

O ZONE 2 - MANHATTAN 2299

1 SPACE. ARCHRONIA

1

Worlds explode, universes are jumbled.  
Close on planets. Whole cities are blown to smithereens;  
panic struck populations; people using any possible weapon  
to plow their way through to the spaceports; spacecraft of  
all breed barreling for emergency take-off: some crash,  
others collide.

NARRATOR OVER

During the joust that pitted Darkaos  
against his peers, the fifth  
chronolith was lost and all time  
dimensions shattered. And since the  
chronolith landed on Earth, the fate of  
the Universe now lies in mankind's  
hands. All assume that the master of  
Chaos has been defeated, but little do  
they know that the key chronolith shall  
inevitably return to its master. Should  
nobody find the answer to this threat  
either in the pasts or in the futures,  
nothing will prevent Darkaos from  
spelling doom for all Universes.

2 STARFIELD

2

Mass space exodus. Motley spacecraft leave their dying  
worlds by whole fleets.  
Huge space ship comes in shot: the Kerenese flagship.  
It is followed by its sister-ships and heads for Archronia,  
b.g. Though it is surrounded by black-holes and vortexes,  
the galaxy is protected by a bright halo much like a  
bubble.

3 INT. KERENESE FLAGSHIP

3

Usual activity on deck. Karliss, Psath and other officers  
watch the main display eagerly.

PSATH (SUBTITLED)

(to Karliss)

Are you sure we will clear those black-  
holes? We're only Protomentorgs.

KERENESE OPERATOR (BREAKING IN: SUBTLD)  
Commander! Look!

Angle on several crewmen. They have stopped moving and become transparent. One of the crewmen vanishes. Everybody's close to panic.

KARLISS  
(bellows)  
Quick! Activate the chronoshields !

Power beams surround the waning Kerenese. They stabilize, but without resuming their usual aspect.

KARLISS  
Change course. Fall out of the dimensional corridors and activate the time modules!

OPERATOR  
You're crazy! Archronia's our only chance!

KARLISS  
(Indicating their comrades' still silhouettes behind the chronoshields)  
Can't you see they're dematerializing? This means our ancestors are dying, our past is dying. We must travel time down to that point.

Kerenese flagship booms in hyper space-time. Karliss and Psath keep a close eye on their half dematerialized fellows. Nothing more happens. They sigh and turn to the main display. Moments later a blue planet comes into sight: the Earth.

KARLISS (SUBTLD)  
So there we are. Point Zero. What do the instruments read?

PSATH  
Something has destroyed The Zero Dimension's time shield. It's evolving fast.

KARLISS

(stern)

The lost chronolith. It broke through.  
This means that what's coming doesn't  
depend only on us now.

4 NEW-YORK : INT. ICARUS LABORATORY

4

The lab's main view-screen displays the CGI of the Kerenese spacecraft as it was shot during the first episode of this story.

Nadia enters, surrounded by a host of technicians. She marches along, dispatching ten orders at the time and answering as many questions. Indicates the view-screen.

NADIA

(To one of the assistants)

How about our space beetle ?

Assistant shakes his head. Nothing new. She shrugs and walks up to Rockefeller Junior who is studying a computer screen. He looks up at her.

RJ

Take a look at this, Nadia. There's  
something wrong with the warps.

She leans over his shoulder. A window displays a computerized vortex. On screen, a world map dotted with bright, blinking signals. She whistles.

R.J

You've said it!

NADIA

(Appalled)

You sure all these signals indicate V  
gamma type warps?

RJ

I'm afraid so. There's more and more of  
these mother fucking interfaces and  
there's no way we can study them. Too  
unstable.

NADIA

We've got to, RJ, no one knows what  
those warps can do to our world.

Conversation rolls on.

Behind them, the main display starts blinking. The CGI of the Kerenese spaceship flickers, then seems to push out and materialize in zillions of photons. The lab's instruments sputter, go off and on.

Nadia curses, wheels round, gapes.

RJ looks at her, then at what she's looking at. His mouth drops.

Techs and scientists are thunderstruck.

Widen to an actual 3D image of Karliss, delineated by sparkling particles. A sharp shrill fills the room.

The Kerenese considers the scientists.

KARLISS

(Filtered voice. Slow English speech)

We came to warn you. Are you ready to acknowledge our message?

NADIA

B.. but who are you? What do you want?

KARLISS

I came to talk of the futures.

He turns to a multi-screen display, waves his antennae. It auto activates.

Each separate screen features a different chronological roll up of the Earth's futures: jumbo orbital stations, futuristic cities, teeming populations, you name it: a few seconds later, they all boil down to a single iteration, reproduced on all the screens.

The scientists gasp.

The screens all exhibit a futuristic multinational research facility branded ICARUS II.

KARLISS

This is an altogether simplified projection of this dimension's potential futures. Its linear evolution has been fouled into a time-lock. The reason to this is that the time shield protecting your universe from alien interference has been shattered. It may stabilize but will more likely undergo dramatic disruptions *down* the timeline, what you call the past. The time warps you have recently experienced seem to confirm this.

Pause. Then Nadia pulls herself together. She marches to the multi-screen, considers it for a while, then turns determinedly on Karliss or his 3D impersonation.

NADIA

Who are you? What does ICARUS have to do with it all?

KARLISS

I cannot explain. Know you only that you are the womb of our universes and if your dimension is altered, we will all return to non existence. It has already started.

NADIA

Fascinating. But I still don't see where ICARUS fits in.

KARLISS

Listen carefully. ICARUS must immediately stop ALL time dimension experiments and delete all data. It is vital. If you don't, your successors, ICARUS II, will reach a state where they come up against something that will override their control. There is no other way to restore your evolution.

NADIA

What do you... Hey! Wait!

The hologram starts fading out, the lab's fouled instruments hum to life again.

KARLISS

(vanishing)

It's all up to you now. No member of the Time Empire will henceforth contact this system.

They all remain spellbound. Then slowly surround Nadia. She sits pondering for a long while, then.

NADIA

Anybody remember *Return to the future*?

They give her the "you're off your rocker" look.

NADIA

(impatiently)

There's one way to make sure of what that... alien said. Do as he told us.

RJ

WHAT?

NADIA

If I got him straight, we destroy the Timescan with all our research program and everything is normal again. Which means...

RJ

Which means the vortexes disappear!

NADIA

Right. So let's knuckle down to it. And by the way, call Lomax up. Tell him to drop his investigations on the AMTRAK vortex until we objectivize this.

5 INT. NEW-YORK CENTRAL POLICE DEPARTMENT. DAY

5

Shots of the usual NYPD routine as an excited inspector burns along the corridors, into a lift, out of the lift several floors higher and past a couple of glass-paned offices.

- LOMAX'S OFFICE -

Lomax is typing on his keyboard. His computer displays several missing people files. He enters a code. Screen now scrolls a CGI vortex and data branded "AMTRAK occurrence". Excited inspector shoots in, shouting his head off.

INSPECTOR

All available men at the Empire State Building! On the double!

Chairs rattle, doors slam, feet pound. Men snatch up jackets, weapons and are gone.

DETECTIVE #1

Bahrain jewel exhibition?

DETECTIVE #2

The knock-off of the century! Just who in the world did it?

Not over concerned with the general excitement, Lomax has been typing away. Then it strikes him. He glances at his watch.

FLASH-BACK: Gateway to O Zone's final sequence. The newspaper. Eaks' smile.

Lomax turns his computer off, retrieves his FD, stands and picks his jacket.

LOMAX  
(casually)

I know who.

His phone rings. He ignores it and exit.

6 EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING. DAY

6

ESB and block are cordoned off by the police. The streets and the approaches are crawling with cops of all feather. Howling squad cars close in on the block. Scores of rubbernecks watch the scene. Lomax is standing apart, ignoring the hullabaloo at the foot of the building. He scans the surrounding edifices with his field glasses. Close on his face. Big smile. Seen through the binoculars: something unusual about the street lamps, but it isn't what the man is looking for. He searches the top of a building, then another. The end of a propeller blade sticks out. There's a chopper up there.

LOMAX  
So there we are : the pussy's pajamas  
as always, Malk !

He stows his field glasses away and sedately crosses the street. He is idly fiddling a Soul Catcher strung around his neck. He stops short. His POV: the Empire State Building blurs, vibrates, stroboscopic light effects streak past. Lomax shakes his head, lets go of the talisman to rub his eyes. Everything is normal again. He glances at the Soul Catcher, about to try it again. Cops start shouting around him, there's some hustling near the ESB's main entrance. Lomax sighs and walks towards the facing building.

7 EXT. TOP OF THE ESB. DAY

7

Eaks, his same neat and trim self in gray dungarees, a rucksack on his back, pops out of a window at the very top of the tower, scales the antenna. Scans the facing building, sees the helicopter, produces a remote control and activates it.

8 EXT. STREET. DAY

8

And it goes off like the Fourth of July. Fireworks fitted on the street lamps chain blast all the way down the avenue. Smoke devices shroud the block. Crowd scatters in a panic, cops yell, sirens chime in.

9 EXT. ESB TOP

9

Eaks laughs and waves at the chopper on the facing building. It pulls off the terrace.

Eaks smiles, looks down. Nothing but a thick cloud of smoke.

A cable uncoils under the aircraft, it stabilizes over the ESB.

Eaks reaches for the whipping cable and after a try or two, catches on, dangling several hundred feet above the ground. On the facing building's terrace. Chopper pilot lies unconscious near an air vent.

10 EXT. HELICOPTER IN FLIGHT

10

10 / 1 - INT. COCKPIT.

Lomax sits behind the controls, a gun on his knees. Smirks.

10 / 2 - EXT. HELICOPTER.

The chopper flies off towards the Hudson. Under it, Eaks starts climbing the rope.

10 / 3 - INT. COCKPIT.

The cockpit hatch flies open. Eaks flings his sack at Lomax, jumps in.

EAKS

Hiya, Fuzzypuss! I just knew you  
wouldn't forget our date!

Lomax is caught short, pushes the rucksack away and reaches for his gun. Eaks snatches it.

EAKS

(Training the gun on him)

Fly south, Roscoe!

Lomax jerks the controls. Chopper dives.

Eaks loses his balance. Lomax tries to retrieve his gun. Dogfight.

10 / 4 - EXT. HELICOPTER.

It pits and rears wildly, its tail hits a building, rear propeller is torn off. The helicopter drops in a death spin towards the Hudson.

The cockpit door opens and both men bail out, Eaks clasping his sack.

11 EXT. HUDSON RIVER. DAY

11

They dive. The chopper crashes and whips up a terrific geyser only a few yards from them.

Eaks surfaces first, coughs, puts forth a string of four cornered oaths: he lost the doggone rucksack and its contents.

Lomax pops out and swims for him. Eaks paddles off with the beef of a speedboat. Under the pier, ahead of him, the dark mouth of a sewer main. He reaches it before Lomax can catch up, and vanishes in the black duct.

12 INT. ICARUS LAB.

12

Many instruments missing. The main display is blank, so is the multi-screen. Computers are out. Assistants finish carrying off other electronic units.

With RJ and assistants behind her, Nadia sits at a sophisticated console with several monitors. One features a visual of the Labmobile (See O Zone I) pitted somewhere in the Colorado Mountains. Another reads the following message:

DELETE ALL PROGRAMS?

Nadia takes in a deep breath and clicks on YES.

Assistants stiffen. She moves to the shot of the Labmobile.

NADIA

And now... for the Timescan.

(falters)

It's.. it's like killing my own child.

RJ sets a comprehensive hand on her shoulder. She types away: another message reads:

EXECUTE?

She clenches her teeth. RJ's hand grips her shoulder. She hits a key.

On screen: a silent explosion, smoke and fire, rolling rocks, then nothing but debris. There is a general sigh. Nadia looks away. RJ gives her a thrust.

RJ

Look! Look at the map!

The shiny dots fade and go out one after the other. Nadia stares at the screen, not believing it.

NADIA

It works! Boje moi, it WORKS!

13 INT. SEWERS

13

13 / 1 - SEWER MAIN.

Eaks produces a flashlight from his hip pocket, darts along the slippery concrete ledge, listens to Lomax panting behind him, crosses the sewage flow to the other side.

Lomax, holding his gun, goes for him and stops.

Blurred visions again, lights whirling past him and odd pyramidal shapes sliding along the walls. He shakes his head and resumes the hunt.

Eaks reaches a crevice in the wall. Lights flicker beyond. He squeezes in

13 / 2 - AMTRAK WORKS

He bursts into a 20 feet wide heading, the walls and roof of which are of raw, exposed rock.

It is unfinished and deserted. Above, an access shaft is partly caved in. Nearby, a forlorn scraper.

Eaks slackens pace, surprised.

EAKS

(Mumbling)

Now how in the devil did I get here?

A concrete wall seals the tunnel access on his left. A hundred feet on his right, the hewn out rock has uncovered the remains of two very old-looking pillars. They frame an opening so dark even the man's flash light seems to come against a black wall. Dull lights flicker within the wall itself, like a dying fire. Eaks reaches to probe it.

14 INT. ICARUS LAB.

14

Close on the map on the monitor. The waning dots blink and grow brighter. Moments later, they're all there again. Nadia hits the keyboard with an angry cry.

NADIA

God damn it! We did it all for nothing!  
The vortexes are active again!

15 INT. AMTRAK TUNNEL

15

Lomax barges in the heading and stops short.  
His POV: Light beams whirl between the pillars, wrap around the shining, transparent shape of the chronolith.  
Eaks touches the wall.

LOMAX

No; Malk, don't ! Keep away !

The streaming lights turn into a bright siphon, squalls rake the tunnel.  
Eaks vanishes. Lomax tries to fight back the pull, grapples for safe hold and goes flying into the vortex.

16 INT. ICARUS LAB.

16

Computer engineers and technicians are busy moving the remaining computers and instruments. The statue of Icarus rules over a deserted realm.  
Rockefeller Junior paces down the deserted alleys, turns into a corridor.

16 / 2 - INT. NADIA'S OFFICE.

It's almost empty too. Nadia is working on a portable computer. Its monitor displays various data and the dotted map.

RJ

C'mon, Nadia, it's no use.

NADIA

(obstinate)

There's got to be a way. If the destruction of ICARUS has failed, then we must prevent the occurrence of ICARUS II. You heard that alien.

She goes on typing. RJ shrugs.

RJ

But how? Unless we find a way of  
sending someone in the future ...

Phone rings. He picks it up. His face screws.

R.J (IN THE PHONE)

What do you mean "missing"? Where? God  
damn it!

Slams the phone down.

R.J

Maverick is missing. He was last seen  
chasing Malko Eaks in the sewers, near  
the AMTRAK works, that is...

NADIA

The vortex! Oh my God!

She stops short. Something dawns on her. She sits  
pondering. RJ gives her a puzzled look.

RJ

Oh no, Nadia! No you won't! We don't  
know where those interfaces lead!

NADIA

So we won't chance it either.  
(She reaches for a metal cylinder in her  
desk).  
But *this* will!

She starts typing quickly.  
A printer scrolls a sheet of plastic paper out. RJ tries to  
read it, gives up and hands it to Nadia.

NADIA

(fitting the sheet in the cylinder)  
A special code Lomax and I have  
elaborated. Now all we have to do is  
throw this in the mailbox of Time.

RJ

(dubious sigh)  
Sure... One chance in a jillion...

17 INT. NY UNDERGROUND

17

Multicolored lights surround Eaks and Lomax, an ear-piercing shrill rakes the air and everything becomes normal again.

They are flung out of the black opening and in the heading again.

LOMAX

(Uneasy)

Now if that was one of your tricks..

EAKS

(Ditto)

I hate to say this, but I'm not *that* good at special effects.

Pause. They look at one another. Lomax tucks his gun in his belt.

LOMAX

D'you think what I think ?

EAKS

Don't give a damn. You think bullshit.

Eaks holds his flashlight up and they scan the tunnel. Nothing special at first.

Then the first discomfoting details : rubble fills the gallery, the scraper is completely rusted out, the concrete wall ahead of them is partly crumbled.

And above all, silence. The distant rumble of subway trains has subsided.

They scale the collapsed wall and vanish in the darkness beyond..

Behind them, something shines on the ground. Nadia's cylinder. They didn't see it.

18 INT. UNDERGROUND

18

18 / 1 - TUNNELS.

They move along half caved in tunnels filled with rubbish. The steady drip of water beats a gruesome rhythm in the silence.

LOMAX

You've got to face it. Those tunnels don't look like what they used to.

Further down, the drip changes into running water that gathers under their feet in a streamlet.

EAKS

(Stubborn)

Oh, call off the bull! Just a gas duct explosion... or maybe an earthquake.

18 / 2 - SEWER MAIN AND SINKHOLE.

They wade into a large, vaulted sewer main.

The gush of water sounds ahead of them.

Eaks turns his flashlight out. The far end of the main is brightly lit. He sighs in relief.

EAKS

See? I told you. Rescue teams must be at work over there.

They stop short.

They are standing on the brim of a pit some hundred feet wide.

Waterfalls pour out of several crevices or tunnel mouths. Shafts of light pour down a cleft some fifty feet aloft and spread into bright rainbows.

EAKS

Holy mackerel ! D'you suppose this is where it blew ? That's an awful big hole !

LOMAX

I'd rather suppose nothing.

Eaks sizes a raw, jumbled section of rocks and broken metal infrastructures to their right. It offers somewhat of a rickety path up towards the cleft.

Slipping, grappling and heaving, they manage up, catch on the brim of the crevice and climb.

EAKS

(Shouting)

Hey ! Anybody out there ? This way!

With a curse, he inches up, hauls half of his body out and stops.

LOMAX

What's keeping you ? Get out, for Pete's sake !

Eaks still doesn't move.

EAKS (OFF SCREEN)

Putain de putain de nom de dieu de bordel de shit!

He drops back. His face is pale, his eyes bulge.

LOMAX

(Concerned)

Malk ? Hey Malk ! No time for heart failure !

EAKS

I wish to Hell I had one right now..

Lomax climbs out in turn.

LOMAX (OFF SCREEN)

Holy Jesus Christ almighty God !

19 EXT. NY DOCKS. DAY

19

Lomax helps Eaks out of the fault. They stand in an empty street, and scan the surroundings.

They are stranded in the middle of what used to be the NY docks : a large, barren strand of rotten concrete lined with piles of rubble, almost small hills, out of which poke plumes of grass and wild vegetation.

Beyond, a jumbled mass of ruins out of which stand the remains of entirely unknown edifices of metal and glass. Lofty foliage b.g : very high trees screen the rest of the City.

There isn't a living soul around. Noon sun scorches the dead cityscape.

EAKS

Where are we ? What happened ?

LOMAX

(Gloomy)

Not *where* are we, Malk, but *when* are we?

Holding his gun ready, he motions Eaks to move silently and they both reach the shades cast by the wrecked edifices.

A mummified corpse stretches awkwardly against a wall, almost part of it.

Eaks gives it a slight push with his foot and it crumbles to dust.

Further down, they find the carcasses of futuristic vehicles : their cockpits hold more petrified skeletons.

LOMAX

Strange.. Those people look like they died a long, long time ago..

He bashes the cockpit open, riffles through the car's contents, produces a wallet containing a set of identification cards.

LOMAX

(reading)

John Smith, July 5...

Drops the card, thunder-struck.  
Eaks picks the card and reads in turn.  
His eyes pop. Reads again.

EAKS

(mumbling)

Twenty two ... ninety nine...

(stressing each word)

TWO THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND NINETY  
NINE ?!!

Drops the card in turn.

20 INT. ICARUS LAB.

20

Nadia and R.J stand in the entirely stripped lab. Nadia nods at the remaining statue.

NADIA

No one will never fathom how much knowledge Icarus holds in his wings!

R.J

It's hopeless, and you know it.

NADIA

No it's not. We are like Pandora. We turned evil loose on humanity but we have withheld Hope.

RJ clenches his teeth and turns away. He addresses a group of technicians who are rigging explosives in the room.

RJ

Are you through with it?

TECH

Yes sir.

R.J

Then blast her and what she holds to smithereens.

NADIA

Wherever Eaks and Lomax are, God help them...

They exit without looking back.

21 EXT. NEW YORK : O ZONE. DAY

21

Lomax stands, fists on his hips, staring at the card on the ground.

Eaks paces about, growling, swearing and angrily kicking the bashed car.

EAKS.

Cornered, damn it! Corralled! Done in like a greenhorn! Me! Malcolm Archibald Eaks VI! The heir to a generation of gentlemen robbers! And what's more, in the future! It had to happen to me!

LOMAX

(bitter)

Reckon that your James Bond gadgets wouldn't pull us out of this one.

Eaks stops short, glares at him and guffaws.

Lomax gives him a skeptical glance.

LOMAX

Don't tell me you *have* one that would?

EAKS

(Moving to him)

I haven't but *you* have.

He reaches out, and with a trick of the hand, pulls the Indian Soul Catcher out from under Lomax's shirt.

22 INT. AMTRAK TUNNEL

22

Eaks' flashlight is set on a stone.

Both men study the crumbled pillars, keeping wary of the dark opening they demarcate. Lomax brushes the dust off one of them, finds the half erased symbols. Then shakes his wrist and glances at it: the black tattooed marks seem phosphorescent.

LOMAX

Indian ideographs, pyramidal designs,  
they remind me of...

EAKS

Don't mention it. Me too.

23    SOMEWHERE WITHIN THE GROUND

23

Fluttering lights cross the rock itself. An odd puddle of what looks like liquid metal is embedded in the stone strata. The lights shape into a transparent image of the chronolith that crosses the puddle. It pulsates and comes to life.

24    INT. AMTRAK TUNNEL

24

Lomax pulls the Thunderstone out of the Soul Catcher, holds it up. It changes into a radiant halo. They step between the pillars.

The chronolith radiates bright beams of light and vanishes. They stare at one another.

Nothing more happens.

Beyond the pillars, there is nothing but rough rock.

EAKS

Well that does it! We're stranded here  
forever!

LOMAX

(loosing his temper)

Can that stuff! You're the one that  
ditched us!

EAKS

Go ahead! Call it my fault!

LOMAX

That's what I'm calling it! I warned  
you!

Eaks flares, grabs him by the collar and belts him one. Lomax goes down, cranes to his feet and pounces on him.

LOMAX

I'm gonna make you sorry you didn't  
wind up in the clink, old timer!

They go for the kill, dealing one another as many bird  
names as blows.

Eaks sends Lomax sprawling to the ground. Pounces on him,  
picks something in the dust to slug him with.

Lomax grabs his wrist. They wrestle. See what Eaks has in  
hand and freeze. It's the cylinder.

They remain sitting on the ground, studying it carefully.

Eaks hands it over to Lomax. He unscrews the cap, pulls out  
the printed plastic scroll

LOMAX

Nadia.

(he starts translating the code)

For the attention of John Lomax. If you  
have crossed the warp and found this,  
it means you are now in a parallel  
dimension of the future, with no  
transfer in space and no direct return  
available. So please read the following  
instructions carefully, for the sake of  
mankind. You must first find our  
statue. It contains a self-powered  
computer with all our database. This  
will provide you with all the necessary  
information and instructions about a  
future research unit facility ICARUS  
II. Should it still be operational  
wherever you are, it is vital that you  
investigate and destroy it. It's our  
only chance and your only chance. May  
God help you.

Lomax looks up. His face bears a determined expression.  
He reads the message once more, produces his lighter,  
burns it and crushes the case.

LOMAX

All right, no use dragging on forever.  
How does your built-in compass behave  
these days?

EAKS

Beg your pardon ?

LOMAX

We're gonna try to find that doggone  
Icarus statue wherever it might be!

25    SOMEWHERE IN THE GROUND    25

Close on the pulsating liquid metal puddle. It sparkles as if undergoing electric changes, swells, pushes and eats through the rock. The metal delineates the now identifiable shape of The Zero Unit.

26    INT. TUNNELS    26

Footsteps. A light flashes.  
Something crunches under Lomax's feet : he stoops and touches warm ashes. Small bones are strewn on the ground. Eaks trains his flashlight on them.

LOMAX

Looks like somebody moved in recently  
and had a few barbecues. Maybe folks  
did survive after all.

Eaks stoops and picks a piece of concrete vaguely hewn out like a prehistoric tool.

EAKS

Survivor, hey? Well, no survivor of an  
advanced civilization like the one we  
saw would use such primitive means of  
survival.

Faint noises. Feet treading.  
Eaks hushes.

EAKS

And it's after us, man or beast. We've  
got to heel out of here quick.

27    INT. AMTRAK WORKS    27

The protean creature emerges from the wall between the pillars, surrounded by electric sparks, fumes, ectoplasm ooze, odd and discomfoting noises. Its polymorphous aspect is hideous.

It moves painfully, but its eyes radiate bright energy beams. Harsh breath wheezes through its mouth, it groans the word ICARUS.

28 INT. TUNNELS

28

Eaks and Lomax are trudging along when the ominous echo reaches them.

The wall to their right rips open under the pressure of a sudden gush of water. Eaks and Lomax are washed by the flow, striving to remain above water.

Eaks loses his flashlight. Curses sound in the dark.

28 / 2 - SEWER SHAFT.

A shaft of light. Both men are clinging to the rusted rungs of a manhole open overhead. They climb like the devil.

29 EXT. MANHATTAN - RUINED STREETS. DAY

29

A concrete block moves and tilts. Both men appear underneath and pull themselves out.

The ground rumbles under their feet, they back out hurriedly and sprint off. The street splits open behind them and caves in, bringing down the remains of a building with it.

Eaks and Lomax move round the next block and freeze.

Their POV. An entirely reshuffled Manhattan: all the 20<sup>th</sup> century landmarks have been replaced by edifices so lofty that their remains still stand taller than our highest towers. Lush vegetation, almost exotic in its abundance, crawls, grows and blossoms everywhere, giving the altogether impression of a place long reverted to the wild.

EAKS.

I can't believe it. New-York couldn't have changed to that extent in three centuries, even after God knows what disaster!

Lomax walks to a crumbled wall, touches it. His hand goes straight through and the wall returns to dust. Lomax pulls his hand out hastily.

LOMAX

Holy mackerel! This concrete looks a thousand years old!

None of them notices they are being stalked by burly figures that move among the wrecks.

A frightful looking behemoth springs from behind a building with a terrific howl. It's a regular Cro-Magnon, followed by a whole pack of his fellow ape-men.

EAKS

Zex!! Flintstone attack!

They scam, the howling pack hot on their heels, make for a nearby building, frantically searching its entrance door. There is none. They race around it to no avail. It displays large oval openings some 20 feet above ground level.

EAKS

Don't tell me them doggone twenty third century assholes didn't know about doors!

Growling and groaning, more Cro-Magnon close in on them. They're cornered.

EAKS

(nudging Lomax)

What's keeping you, damn it! Use your heater!

Lomax draws his pistol, aims at the brutes. They cringe back, terrified.

EAKS

Go ahead and shoot, blockhead! What's keeping you? Ecological convictions?

LOMAX

(shaking his head without lowering his gun)

No. The fact that genuine cavemen seem acquainted with firearms.

He waves his gun and the growling horde backs up. Eaks spots a tree, the branches of which stretch close to one of the building's openings, and dashes for it. Lomax shoots above the Cro-Magnon's heads, they scatter and he makes for the tree. Both men next jump on a ledge.

30 INT. WRECKED BUILDING. DAY

30

They enter a room of huge proportions, revealing an unusually high ceiling. More oval openings like it to an oversized dovecote. They consider the odd scenery.

EAKS

No wonder there's no doors. This ain't no place for regular folks.

Lomax looks about thoughtfully.

LOMAX

You're right: the whole thing beats me. And where did those living fossils come from? It can only mean one thing: the time warps reach all the way down our past, draining creatures from every age into this world.

Eaks spots a web of broken metal structures spanning the room and scales it lithely. Reaches the opposite wall, gashed by a large crack. He looks out.

EAKS

In the meantime, here's a way to drain out of this place.

(He squeezes through)

And remind me to keep a stiff upper lip if we next run into a T Rex!

31 EXT. ANOTHER DISTRICT. DAY

31

They walk through a less devastated district, made of a gossamer web of arches, fly bridges and aerial platforms building the city skyward on a succession of levels and terraces. All of it is overgrown with lush vegetation and immense Banyan-like trees.

Eaks runs his hand on a king size trunk.

EAKS

2299, hey?

Lomax considers the trees dubiously.

LOMAX

I can hardly figure on lollopers like that right here in New York. It would take more than three centuries to grow so many of them.

Something drips on him from above: he looks up and jumps. A 'recent' corpse is sprawled in the branches with a large, burnt out hole in it.

Lomax scans the surroundings. Not far from there, charred bodies straggle along the still smoldering ruins.

LOMAX

Hey! Those fellows were killed only a few hours ago..

EAKS

Yep, looks like a ray gun of some kind got them.

LOMAX

So there are survivors after all, and they obviously kill whatever comes out of the interfaces.

Silhouettes skulk the ruins. They are Time-Outcasts, the people who came through the time warps. One of them shouts in rough English.

TIME-OUTCAST.

Manhattan bats!

Both men wheel round and find themselves facing charging T.O dressed in most disparate rags of all epoch. Most of them bawl incomprehensible words in dialects of bygone ages.

32 EXT. OTHER MANHATTAN DISTRICTS. DAY 32

The chase goes on across districts overgrown with ever denser vegetation. Critters of all kind and feather scoot out in front of the two men.

33 EXT. NO MAN'S LAND - STOCKADE. DAY 33

Eaks and Lomax finally barge into an open space, a vitrified no man's land. Beyond it stands a huge, triple stockade made of tree trunks and roughly bound slabs of concrete.

The waifs cease the hunt and scatter among the ruins and vegetation.

The two men stop to consider the no man's land and the palisade

LOMAX

Don't like it at all. What's going on here? What scared them? What are these Manhattan Bats they mistook us for?

VOICE OFF SCREEN

You! Fucking groundhogs! Beat it!

They face about but something stronger than the voice catches their attention.

Beyond the stockade, the foliage of Antaeon trees. Background and glimpsed through the branches, the outlines, recognizable among all, of the Empire State Building: it glares under the sun as if made of gold.

EAKS

(choking with emotion)

Sweet fuckin' mama! The Empire State building, she's there! She's still standing!

VOICE OFF SCREEN

Hey! I said beat it!

Standing on a watch tower, a sentry clad in gray uniform with copper facings trains some kind of a laser weapon on them: a Manhattan Guard, dubbed MG.

Lomax steps forward, hands extended in placatory gesture.

LOMAX

Okay, man, okay. Hold your horses. We just popped in this place and we don't know where we are. What's going on here?

MANHATTAN GUARD

(keeping his weapon leveled at them)

This is the Organization's private residential district, so kick off or my plaser will take care of you!

Ignoring the guard's threat, Eaks moves in.

EAKS

(jeering)

Hey Maverick, look! Johnny got his gun!

M.G

(shoots)

Scat, you worms!

Eaks dives under shelter. Lomax rolls to the ground, firing his gun. The plaser beam bounces off a nearby tree and the sentry topples over the watchtower's railing, dead.

The pair crawls up to have a look at him.

The guard's wrist transceiver sputters into life.

VOICE OVER

Anything wrong, 036?

Eaks, who was searching the dead guard's futuristic gear, hesitates.

Lomax motions him to answer.

EAKS

036 speaking. Everything's... aah.. OK. Just got rid of a couple of... groundhogs who were trying to crash the gate.

Lomax motions him angrily to cut it, but Eaks blows him a kiss.

VOICE OVER

(chuckling)

That's not really worth reporting, 036, but jot them down. One of us has got to try and beat Stark's record: 57 in one glorious day! Good luck. Over.

Eaks' face is dripping.

He's still holding the sentry's arm when the waifs start pouring out of the ruins and close in on them, threatening. Lomax glances at them, then at the portal near the tower.

LOMAX

(indicating the portal)

Let's see how good you are at crashing gates, man!

EAKS

And whaddya think I'm searching this stiff for? Rubbers?

He shakes the arm. The wristband beeps again, the gate clicks and rolls open just as the T.O charge.

Eaks grabs the dead guard's plaser, aims it at the waifs, but fails in firing it. Lomax drags him across the portal and it rolls back silently.

34 EXT. PARK. DAY

34

The air around them is alive with unknown sounds and calls. Flocks of tropical birds swarm the treetops, creatures of all breed swing from branch to branch, scoot in and out of the brush.

Lavish vegetation has taken over what seemed to have been a trim Park, turning it into a somewhat disheveled Eden. Colossus-trees soar high above.

The two men blunder on their way.

A king size snake brings them to reality.

They stand motionless but the reptile peacefully uncoils its endless body and slithers away with a contemptuous hiss.

35 EXT. GLADE. DAY

35

They reach an open stretch overgrown with tall grass.

EAKS

(Shivering)

What in tarnation is this Hurrah's nest  
? New-York or Kenya ?

LOMAX

Beats me. I sure wonder what this  
Organization is. We've got to find out  
before we do anything else.

EAKS

No way, man!

(points out the ESB)

Now we've got a landmark, maybe we can  
find ICARUS or whatever's left of it.

LOMAX

(indicates the landscape)

Why don't you open your eyes, lunkhead?  
How do you expect to find anything NOW?

EAKS

(walking on)

I'd rather expect anything than live  
through this nightmare. I don't want to  
kick the bucket here!

He studies the Empire State building, looks at the sun,  
indulges in a complicated gesticulation before indicating a  
direction.

EAKS

ICARUS is that way.

A heavy beating sounds behind them.

They face about. Triceratops is charging.

For a split second, they remain aghast, then Eaks grabs his companion's arm :

EAKS

This way !

On their right, the remains of several collapsed structures have cobbled up a hill of concrete and soil, with larger blocks jutting here and there and scarps reaching above the trees. Eaks and Lomax make a desperate dash for it.

EAKS

We'll never make it !

Still running, the beast lowers its head and threatens the men with its triple set of horns. Lomax dives into a bush and rolls over to the side. Bashes his head and stays sprawled in the tall grass, unconscious. Eaks makes for a concrete scarp, luring the tricy away from his companion

EAKS

(Waving his arms and jumping up and  
down)

Hey, you oversized triple horned  
archeo-bastard, come out here ! Ho, ho,  
Toro ! Anda la vaca !

The triceratops lowers its head again and charges. Lomax recovers. Dashes for the concrete crags and safety. Eaks sprints the last yards with the beast snorting on his heels, leaps for an overhanging ridge and scrambles up on top of it. The triceratops rams full speed into the jagged hill, knocking itself clear out.

36 EXT. HILL. DAY

36

Both men meet on top of the hill, panting. Lomax's forehead is bleeding. They watch the dazed triceratops at their feet.

EAKS

Sure ain't gonna let no fuckin'  
maverick get in MY hair!

Lomax glares at him and turns away. Opposite the crag stands a large clearing hacked out of the growth. In the middle of it, geodesic residences built on a system of crossed piles.

Several white objects, too distant to be identified, fly in and out. The whole place has got a high tech, neat and trim look about it that stands vigorously out against the boisterous flora.

Beyond, the ESB stands full height, entirely lined with a copper-like material and topped with an odd looking logo, a huge O and a spire. High above, in the sky, a ring of light or energy challenges the sun and revolves slowly.

LOMAX

Christ Almighty! It would take a millenium, not a century for our civilization to achieve that!

37 - EXT. PARK -RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT. DAY

37

He proceeds downhill towards the buildings.

LOMAX (CONT.)

And if this Organization of theirs can master such technology, they can probably help us out.

EAKS

You're a hopeless Pollyanna, John. Didn't you hear enough to understand that they kill whatever doesn't belong to their Organization ? We can't just walk up to them with a big smile and say "Hi, d'you know which way back to the 20<sup>th</sup> century ?"

LOMAX

We've still got to find out who they are and how they live.

Eaks pats the plaser.

EAKS

This is how they live, man, and it reminds me of a helluva stinkers all the way down History. So let's kick outta this place.

And he walks away.

Coming out of nowhere, two flying shadows swoop down on them.

They are sent rolling to the ground. Jump instantly to their feet, back to back.

Lomax reaches for his gun in his belt. It's not there but on the ground, a few feet from there. Lomax moves for it. A flying man bears down on it, snatches it and flies up again.

They look up. Two flying MG hover some 10 feet above the ground.

One of them is a hangdog-looking behemoth by the name of Stark. He's got the gun. His fellow Brian is medium size but the bantam athletic kind.

EAKS

I can't believe it ! These people  
actually fly !

STARK

(Threatening gesture)

Groundhogs, haw, haw! Squirming  
groundhogs !

(Crushes the gun to bits and pieces)

Oops ! Too bad, I was just playing. Do  
you want to play with us?

Brian slings his plaser over his back with a wicked grin.

BRIAN

Me and my friend are very playful, as  
you're gonna find out right now!

The two fly-men stretch their arms and legs, unfurling dark flaps that line their uniforms from shoulder to ankle, much like wings, and swoop down on their victims.

Brian goes for Eaks, Stark for Lomax. He clenches his huge paw to brain him.

Lomax ducks but the blow grazes his shoulder.

The guards flip over and dive again, fly in circles around their opponents.

Eaks dodges Brian, grabs one of his legs and strives to drag him down.

Brian wriggles straight upward, trying to shake Eaks off. He lashes out at him with his other foot and sends him crash-landing some ten feet below. Eaks is out.

Stark sweeps down on Lomax, stretching out both his fists like a battering ram.

Lomax falls back and kicks his foot up like a soccer player, hitting the airborne behemoth in the groin.

Stark doubles up and goes crashing against a tree-trunk.

Lomax brains him before he gets a chance to recover and wrenches his plaser away.

Brian whirls round but before he can draw his weapon, Lomax levels his plaser at him.

LOMAX

Hold still, Batman !

He cautiously edges away, waving his ray gun.

LOMAX

Now you come down for a nice, smooth landing.

The fly-man does as he's told. The flaps furl back as he touches ground.

Eaks cranes up to his feet, shaking his sore head.

LOMAX

Okay, Malko, take his fiddle.

Eaks takes the plaser and hustles Brian near his colleague.

VOICE OFF SCREEN

Well done, but I'm afraid the show is over now!

They jerk their weapons up.

Deployed in a large semi circle above them, a squad of some ten flying guards is checking them with their plasers, headed by a woman officer. Their uniforms are black with bright copper facings, flaps and helmet. Their badges coin them as a different unit.

Ten feet overhead, the woman considers the two crest-fallen MG sternly.

WOMAN OFFICER

The Aerocontarch will be delighted to find out how a pair of groundhogs ...grounded you. I hope you have a good story for him.

STARK

You Instructors have no business around here, Silver. This district is under the responsibility of the Manhattan Guards.

SILVER

Which precisely accounts for all the successful raids the Time Outcasts have been leading against the Organization. Now we know why, 075!

Stark opens his mouth to answer. She motions him to silence.

SILVER

I suggest you go and report to the Aerocontarch.

She flies down and snatches Lomax's plaser from him. Eaks trains his weapon on her and suddenly realizes there is no apparent trigger to fire it. The woman watches him ironically.

SILVER

Drop those weapons. You groundhogs wouldn't know how to use them anyway. They operate on mental impulse.

Eaks throws the plaser angrily on the ground. She picks it up and returns both weapons to their owners. They take them, hesitate. The Instructors make threatening moves. The two guards give up and fly off sullenly. The Instructors level their ray-guns at Eaks and Lomax like a firing squad.

EAKS

(shrugging)

I guess this is just a quicker way to kick out of this... hog-pen !

LOMAX

The dream of your lifetime, Malk. To be given the great heave-ho by a dame!

A faint smile comes over the woman's features. She waves the guards to rest their weapons.

SILVER

On second though, we may need men like you.

(Motions two of her men)

Take them in.

She flies off with the rest of her squad. The two Instructors holster their ray-guns. Eaks and Lomax are poised for defense. One of the Instructors produces a couple of antigrav disks from his belt and flings them at the two men. The disks pin on their shoulders and radiate an electric web that wraps them from head to toe. The guard hits a key on his wristband, Eaks and Lomax are whisked off the ground and they all fly towards the Empire State building.

38 EXT. ABOVE THE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT. DAY

38

Overhead shot of the residential area: people flying, others walking. Every now and then, a futuristic air shuttle zips by.

Eaks wriggles like a worm on a fish hook, glances at the lights blinking on his custodian's wristband.

EAKS

Hey man, don't fly so high, you're on low fuel!

The Instructor ignores him. Eaks looks at him, at the electric meshes around his own body.

EAKS

C'mon, tell me. How do you do that?

Instructor doesn't answer. Eaks grins at him.

EAKS

I take it you Instructors and the Manhattan Guards ain't really friends... sir ?

INSTRUCTOR #1

(Sharply)

The psychological approach won't work, mister. We have highly trained minds as well as bodies and you won't take us in as easily as you did those two meatheads. So keep quiet.

LOMAX

All we want to know is: what is this place exactly? What happened to New York ?

They come up to a large plaza in the center of which stands the Empire State Building. Its copper-lined façade flashes under the waning sun and reflects the strange, blinding tore that spins slowly above it in the sky.

Eaks and Lomax goggle at the breath taking sight.

INSTRUCTOR #2

This isn't New-York anymore. We are in a paradoxical time dimension called O Zone.

39 INT. ESB. MAIN ENTRANCE HALL. DAY

39

They land in a lofty hall almost half of the building's span and reaching the height of two or three regular stories. Various personnel fly in and out, others soar up large shafts obviously leading to the building's other floors. The Instructors and their prisoners move up one of those.

EAKS

They fly. They all fly. How do they do it?

INSTRUCTOR #1

The Aerocontarch will explain what he estimates fit for you to know.

LOMAX

Who?

40 INT. ESB - AEROCONTARCH'S H.Q.

40

Close on a tall, dark figure standing behind a transparent wall. He faces about, hits a switch and the wall slides open, revealing an arrogant personage whose stern features are framed by black hair done back and flat on the head: the Aerocontarch.

He is standing on somewhat of a rostrum, laden with instruments.

It hovers maybe 30 aloft, above a staff working on sophisticated apparatus ranging from high tech computers to communication units, the whole thing built in floating tiers all the way up a some 60ft high room.

Enter the two men and their escort

The Aerocontarch considers them silently. There is something definitely wicked about him. He concentrates, turns to Lomax first, actually reading his mind.

AEROCONTARCH

John Lomax... a maverick but a righteous one, incorruptible, genuine, flawless.. that is.. almost.

Eaks snickers. The Aerocontarch's eyes fasten on his.

AEROCONTARCH (CONT.)

Malcolm Eaks!

(Eaks freezes)

Totally corruptible he is, faithless,  
Godless and ruthless, a gentleman  
robber as he likes to dub himself.

Lomax smiles. Eaks frowns.

AEROCONTARCH (CONT.)

However, we can use both the virtuous  
and the bad here in O Zone.

Pause. He is not waiting for them to answer and proceeds.

AEROCONTARCH

O Zone: the very point of no return. We  
are stranded here in a universe that  
worked itself into a deadlock none of  
us can escape.

LOMAX

Well, it's about time someone told us  
about it.

AERO

(Dryly)

Speak when you're required to do so and  
only then.

He pauses for his remark to sink home, then waves his hand  
in a particular way, releasing a shiny speck that expands  
into a hologram and features the Organization's  
achievements.

AEROCONTARCH (CONT.)

The Organization that I head rules over  
a highly developed society, an elite  
carefully selected among the hoi-polloi  
that pour in through the time-gates and  
infest this new dimension.

EAKS

Brave New World, hey?

The Aerocontarch stares at him and he doubles up in pain,  
with a surprised gasp.

AERO

Don't compel me to implement one of the  
features of our superiority.. What I'm  
trying to say is ; the Organization is  
the single chance you will be offered  
to survive decently. Everywhere else

you will be met with underdeveloped communities resorting to primitive expedients to survive... that is keep alive just a little longer.

He flicks his fingers. The hologram exhibits a dreadful view of vagrant multitudes crowding the city's, and other cities', ruins.

LOMAX

Christ all mighty! What *did* happen?

AERO

Nothing but the result of a planet-wide Juggernaut that warped the Earth's timeline in 2299, as if it aged one thousand years in a minute, and created interfaces, the time-gates, between the present and the pasts. I am the only actual survivor of the last epoch and as such, the only holder of its knowledge and scientific achievements. You can see it at work, upgraded, here in O Zone.

EAKS

Long live Big Brother ! Don't figure on our...

LOMAX

...declining such a proposition. You've made your point and we've no vocation for hopeless panhandling even if it means freedom. Right, Malk ? So count us in.

AERO

Good. Now, one last thing.

*(Wicked smile)*

I'm sure you're dying to know how we can fly. Let me introduce you to our Sygmatron.

He holds his hand out. The hologram vanishes and part of the room's wall to his left becomes transparent, revealing a laboratory equipped with incredibly sophisticated machinery manned by a crew of scientists and technicians.

AERO

One of the most powerful sources of energy of all times : the sigma energy

released by the human brain. Properly collected and processed...

(He indicates a large machine reminding of a generator)

...it offers many applications. One of these is the development of an anti-gravitation system, relayed through an organic implant or Sygmarec, which enables us to escape gravity. Not actually fly, perhaps, but some of us get skilled enough to give that impression.

Pause. He grins and zaps another part of the wall. The two men start.

Human beings by the hundreds lie on metal bunks, rigged with a nasty-looking headset bristling with cables and wires connected to a collector behind them. Their faces bear the absent expression of zombies.

AERO

(Vicious chuckle)

The sigma energy has to be mass-produced to cover our needs and of course, the Organization is compelled to sacrifice some of its lowest specimens...

(He glares at the two men)

...and also those who endanger our society by proving too unruly or too smart. But I'm sure you will know where your duty... and your own interest lies...

41 INT. ESB: CELL

41

The place displays monastic austerity. Two bunks, built-in table and stools, a food dispenser.

Eaks stalks the room back and forth, probing the walls and the round diaphragm-door.

Lomax fiddles around the dispenser and it finally spits out a goblet full of some unidentified hot liquid. He tastes, frowns, and sends it down like medicine.

EAKS

(Hitting the walls with each word)

We're jugged ! canned ! penned !  
calaboosed ! Hoosegowed !

Lomax ignores his blue streak.

LOMAX

We still don't know what happened really. There's something wrong about this Brave New World tune the Aerocontarch's been singing to us. Something phony.

They gaze out of the window.

Manhattan, a jumble of tumbled mastodon edifices from the 23d century as far as they can see. Beyond the Park and residences, only a small district is kept under maintenance for the Organization's purpose, Water glints in the distance. Inlets have broken the peninsula up in three or four independent islands.

EAKS

Sure. A happy-few living high on the hog and starving the rest of the world to death in the name of democracy. It's a standard of human history.

LOMAX

Precisely. I've got a feeling Mister Aerobat treated us to a tall story. The truth lies somewhere in the past, before the 23<sup>d</sup> century. Something in Nadia's message hinted to that.

EAKS

ICARUS II ?

LOMAX

Yes. We sort of... came in too late. After it all happened. But I'm sure the Aerocontarch knows something he didn't tell us.

They hush. The diaphragm door opens, two MG enter.

MG #1

Follow us. We're taking you to the Sygmarec implant unit.

Eaks bounces with enthusiasm. He's all over the place.

EAKS

So we're really gonna fly? FLY? Wow, man! Hey Fuzz, d'ya realize?

Lomax remains thoughtful. He doesn't answer. Exeunt.

42 INT. PASSAGEWAY

42

They stroll down a tubular, metal corridor. Eaks hums a joyful tune. MG turns to him, sarcastic.

MG #2

You're gonna fly for sure, man... like a Scud missile of your time!

EAKS

(crestfallen)

Fly... like a *missile*?

MG #2

(guffawing)

There's two fun options included with the Sygmarec: a miniature radio beacon to spot you wherever you go and a micro explosive charge to, let's say, prevent any attempted treason.

(suggestive gesture)

Bang!

43 INT. ORGANIZATION GHQ

43

A crew of staff-officers, MG as well as Instructors, await the Aerocontarch in a very large hall lined in copper. He floats in and takes place on another hover-platform above them.

AERO

Gentlemen, the groundhogs' increasing raids in the Organization's estate stress your units' incapacity in controlling them. I hope you have good reasons for this.

MG C IN C

The groundhogs are growing in numbers every day, sir. They pour out of the interfaces like rats, bringing disease and infection with them, and they come from the entire time spectrum. We won't be able to hold them indefinitely.

MG OFFICER #2

And they are beginning to regroup and chances are that intelligent men might organize them into an actual rebel

army. Then we'll really have something on our hands, especially if they start developing weapons.

AEROCONTARCH

Don't forget we,

(turning to Silver)

That is, the Instructors, skim that scum continuously to remove all 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> century specimens that could prove useful or dangerous. That is how you all came to be members of this Organization.

SILVER

Maybe, but we still lack competent men to build up our units. The groundhogs have learned to outwit us now. They don't simply roam the outskirts of the Organization for food and shelter anymore and there's no way we can know who they are and how many.

(Looks scornfully at the MG)

Besides, our inner dissension considerably alters our efficiency.

AERO

I have a clincher that should bring all of you to an agreement.

He waves and a huge, heavily built man enters the room. They all hush.

He is dressed in shiny black uniform, boots and helmet with just a little tinge of *Darth Vader* about him. He gives the Aerocontarch a short bow and takes place without a word.

AERO

May I introduce you to the leader of our new crack regiments, the ABAD extermination units. They have been secretly trained and conditioned to eradicate our problem when the situation comes out of hand, and also to face any eventual force from survival zones in the other countries.

With a wicked smile, he watches his staff shift uneasily. Flicks his fingers and the image of a huge flying destroyer appears on the main view screen. They gasp.

AEROCONTARCH

We have developed a weapon so efficient that we shall use it only in the last resort.

(turns menacingly to the MG officers)

That we do or don't use it is now up to you, for it has been conceived to destroy, regardless what.

They cringe.

Silver studies Black Leader's helmeted face closely. Man or robot? Black eyes briefly meet hers behind the visor, then turn away in cold indifference

AEROCONTARCH

Neither man nor robot, my dear. No hollow moods, no bootless questioning. He and his siblings now go by one single and basic axiom "Kill or get killed".

44 INT. ESB : ANOTHER CORRIDOR

44

Eaks, Lomax and their warders reach a large pit or shaft obviously leading to the building's other levels and wide enough to admit small shuttles. The two men peek down: Breathtaking. A strong draft whips their faces. They back out.

A deep roar rattles the walls and floor. There is much shouting, MG soar past them and vanish in side galleries.

MG #1 (LOOKING UP)

Looks like Abad One is operational. We just gotta see that!

They drag Eaks and Lomax up another shaft.

45 INT. ESB : DOCKING BAY

45

They pop into a docking bay the size of the building's span. One of its walls opens on the outside like a huge aerial hangar door.

Much confusion around. MG busy themselves moving a fleet of shuttles when a gigantic shadow blots the access to the flight deck. An ABAD destroyer roars in approach, raking the whole tower.

A squad of Black Guard marches in the docking bay, hustling the MG away to enable the behemoth aircraft to dock in.

Beyond the transparent cockpit panes, the pilots can be seen shouting and gesturing for the men to clear the way.

The destroyer lumbers through the access deck, too narrow for it, its tail sweeps through a row of shuttles that bust like glass. The Black Guards drive back the excited MG who are trying to save their vehicles.

MG

(waving his fist at the cockpit)  
Hey, you fucking two bit pilots! Move that helluva flying mammoth out of our docking bay!

The Black Guards burst out laughing. The machine's lateral stabilizers scrape the walls a few feet from the two guards and their prisoners. Eaks and Lomax take a diver.

EAKS

You don't argue with a mammoth, dolthead! You just make way for him!

The stabilizers grate a shower of splinters off the walls as the destroyer settles heavily. The two MG are smashed. Eaks and Lomax roll over and squeeze into a nearby air vent.

46 INT ESB: AIR DUCTS 46

Endless slide down and along anodized ducts.

47 INT. ESB : ANOTHER AIR DUCT 47

They are dumped in a larger duct, vaguely lit. There is a grate at the far end, fending off the access to an unseen room.

Voices sound.

Eaks and Lomax start backing up cautiously.

AEROCONTARCH (VOICE OVER)

My Sygmarec synchronizer is out of order again, Father.

Eaks and Lomax exchange astounded gazes. They creep near the grate and peer into the room.

48 INT. LABORATORY

48

High tech lab brimming with the now usual sophisticated apparatus and computers. Staff of assistants at work.

The Aerocontarch stands respectfully before a scientist in his sixties, of austere features, and undoubtedly in chief of the lab. Maybe more.

The man, dubbed Number One, hits a switch on a control panel and an operating table rigged with instruments slides out of the wall. The Aerocontarch settles on it.

AEROCONTARCH

You know my cybernetic system must match the capacities of my brains if I am to rule this Organization.

The scientist ignores his remark. He quickly slits the Aerocontarch's chest, reaches for an overhanging instrument that has more to do with electronics than surgery.

Close on the Aerocontarch's open body. A transparent, viscous fluid oozes out, the rib cage holds a complicate jumble of wires and electronic components.

INT. AIR DUCT.

Eaks and Lomax gasp. Eaks opens his mouth, Lomax nudges him to shut up.

INT. LAB.

NUMBER ONE

(sharply, while working)

Don't forget *I* rule this world, cyborg. My experiments on space-time interfaces haven't failed as you suggest, so don't try to outsmart me.

AEROCONTARCH

*Your* experiments? Aren't you forgetting the other members of the ICARUS II Brains-trust?

Number One waves his laser instrument threateningly.

NUMBER ONE

*You* have better not forget what happened to *them* and all those who crossed my plans for this world.

He goes on working briskly.

NUMBER ONE

Regardless of what my... our experiment triggered, we are given a unique chance of achieving an entirely new society that the Power Ring will soon allow us to keep under thorough control, when it is fully charged.

He nods at a special set of instruments rigged to an oblong console.

AEROCONTARCH

That is if the unidentified element that caused your first trial run to fail doesn't occur again.

Number One is through welding his chest shut. Aerocontarch stands and dresses. He looks up and sees Eaks and Lomax behind the grate. His eyes flare.

-INT. AIR DUCT.

Eaks shoves Lomax to one side. The Aerocontarch's eyes radiate two lethal power rays that cross the grate and miss them by an inch.

They scuttle back along and into a side duct.

-INT. LAB.

Number One waves the Aerocontarch to hurry.

NUMBER ONE

You must find those men at all costs. They overheard something no one here is supposed to know!

Exit the Aerocontarch.

Number One sits wearily at one of the consoles and starts typing. A monitor buzzes. He gives it a puzzled look, clicks to enter the data on his computer.

An unidentifiable wire figure builds up on screen. He watches it, astonished.

Behind him, a dark, viscous fluid trickles down the wall, stretches in ripples on the ground and builds up in the like of the figure on screen.

Moments later, it has shaped into a duplicate of the Aerocontarch, save for the head which remains a hideous blob ridden with electric sparks.

Number One faces about slowly. His eyes bulge, his mouth drops.

49 INT. ESB : VERTICAL SHAFT

49

Eaks and Lomax slide along a vertical copper shaft, one above the other, bracing as they can.

EAKS

(grumbling with the effort)

What in the world is this loony place anyway? Not only do we have a Terminator in our hair, but a mad scientist to match him!

(slides down a couple of feet)

And speaking of one Terminator, maybe there's a whole slew of 'em.

LOMAX

(breathing hard)

Quit bitching, will you? Didn't you hear them mention ICARUS? I told you the truth lies somewhere before their century.

They reach a flat level and squeeze out of the duct.

50 INT. PASSAGEWAY

50

They hop down into another passageway, so high it reminds of a metal canyon.

Strong draft blows out of a nearby access shaft

LOMAX (CONT.)

Everything here seems linked with ICARUS...

SILVER (BEHIND THEM)

You're definitely very interesting, gentlemen!

They start, wheel round and face Silver, hovering a few inches off the floor.

EAKS

(cheeky)

And you're definitely damn hard to shake off!

LOMAX

And also definitely damn alone...

Eaks gives him an approving glance and pounces on her. She flies up, flips over and behind him, grabs his belt, wrenches him off the ground and holds him above the main access shaft to consider a potential 300 feet drop. He gulps and freezes. Lomax hasn't moved a hair and considers them, quite amused.

LOMAX

I was figuring on something like that. He never did know how to talk to ladies!

SILVER

(she's in no joking mood)

He'll never talk again if you don't tell me what you know about ICARUS.

EAKS

(hoarse voice)

Stop fooling around and tell her everything!

LOMAX

(gives Silver a keen eye)

I know one thing: Icarus died from flying too close to the sun...

Silver starts. She sets Eaks on his feet and sets an inquiring gaze on him.

SILVER

Just who are you to be informed of facts no one else knows about?

MG fly down the passageway. An officer calls out to her.

OFFICER

So you did find them? Good, lock them up and report to the Aerocontarch, on the double!

51 INT. NEUTRALIZATION CELL. DAY

51

A bare, metal walled, vaulted room. On the floor, circles about 10 feet in diameter.

Silver shoves her prisoners in one of these, backs out and activates a gadget in her belt. Power rays rise out of the floor and lock them behind luminous bars.

LOMAX

You're all being manipulated. We both actually did see this scientist repairing the doggone cyborg that calls itself the Aerocontarch.

Silver conceals her uneasiness and starts walking away.

LOMAX

(desperate)

ICARUS II stole the achievements of *our* time, they have already destroyed our world! Open your eyes! Don't let them do something even worse. They can also destroy our past, all the pasts!

She starts, gives him a long, thoughtful gaze and finally flies out of the gaol without a word.

52 EXT. DETENTION BUILDING. DAY 52

Silver flies out, lands and walks to her shuttle docked nearby. Her gait is uncertain, her face distraught. She boards the craft, absent-minded.

- INT. SHUTTLE.

Tries to activate the mental controls but her thoughts are elsewhere.

53 MONTAGE. FLASH SHOTS OF HER PAST 53

- INT. 23<sup>rd</sup> CENTURY ULTRA HIGH TECH LAB.

Multinational crew of scientists at work. The diagrams and images displayed on the various monitors are familiar to us : on the room's opposite wall, a huge emblem reads : ICARUS II. Silver works on a console.

- INT. CONFERENCE ROOM.

Oval table equipped with computers. Large view screen features singular, almost alien-looking, installations somewhere in the desert. Gigantic mirrors, towering pylons topped with huge metal spheres, a dome, the whole thing alive with electric bolts. More of these stand in other locations : Siberian tundra, unidentified ice-fields, pacific atoll.

Seven scientists, the ICARUS Brain-Trust, are involved in hot discussion with the rest of the team. Silver sits at the far end of the table, gawking at the incredible contraption on screen. Shakes her head in awed refusal. The team is harshly dismissed.

- INT. FILE ROOM.

Rows and rows of built-in filing cabinets. Silver riffles through oodles of disks, doesn't find what she's looking for, sits thinking. Idea. Stands. Studies the cabinets and the walls. Finds a hidden mechanism. Whole section swings open.

- INT. ICARUS ONE.

Devastated room full of burnt rubble and dust. The Icarus statue lies on the floor. Dim light. A cleaned up path leads to a table supporting a very old portable computer. It has obviously been restored. She manipulates the keyboard cautiously. It is perfectly operational. A file draws her attention : "ICARUS II : potential future data". She is about to enter. A hand sneaks over her shoulder and turns the computer off. She swivels, faces the Brains-Trust Big gun (later identified as Number One).

- EXT. ICARUS II RESEARCH FACILITY, MOHAVE DESERT. DAY  
Thunderstorm rakes the installations, bolts zap around the spheres and pylons. Big Gun sits under a dome, manipulating some instruments. His assistants drag Silver towards an ugly looking portico bracketed with instruments and thrust her in. Big Gun hits a series of switches. A blue vortex bursts into life and bang, she's gone.

- INTERFACE

She spins endlessly in a world of flashing lights, a bright pyramidal shape drifts ahead of her.

- EXT. O ZONE. DAY

Silver lies in the middle of an apocalyptic New York. 23<sup>rd</sup> century buildings around her collapse and crumble silently as in an accelerated deteriorating process. Bustling crowds are suddenly stilled and mummified, blown to ashes. Weeds and awkward vegetation pop out of the ground. She screams and screams and folds her arms over her head.

54 INT. SHUTTLE. DAY

54

And screams in her shuttle's cockpit. Her eyes are wild and face streaming, fists desperately banging the control panel. Then she suddenly comes to.

VOICE OVER COM.

H.Q speaking, do you hear me? Please report to the Aerocontarch at once.

55 INT. AEROCONTARCH HQ. DAY

55

Silver is standing on the Aerocontarch's rostrum, she has finished her report.

AEROCONTARCH

Good. You may go now.

She remains at rest and takes in a deep breath.

SILVER

Sir? I beg your pardon, sir, but is there a connection between our world and ICARUS?

He starts and glares at her.

AEROCONTARCH

And what are the grounds to such a question?.

She falters, scared although she tries her best not to show it.

SILVER

It's the two men I arrested. They mentioned ICARUS. They...

(pause, then in one go)

Forgive me sir, but they seemed to suggest that ... that another man rules the Organization.

He stands, puts his hands behind his back and turns around her.

AEROCONTARCH

(calmly)

02, I knew from the start where you came from. I've heard about ICARUS II. So, take my advice and forget about it: what happened here did after your own ... ordeal took place. ICARUS II and the Brains-Trust have been wiped out. No one else rules the Organization.

He turns to a comlink and hits a switch.

STARK (VOICE OVER COM)  
Yes sir?

AEROCONTARCH  
Put the two runaways to death.

Silver hasn't moved. He nods at her.

AEROCONTARCH  
I said, you may go.

56 INT. ROSTRUM

56

He hits a switch and opalescent panels slide down, isolating him from the rest of the room. Turns to a window and contemplates North Manhattan, then beyond, the Harlem inlet and the misty outlines of Haze Island.. Heavy fog rolls in and conceals the landscape beyond the inlet.

AEROCONTARCH  
(speaking to himself)  
So other mental units did succeed in entering O Zone.

A very faint noise sounds, at first dim then clear : something like a distant drumbeat. The face of Spirit of the Earth crosses the mists and vanishes. An incantation backs up the tom-tom rhythm. The Aerocontarch's eyes flare. The vision and the sound subside.

AEROCONTARCH  
>>> Who are you ? A magician ? A Shaman ? Shamans are nothing but primitive legends. A mere telepath then ? Answer me, show up!

Another flash zaps his mind. He starts. Fugitive vision of a white faced humanoid.

WHITE FACE  
>>> Don't underestimate telepaths, they are a token of the futures...

The Aerocontarch stretches his hand out: the vision stabilizes for a split second, then the white face gives way before a hideous visage bathed in purple hues. The Aerocontarch gasps. Vision vanishes. He concentrates.

AEROCONTARCH  
(to himself)

One of them doesn't belong to this dimension. I feel danger. He is questing for something... but he is not alone...

He retrieves his cyborg composure, moves to a videocom and activates it.

Number One's bony features appear on the monitor, team at work b.g. There is something odd about his look. Aerocontarch takes in a deep breath.

AEROCONTARCH

Father? I have stored disturbing information that I would like to talk over with you.

NUMBER ONE

I have already been informed. There is no need to worry about it all. Everything is in accordance with my plans. We shall soon proceed with the elimination of all undesired elements.

57 INT. LABORATORY

57

Number One leans over and turns the videocom off. When he straightens, his eyes are evil. He turns to his team. They are all clones of the scientist.

58 EXT. ESB. DAY

58

Silver flies out of the building. Several Instructors are waiting for her, near their shuttles. She lands next to them. They give her an inquiring look.

SILVER

We are going back to our quarters in Battery Island. I don't like what's going to take place and I don't want the Instructors to have any part in it.

They nod silently and board their shuttles. She watches them take off. Thinks, then quickly produces the detention building's remote control security device and deactivates it before boarding her own aircraft.

59 INT. NEUTRALIZATION CELL. DAY

59

Eaks is studying the power rays that surround them, pokes cautiously at one of them. It dwindles and vanishes in the ground. So does a network of laser beams spread out between the cells and the exit corridor. Eaks hastily pulls his hand back and gives it a puzzled glance.

LOMAX

(surprised)

How'd you do that?

EAKS

Beats me but let's vamoose before it comes back, and kick the hell out of this Organized Shangri-la!

They creep cautiously down a maze of corridors. No guards. Just electronic surveillance systems that go out one after the other as they proceed.

LOMAX

No. I've got a feeling we've a part to play right here. And first of all, find ICARUS II.

Eaks inches towards the exit, eyeing the mute security devices.

EAKS

Let me tell you one thing, Fuzzypuss. There's probably nothing left of ICARUS one or two. So I'm gonna put as much land as I can between me and that bunch of whacks.

Lomax stops short, frowns. He hears a voice.

SILVER

>>>You will find what you are looking for under the Great Library. Good luck.

LOMAX

Hey, what's that! Who's speaking? Hey!  
Wait!

EAKS

What's the matter with you?

LOMAX

The Library... ICARUS... Maybe only a few yards from us! I hate to say this, but somebody just talked to me... through ESP.

EAKS

Sure, man, and Marilyn Monroe's ghost just gave me a date!

Lomax grasps his arm.

LOMAX

No kidding, Malk. I mean it. We've got to stick around until we find ICARUS. There's more at stake than our own lives. Remember, the fate of mankind may depend on it.

EAKS

Listen, I'm pissed off with the whole deal, including mankind. All I'm interested in is me, myself and I. So let's split. You go your way and I go mine, period.

He shoves him back and steps out of the building. Lomax stands motionless.

60 INT. ESB : MANHATTAN GUARD HQ

60

Officers and staff chat around an array of monitor screens featuring different Manhattan and suburb locations. Stark enters. Stern. Moves to MG C in C, snaps to attention and whispers a few words. C in C nods, concerned, and moves to a videocom. Aerocontarch's face frames in.

C IN C

Sir? The two prisoners are on the run.

AEROCONTARCH (OVER COM)

WHAT? Bring them in, dead or alive!

C IN C

One of them has been spotted near the Theme Park, sir. We needn't bother about him, the place is crawling with half wild creatures that will cook his goose. If they don't, our flying watchdogs will! Ha Ha!

AEROCONTARCH (OVER COM)

You had better make sure they do. And the other ?

C in C gives Stark a sly glance.

C IN C

I take it Stark will personally see to the matter .

AEROCONTARCH (OVER COM)

He had better do so. Anything else?

C in C sighs, types on a keyboard.

Computer screen displays a shot of a T.O encampment, somewhere in what used to be the Bronx. The wastelands there seem a trifle less desolate. T.O live in makeshift shacks, partially restored buildings or even in the huge trees.

A group of ragged soldiers drag the body of a beheaded MG, strip him of his uniform and weapons, then vanish into a nearby manhole with their booty.

C IN C

Yes sir. Groundhogs seem to get organized in somewhat of ah... dissident groups in the suburbs.

AEROCONTARCH (OVER COM)

Well it's your job to see that they keep out of trouble, isn't it? What are you waiting for? Wipe them out before they *really* get in your hair!

61 EXT. BRONX. DAY

61

Bronx. Close on the waifs in the camp shows they are exclusively men, with the tattered look of raiders and soldiers of fortune. They busy themselves silently.

62 INT. UNDERGROUND

62

A torch lit tunnel leads to a mostly caved-in subway station. The soldiers seen previously head for a battered car at the far end of the station.

- INT. SUB CAR.

It appears as the headquarters of an underground rebel organization, loaded with knocked up equipment and an arsenal of various weapons.

It is presently occupied by a motley crew of soldiers from different ages, the uniforms of whom are so dingy they are unrecognizable. They are busy fitting makeshift weapons and stolen plasars with triggers and detonators.

They surround a couple of officers obviously hailing from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Jay and Ted, who are studying a couple of hand made maps.

The soldiers enter the car, happily waving their booty. The officers look up at them and smile.

JAY

Fine. The more of these ray-guns we can have, the better our chances to fight the Organization.

Ted points out a spot on the map.

TED

And to start with, we will launch our first offensive here. Ward Island. It is not guarded and if we manage to establish a bridgehead, we can next raid Manhattan with some chance of success.

Jay considers the map. His face is stern.

JAY

Let's essentially hope other rebel groups will join us. I heard they've been gathering North.

63 EXT. STOCKADE- NO MAN'S LAND. NIGHT

63

Eaks leaps off the last of the stockade's triple walls. The watch-tower stands far to his right. The moon is high. He glances around, makes sure he is alone and takes his bearings.

EAKS

Let's see... North... Yep, it's best to move north. I'll bet there's not a living soul out there.

He creeps along the palisade, making his way northward. Dark winged figures cross the sky above him, giving out a strange muffled cry. He proceeds swiftly, reaches an open stretch some 100 yards wide and completely leveled down. Beyond, the collapsed structures of a theme park are silhouetted against the moon, chaperoned by the cyclopean carcass of a once 1600 feet high tower. He reaches the far end of the no man's land. Ahead, an intricate mess of debris bound into a rough barrier. He quickens his pace. Overhead, the membranous croak again. The winged figures sail aloft, circle and glide into the theme park. He sighs in relief, mops his face and dives for shelter under the barrier.

64 EXT. PARK NIGHT

64

Lomax moves stealthily over small hills, scarps and crags overgrown with brushwood . The Power Ring reels slowly in the dark sky, casting a gloomy twilight over the landscape. Chasing several small predators away, kicking off a few snakes and shooing one or two unknown flying things, he heads for a vague clearing, maybe a former square. Clumps of colossal gymnosperms overlook the remains of several edifices, so crawling with weed and creepers they remind of ruined temples in an Indonesian jungle.

LOMAX

(losing heart)

Christ! How am I supposed to find anything in a mess like this? What the hell did she mean by The Great Library anyway?

A muffled croak sounds overhead.  
The brush hushes.  
Lomax freezes.  
A shadow stretches over the clearing.  
Lomax looks up and catches sight of a pterosaur overhead.  
Waits. There still is no noise, the animals keep silent.  
Crosses the clearing.  
Blood-curdling shriek.  
The pterosaur dives like a bomber.

Lomax runs, trips, falls, rolls over on his back.  
The predator flies over head and vanishes beyond the trees.  
Lomax stands. Whew.  
Coming out of nowhere, a plaser bolt lashes at the ground  
just in front of him.

STARK (VOICE OVER)

Watch out, you worm ridden baboons ! We  
want him alive !

Lomax scrambles for the ruins while four darks silhouettes  
soar out of the woods.

65 INT. RUINED LIBRARY

65

Lomax ploughs through a mess of tangled creepers, feels his  
way along stragglng blocks.  
Heavy blundering behind him.  
Lomax squeezes through God knows what obstacle.  
The glaring Ring and the moon cast vague patches of light  
through what has been windows.

VOICE OVER

Where is he ?

STARK (OVER)

Somewhere in there, lunkhead !

Lomax hears them searching the rubble. He creeps further  
off, scales a heap of debris.

- INT. READING ROOM.

And lands in a ruined reading room. Fallen blocks and  
frameworks merge with soil, roots and weeds, building up an  
eerie chapel littered with decayed paper.  
Lomax trudges into a compost of leaves and bindings,  
stoops, picks up a rotten book.

LOMAX

Well I'll be damned! The Library!

Moonlit bookcases, miles of rosewood shelving come into  
sight. He stands gaping.

STARK (VOICE OVER)

There he is ! Smoke him out !

A volley of plaser bursts crisscross the room.  
Clumps of paper and wood catch on fire. The blaze spreads  
with surprising speed.

Lomax runs straight ahead of him, heads for a recess at the far end of the room.

- RECESS.

Pale like ghosts under the moonshine, a collection of statues greets him. At their feet, armored glass cases contain scrolls and manuscripts.

Plaser blast returns them to nothingness.

Lomax crouches behind a statue.

A winged effigy of Icarus, smaller duplicate of the statue we know.

Lomax sees it, realizes and starts fiddling around it feverishly. Fire is closing in on him.

There is a click, a whir, and he goes under with a surprised cry.

66 INT. UNDERGROUND BUNKER

66

He rolls and bumps endlessly down a steep staircase and lands hard on his behind

He sits shocked for a second or two.

A loud crack sounds overhead and flaming debris come flying down the staircase.

He rolls to avoid them.

The voices of the hounding MGs ring out above him.

STARK (OVER)

Get down in there ! Don't let him escape!

Lomax grabs a burning piece of wood and holds it up.

He is standing in a party collapsed bunker. Starts running while the MG cautiously clear the incandescent fragments and start down the pit.

Moments later, he comes up against a wall of crumbled debris.

STARK (OFF SCREEN)

Give it up, Lomax. There's no way out !

A plaser beam glances off the wall.

He ducks.

The plaser has blasted a hole in the wall. He pulls out a few extra rocks and squeezes through.

Stark enters, holds his men, trains a powerful flash light on the hole. MG #1 is already pushing his way through.

MG#1

C'mon! After him

Stark shakes his head, sniffs, activates some kind of a detector on his wrist band, studies it.

STARK

No. We're too close to the Biopholysers' hive. He's heading straight for them!

They shudder. Stark snickers.

STARK

There won't be enough of him left to bring back...

67 EXT. THEME PARK. NIGHT

67

Eaks stumbles along with nothing but the moonlight to go by.

Out of the ruins stand the outlines of a mock Eiffel Tower, an Egyptian pyramid, a reduced Taj Mahal, an immense and half crumbled Plexiglas sphere. Here and there, the remains of regular merry-go-rounds, roller-coasters, you name it. Indistinct noises, rustling and shuffling, sound behind as well as ahead of him.

Dark figures skulk all around. Man or beast?

He speeds up but the trudging catches up with him.

Shadows rise from the concrete blocks and overhead on the broken walls. They are all over.

Coming into the moonlight, hordes of waifs from an out-of-time Hall of Miracles. They cry and rail at him in multiple dialects, but their intentions are clear.

Eaks remains aghast for a few seconds, then quickly jumps on an overhanging girder.

He chooses his path upward, vaulting the debris and springing like a tomcat on the spree from one felled structure to the other.

The mob leads the chase on the ground, preventing him from coming down. A party of younger men and women follow him up in his aerial flight.

- EXT. BELVEDERE.

Eaks scrambles up a rickety staircase leading to a belvedere, five or six bums howling on his heels.

Leaps for an antenna on top of it and lashes out at a couple of his pursuers, sending them over the narrow terrace's handrail.

Climbs up the swaying pole until it bends and swings down under his weight towards a nearby roller-coaster and slams down on it.

- ROLLER COASTER.

Eaks lands on the unsteady structure.

A rust eaten supporting pile gives way under the impact, teeters and goes down in a crash, bringing a whole section of the coaster's rails to the ground with it.

The mob beneath hollers triumphantly as Eaks stays marooned atop the disheveled metal web.

They badger the weakened girders with metal poles and bars. With a nerve-raking crack, the structure starts rocking, debris shower the scattering crowd underneath. Its last cables snap and whip across the air.

Eaks ducks one of the lashes, grabs it and flies off the coaster as it tears apart and crashes.

The other end of the cable is still fastened to a pile. Eaks sweeps down in a wide circling motion.

Gathered at some distance from the wreck, the mob shakes its fists at him with hateful yells.

He comes diving for them, holding his feet out and slashes through a group of waifs before the pendulum motion of the cable drags him up and away.

- SPOOF EIFFEL TOWER.

It straddles the entrance of a mock "Casino de Paris".

Releasing the cable, Eaks somersaults in mid air to gain enough momentum and slams into its upper structure. He grapples for a firm hold and slides several feet down before he can check his fall with both hands and feet.

A dozen tough-looking fellows climb the tower and come for him.

He looks around quickly and sees a loose chain dangling near his head.

Yanks it free and wields it at his pursuers.

The chain slams in a skull. Man goes down with a shriek.

Another climbs right behind and grabs Eaks' ankle.

A man wrenches the chain from him and lashes out.

Eaks loses his foothold.

The crowd beneath cheers.

Eaks catches onto a large round pole with his legs, grabs the chain, gives it a jerk and sends the man sailing to the ground, 60 or some feet below.

Looks for a way out. The casino's roof is only a few feet away.

- EXT. CASINO

He takes a deep breath and flings himself across the air, lands on the roof and slides down. He catches on the very

brim of the roof, half of his body dangling out, manages to heave up and remains flat on the slanted surface, panting. Looks down. He is only one story above an esplanade leading in a huge hall.

The mob below floods the stairs leading to the entrance.

A membranous cry sounds through the air, high above.

The waifs scat like a bunch of rats, disappear into manholes or among the ruins.

Eaks eases himself down on the terrace, poised for whatever may be coming at him, and moves stealthily towards the entrance of a shopping arcade.

68 INT. SHOPPING ARCADE. NIGHT

68

Eaks speeds along side galleries, keeping a wary eye on the T.O.

Reaches a central hall housing a sphere some three stories high and featuring the Earth. Footbridges radiate out of it towards other galleries on the upper levels.

A man jumps down an overhanging structure and lands only a few feet from him. His crumpled attire recalls that of the 18<sup>th</sup> century's sailors, half whale-man, half pirate. Black B. is the name.

Eaks braces. His new opponent wields a sizeable blade at him

BLACK B.

I'm gonna butcher you, you flying shark!

EAKS

*Viens-y donc, marin d'eau douce !*

The man stops short, puzzled.

BLACK B.

You ain't one of them Manhattan Bats ?

EAKS

Hell no ! I just took to the hills.

BLACK B.

(Still defiant)

Then prove it and join our crew. We need rascals like you to fight them flying sharks!

EAKS

Oh no, man! No way! Nobody's gonna enlist Malcolm Archibald Eaks to fight no one.

BLACK B.

(threatening)

Take care, landlubber, if ya ain't with us, ye're against us!

Black B. waves his men to the quarry. Quick as thought, Eaks tackles the sailor and wrenches his knife from him.

EAKS

Sorry, Long John Silver. I'm with me and against all the others!

He vaults the handrail and leaps on a cat-walk leading to the globe. It rattles dangerously and he totters as he runs along.

His pursuers close in on him.

He looks around desperately and spots a collection of king size banners dangling from a round central hanger near the ceiling all the way down to the first floor

He springs for one of the banners, holding his knife out. It buries in the heavy hanging that rips apart under his weight and eases him down in a cloud of dust.

Eaks breaks his fall, grabs hold of the fabric, swings sideways and lands on a terrace.

It leads out of the hall to a block of four broken buildings.

69 INT. BUILDING. NIGHT

69

He scuttles up flights of stairs, so ruined they are mostly in open air.

Moments later, his pursuers are on his tail again. Voices call out below him, flickering torch lights dot the night.

Eaks scoots along a corridor. The walls are down, it hangs almost in mid air. Draughts whip around. He looks outside.

His POV. The four buildings enclose a square which displays what could be termed at best as a "fly-in" market place.

Platforms arranged in tiers are rigged to the buildings and span the open space between them like a huge web.

Among the ruined shacks, skeletons of shopkeepers, peddlers and customers, perched in positions they could have reached only in flight.

70 EXT. FLY-IN MARKET. NIGHT

70

Eaks vaults the remains of a crumbled window. Squalls meet him. He stumbles.

The howling mob is only one or two floors below.

He braces and proceeds on the platforms. Most of their riggings have snapped free and they dangle awkwardly, rocked by the wind.

Eaks frowns, grasps a broken handrail, inches along the first platform. Slips and loses his balance several times before reaching the middle of the web.

Time-Outcasts pop out of the building and start running along the platforms.

The whole system jolts about, molded cables and structures give way.

Waifs fall over the ruptured handrails or through the floorings.

Eaks holds fast onto his own support.

Several brawny bums have crawled up only a few feet away from him.

Eaks looks down, sizes a possible twenty -story jump and shudders in disgust. Faces the bums, waves his cutlass and lashes out at them.

EAKS

(Hollering)

*La garde meurt mais ne se rend pas!*

They suddenly fall back in panic and scramble for the building.

A broad smile comes over Eaks' face: he believes his assault has generated such an unquestioned retreat. Letting out his rebel yell, he wields his knife over his head.

The actual reason for his antagonists' drawback sails overhead.

Shrieks answer Eaks' victorious cry.

He looks up. A flight of monsters glide out of their lair at the top of the Park's giant tower building and hover in circles above them. Pterosaurs. Huge.

With deafening screeches, they bear down on the platforms. Snatch up the waifs who writhe and shout in agony.

One of the men buries his cutlass in the talon of the beast that is carrying him off. The pterosaur rams him against a wall and proceeds with his limp, dislocated body.

Others attack the men in the buildings. They claw at the walls to enlarge the breaches, their flapping wings beat up a tremendous turmoil about and they thrust their beaks to fish their prey out.

Eaks keeps flat on his platform, despite the jolts triggered by the rampaging brutes.

His POV: they fly awfully close. They wear a harness with the MG 's badge on it.

One of the pterosaurs spots him. Sweeps down, talons extended.

Eaks grabs the loose end of a dangling handrail and leaps off the platform to avoid it.

The monster misses him but its talons clamp on the rail, ripping it out of its sockets. It flies off with it and the man.

A radio receiver imbedded in the raptor's harness emits a shrill beep.

The whole squad banks, wings storming, and sails out northward.

71 INT. ESB - MANHATTAN GUARD HQ

71

MG Officers and staff are viewing a scene of destruction over their monitors.

ON SCREEN: The Black Guard in action. The ABAD destroyer flanked by four fighter-crafts slowly sweeps over the Theme Park, blasting away as it moves. It belches hellfire and disintegrates all the remaining structures. They leave nothing but scorched earth.

T.O scuttle off in panicked herds, chased and decimated by the fighters and airborne strike squads riding jet-bikes. The Theme Park's cyclopean tower implodes.

MG C IN C

(rasping his throat)

I'd hate to see those guys renew this trial run of theirs full size.

MG officer sneaks in. Ill at ease.

MG OFFICER

A-hem... Sir?... We seem to be facing a small problem in the fifth district.

C IN C

(raising his eyebrow)

Have I heard the word "problem", 501? Pertaining to ground-hogs?

MG OFFICER

(gulping)

Yes sir. They are moving to take position on Randall's Island. Regular commandos.

C IN C

Did you say Randall? No use bothering about it then. Our pterosaurs will suffice. And if they don't, we'll send in a few strike squads.

MG OFFICER

Aye, aye, sir!

C IN C

(scanning his frightened staff)  
Because if we *don't* handle this ...  
problem, you all know what it means.

He turns to Stark who has just stepped in.

C IN C

I hope you did handle *your* problem,  
075?

STARK

(jocose)

Yes sir! He's a cooked goose, if I may  
say so!

72 INT. UNDERGROUND

72

Lomax trudges along, holding his torch up. Something is different. No water dribbling, no more sludge on the ground. A few yards later, it is bone dry. Dusty. Particles catch in his firebrand, sizzling like sparklers. He sniffs, coughs. Runs his fingers on the wall : it chips off like an overcooked pie. The air around him is electric, almost ionized. He slackens pace, wary now. A faint glow ahead. He stops, listens : an almost imperceptible hum fills the place. His face pricks. He rubs it nervously. Every now and then his hair stands on his head as if ruffled by a light draught.

LOMAX

(Mumbling to himself)

Now what's this ? An electromagnetic  
field, *here*?

The glow materializes in dull wreaths that float around him. They carry bright particles - micro prismatic

crystals- that zap around him like bugs attracted to his torch.

He looks at it. It sparkles like Bengal lights. He shakes it, it puts forth a blue green halo.

More and more shiny dots surge from the wreaths and wade into the light.

They catch in his hair, singe him. He brushes them off.

LOMAX

Hey !

They're after him like angry bees.

The hum rises to a discomfoting electronic shrill.

Lomax sprints.

The wreaths become denser, condense in strange shiny forms that buzz after him and his fire brand. It blazes like hell, the things seem to suck in some kind of energy from it.

- INT. BIOPHOLYSERS' CAVE.

He comes into a fairly large cavern, misses a grade leading down to it and tumbles.

The hum is deafening, a chorus of crackles, sputters and steady drone.

The place is crawling with the luminous creatures. They gather around a cyclopean hive, so bright one cannot look at it.

The micro-organisms that have bathed in his torch's reviving photons hastily bring their fodder to the hive. It swells to frightful proportions.

Several of the invigorated creatures cluster in a star shape and start diving at the man.

Lomax drops his too attractive torch, grabs a piece of scrap metal and swings it at them.

One of the stars sweeps down and clamps on his neck. Blood dribbles. Smoke puffs. The critter turns pink. Lomax screams and gropes for it. He rolls over to his back, roaring in pain.

Another catches on his arm, singes through the fabric.

Those that got him turn to a dull, disgusting pink. They drop and skip about most sickeningly on the ground, trying either to swallow one another, either to strike at Lomax' legs.

He is almost submerged when wreaths of thick, black smoke rise where the torch fell, setting rotten tires on fire.

The mineral organisms on the ground dry up and crumble. The flying creatures caught in the soot-loaded fumes turn black and drop, lifeless. The others scat.

Lomax fans the stinking fire, and builds up a swarthy inferno, snatches a burning tire up and waves it around

him, driving the flickering hordes back. He dashes for a cavity at the far end of the chamber. The hive explodes overhead, showers him with black particles.

- INT. GALLERY

Lomax flings the tire behind him and keeps running like hell. The gallery turns darker. He scuttles over damp ground again, falls, gratefully smears his face with mud. He looks up. Blue lights reflect on his face, twinkle in his eyes.

73 EXT. ABOVE EAST MANHATTAN. DAYBREAK 73

Eaks and the pterosaurs sail above the East River. Eaks looks down. Too high for a free drop. Randall's Island comes into sight, shrouded in fog and smoke.

74 EXT. RANDALL'S ISLAND - DAYBREAK 74

Gruesome landscape: wrecked industrial plants, toppled refineries, busted roads and flyovers, heaps of rubble, black vitrified ground and not a clump of vegetation. Legions of T.O stream out of the Bronx, cross the river on makeshift pontoons rigged with cables and wires, gather on the island. They are actually marching in order, leaders bark them into action, obviously to raid the Organization's *Civitas Dei*. The pterosaurs are making straight for them.

75 EXT. RANDALL'S ISLAND. DAYBREAK 75

The rebel leaders, Jay, Ted and some of the soldiers we have seen the Bronx, regroup their tattered troops and take position among the ruins. Jay indicates Ward Island. The bridge linking it to Manhattan is mostly down but its fragments cobbled with sand and other wrecks have built up somewhat of a dike. A party progresses towards the inlet between Randall's Island and Ward. It is also crowded with wrecks, rusted ships or barges, partly sunken or driven aground on the sandbanks. The waifs jump, climb and grapple from one to the other. Jay, Ted and other rebel officers wave them along. And it comes down on them like hell.

With blood-curdling shrieks, the pterosaurs storm the bewildered rebels.

JAY  
(yelling)

Damn it! We're Sapfu! Fall back! Fall back!

He starts firing at the flying monsters to no avail. Their motions are too swift.

TED  
No way, they'll slaughter us. We've got to keep moving ahead!

And they scud for the opposite bank on Ward.

76 EXT. WARD ISLAND, RUINED PLANT. DAY

76

Eaks' pterosaur flies behind, impeded by its burden. Grazes the top of a broken smokestack. Eaks lets go of the rail, slams hard against the structure and fumbles for a hold. The beast whirls round and goes for him. Its beak snaps angrily a few inches from his face. He ducks, loses his grip, slides several feet down. Beast gives the man up and takes off.

EAKS  
(shaking his head)  
Fucking prehistoric sparrow!

- EXT. PLANT.

Eaks slides down the stack, hops off a pile of rubble, considers the battling men and birds in the distance, shrugs and mumbles to himself.

EAKS  
That's one game I sure ain't gonna have no part in!

He looks around, spots an odd structure - the Citadel- on Ward's opposite bank, sizes it. A nice looking stronghold. He heads for it.

A well known screech rakes the air overhead and his winged torturer swoops down on him again. The cornered man starts running towards the battle he expected to avoid.

77 EXT. WARD ISLAND PIERS. DAY

77

Eaks jets around the remains of a wracked plant, the beast over his head, scoots along the piers and winds up facing a party of T.O who have outsmarted the pterosaurs and managed to take foot on Ward.

His winged tormentor gives him up, and joins the fray going on between the two isles.

The T.O swarm him, hollering to the quarry in several unintelligible dialects.

Their leader, a rugged-faced woman with the bulk and beef of a longshoreman urges them in broken English. Her name is Mary.

MARY

There! A Manhattan bat! He got no  
weapon. Bump him off!

Eaks takes off in a shake and starts back along the collapsed piers

78 EXT. A GROUNDED FIGHTER AIRCRAFT. DAY

78

The rebels are closing in on Eaks when he spots a grounded fighter aircraft, crash-landed but still in one operational piece. Makes a last dash for it.

- INT. FIGHTER COCKPIT.

Eaks jumps aboard and locks the doors.

His pursuers crowd around the airship, uselessly trying to breach its armored hull with rocks or metal rods.

Looking around, he catches sight of the battle between the rebel commando and the pterosaurs.

His POV. The rebels are putting up a gallant fight against their antagonists, but they are nevertheless overwhelmed by scores of monsters flying in from all directions.

Eaks' features knot. He frowns.

EAKS

Oh my God! Poor bums!

(hollers at his opponents)

Get your asses out there and give your  
friends a hand, you fucking bastards !  
I'm not an MG.

The woman suddenly holds her hand up.

Something moves in the distance.

Her rough features suddenly brighten and she cheers.

Eaks looks in the same direction . His mouth drops in astonishment.

79 EXT. EAST RIVER , BRONX. DAY

79

A company of armed men cross Randall's Island and the pontoon bridges. Their weapons glint in the morning sun. They ride the most unexpected mounts a cavalry would ever dream of : a half tame herd of Unenlagiaae. They charge, flapping their short wings and moving in long, swift bounds.

80 INT. FIGHTER COCKPIT : DAY

80

Eaks rubs his eyes, takes another gander.

EAKS

(muttering)

I've got to quit drinking water...

81 EXT. WARD ISLAND. DAY

81

Clouds of dust surround the troop. Their leader barges over the rusted hulls and comes into clear sight on Ward Island. It is a Viking warrior, although his traditional attire is somewhat tattered and modified. He wields a mighty sledge hammer and booms harsh orders at his troop, mostly Norsemen. They land on Ward, one after the other on their strange mounts. They are followed by an infantry of maybe several hundred men equipped with anything ranging from swords to metal bars, axes, flails and maces. Close on Ted, Jay and their men. Their eyes bulge.

TED

Is it my eyes or is there something changed about the Cavalry?

The rebels cheer. Jay hollers enthusiastically.

JAY

There's something changed about the Indians too. I don't give a damn as long as they're with us!

They go on fighting the pterosaurs off with renewed stamina.

The beasts bear down on the mounted Vikings.

The Norsemen wade in the flapping hosts, swing their heavy axes and hammers at the predators' heads, sometimes chopping one off in one mighty blow.

Excited by the fight, the Unenlagiaae themselves pounce on their flying rivals, burying their fangs in a talon or a wing and bringing the screeching monsters down.

The shrieks of the battling pterosaurs added to the human war cries kick up a dreadful uproar.

Leaving their pets to fight on their own and make a pretty good job of it, the Vikings dismount and start deploying ropes and roughly wrought nets .

Their chief signals and they split in groups of about ten, fling their meshes at the pterosaurs, tangle them up and, pulling all together, they ground and slaughter them.

The brutes dead bodies soon litter the ground.

The rest of them flies up and circles above at safe distance.

82 INT. UNDERGROUND

82

Lomax crawls slowly towards dull shafts of blue light, reaches a narrow crevice.

Stands, keeping his back to the wall and ventures a peek.

Gasps.

Claws at the loose boulders to enlarge the opening and bores his way through.

83 INT. RUINED LAB.

83

An immense jumble of broken grades bathed in a dull, bluish halo, remind of an underground lab complex.

Lomax scrambles down the jagged levels, reaches the bottom.

Kicks heaps of dust and debris. That's it: under a thick layer of rubble, the now shapeless remains of computers, screens, instruments... and fossilized corpses.

He picks a fragment. Hand shakes. The ICARUS emblem, of course.

LOMAX

ICARUS two. The twenty third century  
research unit...

Lomax wanders helplessly, picks shapeless debris, throws them away.

He climbs another grade, inches along a crag.

The strange light is everywhere, casting no shadows. Can't make out where it comes from.

Lomax starts, listens.

The electric hum again.  
He looks back at the aperture he pushed through.  
Lights flicker beyond. The biopholysers are coming for him,  
they jet out of the crevice.  
He creeps between two collapsed partitions into a dark  
cavity.  
We hear him fumble. Then a tumbling noise.

LOMAX

(muffled voice)

God dam it!

84 INT. BURNED ICARUS ONE LAB.

84

He goes rolling into another chamber.  
The blue light is there too, maybe a trifle brighter  
although the man's fall has whipped up clouds of dust.  
The place is coated with soot, littered with the carbonized  
remains of another research lab. No evidence of human  
bodies. It has been intentionally destroyed.

LOMAX

Christ Almighty! Could this be it?

He roams through the charred rubble.  
Something glints under the dust. He brushes it. A bronze  
wing. He plows frantically.  
The statue of Icarus lies at his feet. He drops next to it,  
overwhelmed by emotion.  
With shaking hands he feels around the wings until he finds  
a small hatch. Opens it.  
Empty.

LOMAX

Damn it! It's impossible! It's got to  
be there!

He searches the hollow wing again, close to panic.  
Straightens, takes a deep breath and pulls himself  
together.  
Scans the ruins around him. Takes a few steps, bumps into  
something, looks down.  
A portable computer, dusty, battered but apparently intact.  
Lomax stares at it, hesitates, wipes it off. The ICARUS  
one logo is printed on it.  
The man is so anxious he has to sit back to recover.

LOMAX  
(mumbling)

Wrong guess, Malk.. Here's our baby all right.

He studies it cautiously, almost religiously. It is powered by a small autonomous unit.

Lomax takes in a deep breath, hits a key.

Nothing.

He turns it over.

Long, desperate cry.

The computer's back is open and empty. All its elements have been pulled out.

Lomax sits on the ground, motionless, his head in his hands.

Moments later, he stands mechanically, roused by an electronic whine.

The room is teeming with Biopholysers. No way back.

He sighs: does it really matter anymore? He looks around without much conviction.

A bright beam of blue light reaches out of a crack in the wall.

He makes for it.

Finds a heavy metal door or panel. The light definitely originates beyond.

Lomax tries to pry it open.

No way.

Peers around and finds a piece of steel. Uses it for a crowbar.

The shrilling Biopholysers go for him.

He dodges them.

They swarm him, fly into the blue beams... and sizzle like a host of moths caught in fire.

Lomax stares while the rest of the creatures dash out of the place.

He sighs in relief and busies himself with the door.

With a nerve-raking creak, it gives way.

85 INT. SANCTUARY

85

His POV. At first nothing but lights. They beam out of a transparent structure ahead.

But they're not only lights.

Images, visions, float freely in a domed chamber called the Sanctuary. They stream by, linger, change and distort in a wild holographic show. Maybe just a bad dream. Vague noises, sounds, voices b.g.

The images reflect on Lomax's face. He moves in the room like a sleepwalker, gazes at the visions, tries to touch them.

LOMAX

A... Anybody there?

His voice breaks up the fluttering fantasies. They shatter. The vision of a elderly male face replaces them. It speaks although the lips do not move.

VOICE

Who are you? What do you seek here?

Lomax doesn't answer at once.

Beyond the face, he -and we- get a clearer sight of the room.

Big. Out of this world.

Standing in the middle, six transparent blocks arranged in a pyramid. They are rigged to a sophisticated array of instruments and computers. The blue light radiates from them, partly blurred by a shroud of cold mist.

Something floats inside the blocks.

CU: human brains.

86 EXT. WARD ISLAND BATTLEFIELD. DAY

86

Ted, Jay and rebel officers quickly dispatch their men around the ruined buildings and near the dike.

The two former turn to Gunnar, the Viking chief, and his Norse crew. They size one another silently.

Jay slaps his shoulder.

JAY

I'll be danged if I know where you come from, Thor, but thanks just the same!

Gunnar grimaces what's supposed to be a smile.

The next second his face flares with sheer rage. He wields his hammer at something that flies out of Manhattan.

Jay and Ted wheel round.

They stream out of the ESB and glide over Manhattan like vultures. Manhattan Guards surrounded by a flight of fighters. Coming straight for the rebels.

Deadly silence on the battlefield. Rebels and Vikings watch the approaching army. They regroup around their respective leaders.

Gunnar grins and pats his sledge hammer. There is blood-lust in his eyes. He indulges in some kind of a ritual war dance and war chant, punctuated with an incomprehensible string of oaths and cries of "ODIN!"

The other Vikings whip up a tremendous uproar, holler and beat their metal shields with their weapons.

Their Unenlagiae chime in, screech and prance around madly. The rebels watch them then, one by one, join the row until they're all howling like wolves.

Manhattan Guards are now above them. Take position in the sky, backed by the fighters. They seem quite disturbed by the T.O's martial clamor.

Pause. Nerve-wracking.

A split second later they are all roar in battle amidst dust, smoke and plaser flashes.

The rebels fight gallantly, putting the MG through unexpected trouble.

Gunnar and his men, Ted, Jay and their rebels bring countless enemies to their doom with their weapons and their meshes

But the fighter airships belch their destructive beams and reap their gruesome harvest.

87 INT. GROUNDED FIGHTER - COCKPIT : DAY

87

Eaks watches, goggle-eyed.

EAKS

(muttering)

Holy baloney!

Mary and her men look at the storm troopers, then at him. Hatred in their eyes. They pick crow bars and start busting the fighter's exit hatch open.

EAKS

Hey wait! I ain't got nothing to do with all this!

He looks around frantically for a weapon, fumbles under the control panel.

Whir, buzz, lights flicker into life. With a light jolt, twin plaseras protruding from of the airship's nose settle in their berths.

Eaks looks up, puzzled.

The two stocks are precisely trained on the swarming MG squads in the distance.

Mary and her men hold it. Stare at him. Is that hope in their eyes?

He shakes his head in denial. Hears Black B's voice.

*If ya ain't with us, ye're against us...*

EAKS

I'm not sure who I'm with but I damn  
know who I'm against!

He grabs hold of a set of joy-sticks.  
After a few erratic motions, the guns point upward and spit  
a hesitating beam that evaporates in the sky, without  
reaching the teeming guards.  
Eaks falls on his behind, dazed by the flash, then jumps up  
and busies himself with the keyboards again.

EAKS

Geronimo!

The twin cannons belch their deadly beams. A half a mile  
away, a fighter airship blows up.  
Eaks stares at his guns, unbelieving.  
Outside the cockpit, Mary and her pack cheer.  
He winks at her, jolts his joy-sticks.  
The twin guns roar into action again.  
A towering chimney stack explodes and topples over a squad  
of MG.

88 EXT. WARD BATTLEFIELD. DAY

88

The rebels whirl round, not knowing whether to face an ally  
or an enemy.  
POV straight off the guns. Gust upon gust fly out at the  
attacking MG. Mows them down by the dozens.  
A fighter blows. Another goes reeling to the ground and  
explodes.  
The Organization troops waver. Where the hell is it coming  
from?  
Rebels push in. Their weapons belch at the dazzled MG.

Mary and her men sprint into the fight.  
She waves a long red rag over her head. Utters a very high  
pitched shrill.  
The rebels pick it up. Ear-piercing. It rises above the  
battlefield, affects the MG's mental impulses. Their  
plasers misfire.  
Another volley from the grounded aircraft nukes them.  
Eaks keeps them under rolling fire.  
The Vikings rope and net the panicked guards who venture  
too close to the ground.

One of the fighters banks and makes for Eaks' grounded  
aircraft.  
It hovers cautiously, can't see it or maybe doesn't realize  
it's on ground level.

When it does and faces its opponent, gushing fire terminates it.

MG cease fire, regroup and fly up, under cover of their remaining fighters.

Gunnar and his mount cavort about, both screeching insults to their shirking foes.

Jay wipes his drenched face. His knocked up plaser is half burnt. He throws it on the ground.

JAY

(to Ted)

Well, what do you say? Do we call this a truce or a pause before the grand show-down?

TED

I hope they haven't anything worse in mind. One of my scouts mentioned something about extermination units.

JAY

Naw, if such units existed, they would've already sent them in.

89 INT. ESB : GHQ

89

Staff officers watch the view-screens helplessly. Shots of the belligerent Vikings, their mounts and the unexpected rebel plaser weapons cause quite an uproar. MG officers run to-and-fro, yell over their comlinks and dash for their headquarters.

Aerocontarch floats in, lands near the staff officers. They whip to attention.

AEROCONTARCH

Would you mind telling me how these groundhogs are checking your men so easily ? And above all, how did they take over one of your fighters and succeed in activating its plasars?

Neither officers dares to answer : they stand silent and aghast.

The Aerocontarch dismisses them impatiently and they fly out of the room.

The door slides shut behind them.

The Aerocontarch's eyes flare :

Two muffled cries sound behind the wall, followed by the thump of two falling bodies.

The remaining staff freezes in terror.  
Aerocontarch shrugs and flies up to his rostrum. The partitions slide shut.

90 INT. PLATFORM

90

Aerocontarch sits watching his monitors wearily. His usual arrogant composure gives way to what could be doubt. He sighs, inasmuch as a cyborg can sigh.

AEROCONTARCH

A handful of rebels doesn't mean a thing to us. It's the mental entities who can endanger the Organization.

His videocom beeps, Number One's hollow features frame on the monitor.

NUMBER ONE (OVER COM)

Well? Is the ABAD Unit through with it?

AEROCONTARCH

No Father, not yet.

NUMBER ONE

What are you waiting for? Jump at it!

Aerocontarch is about to argue, considers the scientist's haggard face and changes his mind.

AEROCONTARCH

Yes Father.

91 INT. GHQ

91

He flies out of his rostrum and down.  
Staff still at attention. He motions them at ease.  
He takes a deep breath, turns to a communication operator.

AEROCONTARCH

Call the ABAD unit back. Tell them to return to quarters and await further orders.

A sigh of relief sounds in the room.  
He turns to Stark.

AEROCONTARCH

You're in charge of the operations on Ward until I return.

He flies out, mumbling to himself.

AEROCONTARCH

I hope the Sanctuary will have an answer to my problem.

92 INT. SANCTUARY

92

Lomax watches the vision and the transparent blocks, goggle eyed.

LOMAX

(befuddled)

Who's speaking?

VOICE

We are the Brains-trust. The keepers of all human knowledge, past, present and future.

LOMAX

Hey, I've heard that before. The Aerocontarch. Have you anything to do with him?

A contemptuous expression comes over the face.. if a vision can achieve that.

VOICE

The so-called Aerocontarch is nothing but a robot we have built to conduct our experiments. Did he send you to reanimate us?

Lomax is now close to the blocks. Gazes disgustedly at the brains.

They are alive. Pulsating. A pinkish fluid can be seen running in their veins.

It dawns on him.

LOMAX

Could you possibly be the scientists of ICARUS Two's research team? The.. Brains-trust?

VOICE

(still contemptuous)

Of course we are. The cyborg was supposed to return us to new bodies after our successful transfer experiment : the creation of dimensional interfaces enabling us to travel the space-time continuum. Behold.

Flickering visions surround Lomax again.

- QUICK FLASH-BACK SHOTS: INT. ICARUS 2. CONFERENCE ROOM. The Brains-Trust sit at the oval table. A cyborg has taken up Silver's place. Monitors display the same installations in the desert and around the world. They are swathed in dark, lightning ridden banks of clouds. Number One stands, nods at his fellow scientists.

NUMBER ONE

(reverberated voice)

Gentlemen, this is a unique moment in the history of universal science. We are to open the gates to new worlds for us to colonize!

Cyborg activates a control system. Looks up. His face is that of the Aerocontarch. The Time-Gates on screen roar into life. Cloud-banks seem to burst aflame. Give way to terrific visions of planets streaking by, spinning galaxies, stardust wreaths. Then it's the whole world around them that starts rocking and splitting in fragmented images, like the multiple reflections of a broken mirror. The chronolith's bright, pyramidal shape goes reeling across the screen and shatters the Time-Gates.

Lomax stands appalled.

LOMAX

So you originated the vortexes and the whole darn mess!

VOICE

No. The experiment dislodged an element trapped in the interfaces and we didn't quite master its effects on our timeline. Fortunately, the cyborg

managed to store our brains in these safety cases we had provided for just before the whole thing blew.

Lomax's face twitches in disgust. He grasps his empty Soul Catcher.

LOMAX  
(mumbling)

The Thunderstone!

VOICE  
Whatever it is, it has boosted our world in an uncontrollable time dimension. Which means most any unknown force or entity can interfere with it now.

LOMAX  
Unless we find a way to eradicate ICARUS 2 before this occurrence.

The visions around him flutter and form into the lean silhouette of an elderly man. It walks up to Lomax and sets its face close to his.

VOICE  
Are you serious?

LOMAX  
One of your predecessors of ICARUS 1 believed it could be our only chance to restore the timeline. If you know how to return to that precise point of the past.

He glances at his wrist. The black tattoo is glowing again, almost smoldering. He winces and rubs it.

FLASHBACK:

*Gateway to O Zone, in the Old Man's shack: The Zero Unit indicates the pictograms on the bull hides.*

ZERO UNIT  
*For the Indians, Oozo Whana meant: "the offspring feed on their sire": the future feeds on the past. Oozo Whana stands for O Zone.*

*Fade to the Old Man facing the Zero Unit.*

OLD MAN

*You are no longer the Master of Chaos.  
Never shall you retrieve the chronolith  
and rule over the futures...*

Lomax snaps to it. He feels his empty Soul Catcher.

LOMAX (CONT.)

Although I'm afraid ICARUS hasn't  
really much to do with what's going on  
in O Zone.

The scientist's silhouette fades into shapeless mist,  
whispering.

VOICE

Maybe we can give it a try. There is a  
way...

AEROCONTARCH (OFF SCREEN)

There is no other way but to put this  
man to death before he lures you beyond  
a point of no return.

Lomax wheels round.

The Aerocontarch stands behind him, threatening. His eyes  
flare.

Lomax puts his hands up.

LOMAX

No! Wait!

He falters, gazing beyond the cyborg. A misty halo sizzles  
behind him, something materializes out of it, at first an  
indistinct wreath of smoke and sparks, then a transparent  
ghost that soon solidifies in a duplicate of the  
Aerocontarch.

The real Aerocontarch doesn't see it. He concentrates, his  
eyes put forth twin power rays and Lomax is sent sprawling  
to the ground, unconscious.

With an unearthly screech, what we will now dub the Aero  
Unit pounces on the helpless Aerocontarch.

He tries to fight back, but the wicked Entity smothers him.  
He goes to his knees, shaking as his nervous motor control  
circuits go out. His mouth opens and he blasts in a silent  
explosion that sends his remains sailing across the  
Sanctuary.

The creature stoops. Looks at Lomax, the gleaming marks on  
his wrist and the Soul Catcher. He gives out a fearful  
chuckle. His voice is deep and distorted.

AERO UNIT

Now it won't be long before the chronolith is mine again. After I clear this world of its lice.

93 INT. MG HQ

93

Stark and MG officers study the monitors displaying Ward battlefield.

One of the officers glances nervously at the videocom.

OFFICER

I wonder what's keeping the Aerocontarch. We're in trouble at Ward.

STARK

(harshly)

Shut up, will you. Now I'm in command we don't need him to win this little battle.

OFFICER

You, Stark, you're a nothing. Your groundhog-busting days are coming to an end. You'll be having more and more swashbucklers, adventurers and warriors from the past on your hands. They're deadly fighters, you won't manage them as easily as you did the other helpless bums...

(pauses)

.. or even the Third World population you helped slaughter in your own time.

Stark shoots him a vicious look. Sets his stumpy finger on one of the monitors.

ON SCREEN :

Dubbed the Citadel, it is a most unbelievable structure cobbled up from the remains of a huge plant. Tons of compressed rubble have been packed in and roughly grouted to form the ramparts of a stronghold. The whole thing is backed up by the partly collapsed buildings of the plant. Wedged into one of the main structures after a crash, the tail and fuselage of a jumbo carrier plane overhang the ramparts and the river, like a drawbridge. The Citadel is held by a motley crew of T.O armed with every possible makeshift weapon from this and other time dimensions.

A rotund personage, clad in rotten leather patches and odd metal plates, with the bulk of a Sumo wrestler, is obviously in command. Stands on the ramparts and watches the situation in a more expectant than offensive posture. A wicked grin comes over Stark's face:

STARK

Rajah the Moor. My trump card.

94 EXT. CITADEL. DAY

94

The real Citadel has been standing back ground during the Ward Island battle, firing every now and then. Rajah the Moor and one of his lieutenants stand on the crashed plane's fuselage, near the tail. Under them, in the plane, several men busy themselves around the berth of a king size knocked up flame thrower.

LIEUTENANT

B.. but, Rajah, I don't understand!

Rajah belts him one with the thrust of a gorilla. The man is staggered.

RAJAH

We're here to cut those damn rebels off if they try to fall back. Why do you think the Organization didn't knock us off, eh? Because they can use us. Then maybe we can join their forces instead of starving like those bums!

He waves at the rebels on Ward's battle scene. The fortress' disparate artillery takes fun shots at them with no further result than much noise and smoke. Rajah the Moor motions to his lieutenants. They scuttle off. A nasty grin comes over his face while he considers Eaks' grounded fighter. Moments later, lieutenants and troopers wheel in two large and ugly machines, hybrids of a tanker truck and a fire engine equipped with nozzles. Rajah nods. They level one of the things at the fighter. With a dreadful whoosh, it puts forth a geyser of flames.

95 EXT. GROUNDED FIGHTER. DAY

95

The blazing jet arches out of the stronghold, sails over the river and hits the aircraft.  
The gusts barely harm the fighter itself.  
Eaks jumps. Vaguely glimpses Rajah the Moor's overblown figure on the rampart.

EAKS

Just who are you, fatso?

Another blast flies out and barbecues a party of waifs who are trying to cross the broken bridge to the Citadel.  
The grounded fighter's cannons swivel to face the Citadel.

EAKS

(shooting)

I sort of figured on something like that..

96 EXT. CITADEL : DAY

96

The fighter's twin cannons radiate their deadly beams and a section of the rampart blows.  
Rajah the Moor jumps on one of the jumbo flame-throwers and fires.  
The flaming gust is met with another of the fighter's broadsides. A terrific explosion rakes the grounded aircraft. Rajah cackles like a madman.

RAJAH THE MOOR

You won't be helping those rebels much longer now! And no one can help you!

His lieutenant comes running in.

LIEUTENANT

We spotted a white face mutant a half a mile east. He's trying to join the battlefield.

RAJAH

Did you say one mutant? Must be one of the specimens the Organization pays a fortune in goods to lay their hands on. Turn our hounds loose on him.

97 EXT. QUEENS. DAY

97

Queens, a wrecked, charred industrial estate, strewn with collapsed buildings and a maze of crumbled bypasses and fly-crossings.

Leuk'Lith, a white faced, silver haired youth, dressed in black rags, jets across the ruins. A horde of nightmare creatures is chasing him, howling and waving makeshift weapons.

One of them trains a flame thrower on the young man, fires, misses him.

He vanishes into a building.

They surround the building, throw in hand grenades. Explosions shake the structure.

Leuk'Lith reappears a little further.

They curse and resume the chase.

He draws them under a footbridge, looks up and concentrates on the rusted girders. They split with a terrific screeching noise and crash on the youth's pursuers.

He flings himself into a somersault and lands on a nearby wall.

The flame thrower man sends out a gush at him. When the smoke subsides, the youth has vanished.

They take up the hunt, cautiously this time.

Around the next edifice, they run into Leuk'Lith who stands facing them.

They fire. Flames seem to carom off an invisible wall.

They draw their blades and go for the kill. Suddenly realize he's floating above a deep fault. He vanishes: it was nothing but an illusion. They all topple into the sinkhole.

The real Leuk'Lith steps out from behind a wall, considers the pit with a sigh and squeezes into a manhole at the foot of the building.

98 INT. ESB - ORGANIZATION GHQ

98

The Aero Unit faces a window with his back to us. Leuk'Lith's face seems to reflect in the glass.

Behind him, the Organization staff stands in silent and rigid attention. He runs his finger on the window and turns slowly. Stares at his team: his eyes are burning red, there is evil about his features.

The men consider him uneasily.

He ignores them and addresses Black Leader.

AERO UNIT

Send the Abad unit in the fifth district and eradicate it at once.

MG officers start fretting with worried expressions.

STARK

But, sir, our strike-squads are out there. Do we call them back?

AERO UNIT

No. They will also be eradicated : they proved inefficient.

Black Leader steps stiffly towards the exit.  
An MG officer pops up and stands across his way.

OFFICER

You can't do that!

(faces about and stares at the Aero  
Unit)

Sir! I beg your pardon, sir, but you certainly don't mean to wipe out members of this Organization like you do the rebels?

Black Leader brushes past him like a robot and exits.  
Staff officers cringe back sheepishly.

AERO UNIT

(contemptuous)

What is it with you ?

OFFICER

Isn't one of the Organization's goals to re-colonize this continent as soon as we have the manpower to do so? Shouldn't we be capturing and training those waifs instead of exterminating them? Let alone kill our own men!

AERO UNIT

It doesn't matter as long as I carry my plans out.

OFFICER

Just what are our plans now, sir? They seem to have developed into something none of us is informed of.

Sheer terror rocks the huddled group of officers.  
The Aerocontarch glares at the man.

AERO UNIT

You needn't be informed, just obey or die. Like those varmints.

99 EXT. WARD ISLAND BATTLEFIELD. DAY

99

The Manhattan Guards and their aircraft stand in solemn circle above the battlefield. They are waiting for something or someone.

And it definitely comes. The ABAD unit sails out of Manhattan. The jet-bikes scuttle ahead, they reach Ward while the heavier aircraft banks above the no man's land.

On the field. Rebels look up hatefully. The Vikings wield their weapons and their voices boom over the ruins as they meet the first jet bikes.

The destroyer glides above the East river, glinting under the sunrays.

Jay, Ted and their team are thunderstruck.

JAY

Holy Smokes! The extermination unit!

TED

Something tells me we'd better get our asses the hell out of here!

They bark orders and wave the rebels to fall back.

Mary looks up and lets out a shrill cry.

Her men dash for the nearby manholes and vanish underground like a school of rats.

The woman lingers and glances at the grounded fighter.

It is still blasting away at the fortress.

She hesitates, then runs towards it, waving her arms.

MARY

Quick, come with us! They going to destroy the Island !

- INT. FIGHTER COCKPIT.

She reaches the aircraft and hops in the open cockpit hatch .

Eaks is also staring at the destroyer. He gently pushes her out.

EAKS (WEARILY)

I'm going nowhere, lady. I've already been too many places in my life. You go ahead... and... ah... take care of yourself !

He holds his hand out.  
She looks and touches it.

MARY

(There is something distant in her eyes)  
Me, Mary 1773. You ?

EAKS

Me Tarzan 1999. Glad to have met you,  
Mary. Now beat the rug before the show  
starts.

She gives him a stern look and walks away reluctantly with  
the last men.

Eaks locks the hatch, grabs his joy sticks and starts  
firing.

EAKS

Oh, well. I guess it's a good day to  
die...

LEUK'LITH (VOICE OVER)

>>> Don't be in such a hurry, mister  
Eaks.

Eaks starts, looks all over, fiddles around the comlinks,  
rubs his ears, frowns.

EAKS

Okay, wise guy, who's you?

100 EXT. WARD BATTLEFIELD. DAY

100

Close on a block of huge, rusted oil tanks beyond the East  
River. Leuk'Lith stands atop one of those, arms folded on  
his chest, his clothes and hair flapping in the wind. He is  
watching Eaks' grounded fighter with a smile. Then sighs  
and turns his eyes on the battlefield.

Most of the rebels shielded by Eaks' heavy fire have  
retreated over the pontoon bridges into the Bronx, leaving  
only the Vikings and a party of seasoned warriors behind.

The jet-bikes bank out of the destroyer's way and fly down,  
harrying the fugitives.

Leuk'Lith's eyes narrow, he concentrates.

Close on the jet-bikes.

Sparks flicker out of mid air in front of them, then zap to  
a flight of white birds.

Just a few of them at first. They hit the jet-bikers'  
helmets, jam their controls.

Men try to wave them off, but there's more and more of them, popping out of nowhere. Several jet bikes loose control and go crashing to the ground.

Two or three collide and burst in a ball of fire.

The birds blot out the sky in huge, whirling clouds. A squad of jet bikers regroup, shoot at the birds. They keep coming like locust.

- GROUNDED FIGHTER.

Eaks watches, dumbfounded.

EAKS

Holy Ghost! Lomax is never gonna  
believe this!

A gust of flames streams out of the Citadel and rocks his fighter. He is knocked to the floor. Cranes to his feet just in time to see a squad of jet bikes banking towards him.

Their guns fire a broadside. Big one.

He dives under the console.

- BATTLEFIELD.

Leuk'Lith concentrates on the attacking jets. The bikers' fire curbs, flies back and nukes them.

The youth looks westward. Fear is on his face.

The huge destroyer has moved in and releases a storm of fire on the island.

Several Vikings are disintegrated with their mounts.

The others fling their swords at the blasting aircraft in a hateful gesture.

The blades pick up part of the energy beams and fend them off. Lightning zap around the unharmed Norsemen, radiate out of their chief's cyclopean sledge hammer and strike back at the destroyer & fighters. One of them big bangs. The rebels cheer.

The MG try to form their lines again and, before they realize they have also been sentenced to die, they are atomized in mid air.

On the ground, Mary makes a desperate rush for safety.

Before she can reach the nearest manhole, she is struck by a gust of pinkish flames.

Destroyer progresses behind a wall of flames.

Leuk'Lith grits his teeth. Extends his hands. Storm clouds collect in the sky, start whirling around the gliding destroyer. It seems to slow down some.

Leuk'Lith glances at Eaks' fighter.

LEUK' LITH

>>> Quick! Get out of there! I won't  
hold this flying monster very long!

- INT. GROUNDED FIGHTER.

His features twisted in disgust, Eaks concentrates and fires his plasars at the jet bikes. Several are knocked off course and crash into a building before being nuked by the destroyer's blazing waves of fire.

EAKS

(under his breath)

Go fly a kite, whoever you are!

He aims carefully at the destroyer

101 EXT. CITADEL. DAY

101

Rajah the Moor catches sight of Leuk'Lith on the tank.

RTM

Over there! The mutant! Burn him down.

With surprising litheness, he scrambles off the fuselage and squeezes in the plane. Shoves off the men operating the flame-thrower and trains it on Leuk'Lith.

Leuk'Lith is facing the destroyer and whipping up a storm to keep it from progressing.

The destroyer moves unabated across the whirl winds.

Leuk'Lith gives up with a sigh. Doesn't see what's going on in the Citadel.

Flames hit the tank right under him, smoldering debris fly all around. An incandescent slab of metal falls in the tank.

Leuk'Lith is knocked off balance.

Ball of fire fills the tank. It moves quickly upward.

Flames leap in the sky. Leuk'Lith flies off the top of the tanker and dives in the river below.

102 EXT. JET BIKES. ABOVE GROUNDED FIGHTER. DAY

102

Another squad of jet bikers comes for Eaks.

They fly off to the side and come on his rear, out of his cannons' range.  
Close on leader pilot. He grins fiercely .  
Voice sounds in his helmet.

AERO UNIT (VOICE OVER)

I want this man alive.

Pilot sighs in disappointment and waves his men to aim carefully.  
Power beams strike under the grounded airship, flipping it over like a pancake.  
It rips open.  
Eaks lies inside, bleeding and unconscious.  
Drumbeat sounds across the air.

103 EXT. BRONX : DAY

103

Drumbeat goes on. The Bronx : collapsed buildings and rubble the height of hills overgrown with bushes and scarce trees, makeshift shacks and miscellaneous shelters. Time Outcasts watch the blaze that rages over Randall's and Ward Island. Towering billows of smoke and fire blot the morning sun out.  
The outcasts are silent, listless.  
The ABAD unit banks in the distance and glides back towards the Empire State building.  
Steady drumbeat and incantations sound louder .  
Then a guttural war cry.  
The T.O cheer.  
Tattered and grimy, the Vikings string out of the smoke and over the pontoon-wrecks. They bark harsh orders at their remaining troopers, round them up and push them towards the Bronx, give a last defiant yell and take foot on the riverbank.  
Riding haughtily past the crowd, they move westward.  
Behind them, Jay, Ted and the surviving members of their team carry the spoils of the battle.

104 EXT. HARLEM RIVER : DAY

104

The Vikings' ragged company comes to a halt on the riverbank and regroups.  
Ahead of them, an even stranger sight. The Harlem district is flooded, the waters of the Hudson meet those of the Harlem river, to form a wide inlet.  
The North end of the peninsula stands stranded and shrouded in thick fog like a forlorn promontory. It is now called Haze Island.

105 EXT. HAZE ISLAND : DAY

105

Drumbeat and Indian incantations b.g.

The misty veils part, as the Vikings and their corps take foot on the island.

The exhausted commando splits, each man being taken care of by members of his clan. Vikings ride along, ignoring the crowd. Vanish into a ravine sunken between the devastated buildings.

No one ventures to follow them.

RAGNAR (IN NORSE SUBTITLED)

Does any one know what happened to Gunnar Eriksson ? Erik ? You were fighting side by side with him...

ERIK (SUBTITLED)

Gunnar was still fighting when we left. I believe they took him prisoner.

RAGNAR (SUBTITLED)

If our chief and his mighty hammer Mjollnir have failed, then we will never defeat the birdmen. Their weapons are more powerful than ours.

HJALMAR (SUBTITLED : ANGRILY)

By Thor ! No nation has ever resisted us. We can't let these birdmen rule over us !

106 EXT. ASH-TREE PLAZA : DAY

106

Coming out of the ravine, the Vikings reach a vast square, covered with clumps of grass. Standing in the middle, a high ash-tree. Beyond the tree, the ground is covered with shiny white patches of snow.

While their men gather under the ash, the Vikings dismount and turn their Unenlagiae loose in a large corral.

REGIN (IN NORSE SUBTITLED)

Vethrir will help us. His drum portends future.

RAGNAR (SUBTITLED : SKEPTICAL)

I hope to Thor he will.

While their men rest under the tree, they cross the stretch towards a path lined with huge megaliths, almost a cromlech.

An awkward structure stands at the far end.

107 EXT. MEGALITH ALLEY, THE TIME ARCH : DAY

107

The white snow patches become larger until they blend into one continuous and immaculate coat on the ground. The Vikings enter the passage.

It leads to a wracked tower building. Its lower levels are bashed in as if a giant bulldozer had rammed clear across. It looks like a cyclopean Arch.

Snow flurries scream out of it, whip around the nearby structures in furious squalls and shed gusts of flakes way out under the sun.

Spirit of the Earth is seated beneath on a white buffalo hide, beating his drum.

The Vikings walk up to the Indian and surround him silently.

Around them, the storm subsides as in a hurricane's eye.

He stops drumming, stands and looks at them.

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH

You have fought gallantly but the enemy's power can't be confronted only in battle. We must strike the head of the Organization. When the Games take place, then we will have a chance to face the Aerocontarch himself and challenge him in man to man combat.

He gazes at Manhattan in the distance and whispers.

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH (CONT.)

Other forces will soon join us.

108 INT. UNDERGROUND REBEL H.Q.

108

Ted, Jay and their team are busy with the spoils they have taken from the MG: plasars, small cannons ripped off the grounded fighters and jet-bikes. Most of these are being taken apart and fitted with other equipment.

Drumbeat can be heard very faintly. Men look up inquiringly, then resume their activities.

TED

We have laid our hands on remarkable weapons

(excited murmurs around him)

But mostly impossible to use because of this.

He points out a complicated set of chips embedded in the plaser.

TED (CONT.)

A mental control trigger. Some of these weapons can be fitted with regular triggers, but not all of them. And we can't manufacture enough guns to meet the enemy with equal forces.

Pause. He watches the men's disappointed expressions.

TED (CONT.)

But we do have an alternative solution

(turns to his lieutenant)

Show'em, Jay.

JAY

If we can't catch it running, we'll find the hare sitting.

(Sets some knocked up contraption on the table)

Molotov cocktail peppered with plaser. I rigged it with a time bomb...

SOLDIER

And how, if I may ask?

JAY

Just plain solar powered pocket calculators we found in a busted warehouse. There's just enough energy in them to impulse the bombs.

TED

(bringing his fist down on the table)

And where do you think we will find all those flying dudes and their leader in the same nest?

Cheers. Ted smiles victoriously. Jay pats his bombs.

JAY

When the Games take place, we'll treat them to a very special firework display!

109 INT. ESB : ALIEN CHAMBER

109

Small, hexagonal, lined with a slimy, copper-like material. No windows. Weird, green lights. Eaks, his face and hands smeared with dried blood, his clothes torn and burnt, lies motionless in a corner of the chamber. Lomax floats horizontally above the floor, bathed in a dull halo. His body is rigid, he is unconscious. The tattoo on his wrist radiates a purple glow. The Aero Unit considers them behind a glass pane. Concentrated. His eyes sparkle like twin stars. His entire self is wicked. He is probing Lomax's mind. Images from his memory float around the man's head. A vague vision of the Old Man, Lomax's elder sibling, (see O Zone I) flutters in the room, his voice sounds, speaking incoherent words about Tee Waka Heena, the Thunderstone and the Arch. The Aero Unit's eyes gleam with hatred.

AERO UNIT

So we meet again, you worms! Not twice will you defeat Darkaos. You are now locked in a dimension where I shall soon retrieve my powers and master the chronolith.

The Aerocontarch puts forth a mental impulse. Lomax's body jolts. The images blur. They are replaced with impersonal every day impressions. Lomax's lips move. They form very slowly the word: "FUCK".

AERO UNIT

(flaring)

I will tear your mind apart if I have to, but this time, I will get the information I need!

The mental pressure builds up.

Another floating image focuses in : Eaks and Lomax coming through the vortex, the latter clutching the Soul Catcher under his shirt.

The chronolith glares, expands in a spinning pyramidal flame.

The Aerocontarch concentrates.

And the vision vanishes.

He lets out a surprised gasp.

A transparent face materializes in the cell next to Lomax: Spirit of the Earth

A smile comes over the Indian's face. He looks at Lomax and the man speaks for him in a slow, monotonous voice.

LOMAX

You are nothing but a mere man made machine. You cannot master the Thunderstone ...

AERO UNIT

(flaring)

A mere machine! Know you who I am....

His face distorts, his body glows, then suddenly resumes the Aerocontarch's normal appearance as if something just dawned on him.

AERO UNIT

The *Thunderstone*?

He lets out a wicked laugh.

AERO UNIT (CONT.)

So you don't know who I am, do you?  
Just wait until you find out!

And his blood-curdling guffaw fills the chamber.

110 INT. LEUK'LITH'S UNDERGROUND HIDEOUT. DAY

110

Sunrays bore straight down into an underground cavern the size of a gothic nave.

The place is littered with pieces of fabric arranged in canopies and a hodgepodge of objects.

Close on three felines, size and looks of prehistoric lynxes, sprawled on a flat rock. They cock their ears and open an eye.

Leuk'Lith is sitting next to them on a bunk. Studying his face in a broken mirror : white as a Japanese No comedian's, black tattoos around his eyes, black lips. His

long, silver hair is streaked with dark locks. He looks out of this world but he's only 15 or 16 y.o. Touches his cheeks, rubs them, then picks at his skin. Sighs. No make-up, no mask. His features knot in a desperate expression. He flings the mirror away. Looks at his cats.

LEUK' LITH

Who am I? What is this world? Why am I here?

The Aero Unit's guffaw answers him. It rings out as if the alien were in the cave.

Cats ruffle and growl.

Leuk'Lith clasps his head and winces.

Squalls rake the cavern, the sun rays are blotted out, the waterfalls seem to delineate the Aero Unit's figure, but blurred and glowing. His voice sounds in multiple echoes.

AERO UNIT

*So you don't know who I am, do you?  
Just wait until you find out!*

The figure swells into the hideous features of the Zero Unit.

Leuk'Lith jumps to his feet. The cats scat.

LEUK' LITH

(waving his fist at the apparition)  
No we won't, I already know who you are!

Runs out of the cave.

111 INT. ORGANIZATION GHQ

111

The officers hush and whip to attention as the hover-platform lowers to their level.

Silver is standing to one side with several Instructors, stern.

The Aero Unit glides off majestically .

His eyes meet Black Leader's inquiringly.

The dark colossus nods without a word.

Stark moves up with the wriggling eagerness of a dog.

STARK

Mission accomplished, sir.

The Aerocontarch gives him one contemptuous look and the man slithers back amidst the surviving MG officers. Silver takes one step forward, throws her chin up.

SILVER

(stern but respectful)

What none of these nincompoops dares to say is we also lost several MG squads, sir. Did we really have to sacrifice them?

STARK

(Breaking in angrily)

And where were you while we got hacked up taking care of the dirty job?

SILVER

(harshly)

The dirty job, as you say, isn't our business. We Instructors, we..

Aero Unit stares at both of them. They wince, fall slowly to their knees, clasping their heads.

AERO UNIT

I'm not interested in moods. Just you think of obeying.

Officers freeze. He gives them a careless glance.

AERO UNIT

(addressing Stark)

During the Games, you will take position with your men around the arena.

STARK

(astonished)

Around the arena, sir? But...

AERO UNIT

I'm expecting my best enemies...

He indicates one of the monitors. It displays a view of a cell in the detention building. Eaks and Lomax lie unconscious on the floor.

AERO UNIT CONT.)

And these two will help lure them into the trap.

(turns to Silver)

See that they are transferred to the  
Battery Bowl.

They all exit.

Aero Unit looks thoughtfully at the monitor.

AERO UNIT

Those who seek to protect you and the  
chronolith will show up sooner or  
later.

112 EXT. INLET, EVENING

112

The Hudson and the East River have flooded the lower districts. Now an island just like Harlem, the Battery district stands stranded, facing the sea. Ruins poke out of the waters, littered with wrecks and drift debris.

Sitting on one of these, Leuk'Lith is concentrating on the ESB and its bright halo. The Aero Unit's last words sound muffled.

He frowns, shakes his head and looks south towards Battery Island: The outlines of a tall, oval building stand out against the dusk : the Bowl.

113 EXT. BATTERY ISLAND - BOWL PLAZA - EVENING

113

B.g: a block of high tech buildings, restored for the purpose of the Organization. They are lined with copper. An oval, copper structure reminds of an amphitheater or a Bowl. Floods light it lavishly.

Foreground, a large plaza, crawling with people, peddlers, street traders of all breeds and epochs. Others line up near the entrance of the Bowl, guarded by MG.

In the middle of the plaza, a platform supports an array of metal cages, each one housing up to three or four prisoners taken from Ward Island. Several MG are bringing more of these cages, which they carry in mid air before setting them atop the others. A squad of Instructors supervise them.

The crowd watches idly, jeers and bird names greet the flying guards.

Eaks and Lomax are in one of the cages.

With dramatic gestures, Eaks is relating his exploits which he has apparently hoisted to Shakespearean heights, so pleased with himself he doesn't notice Lomax's bored expression.

EAKS

(Poised like a tragedian)  
... And then I said to myself...

LOMAX

(Speaking at the same time)  
... Today is a good day to die.

EAKS

(Surprised)  
Did I already tell you about it ?

LOMAX

(Wearily)  
No, but they all say that.

EAKS

All who ?

LOMAX

(looking through the bars)  
All the heroes that's about to kick the  
bucket.

EAKS

(waving his hand)  
Aw crap ! It's the story of my life and  
no one's gonna hear it!

LOMAX

Just wait another hour and you'll have  
bloodthirsty hundreds out there just  
waiting to hear it... and see it.

EAKS

Know what ? It's a hell of a day to  
die!

Another cage comes clanging atop theirs. A string of pirate  
oaths rings loud and clear.  
Eaks grabs his bars and twists his head to see who's above.

EAKS

Hey! Long John Silver! Is that you, you  
old salt?

Black B. kneels and thrusts his nose between the bars.

BLACK B

The name's Duncan B. Black, m' boy, but  
my friends call me Black B.

EAKS

Looks like they've got you down in the hold too.

BLACK B

Ole Beelzebub will pull me out of this one. He already did before.

LOMAX

Oh, really?

BLACK B

He sure did and that was in 1718 in Gibbet Island. We was already dangling from the gallows when there was this Elmo's fire all around us and the whole place was blown to bits and pieces. Next thing I knew, I was sitting in this here city of mad men.

Jostling among the prisoners prevents Lomax from asking a question. Black B. wheels round with an oath. MG proceed above them with more cages. In the crowd, Ted, Jay and co. push their way between the shacks and head for the Bowl. Silver flies by, scanning the cages as if she were looking for someone. Eaks nudges Lomax.

EAKS

(whistling)

Hey, Batwoman! Sweetheart! Quit looking, we're right here!

She lands in front of the cages.

EAKS

(dusting and straightening his clothes)

Don't say anything, I know! You need an escort for tonight's party!

SILVER

(rudely)

Sorry, but I am chiefly interested in mister Lomax.

Eaks turns away disgustedly. Tries to talk one of the street peddlers into giving him food. Lomax rises his eyebrows inquiringly. She looks at him, hesitant.

SILVER

Did you find what you were looking for?

LOMAX

I found more.

(earnestly)

Silver, they're keeping the truth from you and you know it. If you've heard of ICARUS, you can't just sit there without doing anything.

SILVER

Tell me what you know first.

Eaks breaks in with his mouth full, indicating the MG around them.

EAKS

Look honey, we haven't that much time left. So I suggest you free us first, then maybe we'll spill the information.

Loud noise and curses.

At the far end of the plaza, four MG are struggling in mid air with a cage holding only one prisoner: Gunnar Erikson. The huge Norseman jolts and rattles his bars so furiously, they can drag it only a couple of feet off the ground, putting it down every now and then to recover before flying up again.

Their fellow MG jeer at them before heading for the arena. Silver steps back in the crowd and considers the scene ironically.

Prisoners, gawpers and hawkers watch the whole thing eagerly. Laughs ring out, then bird names and cheers for the unbroken Norseman.

The street trader's cart stands unattended to near Eaks' and Lomax's cage.

Eaks sneaks behind Lomax's back, crouches and starts filling his pockets with goods. When they're full, he tugs Lomax's sleeve.

Lomax glances at him, gets it and holds his hand behind his back.

Eaks dishes out to him something reminding of Mexican tacos and sends his hand in the cart again. Brings back a handful of jute sachets. Looks inside and frowns. They're full of red chili pepper.

He is about to throw them back. Stops short.

LEUK' LITH (VOICE OVER)

>>> Put them in your pocket.

Zoom the Bowl. Leuk'Lith is standing on the superstructures and stares at the plaza.

The Viking goes on kicking up a terrific row in his cage. After a last stop, his four warders fly up again with it. Gunnar howls like a mad wolf. Prisoners in the other cages start moving restlessly. Crowd grows nervous.

Eaks stares at his satchet, struck silly. Hands one to Lomax, but without letting go of it. Leuk'Lith's voice sounds again in his mind. He's petrified. Lomax turns round.

LOMAX

Well, give it or keep it, man, don't just stand there!

EAKS

(dumfounded)

D'ya... d'ya hear that?

LOMAX

(ironical)

Hear what?

EAKS

The... voice.

LOMAX

Sure, man. Marilyn Monroe's voice!

EAKS

(angrily)

Oh shit! Just you take the fucking chili, shove it in your fucking pocket and make no fucking remarks!

Angle on Leuk'Lith. He smiles.

In the plaza, MG and their overactive prisoner have almost made it to the platform.

Gunnar sticks a hairy arm out of the bars and yanks one of the haulage ropes.

MG #1, at the other end, is thrust against the bars. Gunnar's paw wraps around his neck.

Other prisoners bellow enthusiastically. Crowd is galvanized, starts closing in on anything wearing the Organization's uniform.

The three other MG carriers are thrown off balance and drop their ropes. The cage falls and crashes on top of the pile on the platform.

MG #1 wriggles like mad, manages to grab his plaser in his back holster.

Gunnar hurls him against the cages, knocking him out.

His plaser falls in the peddler's cart.

Eaks snatches it up instantly. No one sees him.

Gunnar braces and starts prying his bars open. They bend apart.

Black B. grips the posts of his cage.

BLACK B.

(yells at the mob)

Board the ship, ye doggone landlubbers!

Send them rogues to the bottom!

The other prisoners chime in. They grab a hold of MG #1 and pin him against their cage.

Crowd moves in, growling like hounds.

MG #2, #3 and #4 fly out of reach.

Several guards who were standing near the Bowl fly to the rescue.

Eaks and Lomax desperately tinker about the plaser to try and activate it.

Eaks looks up at the mob.

EAKS

(shouting)

Didn't you hear my pal, you time puked brutes! Do something, bordel de shit!

Leuk'Lith considers the scene sternly. Whispers under his breath.

LEUK' LITH

No they mustn't. Not now. They'll get butchered.

Eaks hears him in his mind and looks up.

EAKS

You, mister Invisible Man, go jump in the lake!

He unwillingly clenches the plaser. It belches a gust of flames. Eaks and Lomax fall on their behinds.

The force ray streaks out of the cage and hit MG #2. He goes spiraling to the ground.

LOMAX

(enthusiastically)  
Yeah! Bull's eye!

MG#3 glances at his fellow fly men.

MG#3  
Call for reinforcements, quick!

MG #5  
No way! The Aero'd nuke the hell out of us!

Eaks gives the plaser an unbelieving glance, then levels it at the MG.

Silver, who has been keeping out of the whole thing from the beginning, calmly produces a P-handle, aims carefully and shoots the plaser right out of Eaks' hand.

He wheels round.

She smiles mischievously and shakes her finger at him. Gunnar has succeeded in wrenching one of the cage's bars off and batters anything that comes or flies within range.

EAKS  
Right on, Thor! Let them have it!

Angle on MG #1. Scores of hands keep him pinned down and tear away at him.

The other MG fret helplessly around, panic stuck. They try to help him to no avail. The howling mob fends them off. They hold their plaseras drawn without daring to use them.

MG #1  
(screaming)  
Do something! Fire into them!

The T.O in the plaza converge towards the cages and start tearing them apart.

MG #3 releases a warning shot over their heads.

MG #4 shoves him off.

MG #4  
Don't shoot! These men must be kept alive for the Games!

Gunnar is free now and badgers the other cages to let the prisoners out. The crowd goes frenzied and storms the plaza.

MG #1 is butchered by the T.O.

His fellow guards fire. Plaseras mow the mob down.

Silver tries to calm things down.

Leuk'Lith concentrates, his eyes burn : on the plaza, a cart flies up and is hurled against the MG who are trying to take position around the square. More objects sail across the air and go spinning into the flying squad

MG #5

(Shouting)

Kill that Viking! He's the one who's kicking up all the trouble!

They close in on the Norseman.

Gunnar leaps into the crowd and vanishes just as the MG concentrate their fire on him.

Leuk'Lith concentrates again. A sheet of metal flies off a shack and fends the force rays off.

Crowd breaks into a chorus of cries and curses. Then falls silent.

A horde of MG blots the sky and swarms the plaza under Stark's orders. Several men fly down and drive the excited crowd back with their weapons' butts. Others shove the prisoners back in the cages and take position around them. Angle on Eaks and Lomax. The former attempts unsuccessfully to open his cage's electronic lock while the latter shields him. They look up.

LOMAX

Looks like we're outta business.

EAKS

Yep. Those MG are as thick as flies on carrion.

LOMAX

Did you see those things that went flying in the air? Wonder who stood behind that trick?

EAKS

My ole pal, mister Invisible Man.

The crowd falls back silently. Silver appears behind, standing with her arms folded.

Stark sees her and glides towards her with a couple of his men.

STARK

(to his side-winders)

Put her under arrest. She let the prisoners escape and kill our men.

SILVER

Their own foolishness killed your men,  
not the waifs.

Stark trains his own weapon on her.  
Meanwhile the Instructors move in and interpose.  
The remaining MGs regroup behind Stark.  
Stark turns to his men.

STARK

Well? What are you waiting for? Settle  
their hash!

MG aren't so hot about it. Instructors remain impassive.

SILVER

There's been enough dead people so  
don't get our men mixed up in this.  
Let's settle it just you and me.

Stark gives her an ugly grin.  
Eaks glances at Lomax.

EAKS

Ten dollars on Batwoman!

Crouching in the cage above theirs, Black B. sticks his  
dungy paw through the bars.

BLACK B.

Count me in for twenty guineas, boy!

Stark and Silver holster their weapons and circle slowly,  
sizing one another.

STARK

All right then. Here goes!

He pounces on her. The crowd watches the fight, fascinated.  
Bets are on.

The air joust roars across the plaza, now overhead, now on  
the ground. The two infuriated opponents go crashing  
through the wooden stalls, knock the carts over, fly up  
between the buildings and swoop down on one another like a  
pair of battling hawks.

Silver takes several blows but Stark is heavier and not as  
swift. She sends him sprawling in a pile of goods displayed  
on the ground. He lands amidst small cages holding  
miniature dinosaurs much like poultry. A basket of saurian  
eggs lands on his head while the little critters scuttle  
off between his legs.

Laughter and boos rock the assistance.

EAKS

(To Lomax)

You owe me an' Black B. twenty guineas!

Silence claps down on the plaza. They all look up at the Bowl.

Standing on somewhat of a flying quadriga drawn by pterosaurs, escorted by his retinue of Black Guards, the Aero Unit appears in the sky and glides majestically into the Bowl. The rest of the Organization VIPs follow him.

The crowd scatters, silently making for the arena's ground accesses. MG take up their assigned positions. Silver dismisses her Instructors and enters the Bowl in turn

On the roof, Leuk'Lith gazes thoughtfully at them. There is fear in his eyes.

He looks north. A vision of the Time Arch crosses his mind. He takes a deep breath.

LEUK' LITH

>>> You, who are acquainted with the  
pasts and the futures, time has come  
for you to help us!

An Indian in the crowd looks up and smiles. It's Spirit of the Earth.

114 INT. BATTERY BOWL: NIGHT

114

- UPPER LEVELS.

The Bowl's bright copper walls stand out against the creeping darkness, its structures underlined by sophisticated laser lighting effects. Shuttles and various air vehicles are moored along docking platforms, around the open roof.

Flying men and women take place in the reserved galleries at the top of the Bowl, according to their ranks and uniforms. They bracket a canopied grandstand under which the Aero Unit sits enthroned, surrounded by his Black Guard, Black Leader to his right.

Silver and Watanka, her Indian lieutenant, stand back. She scans the cages below.

- GROUND LEVEL

MG herd the crowd into the Bowl, barking orders and shoving with the butt of their weapons.

Jay, Ted and the rebel soldiers quickly squeeze into a small opening near the Bowl entrance. They are concealing something under their rags.

- TIERS.

While MG and Instructors demonstrate combat tactics in the ring, T.O huddle in the lower tiers. With ready weapons, Stark's MG squads are lined all around the arena on a low wall between it, the tiers and a circular pit holding the prisoners' cages,. Stark nervously paces up and down the row.

Angle on surviving rebels from Ward battlefield, scattered in the stands. They move stealthily towards the bottom tiers near the arena and gather around a group of tall and bulky men, clad in leather rags, faces concealed under a shesh made of metal cloth or mails : the Vikings. Blades glint here and there. Gunnar Erikson, feels his sledge hammer under his cloak.

MG eye them all suspiciously. Gunnar grins and bows mockingly. They shrug and look away.

- SUPERSTRUCTURES.

At the very top of the stands, near the roof, Spirit of the Earth watches the Vikings. He is standing in the shade of a pillar. His Soul Catcher radiates a purple glow. Opposite from the Shaman, Leuk'Lith skulks the superstructures like a cat.

- GRANDSTAND.

The Aero Unit's fiery eyes scan the superstructures. The audience is waiting for him to open the Games. The Games Master creeps up to him.

- INT. EAKS AND LOMAX'S CAGE.

Eaks paces the cage restlessly.

Lomax, hugging the bars can't take his eyes off the Aero Unit.

EAKS

Say what you want, Fuzzypuss, but this time, our goose is cooked.

Lomax ignores him, still staring at the Aero Unit. Eaks stops, hits his shoulder.

EAKS

Hey, are you listening?

LOMAX

(absently)

That's odd. Why is he watching the tiers? Maybe he feels something...

Eaks looks in turn. His face grows stern.

EAKS

Yeah, there's an odd feeling about the whole place.

Lomax gives him a sidelong glance. He falls silent. Lomax looks up at the superstructures.

LOMAX

Something here is getting out of control. Even out of the Aerocontarch's control.

- GRANDSTAND.

Aero Unit finally sits and nods to the Games Master below him. He raises his hand.

GAMES MASTER

Let the Games begin!

- RING.

Floodlights illuminate the ring, revealing in its center a bundle of blades, swords, sabers, daggers, you name it, set on a half busted kiosk.

The cages in the pit open. Prisoners swarm the ring for the weapons.

Eaks' and Lomax's cage remains shut. They shake the bars to no avail.

In the arena, a bulky red headed man, Ginger Head, makes it first to the bundle of weapons, snatches several of the best and braces with his back to the kiosk.

The other chance gladiators take up strategic positions around the ring.

Angle on another cage in the pit, with Black B., a couple of medieval looking brutes and a short, lanky man we will call Bantam. Their gate opens, the two brutes belt Bantam and take their run-up.

Black B. steps in the way, holds both fists out and slugs them simultaneously. They collapse. Black B. helps Bantam on his feet and gently pushes him out of the cage.

He is in no hurry, watches a waif who is standing with his back to the pit, on his left. He sedately uncoils the Mexican rope concealed under his shirt, flings it at the man. It sails and locks around his neck. Black B. hauls him closer, strangles him and takes his weapons.

In the arena, a fierce collection of behemoths face one another.

Bantam chickens out. Flings his weapons to the ground and runs towards an exit portal.

BANTAM

I don't want to fight ! I don't want to!

He clings to the gate in despair. A bearish 200-pounder, brains him for good. His body slides to the ground.

- TIERS AND ORGANIZATION STANDS

Despite their civilized attitude, there is blood lust in the VIPs' eyes.

Silver turns away, disgusted. Watanka clenches his teeth.

Stark watches them with a snarl.

Indian nudges Silver. She retrieves her haughty composure.

Her eyes meet the Aero Unit's. She shudders. The cyborg's features are expressionless. He isn't at all interested in what's going on. He seems to be scanning the minds of the people around him.

- RING

The fighters roar in battle. Battling lollopers wipe out their less combative and isolated opponents. Then start lumbering towards one another around the ruined kiosk.

Ginger Head leaps on top of the structure. He brings his sword down like a scythe at whoever attempts to dislodge him.

Black B. is leaning on Eaks and Lomax's cage, in the shadow, and comments the jousts.

- INT. CAGE

LOMAX

(Nodding at the arena)

Aren't you going to try your chance at it ?

BLACK

(With glowing eyes and fierce grin)  
I'll board the ship when the crew is  
hacked out !

- RING

Many dead or wounded men in the sand. Blood all over the place.

Ginger-Head stands victorious on the broken kiosk, wielding his sword.

There's only a couple of fighters left.

Black B's feature narrow in a ferocious grimace.

BLACK B

HAHAHA ! I'm going to have fun at last!  
Come and have a pirate dance with Black  
B. !

Ginger-Head and the remaining fighters pounce on him.  
Black B. faces them with a mile-long string of six-cornered oaths.

Audience watches bemused.

Black fences his three rivals handsomely, backs towards the arena's walls, springs for the red and black hangings under the grandstand, with his sword in his teeth and scales them.

The men uselessly fling their blades as he moves out of reach.

Grasping the drapes with one hand and his bare feet, he thrusts his blade at them. They're out.

Ginger-Head swings his saber with both hands. Gashes the fabric.

Black scoots up the hangings, then turns round and jumps off .

Lands his feet in the colossus' chest and they both go rolling to the ground.

The pirate is instantly on his feet. Waves both his and the red man's weapon.

End of the bout. The Games Master raises his hand.

GAMES MASTER.

You won the right to be one of us,  
ground hog, welcome to the  
Organization.

Black B. salutes the ladies with a pirate jeer and marches off.

Stark flies down and terminates the wounded survivors. A faint growl sounds in the T.O's tiers. MG level their weapons at them and they simmer down.

Black B. walks past Eaks and Lomax behind their bars and whispers under his breath.

BLACK

Fair winds to you, now. I'm gonna see what I can do to scuttle their ship!

MG escorts him out of the ring.

- SUPERSTRUCTURES.

Ted, Jay and a couple of their men sneak out of the tiers. Jed silently indicates the Organization grandstands. They are at the far end of the Bowl, under the roof supported by large pillars. His companions nod. They move noiselessly through the superstructures.

- EAKS AND LOMAX'S CAGE.

Spotlight on their cage. The bars rise slowly. Eaks grabs Lomax's arm. Gulps.

EAKS

Looks like this is it...

They walk in the blinding floodlights. Hold their hands up to their eyes.

The gate closes behind them and the spectators hush. Games Master stands.

GAMES MASTER

These two men are traitors. Therefore will have to face Leopold himself and pay off their treason with their lives, before you, tonight.

His words are met with loud applause from the Organization members. Insults rise out of the T.O tiers.

Eaks and Lomax are unabated. Still don't believe it.

EAKS

And what happens if it's us who give your Leopold Jessie ?

GAMES MASTER

Ho, Ho, Ho ! You ? Overcome Leopold ?  
Ho, Ho, Ho !

(He hushes then, after a couple of seconds)

Overcome Leopold, hey ? All right,  
we'll strike a fair bargain with you :  
if you are victorious tonight, you will  
be granted the right to... live ! Ha !  
Ha ! Ha ! Ha !...

Under the grand stand, a large gate lifts open. Slowly.

- TIERS.

Spirit of the Earth steps forward, his hand clutches the Soul Catcher. There is concern on his face.

The Aero Unit senses something. His gaze shoots at the upper tiers.

Spirit of the Earth starts and backs in the shadow. The Soul Catcher gleams brightly. He scans the far end of the tiers;

Leuk'Lith concentrates on the ring, just as concerned as the Indian.

- RING.

A heavy thump sounds in the depths of the Bowl, then closer.

A monstrous creature bolts out in the ring with a bloodcurdling shriek, waves a gaping maw from right to left and blinks in the floodlights. Roars again.

Excited murmurs run from tier to tier. The VIPs in the upper galleries lean on the handrails.

Eaks and Lomax stand dead still for a while, then start creeping away from the beast.

EAKS

I knew it ! I knew it ! I just damn  
knew we'd get buggered by a stinkin' T-  
rex in the end !

LOMAX

I'm afraid he's got something else in  
mind, Malko, and he's not a T-rex. He's  
too small. Maybe a ceratosaur.

EAKS

(Aping)

Maybe a ceratosaur ! Look, wise guy,  
why don't you just walk up to him and  
ask him if he's a *Meat-o-saur* or a  
*Grass-o-saur* !

The dino spots them and dashes with dreadful velocity.

EAKS

Let's split!

They run in opposite directions.

Eaks reaches the kiosk and takes a diver behind it.

The ceratosaur goes for Lomax. In two tremendous leaps, it corners the man against the wall and thrusts its open maw to crush him.

Lomax dives and rolls between the ceratosaur 's hind legs. A flailing talon rips his shoulder.

The surprised creature dents the copper wall with its fangs. Faces about, searching for its escaping prey.

Eaks has jumped on the kiosk.

Giving Lomax up, the brute lets out another roar, and charges Eaks much faster than he could expect.

He is knocked off his perch.

The beast pounces on him, darts its talons. Strikes the man before he gets out of reach, claws wildly at him, lacerating both clothes and skin.

Lomax tries to sneak behind, he is caught by the whipping tail and sent sprawling in the sand.

Lomax scrambles to his feet and sees a mouthful of fangs ready to close on his friend.

He leaps astride the creature's back. Clamps both arms around its swaying neck.

With an infuriated shriek, the beast starts kicking up a wild rodeo. It tries to strike its rider with its helpless forepaws and writhes to shake him off.

Eaks scuds out of reach, covered with blood but not seriously wounded.

He is about to yell something at Lomax, winces, looks down at his torn and bloody dungaree.

Chili pepper mingled with blood is running down his leg.

- TIERS

Leuk'Lith's face is strained, he stares at the man.

- RING

Eaks' face brightens despite the pain

EAKS

(mutters)

Gotcha, Mister Invisible Man!

(shouts at Lomax)

John ! John ! The pepper! Burn its eyes out!

Lomax reacts on the double, grabs the ceratosaur 's dewlap under its throat with his left hand, thrusts his right hand

in his pocket, brings forth a handful of pepper and shoves it in the beast's eyes.

With a dreadful screech, it bucks and shakes its head madly.

Lomax is sent flying off its back into the nearby wall.

The blinded monster kicks up a row all around the arena.

Lomax springs to his feet again and beckons his companion.

LOMAX

Quick ! It's now or never !

He looks up at the scarlet and black hangings. One of them is half torn off its rod, its free end floating only a few feet off the ground. He grabs hold of the loose flap.

Eaks runs to the monster, gesturing.

EAKS

(hollering)

Hey, you, this way !!! Kitty-kitty-kitty ! Chow-time !

The ceratosaur whirls round with a roar and, following the sound, charges.

Eaks rushes for the wall and the hangings.

- TIERS.

The audience suddenly hushes.

The Games Master leans forward to watch what is going to happen.

The Aero Unit turns an indifferent gaze on the arena.

Silver clasps her hands.

In the ring, the two men spread the loose hanging as far out as they can.

The barreling monster rams headlong into it and rips it off the wall.

Holding fast, Eaks and Lomax are dragged in the sand several yards before the beast finally trips and, one of its hind legs catching in the fabric, goes crashing to the ground.

They quickly catch up with it, swathe it in the drape.

The ceratosaur jolts madly to free itself : one of its paws slashes through and whips the air, its tail swishes threateningly.

The cloth starts tearing apart.

Lomax grips one end of the hanging which he has roughly twisted in a sort of rope.

Eaks runs for the kiosk and snatches up a heavy piece of concrete bristling with metal rods. Without hesitating, he slams it down with all his might on the ceratosaur 's cowed head.

EAKS

Gotcha, you mother fucking son of a bitch of a goddam lizard !!!

Eaks and Lomax stand staring at the still body. Can't believe it's all over. Just slap five.

LOMAX

The past is a killer...

EAKS

And the future, a grave digger!

LOMAX

Say, Malko ?

EAKS

Yeah, what's that ?

LOMAX

How come you didn't swear after your pet "bordel de shit " this time ?

EAKS

Oh, I did. What you got was the subtitle !...

They trudge painfully across the ring. Stop under the Aerocontarch's stand. Look straight up at him. He stares back at them. A fierce glow flashes in his eyes. Silver neither moves nor speaks. Master of Games raises his hand, looks at the Aero Unit. The cyborg's eyes narrow. Pause. He glances at the upper tiers, then turns to Stark and his men.

AERO UNIT

Kill them.

Stark motions his men. They fly down in the arena and take place, their weapons ready to fire. Silver jumps to her feet.

SILVER

No!

The Aero Unit doesn't hear. He stares at Lomax.

His POV: close on the Soul Catcher dangling on his chest under his torn shirt. The cyborg stands, turns his eyes again on the upper tiers.

The Shaman stands in the shade but his own Soul Catcher puts forth a bright purple glow.

The Aero Unit snarls. His eyes radiate twin beams, his face undergoes frightful changes.

Nobody notices, they are all watching the firing squad getting ready.

Silver sees the cyborg. Her hand moves for her P- handle.

Watanka puts his hand on her arm. He looks at the Shaman, then back at her and shakes his head without a word.

- TIERS.

The rebels have regrouped in the lower tiers along the ring. The Vikings deploy silently.

Gunnar slips behind the MG who now face the ring to watch the execution. Snatches up two of them by the neck, snaps their vertebrae and pulls them behind the wall. Ragnar and Erick do the same without the other guards realizing.

Keeping their eyes on Gunnar, the rebels crouch for the attack

- RING.

Stark struts along the firing squad, taking his time before the final order.

Eaks and Lomax in front of him are impassive.

EAKS

(under his breath)

D'you think the chili would work on him  
too?

Lomax smiles

Stark is all puffed up. He glances at the grandstand and raises his hand.

STARK

Take aim!

- TIERS

Leuk'Lith concentrates.

- RING.

The sand flies up and swirls in thick billows.

MG fret and yell. Stark glances right and left, draws his plaser.

The hurling sand busts the spotlights: they go out one after the other. Caught in half darkness, the Organization VIPs start panicking.

- UPPER TIERS

Spirit of the Earth's talisman gleams like a star and lights his face. He steps forth and raises his hand

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH

>>> NOW!

- LOWER TIERS.

Gunnar leaps on the pit wall, sheds his disguise and wields his hammer.

GUNNAR

ODIIIIINNNN!!

Rebels pour in the ring behind him and pounce on the MG.

The Aero Unit bolts up as if he heard the Indian's mental message. His body's outlines blur, glow, his face knots in a hideous snarl. He ignores what is taking place in the ring and stares intensely at the upper tiers.

His POV: the whirling sand diffracts the Thunderstone's gleam in a thousand sparkles. He can't actually spot it.

A shout sounds in the opposite tier. He catches sight of Leuk'Lith. His eyes glow and radiate two balls of fire that swoosh across the air. Sand smothers them.

Aero's POV: Leuk'Lith has vanished.

- RING.

Gunnar and the Vikings stand between Eaks, Lomax and the firing squad.

Gunnar waves his hammer. Lightning bolts fly out at the panicked MG. The Vikings bring several down before Stark shouts them into counter attack.

Rebels send their cutlasses flying at them and slaughter a few more.

MG start firing away. Sand clogs their weapons. Gunnar's hammer absorbs the few deadly rays they put forth. Stark bellows like a mad man.

Eaks and Lomax dive under cover.

- ORGANIZATION STANDS.

Black B. and another rebel party send out grappling hooks and ropes to storm the Organization's stand.

VIPs scatter and fly up like a bunch of scared birds. Black B. brings several down with his Mexican rope. Black Leader quietly deploys his Black Guard around the grandstand. They fan out and start slaughtering methodically their attackers.

Black B. waves his men to fall back. He sends his rope flying at Black Leader. The huge man rips it off his neck with one twist of the hand and aims at the buccaneer. Black B. hastily slips between the tiers.

Another rebel squad tries to overcome Silver and her Instructors. These are attempting to fight their antagonists off and protect the Organization's personnel without firing. Several Instructors are getting a bit nervous.

SILVER

I said hold your fire!

- SUPERSTRUCTURES.

Ted, Jay and their men busy themselves rigging their time bombs to the grandstand's supporting posts. Every now and then, they glance at the fight going on below.

TED

They're gonna have the show of their lives!

Jay waves them to hurry.

Most of them are through with it. Ted leads them out of the superstructures. Jay looks back, spots a large, central stay and climbs for it.

On the bombs' LCD, the countdown is on.

- RING.

Fighting goes on.

Eaks and Lomax have joined the Vikings and scoot along the pit wall, harrying the MG. They succeed in snatching up a couple of plasars and shelter from the sand to fire.

Eaks shoots handsomely. Lomax tries to no avail. Glances at Eaks.

LOMAX

Shit, man, how do you do it?

EAKS

Just plain ESP, I...

He falters, slightly embarrassed.

LOMAX

WHAT?

EAKS

Oh fuck off, I don't know!

- UPPER TIERS.

Leuk'Lith hears Eaks' words and smiles.

A mental call attracts his attention. He looks away and sees Spirit of the Earth in the opposite tiers.

His POV. Spirit of the Earth stands with his arms spread out and his head down, concentrating to keep control over the ever glowing Thunderstone.

Leuk'Lith strikes the same pose. A light breeze ruffles his hair.

Spirit of the Earth looks at him. The breeze whirls from one to the other, the Indian's hair flutter in turn.

The Soul Catcher's gleam subsides, it resumes its opaque aspect.

- GRANDSTAND.

Leaving his men to tackle the rebels, the Aero Unit scans the upper tiers. The sparkles vanish.

He lets out an angry shriek and raises his arms.

The swirling sand stills in mid air for a split second and lands flat in the ring again.

Standing only a few feet from the Aero Unit, Eaks and Lomax come into sight, along with the Vikings and Black B. They freeze and stare at the Alien.

Next, they pull themselves to, put forth their rebel yell and storm the Aero Unit. Eaks releases a plaser blast. It ricochets without harming its target.

Alien focuses his mind on them.

Eaks and Lomax fall to their knees, writhing in pain. Fast motion images shoot by. They age and wither in a few seconds.

Onlookers freeze, scared stiff, including the remaining members of the Organization. They shoot frightened glances at the Alien.

- SUPERSTRUCTURES.

Jay is through rigging the mainstay with an extra bomb. He sets it and scuttles down the girders.

- TIERS.

Eaks and Lomax look a hundred years old. They breathe heavily.

Aero Unit cackles.

Stops short. Voice sounds in his mind.

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH

>>> Stop or destruction will come over  
you !

Aero Unit releases his mental grip on his two victims. They  
resume their normal aspect.

Aero Unit looks up.

AERO UNIT

(booming voice)

So you're here! Who are you? Show up!

Spirit of the Earth's voice sounds in the upper tiers.

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH

Who I am matters not. I am he who will  
have to be reckoned with from now on.

AERO UNIT

Are you trying to impress me ?

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH

No. There is no need to. You are the  
Trickster and I am the Righteous.

AERO UNIT

Really? Then show up!

- UPPER TIERS.

The Shaman starts stepping forth.

- ABOVE TIERS

Leuk'Lith's eyes widen in fear.

LEUK' LITH

>>> Don't! He's trying to lure you!

- UPPER TIERS

Spirit of the Earth hesitates, steps back in the shade.

- GRANDSTAND

Aero Unit snarls.

AERO UNIT

So you won't? All right, it's your  
choice after all...

His eyes flare, he holds his hands out. In the ring, several waifs roll to the ground, dead.

- UPPER TIERS.

Leuk'Lith lets out another yell and scoots down the structure, heading for the grandstand.

Shaman makes an imperative gesture. Leuk'Lith freezes.

Spirit of the Earth comes into full sight. His shamanic ornaments glint in the light. Close on his Soul Catcher. The Thunderstone shines.

The Aero Unit's eyes put forth an odd gleam.

- GRANDSTAND

The Alien's cybernetic body writhes and seems to expand, it radiates power rays.

AERO UNIT (DISTORTED VOICE)

The chronolith is mine!

- TIERS.

Leuk'Lith stiffens. He looks at the Aero Unit, then at Spirit of the Earth. Sheer horror knots his features: he just understood who the Aero Unit really is.

The Aero Unit's eyes are incandescent, they burn and grow as large as his face.

- UPPER TIERS

Spirit of the Earth catches Leuk'Lith's expression, stares in turn at the Aero Unit. Gets it too.

- GRANDSTAND

AERO UNIT

Yes, it is mine, see it blaze! It acknowledges its master!

Close on the Soul Catcher. The chronolith seems to push out of it and swell into a pyramid of light and sparks. Time vibrations rake the set.

- INFRASTRUCTURES.

LCD countdown goes on.

- UPPER TIERS.

Spirit of the Earth climbs on the tiers' cement ledge. He raises his arms.

The beat of a war drum sounds throughout the Bowl. Squalls, rain and snow flurries blast through the Bowl, the air is alive with lightning bolts and thunder.

Spirit of the Earth's body grows taller and huskier, his rags slip off and reveal the figure of a Sagamore warrior in the prime of life, with his traditional weapons.

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH

You believe you are the ruler of this world, but learn you that Mother Earth acknowledges no ruler and that I am the only Guardian of the Thunderstone.

- TIERS.

With an angry shriek, the Aero Unit flies out of the stands towards Spirit of the Earth.

Leuk'Lith leaps like a cat, stretches his arm: a plaser lying on the floor flies up and into his hand. Leuk'Lith fires at the Alien.

Without slackening his flight, the Aero Unit's body distorts under the plaser blast and restores itself instantly.

He pounces on Spirit of the Earth.

Leuk'Lith interposes.

Aero Unit backs out and hurls his death rays at them.

Leuk'Lith reacts too late to fend them off.

Spirit of the Earth flings himself forward, waving his weapon. The beams strike him full in the chest. He collapses.

Aero Unit extends his hands again. Leuk'Lith is hurled back and against a girder. He is out.

Spirit of the Earth cranes to his feet and goes for the Aero. They exchange a terrific power thrashing. Shaman summons all the forces of Nature to the rescue. Lightning bolts zap all around the Aero Unit, the earth quakes, the Bowl cracks.

The Thunderstone transforms into a fiery shape, the Soul Catcher seems aflame.

Aero Unit soars in the air. His body is made of pure energy. Spirit of the Earth arouses another gust of lightning, they strike the Thunderstone just as the Aero Unit tries to snatch it.

It shrinks and vanishes in the Soul Catcher.

With his usual wicked cackle, the Aero Unit builds up a time tornado that engulfs both opponents.

- ON TOP OF THE BOWL.

They land on the roof or ledge overhanging the tiers. Aero Unit motions again, the time tornado settles in a

transparent time dome that cuts them off from the rest of the scene. Everything around them becomes transparent and appears to move in slow motion.

They resume battle. Spirit of the Earth weakens, the Alien moves to grab the Soul catcher.

Spirit of the Earth swiftly pulls the Thunderstone out of it and sends it flying up. Bright as the sun itself, it sublimates into the chronolith's actual shape. Spirit of the Earth chants an incantation, it floats up in the air and remains hovering out of reach.

The Alien looks at it with a surprised gasp then turns to the smiling Shaman. Their gazes challenge one another : the best will win the chronolith.

Aero Unit pounces on his foe.

- TIERS.

Leuk'Lith pulls himself up painfully, looks up and sees the time dome. He leaps from girder to girder to reach the roof. Tries uselessly to enter the transparent bubble. Moves around it, watching the fight.

- MEANWHILE IN THE RING.

Eaks and Lomax recover. Eaks catches sight of a plaser on the ground. Dives, rolls over, grabs it and fires. MG go down.

Stark launches the infuriated MG against the rebels with renewed stamina. They roar in battle across the ring and tiers.

Vikings mow their opponents by the dozens. Gunnar's hammer belches fire like hell.

Black Leader spots the Norsemen. He positions his men around them and motions them to cut Gunnar from his men.

Black Guards move in a steam roller motion and shove the Vikings back.

Gunnar leaps on the kiosk and wields his hammer ever threateningly.

Eaks, Lomax with a rebel weapon, and others are tackling Stark and his squad.

Stark lands in front of Eaks. They exchange bird names.

STARK

Hey, you! Let's have a man to man fight  
if you've got balls. I've got a bone to  
pick with you!

He gets rid of his plaser and clenches his huge paws invitingly.

Eaks lays his own ray gun on the pit wall and poises for the duel.

With a wicked snicker, Stark produces a P-handle concealed in his back and levels it at Eaks.

Quick as thought, Lomax pulls his knife out of his boot and sends it sailing at the MG.

The blade cuts through Stark's helmet and into his eye. The man collapses, screaming.

Lomax walks to him, pulls his blade out and delivers his victim a kick in the face.

Eaks and Lomax join the battle again.

Black Guards corner Gunnar on the kiosk.

LOMAX

Oh my God! They're going to butcher  
him!

Black Leader motions the Guards to kill Gunnar.

Eaks and Lomax jump to the rescue.

Too late. The Black Guards lock their circle and drive them as well as the other Vikings back.

Gunnar braces and lets out a terrific cry.

Black Guards concentrate their fire on him.

He waves his hammer, it picks up the force rays in a wild flurry but it's power soon fails.

Gunnar realizes he's a goner. With one last mighty thrust he hurls his hammer, it explodes like a grenade amidst the firing Guards.

Overwhelmed by the force rays, he falls to his knees and topples as his men break through the enemy lines and reach the kiosk.

Ragnar rushes to him. He whispers.

GUNNAR

Win this war for me, Ragnar!

- ON TOP OF THE BOWL.

Leuk'Lith is watching the ring. Sees Gunnar's death. Hangs his head, desperate.

Then looks up, wary, concentrates.

He 'sees' the time bombs in the superstructure.

- ORGANIZATION STANDS.

Black B. is contending with Silver and the Instructors who try to evacuate the Organization members. The buccaneer flies from one structure to the other as he would in the masts of a ship, pounces on several Instructors, disarms them and sends them to the ground.

Shuttles succeed in taking off from the landing platforms.

Black B. spots one not far from him. With a terrific pirate yell, he flings himself across the air on the shuttle's cockpit.

MG and Black Guard come together and storm the rebels who fall back.

Eaks and Lomax cover their retreat and wave them towards the exits. Eaks does a good job with his plaser but they are finally cornered. Their opponents fix to shoot them down.

- SUPERSTRUCTURES.

Leuk'Lith localizes the time bombs near the mainstay.

Countdown reaches down to a couple of seconds, then zero. Then nothing. Foul.

Leuk'Lith starts, concentrates and sets all the bombs off together.

Hellfire.

Organization stands blow and collapse.

Silver and her men fly off amid flying debris and toppling structures. She stays behind to help the last Organization personnel. A tumbling girder pins her down.

The blast hits the time dome. It disintegrates in a flurry of sparks and fire, triggering chain explosions all around the Bowl and turning it into a blazing inferno.

MG and Black Guards in the ring are wiped out. Black Leader goes up like a torch.

Yelling and waving, Eaks and Lomax drive the T.O out of the Bowl amid the explosions.

They are about to escape themselves. Eaks looks back, sees Silver under the flaming rubble. Lomax attempts to keep him back. He shrugs him off and dashes into the blaze.

The shuttle Black B. is clinging to pitches and crashes into a wall. The buccaneer is sent flying over the wall. He lands hard on the canopy of one of the plaza's stalls.

At the top of the Bowl, a ball of fire engulfs Leuk'Lith.

Surrounded by the storming flames, the Aero Unit reaches for the bright chronolith. An invisible shield repels him.

He loses balance. A whole section of the roof topples and brings him down in the middle of the blaze. One last explosion blows the place to pieces.

115 EXT. PLAZA. EPILOGUE

115

Spirit of the Earth flies off the top of the Bowl as it blows, catches on a jutting girder, leaps over to a still

standing part of the structure and lands to safety as it blasts behind him.

He looks up and holds his hand out. The chronolith materializes in mid air, crystallizes slowly in his palm. At the same time, he becomes the Shaman again and considers the blazing Bowl thoughtfully.

Plaza. with black faces and torn clothes Lomax and the surviving rebels stand watching the edifice's agony. With a worried frown, Lomax scrutinizes the thick, dark smoke wreaths. His face brightens, he rushes towards the blazing wreck, yelling his head off.

Eaks steps out of the smoke, tottering, coughing, swearing, with Silver on his shoulder.

She wriggles off and stands proudly, glares at him, hesitates and smiles.

SILVER

I hate to have to say thank you!

EAKS

I'd hate if you felt obliged to do so!

She is about to say more, looks around and spots the Instructors at the far end of the plaza. She sighs and flies off.

SILVER

We'll meet again someday. Take care of yourself.

Lomax reaches Eaks, hugs him, slaps his back, unable to utter a word.

Spirit of the Earth stands silent and sagacious near a stall and watches them.

EAKS

(To Lomax)

Don't ask me how, but looks like we downright won this battle!

Spirit of the Earth smiles and turns away, whispering to himself.

SHAMAN

But this is only the beginning of the war...

Plaza. The wind parts the smoke's heavy banks. Leuk'Lith appears b.g.

In the Bowl. The fire turns to a greenish glow. Close on the rubble. Shiny drops ooze out of the flames, creep along the wrecks and start gathering in an incandescent puddle.