

Fallout

By

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. PLANET EARTH

The big blue planet floats quietly in starry space, the moon hovers off the southern hemisphere. A starship lumbers forward, The RUMBLE of its engines more felt than heard. A larger cylinder running the length of the ship spins around a central axis.

2 INTERCUT - STARSHIP BRIDGE / PASSENGER SECTION / CARGO BAY

The PILOT, CO-PILOT, NAVIGATOR, COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER (an alien known as a Maccat), and the LIFE SUPPORT CONTROL OFFICER attend to a large control console.

3 PASSENGER SECTION

A lively mix of HUMANS and MACCAT are waited on by friendly FLIGHT ATTENDANTS.

4 CARGO BAY

KALUN, a Maccat secretly, gathers items from his personal cargo.

The bridge crew prepare for re-entry into Earth's atmosphere. Coordinates are checked, re-entry angles are executed, and the COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER talks to EARTH FLIGHT CONTROL.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
(into headset)
Flight Control, this is Daolis
flight SW-4 on approach to ASP
Houston. Verify approach window.

EARTH FLIGHT CONTROL
(v.o.; over intercom)
Roger, SW-4. Your window is good.
You may proceed with atmospheric
breach.

The passengers cock their heads as the P/A sounds:

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
(v.o.; over intercom)
At this time we would like all
passengers to please secure for
landing. We will be entering
Earth's atmosphere in approximately
five minutes.

(CONTINUED)

They busily secure their belongings as the FLIGHT ATTENDANTS fasten their overhead safety barricades.

PILOT
Secure rotation.

The CO-PILOT flips a switch.

CO-PILOT
Disengaging one G rotation.

5 EXT. SPACE

The cylinder stops rotating and locks in place.

6 INTERCUT - STARSHIP BRIDGE / PASSENGER SECTION / CARGO BAY

KALUN retrieves a rather large spherical object, approximately half his size, examines it, and floats across the bay.

The attendants float down the aisles checking for loose floating items, take their seats and fasten themselves in.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
(into headset)
Flight Control, this is SW-4, we have a secure status.

PILOT
Going auto.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
(into headset)
Auto pilot engaged.

KALUN dons a SWEEPSUIT, which is very much like a wetsuit. He punches buttons on a small explosive, setting a timer.

7 EXT. EARTH

The transport approaches Earth and hits the atmosphere. It's shield bursts into flames as the entire ship is engulfed.

8 INTERCUT - STARSHIP BRIDGE / PASSENGER SECTION / CARGO BAY

KALUN floats over to a bulkhead at the rear of the bay, grabs a handrail firmly and plants his feet firmly on the deck as Earth's gravity takes hold.

The ship barely TREMBLES as the passengers ride out the mild turbulence.

(CONTINUED)

The pilot is calm but alert. Outside, an INFERNO covers the entire field of vision. LIFE SUPPORT CONTROL OFFICER checks off readings.

LIFE SUPPORT CONTROL OFFICER
Shield temperature, 483 degrees.
Outer hull, 147 degrees. Interior
temp, 72 degrees, an increase of...
1.5 degrees.

KALUN checks his chronometer. A door opposite stands open, reading TRANSPORT PERSONNEL ONLY. The control panel next to it has been torn open and rewired to allow access. Another door reading ENGINE AND MAIN CONTROL also has been wired open. A series of control monitors is lit up reading SHIELD STATUS AND CONTROL. KALUN's small pocket computer device is attached to the control panel below it, the timer ticking down in an alien fashion.

9 EXT. SKY - DAY

The transport breaks through the planet's atmosphere. The flames wink out as the ship begins its gradual descent to the surface.

INTERCUT - STARSHIP BRIDGE / PASSENGER
SECTION / CARGO BAY

The bridge crew removes their re-entry barricades and prep for landing.

PILOT
Auto-pilot off.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER (into headset) Flight Control, SW-4, restoring manual control, ready to land.

KALUN dons a small respiration helmet, an oxygen tank and a propulsion device. The sound of his BREATHING fills the helmet.

ENGINE AND MAIN CONTROL ROOM

The device on the control panel approaches zero as it continues to countdown. KALUN heads aft, dragging his cargo. He reaches a door at the end of the cargo bay and pushes a release button. The door slides open.

A WARNING LIGHT goes off on the LIFE SUPPORT CONTROL OFFICER's monitor panel.

(CONTINUED)

LIFE SUPPORT CONTROL OFFICER
Indicator warning on inner bay
door.

The PILOT addresses the communications officer.

PILOT
(to COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER)
Orkeem, ask Kathy to check it
out, would you?

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER (ORKEEM)
Right.
(into intercom) Kathy...

KALUN prepares to open the outer door, his cargo by his side. The timer on the device reaches zero.

As KALUN reaches for the release button on the outer cargo door, KATHY enters the cargo bay and the device EXPLODES, blowing the entire room apart.

KALUN and his package are blown out of the transport and into the air, the flames from the explosion licking his feet.

The passengers reel from the explosion. The entire ship is out of control. Frantic passengers try to remove safety restraints as the flight attendants desperately try to keep order.

10 EXT. SKY - SAME

KALUN falls spread-eagle like a skydiver. Above him in the distance the transport plummets toward the ocean.

11 INT. STARSHIP BRIDGE

The bridge crew frantically tries to regain control of the ship as WARNING LIGHTS and ALARMS go off everywhere.

ORKEEM
Communications down. I can't
may-day to Flight Control!

PILOT
Forget about that now. Get back
there and get everyone into escape
pods.

ORKEEM exits. The PILOT turns to the LIFE SUPPORT CONTROL OFFICER.

(CONTINUED)

PILOT (cont'd)
Walter, gimme a status.

LIFE SUPPORT CONTROL OFFICER (WALTER)
I don't know what happened but
we're pretty ripped up. I have
nothing on-line right now.

PILOT
Shields?

WALTER
Captain, I have nothing, I mean
nothing. No stabilizers, no
thrusters... no power! Every system
is dead.

The PILOT's face grows grim at this deadly news. His
CO-PILOT shoots him a desperate, hopeless look.

12 EXT. SKY - SAME

The transport hurdles toward Earth. Below it lies the
Pacific Ocean. The transport falls majestically, faster and
faster. Finally it hits the surface and DISINTEGRATES.

Further away, KALUN witnesses the event from his descent. As
he nears the water he flips another switch on his belt and
is encased by a BLUE-GREEN FORCE FIELD. He rolls into a dive
and breaks the surface of the water cleanly, going down
several hundred feet.

13 EXT. OCEAN DEPTHS

Beneath the surface of the water, KALUN waits. Within
moments a SPEAR ship (Space, Sea, Air) rapidly approaches.
It slows as it nears him. Below, the hull opens and KALUN
flips another switch on his swimsuit. Two water propulsors
start up on his pack and he glides

INTO THE SPEAR SHIP

KALUN removes his helmet and stows it. He makes his way
forward to the cockpit. Waiting for him is MEL, a woman. She
points a pistol at KALUN's head.

He freezes, staring her down, not acknowledging the pistol.

KALUN
Did you retrieve it?

(CONTINUED)

MEL

What the hell was that up there,
KALUN!

KALUN

It was necessary-

MEL

Necessary?!

KALUN

If I had just jumped ship the outer
door indicator would have lit up
and the entire crew would have
known there was someone in the
cargo hold. I covered our tracks.

Mel fumes but remains silent.

KALUN (cont'd)

Lower your pistol.

MEL

Damn you, KALUN! I would never have
agreed to this if I knew-

KALUN

You knew. You suspected. You wanted
this no matter the cost. This was
the cost. It is done. Accept it.

Mel lowers her pistol.

KALUN (cont'd)

Now, may we please leave before the
rescue team arrives?

14 EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - SAME

FOUR SPEAR ships race above the surface of the ocean,
leaving a MONSTROUS WAKE.

15 OCEAN DEPTHS

Mel's SPEAR ship rolls on its aft engines. They FIRE, and
the ship rockets to the surface.

Moments later, the four rescue ships approach the crash
site.

16 INT. RESCUE SHIP

PILOT
(into headset)
Approaching impact area. Raise
shields.

A BLUE-GREEN ENERGY FIELD surrounds each ship. Suddenly they turn skyward, roll over, and dive towards the water, breaking the surface with an enormous SPLASH.

Seconds after the rescue ships pass, Mel's ship bursts out of the water. It rolls, leveling out, then streaks across the surface towards the horizon.

WIPE TO:

17 EXT. SAN DIEGO SKYWAY - DAY

City traffic. SLIPCARS hover thirty to fifty meters above the ground, zipping along a nine lane skyway. Three lanes across, three lanes high. Palm trees over fifty meters high line both sides of the skyway and run down the center divide, preventing cars from veering off into the city.

Large walls with tunnels in the middle loom in separate intervals along the way: Intersections designed to keep the air traffic from colliding.

18 INT. SLIPCAR

HELEN TIERNEY, a woman in her late 30's, drives along. She has vexed look on her face. MUSIC PLAYS within.

HELEN
Radio: Scan.
(music stops)
News: Local.

A newscaster's voice is heard.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
Officials are uncertain what caused the blast, however sabotage has been speculated. Locally, city officials are working on a plan to
...

HELEN
Radio: Universal news.

A new voice drifts from the radio.

(CONTINUED)

NEWSCASTER

(v.o.)

... security at all Terran
aerospace ports is expected to
tighten as a result of the crash-

The slipcar cruises up to one of the towering intersection
walls and flies through one of the tunnels.

NEWSCASTER (cont'd)

(v.o.)

-and the opening ceremony of the
Daolan Embassy in Geneva is now
shrouded in uncertainty.

HELEN

Good God.

19 EXT. THE TIERNEY HOUSE - DUSK

Helen's slipcar pulls into the driveway as wheels slowly
extend from the undercarriage. The car sets down as a garage
door slides open, then it rolls inside.

Lights come on as she hops up the stairs to the front porch.
She places her hand on a small plate beside the door. It
registers her hand print and the front door slides open.

20 INT. TIERNEY HOUSE

Once inside, the foyer light comes on. She pushes a button
and the door slides shut. MUSIC PLAYS throughout. She
removes her jacket, stunner pistol and holster. She glances
at her left hand, flexes the fingers and winces in pain.

FOOTSTEPS on the stairs.

KELLY, her husband, appears. He is a rugged man in his early
40's. Very fit, and slightly taller than Helen. He is
packing his bags.

HELEN

(dejected)

No.

Kelly looks at her but doesn't stop packing.

HELEN (cont'd)

They can't. You just got here.

KELLY

Didn't you hear?

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

(bitter and defeated)

Of course I heard but it was a civilian starliner. What's it got to do with you?

KELLY

Sevalt was on the flight.

Her face drops as she settles onto the sofa.

HELEN

God. They finally did it.

She watches him intently as he packs.

KELLY

I told the Martian Council it was a matter of time.

HELEN

Is the president going to offer aid?

KELLY

If she wasn't before, Sevalt's death sure has her considering it now. They want me up there tomorrow.

HELEN

Why? The crash was, the embassy ceremony is here-

KELLY

Governor Mumpaka has to assume this was diversionary to draw security to Geneva from Mars. I've been named interim Martian Global Security Advisor.

(pause)

You can always come up with me.

Helen averts her eyes. She is quiet, almost sad.

HELEN

What about your transfer?

Kelly stops packing. He pulls an electronic notepad out of his suitcase and hands it to her. She reads it, clenching her fists.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN (cont'd)
Goddammit! Your Martian contract was up over a year ago. They said it was a sure thing.

KELLY
Sevalt said it was a sure thing.
(points to notepad)
That came in thirty minutes ago.

HELEN
I don't believe this.

KELLY
Helen, the PSA was just blown out of the sky. Understand, it's chaos up there right now. The transfer will have to wait.

She flings the notepad on the sofa.

HELEN
You mean I'll have to wait!

He shuffles over to the sofa and settles next to her.

HELEN (cont'd)
This is our home. I wish you would treat it that way.

He places his hand on hers. He doesn't see her wince.

KELLY
When's the last time you were up to see him?

HELEN
Stop it.

KELLY
Six months? A year?

HELEN
Stop it!

She pulls her hand away and surreptitiously protects it. There is an awkward silence as they wait for each other. Kelly reaches again for her hand. She pulls back.

KELLY
Come with me.

A beat. She shakes her head gently.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

I can't.

KELLY

Why?

Helen rises and steps away from him.

HELEN

The crash. I'll have to help here
with the investigation.

He drops his gaze.

KELLY

Helen-

HELEN

I said no.

Kelly is defeated. He closes up his bag and throws it over
his shoulder. His eyes meet hers. She is disconnected.

KELLY

I'll call when I get there.

He pulls the door open. Hesitates.

KELLY (cont'd)

I'm liable to be up there a while.

She doesn't bite.

HELEN

I'll wait.

He sighs gently, then steps out. She listens as the slipcar
door opens, then slams shut. When the whine of the motor
disappears into the San Diego night, she sobs gently.

21 EXT. BALBOA PARK - DAY

Two young SDPD cadets in cadet uniform, HASSOK and LE FREY,
ride their low-level bicycles at a furious pace. They are
concentrating fully when they round a bend and Hassok's eyes
go wide.

HASSOK

Look out!

22

EXT. BALBOA PARK - LATER

HELEN cruises idly through the park in her slipcar as rain begins to pour down in sheets. A siren WAILS faintly in the distance and grows gradually louder as it nears her. She sees FLASHING LIGHTS as they approach ahead of her, then veer off onto a grassy patch in the distance.

Helen breaks off from the road and follows, gently easing her slipcar down onto a cordoned off grassy area. HASSOK and LE FREY talk to a UNIFORM OFFICER. Helen approaches another SUPERVISING OFFICER and flashes him her badge.

HELEN
Tierney, eighth precinct.
(glancing around)
What's this?

SUPERVISING OFFICER
Two bodies. A woman and a Maccat male.

She indicates the cadets talking to the UNIFORM OFFICER.

HELEN
They found them?

The officer nods. Helen bends over to look at the bodies and recognizes MEL. She reacts, horrified.

SUPERVISING OFFICER
Are you all right, Detective?

HELEN
(hiding her shock)
Yeah. I'm fine.

SUPERVISING OFFICER
Is eighth precinct going to handle this?

HELEN looks over at the cadets.

HELEN
That's up to the SI.

The uniform nods. Helen bends over the bodies to get a closer look. The bodies have been stripped bare. There is a burn mark in MEL's chest and a bruise on KALUN's neck. After a few moments she checks her chronometer and rises, addressing the SUPERVISING OFFICER and slipping her ID into his datapad.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN (cont'd)
(eyeing the cadets)
Do me a favor. As soon as you get
their statements have them sent to
me. And have forensics send me
their data, too. Okay?

SUPERVISING OFFICER
Sure thing, Detective.

23 INT. SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Spotless. Every desk outfitted for video communication. The office buzzes with activity. SUPERINTENDENT PERELLI enters and approaches a podium. The room falls quiet.

PERELLI
Good morning, folks. If you don't
already know about the crash
yesterday you were either drunk,
dead, or hibernating. However, let
me bring everyone up to speed. At
15:43 PST yesterday, transport
flight number SW-4 out of Daolis
suffered an explosion in its
central core, effectively rendering
every power system on the ship
inoperable. The transport hit the
surface of the Pacific three
hundred and twenty six kilometers
west of San Diego and was
obliterated. Martian Global
Security Advisor, Mikhail Sevalt,
was on board and was killed along
with the rest of the passengers and
crew.

HELEN steps into the room as he finishes reading, her left hand wrapped in gauze. He pauses briefly upon catching sight of her.

PERELLI (cont'd)
Now, the president is plenty
pissed, as you might have guessed
and since Interstellar Navy has its
hands full with Martian security
she and they have asked us to
assist in the investigation. We're
expected to back burner all other
cases unless otherwise instructed.
I'll be handing out your
assignments individually.
(eyeing the cadets)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PERELLI (cont'd)
Let's get this one resolved
quickly, people. The President told
me personally that she considers
this a matter of interplanetary
security. That's it.

Perelli steps away from the podium. The room fills with
chatter and a bit of excitement. An officer comes up to
Perelli with an electronic notepad and tells him something.
Perelli glances over at HELEN. Then the officer is gone,
leaving the notepad with Perelli, who charges toward Helen
looking somewhat agitated.

PERELLI (cont'd)
Feeling all right this morning,
Helen?

She nods.

PERELLI (cont'd)
I need to talk to you right now.

PERELLI'S OFFICE

As spotless as the rest of the building, if not more so.
Helen closes the door.

HELEN
What's up?

He looks at her hand. He reaches into his desk and pulls out
an electronic notepad. He punches a button and tosses it at
her. Her body slackens with dejection as she reads.

PERELLI
(gesturing to her hand)
You want to tell me what happened?

She puts her injured hand in her lap.

HELEN
(reading)
You already know.

Perelli takes a seat.

PERELLI
(pointing to datapad)
Are you telling me that's true?

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

(taking a deep breath)
Look, SI, it was a personal thing.
That's all. I really don't think
you should-

PERELLI

Then don't think! Listen.

She falls silent, glancing at a picture of a little girl hanging on the wall behind Perelli.

PERELLI (cont'd)

It took him twelve hours to file
that complaint, which may mean he
can be persuaded to drop it.

HELEN

(suspicious)
If I do what?

PERELLI

Not if. It's something you will do.
I've set up an appointment with you
to talk to Dr. Zulfiqar.

She rolls her eyes.

PERELLI (cont'd)

You want to be listening to me
right now, Helen.

She glares at him.

PERELLI (cont'd)

Doctor Zulfiqar has been wanting to
see you anyway. Father McNamara
knows about Jeremy-

Her eyes go wide with panic.

PERELLI (cont'd)

-and says he's willing to drop the
complaint on Zulfiqar's
recommendation, pending the outcome
of your treatment.

HELEN

And if I don't agree?

PERELLI

Then you can climb into a witness
box and explain to a judge how you

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PERELLI (cont'd)
justly assaulted a priest without
provocation.

Quiet tension as Helen weighs her options. She pulls her stunner and badge and places them on Perelli's desk. He pushes a button on his communication console.

Helen glares at him. She glances at the picture of the little girl again and Perelli follows her gaze.

A UNIFORM OFFICER walks in with a datapad and box. Perelli gestures to the badge and pistol with his eyes and the UNIFORM OFFICER places them in the box. He then hands the datapad to Perelli, who signs it. Then over to Helen, who also signs. The UNIFORM OFFICER quickly exits.

PERELLI (cont'd)
(softening)
It's more than your job at stake,
Helen. (softening) I hear Kelly was
named acting MGSA.

Helen rises and heads for the door.

PERELLI (cont'd)
I know it's none of my business-

She pauses.

PERELLI (cont'd)
-but maybe you should go up there
with him.

She keeps her back to him.

HELEN
Are you going to order me to do it?

PERELLI
No.

HELEN
(heads out the door)
Then your right, SI. It's none of
your business.

He watches as the door slams shut behind her.

24 INT. CORONER'S OFFICE - DAY

HELEN steps up to the reception area where a kindly young RECEPTIONIST is at work.

HELEN

Hi. I'm Detective Tierney from eighth precinct. Do you have a human Jane Doe and a Maccat John Doe who were brought in this morning?

RECEPTIONIST

Yes.

(pointing down the hall)

They were taken to AR three. Doctor Vinh is in there now.

HELEN

AR three. Thank you.

AR 3

Helen steps inside. No Doctor Vinh. MEL and KALUN are laid out on operating tables, sheets up to their necks. She walks up to Mel, looking at her momentarily. She glances at the door. Takes a small device from under coat and places Mel's right hand on it. It scans the hand.

The door is heard opening. Helen quickly slips the device back into her coat as DOCTOR VINH enters.

DOCTOR VINH

Can I help you?

HELEN

Yes. I'm Detective Tierney. Eighth precinct.

They shake hands.

DOCTOR VINH

Doctor Ngat Vinh.

Helen gestures the bodies.

HELEN

You're doing the autopsies?

DOCTOR VINH

(a bit wary)

Yes. Actually, I started an RMT about ten minutes ago. Data should be coming through in a moment.

(CONTINUED)

He walks over to a computer terminal.

HELEN

RMT?

DOCTOR VINH

Retinal Memory Trace.

He begins punching icons on the screen.

DOCTOR VINH (cont'd)

(seeing her confusion)

The retina is the part of the eye that converts incoming light into electrical impulses. It acts kind of like film.

He punches a few more icons.

DOCTOR VINH (cont'd)

Frequently, at the moment of death, the last image the eye sees is sort of "burned" into the retinal cells. We can go into those cells and extract that image.

An image begins to appear onscreen. A jumbled mass of colored blotches.

DOCTOR VINH (cont'd)

I know it this doesn't look like much. The retinal cell images have to be extracted individually then put back together in their proper sequence. Then the computer has to extrapolate an image based on certain variable parameters.

The image begins to morph.

HELEN

Which one is this?

DOCTOR VINH

This is the Jane Doe.

Helen watches as the image becomes clearer. It is Kalun from Mel's point of view, aiming a pistol at her chest.

HELEN

I'll be damned. Did you run this RMT on the Maccat, too?

(CONTINUED)

The coroner clears the image and another appears. It morphs into a fuzzy image of a Maccat.

HELEN (cont'd)
That's it?

DOCTOR VINH
Well, the computer can only go with the information it's given. And this procedure was designed for human physiology.

Helen stares at the image.

HELEN
What was the cause of death?

DOCTOR VINH
His neck was broken.

She gets out her electronic notepad.

HELEN
Can I get hard copies?

DOCTOR VINH
(wary again)
Uh... who did you say you were with?

HELEN
Eighth precinct.

He reluctantly downloads the information for her.

HELEN (cont'd)
Thank you, Doc.

DOCTOR VINH
No problem.

She exits.

Doctor Vinh gets on his communiconsole. A MAN's face appears.

MAN
Eighth precinct.

25 INT. TIERNEY HOUSE - LATER

HELEN pauses as the front door closes. She takes the device from under her coat and drops the coat on the couch as she fires up her computervideo. She plugs the device into the computer

She taps a few keys on the keyboard and the screen comes up with the logo: SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT / AFFILIATED LAW ENFORCEMENT INDEX. She types in a command and another message appears: ENTER SEARCH PARAMTERS.

Helen punches in the name CARLINA MOSKOS. The computer returns in moments with: "CARLINA MOSKOS" NOT FOUND. MODIFY SEARCH PARAMETERS. She flips a switch on the device and types again. A hand print scrolls onto a computer screen with the words JANE DOE #87132 and BALBOA PARK DISTRICT at the top. She selects PRINT SEARCH on the screen. In moments the computer returns with NAME: MELANIE GREEN and a full dossier scrolls down the screen. Helen's eye wanders to the address field.

26 EXT. THE PLANET DAOLIS

Floats amid a vast sea of stars, three small moons in its orbit.

27 EXT. POTEK CITY - NIGHT

The city structure is not very much different from Earth, excepting the jungle-like abundance of vegetation. The city is built above and around the jungle to avoid destroying the wildlife habitation. Lattice-work sidewalks take the place of roads above the jungle floor.

Traffic is not regulated and vehicles ZOOM through the air here and there, between tall towers, above the trees and through the undergrowth. The tallest city tower sits proudly among a row of trees.

28 INT. TOWER - NIGHT

A figure gazes out at the night sky. There is a LOW HUM as a door slides mechanically open, followed by FOOTSTEPS. The figure at the window says nothing for a few moments. Then, still gazing out, he addresses the visitor in a Maccat language (subtitled).

FIGURE

What happened, Oro-Koo (Or-O-Coo)?

(CONTINUED)

ORO-KOO
KALUN never made the delivery.

FIGURE
That much I gathered. Can you tell me why?

ORO-KOO
All we know right now is that both he and the woman were killed.

FIGURE
And the ulkuru?

ORO-KOO
Missing. We don't know where.

The figure turns to face ORO-KOO. He is a tall, menacing Maccat figure. He has a calm, placid face, but there is bitterness in his eyes, revealing someone not to be trifled with. He is KEEG, a man of obvious power. When he speaks again, it is in English.

KEEG
Oh, yes we do. We know exactly where it is.

ORO-KOO
Sho-kon?

KEEG
Who else would have it?

ORO-KOO
Suppose Earth intelligence has it. Shouldn't we at least consider that?

KEEG
No, I don't think so. Sho-kon has it. And if we don't get it back soon, he'll use it to expose me.

ORO-KOO
Won't he destroy it?

KEEG
He can't. I don't have much more time. The ulkuru must be in place in time for the Martian Summit.

(CONTINUED)

ORO-KOO

What are your orders?

KEEG

We are going to need Earth's help
if we are to find it in time.

ORO-KOO

You'll never get their help for
this, regardless of who was on that
transport.

KEEG

Oh, they'll help us. They just
won't know it.

29 EXT. A SUBURBAN HOME - DUSK

HELEN comes up the porch steps of a nice quaint home in a quiet suburban neighborhood. When she reaches the door, the porch light comes on. She reaches into her coat and pulls out a black rubber glove which she slips over her right hand.

Taking a quick glance around, she places her gloved hand on the hand plate next to the door. The plate reads the hand print on the glove and the door slides open. Helen quickly slips inside.

30 INT. SUBURBAN HOME

The lights come on automatically as she enters.

HELEN

Lights off!

The lights go out quickly. Helen pushes a button beside the door and it slides shut. She methodically studies every fixture, every piece of furniture. Family photos sit upon an end table, a few more on the mantel above the fireplace. She is unaware of a TALL SHADOW which moves silently across the room behind her. She turns on instinct, seeing nothing, then moves to the kitchen.

31 INTERCUT - HELEN / SHADOW #1 / SHADOW #2

A shadowy figure, SHADOW #2, stands at the top of the stairs, watching her.

SHADOW #1 slowly follows Helen into the kitchen as Shadow #2 watches, then moves back to an upstairs bedroom.

(CONTINUED)

In the kitchen, Helen finds nothing, but her instincts work overtime. She scans the room, feeling a presence in the house. She heads clear around the kitchen, out a far door and into the family room. Shadow #1 follows.

Shadow #1 appears in the family room. Helen has disappeared! He glides across to the door opposite, going back out into the living room. No one there. He is alert now, cautious. He moves slowly to the front of the stairs, purpose in every step, when-

HELEN

Lights!

Suddenly the living room is lit to the hilt. Helen pops out near the front door. Shadow #1, a Maccat, is caught completely off guard. He reaches behind his back.

HELEN (cont'd)

(in Maccat subtitled)

Don't do it!

He stops and puts his hands out in front of him.

HELEN (cont'd)

(in Maccat subtitled)

Just keep your hands in the open.
Let's talk.

Shadow #2 (another Maccat) drops into Helen's line of sight at the top of the stairs. She barely has time to react as he fires, grazing her shoulder. She dives behind a sofa as Shadow #1 draws his pistol, and Shadow #2 comes flying down the stairs.

Helen pops up from behind the couch only to be met with a barrage of laser fire. A shot SINGES her hair and she ducks back down, laser bolts EXPLODING against the wall behind her. The firing stops and Helen pops up again, pistol raised. The room is empty, the front door wide open.

32

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Helen bursts out with her pistol blazing. Green laser bolts POUND the shell of the Maccats' slipcar as it rises into the air. Helen continues to blast away as she runs to her own slipcar and dives into the driver's seat. The car rises into the air and tears off in the direction of the other car.

33

INTERCUT - HELEN'S SLIPCAR / THE MACCAT SLIPCAR / AERIAL CHASE

A computer map in the dashboard tracks the Maccat slipcar as Helen closes in on them.

Both slipcars fly along the road, occasionally dodging other slipcars, at other times veering off the main road and BUZZING trees and houses through various neighborhoods. Leaves blow off in huge plumes as they pass.

Shadow #1 drives while Shadow #2 watches intently through the rear window. The driver says something to him in Maccat.

Helen is all control and cool under pressure as she skillfully pursues. A window comes down on the passenger's side of the other car and Shadow #2 climbs halfway out, a laser rifle in his arms. Her eyes widen and she cranks the yoke hard left and back, attempting to evade.

Shadow #2 fires, green laser bolts erupting from his rifle, lighting up the sky as Helen's car drops toward the trees.

The laser bolts go right through her windshield, leaving nothing more than a smoky mark on the glass, and EXPLODE against the interior as she ducks below the dashboard.

The front end SLAMS the top of a tree and the car tumbles wildly out of control across the sky.

She gets control in time to see the street coming up fast in her window, and pulls back hard on the yoke.

The car rises just before hitting the street, the rear end THROWING OFF SPARKS as it skips off the pavement.

Her car under control, Helen pulls her pistol, lowers her window and sticks her arm out. Shadow #2 sees her and takes aim again.

They fire simultaneously and the night comes alive with laser fire as they race across the city. Shadow #1 sees it erupting around him and cranks the yoke to the left.

Shadow #2 reels from the sudden turn and his rifle flies from his hands as he tries to keep himself from falling out of the window. At the same moment a BLAST from Helen's pistol hits the door and it slides open, spilling him out of the car.

He hangs on for dear life as they race across the sky, Helen blasting away. They race toward a skyway interchange. Lights move over the tops of the trees in the distance.

(CONTINUED)

Finally, Shadow #2 scrambles back into the slipcar. It hits the skyway entrance at full speed, driving other slipcars onto the pavement and off into the trees. Helen follows and they race down the skyway, zigzagging through traffic.

Helen is all cool concentration as she closes in. In the distance looms a towering intersection. She is nearly on top of them when she thrusts her arm out, aiming her pistol at the car's rear windshield.

She bears down, about to fire, when the other vehicle suddenly pops up to the lane above, flying through the top level of the intersection while Helen zips through the lane below.

Shadow #1 pulls back on his yoke, attempting to climb higher, but the altimeter on the instrument panel reads: MAX. ALTITUDE 50 METERS. He HISSES at the altimeter, SWEARING.

Helen sees the Maccat car above and in front of her and prepares to climb, but the other car reduces speed and drops back down to the middle lane. She whips her head around to find herself being pursued.

HELEN

Oops!

In the distance, another intersection approaches. Shadow #1 BARKS an order at Shadow #2, who pulls a pistol.

Helen thinks for a moment, the intersection approaching fast ahead of her. She reduces speed and gently eases back on the yoke. Her altimeter slowly advances from 28 METERS to 34 METERS.

Shadow #1's eyes never leave Helen's vehicle as he closes the gap between them. He doesn't notice his altimeter as it ticks from 33 METERS to 34 METERS. Shadow #2 takes careful aim.

Helen watches the vehicle calmly in the rear view monitor on her dashboard. She is only 100 meters from the intersection wall.

Shadow #2 has Helen in his sights, ready to take his shot.

Helen shoves the yoke forward and her car drops sharply, disappearing from view, leaving a giant wall directly in front of the Maccats.

Shadow #2 raises his head from his sight. Shock hits him as the slipcar plows head-on into the intersection wall, EXPLODING in a ball of flame.

(CONTINUED)

Helen shoots out the other side as flames rise into the sky. She glances back to see the damage and slaps her hand against the dashboard in frustration as she zips down the skyway.

HELEN (cont'd)

Dammit!

CUT TO:

34 EXT. SKYWAY INTERSECTION - LATER

Vehicle lights flash as FORENSIC and FIRE CREWS sift through the wreckage. Traffic is backed up along the skyway as only ground traffic is allowed through. Portable flood lights illuminate the scene. HELEN sits on the front end of her slipcar, surveying the scene. SUPERINTENDENT PERELLI walks up to her, clearly unhappy. She hands him an electronic notepad.

HELEN

Here's my statement.

Perelli takes the notepad and scans it briefly.

PERELLI

(a trace of anger)

I'm curious, Tierney. Why didn't you call in the pursuit?

Helen responds through clenched teeth, biting back anger and shame.

HELEN

I was a little preoccupied. They were blasting at my head. Have you seen the interior of my car?

She jerks a thumb at the window. Perelli takes a casual glance inside.

PERELLI

You say you saw two Maccat males in the home of-

(checks notepad)

-Melanie Green?

HELEN

That's right.

PERELLI

What were you doing there?

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

Investigating. Look, SI, you put me on this case, why are you so worked up? Don't like my work?

PERELLI

Come here.

(takes her aside)

As of now, you're on indefinite suspension.

HELEN

Great.

PERELLI

What do you expect? You just let a major lead incinerate itself against that wall. Not to mention the public disturbance, reckless endangerment. The director ordered me to remove you from duty. He was this close to shipping you off to Europa for reassignment.

HELEN

(sarcastic)

I guess he doesn't like me very much.

PERELLI

He was dead serious. Listen to me. I know the pressures you have, but this looks as if you've lost control completely. Washington thinks you're a danger to the public. You know what, I don't think they're entirely wrong.

HELEN

What the hell am I supposed to do? Sit at home and stare at the walls? Solve mystery novels? This will do wonders for my sanity.

PERELLI

Look. You're burning out. I know you've been hiding in your work and sometimes that's a good thing. But look around. You just lit up a fire in the middle of the city, and now you've killed two Daolis citizens. This is not the work of a rational mind. Now, did

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PERELLI (cont'd)
you take a good look inside that
car of yours? That was
carelessness.

HELEN
So what do I do?

PERELLI
Get out of here. Out of the city.
Go to Mars with Kelly.

HELEN
I can't.

Perelli gives up, no more help to offer her.

PERELLI
I'll contact you when your
reinstatement comes through. Until
then, you're restricted from duty,
and specifically this case. If you
violate this order, I'll arrest you
personally. Understood.

HELEN
Yeah, I understand.

PERELLI
Now, get out of here. We'll clean
up the mess.
(waving the notepad)
I'll call you if I have any
questions.

Helen heads back to her slipcar, unaware of TWO MEN standing
a discreet distance away, observing her closely.

WIPE TO:

35 EXT. TIERNEY HOUSE - NIGHT

HELEN eases her slipcar into the driveway as the tires come
down. Another slipcar is parked there. As she steps to the
front of the house she notices the living room lights on,
and classical JAZZ DRIFTING OUT.

She draws her pistol and eases up the steps, triggering the
porch light. She places her hand on the release plate and
the door slides open. She slips in.

36

INT. TIERNEY HOUSE

Sitting on the sofa is a man in his mid-fifties, RANDALL HOGAN, one of the two mystery men at the slipcar crash. Dressed in the usual suit, replete with tie and trenchcoat, he looks up at Helen, a drink in his hand. His hair is grey, but full, and there is a playfulness to his demeanor with an underlying dangerous edge.

Helen lowers her pistol.

HOGAN
(sips his drink)
You're getting a little sloppy
aren't you, Helen?

HELEN
How did you get in here?

He pulls a black rubber glove from his coat pocket.

HOGAN
I have a key.

HELEN
(gesturing to drink)
You didn't drink it all, did you?

She puts the gun away and goes to the fridge for a drink.

HOGAN
Where's Kelly?

HELEN
On Mars. On assignment.

HOGAN
I see.

HELEN
Of course you do. You knew that
before you got here. What do you
want, Hogan?

She comes back to the living room with her drink.

HOGAN
Volume! Down 10!

The music VOLUME DECREASES 10 decibels.

(CONTINUED)

HOGAN (cont'd)

I understand you find yourself with a lot of free time.

HELEN

You don't miss much do you? I'll bet you knew that before I did.

(Hogan smiles)

What did you do, have one of your freshman pose as the director and call Perelli?

HOGAN

Actually, we did nothing. The director honestly doesn't like you. It seems you have a careless attitude. Doesn't sound like you at all, actually. I'm worried.

HELEN

I'm touched by your concern.

HOGAN

Oh, believe me, I'm sincere.

HELEN

So, this is business.

HOGAN

This is business.

Helen waits, she takes a drink.

HOGAN (cont'd)

How familiar are you with the Konu extremists on Daolis?

HELEN

Just what I hear in on the news. Kelly gives me a little info.

HOGAN

Are you familiar with the group's leader?

HELEN

Sho-kon? Yes, I've heard of him.

Hogan looks at her, and waits.

HELEN (cont'd)

Former Daolis army commander and Executive Aid to Prime Minister

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HELEN (cont'd)

Aakese. Had some problems with a young executive named Keeg some years back, didn't agree with some of his ideas. During a protest rally, Keeg had Aakese declare martial law in the city of Potek. Sho-kon dissented. He was with the protesters when Keeg ordered riot control. He killed several soldiers in the ensuing confrontation, fled with a group of protesters and has been waging nonstop war ever since. Want more?

HOGAN

Is there more?

HELEN

Konu: means 'aborigine' in a literal translation, but a more loose and accurate interpretation would be 'we liked things the way they were before you screwed it up'. Now, what do you want?

HOGAN

The transport crash.

HELEN

What about it?

HOGAN

There was something very crucial on it a mutual friend of ours was trying to smuggle in.

HELEN

So Carlina was involved.

HOGAN

Yes. She was operating under the name Melanie Green on Daolis, managed to hook up with a cabinet minister's aide, a fellow by the name of KALUN. She convinced him to help her bring the item to Earth. We don't know exactly what happened, but we never received a communication. She turned up dead.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

You think she blew up the ship?
Why? You could have helped her
through customs.

HOGAN

No we couldn't. She couldn't
contact us until she was free and
clear. But we don't think she blew
the ship, we think KALUN did. We
think he doubled on us. Killing the
PSA would be a major coup for
Daolis with the Summit coming up.

HELEN

Why, you think the Maccats want to
attack our Martian installation?

HOGAN

No. Security's so beefed up an
assault would be suicide.

HELEN

Earth?

HOGAN

Well, Mars is standing between
Earth and Daolis right now and will
be for the next month. No attack is
viable here, either.

HELEN

Get to the point Hogan, what aren't
you telling me?

HOGAN

The package Carlina was bringing in
is a solar power converter. A
satellite about two to three feet
in diameter, producing enough
energy to power an electronic
frontier over the entire surface of
the moon. With enough of these in
solar orbit, we could generate a
protective frontier for the entire
system.

HELEN

Impressive.

HOGAN

Damn right it's impressive, and if
the Maccats get one up before we do

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HOGAN (cont'd)
we'll be left hanging in the wind.
They'd be virtually invulnerable to
any first strike counter-attack.

HELEN
So you stole it.

HOGAN
We tried to. Carlina was bumped off
before we could take possession.
Now it's out there again. You can
guess where.

HELEN
The Konu.

HOGAN
Exactly. Those three Macks you
bagged weren't citizens, they were
rebels. We think Sho-kon'll use
this incident to blackmail us into
helping him.

HELEN
So help him.

HOGAN
(taken aback) And start
another interplanetary war
with Daolis? I don't think so.

HELEN
So you want me to steal it?

HOGAN
You've been there, you know the
languages. Three of them, anyway.
Carlina's connections are already
in place.

HELEN
Why would I want to come back to
that, Hogan?

HOGAN
What do you have here?
(she doesn't answer)
You can get back to what you're
good at, Helen. You know why you
got suspended? Because you're not a
cop. You're a spook by nature, and
a damn good one.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

Everyone wants to be my savior.
(eyeing Hogan)
All this mumbo jumbo comes down to
the fact you don't want to risk
your own agents on this bullshit
mission.

Now it is Hogan who has no answer.

HELEN (cont'd)

I'll do it on one condition.

HOGAN

Yes?

HELEN

Kelly put in for a transfer to New
Zealand next fall and was denied. I
do this for you and you make sure
his transfer goes through.

HOGAN

Get serious, Helen, we have no
authority over the military-

HELEN

You have the connections, Hogan.
Those are my conditions. You want
me, you get him his transfer.

Hogan thinks on this a long while.

HOGAN

Okay.

HELEN

(leaning in)
Where do I begin?

HOGAN

Take the first transport out
tomorrow afternoon. You're going as
a civilian so you'll have to get
your own ticket and passport.
You're a Konu sympathizer who wants
to join up.

He hands her his electronic notepad.

HOGAN (cont'd)

I've downloaded all the information
we have on the Konu.

(CONTINUED)

Helen says nothing. Hogan gets up to leave.

HELEN

Hogan.

(he turns to her)

Do you really think I'm up to this?
You know me, how I operate. Do you
think I can handle this right now?

HOGAN

I honestly don't know. But you're
my best option right now, and
whatever else is going on in your
life, I know you can do the job.

Hogan leaves. Helen sits for a moment, scanning the notepad. She goes across the living room to a small video monitor in the far wall. She hits a button on the screen which begins to flash the word TRANSMITTING. A WOMAN's face appears.

WOMAN

Hello?

HELEN

Hi, Janice.

JANICE

Helen! I'm so glad you called. How
are you?

HELEN

Okay. Has Kelly arrived yet?

JANICE

Just this afternoon.

(beat)

Are you okay? You look exhausted.

HELEN

Well, it's been an exhausting
night.

JANICE

Hold on.

There is an uncomfortable period of silence while Helen waits. Suddenly, KELLY's face is on the monitor.

KELLY

Hi, honey.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

I'm glad to see you made it okay.

KELLY

On a military flight, okay is a relative term.

HELEN

Janice seems happy.

KELLY

She'd be happier if you were here.

HELEN

Maybe. Listen, I'm not going to make it up there. Something's come up and it looks like I'm going to have to go away for a while.

KELLY

What's going on?

HELEN

I can't get into too many details. Let's just say it's important.

KELLY

What do you mean 'go away'? If you're not coming here, where are you going?

HELEN

I can't say.

KELLY

What? ...You're working for E.I.B. again, aren't you?

(Helen says nothing)

Dammit, Helen.

HELEN

It's important-

KELLY

So are we!

(Helen is silent)

I'm trying very hard to understand what you're going through, but you're not making it easy.

Helen's eyes are glassy as she struggles to hold back tears.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

I'm trying.

KELLY

Then come up here.

HELEN

I will. But I need to do this first.

KELLY

Helen-

HELEN

Kelly, I can't explain but trust me. What I'm doing, it's for us. When I'm done you'll understand. We'll have all the time we need.

KELLY

The time we need is now.

HELEN

Just trust me, Kelly. I know I'm asking a lot, but really... trust me. And I promise, as soon I'm done I'll come to Mars.

Kelly softens, the concern clearly showing on his face.

KELLY

Don't go, Helen. You want the truth? I'm scared. I don't trust those E.I.B. slicksters. Of all the times to get sucked back in, this is the worst.

HELEN

I'll be careful. I'll be okay.

There is nothing more to say.

KELLY

I love you.

HELEN

I know you do.

KELLY

Call me when you get there. Let me know you're okay.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

I'll try-

Abruptly she disconnects the transmission.

37 INT. JANICE'S HOUSE ON MARS - DAY

Janice enters the den to see the vid-phone screen go blank.

JANICE

Everything okay?

Kelly turns to face her. He says nothing.

38 INT. THE TIERNEY LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Helen sits, alone in her own mind struggling with her sanity. She rises and heads to the bedroom to pack.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

39 INTERCUT - SPACE / TRANSPORT BRIDGE / PASSENGER SECTION

A transport heads away from Earth at high speed, the sun gleaming off its hull.

The BRIDGE CREW goes through the usual routines.

NAVIGATOR

Coordinates locked. We're ready to enter circuit corridor.

PILOT

Roger that.

HELEN stares out her window, off into nothing, the weight of the world upon her shoulders.

The transport clears the moon. Infinite space lay ahead.

PILOT (cont'd)

Prepare to open corridor.

NAVIGATOR

Roger, circuit corridor in five-four-three-two-open.

The ship disappears as if through a curtain in space.

WIPE TO:

40 EXT. THE PLANET DAOLIS

The sun slips behind the planet, lighting it in a warm corona glow.

41 INT. TOWER - KEEG'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

KEEG sits alone with an electronic photo album. He is not so much looking at the pictures as he is staring at the walls, remembering. MUSIC PLAYS throughout, like a soft Mozart melody of tribal woodwinds and drums.

A SOOTHING BASS NOTE resounds throughout the apartment. Then another. Keeg finally snaps out of his trance.

KEEG

Enter.

The apartment door slides open to reveal ORO-KOO. She glides into the room. Keeg addresses her in an uncharacteristically warm tone as he sets his photo album upon the table.

KEEG (cont'd)

Yes, Oro-Koo. What is it?

ORO-KOO

A transmission from our Earth sources. E.I.B. has dispatched an agent to Daolis. They do not know her duty orders. However, given the timing, we can assume her objective is the ulkuru. Her transport entered the corridor approximately three cycles ago and should be within our orbit at twenty-seven hundred.

Keeg's mind is elsewhere entirely as he gets up and strolls over to a window.

KEEG

Good. Good... Is it someone we know? Someone we can recruit?

ORO-KOO

Hard to say, sir. She's a data blip, inactive for the last nine moon-seasons. We don't know much about her.

KEEG

Who is she?

(CONTINUED)

Oro-Koo seems wary of Keeg's light tone and relaxed demeanor.

ORO-KOO

Her name is Helen Tierney. She's ex-navy, a 'Triton'.

KEEG

Special forces?

ORO-KOO

That's correct. She did a few jobs for E.I.B. awhile back. When her discharge came she went to work for Criminal Investigations. Her husband is military, too, a marine. Now an advisor. He's on Mars right now, investigating the PSA's death.

KEEG

(turning)

Really?

ORO-KOO

Yes, sir.

KEEG

That could come in useful.

ORO-KOO

I suppose so.

KEEG

Have a team at the aerospace port when she lands. I want her brought here.

Keeg turns back to window.

ORO-KOO

Will there be anything else, sir?

KEEG

No. Thank you, Oro-Koo.

(Oro-Koo turns to go)

Oro-Koo?

ORO-KOO

Yes, sir?

KEEG

Do you believe in the Daos?

(CONTINUED)

ORO-KOO

Sir?

KEEG

(not listening)

Some find it so easy to believe. I wonder how they do it.

ORO-KOO

I'm not really certain what you mean.

KEEG

Faith is such a fickle thing. It comes and goes at its leisure.

He turns to Oro-Koo, now visibly uncomfortable at this unseen side of her superior.

ORO-KOO

I guess it depends on your experiences.

KEEG

If there is a Daos, do you think it will understand?

ORO-KOO

Are you feeling all right, sir?

Keeg ignores the question, turning back to the window.

KEEG

There was a time, you know, when I never would have questioned it. It's amazing how quickly your perspective can change.

Keeg suddenly snaps out of it. He turns to Oro-Koo.

KEEG (cont'd)

Thank you, Oro-Koo, that will be all.

Oro-Koo leaves, a bit perplexed. Keeg grabs the picture notepad off the table, remembering a nightmarish past.

DISSOLVE TO:

42 EXT. A WARTORN CITY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

The sky is alive with the distant bursts of a battle in orbit. On the horizon, a GROUND BATTLE CAN BE HEARD. In the midst of this madness, a MACCAT FAMILY moves quietly through the ruins. MOTHER, FATHER, and LITTLE BOY.

LITTLE BOY
(in Maccat subtitled)
Mama, where are we going?

MOTHER
(in Maccat subtitled)
Hush, Keep.

They are nervous, cautious, obviously afraid of getting caught. As they approach whatever destination they are seeking a FIGURE jumps out of the darkness, a laser rifle pointed at the father's head.

RIFLEMAN
(in Maccat subtitled)
Hold!

FATHER
(in Maccat subtitled)
Don't shoot!

A Human steps from the shadows, gun poised. He looks to the battle on the horizon and lowers his weapon.

RIFLEMAN
We have to hurry. The front is
moving this way.

He ushers the family toward a large blacked out spaceship, looking like an empty hull. They rush inside and the rifleman closes the ramp.

43 INT. SMUGGLER SHIP

The family huddles in fear. Another human, CAPTAIN GRANT, emerges from the cockpit.

GRANT
Is this everyone, Eladio?

RIFLEMAN (ELADIO)
Yes, we're all here. Now let's get
the hell out of here.

(CONTINUED)

GRANT

In a minute.

Grant studies the family for a long moment. He clearly does not approve of his passengers.

GRANT (cont'd)

(in Maccat subtitled)

Payment up front, before we make a single move.

The father looks apprehensively at his family, then at Eladio, who looks nervous, as well. Grant merely waits. The father digs into his robe and pulls out a small bag, holding it out for him. Grant looks inside.

GRANT (cont'd)

(satisfied)

Better strap yourselves in, we're gonna hit combat traffic trying to get out of here.

Eladio repeats Grant's request in Maccat. They enter the cockpit and power up the ship for take-off.

GRANT (cont'd)

Once we clear the combat horizon we'll climb to ten thousand. Then we'll punch through the atmosphere after we clear that damn orbital battle. Blackout conditions until we're in the corridor. Got it?

ELADIO

Right.

44 EXT./INT. SMUGGLER SHIP

A ball of blue flame ERUPTS seemingly out of nowhere and blasts the engines of the smuggler ship, rendering it inoperable. The family shakes violently in their seats, shocked and frightened. Grant and Eladio are rocked out of their seats.

GRANT

What the hell!

ELADIO

That had to be energy shell fire.

GRANT

Dammit!

(CONTINUED)

ELADIO

(checks a scanner)

There's movement outside. Must be foot soldiers.

GRANT

(removes restraints)

I'm getting the hell out of here.

ELADIO

What about the passengers?

Grant isn't listening to him, he makes a hasty exit out of the cockpit's emergency hatch as a group of HUMAN SOLDIERS rush toward the crippled ship.

The family sits stunned in their seats. Ko-Los starts to remove his restraints when Eladio comes in.

ELADIO (cont'd)

We have to get out of here, now!

Eladio helps them out of their seats and they rush to an emergency exit. He pops the door release and it slides up to reveal human soldiers, weapons poised.

SOLDIER

Hold it!

They freeze. From their point of view the soldiers cannot see Keeg, and Ko-Los motions for him to hide, which he does.

SOLDIER (cont'd)

Come out slowly, arms high!

The three of them move slowly forward with their arms up.

COMMANDING SOLDIER

Kuralin! You and Conor check the ship for anyone else.

KURALIN and CONOR head into the ship. The COMMANDER eyes the Maccat couple with obvious disgust, then moves on to Eladio. Moments later the two soldiers emerge from the wrecked ship.

KURALIN

No one else sir, the ship is clear.

COMMANDER

(addressing Eladio)

Is that so? Nobody else with you?
You were going to smuggle them out of here all by yourself, huh?

(CONTINUED)

(Eladio is silent)
Well, if that's what you want me to believe, I'll believe it.

Keeg comes forward to see what is happening. He hides in the shadows, eyes wide with fear. A SOLDIER speaks, a scanner in his hand.

SOLDIER
Sir, I've got movement!

COMMANDER
Where?

SOLDIER
Three marks east of our position.

COMMANDER
(disgusted)
Damn smugglers.

He gives Eladio a hard, SHARP BACK-HAND across the face.

COMMANDER (cont'd)
You're a whore, you know that? A rebel for hire. I despise mercenaries like you. You don't know the meaning of loyalty.
(looks at couple)
Tell me what it is you see in these Macks that you would betray your own people.

ELADIO
They're just innocent civilians-

COMMANDER
Shut up!

Keeg watches in terror as the Commander moves back to his parents. The soldier with the scanner speaks up again.

SOLDIER
Commander?

COMMANDER
I heard you the first time, lieutenant!
(looks at couple)
Innocent civilians.

It's silent. Eladio waits, visibly tense. The commander signals to the two soldiers holding the couple at gunpoint and steps away.

(CONTINUED)

Keeg breathes hard and fast, filled with fear.

The two soldiers take aim and fire, killing the alien couple.

KEEG
(in Maccat subtitled)

No!

Four soldiers whirl, unloading a barrage of laser fire, BLOWING the doorway to pieces.

Suddenly out of the east, the soldiers find themselves under attack, under a HAILSTORM of laser fire and energy grenades. They dig in and return fire and soon a battle is under way. Laser fire is everywhere, all else forgotten.

Keeg sits on the floor of the cockpit, his hands over his ears, rocking back and forth. He is SCREAMING. Screaming for himself and for his parents as two races violently murder each other outside.

DISSOLVE TO:

45 EXT. AEROSPACE PORT ON DAOLIS - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

A transport eases itself onto a landing platform, the BLAST from its engines throwing off huge plumes of steam.

46 INT. DEBARK TERMINAL

A true melting pot of races. Black, White, Asian, European, etc. Even the major populace, the Maccat, are a mix of races. HELEN strides through this grab bag of people, garnering the stares of strangers as she walks past.

Across the terminal FOUR MACCATS in Maccat dress suits wait. One of them has an electronic notepad and glances down. A picture of Helen fills the screen.

Across the terminal she approaches, oblivious to the four figures watching her. MACCAT #1 starts toward her, casual, as if on his way to his flight.

Helen takes a sudden dramatic turn toward a large, tight cluster of people. She picks up her pace.

The three Maccats standing near the entrance move off in her direction, fanning out to flank her. She moves a little faster now, glancing over to Maccat #1, who has her locked. She moves into the thick of the crowd, ducking.

(CONTINUED)

Maccat #1's eyes widen, he drops his gaze down through the legs of the crowd, frantic. Helen has slipped away. He signals to the other three. One heads out the nearest exit, the other two move into the crowd.

Helen analyzes the situation, scanning exits, determining avenues of escape. She sees an opportunity and makes her move, breaking through an opening in the crowd. She emerges face to face with MACCAT #2.

CUT TO:

47 EXT. DAOLIS - POTEK CITY - NIGHT

A shuttle BUZZES through the air over the dense jungle foliage. The glow of city lights can be seen ahead in the distance. The shuttle heads right for the heart of the it.

48 INT. SHUTTLE

Helen glances around at the FOUR MACCATS as they ride quietly to their destination.

HELEN
(under her breath)
I am getting sloppy.

49 EXT. POTEK CITY - SAME

The Tower looms on the horizon, growing taller as the shuttle approaches. Other shuttles BUZZ here and there through the city. The shuttle eases into a hangar near the top of the Tower.

50 INT. TOWER HANGAR

TWO MACCATS escort Helen through. She feels the eyes of passerby all over her. They approach an office door and one of the Maccats hits the BUZZER. A few moments pass and the door slides open. One of the Maccats waves her inside-

51 KEEG'S OFFICE

He sits behind a bare desk. A computer monitor is imbedded in the surface. He motions her to have a seat.

KEEG
Please.

Helen sits down.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

(in Maccat subtitled)

Why have I been brought here-

KEEG

(in English)

I know you are fluent in several of our languages, Ms. Tierney.

However, for the purposes of protocol why don't we speak

English. First off, let me introduce myself. My name is Keeg, Senior Advisor to Prime Minister Aakese. I'd like to ask you a few questions, if I may.

(she shrugs 'okay')

Now, can you please explain why you ran from my men at the spaceport?

HELEN

I'd like you to explain why they were after me in the first place. Is it protocol for your government to abduct and detain visiting foreign citizens without cause or explanation?

KEEG

No. But then again, you aren't just visiting, are you? You have a very specific agenda.

HELEN

(mock surprise)

Really?

KEEG

(a slight smile)

Yes. An interest in our technology that your government is very anxious to acquire.

HELEN

Tell me, Mr. Keeg-

KEEG

Senior Advisor Keeg, if you please, Ms. Tierney.

HELEN

Officer Tierney. Tell me, is it protocol to accuse visiting foreigners of thievery, as well?

(CONTINUED)

(Keeg smiles wider)
Perhaps I should talk with my
embassy about that.

KEEG

Who said anything about theft?

(the smile fades)

It is in neither of our interests
to waste time, Officer Tierney. So,
as I believe they say in your
English, 'let us cut through the
bull'.

(she smirks)

I do not wish to sit here playing
games with you. We've been waiting
for you ever since you were
dispatched by E.I.B.

(on her reaction)

Don't be too surprised, Officer
Tierney. Your government frequently
underestimates our intelligence
resources. There is nothing you
know that I do not. (pause) I'm
willing to make a trade in exchange
for your services.

HELEN

I'm impressed. Tell me, what
exactly do you expect me to do?

KEEG

I don't expect you to do anything
other than you have already
planned. With one minor exception.

HELEN

And that is?

KEEG

I want it back. The satellite, I
mean.

HELEN

Of course. That's not all, though.

KEEG

No. I also want Sho-kon.

HELEN

And you think I can deliver him?

(CONTINUED)

KEEG

Oh, most certainly.

HELEN

Well, Senior Advisor, I might have had a shot at both had you not brought me here. My infiltrating the Konu was a long shot to begin with. Now that I've been here they'll stay away in droves. Besides, you could have better luck sending one of your own people in.

KEEG

Actually, the opposite is true. Sho-kon is a very suspicious man, wisely so. In fact, I have tried several times to infiltrate his organization. Unsuccessfully.

HELEN

Why is that?

KEEG

He doesn't trust Maccats. Never has. Anyone who comes to him never gets in. He always recruits them.

HELEN

And you think he'll choose me because I'm human.

KEEG

He'll at least be curious. He will know that you've been to see me, but he won't be able to pass up the opportunity to gain Earth's sympathy for his cause.

HELEN

You're forgetting something.

KEEG

Yes?

HELEN

I don't need you. In fact, I'm probably better off without you, and I keep the satellite myself.

KEEG

I see.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

My point is, what's in it for us?

KEEG

I am prepared to share information about the satellite with your government.

HELEN

(surprise and doubt)

You are.

KEEG

I am not one who lives in fantasy, Officer Tierney. Sooner or later you will develop the technology anyway, and this satellite goes beyond mere strategic or military possibilities. Defense is just the beginning. Meteors, comets, stray spacecraft debris, radiation. The satellite is a strong defense against it all. It accelerates the terraforming process by 120%. Think of what that could mean to your Europa project.

HELEN

You present a very optimistic viewpoint, Senior Advisor. To tell you the truth it runs contrary to what I have heard of you.

KEEG

Our own reports of your leaders run equally unflattering, and yet I suspect they are untrue.

HELEN

For arguments sake, however, suppose I were to refuse your offer?

KEEG

You would never make it off Daolis alive. I would have you arrested and executed for espionage. (pause) Regretfully, of course.

HELEN

Of course. Then I guess we have an agreement. (Keeg smiles) Where do I begin.

(CONTINUED)

KEEG

You begin by checking in to the Kota Klena hotel. Take the next week to relax and enjoy a vacation.

HELEN

I'm not here on vacation.

KEEG

You are for a week. If you try poking your nose into Sho-kon's operation now you have no chance.

HELEN

Then what?

KEEG

Then one of my men will contact you. He will get you to the next step and from there you will be on your own until you need us.

HELEN

I could use some currency.

He pulls an electronic disk out of his desk and tosses it to her.

KEEG

Untraceable debit account. Use it wisely.

HELEN

Thank you.

KEEG

Well, I've enjoyed our meeting very much Officer Tierney. Good night.

Helen is led away under guard, leaving Keeg alone to stare at the door. A wicked smile spreads across his face.

Helen loads the currency disk into her electronic notepad as she is led back to the shuttle. She climbs in.

SHUTTLE PILOT

The Kota Klena, Officer Tierney?

HELEN

Yes. Thank you.

DISSOLVE TO:

52 EXT. KOTA KLENA HOTEL - LATER

The shuttle eases down a discreet distance from the hotel.

HELEN

No front door service?

MACCAT GUARD

We are under Konu surveillance,
this is the closest I can get you.

He leans out the window as she exits.

MACCAT GUARD (cont'd)

Remember, Officer. You're under our
surveillance, as well. If you need
any help at any point, signal us.

Not so much a reminder as a warning.

HELEN

Thanks.

53 INT. KOTA KLENA HOTEL

It is lively and LOUD. Unlike most Earth hotels, this one has a LIVE BAND PLAYING in the lobby. A kind of tribal, acoustic, big band sound. Scores of people dance wherever they may be. Helen stops to watch the spectacle.

She makes her way to an electronic registration kiosk across the lobby. She inserts the electronic notepad. The monitor kiosk reads: HOW MANY ROOMS? Helen punches in: 1. Monitor reads: LENGTH OF STAY? She types: INDEFINITE. Monitor reads: DOWNLOADING ROOM ACCESS CODE TO YOUR TERMINAL.

She waits. The kiosk BEEPS and she removes her notepad from the kiosk as the monitor flashes directions to her room.

Off to the left is a saloon. She saunters over, admiring the festive hotel patrons. She passes a robot who asks if she needs help with her bags. Helen realizes she doesn't have them and dismisses the robot as she enters the saloon.

The crowd is no less festive than in the lobby. It is not dirty or dark like a typical Earth bar. On the contrary it is quite brightly lit. A half dozen different games are played throughout. Card games, board games, holograph games, a variation of pool, even a pistol range. Few tables are in the saloon. Instead a series of benches and a single padded bench that runs the perimeter.

(CONTINUED)

In the center are bartenders, TWO MACCAT WOMEN and ONE MACCAT MAN. A slot opens at the bar and Helen steps up, addressing the first Maccat woman.

HELEN
(in Maccat subtitled)
Pleasant evening.

BARTENDER
(in Maccat subtitled)
Drink?

HELEN
(in Maccat subtitled)
Soshaq Ale, please.

Helen casually looks around at the patrons. She spots one of Keeg's guards, makes brief eye contact, then turns back to get her ale. She slips her notepad into an electroreader in the bar, pulls it out and reads it to verify the transaction.

The guard leisurely keeps an eye on her from across the bar. She finishes her drink and heads back to the lobby. She strides across the lobby to the magnetic lift as another pair of eyes watch her. She enters the lift and catches sight of the guard as the doors close, studying him.

54

TWENTY NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY

Helen strides down the hall until she arrives at her room. She inserts the electronic notepad and enters. The lights come on. She is only slightly surprised to see her bags waiting for her on the bed. She takes a moment to survey the room.

On a table across from the bed is an electronic device of some kind. She looks and finds something next to the bed on a night stand. A remote control. She fires it at the device and a holographic "movie" comes on. She watches for a while, studying the characters, then gets up and goes to the hologram.

She studies it closely, waving her hand behind the projection, causing it to flicker. She eyes a small metallic square in the wall, then smiles as an idea occurs to her.

CUT TO:

55 TWENTY NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY

Helen emerges from her room dressed to hit the town. She heads to the magnetic lift, passing a Maccat exiting his own room. She enters alone and the doors lock shut. Speaking into a communicator, the Maccat passes-

56 THE MAGNETIC LIFT

ELEVATOR

What floor please?

HELEN

19, 13, 11, 4, lobby.

ELEVATOR

Thank you.

A guard stands near the magnetic lift in the lobby, watching the floor indicators stop occasionally. Finally, it stops at the lobby and a youngish looking MACCAT MALE steps out, heading for the front door. The guard waits for Helen, looks inside to see the lift empty, then gets on his radio to his support team to find her.

57 EXT. KOTA KLENA HOTEL

The Maccat male from the lift steps out to the street and signals a nearby cab. It pulls forward and he steps in. Before the cabby can turn around to see his passenger, the Maccat male reaches for his belt and flips a switch. He dissolves away to reveal Helen, disguised in a hologram.

HELEN

(in Maccat subtitled)

The Ghio district.

The cabby turns around, expecting to see a man. He sees Helen. Somewhat perplexed, he shrugs it off.

58 INT. HELEN'S HOTEL ROOM

The door to Helen's room slides open to reveal several of Keeg's guards. They instantly do a search. The head guard is checking Helen's bags when GUARD #1 calls...

GUARD #1

(in Maccat subtitled)

Lieutenant Clixu.

Clixu goes over to where the guard is. He sees an open hole where the holographic projector should be, and lets an impressed smile creep across his face.

WIPE TO:

59 EXT. THE TOWER - NIGHT

Shuttles BUZZ here and there around the Tower and over the jungle.

60 INT. KEEG'S OFFICE

KEEG LISTENS to his acoustic tribal jazz music, going over computer data when he hears the DOOR BUZZER.

KEEG

Enter.

ORO-KOO enters the office with someone else. Another MACCAT as yet unseen.

KEEG (cont'd)

Well?

ORO-KOO

She slipped us.

KEEG

Sooner than I expected.

ORO-KOO

She's a Triton, technically skilled and combat proficient.

KEEG

And what of the other?

The other Maccat steps out from the shadows. She is the BARTENDER from the Kota Klena Saloon.

BARTENDER

All ready to go. I administered it before she left the saloon.

KEEG

Good. How long will it last?

BARTENDER

Approximately 90 cycles.

KEEG

Well, at this point let's hope she's as good as she appears to be. I want Sho-kon here before the Summit.

(CONTINUED)

ORO-KOO

You'll have him.

((hesitant))

I spoke with Aakese a moment ago.
He wants to meet with you right
away.

KEEG

(irritated)

Of course.

(a knowing look to Oro-Koo)

I'm unavailable until tomorrow.
Unless something changes I want no
disruptions.

ORO-KOO

Yes, sir.

KEEG

You two are dismissed.

61 AAKESE' OFFICE

Keeg enters and approaches a figure sitting in an easy chair. It is AAKESE, listening to tribal classical MUSIC. He is an old man, waiting for death, wanting only to live out his last days in peace. He hears Keeg enter.

AAKESE

Come here, Keeg.

KEEG

(uneasy)

Prime Minister.

AAKESE

I've been receiving underground reports that Sho-kon wants a truce. Can your sources confirm this?

KEEG

We've heard no such news. Actually we think he's recruiting again. The Human woman, Tierney, has vanished. I think she may be with him soon.

AAKESE

You think she'll side with him?

KEEG

Sho-kon is a very stubborn, very persuasive man, and very dangerous.

(CONTINUED)

AAKESE

Rubbish. Sho-kon is very proud and passionate. But, he has a good heart. This violent cause of action... it's not like him at all. Why did he break away?

KEEG

He was inflaming public opinion against you, sir. You should be grateful he fled.

AAKESE

The people are unhappy with me, Keeg.

KEEG

They won't be when we stop him from this terrorist campaign of his.

AAKESE

(a wave of his hand)

Terrorist! If I could only speak to him, to know why he mistrusts me so.

KEEG

I think you may have the opportunity to ask him personally very soon.

AAKESE

What? Is he coming here? Does he wish to meet with me?

KEEG

(an evil grin)

Don't worry, sir. One way or another, Sho-kon will be here.

Aakese smiles. He settles in his chair, both relieved and apprehensive.

AAKESE

I hope so. There is much turmoil on Daolis. I wish to end it, to be united again.

(dismissing Keeg)

Leave me now. I need rest.

KEEG

(bowing)

Prime Minister.

Keeg exits. Once outside the office he pauses, his face grimacing with contempt and disgust.

62 INT. AEROSPACE PORT ON MARS - NIGHT

KELLY sits anxiously reading an electronic magazine, tense.

P/A ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Now boarding flight 3X2 for Daolis
at the east cruiseway.

Kelly springs from his seat and hastens to the cruiseway.

WIPE TO:

63 EXT. THE GHIO DISTRICT - DAWN

The cab settles down next to a not quite shoddy looking apartment complex. HELEN thanks the cabby in his native tongue as she exits. She heads to the apartment entrance.

A monitor rests in the wall near the front door. She touches a foreign character on the screen. Instantly a list of names appears. Helen touches one. A LOW BEEP sounds, then another. Finally, a MACCAT WOMAN's face appears on the monitor and her VOICE ECHOES through a speaker below.

LA-KAI
(over intercom; in Maccat
subtitled)
Who is it?
(in English)
My God! Helen!

HELEN
Hello, La-Kai (Luh-Kye).

LA-KAI
((over intercom)
Oh! Come up! Come up!

The door opens and Helen enters. La-Kai meets her in the hall. She looks much older than her years, but rugged. A woman retired long before her time, with the grit to stay in the game. They embrace warmly.

LA-KAI (cont'd)
My God! It's really you!

HELEN
It's good to see you, La-Kai.

They break, and La-Kai sizes Helen up.

(CONTINUED)

LA-KAI

You look fantastic! What are you doing here? Is Kelly with you?

HELEN

Are you gonna let me in or do you wanna talk out in the hall all day?

LA-KAI

Of course. Come in - come in.

LA-KAI'S APARTMENT

La-Kai has an affinity for Daolis antiques. The entire apartment is decorated with relics from throughout Daolis' history.

LA-KAI

...When I heard about Jeremy I was worried for you. When I met him, I could tell... he was your joy.

HELEN

I received your message. It was very kind.

LA-KAI

I'm sorry it was so late. I didn't even hear about it 'til Carlina came here last low moon.

HELEN

La-Kai, I didn't just drop by. I have business here on Daolis... and I have some bad news.

La-Kai's face reveals curiosity but no real concern.

HELEN (cont'd)

It's about Carlina.

A definite reaction this time, bordering on alarm.

HELEN (cont'd)

Carlina's been... she was murdered - on Earth - two days ago.

La-Kai struggles to control herself, but she can't. She breaks down uncontrollably in her sofa chair and sobs. Helen only watches, numbed by her own pain.

DISSOLVE TO:

64 LA-KAI'S APARTMENT - LATER

Helen and La-Kai look through an electro-photo album, reminiscing.

HELEN

When was the last time you saw her?

LA-KAI

She was here until the end of Low Moon. She was trying to enlist with the Konu.

HELEN

I think Sho-kon had her killed. Did you know she was working here to steal something Keeg developed?

LA-KAI

Why would he kill her if she was trying to enlist?

HELEN

Since when does a terrorist need a reason for his actions?

LA-KAI

But it doesn't make any sense. She wasn't a threat to them.

HELEN

Did Sho-kon know that?

LA-KAI

I don't know, but there's very little that he doesn't know. His intelligence sources are almost as good as yours.

HELEN

Can you remember what she was doing when you last saw her?

LA-KAI

You know Kuru Toka?

Helen nods.

LA-KAI (cont'd)

She was running guns with him across the border into Beodaan Province.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

Sho-kon's from Beodaan.

LA-KAI

Yes. Supposedly, he still operates down there. Carlina saw Toka as a way in.

HELEN

Kuru Toka, huh?

LA-KAI

(changing subject)

Helen, I know you think what you're doing here is important but I have to know: Why are here?

HELEN

What do you mean?

LA-KAI

I mean you haven't worked for E.I.B for years. Why are you here now? Why aren't you with Kelly?

HELEN

Kelly and I... have had trouble. I don't want to get into details but... This is my last job, for good. I'm retiring.

LA-KAI

How long has it been? Two years?

HELEN

Yes.

LA-KAI

Do you ever talk about it with him?

HELEN

He doesn't understand. Jeremy was my baby.

LA-KAI

He was Kelly's baby, too, Helen.

HELEN

It's just- It's hard.

LA-KAI

Yes, it is. As it will be with me and Carlina. I love her, in death

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LA-KAI (cont'd)
as much as life. Right now, I hurt.
In time, I'll grieve. But my
responsibility is to you, my
friends, family. To the living.

HELEN
I've heard it already, La-Kai.

Stern look from La-Kai.

HELEN (cont'd)
I'm trying.

LA-KAI
I know.
(changing subject)
What's Kelly doing up there,
anyway?

HELEN
He was assigned there after the
PSA's death.

LA-KAI
What?

HELEN
Sevalt's death.

LA-KAI
The Martian PSA is dead?

HELEN
You didn't know?

LA-KAI
No.

HELEN
He was killed coming back from
Daolis, along with 213 passengers,
when his transport blew up.

LA-KAI
What the hell's going on, Helen?

HELEN
I don't know, La-Kai. That's what
I'm here to find out.
(checks the time)
Wanna join me for lunch?

DISSOLVE TO:

65 EXT. THE DAVAAR RESTAURANT - DAY

Helen and La-Kai approach on foot, along one of the many lattice-work walkways constructed above the jungle. The restaurant is mostly outside and very busy. It is multi-leveled, and the two of them are led to a lone table on a concrete tableau jutting out over the jungle floor.

LA-KAI

This place has the best ocean food.

Helen leaves her menu alone. She scans the restaurant. She sees someone looking at her, call him TRAILER, and she gets up from her chair.

HELEN

La-Kai, order something for me.

LA-KAI

Where are you going?

Helen doesn't answer. She walks toward the restrooms, into the kitchen, out the back. A HUMAN MAN steps out from the side, pressing a pistol against her temple. Helen freezes and raises her arms.

MAN (KURU TOKA)

Getting old and sloppy, Tierney.

HELEN

(lowering her arms)

Trying to give me a heart attack,
Toka?

KURU TOKA

(snaps his fingers)

Failed again.

They embrace.

KURU TOKA (cont'd)

Sweet Daos, it's been a long time.

HELEN

Apparently not long enough.

(pointing to gun)

You're still on the suicide runs.

KURU TOKA

And what are you doing here? Back
on the shadow show?

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

I'm here to finish Carlina's job.

KURU TOKA

And you're lecturing me about suicide runs? Do yourself a favor, Tierney. Get back home before you and Carlina become soul sisters.

HELEN

Too late for that. Anyway, you owe me.

KURU TOKA

How do you figure?

HELEN

It's because of me your ass hasn't been deported yet.

KURU TOKA

Why do always get vulgar around me?

They relax, looking off the backdoor balcony into the dense lively jungle.

KURU TOKA (cont'd)

Okay, so I owe you a favor. What do you want?

HELEN

What Carlina wanted.

KURU TOKA

An early death?

HELEN

Come on. You know what I mean. I want a way in.

KURU TOKA

And you think I can get that for you?

HELEN

Knock it off, Toka. If Sho-kon needs weapons, who else can he get to supply him?

KURU TOKA

Okay, okay.

(he considers)

Meet me back here in two days at mid-day. That's when the next Konu

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KURU TOKA (cont'd)
shipment goes out. You can tag
along if you want.

HELEN
Thanks, Toka.

KURU TOKA
Don't thank me yet. I wouldn't
exactly call this a favor.

Helen exits. Toka hangs back. Moments later Trailer appears. Toka looks at him and nods. Helen steps out to the restaurant, reaches for her chronometer, and nearly bumps into a waiter. Trailer emerges from around the back and catches her eye. She rejoins La-Kai.

LA-KAI
Everything all right?

HELEN
Yes and no. (she glances around)
Listen, get up and go to the
restroom. When you come out, I want
you to leave and go straight home,
okay?

LA-KAI
What's the matter-

HELEN
La-Kai, you've never asked me a
question when I've given an order.
Please don't start now.

La-Kai looks at her for a moment, then sets down her napkin. She looks around the restaurant, glances back to Helen. A moment later, she rises and strolls away. With La-Kai out of sight, Helen rises and leaves the restaurant.

Trailer follows her patiently, not wanting to attract her suspicions or those of passerby. Across the clearing on the walkway on the other side, a female Maccat, call her TRACKER, catches Trailer's attention. Trailer gives Tracker a signal to head Helen off at the next crossing.

Helen doesn't seem aware of what's going on. She strolls casually, slowly picking up her pace. Trailer follows suit, as does Tracker. Helen is suddenly in a hurry to get somewhere. She moves faster, and it is now blatantly obvious she is being followed.

(CONTINUED)

She breaks into a run, Trailer and Tracker in hot pursuit. Helen and Tracker race to the crossing, but Helen breaks left and-

Catapults over the walkway railing to the jungle trees below. She grabs a branch, swings over to another, then another. Branch by branch she descends to the jungle floor. Tracker attempts to follow, but Helen's maneuver caught them off guard. They'll never catch her.

On the ground, Helen heads into the jungle thicket, not stopping until certain she is far enough ahead to rest. She catches her breath, and HEARS A WATERFALL. She follows the sound to a clearing to find a modest waterfall and a small creek. She rests a moment.

She turns downstream, only to face a THIRD MACCAT, pistol raised. She opens her mouth to speak, but is cut short as a LASER DISCHARGE blows her off her feet.

66 EXT. OCEAN DEPTHS - LATER

A SPEAR ship races through the water, the ripples from its wake fan out in an ever increasing sphere. Its lights cast an eerie glow all around.

67 INT. SPEAR SHIP

HELEN lay unconscious, TRAILER watching her. TRACKER co-pilots the ship with HAREK, the Maccat who shot Helen. Harek's eyes narrow as he keys something up on his console. The SPEAR ship approaches a large overhanging rock and proceeds to fly under it. Farther back is a cave, and the ship makes a shot straight for it.

Helen regains consciousness. She sits up in her seat, her eyes darting around the ship, disoriented. She looks out the cockpit windshield to the sea surrounding them. Harek glances back to the cabin, sees Helen sitting upright, and pushes a button on his console, sealing the door between the cockpit and the cabin.

Harek pulls back on the yoke. The ship climbs, rocketing to the surface. Harek dramatically reduces speed and levels out. The ship makes a slow ascent. Near the surface, light is visible, and Harek and Tracker are suddenly illuminated as the ship rises into-

68

A LARGE CAVE

An enormous cavern which spreads out as far as the eye can see. A variety of vehicles are being serviced on a hangar near the water's edge, a small flight traffic tower is imbedded in a nearby rock wall. Konu rebels are everywhere, their tough, rugged exterior betrayed by fatigue and strain.

The ship sets gently down on a landing pad. Before it can even finish powering down a crew goes to work on it. Moments later, Helen and Harek emerge. He leads her into the mouth of the cave and into an even smaller alcove. He pushes further into the rock, until they arrive at a makeshift brig.

Seated behind a metal desk is a KONU SECURITY GUARD. He motions Harek to an empty cell, and Harek forces Helen in. The guard hits some buttons on his computer console and an electronic net BUZZES to life, barricading Helen in the cell. Harek turns to leave.

HELEN

Hey there!

(Harek stops)

Are you going to tell me what's going on?

Harek turns with deliberate leisure and smiles.

HAREK

You're being incarcerated. Enjoy your stay.

With that, he is out the door, Helen screaming after him.

FADE TO:

69

BRIG - LATER

Helen sits quietly on a bunk in the cell, surveying her surroundings. A SCUFFLE OF FEET is heard and she turns to see Harek enter with an old looking, but young, MACCAT MALE. The young one approaches the cell, taking a moment to size Helen up before speaking.

SHO-KON

Welcome to Konu-Ka, Officer Tierney.

HELEN

(slow realization)

Sho-kon.

(CONTINUED)

SHO-KON
I am delighted to meet you.

HELEN
Konu-Ka?

SHO-KON
The name we have given our
installation here. The closest
translation to English would be
"The city of our birth".

HELEN
Or re-birth.

SHO-KON
Precisely. You have been here for
less than one sun and yet we
managed to catch you so easily.
(pause)
Sloppy work for a Triton.

HELEN
So I've been told. Anyway, I came
here looking for you.
(looking around)
I was hoping to meet under less
adverse circumstances.

SHO-KON
Yes, I know, and that concerns me.

HELEN
Why?

SHO-KON
Because Earth has never before
shown an interest in aiding the
Konu. Yet here you are,
(false patriotism)
ready to join the cause, no doubt.

HELEN
You're the one who brought me here.

SHO-KON
I brought you to this base. I did
not bring you to Daolis and I did
not bring you to Beodaan Province.

HELEN
What's your point?

(CONTINUED)

SHO-KON

My point is... you are here to replace agent Carlina Moskos, alias Melanie Green, who I understand met with an unfortunate death.

HELEN

(angry)

You killed her.

SHO-KON

Yes. I suppose in a way I have to say I did. If there had been any other way I would have taken it.

HELEN

That doesn't make me feel any better.

SHO-KON

It isn't meant to.

(pause)

I understand how you feel. You apparently knew her well. But consider this: Were our positions reversed, you would have killed me or any of my compatriots to obtain your objective. How many Maccat have you killed in your years as a Triton?

HELEN

More than I'd like to claim.

SHO-KON

You've lost your taste for blood?

HELEN

I never had a taste for it. It was forced down my throat.

SHO-KON

Many mass murderers have said as much. Now we know why you are here.

HELEN

No, you don't. Because I had control over this. I had a choice.

SHO-KON

So you choose terrorism over diplomacy. Blood over reason.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

I'm not here for blood.

SHO-KON

You're here to steal.

(on her reaction)

What Keeg knows, I know, Helen.

HELEN

Why did you bring me here?

SHO-KON

As you said, you wanted to come here. I wanted to know why. I have my answer. The only question remaining is what to do with you.

HELEN

Why not kill me?

SHO-KON

The fact that you ask that question proves how little you truly know about me, Helen.

HELEN

(seething)

I know you're a murderer.

SHO-KON

If you persist in this charismatic, pseudo-patriotic manner you will never be able to understand why you were brought here... and why I need your help.

Helen shoots him a puzzled look as he and Harek turn to go.

HELEN

If you need my help, why am I prisoner!

SHO-KON

(turns to face her)

Because for the time being... to you I'm still a target.

DISSOLVE TO:

70 EXT. SPACE

The moon of KALKO floats against the background of DAOLIS.

71 EXT. BASE ON KALKO - NIGHT

A SPEAR ship glides into a hangar hidden beneath a sparse jungle nursery, and comes to rest as the hangar doors SLAM shut against the high winds. The ramp comes down as ORO-KOO exits the ship. Keeg approaches from the opposite end of the hangar to greet her.

ORO-KOO

Primary Division should be here shortly, sir. Ready to deploy.

KEEG

Good. We should have the ulkuru back in our possession before nightfall.

Oro-Koo is nervous about delivering this next bit of news.

ORO-KOO

Aakese has requested that you accompany him to the Martian Summit.

KEEG

Yes, I thought he would... Don't look so concerned, Oro-Koo. This changes nothing. Just think, by this Fifth-Sun, you will be the new Senior Advisor of Daolis.

72 INT. KONU BRIG

HELEN paces the cell, examining the walls. She stops and looks at the garrison. He returns her gaze. Her eyes move over the vast control console behind him. Uninterested, he turns away.

Helen glances at the electronic net, then to the console, then back to the net again. She reaches down and touches the buckle of her belt. She walks right up to the net and stops too late. The yellow laser net BUZZES against her body and forces her backward, stumbling. Hearing this, the garrison turns back to see her massaging her arm.

HELEN

(sheepish)

My fault.

(CONTINUED)

The garrison goes back to his console and Helen notices him adjusting a control. The laser net BUZZES LOUDER and glows brighter. HAREK enters, frowning, and approaches her cell.

HAREK

Sho-kon has instructed me to ask if you would join him for dinner.

HELEN

Instructed you? You're apparently not happy with this request.

HAREK

It makes no difference. What answer should I give him?

HELEN

Tell him I would be delighted.

Harek glares at her, his eyes narrow, his brow furrowed. He turns to leave.

HELEN (cont'd)

You don't trust me.

(Harek turns to her)

Well, no one here does. You, though. It runs deeper with you.

Why is that?

(sarcastic)

Do you know something about me I don't?

HAREK

Do not patronize me with your questionable wit, Officer Tierney. You have no idea who you are speaking to. I am second only to Sho-kon, who has taught me well the mentality of your so-called intelligence work. If he finds it useful to play games with you, I will do as he says. However, I cannot pretend not to know why you are here.

HELEN

(baiting him)

Why don't you tell me?

HAREK

Because I gave Sho-kon my word I would leave it to him. You may ask him if you wish.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

(sarcasm melts away)

I'm sorry for being so glib.

(pause)

You're Harek, right?

(he nods)

You care very much for him.

Harek marches straight up to Helen's cell, close enough for Helen to reach right through the electro-netting and grab him. He looks her dead in the eyes.

HAREK

All of us here have given up a great deal because we believe in what we are doing. We are not mercenaries or thieves. I gave up my family when I joined this group... because they would no longer have me. The Konu are now my family, and Sho-kon my brother. We are beyond petty oaths and words. We would all willingly give our lives to protect each other and what we believe in.

His gaze burrows into her.

HAREK (cont'd)

What do you believe in, Officer Tierney?

Harek waits for an answer. None comes. Helen is left speechless as he exits the brig.

DISSOLVE TO:

73 INT. AEROSPACE PORT ON DAOLIS - DUSK

A throng of people move through the aerospace port. Through this colony of races, KELLY appears. He walks out the nearest exit and hails a cab.

WIPE TO:

74 INT. KONU-KA

HELEN is led by a GUARD through an elaborate maze of tunnels to an alcove hidden in the rock. She sniffs the air, smelling something pleasant.

(CONTINUED)

GUARD
(pointing)
Follow this path to the dining
table. Sho-kon will join you
shortly.

After a glance inside, Helen enters-

75

AN ARBORETUM

She is amazed at the abundance of plant life, like a forest buried in the living rock. Her eyes trace a beam of revolving sunlight to a reflector on the ceiling. The light appears to be coming from a small side chamber. Helen wanders off the path as she takes it all in, then her eyes catch sight of Sho-kon.

He lay on his back in front of a small pond and appears to be almost sleeping. Her brow furrows and she drops to a stealth stance. She prowls up slowly to him, waiting for just the right time to strike.

FLASH!

She is blinded by the rotating sunlight. She blinks, trying to work the flash away. When her vision clears, she sees Sho-kon is gone. She turns and runs smack into him.

SHO-KON
What are you looking for?

Helen lunges at him. Out of nowhere come two guards.

SHO-KON (cont'd)
Please, Helen. Can we make this a
civilized meal? You cannot tell me
you are not hungry.

Grudgingly, Helen follows the group back to the dining table. A beautiful Maccat dinner is laid out before them. Helen notices some of the foods from the plants around them.

HELEN
Were you sleeping back there?

SHO-KON
(a laugh)
I think of it as conversation.

HELEN
With whom?

(CONTINUED)

SHO-KON
(almost surprised)
The Daos. I speak to him daily.

HELEN
You do, huh? What about?

SHO-KON
What do you talk about?

HELEN
I don't.

SHO-KON
(surprised again)
No? Have you never a need for
guidance? For sharing?

HELEN
What, you mean you just lie there
chit-chatting with him like a
drinking buddy?

SHO-KON
I think of the Daos as my friend. I
trust him with everything.

HELEN
I don't.

SHO-KON
Who do you trust?

HELEN
No one.

SHO-KON
Not even your husband?

Helen stops dead. She speaks almost to herself.

HELEN
I don't know.

SHO-KON
You will not last long trusting
only yourself.

HELEN
Who can I trust? You?

(CONTINUED)

SHO-KON

Yes. But I should not have to tell you that. Your own instincts should, if you trusted them enough. I am, I believe you use the term, "an open book." I have nothing to hide.

HELEN

Then tell me what you're doing buried in here.

He is left nearly speechless by that remark.

SHO-KON

Time to "get down to business", I see. You were brought here against your will, yet you expressed a desire to join us. Is this so?

HELEN

Why?

SHO-KON

As I said, we need your assistance.

HELEN

Assistance in what?

SHO-KON

First, answer the question. Do you wish to help us or no?

HELEN

I'm not a terrorist, Sho-kon.

SHO-KON

Neither am I.

HELEN

Of course not! Killing innocents has always been an act of honor hasn't it?

SHO-KON

I am never at a loss of amazement over the propaganda your government takes as raw intelligence.

(exasperated)

There has never been one witness, one splinter of evidence, nothing whatsoever that could lead credibility to the theory we are

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SHO-KON (cont'd)
terrorists. Keeg's misinformation
services must be better than I
thought.

HELEN
(sarcastic as ever)
Oh, well I'm convinced. Thanks for
clearing that up for me, Sho-kon,
ol' buddy-

SHO-KON
Shut up and learn a thing or two!

Helen explodes and leaps from her chair to the opposite end
of the table. The guards are quick to restrain her.

HELEN
Don't talk to me that way, you
murdering maggot! If you're so
innocent, tell me why my friend is
dead!

SHO-KON
She was a an unexpected casualty! I
am not proud of the fact she is
dead, but if she had lived she
would have deterred our mission and
your planet would be a lump of ash!

HELEN
(furious, not listening)
You better execute me, Sho-kon,
because if you don't, I swear
you're a dead Maccat.

Sho-kon leaps away from the table in frustration.

SHO-KON
Take her back to her cell. She
isn't ready to listen to reason.

The guards haul her away. Sho-kon is left alone to fume. He
SLAMS his fists on the table in frustration.

SHO-KON (cont'd)
(swearing)
Bocha!

76 INT. LA-KAI'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

A door opens to reveal KELLY. LA-KAI steps forward and puts her arms around him. He returns the embrace.

LA-KAI
Oh, it's so good to see you.

KELLY
You too.

She pulls away and steps aside.

LA-KAI
Come on in.

WIPE TO:

77 INT. BRIG - LATER

Helen gets off her bunk and stretches. The guard takes casual notice of her. She paces back and forth across the cell, surreptitiously removing her belt in the process. She wraps it around her hand, leaving the backside of the buckle exposed, its slick metal surface shining in the light.

She strolls up to the electric gate and very swiftly places the reflective backside of the buckle in the path of the laser, reflecting it down the far wall and back to the guard's control console.

There is a flash of light as it ERUPTS IN SPARKS AND FLAMES. The electric net disappears. The guard, stunned, is too late to react as Helen strides across the brig, unrolls the belt, and strikes him across the face with the buckle.

He falls back, giving her the chance to throw him up against the rock wall. He hits it with a loud THUD! She buries her fist into his lungs and air EXPLODES. She wraps an arm around his neck, cutting off his oxygen. He falls to floor, unconscious. She grabs his weapon and heads out.

She makes her way through the compound toward the main hangar, seeing the object she needs, a SPEAR ship. She glides along the rock wall, keeping her eyes on the workers.

They thin out and she breaks for the ship, nearly diving up the rampway. She gets just

78

INSIDE THE SHIP

and stops dead. There, sitting in the middle of the ship, is the object of her mission.

SHO-KON (O.C.)
Remarkable, isn't it?

Helen whirls at the sound and FIRES off a shot in SHO-KON's direction. It RICOCHETS off an energy field in the doorway of the cockpit where he sits, pistol raised at her chest.

SHO-KON
Please drop it, Helen. I could kill you, but I don't wish to.

Helen drops her pistol. The field disappears and Sho-kon steps forward, circling the device.

SHO-KON (cont'd)
This is what you came for, correct?
And with no concern as to how it would be used.

HELEN
On the contrary, its use is of utmost concern to me.

SHO-KON
You're not even disturbed by the consequences?

HELEN
Well, if what Keeg tells me is true-

SHO-KON
(surprised)
Keeg spoke to you about this?

HELEN
Yes.

SHO-KON
What did he say it was?

HELEN
A solar power converter. A shield generator.

SHO-KON
And you believe him?

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

It was confirmed through my own agency before I even spoke to him.

SHO-KON

With your intelligence resources, it is hard to believe we did not win the war.

(pause)

Helen, you are looking at the most destructive device ever created.

HELEN

What are you talking about?

SHO-KON

You really don't know.

(he settles back)

Are you familiar with the term, ulkuru?

HELEN

Yes. It means... inferno.

SHO-KON

(nodding)

Let me show you something.

He strides over to a control panel on the bulkhead and punches a series of buttons. A hologram appears in the middle of the ship depicting a group of MACCATS working in a lab, wearing goggles.

SHO-KON (cont'd)

This recording was taken two orbits ago, at one of our research facilities outside of Potek. Watch carefully.

She does. The scientists gaze at an empty space on the opposite side of the lab, which begins to glow yellow. The scientists start congratulating each other on an apparently successful test when there is a sudden-

FLASH!

and the air in the lab bursts into the flames. There is enough time to see two scientists erupt into balls of fire before the recorder blanks out. Helen watches, stunned.

SHO-KON (cont'd)

We ran a projection on what would have happened if the fire hadn't been contained.

(CONTINUED)

A hologram of a planet appears where the lab was. Helen recognizes it.

HELEN

Daolis?

Sho-kon nods. A flaming yellow dot appears on the hologram and quickly spreads like a blanket over the planet's entire surface. Just as quickly, it disappears. What remains is a black ball floating in space. Helen is speechless.

HELEN (cont'd)

Ulkuru.

SHO-KON

That's right. This device can ignite the air of any gas enriched planet. In a matter of minutes, it would be a ball of fire consuming all oxygen, nitrogen... any flammable atmospheric elements, leaving nothing but a charred rock.

He points to the hologram.

HELEN

I don't believe this. How do you know this?

SHO-KON

I was on the original design team.

HELEN

(in horror)

You built that thing?

SHO-KON

No. I designed it.

HELEN

That's even worse.

SHO-KON

It was originally designed as a containment field generator for heating air. In the initial experiment, the air ignited. We were this close to snuffing out the planet for good.

HELEN

(of course)

So, you turned it into a weapon.

(CONTINUED)

SHO-KON
(shaking his head)
Keeg did, and had me removed from
the science team... "an orphan of
war may hold compassion no more."

HELEN
What is that?

SHO-KON
A Maccat aphorism. Keeg's parents
were killed in the war.

HELEN
(inwardly)
I understand...
(back to the device)
What do you want with it? What are
you going to do with it?

SHO-KON
I don't know.

HELEN
You don't know? That's a little
disconcerting.

SHO-KON
Helen, this is a highly
sophisticated, highly destructive
device. It shouldn't even be here.
I would destroy it if I could, but
it could have any number triggering
mechanisms.

HELEN
Why not just fly it out of here?
Launch it into the sun.

SHO-KON
It's encased in muinatite. A
material strong enough to endure
the heat of a star's corona. When
it enters the star itself, the
device explodes, accelerating
fusion, resulting in supernova. It
would destroy the entire solar
system.

HELEN
There's no way you can destroy it?

(CONTINUED)

SHO-KON

At this point, none that we know of.

(holsters pistol; offers his hand)

Come with me. Harek and I wish to discuss something with you.

Helen stares at his hand a moment. She looks about to pounce when two guards smoothly enter the ship. She looks to them, then back to Sho-kon. She nods and he leads her back to his office.

79

EXT. LA-KAI'S HOUSE - DAY

KELLY and LA-KAI are in the middle of a conversation. Kelly looks exhausted.

LA-KAI

...so I did what she said. I left. That's the last time I saw her.

KELLY

(under his breath)
That damn woman.

LA-KAI

Be nice, Kelly.
(Kelly looks up)
She's risking a lot because she thinks it's will help you both.

KELLY

How?

LA-KAI

She didn't say.

Kelly rises and begins to pace the room.

LA-KAI (cont'd)

She's going through an extremely difficult time right now.

KELLY

Do you think it's all roses for me?

LA-KAI

No, I don't. But at least you have Father MacNamara, right? Who does she have?

(CONTINUED)

KELLY

She can see Father Mac if she wants.

LA-KAI

That's just it, Kelly, she doesn't think she can. She's alone, not only in body but spirit, as well. That's the loneliest place to be. Can you imagine what it must be like for her, knowing you have someone to go to when she feels she doesn't? That just intensifies the solitude.

KELLY

This damn E.I.B. business. I've never trusted them. I was so relieved when she finally left. I hate this. Not knowing where she is, what she's doing, if she's alive or dead.

LA-KAI

What do you want to do?

KELLY

(thinks a moment)

Where was this place you two went?

LA-KAI

Over the border, the Davaar Restaurant.

KELLY

What time is it?

LA-KAI

It's almost twelve-hundred.

KELLY

(grinning)

Breakfast.

LA-KAI

(realizing what he means)

Oh, no.

KELLY

Wanna join me?

80

INT. SHO-KON'S CAVE OFFICE

SHO-KON and HELEN sit at Sho-kon's desk as he peruses her electronic notepad. A GUARD watches over them. HAREK enters a moment later and Sho-kon nods to him. Sho-kon hands the notepad back to Helen.

SHO-KON

Look at this poor man we killed in the Arcturus raid last moon-season.

HELEN

(studying the photo)

He was young.

(glares at Sho-kon)

I thought you weren't proud of the people you killed.

SHO-KON

(nods to notepad)

You really believe that nonsense?

HELEN

You said it yourself. And it's right here in my dossier. Daolis and Earth intelligence.

SHO-KON

I shudder at your use of that word.

He waves a hand to Harek. Harek steps forward.

HAREK

Do you recognize him?

HELEN

No. Should I-

She glances at Harek, and stops as recognition comes to her. She studies Harek closely. Her eyes go wide with comprehension as she looks from Harek to the photo, back to Harek again.

HAREK

Yes. It's me, Ms. Tierney.

HELEN

(confused)

What is this?

HAREK

I was a librarian in Arcturus some time ago. One day Keeg and a squad

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HAREK (cont'd)
of men came to arrest me, accused me of being a Konu front. Called it treason... They were going to execute me.

SHO-KON
At the time, we hadn't even met. Fortunately, we had acquired information of Keeg's raid that day and went to the library to capture him. There was a firefight.

HAREK
Sho-kon and a handful of others were able to escape. They took me with them. Keeg took advantage of the battle to portray the Konu as a group of terrorists.

SHO-KON
Keeg has never let us get that close to him since.

Helen stares at the notepad in disbelief. Some skepticism remains, however.

HELEN
What does this have to do with the help you claim to need from me?

SHO-KON
Nothing. This is meant to establish trust.

HELEN
Trust?
(waving the notepad)
Based on this?

SHO-KON
No.
(he pulls a pistol)
Based on this.

Helen recoils as if about to be shot.

SHO-KON (cont'd)
The incident with your friend Carlina has left you single minded of purpose. I cannot excuse what happened to her. However, you've seen the device. You know the danger that was involved.

(CONTINUED)

(struggles with his words)
 Her death may have been the
 salvation of your race.
 (tosses her the pistol)
 Take your revenge, if you must.
 (Harek moves to her)
 Leave her alone, Harek. This
 decision she has to make herself.

Helen stares at the pistol a moment. She glares at Sho-kon.
 She raises the pistol.

HAREK

Helen, please don't. Sho-kon did
 not kill your friend.

(pause)

I was the one sent to retrieve the
 ulkuru.

(pause)

I was the one who shot her.

A beat. Helen turns the pistol on Harek when-

An EXPLOSION rocks the compound and sends everyone in the
 room to the ground. Hundreds of SCREAMING VOICES follow.
 Another EXPLOSION, ENGINES BLASTING, and LASER BOLTS
 SCREAMING and STRIKING metal and rock.

In the confusion, Helen bolts for the doorway, knocking the
 guard off balance. Harek and the guard bolt after her as
 light reflects off the rock walls. The guard falls dead as a
 laser blast hits him.

Harek peers out to the main hangar. An assault ship hovers
 over the water at the hangar entrance. Laser bolts blast
 from its flanking cannons in all directions. FOOTSOLDIERS in
 sweepsuits emerge from the water, blasting randomly at
 anything moving. The KONU draw their weapons in retaliation.
 Soon a FIREFIGHT is underway.

HAREK (cont'd)

There's an assault ship in the
 lagoon and footsoldiers in the
 cave!

SHO-KON

That foolish woman.

HAREK

What?

(CONTINUED)

SHO-KON

She led them straight to us!

Laser bolts RIP into the rock around the small cave room. Slivers of rock go flying. A fragment tears a cut into Harek's cheek.

HAREK

Aaahh!

SHO-KON

Harek, is my ship repaired yet?

HAREK

It has shields. No weapons.

SHO-KON

IT'S OUR ONLY OPTION.

They head for the door, emerging from the side cavern. Before they can survey the situation they are nearly brought down by laser fire. They SCREAM in unison and hit the deck. Footsoldiers are everywhere. Sho-kon and Harek rise off the floor to face Helen. She stands with pistol poised and fires in Harek's direction!

A footsoldier slumps to the ground behind them. Helen lowers her pistol.

HELEN

I'm sorry. They must have traced me somehow!

The three of them stand there a moment. A BLAST brings them back to reality. Harek grabs Helen.

HAREK

Come on!

He leads the three of them to the rear of the cave. Bodies litter the hangar floor. The entire cave is a cloud of smoke. Footsoldiers, under cover of smoke, advance against the Konu. Light flashes through the haze. The odd SCREAM RESOUNDS as another Konu is hit.

The trio make their way further back into the cave, hugging the cavern walls.

HELEN

(points behind them)
I thought the hangar was over there!

(CONTINUED)

HAREK

If you want to fight your way
through a platoon of Keeg's best
men, go ahead!

(pointing up)

We can bypass them through an
access tunnel over the lagoon.

The trio continue to head back into the cave until they reach a dead end. Harek slips behind a slab of rock, a doorway sits behind it, hidden by an illusion of a solid rock wall.

81 INTERCUT - ACCESS TUNNEL / MAIN CAVE

In the main cave, the Konu struggle valiantly against the advancing army, but they are hopelessly outnumbered. Bodies and debris fly everywhere as soldiers are BLASTED away.

The trio crawl desperately through the tunnel, rocked by CONCUSSION WAVES from the battle below them.

The assault ship hovers over the lagoon, blasting away. Several laser bolts reflect off the rock walls. One of the ricocheting bolts BLOWS a hole in the ceiling.

Helen SCREAMS as she disappears through the hole beneath her. Harek whips his around. His eyes lock with Sho-kon's in a shared expression of fear.

Helen plummets to the assault ship below. No one notices her in the confusion.

Harek and Sho-kon peer through the hole to see Helen pull herself together. They look at each other. Then Sho-kon, with a fluster, swings his legs through the hole, dropping to the assault ship below. Harek follows. They press against the hull of the ship, trying to stay out of sight. Laser fire EXPLODES all around them.

HAREK

Are you all right!

(she nods; he points)

We have to get to that ship!

SHO-KON

(spies something)

Maybe not!

On shore, four footsoldiers in sweepsuits stand guard. Abruptly, laser fire RIPS into them from behind, pummeling their shields defenseless. Just as abruptly, the trio fly off of the assault ship, landing on the group, taking them

(CONTINUED)

out. Three soldiers are knocked cold, as Helen blasts away the fourth. The trio surreptitiously retreat against the rock wall and don the footsoldiers sweepsuits.

The firefight continues. Footsoldiers hold their ground against the struggling Konu. A line of riflemen blast away. Without warning, their shields are BLOWN AWAY by an energy cannon from the rear. They turn to face the trio and are promptly BLASTED to their deaths. The trio advance against the unwitting army until...

Through the smoke and haze, scores of soldiers make their way back to the ship. They spot the trio and open fire. The trio are hopelessly outnumbered. Realizing this, they bolt for the lagoon. Shots EXPLODE all around them as they are attacked from all sides. A cannon on the assault ship patiently targets them.

They reach the edge of the lagoon and jump as an energy shell EXPLODES, blowing them full force into the lagoon, as withdrawing footsoldiers go flying from the force of the blast.

The trio dive quickly to the bottom, the propulsors on their backs at full throttle. The explosion glows above them.

A large hatch opens beneath the assault ship and two small, one man SPEAR ships drop to the lagoon below in hot pursuit. KEEG emerges from the assault ship as a ramp lowers to the lagoon's shore. A footsoldier approaches him.

FOOTSOLDIER

The cave is ours, sir. A few Konu are showing resistance, but we have prisoners.

KEEG

Thank you, captain.

He advances into the cave with two footsoldiers at his guard, finding his way to Sho-kon's ship, and the ulkuru. He lays his hand on it with relief and satisfaction.

KEEG (cont'd)

Get this aboard the assault ship. I want it under constant guard.

The guards hurry to carry out his command. Keeg stands for a moment in the ship, savoring his victory.

KEEG (cont'd)

There are no more places for you to hide, Sho-kon.

CUT TO:

82

EXT. OCEAN DEPTHS

HELEN, SHO-KON, and HAREK blast out under the overhanging rock. Moments later the two mini-assault ships emerge in pursuit. The propulsors on the sweepsuits are no match for the attack ships and the gap between them closes slowly.

With Sho-kon in the lead, the trio speed through a cliff-like maze. The assault ships open fire with propulsor driven mini-artillery, trying to blast the trio. Harek is hit once, Helen twice, as the shells RICOCHET off their body shields.

Helen flips on her back, pistol raised. She fires off three shots at the pursuers. The laser light refracts in all directions, missing the ships and dissipating harmlessly.

HAREK

(into headset)

Helen, don't waste your energy!
Those laser bolts are useless in
the water!

The trio continue to be pummeled by the barrage of mini-artillery as they evade the pursuing craft. They approach an abyss. Sho-kon dives for it.

SHO-KON

(into headset)

Follow me!

Harek and Helen follow suit. The ships continue to close in as the trio drops from view. When the ships come over the cliff wall, all but one of the trio have vanished. The two pilots look perplexed, scanning the water for the other two.

PILOT #1

(into headset; in Maccat
subtitled)

Where did they go?

PILOT #2

(into headset; in Maccat
subtitled)

I don't know, but stay close. They
may be trying to draw us apart.

They bear down on Harek. Helen and Sho-kon are nowhere in sight. Pilot #1 lines Harek up in his sights when suddenly-

Sho-kon crawls over the nose of the ship up to the windshield!

(CONTINUED)

PILOT #1

Aaah!

He is stunned, giving Sho-kon enough time to press the muzzle of his pistol against the windshield and FIRE off a shot. The laser bolt goes right through the glass and into the pilot's chest. Sho-kon breaks off as the mini-ship careens to the ocean floor.

Pilot #2 watches through his windshield, then turns to see Helen on the nose of his own ship, pressing her pistol against the windshield. He quickly shifts his head to the left and a laser bolt blasts the bulkhead behind him. He rolls, trying to throw Helen off balance.

She slips back to the underside of the ship, holding on for dear life as the pilot tries to shake her off. She looks down the hull to the propulsor intake engine at her feet. She reaches down and grabs a hand grenade off of her utility belt. She releases it and the ship reels starboard as the grenade JAMS the intake engine. Helen lets go and rockets to the surface.

The pilot struggles to regain control of the ship until-

KA-BOOM!

He is blasted into oblivion. Helen is rocked by the EXPLOSION as she speeds to the moonlit surface. When the water calms, she dives again to regroup with the others.

83

EXT. DAOLIS JUNGLE - DAWN

The TRIO looks somber as they contemplate the day's events. SHO-KON approaches HELEN with some leaves.

SHO-KON

Eat these.

(she eyes them suspiciously)

It contains an enzyme that will mask the tracking serum you were given.

HELEN

(taking it)

What's going to happen to those who were captured?

SHO-KON

They are considered Maccat traitors... I pray none were captured alive.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

What do we do now?

Sho-kon thinks on this a moment.

SHO-KON

We'll go see Kuru Toka. He's supposed to deliver a shipment of weapons to us today.

HELEN

Just like that?

SHO-KON

You have another suggestion?

HELEN

(shaking her head)

How do you do it, Sho-kon. How do you find the strength to keep going?

SHO-KON

There have been many times when I felt I could not... It's those times when I rely on the Daos for my strength.

(on her reaction)

Why do you make that face? Do you carry something against the Daos?

HELEN

You might say that. I... I haven't believed in a Daos in years. I just don't see it at work in anything.

SHO-KON

It's work is everywhere.

HELEN

I know the argument, Sho-kon, but from what I've seen, the universe unfolds on its own. It needs no help from any loveless gods.

SHO-KON

You are bitter. No one is bitter at something that doesn't exist.

HELEN

(inwardly)

I suppose not.

(CONTINUED)

SHO-KON

What happened to you?

Helen pauses, deciding if she wants to tell the story.

HELEN

My son, Jeremy... died when he was very young. We took him to the doctor and at first they couldn't tell what was wrong with him. The next day, they contacted us to say he had contracted Quetoki Fever.

(Sho-kon reacts)

At the time it was very rare on Earth. Not much was known about it except it was indigenous to Daolis and was brought over by soldiers in the war. You had a cure, but for some reason it didn't work on Humans. He had no chance of living.

(pause)

But I thought he'd pull through. You see, I believed. I mean I really believed there was a God, and that he was merciful and loving. I went to my knees every night and every morning and I prayed for him. No matter how weak he got, how sick, I prayed. When he started to lose his sight, I prayed... and I knew he would be okay. When he developed an infection and they had to remove his lung...

(choking back sobs)

I prayed because I knew he would be okay. But when he died in that bed, scared and confused, I began to think. I thought about all the people who had died and suffered over time. The ones who died in the wars. Humans and Maccats, men and women, soldiers and civilians. I thought about all of those who had died at the end of a gun, a rope, the merciless fury of a fire or tornado. I thought about how many of them had prayed every night, for their health, their loved ones. And I'm sure they really believed what they prayed for would manifest. And I realized, it's a lie. I stood at my son's grave and listened to the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HELEN (cont'd)

bloated lectures of the priest,
telling me my son was in a better
place, that God had chosen him.

(seething)

Well, God didn't ask me. He didn't
ask my son. He laid there on that
bed, scared and crying. He didn't
understand what was happening to
him. What am I supposed to tell my
little boy when tells me he'll be
good if I'll make it go away? God
didn't ask my son if he wanted to
die like that! He didn't ask me! He
had no right! Jeremy didn't deserve
to suffer that way! And those
self-righteous pigs with their
false condolences asked me to
forgive God! FORGIVE GOD!...

(calming)

Then I realized that wouldn't be
necessary. God didn't kill my
little boy. He didn't kill any
soldiers, nor civilians. He didn't
do any of it... because He isn't
real. I don't need a God any more
than I need an imaginary friend,
Sho-kon. I depend on myself.

SHO-KON

(taking it in)

Your god is not responsible for
your son's death. Despite what some
believe, there are some things even
a god can't control.

HELEN

(wiping tears)

I've heard that one, too.

SHO-KON

Hearing is not the same as
listening.

(pause)

Come with me.

He offers his hand to Helen and she takes it. Together, they
walk out of the jungle thicket and into the daylight of a
clearing. He stands there for a moment taking in his
surroundings. Helen follows his gaze, trying to see what he
sees. He closes his eyes and takes a slow, deep breath
through his nostrils, and just as slowly, exhales.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

What are we doing here, Sho-kon?

SHO-KON

Unfinished business.

(looks in her eyes)

I want you to talk to him, Helen.
Tell him how you feel.

HELEN

Sho-kon, I appreciate what you're trying to do, but I just finished telling you I don't believe-

SHO-KON

No, no, no. Don't talk to your god. You two have nothing to say to each other just yet.

HELEN

What do you want me to do?
(looking around)
Is this some sort of sacred place.

SHO-KON

Any place is sacred if you make it so.

HELEN

So, what am I supposed to do here?

SHO-KON

Talk to your son. But, more importantly, listen to him. I am sure he has much to tell you.

HELEN

Listen, Sho-kon-

SHO-KON

Helen, an animal can run from its demons for only so long before it faces two options: Stand and fight, or be devoured. You are there now. Your demons have you cornered. You have a chance here to fight them on your terms. If not, you may never beat them back. Talk to your son.

Sho-kon leaves her in the jungle clearing. Helen watches as he disappears in the thicket, leaving her alone and uneasy. She looks at the trees, at the sky, at the ground. She clasps her hands in front of her.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

Oh, what am I doing?

She heads back toward the thicket and stops. She returns to the clearing and looks around again. She closes her eyes and, like Sho-kon, takes a slow, deep breath. All is calm. Silence settles over the jungle. The sun softens. Her face relaxes. She seems unconscious.

Slowly, a SOFT BREEZE descends upon her, blowing up her legs, her body, her face. She breathes it in. Her hands come over her shoulders as she gently embraces herself. She lets out a subtle sigh. A STRONGER GUST of wind embraces her. She GASPS with a sudden realization.

The wind BILLOWS through the grass and the trees. The entire jungle moves under its command. Helen's face contracts and she can no longer control herself. The tears come hard, like a dam bursting under too much weight.

She SOBS uncontrollably, collapsing to her knees, her arms over her chest. The flood is strong and the tears come with both sadness and relief, then slowly recede.

Helen rocks herself gently as the wind becomes a gentle breeze again. She grins, then smiles, then laughs. She laughs and cries for a long time, as the sounds of the jungle and the blowing of the breeze bring life back to her.

Far from home, far from her own world, Helen finally finds peace with her son.

DISSOLVE TO:

84 INT. BASE ON KALKO - NIGHT

A transport ship sits alone in the main hangar. Several of KEEG'S GUARDS are posted within. A door opens across from the ship and KEEG emerges speaking with a NAVY COMMANDER, ORO-KOO in tow.

KEEG

... notify Primary Division to move the fleet to Circuit Corridor Mideas. When you arrive at Earth orbit make sure you target the capital cities first. The President will be on Mars with the Martian alert reserve so their response will be slow and scattered.

He leads them to a transport ship across the hangar.

(CONTINUED)

KEEG (cont'd)

Once you have secured the planet
rendezvous with me in Geneva.
Understood?

COMMANDER

Yes, sir.

KEEG

Good luck, commander.

He gives Keeg a sharp salute, then turns and heads back into the compound. Keeg and Oro-Koo enter the transport. Keeg pauses to admire the ulkuru. He places his hand on it, then turns back to Oro-Koo.

KEEG (cont'd)

Ready to make history, Oro-Koo?

Oro-Koo offers a weak smile. Keeg pulls an electronic notepad out of his pocket. A picture of his parents fills the screen. He settles back as the ship rises into the Kalko sky.

WIPE TO:

85 EXT. THE DAVAAR RESTAURANT - DAY

HELEN, SHO-KON and HAREK emerge from the jungle and creep up behind the restaurant. Slowly, they begin to climb the lattice framework up the back porch.

86 INT. THE DAVAAR RESTAURANT - BACK PORCH - SAME

Kuru Toka comes around a corner, heading for his office. An arm reaches out and pulls him into the shadows.

KURU TOKA

What the-

He is spun around to face Helen, her finger going to her lips for silence. Sho-kon and Harek pop out from the shadows.

HELEN

(grinning)

Getting sloppy, Toka.

Toka grabs Helen and leads her off the porch. Sho-kon and Harek follow to his office.

(CONTINUED)

KURU TOKA

What the hell are you doing here?
Keeg's got half his army out
looking for you three.

HAREK

Were they here?

KURU TOKA

Yeah, they were here. Tore the
place apart looking for you. I had
to ditch the weapons in a swamp!

HELEN

Do you think they'll be back?

KURU TOKA

No but-

Toka is interrupted by KELLY entering the room.

KELLY

Toka, La-Kai told me that-

He stops short when he sees Helen. Helen is shocked in
return. For a moment, the two of them just look at each
other. Then, Kelly races toward her and she just about jumps
in his arms. They devour each with love.

KELLY (cont'd)

You're safe... you're safe...

The others look away, embarrassed.

KURU TOKA

Uh... why don't we give them... a
little privacy.

He leads as the three of them exit to the-

87

BACK PORCH

Toka gently closes the door behind him.

SHO-KON

(indignant)

You dumped my guns in a swamp?

88

INT. TOKA'S OFFICE

HELEN

What are you doing here?

KELLY

I came looking for you.
 (he looks her over)
 A little worn, but still in one
 piece.

HELEN

You look a bit tired yourself.

KELLY

It's been a hell of a vacation so
 far.

HELEN

I'll bet it has.

She turns serious, sits on Toka's desk.

HELEN (cont'd)

I've had a chance to sort a few
 things out... pull my thoughts
 together.

KELLY

And?

HELEN

-aaaand... maybe when this is all
 over, you and I can... talk to
 Father MacNamara. Maybe... unearth
 a few things.

(Kelly moves to her)

Maybe I'll even let Janice talk to
 me.

Kelly takes her in a warm embrace. Helen rests her head
 against his shoulder. Her eyes well with tears.

HELEN (cont'd)

He was a wonderful boy.

KELLY

Yes, he is.
 (they break)
 Who are those guys out there?

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

That... is what remains of the
Konu.

(she nods)

Yup. We were hit early this
morning.

KELLY

We?

HELEN

I was there, too.

KELLY

What happened?

HELEN

Keeg led an assault ship into the
Konu base.

(ashamed)

I led them there.

KELLY

But Keeg left this morning for
Mars.

HELEN

What?

KELLY

Yeah. For the Summit meeting.

Helen's mind races, catching up to a mystery unsolved.

HELEN

Oh my God.

She races out of Toka's office, Kelly following her.

HELEN (cont'd)

(to Toka)

We need a transport, quick!

KELLY

What's going on?

HELEN

I'll explain later.

KURU TOKA

All I have is a SPEAR ship.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

It'll do.

SHO-KON

Helen, what is it?

HELEN

The ulkuru. He's taking it to Mars.

Horror spreads on everyone's face as they break for the transport.

89 EXT. MARTIAN ATMOSPHERE PROCESSING RAINFOREST - DAY

KEEG follows AAKESE into the assembly hall at the edge of the rainforest. He glances back to a docking lot and tosses a nod to Oro-Koo, standing attention near a small ship (a WIND SKIMMER). She nods back.

90 EXT. CIRCUIT CORRIDOR

A small SPEAR ship SCREAMS through the starless black of corridor space. TOKA is at the helm with HAREK in the co-pilot's seat. HELEN, SHO-KON and KELLY gear up for battle.

HELEN

What's our E.T.A. to Mars?

HAREK

About two minutes.

HELEN

I can't believe I didn't see it sooner. With Mars destroyed, he cuts our defenses by more than seventy percent.

KELLY

I still can't believe this... what did you call it... ulkuru? I can't believe Aakese would sanction the development of such a weapon.

SHO-KON

He doesn't know about it. It wouldn't matter, anyway. With Aakese out of the way, there is nothing to stop Keeg from replacing him as Prime Minister.

(CONTINUED)

HAREK

... and no one to question his
authority in an invasion of Earth.

KELLY

Step on it, Toka!

The ship lurches as Toka hits the throttle.

91 INT. ASSEMBLY HALL ON MARS - DAY

A speaker DRONES on about peace relations between Earth and Daolis. The Summit is well under way. KEEG checks his chronometer and leans over to AAKESE.

KEEG

Please excuse me for a moment,
Prime Minister. I just remembered
something rather urgent back at the
ship. I'll be right back.

Aakese nods his approval and Keeg takes his exit.

92 EXT. CIRCUIT CORRIDOR

The SPEAR ship SCREAMS along. Utter blackness fills the windshield. The ship is silent save for TOKA.

KURU TOKA

Exiting corridor in
five-four-three-two-

KELLY

(to Harek)

I want the Cydonia base commander
on the horn as soon as we're out.

The SPEAR ship tears out of a curtain in space, practically in orbit around Mars. A small satellite looms in its path.

KURU TOKA

Whoa!

The ship SLAMS into the satellite, shattering it into a thousand pieces. Sparks fly from the helm and the ship rocks out of control. Harek punches a button several times.

HAREK

Radio's dead.

HELEN

Forget it. Toka, just take us
straight to the Cydonia rainforest.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HELEN (cont'd)
That's where the atmosphere
processor is. The richest source of
oxygen on the planet.

KELLY
That also happens to be where the
Summit meeting is.

KURU TOKA
(to Harek)
Shields.

Shields envelope the ship as it hits the Martian atmosphere,
ERUPTING in a ball of flame.

93 EXT. ASSEMBLY HALL - SAME

Keeg strides over to Oro-Koo, still standing attention by
the ship.

KEEG
Ready, Oro-Koo?

ORO-KOO
Let's just do it and get the hell
out of here.

They head up the ramp into the ship. No sooner are they away
then the SPEAR ship arrives, settling down in the docking
lot. The GROUP exit the ship and start racing toward the
Assembly Hall. Except Harek. He stops, staring at the lot.
Helen sees him and stops, as well. Kelly turns to her.

KELLY
What are you doing?

HELEN
(waving him on)
Just go. We'll meet you back here.

Kelly and Sho-kon race toward the Hall. Toka hangs back with
Helen and Harek.

HELEN (cont'd)
He's here, isn't he?

Harek nods. They move slowly along the rows of ships,
examining every one. They are only a few meters away from
Keeg's-

94 WIND SKIMMER

Keeg sets the timer on the ulkuru. A Maccat chronometer begins to count down.

KEEG

Let's go.

95 EXT. ASSEMBLY HALL GUARD GATE - SAME

Kelly rushes up , waving his I.D. The guard halts him.

GUARD

Stop! Let's see your Summit pass.

KELLY

I'm Colonel Kelly Tierney, Martian Security Administration. You have to get the President and the Prime Minister out of there immediately!

GUARD

(points to Sho-kon)

Who's this?

KELLY

That doesn't matter soldier, I'm giving you an order! We need to evacuate and we need to scramble Inner System Fleet moonward of Earth, now!

GUARD

(nervous)

I'll have to run this by the Summit Director.

KELLY

There's no time!

He rushes past the guard, who draws his weapon. Sho-kon takes him down and knocks him cold, then follows Kelly into the Hall. A group of soldiers appear in hot pursuit.

96 EXT. DOCKING LOT - SAME

Helen, Harek and Toka arrive at the ramp to Keeg's Wind Skimmer just in time to see him appear in the rampway, Oro-Koo by his side.

There is a brief pause for recognition, then Oro-Koo pulls her pistol and fires a shot off at Harek, hitting him in the shoulder. Helen pulls her pistol and fires at Oro-Koo, hitting her square in the chest. She goes down dead.

(CONTINUED)

Keeg pulls his pistol to fire at Helen, but Toka tackles her out of the way and his shot goes wild. Keeg bounds back up the rampway. Helen rolls to face Harek.

HELEN
You all right?

HAREK
(gasping)
Yes. It cauterized.

Then the sound of the Wind Skimmer's RAMP GOING UP.

HELEN
No!

Toka turns and tries to jump onto the ramp. Too late. He grabs Helen and Harek.

KURU TOKA
Come on!

97 INT. SPEAR SHIP

Helen and Toka haul Harek into the cockpit and drop him in the co-pilot's seat. Toka powers it up. The ship rises on lifters and tears off in hot pursuit of Keeg.

98 INT. ASSEMBLY HALL

Kelly and Sho-kon disappear into the crowd as guards come chasing up behind them. Other guards see the commotion and radio in. Then they fan out in search of the two. Sho-kon spots Aakese and points. Kelly nods and they take off in his direction.

99 INT. SPEAR SHIP

Toka concentrates as they tear through the skies after Keeg.

HAREK
Can we catch it?

HELEN
Those Wind Skimmers are pretty old,
they can't even make low orbit.
It's not a match for this ship.

KURU TOKA
Can we shoot it down?

(CONTINUED)

HAREK

We risk setting off the device if
we fire on it.

A WARNING LIGHT goes off on the console. Toka checks it.

KURU TOKA

We're overheating. Water pumps are
failing on engine two.

HAREK

(something familiar)
Water?

HELEN

(catching his drift)
Water?

HAREK

(eureka)
Water! That's it!

KURU TOKA

What's it?

HELEN

The device. It can't ignite in
water, the oxygen's not dense
enough.

HAREK

If we submerge it in a large body
of water, it shouldn't do any
damage.

KURU TOKA

...and how do we get it to a large
body of water? This ship doesn't
have a tractor beam.

Silence. Helen thinks for a moment, then heads aft to put on
a sweepsuit with magnetic gloves and boots. She returns to
the cockpit.

HAREK

What are you doing?

HELEN

I'm going over there.

TOKA

What are you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

I'm going over to that ship and
take it from him.

HAREK

Uh... Helen, that sounds somewhat
suicidal to me.

HELEN

Don't argue. Besides, you're
injured, otherwise I'd have you do
it.

He shoots her an "oh, really?" look.

HELEN (cont'd)

(to Toka)

Get in behind him. Stay close and
steady.

KURU TOKA

Be careful.

HELEN

Harek, raise our shields and
pressurize the bubble.

He does what she asks as Toka closes on the Wind Skimmer.
Helen heads for the top hatch. She calms herself and pops
the top.

100 EXT. SPEAR SHIP

RUSHING AIR is heard as it careens off the shields. Inside
the protective shield bubble, the air is calm. Using her
magnetic boots and gloves, Helen crawls out of the ship.

101 INT. ASSEMBLY HALL

Kelly and Sho-kon play cat and mouse with the guards. The
commotion causes a growing disturbance in the hall. Kelly
grabs Sho-kon.

KELLY

I'll keep 'em busy. You get to the
leadership box.

He shoves Sho-kon away and throws himself towards the
guards, creating a distraction. One of the guards grabs him
and puts him in shackles. He screams in protest.

(CONTINUED)

KELLY (cont'd)
 I'm Colonel Kelly Tierney of MSA!
 I'll have all your asses in a
 sling!

Kelly's screaming distracts the guards long enough for Sho-kon bound down the hall to the leadership box. Guards swarm from every direction. He makes it just in time for Aakese to recognize him.

SHO-KON
 Prime Minister!

AAKESE
 Sho-kon!

Guards swarm on Sho-kon and surround Aakese and the President. Sho-kon is pushed to the ground. Another group of guards pushes through with Kelly in custody.

KELLY
 Good afternoon, Madame President.

PRESIDENT
 Tierney! You better have a damn
 good explanation for all of this!

KELLY
 I do, ma'am.

PRESIDENT
 Is this why you've been AWOL for
 the last three days?

Kelly offers her a meek smile.

102 INTERCUT - AERIAL CHASE / SPEAR SHIP / WIND SKIMMER

The SPEAR ship screams across the surface in hot pursuit of the Wind Skimmer, Helen clinging for dear life to the hull.

103 WIND SIMMER

Keeg checks his console, sees the SPEAR ship approaching rapidly from behind. He punches some buttons. A display pops up on his windshield reading: SHIELDS: ?. He leaves the display there for a moment and smiles.

KEEG
 You wanna shoot me? Go ahead.

He punches another set of buttons. The display disappears and another pops up reading: WEAPONS: ACTIVATED.

104 SPEAR SHIP

Helen moves slowly along the hull as they tear through the sky. She positions herself aft and settles in.

 HELEN
 (into intercom)
 Toka, do you read?

Toka thumbs the intercom.

 KURU TOKA
 (into intercom)
 Yes, go ahead.

 HELEN
 (v.o.; over intercom)
 I want you to pull in front of him
 and stay there.

 KURU TOKA
 (into intercom)
 What?!

 HELEN
 (v.o.; over intercom)
 Just do it! Harek, as soon as we're
 settled in, I want you to lower the
 shields. Got it?

 HAREK
 (into intercom)
 If you say so.
 (to Toka)
 Your friend is insane.

 KURU TOKA
 That she is, but I think I know
 what she's planning to do.

 HAREK
 Would you tell me, please. I'd
 really like to know.

The SPEAR ship moves in closer, overtaking the Wind Skimmer.

Keeg punches another set of buttons. His window display reads: ROUTING ALL POWER TO WEAPONS. One more transaction of the controls and the display reads: FIRE CONTROL TO PILOT: ACTIVATED. An evil grin spreads across his face as he eases back on the throttle.

105 EXT. SPACE

The Maccat fleet emerges, ship by ship, through the very fabric of space. Once clear of the corridor, the ships find themselves face to face with-

an ARMADA of Earth attack ships, waiting to intercept.

106 INT. MACCAT COMMAND SHIP KATAGA

BRIDGE COMMANDER
Oh, sweet Daos!

107 INT. EARTH COMMAND SHIP

The Captain stands proud on the bridge. His expression daring the enemy fleet to attack.

PILOT
Targets engaged, Captain.

CAPTAIN
Tell Beta Group to hold. Hail the Maccat command ship.

The COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER punches a button on his console to hail the enemy ship.

108 INTERCUT - AERIAL CHASE / SPEAR SHIP / WIND SKIMMER

HELEN
(v.o.; over intercom)
Harek, has he raised his shields?

HAREK
(into intercom; checks a readout)
No. He's running open.

KURU TOKA
The son of a bitch is daring us to shoot him down.

HELEN
(v.o.; over intercom)
Get ready, Harek. On my signal, pop the bubble.

The SPEAR ship settles in front of the Wind Skimmer.

HELEN (cont'd)
(v.o.; over intercom)
Ready? and-

(CONTINUED)

A laser blast POUNDS the SPEAR ship's shields, it's blue energy enveloping the ship.

KURU TOKA

Jesus!

HAREK

Sweet Daos!

Toka cranks the yoke starboard, beginning a series of evasive maneuvers. Warning lights go off all over the console.

Helen grips the SPEAR ship for dear life as she's tossed back and forth along the hull. The Wind Skimmer matches the SPEAR ships movement, firing volley after volley of laser blasts. Another shot CAREENS off the shields. A near miss.

All hell has broken loose in the SPEAR ship's cockpit.

HAREK (cont'd)

Shields down to sixty-three percent!

Another warning goes off on Toka's board.

KURU TOKA

Water pump is gone on engine two.
It's burning up!

Keeg gnashes his teeth as he pommels the other ship.

Helen continues to be tossed about.

KURU TOKA (cont'd)

(v.o.; over intercom)
I'm breaking off!

HELEN

(into intercom)
No!

HAREK

(v.o.; over intercom)
Helen, listen-

Another blast nicks the shields, ERUPTING in a great blue burst next to Helen. Helen struggles to keep her balance.

HELEN

(into intercom)
Drop back to direct course and get ready to pop the bubble!

(CONTINUED)

KURU TOKA
 (into intercom)
 Helen we're getting pulverized out
 here-

HELEN
 (v.o.; over intercom)
 Do it... now!

Toka shakes his head, but continues his evasive maneuvers.
 He checks the status board.

KURU TOKA
 Okay, Harek, we're gonna have to do
 this quick. Once the shields are
 down, we're sitting ducks. Ready?

HAREK
 Ready.

Helen takes a deep breath.

The SPEAR ship settles into the target on Keeg's window
 display and glides down in front of the Wind Skimmer.

HAREK (cont'd)
 Ready. And-

HELEN
 ((v.o.; over intercom)
 Now-!

Another sudden BLAST. The ship rocks violently.

HAREK
 (reads status board)
 Shields are down!

The sudden depressurization BLOWS Helen off the hull. She
 flies across the gap from the SPEAR ship to the Wind
 Skimmer. She SLAMS into the ship, rolling across the hull in
 a flash. She is nearly blown off the back, but SLAMS her
 magnetic gloves against the hull. They take hold.

HELEN
 (v.o.; over intercom)
 I'm off!

Toka wrenches the yoke to starboard.

HAREK
 (reads status board)
 Starboard engine critical!

(CONTINUED)

The SPEAR ship breaks off as a laser shot goes wild. The starboard engine EXPLODES, and the ship drops out of control

KURU TOKA

Hang on!

109 EXT. SPACE

A standoff. Two fleets of ships on opposite sides of an imaginary line. No one has yet dared cross it.

110 INT. THE KATAGA

A BEEP goes off on the Communications Officer's console.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Captain, a message coming in from Prime Minister Aakese.

CAPTAIN

Stand by to verify.

A moment of silence as the Captain verifies authentication, then reads the message. He lets out a heavy sigh and looks across the starry battlefield to the Earth armada.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)

Send to fleet.

(pause)

Stand down.

111 EXT./INT. SPEAR SHIP

The ship goes down, heading straight into a mountainside.

KURU TOKA

Strap yourself in! I'm gonna jettison the cockpit.

Harek does. Toka punches a command into the ship's console. The cockpit detaches from the SPEAR ship like a mini life pod as the ship slams into the mountainside and EXPLODES.

KURU TOKA (cont'd)

Brace yourself!

The pod sails across the sky, then SLAMS into the surface, coming to rest. Toka and Harek come to their senses.

KURU TOKA (cont'd)

Are you okay?

(CONTINUED)

HAREK

Yes.

KURU TOKA

(into intercom)

Helen... Helen... It's dead.

They both share a look of concern.

CUT TO:

112 EXT. WIND SKIMMER

HELEN fights the VIOLENT HEADWINDS as she slowly climbs under the Wind Skimmer's hull. The ground rushes by beneath her as she hangs upside down from the ship. She finds the control pad to the water bay doors and punches it. The doors open and ESCAPING AIR rushes out. She fights her way

113 INSIDE THE CRAFT

closing the bay doors behind her. It's quiet, no sign of Keeg. Helen peers into the cockpit. The pilot seat is empty. She glances around, stands over the control board and changes course.

KEEG

(o.c.)

What are you doing, Helen?

She whirls to see Keeg with a pistol trained on her chest.

KEEG (cont'd)

We had an agreement.

He moves forward, motioning her away from the control board.

KEEG (cont'd)

Step away, please.

She does, and he slithers up. He punches some buttons. The window display reads: AUTOPILOT: ACTIVATED

HELEN

MSA knows about the invasion, Keeg.

KEEG

It doesn't matter. I'll settle for the destruction of this planet.

HELEN

You'll die here.

(CONTINUED)

KEEG

As will you. But I still win. If
you like I will kill you now.

He raises the pistol to her head. She walks slowly up to him until the barrel is pressed against her forehead.

HELEN

Have you ever killed anyone up
close before?

At first, there is fear in his eyes. Then he smiles. Then laughs. The laughter grows. Helen smiles in return-

Then suddenly drops and sweeps his legs out from under him. He flies back and lands on his butt, his pistol flying out of his hand. Helen reaches over and hauls him to his feet, SLAMMING him against the bulkhead.

HELEN (cont'd)

It's over, you sick son of a bitch!

114 EXT. WIND SKIMMER

Water appears below the ship. The Rahim Sea.

115 INT. WIND SKIMMER

Keeg reaches forward and grabs Helen's head. He pulls her face forward and bites down hard on her nose. She SCREAMS. He wrenches free and buries his fist in her jaw. She stumbles across the ship, SLAMMING forward against the control board.

She sees the water below, and turns to see Keeg descending upon her. She plants a roundhouse kick across his face. He goes flying. She punches a button on the instrument panel and shoves the yoke forward.

Blue-green shields envelope the ship as it dives for the deck, plunging into the crystal water. The view quickly darkens as the ship descends.

Keeg grabs Helen around the neck and POUNDS her kidneys. She SCREAMS, then pushes back away from the console. They both fall back. Helen's head POPS against Keeg's forehead as they land. She buries her elbow in his side and jumps to her feet, eyeing the altimeter which shows: -300 METERS

She turns back in time to block a punch, and swings her elbow across Keeg's jaw. He stumbles back, then lunges forward. Helen kicks him in the stomach and he goes flying back into the ship, sliding across the deck. He stops near

(CONTINUED)

the ulkuru, his pistol above his head. Helen's eyes go wide as he reaches for it. She spots a control console next to the loading bay door and bolts for it, Keeg tracking her with the pistol.

She closes the door as he fires. His shot RICOCHETS wildly around the loading bay and HITS the control console on his side. He rises and hits the door button. Nothing happens. He opens the porthole at the top of the door and puts his pistol in the opening. Helen is waiting and yanks the pistol free, pulling his arm through the porthole and pinning it to her side of the door.

HELEN

Enough!

Their eyes lock. She releases her grip and he slips back through the porthole, pacing furiously around the room. Helen goes to the control board and stops the Wind Skimmer's descent as the display reaches: -600 METERS. She returns to the door, nodding toward the ulkuru.

HELEN (cont'd)

Turn it off, Keeg.

KEEG

(contemptuous)

No!

HELEN

Perhaps there's something you don't understand. We're nearly two thousand feet underwater. If that thing explodes the only people it will kill are you and me.

KEEG

Then we'll die.

HELEN

(gestures to the bay doors)
I can always leave.

KEEG

Then do it!

HELEN

You have nothing to gain from dying, Keeg. Turn it off and I'll let you out. There's a sweepsuit in there.

He turns his back to her in contempt.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

Are you that anxious to die?

(no response)

Do you think this is what your
parents would want?

KEEG

Do not speak of them, Terran! You
know nothing of them!

HELEN

Perhaps not. However, I know how I
would feel if my little boy did
what you're about to do.

KEEG

Then make sure he doesn't!

HELEN

He won't. He's dead.

Keeg looks at her.

HELEN (cont'd)

"An orphan of war may hold
compassion no more." I used to
think that. But my son has taught
me differently.

Keeg has pulled his electronic notepad out of his pocket and
is looking at a picture of his parents.

HELEN (cont'd)

Turn it off. One day you may face
them with dignity.

KEEG

(whispering)

...I can't.

HELEN

Yes you can-

KEEG

(frustrated)

I can't! ...It was supposed to be
set by KALUN... but I didn't trust
him not to come back for it if he
couldn't make it off the surface in
time... Once it's activated it
can't be shut off.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN
 (considers this)
 Get one of those sweepsuits on.

She presses the door button. Nothing happens. She presses it again. Nothing. She looks at Keeg, then examines the door.

KEEG
 Forget it, Helen.
 (resigned to his fate)
 I got sloppy... Get out of here.

HELEN
 C'mon, I'm sure there's a-

KEEG
 Why must you humans go through this
 fruitless endeavor of helping those
 who wish to kill you? ...Do you
 think I want to go back Daolis to
 be tried for treason?
 (no answer)
 Whether I die here or I'm executed,
 the outcome is the same. Just go.

With that he SLAMS the porthole door shut. Helen stands there, uncertain. She dons the sweepsuit helmet again and activates the shield. She opens the water bay doors and dives in, activating her propulsors, and JETS to the surface.

Keeg sits quietly, watching the timer on the ulkuru. He lowers his head, which bobs up and down. He stares at the picture of his parents, SOBBING uncontrollably.

KEEG (cont'd)
 (in Maccat subtitled)
 I'm sorry...

116 EXT. OCEAN DEPTHS

The Wind Skimmer disappears in the darkness as Helen BLASTS to the surface. Moments later, it happens.

The ship EXPLODES, then IMPLODES as water rushes into the newly made vacuum. Helen breaks the surface as the SHOCK WAVE hits, blowing her out of the water. She sails through the air, landing a hundred yards away, then PLUNGES back below the surface.

The sea calms. She surfaces again and activates a RESCUE BEACON on her belt.

WIPE TO:

117 EXT. SPACE - SAME

The President's personal shuttles SCREAMS away from Mars.

118 INT. PRESIDENT'S SHUTTLE.

KELLY and SHO-KON sit under guard, the PRESIDENT reviewing a statement on an electronic notepad.

PRESIDENT

Incredible.

AAKESE enters and turns to face her.

AAKESE

Just received confirmation. The fleet is at ready-one, heading back to homeworld.

There is a collective sigh of relief. Aakese puts his hand on Sho-kon's shoulder. Sho-kon gives him a sheepish grin.

AAKESE (cont'd)

And you... there is something I would like to discuss with you.

The President looks over to Kelly. He returns her gaze.

PRESIDENT

New Zealand?

Kelly smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

119 EXT. DAOLIS - THE TOWER - DAY

A crowd is gathered around a plaza. A ceremony is taking place: SHO-KON being sworn in by AAKESE. At the head of the crowd HELEN and KELLY watch leisurely. She gives him a warm smile.

KELLY

What are you grinning at?

HELEN

I'm happy.

(she looks down)

I've never really been there for you, have I? Since Jeremy's death. You've been alone.

(pause; looks up)

I love you.

(CONTINUED)

(hand on his heart)
I'm here now.)

AAKESE
(in Maccat subtitled)
... MY DUTY AND HONOR FULFILLED, I
DRAW YOU TO SUCCEED ME, TO RENDER
AS PRIME MINISTER, THE WILL OF THE
CITIZENS OF DAOLIS. DO YOU ACCEPT
THIS PRIVILEGE?

SHO-KON
(in Maccat subtitled)
I DO SO ACCEPT.

They face the crowd.

AAKESE
(in Maccat subtitled)
CITIZENS OF DAOLIS! I PRESENT TO
YOU, YOUR NEW PRIME MINISTER:
SHO-KON OF BEODAN!

The crowd ERUPTS IN CHEERS at the confirmation. Sho-kon glances down at Helen and Kelly, locked in an embrace, and smiles. He turns his attention back to the crowd and shakes hands with Aakese. Helen looks up at Sho-kon.

HELEN
Let's go home.

They turn, making their way through the crowd.

DISSOLVE TO:

120 INT. CHURCH - DAY

HELEN enters cautiously, moving slowly down the aisle. Although laid out like most Christian churches, there are no idols or symbols to indicate denomination. A MAN lights candles at the altar. Helen approaches him with trepidation.

HELEN
Pastor Webb?

PASTOR WEBB
Yes?

Wariness spreads across his face as recognition dawns on him.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

I... uh... I wanted to apologize for... my behavior the last time I saw you. I'm sorry... it was inexcusable.

PASTOR WEBB

(still wary)

Well, thank you. I appreciate that you haven't forgotten me. Your apology is very gracious.

They stand in silence for a few moments.

PASTOR WEBB (cont'd)

Well, thank you for coming by. I'm afraid I have some things to attend to, so if you'll excuse me.

HELEN

Pastor? Do you have a moment?

PASTOR WEBB

(annoyed)

Well... as I said-

HELEN

I'd like to talk to you if I may.

PASTOR WEBB

About What?

HELEN

(pause)

My son.

Slowly, all the anger and antagonism drain from his face. He lets out a relaxed sigh and extends a welcome hand.

PASTOR WEBB

(softly)

Certainly.

She takes his hand as he leads her off the main hall.

FADE OUT:

THE END