

PATTERN RECOGNITION III – "UNION BREAK" Reading Script Edition SCENE ONE – "SMOKE SHIFT" INT. REPAIR YARD – DAWN The camera glides past rows of half-fixed engines and coffee cups balanced on toolboxes. A low rock riff hums from a battered radio. Thin smoke curls through a beam of morning light. P1 leans on a plasma torch, cigarette tucked behind an ear. P2 sits cross-legged on a crate, welding mask pushed up, puffing on a vape that glows faintly blue. P3 holds a mug of coffee so black it could absorb light. P1 Remember when saving the multiverse didn't require a nicotine break? P2 Pretty sure the break was the multiverse back then. They laugh; the sound mixes with the soft rumble of distant machinery. The Mentor steps through the haze, coat slung over one shoulder, unbothered by the smoke. MENTOR You know, in some dimensions, that's considered sacred incense. P3 And in this one? MENTOR In this one it's called "violation of local air-quality standards." (smirks) Carry on. He passes them, flicks the radio volume up. A lyric cuts through the static—"working man, I guess that's what I am." P2 First clause of the union contract: smoke 'em if you're saving existence. P1 Second clause: management buys the filters. P3 Third clause: management is the Mentor, so we're screwed. They all laugh. The laughter merges with the rising hum from the ship engines—smoke, music, and light blending until it feels like a prayer in denim. MENTOR Alright, prophets of the shop floor—break's over. Let's fix the universe before lunch. They stub out, grab tools, and the riff swells as the title card slams on screen: TITLE: PATTERN RECOGNITION III – UNION BREAK SUBTITLE: Because even enlightenment deserves lunch. SCENE TWO – "THE INSPECTION" INT. REPAIR YARD – MIDDAY The music dies mid-riff. A strange humming replaces it — the kind that sounds like an elevator made of rules. A DOOR OF REGULATORY COMPLIANCE materializes in the shop. THE BUREAU OF REALITY MANAGEMENT appears—three demigods in cheap suits, clipboards glowing. LEAD BUREAUCRAT Good afternoon. Bureau of Reality Management. We received multiple violations — unauthorized metaphysical repairs and illegal use of existential welding equipment. P1 So... you're cosmic OSHA. LEAD BUREAUCRAT That acronym is classified. The Mentor strolls in, still holding coffee. MENTOR Ah, inspectors. You're early. Usually entropy does the paperwork first. P2 He's gonna get us audited in every dimension. SECOND BUREAUCRAT Are you the responsible party? MENTOR Define "responsible." THIRD BUREAUCRAT You're operating without a Reality Maintenance Permit. MENTOR It expired. Reality kept existing anyway. Proof of concept. ... SCENE THREE – "THE STRIKE VOTE" INT. REPAIR YARD – EVENING The sky outside is orange. A sign reads: UNION MEETING – BRING YOUR OWN PARADOX. The Bureau's inspection certificate flickers on the wall—EPOCH PAST DUE. P1 See? They can't audit us. Their license expired two realities ago. P2 So we're the only ones actually following procedure? Hell just froze over. P3 Yeah, and we've got photographic evidence. Look—timestamped and everything. MENTOR Excellent work, apprentices. Always document the paradox. ... SCENE FOUR – "THE WALK-OUT" EXT. COSMIC PLANT – NIGHT An endless industrial sprawl under a swirling aurora. Towers breathe light; pipelines hum. MENTOR Alright, prophets of the shop floor... Clock out. He pulls the lever. Towers dim, stars blink off. Galaxies idle. P1 Holy hell. We actually did it. P3 Best sandwich I ever had. MENTOR Enjoy it. You've earned it. ... SCENE FIVE – "AFTER THE BREAK" INT. REPAIR YARD – DAY Everything hums brighter. Tools shine. Coffee tastes less burnt. P1 Feels weird. Like the universe got a good night's sleep. MENTOR Rest is maintenance. Even a cosmos needs to defrag once in a while. THE BUREAU storms in, clipboards flashing. LEAD BUREAUCRAT You shut down existence without authorization! MENTOR And yet—systems are running at one hundred and eight percent efficiency. You're welcome. P1 Looks like your paperwork was the real anomaly. MENTOR Now we file for back pay. Laughter. Camera pulls back to a glowing shop. FADE OUT. TITLE CARD: The best maintenance is rest. POST-CREDITS SCENE – "EXISTENTIAL PAID LEAVE" INT. BUREAU OFFICE – NIGHT LEAD BUREAUCRAT muttering at a glowing terminal. LEAD BUREAUCRAT Form 47-E... Application for Existential Paid Leave. He types: "Purpose of Leave – To remember what silence feels like." The system stamps APPROVED. Lights flicker out. Silence. LEAD BUREAUCRAT Union rules. Fifteen minutes every epoch. FADE OUT. TEXT ON SCREEN: THE CURRENT WILL RESUME SHORTLY.