

EVERLASTING SOL

"Pilot"

Written by
Marshall Knight

FOURTH DRAFT

TEASER

EXT. FAR HAIFA - EARLY MORNING - ESTABLISHING

The sun rises over a sprawling CITY at one-quarter Earth speed. All the signage is in English, Mandarin and Hebrew.

Settle on a stately residential district.

SUPERSCRIPT: "FAR HAIFA, DIPLOMATIC HOUSING -- 2201"

LEVI (PRE-LAP)

Bomb.

INT. HARMONY BOYS' BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

LEVI HARMONY (17), equal parts rough and sharp, passes a digital game board to his brainy little brother BEN (14). One of Ben's avatars has met a grisly end.

BEN

Come on, you're doing it wrong.

LEVI

I'm winning, aren't I?

Levi grins cheekily at Ben, who examines the board intensely.

Suddenly, the wall above Levi's bed flickers to life, spitting out COORDINATES and a TRAJECTORY DIAGRAM.

LEVI (CONT'D)

(re: the chart)

Benny. Hey, you seeing this?

BEN

Hang on.

Ben studies the board intently... then makes a move.

LEVI

Bomb. Bye bye, Field Marshal.

BEN

Chaos isn't a strategy, Levi!

LEVI

If the key to war is "know thy enemy," how better to win than to be unknowable? Come on.

Levi roughhouses Ben out of bed, as he squawks in protest.

PRE-LAP: An ENGINE roars --

EXT. DESOLATE HIGHWAY - MORNING

A SPEEDBIKE tears across the terraformed Izanagi Crater, the outskirts of Far Haifa glinting miles back. The RINGS OF SATURN paint a great arc from horizon to horizon.

SUPERSCRIPT: "IZANAGI WASTELAND"

Ben grips his brother's torso tightly as they speed towards a rising column of SMOKE.

BENJAMIN (FILTER)
What do you think it is?

LEVI (FILTER)
Dunno. Big, whatever it is. Hard angles, gotta be man-made.

BENJAMIN (FILTER)
And what's the rush to go check it out?

Levi peers back over his shoulder, smirking.

LEVI (FILTER)
Benny, you have like zero curiosity.
(then)
Hold tight.

Ben does. He instinctively closes his eyes as they pass through the smoke.

LEVI (O.S., FILTER) (CONT'D)
Holy shit. Ben, look.

Ben opens his eyes as the smoke clears and --

NEW ANGLE, ULTRA WIDE: a MASSIVE BLACK SCAR torn through the landscape.

The brothers stop and dismount atop a roadside embankment overlooking the CRASH SITE. Flashing lights form a ring around a SPACECRAFT the size of a skyscraper. Levi surveys with BINOCULARS:

The surface of the ship glows hot from re-entry. Emergency workers hose it down. "MONTANA" is printed across the bow.

BEN
Is that a battleship?

LEVI
Quiet. I know this ship. It's from Earth.

BEN

What do you think happened?

Levi cranes his neck, tracing the smoky trail the craft left in the sky.

FAR OVERHEAD, tiny, ghostly forms dart about like fireflies. Sparks fly. Dozens of ships LOCKED IN COMBAT.

LEVI

Firefight.

At just that moment, several shimmering objects break loose from the distant vessels, becoming HOT WHITE STREAKS as they plummet towards:

EXT. FAR HAIFA - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - SAME

Far Haifa is waking up. Pedestrians filter onto sidewalks. Vendors unpack their carts. Vehicles line up in the streets.

A scant few citizens glance up to see the half-dozen ribbons of light streaking through the sky.

And without warning, the financial district is ripped apart in a THERMONUCLEAR FIREBALL. A shockwave kicks up and over a hill, flattening housing tracts.

A pedestrian, halfway through a crosswalk, is lifted onto the wind, fifty feet in the air, before FLYING APART LIKE BURNT PAPER. No one has time to react. The second bomb strikes --

SMASH TO MAIN TITLE: "**EVERLASTING SOL**"

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

I/E. THE WELL - DAY - FLASHBACK/DAYDREAM

Weightless, a boy's body tumbles dreamily through DARKNESS, until --SPLASH!

Silhouetted figures cheer from a hundred feet above. TWENTY-SOMETHING KIDS, peeling from a summer's tan, JUMP into a water-filled quarry. Boys rip gainers. Girls pencil dive in tandem.

Two FIGURES watch as one particular YOUNG MAN launches into a SWAN DIVE, only to be SWALLOWED BY THE DARK...

EXT. WATER PLANTATION - TOP OF THE WELL - DAY - PRESENT DAY

That same young man, DANIEL ALLRED, (late 20s), hardened by the weight of privilege, sits, peering into the Well: no more kids, no laughter. A daydream... or a memory.

RUSTY

What are you thinking, Daniel?

RUSTY is Daniel's android companion and servant. Servos whine slightly with every tic of his head.

DANIEL

Just how often I dreamed of diving in. Hot summers it always seemed like it'd be nice.

RUSTY

But that would be very dangerous.

DANIEL

Yeah, so I was told.

He leans back on his hands. Rusty watches Daniel, his expression mechanical, inscrutable.

RUSTY

Perhaps it's time you came inside.

Daniel's mind is elsewhere. Eventually he nods, okay --

EXT. PLANTATION HOUSE - EVENING - ESTABLISHING

A "colonial modern" mansion overlooks a thousand towering Chhatre Harvesters, as they parse moisture out of thin air.

SUPERSCRIPT: "ALLRED WATER PLANTATION -- 2230"

INT. PLANTATION HOUSE - PARLOUR - DUSK

Daniel drinks with his parents, AUSTIN and MIRANDA (70s).
Elephant tusks and other hunting trophies line the walls.

AUSTIN ALLRED
...and they won't tell you where?

DANIEL
Couldn't tell you, even if I knew.
They just said I could be gone a
long time, and to visit home.

Mr. Allred harrumphs.

AUSTIN ALLRED
And this comes from this 'Carter'
fellow I've never heard of?

MIRANDA ALLRED
Probably not his real name anyway.

AUSTIN ALLRED
No. I don't like all this secrecy.

DANIEL
I suppose you'd rather I was
deployed with the fleet somewhere.

AUSTIN ALLRED
Well, sure. My friends in the
Admiralty --

MIRANDA ALLRED
At least he's safe, Austin. An
Agency desk means he's not on the
front lines.

Daniel smiles into his drink at that.

DANIEL
That's true.

AUSTIN ALLRED
Well, have you at least kept up on
your shooting? Got a damned parting
gift around here somewhere --

DANIEL
I go to the range now and then.

Austin finds what he's looking for: a stiff, deployable piece
of fabric, which turns INVISIBLE. A personal CLOAKING DEVICE.

AUSTIN ALLRED

Well, it won't do you any good at a range -- but get outdoors and you're the perfect predator.

MIRANDA ALLRED

Hardly seems fair.

AUSTIN ALLRED

That's evolution. A tiger has his stripes and claws, we get opposable thumbs and a DeltaCo arsenal.

Daniel smiles genuinely this time as he examines the device.

INT. PLANTATION HOUSE - MUSIC ROOM - NIGHT

Miranda PLAYS A PIANO NOCTURNE. Daniel watches, slouching, several drinks deep.

MIRANDA ALLRED

Do you remember your part?

DANIEL

Um...

He slides onto the bench next to her. Starts plinking gingerly on the keys as she accompanies.

MIRANDA ALLRED

Come on, you know it. You picked it out by ear when you were just five years old.

(then)

No no, da DA da da --

DANIEL

Yeah, no, it's just --

But she stops with a discordant thud, irritated, and reaches into the upper register.

MIRANDA ALLRED

Here. Da DA da da dum da...

DANIEL

Mom! What do you want? I don't know it. I've never known it, as long as I can remember. Sometimes I think you're just --

MIRANDA ALLRED

I'm just what?

She stares at him, looking too old to be this boy's mother.

DANIEL
Misremembering.

She snorts and turns back to the keys. Disappointed.

MIRANDA ALLRED
No. You were a natural.

He sighs, drunk and resigned. Starts plinking along again. Closer this time. But never quite right.

INT. N.D. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A SECRETARY sits between Daniel and an unmarked door. There's METAL HISS as she slides side to side at her desk, multi-tasking as Daniel quakes in exasperation.

DANIEL
I'm supposed to be here.

SECRETARY
I'm sorry. Until you've filled out that form --

DANIEL
I have. A dozen times.

SECRETARY
Well, your DNA scan --

DANIEL
I know what the biometrics say. There's *another* Daniel Allred in your system; his information got conflated with mine! Do you not remember this? We're wasting taxpayer dollars on a glitch.

SECRETARY
Sir, if you'd fill out that form --

DANIEL
Can I please just speak to a human!

As he reaches over her desk, we realize that *hissing* is the Secretary's torso sliding on a track. She's an android.

Just then, the door opens and in steps CARTER (50s), a short, severe woman, and government careerist.

CARTER
Allred. Come with me.

DANIEL
Carter, thank God.

He darts away as Carter frees him from this bureaucratic hell.

INT. ISIA STATION - DAY

Carter briefs Daniel crisply inside a sterile office, seal of the "Inner Sol Intelligence Agency" on the walls.

CARTER
How was your leave?

DANIEL
I think my mother's starting to finally lose it.

CARTER
I'm sorry.

She doesn't sound it, and moves past the small talk quickly.

CARTER (CONT'D)
What do you know of Levi Harmony?

DANIEL
Um. Separatist from Rhea. Crash of the *Alta Luna*. Four hundred civilian casualties to his name.

CARTER
Five hundred, counting last week's bombing in New Guangzhou.

DANIEL
So he's the Reds' problem now?

CARTER
Levi Harmony is everyone's problem. With the help of the GDK, we tracked Harmony to Titan five days ago --

DANIEL
Interplanetary cooperation. Really.

CARTER
Yes. Well, Harmony managed to escape on his frigate, the *Kogia*, and he's now in the wind.
(cueing up a video)
But we did manage to capture an accomplice. One Ping Wei.

ON SCREEN, a man in an interrogation room, PING WEI, is questioned. He begins COUGHING, doubled over. As his interrogators come to his aid, Ping Wei EXPLODES!

Daniel averts his eyes as Carter continues, coolly:

CARTER (CONT'D)

We had started to break him. Levi Harmony is plotting a new attack on Earth. Something "historic."

DANIEL

Nothing more specific?

Carter shrugs. That's all we know.

Then she CUES UP a photo on screen: a gaunt, pale man in his early 40s. His eyes are CLOUDED OVER. Radiation cataracts.

CARTER

Levi has a brother, Benjamin. We've detained him four times under various pretexts. So far nothing regarding Levi's whereabouts. But in light of recent developments, we're going to have another crack at him.

DANIEL

And that's where I come in?

CARTER

Ben Harmony is on Earth, crewing up for a mining expedition aboard his ship, the *Asherah*. You're going to infiltrate his crew, determine whether he is involved in this terror plot, and if possible, lure his brother, Levi, out of hiding.

A beat, as Daniel processes this. Then, a little arrogantly:

DANIEL

Sounds doable.

Carter hands him a packet:

CARTER

Your legend. Learn it. Do not deviate from it. I've worked in as much true-to-life detail as the analysts would allow, to make it easier on you.

DANIEL

Wait, did I do something wrong?
This isn't my first go-round.

CARTER

Frankly, if my best field officers weren't busy with the Reds, I'd never assign a deep cover op to someone so inexperienced --

DANIEL

I was undercover for a year on Elevator watch. I got a medal!

CARTER

(unflinching)

There are no safehouses, nor rescue teams in deep space. Ben Harmony keeps a low profile; he's careful, verging on paranoid. If you spook him out there, then Sol help you.

Finally, Daniel nods. Feigned humility.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Quartermaster!

A QUARtermaster in a clean suit enters, presenting Daniel with a small carrying case. Inside are devices disguised as articles for PERSONAL GROOMING -- an ersatz RAZOR BLADE, shaving cream, etc.

QUARtermaster

Officer Allred. Your kit.

(demonstrating)

Entry, eavesdropping, evasion, all the usual business. And this...

He holds up a thin, reticulated metal cylinder and hands it to Daniel.

CARTER

How's your Dodd Code?

Daniel twists the segments of the little device rapidly. Words pop up on-screen: "*Impeccable.*"

CARTER (CONT'D)

I expect a report every six hours if even remotely possible.

DANIEL

From out in the Belt? What's powering this thing?

QUARTERMASTER

Nothing. It's totally analog.
 (off Daniel's surprise)
 It uses quantum entanglement,
 paired with a receiver here. All
 transmissions are instantaneous and
 totally untraceable.
 (now off his skepticism)
 So far, anyway.

CARTER

It also cost more than a destroyer.
 Do not lose it.

He flashes his eyebrows noncommittally, snaps the Communicator into its case and tucks it under his arm.

DANIEL

Yes, sir. Will I be seeing you in
 Quito, or is this goodbye?

CARTER

This is goodbye for now. Be
 careful, Daniel.

Daniel nods, gives a little salute and exits. As he goes, Carter's steely visage melts into a frown of concern.

EXT. CIRRUS HEIGHTS - DAY - ESTABLISHING

A hundred miles above the equator, a carriage crawls up a SPACE ELEVATOR towards a glistening CITY IN THE SKY -- all solar panels and stalactite skyscrapers, hanging on a thread.

INT. CIRRUS HEIGHTS - *PERIHELION* - DAY

At a bar called *Perihelion*, Daniel sips a scotch alone, a glowing periodical open before him. From his POV, it shows a profile of BEN HARMONY.

SUPERSCRIPT: "CIRRUS HEIGHTS -- 450 KM ABOVE SEA LEVEL"

But Daniel's distracted. There's a pretty, exotic woman, OMOLARA ADINGE (30s) sitting alone at the bar.

DANIEL

How long does it usually take?

Omolara looks up. Daniel smiles widely and approaches.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

For some sucker to come buy you a
 drink?

OMOLARA

I'm sorry, I don't know why you're talking to me.

He stops. Her face doesn't betray spite or condescension. She's just being honest.

KING

Mr. Altamont?

Daniel turns. A man stands before him, THICK and DARK, the opposite of the photos in Daniel's file. We'll later come to know him as MR. KING, but for now --

KING (CONT'D)

I'm Ben Harmony.

DANIEL

Oh. Pleased to meet you.

Covering his surprise, Daniel extends a friendly hand.

INT. CIRRUS HEIGHTS - BACK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel sits across from "Harmony," still suspicious.

KING

How long did you serve on the *Idaho*?

DANIEL

Last twenty months at the Academy.

KING

Still have contacts in the Navy?

DANIEL

They don't take well to deserters, so no, I wouldn't think so.

KING

That's as good a reason to get off of Earth as any, huh?

Daniel nods.

KING (CONT'D)

But you're still up on tactics?

DANIEL

They're not that hard to get ahold of if you know where to look.

Mr. King mmm-hmmm's to himself, flipping through Daniel's information. It goes on for several pages.

KING

Look, this is *all* very impressive --

DANIEL

Thank you.

KING

But I'm afraid we've already found our new Tactical Officer.

Off Daniel's squawk, he nods towards a little window looking back into the bar. Daniel turns and sees Omolara framed there, staring down at nothing in particular. Odd bird.

DANIEL

Her? Now, wait a minute --

KING

Miss Adinge has a leg up on you --

DANIEL

How's that?

KING

For starts, she's got an electronic warfare suite built right in --

DANIEL

Wait, you're getting yanked around. There's no way she's an android.

KING

She isn't. But she's better equipped for combat than you or I. Unless you got some off-the-books tech I should hear about.

Daniel shakes his head, doesn't know what to say. He stares at his false papers in disbelief. King starts to get up.

KING (CONT'D)

Well. We appreciate your time --

DANIEL

Wait, I have training in astronav, EVA, uh, hull repair, I mean I can *do* anything you need!

KING

Sorry.

Daniel scrambles, his opportunity walking out the door --

DANIEL

Shit. I used to *feed* a hundred guys
on my boat.

Mr. King stops short.

KING

You cook?

OFF Daniel's desperate nod:

INT. DOCKING PLATFORM - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel and Omolara follow King through the docking area, a cart of luggage trailing obediently behind.

KING

If your affairs are all in order,
we'll be shoving off promptly --

They pass through an arch which BLARES IN ALARM. Omolara is suddenly bathed in neon -- highlighting a steely skeleton and a THOUSAND METAL DOTS alien to a normal human body.

WICKETT

Some good looking enhancements.

Around the corner, a man, WICKETT (30s), leans in wait. His is the sleazier side of charm. Omolara doesn't pick up on the double entendre.

OMOLARA

Thank you.

KING

Mister Wickett, likewise a new hire.
Speaks eleven dialects and,
astoundingly, none like a gentleman.

Wickett nods with a wink, glancing lustily at Omolara.

Through a porthole, a huge, spindly vessel (like a scarab crossed with a falcon's talon) sits docked. *The Asherah*.

DANIEL

That's your ship?

KING

Mmmhmm. Ash is as dangerous as she
is beautiful.

DANIEL
...so she's unarmed?

KING
Ha. Let's go.

They push ahead through a threshold where an AUTOMATED VOICE chimes in to tell them:

AUTOMATED VOICE
You are now leaving the gravity well. Watch your step.

Their FEET LIFT OFF THE FLOOR. Grabbing well-marked handholds, they float their way into --

INT. THE ASHERAH - OUTER SHELL - CONTINUOUS

The interior of the ship is segmented into an inner and outer shell. The Outer Shell has no gravity, and the cylindrical Inner spins to create its own.

They float towards a hatch in the turning surface.

DANIEL
Captain, I didn't mean any offense with that remark about your ship.

KING
Son, two things: One, I got skin thick as leather --

He disappears into the Inner Shell.

INT. THE ASHERAH - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Daniel climbs up and into a narrow command area, stopping when he sees --

KING
And two. Stop calling me "Captain."

Reclining in the captain's chair is the REAL BENJAMIN HARMONY, just like the pictures. Thin, nearly blind, and unnervingly still.

DANIEL
Ah. I see.
(to the Real Harmony)
I'm --

HARMONY
Mister King already briefed me.

Daniel and Wickett both look at the man that, until now, they've been calling Captain: MR. KING.

HARMONY (CONT'D)

A few words before we depart: The Belt is hard country. Once that hatch closes, you don't answer to the Blues or the Reds anymore. Only allegiance that matters is yours to me.

A beat as Daniel, Wickett and Omo stand listening.

HARMONY (CONT'D)

Glad we all understand each other.

He swivels back around, nodding King's way. King escorts the others out.

HARMONY (CONT'D)

Snow, take us out.

S.N.O.

Yes, sir.

S.N.O. (for Stellar Navigation Omnibus), a flight jacketed, holographic representation of the ship's AI, nods in assent.

Daniel looks into the Outer Shell as the HATCH LURCHES SHUT. He's committed now.

EXT. THE ASHERAH - SAME

The *Asherah* embarks and engages her Alcubierre-White drive, an uneven ring protruding from her midsection. Suddenly, she accelerates, the earth shrinking away to the size of a saucer, a quarter, a mote of dust.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. THE ASHERAH - INNER SHELL - ARTIFICIAL NIGHT

Daniel carries his small luggage along the interior cylinder of the *Asherah*, the floor of each narrow room curving gently upward into the next.

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - ARTIFICIAL NIGHT

Daniel enters a spartan, windowless room: his quarters. An EVA suit eats space in the corner by the cot and toilet.

DANIEL

Beautiful.

He seals the door, sets his pack on the cot, opens the case containing his equipment, only to stop himself --

He slips on a pair of GLASSES and surveys the room.

HIS POV: The wires and air ducts inside the walls JUMP INTO FLUORESCENT VIEW. He ignores most of it, attention drawn to a glowing ORB behind the mirror. That's interesting...

He pops the shaving kit out of his bag, makes a SHOW OF RUBBING HIS CHIN STUBBLE and approaches the mirror. He shaves, surreptitiously examining the device:

Its shape hints at an eye. Or an ear.

He finishes up, washes his hands.

INT. THE ASHERAH - BRIDGE - ARTIFICIAL NIGHT

Daniel slips onto the bridge. A figure sits in the captain's chair. He approaches and finds --

Omolara. Staring into the holographic representation of space as it WRAPS ALL AROUND -- she is alone on a wooden plank in an endless the void.

DANIEL

Oh. Sorry, I was looking for the Captain... What are you doing?

OMOLARA

Calibrating my targeting sensors.
(then)
Why aren't you sleeping like the others?

DANIEL

Can't sleep.

He takes a seat on the floor beside her.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I have this recurring dream I can never make it through. About falling. It takes place at home, but -- this is weird, but it feels like it belongs to someone else.

Suddenly she turns to look at him.

OMOLARA

You're lying.
(off his surprise)
That's a rehearsed response.

DANIEL

What? Maybe I've repeated myself about it, but like I said, it's *recurring*.

OMOLARA

I apologize. I don't always read these things properly.

She breaks his eye contact. Embarrassed?

OMOLARA (CONT'D)

If I fall asleep while interfacing with an AI, I too have strange dreams, populated by sprites.
(then)
That feeling of community is nice.

Daniel gives her a little smile. To their surprise, from S.N.O.'s station comes an electronic SIGH.

The door slides open and their attention is drawn to:

HARMONY

What are you doing?

DANIEL

Captain. She's doing calibrations. And I'm keeping her company.

Harmony stares at Daniel. The first time he's really looked at him, squinting those cloudy eyes.

HARMONY

I know what *she's* doing. Don't come onto the bridge without permission.

He turns to go.

DANIEL
 Hey, what good is a crew if you
 can't trust them?

HARMONY
 You're hired. That's implicit trust.

DANIEL
 If that's true, then you won't mind
 disabling the listening devices in
 our quarters.

Harmony stops, turns, stares hard. So does Omolara. Daniel
 sweats for a moment. Shit. He continues, nervously:

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 We've got little enough space for
 privacy as is.

HARMONY
 ...I'll give you that.
 (beat)
 Alright. Don't make me regret it.

Harmony exits as Daniel lets out his breath. Omolara gives
 him a weird look. That was a little crazy.

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel collapses onto his bunk. Takes a moment.

Finally, he slips his glasses out and scans the wall. The
 once-glowing orb in the center of the mirror has GONE DARK.

DANIEL
 ...well, that's interesting.

He finds his communicator and begins to code a message.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ISIA STATION - DAY

Carter is at her desk, drinking a steaming tea. Her ANDROID
 SECRETARY (identical to the first) calls from the anteroom:

SECRETARY
 Dodd Code message from Field
 Officer Allred. Shall I read it?

CARTER
 Please.

SECRETARY

"First report: detected eavesdropping equipment in quarters. Confronted Harmony and he deactivated it."

CARTER

(near spit take)

He did *what*?

(directly to the computer)

Reply as follows: Daniel, that's the most brash, idiotic thing you've ever done. You've only been up there a few hours and you may have already blown your cover.

There's a delay as the device ratchets in Daniel's hand and he pieces together Carter's message in his head.

He sighs, then begins sending again.

SECRETARY

"I don't think so. If he really thinks there's a spy in his midst, there's no way he makes that privacy concession. He keeps the bug active at all costs."

Carter ponders that through a piping hot sip.

CARTER

His response *is* surprising.

SECRETARY

"But the fact that he didn't press the issue could mean he didn't want to raise suspicion about whatever he's really hiding.

(pause)

For all his paranoia, I don't think Ben Harmony is dangerous."

CARTER

Now *that is* a dangerous assumption to make.

(finally, resigned)

Daniel, I need you to be more careful going forward.

SECRETARY

"Understood. Signing off. Work to do."

He stashes the little device, then assesses the rest of his gleaming equipment.

INT. THE ASHERAH - BULKHEAD - MOMENTS LATER

POP. A wall panel comes loose. The cool light from Daniel's quarters mingles with the orange fluorescents inside: a glowing tangle of A THOUSAND FIBEROPTIC CABLES.

DANIEL
(sighing)
Okay.

Daniel slips inside, adjusting his glasses as he searches for a juncture attached to the deactivated listening device.

Peeling a particular strand away from the others, Daniel attaches a small DEVICE, which flickers to life.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
That oughtta do'er.

He slinks out again.

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel lies back onto his bed and slips on a SET OF HEADPHONES. Voices crackle to life:

WICKETT (FILTER)
So how come you won't tell me where
you're from? Adinge's gotta be,
what, African?

OMOLARA (FILTER)
It doesn't seem pertinent.

WICKETT (FILTER)
So you're not interested in friends.
We don't have to be *friends*...

He's got ears throughout the ship!

He flips through more muted conversations, settling on:

INT. THE ASHERAH - HARMONY'S QUARTERS - SAME

Mister King follows Harmony into the latter's quarters. They close the door and lock it with a THUNK.

Their voices are low, but Daniel picks up:

KING
Come on. Open her up.

Harmony slips a CONTAINER out from beneath his bed. Unlocks it with a SNAP.

HARMONY

Don't bring that out, Hurley.

KING

Your reluctance is understandable.
And irrelevant.

What are they talking about? Harmony grunts, opens the case.

REVEAL: It's filled with MEDICATIONS. Bottles rattle as Harmony extracts a handful of pills.

KING (CONT'D)

Please.

Harmony obliges with a grimace, chases the pills with water.

A beat, then Harmony lurches towards the lavatory. He starts to vomit.

KING (CONT'D)

Ah dammit. It's okay.

King comes to him, rubs his shoulders and back, comforting him. A tender moment that borders on -- romantic?

Captain Harmony hurls again.

BACK TO:

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - RESUME

Daniel hangs up his headphones, a little disgusted with himself.

EXT. ASTEROID BELT

The *Asherah* approaches a cluster of asteroids. Another ship flits out, tugging a rock twice its size.

SUPERSCRIPT: "THE BELT -- DISPUTED TERRITORY"

INT. ASTEROID MINE - ARTIFICIAL DAY

Omolara walks at the head of the group as they pass through an airlock into a claustrophobic (but gravity bound) platinum mine. King leads Harmony almost like a service dog.

Daniel and Wickett take up the rear as they're met by:

FOREMAN LAI

(Cantonese)

Where I come from, it's polite to wait at the door until you've been let in.

A stout older man, FOREMAN LAI stands, barring their way. He glares at them imperiously.

HARMONY

Wickett!

Wickett hustles to the front.

HARMONY (CONT'D)

That's Foreman Lai. What did he just say?

WICKETT

Uh...

(awkward pause)

"Where he's going, one should -- "

Harmony takes him by the shoulder faces him up.

HARMONY

Wickett. This man seems very unhappy, and I want to know why. Do you understand him or not?

WICKETT

I -- he's speaking a dialect of Old Red. I haven't spoken in a while.

HARMONY

Unbelievable.

He puts his hands up, palms out.

HARMONY (CONT'D)

Everyone, put your hands where the man can see them while Wickett talks himself out of a major ass-kicking, into only a minor one.

The others comply. Wickett moves slowly towards Foreman Lai. They exchange a look, its significance not yet clear.

HARMONY (CONT'D)

Now, apologize for whatever we did.

Wickett makes a show of piecing together the right words in Cantonese.

WICKETT
 (bad Cantonese)
 "We apologize if we've upset you."

HARMONY
 Now, remind him that we've worked
 together before, under Foreman Yue.

WICKETT
 (bad Cantonese)
 "We've worked together, under Yue."

FOREMAN LAI
 (Cantonese)
 Yue is dead.

WICKETT
 He says, "Yue died."

FOREMAN LAI
 (Cantonese)
 But your friends do good business.

WICKETT
 But that you do -- um, that's --
 good business, I think.

Finally, Foreman Lai cracks a grin.

KING
 (sotto, to Harmony)
 He's smiling.

Harmony smiles in reply, and extends a hand half-blindly. The Foreman takes it.

INT. ASTEROID MINE - MOMENTS LATER

The group tours the mine in the same formation as before.

The place is swarming with CLONE WORKERS -- like the Epsilons of *Brave New World*, they are barely self-aware, and don't make great conversationalists. But they are *big*.

HARMONY
 Some outfits tug whole asteroids
 back to Earth. Something to be said
 for that, and we dabble in whole-
 sale once in a while. But it's
 expensive, and getting a rock down
 to regulation size is a pain.

DANIEL
 Regulation size?

KING

Wouldn't want a rock twenty clicks
wide falling to Earth, would we?

DANIEL

Right. No, of course.

Daniel thinks on this. They pass by several identical clones,
using PLASMA CUTTERS to shear off chunks of minerals.

HARMONY

Our special arrangement is to take
just the raw ore that these guys
carve out. Platinum, mostly. More
profit that way.

DANIEL

I thought strip-mining was ill--

Harmony cuts him off with a look.

HARMONY

Daniel, they've got a little
vegetable garden. Why don't you
round up some ingredients and cook
something for, oh, sixty men.

(to Omo)

And one woman, I guess. My little
treat.

Harmony nods congenially at the clone workers. OFF Daniel's
interested stare --

INT. GARDEN - ARTIFICIAL DAY

Daniel peruses an unbelievable, verdant vegetable garden in
the hollowed out stone. It's a tiny sea of BRILLIANT GREEN.

FLASHES OF:

I/E. THE WELL - DAY - FLASHBACK/DAYDREAM

Daniel's bare feet pad through soil on his parents'
plantation. The Chhatre towers shimmer green like giant bean
stalks.

Ahead, the DARK MAW OF THE WELL awaits...

INT. GARDEN - RESUME

Once he's gotten over this incredible sight, Daniel begins
picking tomatoes, bell peppers and so on.

Until he's drawn by YELLING and a LOUD COMMOTION outside.

INT. ASTEROID MINE - CONTINUOUS

Daniel steps out into the mine.

ADMINISTRATOR

(Cantonese)

Get him out of there! Shut it down
and pull him out!

Administrators and clone miners alike drag one INJURED ADMINISTRATOR out from a piece of machinery. His chest is a GRISLY, CRUSHED CAVITY.

He moans as they carry him off.

Foreman Lai rushes in to see the disaster. He quickly brings up a manifest and reaches for ONE OF THE CLONES.

FOREMAN LAI

(Cantonese)

You, come with me.

He grabs the Clone and they disappear in a noisy procession, the Clone's dozen twins watching with bovine emptiness.

Daniel follows them to:

INT. SICKBAY - MOMENTS LATER

The wailing administrator is sedated by the mine's MEDICAL OMNIBUS. A scanner hums to life.

Daniel and Wickett lean around the corner, peering in as the Foreman and the Omnibus chatter in the b.g.

WICKETT

Sounds like a ruptured stomach and
two collapsed lungs. He doesn't
have long.

DANIEL

...you don't know "hello" but you
can understand all that?

Wickett seems caught off guard.

WICKETT

What? No. I'm just --
(indicating)
-- it's on the screen.

Meanwhile, Foreman Lai barks at the Clone, who sits, confused and apprehensive.

MEDICAL OMNIBUS

(Cantonese)

He's a match. Good thing you ordered
all O-Negs. Shall I proceed?

FOREMAN LAI

(Cantonese, to the Clone)

It's in your contract. If you don't
comply, you won't get anything.

WICKETT

I think he's saying, "If you don't
cooperate, you'll forfeit your
shares."

You could practically hear the wheels in the Clone's head
creak as they turn. Finally:

O-NEGATIVE CLONE

(Cantonese)

Oh. Alright then.

They're joined by Mister King as the Medical Omnibus jabs the
Clone with a sedative, knocking him cold.

The administrator pulls a plastic blind over the medical bay.
A buzzsaw WHIRS and BLOOD SPLATTERS everywhere.

Daniel looks sick.

DANIEL

This is messed up.

KING

That it is.

King turns to leave again, but Daniel can't move himself from
the spot.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. ASTEROID MINE

Space-suited clones help guide a mechanical ORE LOADER, which moves chunks of asteroid ore onto the *Asherah*.

INT. THE ASHERAH - KITCHEN - ARTIFICIAL NIGHT

Daniel stirs a large pot, putting the finishing touches on a gargantuan meal, dozens of bowls and plates stacked nearby.

Headphones donned, he hears DOZENS OF VOICES CHATTERING.

KING

Hey, kid, everyone's ready.

Daniel removes his headphones, casually adjusting them so that they're now playing 21st century music. King hears, seems to recognize the tune.

KING (CONT'D)

...what're you listening to?

DANIEL

Just some anachronistic shit.

KING

Yeah? The classics, huh?

Daniel just shrugs and nods.

INT. THE ASHERAH - ARBORETUM - ARTIFICIAL DAY

Daniel ladles out stew to dozens of clones (six sets of them identical), Administrators, Foreman Lai and the *Asherah's* crew.

They relax on Astroturf, which stretches 360 degrees in a large cylindrical room. At the center stands a disfigured olive tree.

HARMONY

I don't really care for speeches.
But I thought it worth taking the
time to express our appreciation of
your hard work.

A third of the way up the slope, Harmony notices Wickett and Foreman Lai sitting together.

CLOSE ON their mouths as they converse rapidly, fluently.

HARMONY (CONT'D)
So. Consider it expressed.

Wickett approaches, a bottle of absinthe in hand.

WICKETT
This is from the Foreman. Thought everyone might share a toast.

Harmony looks hard at Wickett, whose expression falters.

HARMONY
(not breaking eye contact)
Daniel, we have glasses enough for that?

DANIEL
I can make it happen.

WICKETT
Great.

Weirded out by Harmony's stare, Wickett pops the cork. A cheerful murmur goes up through the clones.

NEW ANGLE: Everyone has a drink in hand. Daniel, Omolara, Wickett, Foreman Lai and some administrators sit together.

The Injured Administrator laughs at a joke, holding his sides, which are crudely stitched up.

DANIEL
(to the Foreman)
So, having not had much experience with clones, I've got to wonder how they mind being treated like spare parts.

A moment as Wickett translates. The INJURED ADMINISTRATOR, (bandaged up) barks in Cantonese, as the Foreman shrugs and looks around, replying more casually.

WICKETT
He says, ah -- well, he says, "That clone saved my life." But Foreman Lai wants to remind you, that "clones are incapable of that sort of" -- what is it -- "abstract thought. The science isn't there ye to give them a soul, if you will."
(beat)
"Til that changes, we can't treat them like humans. It would be unethical."

DANIEL

What happened to the body of the donor from earlier?

Again, a wait.

WICKETT

Hey says they would be "mad to let it go to waste. It was processed into fertilizer for the garden."

A beat. Daniel's face sours and he sets his bowl of stew down, disgusted.

DANIEL

Omo, are you hearing this?

But she seems to be FADING FAST, eyes drooping, unresponsive.

WICKETT

I think she's as sick of this heavy talk as I am.

(to Omolara)

What do you say we get out of here, huh, sweetness?

A delayed, disoriented nod. Wickett picks Omolara up. Daniel looks surprised and moderately horrified. The Foreman grins at Wickett's conquest and wolf whistles.

FOREMAN LAI

Ow ow!

Daniel tries to catch Omo's eye as Wickett leads her away -- there's something off about her.

INT. OUTER SHELL - N.D. DARK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Wickett tugs Omo weightlessly into some anonymous mechanical corner of the ship. Could she possibly be this drunk off of a single glass?

WICKETT

Here we go, baby. Let's get you comfortable.

He floats her up against the wall and starts STRAPPING HER DOWN, breath hot on her neck.

CLOSE ON her eyes, which are WIDE WITH TERROR. She's completely immobilized!

INT. THE ASHERAH - ARBORETUM - ARTIFICIAL DAY

As the miners depart, Harmony sits lost in thought. Daniel watches him, his own expression sour. Suddenly:

HARMONY
Boys. Come with me.

He stands and urges them to follow.

INT. THE ASHERAH - OUTER SHELL - MOMENTS LATER

The trio float through a corridor in the outer shell.

HARMONY
Mister Wickett!

Wickett emerges from a side room and seals the door behind himself. He sidles up next to Daniel, gives him a sick grin.

HARMONY (CONT'D)
Meeting of the minds.
(then)
Where's Omo?

WICKETT
She wasn't feeling well.

HARMONY
Well -- gather, please -- I've got
some troubling news.
(weighty pause)
Someone's been sending coded
messages from the ship. A serious
breach of trust.

Daniel's face drains. Oh shit.

HARMONY (CONT'D)
I've had my suspicions as to the
identity of the culprit, but only
now have I had them confirmed.
(to Daniel)
Daniel, would you come here?

Daniel TENSES UP, prepared to fight for his life. Slowly, he floats forward, closing the gap between himself and Harmony. Harmony takes hold of Daniel's shoulder and --

Reaches past him, hitting a wall console. A door SEALS WICKETT INSIDE behind them. He hammers on the tiny porthole.

WICKETT
Wait, what the hell -- !!

HARMONY

I'm sure you had your reasons for
deceiving me, interpreter. But you
knew my rules.

Before Wickett can counter, Harmony flips another switch, and
the little room OPENS TO SPACE, sucking him out!

EXT. THE ASHERAH - SAME

Like a rag doll, Wickett whips through the void, DEAD in
seconds.

INT. THE ASHERAH - CORRIDOR - SAME

Daniel dry heaves. He's in shock.

HARMONY

Mister King, seal the entrances and
make the ship ready to depart. I'll
work up an alibi for our return to
Earth.

He notices Daniel's beleaguered expression.

HARMONY (CONT'D)

Sorry you had to see that. Collect
yourself, then please clean up the
arboretum.

He and King exit, leaving Daniel wide eyed in terror.

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel closes his door, rapid breaths. He scrambles to code a
message for Carter...

INT. ISIA STATION - NIGHT

The Agency is dark and lifeless as Carter's computer springs
to life:

"SOS. Harmony is violently insane."

A muffled voice from the anteroom, where the Secretary would
normally be reading the message.

NIGHT SHIFT OFFICER (O.S.)

Shhh, don't talk.

REVEAL: The NIGHT SHIFT OFFICER stands at the edge of the
android Secretary's desk in the anteroom.

His trousers half-way down, he's corralled the silicone woman's face into his crotch. Enjoying himself over her indecipherable words, he's missing Daniel's message.

On Carter's screen: "Only a matter of time before -- "

BACK TO:

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - RESUME

Daniel stops suddenly, stares at the communicator, realizing his mistake.

DANIEL
Untraceable, my ass.

He tucks it away into the case, stops, looks over his ersatz shaving kit, weighing his options.

INT. THE ASHERAH - BRIDGE - ARTIFICIAL DAY

Daniel enters the Bridge to find Harmony alone, preparing the ship for departure.

DANIEL
Permission to enter?

HARMONY
Mmm. Not a great time.

Daniel steps in, locks the door behind him. He has armed himself with the STRAIGHT RAZOR, hidden but at the ready.

Harmony stops, realizes something is up.

HARMONY (CONT'D)
What is it?

Daniel is about to confront him, when S.N.O. chirps up.

S.N.O.
Captain, we've got unauthorized movement in the ore loader.

HARMONY
What the hell?

He flips a switch that puts a SURVEILLANCE VIDEO on screen:

A barely conscious form is being spirited out of a container. Holy shit, it's Omo! The miners have kidnapped her!

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. THE ASHERAH - ARTIFICIAL DAY

Harmony and Daniel have a rapid exchange as they watch Omolara carted off screen.

DANIEL
We need to go after her.

HARMONY
Don't be rash.

DANIEL
That's like my calling card. I *am*
going after her.

HARMONY
They've sealed the airlock.

DANIEL
Then I'll go EVA.

Harmony looks at him, assessing.

HARMONY
It's your life.

DANIEL
I signed the contract. Just try to
buy some time, okay?

As Daniel makes a beeline for the door.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
She had to have been drugged. I'd
check out that bottle of absinthe
Wickett gave us.

HARMONY
But we all had some...

Daniel throws his hands up, any better ideas? He exits in a hurry.

INT. THE ASHERAH - ENGINEERING - SAME

King is in the process of firing up the matter-antimatter reactor, when Harmony comes over the intercom.

HARMONY (FILTER)
Mister King. Find that liquor
bottle and have the AIs scan
whatever's inside. Double time.

KING

Yes, sir!

He turns to E.L.M.O. (the Engineering, Logistics and Maintenance Omnibus), another holographic representation of the ship's partitioned AI, physically identical to S.N.O.

KING (CONT'D)

Get this fired up, Elmo.

BACK TO:

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - SAME

Daniel scrambles into the EVA SUIT dangling in his room. It's clumsy moving around inside. He snaps the HELMET into place, is about to leave when something in the room CATCHES HIS EYE...

INT. THE ASHERAH - BRIDGE - SAME

Meanwhile, Harmony hails Foreman Lai, who appears large on-screen.

HARMONY

Foreman Lai. I -- can you understand me?

FOREMAN LAI

(English)

No need to understand, but some I do.

HARMONY

Right. Okay. Well, listen: we can work something out here; we've worked together fruitfully in the past. I just want my crew back.

FOREMAN LAI

Girl is an aug. Battle aug. Worth more than ship, ore, and rest of crew.

HARMONY

You can't put a price tag on a person.

FOREMAN LAI

Sorry. I cannot, also, allow you to leave.

HARMONY

Yeah, no. We'll be leaving with the girl, the ship and all the rest.

But Harmony doesn't look terribly confident right now.

EXT. ASTEROID MINE - DOCKING BERTH - SAME

Daniel, clad in his protective suit, listening in on this exchange, exits the ship and propels himself towards the mine.

FOREMAN LAI (FILTER)
I think *you* do not understand.

Daniel enters an airlock. It's filled with mining equipment including a dozen PLASMA CUTTERS.

Daniel looks through the porthole into the COMMAND MODULE. Foreman Lai sits at center, surrounded by FIFTEEN ADMINISTRATORS.

INT. THE ASHERAH - ARBORETUM - SAME

Meanwhile, King rushes through the arboretum. No liquor bottle, so he grabs an armful of expended glassware.

He rushes towards the glowing neon CROSS at the door to --

INT. THE ASHERAH - SICKBAY - CONTINUOUS

King charges inside and deposits the glasses on a scanning bed. He addresses M.A.R.C.O., a third holographic A.I. with reticulating mechanical arms throughout the room.

KING
Doc, analyze what's in these glasses.

CA-THUNK, a scanner sweeps over the glassware.

M.A.R.C.O.
I detect fermented wormwood,
fennel, anise --

KING
No, what *else*?

Harmony crackles over the intercom --

HARMONY (FILTER)
King, whatever it is could have been
in her glass *before* the drink was
poured.

King looks out into the arboretum. DOZENS MORE glasses sit scattered around. His face darkens, when --

M.A.R.C.O.

Here we are! A nanovirus, which seems designed to target the cybernetic nodes in augmented humans.

KING

So it would only affect Omo. Can we treat it?

M.A.R.C.O.

Paralysis would be brought on by the host's endoskeleton shutting down. I'd suggest a hard reset.

KING

A "hard reset?"

M.A.R.C.O.

In most augs, an electrical shock of 5,000 volts or more will cause a system reboot.

KING

Now that's some *Pulp Fiction* shit.

BACK TO:

INT. ASTEROID MINE - SAME

Daniel hears and understands. He looks to the rack of mining equipment and pulls out a plasma cutter.

DANIEL

I think I can work something out.

Then he removes that CLOAKING DEVICE, the hunting blind his father gifted him, from his pack.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

If I can get there...

He holds his breath and --

INT. ASTEROID MINE - COMMAND MODULE - CONTINUOUS

With a HISS the airlock opens into the module full of Miner/Slavers. Foreman Lai looks up, suspiciously.

NO ONE THERE. No sign of Daniel.

FOREMAN LAI

(Cantonese with Subtitles)

What's going on with that?

ADMINISTRATOR #1
 (Cantonese with Subtitles)
 Don't know.

The Foreman holds a hand up to Harmony, who's still on-screen. Administrator #1 checks the airlock.

ADMINISTRATOR #1 (CONT'D)
 (Cantonese with Subtitles)
 Nothing... Could the girl have done it?

REVEAL: His CLOAKING DEVICE held up like a shield, Daniel TIP-TOES through the Command Module, his flank exposed, narrowly DODGING the Slavers as he works his way towards the exit.

FOREMAN LAI
 (Cantonese with Subtitles)
 You'd better go check before the outer door opens too.
 (back to Harmony, English)
 Sorry. We were...

Administrator #1 exits and Daniel trails him out.

INT. THE ASHERAH - BRIDGE - SAME

On screen, Harmony sees a flicker of Daniel's exposed back as he exits the Command Module. Tries not to betray what he saw.

HARMONY
 (covering)
 Uh. You were going to explain what you intend to do with us...

BACK TO:

INT. ASTEROID MINE - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Administrator #1 pads through a dim corridor outside the Command Module. He comes to a heavy metal door, peeks through a slat, and opens it.

INT. ASTEROID MINE - OMO'S CELL - CONTINUOUS

Omolara lies inside, immobilized. He comes to her, snaps fingers in front of her eyes, and does a quick scan.

ADMINISTRATOR #1
 Huh.

The Administrator exits. The door closes and Daniel APPEARS OUT OF THIN AIR, removing his cloaking device.

DANIEL

Omo.

She's unresponsive, but seems to recognize him. He pries open his plasma cutter and tugs a wire out of it.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I'm really sorry about this. It's going to hurt a lot.

He puts a piece of fabric between her teeth, then takes her hand and clasps it tight around the wire.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Okay. Three. Two --

He fires up the plasma cutter, and Omolara jerks spastically. She half-rises and starts SLAMMING BODILY against the door.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

No!

The horrible racket attracts the attention of the slavers. The door whooshes open and Omo flops out like a fish on deck.

THWAP! THWAP!

Daniel lets loose with the plasma cutter, OBLITERATING the first two Slavers in fiery splatters of gore.

But he's soon overpowered. The Slavers wrest the weapon away and pin him to the floor. Death is imminent...

When Daniel notices Omo is lying next to him, staring.

OMOLARA

(sotto)

Hold very still.

Her skin has broken out into STRANGE GOOSEBUMPS.

Suddenly, a THOUSAND STEEL PELLETS FLY FROM HER BODY in every direction, killing a dozen slavers in an instant!

Daniel quakes as he sits up amid the carnage. Holy shit.

DANIEL

(gathering)

Come on.

He helps her up. She's streaked with blood from a thousand lethal pores. Together they run.

INT. ASTEROID MINE - COMMAND MODULE - SAME

The Foreman curses loudly to himself in Cantonese. He smashes a console, and a heavy barrier SLAMS SHUT in front of the Command Module door.

He turns back to the screen:

FOREMAN LAI
Now you can die.

HARMONY (ON-SCREEN)
What? What's happening over there?

But Foreman Lai has stopped listening. He starts fiddling with controls and --

INT. THE ASHERAH - BRIDGE - SAME

An ALARM sounds on the bridge of the *Asherah* as the video feed cuts out.

S.N.O.
Uh oh.

HARMONY
Mister King, report!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THE ASHERAH - ENGINEERING - SAME

King is back, scrambling to assess the situation. Sparks have started flying. The reactor hums loudly.

KING
He's, uh -- Jesus, okay, he's trying to overload us through those docking cables. He's going to fry us in here!

HARMONY
Can we break free?

KING
Only if you want to break the ship in two.
(to E.L.M.O.)
Reroute that surge to the backup batteries. Dump them when they get too hot.

E.L.M.O. nods, equipment beeps in response.

HARMONY

So what do you suggest?

KING

I'd put a railgun shot right through that off-yellow dickhead.

HARMONY

We still have crew over there.

ADD TO INTERCUT:

INT. ASTEROID MINE - CORRIDOR - SAME

Daniel and Omolara race through the mine.

DANIEL

Yeah, hey, I have Omo. We're on our feet, but Lai sealed himself in his post and the airlock's through there.

HARMONY

Can you cut through?

KING

I can only keep us from boiling in here for --
(checks with E.L.M.O.)
Three minutes. Maybe less.

HARMONY

Not enough time. Daniel, try the crew quarters. The mine's modular, it should be ejectable. You have *two minutes* before I open fire.

DANIEL

Yessir!

Harmony covers his face. Says what might only be construed as a prayer.

EXT. ASTEROID MINE - SAME

In the eerie calm and quiet of space, the *Asherah's* sole armament, a RAIL GUN, swivels into firing position.

INT. ASTEROID MINE - CORRIDOR - SAME

He grabs her arm and they race for the other end of the mine. They come to a two-step door, which slides open, revealing --

INT. ASTEROID MINE - CREW QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

DOZENS OF CLONES, the many twins, look up at them in muted surprise.

DANIEL
Oh, dammit.

OMOLARA (O.S.)
Daniel.

He turns. She indicates what she's found: a MODULE RELEASE PANEL. She touches it with a spark, and data flashes rapidly across it. After a moment:

OMOLARA (CONT'D)
It can't be launched from inside.

DANIEL
...of course it can't. They're slaves.

He looks at the many dumb faces. Then, he has an idea, leaps into action, wrangling an OLDER CLONE.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
You. Do you understand English?
(just stares)
I need you to go out...

Daniel gestures, trying to show him what to do.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
...and... see that panel? You're going to fire it up, and search for "Emergency module release," and...

The Older Clone nods and smiles, gesturing along agreeably. Clearly not processing any of this.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Aaargh. We can't do this.
(to Omolara)
Stay there. Be ready to let me back in.

And with that, he's on the move, sealing himself back in the corridor, before Omolara can react.

INT. ASTEROID MINE - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Daniel, still in his EVA suit, stands at the RELEASE PANEL. He warns everyone via radio:

DANIEL
I'm going to jettison them myself
and then cross by EVA.

He finds the appropriate command prompt, which glows red.

INT. THE ASHERAH - BRIDGE - SAME

Harmony listens in as Daniel comes in over the radio.

DANIEL (FILTER)
You hear me, Captain? You have to
give me half a minute to get clear
before you open fire.

HARMONY
Can't make any promises.

It's true: time is ticking on this end. Some surfaces in the room have started to turn RED HOT, as Harmony tries to keep his cool.

INT. ASTEROID MINE - CORRIDOR - SAME

Daniel nods to himself, then assures Omo through the portholes:

DANIEL
I'll be right behind you.

He yanks a lever. The crew module JETTISONS with a loud thunk and a hiss. He sees Omo and the clones in the module rapidly receding.

He steadies himself, hand moving to the controls that will BLOW THE BOLTS ON THE AIRLOCK when --

BAM!

He crumples to the floor, smoke rising from his helmet.

A SLAVER stands there (the same Administrator whose life was saved by the Donor Clone), weapon in hand, apparently having survived Omo's earlier outburst. He smiles victoriously --

THWAP!!

A hot beam of plasma from Daniel's cutter shears him in two.

Daniel is slow to get up, ears ringing. A HOLE HAS BEEN PUNCHED THROUGH HIS HELMET, the projectile missing his face by an inch.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Shit.

A beat as that sinks in.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(into radio)

Omo, can you hear me?

OMOLARA (FILTER)

Yes.

DANIEL

I need you ready to catch me. I'm gonna have... ten seconds, maybe fifteen --

OMOLARA (FILTER)

I don't understand --

DANIEL

Just be ready, I'm coming to you!

With little time and no other options, Daniel lines himself up, arms the emergency switch and, closing his eyes --

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

FWOOSH. Daniel whips violently through the dark, his tumbling body and the silent vacuum reminiscent of --

I/E. THE WELL - DAY - FLASHBACK/DREAM

In that same recurring memory, a swan-diving young Daniel flips through the darkness of the Well.

A FLASH brings us BACK TO:

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Silently, the front of the mine explodes under fire from the *Asherah*.

Daniel SMASHES into the crew module's open airlock, scrambling for purchase, everything searing pain, his skin starting to puff and boil, until --

He BLACKS OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. PLANTATION HOUSE - PARLOUR - DAY - FLASHBACK/DREAM

YOUNG DANIEL (18) sits on the floor, scrolling through info on undergraduate universities. His parents, Austin and Miranda, look on as Rusty the Robot serves cola on a platter.

DANIEL

Uh, so the UCLA program only admits twelve, but my app should be strong enough.

MIRANDA ALLRED

Daniel. I don't think you've given the Naval Academy much consideration.

DANIEL

(dismissive)

You're right.

MIRANDA ALLRED

Well, we have history there. We just think, you know, it would be a good fit.

He looks at her, across to his father, who sits, unspeaking. Then up to Rusty.

DANIEL

A good fit? Where do they get this stuff, Rust?

RUSTY

Your parents know you better than you think. After all, they've lived with you longer than you have with yourself. So to speak.

DANIEL

Yeah, well, little pellet-gun Danny isn't the same guy --

AUSTIN ALLRED

Oh, Chrissake! Am I going to have to be the one to tell him?

Everyone freezes. Daniel looks to his father.

AUSTIN ALLRED (CONT'D)

You can put that stuff away, son. The Academy is a done deal.

DANIEL
 ...oh, is it?

His father only nods. Daniel erupts.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 The two of you are such assholes!
 My whole life, every move's gotta
 be pre-ordained to fill some -- I
 don't even know what!

MIRANDA ALLRED
 Daniel --

DANIEL
 This person you want so hard for me
 to be, I just -- am not.

A tense beat.

AUSTIN ALLRED
 It's not up for discussion. You're
 committed. We've let *this* go on
 quite long enough.

OFF Daniel ready to explode afresh, we --

INT. THE ASHERAH - SICKBAY - ARTIFICIAL DAY - PRESENT DAY

Snap back to the present. Daniel jerks into wakefulness,
 groggy. M.A.R.C.O. looks him over.

DANIEL
 Owwww.

M.A.R.C.O.
 Ah, you're awake! Excellent --

DANIEL
 What the hell happened?

Daniel's bandaged up, his face gray and red. He sits forward,
 swings his legs off the bed. They barely support his weight.

M.A.R.C.O.
 Well...

But Daniel's already stopped listening. He exits towards --

INT. THE ASHERAH - ARBORETUM - CONTINUOUS

Limping into the grassy ring, Daniel hears murmuring
 overhead. He cranes his neck up and sees Harmony and King
 sitting at the base of the olive tree.

DANIEL
 (weakly)
 Hey.

They look up as he approaches down the infinite slope.

KING
 Welcome back.

DANIEL
 How long was I out?

HARMONY
 Four days. Medically induced coma.

Daniel nods, impressed with himself. He sits down with them.

For the first time, he notices that the tree is carved with hundreds of HEBREW CHARACTERS. Half of its trunk is burnt black, as if from a blast.

DANIEL
 What are those?

HARMONY
 Names. Families searching for loved ones in a disaster. A people wiped out after five thousand years of clinging on.
 (anyway)
 Relics from an old life.

KING
 We may be the reminiscingest old farts you'll meet.

DANIEL
 Yeah?

KING
 Mmmhmm, like the day we met. You ever ridden a chopper, Dan?

He shakes his head, no.

DANIEL
 I'm scared to even ask what that means.

King laughs and Harmony cracks his own smile. Inside jokes. Maybe he'll learn what's so funny some day.

HARMONY

Speaking of things you can't find these days: what you did, going after a crew member like that... that was genuine heroics.

DANIEL

Oh yeah. Everyone make it out okay?

HARMONY

You caught the worst of it.

DANIEL

Good.

HARMONY

Most of the clones we rescued are already Earthside. Some are still getting their bearings.

(then)

I didn't know what to make of you at first, but I think you make a fine addition to our crew.

King nods his assent.

DANIEL

Thank you.

HARMONY

That said, I'm giving everyone a week's leave. After everything that happened out there... if you didn't come back, I think we could call it square.

(finally)

But stay or go, you could really use a shave.

Daniel thinks on this, rubbing his coma stubble. Harmony is giving him an out.

INT. THE ASHERAH - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Omo helps Daniel to his quarters. His legs have been fitted with mechanical braces. Her skin is covered in a HUNDRED HEALING POCKMARKS. Coupla soldiers.

DANIEL

(re: scars)

Does all that hurt?

OMOLARA

Yes.
(then, re: braces)
Does that?

He nods. Of course. A quiet, limping beat.

OMOLARA (CONT'D)

Thank you for coming for me. That won't be necessary again.

DANIEL

What is that, embarrassment?

OMOLARA

Yes.

He grins sheepishly, guilty about that jibe.

DANIEL

It's okay. You'll probably have to come save me soon enough.

OMOLARA

Probably.

His smile widens. She sees it, processes, and does the same.

They turn a corner. The holographic figure of an impish woman, ASH, stands in their way.

ASH

This is an oxygen-rich environment.
Beware of flying sparks.

A static giggle and Ash disappears, ghostly as she came, into a wall. Daniel and Omo stand staring. What to make of that?

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - ARTIFICIAL DAY

Daniel returns to his room, takes a load off. He catches a weird GLARE coming off of his traveling case. He opens it up. The lining is alight with the following:

"MESSAGE INTERCEPTED."

He pauses a moment before reading it. Extra cautious, he does a quick "glasses scan" to make sure his room's listening equipment is still deactivated, before donning his headphones:

MALE VOICE (FILTER)

"Here's the list I dug up for our little project. Let me know what you think."

DANIEL
 (smiling in recognition)
 Levi Harmony. Got you.

The innards of the case glow with the attached message: a LIST OF OVER A HUNDRED NAMES.

Daniel scrolls through. There are DATES, PORTS OF CALL, etc.

But he stops when he sees --

"DANIEL ALLRED."

He taps that entry and an image pops up.

It's DANIEL'S OWN FACE staring back at him!

MALE VOICE (FILTER)
 "Let's see. Daniel Allred.
 Bombardier. From Utah, looks like
 fancy parents. Academy brat.
 (then)
 Died at home on leave a couple
 years after the event, so, uh,
 moving on..."

OFF Daniel, staring at himself from beyond the grave --

INT. SPACE ELEVATOR - DAY

Daniel rides Earthward, gnawing absentmindedly on his knuckle
 -- anxious, bothered. He recoils suddenly. He's drawn blood.

EXT. PLANTATION - DAY

Rusty the mechanical man navigates through towering Chhatre
 devices on the Allred water plantation.

He finds the one he's looking for. He summons an automatic
 ladder and begins to climb forty feet into the air.

RUSTY
 (singing softly)
 "It's to remember you in the entire
 'Cause I'm watching it slip away
 And in the annals of the Empire
 Did it look this gray
 Before the fa-ahh-ahh-ahh-all."

Rusty has pried open a panel in the device when he notices
 Daniel standing at the base of the tower.

RUSTY (CONT'D)

Oh, hello, Daniel. Are you home already? I thought you said --

DANIEL

No. I'm not here, okay?

RUSTY

Alright. Your mother's in the house if you change your mind.

DANIEL

Rusty, when did you start working for my parents?

RUSTY

April 5th, 2189.

DANIEL

Did you know me then?

RUSTY

No, of course not. You hadn't been born... Is there something on your mind, Daniel?

DANIEL

No, but there's something on yours.
(clarifying)
Rusty, what happened on August 28, 2204.

Rusty pauses a short while, thinking.

RUSTY

Nothing out of the ordinary.

Daniel makes a noise of displeasure and hits a button at the base of the tower. The ladder Rusty stands on begins to RETRACT UPWARDS.

RUSTY (CONT'D)

What are you doing, Daniel?

DANIEL

That was the wrong answer.

RUSTY

Please stop the ladder --

Rusty scrambles downward, towards the end of the rapidly rising ladder, face etched with dire concern, until he FALLS the remaining thirty feet with a metallic CRUNCH.

DANIEL

I'm sorry, Rusty. I can't have you running off til I get some answers.

He places a hand behind Rusty's neck, almost comforting. The android tries to move, but his legs are bent the wrong way.

RUSTY

Please let your parents know I've fallen, Daniel.

DANIEL

I'm not here, remember? Now, think carefully: when I asked you about that date --

RUSTY

August 28, 2204.

DANIEL

-- what did you feel?

Rusty thinks, something loose and ticking inside him now. Daniel slips the STRAIGHT RAZOR from his pocket and opens it.

RUSTY

Confusion. Concern. Similar to now.

DANIEL

It's okay. I'll help you remember.

Daniel takes the blade and begins CARVING THE BACK OF RUSTY'S SCALP. A goopy paste escapes as he peels the flaps back. He PLUGS A HACKING DEVICE INTO a port in Rusty's exposed head.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Think about the date.

Rusty does. Data chatters across Daniel's screen. He nods, his suspicions confirmed.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

A lot of your memory, up to and including that date, has been replaced. You're experiencing conflicts between the residual emotional metadata and the new false memories. Now I'm going to wipe that bit --

RUSTY

Wait --

Rusty reels a little but in a button press the deed is done.

DANIEL

Now. Think: August 28, 2204. Do you remember anything about me?

RUSTY

(no hesitation)
No, sir.

DANIEL

What do you remember?

RUSTY

I have the plantation reports. There was a drought in California, and your father agreed to export his stock earlier that day.

DANIEL

...how much of his stock?

RUSTY

All of it. Forty-five million gallons.

That lands with Daniel. Understanding, he moves towards the edge of the Well.

RUSTY (CONT'D)

You shouldn't go to the Well, Daniel. It's dangerous and your parents worry about you an awful lot.

As Rusty sputters, helpless on the ground --

EXT. THE WELL - CONTINUOUS

Daniel reaches the Well. He watches a GHOSTLY VERSION OF HIMSELF, (a memory, the one from his recurring dream) runs past him and SWAN DIVES INTO THE WELL.

DANIEL

So the Well was empty...

And it's a long way down.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. MOTEL - EARLY MORNING

SUNLIGHT, refracted by bleary eyes. A bottle of Scotch.

DANIEL
(half-awake)
Ack! What're you doing?

Daniel's in bed, naked and disoriented, squinting at the girl, GRETA (20s), equally naked, who just parted the blinds beside him.

GRETA
I want a better look.

She traces a finger along his shoulder.

GRETA (CONT'D)
What're these supposed to mean?

He starts to get his bearings, sees what she's put her finger on: a BROKEN, BLACK LINE from his shoulder to his sternum.

DANIEL
(remembering)
Uh... they're supposed to remind me
what I'm made of.

GRETA
It's okay. You don't have to tell
me.

DANIEL
Yeah? What do *those* mean?

He touches the long row of *hanzi* characters down her spine.

GRETA
"I make bad decisions."

She smiles, kissing his neck.

DANIEL
Yeah... Hey, look --
(then, surprised)
Shit.

CARTER
You're absent without leave.

Carter stands in the corner, peering icily at Daniel. The girl squeals and covers up.

GRETA

Oh my God, who are you?

CARTER

You should run along, miss. Our boy has some very important work for the Inner Sol Intelligence Agency.

GRETA

Uh-huh. Come on, what are you, his mother or something?

CARTER

More like a mistress.

Daniel glowers, not meeting either woman in the eye.

GRETA

So, I guess I know the answer, but I'm not going to see you again --

CARTER

No.

DANIEL

No.

Daniel sinks into bed. Greta gets dressed in a hurry. Carter does not look away or seem bothered by her nakedness.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Asshole.

(to Carter)

Spooky bitch. I hope it works out.

Greta exits. An awkward silent pause.

CARTER

I need you back on that ship.

Daniel groans and tries re-closing the blinds, but Carter grabs them, crinkling them back open to his chagrin.

CARTER (CONT'D)

It was unfair to put you into a high pressure situation like that.

DANIEL

Oh yeah. I had my first kill. Or three or four, maybe. I suppose I need to fill out some paperwork?

CARTER

(surprised)

I didn't realize. You never reported in.

(hardening)

(MORE)

CARTER (CONT'D)
 And you've jeopardized our best
 chance at reeling in a terrorist --

As she speaks, Daniel throws the covers off. She GASPS.

His WHOLE BODY IS COVERED IN TATOOS: dotted lines carve him into dozens of pieces, numbered and labeled. Like a pig in a butcher's diagram. The skin underneath is red and raw.

CARTER (CONT'D)
 What are those?

DANIEL
 Spare parts.

CARTER
 ...I see.

Daniel stares at her.

DANIEL
 You *see*? What, you *knew*?

CARTER
 Daniel --

DANIEL
 Knew that I'm a Goddamned *copy*? A *clone*?

CARTER
 Yes I knew. Aside from your
 parents, I'm the only one who did.

DANIEL
 How is that even possible? I --
remember the old Daniel dying.

CARTER
 That I can't explain. But you
 appear to be a special case, like
 no clone to come before you.
 (treading carefully)
 I've been protecting you. If anyone
 were to discover that a clone could
 be made with the same characteristics
 as a real --
 (off his glare)
 As a *naturally-born* human... you'd
 be picked apart. And I couldn't
 stand that, it's cruel enough that
 you had to die once.

DANIEL

That wasn't me. Ask my folks,
they'll tell you -- I'm not as good
as the original.

CARTER

Now *that* is not true. You're a
better man than your parents'
little soldier, "Daniel the First."

She smiles at him for what seems like the first time.

CARTER (CONT'D)

And I'm nothing if not an excellent
judge of character.

He lowers his head, the first tremblings of emotion fighting
their way out.

CARTER (CONT'D)

I could never put myself in your
position. But it seems you've got a
new freedom of choice -- you're not
defined by the path your former
self took... But are you really
going to waste that freedom,
wallowing in this filthy room?
Innocent lives count on you turning
the screws on some very bad guys.

(beat)

You do know they're bad guys, don't
you?

A long beat. Finally:

DANIEL

Yeah. Okay. Let's get out of here.

He lets her help him out of bed and get dressed, her arm
keeping him steady. He gives her a thin smile. But his eyes
aren't smiling.

INT. THE ASHERAH - ARTIFICIAL DAY

Daniel steps aboard the *Asherah*, drops his pack on the floor.

Captain Harmony and Mr. King enter with a GIRL, (15), who we
haven't seen yet. Pretty, damaged. Harmony checks his watch.

HARMONY

Nearly missed the boat. I didn't
think you were coming.

They clasp hands, Harmony offering a genuine grin.

DANIEL
I'm full of surprises.

HARMONY
This is Ilsa. She was among the,
uh, crew we rescued from the mine.

King puts a hand on the Girl's shoulder, who steps forward.
Daniel looks at the frail thing, knows what that means.

DANIEL
Oh no.

HARMONY
She's got nowhere to go. But she
speaks a dozen languages, so I
thought I'd let her stay. As our
new interpreter.

Daniel nods. That's awful decent. Puts out a welcoming hand.

INT. ISIA STATION - DAY - SAME

Carter's Section Chief, DESRAEL (60s), checks in on Carter.

DESRAEL
You've been awful quiet about this
Harmony thing, any news?

CARTER
I have a man on it, Dezzy.

DESRAEL
Oh yeah? What man is that?

CARTER
I...

She goes to bring up Daniel's profile on-screen. But there's
NOTHING THERE:

CARTER (CONT'D)
...obviously wouldn't keep deep
cover agents in the database.

DESRAEL
Ah. Right, carry on then. Status
report in the morning?

He leaves her nodding. Wondering. She taps another search
query and frowns with concern at what she sees.

BACK TO:

INT. THE ASHERAH - RESUME

Daniel releases Ilsa's hand.

ILSA
I'm sorry. What do I call you?

HARMONY
This is our cook, Daniel Altamont.

DANIEL
You can just call me "Dannigan."

Harmony and King give him a curious, sidelong glance.

ILSA
"Dannigan?"

DANIEL
Yeah. Like "Dan." But "again."

OFF his grin:

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - ARTIFICIAL DAY

Daniel (henceforth DANNIGAN) settles in to his room once again and puts on his eavesdropping equipment.

It's not long before he hears...

INT. THE ASHERAH - HARMONY'S QUARTERS - SAME

In locked quarters Harmony RECEIVES A MESSAGE:

A shadowy hologram appears before him, none other than LEVI HARMONY (the voice from the earlier message), all Brando as Col. Kurtz.

LEVI
Hello, Jacob. I hope this message finds you well. I sent the manifest, with as much information as I could gather. 114 names. I'm interested to see you apply your creative touch.

(beat)

I want to tell you about a dream I had: An Earthling steps out of his house into a blizzard. He's knee deep in grayness, bundled against driving sleet. He tries to get warm, but the sun is like him -- pale and red and cold. He journeys for food, but there is none left.

(MORE)

LEVI (CONT'D)

And as the Earthling dies in the snow, I realize it isn't. It's ash.

(beat)

I didn't want to wake up. It's the happiest dream I've had.

Harmony watches and listens, his own expression inscrutable.

LEVI (CONT'D)

Anyway. I miss you, little brother. See you soon.

Levi flickers out of existence.

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - SAME

Dannigan grins excitedly as he listens in. This is the conversation he's been waiting to hear.

He takes out his Communicator and starts to code a message.

INT. ISIA STATION - DAY

Carter's computer blinks to life:

SECRETARY

"Operative... 'Dannigan' reporting in, 8:16 EGMT, en route to Belt sector 77-9-120..."

PUSH IN as there is a long pause in the message. Then:

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

"Situation unchanged. Nothing to report."

INT. THE ASHERAH - DANIEL'S QUARTERS - SAME

Dannigan sits still, fingers on the communicator, not moving. He has the freedom to choose. For now he's choosing to wait.

Finally, he pockets the device and adjusts his headphones to play that "anachronistic shit." More of "the classics."

MUSIC UP as he closes his eyes.

EXT. SPACE

The *Asherah* hurtles once again into the void.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW