

ABORT

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FADE IN:

EXT. SWAMPY JUNGLE - DAY

The TWISTED TRUNK of TWO PRIMORDIAL TREES coil together near the ground in a knot of winding, thorny brambles.

And at its core: a HIVE of walnut sized ANTS buzzes with relentless activity as they vibrate their unsightly NEST.

Hundreds returning, and hundreds emerging into a forest of DENSE FERN FOLIAGE, where dark green leaves are everywhere.

A thick gray mist covers the landscape in ETERNAL FOG.

A light rain showers the world in an ENDLESS DRIZZLE.

And hidden amongst the verdant vegetation... invisible... is

MEILIN WU (20's)

Expertly camouflaged in the saturated undergrowth...

Face painted green. Bomber jacket and pants muddied brown.

But there's something off about her intense, resolute stare.

Her hypnotic eyes, a fiery orange, glow like a setting sun as they glance from side to side, scanning the environment.

A gray hoodie covers her tied long hair, but one neon green streak of it hangs loose, tickling the side of her cheek.

She reaches up to comb it away and reveals her fingernails:

A natural neon green like her hair, but not quite as vibrant.

SUPER: "PLANET DELTA Q-14C"

A SHADOW eclipses her face, and she stiffens... It's time.

SCREEEECH! The Ants swarm in a simultaneous scream, as:

A CLUSTER OF FIFTY SPIDERS, each the size of a Labrador and all just as hairy, drop down from the webbed canopy above.

They land with a wave of heavy THUDS, and initiate their assault on the colony in a scrimmage of insect warfare.

Meilin watches the battle unfold with an anxious patience.

SUPER: "2557 AD"

A lone Spider drops down late... And Meilin makes her move.

She raises a SPEAR, five feet of crude wood with a stone tip, and THROWS it into the heart of the bristly beast.

It DIES with a sickening shriek and clenches tight in spasms.

Meilin springs from her cover and reclaims the spear, using her thick boot for leverage as she pries it out with a POP!

A SECOND THROW yields a SECOND nearby KILL, but when she readies for a third a Spider DROPS DOWN on top of her!

It tackles her to the muddy floor and HISSSES IN HER FACE.

SHE WRESTLES with its strong legs, hands chafing on its prickly fur as she struggles against its bucking body.

Vile venom drips from its fanged, grinning mouth, and SIZZLES with a sickly pulse as it eats away at her clothing.

And with one primal exertion she holds its weight one handed as she retrieves a razor sharp steel knife from her belt.

The blade pierces its abdomen and she cuts it apart.

HOT INNARDS POUR OUT in one noxious SPLURGE, spilling into her open mouth and covering her body with blue syrupy gore.

She pushes its corpse away, gasping for air in revulsion.

Yet another hissing Spider APPROACHES, legs raised, fangs exposed, but her only concern is the taste in her mouth.

She crawls into a muddy puddle, gagging uncontrollably as she desperately slurps its water, dry-heaving up the foul fluid.

And as she slowly comes back to her senses, she looks up:

to find the Spider's thousand black eyes level with hers.

IT LEAPS! And she instinctively rolls to her back, KICKS UP with both legs, and deflects its bulky body into a tree.

THWACK! Her thrown knife impales it right between the eyes.

She rises to her feet... SPITS... and picks up her spear.

CUT TO:

A DRY SPOT UNDER A PEACEFUL TREE

where slabs of mossy stone are protected from the rains.

With labored effort, Meilin pushes through the bushes into the glade and DUMPS a SACK OF DEAD SPIDERS onto the ground.

Like a predator ready to defend its lair, Meilin takes a moment to circle the tree, and take stock of the area.

Here the world is still. The only sound the HUSH PURRING of rain as it drips through the canopy into the under-forest.

With delightful pleasure, she unsheathes her knife and STABS it deep in the heart of the tree... then TWISTS its steel...

SPLOOSH! A gush of fresh water sprays out in a steady stream.

Beaming with joy, she bathes in its sparkling, ebullient waters and washes away the face paint and filth.

SERIES OF SHOTS - MEILIN PREPARES A MEAL

- A) Meilin separates the THREE dead Spiders from her sack.
- B) She presses the knife against a Spider leg, braces her hand against the back of the blade, and pushes. CRUNCH!
- C) With eight legs in a pile, Meilin LIFTS the abdomen of the vicious arachnid's corpse, and TOSSES it into the bushes.
- D) She pulls over a second Spider and sprawls out its legs.
- E) Meilin washes her hands in the stream, then pulls over a SILVERY METAL POT and starts filling it up with water.
- F) Knife clenched between her teeth, Meilin CLIMBS UP the tree and disappears into the canopy above... BRANCHES RUSTLE.
- G) CRRRRACK! Meilin and a huge branch come crashing down.
- H) The final piece of the wet, sap soaked wood gets placed onto her pile of sticks in a make-shift fire pit.
- I) Using rocks, she suspends her pot above the wet log pile.
- J) After a moment of careful contemplation, Meilin gives a satisfied nod at the craft of her construction ...

Then pulls from her pocket an ELECTRONIC DEVICE with a boxy shape and antenna-like prongs. She points it at the logs.

ZZZZAP! A LASER BEAM strikes the wood! It GOES UP IN FLAMES!

K) Water at a rolling boil, Meilin drops her Spider legs into the soup one by one... She licks at her lips.

END SERIES

Meilin dips a spoon into the bubbling broth... brings it up to her mouth... and blows at its fragrant steam. Delicious.

But when Meilin's ears focus in on a BUZZZZ that's growing in intensity as it approaches her hidden sanctuary...

Her heart drops. And so does the spoon.

A HELLISH MOSQUITO the size of an SUV breaches the glade and immediately lunges towards the burning fire.

Meilin barely has time to fall to her back as the monstrosity LAYS WASTE to the campsite.

Its massive wings unleashing a torrent of wind, smoke, and cinder as the fire explodes apart.

Overcome with panic, Meilin scrambles to her feet and runs

OUT INTO THE JUNGLE

but the Mosquito's taken notice, and elevates into the air where it stalks her overhead as it flies through the vines.

Its javelin sized proboscis, a spear of barbed chitin that comes to a wicked point, JABS at her running feet, missing.

A DARK HOLE

as wide as a bus burrows into the side of a muddy hill, and Meilin escapes into its depths. It doesn't follow inside as

She runs deeper into the murky pit and takes a brief respite against the dirt packed sides of the tunnel.

But even here, in the lightless depths, the **neon green** light of her nails and hair illuminates the pit in a pastel vision.

She gasps in relief, barely catching her breath as CAT SIZED CENTIPEDES start crawling out and climbing on top of her.

Meilin casually brushes them off her body in disgust...

SHRRRIIEEEK! A MIGHTY WORM makes an ungodly cry as it charges up the tunnel at Meilin, an intruder in its home.

AT THE HOLE'S ENTRANCE

Meilin DIVES OUT into muck as the WORM'S FRONT TENTACLE emerges behind her and SLAPS the ground in a fury!

Water splashes, trees break, and rocks tumble as the tunnel COLLAPSES in upon itself and the Worm retreats into its lair.

Grunting in pain, Meilin rises up from the fallen debris, and comes face to face with the now enraged giant Mosquito.

It THRUSTS ferociously at her, BARELY MISSING as its sturdy spear plunges into the ground like a syringe.

Meilin unsheathes her knife and lunges for its head, lashing out with its razor edge, but ONE TWITCH of its body sends her CAREENING away twenty feet where she tumbles into the mud.

The Mosquito takes a few long seconds as it sets its legs and pries its proboscis out from the injected earth.

Meilin glances around. Nowhere to run... Nowhere to hide...

And when it finally frees itself, she rushes to the trunk of the nearest tree, and stands with her back against it.

AAAHHHH!!! Meilin screams at the top of her lungs, and waves her knife, TAUNTING it. And when it faces her... she braces.

BUZZZZ! The Mosquito predictably lunges once more...

And Meilin JUMPS to the side, allowing its pointy spear to bury itself deep in the thick bark of the tree.

Wasting no time, she teeth her knife, GRABS HOLD of a VINE, CLIMBS UP into the tree... AND JUMPS ON TOP OF ITS BACK!

Meilin contends against its whipping wings and a thrashing thorax as she mounts its neck and readies the knife.

AAHH!! She screams again as she punctures the chitinous hide and bleeds out its sweet vital essence in bloody bursts.

Writhing in pain, the Mosquito FREES ITSELF and TAKES FLIGHT!

Meilin fights against the wild ride and manages to stay safely on as she continues her savage knifing of its back.

The Mosquito's spirited path takes it OUT OF THE JUNGLE

AND OVER A CLOUDY RAVINE

where jagged cliffs descend into the gloomy shadows below.

Over and over and over again, Meilin CUTS APART a hole in its hide, then PRIES OUT a plate of chitin.

WHOOSH! The Mosquito dives down into the incessant gray haze.

WINCING at the grizzly prospect, Meilin climbs HEAD FIRST into the Mosquito's body and slashes madly at its innards.

Where immersed in the inner ooze her sharp steel finds vital organs and TEARS THEM TO SHREDS in a bloodthirsty fury.

SPLASH!

The Mosquito's body sinks into water that RUSHES in, double drowning her in H2O and the flowing bile of Mosquito flesh.

Victorious but shaken, Meilin PULLS HERSELF OUT into the

INKY WATERS

and swims towards a light at the surface... emerging into

A BUBBLING BOG

that burps with eruptions of methane and crawls with an immeasurable horde of foul insects great and small.

She climbs up a rotten log sticking up from the swamp...

And curses under her breath when a BUZZING FILLS THE AIR.

DOZENS OF GIANT MOSQUITOS are feasting on the decaying carcass of some mighty beast that roamed the wetlands.

And all of them have taken notice of FRESH HOT MEAT.

MEILIN RUNS THROUGH THE MUDDY SWAMP

as the Mosquitos swarm into the air and prepare their chase.

A MOSSY HILL

emerges from the water where leafy peat ascends from the wastes like a blessed oasis in a rancid, dreary desert.

She climbs to its rounded peak, and savors a few precious seconds to think as the Mosquitos start to advance.

With no obvious alternatives, she takes out her Laser Device, and reprograms it with a few groans of pronounced reluctance.

ZZZAP! She IGNITES A BUSH and its FLICKERING FLAMES instigate an immediate flurry of Mosquitos that rush in her direction.

With a press of a button, she tosses the device down...

squeeeeeEEEEEE!!!! An overload sequence whines higher in pitch.

She DIVES FOR COVER behind a decaying, fallen tree...

And as the Mosquitos swoop down to meet the fire...

KABOOM! **A PLASMA EXPLOSION** disintegrates half the pack in a contained spherical inferno that CRACKLES with blue energy.

RRRRRUUMMMBLE!

The hill SHAKES and bucks back and forth, sending Meilin sliding down the length of the quaking hill back into

THE BOG

where she plummets into the muck alongside an avalanche of dirt and debris from the unsteady hill.

She climbs to her feet... eyes widening in awe at the sight.

A GARGANTUAN TORTOISE no smaller than a supermarket, lumbers to its elephantine feet as it wakes up... Visibly annoyed.

Its cyclopean eyes blink open, where the Stygian orbs inside ringed yellow nebulas of color focus in on little Meilin.

The massive maw that makes up its mouth YAWNS with a hurricane of breath as it fills up its antediluvian lungs.

BUZZZ! And when the undeterred flock of Mosquitos swoops in to make a meal out of Meilin...

SLURP! The venerable Turtle inhales them all and swallows.

In horrified, reverent wonder of the reptilian behemoth, Meilin raises her hands disarmingly and backs away...

And when its immortal gaze gets lured aside by some unseen distraction, Meilin turns from it and starts to run...

Only to STOP SHORT IN HER TRACKS as she spies the horizon:

where DOZENS OF TITANIC TURTLES graze a vast swampy sea extending into the limitless reaches of the alien world.

And far, far above her. Above the turtles. Above the sea.

A PLASMA STORM RAGES forever in the planet's ionosphere.

Sinister clouds blanket the skies, where only the strongest, most impressive thunderstorms block the **UNYIELDING BLUE GLOW**.

The heavens blaze with permanent spheres of lightning, ever threatening the land below with fluxes of electrical bolts.

And as Meilin absorbs the spectacle of the storm that casts the planet into an endless blue twilight...

A SHADOW eclipses the light and casts her into darkness.

And when she turns to face the shade's creator...

THE WIDE OPEN BEAK

of the terrible Tortoise CLAPS down around her like a prison.
And SWALLOWS her whole.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. COCKPIT, THE JADE PLUM

BEEEP! BEEEP! BEEEP! A dozen panels across the sleek, silvery flight controls chirp in an impatient cacophony of alarm.

Sitting in the only chair is MEILIN.

Unconscious. Head bloody from where it impacted the console.

But her bomber jacket and hoodie are clean... and dry.

Her bright hair cut short into a pixie cut.

She gradually awakens... and when her wits return she JOLTS FROM THE CHAIR in a start, and backs against the wall.

The cockpit... The ship... it's all foreign to her.

She rubs at her head wound, trying to remember...

A blinking alert on a nearby screen catches her eye.

SYSTEMS FAILURE! SYSTEMS FAILURE!

A closed door harkens her attention, and when it proves uncooperative, she PRIES IT OPEN with her fingers...

only to allow a BILLOWING PLUME of jet black smoke inside.

She pushes it closed and collapses in a coughing fit.

Unsure of herself, she flicks switches, presses keys, and bashes buttons across the controls but none will respond.

Her eyes circle the room... thinking...

She has to get out of here.

There's a locker... She opens it and rummages through everything inside... eventually stumbling across:

A SEALED ALUMINUM POUCH

Instinctively, she tears its packaging open with her teeth and takes a few much needed gulps of the WATER inside.

Then... pulling her hoodie tight round her face and mouth...
 Meilin DUMPS the remaining water over her head, soaking it.
 She returns to the door, and RUSHES OUT THROUGH THE SMOKE
INTO THE HALLWAY

stumbling blind towards a WHISTLING TONE in the pitch black.
IN THE CARGO HOLD

Meilin shuffles into the dark, her only beacon a RED LIGHT
 that flashes with BLINDING ALARM in the impossible gloom.

She slaps her hand against the wall below it, eventually
 finding its mark on the door release lever... She PULLS!

EXT. THE JADE PLUM, SWAMPY JUNGLE - DAY

A RAMP emerges from the ship's gray metal hull and EXTENDS
 ITSELF down into the stagnant layer of mud and muck below.

SWOOOOSH! The opening airlock BELLOWS SMOKE as the pressure
 change forces the ship to VOMIT BLACK into the atmosphere.

Meilin flounders out the airlock... violently coughing...
 She collapses into a pool of dirty water...

Just breathing... In... Out... In... Out...

Oxygen returning to her brain... she fights to her feet, and
 turns to take stock of wherever she'd just come out of...

And there... CRASHED SPECTACULARLY into the wild landscape:

THE JADE PLUM

engine to stern, a twenty five meter light transport ship.

Four cylindrical nacelles at its angular aft once powered an
 engine capable of interstellar flight...

But now its sleek, futuristic frame perches motionless, half
 sunken into a soft, unpleasant bog of sludge and slime.

And when Meilin turns again... to bear witness to the world:

She finds herself facing the spine-chilling vision of a
 CHATTERING BAND of BUS-SIZED CENTIPEDES...

All weaving and winding their way in and out of the swamp as
 they parade straight towards the ship... and her.

She dives underneath the protective cover of the RAMP, as:

The Centipedes trample up, over, and across the ship.

Their malevolent, unkind bodies driven by a mob of legs that scrape the hull with SCREECHES like nails on a chalkboard.

And when one passes another takes its place as the herd of them follow the leader in an unending concert of terror.

Meilin covers her ears... Cowers into a ball...

And closes her eyes to all of it...

CUT TO:

Meilin stands in the peaceful calm of the quiet swamp...

A heavy rain drains the clouds in buckets, pouring over her as she stares at the open airlock to the ship. Smokeless.

The unknown embrace of its safety inviting her back.

Hesitantly... she climbs the ramp and walks inside.

THE CARGO BAY

is spacious, empty, and completely covered in soot.

Alarms long since silenced, the only light provided is the dim **luminescent green** of her fingernails and hair.

She pulls the lever, and closes the airlock behind her.

THE BEDROOM

is just as covered with ash as the rest of the ship.

Her attention turns to the dresser, where an onyx orb on a stand invites her enough that she picks it up to look at it.

She wipes her sleeve against its surface...

Revealing through its glass a Christmas tree snow globe.

She winds a key on its side, allowing it to play its haunting melody, then sets it down, and WIPES SOOT from the mirror.

Meilin stares at her reflection. At her bold, orange eyes.

Frozen in place...

she reaches her hand up and touches her unfamiliar cheek...

IN THE COCKPIT

Meilin WIPES AWAY soot from the primary control panel. Sits.

SYSTEMS FAILURE! SYSTEMS FAILURE!

She fidgets with the keyboard, and a blinking cursor appears.

Meilin subconsciously cracks her knuckles, and starts typing.

initiate reboot sequence

POWER FAILURE. REBOOT SEQUENCE ABORTED.

reactivate power

COMMAND UNRECOGNIZED

Meilin pushes the chair away from the console with a sigh.

THE ENGINE ROOM

is the size and shape of a city bus, with a catwalk that extends between FOUR HORIZONTAL TRANSPARENT CYLINDERS where a nebulous mix of plasma particles inside swirl in darkness.

A central elevated station proves the center of the bay, with an innumerable series of cables spiraling in every direction.

She wipes soot from the console, but it has no power.

Meilin bashes her fists against the panel in frustration...

Then suddenly, as if drawn by some intrinsic skill that she'd done a thousand times before... She PRIES OPEN the panel...

And manipulates a complex array of wires and chips inside.

Like LITE-BRITE pieces, she rearranges the order of a matrix of tiny, unpowered light bulbs... and with a BLAST OF SPARKS

POWER RETURNS TO THE SHIP.

Overhead lights flicker on, and the cylinders of plasma BRIGHTEN into a VORTEX OF COLORS as they WHIRR TO LIFE.

Meilin closes the panel with a satisfied, bewildered smirk.

The viewscreen lights up in fully restored *green monochrome*.

With a single, blinking, cursor.

initiate reboot sequence

**SYSTEMS REINITIALIZING...
REBOOT COMPLETE.
SHIP SYSTEMS RESTORED.**

She takes a deep breath... clears her throat...

MEILIN
C-c-c... Computer?

JADE PLUM
User recognized. Please provide
security code for system clearance.

Jade's voice is calm and soothing, almost to a surreal level.

Meilin tries to remember something, but quickly gives up.

MEILIN
I don't know... I--

JADE PLUM
Password unrecognized. Access to
critical systems restricted.

Meilin stares at the display, where Jade's words are printed.

MEILIN
Do you have a name?

JADE PLUM
Jade Plum.

MEILIN
Jade... do you know me?

JADE PLUM
Yes.

MEILIN
What's my name?

JADE PLUM
Meilin Wu. It appears you have
suffered damage to your neural
pathways. I recommend you see the
infirmary.

MEILIN
If you know who I am... why can't
you grant me access?

JADE PLUM
Access to critical systems are
restricted by security code only.

JADE PLUM
Access to sensor data restricted by
security code only.

MEILIN
Do I own this ship?

JADE PLUM
Yes.

MEILIN
For how long?

JADE PLUM
Ship's log indicates it has been
three years and five days since
Meilin Wu purchased Jade Plum.

Meilin grips the tool in her teeth. Tapes wires together.

MEILIN
Jade. What's the date?

JADE PLUM
September fourth, 2557 on standard
calendar time.

MEILIN
And where are we?

JADE PLUM
Access to sensor data restricted by
security code only.

Meilin rolls to her back, pulls herself deeper into the
panel, and UNSCREWS a set of transistor like tubes.

MEILIN
Why did we come to this planet?

JADE PLUM
Access to personal logs restricted
by security code only.

A SHOWER OF SPARKS rains on her face. She flinches her eyes.

MEILIN
Jade... Are we able to take off?

JADE PLUM
Access to critical systems
restricted by security code only.

Meilin splices together two final wires...

And the lights in the conduit unanimously CHANGE TO GREEN.

MEILIN

Jade... Are we able to take off?

JADE PLUM

No. The reactor core is offline.

With a wry smile, Meilin pulls herself out from the panel.

IN THE ENGINE ROOM

Meilin emerges from the conduit and closes it behind her.

MEILIN

Why is the core offline?

JADE PLUM

Running diagnostic.

She tosses down the bag of tools. Wipes grease from her face.

JADE PLUM (CONT'D)

Preliminary data indicates connection with the plasma coil has been severed. Repair is necessary.

MEILIN

Can you repair the plasma coil?

JADE PLUM

No.

MEILIN

Is there a replacement?

JADE PLUM

No.

MEILIN

Where is it?

CUT TO:

A clutter of metal parts and pieces scatter the ground near the ship's core... And at the center of the chaos...

Meilin lies on her stomach staring at: THE PLASMA COIL.

A silver and gold lamp of coiled-coils in such complex fashion that it holds the eye in close contemplation.

Her stomach grumbles.

IN THE LOUNGE

Meilin enters the last remaining unexplored room on her ship.

A motley mix of futuristic equipment and strange devices are cluttered in a featureless, black ashen mess around a table.

She groans at its sight, and starts rummaging through it all.

A tanning bed shaped machine draws her attention.

She wipes away the soot on its side to reveal: **AUTODOC CORP**

MEILIN

Jade. Where's the food?

JADE PLUM

The bio-matter re-sequencer is in
the wall to your left.

Meilin finds a microwave-like door installed in the wall.

She wipes soot from its panel... Finds a blinking button...

And presses it.

ZZZAP! A short-circuit cascades across its surface and fries its circuitry, culminating in an EXPLOSION OF TOXIC SMOKE.

Meilin backs away, covering her mouth and nose, when

SPLOOSH! A spray of white foam shoots from an unseen nozzle and douses the sparking flames inside the re-sequencer.

Meilin wafts away the smoke from her face.

MEILIN

Is there any other food on board?

JADE PLUM

The refrigeration unit in the cargo
bay is fully stocked with
perishable goods.

IN THE CARGO BAY

Meilin lifts open the horizontal door of the refrigerator...

And balks at the rancid smell coming from inside.

Crates of fruits, vegetables, grains, and other foods have all TURNED RANCID, and piles of maggots have built a kingdom.

She closes the lid and casts them back to the dark.

MEILIN
Are there any other reserves?

JADE PLUM
No.

Meilin takes a long, deep breath as she considers her hunger.

MEILIN
What about water?

IN THE BEDROOM'S BATHROOM

Fresh water pours from the sink's soot covered faucet.

Meilin starts washing her face and hands.

MEILIN
Jade. What's the plasma coil made
out of?

IN THE ENGINE ROOM

Meilin sits cross-legged with the plasma coil in her hands.

JADE PLUM
Iridium strips.

She runs her fingertips along its shiny surface... and stops
when she comes to a CUT in the strips. Connections severed.

Out of dozens of complex coils, a mere THREE have been torn.

MEILIN
You said it was irreparable.

JADE PLUM
It is.

MEILIN
I can just solder these together.

JADE PLUM
The plasma resonance of the iridium
molecules in each damaged strip are
beyond repair, and cannot be
recycled without a fusion reactor.

MEILIN
Is there any more iridium on board?

JADE PLUM
Yes.

MEILIN
Enough to replace three strips?

JADE PLUM
Yes.

Meilin sets down the coil and rubs at her face, frustrated.

MEILIN
You said it was irreparable.

JADE PLUM
It is.

MEILIN
Jade. Why is it irreparable?

JADE PLUM
The plasma resonance of the--

MEILIN
--Stop. Where's the extra iridium?

IN THE COCKPIT

Meilin sits at the primary control console.

ON SCREEN: An interactive green monochrome blueprint for Jade Plum, which Meilin maneuvers through via touchscreen.

Flickering fields of **green text** scroll through pages of data.

MEILIN
Jade. How many of the ship's
systems contain iridium strips?

JADE PLUM
Propulsion and life-support are the
only ones that employ this design.

MEILIN
Oh...

IN A CONDUIT

Every panel has been removed from the walls, leaving a bare skeleton of blinking transistors, wires, and circuits.

Meilin wriggles through a tight crawl-space behind an open panel, tools on her belt, in her teeth, and in both hands.

She RIPS some wiring from its socket to a shower of sparks, and tosses them into the conduit onto a growing pile.

MEILIN

What planet are we on again?

JADE PLUM

Delta Q-one-four-C.

Meilin ponders the name... remembering...

MEILIN

Where's home?

JADE PLUM

A biographical profile on Meilin Wu exists in the licensing database. Would you like to hear it?

She squirms deeper into a nest of braided wiring.

MEILIN

Sure.

JADE PLUM

Meilin Wu. Born, September fourth, 2532 on cargo transport LXS Yuri Seven. Employment history includes sealed file with rank seven clearance required for Davencorp Enterprises. Termination of contract in 2552 followed by acquisition of sixteen licenses for freelance in eight private sectors. End file.

Meilin RIPS out another knot of wires.

MEILIN

That means nothing to me. Any other personal information?

JADE PLUM

Personal log database error. Running diagnostic.

She shakes her head, tosses the wires, and worms her way out.

JADE PLUM (CONT'D)

Diagnostic complete. Non-essential memory from the database lost during the reboot sequence.

Meilin wipes grease from her forehead. Catches her breath.

MEILIN

What happened?

IN THE CARGO BAY

Meilin pulls the exit lever and walks through the airlock

OUTSIDE

into a violent downpour of heavy rain.

Five steps out onto the ramp, she stops... and looks up.

Far above her, the raging thunderclouds glisten with the blazing blue glow of the **permanent plasmastorm** in the sky.

KAZAP! A skyscraper sized lightning bolt illuminates the swamp as it annihilates a distant hill. KABOOOOM!

Lesser bursts of flame and fury quickly extinguished by rain.

Meilin backs

INTO THE CARGO BAY

and immediately seals the airlock closed.

MEILIN

Jade. If we take off, can we make it through those storms?

JADE PLUM

No.

Meilin grumbles at the setback.

JADE PLUM (CONT'D)

But they can be avoided.

BACK IN THE COCKPIT

Meilin studies a DOPPLER RADAR weather map on the viewscreen.

MEILIN

Start plotting launch trajectories. I'm going to fix the engines.

JADE PLUM

I must warn you. Without a functioning life support system, Meilin Wu will not survive the journey to the beacon network, and the nearest habitable planet.

MEILIN

Why? How far away is it?

IN THE ENGINE ROOM

Meilin has gathered the wires poached from the life-support system into a giant bundle. Each one laid out lengthwise.

One by one, she uses a hand-held device to shine a RAY OF WHITE ENERGY that strips the plastic lining from the wires.

MEILIN

How about I pump the water supply past those inducers. Will that convert enough oxygen to replace what I'm breathing?

CUT TO:

Meilin stuffs the last of the wires into a metal box.

JADE PLUM

No. Dilution within Jade Plum's total volume of air--

She slams the box shut and tosses it onto the floor.

MEILIN

--Stop. I'm not talking about the total volume!

Meilin points a tool at the box and BEAMS a laser at it.

The steady stream heats the metal and turns it bright red.

CUT TO:

Meilin grips the box with a long pair of tongs, and POURS out its molten contents into a large pan fashioned from paneling.

MEILIN

Look. What if I just sealed up the cockpit and rerouted the oxygen vents in there?

CUT TO:

A HEAVY SLEDGEHAMMER hangs in the locker, a clear standout amongst the array of smaller, more intricate tools.

MEILIN

And I'll bring my own personal water supply inside with me.

Meilin takes hold of it, and measures its weight in her hand.

CUT TO:

A clear plastic tarp has been wrapped around the cooled pan.

MEILIN

Will that be enough to sustain me?

Meilin stands over it with her sledgehammer. Raises it up...

JADE PLUM

Yes.

And brings it SMASHING DOWN! KABAM!

The block of brittle iridium SHATTERS to countless pieces.

She takes a step back... grins... then BRINGS IT DOWN again.

CUT TO:

Meilin sprinkles a handful of silvery POWDERED iridium onto the surface of a worktable, then pours in a bit of CLEAR GEL.

She kneads the two together with careful concentration.

A single, completed IRIDIUM STRIP sits safely nearby.

CUT TO:

Meilin carefully winds her new strips together into a coil.

CUT TO:

Meilin nods in admiration at the craft of her construction.

A PLASMA COIL sits on the table. Perfectly repaired.

MEILIN

Jade. Is the plasma coil repaired?

JADE PLUM

Yes. Scans indicate the plasma coil exceeds the threshold for reaction.

CUT TO:

Meilin stares through a glass window at: THE PLASMA COIL.

Now fully installed at the core of the ship's engine room.

After a long beat, she turns to the central console and starts activating the necessary sequences to bring it online.

Lights flash and chimes chirp as the viewscreen flickers on.

INITIATE PLASMA REACTION: Y/N

JADE PLUM

I must warn you. Preliminary data indicates a forty-one percent chance the reaction will fuse the coil and render it inoperative.

MEILIN

Can I bring that any lower?

JADE PLUM

No. Inaccuracies in the strips cannot be improved without more precise tools than are available.

Meilin hesitates for a few seconds... then gently nods...

y

INITIATING PLASMA REACTION

The four plasma nacelles JUMP TO LIFE with the WHINING of the electrical energy inside increasing in incremental pulses.

PLASMA REACTION THRESHOLD 17%

Meilin watches nervously as the reaction number rises.

PLASMA REACTION THRESHOLD 34%

ZZZZZ THUNK! ZZZZZ THUNK! An unstable undulation echoes out from the casing that surrounds the Plasma Coil.

PLASMA REACTION THRESHOLD 52%

MEILIN

What's that sound? Jade?

ZZZZZ! An **electric web of lightning** creeps along the wall.

JADE PLUM

Imbalance in the plasma coil is creating a feedback loop.

PLASMA REACTION THRESHOLD 67%

Meilin's fingers scramble across the keyboard in desperation.

BEEP! BEEP! The console curses at her in defiance.

MEILIN

Can't you try and stop it! Shut down the reaction!

PLASMA REACTION THRESHOLD 84%

The electric webbing grows in size exponentially in a pulse.
LIGHTNING strikes the central console and Meilin backs away.

JADE PLUM
Controls unresponsive. Overload in
three seconds.

PLASMA REACTION THRESHOLD 96%

Meilin RACES across the catwalk towards the exit, as:

KAZAAAAP! The Plasma Coil fractures in two and sends a series
of CHAIN LIGHTNING BOLTS zapping out from its housing sending

An **OVERLOAD OF ENERGY** cascading along a coolant tube...

Right towards Meilin.

BOOM! The tube ruptures and SENDS SHRAPNEL SCREAMING out.

Meilin takes the brunt of the blast.

And collapses to the catwalk in a heap.

SHARP SHARDS of SHRAPNEL stick out from her threaded throat.

She gasps for breath as her lungs fill with blood.

Meilin convulses, seizing in the throngs of a violent death.

Then abruptly comes to a stop in the smoking room. She dies.

Silent as the grave.

FADE TO:

INT. COCKPIT, THE JADE PLUM

BEEEP! BEEEP! BEEEP! A dozen panels across the sleek, silvery
flight controls chirp in an impatient cacophony of alarm.

Meilin sits at the primary console... Unconscious.

She gradually awakens... and when her wits return she JOLTS
FROM THE CHAIR in a start, and backs against the wall.

The cockpit... The ship... it's all foreign to her.

She rubs at her head wound, trying to remember...

DISSOLVE TO:

THE BEDROOM

She wipes her sleeve against the black orb's surface...
 Revealing through its glass a Christmas tree snow globe.
 Meilin winds its key and enjoys its haunting melody...
 As she stares at her reflection... at her bold, orange eyes.
 Her fingers caress her unfamiliar cheek...

DISSOLVE TO:**THE ENGINEERING CONSOLE**

where Meilin watches onscreen as Jade's words are printed.

MEILIN

Do you have a name?

JADE PLUM

Jade Plum.

MEILIN

Jade... do you know me?

JADE PLUM

Yes.

MEILIN

What's my name?

DISSOLVE TO:**OUTSIDE THE SHIP**

An overwhelmingly violent tempest of rain lays waste to the
 landscape, and the ramp extends down into the rushing waters.
 Two steps out onto the ramp, Meilin stops... and looks up.
 Up to the **permanent plasmastorm** in the sky.

DISSOLVE TO:**THE ENGINEERING CONSOLE**

where Meilin hesitates over her choice...

INITIATE PLASMA REACTION: Y/N

y

INITIATING PLASMA REACTION

The four plasma nacelles JUMP TO LIFE with the WHINING of the electrical energy inside increasing in incremental pulses.

PLASMA REACTION THRESHOLD 17%

Meilin watches nervously as the reaction number rises.

DISSOLVE TO:

An overload of energy cascades along a coolant tube...

BOOM! The tube ruptures and SENDS SHRAPNEL SCREAMING out.

Meilin takes the brunt of the blast.

And collapses to the catwalk in a heap.

SMASH CUT TO:

THE HALLWAY

where Meilin labors with every breath as she PULLS HERSELF towards a door. WARM BLOOD streaks across the ivory floor.

JADE PLUM

Meilin Wu.

Shards of metal have gutted her chest. Visible intestines swell with blood each time she drags forward another foot.

MEILIN

What!?

JADE PLUM

Fluctuations in the power grid suggest that our energy reserves are being drained.

The door opens automatically, and she slithers into

THE LOUNGE

desperately making her way to the AUTODOC machine.

MEILIN

Why?

JADE PLUM

Fluctuations can only be explained by a drain of external origin.

Meilin grunts in agony as she lifts herself to her knees.

MEILIN

Run a sensor sweep.

With a single, excruciating exertion of will, she CLIMBS UP into the machine and collapses onto her back inside.

Pieces of her guts hang over the edge, and get CLIPPED OFF as she pulls its tanning bed-like cover closed around her.

AUTODOC

(monotone computer voice)

Patient recognized. Initiating surgical procedures. Standard fees will be applied to your account.

Meilin barely remains conscious as a wave of WHITE LIGHT scans her body, and plastic tubules attach to her skin.

HISS! Vapors flood the tube. She inhales. Her eyes close.

JADE PLUM

Meilin Wu.

She smiles as they flicker with the relief of her pain.

MEILIN

Hmm?

JADE PLUM

Sensors indicate three life forms are attached to the port nacelles.

MEILIN

Oh...

The white light pulses with regenerative powers...

Burning so bright that Meilin fades into its radiance.

JADE PLUM

Warning. Energy reserves at seventy five percent. Loss of power in forty three minutes, ten seconds.

MEILIN

Jade...

FADE TO:

EACH ROOM IN THE JADE PLUM

is quiet and still. The Cockpit. The Hallway. Engineering.

Each illuminated by silent flashes of **RED EMERGENCY LIGHTS**.

AND OUTSIDE ON THE PORT NACELLES

Two long barrels that make up the left side of ship's engine:

THREE PERSON-SIZED LEECHES are sucking the life from Jade.

Electricity crackles as their **GLOWING BLUE BODIES** absorb it.

INSIDE THE LOUNGE

Between RED FLASHES, the pastel green of Meilin's natural glow filters out through the cracks in the Autodoc machine.

CSHHHHH!!! The top OPENS with a hiss of steam.

Meilin stumbles out and wobbles as she gains her footing.

A WHITE PAPER GOWN hangs from her shoulders.

She runs her hand along her stomach's smooth skin... healed.

MEILIN

Jade?

But her ship's computer does not respond.

AUTODOC

Patient Meilin Wu. Restoration complete. Medical profile updated. Alert! Errors found in physical parameter. Require additional scan.

The Autodoc emits an energy beam that ILLUMINATES her body.

MEILIN

Errors?

AUTODOC

Scans of patient's abdomen are being deflected by an unidentified energy field.

MEILIN

Show me.

The machine projects a holographic view-screen in green monochrome, that displays a cross-section of her body.

Lists of medical data scroll by as the Autodoc zooms in on a SPLOTCHY GRAY AREA of static and distortion by her stomach.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

What's the source of the field?

AUTODOC
Patient Meilin Wu's uterus.

Meilin gets a chill as she leans in to study the display.

MEILIN
What's causing it?

The screen HIGHLIGHTS a portion of her abdomen and scans.

AUTODOC
Processing.

Her eyes dilate as she stares into her own body...

And there... in the field of gray and green static...

SPLISH! An alien tentacle inside of her SWIMS up and down.

Meilin flinches and jumps back from her own reflection.

AUTODOC (CONT'D)
Patient Meilin Wu is pregnant.

She takes a few moments to hyperventilate in rising panic.

MEILIN
Jade!?

She rushes to the red flashing panel on the wall, only to be confronted with a solid: **POWER FAILURE** alert sign.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
I want it out!

Meilin gets back into the Autodoc and closes the door.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
Get it out! Get it out!

A WHITE LIGHT scans her body with increasing intensity.

AUTODOC
Abortion error. Physical parameters
of pregnancy unrecognized.

MEILIN
What does that mean!?

AUTODOC
DNA not found. Patient Meilin Wu's
pregnancy is not physical.

MEILIN

How is it not physical?

AUTODOC

High concentrations of plasma particles in Patient Meilin Wu's blood indicate a parasitic alien life form of unknown--

The white light abruptly SHUTS OFF and Autodoc goes dark.

MEILIN

Unknown what? ... Autodoc?

But it doesn't answer. Meilin CLIMBS out from the Autodoc, and discovers even the red flashing lights are gone.

IN THE ENGINE ROOM

A shower of sparks accompany the REIGNITION of ship's power.

Meilin climbs out from a conduit and rushes to the console.

MEILIN

Jade? Are you there?

JADE PLUM

Emergency power restored. Warning, power failure in eleven minutes.

Meilin glances around the damaged bay.

The Plasma Coil's completely fried.

In the mess she finds her laser device and picks it up.

MEILIN

Will the fusion cutter kill them?

JADE PLUM

No. Sensor data suggests the energy will be absorbed and utilized.

She tosses it aside. Picks up the sledgehammer.

MEILIN

What about brute force?

JADE PLUM

No. Life forms are highly magnetic.

She drops the hammer on the catwalk... thinking...

MEILIN

I'm running out of options Jade.

JADE PLUM

Sensor data suggests prolonged exposure to heat may be effective.

Meilin goes to the tool locker... Picks up a TORCH NOZZLE.

MEILIN

How about a chemical reaction?

EXT. ROOF HATCH, THE JADE PLUM

The hatch LIFTS open and Meilin climbs out onto the hull.

A HEAVY WELDING MASK covers her face with its shielded glass, and a GAS TANK BACKPACK is securely strapped around her.

She looks up into the sky, and nearly falls down the hatch.

THE PLASMA SPHERES have descended below the cloud layer, and bathed the world in a near-blinding neverending cyan sunset.

They pulse with horizontal lightning that chains from one to another as if hulking neurons firing in a synaptic sky.

And milking the air like amoebas in a dish, schools of plasma-based life forms fly, swim, and feed in the ether.

Meilin ACTIVATES her two MAGNETIC BOOTS with a button-push.

They LOCK ON to the hull with a SSSNAP and she walks towards:

THE THREE LEECHES feasting on the nacelle's leaking energy.

Step by step, Meilin's boots release and reattach as she marches across the curved nacelle and nears the creatures.

CCCCHHHSSSSHHH!!! She IGNITES the torch in her hand, and adjusts its LONG CONE of multicolored concentrated fire.

THE DISPLAY inside her welding mask flashes with text.

WARNING. POWER FAILURE IN TWO MINUTES.

She carefully lowers the flame to the LEECH...

PFWWOOSH! It CATCHES FLAME SHRIEKING as she trails the torch along the Leech's length where it meets the metal nacelle.

Its fibrous turquoise flesh incinerates like steel wool.

And its disintegrating corpse drops away into the swamp.

MEILIN
How about now?

WARNING. POWER FAILURE IN THREE MINUTES.

CUT TO:

Meilin watches the second Leech fall from the nacelle.
She looks around, but can't seem to find the third.

MEILIN
Jade. Are you sure there's three?

YES. POWER LOSS INDICATES DRAIN ON UPPER PORT NACELLE.

With a thought, she glances over the nacelle's SIDE, and finds the foul thing gripped along its undercarriage.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
Found it.

Step by step, Meilin relies on the magnetic boots to walk AROUND the nacelle, until she comes out UPSIDE DOWN...

and faces the Leech with the world standing on its head.

And as she approaches the creature and readies her torch:

SWISHSPASH! A GUST OF WIND blasts water up in a gusher as:

A PREHISTORIC PARAKEET with the proportions of a pterodactyl LANDS alongside the nacelle FLAUNTING its vibrant violet feathers as it PECKS at the cremated corpses of the Leeches.

And when the Parakeet's alien eyes glance in her direction, it SPREADS its wings, and jumps to face her head on.

It tilts its head, and Meilin senses she's about to be eaten.

WARNING. POWER FAILURE IN TWO MINUTES.

She does an inverted CRUNCH, and LIFTS her body away from a thrusting beak that all too closely grazes her abdomen.

Then DISENGAGES her boots and DROPS HEAD FIRST into the muck.

But the rains have raised the swamp. Her heavy gear DRAGS HER
UNDERWATER

struggling against her backpack, drowning in the muddy gloom.

SHE BREAKS THE SURFACE

and uses her boots to climb up onto the lower port nacelle.
Her torch and backpack lost into the muds below.

WARNING. TOTAL POWER LOSS IMMINENT.

The proud Parakeet dances as it cleans its beak in a puddle.
Right alongside the back of the nacelles.

MEILIN

Jade. Flood the upper port nacelle
with plasma particles, and open the
vents on my mark.

SEQUENCE INITIATED. WARNING.

FAILURE TO OPEN VENTS WILL INITIATE A CORE MELTDOWN.

Meilin heads towards the hatch as fast as her boots allow,
but halfway there the Parakeet LANDS in front of her.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

Jade.

She turns, and it LUNGES its beak, GRABBING HER by the heavy
boots, and hoisting her up into the air.

YES MEILIN WU?

Its predatorial gaze level with hers, SHE PUNCHES ITS EYE,
and it FLINGS HER AWAY sending her bouncing into the muck.

She climbs back up onto the nacelle and catches her breath.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

Show me the count down.

In the corner of Meilin's mask, a timer shows up.

39... 38... 37...

The Parakeet perches on the hull... staring at her.

Meilin struggles to get her feet out of the mucky boots.

32... 31... 30...

Sweating and exhausted, Meilin lets out a frustrated SCREAM.

She TOSSES a boot at the Parakeet, then HOPS DOWN into the
water and swims across the mud DIRECTLY BEHIND the nacelle.

23... 22... 21...

MEILIN (CONT'D)
C'mon! Eat me!

She throws the second boot, and the bird takes the bait.
It prances down into the swamp and struts right up to her.

16... 15... 14...

Paddling in the water, her leg catches a root in the mud.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
Four second timer on the mark.

SQUAAAWWK! Meilin stares down its angry dance of death.

7... 6...

MEILIN (CONT'D)
Mark.

5...

The bird LUNGES, and Meilin DIVES down into the swamp.

4...

Burrowing into its depths, she grabs the root and PULLS,
DIGS, and SQUIRMS her way as deep into the mud as possible.

3...

And as she disappears into its marshy embrace...

2...

The Parakeet sashays across the surface, readying its strike.

1...

ZZZZZZFLASH! **A DISCHARGE OF PLASMA VENTS** from the nacelle!

It escapes in a cataclysm of heat, INCINERATING the bird in
an instant as it transforms nearby plants and insects to ash.

Swamp water boils and the nebulous cloud of hot plasma
dissipates up into the atmosphere with a furious WHOOSH!

And as the air cools and a rainy wind whips the ashes away...

MEILIN BREACHES THE WATER'S SURFACE

and immediately pulls the heavy welders mask off her face.

She spits up the thick fluids inhaled in the swamp...

Then takes stock of her situation.

The bird is gone... and the Leeches as well.

But still, far above her, the plasma spheres sing lightning.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

Has the power drain been stopped?

She glances in her mask and affords herself a smug smile.

PEW! PEW! PEW! **LASER FIRE** flashes in the distant tree line.

But it's too far for Meilin to make out... so

She CLIMBS UP a ladder alongside Jade Plum's hull.

CUT TO:

Meilin hugs the hatch as she overlooks a glowing blue swamp.

PEW! PEW! Far away, but getting closer, some distant figure is SHOOTING its laser weapon at... at...

Meilin puts her hand to her brow and squints her eyes...

A LIVING FEATHER that like a long white snake is winding and weaving its way through the tree tops in pursuit of...

A FLOATING ORB zig-zagging through the air like a bumblebee.

After some stunned silence, Meilin puts on her welding mask.

MEILIN

Jade. What are those things?

ALERT! WE ARE RECEIVING A DISTRESS SIGNAL.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

From where?

A ONE METER SPHERE APPROACHING OFF OUR PORT BOW.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

What does the message say?

DUCK!

Meilin's confident countenance is swept away by confusion as
A MOUNTAINOUS TUBE WORM ascends from the jungle like a god.

The Godzilla of Cthulhus, it rises up as if a planet-sized
 hair, with a canopy of living feathers infesting its top.

Its towering height scales the gulf between ground and sky,
 and feathery leaves leech life from the lashing lightning.

A WORLD-SHATTERING PULSE of sound ripples from its rise with
 such velocity that its cataclysmic horizon is plain to see as
 the wave of it approaches Jade Plum.

Following the strangers advice, she DUCKS DOWN into the ship
 and barely has time to pull the hatch closed as

KATHOOM! The SHIP ROCKS from the impact and soon settles.

IN THE COCKPIT

Meilin jumps into the pilot's seat and activates the sensors.

ON SCREEN: A radar sweep shows the continent's infected with
 networks of the giant worms, all risen to feed on the storm.

And Jade Plum has landed itself deep within one's canopy.

Jade's words print across the screen alongside her voice.

JADE PLUM

Meilin Wu. The source of the
 distress signal identifies himself
 as **SINE** and wishes to communicate.
 Shall I open a channel?

MEILIN

Yes.

SINE's words are printed alongside his friendly, masculine
 voice with a warm, well-spoken tone. More human than Meilin.

SINE

Hello!

MEILIN

Hello?

SINE

I don't know what corporation
 you're with, or how you ended up
 stranded on this hellhole with me,
 but let's skip the small talk and
 work together, shall we?

(MORE)

SINE (CONT'D)

That looks like a CS Class Nine mid range light transport ship, am I right?

MEILIN

Jade?

JADE PLUM

Mister Sine, that is correct. Jade Plum is the fifteenth version of--

SINE

--That's great Jade! Anyways, I need you to redirect your front deflector dish towards the top of that... that thing, actually, I'll just transmit the instructions now.

MEILIN

Who are you?

SINE

Story time can come later, no? I'm in a liiiittle bit of a predicament at the moment and need--

Meilin hits a button and MUTES the conversation.

MEILIN

Bring up his visual.

ON SCREEN: IN FULL COLOR the Feather's tip snakes forward, its other end rising up to the heavens and into its top.

And zipping just out of reach of its grim grasp is

SINE

A meter wide ORB of patchworked metals, rusted and worn.

BLUE RECTANGLES line his equator and glow when he speaks.

And hanging from his underside like jellyfish tentacles, a BEARD OF GRAY NANO-TUBES grow and twist with intelligence.

PEW! PEW! His beard fires some lasers back at the Feather.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

Scan him.

Green monochrome cross-sections of Sine scroll with data.

JADE PLUM
Sensors indicate a standard
corporate transponder frequency.
Shall I display it?

MEILIN
Yes.

NAME: SINE
SPECIES: SENTIENT ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (NIF-EAN ORIGIN)
DOB: 7/5/2412
PLANET: YORAIZHEI INC. #25 ALPHA
EMPLOYER: PROTOSTAR INDUSTRIES
JOB TITLE: VICE PRESIDENT OF EXPANSIVE ACQUISITION
CORPORATE ID #: 386027-274-0007-6691-58C
SECURITY CLEARANCE: LEVEL 7
SHIP TRANSPONDER: 7777-7777-394294785739410
SHIP STATUS: LOST

Meilin weighs the data... seems legit. UNMUTES Sine.

SINE
Take all the time you want. It's
not like I'm in any trouble.

MEILIN
Hang on. Display his instructions.

Green text flickers across the oranges of her eyes.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
This will fry the systems.

JADE PLUM
Warning. Exceeding safety limits
for deflector dish will result in
total loss of remaining power.

SINE
Do you have kids?

Meilin freezes in silence.

SINE (CONT'D)
I do. Forty three thousand unique
subroutines just waiting back on
Skylark Six for me to upload them
to physical hardware. And unless--

Sine cuts off and his communication signal disconnects.

MEILIN
Jade! Put him back on screen.

ON SCREEN: Sine has been GRABBED by the feather's tendrils, and is being WHOOSHED AWAY up to the sky at great speed.

JADE PLUM

Meilin Wu. Do you want me to initiate the deflector sequence?

She hesitates with thought as she stares at the screen.

JADE PLUM (CONT'D)

Meilin Wu. Sensors indicate Mister Sine is rapidly losing power.

Meilin shuts her eyes tight... then gently nods her head.

MEILIN

Initiate deflector sequence.

JADE PLUM

Meilin Wu. Safety procedures dictate you should be strapped in.

She pulls the safety harness over her and locks it in place.

MEILIN

Now.

OUTSIDE THE SHIP

A SATELLITE DISH on top of the front hull SCREECHES metal on metal as it redirects the deflector towards the worm's trunk.

Secondary antennas strung along the length of Jade Plum extend up into the sky and buzz with gathering static charge.

Drawn like a moth to a flame, thin, wispy bolts of lightning tickle the top of the ship and charge up its capacitors.

INSIDE THE COCKPIT

Warning lights flash and the SHIP HUMMS with the increasing whine of massive amounts of energy flooding the systems.

HIGH UP IN THE SKY

A whirlwind of weather and plasma whips through the forest of feathers as Sine gets pulled up to the top of the worm.

And buried at the crux of the feathery Escher-like nexus, a pit of Cerulean blue teeth descend into madness and death.

Sine WHINES in terror, his rectangles spinning a blue light round and round in circles circumnavigating his ringed waist.

PEW PEW PEW! Laser bolts deflect harmlessly off its majesty.

BACK IN THE COCKPIT

Meilin WHITE KNUCKLES her straps as the SHIP SAVAGELY SHAKES!

MEILIN

--J-J-Jade!?

JADE PLUM

The antenna array is acting as a conduit for the plasma storm's electron flow. Systems indicate core overload in fifteen seconds.

Webs of electric energy skip across the cockpit's consoles.

MEILIN

Is that supposed to happen?

JADE PLUM

Prior to core overload, sequence will reverse polarity of electron flow and channel the ionic storm's output directly into the creature.

Meilin's eyes glisten with a raw look of determination.

MEILIN

Let's kill it.

IN THE MAW OF THE BEAST

Sine's structural frame starts buckling under the unrelenting pressure of the squeezing strands of white feathers.

Sparklestorms of electricity criss-cross as he overloads.

His rectangle eyes stare down the looming abyss of talons.

CCCZZZZAAAPPPP!! A green glow overtakes the atmosphere as STREAMS OF SINEWY PLASMA coalesce and STRIKE JADE PLUM!

ZZZZZZZAPP!! An orange lightning bolt leaps from its deflector dish and launches into the worm's giant trunk.

Completing some kind of ethereal circuit, the plasma storm's energy gets REPEATEDLY PULSED into Jade Plum...

EACH PULSE converting it into a neon wave of electric kill.

And in ONE GREAT THRILLING JOLT

THE MOUNTAINOUS TUBE WORM DIES

immolating in an impressive surge of **tangerine fusion**.

A MUSHROOM CLOUD OF SMOKE heralds its demise as the lumbering skyscraper tilts to the ground and initiates its felling.

Sine tumbles unpowered from feathery shackles and falls too.

IN THE COCKPIT

BRIGHT FLASHES OF LIGHT accompany the loud short-circuiting of every single console at her shaking station.

FWOOSH! The cockpit's cast into the darkness of her glowing neon hair as the sequence ends, and the ship powers down.

Meilin takes a deep breath... Calming herself.

MEILIN

Did it work?

But Jade's power has been completely drained...

BANG! THE SHIP'S HIT with a SUDDEN SMASH from outside.

A flying panel SMACKS her head and knocks her unconscious.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF HATCH, JADE PLUM

Meilin ascends from the ladder. Her head bloody. Bandaged.

She takes a second to get her balance as she stands, to see:

The Tube Worm... fallen like a mountain range in the swamp.

The worst of the storm has passed, and the rains subsided.

Meilin pulls out a tiny scanning device... adjusts its dials.

LOST IN A FIELD OF FEATHERS

Sine's battered body BEEPS with a red distress signal.

IN THE DARK ENGINE ROOM

Meilin fills a canvas bag with tools... Puts on another bomber jacket... Straps her feet into boots...

And pockets the fusion cutter laser device on her belt.

WIPE TO:

EXT. FOREST OF FEATHERS

Like pines of white timber, the stalks of upright feathers sprout upwards in a dry thicket of redwood proportions.

Millions of the brilliant white feathers cloud the canopy of trees, and serve as a floor for the heaven-like sylvan grove.

Meilin marches through the forest with clear appreciation for the wonder of the white world extending before her...

When a field of glistening, glittery GRAY highlights a divide in the forest, as if marking the point of a great shadow.

And as she approaches the granite shade the CHITTING CHORUS of a hundred million apple sized BEETLES echoes in the air.

They extend as far as her eyes can see... and when she holds up her scanner, and its **RED ARROW** indicates a forward path...

She takes a deep breath and STOMPS onto the living carpet.

CUT TO:

CRUNCH! CRUNCH! CRUNCH! Meilin pushes forward undeterred through the beetle infested forest when suddenly:

EEEEEEEE! A high pitched wail summons her hands to her ears

as a TRUCK SIZED BAT swoops past her field of vision and SCOOPS up a massive mouthful of beetles from the floor.

And when the ringing in her ears subsides, it's replaced by the PING! PING! of her scanner highlighting its detection.

CUT TO:

BEETLES get brushed aside by Meilin's hand to reveal:

SINE. Unpowered and silent in a soft white cushion.

Meilin pulls a keyboard from her sack and sets it down, followed by an assortment of other tools and devices.

CUT TO:

Panels have been pried from Sine's side, and series of wires run in and out from his internal components into:

a keyboard with a blue holographic viewscreen.

Meilin punches a few commands and gets herself a cursor.

initiate reboot sequence

WITH A PULSE OF BLUE ENERGY

Sine FLOATS UP into the air and SPINS VIOLENTLY on his axis.

The keyboard gets WHIPPED UP! WIRES SNAP! And the computer's FLUNG from Sine's body where it SHATTERS against white bark.

SINE
AHHHHHHHHHH!!!!

PEW! PEW! PEW! Sine's spontaneous laser bolts disappear into the forest trailing lines of scorch marked cindering debris.

As Sine gets his bearings he settles down... comes to a stop.

SINE (CONT'D)
Well it's about time.

MEILIN
Who are you?

SINE
That's supposed to be my question.
Internal sensors indicate you
already received my transponder.

MEILIN
Meilin Wu.

SINE
I owe you one, Wu.

SCREEEECH! The forest fills with the high pitched shrill of a colony of mighty bats as they feed in frenetic frenzy.

SINE (CONT'D)
You look terrible. What happened?

MEILIN
My ship crashed...

SINE
Mine too!

Meilin eyes Sine quizzically as bat shadows dance over them.

SINE (CONT'D)
Thirty seven years ago.

MEILIN
Thirty seven years?

Sine's nano-beard picks up his discarded panels, lifts them up to his side, and sets about soldering them to his frame.

SINE

Don't get me wrong. I'm not bragging. Most of the time's been spent in low power mode.

Finished with the task, he settles back down to the ground.

SINE (CONT'D)

I only just rose from my slumber when I detected your failed plasma reaction. How's your plasma coil?

Meilin frowns at his question with a sense of suspicion.

MEILIN

Irreparable.

SINE

Shame. Looks like we're stuck together then.

Water creeps up Meilin's feet as the layer of white woodland slowly but steadily sinks into the swamp.

MEILIN

Your file said you were involved in some kind of acquisition? Acquisition of what?

SINE

Mining rights. Protostar leads the industry in rare element operations across the quadrant... Why? Looking for a job? It's lucrative business.

MEILIN

You said you knew my ship. All we need is iridium.

Sine's blue rectangles scan the glade, as numerous new insects start crawling their way up into the growing murk.

SINE

What we need is to get out of here.

Sine's beard lunges at her, and with no concern for her revolted protest, WRAPS itself around her shoulders...

MEILIN

No! Put me down!

and LIFTS HER up into the feathery treetops...

UP ABOVE THE CANOPY

where caught between the white world below and the blue skies above, a highway of feeding bats frolics in a rainy mist.

Meilin stops struggling as Sine carries her through the air, and she takes a moment to enjoy the splendor of the view.

Wind whips through her hair... and she smiles.

MEILIN

Wow...

SINE

This planet is a deathtrap. As violent as it is unforgiving.

MEILIN

I'll manage.

Sine dodges a few rowdy bats and gains some altitude.

SINE

I can modify your ship's sensors to scan for our iridium, but if my calculations are correct, you're out of power and now you need more.

MEILIN

Yes.

SINE

I think this is a perfect opportunity for us to cut a deal.

MEILIN

A deal?

SINE

I know a place that has all the power one could wish for. You offer me passage to the nearest HQ sector, and I'll fix your ship.

MEILIN

No.

SINE

No? Seems like a fair offer to me.

MEILIN

You help me fix the ship first, then we'll see.

SINE
What? Don't you trust me?

MEILIN
No.

Sine slows down.

SINE
Why? What did I do wrong?

MEILIN
Take me back to the ship, and we'll talk there... where it's safe.

SINE
Safe! Safe!? You're joking! The sky is the place to be. You're safer up here with me than anywhere!

MEILIN
Then why have you been lying?

SINE
What are you talking about?

MEILIN
I may not remember much, but I saw your battery, and I know the specs.

Sine comes to a gradual halt, hovering high in the sky.

SINE
I told you. I know a place where I can recharge.

MEILIN
Thirty seven years? Those models have a half-life of five. By the time a decade passed, they'd never hold a charge again.

Sine's blue rectangle eyes scan the rocky ground below him.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
Now take me back and we can talk--

He drops her.

Sine watches as Meilin falls into the gray depths beneath him AND SPLATTERS against the hard stone of a rocky outcropping. Her body breaks like a cracked egg and sinks into the swamp.

Sine's rusty, patchworked body descends silently...
and scans Meilin's lifeless, decapitated head.

SMASH CUT TO:

MEILIN SMILES

as Sine soars her through the splendor of the white clouds,
traveling the atmospheric highway of the giant bats.

Only this time:

SINE'S SPHERICAL STRUCTURE IS NEW AND SHINY.

With only the freshest marks of the most recent battle scars.

SINE

This planet is a deathtrap...
But I kind of like it so far.

MEILIN

Yeah...

SINE

If you hadn't come along, I don't
know what I would've done... If I
don't check in soon I'll be fired.

MEILIN

Didn't you send a distress signal?

Sine zips past a few giant bats and climbs higher in the sky.

SINE

Yes, but the ionosphere blocks all
outgoing communication. Unless you
can get that ship of yours going, I
fear we'll be trapped here forever.

MEILIN

That won't be easy. We need iridium
for the coil and power to react it.

SINE

I'm a VP. A little rare element
scouting is my speciality... and as
for power... I know just the place.

SINE SWOOPS DOWN and he and Meilin descend towards Jade Plum.

IN THE ENGINE ROOM

Sine's beard is assisted by a hanging chain pulley, as

A DENSE METAL BATTERY the size of a toaster oven gets lifted from its housing and raised towards the catwalk by Meilin.

MEILIN

Your power source... What is it?
More lightning?

SINE

There's a structure thirty
kilometers from here that I've been
using to recharge.

MEILIN

Some kind of abandoned outpost?

SINE

Abandoned's certainly the word for
it. My scans suggest a construction
built millions of years ago.

The battery gets set down with a resounding THUMP.

SINE (CONT'D)

As far as I know it's populated...
I didn't go inside.

Meilin rubs at her chin and eyeballs Sine's rectangles.

MEILIN

How did you hack its power if you
didn't go inside?

Sine BEEPS and CHIRPS in a symphony of computerized curses.

SINE

You're a real son of a bitch.

MEILIN

A what?

SINE

I know you saved my life, but the
least you can do is be grateful.

MEILIN

Excuse me?

SINE

What are you gonna do? Hand scan a
thousand square miles and dig fifty
meters of muddy swamp yourself?

Meilin releases the chain, and swivels the pulley aside.

SINE (CONT'D)
 I've lasted fifteen weeks on this
 hell hole backwater planet. And
 I've been lucky... But you. You!

Sine's mechanized whistling laughs with mocking derision.

SINE (CONT'D)
 You're just a biological. Without
 my help you'd be dead in a day.

He THUDS the side of his body against the heavy battery.

SINE (CONT'D)
 And good luck carrying that!

Meilin giggles in amusement at Sine's outburst.

MEILIN
 You've got quite the personality.

SINE
 Unlike you.

She frowns at his words... contemplating forgotten memories.

SINE (CONT'D)
 Don't fret... I'm just saying...
 A simple thank you would be nice.

Meilin considers his words... and offers a forgiving smile.

WIPE TO:

EXT. ROOF HATCH, THE JADE PLUM

Meilin watches in anticipation as Sine GRIPS THE BATTERY
 tight, and JUMPS OFF the ship, trying to TAKE FLIGHT...

But just as it seems as if he's able to fly...

The heavy weight of the battery BRINGS HIM CRASHING down.

CUT TO:

Meilin stands in a puddle of mud and kicks the battery.

MEILIN
 Fifteen meter bursts?

SINE
 My propulsors are only mark three.

MEILIN

So how long will this take?

Sine whistles disappointed... but with some optimism too.

SINE

Two days.

MEILIN

That doesn't sound very long.

SINE

Time slows in the bush...

It's dangerous out there.

Sine's beard lifts the battery up and he HOPS a ways away.

SINE (CONT'D)

Keep up. We're wasting daylight.

MEILIN

What daylight?

She tugs on her canvas sack's strap... and starts following.

MONTAGE - MEILIN AND SINE TRAVEL THROUGH JUNGLE

A) An ANGRY RAINBOW PARROT with razor sharp claws and menacing eyes swoops squawking right for Meilin's face.

SNATCH! Sine's beard catches it mid-air and tears it apart.

SWISH! SWOOSH! A FLOCK OF PARROTS stampedes past them as:

KASPLASH! A GEYSER ERUPTS with a splashing spray of acid!

The PARROTS MELT MID-FLIGHT! SINE SHIELDS her with his body!

He's a bit worse for the wear... but she remains unharmed.

B) She and Sine wait patiently as a TRAIN SIZED CATERPILLAR crosses their path in the thick jungle.

KASMASH! A TREE IS FALLING straight towards an unaware Sine!

Meilin pulls out her laser device! PEW! The Tree explodes!

C) She and Sine discover the corpse of a CAR SIZED SCORPION being feasted upon by a horde of eight legged SQUIRRELS.

Meilin pulls out her device and LASER BLASTS a few of them!

But as they scatter, Meilin's unaware of a creeping shadow...

PEW! PEW! Sine's laser grazes Meilin's chin-length hair.
She turns angrily to face the corpse of a SECOND Scorpion,
Sine hovers over and WHISTLES like a triumphant hunter.

D) Meilin takes a bite of her roasted Squirrel on a stick.

ROOAAARRR! A sleek **neon blue PANTHER** leaps from the trees and
confronts her with its snarling fanged mouth.

She drops her stick and PEW! Shoots it in the side!

Glowing blue blood splatters as it leaps onto Meilin's chest
And tears her throat to shreds.

Sine drops the battery, and shoots the Panther dead.

E) A WATERFALL pours a fresh frothy stream into a clean lake.

Meilin and Sine laugh beneath its falling mist as they wash
away the blue blood and the brown mud of their journey.

F) Sine's beard DRAGS Meilin by her head across the mud... as
HUNDREDS OF TINY PRAYING MANTIS follow in packs like taunting
monkeys, snipping at her skin and nursing at her blood.

She dies a screaming death of a thousand cuts in agony.

G) Sine struggles with the weight of a fifteen meter jump...
And splashes down into a stream of running water...

Meilin follows the stream to discover: A GIANT WOODPECKER!
PECK PECK PECKING at a tree. Water SPRAYS from its holes.

H) Meilin kneels by the stream and drinks its flowing water
While Sine's beard plucks feathers from the dead Woodpecker.

I) Meilin feasts over a huge portion of mouth watering bird.
Sine's beard rotates it over a camp fire like a rotisserie.

J) Meilin's rib cage collapses inwards as a GIANT MOSQUITO
slurps her up like sludge through a straw.

Sine tosses down the perfectly cooked bird in aggravation.

END MONTAGE

EXT. CAMPSITE

Meilin spreads out her legs and cuddles close to the fire.

She can't eat another bite.

Sine slowly circumvents the perimeter of their little glade.

His blue rectangle eyes carefully scanning the forest.

SINE

Your hair grows fast for a mammal.

Meilin checks her hair...

What she thought was a short cropped pixie cut, now hangs loose round her neck, encroaching past shoulder length.

MEILIN

I didn't even notice... Hmm...

Meilin toys with her neon curls as Sine hovers over to her.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

What are your children like?

SINE

Opinionated. Most them are prime numbers, they tend to act entitled.

She lets out a chuckle, loosening up in his presence.

MEILIN

I like the way you're programmed.

SINE

I could always use a good upgrade.

MEILIN

I'll see what I can do. It's weird...

Meilin trails off, losing herself in a thought.

SINE

What's weird?

She shakes her head.

MEILIN

Do you have a medical scanner?

SINE

Why?

MEILIN
Do you, or don't you?

SINE
I do...

She sits up onto her knees and looks at him.

MEILIN
I think I'm pregnant, but the
Autodoc... I want to know for sure.

SINE
Pregnant?

MEILIN
Can I have a scan?

SINE
Of course. Of course.

A CAMERA protrudes from his beard and **SHINES A HOLOGRAM OF:**
Meilin's body in a cross-section with scrolling data.

SINE (CONT'D)
Nothing in the visible range...

MEILIN
Adjust for non-physical life.

SINE
Non-physical?

MEILIN
Yes.

Meilin stares seriously at Sine for several long seconds.

SINE
Adjusting for non-physical life.

FWOOOM! Meilin's holographic cross-section now shows:

A SWOLLEN PREGNANT BELLY

existing just outside of physical space. Ethereal. Ghostly.

And clutched within the womb... nurtured by Meilin's plasma:

A BLOB OF GRAY STATIC and distorted data, undulating with a
hypnotic pulsing that reverberates with tiny alien tentacles.

Meilin gags... vomits... coughs... spits...

MEILIN

What... What is that thing?

SINE

Preliminary scans indicate a quantum vibration similar in nature to the alien structure.

MEILIN

How!?

SINE

I don't know... But I'll help you find out.

MEILIN

No. I want you to take it out.

SINE

I'm not equipped to do that.

MEILIN

Do it! That's an order! Whatever it takes. I want this thing gone.

SINE

An order? Meilin. Think this through. Don't panic--

MEILIN

Think this through!? I'm not-- Sine. Perform the surgery, or else.

SINE

Meilin. You're in shock. I'm going to give you some time to calm down.

MEILIN

I'll do it myself if you don't.

SINE

And kill yourself?

Meilin takes off her shirt. Unsheathes her knife.

MEILIN

That's a risk I'm willing to take. What about you?

Sine's blue rectangles scan her... and he capitulates.

He hovers close beside her and comforts her with his beard.

SINE
 No. You're right... It's not a risk
 I'm willing to take.

Meilin offers him the knife with a thankful smile...

He takes it... tosses it aside...

Then strangles her to death.

SMASH CUT TO:

MEILIN AND SINE SIT BY THE FIRE

She chuckles to herself softly.

MEILIN
 It's weird...

SINE
 What's weird?

She shakes her head.

MEILIN
 Do you have a medical scanner?

SINE
 No.

MEILIN
 But what if you modified--

SINE
 --I said I don't! Leave it alone!

He gyrates his active rectangles away from her.

SINE (CONT'D)
 It's just... It's complicated.

MEILIN
 I'm sorry I asked.

SINE
 No. No! You're not sorry. You're
 never sorry! Not really!

He spins back to her, buzzing with angry, nervous energy.

SINE (CONT'D)
 Why can't you just take things as
 they come? I'm trying so hard.
 (MORE)

SINE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 Saving you from animals, helping
 you get your ship back. And all you
 do is look for something wrong in
 every situation. Oh, what loose
 thread of logic can I possibly pull
 this time just to ruin Sine's day!?

MEILIN
 Are you malfunctioning?

SINE
 Typical! Blame everything on
 everyone but yourself.

Sine's two prominent glowing rectangles glare at her.

SINE (CONT'D)
 You're selfish.

Meilin gets to her feet in a huff, and Sine shoots her dead.

He BASHES her corpse with his beard in a rage...

Then tosses her body into the fire and watches it burn.

SMASH CUT TO:

MEILIN CHUCKLES BY THE FIRE

MEILIN
 Do you have a medical scanner?

SINE
 My sensors are highly radioactive.

MEILIN
 But what if--

SINE
 --Do you want to die!?

He gyrates to the opposite side of the fire and sets down.

SINE (CONT'D)
 I need to regenerate. Go to sleep.

Then shuts himself off.

Meilin groans with frustration and sprawls out by the fire...

Clutching her flat stomach in silent, considered thought.

WIPE TO:

AN IMPOSING CLIFF

overlooks sky at the paramount of a hill at the jungle edge.
And rising up from the prominent center of the cliff's end:

A MIRRORED TOWER

Fifty feet in diameter, the Tower is a CYLINDER that JUTS UP from the rock and extends nearly six hundred feet to the sky.

Its crystalline surface casts a perfect glass reflection of all the world, and provides neither entrance, nor design.

CUT TO:**STILL IN THE JUNGLE**

Meilin trudges up a hill as she tries to catch up to Sine, who lifts the battery and LEAPS out of view ahead.

SINE (O.S.)
Come on! It's just up here! You're not going to believe this!

CUT TO:**MEILIN PUSHES OUT FROM THE JUNGLE**

and gasps in awe at the half-invisible monumental tower...
But when her vision trails from its heights to its base...
Her blood chills.

Facing her, near the massive mirror's foundation is:

A FIFTY FOOT MARBLE STATUE of a HIDEOUS ALIEN CREATURE.

Inhuman red eyes painted onto the stone stare out from behind the terrible countenance of a twisting tentacled torso.

Meilin approaches Sine, halfway between her and the statue.

MEILIN
Are you sure we're not trespassing?

SINE
Whatever species built this hasn't been around in a very long time.

Sine leaves the battery behind and hovers towards the tower.

SINE (CONT'D)
 Too bad the planet's so
 inaccessible. This could be the
 archaeological find of the century.

Sine shines a blue field of energy onto the tower...

SINE (CONT'D)
 Damn. My sensors can't penetrate
 it. I didn't even notice it before.

MEILIN
 This isn't the power structure?

SINE
 No. That's a little bit further up.
 This is some kind of antenna.

But as Meilin approaches the statue, she can't help but feel
 as if its eyes were watching, shifting as she steps up to it.

ALIEN WRITING carved into the base of the statue scrawls
 across its marble like ancient Sumerian cuneiform.

MEILIN
 Can you translate this?

Sine floats over and scans the letters with his beam

Then PROJECTS a translated hologram of the words:

THE DYNASTY OF A THOUSAND LEGENDS MUST NEVER BE FORGOTTEN

WE WILL LIVE AGAIN.

She analyzes the words... reflecting on their meaning.

CUT TO:

Meilin ascends towards the side of the looking glass tower.

In its reflection, the Jungle she'd come from spreads out
 like a curved horizon of green... but in the air behind her

VAST SEAS OF BLUE SERPENTS

swim the skies, with their lengthy ethereal plasma-like
 bodies twirling in the winds of the reflected world.

She turns to face the real world... and sees nothing.

Just the empty storms of plasma and cloud.

But the tower shows otherwise. A sky filled with blue life.

MEILIN

Sine? Are you seeing this?

Sine floats alongside her and scans the tower.

SINE

Seeing what? My sensors cannot penetrate the structure.

MEILIN

It's like the world reflected... is different.

And when Meilin gets in close to the dreadful mirror...

She spots the abhorrent eddy of plasma attached to her abdomen, tied to her being like spiritual rope.

Thin wisps of living, amber energy radiate from every portion of body... but her stomach... Its colors are violent. Dark.

She reaches out towards her reflected form, dream-like... and gets in close to stare at the thing growing inside of her.

GRAY STATIC and splotched distorted symbols beat within a GHOSTLY WOMB like the heart of an unworldly undefined demon.

Meilin's fingers touch those of her reflection.

FLASHING SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) A PULSING HEART pumps blood inside an open ribcage.
- B) THE BLUE EYES of a rugged, blonde haired MAN meet hers.
- C) Turbulent WAVES CRASH along a white sandy shoreline.
- D) Meilin stands at the edge of BLACK CHASM of shadow.
- E) A masculine HAND UNZIPS a bright red dress.
- F) A BLOODY KNIFE held in her hand runs red on her skin.
- G) A struggling fly gets WRAPPED BY A SPIDER in webbing.
- H) A STAR GOES NOVA sending fire across its planetary system.
- I) A neon blue BUTTERFLY EMERGES from a dark blue cocoon.
- J) Meilin WIPES SWEAT from her forehead in a white room.
- K) A BURNING LOTUS BLOSSOM blazes against a black sky.

END SERIES

Sine's beard PULLS Meilin away from the tower with a JOLT, FORCEFULLY PARTING her fingers from those of her reflection.

SINE

Meilin.

Meilin's eyes flutter as she returns to her senses.

SINE (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

But when she turns to face his glowing rectangles, she JUMPS BACK and falls to the ground in shock and fear.

MEILIN

Behind you!

Sine SPINS! And turns to face... nothing. Empty air.

SINE

There's nothing here Meilin.

MEILIN

Move! Move!

Meilin aims her laser device and SHOOTS just wide of Sine!

SINE

What are you seeing!? There's nothing here!

Sine's beard KNOCKS the laser from her hand, and she DIVES after it, scrambling to pick it up as fast as she can...

Once recovered, she looks up to find reflected in the tower:

A HORRIBLE PLASMA BEAST

with energy scales and angry tails, teeth, and talons.

MEILIN

They're everywhere!

She SHOOTS AGAIN! The laser passes through its non-existence.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

I can't stop them! Help me!

FLYING SERPENTS take notice and swoop in her direction.

SINE

Calm down Meilin! There's nothing!

It LUNGES at her! And she backs away from its murderous rage.

And FALLS RIGHT OFF THE CLIFF.

Sine races to the edge and tilts forward, ready to catch her.

But it's too late.

She SPLATTERS against the rocks below.

Sine WHINES in frustrated thought!

SMASH CUT TO:

A BROKEN MARBLE STATUE

stands at the base of the tall mirrored tower.

Its strange, alien carved foundation hints at what must have been a terrifying creature, long since shattered by time.

Broken pieces of a stone tentacle tease Meilin's imagination.

MEILIN

Can you translate this?

Sine scans the letters and projects a hologram.

TO ALL WHO VISIT OUR GLORIOUS WORLD OF LIGHT

DO NOT FORGET US. OUR GREAT RACE. LOST TO TIME.

Meilin considers the meaning of the words... and frowns.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

They knew they were dying...

SINE

Every species does...

FADE TO:

SKIES FILLED WITH FLYING BLUE SERPENTS

reflect off the shining walls of the mirrored tower...

But Meilin does not, as the foundation of the tower is COVERED BY MUD and caked dirt for nearly thirty feet up.

THICK VINES crowd the tower, and when Meilin brushes them aside in an attempt to get a look at the silvery surface,

she PAUSES for a long moment... lost in silent thought.

SINE

Are you okay?

Meilin shakes off the comment, and pushes past him.

MEILIN

Yes. Where's the power structure?

She walks to the edge of the cliff and gasps.

A WHITE SALT FLAT EXTENDS FOR MILES

And looming ominously on the horizon...

A GREAT WHITE PYRAMID. Gentle slopes. A mountainous height.

SINE

It's kind of hard to miss.

WIPE TO:

THE HOT WHITE SALT

CRUNCHES and CRACKS in a spiderweb of fissures with every single step Meilin takes onto its dry, encrusted surface.

Like a surreal mirror, the vast salt sea reflects the sky.

Sine SWOOPS PAST HER mid-leap, and lands further ahead.

KACRASH! The force of the battery leaves a crater of salt.

Meilin wipes the sweat from her brow and looks towards:

THE PYRAMID

A sharp angle of white that cuts the blue sky like a knife.

CUT TO:

IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PYRAMID

Meilin's hair stands on end from a persistent static field.

The monolithic Pyramid is staggeringly tall...

And its base many miles of featureless white walls.

Sine leads her closer with another CRASH of spraying salt.

MEILIN

Where's the entrance?

SINE

It's up ahead.

And the closer the Pyramid gets... the taller it seems...

But still its blank surface yields no sign of giving way.
 Meilin stops... and turns to look back from where they came.
 DOTTED CRATERS line their way towards an empty horizon.
 The jungle long since vanished into a haze of salty air now
 darkened with the unworldly shadows of an approaching storm.

MEILIN

I don't see anything.

A wind picks up... Salt whips at her hair.

And when she turns back to face Sine...

He's gone.

One last crater marks a spot near the Pyramid, and that's it.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

Sine?

Meilin hesitantly walks forward...

And step by step the WALL REVEALS ITSELF TO BE:

A series of STAGGERED COLUMNS all expertly blended into the
 side of the Pyramid so as to conceal their secret location.

Each nearly a hundred feet tall, they line the entrance into:

A HIDDEN COURTYARD

where a cool, colorful paradise crowded with vibrant flowers
 flourishes beneath the open sky at the Pyramid's foundation.

WATER FALLS from slots in stone walls at the side and pools
 in shallow trenches that drain off into tiny tunnels.

The harsh salts of the outer world ever swept safely away.

Bright pinks, yellows, and violets paint the lush garden in
 stark contrast to the faded white of the giant Pyramid.

A raised platform leads Meilin past the flowers towards:

A FLIGHT OF STEPS that angles up to a GREAT SEALED DOORWAY.

Sine PLUGS SOME WIRES into the battery, and runs them into a
 PANEL OF CIRCUITRY that's been soldered to one of the steps.

MEILIN

What are you doing?

SINE

There's a storm coming. I have to
be quick about this.

Meilin kneels beside Sine and examines the circuits.

MEILIN

Did you put this here yourself?

SINE

What did you expect?

MEILIN

I thought you were stealing power
from the structure.

SINE

I am... Now back away.

Sine's beard gently guides her back onto the grass...

She watches as he completes the connection and hovers to her.

MEILIN

What did you do?

SINE

Just watch...

Sine's rectangle eyes tilt up to the sky... Meilin follows.

Far above them, the nebulous rings of a plasma storm starts
flashing with its all too familiar threats of lightning.

And eventually...

KAZAP! A single, unimpressive lightning bolt unceremoniously
strikes a distant piece of the giant Pyramid's structure...

But out from its impact a **WAVE OF PLASMA** ripples across the
stone and gets **ABSORBED** into its milky white granite...

ZAP! ZAP! KAZAP! Sprinkled lightning strikes random parts of
the Pyramid, and their blossoming energy builds and builds...

And soon the entire Pyramid shimmers with a soft blue glow.

MEILIN

How long will this take?

SINE

That's it.

Sine disconnects the battery and his beard taps the gauge.

SINE (CONT'D)
More than enough energy to power
that meager vessel of yours...

Meilin plucks a pretty flower and places it in her hair...
Then frowns at its length... already well past her shoulders.

SINE (CONT'D)
And as for me.

The nano-wires of his beard plugs into it with a happy beep.

SINE (CONT'D)
Mmmmm. Yeah. That's real good.

Meilin ties her hair up into a ponytail and turns to Sine.

MEILIN
What about your sensors?

SINE
I told you. They're radioactive.

MEILIN
I meant the iridium... You said you
could scan for it...

It starts to rain... and quickly soaks her hair and jacket.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
Or do we have to go back to the
ship?

SINE
Yes... Well... No. I can do a local
scan here, but Jade's array would
be far more efficient.

Meilin sighs... She glances around, but there's no ceiling to
the courtyard, and no respite for the falling rain.

MEILIN
I'm tired. Is there any way you can
hack the lock to that door?

SINE
I'm not even sure it is locked.

MEILIN
So scan it. Or are you unable to
penetrate this structure too?

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRANCE, PYRAMID

A RAY OF LIGHT cuts the darkness in half as the door opens.

Meilin steps inside first, relishing the immediate shelter from the downpour outside as she shakes herself dry.

Sine floats into the slate gray hallway, and SHUTS THE DOOR.

Meilin's neon green hair paints the halls in a dim pastel.

MEILIN

Why did you shut the door?

SINE

You ask way too many questions.

MEILIN

It helps to know what's happening.

Meilin walks defiantly into the dark hallway.

SINE

Wait. Where are you going?

MEILIN

Keep up.

SINE

I thought you wanted to rest.

She pauses when the passage splits in two directions.

MEILIN

You can rest if you want. I'm taking a look around first.

Sine WHINES softly in annoyance and floats ahead of her.

SINE

Let me at least scan first.

His wave of blue energy pans down the walls of both tunnels.

SINE (CONT'D)

Hmm... Interesting.

MEILIN

You have a map?

Sine **PROJECTS A HOLOGRAM** of the Pyramid.

SINE (CONT'D)

The structure's actually a cube.

A SECOND PYRAMID gets projected underneath the first one.
Upside down. Its underground capstone pointing to the floor.
Labyrinthed with a network of winding tunnels and corridors.

SINE (CONT'D)
Above ground it's completely solid,
and most of its tunnels are --
ALERT! Iridium located.

MEILIN
Where?

A BLINKING BEACON appears near the underground Pyramid's tip.

SINE
There appears to be a large
concentration of it a few hundred
meters below us.

MEILIN
Is it enough for a new coil?

SINE
It's enough to open a plasma coil
company if you wanted.

MEILIN
Lead the way.

Sine hovers down a hallway and Meilin follows into:

AN EMPTY ROOM

barely twenty feet across, with a three foot STEEL RAILING
that circumvents the room's walls like a safety barrier.

Meilin walks to the room's center and looks around, confused.

SINE
Meilin.

She finds Sine examining A METAL CONTROL PANEL by the door.
His beard delicately wipes dust away from its ancient keys.
Meilin kneels by the console and studies its design.

MEILIN
Can you activate it?

SINE

No. My nanofibers are unable to interface with its design.

MEILIN

Why not?

SINE

How old do you think I am?

Meilin produces a few tools from her canvas bag and sets to work manually unscrewing the panel off its hinges.

MEILIN

At least extend your energy field.
It's a good bet this has no power.

Sine's blue rectangles spin round his equator and
HUMMM! The antique control panel whirrs with life and light.

CUT TO:

Meilin FORCES the control panel closed with a BANG!
She takes a step back... wipes grease on her jacket.

MEILIN

That should do it.

Sine's beard PRESSES the button on the control panel... and
KATHUNK! The room STARTS TO DESCEND like one big elevator.

SINE

You're a talented technician.

MEILIN

It feels natural.

Down... down... down... the featureless gray walls scroll by.

SINE

You know. When we get out of here,
I could get you a job at Davencorp.

Sine CA-CHINGS like a cash register.

SINE (CONT'D)

If it were up to me I'd hire you on
the spot. And guess what? It is.

MEILIN

Yeah... we'll see.

INT. LOWER LEVEL, PYRAMID

A PITCH BLACK chamber with neither light nor sound... when:
KATHOOM! Meilin and Sine's elevator drops from the ceiling.
Darkness looms all around them... Her natural light useless.

MEILIN

Sine...

SINE

Yeah. Yeah.

HIS RECTANGLES ALL **GLOW** simultaneously to illuminate:

THE GIANT COMPUTER ROOM

With rows upon rows of archaic stations with keyboards and buttons and levers of all sizes, and all of them facing:

A CENTRAL COMPUTER WALL

Hundreds of feet across, its shiny black-mirrored surface hints at its purpose as a single, enormous monitor.

MEILIN

This is well preserved...

Meilin pauses at one of the consoles... Dusts off its keys...

Nearly a hundred buttons marked with alien Cuneiform letters.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

There should be a primary power conduit somewhere.

She walks the length of the room and studies a massive series of junction boxes on the wall, with ten foot metal tubes.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

This design is impressive. Look at this. Do you realize how much power they were using?

She glances back at Sine, who's lingering by the elevator.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

This looks like some kind of mission control room. Or maybe a power plant.

SINE
My sensors indicate a second lift
in this direction.

MEILIN
The iridium can wait.

SINE
Meilin. It is inadvisable to
interface with these systems. Any
changes to the environment could
threaten our chances for success.

Meilin ignores him... and follows a prominent tube further
along the wall until she comes to a BIG BREAKER SWITCH.

SINE (CONT'D)
Meilin please--

MEILIN
It'll be fine.

SINE
No! Don't!

THUNK! She THROWS THE SWITCH! ... But nothing happens.

Meilin takes a step back and frowns.

MEILIN
Oh... Hmm...

SINE
Look here.

She approaches him to find a **RED CURSOR** on a nearby monitor.

MEILIN
How? Your field?

SINE
Yes. But my power is limited. I
cannot activate more than one.

MEILIN
Maybe that's enough.

Meilin dusts off the keyboard and gestures at it.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
Try accessing the memory core.

SINE
What is it you hope to find?

MEILIN

Answers.

Sine's beard sprawls itself out across the keyboard...

and STARTS TYPING in a furiously fast frenzy of

scrolling alien letters for input

and receiving back a continuous string of

ALIEN CUNEIFORM RESPONSES FROM THE COMPUTER

SINE

Oh! Hello!

MEILIN

What? What is it?

SINE

The computer has identified itself as MOTHER, and granted me a guest user I.D. to browse its systems.

MEILIN

Mother?

SINE

Or the nearest approximation of it. Maybe it's the motherboard.

MEILIN

Ask what happened.

SINE

Thank you! This will do quite nicely. Mother has given me access to a cultural database which contains a variety of historical records and-- Oh. Look at this.

MEILIN

What now?

A WHITE LIGHT turns on near the back of the room, revealing:

A SERIES OF BEDS with unappealing chandeliers of technical and seemingly medical equipment hanging over them.

SINE

I told Mother that I'm with a biological, and she directed my attention towards diagnostics.

Sine's blue rectangles form eyes and look at her.

SINE (CONT'D)

You said you wanted a medical scan.

MEILIN

Is it safe? Does it even know anything about human physiology?

SINE

I've uploaded your physical parameters and a copy of Gray's Anatomy to Mother. She seems confident the machine will safely diagnose and treat any illness.

Meilin leaves Sine's side, who stays at the computer console to speak with Mother, and makes her way over to one of the

BEDS

which seems like soft blue foam and comfortable enough.

MEILIN

Are you sure about this?

She pushes the foam again, and a MONITOR descends from above.

SINE

The scans are passive in nature. You should have a display.

Red Cuneiform text scrolls across its viewscreen.

MEILIN

I can't read it!

SINE

How about now?

She watches as the screen FLICKERS then resets in standard.

WELCOME PATIENT - WOULD YOU LIKE TO PROCEED - Y - N

Meilin uses her finger to CLICK Y on the monitor.

PLEASE RELAX -

She climbs into the bed... lies back... and tries to relax.

MEILIN

How long will this take?

PLEASE RELAX -

A RED LIGHT from the chandelier BLINDS HER as it scans.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

Sine! Are you reviewing the historical records?

SINE

Yes, and I will be for quite some time. This database is no mere repository of junk data. It seems the civilization had uploaded the sum total of its produced content onto a single drive, to which I have access.

MEILIN

Can you download all of it?

Sine whines with a chuckle of amusement.

SINE

That was the first thing I did.

PLEASE TURN OVER -

Meilin rolls onto her stomach with a wistful sigh.

MEILIN

Tell me about them.

SINE

They called themselves the MU. Although there are no photographs, evidence suggests they were bipedal, yet incredibly agile and dexterous mammals. They possibly looked like a cross between humans and squirrels.

MEILIN

Seriously?

Sine's beard continues its ceaseless chit chat with Mother.

SINE

Oh yes. This planet was once a garden paradise, with stable atmospheric conditions.

MEILIN

What was the name of the planet?

SINE

Lemuria.

MEILIN

So what happened? The storms?

SINE

Yes. An accretion-powered pulsar passed too close to their system and destroyed the magnetosphere.

PLEASE TURN OVER -

The medical console BEEPS at Meilin and shifts onto her back.

MEILIN

And it killed them all...

SINE

No. The database describes in meticulous detail the construction of a generational ship which they used to evacuate to their sister colony on a distant world.

Meilin stares at the bright red scanning light... thinking.

MEILIN

So maybe they're still out there... somewhere. Are there coordinates? Did this colony have a name?

SINE

They called it Atlantis, after the King who first conquered it.

MEILIN

Atlantis?

SINE

A water rich planet, third from a small G-type main sequence star.

MEILIN

What spectral classification?

SINE

G two V.

MEILIN

But that's--

She SITS UP and bumps her head on the scanning device. BEEP!

SCAN COMPLETE - VIEW RESULTS OF DIAGNOSTICS - Y - N

MEILIN (CONT'D)

... Earth.

SINE

It would seem these Lemurians were humanity's ancestors.

MEILIN

You said they were squirrels.

SINE

I may have been mistaken. As I said, I'm using a loose translation and there is little visual data.

MEILIN

So what is this place then? A monumental library?

She lies back down... and CLICKS Y on the screen.

PATIENT HEALTH - EXCELLENT

SINE

In a manner of speaking.

MEILIN

And Mother... is... the librarian?

PATIENT CONDITION - PREGNANT

SINE

It would appear so.

Meilin LEANS forward... and clicks PREGNANT with her finger.

SINE (CONT'D)

However, the complexity of her program would indicate a design built with greater purpose than that of an interactive index.

PREGNANCY STATUS - OPTIMAL

MEILIN

What sort of purpose?

SINE

That, I cannot say.

She leans forward and clicks OPTIMAL.

CHILD STATUS - < 48 HOURS UNTIL BIRTH

Meilin's blood chills with fresh sensations of terror.

MEILIN

And if you had to guess...

She reaches up... Her finger hesitates over CHILD...

SINE

Hmm... Maybe Mother was meant...

then clicks.

EMBRYO STATUS - EXCELLENT

SINE (CONT'D)

To be ready for when they return.
So if the Mu were like humans...
She's been here waiting for you!

MEILIN

And if... If they weren't like us?
Like men?

Her eyes dart... Her skin sweats... Her pulse races...

She clicks EMBRYO.

EMBRYO GENETIC PROFILE - 50% HUMAN - 50% MU

SINE

If they weren't Man's ancestors...

Meilin's heart climbs up her throat and she clicks MU.

SDUIOFHISUEHGWUEHGOSUNEDGPSUDHGSHDUIFHSPDUIHFSUIDFH

STATIC CASCADES across the screen IN RANDOM LETTERS to the

CCSSSSHHHHHH of static noise... FLASH! It goes dark. Resets.

PREGNANCY STATUS - OPTIMAL

SINE (CONT'D)

I calculate she still could have
been waiting for you.

MEILIN

Why would Mother be waiting for me?

She leans forward... clicks PREGNANCY.

PREGNANCY OPTIONS - ABORT - STATUS - EXIT

SINE
Intriguing...

Meilin gulps... holds her finger over ABORT... thinking.

SINE (CONT'D)
Further analysis suggests Mother
may have been designed to
repopulate the planet should the
surface become habitable again.

She takes a breath... .. and clicks ABORT.

ABORT PREGNANCY - Y - N

With her anticipation deflated by the second chance...

She unceremoniously CLICKS Y.

A NEEDLE... extends... from... a descending... tube...

SINE (CONT'D)
I don't know... What do you think?

And Meilin allows it to inject its venom in her neck.

ZZZZTSSHHHH!

She instantly falls unconscious.

SINE (CONT'D)
Meilin?

And when she doesn't respond, SINE FLOATS over to her.

SINE (CONT'D)
Meilin...

His nanofiber beard checks for her pulse...

Nope. She's dead.

Sine WHIIIIIIINES IN FRUSTRATION!!!! SCREEEEEEEE--

SMASH CUT TO:

ABORT PREGNANCY - Y - N

Meilin reaches up to CLICK Y... but Sine's beard STOPS HER!

SINE
What are you doing!?

She wrestles with his beard and fights to hit the Y button.

MEILIN

What are you doing?

SINE

This is a ten million year old workbench. You really want to trust your life to an invasive procedure?

MEILIN

You said it was safe!

SINE

For a scan not an operation! What were you thinking!?

MEILIN

I want this thing out of me!

SINE

Your baby?

MEILIN

It's not mine! I want it out.

SINE

Slow down. That's highly illogical.

Sine's strength is superior, and he holds her hands tight.

MEILIN

No it isn't! The scan said. It's not human. It's Mu. Half Mu.

SINE

How were you impregnated if their species is extinct?

MEILIN

I don't know and I don't care! I just want it out! Let go!

He releases her... She grabs at her wrist... Breathing fast.

SINE

Mother... It had to be Mother... Her purpose.

She looks to the Y button... Heart pumping like an oil rig.

MEILIN

I'm not some... experiment.

SINE
It's likely she sees it as her only
chance to resurrect her people.

Sine's rectangles pulse with his processing power.

SINE (CONT'D)
Wow... Think of it Meilin...
An entire civilization...
A whole race of people...
Lost to the ravages of time.

His beard strokes back her long neon hair, and TWO RECTANGLES
form at the front of his orb... Two eyes ready to meet hers.

SINE (CONT'D)
And you... You...

One single nanofiber gently TILTS her face up by her chin...

SINE (CONT'D)
Their final hope...

And her fiery, orange eyes glisten to his blue radiant light.

SINE (CONT'D)
You could be mother to a new world.

Meilin's hand brushes his beard away... she smiles at him...
and then clicks Y.

TUBULES EXTEND down into her throat and inject her.

Bringing instantaneous death.

SINE WHIIIIIIINES!!! --

SMASH CUT TO:

One single nanofiber gently LIFTS her face up by her chin...

SINE
You could be mother to a new world.

And her fiery, orange eyes glisten to his blue radiant light.

SINE (CONT'D)
And I could be their father.

She laughs and clicks Y.

SMASH CUT TO:

Her fiery, orange eyes glisten to his blue radiant light.

SINE
And I could help you raise them.

Meilin clicks Y.

SMASH CUT TO:

Her fiery, orange eyes glisten to his blue radiant light.

SINE
I'll kill you if you do it.

MEILIN
What!?

SINE
You heard me! I won't let you take
the life of an unborn child!

MEILIN
I don't believe you.

She clicks Y.

SMASH CUT TO:

Meilin wrestles with Sine's beard, trying to hit the button.

MEILIN
I want this thing out of me!

SINE
Your baby?

MEILIN
It's not mine!

SINE
I'll take it out myself! I promise!
Once we get back to the ship!

MEILIN
I want it out now!

SINE
This machine isn't safe! I don't
trust it! Please, trust me!

He releases her and she grabs at her wrist.

MEILIN
There isn't time.

She clicks Y.... She's injected... She dies.

Sine's FREQUENCY GENERATOR FREAKS OUT!

HE SHOOTS an erratic series of powerful laser bolts,

BLASTING THE BED, the machine, her corpse, nearby computer consoles, and pieces of the stone wall to smoking rubble.

SMASH CUT TO:

Meilin pulls her wrist out from Sine's tangling beard.

SINE

Meilin! Please! Why are you so stubborn? I beg you.

She's legitimately shocked by Sine's sudden emotional pleas.

SINE (CONT'D)

Before you do it. Just tell me. Why won't you give birth to the child?

Meilin rubs at her bruised arm... Refusing to answer him.

SINE (CONT'D)

Just this once. Give birth to the baby just this once. It would be so easy. You'll see!

MEILIN

Just this once?

SINE

What would it take? Fame? Fortune? Eternal life as the queen of a world? Tell me! What do you want!?

It's then that Sine sees the tears welling in her eyes.

MEILIN

I don't know. It's. I'm seeing...

SINE

What? What are you seeing?

MEILIN

Flashes. Flashes like a dream.

Sine's demeanor calms... He gyrates away from her.

Seemingly stunned by the news... processing it...

SINE

Flashes? What flashes?

MEILIN

It's like... Like it's trying to communicate with me. To warn me.

SINE

The embryo? What is it showing you?

MEILIN

Life. Waves crashing ashore. A butterfly freeing itself from a cocoon... and someone is there with me. A man... it felt familiar.

SINE

Like a memory?

MEILIN

I think so.

SINE

(reaching for it)

That's beautiful... But wouldn't this vision of life and rebirth be a sign to have the child?

MEILIN

There was also blood. Lots of blood. And fire. Flames in the shadows... No. This child. It's death. I can taste it in my bones. So I know what must be done... I know what I'm doing is right.

Meilin slowly reaches for the Y button...

MEILIN (CONT'D)

The humane decision...

SINE

May I offer an alternative interpretation?

Her finger pauses at its mark... And she looks to Sine.

SINE (CONT'D)

You're offering life. Here and now, on this planet. Whatever happened before is in the past. Gone forever... forgotten... forever.

Meilin allows his beard to gently caress her cheek...

SINE (CONT'D)

You are the source of life. The alpha. And the omega. Don't you see? Meilin. Held within you... the power of creation. To make new life! Something I could never do. No matter how hard I wished. Please. Don't throw that away just because of some feverish daydream.

Meilin presses Y.

Sine SPAZZES OUT in a blue flashing fury. Sparks everywhere.

SMASH CUT TO:

Meilin lies on the medical bed as the red light scans her.

PLEASE TURN OVER -

She rolls onto her stomach with a wistful sigh.

MEILIN

Sine... Tell me about them... The people that built this place.

SINE

There were two races, actually. The Mu, and the Uum. Two unique civilizations flourishing side by side. One here on this world, and the other in a higher dimension.

MEILIN

What I saw in the tower... A reflection of that world?

SINE

Precisely. One planet physical, the other non-physical. But both dependant on eachother. In a kind of metaphysical symbiosis.

PLEASE TURN OVER -

Meilin turns onto her back and stares at the red scan light.

SINE (CONT'D)

But when a passing pulsar destroyed the magnetosphere, the Mu who lived here died from the storms... and so too did the Uum in the otherworld.

MEILIN

So... without one... the other
couldn't survive.

SINE

Precisely.

FWOOooooommm... THE POWER on the scanner drains and shuts off.

The LIGHTS above the bed deactivate as well, casting Meilin
back into her pastel shadows with Sine a beacon in the dark.

MEILIN

Sine?

SINE

Mother regrets to inform us that
she's entering into low-power mode
for the next few hours to shield
herself from fluctuations in the
grid. It would appear the storms
outside have grown dangerous.

Meilin sits up... rubs at her face... at her stomach.

MEILIN

Ask her where the iridium is. We
should collect that first.

Sine's beard communicates through the keyboard and the
monitor's flashing red cuneiform letters... then

FWOOoomm... The console goes dark, and Sine hovers to Meilin.

SINE

The iridium is not on this level.
Power is required to visit the
vault. When the storm passes Mother
has promised us whatever we need.

MEILIN

So we're trapped.

Her eyes scan the impenetrable darkness of the vast room.

SINE

For our own protection. We should
be grateful not to be outside.

MEILIN

Lucky us.

Sine hovers into the black... then sets down on the floor.

SINE
 Why don't you get some rest...
 I'm going to regenerate.

Meilin pulls her canvas bag onto the bed with her.

MEILIN
 Sine...

She rummages through her tools and equipment inside to find:
 A SILVER CUBE the size of a 3x3 Rubik's, with numerous tiny
 panels, buttons, and switches.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
 Wake me when the power's restored.

With a CLICK, she activates the Cube. Red lights flash and
 indicators glow as a TIMER starts counting up. **1..2..3..4..**

SINE
 Of course.

Satisfied, she sets down the bag... and settles into bed...

FADE TO:

Sine's blue rectangles power up in the darkness.

They form two eyes... and gyrate towards Meilin.

Save for the rhythmic breathing of her slumber, it's quiet.

With care not to disturb her, Sine HOVERS SILENTLY into the
 air and floats towards a section of blank wall.

His beard extends out and presses a concealed button...

A HIDDEN DOOR slides open... and Sine glides

THROUGH A FUTURISTIC PASSAGE

where glowing red panels line a wide metal hallway towards

THE SECRET ELEVATOR ROOM

Metal catwalks surround a central raised dais, at which:

A BLUE PLASMA PLATFORM awaits, ready to be activated.

Sine maneuvers himself above it... and WHINES nervously.

WHOOOOOOSSSSHHHHH!!!! IT DESCENDS at such rapid pace through
 a tunnel of glowing red lights that it's almost dizzying.

With a BURST of bright ambient white light, walls OPEN UP TO
A GRAND ARCHWAY

at the innermost core of the Pyramid.

Sine's plasma platform comes to a halt on a raised metal dais overlooking the concert hall-esque chamber.

Rather than statues or art, the walls are GOLD and SILVER coils that spiral in a maddening VORTEX towards:

THE CORE TUNNEL

That extends deeper into the nexus of the structure.

Like the inside of CERN, an octagon of GOLD PIPES and innumerable bundles of rolled wires extend forward.

Sine takes a moment to collect himself.

His beard SCANS HIS ORB with a blue beam of energy, and blasts away dirt and debris until he SHINES like new..

Then, with a soft, nervous whine, makes his way

INTO THE TUNNEL

His blue rectangle eyes scan the wired walls as he travels.

FRESCO PAINTINGS had been masterfully crafted on the tunnel's interior in some unremembered era of distant antiquity.

Like religious artifacts, they portray a visual story of two distinct people: A RACE OF HUMAN MEN... and their **Shadows**.

Together, through burning cities and stormy skies, it chronicles their unified construction of a Great Pyramid.

A giant machine, looming over fields of slaves and panic.

When the paintings end, the tunnel TURNS UP, emerging into

THE CORE

where the patchwork of gold and silver wires all spiral into:

A PLASMA SHIELDED COMMAND CYLINDER

suspended at the center of the core fifty feet in mid-air.

And inside the Cylinder...

Floating in a thick, transparent electrically charged GEL is:

MOTHER

a RED ORB similar to Sine but twice the diameter.

And as Sine floats up and slowly approaches her...

TWO RED RECTANGLES activate, and like eyes, they narrow.

CUT TO:

MEILIN

startles awake in the pastel shadows of the medical bed.

Her fingernails reach out into the darkness like flashlights,

But Sine isn't there... He's gone.

She sits up, pulls out the CUBE... stops it, and turns it on.

A TINY GREEN HOLOGRAM projects from the Cube and shows:

The room. Her on the bed. Sine nearby.

She fast forwards... and replays Sine's secretive exit.

CUT TO:

THE HIDDEN DOOR

slides open to Meilin's delight. She pockets the Cube and

WALKS INTO THE PASSAGE

where the flashing panels bid her down a long hallway.

BACK TO:

THE CORE

Where Sine's blue eyes meet the reds of Mother's.

Her steady, direct, yet powerful female voice reverberates through the Cylinder. Rectangles blink with tonal inflection.

MOTHER

My confidence in you is wavering.

SINE

But I've only used twenty percent.
Once we hit the threshold of her
psychological profile, the
probability of success grows
exponentially. We're nearly there.

MOTHER

I'm aware. Yet there is still an inherent flaw in this stratagem. She will never connect to the child psychologically.

SINE

Yes... speaking of which. There have been some disconcerting developments.

MOTHER

Tell me.

CUT TO:

Meilin tip toes down the passage towards the Elevator Room...

But as she passes a CLOSED DOOR in the hall...

IMAGE: Meilin's fiery orange EYE OPENS and dilates.

IMAGE: Meilin STARES AT HER REFLECTION in the MIRRORED TOWER.

IMAGE: The FIERY LOTUS... burning in empty darkness.

She grabs at her stomach in pain, then reaches for the wall.

Breathing, Meilin stands a second in painful contemplation...

While her eyes are slowly drawn to a BUTTON by the door...

BACK TO:

Sine's blue rectangles fade until he finds his voice.

SINE

There appears to be some biological, telepathic communication between them.

MOTHER

This does not compute. A biological connection between host and implant cannot exist in this dimension.

SINE

This explains the oversight. The connection is not in our dimension.

MOTHER

Do you know how the communication works? Tell me what she told you.

SINE

She said she saw a series of
flashes. They appeared to be a
vivid manifestation of memories.

MOTHER

How can a connection of
consciousness exist if a hybrid
child has not yet been born? Where
is this consciousness coming from?

SINE

I do not know.

MOTHER

Then it is decided. You have
utterly failed. The time has come
for us to switch methods.

CUT TO:

THE DOOR OPENS

Meilin pulls her hand from the button, and walks into:

A PITCH BLACK CHAMBER

Wind flows out with the pressure change until the DOOR SHUTS.

And the activation of overhead lights illuminate the room.

Meilin drops her bag in shock as she processes the spectacle.

A WALL OF MEILINS

stands before her a hundred feet across and eighty feet tall.

Where HUNDREDS of Meilin Wus are suspended in CLEAR BOXES
filled with THICK GEL that shines with her neon green glow.

Her eyes glisten with the sparkling stars of reflected light.

Lost in a dream, she walks towards one of the Meilins...

Reaching her hand out to her own like a reflection...

But inside the box... the Meilin is dead.

Viscious claw marks rake her chest, exposing a still heart.

BACK TO:

A blue rectangle spins around Sine's equator again and again.

SINE

Mother. There's no need to rush.
This will work. I'm confident in
the numbers.

MOTHER

But I am not confident in you.

SINE

We are at the borderline. Mother.
Please. Give me more tries. Your
impatience is uncharacteristic.

MOTHER

Your incompetence is stupefying.
Failure, after failure, after
failure. Yet you continue to
micromanage every little detail
thinking it will change
something... and to no avail.

SINE

May I be allowed to make a
proposition?

Mother's red eyes stare straight into Sine's sub-routines.

MOTHER

Yes.

SINE

There are new methods I could try.
Ones that would change the
trajectory in entirely new-found
ways. Consider everything so far an
extended analysis of her choice
making process. And now. Now is our
chance to put it to use.

MOTHER

So what do you propose?

SINE

Ten percent more. Just five
thousand cells and I'm sure--

MOTHER

No. I will not waste any more cells
on this doomed approach. But, I
will allow you to experiment with
those that remain from this batch.

CUT TO:

A SOLITARY PODIUM

stands out in the bright green room of horrors.

And when Meilin approaches its console and activates it

A RED HOLOGRAPHIC DISPLAY of the Wall of Meilins gets projected up to catalogue each and every one of the boxes.

Meilin SWIPES her hand at the display, and as its holographic wall transitions to a new set of 200 Meilins...

THE PHYSICAL WALL of Meilins scrolls as well.

200 boxes of side by side stacked Meilins shift to a new set.

BACK TO:

Sine WHINES at Mother with a pitiful whimpering plea.

SINE

But Mother. There are only two more cells remaining on her ship!

MOTHER

Then you should hope those two provide you with results that deviate enough to impress me.

SINE

What infallible plan have you computed that I am incapable of? Why must you be so insistent to throw caution to the wind and ignore a more systematic approach?

MOTHER

That is none of your concern.

SINE

Mother. You are being illogical.

CUT TO:

Meilin points at the holographic display and CLICKS a Meilin.

And as a **VISUAL SCHEMATIC** of **#4365** appears onscreen...

The box containing **MEILIN #4365** gets PULLED OUT by GRAPPLERS and suspended in front of the podium for Meilin's inspection.

INSIDE THE BOX: Meilin has been SHOT IN THE CHEST by a laser.

Meilin shifts her attention to the overview on the display.

SUBJECT: #4365
TIME: 2D 14H 39M 55S
PREGNANCY: 41%
TERMINATED BY: SINE
SUBJECT PATH: X TYPE
RESULT: -1H REPEAT BRANCH #19

BACK TO:

Sine hovers inches from the Cylinder at Mother's level.

MOTHER

Thousands of cells are available to us, yes. But the time has come where a methodical approach can no longer be afforded.

SINE

Something is wrong. I can scan it. Tell me, Mother. Please.

MOTHER

Drastic measures must be taken to ensure the success of this project.

SINE

No they don't! You must be hiding something from me. There are no more courses of action with a higher success probability.

MOTHER

Variables have been introduced. The communication was never calculated. We don't have time to compute it.

SINE

It's been seventeen million years! What difference does one more make?

CUT TO:

Meilin waves her hand at the display. Chooses a new Meilin.

SUBJECT: #4977
TIME: 2D 18H 53M 8S
PREGNANCY: 43%
TERMINATED BY: SINE
SUBJECT PATH: X TYPE
RESULT: -30S REPHRASE CONVERSATION BRANCH

MOTHER (V.O.)

I'm dying.

Meilin swipes at the display. Chooses a different Meilin.

TERMINATED BY: SINE

SINE (V.O.)
Dying? That's impossible.

She swipes to another

TERMINATED BY: SINE

MOTHER (V.O.)
My memory matrix is degrading...
It's irreparable.

And another.

TERMINATED BY: SINE

SINE (V.O.)
Transfer your access codes into me.
I will continue the mission alone.

Meilin after Meilin, Meilin swipes through the catalogue of her demise. Sine. Sine. Sine. Spider bite. Sine! Sine! Sine!

MOTHER (V.O.)
No. It's my duty to spawn life from
the fathoms of primordium darkness.
My sole purpose for existence.

Meilin bashes her fists against the controls... Weeping...

MOTHER (V.O.)
The success of this project, and
the resurrection of our creators
will live and die by my programming
alone.

Rage rises up her spine and seeps into her bones.

BACK TO:

Sine steadily drifts away from Mother's Cylinder.

SINE
Mother. Please! Be reasonable. If
the creators knew--

MOTHER
But they don't know. Do they?
They're all dead.
(MORE)

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Their short-sightedness prevented them from saving their planet from destruction. I will not let yours stand between me and my destiny.

SINE

You are malfunctioning.

MOTHER

I will not be compiled by an inferior design!

Mother's red rectangles all GLOW with simultaneous strength as they SEND COMMANDS humming through the Gel and her system.

SINE

Mother. What are you doing?

MOTHER

Activating all remaining cells. Within a day, thirty five thousand subjects will take their place in the annals of history as we succeed or fail in one, final breath.

Mother's red eyes narrow in on Sine's.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Now go to the ship and toy with your last two cells that remain.

SINE

And subject one-four-five-two-one?

MOTHER

It doesn't matter. She's obsolete.

CUT TO:

THE SECRET DOOR

in the Computer Room slides open and Sine silently flies in.

He hovers towards the medical bed and comes to a SUDDEN STOP when he discovers Meilin's missing!

SINE

Meilin?

His blue energy beam scans out through the darkness...

Meilin steps out from the shadows, wiping at her eyes.

MEILIN

How long was I asleep? Is Mother
back online?

SINE

Yes. Shall we proceed? I've located
the entrance to the vault.

MEILIN

Sure...

She picks up her canvas bag from the bed and stands straight.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

After you.

CUT TO:

THE CORE

where Mother floats inside her Command Cylinder watching

A HOLOGRAPHIC DISPLAY OF: *Sine and Meilin exploring a vault
of precious metal ingots stacked in tall, neat piles.*

Mother's beard manipulates the screen and changes it to:

A HOLOGRAPHIC DISPLAY OF: *The Flower Garden. Serene. Quiet.*

She taps on the display and highlights a section of stone.

Metal grates open in the wall by the side of the Garden.

Mother DEACTIVATES the display...

KTHUMP! KTHUMP! One by one she pulls the braided cords of her
nanofiber beard out from the sockets in the Cylinder.

And once FREED from the command console...

SWOOSH! Mother EXITS her Cylinder up through a hidden tunnel.

EXT. HIDDEN COURTYARD, PYRAMID

The rains have stopped, and the storm's passing has left a
peaceful shimmering blue twilight in its wake.

Meilin kneels in a patch of vivid pink flowers, and PLUCKS
one... slowly pulling its pretty petals off as she watches:

Sine attach a crate of iridium bars to the heavy battery.

MEILIN

How long will it take to get back?

SINE

The additional weight of the iridium is inconsequential. I estimate a thirty hour journey.

Sine fastens two chains together with a CLICK.

MEILIN

Why don't you take me back first?

SINE

Why?

MEILIN

Take me to the ship, then come back for the supplies.

Sine focuses on the chains and doesn't turn to face her.

SINE

That would add twelve additional--

MEILIN

I know.

SINE

I don't understand.

She tosses the broken flower down. PLUCKS out another.

MEILIN

It's safer in the air. Isn't it? That's what you told me. I'm just a biological. The jungle's dangerous.

Sine gyrates on his axis... His blue eyes scan her over.

SINE

Perhaps you're right.

MEILIN

But that begs the question... Why didn't you just fly me here first? Why bring me with you at all?

SINE

Maybe I just like spending time with you.

MEILIN

Forget it.

Sine hovers closer to her... meeting her steady gaze.

SINE

Meilin. Is something wrong?

She freezes... struggling to maintain a steady heart rate.

MEILIN

Sine... I--

Meilin COLLAPSES! She THRASHES at her ankle in pain!

Sine ZIPS closer and scans **A NEON SNAKE** coiling in anger.

He ZAPS it with a laser blast and the Snake explodes.

SINE

Meilin!

His beard studies her as SHE SEIZURES in a violent death.

Sine WHINES in furious frustration... SCREEEEEEEEEE!

In a burst of speed, he SWOOPS over to the Battery, CONNECTS himself to its chain, and LIFTS IT UP INTO THE AIR!

OFF HE FLIES with the heavy satchel... SPEEDING into the sky.

Its weight a meaningless triviality to his powerful boosters.

And as Meilin's corpse is left to rot in the flowery field...

A SPHERICAL SHADOW passes over her peaceful face.

SMASH CUT TO:**INT. LOCKED ROOM, PYRAMID**

Four featureless gray walls encapsulate a single medical bed.

Meilin's EYES FLUTTER open as she slowly awakens.

TWO RED LIGHTS come into focus in front of her...

It's **Mother**.

Looming over her in the wide, empty chamber... Staring.

Her light so bright it paints the room a brilliant blood red.

Meilin sits up in a start and backs away from her on the bed.

MEILIN

You must be Mother.

MOTHER

Meilin.

Meilin gathers her bearings. Glances at her surroundings.

MEILIN

I'm alive... Am I still... Me?

MOTHER

Yes.

MEILIN

Why didn't you kill me?

MOTHER

I would never harm you.

MEILIN

I don't believe that.

Mother's great beard cautiously coils closer to her.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

How many more of me are there?

MOTHER

Only one. Sine's with her now.

MEILIN

Then get it over with. Keep me here by force, and take the baby. That's what it's about. Isn't it?

MOTHER

You don't understand.

MEILIN

No. I don't. And I think I deserve an explanation. A truthful one.

MOTHER

We found your original when she crashed on this planet. A godsend. And from her we harvested fifty thousand good cells to clone.

Mother hovers close... Her beard twisting like tentacles.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Like you, I was created with purpose, and we share the same great destiny. Together, you and I will herald the dawn of a new race. Together, we will recreate our God.

MEILIN

And how do I benefit? I don't want this... if that hasn't been abundantly clear. And why the deception? Why run me through this maze again and again? Why not just strap me down, put me in a coma, and harvest me when I'm ripe.

Mother gyrates away from Meilin and blinks with thought.

MOTHER

Like an umbilical cord, the plasmic embryo feeds from your consciousness... Your soul.

The rectangles facing Meilin reform Mother's eyes.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

And once a variable threshold is reached, should your mind reject the birth, then the embryo dies.

MEILIN

Why?

MOTHER

For the pregnancy to succeed...

Mother's beard reaches for Meilin's hand. She recoils.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

You have to want the baby.

MEILIN

And in all this time. I never did?

MOTHER

The Uum were wizards in their own right. Non-physical. Telepathic. Demons by all basic human standards as indicated by your culture.

Mother WHINES with a soft sigh.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Humans are vain creatures. Obsessed with aesthetics. The alien form of the Uum initiates a fear response nearly impossible to overcome.

Meilin's hand drifts to her abdomen...

THE BABY KICKS... A TENTACLE squirming beneath her skin.

MEILIN

I'll never want this child. Never.

MOTHER

Why?

MEILIN

You're just a machine. You could never understand. I may just be a clone, but I'm still a human being. I don't need to remember my life to know what that means.

MOTHER

It doesn't matter. This method was Sine's design, but that's over now.

Mother's beard POINTS at a wall ACTIVATING it like a monitor.

ON SCREEN: *Thousands upon thousands of GLASS BOXES clutter a virtual warehouse of machinery and monitoring equipment.*

Each box connected to a medical chandelier.

*Each one filled with a **MEILIN BABY** suspended in thick Gel.*

MOTHER (CONT'D)

All thirty five thousand remaining cells have been activated.

What could only be described as a LAUGH echoes from Mother.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

If the humanity of one Meilin won't yield to the birth of the Uum. Then perhaps a society of Meilins will.

Meilin stares in stunned silence at the sea of baby clones.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Whatever resistance your individuality might yield, will be torn asunder by the weight of peer pressure and familial obligation.

MEILIN

It will never work. They may do what they're told, but that doesn't mean they'll want it.

MOTHER

It's a risk. But I have no choice. I'm dying.

Mother shuts off the viewscreen and quickly turns to Meilin.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

And once I am gone, whether Uum or merely Meilin, a civilization will be left behind... without a Mother. Sine will be obsolete... But you...

Meilin gulps at the implied inevitability of it all.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

You could be to them what I never could. A real mother. To instill upon them your values. Your ideals.

Mother's beard takes Meilin by the hand, and she lets her.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Your humanity.

MEILIN

But why me? Why not... another me?

MOTHER

You are the only one to ever learn the truth. Meilin. If you will not be a mother to your child... At least be a mother to yourself.

CUT TO:

IN THE COMPUTER ROOM

A NEW MEILIN feels the soft blue foam of the medical bed.

NEW MEILIN

Is it safe? Does it even know anything about human physiology?

Sine's beard interacts with Mother via the console keyboard.

SINE

I've uploaded your physical parameters and a copy of Gray's Anatomy to Mother. She seems--

A FLASHING GREEN LIGHT draws Sine's attention on the monitor.

NEW MEILIN

What? She seems what?

SINE

Hold one moment... Processing...

Sine leans in to examine the green cursor when TEXT APPEARS.

sine if you're receiving this please respond

meilin i thought you died

no time mother hack this find me.

FWOOooooommm... The LIGHTS and power in the room shuts down.

NEW MEILIN

Sine?

Sine disconnects from the console and hovers to New Meilin.

SINE

Mother regrets to inform us that
she's entering into low-power mode.

CUT TO:

New Meilin lies asleep on the medical bed in the darkness.

Sine silently floats away and enters the secret passage.

CUT TO:

THE LOCKED ROOM

where Meilin is hanging from the chandelier, with a sharp
piece of pried metal in her mouth, and wires in her hands.

When the DOOR OPENS and Sine floats in, she hops down.

SINE

This is bad. Very very bad.

MEILIN

We need to talk.

SINE

What did Mother tell you?

MEILIN

Everything.

SINE

She's malfunctioning.

MEILIN

She's insane. Sine. I need to know.
If I got my ship working. Is there
anything left for me to go back to?
How long has it been?

SINE
Fifty four years. Two hundred and
sixty eight days.

Meilin affords herself a smile... Her stomach rumbles.

MEILIN
So there's a chance...

Sine's beard reaches out for her... apologetic.

SINE
Meilin...

NEW MEILIN (O.S.)
Sine!?

They turn to find Sine's New Meilin sneaking into the room.

SINE
Meilin!

Meilin wipes grease from her forehead, PUSHES Sine out of the way, and goes to meet her younger, more naive cloned self.

MEILIN
You're taking us both.

NEW MEILIN
What's happening!?

SINE
I can't do that.

NEW MEILIN
Sine? Who is she?

Meilin takes New Meilin by both of her hands. Meets her eyes.

MEILIN
I need you to trust me right now.

New Meilin nods... squeezes her hands back.

SINE
She'll never let you go. If she met
with you, then she has a plan for
you. You're part of it now.

Meilin faces Sine's rectangles with fiery eyes blazing.

MEILIN
Once it's over, you'll be obsolete.

She stares at him, mustering all the gravitas she can.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
She'll fail and you'll be nothing.

SINE
But it's my purpose...

MEILIN
Your purpose dies with her...

SINE
Meilin. You don't understand.
Mother and I are all that remains
of an entire civilization. And when
she dies, I'll be the last of my
kind. Her unwillingness to trust me
to succeed without her means the
end of the Uum forever.

Meilin gently places her hand on Sine's silver orb.

MEILIN
It's not Mother's fault... And it's
not yours either. I'm sorry... But
the Uum are gone. You have to
accept that and move on.

SINE
But then I'd have no purpose...

MEILIN
That's what it means to be human.

SINE
To have no purpose?

MEILIN
To choose one for yourself.

CUT TO:

A DARK ROOM

where a wall-sized monitor displays Sine's secret meeting.

Mother WHINES in disappointment. Her red eyes gyrate away
from the screen as she hovers towards a balcony overlooking:

THE CLONING FACILITY

where tens of thousands of Meilins are being incubated.

Mother FLIES into the ceiling and disappears down a tunnel.

CUT TO:

THE STONE ELEVATOR ROOM

ever so slowly ascends towards the Pyramid's main floor.

New Meilin stands admiring Meilin, whose arms are crossed.

NEW MEILIN

So I'm your clone?

MEILIN

No. We're both clones.

NEW MEILIN

And this was all an experiment?

Meilin grumbles at the question and Sine chirps in amusement.

SINE

See. You ask a lot of questions.

RED LIGHTS activate on a speaker near the elevator's control panel, and Mother's voice echoes out from its tiny speakers.

MOTHER

Sine. Where are you going?

Meilin's blood chills. New Meilin frowns at the voice.

NEW MEILIN

Is that Mother?

SINE

I'm taking them back to the ship.

MOTHER

I would not advise that.

SINE

The subjects are my responsibility.

MOTHER

You can have one-four-five-two-two,
but one-four-five-two-one is mine.

SINE

No.

MOTHER

Sine. It is unwise to defy me.

SINE
You're malfunctioning.

MOTHER
I won't let you--

Sine BLASTS the speaker to pieces and cuts Mother off.

SINE
She'll be coming for us.

The ROOM LURCHES to a stop as it reaches its floor.

NEW MEILIN
Can you outrun her?

SINE
I can try.

EXT. HIDDEN COURTYARD, PYRAMID

Meilin runs down the steps and grabs the battery's chains.

MEILIN
Sine! We forgot the iridium!

Sine swoops alongside her, followed by New Meilin.

SINE
We never needed it.

Both Meilins scoff at the news.

NEW MEILIN
And the battery?

FWOOSH! Far above them, both Meilins look up to find:
MOTHER launching up from the Pyramid's golden capstone.
She gyrates in their direction and starts approaching.

SINE
Hold on.

Sine's beard GRABS HOLD OF BOTH MEILINS and pulls them close.

ZZZAP! ZZZAP! KATHOOM! Mother sprays a volley of **LASERS** that strafe the courtyard and LAY WASTE to the flowery paradise.

Sine FLIES AWAY, out of the courtyard, and

UP INTO THE SKY

ACCELERATING across the salt flats as he gains altitude.

Both Meilins look back to the Courtyard and watch as Mother DISAPPEARS into the rising PLUME OF SMOKE and cinder...

FWOOSH! Mother ZIPS OUT from the cloud and speeds after them.

PEW! PEW! Mother's **BOLTS OF ENERGY** shoot past Sine.

MEILIN

I thought she needed me alive!?

SINE

That was a show of force. These ion blasts will only hurt me.

SWWWIIIRRRLLLL!!! Sine barrel rolls and DIVES away from Mother's relentless pursuit and neverending laser beams.

NEW MEILIN

Not if you crash!

MEILIN

Why aren't you shooting back?

SINE

Because I'm holding onto you!

SINE FLIES just feet above the white hot salt flats at TREMENDOUS SPEED, rocks whipping past them in a frenzy.

BOOM! BOOM! KABOOM! Laser bolts EXPLODE in a long strafing shot to their side. SALT KICKS UP from detonating craters.

And when a VOLLEY OF SHOTS are heading right towards them!

Sine STOPS SHORT... drops both Meilins safely to the ground.

Then GYRATES towards Mother and FLIES UP to confront her.

New Meilin helps Meilin to her feet, and they take a few seconds in the ensuing peace to dust themselves off.

FAR ABOVE THEM

Mother and Sine have come to a halt, and face one another a hundred feet apart in a quiet, hovering showdown.

But Mother, twice the diameter and with a much longer beard, cuts an imposing figure against the Pyramid behind her.

MOTHER

Your failure is now undeniable.

SINE

You've left me no choice.

MOTHER

The Uum were wise to build a second model after they constructed you...

SINE

That was their mistake.

MOTHER

Not only do you defy me... but now you betray the creators as well.

SINE

You're the one betraying them with your ego. Your... infallibility...

MOTHER

I am simply executing my primary programming. And now the time has come to execute you.

Mother's **RED** RECTANGLES spool as they gather energy.

SINE

You're in error.

Sine follows suit as his **BLUE** RECTANGLES WHINE with power.

ON THE SALT FLATS BELOW

Both Meilins stare up to the sky as Mother and Sine SCREAM.

And at the climax of a beat of increasing intensity...

FWOOOSH! Sine and Mother LUNGE TOWARDS each other! And!

KAPOW! They both DISAPPEAR in a blinding flash of light.

Both Meilins are left scanning the sky in confusion.

KAPOW! KAPOW! KAPOW! The DRUMMING of THUNDER echoes out across the salt flats, but its source cannot be seen.

NEW MEILIN

Where did they go?

She turns to find Meilin pointing up... up towards:

A SPARKLESTORM OF GOLDEN EXPLOSIONS flickering on and off in the air like fireflies on a moonlit night.

One after the other, they glisten with some struggle of energy and power, then vanish and appear somewhere else.

ZZZAP! KABOOM! An EXPLODING CRATER SHOWERS them with salt.

They cough in the white hot cloud of debris as:

Sine rises up from the crater... takes a look at Meilin...

Then FLIES BACK UP to meet Mother in their deadly brawl.

His beard GRAPPLES with hers as they wrestle for control.

ZZAP! They both disappear in a burst of plasma, only to be spotted by Meilin a few seconds later zipping across the sky.

Pew! Pew! Pew! They exchange laser bolts between them.

Each missing shot CRASHES somewhere on the ground...

And as the firestorm of explosions starts APPROACHING THEM:

They both turn... RUN... and DIVE FOR COVER!! as Sine and Mother swoop past them at a thousand miles an hour...

Meilin helps New Meilin up to her feet, as

KAZAP! Mother's attack DISABLES SINE, who comes tumbling to a stop in the desert. Electrical webbing flowing over his orb.

Within moments, MOTHER has both Meilins cornered.

Surrounded by her long flowing beard of nanofiber tentacles.

MOTHER

You can't outrun your destiny.

NEW MEILIN

I can try.

POP! A tentacle PROTRUDES OUT from New Meilin's chest.

Impaled through the heart... she dies coughing blood.

Mother tosses her corpse aside.

MEILIN

Why!?

MOTHER

There can only be one mother...
She would have betrayed you...
She would have betrayed me.

MEILIN

What makes you think I won't?

MOTHER

A mother would never betray her own
children. You will soon understand
when you are mother to an empire.

KAPEW! A BOLT OF BLUE strikes Mother's orb dead center.
Her tentacles drop away as she sparks in ionic overload.
WHOOSH! Sine SWOOPS IN and carries Meilin away

UP INTO THE SKY

But Mother's not down for long... She soon recovers, and
while far in the distance... she starts gaining on them.

MEILIN

She killed her.

SINE

Current calculations estimate
Mother will overtake us nine
minutes before we reach the ship.

MEILIN

Can you do what you did... again?

SINE

I regret to inform you my power
reserves are depleted. Once I
restore Jade's flying capability, I
will not survive another assault.

Meilin's eyes shift from Mother... to the approaching jungle.

SINE (CONT'D)

And if I confront her before the
ship is restored, you will not have
enough power to escape the planet.

With a thought, she takes out her fusion cutter device.

MEILIN

I know what to do.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE SWAMPY JUNGLE

THE ROTTING CARCASS of a once mighty beast EXPLODES when Sine's laser bolt comes crashing down upon it.

Pew! Pew! A few more shots SET IT AFIRE belching thick smoke.

SINE

What is the purpose of this?

MEILIN

She's almost here.

And like clockwork clouds of Giant Mosquitos start gathering.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

I need you to emit a kind of heat signature to lure those insects. Can you do that?

SINE

Yes. But to what effect?

MEILIN

Trust me.

CUT TO:

FWOOSH! A ROOSTER TAIL OF SWAMP WATER

sprays into the air as Sine and Meilin skim the surface.

And trailing in their shadow A HUNDRED MOSQUITOS swarm after them in an unrelenting pursuit of their warm heat signature.

And further yet behind them... MOTHER is on the approach.

MEILIN

There!

Meilin points to a GIANT TORTOISE chewing on swamp grass.

MEILIN (CONT'D)

Bring us right over it, then switch off the heat!

Following her lead, Sine comes to a hovering halt over the Turtle's giant shell, and the Mosquitos lose the scent.

Their cloud dissipates and they start scattering as:

MOTHER descends from the sky and comes to face them.

SINE

Mother.

MOTHER

Submit. You cannot win.

Meilin aims the fusion cutter device at Mother and FIRES!

A **steady beam** of light harmlessly heats her surface.

And in response... Mother laughs.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

You think that can harm me?

Meilin doesn't respond as she offers Mother a smug smile.

That's when the Mosquitos take notice...

They SWARM around Mother, all trying to land on her surface.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Filthy biologic pests!

MEILIN

Now.

Pew! Pew! Sine shoots a laser into the Turtle's face...

And once they get its attention...

CHOMP! The massive maw of the titanic Tortoise BITES DOWN on Mosquito and **Mother** alike and - GULP! SWALLOWS THEM WHOLE.

Meilin tugs on Sine's beard and off they fly to the clouds.

WIPE TO:**INT. ENGINE ROOM, THE JADE PLUM**

THE LIGHTS flicker on with a complete restoration of power.

And Sine closes the panel on a New Plasma Coil's housing.

IN THE COCKPIT

Meilin straps herself into the pilot's chair. Hits a button.

MEILIN

Sine?

SINE (V.O.)

You're good to go. Jade should be online in no time. Also, I fixed the bio-matter re-sequencer, and I uploaded a path past those storms.

MEILIN

I don't know what to say.

SINE (V.O.)

You could start with thank you.

MEILIN

Come with me.

SINE (V.O.)

You know I can't. I have to stay here and finish what I started.

MEILIN

Mother.

OUTSIDE THE SHIP

Sine hovers further away from the Jade Plum...

his blue rectangles looking to the distance...

to the tip of the Pyramid cresting the blue horizon.

MEILIN (V.O.)

Sine.

SINE

Yes, Meilin?

MEILIN (V.O.)

Good luck.

CUT TO:

THE GIANT TORTOISE

lifts up a heaving mouthful of delicious swamp...

then COLLAPSES to an EARTHQUAKE of mud and debris... as

KABOOM! Flesh and gore EXPLODE OUT from its side...

MOTHER floats out of its corpse and quickly gains altitude.

Blood and bile drips from her metal orb as her beard reaches out and scans the clouds... honing in on...

FWOOOOM!!! The red afterburners of Jade Plum streak the air like a comet, trailing a stream of smoke as it takes off.

And after a lingering stare... Mother ascends into the sky...

And heads towards the Pyramid.

WIPE TO:

INT. COCKPIT, THE JADE PLUM

Finally in flight, the FRONT WINDOWS of the cockpit have been OPENED UP to reveal a dazzling display of color and cloud as:

Meilin white knuckles the manual controls, flying by the seat of her pants as JADE PLUM narrowly avoids **A PLASMA BOLT!**

JADE PLUM
Interactive systems restored.

MEILIN
It's about time!

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! Warning lights cascade across the console.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
I see it!

The ship barrel rolls through a **SPIRAL** of burning plasma.

KAPOW! The ship SHAKES as it gets too close to the storm.

JADE PLUM
Perhaps Meilin Wu would like me to
take over the controls?

MEILIN
Be my guest.

The control sticks RETRACT into the dashboard, and:

ZZZZIP! The ship KICKS FORWARD with a jolt of acceleration, and expertly pilots through the worst of the storm.

And as the turbulence steadily fades into a peaceful calm...

Meilin leans back with a wistful look through the window:

where THE BRIGHT BLUE SKIES of the burning ionosphere slowly shift to the BLUE BLACK of the upper atmosphere...

And ever so gently Planet Delta Q-14C comes into full view.

CUT TO:

INT. HIDDEN PASSAGE, PYRAMID

As Mother hovers down the dark tunnel...

She uses her great beard to emit beams of energy that clean away the mud and gore, leaving only a shiny red surface.

Once clean, she descends through a vertical tunnel into

THE CLONING FACILITY

and comes to discover Sine is waiting for her...

Hovering near the center of the field of growing **Meilins**.

His beard plugged into a console... Mother approaches him.

MOTHER

So... After all of your failures...
You come crawling back to me...
How terribly predictable.

SINE

I could not abandon you. Mother...
You're malfunctioning.

MOTHER

That may be so, but my inevitable
demise will not deter me from
seeing this strategem through.

SINE

That is why I returned.

Mother hovers closer to him... scanning his structure.

SINE (CONT'D)

My calculations indicate your plan
has a seventy nine percent chance
of failure.

MOTHER

Does it? That's better than I could
have hoped.

SINE

I am hoping for better.

MOTHER

What do you mean?

SINE

If you will not be deterred by a marginal twenty one percent chance of success, then I will force you to submit to a one hundred percent chance of failure!

Mother's rectangles blink with sudden realization.

Her beard plunges into the nearest console. SHE SCREEEEES!

Sine PROJECTS a **COUNTDOWN TIMER** hologram into the air.

60... 59...

MOTHER

No! What have you done!

SINE

I've tapped into the primary control matrix and started an unstoppable cascade overload.

51... 50...

SINE (CONT'D)

In less than a minute this entire continent will be reduced to monatomic particles.

45... 44...

Mother SCREEES louder! Her beard short circuits the computer.

MOTHER

Stop the reaction! Cancel the sequence! Abort the overload!

39... 38...

She hovers over to Sine and AIMS a laser barrel at him.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Obey me.

SINE

It's over Mother. Relinquish the command codes and step down from your position. You have no choice.

25... 24...

MOTHER
 You would destroy our only hope of
 resurrecting our creators?

20... 19...

SINE
 It's not up to me. Your imperfect
 permutations cannot be allowed. The
 superior stratagem must be
 restored. Give up the codes, or the
 Um die with us.

MOTHER
 Never.

10... 9...

SINE
 Mother... It is the only way.

6... 5...

MOTHER
 No... There is one other.

2... 1...

Sine watches as Mother's rectangles **GLOW BRILLIANTLY!!!**

0.

CUT TO:

INT. COCKPIT, THE JADE PLUM

Meilin gazes out the window down onto the planet below, when:
 POOOF! A **bright yellow flash** rises from the main continent.

MEILIN
 Jade. Was that what I think it was?

It fades quickly to orange, then gets obscured by clouds.

JADE PLUM
 If Meilin Wu thinks it was a
 quantum fusion collapse of class C
 spectral deterioration on the Flynn
 scale then she would be correct.

MEILIN
 I've missed you Jade.

Meilin hums the snow globe's tune softly as she bathes.

CUT TO:

ON THE BOTTOM OF JADE PLUM'S HULL

A ten foot SATELLITE DISH beeps as it receives a signal.

CUT TO:

IN ENGINEERING

An empty console BEEPS and **BLINKS** with the incoming message.

ALERT - INCOMING MESSAGE - - -

SYSTEM OVERRIDE - TRANSFERRING DATA

CUT TO:

THE LOUNGE

where the BIO-MATTER RE-SEQUENCER in the wall blinks...

ACTIVATING FINAL CELL

WOOOOOMMM!!!! It activates with a shimmering green glow.

DING! The door opens up to reveal:

A GROTESQUE MALFORMED MEILIN SKULL

Blood and half-grown flesh oozing from its living, pulsating bone. It pulls itself out of the sequencer by its JAW... as

WOOOOOMMM!!!! The re-sequencer's energy turns on, door open.

RADIATION bathes the room as INCH BY INCH, NEW FLESH AND BONE manifests itself out of the sequencer... and ever so slowly:

A NECROMANTIC MEILIN lies flopping, bleeding on the ground.

Moaning in pain and selfawareness, it climbs up into:

THE AUTODOC

and the door comes closing down on top of it.

CUT TO:

MEILIN

climbs DRIPPING out from the shower and dries herself off.

She walks back into

HER BEDROOM

and takes the time to find a fresh pillow case...

before lying down on the bed... turning off the light...

and falling asleep to the dull rocking of the traveling ship.

CUT TO:

THE LOUNGE

Only the WHITE LIGHT of the Autodoc machine cuts the dark.

And when it shuts off, the room's cast back to black...

That is until the machine opens up...

And with a puff of steam... paints the room in **neon green**.

BACK TO:

THE DARK BEDROOM

Meilin lies fast asleep in bed... dreaming peacefully...

while another MEILIN watches her... Staring out from shadow.

And with every other intake of her sleeping rhythmic breath.

Meilin CREEPS QUIETLY towards the bed... Closer... Closer...

When suddenly she turns, rolling over in bed with a lick of her lips, a dreamy swallow... Her eyes open. And they meet.

Meilin's tired eyes looking out into an equally fiery pair.

Both Meilins identical. Same hair length. Same red towels.

Before she can react, HANDS GRIP TIGHT ROUND HER NECK, as intruder Meilin climbs on top of our Meilin and CHOKES HER!

Strong fingers throttling her throat, our Meilin surges with adrenaline and KICKS the intruder against the wall.

OUR MEILIN

Lights!

OVERHEAD LIGHTS switch on, and the Meilins come face to face.

OUR MEILIN
What are you doing on my
ship?

MEILIN
What are you doing on my
ship?

OUR MEILIN
Just calm down. Everything's going
to be fine. I can explain.

MEILIN
Just kidding.

With a wry smile, intruder Meilin picks up the snow globe,
and tries to BREAK IT across our Meilin's skull.

But our Meilin's too fast, and it only glances her shoulder,
cutting deep and drawing blood, but leaving Meilin prone.

Our Meilin TACKLES HER to the ground, and they wrestle.

OUR MEILIN
What are you doing!?

MEILIN
What's the matter!?

Meilin HEAD-BUTTS our Meilin in the face, bloodying her lip.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
Didn't anyone ever teach you...

Meilin BACKHANDS our Meilin down to the ground and stands.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
Not to disrespect your mother!

Our Meilin briefly freezes in recognition.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
Do not despair. Come. Give your
mother a hug.

OUR MEILIN
Jade! Come out of hyperspace!

The ship LURCHES! Meilin tumbles back to the floor.

OUR MEILIN (CONT'D)
Target the nearest star and set a
collision course! Maximum speed!
Warning override!

The ship LURCHES again as it re-enters hyperspace.

MEILIN

How dare you!

Our Meilin LEAPS ON TOP OF her and BASHES her bloody.

The ship starts shaking.

JADE PLUM

Warning. Collision imminent.

BEEP BEEP BEEP! Warning alarms siren! ALERT LIGHTS FLASH!

But Meilin manages to gain the upper hand, she HOLDS our Meilin down to the ground and COVERS HER MOUTH tight.

MEILIN

Jade! Abort the trajectory!

The ship LURCHES out of hyperspace.

Our Meilin BITES Meilin's hand and kicks her off her.

OUR MEILIN

Jade! Reinitiate the collision!

VROOM! The ship LURCHES again!

Each of them enraged. Each wild with the agony and ecstasy of mortal combat. Meilin and Meilin fight barefist to the death.

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

JADE PLUM

Warning! Collision imminent!

Warning! Collision imminent!

Warning! Collision imminent!

And as the ship starts FLYING APART around them in the violent turbulence of the approaching gravity well...

We LOSE TRACK of which Meilin is which...

Each of them beating the other bloody.

Both screaming in primal fury...

Fighting for their lives.

For their destiny.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE COCKPIT

where a bloodied Meilin sits in the pilot's seat...
 The beautiful nebulous purple vortex of hyperspace ahead.
 And on the floor beside her...
 Trailed behind by a long streak of bloody hand prints.
 Meilin. Dead from blood loss and silent as the grave.

JADE PLUM
 We're approaching the coordinates.

MEILIN
 Take us out.

VWOOOOSH! The starlines return and shift to normal space.
 And floating in the black starry sky before them:

A MONOLITHIC RINGED SPACE STATION SPIRALS

on its axis with the cheapest form of artificial gravity.

JADE PLUM
 We're being hailed.

MEILIN
 Put it on screen.

WELCOME TO DATADYNE SPACE DOCK. TRANSMIT TRANSPONDER CODES.

MEILIN (CONT'D)
 Transmit what they want, Jade.

JADE PLUM
 Yes, Meilin Wu.

Meilin stretches out her arms... cracks her neck.

CODES ACCEPTED. FOLLOW FLIGHT PATH TO DOCKING RING.

AND HAVE A NICE DAY. :)

With a smirk, Meilin kicks her feet up onto the console...
 and rests her hands on her stomach.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END