

RENKO VEGA
and the
Jennifer Nine

screenplay
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EXT. A STREET - NIGHT

An empty alleyway, dark, but modern, concrete and steel. We hear FOOTSTEPS approaching. A man runs hard into the foreground, carrying a heavy, reinforced, trunk-like case.

He PANTS, looks left and right. He is handsome, in his late thirties. This is RENKO VEGA.

Renko hears more FOOTSTEPS, VOICES. A CROWD appears behind him. They have torches, weapons.

THE CROWD

There! There he is! Stop, thief!

The crowd chases. Renko runs, weighed down by the case.

EXT. VARIOUS STREETS AND ALLEYS

Renko ducks through the shadows, PANTING, cutting corners, barely managing to stay ahead of the mob, which seems intent on catching him and tearing him limb from limb.

Renko puts a hand up to a tiny headset mounted on his ear.

RENKO VEGA

Jennifer, I'm near the edge of the colony. You got a lo-kay on me?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

Still searching, Renko Vega.

Jennifer has a soft female voice, filtered through an INTERCOM, but intimate, seductive...

Renko turns, racing down another alley, finding himself at a dead end. But the alley doesn't end in brickwork or chain-link, there is instead a wall made of transparent material, a thick Plexiglas.

There's writing stenciled on the wall, **NE47 - NO ACCESS.**

RENKO VEGA

Jen, I'm at N.E. 47! Northeast 47!

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

Very good, Renko. Use the airlock there and I'll pick you up.

RENKO VEGA

What airlock? There is no airlock!

JENNIFER 9

Of course there's an airlock. It's clearly marked on the blueprints.

RENKO VEGA
There's nothing, Jen!

JENNIFER 9
*I think perhaps, Renko, you are not
looking hard enough.*

He turns, he hears VOICES, sees flashlight beams.

RENKO VEGA
--I'm telling you there's no
airlock! There's no door!

Renko turns and the angry mob reappears behind him. There's a SHOUT. Renko Vega is trapped.

He looks around, then picks up the steel case and turns to the crowd, hoisting it up over his head like King Kong...

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Stop! Stop right there!

The mob stops dead, obviously fearful of Renko's actions... but, in the crowd, an arm moves in a throwing motion...

A rock flies through the air and CLIPS Renko hard in the ear. His earpiece goes flying and Renko GRUNTS....

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Jen! Jennifer!

A few members of the mob step forward, but people SHOUT...

VOICES IN THE CROWD
No! No! He's crazy! (etc.)

Renko turns, steps like a shotputter. The crowd SHOUTS as he heaves the case at the Plexiglas....

CRACK! The case bounces but leaves a HISSING fracture in the wall. Condensation sizzles frothily at the hole.

The mob rushes at Renko but Renko picks up the case again and glares at the crowd, freezing them again in a desperate version of red-light green-light.

Renko turns and heaves the case again and BASH!! The case SMASHES into the Plexi and penetrates the wall! There's a huge sucking sound and all hell breaks loose.

Everything is sucked toward the hole in the Plexiglas.

The Mob SCREAMS and people grab onto anything that is nailed down because anything that isn't nailed down gets pulled toward the hole by a mighty sucking wind.

Renko holds on for a moment then takes a deep breath, and dives, allowing himself to be sucked through the hole.

EXT. A MOON - NIGHT

Renko Vega tumbles into this strange environment. Behind him is the wall of an enormous ACRYLIC DOME, planted on the barren plain of a MOON.

Gray dunes and craters run off to the distance. Stars fill the black sky. It is eerily, totally SILENT.

Detritus blows out the hole behind Renko until chunks of wood and bits of clothing and people finally plug the hole.

Renko swims through the air in low gravity and grabs that heavy case. But his face is getting puffy, he won't last long in this airless pressure.

His face turns purple, he looks madly around. Suddenly a SHADOW swoops over Renko... it's a spaceship, large, but winged, sleek, and Lamborghini-meets-Bentley cool.

This is the JENNIFER 9.

It hovers and lowers itself toward Renko. A hatch opens... and Renko grabs a handhold and pulls himself through.

CUT TO:

INT. THE JENNIFER 9 - ENGINE ROOM

Renko Vega has that case open and lifts out a tall slim cylinder about a foot high and a few inches across. It's a "Fusion Rod".

He slides it into a opening in a long, complex engine.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

Now, tell me again why you couldn't get out the way we planned?

RENKO VEGA

Because there were people that way, people who weren't exactly happy I was making off with a box of their precious fuel rods. They don't exactly grow on trees you know.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

I've never encountered a tree. Not up close anyway.

RENKO VEGA

Yeah, well, fusion rods don't grow on them, let's leave it at that.

He pulls blackened versions of the fusion rods out of the engine and slides the spent numbers back in the case.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
So, how do you feel?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Refreshed... but you've been neglecting me, Renko, my circuits haven't been running at full power in I don't know how long.

RENKO VEGA
That's life in space, Jen.
Sometimes we must go without.

Renko pushes buttons, the engine covers slide home. Renko turns and heads out of the chamber.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Now how's our progress on the Revolver?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
We've moved into position but we don't have much time. She's already begun her jump.

EXT. SPACE

A blue-black sky is covered in a rich blanket of stars. Off to one side lays the burnished rim of TITAN, the largest moon of Saturn...

We MOVE SLOWLY toward that moon. In the planetary shadow we see the Jennifer 9 is hidden in the darkness.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Arrival in sixty-one seconds. You should be seeing vapor shift in your glass any moment.

INT. THE JENNIFER 9 / BRIDGE

Renko Vega moves through this large, impressive control room. There's a big, sleek console in front of an observation port.

RENKO VEGA
Coffee, please.

A panel opens and a steaming cup and saucer slide out on a tray. Renko picks up the coffee and sips.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Hmm... good.

He puts the coffee back down on the console. But the panel opens and the coffee immediately disappears.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Hey, I wasn't done with that.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Cup sensed your mood and thought an elevated caffeine level would be unwise at this time.

RENKO VEGA
Cup thought it would be unwise?
Jen, I don't care what a cup thinks!

JENNIFER 9
--Cup is doing it's job, Renko. We should go over the arrival sequence again.

RENKO VEGA
(grumpily, by rote)
Five fighter craft fly envoy with the Revolver. Two arrive ten seconds before the mothership. The others travel simultaneous slip.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Would you also confirm our own plan of action?

RENKO VEGA
Wait until the Revolver shows up then go like hell while they're still instrument blind from latent radioactivity. Then, we attach ourselves to the Revolver's skin and render full camo. That right?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I'll set coordinates for approach when we confirm the Revolver's position. Fifteen seconds.

Renko studies his window and hits his intercom.

RENKO VEGA
Bill, where the hell are you?

BILL.1 (V.O.)
I'm in maintenance locker seven, cleaning the portside dust traps.

Bill.1 has a vaguely mechanical voice.

RENKO VEGA
Dust traps?! Bill get up on the
bridge, right now! We gotta go!

BILL.1
If dust penetrates the intake
valves, it may infiltrate vital
circuitry--

RENKO VEGA
--Get to the bridge and get ready
for accel. Jen, did you know Bill
was dusting--?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*--Bill point one is not my
responsibility, Captain Vega--*

RENKO VEGA
--Bill, get up here now!

BILL.1
--I'm right here, Renko Vega.

BILL.1 has appeared on the bridge. He's a slow-moving robot
with a rubbery face. His servos HISS and grind.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Envoy craft arriving...

There's a glow on the screen, then a second glow, morphing
into silent explosions, BURSTING in the black sky.

The explosions coagulate into two single-seat spacecraft
(arriving from "time skip"). They are small but lethal-
looking, the space version of F-18's.

RENKO VEGA
Sachs Six-Sixteens. Very nice.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*Beginning massive acceleration
sequence. Renko, arms out, please.*

RENKO VEGA
Bill get up on the grid. We need
to get rubberized.

But Bill has turned and is moving back to the exit doors.

BILL.1
I forgot to shut the deck seals.
Massive acceleration often leads to
problems with the seals.

RENKO VEGA
 Forget the deck seals! Jen! Take
 over his interface!

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*Starlight Revolver arriving in five
 seconds.*

Suddenly, out of housings in ceiling, floor, and sidewalls, streams of rubber goop shoot out at Renko, WHACKING into his arms, torso, legs, the back of his head.

He grimaces as the goop pull him up off his feet, stretching him out like Leonardo's Vitruvian Man.

RENKO VEGA
 Bill!

Out on the screen, there's a tremendous vibration. The inky black of space ripples like a tossed blanket.

An enormous but silent EXPLOSION fills the viewing screen. The Jen 9 TREMBLES. Renko shuts his eyes against the glare.

An enormous space-liner WHITES OUT and resolves. It is wheel-like, a tube-like rim (the passenger section) rotates around a central engine hub, connected together with four stout "spokes"...

This is the STARLIGHT REVOLVER. It's huge, magnificent... the Queen Mary of the stars.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
 My god... she's big...

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*The Starlight Revolver is the
 largest spacecraft ever equipped
 with a jump drive. Starting ion
 synchronizer. Massive accel in
 three... two--*

RENKO VEGA
 --Jennifer, protect Bill! Now!

Those rubbery streams of goop shoot out at Bill, but only one hits, tightening and pulling him back towards the grid...

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Ignition--

--WHAM! The Jen 9 jumps forward at awe-inspiring velocity. The stars don't move or anything, the Jen 9 simply goes from zero to ten thousand in the blink of an eye.

Renko Vega is thrown backwards, but the rubber stretches, keeping him safe.

Bill, on the other hand, is hurled through the air with only that single inadequate rubber band protecting him. He SMASHES into a bank of hard drives on the rear wall.

EXT. THE STARLIGHT REVOLVER

The Jennifer 9 is a glimmer shooting across a black field, racing at one of those stout spokes.

Then, abruptly, the Jennifer STOPS only inches from the surface of the big ship.

INT. THE JENNIFER 9

Renko Vega hurtles the other way, stretching forward in his rubber net.

Bill leaves the rear wall and FLIES across the room again, right over the console, SPLASHING into the observation glass with a mighty crash and sticking, splayed out, flattened.

EXT. THE STARLIGHT REVOLVER

The Jen 9 hovers inches away from the skin of the larger ship. Little suction feet extend, THUNK, and fasten down.

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Activating camo...*

The skin of the Jennifer changes, assuming the color and shape of the Revolver, achieving a perfect mimicry.

INT. THE JENNIFER 9 / BRIDGE

The rubbery goop drops Renko back on the grid and retreats. Bill.1 slides down the glass and crashes to the floor.

Bill.1 is a mess; his head is dangling off his torso; both arms are broken off; a leg is turned backwards.

Renko walks over, picks up one of the errant arms and disgustedly tosses it onto the stack of Bill's other parts. Bill's eyes swivel up and look at Renko.

BILL.1
I'm okay.

Renko peers cautiously up into the port. He can see an envoy fighter rolling slowly above, rockets HISSING.

EXT. THE JENNIFER 9

The fighter craft glides over the slowly rotating surface of the Revolver. The Jennifer 9 is right below him, but, in full camo, almost invisible.

After a moment the fighter fires its engines and moves back with the other craft.

CUT TO:

INT. THE JENNIFER 9 / TECH ROOM

Renko Vega is laying on a gurney. His head is strapped down in an enormous and complex clamp. Bill.1 is nearby, stuck back together with bolts and bits of steel...

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Stay still, Renko. If you move
even a millimeter the wrong way,
the results could be disastrous.*

An enormous MECHANICAL ARM holds a complex probe in Renko's ear. The probe is snake-like, twisting, moving.

RENKO VEGA
(jaw clamped)
I can feel that! Too deep!
Jennifer!!

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
And... there.*

The arm pulls the writhing probe from Renko's ear. When it emerges we see a tiny mechanism and light at the far end. The head clamps unfasten.

RENKO VEGA
(sitting up)
I thought you were just going in a
few inches!

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I told you I had to access the
auditory nerve. We don't want
anyone discovering the implant, nor
do we want it dislodged like it was
at that moon colony.*

Those manipulator arms disappear into almost seamless panels in the wall as Renko climbs off the table.

He's wearing a pleated tuxedo shirt, pants, and suspenders. Bill.1 slips a black bow tie around Renko's neck.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Beginning earpiece test sequence.

Suddenly there's a WHISTLING sound, like a teakettle. It quickly RINGS up into a HOWLING FEEDBACK.

RENKO VEGA
 Owww!! Jennifer!

The WHISTLING goes wobbly, then RESOLVES into a soft HUMM and then, Jennifer's voice returns, but richer, more "present".

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Sorry Renko, your head seems to
have some peculiar amplitude
anomalies.

RENKO VEGA
 What's that supposed to mean?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Your skull is thick. I've tweaked
the frequency errors and repaired
the deficiencies.

RENKO VEGA
 (shaking it off)
 And when I talk back to you?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
All you have to do is whisper.

Bill.1 moves in front of Renko and begins tying the tie.

RENKO VEGA
 How about video?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
My sensors in your optic nerve are
broadcasting AOK. As long as your
eyes are open, my eyes are open.

Renko looks up at an overhead video monitor:

The video follows Renko's eyes. When Renko blinks the video goes black momentarily.

Bill.1 ties an overhand bowline, rejects that and ties a three-pointed star, then reties it into a cloverleaf pattern.

Renko watches Bill.1 in the video, but suddenly his face is stricken with horror.

RENKO VEGA
 Bill, hold up your hands.

Bill does, wonderingly.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Oh, my god, what the-- his arms are
on backwards! Jennifer, you put
his hands on backwards!

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*I did no such thing. He did it
himself.*

Bill.1 looks at his palms confusedly. His thumbs are on the
wrong side, elbows bent the wrong way.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Renko, if you'd move a little to
your left, I will tie your tie.*

Renko turns and lifts his chin. Those manipulator slide out
of those panels and move, startlingly fast, for Renko's neck.
The arms tie the bow tie, super-quick and perfect.

RENKO VEGA
Jennifer, Bill needs an upgrade.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*I would recommend a complete
replacement. Something built in
the last hundred years perhaps.*

RENKO VEGA
Come on, Jen, Bill and I have been
together since the Academy. Don't
mind her, Bill, just... do
something about those arms.

The robot-manipulators produce a comb and attempt several
styles on Renko's head, settling on a Pat Riley slick-back.

The manipulators rapidly stick several styles of moustache
and beard on Renko, settling on a thin, dashing Gable-stache.

Bill.1 holds up Renko's tuxedo jacket. It's facing the wrong
way. But Bill crosses his arms and the jacket is correct.

Renko pulls it on... it's huge, like it was cut for a giant.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Tailor, please.

The tuxedo shrinks and adjusts to Renko's form. It's
perfect, a classic one button number. Renko looks into the
mirror and smiles at himself.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Not bad, huh? Not bad at all.

CUT TO:

INT. THE JENNIFER 9 / AIRLOCK

The tuxedoed Renko Vega punches numbers in an airlock door.

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Equalizing pressure.*

RENKO VEGA
Has the Revolver's security system
detected us?

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I've made contact with the ship's
AI. It's one of the new twelve-
personality models.*

RENKO VEGA
Multiple personalities? How's that
go?

There's a HISS. Lights go green. Renko pulls open a hatch.

INT. REVOLVER PASSAGEWAY

Dark, narrow. Renko Vega climbs through huge ribs, the
superstructure of the Starlight Revolver.

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Twelve separate AI modules run its
various functions. In this case,
our arrival was sensed by the
janitorial brain, but since that
system isn't getting along with
security brain, it failed to
register an alert.*

INT. REVOLVER SPOKE TUBE - CONTINUING

Renko climbs out of the passageway and into the interior of
this enormous "spoke"... a shaft a hundred feet across and
three hundred yards long.

RENKO VEGA
How convenient for us.

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I did plant a small germ of
misinformation in the root drive.*

Renko descends stairs which spiral down the giant shaft.

RENKO VEGA
Misinformation? Not you, Jen.

CUT TO:

INT. THE STARLIGHT REVOLVER / BALLROOM

An old fashioned ballroom, enormous, like something you might find at an elegant old hotel. There's a dance floor, an orchestra playing semi-classical favorites.

There are tables loaded with flowers, china, silver, platters of delicacies. There's a roped off area where there are card, roulette, and baccarat tables. Finally, along one wall, there's a huge and elaborate curtain.

There are a HUNDRED PASSENGERS dressed in black tie... women in gowns, men in tuxes.

The SHIP'S CREW are outfitted in their finest dress uniforms. The DINING STAFF are wearing trim blue waistcoats with epaulets. They hustle platters of champagne and canapes.

The Revolver CAPTAIN talks to a GROUP of well-heeled SWELLS.

CAPTAIN

And did we all enjoy the time-skip?

SWELL #1

It's hard to believe we traveled so far so quickly. One minute we're on moon-base, ten minutes later we're drinking Martini's over Titan. Incredible!

We SWING AROUND to another group... a collection of BANKER-TYPES, sipping Martinis.

BANKER #1

I'll tell you what, if President Ardmore doesn't watch it, the corporate colonies will be in full revolt and his regime won't be worth a nickel.

BANKER #2

I wouldn't want to be in his position; he has no support other than Earth and the Mars colony.

One of the other is a cheerful, portly woman, DARLA CAHILL. She shakes her head...

DARLA CAHILL

Oh Charles, must politics follow us everywhere?

BANKER #1

Darla, we can't ignore the fact that Venus is in rebellion. They're pushing us closer and
(MORE)

BANKER #1 (CONT'D)
closer to an interplanetary
incident.

DARLA CAHILL
Enough for now. But here's to
Earth and President Ardmore...

She hoists her glass and the others follow her lead.

THE OTHERS
To Ardmore... to Earth...

INT. REVOLVER JUNGLE

A simulated jungle, complete with HOOTING BIRDS, BUZZING INSECTS. Renko walks quickly along a rope bridge suspended over a sun-dappled tennis court.

RENKO VEGA
Are you sure this is the right way?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Yeah, jungleland bridge will take
you over the pool and tennis
courts. You should see a thatched
roof and some--

RENKO VEGA
--French doors....

A thatched, overhanging roof appears, underneath are some French Doors... brightly lit from beyond.

INT. REVOLVER / BALLROOM

Renko steps through the French doors and into an alcove near a service bar. He finds a mirror, dusts his shoulders, tweaks his tie.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*You look beautiful, Renko. Now go
get me lots of pretty pictures.*

Renko smiles. We FOLLOW as he swings into the room.

RENKO VEGA
Copy that.

Renko SWIMS through the crowd, a dashing figure, like an old-time movie star.

He grins at anyone who looks his way, but when WOMEN near him, he really turns it on, eyeballing their swelling bosoms loaded with glittering jewels.

BACK IN THE JENNIFER 9

We focus on a *VIDEO SCREEN*: *Lines rasterize and HASH, Jennifer ZOOMS in on the jewelry. Dollar values TOT up on the screen (thousands, hundreds of thousands).*

(Bill is in background, trying to put his arms on correctly.)

RENKO VEGA (V.O.)
Whoa, this is good stuff, but is
there anyone here under a hundred?

BACK IN THE BALLROOM

Renko keeps smiling as he grabs a champagne glass off a passing tray.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Unh, unh, Renko, you're working...

RENKO VEGA
It's a prop, Jen. Here we go...

He spots Darla Cahill wearing a chunky necklace of emeralds. Renko smiles at her. She smiles back... but her HUSBAND appears, glowering at Renko.

Renko grins and nods at the husband and we see Renko's easy charm even works on guys... the husband smiles at Renko... no harm no foul.

But the husband's attention wanders, Renko nears Darla again.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Pencil me in for a dance?

DARLA CAHILL
Only pencil... not ink?

BACK IN THE JENNIFER 9

Those emeralds glow on the video screen. Numbers reel, dollar signs spin northward.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*Easy, Jocko... we're saving
ourselves for the big number.*

BACK IN THE BALLROOM

Renko swings through the crowd as he tosses down his champagne cocktail, ready to make another tour.

RENKO VEGA
Wouldn't be a bad consolation
prize, would it?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Can't give up that easy, can we?

The band stops abruptly and a microphone briefly WHISTLES.

EMCEE
 Ladies and gentlemen, may I direct
 your attention to the curtain on
 the wall beyond the bandstand...

There's a drumroll... everyone stops and turns...

EMCEE (CONT'D)
 The Starlight Revolver would like
 you to meet our special guest...

WHISPERS cut through the room. The lights dim, the enormous
 curtain sweeps back, revealing a huge observation window.

EMCEE (CONT'D)
 ...the one, the only, the planet,
Saturn.

SATURN is gigantic, her glorious rings cut through a
 brilliant starlit field.

The view is greeted with OOHS and AHHHS...

As all eyes stare up in wonder, Renko keeps MOVING, taking in
 BOUNTIFUL WATCHES, JEWELRY, BRACELETS ETC... all of which are
 reflected in the Jennifer 9 VIDEO MONITORS...

RENKO VEGA
 (quietly, to Jen)
 Any sign of her... anywhere at all?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*It's nice stuff, Renko, but she's
 just not out on the floor.*

RENKO VEGA
 Oh well... onto Plan B.

Renko suddenly finds himself standing in front of a young
 woman in a trim ship's uniform. She's in her late twenties,
 pert, professional, fetching. She holds a clipboard and is
 charmingly nodding at the guests. This is KATHRYN DELRIO.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
 Why, hello, there.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
 Now, she is way off limits, Renko.

DELRIO
 May I help you find your table,
 sir?

Renko sighs, shakes his head...

RENKO VEGA
I'm quite alright, thank you.

As Renko moves off we STAY momentarily on Kathryn DelRio.
She looks after Renko and touches a tiny wire in her ear.

DELRIO
Mister Woods, I need an I.D.

INT. STARLIGHT/SECURITY OFFICE

Chief Security Officer, WALTER WOODS is a small man with a goatee. He stares at multiple screens.

WOODS
Number five, please.

*The screen ZOOMS, finds Renko, ZEROES IN on his smiling face.
It jiggles, boxes.*

A uniformed TECHNICIAN works controls, taps at an interface.
Digits ripple down a column.

A cursor blinks... an alarm goes off, words flash...

"ACQUIRING IDENTITY"

BACK IN THE BALLROOM

Renko spots a pair of SECURITY GUYS in tuxes moving towards him. They are purposeful but focused on being unobtrusive.

RENKO VEGA
Whoops.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Everything okay?

RENKO VEGA
Looks like I've been spotted.

Renko steps quickly past a line of velvet ropes, separating the dining area from the gaming tables.

He moves through GAMBLERS at a plush roulette table as the ivory ball BALL CLACKS on the wheel.

CROUPIER
Red, twenty-three. Winner is red,
twenty-three.

The FAT MAN in front of Renko CELEBRATES with his friends as the croupier doubles the fat man's stack.

Cool as can be, Renko reaches around the guy and lifts a gold chip off the stack. He slips away again, palming the chip and trying to keep his eye on those security guys.

He ducks back towards the dance floor, where the ORCHESTRA is playing a WALTZ and a handful of COUPLES are dancing in classic box steps.

Renko nears the ORCHESTRA CONDUCTOR, surreptitiously slips him the golden chip and WHISPERS in his ear.

The conductor waves his wand, cutting off the waltz abruptly, taps on the podium and swings his stick.

The orchestra, horns, strings, and all, hurl into an unlikely rendition of "Twist and Shout"...

The crowd RESPONDS with enthusiasm and fills the dance floor.

The security goons spot Renko and chase him onto the floor as Renko grabs the hand of Darla Cahill. She grins and gyrates with Renko in a Kennedy-era "twist".

One of the security guys taps Renko on the shoulder. Renko slides one foot back and turns. Renko's elbow "accidentally" SMACKS into the guy's solar plexus.

The guard CRASHES to the ground. Renko's move is so slick and effortless that it's barely noticed by the gleeful crowd, though there is a bit of amiable confusion.

RENKO VEGA
(smiling at Darla)
Sorry, madam, but I must be off.

DARLA CAHILL
Pity.

Renko takes off, finds a service door...

INT. A LARGE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MANY ROBOTIC APPLIANCES are hard at work turning out gourmet platters on a conveyor belt.

One of the robots, a single articulated arm with a "head" mounted on it's vertical elbow, turns and glares at Renko with a giant LENS.

RENKO VEGA
Oh, hello... wrong turn.

Renko keeps moving, finds another door.

INT. ANOTHER REVOLVER CORRIDOR

Renko Vega slips through the door and makes his way down another swanky corridor, but suddenly those two security guys show up at the other end of the hall.

Renko turns back, suddenly coming face to face with Walter Woods, Kathryn DelRio, and more, FRESH SECURITY GUYS.

Renko stops dead, smiles charmingly. The two guys who were chasing move behind Renko and pulls his arms back.

RENKO VEGA
Easy guys, it's a rental.

Woods steps up to Renko, reaches up to his face and strips off Renko's false moustache.

WALTER WOODS
Renko Vega. Take a good look everyone, it's not often we see a notorious outlaw this far out in the solar system.

RENKO VEGA
Oh, you know that whole "notorious" thing is over-rated.

WALTER WOODS
How about con man, thief, traitor?

Renko's smile disappears (it was that word, "traitor").

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Easy, Renko.

RENKO VEGA
I'll own it all except the last.

WALTER WOODS
But isn't that exactly what you are, Captain Vega... a traitor?

RENKO VEGA
I was framed--

WALTER WOODS
--you jumped bail and fled. You stole a valuable, experimental iNASA spacecraft... the Jennifer 9, wasn't that her name?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
--Easy now, Renko.

RENKO VEGA
(to Jen)
--It's okay.

WALTER WOODS
It's okay? Is it? Ms. DelRio,
thank you for your assistance.
(to the guards)
Take him to the brig.

DelRio stares at Renko... something is not adding up for her.

INT. THE BRIG - A MOMENT LATER

Woods and his boys shove Renko Vega inside. It's an eight-by-ten cell. A toilet, a thin cot, a chair.

RENKO VEGA
You know boys, I'd really prefer
something with a window.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STARLIGHT REVOLVER

The envoy fighter-craft float gently around the big wheel.

INT. ENVOY FIGHTER ONE

PILOT #1 is monitoring his gauges. Despite the starry spectacle and the magnificent Revolver rotating slowly in his plexi, the pilot yawns. Space is kinda boring.

A blip shows up on one of his instruments. He spots it, taps the screen, then touches his radio.

PILOT #1
I got a little shock near the jump
point... anyone?

There's a pause. HISSING radios.

PILOT #2
I see that, Cap. I can drop and
take a look.

PILOT #1
Roger that. Tighten the formation
and lock radios down.

INT. THE BRIG - CONTINUING

The door shuts behind him with finality. Renko moves to the door and listens carefully. VOICES and FOOTSTEPS fade.

RENKO VEGA
Jen, you there?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Still here.

RENKO VEGA
You got a tight lo-kay on me?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I will in a second.

Renko wriggles out of his jacket, sits in the chair and puts his left arm on the table.

He grabs the index finger of his left hand and twists. This looks painful but apparently isn't. Renko spins the finger off like he's twisting the cap off a water bottle.

Inside is a complicated bit of mechanics... a rod-like bundle of tubes slides up into through the finger socket.

Renko twists the top of a small ring on his middle finger... there's a voice, mechanical, slightly echoic...

HAND
Hand is aware...

RENKO VEGA
Hand, activate program alpha-one.

HAND
Hand is arming impulse lasers.
Fifteen seconds to detonation.

RENKO VEGA
Jen, you got a mark?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Mapping.

HAND
Please establish zero point.

RENKO VEGA
Jennifer, the Hand and I would like to get going--

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
--Still searching.

HAND
Ten seconds to detonation.

RENKO VEGA
Jennifer?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*The plating is a little heavier
 than I anticipated... maybe if you
 move around a little?*

Renko is annoyed. He waves the Hand around.

HAND
 Five seconds... zero point, please.

RENKO VEGA
 Jennifer--

HAND
 --Beginning heavy radiation laser
 sequence one--

The finger is glowing, heating up.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*--Got it! Renko, turn to the
 right, eighteen degrees, point the
 Hand at the spot where the wall and
 floor meet!*

Renko does it.

HAND
 Program active.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
A little to the left... there...

Suddenly a gaseous, brilliant, narrow beam of light bursts out of the Hand and SLAMS into the steel wall.

Renko is shoved backward as the Hand burns a brilliant door-pattern in the wall in a deliberately robotic way.

After only a few seconds, the Hand has done its work. The laser shuts down, there's a CREAK and a WHOOSH, and the heavy metal "door" SLAPS DOWN on the floor.

HAND
 Hand is cooling, program alpha one
 complete, readying program two.
 You have three minutes.

INT. ENVOY FIGHTER TWO

PILOT TWO fires his rockets. His craft moves away from the Revolver. He scans his bubble. A swirling circle appears in the inky darkness.

PILOT #2
Heat's rising. My carbon sensors
are spiking.

PILOT #1
Jeezus... someone chased us through
the jump hole!

Suddenly dozens of black things EXPLODE out of the darkness
and swarm towards the fighters. They are half-insect, half-
buzz bomb, each about the size of a tennis ball.

PILOT #2
Black Flies!

A dozen of these "Black Flies" CRACK into fighter #2, jamming
themselves up his rocket pipes and HAMMERING into the plexi-
screen! The bubble SHATTTERS... and the ship EXPLODES! The
pilot's SCREAM is lost in the vacuum of space...

The #1 pilot watches this with horror as he rotates, firing
his rockets, trying to get away...

PILOT #1
Mayday! Drones! Black Flies--!

--but BLAAAMMM! The swarm HAMMERS at him and his ship
IMPLODES, blasted out of the sky.

INT. THE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Another one of those laser-cut doorways CRASHES down on the
floor and Renko Vega steps inside, holding his smoking finger
up like a gun, then screwing the tip back on.

The Captain's cabin is a paneled, den-like room.

RENKO VEGA
Jen, I'm in the captain's cabin...

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*There's a map chest on the interior
wall... and a latch between the
chest and the bulkhead.*

Renko spots the chest and slides his Hand behind it. He
feels around, runs it down the other side.

A latch CLICKS. Renko pulls open the cabinet door. (It's a
phony, the tubes of charts are only a few inches long.)
Inside is a large steel safe, rivets, latch, a big dial.

The fingers on the Hand rub themselves together.

HAND
Program one-nine is ready,
placement please.

Renko puts the fingers on the tumbler. They spin the big dial back and forth lightning fast.

HAND (CONT'D)
The safe is open.

Renko tries to turn the big latch, but it won't go.

RENKO VEGA
It's not open.

HAND
Are you certain?

RENKO VEGA
Yeah, it's not open.

He puts the Hand back on the tumbler. The fingers spin back and forth, then stop.

HAND
The safe is open.

Renko grabs the latch again, leans on it, but it won't turn.

RENKO VEGA
It's not open.

The Hand doesn't respond. Renko looks at the Hand.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Hello? It's not open.

HAND
Hand is thinking. Sequence beta, option four. Please remove any flammables from the area and make certain all organic material is at least three meters from detonation point. You have two seconds--

RENKO VEGA
--What... wait, I'm organic--!! I--

--Suddenly there's a concussive FLASH from Renko's Hand. Renko falls backward amidst smoke and dust.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Owww!!

The safe door THUNKS to the ground.

HAND
The safe is open.

INT. FIGHTER ENVOY #3

The pilot twists at his instruments as his ship is POUNDED by the Black Flies... but his ship EXPLODES in just seconds...

EXT. SPACE

Those Black Flies swarm around the two remaining fighters which desperately race away from the Revolver.

Silently, the fighters EXPLODE, one after the other.

INT. STARLIGHT REVOLVER BRIDGE - SAME

The FIRST MATE is standing on the Revolver's large bridge.

There are FOUR TECHNICIANS at a big console with multiple video screens under a large observation window in front of them, revealing Saturn's rings and a star-lit sky.

TECH #1
Sir, I've got heavy activity from
the envoy fighters.

FIRST EXEC
What kind of activity?

TECH #1
They broke formation, two ships
went on a look-see on the backside
and didn't come back. We're trying
to raise them but their comms are
locked up in battle mode.

FIRST MATE
Battle mode?

TECH #2
(pointing at a screen)
Holy--! Drones! Hundreds of them!

TECH #3
Those are Black Flies--!

TECH #1
--Where the hell did they come
from!?

FIRST MATE
--Scramble all defense personnel!
Get the Captain up here now...

INT. THE CAPTAINS QUARTER'S

Renko moves near the safe and peers inside.

RENKO VEGA
I can't stand it, Jen. I can't
stand my Hand.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
It can hear you, you know.

RENKO VEGA
I know it can hear me, it's on the
end of my arm! I just don't
understand why it has to be so
bossy.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
It's not bossy. It's purposeful.

RENKO VEGA
It's didactic and inflexible.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*It got you in here, and got the
safe open as well.*

RENKO VEGA
Why can't he be more like Bill--?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
--Bill is an idiot.

RENKO VEGA
Bill is one helluva robot.

Inside the safe, there's paperwork, bundles of money. Renko ignores this stuff, focusing instead on a BLACK VELVET BOX.

He lifts the box gently and opens the top, and his breath catches in his throat.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Jesus...

INSIDE THE BOX

There is chain necklace with a pendant and an enormous black jewel in a delicate filigree setting.

BACK IN THE JENNIFER 9

The necklace is on the video. The stats streak upwards to levels. The grid zooms...

A label flashes: "Genuine, genuine, genuine..."

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
 (an impressed whisper)
*Renko... it's the Lady... the Lady
 of the Shadows...*

BACK TO RENKO

as he stares at this magnificent thing, awestruck.

RENKO VEGA
 She's all they ever said she was--

--Suddenly ALARMS go off!

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*Renko! There's trouble! You've
 got to out of there! Get out now!*

INT. THE BALLROOM

A UNIFORMED MAN moves up to the captain and WHISPERS quietly into his ear.

The captain nods and smiles at the group he's with, MUTTERS his apologies, and heads off.

BACK ON THE BRIDGE

The Tech's are monitoring movement outside the ship, watching their exterior screens.

TECH #1
 I've got nothing. No signal. We
 lost the envoy!

TECH #3
 What the hell is going on!? We're
 a cruise ship, a pleasure ship!

Suddenly there's one of those enormous silent EXPLOSIONS in the observation screen and a ship appears...

FIRST MATE
 Shit! Something followed us
 through the jump tunnel!!

The swarm of Black Flies dart around this new ship, a "corsair" called the "BLOODY HENRY".

Although it is complex it is also crude... an amalgam of space junk, bits of an space station, rockets, booster tanks, with a long proboscis-like weapon sticking out the top.

TECH #3
 That explains the Black Flies...

Suddenly the bridge doors fly open, the Captain and his STAFF move into the room.

CAPTAIN
Mister Jennings, report!

FIRST MATE
Captain, we've lost our envoy and
we're under attack!

--The Captain checks the screens and suddenly reacts--

CAPTAIN
Shut the shields! That's a Boron
cannon! She's turning on us!

EXT. THE BLOODY HENRY

...that cannon nose jerks, a glowing ball of plasma streaks across the sky and HAMMERS into the side of the revolver.

INT. THE REVOLVER BRIDGE

There are SCREAMS! ALARMS are SHRIEKING!

INT. THE BALLROOM

The room jerks hard; people are KNOCKED right off their feet. Everyone looks up as the big window shields begin rolling across the skyport.

DelRio moves quickly for one of the ship's officers.

DELRIO
What is it? What's going on?

OFFICER
Stay here! Calm the passengers,
I'll see what I can find out.

DelRio frowns, turns, and cuts for the exit.

EXT. CORRIDOR - NEAR THE BALLROOM

DelRio ditches the clipboard and races down the corridor.

EXT. THE STARLIGHT REVOLVER

Cables FIRE off the side of the "Bloody Henry" and grapple onto the wheel-side of the Revolver. The cables tighten, pulling the Henry to the larger ship.

INT. REVOLVER CORRIDOR

There's an EXPLOSION... a big exterior door BURSTS open.
DOZENS of nasty CREATURES BURST into the corridor...

They are AUGMENTICS, and they are colorful and frightening,
like Hell's Angels, but more evolved. They're armed with
ZIGZAG LASERS and bulbous RAYGUNS.

A half-dozen Revolver CREWMEN form a blockade, pointing sleek
palm-lasers at the Augmentics.

HEAD CREWMAN
Stop and lay down your weapons!
This is a lawfully registered--

--But the Augmentics are quick and-- WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! And
the Revolver crewmen fall down.

The Augmentics move purposefully past the bodies, flooding
the corridor as we get a better look at them; we realize they
are all weird, but they are humans who have been altered.

There are DOGHEADS, ZIPPER-LIPS, JIB-JABBERS, CHICKENTOPS,
LAUGHING JACKS, CRAB-EYES, WING-BACKS, and MANDO-GRUBS.

Some of them have multiple arms, multiple heads, or faces on
different sides of their heads. Some have three or four
eyes, and some of those eyes are in their hands.

They seem to revel in their nonconformity and in the fear
they strike in the hearts of regular, non-augmented human
beings (like you and I).

INT. A STATEROOM - SIMULTANEOUSLY

Kathryn DelRio bursts into this large and lavish stateroom.
She rips through a small PASSAGEWAY, and into...

INT. A BEDROOM

There's a big four-poster bed. Someone's asleep in the bed
under a downy comforter.

DelRio moves to the bed, shakes its occupant awake. A GIRL
in a sleep mask drowsily rises. She is thirteen.

GIRL
What? What is it?

DELRIO
Get up. Put some clothes on.

GIRL
No.

DELRIO
Now. Jeans. Tennis shoes, a
 sweater.

DelRio hurries back out the door.

INT. THE STATEROOM

DelRio pulls a suitcase out from a closet, flips it open.
 There's another case inside. She pulls that out, opens it.

CLOSE

A disassembled gun: labels tell us it's a Mercedes carcass,
 Matsushita electronics. It's lethal-looking and complex...

INT. THE BALLROOM

The Orchestra is still playing, when suddenly the room is
 flooded with SHOUTING Augmentics.

They move quickly inside, using their weapons and ugliness to
 THREATEN and BULLY the passengers. They grab at the women's
 jewelry and rip it from their wrists and necks.

At the edges of the room passengers flee out the side exits.

INT. THE SURROUNDING CORRIDORS

PASSENGERS hurry, trying to get to their staterooms. But
 MORE AUGMENTICS appear, grabbing the passengers, shoving them
 hard back towards the ballroom.

INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR

Renko Vega is moving out of the Captain's quarter's, and into
 a corridor disguised as a AUTUMN WOODS. Maple trees done in
 yellows and reds hover above, with blue sky peeking through.
 Brown leaves skitter through cool autumn air.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*Cut down the lane, and take your
 second left, cut over to spoke
 three! Quick, Renko!*

RENKO VEGA
 What's going on?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*The Starlight Revolver has been
 boarded by pirates.*

RENKO VEGA
 Of course it's been boarded by
 pirates! We're pirates!

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*We're not pirates, we're charming
 rogues, well, you're a charming
 rogue, I'm your brainy and
 beautiful sidekick. I'm talking
 about pirates. Just get to the
 spoke. We need to get out now.*

Renko turns a corner, and sees TWO YOUNG COUPLES in tuxedos and gowns hurrying down a corridor.

Renko ducks behind a protruding bulkhead, watches as a GROUP OF AUGMENTICS MOVE aggressively after the couple. The biggest one has two complete faces, one next to the other... a form known as a JIB-JABBER.

RENKO VEGA
 Augmentics. Yuck.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I told you.

RENKO VEGA
 You said pirates, not semi-human
 idiots with self-image problems.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*They're off a corsair called the
 Bloody Henry.*

RENKO VEGA
 How the hell did they get out here?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*A transcript I've intercepted
 indicates that they came through
 the tunnel created by the
 Revolver's skip-drive.*

RENKO VEGA
 They snake-holed 'em. Only a
 pirate would even consider a
 maneuver like that. You're likely
 to leave half your spaceship on the
 other side of the solar system.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*They swamped the fighter envoy with
 Black Flies and took down the
 bridge with a half-charge from a
 Boron cannon.*

RENKO VEGA
 Where'd these monkeys get a Boron
 gun?

Renko watches the Augmentics drag the four passengers out of the stateroom.

Another pirate appears. He is SHIZ. He has a magnifying glass mounted over on his head, which he swings into place as he analyzes the four passengers.

SHIZ

Steve Shiz, science officer off the Bloody Henry. This is Jib-Jab, Dogface, and this is Mando. All my work. Mando has eyes in the back of his head. Go on, let 'em have a peak.

MANDO turns so we can see that, indeed, he has a pair of blinking eyes in the back of his cranium.

SHIZ (CONT'D)

Anyway, augmentation is my specialty. Now, that little mole on your cheek there? What if we were to make it talk? Or, you... you'd look good with a tail...

He hands out cards...

SHIZ (CONT'D)

Fifteen minutes in the nearest men's room. I can fit you in this afternoon.

Jib-Jabber grabs one of the female passengers and drags her down to the ground. Her companion SHOUTS and swings at them.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

Renko, come home and let's get out of here--

Suddenly there's a voice from the other end of the hall--

DOON (V.O.)

--That's enough!

MALTHAZAR DOON is standing at the end of the hall, glowering at his men. He is thick-chested, with a pair of six inch horns jutting out of his scalp.

DOON (CONT'D)

Bring them back to the ballroom with the others.

The other Augmentics stare at Doon.

DOON (CONT'D)

Take anything you want, but only after we find her...

Renko considers this statement as the Augmentics drag the passengers down the corridor and away.

Renko hesitates, then takes off after them...

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Wrong way, Renko... Renko... Renko!

INT. THE BALLROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

The passengers and the ship's staff are gathered in long rough rows in the lush ballroom.

The Revolver Captain is there, wearing a bruise on his face and a torn jacket.

Malthazar Doon looks over all the swells and their finery. He smiles as his men move through them, separating them from jewelry, watches, and billfolds.

The Augmentics leave the booty in a pile near Doon's feet.

DOON
Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your generous donations. My name is Malthazar Doon. I am Captain of the corsair "Bloody Henry".

CAPTAIN
You've got what you want, Doon, now leave us alone.

DOON
Don't assume, Captain, that you have any idea what we want...

Doon turns to a tall woman with cat's ears that twitch alertly in the air. She is MRS. MCMINK. She is lithe and dangerously beautiful.

DOON (CONT'D)
McMink, has he boarded yet?

McMink's ears twitch, listening.

MCMINK
He's here.

Everyone turns. A group of MEN stride through the main doors. They are in matching but unadorned flightsuits. They are not Augmentics, but "normal" men.

The man in the middle is a fifty-year old guy with bristling grey hair. He is trim and stern. He is CREIGHTON BEVILAQUA.

UP ON THE MEZZANINE

Renko Vega is peeking through the balustrade of a balcony.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Renko, who is that guy?

RENKO VEGA
 I thought you knew everything, Jen.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I can take the time to do a facial scan, crossmatch, and look up his identity in my database, or you can just tell me.

RENKO VEGA
 His name is Creighton Bevilaqua. I used to work for him at iNASA.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
So, what's he doing here?

RENKO VEGA
 I don't know, but it explains the Boron gun.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
How's that?

RENKO VEGA
 iNASA designed the thing. Bevilaqua had level one access.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
So, who's he working for now?

RENKO VEGA
 My guess is he's branched out on his own.

BACK ON THE FLOOR

Bevilaqua looks over the passengers, addresses Doon.

BEVILAQUA
 Did you find her, Mister Doon?

DOON
 No, Admiral. We'll have to search the ship in more detail. Mrs. McMink will coordinate--

BEVILAQUA
 --No. Split your men into six parties. My team will run the search. We'll start in the
 (MORE)

BEVILAQUA (CONT'D)
staterooms and work our way around
the wheel. Make sure all radio
communications are shut down.

MCMINK
The antenna have all been
destroyed.

BEVILAQUA
And blow the lifepods. No one gets
off this ship. No one.

Doon nods at McMink. McMink smiles coyly and saunters off.

BACK TO RENKO

...as he considers what he's heard.

RENKO VEGA
They're looking for the lady, Jen.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*And they won't find her. If you
get out of there now.*

Renko looks down at the crowded ballroom. The Augmentics
mock and intimidate the passengers. Renko hesitates.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Come back to me, Renko. Come
home... we'll be ten thousand miles
away from here in an hour.*

Renko nods, climbs to his feet...

RENKO VEGA
Sounds good. Which way do I go?

INT. REVOLVER PASSAGEWAYS - A MOMENT LATER

Renko works his way down increasingly utilitarian
passageways. He slips around a corner and finds a door
marked: **SPOKE ACCESS 4 - NO ADMITTANCE.**

He tries the door. Locked.

RENKO VEGA
Jen, can you open the access door?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*The Brains have issued a general
lockdown. Gimme a minute...*

There's a NOISE. Renko looks down the hall. A GROUP of
AUGMENTICS are moving near. Renko turns and slips into...

A SIDE ALCOVE

There's a service door on a back wall. Renko moves to the door, then hears a CLICK and feels something on his neck.

Kathryn DelRio holds her Merc-Matsu gun up to Renko's head.

DELRIO
Well if it isn't our stowaway.
Remember me, Captain Vega?

RENKO VEGA
You know that's a big gun for such
a little lady.

DELRIO
It makes big holes too.

More NOISES from the hall--

RENKO VEGA
--They're coming.

DELRIO
Friends of yours?

RENKO VEGA
Do I look like one of them?

We hear MUTTERING, FOOTSTEPS, CHATTER from the hall.

DELRIO
Against the wall. Keep your mouth
shut.

They pin themselves flat against the wall behind the door.

BACK IN THE PASSAGEWAY

AUGMENTICS, led by one of Bevilacqua's uniformed men, DURANGO, move through the corridor, kicking through side doors, poking their heads and guns in every corner.

They reach the alcove and one of the Augmentics sticks his weapon inside. He is a DOGHEAD, with a long canine snout.

BACK IN THE ALCOVE

Doghead moves slowly inside the alcove and steps beyond the bulkhead where DelRio and Renko hide. He focuses immediately on that service door, SNIFFING with his dog-nose.

DelRio tracks Doghead with her gun, but Renko sends her a tight warning, and a firm, pleading shake of the head...

Doghead opens the service door. It's a janitorial closet, filled with mops and cleaning supplies-- but Durango's VOICE CALLS from the hallway.

Doghead hesitates, turns, cautiously steps back out, and rejoins the others in the corridor. After a moment their FOOTSTEPS and VOICES DIMINISH as they move out of earshot.

DELRIO (CONT'D)
(to Renko)
Now why don't you tell me what
you're doing up here?

RENKO VEGA
Same thing you're doing. Trying to
get away from those freaks.

DelRio stares at Renko, adding this up...

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*I don't like this one, Renko. I
don't like her one bit.*

DELRIO
You aren't a stowaway at all, are
you, Vega? There's no way you'd be
able to get through security on
Earth. And if you didn't come here
on that corsair, and I don't think
you did, then you got on this ship
some other way... and I gotta
believe it's parked out on the hull
somewhere.

RENKO VEGA
Interesting theory.

DELRIO
How about you and I make a deal?
How about I don't kill you--

RENKO VEGA
--That's a start--

DELRIO
--and you get us off this ship.

Renko starts to protest, then it hits him...

RENKO VEGA
...us?

DelRio turns and pulls the service closet open.

DELRIO
It's alright. Come on out.

A locker opens. That twelve-year-old girl we met earlier steps out, walking through the door and into the alcove.

Renko stares at her. She stares back... a penetrating gaze.

RENKO VEGA

Hey.

GIRL

Hey. Who are you?

RENKO VEGA

My name's Renko. Renko Vega.

GIRL

Weird name.

RENKO VEGA

People think it suits me.

GIRL

Because you're weird?

BACK IN THE JENNIFER 9

Renko's video rasterizes, zeroing in on the girl's face. Lines flicker, boxing out the girl's eyes, measuring...

BACK TO RENKO

Still in the corridor... Jennifer's voice back in his head...

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

Renko, there's something about that girl.

RENKO VEGA

(to the girl)

So, who are you?

DELRIO

She's my sister.

RENKO VEGA

You don't look like sisters.

DELRIO

The light in here is bad.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

I'm gonna shoot her specs through the database.

RENKO VEGA

Copy that.

GIRL
Copy what? Hey Kathryn, I think
your friend is a Purple Zombie.

RENKO VEGA
I'm not a Purple Zombie. What's a
Purple Zombie?

GIRL
A freak so wired-up and jacked-in
he no longer participates in
reality.

RENKO VEGA
I'm not a zombie, okay? I just
don't like people that much.

DelRio waves her gun threateningly at Renko.

DELRIO
Let's get going, Vega.

Renko exits and crosses over to that Spoke Four door. The
one with the seals and the warnings.

RENKO VEGA
(very quietly)
What's the progress on the door,
Jen?

Renko glances and catches the girl's expression of disgust.

GIRL
All Zombie all the time.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*The brains put up a firewall.
You'll have to use the Hand.*

RENKO VEGA
Oh, for Crissakes, not again.

He glances at the others, then twists the ring on his middle
finger and spools off his index finger.

HAND
Hand is aware.

GIRL
What the hell are you doing?
What's he doing?

RENKO VEGA
Program four, access and penetrate.

DELRIO
What is that thing, Vega?

RENKO VEGA

It's my Hand, okay? I lost my real hand in an airlock door four years ago, so I got a new one? Believe me I liked the old one better.

HAND

Hand is thinking.

RENKO VEGA

Hand is talking. Just blow the door, okay?

HAND

Arming detonation cycle and laser igniter, you have three seconds--

RENKO VEGA

--Aww for cr--

(to DelRio and the girl)

--Get back! Get back--!!

--Renko points the Hand at the doorlatch mechanism, and turns his head. That laser BLASTS out and POUNDS the big door.

Renko flies back from the force. A moment later, as the smoke clears we see the door lock is blown. The door swings lightly on its hinges.

HAND

Door is open. Will the Hand's services be required again?

RENKO VEGA

No. Go take a nap or something.

GIRL

He's kind of an jackass isn't he?

(off Renko's look)

I meant the Hand. But you too.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

Renko, they're coming back--!

Get out of there, now!

Renko turns and looks at the end of the hall.

RENKO VEGA

Crap--

--He grabs DelRio and the girl and shoves them through the door just as those Augmentics appear and start SHOUTING.

Renko pulls the door shut but it's damaged from the Hand's assault and the latch doesn't close.

The Augmentics run down the corridor. Durango stops at the burned door, reaching to pull it open, motioning for the others to get behind him.

BACK ON THE JENNIFER 9

That video monitor rapidly flashes through a variety of photos, some old, some new, finally settling on one.

It's a 3D image of a handsome man in his mid-forties posed at a desk. There's a bunch of flags on either side and an elaborate Presidential seal on the wall behind him.

A label on the photo identifies the man as:

***"James Joplin Ardmore,
Third President of United Earth"***

Those raster lines sizzle and fly. Jennifer ZOOMS in close on Ardmore's eye... measuring...

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Son of a bitch.*

BACK IN THE PASSAGEWAY

Durango slowly pushes open the door. He pokes his gun in and steps inside.

INT. SPOKE FOUR

We're in the spoke-shaft with that catwalk spiraling up. Wind blows up through the shaft, an eerie WAILING SOUND.

For a moment it appears there's no one here, then suddenly WHAM! Renko Vega KICKS UP hard into the guy's face. Durango's eyes go blank and he drops to the floor.

Renko hurries back to the door and, along with the two women, JAMS against it as the Augmentics push from the other side.

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
--Renko, I gotta talk to you--*

*RENKO VEGA
--Kinda busy now--*

The Augmentics are forcing the door, prying their way in.

*JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Renko, it's about that girl--*

*RENKO VEGA
--Not now, Jen.*

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
She is not who you think--

RENKO VEGA
 --Quiet, Jennifer!

DELRIO
 --Jennifer? The Jen 9! You're
 talking to your ship! You do have
 a way out--

DelRio backs off the door and futzes with keypad on her gun.

DELRIO (CONT'D)
 --Alright, let 'em in! I'll take
 them all at once.

RENKO VEGA
 What?!

DELRIO
 Let it go and cover your ears!

The girl backs off and covers up. DelRio's got the gun up.

DELRIO (CONT'D)
 Cover your ears! Cover your ears!

Finally Renko ducks back and the door flies open. A half-
 dozen Augmentics burst through... and DelRio FIRES the gun.

BOOOOMMMM! WHIIIIINNNEE! ...a huge EXPLOSION and a wave of
 INTENSE SOUND BLOWS the bad guys right off their feet.

Renko SCREAMS and covers his ears as a WHINING FEEDBACK fills
 his head... then that WHISTLING SOUND, the wobbly tea kettle.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Renko! Renko!

RENKO VEGA
 Jennifer! Jen!

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
(diminishing)
Renko....! Renko....! Ren...

And then Jennifer's voice vanishes into the WHISTLE... and
 the whistle RESOLVES into a soft HUMM... then nothing...

RENKO VEGA
 Jen, are you there? Jennifer...

The girl is on her feet, looking at the ugly Augmentics
 laying around on the floor.

GIRL
Are they dead?

DELRIO
Maybe. Some of them, anyway.

RENKO VEGA
What the hell was that?

DELRIO
Sonic pulse generator, the only way
to take them all at once--

RENKO VEGA
You almost killed us--

DELRIO
--Relax, I calculated the risk--

RENKO VEGA
You knocked out my comm link! I
lost Jennifer.

DELRIO
Look Vega, we gotta get outta here,
I'm sure they heard that through
the whole ship--

RENKO VEGA
We have to split up. You're not
safe with me--

DELRIO
--Why?

RENKO VEGA
Because, I've got this.

He opens his collar and pulls out a crimson-colored ribbon.
On the end of it is the Lady of the Shadows.

DELRIO
The Lady of the Shadows. We were
carrying it to the Saturn Colony
for safekeeping. You stole it!

RENKO VEGA
Right. Now, get moving--!

DELRIO
They're not looking for you, Vega.
I'm sure those jerks would be happy
to find that rock but they probably
don't even know it's on board.

RENKO VEGA
What are you talking about?

DELRIO
 You've been out of touch.
 Creighton Bevilaqua is an enemy of
 the state, working against
 President Ardmore and United Earth.
 He's after something far more
 valuable than that moonstone.

RENKO VEGA
 Like what?

DELRIO
 A passenger.

RENKO VEGA
 What passenger?

DELRIO
 (shaking her head)
 I thought you'd have figured it out
 by now...

DelRio turns and nods at the girl, who is standing at the
 bottom of the stairs, backlit, face in shadow.

DELRIO (CONT'D)
 Captain Vega, may I present...

DelRio bows her head in a formal way and extends her arm...

DELRIO (CONT'D)
 ...Miss Elizabeth Ardmore, Princess
 of Mars, daughter to James Joplin
 Ardmore, Commander in Chief and
 President of United Planet Earth...

Renko stares as the girl steps up and sneers at Renko...

GIRL
 You're supposed to bow you know.
 (to DelRio)
 He's supposed to bow.

DELRIO
 He doesn't know. Or he's
 forgotten.

Renko hesitates. We move in CLOSER on him...

DELRIO (CONT'D)
 ...or perhaps he's exactly what
 they say he is... a traitor...

Renko considers these words... feeling their weight... but he
 does not move... he does not bow.

DELRIO (CONT'D)
 Well, I guess we know where you
 stand. Not that it matters,
 because you're still taking us out
 of here.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STARLIGHT REVOLVER

She's in full sun now, floating gently over the enormous
 orange surface of Titan...

INT. REVOLVER "POOLHOUSE" - MOVING

Malthazar Doon and Creighton Bevilaqua stride along a curving
 bridge above an swimming pool done in Venetian opulence.
 They pass shuffleboard courts, a shimmering fountain.

They approach a large door set in marble. McMink slouches
 against the doorframe. She counts off on her fingers.

MCMINK
 Oxygen, Gravity, Housekeeping,
 Social Services, Catering,
 Sanitation, Janitorial, Pest
 Control, Communication, Music and
 Entertainment, Skip-Jump, and
 Security. That's twelve.

BEVILAQUA
 Are they cooperating?

MCMINK
 They're worried about their own
 skins... well, if they had skins...

INT. REVOLVER CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

A dark room, but large and well-appointed room. A
 transformer HUM undermines the air. There's a big aquarium-
 like tank in the middle of the tile floor with all kinds of
 tubes and wires running around, under, and over it.

In the tank are twelve large BRAINS suspended in viscous
 electrolytic goop. They look like human brains but bigger.
 There are bundles of colorful wires dangling ganglia-like out
 of each brain stem and running down into electronic raceways.

Eerie lights glow from the tanks, throwing the entire room
 into a swimming lava-lamp glow.

There is also a small JANITOR ROBOT, wheeling a steaming
 bucket around, mopping the floor.

As Bevilaqua, Doon, and McMink penetrate the gloom we hear
MUTTERING, ARGUING, then, more clearly:

BRAINS (V.O.)
Quiet, here they come.

A battery of cameras with many lenses mounted behind the
brains track Doon, Bevilaqua, and McMink...

The cameras are especially interested in the boom-chicka walk
of McMink. She smiles, well-aware of her attributes.

MCMINK
Boys and Girls, these are the guys
I was telling you about. This is
the powerful and crafty Admiral
Creighton Bevilaqua and this is the
mighty Mister Malthazar Doon...
(to Doon and Bevilaqua)
These impressive bundles of protein
are the Starlight Revolver
operating system...

TWELVE VOICES speak all at once--

BRAINS (V.O.)
Nice to meet you--
--How's it going--
--Hello--
--Pleasure-- etc.

BEVILAQUA
Let me be brief. Have any of you
knowledge of the whereabouts of
Elizabeth Ardmore?

All the BRAINS talk in a variety of voices, male and female:

BRAINS (V.O.)
Who--?
--No--
--None--
--Didn't even know she was aboard--

BEVILAQUA
President Ardmore's daughter is
somewhere on this ship and I want
to know where.

BRAINS
--No idea, sir--
--She's not on the passenger list--

Bevilaqua stares at the Brains. He turns, glances at the
housekeeping robot, dutifully cleaning the floor.

BEVILAQUA
Robot, what's in that bucket?

ROBOT
Sir. Infection on a spacecraft is dangerous both for the passengers and the organic operating system--

BEVILAQUA
--What is in the bucket?

ROBOT
A compound of sodium hydrochloride, muriatic acid, and lye heated to boiling point. Death to germs.

Bevilaqua looks at McMink, then nods at the tank.

BEVILAQUA
Choose one of them.

MCMINK
Security. Number five there.

BEVILAQUA
Security. Where is the Ardmore girl?

BRAIN
I'm sorry sir, I wonder if you're familiar with the interplanetary agreement of 2079--

--Bevilaqua moves quickly forward, grabs the number five wiring harness that dangles down into the tank. He pulls furiously, jerking the brain up from its perch.

BRAIN (CONT'D)
No! Please, no! NO!!

All the Brains SHOUT in terror as Bevilaqua walks the wriggling brain over to the robot's bucket.

BRAIN (CONT'D)
This is highly illegal--!

BEVILAQUA
--Now, where is the girl?!

The brains PLEAD and PROTEST... and without hesitation, Bevilaqua drops the Security brain in the bucket.

There's a brief SHOUT as the brain HITS the noxious concoction. Then boils and HISSES.

McMink leans over for a better look as Bevilaqua turns back to the remaining brains.

BEVILAQUA (CONT'D)
Now... where is the Ardmore girl?

The brains have gone quiet. Finally, one speaks...

BRAINS
While we are unaware of the girl's identity or her current location, there are only three passengers under the age of sixteen on the ship's manifesto. The lone female is a thirteen-year-old assigned to stateroom twenty-four on "A" deck.

DOON
We've cleaned out all the passenger decks. There was no girl.

There's WHISPERINGS from the brains, a disagreement.

MCMINK
What is it, boys and girls?

BRAINS (V.O.)
Well with all your personnel movements it's hard to tell but there was an incident at spoke four a short time ago. One of the access doors may have been forced.

CUT TO:

INT. SPOKE FOUR STAIRWAY

Renko climbs up that enormous spiraling staircase. The interior of the spoke is huge, echoic, cathedral-like. Kathryn DelRio and the girl follow.

As Renko ascends he glances behind him. DelRio's got that gun and is watching him carefully.

RENKO VEGA
So, I guess you're a member of the Secret Service, is that right?

GIRL
She's Special Agent Kathryn DelRio. Her friends call her "Nails". She's single and an expert at hand-guns, explosives, and needlepoint. In her spare time she likes long walks on the beach and puppydogs--

DELRIO
--Just keep moving, Vega. Let's get our little bundle home to bed and we can chit-chat all you like.

GIRL
Where the hell are we going anyway?

RENKO VEGA
The Jennifer's parked out a strut
between the spokes. We get to
about halfway up then work our way
out to the skin.

DELRIO
You better not be gaming us, Vega.

GIRL
You know Agent DelRio, he is a
zombie but, beyond that, he seems
kind of okay...
(to Renko)
I mean as assholes go.

DELRIO
You're too young to remember.

GIRL
Remember what?

Renko keeps moving and doesn't look back.

DELRIO
Renko Vega was one of the first
interplanetary astronauts. When I
was your age he was always on the
newsfeeds, "Renko Vega Leads
Scientists in Exploration of
Mercury", "Renko Vega Saves Sixteen
off Ganymede." He singlehandedly
flew into the heat of Tartarus and
towed out a disabled lightship.
"Renko Vega", even his name was
magical. They wrote songs about
him--

RENKO VEGA
--One song... and the words were
terrible.

GIRL
So Renko Vega was a hero?

DelRio glances at Renko again. We can tell by the look in
her eyes that Renko was a hero... perhaps even her hero.

DELRIO
He was. Which made it all the more
disappointing when he screwed it
all up.

GIRL

How did he screw it up?

RENKO VEGA

Do we really have to do this?

DELRIO

Things changed... the multi-nationals started taking over the planet-colonies, the Venus corporation rebelled against Earth and acquired stolen plans for a skip-drive developed by iNASA. All the evidence pointed to our Renko here. He was arrested, court-martialed, and stood a public trial.

Renko shakes his head as he continues to climb.

RENKO VEGA

I didn't steal anything. And certainly not for those jerks on Venus.

DELRIO

That's not what the jury thought.

RENKO VEGA

The jury was bought and paid for. The whole thing was rigged.

DELRIO

Then if you were so innocent why did you run?

GIRL

He ran?

DELRIO

He stole the Jennifer 9 and vanished--

RENKO VEGA

--She's was mine, she was built for me-- and who else could I trust? Who else trusted me?

GIRL

Whoa, You're talking about your ship. She's a machine.

RENKO VEGA

You can trust machines. They have integrity. They have a list of instructions and they follow them.
(MORE)

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
They can't be bought. Unlike
humans.

GIRL
You really are a zombie. Maybe
King of the Zombies.

They reach a large hatchway

RENKO VEGA
Here we are--

--But suddenly the lights go out all around. ALARMS sound.

DELRIO
What's going on?

RENKO VEGA
(looking around)
They cut the power.

There are NOISES. Renko peeks. Up the spoke there are
people MOVING, TALKING. Secondary lighting glows up.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Emergency batteries.

Suddenly, cables running down the center of the spoke start
moving. Something glowing, lantern-like is sliding down the
center of the shaft from above.

DELRIO
What is that?

RENKO VEGA
Elevator down from the engine
rooms. Get back and keep quiet.

They watch as a platform appears, dropping down the cables...
it's an open elevator, glowing like a lantern on a wire.

There are THREE AUGMENTICS riding on this platform. One of
them is standing guard. He has a big blower gun and is
staring out at the spiral stairwell.

Searchlights on the elevator sweep along the shaft. The
Augmentic CALLS OUT and the elevator stops.

Renko, the girl, and DelRio watch from the shadows. We can
see that the platform carries a series cylindrical rods on
wheeled dollies. (We've seen these rods before.)

GIRL
(a whisper)
What is that stuff?

RENKO VEGA
 Fusion rods. Power for the central
 thrusters. They're what keep us
 moving in ordinary space.

The head Augmentic motions to the others and the elevator
 begins to drop but at a slower, searching speed.

GIRL
 So, I guess they're valuable, huh?

RENKO VEGA
 Very. But that's not all. Without
 them there's no way to fire the
 thrusters and pull out of Titan's
 orbit--

GIRL
 --What happens if we can't pull out
 of Titan's orbit?

RENKO VEGA
 Eventually, this ship burns up in
 the atmosphere.

GIRL
 Then we have to go up and restart
 those engines.

DELRIO
 --No. We're getting off this ship--

GIRL
 --I order you to take me up to the
 engines. I'm the goddamn Princess
 of Mars, you know--

DELRIO
 --It's a nice title, Elizabeth, but
 that's all it is. You're my boss's
 daughter that's all--

GIRL
 (to Renko)
 --then I order you--

RENKO VEGA
 --Oh, leave me out of this.
 Actually, I'm on big sister's side.
 I don't owe anyone anything and I'm
 gonna keep it that way.

DelRio motions Renko to get moving. The girl sulks but
 DelRio prods her. She GRUMBLES but keeps moving.

CUT TO:

INT. SPAR - A FEW MINUTES

Renko climbs into this dark long space. It's a tunnel lit only by sparse emergency lighting. The girl and DelRio move out behind him.

Suddenly dark shapes are moving at the far end of the tunnel.

DELRIO

Down!

They all duck below the spar, but they've been spotted.

RENKO VEGA

Run! Run!

DELRIO

What are you going to do?

RENKO VEGA

Keep climbing, I'll double back around!

Renko takes off down the tunnel. DelRio and the girl hurry through the shadows the other way.

INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR

Renko hurries down this passageway, he heaves open a hatch, but there's Augmentics on the other side.

He slams it shut and cuts across the chamber.... but there's a BLAST at that door and it CRACKS OPEN.

Suddenly AUGMENTICS flood the room. Renko is surrounded. He throws up his arms, smiles.

RENKO VEGA

Hey, I was wondering where ever--

--The Auggies grab him and shove him down on the floor, pinning him there.

Malthazar Doon move through the crowd. Doon levels his gun at Renko. But Renko smiles... and then, surprisingly, Doon smiles as well...

DOON

Renko Vega! Of all the... well who else! Renko Vega!

RENKO VEGA

Hello Doon.

DOON
Haven't seen you since Harry
Hondo's funeral over on Jupiter.

RENKO VEGA
Poor old Harry. So, how's the
scumbag business, Doon?

DOON
It's going well, Vega, very well.
Now, where's the Ardmore girl?

RENKO VEGA
Ardmore girl? I really don't know
what you're talking about--

--Doon sneers, but suddenly there's a NOISE. McMink enters.
Behind her are DelRio, unarmed, and the girl, hostile, being
prodged by a couple of Augmentics.

Renko stares at them, disappointed.

DOON
Good work, McMink. Shiz, call the
Admiral and tell we have some
interesting fish to fry.

Doon looks down at Renko, still pinned to the floor.

DOON (CONT'D)
You know, I always liked you, Vega.
I figured if you ever got that
victim-hero, hero-victim crap out
of your system, you could really be
something special.

RENKO VEGA
You mean maybe I could be someone
like you? Another King of the
Shitheads?

Doon's smile disappears as he rears back and kicks Renko hard
right in the jaw, then KICKS AGAIN, as we...

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. INNER CORE STOREROOM

Renko Vega wakes to find himself strapped to a chair. The
lights are dim. There's no one's around.

He's got bruises on his face. He moves experimentally, finds
that his bindings are metal straps of some sort.

There's a door to one side of the room and a surveillance
camera mounted in front of him.

RENKO VEGA
 (softly)
 Hand! Hand, can you hear me?
 Hand! Activate!

CLOSE ON HIS HAND

We move CLOSE on Renko's left hand. It twitches...

HAND
 Hand is aware.

RENKO VEGA
 Quietly, okay? Quiet.

HAND
 (whispering)
 Hand can be quiet. Hand can be
 very quiet.

RENKO VEGA
 Listen, Hand, prepare to separate,
 and enter autonomous mode.

HAND
 Separation is a radical maneuver,
 Renko Vega, one often accompanied
 by pain for the major partner.

RENKO VEGA
 I'm aware of that Hand, now prepare
 to separate.

HAND
 Hand will separate in two, one--

--Renko CRIES OUT, stifling his SCREAM as the Hand POPS off
 the end of his arm with a small EXPLOSIVE charge.

RENKO VEGA
 Oh, my god, that HURTS!

The Hand writhes on the floor for a moment and tries to stand
 up on his fingers. He wobbles around, falls, then like a
 newborn colt, manages to stand.

HAND
 Hand is autonomous. Hand is free.

RENKO VEGA
 Hand, listen, I want you to use
 your lasers on these bindings.

HAND
 Hand is free.

The Hand skitters out onto the floor, enjoying his freedom.

RENKO VEGA
Hand, stay away from that camera--!

--Suddenly there's a sound. Renko and the Hand turn--

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Quick, back on the end of my arm!

HAND
No time!

But the door swings open, the Hand dives out of view. ONE of Bevilaqua's PERSONAL GUARDS steps inside, followed by the steely Admiral himself.

BEVILAQUA
(to the guard)
That'll be all.

The guard goes out. Bevilaqua grabs a chair and sits.

BEVILAQUA (CONT'D)
It's good to see you, Renko.

RENKO VEGA
Oh, is that right?

BEVILAQUA
Of course I have to wonder what you're doing out here on this "cruise" ship or whatever it is.

RENKO VEGA
Maybe I should ask you the same thing, Admiral.

BEVILAQUA
The Jennifer... is she here too?

RENKO VEGA
I lost her. Eight months ago. A meteorite off Icarus.

BEVILAQUA
You're lying.

RENKO VEGA
Am I the liar, Admiral? You were the one who sold the plan to the Venus corp, weren't you? Then you framed me and bought off the jury.

BEVILAQUA
I'm surprised it took you this long to figure it out, Renko. President Ardmore and his cronies have a choke-hold on the planets. The
(MORE)

BEVILAQUA (CONT'D)
corporations just want their little
piece of the pie--

RENKO VEGA
--Oh, come one Admiral, you have no
political allegiance. You sold
those plans for money... it's the
same reason you're out here today.

Bevilaqua gives a tiny shrug, a small smile.

BEVILAQUA
Renko, if it means anything, I'm
sorry you had to take the fall.
The only way to mask my actions was
to blame it on someone else.

RENKO VEGA
And now you're off kidnapping a
twelve-year-old girl--

BEVILAQUA
--She's nothing, Renko! She's a
pawn in a much bigger game.

RENKO VEGA
You're the traitor. Not me.

Bevilaqua smiles at Renko and stands.

BEVILAQUA
Unfortunately Renko, I can't afford
to have you knowing what you know.

RENKO VEGA
So you're gonna have your goons
come in here and shoot me?

BEVILAQUA
They won't have to shoot you
because in less than an hour, this
ship is going to come apart in
Titan's atmosphere.

RENKO VEGA
And what about the hundred and
fifty people down in that ballroom?

BEVILAQUA
Like you, they have the misfortune
of being in the wrong place at the
wrong time.

He goes out. Renko stares at the door a moment. Then the
Hand crawls out from his hiding place under the chair.

HAND

So, let me get something straight, Renko Vega. Admiral Creighton Bevilaqua, the former head of iNASA was responsible for selling secret documents... and not Renko Vega.

RENKO VEGA

Hand, stop talking, we only have an hour--

HAND

--But how could the Hand not know this? The Hand has been at the end of Renko Vega's arm for the past four years--

RENKO VEGA

--Hand, please!

The Hand considers, "pacing" back and forth...

HAND

Renko Vega is an interesting entity, filled with contradictions and unexpected surprises. Even to his own Hand.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BALLROOM

Augmentics drag a writhing Elizabeth Ardmore and stand her next to Kathryn DelRio, who has her hands bound behind her.

Bevilaqua stares at the girl and smiles. She glowers at him.

BEVILAQUA

Miss Ardmore, you've no idea how happy I am to see you.

GIRL

Happy enough to kiss my ass--?

DELRIO

--Elizabeth.

The girl quiets, still glowering.

BEVILAQUA

I shouldn't expect anything less out of you given your parentage.

GIRL

I'm sorry, but did you wanna be friends?

BEVILAQUA
 (to his cronies)
 Lock them up in the brig until
 we've loaded out.
 (to Doon)
 Is your ship ready to board?

DOON
 The Henry will be in shadow in a
 quarter hour, until then the
 radiation's too high for the
 portalock.

BEVILAQUA
 The sooner we're out of here the
 better.

DOON
 Admiral, the Bloody Henry has some
 extra room. I thought we could
 take some of the Revolver
 passengers. They don't all need to
 die.

BEVILAQUA
 We can't take that risk.

DOON
 They don't know about the girl,
 and we can keep it that way.

BEVILAQUA
 You and I had an agreement, Doon.
 I get safe passage and the girl,
 you get the Boron cannon and
 everything you can carry. Don't
 make it any more complicated than
 it already is.

CUT TO:

INT. A REVOLVER CORRIDOR

Bevilaqua's guard is out in the hall at a little desk. On
 the desk is a monitor. On the monitor is Renko Vega,
 strapped to his chair.

INT. STOREROOM - CONTINUING

The Hand has climbed up Renko's back, out of view of the
 camera. The Hand has the cap off his finger and, using the
 probe as a torch, is cutting Renko's metal bindings.

HAND
 Hold still, Renko Vega.

Sparks stream, a TORCH HISSES. In a moment the Hand cuts through Renko's bindings.

RENKO VEGA
Good work, Hand.

HAND
My batteries are down, I believe I
have power for just one more.

The Hand carefully drops behind Renko's leg again.

BACK AT THE GUARD STATION

The guard glances at the video. He leans forward. He sees something move behind Renko's legs.

BACK IN THE STOREROOM

The guard busts in holding his gun. Renko is in the chair, hands behind him.

GUARD
What the hell is going on in here?

RENKO VEGA
Oh, hey... gotta question for you.
(he twists his jaw up)
Is there something on my neck here?

But Renko doesn't wait, free of his bindings, he snaps up and WHACKS the guard in the balls with his calf, then jerks up hard and SLAMS the guy in the gut with his shoulder.

Renko puts his attention on the guy's gun which BLASTS into the ceiling and narrowly misses Renko's braincase.

Down on the floor, the Hand scuttles out from a chair leg, stands on his thumb, pinky, and ring finger, and points his laser probe at the guard.

He fires, but only a weak electric charge sputters out of his tubes. Renko twists the guy's hand. It spasms open and the gun drops, but the guard simultaneously twists and pulls Renko down over his exposed leg.

Both men CRASH to the ground and the gun gets kicked away. Renko twists, tries to climb on top, but the guy manages to flip Renko down.

Renko sticks his lone hand out at the gun, but knocks it further away. He looks up to see the Hand madly screwing his own index finger back on.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Hand... I could use a... hand...

The Hand darts forward and tries to grab the gun. This is difficult, for the gun is bigger than the Hand. It's like a man struggling with a cannon, only the cannon has no wheels.

Renko and the guard flip over. Renko jams his hand up under the guard's chin, then clocks him hard with his handless arm.

The guard frees one of his own hands and PASTES Renko hard in the jaw. Both men climb to their knees then slip down again.

The guard's face is jammed down on the floor. He looks up, sees the Hand skittering, spinning the gun, finally getting it pointed pretty much in the guard's direction.

The Hand slips his index finger into the trigger guard and WHHHACCKKK!!! The gun shrieks and a stream of hot plasma cuts across the room, missing Renko and the guard... but the recoil spits the Hand backwards across the floor.

The Hand YELPS and accidentally pulls the trigger again. The laser SPITS AGAIN and this time the Hand gets hammered back into the wall.

The guard desperately tries to get away from the laser blast and Renko grabs the opportunity and SWATS the guard hard in the face, then gets a foot up and knees him in the belly, TWO, three times.

The guard flops like a sack of carrots. Renko climbs to his feet, picks up the gun and the Hand, and runs from the room.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Good work, Hand.

HAND
Thank you, Renko Vega.

CUT TO:

INT. TENNIS COURTS

Renko races across tennis courts, but the nets have fallen down and, weirdly, it's raining.

INT. JUNGLELAND

Renko races across that bridge. But something's gone wrong... it's snowing.

Renko gets to the far end. He tries a door. It's locked. He turns around, looking madly, suddenly an INTERCOM starts RINGING. It's a box on a wall, with a handset.

Renko stares at it. Finally, impulsively, he picks up the receiver and puts it to his ear.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O., FILTERED)
Renko. *It's me.*

RENKO VEGA
Jennifer! Thank god! How'd you
find me?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I can still track you, I just can't
get back in your head... the
implant needs a reset...

RENKO VEGA
Listen, the pirates stole the
fusion rods and shut down the main
engines. The Revolver's gonna burn
up in Titan's atmosphere.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
The shields are burning. Even if
you had the fuel rods it's too late
to save the ship. The Revolver is
already beyond the point of no
return. Renko, please get up here
before the whole thing comes apart--

RENKO VEGA
--No, Jen, listen. Elizabeth
Ardmore is on the ship; she and her
handler are being held by Bevilaqua-

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
--Her handler? You mean that girl--

RENKO VEGA
--Jen, listen. I need to find
them. I need your help--

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
--Renko, come home! Come home now!

RENKO VEGA
Jen, please. Help me find them.

CUT TO:

INT. REVOLVER / OFFICER'S MESS

Kathryn DelRio and Elizabeth Ardmore move reluctantly down a
hallway, led by an Augmentic and one of Bevilaqua's guards.

DelRio has her head down, hands tethered. She moves with
reluctance. The guards stop her and the girl... but DelRio
spots something farther down the hall.

Renko Vega leans out from behind a bulkhead... just enough to
catch DelRio's attention.

DelRio glances at the guards who are messing with unfamiliar key cards.

DelRio elbows the girl, signals her to Vega's presence.

Renko points at the two guards, thumbs his chest, uses sign language to inform DelRio of his plan: He'll work the guard on the left, she'll contend with the one on the right.

DelRio gives the tiniest of nods as the guard's finally manage to open the doors. She turns, then goes into action... snapping a leg up and grabbing the end of the guards big plasma gun.

Renko Vega is there, jamming an elbow in the second guard's face. The guard's laser BLASTS. A bright bolt of zigzag LIGHTNING kicks off the ceiling.

DelRio jams an elbow up hard into her guy's face, desperately tries to pry the gun from his arms.

Renko has his guy, an Augmentic, down on his back, but the gun FLARES, plasma CUTTING into the hallway behind him.

Elizabeth Ardmore reaches in and tries to pull the gun away.

RENKO VEGA
(to the girl)
Go!! Run!! Now!!

The girl hesitates, then bites down hard on the guard's hand. He SCREAMS and Renko pulls the gun from his arms.

Renko turns and sees that DelRio is still struggling with the other guard. He takes the butt end of the gun and WHACKS the second guard in the head.

That guy goes back a moment and DelRio pries the gun away.

CUT TO:

INT. THE JENNIFER 9

Bill.1 is standing in a cradle open in the front. It's a battery charger of some sort. He is completely still.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Wake up please, Bill. We've got problems. Big problems.

Bill turns his rubber head.

BILL.1
Is it those dust traps again?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I need your help, Bill. Renko
needs your help.

BILL.1
 Then I am programmed to help.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I need you to go outside, Bill.

BILL.1
 Outside. You mean... in space?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Yes, in space.

BILL.1
 I don't really like the void.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
But you were built for the void.
Now, I'd like to test your audio
circuits.

BILL.1
 My audio is working fine.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Bill, there's no sound in space.
We have to make sure your radio
systems are functioning properly.

BILL.1 (V.O., RADIO)
 Okay, how do I sound now?
 (his mouth doesn't move,
 his voice is filtered)

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Good, Bill. Very good.

CUT TO:

INT. REVOLVER BRIDGE

Malthazar Doon is there along with Bevilaqua and his men.
 Bevilaqua scowls at Doon.

BEVILAQUA
 We should have taken care of him
 when we had the chance. Put all
 your teams out in the spokes. We
 need to find that girl before this
 ship comes apart. Mister Shiz,
 fetch the Nebulon project and
 prepare it for release.

Shiz frowns and shakes his head...

SHIZ
Is that wise? I mean, we're not
yet ready to leave--

BEVILAQUA
--I said, prepare the Nebulon...

EXT. THE JENNIFER 9

BOOM! A fish-eye hatch blows open. WHOOSH... Bill.1 floats outside. He isn't wearing a space suit of any kind. His arms are on correctly. He wears a tool belt and coveralls.

His rubber head blows up to the size of pumpkin, then begins to contract...

BILL.1
Pressure equalizing...

The Revolver is enormous, a half-mile in diameter, slowly turning. Titan is orange and bright, below the Revolver.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*The pirate ship, the Bloody Henry.
Can you see it, Bill?*

Bill turns. When we hear him speak his lips don't move.

BILL.1 (V.O.)
There it is. Across the core.

The Jennifer is mounted on the shaft of one of the "spars". The Bloody Henry, much larger, is mounted on the "wheel".

Bill fires mini-rockets mounted on his hands and arms and begins traveling towards the Henry.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*Hurry Bill, the pirates will be
back soon.*

CUT TO:

INT. THE REVOLVER - CHAMBER

Shiz and his three Augmentics, KARMAX, JEROBOAM, and MOTOROLA move through a doorway marked, **"Inner Core Access - Danger, Unstable Environment Ahead"...**

Shiz is carrying a chained up black metal case. He looks around, and drops the case carefully on the floor. He slips the chains off, fusses with some latches.

SHIZ
Karmax, the torch.

Karmax gives Shiz a small welding torch. Shiz fingers the trigger and a hot blue flame POPS and HISSES. He leans over the case and begins cutting at the seals.

MOTOROLA

What exactly is a Nebulon, Mister Shiz?

SHIZ

(as he's cutting)

The Nebulon was the brain-child of a black ops program on the moon about ten years ago. Their mission was to develop the "ultimate individual combat module". But they abandoned the project.

MOTOROLA

Why did they abandon it?

SHIZ

Oh, "abandon" is probably the wrong term. They didn't actually survive.

Shiz gets the top of the box open and turns it back. Inside is another box. He slides some panels open and finds a ring-sized box. He opens that: on a cushion of velvet is a tiny bean-sized thing... a little dried-up WORM.

MOTOROLA

Is that it?

SHIZ

That's it.

Shiz steps back, accidentally bumping into his torch--

SHIZ (CONT'D)

Oh, for crissake.

--Shiz has managed to light his sleeve on fire. He waves it around, still holding the little box.

Motorola turns quickly, sees a tank with a spigot on it, marked "H2O". He grabs the tank, turns it, and heaves it...

The water drenches Shiz, knocking out the fire but the ring-box is drenched.

SHIZ (CONT'D)

Hey! What was that?!

MOTOROLA

Just water.

SHIZ
Water!? Water?!

Shiz puts the box on the floor and stares at it nervously.

SHIZ (CONT'D)
Okay. Well. Motorola, Jeroboam,
give your guns to Karmax. Okay?
Hurry please.

They hesitate, but hand their guns to Karmax. Shiz leads Karmax back to the door.

SHIZ (CONT'D)
Now, when the Nebulon wakes up
he'll be hungry. He needs
nutrition to reach his maximum
potential.

JEROBOAM
You want us to feed him?

SHIZ
Yeah. Exactly.

Motorola and Jeroboam blink. Karmax points his own gun at the two Auggies.

INT. REVOLVER CORE / CORRIDOR

Karmax backs out, shuts the door and bolts it.

SHIZ
We'd better weld that door shut.

KARMAX
I don't think those guys can get
through that lock.

SHIZ
I'm not worried about them.

INT. REVOLVER CORE / CHAMBER

Jeroboam and Motorola are staring at the spot where the little bean was, only it's not little anymore.

It's swollen up and is a shivering bit of Jello about the size of a CAT... now a DOG... now, suddenly, a large PONY...

Its wormy architecture gets more complex, bones develop, musculature becomes more pronounced. The "Nebulon" evolves before our eyes, like it's in time lapse...

Its back legs extend, its front legs foreshorten. A narrow, segmented tail extends off its spine.

Suddenly it turns its head towards the Auggies. It has dead, blank eyes under a heavy brow... it opens its mouth and we see a tangle of unorganized hook-like teeth.

The men step back, staring, as the growing shadow of the Nebulon falls over them. They stare, wide-eyed, as WINGS unfurl on the beast, not beautiful wings of an angel, but leathery devil wings.

Jereboam and Motorola turn and try to run for the open door deeper into the ship. But suddenly the Nebulon ATTACKS...

INT. INNER CORE / ANOTHER CORRIDOR

Renko Vega leads DelRio and the girl down a passageway.

DELRIO
You know where you're going?

RENKO VEGA
Thanks to you I haven't been able to get back in touch with Jennifer... and we can't risk going directly up the spokes through the main passageways.

Renko stops by a hatch sunk in a wall. He pulls on the latch, but it's securely sealed. There's a noise.

DELRIO
What was that?

They all go quiet, listening. There is DISTANT, HORRIBLE SCREAMING. Then, nothing. They look at one another.

GIRL
That was creepy with a capital "K".

Renko lifts the guard's gun. He drops down low, staring down the slightly curving length of the hall.

He hesitates then cautiously MOVES down the passageway.

RENKO VEGA
Stay behind me.

GIRL
Why are we going toward the noise. Shouldn't we be going the other--

DELRIO
--Quiet Elizabeth.

Renko finds an open doorway to his right. It's dark inside. He sees an emergency flashlight mounted on the wall. He pulls it down, switches it on, shines it inside.

RENKO VEGA
 Stay here.
 (to DelRio)
 Keep your gun ready.

INT. CHAMBER

Renko steps inside the same room we were in a moment ago with Shiz and the boys. There's some brown-red mess on the floor.

RENKO VEGA
 What the hell...

Renko probes with the light, moving deeper. He bends and picks up a LEATHER SHOE that is almost completely torn in half and covering in a gelatinous slime.

He drops the shoe, then sees something else... those cases that Shiz opened just a few minutes ago.

He finds the biggest one, and shines his light on it. There is stenciled printing, white on black...

**DANGER! - OPEN WITH EXTREME CAUTION IN SEALED AND REGULATED
 ENVIRONMENT - RADICALLY ALTERED GENETIC MATERIAL CONTAINED
 WITHIN - COPYRIGHT 2094 - THE NEBULON PROJECT**

Renko reads half aloud, until he gets to that last part...

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
 The Nebulon project-- holy shit--

--A huge shadow moves behind Renko, but he doesn't see it.

DELRIO
 Vega! Behind you!

Renko spins... and shines his light...

...and we get our first clean look at a full-grown NEBULON! It stands about seven-feet-tall and it is the the stuff of nightmare... the most horrible thing you've never seen...

It's muscular with smooth shark skin. It's vaguely humanoid, but for two features: its long, segmented tail which slowly whips along the floor, and it's rising wings.

GIRL
 Oh. My. God.

--The thing blinks its eyes and bares its teeth... all two hundred of them, hooked and crowded into hyena-like jaws. It slowly lifts its wings...

DelRio shoves the girl back and pulls the trigger on her ZigZag laser. Lightning BOLTS ZAP out of the weapon and batter at the beast.

The laser HACKS and SCALDS the Nebulon... but when the smoke clears, the beast is still standing. Renko let's loose a blast of Plasma that would stop an elephant...

It holds the beast back only long enough for Renko to dive for the door... but the monster charges Renko and grabs him by the hand... the left hand.

GIRL (CONT'D)

NO! Vega!

DelRio DUMPS her laser at the beast... but Renko is caught! He scrambles and desperately tries to pull away....

Renko SCREAMS as the Nebulon and the Hand BREAKS AWAY.

RENKO VEGA

No!!! Hand! No!

The Nebulon falls back as it greedily swallows.

Renko and DelRio pull madly on their weapons as DelRio pulls Renko out the door.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)

Run! Run!! RUNNN!!!

INT. INNER CORE CORRIDORS

Renko, DelRio, and the girl race hand-in-hand-in-hand down the narrowing, curving corridors of the Revolver.

Renko swings a hatch behind them, but the beast is close on their tails, SLAMMING at the other side.

Renko flies backwards from the force... struggles, skittering on his back as DelRio THROWS BURST of juice at the monster...

The Nebulon roars, a SQUEALING BELLOW! Renko gets back to his feet and the trio explodes down the narrow passageways. They cut left, cut right, no idea where they're going!

DelRio finds another HATCH and rips inside, letting the others through and SLAMMING it closed behind, BOLTING it.

They get only a few yards farther, when the hatch BLOWS open, SLAMMING off its hinges and CLANGING into the opposite wall.

They run as hard and fast as they can, only daring to turn for a moment. When they do, they see the beast only it's not running, it's FLYING... wings up and gliding.

The three humans girl hurdle through another hatchway and SLAM it shut, but the Nebulon BLOWS THROUGH, SCREAMING like a Pterodactyl...

Renko sees an opening to the right. He shoves DelRio and the girl through a HATCH. DelRio leads now, zig-zagging along, chasing through hatch after hatch, with Renko SLAMMING the hatches shut as he passes.

Finally they find themselves at a end passageway. There are stairs up through another hatch, and another thicker, forbidding hatch in front of them. It's bigger, heavier than the others. It's marked:

Interior Core: Weightless, Near-Space Environment

Renko thinks hard, panting desperately....

RENKO VEGA

Listen. The Jennifer's mounted on rebreather port 98. Take these stairs up, work your way out to the skin and wait for me--

DELRIO

--No--!

RENKO VEGA

--You have to! I'll lead that thing away from here--!

GIRL

--No! We stick together!

RENKO VEGA

Don't be stupid! DelRio, climb!

DelRio looks at Renko, catching her breath. She grabs the girl by the hand, turns and races up the stairs.

GIRL

No! Vega! Renko!

But DelRio pulls hard on her and, with a lingering look at Renko, disappears up the stairs.

Renko desperately undogs the hatch as the Nebulon suddenly appears behind him.

He hesitates a moment as Renko pulls his trigger-- but the gun SPUTTERS. Renko rears back and heaves it at the beast, CRACKING into its head as Renko finally opens the hatch.

Inside we see the ROOM BEYOND spinning deliriously... and Renko dives inside.

INT. THE INNER CORE

Renko desperately JAMS the hatch shut and spins the latch with his good hand. The beast BANGS at it, a BOOMING, shuddering sound.

Renko turns. We've reached the inner stationary "hub" of the Revolver... a tangled and weightless environment... the walls of the room are stationary but the center is spinning as Renko floats and tries to get his bearings.

He studies the room, when he suddenly realizes there are four men in SPACE SUITS, standing against the wall--

--Renko takes a breath, then realizes these are not men, but empty, hanging space suits.

The Nebulon is desperately HAMMERING at the hatch... the door is DISTORTING under his assault.

Renko floats to the suits, which are open in back. He slides his head up in the helmet and arms and legs inside.

RENKO VEGA
Suit, automate! Suit! Seal and
pressurize!

SUIT (V.O.)
Identify occupant, please.

RENKO VEGA
Astronaut Vega, Renko, serial
number zero-six.

SUIT
Vega, Renko, serial number zero-six
is not authorized. Please abandon
suit immediately.

RENKO VEGA
Don't gimme that, equalize now!

SUIT
Vega zero six is not authorized--

RENKO VEGA
--If you don't equalize right now,
I'll cut you into pieces and sell
you for potholders!

SUIT
(beat)
Pressure equalizing. My sensors
indicate that you are missing your
left hand.

RENKO VEGA
Tell me something I don't know.

SUIT
I can do a temporary repair.

RENKO VEGA
So, you got a spare hand in here?

SUIT
Renko Vega is not serious. I remember this about Renko Vega. He had an ironical sense of humor.

RENKO VEGA
We've met before?

Renko unhooks from the wall, turns and floats. This place is filled with machinery and equipment, parts, etc.

SUIT
Not exactly. But I am a SS Model 450, version 4.

RENKO VEGA
A 450? I think I test drove a prototype 450 out on the moon.

SUIT
You also wore a 450 on that rescue mission over Ganymede. A version 2, I believe. It was the mission that made you famous, Captain Vega--

RENKO VEGA
--Okay, look, right now, I gotta another little problem--

SUIT
--You mean the Nebulon.

RENKO VEGA
You saw it?

SUIT
Only enough to know what it was. Once again, Renko Vega is indulging in irony. The Nebulon is an enormous problem.

RENKO VEGA
What can you tell me about it?

SUIT
The Nebulon construct is thought to be invincible in hand-to-hand combat, the ultimate soldier,
(MORE)

SUIT (CONT'D)
lacking only in the critical areas
of dedication and loyalty.

RENKO VEGA
Suit, you got any weapons in here?

SUIT
No, but I'm not sure what would be
effective against a Nebulon anyway.
It is only a matter of time before
he penetrates that hatchway.

The Nebulon continues to BANG and strain against the hatch.
The whole room vibrates at the sound.

RENKO VEGA
Can you calculate that?

SUIT
Judging by what I know about the
beast and the metallurgy of the
ship, I would say, twenty-eight and
two-tenths of a second. Twenty-
seven... twenty-six...

Renko stares at the stuff in the room. He sees a series of
doors. One door says: **"Rocket Room, Parts, and Spares"**.

RENKO VEGA
(muttering to himself)
Ship like this, you gotta have a
rocket room.

Renko floats expertly to the rocket room. He twists at the
latch and pulls the hatch open.

INSIDE

is a long room filled with complex machinery and shelves
filled with chemicals and parts.

SUIT
This is a high risk environment,
Renko Vega... nineteen...

There is a rocket "motor" on a test bed table.

RENKO VEGA
Activate positioning jets, help me
push this up against that door...

SUIT (CONTINUING)
Sixteen... fifteen...

Renko and the suit drag the test bed up against the open
hatch, pointy end out.

SUIT (CONT'D)
Twelve... eleven...

Renko takes down an electric pack and pulls it back to the rocket trolley. He hooks wires up to fat terminals in the middle of the tube...

SUIT (CONTINUING) (CONT'D)
Captain Vega this is an egregious
breach of safety regulations...
eight... seven... six--

Renko picks up a remote control connected to the test bed with a cable. He throws a switch, a "ready" light comes on.

SUIT (CONT'D)
...five... four...

Suddenly, there's an HUGE BANG from inside the core... the hatch CRACKS open and SLAPS back against the wall.

SUIT (CONT'D)
Oh, I must have miscalculated.

The hatch fills with the Nebulon's darkness as he floats into the core, wings folded, sleek in weightless space.

Renko watches him from behind the edge of the doorway, the rocket next to him.

The Nebulon peers into the machinery lining the core, floating around, nearing Renko, turning, spotting the open door of the rocket room.

Renko waits, still as a statue. Finally the Nebulon glides in front of the door and Renko throws the switch on the box... FLAMES PLUME off the back of the rocket.

The ROCKET SHOOTS out of the opening, catching the SCREAMING Nebulon in the chest and knocking a hole in one of his wings, taking out a chunk of meat.

But the rocket is diverted from the collision... taking off at a crazy angle and BLOWING into the wall and BOOOOMMM!!!!

A hole the size of a beachball is blown in the side of the core. And all hell breaks loose! Everything that is not thoroughly nailed down goes flying through that hole as air is sucked out of the ship.

ELSEWHERE IN THE SHIP

We cut through VARIOUS CORRIDORS... Emergency HORNS blow insistently. Hatchways SLAM shut repeatedly.

Mrs. McMink is standing amidst the fray. She's cool, looking around amidst the wind and noise. She keeps moving, leading a team of Augmentics through the passageways.

INT. THE BALLROOM

The passengers are thrown off their feet. A table slides to one side and crashes to the floor.

Darla Cahill catches the hand of one of her friends, who is overwhelmed and HYSTERICAL. Darla looks around, WHISPERING REASSURINGLY, but privately wondering how all this might end.

INT. THE REVOLVER BRIDGE

Doon grabs onto a rail and looks at the men on the console...

DOON
The Nebulon.

INT. THE CORE

The Nebulon desperately grabs for the machinery at the center of the core, but cannot get purchase in this violent storm. He is pulled out the hole in the ship and into the void...

Renko Vega is pulled down through the rocket room hatch and dangles, holding onto the frame of the door, then loses his grip, managing to grab only on the end of a wire mounted on a reel near the center of the room.

But the wire peels off the now-spinning reel as Renko is sucked towards the opening!

SUIT
Pressure is unstable, equalizing--

Renko CRACKS into the wall surrounding the hole... makes one more grab, but can't get purchase...

EXT. THE REVOLVER

Renko tumbles into the void, still hanging onto that wire. He snaps it around his waist and tie it on the suit hardware.

BACK IN THE CORE

The reel spins, paying out until the wire runs out--

RENKO VEGA

JERKS to a halt at the end of the wire... suddenly stopping, then lightly bouncing...

BACK IN THE CORE

The end of the wire is anchored to the reel, but when Renko's weight reaches it, the reel SNAPS free from it's mounting point and SHOOTs down through the hole.

RENKO VEGA

tries to pull himself up the wire but it has gone slack. He looks up towards the Revolver core, which is already a hundred feet away. He sees something moving through space, headed straight at him.

The reel (still at the end of the wire) is hurtling through space. Renko tries to avoid but it CRACKS into his helmet, SMASHING a spiderweb into the Plexi, punching a hole in it...

Renko CRIES OUT in surprise and pain. The reel drifts off the other way, plummeting into the darkness.

Renko is floating, his suit HISSING, leaking...

RENKO VEGA
Suit! Equalize pressure! Repair!

But there is no response...

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Suit! Respond!

The suit is dead. Suddenly Renko feels something tug on his waist. The wire has gone taught again.

Renko grabs the wire and pulls. The wire tugs back as though there is a fish at the other end of the line.

Renko looks down the line... and sees what he's caught... the Nebulon is on the other end of the line, pulling itself up the wire toward Renko, hand over hand...

Renko tries to get the wire loose from the suit but it's no use, it's stuck tight on the loop.

Renko's suit keeps HISSING. His face mask is fogging up. He struggles to stay consciousness.

He can see the Nebulon clearly now... it's closer and closer... only 25 feet, now 20 feet, now ten feet away.

Renko GASPS. His teeth chatter as his brain begins to swell.

As the beast gets closer and closer, we see those dog-jaws sneering... that chaotic mass of teeth...

Then through the HISSING AIR, we hear something else.

HAND (V.O., FILTERED)
Renko Vega... Renko Vega... are you
out there?

RENKO VEGA
(softly, in pain)
Ha... Hand, is that you?

HAND (V.O.)
Renko Vega, I am somewhere very
dark and unpleasant. I wish that I
was again on the end of your arm.
I think autonomy is not my style.

The Nebulon continues to climb, eyes shining, malice in mind.

RENKO VEGA
Hand... your battery power--

HAND (V.O.)
--I'm up to about thirty percent,
Renko Vega.

RENKO VEGA
(weakly)
Sequence beta, option four.

The Nebulon is closer still... five feet, four feet...

HAND (V.O.)
Oh. Please remove any flammables
from the ar--

RENKO VEGA
--Forget that Hand, now! Go now--!

The Nebulon's jaws snap at Renko. But suddenly the beast
gets a funny look in his eyes. And suddenly there's a
concussive BOOM! (silent in the vacuum of space) and BOOOSHH!

The Nebulon EXPLODES, silently SPREADING outward in a
gelatinous green mass!

Renko Vega is spattered with Nebulon goop as he is forced
outward by the blast.

Renko flies through space, rolling slightly. The suit and
his helmet bubble are a mess of Nebulon guts.

His eyes flutter, then SHUT... as we...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SPOKE THREE - HALFWAY DOWN

DelRio and the girl race down this twisting catwalk. There's VOICES, moving up and down the spoke, all around them.

They arrive at a door marked, "Level 40". More TALKING, SHOUTS RING down from below and above.

Elizabeth tries a door.

GIRL
Locked!

DELRIO
Back off!

DelRio turns the gun on the door... WHACK! BOOM! The door swings free.

DELRIO (CONT'D)
Go! Go!

INT. A SERVICE CORRIDOR

Narrow and irregular, rivets and seams everywhere. DelRio grabs the girl and shoves her forward as they hurry down the dark passageway.

DelRio swings around another corner, peers through the dim light-- suddenly there's a noise--

DelRio shoves the girl down as FLASHLIGHT BEAMS WINK down the corridor. AUGMENTICS appear, just dark shapes at the end of the corridor.

DelRio picks up her gun and watches them carefully! Suddenly someone pokes something hard into DelRio's neck.

MCMINK (V.O.)
Put the gun down now. Put it down!

McMink is standing behind her with her own weapon. The Auggies grab DelRio and twists her hands behind her.

DELRIO
Elizabeth!

McMink turns, points her gun at the girl, who is cowering inside an outer rib of the ship.

MCMINK
Come out of there. Now.

The girl rushes at McMink, punching at her, but an Augmentic grabs her writhing form.

MCMINK (CONT'D)
 You know I'm getting a little tired
 of you two. How about I just end
 this all here and now?

DELRIO
 You wouldn't.

MCMINK
 Oh, but I would. She doesn't mean
 anything to me. Now put the gun
 down.

DelRio hesitates, then loosens her grip on the gun and lets
 one of the guards take it.

MCMINK (CONT'D)
 Take them both down to the wheel.

The Augmentics grab DelRio and the girl and shove them back
 down the passageway.

But McMink doesn't follow. She turns and considers the
 narrow corridor, glances at DOGBREATH, her remaining guy.

MCMINK (CONT'D)
 What were they doing out here?

DOGBREATH
 Nothing. Trying to hide.

McMink looks around. Softly shakes her head.

MCMINK
 Not out this far. Get the brains
 on the box. I want to talk to them
 right now.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE A FEW MINUTES - A MINUTE LATER

Renko Vega is still floating, rotating in a black field.
 His swollen white suit is spattered with green.

Suddenly an enormous shadow appears. It's a huge mass of
 coagulated junk moving slowly. It is the Bloody Henry...

What looks like a giant mouth drops open on the Henry... it's
 a yawning flight deck...

The "mouth" moves down over Renko Vega and eats him...

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
*Bill... there's something wrong.
 I'm cold.*

BILL.1 (V.O.)
*Cold. Like the cold of space or...
 the human feeling... the lack of
 warmth...*

There's nothing...

BILL.1 (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Jennifer? Jennifer 9?

CUT TO:

INT. THE REVOLVER BRIDGE

One of Bevilaqua's men, HAWKINS, rushes into the room.

HAWKINS
 Admiral! We've got a problem! The
 Bloody Henry has undocked and
 separated from the Revolver.

BEVILAQUA
 Separated? What are you talking
 about?

HAWKINS
 She's moving away, sir, four knots,
 staying in planetary shadow.

BEVILAQUA
 Who's on board, Captain Doon? Who
 was left on the bridge of the
 Henry?

DOON
 Admiral, you specifically wanted
 all my people on board the
 Revolver. "All hands in play... a
 show of force."

BEVILAQUA
 Then who the hell is piloting your
 ship?

Doon doesn't like the only answer he has.

DOON
 The Henry's AI was left alone...
 (to Hawkins)
 Have you tried to link to the
 bridge?

HAWKINS
 There's no response.

One of Bevilaqua's other men, NEELEY interrupts.

NEELEY

Mister Doon, I have your number two
on the screen. Panel one.

Doon looks to the screens above the console. McMink appears.

DOON

Mrs. McMink.

MCMINK (VID)

I'm sending. 3D please.

Another one of the panels glows. We see the exterior of the
revolver. The POV SWINGS, focused in on one of the "struts".

MCMINK (CONT'D)

Here. On the strut, between three
and four... by this breather vent.
There's an anomaly on the skin that
doesn't match the original launch
silhouette. It's not far from
where we found the girl.

Bevilaqua moves up next to Doon as they stare at the screen.

DOON

That's a ship.

MCMINK

You know what ship?

BEVILAQUA

The Jennifer 9 is my guess.

MCMINK

That's exactly what I was thinking.

BEVILAQUA

Have the system isolate the spar
and lock down the vent before she
disengages.

MCMINK

Way ahead of you, Admiral. We've
flooded that vent with superfrozen
nitrogen.

DOON

You could brick her circuits.
She'd be useless.

MCMINK

We don't need her circuits. We've
got the Revolver system.

CUT TO:

INT. REVOLVER PASSAGEWAY

McMink is holding a huge blow gun and is standing outside the Jen 9 airlock with some of her people and Shiz.

SHIZ

We had her internal temperature
down to a hundred below. Her
batteries are probably dead, but
there might be some residual--

MCMINK

--Doggie step back--

McMink lines up her sights and WOOMP BOOM! WHAPPP! The gun
KICKS and the door CRACKS open wide.

INT. THE AIRLOCK

McMink steps in and aims that big weapon at the inner door.

SHIZ

You know, McMink, you might want to
make sure the pressure--

--WOOMP BOOM! The interior door CRACKS OPEN.

INT. THE JENNIFER 9/FLIGHT DECK

McMink steps inside. It's really cold in here. Her breath
plumes out of her mouth. She looks around.

MCMINK

Shiz, pull the server memory and
unrack the drives. Do it quick, in
case she's got anything left.

McMink looks around at the Jen's environs.

MCMINK (CONT'D)

Then drag in the Revolver system
and let's see what we got.

CUT TO BLACK:

IN BLACK... we hear a VOICE...

BILL.1 (V.O.)

Renko Vega. Renko Vega. Renko
Vega.

INT. BLOODY HENRY / SICK BAY

Renko Vega's eyes open and he stares into the rubber face of
Bill.1.

BILL.1
Renko Vega. Renko Vega.

RENKO VEGA
Bill...

BILL.1
Renko Vega.

RENKO VEGA
I got it, Bill... now where the
hell am I... I mean where are we?

Renko Vega is out of the spacesuit, laying on a gurney.

BILL.1
We're in the sick bay of the
corsair Bloody Henry.

RENKO VEGA
The Bloody Henry...

Renko tries to climb to his feet, suddenly realizing...

BILL.1
It's alright, Renko Vega. The
pirates are gone. When I got here
the place was empty.

RENKO VEGA
What about the ship's AI?

BILL.1
Henry is quite rudimentary and
somewhat frightened. But basically
he's a nice guy.

RENKO VEGA
Thanks, Bill, for saving my ass.

BILL.1
Of course, Renko Vega, it's what
I'm programmed to do. Saving Renko
Vega's ass is my mandate.

RENKO VEGA
Is the Revolver still intact?

BILL.1
She's lost her shields and is
heating up rapidly. The pirates
have jettisoned the life pods and
destroyed the radio links.

RENKO VEGA
Bill. Everyone on that ship is
going to die.

BILL.1
Yes, Renko Vega, but I may have
even more distressing news. I
cannot link to the Jennifer 9. I
think she has been stolen away...

CUT TO:

INT. THE JENNIFER 9

The flight deck again. McMink cradles her big gun as
Augmentics wire the twelve-brain tank up to the console.

More guards and pirates escort Elizabeth Ardmore and Kathryn
DelRio into the ship. McMink grins at them mockingly.

MCMINK
Ladies.

Bevilaqua boards, glances around the room, steps up on the
grid. McMink glares at him.

BEVILAQUA
Have you figured out how many
she'll hold?

MCMINK
She'll carry twenty-five... but
she'd be faster with six or seven.

BEVILAQUA
Then we should take six.

McMink stares at Bevilaqua.

MCMINK
Then which six?

BEVILAQUA
I might be willing to leave that
choice to you, Mrs. McMink.

MCMINK
Who do you need in your group?

BEVILAQUA
Hawkins. Maybe Neeley.

MCMINK
What about Doon?

BEVILAQUA
I don't need him. Do you?

McMink stares appraisingly at Bevilaqua.

MCMINK
What do I get out of this, Admiral?

BEVILAQUA
Do you like this ship? Maybe
you're the new Renko Vega.

MCMINK
Why would I want to be him?

BEVILAQUA
Then what about this?

He opens his palm. Inside is the Lady of the Shadows, still
dangling from Renko's crimson ribbon.

MCMINK
So that's what Vega was after...

BEVILAQUA
It's worth more than all Doon's
fuel rods and costume jewelry.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY / MED BAY

Renko and Bill move through a junk-filled passageway.

RENKO VEGA
So you've had no signal from the
Jennifer... nothing at all?

BILL.1
No, Renko Vega. I've been scouring
the Comm channels. There is
nothing.

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY / BRIDGE

Renko and Bill step inside. It's filled with gear.

BILL.1
Renko Vega, I intercepted something
just after I saved your ass.

Bill fetches what looks like a bell jar, only it's got a high-
tech base with gauges and readouts.

Inside the dome of glass is the Hand, mounted on its wrist,
fingers extending upward. A lot of his synthetic flesh is
burned away, exposing circuits, robotics, laserworks, etc.

RENKO VEGA
He doesn't look too good, Bill...
is he alive?

BILL.1
He was never alive, Renko Vega.
He's a robot of course.

RENKO VEGA
Is he still functional?

Bill lifts the glass and takes the Hand off the base. Renko holds out his arm and Bill twists the hand on Renko's wrist.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Hand. Activate.

HAND
Hand is aware.

RENKO VEGA
It's good to see you, Hand.

HAND
It is good to be at the end of
Renko Vega's arm again.

Renko allows himself a little smile, then his tenor changes.

RENKO VEGA
Bill.

BILL.1
Yes, Renko Vega.

RENKO VEGA
We've got to board the Revolver as
fast as we can and try and get
those people out of there.

Bill.1 turns, slightly mechanically.

BILL.1
Renko Vega. I would expect nothing
less.

CUT TO:

INT. REVOLVER WHEEL

Renko Vega kicks open a portal doorway. There's a rush of air... then the pressure stabilizes.

Bill follows him.

RENKO VEGA
Jeezus, it's hot in here.

BILL.1
 One hundred and seven degrees
 Fahrenheit. One hundred and eight.
 One hundred and--

RENKO VEGA
 The ballroom, Bill.

Renko and Bill race down this wide hall...

INT. THE BALLROOM

People are laying around out here. Things are bad. Ties are askew, some of the swells are down to their skivvies.

Walter Woods and some of the others are desperately trying to pry the doors open, but they've been welded shut.

Woods stops and swears to himself. He turns and drops the steel rod he's been using on the door.

Suddenly, there's a BOOM and the doors burst open. Renko Vega steps inside, a big zig-zag laser in his arms.

WALTER WOODS
 What the hell, Vega--?

RENKO VEGA
 --How many are you?!

WALTER WOODS
 What's the difference--?

RENKO VEGA
 --How many?

Woods stares at Renko with great hostility, but a calm voice emerges from the crowd.

DARLA CAHILL
 Forty-six from the ship's staff and
 ninety-eight passengers.

Renko looks up and recognizes Darla Cahill. Renko recognizes her, nods.

RENKO VEGA
 Bill...

BILL.1
 It won't be comfortable, but the
 Bloody Henry has a large--

WALTER WOODS
 --The Bloody Henry! That's the
 pirate ship--!

DARLA CAHILL

--Mister Woods, please. Mister Vega, if you have a way off this ship, we'll do everything we can to help.

RENKO VEGA

--Okay. Look, we've only got a--

--Suddenly the ship BOOMS! The wind starts WHIPPING through the doors, the lights dim.

There's another BLAST, half the passengers are knocked off their feet. The entire room TILTS sideways.

CUT TO:

INT. THE POOL AREA

Renko is helping the passengers move across the bridge over the Venetian pool... it's listing at 45 degrees, water tipped out, flooding the walls.

There's more sounds of BURSTING, GROANING... something EXPLODES. Suddenly--

DOON (V.O.)

--Well, I'll be damned.

Renko Vega turns and sees Malthazar Doon and a few of his remaining Augmentics standing on the bridge in front of him.

RENKO VEGA

So lemme guess. Even you couldn't trust Bevilaqua.

DOON

How the hell did you get away from the Nebulon, Vega?

RENKO VEGA

That was a Nebulon? My grandma's got more fighting skills.

Suddenly a WALL CRASHES down at the far end of the corridor. Dust and smoke fill that part of the passageway. Bill.1 emerges from the smoke, gestures behind him.

BILL.1

The 4th level is filling with smoke, Renko Vega. We can't get out that way.

DOON

Get out to where?

RENKO VEGA
An abandoned corsair known as "The
Bloody Henry".

DOON
I guess I should've figured you had
something to do with that.

RENKO VEGA
Look, Doon. I've got a hundred and
fifty people to evacuate out of
here. I'm kinda busy.
(to the others)
This way, let's go!

Doon hesitates, then...

DOON
No. There's a service stair
through the kitchens, this way!

Renko hesitates, then turns and follows Doon...

INT. ANOTHER PASSAGEWAY

BOOM WHACK! Doon's got a laser gun and blows through another
hatchway.

They're not far from the Bloody Henry's airlock. The
corridors are dusty and filling with smoke.

Doon hurries people through. Bill.1 is carrying a woman.

DOON
Robot! Give her to me, go back
down and help the others.

Bill nods and hands off the woman to Doon who turns and
hurries down the passageway, leading a stream of ragged,
COUGHING passengers.

EXT. THE REVOLVER

The core and most of the spars are gone, broken away. The
Henry is mounted to the wheel much of which is on fire...

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY

Doon is inside the door.

DOON
Henry, tighten that airlock!

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)
*Pressure unstable, Oxygen limited,
 airlock integrity failing, heat
 beyond recommendations, and
 altitude to surface is declining.
 We need to disengage immediately.*

More people are streaming through the airlock.

DOON
 Get everyone in the hold! Oxygen
 tanks are in the overheads! Now
 where the hell is Vega?!

Bill moves through the door, carrying an older man. He gives the man to Walter Woods and Darla Cahill and turns and heads back through the airlock.

INT. THE REVOLVER

Renko Vega is leading the LAST of the PASSENGERS through the corridor, which is filled with acrid, swirling smoke. He plunges into the burning maelstrom, pulling them forward.

Suddenly the shaft crumples in front of them, a chunk of structural metal drops from the ceiling. It's hot and burning and the passageway is blocked.

RENKO VEGA
 We'll have to go back and find
 another way...

He turns but there's a SHOUT. Bill.1 is on the other side of the fallen beam...

BILL.1
 Renko Vega! Here! Quickly!

Bill grabs the red-hot beam and lifts. At first he can't raise it, then, with super robot-strength, he raises it high.

It's so hot and there's so much flame, Bill catches on fire. Melting steel drips down on him, burning his rubber parts.

Renko shoves the couple in front of him, then scurries under the molten beam himself.

He pulls the passengers to the airlock and shoves them in.

RENKO VEGA
 Bill!

Bill drops the burning beam. The passageway crumbles as Bill turns and heads toward the airlock. He is on fire.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
 Bill!! Hurry!

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY

Renko exhaustedly falls inside, turns out to help Bill.

DOON
 Shut the hatch!

People are grabbing at the hatch, trying to swing it shut against the superheated, sucking air.

RENKO VEGA
 No! Bill!

Renko holds the door open against the onslaught--

DOON
 --The Revolver's coming apart,
 Vega... we've got to disengage--!

RENKO VEGA
 --Bill! Hurry! Now!

INT. THE AIRLOCK

Bill is on fire head to toe, but methodically swinging the first hatch closed.

RENKO VEGA
 Bill, never mind that! Get in now!

There's a horrible GROAN...

EXT. THE REVOLVER

The wheel is diminishing, dissolving in flames from the bottom up. It collapses, crumbling before our very eyes.

INT. THE AIRLOCK

The airlock falls to pieces, stretching and burning. Renko grabs Bill by the hand and Doon grabs onto Renko's back!

DOON
 Forget it, Vega! He's a robot!
 He's a goddamn robot!

But Renko stretches, bracing himself in the hatchway. Wind is sucking hard out the port. Renko pulls Bill up as the airlock breaks off the Henry and drops away.

Now Bill is dangling from the side of the Henry hatch... below him, the Revolver drops away, dissolving in the atmosphere, an enormous ring of fire!

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY

The ship's air sucks violently. Renko pulls desperately on the dangling Bill and finally manages to lift him inside.

Renko and Bill sprawl on the floor as Doon swings shut the hatch. People are YELLING. A fire extinguisher GASPS and a blast of flame retardant cascades over Bill and Renko.

DOON
(shouting)
Henry, fire the primary rockets and
get the hell out of here!

The Bloody Henry shakes as we hear the rockets EXPLODE!

Renko, dirty, burned, looks at Bill who is a total mess, face half-melted, bits and pieces of armature shining through.

Renko smiles at Bill. Bill smiles back.

BILL.1
Now, it appears, Renko Vega, that
you have saved my ass.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The Jennifer 9 cuts smoothly across the rim of Titan.

INT. THE JENNIFER 9 / TECH ROOM

McMink and Bevilaqua stand over DelRio and the girl who are sitting on the floor, their hands bound behind them.

One of Bevilaqua's guards, NEELEY, is holding a ZigZag laser, staring at them.

BEVILAQUA
After we clear Titan's corona we'll
accelerate to the Venus Colony.
From there we'll send a message to
your father. You'll be the
featured player of course.

GIRL
You want me to give a propaganda
speech for your stupid cause--?

DELRIO
--Elizabeth--

BEVILAQUA
--As a matter of fact, you don't
have to say anything. As long as
your father sees you're alive.

GIRL
He won't negotiate with terrorists.

BEVILAQUA
Until it's one of his own... until
his own daughter might be about to
lose her life.

MCMINK
And there are plenty of volunteers
in line to do that job.

GIRL
Oh, you're fun. Hey, I thought you
and the dude with the horns had a
thing? You drop him for General
Geezer here?

McMink snaps and is about to swat the girl but DelRio, quick
and not nearly as contained as we thought, snaps forward with
her legs and strikes up high... into McMink's solar plexus.

DelRio jumps up (with both hands tied behind her), JAMS a
foot into McMink's chest, pinning her, staring...

DELRIO
Say or do anything you want to me,
but lay one hand on the girl and
I'll take you straight to hell.
You got it--?

Neeley jams his gun in DelRio's back but Bevilaqua grabs him.

BEVILAQUA
--That's enough.

DelRio releases McMink, who stares with unbridled enmity.

MCMINK
Why don't we just toss this one in
the void and watch her pop like a
balloon?

BEVILAQUA
Because two hostages are better
than one. Especially if we have to
sacrifice one to make our point.

That last bit was delivered directly to DelRio. Suddenly there's a BOOM! The ship is ROCKED hard and ALARMS start going off!

INT. JEN 9 BRIDGE

Bevilaqua and McMink hurry inside... Shiz is at the console. The brain's tank is bubbling and glowing.

BEVILAQUA
Mister Shiz, what's happening?!

SHIZ
Black Flies! They hit the shields near the exhaust ports! Fifty, sixty of them!

BEVILAQUA
System, give us a three-sixty.

The panel's flash with a 360 degree view.

SHIZ
Here they come again!

A black swarm of the jittery little constructs, HAMMERS into the force field, CRACKING and BOUNCING off it's mass.

SHIZ (CONT'D)
There's penetration!

EXT. THE JENNIFER 9

The little robot-flies jigger inside and around the Jen 9's outer environs. One SMASHES into a Plexiglas screen.

The second finds one of her glowing rockets. It hammers up the rocket's outlet and the entire rocket EXPLODES!

INT. THE JENNIFER BRIDGE

BOOOM! The Jen tosses up, down, sideways, everyone hangs on.

BRAINS (V.O.)
Portside thrust rocket is down!

BEVILAQUA
Adjust course and increase armor density by fifty percent.

SHIZ
That's gonna slow us down even more, Admiral.

BEVILAQUA
Refresh screens, please.

The screens wipe and refresh. McMink points...

MCMINK
There. What is that?

BEVILAQUA
Twenty power on number two screen.

The panel ZOOMS on the spot. It's fuzzy, then grows huge.

BRAINS
Resolving...

Bevilaqua stares sourly at what he sees.

MCMINK
That's the Bloody Henry.

BEVILAQUA
Who the hell is piloting that ship?

MCMINK
It doesn't matter, she can't keep
up with us, can she?

SHIZ
She can at this speed.

BEVILAQUA
What guns do we have available?

BRAINS
We have two double stage lasers in
operational order. 30 ohms each.

BEVILAQUA
Fire portside rockets and get us
nose on profile... we're going to
counter.

BRAINS
Admiral we've received a radio ping
from the Bloody Henry, would you
like to respond?

SHIZ
Channel one. Panel four.

BEVILAQUA
Creighton Bevilaqua on the bridge
of the Jennifer 9. Identify.

The video flickers, then goes clear. Renko Vega appears.

RENKO VEGA (ON VIDEO)
Renko Vega on the bridge of the
Bloody Henry.

Bevilaqua reacts, covers....

BEVILAQUA
Vega, how the hell did you get off
that ship?

RENKO VEGA (VID)
No, Admiral, this is the part where
you say, "Renko Vega, I should have
killed you when I had the chance!"

BEVILAQUA
You're a nuisance, Vega, but I
don't think you're particularly
dangerous.

RENKO VEGA
Let me get to the point, Admiral...
I want the Ardmore girl. It's as
simple as that.

BEVILAQUA
And what do you have to trade that
might be valuable to me, Renko? I
have your ship, I have the girl, I
even have the moonstone. It seems
I've got everything you want--

RENKO VEGA
--Except a Boron cannon. How about
I knock you into a thousand pieces.

BEVILAQUA
That's interesting, Renko, but how
does blowing up this ship help you
get the Ardmore girl?

RENKO VEGA
It doesn't. It might sound
gruesome, Admiral, but I believe
the girl is better off dead than
she is in the hands of a terrorist.

BEVILAQUA
I don't think you have the nerve
for the that, Renko. I know you
too well.

Bevilaqua nods at Shiz, and the video goes black.

INT. THE JENNIFER 9 - BRIDGE

Renko is standing on the bridge. The video screens in front of him go black. Doon is watching Renko.

DOON

He called your bluff. He knows you won't use that Boron gun as long as the girl's on that ship.

RENKO VEGA

He can't sit out here. He's got to get to safety on Venus. Henry can you calculate a high speed vector to the Venus colony?

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)

Right now, Titan's rotation is blocking the Jennifer's path, but line of sight will be clear in sixteen minutes.

RENKO VEGA

In sixteen minutes, Bevilacqua will fire Jen's rockets and go into Massive acceleration and we can't generate a quarter of the Jen 9's speed. No offense Henry.

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)

None taken, Renko Vega.

BOOOM! Both Doon and Renko are almost tossed off their feet.

JOSHUA

The Jen 9 is coming around!

RENKO VEGA

She's countering! Henry, quickly, random evade pattern! Doon, do we have more Black Flies?

DOON

Our drone chambers are exhausted.

RENKO VEGA

What about munitions?

DOON

Besides the cannon, we've four twenty-meg plasma guns on port and four on starboard. But we've no manpower. We need at least two bodies on each gun.

RENKO VEGA
 Joshua, go down to the hold, ask
 for volunteers and bring them up to
 gun level.

Joshua hurries off as the ship is hit by more GUNFIRE. The
 ship ROCKS HARD. Renko looks appraisingly at Doon.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
 Captain Doon, are you with me on
 this?

DOON
 By all rights I should be your
 prisoner, Vega.

RENKO VEGA
 I don't want your ship, Doon. I
 want your help.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The two ships swoop around one another.

The Jen 9 is more agile but they are both more heavily
 related to ocean-going craft than jet fighters.

The Jennifer lets loose a load of huge load of side mounted
 lasers, BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!! The Henry is CONCUSSED hard by
 FLASHING PLASMA LASERS!

INT. BLOODY HENRY - GUN DECK

Renko and Bill.1 HURRY through this narrow room, with eight
 gun consoles on two sides. There are big windows above,
 below are vid screens, keyboards, gunsticks.

Passengers from the Revolver wear headsets and man the
 consoles: Walter Woods is there, with a couple of his aides,
 some of those Banker-types, the band leader, all pitching in.

Renko and Bill.1 move quickly through the action as the
 passengers get up to speed and the Bloody Henry ROCKS under
 repeated BLASTS from the Jen 9.

BILL.1
 Renko Vega, I'm afraid the Jennifer
 9 is much too strong for the Henry.

RENKO VEGA
 I might agree with you, Bill, if I
 thought that was really Jen out
 there.

BILL.1

Renko Vega means that Jennifer 9 the spacecraft is not being operated by Jennifer 9, the software.

RENKO VEGA

Bevilaqua's probably substituted the Jen 9's software with the Revolver's twelve-head system. It's good stuff, but they can't do what Jennifer can. I'm thinking maybe we can revive Jen, and she can help us stop Bevilaqua.

BILL.1

I've tried all her radio links. There no data moving in or out. I'm afraid the Jennifer that you and I know no longer exists.

RENKO VEGA

But there is one link you haven't tried.

CUT TO:

INT. BLOODY HENRY / MED BAY

Renko Vega is being held down on a gurney by Darla Cahill and THREE OTHER REVOLVER SURVIVORS. His head is immobilized by large straps and his mouth is heavily gagged. Darla smiles at Renko.

DARLA CAHILL

Well, it's been quite an adventure, hasn't it Mister Vega?

RENKO VEGA

Yes, ma'am. Yes it has.

Darla looks up at Bill.1 sitting with his hands on the wheeled controls of small console. It's got binocular specs, boxes, relays, servos nearby.

DARLA CAHILL

He's an old X-10 model isn't he? I've got one at those at home in my basement somewhere.

RENKO VEGA

I've had him forever.

She smiles at Renko, pats his hand reassuringly.

DARLA CAHILL

Ah. They really don't make them
like they used to.

A tiny probe slides out of the machinery and moves towards Renko's ear. Renko's eyes twist, glaring at the probe as Bill stares down into a binocular viewer.

BILL.1

Lights please. Stay absolutely
still, Renko Vega.

The room lights go out. Everyone, including Renko looks up at a big video screen mounted up high.

Renko's ear canal is a hairy cave that swallows us.

BILL.1 (CONT'D)

I'm traveling down the auditory
canal to the ear drum, where I will
make a small incision.

Renko's inner ear narrows as we approach the ear drum--

--Suddenly the ship BOOMS and tips, JERKING. Then it settles into VIBRATIONS. Bill is focused, leaning over his controls.

BILL.1 (CONT'D)

I'm about to enter the cochlea.
Another small incision.

On the video the light and video camera slide through an ever constrictive tunnel... moist and pink.

BILL.1 (CONT'D)

The Organ of Cortii. Beautiful.
Now, we should see... yes, the
auditory nerve, right there.
Jennifer's chip should be around
here... ah... there it is...

A tiny, complex chip is nestled in the tight constriction of the auditory canal... an odd bit of technology in this otherwise organic environment.

BILL.1 (CONT'D)

Looks to be intact. There should
be a reset switch. Yes.

Little probe pliers moves out below the camera and poke at a tiny spot on the chip... suddenly a LED starts flashing.

We hear what Renko hears... a WHOOSHING SOUND... then that WHISTLING sound, like a teakettle. It quickly RINGS up into a HOWLING FEEDBACK.

BILL.1 (CONT'D)
 Hang on, Renko Vega, while I remove
 the probe.

In only a moment, the probe POPS out of Renko's ear. The passengers unstrap Renko as the noise in Renko's head begins to dissipate. Renko sits up, shaking off the pain.

He looks up, Bill is looking at him earnestly. Renko shakes his head... there's nothing. No signal.

BILL.1 (CONT'D)
 Perhaps you should try to talk to
her.

Renko looks at the others, turns and looks at nothing...

RENKO VEGA
 Jennifer... Jen... it's me, Renko.

There's no noise, a little bit of HISS....

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
 Jennifer... can you hear me? I'm
 on the Bloody Henry. Bill is with
 me along with the survivors of the
 Revolver. Jennifer... please... we
 need your help...

Renko hesitates... there are MORE EXPLOSIONS and BOOMS... the room ROCKS and JERKS violently.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
 Jennifer, Bevilaqua has kidnapped
 the Ardmore girl... and he's stolen
 you away.

More BOOMS, the ship rocks even harder. The furniture slides around the room. Renko is almost knocked off his feet.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
 Jen... please wake up... Jen... I
 need you...

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY / BRIDGE

Renko steps out on the bridge. The ship is twisting through space... plasma shocks flare on the screens.

Everyone is strapped into seats or hanging on bars suspended from the ceilings and the floors. Renko joins Doon and Bill.1 behind the console.

DOON
Vega, anything?

RENKO VEGA
No... nothing at all.
(to Bill)
How much time?

BILL.1
In seven minutes Venus rises over
Titan and Bevilaqua will be free to
engage his primary rockets.

DOON
Vega, I know you want the girl and
your ship back, but if we take out
the Jennifer now, this will be over
and done.

Renko stares, refusing to respond.

DOON (CONT'D)
You said it yourself, that girl's
better off dead than she is as
Bevilaqua's hostage. I know him.
I know that's true.

Renko stares at the screens.

RENKO VEGA
Bill, get up to the gun level and
ready the Boron cannon. We'll blow
a warning shot by the Jennifer's
bridge.

INT. THE JENNIFER 9 / BRIDGE

Shiz is at the console. Bevilaqua is behind him near the
brain tank.

SHIZ
Six minutes to burn.

BEVILAQUA
Let's keep them on their heels.
System... do you have a plan?

BRAINS
We recommend aggressive evade
pattern sixteen and active gun
pressure on Bloody Henry's stern.

BEVILAQUA
Activate. Quickly.

Plasma ROCKS into the side of the Jennifer.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Across the room, on the console, an LED glows. Shiz turns, sees it. But when he looks again, the light is out.

SHIZ
(quietly)
Hawkins, the banks down here are
out of the circuit, aren't they?

HAWKINS
That's the old native AI. It's
totally bricked. Dead.

BEVILAQUA
Mister Shiz... everything alright?

SHIZ
Yes, sir... just my imagination.

INT. JENNIFER 9 / TECH ROOM

DelRio and the girl are sitting on the floor, hands bound behind them.

Opposite them sits that guard, Neeley, also on the floor... holding his gun in his lap.

DelRio notices something. Up on the ceiling, a tiny little panel slides open. A lens twists, an tiny LED flickers.

DelRio elbows the girl lightly and flicks her eyes at the flashing LED on the ceiling.

GIRL
(a tiny whisper)
What is it?

DELRIO
Not sure--

NEELEY
--Hey, no talking.

INT. BLOODY HENRY / GUNROOM

Bill.1 and Walter Woods are at a large console.

BILL.1
Cannon is ready, bridge.

DOON (V.O.)
Henry, check vectors and call the
lock. All hands stabilize for
cannon fire.

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY - BRIDGE

Doon looks at Renko. Renko nods.

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)
Target acquired.

DOON
 Cannon, fire away...

BACK IN THE GUNROOM

Bill and Walter Woods are at the console. They hit their levers... dials spin... but there's nothing.

RENKO VEGA (V.O.)
 Bill...

Bill is looking over the gear.

BILL.1
 We have compression but no ignition. I'm running diagnostics.

BACK IN THE BRIDGE

Renko climbs out of his seat, glances at Doon.

RENKO VEGA
 Bring her back around. I'm gonna go up and check the tube. Bill, come to the bridge and call the guns from here.

INT. JENNIFER 9 / TECH ROOM

DelRio and the girl are watching Neeley. Something moves behind Neeley. A wall panel slides open. A long, slender robotic arm extends out of the panel...

The girl glances at DelRio... they look at one another, then both look back at Neeley.

DELRIO
 (to Neeley)
 So... what's your name?

NEELEY
 Rule number one, don't make friends with the hostages.

GIRL
 Oh I don't think there's much danger of that.

On Neeley's other side, another panel opens, another robotic arm extends. DelRio swallows, looks at Neeley.

DELRIO
So, what's your girlfriend think of
your job?

Neeley glares at Delrio.

GIRL
You don't have a girlfriend? Or
you don't like girls--

NEELEY
--Shuttup--

--Suddenly, the manipulator arms SNAP out and grab Neeley,
DelRio thrusts forward with her legs and knocks the gun out
of his hands as the arms pin Neeley to the floor.

The manipulator arms move incredibly fast, while one keeps
Neeley pinned to the ground the other reaches around DelRio
and twists at her bindings, cutting her free.

The arm quickly goes to work on the girl and suddenly she is
free as well.

Across the room, a low panel opens in one of the walls.
DelRio looks around the room, speaks to the air...

DELRIO
Who are you?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Hurry!

DELRIO
Who are you!?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
I... am Jennifer 9...

DelRio shoves the girl in front of her and the two of them
crawl through the hatch.

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY - CANNON WORKS

Renko Vega throws back a hatch and finds himself in a narrow
attic-like room, windows above, machinery all around.

Renko, wearing a headset, stands at the base of the Boron
cannon. It's a long steel-reinforced tube jutting up through
the roof, two and-a-half feet in diameter and 100 feet long.

There are HISSING valves, pipes, pneumatics everywhere.
There's a primitive console, dusty, little used.

BILL.1 (V.O., RADIO)
Can you hear me, Renko Vega?

RENKO VEGA
Copy, Bill. I'm at the cannon
base. I'm gonna depressurize the
main barrel.

Renko twists some valves at the base of the enormous shaft.
A BLAST of steam-like air HISSES out of the port.

There's electrical SNAP... the CRACKLE of electricity. Renko
jacks open the breech, a locking hatch on the side of the
base of the tube. He peeks inside the darkness.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
I think there's something jammed in
the loading mechanism. Bill,
what's the tube compression?

BILL.1
According to the main processor,
the charge is null.

Renko peers inside the base of the cannon.

INT. THE TECH ROOM

McMink BURSTS through the door, BLASTING her laser at the
arms still pinning Neeley down on the floor. WHACK! WHACK!
The arms retreat as though stung.

MCMINK
Where!?

NEELEY
A panel in the wall, down there!
It's the Jen 9. She's alive!

McMink SWEARS and heads back out the door.

INT. JEN 9 BRIDGE

Lasers BLAST on the screens. The bridge rocks. Bevilaqua
stands at the helm with Shiz and Hawkins at the console.

BRAINS
Three minutes to main thrust.

BEVILAQUA
All personnel prepare for massive
acceleration...

An intercom BEEPS...

MCMINK (V.O.)
Admiral, your hostages are loose.
They're headed for the podbay--

BEVILAQUA
Stop them! Blow the lifepods!
Quickly!

SHIZ
(banging at his keyboards)
I can't get access... the software
won't respond! I've lost the
starboard lasers as well!

BEVILAQUA
System! What's happening?!

BRAINS
There is apparently an intruder in
the ship's control hardware. We're
repatching!

BEVILAQUA
Idiots!

Bevilaqua turns and hurries from the bridge.

INT. PASSAGEWAY

DelRio and the girl race through alleys of circuits and wires
and gear. They cut around a corner and down another alley.

A hatch BURST OPEN with another FLASH of laser light. McMink
pounds through... but DelRio reappears with Neeley's gun and
shoots a jagged blast, HASHING down the corridor.

McMink just manages to duck back as DelRio hurtles back,
running, disappearing again. McMink throws herself after
them, Neeley close behind.

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY / CANNON WORKS

Renko peers into the breach of the cannon. Something is
moving in the darkness up the shaft, something fidgeting as
though searching for an exit.

Renko twists his head to get a better look and we realize the
fidgeting thing is one of those Black Flies! The thing
BUZZES, flies back, and HITS Renko hard in the face.

Renko falls back in pain as the Black Fly escapes and BUZZES
up into the room, rocketing around... then SMASHES uselessly
into the upper glass.

Suddenly the cannon tube begins to WHISTLE. An enormous BLAST of HOT AIR FLASHES OUT of the breech.

Renko tries to shut the hatch, but an BLAST backfires out of the tube. Renko is slammed back by the door and is thrown through the cannon chamber. His headset is blown right off his ears as he CRASHES down on the floor.

WE MOVE CLOSER as his head lolls to the side. Renko is unconscious... blood is dripping out of his ear...

INT. JEN 9 - EMERGENCY AREA

A room with a couple of complex hatches lining one wall, there are stencils... LIFEPOD#s - JEN 9 etc.

DelRio swings one of the hatches open and grabs Elizabeth.

DELRIO
Inside, quick.

Elizabeth climbs inside... DelRio starts to close the hatch--

GIRL
--No, not without you!

DELRIO
Get in, now!

But suddenly there's a SMASH at the door behind them. DelRio turns and squeezes off a BLAST of laser.

McMink is first one in, but she ducks and the spasm of electrical charge hits Hawkins and KNOCKS him down hard.

DelRio swings her own gun at McMink and FIRES AGAIN but McMink jams forward and knocks DelRio's gun up in the air.

Both guns BLAST and HASH, scorching the ceiling, CRACKING OPEN a pipe filled with FROZEN GAS. The gas HISSES out of the pipe and billows, filling the room with an acrid FOG.

DelRio swings the butt of her gun up and KNOCKS into McMink's hand. Lasers SWEEP hard across the room, the beams CUTTING THROUGH the fog.

Finally DelRio's gun SPUTTERS weakly. She ditches her gun and JAMS under McMink's arms, grabs her and pulls hard.

McMink hangs on to the gun, but the muzzle is outside DelRio's sphere. DelRio swings her knees up and, using her leg skills, JAMS McMink's shoulder, then pulls McMink's hand off the gun.

The gun CLATTERS to the floor.

Elizabeth tries to get at it, but McMink dives and KNOCKS it away. DelRio kicks up but McMink twists avoids and kicks at DelRio with a sweet leg move of her own.

DelRio flies back through the fog and smashes through the junk on the floor, cut, bleeding.

She staggers back to her feet and faces off with McMink. Even though the room is completely enveloped in a blinding mist, they PARRY at one another with powerful leg kicks...

Finally DelRio gets superior position and KICKS McMink back hard into the wall. McMink SLAMS back, CRACKS her skull, and loses consciousness.

DelRio turns and tries to get her bearings in the fog. ALARM HORNS are SCREAMING. A computer VOICE is counting down...

DELRIO (CONT'D)
Elizabeth!

But the fog is too thick and DelRio's badly wounded. She drops to one knee.

Finally Elizabeth scrambles out of the blinding whiteness.

GIRL
Kathryn! Here!

DELRIO
Get in the pod! Jennifer! Jen 9!
Get ready to launch!

ANOTHER ANGLE

The main door suddenly BURSTS open and Bevilaqua EXPLODES inside. He is backlit in the fog, BLASTING his gun. A BOLT of plasma HACKS through the swirling, freezing whiteness...

BEVILAQUA
No! No!!

He chases over to the pod door as Elizabeth SLAMS it shut.

Suddenly there's a HUGE NOISE, BOOMING ROCKETS... as the pod pulls off the side of the Jen...

The vacuum sucks hard, and ROCKET FIRE fills the room!

Bevilaqua heaves himself back across the room, grabs the hatch and pulls himself through...

INT. JEN 9 BRIDGE

Bevilaqua scrambles back inside.

BEVILAQUA
Shiz! System Twelve, take over the
interface! I want the Jen 9
software shut down! Choke her out!

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY / BRIDGE

Doon is watching his screens.

DOON
What the hell is that? Henry...

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)
The Jennifer has fired her number
one lifepod off the portside stern.

BILL.1
The Jennifer is turning to chase...

DOON
Henry, get to that pod as quick as
you can! Gunnery keep firing on
the Jen 9! Where the hell is Vega!

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY - CANNON WORKS

Renko is unconscious on the floor beneath the Boron tube.

There's a sound we've heard before... a WHISTLING SOUND, like
a tea kettle, wobbly, imperfect... the WHISTLE RESOLVES into
a soft HUMM and then, that familiar VOICE...

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
Renko... Renko Vega... Renko can
you hear me?

Renko looks up, groggily, coming to...

RENKO VEGA
Jennifer. Jennifer, is that really
you?

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
It's me, Renko.

RENKO VEGA
It's so good to hear you... Jen--

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
--Listen Renko, there's no time.
The Ardmore girl is in the number
one lifepod. Bevilaqua is chasing.
Renko, is the Boron cannon ready?

RENKO VEGA
Jen--

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
 --they're trying to shut me out.
 I have only enough strength to keep
 the armor shields down for a short
 time. You have a clean shot--

RENKO VEGA
 --No. No. Jen.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
 You have to end this--

RENKO VEGA
 --Not like this--!

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
 --Listen to me, Renko Vega, and
 remember who you are--

RENKO VEGA
 --Who we are, Jen... a charming
 rogue and his beautiful sidekick--

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
 --No. I'm not beautiful. I'm
 electrical pulses filtered through
 traces of wire and plates of
 silicon...

RENKO VEGA
 Renko Vega is nothing without the
 Jen 9. Nothing.

JENNIFER 9
 Renko Vega is the man who saved
 sixteen stranded miners off
 Ganymede. He flew into the fires
 of Tartarus and towed out a
 disabled lightship. Now, he's
 rescued the Princess of Mars and a
 hundred and fifty people from a
 space liner about to crash into
 Titan. He is Renko Vega... and I
 am proud to have been his ship.

RENKO VEGA
 Jen--

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)
 --There's no more time... the
 shields are down, Renko. The
 shields are down...

And we hear that WHISTLING sound... the fading of Jennifer's
 signal as it descends into HASH...

RENKO VEGA
Jennifer! Jennifer!!

But Jennifer is gone. And now all the air has gone from Renko's spirit. For a moment he does not move.

Finally, he stands and heaves at the breach of the Boron cannon. He levers down the load from its magazine. His actions are stiff, like an automaton.

He stares stony and bereft. He powers up the "local" console. He finds a headset and pulls it over his ears.

RENKO VEGA (CONT'D)
Master Doon, order all engines stop
and prepare for cannon fire.

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY BRIDGE

Bill turns to Doon. They both seem immediately aware of what is happening.

DOON
Henry, all engines stop. Stabilize
and prep for cannon fire.

BACK TO THE CANNON-WORKS

Renko's at the Boron console, entering numbers on a keypad.

On his screen we can see the Jennifer 9 moving steadily through space. A target lines up, tracking on the Jennifer.

RENKO VEGA
Henry, check my calculations,
please.

*BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)
Verifying, Renko Vega, target
acquired and locked.*

RENKO VEGA
Stand by...

Renko throws switches, fingers a pair of levers and resignedly throws the levers. The big cannon HISSES.

EXT. SPACE

The Bloody Henry jerks as the Boron cannon silently winces. A brilliant glowing thing spools across the sky.

INT. THE JENNIFER 9 / BRIDGE

Creighton Bevilaqua is standing on the grid, watching his screens. Shiz is at the console, suddenly showing concern...

SHIZ

Admiral, my board's not responding.
Jeezus, we dropped our shields!
Shields are down!

BEVILAQUA

System! Respond! What's
happening! System!

There's nothing for a moment, finally we hear a sultry, familiar voice.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

*Admiral Bevilaqua, this is the
Jennifer 9, reporting to the
bridge.*

SHIZ

Admiral, the Henry's launched a
missile! A boron load!

Bevilaqua turns to his screen and watches as the glowing Boron missile creases the sky.

BEVILAQUA

Jennifer, as master of this ship I
order you to replace the shields
And put the Revolver AI back in
control. Now!

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

*I'm afraid those Revolver guys
aren't around right now, Admiral.*

Bevilaqua looks at the panels and screens one by one... he sees the repeating image of the Boron missile heading towards the Jennifer.

Bevilaqua calms... finally accepting the inevitable.

BEVILAQUA

Jennifer... you've ended us.

JENNIFER 9 (V.O.)

Yes, Admiral. I have ended us.

And suddenly the Jennifer 9 EXPLODES in an awesome, shattering BLAST...

She comes apart from the inside out, a deep and MASSIVE SPLASH of HEAT and LIGHT... the LOUDEST NOISE you ever heard.

The void SUCKS and HISSES at Jennifer's pieces... pulling it apart in her massive vacuum.

EXT. SPACE - VERY WIDE

An enormous explosion, silent and dazzling, as bright as fireworks in a black velvet sky...

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY / VARIOUS

ON THE BRIDGE - Doon and Bill.1 hang onto the rail as the EXPLOSION roars through the interior of the Henry.

IN THE GUN ROOM - The surviving passengers watch through the portals and on their screens. The blast fills our ears with its lingering DEATH-HOWL...

IN THE CANNON WORKS - Renko Vega watches the sky through the windows above as light rips through the room.

Then the Jennifer is gone. Renko sits at the base of the console and puts his head in his hands.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SPACE

There's BLACKNESS, then STARS... speckling the sky. Then we see a light, red, not a star at all, BLINKING.

We MOVE CLOSER and see a white tube, burned and scorched, covered in pipes and markings, beacon FLASHING...

Suddenly an enormous shadow appears. It's a huge mass of coagulated junk floating slowly: The Bloody Henry.

Henry's giant mouth drops open... his yawning flight deck...

The mouth moves over the Jen 9 lifepod and swallows, like a whale eating a goldfish.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BLOODY HENRY - FLIGHT DECK

The Lifepod is slung up in a rubber net, turned rightside up. Passengers from the Revolver help Bill.1 as he takes a wrench and undogs the hatch.

The door is removed and pulled away. Inside, Kathryn DelRio is dirty, only vaguely conscious, covered in blood. Elizabeth Ardmore, awake and in tears, caresses her head.

Hands reach for the two women and gently remove them from the capsule interior. Darla Cahill helps put DelRio on a stretcher and cover her in blankets.

The girl refuses Darla's help, insisting on standing on her own. Then something catches her eye.

She pulls away from the others. Renko Vega is standing just a little off, his face filled with lingering sorrow.

GIRL

Renko Vega.

Renko stares at the girl softly as people step back and give the two figures room.

Renko hesitates, then, finally, he drops to one knee and bows his head... his voice is urgent, a committed whisper...

RENKO VEGA

To the family Ardmore, to the
Princess of Mars, to United Planet
Earth... I pledge my loyalty and my
devotion... you are my liege...

The girl stops and swallows, for the first time caught unaware, sensing Vega's emotion and feeling her own... but she shakes it off.

GIRL

Okay, Vega. Get up. You look
stupid down there--

Renko stands and looks at the girl. She looks away, then looks back.

Renko smiles in spite of himself. The girl allows a tiny smile in return. Finally, she takes his hand and pulls him into the crowd.

Renko looks down at DelRio. She smiles softly, tries to speak but falters, then regathers herself...

DELRIO

Renko Vega... you're a hero all
over again.

Renko smiles softly, shakes his head in refusal.

DELRIO (CONT'D)

You'll watch the girl for me... for
a little while anyway...

Renko nods... it's a commitment he's already made.

RENKO VEGA

I got you covered, DelRio.

DelRio smiles again as her lids fall. Darla Cahill and the others wheel DelRio away. Renko and the girl watch them go.

GIRL

So, Vega. How's your hand?

Renko holds up his Hand, which is a bit of a disaster.

HAND

Hand is aware. Hand is fine.
Thank you for asking.

Renko turns to one side. Bill.1 is there, looking somewhat unsure of himself, still half-melted.

RENKO VEGA

Bill point one, this is Miss
Elizabeth Ardmore, Princess of
Mars, daughter of James Joplin
Ardmore.

Bill awkwardly drops down to one knee. He CREAKS.

BILL.1

I am honored.

GIRL

Yeah, that's fine, but you guys are
embarrassing me. Hey, you're a
robot, aren't you?

RENKO VEGA

He is a robot... actually he's one
helluva robot.

GIRL

You got some crazy friends, Vega.

Renko hesitates, about to respond, then just nods.

GIRL (CONT'D)

So you got any food on this jalopy?

RENKO VEGA

I think we can find you something.

They turn and walk away from us, across the deck... they move into darkness, FOOTSTEPS RINGING.

GIRL

Lemme ask you something, Vega...
what do you think of Agent DelRio?

RENKO VEGA

What do I think of her? She tried
to shoot me, didn't she?

GIRL

No, that was, look, the two of you have the same go-for-broke vibe and you're not bad-looking and I know you got lots of amigos and they're perfectly nice but I think you oughta start hanging out with human beings every now and then...

She keeps TALKING as they drift out of earshot and we...

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. SPACE

Stars again, in that same old black sky. We hear someone HUMMING to himself as the junk-filled roof of the Bloody Henry ascends into the lower part of the frame.

We hear CLUMPING, awkward FOOTSTEPS. Bill.1 appears. He's wearing big MAGNETIC SHOES and walking across the steel hull.

BILL.1 (V.O.)

How my doin', Henry?

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)

Over to your right a bit...

Right... there.

Bill is standing on the edge of a big pile of welded-together junk, nothing below or around him but the void. He stops.

He's got something in his hands... it looks like a long-handled butterfly net.

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Should be about seventy degrees off the surface, about three meters up.

Bill leans out, dangling off the edge. Something FLUTTERS by, a bit of red, and Bill snags it in his net.

BILL.1 (V.O.)

Got it.

He turns and reaches into the net and pulls something out. He opens his palm...

The jewel, the "Lady of the Shadows" rests in Bill's palm. The crimson ribbon, burned and tattered, floats gently above.

Bill HUMMS as he grasps the rock, turns, and CLANKS BACK across the surface of the Henry.

To the rhythm of his footsteps, Bill begins to *sing*...

BILL.1 (CONT'D)
Wo ho! And they'll never know...
where I hide or where I go! Wo ho
and they can't catch me...!

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)
...for they call me Renko Vega!

BILL.1
In the Jennifer 9 I spend my
time...

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)
Renko, Renko Vega!

BILL.1 (V.O.)
She's a damn good ship and friend
of mine!

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)
Renko, Renko Vega!

BILL.1 (V.O.)
Wo ho! And you'll never know,
where I sleep or where I go. Wo
ho... and they catch me...

BLOODY HENRY (V.O.)
For they call me Renko Vega!

We PULL AWAY from the Henry, further and further... until
 it's tiny glowing dot...

BILL.1 (V.O.)
Wo ho! And you'll never know,
where I sleep or where I go. Wo
ho... and you won't catch me...

The Bloody Henry becomes a tiny star, MOVING among a thousand
 other stars...

BILL AND HENRY (V.O.)
...for they call me Renko Vega!

The stars are WINKING... it's like they're LAUGHING... but
 they're not laughing at all... they're SINGING...

BILL, HENRY, AND THE STARS (V.O.)
For they call... me... Ren-ko Vega!

THE END