

# Judge Dredd

by

William Wisher

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When there is crime in society, there is no justice.

Plato

FADE IN on the words inscribed at the base of the Statue of Liberty:

Give me your tired, your poor, your  
huddled masses yearning to breathe  
free...

SLOWLY TRACK UP the base of the statue, past the stone pedestal, past the green patina'd hem of Liberty's gown, past the folds of bronze cloth, up to the torch and beyond. But instead of blue sky above her, we are staring at an immense BELTBUCKLE. It belongs to...

THE STATUE OF JUSTICE. The imposing symbol of this new society. A helmeted JUDGE holding the LAWGIVER, a futuristic pistol, in one hand, and the BOOK OF LAW in the other. It lays a stern gaze over the city.

WIDER and we see that the statues of Liberty and Justice are surrounded by a forest of massive TOWERS BLOCKS rising a hundred stories high. Tomorrow's tenements; the Bronx on steroids.

PAN AROUND. This forest occupies what was New York Harbor. Most of it has been landfilled. It is now one endless maze of towering "Blocks." There is nothing west of the East River. Nothing but a wasteland. This is all there is. Welcome to the future. A title appears:

## MEGA CITY ONE

2115

START TRACKING through the maze, a thousand feet above the street, heading toward the center of Mega City, picking up speed as we go. Each Block has a name emblazoned on it and we catch glimpses of them as we race past. Dan Quayle. Madonna. The Orb. Bart Simpson. Obviously a world starved for culture.

We veer off into a side canyon and head for the tenement at the end, rushing right at it until the words VICTOR LAZLO fill frame.

INT. VICTOR LAZLO BLOCK - DAY

A long shabby corridor. Paint peels on the walls. A nasty place to live. An elevator door creaks open. HERMAN FERGUSON steps out and unhappily glances around. He has the shifty demeanor of a low rent criminal and the pallor to suggest that he wasn't smart enough to stay ahead of the law. Fergie mutters under his breath.

FERGIE

Jovus! What a drokking sty.

Fergie hefts a duffel bag across his shoulders and starts down the hall, checking the door numbers against the address on his parole papers, looking for a match up, continuing to mutter to himself.

FERGIE

A year in the Cubes ain't bad enough.  
They gotta parole me to the stomm hole of  
the city. Judges got no... sensitivity.

CUT TO

A THOUSAND POUNDS OF HUMAN BEING sits in the corridor, taking up most of it. A badge on his cap proudly proclaims him a charter member of the LEAGUE OF FATTIES. On one side of him is a pile of tiny bones. On the other, a fifty gallon drum labeled OTTO SUMP'S KENTUCKY FRIED GUNGE. He pulls a black-roasted straggly-looking bird from the barrel and starts gnawing on it.

Fergie approaches, checking the numbers. The Fatty glances over at him, startled. Then warily pulls the barrel closer to his side. Belches loudly. Fergie winces, revolted.

FERGIE

Relax. I couldn't eat a thing.

FATTY

Good.

FERGIE

Lose your key?

The man starts gnawing on the bird again, as he gestures to the extra wide apartment door in front of him.

FATTY

Can't fit through. Trying to slim down.

FERGIE

Maybe you oughta switch to low cal.

The Fatty gives the barrel a half turn. "Low Cal" is stenciled on the back. Fergie shrugs. As he moves past, he mutters...

FERGIE

Maybe salad.

The Fatty angrily gives him a kick in the rear. Fergie goes flying through the air, then continues skidding down the entire length of the

corridor, on a collision course with the wall at the right angle intersection ahead...

AT THE INTERSECTION. Fergie SMACKS into the wall at the corner! He shakes his head and glances down the corridor that continues on his right. It runs along the outside of the building, like an extended balcony. A few yards away, Fergie sees...

A GROUP OF LAZLOS, hurriedly moving crates of weapons to the balcony's edge. These are not nice looking people. These are people you cross the street to get away from. They whirl toward Fergie. All activity immediately stops. They eye him warily.

Fergie mutters under his breath, then forces a friendly smile.

FERGIE

*Oh, Grud.... Hi fellas...*

One of them, BOSCO, a huge brute, steps to the front.

BOSCO

Who the hell are you, pimple?

FERGIE

Name's Fergie. But I'll answer to Pimple if your heart's set on it.

Bosco glances at his friends.

BOSCO

Anyone seen him before? Could be from the Wally Squad. You a Wally, pimple?

FERGIE

You oughta get out more. Do I look like an undercover *Judge* to you?

They shake their heads no. Fergie waves his parole papers.

FERGIE

*I just got popped from Iso Cube. And from the looks of this place I'm gonna miss it. You know what I mean?*

He gives them a comradely wink. They don't smile back. The two men flanking Bosco glare at Fergie; TRACHEA and DOUG.

TRACHEA

Something wrong with Lazlo block?

DOUG

Something about Victor Lazlo you don't like, pimple? Let's tap this bowb.

Doug and Trachea stalk toward him. Fergie starts backpedaling.

FERGIE

Whoa, whoa, whoa! I think it's a wonderful place. I've seen Casablanca fifty times. He was the best thing in it. Remember when he made everyone sing the Marseilles. What a guy!

Doug and Trachea pause, reconsidering. Bosco addresses the others.

BOSCO

Okay, you're in. Give us a hand.

They go back to unloading their stuff. Weapons and explosives. Fergie doesn't like the looks of it.

FERGIE

What are we doing?

DOUG

We're going to tap all those Jagers.

BOSCO

Block War!

Fergie looks to where Doug is pointing. To MICK JAGGER block across the street. He sees throngs of people gathered on the balconies there, doing the same thing these guys are. Then Fergie sticks his head over the balcony. Looks up. Then down. Sees everyone above and below getting ready for the same thing.

FERGIE

What exactly did they do to us?

TRACHEA

They're *breathing!* Everyday we gotta stare at their *ugly drokking faces!*

BOSCO

They're always *snap scanning* us, man.

FERGIE

Well, their windows kinda face this way.

Bosco freezes. Pins a dark stare on Fergie.

BOSCO

Hey, you trying to weasel out on us?

FERGIE

Me? No. It's just... I got this parole problem. They specifically told me to avoid block wars, and if I get--

BOSCO

Hey! You're either a Jagger loving pimple, or a patriotic Lazlo. Which is it?

Fergie grabs a crate and starts unpacking weapons with gusto.

FERGIE

I'm a Victor Lazlo and proud of it.  
(shouts across the street)  
Come and get it you creeps!

EXT. LAZLO AND JAGGER BLOCK - DAY

GUNFIRE ERUPTS from both buildings. Every kind of weapon from antique AK-47's to future-tech battle rifles. Glass and concrete explodes in a shower of debris, raining down on the street below.

EXT. STREET LEVEL - DAY

CLOSE ON TWO FIGURES in armored uniforms, JUDGES. They roar up to the blocks on futuristic motorcycles, LAWMASTERS, as chunks of concrete SLAM onto the street in front of them. THE FIRST JUDGE quickly glances at the other. Only the eyes and chin are visible through the Judge's helmet. But we can see that she is a woman. Her uniform is an intimidating black with green and gold trim. Her badge reads HERSHEY. She shouts a command to her partner, BRISCO, a young man in a slightly different uniform that marks him as a rookie.

HERSHEY

Take cover!

The two Lawmasters race back to the end of the block as a few shots claw at the pavement behind them. Hershey calls in to Headquarters as she and her partner draw their weapons, serious looking next century pistols. LAWGIVERS. Her voice is steady and commanding.

HERSHEY

This is Hershey. We've got a block war at

HERSHEY (CONTINUED)

Jagger and Lazlo! Fully engulfed.  
Multiple perps involved. Cadet Brisco  
and I are under fire. Requesting backup.  
We will hold on scene for arrival.

Brisco frowns at her, impatient.

BRISCO

Why are we holding? Let's take 'em.

HERSHEY

My job is to keep you alive, Rookie.

BRISCO

You've been baby sitting me all morning,  
Judge. Griffin trained us in Block Sims  
at the Academy. I'm up for this. You can  
go in behind me if you're scared.

He starts to rise. Hershey wheels on him. Yanks him back down.

HERSHEY

*I don't care what you think you learned at  
the Academy, Cadet. You have exactly  
forty-five minutes of street experience.  
You will stand down and follow my  
instructions.*

INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - ACADEMY OF JUSTICE - DAY

JUDGE GRIFFIN, middle aged but energetic and fit, sits behind his desk, working. The office door flies open. His young aide, CONRAN, hurries in, excited and grinning. Griffin looks up.

GRIFFIN

Yes?

CONRAN

*Judge Griffin. I think the incident you've  
been looking for has arrived. The council  
is in emergency session. I have your car  
waiting.*

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Griffin and Conran stride down the busy corridor. Conran carries a stack of files and folders. Griffin straightens his uniform as they go.

GRIFFIN

The council members have agreed to Fargo's retirement?

CONRAN

I've been in touch with their aides. They're ready to support you.

They pause before the door of the Council Chambers. Conran opens it.

CONRAN

Good luck, sir.

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - COUNCIL ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON a stern, weathered face. It's a face that belongs on Mount Rushmore. Handsome. Rugged. Aged by a lifetime of experience. But with eyes still bright and piercing. A face to be reckoned with. The face of an icon. The face of CHIEF JUDGE FARGO.

WIDER. Fargo sits at the center of a DAIS in the main chamber of the ruling COUNCIL OF JUDGES. Behind them is an enormous map of North America. It is almost entirely black, wiped of features. Across the center of what was once the United States are the words: CURSED EARTH. Only a few lights stand out on all of the continent. One where New York City had been. Identified as MEGA CITY ONE. One on the west Coast, MEGA CITY TWO. A third, TEXAS CITY. And about where Denver used to be, the ASPEN PENAL COLONY.

FOUR OTHER JUDGES sit on either side of Fargo, all identified by the names on their badges. JUDGE SILVER, a black man in his sixties. MCGRUDER, female, severe looking, in her fifties. ECHS, wearing glasses, balding. And ESPISITO, stern and gray.

JUDGE GRIFFIN stands before them, addressing the bench.

GRIFFIN

We all respect the years of service you have given Mega City, Judge Fargo.

FARGO

Always nice to hear.

GRIFFIN

The many... many... many years.

Fargo just stares at him, point taken.

GRIFFIN

And we are all aware of what we owe you. You forged Mega City, and the Judge System of government, from the nuclear ashes of the world that was. A debt no one can ever repay.

FARGO

Griffin, that is the finest eulogy I've heard in some time. But unless I died recently, you're getting ahead of yourself. Now, we have an emergency to deal with, so...

Behind Griffin, at the other end of the room is a giant wall screen, depicting the block war in progress.

GRIFFIN

That's exactly the point. Mega City has continued to change and you have not been willing to change with it.

Griffin glances at the other council members. They all look pretty uncomfortable. He continues.

GRIFFIN

*Individual rights have become a thing of the past. Social order is unraveling.*

Judge Echs speaks up.

ECHS

Judge Griffin has a point. We all recall the crime spree of former Judge Rico, the worst blight on our city's history. You can't deny that happened on your watch.

FARGO

Judge Dredd hunted him down and sent him to Aspen... on my watch.

ECHS

That's true, but...

Echs looks to Griffin, who is not anxious to pick up this particular ball. Fargo narrows his eyes at Griffin, a dare.

FARGO

Do you really want to talk about Rico, Judge Griffin?

The two men stare at one another. Then Griffin shakes his head no.

GRIFFIN

You're right. Let's put the past behind us and look to the present. Your outdated policies are responsible for yet another outbreak of civil unrest.

Griffin gestures to the live shot of the block war on the wall.

FARGO

Hell, Griffin, you shove a hundred million people onto a rock the size of this one and some are bound to go futsie from time to time. Part of the world we live in.

Griffin steps closer to the bench. his voice rising.

GRIFFIN

It wouldn't be if you had adopted my request to disarm the Citidefs.

FARGO

People have a right to defend their own Blocks against terrorism. We can't protect everyone twenty four hours a day.

GRIFFIN

Then sterner measures are required. I have submitted a whole series of preemptive crime reforms--

Fargo's voice heats up as well.

FARGO

Life's hard enough for them as it is. We get any sterner and we won't be able to control a single citizen!

Griffin looks to the others for support. Judge McGruder speaks up.

MCGRUDER

What Judge Griffin is trying to say is...

FARGO

I know what he's trying to say. I'm too old and soft for the chair I'm sitting in. It's about time I gave it up. Is that what the rest of you want?

No one says anything. They all look a little guilty.

SILVER

No one would try to force you out of the Council. We have too much respect for...

FARGO

But it doesn't sound like a half bad idea, does it? I can see he's got the rest of you convinced.

(he sighs)

You're turning into a bunch of women.

McGruder bristles. Fargo glances at her.

FARGO

No offense. McGruder.

FARGO

Hell, maybe I am getting too old. I'm tired. To the bone. With all of this. You all want Griffin. I won't stand in the way.

Fargo removes the *CHIEF JUDGE'S SEAL* from his chest. Lays it on the dais in front of him. Rises from his chair. Griffin steps forward.

GRIFFIN

Then you're retiring?

FARGO

Call it what you like.

GRIFFIN

You know your choices. You can take my chair at the Academy. Or the Long Walk.

FARGO

The Walk.

Griffin tries to stifle a smile. The rest of the Council looks alarmed.

SILVER

Please Judge. Reconsider. None of us wants to see you take the hike.

Fargo moves toward the chamber doors. Glances back with distaste.

FARGO

I'll prefer the air out there.

With that he moves out the door. Griffin steps up to his chair. Sits in it, luxuriating. Places the Seal's chain around his neck. Stares down at its gleaming medallion. The others watch him with a mixture of self-recrimination and relief that it's done.

MCGRUDER

You're Chief Judge now. What should we do about the block war?

Griffin stares coldly at the screen at the end of the room.

GRIFFIN

Send in Judge Dredd.

EXT. STREET - BLOCK WAR - DAY

The block war is in full swing. The sounds of automatic weapons fire, exploding glass, and screams, fill the air. Hershey and Brisco huddle down behind their bikes at the perimeter. The THUNDEROUS ROAR of a LAWMASTER suddenly rises above the sound of the riot. Hershey and Brisco whip toward it.

CLOSE ON A LAWMASTER'S FRONT TIRE. It gleams as it races across the pavement. Then it locks up as the driver jams on the brake. The tire SKIDS to a SMOKING HALT.

TWO HEAVY BOOTS hit the pavement. PAN UP the uniform, past the muscled legs, past the equipment belt where the LAWGIVER pistol rests, past the wide chest, the gleaming badge that reads JUDGE DREDD, up to the helmet. His stern jaw tightens. He stares up at the warring blocks. His eyes narrow to angry slits. Dredd is pissed off.

HERSHEY AND BRISCO. Brisco stares at the Judge with a bit of awe. Dredd's a legend.

BRISCO

Is that... him?

Hershey's reply is full of wry affection.

HERSHEY

All of him.

Dredd strides over to the pair. He gives Brisco a cursory glance. Then turns his gaze to Hershey.

DREDD

What's the problem?

HERSHEY

I've only got a rookie with me. Been waiting for back-up.

DREDD

It's arrived.

Dredd turns as a half dozen other Judges pull up behind them. He looks at them, jerking his thumb toward Mick Jagger block.

DREDD

You six take Jagger. We'll take Lazlo.

INT./EXT. LAZLO BLOCK - BALCONY - DAY

Fergie takes cover as the Lazlo's pour fire into Jagger Block. He's not too happy about all this. He shouts to Bosco over the din.

FERGIE

I'll get some more ammo. Keep it up!

Bosco pats him on the back. Fergie scurries toward the ammo crates. Glances back. No one is watching him. Seizing his chance, he starts crawling to the corner of the end of the hall, muttering to himself.

FERGIE

Victor Lazlo was a putz. I can't believe they named a building after him.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Dredd grabs a megaphone from its rack on his Lawmaster. Then strides to the middle of the street as stray shots, dead bodies, and debris fall around him. He glares up at the mayhem with disdain.

DREDD

Total lawlessness all around me.

Dredd raises the megaphone. Cranks the volume up all the way. His voice ROARS to the citizens of both blocks.

DREDD

STOP FIGHTING!

Amazingly, the block war comes to an abrupt halt. Even Dredd looks a little surprised. Then he hears footsteps trudging toward him.

A GROUP OF HOLY MEN, dressed in white robes, is moving across the street. Surrealistic masks of glowing red peer out from beneath

their cowls, covering their faces from view. A glowing red mushroom cloud rests atop their heads, like an impressionist's halo.

Dredd pauses along with everyone else, out of respect. The lead monk approaches. Holds out a can with a few coins in the bottom. Rattles it at Dredd; a demand. Dredd scowls.

DREDD

Move along. You're interfering with official business.

The monk ignores Dredd. Insistently rattles the can again.

DREDD

Okay. All right.

Dredd scowls as he digs in his pockets for some change. Drops it in the can. The monk nods, satisfied. Then leads the little procession away. As soon as they are in the clear, Dredd raises the megaphone again.

DREDD

THESE BLOCKS ARE UNDER ARREST!

A barrage of gunfire blasts down in answer. The bullets chew up the pavement at Dredd's feet. He glowers, but doesn't budge. Soon the block war is in full swing again. Dredd strides back to safety.

AT THE EDGE OF THE BLOCK. Hershey and Brisco ready their Lawgiver pistols as Dredd joins them. A half dozen PAT WAGONS, large police vans, race up at the end of the block.

HERSHEY

Pat Wagon's are here.

DREDD

Good. We'll keep it simple. Standard relay operation. Single file.

HERSHEY

Tag 'em and bag 'em. You got it, Dredd.

DREDD

Stay behind me.

Hershey nods. Brisco, eager and cocky, steps in front of Dredd at the Lazlo Block entrance.

BRISCO

I'll go first.

DREDD

You go last.

Brisco frowns, defensive.

BRISCO

Excuse me, Judge, but I've trained in Block Sims at the Academy. Very advanced and aggressive program. Not like your day. Judge Griffin likes to say they're more real than the street. Let me take point. Show you what I can do.

Dredd looks at Brisco as if he were a bug. Then at Hershey. She nods, exasperated.

HERSHEY

All morning.

Dredd gets right in Brisco's face. Brisco shrinks a bit.

DREDD

How old are you, Rookie?

BRISCO

Nineteen... sir.

DREDD

Want to be twenty? Do what I say.

Dredd pushes Brisco back behind Hershey. Turns toward the Lazlo entrance door as he draws his Lawgiver.

DREDD

Get down.

Dredd turns the DIAL on the massive handgun from STUN to HIGH EXPLOSIVE. Then aims at the door and pulls the trigger.

KABOOM! The round punches a huge hole in the steel door, knocking it off its hinges. Dredd raises his boot and savagely kicks the door.

INT. LAZLO BLOCK - LOBBY - DAY

The door flies toward CAMERA, landing on the floor as Dredd strides through the opening. Hershey and Brisco are right behind.

A HALF DOZEN LAZLO DEFENDERS, all armed to the teeth, spin around at the end of the lobby. They recognize Dredd.

1ST DEFENDER

It's Dredd!

DREDD raises his Lawgiver. Spins the dial to LETHAL. Takes aim.

DREDD

*Drop your weapons, Lawbreakers!*

Five of them immediately let go of their battle rifles. The sixth raises his and FIRES. Dredd swiftly fires back. BLAM! The guy smacks the wall. Dead. Dredd strides forward, Hershey and Brisco in his wake. Dredd begins swiftly wading through the five men, tossing them behind him into Hershey's and Brisco's hands as he passes sentence.

DREDD

Disorderly conduct, possession of fire arms, and mayhem...five years... five years... five years... five years... you dropped your weapon last--ten years...

Finally, Dredd reaches the dead man. He grimly stares down.

DREDD

And you... you get a funeral.

EXT. STREET - DAY

MORE JUDGES rush into the buildings. Others at the Pat Wagons throw open the doors, revealing benches with shackles inside.

AT THE LAZLO BLOCK ENTRANCE. Judges stream inside. Others set up prisoner processing equipment as the first perps are herded out.

INT. LAZLO BLOCK - CORRIDOR - DAY

DREDD kicks open a stair well door and strides into the corridor. Hershey and Brisco follow behind him.

AHEAD, Lazlos spin around, see justice coming at them. and begin to scatter like cockroaches, jumping into apartments for cover.

DREDD kicks open the first apartment door. CRASH! Inside we see a handful of residents with weapons. Dredd aims his Lawgiver.

DREDD

Cease hostilities!

The little group opens fire. BUDDA. BUDDA. BUDDA. Dredd ducks back. Spins the dial on his Lawgiver to GRENADE. Blindfires around the door jam. KABOOM! Glances in. Then turns to Hershey.

DREDD

This room is pacified.

INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR - DAY

Fergie jumps into the corridor, fleeing the sound of GUNFIRE. He skids to a halt as he sees Judges streaming in at the far end. And ahead of them is the Fatty. Terrified. *Charging right at Fergie!* All thousand pounds of him filling the corridor from side to side.

FATTY

Move outta the way!

But there is no "out of the way." Fergie's eyes go wide. He's about to be pancaked. He spins around and charges back the way he came, running for his life, the Fatty and the Judges right behind him.

Fergie glances back over his shoulder. The Fatty is gaining ground. Ahead of Fergie is an elevator, the only route of escape, and the Fatty's goal. Fergie realizes what's about to happen to him.

FERGIE

Oh no. No, no, no.

Fergie sees a small TRASH CHUTE DOOR on the wall just before the elevator. He makes a decision.

FERGIE

That's me.

Fergie flings it open. Dives in just as the Fatty sweeps past, taking the little door off its hinges. Fergie screams as he drops away.

INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR - DAY

Dredd, Hershey, and Brisco stride forward. Behind them, other Judges pass arrested perps down the length of the hall. The relay in action.

AT THE NEXT CORNER. Dredd glances around to the other side. A few Lazlos are fleeing the far end. Locked apartment doors line the hall. Dredd signals Hershey and Brisco.

DREDD

No perps in sight. Lots of doors.

HERSHEY  
Watch your "six," Dredd.

DREDD  
You watch it for me.

Dredd steps into the corridor. Hershey leans around it, Lawgiver raised. Brisco starts to move past her, eager to get into the action.

HERSHEY  
Stay back, cadet!

Brisco dutifully ducks back, but his expression is pure frustration.

DREDD kicks in the first door. Bellows at the armed Lazlos inside.

DREDD  
This room is under arrest!

They toss their weapons to the floor.  
Hershey steps up beside Dredd.  
Brisco glances down the hall. Suddenly bolts ahead of them.

BRISCO  
I'll take the next one!

Before they can stop him, Brisco races to the next apartment door.

HERSHEY  
No!

Brisco kicks the door in. Stands exposed, like an idiot. Several armed Lazlos stare out at him, rifles raised.

BRISCO  
This room is under--

Before he can finish the sentence, the Lazlos open fire. BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA! Brisco is cut to pieces.

DREDD spins around. Sees Brisco dead in the hall. Snarls, enraged. Steps toward him as Hershey whirls to keep the first room covered.

DREDD aims through the open door. His Lawgiver starts spewing death. BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM!

In a flash, all the Lazlos are lying in crumpled heaps. Dredd steps inside. One Lazlo is still alive. Barely. Dredd glares down at him.

DREDD

For assaulting a Judge the sentence is...

He aims down at the man's head. Fires. BLAM!

DREDD

Death.

IN THE HALL. Other Judges are now converging on the scene. They begin passing sentence on the Lazlos in the first apartment as Dredd joins Hershey over Brisco's body. He forces his eyes empty of emotion. *Hershey stares down at Brisco, distraught.*

HERSHEY

Gruddamnit, kid. You should have listened to me.

DREDD

He was stupid. There's no room for that out here.

Hershey whirls on Dredd. Pissed off.

HERSHEY

That's all you've got to say?

DREDD

He was arrogant too.

HERSHEY

That's pretty cold, Dredd.

DREDD

He'll be colder in an hour. If you want to stay warm, stay alert. Come on.

EXT. LAZLO AND JAGGER BLOCKS - DAY

The fighting subsides as the residents begin surrendering in droves. Hordes of Judges line the street below. Order is returning.

INT. LAZLO BLOCK - LOBBY - DAY

The lobby is filled with Judges escorting arrestees out. Dredd and Hershey herd a few more of their own into the line. One of the Judges addresses them, FRAKES.

## FRAKES

The situation's been stabilized. We have about a thousand perps in custody.

Dredd, Hershey, and Frakes move past the elevator. Several Judges are gathered in front of it, blocking the view. Blood seeps from inside. Dredd glances over, curious. Frakes answers his eyes.

## FRAKES

Apparently a Fatty who lived here tried to use it in a moment of panic. Cable broke of course. Helluva mess.

Dredd nods. Starts to walk away. Suddenly, a brash young firebrand charges up to him. HAMMOND. He glowers at Dredd.

## HAMMOND

Hold it right there, Dredd. You are in some serious trouble.

Dredd stares at Hammond, amazed and annoyed.

## DREDD

*Who are you?*

## HAMMOND

Vardis Hammond. I represent the Lazlo Block Defense Committee and I order you to immediately stop the harassment of these law abiding citizens.

## DREDD

How would you like a year in the Cubes?

## HAMMOND

You have nothing to charge me with. I know my rights, and I demand justice! I'm filing a complaint against you.

Dredd looks unimpressed.

## DREDD

Do it outside. Because in another second I *will* have something to charge you with. Interfering with a Judge.

With that, Dredd pushes Hammond aside, then strides toward the lobby doors, passing a TRASH SHOOT set into the wall. Dredd pauses. Doubles back. Flings it open. A pair of feet dangle in view.

Dredd grabs an ankle and yanks hard. Fergie comes tumbling out of the chute. He looks up. Feigns relief.

FERGIE  
Rescued! Thank Grud.

Dredd hauls him to his feet. Pushes him toward Frakes.

DREDD  
Here's one more. Five years in Isocube.

EXT. LAZLO BLOCK - DAY

AT THE PAT WAGONS. The perps are being processed by the Judges, then led into the wagons. JUDGES COOPER and BURGESS are entering the names into their computer.

THE PERPS wait in a long line that stretches back to the entrance. They're all HANDCUFFED and TAGGED. Most of them look like hardened criminals. Most everyone in Mega City is. A few look especially ugly. MUTANTS. hideously deformed. The others pay them no special attention, as though long used to seeing them around.

COOPER AND BURGESS process the next man in line, It's Bosco.

COOPER  
Bosco, Francis, Herman. Mayhem,  
assault, etc. Arresting Judge... Dredd.  
Ten years in Isocube. Wow. Next.

BOSCO  
(going pale)  
Ten years...?

Burgess glowers at him. Pushes him past.

BURGESS  
Shut up.

The next man appears before them. One of the mutants.

COOPER  
Goldberg. Arthur. Ooh, a very bad boy.  
Multiple charges. Arresting Judge,  
Dredd. You're going to Aspen.

Cooper glances at Goldberg's mutated features. Grins.

COOPER

I see you've been there before. This time you get life.

GOLDBERG

Stom!

COOPER

Cheer up. *Maybe you'll mutate back.*

AT THE LAZLO BLOCK ENTRANCE. Fergie sees Dredd and Hershey as he's being led toward the Pat Wagons, handcuffed and tagged. He desperately tugs his captors over to Dredd and Hershey.

FERGIE

Hey! Your Honors. Your Judgeships. Really, you don't want this on your heads. You gotta listen to me.

Dredd looks over at him.

DREDD

Do you have a problem, lawbreaker?

FERGIE

Huge! Very big. See, I didn't do anything. I was just looking for my apartment when these maniacs started killing each other. This whole thing's a mistake.

DREDD

I don't make mistakes. You should have attempted to call us. Silence is guilt.

FERGIE

I thought silence was golden.

Hershey looks to Dredd.

HERSHEY

He wasn't armed or resisting when you arrested him. What do you say we cut him a break. See what the Birdie says.

She pulls a small device from her belt. "BIRDIE" is inscribed at its top. Fergie stares at it uncomfortably as Hershey scans him with it.

FERGIE

What is that thing?

HERSHEY

Bullshit detector. Think about what happened.

Fergie closes his eyes, straining at the task. THE BIRDIE'S tiny screen shows a "live shot" of Fergie. Breaks it down into rotating graphics as it examines his mind. Hershey frowns at the results.

HERSHEY

Can't get a solid reading. He's probably been lying for so long, his own synapses don't know what's true anymore.

FERGIE

I object to that.

DREDD

Overruled.

Dredd grabs a hand-held booking computer from one of the nearby Judges. Punches up Fergie's "jacket." Frowns as he reads.

DREDD

You were released from Isocube this morning. Too bad. Associating with criminals is a violation of your parole and carries a mandatory sentence. You don't get five years in the cube. You get eight. On Aspen.

Fergie eyes go wide. Then he faints. The other Judges drag him away. Hershey turns to Dredd, disappointed in him.

HERSHEY

That's pretty rough for a guy who might not even be guilty. You could have shown some leniency.

Dredd glances past her as two Med Techs carry Brisco's body out the lobby entrance. Hershey follows his gaze. They watch as the Techs load Brisco into the Meat Wagon.

DREDD

Leniency encourages crime.

JUDGE FRAKES calls out to them as he herds more perps toward the Pat Wagons.

FRAKES

Hey, Dredd, did you hear about Fargo?  
He just resigned! He's taking the Walk.

EXT. CITY GATES - DAY

TWO HUGE STEEL DOORS are set in a massive wall that surrounds the city. Guard Towers on both sides. This is the MAIN GATE.

CADET JUDGES, young teenagers from the Judge's Academy, flank the doors, forming an honor guard. They snap to attention.

JUDGE FARGO stands before them, wearing a LONG DUSTER COAT and a wide brimmed HAT. Before him he holds his uniform, Lawgiver, and badge in a ceremonial bundle. He steps toward one of the cadets, CRAWFORD, a strapping young lad of fifteen. Offers the bundle.

FARGO

Cadet Crawford.

Crawford reverently takes the bundle. Hands Fargo a sawed-off SCATTERGUN, and the BOOK OF LAW. Crawford's eyes are misting; they all revere Fargo.

CRAWFORD

We won't forget you, sir.

FARGO

Carry on, Cadet.

The two lines of cadets salute. Fargo salutes them back. Then turns toward the gates, hefting the shotgun and the book. His eyes stare grimly ahead, awaiting the world outside.

JUDGE DREDD steps up beside him. Grim-faced as well.

DREDD

I wish you'd reconsider. Take the post at the Academy.

FARGO

Would you?

Dredd says nothing.

DREDD

I wouldn't leave the city to Griffin.

FARGO

You don't like him?

DREDD

He's... ambitious.

FARGO

I don't have much use for the Griffins of this world either. But he's always supported you, Dredd. Trained you from childhood.

DREDD

You were my teacher. The one I looked up to.

Fargo puts a fatherly hand on Dredd's shoulder. Nods his thanks, uncomfortable with words of affection.

FARGO

You play ball with him, hear? And he'll take good care of you.

THE HUGE GATES start to open, revealing, the CURSED EARTH stretching toward the horizon; a vast desert of ruins and parched ground.

DREDD AND FARGO gaze out into the wasteland.

DREDD

There's nothing but total lawlessness out there.

FARGO

Then I'll bring the law to it.

Fargo steps toward the gates. Calls back to Dredd over his shoulder.

FARGO

Watch your "six o'clock," son. Always some creep sneaking up behind you.

DREDD

Watch yours.

As Fargo strides into the desert, the gates close on him with an ominous, ringing CLLAAANG!

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - CHIEF JUDGE'S OFFICE - DAY

A huge desk dominates the impressive room. Marble floor. Polished steel walls. Cold. Futuristic. Softened somewhat by the addition of

bear and elk skin rugs and western art prints, which workers are feverishly removing. Judge Griffin turns to Conran.

GRIFFIN

Let's keep it simple. Burn the rugs. Lose the Remingtons. Save the whiskey.

CONRAN

Very good, sir.

Satisfied, Griffin strolls to the huge marble desk that dominates the room. He smiles. Climbs into the chair. Conran smiles too.

CONRAN

How does it feel?

GRIFFIN

Feels good, Conran. Like nothing can stop you. Now we can finally whip the city into shape.

The VIDPHONE rings. Griffin answers, glancing down at the screen.

GRIFFIN

*Chief Judge Griffin.*

INTERCUT

INT. ASPEN PENAL COLONY - WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

A drab looking room. WARDEN JUDGE MILLER sits behind the desk. He's about Griffin's age. Weasel-like. Big grin.

MILLER

It's Miller. I heard about your coup. Thought I'd send my congratulations.

INTERCUT

GRIFFIN. He stares with distaste at Miller's image on the screen.

GRIFFIN

How are things at Aspen, Miller?

MILLER

The same. Horrible. Inhuman. Boring. I've been contemplating a change. Now that you're Chief Judge, you're not going to forget your friends, are you?

GRIFFIN

Absolutely not. But I don't remember us ever being friends. Miller. Do you?

MILLER frowns. A chilly silence on the line. Then...

MILLER

Oh. I think we could be. A man of my abilities is just wasted out here.

GRIFFIN

I think you're doing a terrific job, Warden. I see no reason to make a change, so...

Miller smiles.

MILLER

Aren't you going to ask me about Rico?

GRIFFIN

Still dead isn't he?

MILLER

Those reports were highly exaggerated.

GRIFFIN gets a bad feeling. He immediately spins around to Maxwell and the other workers and barks an order.

GRIFFIN

Give me the room. Now.

(to Miller, hushed)

What are you talking about?

MILLER

I'll bet you aren't aware that when a prisoner is sent to Titan, I get access to all his files. *All of them.* Even the classified ones. I know more about an inmate than he does himself. Especially Rico. Now there's a man with an interesting past. He had no idea. We've been having some wonderful chats. I mainly do the talking. He mostly just listens. He's very upset with you.

GRIFFIN

You telling me he didn't die in the mines?

MILLER

Just a little white lie. His feed and care have been my top priority. No one knows he's around except me. So I suppose anything could happen to him. He could just... disappear.

GRIFFIN

I'll give you my old chair at the Academy.

MILLER

A seat on the council.

GRIFFIN looks ashen.

GRIFFIN

But there's no open chair.

MILLER

Open one. Because there's always the chance that he could... *escape*. Or that I might *accidentally* send his classified files to the other council members. Do you think they'd still let you keep your chair after they read them?

Griffin ponders his choices. Makes a command decision.

GRIFFIN

All right. You've got a seat on the council. But I want Rico's head. Bring it with you.

MILLER

My pleasure. We'll be out on the next shuttle. Look forward to working with you.

Griffin slams the phone down. Rubs his temples.

EXT. ASPEN PENAL COLONY - DAY

An ominous factory fortress in the center of the mountains. Wind howls through the tall spires that rise above the compound walls, topped by concertina wire. Guard towers at every corner. If the Cursed Earth is hell, then this is hell's prison.

INT. ASPEN COLONY

Miller strides down a spotless, gleaming corridor, flanked by uniformed

guards. Set into one of the walls are a series of airtight windows that look out onto the factory area of the prison complex. Everything in there looks like it's been bathed in dragon's breath. Black. Corroded. Miller pauses to watch the inmates work.

THROUGH THE WINDOW we see the prisoners at work before the immense machinery. A huge sign, floating above their heads says:

RADICAL CARBON 4  
THE CLEANEST FUEL ON EARTH

THE PRISON WORKERS sweat, shirtless in the humid atmosphere, contaminated by the GREENISH GASES emanating from the processing machinery. We see men in various stages of MUTATION, from almost normal to monstrous.

MILLER watches, emotionless. He speaks to one of the guards.

MILLER

Too bad it isn't clean when they dig it out  
of the ground.

GUARD

Yes sir.

Miller turns away. They continue down the hall.

IN THE CELLBLOCK SECTION. Miller and the guards stride through the cellblocks, passing a few mutated prisoners being let in from the processing area through a glass, double lockout PURIFYING STATION--the system keeps the guards and staff safe from the toxins.

At the far end of the room, the guard unlocks a heavy door. Beyond is a stone staircase that descends into the bowels of the prison, the Maximum Security section. Miller and the guards head down.

IN THE MAXIMUM SECURITY WING. Miller and the guards move along a corridor toward a MASSIVE STEEL DOOR at the end.

MILLER

Wait outside.

The guards nod. Start opening the triple locks on the door.

IN THE ROOM. Stark and eerie. Carved out of solid granite. No windows. No way out. A single overhead spotlight illuminates a slab table jutting up from the center of the floor. A control panel is built into its top.

In front of the table, a vertical sheet of translucent BLUE LIGHT bisects the room; a shimmering wall of energy. Beyond it we can make out a figure stirring in the shadows. It sits on a bench carved out of the wall. We hear the rattle of chains. And the rasp of breathing.

Miller smiles toward the half-seen figure across the room. The door closes behind him. CLUNK.

The figure draws a bead of sweat from his forehead and absently flicks it at the curtain between them. THWACK! The droplet sizzles and disintegrates. The figure speaks in a voice like caked sand. RICO.

RICO

Miller. Have you come for another chat?

MILLER

A short one. I'm afraid. Duty presses.

Rico issues a dry laugh. Rattles his bonds.

RICO

The chains of office. You poor man. But then, we're both prisoners here, aren't we?

MILLER

Just you.

Miller takes a seat at the table.

RICO

Hardly. We've both been sentenced and forgotten. Well, that's life. And destiny is grasped, not granted. So I have decided to go back and claim what was stolen from me. My destiny to rule Mega City as Chief Judge. I am offering you the chance to sit at my right hand. Take it.

MILLER

Tempting. But I'm going to have to pass.

Miller pulls a PISTOL from his suit and lays it on the table in front of him. Rico eyes it, disappointed.

RICO

I overestimated you. An easy thing to do.

MILLER

I have some good news and some bad news.

RICO

You've decided to kill yourself, but not today.

Miller laughs.

MILLER

The good news is Fargo resigned. Griffin is the new Chief Judge and he's handing me a seat on the Council. I'm leaving for Mega City in an hour... and I'm taking you with me.

Rico stands. Steps toward the shimmering wall of light. We see him clearly now. He's enormous. And horrifying. Mutated beyond the scope of anyone we've seen so far. Larger and more muscled. Like it's been good to him. Miller reflexively shrinks back a little. Rico comes to the end of his tethering chains just before the curtain.

MILLER

The bad news is, I won't be taking all of you. Just your head.

RICO

My head?

MILLER

That's the deal.

Miller smiles as he reaches for the pistol. Rico glares at him. His eyes are volcanoes. He seems to swell with rage at this injustice.

Miller presses a button on the control panel in front of him. We hear a loud THUNK, and then the curtain of energy begins to slowly lower from the ceiling. Miller raises the pistol, waiting.

Rico steps back. Summons all his strength and wrenches against his chains. They tear from the wall. GRANNCH! Miller stares in alarm. The curtain is still too high to shoot. He steps back.

Rico twirls the chain and flings one end toward the curtain. CRACK! The end of the chain sails through, wrapping around Miller's neck. The voltage CHURNS through the chain, climbing along both ends. Rico roars as the power tears through his arms, but he doesn't let go. Miller screams as Rico drags him toward the descending wall.

Miller is slowly pulled toward the curtain. He screams as his head is pulled through, right up to the neck. Then...

SIZZLE-CRACK! Miller's head tumbles to the floor on the other side, severed by the force field. In another second, the wall of light vanishes into the floor...

OUTSIDE THE DOOR. RICO hurls it open! In one hand is MILLER'S PISTOL. In the other, MILLER'S HEAD! The guards gape, stunned.

Rico swiftly aims and fires! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! They tumble dead. An alarm begins to BLARE!  
A STEEL LOCKOUT DOOR drops down, sealing the hall.

Rico aims up at the speaker. BLASTS it into silence. Then approaches a wall panel beside the lockout door; a security override station. He hits the button. The automated panel calmly requests...

PANEL VOICE

Please wait for retinal scan.

Rico thrusts Miller's severed head up to the camera lens. A BEAM of light scans Miller's unblinking eye. Approves the override.

PANEL VOICE

Thank you.

The door ascends with a whirl of servos. Rico quickly ducks through.

INT. CELLBLOCK

As the general alarm continues bleating, Rico calmly strides into the long hall. Prisoners grab onto the bars and shout down at him in glee. A PRISON GUARD with an assault rifle races into the block from a door right behind Rico.

RICO spins around. Grabs the guard by the throat. Twists. SNAP! The guard drops. Rico grabs his assault rifle. Two more guards rush in behind the first. Rico cuts them down. BUDDA BUDDA! Then he stomps to the row of cells.

AT THE FIRST CELL. Rico smiles at the mutant inside. ROACH, a tower of a beast. Mean looking.

RICO

Roach. Long time.

Rico blasts the lock from the door. Throws it open. Roach steps forward. Big grin. Rico hands him Miller's pistol. Roach glances down at Miller's head.

ROACH

Hey, Warden. Lookin' good.

(to Rico)

We heard you was dead.

RICO

Find Calypso, Krieg, and Stork. Meet me at the freight dock. We're going home.

#### INT. COUNCIL CHAMBERS - AFTERNOON

Griffin presides over the council. Dredd stands before them. The gallery, full of spectators, eagerly watches the proceedings. Hammond angrily addresses the council, pointing an accusing finger at Dredd.

HAMMOND

This man murdered, in cold blood, at least a dozen residents of Lazlo block...

DREDD

They were breaking the law.

HAMMOND

They were defending themselves!

Dredd glares coldly. Hammond whirls back to the bench.

HAMMOND

What I want to know, and I'm sure I speak for all the citizens of Mega City, is what you intend to do about this?

Griffin calmly folds his hands and prepares his reply.

GRIFFIN

I'm not at all certain that the citizens of Mega City share your opinion of Judge Dredd. He has become a well known symbol of all that the Judge system stands for.

Hammond nods, sarcastic; that's his point exactly. Griffin turns his stern gaze to Dredd.

GRIFFIN

But I agree that it would be remiss of me to allow Judge Dredd's handling of this morning's incident to go unnoticed.

Griffin smiles. Dredd calmly awaits his reprimand.

GRIFFIN

Therefore, I am awarding him a Commendation for Valor.

Hammond looks dumb struck. Griffin leans toward him. Stern.

GRIFFIN

And I am outlawing the Defense Committees as of this moment. Their weapons are to be confiscated. I am also implementing a curfew. There will be other reforms to follow.

Griffin looks up and addresses the gallery as well.

GRIFFIN

This city has gotten out of control and I intend to make it safe again for law abiding citizens. This session is closed.

With that, Griffin bangs his gavel and rises from his chair. The gallery breaks out in loud chatter. Hammond gapes, dumbfounded. As the Council exits the room. Hammond glares at Dredd.

HAMMOND

I'm not finished with you, Dredd.

DREDD

Threatening a Judge is a crime. Go home. Take a cold shower.

Hammond whirls around and storms from the chamber. Dredd follows the other Judges into the hall.

IN THE HALL. Dredd strides through the hall, past Griffin and Conran, who is going over the Chief Judge's agenda.

CONRAN

At nine o'clock you have a meeting with Energy, at ten thirty, the Housing commission...

Griffin spots Dredd. Swiftly puts up a hand to silence Conran. Then joins Dredd's side, striding down the hall. Conran dutifully follows.

GRIFFIN

Judge Dredd, may I have a word?

Dredd stops. Indifferently gazes into the eyes of the new Chief Judge. Griffin tries to ingratiate himself with the stoic legend.

GRIFFIN

I know you were very fond of Judge Fargo. We're all sorry to see him go.

Dredd waits.

GRIFFIN

But I'm going to depend on you to help turn things around in this city. I've always taken an interest in your career. Together, we can accomplish great things.

Dredd doesn't seem too impressed.

DREDD

We missed you at the gate this afternoon.

Griffin shrugs away the accusation.

GRIFFIN

Yes. It's been a Helluva day.

DREDD

Thanks for the commendation.

GRIFFIN

The first of many. Looking forward to big things with you, Judge.

Dredd turns his back and walks away. Griffin sighs. Conran steps up to his boss, continuing without missing a beat.

CONRAN

Then at eleven forty-five, the boys from Sewage and Disposal...

INT. JUDGE PRECINCT - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Dredd stands before Brisco's open locker. All of it's contents are a

large carry bag at Dredd's feet. Dredd shuts the locker door, then slides Brisco's name plate from its holder. Drops it into the bag and zips it shut.

IN THE SHOWERS. A large communal affair. Male and female Judges are showering immodestly side by side. Dredd stands under one of the jets of water, rinsing off, letting the water cascade over his face. When he turns, Hershey stares at him from the next jet over. Her eyes are troubled. Dredd can tell something's bothering her.

DREDD

Something wrong, Judge Hershey?

Hershey hesitates, searching for words.

HERSHEY

I shouldn't have... snapped at you back there... at the scene. I was feeling... angry and upset about Brisco.

DREDD

His death wasn't your fault.

She shakes her head no, distraught.

HERSHEY

I was responsible for his safety.

DREDD

He broke with procedure. His actions not only ended his own life. they endangered ours. We're all better off without him.

Dredd turns to grab a towel then heads toward the exit. Hershey frowns, then steps in front of it. Dredd stares at her, perturbed.

DREDD

You're blocking the exit.

HERSHEY

Yeah.

DREDD

That's a violation of the fire code. It's also making me... chilly.

HERSHEY

I'm trying to apologize to you.

DREDD

I know.

HERSHEY

Then don't walk away, that pisses me off.

They stare at each other a beat.

DREDD

Listen, Hershey. Brisco was a hazard. A Judge has to be highly trained and disciplined, or he has no business being on the street because this city has more ways to kill you than you can think of. Every law abiding citizen is just a perp resting between crimes.

Hershey frowns.

HERSHEY

Did it ever occur to you that *that* attitude might be contributing to the problem?

DREDD

I believe in the Judge System. Swift. And harsh. Without it, the city is finished. You know it as well as I do.

HERSHEY

I also know you better than you think. Why won't you just admit you're as upset about Brisco's death as I am?

Dredd frowns at her. We see that she's right. But he can't do it.

DREDD

Judge Hershey, you are having a crisis. I suggest you put some clothes on and contact the Psych Division.

With that, Dredd pushes past. Hershey stares after him, frustrated.

EXT. MEGA CITY FREIGHT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A RAIL LINE stretches into the Cursed Earth from the heavy gate set in the City wall. A GUARD TOWER rises above the parapet. TWO GUARDS stare out at the light of an approaching train.

CLOSE ON THE TRAIN. Sleek and futuristic. Slowing down. It pulls sealed CONTAINERS, each emblazoned with the words:

RADICAL CARBON 4

THE GATE slowly rises. The train glides through the opening. IN THE GUARD TOWER. The 1st Guard picks up the phone.

1ST GUARD

Aspen convoy entering the city, sir.

The face of his DUTY CHIEF nods on the Vidscreen.

DUTY CHIEF

It's on the schedule. Pass it through to the checkpoint, then search it for escaped inmates.

AT THE CHECKPOINT, just inside the Freight Gate. The train sits on the track. More guards pass along each side, shining flashlights into the undercarriage. One of them signals to the guard in the tower.

IN THE GUARD TOWER. The two guards shrug at each other. The 1st Guard punches up the Vidphone.

1ST GUARD

It's clean.

THE TRAIN moves past the checkpoint.

EXT. MEGA CITY PROCESSING CENTER - NIGHT

The train rests in the off loading area, a maze of machinery and equipment.

ON THE CONTAINER CARS. Automated open bed TRUCKS pull up alongside them. CHUTES iris open on either side of the containers, then extend downward like steel teats. The contents begin to spill out into the trucks. A WHITE POWDERY ORE. Radical Carbon 4, the blood that fuels Mega City.

ON THE TRUCKS, filling up with RC4. FIVE FIGURES emerge from the ore, like cockroaches climbing from a sugar bowl. Rico and his friends, Roach, Calypso, Krieg, and Stork. All Mutants. Armed to the teeth. They scurry to the truck's edge and leap to the ground.

RICO and the others glance around. No one in sight. Then a hapless FOREMAN, chewing on the end of a cigar, stumbles around the back of the truck, almost bumping into them. He frowns.

FOREMAN

Hey!

RICO

Hush.

Rico swiftly grabs the man by the neck and slams his head against the side of the truck, killing him. He snatches the cigar from the foreman's mouth, then casually lets go the body. THUMP. Takes a puff. Smiles.

RICO

Let's go see the lights.

Rico and the others stroll away.

EXT. MUSEUM OF LAW AND ORDER - NIGHT

Dredd, still carrying the locker room bag, stands at the entrance of the huge building. It's closed for the day. He places his palm over the electronic scanner on the lock. It blinks as it reads him. We hear a series of tones. Then a CLUNK as the lock opens. Dredd heads inside.

INT. MUSEUM - NIGHT

A vast cathedral of a place. No one else around. Dredd's footsteps echo off the walls. It is a history museum. We get a swift lesson in the background of this world as Dredd moves through the place.

Displays chronicle events in law enforcement from the old days when this was NEW YORK CITY through the time of NUCLEAR WAR, PLAGUE, and SOCIAL COLLAPSE, leading up to the reinstatement of order under the JUDGE SYSTEM. instituted by FARGO.

IN THE HALL OF WEAPONS. Dredd strides through the room. Various PISTOLS AND RIFLES rest behind glass. The earliest are old Smith and Wesson .38 revolvers. Then 9mm automatics. Then Lawgivers. There are also 12 gauge shotguns, M-16's, a feast of deadly relics, all shiny and new looking. He passes through the far end, into a corridor that leads to...

THE HALL OF HEROES. Policemen and Mega City Judges who gave their lives in the line of duty are honored here. Wax replicas, clad in UNIFORM, stand at attention behind velvet ropes. Dredd gives them a quick salute as he passes.

IN THE HALL OF THE DEAD. Dredd strides through the arch and pauses. There are no displays here. Just marble walls containing the ceremonial CRYPTS of fallen comrades. A little brass name plate identifies each one. Dredd begins slowly marching past the names.

At the end of the room are EMPTY CRYPTS. Dredd pauses before one. Sets down the bag. Pulls open the crypt's marble faced drawer.

He kneels. Unzips the bag. It contains Cadet Brisco's personal effects. Dredd begins reverently placing them inside. Brisco's uniform, neatly folded. His boots. Helmet. Badge. His Lawgiver. Dredd solemnly slides the vault shut. Places Brisco's BRASS LOCKER TAG in the open slot. Then steps back. Salutes. A private funeral.

Suddenly, Dredd's private ceremony is interrupted by a tiny SOUND. He whips toward it, drawing his Lawgiver. Its sights land on the face of...

A YOUNG BOY, peeking around the corner at the end of the room. His eyes go wide as saucers.

DREDD frowns. Raises the pistol.

DREDD

This building is closed. How did you get in? Come here, juve.

The kid takes off. Dredd scowls. Starts running after him.

DREDD

You're only making things worse for yourself. Disobeying a Judge is in direct violation of...

But when Dredd reaches the corner, the boy is no where in sight. He quickly scans the corridor. Empty. And no way out at the other end. He listens. No sound. Puzzled, Dredd turns away. He's about to start searching the rest of the building when suddenly his radio-mike crackles alive. A VOICE speaks out.

VOICE

Dredd, this is central. You'd better report to the Hall of Justice. We've got trouble.

Dredd frowns. Reaches down for his mike.

DREDD

Copy. On my way.

EXT. HALL OF JUSTICE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON WARDEN MILLER'S HEAD, stuck on one of the spikes atop the entrance gate.

CLOSE ON DREDD'S FACE, scowling at the sight.

WIDER. Judge Griffin stands beside Dredd at the bottom of the gate. Other Judges are gathered behind them. Among them is Hershey.

GRIFFIN

There was an escape from Aspen today.  
They killed Miller. Tore up half the place  
on their way out. Then disappeared.

DREDD

*I think we can assume they are now in  
Mega City. How many?*

GRIFFIN

Five. Led by Joe Rico.

Dredd looks stunned.

DREDD

Rico's dead.

GRIFFIN

Apparently not as dead as we were led to  
believe. Miller told me himself just today.

Dredd's jaw clenches with determination. Turns to the other Judges.  
Gestures to Miller's head.

DREDD

Someone get him down.

Hershey steps up to Dredd.

HERSHEY

Who's Rico?

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - GARAGE

Dredd is readying his Lawmaster motorcycle. Checking his weapons  
and gear. His face is a mask of hardened determination. Hershey  
stands nearby, listening.

DREDD

He was a Judge once. And my friend. We  
were at the Academy together. Room  
mates. He was the best of all of us. The  
smartest. Fastest. Most dedicated. The  
best. I wanted to be just like him.

HERSHEY

What happened?

Dredd slams the ammo container closed. Turns to Hershey.

DREDD

He broke the sacred bond of trust we all make. Went into business for himself. Shake downs. Body sharking. Even murder. He ended up terrorizing everyone he was sworn to protect. All for his own profit.

HERSHEY

How'd they catch him?

Dredd climbs on the Lawmaster.

DREDD

Fargo found out about it. Sent the second best Judge he had after him. Me.

Dredd revs the Lawmaster's engine to life.

DREDD

I found him once. I'll do it again. And send him back to hell.

HERSHEY

I'm coming with you.

Dredd ignores her. Revs the bike's engine and roars past her out of the garage and into the night. Hershey stares after him, worried.

INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - LATER

It's dark. Only a single lamp stabs into the shadows. Griffin sits at his desk, looking haunted. And scared. The Vidphone rings. Griffin stares at it, reluctant to pick it up. Finally he punches the button. The audio comes alive, but the little screen stays black.

GRIFFIN

Griffin.

ON THE SCREEN we see RICO'S smiling, mutated face.

RICO

*The years have been kind to you, Griffin.*



GRIFFIN turns pale.

GRIFFIN

No one would believe you.

RICO

Wouldn't they? Do you think the council will be grateful if they know what you've been covering up all these years? Personally, I don't hold it against you, but then, I'm more open minded than some.

Griffin hesitates, anguished. Then...

GRIFFIN

You haven't got a prayer. Dredd's already coming after you.

RICO smiles. He turns and glances at a huge VIDEO SCREEN on the face of a building across the square. It's broadcasting a news report. ON THE SCREEN. A photo of DREDD. Then a shot of HAMMOND being interviewed by a REPORTER. Hammond is complaining about Dredd's abuse of power and the lack of justice in the city.

RICO turns back to the phone. Nods.

RICO

Good. I'm going after him.

Rico hangs up.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Dredd powers his Lawmaster through the city. Searching for Rico. The streets are deserted. Suddenly...

A FIGURE appears at the mouth of an alley ahead. It calls out.

FIGURE

Dredd!

Dredd wheels the Lawmaster toward it. Its headlights wash over the alley, revealing....

CALYPSO AND FOUR OF THE MUSHROOM MONKS. Three are on the ground, pleading in supplication. Calypso holds the fourth before him, a knife pressed against the monk's throat. The mask glows eerie red in the night.

DREDD climbs from his bike and draws his Lawgiver in one motion. Sets the dial. Starts stalking toward Calypso, eyes narrowed.

CALYPSO

Rico wants to see you. Drop that cannon and follow me or I'll slice this monkey from ear to ear.

Dredd keeps going, taking aim.

DREDD

No one would harm one of the holiest of holies. Not even you. You have five seconds to surrender.

CALYPSO

I don't go in much for religion.

Dredd keeps moving. Calypso starts getting nervous.

DREDD

And I don't negotiate with criminals.

CALYPSO

Hey, I ain't kidding. I'll tap this--

He never finishes the sentence. Dredd fires one round. The Lawgiver ROARS. Calypso flies back, smacking the asphalt. Surprised and still.

Dredd stands over him. Calypso stirs in semi-consciousness. The monks get to their feet. One shoves a can toward Dredd. Rattles it. Dredd cocks an eyebrow at the monk.

DREDD

I just saved your life.

The monk insistently rattles the can again. Dredd barely holds onto his patience. Starts digging through his pockets.

DREDD

Fine...

When Dredd glances down at the change in his hand, the monk suddenly whips a shotgun from beneath his robes and butt strokes Dredd in the head.

Dredd flies back, stunned. The monk spins the gun around and shoves both barrels into Dredd's face. Then pulls his mask off. It's Rico. The

other monks whip off their robes. It's the rest of the gang. Stork quickly snatches Dredd's Lawgiver.

RICO

*That* was classic.

Calypso gets to his feet. Shakes his mutant head to clear it. Rico glances at him.

RICO

Told you he'd use the stun setting.

CALYPSO

Guess I owe you ten.

Rico laughs. Dredd glowers.

DREDD

You're uglier than I remember, Rico.

RICO

Nine years in Aspen's mines takes its toll. But then, you knew that before you sent me there. So I suppose I owe it all to you.

Stork aims the Lawgiver at Dredd's head.

DREDD

How'd you get the robes?

RICO

Dead monks. Well, when we left them, anyway.

STORK

Let's do him with his own gun.

RICO

Put that down, stupid. It's DNA matched to Dredd. You pull the trigger it'll blow your hand off.

Stork tosses it away.

DREDD

At least you remember something about being a Judge.

Rico squats down. Gets right in Dredd's face.

RICO

I remember *everything!* And I've even learned a thing or two more since we last met. You robbed me of my destiny, Dredd. You *owe* for that.

DREDD

If you're going to kill me, do it. I don't want to listen to you whine.

Rico savagely butt strokes Dredd in the head, knocking him unconscious. Then he leans very close, staring with hatred into Dredd's empty face. Savoring it.

RICO

I don't kill people I hate as much as you. I'm not that forgiving. I just wanted to see you again. Before you go away. Forever.

INT. LAZLO BLOCK - HAMMOND'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dark. The door opens. Hammond's silhouette steps inside. He flicks a switch. The lights come on, revealing...

Rico and his gang. Waiting. Hammond gasps. Rico puts a gnarled finger to his lips. Stork shuts the door.

HAMMOND

Who are you?

RICO

Let's just say we're all citizens with a common bond. Judge Dredd.

Hammond looks around, frightened.

HAMMOND

You friends of his?

Rico's gang laughs at the suggestion.

RICO

Hardly. I hate him. More than you could know. More than the hell I endured in the bowels of Aspen. More than the torture of living inside this twisted flesh. More than life itself.

Hammond takes all that in.

HAMMOND

That tops me.

RICO

We'd like you to help us destroy him.

Hammond grins.

HAMMOND

Count me in. You gonna kill him?

RICO

Oh, no. That wouldn't be nearly as much fun. We're going to kill you.

INT. JUDGE PRECINCT - LOCKER ROOM - MORNING

Dredd stands outside his locker, suiting up. His face is bruised. He picks up his helmet, contemplating how much it's going to hurt to put on. Judge Cooper walks by. Glances at him. Winces.

COOPER

Jovus! Rico beat the stom out of you.

DREDD

I'm fine.

COOPER

Why didn't you just shoot him?

Dredd gives Cooper a withering look. Cooper ducks away. Dredd swiftly pulls his helmet down over his head. Slams his locker shut.

EXT. HALL OF JUSTICE - DAY

Dredd and Hershey prepare to go on patrol. As Dredd climbs on his Lawmaster, Hershey gives him a compassionate look. The last thing he wants.

HERSHEY

Heard you had a rough night.

Dredd doesn't say anything.

HERSHEY

Want to talk about it?

DREDD

No.

Hershey is about to go on when Dredd's radio mike squawks.

DISPATCHER

Dredd, this is Central. We have a  
homicide at Lazlo block. Judges on scene.  
You and Hershey take charge.

INT. HAMMOND'S APARTMENT - DAY

Hammond lies in the center of the room. Dead. Blood spatters the walls. Several Judges are gathered there, including Cooper and Frakes. A FORENSIC JUDGE is finishing tests on tissue and blood samples with his equipment.

Dredd leans down over the body. Hershey stands behind him. The other Judges look on, oddly uncomfortable.

DREDD

Hammond.

FRAKES

That's the guy who brought you up on  
charges, isn't he? Deserved what he got.

Dredd tosses Frakes a chilly look. Frakes looks away.

DREDD

How long has he been dead?

COOPER

Neighbors said they heard noises around  
midnight.

Dredd rises. They all look toward the Coroner.

DREDD

Any leads?

The Coroner hesitates.

CORONER

Well, uh... actually... the uh, assailant left  
traces of his own blood. I DNA separated  
his from the victim's and uh...well, the  
computer came back with a positive  
identification.

DREDD

Good. Who is the perpetrator?

The Coroner glances at the other Judges. Then passes his computer to Dredd. Dredd gazes at the screen.

ON THE SCREEN. One column lists a series of DNA characteristics. They flash with identification match ups. The other part of the screen shows a revolving photo of Dredd. His name flashes as well.

CORONER

It says you are.

There is a long awkward pause. Hershey stares at the screen.

HERSHEY

Well, it must be a mistake.

CORONER

I thought so too. I ran it three times. Even widened the field to include every citizen carried on the rolls in the last five years. Unfortunately, there's also a motive, as we all know.

Hershey looks up at Dredd, who's letting this all sink in.

HERSHEY

I don't care. He couldn't do a thing like this. It's not within him.

FRAKES

The evidence is pretty... compelling.

HERSHEY

But did you do it?

DREDD

No.

HERSHEY

Well then--

DREDD

But the law is specific. You have to arrest me.

The other Judges stand like stone. No one wants to do that. Hershey quickly pulls her Birdie from her belt and scans Dredd.

HERSHEY

I'm getting a positive reading. He's innocent.

COOPER

You know that's not admissible as legal evidence. It only measures what the suspect believes to be true. Won't hold up at a hearing.

DREDD

Your duty as a Judge is clear. Don't worry. Let the council decide.

Hershey looks terribly distraught. Dredd faces Cooper.

DREDD

Take my weapon.

Cooper does, reluctantly. Dredd turns to Hershey.

DREDD

I'm waiting.

Hershey stares into his eyes.

HERSHEY

Judge Dredd, you are under arrest. I charge you with the murder of Vardis Hammond.

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBERS - DAY

Dredd stands before the council. Hershey and Cooper beside him. Griffin can't meet Dredd's eyes. Silver, Echs, and McGruder all wear sober expressions.

SILVER

Is there any other possible explanation for the evidence?

Griffin keeps his eyes down. The other members of the Council shake their heads no.

SILVER

Then I believe we have no choice but to convict and pass sentence.

The other Council members look to Griffin. His voice is low.

## GRIFFIN

The mandatory sentence for murder is ten years in Isocube Max One. However, I would argue that Judge Dredd's record of service be taken into account and a more lenient sentence...

McGruder interrupts him.

## MCGRUDER

I agree that his record, and his office, should be considered. And because a Judge is held to the highest standards, a betrayal of those standards makes the offense that much worse. I think we have no choice but to pass the harshest possible sentence, as an example to others. Life in the Aspen Penal Colony.

Griffin looks stricken.

Hershey gasps.

Dredd blanches, dazed. He can't believe this is happening.

The other members of the Council all reluctantly concur with "aye's."

## GRIFFIN

Very well. The sentence is passed.

Griffin bangs his gavel. Bailiff Judges lead Dredd away. He faces Hershey, his eyes full of disbelief. Hershey watches him being led away. Then glances up at Griffin, who shakily exits the chamber.

## INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - CORRIDOR - LATER

Hershey hurries down the crowded corridor. Her face is taut; she's barely holding her emotions in check. Other Judges jostle one another as they pass. Hershey swings around the corner and...

COLLIDES with Judge Griffin. He grabs hold to steady her. Neither notices that Hershey's "Birdie" has been accidentally activated.

## GRIFFIN

Excuse me, Judge. You okay?

## HERSHEY

Sorry. My fault. I should have watched where I was going.

They look at one another a beat. Then Griffin tries a smile and prepares to continue on. Hershey stops him with her voice.

HERSHEY

You know what just happened in there  
was a miscarriage of justice.

GRIFFIN

It's tragic. We all admired him.

E.C.U. ON BIRDIE. It's monitor blinks "True."

HERSHEY

Life on Aspen is a death sentence. And I  
know he's innocent.

GRIFFIN

If there was anything I could have done to  
change the outcome, believe me, I would  
have. Now, it's best to put him behind us.  
Carry on, Judge Hershey.

With that, Griffin strides away. Hershey nods, letting the logic of his  
words sink in. Then a beeping noise begins to emanate from her waist.

Hershey looks down. Notices the "Birdie" is on. She glances at the  
monitor. It now reads "False." Hershey stares at it, then realizes what  
it's telling her. She frowns at Griffin's retreating figure.

INT. ASPEN SHUTTLE - DAY

A prison transfer ship. Like a drab and dingy passenger jet. Rows of  
cramped seats. One door in front. Another at the rear. A PANEL on  
the wall at both exits marked RIOT SUPPRESSION. Gas nozzles run  
the length of the cabin ceiling. A no frills flight. TWO GUARDS herd  
PRISONERS down the aisle toward their seats.

DREDD, in prison clothes, his hands cuffed before him, shuffles along  
the line of prisoners. He looks grim. The First Guard points him  
toward an empty seat in the back. Dredd takes it. Glances at the  
prisoner beside him. It's Fergie.

DREDD AND FERGIE. Fergie glances at Dredd. Doesn't recognize  
him without his uniform and helmet.

FERGIE

What are you in for?

DREDD

Murder. But I'm innocent.

Fergie shrugs, uninterested.

FERGIE.

Yeah, me too.

Dredd shakes his head no.

DREDD

You broke parole. You deserved the sentence the law required.

Fergie stares at Dredd. Blinks. Then puts his hands over Dredd's face, leaving Dredd's jaw exposed, and parting his fingers at Dredd's eyes, like the visor slit in the Judge's helmet. Fergie's eyes go wide.

FERGIE

You!

Fergie calls out to the First Guard, at the head of the compartment.

FERGIE

Hey, I'm not sitting next to this guy! He arrested me. That's cruel and unusual punishment!

Dredd nonchalantly sends his forearm in an blurring arc, the back of his hand swiftly clipping Fergie's jaw. Fergie's face snaps to the side. His eyes wide. Dazed. Dredd casually waves the guard away.

DREDD

No trouble here.

The guard turns away. The WHINE OF ENGINES begins to build as the shuttle takes off. Fergie scoots in his seat, as far away from Dredd as he can get, eyeing him warily.

EXT. MEGA CITY - SHUTTLE PORT - DAY

CLOSE ON RICO, watching the shuttle take off into the darkening afternoon sky like a candle racing toward hell. The rest of the gang stand with him. Rico savors the moment, a delicious grin on his face.

RICO

Bon Voyage, Dredd.

Then abruptly, the smile dies. Rico whirls back to his men.

RICO

Enough sentimentalism. We have a city to save.

INT. ASPEN SHUTTLE - LATER

CLOSE ON A SCREEN, in the shuttle cabin. An orientation tape about the penal colony is playing. A jolly host narrates over shots of a mining operation.

HOST

Our main product is the renown miracle energy compound, Radical Carbon Four. The life blood of Mega City One. You'll be proud to dig it's ore component out of the earth. Or...

FERGIE AND DREDD. Fergie watches the screen, dumb struck. Dredd stares into space, lost in thought, ignoring the film.

ON THE SCREEN. Now shots of the processing plant we saw earlier.

HOST

...help refine it in our state of the art factory complex. The hours are brutal and the work is dangerous, but then, you're all pretty horrible people or you wouldn't be here, so what are you complaining about?

Back to the host. Then a STOP MOTION TYPE SEQUENCE of a HUMAN MUTATION in progress.

HOST

Now... you will notice some changes in your physiognomy before too long. Exposure to R.C.4's raw elements makes that just part of inmate life here on Aspen. But don't be alarmed, the New You will still be able to live a long and productive life. And...

ON THE PRISONERS, watching in mute horror.  
ON THE SCREEN, shots of a gymnasium filled with mutants.

HOST

Aspen also contains a fully equipped gym and aerobic instructors. We encourage you to make full use of the facility in your spare hours...

ON DREDD AND FERGIE. Fergie looks like he's gonna throw up.

He glances over at Dredd, whose facial muscles are strained tight. Eyes still staring into space. Fergie frowns.

FERGIE

What are you doing?

DREDD

Thinking.

FERGIE

Looks painful.

Dredd puzzles out his problem aloud.

DREDD

A major malfunction of Justice is occurring.

Fergie nods toward the screen.

FERGIE

You're telling me.

DREDD

I am sworn to uphold the law. Since I did not commit the crime I am accused of... it would be a dereliction of my duty to allow the sentence to be carried out while the real perpetrator goes unpunished.

Fergie listens, trying to follow the argument.

FERGIE

Yeah...

DREDD

In the interest of justice, I have no choice but to escape and apprehend the real perpetrator of Hammond's murder.

FERGIE

Does that mean not going to Aspen?

Dredd nods. Fergie beams.

FERGIE

I share your outrage. I'll do everything in my power to help right this injustice. How're are we gonna get out of here?

Dredd stares at Fergie a long beat. Then...

DREDD

I need a weapon... of some kind. One that will disable the guards without harming them.

FERGIE

Look. I know this whole crime thing is new to you, but the guards might just have to go.

Dredd fixes Fergie with a stern gaze. Fergie stares back, mute. Then...

FERGIE

Not a hair on their heads. I'm with you... What if I had a pocket knife?

Dredd explodes, outraged.

DREDD

You smuggled a *knife* onto a prison shuttle?!

FERGIE

Keep your voice down! You want it or not?

DREDD

Where is it?

Fergie leans over to Dredd. Taps his belly. Whispers.

FERGIE

I swallowed it.

Dredd stares at him. Grimaces.

FERGIE

It's okay, the blade was closed.

Dredd glances up the aisle. The First Guard sits at the front, paying them no attention. The Second Guard is in the pilot's cabin.

DREDD

Give it to me.

Fergie takes a breath, preparing himself.

## FERGIE

It might take a few minutes for me to work it up. I saw a guy do this once in a club. Shouldn't be that hard.

He starts contorting his face as he works his stomach muscles.

## DREDD

Let me help.

Dredd sends his elbow into Fergie's stomach. Fergie's eyes pop halfway out of his head. The knife flies out of his mouth, plopping into his lap. Dredd scoops it up. Then wipes the thing on Fergie's leg. Fergie finally manages to gasp, filling his lungs back up with air.

## DREDD

Good. We'll need a diversion. Let's see if you can throw up.

Fergie's eyes go even wider as he realizes what's about to happen to him again. He still can't speak. He desperately starts shaking his head no, but...

THUMP! Elbow again. Fergie doubles over, emitting a strange squeaking sound. In a second, he starts to gag. Dredd calls the guard.

## DREDD

Hey! We have a sick man back here!

THE FIRST GUARD reluctantly climbs from his chair. Unsnaps the flap on his holstered STUN PISTOL and strides down the aisle.

## FIRST GUARD

What's the problem?

## DREDD

This prisoner is vomiting.

Dredd pushes Fergie's head into the aisle. He starts spewing. The Guard winces. Automatically steps back, his eyes darting to his shoes.

Dredd instantly grabs the guard by the neck. Pulls him down. Presses the pocket knife's blade against his jugular.

## DREDD

Give me your weapon!

The First Guard cranes his eyes toward the blade. His hand hovering near the stun gun on his belt.

GUARD

That's just a pocket knife.

DREDD

It has a two inch blade. And it's not very clean. Your jugular is an eighth of an inch below your skin. Think about it.

IN THE PILOT'S CABIN. The Second Guard sees the commotion on the monitor. Rushes toward the prisoner's cabin, stun gun drawn.

IN THE PRISONER'S CABIN. Dredd is standing in the aisle, hustling the First Guard into the seat beside Fergie. The other prisoners are cheering. The cabin door flies open. Dredd spins. The Second Guard bursts down the aisle. The prisoners duck into their seats.

SECOND GUARD

Freeze. Perp!

Dredd thinks fast. Tears the GAS MASK from the First Guard's belt. Brings it to his face as he spins toward the RIOT PANEL on the wall behind him. Punches the button.

As the Second Guard readies to fire his stun gun at Dredd, the GAS NOZZLES in the cabin suddenly erupt. A BLUE GAS instantly fills the cabin. The Second Guard drops in his tracks. So does everyone else. Dredd glances around at the unconscious bodies.

DREDD

Everyone stay calm.

Dredd strides toward the Second Guard. Snatches his stun gun as well. Turns to the Pilot's Cabin door...

IN THE PILOT'S CABIN. Dredd kicks the door open. CRASH! The PILOT, in gas mask, cranes around at the noise. Dredd shoves the barrel of the guard's stun gun in his face. The Pilot gawks.

DREDD

Turn the shuttle around. We're going back to Mega City.

PILOT

We don't have enough fuel.

Dredd settles into the seat beside him.

DREDD

Then fly as far as you can.

The Pilot nods. Grabs the controls. Starts banking. Dredd reaches toward the panel. Punches a button marked *PURGE CABIN*.

*IN THE PRISONER'S CABIN*. Everyone still sleeping. The nozzles proceeds to hiss again. The *BLUE GAS* instantly begins to dissipate. Fergie and the other prisoners start to stir from their unscheduled nap.

*EXT. SHUTTLE - LATE AFTERNOON*

The Shuttle banks, moving away from *CAMERA*. Below we see the blasted landscape of the Cursed Earth.

*INT. SHUTTLE - PILOT'S CABIN - LATER*

Dredd and the Pilot are no longer wearing their masks. Dredd glances out the window. Night stretches beyond the cockpit glass. The Pilot stares down at the fuel gauge. Then over at Dredd.

PILOT

We're on fumes, uh... Judge.

DREDD

Then land.

PILOT

Problem is, there's no piece of ground big and flat enough down there.

Dredd glances out the cockpit glass.

DREDD

Then crash.

*EXT. CURSED EARTH - DUSK*

The Shuttle screams across the craggy, blasted landscape, sinking lower and lower to the ground.

*ON THE SHUTTLE*, as it tries to clear a low ridge of hills. Its undercarriage *SCRAPES* the top. The shuttle *BOUNCES* back into the air then starts to careen toward the ground...

*ON THE GROUND*. The Shuttle *SMACKS* the ground, flinging parts of itself into its wake as it tears across the landscape...

*IN THE PRISON CABIN*. Fergie closes his eyes tight as he is slammed back into his chair...

IN THE PILOT'S CABIN. The Pilot tries desperately to control the Shuttle. Dredd stares out. Stoic as stone...

ON THE SHUTTLE. It slides across the desert, colliding with a low hill. BOOM. Then grinds to a halt, settling in the dust.

INT. SHUTTLE - PILOT'S CABIN

Dredd leans over and places a congratulatory hand on the Pilot's shoulder. Then punches the HOMING BEACON on the control panel.

DREDD

Excellent crash. I'll recommend you for a commendation.

The Pilot gives Dredd a puzzled nod.

PILOT

Thanks.

INT. PRISONER'S CABIN

Dredd strides into the cabin, heading for the door. The prisoners applaud. He glares at them. One of the prisoners calls out to him.

1ST PRISONER

Hey man, toss us the keys. We're going with you.

DREDD

You have all been justly convicted of crimes. I am innocent. Stay here until the authorities arrive.

The prisoners start jeering him. Dredd ignores them. But Fergie is outraged at being left behind.

FERGIE

What about me? I'm innocent too.

Another prisoner calls out.

2ND PRISONER

So am I!

FERGIE

Shut up!

(then to Dredd)

Who gave you the pocket knife?

Dredd ponders Fergie. He's never once reconsidered a judicial decision. But it's possible, unlikely but just possible, that this time, his sentence was unjust. Dredd decides. He strides over, unlocks Fergie's bonds, and yanks him into the aisle.

DREDD

Your case is reopened.

EXT. OTTO SUMP'S GUNGETERIA - DAY

One of Sump's chain of unlicensed restaurants, bathed in garish neon. Patrons fill tables that spill out the door onto the sidewalk. Among them are members of the League Of Fatties. Their plates are heaped with steaming mounds of something vile.

Rico and his gang stand nearby. Roach grimaces at the food.

ROACH

Looks like road kill.

RICO

It is.

CLOSE ON A HELMETED JUDGE, barking at the patrons.

JUDGE

This establishment is closed. All citizens will immediately evacuate the premises.

PATRONS whirl toward the voice, their faces resentful. A few of them grumble to one another.

1ST PATRON

It's not right.

2ND PATRON

Best food in town, they close him up.

3RD PATRON

Can't even eat anymore.

ANOTHER JUDGE escorts the MANAGER out the door, handcuffed. The patrons gawk, gathering in a crowd outside.

RICO stares at the commotion. A WAITER moves past, looking frightened. He quickly begins gathering the patron's plates. Rico grabs him and drags him aside.

RICO  
What's going on?

WAITER  
They've arrested the manager again.  
Permit violations. So many new rules.  
It's impossible to do business anymore.

He hurries away. Rico smiles. Turns to his gang.

RICO  
This looks like a good place to start a  
revolution.

THE TWO JUDGES lead the manager through the crowd toward their  
Pat Wagon. The patrons step aside one by one. Suddenly the Judge's  
path is blocked. Rico stands before him. The 1st Judge scowls.

1ST JUDGE  
Step aside, citizen.

RICO  
Let him go.

The Judge stares daggers into Rico.

1ST JUDGE  
This man has violated the law. Don't  
attempt to interfere.

RICO  
He hasn't violated my law.

A GASP runs through the crowd of onlookers; no one talks to Judges  
like that. Rico raises his voice, playing to the crowd.

RICO  
He's a pillar of the community. A decent,  
honest citizen. Like the rest of us. And  
we're tired of being pushed around.

Murmurs of assent ripple through the crowd. The two Judges glance  
at one another. Trouble. Rico goes on.

RICO  
Of living in fear. Of being treated like  
animals. Am I right?

Rico's eyes sweep the crowd. Heads are nodding. A few anonymous voices call out in agreement. Rico turns back to the Judges. Grins.

2ND JUDGE

One more word out of you and you're in serious trouble.

RICO

Your laws sent me to the foulest, darkest hell on earth. I lived it. And I breathed it. And I clawed my way back. Do you really think you're ready to deal with me. Me!?

The Judges glare at Rico. The 2nd Judge draws his Lawgiver. The crowd surges back in fear.

2ND JUDGE

That's it, you're under arrest.

RICO

That's it, you're dead.

In a flash, Rico draws a pistol. Shoves it in the Judge's face and pulls the trigger. BLAM! The Judge hits the pavement. A second of shocked silence. Then the 1st Judge draws his Lawgiver, ready to blow Rico away. But Stork, Roach, Calypso and Krieg pull weapons from beneath their long coats and summarily cut the Judge down. BUDDA! BUDDA! BUDDA! BUDDA!

The crowd can't believe what they've just seen. The manager gapes in stunned amazement. Rico grabs his cuffed wrists. Raises them high in the air and fires a round through the chain, breaking them apart. He then faces the crowd.

RICO

Today is the first day of the New Order!  
The rule of the Judges is dead! We're taking the city back! Who'll join me?

The crowd hesitates. The manager steps up to Rico.

MANAGER

I will.

Another man steps from the crowd.

MAN

Me too.

Then the cheering crowd engulfs Rico, lifting him onto their shoulders.

EXT. CURSED EARTH - DAY

A dead land. Thick clouds swirl over the hammered ruins of what was once the United States. The wreckage of our civilization lies half buried in the parched desert floor, blasted flat by nuclear warheads and eroded by time and the elements. TWO TINY FIGURES move through the landscape.

DREDD AND FERGIE step over the top of a rise and pause. They each carry a bag with the words Aspen Colony stenciled on the side. They look grizzled, as though they'd been in the open for some time.

FERGIE

Are we there yet?

DREDD

Days.

FERGIE

You said that yesterday.

Ahead they see a great ribbon of suspended FREEWAY cutting across the hills. Then abruptly, it ends, jutting into the air like a jagged, gaping mouth. Beneath it, nestled in the cover of the concrete terrace, is a small collection of dwellings. Dredd heads for it.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Up close we see that the village is carved into the clay hill beneath the freeway overpass, like some new variation on a Hopi settlement. It's been gutted and burned. The remains of its former occupants lie scattered about, mostly decomposed. Here and there, an arrow still protrudes from their carcasses.

Dredd stares darkly at one of the murdered villagers. Pulls the arrow from the corpse's back. Peers at it. Fergie gapes.

FERGIE

Juvus! What happened to them?

Suddenly, a fresh ARROW whizzes past his nose. THUNK. It buries itself in the clay wall behind him. Fergie dives for cover.

FERGIE

Indians!

Dredd whirls toward the source of the arrow. Not Indians.

DREDD

Gila Munja!

*THE GILA MUNJA* race toward the village; demons from post nuclear hell. *MUTANT ASSASSINS* with *RAZOR TEETH* and *LONG CLAWS*. Their tangled hair and robes flow in the wind as they charge forward atop *STRANGE BEASTS*; a cross between a camel and a buffalo. The Gila Munja let out an unearthly howl as they charge, swords drawn.

DREDD draws his stun pistol as they approach.

DREDD

Halt! Assaulting a Judge is a serious offense.

*WHIZ. THUMP. THUMP.* Arrows scream toward him. Dredd stands his ground, waiting until the first one is almost on him. Then he fires. *BRUUUMP!* The stun charge knocks the Gila Munja from his mount.

Dredd dives at him, snatching the Munja's sword as the others bear down on him. Dredd whirls toward them, meeting the blows that rain down as the horde shoots past. *CLANG CLANG CLANG!* Two more of the strange killers fall from their saddles, sent to hell by Dredd's blade.

The Munja at Dredd's feet stirs. Dredd arcs his blurring sword down, severing it's head, then turns back to the cavalry.

*THE GILA MUNJA* sweep into the village; a tidal wave of death tearing through the crumbling houses, whooping and screaming.

*FERGIE*, crouching behind the wall of a crumbled dwelling, stares in terror as one of the Munja charges toward him. He draws the second stun pistol. Aims. Closes his eyes and fires.

The charge misses the Munja entirely. But manages by luck to hit his beast. The animal crashes into the ground. The startled Munja flies from his saddle. *SPLATS* into the wall *BESIDE* Fergie. Dead.

Fergie opens his eyes. Stares in triumphant surprise.

DREDD readies himself as the horde wheels back toward him.

*THE GILA* in front pounds forward. Raises his sword high...

DREDD ducks the blow, then yanks the thing from its mount.

*THE GILA* goes down. Dredd swings his sword in a *WHIRRING ARC*, cutting the Gila in half as it falls. Then whirls to face the next one.

FERGIE WATCHES in amazement as Dredd battles the mounted warriors. They storm around him on their beasts, slashing with their swords and claws and snapping with their mouths. But Dredd is a whirlwind, parrying their attacks and pressing his own.

First one drops. Then another. Dredd pulls the next Gila from his animal. CLANG-SLASH. That one dies. SLASH. Dredd fells the next one's beast. The Gila scampers away a few yards. The remaining Gila Munja drops from his animal and faces Dredd, sword raised. His voice is a weird, whining hiss.

GILA MUNJA

You were trained well.

DREDD

Mega City Academy Of Judges. Class of '79. And you're under arrest.

The monster laughs.

GILA MUNJA

We'll see.

Then he LUNGES at Dredd, swiping at him with his sword, then following with the claws of his free hand. Dredd ducks away.

THE TWO circle one another, trading swipes. They're pretty evenly matched. *The Gila is well trained too. Perhaps better. It throws itself in a fury at Dredd.* Their swords resound with a cacophony of CLANGS.

DREDD starts backing up, giving ground to the merciless onslaught of swipes and blows. He finally stumbles to one knee. The Gila sweeps Dredd's sword away.

THE GILA MUNJA smiles, savoring the moment.

GILA MUNJA

I haven't eaten a fresh killed Judge in weeks. And they're habit forming. Kind of like candy. Yum. yum.

He stands over Dredd, his sword raised high for the kill. Suddenly... A SHOT ROARS OUT. BOOM! The Gila gapes, amazed, at the HUGE RAGGED HOLE in its chest.

GILA MUNJA

Well, scrag me. I'm a dead Gila.

With that, it keels forward and hits the desert floor. SMACK.  
Dredd stares down at the thing.

DREDD

Yum, yum.

Dredd turns as a long shadow falls over him. He squints up at the silhouette of a BIG MAN in a long duster and wide brimmed hat. The figure blocks out the sun. JUDGE FARGO.

DREDD

Fargo...?

Fargo grins.

FARGO

Told you to watch your six, boy. There's  
always some sneaky--

THUNK. The point of an arrow suddenly plows out through the front of his chest. Fargo whirls around. The Gila who scampered from his beast now stands a few paces behind Fargo, furiously reloading his bow. Fargo snarls. Levels his shotgun and pulls the trigger. BOOM! He blasts the Gila Munja into the next world.

Fargo angrily looks down at the protruding arrowhead.

FARGO

Drokk.

Then he sinks to the ground.  
Dredd scrambles toward the old man.

DREDD

No!

He scoops Fargo in his arms. snaps his head toward Fergie.

DREDD

Get the bag!

INT. VILLAGE HUT - NIGHT

Fargo lays on a pile of matting near a small campfire. He looks bad. Dredd sits beside him. Fergie watches from the corner. Dredd has dressed the wound as best he can, but blood still seeps from the hole.

FARGO

I'm dying, ain't I, boy?

DREDD

Yes, old man.

Fargo takes that in with a sour nod.

FARGO

Should have taken my own Gruddamned advice.

DREDD

Try not to talk.

FARGO

Why? Afraid it's gonna ruin my good health?

He stares self-reproachfully into Dredd's eyes.

FARGO

Fact is, I got a lot to say. I'm sorry as hell about this fix you're in, boy. Worst of it is, I helped put you there.

Dredd peers at Fargo, confused.

DREDD

You...?

Fargo summons his courage and begins.

FARGO

I wanted to tell you at the gate, but I couldn't. Boy, I... I ain't exactly been honest with you all your life. I didn't find you in the street, an orphan baby, like I said. You were... kind of an experiment.

Fergie speaks up.

FERGIE

*Frankly, I've had my suspicions all along.*

DREDD

Shut up.

Fergie ducks away. Fargo goes on.

FARGO

Griffin had this idea he wanted to try. To create the perfect Judge. If we could

## FARGO (CONTINUED)

genetically breed the color of a person's eyes or hair. why not honesty, integrity and courage? Save a lot of guess work screening recruits for the Academy. He was on fire about it. Kept pestering me until I gave in. Said he wanted to use me as the base material. Build on it. Guess I felt flattered. Drokking ego of mine....

Fargo stares into Dredd's eyes.

## FARGO

But Griffin was right. You are perfect. The best Judge I ever met. I think you always sensed I looked on you like a son. In a way, that's what you are.

Dredd stares amazed.

## DREDD

My parents weren't cut to pieces by lawbreakers gone futsie?

## FARGO

Made it up.

Dredd is stunned.

## DREDD

*You made it up?* But... that was why I decided to become a Judge. That's my whole life. How could you make up a story like that?

## FARGO

Well, there was a lot of that going on back then. And we didn't want anyone treating you... *different*. Then Griffin did something real stupid. He made another one of you without telling me. Altered a gene or two so you'd both look different. But identical in every other way. Said he wanted a back-up in case anything happened to you. I didn't find out about it for years.

Dredd stares, trying to absorb all this.

DREDD

I have a brother?

FARGO

A genetic duplicate. We sent you both to the Academy. You were the top pupils.

Fargo looks away, wracked with guilt.

FARGO

Even became best friends. Then... he started to change. Until he went bad altogether. Became the worst terror Mega City ever saw. You hunted him down and arrested him.

DREDD

Rico.

Fergie's eyes go wide as he listens.

FERGIE

Dredd and Rico are identical twins?

Dredd firmly shakes his head no, unwilling to accept it.

DREDD

No!

Fargo weakly nods.

FARGO

After that, Griffin wanted to cover the whole thing up. Buried the files. He was afraid what would happen to us if anyone found out we were responsible. I let him do it. It was my fault. And now this... I never wanted you to find out...

Fargo looks deeply into Dredd's stunned face.

FARGO

I'm sorry down to my toes, son. But it's the truth. I love you, boy. Forgive me...

Fargo closes his eyes. The breath leaves his body and he dies. Dredd stares down at him, his world torn apart. Finally he roars in anger.

DREDD  
My whole life is a lie. *What kind of love is that, old man!?*

Dredd storms from the room. Fergie tentatively calls after him.

FERGIE  
Judge...?

But Dredd is gone.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Dredd stands under the star lit sky staring at the glow of light far off on the horizon. Mega City One. His face is a war of emotions. His footing on his identity shattered. Fergie approaches him.

FERGIE  
Judge, you okay?

Dredd doesn't move. He's hisses at Fergie.

DREDD  
Get away.

Fergie backs off. Sits on a rock. Keeping a concerned vigil.

LATER. Dredd hasn't moved a muscle. He looks shattered. Fergie wakes up. Shivers. Cold. Stares at Dredd with concern.

ON DREDD. Staring at the stars. A blanket falls across his shoulders. He slowly turns. Fergie is there. He looks into Fergie's eyes.

DREDD  
It was all a lie. Everything I believed.

FERGIE  
I guess so.

DREDD  
Then who am I?

Fergie shrugs.

FERGIE  
You're Judge Dredd.

Dredd slowly shakes his head. no.

DREDD  
I don't know anymore.

FERGIE  
You should sleep.

Dredd nods. But doesn't move. Fergie goes back to his rock. Stares at Dredd with worried compassion. Then closes his eyes.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAWN

Fergie sleeps on his rock as before. Daylight washes over his stubbled face. The SOUND of POUNDING jolts him awake.

Dredd hammers a marker on Fargo's grave. He now wears Fargo's duster and hat. Fergie quietly approaches.

FERGIE  
Feeling better??

Dredd stares down at the grave. No reply.

FERGIE  
What are we gonna do now?

Dredd turns and squints toward the shimmering spot in the distance that is Mega City. His face is determined. Then he hefts Fargo's scattergun and the BOOK OF LAW.

DREDD  
Find Rico. And set things right.

EXT. MEGA CITY - STREETS - DAY

CROWDS OF ARMED CITIZENS sweep through the streets, pushing a phalanx of Judges into retreat. Gunfire bursts from a thousand weapons. It's war.

CLOSE ON HERSHEY, taking cover behind an overturned vehicle. She calls in on her radio mike.

HERSHEY  
This is Hershey. We're outnumbered. We need back-up now!

The dispatcher replies.

DISPATCHER

Negative, Judge Hershey. You have been ordered to withdraw. The situation is beyond control. Abandon the block.

Hershey scowls, reluctant to give in to Rico's rioters. But she signals the other Judges around her.

HERSHEY

Pull back!

THE JUDGES begin to flee under fire.  
THE CROWD starts cheering.

EXT. BLOCK - LATER

CLOSE ON RICO, addressing a throng of new supporters. His gang of body guards surrounds him, warily eyeing their armed followers.

RICO

Another victory for justice. I declare this section of the city to be free.

The crowd cheers. Rico smiles.

RICO

I was once one of them. I know how cruel and unjust their laws have been. I repeal them. In your name. And I pledge here and now to honor your trust and fulfill my destiny as the Judge Liberator of Mega City!

Another cheer goes up. Rico eats this up. He leans to Roach, hushed.

RICO

They love me.

(to the crowd)

A new Order has just been born. Of peace and brotherhood. No longer will we be burdened by the need to carry arms in the streets, just to protect ourselves!

Another cheer. Rico goes on.

RICO

But we must protect this new peace, from *them*. And for that we need a militia. Those who wish to help, and meet my standards, join me now. Let the rest of us

## RICO (CONTINUED)

turn in our arms and greet the new dawn.  
Long live the citizens of New Mega City!

CLOSE ON A STACK OF WEAPONS. Another assault rifle hits the pile. Then another. And another. A parade of citizens passes, surrendering their arms while Rico and his gang stand guard.

## RICO

Secure all the blocks in this sector of the city and bring me maps for the adjacent ones. We're about to expand.

## STORK

Sure thing, boss.

Rico gives Stork a reproachful look. Stork jumps to repair protocol.

## STORK

Judge... Drokk.

Rico nods. Strides away.

## INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

Griffin sits at the center of the Council, tired and worried. The other Judges look no better. McGruder gives Griffin an accusing look.

## MCGRUDER

He's disarming his sectors of the city.  
Forming elite cadres of killers. Maybe we  
should give the weapons back to our  
Block Defense Committees.

## GRIFFIN

We'd have mass futsie in the streets.  
What if they turned those guns on *us*?

Judge Silver speaks up.

## SILVER

There is that. Everyone has lost their  
minds. The city's in revolt. I'm afraid  
we've held them under our thumbs too  
long. They don't respect us anymore.

ECHS

I'd say that's putting it mildly. They hate us. Dredd's departure was a bad omen. If he were here... Perhaps we were too rash in sentencing him to...

Echs lets the sentence die. Griffin snaps at him.

GRIFFIN

He was only one man. And he's probably lying dead somewhere out in the Cursed Earth as we speak.

ESPISITO

Perhaps we should consider negotiating with the citizens. Relax some of the laws. Win back their support.

Griffin glares at him. Slams his fist down on the table.

GRIFFIN

Never. They're a lawless mob. We'll win back their support... with respect. I'm declaring a State of Emergency. Total suspension of civil rights. If they don't love us, by Grud they'll obey us.

With that, Griffin storms from the chamber. The other Judges exchange concerned glances.

INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - A MOMENT LATER

Griffin strides through the door and plops behind his desk. Suddenly, his steely resolve melts away. He stares ahead, frightened and unsure.

EXT. CITY GATES - NIGHT

DREDD AND FERGIE approach the gates. Dredd prods Fergie ahead with the shotgun, keeping his hat pulled down low over his eyes.

FERGIE

This'll never work. Let's go back. Find a nice cave to live in. We could grow corn--

DREDD

Just keep your mouth closed and let me do the talking.

## INT. GUARD POST

TWO GUARDS sit in the room. One watches a security monitor. Sees a man in a long duster and hat leading a prisoner across the bridge toward them.

## 1ST GATE GUARD

Looks like we got a *Long Walk Judge* delivering a prisoner.

## EXT. SECURITY ENTRANCE

Dredd and Fergie approach a small door beside the enormous gates. A security camera set into the wall scans them. Dredd hides his face in the shadow of his hat brim. The Gate Guard's voice squawks from a speaker.

## 1ST GATE GUARD

Identify yourself.

Dredd holds *FARGO'S BADGE* toward the camera.

## DREDD

Judge Fargo. Returning a prisoner from the Aspen Shuttle crash.

IN THE GUARD ROOM. The 1st Gate Guard reads the badge on the monitor. Nods to the other guard.

## 1ST GATE GUARD

That's him.

The 2nd Gate Guard hits a button on his control panel.

AT THE GATE, Dredd pushes Fergie ahead of him as the small door glides open. Dredd speaks in a low voice.

## DREDD

Told you.

Fergie stares nervously into the corridor before them.

## FERGIE

We ain't in the city yet.

## INT. GATE COMPLEX - LOCK OUT CORRIDOR

A narrow hall with a locked door at the end. One side of the hall is glass, looking in on the guard room. The two guards peer at Dredd and

Fergie. Dredd pushes Fergie along, keeping his head down.

The Guards grin at him. The 2nd Gate Guard speaks into a mike.

2ND GATE GUARD

Good to see you again, Judge Fargo.

Dredd gives a little wave. Then the Guard realizes...

2ND GATE GUARD

That's not Fargo!

His voice booms into the narrow hall. Dredd freezes. Fergie whirls back, scared and angry.

FERGIE

Told ya!

The Gate Guard spins toward the control panel. Slams his palm against the alarm. They draw their weapons. The door at the end of the hall BOLTS CLOSED. An ALARM begins to BLARE!

DREDD AND FERGIE charge toward the door. Fergie slams against it. It won't open. Dredd pulls him aside. Aims the scattergun at the handle. BOOM! He swiftly kicks the door open. WHAM! It flies off its hinges. They charge through.

ANOTHER PART OF THE GATE COMPLEX. Dredd and Fergie race through the next corridor. Other Guards and Judges are beginning to respond to the alarm. Confusion. No one is sure what's going on.

Ahead, Fergie sees a phalanx of Gate Guards charging around the corner. He slides to a halt. Dredd peers at the approaching authorities. Can't bring himself to fire. Fergie spins around and races back the way they came. For about three feet. Then realizes they're caught between two advancing groups. He pleads to Dredd.

FERGIE

Do something. You've got the gun!

DREDD

Killing law enforcement officials is a serious crime!

Fergie screams at him.

FERGIE

It's okay. You're a criminal!

Dredd still can't do it. The guards are closing in. Fergie looks like he's gonna have a heart attack. Then he sees...

A TRASH CHUTE DOOR in the wall a few feet away. He pulls Dredd toward it.

FERGIE

This way!

Fergie flings the door open and dives through, disappearing down the chute. Dredd is right behind him. But when he tries to dive in, his shoulders SMACK against the frame. Too big. He steps back, levels the scattergun and fires! BOOM!

The wall around the door disintegrates, leaving a gaping hole. Dredd, grins. It worked. With seconds to spare, he dives down the chute, bullets smacking the wall behind him.

IN THE TRASH CHUTE. A long steel tube. Fergie glides down, flying past CAMERA. In a second, Dredd shoots past as well.

AT THE BOTTOM. Dredd flies out the end, falling through the air. He lands in a huge pile of garbage. THUNK. He looks around. Fergie is by the door. He hisses frantically.

FERGIE

Come on! This way!

Dredd leaps to the floor and hurries after him.

EXT. GATE GUARD COMPLEX - NIGHT

Dredd and Fergie scurry out through a garbage utility entrance. They are at street level, the towering Gate Complex rising high behind them. The ALARM sounds far away. Ahead are the dark, knotted streets of Mega City. They race away into the shadows.

INT. HALL OF RECORDS - DAY

The central records division for every citizen of Mega City. Hershey, in uniform, looking tired from a day on the streets, strides through the lobby, heading for the main desk. The CLERK looks up.

HERSHEY

I'd like you to pull a personnel file for me.

CLERK

No problem. You've got standing clearance. What's the name?

HERSHEY

Judge Dredd.

AT THE DESK. A MOMENT LATER. The Clerk shrugs as Hershey stares down at an open file folder. It's empty save one document. A sheet of paper saying the file is RESTRICTED.

HERSHEY

How old is the restriction?

CLERK

At least ten years.

Hershey frowns. Reads a scribbled notation at the bottom of the sheet. A jumble of coded indexes.

HERSHEY

What's this mean? This handwritten stuff.

The Clerk frowns. Then turns to the desk computer and enters the codes. Stares at the screen, interpreting.

CLERK

It's a cross-reference cue, from the old days. It's tying Dredd's file to Rico's and referencing both back to Judge Griffin. Sealed for his eyes only.

Hershey stares at the screen.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Dredd and Fergie move along the crowded street. They're drawing a few stares from passersby. Dredd glances back. The passersby either nod, or smile, then move on. Dredd looks uncomfortable. He turns to Fergie.

DREDD

People are looking at me.

FERGIE

No they're not.

DREDD

Right at my face.

Fergie shrugs.

FERGIE

That's what people do. You been a Judge too long. All they see is your badge. Or your gun. But they never look at you.

DREDD

Feels funny.

FERGIE

Don't worry about it. Just say, "hi" or something.

Someone else passes by. Glances at Dredd. He stares back. Hard.

DREDD

Hi.

The man quickly ducks away from Dredd's penetrating stare. Dredd looks to Fergie, Confused. Fergie sighs.

FERGIE

Maybe we'd better get you a change of clothes. We'll need money too. Got any?

Dredd shakes his head no.

FERGIE

May I make a suggestion?

INT. SHOP - DAY

Dredd and Fergie stand before the counter. The shop owner has his hands raised high in the air. Other patrons lie on the floor, terrified. Dredd holds the scattergun on them. Fergie saunters from the back, his shoulders piled high with clothes. He addresses Dredd.

FERGIE

My guess is you're an extra large.

Dredd turns to the shop keeper.

DREDD

Open the cash drawer. Give him the money.

The shop owner quickly complies. Fergie stuffs the currency into his pockets. Turns to Dredd.

FERGIE

Let's get out of here!

Dredd shakes his head no. He addresses the owner again.

DREDD

Give me a pen.

The confused shop owner complies. Dredd starts writing on a scrap of paper. Fergie is losing his patience.

FERGIE

You don't understand. We have the  
*money* and the *stuff*. We're *done now*.  
That's how a robbery works.

Dredd passes the note to the owner.

DREDD

This isn't a robbery. We're requisitioning  
these items. You will be reimbursed. Our  
apologies for the inconvenience.

(then to the customers)

Carry on citizens.

Dredd stalks out the door. Fergie shakes his head in disbelief.

INT. RICO'S LAIR - DAY

Rico stands in front of a mirror, admiring his new JUDGE'S  
UNIFORM. Designed to his specifications. All black. Intimidating.  
Think Nazi General. A shiny LAWGIVER pistol rests on his hip. A  
TAILOR nervously watches.

RICO

I like it. It's simple. It's me.

The tailor timidly points to the Lawgiver.

TAILOR

We had it re-coded to match your DNA.

Rico draws the weapon. Smiles. Casually aiming it around the room.  
Its barrel comes to rest pointing toward the Tailor. The Tailor  
squirms. Rico contemplates him. Then holsters the Lawgiver.

RICO

Good work. You live. Now vanish.

The Tailor nods his thanks, bowing as he hurries from the room. Rico turns to the others gathered there. His four cronies keep their wary eyes trained on a group of petitioning citizens, led by the restaurant manager that Rico saved. Rico addresses him.

RICO

You were saying.

MANAGER

Well, we feel that some of the laws you've enacted are less than in keeping with the spirit of the revolution we all...

Rico nods, digesting the complaint.

RICO

I see. You feel I'm being too harsh.

The manager tries to be polite.

MANAGER

Well, the curfews. All the new regulations. You may not be aware, but most of the members of your militia are made up of hardened criminals that were freed when you... liberated Isocube Nine. They've actually attacked some of our citizens. Since we have no weapons to defend ourselves. We were hoping you would do something about this.

Rico nods. Ponders his complaint. Then...

RICO

I will. I charge you with sedition. The sentence is death.

Rico nods at Roach, who casually aims his assault rifle at the startled manager and fires. BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA. The manager is blown out the door. The other citizens gape in horror. Rico turns to them.

RICO

Any one else unhappy?

No one moves. Rico stalks toward them, his anger filling the room.

RICO

Then go back and tell the ungrateful sheep who sent you that I am the new

## RICO (CONTINUED)

Chief Judge in this sector of Mega City.  
My word is law and I will not tolerate  
disobedience. Now leave me!

The small crowd flees the office in terror. Rico turns to Roach,  
gesturing toward the bullet riddled wall and splintered door.

## RICO

From now on, Roach, executions outside  
only.

## EXT. STREETS - DAY

DREDD AND FERGIE step into the street, decked out in their new  
clothes. Garish and wild. Flashy Mega City urban wear. Dredd wears  
a hat pulled low over his eyes. He scowls at Fergie.

## FERGIE

You look great. Really.

## DREDD

I look like a pimp.

Fergie gives Dredd another look. Hesitates.

## FERGIE

Nah... Well, okay, but a handsome pimp.

Dredd scowls harder. Pushes past him. Fergie hurries to catch up.

AT THE NEXT CORNER. The SOUND of GUNFIRE and SCREAMS  
fills the air. Crowds of citizens are fleeing down a wide avenue,  
clogging it solid.

A JUDGE SQUAD, on Lawmasters, attempts to herd them away,  
brutally knocking individuals aside if they're not moving fast enough,  
arresting others who resist.

FERGIE AND DREDD stand on the sidewalk staring in amazement at  
the mayhem. People dart past, terrified.

## FERGIE

Good Grud. What's going on?

## DREDD

Total lawlessness.

Dredd grabs one of the fleeing passersby.

DREDD

What's happening here?

TERRIFIED MAN

Rico's militia is coming. Can't you hear the firing? The Judges are arresting everyone on the street.

With that, the terrified man darts away. Fergie turns to Dredd.

FERGIE

You heard what he said, let's get out of here.

Dredd shakes his head no. Starts pulling Fergie toward the melee.

DREDD

This way.

FERGIE

But that's where Rico's army is!

DREDD

I know. We're going to enlist.

Fergie's eyes open wide as Dredd yanks him into the crowd.

ON THE CROWDED STREET. Dredd pulls Fergie along. They're like two Salmon swimming upstream.

A JUDGE ON A LAWMASTER skids to a halt in front of them. Dredd manages to side step the bike. But Fergie stumbles. Tries to get to his feet. The Judge shouts at him.

JUDGE

Keep moving, Lawbreaker!

Fergie desperately tries to scramble away. The Judge pulls out his baton and swings at him. THUD. Fergie goes down.

DREDD rushes over, stepping between Fergie and the Judge. The Judge angrily shouts at Dredd.

JUDGE

Stand back, citizen.

Dredd helps Fergie to his feet. He glares at the Judge.

DREDD

You had no right to hit him.

JUDGE

He disobeyed my instructions.

Fergie sees that Dredd is about to cause a real problem. He tugs at him, trying to pull him away.

JUDGE

Now get moving, or I'll have you both arrested for defying a Judge.

FERGIE

It's okay. Sorry. My fault. Let's go.

Dredd glares at the Judge a moment longer. Then gives in to Fergie's insistent tugs. They head off into the crowd.

CLOSE ON HERSHEY, astride her Lawmaster, further back on the street, watching. Her eyes zero in on Dredd and Fergie.

HERSHEY

Dredd...?

Dredd and Fergie surge further into the crowd and are lost from view. Hershey powers over to the Judge who clubbed Fergie. She searches the crowd but there is no sign of the pair. Then Hershey whirls on the other Judge.

HERSHEY

I saw you club that man. I ever see that again, I'll have your shield. Got it?

CLOSE ON DREDD AND FERGIE, wending their way through the jammed street. Dredd is still fuming.

FERGIE

What the hell is wrong with you? You can't talk to a Judge like that.

DREDD

What he did was wrong.

FERGIE

What he did happens everyday.

DREDD

I never saw an incident like that.

FERGIE

Maybe they look different when you're standing on *this side* of a Judge's badge.

Dredd looks troubled by that one. Fergie gives him a pointed look.

FERGIE

That was nothing. Believe it or not, some people actually get arrested for things they didn't even do. They just happen to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. Like maybe a block war.

Dredd looks at Fergie again. Fergie's sees he's made his point. He relents, shrugging it away.

FERGIE

Not that you would know, but it's the world we live in.

INT. HALL OUTSIDE GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Conran, Griffin's aide, is coming out the door. Hershey approaches.

HERSHEY

I'd like to speak with Judge Griffin.

CONRAN

He's in the Council Chambers. Emergency session.

Hershey takes a step toward the door.

HERSHEY

I'll wait for him.

CONRAN

I'm afraid you can't wait inside. Try back in an hour.

Hershey smiles.

HERSHEY

Thanks.

Conran nods and heads away. Hershey takes a few steps in the other direction. When Conran turns the corner, Hershey spins around and heads back to the door.

She tries the handle. Locked. Hershey pulls out a security clearance card. Runs it through the scanner slot on the electronic lock. BEEP. It won't open the door. Hershey frowns. Then takes the card and slips it between the door and the jam right at the handle. Wiggle's it around until we hear a CLICK. She turns the knob and slips inside.

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Griffin strides across the platform at the back of the Judge's dais. He looks haggard. The other Judges are already there, waiting for him. Griffin pauses at the empty Chief Judge's seat. He stares at it. It no longer holds the pleasure it once did. With resignation he drops into it and turns to the others.

GRIFFIN

How bad is it?

SILVER

Rico controls more of the city than we do.  
Our Judges are being slaughtered.

Griffin nods, subdued.

MCGRUDER

And the security measures you enacted  
aren't helping to restore order, either.  
Everyone's ignoring the directives. Some  
are going into hiding. It's total chaos.

Griffin seems to shrink back into his chair.

SILVER

The good news is, the people hate Rico a  
lot more than they hate us. They just  
don't think we can stop him.

MCGRUDER

We have to do something.

Griffin sits there, taking it all in. He looks lost. The other Judges stare at him expectantly. The Emergency Vidphone beside Griffin begins to ring. He seems not to hear it. After a long beat...

ECHS

Judge Griffin... your phone.

Griffin stirs. Looks down at his phone. Slowly reaches for it. Hits the line. His voice is flat.

GRIFFIN

Griffin.

RICO'S face appears on the screen.

RICO

I thought it was time you and I had a little chat.

Griffin comes to life. Anger courses through him.

GRIFFIN

We have nothing to talk about, you lawless, murdering perp.

The other Judges crowd around Griffin, listening in. Rico laughs.

RICO

We have plenty, and my sectors of the city aren't the ones out of control, so don't call me names. I have established order where you failed. I am a better Judge than you ever could be. You've lost the will to govern. Everyone seems to realize that but you.

McGruder leans very close to Griffin. Whispers.

MCGRUDER

Ask what he wants.

Griffin's eyes shoot daggers at her. Then he speaks into the phone.

GRIFFIN

Was there some reason that you called?

RICO

We each have something the other wants returned. I have lots of your city. You have that which you stole from me. The right to fulfill my destiny. A seat on the ruling council.

Griffin can't believe his ears. Covers the phone. Turns to the others.

GRIFFIN

I won't even consider it.

The other Judges all exchange looks.

MCGRUDER

We have no other options.

Then Silver leans to Griffin.

SILVER

Take the meeting.

INT. CORRIDOR - HALL OF JUSTICE - A MOMENT LATER

Griffin strides down the hall, angry. Conran follows beside him.

GRIFFIN

They caved in. Rico wants a seat on the council. Probably mine. That drokk.

CONRAN

Unforgivable, sir.

Griffin waves it away.

GRIFFIN

It doesn't matter. He'll never get it. I'm tired of playing nice. I want you to assemble a team of the best shooters we have. Hershey. Reingold. Carter. Whoever else you think. Have them in place before I arrive for the meeting. The minute Rico shows his face, I want them to blow it to pieces.

They pause outside Griffin's office. Conran nods as he jots it all down.

CONRAN

Yes, sir. Pieces.

Conran hurries off. Griffin opens the door.

INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE

GRIFFIN strides in and shuts the door. He pauses as he sees...  
HERSHEY behind his desk, staring at his computer screen.

GRIFFIN

Well, Hershey. We were just talking about you. What the hell are you doing in my chair?

Hershey looks up at him, startled. Then gestures to the computer.

HERSHEY

What's the Apollo project?

Griffin frowns. Steps toward the desk.

GRIFFIN

I think that was the first manned flight to the moon, wasn't it?

Hershey rises from the chair. Eyes Griffin harshly.

HERSHEY

*Your Apollo Project. As in Greek Grud. Or should I say, playing Grud? Dredd and Rico. An adventure in genetics. Rico must be quite a disappointment to you.*

Griffin laughs, sardonically.

GRIFFIN

I'm afraid he's much more than that.

Hershey scowls at Griffin.

HERSHEY

What do you think the council will say when they learn that you brought him into this world. I don't think they're going to be very grateful.

Griffin considers her.

GRIFFIN

You want to tell them? Fine. Do it tomorrow. Were in a crisis. They'll be so thrilled to hear Rico's been killed resisting arrest, they won't care. Hell, I'll help you tell them. I might even promote you for it. But right now your city needs you. So get your butt down to the assembly station and wait for your orders.

EXT. RICO'S HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Five of Rico's Militia stand guard at the entrance to the building. They each wear a CAP and SASH bearing their unit insignia. A couple of them are mutant behemoths.

DREDD AND FERGIE hide in the shadows across the street. They keep their voices low. Fergie looks around.

FERGIE

This is my old neighborhood.

DREDD

It must hold a lot of lawless memories for you.

Fergie nods nostalgically.

FERGIE

Yeah. My old gang's probably still around here somewhere.

DREDD

You led a *gang*?

FERGIE

Burglary gang. That's what I got sent to the Cube for in the first place. Not that I would ever do a thing like that again. Still, it would be nice to see 'em...

Fergie pointedly nods at the militia across the street.

FERGIE

... one last time, before we die.

DREDD

We're not going to die. Come on.

CLOSE ON THE BUILDING. The Militiamen see Dredd and Fergie approach from the shadows. They ready their weapons.

1ST MILITIAMAN

What do you creeps want?

DREDD

We're not creeps. We're hardened criminals.

(nods toward Fergie)

He used to lead a gang.

Fergie tries to look mean. The Militiamen are a little dubious.

DREDD

We want to join Rico's army of bowbs.

The Militiamen look at one another, not sure what to make of this. Fergie jumps in.

FERGIE

What he's trying to say is, we love the man and we want to do what's right.

The 1st Militiaman stalks up to Dredd and stares him in the eye.

1ST MILITIAMAN

We got all the "bowbs" we can handle right now. Why don't you check back in a week?

DREDD

We really want to join. And it looks to me like you're a couple of people short.

Dredd glances to his side. At the two mutant giants. The 1st Militiaman follows his gaze. Suddenly...

Dredd jumps into action. He snap kicks the first mutant in the groin. Then spins and sends an elbow into the other's throat. Both mutant's drop to the ground, writhing.

DREDD

You see. Two openings.

Fergie and the Militiamen gawk, amazed at the lightning speed with which these two were dispatched. The 1st Militiaman draws a pistol and aims it Dredd. The remaining two guards draw their weapons as well. It looks bad.

1ST MILITIAMAN

You son of a bitch.

ROACH watches from just inside the door. He steps out and pushes the 1st Militiaman's gun down.

ROACH

Put that thing down.

Roach steps up to Dredd. Appraises him. Dredd stares back.

ROACH

Pretty good. It'd be a shame to kill someone like you. We're always looking for a few good men.

Roach now steps over to the two mutants on the ground. They're just beginning to stir.

ROACH

Unfortunately, we sometimes make mistakes. Rico hates mistakes.

Roach draws a pistol and swiftly shoots them both. BLAM. BLAM. Fergie jumps. Dredd scowls. The Militiamen's eyes go big.

Roach pulls the sashes and caps from the corpses. Tosses them to Fergie and Dredd. Fergie queasily wipes spattered blood from his.

ROACH

Welcome aboard.

EXT. MEGA CITY - STREET - NIGHT

GRIFFIN'S MOTORCADE roars through the streets, flanked by a squad of Judges on Lawmasters.

IN GRIFFIN'S LIMOUSINE, a sleek futuristic vehicle. Plushly appointed. Griffin speaks to Conran on a small Vidphone.

GRIFFIN

Are Hershey and the others in place?

CONRAN

(off)

They're on route.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - NIGHT

A SPECIAL OPERATIONS VAN from the next century. Stealth technology on wheels. It moves silently through the darkened street.

IN THE VAN. Equipment racks everywhere. Crammed with weapons and gear. As noisy inside as it is silent outside, filled with the roar of engines and gears. Hershey sits on a bench surrounded by the other Judges. They all wordlessly check their weapons.

## INT. RICO'S BLOCK - NIGHT

Roach leads Dredd and Fergie through Rico's headquarters complex. A bustling center of activity. A dark collection of highly disciplined mutants, miscreants and thieves. Dredd eyes them all. His lips silently move. Fergie sees what he's doing. Leans over and whispers.

FERGIE

What are you doing?

DREDD

(whispering back)

Counting crimes. I'm going to need a computer.

Roach looks back.

ROACH

You good with a gun?

DREDD

I've had a lot of experience.

ROACH

No kidding?

Roach glances at Fergie.

ROACH

How about you?

FERGIE

I'm more of a knife man.

Roach nods, satisfied.

DREDD

Why, are we going to kill someone?

Roach grins.

ROACH

Could be. There's a big meeting tonight between Rico and Griffin. You guys are gonna be part of the security team.

Dredd and Fergie exchange a surprised glance.

## INT. RICO'S COMPLEX - GARAGE

Roach leads Dredd and Fergie into a huge garage. Several trucks and vans are lined up. Rico's militia is piling into them. Roach turns toward an armorer, passing out assault weapons from a cache beside the door. Grabs an ASSAULT RIFLE from him. Takes Dredd's SCATTERGUN and tosses it away. Hands him the new weapon.

ROACH

You two ride with me.

Roach hops into the vehicle. Dredd climbs in after him. Fergie addresses Roach at the truck's tailgate.

FERGIE

Don't I get one?

ROACH

You're a knife man.

Roach reaches into his boot and pulls a huge KNIFE from it. Hands it to Fergie with a grin.

ROACH

You get a knife.

IN THE TRUCK. Dredd and Fergie are surrounded by the worst thieves and murderers in Mega City. All armed to the teeth. They eye our pair, looking like they'd just as soon kill them as say hello. Fergie gulps, whispers to Dredd.

FERGIE

We got Rico by the balls now.

Dredd ignores the remark. Turns to the CRIMINAL next to him, who eyes him suspiciously.

DREDD

What are you looking at?

CRIMINAL

You. I know I seen you somewhere before. I don't think I liked you.

Dredd casually flicks the butt of his scattergun up into the man's jaw, knocking him unconscious. He sags to the floor. The others in the truck turn toward the commotion. Dredd addresses them.

DREDD

He tried to hit on me. I hate that.

The other men nod to one another: that's reasonable. Roach leans toward Dredd.

ROACH

Try to be a little more open-minded. We need everyone we've got.

EXT. A BURNT OUT BUILDING - NIGHT

A crumbling, burnt out shell of a marvelous old brick high rise. Huge portions of it are gone now. Gaping holes in the walls, their edges blackened by fire and smoke.

CLOSE ON BACK OF BUILDING. A dark abandoned alley strewn with debris. The SPECIAL OPERATIONS VAN glides to a halt. lights off, at the base of the back wall. The doors fly open.

HERSHEY and the other Judges pile out. The van pulls away. They hurry to the wall. Two of them quickly shoot grappling hooks up onto a terrace. Secure lines. They start repelling up the building.

INT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Dark. Abandoned. The team of Judges moves through one of the burnt out halls. At the corner, Hershey starts giving hand signals. The team silently disperses in various directions.

EXT. BUILDING - NIGHT

DREDD'S TRUCK pulls up alongside the rest of Rico's Militia caravan. They start swarming out.

ON DREDD as he jumps to the ground, Fergie and Roach behind him. Dredd looks around at all the faces. Turns to Roach.

DREDD

Where's Rico?

ROACH

Inside. Let's go.

They head into the building.

EXT. FRONT OF BUILDING - NIGHT

GRIFFIN'S MOTORCADE pulls up out front. The Judges climb from

their Lawmasters and form up into a line.

ON GRIFFIN'S LIMO. Griffin climbs out and stares at the building with trepidation. None of Rico's men are in sight. KRIEG steps out with a jaunty smile.

KRIEG

Evening, Chief Judge. Rico's waiting.

Griffin hesitates. suspicious.

KRIEG

If Rico wanted you dead, that's what you'd be right now. It's okay.

Griffin thinks about it. Then starts forward.

INT. BUILDING - NIGHT

IN A CORRIDOR. HERSHEY moves like a shadow. Keeping quiet. Heading into position.

DOWNSTAIRS. Rico's men fan out into the building. Dredd and Fergie follow Roach. He points to a rear entrance door.

ROACH

You two stay here. If any of Griffin's people try to infiltrate. Kill 'em.

DREDD

Absolutely.

ROACH

I'm going up to the meeting.

Roach spins to leave.

Dredd raises his rifle and swings it at Roach's head. THUNK.

Roach turns.

Dredd butt-strokes him across the jaw.

Roach goes down. Out.

FERGIE

Wow. That's gotta hurt.

Dredd turns to Fergie.

DREDD

Let's go.

Fergie nods. Spins and starts for the door. Dredd pulls him back.

DREDD

To the meeting.

Dredd pushes Fergie down the hall.

HOLD ON ROACH. After Dredd and Fergie leave, he rolls over and sits up, back against the wall. His JAW is SKEWED to one side. He reaches up with both hands. JERKS. We hear a loud CRUNCH. He moves his jaw around, satisfied. Pulls out a radio mike. Flips it on.

ROACH

They're on their way.

IN THE LOBBY. Krieg leads Griffin into an old open-grilled elevator in the blackened lobby. Punches a button. We hear a generator rumble. The elevator begins to creak up. Griffin looks pretty concerned as he watches the floor drop away. Krieg smiles.

KRIEG

Safe as houses. Checked it myself.

IN THE MEETING ROOM. A large space. Several pieces of MELTED and BURNT EQUIPMENT are scattered about. Shadows and city light play across them from open holes in the wall.

RICO stands in the center. Arms folded. Almost regal. Waiting. The SOUND of the approaching ELEVATOR fills the air. Stork and Calypso lounge in the shadows.

THE RAFTERS, high above. Reingold waits in position. Looking down on the room through a rifle scope.

RAPID CUTS TO THE JUDGE'S SHOOTING TEAM.

Reingold high in a corner.

Carter moving into the opposite one.

Another in an outer hall.

THEN HERSHEY, climbing into position in the rafters. She hooks her repelling line to it. Sights through her rifle scope into the room.

IN THE SCOPE. Dark silhouettes of Rico and his two men. The collapsed ceiling beams and crumbling rafters are in the way, keeping her from a clear shot on Rico. She speaks into her headset.

HERSHEY

I can't get a clear shot.

Reingold's voice speaks back.

REINGOLD  
I'm blocked too. Stand by.

CUT TO

DREDD AND FERGIE moving through the halls.

CUT TO

GRIFFIN AND KRIEG, as the elevator comes to a halt. Krieg opens the door. Gestures toward the room. Griffin steps inside. Stares unhappily into the gloomy shadows. Then...

RICO steps into view. His expression is almost beatific. He takes a breath as though the air itself were a delicacy. Then says, simply...

RICO  
Dad.

Griffin glares back, unamused.

GRIFFIN  
Don't... call... me... that. Ever.

Rico smiles, nonplused. Krieg brings a chair for Griffin. Rico gestures to a tray of Otto Sump's delicacies.

RICO  
Indulge me. This is my night. Have a seat. I've brought refreshments.

GRIFFIN  
Save 'em. Let's just get this over with.

Rico gazes at Griffin in supreme disappointment.

RICO  
Ahh, Griffin... You probably gulp your wine as well. One of the things prison teaches you is to savor everything. Each scrap of food. Each drop of water. Even your thoughts.

Rico gestures to their surroundings.

RICO  
Look around you. Recognize this place?

DREDD AND FERGIE approach the elevator landing. We hear Rico's voice coming from inside the room. Dredd moves toward the door. Then past it, to a large section of missing wall.

Dredd peers through the jumble of rotting wooden studs. He signals Fergie to stay down.

CUT TO

RICO AND GRIFFIN. Griffin glances around. Rico smiles at him.

RICO

This is where it all began for us. I was conceived here. In this lab. Remember?

GRIFFIN

Unfortunately, yes. That's why I had it razed.

Rico shrugs.

RICO

Well, they say you can never go home again.

Rico casually flicks a blackened instrument from a table.

RICO

Things change. Fortune, for example. Yours comes to mind at the moment. You are about to move down one seat on the bench. Don't worry, I'll let you keep that one. I'm sentimental.

CUT TO

HERSHEY, in the rafters. Sighting through her scope. IN THE SCOPE. Rico steps into a beam of light.

HERSHEY

(quietly into headset)  
I've got a shot on Rico.

REINGOLD

We've got the others. Take him. We'll fire on your signal.

Hershey is about to squeeze the trigger. Suddenly a figure walks into the sight, blocking her shot. It's Dredd. She hesitates.

DREDD steps from the shadows, his assault rifle pointed at Rico.

DREDD

Your fortune comes to mind as well.  
You're under arrest Rico.

Rico, Griffin and his men all whirl toward Dredd. Rico smiles.

RICO

I was just about to mention destiny and  
in you walk. Brother Judge.

ON HERSHEY. Still holding her fire. Reingold's voice hisses at her.

REINGOLD

Hershey, take the shot!

HERSHEY

Dredd's blocking him.

REINGOLD

Shoot through him, Gruddamnit! He's a  
fugitive. We're losing our window.

ON DREDD as he stalks toward Rico.

DREDD

I'm charging you with the murder of  
Defense Committee Leader Hammond.  
And every other lawless act you've  
committed since.

RICO

Put the gun down. It's empty. Do you  
think I'd let Roach give you a loaded one?

Dredd is taken aback. He aims off to the side and pulls the trigger.  
CLICK. Suddenly Roach appears behind Dredd and butt strokes him  
with his rifle. THUMP! Dredd hits the floor.

HERSHEY looks agonized. Rico moves out of her shot. Reingold starts  
screaming at her in the headset. She rips it off. Tries to figure out  
what to do.

FERGIE sees what's going on. He starts to sweat. He wants to move,  
but he's too scared. He swears to himself, desperate.

FERGIE

Oh, stomm, stomm, stomm...

ON RICO as he steps to Dredd. Stands over him. Glares down.

RICO

You dare to pass judgment on me, you sanctimonious stomm. After what you've done? You sent your own flesh to rot in hell. Look at me. Look what you did to me. Do you think you're better than I am? When you look at me what you should see is yourself. We're the same.

Dredd stares up at Rico.

DREDD

No. I believe in the law.

RICO

So do I.

He draws his Lawgiver pistol.

RICO

*This is the law. This is what rules. Not the precious system you so slavishly adored. It betrayed both of us.*

Dredd's eyes falter. He realizes that what Rico is saying is partly true. Rico aims his Lawgiver down at Dredd.

RICO

I charge you with stupidity. Pride. And arrogance. The sentence is death.

HERSHEY sees what's about to happen. She quickly attaches a drag hook to her repelling line and drops away from the rafter.

ON HERSHEY as she DROPS DOWN. She sweeps her rifle into a firing position and lets go. BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA!

Bullets THUD into the room!

RICO whirls around.

DREDD turns toward it too.

STORK gets nailed by a hail of Hershey's shots.

GRIFFIN ducks the hell out of the way as...

The rest of Hershey's team opens fire! BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA!  
DREDD lunges at Krieg. WHACK! Slugs him and grabs his rifle.  
Turns to Rico. Rico dives away as Dredd opens fire.

RICO'S MILITIA pour into the rafters from adjoining catwalks and splintered walls above. They begin firing on the Judges, taking the shooting team by surprise. Decimating them.

TOTAL CHAOS!

HERSHEY hits the floor. One of the Militia takes aim at her. DREDD cuts him down. Then spins toward Hershey. For a second they stare at one another, guns aimed. Fergie appears at the rear of the room. He shouts to them.

FERGIE

This way!

DREDD AND HERSHEY lower their guns and charge after Fergie.

AT THE BACK WALL. Fergie charges toward the hole in the wall. ROACH is right in front of him, blocking it. He raises his weapon. Fergie closes his eyes and shoves his knife into Roach's chest.

Roach stumbles back, amazed. He recognizes his own blade handle sticking out of him. He mumbles as he sinks to the floor.

ROACH

My knife...

FERGIE

Keep it.

Dredd and Hershey make it to the wall. Jump through.

ON RICO as he sees Dredd, Hershey, and Fergie escaping. He glances at the dead bodies of his men and Reingold and Carter's team littering the floor. Scowls. Reaches down and yanks Griffin up by the collar.

RICO

You broke your bargain.

Griffin looks terrified.

RICO

I was willing to negotiate with you as a gentleman. I'll take my seat on the council tonight. And decide after, whether to let you live.

EXT. BUILDING - NIGHT

RICO'S MILITIA open fire from every surrounding window on the

phalanx of Judges gathered outside. The withering gunfire begins to cut them down.

THE JUDGES scurry to take cover or retreat, scattering as the Militia descends on them, like a wave of death.

INT. BUILDING

IN A CORRIDOR, Fergie leads Dredd and Hershey through the chaotic maze of burnt out hallways. MILITIA MEN appear at one of the junctions ahead of them. Hershey yells at Fergie and Dredd.

DREDD

*Get down!*

They hit the floor. Hershey fires over them. BUDDA BUDDA. The Militiamen tumble like nine pins. Then she screams at Fergie.

HERSHEY

Do you know where you're going?

FERGIE

No.

Dredd gets up. Glances into the side hall next to them. Sees a staircase at the end of it.

DREDD

*This way.*

He races toward it. They charge after him.

IN THE ADJOINING HALL. Dredd takes about three steps toward the staircase when suddenly the floor beneath him COLLAPSES. He disappears from view.

FERGIE AND HERSHEY stare down through the hole as...

DREDD drops to the next floor. CRASH! He blows through that one. Keeps falling. CRASH! That one gives way too. Then WHAM! He hits a pile of debris on the ground floor.

CLOSE ON DREDD as he reels from the descent. He shakes his head.

FERGIE

*(calling down)*

We'll take the stairs.

IN THE HALL ABOVE. Fergie suddenly whirls toward the sound of FOOTSTEPS charging toward them. Militiamen appear at the corner. Fergie changes his mind. Shoves Hershey into the hole and dives in after her as GUNFIRE rakes the hall.

HERSHEY AND FERGIE tumble through space. DREDD sees them coming right at him. Rolls out of the way as... They smack the pile of debris. Dredd pulls them to their feet. Glances around the room. They're in a basement.

DREDD

Now what?

Fergie scans the darkness. Sees a LARGE GRATE in floor. Brightens.

FERGIE

Through there!

They dash to the grate. All three strain to pry it open. It finally gives. They pull the grate off and peer down. BLACK. They exchange wary looks. Turn toward the sound of FOOTSTEPS descending the staircase. Dredd turns to Fergie.

DREDD

You first.

With that, he pushes him into the hole.

FERGIE falls through the air! Then... SPLASH! He hits a river. Comes up sputtering for air. In a second TWO MORE SPLASHES plume up beside him. Dredd and Hershey. They look around.

They are in a VAST CAVERN. The old underground sewer. The main channel seems to flow to the horizon. Wide ledges run along the sides, intersected here and there by tunnels and smaller run off channels. They start swimming toward the edge.

AT THE LEDGE. Dredd pulls himself up. Then helps Hershey and Fergie. The trio lays there, catching their breath.

HERSHEY

Where are we?

FERGIE

The sewer. My gang and me used to practically live down here. It's a great way to move around the city if you want to keep a low profile.

HERSHEY

You had a gang?

DREDD

I didn't believe it either.

Fergie looks hurt. Suddenly...

TORCHES appear in the darkness ahead, moving toward them. Dredd and Hershey quickly get to their feet. Aim their weapons. Fergie squints at the approaching figures.

HERSHEY

Who are they?

DREDD

If they're down here. They're trouble.

THE FIGURES come closer. We realize they're not very big. They're not even adults. Children. Urchins of the future. Behind them are more youngsters. Some as old as fifteen.

Fergie smiles. Dredd squints at the boy in front. He's the one who ran away from him in the Museum of Justice.

DREDD

Wait. I know that boy...

FERGIE

So do I. That's my gang!  
(calling out)

Hey Tommy! Mikey! Sammy!

The boy from the museum, Tommy, peers at Fergie. Then grins.

TOMMY

Fergie?

The gang runs up to Fergie and surrounds him. It's like an airport at Thanksgiving. Dredd and Hershey exchange an amazed glance.

HERSHEY

His gang?

FERGIE

(proudly)  
The best breaking and entering crew in  
the city.

The other boys move closer as well. We see by their uniforms that they're cadets from the Judge's Academy. They look like they've been on the run for awhile. Mikey gives Hershey and Dredd a dubious look.

MIKEY

Who're the stiffs?

One of the cadets steps to the front. It's Crawford, the boy from Fargo's farewell at the city gates. He smiles at Dredd.

CRAWFORD

That's Judge Dredd.

INT. SEWER - SERVICE TUNNEL - LATER

Dredd, Hershey, Fergie, and the kids move through one of the service tunnels feeding off of the main channel. Tommy and Crawford are filling them in as they go.

CRAWFORD

We've been down here ever since Rico took over the Academy. Not all of us managed to get away. He killed the others.

TOMMY

We thought things was tough when you was runnin' 'em. Picnic.

They approach the service tunnel.

HERSHEY

How have you boys managed to get along down here, alone?

CRAWFORD

We've managed okay. But we're not exactly alone.

Crawford gestures to the room beyond the end of the tunnel. Dredd and Hershey follow his pointed arm to...

A VAST GROTTTO. Hundreds of people fill the room. Men, women, children. Whole families. More cadets. All refugees from Rico's reign of terror.

EXT. HALL OF JUSTICE - NIGHT

RICO'S MILITIA is pouring through the streets, waging a brutal war

on the remaining Judges. The Judges are trying to hold them at the gates of the Hall of Justice. But they are being overrun. The militia swarms through the gates, crushing the Judges before them.

ON GRIFFIN'S LIMO, now escorted by a Lawmaster motorcade of Rico's militiamen. The Limo pulls through the gates and rolls up toward CAMERA.

RICO climbs out, pulling GRIFFIN after him. Rico quickly surveys the scene. Sees that his men are rolling over the grounds. Griffin stares, aghast.

GRIFFIN

You're murdering them all.

RICO

The night is still young and there's much to accomplish. Come on!

Rico pulls him up the steps leading to the main entrance.

INT. GROTTO - LATER

Dredd uncomfortably surveys the haunted eyes focused on him. The entire room stares up at him. The cadets are all gathered before him.

CRAWFORD

We believed in you. You're a legend to everyone here. You've got to do something.

DREDD

The Judge System is dead. Rico killed it tonight. Maybe what he said was true. Maybe we were no different than he is. I don't know if I have the right to lead any of you.

One of the men speaks up.

MAN

All Rico stands for is terror. You believed in justice. And justice isn't dead as long as you're alive, Judge Dredd.

Dredd looks at Hershey. Both are moved by the words. But he sadly shakes his head.

DREDD  
Hershey and I are all that's left. We  
couldn't stop him alone.

Crawford speaks up.

CRAWFORD  
*We'll fight with you.*

Dredd turns to him, surprised. Fergie steps up as well.

FERGIE  
Me too.

TOMMY  
*So will I.*

The entire gathering pipes in, in two's and three's. They all volunteer. Hershey smiles at Dredd. It's a moving moment.

DREDD  
What will we fight with? We don't have  
any weapons.

Tommy leans toward Dredd.

TOMMY  
I know where we can get some.

CLOSE ON TOMMY, poised on a ladder set in a narrow, vertical  
access tunnel. He pushes open a grate above his head. Scampers out.  
*Calls back to CAMERA.*

TOMMY  
Come on. The coast is clear.

Dredd bounds up the ladder and climbs out into...  
THE MUSEUM OF LAW. He looks around, surprised. Hershey and  
Fergie climb out next. Then everyone begins to pour into the room.

TOMMY  
This way.

Tommy takes off down the corridor.

INT. MUSEUM OF LAW- HALL OF WEAPONS

*Dredd follows Tommy inside. Hershey, Fergie, and the crowd of  
refugees pile in after them.*

TOMMY

Here they are. What are we waiting for?

Dredd surveys the glass cases containing hundreds of POLICE FIREARMS throughout the centuries. He smiles at Hershey then approaches the first case. Swings his rifle at the glass. CRASH! The glass falls away. He reaches in and starts passing out weapons.

CLOSE ON THE NEXT CASE. An older refugee swings his cane at that one. CRASH! He reaches in and grabs a pump shotgun.

ANOTHER CASE breaks. More hands reach inside this one. The cadets all grab weapons. Start distributing them among themselves.

THE CITIZENS OF MEGA CITY are becoming a people's militia.

Dredd approaches a wall of METAL CABINETS. The words AMMUNITION are painted across the doors. Dredd pries the doors apart. Reaches in and grabs an armful of ammo boxes. Hands them to the cadets.

DREDD

Start matching them to the guns.

The cadets nod. Hurry away.

Tommy gets an idea. He spins on his heels and heads into the hall.

IN THE HALL OF HEROES. Tommy stares up at the mannequin in a Mega City Judge's uniform. He smiles, then unhooks the velvet rope before it and climbs onto the platform.

IN THE HALL OF WEAPONS. Dredd surveys the crowd. All armed now and waiting for his orders. Tommy enters the hall carrying the Judge's uniform, neatly folded.

Dredd turns to him. Tommy silently offers it. Dredd gives the boy a solemn smile. Reverently runs his hand over the tunic. Sees a JUDGE'S BADGE lying atop the bundle. Tommy has scratched the name DREDD onto it.

Hershey smiles at Dredd.

HERSHEY

Put it on.

INT. MUSEUM OF LAW - A MOMENT LATER

CLOSE ON JUDGE DREDD, in full uniform. His hand-engraved

badge pinned to his chest. In one hand he holds a COLT .45 AUTOMATIC, in the other, the BOOK OF LAW.

Dredd turns to the citizen's army behind him. Smiles at the cadets.

DREDD

Looks like you're graduating a little early.  
Don't let it go to your heads.

Then he faces the rest of the assembly. Addresses them all.

DREDD

Raise your right hands.

They all go up at once.

DREDD

I deputize you in the name of the law.  
Let's go deal some justice.

With that, Dredd leads them out the front door and down the steps.

EXT. MEGA CITY - NIGHT

Dredd leads the band of brave citizens through the street. Their torches bob above their heads as they march along.

CLOSE ON A WINDOW, high above. A woman sticks her head out, gazing in wonder at the sight below...

CLOSE ON ANOTHER WINDOW. A couple peers out at the torches beneath them. They look at one another curiously...

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - NIGHT

DREDD'S ARMY surges forward. We see people coming out of their block entrances to gaze at the procession.

THE CADETS march in close order, proudly smiling at one another, and the citizens around them.

CLOSE ON A MAN standing at a block door. He calls out to the passing men and women.

MAN

What's going on?

A woman in the crowd shouts back to him.

## WOMAN

Judge Dredd's back. He's going to arrest Rico. We're going to help him.

ANOTHER ANGLE ON DREDD'S PROCESSION. Their numbers are swelling now as people pour from their blocks to join the army. They carry any kind of weapon they can find, from tire irons to rolling pins.

CLOSE ON DREDD, HERSHEY, AND FERGIE in the front rank of the army, backlit by a forest of torch light. They march right toward us, looming larger with every step, until they FILL FRAME.

## EXT. HALL OF JUSTICE - NIGHT

Rico's guards stare apprehensively at the field of approaching torches. Dredd's army rolls right up to the gates.

CLOSE ON DREDD as he stares angrily at the faces of Rico's Militia, gathered in front of the hall of Justice.

TRACK PAST the solemn, steeled faces of Dredd's band of followers. THE CADETS fall into drill with snap precision. Take aim, their rifle bolts slamming closed in a single CRESCENDO.

RICO'S MEN don't like the looks of them. They exchange nervous glances with each other.

CLOSE ON DREDD. He looks at Hershey. Then Fergie. Nods. Then he addresses Rico's frightened men.

## DREDD

You are all under arrest!

DREDD'S ARMY lets go a battle cry and surges forward, OPENING FIRE on the evil men before them.

RICO'S MEN start firing back!

ON THE GATES, as the CADETS charge. BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA. DREDD reaches the gates first, firing his pistol. BLAM BLAM. Two of Rico's men fall. Dredd blasts the latch and kicks the gate open.

THE BATTLE IS ON! Dredd's army pours through like a tidal wave. Rico's men start backing up, firing madly. Some of Dredd's people are hit. BLAM. BLAM. But the army surges on, sweeping Rico's men before them. The Cadets charge over the lawn, taking back their headquarters a yard at a leap.

## INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Rico holds Griffin by the neck, his Lawgiver raised, as he stands before the dais. Calypso and Krieg flank him, weapons raised as well. The Council is gathered before them. McGruder, Echs, Espisito, and Silver. They stare down at Rico, hostile.

RICO

Look at you. The Masters of Mega City.  
The Guardians of Justice. You did not  
manage to hold onto the city very well.

McGruder speaks up. Her voice is uncowed.

MCGRUDER

Perhaps if we'd simply resorted to terror  
and murder we'd be up to your standards.

Rico glares at her. Griffin cuts her off.

GRIFFIN

McGruder, shut up.

She holds her tongue. Rico smiles, his good mood restored.

RICO

Yes. This is the most supreme moment of  
my life and I won't have it spoiled. I want  
you to grant me the legitimacy that was  
mine by right. And remember, there's  
going to be one too many of you for the  
council, so the next few minutes will have  
an enormous impact on your careers.  
Someone offer me the Chief Judge's chair.

The Council glowers at him. No one leaps to the request. Griffin is incensed. Rico snarls at them, his Lawgiver aimed at Griffin's head.

GRIFFIN

I will. How'd you like to be Chief Judge?

RICO

I'd be honored. Take a vote.

## INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - MAIN ENTRANCE

DREDD AND HERSHEY reach the main door. More of Rico's men are there. Hershey opens up on them. BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA. They tumble down the steps. Dredd turns back to survey the battle.

ON THE MAIN GROUNDS. Rico's men are being overwhelmed. Some are surrendering. Others are dropping their weapons and fleeing for their lives. Dredd faces Hershey.

DREDD

Let's go.

HERSHEY

I'm with you all the way.

They head inside. Other citizens charge in after them, Fergie and Tommy among them.

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - JUDGE'S CHAMBER

ON THE COUNCIL. None of them holds their hands up, except Griffin. Rico shrugs, unconcerned.

RICO

It's unanimous.

He shoves Griffin aside and jauntily climbs the dais. Espisito, Silver, Echs, and McGruder shrink away from him, reviled. Rico drops into the Chief Judge's chair and smiles, full of himself.

MCGRUDER

I'm not going to be a party to this farce.

She rises from her chair. Rico slams her back into it.

RICO

Yes, you will.

Rico nods to Krieg and Calypso. They grab Griffin and drag him to the bench. Rico lays a cold gaze upon the former Chief Judge.

RICO

My first official act will be to try you for attempting to have me killed. I find you guilty. The sentence is death. To be carried out immediately.

Griffin pales. Rico nods to Krieg.

RICO

Shoot him.

The Council gasps. Krieg smiles. Takes a step back from Griffin and aims his rifle at him. Suddenly...

The SOUND of MUFFLED GUNFIRE drifts into the chamber. Krieg pauses. Rico rises from his chair, frowning as he draws his Lawgiver. Krieg and Calypso nervously glance around.

RICO

What the hell is going on?

CRASH! The doors on all three sides of the chamber are suddenly SMASHED OPEN! The cadets pour inside, armed to the teeth. Hershey stands at the head of one group. Fergie another. And through the third doorway...

DREDD strides into the chamber. Glares up at Rico.

DREDD

Rico! In the name of law and order I'm placing you under arrest.

GRIFFIN snarls. Spins toward Krieg and delivers an elbow to his head. Krieg drops. Griffin snatches his rifle and whirls toward Rico.

GRIFFIN

Let's not complicate this. Just kill him!

RICO roars in outrage. Fires at Griffin with the Lawgiver. BOOM. BOOM. BOOM. Ferocious EXPLODING ROUNDS blow Griffin into the next life, and probably kill him there too.

Then... ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE.

Calypso fires into the cadets. BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA.

Some of them go down. The rest fire back as they take cover.

Hershey sends a whole magazine of bullets into Calypso.

He crumples to the floor. The cadets swarm through the room.

Krieg stares at a dozen rifle barrels pointed right at him.

RICO spins and aims the Lawgiver at the wall behind him. Spins its SELECTOR DIAL to GRENADE and fires. KABLAM!  
A NEW DOOR exists where the wall was. Rico dives through it.

DREDD charges across the room after him. At the ragged door he turns back to Hershey.

DREDD

Stay here and protect the council. I'm going after him.

Hershey nods. Dredd ducks through the hole.

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - CORRIDOR

RICO races through the hall, heading for a stair well. He throws the door open and charges down.

DREDD makes it to the door a few seconds later. Kicks it open and heads after him.

INT. STAIR WELL

RICO bounds down the stairs. Charges past the next landing. Keeps going. Behind him he hears the SOUND of DREDD'S BOOTS following like a curse. Rico pauses. Aims back up the stair well. Fires another GRENADE CHARGE.

ON DREDD, as the GRENADE EXPLODES! He flies back. Debris and smoke fills the air. Dredd gets to his feet. Keeps going.

AT THE GARAGE LEVEL DOOR. Dredd charges toward the door. Kicks it open. Races through. Suddenly...

BULLETS tear into the wall all around him. Dredd dives for cover. In the next second he hears the ROAR of a Lawmaster's engine. Then the SQUEAL of tires. Dredd gets to his feet just in time to see Rico tearing out to the street.

DREDD races to the nearest Lawmaster. Jumps on it. Kicks it over. Revs it like crazy and charges after Rico.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Rico thunders past the Hall Of Justice, heading into the city night. A split second later, Dredd tears past, trying to catch him.

CADETS AND CITIZENS on the lawn race toward the street, staring at the disappearing tail lights.

1ST CADET

Dredd's going after Rico!

2ND CADET

Come on.

The cadets and the others race to the nearest vehicles. They jump in and take off after the pair.

## EXT. ANOTHER STREET - NIGHT

RICO roars through the deserted street. Glances over his shoulder. Dredd is right behind him. Rico pulls the Lawgiver from his belt and aims behind him. BLAM!

DREDD swerves to avoid the round. It tears a huge chunk from the asphalt. Rico fires again. This time he gets a chunk of Dredd's windshield. Dredd flinches to avoid the shards. The Lawmaster tips to one side. Catches the pavement. Goes ass over teakettle.

A TRAIL OF SPARKS dances along the highway as Dredd and the bike go tumbling. Finally Dredd climbs on top of the beast as it skids itself to pieces across the pavement.

RICO screams to a halt. Looks back. Sees more headlights approaching. Guns the motor and takes off again.

DREDD gets to his feet as the motorcade of vehicles comes up from behind him. One of the cadets brodies a Lawmaster to a stop a few feet away. He calls out to Dredd.

CADET

Are you all right... sir?

Dredd glares at Rico's retreating figure. Then turns to the cadet. The kid hops off his Lawmaster, offering it to Dredd.

CADET

He's getting away.

DREDD

Like hell he is.

DREDD REVS the engine to REDLINE and pops the clutch. The Lawmaster leaps forward, an angry stallion charging into the night. The cadets and the others jump into their vehicles and follow after.

## EXT. JUSTICE SQUARE - NIGHT

Dredd races around the corner and comes to a halt. Before him, in the center of a vast square, is the towering STATUE OF JUSTICE. It rises into the night sky as though ascending to the stars. Beside it, looking small and contrite, is the Statue of Liberty, it's lamp glowing forlornly.

AT THE BASE OF JUSTICE. Dredd looks around. The maintenance entrance to the statue, a door in the boot's heel, has been blown open. Dredd draws his pistol and ducks inside.

THE OTHER CADETS AND CITIZENS reach the square behind Dredd. They race to the abandoned Lawmasters.

INT. STATUE OF JUSTICE - NIGHT

Dredd glances around. Open girders and beams criss cross the vast interior. Work lights stab pools of brightness into the gloom. Nothing moves. Then...

The ECHO OF FOOTSTEPS far above. Dredd glances up. Sees a figure dart among the shadows. Rico. Dredd steps to a small open ELEVATOR and presses the button, his eyes scanning the darkness above.

THE ELEVATOR, nothing more than a platform on a cable, begins to rise upward, passing landing after landing. Dredd's eyes dart into every passing crevice. Suddenly...

BOOM! A blast of light FILLS FRAME! Rico fires from almost pointblank range as Dredd's elevator comes abreast of his landing! Dredd flies back, hit in the arm. He yanks the control lever, jolting the elevator to a halt, as he fires in return. BLAM BLAM BLAM! But Rico is gone. All we hear is his laughter. Then...

BOOM. Another blast from Rico's Lawgiver. It snaps the elevator's cable. WHOOSH! The elevator starts to fall.

DREDD lunges toward a girder, dropping the .45 automatic. He barely manages to grab the girder as the elevator drops away. Then strains to pull himself to the landing. Bleeding badly, Dredd opens his uniform tunic and rips a strip from its lining. Ties it into a tourniquet. A voice echoes toward him.

RICO VOICE

Brother! Still alive?

DREDD

Give up. In the name of justice.

ON RICO. Huddled in the darkness. He gazes down at a bleeding hole in his chest. Laughs.

RICO

Good. I was afraid this was already over.  
If it's justice you want, I can't think of a  
better place for it.

With that, Rico turns and aims into the darkness toward Dredd's voice.

DREDD peers into the shadows. Then... BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! Rico starts firing. The shots tear into the scaffolding all around Dredd, driving him toward the outer skin of the statue. Another BOOM, and a gaping hole appears in the skin. Dredd dives through.

EXT. STATUE - NIGHT

Dredd sails through mid air. Crashes onto the top edge of a giant JUDGE'S BADGE. Rolls toward the end and space. The buckle on his utility belt catches the edge, checking his fall.

ON THE GROUND. The cadets and the other citizens stare up in mute horror.

ON DREDD. He grabs onto the edge. Tries to pull himself up. His buckle is still caught. He unsnaps it, staring down at the giant badge's face. Then painfully pulls himself up toward the top. Catches his breath. Looks up as...

TWO BOOTS jump onto the badge with him. Rico. He holds the Lawgiver. Dredd glares at him.

DREDD

Give up. Last chance.

RICO

You are ridiculous. It's over. For both of us. But you first.

Rico takes aim. Dredd heaves the utility belt at him. It smacks Rico in the face. Rico's shot goes wild. BOOM! Dredd lunges. Tackles Rico and together they go flying off the edge of the badge.

DREDD AND RICO fall through space. Then...

SMACK! They land on the STATUE'S BELT BUCKLE. The impact forces them apart. Rico gets to his feet first. The surface beneath them slopes away. Precarious and slippery.

ON DREDD as RICO'S BOOT crashes into his face. POW! Dredd smacks against the statue's stomach. Rico aims his Lawgiver.

DREDD rolls out of the way just as he fires. KABOOM! The round tears chunks from the statue's side. Dredd ducks behind a curving fold in the statue's uniform.

RICO aims at it. Pulls the trigger. CLICK. Out of grenades. He starts to spin the Lawgiver's selector dial.

Dredd climbs up the fold then DIVES at Rico! The two men go TUMBLING. The Lawgiver skitters across the buckle's surface.

Rico desperately punches Dredd. Dredd falls back. Rico dives for the Lawgiver. Dredd throws his leg beneath Rico's feet. Rico SMACKS the buckle's surface. Starts sliding. Dredd hauls him up.

DREDD

Resisting arrest is a very serious offense.

Dredd punches him. Hard. Rico slumps to the buckle's edge. Dredd lets go his grip. Then stalks up the slope to retrieve the Lawgiver.

Rico crawls away from the edge. Pulls a hidden PISTOL from his uniform. Aims at Dredd's back. BLAM! The bullet bites into Dredd's shoulder. Dredd winces. Spins around, the Lawgiver aimed at Rico.

DREDD

Drop it. Or die.

Rico laughs. Aims his pistol for another shot.

RICO

Go ahead. Pull the trigger. It's matched to my DNA, stupid.

Then Rico suddenly realizes that it's matched to Dredd's too.

RICO

Drokk...!

RICO swiftly fires another shot. DREDD fires at the same instant.

Rico's shot goes wide. Dredd's doesn't. The Lawgiver's round SLAMS into Rico's chest, hurling him to the buckle's edge. He teeters there, his eyes wide with the knowledge of impending death. He tries to get to his feet. To raise his pistol for another shot.

DREDD fires again. This Lawgiver's round punches Rico over the edge. He tumbles through the air, falling into the night.

ON THE STATUE OF LIBERTY'S TORCH. Rico slams through the glass enclosure. There is an explosion of light and sparks. The torch GLOWS brightly as it consumes Rico's body.

DREDD moves to the edge. Stares down at Liberty's flame. Then past it to the cadets and citizens gathered on the square below. They send up a cheer.

## INT. COUNCIL CHAMBERS - DAY

Silver, McGruder, Espisito, and Echs sit on the dais. Dredd, Hershey, and Fergie stand before them. Dredd is back in his own uniform, his wounded arm in a sling. McGruder addresses them as the packed gallery looks on. A few familiar faces are there, including Cadet Crawford's.

MCGRUDER

Judge Dredd. You are restored to full duty, and all charges in connection to the murder of Mr. Hammond are dismissed.

DREDD

Thank you.

McGruder smiles.

MCGRUDER

The thanks is ours, Judge. What this city owes you is beyond estimation. And we must now begin to repair the damage that we ourselves are responsible for.

Dredd nods. McGruder continues.

MCGRUDER

By unanimous vote, the council has selected you to fill the chair of Chief Judge. You have earned the right. And the trust of all of us.

McGruder holds out the Seal of Office. Dredd looks stunned.

DREDD

I'm honored. But I can't accept. I'm a street Judge. It's what I know. I'm not cut out for the council.

Everyone looks surprised at Dredd's refusal.

DREDD

But if I can make a suggestion, the best candidate for Chief Judge I know is standing in this room.

Dredd turns to Hershey.

DREDD

Judge Hershey has a wisdom and compassion far beyond her years. Or my limitations. I've learned a lot from her.

Hershey is dumb struck.

HERSHEY

I don't know what to say.

The council members all glance at one another, quickly conferring in whispers. Dredd gives Hershey some quiet advice.

DREDD

Take the job. It's a good career move.

McGruder addresses them again.

MCGRUDER

Although there's no precedent for this... we are agreed that Judge Dredd's recommendation be accepted... if Judge Hershey is willing.

Hershey looks at Dredd. He nods. She takes a deep breath.

HERSHEY

I would be honored.

McGruder gestures to the chief Judge's chair.

MCGRUDER

Judge Hershey, you have the council.

The room breaks into hearty applause as Hershey moves toward the chair at the head of the dais. Dredd quietly slips toward the exit door.

AT THE EXIT. Dredd pauses to glance back as Hershey reverently takes her seat on the council. The other members look to her, waiting. *Hershey glances at all the faces turned toward her. Then...*

HERSHEY

We have a lot of work to do. So let's begin...

With that, Dredd closes the door and moves past CAMERA.

EXT. HALL OF JUSTICE - DAY

Hershey, Dredd and Fergie stand at the gates.

HERSHEY

Thanks for your confidence. I hope I can live up to it.

DREDD

You'd better.

Fergie sees Tommy and the other kids waiting for him across the street. He turns to Dredd.

FERGIE

This is a very touching moment, but uh, the kids and I have a lot of catching up to do. So if you don't mind. See you around your judgeships.

Fergie takes a step into the street. Dredd sees his gang waiting for him. Scowls. Yells after him.

DREDD

Halt, citizen!

Fergie freezes. Catches Dredd's imperious stare.

DREDD

Let me remind you that your case is still under review.

(gesturing to his gang of kids)

Intent to consort with known criminals is a further violation of your parole. And carries an additional sentence.

Fergie looks outraged.

FERGIE

They're kids! What'll they do without me?

DREDD

Probably grow up into decent citizens.

FERGIE

I resent that.

Hershey interrupts them. She gives Dredd a disapproving look.

HERSHEY

Judge Dredd. Do you think a little  
judicial restraint might be in order here?

Dredd gets her point. Faces Fergie again.

DREDD

But under the circumstances... your case  
is dismissed.

Fergie looks relieved. Dredd leans toward him.

DREDD

But I'm going to keep my eye on you. If I  
ever hear that you or those small citizens  
over there are engaging in lawless  
activities... I won't be able to control  
myself. Got it?

Fergie gulps. The fear of Grud in him.

FERGIE

Yes Judge. The straight and narrow.  
Loud and clear.

Dredd throws a glance to Hershey.

DREDD

Good... now have a nice day.

With that, Fergie hurries off.  
Hershey smiles at Dredd, pleased.

HERSHEY

Doesn't it feel good to show a little  
leniency from time to time?

Dredd climbs on his Lawmaster. Gives her a constipated look.

DREDD

I'll try to get used to it.

He revs the Lawmaster's engine and charges away. Hershey ruefully  
shakes her head. But an affectionate smile appears on her lips.

CLOSE ON DREDD, roaring away. As the towering blocks blur past,  
we see a smile on his lips too.

CUT TO BLACK