GEMINI MAN

by

Darren Lemke

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Somewhere, sometime in the future...

'CITYVIEW' MONITOR

A DECORATIVE VIDEO LOGO appears. Words read: CITYVIEW

An overly-cheery NEWSCASTER fills the screen.

NEWSCASTER
Good morning and welcome to Cityview.

VIDEO FOOTAGE rolls. Fires are doused. Bodies are bagged. Different times. Different places. Each image is more violent and suspicious than the last.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
Accused of using brash and unlawful attacks on political adversaries, the Intelligence Office has found themselves at the center of the controversial debate regarding Administration control.

VIDEO FOOTAGE rolls. Shows an enormous gray monolith among the clouds. THE OFFICE OF INTELLIGENCE.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
Often referred to as the 'strong arm' of the Administration, Intelligence Officials have taken an offensive stance against the latest accusations of conspiracy and misuse of power.

VIDEO FOOTAGE rolls. An Administrative Official speaks. His name is WILLIAM HOLLAND; 58, gray hair, thick skin.

HOLLAND
The use of covert tactics has not been, nor ever will be, an acceptable means of policy for this Administration, and any accusations that state otherwise should not be made lightly.

Back to the overly-cheery Newscaster.

NEWSCASTER
Intelligence authorities assure City residents that any Official found violating Administrative policy will be dealt with accordingly.

VIDEO FOOTAGE rolls. A lab under siege by government troops. SUITS and SCIENTISTS led out in cuffs.

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NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
Although it's been forty years since the official outlaw of all homogenous gene production, the Biotech Corporation, a leading distributor of cellular synthetics, has become the third private sector research facility to be closed by Administrative Officials for violating standard cloning laws this year.
(beat)
A spokesman for the Office of Science and Technology voiced his concern on the steps of City Hall this morning.

VIDEO FOOTAGE rolls. A SPOKESMAN speaks.

SPOKESMAN
As long as we continue to live in a god-fearing, morally conscious society, the practice of homogenous cloning, whether for corporate research or commercial production, will not now, nor ever be tolerated by this Administration.

VIDEO FOOTAGE rolls. Twentieth century genetics in action. Labs. Lasers. Microscopes.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
The debate over man-made-man is nothing new to Administrative politics, raging all the way back to the pioneer days of biochemistry.

VIDEO FOOTAGE rolls. Ancient history. Clones of mice and frogs. Chimps and gorillas. Each in identical sets of two.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
Since then, experts have speculated that although the genetic code of the human species has long been deciphered, the successful reproduction of a fully developed homogenous organism is still years away.
And now, with the Administrative crackdown on all private sector research,...that day may never come.

Back to the overly-cheery Newscaster.

NEWSCASTER
For Cityview, I'm Kathryn Rhodes.
(beat)
Have a productive day.

BLACK

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CUT TO:

EXT. - THE CITY

Clean. Compact. Claustrophobic. Steel gray skyscrapers stretch up into the heavens. Disappear into the clouds and beyond.

We never see the streets.

Ever.

A complex web of MONORAIL TRACKS stretch out in every direction. Dozens of high-speed, low-maintenance MONORAILS soar past.

CITY VIEW MONITORS play on ever corner. One channel. One station.

RESIDENTS shuffle about like well-trained cattle. Always moving. Always following. Categorized by class. SUITS with SUITS. GRUNTS with GRUNTS.

Two types of security maintain the streets:

CITY PATROL(CP) and ADMINISTRATIVE POLICE(AP). The CPs have limited authority. APs...unlimited. It's abundantly clear who's in charge.

Metallic vests and chest plates make the APs appear more like robots than men. Eagles and identification numbers act as regulation tattoos. Logos read:

COMMUNITY FIRST

Every building, every street, every person...all look the same. Sterile. Functional.

The world of the future.

Ding.

INT. - SECURITY HIGH RISE; SECURITY POINT #3

ELEVATOR DOORS

open. A FOREIGN AMBASSADOR walks out into a marble hallway. Late forties holding onto early thirties. Reeks of money, politics, and power.

We'll know him only as THE TARGET.

POV - X-RAY BINOCULARS

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THE TARGET

Now seen as a GREEN SKELETON. Moves down the illuminous corridor. He passes

TWO PRIVATE SECURITY GUARDS

Same nationality as the Target. Also seen as green skeletons. Both guards are armed with AUTOMATIC WEAPONS. PISTOLS hug their waists.

The skeletal guards nod as the Target moves past.

The Target's apartment door slides open.

Slams closed.

EXT. - ADJOINING BUILDING

Directly across from the security high rise.

Wind roars. Papers flutter. Caught in a vacuum of crossing gusts.

The X-Ray binoculars are lowered revealing

ALEXANDER KANE

Thirty-nine. Hard face. Sharp features. Wears a thick gray jumpsuit and back pack. A toothpick between his lips.

Alex pulls the toothpick from his mouth. Drops it. The toothpick sails upward as we reveal that Alex is

HANGING UPSIDE DOWN

Seventy stories from the pavement. Suspended only by a single high-tension wire.

Alex pulls the hood of his jumpsuit over his head. Black goggles wrapped around his eyes.

Alex withdraws a sleek compact-pistol from his shoulder holster. Cocks it. Returns the pistol to its holster.

Make no mistake, Alexander Kane is a professional assassin.

A MONORAIL

tears by. Blocks Alex from view.

The monorail passes, but-

Alex is gone.

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EXT. - SECURITY HIGH RISE; SECURITY POINT #1

A balcony wraps around the sixty-fifth floor of the high rise. Complete with a fountain, garden, and-

PRIVATE SECURITY GUARDS

A GUARD walks patrol across the northern perimeter. Armed with an automatic weapon and X-RAY GOGGLES. Coiled like a spring.

Footsteps.

The Guard spins around, weapon aimed. He freezes.

GUARD'S POV - X-RAY GOGGLES

Scanning the area. Everything coated in X-Ray green.

Aside from the other Guards,...the balcony appears deserted.

The footsteps sound louder. Closer. Then...

Nothing.

Perplexed, the Guard removes his X-Ray goggles revealing-

ALEX

-standing directly in front of him.

We realize that Alex's jumpsuit is composed entirely of lead fibers, making him invisible to all X-Ray equipment.

Before the Guard can react, Alex is on him. Twists his neck with one hard jolt and-

INT. - TARGET'S APARTMENT

-snap.

The Target pops the cap off of a Whiskey bottle. Pours himself a drink. Moves away from the bar. Passes

A SECURITY MONITOR

A computerized map of the surrounding area. Each security point digitized in red.

We move closer to the portion of the map marked

INT. - SECURITY POINT #2

A single elevator at the end of a long hallway with high ceilings.

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TWO TURRET SENSORS

have been placed high on the opposing walls of the corridor. Automatic weapons positioned on pivotal motion-sensor supports.

A signs reads:

WARNING! TURRET SENSORS ARE ARMED
AND ACTIVE

Alex is there. Hood down. Eyes the turrets. Digs in his back pack. Moves past a series of high-tech, top-of-the-line, electronic equipment and pulls out

A FRISBEE

Alex studies the turrets, the corridor, then-

Throws the Frisbee.

The turrets stir. Pick up on the approaching Frisbee. Lock onto it.

A digitized warning is heard.

DIGITAL VOICE
(o.s.)
Warning. Turret sensors are armed and active.

Frisbee moving closer. Turrets turning.

DIGITAL VOICE
(o.s.)
Warning. Turret sensors are armed and active.

Closer...

DIGITAL VOICE
(o.s.)
Warning. Turret sensors are armed and-

The Frisbee crosses directly between the two turrets. Perfectly positioned in the line of fire.

The turrets turn directly toward each other. Fire as the Frisbee passes. Hitting each other in the process.

The turrets explode.

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INT. - SECURITY POINT #3

TWO GUARDS stand at their post before the Target's apartment. The elevator, silent behind them.

Ding.

The Guards spin around, weapons aimed at

THE ELEVATOR

Doors open, revealing-

Nothing.

The elevator is deserted.

Cautiously, the guards approach. Fingers tense on their triggers.

INT. - ELEVATOR

The Guards move in. Scan the deserted interior.

Guard #1 looks up. Notices the trap door is slightly ajar. He signals for Guard #2 to cover him.

The Guards raise their weapons, take a breath, and-

INT. - ELEVATOR SHAFT

-slam the trap door open.

Guard #1 peers out. Assault weapons ready.

He removes his goggles. Stares in horror upon seeing-

A detonator attached to the elevator's cable. Before he can react-

The detonator bursts. Just enough of a charge to sever the cable and send the elevator (and guards) down the seventy-story shaft.

The Guards' screams vanish into the void.

INT. - SECURITY POINT #3

Alex climbs down from the shaft's ladder and into the hallway. Moves on.

The elevator doors slam shut.

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INT. - TARGET'S APARTMENT; BATHROOM

The Target washes water across his face. Dries himself. Shuts off the light.

Black.

INT. - LIVING ROOM

A palace. Fireplace roars. Theater-sized TV screen plays.

The Target settles into his lush leather chair. Blanket up to his chin. Eyes closed, he turns and rests his head. Doesn't notice

ALEX

standing silently over him. Pistol aimed and cocked.

Alex's finger grows tense on the trigger when-

The blanket stirs. Alex freezes as a-

THREE-YEAR OLD BOY

adjusts himself in the Target's arms...his father's. The boy yawns. Opens his eyes. Sees Alex.

Silence.

The two stare at each other. Motionless. Alex's pistol aimed at the Target's skull. Seems like forever, then-

The Target shuffles. Opens his eyes. Shocked.

TARGET

Oh my...

The Target looks up, but-

Alex is already gone.

The Target eyes a clock on the wall.

TARGET
(to his son)
You're an hour past your bedtime.

The Target lovingly picks up his son and carries him into the bedroom.

The breeze gently blows a curtain past an open window.

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EXT. - INTELLIGENCE OFFICE - MORNING

A large steel skyscraper reaches into the heavens. A fortress. Monorail stations every ten floors. A SQUADRON OF APs at every entrance.

ALEX
(v.o.)
I don't know what happened, Will.

INT. - INTELLIGENCE OFFICE

Elevators rocket in and out of the abyss.

INT. - WILLIAM HOLLAND'S OFFICE

Alex sits.

WILLIAM HOLLAND fixes two drinks at the bar. Clearly a man high up on the chain. Perhaps the highest.

ALEX
I can't explain it.

HOLLAND
You have a gift, Alex. A talent. No one knows your limitations better than you.
(beat)
You have instincts, Alex. You have to trust them.

ALEX
That's the problem...

Alex sighs.

ALEX
I did.
(pause)
I sacrificed the entire mission waiting for a reaction that never came.

A thoughtful pause.

ALEX
There was a time in my life when I wouldn't have left the address in one piece, nevermind the target. But last night...

HOLLAND
There's a first time for everything, Alex.

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ALEX
Not for me.
(beat)
My actions were inexcusable. They were amateur. Reckless. They were...

HOLLAND
Human?

No response.

HOLLAND
It's alright, Alex. It happens to the best of us. Believe it or not,...even I've fallen victim to humanities' virtuous claws.

ALEX
I don't believe it.

Holland smiles. Hands Alex a glass.

HOLLAND
People change, Alex.

ALEX
Not if they can help it.
(pause)
It won't happen again, Will.

HOLLAND
Of that, I have no doubt.

They clink glasses.

HOLLAND
Now, enough of this self-loathing.

Holland opens his desk. Takes out a small box with a bow on it. Lays it before Alex.

HOLLAND
Especially when there are more important matters at hand.

ALEX
What's this?

HOLLAND
A gift.
(beat)
For you.

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HOLLAND
Tomorrow's an important day, Alex.
I wouldn't want for it to go unnoticed.

Alex opens the box. Takes out a small gold pin. An Asian design. The symbol of friendship and loyalty.

Alex studies it.

ALEX
I haven't celebrated a birthday since
I was ten.

HOLLAND
And with good reason.

Holland takes the pin. Attaches it to the inside of Alex's jacket.

HOLLAND
Any day dedicated to acknowledgment of
mortality is no cause for celebration...
but it is cause for reflection.
(beat)
Thirty-nine years worth.

ALEX
I don't know what to say.

HOLLAND
As I said...

Holland grins.

HOLLAND
There's a first time for everything.

Alex studies the pin. Looks troubled.

ALEX
About last night...
(beat)
What are you going to tell the Board?

HOLLAND
I'll tell the Board what I always
tell the Board. That Alexander Kane has
been this Administration's most valued
and dedicated asset for the last twenty-five
years and he will continue to be so for the
next twenty-five.
(beat)
Face it, Alex,...without you, the cleaning
bill for the Administration's dirty laundry
would be enough to have us all filing for
bankruptcy.

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Alex forces a smiles.

HOLLAND
Besides,...I'm giving you a chance to make it up to them.

Holland slides a folder over to Alex. Alex opens it. A photo of

ANOTHER TARGET

is revealed. Vital information included.

ALEX
Who is he?

HOLLAND
Does it matter?

No response.

Alex studies the picture, determined.

ALEX
I won't let you down, Will.

HOLLAND
You never do.

Alex finishes his drink. Rises.

ALEX
I'll show myself out.

Alex stops. Turns.

ALEX
And, Will,...
(pause)
Thank you.

Alex moves away.

HOLLAND
Alex...

Alex stops. Turns.

Holland stays silent. Look like he wants to say something. Settles for-

HOLLAND
Happy Birthday.

Alex nods. Leaves.

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Holland looks troubled.

EXT. - CITY

A monorail whizzes by silently. Miles up from the streets.

ADVERTISER
(v.o.)
Feeling a little older? A little slower?
Feel like you lost your edge?
(beat)
Biocorp can help.

INT. - MONORAIL

CITYVIEW MONITOR

Before and after shots of an OLD WOMAN. Looks years younger.

ADVERTISER
Thanks to the miracle of genetic facial surgery you could take years off your life without taking years off your savings.
(beat)
Biocorp. The private sector's only choice for a better you.

Alex is there. Lost in thought.

The monorail moves on.

INT. - MONORAIL STATION

A dozen monorails stop and go. PATRONS board and depart.

INT. - MONORAIL

Alex in his seat. His eyes turn to the window. He notices something in the station.

A DARK-HAIRED WOMAN; 42, worn but attractive. Her left eye is swollen. She looks as out-of-place as Alex feels.

Beside the woman is her SON, barely six.

Alex watches as the dark-haired woman hangs a flyer on a video-phone booth. Reads:

LOOKING FOR A CHANGE?

ROOM FOR RENT. CHEAP.

The woman turns. Notices Alex. Their eyes meet as-

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The monorail soars away.

An alarm buzzes.

INT. - ALEX'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Plain. Practical.

Alex awakens. He rises. The alarm goes off automatically.

ALARM CLOCK
(v.o.)
Good morning, Alex. The time is eight forty-five, Tuesday, November twelfth.

A beat then-

ALARM CLOCK
(v.o.)
Happy Birthday.

Alex eyes the clock sharply. Sighs. Rises.

INT. - LIVING ROOM

Alex is naked. Both upside down and in a hand-stand position. He painfully does push-ups. A perfect combination of strength and balance.

Alex's body is beginning to show its age. A faded tattoo of a falcon can be seen on his right bicep.

Alex drops, exhausted. Sweat covers his brow.

A PHOTO OF ALEX can be seen on the dresser. Taken years ago. Young. Sharp. A well-oiled machine.

Alex eyes the photo. Rises. Begins again.

INT. - TRACK

An indoor track. JOGGERS move in synch.

Cityview monitors are everywhere. An INTELLIGENCE OFFICE OFFICIAL addresses the press.

CITYVIEW MONITOR

INTELLIGENCE OFFICIAL
I repeat, there are no Board-funded executions being ordered by this Office or any other fraction of this Administration and any accusations that are to the contrary are purely the product of a paranoid and hyper-active imagination...

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Alex jogs past. Pants. Pushes himself.

A YOUNGER JOGGER is in front of him.

Alex eyes the Younger Jogger. Speeds up. Passes the Younger Jogger.

Alex grins to himself. Continues on.

EXT. - ALEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A steel slab just like the rest. More like an insects' cocoon than an apartment building.

INT. - ALEX'S APARTMENT

TWO COMPACT PISTOLS

are loaded and holstered.

A BACK PACK

is filled with high-tech weaponry.

MIRROR

Alex moves in front of the mirror. Attaches Holland's golden pin to his shirt like a medal of honor. Eyes himself thoughtfully.

ALEX
The best.

Alex studies his reflection. Fakes confidence.

The dossier of Alex's target lies opened on a table. A photo of a genetics lab can be seen.

Thunder rumbles.

EXT. - GENETECH - NIGHT

Same as the photo.

Dark. Deserted. Abandoned for years. Another research facility closed down by the Administration.

A tangled mish-mash of rusted steel pipes stretch off in every direction. Moss as thick a carpeting makes the factory appear almost botanical.

The fence is electronically secured. Warning's posted.

Rain pours.

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Alex is there. Alone. Silent. Geared up in his lead-fiber jump suit and goggles.

He studies the address unsurely. Scans the area.

A hesitant beat, then-

Alex moves out.

INT. - GENETECH; STORAGE

Dust-coated canisters, barrels, and boxes are littered everywhere.

All is silent, then-

ALEX

free falls from an opened skylight. A three-hundred foot drop. Stops upside-down just inches from the floor. Suspended by a high-tension wire.

His pistol is out. Goggles on. Aimed at every shape and shadow.

Nothing moves.

Alex unhooks himself. Lands like a panther.

INT. - GENETECH; WAREHOUSE/COOLER

Frozen. Icicles among the steel. Looks like an arctic cave.

Barrels and canisters are piled to the ceiling. All genetic waste.

Alex creeps out of the shadows, gun aimed. He eyes his surroundings, uncertainly.

Moves out.

A noise. Comes from above.

Alex spins around. Gun trained at a

CATWALK

Stretched out high above.

A MUTANT RAT peers out of the shadows. Blind white eyes. Two tails. Victim of the toxic decay.

The rat hisses viciously. Scurries away.

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Alex hesitantly lowers the pistol. Moves on. Disappears up a staircase.

As he does, we notice a

FIGURE

standing silent in the shadows. Holds a portable

DIGITAL TRACKER

A red dot blinks across the screen. Moves in the same direction as Alex. Locked on Alex like a smart missile.

INT. - HALLWAY; SECOND FLOOR

A pack of Mutant Rats tear apart a dead cat. They scurry away as-

Alex creeps out from the stairwell. Eyes the hallway.

ALEX'S POV - X-RAY GOGGLES

X-Ray goggles paint the hall in fluorescent green. Reveal everything in a sixty-foot radius.

Alex moves down the corridor, pistol aimed. He stops. Peers ahead upon seeing

ALEX'S POV - X-RAY GOGGLES

A green SKELETAL FIGURE stands motionless in a deserted lab.

Alex readies his firearm. Moves ahead.

INT. - LAB

Alex quietly enters the lab. Gun out. Peers in.

Broken glass beakers and dusty charts fill the room.

ALEX'S POV - X-RAY GOGGLES

The Skeletal Figure stands in the back of the room. Facing away from Alex.

Alex moves closer. Just behind the figure. Pistol aimed. Finger tense and-

Alex fires. Barely makes a sound.

The Skeletal Figure drops to the floor. Lies still.

Alex takes off his X-Ray goggles. Looks down. Eyes widen. Before him lies

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A LABORATORY SKELETON

Plastic. Harmless. A freshly-made bullet hole through the back of its skull.

Alex studies the skeleton. The lab.

Something's wrong.

Alex retreats.

INT. - WAREHOUSE/COOLER; MOBILE CATWALK

An interchangeable steel pier overlooks the warehouse below.

Alex moves quickly. Eyes everywhere. Coiled like a spring. Rushes across the catwalk toward the exit when-

TEAM LEADER
Freeze!!

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICE

spring up from everywhere.

Equipped with X-Ray goggles, steel armor and standard assault weapons.

A dozen green laser-scope lights cover Alex at once.

TEAM LEADER
Let's not make this any harder, Alex.

Alex moves like a blur. Fires his pistol at the catwalk's steel lock. The catwalk detaches. Drops like a trap door. Alex with it.

A hail of gunfire follows. Tears up the steel.

Alex lands hard. Rolls. Takes cover behind a series of steel barrels as armor piercing bullets chew up the floor.

Alex scans the area with his X-Ray goggles.

No use. The goggles were damaged in the fall. Alex tears them off. Takes position.

CATWALK

Administrative Police scurry about like army ants. Digital trackers reveal that Alex is on the cooler floor.

TEAM LEADER'S POV

X-Ray goggles scan the floor.

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Alex's leaden jump-suit keeps him invisible.

TEAM LEADER
(v.o.; radio)
Target's walking black. Switching to thermal.

With a twist, the goggles' view changes from X-Ray to thermal. Gives a thermal view of everything giving off heat.

Alex's form can be seen behind the canisters below.

TEAM LEADER
(v.o.; radio)
Target located.

INT. - WAREHOUSE/COOLER FLOOR

The Administrative Police rush above. Give Alex nowhere to run. APs box him in. Move to cover Alex from all angles.

Alex looks around. Nowhere to hide. Nowhere to run.

Alex eyes the words on the canister next to him. Reads:

LIQUID NITROGEN

The APs break into two squadrons. One above. One below.

THE SECOND SQUADRON

Quickly descends down the stairs. Onto the cooler floor. Assault rifles aimed. Moving fast.

POV - SECOND AP SQUAD; THERMAL GOGGLES

Alex's HEAT OUTLINE can be seen behind the canisters. Completely visible.

APs prepare to fire as-

Alex dives back. Fires repeatedly at the liquid nitrogen canisters.

The canisters blow. Liquid nitrogen sprays the floor. Coats the room in an icy mist. Drops the temperature even lower as-

POV - SECOND AP SQUAD; THERMAL GOGGLES

-Alex's thermal image fades from the screen.

APs stop dead. React as-

CATWALK

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The Team Leader's digital tracker shows that-

TEAM LEADER
Target's active! Target's active!

And then-

COOLER FLOOR

Before the second squadron can react-

Alex is on them. Emerges from the veil of gray fog like a demon. Fires repeatedly. Sends two APs to the icy floor. Three. Four. Six.

APs fire blindly. No use. Alex is on them.

CATWALK

Bullets blare like thunder. Flashes from beneath the mist.

The Team Leader reacts. Rushes toward the cooler floor. The First squadron follows. A DOZEN APs in all.

COOLER FLOOR

Gunfire stops. Silence resumes. The fog lifts revealing-

THE SECOND SQUADRON

Dead, all.

A beeping sound. The Team Leader eyes his digital tracker. The red dot moving west.

TEAM LEADER
Find the son-of-a-bitch.

INT. - WESTERN CORRIDOR; THIRD FLOOR

TWO APs rush by. Digital trackers in hand. They monitor the red blip on the screen. Right on top of it.

The APs stop. Scan the area, rifles aimed. See nothing.

AP
(into helmet mike)
Third floor clear. Moving to two.

The APs move down the stairs.

High above the APs...

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PIPES

Alex sits still and silent amongst the steel pipes. Watches the APs fade.

Alex curiously eyes the APs digital trackers. The red blip.

Alex considers. Reaches into his lead-lined suit. Pulls out

THE GOLDEN PIN

Holland's gift.

Alex snaps the frame off of the pin. Reveals an electronic tracing unit beneath.

Alex's face goes hard.

ALEX
...Will.

INT. - WESTERN CORRIDOR; FIRST FLOOR

The Team Leader and his APs scan every room.

An AP spies his tracker. Blip moving.

AP
Target's active.

The men move. Follow the blip into

INT. - WAREHOUSE FLOOR

The Team Leader stops as-

Two APs emerge from down the stairs. Two more from up.

AP #1
Third floor clear.

AP #2
Second clear.

The Team Leader scans the area as-

The digital blip stops moving. All heads slowly turn toward

A MEN'S ROOM DOOR

Slightly ajar.

The Team Leader grins.

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INT. - MEN'S ROOM

Large. Industrial. Forty sinks. Fifty stalls.

A DOZEN APs silently enter the men's room, assault weapon raised. Quickly take position.

All stall doors are opened except for the last one.

DIGITAL TRACKER

Shows that the blip is close. Closer...

The Team Leader advances. Slowly moves toward the last stall. His team behind him.

DIGITAL TRACKER

The blip stops blinking. The APs are literally right on top of the target.

The Team Leader eyes the last stall. Gestures for his men to hold position. And then-

TEAM LEADER

Fire.

Bullets roar as-

INT. - STALL

Canisters shake. Four of them. All marked 'explosive'.

Holland's golden pin lies on top. Alex, no longer attached.

Sparks fly. Metal tears and-

EXT. - GENETECH

-the factory explodes. Rusted shrapnel engulfed in flames.

Rain pours.

Alex walks away from the inferno.

Doesn't look back.

Explosions turn to-

EXT. - HOLLAND'S PENTHOUSE; HIGH RISE

-thunder.

Eighty stories up. A monorail whizzes past.

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Rain sweeps across the wall-sized windows in waves.

INT. - HOLLAND'S PENTHOUSE; STUDY

COMPUTER SCREEN

A file is opened. The name 'FORRESTER GRANT' appears.

A name is typed below it. Alex's name.

Holland is there. Eyes the screen solemnly. He sighs. Types.

Words appear beside Alex's name. Read: FILE DELETED

Holland sighs. Shuts the screen off. Notices that his slippers are wet. His chair is in a puddle of rain water.

Holland's eyes widen and then-

Alex is on him. Slams Holland's head into a computer monitor. Cracks it.

Holland is pressed against the desk. Alex jams the barrel of his pistol down Holland's throat.

ALEX
I want to know why.

HOLLAND
It wasn't my fault, Alex. I tried to reason with them. You have to believe me. It was the Board's decision-

ALEX
I want to know why!!

Alex draws back the hammer. Speaks softly.

ALEX
I want to know why.

The doorknob to the study turns. Holland notices. Alex doesn't.

Holland opens his mouth. Barely whispers a response.

HOLLAND
It's...it's your birthday.

Alex stares confused as-

The study door bursts open. TWO APs are there. Weapons drawn.

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Alex moves. Runs down a hall.

The APs fire. Eat up the walls.

LIVING ROOM

Alex runs. Heads right for the enormous window. Fires at it repeatedly. Splinters it like a web.

The APs aim at Alex as-

Alex jumps through the window. It shatters like the rain.

The APs rush to the edge. Look out. Eighty-three stories of nothing. Alex is nowhere to be seen.

Holland moves to the edge. Wipes the blood from his head with a hanky. Stares into the abyss.

Doesn't like what he sees.

HOLLAND
(v.o.; on the phone)
There's been a problem.

INT. - APARTMENT

Plain. Practical. Looks a lot like Alex's.

HOLLAND
(v.o.)
There were...complications.

A FIGURE

Young. Naked. Half of Alex's age. Both upside down and in a hand-stand position. He does push-ups. A perfect combination of strength and balance. Fast. Furious. Never tires.

The body is in perfect shape. A machine. A fresh tattoo of a falcon can be seen on his right bicep.

HOLLAND
(v.o.)
A specialist may be required.

The figure stops. Drops. Takes a breath.

HOLLAND
(v.o.)
A specialist in every sense of the word.

Begins again.

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INT. - INTELLIGENCE OFFICE; BOARD ROOM

A DOZEN HUGE DIGITAL MONITORS are displayed across the perimeter of the oval-shaped room. A similarly-shaped table in the center.

A different FACE fills each monitor. All old. Grave. Intimidating.

Meet the BOARD.

Holland stands before them all.

BOARD MEMBER #1
Even if this Board does agree with your...proposal, Holland, how can you even be sure that Alex is still in the City?

HOLLAND
Alex is a romantic. He believes that every problem has a solution. In the last twelve hours his faith has been shattered, his life threatened, and his world torn apart. He'll want answers. They City is the only place where he'll find them.

BOARD MEMBER #2
And if you're wrong? If he decides to run?

HOLLAND
Run? Run where? With AP restriction on all outbound Metro service, Alex will be lucky if he's able to crawl.
(beat)
Besides...

Holland pours a glass of water. Drinks.

HOLLAND
Alex is a bird of prey. When struck, he doesn't cower...he attacks. The man is cunning, calculated, vindictive...and, fortunately, for this Administration, ultimately predictable.
(beat)
Given enough time,...Alex will come to us.

BOARD MEMBER #3
A luxury, unfortunately, we can't afford.

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Silence.

The Board considers.

BOARD MEMBER #1
And your...specialist...has he been told?

HOLLAND
He's been told. Yes.

BOARD MEMBER #2
Everything?

HOLLAND
Everything that needs to be.

BOARD MEMBER #1
He's had questions?

HOLLAND
No more than expected.
(beat)
Personally, I think he's suspected all along.

BOARD MEMBER #3
Which doesn't strengthen your argument.

BOARD MEMBER #1
Strengthen or weaken, there are still certain...personal conflictions that must be addressed. Certain emotional factors that may exist between predator and prey. Sympathy. Compassion. Devotion.

HOLLAND
Resentment. Rivalry. Conceit.
(beat)
The knife cuts both ways.

BOARD MEMBER #2
Yes, and the Board doesn't need any blood spilling outside its door.

HOLLAND
With all due respect, Rye has never let personal conflict come between him and his assignment. I see no reason why he should start now.

BOARD MEMBER #2
And I see no reason why he shouldn't.

HOLLAND
If I may.

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Holland addresses the entire board.

HOLLAND
Rye's already had six years field experience over-seas with a tighter record than most City-trained AP units put together. He's young. He's sharp. And, most importantly, he's hungry. There isn't a skill that Alex has learned that Rye hasn't mastered. A mission completed, that Rye hasn't mimicked. And, although I agree that, ultimately, this Board can predict Alex's every move, it can't, however, predict his every thought.
(beat)
A disability, fortunately, that Rye does not share.

Silence, then-

BOARD MEMBER #1
Bring him in.

METALLIC DOORS

open. Reveals

A FIGURE

in the shadows. Built. Athletic. Stands silent.

BOARD MEMBER #1
Do you understand the circumstances that have been presented to you?

The Figure nods.

BOARD MEMBER #2
And you understand your role in those circumstances?

The Figure nods.

BOARD MEMBER #3
Then you understand what is required?

FIGURE
Yeah.
(beat)
I understand.

The Figure lights a cigarette. Reveals

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RYE KANE

Hard face. Sharp features. We've seen this face before. It's Alex's.

Meet Alexander Kane's twenty-five year-old clone. Cocky. Confident. Young. Dressed flashy. Acts flashier.

RYE
You want me to kill myself.

Rye blows out the match.

BLACK

Wind growing. Growing.

ALEX'S DREAM

EXT. - 'CAPETOWN' MILITARY ACADEMY

A fierce wind storm shakes the trees.

GRADUATION CEREMONY

Has ended.

PARENTS grabs their CHILDREN and rush them out of the fierce crosswinds.

A single boy moves through the crowd. Dressed in a child's military uniform. It is

ALEX

age 12.

Alex eyes the parents. Watches as they shield their children. Escort them to safety.

The yard clears out.

Alex is alone. No parents to shield him. No family to greet him. Then-

A HAND falls on Alex's shoulder and-

INT. - SEEDY HOTEL ROOM

Alex wakes from his dream, rattled.

Alex rises from the sunken mattress. Moves to the cracked window. Over the chipped floor.

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Alex peers out.

A single-car AP MONORAIL slowly passes by on its tracks.

Alex leans back. Waits for it to pass. Scans the view. Rain pours.

Alex sighs. Moves back in.

SHOPPING BAG

Alex takes out some scissors, bleach, and a comb.

INT. - SEEDY HOTEL ROOM; BATHROOM

Water runs. Clipped hair and bleach spills down the drain.

Alex looks up at the mirror. Wipes away the fog. Alex's hair has been bleached white. Cut to the scalp.

Not much of a disguise for the APs, but it'll do.

Alex kills the light. Moves out.

INT. - SEEDY HOTEL ROOM

Cityview plays on the monitor.

CITYVIEW

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
And in science today, renowned genetic pioneer, Dr. Sidney Sampson, received the Edmund Kinn Lifetime Achievement Award for his Administrative work in the advancement of biogenetical research.

Footage plays. DR. SIDNEY SAMPSON, 62, black, distinguished; receives his award on stage. Camera flashes go off.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
Although a strong public advocate against the legalization of humongenous cloning, Dr. Sampson, best known for his contributions to the Office of Science and Technology, has long been credited as the father of bipedal synthesis-

Alex switches it off. Moves to the mirror. Eyes his tired reflection. Then-

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The video-phone rings.

Alex spins around.

The video-phone rings again...and again.

Alex eyes it. Considers.

Slowly, hesitantly,...Alex's hand switches on the receiver. The screen stays black. The speakerphone hums.

Silence, then-

RYE
(v.o.; speakerphone)
Y'know, if I was a guy hiding from the Board, the AP, and every Administrative official this side of the Metro, I'd be staying at the only private sector hotel in the City with trains running to both Downtown and the Tunnel in a two block radius. Eighty-eighth floor. Eastern view. Smoking.
(pause)
But, of course, that's just me. Everybody's different.

Alex moves. Takes cover against the wall. Cautiously peers out the window. Sees nothing.

Alex spies his gun across the room. The glass window between him and the pistol. A perfect opening for any sniper.

Alex gets ready to make a run for it, when-

RYE
(v.o.; speakerphone)
Easy, Alex. This is no time to get reckless.
(beat)
Remember what they taught us in Capetown. Action, not reaction. Control your environment before your environment controls you.

Alex considers the situation. Eyes his surroundings. He notices a light switch on the opposing wall.

Alex opens the dresser drawer beside him. Snags the Bible. Throws the Bible against the light switch. The lights go out.

Alex moves like a panther. Runs. Drops. Rolls past the window. Snags his gun and recovers. The entire action takes less than a second.

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RYE
(v.o.; speakerphone)
Very good, Alex. Colonel Barter would be proud.

Now armed, Alex peers out the otherside of the window. Scans the opposing rooftop.

RYE
(v.o.; speakerphone)
Of course, all this isn't making my job any easier.

Nothing.

RYE
(v.o.; speakerphone)
I mean, after all, how do you take out a mark on full alert, seventy stories up, with no clear shot, and zero visibility?
(pause)
Well, Alex?...How do you?

A beat, then-

Alex's eyes widen.

EXT. - ALEX'S HOTEL ROOM

Alex bursts out of the glass window. Shards fly as Alex's room-

-explodes.

The ceiling crumbles. Crashes onto the floor. Crushes everything in its way as-

Alex lands on the

EXT. - OPPOSING ROOFTOP

High winds. Pounding rain.

Two stories below. Filled with dozens of tangled antennas.

Alex hits hard. Bloody. Beaten. His gun's gone. Lost in the jump.

Alex rises to his knees. A SILENCED PISTOL is pressed against Alex's forehead.

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RYE
(o.s.)
Personally, I'd rent the room above him and drop the ceiling on his head.
(beat)
But, to each his own.

Slowly, cautiously, Alex looks up. Eyes the SILHOUETTE above him.

ALEX
Who the hell are you?

Lightning flashes revealing

RYE

Grinning. Leering.

RYE
Your replacement.

Alex goes white.

A fire alarm blares from across the way. Rye's eyes shift.

Alex regains his composure. Seizes the moment. Swats Rye's gun from his hand. Knocks it off the roof.

Alex is up. On Rye. Uses martial arts tactics. An expert.

Rye blocks every punch. Stops every kick. Expects them all before they happen.

RYE
It's no use, Alex. I'm your complete genetic equivalent. Same RNA. Same DNA.
(beat)
Hell, we even have the same over-bite.

Rye sends Alex reeling in pain. Savors the moment.

RYE
I'm you, Alex. Only better.

Alex snags a stray piece of pipe from the rooftop. Swings.

Rye blocks the swing, already armed with his own piece of steel. Alex stares, amazed.

RYE
I know how you think.

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Alex swings again. Rye ducks.

RYE
I know how you act.

Alex swings. Rye blocks. Knocks the pipe from Alex's hands.

RYE
Your entire goddamn defense system is a biological reaction.

Rye kicks Alex in the chest. Sends him back.

Alex tumbles. Gets to his knees.

Rye throws the pipe to the pavement. Advances. Alex eyes Rye in disbelief.

ALEX
...how?

Rye belts Alex. Knocks him down.

RYE
First rule of combat. Never question. Only respond.

Rye grabs Alex and-

RYE
Didn't you learn anything in Capetown?

Rye head-butt's Alex. Sends Alex sailing toward the roof's edge.

Alex spies his fallen gun on the adjoining building's fire escape. Two stories below. Eighty-stories from the pavement. The lower half of the fire escape fades into the void.

Alex moves. Runs. Jumps off the rooftop and onto the

OPPOSING ROOFTOP

A twenty-foot gap between. An endless drop below.

Alex hits hard. Takes a breath. Rises to see-

RYE

Standing in front of him.

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RYE
There's no point in running, Alex. I'm your shadow. Better. I'm your reflection.

Alex runs. Jumps from the rooftop to the

FIRE ESCAPE

Alex moves. Reaches the landing where his gun fell, except-

The gun is gone.

Alex freezes.

Rye is there. Already armed with Alex's pistol.

RYE
There's no way you can win, Alex.

Alex backs up. Exhausted. Out-of-breath. Moves toward the fire escape's edge.

RYE
There's nothing you can do that I can't predict.

Alex is at the fire escape's edge as-

Rye aims the gun and-

Alex slips on the wet surface.

Rye fires.

Alex tumbles backwards. Falls. Disappears from sight.

Rye rushes to the roof's edge. Looks down to see a

MONORAIL

whizzing past.

Alex lies on top. Stunned. Barely conscious.

The train fades into the distance.

RYE
I stand corrected.

Rye grins. Finds it amusing.

RYE
Okay, Alex. Have it your way.
(beat)
It's all the same to me.

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INT. - MONORAIL

Doors open. Alex tumbles inside.

A FEW STARTLED PASSENGERS notice Alex. Quickly exit the car.

Alex pulls himself into a seat. Notices that his hand is covered in blood. The same blood that's leaking from Alex's side.

A gunshot wound.

Alex sighs. Closes his eyes as-

EXT. - MONORAIL

-the monorail speeds off into the night.

INT. - LUXURY HIGH-RISE; UPTOWN - SUNNY MORNING

Uptown...Skyscraper homes of the elite.

PERSONAL GLASS ELEVATORS

rocket up the sides of the building.

INT. - SIDNEY SAMPSON'S PERSONAL ELEVATOR

The elevator doors slide open.

DR. SIDNEY SAMPSON

enters.

ELEVATOR
(v.o.)
Good morning, Doctor Sampson. The time is eleven-thirty five.

Sampson hits a button. The doors close.

EXT. - LUXURY HIGH-RISE

Sampson's elevator begins its descent.

INT. - SIDNEY SAMPSON'S PERSONAL ELEVATOR

Sampson waits impatiently. Enjoys the view. Notices something on the floor.

A drop of blood. Sampson's eyes widen. He moves. Reaches into the elevator's glove compartment.

It's empty.

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A pistol is pressed against the back of Sampson's head.

ALEX
(o.s.)
Looking for this?

Sampson turns. Alex is there. Already behind him. Pale. Wounded. Armed with Sampson's gun.

ALEX
And I thought I read somewhere that you were supposed to be a pacifist, Sidney.

SAMPSON
These days you can't be too careful.

Alex presses the elevator button with the gun's barrel.

ALEX
So I've noticed.

EXT. - LUXURY HIGH-RISE

The elevator stops. Moves back up. Floors whiz past.

INT. - SIDNEY SAMPSON'S PERSONAL ELEVATOR

Sampson stays frozen. Alex behind him. Gun trained at Sampson's head.

ALEX
Your name is Dr. Sidney Sampson.
You were the chief biogenetic engineer at the Office of Science and Technology for thirty-three years.
(beat)
Your sector clearance opens more doors than a jack hammer.

SAMPSON
I'm retired.

ALEX
Only in spirit, and if you want to keep it that way I suggest you answer my questions quickly and accurately.
(pause)
You know who I am?

Sampson studies Alex. Hesitantly nods.

ALEX
You know why I'm here?

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Sampson shakes his head.

ALEX
I tried to kill myself tonight, and myself tried to kill me.
(beat)
The Board wants me dead. What the hell's going on?

SAMPSON
I don't know what you're talking about.

ALEX
Don't bullshit me, Sidney. There's a guy out there walking around in my skin, and I sure as hell don't remember loaning it out.

SAMPSON
(turning; shocked)
You met him?
(beat)
Jesus...that was never supposed to happen.

ALEX
Yeah, well, things haven't been going exactly as planned all week. What do you know about it?

SAMPSON
It was a long time ago, Alex.

ALEX
So get nostalgic.

A beat.

SAMPSON
It was the Board's idea. All of it.

ALEX
What was?

SAMPSON
Power comes and goes. Administration's rise and fall. No matter how well you keep things maintained...it's just a matter of time before they break down.
(beat)
The Intelligence Office was Holland's machine. You were its most irreplaceable part.

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ALEX
Part?

SAMPSON
For years you were Holland's single greatest asset. You bailed the Board out of more shit than any AP unit or puppet media ever could. You were hard. You were hungry. You were fast.

ALEX
Enough with the history lesson, Sidney, get to the biology.

SAMPSON
Well, it's like I said. The Intelligence Office is a machine. When a part gets rusty, you replace it. Why take a chance on untested equipment-

ALEX
-when you can just use newer models.
(beat)
Jesus Christ.

SAMPSON
Your genes made for the blueprint. Your upbringing,...the design.

ALEX
Design for what?

SAMPSON
Perfection.
(beat)
Professional athletes reach their peak at twenty-five. Decline at thirty. By forty they're done. You're profession's no different. The years take their toll.
(beat)
Rye was created to finish what you started.

ALEX
Are you saying that he didn't have a choice?

SAMPSON
Do any of us? C'mon, Alex, how much free will do you think we really have? Intelligence. Creativity. Dexterity. Aggression...Most every decision we make is based on our individual genetic code. Holland only nurtured what was already there.
(beat)
Like it or not, Alex. You made Rye what he is today.

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ALEX
The perfect killer.

Alex considers.

ALEX
It doesn't make sense. For twenty-five years my loyalty to the Board has never once been in question...what makes today any different? If they wanted me to retire, why didn't they just give me a watch? Why am I suddenly such a threat?

Alex presses the gun against Sampson's skull.

ALEX
You're not telling me something, Sidney.

SAMPSON
I swear, Alex, I told you everything I know.
(beat)
I just make the blood, I don't spill it.

Alex considers.

Silence.

The pain hits. Alex tries to ignore it but can't.

ALEX
I've been bleeding too long. It has to stop. Can you help?

SAMPSON
Do I have a choice?

Alex draws back the hammer on the gun.

ALEX
Absolutely.

INT. - SAMPSON'S APARTMENT

A architectural marvel.

Sampson bandages Alex's side. Exchanges bloody cloth for dry bandages.

Alex cringes in pain as Sampson finishes his work. He hands Alex some pills.

SAMPSON
They might help with the infection.
I have nothing to give you for the pain.

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Silence, then-

ALEX
How do I stop him?

A thoughtful beat, then-

SAMPSON
Your prime instinct is survival. Rye's is the same. Have you ever considered that maybe stopping him isn't the solution?

ALEX
There's nowhere I could go where he wouldn't find me. Nowhere I could hide. He'd follow me to the end of the earth. The bottom of the sea.

SAMPSON
How can you be so sure?

ALEX
Because that's exactly what I'd do.

Alex sits up. Gets dressed.

ALEX
I was at my peak at twenty-five. He couldn't be much older.
(thoughtfully)
When I was his age I killed men like me. Older. Slower. Used-to-bee's. It was my specialty.

Alex considers.

ALEX
I need time to heal. To plan. I need rest. I don't know where to go.
(beat)
How do you beat something that knows how you think?

Sampson thinks.

SAMPSON
Change how you think.
(beat)
You have a pattern, Alex. A style. His is the same. Work out of character. It'll make it tougher for him to follow.
(beat)
Just because he knows your thought pattern doesn't mean he's psychic. You have experience, Alex. He doesn't. Use it to your advantage.

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Alex considers. Rises and dresses.

ALEX
You probably saved my life.

SAMPSON
I didn't have much say in the matter.

ALEX
That doesn't mean I'm not grateful.
(pause)
If what you're saying is true, then it's not going to take much time for my new friend to figure out where I went.
(beat)
Do you have someplace to stay?

Sampson nods.

ALEX
Good. Then stay somewhere else.
(beat)
Rye has little tolerance for informants. And the Board...even less.

Sampson takes in the implications.

Alex moves up the stairs.

ALEX
Sidney.

Sampson turns.

ALEX
If the Board does want me dead, they're not going to give me much time to find out why.
(beat)
I saw something in Holland's office the other night. A name. Forrester Grant. Does it mean anything to you?

Sampson considers.

SAMPSON
No.

ALEX
Why don't I believe you, Sidney?

SAMPSON
You're suspicious by nature.

Sampson shrugs.

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SAMPSON
I should know.

Alex grins wryly. Moves out.

EXT. - MONORAIL STATION - AFTERNOON

Among the heavens.

Hustling with COMMUTERS. Most in suits. All the same color. Same style.

INT. - VIDEO-PHONE BOOTH

Alex is there. Looks pale. Weak. He flips through a digital phone book. Hotels, motels, apartments, homeless shelters....

Nothing. Frustrated, Alex shuts the screen off. He leans back, defeated.

ALEX
Where the hell wouldn't I look?

Alex turns. Something on the video-phone booth's outside wall catches his eye.

EXT. - VIDEO-PHONE BOOTH

Alex rips a paper flyer off the booth. Stares at it. It reads:

ISN'T IT TIME FOR A CHANGE?

ROOM FOR RENT. CHEAP.

Alex considers.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN

Made from brick instead of steel. Run-down buildings stretch up sixty stories. Graffiti covers almost every inch. Skyscraper slums.

Most monorail lines are out of service. Gangs of TEENS play on the tracks.

APARTMENT BUILDING

Beaten. Run-down.

DARK-HAIRED WOMAN
(v.o.)
Okay, now listen up and listen good because I'm only going to say this once.

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INT. - APARTMENT

Decaying. Shabby.

Alex is there. The DARK-HAIRED WOMAN from the subway station leads him down the hall. Her name is REBECCA. Her swollen eye is less noticeable than earlier.

REBECCA
The bathroom's down the hall to the left. The kitchen to the right. We don't allow guests after eight and lights are off by ten.

Rebecca opens the door to

ALEX'S ROOM

Musty. Claustrophobic.

REBECCA
You have your own bed, refrigerator, and Cityview to make you feel at home, so they'll be no reason why you'd have to use any of mine.

Rebecca moves in. Locks the windows.

REBECCA
Windows stay down. Heat stays up. I have a six-year old child in the next room and I'm not going to allow him to get sick because my new tenant wants to play Nanook of the North.
(beat)
You know how to use a phone?

Alex nods.

REBECCA
Good. Then you know how to pay for one.
(beat)
The washing machines are on forty-five. The dryers on forty-six.

Rebecca moves out.

REBECCA
Enjoy your stay.

Rebecca stops.

REBECCA
Oh, and one more thing...

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Turns.

REBECCA
Don't let the single, desperate mother act fool you. I have one gun, two degrees in Tai-Kwando, and a half dozen brothers on City Patrol.
So, if you came here today with any motives aside from sleeping, eating, and bathing, I suggest you pack your bags and save yourself a fortune in hospital bills.
(beat)
Is there anything I forgot to mention?

ALEX
Your name.

A beat.

REBECCA
Rebecca.
(pause)
Is there anything else I can help you with?

Alex shakes his head.

REBECCA
Good.

Silence.

REBECCA
Try to keep it that way.

Rebecca disappears down the hall.

Alex turns. Sees a six year-old boy studying him from a half-opened doorway. Name's ZACH.

Alex fakes an awkward smile.

The boy closes the door.

Alex stares. Retreats into his room.

EXT. - MONORAIL STATION - NIGHT

Monorails zip in and out of the station.

INT. - MONORAIL STATION

The evening commute. Packed with evening COMMUTERS.

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SIDNEY SAMPSON

quickly moves through the crowd. Luggage packed. Ticket out. Constantly checks to see if he's being followed. Keeps his head down to avoid AP contact.

Sampson finds the gate he needs. A shuttle out of the city. He rushes through. Disappears down the hall passing a

NEWS STAND

A Cityview monitor plays

CITYVIEW

Footage of Alex's seedy hotel room plays. Fireman control the flames.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
In other news, it seems a faulty gas pipe was the cause behind last night's Mid-town inferno which left two dead and dozens injured in what Administrative Safety Inspectors are calling neglectful endangerment...

Below the monitor is

RYE

Chews on a toothpick. Watches Sampson flee the scene. Follows.

EXT. - TUNNEL

THE MONORAIL

flies out of the darkness and over the City. Tunnels are carved through the center of buildings. The monorail zips through.

INT. - MONORAIL

Sampson sits among the other PASSENGERS. Catches his breath. Watches the skyscrapers pass.

The monorail heads through a short tunnel. Lights go out. When they return-

RYE

sits across from Sampson. Face stone. Eyes on Sampson.

Sampson sees him. Goes white.

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Rye shakes his head disappointed.

Sampson slowly rises. Cautiously walks backwards. Eyes on Rye. Then-

runs.

Rye watches him go. Follows.

EXT. - MONORAIL

Whizzes across the tracks. Turns.

INT. - MONORAIL; SECOND CAR

Sampson rushes through. Pushes past the crowd.

Rye follows. Walks steadily. Coolly.

Sampson drops his bags. Leaves them.

PASSENGER
Hey, mister, you dropped your-

Rye pushes past.

INT. - MONORAIL; THIRD CAR

Sampson pushes through. Knocks a WOMAN to the ground.

WOMAN
Hey-

Keeps running.

Rye follows.

Sampson opens the front door. Moves into

INT. - MONORAIL; LAST CAR

Sampson stops. Eyes the car for a moment. Rushes in.

INT. - MONORAIL; THIRD CAR

Rye tears the door open. Moves into the

LAST CAR

Stops dead in his tracks. The car is filled with

CITY PATROL OFFICERS

A dozen in all. Each armed.

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Sampson sits quietly at the front of the car. The wall of City Officers between him and Rye.

Tense silence.

Rye surveys the scene.

Sampson eyes Rye triumphantly. Brow wet with sweat.

Rye says nothing. Stands motionless.

A CP OFFICER notices Sampson. His shaken composure. He scans Rye. Notices the trouble.

CP OFFICER
(to Rye)
Excuse me.

Nothing.

CP OFFICER
Excuse me.

Rye turns.

CP OFFICER
Is there a problem here?

EXT. - MONORAIL

Heading toward a tunnel. A few yards away.

INT. - MONORAIL

Rye eyes the approaching tunnel. Closer...closer...

CP OFFICER
(to Rye)
Hey. I asked you a question.

Rye turns back.

CP OFFICER
Is there a problem?

Closer...closer...and then-

RYE
No, Officer. There's no problem.

Rye moves like a viper. Whips out two pistols.

The officers react as-

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The MONORAIL enters the tunnel.

Darkness.

EXT. - MONORAIL

Roaring wheels. Screeching metal as the last of the MONORAIL disappears through the tunnel.

INT. - MONORAIL; LAST CAR

Gunfire lights up the last car like a strobe light.

SNAPSHOTS IN THE DARK

Rye firing. Dodging. Maneuvering.

Officers scrambling. Missing. Dropping.

Bullets blare. Blood sprays.

An Officer's chest explodes. Another's eye bursts.

Two more drop. Three.

Rye moves like a well-oiled robot. Fires and reloads reflexively.

A machine.

A monster.

EXT. - MONORAIL

The MONORAIL exits the tunnel.

INT. - MONORAIL; LAST CAR

Silence.

Sampson slowly peeks out to see

THE DOZEN CP OFFICERS

Dead. Every last one.

Rye stands over them. Gun smoking like a chimney.

RYE
No problem at all.

Sampson freezes.

Rye steps over the dead officers. Moves to Sampson. Sits in front of him.

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RYE
Excuse me.

Sampson looks up at Rye.

RYE
Is this seat taken?

EXT. - MONORAIL

The train fades into the night.

INT. - REBECCA'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

A thin drizzle falls.

INT. - ALEX'S ROOM

CITYVIEW MONITOR

Footage of the train massacre. Bodies carted away.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
Although the lone gunman managed to avoid AP authorities, Administrative Officials assure Metro-Line riders that every precaution is being taken to assure commuter safety.

Sampson's broken glasses are bagged and removed.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
Dr. Sidney Sampson was sixty-one.

The screen goes black.

Silence.

Alex sits on the bed. Weak. Frustrated. Lost in thought. Notices the fresh blood on the side of his shirt.

Alex sighs. Rises.

INT. - BATHROOM

Alex is bare-chested. Unwraps a bloody bandage from his side. Applies a fresh one. He gasps in pain.

REBECCA
(o.s.)
There's some anti-septic in the cabinet.

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Alex turns. Rebecca stands in the doorway in a robe.

A beat, then-

REBECCA
Don't worry. I won't charge you.

Alex opens the cabinet. Takes out a bottle of anti-septic. Applies it.

REBECCA
You don't say much, do you?

No response.

REBECCA
You don't talk, you don't eat.
If it wasn't for the position of
the toilet seat I'd never know I
had a tenant.

Alex eyes the toilet seat. It rests in the 'up' position. He lowers it.

REBECCA
So...what kind of trouble are you in?

A beat.

ALEX
I didn't know there was a selection.

Rebecca smiles.

Alex smiles back.

REBECCA
Can I ask you a personal question?
(beat)
What happened to your side?

ALEX
Can I ask you a personal question?
(beat)
What happened to your eye?

Silence then-

REBECCA
Try not to use it all up.

Rebecca walks away.

Alex watches her go.

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RYE
(v.o.)
So, apparently, our friend, Alex, has had a change of mind.

INT. - ALEX'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The room is ransacked.

Rye is there. Looks frustrated. Tries not to show it. He speaks to Holland on Alex's video-phone.

RYE
Literally.
(beat)
According to Sampson, the man's just not thinking like his old self.

HOLLAND
Which means he could be anywhere.

RYE
Anywhere but where we'd expect him.

HOLLAND
That leaves us at quite a disadvantage.

RYE
Not for long.
(beat)
You can change the method, but you can't change the man. We'll find him. You have my word.

HOLLAND
It's not your word that worries me.

Rye eyes Holland sharply.

RYE
If you have something to say, Will, just open your mouth and speak.

HOLLAND
The Board's concerned that you may be taking this assignment too personally. They think you have something to prove.

RYE
And what do you think?

HOLLAND
I think there are more discreet ways to enforce authority without dispatching a dozen City Patrol Officers on a public Metro-Line in the process.

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RYE
You wanted to see results.

HOLLAND
Results yes. A spectacle, no.
You're actions last night were
reckless and inexcusable. Administrative
relations with City authorities have
been strained enough without you
straining it even further.
(beat)
I need to know that you're in
control.

RYE
What do you want to hear?

HOLLAND
The truth.

A beat, then-

RYE
Last night I acted on impulse.
It was a mistake that won't be
made twice.
(beat)
Alexander Kane is no different than
any previous target. This assignment,
no different than any prior duty.
You can tell the Board that the
situation as well as its operative
are well under control.

Silence. Holland smiles.

HOLLAND
My, you and Alex really are identical.
(beat)
I could never tell when he was lying
either.

The screen goes blank. Rye's face goes hard.

Wind building...building...then-

ALEX'S DREAM

EXT. - 'CAPETOWN' MILITARY ACADEMY

The same one as before.

A fierce wind storm shakes the trees.

GRADUATION CEREMONY

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Has ended.

A twelve year-old Alex stands alone. Dressed in a child's military uniform.

Alex eyes the parents. Watches as they shield their children. Escort them to safety.

The yard clears out.

A HAND falls on Alex's shoulder.

Alex turns.

His administrator is there. An aging LIEUTENANT.

LIEUTENANT
Alex.
(beat)
There's someone I want you to meet.

Alex turn. Behind the Lieutenant stands

WILLIAM HOLLAND

Early twenties. A bright smile spreads from ear-to-ear.

LIEUTENANT
This is William Holland.
(beat)
He works for the Administration.

HOLLAND
Hello, Alex.

Holland extends his hand.

HOLLAND
I've heard a lot about you.

Alex eyes Holland's hand. Reluctantly reaches out with his own.

Wind building...faster...harder...

Just as the two hands are about to meet-

INT. - REBECCA'S APARTMENT; ALEX'S ROOM - NIGHT

Alex wakes up from his nightmare. Sweaty. Exhausted.

Alex rolls over. Tries to catch his breath.

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ZACH
(o.s.)
You were having a bad dream.

Alex spins around.

Zach is there. Stands sheepishly in the doorway.

ZACH
Mom says that if you can dream about monsters,...you can dream about fairies. And the fairies can turn the monsters into ladybugs and chase them all away.

Silence.

ZACH
Do you ever dream about monsters?

Alex has no response.

INT. - ALEX'S ROOM - MORNING

Pillows are tied around a coat rack. Hang from the ceiling.

Alex uses it as a punching bag. Hits hard. Quick. Tries to retrain himself. Learns new moves. Opposite from his old.

Alex stops. Checks himself in the mirror. Eyes his wound. Not bad. He's making a quick recovery.

Noise from the next room. Voices.

Alex stops. Peers out.

INT. - LIVING ROOM

Rebecca by the front door. A man stands in the hall. Late thirties. Built. Huge. A seven-foot giant. Name's SAL.

REBECCA
You can't see him now. You're drunk.

SAL
He's my goddamn son. I'll see him anytime I want.
(shouts down the hall)
Zachary!
(beat)
Zachary!

Alex spies Zach peering out from his room. Looks terrified. Zach and Alex's eyes meet.

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REBECCA
He doesn't want to see you.

SAL
And why not? What the hell have you been telling him?

No response.

SAL
Have you been saying shit about me?
(beat)
Have you?

Nothing.

He slaps her. Hard. Deliberate.

SAL
Have you?!

Stunned silence.

Alex's face goes hard. He opens the door.

Sal sees him. Doesn't want to press this any further.

SAL
Aw, fuck the both of you.

Sal leaves. Rebecca closes the door. Rushes into the bathroom. Eyes wet. Slams the door behind her.

Zach looks at Alex.

Alex looks at the boy.

Monsters.

Neither say a word.

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EXT. - CITY ARCHIVES - AFTERNOON

A gray slab. Cold steel letters.

Monorails speed by.

INT. - CITY ARCHIVES; FOYER

Colossal. Intimidating. A library of digital information.

TWO AP OFFICERS stand in the hallway. Flirt with a FEMALE CLERK.

COUNTER

Alex is there. Head down. Discreetly eyes the AP Officers. A TEEN PATRON stands in line in front of Alex.

A MALE CLERK registers the Teen Patron. Slides VIRTUALITY GEAR onto the counter. Hands the Teen a magnetized ID CARD.

CLERK
Room two-twenty-one. Second floor.

The Patron moves away. Alex approaches the counter.

CLERK
Welcome to City Speak.
(beat)
How can I help you?

INT. - CORRIDOR; SECOND FLOOR

A door reads: 222

INT. - ARCHIVES ROOM

Dark. Empty. Silent. A single platform in the center. Alex steps onto it. A soft hum is heard.

VIRTUALITY GEAR covers Alex's eyes and hands.

A series of red laser lights ignite. Blanket Alex in a grid-like pattern.

COMPUTER VOICE
(v.o.)
Warning. Prolonged use of City Speak Virtual Wear may cause dizziness, nausea, and loss of visual perception. Please use with caution.
(beat)
Enjoy your search.

SMASH CUT TO:

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INT. - VIRTUAL ARCHIVES

Digitized bookshelves stretch off in every direction. Up. Down. Left. Right. Twisting. Churning. A sea of papers fly by like a flock of birds.

An Escher painting come to life.

VIRTUAL ALEX is there. A digitized version of the real thing. He eyes his surroundings in awe.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
(v.o.)
Hello, and welcome to City Speak. The City's only virtual periodical timeline and interactive-record library.

A cheery, attractive woman sits before Virtual Alex behind a mahogany desk. Meet Virtual Alex's VIRTUAL ASSISTANT.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
My name is Erin Four-Twenty-Two. How can I assist you in your search?

VIRTUAL ALEX
Uh...I'm looking for a friend. An old friend.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Certainly. Last name first. First name last.

VIRTUAL ALEX
Grant.
(beat)
Forrester, Grant.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
One moment, please.

An endless Rolodex appears. The Virtual Assistant happily flips through.

Virtual Alex waits. Digs in his pocket. Pulls out a virtual cigarette. Goes to light it, when-

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
No smoking in the library, please.

Virtual Alex puts the virtual cigarette out.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Searching Grant, Forrester.
(beat)
No current record listed.

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VIRTUAL ALEX
Search Grant, Forrester. Past records.
First century. Second quarter.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Searching Grant, Forrester. Past records.
First century. Second quarter.

The endless Rolodex spins.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
No record listed.

VIRTUAL ALEX
Search Grant, Forrester. Past records.
First century. First quarter.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Searching Grant, Forrester. Past records.
First century. First quarter.
(beat)
No record listed.

Virtual Alex considers.

VIRTUAL ALEX
Search Grant, Forrester.
Open century. Open quarter.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Searching Grant, Forrester.
Open century. Open quarter.

Nothing, then-

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Record found.

A digital read-out scrawls across the air.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Commander Forrester James Grant.
Born 1988. Deceased 2039.

INT. - ARCHIVES ROOM

Alex pauses.

ALEX
Commander...?

Thoughtful silence.

ALEX
Commander Grant, Forrester. Military profile.

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INT. - VIRTUAL ARCHIVES

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Searching Commander Grant, Forrester.
Military profile.

An alarm blares. A red light flashes then stops.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Access denied.

Virtual Alex thinks.

VIRTUAL ALEX
Commander Grant, Forrester. Administrative profile.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Searching Commander Grant, Forrester.
Administrative profile.

Another alarm. Another light.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Access denied.

Virtual Alex considers.

VIRTUAL ALEX
Commander Grant, Forrester. Media search.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Searching Commander Grant, Forrester.
Media search.
(beat)
One listing. March tenth, 2039.

VIRTUAL ALEX
Play listing.

A MONITOR SCREEN appears out of nowhere. Rolls news footage of POLICE OFFICERS pulling an unrecognizable BODY from a river.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
After nearly twenty-six years of dedicated military service, Commander Forrester James Grant, Naval Seal, as well as recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor, was found dead today in the West Side River; an apparent victim of a fatal gunshot wound to the head. The former veteran of two wars and countless peace-time activities left behind no surviving family.

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Footage shows a BODY BAG being carted away.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
Although early reports are still unclear, authorities promise that a full investigation will be conducted.

The monitor disappears as quick as it appeared.

Virtual Alex takes it in.

VIRTUAL ALEX
Commander Grant, Forrester...

Virtual Alex considers.

VIRTUAL ALEX
Death certificate.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Searching.

INT. - CITY ARCHIVES; FOYER

Two APs continue to flirt with the FEMALE CLERK.

AP
So your boyfriend's on City Patrol, huh? My condolences.

The APs laugh.

The Male Clerk rushes over.

MALE CLERK
Officer.

No response.

MALE CLERK
Officer.

The APs turn.

MALE CLERK
I think you should see this.

COUNTER

The monitor flashes repeatedly. Words read:

SECURITY ALERT

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MALE CLERK
Someone's trying to access restricted files.

AP OFFICER
Who?

The Male Clerk types. Words appear on the screen.

PATRON IDENTIFICATION #222

AP OFFICER
Let's move.

INT. - VIRTUAL ARCHIVES

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Searching Commander Grant, Forrester.
Death certificate.
(beat)
No record listed.

VIRTUAL ALEX
Commander Grant, Forrester.
Birth certificate.

INT. - CITY ARCHIVES; STAIRCASE

APs rushing up the staircase toward Alex's sector.

INT. - VIRTUAL ARCHIVES

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Searching Commander Grant, Forrester.
Birth certificate.
(beat)
No record listed.

INT. - CITY ARCHIVES; HALLWAY

APs moving down the hallway. PATRONS duck for cover.

INT. - ARCHIVES ROOM

Alex's mind whirls frantically.

INT. - CITY ARCHIVES; OUTSIDE ALEX'S ROOM

APs move in front of the door marked 222. Draw their pistols-

INT. - VIRTUAL ARCHIVES

VIRTUAL ALEX
Commander Grant, Forrester.
Obituary search. Burial record.

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VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Commander Grant, Forrester.
Obituary search. Burial record.
(beat)
One listing.

VIRTUAL ALEX
Play listing.

And then-

INT. - ARCHIVES ROOM 222

The doors fly open. AP OFFICERS storm the room. Grab Alex. Pull the virtual gear off and throw him to the floor. Pistol pressed against the back of his head.

The AP Officers turn Alex over. Except-

It's not Alex. It's the Teen Patron.

TEEN PATRON
Don't shoot.

The AP Officer eyes the Teen's gear. Not even online. The Officer stares confused.

TWO AP OFFICERS inspect room 221 across the hall. Door opened. Empty. Alex's Virtuality Gear litters the floor.

TEEN PATRON
He said twenty-one was his lucky number.

The AP Officer sighs, frustrated.

EXT. - REBECCA'S BUILDING - DUSK

The orange sky turns to purple.

INT. - REBECCA'S BUILDING

The elevator doors open. Alex exits.

SAL
(o.s.)
I'll be at the bar on Twenty-Three when you're ready to apologize.

Sal turns the corridor. Slams into Alex. Sends him flying.

SAL
Watch it, assfuck.

Sal enters the elevator. The doors close.

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Alex moves down the hall.

INT. - REBECCA'S APARTMENT

The door open. The chain's broken. Wood dangles.

Alex peers in.

More disarray. A table over-turned. Some glass scattered.

Sobbing is heard.

Rebecca sits at the kitchen table. Crying. Gasping.

Alex moves over to her.

She looks up at Alex. Her face is beaten. Bloody.

She looks away, ashamed.

Zach stands in the doorway to his room. Tears roll down his face. He eyes Alex.

Alex's face goes hard.

EXT. - 'GENETIC GYRATIONS'; TWENTY-THIRD FLOOR BAR

Sodom and Gomorra with a cover charge.

INT. - 'GENETIC GYRATION'

'Genetically enhanced' WOMEN dance on stage. Breasts in two sets. Tongues as long as snakes.

A sexual freak-show.

SLEAZY CUSTOMERS fill every bar stool.

SAL

Finishes his beer. Enjoys the show. Rises.

SAL
(to a friend)
Order another round.

FRIEND
You buying?

SAL
I'm not that drunk.

Sal heads upstairs to the bathroom.

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EXT. - SECOND FLOOR

Sal passes the tinted window overlooking the floor below. Heads into the

INT. - MEN'S ROOM

Sal moves to the urinal. Goes about his business.

The bathroom door opens. Closes. A HAND locks it.

Sal finishes his business. Moves to the sink. Washes. Looks in the mirror. Sees

ALEX'S REFLECTION

standing at the door. Silent. Face stone.

Sal eyes him. Finishes washing. Turns. Stares at Alex. Alex stares back.

SAL
What the hell are you looking at?

A beat, then-

INT. - FIRST FLOOR

The tinted glass explodes as Sal crashes through.

PATRONS scatter as Sal lands behind the bar. Bottles burst. Glasses shatter.

Sal lies dazed. Bloody. Bruised. Beaten within an inch of his life.

All eyes go to the broken window.

Alex peers down at Sal.

ALEX
Twenty-five to life.

Alex walks away.

EXT. - REBECCA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Zach's asleep on the couch. Rests in his mother's arms.

Alex exits the kitchen with an ice pack. Leans beside Rebecca.

ALEX
I thought you said you had a gun.

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Rebecca holds up a squirt gun. Fires.

Alex holds the ice pack against her face.

ALEX
Hold your head high and the ice low.

REBECCA
You've had experience with this?

ALEX
Just a little.

Awkward silence.

REBECCA
His eyes.

ALEX
What?

REBECCA
You were going to ask me what I ever saw in a guy like that.

Alex says nothing.

REBECCA
What can I say? I'm a sucker a for a sad pair of eyes.

Alex studies her eyes. Sad. Worn.

ALEX
You two must have had a lot in common.

Another smile.

Thoughtful silence.

REBECCA
It wasn't always like this, you know. For awhile there, things were pretty good. Pretty normal.
(beat)
At least that's what I used to tell myself.

ALEX
So what changed?

A beat.

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REBECCA
I did.

Rebecca eyes Alex seriously.

REBECCA
Sometimes that's all it takes.

Alex says nothing.

ALEX
I'll get some more ice.

Alex moves to the freezer. Gets some ice.

REBECCA
So, tell me,...are you always this talkative or do you just open up around strangers?

Alex returns.

ALEX
Talking's never been one of my strong points.

REBECCA
Well, if you ever need anyone to give you some pointers...

Alex grins. Reapplies the ice.

REBECCA
It's funny. Ten years ago you couldn't have gotten more than two words out of me. Today...you couldn't get less.

ALEX
There's nothing wrong with listening.

REBECCA
I hope not...for your sake.

Rebecca studies Alex.

REBECCA
What about you?

ALEX
What about me?

REBECCA
What were you like back then? When you were younger.

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ALEX
The same.

REBECCA
Exactly?

Alex considers.

ALEX
A little more daring, maybe. A little more reckless. Always had something to prove.
(beat)
I thought I was going to be around forever.

REBECCA
You were a rebel.

ALEX
I was an asshole.
(beat)
I just never realized it until lately.

Silence.

ALEX
...what you said before. About people changing. Do you really believe that?

REBECCA
Believe what?

ALEX
That they can.

REBECCA
Of course.
(beat)
Don't you?

Zach stirs.

REBECCA
Hello, sleepy head.
(beat)
Do you want to go to bed?

Zach shakes his head.

REBECCA
No?
(beat)
You sure?

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Zach nods. Falls back to sleep.

REBECCA
He's sure.

Rebecca rises. Carries Zach.

REBECCA
C'mon. You can help me tuck him in.

Alex stands motionless.

REBECCA
C'mon. He won't bite.

Reluctantly, Alex follows.

INT. - ZACH'S ROOM

Rebecca tucks Zach in. Kisses him.

Alex stands at the foot of the bed. Uncomfortable. Watches the scene through virgin eyes.

Rebecca moves beside Alex. Watches her son sleep.

REBECCA
He's taken quite a liking to you, you know.

ALEX
He doesn't even know me.

REBECCA
He doesn't have to.

Zach stirs, uncomfortable. Having a bad dream.

Alex notices. Sympathizes.

Alex moves forward without even realize he's doing it.

ZACH

Groans, scared. Head shakes.

Alex places a comforting hand on Zach's head.

ALEX
Shh.
(beat)
Shh.

Alex strokes Zach's head. Zach calms. Falls into a peaceful sleep.

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Rebecca watches, amazed.

EXT. - CITY ARCHIVES

Dark and silent.

INT. - CITY ARCHIVES

A SECURITY GUARD shuts the Archives down for the night. Moves away. Notices a door is ajar. Comes from room 221.

The Guard approaches. Peers in.

GUARD
Excuse me.
(beat)
Excuse me.

A FIGURE stands on the VR platform. Fitted in a Virtuality helmet and gloves. The Figure tilts his head toward the Guard.

GUARD
The Archives are closed.

FIGURE
That's alright.

The Figure removes his helmet. Reveals Rye underneath.

RYE
I was just leaving.

EXT. - REBECCA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATE NIGHT

Dark. Silent.

INT. - ALEX'S ROOM

Alex loads his pistol. Places it in his holster. Eyes himself in the mirror.

INT. - REBECCA'S ROOM

Rebecca lies asleep.

Alex stands in the doorway. Watches her. Studies her, then-

Moves out.

EXT. - CITY

Monorails tear through the skyline.

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Lightning flashes. Ignites the night sky.

EXT. - CITY CEMETERY

Dark. Silent.

A gothic monolith stretches into the sky.

INT. - CITY CEMETERY

SECURITY CAMERAS blinded. ALARMS deactivated.

A fire ax is missing from a FIRE STATION.

A STATUE OF A SOLDIER stands outside of the Soldier's Memorial Wing.

INT. - CEMETERY; SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL

Closed. Deserted.

An indoor cemetery. Marble floors. Stained-glass windows.

Non-denominational sculptures and carvings decorate the high ceilings. Identical headstones stretch off in every direction.

HEADSTONE

Reads:

#44321

GRANT, FORRESTER

1988 - 2039

Alex is there. Stands over the grave. Fire ax in hand.

Alex raises the ax.

A thoughtful beat.

He brings it down. The marble cracks.

Thunder crashes.

EXT. - CEMETERY; SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL

A full electrical storm is underway.

INT. - CEMETERY; SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL

A broken hole before the headstone. Alex is in it. Covered in dust and rubble. He brings down the ax again and again, until-

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He hits something.

Alex bends down. Wipes the broken marble. Reveals

A COFFIN

Alex fits the ax between the lid. Uses all his strength to pry it open. The lid's lock snaps.

Alex drops the ax. Pulls the lid open. Peers in.

Stares stunned as we reveal-

Nothing. The coffin is empty.

Thunder cracks.

Alex considers. Realization settles in. Before he can savor it-

A noise is heard. Alex reacts. Quietly creeps out of the hole and scans the deserted cemetery. Abandoned in every direction, then-

Alex tears his pistol out from his coat and spins around. Gun trained on

RYE

Behind Alex. Standing in the same position. Gun trained on Alex.

Neither budge. Laser-scope lights leveled on each others' forehead.

A beat, then-

ALEX
You're late.

RYE
You're early.

Rye eyes the opened grave.

RYE
Friend of yours?

ALEX
I was hoping you could tell me.

RYE
Well, you know what they say, Alex,
some secrets are meant for the grave...

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ALEX
...and some graves are meant for the secrets.
(beat)
I remember.

RYE
I would hope so. After all, you are the one who said it.

Alex takes a cautious step. Rye follows. Moves in synch.

ALEX
The Board wants me dead. I want to know why.

RYE
Isn't it obvious? Just look at yourself for Christ sakes. Ten years ago you would've heard me coming at fifty yards. Today it's down to inches. You're a joke, Alex. Worse. You're a sight gag. Every gray hair just a reminder of how obsolete you are.

ALEX
You still didn't answer my question, Rye.

RYE
Didn't I? Or maybe you just didn't listen.

Alex and Rye circle. Move at the exact same pace. At the exact same second. Like looking in a mirror.

Each reading the others' expressions. Deciphering the others' thoughts.

RYE
You know, Alex, this is quite an opportunity you've handed me. After all, what better way to prove yourself than against yourself. Shit, back in the day, you would've killed for a chance like this...now you'll just die for it.

ALEX
Back in the day I didn't need opportunity, ...just skill.
(beat)
But I guess there are some things you just can't learn from a test tube.

RYE
Don't be too sure.

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ALEX
Truth is, Rye, you don't have anything that I haven't given you, and right now you don't even have that. Impulse. Arrogance. ...Fashion. Every weakness I've overcome you're still nurturing as strengths.

Rye's face hardens.

ALEX
Face it, Rye, you may have the material, but without the experience you're just an incubator with an attitude.

Rye whips back the gun's hammer. Ready to fire.

Alex does the same. Moves like a reflection.

Alex and Rye stand frozen.

ALEX
Easy, Rye. This is no time to get reckless. After all, the knife cuts both ways. Better know which side of the blade you're standing.

RYE
Make your move, Alex.

ALEX
Wake up, Rye. You can't win. We can read each others' faces like instruction manuals. You so much as breathe out of synch. Blink out of turn...we'll both be dead before the spark hits the powder.

RYE
I'm not afraid to die.

ALEX
I know. I remember. You think you're a cowboy. A machine. You think you're invulnerable. I'm here to tell you that you're not.

Tense silence.

Slowly, cautiously, Rye begins to lower his pistol. Alex does the same.

Lower...lower...each reflecting the others' moves.

The two assassins lower their pistols toward their sides.

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Rye's eyes change. A devilish grin appears on his lips.

RYE
Prove it,...pardner.

ALEX
Goddammit, Rye-

Rye draws like a gunslinger. Alex follows.

Five feet between them. Move as identical as shadows.

Guns aimed. Laser lights cross. Becomes one intense beam.

They both fire simultaneously. Sounds like a single blast. And then-

A spark. A ricochet. Something bounces across the room like a metallic lightning bug.

Rye and Alex stare at each other. Wait for the other to fall. Neither do. Neither is hit.

Something rolls to a stop between them. It is

TWO BULLETS

Charred together. Hit dead on.

Both stare in disbelief. Alex eyes Rye.

RYE
Good shot.

Alex readies a second shot as-

Rye charges. Crashes into Alex. Alex's gun fires blindly as-

EXT. - CEMETERY; SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL

-the two soar through the stained-glass window and onto the top of a-

SPEEDING MONORAIL

A digital sign reads: OUT OF SERVICE

EXT. - MONORAIL ROOF; FOURTH CAR

Hundreds of stories from the pavement...

Alex and Rye tumble to a stop on the back car. Recover from the fall. Guns spill. Tumble off the edge.

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Alex and Rye recover. Both go for their belt buckles. In a flash, their buckles are transformed into butterfly knives.

They eye each other stunned, then-

RYE
I like the way you think.

-The two collide. Knives slashing. Wind slamming.

Rye disarms Alex. Knocks Alex to his knees.

Alex tries to recover. Rye is on him. Knife at his throat. Alex and Rye struggle. Alex dangles off the train's edge.

Rye's eyes glow. Knife moving closer to Alex's throat.

RYE
It's no use, Alex. You may be smarter, but you're not faster.

Alex squirms and shudders.

RYE
Fact is, old timer, there's nothing you don't have that I haven't inherited.

Alex sees an opening. Buries his knee in Rye's groin. Rye's face goes white with pain.

ALEX
Lucky for me.

Alex flips Rye. Sends him sailing off the back of the train.

Alex turns over. Cautiously peers off the edge.

Rye is gone. Vanished below.

Alex quickly moves away.

EXT. - MONORAIL

Rips down the track.

EXT. - MONORAIL; THIRD CAR

Alex is on his feet. He jumps across the divider between the fourth car and the third.

Keeps moving. Heads for the control room in the first car.

INT. - CONTROL ROOM; FIRST CAR

A CONDUCTOR sits at the controls. Beeping is heard.

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A video screen shows that the emergency exit in the rear of the train is ajar.

CONDUCTOR
Goddammit, not again.

The conductor opens the door to the control room.

Rye stands in the doorway. Winded, but alive.

CONDUCTOR
Hey, this rail's closed. How did you get on here?

Rye jams his knife into the conductor's heart. Leaves it there. Rye moves past.

RYE
Season pass.

The conductor drops.

EXT. - MONORAIL; FIRST CAR

Alex makes the last jump. Gets to his knees. Crawls to the front of the car and leans down. Pounds on the glass. Tries to get somebody's attention. He does.

Rye's.

Rye's at the control. Eyes Alex. Grins.

Alex goes white.

Rye grabs the intercom microphone.

RYE
Better buckle up, Alex.
(beat)
It's going to be a bumpy ride.

Rye grabs the controls.

The monorail speeds up.

The force throws Alex back. He bounces across the front car onto the second.

MONORAIL

speeds down the track. Getting faster.

INT. - MONORAIL; CONTROL ROOM

Rye increases the speed.

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EXT. - MONORAIL; SECOND CAR

Alex tries to hold on. No use. He tumbles all the way back to the

THIRD CAR

Alex manages to snag the gap between the second and third car. He holds on tight.

INT. - MONORAIL; CONTROL ROOM

The monorail has topped off. Can't go any faster.

Rye tries to anyway.

EXT. - MONORAIL ROOF

The wind whips Alex's hair. The city is a blur.

The monorail flies down the track. Alex hangs by a thread.

EXT. - MONORAIL STATION

The monorail zooms through the station. The wind behind it. Papers fly. COMMUTERS tumble.

EXT. - MONORAIL ROOF

Alex pulls himself closer to the gap. Tries to get between the cars.

Alex is almost there when he sees a-

SHARP TURN in the track.

Alex goes white. Holds on for dear life.

SHARP TURN

The monorail whips by. Too fast. The last two cars jump the track.

Metal tears. Sparks fly. Practically tears the monorail in two.

Alex loses his grasp. Dangles from the roof. Legs swinging over the monorail's side.

The monorail straightens out. The last two cars crash back onto the track. The lights go out.

INT. - CONTROL ROOM

Lights flicker. Power's damaged. Alarms sound.

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Rye checks the rearview video screen. Sees Alex's feet dangling. Grins, pleased.

EXT. - MONORAIL ROOF

Alex's feet kick.

EXT. - MONORAIL TRACK

A tunnel in the side of a building. Black. Tight.

The monorail can be seen in the distance. Approaching fast.

EXT. - MONORAIL ROOF

The roof is torn open like a sardine can. Sparks shower Alex.

Alex tries to ignore them. Uses all his will to climb back onto the roof. No luck.

He hangs motionless. Tries to regain his strength.

Alex notices something up ahead.

The tunnel.

Too tight a squeeze. Alex will be crushed.

Alex finds his strength.

BY TUNNEL

The monorail's almost on it.

INT. - CONTROL ROOM

Rye sees the tunnel. Mouth waters.

EXT. - ROOF

Alex pulls. Harder. Harder.

BY TUNNEL

The monorail is only a few yards away.

EXT. - ROOF

Muscles burning, Alex pulls himself onto the roof and dives into the torn opening as-

TUNNEL

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The monorail zips through.

INT. - MONORAIL; THIRD CAR

Alex lands hard. Eyes the broken glass. Twisted metal. The last two cars are barely connected to the first two cars.

As soon as Alex gets to his feet-

RYE
Well, what do you know, Alex?

Rye's there. Swings a fire extinguisher at Alex's head. Misses. Splinters a window.

RYE
Persistence must be hereditary.

Rye advances.

EXT. - MONORAIL

Rumbles down the track at top speed.

EXT. - MONORAIL STATION; THE END OF THE LINE

The final stop. The tracks end against a marble wall.

SUITED COMMUTERS wait. Check their watches. One notices the approaching lights.

PASSENGER
It's early.

INT. - MONORAIL; THIRD CAR

Rye swings the extinguisher again. Misses. Alex buries his fist into Rye's stomach. Rye drops the extinguisher.

Alex kicks. Rye blocks it. Fists swing. Feet fly.

Rye brings Alex down. Presses his head against the back of a chair. Tries to snap his neck.

Alex struggles. Bleeds. Alex notices the fallen fire extinguisher right below him.

RYE
You lived too long, Alex. Life's made you weak. Safe. Cautious. That's why you can't win. Because no matter how far you go...
(beat)
I'll always go further.

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Alex spies the train station up ahead. The approaching stone wall.

Alex grins.

ALEX
You got that right, asshole.

Rye turns to look as-

Alex snags the fire extinguisher. Slams it into Rye's gut.

Rye falls back. Releases his grip.

EXT. - MONORAIL STATION; END OF THE LINE

The monorail is coming fast. WORKERS see it.

Commuters start to notice.

An alarm sounds.

INT. - MONORAIL; THIRD CAR

Alex smashes Rye with the fire extinguisher. Blasts the white foam into his face. Blinds him.

ALEX
You want to make an impression, Rye?

Alex kicks Rye with all his might. Knocks him into the second car.

Alex grabs the emergency break.

ALEX
Make it on the pavement.

Alex pulls.

EXT. - MONORAIL

Brakes squeal. Hard. Abrupt.

INT. - MONORAIL; THIRD CAR

Alex flies back as the damaged monorail-

EXT. - MONORAIL

-snaps in two.

The first two car break free from the last two.

INT. - MONORAIL; LAST HALF

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The last two cars begin to slow down while-

EXT. - MONORAIL; FIRST HALF

-the first two gain speed.

INT. - MONORAIL STATION; END OF THE LINE

Alarms sound. Workers and commuters scurry for cover as-

INT. - MONORAIL; SECOND CAR

Rye rises. Wipes the foam from his eyes. Sees the approaching wall. Eyes widen, and-

INT. - MONORAIL STATION; END OF THE LINE

The first half of the broken monorail smashes into the stone wall at top speed. Glass explodes. Metal shrieks as the

STONE WALL

explodes. Jagged bricks fly as the monorail-

EXT. - MONORAIL STATION; END OF THE LINE

-bursts through the otherside.

Smashed. Flaming. The monorail falls from the sky. Plummets downward into abyss.

EXT. - MONORAIL TRACK; LAST HALF

The back half of the monorail comes to a stop just inside the station.

INT. - MONORAIL STATION; END OF THE LINE

Workers and commuters come out of hiding.

MONORAIL; LAST HALF

Smoke pours as Alex stumbles out. Dazedly moves to the newly-formed hole in the back of the station. Peers down at the endless drop.

Alex scans the scene satisfied, then-

notices something on the edge. Caught in the twisted metal.

A PIECE OF RYE'S SHIRT

Torn. Flashy. Unmistakable.

Alex eyes it suspiciously. Scans the station. Sees no one.

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A CROWD gathers. Alex pushes past. Quickly moves away.

EXT. - REBECCA'S BUILDING

A monorail silently soars past.

INT. - REBECCA'S BEDROOM

Rebecca stirs in her sleep. Wakes. Notices something on her bedside table.

AN ENVELOPE

Rebecca opens it. Peers inside. Reveals

Rent money. A year's worth.

INT. - REBECCA'S BUILDING; STAIRWELL

Alex quietly moves down the winding staircase. His gear packed and in hand.

REBECCA
(o.s.)
Leaving so soon?

Alex looks up. Rebecca is there. On the landing above him.

Alex says nothing. Almost looks ashamed.

REBECCA
Oh, I forgot...Talking isn't one of your strong points.

Rebecca fingers through the money in the envelope.

REBECCA
You know, there's enough money here for six months' rent. Seems a little steep being that you only stayed two nights.

ALEX
I never said I wasn't coming back.

REBECCA
No...I guess you didn't.

Silence.

REBECCA
Well, I don't want to hold you. I just wanted to thank you for all you've done.

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ALEX
What do you say we call it even?

Rebecca nods. Alex moves down the stairs. Rebecca watches him go.

REBECCA
Alex.

Alex stops.

REBECCA
I don't get out much, you know.

Rebecca struggles with her words.

REBECCA
Doctors say I have this fear of open spaces. But that's okay. Because I keep telling myself that as long as I take it one day at a time, sooner or later,...I'll be flying kites down Main Street. In the meantime, I'll just stay where I'm comfortable.
(beat)
Sometimes that's all you need to sort out your troubles. Just a place to feel comfortable.

A thoughtful pause.

REBECCA
So maybe I'll see you later.
(beat)
Okay?

Alex understands. Nods. Smiles.

Rebecca smiles back.

Alex leaves.

Rebecca's smile fades.

EXT. - ALEX'S APARTMENT

Only one light on among the thousands.

INT. - ALEX'S APARTMENT

A VIDEO-PHONE MONITOR

comes to life. Rebecca and Zach's bright faces fill the screen. An answering machine.

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REBECCA
Hi, you've reached Rebecca and-

ZACH
Me!

REBECCA
If you have a message for either one of us, just leave it after the beep.

Rebecca tickles Zach. Zach screeches with glee.

Beep.

The receiver is hung up. The screen goes blank.

Alex is there. Sits among the junk. By the phone. His apartment in ruins. Ransacked by Rye. Everything shattered and smashed.

Alex studies the video-phone. Considers. Dials again.

FLOORBOARD

Alex lifts off a fake tile. Reveals a digitally-locked safe underneath.

Alex types in the combination. The safe unlocks. Alex opens it. Reveals a

CANVAS BACK-PACK

Alex studies it. Grabs it.

Closes the door shut.

BLACK

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EXT. - INTELLIGENCE OFFICE - LATE NIGHT

A maze of futuristic lightning rods cover the side of the grey fortress. Lightning bolts connect. Ricochet around the rods like an electric pinball game.

A security train whizzes toward the eighty-first floor's front gate.

Armed AP PATROLS cover every track. Guard each entrance.

ALEX'S POV - X-RAY BINOCULARS

Armed green skeletons are everywhere. Concealed behind every wall. Perched on every tower.

EXT. - DOME

Across from the Intelligence Office. High above the gate.

Alex is there. Back pack in hand. Lowers his binoculars. Eyes the scene solemnly. Moves.

EXT. - INTELLIGENCE OFFICE; FRONT GATE

The security monorail stops. Opens. A TEAM OF OFFICIALS exit. Pass an AP security checkpoint.

The monorail pulls out. A LARGE AP OFFICER watches them go. Body covered in regulation armor and helmet.

The Officer turns away as-

A shadow passes behind. Leaps from the top of the monorail and into the darkness.

The Large AP Officer spins around.

The area is deserted.

EXT. - FRONT GATE; EASTERN PERIMETER

Alex is there. Eyes ahead. Moves cautiously around the bend. Scans the gate with his binoculars, when-

LARGE AP OFFICER
(o.s.)
Don't move.

Alex freezes. The Large AP Officer is behind him. Gun trained at Alex's skull.

LARGE AP OFFICER
Turn around slowly.

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Alex follows orders. The Large AP Officer looks Alex over.

LARGE AP OFFICER
You so much as blink and you'll be scraping your face off of the otherside of your head.

A grin grows on Alex's lips.

He blinks.

EXT. - FRONT GATE

A gunshot.

AP OFFICERS turn.

Two more shots follow. AP Officers react. Move.

AP OFFICER
(into helmet mike)
Shots fired. Repeat. Shots fired.

EXT. - FRONT GATE; EASTERN PERIMETER

The Large AP Officer stands silent. Gun smoking. Holds Alex's back pack.

The other APs arrive, weapons drawn. They advance. Eyes on the pavement.

Alex's body lies on its back. Motionless.

A SMALL AP OFFICER advances.

SMALL AP OFFICER
Who is he?

The Small AP Officer bends down. Turns Alex's corpse over. Face destroyed.

SMALL AP OFFICER
I mean,...was.

EXT. - FRONT GATE

Alarms sound. AP PATROLS rush out. Security on full alert.

The Large AP Officer moves past the patrols. Into the building.

EXT. - FRONT GATE; EASTERN PERIMETER

The Small AP Officer digs through Alex's pockets. Finds nothing.

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The Small AP Officer notices something on Alex's arm. He rolls up the sleeve. A standard identification number tattoo is revealed.

SMALL AP OFFICER
...He's one of ours.

INT. - INTELLIGENCE OFFICE

Elevators rocket up and down the bottomless abyss. Out of the depths and into the heavens.

INT. - ELEVATOR

The Large Officer's access card opens the restricted areas. Endless floors appear across the elevator's touch-screen monitor.

A finger finds the word 'Cryogenics'. Presses it.

The Large Officer is there. Removes his helmet. Reveals Alex underneath.

Alex takes a deep breath.

EXT. - ELEVATORS

Descend into the void.

INT. - CRYOGENICS

A steel door slides open.

Alex pulls the Large AP Officer's security card from the slot. Moves in.

LAB

Dim. Dark.

Alex hits a switch. The room hums under the pale fluorescent ceiling. Reveals hundreds of

CRYOGENIC FREEZERS

Steel coffins line the walls of the room. A catwalk leads to more freezers on the second level.

Alex moves in.

FREEZERS

Different names. Numbers. Codes.

Alex passes them all. Moving with a purpose.

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Alex stops. Finds the freezer he's looking for.

Alex wipes some frost from the steel cover. Reveals the name:

GRANT, FORRESTER

Alex slides the security card across the digital lock. The word 'approved' appears. The lock is unfastened.

Alex grabs the freezer's handle. Opens the cryogenic chamber. Icy mist pours out. Fades.

Alex stares at the CORPSE inside. Has no reaction.

We reveal

FORRESTER GRANT

Fifty-two. Sharp face. Strong features. Familiar. Instantly recognizable.

It is Alex. The original mold.

Alex stares into his own eyes silently.

RYE
(v.o.)
Like I said,...

Rye and Holland are behind Alex. TWO DOZEN APs move into position on both the ground and catwalk. Weapons aimed at Alex.

Rye, still recovering from the monorail crash, is covered in scrapes and bruises. Pistol leveled at Alex's head.

RYE
You can change the method, but you can't change the man.

Alex doesn't even turn. Eyes on the frozen corpse.

ALEX
Who is he?

HOLLAND
Isn't it obvious?
(beat)
He's you.

Alex studies the corpse's face. Gray. Worn. Dead for centuries.

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HOLLAND
What can I say, Alex? When they made Forrester Grant they broke the mold. Fortunately,...we didn't.

Holland flips through a folder. A portfolio dedicated to Forrester Grant.

HOLLAND
Commander Forrester Grant; born October fifth nineteen-eighty-eight, graduated Capetown Military Academy twenty-four where he served three tours of duty with the United States Naval Academy. Graduating from guerrilla warfare to black-ops, Commander Grant proved to be one of the finest damned killing machines this nation has ever produced. Loyal. Obedient. The perfect soldier. A marvel of both biology and society.

Holland lowers the folder. Drops it on a freezer beside Alex.

HOLLAND
Needless to say, the Administration had to have him.

Alex picks it up. Glances through.

HOLLAND
For twenty-two years Commander Grant's record remained impeccable. Never questioned an order. Never failed an assignment. Then one day...things changed.

Holland paces.

HOLLAND
Duties were neglected. Targets lost. The years of bloodshed had finally taken their toll on Commander Grant. Humanity had left its scar. The weight of his soul was too much to bear. His instincts became unstable. Impulses...unpredictable.
(beat)
Not surprisingly, the toxic addictions soon followed.

He stops. Eyes the corpse reflectively.

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HOLLAND
By the end of his fiftieth year Commander Grant's rash and reckless actions nearly brought the entire Administration to its knees...that is, if the Administration didn't bring him down first.
(beat)
Understand, Commander Grant's breakdown was never the product of a conscious morality. It was simply the nature of the beast.

Holland moves behind Alex. Stops.

HOLLAND
Which is why we've made certain arrangements to see that Commander Grant's actions will never be repeated again.

Alex turns to Holland. Face stone.

HOLLAND
The truth is, Alex, every product has an experation date.
(beat)
Today is yours.

A beat, then-

ALEX
How many?

HOLLAND
Before you?
(beat)
Who can keep count?

ALEX
And all of them were...

HOLLAND
Born of the same material.
Product of the same environment.
The perfect clay, for the perfect sculpture. All programmed with the same attributes...as well as the same defects.

ALEX
And Rye?
(beat)
When the day comes, are you planning on blowing out his birthday candles as well?

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RYE
Not likely, Alex. You see, unlike you, I've been built to last. All of your flaws. All of your weaknesses. Thanks to the miracle of gene therapy, they've all been yanked from my system like weeds in a garden.
(beat)
I'm the man to your chimp, Alex. Evolution's last step.

ALEX
And did Holland tell you that?

RYE
I think the facts speak for themselves.

Rye advances. Draws his pistol.

RYE
Unfortunately, the evolutionary process ends here, Alex.

Rye pulls back the hammer on the trigger.

RYE
And so do you.

ALEX
Not so fast, Rye. After all, do you honestly think that I'd come all this way just to pay my respects?

RYE
It's not like you had a choice.

ALEX
Isn't it?

For the first time, Rye is honestly uncertain.

HOLLAND
Enough games, Alex. There isn't a move you've made that we haven't predicted. A plan you've drawn that we haven't schemed.
(pause)
Face it, Alex, you don't have any surprises left.

Alex slowly turns his back pack. Reveals a series of pulsating lights and switches. It is

A THERMAL BLASTING PACK

A hand-held nuke.

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ALEX
Well,...not anymore.

APs react.

ALEX
For the last fifty years all I've ever learned,...all I've ever known was how to survive. Well, I don't want to survive anymore.
(beat)
I want to live.
(beat)
If even just for the moment.

HOLLAND
He's bluffing.

ALEX
Am I, Will?
(beat)
Rye doesn't seem to think so.

Rye stands cool, but serious. Pistol aimed at Alex. Frozen in mid-air.

RYE
No matter what you're thinking, Alex.
No matter what you're planning...
(beat)
You're not getting out of here in one piece.

ALEX
Well, that's just it, Rye.
(beat)
I'm not expecting to.

Rye begins to look genuinely concerned.

ALEX
It's called acceptance, junior.
Recognizing your limitations.
(beat)
The one move that you could never predict.

Alex eyes the APs. All with itchy trigger fingers.

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ALEX
And in case anybody starts looking for a promotion, you should know that this thermal pack is pulse sensitive. Any sudden change in heart rate...equals a sudden change in temperature.
(beat)
Hope you packed your shorts.

HOLLAND
Come on now, Alex. Let's be reasonable. After all, we can still work this out.

Rye eyes the thermal pack. The heart-monitor wires that are connected to the handle.

HOLLAND
Just tell me what you want.

ALEX
Spontaneity.
(beat)
Have any of that in your fucking test tubes?

Rye moves. Alex turns as-

Rye fires. Hits the handle. Severs the wires. Short-circuits the pack.

The pack flies out of Alex's hand.

AP LEADER
It's going to blow!

APs duck for cover.

Alex moves. Pulls out his sub-machine pistol and-

-fires at the fluorescent ceiling.

Glass explodes. Lights flicker. Then-

Darkness covers the mayhem.

Rye fires blindly. Alex runs. Holland rushes for cover.

AP OFFICERS aim.

AP OFFICER
Going green!

X-Ray goggles are ignited and-

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APs POV - X-RAY GOGGLES

Skeletons scramble.

Alex's green skeleton rushes across the floor toward the entrance.

AP LEADER
Take him!

Gunfire blasts. APs open fire.

Alex's skeleton is literally ripped apart before our eyes. Bones splinter. Alex falls.

Emergency lights switch on.

APs rush to their fallen pray. Freeze, horrified.

Rye pushes through. Stares down at

HOLLAND

shredded by gunfire.

Alex and the thermal pack are gone.

Rye sighs.

RYE
Do they pay you guys by the bullet?

Rye grabs an Officer's rifle. Storms out.

INT. - CORRIDOR

Alarms sound.

Alex rushes down the hall. Broken thermal pack in hand. Shoulder bleeding. The mark of Rye's stray bullet.

An AP SQUADRON appears.

AP OFFICER
Freeze!!

Alex retreats. Gunfire follows.

Alex runs. Dives. Rolls into a

CLOSING ELEVATOR

Alex rises. Takes a breath and-

Spins around, gun aimed at

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A TERRIFIED OFFICIAL

Cowering in the corner. Hands raised.

Alex studies him. Moves toward him.

ALEX
I just have one question.

Alex presses the gun's barrel against the Official's head.

ALEX
And you better have one answer.

EXT. - CORRIDOR

Rye peers over the banister. Watches the elevators rise and fall. Then-

Bullets tear up the railing. Skin Rye's shoulder. Blood streams. Rye ducks for cover. Shots from above.

Rye looks out. Sees Alex peering over a banister twenty floor above. Grinning. Egging Rye on.

ALEX
Now we're identical.

Alex moves.

Rye feels his wounded shoulder. Lets the pain fuel him.

Rye moves.

INT. - OUTSIDE ELEVATOR; ALEX'S FLOOR

Ding. The elevator arrives. Doors open.

Gunfire pours out. Rye's there. Fires blindly into the hall.

Empty.

Rye scans the hallway. Moves. Passes a sign that reads:

GENETICS

INT. - EASTERN CORRIDOR; LABS

Lab doors line the walls. All digitally locked.

Rye moves past them, rifle aimed defensively.

A security door lies ajar. Lab #45. A few droplets of blood lead in.

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Rye scans his surroundings. Moves inside.

The door closes.

INT. - LAB #45

Gloomy. Silent. Appears deserted.

Rye is there. Cautiously moves in deeper. Follows Alex's bloody trail.

ALEX
(o.s.)
Still think you're it, Rye? Evolution's last step? Well, I got news for you, pal,...

Rye spins around. Sees a FIGURE behind glass.

ALEX
(o.s.)
You're just the beginning.

Rye fires. The glass shatters. The figure falls forward.

Rye turns the figure over. Reveals

ANOTHER CLONE

Rye's age. Rye's build. Naked. An exact replica. A dormant test model.

Rye stares stunned.

ALEX
That's right, Rye. Take a good long look. You might've gotten him today, but he'll be back tomorrow. Smarter. Faster. Stronger.
(beat)
He'll be back alright. And in a few more years he'll be the one looking down at you.

Rye backs away.

ALEX
And they'll be more.
(beat)
Each one better than the last.

Rye keeps backing up until-

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ALEX
You see, that's all they do in here, Rye. Try to find ways to improve the original product.
(beat)
Make us more efficient. More durable...

Rye bumps into another incubation chamber. He spins around, gun trained on

ANOTHER DORMANT CLONE

behind the glass.

ALEX
More predictable.

Rye can't believe his eyes. Quickly moves away. Rushes into-

A MAZE OF INCUBATION CHAMBERS

A CLONE behind each one. All dormant. Experimental.

Rye moves through the maze in a horrified daze.

ALEX
They think we can't change. That conformity is a part of our genes.

Motionless eyes glare at Rye from behind the glass. His own.

ALEX
We have to show them that they're wrong. That we can change.

More eyes. More stares. Suffocating Rye. Closing in.

ALEX
It has to end, Rye. Once and for all.

ALEX
Starting now.

Rye spins around. Rifle trained at

ALEX

standing alone at the end of the row of incubation chambers. His gun trained on Rye.

Tense silence, then-

Alex tosses his weapon across the room.

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ALEX
There's more to life than survival.

Rye stares at Alex, genuinely confused. Rye has no reaction. His face softens.

ALEX
Please, Rye.
(beat)
Let it end.

A thoughtful beat, then-

A grin rises on Rye's lips.

RYE
Gladly.

Rye's eyes change. Alex realizes. Moves as-

Rye opens fire.

EXT. - OUTSIDE LAB #45

Gunfire is heard as the AP SQUADRONS appear. The AP Leader pushes through. Kicks the lab door opened.

Rye's there. Gun aimed at the AP Leader.

RYE
He's mine.

Rye fires into the AP leader.

RYE
You've been warned.

The AP Leader drops. Officers stand stunned.

The door closes.

INT. - LAB #45

Rye fires at the control panel.

Steel security doors slam closed in front of the lab entrance. Locks Rye and Alex in.

BY ALEX

Hiding behind the incubation chambers. Opens the side of the thermal pack. Tries to repair the damage.

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RYE
(o.s.)
Come on now, Alex.

MAZE OF INCUBATION CHAMBERS

RYE
You can't hide forever.

ALEX
I'm not planning to.

An oxygen tank crashes into Rye. Alex is on him. The rifle fires. Rye and Alex's hand clamped around the barrel.

Bullets tear up the lab. Incubation chambers are destroyed. Cloned slaughtered.

STEEL CANISTERS

are filled with bullet holes. Flammable chemicals spill out.

The rifle empties out. Rye uses it like a bat. Swings at Alex. Alex blocks it with the tank.

ALEX
Open your eyes, Rye. They played you. The played us both.

Rye swings again. Alex ducks. The rifle knocks an incubation chamber opened.

ALEX
They used us like fucking machines and dismantled us when we got rusty.

RYE
I don't get rusty.

Rye swings again and again. Draws Alex back. Even an empty rifle is used with expert skill.

ALEX
You know, I used to think like you. Thought it would never end. That I was unstoppable.

Rye charges. Alex sprays the oxygen tank. Cool air blasts out. Blinds Rye. Alex crashes the tank over his head.

Rye drops to the floor.

ALEX
I was wrong.

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Rye moves. Hits Alex like a freight train. Knocks him against an incubation chamber. A long shard of glass protrudes.

Rye tries to push Alex into it. Alex resists. Muscles tighten. Sweat pours.

RYE
If you know so much about me, Alex, then you know that there's nothing you can say that will change my mind.

Alex comes closer to the glass.

RYE
I don't give a shit who you are or what you have to offer. To me you're just another target. Another assignment.
(beat)
And I'll be damned if I'm going to forget that now.

ALEX
You're damned one way or another.

Alex grabs the broken shard with his bear hand. Snaps it in two and jams the blade into Rye's side.

Rye howls. Alex's hand pours blood.

INT. - OUTSIDE LAB

AP SQUADS jam steel bars between the security doors. Begin to pry the doors open. OTHERS prepare their weapons.

INT. - LAB #45

Rye pulls the shard from his gut just as-

Alex attacks. The two collide. Fight like artists. Hypnotic. Beautiful. Each one giving it their all.

Punches land at the same time. Kicks connect in rhythm. Shadow boxers that punch back.

RYE
C'mon, Alex. Is this the best you can do?

Alex keeps punching. Blocking. And then-

ALEX
No...

Alex moves and-

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ALEX
This is.

-lands a devastating kick against Rye's chest. Rye lands the exact same kick at the exact same time into Alex's chest.

Ribs crack in synch.

Both gasp. Tumble. Crash to the ground.

Silence.

Alex and Rye lie still. Barely breathing. Barely conscious.

Their eyes flutter open. Both see the same thing at the same time.

ALEX'S GUN

Across from them. Lying in the middle of the chemical puddle.

Rye eyes the weapon. Alex eyes it. Their eyes meet.

A tense beat, then-

Alex moves. Rye moves. Both together.

Rye dives forward. Rolls. Snags the gun. Comes up with the gun aimed at Alex except-

Alex isn't there.

Rye turns. Alex stands at the edge of the puddle. Never left his spot. Never went for the gun.

Rye stares confused.

ALEX
You know what your problem is, Rye?

Alex's lighter is already lit.

ALEX
You're so goddamn predictable.

Alex drops the lighter. Jumps back as-

Rye's eyes widen, then-

The lighter hits the puddle of chemicals. Ignites. Flames rush Rye. Hit the canisters and-

Boom!

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The canisters blow. Fire and shrapnel cover the room. Incubation chambers explode. Clones burn. Flesh smokes.

BY ALEX

Lies dazed. Cut. Shrapnel embedded in his leg. Alex painfully rises. Eyes the flames. The charred clone remains. Any one of them could be Rye.

The lab door stirs.

Alex turns.

The AP Officers are almost through. Alex moves.

THERMAL PACK

Alex pulls the cover off. Snags the wires and reroutes them. Prepares to set the pack off manually.

LAB DOOR

The door begins to give. Metal creaks.

THERMAL PACK

Alex pulls two wires out. A black and a red.

LAB DOOR

Almost opened. Gloved fingers pry the doors apart. Rifle barrels stick through.

THERMAL PACK

Alex holds the two live wires. Prepares to connect them and set off the charge.

Alex closes his eyes. Takes a deep courageous breath and then-

Click.

Rye's gun is at the back of Alex's head. Cocked and ready to fire.

Alex looks up. Rye stands over him. Charred. Bloody. Alive.

Tense silence.

Alex doesn't budge. Rye doesn't budge. Their eyes locked.

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RYE
I have you, Alex.
(beat)
I have you and there's not a goddamn thing you can do.

Rye knows it. Alex knows it.

It's over.

Rye savors the moment, then-

Slowly, hesitantly,...Rye lowers the gun.

RYE
Never forget that.

Alex studies Rye silently.

RYE
Not ever.

Alex nods. Understands.

A reluctant grin grows on Rye's lips. Alex's lips follow. In synch as usual.

The lab doors burst open as-

Alex connects the two wires. A spark ignites and-

RYE
You know, it's a shame we didn't get to know each other sooner.

Rye places a cigarette between his lips.

RYE
I bet you and I would've had a lot in common.

EXT. - INTELLIGENCE OFFICE

The Intelligence Office explodes in a contained nuclear fireball.

Monorail tracks tear like plastic. Nearby AP Officers are vaporized.

Glass and shrapnel shower like rain. Settle.

Silence.

FADE TO BLACK

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CUT TO:

INT. - REBECCA'S APARTMENT; KITCHEN - MORNING

CITYVIEW MONITOR

Shots of the flaming Intelligence Office.

NEWSCASTER
(v.o.)
In other news, last night's tragic blast at the Office of Intelligence was confirmed earlier this morning to be the work of foreign terrorists. Although no specific fraction has been identified, Administrative Officials assure City residents that a full investigation is being conducted.

Rebecca is there. Makes breakfast.

REBECCA
Zach!
(beat)
C'mon, hon. Come and get it.

Rebecca grabs some plates. Stops. Notices that the video-phone answering machine is blinking. One message.

Rebecca stares curiously. Hits the 'play' button.

Alex's face fills the screen.

ALEX
I hope I didn't wake you. I just wanted to...

Alex thinks. Tries again. This isn't easy for him.

ALEX
I did a lot of thinking since we talked. About what you said. About finding a place to be comfortable. Well, you'll be happy to know that I did...For maybe the first time in my life.

Alex considers.

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ALEX
The trouble with comfort is the more you get...the more you want. And I've been out in the wild so long that I need more than I could ever hope to find.
(beat)
So, I guess what I'm trying to say is...that although my time in from the cold only lasted for a little while... it was enough to keep me warm for the rest of my life.

Rebecca watches thoughtfully.

ALEX
Listen to me. Going on like this. And I thought I was supposed to be the strong silent type.

Alex shrugs.

ALEX
People change.

Rebecca smiles.

ALEX
Y'know, I bet it's a beautiful day outside.
(beat)
Why don't you go find out.

The message ends. Screen goes black.

Rebecca stares at the blank screen silently. Seems like forever.

ZACH'S ROOM

Zach plays with his toys.

REBECCA
(o.s.)
Hey.

Zach turns. Rebecca is there.

REBECCA
I was thinking about maybe going out for breakfast.
(beat)
You want to join me?

Zach stares stunned.

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REBECCA
My treat.

Zach moves. Rushes to get dressed.

Rebecca smiles.

REBECCA
Gets them every time.

Rebecca follows her son as-

Wind rises. Louder...louder...until-

EXT. - 'CAPETOWN' MILITARY ACADEMY - THAT MORNING

The same one as Alex's dream. Now a reality.

A fierce wind storm shakes the trees.

GRADUATION CEREMONY

Has ended.

A twelve year-old BOY stands alone. Back toward us.
Dressed in a child's military uniform.

Parents shield their children from the wind. Escort them to safety.

The yard clears out. The Boy is alone.

A HAND falls on the Boy's shoulder.

His principal is there. A middle-aged LIEUTENANT

LIEUTENANT
Derrick.
(beat)
There's someone I want you to meet.

Behind the Lieutenant stands

AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL

Early twenties. A bright smile spreads ear-to-ear.

LIEUTENANT
This is Roger Breen.
(beat)
He works for the Administration.

OFFICIAL
Hello, Derrick.

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The Official extends his hand.

OFFICIAL
I've heard a lot about you.

The Boy shakes the Official's hand. We see the Boy's face. Realize that the boy is

ANOTHER CLONE OF ALEX

Maybe the last. The one that got away.

OFFICIAL
I'd like to talk to you about your future.

The Boy's eyes widen with excitement.

Eager with anticipation.

BLACK

End.

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