

Divinity

By Sophie Abrahams

WGA Reg No: 1519603

OVER THE DARKNESS WE HEAR--

a strange throbbing sound.

LIGHT
EXPLODES outwards from the center
BRILLIANT WHITE.

RED and ORANGE BEAMS emerge
swirling into IRIDESCENT STREAMERS.

They fuse into a TUNNEL OF LIGHT
that changes into BLAZING HOT GAS
a chromatic shimmering haze.

This mutates into PRIMAL ENERGY
turbulent, wavy blue-yellow light.

Crackling TENDRILS OF ATOMIC ENERGY lash out -- ZZZWAKK!

Pull Back to reveal that we were inside a STAR
having witnessed NUCLEAR FUSION, the conversion of matter
into energy. The possible source of life on earth.

Traces of prismatic energy (GASEOUS PARTICLES) escape out
into...

EXT. SPACE - PRESENT DAY

...an infinite star field.

We hitch a ride with the traveling Gaseous Particles and drop
downwards...through layers of RADIATION WAVES... finally
revealing...

EXT. EARTH'S SKY (THE U.S.) - 10,000FT UP - NIGHT

...a puffy CLOUDSCAPE illuminated by a FULL MOON.

Gaseous Particles push through the billowy clouds, bringing
into view...

EXT. WILDERNESS - HIGH WIDE AERIAL - CONTINUOUS

...MOUNTAIN RANGE
overlooking an expansive OPEN VALLEY.
An inviting paradise found in east-central California.

Barely visible HEADLIGHTS cut through the blackness below
...they belong to a jeep...

EXT. VALLEY - CONTINUOUS

...a GRAND CHEROKEE. Moving fast and with urgency.

GASEOUS PARTICLES

sprinkle across the ground near a GANG OF BISON grazing. Up
ahead, the Cherokee speeds towards a vast FOREST.

EXT. FOREST - LOG CABIN - LITTLE LATER

A CABIN ON A HILLSIDE
lights are on, curtains are pulled.

A COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE SYSTEM
on the roof flashes with activity.

A LAND ROVER sits parked on an open, rocky road.

Cherokee's HEADLIGHTS strobe through the trees
then disappear as the engine turns off.
The SOUNDS OF NATURE fill the air.

A SQUIRREL picks at an acorn. Delighted with life.

Two SILHOUETTED FIGURES creep out of the woodland
a man and a woman. ORIS & ZARA, respectively. Both 30ish,
smooth and military in movement.

Hefting SUBMACHINE GUNS.

The squirrel scampers away. Startled.

Two other HARD-CHARGING KILLERS hang back.
REESE AND LOPEZ, both 30ish. Working a SURVEILLANCE BOX,
ear-jacking on...

INT. CABIN - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...PROFESSOR RHEA PIPER, 60's, tinted spectacles, Sontag
hairstyle, having a tense and tetchy FACETIME CHAT with DR.
ETHAN DALLAS, 40's, shaggy beard conceals his otherwise
boyish face.

ETHAN (ON SCREEN)

Well...

(beat)

Did they agree to destroy Brain
Mapping?

RHEA

They didn't commit either way.

ETHAN (ON SCREEN)

Rhea...

RHEA

What were you expecting, Ethan?
(snapping her fingers)

An immediate "Yes. Sure, no problem."

ETHAN (ON SCREEN)

Didn't you explain how dangerous Brain
Mapping is?

RHEA

No, Ethan, I overlooked all that.

ETHAN (ON SCREEN)

Damn it, Rhea, what did Porter and
Aldridge say?

RHEA

That Brain Mapping could change
everything, make everything better...

She holds up an ELECTRONIC DEVICE to support the point
a circular-shaped computer chip.

One side is smooth with FLASHING INDICATORS and an EMBEDDED
LENS; a FASTENER encircles the edge. The other displays its
complicated but cool-looking circuitry.

This is the NEURO-CHIP.

RHEA (CONT'D)
 ...And in fairness, Ethan, they have a point.

ETHAN (ON SCREEN)
 The neuro-chip is impressive, Rhea. But it doesn't off-set the killer dangers inherent in Brain Mapping.

RHEA
 I know. But I didn't want to push them -- okay, Ethan. The neuro-chip is their life.

ETHAN (ON SCREEN)
 I understand that, Rhea, I do...

RHEA
 ...They're unveiling it to the world tomorrow for Christ's sake.

ETHAN (ON SCREEN)
 I can relate, god knows. But time wise...

RHEA
 We're running out.

EXT. CABIN - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Oris & Zara creep past a MOTION SENSOR DEVICE hidden in the underbrush.

INT. CABIN - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ETHAN (ON SCREEN)
 The future's not set, Rhea. We can make it right, make it clean.

An alarm BREEPS!

ETHAN (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)
 What's that?

Rhea turns it off. Double-taps A SECOND SCREEN, calling up SURVEILLANCE of outside: Oris and Zara approach.

RHEA
 Ethan, move camp.

ETHAN (ON SCREEN)
 What?

RHEA
 If I don't make it, approach Luna and Josh.

RHEA
 (to computer)
 Computer. New program: 20-29.

ETHAN
 (over screen)
 Rhea, what's happening?

RHEA
 Execute.

Ethan's image CUTS OUT. Computer screen goes berserk with DATA SLASHING ACROSS - then - blank. Hard drive dead.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

STATIC blares over headsets, deafening Reese and Lopez.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Rhea PUNCHES A BUTTON
panoramic window opens. She heads out into the wild.

Window closes back shut.

EXT. CABIN - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Oris holds up A HAND-HELD DEVICE to an EYE-SCANNER.
A GREEN BEAM flashes over it. Front door BEEPS opens.

INT. LOG CABIN - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A TV, on mute, shows À BOUT DE SOUFFLE.

PATRICIA FRANCHINI (SUBTITLED)
What is your greatest ambition in life?

PARVULESCO (SUBTITLED)
To become immortal...and then die.

Oris and Zara enter, cautiously, guns leveled.

He checks the dead computer.

She goes to search elsewhere when she doubles-back.

Her gaze focuses on MOVING BLINDS by the window Rhea fled through.

EXT. FORREST - CONTINUOUS

RHEA

rushes along...through SHAFTS OF MOONLIGHT...zigs & zags
around TOWERING TREES.

She stops, panting.

Twigs SNAP. Approaching movement.

Rhea hides behind a MASSIVE TREE.

Two BODIES emerge from the shadows. Spread out.
It's Reese and Lopez.

REESE

prowls around. STUN BATON ready. ELECTRIC ARCS CRACKLE.
It's quiet. Only the tranquil SOUNDS of nature.

Without warning Rhea SMACKS AWAY the stun baton - CLAMPS onto
Reese's throat - LIFTS HIM UP with one hand onto his tiptoes
- the neuro-chip is attached to her bicep, FLASHING WITH
ACTIVITY.

Tough-guy Reese struggles in vain to break free from his 60-something assailant.

RHEA
How does Solenko know I was communicating with the FTF?

REESE
(choking)
Dunno. We were just ordered on a snatch-and-run.

LOPEZ (O.S.)
Put him down.

Lopez stands across. Submachine gun up.

LOPEZ (CONT'D)
Before I put you down.

RHEA
He's all yours.

RHEA FLINGS REESE THROUGH THE AIR - BODY-CRASHES INTO LOPEZ.
Rhea flees.

Lopez, in a fit of snarling rage, aims her submachine gun.

REESE
(spluttering)
She has to be alive.

Lopez RIPS OFF A BURST.

ROUNDS RAKE THROUGH THE TREES as Rhea ducks and pushes through a MASS OF LEAVES - then like that -- she drops out of sight --

slides down a MUDDY CLIFF in a blur of rapid motion - lands SPLAT in a marsh.

Dazed, muddy and gasping, she's now sprawled along --

A CANYON

overlooking a wide lake. Surrounded by awesome CLIFFS and a WATERFALL shimmering silver in the moonlight.

She rises weakly - stumbles back down. COUGHS and SPLUTTERS. Spots the neuro-chip spurting on and off. Malfunctioning.

ZARA (OFF)
Give ya a hand there, doc?

Rhea looks up - the BUTT of Zara's submachine gun goes to WHACK her - when RHEA'S HAND CLAMPS HOLD - the neuro-chip indicators flashing at half-speed.

Still Zara can't free her gun.

RHEA FLINGS THEM BOTH ACROSS THE MUD

She picks herself up. Only to see Oris straight ahead, aiming a taser gun - FIRES --

Rhea drops: AAAAAAGHH!

Struggles to resist, her body writhes in agony.

ORIS
 You're done, Dr. Piper. Don't make us
 go enhanced on your tired ass.

Rhea slumps. Out cold. HEAVY WIND blows through.

Zara approaches. Stretching out the pain. Reese and Lopez
 stand over the edge of the cliff, looking down.

The neuro-chip powers down.

SMASH TO:

LANDING LIGHTS ON FULL BLAST...

EXT. DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO - ETERNITY CONNECTION (EC) HQ
 ROOFTOP - LATER

...a HELICOPTER touches down on the helipad.
 Beside a parked helicopter.

DR. DOMINIC SOLENKO hops out, a coiffed, dark-minded dude in
 his fifties but looks forties. Radiates presence.

INT. EC HQ - ELEVATOR - MINUTES LATER

Solenko rides down in a glass elevator. San Diego's
 coastline glitters in the BG.

INT. EC HQ - CORRIDOR - MINUTES LATER

He strides along.

INT. EC HQ - LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

He enters a room slammed with technology found in an
 underground Pentagon War Room: 3D interactive screens;
 wraparound displays.

SOLENKO
 Well?

MYAN and LUKE are waiting. She's a fortyish, power-suited
 babe, a brain and ego the size of Colorado. He's a wiseass
 computer whizz, oversees all the COM TECH UNDERLINGS at their
 consoles.

Myan gestures behind him.

Oris and Co. wheelchair a restrained Rhea along. She's
 conscious, but half-dazed.

She and Solenko swap an awkward look as she is wheeled down
 the corridor.

SOLENKO
 Was a trace on the FTF's location
 established?

MYA
 We lost the connection.

LUKE
 Dr. Piper killed her computer terminal
 before we uh...

MYA
 (to Solenko)
 I know you and Rhea are close, Dominic,
 but...

Solenko steps up to a picturesque window. Staring out.

MYA (CONT'D)
 We have to question her about the FTF,
 find out what she told them.

He looks back over his shoulder. Giving Mya the nod. She leaves. He turns back to the window, hating himself.

We dissolve through the glass...

DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO

...revealing Eternity Connection HQ to be an unusual-looking skyscraper...glide through the GLITTERING CITY, quiet and peaceful...NIGHT LAPSES INTO DAY...

...close in on a HIGH-RISE OFFICE ROOFTOP...an attached JUMBOTRON advertises --

**San Diego
 America's Finest City**

a FIGURE moves past...a MAN SPRINTING...zips right across the rooftop with incredible speed.

THE RUNNING MAN

jumps over to the neighboring HIGH-RISE OFFICE...hits the ground running with SUPERHUMAN PACE.

28, dressed casually, his face is thrilled.

Approaches another ROOFTOP -- LEAPS right across the DIZZYING DROP...lands safely on the new rooftop and keeps on sprinting. Pumped with adrenaline. RUNNING FAST FEELS FANTASTIC

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly we are watching LAB TECHNICIANS. They are tracking the Running Man using COMPUTERIZED BINOCULARS.

LAB TECH #1 (LUNA)
 Whoo!

Lab Tech #2 turns to a bank of COMPUTER SCREENS monitoring the running man's brain and heart vitals. Regions of activity flow up and down with shifting colors.

LAB TECH #2
 His heart rate is spiking.

LAB TECH #1 (LUNA)
 What'd you expect? Look at him go.

REPORTERS are also present. Both excited and terrified.

Lab Tech #1 -- LUNA, 30s, self-assured, unblushing sense of her own femininity -- stops smiling. Eyeing one of her Lab Tech peers at the back, slumped over, miles away. JOSH, 30s, cool-cat, hippyish.

He gives her a knowing look. Troubled. Worried.

The buzz of the room captures back her attention
 Watches the Running Man LEAP OFF another rooftop...

EXT. CORPORATE SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

...LANDING HARD on both feet

Resumes running...WHOOSHING past a jogging line of
 EXECUTIVES, some slim, some flabby, who stop in disbelief,
 causing a BODY SMASHUP...

the Running Man approaches the edge, except this time the
 adjacent skyscraper is a good distance away, twenty yards.

EXT. NEURAL NETWORK - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

LUNA
 Wait. What's he doing?

JOSH
 (approaching)
 He'll never make it.

LUNA
 Stop you idiot.

EXT. OFFICE ROOFTOP EDGE - CONTINUOUS

The Running Man LAUNCHES...flies through the wispy sky...
NEURO-CHIPS ATTACHED TO HIS ANKLES, FLASHING WILDLY...

He nears the neighboring rooftop -- when -- the neuro-chips
 start to spurt out - malfunction - suddenly the Running Man
 loses strength -- drops like a stone --

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The Reporters GASP in horror. Bio-monitors SCREECH OMINOUS
 WARNING ALARMS.

EXT. SKY - CONTINUOUS

The Running Man HURTLES DOWNWARDS in a violent freefall at
 120 mph - against a hurricane of wind.

He comes about in a spread-eagle position, slashing downward
 now at 130 mph.

Street level, forty stories away, RUSHES TOWARDS US AT
 FEROCIOUS SPEED.

He pulls a ripcord - from inside his jacket a parachute
 bursts out -- POOM! -- JERKING HIM UPWARDS.

The Running Man coast high above the city buildings, thanks
 to a navy-blue disc of cloth.

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Everyone starts to relax with relief.

LUNA
Danger-junkie asshole.

JOSH
(beat)
We gonna talk this out now?

LUNA
(low)
Josh...

JOSH
Rhea? The FTF? Eternity Connection?

LUNA
...stop it.

Josh moves away. Containing his anxiety.

LUNA (CONT'D)
(big smile to
reporters)
Okay.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - MINUTES LATER

The Running Man lands safely on a PEDESTRIAN PLAZA
his canopy deflates around him.

Some PASSERS-BY watch. Most continue on, not much caring.

The Running Man takes off his jacket and chute lines
pumped and buzzed.

This is NICK DALTON
neuro-technologist that acts more like a cocky MTV VJ than an
egg-head scientist.

STREET PERFORMERS are nearby, off-Broadway style.

STREET PERFORMER #1
I thought I could escape my old self,
make it new.

STREET PERFORMER #2
The plight of every lost soul. But as
F. Scott knew all too well: "we beat
on, boats against the current, borne
back ceaselessly into the past."

NICK

holds up the malfunctioning neuro-chips, giving them a once
over...

LUNA (V.O. PRE-LAP)
The neuro-chip.

BACK TO:

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Luna holds up a NEURO-CHIP to several reporters, giving a
presentation, one of several simultaneously occurring.

LUNA (CONT'D)
It's both a processing unit and a power
source.

(MORE)

LUNA (CONT'D)

Capable of trans-skin communication. Which is what allows us to reprogram our red blood cells and enhance our capabilities? As of now the neuro-chip can still only rely on cables. Independent neuro-chips are still in the early stages. They only last a couple of minutes before overcharging and cutting out. But these are bugs we are currently fixing. That aside, these bad boys work.

Behind Luna is a WALL OF PHOTOS immortalizing Science Giants of the past: Gordon Moore; Alfred Korzybski; José Delgado; Rhea as a young woman, colligate, outside a building called, "Silicon Circuitry." Alongside a younger SOLENKO.

Recent photos show Luna and Nick, warm smiles.

LUNA (OFF)

The neuro-chip is the end product of nearly fifty years of research. When our predecessors back in the day saw the potential of combining technology with biology so to uncover the mysteries of the human brain.

A WINDOW beside the photos shows Nick down below making his approach.

EXT. NEURAL NETWORK - PLAZA - CONTINUOUS

A digital standalone sign reads:

N E U R A L N E T W O R K

Its accompanying CNN-like CRAWLER goes:

**synthesizing biology with technology
The Post-Human Adventure Starts Here**

An animated DOOMSDAY PREACHER steps into VIEW. Venting with passion to anyone who will listen.

DOOMSDAY PREACHER

Yes, good people, the last days will be upon us unless we learn to accept our limitations and calm that restless spirit. For if we keep going beyond the beyond, flesh and blood will not be left to inherit the earth. Only the catastrophic ruins caused by the mad, divine wannabe.

NICK

makes for the Main Entrance surrounded by ANTI-TECHNOLOGY PROTESTORS. Circle him in a garble of hue and cry. Shaking PLACARDS --

**Humanists Against Bio Modification
Post-humanity isn't our future.**

NICK

Oh what, you're here again? We up there curing our defects, and you're down here complaining?

The protestors, unmoved, CHANT their anger. So --

NICK (CONT'D)
 You know what else we do? We eat
 dolphin-unfriendly tuna for lunch. We
 wear mink for lab coats. We can prove
 climate change is a myth...

Neural Network Security wade in --

NICK (CONT'D)
 ...We started an online petition to
 cancel Southpark. And Governor Nikki
 Haley is a babe -- yah!

A MILD SCUFFLE BREAKS OUT
 after a moment --

LUNA (V.O. PRE-LAP)
 We have reached an iconic moment...

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - CORRIDOR - LITTLE LATER

Nick exits an elevator. Jazzes his way over to a high-tech
 SECURITY STATION. Banter with the TWO GUARDS on post
 outside a large DOUBLE-DOOR.

LUNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...Genetics. Robotics. Bionics.
 Nanotechnology. Neural modeling...

Nick palms a hand scanner without looking. His PHOTO PROFILE
 flashes up on a screen.

Nick Dalton
Neuro-technologist. Brain Mapping
Approved

The double-door starts to WHIR open.

LUNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...All these miraculous scientific
 advancements have been part of one
 immense quest: to decode humanity...

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

A BANK OF WIDESCREENS show cool CGI's of the HUMAN BRAIN,
 from all angles. Colors highlight each respective region,
 showing what's responsible for what.

LUNA (CONT'D)
 ...Human Genome scientists cracked our
 DNA code in 2000; we at Neural Network
 have now cracked the code of the human
 brain.

Track through, getting a feel of the place and the
 presentations on offer by good-natured sci-fi geeks.
 Playful. Animated. Fun.

LUNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Everything we are, everything that
 makes us human, is about to change.

Presentation #1: a BLIND ELDERLY WOMAN. A neuro-chip is
 hooked up to her head. Computer monitor shows her point-of-
 view vision. Going from darkness...to blurry...to 20/20 and

beyond. She can magnify like binoculars upon mental command. She zooms in on an OFFICE COUPLE making-out across the city.

Presentation #2: a WHEELCHAIR-BOUND TEEN. Paralyzed from the neck down. Neuro-chip is attached to his spine. He stands up on his own two feet...small, slow steps.

JOSH
(struggling to
concentrate)
The neuro-chip can reestablish a functional neural interface that can allow the human brain to register sensation and transmit movement commands.

FIND LUNA

finishing up by a QUANTUM COMPUTER TERMINAL named TYSON Looks like a beer keg. Its screens show (1) CGI's of the brain & (2) pulsating lines, emitting a radio-static-like sound. Luna is helped by IVY. Not a scientist. An assistant. Athletic frame, ironic black glasses.

LUNA
(re: Tyson)
These accomplishments are in large part due to a single piece of equipment: The Tyson, the quantum computer of quantum computers, very special. This is what makes multi-tasking computation easy.

ANGLE - TRANSITORY SCIENTIST #3

NEURAL NETWORK TECHIE #1
(calling out)
Anyone got the Mendrake file?

NEURAL NETWORK TECHIE #2
Yeah. Here.

Neural Network Techie #1 GRABS AN IMAGE OFF A COMPUTER SCREEN AND THROWS IT ACROSS like it was a softball --

Neural Network Techie #2 catches it and slaps it onto his own computer screen. Uploading instantly.

BACK ON LUNA

LUNA
(re: Tyson)
And that's what enables us to translate the brain's flow of electricity - or to put it another way, everything we see or feel, all our memories, our expectations, our loves - we can express all that through ones and zeros. In short, we are a mathematical model away from solving the biggest mystery of all: human consciousness.

Find one REPORTER less enthused. She observes everything around her with critical discomfort.

Her ID tag shows her to be a reporter for "Breaking Science" magazine, a New Scientist-type journal.

NAME: KARA DAVIES

NICK PASSES BY

carrying his chute like a fighter pilot carrying his helmet. Swaps an interested glance with a pretty redheaded REPORTER beaming a head-cheerleader smile --

Bumps into Ivy. She keeps going, giving him a flirty smirk.

IVY
Watch it, Bitch-Boy.

Nick smirks back, passing Luna

She's still peeved, ignores him. He stops behind her and waits. In spite of herself, she smiles and they swap a BACK HIGH-FIVE. Tight buddies.

LUNA (CONT'D)
Ladies and gentlemen...
(pausing for effect)
"The post-human adventure starts here."

KARA
speed dials her smart phone. Now in a quiet corner.

KARA (INTO PHONE)
Ethan, Luna Porter and Josh Aldridge
are on site.

Commotion breaks out. Nick is being given a hero's welcome by his Neural Network peers. The star quarterback.

Kara moves away:

KARA (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)
But Dr. Piper definitely ain't.

INTERCUT TO:

EXT. RHEA'S LOG CABIN - CONTINUOUS

We're back in the wilderness. Ethan Dallas wanders around.

ETHAN (INTO PHONE)
She's not here either.

Two other dudes are present. MADDOX and YEATS. Boot camp frame and appearance.

A Woman named LAMAR jogs out of the woods.

LAMAR
Tracks about half a klick behind me.
Hunt and grab pattern. And signs of a
struggle.

MADDOX
(to everyone)
Think Dr. Piper told them about us?
You know, us going to strike their
virtual reality site?

Eyes fall on Ethan. No response.

YEATS
Doubtful they'll ask her nicely.

ETHAN (INTO PHONE)
 Grab Porter and Aldridge. Bring them
 to the new camp. And do your best to
 speed things up. Good chance Eternity
 Connection knows about them.

Ethan clicks off, worried.

SOLENKO'S VOICE
 Ethan Dallas is alive?

CUT TO:

INT. EC HQ - LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Solenko and Mya are going over matters. He is in a state of
 astonishment.

SOLENKO (CONT'D)
 He didn't die in the laboratory
 explosion with the others?

MYA
 All a set-up. Rhea says there's about
 fifty of them.

SOLENKO
 What brought them together in the first
 place? How do they know each other?

MYA
 Rhea was Dallas' academic advisor at
 Cal Tech.

SOLENKO
 She was?

MYA
 It was Rhea who recruited Dallas. And
 Cal Tech is also how Rhea knows Luna
 Porter and Josh Aldridge.

Luna's and Josh's PHOTO PROFILES are displayed on a
 widescreen.

SOLENKO
 We created fricken Frankenstein's
 monster-child when we started funding
 that place.

MYA
 The question is what do we do about
 Porter and Aldrige? Or for that
 matter, what do we do about Neural
 Network?

BACK TO:

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Luna finishes up with an assembled group of reporters. She
 walks off, looking around frantically. Grabs hold of Ivy, an
 assistant.

LUNA
 Where's Nick?

INT. REC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

NICK AND THE REDHEADED REPORTER (SUMMER) SLAM UP AGAINST THE DOOR

hungrily kissing. Randy as hell. She paws his back - he YELPS AAGH! in pain.

SUMMER
What's wrong?

NICK
My back.

She pulls back his shirt to reveal an ugly blue/purple BRUISE.

NICK (CONT'D)
From the parachute drop. It happens.

SUMMER
Aw. Poor baby.

Their mouths go to lock when the DOOR OPENS, pushing them back. It's Luna.

LUNA
(giving him a look)
Uh...Dr. Dalton? The press is waiting.

NICK
Not to worry, Dr. Porter. I've already started my debriefing.

Summer adjusts her hiked up skirt. Leaves.

LUNA
God's sake, Nick.

NICK
(buttoning his shirt)
What's up, Luna?

LUNA
(pushing him out
the door)
Come on, quarterback. Try to act your age for five minutes.

NICK
Hey, hey, watch the threads, Luna.

LUNA
Threads? You're wearing a shirt from Kmart; okay, GQ.

NICK
Kmart-Online.

INT. MAIN FLOOR - MINUTES LATER

Nick takes questions. Flanked by Luna.

REPORTER #1
Why do you call yourselves
"evolutionary engineers?"

NICK
Like the sign on the door says, we're
changing what it means to be human.

He elbows Luna, joking around.

REPORTER #2
What's wrong with being human?

NICK
Human are organic.

REPORTER #2
And that's bad?

Nick gestures over to the paralyzed teenager taking small steps for another batch of reporters.

NICK
Ask Billy.

LUNA
(low)
Bryan.

REPORTER #2
(to Nick)
Isn't his name Bryan?

NICK
(staying on point)
Look the neuro-chip means overcoming our flaws, our insecurities, our--

LUNA
(cutting in to reporters)
And there are big humanitarian and health gains, also. Massive.

REPORTER #1
(re: protestors outside)
Not everyone agrees with you.

NICK
Hold-outs never do.

Luna regards the protestors down below with concern.

REPORTER #1
So you dismiss outright the criticisms that human enhancement technology is rewiring people, turning them into cyborgs?

NICK
The cyborgization complaint misses the fundamental point.

REPORTER #2
The relevant point being, Dr. Dalton?

NICK
That transhuman technologies can do what Jesus couldn't: fix his old man's mistakes.

REPORTER #2
You're bigger than Jesus?

Nick, to show his point, moves over to free presentation area, a MAKESHIFT PITCHING CAGE with a CATCHING NET at the far end.

NICK

It's like this: in the new age we're now creating and mastering, athletes and sports stars can forget about being the hot juice, okay.

(picks up nearest neuro-chip)

This will be the new role model for your kids.

(attaching the neuro-chip to his pitching arm)

Whatever you couldn't do before, you can now. Greater strength, better speed - the neuro-chip means you can be what ever you wanna be.

Without trying, Nick pitches a baseball - it ZOOMS THROUGH THE AIR - hitting BAM! into the net - astonishing the reporters.

A speed indicator clocks at 200.9 mph.

Some reporters clap.

FOCUS ON A LAB BAY IN BG:

Josh is having a borderline heated discussion with Kara. Both are wary not to attract attention.

MYA'S VOICE

Neural Network is a security risk.

BACK TO:

INT. EC HQ - LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

SOLENKO

Yes but what grade of risk? We're working blind here. We don't know if others may be involved or...

MYA

Rhea only mentioned Porter and Aldridge. Problem is, perhaps Porter and Aldridge have approached others.

SOLENKO

How can we be certain that Porter and Aldridge haven't tampered with Brain Mapping already?

MYA

They're being closely watched.

BACK TO:

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

IVY

walks alongside Luna. Events for the day are wrapping up. Some Reporters have left, some are leaving.

LUNA

And double-check to make sure no one is left waiting for an interview or a quote or something?

IVY
Right.

LUNA
Thanks.

Stay with Luna as Ivy breaks off, revealing

Nick in BG. Still showing off, this time with a basketball. Making a three-pointer Larry Bird would be envious of. Reporters cheer. He basks in a harmless, obnoxious way.

Luna shakes her head at his antics. Entering --

LAB BAY

Seeing only Josh.

LUNA
(re: Nick)
Have you been watching that idiot show-off? God he's getting worse, I swear to--

JOSH
Luna.

He gestures behind her. She turns. Seeing Kara.

LUNA
Oh. Sorry. I didn't see you.

Kara smiles politely.

LUNA (CONT'D)
(re: name tag)
Aw no way, you're with Breaking Science. Excellent. I love that mag.

KARA
Actually...I'm not with Breaking Science.

LUNA
Sorry, what's that?

JOSH
And her name isn't Kara.

Kara pulls off her nametag. No more games.

KARA (CHALKY)
It's Chalky.

Confusion ripples over Luna...

JOSH
She's FTF.

...followed by ice-cold realization.

BACK TO:

INT. EC HQ - LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

MYA
All our equipment - Tyson computer, Brain Mapping - everything is vulnerable.

(MORE)

MYA (CONT'D)
 We should clear out Tyson and processes
 the site.

After a moment...

SOLENKO
 Send a team.

BACK TO:

INT. LAB BAY - CONTINUOUS

CHALKY
 (going to leave)
 I'll wait for you outside.

LUNA
 (grabbing her arm)
 We're not deleting Brain Mapping.

JOSH
 (to Chalky)
 And you can forget about us viraling up
 Tyson. We don't know who you FTF guys
 are or anything.

CHALKY
 Who cares who we are? Eternity
 Connection is the problem. Didn't Dr.
 Piper wise you up about them?

LUNA
 Look: we never made any promises to
 Rhea.

JOSH
 None.

LUNA
 (to Chalky)
 Take a look around you, at everything
 Brain Mapping can lead to.

INT. MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Nick goofs around with reporters. Giving them chances to do
 three-pointers with neuro-chips attached.

He notices Ivy across the way. Staring thoughtfully at Luna
 and Josh with Chalky. Luna reaches over to push a button -
 THE GLASS FOGS UP.

Nick gets pulled back in with the reporters and their frat
 house antics.

Ivy's curiosity remains focused.

LAB BAY

CHALKY
 Hey you two are the geniuses here. But
 by our count, if Eternity Connection do
 their thing, that's it; the final F-U
 to everything. If you two don't go
 along with that then forget you met me
 and take your chances with Eternity
 Connection.

Luna and Josh swap a look. Their intensity waning.

INTERCUT TO:

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Two Coupes high-speed along.

Oris and Zara are in the lead Coupe with other EC Agents.

Reese and Lopez are in the second
double-checking their weapons. SMACKING clips into place --
SNICK-SNICKED!; racking slides -- CHAK-CHIKKT!

BACK TO:

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Nick leads the remaining reporters out. Chalky slips past.

NICK
Thanks for coming.

CHALKY
What? Yeah thanks for uh...thanks.

Nick watches her hop on an elevator, interested, as he shakes hands with Reporters.

LAB BAY

Josh and Luna go at it by a computer terminal. All nerves.

JOSH
What about Tyson? We can't just pick
it up and take it outta here.

LUNA
We'll - I don't know - we'll come back
for it.

JOSH
Come back for it?

LUNA
What'd you want from me, Josh?

JOSH
A workable plan, Luna. One that lets
us have it both ways.

LUNA
Well we can't let Eternity Connection
get access.

JOSH
So what'd we do?

LUNA
(beat)
Change the encryption codes.

JOSH
Type in new security?

LUNA
What else do we have? For now at
least?

JOSH
Beats the shit outta me.

LUNA
Okay then.

JOSH
(re: computer
terminal)
What about the download?

LUNA
Let's just start on Tyson. I'll come
back for it.

Out they go. On a mission. Revealing the computer terminal
screen. A FILE WINDOW shows a file transfer occurring --

Transferring Brain Mapping

a MEMORY STICK is plugged into the USB

INTERCUT TO:

EXT. NEURAL NETWORK BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

EC Coupes veer into the PARKING GARAGE.

ACROSS THE STREET IS CHALKY

getting behind the wheel to a parked SUV.

INT. NEURAL NETWORK CAR PARK - CONTINUOUS

EC Coupes pull up. Zara swipes an ID card across a scanner.

Approved

BACK TO:

LAB BAY

Nick enters. Surveys leftovers on a food trolley. Reaches
for a pumpkin muffin when - BEEP-BLEEP!

He looks over. Computer terminal reads --

File Transfer Complete Deleting Brain Mapping File

His eyes narrow. Confused. Notices the USB MEMORY STICK.

IVY (OFF)
Doing some saving and deleting?

NICK
(getting a start)
Jesus, Ivy. What? No, I was...I'm not
sure what the--

He turns back to Ivy -- SMACK! -- she SUCKER BACKHANDS HIM -
lands a HAMMER-PUNCH - snaps a FRONT-KICK --

NICK CRASHES BACK-FIRST ONTO A GLASS COFFEE TABLE

Ivy calmly pockets her glasses. Using her other hand to draw
a SILENCER PISTOL from her waistband. Shrugs --

IVY
Time's up, bitch-boy. Shame.

She takes aim -- WHACK! -- a LAPTOP SWIPES ACROSS her head.

Ivy drops, out cold, revealing --

Luna clenching onto a laptop with both hands. Her whole body shaking.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Oris & Co ride up. Ready. Silent. Ice cold.

BACK TO:

LAB BAY

Computer terminal BEEPS --

Brain Mapping File deleted

Nick is back on his feet, in pain.

NICK
You deleted Brain Mapping?

LUNA
(detaching memory
stick)
We saved it; it's okay.

NICK
We?

LUNA
Me and Josh.

She points out to Josh on the main floor. Typing into the Tyson quantum computer.

NICK
Luna? What the hell?

LUNA
It's all messed up, everything.

NICK
What is?

LUNA
Me and Josh, okay, we - I mean our - it
all starts with our old Cal Tech
professor.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - CONTINUOUS

Oris & Co. exit the elevator. Swift & purposeful.

ZARA
(to security guards)
Hi.

SECURITY GUARD #1
How are ya'?

SECURITY GUARD #2
Hey you doin'?

Zara draws two SILENCER GUNS -- FIRES

BACK TO:

LAB BAY

LUNA

There are two groups. Eternity Connection. And the FTF. Eternity Connection is like us: inventors, futurologists - they banded together like back in the seventies, when they were working for the microchip company, Silicone Circuitry.

MAIN FLOOR

OLD PHOTOS ON THE WALL

showing Rhea and Solenko. Nearby Josh is finishing up with the Tyson. One of his Neural Network Techie peers, a buddy, walks past, giddy from the day's events.

NEURAL NETWORK TECHIE

Want some help, Josh?

JOSH

Naw, naw, I got this. Thanks. I'm good.

NEURAL NETWORK TECHIE

Sure? Alright, man. Good day today, hunh?

JOSH

Yeah. Good day.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - CONTINUOUS

EC Agents stick ELECTRONIC EXPLOSIVE CHARGERS on the wall. Twist the top like an egg timer, ACTIVATING them.

BACK TO:

LAB BAY

LUNA

Dominic Solenko is in charge of Eternity Connection.

NICK

Solenko? The billionaire recluse.

LUNA

Mr. Microchip. He's the one who's paying for all this through Cal Tech.

NICK

Since when?

LUNA

Since forever. Neural Network is one of his fronts. He has others too.

NICK

Others?

LUNA
Other proxy academic institutions.

NICK
Doing what?

LUNA
Electronic transcendence.

NICK
Virtual reality? Okay. So what?

INTERCUT TO:

INT. NEURAL NETWORK - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - CONTINUOUS

Zara holds up a DEVICE to the Scanner, like the one Reese used to open Rhea's cabin. A FLASH OF LIGHT beams out. Rhea's picture profile pops up on the screen: "Approved."

THE ARMORED-VAULT DOOR STARTS TO OPEN

BACK TO:

LAB BAY

LUNA
Virtual reality isn't the problem.
Brain Mapping isn't the problem. Not on their own. Solenko wants to combine them, that's the problem - that's what the FTF wanna stop. And Josh and me think they might be right about this.

Before Nick can reply, mind frazzled -- THE DOOR SNAPS OPEN
Josh enters. Hesitant about Nick's presence.

LUNA
He knows.

NICK
What do I know?

LUNA
The FTF want us to destroy Brain Mapping.
(off Nick's reaction)
Relax; we're not going to.

NICK
(taking memory stick)
You're right. You're not.

JOSH
Calm down.

NICK
You calm down. Both of you.

LUNA
We only want to keep it away from Eternity Connection.

JOSH
(to Nick)
We encrypted new security protocols into Tyson.

Hands over a NOTE PAGE --

7D - 12E - 65BQ - 44Y - 93L

LUNA
(re: memory stick)
And we have that.

NICK
I--I don't...what?

JOSH
(opening the door)
Let's just get out of here.

NICK
Whoa-whoa-whoa, hang on.

LUNA
We can't. One of the FTF--

SCREAMS OF PANIC

giving Nick and the others a start.

Oris and Co. have invaded, shooting at will. Sticking ELECTRONIC CHARGERS on the wall as they move and kill.

BANG! -- Josh drops like a rock from a bullet to the head.

LUNA
Josh...

His cold dead eyes stare up at them.

Nick pulls Luna back inside Lab Bay, kicking shut the door.

NICK
Computer. Lock door to Lab Bay Three.

The fogged-up door automatically locks.

Backtracking, they almost stumble over Ivy's body - she is slowly coming around. Nick clumsily pockets the scrunched-up note page & memory stick --

NICK (CONT'D)
911 call. Message: security breach.

He guides Luna out a rear door --

INT. UNUSED TEST BAY - CONTINUOUS

...and through the darkness, passing the murderous chaos raging on the main floor made visible by a wall of glass.

LAB BAY

Oris, on the outside, tries to break the impenetrable Plexiglas.

A dazed Ivy punches a button. The door opens. Oris enters, seeing her muddled condition.

TEST BAY

Nick guides a shaking, freaked-out Luna out the Fire Exit, revealing a EC Agent on watch - Nick shuts the door when

SUBMACHINE GUN ROUNDS RIP THROUGH and POP LUNA'S CHEST, body-shielding Nick.

She slips from Nick's grasp, collapsing to the ground.

Before Nick can process the horror - the big, burly Agent RUSHES THROUGH THE FIRE EXIT DOOR - PROPELLING NICK BACKWARDS - he hits a worktable adorned with BASKETS OF NEURO-CHIPS.

Grabs one as the EC Agent enters.

LAB BAY

ORIS
What happened?

Before Ivy can reply, Zara rushes in with concern:

ZARA
We can't find Brain Mapping in the system.

IVY
That's because he deleted it and downloaded it to--
(off seeing the memory stick is gone)
You got the memory stick? You get him?

She scans the Main floor with urgency. Only seeing bodies and EC Agents packing up the quantum computer, Tyson.

ZARA
Aldridge? Yeah, right there.

IVY
No not - Dalton. He has Brain Mapping.

ORIS
Who?

KSSHFWOOM! -- Nick's EC Agent CRASHES through the wall revealing Nick in the Test Bay. He starts running.

Ivy DRAWS Oris' SIDE-ARM and starts SHOOTING.

INT. RHEA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Nick rushes out...

EXT. TERRACE

...attaching the neuro-chip to his ankles. It powers up.

A BLUE BEAM FLOWS ACROSS HIS RETINA

The closest high-rise building is WAAAY across, a good fifty yards. But Nick doesn't break stride and as Ivy, & Co. arrive --

he LAUNCHES himself off - neuro-chip flickers wildly.

ORIS
The hell?

NICK

sails over the DIZZYING DROP...neuro-chip SHORT-CIRCUITS - his forward momentum slacks - he lands...

SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP

...HAPHAZARDLY and HARD...his weight drags him back over the edge...there he hangs, legs dangling forty floors above ground -- neuro-chip fritz out, SPIT SPARKS.

Groaning, he uses all his strength to CLIMB UP. Lies flat out on the granite, drawing wheezy breaths.

NEURAL NETWORK TERRACE

ZARA
(impressed)
That joint be jumpin'.

SKYSCRAPER ROOF

neuro-chip GOES ON FIRE. Nick quickly pulls it off, BURNING his hand. Detaches the second.

NICK
(to himself)
How do you like bitch-boy now?

He rolls up onto his knees, pocketing the second neuro-chip. Gives Ivy and Co. the finger.

IVY

sneers. Perversely impressed.

She follows Oris and Zara back inside. Revealing --

Nick across on the neighboring skyscraper roof
YANKS OPEN the roof door.

INT. TEST BAY - CONTINUOUS

As Oris and Zara hurry out to the main floor, Ivy doubles back. Grabs a couple neuro-chips off the floor.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKYSCRAPER - MAIN ENTRANCE - MINUTES LATER

Nick stumbles out. Lightheaded. Not sure where to go. Muddled by the teeming PROFESSIONALS and EVENING SHOPPERS.

Finds a POLICE OFFICER doing patrol on HORSEBACK across the street.

ANGLE ON CHALKY

waiting in her SUV. Eyes glued on Neural Network main entrance, waiting for Luna and Josh.

Sees Ivy and Oris hustle out. Heading toward the neighboring skyscraper.

CHALKY

What the...

(into headset)

Uh...Oris is here...I'm staring right at the guy...he's running somewhere with what's-her-face, Ivy...How do I know?

IVY AND ORIS

reach the neighboring skyscraper. Scan the Foyer.

ZARA

pulls up in a EC Coupe ahead of Chalky's parked SUV. EC Coupe #2 zooms past. Heading back to base.

CHALKY

crouches down, knows her too.

BACK ON IVY & ORIS:

ORIS

What'd you think? Car park?

Ivy scopes the street, worried. Finds Nick amongst the crowd.

IVY

Got him.

She rushes onward - a military-styled sprinter.

NICK

reaches the mounted police officer -- when --

KA-BOOOOM! - inward EXPLOSION rips through the top floor at Neural Network.

The street SHAKES - knocking Nick and everyone else off their feet including the Police Horse -- NEEEE!

CHALKY'S CAR WINDOWS

SPIDER-CRACK from the blast concussion.

NICK

fumbles onto his back - A FIREBALL ROLLS OUT into the sky - SEARED SECTIONS SLAM DOWN ONTO CARS - people flee from the GLASS and FLAMING DEBRIS.

Nick manages to rise. The Police officer lies half-conscious on the street.

Through the chaos and devastation, a blur approaches. Fast. It's Ivy.

Nick remembers to move, right down the traffic jam.

IVY

not far behind. Shoves dazed people out of her way.

Nick turns down a side-street. Hordes of GAWKERS are on-coming, rushing to see what the explosion was.

Ivy loses him in the bustle. Oris catches up. Both scan frantically.

Spot Nick exiting the mouth of the side-street.

ORIS (INTO EARPIECE)
(running)
He heading down Horton Plaza.

BACK ON:

ZARA

peels out in the Coupe. Revealing Chalky watching.

EXT. HORTON PLAZA - CONTINUOUS

Nick hauls ass down this busy main street. Past the Shoppers and Happy Hour Patrons.

Ivy exits the side-street in BG. Faster than Oris.

Attaches a neuro-chip onto her thigh...

The cluttered sidewalks force Nick onto the street, sprinting alongside traffic.

...the neuro-chip powers up - Ivy ZOOMS ONWARDS - Oris comes to stop, astonished.

IVY

VAULTS over an opening car door like an Olympic huddler -- slides across a Toyota hood, never breaking stride.

Zara in the EC Coupe curbs up ahead, blocking off Nick's escape.

Ivy zooms up to grab hold of Nick - when he seeing Zara, banks back onto the sidewalk - Ivy ZOOMS PAST AND SLAMS HARD INTO A LAMPPOST - it SNAPS - FALLS ONTO THE STREET --

- an oncoming HONDA SWERVES - SIDE-SLAMs into a LEXUS --

Nick bolts into --

DEPARTMENT STORE - WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT

bobs and weaves around the busy DISPLAY TABLES.

Ivy charges in. Furious. She stops to scan.

A peppy PERFUME LADY offers to spray "Ralentir for Women" - IVY SMACKS HER OUT OF THE WAY.

NICK

heads out a exit on the far end. Ivy sees.

IVY
(into earpiece)
He's gone out the south end exit.

Ivy SURGES FORWARD --

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE - CONTINUOUS

-- CRASHES THROUGH THE SOUTH END EXIT, THE ELECTRIC DOORS FLY, sparks everywhere, people stare dumbfounded.

Nick, up ahead, comes to a stop from all the noise. Seeing Ivy in the middle of traffic, having run to fast and far. Her neurochip starts to malfunction from overpower.

She locks onto him with a hunter's glare.

He runs...halfway across a crosswalk -- SHE ZOOMS UP BEHIND HIM, TAKING HOLD...

IVY
Where you going, bitch-boy --

KAWHUMP! -- Ivy goes right over Chalky's SUV's hood - screeches to a stop -- she hits the pavement rolling... flattens out, conked. Neurochip powers down with a hum.

SUV backs up to Nick, on all fours.

CHALKY (OFF)
(a low echo)
Quickly.

Nick, bleary eyed, looks up. Sound returning.

The open passenger door reveals Chalky behind the wheel

Zara comes in her Coupe - Chalky goes into reverse - a SCREECH of TIRES - CRUNCHES INTO Zara's Coupe - pushes it right back across the street - Zara rumbles along the bumpy ride, helpless -

Chalky reverses Zara's Coupe straight into a Coffee Shop - BREEESH!

Chalky stops. Gears into forward. Floors it -- up to Nick. The passenger door swinging open.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
Move!

He goes to get in --

ROUNDS CLANG INTO METAL AROUND HIM

ORIS

approaches fast, RAPIDLY OPENING FIRE - people scatter.

Chalky aims her GUN across Nick's shoulder, FIRING BACK, HE YELPS FROM THE SHARP JARRING SOUND.

Oris' gun KLACKS empty - he takes cover behind a parked BMW - GLASS SHOWERS OVER HIM IN SHARP SHARDS.

Zara comes up behind - goes to fire - Chalky, quicker, pulls in Nick as --

CHALKY'S SUV

goes into reverse - KNOCKS ZARA ONTO HER ASS, and PEELS OUT, tires smoking

Oris helps up a winded Zara. Bystanders stare, both petrified and fascinated.

ORIS
See who that was?

ZARA
(in pain)
I saw.

ORIS
Quick moves for a perished military
dog.

POLICE SIRENS approach in the distance.

ZARA
(bent over)
Get the car.

Oris runs off. Zara spots Ivy, coming around up ahead.

INT. CHALKY'S SUV - TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

Nick warily sits up, all messed up.
Coughs, catching his breath.
The world whooshes past him.
Stares at Chalky driving with nerveless absorption.

CHALKY (INTO HEADSET)
Bad news, Zara spotted me. So did
Oris...Naw, naw, they recognized me,
definitely...Yeah, okay.

Reloads her pistol, keeping one hand on the wheel.

Nick looks away --

Seeing BLOOD on his shirt. Luna's blood.

FLASHBACK IMAGES APPEAR BRIEFLY ON THE WINDOW GLASS
Luna is shot in his arms.

He rubs the stain. Won't come off. Dried in.

CHALKY (OFF)
(to Nick)
You okay?

Nick looks up. Devastated.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
Can you talk?

No response.

EXT. STREET -- CONTINUOUS

The SUV jinks in and out of traffic.

INT. CHALKY'S SUV - CONTINUOUS

CHALKY
What about Piper? Professor Rhea Piper
- you know her?

NICK
No. I mean I know of her, who she is.

STREET

Chalky's SUV rounds a corner. Laying rubber.

CHALKY'S SUV

CHALKY
Did Porter and Aldridge manage to
destroy Tyson?

NICK
No. Ivy and whoever, they are got.

CHALKY
What about Brain Mapping? They get
that too?

NICK
I...I don't--I dunno. Probably.

Chalky makes a jaw-clenched slow burn

STREET

Chalky's SUV high-speeds along.

CHALKY'S SUV

NICK
Ivy flipped, she--she just attacked me
before I knew what was going on. Pulled
out a gun, even.

CHALKY
Ivy's ex-Special Forces.

NICK
Ivy?

CHALKY
She was a "Beast of the Field." Skill
sets in short-duration strikes, small-
scale offensive operations, close
quarters combat.

NICK
I don't...what?

CHALKY
Ivy was recruited out-of-the-job by a
private security firm called Willow.

STREET

Chalky's SUV cuts through. STREETLIGHTS flare across.

CHALKY'S SUV

CHALKY
Willow isn't just any security firm.
It was owned by a private investment
group called Eternity Connection.

NICK
L-Luna and Josh said something about--

CHALKY
Down.

She pushes him down as HEADLIGHTS strobe through - TRACERS WHIZZ PAST -- Chalky drives half-blind.

STREET

EC Coupe comes in fast
Zara leans out her passenger window to the waist, FIRING A SUBMACHINE GUN -- BRRRA-AA-AP! -- Oris drives. Ivy is in the back. Still recovering.

Chalky's SUV jinks side-to-side - rounds rake the tailgate and ricochet off the pavement in quick flashes of light.

CHALKY'S SUV

CHALKY
(removing headset)
Take the wheel.

Nick hesitates. She firmly directs his hands over.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
Keep doing quick turns. Smash your foot down on the throttle -- right down.

Nick, on automatic pilot, leans his foot over and does so, steering from the passenger seat.

Chalky readies a second pistol, holstered behind her back.

With one in each hand, she lunges up through the open sunroof -- OPENS FIRE -- slugs CLANG into metal.

NICK

cuts the wheel hard - floors the SUV into reverse --

STREET

The SUV SQUEALS backwards past the EC Coupe surprising Chalky as they do a sloppy pivot - she spins herself around and UNLOADS her left-handed pistol --

Coupe's back tires BLOW OUT --

SUV skids into a spin and SLAMS into a parked Ford --

EC Coupe swerves out of control - flips sideways - slides across the asphalt - PEDESTRIANS scramble - the Coupe K-WHAMS through a Mini-Mart.

Chalky keeps her smoking pistol elevated, ready to rock sizing up the situation with an enigmatic look and tilt of the head.

Passers-by crowd around the smash up.

The SUV is on a quiet street.

Chalky spots a YOUNG COUPLE plastered on a nearby bench gaping at her like she was an alien that landed.

Judging them as a non-threat, Chalky slides back down --

CHALKY'S SUV

Nick, out-cold, is face-down on the wheel. She gives him a once over...satisfied, picks up her headset.

CHALKY
 (into headset)
 Anyone there?...We had some trouble but
 it's over.
 (re: Nick)
 He'll make it alright.

FADE TO BLACK:

The sound of the SUV pulling out. Drives off.

FADE UP:

INT. EC HQ - LAB - NIGHT (LATER)

Ivy types code into Tyson
 becoming more and more frantic as it keeps Bleeping --

**Invalid Password
 Please try again**

Mya is behind her.

MYA
 So you can't access it?

IVY
 I don't...I don't understand it.

MYA
 And you're such a deep thinker.

Zara is reviewing VIDEO PLAYBACK of CCTV footage of Chalky's SUV ramming into the Coupe.

ZARA
 (to Mya)
 There. That's her. Chalky. Jody
 Chalke. Unreal.

MYA
 (to Ivy)
 You know her too.

IVY
 No. I saw her today, but no we never
 met.

MYA
 (re: Tyson)
 Well?

IVY
 It's like...

MYA
 Yes?

IVY
 The codes have been changed.

ORIS
 (entering)
 Ivy. You're wanted.

Ivy takes a moment. Dreading this. Tries Tyson once more. Desperate. It BLEEPs at her. She snarls to herself.

INT. CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Ivy on the move. Alone.

Stops outside a ROOM...composes herself.
Moves through the sliding doors...

INT. CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

...and enters a mini-place of worship that's found in any hospital or funeral home. Except this one is encased in glass and has one kick-ass, high-up view of downtown San Diego, a twinkling glow.

SOMEONE prays silently at the front aisle.
It's Solenko, our visionary scientist.

IVY

Mr. Solenko...

No response. She drops her punch line smile. Preparing for the worst. Tough girl is genuinely intimidated.

SOLENKO

Ivy...ever wonder about the movement of humanity?

He rises to face her.

SOLENKO (CONT'D)

How primordial goo billions could lead to all this?

(beat)

Are we creatures of chance? Or are events divine-willed?

(slowly approaching)

I'm not a fatalist making the answer simple: life is controllable. But free will is only as good as the technology we have to make it possible. So long as you're properly equipped, even the most improbable dream can become reality. The only real threat to my dream, to us, to our work, is the FTF.

(temper boiling over)

And you're goddamn well helping them.

IVY

It was a fluke, the whole thing: Nick getting away, him--

SOLENKO

I don't want to hear it. Thanks to you, the FTF now has the decoded brain material -- which they will destroy.

IVY

There's something else.

(beat)

Tyson. They installed new encryption codes. We can't access it -- but we will. Just need to get Dalton.

CUT TO:

NICK'S EYES...

INT. FTF CAMP - TENT - MORNING

...roving under the lids. From an uneasy dream.

IVY (V.O.)
The last man.

FAMILIAR VOICES ECHO -Neural Network Scientists, filled with alarm.

EYES POP OPEN
pupils dilate as he takes a SHARP BREATH.

HE LUNGES UP
groggy. Bleary-eyed. Mouth parched. Finds himself lying on a COT. One of several in a large, simple CANVAS TENT.

He eases himself onto his feet. Strained. In pain.

Reaches into pocket. Pulls out the MEMORY STICK wrapped in the note page with the encryption codes.

Clenches his FIST around them
carefully pockets them again as he stands unsteadily... moves towards a PASSAGEWAY to a connecting TENT.

Tentatively steps out. No one is around. Moves along.

Reaches a

KITCHEN AREA

Small. Empty. He leaves only to double-back.

A morning talk show on a TV MONITOR is talking about him. His PHOTO is superimposed.

SHOW MODERATOR (ON TV)
Details are still coming in, but we are told his name is Nicholas Dalton.

CHALKY (OFF)
We all be terrorists now.

Nick finds Chalky opening the refrigerator.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
Must be feeling headachy. Dehydrated.

She offers him BOTTLED WATER but he instinctively jerks back like a scared dog. She puts it down for him to take.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
They want to question you about the explosion at Neural Network. And me.

NICK
(hoarse)
What?

She gestures over.

TV shows SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE of Chalky picking Nick up, firing her gun.

MODERATOR (ON TV)
 Gunshots were fired just a block and a half from the explosion. It is believed some brave San Diegoians tried to intervene.

NICK
 This shit is too surreal.

CHALKY
 Come on. Ethan wants to see you.

INT. TENT CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Nick lags behind a swiftly moving Chalky.

NICK
 Who's Ethan?

CHALKY
 Ethan Dallas.

NICK
 W...wait. Dr. Ethan Dallas? The bio-engineer?

CHALKY
 Ethan stays away from that kinda thing now.

NICK
 Stays away from it? He's dead. Died in that lab explosion from a botched experiment.

CHALKY
 Yeah. I know.

NICK
 You know?

She pushes open the flap-door -- BLINDING SUNSHINE.

EXT. FTF CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Nick, wincing, emerges to find himself in the FTF's training and living compound.

Located in the East California desert, DEATH VALLEY a golden sandy landscape, consisting of both flat planes and massive dunes.

CHALKY
 (re: camp)
 We just got here ourselves. We have a second camp up north, but that's another story.

He scans around, observing a dozen or so FTF AGENTS --

(1) set up a basketball court.

(2) erect a SHOOTING RANGE. Unpack CONCUSSION RIFLES. Some resemble pump-action shotguns. Others, M4 MACHINE GUNS. They fire COMPRESSED CAPSULES OF IONIZED AIR.

an FTF AGENT FIRES on a dummy target.

(3) lay the groundwork for a self-sufficiency garden.

Chalky, as she moves, hands Nick a THIN, FIVE-INCH DEVICE, A TRACKER.

CHALKY
Here. Keep this on you.

NICK
What is it?

CHALKY
A tracker. It's easy to get lost
around here. Put it in your pocket.

Nick slides down his pack pocket.

A PIPE BURSTS. WATER GUSHES.
FTF AGENTS scramble to contain it.

CHALKY
(calling out)
You got it?

VOICE (OFF)
Yeah. We cool.

Nick, for a micro-moment, sees Luna. Focuses. Just a woman with the same frame and hair.

He shakes it off. Follows Chalky into --

INT. TENT/COMPUTER CONTROL AREA - CONTINUOUS

...moving down some steps...around a corner...into --

CONTROL ROOM

Some new faces for Nick: Maddox, Yeats and Lamar, the three we saw earlier with Ethan outside Rhea's cabin.

CHALKY
This is Maddox. Yeats. Lamar.

Points over to ANTON, working the console, 30's, a computer hotshot with a jazz musician look. He's monitoring a multi-screen system showing a satellite jack-in. He's waiting for something.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
That's Anton.

Anton waves over, all cool like.

MADDOX
(to Nick)
Man, how are you still alive?

NICK
Bad luck, I guess.

YEATS
(patting him on
the back)
Like the rest of us.

LAMAR
 (sizing up Nick)
 Talk about being touched by an angel.

Nick turns to see Ethan stepping up. More surreal shit.

CHALKY
 And Nick, this is Ethan—

NICK
 Dr. Dallas.

ETHAN
 You know me?

NICK
 Your papers on artificial neural
 networks were required reading when I
 was coming up.

Ethan smiles slightly. Remembering.

ETHAN
 I'd forgotten that my work was teaching
 material.

Points over to a computer screen, showing ACADEMIC PAPERS
 along with FOOTAGE of Nick as a post-grad student giving a
 presentation.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
 I've been reviewing some of your own
 papers, your ideas. Impressive.

NICK
 The news said you went up in a lab
 experiment gone wrong.

ETHAN
 I needed the cover. To disappear. We
 all did.

NICK
 (looking around)
 To start up this place? The FTF?

The others swap a look. Lamar mouths "FTF?"

ETHAN
 Actually, Nick...we don't have a name.
 Rhea called us that because, well, we,
 I talk about the future a lot. How
 nothing is definite. "Fight the
 Future" F-T-F.

Nick nods, feeling awkward. Self-conscious.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
 (beat)
 It all starts with Solenko, Dominic
 Solenko. You've heard of him,
 obviously.

NICK
 Helped develop the first microchip.

CUT TO:

INT. EC HQ - LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Solenko is working on the Tyson computer. Engrossed. It's cabled up to another computer terminal with transparent screen displays showing alphanumeric readouts.

SOLENKO

Computer, multiply the search speed by four.

The alphanumeric readouts start changing faster than the human eye can follow. Mya enters.

MYA

The Dalton file.

She plugs in a USB stick into a widescreen, calling up Nick's video profile.

BACK TO:

INT. FTF CAMP - TENT/COMPUTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

ETHAN

Us of us here, everyone outside, we all used to work for Solenko. Or Eternity Connection. On something called Project Majestic. Part private, part military.

NICK

Military?

ETHAN

Solenko has a deal with the government. Eternity Connection Scientists would boost the military's weapons program, in exchange the government helped finance Eternity Connection's own projects. That's how Neural Network started.

NICK

(beat)

These military projects...what's their story, their deal?

ETHAN

Brain experimentation.

(beat)

The military were looking to create the perfect soldier. Robotic obedience. GI's like most of the guys on this camp were used as test subjects. Solenko fed that that research over to you guys at Neural Network, to help you with Brain Mapping. You ever wonder where your external research came from?

NICK

Assumed it came from Cal Tech.

MADDOX

Same difference at end of the day.

NICK
 Hey, We at Neural Network invented the neuro-chip. Okay? Solenko or any other Eternity whoever above-average asshole had nothing to do with it. Or us them.

ETHAN
 Inventing the neuro-chip was an accident, immaterial to Solenko's objective. He wanted Brain Mapping, to understand how the brain works.

NICK
 Why?

ETHAN
 To fuse it with electronic transcendence.

NICK
 Luna said something about that. Virtual reality, mind upload. So what if they get combined?

ETHAN
 It will forcibly lead to the next stage in evolution.

NICK
 What?

ETHAN
 A second genesis. Adam and Eve 2.0

ANTON
 Hey, ramblers?
 (re: computer screen)
 The satellite is coming around.

Everyone crowds around, bar Nick, no idea what's happening.

BACK TO:

INT. EC HQ - LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Solenko wanders around as Mya reviews Nick's video profile.

MYA
 Everything the FTF represents conflicts with Dalton's value-system. Dalton is a thrill-seeker, has an impatient attitude, a no-limits mentality. Psychological testing did suggest a neurosis underlining his behavior, but...

SOLENKO
 What type of neurosis? Bio or social?

MYA
 Social. Anxiety; obsessive thoughts; compulsions.

SOLENKO
 Any discernable pattern?

MYA
 Childhood. High school.

SOLENKO
That's his driving force?

MYA
Each to her or his own, Dominic.
(re: Luna's profile)
Porter sought to end paralysis stemming
from her mother being wheelchair-bound.
(back onto Nick)
Dalton applied science to offset his
bad experiences with sports.

SOLENKO
Sports?

MYA
Mr. Dalton seems to be docking some
grudges. Has an aberrant vendetta
against his body.

SOLENKO
My kind of guy.

Oris and Zara enter.

ORIS
We broke her. Piper.

Solenko lowers his gaze. Guilty and uneasy.

MYA
And?

ZARA
It ain't good.

After a beat...

MYA
Are you trying to tell us
telepathically?

ORIS
Piper gave up the location to the
Virtual Reality site.

MYA
Oh for the love of...

ZARA
They're planning a strike and destroy.

BACK TO:

INT. FTF CAMP - COMPUTER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BANK OF MONITORS SHOWING SATELLITE READINGS

of an office complex in an isolated location.

Chalky, Ethan and the others are debating. Nick looks-on.
Anton also keeps quiet, working the console.

CHALKY
It's too unsafe.

LAMAR
If Eternity Connection knew we was
coming, they'd bail.

YEATS
Big style.

LAMAR
(re: computer screen)
But they ain't. They're staying put.

MADDOX
You don't think they're out to trick us?

LAMAR
I don't think subtly is their game.

CHALKY
I do. Lure us in.

ETHAN
That would be pretty risky for their side.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. EC HQ - CONTINUOUS

Mya and Solenko now debate. Oris and Zara observe.

MYA
Waaay too risky. We should evacuate the site. Relocate.

ORIS
Relocating mighten be the way to go on this.

MYA
Excuse me?

SOLENKO
(to Oris)
Why not?

ZARA
If the FTF or whatever they call themselves do decide to hit, they gotta have some kind of surveillance on the go.

ORIS
They know we snatched Piper, right? So they gotta think we know everything she knows.

ZARA
They won't do anything if we start moving everything.

ORIS
And there's no point moving the site anyhow since they'd tag us wherever we go.

Solenko and Mya swap a look.

MYA
(to Oris & Zara)
How can we be certain the FTF will come?

BACK TO:

INT. FTF CAMP - COMPUTER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ETHAN
Virtual Reality is everything to
Eternity Connection. Losing that would
set them back years.

CHALKY
They still have Brain Mapping.

Nick reacts. Using his hand to cover the memory stick
BULGING from his pocket.

ETHAN
Brain Mapping on its own is worthless.

LAMAR
(to everyone)
What are we about if we don't strike?

MADDOX
We shouldn't be making moves in a
hurry.

ETHAN
True. But we do have to factor in the
financial problem.

CHALKY
We broke?

ETHAN
Rhea was paying the bills. And now
that we have two camps, we're working
against the clock.

YEATS
What're you getting at?

ETHAN
(beat)
That we keep watching the Virtual
Reality site. And, if things look
kosher, we go in. Next week. As
planned.

Chalky swaps a displeased glance with Maddox.

LAMAR
Right on.

She and Yeats high-five, both sharing the same vibe.

BACK TO:

INT. EC HQ - CONTINUOUS

ORIS
What should we do with Piper now that
we're done with her?

Solenko leaves.

ZARA
(to Mya)
That a signal to do something?

Mya, restless, shrugs no idea.

CUT TO:

EXT. FTF TRAINING CAMP - CONTINUOUS

WATER GUSHES OUT

from a dug dry stream. FTF Agents are working to contain it. Chalky assists.

Nick wanders past with Ethan.

NICK

If Solenko is the ultimate head-case, why not take him out? Why target technology?

ETHAN

Even if Solenko or Eternity Connection never existed, nothing would change, we would still be out here.

NICK

How do you work that out?

ETHAN

What do you think science is?

NICK

Being able to build cool stuff.

ETHAN

(warming to Nick)

Fair enough. But that's your take on things. For others, science is another story.

NICK

About what?

ETHAN

Discovering the correct mechanical laws and equations that will decipher the mind of God.

NICK

Great, another born-again scientist. Just what the mix needs.

ETHAN

Think about it for a second. Think about every major modern scientific accomplishment: space exploration, DNA decoding - the scientists involved were all religiously-motivated.

NICK

Religiously-motivated?

ETHAN

God isn't dead, Nick. Scientists since Ancient Greece have been doing their damndest to reboot the promise of everlasting peace. Science is a spiritual process, a process, Nick, that's seeking to reconnect mortals with the source, redeem our divinity.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. EC HQ - HOLDING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rhea sits slumped in a chair uncontrollably twitching. Her body in shock. Looks pale and haggard. Undergone a harrowing ordeal.

She is bathed in a SPOTLIGHT in an otherwise dark room.

A SILHOUETTED FIGURE move paces behind her --

SOLENKO (OFF)

The prophet Mohammad (pbuh) said that God could be understood through studying both the Koran and the cosmos. The Jewish Gollum is a sentient robot. Even the Dali Lama said he's fine with being reincarnated into a computer. Who are you to say otherwise?

RHEA

But you don't want to integrate with a computer. Your plan is a whole lot different.

SOLENKO (OFF)

The principle is the same: to liberate the mind and soul. To move away from biology.

RHEA

(beat)

I have watched the world burn itself out...waste resources...debase social values...and did nothing.

SOLENKO (OFF)

What could you have done? Decay is inevitability. Destiny. Evolution.

RHEA

I can't live with that lie any longer.

SOLENKO (OFF)

Lie? Conventional society is cold and demented. Nature is brutal and inhospitable. Bohemia is self-absorbed and parasitic. Tell me...where's the lie?

RHEA

We have the resources and capabilities to meet every single human need. Every one.

SOLENKO (OFF)

Say we did satisfy every desire, every want...what would that change? Human nature is egocentric; small-minded; self-destructive. People only want comfort. Give it to them and they only want more.

SOLENKO'S FACE peers up beside hers.

SOLENKO (CONT'D)

Selfishness is all they know.

BACK TO:

INT. FTF CAMP - MESS TENT - NIGHT

Nick sits down opposite to Ethan. Having dinner. Pasta w/ butter. Other FTF Agents are collecting theirs. Chalky is on scoop-&-serve duties.

NICK

No I don't get it. Because all your talk about slowing down technological growth sounds cruel to me.

ETHAN

Cruel?

NICK

Yeah. Cruel. The whole point is to go faster. Not slow it down.

FLASH FORWARD TO:

INT. FTF CAMP - WORK ROOM - NIGHT

Chalky shows Nick around. A large worktable is its centerpiece. Tools are scattered around:

CHALKY

This is where we make the concussion riffles. Well, Ethan designs them and tells us how to build them.

INT. FTF CAMP - PORTABLE WASHROOM - NIGHT

CHALKY

(re: sinks)

Push taps. Cold water, usually.

(re: showers)

You can shower and change in the cubicle, save on embarrassment. And do know insects love this place. So try and be quick, get eaten alive otherwise.

(re: "Women Only")

They're ours. No perving.

Nick blushes. Chalky smirks to herself.

CHALKY (CONT'D)

Come on. We'll change your clothes.

EXT. FTF CAMP - LATER

Nick, in a new t-shirt and pants, drops his blood-stained clothes into a BLAZING FIRE in a cement Firepit administered by Chalky.

He watches the dry blood scorch in the flames

INT. LIVING QUARTERS TENT - LATER

Nick lies awake in his cot. Staring at the memory stick wrapped in the note page held tightly in his hand

It's late. Dark. Quiet. The others are asleep.

Strange noises. He looks over.

It's Chalky. Mumbling in her sleep, upset.

He sits up. Hesitates. Goes to get up -- she stops.

He lies back down...places the memory stick & note page under his pillow...curls up into the fetus position...closes his eyes.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. EC HQ - HOLDING ROOM - DAY

RHEA OPENS HER EYES

sitting opposite to Solenko. She has recovered her senses somewhat, less shaky. He helps her drink water.

RHEA
I can't look at myself any longer. I don't know how you can.

SOLENKO
Why does infinity scare you?

RHEA
It doesn't.

SOLENKO
What then?

RHEA
Those that get left behind.

SOLENKO
Rhea, there are a trillion, trillion stars. What's it matter if one person dies or a billion? The universe doesn't care. Because there are a trillion, trillion stars.

RHEA
It's murder, Dominic.

DOMINIC
It's evolution, Rhea.

RHEA
Global destruction...giga death.

DOMINIC
How many life forms died in the first extinction? Or in the second extinction? What we are doing is only the next stage of development, an evolutionary jump into the complex order of mystery and wonder.

BACK TO:

EXT. FTF CAMP - SHOOTING RANGE - DAY

ETHAN
Cosmic consciousness.

BA-BAM! -- Chalky and FTF Agents practice shooting CONCUSSION SHOTGUNS. Resemble pump-action shotguns, but fire compressed capsules of ionized air. Powerful, but non-lethal. Lamar fieldstrips taser riffles.

Nick follows Ethan as he recalibrates concussion rifles malfunctioning.

NICK
What?

ETHAN
Cosmic consciousness. That's Solenko's goal.

NICK
You mean immortality?

ETHAN
The cyberpunks didn't go far enough for Solenko. They wanted to upload into a machine, right?

NICK
Yeah.

ETHAN
Well Solenko wants to commune with space and achieve cosmic consciousness
(beat)
Or cosmic souls, if you prefer.

NICK
I don't.

LAMAR
(chiming in)
Guys like Solenko don't got a soul to start off with.

YEATS
(sitting down)
That's why they're killing for one.

ETHAN
(re: shooting range)
Hey you two? Concentrate.

Yeats aims and fires -- BA-BLAM!

INT. FTF CAMP - MESS TENT - LATER

Nick helps the Chef dish out lunch. Scoops and serves.

CHALKY
Thanks.

He smiles politely and moves onto his next customer.

Chalky looks back at him.

INT. KITCHEN AREA - LATER

Nick SCRAPES lunch plates.
A messy and disgusting chore. Annoying. Sticky bits almost impossible to come off.

He recites the encryption codes to himself, memorizing them
"7D - 12E - 65BQ - 44Y - 93L."

He reaches over to the PORTABLE COOKER. Heats up the gas stove. Burns the NOTE PAGE.

SUPERIMPOSE IMAGES OF LUNA
giving Nick pause.

He resumes scraping. Harder. Faster.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. EC HQ - HOLDING ROOM - DUSK

Rhea and Solenko are more relaxed with one another. She drinks a hot cup of coffee using both hands.

RHEA
It's a sin, you know.

SOLENKO
What is?

RHEA
To change your natural-born life.

SOLENKO
That's a literal interpretation of an allegorical text.

RHEA
Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden because they tried to be like God.

SOLENKO
I'm trying to reconcile with God.

RHEA
Wasn't Lucifer punished for that very reason?

SOLENKO
Lucifer was a revolutionary. I'm merely returning home.

BACK TO:

INT. FTF CAMP - COMPUTER TENT - MORNING

Anton is reviewing PLAYBACK SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE of the EC Virtual Reality site in FAST MOTION. Turns to Ethan behind him.

ANTON
Still normal activity. Staff left last night. They come back this morning. It's all good.

Ethan nods and moves out. Nick falls in beside him.

NICK
If Solenko and his buddies want to live forever, big deal.

ETHAN
It wouldn't be if we could afford accidents.

NICK
What kind of accidents?

They head outside...

FTF CAMP

...move along.

ETHAN
Solenko wants to redesign individual atoms to specific patterns of information using techniques of molecular nanotechnology. But--

NICK
Nanobots. You're talking about nanobots -- manufacturing systems; assemblers.

ETHAN
(nodding yes)
Miniscule robots that can modify the DNA code and reprogram consciousness into energy, and then meld that energy into space, an infinite system of connections. A new creation.

NICK
First you have to understand consciousness.

ETHAN
(stopping)
No first we have to worry about nanobots, Nick. And what are nanobots at the end of the day?

NICK
(beat)
Viruses.

ETHAN
Viruses capable of self-replication. And if such viruses self-replicate -- and they will - they will gobble up the entire ecosystem.

Maddox waves Ethan over.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Exponentially-growing technologies plus transhuman desires, Nick, equals the end of the world. That's why technology needs to be regulated, capped. A legal threshold needs to be put in place; otherwise..

He leaves Nick deep in troubled thought.

INT. FTF CAMP - LATER

Nick wanders aimlessly...

A BASKETBALL COURT

Half-court pickup game. Five-a-side.

Maddox, due to his PROSTHETIC LEG, is forced to sit and watch. We sense from his desperate look and the way he clenches a ball, he would love to play.

Nick passes by.

Basketball dribbles. Sneakers scrape against the ground. Bodies circle. Defensive zigzags.

MADDOX
 (to Nick)
 Hey? Wanna jump in?

NICK
 (picking up pace)
 Uh no - thanks - you guys go.

Turns a corner - stops still --

Chalky, sitting, in a meditative state.

Nick heads off. Keeping a curious gaze on her.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. FTF CAMP - HOLDING ROOM - NIGHT

Solenko FIRES UP a cigarette dangling from Rhea's mouth.

RHEA
 Why can't we be happy with what we've
 have already? We're always trying to
 cheat nature, remodel ourselves. Why
 can't we live?

SOLENKO
 Who says what we have now is living?
 Don't you feel incomplete?

RHEA
 I think we've wasted our time here on
 earth.

SOLENKO
 We can't realize our potential on
 earth.

RHEA
 But in space we can?

SOLENKO
 Pure abstraction. Celestial
 transcendence. Able to experience the
 unreachable expanses of reality. As
 cosmic spirits.

RHEA
 At what cost?

SOLENKO
 The cost is impossible to avoid.

RHEA
 You don't care about avoiding it.

SOLENKO
 I'm not a monster.

RHEA
 What you are is dying.

Solenko's cool-as-ice expression vanishes. Surprised as much
 as confused.

SOLENKO
 How do you know that?

RHEA
Your condition is starting to show. In
your eyes.

Solenko leans into the nearest reflection, to inspect.

His eyes are marked by a GREY-WHITISH BLOT, especially his
right eye.

RHEA (CONT'D)
What is it? Degenerative liver
disease?

He looks back. She starts to chuckle.

Solenko, flustered, stands. Pushes a button. The door
automatically opens, flooding the room with light. Calming
himself slightly, turns back.

SOLENKO
Your simplistic moral values don't
impress me.

He leaves. The door closes shut on Rhea.

BACK TO:

INT. FTF CAMP - COMPUTER TENT - DAY

Nick is on his back, tinkering under the console like a
mechanic fixing a car. Anton sits and waits, swinging around
in his chair.

NICK
How's that?

Anton fiddles with some console touch-buttons. Power starts
up only to cut out with a HUM!

ANTON
Nope. 'Fraid not, man.

Nick returns to the service wires. After a beat...

ANTON (CONT'D)
Guess you be the yammering type, hunh?

NICK
Wha --? Oh. Sorry. Not much of a
talker these days. Been kinda stuck in
my own head.

ANTON
Makes sense. Bound to be weirded-out
after events. Just don't go Emily
Dickinson on us, a'ight.

NICK
Think I'm half-way there already.

ANTON
That bad, hunh?

NICK
I think I might have made a lot of bad
decisions.

ANTON
I get you. You got doubts. Regrets.
Better watch those soul-suckers, man.
Eat away at'cha, kill you slow.

Nick sits back up.

NICK
Try it now.

Anton works the console like a mega-pro. The console lights up like it's alive.

ANTON
Hey you did it. My man. Alright.

Anton's fingers dance on the console keypad.

NICK
You seem to like your high tech.

ANTON
Hardcore, baby.

NICK
Were you in the army, too? With Chalky
and the others?

ANTON
The army? Who me, man? Nu-uh. My
skinny ass was a private contractor.
Hired by Eternity Connection to work on
Project Majestic. Run their equipment
sorta deal. I won't deny it wasn't
fun. Got a serious pioneer boner over
it you know.

NICK
Yeah. Yeah, I do.

ANTON
For a long time I looked the other way
to what those high-stakes pricks were
up to. But that was then. Now we in
the now.

NICK
What'd you mean?

ANTON
My granddaddy hadda a saying: what
you've done, don't matter. It's what
you will do that counts. Some profound
shit.

On Nick, pensive:

INTERCUT TO:

INT. EC HQ - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Oris and Zara on the move

she holds onto a SYRINGE.

They enter the Holding Room.

Rhea sees the syringe. Knows what's coming.

Door closes shut.

BACK TO:

INT. FTF CAMP - LIVING QUARTERS TENT - NIGHT

Nick lies wide awake. Restless. Everyone else sleeps.

He gets up.

INT. WORK ROOM TENT - MINUTES LATER

Nick sets down the second neuro-chip he saved on a table. Gives its circuitry a once over. Definitely broken.

Rummages through some tools. Finds a laser gun. Tweezers. Some wires and cables. Acetylene soldering torch. Goggles.

Starts to tinker with the neuro-chip. Stops. Steps back and thinks. Reconsidering.

INT. LIVING QUARTERS TENT - MINUTES LATER

MADDOX'S PROSTHETIC LEG
lies beside his cot. The man himself is fast asleep.

Nick's hand reaches in. Takes it.

INT. WORK ROOM TENT - MINUTES LATER

Nick gives the leg a once over: half-plastic, half-steel. Basic model.

Gets to work.

Welds down iron bars - sparks fly. Drills screws into them, making the iron bars bendable. Writes down some goobledygook equations, working them out.

AB = Resistance
RG = Strain

Draws a rough schematic of the leg, making annotated adjustments.

Takes the neuro-chip. Disassembles it. Tinkers with its circuit board. Places a remodeled version into the calf of the leg.

Picks up a HINGE --

CHALKY (OFF)

Hey.

Nick jumps, getting a start. Chalky approaches.

CHALKY (CONT'D)

Sorry, I didn't mean...What're you doing?

NICK

Oh, uh...thought I'd try something.

CHALKY

Isn't that Maddox's prosthetic?

NICK

Uh, yeah.

(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)
 (off a look)
 Thought I'd upgrade it.

CHALKY
 You can do that?

NICK
 Try to.

CHALKY
 (beat)
 Wanna hand?

NICK
 Here. Hold it up.

Chalky balances the leg. Nick tries to weld open a space for the hinge joint. After a moment...

CHALKY
 Guess you know your way around this stuff, hunh?

NICK
 It was Luna who was the biomechatronics whiz. You know, Dr. Porter? She showed me some tricks.

CHALKY
 (re: equations)
 Is that to do with the flexing of the knee?

NICK
 (beat)
 You a doctor?

CHALKY
 Nurse.

NICK
 Yeah? Never figured you for a nurse.

She shrugs.

NICK (CONT'D)
 Especially a nurse that likes to meditate?
 (off a look)
 I saw you earlier.
 (beat)
 You a Buddhist?

CHALKY
 Not really anything. I picked up some things along the way, some from Buddhism, some from Hinduism...
 (beat)
 Ever meditate?

NICK
 Never tried it.

CHALKY
 It's hard. Trying to concentrate, I mean.

Nick takes possession of the leg.

NICK
Okay, let's see where we are.

He throws the leg, foot-first, onto the ground - it
BOOMERANGS AND PIERCES THROUGH THE TENT ROOF LIKE A
ROCKET...after a moment we hear it land outside with a THUD!

Chalky stares in amazement.

NICK
Guess my math was off.

EXT. FTF CAMP - BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Maddox plays in a pick-up game
with his new upgraded leg.

The whole camp watches. Cheering for both sides, making
small bets.

Maddox can move freely. With speed. Do wraparounds. Spin
moves. Crossover dribbles. Zig. Zag.

He catches a pass. Drives through the defense --

JUMPS - dunks with a full-throttle jam - FLIES WAY OVER THE
NET and lands on the other side, falling over.

Total silence falls. Only a light wind.

Maddox picks himself up, catching his breath. Feeling the
new power. Stretches out the kinks.

Eyes gradually move onto Nick beside Chalky.

INT. MESS TENT - LATER

Nick collects dinner trays from behind the pick-up counter.

Chalky hesitates, feeling bad about giving him her dirty
tray.

CHALKY
Naw, it's okay. I got it.

Starts cleaning it herself with the hose, holding up the line
which causes GROANS and JEERS.

EXT. FTF COMPOUND - BASKETBALL COURT - NIGHT

A basketball BOUNCES OFF the basket rim.

Nick catches the ball. Takes aim. Shoots. Misses again.

He frowns with annoyance as the basketball bounces over to
Chalky. He tenses up, self-conscious.

CHALKY
Didn't I see you drop a three-pointer?
At Neural Network?

NICK
Yeah, but that was different.

CHALKY
Were you wearing that thingamajig?

NICK
 (beat)
 The neuro-chip.

She bounces the ball over to him.

CHALKY
 Check it.

After an uneasy, self-conscious beat, he bounces it back.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
 (dribbling)
 Come on now, come on. Don't feel bad
 for feeling scared. I can fly.

Nick forces himself into defensive mode.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
 Ooh, he's stepping up. You sure? It's
 not too late to chicken out. You don't
 want any of this.

Out of no where she literally runs with the basketball like
 she was playing rugby and DUNKS it in. He gapes in response.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
 What? That's allowed.

Nick makes a face. Lightening up. Loosening up.

LONG LENS:

they mess around, silhouettes in the glow of moonlight.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE:

- (1) Nick serves breakfast. Chalky gives him a hand when
 it's not her turn. Ethan swaps a look with Maddox.
- (2) Nick and Chalky clean up tables together. After a few
 exchanged glances, he spays her with the hose.
- (3) She teaches him how to use a concussion riffle. He's
 into it. Hefts it like a new toy.
- (4) shows him some meditative techniques. He keeps
 laughing, can't help it.

Across the way --

Ethan observes with Lamar.

LAMAR
 You gonna squash that?

ETHAN
 (walking off)
 Squash what? They're adults.

LAMAR
 Mistake.

CUT TO:

STAR-FILLED SKY...

EXT. DESERT DUNE - OUTSIDE THE FTF CAMP - NIGHT

...pinpricks of twinkling light.

Nick and Chalky rest on the face of a dune. Staring up.

CHALKY
You believe in god?

NICK
I believe in a creator.

CHALKY
Really?

NICK
Definitely.

CHALKY
I was sure you'd say no.

NICK
Look up there. See all those stars?

CHALKY
Unh-hunh.

NICK
That's where we come from.

CHALKY
The stars?

NICK
Inside the stars.

CHALKY
Uh...okay...what?

NICK
We were baked up inside the stars.

CHALKY
That can't be...

NICK
It's true.

CHALKY
How?

NICK
Nuclear fusion reactions.

CHALKY
What's that?

NICK
Inside a star, okay, hydrogen is turned into helium; helium into oxygen and carbon; oxygen and carbon into nitrogen and phosphorous. And that cocktail of elements, okay...

CHALKY
Okay.

NICK
...that gets ejected out into space.

CHALKY
And they landed here? On earth?

NICK
Particles did, yeah. Billions of years ago. That's what caused the first cell organism.

CHALKY
You're making this up.

NICK
I'm not. Life is rigged.

CHALKY
Really, you think?

NICK
"With its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator."

CHALKY
That from the Bible?

NICK
The Origin of Species.

CHALKY
Now I know you're messing with me.

NICK
I'm not. There's a designer out there somewhere. Or designers. Divine scientists.

CHALKY
For real?

NICK
People - us - we're built. Cells aren't an accident - they're purposefully-built machines.

CHALKY
That is one spacey, trippy theory.

NICK
It is, isn't it? But how else can creation start with tiny microbes and end up with Copernicus - Galileo - Darwin - Freud - Kurzweil...us.

CHALKY
(beat)
And Solenko.

That comment sours the mood.

NICK
Yeah...yeah there is that downside.

CHALKY
(sits back)
Why are there bad people? I mean how do bad things fit into it all? The grand plan?

(MORE)

(CHALKY (CONT'D))
 (off Nick sitting back
 beside her)
 Why do we make bad choices?

NICK
 (beat)
 Don't know.

CHALKY
 (beat)
 Weird.

After a moment of contemplation...

NICK
 It could still work.

CHALKY
 What could?

NICK
 The neuro-chip. Brain Mapping. Not to
 run fast or anything like that. But
 for stroke victims...the blind...
 Parkinson's...autism.

CHALKY
 Mmm...sounds nice.

ON A LONG LENS, them as SILHOUETTES in the moonlight:

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING QUARTERS TENT - NIGHT

Nick and the others lie asleep in their cots.

CHALKY

groans. Having an unpleasant dream.

Nick gently wakes her - she gets a start.

EXT. FTF CAMP - LITTLE LATER

Chalky stands with her back to Nick. He sits on a fold-up
 chair. Listening with a thoughtful expression.

CHALKY
 Stitching and amputating. That's all
 you do when you're a medic. You try to
 stabilize the best you can, over the
 screams, the crying, but...

(beat)
 I must have helped put on a million
 prosthetic limbs.

(beat)
 This one afternoon, a roadside bomb
 took out this convey of VIP's. Guess
 who was among them. Solenko himself.

(beat)
 I figured him to be another privatizer
 looking to make out. In the mobile
 hospital, he said he wanted to pay me
 back for saving him. I said that it
 wasn't necessary, I was just doing my
 job and whatever.

(MORE)

CHALKY (CONT'D)

He said he wasn't offering charity,
that I had skills he could use.
Honestly I was only glad to say yes. I
wanted out. So off I went, assisting
in Eternity Connection experiments.
Using wounded soldiers as test
subjects. Some I had even trained with
in boot camp.

(looks up at the
winking stars)

Anton loves to say it's not what you've
done; it's what you're gonna do. But I
swear I can't get through a day when I
don't remember the shit I've done.

ON Nick, eyes down, moved:

DISSOLVE TO:

Nick...

INT. KITCHEN TENT - MORNING

...cleaning up post-breakfast.

He opens a cupboard to put sealed containers away --

LUNA'S GHOSTLY IMAGE APPEARS for a second on the glass door -
- being shot in his arms.

Nick stops, remembering.
Almost overcome.

CHALKY (OFF)

Nick...?

NICK

Hunh? Hey.

She steps up. Sheepish. Embarrassed.

CHALKY

Look, um, about last night, I'm sorry
about--

NICK

No, no, don't be.

CHALKY

I guess I got some bad crap slowing me
down; I didn't mean to unload it all--

NICK

(blunt)
You're honest, Chalky.

(beat)
It's a lot more than I am.

CHALKY

W--what'd you mean?

(smiling)
You're honest.

He hesitates...goes to say something, but --

MADDOX
 (to Shelby and other
 FTF Agents)
 Alright ladies, let's move out like we
 wanna.

CHALKY
 (to Nick)
 I gotta...talk later?

Nick strains a smile. She heads off with the others. After a beat, he starts sweeping around the now empty tables. Mind elsewhere.

A portable TV is on. Showing a rerun of THE WIRE, D'Angelo's Prison Book Club scene.

PRISON COUNSELOR (ON TV)
 Fitzgerald said that there were no
 second acts in American Lives. Do you
 believe that?

D'ANGELO (ON TV)
 He's saying that the past is always
 with us. Like at the end of the book
 you know? Boats and tides and all.
 Gatsby, he was who he was, and he did
 what he did, and cause he wasn't ready
 to get real with the story, that shit
 caught up to him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT DUNE - NIGHT

Nick and Chalky lay side-by-side. Sharing a blanket.

He stares up at the star-sprinkled sky with a troubled look, wide-awake. It's unclear if she is awake or asleep.

After a moment...

NICK
 When I was a kid, I was always building
 things. Lego, skeletons that came in
 biology sets. My first computer game
 console; I took it apart just so I
 could put it back together again.

(beat)

Problem was that kind of thing wasn't
 exactly cool when you're a teenager.
 And girls like Pixie Geller didn't look
 once at guys like me.

(beat)

Working at Neural Network, the more we
 discovered how the brain worked, the
 more I could see control over the body
 was possible. That I could upgrade my
 capabilities...relieve my life.

(beat)

Luna was different. She did it to
 change things. I mean, yeah, she had
 her own personal reasons too, but she
 did want to make bad things good:
 diseases, illnesses - wipe them out.
 I'm just this angry asshole-loser who
 can't get past high school. Luna
 should be alive. Not me.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT DUNE - MORNING

Nick awakens. Finds CHALKY'S ARM wrapped around him. She's fast asleep. He rests his head back down with an uneasy look.

TIME CUT TO:

Chalky stirs awake from a restful sleep. Nick's gone. She rises.

He's standing across from her. She beams with relief.

CHALKY

Hey.

He turns with an uneasy smile.
Holding onto the MEMORY STICK.

She squints with interest -- "what's that?"

CUT TO:

INT. WORKROOM TENT - DUSK

Chalky, Ethan, Lamar, Maddox and Yeats are preparing to leave. Checking concussion shotguns, taser guns. Other FTF Agents come and go. Atmosphere is tense.

LAMAR

So all this time our man Nick had Brain Mapping?

CHALKY

And he's the only one who knows the code to that, you know, quantum computer...

ETHAN

Tyson.

CHALKY

Right.

MADDOX

(chuckling)
Solenko must be going nuts.

This lightens the mood.

ETHAN

Nuts looking for Nick.

YEATS

Mega time.

LAMAR

Once we take out the Virtual Reality site, is that it? Game over?

CHALKY

(re: memory stick)
But...what are we gonna do with that?

The others stop to stare at her.

CHALKY

What?

YEATS
(confused)
We ain't gonna destroy the memory
stick?

CHALKY
Nick thinks that Brain Mapping could do
great things. And I think so too.

LAMAR
(to Ethan)
What I tell ya? Big mistake.

ETHAN
Too dangerous, Chalky.

Ethan moves out. The others follow...

CHALKY
Oh so because of shit-birds like
Solenko, the rest of the world can go
on as is?

FTF CAMP

The place is a beehive of activity.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
Nothing should change? We can all go
screw ourselves -- that's crap.
(to Maddox)
Jump in anytime.

MADDOX
Me?

CHALKY
Sucks to walk properly again, is that
it?

Yeats and Lamar groan and mumble in protest.

ETHAN
No, no, no, it's a reasonable argument.

CHALKY
Thank you.

ETHAN
Just not a convincing one.

CHALKY
Ethan--

ETHAN
We agreed that boundaries must be put
on the progression of technology.

CHALKY
I know that, Ethan, but--

ETHAN
Brain Mapping goes past that breaking
point.

CHALKY
Ethan, let's just--

ETHAN
Chalky, do you think this is the time
for this? Because I don't.

Maddox gives her a look. Chalky relents. The others walk
off. Tense, things to do.

She eyes Nick across the way, staring over.

TIME CUT:

Chalky and Nick meet half-way.

NICK
Destroy it?

CHALKY
Not yet. But they want to.

After a beat or two...

CHALKY (CONT'D)
Hang with Anton, okay?

He nods.

NICK
Some of you don't seem too thrilled
about doing this strike.

CHALKY
It's the waiting I hate the most. The
in-between time. Hate it.

NICK
What if it goes wrong?

CHALKY
Then it goes wrong.

Their locked gaze holds for a beat...

CHALKY (CONT'D)
See you later?

NICK
(beat)
Later.

They slowly back up and part ways.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE UP:

BLACKNESS...

EXT. REMOTE LOCATION - HIGHWAY - LATER (NIGHT)

...rush along a PAVEMENT illuminated by HEADLIGHTS.

A BUILDING COMPLEX is up ahead
Eternity Connection's Virtual Reality Site (aka, EC
Facility).

Massive. In the middle of no where. NIGHT LIGHTS are on.
Massive car park is empty, bar two or three cars.

The massive car park is empty, except for two or three cars.

Three FTF SUVs cruise along.

Chalky is in one...

INT. FTF SUV #2 - TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

...adjusts her HEADSET CAM.

Everyone has tense, expectant faces.

INT. FTF COMPUTER TENT - CONTINUOUS

Anton works the consoles. Nick sits behind him. Arms folded. Nervous. Watching the bank of monitors show live images from everyone's headset.

Anton glances back at Nick.

ANTON

Hey, ease those tensions, baby. Your girl will be back in no time.

Nick shifts awkwardly in his chair, embarrassed. Giving Anton a mild chuckle. Anything to ease the tension he himself is feeling.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Fifteen minutes...they'll be in and out in fifteen minutes. Maybe twenty.

INT. EC FACILITY - CORRIDOR - LATER

A lone SECURITY GUARD on rounds. Reaches a corner --

TZZZ! -- An FTF Agent TASERS the Security Guard, catching him as he falls unconscious.

A Second FTF Agent reaches down, pulls off the Guard's KEY CARDS, chucks them over to Ethan.

He leads his team over to a translucent door. Tries swiping each key-card to gain access.

EXT. EC FACILITY - CONTINUOUS

On the other side of the building...

Chalky double-times up to a back window. Alone.

She pulls out a hand-held device from her back-pack. Attaches it on the window glass.

The device flashes yellow, then BLEEPs green - the window CLICKS open.

CHALKY (INTO HEADSET)

I'm in.

MADDOX (OVER HEADSET)

En route.

She goes to push up the window - Zara reflects off the glass - before Chalky can react --

INT. FTF COMPUTER TENT - CONTINUOUS

ANTON (CONT'D)
They're coming.

MADDOX'S VOICE
(over console)
Anton?

Monitor displaying Maddox's POV show he is sprinting like mad. Images are too fast and kinetic for us to see anything clearly.

ANTON (INTO CONSOLE)
Yeah.

MADDOX'S VOICE (OVER CONSOLE)
Bolt and blow. Assemble at the apartment.

ANTON (ONTO CONSOLE)
I've lost Ethan - and Chalky--

MADDOX (OVER CONSOLE)
Now, Anton.

Anton types frantically. A compartment from inside a wall opens. Revealing a BLACK PUSH BUTTON --

Anton slams it. Emergency yellow lights come on. The console and monitors go dead.

ANTON
We gotta break, Nick man.

NICK
But-but Chalky? A-and the others.

Anton hauls Nick outside.

EXT. EC FACILITY - CONTINUOUS

LOPEZ
(into walky-talky)
We got everything. Start moving the equipment.

CHALKY GOES TO LUNGE UP

Lopez kicks her back down, aiming her gun point blank.

LOPEZ (CONT'D)
Oh give it up, sweetie. It's all been for nothing.

BA-BLAM! -- A CONCUSSION WAVE HITS THE EC AGENT

Lopez sees Maddox and Lamar approach

She aims to shoot - Chalky sweeps Lopez's legs from under her - followed by a SNAP-KICK to the face.

INT. EC HQ - COMPUTER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Luke is working his terminal. Mya and Solenko observe. Ivy waits, dying to get a move on.

MYA
(impatient)
Well?

LUKE
The home signal was cut, okay. I'm
doing my--wait.
(beat)
Got it. They're in the desert.
(to Ivy)
Sending you the coordinates.

Ivy already left before he's finished speaking.

EXT. FTF CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Anton guides Nick into a JEEP.

He gets behind the wheel. Starts it up. Floors it.

Behind them --

KA-BOOM! -- THE COMPUTER TENT BLOWS

KABOOM!-KABOOM!-KABOOM! -- a SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS rip through the whole camp in a chain of designed destruction.

INT. FTF SUV - TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

Yeats drives. Maddox is beside him. Lamar is in the back with Chalky. Everyone is freaked, trying to keep cool.

LAMAR
(re: phone)
There's no signal from the camp.

MADDOX
There shouldn't be. Not if Anton blew.

LAMAR
That's what I mean. They must've
cleared out alright.

CHALKY
(remembering)
Tracking signal.

YEATS
What?

CHALKY
(rummaging through
a backpack)
Nick should have his tracker on him,
the one I gave him.

She pulls out a HAND-HELD DEVICE (TRACKING RECEIVER) with a DIGITAL DISPLAY SCREEN. Showing Indicator Graphics. Nick's signal is moving.

She exhales with relief.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
He's mobile.

But...

YEATS
What about Ethan?

MADDOX
And the others?

Uncomfortable silence.

EXT. DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO - LATER

Anton's SUV barrels along.

INT. ANTON'S JEEP - TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

Nick stares out his passenger window.

Can't keep still. Goes to speak but holds back, seeing Anton is dealing with his own mental shit.

After a beat the car comes to a stop --

ANTON
Man, this ain't happening.

NICK
What?

A TRAFFIC COLLISION up ahead. POLICE are on scene. Directing traffic through.

Anton goes to reverse, but cars are behind. Only one direction. Forward.

NICK (CONT'D)
Maybe they won't notice me.

ANTON
The luck we're having, you wanna take that chance?

(beat)
The rendezvous point -- you remember it, right?

NICK
(nervous)
Yeah.

ANTON
Just amble nice and easy; eyes down; a regular citizen minding his P's and Q's. You feel me?

Nick nods yes, more nervous. The traffic resumes moving.

ANTON (CONT'D)
Go, go, go.

Nick hops out...

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

...blends in with SHOPPERS and STROLLERS.

Anton drives on.

NICK

spots two BEAT COPS coming in his direction

He spins around. ON-RUSH OF PEOPLE muddles him, adds to his panic.

Turns into the nearest store, DREXLER PHARMACY

The Beat Cops move past. None the wiser.

The door to Drexler Pharmacy closes - Nick's PALM PRINT is smudged against the glass.

INT. DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE - BULLPEN- CONTINUOUS

Huge room, earthy/green look, boasting the best tech available. Cubicle COMPUTER ANALYSTS are NASA-styled operators.

One CUBICLE COMPUTER SCREEN shows a PALM PRINT alongside a rapid-match up...Nick's photo appears -- 99% Match.

ANALYST
Holy--I got something.

The Analyst punches his keyboard, bringing up this information on the 26-foot wide MAIN VIEWING SCREEN.

Nick's photo profile pops up.

DNA Match
Location: Drexler Pharmacy

INT. EC HQ - COMPUTER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

One of the Computer Techies becomes alert.

COMPUTER TECHIE
We got a problem.

SOLENKO
What?

Luke goes over to investigate.

MYA
What's wrong?

LUKE
Homeland Security has a live location on Dalton.

SOLENKO
Where?

LUKE
Downtown.

INT. DREXLER PHARMACY - CONTINUOUS

Nick loiters around the aisles, checking out the window. Sees only ordinary people.

Goes to move for the exit --

a REVOLVER is pressed against his head.

VOICE (OFF)
Hands in the air.

Nick goes white.
seeing off the window's reflection a UNIFORM OFFICER.

UNIFORM OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)
Hands up above your head -- now.

His PARTNER creeps out from behind an aisle, his gun firmly raised, ready to blow Nick's head off.

Nick shuts his eyes. Surrounding customers edge back. Some try to record with their smart phones.
EXT. EC HQ - COMPUTER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Luke turns to Solenko and Mya:

LUKE
And now he's been arrested.

Solenko tightens up. Can't fucking believe it.

TECHIE #1 (OFF)
Getting a line on the police car's location.

EXT. STREET - LITTLE LATER

The Police Car stops at an intersection. Red Light.

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Nick is in the back. Hands still handcuffed behind him. Stares at his arresting officers through the protective wire mesh. They're stoked about their bust.

OFFICER #1
I swear to Jesus H. this makes all the crap and f-you's worth it.

OFFICER #2
That be your thinking, Det. Grasso?

NICK
Hey, uh, guys...?

OFFICER #1
You think we'll get shields for this?

OFFICER #2
Shit yeah. We got the modern-day Unabomber back there.

OFFICER #1
Suspected bomber. He's only wanted for questioning.

OFFICER #2
Dumbass, please. He did it, 'course he did it. Our sats will rocket off the charts for this one.

NICK
Look, guys, can we--

OFFICER #2
Shut it back there.

OFFICER #1
(dreaming)
Detective...

OFFICER #2
Overtime-ville, baby.

NICK
Listen, you gotta listen to me--

OFFICER #2
Talk again, dickwad, and my taser will
answer you.

WHUMPH! -- A CAR RAMS THEM FROM BEHIND, ROCKING EVERYONE

OFFICER #1
What the?

KSSSSH! - OFFICER #1'S WINDOW SHATTERS INWARD

from a hooded EC Agent swinging a TELESCOPE BATON. Drops in
a small ELECTRONIC DEVICE with a sensor casing.

EMITS A WHITE FLASH - BLINDING

As both Officers struggle to recover, shouting out,

EC Agent, neuro-chip attached, RIPS OFF NICK'S DOOR like it
was nothing.

Heaves a blinded Nick out

Shoves him into...

INT. EC SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

...the back seat, getting in beside him. The first EC Agent
gets behind the wheel. Peels out.

The Second EC Agent pulls off hood. Revealing --

IVY
Hey, bitch-boy.

Nick blinks rapidly, trying to see. Ivy detaches the neuro-
chip.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The EC Sedan high-speeds off, leaving behind the blinded
police and a crowd of on-lookers.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARINA - CONTINUOUS

Anton drives by...approaching a riverfront APARTMENT BLOCK.

INT. FTF APARTMENT - LITTLE LATER

Anton enters.

Finding Maddox, Yeats, Lamar, and Chalky.

They're surprised to see him. Alone.

MADDOX
Nick not with you?

Chalky picks up her Tracking Receiver: BLINKING DOT is moving.

CUT TO:

INT. EC HQ - PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Ivy yanks Nick out of the car. Roughly guides him along. His eyes are all bloodshot.

IVY
Gonna tell us the code, Nick? Hunh?
gonna make it easy on yourself?

No response. He's too busy concentrating on taking out the TRACKER from his back pocket without being noticed.

IVY (CONT'D)
No? Not talking, hunh? That's okay.
We can work around that.

As the lift door opens, he FLINGS it away.

The lift doors close on him, Ivy and EC Agent.

EXT. FTF APARTMENT BUILDING - PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Chalky is getting into the FTF SUV with the others.

CHALKY
(re: tracking
receiver)
It's stopped. The signal. He's
stationary.

YEATS
(getting behind
the wheel)
Let's move.

The SUV peels out --

INT. EC HQ - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Nick is pushed along.

Passes Solenko and Mya.

NICK
Where's Piper? Professor Piper? Where
is she? Sick assholes.

SMASH TO:

BLACKNESS...

INT. HOLDING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Door opens. Flooding the room with light. Nick gets pushed inside. Door closes back shut.

BLACKNESS

Only the sound of Nick's heavy breathing. His feet scraping against the floor.

EXT. EC HQ - CONTINUOUS

Chalky & Co. are curbed across from the Car Park. Looking in at the cars going in and out. The Tracking Receiver shows a stationary blinking dot. Strong pulses.

CHALKY

We should be looking right at him, shouldn't we?

LAMAR

Boy musta dropped it. Tip us off.

YEATS

Yeah but where is he? It's a big-ass building.

MADDOX

What is this place?

A TABLET PC BLEEPS like a phone. Maddox double-taps its touch screen. Anton flashes up, speaking from the FTF Apartment.

ANTON (ON SCREEN)

You better check this.

Screen splits, with Screen #2 showing a Cable News Report. Nick's Photo.

NEWSREADER (ON SCREEN)

The suspect wanted for questioning in last week's "Downtown Bombing" was in police custody. Nicholas Dalton was, we are told, arrested, but has since been rescued by masked assailants. No one has been reported killed or seriously injured.

YEATS

(looking at EC HQ)
Holy...

LAMAR

The mother frickin ship.

MADDOX

Think Solenko is in there?

CHALKY

Nick is.

YEATS

What about Professor Piper? She still breathing?

MADDOX

(beat)
Let's head back.
(off Chalky's look
of alarm)
And think this through.

She relents. Grudgingly. Yeats pulls out.

YEATS
We better think fast.

CUT TO:

Blackness...

INT. EC HQ - HOLDING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...hear only Nick's breathing. Some movement.

The door opens - Nick winces from the brightness - Zara pointedly marches in - carrying a BATON - squats down into face --

ZARA
Say it.

NICK
(beat)
W-what?

ZARA
Say it.

NICK
Say what? I don't--

SHE WHACKS HER BATON OVER HIS HEAD!

ZARA
Say it.

NICK
I don't know what you want me to--

SHE WALLOPS THE WALL - horrible echo.

ZARA
Say it.

NICK
What'd you mean?! Say what?!

ZARA
(banging over
and over)
Say it - say it - say it - say it -
saaaay it!

BACK TO BLACK:

See nothing, hear only Nick's shallow breathing.

The door opens. In comes Zara again. Baton in hand.

Nick sighs.

ZARA
Say it.

NICK
(almost laughing)
"Say it?" Say what?

ZARA
Say it.

NICK
(exacerbated)
What'd you want me to say?!

ZARA
That you killed. That you're a killer,
that you killed all those people at
Neural Network.

NICK
You say it. You're the one who killed
them.

Zara sneers. Whistles a signal, standing to the side,
revealing --

ATTACK DOBERMANS

glistening, flesh-ripping teeth
snarling, ready to chomp and chew.

They ARFF!--ARFF!--ARFF!--ARFF! into Nick's face - snap the air
a fraction away from his cheeks.

CUT TO:

INT. FTF APARTMENT - LATER (DAY BREAK)

Chalky stands with her back against us, staring out the
window as the morning sun begins to break over the horizon.

Grips onto the memory stick. Running her fingers along it.

ANTON (OFF)
Alright, we ready?

Chalky focuses. Turns. Joins the others huddle around Anton
working a snazzy laptop:

the San Diego County Recorder's Office is up on a widescreen
-- CGI schematics of the EC HQ.

ANTON (CONT'D)
Alright, y'all, check it: the building
has got but one weak spot: the terrace.
See them doors? Secured by a routine
lock only.

MADDOX
That it?

LAMAR
No keypad or nothing?

YEATS
What about a hand scan?

MADDOX
Iris recognition?

ANTON
The window glass is motion sensitive,
but it's like a house alarm, you know:
when the building closes down, it go
on. Other than that, there ain't no
other than that.

CHALKY
Why the exposure?

ANTON
Look at where it's situated?

LAMAR
How many floors up?

ANTON
Thirty-four.

YEATS
(beat)
Anyone gotta way to get up there?

No response.

CUT TO:

A BOX-SHAPED SKYSCRAPER...

INT. EC HQ - HOLDING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...looms outside the window.

Nick is chained by all four. Upside down. Hanging six feet up off the ground. Soaking wet.

Reese and Lopez circle him throwing out weird rhetorical questions:

REESE
What did you have to eat the day after yesterday?

LOPEZ
Why do you wear underwear?

NICK
(over the strain)
I don't under...

REESE
Why did you turn to the other side?

LOPEZ
Why do you wear socks?

NICK
I don't understand!

Both Reese and Lopez step back as he presses down on a wireless device...a wave of ICE-COLD WATER from a large tube overhead SPLASHES hard over Nick --

HE CRIES OUT

uncontrollably SHIVERS. His teeth CHATTER.

REESE
(resuming)
Why did you kill her?

NICK
Who's her?

LOPEZ
How did you kill her?

NICK
Who's HER?!

REESE
Which came first? DNA or protein?

LOPEZ
Which came first?

REESE
DNA or protein?

LOPEZ	REESE
Which came first?	DNA or protein? DNA or
Which came first? Which	protein? DNA or
came first?!	protein?!

Nick SCREAMS OUT in a fit of madness --

CUT TO:

INT. FTF APARTMENT - LATER (AFTERNOON)

Maddox guides Anton to the front door. In BG, the others are getting ready. Packing concussion riffles and other equipment into bags.

MADDOX
Once you cross the border, tell everyone what's happened. Now, Anton, they're gonna freak when they hear about the others, Ethan especially. It's on you to calm that shit down.

ANTON
Yeah, yeah; a'ight; I'll try.
(off a look)
I mean I will. I will.

MADDOX
Alright, man. Breath in, breath out.

Anton leaves. On the door closing:

CUT TO:

INT. EC HQ - CORRIDOR - LATER

Solenko and a MEDICAL DOCTOR look in on Nick. He SQUIRMS on a single bed. In and out of consciousness. Ivy sits over him, fondling his hair, playing nice, messing with him.

MEDICAL DOCTOR
He's in too fragile a state to withstand any more techniques.
(flipping off
the switch)
A bright light could snap this guy into coronary arrest. You went too hard, too quickly.

ON IVY

IVY
(to Nick)
Nick, if you give us the code, it will end, it will all end. I promise.

Tenderly kisses him.

BACK ON:

SOLENKO

(beat)
What about a jack-in? Is he
sufficiently healthy to absorb it?

MEDICAL DOCTOR

If we give him an optimal boost,
administer a drip chamber...yeah, yeah
maybe.

SOLENKO

(beat)
Set it up.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY FIELD AIRPORT - LATER (DUSK)

It's quiet...a PRIVATE AIRPLANE touches down on a runway in
the distance...

FIND AN EXECUTIVE-TYPE

heading across a HELIPAD lined with HELICOPTERS.
Taking off his suit jacket. Loosening his Oxbridge tie.

Approaches a EUROCOPTER, twin engines & Rigid Rotor system
which allows for aerobatics. He opens the passenger door -

LAMAR

comes up behind him like a black cat and tasers him into
unconsciousness.

LAMAR

(whispered)
Mis disculpas, man.

Oris helps her drag him out of sight. Quick. Professional.

He rummages through his pockets. Tosses over a WALLET to --

Chalky who tosses it over to Yeats. He hops into the
cockpit. She starts packing heavy bags into the passenger
area.

YEATS (INTO HEADSET)

(reading Executive's
Helicopter ID)
Montgomery Tower, this is EC135. Do
you copy?

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER'S VOICE

(over headset)
Roger, EC135.

YEATS (INTO HEADSET)

Ready for departure, Montgomery Tower.
(typing)
Sending you flight pattern now.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER'S VOICE

(over headset)
Copy, EC135. Have you clear for
takeoff in seven minutes. Repeat,
EC135. Climb in seven minutes. Have a
good one.

YEATS (INTO HEADSET)

Copy, Montgomery Tower. Thank-ing you.

Yeats exhales, relieved that's over.

Lamar and Maddox climb in. Pull Chalky up.

Yeats spools-up the engine.

CUT TO:

INT. EC HQ - MEDICAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nick lies strapped onto an exam table
in-and-out of consciousness. Connected up to an IV.

Med Techs are prepping him for something, a rush of activity.
Place ELECTRODES onto his head, biometric sensors onto his
wrist and chest. A hubbub of jargon fill the air, like:
"Launching sequence forty-three"... "Equivalence relation
set."

A Med Tech puts on the final touch:

VIRTUAL REALITY GOGGLES
over his eyes.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Head Doctor is working the consoles and interface
monitors with his senior Techies. Monitors show 3D SCANS of
Nick's brain and each region's activity, along with readouts
of his nervous system.

TECH #1
Bio stats are good.

TECH #2
Mode-locking ninety-five percent.

Solenko and Mya observe.

HEAD DOCTOR
Jacking-in...five...four...three...

MEDICAL EXAM ROOM

We Close In on Nick...

HEAD DOCTOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
...two...one.

The Virtual Goggles emit a PRISMATIC LIGHT.

Nick suddenly draws a SHARP BREATH feeling a powerful surge -
his body seizes up.

PRISMATIC LIGHT washes out FRAME...

NICK'S POV:

blurry, out-of-focus...resolves into a CLEAR BLUE SKY,
billowy clouds float past.

He lunges up to find himself...

EXT. NICK'S VIRTUAL WORLD - DAY

...on a scenic MOUNTAIN VALLEY

their parachutes come with STEERING CONTROLS, enables them to glide across the lush, panoramic landscape cloaked in a ruddy orange...over the tops of the cloud-wreathed mountain tops...at a nice, leisurely pace...pure freedom.

LUNA
(calling out)
Race ya'.

She presses her belt button, detaching herself from her chute lines -- PLUNGES DOWNWARDS.

He DOES THE SAME like he's done it a million times -- free fall

toward a massive river - which RUSHES UP AT US AT A FEROCIOUS PACE.

Luna DROPS FEET-FIRST into the water like a practiced diver. As does Nick --

UNDER WATER

swirling bubbles
as silhouettes, they make for the surface.

ABOVE WATER

they burst out. Adrenalized. The current carries them along like a fun-park water ride.

EXT. RIVERBANK - LATER

They help each other out. Soaking wet. Catch their breaths. Never been happier or as energized.

LUNA
I'm starving.

Nick nods, famished.

LUNA (CONT'D)
What'd you think? Cheeseburger?
Fries?

NICK
And chocolate malts.

LUNA
I'll go get them.

NICK
Right.
(off her walking away)
Luna...?
(wave of emotion
hits him)
Wait.

He steps up to her, almost in a trance. She smiles awkwardly not understanding this new look on his face.

LUNA
What?

HE BEAR HUGS HER
a blanket of love and affection.

They disentangle. She takes out money. Cash notes have lost their color.

LUNA
I better get some more money. What's the number again; I forgot.

NICK
Which number?

LUNA
The code, dummy.

NICK
Oh. Uh, it's uh, what is it...7D. 12E. Six--

Her warm smile fades. Worried.

LUNA
Run.

NICK
Run? What, what'd you...?

LUNA
(tearing up)
Run. Run.

Nick starts to backtrack, sensing her alarm.

For a split second Luna is Chalky, same alarmed expression.

Their clasped hands slip apart.

LUNA (CONT'D)
RUN!

He about-faces and breaks into a run

BACK TO:

EXT. EC HQ - OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Solenko and Co. are watching Nick's adventures on a widescreen like an audience watching a movie: Nick runs across an open plane.

HEAD DOCTOR
He's resisting.

MYA
I thought we had him.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOX-SHAPED SKYSCRAPER - ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

The Eurocopter sits parked on the helipad.

Chalky and the others ready equipment in unison. Cool. Quick. Precise.

Lamar holds up a SENSOR-READING GUN toward the EC HQ across the street.

LAMAR
Got some major ultrasonic going on. A lot of energy is being used. Floor thirty-five.

MADDOX
Good a place as any to start.

YEATS
Think they're torturing him?

Chalky returns to getting ready. Speeding up. Maddox and Lamar give Yeats a look. He shrugs, helplessly, just realizing.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EC HQ - OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

SOLENKO
7D - 12E - six.

MYA
Nine more to go.

SOLENKO
(to head doctor)
Push him.

HEAD DOCTOR
(re: Nick's meds)
His heart rate is picking up.

SOLENKO
Hit him, come on.

Head Doctor nods to his Underlings. After some finger taping on the interface control screen --

CUT TO:

EXT. BOX-SHAPED SKYSCRAPER - ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

LAMAR
(re: sensor-
reading gun)
Whoa. Serious jump in sensors. What
in the hell is going on in there?

CHALKY
(impatiently worried)
C'mon, let's crank it.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EC HQ - OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TECH #1
Launching unit fourteen. Three...two...one
--

BACK TO:

EXT. NICK'S VIRTUAL WORLD - DUSK

WE'RE RUNNING ALONGSIDE NICK

the untouched beauty around him goes on forever.

Without warning - a portion of the ground OPENS UP like a trap door - he falls down --

BLACKNESS

tumbling through --

CLOSET DOOR opens. Nick finds himself in his childhood bedroom, Circa 1990.

Watching his EIGHT-YEAR-OLD SELF disassembling a Nintendo Super Mario 3.

Stunned and puzzled, he walks around himself. Scans around. Transformer toys and X-Men comic books are strewn about.

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD NICK
I need the code. Do you have
the code?

Overwhelmed, Nick goes to rest on a window ledge when he stumbles and falls out --

CUT TO:

CLEAR BLUE SKY

a FALLING OBJECT approaches. It's Nick. Lands hard with a KLUD!

He lifts himself up to now see he's on HIGH SCHOOL TRACK FIELD. Suburban Illinois, Circa 1998. Wearing a TRACK SUIT.

One of five runners. In formation, crouched positions. At the STARTING LINE for a 200 meters race.

BANG! Pistol shot. The runners burst forth.

Nick hesitates, startled. Breaks into a run...at 25 meters, hurdles suddenly appear - the other four runners clear them, no sweat.

Nick stumbles. Slides across the tracks. The other runners are well gone.

He picks himself up now finding himself on --

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD, suited up, helmet and all.

A heated practice session is afoot.

He receives the handoff:

PLAYER #1
Go, Dalton!

NICK
(like it was normal)
Right.

He starts running - when -- WUMF! -- he gets sacked to the ground by an OPPOSING DEFENDER, much bigger.

The COACH comes yelling his head off. A real screamer.

COACH
Goddamn it, Dalton, you call that a
run?! Now get back there and scrimmage
again you effeminate puke!

Nick's knocked for six. Wills himself up. Walking back he spots PIXIE GELLER on the sideline, practicing ACROBATIC FLIPS off a pyramid of Cheerleaders.

He takes position for the snap and:

NICK
Set. 7D - 12E - 65BQ -- I mean Q-rod
23. Hut!

Nick takes the ball, runs backwards, determined to throw -- SHWAK! -- two huge DEFENSIVE ENDS BLINDSIDE HIM -- his HELMET SHOOT'S OFF -- his face hits the ground hard.

OPPOSING PLAYER #1
Attaboy, Nicky-baby? How's that feel,
hunh?

For a second Opposing Player #1 is Ivy:

OPPSING PLAYER #1 (IVY)
7D - 12E - 65BQ -- what? Finish the
snap count, bitch-boy. Finish it!

Nick, in agony, gazes up to see Pixie Geller staring right at him.

COACH
You limp-ass NERDLINGER, Dalton! GET
UP! Get your flimsy ass up!

He shuts his eyes, wants to die.

BACK TO:

INT. EC HQ - OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bio-monitors are SHRIEKING WARNING ALARMS.

HEAD DOCTOR
He's tapping out.

MYA
Just a few more minutes.

HEAD DOCTOR
He won't make it.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOX-SHAPED SKYSCRAPER - ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

YEATS AIMS A GRAPPLING SPIKE LAUNCHER

toward the EC HQ. FIRES a cable across.

Lamar helps Chalky put on a SNATCH HARNESS.

LAMAR
Fifteen minutes. Or I'm going in there
to nab your ass, girl.

CHALKY
Stay on the plan.

LAMAR
I will if you will.

Maddox is wearing the same harness. Looking over via electronic binoculars. The Terrace and connecting room are empty and unused.

Yeats secures the cable to a BEAM LINE.

MADDOX
 (to Chalky)
 Ready?

On Chalky, nervous,

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EC HQ - OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

We see Nick's body contort and shake about.

SOLENKO
 (getting desperate)
 Go with Program Divinity. Calm him
 down. Break him softly.

BACK TO:

EXT. NICK'S VIRTUAL WORLD - CONTINUOUS

We find ourselves on a HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL PLAYING FIELD,
 with Nick as pitcher - he winds up and lets it rip - light-
 weight

KRACK! -- The BATTER swings an easy home run.

Nick watches his pitch soar into the yonder behind him.

He spots his MANAGER at the Dugout. Shaking his head,
 embarrassed for him.

Nick wanders about, PUNCHING his GLOVE, as another BATTER
 steps up to the plate, hot-dogging.

Nick's self-conscious of his fellow players, GAWKERS on the
 bleachers and behind the chain-link fence, Pixie Geller.

He goes to wind up when he stops still.

Everything around him as come to a halt.
 The players. Coach. Gawkers. Pixie Geller - everyone is
 silent and staring right at him like a B-zombie movie.

Things start to get weirder --

The world begins to come apart
 People, the field, things in general break and dissolve
 electronically into GLOWING SCAN LINES and ELECTRICAL
 IMPULSES & CIRCUITS...A LUMINOUS GRID PATTERN.

Nick starts to de-digitalize...into a MULTICOLORED GLOB OF
 DISEMBODIED ELECTRONS, pure energy.

A BRILLIANT BEAM OF LIGHT FLARES OUT THE SCREEN

dies down to reveal a STAR, a sparkling celestial body...a
 SPLASH OF STARS illuminating the otherwise black void.

WE ARE NOW IN SPACE

hurtling through the cold infinity with building speed,
 voyaging through the galaxies...GASEOUS NEBULAS... IRIDESCENT
 DUST...INTERSTELLAR CLOUDS, a kaleidoscope of rich, dazzling
 colors --

Amongst the whorls and smudges of fantastic colors, SHAPES
begin to form and emerge into 7D - 12E - 65BQ...44Y - then
 abruptly --

a TUNNEL OF RUMBLING, PULSING LIGHT...flash of BRILLIANT
WHITE - sunshine --

DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO

BACK TO:

INT. EC OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Screens show Nick wander around the Downtown Streets.

SOLENKO
What the hell happened?

HEAD DOCTOR
(not sure himself)
He's resisting...I think.

MYA
You think?

SOLENKO
(re: screen)
What program is that?

HEAD DOCTOR
It's him. Not us.

SOLENKO
Well send him back.

Head Doctor looks to his underlings. They shrug helplessly.

HEAD DOCTOR
Not sure we can.

SOLENKO
(re: screen)
What's he doing?

On screen: Nick...

BACK TO:

EXT. NICK'S VIRTUAL WORLD - CONTINUOUS

...is across the street from Neural Network
like it never blew up. Gleams in the sunshine.
All his old work buddies are messing around. They swap waves
and jovial smiles.

Nick stops at a traffic Island. Waiting to cross. The
Doomsday Preacher is present.

DOOMSDAY PREACHER
It's not "divinity that shapes our
ends." It's us. Our choices. Our
actions.

Nick eyes the Preacher with a meaningful gaze --

DOOMSDAY PREACHER (CONT'D)
"Our character is our guardian
divinity."

LUNA (OFF)
Nick?

She is across the street, waiting for him with Josh. Both smiling. Happy. Content.

JOSH
Hey, Nicky-boy? Check this.

He attaches a neuro-chip onto his shoulder. Takes off in flight...soars up to the wispy sky, flying around with control.

Nick watches in amazement.

LUNA
Cool, hunh?

NICK
Very cool.

Nick turns back to Luna. Behind her, Neural Network starts to dissolve due to an expanding WHITE-GREY FOAM.

BACK TO:

INT. EC OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Everyone watches Neural Network disappear and dissolve from the foam.

HEAD DOCTOR
What the hell...?

SOLENKO
(beat)
Grey goo.

MYA
God, yeah. You're right.

Lopez rushes in:

LOPEZ
We've been infiltrated.

SOLENKO
What? How?

LOPEZ
Not sure yet. Two bodies were found on the stairwell.

MYA
Why are you talking to us? Go find them.

LOPEZ
Our location. It's known. We have to detonate.

HEAD DOCTOR
(re: Nick)
His whole environment is collapsing. We should pull him.

MYA
We only need three more numbers.

HEAD DOCTOR
We don't know how to handle this.

SOLENKO

Keep him in.

Solenko follows Lopez out. With Mya.

BACK TO:

EXT. NICK'S VIRTUAL WORLD - CONTINUOUS

Nick falls the ground. A MASSIVE EARTHQUAKE.

CITY BUILDINGS ARE BEING CONSUMED BY THE FOAM, leaving only DUST...the whole structure begins to disappear - car by car, person by person, street by street - leaving a parched wasteland.

Luna runs toward Nick. He reaches out -

FOAM ATTACKS HER - DISSOLVES HER TO DUST.

Nick's SHOUT-OUTS are drowned out by the SHUDDERING NOISE OF DESTRUCTION.

Foam approaches. Nick crawls backwards. The foam jerks ahead ready to ensnare him --

TUNNEL OF PRISMATIC COLOR

BACK TO:

INT. EC - MEDICAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nick stirs awake.

The room's power is shutting down.

INT. EC HQ - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Solenko, Mya and Lopez exit an elevator as darkness descends.

EXT. EC HQ - CONTINUOUS

One by one, the light on all the floors go out.

INT. EC HQ - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

DIM EMERGENCY LIGHTS ACTIVATE

Solenko and Mya swap a look. Pick up the pace.

INT. EC HQ - MEDICAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Med Techs fumble in the now poorly lit room.

Nick SWIPES AWAY the VR Goggles with what little strength he has. Tries to pull loose the wires hooked up. Too weak.

Sees unconscious bodies all around him.

Sounds of a scuffle. From inside the now dark observation room.

THE HEAD DOC SLAMS against the observation glass. His unconscious face slides down.

Nick waits. Bemused expression.

A figure emerges. A silhouette.

Chalky.

Nick could almost cry.

CHALKY (INTO EARPIECE)
Got him. Meet back on the terrace.

Can hear a muffled "Copy" from Maddox.

She yanks the wires. Freeing Nick.

They share a moment...

CHALKY
Tell me you can move.

NICK
Uh...

She helps him up into his feet - his legs buckle. She squats down, taking out an AEROSOL SPRAYER from her waist bag.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
Mild adrenalin boost, okay. On three,
big inhale. Ready? One, two, three--

Sprays into his mouth - his face clenches - his whole body seizes up - GROANS slightly -- exhales sharply, beginning to settle.

EC HQ CORRIDOR #1

Solenko hurries along with Maya.

SECURITY ROOM

Luke and his Com Tech operators are in a state of panic and confusion struggling to reboot their consoles. Reese and Zara are present.

SOLENKO
Where's Ivy?

EC HQ CORRIDOR #2

Chalky cautiously peers around a wall. Concussion rifle ready. All clear. Nick hobbles after her, still wonky, uses the wall for support.

They reach a corner, when - SCHWOK! -- Ivy FRONT-KICKS Chalky's Concussion Rifle out of her hands and tosses into the air. Neuro-chip is attached to her arm.

Ivy aims her pistol - Nick sloppily slaps her GUN - a ROUND GOES WIDE - Ivy BACKHANDS Nick - aims to blast his leg --

Chalky clinches onto Ivy's gun and wrist - Ivy, no problem, breaks free and roughly LIFTS CHALKY UP BY HER NECK - SQUEEZES THE LIFE OUT...

IVY
Do me a favor? Don't tell God I killed you. Okay?

NICK (OFF)
Hey?

Nick, on his knees, clutches Chalky's Concussion Rifle --
BA-BAM! --

SHOCKWAVE ROCKETS Ivy through the air -- THROUGH a window --

EXT. EC HQ -- CONTINUOUS

...WHOOSH! -- Ivy plunges at high speed --

she CLAMPS onto a WINDOW-CLEANING PLATFORM twenty-floors
 above ground, placing huge strain on the hinges, which CREAK
 ominously, becoming loose.

Neuro-chip starts to spurt, fade in and out, malfunctioning.

She uses her free hand to labouredly pull herself to
 safety...lies sprawled on her back, dragging in breaths,
 clutching onto her stomach. Her bent leg reveals a GUN
 strapped to her ankle.

INT. EC HQ - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Nick squats beside a dazed Chalky.

She VOMITS. The floor's lights come back on.

EXT. EC HQ - CONTINUOUS

One by one, all the light on all the floors come back on.

INT. EC HQ - SECURITY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The security console starts to spool up with fresh life. The
 monitors flicker back on.

LUKE
 We're back up and running.

Com Tech operators retake positions. Solenko, relieved, goes
 to leave when--

MYA
 They have him.

He turns back. Security Monitor shows Nick helping Chalky to
 move. The monitor on the Exam/Observation room shows
 unconscious bodies strewn about.

LUKE
 (into PA)
 Security breach on floor thirty
 corridor. Near library.

Zara and Reese exit with purpose.

INT. EC HQ - LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Nick pushes open the doors, carrying Chalky the best he can.

Four EC AGENTS come up behind them - shooting with SMALL
 MACHINE GUNS - CHALKY takes one in the shoulder -

B-BOOM!-B-BOOM!-B-BOOM! -- shockwaves hurl the EC Agents back
 across the corridor.

Nick looks over - Maddox is on the Terrace, Concussion Rifle leveled.

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. TERRACE - MINUTES LATER

Chalky RIPS her top. Ties cloth around her bleeding shoulder.

Maddox puts a snatch harness onto Nick as he spies TWO CABLE WIRES going from the Terrace wall right across the street to the roof of the adjacent Box-shaped skyscraper.

Nick peers downwards. Cars are like tiny, glowing ants.

MADDOX
(re: Chalky)
You'll ride with me.

Chalky, a sweaty mess, nods. Maddox hands Nick a wireless push-down device.

MADDOX
Keep your palm down. Got it?

Nick nods, not entirely sure. Maddox clamps him on to the cable wire. Then Chalky onto his harness. They ready themselves on the ledge.

Nick braces himself.

Zara, Reese and EC Agents appear.

Maddox pushes Nick forward and as he and Chalky launch --

Zara and Co. watch all three slide down the DOUBLE CABLE WIRE, which goes dangerously taut.

REESE
This sure is some bizarre ass goings on.

Zara aims to shoot --

TRACERS nick Zara - take out EC Agents - Reese ducks.

BOX-SHAPED SKYSCRAPER ROOF

Lamar fires a high-powered, scoped ASSAULT RIFLE

NICK

& Co rappel over the DIZZYING DROP.

EC HQ TERRACE

Zara spots that the cable wires are embedded into the wall via a computerized I-beam line. In a fit of rage, she SHOOTS -- the I-beam EXPLODES into pieces, the wires break.

BOX-SHAPED SKYSCRAPER ROOF

as Maddox with Chalky land safely - Nick's cable gives - he drops out of sight - Chalky reaches out --

NICK

SLAMS HARD against a window -- glass SPIDER-CRACKS. His harness breaks and falls --

STREET LEVEL

a TRAFFIC WARDEN goes to attach a WHEEL CLAMP onto a car - when -- Nick's harness SMASHES down nearby. Traffic Warden thinks twice. Slinks away.

NICK

clutches onto the wire with both hands, his legs dangle twenty floors above ground.

His dragging weight BREAKS the computerized I-beam line - it shoots across for the edge - Yeats GRABS HOLD - the weight pulls him toward the edge - Lamar drops her gun to grab onto Yeats - he gets a foothold.

NICK

starts to lose his grip. Gritting his teeth

Maddox grabs hold of Lamar to keep her balance. Yeats pulls up the wire.

NICK

is hoisted up. Blood seeps down his hand - his arms wobble - his grip slips - he goes into freefall --

CLENCH! -- Chalky catches him - her whole body shakes from the strain. Maddox hauls Nick up to safety.

Everyone collapses. Wiped.

EC HQ TERRACE

Reese watches Nick and Co. head for the HELICOPTER.

REESE
(getting an idea)
C'mon.

INT. EC HQ - OFFICE FLOOR - LITTLE LATER

BANG!--BANG!--BANG! -- window glass SHATTERS to reveal Ivy.

Leaps in from the window cleaner's platform. The floor is dark & unused.

A THUNDERING NOISE approaches outside. She turns.

Eurocopter ROARS past.

INT. EC HQ - COMPUTER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Solenko and Maya help scrambling staff and technicians dismantle Tyson hard drives.

Oris sticks a MINI-CHARGER onto a wall, turns its top like an egg timer -- the charger powers up with a HUM.

EXT. SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN - AERIAL - CONTINUOUS

Eurocopter thunders above the tops of skyscrapers.

INT. EUROCOPTER - TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

Yeats pilots.

Lamar and Maddox lay Chalky down on a small couch in the back passenger area. Nick watches as they inspect her wound.

MADDOX

Penetration looks pretty clean.

LAMAR

Holding Nick like she did didn't help.
Got some torn tissue. Ligament damage,
too.

Worry and guilt wash over Nick, when --

CLANG!-CLANG!-CLANG! -- rounds buffet the outside rear.

SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN

Eurocopter ROARS past, revealing --

TWO EC HELICOPTERS giving chase. Bigger, heavier built, like an attack apache. Armed like an apache too. CHAIN GUNS, automatic cannons, are mounted on the lower section -- BRRR-A-A-AP!

Reese pilots one. Zara, the other.

YEATS

LURCHES FORWARD on the steering wheel - throwing everyone about - Chalky CRIES OUT in pain.

SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN SKYLINE

Eurocopter swerves and dodges - ROUNDS hit a JumboTron -- a WILD BURST OF FIREWORKS.

SAN DIEGO BAY

EUROCOPTER

thunders over the ocean

REESE

works his 3D targeting monitor -- zeros in on the Eurocopter's engine with a BEEP!-BEEP!-BEEP!

Reese's Copter FIRES

ROUNDS RIP APART the targeted Eurocopter engine.

Nick holds Chalky still as GUNFIRE rocks the cabin.

YEATS

(calling out)

Right engine is blown.

Maddox bumps and bangs his way over to a panel.

Lamar readies an EMP (Electro Magnetic Pulse) GRENADE LAUNCHER. Slides open the side door.

Yeats YANKS DOWN the steering wheel - Lamar goes to fall out
- Nick grabs hold --

EUROCOPTER
does a DEEP DIVE DOWNWARDS - Lamar dangles half-way out,
against pummeling wind - EC Copters turn and follow.

EUROCOPTER
swiftly spins and twirls, dodging the hail of bullets - which
RIP ACROSS the ocean, causing plumes of spray.

EUROCOPTER
comes about.

NICK
hauls Lamar inside. Both fight for breath.

LAMAR
Good one on the warning, Yeats.

YEATS
Here's a warning.

Yeats YANKS his stick, banking hard.
Chalky hits the floor on her bad shoulder, YELPING IN PAIN.

INT. EC HQ - CAR PARK - CONTINUOUS

Solenko, Mya - everyone - race toward cars. Ivy limps into
the driving seat. Clutching onto her stomach.

INT. EUROCOPTER - TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

ZAP! -- Maddox gets an ELECTRIC JOLT from working at a panel
and messing with wires.

Lamar takes aim with the EMP grenade launcher.

SAN DIEGO BAY

The EMP grenade BLASTS through the air. Reese's Copter jinks
out of the way - the EMP BULLET-WHOOSHES right past and
SHOOTS THROUGH the front canopy...

ZARA'S COPTER

...and bounces into the rear corner -- CLUNK-CLUNK! Zara
snap-looks around. The EMP BLEEPs, about to blow.

Zara punches a BLACK BUTTON on the dash -- P-FOOM! -- her
ejection seat ROCKETS UPWARD through the canopy --

SAN DIEGO BAY

Zara soars into air with a WOOSH and a ROAR --

Her Copter below becomes enveloped in the EMP BLAST, a
blinding flash of blue-white light which cascades outwards,
killing its power - the Copter spins down towards the ocean
in a hail of sparks --

WHOMP! -- ejection seat's CHUTE opens with a YANK.
Meanwhile...

EUROCOPTER

paces back toward Downtown San Diego.
Reese's Copter in hot pursuit.

SAN DIEGO BAY OCEAN

Zara drifts along the surface and heavy currents. Sensing something, she looks around.

The wreckage of her Copter is making a strange humming sound. Before she can react -- BTOOOM! -- the Copter explodes - SHOCKWAVES hurl Zara into the air.

INT. LUXURY YACHT - CONTINUOUS

Socialites watch what's happening outside in astonishment.

K-KRASH! -- Zara smashes down through the roof. Giving everyone a fright. She coughs up some water. Sees snooty faces grimacing at her like she was a turd.

ZARA

What're you government bailout-grubbers
gawpin' at?

EXT. SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN - CONTINUOUS

Both Copters thunder over the tops of skyscrapers.

MADDOX

works frantically on the panel. It FIZZES with electricity. Sparks spray. He pats down his clothes, on fire.

STREET LEVEL

PEDESTRIANS watch in confused wonder at the bizarre aerial ballet.

EUROCOPTER

twists on its side - racing through a tight space in-between two Buildings

Reese goes to turn likewise, but his copter is too heavy -- its rotor WHACKS OFF a building - Copter tailspins - CRASHES through the glass of another Building - starts plummeting at high speed.

REESE

pushes open the canopy and surges forward out into open space - catching onto a window ledge, dangling ten stories up - as - his Copter drops beneath him --

STREET LEVEL

People scramble -- BLAMMO! -- Reese's Copter EXPLODES on a large walkway - CONCUSSION WAVES smash car glass.

REESE

jumps down one window ledge at a time...at the last ledge, back-spins and lands on the pavement.

He surveys the smoldering wreckage. Recovering his breath and composure.

Sirens approach. He jogs off.

SAN DIEGO SKYLINE

Eurocopter escapes. Behind it --

BA-WHOOOOM! -- a high-implosion rips through the EC HQ.

INT. EC CAR - TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

With Ivy driving, Solenko and Mya watch behind them their building go up in flames.

EXT. SAN DIEGO SKYLINE - AERIAL - CONTINUOUS

Nick and CO. stare out the Eurocopter's side door, buffeted by the air stream.

They thunder off into the distance.

FADE TO BLACK:

A moment's hesitation. Then, movement.

FADE UP:

INT. UNKNOWN LOCATION - EC LABORATORY - DAY

SOLENKO'S EYES

a GREY-WHITISH BLOT streaks down his retinas, touching his iris.

He's examining himself in a mirror.

Turns around to watch Luke and other Technicians reassemble hard drives to supercomputers. Zara and Reese help carry in equipment.

He moves over to Mya. She's finishing up examining the Tyson computer.

MYA

Three decryption codes short. We can break that. Shouldn't take long.

WHITE OUT:

EXT. I5 HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Nick slowly chews a mouthful of cheeseburger miles away. Sits alone on a hillside.

Stares at the MEMORY STICK in his hand.

Chalky steps up. Her shoulder in a sling, her wound bandaged up.

CHALKY

Made contact with Anton.

(beat)

We'll meet him and the others at the border. Fly us across to the other camp.

NICK

What about Tyson? What's gonna be done about targeting that?

CHALKY

Yeah, we'll, uh, we'll go over all that once we get up there.

Nick starts collecting his garbage.

CHALKY (CONT'D)

You haven't said much.

NICK

About me giving away the codes to Tyson.

CHALKY

No - well, related to that. About what happened. What they did to you.

NICK

What's there to say?

CHALKY

Nick...it's alright to feel bad, to talk about--

NICK

(re: memory stick)

I'm destroying this.

CHALKY

(beat)

What about using it? You know, for Parkinson's or helping people who can't walk or--

NICK

Never work. Too dangerous. A fantasy, a stupid fantasy.

CHALKY

Maybe you should think about it some more, take some--

NICK

Nothing to think about. Except killing Solenko.

CHALKY

Don't mean stopping him?

(beat)

Him and Eternity Connection. Not killing him.

Nick walks off.

TIME CUT:

CHALKY

joins Maddox and Lamar by a parked minivan.

LAMAR
Ask him about the torture?

CHALKY
(worried)
He's not ready to talk about it. And,
uh...now he wants to destroy Brain
Mapping.

Lamar nods, glad but quiet about it, seeing Chalky is upset.
Maddox feels his upgraded leg, conflicted, not so sure.

CHALKY (CONT'D)
Calls it a stupid, dangerous fantasy.

Yeats hops out the back of the van:

YEATS
Okay, we're on. Anton and the others
will meet us at the border.

He gazes over at Nick.

YEATS (CONT'D)
(to Chalky)
So what's the deal? They torture him?

CHALKY
I don't know - I didn't ask yet.

YEATS
Okay, okay.

MADDOX
Not that you have to ask.

CHALKY
What's that supposed to mean?

MADDOX
Like you don't know. Boy got that look
now.

LAMAR
Ugly, angry look.

YEATS
Goes deep.

CHALKY
He needs space. Space and time, that's
all.

MADDOX
Chalky--

CHALKY
Back off. All of you. Nick's mine to
handle.

LAMAR
Girl, you know he's damaged.

CHALKY
Don't say that.

MADDOX

Has to be said, Chalky.

(beat)

And Nick getting a good night's sleep
ain't gonna make things right. Not in
his head, it ain't.

YEATS

If the dude ever gets a night's sleep
again.

Chalky looks back at Nick. Really worried.

He starts packing up his garbage...gets up...moves for a
rusty, metal TRASH BARREL. A FIRE roars from inside.

NICK

tosses the memory stick into the Burning trash barrel.
Watches it BURN and SIZZLE up to a tiny crisp.

CHALKY

(calling out)

Nick?

He snaps out of it.

CHALKY (CONT'D)

We're going now.

He heads for the minivan...hops in the back beside Chalky.
They share a look.

The Minivan takes off. Heading north for Canada.

The phenomenon AURORA BOREALIS colors the sky.

FADE OUT:

The end

...for now