

MORNINGSTAR

Written By

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A CHYRON OVER BLUE: *Innerdepartmental Psych Evaluation, United Nations Intelligence Division. 10/07/2037 Subject: Webber, M. Evaluator: Jacobs, S.*

ON VIDEO

WEBBER, 40ish, tired. A therapeutically bland backdrop.

WEBBER

I guess if we'd been true People of the Earth - farmers or Indians or something, we'd have been watching the skies. We would have known something was coming. As it was, we were driving to Stop N' Shop.

FLASHBACK - INT. PRIUS -- DAY

A 5-YEAR-OLD BOY plays with an ORANGE DINOSAUR to the accompaniment of a RADIO being frantically tuned...

NEWS REPORTER (O.S.)

...fleeing these areas... reports, as yet unsubstantiated...

At the wheel, the boy's mother, MELISSA, looks terrified. The boy himself seems oblivious to whatever's going on, watching passing blocks that look like they've been hastily evacuated.

LITTLE BOY

You're going fast!

The voice is replaced by an EMERGENCY BROADCAST TONE as a streetlight turns YELLOW.

MELISSA

Honey, just let me listen, ok...?

Melissa turns her head to look back. Just when an SUV BRUTALLY SIDESWIPES THEM... The Prius is spun around, front-end totaled. The SUV, sputtering, disappears down the street.

The boy cries hysterically. Melissa hushes him even as she frantically checks him for injury.

EXT. STREET -- DUSK

Holding her son, Melissa looks up and down the weirdly deserted street. She gets no service on her phone. Her eyes show hope as a BMW speeds toward them.

She tries to flag the driver down. He SWERVES around her, DINGING a parked car, speeding on, heedlessly. Melissa holds the boy tighter.

Her anxious gaze happens to land on a puddle in a pothole near her feet. Reflected in the puddle, A WHITE FIGURE leaps from one rooftop to another.

She whips around to look behind her. Nothing there now. She holds her kid tightly and starts walking, the boy holding his dragon. From down the deserted, dusky street behind them comes an INHUMAN WAIL. Melissa makes herself focus on what's ahead... which soon turns out to be A SILHOUETTED FIGURE crouched on a ledge above them. It looks, at first, like a statue. A gargoyle. Whatever it is, it's alive. It turns its head to follow Melissa and the boy as they move on. She tries hard not to break into a run.

A SHADOW flits across the street behind them. Vaguely human-shaped but not moving like anything human moves. More "gargoyles" appear on ledges all around them.

Now Melissa starts running with the child in her arms... only to abruptly put on the brakes as she rounds a corner and finds herself facing a COLUMN OF HEAVILY ARMED NATIONAL GUARDSMEN and ARMORED VEHICLES rolling toward them.

She opens her mouth to call to them but her voice is drowned out by the HUGE VAPROUS EXPLOSION that takes out half the column right before her eyes. Now, suddenly, she and her child find themselves in the middle of the WAR OF THE WORLDS.

FLYING ORBS descend from the skies, blasting the terrified and hapless soldiers. ALIENS in weirdly articulated exoskeletons attack from every direction, wielding strange weapons. A GIGANTIC BLACK HEXAGON lowers over the street. An orifice opens at its base and hundreds of Lovecraftian nightmare things emerge, with metallic yet somehow fleshy TENTACLES snaking out, hungrily.

Melissa hides with her child behind the wreck of a car. She makes the boy look at her.

MELISSA

Martin, you have to be my big b...

A TENTACLE wraps around her and snatches her away, into the sky. The little boy, left alone, in shock, watches her fly.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- DAY

A motherly THERAPIST, bundled in a sweater, observes Webber's subdued reaction to the tale he's just told.

THERAPIST

You then spent four years in a series of refugee camps until your father found you?

WEBBER

Half the people my age have very similar stories.

THERAPIST

You were the worst possible age. Old enough to experience the full terror of the invasion but too young to fight...

WEBBER

I saw a little action as a cadet. On "the Goblin."

THERAPIST

But not enough?

WEBBER

The Truce thwarted my revenge. Thus, I'm a tinderbox of unresolved anger... is the hour up?

THERAPIST

Your division's vetting process might be the reason we came into each other's lives but that doesn't mean we have to be adversarial.

WEBBER

I don't consider you an adversary. And I truly don't give a shit if I get this promotion or not.

THERAPIST

You'd have me believe you don't give a shit about anything... You did see your mother again?

WEBBER

Just the once.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM -- DAY

A crowd rages as PRISONERS are led to a BONFIRE. The prisoners resemble humans but their faces and flesh have been flayed so that a subderma of alien skin has been exposed. The crowd cheers as these human imposters are thrown into the flames, one by one.

Young Webber and his FATHER, a careworn man in a frayed suit, remain stoic and silent as a creature that wears Melissa's face defiantly mocks the mockers, an inhuman voice coming out of her mouth, some alien language. Webber's father holds the boy tight as his mother leaps into the fire. As the human guise burns away, the alien underneath can be seen. The little boy doesn't look away.

BACK TO -

THERAPIST

As an adult, you understand that wasn't your mother...

WEBBER

As a child, I understood. These things are pretty simple. People like you try to complicate them. We're different species. Eventually, we kill them or they kill us. Everything else is Kabuki.

THERAPIST

Like this session?

Webber smiles.

THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- LATER

The Therapist is dictating into a recording device.

THERAPIST (O.S.)

Subject L3-1024. Webber, Martin. Special Agent, U.N. Intelligence Division. Nominee for departmental promotion...

PANNING ACROSS files open on her desk, photos trace Webber's history: as a boy, soldiers have put a military cap on his head and hoist him up; (in the b.g. the ruins of the Brooklyn Bridge, strange airborne objects over Manhattan) as a young officer, he receives a decoration...

THERAPIST (CONT'D)

Subject was cooperative but displayed an emotional calcification common to Invasion-era survivors. Given classic signs of "burnout" displayed by subject, one benefit of advancement might be to get him out of the field.

EXT. AIRPORT (CAGLIARI, SARDINIA) -- DAY

Webber and other rumpled PASSENGERS on a dusty airfield are routed by heavily-armed POLICE to a screening queue where a WHITE-COATED WOMAN takes a fingertip blood sample from everyone. The blood samples pass under a blacklight device that flashes GREEN and the passenger is allowed through.

INT. AIRPORT -- DAY

As Webber passes through the tiny terminal, TVs are showing a speech by the UN GENERAL SECRETARY VOSS with Italian subtitles. He stands before the Washington Monument which still stands, despite being cracked in half.

GENERAL SECRETARY VOSS (ON TV)

For two decades, the Truce has held. There has been no terror from the skies, our children sleep in their beds at night without fear...

Webber is greeted by the dapper, middle-aged RICHARD DORNA.

WEBBER

They couldn't invest in a couple of I.L. scanners to move the line faster?

DORNA

Indoor plumbing still hasn't caught on everywhere here.

Smiling, Dorna puts a hand on Webber's shoulder, leads him on. They are met by an apple-cheeked young man. BEWLEY.

INT. FIAT -- DAY

The driver is the schlubby, slightly dishevelled FELTON. Bewley sits beside him, looking a little nervous. Webber rides in back with Dorna. Out the window, medieval walls rise above steep tenement streets.

DORNA

I tell you Lizzie got into Vassar?

WEBBER

How are you going to pay for that?
Rob a bank?

The Fiat slows. Traffic. Webber sees what's going on: In the piazza ahead, TOWNSPEOPLE are burning in effigy what looks like some kind of praying mantis-like creature. They carry candles. Women in black are wailing, hacking off their hair.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

All this started again?

DORNA

Two days now. Since the Xenos stuck a toe over the line in Italy.

WEBBER

Any time we exchange an angry look across the DMZ, everybody thinks it's the end of the world.

DORNA

Because it could be the end of the world.

WEBBER

Think they'd be used to it by now.

Dorna gives Webber a sardonic smile.

INT. A CAFE -- DAY

A news report on Secretary Voss' speech plays on the TV over the bar: the Eiffel Tower rises from what is now an alien zone; all around it, strange, alien structures sprout from a blasted wasteland patrolled by SPIDER-LEGGED DRONES.

GENERAL SECRETARY VOSS (ON TV, O.S.)

...though a shroud fell over a stretch of our earth from the great city of Paris to the southern tip of what we still know as Germany, the human race stood united and strong...

The OWNER of the cafe makes the universal jack-off gesture at the TV. He then notices the Fiat carrying Webber and the other men drive past. He gets on his phone...

GENERAL SECRETARY VOSS (CONT'D)

Now we must be strong in order to seek a true and lasting peace...

EXT. PALAZZO -- DAY

Dirty, half-clothed children play soccer. The Fiat parks in front of a flaking Palazzo undergoing restoration.

INT. PALAZZO -- DAY

Stripped to the walls, holes in the roof. Webber walks around the vast room, surveying. Bewley offers a thermos. Webber shakes his head. Bewley pours coffee for himself and Felton.

FELTON

I didn't dress for this. Supposed to be the fucking Mediterranean.

They HEAR a car pull up outside. Dorna drags a chair to the middle of the floor, then places another opposite.

FOOTSTEPS on the landing, then TWO UNDERCOVER ITALIAN POLICE enter with a third man between them who wears a BLACK HOOD. They seat the prisoner in the chair, remove his hood, revealing a young man, sweaty, pasty. Beyond fear, despairing. Webber looks out the window. Another CAR pulls up outside. Now they can get started.

WEBBER

This isn't about hope or bargaining. We're past that. This is about redemption.

PRISONER

I'll let God judge me, not you.

WEBBER

A Believer?

PRISONER

It was a figure of speech.

Webber sits in the chair across from the man.

WEBBER

How many dispatches did you get off before we caught you?

(gives prisoner time to look at his shoes)

Three agents were killed because of those dispatches. It doesn't matter that you did it for love.

More FOOTSTEPS. A FEMALE ITALIAN AGENT comes in with a PRETTY YOUNG WOMAN beside her, hands bound. The Prisoner looks at the handcuffed young woman. Pain and guilt.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

This is who you did it for? This is the great love of your life? ... Have you ever seen her naked? You haven't, have you?

Felton produces a KNIFE. Bewley looks away.

PRISONER

Please...

Webber nods. Felton begins to draw the blade across the girl's face. The prisoner shuts his eyes tightly.

WEBBER

Open your eyes.

The Prisoner opens his eyes. Felton pushes the girl to her knees in front of him. A sliver of her face has been cut away - revealing an alien face peering out from underneath. Shimmering white skin. A black orb of an eye.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

She's more advanced than the first wave of infiltrators. We've come a long way from the days when the bugs crawled inside corpses and used them like puppets. Still, she's just a crude imitation of a woman. Look at her. Cloned female skin stretched over an Insect from Outer Space. That's what you were fucking.

PRISONER

(to her, in tears)

I'm sorry.

WEBBER

Maybe you can get past her looks but do you know what she sees when she looks at you? Vermin. Something that carries disease.

Webber nods. Felton starts cutting the female prisoner again. As Felton's knife parts the flesh of the woman's arm, a white, spidery TENDRIL erupts there, wriggling...

PRISONER

Five! I sent off five dispatches. Only the first one had real intel.

Webber nods. Felton stops. Webber and Dorna exchange looks. The female agent leads the female prisoner away. Bewley lingers a moment, looking anxious, then he follows too. Dorna approaches the prisoner in the chair. Webber looks out the window as a SILENCED SHOT is followed by a THUD.

WEBBER

Give her a minute to restore before we take her back out there.

Webber looks over at the "female" alien being helped onto a love seat with tattered upholstery. Her skin is already visibly growing back. Emotionally, she gives nothing away.

FEMALE ALIEN

Can I have a cigarette?

Bewley looks to Webber for guidance.

WEBBER

It's up to you.

Bewley gives her one. The alien looks at the flesh of her arm visibly sealing itself.

FEMALE ALIEN

No matter what we do, humanity
always grows back. Like a fungus.

EXT. STREET -- DAY

The Italian Agents escort the female alien to their car...
PULLING BACK we see this from the POV of someone watching
through a car window.

INT. PALAZZO -- DAY

Felton sneaks a shot from a flask. Dorna grimly watches
Webber drape the dead prisoner in plastic.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF PALAZZO -- DAY

Nearing a waiting VAN, one of the Italians notes one of the
soccer-playing boys in the street ahead looking her way, then
quickly averting his eyes. Warning bells go off.

She puts her hand on her weapon as a BLUE CAR comes at them
from the other end of the street.

GUNFIRE erupts from windows down the street. The officers
shove their prisoner behind the cover of their vehicle...

INT. PALAZZO -- DAY

Webber and Dorna hit the window. Webber draws his weapon,
scanning. Sees street kids running from the gunfire... except
for that one Street Urchin who lingers.

Webber takes aim at him. But does not pull the trigger.

EXT. PALAZZO -- DAY

One of the Italians looks dead. Two others wounded. The van is backing up for them to hop in... but before that can happen, the Street Urchin tosses a spherical metal OBJECT. The object rolls under the agents' van. DETONATES. There is no explosion, though, no smoke, no flame. The van just crumples as if being crushed by an invisible fist.

The wounded female agent gropes for her gun as the female alien rises, still bound, and starts running toward that idling blue car, filled with wild hope... until a STRANGE WEAPON shoved out the passenger side of the car CUTS HER IN HALF with a burst of plasma fire.

Webber and Dorna hit the street just in time to see her fall. They fire at the blue car as it careens around a corner. Dorna moves to check on the Italian agents. Webber sees the bomb-throwing urchin scamper - with inhuman agility- up a crumbling wall.

A GUNSHOT rings out behind Webber - Dorna, firing as he runs. Webber now raises his own gun and fires at the scampering boy-creature. He misses. Twice. Dorna finally hits the boy just before he almost disappears over the roof. The "boy" drops to the street, hideously emitting that INHUMAN WAIL we've heard before, then freezing suddenly, eyes rolled back white, back arched unnaturally and one arm reaching into the air. Like a flash-preserved Pompeii victim.

WEBBER

I gotta go back to my Smith-Wesson.

DORNA

The ravages of time have something to do with it too.

Webber smiles. They move down the street to where Bewley, distraught, kneels beside the mortally wounded female alien. She repeats something indecipherable, over and over.

BEWLEY

What's she saying?

WEBBER

She's praying.

The alien reaches out with a trembling hand toward Bewley. The young man reacts with disgust but takes her hand.

BEWLEY

The words... she wants me to say the words. I know this.

(MORE)

BEWLEY (CONT'D)

She wants somebody to repeat back
the words...

The alien keeps trying to be understood with increasing
desperation. Bewley shakes his head apologetically.

BEWLEY (CONT'D)

A-na... utvass? I'm sorry. I
can't...

Webber pushes the kid out of the way and puts the alien out
of her pain with a point blank shot to the head. Bewley is
shocked, tries not to show it. Webber holsters his weapon.

WEBBER

A-na nathrat udvassun bethud nu
neldoc net nyenvai.

DORNA

"I show my true face that you may
know me when I come home."

Webber nods to Dorna as he joins them.

Bewley looks shaken. Webber places a hand on his shoulder, a
bit stiffly, but it means something to the young man. He
straightens up immediately.

BEWLEY

You get used to it all, I suppose.

WEBBER

No.

INT. A JET -- NIGHT

Webber and Dorna stow their bags like business commuters.

DORNA

When you're Sub-Director in D.C,
you'll miss all this excitement.

Webber smiles at that. They find their seats.

DORNA (CONT'D)

Of course, you'll have to start
wrestling with a whole other league
of questions- that's the thing I
find really gets to me these days.
The way questions... linger.

Webber looks over at him, intrigued - concerned?

WEBBER

What's bothering you?

DORNA

Why did she come back? The female. We only caught her because she came back to say goodbye to him. She knew she was blown... Why come back?

WEBBER

Maybe it was true love.

DORNA

What if it was?

Webber looks at him. Are you being serious? Dorna starts laughing, though it's not clear at all that he was joking.

EXT. PARIS - U.N. CO-OPERATIVE ZONE -- DAY

Webber buys french bread from a STREET VENDOR. An LCD billboard on the quaint, cobblestone street displays a PSA about ways to spot alien imposters as A SPHERICAL DRONE that resembles a Mondrian sculpture patrols, scanning citizens.

DRONE'S POV: Everybody shows as green.

INT. A CAFE -- DAY

Everyone's glued to the same thing: a NEWS REPORT...

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

UN officials are downplaying the significance of these talks but many hold the hope that, after decades of tenuous truce, an era of true peace may finally be at hand...

Only Webber has his monitor playing something else: a documentary about Antarctica. He pokes at eggs. At the next table, a glum CUSTOMER in a festive holiday sweater grumbles loudly (in subtitled French)

CUSTOMER

Peace? Surrender is what it is. That dickless coward Voss at the UN...

Webber's waitress - MIA, by nameplate, a pretty girl with a stylized peace sign button on her uniform, gives Webber a conspiratorial smile along with a coffee refill.

MIA

Good to know somebody's having a worse day than you, huh?

WEBBER

It's the holidays.

MIA

I've always had the theory there's a direct relationship between the number of reindeer on someone's sweater and their level of despair.

WEBBER

(straining for polite)
The check?

MIA

Forget it. You're a neighbor.
(off his reaction)
I live across the walkway from you.

Webber nods. As the waitress walks away, it's clear this brief, pleasant exchange has stirred some turmoil in him.

INT. A COMMUTER MONORAIL -- DAY

Webber stares blankly out the window. The statues of what was once the Jardin des Tuileries, half-submerged in fossilized ash, pass by below. He shows a hint more emotion as he raises his eyes toward an enormous WALL in the distance, made from some seamless silver-grey metal, lined with sentry boxes. A FEMALE TOURIST is taking pictures with her phone.

TOURIST HUSBAND

That light, that's the "Mother Zone". It's like their airport.

Beyond that wall, the alien "Mother Zone" GLOWS brightly, obscured by low, grey clouds. Webber looks at it, looks away.

INT. MEDICAL BUILDING -- DAY

A CAMERA POV scans green, registering Webber as he enters a building. He uses a card key to access a service elevator.

BASEMENT (U.N. "BLACK SITE")

Webber steps off the elevator. A ping-pong table shares space with high-tech gadgetry.

Bewley and a droopy-eyed Felton sit in front of a video monitor: an ALIEN floats naked in a tank, tubes coming off him. He looks serene and peaceful.

FELTON

Like a baby. Deep in The Dream.

WEBBER

How long till the next waking?

FELTON

He's been out seven minutes. He's talked a little. Second hand stuff.

BEWLEY

He says an attack's in the works.

WEBBER

So he reads our news sites.

Felton looks at his watch, presses a button. A BUZZER goes off in the cell. The Alien wakes. Eyes instantly flooding with pain. Bewley looks troubled. Webber notes this. Bewley sees Webber's noticed. He looks embarrassed by his reaction.

BEWLEY

I know we're well within the bounds—legally and morally, but...

Bewley trails off. Webber nods.

WEBBER

We should never forget that severing one of them from the Dream is a brutal act of violence. If it wasn't, it wouldn't be an effective interrogation technique. It'd just be rudeness.

Bewley nods, chastened. Webber stares into those agonized, alien eyes on the monitor.

HALLWAY - LATER

Webber takes an energy bar from a jar. GIGGLES from the adjacent lunch room, and something that catches his ear...

MARLING (O.S.)

Webber's the one you like. Admit it. Just don't get your hopes up. We call him "The Monk."

Webber peers in: a young agent, MARLING, gropes a FEMALE AGENT as they converse over shared bites of yogurt with a single spoon. When the female agent notices Webber there, they straighten up quickly, awkwardly go back to work.

Once they're gone, Webber looks with mixed emotion at the yogurt cup and spoon left behind, chucks them in the trash.

EXT. PARIS STREET -- LATE AFTERNOON

A HOVERING POLICE VEHICLE the size of a PT boat passes above.

Webber walks past a modernist-abstract MONUMENT, ringed by candles, dedicated, in French, to the "Heros de Arrondissement Gobelin." He pauses to read the English inscription: "...to members of all services who valiantly defended the 'Goblin Front' 2023-2024" Overtaken by memory, he looks down the street...

FLASH TO -- EXT. PARIS STREET (YEARS EARLIER)

The same street in flames. Humans, some in uniform, some partisans in rags, battle Aliens riding hover vehicles with AKs and rocket launchers. A HUGE ALIEN CRAFT looms above all.

BACK TO-

Webber shakes it off and walks on. He drops something in the cup of a HOMELESS VETERAN. The Veteran salutes Webber WITH A ROBOTIC LEFT ARM... as Webber keeps walking, the Veteran tracks him with his eyes, seemingly with intent.

INT. MONORAIL -- EVENING

Webber shares a car with a FATHER and his SON. He watches the boy half-dozing in his father's lap with something like envy.

FLASHBACK TO- INT. A REFUGEE HOSTEL -- DAY

Webber's Father picks his way slowly through a dank hall crowded to bursting with RAGGED CHILDREN, all with names pinned to their coats. He's not finding the child he's looking for... until one skinny urchin, slowly, warily stands up. He wears the name "Martin Webber." It's the little boy from the opening, 3 years older.

The man's eyes fill with tears. He lays hands on his son so gingerly it's like he's afraid the child will break.

INT. ST. VINCENT CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL -- DAY

Webber passes VETERANS with robotic limbs sitting like zombies in wheelchairs. He looks in a private room midway down the hall. His FATHER lies in the bed here. Old now.

Webber doesn't go in. He just lingers in the doorway, watching his father sleep. When the old man starts to rouse, Webber clears out before he can be seen.

INT. WEBBER'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Spartan in the extreme. The only decor is an ABSTRACT PAINTING that resembles a white landscape.

Webber stands at his window. A LIGHT comes on across the courtyard of this slightly dilapidated 19th century, Haussmann-style apartment building,- it's that waitress, Mia pattering in her little kitchen. Webber watches her with concern, suspicion... and maybe something else. He closes his shutters and puts the latch on.

EXT. SALZBURG, MARKARTPLATZ -- NIGHT

Enchanted city, yellow lamplight. Dorna joins well-heeled stragglers heading into the OPERA HOUSE.

INT. SALZBURG OPERA HOUSE -- NIGHT

Dorna shows his ticket to an usher but doesn't take a seat. He watches the audience. "The Magic Flute" is in progress. An OLD WOMAN, hunched, head lowered, rises from her seat and comes up the aisle toward him. Dorna doesn't glance at her as she passes but when he looks in his palm, there's a SMALL BRASS KEY there.

OPERA HOUSE - UPPER FLOOR

Dorna makes sure he's unobserved then uses the key to enter a private box. His eyes have to accustom to the dark. The box is empty except for a lone figure, holding opera glasses, seated in the first row of seats.

Dorna moves closer and discovers that the opera fan in the seat is a macabrely smiling ventriloquist's DUMMY.

The Dummy lowers the opera glasses and rotates its cracked, painted face. Its mouth drops open, grotesquely wide. Before Dorna can react, a YELLOWISH CAUSTIC SUBSTANCE sprays from the gaping mouth. He screams as his face melts...

We HEAR Dorna's death gurgles as a vaporous yellow stream continues to issue from the doll's mouth... PANNING to the stage, Papageno collapses, spewing blood, followed by other members of the cast, the orchestra, the now panicking audience is stumbling into the aisles...

EXT. SALZBURG OPERA HOUSE -- NIGHT

The "old woman" - little more than a silhouette - stops, straightens up, looks back at the opera house. Listening to the SCREAMS coming from inside. A well-dressed mob appears at the closed front doors. Desperately pounding hands smear blood on glass. From this distance, it looks the walls of a huge fish tank turning red.

INT. HQ - HOMELAND DEFENSE BLACK SITE -- DAY

Webber enters a hive of frenetic activity...

BEWLEY

Four hundred and thirty dead.
Initial reports are fuzzy but it
looks like they used a Xenite
compound, sulfur dichloride.

FELTON

"Devil's Piss."
(to Bewley)
They use it in their mining
operations. To dissolve rock.

MARLING

The official Xeno response is a
strong denial they had anything to do
with the attack, mixed with a vow of
retaliation if we indulge in
"opportunism". That means something
less than fuck-all, of course, but it
does beggar belief the Hex would
threaten the truce so brazenly on the
eve of the peace talks.

A photo's being passed around. Webber puts on glasses. The photo is Dorna's corpse. Webber stiffens looking at it.

BEWLEY

There has always been one theory
that the Xenos' exponential birth
rate necessitates them having a
"doomsday plan" for global
expansion- or someday inevitably
developing one.

FELTON

Nice to know the Academy's still teaching the obvious like it was revelation.

Bewley is irked by the insult but doesn't respond.

WEBBER

What the hell was Dorna doing in Austria anyway?

BEWLEY

Best we can reconstruct it, he was pursuing some personal investigation. Likely, he caught wind of this Salzburg plot and got bolloxed up in the middle of it.

MARLING

We haven't been able to confirm yet that Salzburg had anything to do with the report Dorna filed to Eberlin last month.

WEBBER

What report?

A commotion greets a new arrival in the bunker - GAST, a gaunt, imposing figure, dressed immaculately, all business.

FELTON

It's the grim reaper.

Webber is clearly not happy to see the man. Nobody is. All hush as he addresses them in a slight French accent.

GAST

I need not remind anyone that the death of an agent in the field immediately becomes a Priority Red item. You'll all be expected to give this one hundred percent of your time and energy. That's from Eberlin himself. Thank you.

Gast walks away, to murmuring. Webber pulls Marling aside.

WEBBER

What do you know about this report Dorna filed?

MARLING

He didn't tell me anything... He didn't mention it to you?

There's an obvious subtext there. Webber hits it head on-

WEBBER
He didn't trust me.

MARLING
He didn't trust anybody.

INT. DORNA'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Webber enters a living room crowded with people crying, consoling, etc. Dorna's wife, INBAL, a handsome, if brittle, woman sees him from across the room and comes to him. He hugs her, whispers in her ear. She pulls away, shaking her head.

INBAL
What happened?

WEBBER
I don't know.

INBAL
And you'd tell me if you did?

WEBBER
We don't know anything yet.
(hushes Inbal, hugs her)
You don't have to be in control of
anything right now... Look at me.
Just take care of yourself, Ok?

She starts to protest then just nods. He holds her, gently.

MOMENTS LATER

Webber places a hand on Dorna's sulking DAUGHTER's shoulder, gives the girl a "be brave" smile and moves off. Seeing no one's watching, he slips away.

DORNA'S STUDY

Webber rifles through Dorna's desk. He's just about to search the files on his computer when he notices he's not alone: Dorna's 4-year-old son, JOSHUA, is standing in the doorway.

JOSHUA
This is my daddy's room.

WEBBER
I know.

JOSHUA
He's not coming back.

WEBBER
I know.

JOSHUA
I remember you. We went to the ocean. You gave me a kite.

WEBBER
I remember that.
(kneels in front of boy)
Your father loved you very much. He talked about you all the time. How brave you are. But the thing about being brave is you don't have to show it all the time. Sometimes you feel like crying. Sometimes you feel like locking yourself in a closet and cry for days. Brave people do that too.

JOSHUA
Now?

WEBBER
(smiles warmly)
Whenever you want.

HALLWAY

Webber stops in front of a framed photo. Dorna and his wife. Caught in candid moments or smiling for the camera, they are obviously in love. Webber focuses on Dorna's smile in one photo where the dead man is spoon feeding his wife ice cream. His eyes betray a painful longing. Maybe envy.

EXT. 37 RUE D'AMBOISELLE -- NIGHT

Ghetto-looking, no surveillance in evidence. Webber accesses a decrepit building via some stairs leading down.

INT. 37 RUE D'AMBOISELLE --- NIGHT

A DOG FIGHT in progress. A rough-looking crowd, mostly North African immigrants gathered around the pit, laying money. Webber enters a dark, junk-strewn gallery above. He's greeted by an INHUMAN VOICE speaking in the Alien language.

OSCARSSON (O.S.)
 (subtitled)
 Welcome brethren, Morningstar.

Webber answers with an alien phrase of his own, startlingly producing inhuman sounds-

WEBBER
 (subtitled)
 I come unhindered to this place.

Webber sits down next to the speaker of the alien words: OSCARSSON, a professorial-looking white man, very out-of-place in these surroundings. He switches to English...

OSCARSSON
 Your inflection's getting better.
 If you were human, it would be
 extraordinary.

Webber seems unamused by the compliment. Oscarsson half watches the dog fight and flips through a magazine.

OSCARSSON (CONT'D)
 You can learn a lot here. About
 humanity. The winners get rib-eye,
 the losers are skinned and sold in
 Little Tangier, labeled as goat
 shank. The lucky gamblers hit the
 town with their winnings and get
 laid. The totality of human
 experience can be understood as
 economies of meat.

WEBBER
 You're here for research purposes?

Webber sees what Oscarsson's reading. A gentleman's magazine.

OSCARSSON
 Humans put themselves through the
 most remarkable contortions,
 seeking some sort of connection.
 (flips to a graphic page)
 Flesh and spirit are different
 things for them - that's the key to
 understanding the species.

Webber takes the porn away from Oscarsson.

WEBBER
 Who's responsible for Salzburg?

OSCARSSON

I can't imagine it happening
without Abraxas' permission.

WEBBER

Four hundred and thirty people!

OSCARSSON

You should mingle a little
gratitude with your shock. Dorna
was filing confidential reports
behind your back. It's believed he
was onto you. Or getting close.

WEBBER

If he was, I could have handled
him... and that fiasco in Salzburg
can't possibly have been only about
eliminating Dorna.

OSCARSSON

I don't imagine so. It's becoming
hard for me to tell, though,
exactly how in the dark I am. There
are factions now. Factions, feuds.
We just have to trust Abraxas knows
what she's doing and we wind up on
the winning side.

WEBBER

There won't be a winning side. It's
just going to go on and on.

A HOWL goes up. Winners cheering, losers cursing.

OSCARSSON

Dorna was your friend, I know.

WEBBER

(as if accused)

Bill Dorna was a productive source,
that's all. Years of work down the
drain.

Webber watches the losing dog's corpse dragged from the ring.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

I've done enough. I'm finished...
We aren't made to be here.

OSCARSSON

And yet you'll carry on. Because
the Vale is your home, on this
world or any other.

WEBBER

"Home." We call it that but you haven't seen it, either - except in The Dream.

OSCARSSON

(produces a flask)

They'll never forgive you for being made with human DNA. Even I - genetically pure as I am - will always be suspect, just for having spent so much time on this planet. Neither one of us will ever be considered "of the body." That's the truth of it.

WEBBER

But we soldier on?

Webber takes the flask. Sips, winces. Hands it back.

EXT. WEBBER'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- NIGHT

A slight drizzle as Webber walks the dark lane to his gate. His antennae go up- a car is coming up behind him at an unusually slow speed. Webber scans for routes of escape...

The car pulls alongside him. Its driver is Gast.

GAST

If you don't mind, shake off your coat before you get in- the upholstery.

Webber looks up and down the street as if he really has a choice about getting in the car. He decides he doesn't.

INT. GAST'S CAR -- NIGHT

Webber watches Gast sidelong. Gast focuses on the road. Webber keeps one hand near the handle of his door.

Webber faces forward as they pass a deserted sentry post and enter an ABANDONED AIRFIELD. Webber looks very nervous now. Gast stops the car.

GAST

This is you.

EXT. ABANDONED AIRFIELD -- NIGHT

Webber exits the car. A vast field of asphalt with weeds sprouting through cracks, an abandoned-looking barracks. He expects a shot to ring out any second... instead, the barracks' door opens. A mildly DISFIGURED MAN waves him in.

INT. BARRACKS -- NIGHT

Webber enters hesitantly to the sound of light classical music. A John Housemanesque figure, a shawl over his shoulders, thumbs a book, cozied up near a space heater.

EBERLIN

Not very homey, I know - my reward for being such a high value target.
(motions for him to sit)
I'm sorry about Dorna. You were friends, I know. What angers me is the stupidity of this new violence. The old status quo served both sides nicely.

Webber throws a still wary look at the Disfigured Man - who now starts serving tea.

WEBBER

Do we know what Dorna was looking into in Salzburg?

EBERLIN

His report detailed this.

WEBBER

He didn't share it with me.

EBERLIN

Yes.
(a loaded beat as Webber receives his cup of tea)
Dorna discovered there's a mole in the division. An infiltrator.

WEBBER

(appropriately surprised)
A Xeno infiltrator imbedded in the agency? Is that possible?

EBERLIN

We never believed it was. We now speculate they've developed a method of creating nothing less than an imitation human being.

(MORE)

EBERLIN (CONT'D)

A flawless copy, down to the genetic level... milk? We hypothesize this infiltrator was created from cells harvested from a human child sometime in the twenties.

Eberlin lays a a PHOTO in front of Webber. A captured video frame: A SHADOWY FIGURE in a bleak industrial space.

EBERLIN (CONT'D)

The only known image of the mole, according to Dorna. Taken from surveillance footage of sabotage at a Czech drone installation, two years ago.

Webber stares at the "shadowy figure" in the photo. Himself.

EBERLIN (CONT'D)

If Dorna was correct, this mole might even have been raised unknowingly by the donors of his human DNA. He'd have had decades to polish his resume. He'd be the most dangerous double agent in history.

WEBBER

(concentrating on his tea)
If he exists. But is that all we have? Speculation?

EBERLIN

Well, we do know his name.

Webber stops stirring his tea.

EBERLIN (CONT'D)

His name is Morningstar. Lucifer exiled from heaven... They do wax poetic with their code names.

WEBBER

Why am I here?

EBERLIN

We want you to find him. The mole. "Morningstar." Smoke him out, drive him into the light- whatever metaphor you prefer, just so long as you lay him at my feet. Alive, if possible, but we won't quibble.

Webber, composing himself, manages to just nod.

INT. WEBBER'S BEDROOM -- LATER

Webber enters like a condemned man. He crosses to his dresser, opens a drawer filled with seemingly random little knick-knacks. He takes out of his jacket pocket that photo of Dorna and his wife eating ice cream- he swiped it off the wall. Webber stares at the photo, haunted, then adds it to the things in the drawer... but before he shuts it, another of the drawer's oddly mismatched contents grab his attention:

An orange plastic dinosaur.

FLASHBACK TO -- EXT. STREET -- DAY

The Little Boy from the opening watching his mother being swept away by that alien bio-mechanical tentacle. What we didn't see before: a second tentacle creeps up behind him, curls around him and drags him away too...

FLASH TO -- INT. ALIEN LAB -- DAY

The Little Boy squirms as an AUTOMATED ARM draws blood.

FLASH TO -- ALIEN LAB -- LATER

The boy's BLOOD SAMPLE is transported on an automated trolley down a weird, mirrored corridor.

FLASH TO -- A GLASS-LIKE SPHERE

Inside: an EMBRYO suspended in red liquid... A series of DISSOLVES takes us through the development of the embryo to the point where it becomes recognizable as a CLONE of the Little boy...

FLASH TO -- AN ALL-WHITE SPACE

The Boy sits before three oval screens. One projects rapid images of news clips from Earth, one flashes depictions of people and events from Earth history. The third unspools inscrutable symbols. The boy anxiously presses buttons, trying to keep up with the dizzying flow of information. Some kind of test.

FLASH TO -- A BLACK ROOM

The Boy- about ten now - sits in lotus position, periodically lit by a warm orange light from above, a slow strobe.

The boy grins broadly, then frowns, then grimaces, smiles again. Practicing facial expressions.

FLASH TO -- BLUE ROOM - LATER

The boy, 12 now, stands at a window looking out over the ALIEN ZONE. A strip-mined wasteland. Terraformed earth, red veined with yellow. CYCLOPEAN PODS patrolling in packs; here and there, ALIENS at work in MINING EXO-SUITS. The boy's eyes are focused on one point on the horizon- that shining portal in the sky called "the Mother Zone."

FLASHBACK TO - INT. REFUGEE HOSTEL -- NIGHT

The joyful reunion we saw before - the clone raised in the alien lab stands, wearing the name "Martin Webber" pinned to his coat. "His" father, tears in his eyes, comes toward him, holding the long lost child's beloved toy- that orange plastic dinosaur...

BACK TO-

Webber shuts the dinosaur in the drawer like it was incriminating evidence.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING -- DAY

Webber broods on his balcony. He's startled by the flare of a lighter on the next balcony - Mia lighting a cigarette. She looks surprised by him too. She gives a half-smile.

MIA

Don't judge me.

Feeling trapped and intensely uncomfortable, Webber manages only the thinnest smile. She senses his reticence.

MIA (CONT'D)

You were here first. If you want privacy, I'll wait for this.

Webber shakes his head. It's ok. She nods.

MIA (CONT'D)

You know, Alexei took a dive out his window this afternoon.

(off his lack of reaction)

He lived in the apartment on the other side of you.

Now Webber looks troubled, trying to remember the guy.

WEBBER

A heavy-set man? Always talking on his phone on the stairs?

MIA

Well, not anymore.

WEBBER

No. I guess not.

MIA

He waited to jump till the school across the street was getting out. Show off.

WEBBER

You're the sentimental type?

MIA

I can be. I like old movies... You do too, I guess - I hear 'em a lot through the wall at 3 AM.

WEBBER

I'm sorry.

MIA

No worries. I'm an insomniac myself - that's a touchy thing to admit, right? It's one of the big signs? Infiltrators don't like to sleep?

WEBBER

They don't like to wake up.
(uncomfortably realizes
more's required)
When they sleep, they telepathically link to their home world. Motherland's a metaphor for us but they are literally spawned from the soil of their planet. It's a bond they all share... in their sleep.

Now he feels he said too much.

MIA

Anyway, I assure you I am a certified human being.

WEBBER

I believe you.

MIA

Thank you.

WEBBER

I'm going in now.

MIA

Thanks for keeping me company.

WEBBER

(nods; heading in, pauses)
You might try Chamomile tea. Also,
I don't think smoking helps.

She laughs. Webber smiles, goes back in, quickly.

INT. WEBBER'S BEDROOM -- LATER

Webber lays on the bed, like he was surrendering to death...

FLASH TO - THE DREAM

A wash of white. A suggestion of smooth white skin moving against smooth white skin...a sea of identical creatures lolling in a white sun like a herd of seals lounging on an arctic beach... moving over the gently writhing bodies, we begin to see that they are emerging blind from milk-white soil, being born... we plunge deeper into the white...

BACK TO - WEBBER'S APARTMENT

Webber wakes with the same anguished look the alien in that tank had worn. He desperately climbs out of bed.

BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Bent over the toilet, Webber flushes. He splashes water on his face. Dripping, he looks into next room. At that white abstract on the wall.

INT. "BLACK SITE" HQ - CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

Webber sits at the head of a conference table. He manages to remain composed even as he stares, with everyone else, at a blow-up of that shadowy, Czech-surveillance image of himself.

BEWLEY

Dorna believed Morningstar was moving from espionage to terrorism, planning to attack a civilian population center. That's the lead he was following in Salzburg...

Bewley puts up a slide: a surveillance shot of a plain-wrap PACKAGE in a metal cage with a few suitcases. Webber puts on his glasses to look at this one- clearly no idea what it is.

BEWLEY (CONT'D)

This package of unknown origin went unclaimed in the lost luggage of Festenburg station for six days, then disappeared. According to Dorna, it wound up in Morningstar's hands. Dorna feared the package contained a weapon. We now believe it contained the device used in the Salzburg attack. We also believe that Morningstar deliberately left the trail of clues that led Dorna to be at the opera house that night- the "two birds with one stone" concept.

Another slide: images of opera house death. Webber betrays a flicker of emotion- and not just fear of getting caught.

BEWLEY (CONT'D)

The most troubling thing is that this bait was set for Dorna in the form of a falsified top clearance report by a fictional Romanian diplomatic attache.

WEBBER

(genuinely stunned)

If Morningstar was able to pass a manipulated top clearance report, he had to have intimate knowledge of the workings of this division...

GAST (O.S.)

Morningstar is not just UN- he's one of us. A field agent.

A stir in the room at a late arrival- Gast. Webber is clearly not happy to see him.

WEBBER

Mr. Gast, you're joining us?

GAST

At Eberlin's request. I'm just here to consult and advise... But, if I may, I'd add that our nemesis took a risk, showing his hand in order to bait Dorna. Morningstar must have felt an urgent need to have Dorna out of his way.

WEBBER

You believe Salzburg was just a prelude to something else.

GAST

Personally, I expect Morningstar's sequel to be something much gaudier.

WEBBER

(nods)

Our best lead is the Salzburg package. We have to locate the courier who delivered it to Morningstar. Find the courier, we'll find our man.

BEWLEY

Or woman.

Webber smiles, gives the young man an encouraging nod.

GAST

When you have a moment...?

Gast nods to the others. He wants to speak alone. Webber dismisses the others with a gesture. Soon, they're alone.

GAST (CONT'D)

We were just contacted by Dorna's principle source.

WEBBER

(surprised, inwardly
alarmed)

Who is he?

GAST

A Xeno who'll only identify himself as a "friend from the North." He's coming across the wall in nine hours. He says he's not defecting. Just wants to meet. He claims to be motivated by a desire for peace.

WEBBER

In other words, he's telling us what we want to hear.

GAST

Lisbon vouches for him. He apparently named two infiltrators in Portugal. Both leads panned out.

WEBBER

Could've been sacrificial lambs.

GAST

Maybe. But he claims to know the identity of every enemy agent active in the Eurozone.

That makes Webber almost break a sweat but he keeps his cool.

WEBBER

A bold claim.

GAST

Maybe. We'll know in nine hours.

INT. WEBBER'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Webber comes in, draws the blinds, turns out all the lights. He crosses to the drawer he opened before and lifts out a false bottom panel. He urgently retrieves a passport and several different national currencies... only to abruptly stop himself. Cursing under his breath. He puts everything back. He's in the middle of replacing the panel when he hears a KNOCK on his door.

He draws his gun, aims it at the door. Waits.

After a moment, FOOTSTEPS retreat. Webber creeps up on the door. Something's been left on the ratty carpet in front of his apartment: a LAVENDER BOX. He considers a moment then carefully retrieves the box and shuts and re-bolts the door. He handles the box like a bomb. Puts it on a table, gingerly lifts the lid, prepared for it to blow up in his face... Instead, he finds a bag of VALERIAN ROOT TEA. A note: "this works for me, sort of" It's signed: "Mia (your stalker)" Webber looks troubled by this.

MOMENTS LATER

Webber peers past his curtains. Mia's in her kitchen window. In her underwear, eating cherry ice cream straight out of the carton. He seems to catch himself staring a second too long and quickly turns away.

INT. OSCARSSON'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Spartan as Webber's. Oscarsson stumbles in, a little drunk... he's startled to find Webber sitting in the dark, waiting for him. Webber taps the coffee table with his shoe- it's covered with empty vodka bottles and "selfies" apparently taken by Oscarsson in an inebriated state.

WEBBER

You lecture me about going native?

OSCARSSON

(sits down, anxious)

I would be embarrassed but I still haven't quite grasped the concept of shame.

WEBBER

Richard Dorna was lured to his death by a field agent with top clearance. I didn't do it but somebody did. Someone who can pass for human, just like me.

(cutting him off)

Stop, realize there's no point in lying, and start over.

OSCARSSON

Yes. You have a "brother." They created two of you... There were more originally.

WEBBER

What happened to the others?

OSCARSSON

Exterminated. They were deemed too human to ever be trusted. One, I've heard, took a human lover.

(seeing Webber's disbelief, nods)

You and one other were spared because they considered you unstained by human emotion. Until recently, I'd have agreed.

WEBBER

Have I ever given any reason to doubt me? All I've sacrificed...

OSCARSSON

But that's just it, don't you see? If you were "true brethren," the things you've renounced wouldn't be sacrifices- they'd be things successfully avoided.

Oscarsson accompanies this with a smile and a good-natured shrug but Webber registers the words darkly. He nods.

WEBBER

All that matters is the situation I've been put in now. Eberlin just gave me a new job: hunting down Morningstar.

OSCARSSON

(bursts out laughing)
You're a Greek tragedy!

WEBBER

(rising to leave)
Tell Abraxas if she doesn't lift me, I'll have to resolve the situation myself, and that'll come down to this other guy or me.

OSCARSSON

She won't respond well to blackmail.

WEBBER

My standing orders are to advance my position at any cost- and it is an absolute operational necessity that I keep breathing.

OSCARSSON

As your handler, I feel compelled to point out if you need to deliver up a Morningstar, I'm obviously the one who should be sacrificed.

WEBBER

You don't fit the frame. You're not a field agent.

OSCARSSON

You could make it work. It could be said, in fact, that your letting me live's a sign of human infection.

WEBBER

(at the door)

I may get back to you.

INT. MONORAIL -- DAY

Webber rides with mid-day commuters, looking around, paranoid. He doesn't stand out. Everyone looks paranoid.

NEWSMAN (ON A MONITOR)

While denying that the movement of 300,000 UN troops to the Red Line was a retaliatory gesture, Secretary-General Voss did invoke Salzburg in asserting "humanity's right to self-defense..."

A woman crosses herself. Webber turns from the news and winds up looking at a PSA poster about dealing with anxiety. A cartoon character who looks like Munch's Screamer turns orange and smiles in the embrace of other orange people. Tagline: DON'T GO IT ALONE.

EXT. ZOO -- DAY

Webber walks past cages that contain the usual monkey or meerkat, mixed with the odd, unidentifiable alien species. He finds the Homeless Veteran with the Robotic Arm he once gave a coin to (SION) staring into a cage that holds a ferret-like ALIEN CREATURE. A placard tell how these "Maru" were used as attack animals in the war. (scene in subtitled French)

SION

Morningstar, I'm honored.

WEBBER

Don't get excited. I don't need anyone killed. I just need a name. If I were going to move an item through Salzburg, who would I use?

SION

Salzburg's a little hot at the moment, don't you think?

Webber gives him a look. Sion shrugs.

SION (CONT'D)

There's a guy at Festenburg Station. A customs agent. His name's Anders. Karl Anders.

WEBBER

You still have a UN caseworker you pass disinformation to?

SION

I would've been picked up a long time ago if I didn't.

WEBBER

I want you to give him the name you just gave me.

SION

You're going to burn Anders, why?

WEBBER

We're doing explanations now?

Sion doesn't like it but he doesn't argue. Webber walks away.

SION

Hey, Webber, maybe someday they'll put you in a cage like this. They'd have to come up with a name for what you are.

Webber looks back but he doesn't take the bait.

INT. HQ - WEBBER'S OFFICE

Webber sits at his desk, anxiously waiting. His eye is drawn to the note Mia wrote him. He picks it up. He uses an app on his phone to SCAN it with ultra-violet light, as if looking for a secret message. He sees nothing. Just that signature: "Mia (your stalker.)"

He looks up as Bewley comes in.

BEWLEY

We have a new lead: a Karl Anders. He's an Austrian customs agent.

Webber acts like this is news. Mildly interesting news.

OUTER OFFICE - LATER

Webber studies a HOLOGRAPHIC PHOTO of KARL ANDERS.

WEBBER

Have we got him under live
surveillance now?

Bewley conjures up an image on another screen: a live feed of an apartment building. Framed by a window, a heavy-set bald man (ANDERS) is watching TV in his unit.

BEWLEY

Nothing yet.

Webber nods. He subtly reaches into his pocket and presses a button on his phone to make it RING. He pretends to answer.

WEBBER (INTO PHONE)

Yes... I told you, yes... alright.

He hangs up with a slightly melodramatic sigh. Bewley looks over, not wanting to be a busybody.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

It's alright. It's part of the job
description to be curious.

BEWLEY

(smiles a bit shyly)
Is everything alright?

WEBBER

Yes. It's just that we're going to
be trapped on this thing for God
knows how long. Before I disappear
into it, I have a friend- she's
going to need to be... placated.

Bewley gets it and nods, smiles- proud to be taken into Webber's confidence. Webber heads out. He looks toward Gast, who's conferring with a secretary, then heads the other way, toward a fire exit.

EXT. ANDERS'S BUILDING -- NIGHT

The same angle from the surveillance footage. A TEAM with a camera watches the window of Anders's apartment. The heavy-set bald man is watching TV... PAN DOWN to Webber in the grimy street below, in the shelter of a shop doorway. He compares the lay of the street to the blueprint on his phone with blinking markers indicating the position of the surveillance teams. He slips in a side entrance, undetected.

INT. ANDERS'S APARTMENT

The alien known as Anders is watching a documentary about life in the arctic. His phone rings. A text. A jumble of letters. He fights the urge to look over his shoulder.

EXT. ROOFTOP ACROSS THE STREET -- DAY

The agents see Anders leaving his apartment.

INT. ANDERS'S SHOP -- NIGHT

Webber hears FOOTSTEPS. The rear door opens and Anders enters. Webber stops him from touching the light switch.

WEBBER

It's best if you don't see me.

Anders nods, closes the door without looking at Webber.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

We might have crossed paths once -
Istanbul?

ANDERS

I don't think so.

Anders is very nervous- but careful not to look back - as Webber follows him into a darkened back room.

WEBBER

My agency believes I recently had you smuggle a package for me which contained a device that killed a bunch of people in Salzburg. Couple of interesting notes on that: I've never used you to smuggle anything and I did not kill those people.

Webber discovers a perfectly intact, MALE HUMAN SKIN in a tub filled with amber liquid. Air fresheners dangle from strings along the curtain rod.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

You're preparing a skin?

ANDERS

"Anders" served his purpose.

Webber looks over at the corpse. The dead man is Asian.

ANDERS (CONT'D)

I know- old school. I'm first wave. I never got outfitted with one of the new synthetics... You never had to fuck around with this shit, did you?

WEBBER

So, you do know me?

ANDERS

I just know what everyone knows: that Morningstar was born human... Or, at least, you know...

He regrets the inadvertent insult. Webber steps into the light, smiling thinly. Anders anxiously steps back.

ANDERS (CONT'D)

I picked up a package at a hotel in Marseille and delivered it to Salzburg. That's all. It was a dead drop at both ends.

WEBBER

Who gave you the assignment?

ANDERS

There were no names. I only met him once. For maybe two minutes.

Webber eyes him. Anders rests his hand on a cabinet... which has a concealed GUN affixed to the back side...

WEBBER

What did he look like?

ANDERS

Kinda like you. Taller, blonde. He said like two words to me. He was on the phone.

WEBBER

The phone? Who was he talking to?

ANDERS

Actually... it sounded very much like he was getting shit from a girl.

WEBBER

A girl? A female human?

ANDERS

I jumped to that conclusion. It was a very... human-sounding conversation.

WEBBER

You didn't find this remarkable?

ANDERS

I didn't know how to judge what was unusual with him. Given that he was...

Anders realizes he's said too much, stops.

WEBBER

A freakish mutant? Like me?

ANDERS

I didn't say that.

WEBBER

No, you did not say that.

Anders moves his hand to the gun as Webber comes closer.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

You're under full spectrum surveillance. I can give you a window of ten minutes... We did meet, didn't we?

ANDERS

Yes. Istanbul. I remember you, Webber, but you can trust me.

WEBBER

True Brethren have no need of trust. We are one.

Webber's smile reassures him. Anders nods, breathing easier. His hand moves from his gun as he turns away. As soon as Anders presents his back, Webber withdraws a gloved hand from his pocket, holding a long, thin blade and stabs Anders in the base of the skull.

Webber's phone RINGS as he's searching Anders' pocket. He answers, rifling through Anders' wallet.

WEBBER (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)

Yes.

GAST (O.S.)
 Anders left his flat several
 minutes ago but hasn't
 materialized.

Webber finds what appears to be a HOTEL CARD KEY. No
 identifying markings on either side.

WEBBER (INTO PHONE)
 Send in a recon team. West
 entrance.

Webber opens the bag of tools, takes out a sharp, flat blade.
 He leans over Anders's body and starts slicing away skin.

MOMENTS LATER

A glimpse of the WHITE BODY of the alien that had been hidden
 beneath "Anders" skin as Webber zips up a black body bag. He
 drops the wallet's contents on the bloody floor, making sure
 the hotel key is left in a slightly prominent place.

FRONT OF SHOP

With the body bag cradled in his arms like a child, Webber
 waits behind a shelf for a team of agents to pass.

EXT. ALLEY -- NIGHT

Webber places the body bag in the trunk of a RENAULT.

INT. ANDERS'S SHOP - BACK ROOM -- NIGHT

The FLASHLIGHTS of the searching agents play over "Anders's"
 gorily discarded human form on the floor. A moment later,
 they discover the tub of amber liquid - the human skin that
 had been floating in it is gone now.

INT. CAR -- NIGHT

Webber answers his phone as he drives.

FELTON (O.S.)
 He jumped. There's signs he had
 another skin prepared.

WEBBER (INTO PHONE)
 Lock down the building and bring in
 a full scan team.

He hangs up, checks his calmness in the rear view.

EXT. STREET BESIDE THE SEINE -- NIGHT

Webber dims his lights as he cruises down a dark street that is obviously some kind of surveillance state dead zone, judging by the little playlets of illicit activity he passes. People shooting up, coupling with prostitutes.

He pulls over and waits as the SEARCHLIGHT of a Police Hovercraft passes overhead. It misses him.

MOMENTS LATER

Webber drops the alien body in the Seine.

EXT. ANDERS'S BUILDING -- NIGHT

FRENCH POLICE have set up barricades. Webber flashes his ID.

INT. ANDERS'S BUILDING -- NIGHT

Webber enters the room where Anders's blood is still on the floor. Bewley greets Webber with the HOTEL CARD KEY, now in a plastic bag. As Webber inspects it, Gast joins them.

BEWLEY

It's a standard hotel card key.
It'll take some time to track the
one it came from.

Webber walks on, looks in the area with the tub as if seeing it for the first time. He's irked that Gast follows.

GAST

You took your time.

WEBBER

I was following up on a lead. A
K.A. of Anders', in Montmartre.

GAST

Really? You took a rather
circuitous route to get here. Via
the Rue Montaigne bridge?

Webber feels a thrill of fear at Gast's knowing smile, as the other agent produces his phone and shows him a GPS readout.

WEBBER

You're tracking my car's toll pass?

GAST

All personnel's movements are being tracked. Including my own. I don't mean to be confrontational.

WEBBER

Of course, you do. Eberlin obviously put me in charge of this task force over your objections. You don't trust anyone outside your little, fascist clique. I understand the resentment.

Gast smiles. You got me.

GAST

Was your friend "placated?"

Webber looks taken aback a moment, then smiles.

WEBBER

Yes, we fucked. I wasn't aware I was required to issue a staff memo.

Gast shrugs and turns to walk away.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

In the interest of full disclosure, she's a known Sympa, the girl.

GAST

Of course.

Gast says this with clear malevolence. Webber doesn't let his poker face betray any concern until he's alone.

INT. WEBBER'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- NIGHT

Webber waits in the shadows at the end of a corridor. He sights his quarry: Mia, getting off the elevator, struggling with heavy grocery bags. He pretends to be happening upon her. He gestures in the direction of her bags. She goes "oh." He interprets that as "yes, I need help" and takes her bags.

MIA

Thanks. I see you're also roaming the halls at two-thirty.

(digging for keys)

I never had trouble sleeping before I came to Paris.

(MORE)

MIA (CONT'D)

I spent a lot of my childhood being shuttled around camps in the north. I've never gotten used to the quiet here.

WEBBER

You're Dutch?

MIA

Amsterdam.

WEBBER

(registering the meaning)
I'm sorry.

MIA

Yeah.

She finally finds her keys, opens the door.

INT. MIA'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

She turns on lights as Webber puts the bags down on the nearest clear space- which takes some searching. Her place is the opposite of his, borderline hoarder-cluttered.

MIA

You can move the macrame ape...
and, yes, I know I have a macrame
ape.

WEBBER

I'm not judging.

Webber puts the bag down, furtively scoping out the place.

MIA

I'm torn- I kind of feel like I
should ask "You want some coffee?"
This is kind of a classic "you want
some coffee" situation... right?

WEBBER

You should probably heed your first
instinct and tell me to go away.

MIA

Where'd you get that from?

WEBBER

Your words.

MIA

Fair enough. I just meant I couldn't think why you'd want to have coffee at 3AM. But now you have to have coffee. Take off your coat.

As she sets about making coffee, Webber looks out the window, scanning for signs of surveillance. Turning from the window, he examines a flyer tacked to the wall. It advertises a play with an illustration of a donkey-headed man.

WEBBER

You're an actress?

MIA

One of my gigs. It's an amateur production we're putting on at the Veteran's Center - courtesy of a UN arts grant because everybody knows shell-shocked vets are way into experimental theater.

WEBBER

Who are you in it?

MIA

I guess ultimately I'm a drug addict in a hospital where they're putting on a production of *Midsummer's Night's Dream*. In that, I'm Hyppolyte playing *Thisby*... I think. It's very Post-Postmodern. You lose track.

(gives up on coffee machine)

This thing's bugged... There's a place across the street. It's an okay place. They've got live music sometimes.

WEBBER

Hopefully this won't be one of those times.

MIA

(a big smile)
Right?!

INT. A BAR/CAFE -- NIGHT

He sips plain milk. She repeatedly stabs a strawberry tart, not looking up. Webber notes her peace sign button.

WEBBER

That's an interesting button for someone from Amsterdam to wear.

MIA

It's not about peace. When a war starts, there are always only two sides, the people doing the fighting and the ones caught in the middle. So this is my little "fuck you" for them.

Webber is struck by those words but is careful just to smile.

MIA (CONT'D)

You're not going to try some?
 (re: the tart. He shakes his head)
 Do you only eat soft-boiled eggs?
 That's all you ever order.

WEBBER

It gets the job done.

She picks one of the berries out of her tart with the end of her fork, offers it to him. He looks slightly threatened.

MIA

These are Mandarin Strawberries. People have spent decades sitting cross-legged on mountaintops- they could've just eaten one of these.

WEBBER

I'm alright.

MIA

(shrugs- suit yourself)
 There are good things in this world. You just have to keep your eyes open... but maybe not too open. Squint, I guess, is what I'm saying.

Mia squints her eyes at him. Webber smiles. He watches her eat. Impulsively, he plucks a strawberry off her plate. He hesitates, pops it in his mouth. His face screws up.

MIA (CONT'D)

You're hopeless.

WEBBER

No... It's incredibly good actually.

He looks somehow deeply moved by the berry experience.

MIA

Well, don't cry about it.

He laughs. She chuckles too.

EXT. STREET --- NIGHT

Webber and Mia stroll a rain-slicked avenue, past a vast, MURAL depicting events of the First Xeno War. One panel is a tribute to an AMERICAN GENERAL, depicted wearing a Baltimore Orioles cap and sternly pointing.

MIA

I thought General Blake was my father when I was a kid. I was in the American camp at Avignon till I was seven. They made us all "Blake's Rangers." We sang songs, did drills. We all wore patches with that bird on it- the Baltimore Oriole. For a long time, I thought I was American... It's so ridiculous to feel homesick for a place I've never even been.

Webber understands better than he dares let on. She stops to look at a depiction of human refugees fleeing Den Hague.

MIA (CONT'D)

The truth is I don't have anyone to speak English with and I miss it. That's why I talk to you at the cafe.

Mia puts her smile back on but he sees through it, feels what's underneath it. For a moment, it's very much like something were going to happen. He sabotages the mood, walking on, quickly switching to an impersonal topic-

WEBBER

Blake gets credit for holding back the Xeno "armada" but the truth is that first Xenon wave, their only weapons were hastily retrofitted mining equipment...

In his haste, Webber trips a little on a step. He catches himself on Mia. She laughs. He's embarrassed. She gives him a once over, straightens his lapel. Again, the danger of intimacy. This time Mia senses his reticence.

MIA

It's almost five. We can say we spent the night together.

WEBBER

(smiling)

That can be said.

INT. MIA'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

An old western's on TV. Mia's fallen asleep beside Webber - who reacts uncomfortably as her leg stretches across his lap. Her robe, hitched up, exposes an hourglass tattoo on her thigh. Compelled somehow, he touches the inked patch of skin like it was some rare and fascinating specimen. Then he makes himself look away and carefully removes the leg, getting up quietly as he can.

Keeping one eye on Mia, Webber withdraws a handkerchief from the jacket he's slung over a chair and goes into her bathroom.

Opening the handkerchief, he carefully removes a RAZOR speckled with his stubble. He places the razor inside her medicine chest... his phone VIBRATES.

He answers quickly- a text message: Downstairs. Now.

INT. GAST' CAR -- NIGHT

Webber rides with Gast, struggling to not show his anxiety.

WEBBER

Where are we picking-up our Northern friend?

GAST

No pick-up. We're meeting him halfway. In the DMZ.

Webber is really displeased by this news.

EXT. STREET NEAR DMZ -- NIGHT

From the top of a wall, the outline of ruined structures like the Arc de Triomphe are intermittently lit up by passing searchlights. UN SENTRIES guard an idle cable car. We see that the cable car line runs upward to a platform atop the Alien Wall on the opposite side of the DMZ. Below, Webber and Gast shake hands with two FRENCH AGENTS, one (MARCEL) is a bit grizzled, wearing a Ramones T-shirt.

FRENCH AGENT

This is Marcel. He's our best stalker. He'll guide you through.

MARCEL

Just follow my every utterance like the voice of God and you'll be ok.

Gast smiles. Webber tries to too. They all walk to the edge of a yellow line painted on the ground, wait there.

MARCEL (CONT'D)

The Sentry in that tower has standing orders to incinerate anything that tries to come out of the zone. He's stepping out for a piss but he can't stretch it past an hour. We're not out by then, we become permanent residents.

With audible THUNKS, the klieg lights illuminating the area of zone in front of them go out, one by one.

Gast and Marcel cross the yellow line. Webber lingers, eyes focus on that mist-shrouded ball of light on the alien side of the DMZ. The Mother Zone. So close and so far.

GAST

Are we keeping you from something?

Webber nods and follows.

DMZ

They cross the blasted landscape, past the ruins of the Eiffel tower. Marcel motions for them to stop. He points to a FLOATING ORB approaching.

MARCEL

Watch it. Don't get within a foot of one of those. There's leftover ordinance everywhere here, ours and theirs. Just about anything you touch in this place can kill you.

The orb slowly passes. They move on.

They soon enter a wide, barren field, bordered by crumbled stone walls. Marcel walks point with a hand-held device.

MARCEL (CONT'D)

That used to be my school over here. I like it better this way...

Marcel raises his hand for Webber and Gast to hold- a RED DOT has popped up on his device. He directs them with gestures to avoid a spot of ground. A few steps on, more ominous RED DOTS. Webber and Gast trade anxious looks but they press on, following the guide.

At the other end of the minefield, they find themselves at the stone steps of a ruined chapel. An ethereal blue light shines within. Webber and Gast draw their weapons, enter.

INT. RUINED CHAPEL -- NIGHT

A blue glowing ball hovers, providing temporary illumination. The ALIEN waits for them in a cathedral chair, wearing a carapace-like exoskeleton. His inhuman face blurry behind a translucent mask, he resembles a Francis Bacon pope.

GAST
Hodinth snal takreth...

The Alien raises a hand. Speaks English in a filtered voice-

ALIEN
Do not strain yourself.

Gast nods gratefully. Webber and Gast put away their guns - though Webber keeps his hand close, even as he takes a seat.

ALIEN (CONT'D)
I thank you for coming...

GAST
You claim to possess a complete
list of your infiltrators operating
on our side of the zone?

The alien's mask turns toward Webber. A coincidence?

ALIEN
I know our time is short. I know
what interests you is Morningstar.

The Alien's face is inscrutable behind his mask. Every muscle in Webber's body tenses but his face remains placid.

GAST
You can identify him?

ALIEN
No. There is no image of him in our
collective memory. We are all
threads of a single tapestry. But
he is an aberration. A monster.

Webber registers pain in the merest twitch of his left eye.

ALIEN (CONT'D)

He is one of us but not of the body. Murder is not in our nature. This is what we've come to- using instruments such as him.

GAST

Enough moralizing. What can you tell us about this Morningstar?

ALIEN

I don't have to tell you anything. I can give him to you.

Webber's hand moves to his gun as the Alien reaches into his exoskeleton and produces what appears to be A DATA DISK. Webber looks at the other two men. Wondering if he shouldn't just make a break for it right now.

ALIEN (CONT'D)

This disk contains the complete map of Morningstar's DNA. The genetic template used to create the imposter. My gift to you.

The Alien holds the disk out in Webber's direction. He reaches for it but the Alien won't relinquish it so easily.

ALIEN (CONT'D)

But there is something more important than this you must know: I do what I do for my home and for peace...

Webber agonizes, wanting to grab the disk...

ALIEN (CONT'D)

There are elements on my side, fanatics, who want war. They believe in the fantasy of Total Victory...

Marcel sees a SHAPE moving amid the rubble outside.

MARCEL

We're not alone.

ALIEN

(growing urgent)
They are planning another attack.
(MORE)

ALIEN (CONT'D)

One that will scuttle the peace process forever. Salzburg was nothing.

Webber reacts with genuine shock to that news... More movement outside. Shadows. Marcel draws his weapon.

MARCEL

We have to go. Now.

GAST

What's the target?!

ALIEN

(distracted, distraught)

It was only copper. That's all we wanted when we first came. We gave no thought to how your species would react. We'd never encountered...

A SHOT from outside smashes the Alien's mask. Goopy matter explodes against the shattered glass.

Webber, Gast and Marcel duck. A barrage of PLASMA FIRE rips through the archways, melting the chapel walls in places.

The data disk drops from the alien's limp grip to the floor. Weber crawls toward it... but Marcel gets to it first!

Gast fires into the dark, blindly. The barrage stops. From outside, the chilling sound of ALIEN CLICKS and HISSES.

MARCEL

Our window's closing.

Webber impetuously gets up and runs out the door. Gast and Marcel follow right behind, firing wildly...

EXT. RUINED CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

As the three men emerge, they are scattered by FIRE from multiple positions. Webber ducks behind some rubble. Webber has a realization. This is a chance. A smile appears on his face. He runs into the darkness where he knows the aliens are waiting... But he's not met with open arms. They open FIRE.

He throws himself against a free-standing column. Speaks in a loud whisper between bursts of fire-

WEBBER

Ah-na nathrac! Konna Morningstar!

The firing stops. CLICKS, HISSES. Talking among themselves. Webber puts his gun away and shows himself. Hands raised.

WEBBER (CONT'D)
Morningstar! Morningstar!

Webber moves forward, listening to NOISES all around him. An ARMED ALIEN rises up in front of him, wearing a black version of one of their high-tech suits. Webber smiles. The Alien speaks in the Alien language-

GAST (O.S.)
Webber?!

Hearing the harsh whisper, the Alien raises his weapon.

WEBBER
No!

The Alien has Webber dead to rights but TWO SHOTS RIP THROUGH HIM just as he fires. The Alien's shot WHIZZES past Webber's ear. Webber then sees it's Gast who saved him. They make eye contact just before ALIEN RETURN FIRE opens up from at least three new directions.

Webber takes cover with Gast behind a low wall. Marcel falls in beside them.

They hear the HISSES of Alien communication. Withdrawing? Flanking them?

MARCEL
We can't stay here.

Gast glances at his watch. 7:28 and counting.

They move on, crouched low, hewing close to a ruined wall till they find themselves at the edge of the mine field they passed through before. They head across. Webber leads the way, retracing their steps by their previous footprints - which the rain is rapidly obscuring.

The WHOMP-WHOMP of plasma fire erupts behind them, sailing over their heads.

MARCEL (CONT'D)
Don't run!

A shot grazes, singes Marcel's leg. He falls. Webber and Gast brace themselves... but there's no detonation.

Webber's had it, though, and breaks into a run. He makes it to the shelter of a trench on the far side of the minefield. Gast badly turns his ankle as he hops in beside him.

Gast fires into the dark, trying to provide cover for Marcel - who is up again, awkwardly hopping on one leg. Webber pointedly sits out this round.

The Frenchman sets off a mine. A gravitational flux instantly CRUSHES his body. Leaving him turned inside out, guts steaming in the cool, misty air.

Webber nods to himself, starts to move on. Gast stops him.

GAST

The disk.

WEBBER

It's crushed. Forget it.

GAST

It's not. I see it.

Gast directs Webber's gaze to the minefield. Webber can't believe the luck: the disk is miraculously intact and lying in the dirt in plain sight.

WEBBER

We don't have time.

GAST

The disk is the mission!

Another SHOT rings out from the other side of the minefield.

WEBBER

Ok, go. I'll cover you.

GAST

I can't - my ankle.

Webber glares at Gast in disbelief. He has no options. He climbs out of the trench and runs back into the line of fire, into the minefield. An alien takes a shot at Webber. The FLARE of his weapon gives away his position. Gast drops him.

Webber retrieves the disk and re-traces his steps as best he can, hurrying back to Gast... until he sees one of those FLOATING MINES looming up rapidly behind Gast. He hits the dirt. Gast sees it just in time too and ducks down.

The Floating Mine passes over Webber just as an Alien rises up, directly in its path. The Alien immediately realizes his mistake and fires at the hurtling object.

It DETONATES. The Alien is vaporized.

Webber clammers to his feet. Gast looks at his watch. As Webber lets Gast limp on ahead, he takes the data disk out of his pocket and tosses it... just as he does, one last Alien pops up from some debris to his left. Webber pivots and fires. The Alien returns fire as he falls. Webber, grazed, winds up on his back.

The alien "mother zone" hovers directly above him... until Gast fills the frame, leaning over him, helping him up.

And retrieving what he really came back for: the data disk.

Together, Webber and Gast hobble toward UN territory. SENTRIES with their weapons poised are visible at their posts atop of the wall as - THUNK-THUNK - the klieg lights start to come back on.

Webber and Gast make it across the yellow line just before lights hit the area where they collapse in exhaustion.

INT. PARIS HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

A NURSE swabs Webber's ear. Gast, having his ankle tended to, is staring at Webber. Suspicion? Webber, for his part, watches Bewley collect the data disk and place it in a plastic bag, like it was some ritual of doom.

DR. SCHOENWEISS (PRE-LAP)
 With this DNA template, we will be able to quickly devise a simple blood test that will reveal a genetic match with Morningstar.

INT. HOMELAND DEFENSE "BLACK SITE" -- DAY

Webber sits at the head of a conference table but the man running the event, Eberlin, is present only via video screen. A professorial science officer, DR. SCHOENWEISS, passes out a PRINT-OUT labeled "Morningstar Genetic Profile."

DR. SCHOENWEISS
 We will, of course, need blood samples from everyone. Assuming the collection proceeds swiftly, I'd say we'll have results within 36 hours?

Webber nods OK.. but Eberlin smiles unhappily.

EBERLIN

Under normal circumstances, Doctor, I'd be inclined to accept your estimate and move on, but I believe that it is now time for everyone in this room to be brought up to speed on what circumstances actually are.

He has everyone's attention now.

EBERLIN (CONT'D)

At o-six hundred hours yesterday, the Xeno Hex delivered to Secretary Voss an ultimatum concerning UN troops positioned at the Red Zone. Those troops remained in place. Less than an hour ago, shots were fired across the line. To the public, the exchange is being described as part of scheduled maneuvers. The truth is we're a hair's breadth away from war. Both sides are frantically trying to get the peace talks re-started but the slightest spark will set things off. If provoking the Apocalypse is Morningstar's aim, he will succeed.

An appalled silence as everyone processes this.

DR.SCHOENWEISS

Twenty four hours?

Eberlin smiles. Webber tries to sound pleased-

WEBBER

Excellent.

HQ -- LATER

NURSES collect blood samples from agents with rolled sleeves. Webber anxiously watches their progress. Steering clear of the nurses, he tracks down Marling.

WEBBER

I want you to compile a list of active agents defined by a more narrow profile. He lives in a single room, some place far from parks or any kind of greenery. He eats at the same place every day. Something bland. Eggs... and he may be married. To a civilian, a human.

MARLING

That would go against everything we know about Infiltrators... What's the source of this new profile?

WEBBER

It's an extrapolation of the statistical variance of mind your own fucking business.

Webber leaves Marling flushed. Seeing the nurses with their trolley coming toward him, he heads the other way. His phone BUZZES. A text: *Your table is ready.*

He deletes the message quickly as Bewley pops up in his path.

BEWLEY

I've got something- a Xeno operative, here in Paris. I came across the codename "Sion" in a communication. Turns out I.D.F. has a file on him...

He presses a photo into Webber's hand. A surveillance shot of the "Homeless Vet" Webber talked to at the zoo.

BEWLEY (CONT'D)

His current whereabouts are unknown but there's an excellent chance he could identify Morningstar.

WEBBER

Yes. Good. Put Felton on it.

BEWLEY

Felton? I...

Bewley wants to protest the choice but Webber's already on the move, making a beeline for the fire exit he used before.

He finds it locked.

GAST (O.S.)

Oh, yes, that's been sealed- red alert protocol.

Webber turns. Gast is passing by, his nose in a file.

GAST (CONT'D)

We'll just have to hope there isn't a fire.

Adding insult to injury, as Gast clears frame, those vampiric nurses are right there, waiting for Webber, smiling.

MOMENTS LATER

Blood is drawn. He watches them cart it away, into the system, hopelessly out of reach.

EXT. PARIS STREET - MONTPARNASSE -- DAY

Webber walks an immigrant neighborhood, constantly looking over his shoulder. He approaches an olive-skinned BOY perched on a fire hydrant like a gargoye.

WEBBER

Je veux une billet de Lotto.

The Boy faces Webber. Unsettlingly, the boy's left eye has been replaced by a robotic prosthetic that looks him up and down. Webber hands the boy a coin.

INT. A LAUNDRY -- DAY

Webber trails the kid past Asian women taking laundry out of old-fashioned machines. Steam spewing everywhere creates a stygian vibe. The kid with the robot eyeball disappears through a curtain of beads into the back.

Webber looks around. A CUSTOMER, a white woman, pets a strange mutant CREATURE in her lap. She smiles broadly.

CUSTOMER

He's a gen-mod Pekanese-Quato hybrid but he's fully licensed.

Webber nods. OK. The boy returns with a gruff ASIAN MAN who looks to be seventy. Webber, beckoned, follows them into the back room where the Old Man measures Webber with a tape. When he's done, he motions Webber on through a further door... down a dark corridor...

Webber watches as the old man lifts a manhole cover and then, with surprising strength, lifts out a coffin-shaped, grey-metallic TORPEDO-LIKE OBJECT. Which he opens, motions for Webber to get in. Webber balks, slightly.

WEBBER

Is there any heat shielding?

The old man impatiently motions again. Webber realizes there's no use arguing, gets in. It's a very tight fit.

INT. "COFFIN" VEHICLE -- DAY

Webber takes a deep breath before the lid closes. There's one small, orange-tinted light in this extremely claustrophobic space. Webber hears MECHANICAL SOUNDS outside. Suddenly, the "coffin" tilts radically at a 45 degree angle. Webber braces himself. He finds it more difficult to breathe as a WHIRRING builds around him, becoming deafening. The "coffin" begins to vibrate insanely... then, suddenly, silence. Webber waits. Waits some more. Panic sets in. He starts banging on the lid ... until it opens and blinding DAYLIGHT comes flooding in...

EXT. ALIEN ZONE -- DAY

GLOVED HANDS pull him out.

The "torpedo" now juts out of a bank of red dirt. The hands belong to a pair of ALIENS who brusquely lead Webber, dazzled by light and noise, toward another waiting VEHICLE with articulated digger arms.

INT. ALIEN VEHICLE -- DAY

Webber looks out the one narrow window. He sees A CONICAL TOWER rising toward the burning white glow of the "Mother Zone." Glassine tubes extend from the tower's base, connecting it, like a series of umbilical cords, to a hundred domed districts glimmering in the sun.

INT. ALIEN STRUCTURE -- DAY

Webber enters a dark, smoky chamber, lit only by dimly glowing, hovering orbs. The interior resembles a palace from old Byzantium, its rococo decor a weird mingling of motifs from the ancient West and the Far East. A HUMAN, dressed in rags, passes by, carrying some cumbersome piece of equipment.

ABRAXAS (O.S.)

More humans cross over every day.

Webber turns. ABRAXAS enters, wearing a hooded robe. Two large, yellow alien eyes and a sliding rictus of a mouth are all that can be discerned behind the veil that covers her face. They speak in the ALIEN LANGUAGE (Webber, clumsily.)

ABRAXAS (CONT'D)

They are naturally an unusual sub-species- so eager to renounce the only world they've ever known.

WEBBER

They do not...
 (gets stuck on a word)
 They don't belong anywhere. Like
 me.

ABRAXAS (SWITCHING TO ENGLISH)

You are nothing like them. You are
 Brethren. Come.

Webber follows Abraxas down a corridor.

ABRAXAS (CONT'D)

I've been apprised of the blood
 test situation. It's nothing for
 you to concern yourself over.

WEBBER

I feel much better. Thank you.

ABRAXAS

Is there anything else I can put
 your mind at ease about?

WEBBER

You do know I was being sarcastic?
 I never know how that translates.

ABRAXAS

Oh, yes. I understood. You have
 doubts, questions.

WEBBER

Just one: are we really about to
 stage an attack that will trigger
 an apocalyptic war?

ABRAXAS

The prospect troubles you?

WEBBER

I see things as a human. That's why
 I'm useful to you.

ABRAXAS

Of course. That is your particular
 burden. No one has sacrificed for
 the Vale as you have.

WEBBER

Now that's not exactly true, is it?

ABRAXAS

No there is another. He has his job to do. I have mine. And you have yours. Mercifully, others make the large decisions - we have only to do our duty.

WEBBER

That's all I've ever done. Trusting that I would never be lied to and that, when I'd served my purpose, I would be allowed to come home.

ABRAXAS

And so you will. The time has come.

Webber is thrown by that. He looks at Abraxas, inscrutable behind her veil.

ABRAXAS (CONT'D)

Of course, you're distrustful. Your whole life you've known only this pit where creatures grope each other in the dark.

They approach a cascade of GOLDEN LIGHT spilling from an open door. Abraxas motions for Webber to go forward. He does and, from that doorway, we get our closest view yet of the "Motherzone." Webber fights a surge of emotion, bathing in its light. Abraxas' voice is maternal-

ABRAXAS (CONT'D)

Soon we will walk the sands of the Vale together. The meaningless human words "sand" and "Vale" will fall away like a bad dream.

Webber turns, impulsively extends his hand toward her. She reflexively pulls her hand back. Abraxas quickly corrects herself and clasps Webber's hands but that moment happened and he saw it.

ABRAXAS (CONT'D)

I'll make the commitment to you now: Keep your division running around in circles for one more week and I'll bring you home.

Webber grins lopsidedly to himself, then raises his head to her and nods. He lets go of her hands.

EXT. PARIS STREET, NEAR SEINE -- EVENING

A JAMAICAN WOMAN, a lone protestor with a sign, gesticulates at a MILITARY CONVOY rolling down the boulevard.

STREET PROTESTOR

Wake up! These are not "exercises",
this is war! This is death...

Walking past, Webber attaches a device to his phone. It blinks GREEN. He dials. Oscarsson picks up. MUMBLING.

WEBBER (INTO PHONE)

Are you drunk?

INTERCUT - OSCARSSON'S APARTMENT

Oscarsson sits up, bleary-eyed-

OSCARSSON (INTO PHONE)

Only medicinally.

WEBBER

There's a good chance my
counterpart is about to set off
Armageddon. Thought I owed you a
heads up, for old time's sake.

OSCARSSON

You talked to Abraxas?

WEBBER

Yes. She assured me I'd be raptured
before it went down. She even gave
me a date. A week from now.

OSCARSSON

But we don't believe it?

WEBBER

By next week, this planet will be a
cinder. There are still doves
inside the Hex desperately
scrambling to arrange peace talks.
If these others want to be certain
of starting a war, they have to
strike now- she didn't respect me
enough to craft a convincing lie.

OSCARSSON

What are you going to do?

WEBBER

I'm going to hunt down my "brother"
and kill him. What else?

OSCARSSON

If you stop him, you may save this
planet, but don't expect gratitude
from the humans. You have only
enemies now.

Webber hangs up, looks at the war machines rumbling by.

BEWLEY (PRE-LAP)

We IDed the hotel Anders card key
came from.

INT. HQ - CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

A projected surveillance image: two men smoking on a balcony.
One is much shorter than the other.

BEWLEY (O.S.)

It's a residential hotel.
Ethnically diverse, low income.
We've identified three occupants of
one room as Xeno infiltrators.

Webber, Gast and the others, receiving a briefing from
Bewley. Photos of THREE MEN are laid out in front of Webber.
One old, one baby-faced, one short and slender.

GAST

Two come and go. This rather
diminutive man, seems to stay
inside. There's also a suitcase in
there, identical to the one from
Salzburg.

On the screen: an infra-red photo of an object on a table in
the room. Live readings of temperature, GPS positioning etc.

BEWLEY

No radioactivity. Our best analysis
is that it's something chemical, or
biological. If it is a weapon.

GAST

Whatever it is, they're sitting on
it, waiting for instructions. Which
means Morningstar will contact them
at least once more.

BEWLEY

And we have full-spectrum
surveillance in place when he does.

Webber studies a wall of still surveillance photos. He notes something in a photo of the short man on the balcony. He refers to other photos on the table. What he sees: a watering can has appeared on the ledge in this most recent photo.

WEBBER

I want to take the nest now.

This draws disapproving looks from everyone. Webber holds up the surveillance photo he was looking at.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

Those are plastic plants. What's
the watering can for? It's a signal
for Morningstar to stay away.
They know they're being watched.

Gast, annoyed he missed that, nods his assent.

EXT. MARSEILLE -- DAY

In sight of the harbor, FRENCH POLICE fan out across a tenement roof, train their weapons on the squalid building across the street. A DRONE hovers nearby.

Gast, waiting with a FRENCH PARAMILITARY TEAM by a back door, watches on a remote video set-up.

INT. TENEMENT BUILDING -- DAY

Webber and Bewley, wearing flak-jackets, follow PARAMILITARY FRENCH COPS down a shabby hall with rippled wallpaper and worn carpeting. ARABIC MUSIC, a baby CRYING. They stop in front of the door of the "nest."

Bewley anxiously raises his AK-like weapon. Webber looks over, notes something's off. He releases the safety on Bewley's gun. Bewley looks ashamed. Webber gives him a little smile, a nod.

A French Cop prepares to hit the door with a BATTERING DEVICE... but just before he does, the door opens and an OLD MAN emerges- the elderly Infiltrator from the surveillance. The Old Man looks around casually as the French officers level their weapons at him. Slowly, a grin spreads across his face, wide and nearly toothless. He raises his hands.

WEBBER

Take him.

Now the Old Man opens his palm. It holds what looks like a cluster of red berries. Before anyone can react, he lets it drop.

The object splits into millions of tiny, red pieces as it hits the floor. Each fragment acts as if alive, multiplying incredibly. The Old Infiltrator is reduced almost instantly to bone and sinew.

The closest cops just have time to register that the red tide flowing toward them is made up of millions of ANT-LIKE INSECTS before they're devoured too.

EXT. TENEMENT BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

On the video monitor, Gast watches the red tide spread in a wide circle, taking out cops. He draws his weapon...

INT. TENEMENT BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Webber, Bewley and the last few French cops retreat as the red tide stops just in front of them, like a spent wave. There's no time for relief, though, as the Baby-Faced Infiltrator OPENS FIRE from the open doorway of the "nest".

The last French cops go down. Webber and Bewley RETURN FIRE but the shooter's already retreated back behind the door.

TENEMENT BUILDING - STAIRWELL

A door BLOWS inward and a FRENCH SQUAD, accompanied by Gast, charges in, heading upstairs... near the landing, one of the French officers' shoes trips an almost invisibly thin wire.

An IED unleashes a SHOWER OF THAT CAUSTIC YELLOW SUBSTANCE.

The French Cops ahead of Gast scream, flesh visibly melting.

TENEMENT APARTMENT ("NEST")

Webber and Bewley burst in through the door, firing. Baby-Face is hit several times, dies screaming.

Webber and Bewley warily searching for the third Infiltrator. The "nest" turns out to be a litter-strewn suite of abandoned-looking rooms. Bewley takes the one on the right.

Bewley finds a lone occupant: a terrified LITTLE GIRL in a dirty dress, curled up in a corner, hiding her hand behind her back. A captive?

BEWLEY

It's alright. I won't hurt you.

In the first room, Webber kicks down a door. He finds himself looking into a bathroom. A HUMAN SKIN, slack like an empty mask, lies discarded on the floor. FLIES hovering around a tub caked with blackish dried blood.

WEBBER

One of them jumped his skin.

Bewley now understands what he's looking at. The "little girl" lets fly what she's hiding behind her back. An ALIEN INSECT- a larger, more scorpion-like species- that attaches itself to Bewley's face.

The Infiltrator disguised as a Little Girl bolts as Webber arrives, slipping past him, making for the door.

Webber tears the insect off Bewley, breaking off the stinger that remains lodged in Bewley's throat. He lowers the dying young man to the floor filled with very genuine horror.

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The "Little Girl" runs for the stairs, only to freeze, HEARING the French cops on their way up. She turns to run the other way... but Webber's right there. He clamps his hand over her mouth and pulls her back into the apartment she just fled.

TENEMENT APARTMENT ("NEST") - CONTINUOUS

Webber shoves the Little Girl into the wall, motions for her to be quiet. She's wary but she nods...

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

...Webber closes the apartment door behind him and meets Gast and the surviving French cops at the stairs as they arrive.

WEBBER

The short one slipped past us. He's headed toward the roof. I'm calling in back-up.

Gast takes one moment to grimly regard the devastation in the hall then charges on, continuing up the stairs toward the roof, followed by the French cops. Soon as they're gone, Webber heads back down the hall, back to the "nest" apartment.

TENEMENT APARTMENT "NEST" - CONTINUOUS

The Little Girl steps back from Webber as he returns. He grabs her by the scruff of the neck and pulls his gun.

WEBBER

You know who I am?

She nods fearfully, starts to answer in the alien language...

WEBBER (CONT'D)

(in alien language)

In English!

LITTLE GIRL

Yes! I know. Morningstar... He didn't tell us who the target was. He said we were eliminating a traitor.

WEBBER

This was all a setup?

The Little Girl balks at answering. Webber presses his gun into her eye. The "child" looks terrified.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

He set you up too. There was no way any of you were getting out alive.

(FIRES into wall next to her ear)

Give me something and I'll get you out of here.

LITTLE GIRL

He knew you'd found out about this building- he lived here for a while, last year. He said it was perfect, you coming here, because he could watch it all from the window of his old apartment.

WEBBER

His old apartment? Point.

Webber shoves her to the window. The Little Girl points toward an apartment on the other side of the courtyard. It's shaded, impossible to tell if there's anyone there or not.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

Take the back stairs. There's no one watching the alley now.

Webber lets the girl go. She nods and runs off. Webber hears a GASPING sound. He turns. He's startled to see Bewley's still alive, trying to get up.

He rushes to Bewley but by the time he gets there, the young man's lost consciousness again. Webber's left with a pair of troubling thoughts: did Bewley witness his exchange with the Infiltrator and might he wake up?

Webber looks to his left. A tattered, bordello-looking red pillow lies on the floor, close at hand. He picks it up. He looks down at Bewley, poised to place the pillow over Bewley's face and end all questions.

It takes three long seconds before he decides against it and angrily tosses the pillow away.

EXT. TENEMENT BUILDING -- DAY

The Little Girl comes bursting out the rear door, as directed... and runs smack into a phalanx of FRENCH POLICE.

LITTLE GIRL

Cochon!

They hit her with ten thousand rounds.

Webber watches this from the fire escape. Satisfied, he keeps climbing. All the way up to the roof.

He makes his way across the steeply slanted, slate rooftop that separates the two buildings and carefully lowers himself onto the balcony of the apartment "Little Girl" pointed to.

He draws his weapon and lets himself in.

INT. DOPPLEGANGER'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Keeping his gun at the ready, Webber enters cautiously, scanning the dark interior. There's no sign of his counterpart. It's apparent the place hasn't been actually lived in for a while. Thick dust over everything. Webber's eye picks out a few oddly homey details. A tea cozy.

He feels something underfoot. He bends down and picks it up—a LITTLE GIRL'S TOY. A Cinderella tiara. Its presence seems to bewilder him.

In the bedroom, a bare mattress. He searches the mostly empty drawers of a dusty bureau. Stuck in the corner of one, he finds a SELFIE, a half-nude woman curled up on the very bed in this room. There's an arm around her but a jagged tear has removed the man from the picture.

Webber places the photo on the mattress. Looks at it, as if he were trying to picture the couple laying there.

He hears something. A very low CREAK. Turning, he sees the door of an old dresser behind him is just slightly ajar.

He aims his gun at the dresser and carefully pulls the door open... to discover that the dresser has no back and the wall behind it has a huge hole in it.

DESERTED APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Bent low, Webber enters what looks like a stripped-to-the-walls loft space, lit only by dusty light descending from filthy transoms. Strips of plastic wafting from exposed beams. A SHADOW draws his attention. It takes Webber a moment to realize it's a man standing there.

The shadow FIRES. Webber ducks behind a beam and SHOOTS BACK.

Silence. Then—

WEBBER

You have to know what you're doing is insane. What do you think you'll accomplish besides killing a bunch of people?

FIGURE (O.S.)

Just killing a bunch of people? You say that like it's nothing.

Webber wants to ask a thousand questions. He picks one—

WEBBER

But why...? You'd made a life for yourself. You had a woman... a child?

The shadows do not answer. Webber peers around the beam. He moves out, silently, gun raised, approaching where the shadow was a moment ago... but when he gets there, he sees daylight, a doorway hanging open. Webber rushes to the door.

It opens onto a veranda above a busy street, giving him a view of the wide world and nothing.

INT. A HOSPITAL LAB -- DAY

Under a magnifying glass: A GHASTLY CREATURE, a thing from nightmares.

FRENCH SCIENTIST (O.S.)

It appears to be a genetically-modified variation of a known alien species, *Idora Cubensis*.

Webber stands with Gast as a SCIENTIST examines the insect-like specimen. More swarm in a nearby jar.

FRENCH SCIENTIST (CONT'D)

The pedical features an armed propodeum which secretes a caustic, alkaloid venom. In the larval stage, they're less toxic but a thousand times more ravenous. A release of even a few hundred larvae could kill thousands.

GAST

The war such an attack would trigger would kill billions.

Webber feels a tug of some unfamiliar feeling. He looks up as Marling bursts into the room breathlessly.

MARLING

Bewley's conscious.

And now Webber feels an icy hand close around his heart.

ICU

Bewley lies under a plastic canopy. Hideously conscious. Webber, Marling and Gast enter. Webber tries to hang back but the one functioning eye in Bewley's swollen, distorted face lands on him. Webber's compelled to go forward.

As he comes closer, Bewley agonizingly works his lips, trying to say something...

GAST

I want this recorded.

Marling takes out his mobile device, sets it down. Recording. Webber looks at the device like it was death itself, then at Bewley... who is starting to make audible sounds.

Webber leans in, ear against the clear plastic. Now he hears:

BEWLEY

I have no words.

Webber can't help but react. Like someone punched him in the gut. He sees Bewley's swollen, gauze-wrapped hand reaching for him, through the plastic veil. He wants to run away but he takes Bewley's hand. Hesitantly, gingerly. He can only hold on for a moment, though, before he pulls free and practically runs out of the room.

Both Gast and Marling are startled by this uncharacteristic show of emotion. They then turn back to Bewley as the monitoring equipment's TONE signals the patient has died.

INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT "NEST" -- DAY

Webber wears protective gear as he pokes through the debris of the "nest." Marling trails him, similarly suited-up. BODY BAGS line one wall. Webber tries not to look.

He moves to the window. CITIZENS are gawking behind a police barricade. He looks at their faces. Every kind of human, young, old, male, female.

WEBBER

A million? A billion? Ten billion?
What does it mean?

MARLING

Sir?

Webber shakes his head. Forget it. Then he notices something—a WHITE SUBSTANCE on the window sill.

MARLING (CONT'D)

We noticed that. It's being
analyzed.

WEBBER

It's milk.

Webber looks around and finds a piece of BROKEN GLASS on the floor nearby. It too is covered with dried milk on one side. He carefully picks up the glass shard with a pair of tongs. Scans it with ULTRA-VIOLET light.

A LONE FINGERPRINT shows up, plain as day.

MARLING (O.S.)
Stephen Allen Kemp.

INT. HQ - WEBBER'S OFFICE -- DAY

Marling at his side, Webber scans a screen: Stephen Allen Kemp's personnel file scrolls. Not much there.

MARLING (O.S.)
His entire record's been scrubbed.
No photo, nothing. But from what
we've been able to forensically
reconstruct, your hunch was right-
Kemp has a wife, married last May.
A French national, Adele Marie
Vigne. They have one child, Ann-
Louise. It seems they lived for a
time in DuLac but shortly after the
birth of the child, he took off.

WEBBER
"Took off?"

MARLING
Left the service. Disappeared.
Adele and little Anne-Louise, as
well. After Dulac, they evidently
lived for a time in that Marseilles
apartment but there's nothing more
on any of them.

WEBBER
(to himself, in wonder)
He left. He just walked away.
(to Marling)
The woman's the key. Find her.

MARLING
(slightly abashed)
Gast already put a unit on it.

WEBBER
Gast is issuing directives now?

MARLING
(more hesitant)
I assumed you'd talked.

Webber knows this is bad.

GAST'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Webber lets himself in. He immediately sees a DOSSIER open on Gast's desk. He looks in it, feels a chill down his spine as he discovers it contains print-outs of frames from surveillance footage. His "date" with Mia. There they are, having coffee together, walking in the street.

Webber keeps flipping through the photos. One is a close-up of his razor in Mia's open medicine cabinet.

Gast enters with coffee. Discovering Webber, he smiles.

GAST

Eberlin's decided to shake things up a bit- he's elevated me to CO in charge of this operation.

WEBBER

(gestures with dossier)
And you thought this would be an amusing way for me to find out?

GAST

I wanted to complete my vetting of young Mia before I spoke to you. I interviewed her myself this afternoon, discreetly, at the cafe where she works.

Webber plays off alarm as indignation-

WEBBER

What earth-shaking revelations did you wheedle out of her?

GAST

My intention is to take a very close second look at everyone in the division. Dr. Schoenweiss has informed me there was a mysterious fire at the facility doing the blood testing.

WEBBER

(genuinely surprised)
Sabotage?

GAST

Someone is trying to help Morningstar elude detection. It's possible there's more than one mole in the division.

WEBBER

All the blood samples were destroyed?

GAST

Not all. Twenty-some possible matches were put aside for further testing before the fire.

WEBBER

("relieved")

That's a bit of luck.

Gast takes the dossier from him, smiles at Mia's photos.

GAST

One detail from my interview with Miss Vandergroot does trouble me— She told me you capped off your lovely evening, the other night, with fried chicken and waffles. In what forsaken corner of Paris did you find such an abomination?

Webber almost says "what?" Gast smirks and goes back to his paper. Webber turns and walks out, quietly.

INT. A SMALL THEATER -- DAY

A comical monster stares at us - a crude and cartoonish mask that Mia is holding in front of her face.

MIA

(growly male voice)

I am the most fearsome monster in the forest and I'm HUNGRY!

Her "fearsome" roar is greeted by gales of CHILDREN'S LAUGHTER. Mia stalks around the stage, growling and stomping her feet. Webber watches from the back along with a couple of wounded veterans in wheelchairs who seem hardly conscious of being there. Mia lowers her mask.

MIA (CONT'D)

Oh, I couldn't fool you. You know there's no such thing as monsters!

But even as she says this a "monster" (troupe members under a mangy rug of a costume) rises up behind her. The kids try to warn her then eat it up as Mia shrieks and descends into the audience. Webber watches, wonders who this person is.

BACKSTAGE - LATER

Mia and her theater friends are gathered around a GIRL with dreadlocks who holds what looks like a CRYSTAL HEXAGON. She lets it go. The crystal hovers, slowly spinning in the air, casting a trippy light as it rotates. Mia's pleasantly surprised to see Webber coming toward her.

MIA

It's Xenian. She says it's some kind of portal they use to access their collective consciousness.

WEBBER

(unamused)

You're a better actress than you let on.

MIA

Out there? That wasn't a performance. When I act like I'm happy, it makes me happy. It just works like that.

WEBBER

Why did you lie for me?
(cutting off protest)
U.N.I. interviewed you today. You lied in an official interview. You made up a story about chicken and waffles. Why?

MIA

I thought I was helping you.

WEBBER

Why?!

MIA

(confused, frightened)

What kind of trouble am I in?

Webber roughly pulls Mia close and lifts her left eyelid to examine her eye. Satisfied, he lets her go.

MIA (CONT'D)

What the fuck?!! ...You thought I was an alien?

Mia smiles for the benefit of her friends who look over.

WEBBER

How did you know to give me an alibi for that particular night?

MIA

It was the only night he asked about... I told him we slept together.

WEBBER

(almost titillated)
Why would you do that?

MIA

I just didn't think they had the right... Somebody has to stand up to these fascists.

WEBBER

So you did it just on some half-assed, left wing principle?

MIA

Yes... and... I thought we had a connection... the way you look at me. Maybe I finally just went crazy. Maybe I just wanted it to be there...

WEBBER

On the basis of a look, you lie to a UN official? It can't be that simple.

He looks into her eyes. Searching for answers. Getting none. he lets her go. Walks away. On his way out, Webber detours to the spinning orb. Touches it and it falls.

WEBBER (IN FRENCH) (CONT'D)

It's a gyroscope for a Xeno Digger's drill-bit. There are no portals in this world except the ones that flow down to the Seine.

Having sufficiently killed the buzz, Webber walks out. Mia fights the urge to go after him.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THEATER -- DAY

NEWS scrolls across a building: ...sixty thousand additional UN troops to Austro-Italian border... below, TWO MEN IN EXPENSIVE SUITS fight on the sidewalk like barroom brawlers. Webber walks past, ignoring it all, lost in his own crisis.

INT. L'HOSPITALE ST. VINCENT -- DAY

Webber enters the doorway of the darkened private room where his FATHER sleeps peacefully. Something seems to drive him into the room. He approaches the bed, watching the old man sleep. When his father opens his rheumy eyes, Webber tenses like he'd been caught at something.

FATHER

D-did you go down to the river..?

Webber shushes him, awkwardly but gently.

WEBBER

That was Ohio. This is Paris.
There's a different river here.

His father slowly returns to his senses. Webber helps him sit up, plumps his pillow. The old man, now that he's conscious, seems surprised to see Webber there.

FATHER

You came this month already...
didn't you? Is something wrong?

WEBBER

No. I'm fine. I haven't talked to
them about your condition yet.

The old man smiles at Webber's deadpan candor. He reaches for his glasses but his hand is shaky. Webber helps his father get his glasses on but quickly backs off again when the old man touches his arm. His father notices. Smiles again. Webber looks at the old man as if studying him... then his eyes land on a bedside photo. His father as a young man with his arms around his young wife, Melissa and his real son, the child Martin. Webber stares at the woman in the picture.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

When you met your wife... my
mother... you told me she came into
the shop where you worked and
bought a magazine and you had a
brief conversation...

FATHER

Yeah?

WEBBER

You told me within thirty seconds
that you knew this is the woman you
were going to marry. Was that true?
I know it's a conventional thing to
say.

(MORE)

WEBBER (CONT'D)

But it must refer to something real... or does it? I mean, if you knew, if you actually knew, there must have been something concrete. A gesture... Something...

FATHER

You came here to ask me that?

WEBBER

(as if realizing)
I don't know.

FATHER

(smiling, nodding)
You were always stubborn about wanting to get things right. When we played catch when you were a kid, you'd get so mad at yourself when you dropped the ball.

Webber realizes he's been foolish. Nods, to himself. ..

WEBBER

I have to go.

FATHER

(desperate for company)
Want to watch TV? I get all the English stations...

WEBBER

I can't.

Webber tries a smile and prepares to leave. His father's glasses slip off. Webber puts them back on again for him.

FATHER

You know- she was wearing these round glasses, your mother. They made her look smart... There might be something there.

He knows his gambit to keep his son here has failed. He shrugs with a smile. Overcome by an impulse he doesn't understand, Webber touches the old man's face. Tenderly. His father looks very touched and very confused at the same time.

WEBBER

I would have liked to stay and watch TV.

His father nods, smiling now as if to comfort him. Webber leaves before things get too painful.

CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL - HALLWAY

A male NURSE passes Webber in the opposite direction. Webber glances at the man's flat, black shoes before he boards the elevator at the end of the hall.

CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL - ELEVATOR

A moment after the doors close, Webber looks at the two other occupants of the elevator. Two more NURSES. He looks at their shoes. They both wear white athletic shoes. Webber immediately pushes a button to stop the elevator.

CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL - HALLWAYS

Webber tears out of the elevator, runs for the staircase. He charges up the stairs, past startled cleaning staff...

Reaching the hall one floor up, he gets a view of his father's room- swarming with MEDICAL PERSONNEL. A crash cart. Webber frantically scans for a sight of that Orderly he glimpsed before but he knows he's gone. It's useless.

He enters his father's room. Stands there, uselessly, watching the medical staff try to revive the old man.

WEBBER

If it's possible to resuscitate
him, even for just a minute...
there's something I have to tell
him.

Webber says this flatly, as if it were a reasonable request. The lead doctor just looks at him. Webber sees his father FLATLINE. Just a hint of urgency touches his voice-

WEBBER (CONT'D)

I'd just need a second, really.

The Doctor stops working.

DOCTOR

He's passed. I'm sorry.

Webber seems to not quite process. The Doctor motions to the others and they give Webber a moment alone. Webber approaches the old man's body slowly. Looks at the blotchy hand lying limply at his father's side. Webber takes the hand in his.

He stands there, holding his father's hand, looking lost.

INT. WEBBER'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Webber sits in the dark, his gun on the endtable beside him. His phone RINGS. He answers, slowly.

MARLING (O.S.)

Kemp's wife and child have turned up, in a manner of speaking...

WEBBER (INTO PHONE)

Dead?

MARLING

Six months ago, Adele and little Ann-Louise were found in a bog near Arlon. Necks broken, expertly. Kemp is still wanted for questioning.

WEBBER

Send me everything.

MOMENTS LATER

Footage on Webber's phone: A reporter in a provincial village square talks grimly to the camera. They cut to footage of Adele pushing Anne-Louise on a swing. Happier days. Webber's eyes fill with emotion. He looks away.

Webber removes his earphones and moves to the window. Looking across the courtyard, he sees Mia in her window. She's alone, smoking in her kitchen.

INT. CAR -- DAY

Webber drives through marshland. A sign says "Arlon 1km."

EXT. A BOG -- DAY

Webber surveys a spookily deserted hollow. A swing hangs in a tree. A sign somebody had a good time here once.

INT. CAR -- DAY

Webber drives past a picturesque rural village. He slows, seeing something that draws his interest.

EXT. CHURCH -- DAY

Webber approaches a dilapidated brick structure at the back. Shabby, mostly elderly LOST SOULS rest here and there in the shade. A few CHILDREN from the village play nearby. But what has drawn Webber is a perfect square of barren earth.

He sniffs the dirt. A youngish, balding PRIEST passing by observes Webber's interest. (*Scene in FRENCH.*)

PRIEST

Everything died, all at once.
Overnight. It was tempting to see
it as some kind of sign.

WEBBER

Your garden was poisoned. Somebody
dumped kerosene here.

The Priest looks troubled by the notion. Webber eyes the little house which overlooks the garden.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

Who lives in that house there? The
one with the view of this garden?

PRIEST

No one. That's the old sacristy...
Well, for a few days last month, I
let a very disturbed man spend some
nights sleeping in there...

WEBBER

(shows ID)
What can you tell me about him?

PRIEST

(switching to English)
Almost nothing. He just showed up
one day. Looking lost. He wouldn't
even take confession.

WEBBER

Did he leave anything in there?

PRIEST

Some junk. A couple of journals...
if you'd like to look...

WEBBER

Please.

PRIEST

The key's inside.

Webber follows the Priest past where those kids are playing.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

It took something for him to stand out. Only the most desperate souls come around here.

The Priest visibly recoils as one of the children, chasing a ball, nearly brushes against him. Webber notes this.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

The marketing problem the church faces these days is that no one looks heavenward anymore with anything but dread.

INT. CHURCH -- DAY

Webber looks around as the Priest rummages for the key.

PRIEST

What did he do, this man?

WEBBER

He was living a very normal suburban existence with his wife and three-year-old daughter. Then he killed them.

The Priest responds with a shake of his head. Webber's gaze settles on an ABSTRACT SCULPTURE that looks out of place among the religious objects all around. A WHITE CUBE on a translucent pedestal. Webber touches it, almost reverently.

PRIEST

That's a piece by a Belgian artist named Bellocq.

WEBBER

A little unusual for a church.

PRIEST

Personally, I'm moved by the purity of it.

Webber smiles. As the priest goes back to rummaging, Webber draws his gun, holds it behind his back.

WEBBER

You didn't seem that surprised when I told you what he'd done.

PRIEST

I wasn't. People think these things are inexplicable. But they're not.

WEBBER

Explain it to me. Please.

PRIEST

This man probably settled into a pleasant, little suburb with that woman and that lovely little girl, wanting to do it right. Wanting to be a husband, wanting to be a father. He probably felt that, if he did all the things a husband does, a father does - you know, just kept at it - eventually he'd somehow, magically transform into the real thing.

WEBBER

But the magic never happened?

PRIEST

He tried. I imagine, he really tried. I imagine he wanted so badly to be anything except what he was. Wanted so badly to love them. And maybe he almost convinced himself, for a while. But, in the end, he certainly hated them. For making him weak. For being so easy to fool.

("breaking character")

Is it because I didn't let the kid touch me?

WEBBER

I jumped to a lucky conclusion. Don't blame yourself.

PRIEST (KEMP)

Still, I should've let the fucking kid touch me.

The Priest - Kemp - FIRES through the desk. Just misses. Webber RETURNS FIRE- but not accurately enough to hit Kemp as he dodges out the door.

Webber charges out into the church proper... but puts on the brakes as he finds Kemp holding by the neck the Little Boy who brushed up against him earlier. Kemp smiles at Webber's standing down.

KEMP

I didn't think this would work.

Webber takes cover and keeps his gun trained on Kemp as he backs with his hostage down the apse. When they duck back through the arched stone doorway that leads to the crypts, Webber runs after him...

CRYPT

Webber pursues Kemp down spiralling stone steps. At the bottom, the FLASH of Kemp's gun makes him take cover behind a sarcophagus. He hears the hostage child CRYING.

Peering out, Webber sees the kid, tossed aside, on his hands and knees, sobbing. Webber moves on, crouched low.

Through the gap between two sarcophagi, Webber sees: an ochre CHRYSALIS at the base of a weeping madonna. It pulsates. Webber knows what it is. He sees one of those fearsome ALIEN INSECTS crawling over the stone face of the crypt in front of him, the larger adult version, with the stinger.

Then he sees another. And another. They're all around him.

Webber rushes to the kid, pulls him into an empty niche.

He raises his gun at Kemp's FOOTSTEPS... but freezes as he sees one of the insects crawling up his arm, pronounced stinger at the ready. Webber remains completely still as the creature crawls from his arm to the top of the kid's head...

WEBBER

Don't move! Try not to breathe.

The kid stirs, feeling insect as it continues to crawl down the length of his body. Webber holds him still.

Kemp shows himself, grinning. Seeing Webber won't dare move.

KEMP

You really are far gone.

Kemp turns and walks away. Webber is so sorely tempted to take his shot, even if it means the death of the kid in his arms. But he doesn't. He watches Kemp slip out of sight.

Only when the alien bug finally crawls off the boy does he move. He stomps on it.

EXT. CHURCH/ARLON -- CONTINUOUS

Webber comes charging out the vestry door. He catches a glimpse of Kemp's back disappearing down a flight of steps, Webber runs after him, pursuing Kemp down what turns out to be a long series of tiered steps, leading down to the quaint streets of the town.

At the bottom of the steps, Kemp loses himself in a MOB of people, many wearing peace symbols and carrying protest signs or white flags. Webber curses and follows the crowd.

They're surging toward a MARKET SQUARE where a DEMONSTRATION is going on. POLICE DRONES circle above. BLACK-SHIRTS- one with a megaphone- are baiting a growing crowd.

BLACK SHIRT (O.S.)
 ...the politicians talk and talk.
 But now is the time for action! At
 three o'clock today, the enemy
 fired shots across the DMZ...

There's jostling in the crowd, incipient violence. Webber pushes through it, focused on searching for his quarry.

And now a SHOT is fired somewhere. In response, a Drone FIRES a smoke grenade into the crowd. A bit tardily people become aware that a man's clothes have CAUGHT FIRE. Some rush to try to put him out, others watch helplessly.

Webber sees there's only one other person in the crowd not spellbound by the unfolding tragedy: Kemp. Their eyes meet.

Kemp opens fire, indiscriminately. A woman near Webber falls. Webber raises his gun but he doesn't have a shot as bedlam breaks out and frantic, confused people get in the way.

The next glimpse Webber gets of Kemp is him wading into a line of cars jammed by the demonstration, lethally jacking a Peugeot and speeding off in it through the square, clogged with people...

Webber hijacks a Renault at gunpoint and takes off after Kemp. (The Renault, like the Peugeot, is a slightly futuristic vehicle with 60s-retro styling.)

At the wheel of the Renault, teeth gritted, Webber tries not to hit anybody. Kemp shows no such restraint. He hits all kinds of people.

Clearing the square, the two retro-futurist Euro sports cars insanely careen up and down the winding cobblestone streets of the town...

...until Kemp, cutting down an alley, has to slam on the brakes because of the POLICE VEHICLE travelling in the opposite direction. The two cars halt with a hideous SCREECH, nose to nose. Hoods almost touching.

Webber arrives behind Kemp. Blocking him in.

Kemp responds by bringing up his gun and BLASTING away. The windshield in front of him disintegrates. The OFFICERS in the front seat of the police car are RIDDLED.

With no windshields in the way, Kemp climbs out of the Peugeot, crawls across two car hoods and settles in behind the wheel of the police vehicle.

He shoves out the corpses of the gendarmes and takes off again, speeding backward.

Webber floors it. He pushes the abandoned Peugeot the entire length of the alley - until he reaches a wider street and can get around it.

Looking in his rear view, Webber sees a string of POLICE VEHICLES have joined the chase. Chasing Kemp and him.

One of the pursuing police cars ejects a PATROL DRONE.

It implacably lowers over Webber's desperately swerving car and FIRES A PROJECTILE... which turns out to be a DISK that attaches magnetically to the Renault and causes its power to immediately cut out.

INT. RENAULT

Webber's badly tossed by the violent lurch of the vehicle suddenly stopping. The drone ZOOMS past, after Kemp now.

EXT. ARLON STREET

Webber emerges from the Renault, holding up his UN badge. People back off. He looks up and sees the police drone above the rooftops, tracking Kemp. He follows the chase on foot...

INT. FRENCH SQUAD CAR

The FRENCH COP in the passenger seat is controlling the drone that is now lowering over the police vehicle commandeered by Kemp that's now slowing to a stop.

The drone drops lower, allowing the cop to see that the stolen vehicle is now empty.

FRENCH COP (SUBTITLE)
 Suspect has abandoned the vehicle.
 He must have ditched somewhere
 right up here...

A BABY STROLLER suddenly rolls in front of the speeding police car. The cop at the wheel has to go into a SKID...

EXT. ARLON STREET - CONTINUOUS

The police car CRASHES into a kiosk.

Kemp throws to the pavement the FRANTIC MOTHER of the baby in the carriage he just rolled into the street, then strolls over to the wrecked car and SHOOTs the two cops inside.

Webber, arriving a block away, sees the mother tearfully retrieving her baby from the carriage. Then he sees Kemp.

Kemp gives Webber a hint of a smile before he reaches into the wrecked police car, does something we can't quite see and casually walks away. Webber takes aim at Kemp's back... but the now driverless police drone ZOOMS toward him. SMASHING THROUGH AN OUTDOOR BISTRO, CRASHING into the street right in front of Webber. Webber shields himself from debris.

When he looks up again, he sees only curling black smoke.

EXT. CHURCH -- DAY

Surrounded by GENDERMES, ambulances. Marling gets out of a car in the midst of the official bedlam. He observes HEALTH DEPARTMENT WORKERS in hazmat gear INCINERATING the alien insect hives with flame throwers.

RECTOR'S OFFICE

The contents of every drawer are on the floor. Webber is currently thumbing a stack of PAMPHLETS for a clinic, Centre de Crise. On the top corner of one page, he reads, "Call anytime - Phillipe." He acknowledges Marling's arrival-

WEBBER
 I need anything you can find on
 anyone named "Phillipe" associated
 with an anxiety clinic in Paris
 called "Centre de Crise."

INT. ANXIETY CLINIC -- DAY

ON VIDEO: a map of Europe, one area blinking red.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

...reports that Secretary Voss will make an unprecedented trip across the DMZ for a round of emergency peace talks, this despite the Secretary's receiving a vote of no confidence from the Assembly...

Kemp watches this on his phone, surrounded by gaunt, anxious people in yellow plastic chairs. Some kind of crowded free clinic. "Don't Go It Alone" posters are on the walls. A COUNCILOR comes over to Kemp with a disapproving look. Kemp realizes his phone is the problem and turns it off, smiling obligingly. The Councilor nods, waves him back.

COUNCILOR

It's normal to want to look at every alert and headline but you gotta go cold turkey.

Kemp follows the man to a cubicle. Kemp produces a card from his wallet as they walk.

COUNCILOR (CONT'D)

Pharmaceutical card?
(taking card)
Symptoms: depression, inability to concentrate... suicidal feelings?

KEMP

Mostly homicidal.

The Councilor gives Kemp a look as they go into his cubicle.

TIME CUT TO - INT. ANXIETY CLINIC -- NIGHT

The now deceased Councilor is slumped in his chair with the blood vessels in his eyes burst hideously. The needle that poisoned him still sticking out of his throat.

MARLING (O.S.)

He was an ordinary citizen, it seems. Other than being a sympa.

Webber examines the dead man with disposable gloves, Marling standing by. Webber notes the dead man's left hand is minus two digits. A birth defect. Under the Councilor's shirt, he discovers a MEDAL bearing a depiction of the Mother Zone.

WEBBER

He wasn't just a Sympathizer. He wanted to defect. I bet if we look, we'll find he recently received a visa to cross the DMZ.

MARLING

If Kemp killed him for his visa, then he's fleeing across the wall...

WEBBER

Not fleeing. He has nowhere to run to.

Webber straightens up, looks out the window. A CANDLELIGHT PROCESSION is passing in the street. People in black, chanting in unison. Incongruously mediaeval.

MARLING

People are clinging like lambs to Voss and his supposed peace talks- it's not even entirely clear he's still our boss.

Webber notes the condition of a fidgety, perspiring YOUNG GENDERME on crime scene guard duty. His phone DINGS. A message from Gast: 100 Rue Montais. It's over.

He feels a chill.

WEBBER

Marling, can you check with HQ if the blood results came in?

MARLING

They did. I believe Gast received them this evening... He didn't share the results with you?

WEBBER

He just did.

EXT. PARIS STREET -- EVENING

Everywhere, people stand frozen, staring in mute horror at the news on their phones. Fresh reports of doomsday. Webber walks among them like a condemned man. A snatch can be heard from a cafe-

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)

At this hour, it is unknown which side fired first but we can now confirm that there has been an exchange of shots across the DMZ...

Near the train station entrance, an OLD MAN is selling fresh fruit from a cart- or would be if he wasn't preoccupied, watching his phone. Webber finds himself drawn to him. He examines the Mandarin Strawberries. The Old Man belatedly notices he has a customer. Smiling weakly, he offers Webber a free sample. Webber looks askance for an instant, then he takes the strawberry from the old man's knobby fingers. Tastes it. It swells inside him.

Webber finds himself returning the old man's grin. He surprises him with a hundred Euro note and walks on.

EXT. 100 RUE DE MONTAIS -- EVENING

Webber parks on a forbidding industrial block. Thinks a long moment about not getting out, but does. He checks his gun.

INT. 100 RUE DE MONTAIS -- EVENING

Webber walks down the hall, a man on his way to the gallows. He finds Gast standing in the hall, as advertised, smug.

GAST

We got a hit with the blood tests.
There is another mole.

Webber betrays nothing. Gast looks to the grim-faced UNDERLING coming down the corridor toward them. The Underling reaches under his jacket- Webber expects a weapon- but instead produces a manila envelope, which he hands to Webber. It contains inscrutable blood results... and, underneath, a DOSSIER. Oscarsson's.

WEBBER

Sven Oscarsson?

GAST

His blood came back pure alien. Not a hybrid like Morningstar. Just very clever - hidden for years, taking advantage of loopholes.

Webber turns toward the doorway and is surprised to see a FRIGHTENED YOUNG MAN sitting in a chair.

WEBBER

Who is he?

GAST

Oscarsson's little friend. The kid claims it's true love.

Webber processes this, surprised on a couple of levels.

GAST (CONT'D)

He's cooperative. He says Oscarsson's going to be here at 7.

WEBBER

(nods, calmly)

There are snipers in place?

GAST

Every effort will be made to take him alive, of course.

Webber nods again. Good.

EXT. 100 RUE DE MONTAIS -- NIGHT

Webber stands by a street lamp, watching the entrance - where Gast has planted himself - and the wide, empty avenue. A pedestrian bridge to his right. Webber eyes the sniper's position above the bridge. A VOICE comes over Webber's radio-

SNIPER (O.S.)

We have visual on the target.

Webber steps away from the street lamp. At the far end of the bridge, Oscarsson's familiar form waddling toward him.

WEBBER (INTO RADIO)

Stand by.

Webber heads out onto the bridge to meet Oscarsson. A hovering surveillance ORB trails him.

Gast watches from a small "video village" as Webber shows Oscarsson his ID in the middle of the bridge.

WEBBER (ON MONITOR) (CONT'D)

U.N.I.

Oscarsson smiles wryly, understanding what's going on.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

It's your move.

Oscarsson has a little laugh to himself at that. Webber remains poker faced as Oscarsson keeps coming.

OSCARSSON

I'm a terrible hypocrite. I preach non-attachment but I've found I'm quite wedded to this life after all.

Webber knows this is a direct threat. He nods.

WEBBER

And you can live, you know?.

OSCARSSON

Of course. I could strike a deal. A pretty good one, probably.

WEBBER

A very good one.

OSCARSSON

I bet I could get anything I wanted. A villa on the coast. At the very least a promise not to dissect me as a lab specimen.

WEBBER

At the least.

OSCARSSON

Tempting. But then there is loyalty too. Loyalty is what holds you humans together. It's a shabby replacement for the oneness of my kind. Pathetic. But that's what I feel now- the tug of loyalty. I've been in this flesh too long.

Oscarsson brushes past Webber. Walking toward the end of the bridge where the snipers and the cameras are waiting.

OSCARSSON (CONT'D)

I renounce the blood that moves my hand...

WEBBER

(knowing what this means.)
Oscarsson....

OSCARSSON

I renounce the heart that drives it. The constraint of muscle, the burden of bone...

Oscarsson reaches into his jacket...

WEBBER

Don't!

OSCARSSON

I show my true face so that I may
be known when I come home.

Oscarsson brings out his pistol and points it at Webber. A slight smile on his face as the bullets hit him. Webber remains frozen, watching Oscarsson fall from the bridge.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER -- DAY

Kemp carries a shaving kit past lost souls gathered around a small TV: a newsman stands in front of an armored transport.

NEWSMAN (ON TV)

...it is quiet at this moment...

Follow Kemp into a little "bathroom." He pulls a plastic curtain closed behind him. Opens his kit. Inside, the passport of the dead councilor, containing a DMZ visa. The councilor's distinguishing features are mentioned. Missing fingers. Kemp removes a SCALPEL from the bag. A unit on the wall warns users to "sheath all used needles." Kemp sticks the scalpel in the unit's PURPLE LIGHT to sterilize it. He then begins to cut off the little finger of his left hand...

EXT. BRIDGE -- NEAR DAWN

Webber grimly watches Oscarsson's body being fished out, Gast beside him.

GAST

Not a bad day's work. Even if this
is the end of the party, we at
least have the satisfaction of a
job well done.

Webber just looks at him. Marling joins them, excited.

MARLING

There was a sighting of Kemp- a
homeless shelter. The place is
fifty percent pilgrims waiting on
DMZ visas.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER -- DAY

Gast and Marling watch on, flanked by SHELTER STAFF and a host of curious lost souls, as Webber searches the area around one particular cot.

GAST

He'll have crossed over by now, of course.

Under the mattress, Webber discovers a small DISC, like a mini-CD. Gast holds out his hand. Webber has no choice but to hand it over. Gast slides the disc into the hand-held device he produces from his pocket. It's revealed to be an audio recording as Gast presses play. Unrecognizable alien SOUNDS.

MARLING

It's High Dialect. It'll take hours to decipher it.

Webber, though, is already understanding what's being said-

KEMP (O.S.)

(alien language,
subtitled)

...Webber. You'll excuse my wretched accent. I just had something to tell you. About your Little Dutch Girl...

Webber reacts with alarm he can barely conceal.

KEMP (O.S., SUBTITLED) (CONT'D)

I had to complicate your decision to follow me, just a bit...

Gast starts to turn off the recording, figuring its just gibberish to human ears. Webber stops him.

KEMP (O.S., SUBTITLED) (CONT'D)

...So I've created a dilemma for you. A human dilemma...

A surprised Gast stares at Webber - who is concentrating, eyes closed, on the sounds, obviously understanding the impenetrable alien dialect.

KEMP (O.S., SUBTITLED) (CONT'D)

I made a call, to Abraxas. I painted a rather vivid picture of a loose end...

Webber charges off, leaving Gast and Marling very taken aback. By the time Webber hits the door, he's already dialed Mia's number. He winces at getting her VOICE-MAIL...

WEBBER (INTO PHONE)

Mia, if you're out somewhere, don't go home. If you're in your apartment, get out. Now.

INT. MIA'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Mia is deep asleep, a towel over her eyes. Her phone DINGS near her waitress uniform. 1 Voicemail received.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING -- DAY

Sion, the "homeless" alien with the robotic arm, crosses the street in front, carrying a wrinkled grocery bag... another angle reveals he's being watched by a figure in a parked car.

INT. WEBBER'S CAR -- DAY

Webber dials as he maniacally speeds down the highway. He dials Mia again. Again, voice-mail!

INT. MIA'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Wearing a robe, yawning, Mia walks down the little hall that separates her kitchen from her bedroom. In passing, we may note the chain on her apartment door. She gets a yogurt out of her fridge and spoons it as she re-crosses the hall.

She notices her phone BLINKING. Follow her as she retrieves her phone. She listens to her message...

WEBBER (O.S.)

Mia, if you're in your apartment. Get out. Just get out...

Mia whirls to look behind her. Holding the phone, she fearfully exits the bedroom, scanning... Reaching the hall, she lowers the phone. Her door is ajar. The chain is dangling. Someone's in the apartment with her.

Mia hangs up the phone so its muffled murmuring won't give her position away. She back-pedals, quietly as she can, toward the kitchen... only to freeze before she gets there, HEARING something. A creak.

She watches the kitchen doorway, her whole body tense. There's nothing there. Nothing, nothing... then a glimpse of a man's arm and shoulder.

She backs away slowly, keeping her eye on the doorway. Ducks into the bathroom to her right, turns on the water in the shower, then quickly dodges back across the hall.

Mia quietly slides a knife out of a kitchen drawer and retreats into a closet behind her...

Sion enters the hall, weapon at his side. He approaches the bathroom...

Holding the knife in the dark, Mia tries to listen to what's going on outside but loudly humming pipes make it impossible.

...Sion turns away from the empty bathroom with the shower running... and finds himself facing UN agent Felton who holds a somewhat shaky gun on him.

FELTON

Don't move. Put your weapon down.

Sion puts his gun on the floor, smiling the whole while at Felton's obvious nervousness..

SION

U.N.?

FELTON

I've been on you for days. You're a little fish. We want Morningstar.

SION

I think you say "speak of the devil."

Felton doesn't get it. Sion nods to something beyond Felton's shoulder. Felton turns and sees Webber there, his own gun drawn, a silencer on it. The gun's pointed at him.

WEBBER

Hand over your weapon and back up, hands behind your head.

Felton- aghast- just stands there.

FELTON

You... you're...?

WEBBER

Now.

Disbelieving, Felton surrender his pistol, butt first.

SION

Nice timing, Morningstar.

Webber looks at Sion. Then SHOOTs HIM, dead center. Felton is startled. Webber motions to the couch.

WEBBER

Sit.

Felton obeys. Webber walks over to Sion who is clawing at the human face he wears, as if it were a mask he desperately wanted to take off, drawing blood...

SION

Not like this... not like this...

With a hideous ripping sound, Sion succeeds in tearing away a portion of his human face exposing something we haven't really had a close look at- the true face of an alien. It looks demonic, contorted in anger. Webber holds Sion down, covering his nose and mouth with his hand, suffocating him...

...as Felton, looking around for a weapon close at hand, fixes on a SCARF of Mia's, draped over the sofa's arm.

...and Mia hesitantly emerges from the closet, making her way fearfully down the hall, still clutching the knife...

Webber gets a nasty surprise as an ALIEN ARM bursts out of Sion's mid-section, clutching wildly at him.

With Webber distracted, Felton seizes his moment- he leaps up, grabs the scarf and wraps it around Webber's neck. Sion's arm falls limp- dead- as Felton pulls Webber off him, tightening the scarf like a garotte. This is what Mia sees as she enters the living room.

She rushes to Felton and tries to pull him off Webber. Felton knocks her back with an elbow and goes on strangling Webber.

Mia watches Webber's eyes roll back in his head. He's dying.

Acting on instinct, she sticks Felton with the knife.

Felton falls, yowling. Mia is in shock at what she's done. Webber's pretty surprised himself. He unwinds the scarf from his neck and takes the knife from her.

MIA

Were they... wh-who were they?

WEBBER

Wait for me in your bedroom... now.

Felton is curled up, moaning, holding his side. Looking down at him, Webber grits his teeth in frustration.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

She has nothing to do with this.

FELTON

(obviously out of fear)
Alright. I believe you

Webber shakes his head. It's useless.

WEBBER

Go.

Felton can't believe it. But he doesn't need to be told twice. He picks himself up, in pain and limps out the door.

Webber curses under his breath then goes to Mia's bedroom. She's sitting on her bed.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

We have to go, quickly. The man you stabbed was a U.N. intelligence officer.

MIA

But he... why was he attacking you?

WEBBER

You know.

MIA

I don't know anything.

WEBBER

You know.

MIA

I don't! What do you think I know? That you're an infiltrator? How can I think that? You can't be...

WEBBER

You don't understand but you know.
(stops her from bolting)
Your life depends on trusting me.
There's only one shortcut to get there. Let me see your hand.

MIA

What?!

He takes her hand. He picks up a pair of cuticle scissors from the table between them.

WEBBER

I'm sorry for this.

He SLICES her palm. Mia recoils. He then slices his own palm.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

I've never seen my home. My real home. But I carry it with me wherever I go. In my blood.

Webber clasps his bleeding palm over the wound of hers. She immediately reacts with bodily shudder, turning pale.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

The collective memory of my kind is imbedded in my DNA structure. Hidden. It's all there- what it is to be one of us.

Blue veins radiate from Mia's wrist, down her arm, disappearing under her sleeve. Her eyes roll back.

FLASH TO-

A field of unbroken white... movement, shapes, white bodies amid the whiteness, gliding against each other in rhythmic unison, like an underwater dance...

INT. CAR -- DAY

Mia wakes up, pale. Lost on her: they're driving through the first pretty countryside we've seen. She becomes violently ill. He directs her attention to the wastebasket in the well in front of her.

WEBBER

It'll pass. It's always painful to wake up on earth after the Dream.

MIA

I was somewhere... it was beautiful. The most beautiful... we were all... all of us... we were...

WEBBER

It's the dream I have every time I close my eyes.

MIA

It wasn't a dream. I was there.

WEBBER

In a way, you were. In another way, it was just a sadistic lie.

Mia tilts the rear view to look at herself. Her eyes have changed color. A vivid blue. It's the last thing she sees as she loses consciousness again.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE -- DAY

Webber parks outside an ill-kept cottage, surrounded by wild growth. He lifts an unconscious Mia out of the car.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE -- DAY

A RED LIGHT on an armed MINE in front of the front door goes out as Webber flips a concealed switch in the door frame.

Webber carries Mia to a slip-covered sofa. He goes to the window, eyes the dirt road that cuts through the tall weeds... at the same time, Mia rouses and, looking around groggily, finds herself staring at the faded wallpaper. The twining vines of the print seem to fascinate and greatly trouble her. When Webber looks back at her, she's doubled over in painful nausea.

WEBBER

It's the floral pattern in the paper. Organic shapes can be hard to take right after the Dream.

MIA

Everything I look at is one big, dull, grey, disgusting thing. I look at a chair, a rock, your face - they're all just broken bits of something broken... You live like this?

Webber's face answers for him.

WEBBER

These effects will fade. You'll be safe on a train in an hour.

MIA

On a train? Where am I going?

WEBBER

Madrid, first. There'll be someone on the other end to guide you from there. I've used this escape route before. It's safe.

MIA

But why do I need to run? I didn't do anything. I... I didn't know...

WEBBER

The UN already suspected you *before* you stabbed one of their agents. They'll dump you in a Black Site for interrogation, if they get their hands on you. And my side wants you dead. So, yes, you need to run. It's not fair. I'm sorry.

MIA

You're sorry...?

She literally starts laughing and crying at the same time. Webber wants to comfort her but he doesn't know how, so he just stands there, watching.

WEBBER

I wish I could take you myself but there's a small chance I can prevent this war. There's a man out there who's going to sabotage the peace talks but I can stop him. Maybe. I'll have to kill him, of course... He happens to be the only person on this planet I have any real connection to.

MIA

Why are you smiling?

WEBBER

I'm just enjoying this opportunity to say what I'm actually thinking.

He crosses to her. She looks up at him. He kisses her, as if compelled. They're both surprised. Even more so when she kisses him back. For several, long seconds, they clumsily grope each other. Until, as if by mutual decree, it stops.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

Are you alright?

MIA

That's a weird question but yeah...
Yeah.

Mia looks at him as if trying to sort out her feelings. A sudden, wayward thought...

MIA (CONT'D)

What do you look like under your
skin?

WEBBER

I look like you. Is that a relief?

She laughs a little. Webber's expression changes suddenly- Mia's confused as Webber walks toward a rear hall. Stands there, listening. She starts to ask. He motions for quiet.

A SHADOW flits across daylight at the base of the back door.

Mia looks terrified. Webber gives her a reassuring look, then ducks back... as the back door CREAKS open. An INFILTRATOR wearing a suit enters, gun out, silhouetted by sunlight as he comes down the hall. Until Webber flips a wall switch activating a PULSE MINE on the floor. Instantly, the silhouetted infiltrator's body crumples and collapses.

Webber nods for Mia to take shelter in the corner. He selects a length of rusty pipe from the debris on the floor.

More CREAKING - the stairs. Webber positions himself.

Mia bites her hand to keep from making noise as a PAIR OF MEN'S SHOES appear on the steps, followed by the man himself.

Webber lets the infiltrator get all the way down, then he takes a chunk of the guy's scalp with one swing of the pipe.

Webber retrieves the infiltrator's dropped ALIEN WEAPON, which resembles a shotgun. He takes out his own pistol and hands it to Mia. She looks skeptical.

ALIEN VOICES from the next room, muffled.

Webber levels the weapon at the wall and starts BLASTING. Devastating plasma rounds punch through the wall.

Walking around the other side of the wall, Webber finds, amid clearing smoke, three DEAD INFILTRATORS on the floor. Abraxas- now in the human guise of an elegantly dressed older woman- lies among them, wounded but alive.

ABRAXAS

I'm an outcast, as much as you and Kemp. All of us who dirty our hands down here. Instead of being honored for our sacrifices, we're scorned...

Webber levels the weapon. She grows more urgent-

ABRAXAS (CONT'D)

You don't understand- it would have been impossible for you to have a life in the Vale before but that's about to change...

WEBBER

What's going to change that? War?
(realizing)
The Hex never wanted war. Kemp's mission was you forcing their hand.

ABRAXAS

They're incredibly stubborn but after today they'll have no choice but to commit. A full assault. Finally.

WEBBER

The peace talks are happening. That's Kemp's target.

ABRAXAS

A new world will rise from this. One where you'll finally belong. Where you will be treasured, as you always should have been.

WEBBER

It may be a failure of imagination on my part but I can't envision any better world with you still in it.

Webber whacks her across the skull with the butt of his gun and reaches for a length of electrical cord on the floor.

In the other room, Mia glimpses something moving outside.

MIA

Hey... hey!

Webber quickly finishes tying unconscious Abraxas to a rusty heater and grabs the weapon...

Mia raises the gun Webber gave her with two hands and starts backing up the stairs... not seeing the INFILTRATOR appearing on the stairs behind her. She does HEAR a floorboard sag. She whips around and FIRES, eyes closed. She hits the man, miraculously. He keeps coming, though. Staggering at her, aiming his gun hand...

Till Webber arrives and cuts him in two with a plasma blast.

Mia freaks as unidentifiable alien appendages flail for a few moments from the Infiltrator's ruined body. Webber grabs her.

WEBBER

You're ok. You can't do this now.

She pulls it together, sort of. Webber leads her back to the other room, to check on Abraxas.

They find: the electrical cord lies curled in BLOODY TISSUE, the skin of her human arm, discarded like a snake's skin.

Webber rushes to the window. He sees TWO TRAILS of flattening weeds swiftly descending from the road above into the overgrown field in front of the house. Cars.

A CLEARING IN THE WEEDS

A BLACK CAR parks, AN INFILTRATOR gets out, nerdy, wearing glasses. A second CAR emerges from the weeds. A THUGGISH INFILTRATOR emerges from that one- accompanied by Abraxas, her exposed alien arm dangling at her side.

Mr. Glasses sets a METALLIC CYLINDER on the ground. It springs to life, unfolding into a large, frightening CYCLOPS on tripod legs like the ones glimpsed in the Alien Zone.

FIELD

Webber leads Mia through the tall weeds, fleeing on a trajectory away from the cars. Webber stops short, listening. He hears something coming toward them through the weeds, a WHIRRING. He knows what it is. He turns to her.

WEBBER

Follow the tree line north. There's a train station, three miles that way. It looks deserted but today a train will stop there.

MIA

No! I'm not going alone. We can get on the train together.

WEBBER

That window's closed.

The WHIRRING is growing louder, closing in rapidly.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

Run. Please.

(cutting her off)

If you run and I don't see you die,
then for the rest of my life,
there'll always be a chance you
made it. Give me that.

Mia's eyes fill with tears as she realizes she has no counter-argument. Then she's off. It's so abrupt it surprises Webber. He wants to call after her.

The WHIRRING is almost on him now. He takes off in the opposite direction Mia ran, running uphill. He reaches a point where he can see the silver top of the Cyclops poking above the weeds, plowing toward him.

He reaches a bare hillside. Stops, turns. He braces the shotgun listening to the WHIRRING get louder.

He gets off one shot before the Cyclops is on him. One of its spidery legs pierces Webber's wrist. Poised over a pinned Webber, the mechanical creature goes dormant, emitting a BEACON SIGNAL.

INT. BLACK CAR -- DAY

Webber is thrown in the back seat beside Abraxas.

ABRAXAS

There are years of secrets we have
to account for. This could take
days.

Webber rubs his wrist, crudely swathed with torn cloth. As the car pulls away, he subtly glances back. He catches sight of Mia making it into the trees. He looks almost peaceful.

EXT. STREET NEAR DMZ -- DAY

Abraxas' men take Webber out of the car on a block of ruined brick buildings dominated by an imposing UN Sentry Tower.

INT. RUINED BUILDING -- DAY

PIGEONS take wing as a door opens. Webber is led in, Abraxas trailing, a coat covering her arm. They ascend a rickety staircase through dusty bands of light. At the top of the stairs, a debris-filled room where the wall facing the DMZ has collapsed. One of Abraxas' men removes a drop-cloth from a mostly-glass contraption like something out of Jules Verne, a blimp-shaped TRANSPORT the size of a bus.

ABRAXAS

The cloaking on this isn't designed for daylight. We'll hope for the best.

EXT. DMZ -- CONTINUOUS

The UN sentry tower stands in the foreground as the alien transport flies low, away from the brick building. Its cloaking makes it mostly invisible.

INT. ALIEN TRANSPORT

Webber, standing at the front, has a vertiginous view of the ruins of the DMZ. Webber raises his eyes to the Mother Zone in the distance. FINGERS OF LIGHT descend from it to touch the top of the tower located directly beneath it.

WEBBER

Is that Ambassador Thtk arriving?

Abraxas corrects Webber's pronunciation of the Ambassador's name. Webber grins darkly.

WEBBER (CONT'D)

He's the real target, isn't he? Not Secretary Voss. He'll be killed by Kemp- a human, and the Hex will be forced to declare war.

ABRAXAS

No, they'll balk and dither, and a new regime will have to declare a State of Emergency. Then there'll be war.

WEBBER

I have to admit I envy you. You know what you want.

Webber smiles. Abraxas smiles back.

Very fast: Webber kidney-jabs the thuggish underling next to him then, simultaneously, rips the glasses of the nerdy underling's face and breaks his leg with a stomp. He snaps the glasses in two and uses the sharp edge to slash the thug's throat. Snagging the guy's gun as he falls, he FIRES point blank into the "nerd" who's reaching for his weapon...

EXT. UN SENTRY POST -- DAY

A UN GUARD spots the FLARES inside the cloaked transport, giving its position away. He starts barking indecipherable commands into a mouthpiece.

INT. ALIEN TRANSPORT

Webber faces Abraxas. He raises his gun. Just as a phosphorescent projectile streaks toward them.

EXT. DMZ/ALIEN ZONE

The transport becomes visible as, engulfed in phosphorous flames, it begins a rapid trajectory toward earth... and CRASHES in a remote mining area of the alien zone.

For a moment, silence as the flames sputter out. An ALIEN ROVER arrives on the scene. TWO ALIEN BORDER GUARDS in exosuits get out to look. One approaches the crash site.

A BLAST from inside the wreck practically decapitates him.

Webber rolls out of the wreck and trades fire with the 2nd alien guard, bringing him down.

Webber gets to his feet, a little shaky, and recovers a phone from the wreck. No service. At the same time, Abraxas is crawling out of the wreck. Her lower half is missing and she's dragging along a couple of exposed alien appendages. She says something to him in the alien tongue.

WEBBER

I'm sorry. I don't understand.

He shoots her. He then sees a fleet of ROVERS coming his way.

He looks toward the alien city in the distance and the Mother Zone tower that looms above it. That's where he has to go. He confiscates the rover the dead border guards left behind.

ALIEN CITY - OUTER BOROUGH

Webber abandons the Rover at the edge of a deserted, narrow lane lined by red sandstone-looking structures that flow into each other like natural formations.

He follows the MUFFLED NOISE of the city's center. Niches carved irregularly into the walls provide glimpses of alien strangeness going on inside the structures he passes. In one, a lone alien makes stylized gestures to the air- a prayer or calisthenics?

Around a corner, Webber almost runs into a group of ALIENS wearing hooded robes. He heads the other way... and discovers a patrolling ALIEN in a military exo-suit in his path.

Webber blindly ducks through the nearest door.

INT. ALIEN HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Webber draws his gun and moves through the dark space, cluttered with incomprehensible bric-a-brac... A SOUND makes him turn... AN ALIEN CHILD looks up at him, regarding him like a slightly interesting novelty. Webber lowers the gun and backs away.

EXT. ANOTHER ALIEN STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

This one's busier, there are HUMANS in evidence- serfs in soiled rags. Webber fits right in. He flows with the other humans into a crowded, Casbah-like warren. Soon he's awash in cacophonous sights and sounds. He passes aliens aggressively exchanging colored discs - some kind of commerce? A game?

Webber notices one of the alien "vendors" looking at him. He's not sure whether to make anything of it or not.

A WHIR behind him. He looks back. The crowd is parting for one of those CYCLOPEAN TRIPODS. No way to tell if it's coming after him. Just in case, he cuts down another lane.

There are two more CYCLOPI coming toward him from that direction. Now there's no doubt.

Webber climbs a flight of steps and winds up on a flat rooftop that flakes under every footfall like a sand dune. He jumps from roof to roof- until one of the Cyclops leaps onto the roof in front of him with its springy spider legs.

He follows another flight of steps around a Gaudi-like turret. The Cyclops takes the steps with surprising alacrity.

With nowhere to go, Webber makes a leap of faith, dropping through an opening at the top of the turret...

INT. ALIEN SHRINE -- CONTINUOUS

...and lands in a darkened space where dozens of naked aliens float in glass chambers filled with a viscous blue gel. A few dry on mats where ALIENS IN PRIESTLY ROBES talk them through the experience of waking on Earth. Webber only gets a quick impression of all this because his mere presence here causes instant bedlam. The aliens in the tanks wake all at once in an agony of desperate flailing. Webber pushes through the madness, running for daylight...

EXT. ALIEN STREETS -- CONTINUOUS

Emerging onto a quiet street. Webber looks back at the shrine and sees its surrounded by Cyclopi. They stand frozen-programmed not to enter the shrine, apparently. Webber slips away. He follows a street paved with white tiles.

Aliens stare at him from under their hoods like he was an escaped animal from the zoo, but no one stops him.

EXT. ALIEN ZONE -- DAY

Webber reaches a high street where he can clearly see the "Motherzone" tower. He heads that way.

MOTHERZONE TOWER

A white-tiled expanse, cordoned off by ALIEN SENTRIES and patrolled by CYCLOPEAN PODS. Beyond the cordon, the TOWER falls intermittently under shadow as a HUGE TRIANGULAR BLADE hovering in the sky above it slowly rotates. In the white courtyard, WELL-HEELED HUMANS, obvious government types, mix with ALIEN DIPLOMATS or talk on phones. This is clearly where the peace talks are going on.

Webber approaches the cordon, scanning the dignitaries on the other side of the barricade. He watches a SENTRY wave a LIMO through. He notes a familiar face behind the tinted rear window: SECRETARY-GENERAL VOSS.

There's movement too at the entrance of the tower -a phalanx of EXO-SUITED ALIENS are just now emerging, led by the XENIAN AMBASSADOR, festooned in ornamental robes.

Webber knows whatever's going to happen is happening now. He scans the human contingent in the courtyard more closely.

Kemp is there, wearing a diplomatic badge, cheerfully chatting up a balding ATTACHE.

Webber takes one step toward the barricade... and suddenly finds himself surrounded by threatening CYCLOPI. ARMED SENTRIES approach. One scans him with some device.

ALIEN SENTRY

Martin Webber?

Webber raises his hands. He sees Secretary Voss emerging from the limo with his BODYGUARDS.

Kemp sees the same thing. This is his moment.

But just as he starts moving, Kemp notices the buzz of activity all around. A Bodyguard whispers something in Voss' ear and the Secretary immediately gets right back in the limo he just got out of. Kemp has no idea what's going on.

Then he sees Webber, on the other side of the barricade, under arrest, and he understands.

He looks toward the tower where the Xenian Ambassador is right now getting the same message from his guard...

ALIEN BODYGUARD (SUBTITLE)

Security has been compromised. We have to go back.

Kemp can't believe it as security closes around the Ambassador, leading him back toward the tower entrance.

Kemp looks back toward the barricade. He can't hear what Webber's telling the Alien Security forces surrounding him but there's no doubt about the upshot as Webber points at him

It's now or never. Kemp charges after the Ambassador, bringing out of his pocket an RED GLOBULE the size of a golf ball. When he gets as close as a Cyclops covering the Ambassador's retreat will allow, Kemp throws it. A Hail Mary.

It lands in the hair of a BLONDE DIPLOMATIC ATTACHE desperately trying to get the Ambassador's attention. She doesn't even notice.

CLOSE ON: the red egg in her hair undulates, a spider-like leg emerges...

Kemp says a profane prayer under his breath.

The Blonde Attache's body suddenly collapses like a deflating balloon inside her tailored suit. And a MASS OF CARNIVOROUS INSECTS erupts from where she was standing.

At once, people- human and alien alike- are being devoured in the streaming RED TIDE, flesh disappearing, exposing sinew and bone. Some visibly decompose while still trying to run.

The *Cubensis Idori* stream across the barricade, climb the tripod legs of the Cylopi, gumming up their inner works and bringing them down. Webber has to dive to avoid being crushed by one as it falls.

As abruptly as it started, the red tide extinguishes itself like a spent wave- just shy of the disoriented Xenian Ambassador who's already at the tower entrance.

Recovering his feet, Webber sees Kemp pursuing the Ambassador into the tower. He goes after them...

INT. MOTHERZONE TOWER - CONTINUOUS

Entering, he finds himself in a long corridor lit only by amber light spilling from the SILO at its far end. As that borrowed light fades, all Webber can see ahead are MUZZLE FLASHES. Kemp trading gunfire with the Ambassador's guards.

Webber feels along the wall. Near the end of the corridor, he has to step over dead bodyguards. As he enters the silo...

MOTHERZONE TOWER - SILO - CONTINUOUS

...that AMBER LIGHT flares up again. It's the light of the Mother Zone, filtered by a dome above. The Triangle in the sky above the tower has rotated to let it in again.

The temporary illumination allows Webber to see everything: He's on a platform halfway up the silo. Twin ladders line the silo, opposite each other. They are linked at regular intervals by BRIDGES, each of which is divided into compartments by a series of transparent BLAST SHIELDS.

Webber looks downward and sees the Ambassador being hustled by his last surviving bodyguards down the ladder below, toward a platform at the base of the silo from which SPHERICAL TRANSPORTS continuously rise, like cars on a Disneyland ride. He sees no sign of Kemp.

Webber starts down the ladder as the Triangle in the sky once again blocks out all light.

KEMP (O.S.)

Here we are. At the passage between
the two worlds.

(MORE)

KEMP (O.S.) (CONT'D)

After I kill His Excellency, we should hijack one of the spheres, take the ride all the way up. Storm the gates of heaven.

Webber FIRES in the direction of Kemp's voice. Kemp RETURNS. They stop firing as one of the empty SPHERES rises between them. The lights of the sphere reveal Kemp's position- on the ladder opposite, just above him.

Webber fires and misses. To his surprise, Kemp doesn't shoot back- instead, Kemp grabs the ladder with both hands, holding on for dear life. Webber looks up as light returns and sees why: the dome is opening to let the Sphere pass.

As the dome opens, it's no longer amber light flooding the silo, it's the BURNING WHITE LIGHT of the Mother Zone, undiluted. It singes Webber's sleeve where his arm pokes out a little from the shade of the landing above. Gravity disappears. All the yellowish dust that coats everything in here is suddenly released to dance in the air. Webber and Kemp have to hold on to keep from being swept up too.

The dome closes behind the sphere. Gravity returns.

Webber and Kemp resume shooting each other until everything goes black again.

Webber hears hushed, anxious ALIEN WHISPERS- the Ambassador and his remaining escort. A beat later, there's an ERUPTION OF MUZZLE FLASHES everywhere. It lasts only a moment.

When light returns, Webber sees the last two of the Ambassador's bodyguards dead on the next bridge below him and the Ambassador himself- spattered with their blood- desperately continuing his descent down the ladder alone.

He's a sitting duck for Kemp who's almost parallel with him now on that other ladder across the silo.

Webber fires quickly, hitting Kemp in the back of the shoulder, throwing off his aim.

Black falls again. Kemp hisses in the alien tongue, then-

KEMP (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Your problem is you see both sides of the conflict. If you're both, you're neither...

Webber aims his weapon at Kemp's voice even as he keeps clumsily descending the ladder after the Ambassador.

WEBBER

We have to be who we are.

KEMP (O.S.)

That's why I embrace Neither.

Light returns. We're now with the frightened Ambassador as he discovers that he and Kemp are standing directly opposite each other, on either side of one of the silo bridges.

Kemp FIRES, shatters the blast shield in front of him... only to have his shot stopped by the blast shield beyond it.

The Ambassador looks terrified as Webber, dropping down from the ladder above, joins him on his end of the bridge.

WEBBER

Keep going! Don't look back.

The Ambassador asks no questions. He keeps going, down the ladder. Webber faces Kemp. They study each other a moment through the layers of glass then start SHOOTING THEIR WAY TOWARDS EACH OTHER, demolishing glass barrier after glass barrier. Until there's only one left between them.

Kemp demonstrates he's out of ammo. Webber shoots the glass wall between them. It falls away. Kemp waits for it.

Webber pulls the trigger- click. He's empty too.

Kemp smiles. The darkness drops again.

In the black, we HEAR fumbling, the CRUNCH of glass. When light returns, Kemp's no longer in front of him.

He sees the Ambassador boarding a sphere below.

CLOSE ON: Kemp's hand closes around a shard of broken glass just before everything once more goes dark...

We hear a TUSSLE, a CRY of pain... the light of the rising sphere reveals Webber with a SLASHED arm and Kemp holding his glass shard like a dagger. Webber takes up a shard of his own, gripping so tightly blood oozes between his fingers. The Ambassador's sphere rises slowly toward them as they slowly close on each other. They feint and parry.

Then, grinning, Kemp leaps off the bridge, onto the exterior of the rising sphere, grabbing hold of a porthole latch to keep from sliding off. Webber jumps aboard too. Now Webber and Kemp knife fight like bar brawlers, while precariously hanging onto the sphere. They start making contact. There's blood. They lose their grips, one right after another.

They both wind up on their backs on the bridge below, wind knocked out of them, weaponless, watching the sphere rise.

KEMP

So, you won- this world will go on,
groaning under the weight of its
own tedium. I leave it all to you.
Enjoy.

Webber crawls under shelter. Kemp stays put.

WEBBER

Come on.

Webber holds out his hand. Kemp finds himself smiling, a sad, wise smile.

KEMP

I lived this moment a thousand
times. I never imagined I wouldn't
be alone.

Still smiling, he looks up. Webber looks up too. The sphere is almost at the top of the dome. Kemp's eyes go wide, watching in wonder, in awe, as the dome begins to open...

KEMP (CONT'D)

Look at that.

The white-hot plasma of the Mother Zone FLOODS in, blowing Kemp's body apart. Webber grabs a rail as zero gravity lifts him. Kemp's beaded blood dances in the speckled air.

INT. A WINDOWLESS ROOM -- DAY

Yellow light. A bare bulb in a water-marked ceiling.

Webber's eyes focus on it. He becomes aware of his surroundings, slowly. He's crudely bandaged. An IV stand is about the only furniture. Then he becomes aware of a TV that's showing surveillance video of himself and Mia entering the country house.

WEBBER

Mia?

GAST

Is she really your first thought?

Webber sits up, discovers Gast sitting in a chair.

GAST (CONT'D)

We were evenly split in our interpretation of that relationship. Half of us thought it was purely tactical opportunism on your part. Others thought it was biology asserting itself. I withheld judgement.

WEBBER

Why am I alive?

GAST

Peace accords have been signed. All nonsense, of course, but doomsday has been forestalled, for a while anyway. The agreed-upon fiction is that you were acting as the leader of a special task force, operated jointly by the UN and the Xeno High Command. So you're untouchable. For now.

(places a PASSPORT on the bedside table)

Eberlin will not forget, though. So it would be wise for you to pass into legend as quickly as possible. And, if you do have any capacity for pity, don't try to see the girl again. You could only drag her back into this shit again.

WEBBER

Where is she?

GAST

We found her on a train in Breton. I interviewed her again. I determined that she is exactly what she seems to be. Imagine my amazement. I let her go. She went wherever she went.

WEBBER

(looking at passport)

There a chance any of this is true?

GAST

Welcome to the human condition. We live in doubt.

Gast smiles and leaves Webber alone.

A HALLWAY

Webber, wearing new clothes, limps down an ominous grey-steel corridor. At the end, a door. He hesitates. He tries the knob. It is unlocked...

EXT. PARIS STREET -- DAY

Webber emerges onto a busy street. He looks around. Normal life going on in every direction, in all its strangeness. He stands there a moment, very still, still not quite buying it.

EXT. TRAIN STATION -- DAY

ON A MONITOR: the signing of the peace accords. The Ambassador is there. Smiles, handshakes... Webber pays no attention as he boards a train.

INT. TRAIN -- DAY

Webber shows his ticket to the CONDUCTOR. Settling back in his seat, he feels a bulge in his jacket pocket. He finds something unexpected there. A DATA DISK. Unlabeled. He puts it in the Ipad-like device embedded in the train's arm-rest. It's a video of Mia, addressing the camera, him.

MIA (ON VIDEO)

Monsieur Gast allowed me to make this recording for you. I got the impression it was a big concession for him but now I don't even know what to say... They told me you're incapable of certain human feelings... Love. Love is what we're talking about. They showed me surveillance footage of us together. I think it was supposed to rattle me, get me to confess... something, God knows what. But there was something I saw. It was in the footage of the night we had coffee together. We were walking back... there was a moment you slipped- do you remember that? I noted the frame. 17:21:08:02. Gast told me he'd put it in with your visa...

Webber quickly pulls out his documents, starts urgently rifling through them.

MIA (ON VIDEO) (CONT'D)
There are two people in the photo.
They're captured in a moment...

He finds the photo she's talking about. His whole body goes completely slack.

MIA (ON VIDEO) (CONT'D)
I've looked at that frame a
thousand times... I know what I see
there. And nobody'll convince me
I'm wrong.

EXT. A PARK, SOMEWHERE IN THE U.S. -- DAY

A kid's party is in progress. Streamers, balloons. Mia runs the show, costumed as a princess. Mia shamelessly mugs for the kids as she serves cake. She is transparently happy.

INT. TRAIN -- DAWN

A warm, sad, very human smile spreads across Webber's face. He's still looking at the photo in his hand. It's a close-up of Webber and Mia on that street corner. Her hand is on his arm. They're looking into each other's eyes. They look, for all the world, like two people in love.

MIA (O.S.)
Am I wrong?

EXT. TRAIN -- DAY

The train winds up a snowy pass, disappearing into white.

END