

GENERATIONAL LEAP

Written by
The Sonntag Brothers

John Zaozirny BELLEVUE

OVER BLACK --

MORGAN'S VOICE

The early bird gets the worm,
right? Well... not always.

That blackness gives way to millions of specs of light. But even they can't overcome the darkness that is DEEP SPACE. Cold, sterile, and brutally unforgiving at a constant -457° F.

MORGAN'S VOICE

Imagine a nest of birds and they're out of worms. Dire stuff. So one brave bird volunteers to fly out across the land and save the nest. But while she's out on her perilous journey, the R&D department back in the nest creates a jetpack. They strap that sucker on a second bird, and suddenly the second bird passes the first bird, gets the worm, and returns to the nest a hero.

Against the darkness, two specs glow brighter than the rest.

MORGAN'S VOICE

It may sound like a joke, but astronauts have a name for this phenomenon. "*The Wait Calculation.*"

One of the bright specs is rapidly approaching the other.

MORGAN'S VOICE

How long should someone wait to leave so they won't get lapped by something better? It's the hardest question for an explorer to get right because there is no answer.

And just as that rapidly-approaching spec reaches the other --

MORGAN'S VOICE

The future is always coming.

SMASH TO:

INT. NASA SPACE SHUTTLE

THREE HUMAN-SIZED RECTANGULAR **STASIS PODS** ARE OPEN -- translucent, each like a sarcophagus from the near future.

But right now -- SENSORS, ALARMS, RED LIGHTS go off in succession. *Something has gone terribly WRONG.*

THREE ASTRONAUTS float out of the pods in ZERO-G.

ISAIAH WILKINS -- early 30's, surgeon smart, quarterback handsome with a "never say die" attitude --

ISAIAH
Stay calm! We have oxygen!

LELAND WONG -- mid 40's, whip-smart, rugged, a few gray hairs that make him the "elder statesman" of this crew --

LELAND
Only a ship emergency should
jettison us from stasis, but it's
saying all systems are functional.

Last but not least --

MORGAN REED -- early 30's, modern-day explorer, give her a bullhorn and a soapbox and watch her turn an angry mob into a peaceful protest, or vice versa. And right now --

MORGAN
Everyone, shut the fuck up!

Morgan's eyes are locked on something across the room. Everyone follows her gaze to the CLOCK -- "**116 YEARS**"

ISAIAH
We're early...

The ship JOLTS again.

MORGAN
Something interrupted our journey.

Leland floats to a porthole window and stares out. What he sees causes him to go DEAD STILL, even in zero-G.

The rest of the crew join him and look outside.

Each is immediately struck with the exact same look --

TOTAL AND UTTER TERROR.

SMASH TO:

DARKNESS

Silence, then --

The sound of an *ENGINE ROARING TO LIFE*.

INT. MECHANIC'S GARAGE - DAY

A **MECHANIC** finishes working under the hood of a Mercedes S-Class that now purrs like a kitten.

The Mechanic steps back, revealing their identity --

Morgan. Less astronaut, more grease monkey.

SUPER: "118 YEARS EARLIER -- 2039."

The **BUSINESS MAN** and owner of the Mercedes is impressed.

BUSINESS MAN

Complicated in there. Almost like you'd need to go to school for it.

MORGAN

I did.

She slams the hood shut.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

M.I.T.

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Small and one-story. Morgan enters. She takes off her baseball cap and tosses it in a pile.

A **NURSE** grabs her coat off a rack as she gets ready to leave.

NURSE

He was able to eat. I made extra.

Morgan smiles thankfully.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Oh, and today is already Thursday. I hate to bring it up again, but...

MORGAN

No. I understand. I'll talk to the insurance company tomorrow.

The Nurse nods and leaves.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Morgan passes a SET OF PHOTOS in the tiny hallway. They are mostly of her father **PHILLIP** -- a handsome, honest, and hard-working mechanic like his daughter.

But the Phillip seated on the couch struggling with an iPad is much older now. More frail.

Morgan enters and sits down next to him.

PHILLIP

I miss ink on my fingertips.

Morgan smiles.

MORGAN

Yeah, and I miss 'NSync, but something tells me J.T. ain't coming back.

She takes the moment to nestle against his shoulder.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Morgan helps give her father a bath.

What you do for a parent who once did everything for you...

INT. PHILLIP'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Morgan tucks her father into bed. Tonight, as she does --

PHILLIP

You shouldn't be here.

Morgan slowly pulls back. He stares at her.

She waits a moment, then kisses him on the forehead.

MORGAN

I'm right where I need to be.

INT. MORGAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Morgan's naked body is reflected back in a mirror. She is trim and athletic. She moves to a chair and puts her PJs on.

Above it, a POSTER OF THE APOLLO 11 CREW hangs on the wall. The three astronauts proudly smile to a homecoming crowd.

But under the hopeful poster lies DOZENS OF UNPAID BILLS.

EXT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Morgan leaves the next morning.

INT. MORGAN'S TRUCK - DAY

Morgan gets in and turns the key. The engine SPUTTERS.

MORGAN

Houston... we have a piece of shit.

She lowers her head onto the steering wheel, already feeling drained, and wondering what her life has come to. But like she's always done, she throws the door open to make it work --

EXT. STREET - DAY

-- and stops dead in her tracks. She's suddenly surrounded by TWO BLACK SUVs along with **SEVERAL MEN IN SUITS**.

MAN IN SUIT

Morgan Reed?

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Morgan is let inside as a door shuts ominously behind her.

She's completely alone in the massive room. But as she looks forward, she spots a SINGLE TABLE... and a VR HELMET.

She walks up to the table and sees a note -- "*FOR MORGAN.*"

Morgan skeptically looks around. Curiosity gets the best of her... and she slowly fits the VR HELMET onto her head.

The second she does --

THE IMAGE OF A MAN APPEARS IN FRONT OF HER WITH HIS BACK TURNED.

After a moment, The Man turns around. It's ISAIAH. He greets her with the warm smile of an old friend and wears a business suit as handsomely as he did a spacesuit.

ISAIAH

Hello, Morgan.

MORGAN

Isaiah... where are we?

ISAIAH

You're in L.A. I'm in Cape Canaveral.

He walks up to her.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
How's your father doing?

MORGAN
What's this about, Isaiah?

Isaiah nods. He turns and waves his hand -- digitally transporting them to a CUTTING-EDGE NASA LABORATORY.

He starts to walk through the simulation. Morgan follows.

ISAIAH
Since you left four years ago,
we've had a breakthrough.

Morgan is suddenly transfixed by THREE RECTANGULAR PODS. Pristine, clear and big enough for a person in each one.

MORGAN
Stasis?

Isaiah nods.

ISAIAH
It's not a theory anymore. With
these, a person can remain alive
and unconscious indefinitely.

Isaiah smiles.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
It's a generational leap, Morgan.

Morgan turns and looks at him.

MORGAN
What's the destination?

ISAIAH
A distant planet called Meliora.

MORGAN
Little green men?

ISAIAH
No, thankfully.

Isaiah can barely contain his excitement --

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
It's beautiful, Morgan. Early
readouts are showing oxygen in the
air and a dense, mineral rich soil.
(MORE)

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

But we won't know for sure until we land on it.

MORGAN

Guinea pigs.

ISAIAH

Interstellar explorers.

Morgan is quiet. Isaiah doubles-down.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

Our generation inherited a climate crisis we might not be able to fix. We're trying, but things are reaching a tipping point. We have to know there's hope out there if things don't go the way we plan. You and I are *explorers*. This gets us back to what NASA was founded on. A mission not just for our generation, but for every generation that follows us...

Morgan is silent, running the numbers that most people can't even hold in their head --

MORGAN

If we're traveling at one sixty-fourth the speed of light, with solar sails plus acceleration, it'll take nearly --

ISAIAH

-- three hundred years.

It hangs there.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

It seems like a long-time, but if we actually establish a base on another planet for others to follow, three-hundred years is a snapshot in our species' history.

Morgan is unreadable. *Is she considering it?*

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

Morgan... because of the sacrifice you'll be making, there are people willing to step up in your absence.

She looks Isaiah right in the eye, but doesn't speak.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
He'd get the best care.

MORGAN
Don't use him as a bargaining chip.

ISAIAH
I just meant --

MORGAN
The answer is no.

ISAIAH
Morgan, listen, please --

She takes off the VR HELMET --

-- and is suddenly alone again in the empty warehouse.

INT. NASA OFFICE - DAY

Isaiah sits with several HIGH-RANKING NASA OFFICIALS.
MORGAN'S FILE is in front of them along with her original
astronaut photo. She holds her helmet and has a huge smile.

ISAIAH
Morgan Reed was one of the best
astronauts we ever trained. The
mind of an engineer with the heart
of an explorer. But like a star
athlete on a rebuilding team, her
talents were wasted. Our funding
was slashed right when she was
getting her wings. Then her
father's health deteriorated.

The Officials trade a look.

NASA OFFICIAL
How long are we prepared to wait?

Isaiah points down to a line in the file --

ISAIAH
"Consistently rises to meet a
challenge, no matter how extreme."

Isaiah closes the file and stares at the Officials.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
Let's see if the file's right.

EXT. MECHANIC'S GARAGE - DAY

Morgan sits down to get under the engine of a JAGUAR. She already looks overworked, and the short fuse of the OBNOXIOUS OWNER doesn't make things easier.

OBNOXIOUS OWNER
Is this necessary?

MORGAN
I couldn't see the leak you mentioned from under the hood, so this will give me a better idea.

Morgan rolls under the car.

UNDER THE ENGINE --

Morgan looks up...

... and sees SEVERAL RATS burrowed inside.

She quickly wheels back out and stands up.

OBNOXIOUS OWNER
So? Is there a problem?

Morgan hesitates, then --

MORGAN
Tony!

She hurries over to another MECHANIC finishing his lunch.

TONY
What's up, Morgan?

MORGAN
Rats in the engine...

TONY
How bad we talking?

MORGAN
It's their world. We're just living in it.

Tony smiles, understanding.

TONY
No worries. I got this one.

Morgan nods a thanks as Tony heads over. Morgan exhales.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Morgan juggles a phone on her shoulder as she's trying her best to boil some pasta and work a sauce on the stove all at once. *These* are her real problems --

MORGAN

I understand, but we've always made our payments, even if we're a little late. If I could just have --

She dumps some pasta in the water, but the pasta water begins to BOIL OVER -- *SHIT*. She tries to turn off the stove when suddenly, from outside -- HER TRUCK STARTS IN THE DRIVEWAY.

Morgan's face instantly fills with fear.

EXT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Morgan dashes out to see the pickup truck backing out of the driveway... AND PHILLIP BEHIND THE WHEEL.

MORGAN

Dad, stop!

A CAR SWERVES out of the way to avoid a collision with him.

HONK!

Phillip panics. Confused. Worried.

It all happens in an instant --

The pickup SPEEDS BACKWARDS and CRASHES into a pole.

It crunches the rear bed of the truck.

Morgan runs up, leans in the window and yanks out the keys. But worse -- Phillip's head is bleeding from the dust-up.

PHILLIP

Where's the other nurse!

That hurts Morgan deeply... now more than ever before.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Phillip lies asleep in bed, cut bandaged on his head. Morgan sits next to him. Her eyes are red from crying. A NURSE walks in, checks his vitals, then turns to leave.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Morgan steps out. She takes out her cell phone. Her hand trembles nervously. But finally, she dials --

ISAIAH
(through the phone)
Morgan...?

As a tear rolls down her cheek --

MORGAN
What kind of care could he get?

EXT. PREMIER CLINIC - DAY

Big, modern, and full of life. Three NURSES for every PATIENT. Only the rich get this. But now Phillip does, too.

He stands overlooking a gorgeous garden. Morgan joins him. They stand in silence for a moment. Morgan hesitates, then --

MORGAN
I wanted to say thank you. For everything you and Mom did for me. The sacrifices you guys made... I want you to know none of it was wasted. It's going to be the foundations of a brand new world.

Phillip is silent. Morgan has to wonder... *did any of that make it through?* Phillip finally turns and looks at her.

PHILLIP
I had my time...

He smiles proudly.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)
It's your time now.

It seems it did.

Morgan fights back tears and hugs him tightly.

MORGAN
Goodbye, Dad. I love you.

EXT. FORT LAUDERDALE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

A 747 lands.

INT. NASA HANGAR - DAY

Isaiah escorts Morgan through the facility.

ISAIAH

We'll be training for just under a year. All of it from this base.

MORGAN

Sounds good.

Leland is seated at a table sipping coffee as Isaiah and Morgan approach them.

ISAIAH

Morgan, this is Leland Wong...

Leland stands and they shake hands.

MORGAN

Leland Wong... you were an instructor during my first year.

LELAND

Yes, I'm the decrepit age of 42. Just don't call me gramps and we'll get along fine.

Morgan pauses.

MORGAN

Your mother was Natalie Wong, right? She was the first female to break the record for consecutive months spent in orbit. She was a hero of mine.

Leland smiles with a heavy heart.

LELAND

Mine, too.

MORGAN

It's nice seeing a son follow in his mother's footsteps.

LELAND

Well, hopefully not *all* the footsteps. I'd like to avoid the "blowing up in space" one.

Morgan doesn't know how to react to that.

LELAND (CONT'D)
It's okay. You can laugh.

Isaiah playfully throws his arm around Leland.

ISAIAH
Gramps has a weird sense of humor.

Morgan smiles.

EXT. NASA HANGAR - DAY

Everyone exits the east side of the hangar, revealing --

"THE MARATHON"

Think the Space Shuttle Endeavor crossed with a DC-10. 140 feet long, 90-foot wingspan and a 60-foot tail height. Sculpted like a ship from the future built to honor the past.

ISAIAH
Welcome to The Marathon.

Morgan takes a deep breath -- *she's reached her dream.*

MORGAN
So, when do we start?

And off her smile --

INT. "THE MARATHON"

-- *WE'RE BACK IN THE CHAOS OF THE OPENING PAGES.*

SENSORS, ALARMS, RED LIGHTS going off in succession.

Isaiah, Leland, and Morgan drifting out of their pods.

ISAIAH
Stay calm! We have oxygen!

LELAND
Only a ship emergency should jettison us from stasis, but it's saying all systems are functional.

MORGAN
Everyone shut the fuck up!

Morgan's eyes are locked on the CLOCK -- **"116 YEARS"**

ISAIAH
We're early...

The ship JOLTS again.

MORGAN
Something interrupted our journey.

Leland floats to a porthole window and stares out. The rest of the crew joins him and looks out.

Terror strikes each of their faces --

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW --

They now see they are DEEP IN OUTER SPACE.

But more pressing at the moment --

-- IS THE MASSIVE BLUE SPACE CRAFT APPROACHING THEM.

Its design is completely foreign. Sleek, colorful, and GIGANTIC. Ten times the size of The Marathon.

The mysterious blue craft moves closer...

... and begins to ENGULF THE MARATHON like a whale.

Isaiah floats beside Morgan. Just as stunned at the sight.

ISAIAH
It's drawing us in!

As The Marathon is drawn into the other ship, a LIGHT begins to shine in from the porthole.

GRAVITY SUDDENLY KICKS IN!

The three crew members SLAM to the ground -- *hard*.

Leland lands on his elbow -- *CRACK!* -- snapping a bone.

Pulsing lights seem to scan the interior of the ship. An otherworldly laser show. Unnerving yet hypnotic.

From somewhere inside their ship...

... comes the sound of the AIRLOCK OPENING.

LELAND
They're inside the airlock!

FOOTSTEPS are heard approaching through their ship.

The hatch to the room they're currently in OPENS, revealing --
THREE TALL, SKINNY FIGURES. DEEP BLUE WITH GOLDEN HEADS.

Exotic and other-worldly.

The crew is too shocked to move. Everyone's heart racing.

The Figures step closer and their shapes become more clear --
-- SPACE SUITS.

... and through their golden *helmets*, they are seen to be --
HUMAN.

Morgan can only muster one word --

MORGAN

What...?

Without speaking, the Figures PULL EACH OF THE FIRST CREW'S
HELMETS OFF AND -- *VWIP!* -- INJECT A SYRINGE INTO THEIR NECK.

As Morgan's eyelids get heavy and shut --

SMASH TO BLACK

DARKNESS.

Silence for a moment. Until --

CUT TO:

INT. INFIRMARY

Morgan's eyes slowly open. Groggy, she starts to shake off
the effects of whatever was jammed into her neck.

She isn't sure if she just woke up from one nightmare into
another. But while one was jarring, this new one is *serene*.

As her eyes focus, she begins to take in her surroundings --

An infirmary mixed with a spa. Spacious with white walls.
Plenty of room, and flowers between separate hospital beds.
Calming music fills the area. The other beds vacant.

A WOMAN washes her hands in a sink with her back to Morgan.

Morgan spots a tray beside her bed. It has a PLASTIC SPOON
and a CUP OF JELLO. The Woman turns and sees her.

WOMAN

You're up.

Morgan quickly takes the spoon and SNAPS the round tip off to create a plastic shiv. She rolls out of bed and backs into the corner as she holds up the plastic shiv, ready to use it.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

My name is Alyx Rishika...

ALYX RISHIKA, late 20's, toned with a shaved head and left arm covered in a sleeve tattoo of the staff of Hermes. Uncensored in appearance and behavior.

ALYX

... and you look like shit.

MORGAN

Who are you?

ALYX

I'm an astronaut, just like you.

Legs still weak, Morgan catches herself from stumbling.

ALYX (CONT'D)

Easy now, cowgirl.

INT. HALLWAY

Alyx walks a few feet ahead of Morgan, who still has the plastic spoon in her grip like she's walking her at knife-point through the halls of a surprisingly large ship.

A ship that doesn't have the same tight, industrial feel of The Marathon. The shape of the walls has an aerodynamic, art-deco aesthetic. High ceilings with streamlined corners.

If The Marathon was built for utility, this place seems to have an element of interior design. Gold trim accents give this ship an almost elegant feel.

Digital screens appear and disappear on the walls as they walk past. Silent, and highly efficient.

Morgan realizes the strangest thing about this place --

MORGAN

There's gravity in here...

ALYX

Yeah. Get used to these things.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Alyx and Morgan enter.

Isaiah and Leland are seated and recovering around a long, oak table like a board room.

They all look BLITZED. Leland has his arm in a sling that seems to be MASSAGING IT. Isaiah moves closer to Morgan.

ISAIAH

You okay?

MORGAN

Who are they?

HUNTER VEGA -- early 30's, full beard like a blue-collar oil driller in the arctic with the focused determination of a jogger who wakes up early to run at sunrise.

HUNTER

I'm Hunter Vega, captain. You met Alyx Rishika, our medical expert.

Alyx catches Leland staring at her.

ALYX

Want to take a photo, grandpa?

Leland goes quiet at *that* word.

LELAND

It's just gramps...

HUNTER

And that pup in the corner is Yuri Pheiffer, our lead programmer.

YURI PHEIFFER -- mid 20's, youngest of the group with black-rimmed glasses and very skinny. He looks like he'd be more comfortable behind a desk than in an astronaut's suit, the kind of person who had a stutter and fears people still know.

ISAIAH

Programmer?

HUNTER

This entire ship is A.I. controlled. Yuri is our version of what you might call... a mechanic.

Morgan finds that hard to believe. Yuri pushes up his glasses, nervous to be in the spotlight for even a moment.

YURI

I, uh, just bottle the engine runoff and make Neptune crystals out of it.

MORGAN

Neptune what?

YURI

Just kidding. Bad joke.

LELAND

That's usually my job...

YURI

Defensive mechanism, I suppose. When I'm nervous.

ISAIAH

Why would you be nervous?

Isn't it obvious?

YURI

Never met anyone famous before.

Morgan looks at Hunter --

MORGAN

Who are you people?

HUNTER

We're you. Only faster.

Hunter turns and touches the wall behind him and the translucent image of space changes to -- THE NASA LOGO -- *but sleeker*. Like the company went through a re-branding effort.

MORGAN

You work for NASA?

HUNTER

Yes. Currently en route to Meliora.

LELAND

That's our mission.

HUNTER

It was. 116 years ago.

MORGAN

When did you leave Earth?

HUNTER
20 years ago.

MORGAN
... 96 years *after* us?

Hunter taps the smart wall. A gigantic info-graphic of a digitized EARTH appears on the left side of the wall.

HUNTER
This is Earth. And this is you
leaving on your historic journey.

The info-graphic shows a small "MARATHON SHIP" leaving Earth and heading in a straight line across the wall.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
96 years after that monumental day,
we leave on our journey.

He taps the screen. A second, BIGGER SHIP leaves Earth. It moves FASTER across the wall, catching up to The Marathon.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
And instead of taking us the 116
years to reach how far you got, it
took us only 20 years.

Silence. Morgan is deep in thought for a moment, then --

MORGAN
The wait calculation.

Hunter nods -- *that's right*.

HUNTER
A phenomenon that can only happen
over great distances, like space
itself. You leave Earth in your
ship. Time passes. Meanwhile,
technology advances like it always
does. Then one day, a new ship
leaves Earth equipped with that
technology. If they're headed to
the same place, well, eventually...

The two ships reach the SAME EXACT SPOT on the wall.

MORGAN
... the newer ship catches up.

HUNTER
What took your technology over a
century took ours only twenty.

Isaiah, Morgan, and Leland remain quiet.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
As I said. We're you, just faster.

Morgan turns and sees the name of the bigger ship on the wall that caught up to them -- the ship they're currently now on --

"THE SPRINT."

(In a very real way, it's like the crew from the original Apollo missions on one side of the room... and the crew from the Jetsons on the other.)

HUNTER (CONT'D)
Neal, can you start preparing dinner for our guests?

A BLUE CAMERA in the corner of the ceiling GLOWS in response.

NEAL
Of course, Captain.

"Neal" seems to be their onboard A.I. system.

HUNTER
Get changed, then we'll have a tour before dinner. And you can all relax. Nobody is being replaced.

The first crew shares a glance -- *"replaced?"*

INT. MORGAN'S PRIVATE QUARTERS

A porthole on one wall shows outer space whizzing by. Morgan finishes zipping up a fresh suit with the new NASA LOGO.

She touches it, expecting a patch, but it's a THIN HOLOGRAM.

INT. LELAND'S PRIVATE QUARTERS

Leland stands at the shower and removes the sling from his arm. He stretches his elbow. Amazingly, it's HEALED.

He goes to turn on the shower, but it has no knobs of any kind. He's at a loss, so he takes a punt at it --

LELAND
Water... on?

But instead of water, a CLEANSING MIST sprays out and surrounds Leland. It only takes a moment, but when the mist is gone, his entire body and hair are fully clean and dry.

LELAND (CONT'D)
Okay... now where do I pee?

INT. ISAIAH'S PRIVATE QUARTERS

Isaiah stands near a porthole window and stares out, lost in thought. He rubs a SWISS ARMY KNIFE between his fingers, seemingly stewing on that terrifying final word -- *replaced*.

HUNTER
(pre-lap)
*As you can see, it's more important
than ever we reach Meliora.*

INT. HOLOGRAPHIC OBSERVATORY

Both crews stand inside a MASSIVE HOLOGRAM OF EARTH.

It ZOOMS IN ON NEW YORK CITY... and they're suddenly surrounded by a CHAOTIC FUTURISTIC SPRAWL. A mess of highways, automated cars, people, and elevated trains that wrap through the city like a demented M.C. Escher painting.

LELAND
What the hell happened?

HUNTER
We managed to get a handle on climate change shortly after you left. People came together. It was wonderful. But then it led to a population boom that threw our balance with the planet into flux.

MORGAN
How much of a boom are we talking?

ALYX
52 billion.

MORGAN
52?!

LELAND
Holy shit, is that even possible?

Hunter isn't so sure anymore.

HUNTER

For a moment, it seemed like it was. But overpopulation has caused dormant tensions between countries to re-ignite. World War has become a constant threat. Because while resources are no longer limited, land still is. Now more than ever.

MORGAN

Wait, how are resources not limited with 52 billion people?

Yuri pushes up his glasses, ready to explain.

YURI

It's called synth.

INT. LOWER DECK - SYNTH GARDEN

A rainbow drapes over lush plants and ripe vegetation growing on long, healthy vines inside this Garden of Eden-like biodome. A HAND pierces the rainbow. It fizzles into static.

Yuri leads both crews over to a pot growing STALKS OF CORN.

YURI

Synth is carbon-based edible nanites able to transform into any material we need. Even food.

Yuri slips on a CONTROL PAD over his hand that seems to fit like a pair of BRASS KNUCKLES with dozens of lights FLASHING in unique patterns.

YURI (CONT'D)

All I have to do is program it.

Yuri moves it over the stalk of corn.

The stalk of corn suddenly MELTS LIKE A MANNEQUIN UNDER A HEAT LAMP and reverts to its original form --

YURI (CONT'D)

This is what we call "raw synth."

Flesh-colored, oval, GELATINOUS BLOBS no bigger than a dime, but each packed with thousands of nanites that sizzle inside like beautiful fireflies. Hard to tell what's more dominant in this tempestuous marriage -- the technology or the nature.

YURI (CONT'D)

The whole "supply and demand" thing you guys had, well, it kind of went out the airlock. But humanity's resurgence has caused new problems.

As Morgan, Isaiah, and Leland keep staring at the synth, Hunter can see they're a little freaked out.

HUNTER

You guys had 3-D printers, right?

ISAIAH

This your version of that?

ALYX

Sort of. This is a bit of a generational leap.

Morgan and Isaiah share a look.

INT. DINING QUARTERS

Everyone is seated around a delicious spread of gourmet food. Leland slices off a hunk of "filet mignon" and it sizzles like it just came off a grill. He cautiously takes a bite...

LELAND

It's... chewy. But not terrible.

That's a huge compliment coming from him right now.

HUNTER

Synth is really best viewed as a workaround to a bigger problem.

MORGAN

You mean climate change?

Hunter nods.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

So you didn't really "fix" it then?

ALYX

Did you?

Tool's "Schism" plays in the background.

Yuri tries using it to break any mounting tension.

YURI

Uh, great tunes you guys brought.

MORGAN

Thanks...

YURI

I always loved classic rock.

But he does just the opposite.

Seeing their reactions, he tries catching himself.

YURI (CONT'D)

Oh. I mean... just rock.

A moment passes.

LELAND

We should keep track of this stuff.

ALYX

What "stuff?"

LELAND

The things that successfully made
it from one generation to the next.
Like, let's say for instance...

Leland looks at Morgan and Isaiah. Morgan takes a shot --

MORGAN

Football... ?

The second crew shares a blank look.

MORGAN

Wow, really?

Leland takes another stab --

LELAND

How about... Playstation?

In unison --

YURI

Oh, for sure.

HUNTER

Why wouldn't it?

ALYX

Yeah, is "water" still around?

The first crew shares another look.

LELAND

This has been an enlightening experience, thank you.

Hunter leans forward -- more serious and back on track.

HUNTER

We have a mission to complete. Reach Meliora, find out if it's habitable, then relay the answer back to Earth before it's too late.

MORGAN

Why did you stop for us then?

HUNTER

You were part of the mission. To help you. Astronauts have always looked out for each other, right?

Morgan eyes Leland and Isaiah, feeling somewhat... skeptical.

Silence, then --

ISAIAH

Who steps out on Meliora first?

A few looks are shared. Isaiah has clearly been thinking about this, but he can't seem to hold it in a moment longer.

HUNTER

It's not really our main concern...

ISAIAH

We left our lives behind for this. People we cared about.

HUNTER

Are you asking for the sake of the mission? Or your legacy?

ISAIAH

I'm asking about our *purpose*.

Hunter nods. He wants to be sympathetic. But also realistic.

HUNTER

We're not trying to take away your purpose -- we're trying to give it back to you. You'd be floating for another two hundred years out here. By the time you'd reach Meliora, the mission would have been over.

He has a point... but it might not feel like it to them.

INT. ISAIAH'S PRIVATE QUARTERS

The first crew is together, trying to make sense of it.

But... none of them know what to say.

After a moment, Leland takes a crack at it --

LELAND

Remember when Nick at Nite started
playing Fresh Prince instead of I
Love Lucy?

That might be the scariest thing anyone's said yet.

After a moment, Isaiah stares down at his swiss army knife.

ISAIAH

My dad gave me this when he walked
out on my mom and me. You know what
his last words were to me?

Isaiah pauses.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

"Fuck it. It's your mess now."

Just then, the door opens. Hunter steps inside.

HUNTER

Listen, I think we got off on the
wrong foot. As captain of this
ship, I take full responsibility.

He walks over to them.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

Here. An olive branch.

He opens up his palm, revealing --

THREE TINY SQUARE TRANSLUCENT PATCHES.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

To help you sleep tonight. Has
several essential nutrients, too.

Isaiah picks up one of the patches. Morgan and Leland take theirs. *But none of them put it on their neck.*

MORGAN

When do we re-enter stasis?

HUNTER

Soon. We want to use this break to make sure the ship is in good condition for the rest of the trip.

Morgan nods.

She and Leland turn and exit. Hunter follows them. He remains by the door and smiles at Isaiah, then shuts the door.

Isaiah stares back at his "patch."

INT. MORGAN'S PRIVATE QUARTERS

Morgan lies awake in bed. She turns and glances at her own patch on the bedside table. *Does she take it?*

She stands up and throws on her suit again, then moves to the door. She gets there and --

-- it doesn't open.

Morgan waves her hand over a sensor -- it blinks RED.

MORGAN

Hey... I need to get out. Niles... Neal... whatever, are you there?

NEAL

Yes.

MORGAN

Open my door.

NEAL

I'm sorry. All crew must remain in their quarters. If you're having trouble sleeping, the patch can be--

MORGAN

Screw the patch. Let me out.

NEAL

I cannot do that. All safety measures are for your own good.

Morgan slams her fist into the door.

MORGAN

Hello! Anyone?

No response. Morgan moves to her desk and grabs a chair. She picks it up and SWINGS IT INTO THE DOOR, but it bounces off.

Morgan stares at the door, and now out of breath -- TRAPPED.

EXT. "THE SPRINT"

You might not know it, but just like that, it's the next day.

INT. MORGAN'S PRIVATE QUARTERS

Morgan is slouched on the floor. Dog tired. Locked in her room the entire night, when -- the sensor turns GREEN.

EXT. HALLWAY

Morgan runs out, *extremely* on-guard.

The door beside her opens. It's Isaiah.

MORGAN
We were locked in.

ISAIAH
Yeah. All god damn night.

From the bags under their eyes -- *NEITHER TOOK THE PATCH.*

The third door opens and Leland steps out. He... YAWNS, awoken from a refreshing slumber. He removes the patch.

LELAND
Oh, were we not supposed to...

Morgan and Isaiah start to move. Leland follows.

INT. EXERCISE QUARTERS

Alyx, Yuri and Hunter work out with HOLOGRAPHIC WEIGHTS.

Morgan, Isaiah, and Leland enter. They feel a strain on their shoulders as the gravity has been INCREASED in this room.

Hunter racks a BAR and the "weights" on it dissolve into holographic static. He wipes off a bead of sweat and takes a deep breath, seeing the crew. He stands up and walks over.

HUNTER
Neal, pause gravity training.

He wipes his brow and greets Isaiah.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
 Didn't take the patches, huh? I can
 tell by the bags under your eyes,
 it's very early-21st century of yo--

Isaiah cuts Hunter off.

ISAIAH
 Why the hell did you lock us in our
 rooms for the night?

There's a loaded silence, when Morgan notices something.
 Isaiah and her aren't the only ones with bags under their
 eyes -- each of the second crew also has them.

Like they've been up all night.

In that moment, Morgan realizes --

MORGAN
 Because they had to.

Everyone looks at her.

LELAND
 What?

MORGAN
 There's only one real reason they'd
 ever risk their mission and stop
 for us.

She pauses and stares Hunter dead in the eyes.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
 Because it was life or death, but
 not for us...

The second crew is quiet.

After a long, final silence --

HUNTER
 Clean water.

LELAND
 What?

HUNTER
 Our ship was hit by micro-meteors.
 Everything was fine except our
 water filtration system.

YURI
It was damaged beyond repair...

ALYX
And damn it if you still can't
survive a trip across space without
reusable water.

ISAIAH
So you locked us in our room as you
what, stripped our ship for parts?

YURI
Part, technically...

Isaiah fumes. But Hunter coldly stares back at him.

HUNTER
Like I said, you'd be out here
another two hundred years if it
weren't for us. Our bad luck was
actually the --

Isaiah suddenly grabs him by the collar.

ISAIAH
You lied to us!

HUNTER
Let go of me.

ISAIAH
Or what?

HUNTER
Neal, reverse gravity.

Everyone is suddenly FLIPPED UPWARDS.

Right as everyone finds their balance on the ceiling --

HUNTER (CONT'D)
Neal, normalize gravity.

Everyone FALLS BACK DOWN.

And when they do --

Hunter has now pinned Isaiah to the ground.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
Ready to act your age?

Isaiah doesn't answer.

YURI

If we're going to reach Meliora
now, it'll take both our
generations working *together*.

Just as Isaiah finally has to make a choice between
swallowing his pride... or his tongue --

NEAL (O.S.)

*ALERT! I'm detecting an unknown
construct in the vicinity.*

What did he just say?

Isaiah throws Hunter off him and rolls out. Both crews stand
and stare at each other from across the room.

Everyone is suddenly more concerned with what Neal just said.

INT. FLIGHT DECK

The bow of the ship. Both crews stand in front of a PANORAMIC
VIEW OF SPACE surrounded by holographic consoles.

ISAIAH

What the hell is that?

Everyone stares out in amazement, as deeper in space --

The "Unknown Construct."

From their vantage point, it looks to be a METALLIC HIVE.
Oval-shaped with jagged protrusions sticking out of it like a
grenade that was frozen mid-explosion.

NEAL

I am getting no response.

Leland looks at the others.

LELAND

What did we just find out here?

MORGAN

Or what just found us...

Isaiah steps forward to the window. His face is so close that
his reflection seems to haunt the Unknown Construct.

ISAIAH

Has it given off any type of
distress signal?

HUNTER
Distress signal?

Hunter and Alyx share a look.

ALYX
Sounds like you've read too many
sci-fi novels.

ISAIAH
Is that a fucking no!

Yuri looks at his computer.

YURI
Uh, yeah, that's a no.

ISAIAH
Then we need to board it.

Hunter shakes his head defiantly.

HUNTER
No. None of us are stepping foot on
that thing. We have a mission.

Isaiah turns, angered --

ISAIAH
This *is* the mission -- find out if
it's safe to reach Meliora. We
might actually be on the verge of
answering the most important
question our lifetime ever faced --

Even he can't help but smile at the possibility --

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
"Are we alone in the universe?"

Silence.

But for some reason...

... the second crew doesn't share in his enthusiasm.

ALYX
About that "question"...

The first crew slowly looks at each other, shocked --

MORGAN
What are you talking about?

HUNTER

Look, it's all very technical, but in 2084 there was an experiment called the TWS -- Tipton Wave Sync.

YURI

Cover of Time magazine, etc.

LELAND

Print is still alive? That's the craziest thing yet...

Morgan approaches Hunter, needing to know --

MORGAN

So? What was the answer?

Hunter hesitates, then --

HUNTER

There is no other life. It's just us.

Isaiah walks back to the window and defiantly points out at the Unknown Construct. He turns and stares at the first crew.

ISAIAH

Maybe your generation got it wrong.

INT. AIRLOCK

Morgan, Isaiah, Leland, and Yuri are all suited-up in the second crew's more advanced spacesuits.

ALYX

(over radio-link)

Remember, only use propulsion in short bursts. Also, you have helmet-cams, so we see what you see.

ISAIAH

Yeah, we had these in our day, too.

They approach the outer airlock. Morgan looks at Yuri.

MORGAN

Sure you're up for this?

YURI

Yeah. Sure. Like I said, we need to work together, right?

The AIRLOCK OPENS.

INT. THE SPRINT - FLIGHT DECK

Hunter and Alyx watch the helmet feeds on FOUR LARGE SCREENS. Hunter nervously pulls at his beard.

HUNTER
What the hell are we doing?

EXT. THE SPRINT

Morgan, Isaiah, Leland, and Yuri lift out of the airlock...
... into outer space...
... and begin to guide themselves to the Unknown Construct.

INT. THE SPRINT - FLIGHT DECK

ON THE SCREENS: The Unknown Construct looms closer.

EXT. UNKNOWN CONSTRUCT

There appear to be SLITS in the surface's exterior.

ISAIAH
There. Looks like we can go inside.

Isaiah takes the lead. As they get closer, the Unknown Construct looks less like a mysterious alien structure...

... and more like a DERELICT SPACESHIP.

INT. UNKNOWN CONSTRUCT

Morgan, Isaiah, Leland and Yuri drift inside like deep-sea explorers swimming through a sunken ship. Cramped.

LAYERS OF THICK ICE cover every wall of the structure and each surface is rounded with FROST.

Morgan ducks under an ICICLE jutting out of the ceiling.

INT. THE SPRINT - FLIGHT DECK

ON THE SCREEN: The group passes under more ICICLES.

ALYX
It's frozen...

INT. UNKNOWN CONSTRUCT

Very soon, they suddenly comes across a series of THREE RECTANGULAR CUBES covered in snowy powder. Each is roughly the size of a large coffin.

ISAIAH

What are these things?

Morgan floats to another wall as something catches her eye. She lifts her gloved hand and brushes away a layer of ice.

As she does, her eyes go wide...

MORGAN

Guys...

The others turn to see what she's revealed --

A PICTURE FRAME.

Hanging on the wall.

RONALD REAGAN'S PRESIDENTIAL PHOTO. Smiling back at her.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

They're... us.

INT. THE SPRINT - FLIGHT DECK

ON THE SCREENS: Morgan wipes more ice off the wall, revealing a silver crest near the photo -- NASA. Older, less sleek.

Hunter and Alyx watch in amazement.

HUNTER

This was a NASA mission?

INT. UNKNOWN CONSTRUCT

They each start brushing frost and ice off the walls and platforms. With each swipe, more of the ship is revealed --

-- *warnings of power levels and integrity WRITTEN IN ENGLISH.*

-- *A FROZEN AMERICAN FLAG that's become rigid in the cold.*

-- *AND A SINGLE COMPUTER with a green, CRT monitor. Old tech.*

YURI

I found their computer.

They all crowd around it.

MORGAN
Does it still have power?

Yuri stares down cluelessly at the clunky, grey computer.

YURI
Before my time...

ISAIAH
Looks like an old IBM.

YURI
A what?

Morgan glances at Leland.

MORGAN
Add it to the list.

With that, she takes the initiative and slams the space bar.

Amazingly, THE MONITOR BLINKS TO LIFE.

Writing begins to automatically scroll along the screen --

....VESSEL DESIGNATION: PHEIDIPPIDES....

....CREW: 3 - Two male - One Female - F1 for details....

....DESTINATION: MELIORA....

....LAUNCH DATE: October 4th, 1987....

....ETA: 574 YEARS....

They all stare at the screen in shock --

ISAIAH
They were heading to Meliora.

MORGAN
We're on the other side of it...

YURI
The other side of what?

MORGAN
The wait calculation.

Morgan looks at the THREE GIANT ICE CUBES, realizing --

MORGAN (CONT'D)
They're us... only *slower*.

Isaiah floats over to the cubes. He can't see inside.

ISAIAH
Jesus, is this their version of stasis? *Literally* frozen?

YURI
What's a "Pheidippides?"

HUNTER
(over radio-link)
"Who." Neal is saying he's an ancient Greek figure. He ran from Marathon to Athens.

MORGAN
The first marathon...

Morgan, Isaiah, and Leland all share a look.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
NASA sent a ship before us to Meliora? In the 1980's?

INT. THE SPRINT - FLIGHT DECK

ON THE SCREENS: More shots of the computer and "ice pods."

HUNTER
It was during The Cold War. These projects were all top secret...

INT. UNKNOWN CONSTRUCT/PHEIDIPPIDES

Leland remains at the computer as the others keep searching.

ISAIAH
Not to mention 1987 was only a year after the Challenger accident. They probably wanted to keep it secret in case it ended in disaster again.

Yuri's eyes skittishly glance around the icy tomb.

YURI
That's definitely a word for it. They must have lost pressure. Travelling on this old tech, something had to have gone wrong.

ISAIAH

Did it? The computer still works.
The ship is on course. Otherwise we
never would have come across it.

YURI

What are you saying?

ISAIAH

That maybe everything's working
just fine here.

They go quiet.

Leland looks back at the computer.

There's more written under a layer of frozen ice. He wipes
away the ice, revealing the final line of text --

"... THAW: Y/N?"

They all see it now.

INT. THE SPRINT - FLIGHT DECK

ON THE SCREENS: Focused on "THAW Y/N?"

Hunter looks at Alyx as they, too, see the choice.

INT. PHEIDIPPIDES

Isaiah is the first to give his answer --

ISAIAH

No.

MORGAN

... no?

ISAIAH

They're not the mission. Meliora
is. And if they are on course,
they'll reach it in 500 years.

As they continue discussing it, Leland taps "F1" on the
computer. Readouts of all of the frozen crew members reflect
off his helmet. His eyes open wide...

MORGAN

*After we get there. They're
expecting a new planet. In 500
years the planet will be developed.*

ISAIAH
Even better. Less work for them.

Leland has moved to the three, symmetrical "ice pods."
He seems to try and stare into one in particular.

MORGAN
We need to return to the ship and think this through. This shouldn't be a fast decision down here.

ISAIAH
I vote to leave. Everyone else?

INT. THE SPRINT - FLIGHT DECK

ON THE SCREENS: Leland's camera is close to one of the pods.
Alyx takes a deep breath.

ALYX
It's Schrodinger's Astronaut...

Hunter deliberates, then --

HUNTER
Neal.

Neal's blue eye glows brighter as he processes the question --

NEAL
Optimal mission success dictates more crew members would put a severe strain on resource threshold. We will leave them.

Hunter nods.

HUNTER
Verified.

ALYX
Verified.

YURI
(over radio-link)
Verified.

Hunter speaks back into the radio --

HUNTER
We agree to leave them.

INT. PHEIDIPPIDES

Morgan is confused by what she just heard.

MORGAN

"Verified?" Whoa hold on, you're letting the A.I. decide this?

HUNTER

(over radio-link)

It's protocol. Saves us time and energy so we don't get bogged down.

MORGAN

Bogged-down... with life or death decisions?

HUNTER

(over radio-link)

Neal is the arbiter. He keep us from in-fighting. It works.

ISAIAH

For once we agree.

Morgan finds Isaiah's stare.

MORGAN

No. We can't let some A.I. decide their fate. This is human life.

ISAIAH

How do we know the mere act of interfering won't cause some type of cataclysmic systems failure? They could just be hibernating. Like the ship. We're the variable.

Leland starts to wipe off the top layer of ice on one of the pods. He begins to see the face of an astronaut inside. They appear to have a BREATHING APPARATUS ON INSIDE A SEALED SUIT.

And for some reason, he seems to RECOGNIZE them.

MORGAN

The Sprint might have the technology to help them. We shouldn't rush this decision.

ISAIAH

Or we let them reach Meliora when they originally planned.

MORGAN

They'll be dinosaurs when they arrive. Like we would have been...

ISAIAH

Their technology, and whatever's happening here, is as foreign to us as our technology was to *them*.

Distracted by the disagreement, none of them see Leland swim away from the frozen astronauts back towards the computer...

INT. THE SPRINT - FLIGHT DECK

Hunter takes a deep breath, already frustrated.

HUNTER

Look, this is exactly what we're talking about. We're on the same page up here. You guys need to co--

MORGAN

(over radio-link)
You don't get to make this call.

INT. THE PHEIDIPPIDES

Morgan and Isaiah are now inches apart.

MORGAN

This is an entire generation of people we're talking about.

ISAIAH

So let them remain in stasis. We were never here.

MORGAN

What about us, Isaiah? Should we have remained in stasis?

ISAIAH

We're different.

Neither of them see that Leland is now at the computer.

"... THAW? -- Y/N"

His gloved hand reaches out...

Yuri sees him just as --

YURI
Hey, uh, Leland...

-- he strikes "Y."

The ship begins to echo with strange noises, the reverberating sounds of warping metal and twisting pipes. Some internal power source now changing gears.

Leland swims back to the frozen astronauts.

He watches as the archaic stasis chambers HEAT UP...

... and begin to THAW.

ISAIAH
Leland, what the hell are you --

LELAND
Shut up!

Droplets of water start to rise up through the air around the ice pods... followed by larger chunks of ice BREAKING OFF...

YURI
This isn't good...

LELAND
Get ready to help them!

One of the ASTRONAUTS is already almost finished THAWING -- a **WOMAN** -- white-haired, late-40's.

Leland frantically tries breaking away the rest of the ice pod as her body SHIVERS in her suit, still unconscious.

He seems to take special care of her, making sure her breathing apparatus remains secured.

Then -- her eyes OPEN.

She looks PANICKED. Primal confusion. Struggling to breath with the mask on.

LELAND (CONT'D)
Hey, it's okay! It's okay!

Her eyes fill with PANIC. She starts to THRASH AROUND.

LELAND (CONT'D)
Calm down, we're here to help!

MORGAN
Leland, what's going on!

He ignores Morgan, focusing on the Woman.

Her muscles seem to TWITCH AND SPASM UNCONTROLLABLY.

LELAND

Mom, it's me! It's okay!

Everyone shares a look -- *did he just say "mom?!"*

But it doesn't seem to register with the woman.

Her arm flails out and grabs something -- AN ICICLE.

Before Leland can react --

WHAM! -- THE WOMAN SLAMS IT INTO HIS CHEST!

It pierces his suit and the pressure instantly changes...

... BLOOD SPLASHES OUT.

Leland looks down -- she stabbed him right in the HEART.

Morgan swims up behind Leland as the WOMAN'S SUIT BEGINS TO CRYSTALLIZE. *Something is going very wrong.*

LELAND (CONT'D)

No...

The ship CREAKS like a submarine breaking under the weight of the ocean. The metal walls START TO CRACK and the entire ship begins to FRACTURE. The photo of Ronald Reagan SHATTERS.

MORGAN

We need to go!

Morgan forcefully grabs Leland and starts to swim away with him like a lifeguard saving a drowning victim.

He reaches out for the Woman as her SUIT BURSTS OPEN and her exposed body INSTANTLY FREEZES IN THE VACUUM OF SPACE.

With her eyes open -- TERRIFIED -- she suffocates --

-- and **DIES.**

INT. THE PHEIDIPPIDES

The four of them glide around a corner as the ship continues to WARP like a haunted house trying to kill them.

Morgan continues to pull Leland with her.

MORGAN
 (over radio-link)
 We got an injury, be ready!

Metal, debris, exhaust -- *all seemingly aiming to not let them go.* Morgan keeps swimming, maneuvering through a SHRINKING PASSAGE, about to be crushed by the metal walls.

EXT. SPACE

The hull SPLINTERS as they make their escape.

And just as they propel themselves back to The Sprint...

... The Pheidippides BURSTS INTO A THOUSAND PIECES!

SMASH TO:

INT. THE SPRINT - HALLWAY

Leland is RUSHED ALONG ON A GURNEY with both crews by his side. They remove his helmet as he COUGHS UP BLOOD.

His skin has severe frostbite from the extreme loss of pressure and cold from his broken suit.

HUNTER
 Get him to the infirmary!

INT. INFIRMARY

Leland is pushed inside. Alyx is already scanning his body with a WAND-LIKE DEVICE. She shows the readout to Hunter.

HUNTER
 Punctured his heart.

ALYX
 Massive trauma to his lungs from
 the sudden drop in pressure.

ISAIAH
 Can you save him?

Hunter pushes Leland on the gurney so he's close to the wall.

HUNTER
 Prep for surgery.

Isaiah reaches out and grabs Hunter by the arm, but Hunter swiftly turns around and lightly pushes him back.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
 You never should have been on that
 ship.

Suddenly -- *VWIP!* -- A GLASS PARTITION SLIDES SHUT --

EXT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE INFIRMARY

-- separating Morgan, Isaiah, and Yuri on the OUTSIDE...

INT. INFIRMARY

... Alyx, Hunter and Leland on the INSIDE.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE INFIRMARY - SAME

Morgan and Isaiah can only stare in like medical observers.

THROUGH THE GLASS --

Alyx pulls a privacy curtain back, revealing --

A STEEL CHAIR WITH DOZENS OF ROBOTIC LIMBS ARCHING OUT THE
 BACK OF IT like the throne of some monstrous Spider King.
 Part advanced medical device -- part medieval torture device.

ISAIAH
 What the hell...

YURI
 Listen, what you're about to see
 may look, uh, strange, but...

ISAIAH
 But what!

YURI
 They're going to save his life.

INT. INFIRMARY

Alyx and Hunter lift Leland's body into the chair.

Suddenly, a CIRCULAR HOLE IN THE CEILING opens...

... and a METALLIC HALO LOWERS DOWN ABOVE THE CHAIR.

Alyx and Hunter secure Leland in the chair. The metal halo
 FASTEN'S AROUND LELAND'S FOREHEAD like a crown.

It straps his head back and tilts it up... exposing his neck.

The spidery, robotic limbs start to move on their own and reach into a WALL OF DRAWERS like a MORGUE COOLER.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE INFIRMARY - SAME

THROUGH THE GLASS --

A CLOUD OF NITROGEN FOG spews out of a drawer as it's opened, obscuring the view.

The bellowing nitrogen fog starts to CLEAR... revealing that one of the robotic limbs now holds a SWORD-SIZED BLADE.

MORGAN

Save his life... how?

YURI

Well, his body is beyond saving.
But not his, uh, brain...

Morgan and Isaiah exchange a look -- *what the hell?*

THROUGH THE GLASS --

The blade presses into Leland's neck. It starts to carve into his skin like a pumpkin. ARTERIAL SPRAY splashes the curtain.

MORGAN

Oh, shit...

The blade traces an outline around Leland's trachea...

Isaiah spots a LOOSE PIPE in the hallway. He rushes over, grabs it, then runs back to the glass.

YURI

Hey, wait you have to trust --

WHAM! -- Isaiah hits the glass and a CRACK begins to form.

THROUGH THE GLASS --

Two of the other robotic limbs CLAMP onto Leland's head like it's a carnival prize, then --

With a bone-crunching SNAP -- the robotic limbs RIP LELAND'S HEAD OFF! His spine dangles and blood drips off it.

Isaiah and Morgan want to vomit and scream at the same time.

YURI (CONT'D)
I know it looks bad, but --

Isaiah points the pipe at Yuri.

ISAIAH
Don't say another fucking word!

Isaiah slams the pipe into the glass again.

WHAM! -- the CRACK WIDENS.

THROUGH THE GLASS --

The metal halo lifts LELAND'S SEVERED HEAD off his body.

The seat with Leland's decapitated body suddenly SWIVELS INTO THE WALL, taking his headless body with it...

... and a SECOND SEAT ROTATES INTO POSITION WITH A FRESH, HEADLESS, NUDE, MALE BODY DIRECTLY UNDERNEATH.

WHAM! -- Isaiah hits the glass -- and it SHATTERS!

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Isaiah charges in. Hunter sees him.

HUNTER
Look, we would have briefed you,
but there was no --

ISAIAH TACKLES HUNTER TO THE BLOOD-DRENCHED FLOOR.

ALYX
Stop!

Isaiah throws a punch, going on the offensive. Hunter tries to block it, but Isaiah pummels him -- *WHAM! WHAM! WHAM!*

Maybe with a little extra venom, too...

ALYX (CONT'D)
We're helping him, asshole!

Hunter tries reaching up for a scalpel, but Isaiah headbutts him back down and grabs the scalpel instead.

He's about one millisecond away from killing Hunter when --

LELAND (O.S.)
Wait...

Everyone in the room goes dead still.

Was that... Leland?

And as they all turn and look up at him --

-- *LELAND IS ALIVE AND WELL...*

... A HALF A FOOT TALLER THAN BEFORE...

... WITH A STEEL COLLAR AROUND HIS NECK.

Silence, then --

MORGAN

What the *FUCK* just happened?

CUT TO:

INT. OBSERVATION DECK

Both crews are standing across from each other. Except for Leland, who is the only one seated, enjoying some hot coffee.

ALYX

It's called a "BUB." Backup Body.
Grown from stem cells. No brain.

MORGAN

So it's not... synth?

ALYX

No. Completely human tissue.

Leland delicately blows on his coffee. Still... recovering.

Isaiah remains a skeptic --

ISAIAH

You *decapitated* him.

ALYX

Sure, and in your day to perform heart surgery, they would use a *saw* to cut into the rib cage and hold the chest cavity apart with pliers.

YURI

Imagine being from the 19th century walking in on *that*.

ALYX

Without knowing what's actually going on, you'd think you were witnessing some satanic ritual...

HUNTER

... when really you were walking in on one of the most advanced medical techniques ever invented.

Silence. Hunter looks down at Leland.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

The real question is -- why did you thaw their ship?

Leland pauses. He stares forward, still lost in that moment.

LELAND

I... I was trying to save her.

ALYX

Who?

LELAND

Natalie Wong. I saw her name on the computer. She was inside one of those... blocks of ice.

YURI

Wong... you mean...

LELAND

My mother.

Silence.

YURI

How is that possible?

Leland's emotions are still in flux. Eyes red. Delirious. Any "sunny side" he had is now darkened amid a growing anger.

LELAND

NASA told me she died in a training accident thirty years ago. I was just a boy. They... fucking lied.

He pauses.

LELAND (CONT'D)

You were all bickering. But there was no way I was going to let her stay out there another 500 years.

His eyes start to water again as he faces the consequences of his decision.

LELAND (CONT'D)
They should have told me!

Morgan puts her hand on his shoulder, trying to console him.

Isaiah stares at Hunter.

ISAIAH
Well, at least we learned your crew
lets the A.I. decide everything.

Hunter holds Isaiah's stare, both with unfinished business.

HUNTER
I told you. He's a tool we use to
avoid disagreement.

ISAIAH
That's a nice way of saying you
avoid making the tough choices.

Alyx points to the rest of her crew.

ALYX
We're on the same page. When you
were down there, you couldn't agree
on anything. If there's a fracture
on this mission, it's not between
generations -- it's between you.

Silence. Yuri just shakes his head, and with real concern --

YURI
We read your generation was
divided, we didn't know how much...

As tensions keep rising, Hunter tries maintaining order.

HUNTER
Look, we re-enter stasis in six
hours. Let's all take a breather
until then. Meet back for dinner.

As everyone reluctantly agrees to step away and cool off --

MORGAN
Wait.

Both crews stop and look at her.

HUNTER
What?

MORGAN
The Wait Calculation...

ALYX
Yeah, we get it. You explained --

MORGAN
It's going to happen again.

Silence. The others share a look. Yuri smirks --

YURI
C'mon.

MORGAN
"C'mon," what?

YURI
That would be... ridiculous. Right?

MORGAN
Why?

YURI
Because... we're different.

Morgan walks up to the screen. She uses her finger to trace out some quick math next to the diagram of the two ships.

MORGAN
We're not even a third of the way to Meliora. If the math works out roughly the same as before, and the next crew continues to be faster...

ALYX
Next crew?

MORGAN
It's not ridiculous at all...

She stops and looks at them.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
... it's guaranteed.

They start to realize she might be right.

LELAND
So what are you saying, that if we go in stasis again --

MORGAN

A faster ship will wake us up. Just like you did to us. Just like we did to the Phedipeddies.

Silence. Morgan stares at each of them --

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Don't you guys get it? The danger we thought we'd face out here? It's not aliens or some asteroid. It's *this*. The wait calculation.

Another long, tense moment passes. Isaiah looks at her --

ISAIAH

Shit. It's even worse than that.

MORGAN

What do you mean?

ISAIAH

You're right. A new ship is guaranteed to catch up to us, but it isn't guaranteed to *stop* for us. What if it just... passes us by?

Everyone starts to realize what that means --

ALYX

We'll still eventually arrive at Meliora, but a fully-developed one. And we won't be pioneers or explorers. *We'll* be the dinosaurs.

Not even Morgan had anticipated that. Silence, then --

ISAIAH

... unless we do something to *make* them stop for us.

Morgan isn't sure she likes the sound of that.

MORGAN

By doing something like that... we'd be choosing our lives ahead of the mission. If another ship is meant to get there faster, with or without us... it's their decision.

Isaiah holds her stare.

ISAIAH

Is it?

As everyone dwells on that --

ALYX
I think I might have an idea.

CUT TO:

INT. RECORDING ROOM

Everyone is huddled around a MICROPHONE. An opened bottle of JACK DANIELS is on the table.

Alyx looks down at a WRITTEN MESSAGE. Lines are crossed out, words have been altered and re-written.

Morgan stands off to the corner. Not drinking.

Alyx takes another swig of whiskey, cracks her neck, then --

INT. "THE SPRINT" - HALLWAY - SAME

Her VOICE echoes through the different halls and rooms.

ALYX (V.O.)
*This is the U.S.S. Sprint, codex
alpha 44-7.*

After much practice, and a little whiskey, her voice is the perfect combination of grave yet somehow... alluring.

INT. LELAND'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - SAME

Leland stands naked facing a mirror as he examines his new, younger body. He rubs the collar keeping his head attached.

ALYX (V.O.)
*Something has happened. We have
vital information you need to
complete your journey to Meliora.*

He spots something in the mirror on his skin just above his left kidney. He twists to get a look at it -- **A BAR CODE.**

ALYX (V.O.)
*We've made a major discovery. And
we need your help.*

He takes out a PHOTO, decades old. It's of him as a young boy with his MOTHER standing beside him in her astronaut suit.

Leland raises his hand to his face... and begins to CRY.

INT. ISAIAH'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - SAME

Isaiah stares out his window into space. But he doesn't cry. Instead, he continues to fiddle with his swiss army knife.

But unlike before... it now slices into his skin as droplets of blood hit the floor. And he doesn't even seem to notice.

ALYX (V.O.)

*You are in danger, like we were.
You must stop and find us, for your
own sake, and that of the mission.*

INT. RECORDING ROOM - SAME

Alyx finishes just above the mic, a hypnotic hint of ASMR to the final words of her "distress signal."

ALYX

We have so much to tell you. You will not make it to Meliora without our help. We must make it there... together.

And with that, the MIC turns off.

Alyx looks at the others, and they look at her.

Knowing what they've just done.

YURI

I'd stop for that.

ALYX

Don't thank me. I got the idea from him.

Alyx points at Isaiah.

ALYX (CONT'D)

How's *that* for a distress signal?

Isaiah smiles back.

Are these crews actually... *bonding*?

HUNTER

All we have to do now is send it and enter stasis.

Hunter reaches out to a holographic button --

"SET TO BROADCAST LOOP."

Morgan steps forward and holds his stare.

MORGAN

If we choose to do this, we have to be willing to accept the future when it gets here... and all of the consequences it brings.

A moment, then --

Hunter hits "BROADCAST."

INT. STASIS CHAMBER

Everyone is dressed down to their underwear as they step forward to each enter their own VERTICAL STASIS POD.

Hunter has shaved his beard, seemingly wanting to look his best in case they get boarded by "the future."

Morgan and Isaiah are the last ones to enter their pods. Morgan looks at him, and for the first time... is fearful.

MORGAN

What have we just done, Isaiah?

ISAIAH

Assured our survival.

MORGAN

You mean our relevancy.

ISAIAH

Staying relevant is survival.

Isaiah turns and gets in his pod.

Morgan stares at her own... then steps inside.

She turns around and the pod SEALS with a suffocating *HISS*. Her breathing constricts. Her eyes close. A mist starts to cover her skin. And very soon... she's peacefully in stasis.

But in her slumber --

THE FLASH OF A DREAM... OR A MEMORY --

Her father Phillip when he was young and healthy. SEVEN-YEAR OLD MORGAN is by his side as they tend to an old car.

PHILLIP

What's the problem, Morgan?

Seven-Year Old Morgan doesn't answer.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)
Remember, a good mechanic has to
actually get INSIDE the engine.

Morgan kneels down and gets on her back. She scoots underneath the engine.

UNDER THE ENGINE --

Everything looks normal... until parts of the engine suddenly appear to MOVE...

Morgan quickly scoots back out and recoils into the safe clutches of her father's dirty work gloves.

Phillip tries not to laugh.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)
What did you see, Morgan?

MORGAN
Rats...

Philip smiles.

PHILLIP
That's right. The rats are there
because the engine wasn't
maintained. But if we're going to
do our part and fix this car, we
have to be the ones to confront it.

BACK TO ADULT MORGAN IN STASIS, EYES SHUT --

PHILLIP (V.O.)
So, Morgan, will you do your part?

And just as that question echoes --

HER EYES SHOOT OPEN AS A RED EMERGENCY LIGHT BATHES HER FACE!

Everyone is ejected out of their pods. But instead of floating out, they fall forward and drop to the floor, in need of catching their breath. Hunter looks up and SHOUTS --

HUNTER
Neal, what's going on?

NEAL
Another ship is in proximity.

Isaiah sees the clock -- "74 YEARS..."

ISAIAH
Holy shit, it worked...

Both crews start to quickly get dressed.

INT. AIRLOCK

A massive, steel elevator-like door. Sealed shut, impossible to penetrate. Both crews turn the corner and stare at it.

HUNTER
Everyone relax. Nothing can get --

Suddenly, a LIQUID METAL begins to seep through the small crack between the doors of the airlock. It starts to harden then begins to EXPAND -- prying the airlock door open.

The metal airlock CREAKS like an old ship. Then --

BOOM! -- IT BURSTS OPEN and a CLOUD OF SMOKE fills the air.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
(through the smoke)
Stay calm!

No one can see for a moment. A sense of panic rising.

When the smoke settles...

THREE MASSIVE FIGURES HAVE STEPPED ABOARD!

Each is over 6-FEET TALL -- *IMPOSING* with SHARP, METAL SKIN and JAGGED, PYRAMID-LIKE HEADS WITH NO MOUTHS OR NOSES.

Just two, pearly-white EYES.

Each of the Figures holds a freakish WEAPON of some type -- a COBALT GUN that's part sniper rifle, part medieval javelin.

And they are each aimed right at the original two crews.

The two crews FREEZE -- clearly at the mercy of this third presence, until --

One by one, the metal skin seems to mechanically RETRACT from each of the figures. Exo-skeleton armor now revealing --

THEY ARE HUMAN.

YURI
Oh, thank God.

But they appear more like **SOLDIERS** than astronauts. Faces HEAVILY SCARRED -- shaved heads -- *battle-hardened* -- they look wary. Knights of the roundtable with breathing helmets.

Like the crews before them, they are split two men, one woman, each a different ethnicity. But they are taller and stronger with an... authoritarian temperament.

Morgan walks right up to the first Soldier and stares at a strange emblem displayed right on the front of his suit --

NASA.

Redesigned and more militaristic.

Each of the three soldiers also have identification on their uniforms like nametags -- "**A.1.**" "**B.2.**" "**Z.3.**"

A.1.

We got your distress signal.

B.2.

Where is it!

Hunter raises his hands, trying to answer diplomatically.

HUNTER

Look, there's a lot to explain, but we're fine. There is no threat.

ALYX

We just had to say something so we wouldn't be stranded out here.

The Soldiers share a look...

Z.3.

They don't know yet...

The first two crews trade a glance.

YURI

Uh, excuse me, don't know *what* yet?

INT. "THE SPRINT" - HALLWAY

The Soldiers move with purpose.

One of them uses a SMALL PYRAMID-SHAPED DEVICE that gives them immediate three-dimensional readouts of every hallway.

Everyone follows.

B.2.
Stay back and let us do our job!

ALYX
Didn't you hear us -- we're not in
danger! There is no threat!

The Soldiers stop outside a door and raise their guns.

A.1.
It's in here.

INT. SYNTH GARDEN

Peaceful fields of strawberries, bananas, and potatoes. But that peace is shattered as the Soldiers storm in. They don't see a luscious garden... they see a dangerous battlefield.

A.1.
My God. It's everywhere.

Z.3.
It may have already started
changing.

HUNTER
Changing?

A.1.
Burn it all!

Each of the Soldiers press a button on their guns -- and they seem to SHIFT into something more resembling a FLAMETHROWER.

ALYX
No, wait --

VWOOOOOSH! -- the Soldiers blanket the garden with a unique MERCURY-COLORED FLAME!

HUNTER
That's our food supply!

Hunter makes a move to stop one of them -- *WHAM!* -- one of the Soldiers knocks him in the head so he falls to the floor.

As the Soldiers continue to torch the beautiful garden --

Something eerie can be heard... *SHRIEKING.*

Like the garden itself is howling out in pain.

Like the garden is... alive.

As the fire starts to eat away at everything, the nanostalks seem to lift up into the air like they're reaching to escape.

But the flames are too strong, and they eat away at the roots of the stalks until and they begin to go limp and burn off.

The Soldiers stand near the door, then --

A.1.

Neal, seal all ventilation and contain the fire inside the room.

NEAL

Yes, Captain.

HUNTER

Captain? Wait, I'm --

The Soldiers STEP BACK.

A.1.

I'm sorry.

VWIP! --

A DOOR SLIDES DOWN -- JUST LIKE THE INFIRMARY BEFORE.

Except this time... the first two crews are INSIDE THE ROOM --
-- while the Soldiers are OUTSIDE IT -- *GONE*.

HUNTER

Neal, open the door!

NO RESPONSE.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

Neal, open the god damn door!

MORGAN

They must have hacked your ship before they came aboard.

HUNTER

They can't do that.

MORGAN

We don't know what they can do...

Leland stares out one of the portholes. He sees TWO LONG RAILS now attached to The Sprint like a set of tracks. They seem to come from a THIRD, SILVERY SHIP IN THE DISTANCE.

But in *here*, the flames start TAKING OVER THE ROOM.

ALYX

Why the hell would they do this!

They all start to COUGH -- SMOKE IS EVERYWHERE -- and the fire is all consuming. They have *seconds*, not minutes.

YURI

If we can get to an emergency terminal, I can override Neal.

ISAIAH

Is there one in this room?

YURI

No. We need to get out of here.

Flames ROAR and smoke begins to blanket the ceiling.

Morgan suddenly looks around, realizing --

MORGAN

We're surrounded by synth...

ALYX

No shit.

MORGAN

Can't we make it whatever we need?

Yuri looks up at Morgan -- *she's right*.

YURI

Backup.

MORGAN

Where?

YURI

No. *The* backup...

Yuri slides the special pair of BRASS KNUCKLES THAT CONTROL THE SYNTH over his right hand and points it at the fire.

Instantly, whatever synth is still alive suddenly SLITHERS TOWARDS THE SEALED DOOR LIKE A SNAKE, then SLIDES UNDERNEATH the imperceptible gap under the door.

MORGAN

Where are you sending it?

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The nanites rapidly coalesce into a SMALL SYNTH CLOUD. It travels through the hallway *also* with purpose. But it doesn't go to the docking bay, instead it turns...

INT. SYNTH GARDEN

A STALK OF NANITES crumble in the fire and cascade to the floor, kicking up smoke. Everyone has to duck to avoid it as it's becoming increasingly difficult to breathe.

Leland tries smashing the door with his new body, but no matter how strong he is, the door doesn't budge.

Just then, *BEEPING* comes from the other side of the door.

The airlock RELEASES and the DOOR SLIDES OPEN. The rush of air PULLS THE FLAMES out for a second, then they subside.

And when they do, their savior is seen on the other side of the door -- **A SYNTH/BACKUP-BODY HYBRID.**

A NUDE, MALE BODY... WITH A FLESH-COLORED HEAD MADE OF RAW SYNTH. It has NO FACIAL FEATURES. No nose. No eyes. No mouth.

Just a blank head like a mannequin.

Incredibly... unnerving.

The crew members share a look, then rush out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Everyone keeps running from the fire, along with the Hybrid. Yuri seems to be controlling it with the BRASS KNUCKLES.

Hunter rips the cover off a CONTROL PANEL, then quickly inputs a code. The words "*MANUAL OVERRIDE ACCEPTED*" flash.

HUNTER

Neal!

NEAL

Yes, captain.

They share a glance -- *they have control again.*

INT. HALLWAY

The Soldiers move quickly, using the pyramidal device to continue scanning each room of the ship.

INT. DINING HALL

The Soldiers enter as the pyramidal device BLINKS --

Z.3.
Last strand in here!

A.1.
Then let's finish it and get the
hell off this relic!

But before they can --

The door suddenly SEALS BEHIND THEM.

THE LIGHTS SHUT OFF -- REPLACED BY RED EMERGENCY LIGHTING.

Z.3.
Shit, it's a trap!

B.2.
Must already be sentient! Visuals!

SOMETHING MOVES IN THE DARKNESS. It is SWIFT and VICIOUS as it charges Z.3. -- *WHAM!* -- ramming him out of formation. The others try to react, but it's already gone.

A.1.
Target!

They see something move in the corner.

Z.3.
There!

They OPEN FIRE and their advanced firepower has a deep orchestral rhythm to it. But the intruder stands unaffected by their gunfire as it reveals itself -- the HYBRID.

It's body is now filled with bullet holes. But miraculously... nanites start swarming off its head and zoom down to its human body as it START HEALING ITSELF.

B.2.
It's the Synth!

A.1.
We know what to do! Light it up!

Their guns suddenly MORPH and that MERCURY-COLORED FIRE FLOWS OUT OF THEM LIKE BEFORE -- TORCHING THE HYBRID!

The Hybrid's human body starts to disintegrate and the swarming nanites are unable to heal itself faster than it's melting.

But it quickly reaches out and GRABS FOOD -- CONVERTING FRUIT BACK INTO RAW SYNTH AND USING IT TO HELP PATCH ITS WOUNDS.

The Hybrid -- almost *angry* and in a state of aggression -- LUNGES FORWARD and begins to disarm the Soldiers one-by-one, sending their weapons one way, and their bodies another.

When it's all over, the Soldiers are recovering on the floor while the Hybrid finishes healing in the middle of the room.

The door opens... and the first two crews step inside.

Yuri moves the brass knuckles and the Hybrid joins his side.

A.1. looks up at them, horrified --

A.1. (CONT'D)
You don't know what you've just
done...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Everyone is crowded around the table. But now instead of TWO CREWS EQUALING 6 -- there are **THREE CREWS EQUALING 9**.

A.1.
We don't have names. We have
designations. That's B.2. and Z.3.

She signals out each of her crew.

A.1. (CONT'D)
And I'm A.1.

The first two crews share a glance.

YURI
Like the steak sauce?

A.1. pauses. She's never heard of it.

Yuri leans in to the others.

YURI (CONT'D)
No steak sauce.

A.1. just stares back at them.

A.1.
Our only priority is Meliora.

ALYX
Sounds familiar...

Z.3.
And keeping it pure.

Silence -- *say what?*

HUNTER
What does that mean?

A.1.
All you need to know is that war
broke out. Worse than ever before.
Within months, a third of the
world's population was gone.

YURI
War? That's, uh, not possible.

Z.3.
You synthies would say that.

ALYX
Excuse me, "synthies?"

Z.3.
We're cleaning up your mess.

YURI
What "mess?"

B.2.
The synth crops.

It hangs there.

A.1.
The nanites started... changing. On
their own. Weaponizing.

Z.3.
Then they started killing us.

ALYX
Bullshit.

A.1.
This is Earth now --

A.1. walks to the wall and touches her glove to it.

It suddenly PROJECTS AN IMAGE FOR ALL TO SEE --

CRUMBLING CITY BUILDINGS COVERED IN SYNTHETIC NANITES. Like mold reclaiming a corpse. Blown-out tanks fill city streets.

A WAR-BATTERED HELLISH LANDSCAPE.

ALYX

No... synth *cured* world hunger.

B.2.

Yeah. And then it caused the greatest loss of human life the world has ever known.

Silence.

A.1.

That's the thing -- synth was a "quick fix" to a bigger problem. A bigger problem that that should have been solved a long time ago.

Morgan can't help but feel a sense of guilt.

Z.3.

There aren't enough resources now. Meliora is our last hope.

A.1.

If the Synth get there... it would be the end of humanity.

No one knows exactly what to say for a moment.

HUNTER

So... you were always out here searching for us?

B.2.

No. We didn't even know you assholes were out here until we heard your distress signal.

The first two crews share a glance.

INT. THE MARATHON - SAME

As the three crews try and get on the same page...

... strands of melted synth drip down around The Marathon like battery acid...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

Alyx walks right up to the Hybrid and stares up at it.

ALYX

We control it. Otherwise, if it wanted to, it would just kill me.

She stares right at it.

ALYX (CONT'D)

So kill me, you piece of shit!

It stares right down at her...

... and stares...

... and stares...

A.1. exhales, at the end of her rope.

A.1.

Why won't you just listen to us...

A SUDDEN JOLT grabs everyone's attention, then --

INT. DOCKING BAY

BOOOOOOM! -- The Marathon EXPLODES!

Whatever that dark plasma is, it CATCHES FIRE and begins to fork through DIFFERENT VENTS -- bringing DESTRUCTION with it.

INT. DINING QUARTERS

Alarms begin to *BLARE*. The ceiling's fire retardant system begins to rain water down on all of them. Chaos brewing...

HUNTER

Neal, what's happening!

NEAL

Cascading failures are being detected... detected... detected...

B.2.

It's the synth...

LELAND

Or it's a mechanical fire because
of the fire you started.

A.1.

Either way, we have to go!

HUNTER

Neal, how long do we have!

No response.

Poor old Neal is the first casualty.

Isaiah walks right up to A.1.

ISAIAH

You're taking us aboard your ship.

Yuri points his brass-knuckled hand out, and with it, the
Hybrid treads up to A.1. and stares down at her.

YURI

Seems he's still listening to us.

A.1. stares up at the faceless Hybrid.

A.1.

Only if this abomination goes down
with the ship.

Hunter and Yuri trade a look. A final moment, then --

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY

ALL 3 CREWS now *sprinting down the hall* -- **TOGETHER.**

The Hybrid is nowhere in sight.

BOOM! -- another EXPLOSION from deeper in the ship.

Alyx stops and opens a SET OF EMERGENCY LOCKERS and starts
distributing BLUE SPACE SUITS AND GOLDEN HELMETS.

The original two crews have to SUIT UP... but the third crew
just taps a button on their shoulder and their METALLIC SUITS
re-form over their body like before.

INT. "THE SPRINT" - AIRLOCK

They reach the airlock. Cramped together in a small 10 x 20 foot sealed chamber with a TRANSPORT TRAIN secured to a SQUARE SET OF TRACKS -- TWO RAILS above, TWO RAILS below.

ISAIAH
Everyone crowd in!

A.1.
No! It has to be three at a time.
The train won't move if it's more.

Another EXPLOSION rocks the ship.

MORGAN
We go in shifts. Mix up the crews.

INT. TRANSPORT TRAIN

A.1., Yuri, and Leland strap into the seats of the transport train like they're securing into a roller coaster.

A moment, then --

WHOOOSH! -- the train LAUNCHES FORWARD.

EXT. SPACE

The train rushes over the tracks in silence. But the tracks TREMBLE under the sheer force of the rushing train.

INT. THIRD SHIP - AIRLOCK

The transport train DOCKS into the third ship.

Everything is INDUSTRIAL STONE GRAY. Like smoke that has somehow hardened and formed a ship. Wartime monochromatic.

EXT. SPACE

The empty train *SOARS BACK THROUGH SPACE.*

INT. "THE SPRINT" - AIRLOCK

The train returns and docks in the airlock.

INT. TRANSPORT TRAIN

Z.3., Isaiah, and Alyx get on and strap in, then --
WHOOOSH! -- the train launches forward.

EXT. SPACE

The train speeds through space.
 Again, the tracks TREMBLE.
 ... maybe a *tad more* severely than before.

INT. THIRD SHIP - AIRLOCK

The train pulls back in and the second shift climbs out.

A.1.
 Last trip!

EXT. SPACE

This train comes back and docks with The Marathon.

INT. TRANSPORT TRAIN

Morgan, Hunter, and B.2. are the last three. They get onboard
 and strap in as the TRAIN DOORS SEAL SHUT.

EXT. SPACE

VWOOSH! -- the train DEPARTS towards the third ship.

INT. TRANSPORT TRAIN

Hunter looks at Morgan.

HUNTER
 You were right. We never should --

EXT. SPACE

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM! --

THE SPRINT EXPLODES.

INT. TRANSPORT TRAIN

Morgan, Hunter, and B.2. are VIOLENTLY JOSTLED AROUND.

EXT. SPACE

SHRAPNEL BLASTS OUT EVERYWHERE!

The tracks BREAK AWAY FROM THE SHIP AND CURL from the force of the blast... **CAUSING THE TRAIN TO ROCKET DOWN THE TRACKS!**

INT. THIRD SHIP - AIRLOCK

Everyone moves away from the window as shards of the The Sprint begin to *pepper and crash* into the third ship.

INT. TRANSPORT TRAIN

Morgan looks out the window -- they're *COMING IN HOT*.

MORGAN

Hold on!

As each of them grip their seats --

SMASH TO BLACK

DARKNESS.

Silence for a moment. Until --

CUT TO:

INT. UNKNOWN

A DEEP INHALE OF BREATH --

Morgan wakes up. Coughing. Groggy. Her vision comes to.

She's in an INFIRMARY. Only this one doesn't have the warmth of before. Now the walls are *cold and lifeless*.

And for some reason, it's hard for her to BREATHE.

She lifts her legs up and stands, but her balance is weak.

EXT. HALLWAY

Dark, gunmetal gray. Straight lines and sharp angles. Like running through a mausoleum of carved rock.

Morgan passes a WINDOW that looks out into space.

The stars seem to be *STREAKING BY*.

MORGAN

We're moving...

Much faster than either The Marathon or The Sprint, too.

She keeps walking, but her balance is *off*.

INT. DARKENED ROOM

Morgan cautiously stumbles inside a room as she continues to try and figure out where she is, unsure of her surroundings.

As she takes several steps inside...

LIGHTS SUDDENLY COME ON

The room she's in is FULL OF KNIVES, GUNS, GRENADES. All sealed behind DISPLAY GLASS like objects in a museum. There's even a SHOOTING RANGE on the other end of the room.

She suddenly STAGGERS and has to hold onto the wall for support. The moment she does -- *CLANK!*

That was a strange sound for her hand to make.

She looks at her right arm and her eyes fill with shock --

HER ARM HAS BEEN REPLACED -- it's now a hyper-sophisticated AUGMENTED PROSTHETIC. BLACK METAL and CARBON-FIBER TENDONS.

MORGAN

What... happened...

Morgan is at a loss.

But she suddenly turns and sees someone in the doorway --

Z.3.

And just like her, he seems to be breathing heavily.

INT. HALLWAY

Morgan follows Z.3. through the ship.

A RED LIGHT splashes over her from a scanner in the ceiling.

DEEP A.I. VOICE
DISARM YOURSELF!

MORGAN
Armed? I'm not --

In a flash, Morgan's METALLIC ARM STARTS TO TRANSFORM.

Metal pieces sliding back and forth, in and out, until her augmented prosthetic is no longer an arm at all.

It's now a big, nasty fucking gun.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
... armed.

DEEP VOICE
*RELINQUISH YOUR WEAPON IN FIVE
SECONDS... FOUR... THREE...*

Z.3.
Neal, verify Morgan Reed!

THE RED LIGHT TURNS BLUE and VANISHES.

MORGAN
That's Neal now?

Z.3. shrugs. Morgan raises her augmented prosthetic.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
And why the fuck is my arm a gun?

Z.3.
Because your real arm is probably
in a black hole somewhere. And
that's the last prosthetic we had.

Morgan's augmented gun suddenly SHIFTS BACK INTO AN ARM.

MORGAN
I'm not doing that.

Z.3.
I'm sure you'll get the hang of it.

The ship TREMBLES.

An aftershock... or a precursor for something worse?

INT. OBSERVATION DECK

An oblong room with doors leading out in every direction. A 360 view of outer space is seen through a domed ceiling.

The ship is moving so fast through the universe that every star appears to be shooting by.

All 9 members of each of the three crews stand.

B.2.

We can't! The train hit in the worst possible spot on this ship!

(In a very real way, it's like the crew from the original Apollo missions AND The Jetsons on one side... and a squadron of post-apocalyptic space marines on the other.)

HUNTER

How bad is it?

A HOLOGRAM suddenly forms of the now DAMAGED THIRD SHIP, along with the FLOATING DEBRIS FROM THE SPRINT all around it.

The damage is SEVERE.

A.1.

The train impacted directly with oxygen and life support systems.

MORGAN (O.S.)

But we're still moving.

Everyone turns and sees her enter the room.

B.2.

Fuel cells are on the other side of the ship. Lucky us, I guess.

MORGAN

How long until we reach Meliora?

B.2. points to a COUNTDOWN on the other wall --

"16 HOURS... 33 MINUTES... 47 SECONDS..."

Morgan stares at it.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Neal, how much time do we have left with the remaining oxygen?

The COUNTDOWN RE-FORMS --

"29 MINUTES... 9 SECONDS..."

Everyone goes silent.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

So that explains why we're all out
of breath.

Another long silence, then --

Z.3.

Neal, how much time would we have
with 3 people on board?

ALYX

Asshole, there's 9 of us...

The COUNTDOWN RE-FORMS AGAIN --

"5 HOURS... 14 MINUTES... 55 SECONDS..."

Yuri glances around, relieved.

YURI

Dodged a bullet there, right guys?
I mean, it still isn't --

ISAIAH

Neal, how much time would one
person have?

YURI

Oh, don't do that...

The COUNTDOWN RE-FORMS ONE MORE TIME --

"17 HOURS... 4 MINUTES... 23 SECONDS..."

No one has to say it.

NOT A SINGLE FUCKING WORD.

There's enough oxygen... FOR EXACTLY ONE PERSON.

Z.3.

If only one person can make it,
then it's someone from our crew.

LELAND

It was our mission before it was
yours. We started it, we end it.

ALYX

What about us?! You wouldn't even be alive if we hadn't saved you.

Isaiah just shakes his head --

ISAIAH

I can't be the only one here who appreciates irony, can I?

He stares at each of them with a *different* perspective.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

We left because Earth was running out of clean air, and yet here we are again -- *out of oxygen*.

He turns to Hunter.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

You left because Earth was overpopulated, and yet here we are -- *overpopulated*.

Isaiah turns to A.1.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

And you left Earth because of war, and yet... here we are.

"WAR."

Each of the three crews starts to appear a *tad more* defensive... eyes shifting to the person beside them.

But Morgan's transfixed on THE REAL-TIME MODEL OF THE THIRD SHIP. She sees the NAME ON THE SIDE OF IT. The hull has been shattered, and only part of it remains -- "...ELAY."

MORGAN

What's the name of your ship?

B.2. adjusts levers on the stone controls. The model of their ship REWINDS THE DAMAGE, HEALING THE MODEL SHIP.

The name is now clearly displayed -- "*THE RELAY*."

MORGAN (CONT'D)

The Relay...

And slowly... tears fill her eyes.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
We have to break this cycle. No matter what happens between generations, instead of helping each other... we fight each other.

She pauses.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
We're not supposed to be enemies.

Hunter wants to believe that, but --

HUNTER
Maybe it's a bigger problem than we can solve, Morgan.

Alyx seems to agree --

ALYX
It's not as easy as just stopping.

Morgan's suddenly struck by that word.

MORGAN
How fast are we going?

A.1.
Close to the speed of light, why?

MORGAN
We're moving too fast to be caught.

A.1. trades looks with her two crewmates.

A.1.
Yeah, I'm afraid we've entertained you as much as we can.

Their hands move closer to their holstered weapons...

A.1. (CONT'D)
It is *our* ship, after all.

Everyone, including Morgan, can sense what they're implying.

MORGAN
No, if we stop then the next --

The third crew now shares another loaded look.

LELAND
I think they're done "waiting."

A.1. nods to B.2. and Z.3. --

And just as they draw their weapons --

SLASH! -- ISAIAH IS A FRACTION OF A SECOND FASTER AND DEFENSIVELY SLICES A.1. ACROSS THE EYE WITH HIS SWISS ARMY KNIFE!

MORGAN

No!

A.1. *falters.*

Isaiah uses the momentum and GRABS HER GUN.

B.2. and Z.3. draw their weapons when --

VA-BOOM! -- Isaiah pulls the trigger and a MASSIVE CONCUSSIVE FORCE is blasted out of his gun, launching B.2. and Z.3. backwards against the wall.

The gun is too powerful for Isaiah and it FLIES OUT OF HIS HANDS across the room. Isaiah barely has time to register the power of the weapon when A.1. recovers --

A.1.

Seal them in!

Z.3. collects himself and hits a panel on the wall.

The door to the room starts to SLIDE CLOSED, but Leland leaps across the room and uses all his strength to prop it open.

LELAND

Move!

The first two crews quickly dash out past Leland. Isaiah is the last one heading for the door --

B.2. shakes off the concussive blast and aims his gun --

As he does, his gun RECONFIGURES ITSELF, shifting into a new attack mode -- AND HE OPENS FIRE!

BULLETS TEAR THROUGH THE ROOM!

Leland is the last to make it as he rolls out.

The door SLAMS SHUT.

INT. HALLWAY

Bullets are heard reflecting off the other side of the door as the first two crews race out.

ALYX
They're going to kill us...

But Leland looks down... bleeding in his side from a bullet.

LELAND
Might have already started.

ISAIAH
It always had to end this way.

ALYX
What way?

ISAIAH
Survival of the fittest.

Morgan tries to plead with Isaiah --

MORGAN
No, we have to find the bridge! We can still make it out --

YURI
Fuck this!

Yuri runs off in a panic.

MORGAN
Wait, we have to stay together!

But it's already too late. Amidst the fear and confusion, everyone has already to DISAPPEAR INTO DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS, running for their lives.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK

The third crew stands alone.

A.1. gets back up and looks at B.2. and Z.3.

A.1.
This is our ship...

Her left eye is slashed and bleeding.

A.1. (CONT'D)
This is our time...

She slaps a PATCH over her eye. It seamlessly melds with her skin and masks the wound... but not the pain.

A.1. (CONT'D)
Kill them all.

INT. COLD STORAGE

Frozen mist fills the air. Steel crates piled high and covered in frost. Quick bursts of steam shoot upwards from behind a row of crates like a tiny train chugging along.

BEHIND THE CRATES --

Leland looks for something to cauterize his wound, going through supply crates that he has no idea what's inside.

But he suddenly stops breathing, noticing SHORT, STEAMY BREATHS coming from behind a *different crate*.

It's Alyx.

She's also found a similar spot... and a CROWBAR.

They see each other. Leland raises his finger to his lips.

Because he suddenly hears something else --

FOOTSTEPS coming from somewhere else in the room.

Leland looks through a crack in the crates and sees Z.3. stalking through the storage unit.

... carrying a FLAMETHROWER.

Alyx sees it, too. Leland looks at her, trying to communicate a gameplan, when Alyx --

-- steps out in front of Z.3.

Z.3. sees her and raises the flamethrower.

Z.3.
We never should have let you board.

Knowing it's now or never, Leland looks down at his body --

LELAND
Time to see what this thing can do.

-- and BRAVELY STEPS OUT BESIDE ALYX.

LELAND (CONT'D)
Look, we're not enemies, so let's --

WHAM! --

ALYX SMASHES LELAND'S LEG WITH THE CROWBAR!

LELAND (CONT'D)
What!

Leland falls to the floor as Alyx dashes away.

Z.3. approaches Leland with the flamethrower...

Z.3.
Damn, she did you... cold.

LELAND
I still got some life in me.

Leland quickly spins out of the way and charges Z.3.,
knocking him back. As they spar over the flamethrower --

INT. ANGULAR HALLWAY

Morgan sprints down a separate hallway on her own.

She keeps running, but everything here is fog and smoke. Like
a battlefield after a bomb has gone off.

She turns another corner and COLLIDES INTO A.1.

Blood soaks the edges of A.1.'s eye patch.

MORGAN
Listen to me, we're running out of
time. I need to get to the bridge.

A.1. grabs her by the throat and SLAMS HER AGAINST THE WALL.

A.1.
Do you even know what year it is?

Morgan raises her arm up and grabs A.1.'s wrist from around
her neck. And that's when she remembers...

HER ARM IS METALLIC.

SHE CLOSES HER METAL FINGERS AROUND A.1.'S WRIST and A.1.
grits her teeth, but Morgan pulls her arm off her neck. She
PUNCHES her in the chest and A.1. FLIES BACK.

A.1. gathers herself and stands up, staring back at Morgan.

A.1. (CONT'D)
You're stronger than you look.

Morgan tries transforming her arm into a gun again -- *but nothing happens*. She's just... pointing her arm at A.1.

A.1. (CONT'D)
Still can't tap into it, though.
They teach us in basic training --

A.1. raises *her* arm at Morgan AND IT TRANSFORMS INTO A GUN!

A.1. (CONT'D)
It's all in the wrist.

Morgan DIVES INTO A CONNECTING HALLWAY just as a STRING OF BULLETS tear into the wall.

INT. HALLWAY

Yuri keeps running and looking over his shoulder. He has something in his right hand. Something he clearly just found.

The halls seem to be warping around him, then --

He stops as he sees someone at the end of the hall --

ISAIAH.

Yuri freezes in his tracks.

Are they teammates... or enemies?

YURI
Hey, whoa, what's up, man?

Isaiah doesn't react.

Because he sees what's in Yuri's hand.

Another strange, pistol-like weapon.

Yuri quickly raises it and points it at Isaiah.

But Yuri doesn't seem like he knows how, or necessarily *wants*, to shoot it. He's just... confused and terrified.

YURI (CONT'D)
We're on the same team, right?

ISAIAH
Yes. Now put the weapon down.

Yuri doesn't. Isaiah pauses, then --

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

Damn it, if we're going to survive this, we have to come together, not fall apart. That means leading with love, not hate. Passing our skills down to the next generation so they can learn from us. I know it's hard, but we have to be *selfless*. Accept that our time might have come, preserve our resources and...

YURI LOWERS HIS GUN.

Isaiah exhales, relieved.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

Okay. Good.

YURI

I just don't want to die...

Isaiah takes a step forward... and pulls Yuri into a hug.

ISAIAH

Neither do I.

Around the corner, Morgan suddenly stops and sees Isaiah embracing Yuri. But in Isaiah's hand... THE SWISS ARMY KNIFE.

MORGAN

No!

THWICK! -- Yuri's eyes go wide --

-- as Isaiah STICKS THE KNIFE INTO THE BACK OF HIS NECK!

Yuri's gun drops from his hand and drops through a grate as Isaiah slowly lowers his body to the ground. Yuri slinks out of his grasp and falls to the floor -- *the sacrificial lamb*.

Isaiah looks up and sees Morgan. He SHOUTS to her --

ISAIAH

It's us or them now, Morgan!

Morgan slowly backs up -- horrified at what Isaiah's become -- and turns to run.

Isaiah nods to himself, realizing Morgan has made her choice. He picks up the gun and leaves the knife in Yuri's neck.

INT. COLD STORAGE

Leland and Z.3. remain locked in a life-or-death struggle for the flamethrower. They wrestle for control, pushing themselves into different corners of the room -- until the flamethrower drops from both their grasps and hits the floor.

Z.3. throws a jab and hits Leland right in the stomach. He follows it up with a flurry of quick punches.

But... Leland takes PUNCH AFTER PUNCH. Z.3., growing frustrated, gives him his best shot in Leland's gut.

But again... Leland looks like he barely felt it.

And before you know it, Z.3. is completely out of breath.

LELAND

Too young to know what a "rope a
dope" is, huh, kid?

Leland throws his first punch and knocks Z.3. across the room with the cleanest and nastiest right hook he's ever thrown!

Z.3. flies back and hits the floor, shocked. He scatters back as Leland grabs the flamethrower.

LELAND (CONT'D)

You see, I may be old...

Z.3. continues to scamper backwards as Leland steps closer. He turns on the flamethrower and the tip of it catches fire.

LELAND (CONT'D)

... but my body is brand new.

Leland points the flamethrower down at him, when --

Z.3. quickly spins and hits a button on the wall beside him.

TWO METAL DOORS INSTANTLY SLAM DOWN AROUND LELAND!

Leland turns and sees Z.3. on the other side of the door.

Z.3.

Muhammad Ali, George Foreman, 1974.

Z.3. taps a panel on the wall and very suddenly the ENTIRE AREA AROUND LELAND STARTS SHIFTING -- walls turn inside out like he's trapped inside a rubik's cube. Before he knows it --

NEAL 2.0
*EMERGENCY AIRLOCK ACTIVATED.
 DEPRESSURIZATION OVERRIDE. EVA
 SUITS REQUIRED.*

Leland is inside an EMERGENCY AIRLOCK with a NEW DOOR NOW LEADING DIRECTLY INTO OUTER SPACE!

But as amazing as the third crew's ship might be, something else seems to be bothering Leland even more --

LELAND
 So you guys *don't* have football,
 but you *do* have boxing?

The outer door OPENS A CRACK as the pressure RAPIDLY CHANGES.

Z.3.
 (through the window)
 Never missed a fight, gramps.

Z.3. turns and leaves.

Knowing he's finished, Leland takes out the photo of him and his mother. He looks at it --

LELAND
 See you soon, Mom.

The airlock finishes opening, and in an instant --

VWOOSH! -- Leland is yanked out into the vacuum of space.

EXT. SPACE

Leland's body hurls through space as he dies with the photo of him and his mother forever frozen in his hands.

INT. HALLWAY

Z.3. keeps running, but struggles to breathe.

Just then, he hears something down the hallway -- a *WHIMPER*.

He cautiously treads forward... until he sees someone face down in a POOL OF BLOOD -- ALYX.

ALYX
 Help... someone...

Z.3.
 Who did this? Are they still --

THWICK! -- Alyx turns and STABS Z.3. IN THE NECK!

She stands. Whatever blood she's covered in, it ain't hers.

Z.3. drops to the floor with a HEAVY THUD.

Alyx YANKS THE SHIV back out of his neck -- the PLASTIC JELLO SPOON SHIV. She re-pockets it.

But before she goes, she sees Z.3.'s belt...

... and a SET OF MYSTERIOUS GRENADES attached to it.

INT. UNKNOWN AREA

Across the ship, Hunter dashes inside a room. CAGES line the walls with *GUNS, GRENADES, and BULLETPROOF ARMOR.*

HUNTER

The armory...

He sees a STRANGE LOCK on the cage. Inscrutable future tech.

Suddenly, the SILHOUETTE OF A PERSON covers the lock.

Hunter turns and sees Isaiah under a glowing red light. Isaiah aims his gun at Hunter. Hunter doesn't flinch.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

You really were only in this for the glory. It was never about helping anyone other than yourself.

ISAIAH

That how you speak to your elders?

Hunter suddenly CHARGES and is able to KNOCK THE GUN UP just as Isaiah fires -- *VA-BOOM!* -- launching some type of CONCUSSIVE BLAST WAVE that hits one of the weapon lockers.

HUNTER

You should have died 200 years ago. I'll make sure history forgets you.

The weapon skids across the floor as Isaiah lowers his shoulder and RAMS HUNTER BACK INTO ONE OF THE METAL CAGES.

Hunter LIFTS HIS KNEE UP and delivers a kick to Isaiah's gut that causes him to stumble back. But both men are quickly exhausted and almost out of breath due to the low oxygen.

The two men wrestle for dominance. *Violent, brutal, sloppy.* Two wounded animals fighting for survival. Isaiah manages to bring his leg up and KICK Hunter to the floor.

Hunter looks up -- THE WEAPON LOCKER IS OPENED.

He crawls forward and reaches out, almost there...

... when Isaiah leaps on his back, YANKS HIS HEAD BACK, and --
CRACK! -- COMPLETELY SNAPS HUNTER'S NECK!

Hunter goes lifeless as Isaiah rolls off him and stands up.

Isaiah grabs the gun and stares down at Hunter.

ISAIAH
History remembers the winners.

INT. HALLWAY

A VENT along the ceiling is PUNCHED OUTWARDS.

Morgan falls out and stands up. Alone.

She's runs up to a SEALED DOOR MARKED "**BRIDGE.**"

MORGAN
I found it...

As she checks the wall beside the door -- a LIGHT SCANS HER.

NEAL 2.0
BRIDGE CODE NEEDED.

A.1. (O.S.)
I knew exactly where you were
going.

Morgan turns and sees A.1.

A.1. (CONT'D)
I believe you called it... home
court advantage?

Morgan aims her arm at A.1. -- *still not shifting.*

A.1.'s gun starts to spin, warming up to obliterate, when --

DINK! -- A GRENADE ROLLS UNDER HIS FEET.

She looks down -- then turns and sees Alyx.

WA-WOOM! -- A FLASH OF LIGHT EMANATES FROM THE GRENADE -- BUT INSTEAD OF AN EXPLOSION -- A **GRAVITY WELL** EXPANDS AROUND HER!

She's *lifted up off the ground* as WAVES OF ENERGY pulsate around her and PUSH HER UPWARDS. She floats in SLOW-MOTION -- caught in a bubble that distorts time and space around her.

Unable to move, her gun/arm still revs up...

THUNK! THUNK! THUNK! THUNK! --

It FIRES DOWNWARDS. But the bullets *RICOCHET* and COME BACK AT HER IN SLOW-MOTION INSIDE THE GRAVITY WELL!

One by one, THEY SLOWLY PIERCE HER TORSO and BLOOD SPLATTERS in the gravity well like a red snow globe.

THE GRAVITY WELL EVAPORATES and A.1.'s body hits the floor.

Morgan rushes up beside her and rolls her over. She coughs up blood, dying. Lungs rapidly filling. Morgan tries to put pressure on the wounds to stop the bleeding, but it's no use.

A.1. (CONT'D)
Why... help me...

MORGAN
Because you're not my enemy.

A.1. stares up at Morgan.

In that moment of closure, comes clarity...

A.1.
I... want to do my part...

She weakly waves her hand for Morgan to lean closer.

... or something else?

Alyx tries to warn Morgan --

ALYX
She's lying. She'll kill you.

Morgan pauses. She looks down into A.1's dying eyes, then --

She chooses to trust her and LEAN IN.

A.1. stares at Morgan... then whispers something into her ear. Morgan nods back... as A.1. dies in her arms.

Morgan stands up. Alyx look at her.

ALYX (CONT'D)
What did she say?

Morgan faces the door, then --

MORGAN
Neal, access code TJ-521.

The light turns GREEN -- AND THE BRIDGE DOOR OPENS.

INT. BRIDGE

Morgan and Alyx enter. A MASSIVE WINDSHIELD stretches out in front of them. Space flies past at unconscionable speeds.

The consoles look more like stone sculptures than keyboards.

MORGAN
Do you know what happened to any of the others?

ALYX
I... haven't seen anyone else.

They start searching the console to operate this technology.

MORGAN
A hundred years of updates really screws with a user interface.

As she continues searching, Morgan doesn't notice...

... but Alyx has begun to PALM THE JELLO SHIV IN HER HAND.

INT. LOCKER ROOM

B.2., seemingly the sneakiest of the bunch, hustles inside.

B.2.
Time for an upgrade.

He finds a locker and TYPES IN A CODE.

The locker SLIDES open. But as it does --

Someone steps into the room behind him.

B.2. turns and sees Isaiah.

They both stare at each other, ready for a fight...

INT. BRIDGE

Morgan keeps working different controls, moving stones around, trying everything she can --

NEAL 2.0
*WARNING. MASSIVE LOSS OF LIFE
 DETECTED. ONLY 3 PEOPLE ON BOARD.*

Just then, a HOLOGRAM forms above a STONE LEVER, reading --

"WARNING! EMERGENCY STOP!"

MORGAN
 There!

But just before she can pull it --

She sees the shiv in Alyx's hand.

Morgan dodges just as the shiv grazes her skin.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
 What are you doing!

ALYX
 I'm done "waiting." Every time we succumb to the wait calculation, things only get worse. We can't risk stopping for yet another one.

MORGAN
 We have to trust them. That's been our mistake -- we always fear them.

ALYX
 Then it's their turn to fear us.

Alyx lunges for Morgan. Morgan raises her arm and deflects the shiv. They STRUGGLE TO BREATHE as Alyx KICKS OUT MORGAN'S KNEE. Morgan stumbles as Alyx makes a move for her throat.

Morgan swings her arm harder and NAILS Alyx SQUARE IN THE JAW. Alyx stumbles back and touches her lip, seeing blood.

Alyx RUSHES Morgan, when --

VA-BOOM!

A SONIC SHOCKWAVE seems to hit Alyx from behind.

She suddenly stops in her tracks.

She CLUTCHES HER CHEST... feeling her heart give out...

... and DROPS DEAD.

NEAL 2.0
WARNING! ONLY 2 PEOPLE ON BOARD.

Standing where Alyx just was is a PERSON IN ONE OF THE THIRD CREW'S ARMORED SUITS holding one of their MYSTERIOUS WEAPONS.

But the armor around their head *RETRACTS*.

And this time, it's not a member of the third crew...

... it's ISAIAH.

Isaiah looks at the gun, impressed.

ISAIAH
 What will they think of next?

MORGAN
 How... how many people have you killed, Isaiah?

ISAIAH
 How many people did Cortes kill? Columbus? We're *explorers*, Morgan. And expansion always has a cost.

Just then, Morgan's arm -- *SWOOOSH!* -- *THUNK!* -- shifts into a GUN SHE CAN SUDDENLY CONTROL. She points it at Isaiah.

He doesn't move -- *willingly putting himself at her mercy.*

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
 Now you're getting it.

The gun starts to WHIRL...

Isaiah doesn't move...

Then --

MORGAN
 I won't play by the old rules.

-- Morgan leaps forward and GRABS THE LEVER.

SHE YANKS IT BACK... AND --

NEAL 2.0
EMERGENCY LOCK STILL IN PLACE.

MORGAN
 What? No!

Isaiah smirks.

ISAIAH
Ouch. So close...

WHAM! --

-- he swings the gun across her face and sends her flying back. He raises the gun. *The kill shot.* When --

TWHIP! --

SOMETHING STABS HIM IN THE SPINE!

He slowly turns to see his assailant --

YURI.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
How...

Isaiah's legs give out and he drops to his knees. He reaches to his back to see what just sliced his spine... and pulls out THE SWISS ARMY KNIFE.

Holding it in his hand, Isaiah COLLAPSES to the floor.

NEAL 2.0
WARNING! ONLY 1 PERSON ON BOARD.

Morgan and Yuri meet eyes.

But... *something about what Neal 2.0. just said...*

MORGAN
You find yourself one of those
"back-ups" or...?

Yuri doesn't answer.

In fact, he has no reaction.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
Only one, huh, Neal...

Her gun defensively WHIRLS to life...

... as Yuri's face is suddenly COMPLETELY BLANK.

Like, no facial features whatsoever.

And very quickly, anything resembling "Yuri" is shed.

Because what now stands in front of Morgan is something NEW --

The **SYNTH PURE** -- full-bodied, sizzling with electrical nanites under flesh-colored, gelatinous exterior. Primordial stew collected, resurrected, and *posture perfected*.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
A stowaway...

The Synth Pure seems to look at the lever Morgan just pulled.
And with it, Morgan realizes --

MORGAN (CONT'D)
You want me to stop it... so you
can board the next ship and make it
to Meliora.

The Synth Pure turns and stares at her.

Its chillingly silence is clearly a *"no shit."*

But in that moment... Morgan finds a deeper resolve. As if a bigger mystery that's haunted her has now been solved.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
I know what you really are now...

The Synth Pure tilts its head at her.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
You're the rat in the engine.

She doesn't wait a second longer --

MORGAN (CONT'D)
But it's time I do my part.

BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM!

-- she empties her entire arm into the Synth.

The Synth begins to weaken and split apart, when --

Her arm *stops* SHOOTING and *starts* BEEPING -- *"RECHARGING..."*

The barrage of gunfire might have momentarily disrupted the Synth, but just like before, it begins to heal itself as "raw synth" spools around it like bees protecting a hive.

Morgan ain't going to wait -- she turns and RUNS.

INT. HALLWAY

Morgan turns a corner and sprints as fast as she can.

MORGAN
Neal! Who's captain now?

NEAL 2.0
YOU ARE.

MORGAN
Activate self-destruct!

The Synth suddenly turns behind her -- now part bi-pedal, part nanobite/insect cloud.

NEAL 2.0
*SELF-DESTRUCT CAN ONLY OCCUR WHEN
THERE IS A CRITICAL ENGINE FAILURE.*

Morgan looks back and sees the Synth gaining.

MORGAN
The engine, huh?

She drops one of the GRENADES she got from Alyx and --
WA-WOOM! -- and a **GRAVITY WELL** CATCHES THE SYNTH INSIDE IT.
Morgan keeps running and turns another corner.

INT. LOCKER ROOM

Morgan enters. She spots a FRESH ARMORED SUIT. She leaps inside it and it AUTOMATICALLY FITS OVER HER BODY.
With it, a **HOLOGRAPHIC MAP OF THE SHIP** FORMS IN HER HELMET.

INT. HALLWAY

The nanites flutter inside the gravity well, trying to poke their way to the edge and escape...

INT. LOWER LEVEL

Morgan follows the map and runs as fast as she can, passing an AIRLOCK. She opens it, *but keeps running down the hallway.*

INT. HALLWAY

The gravity well EVAPORATES. The nanites drop to the floor and instantly RE-FORM INTO THE BI-PEDAL/SWARM MONSTROSITY.

And even though it has no expression... it seems *PISSED.*

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Where the last ship had a beauty to its mechanical design, this one continues to contain an aggressive decor to it that makes every room feel like a battle zone.

And the engine room is no different. Sharp pipes, hostile steam shooting off in every direction, and fires burning in every corner. It feels more like a furnace than an engine.

Morgan runs inside. She keeps moving forward -- *deeper* -- avoiding the fire and exhaust that spits out around her.

She kneels down and begins BURROWING HERSELF INSIDE THE ENGINE. *She goes until she can't go any farther*, nestled in the farthest corner.

Her map blinks in her helmet, notifying her she's on a METAL GRATING with an EMERGENCY HATCH.

But she stays right where she is.

She takes a deep breath, then --

-- the SYNTH ENTERS.

It suddenly and horrifically expands into TENTACLES as it tries to find her, scouring every inch of the engine room...

... until it sees her NESTLED IN THE VERY CORE OF THE ENGINE.

MORGAN

Like I said...

The Synth SUDDENLY BURSTS INTO A DARK WEBBING, *violently expanding* until it INFESTS THE ENTIRE ENGINE. Nanites fester into every piece of metal, wire, and fuel rod.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

... rats in the engine.

And just as it consumes so much the engine that it begins *warping* the metal around Morgan to scald and kill her --

NEAL

CRITICAL ENGINE FAILURE DETECTED!

MORGAN

Neal, activate self-destruct!

NEAL

YES, CAPTAIN. THIRTY SECONDS...

The Synth is now face to face with her.

But Morgan is unafraid of the darkness she once avoided --

MORGAN

It's our world, mother fucker.
You're just living in it.

She KICKS THE HATCH and the grate underneath her RELEASES.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - LOWER LEVEL - CONTINUOUS

Morgan falls down a level and SLAMS into the floor. Wind knocked out of her, no time for pain, she STANDS...

... AND RUNS FOR HER LIFE.

NEAL 2.0

TWENTY-FIVE SECONDS...

As she does...

INT. MYSTERIOUS ROOM

... someone else seems to be dragging themselves into a different room deep inside the ship.

ISAIAH.

Neal 2.0. might have been premature in calling his death.

Isaiah wheezes as he coughs up blood, barely alive. He uses every last ounce of energy to keep shuffling forward...

... until he's in front a CHAIR...

... an oddly-familiar, MEDIEVAL-LOOKING ONE.

Isaiah lifts himself up beside a computer. He taps the controls and the screen lights up -- "*BACK-UP BODY -- READY!*"

Miraculously... the machine COMES TO LIFE.

ISAIAH

The fight is never over.

With the last of his energy, Isaiah plops down in the chair. A hole in the ceiling opens and the METAL HALO lowers around his skull and fastens it in place.

Isaiah grits his teeth. Ready to be reborn.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Morgan continues to run as she turns another corner.

NEAL 2.0
TEN SECONDS...

INT. BACKUP ROOM

A FRESH BACKUP BODY ROTATES OUT OF THE WALL.

But as it starts to rotate into position....

IT JAMS.

But the knife is still working properly...

Isaiah's eyes dart around -- *no one is coming to help him.*

In his final moments, he can only think of one thing to say --

ISAIAH
Fuck it. It's your mess now.

SLICE! -- the knife CUTS HIS HEAD OFF and the halo raises it into the air. But with the back-up body jammed on the tracks... it releases his head and it BOUNCES OFF THE SEAT.

INT. HALLWAY

Morgan REACHES THE AIRLOCK.

NEAL 2.0
THREE... TWO... ONE...

She gets inside --

INT. AIRLOCK

She seals herself in, and just as she pulls the RELEASE --

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM! --

EXT. SPACE

-- the SHIP EXPLODES!

Morgan is blasted out of the airlock.

Debris shoots off in all directions.

A STRING OF SYNTH NANITES PASS RIGHT BY HER -- almost trying to reach out and grab her...

... but like all the other debris from the ship, they slowly just fly right past her...

Until, after a long moment --

Morgan is ALONE IN SPACE.

Adrift and floating amongst the stars.

The debris of the ship gets farther and farther away...

SUIT A.I.
OXYGEN LEVELS... DEPLETED.

BEEEEEEEP.

The interior of her HELMET BLINKS RED.

OUT OF OXYGEN -- AND OUT OF TIME.

She takes her last breath and her eyelids get HEAVY.

And just as they might shut forever --

A BLINDING LIGHT SUDDENLY FLASHES IN FRONT OF HER.

A splash of primordial space dust amid a vortex of darkness.

Bursts of light in the dead of night.

A spectrum of colors the brain can barely process.

When it's finally over...

... A SPACESHIP UNLIKE ANY OTHER IDLES IN FRONT OF HER.

SMASH TO:

INT. NEW SHIP'S INFIRMARY

Morgan peacefully wakes up in a medical bay.

She slowly sits up. And when she does, she sees something familiar beside her -- A CUP OF JELLO.

Standing at the other end is a YOUNG WOMAN.

Before either can say a word --

Morgan leaps out of bed and raises her metallic arm -- shifting it into a gun. *Seems she's got the hang of it.*

MORGAN
Why are you here!

YOUNG WOMAN
What?

MORGAN
Answer the god damn question!

YOUNG WOMAN
To reach Meliora. We were looking for you when we saw the explosion.

MORGAN
And the synth?

A moment, then --

YOUNG WOMAN
Extinct.

Morgan keeps her gun held high.

Finally...

-- SHE LOWERS IT.

And with it, she can't help but start to cry.

EXT. MELIORA - DAY

A sherbet sunrise warms a pair of dueling waterfalls cascading down a flowery meadow. New colors and wondrous plants that seem like something out of a fairy tale.

Meliora is more spectacular and magnificent than *any* location on Earth. This is a planet of pure, untapped potential.

In a word -- *HEAVEN*.

A LANDING VESSEL disembarks from the spaceship high above the planet's crystal-clear atmosphere.

It safely touches down in front of a gorgeous lake.

EXT. LANDING VESSEL - DAY

Waiting on the platform are SEVERAL YOUNG MEMBERS OF THE NEWEST CREW.

They watch as Morgan stands alone at the very tip of the landing platform. Full of life. Healed.

And with just one more step...

... she'd be the first person on Meliora.

Morgan stares out at the vast planet before her.

She takes a breath. The sweetest air.

But instead of walking forward... SHE TURNS AROUND.

She walks back to the Young Woman.

YOUNG WOMAN
Is something wrong?

MORGAN
No. It's just...

She pauses and remembers her father's last words to her --

MORGAN (CONT'D)
I had my time...

Morgan steps aside, allowing the Young Woman to go first.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
What happens next is up to you.

The Young Woman is surprised, knowing the honor Morgan is giving her. But Morgan nods. The Young Woman walks forward.

With a breath of anticipation... she takes the first step onto a new world.

And watching it all with a smile... is Morgan.

Knowing she did her part.

FADE OUT