

# **JETWASH**

By  
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EXT. EARTH (FROM SPACE) - DAY

A comet streams past the Earth as a rocket from the North American continent bee-lines straight for it.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

Tomorrow, AD. The Earth piggy-backed a space observatory lab on a comet that zipped past the planet. The mission was to record the journey and get deeper images of space while analyzing the comet itself. This trip would take a good century. In the meantime...

EXT. OUTERSPACE

Construction space crafts build colonization quarters and space ports on various Solar System moons.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

What was left of Earth's governments unified to form the Galactic Government, or Big-G as we call it, to establish space ports throughout the Solar System. A hundred years went by and the satellite returned.

EXT. EARTH (FROM SPACE)

The comet returns. The space observatory lab detaches itself and careens toward snow-capped Antarctica.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

When the observatory lab was recovered an epidemic broke out causing mutations. Specifically a melding mutation, fusing man and machine together. The virus quickly became widespread.

EXT. FREEWAY

A DRIVER in gridlock pushes a button on his car radio as the illuminated numbers meld with his skin. He pulls his hand away, but the metal radio buttons crawl across his hand.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

The virus was an intelligent species of microscopic proportions using human bodies as vessels.

The driver looks out at the freeway seeing other DRIVERS merging with their vehicles -- a morbid contortion of man and machine.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

We called it Mechanical Xenografting.  
The new species itself was called  
Mechanix for short.

EXT. ANTARCTICA

HALF MAN/HALF MACHINES gather at the impact crater of the satellite.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

While Man scrambled for an inoculation,  
the Mechanix created their own nation at  
the epicenter of the virus harvest,  
Antarctica, now known as Kaipin City.

Many months later Kaipin City has erected into a fortress...  
in a few more months a small base... in a couple more months  
a full-fledged metropolis.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

Whatever the Mechanix were doing in  
Kaipin City seemed to cause abnormal  
weather patterns.

Hurricanes flood various parts of the Earth's landmasses.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

To power something as epic as Kaipin City  
it would have to get its energy from the  
core. Well, the soldier boys wanted to  
know what was going on in Kaipin City.  
It wasn't long before the Mechanix waged  
war on humanity. Or maybe it was the  
other way around. Either way, we  
scrapped.

Various cities crumble to the ground as SOLDIERS and MECHANIX  
fight in the streets.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

The Mech War lasted 30 long and very  
bloody years. As the Mechanix's numbers  
escalated, the human numbers dwindled  
until the human race surrendered and was  
eventually exiled from the Earth... to  
post homestead anywhere but there.

Space crafts in the thousands leave the Earth.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

The only humans that remain on the planet are a small pocket of environmental specialists dedicated to the longevity of the Earth. With Kaipin City's excessive use of the Earth's natural resources and the planet now in climate upheaval, it's feared the Mechanix will venture out and occupy the other planets.

EXT. EARTH

Kaipin City, now a large metallic metropolis that breaks through the cloud line takes up almost all of Antarctica.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

It's just a matter of when...

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - NIGHT

Bratton's hovercraft and Abominable Charlie's zero-gravity big-rig shred the slushy wasteland of the Saturn moon Pandora. Coming up behind them, a 75 x 200-foot wide cargo ship, The Boyington.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

CPT. JENN ATLANTA (30's, female) looks out her window to the hovercraft.

BRATTON (O.S.)

(over radio)

That thing's really got some power behind it, Atlanta.

A glow skull hangs from the rearview mirror. She white-knuckles a fuzzy pink and lavender steering wheel.

ATLANTA

I'm getting some trembles in the steering.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

That's because you overloaded that hunk of mess with construction vehicle parts.

(MORE)

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.) (cont'd)  
You shoulda left that bucket in the yard.  
That looks more trouble than it's worth.

ATLANTA  
All it needs is a little love.

CRUNCH! The Boyington TREMBLES.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)  
There ain't enough love on Saturn,  
sweets.

ATLANTA  
You might appreciate it later when we can  
take jobs farther out. More money in  
long distance rescue and recovery.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND

The Boyington SMASHES the lip of an ice crater spraying ice  
up against Bratton's hovercraft windshield.

INT. BRATTON'S HOVERCRAFT (SPEEDING)

BRATTON (20's, male) tries to steady his craft.

ATLANTA (O.S.)  
My fault, Bratton.

BRATTON  
I can't see!

ATLANTA (O.S.)  
Pull out before you hit the other side of  
the crater.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND

Bratton's craft hits the up-slope of the crater anyway.

INT. THE BOYINGTON (SPEEDING)

ATLANTA  
Bratton, you okay? Bratton, come back.

Atlanta watches Bratton's craft slide down the crater.

BRATTON (O.S.)  
Shit!

ATLANTA

Shit means you're still alive.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - ICE CRATER - LATER

Abominable Charlie's big-rig pulls in close to the Boyington at the edge of the crater.

Atlanta steps to the edge of the crater watching Bratton struggle up the slope while fumbling with his breathing apparatus.

Bratton's hovercraft smokes in the background.

ATLANTA

It's not always about the machine. It's how it's--

BRATTON

Yeah, yeah.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (50's, male) kneels at the edge of the crater.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

That's life on the F-ring, son.

Atlanta leans over, helping Bratton out of the crater.

BRATTON

So, how did the Boyington handle?

ATLANTA

Not bad. Still needs some tweaks here and there. Once we repair the space-fold unit we can take jobs farther out.

A POP erupts from Bratton's hovercraft followed by smoke.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

While we at it, let's see if the crane works. Let's get that hunk of mess of yours outta there.

EXT. THE BOYINGTON - DERRICK CRANE

Abominable Charlie sits in the cab of a derrick crane and swings the latticed boom over the crater.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - ICE CRATER

Atlanta grabs onto the crane's hook as it lowers close to Bratton's hovercraft.

BRATTON  
Hey. Check that out.

Bratton looks up at the black sky, making them turn around. They see a twinkling in the E-ring.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
Somethin' comin' through the rings.

Atlanta takes out her spy glasses zooming into the E-ring which has broken bits of ice careening towards them.

ATLANTA  
A ship crashed through the E-ring and debris is coming right for us. Get back in your buckets before it hits.

Bratton heads back down to his hovercraft.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
Hey, fool! Where you goin'? Git yo ass in my big-rig!

Bratton turns back around and struggles up to Abominable Charlie's big-rig.

As Atlanta and Abominable Charlie dash up toward the Boyington, a large shadow looms above.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT - LATER

Atlanta starts up the Boyington while looking up to a large military vessel with battle damage across its hull coming in for a crash-landing.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)  
Looks military.

BRATTON (O.S.)  
Let the Big-G take care of their own stuff.

ATLANTA  
It's got battle damage along its hull. One way to lose your wings is by ignoring a ship in distress.

BRATTON (O.S.)  
We're better off without 'em.

ATLANTA  
Head back to the Maze and stay on the network for this.

BRATTON (O.S.)  
You want I report it?

ATLANTA  
Don't do that. Not yet anyway.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND

The Boyington's engines WHINE as debris begins to PELT the ground.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - NIGHT

The Boyington streaks across the icy wasteland as a hail of debris CRASHES DOWN.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)  
This ain't helpin' my PTSD, sweets.

The large interstellar craft is half buried into the terrain.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

Atlanta looks in the rearview watching Abominable Charlie enter the cockpit and takes a seat at the keyboard.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
Sure is a big, old ship.

A graphic of the ship's aft pops up on the monitor. The database searches.

ATLANTA  
It's definitely I-class.

"No Matches Found" blinks on Abominable Charlie's monitor.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
Nothing coming up the D-base about an interstellar class ship like that. Gotta be some hush-hush military junk.

ATLANTA

Haven't seen something like that since  
the war.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - CRASH SITE

The Boyington circles the spacecraft which is half protruding  
out of the ground like a railroad spike.

ATLANTA (O.S.)

I don't see any insignia. Wonder what  
brought it down.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

Gotta be military to take this monster  
down.

ATLANTA (O.S.)

You don't think the Mechanix made it out  
this far?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

Hell naw. Mechanix got they own planet  
now. That's Big-G shooting down they own  
stuff and that's bad news all over.

Atlanta notices that some of the damage was from internal  
explosions.

ATLANTA (O.S.)

The damage looks like it came from  
inside.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

The scanner pickin' up a biohazard  
warning, but no trace of radiation or  
biological mess.

ATLANTA

We proceed with caution then.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - T.O.E. ROOM

Atlanta gathers an aid pack, hoisting cable, extinguisher,  
water, a sidearm and steps out.

Atlanta suits up into a radioactive protection suit.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The scanner also says that mess was loaded up with a second generation Grendel battle droid.

ATLANTA

Maybe that's what shot it down. I'm gonna check it out.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Ah hell. You ain't goin' alone.

INT. THE GHOST SHIP - LATER

Atlanta and Abominable Charlie climb inside the ghost ship and make their way down the fuselage.

INT. THE GHOST SHIP - HYPER-SLEEP CHAMBER - LATER

They see a row of battle-scarred humans behind hyper-sleep encasements labeled: "Biohazard". Some of the encasements have been shattered. Some bodies hang half out. Some just lay smashed against the glass from external hull damage.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Soldiers.

ATLANTA

Not pickin' up a bio or radio reading.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Maybe they labeled biohazard so no one be messin' with them.

Abominable Charlie begins reading the names on the encasements.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Mr. Frenzy, Mr. Scraps, Mr. Battle, Mr. Clash, Mr. Fracas. Chief Warrant Officer ranks. They shock troops. Didn't you used to date a shock troop?

ATLANTA

I grew up with a guy that ended up being a shock troop. When we all got back from Old Detroit things were different.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Things were different for everyone after Old D.

Atlanta takes out her pulse reader as a faint blip blinks.

ATLANTA

I'm picking up a heartbeat at our High Noon. Possibly the cockpit.

Abominable Charlie sees one of the encasements labeled Mr. Skirmish blink: "Purged".

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Hey, sweets. Looks like something got out.

ATLANTA

Or escaped.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Don't be puttin' the heebie-jeebies on me. It gets to a certain point in my old age where I don't need science experiments jumpin' me from behind and flinging me around.

ATLANTA

Let's head up to the cockpit and dig out the flight data recorder.

EXT. JUNKER'S MAZE - NIGHT

Abominable Charlie's big-rig tows Bratton's hovercraft into a graveyard of decommissioned military crafts.

INT. ABOMINABLE CHARLIE'S BIG-RIG (MOVING)

Bratton pilots the big-rig and notices a streak of fire disappearing on the horizon.

BRATTON

Who the hell was that?

INT. THE GHOST SHIP - COCKPIT - NIGHT

Air HISSES OUT as Atlanta and Abominable Charlie force open the cockpit doors. The cracks on the windshield begin to SPLIT with heavy external terrain pressure pushing on the glass. They see the pilot strapped into the seat.

ATLANTA

Hold on there. I'm gonna get you out.  
Abominable, see if you can jimmy the  
flight data recorder loose.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You okay with this guy?

ATLANTA

I'm okay.

Atlanta climbs in seeing the pilot, CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2  
MELEE (30's, male). She recognizes him.

ATLANTA

Deja vu, you.

She cups a breathing apparatus around his nose and mouth.

ATLANTA

Can you speak, Chief?

He's unconscious. The windshield starts to CRACKLE.

Abominable Charlie power-drills the black box panel loose  
revealing a bright orange metallic encasement.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Gotcha, ya sweet hunk of pleasure.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - NIGHT

Somewhere deeper in the ice dunes of the Pandora Wasteland, a  
30-foot Grendel II battle droid rises up out of a smoking  
impact crater.

INT. GRENDEL II - COCKPIT

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 SKIRMISH (30's, male) nurses an  
abdominal wound while surveying the Wasteland. There's a  
large crack in the cockpit window. He sees the smoking crash  
site of the Ghost Ship in the distance.

The monitor shows a telephoto zoom on the Boyington leaving  
the crash site. Mr. Skirmish starts up the propulsion  
engines, but the cockpit glass CRACKS setting off a PRESSURE  
SEEPAGE ALARM.

EXT. JUNKER'S MAZE - NIGHT

The Boyington glides into Junker's Maze.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18 - LATER

Mr. Melee lies on a slab as Atlanta and Bratton study him. Abominable Charlie checks out his flight suit which is littered with plugs on the joints.

BRATTON

What's he wearing?

ATLANTA

Looks like one of those flight suits they released near the end of the war. Those plugs attach to a gyroscope cockpit operated by their anatomy.

Bratton runs a scanner over his shoulders.

BRATTON

Who's this guy? He doesn't have an ident chip.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

They wouldn't. They not supposed to exist as part of the Kaipin City Armistice Treaty. "No human may harbor weapons that may cause harm to Mechanix or agents acting theyof."

ATLANTA

You think Abominable Charlie's tough, these guys were the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. He's a shock troop trained by ProtoSystems' 2 Corp. Not the friendliest of fellas, but great to have on your side in a fight.

BRATTON

Is he human?

ATLANTA

He better be.

BRATTON

If they're so tough, why didn't they win the war?

ATLANTA

Introduced a little too late is my guess.

BRATTON

Well, Big-G's gonna be lookin' for this one for sure.

ATLANTA

We need to crack Big-G's network and see if that craft is on the hot sheet. By we, I mean you, Bratton.

BRATTON

You think there's a reward for this guy?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Hell naw. The Big-G probably hire privateers just to keep they asses clean.

Abominable Charlie's head twitches as he scratches at his neck.

ATLANTA

It'd be good to check, Bratton. We also gotta see what's on the FDR.

BRATTON

I'm on it then.

EXT. THE ORBIT OF JUPITER - NIGHT

The Alptraum-Konig, a large interstellar super carrier war ship glides past the Jupiter moon, Io, sporting a phrase along the flight deck: "In his house at R'lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming."

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

COMMANDER BLACKMARE (60's, male) ponderously stares out of the window watching the band clouds of Jupiter roll by. LIEUTENANT COMMANDER KELTON (60's, female) walks up next to Blackmare.

LCDR. KELTON

Someone's on the Quiet Line.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Good to know. Hold the bridge.

LCDR. KELTON

Sir.

Cdr. Blackmare walks off.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BLACKMARE'S QUARTERS - LATER

Cdr. Blackmare turns on a monitor revealing ZEBRA (50's, male).

ZEBRA

Commander Blackmare, we have a problem on the Outer Rings of Saturn. We have an I-class personnel carrier shot down on the Saturn moon Pandora.

A schematic of the Ghost Ship pops on to the screen.

CDR. BLACKMARE

The Ruby Di Milo.

ZEBRA

Indeed. It seems that something has gone awry. The Mechanix attacked our Mars base and the only ship we lost contact with was the Ruby. We need you to recover the ship and particularly the flight data recorder. It appears we have someone snooping around our network. We suspect someone on Pandora recovered it. Half of your moneys has been credited, the rest will be awarded after we've re-acquired the Ruby and have eliminated any proof of its existence. One last addendum. If you, your ship or any of your crew are spotted by the Mechanix, we will deny all existence of our affiliation.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Understood. Do you know who the pilot of the Ruby was?

ZEBRA

Last we heard the pilot was Chief Warrant Officer Melee.

Blackmare recognizes the name, but doesn't say anything. The monitor BLEEPs off. He pushes a button on the communicator.

LCDR. KELTON (O.S.)

Yes, sir?

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Find Druckner and have her meet us on the  
bridge.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE - LATER

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS DRUCKNER (30's, female) enters with her flip-flops SLAPPING against her feet. She stops in front of Blackmare and salutes him while blowing a bubble gum bubble.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Stand at ease, Sarge.

Druckner SNAPS her gum and stands at ease.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
I need you to get your unit together and  
have two drop ships ready. I want full  
tactical gear. Armed to the teeth.

DRUCKNER  
Sounds dramatic, sir.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Could be. Mr. Melee's mixed up in this.  
A 2 Corp shock troop.

Druckner's gum-chewing slows as she pricks up.

DRUCKNER  
Full gear, sir. To the tooth.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - INFIRMARY - DAY

Abominable Charlie sits on the exam table with his left sleeve rolled up revealing a metal catheter in his vein.

ATLANTA  
We're running out of your dose,  
Abominable. You may have to accept that  
electronic side of yourself.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
I don't wanna be pluggin' myself in at  
night, sweets. I ain't a robot.

Atlanta plunges a syringe into his catheter.

ATLANTA

Probably live longer.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I like havin' my free will. I say I earned it.

Abominable Charlie kisses his necklace medallion and rubs it between his fingers.

ATLANTA

It doesn't really seem like we got that now. We're out here running a junk heap on a Saturn moon.

Abominable Charlie gnashes his teeth as the chemical works through his body.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

That mess hurts more every time.

ATLANTA

The mutation could be progressing. Might have to up your dose.

Abominable Charlie rolls into the fetal position on the exam table as his body twitches. Atlanta and Abominable Charlie clutch each other's hands.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

At least the kid never saw the Mech War. All those great nations falling once. What a damn site.

ATLANTA

Ignorance is sometimes bliss.

Bratton enters surprised to see Abominable Charlie on the exam table.

BRATTON

What happened, Abominable Charlie?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Flu shot, bitch.

BRATTON

Could be the Mimas Pox. You don't want that at your age.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You don't wanna git beat down by someone my age. Guarantee that.

Atlanta points to the FDR sitting on the counter top next to a keyboard.

ATLANTA

I can't crack the FDR. It's got some sort of defense security lock.

BRATTON

Let me take a hammer to it then.

Bratton goes over to tinker with it.

ATLANTA

Anything on the network, Bratton?

BRATTON

Uh, yeah. Downloaded a bunch of stuff I haven't gone through all of it yet. I had to repair the propulsion unit on the hovercraft. But you're right, Atlanta. He's from 2 Corp by way of ProtoSystems.

ATLANTA

It would be ProtoSystems.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

That's where the human war machine get they toys.

BRATTON

These shock troops were supposed to be incinerated as part of the Armistice Treaty. But these guys are currently used for interstellar exploration. These aren't soldiers.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

They ain't "supposed" to be classified as soldiers. It part of the Armistice Treaty I was talkin' about.

BRATTON

But these are just people.

ATLANTA

These guys are cultivated from birth to be world class warriors. If there's a personnel craft loaded with a brigade of these shock troops, you can bet someone's plotting something.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Ya think the Big-G wanna take back the Earth? If the Mechanix find out, we goin' to war, sweets. They comin' to every planet and they moons to wipe us all out for good.

BRATTON

But he's just a guy. We don't have weapons or harbor any aggression.

ATLANTA

He is an act of aggression. Right down to every sub-atomic fiber of his being. I've seen these guys in action.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

That means Big-G definitely calling in privateers. Pro'lly Blackmare.

ATLANTA

We're gettin' outta here.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

In what?

ATLANTA

The Boyington. We're gonna load it up with everything we got. We can't turn him over to Blackmare. Blackmare will wipe us out.

Bratton turns from the FDR monitor blinking: ACCESS DENIED.

BRATTON

I can't crack this. It's written in a random media language.

ATLANTA

You tryin' to tell me that a graduate from the University of Io can't crack a lame government security code?

BRATTON

Yeah. It needs a special key.

ATLANTA

I thought Io only accepted the best and spawned the even better.

BRATTON

Well, yeah, but this is Big-G stuff.  
This could have a destruct mechanism in  
it. Or a lethal noxious gas trip.

Atlanta shakes her head mocking disappointment.

BRATTON

Okay, let me take another look. If I  
blow us up, it's all on you.

Orange lights strobe throughout Junker's Maze.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

What you do, Bratton?

BRATTON

That was definitely not me.

ATLANTA

Set out the good China, fellas. Hide the  
Chief.

INT. BLACKMARE'S DROP SHUTTLE - DAY

Blackmare talks into the radio and watches the other drop  
shuttle break away toward the Ghost Ship crash site.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Recover the flight data recorder and  
that's it. No sight-seeing. It's  
possible that the FDR has already been  
recovered.

Druckner SLAPS her flip-flops against the soles of her feet  
while SLAPPING a magazine into her assault rifle. She blows  
a bubble and nods to her TROOPS. They LOCK AND LOAD.

INT. BRATTON'S BUNGALOW - DAY

Abominable Charlie and Bratton carry Mr. Melee into a  
bungalow, setting him on a cot.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Strip him into a grease monkey suit.  
Watch him. Make sure he don't go  
nowhere.

Abominable Charlie goes to his bungalow across the way, opens his locker, pulls out a Winchester repeating rifle and loads three bullets. He hands it to Bratton.

BRATTON

What's this?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The gun that won the West, fool.

BRATTON

What West?

EXT. THE GHOST SHIP - CRASH SITE - DAY

A drop shuttle halts to the side of the Ghost Ship. 5 of BLACKMARE'S SOLDIERS flank out around the ship.

The Grendel II rises up from behind the drop shuttle and MACHINE-GUNS them down.

INT. GRENDEL II

Through the monitor, Mr. Skirmish studies the paramilitary uniforms of the carcasses.

MR. SKIRMISH

Blackmare.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18 - DAY

The monitor shows a digital schematic of the Alptraum-Konig orbiting Pandora.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The A.K.

Atlanta and Abominable Charlie double-time it to the Boyington.

ATLANTA

Blackmare. We'll just have to be quick.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

This sucker's a war hero. A damn living legend.

ATLANTA

Show me a hero and I'll prove he's a bum.

Atlanta climbs a scaffolding to the roof of the Boyington.

LATER

Cdr. Blackmare and several of his heavily armed TROOPS enter the hangar led by Druckner.

Abominable Charlie steps into the cab of the Boyington's derrick crane. He's got a sidearm close while watching Blackmare and his men surround the Boyington. Atlanta guides a gravity drum dangling from the crane into the propulsion compartment of the Boyington.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Howdy, Captain.

ATLANTA

What can I do for you, Commander? And your very heavily armed troops?

CDR. BLACKMARE

Nice boat. A cargo class rescue and recovery ship. Viking 9 series. Solar, Wind, Hydro-powered alternatives. Perfect for interstellar travel.

ATLANTA

Runs on bullshit too. Too bad they're extinct.

CDR. BLACKMARE

They certainly don't make them like that today.

Cdr. Blackmare strolls around the Boyington studying it as Druckner leads a team of men into the hangar bungalows.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Lot of modifications.

ATLANTA

We just threw it all together with pieces here and there.

CDR. BLACKMARE

That's the product of a high education and experience. You should've worked for ProtoSystems. Mighty fine work. Problem with your gravity drums?

ATLANTA

Yeah, well, bubblegum and tape.

CDR. BLACKMARE

I've had to do that on occasion. To the point, however. You happen to notice an I-class personnel carrier crashing down around these parts?

ATLANTA

You missing one? We got some stuff in the yard if you need repairs.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Appreciate that.

ATLANTA

Say, what's a big, ol' war hero like yourself operating a war class super carrier like the Alptraum-Konig during peacetime?

CDR. BLACKMARE

Hero? Not a word I've heard in my presence for some time. Not all of us could just give up our trades when the nations fell.

Blackmare winks at Abominable Charlie.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Not all of us could just take up work on remote salvage depots employing outlaws. Or take refuge on a monk moon making Ganymede gin drowning in post-war depression.

ATLANTA

Those Ganymedian monks make some fine gin though. Maybe you could take up some commerce on the Litter Belt. That's what everyone's doin' these days.

CDR. BLACKMARE

On the subject of monks. There was a convoy of personnel heading for the Armistice Moon, Triton. It fell off its beaten path. Don't reckon you've seen it?

ATLANTA

Psh. Is that what the Big-G is playing it off as?

(MORE)

ATLANTA (cont'd)

They're better off denying its existence altogether. It's not hard. Just say, "Hey, don't know anything about it." Me, myself, I never trust a moon in retrograde orbit.

CDR. BLACKMARE

My. That *is* a beautiful ship. I would hate to blow it and its pretty captain into pieces.

ATLANTA

Well, let's try and keep things where you like it. And thanks for the "pretty" thing. Not a word I've heard in *my* presence in a while.

INT. BRATTON'S BUNGALOW - DAY

Armed with the aged Winchester rifle, Bratton spies through a sliver of blinds watching Blackmare's privateers KICKING IN doors.

Hearing the MURMURING of Blackmare's men calling in their positions, Mr. Melee's eyes snap open.

Bratton turns around to check on Mr. Melee only to have his mouth covered and Winchester taken away. Mr. Melee sees the look of panic in his eyes. Mr. Melee removes his hand.

BRATTON

Hey, man, I'm your friend. We rescued you from the ship.

Mr. Melee hears radio SQUELCHES in the hallway. He peeks out the window.

BRATTON

There's ten guys in the hall. There's only three rounds in there.

MR. MELEE

More than I need.

INT. BUNGALOW HALLWAY

Mr. Melee walks out coming face to face with one patrol member shoving the barrel of the Winchester into his mouth.

MR. MELEE

I got him!

The patrol group pricks up as Mr. Melee FIRES a round SPLITTING the member's head in half. The bullet RICOCHETS and SMACKS another patrol member in the face.

The patrol members OPEN FIRE, but Mr. Melee uses the leader's body and armor as a shield and pushes forward like a Spartan.

He shoves the carcass shield into the center of the hallway as Mr. Melee CRACKS the butt of the Winchester across one troop's face breaking the stock in half. He shoves the point of the broken stock in one member's mouth and the other half into another's.

The carcass shield now riddled with GUNFIRE, drops to the floor. Mr. Melee RACKS the rifle and FIRES twice.

Gunfire finally stops as bullet holes rest in the heads of the last six patrol members which were all filed behind each other like minute men. They collapse to the ground -- dead.

Bratton peeks out of his bungalow seeing all the bullets well-used. Mr. Melee tosses him the Winchester.

MR. MELEE

The gun that won the West.

BRATTON

It must've.

Mr. Melee collects a submachine rifle and a chatterbox grenade. He then hears the sound of flip-flops approaching. Druckner and her men BUST IN through the other side of the hallway.

INT. THE GHOST SHIP - COCKPIT - DAY

With his sidearm drawn, Mr. Skirmish sees that the cockpit is empty and the FDR is missing.

Sirens go off. The console reads: "Self Destruct Detonation Enabled."

Mr. Skirmish finds his way out just as the windshield CRACK flooding the cockpit with rock and ice.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18 - DAY

Cdr. Blackmare grabs his communicator.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Go ahead, Comm.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER (O.S.)

There's an abundance of photo-voltaic energy collecting near the Ruby Di Milo for a possible nuclear blast. It could blow that moon in half, sir.

ATLANTA

Shit! Start her up, Abominable! I'm gonna find Bratton.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Sergeant Druckner, emergency evac! Report to the Alptraum-Konig immediately! This moon is dangerously unstable!

Blackmare looks up at Atlanta.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Maybe we'll have a drink and a chat about our post-war careers a little later.

Blackmare and his men scramble towards their transports.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HALLWAY

Beaten and bloody, Druckner and five of her armed PRIVATEERS sit at the edge of the hallway as GUNFIRE APPROACHES from behind a bulkhead.

CDR. BLACKMARE (O.S.)

All flank leaders report in or you will be left.

Druckner picks up her communicator just as the bulkhead EXPLODES. What looks like a small, metal softball ZOOMS right at them.

DRUCKNER

Chatterbox!

The chatterbox SPITS BULLETS as it approaches and then EXPLODES flinging people back into a bloody mess.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18

Atlanta ducks as the bulkhead right next to her EXPLODES slinging chunks of meat and bone. Mr. Melee walks through the gaping maw of charred and twisted metal.

Druckner lies on the floor peppered with small shards of bone and bullets. Mr. Melee sees she's still alive, but walks past her.

Bratton is in disbelief as he stares at all the freshly masticated bodies.

Atlanta aims her sidearm at Mr. Melee and his at her.

MR. MELEE

Captain.

ATLANTA

Chief.

BRATTON

You two know each other?

ATLANTA

Maybe.

MR. MELEE

We don't have much time. Mr. Skirmish, another shock troop like me, isn't far behind.

Atlanta doesn't take up much time thinking about it. She sees Druckner trying to crawl across the hangar. Druckner watches Blackmare's transport take off.

ATLANTA

Get in the bucket, Chief. Bratton, help me with that one.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - PASSENGER BAY - LATER

Bratton and Atlanta drop Druckner on a tattered sofa.

ATLANTA

See if you can patch her up.

BRATTON

I'm a computer engineer not a doctor.

Atlanta bee-lines for the cockpit.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

Atlanta sits in the captain's chair, flipping switches and resting her hands on the fuzzy steering wheel.

The ship begins to WHIR and WHINE as it powers up.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

It ain't workin', sweets.

ATLANTA

We cross pessimistic lines, Abominable.  
That's what we do.

Abominable Charlie clicks the garage door opener as the hangar doors begin to open, but get stuck. They exchange glances.

ATLANTA

Blast it.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I didn't load ordnance.

ATLANTA

Why not?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Too damn heavy. We lucky to be able to  
lift off at all.

Atlanta jumps out of her chair.

ATLANTA

Don't wait for me. Head straight for the  
Litter Belt.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

We ain't leavin' you, sweets.

ATLANTA

You won't have to.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18

Atlanta sprints out of the Boyington making for the hangar doors to try and push them apart. Not budging.

Suddenly, the doors ease apart making her fall to her ass. She sees Mr. Melee pushing the doors apart.

ATLANTA

I need you back in the ship.  
(into radio)  
Abominable Charlie, burn it.

A tremor RUMBLES through the hangar.

Mr. Melee slips back into the ship. She looks to make sure Mr. Melee's gone.

She sprints back into the bungalows.

EXT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18

The Boyington taxis out of the hangar.

INT. THE BOYINGTON (MOVING)

Abominable Charlie feels a sense of relief.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Damn. I tell ya, sweets, you had me openin' my sweat pores for a second there. And you now how I hate the smell of my own sweat.

Then he notices the monitor: Atlanta on a jet cycle carrying the FDR.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

How you passed officer training school I'll never know!

A bright light breaks the horizon.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND

The Boyington lowers its embarking ramp to meet her. But the cycle can't match the increasing speed of the Boyington.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

(over radio)

I can't go any slower, sweets!

Atlanta's bike starts to fall behind. Mr. Melee steps out on to the embarking ramp. Mr. Melee spots the Grendel II coming at them from 200 yards out.

Suddenly, Atlanta's bike hits a crater lip and the bike leaps up on to the ramp. Mr. Melee grabs onto her handle bars as the rear wheel spins.

ATLANTA  
Climb, Abominable!

Mr. Melee heaves the bike inside as Junker's Maze disappears in the light of a nuclear explosion. The embarking gear closes.

The Boyington climbs as the shockwave spreads along Pandora's surface.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - CARGO BAY

Atlanta drops the FDR on the floor.

ATLANTA  
Remind me to thank you later, Chief.

MR. MELEE  
You won't need to.

ATLANTA  
That's one less thing I gotta do then.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

Abominable Charlie looks in the rearview seeing Atlanta enter. He shakes his head and counts down with his fingers.

ATLANTA  
What's that?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
Countin' down how many lives you got left.

Atlanta hops back into the captain's chair.

ATLANTA  
Keep that pretty, little thought in that pretty, little head.

EXT. THE F-RING (OUTERSPACE)

From Saturn's F-ring a wave of tracer-fire sprays from the Alptraum-Konig's chainguns. The Boyington and nearby ice rocks take hits.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

Atlanta sees Blackmare's transport ahead of them making for the Alptraum-Konig.

ATLANTA

You think if we fly right up behind them they'll stop shooting at us?

An ice rock EXPLODES spitting debris against their ship. He looks at her shrugging.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The F-ring ain't gone be much cover in one, maybe two heartbeats.

EXT. THE F-RING (OUTERSPACE)

The Boyington slips behind Blackmare's ship like an elephant hiding behind a basketball. But tracer-fire suddenly stops.

The Saturn Moon Pandora EXPLODES as the Boyington flies over the flight deck of the Alptraum-Konig.

Mr. Skirmish's Grendel II is hit by the shockwave forcing it against the Alptraum-Konig's flight deck.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

LCDR. KELTON

Launch interceptors!

Interceptor pods LAUNCH from the flight deck following the Boyington.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

An ALARM SOUNDS getting Abominable Charlie's attention.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

They sending interceptors, sweets!

INT. THE BOYINGTON - PASSENGER BAY

Bratton and Mr. Melee look out the portholes checking out the inceptors making headway.

BRATTON

Don't worry, man. Atlanta will get us outta this.

MR. MELEE

I don't worry.

BRATTON

Good for you.

Bratton is panicked.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You know they gonna cancel your flight status soon as we hit the Io station.

ATLANTA

I know, that's why we're takin' the Sunshine Highway.

Abominable Charlie looks at her sideways.

ATLANTA

You think I'm battle whacky.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I don't speak Obvious. I just look at you sideways.

ATLANTA

Charge up the space-fold drives.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You mean, charge up the untested space-fold drives built out of recycled and rejected spare parts that could split our asses into a fifty billion subatomic particles before they could actually catch us making this whole damn escape a jacked up attempt in the first place? Those drives?

ATLANTA

Just look at me sideways, Abominable Charlie?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I must be comin' down with what you got. A case of the crazies! A whole damn plague.

ATLANTA

Crazy's better than dead.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Dead people ain't stupid! They already got they stupid stuff outta the way.

The interceptor BLASTS RATTLE the Boyington forcing another ALARM to go off. Atlanta yanks on the wheel as tracer-fire slip past them.

ATLANTA

The ship's fallin' apart, but all the alarms work. How's that fold coming, Abominable?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I pushed all my buttons. Sunshine Highway or bust.

ATLANTA

Kiss my six, Blackmare.

EXT. OUTERSPACE

A sphere of energy forms around the Boyington. A wormhole opens in front of them. An interceptor moves in and then both crafts disappear leaving the other interceptors and the A.K. behind.

EXT. THE LITTER BELT - DAY

A wormhole forms spitting out the Boyington and the interceptor. The interceptor SMASHES into the Boyington's aft hull.

The Boyington cruises along the Asteroid Belt aka The Litter Belt. Billboards for local businesses are perched on rocks. Garbage and other assorted man-made space junk are locked in the Belt's orbit. VANDALS etch laser-graffiti into the sides of asteroids.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

There's a damn breach in the cargo hold. Natch.

ATLANTA

It's not a munitions blast. Coulda gotten ramrodded by an asteroid.

Atlanta checks out a large asteroid and maneuvers the craft into a large hole illuminated by neon.

INT. THE WESTWOOD ASTEROID

The Boyington cruises through a set of caverns lit by neon ads leading to a sunny beachside community with a well-maintained atmosphere.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

ATLANTA

You ever been to Westwood, Abominable Charlie? Home for your underground forged digital paraphernalia and your assorted foodstuffs.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

How you know about this place?

She turns to him and winks.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Yeah, okay.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - PASSENGER BAY - DAY

Atlanta enters noticing Bratton and Mr. Melee. Druckner clutches her bleeding wounds.

MR. MELEE

I suspect you have a reason for saving this one?

ATLANTA

She's human. She lives. That's how it is on my ship. It's still my ship isn't it, Chief?

MR. MELEE

It is.

ATLANTA

First of all, much obliged for your help on Pandora. For the better and worst of it. Sincerely.

Atlanta kneels in front of Druckner.

ATLANTA

Before I allow you to indulge in our fine medical program, I'd like to know why that moon was nuked.

DRUCKNER

You know what I know. Not much. I swallowed my gum.

ATLANTA

I'll get you another pack. Bratton, get her dolled up.

Bratton helps Druckner up and walks off. With everyone gone, Atlanta turns to Mr. Melee.

MR. MELEE

I apologize.  
(sneers at his  
awkwardness)  
That's the best I got.

ATLANTA

Yeah? Your apologies go back a ways. But hey, I'm not holding grudges. I'll be expecting a better one later. I know you're good for it. We were in the military. Go where the orders take you. I get it.

She shakes her head and winks.

ATLANTA

But every time you show up, things just go kaboom. Always drama with you.

MR. MELEE

I like the theater.

She's about to walk away, but he grabs her by the arm and looks her dead in the eyes.

MR. MELEE

Uh...

The silence goes on for a beat or two as a slight grin creeps on his face. She SNORTS and chucks him in the arm.

ATLANTA

Right back at ya, sport.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

Atlanta!

INT. THE BOYINGTON - CARGO BAY - DAY

Mr. Melee and Atlanta enter seeing Abominable Charlie scratching his head over the interceptor partially protruding into the ship.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

There ain't no pilot. All automatic or remote pilot.

ATLANTA

Drag it on in. Strip it for a possible remote link-up and see if any of these parts are salvageable.

Atlanta turns to Mr. Melee.

ATLANTA

Okay, you. Why was there a personnel carrier loaded with shock troops on my rock?

MR. MELEE

The Big-G had a clandestine shock troop training program on Mars before the Mechanix found it. I got the call to move the personnel before the Mechanix looked at it as an act of aggression. But they attacked anyway.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The Mechanix are on Mars now?

MR. MELEE

Correct. We tried to fly out as many as possible, but the Ruby Di Milo sustained heavy damage. I haven't gotten word about the other ships.

ATLANTA

There are more ships? Loaded with more of you guys?

MR. MELEE

The new guys. I'm obsolete.

ATLANTA

You mean like this Skirmish character? What makes these new guys so badass?

MR. MELEE

I'm not sure.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

If you obsolete then why send you to rescue the new fellas?

MR. MELEE

It was a last minute decision.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

No shit.

ATLANTA

How did the Ruby make it all the way to Pandora if it was attacked near Mars?

MR. MELEE

The Ruby limped. I tried to make it to Ganymede, but knowing privateers often orbit Jupiter I stretched it out to the Rings of Saturn. The Big-G would have destroyed the ship to retain the guise of peace with the Mechanix. Possibly to apply blame on a rogue militant insurrectionist.

ATLANTA

Someone flying a ship like say the Ruby full of troops looks like a mutineer?

(beat)

You're an outlaw now, Chief. You're in the right group.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

But why our rock? There's plenty of docking ports along the way.

MR. MELEE

Those ports are monitored by the Big-G and they would summon privateers.

(MORE)

MR. MELEE (cont'd)

I did a quick command scan on Saturn's local satellites and recognized Captain Atlanta's name. We trained on 2 Corp together.

Abominable Charlie smirks and looks at Atlanta sideways.

ATLANTA

What finally crashed you, Chief?

MR. MELEE

The ship received an encrypted transmission of unknown origin before I broke past the Litter Belt. I suspect it was intended for one of the shock troops to assume control of the Ruby. My monitor showed that a hyper-sleep unit had been purged and a Grendel II was launched. Then I took on more battery. That's when I assume Blackmare was called in to pick up the pieces.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

If this ain't an inter-galactic incident, I don't know what is. If them Mechanix would fly out to Mars, they'd come to wipe the rest of us out.

ATLANTA

Whatever pockets of humans that are left aren't set up for war.

Mr. Melee stares suspiciously at Abominable Charlie noticing his left pupil fluttering.

MR. MELEE

You've got the Mechanix virus.

Atlanta looks over her shoulder to make sure no one else is listening.

ATLANTA

We try to keep that quiet around these parts.

MR. MELEE

We're dangerously close to Kaipin City's sleeper range. The virus could initiate its mutation properties.

ATLANTA

We couldn't stop at the Io station. Big-G would've grabbed us as soon as we docked. That said, we have to get Abominable's next dose.

Abominable Charlie's arm twitches.

ATLANTA

We're also gonna have to crack that flight data recorder to see what was in that transmission.

(to Mr. Melee)

Which I assume, you don't know how to do.

MR. MELEE

It's eyes only.

ATLANTA

That's how our luck rolls. Before we give it back we're gonna find out what was in that transmission and see why it was worth sending the most notorious privateer on the network to blow up our livelihood.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

(grimaces)

Natch.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE - DAY

Mr. Skirmish strolls onto the bridge. Kelton turns around, staring in shock. Blackmare turns around staring at this juggernaut of a man.

MR. SKIRMISH

Commander Blackmare?

CDR. BLACKMARE

What do ya say, Chief?

Mr. Skirmish walks up to Blackmare and Kelton.

MR. SKIRMISH

I'm here to bring Chief Warrant Officer Melee to justice. I believe we can help each other.

CDR. BLACKMARE

How do you suppose that, Chief?

MR. SKIRMISH

I have a locator device that can help you track the Ruby Di Milo's flight data recorder if I'm within range. From what I understand, the flight recorder is missing.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Forgive my cynicism, Chief, but I've got troops I've lost on Pandora. It makes it a little tough to ally myself and my crew with you--

MR. SKIRMISH

The Ruby Di Milo's flight protocol is scheduled to self detonate if it is captured or shot down. There was an override command, but it can only be shut off by the ranking officer. That being Chief Melee.

CDR. BLACKMARE

I thought Chief Melee and his old unit were decommissioned due to the Armistice.

MR. SKIRMISH

The Galactic Government needs to retain that guise. The Galactic Government keeps me on to make sure soldiers like Chief Melee don't get out of hand.

CDR. BLACKMARE

What do you need from us?

MR. SKIRMISH

You're about to space-fold into the Asteroid Belt correct? I need a ride.

CDR. BLACKMARE

We are happy to oblige, Chief.

Mr. Skirmish walks toward the windshield staring at the Sun in the distance.

Kelton leans close to Blackmare and whispers.

LCDR. KELTON

This stinks. Neither one of those shock troops are supposed to be alive in the first place.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Someone's lying to us.

LCDR. KELTON  
He's got the uniform, but he's not working for Big-G. Zebra wouldn't be stupid enough to call us in and a shock troop.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
When Mr. Skirmish finishes his mission he'll more than likely get rid of us.

LCDR. KELTON  
I suggest getting on the Quiet Line.

Mr. Skirmish stares at Blackmare and Kelton's reflection in the window and reads their lips.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - THE GALLEY - DAY

Shirtless, Druckner sits on a metal counter cradling a series of wounds through her ribcage.

BRATTON  
You got a few punctures in your lungs due to shrapnel.

DRUCKNER  
I've had worse.

Druckner stares hard at Mr. Melee, who's leaning against the wall with his arms folded.

BRATTON  
I see you got your war patch with the 3-67. They don't get any more hardcore than that. Color me impressed.

Bratton looks over his shoulder.

BRATTON  
Or at least until he came along.

Bratton sees another piece of shrapnel jutting from the round base of her breast. He's about to pluck it out with a pair of serving tongs, but gets flustered.

BRATTON

Sorry. That's about as good as I can get it.

Druckner scowls at his squeamishness and yanks the metal shard from her breast.

BRATTON

Hey, whatever works.

Mr. Melee grins and walks away.

INT. WESTWOOD VILLAGE DOCKING PORT - DAY

Mr. Melee walks out to Atlanta ZAPPING a loose metal panel on the Boyington.

MR. MELEE

How is it?

ATLANTA

We took heavy battery on two of the gravity drum compartments. We're gonna need to replace one and maybe we can fix the other.

Abominable Charlie pokes his head out of the derrick crane.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

We can still fly with four drums.

ATLANTA

Not if we have to break atmo somewhere or wanna make another space-fold. Chief, you have tokens?

MR. MELEE

Tokens?

INT. KING COBRA'S ARCADE - DAY

Atlanta and Mr. Melee arrive at King Cobra's Arcade with a CADRE OF GUNFIGHTERS turning heads as they pass. A LARGE GUNFIGHTER stands between them and King Cobra's office.

LARGE GUNFIGHTER

Sure you belong around these parts,  
ma'am?

Mr. Melee is about to step up, but Atlanta holds him back.

ATLANTA

We're here to see King Cobra.

The gunfighter POUNDS twice on the door.

KING COBRA (O.S.)

Let 'em pass, yo.

INT. KING COBRA'S OFFICE

Atlanta and Mr. Melee enter as a skinny, little runt who calls himself KING COBRA (20's, male) sits behind a desk watching several monitors flickering breaking news on the Mars attack.

KING COBRA

Checkie here. Haven't seen yo fine ass  
in a while. I heard yo sweet ass blew up  
Pandora. You know you on the hot sheet,  
Atlanta. Dee-yum!

ATLANTA

You heard about all that already?

KING COBRA

That's right. King Cobra knows all. In  
this volah-tile age bad news like the  
housewife hotline, yo. It won't be long  
before everyone knows. You blew up one  
of Saturn's shepherd moons, baby.

ATLANTA

See, now that wasn't me.

KING COBRA

Denial ain't just another volcano on Io.  
You lucky you and yo crew the only one  
out there. So, tell me what you need and  
let's see if King Cobra can provide.

ATLANTA

Hot flight credentials, navigation  
software and an unregistered Viking cargo  
ship put on the network as if it's been  
there for a while.

King Cobra runs his fingers along a cork board full of old school USB drives.

KING COBRA

Ever since the Exile, the only nav software I gots is this junk. It's still got some proposed space stations and Mars and Earth geography. But it's still good if you wanna be in the general vicinity. That bitch is on the house. But checkie here, the Big-G might've frozen your accounts.

ATLANTA

I've got an account on the Fringe. Your cousin, Copperhead, still runnin' that salvage yard in the Litter Belt?

KING COBRA

Yeah, he a few bricks out. Big flashin' lights: "Copperhead's Huge-ass Salvage Emporium".

ATLANTA

Run this for me.

Atlanta takes out a data drive and tosses it at King Cobra. King Cobra slips it into his computer.

KING COBRA

What's this?

ATLANTA

Don't know. You know language like that?

KING COBRA

While you here, you want some of my Snooper Dinkle-Doodles? Excellent long range transmissions and spyin' on Mechanix chatter.

ATLANTA

We're gonna go shortwave.

KING COBRA

You like Prehistoric and stuff, baby.

The computer monitor flicks random images and sounds.

KING COBRA

This is some weird junk, yo.

ATLANTA

You can read that?

KING COBRA

Naw. This almost like this random language invented by that dude Johnny Q. At least we think his name is Johnny Q. It's like an organic language and stuff. It recreates itself. It be like how the Mechanix speak to each other. It's not encrypted because whoever was gonna receive it would know the language.

ATLANTA

A Mechanix language, uh? Who's Johnny Q?

KING COBRA

Last I heard he was on Earth during the war. Was a ProtoSystems staple under Dr. Neva Farm. She be on the atmo processing joint up at the Rock Yard.

Mr. Melee knows the name and looks at Atlanta.

ATLANTA

(scoffs)

Neva Farm. Figures.

Atlanta double-takes the monitors showing an aerial dog fight of several ships. The graphic at the bottom reading: "Breaking News: Mars Incident."

KING COBRA

The Mechanix be makin' they way to the Litter Belt soon.

ATLANTA

Ready for this?

KING COBRA

Oh, hell ya. Bring on the Mechs, baby!

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BLACKMARE'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Blackmare is on the Quiet Line with Zebra.

ZEBRA

Nothing on the database regarding Mr. Skirmish.

(MORE)

ZEBRA (cont'd)

We've traced Mr. Skirmish's origin to the Mars base and there's nothing in our records that show his training was uploaded by us.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Is it possible that his training was uploaded through a comm frequency?

ZEBRA

Possible? It's our greatest fear. That means the Mechanix have duped our shock troops.

INT. CLUB CASTAWAY - NIGHT

Atlanta, Mr. Melee, Druckner and Bratton sit on the patio bar overlooking an imported ocean.

ATLANTA

I apologize for carting you around with us, Druckner. You can either go your own way or you can have some chow and drinks on me.

DRUCKNER

I am hungry.

ATLANTA

Well, this place has the best Oki Dogs in the Solar System.

BRATTON

I didn't crack the FDR language, but I did find out that the Ruby received over 700 yottabytes before the Chief crash-landed on Pandora.

ATLANTA

That's pretty heavy for a communique. That's more like data transfer.

MR. MELEE

The Galactic Government's been known for hiding military secrets in citizens' brains.

BRATTON

I've heard of that brain-tapping stuff. There was this one guy at Io-U that passed his engineering final without cracking a PDF.

ATLANTA

Brain-tapping?

MR. MELEE

Encrypted information that can only be retrieved by the government. The host wouldn't know the difference.

ATLANTA

How do they do that?

MR. MELEE

Wireless communication devices.

ATLANTA

Bratton, you found that out and didn't crack the language code?

BRATTON

I can see the size of the information that comes in, but not *what* it is. Kinda like a windsock. You can see there's wind, but not what's in it. But there are no known nearby communication bases that could transfer that much so quickly. There's only one place it could've come from.

ATLANTA

Mars?

BRATTON

Mars has a crappy comm-signal. It can't successfully pass Jupiter's magnetic field without a satellite rebound. And by that time you're talkin' about data corruption.

MR. MELEE

The Mechanix most likely dropped a satellite in orbit to monitor and prevent human communication and tactical advances.

BRATTON

True, but it still wouldn't be strong enough to fling 700-plus yottabytes across space so quickly. The only thing powerful enough is on Earth. And it would have to have been received before the Chief's ship hit Jupiter's mag field.

ATLANTA

Aren't the humans on Earth prevented from communication beyond the planet?

BRATTON

I never said it was a human transmission.

MR. MELEE

The only facility large enough to handle that much data transfer is Kaipin City.

BRATTON

I think so, Chief.

ATLANTA

The Earth is on the far side of the Sun this part of the calendar.

BRATTON

Earth? That's an occupied planet.

Abominable Charlie arrives with drinks.

BRATTON

Took you long enough.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Shut up, fool. I had to maneuver around three mosh pits to get here.

LATER

Atlanta leans against the wall of the bathroom corridor. Mr. Melee walks out of the restroom. She shoves her leg against the opposing wall block his path.

Bratton sees this from their table.

BRATTON

What's their deal?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

They grew up at ProtoSystems together. She was 16 when she was sent off to fight the war in the skies and got her ace wings. They sent him to an advanced training unit called 2 Corp. I guess to become what he is now. But they didn't met again until the Showdown at Old D five years later.

Abominable Charlie takes a drink.

BRATTON

You're always talkin' about that, but I don't know what that is.

DRUCKNER

Old Detroit.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Bad is what it was. Old D was the battle that would begin the long, hard fall of the human race.

Abominable Charlie rubs his medallion taking him back to the horror of that battle. Bratton tries to change the subject.

BRATTON

Uh... I thought Atlanta trained pilots.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

She did. She like you. She got a penchant for trouble. Bending rules and sometimes breakin' them. Pissed off the wrong commander, took her outta the field and they sent her to 2 Corp to train. And them...

Abominable Charlie looks over at Atlanta and Mr. Melee laughing at talking.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

... well, you know how that goes. Male parts, female parts. Together parts.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BRIDGE - NIGHT

THE COMMUNICATION OFFICER (20's, female) turns from her console to Blackmare.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER  
Sir, Captain Atlanta just docked in one  
of the Westwood ports.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Make way for the Westwood rock post  
haste.

Blackmare turns to Mr. Skirmish, but he's already out the door.

EXT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - FLIGHT DECK - LATER

The flight deck elevator raises the Grendel II to the flight deck. FOOM! The Grendel flies straight for the Westwood asteroid.

EXT. THE LITTER BELT - NIGHT

Bratton's hovercraft leads Abominable Charlie's big-rig through the Asteroid Field to an asteroid called the Rock Yard that is lit up like a laser light show.

INT. ABOMINABL CHARLIE'S BIG-RIG (MOVING)

While piloting the big-rig, Abominable Charlie yanks down the CB radio.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
This Dr. Farm girl really know how to  
party livin' on the Rock Yard. I hear  
time stands still there.

ATLANTA (O.S.)  
We'll let you know. Try to be quick,  
Abominable. Just get that grav drum.

Abominable Charlie watches the hovercraft speed for the Rock Yard asteroid. He breaks for another asteroid with bright lights flashing: "Copperhead's Huge-ass Salvage Emporium".

EXT. THE ROCK YARD

Bratton's hovercraft zooms past a fully packed rock concert.

INT. BRATTON'S HOVERCRAFT (SPEEDING)

Atlanta punches a code on the key pad.

ATLANTA

Think Dr. Neva Farm's on call today?

INT. ATMOSPHERE PROCESSING CENTER - SICK BAY - DAY

DR. NEVA FARM (50's, female) enters without looking at Atlanta and Mr. Melee. She goes to her desk and pulls out a metal syringe.

DR. FARM

I'm Doctor Neva Farm. And you are, well, sick or else you wouldn't be here. This's enough to reduce the symptoms, but not to halt the mutation process.

Dr. Farm looks up and recognizes Mr. Melee.

DR. FARM

Uh, you don't fool me, good boy. You're immune to all viruses.

Dr. Farm looks over at Atlanta and recognizes her too.

DR. FARM

Well, looks like we all know each other by proxy of me. Is it still Lieutenant Atlanta?

ATLANTA

I'm a Captain by default.

DR. FARM

Nothing wrong with self-promotion. I demoted myself from ProtoSystems project supervisor to a more humanitarian effort. I now wipe noses for a living.

Dr. Farm goes to her desk and pulls out a bottle of scotch and swigs.

ATLANTA

You didn't love building up guys like the Chief here?

DR. FARM

I was the best in my field which is how I inherited the shock troop project. But you're not here to ask me about him are you?

ATLANTA

You were always sharp, Doc. We're inquiring about Johnny Q. He worked under you right?

Dr. Farm tosses Atlanta the bottle.

DR. FARM

Take a swig, sister. I knew Johnny Q quite well. During the end of the Mech War, when we all still lived on Earth, Johnny Q was designing an evolutionary language that would amalgamate visual, audio, phonetics derived from a base alphabet. And I don't mean in the ABC sense of the word. It was very media-centric. It functioned by speaking straight to the subconscious. The thinking would be taken out of the language to create simple direct impulses.

ATLANTA

Just a shot in the dark, but do you know how to decode this language?

DR. FARM

Think as if someone re-writing the alphabet. You recognize the words and letters, but someone has changed the meaning. And you have to sift through endless coding to find out when the code was changed to make sense of it now.

ATLANTA

Why would he want to do this?

DR. FARM

It was part of a coding process that our military was working on during the Mech War. The Mechanix had captured and tapped all satellites. We needed a new code that would help us win the war. But Johnny Q was so much smarter than code writing. He had ideas that were never realized. Revolutionary. But too revolutionary.

(MORE)

DR. FARM (cont'd)

One of them was fusing the Mechanix virus with human clones. He had this idea for a hybrid spy that would be captured by the Mechanix and relay intel to the human command centers.

ATLANTA

Clones?

DR. FARM

You knew that Johnny Q was a clone, right?

MR. MELEE

You've neglected to tell us.

DR. FARM

Oh. Well, surprise.

ATLANTA

I thought they were forbidden.

DR. FARM

In wartime, honey. Anything goes. But the Mechanix attacked our science and research bases and we were all dispersed to different parts of the planet. I never heard from Johnny Q again.

MR. MELEE

Is it possible he's still alive?

DR. FARM

Don't know. During the loss of the Mech War and the exodus, I pretty much lost track of people. But you're here because you've found something?

ATLANTA

We found a data stream of 700-plus yottabytes, but we can't read it.

DR. FARM

I can't help you, honey. Not without the base language. The only place I know about was on ProtoSystems, Earth. Last I heard, that base was nuked.

ATLANTA

So, we'd be sifting through radioactive rubble.

DR. FARM

I'll tell you this, sister. After the exodus there was a Mechanix-sanctioned facility on the Australian continent called the Willmore-Sphere. It was designed to research the Earth's core to power Kaipin City. It's still run by humans. Scavenger teams often sought out defunct military posts for recyclable material. This Colonel Falkland was said to have recovered a media-based code.

ATLANTA

How do you know about this Willmore-Sphere?

DR. FARM

Once ProtoSystems was attacked that's where a lot of us gathered. But I got out of there quick.

ATLANTA

Why's that?

DR. FARM

The scavengers started bringing in strays like Colonel Falkland who were embittered soldiers left behind. They began forming an underground resistance. It won't be long before the Mechanix are sent in to investigate and annihilate everyone if said resistance is found out. But as long as the Willmore-Sphere functions for Kaipin City, then that's all the Mechanix really care about.

(beat)

Give it up, sister.

Atlanta takes a swig from the bottle and then tosses it over.

ATLANTA

So, where can I get a treatment for the Mechanix virus?

DR. FARM

You really have someone with the bug?

ATLANTA

A close friend.

DR. FARM

I need to see this person. How long has this person been infected?

Dr. Farm packs her medical bag.

ATLANTA

Since the war. But we were posted on Pandora up until recently.

DR. FARM

That's why the mutation has spread and attacked his system. The Mechanix signal hasn't reached him to expedite the mutation. Unfortunately, I don't have treatment in that late stage. You can't get it without the Big-G handing it to you yourselves.

ATLANTA

How do you figure that?

MR. MELEE

They want to keep tabs on who's infected.

DR. FARM

The Willmore-Sphere is the only free market.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - PASSENGER BAY - NIGHT

Bratton pops a piece of Pop-tart in his mouth while sitting at a battered computer monitor. He starts up a media player on the computer.

BRATTON

Okay, let's see what these files are.

He offers a piece of Pop-tart to Druckner.

BRATTON

Toaster cake?

She just shakes her head.

BRATTON

Sure? It's made with real Champ Chocolate. The best artificial chocolate in the Solar System.

Druckner takes notice to the media file on the computer starting with a ProtoSystems logo and cheesy synth music.

DRUCKNER

Where did you get this?

BRATTON

I hacked into the Big-G's D-base while looking up the Chief.

DRUCKNER

You could go to the Mega-slam for that.

BRATTON

Almost did, but Atlanta got me out of it before it went to trial.

A young Dr. Neva Farm appears onscreen.

DR. FARM

We are already 10 years into the Mech War. The human numbers are dwindling. The human race has already dipped into its reserve military and frankly not equipped to continue without assistance. What the family of the soldiers have left behind are sons and daughters. Orphans.

The screen shows a nursery of BABIES. Druckner and Bratton watch intently.

DR. FARM

We will train these young children into super soldiers by infusing the skills and experiences of today's finest infantrymen, pilots and tankers. They will be faster and stronger in every way. They will be able to observe, assess and execute in one instinctive response. We do that by separating the emotions and memories from the host. We will extract their emotions during the night and download them into medical research clones mimicked from their own DNA in these adjacent rooms.

The monitor shows a YOUNG BOY hooked up to tubes and wires. The fluid travels through the tubes into a machine that is connected to another machine in the adjacent room and into the brain of the YOUNG BOY CLONE.

BRATTON

How long would it take to make those?

DRUCKNER

16 to 21 years.

BRATTON

The war was almost over by then. It's weird. All the shock troops are Chief Warrant Officers.

DRUCKNER

So they don't have to answer to anybody. They don't have to take anyone's bullshit except for the ones in their own hierarchy.

BRATTON

So, he can run rogue and no one can say anything about it. Running rogue requires emotion doesn't it? And our Chief's got emotions. He's sarcastic. A little too much for my taste.

DRUCKNER

My guess is that his personality fills in the holes. I guess he compensates.

BRATTON

What about the clones?

Druckner motions to the monitor showing Dr. Farm walking over to the young clone's room.

DR. FARM

And the clones? They will be educated and to be the finest citizens and leaders of all sciences and politics prolonging the longevity of the human race. Even if it means fighting this war for another hundred years.

Bratton and Druckner look away from the monitor. The room is labeled: "Johnny Q".

INT. GRENDEL II - COCKPIT - NIGHT

Mr. Skirmish monitors his tracking display as the Grendel storms through one level of the docking port.

INT. WESTWOOD VILLAGE DOCKING PORT - NIGHT

Atlanta and Dr. Farm walk into the docking port where the Boyington is powering up. She sees Abominable Charlie working on one of the gravity drums.

ATLANTA

How's it look?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Copperhead's got some good stuff.

Abominable Charlie's arm twitches making him drop his zap-tool.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Damn.

He massages his arm.

ATLANTA

There's someone I'd like you to see,  
Abominable.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - GALLEY - LATER

Atlanta, Dr. Farm and Abominable Charlie enter the galley with furniture strewn everywhere.

ATLANTA

Sorry about the mess, Doc. We didn't  
have time to bolt everything down before  
we were attacked by privateers.

DR. FARM

I've seen a lot worse in my day, sister.

Abominable Charlie picks up a chair, sits and rolls up his sleeve revealing the metal catheter. Dr. Farm hooks up a media jack into his arm and watches the results on her hand-held monitor.

DR. FARM

This will take a few moments. It's  
counting how much of your cells have been  
remapped. In the early stages the virus  
learns your thought process while it  
hibernates. In the second stage which is  
much later, the mutation begins. Which I  
suspect is happening now.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I smell booze. Good booze.

Dr. Farm hands him a flask.

ATLANTA

What do you think about going to Earth?

He just looks at her sideways.

ATLANTA

We need to recover your dose. We can do a cheap homemade version, but it'll hurt. But Earth is the only place we can a nice stock to last.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

What's goin' on, sweets? I can't be in the vicinity of the Mechanix hub. We damn close as it is.

ATLANTA

I can't leave you here in case we don't get back quick enough. The mutation...

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I know, sweets. I know.

DR. FARM

You might be right about that. But here's a choice for you. The Big-G holds all the rations for the mutation treatment. You'll never be returned to your normal life.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I ain't got a normal life now.

DR. FARM

You'll be subject to a battery of exams and experiments which a soldier like yourself wouldn't appreciate.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

A screwfest no matter which way.

Atlanta hesitates for a moment.

ATLANTA

The Ruby's communique coulda come from Kaipin City.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Hey-all naw!

ATLANTA

I don't wanna see you mutate, Abominable. I'm gonna have to put you down and you know that's gonna be tough on me. After all we been through.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

How South is this thing gonna go, sweets?

ATLANTA

Something big has been set in motion and we're just caught in its jetwash.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Think all this worth it, sweets? All the evidence was blown up on Pandora. The chief ain't supposed to exist in the first place. The kid should be in prison for cyber crimes. And I'm just a crazy war vet with a Mechanix virus and you leadin' this whole thing. You ain't too popular with the Big-G these days. Who's gonna listen to us?

ATLANTA

Mech War II is on the way, Abominable. We can head it off at the pass and die trying or we can sit around and wait for it to find us and fight this war all over again.

Abominable Charlie hangs his head knowing she's right.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

With all the satellites the Mechanix have orbiting Earth how we gonna bust through? We can't space-fold in atmo. We'd have to burn through the sky and they'll see us comin'. Have I mentioned yet that the Earth's on the far side of Sun this part of the year? The only thing between our part of the sky and Earth is the Sun and Mars. And Mars is on the better half of bein' screwed.

ATLANTA

I'm just talkin' to myself here. Stop me anywhere. Say we do a fold near a sun spot.

(MORE)

ATLANTA (cont'd)

The energy sphere from the fold drives open while simultaneously protecting us, igniting a solar flare. It'll take the Mechanix sats off-line for a good 8-10 minutes. By the time the first sats recharge on PV power, we're coming through the backyard -- right through Earth's umbra.

Abominable Charlie stares at her in disbelief.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I don't know what I'm trippin' at more. You having this all thought out or the fact that you're talkin' about space-folding on a sun spot. We be burnt the Hell the up.

ATLANTA

The energy field protects us from flying apart in the wormhole, it can protect us from the Sun.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

For two doggy-rapin' seconds!

ATLANTA

More than we need.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

A billionth of a second be cuttin' it too close ya think?

Abominable Charlie huffs.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

That's why we in this mess. Geniuses like you think up all this kinda stuff. If it weren't for geniuses coming up with the bright idea of hitchhiking an observatory lab on a comet, then we wouldn't have those space spores polluting the planet and mutating our kinfolk. We wouldn't have had to go to war with our own people, they wouldn't have built guys like Mr. Melee, we wouldn't have been exiled and we sure as shit wouldn't be space-folding onto a damn sun spot!

ATLANTA

Yeah, but if it weren't for that hitchhiking observatory we wouldn't have met.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

True that.

(huffs)

But we still wouldn't be flying into no damn sun spot.

Dr. Farm's monitor BEEPS.

DR. FARM

Oh. Damn.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I know, uh? Wait. What damn? Just hit me with all the bad news now, Doc.

Dr. Farm takes the flask and swigs.

DR. FARM

You're a bit farther along then I thought.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Should you be drinkin' after me then?

DR. FARM

I'm inoculated. I hope the rest of your crew is, Captain.

INT. WESTWOOD VILLAGE DOCKING PORT - NIGHT

Atlanta stomps on the gravity drum hatch on the roof of the Boyington, but it's not shutting. She kneels down to examine it, seeing that a little cam is out of place.

ATLANTA

It's always gotta be one nut coming down the wrong slot.

MR. MELEE

Pardon.

She shoves a tool into the gravity drum compartment.

ATLANTA

Nothing. Been meaning to ask you. Did you mean all those goofy, little things you said to me back in our 2 Corp days?

MR. MELEE

I didn't think they were goofy.

She blushes and smiles.

ATLANTA

Just checkin'.

She SNORTS and chucks him in the arm. He's about to chuck her back, but she holds up her hand.

ATLANTA

Yeah, don't reciprocate. I've gone through enough for the day.

The large metallic docking doors EXPLODE paving the way for the 30-foot Grendel II. It ambles confidently towards the Boyington pointing its bulbous Gatling gun arm at them.

Mr. Melee snatches Atlanta's side arm, leaps off the Boyington and sprints towards the Grendel II head-on.

GATLING-FIRE chases Mr. Melee. Mr. Melee kicks up a manhole cover in the ground and uses it as a shield and sprints forward deflecting rounds.

ATLANTA

Abominable, start up the Boyington!

Mr. Melee peers through the pick holes of the manhole cover seeing a missile hatch open on the Grendel II's shoulder.

The Boyington begins to taxi out of the docking port while Atlanta repairs the bolt on the gravity drum.

A missile with a smiley face launches from the Grendel II's shoulder headed straight for Mr. Melee. Mr. Melee leaps a good five feet into the air placing the manhole under his feet as the missile EXPLODES underneath him.

The explosion launches Mr. Melee into the air as he surfs the manhole 15-feet even with the cockpit window. He BLASTS the pistol at the cockpit SHATTERING the glass.

Mr. Skirmish tries to un-holster his pistol, but Mr. Melee yanks him out of the gyroscope seat. They both fall to the ground PUNCHING each other on the way down.

INT. THE BOYINGTON

Abominable Charlie tries to keep his eyes on the controls, but he's staring out the window at the Melee-Skirmish fight.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Too many Chiefs, not enough Indians.

A pain shoots through Abominable Charlie's arm forcing the Boyington to jostle.

EXT. THE BOYINGTON - ROOF

Atlanta gets tossed to her back sliding towards the edge of the Boyington revealing a 500-foot drop. She catches herself from going over.

ATLANTA

You okay in there, Abominable?

The Boyington makes it completely out of the docking port.

INT. WESTWOOD VILLAGE DOCKING PORT

Mr. Skirmish punches Mr. Melee in the face knocking him back a few feet. Mr. Melee shakes it off. He sees that little bits of hard metal contorts under Mr. Skirmish's face.

MR. MELEE

Hybrid.

Mr. Skirmish approaches Mr. Melee.

MR. SKIRMISH

How about a hybrid shock troop, Chief?

Mr. Melee kicks Mr. Skirmish's legs from under him and locks legs, dragging him closer so Mr. Melee can dig his fingers into Mr. Skirmish's rib cage SNAPPING several ribs then KICKS him off.

Mr. Skirmish cradles his rib cage as they repair themselves by SNAPPING back into place. Mr. Melee sees this. He gets up and makes a mad dash for the docking port exit as the Boyington waits.

Mr. Skirmish hits a motion capture button on his gauntlet. The Grendel II mimics his moves.

INT. GRENDEL II

The Grendel II swings the Gatling gun arm at Mr. Melee -- FIRING just as he leaps onto the roof of the Boyington.

EXT. WESTWOOD VILLAGE DOCKING PORT

The Boyington pulls away from the docking port as Atlanta and Mr. Melee climb inside. The Grendel II scoops up Mr. Skirmish and goes after them.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

Abominable Charlie relinquishes the steering to Atlanta as soon as she sits. He sees on a monitor that the Grendel II is closing in.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

He on our six, sweets.

Atlanta maneuvers the Boyington into the asteroid corridor.

INT. GRENDEL II (SPEEDING)

The lack of oxygen in the asteroid cave chokes Mr. Skirmish. He puts on his oxygen mask as the Boyington's wake turbulence interferes with the Grendel II's controls and starts to blister his skin revealing bits of his metallic endo skeleton.

EXT. THE LITTER BELT

Just as the Boyington breaks away from the asteroid they come face to face with the Alptraum-Konig.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

Atlanta yanks back on the wheel to avoid hitting the control tower.

ATLANTA

They sure caught up to us quick. There's gotta be a locator on the FDR.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I'll go check it out, sweets.

ATLANTA

I need you to monitor the shields. Bratton needs to help me calculate the fold.

(hits intercom button)

Bratton, come up to the pit.

(MORE)

ATLANTA (cont'd)

I need to do the math on the space-fold.  
In the shake-your-ass sense of the word.

Abominable Charlie sits in front of a ball track console as a BLAST hits the ship.

EXT. THE LITTER BELT

The Boyington arches back into the Litter Belt as the A.K. follows. The Grendel II lands on the Alptraum-Konig's flight deck.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BRIDGE

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Armor, fire chain weapons. Heed civilian  
rocks.

The ARMOR OFFICER (20's, female) readies her console.

ARMOR OFFICER  
Yes, sir.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
(to Kelton)  
See what that science project is doing  
back on my ship.

LCDR. KELTON  
Sir.

INT. GRENDEL II

Mr. Skirmish PEELS AWAY the melted rubber of his oxygen mask that's grafted into his face.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - MOTOR POOL

Mr. Skirmish hops down coming face to face with Kelton.

LCDR. KELTON  
You're looking pretty rough, Chief.

MR. SKIRMISH  
I want the shield repaired on the  
Grendel.

LCDR. KELTON  
Did you find anything out, Chief?

MR. SKIRMISH

Yes.

Mr. Skirmish walks away.

EXT. THE LITTER BELT

A barrage of tracer-fire streams from the Alptraum-Konig chasing the Boyington.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

The ship TREMBLES.

BRATTON

It isn't gonna be long before one of those tracers knocks out one if not all of our drums.

ATLANTA

Ya better get on making those fold preparations then. Not that we're in any rush, Bratton.

Bratton types away on his keyboard which brings up a Doppler map of the Sun.

There's a BEEPING getting Atlanta's attention.

ATLANTA

The hell?

Bratton looks around at the panel.

BRATTON

Someone's transmitting our flight data.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

The COMMUNICATION OFFICER (20's, female) turns to Blackmare.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Sir, they're charging up for space-fold... towards the surface of the Sun?

CDR. BLACKMARE

I want you to triple check that. And Navigation Officer, I want you to prepare for the fold.

THE NAVIGATION OFFICER (20's, male) nods and checks the predicted trajectory of the Boyington.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

Bratton taps away on the communication keyboard.

BRATTON

I dropped an Exit-13 virus into the frequency. It'll find the source and chew up their power supply.

ATLANTA

Did you guys dismantle the interceptor?

BRATTON

We didn't have time with all the chasing, shooting and repairs going on.

ATLANTA

Do everything as we planned and I want you to do it now.

Abominable Charlie kisses his fingers and places them on his butt.

EXT. THE LITTER BELT

The space-fold energy sphere forms around the Boyington as a wormhole opens up swallowing the two ships.

EXT. THE SUN - DAY

The wormhole spits out the Boyington and A.K. and then sucks them back in as a solar flare bursts off the surface of the Sun.

A wave of solar wind flies past the Earth causing the satellites operational lights to flutter and turn off.

EXT. EARTH'S ORBIT

The black hole opens, spitting out the Boyington and Alptraum-Konig in the shadow of the Earth. The Boyington zooms into the Earth's atmosphere passing a Mechanix satellite.

The satellite's operational lights come back on just as the Alptraum-Konig passes.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Sir, we're getting a transmission from Kaipin City wondering why we're entering their atmo.

LCDR. KELTON

They don't see us chasing the Viking?

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

No, sir.

CDR. BLACKMARE

No response. Follow the Viking.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Sir, they're sending an assault team.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Armor, open fire on the Viking. Maim it. Do not destroy it.

INT. THE BOYINGTON (SPEEDING) - NIGHT

Atlanta maneuvers the Boyington towards an electrical cyclone.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Yo, sweets, we're headed right for a cyclone.

ATLANTA

It's the only way we're gonna lose 'em.

An EXPLOSION RATTLES the ship.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

We got hull breach in the cargo hold where my big-rig is.

ATLANTA

Abominable, take the wheel.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

What for?

ATLANTA

They're either trackin' us with the locator in the FDR or that Interceptor's relaying. Either way, they gotta go.

Atlanta storms out to Mr. Melee in the passenger bay, scooping up the FDR.

ATLANTA

(to Mr. Melee)

I need your muscles for something.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

Kelton returns just as the monitors begin to scramble. Chain-guns FIRE at the Boyington.

EXT. CYCLONE

The Boyington cuts through layers of black clouds and lightning, but the Alptraum-Konig is still on them.

The big-rig rattles loose from the Boyington's cargo hold and flies across the sky, smashing against the flight deck and EXPLODING against the command tower.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

LCDR. KELTON

Did they just throw a ship at us?

Blackmare sneers and watches lightning strobe and illuminate the Boyington, but then it disappears into the clouds.

But the A.K's interceptor comes careening right at them forcing them all to duck.

EXT. CYCLONE

The interceptor slips past the Alptraum-Konig's tower and then the thrust BURNS and flies off into a black cloud.

The Boyington makes a hard turn into the eye of the cyclone where everything is calm. They cruise a few feet above the ocean before disappearing into another storm eyewall.

The Alptraum-Konig emerges from an eyewall hovering high above the ocean.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

Blackmare looks around seeing his monitors scrambled. One by one monitors come back on-line.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Commander, we're receiving a message from Kaipin City saying that we'll be terminated once our location has been established.

CDR. BLACKMARE

(to Kelton)

Make preparations to convert the ship to dive mode.

(to Comm Officer)

Comm, see if you can locate the Viking.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Done deal, sir.

The ship's communicator BUZZES. Kelton picks it up.

LCDR. KELTON

Bridge. This is the XO.

FLIGHT DECK OPERATOR

This is the flight deck. There's something you have to see.

EXT. CYCLONE

The Alptraum-Konig dives into the ocean averting detection of patrolling Mechanix crafts.

INT. A.K. INTERCEPTOR (SPEEDING)

Atlanta pilots the interceptor through a curtain of lightning and clouds. The ship streaks out of the cyclone speeding across the sky towards the continent of Australia.

INT. THE BOYINGTON

BRATTON

So, we're just gonna wait here? We got enough power for that?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The Boyington will just feed off wind and hydro power. Right now, I'm fixin' to get my violence on.

Abominable Charlie storms out towards Druckner.

BRATTON

I'm not sure she was transmitting our stats.

EXT. CYCLONE

The Boyington hovers amid the storm and rough sea.

EXT. AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK - DAWN

The interceptor burns across the clear blue sky of the Australian Outback.

INT. A.K. INTERCEPTOR (SPEEDING)

Mr. Melee types on a keyboard while examining the screen. A graphic on the monitor shows an underground facility five miles underground.

ATLANTA

You know anything about this Colonel Falkland character?

MR. MELEE

Only what I've seen on the news. His type isn't too happy with us shock troops. He calls us "Cheat" Warrant Officers.

ATLANTA

Why's that?

MR. MELEE

He's from the school of the 3-67.

ATLANTA

Ah, that whole honor and pride generation.

Atlanta notices his wound.

ATLANTA

I need to take a look at that.

MR. MELEE

It'll heal. Not as fast as Chief Skirmish though. He seems to regenerate on site.

ATLANTA

I wonder if that's one of Johnny Q's proposed hybrids.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - FLIGHT DECK - DAY

THE FLIGHT OPERATOR (40, male), Kelton and Blackmare are huddled in the hangar in front of the Grendel II. Two CREW MEMBERS repair the Grendel II's ship.

CDR. BLACKMARE

What is it, Captain?

FLIGHT DECK OPERATOR

I did an ordnance scan when the Chief first powered up. It was maxed out. After the Litter Belt, he was missing more than his expended fire power. He's missing a cache of detonators.

CDR. BLACKMARE

How many?

FLIGHT DECK OPERATOR

He had a hundred and he's down to fifty.

LCDR. KELTON

You suspect he's hiding them on the ship?

CDR. BLACKMARE

(to Kelton)

Talk to security about the Chief's movements through out the ship. I want those detonators accounted for.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - GALLEY - DAY

Abominable Charlie tosses Druckner into the messy galley with stuff strewn everywhere. He picks up another chair and slams it down in front of her.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Sit.

Druckner complies casually. Dr. Farm enters and watches from the doorway.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You tryin' to get yourself killed transmitting our stats like that? You on this ship too!

DRUCKNER

(puzzled)

I didn't do anything of the sort.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I got news for ya, kid, the human race no longer has a military.

DRUCKNER

We certainly need one.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Did you even fight in the Mech War? Blackmare's an outlaw-for-hire. He ain't no soldier, kid.

DRUCKNER

Commander Blackmare is a man of tradition! He's fighting to reclaim humanity's right to exist in this galaxy.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

By being a key figure in starting another war? He only fought one war in his career and he lost. I saw what freedom was. Hell yeah. I was 20 when the Mechanix waged war on us.

DRUCKNER

I was born into the war. Shipped off to a military academy the day I learned to walk!

Abominable Charlie takes a breath and picks up a chair. He takes a seat.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You, Atlanta, even the Chief went through the military machine at the same time. And I ain't messin' around when I say I'm glad the kid never went saw the war. Me and your boy Blackmare, knew a free world with peace. Blackmare a man of tradition, uh? Ya know what my favorite tradition is? Goin' to sleep and wakin' up alive and makin' sure the ones next to me do too.

Abominable Charlie takes off a necklace medallion from around his neck. He kisses it.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I got myself shot up pretty good in Old D. Musta been there for days, but felt like months smellin' my stinky blood. A chaplain would come by and hand these out. To make sure the soldier never lost his way. We were doin' politicians' dirty work. We was goin' to hell for all the killin'. They wasn't. Soon as they fixed me up, they threw me back out there. Broke dick and all. They didn't care as long as I could still shoot straight. Never heard what happened to my wife and kid again. Don't know if they still alive or not. But I had this. It gave me hope that if I kept fighting hard enough to win the war, I'd see my family again. Ain't gotta tell ya how that turned out. Everyone that I got left is on this bucket.

Abominable Charlie hands her the medallion.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You a fighter. You wouldn't be 3-67 if you wasn't. But all I ask, re-think how that Pandora scenario played out. All I know is my new home was blown up and your men left to die. That's a politician thinkin'.

Abominable Charlie shoves his palm into his orbital socket as a pain shoots into his eye. Dr. Farm rushes to his side.

BRATTON (O.S.)

(over P.A.)

Abominable, I think that signal is still on board the ship.

Abominable Charlie tries to stand, but falls to his knees clawing at the floor. Druckner shoves his face into the floor and grabs his sidearm. Druckner points the weapon at Dr. Farm.

DRUCKNER

Back away from him, Doc.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT - LATER

BRATTON

Abominable, come back.

Druckner enters shoving a bound and gagged Abominable Charlie to the floor. Bratton turns around with his hands up.

DRUCKNER

Your friend's got the virus and he's got no meds. He's probably transmitting our location as we speak. You know how to fly this bucket?

BRATTON

A little. I'm not officially licensed.

DRUCKNER

First, we're going to transmit a message to the A.K. saying that we have a Mechanix sleeper.

Bratton hesitates looking at Abominable Charlie. She aims the sidearm at Abominable's head.

DRUCKNER

And you're going to do it now.

BRATTON

The Mechanix can pick up your transmission on their sats.

DRUCKNER

It's going to have to be that way then.

BRATTON

Wait. Does the AK have shortwave capabilities?

EXT. WILLMORE-SPHERE - LANDING PAD - DAY

Mr. Melee jimmies the FDR's locator loose and shows Atlanta.

ATLANTA

Yeah, hide that will ya.

POST COMMANDER (50's, male) and the COLONEL FALKLAND (60's, male) approach Atlanta and Mr. Melee.

POST COMMANDER

What's wrong with your ship?

ATLANTA

We were sent by Dr. Neva Farm.

POST COMMANDER

Neva? What did she leave behind?

ATLANTA

Are you the post commander here?

POST COMMANDER

I am.

MR. MELEE

Who's he?

Colonel Falkland is all business and vigilant.

POST COMMANDER

He's the Willmore-Sphere's sergeant at arms if you will.

ATLANTA

You may be the one we need to talk to then.

COLONEL FALKLAND

How do you reckon?

ATLANTA

Are we to understand that you've recovered Johnny Q's base code? Because we need something decoded.

INT. POST COMMANDER'S JEEP (MOVING) - LATER

A Jeep cruises through the Willmore-Sphere tunnel system. Post Commander drives while Colonel Falkland looks back at Atlanta and Mr. Melee sitting in the back.

COLONEL FALKLAND

It's a bit of a ride to the other side of the Willmore-Sphere. That's where the cryptology lab is. So, what unit were you with back in the war?

ATLANTA

501st Aviation Strike Battalion. Later got recruited by ProtoSystems to train the new guys.

COLONEL FALKLAND

Damn ProtoSystems. That corporate science was a step away from being Mechanix. But I appreciate you flyboys. You really came through in a pinch for us infantry types. What about you, big man?

ATLANTA

Uh, we were together on the same post.

MR. MELEE

I acquired most of my training from Captain Atlanta.

COLONEL FALKLAND

You must be the best in your field.

ATLANTA

I'm not a bragger, but it's true.

COLONEL FALKLAND

I suppose ProtoSystems recruited you for those Cheat Warrant Officers.

ATLANTA

Just sharing the wealth.

COLONEL FALKLAND

Not all that happy all my hard-learned training and experience went into a vial and inserted into some 16 year-old kid.

MR. MELEE

They learn from your mistakes, Colonel.

Something about Mr. Melee rubs Colonel Falkland the wrong way.

EXT. WILLMORE-SPHERE - LANDING PAD - DAY

A Mechanix Emissary ship touches down.

THE EMISSARY (30's, male) steps out and makes for the Post Commander's office.

INT. CRYPTOLOGY LAB - DAY

Mr. Melee, Atlanta, the Post Commander and Colonel Falkland stand around the FDR that's hooked up to a series of cables.

COLONEL FALKLAND

What's so valuable about this banged up hunk of junk?

ATLANTA

That's what we'd like to know.

MR. MELEE

We're particularly looking for a transmission. Possibly data transfer.

POST COMMANDER

We better make this quick. I'm sure the Emissary is on his way.

MR. MELEE

Emissary?

POST COMMANDER

The Mechanix send an emissary every time something out of the ordinary happens. Their satellites just went down and we're gonna have a visitor.

COLONEL FALKLAND

Mean-ass honchos them emissaries. Spooky too.

ATLANTA

Spookier than Mechanix Centaurs? Half tank, half human is pretty spooky.

POST COMMANDER

Much spookier. These emissaries are sophisticated hybrids. They look pretty damn human, but they're mechanical underneath the skin.

(MORE)

POST COMMANDER (cont'd)  
They were fused with those medical clones  
on ProtoSystems.

COLONEL FALKLAND  
It's those eyes. Those cold, dead eyes  
that put the chill in your spine.

Mr. Melee and Atlanta exchange glances.

ATLANTA  
You ever seen Johnny Q?

COLONEL FALKLAND  
Seen him? No. MIA last I heard. No  
confirmation of his death though. He's  
been on people's lips the past few years  
ever since we brought this base-code  
back.

The monitor shows scrambled images of data. Everyone is  
confused except for Mr. Melee. He recognizes it.

COLONEL FALKLAND  
Johnny Q really wrote a complicated  
symphony of code here. We can see what's  
on the surface, but there's layers of  
metadata in there far more complex. The  
metadata is useless unless there's an  
order that goes along with it.

MR. MELEE  
Well, that stuff on the surface is a  
Smart Book.

Mr. Melee turns to Atlanta.

MR. MELEE  
A training manual for shock troops.  
Shock troops were injected with a vial of  
liquid data. Someone has compressed this  
into a digital consciousness. It takes  
several years before shock troops could  
amalgamate this, but this is a full 21-  
year dose in one sitting.

ATLANTA  
Can a human mind handle this much at  
once?

MR. MELEE  
You would have to be a machine.

COLONEL FALKLAND  
Like a damn hybrid.

ATLANTA

And you had a ship full of these guys.

COLONEL FALKLAND

A ship full of what?

MR. MELEE

Mars was attacked by Mechanix when they discovered a training camp full of shock troops.

ATLANTA

That's breakin' news for ya, Colonel. We're heading into another war if we don't get to the bottom of this.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BRIDGE - DAY

Blackmare sits in his ship thinking. Kelton walks up to him.

LCDR. KELTON

The Chief's clean. The security playbacks have him on everything and nothing shows him planting anything or even walking out of the Grendel with a case of anything.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Unless someone's working with him.

LCDR. KELTON

On this ship?

CDR. BLACKMARE

We're so close to the Mechanix hub that a sleeper is not out of the question.

LCDR. KELTON

We would know if someone was infected with the virus. You can't hide the infection without treatment.

CDR. BLACKMARE

That's why you're going to check the sick bay logs and see who's been making regular visits. Particularly in two week increments.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER  
Commander, there's a transmission coming  
in from the Viking claiming to be  
Sergeant First Class Druckner. It's  
coming via shortwave radio.

Blackmare looks up surprised and puts on his headphones.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Patch it. Sergeant Druckner, good to  
hear you've survived Pandora.

DRUCKNER (O.S.)  
Atlanta and her crew picked me up.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
At the risk of sounding rushed, did you  
recover the FDR?

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

DRUCKNER  
The FDR is not aboard this ship. I've  
commandeered the Boyington and they have  
a sleeper on board.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

COMMUNICATION OFFICER  
We've got their coordinates, sir, but so  
has a team of Mechanix.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
We're comin' for ya, Sarge, but you also  
have a Mechanix squad homing in on you.

DRUCKNER (O.S.)  
Got it, sir.

Mr. Skirmish enters looking beat up, but not lacking energy.  
Blackmare nods and tries to focus on Druckner.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

Bratton is distracted by a BLEEP of approaching blips on the  
monitor.

DRUCKNER  
(to Bratton)  
You know how to fly this?

BRATTON

Not this bucket. But he does.

Bratton nods at Abominable Charlie.

EXT. THE BOYINGTON - DAY

A pair of lightning bolts CRACKLE. A Mechanix Sentry ship stares at the rear end of the Boyington sticking out of a curtain of wisping storm clouds.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

Druckner plops Abominable Charlie into the captain's chair. Druckner keeps the weapon on him.

DRUCKNER

Get us out of here.

BRATTON

The sentries are demanding a response or they'll open fire.

Druckner notices Abominable Charlie's right hand curling into a trembling fist. His pupils dilate and retract rapidly.

DRUCKNER

What kind of shielding defenses does this ship have?

BRATTON

It's tough old ship, but who knows against a Mechanix craft.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

(to himself)

Get it together, Sarge. You've been through worse.

Abominable Charlie musters up his strength and forces the Boyington into motion.

EXT. CYCLONE

The Boyington burns back into the Cyclone with the Mechanix sentries BLASTING away. The Boyington takes hard HITS forcing some of its trajectory SPLASHING into an ocean wave. The Boyington barely recovers.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

COMMUNICATION OFFICER  
Sir, the Viking is taking on ordnance.

LCDR. KELTON  
We can launch missiles.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
We're not wasting heavy ordnance on a couple of sentries when we're in the enemy's backyard.

Mr. Skirmish listens to his communicator and abruptly walks away. Kelton and Blackmare watch him leave and then stare at each other inquisitively.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
(to the Nav Officer)  
Surface.

Blackmare sits back in his chair... thinking.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Comm, can you hack into the Chief's communicator signal?

COMMUNICATION OFFICER  
I'll give it a go, sir.

Kelton leans in close to Blackmare.

LCDR. KELTON  
What are you up to? Hacking into a Chief Warrant Officer's communique is against regs.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
What regs? Is he going to fire me?

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - MOTOR POOL - LATER

Mr. Skirmish enters the motorpool where his Grendel II sits with a piece of scrap metal welded over the damaged windshield.

The Flight Deck Operator follows Mr. Skirmish as they head right towards the Grendel II.

FLIGHT DECK OPERATOR  
I've put a blackout blast shield over the cockpit. So, you'll have to trust your digital gauges.

MR. SKIRMISH  
Fine job.

Mr. Skirmish climbs into the Grendel II.

EXT. CYCLONE - LATER

The A.K. rises out of the ocean with the Grendel II standing defiantly on the flight deck as if he's surfing the war ship.

The Grendel II LAUNCHES OFF Blackmare's ship and flies off towards the mainland.

INT. GRENDEL II - COCKPIT (MOVING)

Mr. Skirmish studies the FDR's locator on his monitor.

EXT. WILLMORE-SPHERE - LANDING PAD

The Grendel II SHRIEKS across the sky nearing the Willmore-Sphere landing pad.

INT. WILLMORE-SPHERE - CRYPTOLOGY - DUSK

Mr. Melee, Atlanta, the Post Commander and Falkland start packing up the FDR.

COLONEL FALKLAND  
All right, Captain Atlanta. I made copies of the FDR so I can finish decoding it.

Colonel Falkland hands Atlanta a data disc and a medical case.

ATLANTA  
Good deal, Colonel.

POST COMMANDER  
Remember, that dose is pretty hardcore. Get that back to Neva and I'm sure she get someone to duplicate the formula.

ATLANTA

Thanks a lot for this.

POST COMMANDER

Hey, me and Neva go back. Wish she would have stayed. We could use her around here.

The Emissary enters and notices everyone around the FDR.

THE EMISSARY

Good evening, gentlemen. And lady.

POST COMMANDER

Uh, good seeing you, sir.

THE EMISSARY

I gather you have received my communiqué regarding the satellites and the war class super carrier breaking atmo?

POST COMMANDER

I have, sir.

THE EMISSARY

Is that a flight data recorder?

ATLANTA

We just returned from a salvage run from old Hong Kong, boss.

THE EMISSARY

I see.

ATLANTA

Yeah, not much on it, but air chatter.

THE EMISSARY

I'll have to take a listen to it.

A metal plug juts from the Emissary's index finger and jams it into the FDR. They all look at each other and step away. The Emissary's about to draw his weapon when, Mr. Skirmish enters with his weapons at the ready. The Emissary raises one hand as a pulse of energy FLARES out of his palm. A scorched and gaping hole SIZZLES from the Emissary's hand.

ATLANTA

Let's make like a library and book.

Atlanta takes cover, but Mr. Melee rushes for the FDR. He picks it up. The Emissary turns around, FIRING a pulse blast from the palm of his hand.

Mr. Melee throws the FDR up to deflect the shot. Mr. Melee flies back, CRASHING through the wall.

Mr. Melee hops back to his feet and reaches for Atlanta.

MR. MELEE

Let's go.

Mr. Skirmish RAPID FIRES at the Emissary. The Emissary's finger tips CRACKLE with electricity. He leaps for Mr. Skirmish. The Emissary locks Mr. Skirmish in a head-crusher move as jolts of electricity SNAP through his head. But the Emissary suddenly backs away in fear.

THE EMISSARY

It can't be!

MR. SKIRMISH

It is.

Mr. Skirmish FIRES a shot through the Emissary's head. Mr. Skirmish, seemingly unphased, turns his charred head to the gauntlet and sees the locator blip moving toward the tunnel system. He sprints back down the hall.

INT. WILLMORE-SPHERE TUNNEL SYSTEM - LATER

A Jeep tears through the tunnel leaving the cryptology lab.

INT. THE POST COMMANDER'S JEEP (SPEEDING)

Mr. Melee drives with Atlanta in the passenger seat slapping a clip into her plasma pistol. As the Jeep makes distance, Mr. Melee sees in the rearview mirror an MP cruiser speeding right at them.

MR. MELEE

Here he comes.

INT. WILLMORE-SPHERE TUNNEL SYSTEM

The Jeep banks right SCRAPING against the tunnel wall as GUNFIRE just misses them.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING) - NIGHT

The Boyington WRENCHES again from another blast making Druckner fall on Abominable Charlie.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You better get to lettin' me fly this bucket. Take a sit-down, Sarge. Kid, how much more of this cyclone we got?

Bratton taps away at his keyboard as digital schematics flash across his screens.

BRATTON

We're running out of cover in this cyclone. There's another in full effect over the Marshall Islands.

DR. FARM

We're not gonna leave Atlanta and the Chief back there are we?

DRUCKNER

They'll be fine.

BRATTON

There's no cover for us out there. We'd be sitting ducks.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

What you mean by that?

BRATTON

With all that open water and their sats back on-line, we could be blasted to pieces trying to piggy-back that other hurricane.

DRUCKNER

Hit the other hurricane. We should be out of blast range.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Maybe they bankin' on us tryin' something stupid like that.

DRUCKNER

Do it.

DR. FARM

What can I do?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You gonna have to man the aft shields, Doc.

Dr. Farm sits down at the defense console with a ball-track and joystick.

EXT. THE CORAL SEA

A series of overlapping SONIC BOOMS erupt as the Boyington rushes out of the storm into the cold, black night with Mechanix Sentries hot on their tail--FIRING. The Alptraum-Konig comes up behind the Mechanix Sentries. The Sentries FIRE at the Boyington.

A small plasma energy surge forms in the middle of the Boyington. The plasma surge slides along the shape of the ship as it deflects Mechanix FIRE.

More Mechanix ships surround the A.K. allowing the Boyington to escape into the other storm.

The A.K. cuts along the surface of the water as it takes heavy GUN-BLASTS.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

Blackmare is rock solid clutching the arms of his command chair.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

More Mechanix Sentries have been deployed, sir.

LCDR. KELTON

More than the ones that are attacking us now?

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Yes, ma'am.

Blackmare and Kelton look out the window as a swarm of Mechanix ships obscure the sky.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Dive, dive, dive!

The ocean washes over the flight deck as the Alptraum-Konig submerges.

Kelton stands close to Blackmare as they all watch spherical objects sink past their ship.

LCDR. KELTON

What the hell?

CDR. BLACKMARE

Damn EMP drop mines.

One sphere ignites a strong jolt of electricity making all the electronics flutter. Another goes off JOSTLING the ship.

A school of suddenly dead fish float up past the bridge windows.

More EMP drop mines IGNITE.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

The Boyington cuts into the hurricane.

DRUCKNER

Don't cut through the eye wall. They might be waiting for us emerge there. Follow it all the way around.

The ship RATTLES. Abominable Charlie turns to Druckner.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Doc, concentrate the shields on the afterburners or else we gonna be swimmin' home.

DRUCKNER

Watch the sky!

Abominable Charlie turns to the windshield seeing a Sentry ship careening head-on.

INT. TUNNEL SYSTEM - NIGHT

Mr. Melee SMASHES OUT the windshield of the Jeep, climbing onto the hood. Atlanta jumps into the driver's seat.

ATLANTA

You need to tell me when you're gonna do stuff like this.

MR. MELEE

I plunged a knife on the accelerator.

Atlanta looks down at the pedals.

ATLANTA

I didn't see you do that.

MR. MELEE

Get the data drive back to the  
Interceptor. Don't wait for me.

ATLANTA

Where are you going?

Mr. Melee jumps off the hood, flying over the Jeep as it leaves him behind. He CRASHES feet-first through the windshield of Mr. Skirmish's on-coming cruiser.

Mr. Skirmish clutches Mr. Melee's feet with both hands as the passenger side of the cruiser SCRAPES up against the tunnel walls.

Mr. Melee reaches into the cruiser yanking on the emergency brake forcing the tires to SQUEAL. Mr. Skirmish PUNCHES Mr. Melee across the face and puts the emergency brake back down. Skirmish uses the velocity of the cruiser to throw Melee off.

Mr. Melee flies off the hood, but grabs Skirmish by the throat and takes him with him. They both go SMACKING and SCRAPING along the ground as the cruiser rolls ahead a few feet.

They both stagger to their feet. Mr. Skirmish his ready to fight it to the bloody death. Mr. Melee runs back to the cruiser and SCREECHES OFF leaving Skirmish standing in the middle of the tunnel system.

Mr. Skirmish sprints after the MP cruiser anyway.

EXT. MEXICO - DAY

The Boyington rushes out of the hurricane as the dark sky illuminates to a bright sunrise over Old North America Mexico.

The Mechanix Sentry is close behind.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

Dr. Farm's console blinks an alert.

DR. FARM

What's going on here?

DRUCKNER

We've only got enough power on the shields for one direct hit. You better come up with some slick maneuvers.

BRATTON

What would Atlanta do?

Abominable Charlie arches his back as forcing the ship to make a sharp turn. The Sentry SCRAPES against the top of the Boyington altering both trajectories. The Sentry wobbles to the side and GRINDS against the earth and EXPLODES. The Boyington COLLIDES into the side of the Houston Astrodome.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE - NIGHT

The Communication Officer examines her panel just as Kelton walks up behind her.

LCDR. KELTON

What is it, Comm?

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Ma'am, just before Chief Skirmish left, I got an encoded blanket message leaving our ship.

LCDR. KELTON

Can you decode it?

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Not yet, ma'am. It's very complex. Much like a Mechanix code.

LCDR. KELTON

Who was the recipient?

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Not sure, ma'am. A blanket message like that probably went out to all the nearby sentries.

LCDR. KELTON

How sure are you that it came from us?

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

90 percent sure, ma'am.

LCDR. KELTON

How close can you get to 100?

COMMUNICATION OFFICER  
I'll get on it, ma'am.

EXT. WILLMORE-SPHERE - LANDING PAD - NIGHT

The Jeep speeds out of the tunnel SKIDDING to a halt. Atlanta steps out seeing both the A.K's interceptor and the Emissary's shuttle. She heads for the Emissary shuttle.

ATLANTA  
You'll come in handy.

INT. EMISSARY SHUTTLE - COCKPIT

Atlanta charges up the shuttle when she hears tires SQUEAL.

ATLANTA  
Here's comes trouble.

Atlanta pulls an assault rifle from a gun rack and heads into the embarking ramp.

INT. EMISSARY SHUTTLE - EMBARKING BAY

Atlanta white-knuckles her rifle as she realizes the landing ramp is down. Just outside she sees Mr. Skirmish's cruiser. She shivers as a sudden fear envelopes her. Startled, she spins around as Mr. Melee parries her rifle.

MR. MELEE  
You shouldn't leave the ramp down without someone guarding it.

Mr. Melee chews on something while Atlanta scowls at him.

ATLANTA  
Are you eating?

MR. MELEE  
I found this oatmeal bar in one of my pockets.

ATLANTA  
You mind swallowing real quick?

Mr. Melee smiles. She clutches a mesh of his jump suit, yanking him forward and kisses him hard on the mouth.

ATLANTA

That was long overdue, I must say. Among other things that haven't come forewishin'.

Atlanta heads straight for the cockpit as Mr. Melee stands there taken a little aback.

MR. MELEE

Uh... hold on. Wait a second.

ATLANTA

Ain't got time. Gotta get us outta here.

EXT. AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK - LATER

The shuttle BURNS into the sky. Mr. Skirmish arrives at the Grendel II seeing the Emissary shuttle making its getaway.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - THE GALLEY - DAY

Druckner rolls an old school defibrillator against the exam table. Bratton straps Abominable Charlie's wrists down to the table with disdain.

DR. FARM

This is utterly barbaric!

Dr. Farm takes a swig from her bottle.

DRUCKNER

It's gotta happen, Doc.

BRATTON

All this time, you think you'd tell me about something like this, Abominable. You're infected.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I got infected trudging up the hills of Kaipin City trying to defend what was left of the human race! I fended off a gang of Mechanix while carryin' injured across the line!

DR. FARM

You're gonna need gel if you're gonna do this.

BRATTON  
There's defibrillation gel in the cockpit.

DRUCKNER  
What's it doing in there?

BRATTON  
None of your business!

Druckner exits. They wait for her to go out of earshot.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
You know how to fly this bucket. Why didn't you do it?

BRATTON  
It was the only way to keep her from killing you.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
Well, untie me and we go kick her ass.

Bratton hesitates.

BRATTON  
Without proper meds, it's the only way to stunt the virus and jolt the Mechanix frequency.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
Is it gonna hurt?

DR. FARM  
You wouldn't be strapped down otherwise.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE  
My ass.

Dr. Farm swigs the bottle.

DR. FARM  
I'm afraid so.

LATER

ZAP! Abominable Charlie arches his back as electricity jolts through his body.

EXT. THE CORAL SEA - DAY

The Emissary shuttle cruises through a cyclone.

INT. EMISSARY SHUTTLE (MOVING)

Atlanta looks around.

ATLANTA  
Where's my ship?

The ship cruises to the of the storm. Atlanta's walkie  
SQUELCHES.

INTERCUT SERIES:

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Captain Atlanta, this Commander  
Blackmare, over.

Atlanta hesitantly picks up her walkie.

ATLANTA  
This is Atlanta.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
High machs, Captain. High machs. But  
I'll have you know that Sergeant First  
Class Druckner commandeered your ship.  
We know about your co-pilot's ailment.  
What say we make a trade and get this  
over with, over.

Atlanta SMACKS her walkie against her forehead.

ATLANTA  
He's not a danger to you.

CDR. BLACKMARE (O.S.)  
We have a treatment facility on the AK.  
We can take care of him, over.

Atlanta turns to look at Mr. Melee.

ATLANTA  
What if I told you what's on the FDR?

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Not interested what's on it. I'm  
interested in retrieving it, over.

Mr. Melee holds up the locator.

ATLANTA

What if I told you it's in a laboratory on a bio-facility? We had to ditch it because there was a locator on it.

CDR. BLACKMARE

On the Willmore-Sphere? Don't tell me the nut Falkland has it, over?

ATLANTA

You know each other?

CDR. BLACKMARE

You might say that. We'll check out the Willmore-Sphere. We recover the FDR and your friends and ship will be returned, over.

ATLANTA

Deal. Over and out.

END SERIES:

In a deep remorse, Atlanta puts away her walkie.

ATLANTA

Ya know, Chief. This isn't a Mechanix or Big-G-backed conspiracy. That Mechanix emissary didn't seem concerned about the FDR. I would think it be on the hot sheet if they were behind the crashing of the Ruby Di Milo. There is a faction inside the Mechanix hierarchy. Maybe that data transmission wasn't designated for just one shock troop, but all of them.

MR. MELEE

The shock troops would be uploaded with the same basic combat skills and one central leader. If the Emissary is a result of Johnny Q's proposed plan to merge human clones and the Mechanix virus then it's possible he's still alive.

ATLANTA

And probably acting on his own under the guise of helping the Mechanix. Which is why the Mechanix attacked Mars. He's building the army.

MR. MELEE

I'm curious as for what.

ATLANTA

You were there. You don't know?

MR. MELEE

I was training them. I wasn't part of the tactical command.

ATLANTA

We're going straight into Kaipin City. We'll blend in if we're in one of their ships. We're gonna find this Johnny Q. We're gonna stop this thing whatever it is.

MR. MELEE

I'm in it to the end.

ATLANTA

You don't have to put it like that.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE - DAY

Blackmare turns to Kelton while picking up the radio.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Set up a drop ship with an armed unit. I'm going to recover the FDR. You take the AK, pick up Sergeant Druckner and the Boyington. We'll rendezvous at the Willmore-Sphere. And try and figure out our sleeper issue. That's becoming a problem the longer this drags out.

LCDR. KELTON

Done deal.

Blackmare turns to the communication officer.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Comm, heat up one of King Cobra's Snooper Dinkle-doodle spy crackers so we can narrow down Chief Skirmish's communication source.

Blackmare exits.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT - NIGHT

Druckner looks out at the stadium seats and notices a pair of shadows zooming past the Astrodome ceiling. She's about to walk away, when she notices silhouettes of a couple of Mechanix ships hovering over the Astrodome.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - GALLEY

Druckner double-checks her weapon and tosses it at Bratton.

DRUCKNER

Mechanix crafts are surrounding the stadium. We're going to have to stand our ground.

Bratton looks around panicked.

DRUCKNER

What are you looking for?

BRATTON

Not sure. A way out?

INT. THE BOYINGTON - GALLEY - LATER

Druckner and Bratton enter seeing Abominable Charlie curled up in the fetal position and twitching.

DRUCKNER

We've got company. I want him back in the cockpit.

Dr. Farm swigs.

DR. FARM

I'll do what I can. This poor man's pretty messed up.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT - LATER

Abominable Charlie plops down in the seat charging up the console and white-knuckling the steering wheel. He pulls his hand away from the console as a long string of slimy skin stretches from his fingers to the console.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Shit.

Dr. Farm sees him shake it off his fingers and the skin slime bubbles into the flight deck.

DR. FARM  
You're grafting, son.

Abominable Charlie just stares at her sideways.

EXT. THE BOYINGTON - ROOF - LATER

Druckner opens a hatch and sets up a submachine gun on a bipod as Mechanix start to file into the stadium seats.

DRUCKNER  
I want you do keep this weapon hot.

BRATTON  
What?

DRUCKNER  
Keep me re-loaded.

She looks down at Bratton who stares up at her from the other end of the hatch corridor.

The gravity drum compartment Atlanta was working on suddenly SNAPS and then smokes.

BRATTON  
Was that the gravity drum?

DRUCKNER  
I think so.

Bratton hurriedly climbs up the corridor ladder.

EXT. BLACKMARE'S DROP SHIP - DAY

Blackmare's drop ship STREAKS toward the Willmore-Sphere's landing pad.

EXT. WILLMORE-SPHERE - LANDING PAD - LATER

As the drop ship lands, GUARDS scramble towards fighting positions.

INT. BLACKMARE'S DROP SHIP

Blackmare and the shuttle's pilot watch Willmore-Sphere DENIZENS ignore them.

DROP SHIP PILOT

What in the hell is going on?

A group of Mechanix strike ships ZOOM down and strafe the landing pad. Another Mechanix group BUZZES by leaving EXPLOSIONS in its wake.

CDR. BLACKMARE

We walked right into a Mechanix assault.

DROP SHIP PILOT

Want me to land, sir?

CDR. BLACKMARE

Make it happen.

EXT. SOUTHERN OCEAN - DAY

Atlanta's emissary shuttle speeds along the Arctic's Southern Ocean while the Grendel II lands on a glacier watching them from a far.

A large metropolis-like mountain made of metal rises up into the sky breaking the cloud line. Thousands of Mechanix crafts zip around.

INT. MEDICAL SHUTTLE (MOVING)

Atlanta stares in awe at the epic structure of Kaipin City.

ATLANTA

It's much smaller than I thought. Can you believe this little rock is what causes all these storms?

MR. MELEE

I don't think it's very little.

Atlanta winks at him.

ATLANTA

You see a way in, Chief?

MR. MELEE

Kaipin City bores into the Earth's core.  
Maybe there's a way in under the ice.

ATLANTA

Well, at least we're communicating. But  
let's try the front door.

Atlanta maneuvers the shuttle into Kaipin City.

INT. KAIPIN CITY - TRAFFIC GRID

With such an abundance of ships and activity that their  
shuttle is not even noticed. Inside Kaipin City is a  
technologically advanced metropolis sheltered from the Arctic  
snow.

MR. MELEE

Where to now?

ATLANTA

I take it that thing over there. That's  
where the satellite dropped. The heart  
of the beast is always good place to  
start.

She nods to a bright orange light illuminating a large,  
cylindrical mast in the middle of the city.

ATLANTA

That's probably what's boring into the  
core and distributing energy.

MR. MELEE

The Mechanix hub it is.

INT. GRENDEL II - COCKPIT

Mr. Skirmish studies his monitor making sure that he's still  
following the locator.

EXT. KAIPIN CITY

The Grendel II LAUNCHES from the glacier when a swarm of  
Mechanix crafts re-direct toward him. Before they can catch  
him he ZOOMS inside, following Atlanta's path.

INT. KAIPIN CITY

The Grendel II FIRES a missile right at Atlanta's emissary ship.

INT. EMISSARY SHUTTLE (MOVING)

An EXPLOSION rocks Atlanta's ship forcing it to lose altitude.

EXT. HOUSTON ASTRODOME - NIGHT

Druckner tosses out two smoke bombs. One reveals orange smoke and the other blue. She crouches into the prone position, spying through the sniper scope at Mechanix making their way through the stadium seats.

DRUCKNER

They're human!

BRATTON

What?

Bratton looks at the stadium seeing Mech troops gather. He picks up his radio.

BRATTON

Abominable, these guys look human!

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

Abominable Charlie picks up the radio. Dr. Farm turns to him.

DR. FARM

Check the heat signature. See if it's above 98 degrees. If so, you're dealing with a clone-Mechanix hybrid!

EXT. HOUSTON ASTRODOME

Druckner spies through the scope's thermographic reading and sees their temp are well above 98 degrees.

DRUCKNER

Play ball.

Druckner FIRES one shot after another making every troop and hybrid drop with a direct hit.

FIRE RETURNS from the seats. Bratton hides behind the gravity drum while forcing a tool into a panel. He pulls out a fried circuit board.

BRATTON

I need to get a new circuit board.

DRUCKNER

Just do it. We're outnumbered if you must know.

Bratton runs across the roof of the Boyington evading tracers and drops into the hatch corridor.

INT. THE BOYINGTON

Bratton picks himself up and stumbles toward the T.O.E. room where the tools and electronics pieces are strewn everywhere. Not knowing where to start, he just dives into the first box.

EXT. HOUSTON ASTRODOME

Druckner FIRES. Hybrid troops keep dropping. But a large Mechanix assault ship CRASHES through the roof of the Astrodome.

The Mechanix assault ship SPRAYS RAPID FIRE down on the Boyington. Druckner picks herself up and sprints toward the Derrick crane for cover.

Druckner ejects her clip and RELOADS as she watches the assault craft lower and troops storm across the Outfield.

INT. THE BOYINGTON

Abominable Charlie watches all the gravity drums blinking at various functionality percentages.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Kid, we need at least a 63% charge on all to get us airborne!

INT. T.O.E. ROOM

BRATTON

I'm totally working on that!

Bratton searches through a box full of circuit boards and finally finds one.

EXT. HOUSTON ASTRODOME

Druckner steps out from the Derrick crane and lays down FIRE at the troops on the field.

Mechanix Gladiators drop from the assault ship. Behind the Gladiators are Centaurs--the torso of a human and a body of a tank.

INT. WILLMORE-SPHERE - CRYPTOLOGY - DAY

Blackmare and his troops storm into the lab and find the dead Mechanix Emissary.

PLATOON LEADER

They sent an emissary looking for us because we broke atmo.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Kaipin City's attacking the Willmore-Sphere because this guy didn't check in.

One of BLACKMARE'S TROOPS picks up the FDR.

TROOP #1

I've got the FDR, sir.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Double-time it back to the ship before this place crumbles!

Everyone trots down the hall, but Blackmare slows down. The platoon leader turns around.

PLATOON LEADER

Sir?

CDR. BLACKMARE

They're going to tear this place and its people apart. Go on. I'll catch up. Don't leave the lights on.

The other troops down the hall stop too.

PLATOON LEADER

Bullshit, sir.

Platoon leader turns to his troops and points out the troop with the FDR.

PLATOON LEADER

Get the FDR back. Priority one! The rest of you, you know where we stand.

Another EXPLOSION RATTLES the Willmore-Sphere.

CDR. BLACKMARE

We'll fight to the last man. If we're lucky enough to hold out until the AK gets here, we don't stop until everyone on the Willmore-Sphere is on that carrier.

PLATOON LEADER

We got your ass, sir.

INT. KAIPIN CITY - DAY

Atlanta's shuttle CRASHES into a 200-story housing structure not far from the Mechanix hub.

The Grendel II takes down Mechanix ships left and right while taking heavy battery himself. The Grendel II jumps on the nose of one ship and surfs it into a structure.

INT. HOUSING STRUCTURE

Atlanta and Mr. Melee run from the emissary shuttle and make their way across the housing structure to an outside elevator.

MR. MELEE

Into the elevator. I'll take care of the Grendel.

ATLANTA

You want me to go in the elevator?

MR. MELEE

You can take the long, hard way down. I'll meet you at the hub.

The Grendel II leaps from an EXPLOSION, landing on the roof of the housing structure.

EXT. HOUSING STRUCTURE - ELEVATOR

Atlanta dives into the elevator. Mr. Melee jumps on the blast shield of the Grendel II.

The elevator slides down as the Grendel's Gatling gun CHATTERS into the side of the structure and into the elevator forcing Atlanta to the floor.

The Grendel hovers sloppily trying to shake Mr. Melee off the blast shield. Mr. Melee peels back the blast shield, revealing Mr. Skirmish.

Mr. Skirmish forces the Grendel toward the elevator to crush Mr. Melee. Mr. Melee climbs up to the Grendel's shoulder, but the right arm of the Grendel PUNCHES through the glass of the elevator. The Grendel starts to pull away from the housing structure yanking the elevator off its tracks.

Mechanix security ships surround the Grendel. Mr. Skirmish tries to swing his Gatling gun around, but the weight of the elevator prevents it.

The Mechanix ships OPEN FIRE on the Grendel. Evading fire, Mr. Melee hops over the Grendel's shoulder towards the rear propulsion system.

The elevator BREAKS AWAY from the housing structure weighing the Grendel down. The Grendel goes twirling toward the ground.

The Grendel's Gatling gun CHATTERS away at the Mechanix ships.

INT. ELEVATOR

The Gatling shells RICOCHET through the elevator car as Atlanta ducks and covers.

INT. HOUSTON ASTRODOME - NIGHT

Bratton is pinned down by Mechanix FIRE.

Druckner FIRES continuously at the Mechanix Gladiators and Centaurs which RETURN FIRE. She takes cover behind the Derrick crane and yanks a chatterbox grenade from her LBE.

She pulls the pin from the chatterbox and flings it at the first Gladiator. The grenade adheres itself to the Gladiator. The Gladiator tries to remove it, but it BLASTS its fingers off FIRING rounds in all directions.

The chatterbox EXPLODES obliterating half of the torso revealing a human brain encased in Plexiglas. The Gladiator falls over. The Centaur CRUSHES the Gladiator's brain under its tracks. The Centaur stretches its arms that are basically miniguns.

Druckner dives back to her cover as the Centaur's minigun FIRE PELTS the Derrick crane.

Bratton slaps the circuit board into the drum. The gravity drum automatically lowers in the slot and suddenly leaves Bratton exposed with no cover.

BRATTON

Crap!

The Centaur turns to fire at Bratton, but Druckner FIRES a killshot right through the Centaur's head. She tries to fire another shot, but she's out.

DRUCKNER

Get in the ship!

The Centaur's head jerks wildly as it keeps coming toward the Boyington.

TRACER FIRE chases Druckner across the roof of the Boyington and into the hatch corridor.

The Boyington begins to rise up, but they are totally surrounded by an encroaching Mechanix army and an assault craft above.

EXT. HOUSTON ASTRODOME

From parking lot the Astrodome spews orange and blue smoke. More Mechanix make their way to the stadium.

INT. HOUSTON ASTRODOME

EXPLOSIONS suddenly breakout across the hull of the Mechanix assault craft. CHAINGUN FIRE sprays down on the Mechanix army. Another EXPLOSION sends the Mechanix assault craft plummeting onto Center Field.

Through the hole in the Astrodome above is the Alptraum-Konig lays down CHAINGUN COVER FIRE.

The Boyington makes its wobbly way up through the ceiling of the Astrodome.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

Druckner enters seeing that Abominable Charlie's in bad shape. She's sympathetic thinking about what he could turn into.

DRUCKNER

Just land this heap on the AK. We can get you help.

EXT. WILLMORE-SPHERE - LANDING PORT - DAY

Behind Blackmare near the control tower, Willmore-Sphere CITIZENS desperately stuff themselves into a shuttle.

Blackmare wraps a bandoleer of Claymore chatterboxes around a rocket launcher with only one rocket left. A horde of Mechanix Gladiators and Centaurs make their way towards him.

Blackmare heaves a rocket launcher onto his wounded shoulder. The rocket SCREAMS across the runaway as a Mechanix ship EXPLODES and tumbles to the ground CRASHING against the control tower.

He tosses the empty rocket launcher away and yanks his machine-gun off his shoulder and BLASTS AWAY at the on-coming Mechanix army. He backs away toward the flaming debris of the control tower.

The platoon leader lies in the prone position as Blackmare backs past him. The rest of the unit BLASTS at anything coming at them.

Some of Blackmare's unit are torn apart my Mechanix-FIRE.

PLATOON LEADER

Hit the dirt, sir!

Blackmare drops to the ground. The platoon leader CLICK a firing mechanism making the chatterboxes ERUPT along the group of Mechanix. Mechanix bits and pieces are flung out in a flaming mess... but it's not enough to stop the rest.

Battle-damaged Gladiators still approach with their brain encasements exposed.

Blackmare FIRES at an exposed brain encasement making a Mechanix Gladiator halt.

The platoon leader DRY FIRES.

PLATOON LEADER

I'm out!

Blackmare tosses him his rifle and then whips out his pearl-handled six shooter and BLASTS away at the encroaching Mechanix until he too dry fires.

Soon, the rest of Blackmare's unit are all ejecting dead clips and their ammo pouches are empty.

Blackmare turns around and sees that the Willmore-Sphere citizens are still forcing themselves into the shuttle. He gnashes his teeth pulling out his last weapon: a Marine Raider Bowie Knife. He turns to his men who are all throwing down their rifles and taking out their knives.

CDR. BLACKMARE

All ya got! Nothing less!

Suddenly, missiles SHRIEK out of the sky SMASHING along the line of Mechanix. A 20-foot wall of fire billows amid the Mechanix. TRACER FIRE rains down on the Mechanix for good measure.

Blackmare's men look up to their savior: The Alptraum-Konig. They HOOT and HOLLER while Blackmare barely grins.

INT. KAIPIN CITY - STREET LEVEL - DAY

The Grendel II CRASHES down on what would be the equivalent of street level in Kaipin City. The Grendel tries to yank its Gatling gun arm free from the elevator as the Mechanix ships fly right at them.

Mr. Melee sees the missile hatch open on the left shoulder of the Grendel aiming at Atlanta's elevator. He climbs up across the trapezius of the Grendel and leaps onto the outgoing missile--ZOOM!

The missile yanks Mr. Melee several feet away from the Grendel in midair. Mr. Melee shifts his body weight to redirect the smiley faced missile right back at the Grendel.

Mr. Melee lets go just before impact. The missile EXPLODES right into the Grendel's shoulder separating the Gatling gun arm.

Mr. Melee drops right in front of Atlanta's freight elevator. He helps Atlanta out. They run past the Grendel as it takes on Mechanix-FIRE.

Mr. Melee and Atlanta run through the streets toward the heart of Kaipin City.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - CORRIDOR - DAY

Blackmare, Dr. Farm and Druckner walk hurriedly along the corridor.

CDR. BLACKMARE

If that Bratton fella can crack that FDR, then I want to know what's on it. Make sure he gets all the resources he needs.

DRUCKNER

We don't ever peek into the stash.

CDR. BLACKMARE

We're about to go into a full-on war at the expense of losing what's left of the human race. This isn't about commerce anymore.

Blackmare takes a whiff and looks down at Druckner's smudged and lacerated feet. The flip-flops are still in tact.

CDR. BLACKMARE

You need to wash those feet, Sarge.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - SICKBAY

The three of them turn and enter sick bay finding Abominable Charlie hooked up to several apparatuses.

DOC BLEEDO (50's, male) holds up a vial to Abominable Charlie.

DOC BLEEDO

In this vial are several nano chips that are specifically designed to rebuild your cells, but it's gonna take a while to repair everything. So, if you feel some zaps and kinks in your body don't panic.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Cool.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Staff Sergeant Jackson Washington  
Lincoln?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Yup.

DRUCKNER

AKA Abominable... Charlie?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Don't I look like a Charlie?

CDR. BLACKMARE

We picked up the signal that Chief Skirmish has been using to track the FDR. We've discovered that the locator is missing. Any reason why that's so?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Yeah, well, me and the Chief ain't chat buddies. He don't tell me nothin'.

CDR. BLACKMARE

We also tracked the locator's current position to Kaipin City. Now, why would Captain Atlanta want to go there?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

She felt that's where the signal that brought down the Ruby originated.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Then that's where we're going then. Kaipin City.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Don't get me wrong, man, but as badass as this bucket of meanness is, it don't hold up to Kaipin City.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Well, we are working on that.

Abominable Charlie suddenly jumps up. He looks at his hands that start to warp. He throws his fist against the wall making it CLANK.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Doc, what's happening?

DOC BLEEDO

He must be reacting negatively to the procedure.

DR. FARM

He's accelerated the grafting process!

CDR. BLACKMARE

Seal him in and lock this wing down!

DRUCKNER

Everyone out!

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - CORRIDOR

The sick bay doors shut as Blackmare slams Doc Bleedo against the corridor walls.

CDR. BLACKMARE

It's you! You've been infecting my crew!  
You're tied in with Chief Skirmish!

Doc Bleedo shoves Blackmare clear across the corridor hallway. He holds his hand out to Blackmare as a sphere of energy forms from Bleedo's palms. Druckner FIRES repeatedly at the doctor, which seems to have little effect, but at least deflects the PULSE SHOT.

The doctor sprints down the hall and rounds a bulkhead.

Druckner hits the ALARM.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Seal Sergeant Lincoln in! The rest of you back at the bridge for briefing.

EXT. THE SOUTHERN OCEAN - DAY

The Alptraum-Konig cruises above the Arctic's Southern Ocean on its approach to Kaipin City.

Across the flight deck a row of elevator platforms rise up to the runway brandishing an array of nuclear warheads. Mechanix ships surround the AK, but dare not fire.

INT. KAIPIN CITY - THE DOWNWARD CORRIDOR - DAY

Atlanta and Mr. Melee are surrounded by Mechanix crafts, but they don't fire.

ATLANTA

Can you blast our way outta this?

Mr. Melee looks up and sees the AK gliding towards them.

LCDR. KELTON (O.S.)

Captain Atlanta. This the acting commander of the Alptraum-Konig. You've seen spared by the Mechanix military machine for the time being. I suggest you come aboard so we can discuss our options. Believe me, we don't want to be here any more than you.

The Grendel II comes CRASHING down in front of Atlanta. Mr. Melee shoves her aside as the Grendel and Mr. Melee fall toward the downward corridor. Which leads to the Mechanix hub.

ATLANTA

Chief!

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BRIDGE - DAY

Atlanta enters finding Dr. Farm, Druckner, Bratton sitting at the communication terminal next to the comm officer and Blackmare all on the bridge.

She sees The Boyington sitting at the edge of the flight deck with rows of nuclear war heads at the ready.

ATLANTA

Enough nukes?

CDR. BLACKMARE

Enough to blow this planet in half. It's the one bargaining chip we have at the moment.

ATLANTA

Where's Abominable?

DR. FARM

He's locked down in sick bay. He was injected with a virus booster by the medical officer in charge.

DRUCKNER

That rat scum, Doc Bleedo, blew a hole in the hull and dropped into the Arctic Ocean.

Atlanta pulls out the metallic syringes and hands them to Dr. Farm.

ATLANTA

What good are these then?

DR. FARM

I'm sorry, kiddo. The good news though is that he's blocked off from the Mechanix signal. No transmission goes in or out.

BRATTON

Bam! Got it!

CDR. BLACKMARE

What it is?

BRATTON

My Exit-13 virus. It traced the source of the communication that was transmitting from the Boyington.

ATLANTA

It wasn't the FDR locator?

BRATTON

No, it was the Mechanix hub. It was bouncing around between the Mr. Skirmish, Abominable Charlie and...

ATLANTA

... the AK?

CDR. BLACKMARE

We've recently discovered sleepers on board.

BRATTON

I can safely clear everyone in this room. No one's relaying intel.

ATLANTA

Can you eavesdrop on that communique?

BRATTON

Hell yeah.

Bratton puts on the speakers and the monitors all blink on. They see everything through Mr. Skirmish's POV.

CDR. BLACKMARE

I want this recorded.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Done deal, sir.

INT. KAIPIN CITY - THE MECHANIX HUB - DAY

Mr. Melee enters with Mr. Skirmish pressing a plasma pistol against the back of his head. It's a room that HUMS with various electronic parts moving, but everything in front of him is all black.

Slowly small lights begin to illuminate the hub revealing JOHNNY Q (30's, male) sitting on a throne. Johnny Q is still dimly lit, but a network of wires are plainly seen blooming out of the silhouette of the throne.

JOHNNY Q

Chief Warrant Officer Melee.

MR. MELEE

You know me?

JOHNNY Q

Can't live in this generation and not know who you are.

MR. MELEE

So, it's you causing all this ruckus?

JOHNNY Q

If that's how you wanna phrase it, I suppose.

MR. SKIRMISH

He doesn't have the flight data recorder on him.

Suddenly, the hub's lights burn bright orange as Johnny Q is lifted out of his throne by wires and cables making up the lower half of his body and halts an inch from Mr. Melee's face.

JOHNNY Q

Where's the FDR?

MR. MELEE

Tell me why you digitized a shock troop training program into a set of clone hybrids.

JOHNNY Q

It's more than just a shock troop training program. I mimicked my consciousness to be downloaded into a shock troop. A shock troop with an able body! Something that wasn't grounded and hardwired into the Mechanix hub!

MR. MELEE

You seem to be the man with the power here. You control all that the Mechanix see and hear. Not to mention all the sleepers you have about the Solar System.

JOHNNY Q

So, you know about the sleepers?

MR. MELEE

But I don't know why. I don't know how your benefactors don't know what you're up to.

JOHNNY Q

They're just tools to execute my plan. Mindless minions. They think they control me, but I control them by the information that I distribute.

MR. MELEE

You informed the Mechanix about the shock troop training facility on Mars? That's why they're attacking. Why kill everyone there?

JOHNNY Q

As you know the Mechanix see the shock troop program as a threat. The Mechanix dropped a spy satellite in Mars' orbit to keep an eye on things during the attack.

(MORE)

JOHNNY Q (cont'd)

In that satellite houses my orders to all my clone hybrid shock troops. My consciousness was to be downloaded into one of those hybrids when you up and zoomed off to... where ever?

MR. MELEE

You have your sleeper hybrids working on Mars creating this army. And the Mechanix are attacking your hybrids? What is this all for? Keeping up appearances?

JOHNNY Q

There's something out there that you're not able to conceptualize. Something that's coming to devour this galaxy. In what you call the Mechanix virus is a breed of intelligent beings that have jumped celestial bodies trying to evade this Devourer. Every Mechanix and hybrid like myself and Chief Skirmish there knows this. Within each body is a nation of the Mechanix virus cultivating. The Mechanix are content in hiding on this planet. I want to spread out and build more armies to fight the Devourer. To be a dominant species. Which the Devourer doesn't want.

MR. MELEE

You don't have to take the human's free will. You can give them a choice. We can pull together our resources. The humans, Mechanix and clone hybrids--

JOHNNY Q

As I said, you can't conceptualize the enormity of the Devourer. It will continue to eat until there is nothing left. It will even consume itself in the process of ravaging us.

Behind Johnny Q a monitor lights up showing an animation of the Andromeda Galaxy swirling towards the Milky Way Galaxy.

MR. MELEE

It's just the Andromeda Galaxy. You'll be long dead before these galaxies collide.

JOHNNY Q

That's what I mean. You don't get it. Your mind can't see the whole shape of the Devourer because your mind can't interpret its true shape and size. In other words it's closer and bigger than you think.

A monitor shows a graphic of the Andromeda Galaxy body tripled in size by a color coated graphic of a shifting nebula.

JOHNNY Q

And don't think I won't be alive for its arrival.

Johnny Q points to a ProtoSystems brand on his shoulder. Images flash across the screen showing Mr. Melee at various ages in his life. His emotions extracted from his mind during sleep and trickling into Johnny Q--the clone. Mr. Melee looks back Johnny Q.

JOHNNY Q

That's right. Up until your 21st birthday, I got copies of all your memories and emotions. Including that cute, little lieutenant Atlanta. Now, that was porn for the brain.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

Atlanta turns from the monitors to Dr. Farm.

ATLANTA

You knew about this clone business?

DR. FARM

Didn't think it was something you were ready to hear. And the odds of it all was a billion... uh!

Dr. Farm swigs her flask.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Comm, broadcast the exchange between Chief Melee and Johnny Q throughout Kaipin City.

ATLANTA

Uh, so, what's the plan, Commander? Are we gonna do something or watch these guys talk each other into a coma?

CDR. BLACKMARE

At the risk of making any more stupid mistakes, I say we lay low. They haven't gunned us down yet. Let's see if your boy can come with something.

Atlanta turns to Druckner and notices Abominable Charlie's medallion.

ATLANTA

Did Abominable tell you that story about the warrior who lost his way?

DRUCKNER

Yeah.

ATLANTA

That story never made sense to me.

Atlanta stares out at the Boyington on the far end of the flight deck.

INT. KAIPIN CITY - THE MECHANIX HUB

Mr. Skirmish continues to press the pistol at the back of Mr. Melee's head.

MR. MELEE

Assuming that the humans haven't shot down that Mechanix satellite over Mars, how would you be able to toss your brain about the system?

JOHNNY Q

I've got a rocket in the crypt loaded with a satellite ready to go.

MR. MELEE

Part of the Armistice Treaty says that no Mechanix government or nation can harbor any ballistic vessel that can break Earth's atmo. There's no way the Big-G will not take that as hostile intent.

JOHNNY Q

That's correct.

The monitors show a missile silo opening.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

They all watch the various images of a ballistic missile silo opening.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Ah, hell.

ATLANTA

The Willmore-Sphere!

CDR. BLACKMARE

Comm, get on the wire and see if you can contact anyone there!

DRUCKNER

Didn't we evacuate everyone?

CDR. BLACKMARE

Let's hope not.

ATLANTA

Bratton, get out to the Boyington!  
Druckner, I need you to give him cover fire!

Druckner looks over at Blackmare.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Do it, Sarge.

INT. KAIPIN CITY - THE MECHANIX HUB

MR. MELEE

Clever.

JOHNNY Q

It's been in motion for years.

MR. MELEE

One thing I don't understand. If somehow you succeed in transferring your consciousness how will your mimic know how this ended if we've got a copy of your brain?

Mr. Melee holds up the data drive. Mr. Skirmish pulls the trigger, but Mr. Melee grabs his wrist and points the pistol right at Johnny Q's head--BLAM!

EXT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - FLIGHT DECK

Atlanta, Bratton and Druckner dash out to the Boyington. Mechanix ships FIRE, but Druckner returns COVER FIRE.

INT. THE GHOST SHIP - COCKPIT

Atlanta hops into the captain's chair.

BRATTON

Where to?

ATLANTA

Right into the Mechanix hub. We're not leaving the Chief down there.

BRATTON

What about Abominable?

ATLANTA

He's gonna have to sit this one out.

EXT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - FLIGHT DECK

The Boyington flies off the flight deck and into the downward corridor of the Mechanix hub.

INT. KAIPIN CITY - THE MECHANIX HUB

Johnny Q grabs his head as the wires and cables thrash him around the hub.

Mr. Skirmish is about to fire at Mr. Melee when the wall beside them EXPLODES. Mr. Melee sees Druckner hanging off the Boyington's embarking ramp loading another grenade into a grenade launcher. Mr. Melee drops the data drive. It slides towards the writhing Johnny Q.

Mr. Skirmish makes a flying leap for the data drive.

Mr. Melee hops aboard the Boyington as it takes off.

Mr. Skirmish runs over installing the data drive into a computer port. The monitors blink "Uploading final log".

INT. KAIPIN CITY

The Boyington ZOOMS past the deck of the Alptraum-Konig making for the exit.

Mechanix crafts begin FIRING at the AK to bring it down. A plasma shield envelopes the AK as the ship tries to turn around.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING) - DAY

The Boyington SCREAMS across the sky toward a white vapor trail shooting straight up from the Australian continent.

BRATTON

You weren't planning on shooting it down.  
The radioactive fallout would be  
considered a hostile intent.

ATLANTA

We're gonna see if we can trap it in our  
space-fold field and drop it on Neptune.  
You think you can make those coordinates  
work?

BRATTON

Yeah.

EXT. KAIPIN CITY

The Alptraum-Konig streaks out of Kaipin City with ships attacking from all angles.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BRIDGE (SPEEDING)

The ship takes on heavy bombardment tossing the crew around the bridge.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Increase speed! Armor, shoot down that  
missile before it breaks atmo!

ARMOR OFFICER

What about the fallout?

CDR. BLACKMARE  
Blast that thing out of the sky before  
that signal gets to the other sleepers!

A chain reaction of EXPLOSIONS bloom along the sides of the  
AK.

CDR. BLACKMARE  
What the hell was that?

ARMOR OFFICER  
Sir, we've lost all our guns due to  
internal damage.

LCDR. KELTON  
The detonators.

The AK closes in on the Boyington just as Mr. Skirmish's  
Grendel II ZOOMS past the AK making for the Boyington.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

Bratton turns away from his console to Atlanta.

BRATTON  
That Grendel is right on us!

MR. MELEE  
(to Atlanta)  
Remember that battle maneuver over Hong  
Kong?

ATLANTA  
That was a once-in-a-lifetime maneuver.

MR. MELEE  
We'll have to make it twice.

Mr. Melee grabs Atlanta's sidearm and exits. Druckner  
follows him.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - CARGO BAY

Druckner watches Mr. Melee hop into Bratton's hovercraft.

DRUCKNER  
What are you going to do?

MR. MELEE  
Demolition derby. Just catch that  
missile. Don't wait for me.

DRUCKNER

I won't.

Druckner opens the bay doors as the hovercraft drops out of the Boyington.

EXT. EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE

The Grendel II approaches FIRING a series smiley-faced missiles at the Boyington. The afterburners on the hovercraft CRACKLE as he flies toward the middle of the on-coming missiles. The missiles redirect as the hovercraft passes.

INT. THE BOYINGTON

A fledgling missile comes right towards Druckner. She shuts the cargo bay doors, but is thrown back from the EXPLOSION. She holds on tight to a cargo strap to keep from being sucked out of the ship.

EXT. EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE

The hovercraft SMASHES against the Grendel's cockpit as the missiles PLUMMET into the Grendel.

Battle-damaged, the hovercraft and Grendel go flying against the control tower of the AK.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

ATLANTA

What was that? Chief? Druckner?

DRUCKNER (O.S.)

The Chief took the hovercraft.

BRATTON

The engines on that are iffy at best. The only thing tip-top on that is the ejection seat and I've never used it.

ATLANTA

Just charge up the fold drives, Bratton.

EXT. EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE

More detonators EXPLODE across the aft hull of the AK causing it to slow down and lose altitude.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BRIDGE

NAVIGATION OFFICER

Sir, we're losing altitude! We have no more propulsion!

Blackmare pounds his fist against the command chair.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Prepare for a space-fold near a docking port.

NAVIGATION OFFICER

Our fold drives are destroyed.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

Sir, we have a group of Mechanix assault crafts right on us.

EXT. EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE

The hovercraft breaks away from the Grendel II, u-turns and SMASHES across the Mr. Skirmish's cockpit shield exposing the gyroscope cockpit. The hovercraft turns and climbs toward the Boyington. The Grendel II is right on him.

Mr. Melee pulls the ejection seat LAUNCHING him out of the hovercraft toward the Boyington. Mr. Melee turns and FIRES the pistol right at Mr. Skirmish's chest.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - CARGO BAY

Mr. Melee flies into the cargo bay, clutching Druckner's and watching the Grendel II and hovercraft fall back toward the descending AK.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

MR. MELEE (O.S.)

I'm in!

ATLANTA

Hit the fold, Bratton!

BRATTON

You sure? I don't think we got the power to do all that.

ATLANTA

Abominable's still on that ship! Damn right!

EXT. EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE

The Mechanix assault ships BLAST AWAY at the AK. The space-fold energy field goes up around the Boyington growing larger as they start to reach outerspace.

Suddenly, the AK and the missile disappear into a wormhole leaving the Boyington behind.

EXT. OUTERSPACE

The Boyington pulls away from the Earth leaving the Mechanix and the planet behind.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BRIDGE - DAY

The wormhole opens up and spits out the AK and the ballistic missile near the planet Neptune. The missile streams for the planet to be lost forever.

The crew looks around seeing that they're in the clear. Blackmare sits back in his chair with a slight grin.

CDR. BLACKMARE

High machs, Captain Atlanta. High machs.  
(beat)

Comm, get that Johnny Q conversation and broadcast it all over the network. Make sure both Kaipin City and the Big-G get it.

FLIGHT DECK OPERATOR (O.S.)

Uh, Commander, the Chief requests to roll his Grendel into the motorpool.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Get that garbage off my ship.

EXT. NEPTUNE - LATER

The Grendel II is flushed off the flight deck and falls toward the planet Neptune.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - GALLEY - DAY

Atlanta pours a glass of Ganymedian gin. She faces a comm monitor seeing Abominable Charlie looking human holding up a bottle of Ganymedian Gin.

ATLANTA

Here's to no more war stories.

They toast and drink.

ATLANTA

How ya feel, Abominable?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

In the best shape of my life, sweets.  
Gotta stay on the AK for a while though.  
The ship's now protected from Mechanix  
sleeper signals.

(beat)

Speakin' of signals. What about you and  
the Chief?

ATLANTA

(grins)

We'll see about that.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Hey. You take care, uh. Hear me?

ATLANTA

No. *You* take care.

He looks at her sideways with a grin.

BRATTON (O.S.)

Atlanta, we're picking up an emergency  
beacon somewhere in the Kuiper Belt.

Atlanta downs her drink.

ATLANTA

Gotta go.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Go get 'em, sweets.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

Atlanta rushes in finding Bratton, Druckner and Mr. Melee turning around.

ATLANTA

What's going on?

MR. MELEE

There's a medical supply ship stranded in the Kuiper Belt that's running out of oxygen.

ATLANTA

Well, set up the coordinates, Bratton.

BRATTON

Is this what we do now?

EXT. OUTERSPACE

The energy field forms around the Boyington, the wormhole opens up and they're off.

EXT. MARS' ORBIT - NIGHT

A satellite orbits the planet Mars.

INT. SATELLITE

A monitor blinks "incoming message"... then "uploading files"... then "transmitting data"... and finally "message received".

A pair of eyes suddenly snap open. Then a row of shock troop encasements blink: ON-LINE.

TO BE CONTINUED: