

Akira
by
Albert Torres

Based on the Kodansha Comic by Katsuhiro Otomo

THE INFINITY OF SPACE --

A Woman's voice. Quiet. Serene. Wise.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Since the dawn of time, man has
struggled to attain **power**...

Stars glimmer in the distance as Earth comes into view --

WOMAN'S VOICE

To control it... To wield it... Or
to create it...

A break in mesosphere brings glowing noctilucent clouds
rushing by until the continents of our planet take shape.

WOMAN'S VOICE

But once even a mere taste is
acquired, the hunger for it
becomes insatiable... It becomes
narcotic. An **addiction**.

Moving closer, North America... Then closer... The United
States... New York... And finally Manhattan.

WOMAN'S VOICE

And all the lessons from the
ravenous mistakes of those who
have tried to bottle the storm
before, go forgotten. Or worse...
Ignored...

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - DAY

"The Crossroads of the World" glimmers in the daylight
with the familiar advertising assault suspended above.

WOMAN'S VOICE

...forcing the horrors of history
to simply... Repeat.

The anomaly of stillness becomes chillingly apparent.

The iconic intersection, deserted except for the gridlock
of abandoned vehicles, doors left wide open.

Steam rises from a forgotten hot dog cart. Whatever
happened... It was only a short while ago.

INT. DELI - DAY

Half-eaten plates of food populate the empty restaurant. Chairs lay toppled. The signs of a mass exodus. A television drones with the electronic buzz of the EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM. Color bars fill the screen as the serene recording of a man's voice utters:

RECORDED VOICE

This is not a test. This is a
broadcast of the Emergency Alert
System... This is not a test --

EXT. LINCOLN TUNNEL - DAY

MAYHEM. A crush of vehicles, horns blaring, and panicked PEOPLE inch into the passages beneath the Hudson River. NYPD and THE NATIONAL GUARD struggle to control the escalating panic.

EXT. WEST 41ST STREET - DAY

HOARDS OF PEOPLE head west as a CONVOY OF HUMVEES and TANKS part the crowd, heading into the city.

Amid the chaos, a MOTHER pulls along her two sons, KANEDA (12) and TETSUO (6). She shoulders through, protecting her boys against the frantic shoving.

MOTHER

Boys, don't let go of my hands. No
matter what! You hear me?

YOUNG KANEDA

What's happening? Where are we
going?

They round the corner onto 8th Avenue, coming upon the PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL where THOUSANDS OF CITIZENS have converged, everyone fighting to board a line up of TWENTY BUSES commandeered by the U.S. Military.

EXT. CANAL & BROADWAY/SUBWAY STAIRS - DAY

SOLDIERS and POLICE try to maintain order as frantic PEOPLE funnel into the subway station. Bodies are flattened against the railing as the surge presses on.

EXT. THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE - DAY

THOUSANDS OF HARRIED CITIZENS weave their way between the gridlocked cars and trucks heading off of Manhattan.

Above, four U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopters roar past, FANNING OUT IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.

BLACK HAWK'S POV -- A bottleneck of HUMANITY flows toward the bridge. Hundreds of thousands trying to escape.

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL - DAY

Kaneda and Tetsuo hold tight to their mother's hands as she presses through the CROWD, rushing alongside the lineup of buses. Her desperation grows as ANGRY CITIZENS are turned away from the overflowing buses by SOLDIERS.

Reaching the last bus, she muscles herself and the boys through the throng, squeezing between barriers. Then tries to push her family onto the packed bus only to be stopped by a SOLDIER monitoring the door.

SOLDIER #1

That's it! That's it! We're full here.

MOTHER

But this is the last bus! Please just let us on! Please!

SOLDIER #1

You're not listening, lady. There's no more room.

MOTHER

Please... Just the boys, then? They're small. Just let them on.

A flash of panic hits Kaneda as the crowd behind him becomes more frantic.

YOUNG KANEDA

No, Mom.

The Soldier steps off the bus, face to face with the Mother as the doors to the bus close behind him. Desperate, she grabs him by the wrist --

MOTHER

Please. I'm begging you.

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The moment seems to last forever...

SOLDIER

Alright.

He pounds on the bus door. It opens. And it really is impossibly full. Curses rise from the crowd.

SOLDIER

(to the driver)

I got two kids. Let's squeeze them in.

The mother drops to her knees, wrapping her arms around Tetsuo and Kaneda, both in tears now. Terrified.

YOUNG KANEDA

Mom, we can't split up. Please, don't make us leave you. Please.

MOTHER

Kaneda, there's no time to argue about this. You both have to get on this bus.

SOLDIER

Lady! Let's go!

MOTHER

There will be another bus. I'll get on it. I promise. But you have to promise me something too.

She looks in Kaneda's teary, panicked eyes. Struggles with her own resolve. Dives into the irreversible moment.

MOTHER

Promise me, you'll watch over your brother. Be brave. You're all each other have. Promise me.

YOUNG KANEDA

Please, just come with us.

MOTHER

Kaneda! Promise me.

YOUNG KANEDA

I promise.

Quick kisses and hugs before she guides them onto the bus. The stairwell is as far as they fit.

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She swallows her sorrow. Shows courage for her boys. And as the bus doors close --

MOTHER

I love you.

The bus pulls away. The brothers watch, helpless and alone as the MADDENED CROWD BREAKS THROUGH THE BARRIERS, ENGULFING THEIR MOTHER, FUTILELY CHASING THE BUS.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - DAY

Just abandoned cars. Some with engines still running.

Car stereos hum with the Emergency Alert System recording eerily mixed with others playing the latest Top-40 pop tune.

Halfway down the block, amid the stillness, a figure calmly approaches, weaving slowly between the vehicles.

Although unclear at first, it becomes quite certain the figure is A LITTLE BOY, 6 years old and alone.

The Boy stops, distracted by something to his right --

EXT. FAO SCHWARTZ - MOMENTS LATER

The Little Boy stands before the glass facade ogling an expansive Teddy Bear display. He places his hand on the window. On his palm -- A TATTOO: #28.

The sudden roar of a Black Hawk bellows from above. He looks up to see the helicopter circling. Unaffected, his gaze drops back to the coveted display.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - MOMENTS LATER

The Little Boy holds a Teddy Bear by the arm, dangling at his side as he walks down the center of the street.

A squeeze of the paw and the stuffed animal begins to sing. A nursery rhyme. "Frere Jacques." Sweet. Playful.

BLACK HAWK PILOT (O.S.)

(over radio)

Command, we have a lock on the subject's location. Northbound on Fifth Avenue approaching the intersection of 59th Street. Over.

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Behind him, the Black Hawk threads between the buildings.

INT./EXT. UH-60 BLACK HAWK HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS

A DIGITAL RIFLE SCOPE POV -- sets its site on the Little Boy, running now, dashing between the abandoned cars.

An ARMY MARKSMAN, perched at the open hull, eye pressed to the scope of his weapon, follows his elusive target.

ARMY MARKSMAN
Christ... Poor kid.

EXT. COLUMBUS CIRCLE - DAY

A PLATOON OF SOLDIERS emerge from Central Park, surrounding the towering Columbus monument.

Two fully armed Humvees speed down Central Park South, screeching to a halt behind the Platoon.

The Black Hawk circles as the Little Boy steps out from behind the tower, teddy bear gripped tight to his chest.

The first good look at the boy's face reveals soft, innocent eyes. Unafraid. He stares at the battle-ready soldiers as they all lock and load.

The PLATOON LEADER lowers his weapon, cautious.

PLATOON LEADER
Hold your fire! Hold your fire!

The Platoon Leader sets down his weapon and cautiously approaches the Little Boy, staring at his own feet.

PLATOON LEADER
It's alright, Akira... Nobody's going to hurt you, son. Just come with us... And everything will be fine.

The Little Boy looks up, HIS HAIR STANDING ON END, EMITTING A GENTLE PULSE OF STATIC ELECTRICITY as he begins to hum a slow, haunting version of "Frere Jacques." It chills to the bone.

His gaze remains stoic. Emotionless. Empty. The whites of his eyes go bloodshot, red vessels spreading beyond, webbing across his face and turning black.

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Slowly, a lone black tear-drop escapes his eye, landing with an odd pulsating splash onto the asphalt.

SUDDENLY, THE PLATOON LEADER AND SOLDIERS BEHIND HIM ARE JERKED HIGH OFF THEIR FEET, SUSPENDED IN MID-AIR. FROZEN AND FLOATING. THE HUMVEES, JOLTED OFF THE GROUND AS WELL.

The Little Boy peers at the soldiers, impassive.

INT./EXT. BUS/NEW JERSEY/ROUTE 3 - DAY

Kaneda and Tetsuo, at the back of the bus, peer through the rear window, Manhattan fading in the distance.

Kaneda wipes away his tears. Looks at his brother, sobbing hysterically. No idea how to console him.

Then reflected on the window, seemingly superimposed over the boys faces, A GIANT FIREBALL BEGINS TO RISE FROM THE CITY.

AN ARIEL VIEW OF NEW YORK CITY AS --

-- a massive fiery explosion blossoms from Columbus Circle, consuming everything, mowing down the metropolis.

A BLINDING WHITE LIGHT SCORCHES THE SCREEN AS...

Red letters fade in: **AKIRA**

The letters fade away, replaced by: 21 YEARS LATER.

The incongruent voice of a placid British ANNOUNCER:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Welcome to Neo-Manhattan... The
safest city on earth.

A VIBRANT CORPORATE VIDEO BEGINS --

A MONTAGE. Sleek. Pulsating. Utopian images of the new city.

-- Buildings blot out the sky. Elevated roads snake between the massive structures.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Where the world comes to see the
world.

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-- Different districts, each a major borough: TOKYO.
PARIS. EGYPT. NEW DELHI. MOROCCO.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
The Foundation and it's Board of
Directors have brought a new
meaning to safety and security...

-- A PUBLICITY STILL. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, eight men,
different nationalities, before THE FOUNDATION TOWER.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
...with the creation of the Sub-Q
I.D. System...

-- The NEWLY CONSTRUCTED BROOKLYN BRIDGE. The only way on
or off Neo-Manhattan.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

The video continues, now on an incandescent jungle of
GIANT HOLOGRAPHIC DISPLAYS blanketing the narrow skyline.

Beneath it all, Neo-Manhattan in all its glory.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Our now privately owned metropolis
will never again fall at the hands
of terrorism.

Hoads of PEDESTRIANS flow along the sidewalk as the
elevated roads stream with traffic.

ON THE HOLO-SCREENS -- AN ELABORATE ENTRANCE KIOSK,
IMMIGRATION. HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE passing through
checkpoints as TECHNICIANS use an injection device to
insert an almost microscopic chip into the back of each
person's hand.

The city brims with consumerism. Ads on any surface
available.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Sub-Q is your ticket to freedom.

ON THE HOLO-SCREENS -- A FOUNDATION SECURITY FORCE
(henceforth known as F.S.F.) GUARD scans a hand as a
screen flashes the image of a LITTLE GIRL and all her
vital information.

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ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Your passport to a world of
pleasure.

Vendors on every corner. Money changing hands every
second.

ON THE HOLO-SCREENS -- Various Neo-Manhattan attractions.
Fine dining. Gambling. Indoor Skiing. Jia-alai. Sumo
Wrestling. You name it... They have it.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

We are what the world could
achieve. Neo-Manhattan...

The propaganda ends with a brilliant Foundation logo then
the city slogan:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

...come see what we've become.

Suddenly, the collage of screens flash with static --

Then the face of an Japanese woman, LADY MIYAKO. Wise,
monk-like, her hair stacked like a Geisha.

Some pedestrians halt, intrigued. Others keep moving, not
interested.

LADY MIYAKO

(Japanese accent)

Citizens! The Foundation is lying
to you. They are nothing more than
a corporation. They own you, like
they own this city. We were not
victims of hate. We were not
targets of extremists and zealots.
The **hunger for profit and power** is
the villain here. No one is safe!
Ask the right questions! What
happened to Akira? Where are they
hiding him? Beware! Or one day...
Akira will rise. Don't be --

The hundreds of screens go black. Three seconds later a
cascade of advertisements blanket the different screens.
Everything back to normal.

EXT. OLD CHINATOWN/STREET - NIGHT

A ragged street, ignored by the rebuilding effort. The
brilliant city-scape glows in the background.

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Tattered neon signs flicker in front of abandoned charred storefronts. One glows brightly: THE MINOTAUR BAR.

YAMAGATA (30s), kills his motorcycle engine, heads down a set of stairs leading to the underground bar.

The low din of a TV newscast in progress:

REPORTER (V.O.)
...things are heating up in Neo-
Manhattan this evening.

Along the way he passes an odd splash of graffiti: A STENCILED TEDDY BEAR. EYES CROSSED OUT. And scrawled beneath it: AKIRA WILL RISE.

INT. MINOTAUR BAR - CONTINUOUS

Yamagata enters the narrow dump, cruising past DREGS, slugging drinks at the bar and nuzzling EASY WOMEN.

REPORTER (O.S.)
A Resistance demonstration is
brewing here outside the
Foundation Tower after, earlier
today, the city's "Ad-stream" was
hi-jacked again by the elusive and
mysterious Lady Miyako.

He stops, flagging a drink from the BARTENDER as he glances at a HOLOGRAPHIC LCD SCREEN -- A REPORTER stands near PROTESTERS assembling in a PLAZA before a massive concrete tower.

Some carry picket signs: TAGGING IS FOR ANIMALS. Other signs display the stenciled Teddy Bear.

REPORTER
The Foundation Security Force have
begun to mobilize the Riot Guard
in a effort to control the growing
protest, focusing on the usual
mandated Sub-Q ID system,
originating from The Foundation's
commitment to keep our privatized
metropolis the safest place on...

Yamagata heads to the back of the bar where a nervous, shady looking "CUSTOMER" lays his arm onto the table.

Across from him, another MAN, back to the room, lines up a laser-scalpel beneath the customer's middle knuckle.

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YAMAGATA

Yo, Kaneda --

The "Man," eyes on the task, holds up his hand, silencing Yamagata, then continues with this impromptu "surgery."

THE MAN/KANEDA

Try to hold steady.

CUSTOMER

Thought you'd done this before.

KANEDA SHIMA, now 33, finally looks up. A lot of life behind those eyes. He grins and it's clear he's all good looks, grit, charm and composure.

KANEDA

I'm not the one shaking.

Kaneda fires up the laser scalpel, emitting a pin-point of blue light. It sears a tiny incision through the skin.

KANEDA

Easy. Small price to get the "eye in the sky" off your back.

Kaneda sets the scalpel down and picks up surgical tweezers sitting beside a small electronic device. A tiny Sub-Q ID chip hovers above it in a narrow magnetic field.

KANEDA

It's not who you are... It's who they think you are that buys you opportunity in this town.

The Customer groans as Kaneda pulls his ID chip from beneath the skin of his hand. Tosses it into a glass.

KANEDA

You're about to be a whole new man. Where else in this world can you do that? It's "paradise found" here.

Then, with the tweezers, he plucks out the hovering new chip and implants it into the customers hand.

KANEDA

No more rap sheet... No more nothing. It's reincarnation time.

Kaneda grabs a can of aerosol "liquid skin," and sprays the guy's wound. Seals it.

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KANEDA

Done. Just try to lay low while
the wound heals.

Kaneda picks up the device, passing it over the
Customer's hand, scanning his new identity. A small
screen displays the Customer's face, his new name and
vitals. It reads: Doctor Yuri Olmstead.

KANEDA

What's it feel like to be
reborn... Doctor Olmstead?

The Customer digs out a roll of cash. Hands it over.

CUSTOMER

Feels expensive.

Kaneda stands. Looks at the TV -- At the protest an angry
fervor grows as the Reporter interviews a babbling
ZEALOUS PROTESTOR holding a "Teddy Bear" sign.

ZEALOUS PROTESTOR

...it's not just that. The
Foundation has been feeding us
lies since they bought and rebuilt
this place... They claim some
imaginary terrorist took down this
city... But ask them... Ask The
Foundation about the experiments!
Ask them about the children? Ask
them about Akira!

Kaneda, shakes his head, "what a waste of time."

KANEDA

Sup, Gata. Let's have a drink?

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET/PLAZA - NIGHT

HUNDREDS OF PROTESTERS chant as TOURISTS watch. DOWN THE
BLOCK -- A row of F.S.F. RIOT GUARDS hold their ground,
batons and shields at the ready.

One young woman stands out as she maneuvers through the
crowd -- KY REED, beautiful and passionate -- on her cell
phone, searching for something... Or someone.

KY

It's impossible. How am I supposed
to find them in this mess?

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The VOICE OF A MAN on the other end of the line, remains calm and reassuring -- It belongs to ANTON ELLISON.

ELLISON (V.O.)

Just relax, Ky. We need the distraction. It's why we organized the protest. Our mole will find you. Everything is going to change tonight. We'll finally have proof the experiments are real...

KY

I just don't want to make a mistake.

ELLISON (V.O.)

Relax. Lady Miyako chose you for a reason.

Ky smirks. Humble, yet knowing it's true. He hangs up. Emboldened, Ky reaches the edge of the protest. Beside her, a FAT TOURIST with a small digital camera, snaps photos of the demonstration as the crowd chants:

PROTESTORS

AH-KI-RA! AH-KI-RA! AH-KI-RA!

CAMERA FLASHES lead to an incongruous TORRENT OF IMAGES.

A NIGHTMARE -- QUICK FLASHES OF:

Abstract destruction - Tetsuo & Kaneda's Mother - Her arms reaching out, pleading as a blossoming wall of fire swallows her.

Water and blood churns - A blurred silhouette - Head at a tilt - An infant's face, screaming silently - A child's laugh - Then humming - A few notes: Was that "Frere Jacques?" - All of it leading to...

INT. MINOTAUR BAR/BACK ROOM - NIGHT

A sudden stillness. TETSUO SHIMA (27) sleeping, eyes twitching, trapped in his night terror.

BACK TO THE NIGHTMARE - A body - Falling through a void - Closer and closer - An eye, wide with pain - Red blood vessels spread - Bursting. A whisper beckons: *"Help me... Set me free."*

BACK TO TETSUO -- A gasp. Awakening. A tired, frail soul.

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He lays still, catching his breath, grimacing as he rubs his forehead, trying to will away an intense pain.

Tetsuo reaches under the bed. Pulls out an old cigar box and finds a small baggy. A faded logo stamped on it: A Harlequin diamond. Inside, one red/blue capsule.

Beneath it, sits a photo booth strip. Snapshots of TWO BOYS, 6 & 12, and their Mother, arm in arm. Everyone happy. Laughing.

He eyes the pill. Sighs, frustrated. One just won't do.

INT. MINOTAUR BAR - NIGHT

Tetsuo emerges, slightly dazed, heading for the exit. Passing the bar, an arm darts out stopping him. Startles him. Kaneda spins around. Yamagata sits beside him.

KANEDA

Whoa. Slow down, big man. How are you feeling?

TETSUO

Same as always.

KANEDA

Nightmare?

TETSUO

It's only news when I don't have one, Kaneda.

Kaneda sighs, knows it all too well. A quiet moment. A fractured bond between them.

KANEDA

Sit down? Have a drink. Eat.

TETSUO

I gotta to go.

Kaneda stands, tries to coax Tetsuo into a seat.

KANEDA

Tetsuo, relax. Where you gotta go?

Tetsuo flinches, jittery as he pulls away.

TETSUO

I said no!

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Embarrassed at his outburst, he storms off.

YAMAGATA

There he goes. The rolling stoned.

Kaneda watches, disappointed, quelling a deep guilt.

YAMAGATA

He's a big boy, you know.

Kaneda eyes Yamagata, annoyed. Grabs his drink. Downs it.

YAMAGATA

Our guy with the bits is ready to meet. In an hour. Uptown.

KANEDA

I thought that mope was coming here.

YAMAGATA

He don't trust us. Wants it all in the open this time. People and what-not. So U-Square Market Place.

KANEDA

How many times we buy chips from this guy?

YAMAGATA

Enough he shouldn't be so jumpy.

KANEDA

Call the guys. Tell them to get down here. If this dude's quivering about something, I want to make sure we're not dangling with no support.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET/PLAZA - NIGHT

Ky scans the crowd prowls, watching the F.S.F. RIOT GUARD close in, when her cell phone rings -- A desperate, panting voice hisses over the phone:

RESISTANCE MOLE (V.O.)

I have him...

KY

(euphoric)

Repeat that please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RESISTANCE MOLE (V.O.)

I have Tobias.

KY

Where are you?

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN/ALLEY - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

The RESISTANCE MOLE barrels through the alley --

RESISTANCE MOLE

Heading toward this shit-show, in front of the Foundation Tower. But they're right behind me...

KY

Who?

RESISTANCE MOLE

The Colonel's men!

KY

Keep moving. I'll find you.

He hangs up. Held tight by his hand, a small boy -- TOBIAS (9), struggles to keep up. A NYC baseball cap, shadows the child's face.

Two Rottweilers whip around a corner in pursuit.

The Mole pulls a gun, firing at the charging dogs as TWO PLAIN-CLOTHES F.S.F AGENTS take cover, firing back.

The Mole instinctively shields the boy with his own body as they round a corner, escaping for the moment.

INT./EXT. BOEING CH-47 CHINOOK HELICOPTER/SKY - NIGHT

The helicopter slices through the air. INSIDE -- A small SQUAD OF F.S.F GUARDS, clad in black battle gear, assault rifles at the ready, sit quietly as --

-- THE COLONEL (50s) steps through the cabin. A titan looking over his men. A sliver of nerves peeks through his hardened exterior. He reaches the rear of the airship and takes a seat across the aisle from what seems like a child --

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-- SEBASTIAN. Oddly clad in a three-piece-suit, short atrophied legs dangling off a motorized wheelchair, his face, concealed, staring out through a portal. His voice is small, innocent, yet etched with wisdom --

SEBASTIAN

Tobias is fragile. More than me.

THE COLONEL

I know. We'll get him back safely.

SEBASTIAN

Tell your pilot he's to the west.

EXT. MINOTAUR BAR/ALLEY - NIGHT

Tetsuo, in the bucket seat of a monster red motorcycle, fiddles with the controls, lights up the dashboard.

PUSHER (O.S.)

Nice bike.

Tetsuo turns, startled to find a greasy drug PUSHER, wielding a thick Irish accent.

TETSUO

You shouldn't sneak up on people like that.

(slides off the bike)

You could get hurt.

PUSHER

Hurt? Who'd want to hurt me? When I have so much love to give...

The Pusher produces a baggy, filled with blue & red capsules -- Street name: SLAM. Dangles it in front of Tetsuo. The Harlequin diamond logo stamped on the front.

PUSHER

Question is... How much love you got to give back?

Tetsuo peels out a few bills.

TETSUO

Just give me half of that.

PUSHER

Half? You're sporting a broad like that between your legs and all you want is half?

(MORE)

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CONTINUED:

PUSHER (CONT'D)

Buy it now, buy it later... Same thing. This is good SLAM. Pure Compound-S. What happened to the the last bag you blasted through? What was that? A day ago?

TETSUO

It's all I need now. Half a bag.

The Pusher chuckles, malicious. Then suddenly serious --

PUSHER

I don't sell halvsies.

He turns to go as Tetsuo grabs him by the jacket.

TETSUO

Wait!

The Pusher slams Tetsuo against the wall. Holds him there with a .22 handgun pressed to his chin.

PUSHER

I don't like to be touched by sick junkies. You don't even know how bad you got it. You need to accept it, son.

He holds the pills against Tetsuo's nose. Humiliating.

PUSHER

This is what you live for... Your purpose.

TETSUO

Get off me!

PUSHER

Maybe I should take your little bike for a ride while you think about how much you need what I got.

KANEDA (O.S.)

That ain't his bike.

The Pusher is YANKED OFF TETSUO, GUN RIPPED AWAY, SLAMMED FACE FIRST INTO THE WALL. He goes down. Out cold. And there's Kaneda, stripping the gun, not even winded. He turns to Tetsuo. A cold stare.

TETSUO

You didn't need to do that.

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KANEDA

You told me you were going to lay off.

TETSUO

(defiant)

I am... When I'm ready.

Kaneda picks up the bag filled with SLAM/Compound-S. Sees the Harlequin logo.

KANEDA

You know this shit comes from the Harlequins. Same guys who'd be thrilled to see me on a slab.

TETSUO

At least now we know what you're really worried about.

Kaneda shoots an icy glare, seething. Out of patience.

KANEDA

You're writing your own story here.

TETSUO

Same shit, different toilet.

(defeated, exhausted)

I've tried everything. But you're so busy riding my ass every minute, you can't see... This ain't all just my fault.

KANEDA

No. It's everybody else's. Right? Nothing's ever your fault. I'm sick of trying to keep you safe --

TETSUO

I never asked you to! I don't need you or anyone else telling me who I should be...

Kaneda fumes. Angry. Guilt-ridden. Then, turns like a switch.

KANEDA

OK. Then I'll make it right. We're done.

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CONTINUED: (3)

Tetsuo stares, puzzled, anxious. Four motorcycles rumble into the alley: Yamagata, GRIP, GOOSEY and RIFF. Kaneda's crew.

TETSUO

What do you mean we're done?

Kaneda brushes past his brother. Slides onto his bike.

KANEDA

It means I want you gone.
Permanently. Pack your bags and
find someone else to watch you
burn out. I don't give a shit
anymore.

Tetsuo, dumbfounded, disbelieving. Struggles to quell an anxiety as Kaneda fires up the bike. Yamagata meets Tetsuo's stare, empathetic.

Kaneda roars out of the alley, tail-lights leaving red and yellow glowing streaks behind. The crew follows.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET/NEAR THE PLAZA - NIGHT

The Resistance Mole, bleeding, stumbles out from an alley with Tobias, darting past a storefront filled with TVs and the same insipid commercials --

The two Rottweilers race out of the alley as the Mole and Tobias snake between the gridlock.

The F.S.F. Agents emerge, guns drawn, scanning the area.

One canine suddenly upon them, LEAPING INTO THE AIR, ATTACKING AS THE MOLE SHOOTS -- Dogs yelp.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET/PLAZA - NIGHT

Ky zips through the CROWD as she answers her cell phone.

KY

Stay there. I'm on my way.

EXT. DOWNTOWN ALLEY - NIGHT

The F.S.F Agents, pistols poised, pause before a few drops of blood.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Behind them, Ky sweeps around the corner. She ducks behind a parked car, unseen.

The Mole bolts from behind the trash bin, GUN BLAZING, Tobias in tow. FIRES BLINDLY AS THE AGENTS TAKE COVER... RETURNING FIRE.

The Mole throws himself in front of Tobias, TAKING A HAILSTORM IN THE BACK. He collapses onto the child.

Ky watches as Tobias squirms out from under the dying Mole. She gets her first good look at him. Pale and wrinkled. An old man trapped in the body of a little boy.

The F.S.F Agents step from their cover, guns leveled.

F.S.F. AGENT #1
Tobias. Don't move. You hear me?

RESISTANCE MOLE
(to Tobias)
Don't be... Afraid. Run.

In a final effort, THE MOLE FLINGS HIS GUN AROUND, getting off one shot before taking four in the chest.

Tobias, terrified, lets out AN INHUMAN SCREAM. The piercing pitch causes Ky and the F.S.F. Agents to cover their ears as WINDOWS LINING THE SURROUNDING BUILDINGS SHATTER. GLASS SHOWERS THE ALLEY.

As the shriek finally dissipates the Agents look up to discover Tobias -- Gone. Only his NYC ball cap remains.

EXT. STREETS OF NEO-MANHATTAN - NIGHT

The impossibly high city skyline looms as Kaneda and his crew roar towards the vibrant cluster of modern towers. Holographic Billboards hover amid the massive corridor selling the usual BIG TICKET AD ITEMS.

Yamagata pulls up beside Kaneda, sees his troubled gaze.

Kaneda veers up an on-ramp leading to the winding network of elevated streets. The others follow.

EXT. DOWNTOWN ALLEY - NIGHT

Ky, hidden, afraid to move as F.S.F. Agent #2 rifles through the dead Operative's clothes. Finds his cell phone, smeared with blood. Scrolls to recent calls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

F.S.F. AGENT #1
We gotta find him. Now... Hit that
last number.

He does. Ky's phone starts to ring. She silences it. Then
as she slowly peeks out from behind the car SHE'S
ASSAULTED BY A SPRAY OF GUNFIRE. SHE RUNS.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET/PLAZA - CONTINUOUS

Ky pushes through the CROWDED street, the two F.S.F.
Agents close behind, trying to get a clear shot through
the masses.

She pulls her cell phone, punches in a text, then drops
it to the ground ahead of her, smashing it with her boot,
mid-stride.

Reaching THE PLAZA, the demonstration is at a fevered
pitch. Ky charges toward a line of F.S.F. RIOT GUARDS,
their backs to her as they move on the protest. She pokes
one of them. As he whips around --

KY
Arrest me!

Ky looks over her shoulder, sees the Agents approaching --

F.S.F. GUARD
What are you talking about, lady?
Get out of here!

Ky, exasperated, SHUTTLES A FIST TO THE GUARD'S JAW.
She's swarmed by THREE OTHER RIOT GUARDS, pulling her
away. The Agents watch as she's thrown into a Paddy
Wagon.

F.S.F. AGENT #1
Let her go. We need the kid.

EXT. U-SQUARE MARKETPLACE - NIGHT

Bustling. An old world collision of cultures. Stalls with
everything for sale. Food. Merchandise. Livestock.

Amid the SHOPPERS Kaneda and Yamagata scan the area.
Grip, Riff and Goosey stand on guard along the perimeter.

YAMAGATA
You didn't mean that, back there,
with your brother, did you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KANEDA

Yeah. I did. You want to be his
mother for a while, have at it...

Yamagata stares, knows it's a lost cause.

KANEDA

Where is this slag?

Kaneda's gaze settles on a nervous looking fellow --
LONNIE. A small metal container tucked under his arm.

KANEDA

Lonnie. Why the cloak and dagger?

LONNIE

It's nothing. Just you don't
exactly live on the right side of
the tracks. Makes me nervous.

YAMAGATA

You've been there about a hundred
times, dumb-shit. What makes today
so special?

YAMAGATA

Look, I've been getting a funny
feeling. Like I'm being watched.

KANEDA

Watched by who?

LONNIE

I don't know. It's just a feeling.
So let's just get this over with.

Kaneda pulls an envelope from his jacket, cash inside.
Lonnie grabs it, then hands Yamagata the metal container.

LONNIE

That's seventy-five blank chips.
Like I promised. But that's it...
For a while at least.

He flips through the money as THE ROAR OF TWO ENGINES
suddenly echo through the marketplace.

Kaneda and Yamagata turn, spotting two motorcycles
barreling through, SHOPPERS diving out of the way.

Panicked, Lonnie runs. The first motorcycle barrels
toward Kaneda and Yamagata when --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

-- a YOUNG GIRL steps in its path. Kaneda spots her, dashes forward, snags her by the collar and WHIPS HER AWAY FROM THE CHARGING BIKE'S PATH, LIKE A MATADOR.

The driver: TREAD-FACE, Harlequin diamonds painted across his eyes, sneers as he races by.

Riff, Goosey and Grip run toward the exit of the marketplace.

On the second bike, another HARLEQUIN (#1), sporting a jester tattoo over one eye, roars past, SNATCHING THE CONTAINER from Yamagata. Stuffs it into his bike satchel.

With the girl safe, Kaneda sprints after the motorcycles.

Tread-Face bears down on Lonnie. Grabs him by the wrist, DRAGGING HIM ALONG SIDE THE BIKE as he swiftly snatches the money envelope then lets him go, wildly tumbling behind.

Goosey reaches the exit, WHIPPING OPEN A RETRACTABLE STEEL BATON just as Tread-Face and his Thug are about to race through the gateway.

Goosey swings as Tread-face ducks, flattening out, unscathed. But Harlequin #1, not so much. He swings again, SMASHING HIS FACE, KNOCKING HIM OFF HIS BIKE.

Kaneda leaps over the unconscious Harlequin. His riderless motorcycle careens into a food stall.

Tread-Face plows through the exit just as Kaneda arrives, LEAPING ONTO HIS WAITING BIKE. The rest of his crew, right behind him --

EXT. U-SQUARE MARKETPLACE/ELEVATED ROADWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tread-Face races away from the marketplace, revealing the amazing reality -- THE PLACE IS ALL ON THE ROOFTOP OF A 200 STORY SKYSCRAPER.

Tread-Face weaves through traffic, then cuts a sharp right onto a vast DESCENDING SPIRAL ON-RAMP, teaming with one-way oncoming traffic. Kaneda and crew follow, peeling down the wide spiral, only inches to spare between cars as they circle down closer to the "street level."

YAMAGATA

Kaneda! If he hits the grid, he's
a ghost! We'll never catch him!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An intense resolve hits Kaneda as he accelerates,
LAUNCHING HIMSELF OVER THE RAILING OF THE ROADWAY, a
death-defying leap, landing him on --

-- THE STREET LEVEL. He slides the bike into a long,
smoking skid. No problem.

EXT. ELEVATED ROADWAY/STREET LEVEL ON-RAMP - CONTINUOUS

Tread-Face speeds off the roadway, melding into the
street traffic. Behind him Yamagata, Grip, Riff and
Goosey gun it, trying to narrow the gap when suddenly --

-- they are swarmed by SIX MORE HARLEQUINS (#2 thru #7)
merging into the fray. Bikes grind, weave and teeter as
the thugs run their defense. It's 100 MPH gauntlet.

GOOSEY FLINGS HIS STEEL BATON INTO #2'S SPOKES.

THE BIKE FLIPS, sending the thug onto the asphalt in
Grip's path, who just RUNS OVER THE THUGS ARM as Police
sirens wail.

F.S.F. DISPATCHER (V.O.)
All units. Code 23 on the grid,
N.E. of U-Square Marketplace.
Suspects unknown.

EXT. ELEVATED ROADWAY - NIGHT

An F.S.F. Guard Cruiser fires up its lights as it speeds
past the flow of traffic.

F.S.F. GUARD
10-4. Unit 61. In the vicinity. On
our way.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET - NIGHT

Kaneda rumbles into Tread-Face's sights. A deadly game of
"chicken" in the works.

Tread-Face sneers. The motorcycles race toward each
other, about to collide, when Tread-Face "chickens out,"
swerving off onto a busy sidewalk. He skids to a halt as
KANEDA BURNS RUBBER, SLIDING SIDEWAYS. A CONTROLLED STOP.

The next instant -- Harlequins and his own crew -- are
upon him. Leading the pack, HARLEQUIN #3 hit his brakes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His front tire locks up, launching him forward and
SENDING THE BIKE INTO A DEADLY TUMBLE.

At the last possible moment, Kaneda gracefully tilts his
bike flat on its side, splays his body low and watches
THE ROGUE MOTORCYCLE TUMBLE OVER HIM. IT'S BREATHTAKING.

The rest of the Harlequins zip past as Tread-Face loops
his bike into a NARROW ALLEY. Harlequins #4 & #5 follow
Tread-Face as #6 & #7 charging down the street --

Yamagata and Grip skid to a halt beside Kaneda while Riff
and Goosey follow #6 & #7. Police sirens howl.

GRIP

You OK?

KANEDA

I'm fine. Just go! We're going to
lose them!

Suddenly, another motorcycle roars out from an
intersecting street. Races past in a blur --

GRIP

Who was that?

KANEDA

My brother!

Tetsuo rides with a reckless abandon, speeding into the --

INT. NARROW ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Tetsuo threads the needle, pummeling through trash cans
and debris as he sets his sights on the Harlequins ahead.

KANEDA (O.S.)

(on com-link)

Tetsuo! Goddamn it! What are you
doing?

Kaneda, Yamagata and Grip dodge rubble in Tetsuo's wake.

TETSUO

I'm part of this crew too!

KANEDA

You're going to get yourself
killed!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tetsuo, pulls out his com-link and tosses it as Yamagata and Grip charge ahead of Kaneda.

YAMAGATA

Don't worry, guv. We'll slow him down. You stay on Tread-Face.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Tread-Face and Harlequins #4 & #5 explode out of the NARROW ALLEY, skidding to a stop on either side as one pulls out a coiled razor-thin wire.

He tosses an end to the other Harlequin as Tetsuo hurtles out of the alley JUST UNDER THE WIRE. It goes taught as he clears it.

EXT. NARROW ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

From behind his crew, Kaneda catches sight of the wire, glistening from a street light for a brief moment --

KANEDA

Yamagata! Get down!

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

YAMAGATA THROWS HIS BIKE INTO A SKID. It slips out from underneath him as he slides out of the alley.

Grip's reflexes aren't so fast. HE SLAMS INTO THE WIRE.

KANEDA

No!

Grip's bike hurtles wildly, his helmet rolling away.

KANEDA

Gata! You alright?

Yamagata staggers to his feet, watches as the two Harlequins take off after Kaneda, bolting from the alley.

YAMAGATA

I'm fine. But Tetsuo --

KANEDA

I'm going after the money.

Yamagata watches him disappear into the city, troubled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kaneda guns it, eyes narrow, vengeful.

FURTHER AHEAD ON THE STREET --

Tetsuo gains on Tread-Face, both rounding a sharp corner.

BACK WITH KANEDA --

The two Harlequins ride up, sandwiching him. Kaneda makes quick work of #4, grinds him head-on into a Pepsi truck.

Kaneda and #5 hit a corner, only Kaneda goes wide, bumping his foe, sending him wobbling out of control...

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

A COUPLE sit at a plate-glass window booth when suddenly #5 AND HIS BIKE SHATTER THROUGH, CRASHING ATOP THE TABLE.

EXT. RED LIGHT DISTRICT - NIGHT

Tread-Face peels onto the street, Tetsuo on his tail.

TOURISTS dive out of the way as Tread-face zips past the glowing windows with BIKINI-CLAD GIRLS on display.

Tetsuo closes in when Tread-Face throws his bike into a controlled skid, a sharp turn as he rumbles into a --

INT. BROTHEL/FOYER - CONTINUOUS

A MADAM screams, nearly rundown as Tread-Face thunders up a staircase, RIPPING APART THE HAND RAILING --

EXT. BROTHEL - NIGHT

Tetsuo stops, uncertain, giving Kaneda time to catch up, skidding to a stop.

KANEDA

Have you lost your mind?! Get out
of here! Or I'm going to run you
off myself!

And Kaneda's gone again, speeding into --

INT. BROTHEL/FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Kaneda opts for the first floor hallway instead of the staircase, his monster of a bike barely fitting --

INT. BROTHEL/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

LADIES and MALE PATRONS dive out of the way as Tread-Face rages down the narrow corridor --

EXT. BROTHEL - NIGHT

Frustrated, Tetsuo cuts down a near-by alley.

INT. BROTHEL/DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kaneda jams the breaks as a LADY steps out from an open doorway. HE FISHTAILS THE BIKE INTO THE WALL, PULVERIZING THE PLASTER AND WOOD as he grinds past, barely missing her... Then quickly regains momentum.

INT. BROTHEL/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tread-Face crashes through a door as a half dressed PROSTITUTE and PATRON dive out of the way. He tears through, crashing through a picture window and onto --

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Tread-Face lands gracefully, speeding away as Tetsuo hurls from the alley right behind him.

Kaneda bursts through the back door, following --

Tread-Face spots a roadblocked on-ramp leading onto the elevated streets. HE EXPLODES THROUGH THE BARRIER, disappearing into the night.

Tetsuo stops at the roadblock, breathless and troubled at the darkness ahead. His hesitation vanishes as he spots Kaneda, speeding toward him... He guns it up the deserted roadway.

EXT. DESERTED ELEVATED ROADWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tetsuo winds up the twisting road, Kaneda thundering behind him, narrowing the gap.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tetsuo sees Tread-Face's taillight vanish around a bend.

TETSUO

Damn it!

He revs his engine, giving it all he's got. A blur of motion.

He glances over his shoulder, sees Kaneda gaining ground... When suddenly as if dropped from the sky --

-- TOBIAS, THE LITTLE BOY, APPEARS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD. Caught in Tetsuo's headlight, he freezes.

Tetsuo brakes. But the momentum is too great. Utter terror fills his eyes. This is the moment of his death.

TIME SEEMS TO STAND STILL as Tobias defensively holds out his hands, giving a clear view of THE NUMBER 26 tattooed on his right palm --

HE EMITS MASSIVE PULSE OF GLOWING TELEKINETIC ENERGY.

Kaneda, skids to a stop, horrified as Tetsuo's bike is incinerated by the radiating sphere of power.

He watches stunned by the sight of TETSUO MIRACULOUSLY PULLED BACK OFF THE BIKE A SPLIT-SECOND BEFORE THE COLLISION -- like he's been tethered to a rope.

He hovers above Tobias' pulse of energy for an impossible suspended moment, then tumbles over the little boy, crashing onto the asphalt in an unconscious heap.

Kaneda peels around A MASSIVE CHARRED CRATER IN THE ASPHALT, toward his brother. He screeches to a halt, running to Tetsuo, bloodied and battered.

KANEDA

Tetsuo!

Kaneda drops, almost too scared to touch him when --

TOBIAS (O.S.)

I...

Kaneda turns to face Tobias and is awestruck at the sight: An old man's face etched onto the body of a child. Tobias trembles. Terrified. In a near trance-like state.

KANEDA

What did you do to my brother?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Suddenly, from above AN UNEARTHLY LIGHT WASHES OVER THEM. Dream-like. Luminescent. A vacuum of silence. Except for a crisp voice. Like from nowhere.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)

Don't run.

Tobias, looks up into the light, dazed as his eyes settle on the surreal sight of Sebastian, the boy from the Chinook Helicopter, in his wheelchair, HOVERING. Descending onto the scene.

His face, cracked with age, yet more robust, even pudgy.

SEBASTIAN

We're here to take you back with us.

Tobias looks on, helpless and afraid --

SEBASTIAN

You know we can't survive outside... We all belong at home.

Tobias collapses, overwhelmed with the thunder of TWO CHINOOKS LANDING.

INT. BOEING CH-47 CHINOOK HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS

The Colonel stands before the rotorcraft's side cargo door as it lowers. The F.S.F. Guards storm out past him --

EXT. DESERTED ELEVATED ROADWAY - CONTINUOUS

Guards fan out from both copters, rushing Kaneda, rifles poised as three F.S.F. Cruisers screech to halt.

F.S.F. GUARD

Down on the ground! Now!

KANEDA

What's going on? My brother's hurt! We need help!

Kaneda is kicked down, face pressed to the asphalt and handcuffed as he watches The Colonel descend the gangway. Their eyes meet. Kaneda, angry. The Colonel, apathetic.

KANEDA

Let me up! You've got to help him!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Two other Guards rush to Tobias, towing a gurney.

THE COLONEL

Don't touch him.

The Colonel scoops him into his arms as Tobias slowly regains consciousness. He brushes the hair from Tobias' eyes. A gentle, fatherly gesture.

TOBIAS

I'm sorry. He said he could show me the outside. I wanted to see...

THE COLONEL

It's OK. Everything is fine now.

Tobias shakes his head. Whispers. The Colonel pauses. His eyes dart to Tetsuo, still laying in a heap.

THE COLONEL

You're certain?

Tobias nods. The Colonel eyes Tetsuo. A snap decision --

THE COLONEL

Bring the injured one as well.
Make this mess in the road
disappear.

(eyes on Kaneda)

And make sure that one never sees
daylight again.

F.S.F. Guards load Tetsuo aboard the Chinook. The Colonel follows, cradling Tobias, ignoring Kaneda's pleas.

KANEDA

Wait! Where are you taking him?

Kaneda is pulled to his feet as another Guard loads his motorcycle into the rear cargo hold of the Chinook.

The entire Squad of F.S.F. retreats into the Chinook, the rotor wash choking Kaneda as it lifts off.

He watches, desperate, the copter swallowed by the night as a PAIR OF GUARDS shove him into a cruiser.

INT./EXT. BOEING CH-47 CHINOOK HELICOPTER/SKY - NIGHT

Sebastian, in his wheelchair beside Tobias, now strapped into a seat. Tetsuo lays, unconscious, across from them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEBASTIAN

Why did you save the boy?

TOBIAS

I didn't.... He saved himself.

INT. FOUNDATION SECURITY FORCE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

A Sub-Q ID scanner passes over Kaneda's hand.

KANEDA

I'm telling you the truth. My
brother's been kidnapped!

A monitor displays a mug shot of Kaneda. His stats and a long rap sheet scroll by beside it. Flashing red letters read: PRIORITY. WANTED.

F.S.F. GUARD

Looks like you're in for the long
haul. You've been red flagged.

INT. F.S.F. HEADQUARTERS/HOLDING CELLS - NIGHT

Two large cells divided by gender. Both packed with unruly PROTESTERS. The two F.S.F Guards shove Kaneda into the cell.

KANEDA

I have to find my brother! Just
listen to me! I know what I saw!

F.S.F. GUARD

Sure thing, kid. Little boy... Old
man's face... Magical powers.

The Guards share a chuckle as they walk away.

IN THE ADJACENT CELL -- Ky spots Kaneda.

KY

Hey.

Kaneda paces, unaware she's calling to him.

KY

Where did you see the boy?

He stops. Looks. Struck by her beauty. And she knows it. She smiles, alluring. It works every time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KY

I saw him too.

Kaneda stares. Cautious. Stepping closer.

KANEDA

That little boy, whatever he was,
almost killed my brother. And then
they took him.

KY

Who took him?

KANEDA

I just have to get out of here and
find him.

KY

I can help you. This information
is more valuable than you can
imagine --

KANEDA

Valuable?

KY

To Lady Miyako. It'll prove to the
world the experiments are
happening. That those kids exist.
And that Akira was real.

KANEDA

You gotta to be kidding me. Akira?
You actually believe that kid blew
this city up 20 years ago?

KY

That's what all this is about. The
Foundation has lied for years
about that day. And now your
brother might be a part --

KANEDA

My brother is not part of
anything.

KY

Then why do you think you're
sitting behind bars now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KANEDA

Well, obviously so we could tell
our children about the hilarious
way we met.

KY

You don't understand... The
Foundation will let you rot in a
jail cell for what you've seen.

KANEDA

So I should trust you? We're both
behind bars, honey.

Kaneda walks away, pressing through the crowded cell.

KY

Wait! Come back!

He settles onto a bench, calculating his next move --

INT./EXT. BOEING CH-47 CHINOOK/PRIVATE CABIN - NIGHT

The Colonel sits alone before a large video conference
screen, split into eight windows, broadcasting from --

INT. THE FOUNDATION BOARD ROOM - INTERCUT

The FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS (the men from the
opening tourism video) surround a large table.

A holo-screen hovers before them. A meeting in progress
as the JAPANESE DIRECTOR chastises The Colonel in
Japanese. Both understand the other's language.

JAPANESE DIRECTOR

(subtitled)

*Do you have any idea what would
have happened if Miyako and her
people had succeeded in getting a
hold of that little creature?*

BRITISH DIRECTOR

Everything we've been planning
would have been exposed.

THE COLONEL

Which is why the situation was
quickly contained.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAPANESE DIRECTOR

*Contained? We nearly had another
Akira incident on our hands.*

THE COLONEL

Not by a long margin. The children
currently in the Esper Program do
not possess the ability, nor the
malice of Akira.

JAPANESE DIRECTOR

(an accusation)

Well, you would know.

The Colonel peers at the Japanese Director. An icy stare.

THE COLONEL

My history is no secret, Director.
I accepted the blame forced onto
me when we lost control of Akira.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

Gentlemen, please... Do we know
how the breach occurred?

THE COLONEL

Someone inside the facility gained
the child's trust. A Resistance
mole. He's been... Contained as
well.

JAPANESE DIRECTOR

*This entire program has been your
responsibility from day one. Even
before our time. It's why we hired
you. And while you continue to
play nurse maid to those little
specimens, you've allowed Lady
Miyako to run rampant, undermining
The Foundation. Making us look
like fools.*

THE COLONEL

They're children. Not specimens.
And they're servants to all of you
and this city.

JAPANESE DIRECTOR

*We are a business, Colonel. Not a
city. You should know that by now.*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAPANESE DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

And the only reason we've allowed those "children" to exist is because their ability to foresee financial futures makes them profitable.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

More importantly, we've let you continue your experiments because our expansion agenda depends on finding a subject powerful enough to serve as our ultimate weapon.

JAPANESE DIRECTOR

A threat that will force the world to bend to our will.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

Colonel, we've been extremely patient. And now The Resistance has become too volatile. We're ready to take over the U.S. It's the reason we bought and rebuilt Neo-Manhattan. There are 400 million Americans ready to be infiltrated. A nation of consumers, hungry to find comfort from the disarray and terror of their world by spending money in ours. This property is our flagship. And it's time to set sail.

THE COLONEL

I couldn't agree more. And as of this evening, I have reason to believe fate has turned our way.

JAPANESE DIRECTOR

What are you talking about?

THE COLONEL

I have another subject... You may have your ultimate weapon after all.

INT./EXT. BOEING CH-47 CHINOOK/SKY - CONTINUOUS

The blip of an EKG. Tetsuo still on the gurney. Unconscious. Deep in Rapid-Eye-Movement as another TORRENT OF IMAGES & SOUND HITS --

TETSUO'S NIGHTMARE --

Abstract destruction - A world turned to molecules -
Atoms - Protons - Some morph into blue/red pills -
Compound-S/"SLAM."

A crush of flames - A child's laughter - Blood seeping
and churning into water - Black blood vessels spreading
across an eye - A blurred silhouette of a child - The
slow humming: "Frere Jacques." Haunting.

Tetsuo falling AWAY in a black void. Face up. A harsh
whisper calls out: "Tetsuo."

EXT. GOLD TOWER MILITARY BASE - DAWN

The sunrise glistens off the brilliant tower, one of the
highest peaks in the city.

INT. GOLD TOWER MILITARY BASE/LAB - DAWN

A syringe needle plunges into flesh as a glass vial
floods with freshly drawn blood.

A finger pulls back the eyelid of an unconscious eye. A
light shines into it. No dilation.

MOMENTS LATER -- Tetsuo lays behind an enclosed glass
chamber, THE GIANT RING OF A CT SCANNER PASSING OVER HIM.
TECHNICIANS track results before a bank of computers as
one MED-TECH stares, awed and confused --

MED-TECH

Doctor Adiga?

DOCTOR PRADEEP ADIGA steps to the bank of computers.

MED-TECH

I don't know what to make of this.

The Tech calls up a split screen on a large monitor. On
one half, the image shows Tetsuo's bones shattered.

MED-TECH

This scan is from three hours ago.

The other shows almost all the bones have fused together.

MED-TECH

This is now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dumbfounded, Adiga peers at Tetsuo in the glass chamber.

DOCTOR ADIGA
Get The Colonel down here now.

INT. HOLDING CELLS - DAY

Ky spots an F.S.F. GUARD entering the corridor. Their eyes meet as he glides by. Knowing stares from both.

F.S.F. GUARD
Kaneda Shima.

Kaneda steps to the bars between them. Ky peers. Puzzled.

KANEDA
Am I getting out of here?

F.S.F. GUARD
As a matter of fact, you are.
Someone very important wants to
meet you.

The Guard pulls out a pen. Shows Kaneda.

F.S.F. GUARD
Do you know what this is?

KANEDA
A pen?

The Guard shrugs. Smiles. Blase'.

F.S.F. GUARD
I had a guy make it special. You
better get down.

The Guard turns and crouches down, taking cover as Ky, realizing what's about to happen, yells, panicked.

KY
Ellison! No!

ANTON ELLISON/F.S.F Guard clicks the pen, causing the far wall of the cells TO EXPLODE, BLOWING A MASSIVE GAPING HOLE IN THE BUILDING.

Dust and rubble fill the air. A mass exodus follows. Those not downed by the explosion cascade out of the building. Among them, Kaneda bursts out onto the street.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLISON/F.S.F. GUARD

Kaneda! Wait!

Kaneda bolts as Ellison sprints down the corridor, the INTACT JAIL BARS preventing him from giving chase --

ELLISON

Don't let him get away, Ky!

Ky, recovering from the blast, charges after Kaneda.

EXT. F.S.F. HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Kaneda slips through the chaos. CRIMINALS, F.S.F GUARDS, CIVILIAN BYSTANDERS. Impossible to tell who's who. Ky spots him and follows.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Kaneda slides into a SEEDY BAR. Ky follows him in.

INT. SEEDY BAR (THE UMLAUT) - CONTINUOUS

Dark, CROWDED and loud. Ky spots Kaneda slipping down a rear hallway, when a DRUNK GUY whips out in front of her.

DRUNK GUY

What's your hurry, honey? Let me --

With eyes still on Kaneda, KY FLIPS THE DRUNK, SLAMMING HIM TO THE GROUND. She presses through, watching Kaneda disappear into a --

INT. SEEDY BAR/STORAGE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ky slips into the dark, cramped room, lined with kegs. Listens to the silence when suddenly --

Kaneda darts out from the darkness, quickly subduing Ky by the wrist, twisting her arm behind her.

KANEDA

I don't want anything to do with your cause.

She breaks free, UNLEASHING AN ASSAULT OF FLYING FISTS. KANEDA BLOCKS PUNCH AFTER PUNCH, finally snatching her wrist, pinning her to the wall. His other hand to her throat, holding her in place.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KY

(struggling)

Let me go. I'm telling you, we can help you, if you just --

KANEDA

I don't need your help.

A GUN IS PRESSED TO KANEDA'S HEAD. Ellison on the trigger end.

ELLISON

Come with us... And we'll tell you everything you need to know to find your brother.

KANEDA

That's sweet. Your boyfriend coming to the rescue.

KY

That's not my boyfriend. And I'm not the one with the gun to my head. So who needs rescuing now?

Kaneda steels himself. Calls their bluff.

KANEDA

Tell me where my brother is or I'll crush her throat.

ELLISON

What do you think, Ky? It's your neck.

KY

Don't tell him shit.

ELLISON

(cocks the gun)

Not sure I agree, breathing being so important and all. You need to come with us. You're drowning and you don't even know it.

KANEDA

So your plan now is to shoot me in the head to get me to go with you. Sounds like you haven't really thought it through --

A BLUR OF MOTION AS KANEDA DISARMS ELLISON, FLIPPING HIM ONTO THE FLOOR AND LEVELING THE GUN AT HIS FACE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KANEDA

Now who's in over their head?

ELLISON

You're really making this difficult. Your brother is in danger. And you're wasting time.

KANEDA

Tell me where he is.

Ellison's cell phone chirps from his coat pocket.

ELLISON

My guess is that's for you. You want to get your brother back? Answer it.

Kaneda thinks, cautious. Then, keeping them at gun point, he pulls the cell phone from Ellison's pocket. He answers. Hears a Woman's voice. Quiet. Serene. Wise. --

WOMAN'S VOICE

Seems Mr. Ellison underestimated you.

KANEDA

Who is this?

WOMAN'S VOICE

Your brother needs you now, more than ever, Kaneda.

KANEDA

Tell me where he is or I'll shoot your people right here.

WOMAN'S VOICE

No, you won't, Kaneda. You need to know, your brother's addiction was not a weakness or a mistake... It was a plan.

(pause)

Part of a conspiracy by The Foundation. A sanctioned drug trade.

FLASH TO -- The British Director signing a requisition document, handing it to a mysterious MAN IN A WHITE SUIT.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WOMAN'S VOICE

The Foundation has been
infiltrating the people of this
city with a substance known as
Compound-S. You know it as SLAM.

FLASH TO -- A lab. TECHNICIANS man an assembly line.
SLAM/Compound-S pills poured into small boxes and sealed.
The Man in White observes.

WOMAN'S VOICE

They manufacture it. Then supply
it to a network of criminals who
unwittingly peddle it for profit,
not knowing the truth.

FLASH TO -- An alley. The Man in White stands beside a
car trunk. QUICK CUTS as he hands box after box of
SLAM/Compound-S to A SERIES OF DRUG DEALERS ending
finally on -- TREAD-FACE.

KANEDA

What truth?

WOMAN'S VOICE

That the drug's purpose is to
discover rare people like your
brother. People with the gift.

KANEDA

My brother's a junkie.

WOMAN'S VOICE

There's a power in him greater
than you can imagine. A dormant
gene. The Foundation is mining for
it as we speak. Compound-S matures
it. And if we don't get to him,
they'll turn him into a weapon to
take control of the U.S. and turn
it all into a place just like
this.

KANEDA

(scoffs)

I better get back to the office
then. My business will be booming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

WOMAN'S VOICE

You may chose not to believe any
of this, but one day you may
wonder: "Would my brother still be
alive if I had listened?" I
wouldn't wish that on anyone.

The Woman hangs up. Kaneda stares at Ellison. A decision
in the works.

KY

What did she say?

KANEDA

She said she thinks this guy is
too old for you.

And with that, he fades into the shadows. Gone.

INT. LAB - NIGHT

The Colonel and Doctor Adiga peer at Tetsuo through a
window leading to an OBSERVATION ROOM.

DOCTOR ADIGA

The subject does possess the gene.
Dormant, like it was in the
others, before we introduced
Compound-S.

THE COLONEL

That's how he saved himself from
being killed during the accident.

DOCTOR ADIGA

Yes. His adrenaline flashed the
dormant gene. It became active for
a moment. And he controlled its
power. Although he most likely had
no idea he was doing it.

THE COLONEL

I knew Tobias would be right. The
children are always right.

Doctor Adiga, suddenly fidgety, taps a keyboard --

DOCTOR ADIGA

There's something you need to see
before we move forward, however.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Two monitors flash with separate ALMOST IDENTICAL images of TWO DOUBLE-HELIX DNA STRANDS.

DOCTOR ADIGA

The one on the left belongs to,
Tetsuo. The one on the right --

THE COLONEL

-- is Akira's. I know.

DOCTOR ADIGA

Yes. They're almost identical.

Adiga, surprised, notices TWO MED-TECHS enter the observation room and begin prepping Tetsuo with IV bottles, EACH FILLED WITH A THICK BLACK FLUID.

DOCTOR ADIGA

What's going on? I need to run more tests before we give him any concentrated doses of Compound-S. He may not be able to handle it.

THE COLONEL

He has SLAM coursing through his veins already. He can handle it.

Adiga looks to The Colonel, troubled.

DOCTOR ADIGA

Our Compound-S is twenty times as potent as SLAM is. It's like comparing an aspirin to morphine. You can't introduce a dose of this size so quickly. We're trying to create a dependency, to control him, not poison the boy. The process must be gradual or --

THE COLONEL

This is not a debate... Fate is finally offering me an opportunity to prove Akira was not my fault. So do as I say. If something goes wrong you can blame me. I'm quite used to being the scapegoat.

The Colonel's cell phone rings. He answers. Listens, becoming indignant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE COLONEL

He escaped? How? Do you have any
idea what he saw? Find him... Do
whatever you have to do. Now.

EXT. DESERTED ELEVATED ROADWAY - DAWN

Kaneda walks toward the scene of Tetsuo's accident. He
comes to a stop realizing --

-- THE CHARRED CRATER IN THE ROAD IS GONE. A patch of
fresh asphalt in its place. Baffled, he runs his finger
along the ground. Still viscous, damp.

He pulls out Ellison's phone, scrolling through the
numbers ready to make a call, when it RINGS. He answers.

KANEDA

Explain what I'm looking at.

WOMAN'S VOICE

It's all too easy, isn't it. Like
nothing ever happened.

KANEDA

There's not even a tire mark left.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Look around you, Kaneda.

Kaneda notices numerous F.S.F. HELICOPTERS PEPPERING THE
GOLDEN SKYLINE, above the looming towers surrounding him.

WOMAN'S VOICE

You make a business of helping
people hide in plain sight. But do
you really know who we're all
hiding from? The Foundation took
your brother. I know you've tried
to watch over him since your
mother died...

Kaneda tenses, feeling invaded. Suppressing anger.

KANEDA

How do you know about that?

WOMAN'S VOICE

The promise you made was so much
to ask of you. To look after your
younger brother when you were only
a boy yourself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kaneda's stunned. Disconcerted. Vulnerable. A crack in his doubt.

WOMAN'S VOICE

But Tetsuo's path is not your fault. And while you feel otherwise, you have not failed him. He tried to be everything you wanted. Your love means everything to him. He needs you more now than ever before.

KANEDA

How can you know all this? How I feel? How my brother feels?

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - INTERCUT

Tetsuo lays still, heart rate steady as the Compound-S infusion begins, the black fluid draining into the IV.

WOMAN'S VOICE

I know because I have felt what he feels...

Tetsuo's veins, throb as the drug flows through his arm. His heart rate rises. The Colonel and Doctor Adiga watch.

WOMAN'S VOICE

His pain... His dreams... I know what they mean... I know the confusion and the fear...

As the second IV bottle begins to drain, Tetsuo's muscles begin to contract. Short spasms, then more intensely.

WOMAN'S VOICE

I know because I feel it too.

The remaining fluid in the second IV bottle begins to boil, small bubbles giving way to a rapid roiling. Tetsuo's heart rate climbing 200...220...240...

WOMAN'S VOICE

And this may be your last opportunity to reason with him.

Doctor Adiga reaches for the computer console, intending to stop this, only to have The Colonel grab his wrist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN'S VOICE

And to stop The Foundation from
creating another Akira.

Tetsuo's hair stands on end, emits a pulse of
electricity.

WOMAN'S VOICE

You're his only hope...

A JOLT OF ENERGY SHOOTS FROM TETSUO, shattering the IV
bottle as his body begins violent convulsions. His heart
rate passing 300. The Colonel watches stoically.

FINALLY THE ROOM'S LIGHT FIXTURES SHATTER, GLASS RAINING
DOWN ON TETSUO AS THE IV REGULATOR BLOWS, A SHOWER OF
SPARKS BLANKETING THE ROOM.

Then all is quiet. The Colonel and Adiga, think the worst
until the heart monitor beeps. Slow and steady. 60 bpm.

The Colonel's eyes narrow. Hunger in his gaze.

EXT. DESERTED ELEVATED ROADWAY - DAWN

Kaneda, still on the phone, rattled by her insight. The
weight of her words heavy on his soul --

WOMAN'S VOICE

You're all he has to hold onto in
this world.

KANEDA

That's never been enough for him.

WOMAN'S VOICE

But it can be once you understand
his burden... His purpose.

KANEDA

His burden? We were both left
alone that day.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Yes. But your strength gave him
permission to be weak.

The notion sobers him. Quells his angst. But only until
the woman's voice grows slightly urgent --

WOMAN'S VOICE

Kaneda... We've run out of time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KANEDA

What are you talking about? Why?

WOMAN'S VOICE

Remember, you must remain
vigilant. You're still a fugitive.
And The Foundation have no idea
the storm they are about to
unleash --

A CRUSH OF WIND AND THE ROAR OF AN ENGINE ENCOMPASS
KANEDA as an F.S.F. Helicopter rises from beneath the
elevated roadway.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(over the roar)

Ask yourself, where would Tetsuo
go if he were free! Go there!

Kaneda sprints DOWN the way he came, spotting TWO FAST
APPROACHING F.S.F. CRUSIERS. Kaneda RACES BACK UP THE
ROADWAY AS THE COPTER BEARS DOWN ON HIM.

With the Cruisers closing in, he slides to a stop,
reaching A GAPING CHASM IN THE ROAD BEFORE HIM, a gorge
between two fractured sections of road.

Below, an ELEVATED MONORAIL TRACK and SUDDENLY A TRAIN
SCREAMING BY. With no other choice --

HE JUMPS. Lands hard, tumbling along the train roof until
HE SLIPS OFF THE SIDE, PERILOUSLY DANGLING FROM THE EDGE.

He heaves himself back on top of the speeding Monorail
car as THE F.S.F. HELICOPTER DESCENDS RIGHT BESIDE IT.

PASSENGERS gawk. But only until AN F.S.F. SNIPER OPEN
FIRE AT KANEDA. Everyone hits the deck.

Kaneda dives toward the opposite side of the roof,
grabbing the edge, swinging himself off, then SMASHING
HIS FEET THROUGH THE SIDE WINDOW OF THE SPEEDING TRAIN.

INT. MONORAIL - CONTINUOUS

Kaneda presses through the terrified PASSENGERS as the
Copter tracks him from outside. No clear shot.

EXT. MONORAIL - CONTINUOUS

The Monorail Train threads through towers then begins a fast descent, leaving the helicopter behind as it disappears UNDERGROUND, INTO A SUBWAY TUNNEL.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - CONTINUOUS

The Monorail screeches to a stop. Doors slide open and Kaneda bolts out into a SEA OF PEOPLE, his eyes falling on MORE F.S.F. GUARD fanning out, on the hunt.

He presses through the dense crowd, low, out of sight.

FROM ABOVE -- The immense space is revealed. Kaneda lost in the HOARD OF TRAVELLERS. Needle in a haystack. Capture eluded.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The buzz of a tattoo needle. A MED-TECH sits bedside as a final sterilizing wipe of Tetsuo's hand reveals THE NUMBER 41 ETCHED ONTO HIS PALM.

INT. GOLD TOWER MILITARY BASE/CHILDREN'S CHAMBER - DAY

Four concrete columns tower from the center of the massive room up into an endless darkness.

The walls display a wildly vivid 4-D projection of various worldly and other-worldly locations:

-- AN UNDERWATER SEASCAPE, brimming with bioluminescent sea creatures. Nestled snugly in a bed, sleeping restlessly, another "special" child. A girl. Tiny. Her face, shriveled and hollow-cheeked. Her name is -- EMMANUELLE.

-- A VIBRANT RAIN FOREST. Alive with radiant wildlife. Tobias uses his telekinetic power, levitating a TOY ALPHABET. He peers into the distance, troubled.

-- A MOONSCAPE. Serene and endless. Sebastian glides his wheelchair into the Rain Forest projection as Tobias stares at the orbiting toy letters.

SEBASTIAN

I can feel the new boy. I hear his thoughts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Six of the orbiting letters form T-E-T-S-U-O.

TOBIAS

The Colonel thinks he's special.

SEBASTIAN

Like us. Yes.

TOBIAS

(sad & frightened)

No... Not like us.

Sebastian watches as the toy alphabet spin faster...
Until five letters jump out, forming the name: A-K-I-R-A.

Sebastian stares, unsettled, when suddenly A SHRILL
SCREAM CAUSES THE LETTERS TO SCATTER AND FALL as --

Emmanuelle's Seascape melts away into a dark infinity.
She lays awake. Terrified. Remnants of a nightmare.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tetsuo's eyes loll in a sedated haze. Reaches for the IV
protruding from his arm when someone's hand stops him.

THE COLONEL (O.S.)

Easy does it, son.

The Colonel stands beside the bed as Tetsuo struggles for
consciousness.

THE COLONEL

Relax... Feels good, doesn't it?

TETSUO

Yes.

THE COLONEL

You feel like new... Like
everything has been washed away. I
did that for you. And soon you'll
be able to do something for me.
You have a spectacular future
ahead of you. Relax now... Sleep.

He adjusts the IV regulator, increasing the sedative.

INT. THE COLONEL'S OFFICE - DAY

The Colonel enters to find the British Director seated in guest chair.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

How are things with the new subject?

THE COLONEL

Be patient. The U.S. will be yours for the taking. The power this boy potentially has is more than mere proliferation. This is supreme armament. If we're correct about the level of his gift, there's no government fit to resist. You'll have control of the U.S., all its assets and anything else you want.

The British Director smiles, intoxicated with the notion.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

If this boy's power becomes fully realized can you control him? We wouldn't want him running through streets with a teddy bear, if you know what I mean.

THE COLONEL

Akira was an unfortunate miscalculation. It won't happen again. The threat of force is just as effective as an act of force. Think of what the bomb did for America in 1945. It made them a Super-Power. An empire.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

The old warlord will finally have his day. The ultimate weapon, dangling beneath your fingers like a marionette.

The Colonel soaks in it. Not a day goes by the thought has not crossed his mind.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET - DAY

Kaneda moves fast through a SEA OF PEDESTRIANS. The cell phone rings. He answers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KANEDA

They tried to kill me!

WOMAN'S VOICE

You're dangerous to them. You've
seen too much.

KANEDA

What did you mean, "where would
Tetsuo go, if he were free?"

WOMAN'S VOICE

He will be more powerful than they
anticipate. He will escape. And he
will be suffering. His compulsions
will take over. Only you know
where he will go.

Kaneda realizes instantly. He hangs up. Charges away.

INT. CHILDREN'S CHAMBER - DAY

The Colonel sits beside Emmanuelle's bed, holding her
tiny hand. Sebastian and Tobias look on.

THE COLONEL

It was just a dream, Emmanuelle.
Akira is dead. Gone...

EXT. NYC MEMORIAL BUNKER - INTERCUT

The wide concrete Memorial spans a hundred square yards.
Massive blue spot lights beam into the heavens. Millions
of names etched along the walls.

THE COLONEL (V.O.)

...has been for a very long time.

INT. CHILDREN'S CHAMBER - INTERCUT

Emmanuelle looks at The Colonel, worried, not convinced --

SEBASTIAN

She says it's more than a dream.
She says it's a prophecy. She sees
Akira destroying the world. She
sees him doing it with Tetsuo.

EXT. NYC MEMORIAL BUNKER - INTERCUT

TOURISTS stand before the memorial paying their respects as The Colonel approaches a Maintenance Shack.

THE COLONEL (V.O.)
Well, she's wrong... That's impossible. And entertaining the idea as more than just a bad dream is simply dangerous. With your gifts, your power...

INT. MAINTENANCE SHACK - CONTINUOUS

An F.S.F. GUARD jumps to attention as The Colonel enters.

THE COLONEL
At ease.

The Colonel strides to a locked steel doorway. Slides his hand under a Sub-Q I.D. scanner. The door clicks open --

THE COLONEL (V.O.)
Your dreams can be as tangible as I am. It's easy to forget that.

INT. CHILDREN'S CHAMBER - INTERCUT

The Colonel strokes Emanuelle's forehead --

THE COLONEL
But Akira simply does not exist anymore. So you have nothing to be afraid of.

SEBASTIAN
Tetsuo is in her nightmare too.

The Colonel is unable to mask his troubled intrigue.

INT. MAINTENANCE SHACK/STORAGE ROOM - DUSK

The Colonel enters. The floor suddenly sinks beneath the surrounding walls.

INT. UNDERGROUND CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

A platform descends. The Colonel is greeted by another nervous F.S.F. GUARD.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Colonel walks. Says nothing. The Guard follows.

F.S.F. GUARD

Sir. Sorry. Is something wrong?

They reach an iron door. Hooded parkas line the wall.

THE COLONEL

No. But we're doubling the detail
down here.

The Colonel removes a fail-safe key from around his neck.
The Guard does the same. They unlock a compartment in the
wall -- Another Sub-Q scanner. He scans his hand again
The iron door unlocks.

F.S.F. GUARD

Sorry, it's just... No one ever
comes down here.

THE COLONEL

(slipping on a parka)
You shouldn't expect visitors to a
place that doesn't exist.

INT. UNDERGROUND WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A doorway leads The Colonel into a vast space. His breath
immediately vaporizes. It's far below freezing down here.

He crosses to a massive, frost coated, iron chamber. A
digital thermostat reads: "-100 degrees." A nameplate
above the door reads: #28.

He peers through a glass portal. Sees only ice. A hint of
paranoia in his gaze before going back the way he came.

Unnoticed -- The digital thermostat rises to: -99.

TETSUO'S NIGHTMARE --

Tetsuo's photo strip - He, Kaneda and Mom posing -
Laughing - Filled with joy. A child's voice hums: "Frere
Jacques." Slow - Haunting.

A blurred silhouette becomes distinct -- Akira from 21
years ago. Staring ahead. Motionless. As silence crashes
in. And a whisper: "Tetsuo."

Tetsuo falls through the void - Seemingly from nowhere,
SOMEONE reaches in, grasping him by the hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A roiling wave of flames - Everything engulfed - Silence.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DUSK

Tetsuo's eyes flutter open, he struggles to sit up. Overwhelmed with thirst. A glass of water just out of his reach.

The glass inexplicably slides into his grasp. Barely noticing how he acquired it, he drinks voraciously.

INT. CCTV ROOM - SAME

TWO F.S.F. GUARDS observe a massive collection of monitors. Neither notices the one with Tetsuo as he slides off his bed, yanking his IV line from his arm.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

Tetsuo collapses, clutching his head. An incredible pain.

TETSUO
What's happening?

He reaches for the room's doorknob. It's locked.

INT. CCTV ROOM - SAME

Two monitors, side by side -- One displays Tetsuo's room. The other an empty hallway and the door to the room. A flash of light. Both screens go black.

CCTV GUARD #1
Whoa. That's a problem.

INT. CORRIDOR - SAME

Darkness and smoke cloak the corridor as an elevator opens and two F.S.F. GUARDS cautiously step out.

Flashlights out, they creep forward. The walls and ceiling freshly charred. The door, bent and twisted off its hinges, like something exploded from inside the room.

F.S.F. GUARD #1
Christ... What happened here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A moan draws their flashlights to Tetsuo struggling to stand.

F.S.F. GUARD #2
(into his radio)
Get a medic down here right away!

F.S.F. Guard #2 approaches Tetsuo, helping him to his feet when Tetsuo snaps --

TETSUO
What is this place? Who are you!?

Tetsuo clutches his head while F.S.F. Guard #2 swings around trying to subdue him, placing him in a choke hold. F.S.F. Guard #1 levels his weapon --

ARMED GUARD #1
Hold it, right there!

Tetsuo's hair stands on end. A pulse of electricity.

TETSUO
Let me go!

TETSUO'S EYES BULGE, BREAKING BLOOD VESSELS TURNING BLACK as Guard #1's rifle is inexplicably torn away, flung down the hallway. Before he can react HIS BODY IS SLAMMED AGAINST THE WALL. Knocked unconscious.

TETSUO
I said, let me go!

F.S.F. Guard #2 is hurled into the hospital room, SLAMMING AGAINST THE WALL. Out cold.

Tetsuo stands there, confused, scared, the veins along his temples throbbing. No clue how he just did all that.

INT. CCTV ROOM - SAME

One by one the wall of monitors begin to go black.

CCTV GUARD
This doesn't look good.

CCTV GUARD #2
Mobilize a unit to the lobby.

ON ONE OF THE MONITORS -- Tetsuo, a mania in his gaze, looks right into the camera before it blacks out.

INT. LOBBY - DUSK

A SMALL UNIT OF F.S.F. GUARDS form a blockade down a wide gallery leading to a door labeled: STAIRS.

The door slowly swings open and Tetsuo steps out.

F.S.F. GUARD
Down on the ground! Now!

Tetsuo seethes motionless until the F.S.F. Guard signals TWO OTHERS to apprehend him. As the Guards charge down the gallery, Tetsuo begins to pant, a thrum building.

HE RELEASES A BLOSSOM OF ENERGY, BUCKLING THE FLOORS, CEILING AND WALLS AROUND HIM. IT RADIATES OUT, FLINGING THE CHARGING GUARDS INTO THE WALLS THEN CAUSES A SECTION OF THE GALLERY TO COLLAPSE ONTO THE OTHER F.S.F. GUARDS.

EXT. GOLD TOWER MILITARY BASE - DUSK

Tetsuo emerges, stumbling away as smoke envelops the lobby behind him.

INT. MINOTAUR BAR - NIGHT

Kaneda burst in, scanning the usual DRUNKS, looking for Tetsuo.

His gaze falls on the door to the back room, Tetsuo emerging, head lolling, eyes dazed. Kaneda stares, shocked. He rushes over, embracing his brother.

KANEDA
(voice cracking)
I thought you were dead. If you'd
just done what I said, none of
this would have happened.

TETSUO
It's all my fault. Like always.

Tetsuo hangs limply in Kaneda's arms. No return embrace.

KANEDA
What did they do to you?

TETSUO
I... I don't remember anything.
Only the dreams. The name.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KANEDA

What are you talking about? What name?

Kaneda looks him in the eyes. Bloodshot. Dilated.

KANEDA

Christ... Are you "slammed?"

Tetsuo manages to focus his gaze for a moment.

TETSUO

Over and over. Like it's calling to me. Asking me to set him free. He wants me to find him. Akira.

KANEDA

Akira?

Tetsuo cringes, a pain shooting through his head. He pushes past Kaneda, shoving him aside.

TETSUO

I need something for this... To make it stop... This pain.

KANEDA

(sincere)
Then let me get you help.

Tetsuo stops in his tracks, his back to Kaneda.

TETSUO

The bag.

KANEDA

What?

TETSUO

The bag you took. With my SLAM.

KANEDA

(protective)
That shit's gone. And you're staying right here.

Tetsuo's posture changes. His voice, a wretched hiss.

TETSUO

All you want to do is keep me down. On a leash. Like an animal. You were supposed to watch over me. Keep me safe.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TETSUO (CONT'D)

Instead, you can't stand the sight
of me. You blame me for everything
in my life... And yours.

Kaneda stifles his instinct to anger, to repel the
accusations.

KANEDA

That's not you talking. You know
better.

TETSUO

You're right. I do know better.

He turns to face Kaneda who's taken aback by his
brother's face. Malicious. Possessed. Eyes vacant.
Staring like a stranger. Tetsuo steps closer. Inches
away. A challenge.

Kaneda pops him on the chest. Tetsuo holds his ground,
unflinching.

KANEDA

You want to step up on me? You
think you got the sack for that?

Kaneda pops him on the chest again, antagonizing now.
The Drunks at the bar gawk at the impending brawl.

TETSUO

Don't touch me --

KANEDA

Or what?

And as Kaneda shoves him again, A STARTLING SURGE OF
ENERGY THRUMS OUT OF FROM TETSUO --

TETSUO

I said don't!

IT HEAVES KANEDA down the length of bar, POUNDING HIM
AGAINST AN OLD JUKEBOX AS A PULSATING SHOCK-WAVE FOLLOWS,
SMASHING THE WALL OF BOOZE BOTTLES BEHIND THE BAR. Lights
shatter. Drunks knocked off their stools.

Tetsuo's black veins bulge as currents of static
electricity dissipate around him. A spasm of pain shoots
through his head, almost bringing him to his knees.

He stares at Kaneda, horrified, confused. Snapping out of
his manic episode.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TETSUO

What's happening to me?

Kaneda, face cut, regaining his bearing, tries to stagger to his feet as Tetsuo stumbles out, stealing a coat from a rack before rushing out the door.

TETSUO

I'm sorry.

KANEDA

Tetsuo! Wait!

EXT. MINOTAUR BAR - NIGHT

Kaneda, small cuts on his face, stumbles out. Scans the area. A few PEDESTRIANS shuffle past. No sign of Tetsuo.

He paces for a moment, thinking, plotting. A plan forming.

INT. CHILDREN'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Sebastian, in his wheelchair, and The Colonel sit amid a 4-D projection of The Eagle Nebula, the famous "Pillars of Creation," spirals of interstellar gas and dust churn as they play chess. A glass of milk before The Colonel.

SEBASTIAN

He's suffering...

Sebastian moves a piece with his telekinetic power as The Colonel removes a small glass vial from his pocket.

THE COLONEL

That's why I need you to help me find him. I'm sure he's in a great deal of pain.

He unscrews the top, pulling out an eye-dropper.

SEBASTIAN

He doesn't understand using the gift can wreak havoc on our bodies.

He places three drops of black fluid in the milk, changing it to a murky grey.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE COLONEL

He doesn't know how to control his power yet. I'm going to help him learn. And keep his pain away... The same way I keep yours.

The Colonel hands Sebastian the glass of milk, then moves one of his own chess pieces.

THE COLONEL

He's a very special boy. He may be able to change the world. Bring order to the chaos. Like our city.

Sebastian drinks the tainted milk. Breathes deep, relief washing over him.

SEBASTIAN

But you cannot have order without force. What if you unleash another Akira?

THE COLONEL

I can control the mutation in Tetsuo. The drug is different now.

SEBASTIAN

Yes. But human hunger is not. Power is like a drop of blood to a hungry beast. All it takes is a taste...

Sebastian's queen slides on its own, placing the Colonel's king in check.

THE COLONEL

The boy will die if we don't help him now.

Indecisive, a wave of melancholy washes over Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN

Why are we dreaming of Akira after such a long time? Tobias and Emmanuelle are scared.

The Colonel quells a hint of fear. Answers earnestly.

THE COLONEL

I don't know.

Behind Sebastian the 4-D projection of the Eagle Nebula dissipates, replaced the image of --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE EXTERIOR OF A DILAPIDATED BOWLING ALLEY. A desolate street. A flickering neon sign reads: THE PIN DROP.

SEBASTIAN

You'll find him there shortly.

INT. RESISTANCE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

A large warehouse-like space. Ky and Ellison stand over a table, studying a blueprint. Three other RESISTANCE OPERATIVES work at cleaning a cache of weapons.

KY

(troubled)

You killed a lot of people back at the jail.

ELLISON

Dying's part of it, sweetheart.
Results require consequences.

KY

That's not what Lady Miyako stands for --

THE WHIR OF AN ELEVATOR MOTOR STARTING UP draws Ellison and Ky's attention to its doors, the floor numbers above it lighting up, climbing. Someone's coming up.

ELLISON

Expecting company?

Ky nervously shakes her head as Ellison calmly motions for the Operatives to prepare. They arm themselves, then toss assault rifles to Ky and Ellison. Everyone's weapons poised at the elevators doors as it climbs --

Floor 191... Floor 192... Floor 193... It finally reaches their floor. 198. The bell chimes. Weapons are locked and loaded. The doors slide open, an ominous silhouette standing there until --

-- Kaneda, calmly steps from the shadows, HOLDING A PEN EXACTLY LIKE THE ONE ELLISON USED TO BLOW UP THE JAIL.

KANEDA

"Do you know what this is?"

A tense silence, the Operatives piecing it together as Ellison remains utterly calm.

CHAOS as the Operatives bellow --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RESISTANCE OPERATIIVES

Drop it! Drop it! Get down on the ground!

KANEDA

Relax. Blowing us all up, not really the best plan.

Kaneda smirks as he tosses the pen/detonator to Ellison.

KANEDA

I guess we know the same guy. He does a bang up job.

ELLISON

You found us. Impressive.

KANEDA

I just want my brother back. And I want answers.

ELLISON

You'll get them soon enough. Ky will you do the honors?

Ky steps to him, eye to eye. Frisking him. Kaneda grins as she stays icy, quelling an attraction.

KY

What are you smiling at?

KANEDA

Nothing. Just surprised Ellison lets you out so late. Who's cooking supper if you're here?

Ky stares, irked as she pats him down, finding Ellison's phone in his pocket. She tosses it to him.

KY

Your phone.

KANEDA

Oh, I get it. Married to the cause... Sounds so... Sad.

She reaches around Kaneda's back, finding Ellison's gun tucked in the small of his back. She tosses it to him.

KY

And your gun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KANEDA

Keep looking. His pride is tucked
away in there too.

Ellison smirks. Checks the chamber of his gun --

KANEDA

Where's the woman on the phone? I
want to see her now.

ELLISON

And we'd like to see your brother.
Where is he?

Kaneda stares, giving nothing away.

ELLISON

Still having trust issues. Did he
try to hurt you?

The question unnerves Kaneda. The truth, even more.

KANEDA

My brother would never hurt me.

ELLISON

You're a terrible liar, kid. The
Foundation has most likely already
altered him.

KANEDA

Altered him, how?

ELLISON

The puzzle has many pieces, old
boy. It will all be clear soon
enough. For now, his memory of you
is his only connection to reality.
Is the only way to gauge if
there's even a chance at stopping
this.

KANEDA

Stopping what?

ELLISON

Stopping your brother from
destroying this city and everyone
in it... Like Akira did twenty
years ago.

Kaneda sighs, frustrated. Then with focus calm --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KANEDA

This is what you want me to believe? I saw what happened to this place. People died... And a little boy had nothing to do with it. There's no such thing as Akira. And the truth is you're just brainwashing drones, like her...

(nods to Ky)

...because you can't bear the fact that what this place has become will never be as bad as you want it to be. You don't like the rules, so suddenly there's some mystical cause to fight for. There's no where in the world like this city. This is the land of opportunity. You just have to know how to take it.

Ky smiles, smug, condescending.

KY

We're not trying to make converts, Kaneda... You can believe whatever you want. But look at it this way: You don't have to buy into any of this to let us help you and your brother. We all want the same thing.

Kaneda considers this simple logic...

KANEDA

Sure. The difference is, you want to save the world. I just want to save my brother.

KY

You don't want to believe me, but right now, that's the same thing.

KANEDA

Boy, you must be a goddamn riot on a date.

She smirks. Ignores his comment.

KY

Where's Tetsuo? You have no idea how important this is...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Ky gets quiet, sensing something. The faint sound of helicopter rotors. She looks at Kaneda.

KY

Nice work... You were followed.

THE WALL OF WINDOWS SHATTERS, revealing an F.S.F. Helicopter hovering just outside as --

OPERATIVE #1

It's a raid!

-- An F.S.F. SWAT TEAM rapel into the warehouse, guns blazing. A VOICE roars from a copter megaphone --

MEGAPHONE

This is the Foundation Security Force. Drop your weapons.

Ky and the Operatives SPRAY FIRE AT THE ADVANCING SWAT TEAM as Kaneda drops, pulling Ky down with him.

Operative #1 goes down, shot dead in front Kaneda. He snags the guy's weapon.

Pulling Kaneda up, Ky follows Ellison and the last two Operatives, charging toward an elevator. They lay down suppression fire as SWAT PEPPER THE AIR WITH BULLETS.

Reaching the elevator, the doors slide open suddenly revealing another F.S.F. SWAT TEAM. They open fire and Operative #2 takes one to the chest.

As the first two SWAT members charge out of the elevator, Ellison triggers a detonator --

-- UNLEASHING AN EXPLOSION ABOVE THE ELEVATOR CAR. Cables snap. The car drops, taking the remaining F.S.F with it.

ELLISON

The stairs! Get him out of here!

Kaneda and Ky dart across the room, laying down a stream of gunfire as they barrel into the --

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Kaneda and Ky whip up the staircase --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KANEDA

Place is crawling with cops by now. How do we get out of this tower?

KY

We're not... Not this tower.

INT. RESISTANCE HEADQUARTERS - SAME

ELLISON HURLS A CHAIR, SHATTERING ANOTHER WALL OF WINDOWS as Operative #3 goes down, shot right next to him.

Ellison flings a rappelling cable out the window then launches himself into A SWIFT DESCENT as the final downed Operative reveals another detonator. His dying act: Pressing the button.

EXT. RESISTANCE HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

ELLISON DESCENDS THE 250 FLOOR TOWER AS THE HIDEOUT FLOOR EXPLODES. Billows of fire just miss the F.S.F. copter, flames and debris cascading out from the whole floor as --

EXT. RESISTANCE HEADQUARTERS/ROOFTOP - SAME

-- Ky grabs a grappling rifle and fires it across the chasm to a SKYSCRAPER NEXT DOOR, a cable trailing behind. The spear impales the building a few floors down.

Kaneda watches, impressed, as she clips two zip-line pulleys onto the taut cable.

KY

This ain't the first time we've been raided.

Kaneda and Ky zip-line between buildings as Ky fires back at a team of F.S.F SWAT swarming the rooftop.

Nearing the end of the line, Kaneda whips his rifle around, SPRAYING A SWARM OF GUNFIRE SHATTERING THE WINDOWS AHEAD, just in time for them to tumble through.

INT. THE PIN DROP BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Pins and bowling balls sit littered between the fractured plastic seats and broken scoring consoles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Parked motorcycles give way to a group of HARLEQUINS packing baggies of SLAM/Compound-S. Pills piled high in glass bowls.

Tread-Face watches from behind a desk counting piles of cash. Business is good. A creaking floorboard draws his gaze to a silhouette of someone.

TREAD-FACE

Who's that?

No answer as Tread-Face draws a long-barreled revolver.

TREAD-FACE

Step into the light shit-heel or
get ready to see it coming at ya.

Tread-Face stands, cautious. The Harlequins stop working and spread out when the figure emerges from the shadows --

-- Tetsuo, head slung low, shuddering with head pain. Tread-Face realizes who he is. Relaxes.

TREAD-FACE

This is precious. If it isn't the
little kept man. Kaneda's shame
and sorrow...

Tread-Face darts across the lanes, coming face to face with Tetsuo. Other Harlequins follow, surrounding him.

TREAD-FACE

(hissing)
Get it? Shame and sorrow. Pride
and joy.

TETSUO

I need... Some... SL--

TREAD-FACE

I know what you need. How about a
little appetizer first?

One of the Harlequins hammers Tetsuo's lower back with a baseball bat. He goes down hard. The other Harlequins, join in, pummeling Tetsuo.

Tread-Face smugly walks back to his desk enjoying the sounds of the beating when A HARLEQUIN GOES FLYING OVER HIS HEAD CRASHING AGAINST THE WALL. DEAD.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He whips around toward his men just as one of them begins to convulse, AN UNCONTROLLABLE SHUDDERING UNTIL HIS BODY TURNS TO MIST. ATOMIZED.

Tetsuo stands. Eyes possessed. Fiending.

Terrified, the other Harlequins make a run for it, disappearing into the shadows. But that's as far as they get. MOLECULAR MIST SPRAYS OUT FROM THE DARKNESS as Tetsuo turns them to mere particles.

Tetsuo turns to Tread-Face --

TETSUO
Time for the main course.

INT. MONORAIL - NIGHT

Kaneda cuts through the CROWDED train, Ky on him like glue.

KANEDA
Why are you still here?

KY
Because I need something from you.

KANEDA
I'm flattered. But this is no time
for romance, sweetheart.

KY
But it's definitely time to be a
smart ass. You know where your
brother is. Don't you?

The monorail screeches to a stop as Kaneda reaches a door and turns to face Ky.

KANEDA
Of course I do. I raised him. I
know everything about him.

KY
You know the person he was... Not
what he's becoming. Let me come
with you. I won't let anyone hurt
him.

The monorail doors slide open. And as he walks out --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KANEDA

Fine. Let's go. He's going to get more pills... But no Ellison.

INT. THE PIN DROP BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Kaneda and Ky enter, stopping in the shadows.

KY

There's no one here.

Each step they take sounds wet, viscous --

KANEDA

What's this shit on the floor?

As they step into the light, Kaneda's gaze falls on his own feet -- His shoes stained with blood. Ky's too.

KY

Jesus... It's blood.

A slow, dark cackle hisses out from somewhere.

KANEDA

Tetsuo.

Tetsuo paces in the shadows.

TETSUO

Aren't you the smart one... Right on my heels. And still finding time to date.

He peers at Ky, a lascivious grin. Licks his lips.

KANEDA

What have you done here? Where's Tread-Face?

Another slow cackle as Tetsuo emerges from the darkness. His eyes demonic. Black veins webbing across his face.

TETSUO

He's around...

He holds a half empty bowl of SLAM one hand, a handful of pills dribble from the other.

TETSUO

(pointing)
Over there... And over there...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TETSUO (CONT'D)

And little bit over there too. I
just needed a little relief...

Kaneda wretches at the sight of his transformed kin.

TETSUO

Don't look so appalled. Just say
thank you. No more nemesis.

KANEDA

How much did you SLAM?

TETSUO

More than I should. Less than I
need. Don't matter. It does
nothing.

KANEDA

This isn't you... Whatever is
happening to you... You have the
strength to stop it.

TETSUO

(mocking, angry)
Do I? How would you know?

KANEDA

Because you've always had it. You
just never knew...

Kaneda struggles with a confession --

KANEDA

Because I never let you.

Tetsuo seethes, Kaneda's words not getting through.

KANEDA

Let me help you now.

TETSUO

Do I look like I need help? I
finally know what all this means.
The nightmares. The suffering... I
finally found my place... I've
been chosen.

KY

Chosen? For what?

TETSUO

Akira. I hear his voice. I am his
savior. His resurrector.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TETSUO (CONT'D)

His breath of life. I'm going to
find him. Set him free. Help him
break it all apart again.

The notion chills Ky to the bone. Kaneda, undaunted.

KANEDA

Akira is a myth.

TETSUO

Liar!

Tetsuo flings the glass bowl of SLAM. A fury igniting as
he marches toward them. Kaneda shields Ky.

TETSUO

You think you know everything. You
shouldn't have come here!

KANEDA

You need to calm down.

The discarded bowling balls begin to waver, then DART
INTO THE AIR, HOVERING IN PLACE FOR A MOMENT --

TETSUO

Need? I got all I need.

The spheres begin to spin in orbit above his head. Tetsuo
watches them, amused by his own power... His control.

TETSUO

But what I don't need... IS YOU!

THE BOWLING BALLS LAUNCH AT KANEDA AND KY as he drags her
out of the line of fire, behind a low wall. THE LETHAL
BOWLING BALLS CRASH INTO A ROW OF OLD VIDEO GAMES.

KANEDA

Tetsuo! Goddamn it! Stop!

Kaneda and Ky, stay low, moving toward an emergency exit.
Tetsuo stops. Eyes scanning. A beast stalking its prey.

TETSUO

You can't tell me what to do
anymore. This is why I'm here.

Kaneda and Ky freeze as AN ASSAULT OF TEAR GAS CANNISTERS
crash through the high windows, smoke trails streaming.

KY

Shit! We have to get out of here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Kaneda and Ky dart through the blossoming smoke and out the emergency exit. Tetsuo remains still. Unaffected. Fascinated as the tear gas swirls, enveloping him.

EXT. THE PIN DROP BOWLING ALLEY/REAR EXIT - CONTINUOUS

Kaneda and Ky whip out through the door, immediately caught in the headlights of a black van baring down on them. They skirt out of the way as the van screeches to a halt, the side door opening and revealing --

-- Ellison perched there. Ky pushes Kaneda in, rolling in after him as the van peels away.

INT./EXT. BLACK VAN/ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

-- tearing down an alley.

KANEDA

I told you not to contact him!

(to Ellison)

What are you people doing to him?

You'll kill him!

ELLISON

Us people? You think too much of us, friend. That ain't us --

EXT. THE PIN DROP BOWLING ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

The van comes under fire as it drives away from A PLATOON F.S.F GUARDS.

Behind them, four Humvees, SNIPERS perched atop, weapons aimed at the entrance. The Colonel stands behind his men, clad in battle gear.

THE COLONEL

Hold your fire! Hold your fire!

A tense lull is broken as the GLASS DOOR OF THE BOWLING ALLEY SHATTERS. A huge billow of tear gas clears slowly, revealing --

-- Tetsuo, stepping through it. He leers, panting, grimacing from head pain. His eyes vacant and furious.

THE SNIPERS UNLEASH A BARRAGE OF TRANQUILIZER DARTS piercing his chest. He plucks one out like a pesky bug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Colonel watches, pleased at Tetsuo's resilience as the front line of Soldiers take aim.

THE COLONEL

Everyone, stand down!

(pause)

Son, you remember me? From the hospital. I know you do. I can make it stop. The pain. I know it's bad. Let me help you.

TETSUO

Everyone thinks they can help me.

Tetsuo's hair stands on end, electricity buzzing just before an ENERGY SURGE BURSTS FORTH, FLIPPING THE HUMVEES BACK LIKE LEAVES FROM A TREE, the Snipers catapulted off.

The Troop opens fire. Bullets bear down on Tetsuo when -- HE EMITS A PULSE OF TELEKINETIC ENERGY. IT THRUMS AROUND HIM AS THE BULLETS ARE CONSUMED BY IT, MID-FLIGHT, SPARKING AWAY INTO NOTHING.

The assault rifles are inexplicably pulled from the Guards hands, FLUNG INTO THE AIR.

Tetsuo wavers, dizzy, weakened by the use of so much power as the Troop shrinks back, SOME DRAWING HANDGUNS.

THE COLONEL

Put away your weapons!

The Colonel fearlessly steps toward Tetsuo.

THE COLONEL

Son... Can you hear me?

IMAGES FLASH: Screams of thousands - A needle piercing flesh - an IV bottle with black fluid, bubbling - Veins pulsating - Akira, mouth agape, a silent roar.

Tetsuo teeters, pain shooting through his head as The Colonel reaches him. Stands cautiously.

THE COLONEL

I can make that pain go away. You just have to trust me. Every time you use your power, this will happen. This weakness. This suffering. The nightmares. But I can control it. Remember the feeling at the hospital. The comfort. Like you were reborn.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE COLONEL (CONT'D)

I did that for you... Would you
like to feel it again?

Tetsuo collapses into The Colonel's arms --

TETSUO

Yes...

INT./EXT. BLACK VAN/ELEVATED FREEWAY - NIGHT

The van winds up the road, between the towers. In the background the countless holo-screens flash a burst of static -- Lady Miyako, beginning another transmission.

INSIDE THE VAN -- Kaneda, depleted, eyes Miyako's face.

KANEDA

He was inhuman. Almost possessed.

Ellison peers at Ky looking for confirmation. She nods.

ELLISON

Miyako foresaw this.

Ellison looks to Kaneda.

ELLISON

Time to pull the curtain back. You
ready?

INT. SILVER TOWER/FIVE STAR RESAURANT - NIGHT

Spectacular views of the metropolis. Kaneda follows Ellison and Ky. SNOOTY PATRONS stare.

Ellison smirks. Walks through a private door.

INT. PRIVATE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A gourmet meal awaits as a STATELY WOMAN, back to the room, a pashmina draped over her head, peers at the skyline.

STATELY WOMAN

It's nice to finally meet you in
person, Kaneda.

She turns. But it's not the Lady Miyako they expect. Not the elderly Asian face of the Resistance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Instead, a refined, elegant woman. Serene. White lace gloves grace her thin fingers. THIS IS THE REAL LADY MIYAKO --

STATELY WOMAN (LADY MIYAKO)

Anonymity is my weapon of choice.
Things would be infinitely more
difficult to accomplish if I had
to remain in hiding. Please, sit.

Miyako steps to Kaneda, peering at him with the gentle eyes of a loving mother as the others sit.

LADY MIYAKO

I'm so sorry. If only we'd found
your brother first none of this
would be happening.

KANEDA

It was you on the phone.

LADY MIYAKO

Yes. Please... Sit.

He hesitates until she pulls out a chair for him between Ky and Ellison. She rounds the table, facing them.

LADY MIYAKO

I sense my vision was correct, Mr.
Ellison.

He nods. She sighs. Uneasy. Looks to Ky, sensing something.

LADY MIYAKO

Ky... Am I missing a detail?

KY

He called himself the ressurector.
Akira's breath of life.

A sliver of alarm flashes in Miyako eyes.

KANEDA

You know what that means?

LADY MIYAKO

I'm afraid I do. Akira is calling
to your brother. He wants Tetsuo
to set him free. We cannot let
that happen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KANEDA

You're saying Akira is real. And that he's alive somewhere?

LADY MIYAKO

Yes. And if your brother finds him, together they will bring a reckoning that could turn this world to dust.

Kaneda struggles to believe.

KANEDA

Even if you're right and all this is true, my brother wouldn't hurt anyone.

LADY MIYAKO

If you don't get to him soon, he'll have no choice. Just like Akira.

KANEDA

What do you mean, no choice?

LADY MIYAKO

Years before New York was destroyed the U.S. Army Research Institute formed a panel, led by The Colonel, to assess over a hundred years of evidence regarding the existence of psychokinesis. The purpose was to find rare individuals harboring the dormant gene. Children were secretly tested. Mostly orphans. Motherless. Unloved.

An unexpected sorrow skims her face.

KANEDA

How do you know all this?

LADY MIYAKO

I believe it was Marcello Truzzi who said, "Extra-ordinary claims require extra-ordinary proof."

Lady Miyako peels off her right glove, revealing A FADED TATTOO OF THE NUMBER "ONE" ETCHED ONTO HER PALM.

KANEDA

You were one of the children.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Even Ellison is stunned by this revelation.

LADY MIYAKO

The very first.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY (A MEMORY)

TWENTY-EIGHT CHILDREN laugh and play games as a TEAM OF NURSES watch over them.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)

There were twenty-eight of us.
Seemingly bound by one common
fact. We were unloved.

YOUNG MIYAKO(11) plays hop-scotch with Emmanuelle(7), her features unscathed. Miyako throws the stone onto the court. Her palm displays the tattooed number "one."

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)

But for this fleeting moment it
did not matter. We had each other.

A GROUP OF BOYS play a game of marbles. Among them, Tobias(6) and Sebastian(8), both sweet young boys. Beside them, a familiar innocent face, giggling as he shoots a marble into the mix. This is AKIRA.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)

Our innocence was our bond. But we
had no idea what was in store.

INT. LAB - DAY (A MEMORY)

Young Miyako lays on a gurney. Eyes red from tears. A NURSE injects an IV needle into her arm then begins the infusion of a black fluid -- Compound-S.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)

We didn't know why they were doing
this to us...

The Nurse steps away, crossing the large lab, where 27 more gurneys hold 27 more children, each with an IV dripping the black fluid into their veins.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)

...only that it was important...
And that we were special.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A MILITARY DOCTOR whispers into Miyako's ear. She listens. Tries to calm herself. Lip quivering.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
And they were right. We were
special.

INT. TESTING ROOM - DAY (A MEMORY)

Akira and a group of CHILDREN sit in a row of school desks, each with a glass bowl filled marbles.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
Some more than others.

The Military Doctor walks the line, clipboard in hand as each child attempts to levitate a marble. Some marbles quiver. Some barely float then drop. Some do nothing.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
And some of us could do the
impossible. It was beautiful.

Akira concentrates as his little glass spheres begin to percolate, rattling against the glass WHEN A BIG BLUE ONE SHOOTs OUT FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE PILE. It hovers over the rest.

The Military Doctor smiles. Akira does the same.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
But like all things: Beauty fades.

The other children stare, mystified as THE BOWL SHATTERS, STARTLING EVERYONE. Marbles cascade onto the floor.

INT. DORMITORY - NIGHT (A MEMORY)

Children sleep in rows of beds. Light seeps in a bathroom as A SHRILL SCREAM FRACTURES THE SILENCE.

Young Miyako and the other children tumble from bed and follow a NURSE racing into the --

INT. COMMUNAL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Emmanuelle stands before a mirror, hysterical at the sight of her reflection -- THE EARLY STAGES OF THE ADVANCED AGING, WRINKLES TAKING OVER HER SKIN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
The side effects of the drug where
simply horrible.

As the Nurse tries to comfort her some of the other
children, seeing their faces in the mirror, begin to
scream as well. They too struck by this ailment.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
Most of those young vessels turned
to mush.

Young Miyako looks at her own reflection. Her face
unaffected. Beside her, Akira. Also unaffected.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
And one was robbed of something
far more valuable. His sanity.

His face stoic, a lone black tear slipping from his eye.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY (A MEMORY)

TWO NUNS drag Young Miyako away into a waiting car.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
Those of us whose gifts were
inconsequential were sent away.
Back to the land of the unloved.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT (A MEMORY)

White sheets on gurneys cover twenty tiny bodies. A hand
peeks out from one. Random. Number 19 inked on the palm.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
And the weaker of us... You can
imagine.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - DAY (A MEMORY)

A familiar moment. Akira stands in the center of the
deserted street, abandoned cars peppering the avenue. He
holds the teddy bear by the arm.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
And then there was Akira. And what
happened next, changed the course
of history.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stares straight ahead. No expression. No feeling. Blank.

INT. FIVE STAR RESTAURANT/PRIVATE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Lady Miyako, somber. The room quite except for Ellison sipping wine.

ELLISON
(sarcastic)
Poor, poor boy.

LADY MIYAKO
Mr. Ellison lacks compassion for these children. Fails to see they are the true victims here.

Ellison's unapologetic attitude irks Kaneda. He stiffens.

LADY MIYAKO
For the last twenty years, my hope... One of my goals has been to free the remaining children, so that we could attempt to find a cure. Something, not only to release them from the hold of the drug, but to perhaps even restore them... Make them normal again.

ELLISON
The only thing we should be concerned with is finding a way to destroy all of them. Including your brother.

Without warning, Kaneda swings around, CLUTCHING ELLISON BY THE THROAT AND TIPPING HIS CHAIR. They hit the ground hard. Kaneda on one knee. Ellison on his back.

KANEDA
There's no version of this where my brother and I aren't walking away alive. Together. Got it?

Ellison chuckles as Ky peels Kaneda off --

ELLISON
There's the old vim and vigor.

Ellison gets to his feet, takes a swig of wine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLISON

There is such a thing as a greater good. One life is not equal to many.

KANEDA

(a threat)

I'll keep that in mind.

LADY MIYAKO

Mr. Ellison's zeal is not what the Resistance is about. We are not your enemy. We all want the same thing. And the means to it lies in stopping The Foundation's plan to use your brother to infest the world like a weed.

KANEDA

They turned him into a junkie. And now a weapon... Like Akira.

She nods, empathetic of his despair.

KY

But Tetsuo has something Akira didn't.

Kaneda meets her gaze. Lost in her hope for a moment.

KY

You. A brother.

LADY MIYAKO

The boy you've looked after all your life is still in there. And he needs you now more than ever.

KANEDA

I looked in his eyes. There was nothing.

LADY MIYAKO

Then look deeper... His heart is in your heart... Akira is summoning Tetsuo to release him from the chamber where he's been hidden all these years. Tetsuo cannot be permitted to reach that chamber.

KANEDA

And if he does?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LADY MIYAKO

Then history will repeat. Akira
cannot be destroyed. Only
contained. His power is too great.

KY

Why would Akira do this again?

LADY MIYAKO

Why the first time? A child turned
into a lab rat. After a time, it
was the only life he knew. The
savage side of humanity. His mind
had been corrupted. The drug had
severed his grasp on any form of
reality. So he broke reality to
pieces. He'll do it again. And
he'll keep doing it until there's
nothing left.

Kaneda peers at the endless skyline. Then turns and meets
her gaze. Feels her compassion. Makes a choice.

KANEDA

Let's go get him.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

A MED-TECH administers another IV bottle of Compound-S.
Doctor Adiga watches, his concern apparent as Tetsuo's
veins throb with the drug.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Doctor Adiga catches up to The Colonel, moving fast --

DOCTOR ADIGA

Colonel... I think you're making a
mistake. Tetsuo should be detoxed.
Continuing the drug regiment is
too dangerous.

THE COLONEL

The boy can handle it, Doctor.

DOCTOR ADIGA

I'm not worried about the boy. I'm
worried about this city. And the
millions of people in it.

The Colonel stops, his stare challenging Adiga to go on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOCTOR ADIGA

Based on his abilities, the similarities in his genetic code to Akira and the fact he's already proved to be unmanageable, we should remove him from the program before the damage becomes irreversible.

The Colonel chuckles condescendingly.

THE COLONEL

Your diligence is commendable. But if you continue down this track...
(smile fading)
I'll see to it that you are dismissed, discredited and should it become necessary, disappeared.

DOCTOR ADIGA

Are you threatening me?

THE COLONEL

You're either going to make history... Or be it. You choose.

Shaken, Adiga watches The Colonel walk away.

INT. FIVE STAR RESTAURANT/STORE ROOM - NIGHT

Ellison unrolls a city map into a stack of boxes used as a table. Kaneda and Ky surround him.

ELLISON

There's only one way into the base where they're keeping your brother. Same way our man got Tobias.

KY

From underneath. The caverns were abandoned when construction was taken over by the Foundation.

ELLISON

They're completely sealed, except for one spot. Here.

KANEDA

The courthouse.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KY

How are we supposed to get in there? We're fugitives. We're dead if we go into that building.

KANEDA

Then it's time to be reborn.

INT. BLACK VAN - NIGHT

Ellison flinches as Kaneda finishes cutting into the back of his hand with a laser scalpel, then roughly plucks out his chip.

ELLISON

Easy. It's not a Christmas ham.

Ky smiles, amused as Kaneda inserts the new chip.

INT. THE FOUNDATION BOARD ROOM - DAY

The Colonel enters, surprised to find the room empty. A holo-screen plays the surveillance footage of the Bowling alley incident. The Humvees flipping.

Another screen beside it flashes on -- The British Director and the Japanese Director, transmitting from THE COLONEL'S OFFICE AT THE GOLD TOWER.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

Forgive us, Colonel. We decided to take advantage of your absence here at the base to get an unbiased look at this weapon of yours. You led us to believe you could control him.

JAPANESE DIRECTOR

(subtitled)

You are a liar and a manipulator.

THE COLONEL

A precedent set by you and the rest of the Foundation, Director.

The British Director glares.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

We're shutting down the program.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE COLONEL

What?

JAPANESE DIRECTOR

The program is a liability. You are a liability. We want it gone as well as all evidence it even existed. The drug... And your little creatures. Including the new one.

Speechless, The Colonel's own strategy and emotion swirl.

THE COLONEL

We are at the precipice of something revolutionary. Something that will offer redemption for the failure of Akira --

BRITISH DIRECTOR

Redemption for who? We did not create this. You did. And we inherited it. We are not in the business of saving your soul, Colonel.

THE COLONEL

Tetsuo will hand you the power you've been waiting for. You've seen what he can do.

The surveillance footage: Tetsuo sags into The Colonel's arms.

JAPANESE DIRECTOR

(in English, dripping
sarcasm)

Clearly, a reckoning is afoot.

THE COLONEL

Gentlemen, the use of the power drains the subject. And only more of the drug will counter this effect. His dependance is our power.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

We're all aware how you've revolutionized the role of the pusher, Colonel. Our decision is final. You have 24 hours.

INT./EXT. BOEING CH-47 CHINOOK HELICOPTER/SKY - DAY

The Colonel watches the sunrise glistening as the helicopter glides over the city. Pensive. Plotting.

THE COLONEL

Lock down the base. No one in or out.

EXT. COURTHOUSE TOWER - DAY

Kaneda, Ky and Ellison approach the Courthouse Tower, each clad in business attire. Ky and Kaneda hold steel briefcases as they casually enter --

INT. COURTHOUSE TOWER/ATRIUM - CONTINUOUS

BUSTLING security kiosks. Hands scanned, monitored by F.S.F. GUARDS.

Ky and Kaneda place their steel briefcases onto an X-Ray conveyor. Ellison lingers behind, cautious.

Ky slides her hand beneath the SUB-Q ID scanner. The GUARD glances at the monitor. Ky's photo. The name reads: ALICE KILLORAN: Deputy United States Marshall.

On the X-Ray monitor -- Her STEEL briefcase, contents obscured. The Guard's eyes drift from the monitor to Ky.

GUARD

You're going to need to open that briefcase, mam'am.

KY

Happy to. But I can tell you right now, it has two Kel-Tec Sub-2000 9mm assault rifles in it.

(nods to Kaneda)

He's got a couple too.

The Guard stares. Ky smiles. All charm.

KY

Check the scan. We're authorized.

KANEDA

U.S. is extraditing some dirt bag you guys are processing in here. I.D. Theft or something like that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUARD

Just open the case.

Ellison watches nervously as Ky opens briefcase. Inside, two compact, collapsed rifles and four magazines.

GUARD

That's a lot of fire power for transporting one guy.

KANEDA

What can I say? We're cautious.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tetsuo, still unconscious. Under his eyelids, his pupils vibrate. An unreal R.E.M. Inhuman. Veins bulging black.

INT. CHILDREN'S CHAMBER - DAY

A holographic image of earth slowly drifting closer (Reminiscent of the opening). Sebastian, in the midst of it, grimaces. Pain shooting through his head.

SEBASTIAN

It's not a dream... Akira is calling to him. He's alive. Calling for help. Calling Tetsuo to release him. I can see it...

Tobias and Emmanuelle watch as THE 4-D PROJECTION SHOOTS FORWARD AT LIGHT SPEED. Earth... The U.S.... The winding streets of Neo-Manhattan... The NYC Memorial Bunker... Down the elevator shaft... And finally to the Cryogenic Chamber.

SEBASTIAN

I know where he is.

INT. COURTHOUSE TOWER/ATRIUM - DAY

Kaneda stops to watch as Ellison reaches the check point.

KY

What are you doing? Let's go.

KANEDA

You need to know... This had to happen, OK?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ellison slips his hand under the scanner --

KY

What had to happen?

The GUARD examines the stats on the monitor.

KANEDA

I'm not letting anyone hurt my
brother.

A realization hits Ellison. He locks eyes with Kaneda --

MAYHEM. Alarms. F.S.F. GUARDS swarm. All guns on Ellison.

INT. INDUSTRIAL WALK-IN COOLER - DAY

Black liquid pours into a steel sink, swirling down the drain as Doctor Adiga empties bottle after bottle.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tetsuo's eyes, still in a mad flutter, FLICK OPEN. Black blood vessels crack the whites. His gaze, venomous.

INT. COURTHOUSE TOWER/STAIRWELL - DAY

Kaneda and Ky hurry down flight after flight --

KY

That was a dumb thing to do! How
are we supposed to do this alone?

KANEDA

This was never going to be an
assassination.

KY

Well, now it's a suicide.

INT. INDUSTRIAL WALK-IN COOLER - DAY

Adiga pours out another bottle of Compound-S when suddenly HIS HAND STARTS TO TREMBLE, HIS FACE SEIZING. He turns to find Tetsuo in the doorway, angry, malicious.

TETSUO

Now why would you go and do that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Adiga drops the bottle as HIS BODY IS LAUNCHED INTO CEILING LIGHTS. Sparks and glass rain down as ADIGA IS SLAMMED ONTO THE GROUND. DEAD.

Tetsuo stares. Takes a bottle of the drug and downs it.

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

Ky and Kaneda reach the bottom of the stairs. Flip open their cases and begin peeling off their business attire, revealing street clothes beneath.

Ky turns away. Her bare back exposed. She feels Kaneda's eyes on her. Peers over her shoulder slipping on something tight and sleek as he assembles rifle.

KY

Pay attention, Kaneda. You're gonna shoot yourself in the foot.

KANEDA

Don't worry...
(smirk & a wink)
I can do two things at once.

INT. UNDERGROUND CAVERN - DAY

Kaneda and Ky descend a rickety ladder, splashing down in knee-high water. Two tunnels before them. Both identical.

KY

Shit... Which way?

Ky suddenly buckles over. A shooting pain in her head.

KY

Damn it! What is that?

KANEDA

What's wrong?

KY

This pain in my head... Like a...
I don't know...

She get's upright. And the pain fades.

KY

It's probably the air down here.

She walks past Kaneda to the right, but abruptly stops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KY

It's to the left.

KANEDA

How do you know?

She looks at him, unable to articulate --

KY

I'm not sure how... I just do.

EXT. GOLD TOWER MILITARY BASE/ROOFTOP HELIPORT - DAY

Rotors still churning, The Colonel steps out from the Chinook, greeted by the British Director and FOUR F.S.F. SECRET SERVICE MEN.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

What did you expect?

THE COLONEL

I expected the last twenty years of my life not to be erased because of your cowardice. And as for the children, you might as well be asking me to destroy my own flesh and blood.

BRITISH DIRECTOR

Perhaps we'll ask that next. You should have known better than to try to make a mockery of the Foundation. You left us no choice. Arrest him.

Before they can make a move, FOUR SILENCED SNIPER SHOTS WHIZ BY -- The Secret Service men collapse. Shot in the back. Dead. The British Director goes ashen. Bravado gone.

THE COLONEL

Then you leave me none as well. You know, my snipers can hit a flipping quarter, mid-air, from 200 yards. I, however, prefer close range.

The Colonel draws his sidearm and shoots the British Director. Then holsters the gun, walking toward his Chinook. He snaps open a cell phone --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE COLONEL
Take the rest of the Foundation
Directors into custody... I'm
declaring Martial Law.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - DAY

Kaneda and Ky trudge through the shallow water lining the tunnel. Ahead of them a light flickers past.

KANEDA
You see that?

KY
Whatever it was, wasn't on foot.
Was moving way too fast.

Without warning the light whips back around the corner.
Grows bright. Closer. Coming right at them as A BARRAGE
OF TRACER FIRE ERUPTS FROM IT.

They hit the deck, into the foul water as the glare skims
over them, passing and revealing itself to be an UNMANNED
AERIAL VEHICLE (UAV), a modified MQ Reaper.

INT. UAV CONTROL ROOM - SAME

TWO REMOTE PILOTS sit before a panel of instruments, eyes
on POV monitors, seeing what their UAVs see.

REMOTE PILOT
Coming around for another pass.
Two unauthorized subjects locked.

On a monitor -- Kaneda and Ky BOLTING TO THEIR FEET, on
the run. MORE TRACER FIRE on their heels as --

INT. UNDERGROUND CAVERNS - SAME

-- another UAV rounds the corner, flying higher.

REMOTE PILOT (V.O.)
Copy that. I have a visual
northbound tunnel 88. I'll take
the high road.

KANEDA
Get the one behind us!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kaneda and Ky get back to back, EACH SPRAYING RIFLE FIRE at an approaching UAV.

Tracer fire from the UAVs ping the water around them as KY'S GUNFIRE STREAKS THE HULL of her approaching, low flying UAV, knocking it off it trajectory --

The damaged UAV bounces between the walls, just missing the other approaching UAV. It careens into the ceiling. EXPLODES INTO A STORM OF SHRAPNEL AND FLAMES.

INT. INDUSTRIAL WALK-IN COOLER - SAME

An empty Compound-S bottle smashes against the door jamb revealing Sebastian, in his wheelchair, watching Tetsuo.

SEBASTIAN

The doctor meant no harm.

Tetsuo whips around. Breath heaving. Taken by the drug.

SEBASTIAN

We know what you are doing. We know what you want.

TETSUO

What are you?

SEBASTIAN

I am you... What you will become... If you do not stop.

TETSUO

No. You're lying. That can't be.

SEBASTIAN

Soon there will be no turning back for you. We cannot allow you to reach Akira.

Tetsuo's eyes narrow. A realization striking him.

TETSUO

You know where Akira is hidden.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - SAME

Kaneda and Ky run, TRACER FIRE AT THEIR HEELS. They cut a sharp turn into another tunnel, whip around, assault rifles at the ready. The tunnel before them glows as the UAV fast approaches. And just as IT STREAKS PAST --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KANEDA

Now!

BOTH UNLEASH A FIRE STORM OF BULLETS, ripping into the side of the fuselage as it fails to make the sharp turn into their tunnel.

The gunfire rattle comes to a stop. Both out of ammo. They each pop the empty mags from their rifles.

KY

Did it go down?

KANEDA

I don't hear it.

As they pull a new cartridges, the UAV banks tight, ZIPPING AROUND THE CORNER, COMING RIGHT AT THEM. Smoke streaming from its damaged fuselage.

INT. UAV CONTROL ROOM - SAME

On a monitor -- UAV/POV: Kaneda and Ky. They run.

REMOTE PILOT #2

Goddamn. Weapons system disabled
on Reaper 2.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - SAME

Ky and Kaneda dash away. But only as far as the dead end before them allows. The UAV makes A KAMIKAZE APPROACH --

REMOTE PILOT #2 (V.O.)

I have a nav system failure. This
thing's gonna ditch.

Pressed up against the dead end, KANEDA PROTECTIVELY SLIDES IN FRONT OF KY, shielding her as he pops on a new mag, spraying gunfire. Heroically futile as the impaired aircraft careens forward --

They brace themselves for the moment of their death, caught in the shining headlight when suddenly --

-- nothing happens. Kaneda and Ky open their eyes to find THE UAV HOVERING INCHES AWAY FROM THEM.

The aircraft drops. A heap of useless metal powering down. They stare, baffled and relieved.

INT. UAV CONTROL ROOM - SAME

The two Remote Pilots lay unconscious on the floor. Behind them, little Tobias, proud of himself as he watches Ky and Kaneda on the monitor. He runs away.

INT. LAB - DAY

SEBASTIAN IS JOLTED OUT OF HIS WHEELCHAIR, hovering above it. He pulls at his collar, choking. Tetsuo steps out of the cooler, a delirium in his eyes.

TETSUO

Tell me where he is... Where!

SEBASTIAN

No...

TETSUO

TELL ME!

TETSUO RELEASES A SURGE OF ENERGY, sending Sebastian flailing across the room.

THE COLONEL (O.S.)

Tetsuo! Stop!

Sebastian cringes as his momentum comes to a halt inches from the wall. He drops to the ground.

The Colonel enters, a TROOP OF F.S.F. GUARDS behind him, rifles trained on Tetsuo.

THE COLONEL

What have you done here, son?

Tetsuo pants like an animal.

TETSUO

What have I done? What have you done? What have you done to me?

The Colonel steps closer as Tetsuo side-steps around like a caged beast.

THE COLONEL

I saved your life.

TETSUO RELEASES ANOTHER PULSE OF ENERGY, pinning The Colonel to the wall with a painful thud.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As The Colonel chokes an OVERZEALOUS GUARD takes a shot. HITS TETSUO IN THE CHEST. He goes down in a heap. The Colonel drops, released, gasping for air.

THE COLONEL

No... No... NO!

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - DAY

Ky runs, full speed, urgent. Kaneda struggles to keep up.

KANEDA

Ky!

She keeps moving --

KANEDA

Ky! Stop!

She stops. Turns to face him. Out of breath.

KY

What!

KANEDA

Where are we going?

KY

It's this way. I know it. There's an elevator.

KANEDA

You know it? How?

KY

(shocked, confused)
How is this happening? I'm hearing a voice.

INT. LAB - DAY

The Colonel stands over Tetsuo, dismayed until the impossible --

THE BULLET EJECTS FROM TETSUO'S BODY. Spinning and floating right before The Colonel's eyes.

The Colonel watches as THE BULLET ZIPS ACROSS THE ROOM, HITTING EACH GUARD, PIERCING KEVLAR VESTS, ZIG-ZAGGING FROM ONE TO THE OTHER AS THEY EACH COLLAPSE. DEAD.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The "magic bullet" stops in front of the Colonel's forehead. Then drops to the ground between his feet. Behind the Colonel, Tetsuo rises with a maniacal cackle --

TETSUO

There... Now we're even.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

An elevator door slides open, Kaneda and Ky coming face to face with TWO F.S.F. GUARDS, surprised as --

-- Ky disarms the first, CRACKS HIS FACE WITH THE RIFLE BUTT, THEN JAMS HER FOOT INTO THE SECOND'S KNEE, dropping him and shuttling the rifle butt to his head. 3 seconds.

Kaneda stares, stunned as she tosses him the weapon.

KY

By the way... I am a goddamn riot on a date.

INT. LAB - DAY

Tetsuo cringes. A pain shooting through his head as --

IMAGES FLASH: An eye, vessels bursting, a black tear - Ice cracking - The cryogenic chamber - Screams of thousands - The nameplate: #28 - Akira's serene face - Two voices, harsh whispers overlapping: "Tetsuo/Akira."

Tetsuo shakes off the agony.

TETSUO

(re: Akira)

There you are...

He turns to The Colonel. An animal circling it's prey.

TETSUO

You look worried, Colonel. It's OK. I'm going to give you what you want. I plan on enjoying it. Watching this place... Go to pieces. Like it did 20 years ago.

THE COLONEL

That's not what I want.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TETSUO

You can't change the world,
Colonel. You just got to keep
starting over until you get it
right.

THE COLONEL

Son, you have an amazing gift. But
you don't have that kind of power.

TETSUO

But I know who does.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Kaneda and Ky move cautiously, when she suddenly pulls
him into a room as a TROOP OF SOLDIERS rush past.

INT. CHILDREN'S CHAMBER - DAY

Darkness before doors slide open. Kaneda and Ky framed in
the light spilling in, illuminating Emmanuelle's bed.

KANEDA

He's not here.

KY

She's the voice I've been hearing.
She says it's too late. Tetsuo's
gone.

INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR - DAY

Tetsuo runs. Behind him, The Colonel rushes out from the
lab, knows any effort to stop him would be futile.

Tetsuo runs faster and faster, until he CRASHES THROUGH --

EXT. GOLD TOWER MILITARY BASE/198TH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

MIRRORED WINDOWS SHATTER as Tetsuo catapults through,
ARCING INTO THE AIR INTO A CONTROLLED PLUMMET.

EXT. GOLD TOWER MILITARY BASE - CONTINUOUS

Tetsuo lands with a thunderous crunch, CONCRETE BUCKLING
BENEATH HIS FEET.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

The Colonel, on the walkie-talkie. Contained panic.

THE COLONEL

We have a full scale security breach... Subject 41's escaped. We need everyone and everything. He cannot be permitted to reach the Memorial Bunker.

INT. CHILDREN'S CHAMBER - DAY

Ky stands beside Emmanuelle's bed. The child's eyes barely open. Drained from the use of her power.

KY

She says your brother is on his way to free Akira. His mind is gone. It's not him anymore.

The thought rattles Kaneda, but --

KANEDA

I don't believe that... I won't.

KY

Nothing can stop him now. She says Akira and Tetsuo will bring the city down together.

Kaneda gently takes Emmanuelle's fragile little hand --

KANEDA

There's still time. I can stop him. I can save him.

She looks up. Sad eyes watering. Ky sighs, discouraged.

KANEDA

Tell me where my brother is... Please.

Ky looks up, confused, hearing Emmanuelle's voice again --

KY

What's in the salvage yard?

EXT. SALVAGE YARD - DAY

A chain-link fence surrounds rows and rows broken down jeeps, humvees, tanks. The roar of an engine gives way to the sight of --

-- **KANEDA ON HIS GLEAMING RED MOTORCYCLE**. Ky on the back, holding tight as they burst from a row of wreckage, crash through the chain-link fence.

EXT. GOLD TOWER MILITARY BASE/STREET LEVEL - DAY

A convoy of Troop-Transports and Humvee Gun-Trucks, some with anti-tank missile launchers on top, stream out from a parking garage.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - DAY

The sidewalk thick with PEDESTRIANS as Tetsuo presses through. A bull. People scowl and curse as he trudges on.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET - DAY

Kaneda and Ky ride, weaving through the dense traffic --

INT./EXT. BOEING CH-47 CHINOOK HELICOPTER/SKY - DAY

F.S.F GUARDS fill the cabin as The Colonel, beside the PILOT, surveys the streets below --

PILOT

We have a lock on the target.
Fifth & 34th.

THE COLONEL

He's heading for Akira. We need to
evacuate the city.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN/TIMES SQUARE - DAY

The "Ad-Stream" goes dark. The Foundation logo flickers on. PEOPLE on the street stare as --

RECORDED VOICE

Citizens and guests of Neo-
Manhattan... This is not a test.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - DAY

Pandemonium. A crush of vehicles trying to evacuate through the only way out of the city.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 57TH - DAY

Assault vehicles form a perimeter as a BATTALION OF F.S.F.GUARDS spill out from Transports, filtering down opposite sides of the street, clearing PEDESTRIANS.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 34TH - DAY

Tetsuo strides between the gridlock when two AH-64 Apache attack helicopters roar past overhead. He stops to watch them for a moment and is distracted by the sight of --

-- TWO YOUNG BROTHERS on the sidewalk with their PARENTS. They point in wonder as the HELICOPTER'S SCREAM BY. Tetsuo stares, a final memory fading away...

Tetsuo shakes it off. DEMENTIA TAKING A STRONGER HOLD as he flings his arms out, HEAVING A TORRENT OF ENERGY, PARTING THE VEHICLES BEFORE HIM, CARVING A PATH.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 56TH - DAY

F.S.F. GUARDS direct civilian vehicles off the thoroughfare down 57th as OTHERS set road blocks cordoning off cross streets leading to 5th Ave --

The rumble of an Apache draws the crowd's attention as they catch a glimpse of the low-flying aircraft.

Out of view now, the rumbling copter is oddly silenced. BUT ONLY UNTIL IT COMES CAREENING THROUGH THE AIR, BACK THE WAY IT CAME, TUMBLING LIKE A DISCARDED TOY... IT COLLIDES WITH A BUILDING -- ERUPTS INTO A BALL OF FLAMES.

Smoke and flames fill the air. THROUGH THE HAZE, CROSSING THE INTERSECTION -- TETSUO.

INT. STREET - DAY

Kanada and Ky veer onto a sidewalk as Pedestrians dive out of the way of the speeding motorcycle --

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 57TH - CONTINUOUS

F.S.F. GUARDS man the armed Humvees. Missile launchers pan and tilt into place. Four M1 Abrams tanks turn onto the avenue, leveling their cannons at TETSUO, 2 BLOCKS AWAY.

INT./EXT. BOEING CH-47 CHINOOK/SKY - DAY

The Colonel sees the destruction in Tetsuo's wake.

PILOT

Sir, they're waiting on your command.

He struggles with a pained decision.

THE COLONEL

Take him out.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 57TH - DAY

TANKS FIRE THEIR CANNONS, BLASTING A FIERY CRATER INTO THE STREET. A mushroom of black smoke plumes as --

TETSUO STEPS FORTH, SOOT COVERED, BUT UNSCATHED. He seethes with fury. Black veins pulsating beneath his skin as he fixes his gaze on one of the tanks --

THE MIGHTY METAL MACHINE BEGINS TO SHUDDER, CLATTERING LOUDER AND LOUDER UNTIL IT BURSTS APART, DISASSEMBLED. THE FRAGMENTS IMPALE THE SURROUNDING STOREFRONTS.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN STREET - DAY

Kaneda and Ky race toward a corner. She flinches. A sharp pain in her head --

KY

Turn here! Turn here!

Kaneda cuts the turn sharp, barreling toward a cross street roadblock. THEY CRASH THROUGH, SKIDDING TO A HALT BLOCKS BEHIND TETSUO. Smoke rises in the distance.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 57TH - DAY

All four tanks lay decimated before Tetsuo as the rest of the ground forces UNLEASH A HAIL-STORM ASSAULT -- Troops, Humvee missile launchers, the Apaches --

-- all of it coming at Tetsuo as he raises his hands before him, palms out, CAUSING THE INCOMING ATTACK TO SWERVE OFF TRAJECTORY, CURVING OUT, BOMBARDING THE CANYON OF SKYSCRAPERS. Shrapnel and debris rain down.

TETSUO BACKHANDS A SWIRL OF ENERGY INTO THE ASPHALT in front of him. The width of the street buckles, rippling toward the front line of troops and vehicles like a ferocious wave then --

-- POPS EVERYTHING INTO THE AIR FOR A MOMENT, before it all crashes down. The troops and vehicles demolished.

INT./EXT. BOEING CH-47 CHINOOK HELICOPTER/SKY - DAY

The Colonel turns from the chaos in the street, appalled.

THE COLONEL

Get me back to the base. Have the
children waiting on the rooftop.
We need to leave the city.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 34TH - DAY

Kaneda and Ky, on the bike, watch the distant battle. A cloud of dirt and smoke mushrooms into the air.

KY

What are you waiting for?

KANEDA

Get off the bike, Ky.

KY

What? No. I'm not going to let you
do this alone! You need me.

He meets her gaze. A seed of longing. Very real.

KANEDA

Maybe I do...

And he leans in for a short, sweet kiss on the lips, catching Ky off guard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KANEDA

But not for this. Sorry.

And he sweeps her off the bike. Angry, she tumbles to the ground as Kaneda speeds toward his brother...

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 57TH - CONTINUOUS

The two Apache copters hover over wrecked military vehicles. Smoke and dust swirls away in the rotor wind.

INT./EXT. AH-64 APACHE HELICOPTER/SKY - CONTINUOUS

A MONITOR POV of a Digital Targeting System. Tetsuo in the cross-hairs as --

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 57TH - CONTINUOUS

-- Apache #1 launches a "Hellfire" missile.

Tetsuo deflects the assault with A TORRENT OF ENERGY, sending the tactical missile back where it came from.

APACHE PILOT (O.S.)

Look out, look out, look out...
Incoming.

Apache #1 swerves clear, but clips Apache #2, sending it careening down 5th Ave hitting one of the skyscrapers.

The missile disappears up 5th Ave as --

APACHE PILOT (O.S.)

Laser targeting, disengaged.
Missile is rogue. Visual lost.

-- APACHE #2 RIPS INTO THE BUILDING, decimated, showering Tetsuo with a deluge of fire and concrete.

TEN BLOCKS AWAY -- Kaneda rides, faster and faster toward the chaos he sees ahead of him.

INT./EXT. AH-64 APACHE HELICOPTER #1/SKY - CONTINUOUS

Alarms buzz. The missile tracking system, engaged again --

APACHE PILOT (O.S.)

Shit! Missile tracking back on
target.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 57TH - CONTINUOUS

Tetsuo turns to see the rogue Hellfire missile streak toward the Apache, smash through its tail, exploding and sending the aircraft into an wild spin, FLIPPING INTO AN UPSIDE-DOWN NOSEDIVE RIGHT AT HIM.

TETSUO SENDS A SWELL OF ENERGY at the plummeting copter, HIS ARMS OUTSTRETCHED, but as he stops the aircraft from falling on top of him --

-- the spinning rotors of the falling Apache SEVERS HIS ARM an instant before --

-- IT CRASHES INTO A FIERY EXPLOSION RIGHT ON TOP OF HIM.

A BLOCK AWAY -- Kaneda jams on the breaks, horrified. He leaps off his bike, dashing toward the small inferno.

KANEDA

Tetsuo!

Kaneda circles the flaming remains. Finds Tetsuo miraculously alive, skin charred, on his knees, facing the wreckage, eyes on the stump where his arm once was.

As Kaneda steps forward, Tetsuo's gaze darts up, lethal --

TETSUO

Stay away!

Kaneda freezes as TETSUO LETS OUT A GUTTURAL YELL --

Suddenly the wreckage starts to churn, pieces of metal and wiring slithering out, snaking along the asphalt, then winding up around Tetsuo's torso until finally the loose shrapnel and cables fuse with the remains of his limb, forming -- A MONSTROUS METALLIC ARM.

Kaneda watches, astounded and helpless.

KANEDA

My God...

Tetsuo holds it up, marveling when, like a lighting bolt, he shoots to his feet, hurling himself at Kaneda, snatching him up by the throat. He pulls him off his feet. A new level of mania. His face distorted.

TETSUO

Yours and everyone else...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KANEDA

Don't do this. This is not you.

TETSUO

No! It's not. It's better than me.

KANEDA

(gasping for breath)
Listen to me! It's not too late.
You can stop this. I know who you
are. The man inside. All these
years, you've survived, suffering.
Keeping this at bay... Alone. You
have that strength in you. That
power.

Tetsuo looks deep into his brother's eyes, tortured,
trying to understand, trying to accept Kaneda's words.
Longing for relief. Blinks. Memories fighting to surface.

KANEDA

This is your gift. I didn't see
it... I didn't know... How to be
better to you.

A TORRENT OF IMAGES: A lifetime. The brothers history
rips through Tetsuo's mind. Love. Hate. Hurt. Joy.
Jealousy. Elation. Arrogance. Addiction. Denial. Loyalty.
Pain. Their mother's death. Competition. Pride. Devotion.

KANEDA

Your purpose... It's not to bring
Akira back... It's to keep him
where he is. It's why you're here,
Tetsuo... To save us all!

Tetsuo on the precipice of cognition, of rationality...
He drops Kaneda. Longing gone. Replaced with malice.

TETSUO

You're wrong. It's too late for
me... It's too late for everyone.

Tetsuo calmly walks away.

EXT. NYC MEMORIAL BUNKER - DAY

Tetsuo steps up to the memorial, his eyes scanning the
names etched onto the concrete.

TETSUO

I'm here.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE & 57TH - DAY

A BLACK ROLLS-ROYCE PHANTOM speeds between the flaming debris, screeching to a halt beside Kaneda. The back door swings open, revealing Lady Miyako. Ky sits beside her.

LADY MIYAKO

We don't have much time, Kaneda.
We need to leave.

KANEDA

I couldn't stop him.

LADY MIYAKO

This is all far from over, my boy.
You'll have another chance. Now
come on with us.

KY

Kaneda, please. We have to go.

EXT. NYC MEMORIAL BUNKER - DAY

TETSUO SHUDDERS AS HE SUMMONS ALL OF HIS POWER.

The concrete memorial trembles. Long cracks web out.
Cement buckles. THE STONE TURNS TO MOLTEN MAGMA just
before --

-- EVERYTHING ERUPTS LIKE A VOLCANO. Plumes of hot ash
shooting miles into the sky.

INT. BOEING CH-47 CHINOOK HELICOPTER/SKY - DAY

The Helicopter cuts through the sky, away from the city.
The Colonel watches the MUSHROOMING ERUPTION, then turns
around to meet the troubled stares of Sebastian, Tobias
and Emmanuelle, all three safely buckled in.

EXT. NYC MEMORIAL BUNKER - DAY

The rupturing earth makes way for THE RISE OF THE
CRYOGENIC CHAMBER, LEVITATING OUT FROM THE CHASM as it
breaks apart in a shower of iron and ice fragments.

It all settles, ash and smoke clearing to reveal --

-- AKIRA.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TETSUO

(falls to his knees)

OK... OK... OK... I did what you
wanted. Now make it stop. I want
it to stop. I don't... Want
this... Anymore.

(in tears)

Please... I've had enough.

The little boy peers, the ragged, aged teddy bear
dangling in his grasp. No emotion. The same look from 21
years ago, just before he leveled the city. Suddenly --

-- THE ROAR OF KANEDA'S MOTORCYCLE OVERTAKES THE SILENCE.

He rides reckless, nothing to lose, seemingly headed for
A DIRECT COLLISION WITH TETSUO AND AKIRA.

At the last possible moment, he heaves the bike into a
daredevil skid, SPITTING UP A WALL OF DIRT OBSCURING
EVERYTHING until --

-- KANEDA BURSTS FROM THE RISING SCREEN OF SOIL AND DUST,
TETSUO ON THE BACK OF THE BIKE AS THEY SPEED AWAY.

KANEDA

Hold on... I got you.

Through the dissipating cloud Akira watches. Emotionless.
A gentle pulse of static electricity dances around
Akira's head, his hair beginning to stand on end as HE
PREPARES TO UNLEASH HELL ONCE AGAIN...

His eyes go bloodshot. Red vessels spread. Turn black.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)

(serene)

Are these the lessons we've
learned?

EXT. WEST 57TH STREET (NEO-MANHATTAN) - CONTINUOUS

Time slows... Silence overtakes...

The Brothers race through the city as the earth quakes, A
WAVE OF ENERGY WOBBLING THE MOTORCYCLE AS BUILDINGS BEGIN
TO CRUMBLE BEHIND THEM.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)

How man is doomed to replicate the
sins of those who tread the earth
before them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A giant tidal wave of flames comes licking around a corner, churning behind the fleeing bike.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
Or is there something else?

They race past a street sign reading: HUDSON RIVER, two seconds before the seething flames swallow it.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER DOCKS - CONTINUOUS

Kaneda and Tetsuo come CRASHING THROUGH A GATE, a long pier just ahead --

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
Something more resilient...

-- they rumble onto the wood dock, the roiling fire on their heels, as THEY CATAPULT OFF AND INTO --

EXT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

THEY HIT THE WATER HARD. The bike sinks. Tetsuo, unconscious, drifts down slowly. Enveloped by the watery void... When Kaneda reaches out, trying to grasp him. The moment lasts forever...

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
Something which gives us the will
to rise again...

KANEDA'S HAND TAKES HOLD OF TETSUO'S METALLIC APPENDAGE, pulling his brother toward the surface.

AN EYE IN THE SKY VIEW OF NEO-MANHATTAN AS --

-- a wave of destruction brings the city down as everything FADES TO BLACK.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
To see through the darkness...

EXT. HUDSON RIVER SHORE - DAY

Jagged, crippled towers cut through the skyline.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
...and find the strength to
rebuild...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kaneda, soaking wet and gasping, flips Tetsuo onto his back. He stares, desperate to see life in his brother.

LADY MIYAKO (V.O.)
...and take hold of the one true
power which can conquer all.

Finally, Tetsuo's eyes blink open. His face serene. Stoic. Kaneda manages an exhausted smile. Relieved. His brother, alive and safe for now.

He helps Tetsuo sit up. Both staring at his monstrous metallic arm as Tetsuo slowly flutters his steel fingers. He looks up, hearing something.

The wind carries a faint little voice humming something indistinct.

Kaneda hears it too. And his gaze settles on the city in ruins before him. The sky black with soot and smoke.

Staring at the murky waters of the Hudson River, Tetsuo grimaces, a pain shooting through his head again as --

-- he sheds one sad, horrible BLACK TEAR.

EXT. NEO-MANHATTAN RUINS - DAY

A canyon of jagged, devastated skyscrapers. Towers lean on one another. Barely standing.

And there, strolling in between it all... Akira, teddy bear gripped in his hand... Slowly, hauntingly humming the opening notes of "Frere Jacques."

SMASH TO BLACK.