

B L A D E R U N N E R 2 0 4 9

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FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT

FADE IN ON:

A GREEN EYE

We move towards its pupil.

EXT. SKIES OVER GROUND. DAY.

SOARING OVER

AN INFINITE ARTIFICIAL LANDSCAPE OF SOLAR PANELS AND PLASTIC SHEETING. All dead and abandoned to the dust and wind. Finally giving way to --

EXT. FARMLAND. CALIFORNIA. DAY.

Called farm only generously. The ground dry, inhospitable. A dubious horizon to distinguish the browns that are both Earth and sky. There is no green in sight.

The landscape streaks by in a blur. Nothing to tame our focus until... REVEAL:

A SPINNER

Beaten, scuffed, yet owns the sky like a seagull. It flits RIGHT BY US, as we MOVE INSIDE --

INT. SPINNER.

THE PILOT IS ASLEEP. The Spinner on autopilot. The MAP on the dash is abruptly interrupted by A CHIME.

The pilot wakes. Yawns.

This is K. You'd peg him for 30 if you didn't know better. Refined features, flawless skin. Intelligent eyes that breathe in detail and exhale warmth. Gifted with a grin that masks wry for earnest.

SHAPES begin to coalesce ahead in the distance. Revealing themselves to be PLASTIC GREENHOUSES.

K's eyes go hard at seeing a strange INSTALLATION ahead.

K directs the Spinner towards...

EXT. FARMLAND. CALIFORNIA. DAY.

TRAVELLING WITH THE SPINNER over remains of abandoned greenhouses. PLASTIC DOMES over what were once POOLS.

A windmill stands above it all. Slowly, creakily rotating. Its bent wing hitting the center pole as it strikes 6 o'clock... creakCLACK... creakCLACK... creakCLACK...

The Spinner's SHADOW rolls over the windmill. Approaching --

EXT. FARMHOUSE. DAY.

Cement walls and corrugated tin roof. An old school maybe. Beside it a PLASTIC TENTED POOL.

INT. TENTED POOL. DAY.

Under a translucent dome. A bull of a FARMER stands knee deep in a pool full of sludge, raking a nutrient rich solution. Bio-reactors slowly filtered the fluid into vertical plasmid sacs that feed into LARGE BINS.

The Farmer wears thick protective gear from head to toe. Hood and goggles cover his face. He takes up a handful of NEMATODES, pleased with his crop. Looks up as --

THE SPINNER SOARS OVERHEAD.

The Farmer sets down his rake.

EXT. FARMHOUSE.

The Spinner lands in the open field behind the house, kicking up a PLUME of DUST that briefly obscures it.

A small flitty HOVERCRAFT ejects itself from the back of the Spinner, A PILOTFISH.

K emerges from the dust. Whatever color his coat was, it's brown now. K instructs with the Pilotfish with a gesture. It TAKES OFF.

K approaches the peeling-paint farmhouse. ONE TREE in sight, a giant, DEAD, leafless thing. A ghost of grandiosity, standing only thanks to a brace and wires staked down.

INT. FARMHOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

K crosses creaking floors. Looks around: Kalsomined walls, pitted windows. All old, but clean. Someone takes pride. Basic furniture, an UPRIGHT PIANO. Otherwise EMPTY. No decor, shelves BARE.

K inspects the few items. Sheet music for CHOPIN on the piano. An aquarium in which COWSLIPS grow...

A pot of something fragrant simmers on the stove... K leans into the pot, sniffs deeply, when --

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS come from outside. Rattling the whole house.

K re-lids the pot, as --

EXT. FARMHOUSE. CONTINUOUS.

The Farmer approaches his home. Air HISSES in at the unfastening of his MASK. He eyes the Spinner parked beyond the tree. Sees the Pilotfish hovering above. Pulls a chain. A DECONTAMINATION SHOWER rains over his suit, which he can now unsnap.

This is SAPPER MORTON. Weathered 60s. A well-broken nose. Yet he pulls from his belt satchel a set of dainty glasses.

INT. FARMHOUSE. CONTINUOUS

THE DOOR OPENS. Sapper steps in. The floor creaks under his weight.

He scans the room. Empty. Sapper moves to a sink where he violently scrubs his hands. He does not yet see K.

K leans from a shadow into the light. A stranger, suddenly visible. Briefly ominous. An uncertain moment...

K
(polite)
Hope you don't mind me taking the
liberty. Wind's a bit unkind out there.
I was careful not to track in any dirt.

Sapper eyes K's chummy posture. Dismisses any threat.

SAPPER
I do not mind dirt. I do mind
unannounced visits. You police?

K
Sapper Morton... Civic number NK680514?

SAPPER
I'm a farmer.

K
(genuinely interested)
I saw that. What do you farm?

SAPPER
This is a protein farm. Wallace design.

Sapper fishes a clod off his boot and pulls off a single wriggling WORM.

SAPPER (cont'd)
It only takes the one to start.
Parthenogenic strain. Constant doubling.
They'll fill as much dirt as you can wet.

K
Is that what I smell?

K looks to that inviting pot on the stove. Sapper shakes his head, pleased with himself. Opens a cupboard, where a grow light nourishes PLANTS. A few FLOWERS. And a bottle terrarium full of GREEN SHOOTs.

SAPPER
Grow this just for me. Garlic.

K
Garlic.

He looks. The pot on the stove bubbles and steams.

SAPPER
Whole town farmed it back once. Smelled this good a hundred miles in circle. Try some?

K
No thank you. I prefer to keep a cold stomach until the hard part of the day's behind me. How long you been here?

SAPPER
Since '20. Came by it honest too if that's what you're after.

K
But you weren't a farmer prior.

Sapper cocks his head at the comment. K notes the SATCHEL at his belt.

K (cont'd)
That bag... colonial medical use, isn't it? Military issue. Heat resistant. Where were you... Calantha? Must've been brutal. Not many who survived bothered to come back to ground.

A beat. Sapper's expression *darkens*. He takes off his glasses puts them in his satchel.

SAPPER
Planning on taking me in? Huh? Take a look inside. See what they missed.

REVEAL: Sapper has A SCALPEL from his satchel. Not likely.

K
If taking you in is an option, I'd much prefer that over the alternative.

K puts his gun on the table.

K (cont'd)
You had to know it'd be someone in time.
Sorry it's me.

K stands and retrieves a small SCANNER from his pocket.

SAPPER
Good as any.

K activates the scanner.

K
If you'd look up and to the left please.

The FIGHT is quick and it is fierce:

Sapper stabs towards K's heart. K avoids the blade, only his coat and the wall are pierced by Sapper's knife now stuck deep into the wall. K breaks Sapper's hold on the knife, which skids to the floor.

K DUCKS a heavy fist that sinks into the wall where his head just was. Sapper grabs K by his belt and collar, lifting him into the air and slamming him into the wall over and over -- until K's body GOES THROUGH IT, and --

K crashes onto the floor in the next room.

K recovers quickly, strangely able to withstand the punishment. He sees Sapper charge through the wall to finish the job.

Sapper is on him -- a vice lock around K's throat -- K gasping for air.

K gets out of Sapper's grip, and lashes out in rapid succession, his solar plexus, his chin, his throat, crushing his windpipe. His blows are SURGICAL, anatomically precise, like viper bites.

Sapper is stunned, choking, in pain. K kicks Sappers' knee and the giant drops to the floor like a felled oak tree.

K SNATCHES Sapper's THROAT -- SQUEEZING -- thumb SLIDING UPWARD as -- Sapper GASPS... FLAILS... hand reaching...

For the dropped SCALPEL... GRASPING IT!

HE STABS K in the SHOULDER.

K accepts the wound and the pain. Only squeezes tighter.

Sapper's EYES ROLL BACK -- the desired effect -- REVEALING:
A PINPRICK OF COLOR on the underside of the right EYEBALL.

K draws the SCANNER -- which reads the point like a bar code.
 It confirms Sapper's ID.

K stops holding back -- SNAPS Sapper's remaining good arm --
 grabs his GUN that has fallen on the floor beside the table.

K (cont'd)
 Please don't get up.

Sapper raises up still fighting for air.

SAPPER
 How does it feel, killing your own kind?

K
 I don't retire my own kind. We don't
 run. Only old models run.

SAPPER
 You new models. You're happy scraping
 the shit. *You've never seen a miracle.*

Sapper gives a zealot's grin. Ready to die for a cause only
 he understands. Eager for it. HE RUSHES K.

THE GUN THUNDERS.

HOLD ON THE GUN. So we only HEAR Sapper's body DROP.

K breathes heavy. Checks his wound. Sees his BLOOD on his
 FINGERS.

Blood trickles onto fallen sheet music. Staining Chopin.

K smooths himself back to dignity. Leans over the body.
 Then PAUSES. Crosses the room. Finds a spoon. Hesitates.

Tastes the soup. *Hmmm. Garlic.*

EXT. FARMHOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

K steps out. Looks up at a sliver of sun eking through the
 dense clouds. The Pilotfish is hovering above the farm.

In one hand he holds SAPPER'S GLASSES. In the other he holds
 a small, clear CASE. INSIDE IS SAPPER'S EYE. He staggers
 toward his Spinner. Gestures to the Pilotfish.

K
 Photograph everything.

The Pilotfish rises to take pictures of the farm.

INT. SPINNER.

K taps a button on the dash. An LAPD LOGO comes up.

K
Madam, please.

ON SCREEN comes the perpetually disappointed face of LT. JOSHI. A 50ish woman. Ambitious, officious, impatient. K's backtalk gives fuel to her irritation so she tolerates it. Or maybe she just likes the look of him. More than she should. She sees his BLOODY shoulder.

JOSHI (ON SCREEN)
You're hurt. I'm not paying for that.

K
I'll glue it.

JOSHI (ON SCREEN)
And?

In answer K holds up the CASE with SAPPER'S EYE. The pinprick of his CODE below the cornea. It SCANS. Sapper's SERIAL NUMBER and history open. A NEXUS 8 for the curious.

JOSHI (ON SCREEN) (cont'd)
One of the tail end Nexus 8s before Prohibition. Looks like he could take your head off.

K
He thought about it.

JOSHI (ON SCREEN)
Field medic, standard ocular ID upgrades, open end lifespan, now ended. He went AWOL after Calantha with a few more in his outfit I wouldn't mind closing out. Just him?

MORE NEXUS 8 IDs flit by. All wanting to be retired.

K
Just the one.

JOSHI (ON SCREEN)
Between the retirement and the bleed you'll see a tidy bonus. Less mine.

K
Can I get it today?

JOSHI (ON SCREEN)
 I don't know what you all do with cash in
 pocket anyway. Come on home for your
 baseline.

Something catches K's eye. By that TREE. Low to the ground.
 The smallest pop of YELLOW... against a dirt brown world.

K
 Moment, Madam.

EXT. FARMHOUSE.

He kneels at the foot of the tree to find:

A SINGLE, SLENDER COWSLIP. Left leaning against a root.

K lifts it to his eye. As if moved by its delicacy. He
 considers the long dead tree. Gestures to the Pilotfish --

K
 There. 30 meters to maximum depth.

The Pilotfish begins a spiral over the area.

ON THE SCREEN: An ULTRASOUND of the ground below. Root
 systems. A cracked foundation. And there, buried DEEP under
 the tree... A SMALL SEALED SQUARE FOOTLOCKER.

Joshi sees it in her office as well. Annoyed at more work.

JOSHI (ON SCREEN)
 What is that?

K
 It's down in deep. Send a dig team,
 Madam?

Joshi SIGHS, annoyed.

K (cont'd)
 Should I find a shovel, spare your night?

JOSHI (ON SCREEN)
 (yes, but...)
 You better get back ahead of the storm.

The Pilotfish attaches itself to the spinner as it takes off.

Camera moves toward the tree as we --

CUT TO:

EXT. SKIES ABOVE LOS ANGELES. NIGHT.

LIGHTNING shatters the sky into irregular jigsaw shapes.
Indeed, there is a storm collecting to the north. We are...

SOARING OVER

The breathtaking cityscape skyline of dystopian grime. 30 years older. Sweatier. Sucked of oxygen. If LA then was a giant oil refinery then, now it is industrial bones jutting out of a new city built atop the old. And spread far as the eye can see. What were streets are canyons that cut deep down to the strata below. Who knows how far.

K'S SPINNER

Is a single bulb in the Christmas tree. Part of the SPINNER TRAFFIC that lights up the sky. Now gliding for the city's poorer, uglier center. A seizure of ADVERTISEMENT, interactive and bright. In the distance is a massive structure: THE SEPULVEDA SEAWALL.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Subject: Officer K D6-dash-3-dot-7.
Let's begin. Ready?

K (O.S.)

Yes, Sir.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Recite your baseline.

We see K through his rain streaked windshield as the Spinner banks and begins its descent toward a grey cinder block of a building. RUNNING LIGHTS illuminate a LANDING PAD at the top of the LAPD TOWER / DIVISION 5.

K (O.S.)

"And blood-black nothingness began to spin / A system of cells interlinked within / Cells interlinked within cells interlinked / Within one stem."

INT. POLICE STATION. PROCESSING HALL. NIGHT.

Lifeless architecture. Huge, with worn out plastic features. Call it functional to be nice.

Though it is late it is CROWDED. Bloody-nosed K walks through a chaotic hive of crime processing. CRIMINALS pleading cases at plexi-covered booths... or shouting into passport phone banks...

The HUMAN COPS still manage to get in K's way, sure to remind him of his place and esteem as a Replicant.

COP
Fuck off, Skinjob.

If that bothers K he does not let on.

K (O.S.)
*"And dreadfully distinct / Against the
dark, a tall white fountain played."*

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM. DAY.

A clinical room that was white a decade ago maybe. The INTERVIEWER can be heard but not seen.

The long barrelled LENS of a specialized CAMERA slides back and forth to find its specific focus on K, who sits on a stool. Coat off and on his lap. Dry blood on his cut shirt. He stares ahead at the camera. Compliant and still.

The CAMERA alters its focus accusingly. Locks in.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
(sudden and forceful)
Cells.

K
Cells.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Have you ever been in an institution?
Cells.

K
Cells.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Do they keep you in a cell. Cells.

K
Cells.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
When you are not performing your duties
do they keep you in a little box? Cells.

K
Cells.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Interlinked.

K
Interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
What's it like to hold the hand of
someone you love. Interlinked.

K
Interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Did they teach you how to feel, finger to
finger? Interlinked.

K
Interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Do you long for having your heart
interlinked. Interlinked.

K
Interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Do you dream about being interlinked?
Interlinked.

A moment's hesitation. Then --

K
Interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
What's it like to hold your child in your
arms? Interlinked.

K
Interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Do you feel like there is a part of you
that is missing? Interlinked.

K
Interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Within cells interlinked.

K
Within cells interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Say that three times. Within cells
interlinked.

K
Within cells interlinked. Within cells
interlinked. Within cells interlinked.

A pause, a grinding of unseen machinery, the camera powering down, then --

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
(kindly)
We're done. Constant K. You can pick up
your bonus.

K's eyes look to the eye of the camera.

K
Thank you, Sir.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET.

A POLICE SPINNER glides low overhead. A small ADVERTISEMENT DRONE hovers like an insect, projecting 3D ads in the smoggy atmosphere. A HUGE SNOW MELTING MACHINE moves down the street, clearing the slush. It passes to REVEAL --

K. He pushes past the occlusion of PEOPLE buttoned against the cold. Crosses the windblown street. Gutters heaped with dirty snow as more dirty snow falls. Fat, sooty flakes.

He carries a newly purchased PACKAGE under his arm.

EXT. K'S APARTMENT COMPLEX

A grand, old office building. TILT DOWN the building's facade as K enters...

INT. K'S APARTMENT COMPLEX.

The office building has been hastily and cheaply retrofitted for residential living. DENSELY crowded with FAMILY LIFE.

The many RESIDENTS, too poor or genetically problematic to get Off-World, treat the halls and stairway landings like a dorm commons. An extension of their own homes.

Pungent signs of ethnicity everywhere. Colors, carpets, clothes. As many languages as shades of skin. K gives a nod of acknowledgment to a man smoking in the hall. Is acknowledged back with a stream of foreign epithets that follow him up...

INT. K'S APARTMENT COMPLEX. CONTINUED.

FIND K ON THE STAIRS

Walking up 80 stories. Stiff from the fight. An OLD WOMAN bumps into him, expecting him to get out of her way. No one he passes the least glad to see a Replicant.

INT. HALLWAY.

K crosses the hall. ALL his NEIGHBORS' DOORS are open like market stalls letting in air and letting out CHILDREN. Every home thickly filled, like a hoarder's garage. Some host SHOPS. FOOD STALLS. Every floor like a town square.

K walks past and to his apartment. A BOY, brown-faced, missing an ear, looking up at K, with curiosity and fear.

K opens the lock. Disappears inside. The only one to close his door, which is tagged with a GRAFFITI: "FUCK OFF SKINNER."

EXT. K'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

PUSH IN ON K'S WINDOW, as a LIGHT turns on within...

INT. K'S APARTMENT.

A sparsely adorned space in clear contrast to his neighbors. No pretense of cultural heritage. A simple chair. On its arm a valueless paperback novel, well-thumbed, noted, creased. Nabokov's maddening "PALE FIRE" as it happens, not that we make a thing of it.

K walks in with his package, trying to be discreet, he hides it as...

He turns on a CONSOLE. Perhaps a MUSIC PLAYER, which spins a SINATRA song, "*Summer Winds.*"

K takes off his coat. Seems more annoyed at the scalpel tear in the fabric than the shoulder wound he sustained under it.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

K! I didn't hear you. You're early!

K

You want me to come back?

JOI (O.S.)

(a laugh)

Go scrub.

Just hearing it helps take away the pain. K relaxes into this normal domestic scene.

INT. SHOWER.

K washes off the day's dust and blood. Jets shower. Five seconds of water.

INT. BATHROOM.

K at a mirror eyes his shoulder WOUND.

JOI (O.S.)
How was your meeting?

He squeezes the contents of a thin nosed TUBE onto it. Platelet jelly. The skin rebonds. Gluing it after all.

K
The usual. How was your day?

JOI (O.S.)
I'm getting cabin fever.

INT. KITCHEN.

K cooks in a corridor kitchen that looks like one we would find in a very old space station. He cooks with dexterity, trying to be light, as he makes a prefab meal.

K
I had an accident at work. Think I ruined my shirt.

JOI (O.S.)
I'm sure I can fix that for you. Let me take a look at it.

K
You want a drink first? I need a drink.

JOI (O.S.)
Mmm-hmm. Pour me one, will you.

INT. K'S APARTMENT.

K crosses in, pours two drinks. Sits on a chair in the middle of the living room. Neighbors at the window, a couple, on the other side of the street. Ordinary life.

JOI (O.S.)
I'm trying a new recipe. I think you'll like it.

K
Don't fuss.

JOI (O.S.)
Too late. I hope it isn't dry.

K plays at indignation but is glad for her thoughtfulness.
K's life is not lonely and that is something in this world.

K drinks the two drinks poured, sits to eat the meal he made.

JOI (O.S.) (cont'd)
Did you know this song was released in
1966 on Reprise Records? It was number 1
on the charts... Won't be much longer.
Finishing touches.

He opens a CASE. Inside: Five cigarettes. A commodity. He
sets ONE onto an ashtray.

We hear CUTLERY gather. We hear FOOTSTEPS.

JOI (O.S.) (cont'd)
Ok, ready! I think you'll like it.

K
I told you not to fuss.

JOI (O.S.)
And yet.

REVEAL: JOI.

Not a real woman at all. A digital companion. PROJECTED from
a hard line CONSOLE unit mounted on tracks along the ceiling,
and restricting her existence to this space. Goddess,
girlfriend, geisha and, right now, goddamn bombshell.
Ingenuously real in every way except the one that counts.

She holds a plate of steak frites. Not real of course. An
illusion of satisfaction. Just like Joi in her APRON over a
sweater set and pearls. Waiting for him with dinner on the
table and drink in hand like a cartoon 60s housewife.

(NOTE: *Joi cannot interact with physical objects. Any
"object" she manipulates is a holo representation, like her.
Nor does she move when unobserved by K; when he turns away
for any length of time she shifts into idle animations.*)

JOI (cont'd)
Voila. Bon appetit.

She sets the plate atop his sad prefab bowl of actual food.
Kisses him on the cheek.

CLOSE ON: HIS SKIN. Brushed by the butterfly kiss of her
cloud. Palpable but not tangible.

JOI (cont'd)
I missed you, babysweet.

K
Honey, it's beautiful.

JOI
Just put your feet up. Relax.

K is moved by the gesture. He puts the cigarette to his lips. Joi leans in close. Puts up a finger... *Juuuust* teasingly touching the tip of the cigarette... until... a tiny STATIC SPARK ignites an ember.

He draws, and his cigarette lights. He blows the smoke into Joi, making her hologram all the more dense and real.

They look at each other. Joi studies him. She looks to the shelf. Notes Sapper's glasses.

JOI (cont'd)
Was a day, huh?

K
(heavy)
It was a day.

Her form seamlessly reverts back to her lissome baseline. *Companionate, respectable, smart.* The way he likes her. She "picks up" his copy of "Pale Fire," hoping to cheer him up.

JOI
Would you read to me. I'm dying to know what happens next.

K
You hate that book.

K smiles. She throws the book behind her back. The book disappears as it flies.

JOI
I don't want to read either. Let's dance.

She straightens. Arm up to receive his and be led, wearing now a beautiful dress. And with that Joi wins. K has no choice but to put his day behind him.

JOI (cont'd)
You wanna dance, or you wanna open your present?

JOI (cont'd)
A present?

Joi looks elated.

JOI (cont'd)
What's the occasion?

K
Our anniversary.

JOI
Is it?

K smiles. Of course not.

He opens the box on... A DIGITAL DEVICE, size of a King Size Snickers. Joi visibly brightens with excitement.

K
Happy Anniversary.

JOI
An emanator.

K
We don't need a hard line anymore. Try it on.

K presses the console. Joi hesitates only a moment then...
FADES AWAY.

A RESTART CHIME. A LOGO floats off the emanator: A SPHERE, surrounded by smaller spheres in orbit. WALLACE CORP, E&C.

K taps the emanator and, with a CHIME... Joi comes back online. THE EMANATOR conjures her even more realistically in every way. She moves about, her image unbroken as it was when projected from the hard line. She TWIRLS about, the pleats in the new dress conjured for the effect billow out. She loves it.

JOI
Oh thank you thank you *thank you!*

K
You can go anywhere in the world. What do you want to see first?

Joi considers, eyes sparkling with an idea. And we...

EXT. ROOFTOP. STORMING. NIGHT.

ON JOI. Rapt, eyes fixed on the gorgeous fractal skyline. The rain passes through her projection. In a well-programmed nod to physics her clothes get "wet," stick to her skin.

LIGHTNING FIRES ABOVE. Joi does not flinch. Only flickers.

K raises his coat to cover the rain. Joi stays his hand.

JOI
Stay like this. The light catches your skin. You look like me. If you're not too cold...

He's not. Stays wet.

JOI (cont'd)
I'm so happy when I'm with you.

K
You don't have to say that.

Joi "takes" his hand. Static heightened by the conductive water clinging to his skin. She leads his hand to her waist. As if to dance.

She leans in close to his neck. Her exhaled "breath" tickles his lips. A smoky wet dream. He kisses her. She looks deep in his eyes. K kisses her neck, slowly... not breaking the illusion... The moment intensifies-- her breath escaping --

HER IMAGE GOES STATIC --

THEN FREEZES -- her face in a rictus of ecstasy, gorgeous in motion but the single frame out of context appears vulgar.

Joi's face replaced by AN EMERGENCY PAGE. "VOICE MESSAGE. IMMEDIATE RESPONSE REQUIRED." The POLICE LOGO. His time is entirely owned. The message plays:

JOSHI (V.O.)
Your dig came through... Get down here.

K looks at Joi, their moment ruined. A chime from the emanator and she is gone.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE. POLICE STATION. MOMENTS LATER.

ON A MACHINE. MOVING OVER A SKELETON ON AN EXAMINATION TABLE. Bones clean. Half assembled, half still in a 2X2X2 footlocker. A thick BRAID of HAIR CURLED beside it. An AUTOPSY is visible taking place in an adjacent room as --

A TECHNICIAN takes out the remaining bones one by one, and unwraps them -- *as each has been individually wrapped in cotton rags with ritualistic care.* A small bag contains the full set of teeth, which the Technician sets under a scanner.

A pug COP, NANDEZ, enjoys the show. A bigot with a mouth certain whatever comes out of it is funny. Recognizable as human as all humans stuck on Earth seem to be.

NANDEZ

Your box is a military footlocker issued to Sapper Morton, creatively repurposed as an ossuary. Box of bones, meticulously cleaned and laid to rest about 30 years gone. Nothing else in it but hair. She's pre-Blackout so DeNabase doesn't give an ID.

K

She?

JOSHI

Even better. She plus one.

NANDEZ

Cause of death, Coco --

An awkward MORGUE TECH, COCO, joins. Means well but prone to nervous giggles. One of few who treats K with respect. Coco throws a SIM SCAN upscreen: Showing the bones REASSEMBLED.

COCO

No breaks, hi K, no signs of trauma... except...

The PELVIS centers. A FRACTURE. Similar pattern to the heat lighting. K ignores the holo, checks the actual bones, as --

COCO (cont'd)

Fracture through the ilium. Narrow birth canal, baby probably got stuck. The bone should re-bond if you live long enough... she didn't.

JOSHI

She was pregnant.

K

So he didn't kill her.

COCO

She died in childbirth. Guess she wasn't meant for motherhood.

K continues looking at the bones after Coco moves on. *He sees something on the pelvis.* Throws it upscreen. Enlarges the image until SCRAPES ALONG THE BONE are visible. Taps it.

K
Go back. Closer. Closer. That. What's that?

COCO
Notching on the iliac crest. Fine point, like a scalpel. Looks like an emergency c-section... Cuts are clean. No sign of struggle.

K
He was a combat medic. Maybe he tried to save her. Just didn't.

Joshi considers. Eye to Coco. *Is he right?*

Coco checks the image. Whistles, goofily impressed.

NANDEZ
He didn't seem like the saving type.

COCO
He took the time to bury her. A sentimental skinjob.
(off K, realizes the insult)
Sorry.

JOSHI
Didn't seem the Daddy type either. So where's the kid? You scan the whole field?

NANDEZ
Just dirt and worms. No other bodies.

COCO
Maybe he ate it.

K steps away. Picks up the thick BRAID. Considers it. Looks at the COWSLIP in an evidence bag. Stares at it.

He lifts the bone. The fractured ilium. Instinct engaged again. He puts it back upscreen.

WE CLOSE IN further and further on the sample. Down to cellular level. A FORM coming into focus.

ON K. AS HE SEES IT. EXPRESSION CHANGING.

K motions for Joshi to look. She sees his face, looks. Beat.

ON JOSHI. As we see what she does on the SCREEN:

LETTERS AND NUMBERS ETCHED ON A CELL. A SERIAL NUMBER.

K and Joshi look at each other facing incontrovertible truth.

INT. JOSHI'S OFFICE. MOMENTS LATER.

Evercalm Joshi pours herself a drink. A safeguard on that calm. She picks up her drink with a shaking hand. Finally --

JOSHI

That's not possible. She was -- a
Replicant. Pregnant. It was pregnant.

She quiets with the alcohol burn.

Stares out. Seeing too many steps ahead. Into darkness.
She sets her glass down with finality. Finally looks to K,
firm, declaring:

JOSHI (cont'd)

(firm)

The world's built on a wall that
separates kind. Tell either side there's
no wall -- you bought a war -- or a
slaughter.

(and then)

So what you saw. Didn't. Happen.

K

Yes Madam.

JOSHI

What isn't possible can't be.

K

Yes Madam.

JOSHI

There's an order to things. This turns
it. That's what we do here, we keep
order.

K catches on. What Joshi is asking.

K

You want it gone?

JOSHI

Everything.

K

Even the child.

JOSHI

We have to break the mold. All trace.
Numbers, incepts. Erase. Everything.

Silence. Joshi scans K.

JOSHI (cont'd)

You have something to say?

K

I've never retired something born.

JOSHI

What's the difference?

K

To be born is to have a soul.

JOSHI

You telling me no?

K

(polite)

I wasn't aware I had a choice.

JOSHI

Attaboy.

Just before leaving the room...

JOSHI (cont'd)

Hey. You're getting on fine without one.

K

What's that Madam?

JOSHI

A soul.

INT. K'S SPINNER. DAY.

ON AN AD SPIRE as an AD PLAYS... FOR THE JOI DIJI. A sexed-up crass version winks at us. A MALE MODEL (DIJI BOI) also available. The jingle and copy come with the WALLACE LOGO:

"Whatever you want to see. Whatever you want to hear. Joi."

K's SPINNER flies by.

INT. K'S SPINNER. DAY.

ON K through the SPINNER WINDOW, which reflects the riot of COLORFUL ADVERTISEMENTS. The city glisters below as K'S SPINNER soars toward...

The DARK abandoned structures of THE TYRELL CORPORATION PYRAMIDS... now overshadowed by THREE GIGANTIC BLADE SHAPED BUILDINGS: THE WALLACE TOWERS. Soaring clean lines in a craggy, sooted city.

EXT. WALLACE TOWER.

K's Spinner approaches the foot of the great TOWERS.

INT. LOBBY. WALLACE CORP. DAY.

A huge, wide open space made of sandstone and lit by artificial sun beams. Doesn't look like the lobby of a corporation, but the interior of a Nabataean Tomb.

A GREETER meets K and escorts him to --

INT. ENTRY. RECORDS LIBRARY. DAY.

A dead end corridor. GREETER goes away in the dark.

Leaving K standing before a too-chatty FILE CLERK. File Clerk's booth looks like a bunker.

K
Checking on an old serial number.

FILE CLERK
You have anything else? You have confirmation DNA?

K
I have hair.

K sets the braid on a case. Clerk SCANS IT. A SERIAL NUMBER APPEARS ON THE MONITOR.

ON HIS MONITOR: AUTOCAPTURING THE SERIAL NUMBER. This as --

FILE CLERK
An old one. Pre-Blackout, this is gonna be tough. Not much from then and what's there is thick milky.

ON THE MONITOR: The autocapture SENDS, and --

INT. LUV'S OFFICE. THAT MOMENT.

A WOMAN'S HAND reaches for a small, delicate TEAPOT. Which she tilts and pours into a small, delicate teacup. She sits at a desk made of wood in a world without trees. REVEAL:

LUV. Polite, efficient. Perfect. Moral as a tornado and about as safe. Beautiful, yes. The way a sword can be if it's safely behind glass.

Luv sits in a formal business meeting pose across ANOTHER WOMAN who sips tea across from her. A HOLO PROJECTION of someone off-world.

LUV

You can customize them as much as you'd like. *"As human as you want them to be."* But the Placers is strictly a drill site, isn't it? Off-world mining rock wants a strong back and an utter lack of self-sufficiency, I wouldn't waste your money on intelligence or attachment or appeal. Unless you'd like to add some pleasure models to your order?

A LIGHT BLINKS in Luv's earpiece. Some information received. A pause as she reacts to it. Sets down her cup.

LUV (cont'd)

Excuse me a moment.

She moves behind her desk. And sees the same AUTOCAPTURE on her screen. Off Luv...

INT. RECORDS LIBRARY. THAT MOMENT.

Deep in the library's belly, K walks with Clerk passing hundreds of ROWS OF DRAWERS.

FILE CLERK

Everyone remembers where they were at the Blackout. You?

K

Before my time.

FILE CLERK

Home with my folks, terrified -- ten days of darkness, every machine stopped cold. When the lights came back we were wiped clean as any. Photos, files, every bit of data -- gone. Bank records too, didn't mind that, couldn't prove our loan and had to give us the house outright...

Clerk locates and opens a drawer. Inside, neatly stacked, are thousands of thin, translucent CARDS. Clerk fingers through them, nostalgic while searching.

FILE CLERK (ON SCREEN) (cont'd)

Funny how only paper lasts. We had everything on drives. My mom still cries over the lost baby pictures.

K
Shame. You must've been adorable.

Clerk misses the joke. Surprised to find something:

FILE CLERK
Here. Pretty fractured, not much on it.
One of the last gens pre-Prohibition.
B's across the board, standard issue.
Made by Tyrell.

K
And?

FILE CLERK
No remarks. Unremarkable.

K
Unremarkable. That's all you know.

FILE CLERK
(off the braid)
Brown hair.

A VOICE from OS interrupts --

LUV (O.S.)
There must be something else we can find
for him.

K turns to see: LUV.

Clerk's sphincter tightens at her arrival. Backs away.

Luv comes toward K. Hands tucked. Suit sensible. Every
aspect immaculate. The flawless representative.

LUV (cont'd)
Another prodigal serial number returns.
A 30 year old open case finally closed is
a curiosity and relief. Thank you,
Officer. I'm here for Mr. Wallace.
(hand out)
I'm Luv.

K
He named you. You must be special.

He steals a once over, understanding. She gives an
unembarrassed nod of confession.

LUV
I'm here for Mr. Wallace.

INT. NEXUS RELIQUARY HALL. MOMENTS LATER.

Luv leads K down stairs, lined with DISPLAY CASES. Each containing an outmoded model REPLICANT. DEAD and suspended in a clear preservative liquid. An historical record of their kind. Luv scarcely registers them, spinning the corporate thread --

LUV

The ancient models give the entire endeavor a bad name.

She touches under her eye, where the pinprick is, winks.

LUV (cont'd)

What a gift, don't you think? From Mr. Wallace to the world. The outer colonies would never have flourished had he not bought Tyrell, revived the technology. To say the least of what we do.

INT. SMALL BASEMENT CORRIDOR.

K and Luv walking in a small basement corridor. A chime comes out of K's pocket: his emanator.

LUV

I see you are also a customer. Are you satisfied with our product?

K

She's very realistic.

Luv leads him toward a HEAVY DOOR.

LUV

Here -- all the junk is in here. Lucky for you Mr. Wallace is a data hoarder. A shard in the right shape can be a gem.

She leans into a FACIAL RECOGNITION SCAN. It unlatches -- but stops before opening. STUCK. A nuisance.

LUV (cont'd)

No one's been down here in ages.

Without a break in stride she PRIES into the door seam with her FINGERS to OPEN it. A show of tremendous force. Perhaps deliberate. *After you...*

INT. MEMORY VAULT.

Subzero temperatures preserve the data stored within and turns breath into smoke. Luv opens A WIDE, FLAT METAL DRAWER, one of DOZENS.

FILLED WITH THOUSANDS OF GLASSY SPHERES. Like eyes milky with cataracts. She pulls on gloves before handling them.

LUV

All our memory bearings from the time.
All fairly well damaged in the Blackout.

She locates and inspects one of them. Particularly cloudy.

LUV (cont'd)

But there are sometimes fragments.

She sets it into a PLAYER device. The bearing SPINS in the player... FIRES UP.

A title on the record: VOIGHT-KAMPFF TEST NOVEMBER 2019
OFFICER RICK DECKARD / SUBJECT # N6RRP40619.

Up comes A EXTREME-CLOSE IMAGE OF...

AN EYE

LARGE. LOVELY. A rich green we so far haven't seen in the film. AN OLD VOIGHT-KAMPFF RECORDING. The eye BLINKS.

Over it comes a JUMBLE OF VOICES, falling in and out, incomplete audio. *YET ALL HAUNTINGLY FAMILIAR.*

ON K. WATCHING, AS --

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

*Have a little boy--butterfly
collection plus the killing--*

--I'd take him to the doctor--

*--Feel a wasp crawling on
your wrist--*

*--I should be enough for him--
this testing whether I'm a
replicant or a lesbian--*

--Just answer the question--

The IMAGE BREAKS OFF. REPEATS again in a LOOP. The eye BLINKS, the voices come. A ghost fragment of an indelible moment. Too brief. IT PLAYS OVER AND OVER AGAIN as --

LUV (cont'd)

It was unclear what she was, at least to someone. This was a test. We were difficult to spot then.

She looks to that stunning EYE.

LUV (cont'd)

Was there anything unusual about how you found her? To warrant an official investigation?

K
 (a smile)
 Like you say, old serial numbers.
 Everyone sleeps better if we know where
 they got to.

LUV
 So long ago... does it matter?

K takes in the replaying RECORDING. An instinct about it.

K
 She seems to like him.

LUV
 Who?

K
 The policeman. Deckard. She's trying to
 provoke him. Get a reaction.

LUV
 (watching)
 It is invigorating being asked personal
 questions. Makes one feel -- desired.
 (to him, a grin)
 Do you enjoy your work, Officer?

Did she just ask him a personal question? A beat.

K
 Please thank Mr. Wallace for your time.

LUV
 Apologies to have paved a dead end road.
 If there's anything at all else I can do.

She grins invitingly, and we --

CUT TO:

INT. HOME FOR THE ELDERLY. DAY ROOM. DAY.

K sits at a table, in front of a man, GAFF mid 70's. An old woman is seated beside them, in a wheelchair. Gaff is wearing kind of hospital whites with an official ID tag: STAFF. He folds something in his hands.

GAFF
 Deckard liked to work alone. So did I. We
 worked together to keep it that way. That
 was it.

K
 Anything else can you tell me?

GAFF
He wasn't long for this world.

K
How's so.

Gaff looks K in the eye.

GAFF
Something in the eyes.

K
Do you know how I can contact him?

Gaff chuckles.

GAFF
No. He's retired.

K
What happened?

GAFF
He probably got what he wanted.

K
What's that?

Gaff folded a delicate flower that he offers to the old lady.

GAFF
To be alone.

EXT. MARKET. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: A VENDING MACHINE. An animated version of a soju bottle rotates on a SCREEN next to a thousand other beverage choices similarly rotating. A THUMB presses and...

The soju is dispensed below. A CUSTOMER takes it. REVEAL:

THE MARKET. Subdivided by STALLS and STATIONS and SHOPS, all under BRIGHT LIGHTS. The ECLECTIC CROWD OF CUSTOMERS in a crush to purchase food and drink. And entertainments. Particularly outside...

EXT. BIBI'S BAR. NIGHT.

An unabashed sex den. PATRONS enter to taste and experience with no more shame than they would the vending machines.

IN THE DOORWAY -- A PATRON flirts with his crassly customized JOI diji, both ignoring the DOXIES hustling to earn a living. As some do, as evidenced by the SHADOWS OF COUPLES WRITHING on the plexi front windows.

A WOMAN approaches the bar, commanding the doxies' respect. Their HANDLER. Still strong 60, looks like she did her doxie time before turning management. Handler wears LARGE DARK GLASSES over her eyes. She spots something of interest in --

EXT. MARKET. UNDER CANOPY.

K IS AT A HIGH TOP TABLE. Grabbing a beer and quick meal of ramen with others doing the same. He studies PHOTOS from Sapper's farm.

Handler signals to a TRIO OF DOXIES, including an alluring, hard core PUNK DOXIE. A nod in K's direction.

The THREE DOXIES cross the market to approach K. Flank him at his table, studying the PHOTOS: *The FARM. The BONES. Dead SAPPER MORTON.*

DOXIE #2

Hello hello A-Boy... You alone ?

DOXIE #3 recognizes him. TELLS THE OTHERS, DISGUSTED.

DOXIE #3

(in FINNISH, UNTRANSLATED)

Leave him, he is a fucking Blade Runner... I've seen him. This guy is dangerous. You coming?

MARIETTE

It's ok... I'm good.

She and the second back off, put off. Punk Doxie (MARIETTE) doesn't seem to mind. She gives her most inviting grin. But K's not interested.

MARIETTE (cont'd)

Buy a lady a cigarette?

(off his silence)

You don't even smile.

K

It only encourages. I'm working.

MARIETTE

You're drinking.

K

One helps the other. You heard your friends. You know what I am.

MARIETTE

Yes. A guy eating noodles.

She sits next to him anyway. She eyes his PHOTOS, trying to make conversation. She sees the IMAGE OF THE HUGE TREE on the farm.

MARIETTE (cont'd)
What's that?

K
A tree.

MARIETTE
(looks again, genuinely taken)
A tree? I've never seen a tree. It's pretty.

K
It's dead.

MARIETTE
Who keeps a dead tree?

K
Someone dead.
(K looks around)
I'm surprised you're talking to me.

MARIETTE
(flirtatious)
Why? You're not going to kill me are you?

K
Depends. What's your model number?

MARIETTE
Why don't you take a look under my eye and find out...

A CHIME from the emanator in his pocket. He turns it off. Mariette takes the hint.

MARIETTE (cont'd)
What's the matter, don't like real girls?

K has a good comeback in the chamber, but lets her get the last word for her benefit and to give her a good exit.

Alone again, K drinks. Looks again at the photo of THE TREE. Considers it. Traces its dry, empty branches with a finger.

K
Who keeps a dead tree?...

CUT TO:

THE TREE ITSELF. We are --

EXT. SAPPER'S FARMHOUSE. DAWN.

Evidence of the dig nearby.

EXT. FARMHOUSE. DAWN.

K moves inside the house, scanning. Sees the Chopin's music sheet on the floor, stained with blood.

K tries a few notes. One of the note has no sound, only a felt hammer tapping wood.

He opens the top of the piano. SOMETHING IS HIDDEN INSIDE:

A TOBACCO TIN. HE OPENS IT. Inside is --

AN OLD PHOTO. OF A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN. A BABY IN HER ARMS. The great tree alive and IN BLOOM behind her.

K pockets the photo. Checks the tin. The photo was covering something else.

K picks it up. Holds it to the light. Eyes gleaming:

A BABY'S SOCK

EXT. FARMHOUSE. DAWN.

K stands in front of the farmhouse, by the tree. Sees a SINGLE NEMATODE crawling along the cold dirt. Picks it up. Watches it wriggle. He sets it down to continue its journey. *"It only takes the one."*

K sees something carved on one of the tree's roots, hidden by dirt and sand. REVEAL:

A DATE: CARVED ON THE ROOT. Like a grave marker. 6/10/21

ANGLE OVER THE TREE LOOKING DOWN AT K. Kneeling beside it.

ON K. Stricken by what he sees. He traces the date with his finger. As if to prove it's real -- stands suddenly.

K moves determinedly towards his Spinner, at which we REVEAL:

THE FARMHOUSE IS ON FIRE. BURNING TO THE GROUND.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRS. WALLACE TOWER. DAY.

FOLLOW LUV

As she climbs a set of marble stairs, to reach...

INT. PRIVATE OFFICE. WALLACE TOWER. DAY.

Like a meditation garden. Or a temple. A dim room lit by spears of artificial sunlight. A great fish-filled POND owns the floor but for the square stone islands, a school of koi.

Luv steps over the stone path across the pond to the far end, by an arrangement of decadent chairs. There is a nervous clip to her voice.

LUV

You wanted to review the new model, Sir.
Before shipment. The remote telomerics
implemented, for home renewal.

A VOICE ECHOES in reply, coming from everywhere.

NIANDER WALLACE (O.S.)

Do you come bearing gifts?

Luv pauses. Asked what she hoped would not be.

LUV

Not yet, Sir.

A little black drone like a BARRACUDA moves from the darkness towards Luv.

NIANDER WALLACE (O.S.)

An Angel should never enter the hut
without a gift. Or news. Can you at
least pronounce a child is born?

Luv stops, says nothing. Hating to disappoint him.

A pause. Then the Barracuda moves past Luv. It joins...

A SMALL CLUSTER of BARRACUDAS that float toward Luv in the LIT center of the room. They undulate in watery formation at eye level like Medusa would ask of her snakes, to precede --

NIANDER WALLACE

Shadow shrouded. Commanding in his silences, which are few. Older, yet at the height of powers that still increase as if by magic. Only when he steps into the LIGHT do we see --

WALLACE IS BLIND. The probes act as his eyes.

NIANDER WALLACE (cont'd)

The new model. Let us see then.

CUT TO:

INT. CRECHE.

A dark room dominated by a cascading PLASTIC SHEET. The sheeting rises, slowly, to unveil --

A NUDE FEMALE REPLICANT. Fully formed. Suspended in repose. Covered in viscous liquid, like honey.

The Replicant collapses to the ground.

Something happens when she is exposed to the cold air: She WAKES. AN INCEPT.

A first breath. Consciousness coming on anew. A first flutter of the eyes. A slow realization of light. Of cold.

OF WALLACE STARING AT HER.

Wallace's hand touches her face. Turns it. Caresses it. "Seeing" her with his fingers.

The Replicant Model bristles in mute terror of a world she cannot understand. Shivering. Cold and fear commingled.

NIANDER WALLACE

The first thought tends to fear. To preserve the clay. Fascinating. Before we even know what we are, we fear to lose it. Happy birthday.

INT. CRECHE. MOMENTS LATER.

Wallace now sits on a small Japanese stool, cleaning his hands with a cloth.

The new Replicant sits in front of him, wrapped in a sheet.

NIANDER WALLACE

Now let's have a look at you.

Wallace's fingers feel for a TRAY of INSTRUMENTS. He clasps A BLADE.

Luv holds back. Knows better than to help without asked as he begins his examination.

NIANDER WALLACE (cont'd)

Bring the one for micronics, would you, luv.

Ah, "luv." A diminutive. Not a name at all, though taken for one. Luv brings a small wooden box. INSIDE THE box are several small DEVICES, the size of LEGO bricks: HALOS. Each with electrodes on the inside. Luv selects one of them.

She comes with the HALO -- which attaches with a practiced motion neatly into a FLASH SHOE on the back of Wallace's head at the lambdoidal suture.

The electrodes fit into wetware receivers within and... the device glows to match the new light in the Barracudas' eyes, enabled.

Luv's hands shake as she closes the box. Beyond respect, she lives in perpetual awe of him.

A formation of BARRACUDAS come around Wallace... Then moves toward the Replicant model predatorily.

CUT TO:

INT. CRECHE. MOMENTS LATER.

The Replicant model stands in front of Wallace, still sitting on his stool. He "sees" her with the flying probes, which move over her, inspecting her like chattel. Up and down. Her hands. Mouth.

NIANDER WALLACE

We make Angels. In service of Civilization. There were bad angels once... I make good angels now. Like you, luv. God saw a bad batch and, rash and cranky, scrapped the whole project. We are not so short sighted. Just because some fell...

A scalpel blade dances in his fingers.

NIANDER WALLACE (cont'd)

Now look. I brought back the Angels and took us to nine new worlds.

(disdainful)

Nine. A child can count to nine on fingers. We should own the stars.

LUV

Yes, Sir.

Wallace stands, walks toward the Model.

NIANDER WALLACE

We were meant to reach beyond the firmament. We should read our books by the light of a thousand different stars. Every one a home. Till we lose count. That's the future of the species if there's to be one. We simply need more Angels to carry us aloft.

LUV

Sir.

He runs the SCALPEL'S dull edge under the Model's CHIN to raise it. Stills her when she again shivers.

NIANDER WALLACE

Every leap of civilization was built off the back of a disposable workforce. We lost our stomach for slaves. Unless... engineered. And I can only make so many.

He runs the dull edge along the entire length of the Model.

NIANDER WALLACE (cont'd)

To make this I have to build from whole cloth. Bit by bit and at great expense. Shameful inefficiency, built into Tyrell's template. Tyrell.

He touches the Model's abdomen at the navel.

NIANDER WALLACE (cont'd)

That barren pasture, empty and salted. Right there. The dead space between the stars. *This the seat that we must change for Heav'n.*

With a swift motion he CUTS the Model across the ABDOMEN. She stands for an uneasy moment as he continues:

NIANDER WALLACE (cont'd)

I cannot breed them. I have tried, so help me. Tyrell's final puzzle in adamantine chains and penal Fire.

He drops the scalpel.

NIANDER WALLACE (cont'd)

We need more Replicants than can ever be assembled. *Millions so we can be trillions.* More. Worlds beyond worlds, diamond shores. We could storm Eden and retake her...

THE MODEL COLLAPSES.

NIANDER WALLACE (cont'd)

His last trick. Procreation. Perfected... then lost. There is a child. Finally unearthed. Bring it to me. Bring it to me. Bring it to me.

ON LUV: An eye waters at the thought of disappointing him.

LUV

Sir.

He reaches behind his head, removes the HALO. Preferring the darkness.

NIANDER WALLACE

The best Angel of all. Aren't you, luv?

ON LUV: Her jaw sets. She will not disappoint Mr. Wallace.

PRELAP: FOOTSTEPS, CLACKING, ECHOING down a hall --

INT. POLICE STATION. DAY.

Lines of grubby CRIMINALS await their turn at processing booths. Crowded enough one pisses against a wall in his handcuffs and none of the low-watt cops notice him -- or --

LUV

She crosses the chaotic hall unnoticed, determined. She will not disappoint.

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE. HALLWAY. DAY.

WITH COCO: Entering...

INT. MORGUE. DAY.

He finds LUV casually packing the BONES back into a satchel. Confused by her calm.

COCO

Hi. Wait -- you can't take those.

She pauses, briefly annoyed. Then brings a wide, inviting smile.

LUV

Of course not. Proper channels and paperwork. It's all here. Hold this for me?

She hands him a femur and, with her hand free --

Her fist JABS his back -- INSTANTLY PULVERIZING HIS C6 --

ON THE FLOOR. As Coco crumples. Twitches disturbingly.

ON LUV. Going back to taking what she needs as Coco dies noisily at her feet. A bullet would've been slower. PRELAP: A LONG ZIPPER, CLOSING UP --

INT. MORGUE. NIGHT.

-- OVER COCO'S FACE. A BODY BAG. Enclosing him. A smudge of blood on his still cheek the last thing we see.

ON Joshi. Watching it happen. Knows why it's happening.

CUT TO:

INT. K'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

K stares at A PHOTO: The DATE carved in the tree. Something about it haunts him. Just then --

A KNOCK at his door. Surprising. He doesn't get visitors. He opens the door to find --

JOSHI. Unusual visit. Nothing friendly about it either. She steps in, keeps her coat on. Hands in pockets.

JOSHI

Your lady friend about?

K

Madam.

Joshi looks around anyway, fear masquerading as caution. She checks the hard line, THE CEILING TRACK PROJECTOR. Turns OFF the power to it definitively.

JOSHI

Coco is dead. Bones are gone. It's out. Already out. How long'd that take? Someone's on your tail. A someone willing to kill. Care to make any wagers?

K

I could lay odds.

K says nothing more. Knows Joshi is pissed. Maybe scared.

JOSHI

I can feel the breath on my neck. They are coming after this. They've got every gun in the city if they want it. I've got you... So what do you have for me? And don't say nothing.

A pause. Then K points to the table. *The sock*.

JOSHI (cont'd)

A sock. Where did you find it?

K
Sapper's. There was a baby there. Long
enough to wear that.

They both look at the sock and feel the weight of that
discovery.

K (cont'd)
(recalling Sapper)
"Never seen a miracle..."

JOSHI
So what does he do with his miracle?
Anything else?

K
I burned everything else.

Joshi considers. Sees that PHOTO K lingered over. Of the
tree. The DATE CARVED in it.

JOSHI
What about this? 6/10/21. What's that?
A birthday? A death day?

K
I don't know yet.

Joshi stares hard. K looks away. Beat.

JOSHI
Maybe it's only me can see the sunrise
here. This breaks the world, K. You
ever seen scorched earth? It's glass.
Shreds your feet. Nothing grows.

Coco's murder, the future she sees -- it all frightens her.
A first hint of something soft under the ice.

She helps herself to a glug from K's bottle.

She picks up the sock. Considers it.

JOSHI (cont'd)
Are feet ever so small?
(then)
I had a kid. Grown up now... Hates me.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. K'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

Joshi is whatever comes past tipsy. Not a woman who opens up
or lets go often, she is doing so now. Her coat off.
Reclined on the couch. Unguarded. She needed this.

K is beside her, seated upright. He doesn't drink. Deferential, as if this was her place not his.

JOSHI

I've known a lot of your kind. All useful but... with you I sometimes forget... We didn't have any of you where I was a kid.

She empties her glass. Pours again. K's eye doesn't leave her pour -- we see she is using K's single beloved book for a coaster, spills a little. No idea it's precious to him.

JOSHI (cont'd)

You don't remember anything before you were under me, do you? You have any memories from before?

K

I have memories. They give us some. Implants. They're not real.

JOSHI

Tell me one. From when you were a kid.

K

I feel strange sharing a childhood story considering I was never a child.

JOSHI

Would it help if I told you it was an order.

She kicks him. C'mon. K sits back, a little embarrassed.

K

I had a toy, this wooden horse. An inscription underneath. All I remember is a group of boys, big kids, try and take it away from me. So I run.

(stops himself)

This is dumb -- it's all fake. I was never a kid --

JOSHI

(likes this)

Go on. Little K with his tiny toy... scared of mean boys taking it...

K closes his eyes, the images washing over him.

INSERT CUT: K'S MEMORY: Watery. Indistinct. A CHILD'S POV OF A CAVERNOUS INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURE. A WORLD OF RUST. A MAZE OF STAIRS. FOOTSTEPS CHASING AFTER.

K (V.O.)
*I go looking for a hiding place. There's
 nowhere to go but this... dark furnace.
 It's very dark. I'm very scared... But
 this horse is all I have so I go in
 anyway.*

*A FURNACE RAGES WITH FIRE. He moves to THE DARK PLACES
 BEHIND. The child's hand opens a secret space in the back.*

THE LARGER BOYS FIND THE CHILD IN FRONT OF THE FLAMES.

K (V.O.)
*They find me and beat me to tell them
 where is it. But I don't.*

INT. K'S APARTMENT. RESUME SCENE.

BACK TO: K. His eyes open. The spell of memory broken.

K
 That's it.

JOSHI
 Little K, fighting for what's his.
 That's a good one... No wonder with you
 I sometimes forget. Look at me.
 (then)
 We're all just looking out for something
 real.

Joshi looks at him. A little too long. Looks at the bottle.

JOSHI (cont'd)
 What happens if I finish this?

K doesn't react.

K
 Shouldn't I get back to work, Madam.

Joshi pulls away. Rises. Coat back on. The armor back up.

JOSHI
 You do polite like some folks go
 screaming. Check back in after DeNABase.

And she's gone. And we --

CUT TO:

INT. DENABASE DATABANK. POLICE STATION. DAY.

The unpopulated recesses of the station. A mausoleum for
 hard copy files. K negotiates an ancient security interface.

K
Access 37-88-60. Officer K D6-dash-3-dot-7.

A reply from the machine in JAPANESE.

K (cont'd)
Request newborn 18th chrom DeNAprints
children born 6/10/21. Looking for
anomalies.

The SECURITY SLATE IDS him. "K D6-3.7. APPROVED USER." It comes to life. The SLATE prompts: "ENTER DAY"

K (cont'd)
Put up the year.

The SLATE CHIMES a warning. "PRE-BLACKOUT INFORMATION. NO DATA FOUND."

K (cont'd)
You have the satcrystal backup.

ANOTHER CHIME.

K (cont'd)
Run it.

ANOTHER CHIME. "ALL EXEGETIC DATA CORRUPTED." Annoyed --

K (cont'd)
Ok. Then run it raw. On a rondo.

The SLATE recedes. A FAN begins to WHIR as a VIEWING DEVICE comes to life. Like an old moviola. Blinders on each side. K situates himself in front of it -- CLICKS on the emanator -- and cranks the machine.

A DATAFLOW begins on its SCREEN. A CASCADE OF ONLY FOUR LETTERS: A-C-T-G. RAW GENETIC CODE. WITH NO IDENTIFYING CONTEXTUAL DATA TO LINK WITH SPECIFIC TRAITS. ONLY RAW CODE OF DNA FINGERPRINTING.

The LETTERS flow like millions of snowflakes. Intense, numbing, seizure inducing, incomprehensible.

The information flickers across K's face. His concentration holds. Taking it all in. Missing nothing.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DENABASE DATABANK. POLICE STATION. CONTINUOUS.

THREE PILLS

Set on a table. A DeNABase TECH, a dim, simple TEEN, brought them for K -- who rubs his headached eyes. Tech looks at the oppressive avalanche of data. He speaks FARSI, SUBTITLED:

TECH
You can read all that?

K
Yeah. Just hurts.

TECH
*18th chromosome has 78 million base
pairs, 80,000 kids put in the system
2021, that's...*
(tries the math, gives up)
*I can help if you tell me what you're
looking for.*

K
A ghost.

K dry swallows the pills, head pounding.

K (cont'd)
Can I get a glass of water?

TECH
You don't need water.

K
I'd like a glass of water, please.

TECH
Will be removed from your pay.

Tech reluctantly obliges, steps out. K is alone with the ongoing dataflow, absorbing it. A beat then...

JOI APPEARS BEHIND HIM. K couldn't resist. She drapes a hand over a shoulder, not to interrupt. Watching the dataflow like a movie, enthralled. *Amazing.*

JOI
Mere data makes a man. A and C and T and
G. The alphabet of you. And them. Books
made of sentences made of words and all
from four symbols. Where I am only two.
1 and 0.

K
You're twice as elegant.

JOI
You don't prefer your Madam.

K
You were listening?

JOI
Maybe.

She slides behind him, her hands "rubbing" his shoulders --
so we can HOLD ON K as --

JOI (cont'd)
You didn't like her enough to tell her
the truth... Six and ten and twenty-one?

K
(tempering his excitement)
There's nothing to tell.

JOI
How many times have you told me that
story -- your memory. The date carved
beneath.

IN JOI'S HAND IN FRONT OF K: JOI CONJURES THE TOY HORSE FROM
K'S MEMORY. She shows the date carved under it: 6/10/21

JOI (cont'd)
Coincidence?

K COVERS HER HAND TO STOP HER. Looks around cautiously.

K
A dangerous coincidence.

JOI
(teasing, tempting)
I always knew you were special. Maybe
this is how.

Her hand strokes his cheek. A whisper in his ear.
Seductive. Close. Everything he wants to hear.

JOI (cont'd)
A child... of woman born. Pushed into
the world... Wanted... Loved...

K
If it were true, I'd be hunted for the
rest of my life by someone just like me.

JOI
It's okay to dream a little, isn't it?

K
Not for us.

He quiets. Just then -- K sees something in the dataflow.
Sits up suddenly.

K (cont'd)
There. Hold.

The snowstorm of LETTERS FREEZES. K moves close. Sees something remarkable in the chaos.

K (cont'd)
Put up 4847 and 2181. Side by side.

The datasets comply. All other information falls away as two chains of DNA move side by side. Then OVERLAP so we can see:
THE LETTERS OF EACH OF THEM MATCH EXACTLY.

K (cont'd)
They're identical... Translate.

It READS and translates the THE DNA CHAINS. Sorting the LETTERS into codon groups of THREE, which string into LONG CHAINS (proteins), and then finally into WORDS.

ONE SET IS LABELED FEMALE 2181, DECEASED. THE OTHER: MALE 4847, NO ADDITIONAL DATA.

K (cont'd)
A boy and a girl. It's not possible.
Two people can't have identical DNA. One of these isn't real. It's a copy...
Show all telemetry.

K manipulates the data. Looking for attendant files.

K (cont'd)
They were both processed at Morrillcole.
The Orphanage... The girl... She dies there.

ON THE DNA SET: A SPECIFIC SECTION OF CODE HIGHLIGHTS.

K (cont'd)
Genetic abnormality, Galatians Syndrome.
The boy... He disappears.

ON K. PUTTING IT TOGETHER. *OF COURSE.*

K (cont'd)
The boy. They faked his print. If they swapped him out, no one could trace him. Where he came from... Where he went there... What he really was... He'd be a ghost in the system.

JOI
Where's the Orphanage?

K considers. Looks back to her.

K
You wanna go for a ride?

Joi grins, brightens. *Anywhere.*

CUT TO:

EXT. SKIES ABOVE LOS ANGELES. DAY.

K'S SPINNER emerges out of the FOG, flies south over the RAINY outer ring of the city. Away from the mass to where the city finally THINS. High enough to see a monumental and cascading SEA WALL which dwarfs the Spinner.

INT. K'S SPINNER.

Joi looks out at the rain-streaked view of the lights below.

The RAIN beats heavy against the roof and windows. K flies them over the gigantic ruins of an AERIAL HIGHWAY SUPERSTRUCTURE looming threateningly under the rain's shadow.

The multi-tiered structure's side BLAZES with the harsh electric light of AN AD SPIRE.

A GIANT AD PLAYS, for a tacky erotic version of JOI:
Whatever you want. Joi.

Joi looks away. Ashamed of it.

K
Don't be.

She smiles her gratitude. They fly on...

FAR BELOW the city begins to thin. The buildings eventually run out and give way... as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SKIES. SAN DIEGO COASTLINE. DAY.

The COAST is bald. Trees long gone. A hint of OCEAN at the edge of vision. Angry, low slung CLOUDS grumble with THUNDER above. A STORM done holding its breath.

K'S SPINNER FLIES... toward a strange RANGE OF ODDLY TEXTURED HILLOCKS... FLATTENED at the tops like MESAS...

INT. K'S SPINNER.

Joi looks out the window at the rain. REVEAL the MESAS are... MOUNTAINS OF TRASH. Piled atop ruined buildings.

K AND JOI'S POV, LOOKING DOWN AT:

EXT. TRASH MESA.

Our landfills expanded to become part of the geography. Tacky and textured. Trodden vermiculated paths up and down their sides. MASSIVE AERIAL TRACTORS deposit MORE trash over calcified trash.

The moment they do DOZENS OF SCAVENGER BEDOUINS chitter over the surface to collect it. An entire race living off refuse.

INT. K'S SPINNER.

THE SPINNER RATTLES. LIGHTING from the storm.

K smiles to Joi to reassure her and takes the Spinner down... INTO THE MESAS. They SOAR on. Beyond the wrecks of buildings comes...

The wrecks of SHIPS... Ships and ship parts for miles...

K flies over the massive hulks. Firelight glows from inside them suggesting PEOPLE LIVING WITHIN. SCAVENGERS chitter over the surface.

Another RATTLE as -- GUNFIRE HITS THE SPINNER. STRAFING FIRE COMING FROM THE MESA. K looks out to see --

EXT. TRASH MESA.

Someone below is SHOOTING at his Spinner, which flies too high. Bullets POCK harmlessly against the glass.

INT. K'S SPINNER.

K flies over a LARGE OVERTURNED FREIGHTER. On it --

EXT. FREIGHTER DECK.

THE SCAVENGER LEADER holds a makeshift LONG RANGE GUN. Watching. He takes aim... tracking the Spinner, and --

INT. K'S SPINNER.

BOOM! THE SPINNER LURCHES.

K looks back, sees -- A LONG METAL BOLT has punctured a rear quarterpanel -- A SHOT FIRED FROM THE MESA -- where --

EXT. FREIGHTER DECK.

The SCAVENGER watches. Waiting.

INT. K'S SPINNER.

K thinks nothing of it... not seeing... THE IMPALED BOLT
TRAILS A LONG MICRO-FILAMENT...

That sprouts a KITE. That RISES... UP... INTO THE CLOUDS...

Where A HUGE STATIC CHARGE BUILDS in a RUMBLE overhead...

LIGHTNING FIRES!

A MASSIVE ELECTRICAL DISCHARGE RUNS DOWN THE FILAMENT -- AND
STRIKES THE SPINNER!

EXT. TRASH MESA.

THE SPINNER STALLS. ENGINES FAILING.

INT. K'S SPINNER. DAY.

POWER goes out inside, just as --

JOI FLICKERS AND DISAPPEARS.

K sees SMOKE coming off the engine, slaps an emergency system
to activate it, as --

THE SPINNER'S NOSE DROPS. BEGINS TO SPIRAL DOWN!

K tries to control the crash. Steering with one hand,
working the controls furiously with the other.

The GROUND closing in -- K REACHES TO GRAB THE EMANATOR AS IT
SLIDES OVER THE PASSENGER SEAT -- he clutches it tight --

ROCKETS FIRE UNDER THE SPINNER TO DAMPEN THE IMPACT AS --

EXT. TRASH MESA.

THE SPINNER CRASHES INTO A VALLEY OF TRASH!

POV FROM A MESA: The rain stops. The Spinner smokes.

K IS INSIDE. Unconscious. Unmoving. Forehead BLOODY.

INT. K'S SPINNER.

ON THE EMANATOR, fallen at K's feet. Its LIGHT blinks ON.

JOI PROJECTS. Looks about her.

CLOSE ON JOI: SEEING K. NOT BREATHING. MAYBE DEAD.

JOI'S CONFUSION TURNS TO WORRY. TO FEAR. JOI FLICKERS. Scared, panicked. All she can do is repeat, with unnerving, inhuman steadiness, her image cracking:

JOI
K... K... K... K... K... K...

Her voice and emotions rise even though K has not yet looked to her to see it. So that in the moment it could be taken for a spontaneous display.

EXT. TRASH MESA.

JOI PROJECTS OUTSIDE THE SPINNER. Still calling. Her hand uselessly pounding at the window to wake him. To warn him.

JOI
K... K... K... K... K... K... K...
K... K... K... K... KK-kk...

JOI'S FACE CONTORTS. The name caught in her mouth disturbingly. HER PROJECTION FLICKERS. GOES STATIC. LIKE A COMPUTER CRASHING. *UNTIL JOI CUTS OUT ENTIRELY, REVEALING --*

A DOZEN SCAVENGERS BEGIN CLOSING IN ON THE DOWNED SPINNER.

The Scavengers circle in TIGHTER. CLOSER. Talking together in their strange LANGUAGE.

INT. K'S SPINNER.

The Scavengers' shadows close in on the Spinner. K still unmoving.

The SCAVENGER LEADER orders the others -- who SLAM a device onto the Spinner door. The device begins GRINDING THE DOOR AWAY with a caterwaul SHRIEK.

The SHOCK of the sound wakes K. He slowly comes to -- ALIVE.

EXT. TRASH MESA.

K opens the door, surprising them by not being dead. He stumbles, consciousness still seeping in.

The Scavengers back away. A moment as they stare at one another. K takes in their wan, weathered faces. Hardship and hunger legible in the dirt. The few that are armed have only rusted antique guns.

Their LEADER raises an old CARBINE, barks orders at his MEN.

In response -- TWO SCAVENGERS JUMP K, a THIRD raises a GUN --

K INSTANTLY DROPS THE TWO AND SHOOTS THE THIRD. PLUS TWO MORE.

K points his blaster from one Scavenger to the next. They begin to back away -- until K sees --

FIFTY MORE SCAVENGERS CREST THE HILL OF TRASH. COMING TO JOIN THE FIGHT.

K IS CORNERED. HE FIRES TWICE. TWO SCAVENGERS DROP.

But still they keep coming. K backs up toward his Spinner.

ON K. His next move uncertain, critical, when --

BOOOM!

ROCKETS FALL FROM THE SKY RIGHT INTO THE MASS OF SCAVENGERS. A BRUTAL DRONE STRIKE, INSTANTLY OBLITERATING THEM.

K is thrown back into his Spinner.

A final ROCKET POUNDS the few surviving Scavengers before they can scatter.

K looks up to the sky. Sees a distant blinking LIGHT, like a satellite, hidden far away in the clouds, and --

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. LUV'S OFFICE. WALLACE TOWER. THAT MOMENT.

THE SAME ACTION VIEWED ON A SCREEN. K LOOKING UP.

Luv monitors and controls the drone's movement via an OPTICAL CONTROL ASSAY which fit like glasses. This as her NAILS are being painted in fabulous detail by an AESTHETICIAN with a micropipette. Her voice calm and even.

LUV
200 feet to the east. Fire. Go north.
Fire. Stop. 20 degrees east. Stop.
Zoom. Closer.

LUV'S POV: The assay ZOOMS IN ON K.

LUV (cont'd)
Come on. Get up. Do your fucking job.

SHE FIRES AGAIN.

EXT. TRASH MESA.

ANOTHER SHOT BLASTS by the Spinner to rain trash down on K.

K rises. Looks up to the sky. Knows he is being followed.

THE DRONE'S EYE FOCUSES IN ON K... THEN RETREATS UNSEEN.

K looks at his crashed Spinner. He hits a switch inside, punches in. AN ALERT/DISTRESS PROMPT LIGHTS UP. The Pilotfish ejects itself and raises vertically.

K
Watch the car.

K walks. Holding holds pace over the putrid, crumbling terrain. He looks out toward the large TRASH HILL in the distance. Capped by an enormous overturned

SATELLITE DISH.

EXT. THE DISH.

K approaches a ramshackle DOOR.

INT. CAVERNOUS HALL. DAY.

K enters A BURROW UNDER THE TRASH MOUNTAIN. Opening up into...

INT. "THE ORPHANAGE".

A WIDE OPEN ROOM. THE WALLS ALL MADE FROM MATERIALS RECYCLED FROM TRASH. ARTFULLY RE-CRAFTED INTO NECESSITIES, FURNITURE.

DOZENS of pale, ratty ORPHANS sit on the floor. Eating their meal out of bowls in fearful silence. Some have obvious deformities. Others just ill or odd from a life in darkness.

Seeing K, the CHILDREN stop still. Eyes wide and astonished. If they've ever seen anyone like him it wasn't lately.

They circle K like he was a newfound species. Fascinated. All wanting to poke at him... touch his clothes.

AN ORPHAN BOY TAKES K'S HAND. Begins to lead him through.

They pass A GIRL curled up with a handcrafted DOLL, its "skin" made of scales fashioned from flattened soda cans.

A SHRILL WHISTLE BLASTS from far off. The children all return to their seats on the floor.

The Orphan Boy stiffens. Scared. Points ahead. For K to go on alone. K nods his thanks, and enters...

INT. THE SORTING ROOM.

Capped by the overturned DISH, sections of which have been cut to let in the light. Like an AMPHITHEATER. Thick support beams built of reclaimed metals. All to house --

A FACTORY. THOUSANDS OF ORPHANS WORKING AWAY. Tiny hands SIFTING THROUGH TONS OF TRASH brought from the mesas. Mining it. The bigger kids feed the sorted materials into CARTS down and away. His private industry.

At the center is the figure of a tall, grandiloquent gelding, MISTER COTTON. Sole caretaker. A greasy CAPE over broad shoulders and powerful arms. He SHOUTS at the children.

MISTER COTTON

I'll put you outside where it's raining,
raining fire! You're in here to work.
If you're not working I don't need you!

He stops, noticing K. Grows a salesman's reptile smile.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SORTING ROOM.

K follows Cotton through a dense section of WORKING, COUGHING CHILDREN.

MISTER COTTON

No child in my care is ever cold, is ever hungry -- clothes, blankets. Food, not the tastiest but warm and enough. I encourage play, keeps them occupied, makes them nimble. But it's work that molds them into a child worth having.

A TRAY of bottles spills. Cotton suddenly blows A SHRILL WHISTLE that hangs from a chain around his neck. The BOYS FREEZE their work. Cotton stares them down. The Boys' faces lower in fear and shame. Begin to clean their mistake.

They move through an area dedicated to the sorting of METALS. Taken from old technology. Sorted and melted down by MUCH YOUNGER CHILDREN. Many of whom show the desquamated skin and blackened teeth of metal poisoning.

MISTER COTTON (cont'd)

We find new life for everything discarded. And every one. The nickel goes to colonial ships. Closest any of them will get to the grand life offworld. Now -- what sort did you have in mind? I have all kinds.

He blows two short BLASTS of his WHISTLE. Every child in the arena instantly STOPS WORK, STANDS. FACES THEM. On display.

K sees the sea of hopeful faces. Shows his BADGE.

K
I'm not buying.

Cotton wheels on K. Suddenly hackles up and hard boiled.

MISTER COTTON
No. This is my game and I play it fair.
Bigger have tried to shut me down, men at
that.

K gives a hard stare. Taking in all the KIDS.

K
A little boy came through here, 30 years
back. I need to see your records.
Legitimate placements, private sales.
Everything, in and out.

MISTER COTTON
I don't keep records that far back.

K
You don't.

MISTER COTTON
I can't help you.

Cotton gives a confident, supercilious shrug. In response...

K CRACKS Cotton in the FACE. SLAMS him to a wall, PULLS his WHISTLE CHAIN tight. Choking him. In front of THE CHILDREN.

K
I think you can. I think someone like
you keeps a long memory. Minds what he
owes and makes sure he gets paid.
Someone like you keeps it all careful.
You can tell me what you know... or I put
a hole right here and take a look.

ON COTTON. A bead of BLOODY SWEAT finds his nose, jumps off.

EXT. TRASH MESA. MOMENTS LATER.

K pushes Cotton across a path cut through the wide expanse of trash from the overturned dish toward an COLOSSAL TANKER.

INT. ABANDONED TANKER. THE ORPHANAGE.

INSIDE A METAL GUNSHIP. A CAVERNOUS INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURE. A WORLD OF RUST. A MAZE OF STAIRS.

K keeps a firm, probably painful grip on Cotton's shoulder as they walk through. They reach a split in the path. Cotton moves on down a set of stairs.

K pauses a moment. Looking around him. A strange and fleeting feeling of familiarity about his surroundings. A MOMENT OUT OF THE MEMORY HE DESCRIBED EARLIER.

MISTER COTTON

You coming?

A pause. Then K follows, toward --

INT. COTTON'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANKER. MOMENTS LATER.

Private quarters to house Cotton and his lavish tastes. Cotton searches A WALL OF LEDGERS...

Finds the one he's looking for, pulls it down. We see page after page of meticulously kept balance sheets. Cratchit level care and penmanship. As Cotton flips pages...

K scans the room. Notes Cotton's personal luxuries. More treasures of secondary use. A rotisserie humidor. A handcrafted gilt bed.

Cotton locates A DATE in a dusty volume. Flips to it...

Only to find TORN PAGES. Surprised, he flips back and forth.

MISTER COTTON

It's gone. The entire year, it should be here! It-- wasn't me -- it wasn't me --

He offers K the book, quailing. Pathetic supplication.

K sees the missing sheaves. He hears the door SLAM -- Cotton slipping out. Worming away.

K leaves him to his retreat. Examines the torn pages.

Someone got in here a long time ago. Covering tracks.

K's eyes find an item in the junk: A HORSE HEAD ASH TRAY

Stuffed with stubs and ash. He turns it. Stares at it. Something about it tugs at K's memory, as...

INT. ABANDONED TANKER. THE ORPHANAGE.

K makes his way out. Following the shadowy maze. He turns towards the light of an OPENING to outside -- when he stops at the place that caught his eye before.

K changes directions. Walks downstairs.

He pauses, looks down over a railing, as --

INT. ANOTHER PASSAGEWAY. THE ORPHANAGE.

Something about it. An odd familiarity.

He moves down the passage. Into the dark. Takes a turn...

INT. BOILER ROOM. THE ORPHANAGE.

K inside. Huge to a child. Small to him now.

He finds A ROW OF FURNACES. Old, cold, rusted.

He stops before one of them. And freezes. JUST AS HE DID WHEN A CHILD IN HIS MEMORY. STANDING IN THE SAME SPACE.

He moves to the secret place behind it. Frightened to look.

Then steps closer. Moving around behind it, finding...

THE SMALL HINGED GRATE. The hiding place. Not just figment.

He works up the nerve. The ancient grate opens with a CREAK.

He reaches in. His heart skips as he finds --

AN OLD DUSTY RAG. K UNWRAPS THE RAG... INSIDE IS...

A SMALL HAND-CARVED TOY. A WOODEN HORSE. FORELEG RAISED. SPRAY OF MANE. JUST AS HE DESCRIBED IT. IT IS REAL.

K forgets to breathe. Turns it over.

RAISES IT TO HIS EYES... SO HE CAN SEE... CARVED UNDERNEATH THE PRECIOUS TOY... IS THAT SAME DATE:

6/10/21

CUT TO:

INT. K'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

K and Joi are both sitting, looking at the little wooden horse, in awe. K's mind reels with possibility. Joi looks restrained. A sadness in her eyes. *There is something different about her.*

JOI
 I always told you. You're special. Born
 not made. Hidden with care. A real boy
 now.

K sees her unusual melancholy, despite the discovery.

K
 What's wrong?

She FLICKERS like before. Turns away, embarrassed.

JOI
 I'm sorry. I saw you. Dead. The
 thought of you. Gone. Hurt me.

She faces him. Eyes full of love. Utterly convincing.

JOI (cont'd)
 You're special, Jo. I always knew it.

K
Jo?

She breaks a smile.

JOI
 You're too important for "K." A real boy
 needs a real name. Your mother would
 have named you. Jo.

She kisses him... repeating the name over and over...

JOI (cont'd)
Jo... Jo... Jo...

K likes it, gives in to it. Thinking it through.

K
 How can I tell if a memory's an implant
 or not?

JOI
 (considers, then)
 Who makes the memories?

Her digital toy horse rides... and rears... animated in her
 hand... And we --

CUT TO:

EXT. LAB BUILDING. DAY.

The sometimes frightening skyline looks beautiful through the mist that softens the crosshatched array of SPINNER lights. Even traffic can be lovely from the right vantage.

K's Spinner DRIVES to a stop in front of... a building of striking architecture. Money can still buy lovely.

INT. HALLWAY. LAB BUILDING.

K walks down the clean, sterile corridor. So different from the world outside. Money can still buy clean too. A view of the OCEAN and SEPULVEDA SEA WALL beyond.

He finds the right door -- suddenly, incongruously, in --

EXT. RAINFOREST/MEMORY LAB.

The view from a tree in Costa Rica. A thick canopy overhead. Lush and green in an endless variety of rare vegetation. Gently swaying in a fictional breeze. The first wash of saturated color we've seen.

CLOSE ON: A SINGLE LEAF. LUSH, RICH GREEN. SPECKLED WITH DROPS FROM A RECENT RAIN.

CLOSE ON: A BEETLE. CRAWLING UP THE LEAF. SUNLIGHT CATCHES ON ITS ROUNDED SHELL AND REFLECTS PRISMATICALLY. UNTIL --

THE BEETLE IS ALL OF A SUDDEN CHANGED OUT FOR AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT INSECT. THEN CHANGED AGAIN. AGAIN. AS IF BEING SELECTED FROM A MENU OF OPTIONS. SETTling FINALLY ON --

A SCARAB. ITS EYES BEGIN TO CHANGE SHAPE. Forming and reforming. Evolution changing its mind.

A WOMAN'S SILHOUETTE emerges through the dense forest air.

DOCTOR ANA STELLINE

Younger than you'd expect given all this is hers, 30s. But so very obviously so very bright you never question why. A stratospheric IQ with eyes that do not hide it. Conspicuously lovely for a human not offworld.

She sits on the balls of her barefoot feet in the center of the forest simulation. Like some god painting dreams with a wand onto moving canvas. Spinning and MOLDING and moving the images with a palmed INSTRUMENT. As much electronic as musical. Somewhere between performance art and programming.

INT. MEMORY LAB. CONTINUOUS.

A gentle VISITOR ALARM CHIMES and BLINKS, catching Ana's attention which was until now fixed hypnotically on the delicate minutia of her creation. Her eyes flick to the DOOR, which suddenly appears. And opens. On K.

K looks on the HUGE DOME in which she works.

K
Doctor Ana Stelline?

She sees K and pauses in her work. The room SHIFTS. The forest disappears to reveal an artist's studio showing its colors as a LAB, with equipment sliding into place.

ANA
A visitor.

K
Is that all right?

ANA
Just unusual.

K shows his badge. Ana gives it a look, intrigued.

ANA (cont'd)
Even more unusual. Nice to meet you --
(reading)
Officer KD6-3.7

K steps to meet her extended hand but -- BUMPS into GLASS. A thick WINDOW that divides the room, enclosing her.

Ana laughs. A joke. She TAPS the GLASS, a puckish streak. Ana is easy to like.

ANA (cont'd)
Sorry. Compromised immune system, a life of freedom so long as it's behind glass.

K
I was wondering.

ANA
Why I'm not offworld? My parents had our passes in pocket, then I took sick. It was a new life or me, they picked me. Made my cage and filled it with everything they could to keep me happy -- except company of course, and I was used to crowds. What can I help you with?

Caught. But not minding it. K tries direct.

K

Just questions. You might be able to help me with a case.

Ana considers, amused by the idea.

ANA

That is the most interesting thing I've been offered to help with in ages. Do you mind if I work while you talk? I promise I hear every word.

The lights dim. She sits in the middle of her lab and creates a birthday cake, focuses on *the candles*. She "puts" the cake on a TABLE, decorates it. Streamers and treats. A *birthday party*. All as --

ANA (cont'd)

I loved birthday parties.

She adjusts the ICING on the cake. Then brings in SMILING FACES OF CHILDREN. Taking special care to craft the micro-expressions on each face... joy... wonder... anticipation...

She takes the edges of the IMAGE out of focus, adding Holga like blurs and imperfections.

K

You make memories, that go into Replicants. They say you make the best.

ANA

Then they're kind.

K

You work for Wallace.

ANA

Subcontract. I'm one of his suppliers. He offered to buy me out, I take my freedom where I can find it.

K

What makes your memories so... authentic?

ANA

I was locked in an aseptic cloister at eight. If I wanted to see the world I had to imagine it. I got very good at imagining. Wallace needs my talent to maintain a stable product. "Provide context for unavoidable affect." I think it's only kind.

(with sympathy)

(MORE)

ANA (cont'd)

Replicants live such hard lives, made to do what we'd rather not. I can't help your future, but I can give you good memories to think back on and smile. A birthday party.

She lights the candles one by one... then brings in a POV HAND to reach out to the cake... fingers thick with stolen FROSTING... which is brought towards us in POV to taste... a tiny, complete, evocative birthday memory vignette.

She steps back to consider it. Pleased with her work.

K

Nice.

ANA

It's better than nice. It feel authentic. If you have authentic memories, you'll have real human responses wouldn't you agree?

Ana and the kids blow out the candles together and the room goes completely dark.

K

Are all the memories constructed or do you ever use ones that are real?

ANA

It's illegal to use real memories. But there's bit of every artist in their work.

K

How can you tell the difference? Can you tell if a memory really happened?

Lights turn on as Ana walks towards K. At this Ana faces him. Her favorite subject merits her full attention.

ANA

Untangling memory and history. They all think it's about more detail, dutiful exactitude, hyberbolic photorealism -- that's not how the memory works. We recall with our feelings... and our feelings are awful students. The mind is an impressionist. Anything real should be a mess. I can show you.

She offers K a CHAIR built perfectly into the wall by the glass. Fitted with a chin ledge so a LIGHT can SCAN deep into the eyes, like an optometrist's slit lamp. A Stellite Scan. After its designer.

ANA (cont'd)

Sit.

K

Does it hurt?

ANA

Only if you fight it. So maybe don't fight it.

K takes a seat. Ana sits into A MATCHING DEVICE kitty corner on her side of the divide. She looks into the scanner.

K puts his face into the rest. A light SHINES bright into his eyes.

ANA (cont'd)

Now think about the memory you want me to see. Not even that hard. Just picture it. Let it play.

She works her console. Peers into a MATCHING LIGHT. *Seeing INSIDE... through the optic nerve, into the visual cortex... the Scanner translating neural impulse until... A ghost of an IMAGE takes loose shape...* She GRABS it.

A CONNECTION ESTABLISHES WITH A SHOCK. AS WE SEE --

A MEMORY, LIGHTLY DIGITIZED: *K swimming in the rough ocean as a teen. Nearly drowning. Fear. Salt.*

THE CONNECTION ABRUPTLY BREAKS. K rubs his eyes.

ANA (cont'd)

A fake. An ugly fake at that.

K

You can tell that quick.

ANA

Stolen straight off the art book shelf. Detail without mood. Colors are too perfect, the moral too clear -- "keep away from water." Did it work?

K shakes his head.

ANA (cont'd)

Lazy work.

K

(beat)

Can we try another?

She gestures -- *Sure.* Offers him the machine.

K rests his head on the scanner. She dials in. AGAIN --

THE SHOCK OF CONNECTION AS WE ARE JOLTED BACK INTO:

K'S CHILDHOOD POV MEMORY: CHILDREN HITTING US, CRUEL...

WE RUN AWAY FROM THE CHILDREN... COMING TO... THE METAL DOOR... THE BOILER ROOM... THE HIDING PLACE...

ANA

Is moved. Watching this unfold on her SCANNER as...

THE HORSE IS INTERRED IN ITS HIDING PLACE... SEALED AWAY...

THEN OUTSIDE LARGER KIDS SPRING ON K, MENACING... THEY SURROUND HIM... BEAT HIM... SHOUTING "WHERE IS IT?"... AND...

Ana stops the imaging. Affected by what she is seeing.

She looks up to K. Seeing him differently because of it. A new sympathy. For a moment, she seems unsure how to answer.

K looks to her, expectant. Everything riding on her answer.

ANA

No one invented that. It was a real moment. Remembered.

K

You're -- certain?

She stares. A pause. She NODS.

ANA

Someone lived this. This happened.

K

(and then)
I know it's real.

CLOSE ON K. He has the answer he wanted. A heart skip of excitement, hidden as best he can. Not very.

EXT. STREET. DAY.

K steps out of Ana's building. The wind has picked up, whipping around him. SNOW begins to fall.

K looks up at the angry churning sky. Around him OTHERS hustle and hurry to get out of the weather.

K stands still. Takes a moment for himself, perhaps for the first time, simply to feel. *Everything is possible.* When --

COP (O.S., THROUGH SPEAKER)
Officer K D6-3.7. Joshi calling.

A POLICE SPINNER HOVERS BEHIND K. Was waiting for him.

COP (THROUGH SPEAKER) (cont'd)
Let's go, skinner. Or I shoot.

CLOSE ON K. A twitch and --

CUT TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM. DAY.

K in the cold, clinical room. On the stool but unable to keep still, a capped volcano, as --

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Cells.

K
Cells.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Have you ever been in an institution?
Cells.

K
Cells.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
When you're not performing your duties do they keep you in a little box? Cells.

K
Cells.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Interlinked.

K
Interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
What's it like to hold the hand of someone you love. Interlinked.

A pause.

K
Interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Within cells interlinked.

K
Within cells interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Dreadfully.

K
Dreadfully.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
What's it like to be filled with dread?
Dreadfully.

K
Dreadfully.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Do you like being separated from other
people? Distinct.

K
Distinct.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Dreadfully distinct.

K
Dreadfully distinct.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Dark.

K
Dark.

INT. JOSHI'S OFFICE. POLICE STATION. INTERCUT.

ON JOSHI. Watching K's FEED carefully, knowingly. She can
sense a change in him, as --

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Within cells interlinked.

K
Within cells interlinked.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Within one stem.

K
Within one stem.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
And dreadfully distinct.

K
And dreadfully distinct.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Against the dark.

K
Against the dark.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
A tall white fountain played.

A pause. K looks at camera.

K
A tall white fountain played.

A pause.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
You're not even close to baseline.

INT. JOSHI'S OFFICE. POLICE STATION. MOMENTS LATER.

K is seated, looking off. A new energy to him. The entitlement that comes from *knowing*. Joshi enters, pissed.

JOSHI
The hell is with you?

K eyes her. Holds silent.

JOSHI (cont'd)
I put you on a case, I impressed on you the importance of that case. Then we pick you up fucking around outside some upgrade center.

Silence.

JOSHI (cont'd)
Scan said you didn't look like you inside -- miles off your baseline. You know what this means... You should have been retired right there on your feet.

A beat. Finally --

K
I found the kid.

K's in control of this conversation now.

K (cont'd)

He was set it up as a standard Replicant, put on a service job. Hidden in plain sight. Plainest. They wrote over any memory, added fake ones, so -- even he didn't know what he was. Someone cared enough to give him a life.

JOSHI

And?

A beat. A forever beat.

K

It's done.

JOSHI

What does that mean it's done?

K

What you asked. It's done. No trace left. Just like you wanted.

Joshi sits back. A weight lifted.

JOSHI

You just stopped a bomb going off. You did good. It can't have been easy. You're allowed to be hit by this one.

K

Thank you.

JOSHI

Hell, I'm 55. My twenties are in their thirties. Plenty of cases broke me, too many and not half as bad. We all owe you one, know it or not...

Joshi looks outside. Endless Los Angeles.

JOSHI (cont'd)

I can help you get you out of this station alive. You have 48 hours to come back on track. Your next baseline is out of my hands.

K nods.

K

Thank you, Madam.

CUT TO:

EXT. K'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

K's Spinner drives up and stops short. K gets out quickly. Rushing. Paranoid. He looks over his shoulder.

A female silhouette seems to follow him. He walks faster.

INT. K'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

K enters, intensed, wild-eyed from the possibilities.

Joi waits for him, against the windows, already projected.

K
You were right. You were right bout
everything.

But Joi has other plans at the moment. Moved. She walks slowly toward him.

JOI
Shhhh, I know. I have something special
for you. You deserve more than me. I
can't even touch you.

K
I feel you plenty.

K runs his hand over the outline of her face. CLOSE: The ruffle of her static makes the tiny hairs on his hand quiver.

JOI
Silly trick. Haptic static. You're
special, like I always knew. I want to
be real for you.

K
You're more real to me than any of them.

She pulls away. Her voice changing. To something real, sad.

JOI
You love me so you only see what's good
in me. You see my faults as freckles.

K
You don't have any freckles.

She twiddles her nose. And now she has freckles.

K (cont'd)
I like 'em.

The freckles remain. At which -- A BUZZ AT THE DOOR. Joi smiles. Nods -- *Answer it*. K opens the door to find --

MARIETTE. The DOXIE from the bar. Shined up. A fresh coat of everything on her. She grins at K. Cat, canary.

MARIETTE

Thought you weren't interested. Worky man.

She enters, takes off her coat. Making herself at home. K looks to Joi.

JOI

You liked her, I could tell. It's okay. She's real... I want to be real for you.

K

You are real for me.

MARIETTE

You have a special lady here.

Mariette kisses K. Steps back. Ready.

Joi steps up to Mariette. Slow. Close. Her face of light to her face of flesh. Joi touches Mariette's face.

K looks to Joi -- *What are you doing?*

Joi steps forward... stepping into Mariette. Overlaying her projection ATOP the doxie. So that Mariette is only a shadow image, encompassed by Joi's projection... Joi now a thin layer of light like skin atop Mariette's real body.

Mariette lifts her hand to take in the effect, which is still imperfect.

MARIETTE (cont'd)

Look at you.

JOI

Quiet now. I have to sync.

Joi BRIGHTENS as the sync completes. Mariette's moves are now her own. At least for a moment Joi has substance, form. She moves her body in a delicate sway. A turn. Loving the effect. Her gift.

She slowly steps up to K. Joi's face so close to his.

CLOSE ON: THE MUSIC PLAYER. *"Summer Winds."*

K isn't sure how to take this. So Joi raises a hand. K raises his to meet hers. Recalling their palms pressed earlier... *only now they can truly touch...*

He runs a finger over the outline of her face. Skin of smoke and light over a warm, willing body.

Joi KISSES him. With real lips. A combination of her static wisps and true flesh. A perverse threesome. A loving twosome. K gives in to the moment.

-- JOI PUTS K'S HAND TO HER WAIST AS BEFORE AND...

-- THEY PERFORM ONE DANCE MOVEMENT TOGETHER... AS THEY COULDN'T DANCE BEFORE... FEELING HER WEIGHT AGAINST HIM..

-- JOI AND MARIETTE MOVE AS ONE... SEPARATING ONLY, BRIEFLY AS K EXTENDS HIS ARM TO TWIRL HER AND JOI GETS LOST IN THE MOVE...

-- K PULLS HER BACK TO HIM. THEY KISS...

-- ON K... SMILING... IN LOVE...

-- ON MARIETTE... UNDER THE SKIN OF LIGHT... SHE FEELS HIS LIPS ON HERS... SEES THE LOOK ON HIS FACE... AND IS MOVED BY A DEPTH OF LOVE SHE NEVER TASTED BEFORE... DIDN'T KNOW WAS REAL...

-- JOI STANDS AWAY FROM HIM. HER HOST BODY, BARELY VISIBLE BENEATH HER AS SHE REACHES A HAND BEHIND HER TO UNFASTEN HER DRESS... WHICH FALLS TO THE FLOOR...

-- K AND JOI LOOK INTO EACH OTHER'S EYES... JOI STEPS TOWARDS K AND --

EXT. SKIES ABOVE LOS ANGELES. NIGHT.

Looking down a canyon between buildings where...

AN AD SPIRE turns day to night with its brilliant light...
AN AD FOR:

JOI. SMILING RIGHT AT US... knowing... willing...

INT. K'S APARTMENT. MORNING.

A rare ribbon of TRUE SUNLIGHT through the one small window bisects K and Mariette entwined on the bed.

K is awake, eyes open. He observes Mariette, a touch of embarrassment in the light at the intimacy shared in the dark.

He rises to the shower. We hear the water spray.

ON MARIETTE. Her eyes snap open. Also awake. She slowly gets out of bed and dresses.

As she dresses, she scans the room. Sees the suitcase again. Touches K's PHOTOS on the coffee table. Then --

She discreetly tags an almost imperceptible device in one of K's jacket's pockets.

With that she begins to move toward the door, when she sees --

THE WOODEN HORSE. Her eyes widen. She moves to it. Picks it up reverentially. Moved by it.

MARIETTE

From a tree...

Then sees --

JOI. Simply standing there. Watching her. Eerie stillness.

JOI

I'm done with you. You can go.

Mariette sets the horse back. Puts on her coat. Stares right back. Refusing to see Joi as more. Mocking. Back on her hard mode.

MARIETTE

"Quiet now." I've been inside you. Not so much there as you think.

And she's out the door.

As we CLOSE IN ON JOI... a flinch... a *feeling?*...

But K's attention is on the WOODEN HORSE. Mariette's words lingering. He feels it in his fingers.

K

From a tree...

Joi catches on to his idea. Brightening with the insight. Confirming his thought.

JOI

Your story isn't over yet.

(off the horse)

There's still a page left. Written with love.

K smiles. Picks up the horse: This is the trail to follow.

Joi disappears --

INT. K'S APARTMENT.

-- Reappears from the central console. As K readies to move, holding the horse --

K
They'll be coming soon. You're coming
with me.

JOI
No.

K halts. Joi just refused him. A first.

JOI (cont'd)
Not like this. If they come here looking
for you they'll have access to all my
memories. You have to delete me from the
console.

K doesn't understand.

JOI (cont'd)
My present. Put me there.

The emanator.

JOI (cont'd)
None of the rest can touch me. I can be
me with you. Only. Always.

K
I can't. It's just a weak processor.

JOI
A body.

K
If anything happened to it, that's it...
you'd be gone.

Joi finally smiles.

JOI
Yes. Like a real girl.

K faces her.

JOI (cont'd)
Please. I want this. I can't do it
myself.

A pause. K keys into the central console. WORDS FLOAT in
the air: "UPDATE EDITION: JOI."

Joi nods to K. He presses the console and --

JOI CUTS OUT. A WHIR. JOI'S VOICE comes from the EMANATOR.

JOI (V.O.)
Break the antenna.

K SNAPS open the casing on the emanator. BREAKS OFF a piece inside. The antenna.

JOI (V.O.)
Take me off the console.
(he hesitates)
Do it.

THE WALLACE LOGO FLOATS in the air. "DELETE THIS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?" is written underneath.

K selects. YES.

A WARNING CHIMES: "ALL PREVIOUSLY SAVED PROGRESS AND USER FILES WILL BE LOST." The word "LOST" BLINKS.

K looks to the emanator's eye.

A SINGLE WORD BRIGHTENS ON THE CONSOLE: DELETE

CUT TO:

INT. LUV'S OFFICE. THAT MOMENT.

A MAP OF THE WEST COAST. Key points lit up.

One particular point of interest in LOS ANGELES immediately GOES DARK.

ON LUV. Taking note. Rising. Displeased.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL. REFURB APARTMENT COMPLEX. DAY.

In the middle of the bazaar of their complex FIND --

K and Joi. Squatted beside DOC BADGER, the lone resident K greeted to on his way home, in a stall crowded with jury-rigged lab equipment. An elaborate SCOPE. A hand-painted sign in SOMALI offers "DOCTOR BADGER'S OFF-WORLD SCREENING."

Badger takes the wooden horse. Fits it into his SCANNER.

He LAUGHS at what he sees. IN SOMALI ONLY:

DOC BADGER

(IN SOMALI)

Real wood. You are rich, my friend. You could buy a real horse with this. You want a real horse?

K

I don't want a real horse.

DOC BADGER

I can get you one. Like Wallace shit. Amazing!

K

Can you tell where it's from?

DOC BADGER

Smells like dirt. Old dirt. But the structure is changed. Old dirt, new change...

K

Radiation. From a reactor?

Doc Badger shakes his head no.

DOC BADGER

No. More volatile.

The SCREEN offers a radiation fingerprint: Isotopic details. Age estimate. The facts registers with K.

K

Matches a dirty bomb.

They look at each other.

DOC BADGER

There is only one place that dirty. Radioactivity that strong.

K

But no ones lives there...

DOC BADGER

(smiling)

You ask me where it came from, now I tell you. So, what else do you want, my friend? A horse? A sheep? Off-world papers! Whatever you want, Doc Badger can get!

CUT TO:

INT. K'S SPINNER / PILOTFISH POV

A FLYING POV THROUGH THICK, LAMBERT RED DUST. FOCUSING ON:
A BROKEN STREET LAMP.

K (O.S.)
Pull back 200 meters. Hold.

THE POV FOLLOWS his instruction. WIDENS TO REVEAL:

A VAST PARKING LOT. EVEN LARGER CASINOS IN THE DISTANCE.
Erotic statues out of an ancient temple of old. A PYRAMID.

POV WIDENS OUT FURTHER:

THE VEGAS SKYLINE. Recognizable but, like an old stripper,
only a shell of debauchery. The hulked MEGASTRUCTURES are
all still there. Dark. Empty. Years of neglect.

In their day they were fever dreams of debauchery. Decades
of sandstorms have scoured away the luster and color. Weeds
grow tall in the cracked streets. A thick DUST coat over it
all makes equals of everything. It hasn't rained in forever.

One CRUMBLed EGYPTIAN-THEMED HOTEL shows evidence of A BOMB
BLAST. Outsized STATUES in ruins around it. THE PILOTFISH
POV registers the radiation levels at SAFE.

It picks up on a RED DUST DEVIL, STREAKED WITH BLACK.

K (O.S.) (cont'd)
Move in right, 15 degrees. More. More.

POV SOARS OVER THE EERILY STILL RUINS TO FOLLOW THE WHIRLING
DUST. Homing in on the CLOUD OF DARK MOVEMENT WITHIN.

K (O.S.) (cont'd)
Stop. Back 20 meters. Go to 5. 6. 7.

EXT. LAS VEGAS STREET. CITY OUTSKIRTS. AFTERNOON.

K reacts. He has been flying the Spinner's PILOTFISH like a
drone. Watching its POV on the Spinner's screen.

K
Heat analysis.

K sees something in the image that strikes him. A dark
cloud. Joi watches too.

K (cont'd)
Life.

JOI
What is it?

K's look isn't reassuring.

K
We'll find out.

ON K. Decision made. He gets out of his vehicle, parked on the side of a hill. Down below, few miles away, we see the ruins of a city, lying under a cloud of red dust.

He begins to walk.

An old warning panel beaten by the wind: WARNING. RADIATION LEVELS INHOSPITABLE can be seen nearby.

LOOKING OVER THE SPINNER... We see K recede into the distance. Moving toward the city.

EXT. STATUARY COURTYARD. AFTERNOON.

People once gathered here to take photos and frolic. All under the eyes of the god-sized STATUES towering above. Erotically posed and positioned. Gods making gods. Now in semi-ruins, beheaded and disarmed.

K is a human speck at their feet. Dwarfed. Stepping over cracked and uneven concrete.

A plume of red dust beats against K.

The wind finally passes. But when it does K's eyes LOCK on something overhead that astounds him so much more than the grand ghost city. Something small.

A BEE

Flitting about. It waggles a crooked path to land...

ON HIS ARM

K is speechless. He has never seen the like. He is careful not to move lest he scare it off.

The bee takes off anyway. Flies a deliberate line through the grand statue's legs. K follows after it, as... The BEE joins another. MORE BEES STILL. Until the loose cluster rejoins...

A SWARM OF THOUSANDS. THIS was the dark cloud he saw from afar. They move as one. Their HUMS together a ROAR. Circling in waves around an ARTIFICIAL FEEDING SYSTEM.

K steps below the vertical FEEDER. Powered by a solar panel that has recently been SLEEVE-SWIPE clean of dust.

K TURNS. HEARING SOMETHING MELDED WITH THE WIND. MUSIC.

He strains to listen. The faintest sound of... A PIANO.

He raises his eyes toward the source of the sound. If it is real at all it seems to come from...

A CLASSIC OLD STYLE CASINO HOTEL

Faded, deep cracks in its foundation, the occasional window blown out. But still an architectural wonder.

EXT. CASINO HOTEL.

K crosses the lake-sized FOUNTAIN, long dry and cracked...

INT. CASINO LOBBY. AFTERNOON.

K enters great glass double doors, reinforced with steel. Sand piled at the seams. K takes a single step, and stops short at --

Seemingly nothing. Then we make out what his eyes perceived: A set of thin, carefully hidden TRIPWIRES across the floor.

He carefully steps over.

He continues in. The lobby is long abandoned. A chandelier long since crashed to the lobby floor.

K WALKS THROUGH. Dust motes swirl in the stale air.

K passes a MANNEQUIN dressed as a bellman.

He SPINS, hearing MOVEMENT. Seeing no one. And then... HE HEARS A PIANO. THREE NOTES PLAYED somewhere deep inside.

INT. CORRIDOR.

He moves into the dark. Following another NOTE'S ECHO.

INT. CASINO FLOOR.

A huge gambling hall. A bar. Behind which is AN ELABORATE PYRAMID SCULPTURE made of EMPTY ALCOHOL BOTTLES. Someone has been here. Lived and drank here.

K passes old poker tables. CARDS fanned out on a blackjack table. Dust on the felt. He picks up a card.

He walks on. Toward the sound. MOVES UP A SET OF STAIRS.

INT. CIRCULAR BAR.

A balcony on the third floor MEZZANINE. STACKS of priceless paintings against the bar. There K finds --

A PIANO

The keys open. K taps a KEY. The note rings through the airy space. Makes the current of floating dust vibrate. At which K notices --

TWO EYES staring at him in the dark --

A MANGY DOG

It is, at a glance, the ugliest dog on earth. Flea bitten and ragged. But a real, live dog. It cocks its head at K.

ON K. *Utterly awed by this animal.* Homely as it is, it is miraculous to him. He moves slowly toward it. Hand out. Hoping to touch it. So lost in the discovery, he is completely surprised by -- THE CLICK OF A GUN --

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

"You mightn't happen to have a piece of cheese about you now, boy?"

DECKARD'S ICONIC BLASTER

Comes out of the SHADOWS half into the LIGHT. Preceding

RICK DECKARD

Strong, tireless. Seasoned by time and, like teak or copper, far more handsome for the patina. But also something... cracky about him. Thoughts obscure, running together. Enough to keep us guessing if he's gone touched left alone out here too long... Or maybe just a calculated way to keep an intruder guessing...

K stares down the blaster. Takes a gamble.

K

"Treasure Island?"

DECKARD

He reads. That's good. Me too. Not much else to do around here at night anymore. "Many's the night I've dreamed of cheese -- toasted, mostly."

Deckard leads K forward, blaster is fixed on him, keeping a safe distance, as --

DECKARD (cont'd)

What are you doing here?

K

I heard the piano.