

HACKERS

by

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SEATTLE 1988

EXT. FRONT YARD. DAY.

Slow motion. Armed troops in black uniforms pour out of unmarked vans and swarm across a lawn in a middle class residential neighborhood. Yuppie neighbours look on in shock, confused. Two of the troops carry a battering ram to the front door of a white two-storey house. A leashed Rottweiler snarls and barks. In position, their comrades point M-16s into first-floor windows, ready to be ambushed. Pan into a window in the kitchen. An attractive woman in her thirties is making breakfast.

Now, in regular motion, the battering ram breaks open the front door. The woman, startled, drops her spatula.

INT. MURPHY RESIDENCE. DAY.

WOMAN
(screams)

Oough! Ahhh!

SECRET SERVICE AGENT
(to others)

Upstairs.

Troops pour into the house.

WOMAN
What's going on? What's the matter?
Who are you?

The troops, and one or two trenchcoated agents, continue entering the house and heading upstairs, still with rifles ready.

WOMAN
Hey!

Upstairs, crowded in the narrow hallway, the troops descend on a bedroom.

WOMAN
(off camera)
Dade! Dade!

AGENT
Knock it down.

The battering ram knocks down a bedroom door.

INT. COURTROOM.

The prosecutor, a woman of about forty, gives her closing argument blandly. She'd rather be somewhere else.

PROSECUTOR

The defendant, Dade Murphy, who calls himself "Zero Cool", has repeatedly committed criminal acts of a malicious nature. This defendant possesses a superior intelligence, which he uses to a destructive and antisocial end. His computer virus crashed one thousand five hundred and seven computer systems, including Wall Street trading systems, single handedly causing a seven point drop in the New York Stock Market.

As she speaks, the camera pans across the court, panning down and stopping on the defendant: eleven year old Dade Murphy.

Fast forward to the sentencing.

JUDGE

Dade Murphy, I hereby fine your family forty-five thousand dollars...

The court gasps, Dade's father winces

JUDGE

...and sentence you to probation, under which you are forbidden to own or operate a computer or touch tone telephone, until the day of your eighteenth birthday.

Now Dade winces, in fact we almost expect him to cry.

Opening credits roll to a backdrop of Dade and his family and lawyer fighting through a gaggle of journalists and photographers, in slow motion, and driving away.

SEVEN YEARS LATER.

Aboard a jetliner, Dade Murphy is staring blankly out the window, wearing headphones. Exterior view from the aircraft of approaching New York City. The view becomes a direct overhead of the buildings and streets of the city, which then metamorphoses (through animation) into chips and digital signals on a stylised computer board. The title logo.

INT. DADE'S ROOM.

Segue to Dade Murphy, now 18, wearing mirrorshades indoors and at night, working on his new computer. His mother calls him.

MRS. MURPHY
(off camera)

Dade?

DADE

Yeah, mom?

MRS. MURPHY

What are you doing?

DADE

(after a semi-pregnant pause)

I'm taking over a TV network.

MRS. MURPHY

Finish up, honey, and get to sleep. And happy birthday.

INT. OTV STUDIOS.

In the OTV Studios security department, a phone rings, a man answers nervously.

NORM

Security, uh Norm, Norm speaking.

DADE

Norman? This is Mr. Eddie Vedder, from Accounting. I just had a power surge here at home that wiped out a file I was working on. Listen, I'm in big trouble, do you know anything about computers?

NORM

Uhhmmm... uh gee, uh...

DADE

Right, well my BLT drive on my computer just went AWOL, and I've got this big project due tomorrow for Mr. Kawasaki, and if I don't get it in, he's gonna ask me to commit Hari Kari...

NORM

Uhhh.. ahahaha...

DADE

Yeah, well, you know these Japanese management techniques.

(pause)

Could you, uh, read me the number on the modem?

NORM

Uhhhhhmm...

DADE

It's a little boxy thing, Norm, with switches on it... lets my computer talk to the one there...

NORM

212-555-4240.

Dade goes to work on OTV. He closes his eyes and a flurry of half-second video clips from old TV shows flashes by. He opens his eyes. His screen says ENTERING ARPS 331 and then wipes to another screen. Automated Record Playback

System. There is a graphic representation of the station's automatic videotape changer. Dade turns on his TV set and turns to OTV. It is running a Rush-Limbaugh type TV show.

COMMENTATOR

(on TV)

...so-called American Indians, Latinos and Blacks come from a genetically mediocre stock...

DADE

Yak yak yak. Get a job!

Dade presses a key on his keyboard. The Video Changer diagram lights up in red. At the station, a robotic arm selects a videotape from a huge rack of thousands of tapes. The "America First" tape slides out of the VTR and is replaced by an episode of "The Outer Limits" as Dade watches, drinks Coke and smiles, full of himself.

TV

You are about to experience the awe and mystery, which reaches from the inner mind, to... The Outer Limits.

DADE

Yesssss!

Suddenly, the ARPS screen is replaced by an ominous message:

U HAVE TREAD
UPON MY DOMAIN &
MUST NOW SUFFER
WHO R U?

DADE

Hey! What?

He starts to type ZERO...

DADE

No, wait.

Dade types:

CRASH OVERRIDE.
WHO WANTS TO KNOW?

Dade's screen dissolves into:

ACID BURN

DADE

Unbelievable. A hacker!

Then the screen changes again:

ACID BURN
SEZ LEAVE B 4
U R EXPUNGED

"The Outer Limits" suddenly flashes off.

DADE

Yeah, okay "Acid Burn", that's enough.

Dade starts hacking. Apparently so does Acid Burn. The tape changer machines at OTV are swamped, sometimes fighting over the same tape. The program on TV keeps changing.

The message comes up on Dade's computer screen:

I WILL
SWAT U LIKE
THE FLY U R

More dueling tape changers, more half second video clips. Another message.

I WILL
SNAP YOUR BACK
LIKE A TOOTHPICK

As the duel continues, Dade types back a taunt of his own:

MESS WITH THE BEST
DIE LIKE THE REST

One last from Acid Burn:

YOU ARE
TERMINATED

Then his own computer confirms for him that the connection is terminated.

DADE

Shit on me!

Next morning. Mrs. Murphy is unpacking. Dade emerges from his room in a housecoat. He makes a beeline (dodging moving boxes) for the fridge.

MRS. MURPHY
Good morning. You unpack your stuff yet?

DADE
Mm-hmm.

MRS. MURPHY
Up all night again, huh?

DADE
Can this wait until both my eyes are open,
please?

Dade's mom picks up the phone, mocking a call to the building superintendent.

MRS. MURPHY

Can I cut the electricity to his room so he'll sleep normal hours? He's been playing with his computer all night for a solid week.

(pause)

Well yes, he could be playing with himself. Mmm hmmm. Yes I'll ask. Dade, you like girls, don't you?

DADE

Well, yeah, I just haven't found one as charming as you yet.

MRS. MURPHY

You haven't been doing anything stupid, right, Dade?

(louder)

Right, Dade?!

DADE

Right, mom. And I'm still a virgin!

Dade slams the bathroom door. Mrs. Murphy quickly checks his room. Dade is showering.

MRS. MURPHY

(angry, through the bathroom door)

You hooked it up to the phone, didn't you? Dade! Turn the shower off! You screw up again and you won't get into college!

She pauses and regains some of her cool.

MRS. MURPHY

I'm sorry we had to move in your senior year. I didn't want to sell the house but I had to take this new job, you know that. You're going to love New York, it's the city that never sleeps!

EXT. NEW YORK CITY.

We enjoy several views of New York, the morning sun shining between skyscrapers, neon signs that stay lit day and night. Dade emerges from the ground-floor apartment on rollerblades and skates down the street to school.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL.

At school, hundreds of teenagers converse, move around, head to class. Dade looks lost among them. He walks up to a skinny latino kid in a faux leopard-skin muscle shirt. The kid is on a pay-phone, speaking in Spanish.

DADE

Excuse me.

KID

Yo, chill man, I'm talking to Venezuela.

DADE

Yeah, I'm sorry, I was just looking for the principal's office.

KID

Sorry, I can't help you, okay?

Now Dade really looks lost. He heads off in search of the office.

INT. OFFICE.

Dade is filling out a form.

GIRL

Do you have your transfer forms?

Dade stares at her, stunned. The girl has a decidedly unconventional appearance, yet is a first-rate beauty.

GIRL

It's a relatively straightforward question.

Dade notices her lips, and in his imagination launches into a flurry of half-second video clips and art bites, all involving lips and kissing.

GIRL

Do you speak English?

DADE

Sorry, you wanted...?

GIRL

I wanted transfer forms.

He gives them to her.

GIRL

Thank you.

She starts leaving. He doesn't.

GIRL

Are you coming?

Dade clues in, gets up and follows her. She takes him on a brief tour.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CORRIDOR.

GIRL

The gym is through there, and the cafeteria is through there.

DADE

Great. Cool.

(pause)

What's your name?

GIRL

Kate. Kate Libby.

They arrive at a classroom.

KATE

Here's your class.

DADE

My... class. You mean I'm not in your class?

KATE

No, you're not in my class.

Kate starts away.

DADE

Give me time!

A guy in the halls notices Dade.

GUY

Hey, you new?

DADE

Yeah.

GUY

Tell him about the pool, Kate.

DADE

Pool?

KATE

Yeah, there's an Olympic size swimming pool up on the roof. Take the stairs over there.

DADE

Yeah! Sure.

Kate starts away again.

DADE

Thanks!

EXT. SCHOOL ROOFTOP.

Dade enters, and lets the door slam behind him. Across the roof, a dozen or so geeky looking kids are looking over the edge, apparently trying to get someone's attention. One of them notices Dade.

GEEK

Hey! Hold the door!

He's too late. The geeks look pretty angry. There is no pool.

Dade

(realizing he's been had)

No pool.

Dade tries the door but it's locked. He hammers it with his palm, furious. Above, thunder roars and it begins raining.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR.

Dade is soaking wet, and trudges among his classmates leaving a muddy trail. A three-second video clip rolls through his mind: it is a screaming woman being strangled in an old movie. He walks past Kate, who giggles.

KATE

Oh my God! He found the pool.

INT. SCHOOL COMPUTER LAB.

The kids are all seated at computer workstations. Dade is hacking, the latino kid who was on the phone to Venezuela is running a demo involving dirty-dancing skeletons.

TEACHER

I'm Mr. Simpson. And I'm subbing for Ms. Bayliss who was arrested at the anti-fur rally. I know some of you kids got computers at home. But these are school property, people, and I don't want to see any gum stuck to 'em. Chapter 1. Designing graphical interface...

Meanwhile, the latino kid notices that Dade has been looking up Kate Libby's school records. And hacking himself into her advanced English class.

EXT. SCHOOL QUAD.

It's after school, kids are heading home, Dade too. The latino kid notices Dade and catches up with him.

KID

So, um, what's your interest in Kate Libby, eh? Academic? Purely sexual?

DADE

Homicidal?

KID

What's up, man? I'm the Phreak!

The name rings no bells with Dade.

PHREAK

The Phantom Phreak? The king of Nynex? I know you play the game.

Another kid, younger and a little geeky looking, runs up to Dade and The Phantom Phreak.

JOEY

Phreakphreakphreakphreakphreak,
dudedudedudedudedudedude... I gotta...

PHREAK

(slaps Joey)

Joey, Joey...

JOEY

What? whatwhatwhat?

PHREAK

One more "dude" out of you and I'm gonna slap the shit outa you, okay? Now I'm trying to save you from yourself but you gotta stop letting your mama dress you, man!

(To Dade):

Check it...

Phreak starts to hand Dade a flyer.

JOEY

(interrupting)

I need a handle, man. I don't have an identity until I have a handle.

PHREAK

You know, you're right about that.

(to Dade)

Check it, Friday.

Phreak hands Dade a flyer for Cyberdelia.

JOEY

Alright. How about the Master of Disaster, huh?

PHREAK

You're hopeless, man, utterly hopeless.

Phreak walks away.

JOEY

Ultra Laser.

(desperate)

Doctor Doom!

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET VILLAGE. NIGHT.

Dade rolls in on rollerblades. Street vendors hawk computer parts and bootleg software. A bootleg music vendor catches Dade's attention.

CEREAL

Check this out, each and every one of you. Compilation tape, of my own making. I call this the "Greatest Zooks Album". Featuring artists like, well I got some Hendrix on there, some Joplin, Mama Cass, Belushi... all great artists that asphyxiated on their own vomit!

The small crowd around him finally gets the joke.

CEREAL

Can't get this in stores, man, I made it!

Dade wheels into Cyberdelia, which just happens to be equipped with a ramp down to its main floor for the benefit of skaters. The place pounds with loud, bassy techno music and coloured light. Video monitors with psychedelic patterns complete the atmosphere. There is a video game with a huge screen. Phreak is at a pay phone.

OPERATOR

(on phone)

Please deposit five dollars for the first minute.

Phreak holds a small box up to the receiver, presses a button, and the box emits a series of tones.

OPERATOR

Thank you.

PHREAK

Nonono, thank YOU!

Dade checks out the scene. Kate is playing the big video game. Dade skates up to her. She loses her last man. She's got the high score, in fact her name dominates the top-10 list.

DADE

That's a nice score for a girl.

KATE

(irritated by Dade's presence)

Think you can do better?

DADE

I'll give it a shot.

Kate yields the controls to Dade, who begins playing. Kate's boyfriend looks on from a mezzanine several feet above.

CURTIS

Is this kid bothering you, Kate?

DADE

Sorry, can I get some room here?

CURTIS

Yeah.

(to Kate)

Why don't you come up here?

Kate obliges and joins Curtis. Dade continues playing. He plays brilliantly. The game is a flashy 3-D high-speed chase game with lots of surprises. Dade loses, but his high score is about to come up.

CURTIS

He's good!

Dade's score comes up. He's in the #1 position. Phreak is amazed.

DADE

(to Kate)

Well, it looks like I'm on top.

Kate, defeated, leaves. Curtis follows.

PHREAK

Congratulations. No one's ever beat her
before. You just made an enemy for life.
(to someone else)
Boy meets world. Let's go?

EXT. OUTSIDE CYBERDELIA. NIGHT.

Kate and Curtis are sucking face, oblivious to the busy
world around them. Dade and Phreak watch, more than a
little disgusted.

DADE

Who's that?

PHREAK

Curtis.

DADE

And what's he do?

PHREAK

That's it, you're looking at it, he just looks
slick all day.

Kate and Curtis start to take off on Curtis' motorcycle.
Kate and Dade make eye contact briefly. The motorcycle
speeds off into the night.

INT. DADE'S ROOM.

The clock says it's 4:16. As the camera pans up to Dade,
it changes to 4:17. Dade is hacking again. It's the
school's administration system. Dade schedules a test of
the school sprinkler system for 9:30am.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CORRIDIR.

Dade stands alone in the hall, watching the time closely.
Phreak rounds a corner and meets Dade.

PHREAK

What's up?

Dade doesn't answer. He watches the time a couple of more
seconds, then opens an umbrella. Immediately the fire
sprinklers turn on. Phreak starts getting drenched. He
realizes what is happening.

PHREAK

(amused and highly impressed)

Oh my God. You...

A bell rings and students pour out into the halls by the
hundreds. They're all being showered on. A tall
cheerleader bounces by Phreak, pushing her pom-pom in his
face.

PHREAK

Way cool!

(to Dade)

You saw that?

Dade nods in the affirmative.

Kate walks up to Dade, also understanding what has happened.

KATE
What the hell is going on?

DADE
Pool on the roof must have a leak.

Kate gives Dade a look that could kill and skulks away.

Dade walks away under his umbrella, smug and dry.

PHREAK
Man, oh man, this is gonna be good.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM.

Dade, Kate, and a couple of other students are writing on the chalkboard. Kate finishes first.

KATE
If God gave men brains bigger than dogs',
they wouldn't hump womens' legs at cocktail
parties.

The class giggles.

KATE
Ruth Libby.

TEACHER
I'm not so sure your mother qualifies as a
significant author of the twentieth century.

KATE
Her last book sold two million copies.

CLASS
(almost in unison)
Woooooo!

The teacher reads Dade's quotation.

TEACHER
"Angel-headed hipsters burning for the ancient
heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in
the machinery of the night."

DADE
That's Ginsburg.

TEACHER
Nice. Very nice.

KATE
He's not in this class.

DADE
I said give me time.

KATE
He's not enrolled in this class.

TEACHER

Well, he's on my list.

Kate leaps across a desk and snatches the list from the teacher. Dade is on it. She gives Dade another filthy look, both Dade and the teacher just shrug. The teacher moves on to Cereal.

TEACHER

"Of all the things I've lost, I miss my mind the most?"

CEREAL

Ozzy Osbourne!

TEACHER

You. What is your name?

The teacher grabs the list back from Kate.

CEREAL

Uh, Emmanuel Goldstein, sir?

TEACHER

You, however, are not on my list.

CEREAL

(in mock shock)

Whoa, this isn't wood shop class?

The class cracks up. Kate and Dade exchange looks as the teacher escorts Cereal to the door.

INT. DADE'S PLACE.

MRS. MURPHY

How was school?

DADE

(eating)

Hmmm.

MRS. MURPHY

What did we learn in school today?

DADE

Revenge.

MRS. MURPHY

Aaaah. Did we meet someone special?

DADE

No. No one special.

MRS. MURPHY

Okay, I gotta get back to work. I'm gonna be home late. And would you try and please fill these out?

She indicates a pile of college applications.

MRS. MURPHY

Oh don't worry, it's only the rest of your life.

She starts to the door.

DADE

Right. Anything else, you want me to mow the lawn? Oops, forgot. New York. No grass.

MRS. MURPHY

And unpack.

She leaves. Dade looks over the college applications for a second, and pushes them away. He'd rather not do this now.

INT. CYBERDELIA.

Dade, Phreak and Joey are sitting at a table. Joey is giving a dull account of his hacking adventures. Enter Cereal.

CEREAL

FYI, alright man, you can sit at home, and do like absolutely nothing and...

Cereal pauses, notices Dade, whom he has never met formally but seen around, and then continues.

CEREAL

...and your name goes through like seventeen computers a day. 1984, yeah right man, that's a typo. Orwell's here and now, he's living large. We have no names, man, no names. We are nameless. Can I score a fry? Thanks.

PHREAK

Meet Cereal Killer. As in Froot Loops? But he does know things.

Dade and Cereal acknowledge each other.

JOEY

Anyways, guys, guys, listen, listen to me. I'm in this computer right? So I'm looking around...

PHREAK

(to Cereal)

D'you bring those Crayola books?

CEREAL

Oh yeah, technicolor rainbow.

Cereal brings a book out of his bag.

CEREAL

Green one.

JOEY

What is that, what is that? Lemmie see. What are these?

DADE

International Unix Environments.

Cereal pulls out another book.

CEREAL

Luscious orange?

Cereal hands the orange book to Phreak.

DADE

Computer security criteria, DOD standards.

Another book comes out.

DADE

The Pink Shirt Book, Guide to IBM PCs. So called due to the nasty pink shirt the guy wears on the cover.

Another one.

CEREAL

What's that?

DADE

Devil book. The Unix Bible.

Another one.

CEREAL

What's that?

DADE

Dragon book. Compiler design.

Cereal brings out a large red book.

CEREAL

Oh yeah? What's that?

DADE

The Red Book. NSA Trusted Networks. Otherwise known as the Ugly Red Book that won't fit on a shelf.

By now Phreak has made a pile of the books, and the Red Book looks wholly out of place on the top of the pile.

JOEY

Anyway, anyway, guys guys guys, come on. I'm in this computer, right. So I'm looking around, looking around, you know, throwing commands at it, I don't know where it is or what it does or anything. It's like, it's like choice, it's just beautiful, okay. Like four hours I'm just messing around in there. Finally I figure out, that it's a bank. Right, okay wait, okay, so it's a bank. So, this morning, I look in the paper, some cash machine in like Bumsville Idaho, spits out seven hundred dollars into the middle of the street.

CEREAL

That's kinda cool.

JOEY

That was me. That was me. I did that.

DADE

You did this from your house.

Joey takes a drag from his cigarette and just nods, with a big grin on his face.

PHREAK

What are you, stoned or stupid? You don't hack a bank across state lines from your house, you'll get nailed by the FBI. Where are your brains, in your ass? Don't you know anything?

CEREAL

Stupid, man. It's universally stupid.

JOEY

You guys always think I should know everything, and you never tell me anything. Am I right?

PHREAK

Alright, what are the three most commonly used passwords?

JOEY

Love, secret, and uh, sex. But not in that order, necessarily, right?

CEREAL

Yeah but don't forget God. System operators love to use God. It's that whole male ego thing.

PHREAK

Look, you wanna be elite? You gotta do a righteous hack. None of this accidental shit.

CEREAL

Oh yeah, you want a seriously righteous hack, you score one of those Gibsons man. You know, supercomputers they use to like, do physics, and look for oil and stuff?

PHREAK

Ain't no way, man, security's too tight. The big iron?

DADE

Maybe. But, if I were gonna hack some heavy metal, I'd, uh, work my way back through some low security, and try the back door.

CEREAL

Yeah but oh man,
(starts rubbing one of his own nipples in mock sexual excitement)
wouldn't you just love to get one of those Gibsons, baby? Ooooh!

PHREAK

Yo, who ate all of my fries?

Cereal pauses a second.

CEREAL
(pretending to be enraged)

Joey?!

JOEY
What, no, nonononono, I didn't touch your
fries. I did not touch your fries.

PHREAK
Cereal, man, you owe me a pack.

CEREAL
It was him, man!

PHREAK
You're psyched. You need to lay off of that
shit.

CEREAL
(to Joey)
I'm gonna hit you!

INT. JOEY'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Joey is hacking. A Gibson. He gets in. Using GOD as a
password. Nice graphics represent the machine's vast
systems.

JOEY
YES! Home run, home run. You and me Lucy.
We're gonna show em baby.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, ELLINGSON MINERAL.

A system operator at Ellingson Mineral Corporation, a
large oil company, notices the intrusion. He gets on the
phone.

INT. PLAGUE'S LOFT.

The place is a mess, typical of the hacker bachelor pad.
Empty chinese food boxes and Jolt Cola cans litter the
place.

Plague's phone is ringing, waking him.

HAL
(on phone)
Mr. Belford?

PLAGUE
(sleepily)
My name is the Plague.

HAL
Uh, Mr. The Plague, uh, something weird's
happening on the net.

PLAGUE
As in what, you hapless techno-weenie?

HAL

Uh, the accounting subdirectory in the Gibson is working really hard. We got one person online, the workload is enough for like ten users. I think we've got a hacker.

INT. JOEY'S ROOM.

JOEY

Okay, okay, we need proof that we were here. Right, uh...

Joey starts looking for something to download as proof he was there.

JOEY

Yeah, Garbage, okay, give me Garbage.

He selects a Garbage file and starts the download. His screen becomes a psychedelic mind trip.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, ELLINGSON MINERAL.

The Plague glides in on a skateboard. Short and thin, bearded, about 35 but still trying to be a teenage anarchist, yet not consciously realizing he sold out that ideal years ago.

PLAGUE

Never fear. I is here.

HAL

I've narrowed the activity to terminal 23.

PLAGUE

Let's echo 23, see what's up.

The huge monitor lights up with the display of the Gibson's resources. Hal and the Plague watch. Plague starts "surfing" around.

PLAGUE

"God" wouldn't be up this late.

He sees what Joey is downloading. A file called "Garbage".

PLAGUE

Shit! Get me the switching control center.

He puts on a telephone headset. Hal dials for him.

PLAGUE

(into the headset)

I need to trace a call that's in progress.

INT. JOEY'S ROOM.

Joey is sneaking a cigarette while his computer downloads. There is a knock at the door. It's his mother.

JOEY
(whispering)

Shit!

(loudly, panicked)

Uh yeah... hold on, mom. Hold on one second.

He puts out the cigarette and sprays the room with air freshener.

JOEY'S MOM
I mean it! Open the door, Joseph.

JOEY
Yeah, uh, yeah, okay.

He unlocks the door. Joey's mom bursts in. He's still clambering into bed.

JOEY
There you go.

JOEY'S MOM
Bed. Sleep. Now!

She turns off the computer. It wasn't finished downloading.

JOEY'S MOM
Sweet dreams, Joey.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, ELLINGSON MINERAL.

HAL
He's gone!

PLAGUE
Did you get a trace?

OPERATOR
(on phone)
Yeah, we got him.

PLAGUE
(smiling)
Good.

INT. JOEY'S ROOM. DARK.

Joey takes a disk out of his computer and stashes it in an air vent in the ceiling.

INT. TENEMENT HALLWAY.

Phreak, Dade and Cereal are rollerblading through the halls of an apartment building that is filled with graffiti. It appears that most of the spray-bomb art was created by the residents.

CEREAL
Nice place, huh.

Cereal knocks on a door spray-painted "Hackstock"

DADE

You heard of a hacker called Acid Burn? You know who he is?

PHREAK

(surprised)

No, don't know who he is.
(to Cereal)

Do you?

Cereal shrugs.

A hooded black man in his early twenties answers the door.

PHREAK

Nikon! Lord Nikon this is...

Phreak motions to Dade.

DADE

(finishing)

Crash Override.

NIKON

Never heard of you. Done anything?

DADE

No.

Nikon slams the door.

PHREAK

Come on!

Phreak knocks the door again. Nikon opens again.

NIKON

What, your mom buy you a 'Puter for Christmas?

(to Phreak)

Does he know anything?

PHREAK

Sure man, he's elite.

NIKON

(pausing, checking Dade out)

Come in.

CEREAL

Uh... Nikon, can I... can I crash at your place tonight?

NIKON

(removing his hood)

Again?

(pauses, then grins broadly)

Yeah sure.

Nikon and Cereal do a fake Kung-fu move together.

BOTH

Ooka-pow!

INT. NIKON'S PLACE.

Later, the four are watching TV. On TV is a secret service agent giving a news interview.

GILL

(on TV)

Hackers penetrate and ravage delicate public and privately owned computer systems, infecting them with viruses, and stealing materials for their own ends. These people, they are terrorists.

CEREAL

Agent Richard Gill, You're hacker enemy number one, man. You're a boner!

NIKON

Yo, showtime, showtime!

DADE

What's going on?

ALL BUT DADE

(in unison)

4...3...2...1...

Cheesy music plays. Razor and Blade, androgynous asian brothers, have a community access TV show. "Wayne's World" in eye liner.

RAZOR

Welcome to our show!

BLADE

Hack the Planet!

ALL BUT DADE

Hack the Planet!

RAZOR

For those late night hacks...

BLADE

Jolt Cola! The soft drink of the elite hacker.

DADE

Who are these guys?

NIKON

That's Razor and Blade.

DADE

Razor and Blade.

Now Razor and Blade have a disconnected payphone in their studio.

RAZOR

That's right, this IS a payphone.

RAZOR AND BLADE
(in unison)

Don't ask.

BLADE

As you can see, this is just a simple microcassette recorder. (shows the microcassette recorder) Hook it up to the phone and drop in five bucks in quarters.

RAZOR

Record the tones that the coins make. And hang up and get your money back!

BLADE

And never again have to pay for a service that would be dirt cheap...

RAZOR

...IF it weren't run by a bunch of profiteering gluttons!

BLADE

Remember, hacking is more than just a crime. It's a survival trait!

INT. JOEY'S PLACE.

Joey is taking a shower, wearing walkman headphones, singing along with the music. Joey finishes, turns off the shower, still singing. He draws open the shower curtain to find two secret service agents with shotguns pointed at him.

SS AGENT

FREEZE!

JOEY

What? What? What did I do? What?

The agents drag Joey, still naked and wet, out of the shower and into the living room. His mother is hysterical..

JOEY'S MOM

Joey!

AGENT

Get in there! Sit down!

ANOTHER AGENT

Stay down there. Don't move.

Joey is pushed into a sofa. He sees his computer, "Lucy", being carried away.

JOEY

Lucy!

Joey dives onto the agent carrying Lucy away, losing his towel. His mother, seeing his exposed buttocks, is shocked.

JOEY'S MOM

JOEY!!!

EXT. OUTSIDE JOEY'S PLACE.

A police-type vehicle pulls up. It's Agent Richard Gill of the Secret Service. He stops a young agent for an update.

GILL

How's it going, Ray?

AGENT RAY

It looks good, sir. We've got an uncorrupted hard drive.

GILL

In English, please. I didn't spend ten years protecting the president so I could finish my career feeling like an idiot.

AGENT RAY

I'm sorry, sir. We caught him by surprise, so we don't think he had time to erase his computer files.

GILL

Good. Good man. Alright, let's finish up here, and take him in for interrogation.

AGENT RAY

Alright sir.

They split up. A reporter and her sound man run up to Gill.

REPORTER

Agent Gill, can you spare a moment of your time?

GILL

Why of course, Jennifer.

While Jennifer conducts the interview, agents lead Joey into an unmarked car. His mother is behind him, still hysterical.

JOEY'S MOM

Joey!

JOEY

Mom...

JENNIFER

Just how dangerous are hackers?

GILL

Well, hackers penetrate and ravage delicate public and privately owned computer systems, infecting them with viruses...

JOEY'S MOM

Joey!

GILL
...and stealing sensitive materials for their
own ends. These people, they're terrorists...

JOEY'S MOM
Joey!

INT. ELLINGSON MINERAL CORPORATION.

A tall, impressive building. A cavernous atrium filled
with busy people.

INT. ELLINGSON BOARDROOM.

A handsome looking woman in her late thirties walks in.

MARGO
Good morning, Gentlemen. Please be seated. I
see we're still dressing in the dark, Eugene.

PLAGUE
(to Margo)
Once again, don't call me Eugene.
(to the board)
A recent unknown intruder penetrated, using a
superuser account, giving him access to our
whole system.

MARGO
Precisely what you're paid to prevent.

PLAGUE
Someone didn't bother reading my carefully
prepared memo on commonly used passwords.
Now, as I so meticulously pointed out, the for
most used passwords are love,
(gesturing lewdly)
sex, secret and...
(eyeing Margo)
...God. So would your holiness care to change
her password?

Margo just blinks prettily.

PLAGUE
A hacker planted the virus.

MARGO
Virus?

PLAGUE
Yesterday, the ballast program for a
supertanker training model mistakenly thought
the vessel was empty, and flooded its tanks.

MARGO
Excuse me?

PLAGUE
(as if to a child)
The little boat flipped over. A virus planted
in the Gibson computer system claimed
responsibility.

MARGO

What, it left a note?

Plague hits a button on a remote control, and the virus - a long haired male model - appears on a large screen, in psychedelic colors. The virus speaks in a hammy Italian accent.

VIRUS

Unless five million dollars are transferred to the following numbered account in seven days, I will capsize five tankers in the Ellingson fleet.

BOARD MEMBER

Is that...

PLAGUE

(interrupting)

That is the virus. Leonardo da Vinci. The problem is we have twenty six ships at sea and we don't know which ones are infected.

DUKE ELLINGSON

Well then, put the ships' ballasts under manual control.

PLAGUE

There's no such thing anymore, Duke. These ships are totally computerized. They rely on satellite navigation, which links them to our network, and the virus, wherever they are in the world.

MARGO

So what are we supposed to do?

PLAGUE

Well luckily, you have a gifted and talented security officer. I traced the hacker's call. The secret service picked him up this morning. I'll just search his files for the original virus code, and then I can eliminate it.

INT. ELLINGSON MINERAL ATRIUM.

Plague, Margo and two suits from the boardroom are riding down an escalator.

SUIT #1

Now look, now we expect you to get onto this right away, yeah?

PLAGUE

Yeah!

SUIT #1

Well, how soon?

PLAGUE

Well, we're working on it as fast as we can. This is a very common occurrence in corporations as large as ours. You have nothing to worry about.

SUIT #2

Yeah, right.

SUIT #1

Now, you're sure about that, Mr. The Plague?

PLAGUE

Yeah, the Secret Service is helping us out 100 percent. Okay?

SUIT #2

Yeah.

SUIT #1

Okay.

PLAGUE

We'll be in touch. Talk to you later.

The suits get off the escalator, Plague and Margo take the next one down.

MARGO

What the hell was that all about?

PLAGUE

I had to move fast. The hacker copied my garbage file.

MARGO

What?

PLAGUE

I created Mister da Vinci so we could call in the Secret Service. So they'd arrest the hacker, sieze his equipment, things that we can't do on our own.

MARGO

I don't want to go to jail for this.

PLAGUE

Relax. Think about the 25 million dollars.

MARGO

But you've created a virus that's going to cause a worldwide ecological disaster, just to arrest some hacker kid?

PLAGUE

Basically, uhmm, yeah. Mmm hmmm.

MARGO

Jesus. You know, you're sick, Eugene. You...

PLAGUE

Sh, sh sh sh sh.

Plague stops a passing secretary and snatches a piece of paper from her hand.

PLAGUE

I'll take care of this.

SECRETARY

Alright, sir.

PLAGUE

I can cancel it any time. I don't need any program code. But it's the perfect cover, to confiscate the disc and find out how much of that garbage file has been copied.

MARGO

Get it!

(walking away)

Why did I ever trust you?

(going back up the escalator)

Get the file. Otherwise you'll lose all your toys.

INT. SECRET SERVICE INTERROGATION ROOM.

Joey is distraught over the dismantling of Lucy. Agent Ray examines the Mac's innards.

GILL

Did you find the program for the virus on any of the discs we confiscated?

PLAGUE

No. He's either very smart or very stupid.

GILL

Then he stashed it somewhere, or he has an accomplice. We'll release him until his indictment, keep tight surveillance, and see if he leads us to your disc.

EXT. OUTSIDE JOEY'S PLACE.

Joey's apartment building is an L-shaped skyscraper about 30 storeys high, unimpressive by New York City standards. Two Secret Service agents are staking Joey out in a car outside.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT BOB

Unit 3 outside suspect Joey Pardella's apartment. Nothing to report. Suspect still grounded... by his mother.

His radio crackles.

AGENT BOB

Listen to this bullshit.

(he reads)

"This is our world now. The world of the electron and the switch, the beauty of the baud. We exist without nationality, skin color, or religious bias. You wage wars, murder, cheat, lie to us and try to make us believe it's for our own good, yet we're the criminals. Yes, I am a criminal. My crime is that of curiosity. I am a hacker and this is my manifesto." Huh, right, manifesto? "You may stop me, but you can't stop us all."

AGENT RAY
Now that's cool.

AGENT BOB
Cool?

AGENT RAY
Yeah, cool.

AGENT BOB
You think it's cool?

AGENT RAY
(not caring for where Bob is going
with this)
It's cool!

AGENT BOB
It's not cool. It's commie bullshit!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL BOYS' ROOM.

Dade, Cereal and Phreak check their faces. Cereal brushes his teeth.

CEREAL
(to Phreak)
So what do you think, can I crash at your place tonight?

DADE
What is it with this guy?

PHREAK
His parents missed Woodstock and he's been making up for it since. Hey, you hear about Joey's bust?

CEREAL
Yeah. Probably had something to do with that bank in Idaho.

PHREAK
Do you think he could hack a Gibson?

DADE
Did you talk to him?

PHREAK
Nope. His mom said he's grounded for his next three lifetimes.
(imitating her)
He isn't to consort with his computer friends.
(himself again)
The secret service is really out to get him.
(changes the subject)
Hey there's a big party tonight, you wanna go?

Dade shakes his head.

PHREAK
It's at Kate's...

Dade just smiles.

PHREAK

Thought so!

Cereal and Phreak leave, Cereal dancing.

INT. PLAGUE'S OFFICE.

Plague is wearing a VR helmet and gloves, playing some sort of action game. He is unaware that Gill has just entered the room.

GILL

What the hell are you doing? Plague!

He thumps the VR pedestal.

GILL

PLAGUE!

Plague finally notices, and takes off the helmet.

PLAGUE

Gill.

GILL

I think we've got something.

Gill hands Plague a folder. It has the logo of Stanton High.

PLAGUE

Uuugh, hard copy.

Plague looks it over and recognizes a name.

PLAGUE

Dade Murphy.

INT. DADE'S PLACE.

It's after school. Dade's just unlocking the front door, only to find a Secret Service agent behind it. And one behind him in the hallway. Both point pistols at him.

AGENT RAY

Secret Service!

AGENT BOB

Don't move!

They slam Dade against a wall and start frisking him.

DADE

Christ! What is the...

AGENT BOB

Shut up!

DADE

What are you doing, man? Get off me!

They lead him into his room and throw him down on the bed. Plague is there.

AGENT BOB

Just sit in the bed and keep your hands where we can see them.

PLAGUE

The year was 1988. And this nasty virus crashed fifteen hundred systems in one day.

Dade has a flashback.

DADE

Fifteen hundred and seven.

AGENT RAY

(astounded)

Wow, huh!

GILL

It got you seven years probation. No computer, couldn't even use a touch tone phone.

PLAGUE

Must have been hell, huh? Zero Cool?

(getting to the point)

A virus has been planted in the Ellingson Mineral computer system. You were our prime suspect, till we trashed your stuff and found no trace of it.

GILL

However, we have come to believe that one Joey Pardella is involved in this Ellingson virus. He or perhaps his accomplice has a disk that Mr. Belford needs to disable that virus. We want you to help us find it.

PLAGUE

Gill.

The three secret service agents leave Plague and Dade alone. Plague shuts the door behind them.

PLAGUE

(of Gill)

Loser.

(continues)

I can't believe you were only eleven when you wrote this. It's quite an impressive virus. Dade, I know how you might feel about narking on your friends, but, we're hackers. For us, there's no such thing as family and friends. We're each our own country, with temporary allies and enemies. I'd like to make a treaty with you.

DADE

I'm sorry. Who are you?

PLAGUE

I'm the one who understands you. Now, can we be allies?

DADE

Nah. I don't play well with others.

Plague is holding Dade's baseball bat. He shrugs, turns around, and smashes Dade's stereo to smithereens.

DADE

Shit! Come on!

PLAGUE

Watch which friends you do play with. A record like yours could land you in jail, get you kicked out of school, no colleges would take you. No future. Exiled from everyone and everything you love.

Plague replaces the baseball bat.

PLAGUE

I'll be in touch.

Plague leaves.

PLAGUE

(to agents)

I'm fine.

(to Dade)

Oh, and Dade, try to stay out of trouble, okay?

DADE

Blow me.

PLAGUE

(smiles)

Thank you!

INT. DADE'S ROOM. LATER.

Dade is lying in bed. A door opens. It's Kate. She opens her motorcycle jacket, revealing her bare breasts. Dade starts to get up, she pushes him back down on the bed and starts kissing him passionately. He responds in kind. Then, Gill, Agent Ray and Agent Bob burst into the room, handcuff him, break the two up and haul them away as Plague looks on smugly.

Then Dade wakes up in a sweat. It was only a dream. He regains his composure. The sound of New York City at night surrounds him. He goes back to sleep.

INT. KATE'S PLACE.

The party. A large, well-furnished apartment in an elegant old skyscraper in the fashionable part of town. Teenagers dance and writhe to loud, bassy music. Dade and Phreak arrive.

PHREAK

Her mom makes big bucks writing self-help books for women. Stuff like "Women Who Love Men Who Are Emotional Amoebae"

Phreak shows Dade the book.

DADE

That explains a lot.

Kate, the lovely and gracious hostess, mingles and greets her many guests, not noticing Dade or Phreak. Cereal offers Dade a drink from a plastic bottle. Dade, not knowing what he's in for, drinks. Nikon is the DeeJay.

PHREAK

(loudly)

Yo, what's up Nikon!

NIKON

Yo Phreak! Dade, man, you made it.

(to Cereal)

Houston, we have liftoff, 3 o'clock, check it... don't look right away, what's wrong with you! Look at her man...

Nikon and Cereal are checking out a truly fine babe.

NIKON

(concentrating)

Look out, man. Lisa Blair, 26 East 7th St., apartment 16, 555-4817, BOOM!

DADE

How did you know that?

NIKON

I got photographic memory.

(Smiling)

It's a curse!

(Into the crowd)

Lisa!

LISA

Hey, how do you know my name?

Cereal and Phreak move through the crowd. Cereal notices something.

CEREAL

Oooo, look at that pooper man. Spandex, it's a privilege, not a right!

INT. MEETING HALL.

A 12-step recovery group. Addicts, including Joey Pardella, sit in a semi-circle.

VICKIE

Hi, my name is Vickie, and I'm an addict.

HANK

Hi, my name is Hank, and uh, I'm an addict.

JOEY

(smoking)

Uh, my name's Joey but, uh, I'm not an addict.

Joey takes a drag. The group reacts indignantly.

JOEY

Nono, really, really, listen, listen to this.
I got in trouble with my computer, right,
okay, and my lawyer told the judge that I'm an
addict, but I'm not addicted to my computer!
No really, really,

Joey takes another drag.

JOEY

I'm not an addict. I'm not, I'm not.

Joey downs his coffee.

JOEY

Can I get some more coffee?

INT. KATE'S BEDROOM.

Phreak is checking out Kate's computer.

PHREAK

Yo. Check this out guys, this is insanely
great, it's got a 28.8 BPS modem!

DADE

Yeah? Display?

CEREAL

Active matrix, man. A million psychedelic
colors. Man, baby, sweet, ooo!

NIKON

I want it.

PHREAK

I want it to have my children!

CEREAL

Yeah, I bet it looks crispy in the dark.

PHREAK

Yo, hit the lights.

Dade hits the lights. The four ooo and ahh at
its graphics. Kate and Curtis walk into the
room and hit the bed, unaware of the hackers
in the corner by her laptop.

DADE

(whispering)

Shit!

CEREAL

Shh!

DADE

Was that her top?

PHREAK

One-handed!

CEREAL

Difficulty rating?

NIKON

Seven. Wow! Burn's wetware matches her software!

DADE

(loudly)

Burn!

Their cover is blown.

NIKON

What the f...

Cereal hides under the desk.

KATE

Hey! What are you guys doing in here?

PHREAK

I'm sorry, we're sorry, just checking out your fly laptop!

NIKON

Yeah, it's hyped, you know... you're in the butter zone now, baby.

PHREAK

(smiling)

Uh-huh!

KATE

(her tone changing)

Yeah, it is...

(she comes over to it)

I wanna triple the RAM...

CURTIS

Oooh, Leopard Boy... AND the Decepticons. Uh, Kate, Kate, you're not going into that computer shit now, right?

Kate barely acknowledges him.

CURTIS

(cynically)

Humm, yeah.

Curtis leaves.

CEREAL

(mockingly)

Right.

DADE

The sensitive type.

Kate finally notices that Dade, whom she didn't invite, is at her party and in her bedroom.

KATE

What is he doing in here?

PHREAK

Relax, Burn, he's my guest.

DADE

Burn. You're Acid Burn. You booted me out of OTV!

KATE

What?

DADE

I'm Crash Override.

KATE

You're the moron that's been invading my turf?

CEREAL

Whoa, whowhowhowhoa.

(motioning to Dade)

Crash...

(motioning to Kate)

and Burn!

Cereal breaks into hysterics.

INT. PLAGUE'S LOFT.

Plague is hacking.

MARGO

Murphy kid turn you down?

PLAGUE

(in a hammy southern accent)

I disguised myself as an Alabama State Trooper and penetrated the FBI NCIC.

MARGO

Pervert! What are you talking about?

She turns her back to him. He does up the zipper on her dress. Their relationship becomes apparent.

PLAGUE

The FBI computer holds files on twenty million Americans. I just hacked into it.

MARGO

Congratulations.

PLAGUE

From here I got access to every piece of data ever stored on Dade Murphy's parents. His parents separated five years ago, reconciled two years later, filed for divorce last year, custody battle, boy chose to go with his mother. Hmm.

MARGO

So?

PLAGUE

So, we get the mother, we get the boy.

INT. KATE'S ROOM.

Kate's room is empty, and Dade can't resist going back in to play with her laptop, which far outclasses his own, some more. On the balcony, Kate notices and comes back in.

KATE

What the hell are you doing?

DADE

It's cool, I'm just looking.

KATE

It's too much machine for you.

DADE

Yeah?

Dade starts working furiously on it.

KATE

I hope you don't screw like you type.

Dade slows to a two-finger keypoke, not missing a beat.

DADE

It has a killer refresh rate.

KATE

P6 chip. Triple the speed of the Pentium.

DADE

Yeah. It's not just the chip, it has a PCI bus. But you knew that.

KATE

Indeed. RISC architecture is gonna change everything.

DADE

Yeah. RISC is good.

They uncomfortably exchange glances.

DADE

You sure this sweet machine's not going to waste?

KATE

Crash Override. What was it. "Mess with the Best, Die Like the Rest?"

DADE

Yeah.

KATE

Are you challenging me?

DADE

Name your stakes.

KATE

If I win, you become my slave.

DADE

(intrigued)

Your slave?

KATE

(realizing his mind is in the gutter)

You wish. You'll do shit work, scan, crack copyrights, whatever I want.

DADE

And if I win?

KATE

(giggles)

Make it my first born.

DADE

Make it our first date.

KATE

You're not gonna win.

DADE

And you have to smile.

KATE

I don't do dates. But I don't lose either, so you're on.

MONTAGE: Scenes of Dade and Kate preparing for the challenge.

PHREAK

(voice over)

So here's the deal. The chosen contest: To hassle Secret Service Agent Richard Gill, and get one back for Joey.

Dade spray paints camouflage onto his keyboard.

NIKON

Our decisions are final, by a vote of 2 to 1. No appeals.

Kate rifles through her address book.

CEREAL

The duel will last until we declare a winner.

Dade plays quick-draw with disks.

PHREAK

Use only the dialups, access codes and passwords in your collection. Can't ask for any help from us.

Dade, having mastered the quick-disk-draw in the mirror, looks satisfied.

DADE

(into mirror)

Talking to me?

All five are together at the beginning of the challenge.

PHREAK

Any questions?

KATE

Yeah. Whose gonna notify his next of kin?

Dade and Kate shake hands and the challenge begins.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC PHONE.

At a public phone, Kate hacks into Concourse Bank, looks up Richard Gill, and has his credit card maxed out. "Destroy Card" is the final instruction. The other hackers look on.

INT. RESTAURANT.

A waiter runs a credit card through a validation machine, sees the message and returns to the patron's table. It is Richard Gill. Right there, the waiter chops the MasterCard in two with a pair of scissors, to Gill's horror.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC PHONE.

Dade hacks into an electronic personal ads system and changes an ad.

KATE

Alright, he's in the personal ads.

(reading Dade's ad)

"Disappointed white male, crossdresser, looking for discreet friend to bring dreams to reality. Leather, lace, and water sports. Transvestites welcome."

INT. GILL'S OFFICE.

At his office, Gill is on the speaker phone with someone responding to the ad.

GILL

I... I... I know where you can stick it... I know where you can stick it...

Gill punches a button on the phone, another caller comes on.

CALLER

...wanna lick your earlobes... I wanna lick your lips... I wanna lick your toes... I wanna lick your ankles...

GILL

Awww, yeah, you wanna lick something? Lick this.

Gill punches another button, another caller comes on.

CALLER

That's why they call me Stallion...

GILL

Aw, that's disgusting!

Gill punches another button.

CALLER

My heart is steaming for you...

Gill punches another button. He is becoming quite flustered.

CALLER

...spank you with my...

GILL

Aww, Spank your ass...

He punches another button.

Another caller comes on, and Gill hangs up the phone, disgusted, offended, and distraught. The Plague is there, witnessing the whole thing.

PLAGUE

Animal!

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING OBSERVATION DECK.

It's Kate's turn. Kate is hacking into the Department of Motor Vehicles. She adds 113 traffic violations and DUI offender status to Gill's record.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY, BUSY STREET.

Gill is being arrested quite forcefully by a NYC police grunt. He is thrown onto the hood of his car and handcuffed.

GILL

Hey! Hey, ow! Do you know who I am? Do you know who I am?

EXT. CHINATOWN, PUBLIC PHONE.

Dade's turn. He hacks into the Secret Service's personnel file, and changes Gill's status to "Deceased."

INT. GILL'S OFFICE.

EMPLOYEE

(on phone)

This is accounting, sir. You enquired about an employee of ours, an Agent Richard Gill?

GILL

Yes.

EMPLOYEE

Our records indicate he's deceased.

GILL

I'm what?

INT. CYBERDELIA.

The five are playing pool.

DADE

Dead.

PHREAK

Dead?

DADE

Yeah. Like Rigor Mortis, Habeas Corpus.

NIKON

Very impressive.

CEREAL

Super hero like even.

KATE

Yeah, whatever. What's the score?

Phreak clicks the pool scoreboard so it says 60 - 60.

PHREAK

Tie.

The other four protest.

PHREAK

Due to Mr. Gill's untimely demise and everything, I guess you two will have to improvise the next round.

DADE

Right. If I win, you wear a dress on our date.

KATE

And if I win, so do you.

Dade thinks about it a second.

DADE

Deal.

Kate gives Dade a look that says "I'm going to hold you to that."

INT. KATE'S BED. NIGHT.

A shapely figure wearing a red leather legless suit with a zipper that goes all the way around the crotch. Hands caress the sultry figure as the camera pans up. The body belongs to Dade Murphy.

Kate wakes up gasping. It was only a dream. She pants and regains her breath. Then she smiles. She enjoyed that dream.

KATE

Oooohhhh...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY.

Kate, at her locker, stops Dade.

KATE

Dade. I didn't know your size, so I guessed.

She opens her locker to reveal a red leather bustier and bikini bottom.

KATE

You are man enough to stick with the deal, aren't you?

Dade walks off.

INT. DADE'S PLACE.

Dade signs an electronic pad for a package from UPS. He takes the package.

DADE

Thanks.

He closes the door and opens the package. It is a laptop computer, clear plastic shell, full colour screen. Very high-end, perhaps the equal to Kate's machine. He turns it on. The Plague's face, distorted, appears. It speaks.

PLAGUE

You wanted to know who I am, Zero Cool? Well let me explain the New World Order. Governments and corporations need people like you and me. We are samurai. The keyboard cowboys. And all those other people out there who have no idea what's going on are the cattle. Moo! I need your help, you need my help. Let me help you earn your spurs. Ahh, think about it. Enjoy the laptop, "Cool"! Tell me where the disk is.

Plague's face vanishes.

INT. JOEY'S ROOM.

Joey lies on his bed with a comic book, looking despondent. His mother enters.

JOEY'S MOM

You look pitiful. Okay, okay, you're not grounded anymore.

She kisses his forehead and leaves. He springs back to life, gets up and gets the disc from where he stashed it in the air vent.

EXT. PARK.

Joey is nervously waiting on a park bench. Phreak arrives. Agents Ray and Bob still have Joey staked out.

PHREAK

Yo, what's up?

JOEY

Dude dude dude, I gotta talk to you a minute, listen listen listen. I copied a garbage file from...

PHREAK

Big deal. A garbage file's got shit in it, Joey, come on.

JOEY

Nono, it's like hot or something. I don't know.

PHREAK

Joey, a garbage file holds miscellaneous data. Junk. Bits of stuff that's been erased, man.

JOEY

I copied it from Ellingson, okay? They're asking me about it, alright? Will you take a look for me?

Joey hands Phreak the disc. Agent Bob is taking pictures, and Phreak notices.

PHREAK

Oh shit, Joey, you've got a tail.

Joey sees, and runs for it.

JOEY

Shit!

The agents split up, one runs after Joey, the other after Phreak.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL BOYS' ROOM.

Phreak has lost his tail. He puts Joey's disc behind a condom machine in the boys' room at school, and sticks it there with gum.

INT. PHREAK'S ROOM.

Phreak frantically destroys all records of his hacking career. He knows he's about to be busted.

DREAM SEQUENCE.

The Secret Service is about to burst in on Phreak. He still hasn't destroyed any records, and starts manically going through everything. Gill is on his laptop screen.

GILL

I'm watching you...

INT. PHREAK'S ROOM. MORNING.

A knock on the door. Phreak awakes. It's his mother.

PHREAK'S MOM

Ramon? Wake up. Ramon! Wake up! Vamano. Time for school, come on.

The secret service bursts in through the window just as Phreak's mom opens the blind. She screams, Phreak leaps to his feet.

AGENT

Secret Service, don't move!

PHREAK

Deja vu!

AGENT BOB

Ray Sanchez, you are under arrest, under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986.

Phreak's mom becomes very angry and starts slapping Phreak, cursing in Spanish.

PHREAK

What are you waiting for, arrest me already!

INT. POLICE STATION LOCKUP.

The undersized Phreak is just a morsel to the hardened thugs behind these bars and they taunt him viciously as he is led to his one phone call.

COP

You get one call. Uno. Understand?

The cop locks the dial on the phone.

Phreak waits for the cop to leave, and hangs up. He starts rapidly pushing the hangup hook, and he hears a ringing tone.

OPERATOR

Hello, operator services.

PHREAK

Hello, operator? I'm having trouble dialing a number.

OPERATOR

What number please?

PHREAK

555-4202.

OPERATOR

Just one moment.

PHREAK

Thank you.

Kate answers.

KATE

Hello?

PHREAK

Hey, it's me.

KATE

Phreak?

PHREAK

I'm freaking! Joey wasn't making it up! He really hacked into Ellingson! He gave me the disc with a file he copied and now I'm in jail! They're charging me with some serious shit! And there's stuff I didn't even do, like inserting some virus called Da Vinci, and they keep asking about you guys.

KATE

You think they're going to bust us?

PHREAK

Yeah! You better figure out what's on that disc, cause we're being framed. It's in that place where I put that thing that time?

He hangs up just as the cop returns.

INT. SCHOOL BOYS' ROOM.

Kate is entirely out of place in the boys' room, as the boys look on amusedly. She finds the disc behind the condom machine and pockets it. Then she buys a condom from the machine and struts out, smiling sweetly, hot as fire.

INT. DADE'S PLACE.

Kate knocks. Mrs. Murphy lets Kate and Cereal in.

MRS. MURPHY

Hi!

(looking Kate over)

Well, now I see what all the fuss is about.

(she shows them to Dade's room)

Dade... you have company.

CEREAL

It's a nice room.

KATE

We need your help.

DADE

Do my ears deceive me?

Kate starts to leave.

CEREAL

Nonononono. Truce, you guys. Listen, we got a higher purpose here, alright? A wake up call for the Nintendo Generation. We demand free access to data, well, it comes with some responsibility. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things.

(pause)

What... It's Corinthians I, Chapter 13, verse 11, no duh. Come on.

KATE

Phreak and Joey are being framed. We need your help to figure out what's on this disc.

DADE

I can't. Everybody who touches that thing gets busted, I can't afford to get arrested, I'm sorry.

CEREAL

Maybe I should just go to the bathroom or something.

Cereal leaves the room.

KATE

What is it with you? I know we've been playing games, but, we're supposed to be on the same side and we really need your help. I really need your help.

DADE

I'm sorry, I can't.

KATE

Well, could you just make a copy of the disc? And just hide it in case we get busted, so we have something to give our lawyers, something that hasn't been tampered with? Can you do that?

A knock on the door. Dade's mom peeks in.

MRS. MURPHY

Listen you guys, help yourself to anything in the fridge. Cereal has.

She leaves.

KATE

(to Mrs. Murphy)

Thank you.

DADE

Okay. I'll copy it.

KATE

Okay, thank you.

Later. Plague phones Dade. Plague has Lauren Murphy's records on his screen.

PLAGUE

The girl. The girl has the disc I need.

DADE

I told you, I don't play well with others.

PLAGUE

Turn on your laptop. Set it to receive a file.

Dade does.

An extensive criminal record with a strange woman's picture comes up. The strange woman transforms into Dade's mother.

PLAGUE

Lauren Murphy is now a wanted felon in the state of Washington. Forgery, Embezzlement, two drug convictions, plus she jumped parole. When she's arrested, she will not have a trial, she will not pass go, she will go directly to jail. Then I change this file back to the original, and your mom disappears.

DADE

That's bullshit.

PLAGUE

What can I tell you. Computers never lie, kid. Your mom will be arrested at work, she'll be handcuffed, and later, strip searched.

DADE

You lay a finger on her and I'll kill you.

PLAGUE

Kid, don't threaten me. There are worse things than death and, uh, I can do all of them!

Dade emerges from his room. His exhausted, overworked mother is asleep on the couch. He pulls a blanket over her.

EXT. PUBLIC PHONE, WET STREET, NIGHT.

Shortly after, Dade is outside on a payphone.

PLAGUE

Talk to me.

DADE

I got it. But listen, Kate didn't know what's on it. I mean, she came to me to figure it out. She's not the one who planted the virus. You leave her alone.

PLAGUE

Hey, don't worry, kid. If she's innocent, she'll be fine. Your mommy's safe now, okay?

Dade hangs up and waits for some time. A limousine drives by, with a skateboarder tailing. Plague grabs the disc, jumps in the limo and speeds away. Dade tries to chase but gives up quickly.

INT. KATE'S ROOM.

Dade shows up. Kate, Nikon, and Cereal are working on the disc.

DADE

Kate, listen.

KATE

Uh, hold on...

DADE

I have to tell you something.

CEREAL

Hold on a second!

NIKON

Look at this, it's so lean and clean.

CEREAL

Looks like a hacker wrote it.

KATE

Come here, look at this. This thing is dense.

Nikon points out part of the code.

NIKON

But that's ill, man. It's incomplete. This is taking forever and a day to figure out. I'm gonna make some coffee.

Dade takes Nikon's place.

CEREAL

Tag, you're in.

Hours pass. Dade studies and reverse engineers the garbage file. The other hackers watch, and do just about anything but be hackers. Finally, over boxes of half-finished pizza, Dade makes an announcement.

DADE

This isn't a virus. It's a worm!

NIKON

What's this one eat?

DADE

It nibbles. You see this?

Dade indicates a rapidly scrolling data display.

DADE

This is every financial transaction Ellingson conducts, yeah? From million dollar deals to the ten bucks some guy pays for gas.

KATE

The worm eats a few cents from each transaction.

DADE

And no one's caught it because the money isn't really gone. It's just data being shifted around.

KATE

Right. And when the worm's ready, it zips out with the money and erases its tracks.

DADE

Joey got cut off before he got to that part. Check it out. By this point, it's already running at, what, twice the speed as when it started.

KATE

Right, and at this rate it ends its run in...

NIKON

Two days.

DADE

And judging by this segment alone, it's already eaten about...

CEREAL

21.8 million bucks, man.

Nikon whistles.

KATE

Whoever wrote this needs somebody to take the fall. And that's Phreak, and that's Joey, and that's us. We've got to get the rest of the file, so we can find out where the money is going before the worm disappears, so we can find out WHO created it.

DADE

I know, I know who wrote it.

KATE

What?

DADE

This Ellingson security creep. I gave him a copy of the disc you gave me.

KATE

You what?

DADE

I didn't know what was on it.

CEREAL

(agitated)

Oh man. That's universally stupid, man!

NIKON

Yo, man, you an amateur, man.

KATE

Why did he come to you?

DADE

I got a record. I was Zero Cool.

NIKON

Zero Cool? Crashed fifteen hundred and seven systems in one day?

Nikon closes his eyes and access his photographic memory.

NIKON

Biggest crash in history, front page, New York Times, August 10th, 1988. I thought you was black, man! Yo, man, this is Zero Cool! Oh, shit!

CEREAL

That's far out!

NIKON

This is Zero Cool, man! Whooo, haha!

KATE

(coldly)

Well that's great. There goes MIT.

DADE

I'll make it up to you!

KATE

How?

DADE

I'll hack the Gibson.

NIKON

They'll trace you like that
(snaps his fingers)
man, cops are gonna find you, they're gonna find you with a smoking gun.

DADE

Fucked if I care, man.

NIKON

Look, even if you had the passwords, it'll take you ten minutes to get in, and you've still gotta find the files, man, I mean, the cops will have you in... five minutes.

CEREAL

Oh wow, we are fried.

KATE

(suddenly lighter-hearted)

Never send a boy to do a woman's job. With me, we can do it in seven.

CEREAL

You're both screwed. I help, we can do it in six.

NIKON

Jesus, I gotta save all your asses. I help, we can do it in five minutes, man.

DADE

Okay. Let's go shopping.

CEREAL

Woo hoo! Boom!

EXT. OUTSIDE ELLINGSON BUILDING.

Dade and Kate cut through a chain link fence and jump into a dumpster at Ellingson. Kate lands on Dade.

DADE

You know, if I didn't live by a strict code of honor, I might take advantage of this situation. Erotically, as it were.

Kate fishes around in her pants, never breaking eye contact with Dade. She pulls out a flashlight. They start trashing. They get up to leave and are spotted by a security guard.

GUARD

Alright, hold it right there!

Kate pulls out a flare gun and fires it at the security guard. He ducks.

DADE

Shit!!

KATE

It's my subway defense system.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET.

Nikon is staring down a manhole, Cereal is fishing through an adjacent phone company truck.

NIKON

He's way down there.

Cereal emerges with a beltload of equipment and a hard hat. But he forgot the most important thing.

CEREAL

Ta-da!

NIKON

Yo, brain dead, the manual!

Cereal goes back to the truck and gets a thick manual. The phone company technician comes up from the manhole.

PHONE COMPANY TECH

Hey!

CEREAL AND NIKON

(in unison, pointing down the street)

TRUCK!!!

The phone company tech jumps back in the hole, Cereal and Nikon take off.

INT. SECRET SERVICE BUILDING.

A woman is seated at the desk. Agent Gill walks by.

WOMAN

Find it?

Cereal emerges from the desk, between her legs. His tool belt dangles obscenely from his crotch.

CEREAL

Phone's alright. The problem must be somewhere else.

Cereal walks away with his buttcrack seriously showing.

INT. ELLINGSON MINERAL OFFICES.

Nikon poses as a flower delivery boy. He winds his way through the offices of Ellingson Mineral, "shoulder surfing", watching the workers entering passwords. His photographic memory captures everything. The Plague walks past him, noticing briefly but not making the connection.

INT. PLAGUE'S LOFT.

The Da Vinci virus' launch/cancel prompt is up.

MARGO

(pacing)

They had a large chunk of the garbage file?
How much do they know?

PLAGUE

Not everything. But enough to implicate us.

MARGO

You said the worm was untraceable!

PLAGUE

Yeah. To civilians. But they're hackers.
But don't worry. All we have to do is launch
the Da Vinci virus, and then they'll all be
put away.

MARGO

Launch the Da Vinci virus? You can't do that!

PLAGUE

No one believes the guilty. Besides, by the
time they realize the truth, we'll be long
gone with all of our money.

Margo starts to protest.

PLAGUE

Look, there is no right and wrong. There is
only fun and boring. A thirty year prison
sentence sounds pretty dull to me. Who do you
prefer serves it, us? Or them?

Plague clicks on "Launch". The virus repeats its demand.

VIRUS

Unless five million dollars are transferred to
the following numbered account in seven days,
I will capsize five tankers in the Ellingson
fleet.

EXT. OPEN SEA.

As the virus speaks, a supertanker sails on a choppy sea.

INT. PLAGUE'S LOFT.

Plague leaves a message on Gill's answering machine.

PLAGUE
(sternly)

The virus goes off tomorrow morning at 10:30, and those hackers tried to get into our system again. At this point I insist you take more strenuous action, or Ellingson Mineral will hold the Secret Service responsible.

Gill gets on the phone.

GILL
(grimly)

Get me arrest warrants on Kate Libby, alias Acid Burn, Emmanuel Goldstein, alias Cereal Killer, Dade Murphy, alias Crash Override, also known as Zero Cool, and Paul Cook, alias Lord Nikon. We pick them up tomorrow morning at nine o'clock.

As Gill gives the order, a mysterious device under his desk blinks. Cereal put it there.

INT. NIKON'S PLACE.

Nikon and Cereal taped Gill's orders.

CEREAL
Snoop onto them...

NIKON
...as they snoop onto us.

Nikon calls Kate.

KATE
Yeah, it's Kate.

NIKON
Hey, Burn. We got a little problem here.

INT. SUBWAY.

Cereal, Nikon, Dade and Kate skate through a run down subway platform and get on the "A" Train. They go over the results of their password gathering spree.

KATE
Alright, so what have we got?

DADE
Well, we have fifty passwords, plus whatever Polaroid head here got inside Ellingson.

NIKON
Well, I got a lot, alright? I don't know how many but... my head hurts.

CEREAL

Yo, everyone check this out. Hey, what's the Da Vinci virus?

DADE

What?

CEREAL

Check this out. It's a memo about how they're gonna deal with those oil spills that happened on the fourteenth.

KATE

What oil spills?

NIKON

Whoa, whoa. Yo, brain-dead, today is the thirteenth.

CEREAL

Well this hasn't happened yet.

KATE

Wait a minute, the fourteenth, that's the same day the worm ends its run. I mean... Da Vinci virus, didn't Phreak say that's what he was being charged with? Look...

(quotes the memo)

"Infecting ballast programs of Ellingson tankers" - they blame hackers!

NIKON

(angry)

Damn!

CEREAL

A worm AND a virus? The plot thickens.

Kate gets ready to get off the subway.

NIKON

Whoa, whoa whoa whoa, where are you going, huh?

KATE

I got an idea. We've got a few hours, right, till we get arrested. So just stay low. I'm gonna go get some help. I'll beep you, okay?
(to Dade)

Are you coming?

Dade gets up.

CEREAL

May the Force be with you, man.

INT. INDUSTRIAL DANCE CLUB.

Weird music plays, lots of weird people dance. Razor and Blade are on stage, dancing in front of a huge speaker.

KATE

There they are!

DADE
Razor and Blade! They're flakes!

KATE
They're elite! Let's get 'em.

Dade and Kate push through the crowd. The song changes to a fast industrial rap number, Razor and Blade leave the stage, and Dade starts getting moshed. He climbs on the stage to follow Razor and Blade. For his trouble, he is thrown back onto the crowd, who pass him around overhead.

Finally the crowd lets him go. He catches up with Kate.

KATE
I lost 'em. Where were you?

Dade tries to explain, but is at a loss for words.

They make their way to the entrance to Razor and Blade's lair. Video monitors are everywhere.

DADE
I don't like this.

A robotic arm with a revolver swings around to point at Dade.

DADE
AAAAAUGH! I definitely don't like this!

BLADE
(through video intercom)
What do you want?

DADE
Ummm... we come in peace?

Dade winces at his own corniness.

KATE
We need your help. If you're up to it.

RAZOR
She's buff. Ballsy.

BLADE
Let's keep her.

RAZOR
Waste the dude.

The gun goes off. It's only a cigarette lighter! No one can accuse Razor and Blade of not having a sense of humor.

INT. RAZOR AND BLADE'S PLACE.

KATE
A virus called Da Vinci will cause oil spills at 10:30 AM Eastern Time tomorrow.

DADE
It's somehow connected with the worm that's stealing the money.

KATE

We need your help to overload the Gibson so we can kill the Da Vinci virus and download the worm program.

RAZOR

She's rabid, but cute.

BLADE

See, we're very busy. A TV network that wishes to remain nameless has expressed an interest in our show.

DADE

(noticing the stench of sellout)

Let's go, Kate.

RAZOR

Wait. Nobody said no. But you are going to need more than just two media icons like us. You need an army.

BLADE

That's it! An electronic army! If I were us, I'd get on the internet, send out a major distress signal.

RAZOR

Hackers of the World, Unite!

BLADE

How are you going to take care of the cops?

Dade just smiles.

INT. DADE'S ROOM.

Dade hacks into the city traffic light control system. Suddenly there is gridlock on the streets of New York City.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK.

Nikon is playing chess against two Hassidic Jews. Cereal's beeper goes off. It displays the message:

GRAND CENTRAL
HACK THE PLANET

CEREAL

Yo. I'm blowing up. It's Kate, Grand Central. Let's hit it!

Nikon checkmates his opponent and the two leave.

Dade, Cereal, Nikon, and Kate skate through the streets. Dade's program to freeze all the traffic lights on green, runs on schedule at 9:00:00 precisely. Picture New York City in morning rush hour, and every traffic light is green. Instant gridlock ensues. The four skate through the traffic easily, while the Secret Service, now pursuing them, is stuck. Gill punches a parked car in frustration. Its alarm goes off.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION.

The four hackers skate into Grand Central Station and head to the lowest level. They meet up with Joey.

CEREAL

Hey Joey, you made it!

INT. GRAND CENTRAL PUBLIC PHONES.

The hackers are now setting up laptops at a bank of pay phones. Dade is wearing a "Pirate Eye" eyepiece.

KATE

Now listen up, use your best viruses to buy us time, we have to get into Plague's file and copy the worm.

Cereal screams.

CEREAL

Ai! Boom boom aiaiaiaiaee! Alright, that was a little tension breaker, that had to be done, alright?

KATE

Cereal.

CEREAL

Yeah?

KATE

Go fix the phones.

CEREAL

Roger.

Cereal takes off to fix the phones.

KATE

Joey, take his place.

JOEY

What, me?

KATE

Take his place, man, do it. You can do it.

Joey takes Cereal's place.

KATE

Ready?

DADE

Yeah.

KATE

Alright, let's boot up.

The four boot up their machines. Various vanity screens come up on the laptops. They begin to hack. We see the inside of the Gibson. Viruses of all kinds begin to pour in. In the offices and data processing rooms, the Ellingson staff are in pandemonium. Happy faces with eye

patches appear on their screens. "Sit on my interface."
"Shit for Brains." "Arf Arf Arf!" Cookie monsters.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, ELLINGSON MINERAL.

The big monitor shows the attack in progress.

MARGO

What is it? What's wrong?

PLAGUE

Nothing, it's just a minor glitch.

MARGO

"Minor glitch" with you seems to turn into a
major catastrophe.

The main screen is filled with:

I WANT A COOKIE. GIVE ME A COOKIE NOW!

HAL

There's a new virus in the database.

MARGO

What's happening?

HAL

It's replicating, eating up memory. What do I
do?

PLAGUE

Type "Cookie", you idiot. I'll head 'em off at
the pass.

Another virus appears.

HAL

We have a Zero Bug attacking all the login and
overlay files.

PLAGUE

Run anti-virus. Give me a systems display!

The systems display comes up. Red flashes everywhere,
signifying new attacks. Plague presses a key.

PLAGUE

Die, dickweeds!

HAL

The rabbit is in the administration system.

Rabbit icons start to fill the systems display.

PLAGUE

Send a Flu-shot.

MARGO

Rabbit, Flu-shot, someone talk to me.

HAL

A rabbit replicates till it overloads a file,
then it spreads like cancer.

MARGO

Cancer?

The Da Vinci Virus sings "Row Row Row Your Boat".
Tanker ballasts start filling - for real.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL PUBLIC PHONES.

KATE

It's the Gibson, it's finding us too fast.

DADE

Man, there's too many garbage files, I need
more time.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, ELLINGSON MINERAL.

PLAGUE

They're at Grand Central Station, lower level.
Don't screw up.

EXT. GRIDLOCKED STREETS.

The Secret Service and NYPD are stuck. They turn around
and head for Grand Central Station.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL PUBLIC PHONES.

The public phone next to Dade's rings. Dade answers.
It's The Plague.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, ELLINGSON MINERAL.

PLAGUE

Game's over. Last chance to get out of this
without a prison sentence. You're not good
enough to beat me, you little shit.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL PUBLIC PHONES.

DADE

Yeah, maybe I'm not. But we are, you asshole.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, ELLINGSON MINERAL.

PLAGUE

Give it up! Just give it up.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL PUBLIC PHONES.

Kate's phone rings. It's Razor.

RAZOR

Are we fashionably late?

Hackers in England, Italy, Japan, Russia, everywhere
mobilize and start attacking the Ellingson Gibson. The
English hacker looks and talks suspiciously like Annie
Lennox's husband. Our heroes relentlessly search for
the right garbage file.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, ELLINGSON MINERAL.

SYSOP

We have massive infection. Multiple GPI and FSI viruses.

HAL

They're coming in from remote nodes. They're going after the Kernal!

MARGO

Colonel who?

HAL

The System Command Processor, it's the brain.

MARGO

Cancer, brain... Brain Cancer?

Duke Ellingson arrives.

DUKE ELLINGSON

Belford, what's going on?

PLAGUE

In short, Duke, a shit storm.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION.

Dozens of armed Secret Service and SWAT troops push through the crowded station looking for the hackers.

INSIDE THE COMPUTER.

The garbage file lights up. The familiar psychedelic swirl of equations and fractal graphics returns.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL PUBLIC PHONES.

DADE

I found it! I found it!

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, ELLINGSON MINERAL.

PLAGUE

This is the end, my friend.
(smiling sickly)
Thank you for calling!

INT. GRAND CENTRAL PUBLIC PHONES.

Dade is disconnected.

DADE

Oh, shit! He got me.

NIKON

Joey's getting stupid busy.

The SS and SWAT are still closing in on the hackers.

DADE

Joey. I need you to drop your viruses, go after the worm. You're the closest.

The SS and SWAT push through crowds.

DADE

It's root slash period workspace slash period garbage period.

The SS are nearly there.

Joey has found the file.

The SS arrive. Gill himself has his .357 drawn.

GILL

Freeze!

It's an empty bank of payphones, the receivers are linked together and taped up. No hackers. They keep going.

GILL

(pissed off but determined)

Ahhh Come on!

Joey completes the download.

KATE

(to Razor and Blade)

Kill the Gibson.

RAZOR

Roger that.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, ELLINGSON MINERAL.

PLAGUE

Come on you son of a bitch, is that all you got, huh? Come on, let's see what else you can do! You talking to me? Huh? Hahahaha. Are you nuts? Come at me!

Margo and Duke are awed by Plague's imminent failure and total unprofessionalism.

HAL

They're in the kernal.

DA VINCI VIRUS

Help... me...

The Da Vinci virus dies. The tankers stop capsizing and right themselves.

WOMAN

(off screen)

The tankers have stopped capsizing.

SOMEONE ELSE
(off screen)
Ballast tanks are emptying. It'll be okay.

The main screen lights up:

ARF ARF!
WE GOTCHA!

MESS WITH THE BEST
DIE LIKE THE REST

PLAGUE
Little pissant!

The Gibson dies in a flash of light.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL PUBLIC PHONES.

The hackers cheer and congratulate each other.

NIKON
Yes!

DADE
We did it!

KATE
Let's get out of here!

GILL
FREEZE!

The SS have caught up with the hackers. Agent Bob seems to be choosing which pore on which hacker's face to blow away first. Only Joey thinks to put his hands up.

As they are led away, a handcuffed Dade surreptitiously tosses the disc with the worm into a trashcan.

EXT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION.

Outside, he notices Cereal, who wasn't present to be arrested. He yells to the crowd, but really is addressing Cereal.

DADE
They're TRASHING our rights, man! They're TRASHING the flow of data! They're TRASHING! TRASHING! TRASHING! HACK THE PLANET! HACK THE PLANET!

GILL
Shut up and get in the car!

CEREAL
(understanding the hidden message)
HACK THE PLANET! HACK THE PLANET!

INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION.

Later, Cereal is trashing through the garbage cans in Grand Central Station. Eventually he finds the disc.

To Cereal's disgust, it has gum stuck to it.

INT. GILL'S OFFICE.

Gill phones The Plague to report the successful takedown.

PLAGUE

Hello?

GILL

We caught 'em.

PLAGUE

Good.

GILL

Red handed! You won't be having any more trouble from them.

INT. PLAGUE'S LOFT.

At Plague's place, Plague and Margo toast with champagne, giggle, and then scurry off to bed...

INT. GILL'S OFFICE.

Dade and Kate are there.

DADE

Me, alright? I did it. She knows shit about computers. She... she's just my girlfriend.

GILL

(laughing)

I suggest you modify your attitude. Because you are floating. And I'm about to flush your ass.

The intercom beeps.

AGENT

You've got a Mrs. Murphy to see you, sir.

Gill leaves.

KATE

Are you crazy? What are you doing?

DADE

I'm trying to help you.

She pauses, realizing his gesture.

KATE

Dade.

DADE

What?

KATE

Thanks for your help.

Dade turns on the intercom. Gill can be heard through it.

GILL

(grimly)

Your son is in big trouble. He has violated his probation and he has engaged in criminal activity.

MRS. MURPHY

My son happens to be a genius. He understands something happening today that you won't comprehend if you live to be a hundred, and he would never use what he knows to harm a living soul.

Agent Bob enters.

AGENT BOB

The news crew you requested is here.

MRS. MURPHY

Oh good. Cause I have a few things to tell them.

GILL

Your son is facing thirty felony counts in an ongoing investigation. You face possible arrest if you do that.

MRS. MURPHY

Mister, I don't care if I face certain death.

GILL

Mrs. Murphy stays right here.

KATE

Oh, wow, she's great.

DADE

Yeah.

INT. SECRET SERVICE OFFICES.

The news crew interviews Gill.

REPORTER

...and attacked the Ellingson's computer network. Is the last we've seen of this type of high-tech espionage?

GILL

Well, I'm afraid not. Hackers are a grave threat to the national security. This incident just proves without a doubt that we need increased funding to stop...

Nikon and Joey are led in.

The monitors cut into static, then Cereal appears.

SOMEONE

That kid cut him off!

CEREAL

Hold on, boys and girls. It is I, the Cereal Killer, making my first coast to coast, world wide, global television appearance. Yes, that's right, I'm here to tell you about this heinous scheme hatched from within Ellingson Mineral.

Razor and Blade busily work on keeping him on the air.

CEREAL

But for what, you ask? World domination? Nay. Something far more tacky. A virus called Da Vinci, that when launched, would cause Ellingson Mineral tankers to capsize was to be blamed on innocent hackers. But this virus was really the smokescreen, right. What could be so vitally important to protect that someone would create such a nasty, antisocial, very uncool virus program?

Cereal is now seen and heard on the big screen in Times Square.

CEREAL

But why? Could it be to cover the tracks for this worm program? A worm that was to steal 25 million bucks. The password for this hungry little sucker belongs to Margo Wallace, head of public relations at Ellingson Mineral...

INT. PLAGUE'S LOFT.

Margo watches this and sits bolt upright in bed.

MARGO

Oh my God!

CEREAL

(continuing)

...and Eugene Belford, Computer Security Officer.

INT. SECRET SERVICE OFFICE

GILL

(finally understanding what's been going on all along)

Son of a BITCH!

CEREAL

(continuing)

What's this? Is this the unnamed account in the Bahamas where the money was to be stashed? I think so!

An account number scrolls below Cereal's chin.

CEREAL

Yo. I kinda feel like God!

His voice echoes across the earth and among the satellites.

MARGO

Plague?
Eugene?

Almost supernaturally, Plague is already gone. He was right next to her, stark naked in bed a second ago.

INT. SECRET SERVICE OFFICES.

The hackers embrace and congratulate each other again, Lauren Murphy hugs her son.

INT. POLICE STATION, WOMEN'S LOCKUP.

Margo Wallace has been arrested, and is being led into the women's lockup. Some of the other women grab at her expensive Italian leather jacket as she is led to her cell.

MARGO

I don't even know how to work a VCR, let alone a computer! Get off! Look, listen, I'll make a deal. Eugene Belford! I know where his mother is, I promise you. Get offa me! I need a lawyer!

INT. AIRLINER CABIN. IN FLIGHT.

STEWARDESS

Here you are, Mr. Babbage. Flight time to Tokyo should be about 14 hours today. Can I get you anything else?

"Babbage" is The Plague in disguise; he now appears about 60 years old.

PLAGUE

Just a pillow please.

The pillow slides in behind his head, he reaches up to adjust it.

PLAGUE

Thank you.

A handcuff snaps onto his wrist. It's Gill.

GILL

You're welcome.

PLAGUE

What's going on? Let go of me! Stewardess! I'll never fly this airline again!

EXT. NEW YORK CITY SIDEWALK. NIGHT.

Dade and Kate are on their date. Dade is smartly, somewhat androgynously dressed. Kate is heavily made up, and yes, she is wearing a dress.

DADE

You look good in a dress.

KATE

You would have looked better.

DADE
Wanna go for a swim?

EXT. ROOFTOP SWIMMING POOL.

Dade and Kate swimming, fully clothed, in a pool on a roof.

KATE
I can't believe they decided you won.

DADE
They didn't. The guys felt it was the only way I'd get a date. Anyway, you're pretty good. You're elite.

KATE
Yeah? You know if you would have said so in the beginning, you would have saved yourself a whole lot of trouble.

They look out at the skyline. Suddenly, the lights in three buildings change. They spell out:

C B
R A U
 A N R
 S D N
 H

Kate laughs, honestly impressed.

DADE
Beat that!

Kate continues laughing.

DADE
You know, I've been having these really weird..

KATE
(finishing his sentence)
Dreams?

They kiss passionately.

The credits roll.

Dade and Kate emerge from their underwater kiss, the view rises above the pool and into the night. Fade to black.