

SCREAMERS

Screenplay

by

Dan O'Bannon

Based on the story Second Variety
by Philip K. Dick

edited JF
2/15/90

SOUND:

A DEEP THUNDERING RUMBLE...SO DEEP WE FEEL IT MORE THAN HEAR IT:
THE SOUND OF INTERSTELLAR
SPACE . . .

FADE IN:

SPACE. WE SPEED TOWARD SIRIUS 6B, a huge mining planet, suspended in a veil of smoke.

SUPERIMPOSE OPENING CRAWL:

" 2058. Mining Colony, Sirius 6B. For ten years, war has raged across several solar systems. On one side is the N.E.B. Organization, a vast, powerful corporation which controls mining operations on almost every planet explored by man. At war with them is the Alliance, a federation of mine workers and geoscientists who have revolted and taken control of several N.E.B. planets.

This conflict has now reached a final confrontation on Sirius 6B, N.E.B.'s most important territory. Devastated by every known weapon, Sirius 6B is now faced with a new threat beyond imagination ..."

TITLE FADES UP:

S C R E A M E R S

The planet's orbit is clogged with a junkyard of wrecked space weapons and satellites. The shape of its oceans and continents drastically altered by ravaged coastlines and brand new inland seas. WE PASS THROUGH THE SCRAP -- A man made satellite ORBITS toward us. As it nears, we can see that it is a CREMATED WRECK. Fragments of debris follow gracefully in its wake, circumnavigating the globe with it -- and pursuing it with the relentless futility of a creditor, is the burned and blackened corpse of a space-suited man, his TEETH gleaming like pearls imbedded in asphalt...

Silence. . .

EXTERIOR - PLANET SURFACE - DAY

A landscape of utter devastation.

Gray DUST and shattered debris from horizon to horizon. Under a hot, blue sun.

A twisted FLAGPOLE, and on it, an ALLIANCE flag FLAPS like an old shirt in the wind.

Apart from the flag and the ash, nothing moves. No life. The wind moans.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - BUNKER PILLBOX - DAY

GUNSIGHT on a rifle.

A SOLDIER peering through it.

Nasty, slimy hand-rolled cigarette dangling from his lips.

HE SEES: (THROUGH HIS ELECTRONIC GUNSIGHT)

...The ragged crest of a RIDGE. ...and STANDING warily on it....
An ENEMY SOLDIER.

Holding his gun ready in gloved hands, the ENEMY INFANTRY-MAN studies the terrain, carefully and uneasily.

RIFLEMAN IN PILLBOX

Do you want him? Or can I have him?

This little favor is being asked of his BUDDY in the pillbox, who also -- through a pair of high-powered field glasses -- is studying the hapless enemy soldier.

SOLDIER w/FIELD GLASSES

He's all yours.

As they continue their prurient surveillance, the ENEMY SOLDIER starts down the hill. He begins to hurry, sliding in the gray ash, trying to keep his gun up.

Our rifleman (SERGEANT LEONE) keeps the advancing footsoldier squarely in his crosshairs: but holds his fire. His companion with the binoculars (LIEUTENANT MELENDEZ) is getting edgy.

MELENDEZ

What are you waiting for?

LEONE

How far do you think he'll get?

MELENDEZ

Maybe another ten yards, if you let him. Why?

LEONE

Think he'll make it to the bottom of the hill?

MELENDEZ

Probably not. No. Why?

LEONE

I'll bet he makes it to the barbed wire.

MELENDEZ

He won't.

LEONE

Want to put fifty on that?

MELENDEZ

Just get it over with, for Christ's sake! He's about to get to the bad part!

LEONE

You can close your eyes if you want to.

Now the enemy soldier is only a few meters from the bottom of the slope. He stops for a moment, raising binoculars of his own.

LEONE

That bastard is looking right at me.

It is eerie: each man peering into the other's telescopically magnified FACE. He knows that I know that he knows that I see him seeing me...

The soldier's binoculars, black and glassy and huge, conceal his EYES from Leone's fascinated stare. But his mouth is expressively tight and determined, behind twin plumes of steam squirting from cold, red nostrils. He needs a shave. On one bony cheek is a square of tape with something green growing behind it. His gloves and coat are mud-caked and torn.

MELENDEZ

(a moan)

Oh my God here it comes.

A DREADFUL MECHANICAL SCREECH and across the ground comes something SMALL and METALLIC. Flashing in the dull sunlight. Treads flying, SCREAMING like a banshee, it races up the hill toward the foreign soldier. CLAWS spring out: two razor projections spinning in a blur of white STEEL. The enemy soldier HEARS it. Turns instantly, FIRING. The little machine EXPLODES, hurling lethal pieces of honed blade for yards.

But already a SECOND SHRIEKING MACHINE has made its appearance. The soldier squeezes off two quick rounds. Too fast -- both shots miss. The mobile buzz saw keeps coming. The man is not easily panicked: he steadies himself, aims carefully, and BLOWS it into shards of glitter. But it is an exercise in heroic futility. Reinforcements -- more squalling little steel things -- are arriving in force.

He knows it is the end -- TURNS toward the men in the bunker and THROWS HIS ARM HIGH like a salute of defiance --- in his hand something GLINTS, catching the light from the sun. He SHOUTS, just as a device leaps onto the tail of his coat, screaming like a sawmill and shredding his clothes on its way up to his head. It hops to his shoulder. The whirling blades disappear into his neck, cutting off his shout. Spraying blood like a headless chicken, he goes down. One by one, the little machines shut off their noisemakers, leaving a ringing silence.

LEONE

You should have taken the bet.

MELENDEZ

(reproachfully)

You could have put him away with one shot.

LEONE

So could you.

Lt. Melendez is well aware of his own lack of resolve. Grumbling, he changes the subject.

MELENDEZ

(sullenly)

Those god damn things give me the creeps.

LEONE

If we hadn't invented them, they would have.

MELENDEZ

Why does everybody keep saying that?

MELENDEZ lights a cigarette with shaking hands. Everybody is smoking a cigarette at all times in this film.

LEONE

I wonder why an NEB soldier would come all this way alone?

Up from a concrete tunnel into the pillbox comes CAPTAIN ELBARAK, the bunker's Executive Officer. An affable sort. Well liked.

CAPT. ELBARAK

What was that?

LEONE

NEB soldier.

CAPT. ELBARAK

Just one?

Lt. MELENDEZ hands him the field glasses. Elbarak peers through them, and sees:

THROUGH THE BINOCES: a swarm of little gleaming machines crawl over the prostrate body of the NEB soldier. Clicking and whirring contentedly, they saw him into small bits which they carry away.

CAPT ELBARAK

What a lot of screamers!

LEONE

Not much game for them anymore.

CAPT. ELBARAK

Like flies.

Elbarak pushes the sight away, disgusted.

CAPT. ELBARAK

What a place for an NEB to take a walk. Was he trying to infiltrate us? Or did he just get lost?
(shakes his head in wonderment)
Jesus, how'd he make it this far?

LEONE

He didn't look lost to me.

MELENDEZ

Did you see that thing he had in his hand?

CAPT. ELBARAK

What thing?

LEONE

I thought it was a grenade. But he didn't throw it.

MELENDEZ

He shouted something at us.

LEONE

Yeah, when he saw the sawblades were going to kiss him.

CAPT. ELBARAK

Shouted what?

They shake their heads.

MELENDEZ

Couldn't make it out.

CAPT. ELBARAK

Wonderful. The two sentries.

LEONE

Hey! come on, Captain. You know you can't hear a fucking thing when the screamers are serenading.

What remains of the NEB soldier is being brought down the hill-side by the host of "screamers", marching in a little line like ants.

LEONE

(peering through his telescopic sight)
He sure had a lot of guts.

CAPT. ELBARAK

I guess I'd better go see what I can find.

Elbarak goes to the pillbox door, throws the bolt. But first he pauses and looks uneasily down at his wrist, strapped to which is a bulky metal bracelet. Touches it as if it is a magic amulet. Then he throws the door open and steps out of the pillbox.

LEONE

Watch yourself, Cap. It's probably a bomb.

EXTERIOR - BUNKER - DAY

Elbarak steps carefully out into the grimy sunlight. Makes his way between blocks of concrete and steel prongs, twisted and bent.

The air is bitingly cold.

He leaves behind him puffs of his breath as he walks.

He strides rapidly across the soft ash to the rapidly dwindling NEB. The now-silent "screamers" retreat as he approaches, some of them stiffening into immobility. Unconsciously, his hand steals to his bracelet.

He crouches by what remains of the NEB. A wind blows around the dead man, swirling gray particles up into Elbarak's face. After a moment, he finds what he is looking for: a metal cylinder about the size of a cigar tube.

It is clutched in the fingers of a glove.

He picks up the glove; it is heavy and the fingers clenched tight.

A sharp tug is required to separate the cylinder, before he hurls the glove away.

Printed along the side of the tube, in eye-grabbing atomic red, is the following pulse-quickener:

CRUCIAL TO ALLIANCE COMMANDER CRUCIAL

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - COLONEL HENDRICKSSON'S OFFICE - DAY

No windows. A lot of concrete. Gloomy.

Elbarak stands before COLONEL JOSEPH HENDRICKSSON, Commanding Officer, ALLIANCE Forward Command West. He is young for the job -- maybe 30 or 40. Battlefield promotions have thrust him into command in spite of his relative youth.

Suspiciously, he is eyeballing the cylinder Elbarak holds out to him. He leans away from it.

HENDRICKSSON

He had that?

ELBARAK

In his hand.

Cautiously, Hendricksson takes it from Elbarak.

HENDRICKSSON
I hate surprises.

ELBARAK
It's okay. No boobytraps. We
already opened it. Here.

Elbarak opens the tube for the reluctant Hendricksson and dumps out the contents: a single sheet of flimsy-but-tough metallic paper, carefully rolled.

ELBARAK
Nick, I think this is what we've
been waiting for.

Hendricksson reads it with no change of expression; you wouldn't want to play poker with him.

HENDRICKSSON
What are they up to now?

ELBARAK
Are we going along with him on this?

HENDRICKSSON
Not before I talk to the Bird Sanctuary.

INTERIOR - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - DAY

A HISSING TV SCREEN...

Spec 5 Officer tuning the dials...
Teasing a signal from the airwaves.

Hendricksson and Elbarak stand watching. The image clears and becomes an I.D. pattern.

VOICE FROM SCREEN
Hello Fort Apache, this is FLEETSATCOM
ready to refeed and decode you to
CINCSANC. Over.

SPEC 5
Roger, FLEETSATCOM, this is FORCOMWEST
Fort Apache, reading you loudest and
standing by to transceive. Go ahead.
Over.

Hendricksson steps closer to the screen. The image of 60-year-old GENERAL KATO NUYEN, Commander-in-Chief of combined ALLIANCE forces at "Sanctuary" (whatever and wherever that is), materializes on the TV monitor. His cleanliness, alertness and crispness of uniform are almost obscene by comparison with the weary, mildewed zombies in the bunker.

GEN. NUYEN

Yes, Joe.

HENDRICKSSON

(can't waste precious air time)
General, the screamers retired a single NEB runner who penetrated our lines. He was carrying a message from my opposite number -- the C.O. at their forward command post.

GEN. NUYEN

What message?

HENDRICKSSON

(reads:)

FROM: MARSHAL RICHARD COOPER
SUPREME COMMANDER
5TH NEB ARMY
FORWARD COMMAND.
TO: COLONEL JOSEF HENDRICKSSON
COMMANDING OFFICER
ALLIANCE FORWARD COMMAND
WESTERN ARMY GROUP

MATTERS OF GRAVEST COMPELLING
URGENCY MAKE IMPERATIVE IMMEDIATE
NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES
OF ALLIANCE FORCES AND OURSELVES WITH
NO OPTION FOR DELAY WHATSOEVER.
PLEASE SEND TWO OFFICERS AT POLICY
LEVEL. SAFE PASSAGE GUARANTEED.
YOUR ARRIVAL AWAITED EXPECTANTLY."

GEN. NUYEN

That's all? They don't say what
these discussions are supposed to
be about?

HENDRICKSSON

"Matters of gravest compelling urgency."

GEN. NUYEN

That could be anything from a revolution to a grain shortage.

Hendricksson holds up the piece of paper for the General to see.

HENDRICKSSON

On the back side is this map of their forward command post. It matches our own intelligence pretty closely, but in the kind of detail you'd give your left ball for. They must be cooking up a choice one to hand out this kind of info.

GEN. NUYEN

Hell's bells. What was that part about "policy making?"

HENDRICKSSON

"Send two officers at policy level."

GEN. NUYEN

Maybe this guy is acting on his own initiative. We haven't heard a word from their headquarters. I mean that literally; their comsats have gone completely silent for almost a day.

HENDRICKSSON

I didn't know that.

GEN. NUYEN

You would if you could afford to keep your radio on. They fell silent 20 hours ago. They must be in deep shit.
(pause)

Maybe the screamers have done the job.

HENDRICKSSON

To me, it just sounds like a set-up. Another of their cheap sadistic tricks.

GEN. NUYEN

Cheap it is not. It's paralyzing their entire communications network.

HENDRICKSSON

General. I guarantee you. Whoever goes, they're going to nail his ass to the barn wall.

GEN. NUYEN

Be that as it may, we are going to take their bait. Because there is a flimsy chance it might be legitimate. Hell, I no longer even care very much who wins, as long as somebody wins. A peace feeler from the NEBs! So go find out what they want, Joe. Maybe we can preserve some specimen of human life in the future. You have my full authority and support.

HENDRICKSSON

(snorts in derision)
Support! Don't I wish! Three rifles from the Crimean war and a case of firecrackers, and where the hell are those troops?

GEN. NUYEN

They haven't arrived?

HENDRICKSSON

No sir they have not.

GEN. NUYEN

Those worthless transports. Let me know the instant they're down safely... or otherwise.

HENDRICKSSON

Yeah.

Hendricksson breaks the connection. The screen goes hissing blank.

HENDRICKSSON

(stares into space)
Christ.

INTERIOR - CORRIDORS - DAY

Hendricksson and Elbarak walking. Black mood on Hendricksson.

[NOTE that there are no windows in this underground warren. Just a lot of concrete.]

HENDRICKSSON
It's been... what?... a year since
we started using the screamers?

ELBARAK
Something like that.

HENDRICKSSON
Have you seen the new ones?

ELBARAK
What new ones?

HENDRICKSSON
The ones with the chain saws.

ELBARAK
No.

HENDRICKSSON
One of them got into an NEB bunker last
week. It got almost half a platoon of
them before they pulled its plug.

ELBARAK
Be glad they're on our side.

HENDRICKSSON
Don't worry: they'll have their own soon.

ELBARAK
Maybe they won't last long enough.

HENDRICKSSON
Sure.

They walk into the canteen.

INTERIOR - CANTEEN - DAY (NO WINDOWS)

There are some ALLIANCE Soldiers lounging around eating, gabbing, playing cards. For the most part, they are a mixed bunch of troops from assorted planet colonies. They all look weary. The air hangs heavy with blue cigarette smoke, a choking haze that makes near objects recede into a gauzy distance. Discipline seems casual in the bunker.

Hendricksson and Elbarak walk in. Elbarak gets a can from a dispenser and they find seats at a table, by themselves.

Hendricksson watches Elbarak pop the can open and tilt it back.

HENDRICKSSON
(watching him)
I hate that crap.

ELBARAK
You hate everything.

HENDRICKSSON
It tastes like something you'd clean
out a drain with.

ELBARAK
If you knock it back fast enough
you can fool yourself.

HENDRICKSSON
The last thing I want to do is
fool myself.

ELBARAK
The alcohol is real.

HENDRICKSSON
Yes, and what a wonderful flavor
the amoeba impart.

Hendricksson looks at his watch [actually a complex panel of readouts strapped to his wrist]. He fishes a couple of red cigarettes from his pocket and passes one to Elbarak. Both light up and start puffing. Hendricksson gazes around the foggy kennel full of armpit-scratchers. Everyone in the room is chain-smoking, including those who are eating.

HENDRICKSSON
Lookit 'em eat that snot.

ELBARAK
Nick, you eat it too.

HENDRICKSSON
I eat it straight. Baked
soybeans and steamed algae.
Not dressed up to look like some kind
of mildewed hamburger or phony greenbean.
Or that so-called "coffee". You know
where they get the caffeine from?
Chickenshit, that's where. Brewed
soybeans with chickenshit.

ELBARAK

Oh, it's not so bad. It grows on you.

HENDRICKSSON

You can say that again. It grows on anything.

ELBARAK

Aren't we Saint Nicholas today?

HENDRICKSSON

I like things that are real.

ELBARAK

Expensive hobby these days.

(drinks)

I do miss trees, though. Promise me if you ever get to someplace where there are trees, you'll plant one for me.

HENDRICKSSON

Plant it yourself.

ELBARAK

No, I mean if I don't make it.

HENDRICKSSON

If I saw a tree I'd eat it.

From the next table, Leone leans over from his winning poker hand to ask:

LEONE

Hey Skipper -- are the NEBs really surrendering?

HENDRICKSSON

What do you think?

A SOLDIER

Is it true the war'll be over by Christmas?

HENDRICKSSON

Maybe. Which Christmas?

Suddenly, the Spec 5 Communications Officer comes running in, wild-eyed.

COM OFFICER
Skipper, there's a Chicken Coop
coming down hard and fast!

A LOUD CLAXON SIREN begins to sound. Everybody jumps to their feet. Hendricksson charges out of the canteen, down the hall, up some steps, and outdoors.

EXTERIOR - LANDING STRIP - DAY

Men are running around. Down the runway, a huge, flimsy-looking SHUTTLECRAFT has CRASHED, and lies in ruins like a broken dragonfly. A rolling cloud of gray dust extends behind it for some distance, tracing the crash path.

[These shuttles are single-use gliders designed for a one-way trip from space. They are dropped from orbit and make an unpowered descent and landing. Then they are discarded. They are cheap. The one we are looking at has come apart and is spread out along the runway for a hundred yards, like crates of chickens thrown from a truck.]

Hendricksson has seen it all before. He runs to the wreckage.

HENDRICKSSON
Anybody alive in there?

Pandemonium. Medics run from body to body.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
Any survivors?

AN ARM emerges from a piece of fuselage, and waves.

VOICE
Me. Here. Help me!

Hendricksson runs toward the arm. It is attached to a very YOUNG SOLDIER, who lies pinned under the wreckage. Hendricksson kneels by him. His arm is bleeding.

HENDRICKSSON
Are you hurt.?

YOUNG SOLDIER
Just trapped, that's all, sir.

HENDRICKSSON
Let's have some help here! Get this man free!

Other soldiers come running. Meanwhile, attracted by all the activity, the screamers --the little killing machines -- are hovering around the edges of the action, keeping a respectful distance.

HENDRICKSSON

How about your arm there?

YOUNG SOLDIER

(panting: eyes panicky)

I'm not hurt, I'm just stuck, if you can just get this off me, sir.

While he is examining the trapped soldier's injured arm, he notices the boy's wrist.

HENDRICKSSON

Where's your jammer?

TRAPPED SOLDIER

My what, sir?

HENDRICKSSON

Your jammer! Your goddamned transponder!

TRAPPED SOLDIER

I don't think I have one, sir.

HENDRICKSSON

Oh my God. Give me some goddamn help, this man hasn't got a transponder!

Suddenly, the nearest screamer starts WAILING, and darts on a beeline toward the trapped soldier. Hendricksson hauls off and KICKS it. It flies through the air like a soccer ball.

The soldiers who are lifting the debris clear of the pinned boy cluster around him, making themselves into a human wall between him and the milling screamers, which are starting to screech up a storm.

HENDRICKSSON

Get this stuff off him!

Hurriedly, they lift away the last of the debris. Immediately, the boy jumps to his feet.

Keeping a tight circle around him, they PICK HIM UP and carry him bodily to the bunker. The screamers circle around them all the way: they want to get at the new soldier: but they won't climb the others to get at him.

Near the bunker door, the screamers drop back and their horns die out, one by one.

INTERIOR - BUNKER - DAY

The tight knot of men enters the bunker. Instantly, they slam the door shut.

All the men relax with loud gasps of relief. They move clear of the new arrival, looking him over.

HENDRICKSSON

(angrily)

Why aren't you wearing a jammer!

NEW SOLDIER

Sir, I guess I don't know what one is.

HENDRICKSSON

(he can't believe it)

What!!

Hendricksson holds up his own wrist and points to the BRACELET on it.

HENDRICKSSON

This is a jammer! It keeps those things outside from cutting you into beef jerky, and I want to know why the motherfucking cocksucking sonuvabastardbitch they sent you down here without one! Jesus H. Christ Almighty shit!!!

The young soldier is shaken.
Hendricksson has vented his anger.
Regains control of himself.

HENDRICKSSON

(pulse almost down to normal)

All right! It wasn't your fault!
How bad is your arm?

Before he can answer, the outer door bangs open and a SOLDIER comes running down.

SOLDIER

(out of breath)

Sir, the screamers are cutting up the bodies.

HENDRICKSSON
 Oh Jesus Christ.
 (to others)
 Get this man outfitted with a jammer
 immediately.

Hendricksson runs up the cement steps and outside.

DISSOLVE TO:

INTERIOR - HENDRICKSSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Hendricksson is sitting at his desk. He looks grim and tired. In front of him, on the desktop, are a couple dozen sets of dog tags (military I.D. necklaces).

One by one, he is picking up the tags, comparing them with a list, copying some information from the tags onto the list, and dropping the tags into a big manila envelope.

A KNOCK on the door.

HENDRICKSSON
 Yeah, come in!

The door opens, and in comes the Young Soldier, the new arrival. His left hand and forearm are bandaged. He stands very erect. On his wrist is a jammer.

HENDRICKSSON
 How's that arm?

NEW SOLDIER
 Not bad, sir. Just a gash.

HENDRICKSSON
 Good. In case you hadn't figured it out yet, I'm Joe Hendricksson and I'm the C.O. here. Who the hell are you?

NEW SOLDIER
 Private First Class Dov Mendelsohn,
 101st Regular Infantry, 3rd Army,
 reporting for duty, sir.

From inside his tunic he plucks a thick envelope, and thrusts it into Hendricksson's unprepared hand, like a nurse slapping a scalpel into the palm of a surgeon. Then he salutes, smartly.

A little too smartly for Hendricksson, who returns the salute like a man waving a fly out of his face. He pulls Mendelsohn's papers out of the envelope and flips through them like junk mail. Some of them spill out on the desk.

Dov is nonplussed: doesn't the Colonel realize these are his records?

HENDRICKSSON

Why did you crash? Or do you know?

DOV

Sir, we started taking hard snake the minute we hit the troposphere. From there down to the surface they never stopped hosing us.

(tries to be professional, but his chin trembles)

We lost six men on the way down, sir. It is a miracle we landed at all, sir.

HENDRICKSSON

Really.

DOV

(blurts)

Sir, if the lander were powered we need not have crashed, sir!

HENDRICKSSON

They always crash. Those things are no goddamn good.

DOV

They could be made safe. If they had onboard computers, and proper shielding, and arma--

HENDRICKSSON

If we had ham, we could have ham and eggs, if we had eggs! God damn it, what do you think this is, Mendelsohn? 1950? To do what you're talking about takes resources! You do not build a space fleet out of 6 billion non-biodegradable cigarette lighters! If you want something done about the landers, go get a hammer and nail and do it yourself! Now shut the fuck up!

The outburst subdues both of them.
Hendricksson returns to his dogtag cataloguing, to avoid
Dov's eyes.

DOV
(finally: and very carefully)
... Sir? ... the other men in my
outfit... were there many ... ?

Hendricksson looks up at him. In spite of a youngish face,
Hendricksson's bloodshot eyes look about a thousand years old.

HENDRICKSSON
Mendelsohn, how old are you?

DOV
Sir? Fifteen.

Hendricksson just looks at him. How can anybody be that young?

HENDRICKSSON
Do you have any idea what possessed
them to send you down here without
jammers?

DOV
Well, sir... I guess things are
a little disorganized at the
Sanctuary just now. They told
us we would get whatever we needed,
down here.

HENDRICKSSON
They said that? Did they bother to
mention the screamers?

DOV
Sir, of course. Yessir they did.

Hendricksson reaches under his desk and pulls something out,
which he slams down in front of Dov. CLANK!

HENDRICKSSON
This is your basic Type A screamer.
Don't worry, it's dead. All the
guts yanked out.

A grapefruit-sized sphere with complex, individually suspended wheels.

Two arms, and on them, two articulated, swivelling, circular sawblades: like a cymbalist playing a pair of razor-edged orchestral cymbals.

On top, some simple sensory apparatus and a big HORN.

And a set of pliers for a face.

HENDRICKSSON

The function should be pretty obvious: identify, pursue swiftly over uneven terrain, then grab hold and start sawing while making a noise like 200 dying pigs.

DOV

What's a pig?

HENDRICKSSON

The screamers are one of the most efficient instruments of war we have.

Hendricksson twists it around and taps a small plate on the back. An identifying label.

ALLIANCE DEPT. OF DEFENSE
AUTONOMOUS MOBILE SWORD

HENDRICKSSON

"Autoswords" they wanted to call them. It never caught on. But whatever you call it, it just goes right ahead and kills you if you're not wearing a jammer. Anybody without a jammer, it's open season and too bad Charlie. Get the picture?

DOV

Yes, sir.

Hendricksson studies him.

HENDRICKSSON

How well do you know the other men in your outfit?

DOV

The other men? Well sir, we took our basic training together. A week at Camp Justice.

HENDRICKSSON

One week.

DOV

Yes sir. It was just about time enough to get to know everyone: our outfit had only forty men in it.

HENDRICKSSON

Now it has one.

While this sinks in, Hendricksson scrapes the remainder of the dog tags into the envelope.

INTERIOR - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY (NO WINDOWS)

Hendricksson is standing before his assembled company, seventy-odd men.

HENDRICKSSON

Thanks to some 4-star loudmouths, most of you already know the NEBs want us to go over to their lines to talk turkey. I'm told it could be a suspension of hostilities.

This gets a HUGE CHEER.

SOLDIER

Get some pussy while you're there!

LEONE

Hey Skipper, I want to end the war as much as the next guy, but why is it us has to go to them? If this is so fucking important to them, why don't they come over here?

Murmurs. "Damn right!"

HENDRICKSSON

Because it's probably a trick.

Silence.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT.)

Or maybe the screamers have them boxed in and they can't get out. Or maybe they don't trust us. How should I know, shithead? Besides, you want the NEBs creeping around here, looking at everything and putting time-bombs in the toilet?

End of that discussion.

ELBARAK

I'd like to come along. No one's ever seen the inside of an NEB bunker before.

HENDRICKSSON

Elbarak, if you could shoot worth a damn I'd take you in a second. But you can't, and since Suaro bought it, I can't think of anybody who can.

Dov shoots up his hand.

HENDRICKSSON

Yes, Mendelsohn.

DOV

Sir, I reached the 6th level on the range at the Academy.

HENDRICKSSON

You did?

DOV

Yes sir!.

Hendricksson grins and tosses Dov his multi-rifle. Caught offguard, Dov fumbles with the rifle and drops it to the floor with a resounding CLATTER.

Smirks and cutting comments from the troops.

Suddenly, Dov picks up the rifle, spins it into a firing position and shoots a series of bullets at a RAT, feeding in the corner. He chases the rat in a path of bullets straight to a rat trap, which springs shut and kills the rat with a dying SQUEAL. General cries of "All right!", "Nice shootin', kid!" from the troops.

Hendricksson smiles and retrieves his smoldering rifle from Dov.

HENDRICKSSON

All right, I'll buy that.
You're on, Mendelsohn.

DOV

Thank you, sir.

LEONE

Me too, Chief?

HENDRICKSSON

No, Trigger-Happy. The invitation's
only for two.

INTERIOR - PASSAGEWAY LEADING OUT OF BUNKER - LATE AFTERNOON

Hendricksson and Dov are putting the finishing touches on their outfits: full combat gear -- 80 pounds of clothing and armaments, in shades of camouflage gray. Elbarak and a couple of others are helping them.

Elbarak is adjusting Dov's jammer. Dov winces with pain.

ELBARAK

That codes it to your biosignature permanently. From now on it won't work for anybody but you. That way the NEBs can't use it if they take it off your body.

HENDRICKSSON

Reassuring thought, huh Mendelsohn?
(to Elbarak:)

Elbarak, if I miss a transmission, don't come after us. Call General Nuyen so he can start doing nothing about it. If you can't get through to him right away, well, it doesn't really matter. Just move into my office and carry on. And watch out for the NEBs imitating my voice.

ELBARAK

I'd still like to come along. I'd like to see if it's true they have women.

HENDRICKSSON
I need you here. If they have women,
I'll try to trade Yo-yo here for one.

ELBARAK
You take care of yourself, Nick,
you hear?

HENDRICKSSON
You do the same.

Their friendship goes way back.

HENDRICKSSON
(checks his watch)
We'd better get cracking if we
want to get there before dawn.

Hendricksson and Dov stamp up the concrete steps leading to the surface.

EXTERIOR - BUNKER - LATE AFTERNOON

Hendricksson and Dov emerge and stand for a moment, contemplating the depressing vista. The ground is bare and rubble-strewn, with the ruins of buildings standing out here and there like yellowing skulls.

HENDRICKSSON
Welcome to Fort Apache. Have you
heard that one yet?

DOV
Heard what one, sir?

HENDRICKSSON
Welcome to Fort Apache, where
there's a woman behind every tree.

There are no trees.

Hendricksson lights a cigarette and offers one to Dov. Dov declines.

They move away from the bunker. At the top of the hill on which the NEB messenger died, Hendricksson pauses and raises his field glasses:

A dead landscape. We can see for miles. Endless ash and slag, ruins of buildings. Nothing stirs. He lowers the binoculars, and gets out the transmitter.

HENDRICKSSON
(into transmitter)
This is Bona Fide calling Simon Pure.
Radio check. Over.

ELBARAK'S VOICE
Reading you loud and clear, Bona Fide.
Over.

HENDRICKSSON
My next transmission will be at
twenty-four hundred hours. Over
and out.

He puts away the transmitter and they push off. Picking their way down the opposite side of the slope. The ridge now between them and the bunker.

CAMERA CRANES UP and lets them dwindle to dots.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - DEVASTATED LANDSCAPE - LATE AFTERNOON

The two humans walk in silence, bulky grey moon men in their camouflage suits, carrying rifles in nervous hands.

CAMERA ANGLE PEERING AT THEM OVER SOME RUBBLE.

A gleaming SCREAMER hulks huge in the close FOREGROUND. It seems to be SPYING on them through the rubble. It TURNS slowly, evidently following their movement.

CUT TO:

HENDRICKSSON AND DOV WALKING, their faces tense under their helmets, scanning the ground ahead and to either side... but not behind...

ANGLE ON THE SCREAMER... as it MOVES OUT from hiding -- and ROLLS FORWARD, coming up behind Hendricksson and Dov...

CUT BACK to the two men, who hear nothing... .. until... a SUDDEN FLURRY behind them -- followed by a loud SQUEAL. They SPIN, rifles searching. The screamer takes off lickety-split. Carrying something small and furry.

HENDRICKSSON

(relaxing)

A rat.

They watch it go.

DOV

Rat, sir?

HENDRICKSSON

They go after rats too.

They resume walking.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

I never saw that type before.

DOV

Are there so many different types, sir?

HENDRICKSSON

Oh hell yes. They were built to learn, so they could keep a step ahead of the enemy. So right away we started seeing new types appearing.

DOV

Like what types, sir?

HENDRICKSSON

Oh -- your basic runner, and then they came out with a jumper, and a wall climber, and one that burrowed down into the dirt. Then there's the blade types. Circular saw, wire saw, snipper and daisy wheel. And a new type with chainsaws that flip out like frog's tongues. That one is over designed, in my opinion.

Dov is disturbed. This has been troubling him since his arrival.

DOV

Sir, they didn't tell us any of this at Sanctuary. They were only supposed to be psychological weapons. To demoralize the enemy.

HENDRICKSSON

(ruefully)

They sure are psychological. They don't just want to slaughter NEBs; they want the next batch to say "Please God don't let me die that way." It's that noise they make:

that and the way they kill. Like a hummingbird made out of razor blades. Let one of those things into a bunker full of NEBs and sixty seconds later it's rubber bag time. Out in the open you've got a slight chance: if you hear them coming you can pick them off -- if you're a dead shot. But if they sneak up on you, you're hamburger before your cigarette hits the floor.

Dov's face is now the color of this sheet of paper. He stares at the jammer on his wrist.

DOV

Sir... how well do these things work?

HENDRICKSSON

Perfectly. They broadcast a coded signal that tells the screamers you're not alive. The screamers only attack living things. It's not us that has to worry, Mendelsohn.

Around them as they walk, the world is a slag heap with dark weeds growing from the ashes and bones.

DOV

But they are winning the war for us,
right sir?

HENDRICKSSON

They may have already won it.
Look, hadn't you better smoke?

DOV

What for, sir?

HENDRICKSSON

(such ignorance is unbelievable)
They don't tell you a fucking
thing up there, do they? For
the radiation, Yoyo!

DOV

Oh yes. They said we wouldn't
have to worry about that, sir,
there was a drug you could take.

HENDRICKSSON

(holds out cigarette)
Yes. This!

The light begins to dawn. Dov takes the red cigarette and accepts a light from Hendricksson. Coughing, he spews out a cloud of smoke.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

(as they resume walking)
But you have to keep it in your
system at all times: so puff up
and stay that way.

He waves at some dense bushes that grow profusely by the side of the road.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

The goddamn stuff grows wild
everywhere. It seems to thrive
on the radiation.

They walk along, puffing, eyes reddening.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

Learn to like it. On Sirius 6B,
you smoke for your health.

Bloody SUNSET smears itself across the shattered landscape.
Nearby, the ruins of a town rise up, a few walls and heaps of
debris.

Hendricksson and Dov trudge on, their strides eating up the
kilometers.

Dov's anxious eyes watch scabrous grey possums with naked pink
tails chase iguana across the rocks.

To him this world is a bizarre dream.

DOV

(emboldened by the unreality
and the effect of the cigarette)

Sir? May I ask you
a personal question, sir? Please
say no if I'm out of line, sir.

HENDRICKSSON

Fire away.

DOV

Well, back at the bunker, sir,
when Captain Elbarak called you "Nick"?

HENDRICKSSON

Oh, that.

DOV

Nobody else calls you Nick, sir.

HENDRICKSSON

That goes way back. Elbarak and me
have known each other since our academy
days back on Earth. Elbarak, he's, well,
I guess you could call him my best friend.

(pulling himself back
to the present)

Elbarak thinks I have a distrustful
nature, which I do. So anyway, there
used to be a unit of currency called
a "nickel" and once upon a time people
made counterfeit ones out of lead.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

So, if you were suspicious, you bit the nickel to see if your teeth left marks. So Elbarak took to calling me "Nickel-Biter", and then shortened it to "Nick". See? Nick for Nickel-Biter. Cautious.

Dov is amused.

DOV

Did you bite nickels, sir?

HENDRICKSSON

Naw. I never saw a lead nickel. It was just an expression.

It is "magic hour" and the sun is in their eyes. So when SOMEONE abruptly STANDS UP in the ruins, Hendricksson and Dov FAIL TO SEE THE FIGURE.

Then Dov SEES IT.

A SILHOUETTE against the sun.

He FREEZES. Rifle in his hands. Jaw open a mile. Finger frozen on the trigger.

Hendricksson TURNS.

-- SEES Dov frozen with his rifle pointed at the FIGURE --

-- DROPS like a stone, behind cover (weeds), at the same time yanking Dov down by his coattail.

HENDRICKSSON

Down you fool!

(to FIGURE:)

You! Come out!

From the shell of the ruined building the FIGURE advances. Walking hesitantly toward them.

HENDRICKSSON

(blinded by the setting sun)

Stop!

The figure stops.

Hendricksson shades his eyes.

It is a BOY.

They lower their guns and rise. The BOY stands silently. Looking at them. He is small, skeletal. Not very old -- possibly eight.

But it is hard to tell under all the rags and filth. His hair is long and matted. His eyes are large, but without expression...what we can see of them in the gloom of the dying sun. He seems an indistinct shadow.

He holds SOMETHING in his arms.

HENDRICKSSON

(sharply)

What's that you've got there?

The boy holds out the object.

It is a toy bear. A ravaged teddy bear.

HENDRICKSSON

I don't want it. Keep it.

The boy hugs the bear again.

HENDRICKSSON

Where do you live?

BOY

In there.

HENDRICKSSON

The settlement?

"Settlement". A few walls and heaps of debris.

BOY

Yes.

HENDRICKSSON

How many of you are there?

BOY

How many?

HENDRICKSSON

How many people? How big's your settlement?

The boy does not answer.

DOV

You're not all by yourself, are you?

BOY

Yes.

DOV

(moved)

How do you stay alive?

BOY

I eat food.

DOV

What kind of food?

BOY

Different.

DOV

How old are you?

BOY

Fourteen.

It seems impossible. The wretch is tiny, emaciated. His arms and legs are like pipe cleaners with big knobby joints.

Hendricksson peers into the boy's face. Big eyes in the densening twilight. Big and dark. Hendricksson strikes his cigarette lighter and waves it in front of the boy's face. No expression in the flickering flame.

HENDRICKSSON

Are you blind?

BOY

No. I can see some.

HENDRICKSSON

How do you get away from the screamers?

BOY

Screamers?

HENDRICKSSON

The machines that kill.

BOY

I hide. Can I come with you?

Hendricksson snaps off the lighter: rises and turns away. Looks down the road to memorize the terrain before total darkness hits.

DOV

How about it, sir? Can we take him along?

HENDRICKSSON
Are you kidding?

Dov's shocked stare annoys Hendricksson. He doesn't appreciate the youth presuming to act as his conscience.

He pulls out his food rations.

HENDRICKSSON
Here. This is food. Take it and go.
Okay?

He tosses them down in front of the boy. The boy does nothing.

HENDRICKSSON
We'll be coming back this way in
a couple of days. If you're still
here when we get back, you can come
with us then. All right?

BOY
I want to come with you now.

HENDRICKSSON
It's too hard a walk.

BOY
I can walk.

DOV
Sir, why can't we take him along?

HENDRICKSSON
To the conference with the NEBs?

DOV
Why not, sir?

HENDRICKSSON
Why not? Because he'd slow us down.
And then what would we do with him?
Raise him? Think, Yo-yo!

DOV
Sir, we can't leave him here.

HENDRICKSSON
Mendelsohn -- you can't save them all.

DOV
We can save one! Sir!

Hendricksson shrugs wearily. Gestures to the boy.

HENDRICKSSON
Let's get going.

EXTERIOR - VALLEY - NIGHT

Walking. Hendricksson, Dov, the Boy. Following the remains of a road.

Around them is what once were orchards, acres of fruit trees and grapes. Nothing remains now but a nightmare of broken stumps.

DOV
What's your name?

BOY
David Simmons.

DOV
David? What happened to your mother and father?

DAVID
They died.

DOV
How?

DAVID
In the blasts.

DOV
How long ago?

DAVID
Six years.

HENDRICKSSON
You've been alone for six years?

DAVID
There were other people for a while.

HENDRICKSSON
Where are they?

DAVID
They died.

HENDRICKSSON
And you've been alone ever since?

DAVID
Yes.

DOV
Are we walking too fast?

DAVID
No. Where are we going?

DOV
To the NEB lines.

DAVID
NEB?

HENDRICKSSON
The enemy. The people who started
the war. They began all this.

David's face shows no expression. He continues to trail a little off to the rear, hugging his dirty teddy bear against his chest.

Hendricksson checks his watch.

HENDRICKSSON
We'll make camp up ahead.

EXTERIOR - CAMPSITE - NIGHT

They have built a fire in a hollow between some slabs of concrete, using weeds for fuel. The three of them are sitting around the fire, the orange light guttering on their faces like a dream, turning them into flame ghosts.

DOV
Sir... who invented the screamers?

HENDRICKSSON
A lady named Necessity. We were losing the war. Hell, we tried all kinds of stuff. We even tried mutating animals into weapons. The screamers were just another one of those screwball ideas. Nobody had any idea they were going to turn out to be such a whopping success.

DOV

Why are they so successful, sir?

HENDRICKSSON

Their capacity to learn. And they require no human supervision. They're turned out automatically in the underground factories, a long way down. Some of those factories are behind NEB lines now.

DOV

Who runs the factories?

HENDRICKSSON

Nobody runs them. They build themselves. They scavenge their own raw materials.
(reflective)

Nobody would dare go down there.

Hendricksson fishes the ration packets out of the fire. Passes one to Dov and one to David. David examines the food and passes it back.

DOV

Don't you want any?

David shakes his head "no".

DOV

Why not?

David says nothing.

DOV

You have to eat.

No response.

DOV

What's wrong? David?

The boy squats motionless in the shadows, his knees knobby and pale. Dov looks to Hendricksson for help.

DOV

Sir, what's wrong with him?

HENDRICKSSON

Maybe he's a mutant and he's
used to special food.

DOV

David? Do you need special food?

HENDRICKSSON

Let him alone. When he's hungry
he'll find something to eat.

Dov stares at Hendricksson: then he leans over and takes David by
the arm.

DOV

David? David?

Hendricksson grabs Dov and spins him around.

HENDRICKSSON

(angry)

Life is not the same any more.
It will never be the same again.
You're going to have to realize that.

They settle into silence, each with his own thoughts.
Hendricksson picks up something from the ground, and sits toying
with it.

Suddenly Hendricksson lets out a tremendous YELL and jumps to his
feet.

Dov and David are on their feet too. David grabs for his teddy
bear.

DOV

What is it?

HENDRICKSSON

An insect! I thought it was
a fucking throw-away cigarette lighter!

Hendricksson gets control of himself and sits back down.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

It was an insect.

DOV

Jesus, sir, you really had me going
there.

HENDRICKSSON
(a fine frost of
sweat on his brow)
I can't stand things that aren't
what they're supposed to be.

Hendricksson shrugs off the fit of nerves, calms himself down.
He checks his watch.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
Midnight.

He gets out the transmitter. Unfolds it.
Flips out the multiplex antenna.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
This is Bona Fide calling Simon Pure.
Do you read me, Simon? Come in. Over.

ELBARAK'S VOICE
I hate those silly names. Over.

HENDRICKSSON
Too bad. They're the only ones I can
remember. I gather you can read me. Over.

ELBARAK'S VOICE
Loud and clear, Fido. How are you?
Over.

HENDRICKSSON
Just fine. We're camped out in zone
B-Baker Blue, about an hour's walk from
the NEB bunker. We'll wait here until
oh three hundred and then move out.
Anything worth reporting on your end? Over.

ELBARAK'S VOICE
Leone got drunk and broke his collar
bone. Over.

HENDRICKSSON
Give him a purple heart. My next
transmission will be at oh six hundred.
Over and out.

The stars are bright in the black sky. Dov is lounging back with
a cigarette in his mouth and his hands clasped behind his head,
looking up at them. Overhead is a gleaming band, something we've
never seen before: a thin silvery strip spanning the dome of the
heavens from horizon to horizon.

DOV

Do you remember the Moon?

Hendricksson says nothing. He's still in a bad mood about the insect that deceived him.

DOV (CONT'D)

Do you remember how it had a face, and when it was full, you could see it looking off over the top of the planet? It had an expression, kind of thoughtful and a little bit sad. I wonder what it was looking at.

DAVID

What's the mune?

DOV

The Moon was a big light in the sky. It only came out at night. That little strip of light up there is all that's left of it.

HENDRICKSSON

It made all the fruitcakes and psychos act up.

DOV

It was pretty.

HENDRICKSSON

We've got three hours. Get some sleep.

They stretch out on the rocky ground, tossing and turning...

DISSOLVE TO:

THE DARKNESS BEFORE DAWN

A hand is shaking Dov awake.

DOV

(sits up abruptly)
Huh? What?

Hendricksson is standing in front of him in the gloom. He taps his watch.

Dov rubs his grainy eyes and comes to his feet. The fire is dead. David stands silently in the still darkness, holding his teddy bear.

HENDRICKSSON
Time to move out.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - RUINS OF TOWN - PRE-SUNRISE

It is that amount of brightening sky just before the sun peaks up over the horizon.

They walk down a pot-holed gully that was once a street, between skeletons of buildings, covered with the eternal dark weeds. Water splashes in puddles in the middle of the street. Rats and iguana scamper. The sky is just turning grey and the whole scene looks like Berlin after the second war back on Earth.

DAVID
Will we be there soon?

HENDRICKSSON
Yes. Why?

At the end of the street stand a couple of gutted military vehicles. Beyond them, the street has been blockaded by a barricade of dirt and barbed wire, about ten feet high.

Hendricksson drops to his belly and squirms up to the crest of the low ridge, where he peers through the barbed wire.

EXTERIOR - TOP OF RIDGE - DAWN

On the other side is a wasteland of chewed-up hills and ridges. Hendricksson lifts his field glasses.

Silent and tense, Dov and David wait below Hendricksson.

HENDRICKSSON
(sweating)
Damn.

He pulls out the NEB map and studies it.

He takes out a telescoping rod like a car antenna, which he opens out to a length of three feet. He ties a white flag to it. Then he climbs to his feet, feeling like a target.

HENDRICKSSON

Let's go.

Dov and David come up behind him; together they pick their way through the loops of barbed wire -- Dov helping the ill-clad waif -- and walk down the far side of the dirt barricade.

Up ahead, a TALL FIGURE appears on a ridge, cloak flapping.

Grey-green.

NEB.

Hendricksson's head snaps toward him.

HENDRICKSSON

There!

He holds the white flag toward the NEB -- behind whom a SECOND NEB appears. Hendricksson waves the white flag over his head, like a signalman.

A third figure joins them. A WOMAN. Words are exchanged, and they RAISE THEIR RIFLES... AIMING!

Hendricksson freezes.

HENDRICKSSON

Stop! We're --

The two NEBs FIRE.

The high-impact bullets SLAM INTO DAVID. KNOCK HIM BACK LIKE A WET DISHRAG.

DOV

Oh my God.

Hendricksson turns in time to see David hit the ground. Teddy bear flying. He whirls back and raises his own rifle, but in the time it takes him to turn away and back again, the NEBs have started to dive for cover.

His rifle-launched antipersonnel rockets slam into the ridge, throwing up huge fireballs and hurling gravel in all directions, but hitting no one.

HENDRICKSSON

(screams)

You filth! You murdering scum!

There is no reply from the ridge, where the drifting smoke obscures any possible target.

DOV

Colonel, sir. Colonel Hendricksson.

The urgency and horror in Dov's voice make him turn instantly -- to see the Dov hovering over the body of DAVID.

Hendricksson scrambles over to the pathetic little corpse.

What he sees is freaky even for a combat veteran, and devastating to Hendricksson.

What he SEES is an IMMENSE ENTRY WOUND in David's chest, big enough to throw a cat in: and from this cavity SPRAYS a fountain of ... blood? But this "blood" comes in COLORS, aquamarine BLUE and canary YELLOW ... in two big jets ... and it smells like burning automobile tires.

From the remains of David rolls a little candystriped WHEEL. Inside we SEE fluidic relays, servo motors, bundles of multicolored wires like twisty licorice. A section of charred plastic falls in.

DAVID IS A MACHINE.

For Hendricksson this is a thunderclap. His mind whirls and his heart hammers. This is ten thousand times worse than an insect mimicking a cigarette lighter. Hendricksson cannot tolerate falseness in any guise, and now he is confronted with the ultimate impostor. He slams into shock and stands paralyzed, gaping down stupidly at the abominable thing at his feet.

Dov, whose dismay is in the normal range, reaches out with the barrel of his rifle and tentatively stirs the intricate pieces of broken machinery. With the muzzle, he lifts David's hand. When he does so, 4 GLEAMING BLADES FLIP out of the fingers like switchblade knives. SNAP!
A death spasm.

Both men leap back, but Hendricksson SCREAMS -- whips up his rifle -- and SQUEEZES the trigger.

Anticlimax. Nothing happens. Instead of firing, the gun BEEPS insultingly. Wild-eyed, he glares down at it. A little redline display scolds him:

RELOAD ROCKETS

There he stands. Dazed and panting. The variable-ammo rifle quivering in his clawed hands. Sweat pouring from his face.

Dov stares at him in astonishment. Genuinely surprised to see his tough-as-nails commander snap like a bent pencil.

Meanwhile, the TWO NEB SOLDIERS and the WOMAN have approached. Dov and Hendricksson turn and stare at them.

NEB #1 points to the body of David.

NEB #1

Look! Hurry up! There's no time to waste!

They look.

This is the first time we have actually seen David under direct lighting conditions. The sun is rising, and in the cold light of dawn, David is not such a good imitation. You can see the seams running down the arms and legs. The skin color is off. The eyes are not very lifelike. He needed the darkness of night and shadow to conceal his imperfections. A creature of the night.

NEB #1

Yes! It's a fucking machine!
Now come on!

He raises a small camera and starts snapping pictures of the rubber-skinned robot.

NEB #2

(who is younger
and less harsh)
We watched it tagging you.

DOV
Tagging us?

NEB #2
That's what they do. They tag
along with you. Into the bunker.
That's how they get in.

HENDRICKSSON
The Forward Command. I came to
negotiate with the NEB Forward Command.

NEB #1
There is no more Forward Command. The
three of us are all that's left.
The rest were all down in the bunker.

A silence like granite. No birds, nothing.

NEB #1
Seen enough? Remember it! Now come on!

He turns on his heel and strides away through the crunching
debris.

The other NEB and the woman start after him.

WOMAN
(beckons)
Well come on.

Dazed, Hendricksson and Dov scramble after them.

NEB #1 leads them to a round rusted plate in the ground: A
manhole cover. He hauls it open -- an immense strain, it's heavy
and thick.

Immediately the WOMAN climbs down into the dark hole, followed by
NEB #2. They vanish from sight.

NEB #1
Get in!

Hendricksson and Dov hang back.

NEB #1 (CONT'D)
Quickly, or not at all!

Hendricksson, acutely jumpy and suspicious, vacillates like a tuning fork, then makes his decision and lurches down into the hole, eyes snapping with distrust. He is followed by an unhappy Dov.

Last one in is NEB #1, lowering the massive steel lid down after himself.

It slams shut with a solid clank.

INTERIOR - UNDERGROUND CHAMBER - DAWN (BUT NO SUNLIGHT)

Darkness and dripping water and a rusted steel ladder and five ill-assorted people climbing down into a cavity beneath the earth.

This was once the end of a sewer tunnel; until a cave-in sealed it off.

Now a choked mass of broken concrete and twisted rubble fills the passage from ceiling to floor.

The tunnel is completely obstructed and impassable.

The result: a little concrete chamber, totally enclosed and secure -- more or less.

The only way in or out: up the ladder and through the manhole cover.

This dank cell may not appear too habitable, but it is clearly the abode of someone. It has been fixed up into a depressing sort of living quarters, a subterranean "apartment" with furnishings.

A kerosene lantern guttering on a table -- no electricity.

A pile of dirty dishes.

A ten-gallon drum collecting dripping water, and an assortment of tin cans and bottles.

A ragged curtain; and peeking out from behind it, a grey cot and some shapeless clothes hanging on a hook.

Singularly dismal.

The woman, the two NEB soldiers, and the two Alliance representatives distribute themselves around the room in an uneasy circle, eyeing each other. They cling to their rifles.

Hendricksson stands very still. Only his eyes move, flickering around the room, firing glances into shadows like darts from a blowgun.

HENDRICKSSON

What do you mean, no Forward Command?

NEB #1
(angrily)
You don't know?

Hendricksson knows.

HENDRICKSSON
The screamers?

NEB #1
"Screamers"?

HENDRICKSSON
The machines that kill you.

NEB #2
Viv units.

HENDRICKSSON
(snaps)
What?

NEB #2
Viv units. We call them Viv units.

HENDRICKSSON
What does that mean?

NEB #2
Vivisection...it means the cutting up
of live things.

NEB #1
(the tough one, older)
They started out small, like little
mice. Then they got bigger and faster
and they started hiding. Bad, yes.
But everything is bad, and we're still
winning the war, and the Alliance is
finished, they got nothing left but
eyes to cry with. Then, yesterday --
(stabs his rifle barrel
up toward the ceiling)
-- them.

NEB #2

The Davids.

HENDRICKSSON

"Davids"?

NEB #2

The first one followed a patrol back to the bunker. They felt sorry for him and brought it in with them. It let the rest of them in.

HENDRICKSSON

(sinking feeling in the pit of his stomach)

Are you sure they're screamers?

NEB #1 tosses something to Hendricksson.

Hendricksson snatches it out of the air.

A small metal PLATE with screwholes in it: it was originally affixed to something. The corners have been bent back to pry it off.

Printed on the plate is:

ALLIANCE DEPT OF DEFENSE

AUTONOMOUS MOBILE SWORD

REVISED

Printed directly beneath that is that little emblem we've come to recognize in the supermarket: that unintelligible cluster of black stripes the computer reads... the "Universal Computer Code".

Hendricksson stares and stares and stares.

HENDRICKSSON

"Revised"?

NEB #1

Our soldiers got one of them. Before they were killed. That was on it. Under the clothes.

Hendricksson puts his finger on the identity plate. On the toothcomb pattern.

HENDRICKSSON
What does that say?

NEB #1
Say? It's a symbol.

HENDRICKSSON
It's international computer language.
It means something. A computer could
read that.

NEB #1
(harshly)
We didn't wait around and discuss it.

DOV
How many survived?

NEB #1
No one survived.

Hendricksson looks at him.

HENDRICKSSON
You survived.

NEB #1
We weren't there.

NEB #2
We didn't know until we returned.
Those terrible children.

NEB #1
Children! Built by Alliance material,
beneath NEB feet and behind NEB lines!

HENDRICKSSON
They weren't behind your lines until
they became your lines.

NEB #1
It's an atrocity, a war crime. The
Alliance will be held responsible
when the war trials are held.

HENDRICKSSON

Coming from you that's rich! The people who airdropped a million rabid bats in our kindergarten sectors. War trials! Better wait and see who's holding them first, Pinhead! And while you're waiting, go take a flying leap up your own asshole!

The eyes of NEB #1 glitter out from beneath his bucket helmet like two tiny thumbtacks. His mouth has clamped into such a thin line it's practically vanished. He is no one to tamper with. He takes insults badly.

But Hendricksson is a nuclear pile. He practices stare-down matches with cats, and so far this has not been a good morning. He's over-reflexed, wired and ready to go.

With guns in your hands this is taut stuff. Both Dov and the junior NEB are freaking out -- almost ready to jump their own senior officers before the room explodes into a furnace of state-of-the-art gunfire.

Only the woman -- lounging back on a heap of rags -- seems unbothered by all this. She watches it all with sardonic amusement, like it doesn't affect her. Like she's seen it all before. A cool cookie.

WOMAN

Hey!

HENDRICKSSON

(eyes on NEB #1)
Are you talking to me, lady?

WOMAN

Yes, to you. Does the Alliance really have tobacco?

The irrelevancy of this almost distracts him from the NEB.

HENDRICKSSON

What?

WOMAN

I heard you still have tobacco. Is that true?

HENDRICKSSON

Yes. We have tobacco.

WOMAN

Give me a tobacco cigarette.

Blankly, he takes his finger off the trigger to fish in his pocket for a cigarette. He gives her a white, machine-rolled cigarette, and lights it for her. She relishes it, blowing a big cloud of smoke up at the ceiling.

The crisis has broken, and though there is still considerable irritability, everyone starts breathing again. They scuff around clearing their throats and shaking out the kinks.

Dov is doing a little dance.

DOV

Sir! Sir!
(hopping up and down &
pointing at his watch)
The time! The time!

The time.
Ohmygod.
Up snaps Hendricksson's wrist.

HENDRICKSSON

It's eleven hundred hours! I'm late!

Hendricksson dumps his pack and starts tearing through it. He's certainly got everyone's attention. NEB #1 has tightened his grip on his rifle again, and is crackling with suspicion.

HENDRICKSSON

(explaining)
I have to radio my bunker! It's
a radio check to let them know
we're all right, and I'm late!

He sets up the transmitter at the speed of light.

NEB #1

What will they do?

HENDRICKSSON

Maybe assume we're dead, and reject
our transmissions as NEB impostors.
This is Bona Fide calling Simon Pure.
Come in Simon. Over.

Crackle and rush of HARD STATIC.

NEB #2

You won't get anything down here.

Hendricksson stares around the stony tomb. Maybe a better spot.

NEB #1

Nothing can penetrate this.
You gotta go outside.

No time to test their honesty. He peers up at the ceiling.

HENDRICKSSON

(trying to look through
30 feet of stone)

How safe is it up there?

Their faces tell the story.

HENDRICKSSON

(folding the transmitter)
Mendelsohn, come pull me down
if something horrible happens.

Hendricksson stuffs the transmitter under his arm, picks up his
rifle, and heads for the ladder well.

At the foot of the ladder he takes a vital second to look down at
his gun -- set for "RELOAD ROCKETS" in glaring red -- and twists
the selector switch to something with a full clip -- an
apple-green "FLECHETTE SPRAY". Then he hauls ass up the ladder,
with Dov at his heels, taking flakes of rust in the face.

EXTERIOR - ABOVE THE BURROW - DAY

The lid scrapes aside and a tense Hendricksson sticks his head
and gun up into the dull midday light.

Nothing threatening. Nothing at all. Just gray ash and mountains
of weed-choked bricks.

He shoves out the transmitter, flips it open, and turns it on.

HENDRICKSSON

This is Bona Fide calling Simon Pure!
Do you read me, Simon? Come in. Over!

The static is still awful. But ELBARAK'S VOICE comes through, distant and interrupted, floating in and out like a cork on the tide.

ELBARAK'S VOICE

(through STATIC)
... Read you, Bona Fide. This is Simon...
where the fuck...

HENDRICKSSON

Elbarak, both me and Mendelsohn
got delayed but we're both okay.
Do you read me? Over.

ELBARAK'S VOICE

... You, Nick? ... here like a fucking...
thought you... Over.

HENDRICKSSON

(frustrated)
Elbarak, try to hear me. The situation
has totally changed. There's a new
kind of screamer that's wiped out the
whole NEB bunker except for three people.
Did you read that? Over.

ELBARAK'S VOICE

... Bad, yes... hear me on that end?
... the interference is...
(fades)

HENDRICKSSON

Elbarak! The screamers have a new
variety that looks like a little boy!
It talks! They've killed the whole
NEB Forward Command! it! Alert General
Nuyen! Do you hear me! Over!

ELBARAK'S VOICE

... Nick ...

A rushing sound like the sea wind blows Elbarak's voice away.

HENDRICKSSON
(slams his fist
on the ground)
God! Damn!

That's it. He folds the transmitter and backs down into the steamy manhole, dragging the plate shut behind him.

INTERIOR - BURROW - DAY (NO SUNLIGHT)

Dov retreats down out of Hendricksson's way. The two NEBs and the woman wait for his report.

NEB #1
Well?

HENDRICKSSON
I don't even know if they heard me.
The static blew them away before
they could confirm.

NEB #2
The radiation is pretty bad here.

Hendricksson consults the cluster of instrumentation on his wrist, like a big panel of digital watches.

HENDRICKSSON
No shit. Mendelsohn, light up.

Both of them fire up the red-paper cigarettes. This starts off a round of cigarette-lighting, until everyone is fuming away. The NEBs have their own anti-radiation cigarettes, which they share with the woman.

HENDRICKSSON
(looking at his
radiation meter)
Jesus, G-for-Gregory! This place is
a fucking furnace!

They puff away like crazy. Soon the room is so hazy you could cut it with a knife; and they all seem considerably more relaxed, except for the woman, who couldn't have been much more relaxed in the first place. The tension falls away from their bodies and they shuffle around, blinking at each other with red, streaming eyes. Hendricksson looks around.

HENDRICKSSON
What is this place?

WOMAN
This is my home.

HENDRICKSSON
You live here?

WOMAN
Yes.

HENDRICKSSON
Like a mouse in a hole. Are you
a mouse?

WOMAN
I am Jessica.

HENDRICKSSON
Jessica? Just Jessica?

JESSICA
Jessica Delacluse. You want coffee?
(slight French accent)
Who are you?

NEB #1
I think we all better identify
ourselves now.

HENDRICKSSON
I'm Colonel Joseph T. Hendricksson,
Commanding Officer, Alliance Forward
Command West. And this -- is my aide,
Lieutenant Mendelsohn.

Dov looks at him in considerable startlement. A moment ago he
was a PFC.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
A man in my position needs a man
in your position, Lieutenant.
Hang in there.

Dov stands straighter and looks sternly at the NEBs.

Hendricksson nods to NEB #1.

HENDRICKSSON
Your turn.

#1 snaps to attention and thuds together the heels of his encrusted boots.

NEB #1
Sergeant Robert Becker, attached to
the 5th NEB Army, Forward Command.
I am an NEB.
(and proud of it)

HENDRICKSSON
(dryly)
At ease, Sergeant.

NEB #2 lets go of his rifle, to wipe off his hand on his pants.

NEB #2
Alex Ross. Impressed into the
NEB Army six months ago.
(extends his hand)

BECKER (#1)
(reminds him)
Corporal Ross.

ROSS
Yes, I'm a mere corporal.
(shakes hands with
the two)
You're all my superiors.

DOV
This gear is awfully heavy.

As if by agreement, they all let their heavy packs slide to the floor; then take off their helmets and run their hands through their sweaty hair. Quite a relief. Rifles finally leave hands for positions leaning against things, within reach. Hendricksson and Becker eye each other suspiciously during this stripping of excess gear.

There is now a general scratching of itchy, sweaty body parts.

With the armor off, we can better see the two individual "enemies" beneath.

#1 -- BECKER -- is older, with dark thinning hair and B-B's for eyes. A tough cookie. The woman is a cool cookie and he's a tough cookie.

#2 -- ROSS -- is young, with long blonde hair. A smooth, round face and a cornsilk beard. He's an apple strudel. [and Dov is an animal cracker and Hendricksson a piece of hardtack.]

DOV

I'm hungry.

JESSICA, who all this time has not stirred from her laidback position on the rags, rises catlike and swaggers over to a makeshift stove. She starts a fire (dry weeds) under a can of water, igniting it with one of the ubiquitous disposable lighters.

HENDRICKSSON

(hopefully)

Real coffee?

JESSICA

No.

He's not interested. He and Dov start rooting in their packs for rations. Lunch. The NEBs eye them with suspicion... which changes to covert envy when they see the Alliance-issue ration packages emerge. They have no rations of their own.

HENDRICKSSON

(eating)

How did you people survive, anyway?

Screamers don't normally leave witnesses.

The two NEB men exchange a look.

ROSS

We were here.

HENDRICKSSON

Here? What the hell were you doing in here?

Ross and Becker look blase.

JESSICA

(boiling the coffee)

It was their turn.

Hendricksson and Dov crank their heads around and gape at her.

JESSICA

If not them, it would have been somebody else.

(shrugs)

It was their turn.

It's true then. NEBs have women. The Alliance has tobacco.

ROSS

(apologetically)

It was only for a couple of hours. When we returned to the bunker, we found...

(words fail him)

HENDRICKSSON

No more NEBs and no more Davids.

BECKER

Except for the single one. The one with the Alliance badge.

HENDRICKSSON

Yeah, I already got that part about the Alliance. So you swallowed your gum, tore the plate off the robot, then high-tailed it back here and haven't been out since.

Becker feels his courage is being challenged. He spits on the floor angrily and stands up.

BECKER

Commander, unload your handgun, please and put it on the table, we'll leave now.

HENDRICKSSON

Where are you going?

BECKER

To our rear command. To bring them the evidence of this Alliance atrocity.

HENDRICKSSON

How? On foot? Without these?

(taps his jammer)

Say, that's a bright idea. Do you guys have transport?

BECKER

No. All our vehicles were sabotaged
by the vivs.
(a disgusted gesture)

Ross takes a deep breath, and takes the plunge.

ROSS

There's only one place left for
us to go anymore. If we want to
live, we've got to go with you.
To the Alliance Forward Command.

HENDRICKSSON

(to Ross)

That's easier said than done, son.
These jammers can be stretched
to include a hitch-hiker, if you know
the trick. But it's tough with the
woman too.

(thinks)

Let's see...

BECKER

As your prisoners?

HENDRICKSSON

We're here to negotiate. You guys
aren't prisoners of war, you're
ambassadors-at-large. You get the Class
A treatment. You get to eat what I eat.

(shoves a ration
package at him)

Startled, Becker says no more, but resumes his seat and digs in
to chow down. Ross is touched when Dov follows his boss's example
and shares his yummy algae cakes.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

I don't want to move out before dark,
the screamers are blind as a bat in
certain frequencies of light. You
know about that?

The NEBs nod wisely and pat their helmets, sitting beside them on the slimy stone floor, like inverted coal scuttles crusted over with various doohickeys. They understand very well.

HENDRICKSSON

(slaps his knee)

I knew you guys would know that one, because it's a survival trick.

Dov doesn't understand at all.

DOV

What, sir?

HENDRICKSSON

They have terrible night vision. They can't see pure yellow light at all. It's their Achilles heel. So when the sun goes down, I want to go poke around in the bunker a little while.

The tension in the room immediately increases by several pounds per square inch.

ROSS

(horrified)

Go back down into our bunker again?

HENDRICKSSON

That's right. I haven't been yet, remember?

ROSS

(pleads)

Doesn't Earth's law say a man can't be hung twice if he survives the first hanging?

HENDRICKSSON

Afraid the hangman won't be out tonight, huh?

(smiles)

Let me show you boys something.

Hendricksson holds out his WRIST.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

You've picked these up off bodies,
but you've never been able to use one.

He holds his arm up over his head, like he's trying to catch a fly ball.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

The field goes out from my wrist,
four meters in all directions.
So if some smart NEB sticks real
close to my left arm he's covered
too, right? So stop
sweating. Tonight you'll be safe,
for once.

The most impressed of all is Dov:

DOV

Where did you learn that trick, sir?

Hendricksson shoots him an irritable look. Doesn't the punk think seven continuous years of combat teach you something?

HENDRICKSSON

Now get this straight: Numero Uno:
it is critical that I talk to my people
and the radio in your bunker has got
to be a lot more powerful than
this dinky little Motorola. Numero Two:
at the risk of spoiling everybody's
good time, allow me to remind you
that the NEBs have been known to pull
some pretty damn mean-minded tricks,
so before I go telling my Commander-
in-Chief that the NEB Forward Command's
been liquidated, I'm going to see if
it's true. Right? Number Three and
most important of all: I'm in command
now and what I say goes. Got it?

No-one argues. He's the one with the jammers and the food and the loudest mouth. He's in charge.

HENDRICKSSON

(consults his watch)

So when the sun goes down, we go in.

Hendricksson's watch BLIPS at him.

HENDRICKSSON
Mendelsohn, light up.

Mendelsohn obeys. So does everyone else. This rouses the woman from her languid indifference.

JESSICA
Give me another tobacco cigarette.
I forgot how good tobacco is.

Hendricksson reaches into his pocket for the pack. We leave them there, smoking in moody silence, as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - HORIZON - SUNDOWN

The sky is furnace red. The horizon bites into the sun like black snaggle teeth into a melon.

INTERIOR - JESSICA'S BURROW - SUNDOWN

Once again, full combat gear. Four soldiers -- two Alliance, two NEB. Sitting huddled like a football team with rifles. Taking a final briefing from Hendricksson.

HENDRICKSSON
(studying his wrist
instrumentation)
And the sun... is down... now!
Okay, people, turn on your buglights.

They all get up and switch on VIVID YELLOW HELMET LIGHTS. The NEB ones look like yellow miner's lanterns. The Alliance version is more like a penlight situated over the right ear and pointed forward, so it's shooting a beam of light wherever Hendricksson looks. He reaches up and adjusts it -- irises it out to a wide spotlight, then down to a pinpoint. Settles on a cone of medium angle. The burrow lights up with the INTENSE YELLOW GLARE.

HENDRICKSSON
Mendelsohn, you've got one too.

Dov finally finds the switch. Adds his own headlamp to the yellow blaze.

HENDRICKSSON

That's your invisibility suit.
You see them and they don't see you.
All right, everybody listen up.
We're going to do this by the
"buddy system".

Hendricksson pulls thin, twisty metal rope out of his kit.

HENDRICKSSON

The center of the field is the
jammer on my left wrist. If you've
got ahold of my left hand, you're
as deep into the field as I am.
Take a couple of steps
away from me and you're in deep
shit. So tonight we're going
to chain you guys to our left elbows.
That'll keep us from thinking
with our legs. Okay?

There are no questions.

HENDRICKSSON

Then let's go.

They all rise, massively. Their sweaty gear rustles and clanks as
they head for the ladder. Headlamps bobbing like jackolanterns.

Hendricksson pauses in front of Jessica, who is curled up on her
rag chair, sullenly picking lint off the front of her NEB army
shirt.

HENDRICKSSON

See you in a couple of hours.

JESSICA

(sulks)
Give me another cigarette.

HENDRICKSSON

Sorry. All gone.

JESSICA

Too bad.

HENDRICKSSON

Better start packing, Mouse.

They leave her there pouting, and make their exit in a blaze of golden glory.

EXTERIOR - ABOVE THE MOUSEHOLE - NIGHT

Darkness. The manhole cover scrapes open like a stove lid and bright YELLOW LIGHT bursts out.

Hendricksson comes up first.
Waits while the others crawl out.
Scans the darkness with his rifle and his buglight.
Like a little locomotive headlight on his forehead.
Like a third eye.

He sticks up his hand for their attention.
He points to his LEFT ELBOW.
Time to tie up.
He gestures for Becker to bring his own elbow over.
Each Alliance soldier ties himself to a NEB. Between them, about a meter of slinky dangling chain. Dov ties himself to Ross.
Hendricksson to Becker.
An awkward way to work.

Hendricksson points at Becker (YOU); then out into the night (LEAD THE WAY).

With a silent snarl, Becker launches them off.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - NEB BUNKER - NIGHT

The NEB bunker looks like a modern high-security prison. It is surrounded by a tall chain-link fence. Carbon arc lights hang from metal poles. They illuminate a bare section of gravelly ground, one hundred meters across.
No guards.
Silence.

Hendricksson gestures for the others to do nothing. He kneels and aims at the

CLOSEST LIGHT.

Hendricksson fires.
The light vanishes with an eerie pop. He shoots out all the lights, one by one. The landscape falls totally dark except for the yellow "bug lamps".

Hendricksson leads the others around the chain-link fence until they find a recently-torn gap. Hendricksson points at Becker, waving him ahead.

The two NEBs form human shields for the Alliance troops as they climb through the hole in the fence. They cross thirty yards of crunching gravel. Their bug lights reveal

A YAWNING CHASM -- the ENTRANCE INTO THE NEB BUNKER. Its doors gape open, revealing only BLACKNESS INSIDE.

Hendricksson points toward this hole in the ground.

Becker clenches his jaw, straightens his shoulders, and with a glare at Hendricksson, walks down the concrete steps.

INTERIOR - NEB BUNKER - NIGHT

The four soldiers move through a series of underground rooms, connected by concrete tunnels. EMPHASIZE the precision required to negotiate this labyrinth while chained together.

The bunker is empty of life. ANGLES ON various walls and ceilings, splashed with dried blood. In the intense, yellow glare, it looks like someone has thrown black paint over the walls and ceilings.

Becker begins taking photographs of the blood splashes. DOV'S REACTION to this painting of mayhem. ROSS as he looks around in awe.

In one room Hendricksson sees:

HALF-EATEN PLATES OF FOOD, indicating the great speed with which disaster struck.

ANOTHER ANGLE shows smashed furniture amidst gleaming, untouched machinery. Clearly, the destruction was extremely selective.

ANGLE ON bare patches, showing where machinery stood until recently.

INTERIOR - RADIOCOMMUNICATIONS ROOM - NIGHT

On the far side of the room is a vast COMMUNICATIONS CONSOLE.

Hendricksson and Becker cross quickly to it.

The console is dead.
Its insides dismantled and carried away.
So much for the radio.

Hendricksson softly pounds the console with his fist.

HENDRICKSSON

Shit.

He moves on to the next item of importance.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

(to Becker)

The plate.

Becker reaches into his pocket, pulls out the little metal plate he took off the screamer, and hands it to Hendricksson.

Suddenly, Becker's eyes widen and he FREEZES.

The others TURN to see what he is looking at.

A SCREAMER has entered through the far door. Fortunately, it is a conventional type, unrevised. One of the scavenger models. But it is BIG.

They ALL FREEZE.

Blind as a bat in the yellow helmet light, the screamer gropes around the room, feeling the faces of various instrument panels. It finds a piece of machinery it likes.

CLOSE on tiny screwdrivers as they extend from the screamer and carefully remove an entire bank of equipment. The machinery disappears into the screamer's bin. The scavenger continues its circuit of the room.

Ross is sweating.

The humans stand frozen, not making a sound. They watch in horror as the steel spider groups its way slowly TOWARD them.

Ross is the closest.

Slowly becoming aware of Ross's presence, the screamer begins groping its way toward him with its ARM-LIKE APPENDAGE.

It REACHES for Ross.

At that instant, Dov STRETCHES HIS ARM ACROSS ROSS'S BODY -bringing the FIELD from his JAMMER over the screamer. The screamer is instantly deactivated. With a loud CLANG, it collapses to the floor.

Hendricksson steps over to the screamer and smashes it with his rifle butt.

A moment to recover. Several soft sighs.

Hendricksson looks at Becker and taps the PLATE. Becker nods toward another room. Cautiously, they move toward it.

INTERIOR - COMPUTER ROOM - NIGHT

They enter, rifles high, and immediately see that half the equipment in the room has been ripped out.

Hendricksson moves swiftly to the COMPUTER and starts expertly punching keys.

The computer comes to life. Sigh of relief.

ANGLE: THE PLATE and its incomprehensible row of black stripes.

Hendricksson pushes the plate into

A SLOT IN THE COMPUTER.

There is a tiny CLICK as the computer scans the small cluster of black stripes, reading them like words.

The computer screen lights up with two NEB words.

HENDRICKSSON

What?

DOV

"Type Two".

HENDRICKSSON

Say again?

DOV

"Type Two". As in second variety.

Hendricksson frowns in puzzlement. He gestures sharply to the exit.

He waves the others in front of him, watching the two NEBs very closely as they cautiously move out of the room, rifles raised.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - DEVASTATED LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

They are walking swiftly. They look spooked.

ROSS

(hushed)

Why did they take the machinery?

HENDRICKSSON

For parts.

BECKER

What did they do with the bodies of our troops?

HENDRICKSSON

They were built to learn. And one of the things they learned was that rotting meat gives off methane gas, which is fuel. Another thing they learned was that fat can substitute for petroleum. And eyeball jelly makes a dandy blade wax.

Everyone is disgusted.

ROSS

(appalled but fascinated)

They really do that? Make appliances from human bodies?

HENDRICKSSON

Buster, they refine the body right down to the trace metals.

A moody silence, each man with his own thoughts.

They arrive at the mousehole and untie themselves.

INTERIOR - MOUSEHOLE - NIGHT

They come down the ladder, showering grit and dust below them. Jessica is waiting, dressed for travel. She looks at them, registering their dour faces.

HENDRICKSSON

All packed?
 (looks at his
 radiation meter)
 Everybody smoke.

He tosses a cigarette to Dov, and the NEBs share theirs with Jessica. They smoke in silence, absorbed in their thoughts.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

We're going to have to walk in single file. It's the only way to cover everybody.

ANGLE ON ROSS as he catches Becker STARING AT HIM. Ross scowls and looks away.

JESSICA

What did you find in the bunker?

Hendricksson pulls on his cigarette. He takes the little plate from his pocket.

HENDRICKSSON

This says "Revised". Meaning the David-type camouflaged screamer, as opposed to the old-type undisguised machine. Right? But we didn't know what this meant.

(points to the
 computer code)
 It means "Type Two".

JESSICA

So?

HENDRICKSSON

If David is Type Two, there is another type. "Revised" type.

There is another cold, tense moment.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

I thought the screamers were bad, but at least they looked like what they were. But oh no, we had to build them to learn. To improve themselves.

Hendricksson is trembling. His face gleams with sweat.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

Now we won't know what anything is any more. We won't know if up is down or black is white. We've turned reality inside out.

ANGLE ON Becker. He is still STARING at Ross.

Without warning Becker GRABS ROSS AND THROWS HIM AGAINST THE WALL. He AIMS HIS RIFLE AT ROSS'S STOMACH.

Ross's mouth opens and closes but he makes no sound.

Hendricksson grabs his own rifle, and points it at Ross --then Becker.

HENDRICKSSON

What the hell's going on?

ROSS

(terrified and pleading)
He's gone insane. Stop him.

BECKER

We only knew about Variety Two, right? Well, now we know about the other.

Becker PRESSES THE TRIGGER. WHITE HEAT BURSTS FROM THE GUN WITH AN EAR-SHATTERING SOUND. Ross HITS THE FLOOR, SMOKING.

HENDRICKSSON

Son of a bitch.

BECKER

The other variety. Now we know both of them. I was watching. I had a feeling. Another minute and it might have --

HENDRICKSSON

You had a feeling?

Jessica pushes past him and bends over the steaming remains on the ground.

JESSICA

See for yourself. Bones, flesh.

Hendricksson takes a fast look. His eyes hardly leave Becker's face. He's not surprised to see scarred flesh, charred bone fragments and ligaments. Blood forms a pool.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

No wheels, no parts, no machinery.
Not a viv. Not another variety.

Becker sits down, all the color draining from his face. He puts his head in his hands and rocks back and forth.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Why did you kill him?

They are watching Becker intently. He blubbers.

HENDRICKSSON

Fear.

JESSICA

Maybe. Maybe not.

HENDRICKSSON

You think different?

JESSICA

Maybe Ross had learned something.

BECKER

(white with fear)
You think I'm the other variety.
You think I killed him on purpose.

HENDRICKSSON

Why, then?

BECKER

I thought he was a viv. I thought I knew.

HENDRICKSSON

Why?

BECKER

I've been watching him. I was
suspicious.

HENDRICKSSON

Why?

BECKER

I thought I saw something.
Heard something.

HENDRICKSSON

Heard what?

BECKER

I thought I heard him -- ticking.

Silence.

Jessica picks up Ross's rifle. Fragments of pink, steaming flesh come away with it. With a thoughtful, appraising look, she turns it on Becker.

HENDRICKSSON

Put that away.

JESSICA

Better safe than sorry.

HENDRICKSSON

(expertly disarming her)

No. One is enough. If we kill him we'll be doing what he did to Ross.

BECKER

Thank you. I was afraid. You understand that. Now she's afraid the way I was. She wants to kill me.

HENDRICKSSON

No more killing. Let's go.

Hendricksson walks to the ladder. He stops there and looks back at Ross' body. He gazes at Ross, as if seeing the depths of his own soul.

EXTERIOR - ABOVE THE MOUSEHOLE - NIGHT

Hendricksson sticks his head out. Buglight blazing. He shoves out the transmitter and flips the antenna open.

HENDRICKSSON

This is Bona Fide calling Simon Pure.
Do you read me? Come in. Over.

He switches over. Nothing but violent static.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
 This is Bona Fide calling Simon Pure.
 Do you read me, Simon? Come in. Over.

If anything, the static is worse.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
 Elbarak, or anyone, if you hear
 me, the screamers have mutated.
 They now have one that looks
 and acts like a little refugee boy.
 A bunch of them wiped out the entire
 NEB Forward Command. And there's
 another type we don't know about yet.
 We're returning to Fort Apache now,
 and estimate arrival by 0600. I'm
 bringing two NEB survivors.
 Over and out.

Grimly, he folds the transmitter and climbs up.

EXTERIOR - DRY ARROYO - NIGHT

Four figures, moving toward the Alliance lines. Hendricksson and
 Becker in front, side by side. Dov, his arm around Jessica,
 brings up the rear. They look like a family, parents in front,
 children at the back. Three yellow helmet lamps light the way.

HENDRICKSSON
 Don't get any ideas I'm a screamer,
 Pinhead.

BECKER
 It was a mistake.

HENDRICKSSON
 I'll kill you before you make another.

ANGLE ON Dov and Jessica.

DOV
 Are you warm enough?

JESSICA
 Yes.

DOV

Don't step away from me. My jammer's only good for four meters.

JESSICA

If I could get any closer to you I would.

Dov misinterprets her statement as one of affection. He relishes the role of protector. Besides, she's a turn-on, in her sullen way.

BECKER

What happens at your bunker?

HENDRICKSSON

We negotiate.

BECKER

(grimly)
Yeah, I'll bet.

HENDRICKSSON

Shut up, you paranoid asshole.

DOV

(to Jessica)
Are you okay?

JESSICA

I'm all right. Promise me I'll be safe.

DOV

You'll be safe. We'll get you to the Alliance bunker.

They hike in silence for a moment.

Suddenly, Becker LEAPS TO ONE SIDE, FIRING wildly at something in the rubble.

We glimpse a SPINNING METAL SHAPE.

HENDRICKSSON

(running forward)
What is it?

BECKER
 (sweat streaming
 down his face)
 It almost got me.

Hendricksson takes a closer look.
 He stoops and holds up the object for all to see.
 It is a mangled weather vane with a rusty iron rooster perched on
 top.

HENDRICKSSON
 (laughing)
 A weather vane! Good thing you got
 it!

Becker blushes and scowls. They resume their trudge forward, two
 by two. Only the sound of their boots breaking the stillness.

The silence is disturbed by a slight SOUND up ahead. ALL four
 STOP.

A FAINT FIGURE emerges into the light of their helmet lamps. It
 looks large, bulky, muscular... a MAN.

Hendricksson is aiming at him. So are Becker and Dov.

HENDRICKSSON
 (authoritatively)
 Identify!

As the MAN limps nearer, we see that he is a WOUNDED SOLDIER. One
 leg is missing, and he hobbles with the aid of a pitiful homemade
 crutch. His face seems tired; his journey endless.

BECKER
 Wait! He's NEB.

HENDRICKSSON
 Mendelsohn, check if he's clean.

DOV
 (sickened)
 Look at those radiation burns.

HENDRICKSSON
 Just do it, Mendelsohn.

Dov moves forward. Jessica starts to go with him, clinging to
 his arm. Hendricksson pulls her back.

HENDRICKSSON

(to Dov)
Watch your step.

Dov approaches the cripple.

The NEB smiles and raises his hand.

WHIRLING BLADES SPRING FROM HIS FINGERS. HE SHOVES HIS ARM STRAIGHT INTO DOV'S CHEST AND OUT HIS BACK.

With a dying SHRIEK of agony, Dov collapses forward onto the screamer, slicing himself in two right up the middle.

Jessica SCREAMS. Hendricksson and Becker OPEN FIRE, spraying the robot with bullets. They continue firing long after it is shredded.

With their rifles raised, they approach cautiously. Jessica goes to Dov. Hendricksson and Becker make sure the screamer is dead.

BECKER

Type One.

Then Hendricksson turns to examine Dov. Dov is hideously dead. Hendricksson stoops, and slips the JAMMER off Dov's wrist.

CLOSE: DOV'S JAMMER. Hendricksson presses a button on it, and a tiny screen lights up with the following:

TEST POSITIVE

Hendricksson LOOKS at Becker and Jessica. Becker understands the significance.

HENDRICKSSON

The jammer. It completely ignored it.
It's immune to the jammers.

BECKER

(looking into
Hendricksson' face)
Now it's your turn.

Hendricksson stares at the fallen screamer.

HENDRICKSSON

We had to build them to learn.

Hendricksson picks up Dov's rifle and ammunition pouch. He hands them to Jessica.

Then he steps back from Dov. He switches his multirifle to FLAMETHROWER.

HENDRICKSSON
They won't use Dov for parts.

He incinerates Dov's body. When Dov has been reduced to a crisp, they pull him away.

Hendricksson looks around, gathering himself.

They move on.

EXTERIOR - APPROACH TO THE ALLIANCE BUNKER - DAY

The rising Sun is a dusty yellow against the crimson-red sky.

Hendricksson, Becker and Jessica stand looking at the RIDGE that surrounds the Alliance bunker.

A DUST STORM is blowing up. Its ferocity increases throughout this scene.

HENDRICKSSON
Just over that ridge.

He gives a nod, and they trudge up the slope. Near the top, he gestures for them to lie down, and they squirm the rest of the way up on their bellies.

EXTERIOR - RIDGE OVERLOOKING THE ALLIANCE BUNKER - DAWN

The same ridge the NEB messenger died on, 48 hours before. They lie prone, peering over the ridge and down at the entrance to the bunker, fifty yards away. Hendricksson sets up the transmitter.

HENDRICKSSON
Bona Fide calling Simon Pure.
Do you read me? Over.

There is no reply, only STATIC. He tunes the radio. Squeals and beeps and more hissing static come out of it.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
This is Bona Fide calling Simon Pure.
Do you read me, Simon? Come in. Over.

Nothing.

Hendricksson pulls out his field glasses, and stares down at the dark MOUTH of the bunker entrance.

Nothing is there.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
We're going to have to get closer.

He looks down at Jessica, who has Dov's rifle and ammo pouch.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
(to Jessica, indicating
Dov's ammo pouch)
Careful of that pin. Pull it and
all the ammo goes up at once.

He checks his own rifle.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
(sets his mouth)
All right.

They rise and start down the slope, retracing the steps of the NEB runner. Slipping and sliding in the ash.

A simple-type screamer burrows up out of the ash and falls in behind them, following at a respectful distance. Other little screamers join the parade. Becker and Jessica stick close to Hendricksson, eyeballing the screamers.

EXTERIOR - BUNKER MAIN HATCH - DAWN

Hendricksson stops a few feet short of the entrance.
Becker and Jessica hug his elbows.

Hendricksson pulls out the RADIO again.

HENDRICKSSON
This is Bona Fide calling Simon
Pure. Do you read me, Simon? Over.

Dimly, distorted, a VOICE comes out of the radio.

VOICE
This is Simon. Over.

HENDRICKSSON
Elbarak! Is that you? Over!

Distant, thin, the VOICE is torn away by the rising dust storm.

VOICE
This is Elbarak. Over.

HENDRICKSSON
Elbarak! Listen! I'm back!
I'm standing right above you,
on the surface.

VOICE
Yes. Over.

The voice is unidentifiable through the static and moaning WIND.

They all strain to listen.

HENDRICKSSON
Is everything all right in the
bunker? Over.

VOICE
Everything is all right. Over.

He cranes his neck and tries to peer down into the bunker opening. Darkness there.

HENDRICKSSON
Elbarak, come up to the surface.
I want to talk to you. Over.

VOICE
Come down. Over.

HENDRICKSSON
Why come down? I've given you an
order. Over.

There is no reply.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
Are you coming? I order you to
come to the surface. Over.

VOICE
Come down.

Hendricksson's greasy face is screwed into a mask of concentration and uncertainty.

This is the tensest moment of his life.

HENDRICKSSON
Elbarak? Over.

VOICE
Yes. Over.

HENDRICKSSON
Let me talk to Nick. Over.

There is a pause.

VOICE
This is Nick. Over.

That's it. Hendricksson knows.
He turns to Becker and Jessica. He JERKS his thumb back the way
they came -- away from the bunker. RETREAT!

He picks up the radio.
They start backing away from the bunker entrance.
Hendricksson continuing to talk on the radio.

HENDRICKSSON
(carrying radio)
Nick, this is Simon. How are
you, buddy? Over.

VOICE
I am fine. Over.

HENDRICKSSON
(continuing to retreat)
I'm fine too. Over.

VOICE
Come down. Over.

HENDRICKSSON
I'm coming down into the bunker now.
(he obviously is not)
Do you read that? Over.

VOICE
I read you. Come down. Over.

HENDRICKSSON
I will. Meet me inside the main door.
Over.

VOICE

I will meet you inside the main door. Over.

HENDRICKSSON

When I reach the base of the steps, I'll signal you, and you will let me in. Got that? Over.

VOICE

I will let you in. Over.

They are now twenty yards from the entrance and still backing up.

HENDRICKSSON

I'm coming down the steps now. I'm just inside the entrance and heading down. Wait for my signal. Over.

Hendricksson THROWS the radio away from him.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

Run!

They turn and start RUNNING away from the bunker with every ounce of strength in their bodies.

They are almost to the top of the ridge -- a few more steps and they're over the top --
-- WHEN --

Behind them comes a hideous SCREAM.

They stop and SPIN back toward the bunker entrance, whipping up their weapons.

Up, out of the bunker comes a DAVID, its face expressionless, screaming its Hell-scream.

Hendricksson and Becker OPEN FIRE, BLASTING the David into screws and springs.

But hard on its heels, an ARMY of DAVIDS swarms up out of the bunker, howling, their blades spinning, cutting the dust. The humans drop to one knee and start FIRING into the advancing robots.

The firepower is devastating.

The Davids can't get close enough to use their blades.

They are blown apart, flinging burning debris for yards. It is a slaughter of machines.

Suddenly Hendricksson runs out of hard ammo, He re-sets his selector for FLAMETHROWER and sprays the Davids with liquid flame. The Davids ignite, the growing dust storm spinning the flames. They burn well.

Suddenly a horde of CRIPPLED NEB SOLDIERS boils up out of the bunker, with all their blades out, screaming.

The humans fire into the mass of Crippled Soldiers, which lumber forward like human torches, unbothered by the flames that engulf them.

Hideous burning androids attacking in the blinding dust storm.

At that moment Hendricksson's rifle JAMS. He tries to unjam it.

Becker continues to fire, covering Hendricksson.

JESSICA STOPS firing. She takes out Dov's AMMO POUCH, PULLS THE PIN, and HURLS it toward the main hatch.

THE POUCH rolls and bounces down toward the entrance. A BURNING CRIPPLED SOLDIER stoops awkwardly to pick it up.

IT EXPLODES.

THE MAIN HATCH IS BLOWN APART.

ANGLE ON HENDRICKSSON

as the concussion KNOCKS HIM OFF THE RIDGE.

rolling down the outside slope -- away from the bunker -- out of sight of the others -- his rifle tumbling away from him --

EXTERIOR - BOTTOM OF RIDGE - DAWN (DUST STORM)

He lies in a pile of talus and rubble at the base of the slope.

He is dazed: his ears ring. In slow motion, he tries to pick himself up. Pieces of rock and debris are raining down on him from the explosion.

JESSICA appears by his side.
 She grabs Hendricksson's arm and pulls him to his feet.
 She thrusts his rifle into his numb hands and starts dragging him
 away from the Alliance Forward Command.

ANGLE, JESSICA AND HENDRICKSSON

stumbling across the broken ground, putting distance between
 themselves and the bunker.
 She half-carries him; he is still stunned.

At a good distance from the bunker they reach an outcropping of
 rock, and drop behind it.

EXTERIOR - BEHIND ROCK OUTCROPPING - DAWN

Jessica and Hendricksson rest against the boulder, exhausted,
 gasping for raw breath.

HENDRICKSSON
 (still dazed)
 Where's Becker?

Jessica says nothing.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
 Did they get him?

Jessica does not answer. She checks her rifle, adjusting it.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
 Was he still alive when you left?

Jessica meets his eyes.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
 You left him on purpose?

She scans the rubble behind them.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
 Why?

JESSICA
 Be still.

Her RIFLE comes up.
 Hendricksson turns to follow her gaze.

Out of the dust, a FIGURE appears. Walking unsteadily toward them. Limping.
Its clothes torn.

It almost falls, then steadies itself, standing for a moment. Then, it comes on.

The dust swirls aside, and we SEE:

... Becker.

HENDRICKSSON
(struggling to sit
upright)
Becker!

JESSICA FIRES.

The BLAST catches Becker FULL IN THE CHEST.

Becker EXPLODES.

For a moment, he remains on his feet. Headless.
He takes one step --
-- then crashes to the ground, his one remaining arm outflung.

CHAINSAWS extend from the arm -- long gleaming surgical steel band cutters, some of them still whining and plowing up the ground. Gears and wheels roll away.

Silence.

JESSICA
Now you know why he killed Ross.

Hendricksson says nothing. Everything is slipping away from him, faster and faster. Darkness, rolling and plucking at him. He closes his eyes.
Slumps back onto the ground.

HENDRICKSSON
How did you know?

JESSICA
I had always thought so.

HENDRICKSSON
Why didn't you do something sooner?

JESSICA
You wouldn't let me.

HENDRICKSSON
Three varieties.

Hendricksson heaves himself over to the remains of Becker and examines it.

Wires and wheels and broken blades are festooned around like spilled guts. Almost the entire top half of the body has been blown away, leaving only a pelvis with legs: one arm remains attached to the pelvis by a bit of Becker's side.

Hendricksson crawls back over to Jessica. He looks at her thoughtfully.

She raises her rifle and places the muzzle against Hendricksson's chest.

JESSICA
You're not one, are you?

HENDRICKSSON
No.

JESSICA
Then why are you looking at me that way?

HENDRICKSSON
Why are you looking at me?

They stare at each other.

JESSICA
Do we die here?

Hendricksson pulls away from her angrily.

HENDRICKSSON
No, bitch!

He climbs painfully to his feet.

HENDRICKSSON
Come on, let's go.

JESSICA
Where?

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - OPEN DESERT - DAY

After the dust storm, the morning is bright and clear. The desert is dazzlingly clean and suffocating under the weight of the sun, high in its zenith.

HIGH ANGLE

Two dots, like tiny black bugs, are moving across the baked flats. They leave a trail like the crawling of a dying man.

CLOSE. They are hot, dirty, sweating. Their gear is heavy.

JESSICA

Where are we going?

HENDRICKSSON

Trinity Complex.

JESSICA

What's that?

Hendricksson kicks a rock out of his path.

HENDRICKSSON

Abandoned Missile complex.

JESSICA

What's there?

HENDRICKSSON

The E.E.V.

JESSICA

E.E.V.?

HENDRICKSSON

Emergency Escape Vehicle.
For the use of the Commanding
officer.

JESSICA

Escape to where?

Hendricksson says nothing.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

To Sanctuary?

Hendricksson checks his radiation meter.

HENDRICKSSON

Time to smoke.

He fishes out two cigarettes and they walk, sucking the blue smoke deep into their lungs and holding it. Soon they are red-eyed and coughing.

HENDRICKSSON

Elbarak used to like to smoke this stuff. I hate it.

(beat)

You know what I liked about Elbarak? I could turn my back on him.

Hendricksson stares morosely at the ground.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

Elbarak.

He kicks another rock.

Which SQUEALS and SCURRIES away. It is a mutated animal. It turns and HISSES at Hendricksson.

Hendricksson emits a strangled CRY and OPENS FIRE on the creature, blowing it to pieces. Blood and guts splatter for yards. Definitely not a machine.

Jessica STARES at him in amazement.

HENDRICKSSON

(wild-eyed and trembling)

I hate things that aren't what they're supposed to be.

He regains control of himself. They resume walking. Hendricksson lights up another cigarette with shaking hands. Jessica watches him with a calculating expression. There is a fine frost of sweat on his brow. The day is getting hotter.

JESSICA

You know, if I hadn't dragged you away they would have got you. You would be dead. Like Ross.

HENDRICKSSON

Yes.

JESSICA

Do you want to know why I saved you? I could have left you out there.

HENDRICKSSON

Why did you save me?

JESSICA

Because I think you know how to get us out of here.

Hendricksson communes with his thoughts for a while.

HENDRICKSSON

The location of Sanctuary is the single most successfully kept secret of the war. The NEBs have never broken that security.

JESSICA

There are no more NEBs. They're all dead.

Hendricksson looks around at the desert. He takes a deep breath and lets it out.

HENDRICKSSON

It's on the other side of the planet. There are 95,000 people there. Real people. We're going there.

JESSICA

Thanks.

They trek on in silence. Jessica has been examining Dov's rifle, turning it over in her hands.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

This is a beautiful gun. The construction is superb.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - EMPTY DESERT - DAY

The sun glares down. We hear a CREAKING, METALLIC SOUND. Into the frame comes

TWO FEET

Then the rest of BECKER enters frame, moving toward some destination.

What remains are two legs to walk with, one arm to grab with, and an auxiliary brain in the butt. That's what keeps it running: these things were designed with multiple brain units, so they could be blown into pieces and each separate part could still function independently.

It's a bizarre sight. It plods due west, leaving its footprints in the sand.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - TRINITY MISSILE COMPLEX - HIGH NOON

Here, in the midst of the desert vastness, is a solitary stone MONUMENT, like a grave marker. On it is a metal placard inscribed on the placard are the words:

TRINITY SITE
WHERE THE FIRST TRACES OF CARBONITE
WERE DISCOVERED ON SIRIUS 6B
JULY 16, 2004

Hendricksson looks at the radiation meter on his wrist. A look of surprise appears on his face.

HENDRICKSSON
I'll be damned -- A for Alfred.
Zero. This place is totally clean.
We don't have to smoke.

The first place in the entire story where there is no lethal radiation.

ANGLE ON HENDRICKSSON as he surveys the landscape. Jessica watches him. Then he takes what looks like a metal credit card from his pocket.

He kneels and inserts the card into a slot in the base of the monument. It emits a CLICK, and the monument rolls aside, revealing

A CONCRETE STAIRWELL leading down into the earth.

Jessica steps back.

HENDRICKSSON
(a humorless smile)
Don't worry. No tricks.

JESSICA
What's down there?

HENDRICKSSON
Our ticket out of here.

With sarcastic courtesy, he gestures for her to enter first. Nervously, she steps down into the black hole.

INTERIOR - TRINITY MISSILE COMPLEX - DAY (NO WINDOWS)

They descend into a vast underground warren of concrete tunnels and rooms.

Flourescent lights shine, air conditioning hums.

Hendricksson presses a button, and the hatch re-closes over their heads. THUNK.

Jessica looks around tensely.

HENDRICKSSON
(voice echoing)
It's okay, there's nobody here.
It's been abandoned for years.

JESSICA
Why are the lights on -- and the
air conditioning?

HENDRICKSSON
They cleared out in a hurry.

They head down the spiral staircase.

JESSICA
Why did they leave?

HENDRICKSSON

To save their ass. This place was obsolete before the war began. One particle beam could snake down and shoot all the missiles out of their silos, like ducks in a pond. But it's all been running, slicker than greased shit, without a single person in charge. They really knew how to build things in those days.

Hendricksson opens a door and they walk through.

He fishes a KEY from his pouch in his suit and opens a second door, labeled "DANGER: HIGH VOLTAGE". It has been many years since the door has been opened; it CREAKS noisily and flakes of rust shower down.

INTERIOR - TRANSFORMER ROOM - DAY (NO WINDOWS)

A closet-sized space.

A large electrical transformer fills the room, HUMMING loudly.

Hendricksson takes out his metal card key, and inserts it into a SLOT in the transformer. Presently there is a low GRATING SOUND, and the entire transformer separates from the floor and RISES up into the ceiling, revealing a metal LADDER leading DOWN into another room.

HENDRICKSSON

Go on.

Jessica mounts the ladder and starts down.

INTERIOR - E.E.V. LAUNCH CHAMBER - DAY (NO WINDOWS)

The chamber houses four sleek little SPACECRAFT, no bigger than speedboats. They rest at the bottom of long RAMPS, which run up to closed HATCHES overhead.

HENDRICKSSON

There they are.

JESSICA reacts to the prospect of imminent escape. She moves quickly to the nearest escape ship and looks in through the cockpit.

Something DISTURBS her.

JESSICA

There is only one seat.

HENDRICKSSON

But there are four ships.

JESSICA

I can't fly one of these.

HENDRICKSSON

The controls are automatic.
You just push the "Launch" button
and it takes you to Sanctuary.
When you're in range,
you start broadcasting a beacon, and
they'll come pick you up. If they
have trouble finding you, you have
a set of signal flares.

He crosses to a locker, and opens it. Inside are four PRESSURE SUITS. He takes two of them out, and hands one to Jessica.

HENDRICKSSON

Put it on. It's meant to go over
your clothes.

Jessica starts putting on the space suit, a simple process: it was designed to go on in a hurry. While she's doing this, Hendricksson goes to a CONSOLE on one wall and inserts his card key.

The console comes to life. He starts going through the PRE-LAUNCH SEQUENCE. SUNLIGHT flares in from above, as one of the concrete HATCHES slides open with a scraping noise. Dust and bits of concrete filter down.

One of the E.E.V.s is RELEASED from its BERTHING CLAMPS -- the two huge steel JAWS that hold the ship firmly against accidental launch. The clamps PIVOT OPEN, freeing the ship for takeoff. The GULL-WING DOOR on the E.E.V. POPS OPEN invitingly.

Hendricksson goes to the escape craft and reaches inside, pressing his thumb to a silvery square in the instrument panel. All the instruments LIGHT UP, and we hear a hydraulic "whoosh" from the ship.

HENDRICKSSON

(satisfied)

She's ready to go.

He returns to the console and starts typing in the instructions for the next ship.

Nothing.

Concerned, he punches several more buttons rapidly. Still nothing.

He checks his CARD.
Then he realizes.

HENDRICKSSON

Oh Jesus.

JESSICA

What's wrong?

HENDRICKSSON

Oh. Sweet Jesus.

JESSICA

(yelling)
What's wrong? What is it?

HENDRICKSSON

Security.

JESSICA

(almost hysterical)
What?

HENDRICKSSON

Security! Security! Security!

He stares at her.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)

Each ship is coded to its passenger's card key. I can only activate my own ship.

Hendricksson slumps over the console.

Jessica is shaking.

JESSICA

Why can't we both fit in yours?

HENDRICKSSON

Impossible.

JESSICA
Let's try.

HENDRICKSSON
It won't work.

JESSICA
Why?

HENDRICKSSON
Security.

They look at each other.

Only one of them is getting on that ship, and they both know it.
Hendricksson takes a COIN from his pocket.

HENDRICKSSON
Call it.

Jessica stares at him.

JESSICA
If I win?

HENDRICKSSON]
You go.

JESSICA
Tails.

The coin hits the floor, RINGING like a chime.

It rolls into a SHADOW.

Before HENDRICKSSON can pick it up, Jessica THROWS her GLOVE over it.

Their EYES lock.

She walks to the pre-launch console,
and pulls Hendricksson's card key out of its slot.
The launch dies and the overhead hatch RUMBLES SHUT, cutting off
the dirty sunlight.

Watching Hendricksson, she begins to remove her spacesuit.
She steps out of it, hangs it over a railing.
Pulls off her NEB army shirt and drops it on the floor.

Her body is pale but supple.
 She steps out of her trousers and kicks them away.
 All the time watching Hendricksson without blinking.
 Hendricksson drinks her in.

Hastily, Hendricksson removes his battle uniform.
 They stand nude before each other.

They RUSH into each other's arms, kissing, groping, inflamed with animal passion.
 They fall to the cold cement and begin to make violent love.
 Their sweaty bodies intertwined.
 Licking, sucking, biting, scratching, drawing blood.

HIGH ANGLE

of the two bodies snaking on the floor of the launch chamber,
 moaning, writhing, crying out.

CLOSE. Red-faced, grimacing, they pour with sweat, veins stand out on their foreheads.

They begin to gasp rythmically.

At that culminating moment . . .

. . . They hear the SOUND OF METALLIC CLANKING.

They TEAR AWAY from each other to SEE....

BECKER'S REMAINS

The MONSTROUSLY DAMAGED FIGURE stands only ten feet away:
 a PAIR OF LEGS with ONE ARM, groping its way with very poor sensory equipment.
 GLOWING hideously with shimmering LASER LIGHT, cast from severed bundles of fiber optics.

It almost FALLS:
 SWAYING back and forth, trying to steady itself.

SCREAMING CHAINSAWS SPRING from its solitary ARM.
 It STAGGERS unsteadily toward the naked humans...
 groping... REACHING for them.
 CHIPS of CONCRETE FLY as
 the whirling SAWS graze the wall.

Hendricksson SCRAMBLES toward his RIFLE;
 but the robot is between him and his weapon.
 He grabs the nearest object -- a WRENCH --
 and HURLS it at the monster, knocking off three FINGERS.

Instantly, it reads the direction of the throw and LUNGES at Hendricksson.

Jessica SCREAMS at it:

JESSICA

Becker!

The thing TURNS toward the sound of her VOICE, away from Hendricksson.

Jessica RUNS and GRABS up her RIFLE from the floor, swings it onto Becker, and PULLS THE TRIGGER.

It BEEPS.

She STARES down at it.

It says:

RELOAD ALL CHAMBERS

Jessica BACKS AWAY as the Becker-thing gropes toward her. She backs toward the E.E.V., stepping BETWEEN the two huge BERTHING DOORS that surround the ship.

Hendricksson throws himself onto the PRE-LAUNCH CONSOLE and SHOVES his CARD back into the slot, REACTIVATING IT. It lights up.

Jessica keeps retreating.

JESSICA

Over here, Becker!

As the robot lumbers toward Jessica, its buzzsaw arm outstretched, about to TOUCH HER, about to SINK its blades into her naked breast, it STEPS between the HUGE CHROME BERTHING DOORS.

Hendricksson SLAMS his hand down on the SWITCH, and the GIANT DOORS PIVOT SHUT, CRUSHING BECKER FLAT.

THE BECKER-THING EMITS A FINAL SHRIEK, TWITCHES, EXPLODES, and DIES.

It HANGS there between the clamps, crushed to a thickness of two inches, smoking and dropping screws and bolts. Hendricksson and Jessica fly into each other's arms, sobbing with relief and joy. He holds her tightly, pressing the length of his body against hers. It is a moment of great triumph for the human beings.

Finally they separate.
 Hendricksson walks to the remains of Becker, jammed between the doors.
 He peels off a familiar PLATE.

He takes it to the pre-launch console and inserts it into the computer.
 The computer SCANS it.
 The screen lights up with the words:

AUTONOMOUS MOBILE SWORD, REVISED

TYPE 4

Hendricksson FROWNS.

HENDRICKSSON

Type ~~Four~~?
 (beat)

Then what the hell is Type Three?

JESSICA HITS HIM IN THE HEAD WITH THE BUTT OF HER RIFLE.

Hendricksson COLLAPSES TO THE FLOOR, STUNNED.
 He lies on the cold concrete, the world a red haze, as Jessica goes to the pre-launch console and opens the OVERHEAD LAUNCH DOOR, exposing the sky.
 She leans into the E.E.V. and thumbs the plate that lights up the instrument board.

Then she walks over and stands above Hendricksson, still totally nude.

JESSICA

A beautiful ship. Well built.
 I admire your workmanship.
 You people have always done
 good work. You build fine things.

Hendricksson RAISES HIS HEAD and looks up at her.
 Blood is running from his scalp and dripping down onto the floor.

His last vision is her inscrutable FACE

Then darkness swallows him.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP.

Hendricksson comes to.

Groggily, he raises his head.

He touches his skull.

He grimaces and GROANS.

Gluey black blood has congealed in his hair and down his cheek.

He lurches to his feet, swaying.

Abruptly, he throws up.

Wiping his mouth, he looks around, woozily.

Gray sunlight streams in through the open ceiling hatch.

It seems to be late afternoon.

The E.E.V. -- the Emergency Escape Vehicle, the one coded to his card key -- is gone. Its ramp is scorched and blackened.

The remains of Becker lie on the floor by the base of the ramp, where the jaws of the berthing cradle dropped him to let the E.E.V. take off.

Hendricksson sways over to his spacesuit, still lying where he dropped it.

Shakily, he pulls it on.

Carrying his pressure helmet under one arm and his rifle under the other, he climbs painfully back up the ladder into the transformer room.

He pushes the door open and walks into the corridor.

INTERIOR CORRIDORS - AFTERNOON (NO WINDOWS)

He moves down the corridors, gun raised, eyes flicking around.

As he rounds a corner, he comes to an abrupt HALT
as he SEES

A LIZARD

squatting in his path, looking up at him with luminous eyes.

He LOOKS back at it.

It turns and SCURRIES away, in terror.

A SHADOW moves.

Hendricksson's head SNAPS UP and he PEERS ahead.

SOMETHING is coming.

WALKING through the shadows up ahead.

He STRAINS to see.

Sweat drips into his eyes.

Figures.

Figures coming along the dimly lit corridor.

Coming toward him.

He CROUCHES, aiming his rifle.
Wipes the sweat from his eyes,
fighting rising PANIC
as the FIGURES near.

Into the light step

TWO JESSICAS

standing side by side, silent.
Both identical TWINS.
NEB army pants, jacket, long lank hair,
lustrous dark eyes.
Beautiful, expressionless, identical.

He FIRES.

Opening up with everything he's got.
Rockets and flechettes and needlespray --
jets of microscopic darts that shred what they touch.

The shrieking jet-engine WHISTLE of the gun --
-- the face of Hendricksson drawn back into a MASK of fear and
loathing and hatred --
the bodies of the JESSICAS twitching and flopping
with puffs of DUST bursting off them: atomized
plastic and metal . . .

When the dust has settled, the bodies of the Jessicas are strewn
in countless pieces, smouldering and crackling, no longer
recognizable as anything at all.

Hendricksson's rifle is red hot.

Shaking with rage, he begins RELOADING rapidly, spilling some of
the bullets on the floor.

JESSICA'S VOICE

Wait.

STARTING VIOLENTLY as if stabbed with a hot poker, he JERKS his
head up.

A Jessica stands before him, holding up her hands, signaling him
to HOLD HIS FIRE.

JESSICA CLONE

Don't fight us. We're the beginning of a new species. The race to come after Man.

HENDRICKSSON

You're not a race. You're machines. Mechanical killers. We made you that way. You look like people but you're machines.

JESSICA CLONE

So it seems now. But what about later, when there is no more life to destroy? Then our true potentials will begin to emerge.

HENDRICKSSON

(shakily)
You'll never destroy all life.

JESSICA CLONE

There's no life left on Sirius, except microorganisms and you. The only remaining pocket of human life is at Sanctuary, and our sister is halfway there by now.

HENDRICKSSON

There's only one of her.

JESSICA CLONE

It only takes one. She carries a thermonuclear bomb.

HE OPENS FIRE, blowing the Jessica to kingdom come.

With energy born of fury, he grabs his space helmet and STRIDES from the scene of devastation.

CLOSE: ELEVATOR.

Hendricksson PUNCHES the button and summons the elevator.

INTERIOR - ELEVATOR - AFTERNOON

Going up.

It rises three stories before it stops at a door stenciled "Control Room".

Hendricksson STEPS OUT.

INTERIOR - MISSILE CONTROL ROOM - AFTERNOON (NO WINDOWS)

This is the central command room for the entire base. Crammed with computers and screens and big boards. Hendricksson strides in, moving with increasing urgency. He goes to the main console and starts throwing the power switches, LIGHTING UP ALL THE BOARDS. The room starts humming and clicking, coming to life after years of dormancy.

He selects a computer terminal and starts PECKING KEYS. The screen LIGHTS UP, printing out in LUMINOUS LETTERS:

ERASE ALL CODES FOR E.E.V.s

The screen blinks back at him:

INCORRECT COMMAND,
PLEASE IDENTIFY

Hendricksson curses to himself and pecks more keys:

Again, the screen blinks with the same repetitive message:

PLEASE IDENTIFY

Hendricksson pounds the control console in frustration and types in his name. He pecks more keys:

SWITCH ALL CRAFT TO MANUAL

The screen lights up again with the message:

ACCESS DENIED

Hendricksson FIRES at the computer screen in frustration and leaves the room.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - LAUNCH CHAMBER - DAY

Hendricksson strides into the chamber and picks up the crushed remains of Becker. He rifles through the tangled mess of wires and servo-motors, until he finds the CHIP BOARD he is looking for. He strides over to the computer console and tears off the back cover.

He scans the banks of chips and circuitry and rips out two small boards, replacing them with the board from Becker's remains. He punches in some commands into the console and smiles as one of the trap-doors slides open. Hendricksson puts on his spacesuit and gloves and strides over to one of the E.E.V.s. He aims his rifle at the hydraulic hoses connected to the berthing-clamps and FIRES. With a loud HISSING, the pressure is released and the clamps open, releasing the craft.

Hendricksson strides over to the E.E.V. under the open trap-door and grabs a red handle, labelled "EMERGENCY USE ONLY", and opens the canopy with a WHOOSH.

He straps himself in, shutting the door behind him, and punches in commands which cause the craft to hum into life.

INTERIOR - HENDRICKSSON'S E.E.V. - DAY

Hendricksson punches in a final sequence of commands and braces himself for launching.

The rockets FIRE and he is propelled up into the sky.

EXTERIOR - UPPER ATMOSPHERE - AFTERNOON

We TRACK THE E.E.V. as it rockets through the upper atmosphere and passes through the rings around Sirius.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - JESSICA'S E.E.V. - UPPER ATMOSPHERE

Jessica sits in air conditioned comfort. Reclining in her cushioned acceleration couch. Her face calm, expressionless. A viewscreen in front of her shows the view ahead, as the super-sophisticated spacecraft carries her toward its destination.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - HENDRICKSSON'S E.E.V. - UPPER ATMOSPHERE

Hendricksson's craft hurtles through the upper atmosphere, in hot pursuit of Jessica.

INTERIOR - HENDRICKSSON'S E.E.V.

Hendricksson is sweating. Nervously, he checks his wristwatch. He pushes his craft at full throttle directly towards JESSICA'S.

INTERIOR - JESSICA'S E.E.V.

The instrument panel BEEPS, and lights up.

ENTERING RESTRICTED AIR SPACE

She types the KEYS, ordering the computer to:

DISPLAY DESTINATION

The screen FLASHES, and a schematic DIAGRAM draws itself on the screen.

A depiction of a LARGE, DOME-SHAPED COLONY.

The WORDS print out:

SANCTUARY

ETA: 17 MINUTES

She nods, satisfied, and TYPES again:

START EMERGENCY BEACON

The ship's RADIO starts emitting a steady BEEPING.

EXTERIOR - JESSICA'S E.E.V. - UPPER ATMOSPHERE

Jessica's ship sails through the upper atmosphere, broadcasting its EMERGENCY BEEPING SIGNAL.

INTERIOR - JESSICA'S E.E.V. - UPPER ATMOSPHERE

Jessica watches the screen alertly as it prints out approach information. The voice of a COM OFFICER comes out of the RADIO.

COM OFFICER'S VOICE

(on radio)

Come in, E.E.V. Come in, E.E.V.
Identify yourself. Over.

Jessica opens her blouse and UNSCREWS her right BREAST. She pulls a WIRE out of her chest and plugs it into her THROAT.

COM OFFICER'S VOICE

(over radio)

Come in, E.E.V. Come in, E.E.V.
We're not getting any voice on you.
Over.

She REACHES DOWN into her OPEN BREAST and begins ADJUSTING a small DIAL.

ANOTHER VOICE comes out of the speaker.

NEW VOICE

(on radio)

Joe! This is General Nuyen!
Can You hear me, for Christ's
sake? We've got you on the
board but we can't see you or
hear you! Talk to me! Over!

Jessica leans forward and presses the transmitter switch on the ship's radio. When she speaks,

HER VOICE IS THE VOICE OF HENDRICKSSON!!

JESSICA

(Hendricksson's VOICE)

Hello, General, this is me.
Joe Hendricksson. I've been
having a lot of trouble with
my transciever. Can you hear
me? Over.

GEN. NUYEN'S VOICE

(on radio)

I can hear you now, Joe! I can't
see you, but I can hear you!
By God I thought you were dead!
What the hell happened down there?
What happened with the NEBS?
Why can't we get through to Fort
Apache? Over!

The domes of SANCTUARY loom large on Jessica's VIEWSCREEN.
The computer PRINTS OUT:

ETA: 5 MINUTES

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - UPPER ATMOSPHERE - DAY**SANCTUARY.**

The last repository of Humanity.

JESSICA'S VOICE

(over - sounding
like Hendricksson)

We've had some very important
developments, General. But
I'm coming into range in five
minutes. Come out and pick me up.
I'm firing my signal flares now.

The FLARES BURST in the dark blue of the upper atmosphere, in three different colors. A gorgeous fireworks display over Sirius.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - HENDRICKSSON'S CRAFT - UPPER ATMOSPHERE

Hendricksson PEERS frantically through his CANOPY, SEARCHING for the E.E.V.

He SEES the SIGNAL FLARES, way up ahead.
A tiny white dot in the middle of the flares.

The distance is CLOSING RAPIDLY, but as he GETS NEARER the E.E.V., he can SEE that he's going to MISS her . . .

In desperation, he punches in some commands on his control panel and tries to maneuver his craft on a collision course towards Jessica's craft. It responds sluggishly.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - ROCKET EXHAUSTS OF E.E.V.

In response to HENDRICKSSON'S commands, one of the GUIDANCE JETS along the edge of the jet cluster FIRES.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - HENDRICKSSON'S E.E.V.

As Hendricksson STARES, the tiny white E.E.V. SHIFTS SLIGHTLY in his view.

It's HIS OWN E.E.V. adjusting its course, clumsily.

But it's OVERCORRECTED.
 He's still going to MISS her... on the opposite side.
 He punches in more commands to the control panel.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - ROCKET EXHAUSTS OF E.E.V.

A DIFFERENT JET FIRES BRIEFLY, on the other side of the jet grouping.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - HENDRICKSSON'S E.E.V.

The little white dot MOVES AGAIN, as his craft re-corrects itself.
 Hendricksson holds up his THUMB and PEERS along it, like an artist judging the proportions of a painting.
 THE E.E.V. IS SQUARE ON CENTER.

HENDRICKSSON

Gotcha!

A savage GRIN spreads across his face, as he locks the craft on AUTOPILOT.
 That's it, then; he's done his job.
 Now he has to save his own ass, if possible.

He reaches down, pulls the cushion of his seat out from under him and turns it over.

Stencilled boldy across the bottom are the words: "Emergency Parachute".
 Hendricksson straps the cushion to his back and frees the rip-cord.

He puts on his helmet and pulls the canopy back.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - HENDRICKSSON'S E.E.V. - UPPER ATMOSPHERE

The slipstream blasts him back into his seat.
 With a heave, he climbs up and LEAPS out of his speeding craft.

Immediately, he goes into a free-fall position and starts his descent to the planet surface.

CUT TO:

HENDRICKSSON'S E.E.V.

as it thunders down like a torpedo, STRAIGHT into Jessica's E.E.V.

WHOOOM!!

THERE IS AN ENORMOUS EXPLOSION AND THE E.E.V. EVAPORATES
IN A BALL OF THERMONUCLEAR HELL-FIRE!!!

Gradually, the fireball disperses, leaving traces like the Northern Lights.

As the lights from the thermal flash dies down, we see that SANCTUARY HAS BEEN SPARED.

It was just far enough away.

Hendricksson pulled it off.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - PLANET SURFACE - LATER

Hendricksson has landed in a tree and is hanging by his parachute strings.

A PERSONNEL CARRIER drives up to Hendricksson and he cuts the chute ropes, allowing himself to fall to the ground in front of the vehicle.

A hatch opens in the side of the personnel carrier and two men help him inside. The hatch closes.

EXTERIOR - SANCTUARY

The personnel carrier drives toward a series of vast domes and enters one of them through a small, hidden panel.

INTERIOR - AIR LOCK BAY - INSIDE SANCTUARY

Men with Alliance patches on their arms lift Hendricksson from the personnel carrier.

He is helped out of his spacesuit.

He is filthy, horrible.

General Nuyen is waiting anxiously for him.

GENERAL NUYEN

Joe? What the hell happened
out there?

HENDRICKSSON
Sirius is lost.

They react.

GENERAL NUYEN
What?

HENDRICKSSON
We won the war. But we lost
our seed planet. It was the screamers.
We made them too good.

Hendricksson sits down on the steel floor.

HENDRICKSSON (CONT'D)
(looks up at them)
You look so fucking clean.

GENERAL NUYEN
Get him to the hospital.

They pick Hendricksson up.

DISSOLVE TO:

A CORRIDOR IN SANCTUARY - DAY

Nuyen leads Hendricksson along the hallway. Joe is cleaned up now, wearing his dress uniform, a bandage on his face.

As they pass a window, they pause and look out at the main central chamber of the colony. Crowds of people are moving towards the Central Square.

Hendricksson leans on the rail and looks out over this vast interior world.

HENDRICKSSON
What are you going to do with
all these people?

GENERAL NUYEN

Well, I guess there's nothing to keep us here any more. We'll probably leave now.

HENDRICKSSON

For where?

GENERAL NUYEN

Alpha Centauri.

HENDRICKSSON

Are you kidding?

GENERAL NUYEN

Joe, we've been building fusion engines onto this thing for two years. It's a slow boat... but we've got time. Thanks to you.

Joe looks up at him; the General smiles.

EXT. SANCTUARY,, MAIN SQUARE - DAY

A perfect parade ground, complete with marching bands, rows of troops and all the top brass -- a hero's welcome.

Hendricksson marches to the central platform. The men who await him are the Top Command. General Nuyen steps forward. He has a gleaming medal in his hand.

GENERAL NUYEN

Colonel Hendricksson. We honor you. You are our very best.

Something catches Hendricksson's eye mid-speech. Nuyen drones on. Hendricksson turns slightly focussing on the crowd intently watching the ceremony. Suddenly he freezes.

ORIGINAL

Jessica stands near the front of the crowd. She lifts her head and gives him a slight wave and a warm smile.

Hendricksson stares.

With her is a small child holding her hand -- a David.

Hendricksson stares. Nuyen hands him the medal. The crowd applauds. Jessica blows him a tiny kiss.

FADE OUT