

Aliens vs. Predator

Dark Horse Prod. Presents

ALIENS

Vs.

PREDATOR

Screenplay by Peter Briggs

EXT. DEEP SPACE

We OPEN on TOTAL BLACKNESS, a sea of stars spread across the infinite depths of space. As the TITLES ROLL, we notice that three of these specks seem to be moving; one of them picking up acceleration and racing toward us. Our perspective changes, and we catch a quick glimpse as it HURTLES past, and into the gravitational pull of a large brownish planet. Kicking up SPARKS of FRICTION as it hits atmosphere. It seems to be manmade. Or at least artificial.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - DAY

The planet is dead, barren. Death Valley on a grand scale. We watch the object plummet through the wispy cloud-cover, emitting a few last burning embers before falling to ground way-off in the distance. A BOOMING ECHO resonates across the dusty plains, before settling back into an eerie silence.

EXT. FISSURE CANYON - DAY

We're looking into a deep gorge, dark and sinister. A howling wind whips dust into a sandstorm, reducing visibility to almost zero. About seventy feet down there's a hole in the rock-face that just might be a cave entrance, and near is a peculiar SHIMMERING in the air. We hear a mechanical BEEPING and the SHIMMERING disappears, replaced by FIVE humanoid SHAPES clinging to the sheer rock - each well over seven feet tall. They are PREDATORS, a race of intergalactic big-game hunters on permanent safari; their clothing and weaponry a bizarre mix of aborigine and ultra-hi-tech. In their hands are circular metal discs; 'smart weapons' which cut into the stone and give them purchase.

PREDATOR-VISION.

From their P.O.V., we see the fissure reduced to THERMAL HEAT SOURCES. The entrance registers as a black gaping void.

INT. FISSURE NEST TUNNEL

The five hunters climb inside the rim of the tunnel, out of the wind's banshee wailing. The lead PREDATOR reaches up to his headgear, pulling at the coupling pipes connecting it to a hidden breathing-apparatus. He removes the helmet, clips it to his rear utility pack, and takes a deep breath of the air. A curious speckled pattern runs across his wide forehead, marking him different to the others; in addition, one of the fangs of his mandibles

has been sheared away. We'll call him BROKEN TUSK, he's the leader of the hunting party. He reaches out a hand to caress the wall of the tunnel.

Several feet in from the rim, it changes from rock to a textured biomechanical surface; a swirling mass of disturbing shapes. He hurries forward in response to the GURGLING-HISS of one of his team who has found something.

The other PREDATOR holds a telescopic spear up for scrutiny. Skewered on the end is a shriveled FORM with eight spindly legs and a segmented tail; it's a FACEHUGGER, the first stage of the deadly ALIEN lifeform. BROKEN TUSK HISSES a caution to his party; they respond by pulling spears and elaborately-shaped swords. Several shoulder-mounted plasma cannons slide up to firing position, tracking with their owners' helmets. Thus armed, they move cautiously ahead...taking no chances. One helmeted PREDATOR pauses, scanning the area.

PREDATOR-VISION.

He switches through a variety of different views; infra-red, ultra-violet, enhanced motion-tracking. Nothing.

He's so pre-occupied with this task, he totally fails to notice the skeletal ALIEN loom up behind him, emerging from the biomechanical growth on the floor. A barbed tail skewers the PREDATOR straight through the neck, splashing luminous blood across his chestplate. A gargled DEATH-RATTLE issues from his throat, the band of PREDATORS spinning around in time to see him being dragged below the ground. The band of extraterrestrial hunters have no time to come to his aid; they themselves are set upon by a half-dozen ALIEN WARRIORS. The carnage is swift and terrifying, a blur of motion.

Steel blades and serrated biomechanical limbs scythe the air, alive with the CRIES and HISSES of both adversaries. One PREDATOR is pinned against the tunnel wall, his spear out of range. The ALIEN claws away his face mask, and he finds himself dodging the ALIEN's toothed tongue, extended toward him with pile-driver speed. He reaches down, grasping the 'smart-weapon' hanging from his belt and brings it up in an arc that terminates at the ALIEN's grinning face. Big mistake. The two are in such close proximity that the ALIEN's acidic blood sprays across the PREDATOR's head. While their technology seems to be resistant to it, their bodies aren't: the viscous yellow liquid begins burning into the PREDATOR's skin. He kicks the skeletal corpse away with a HIDEOUS PIERCING SCREAM, clawing at his seared face.

It all seems to be over as quickly as it began; there can be no question as to who were the victors. The PREDATORS stand amidst a sea of biomechanical limbs strewn around like a charnel house. As his companions begin to carefully decapitate the ALIEN skulls, BROKEN TUSK steps over the corpses to examine his fallen comrades. The first PREDATOR to be attacked was killed instantly; he crosses to the other. What he finds causes him to react with pity and disgust. His fallen comrade is only just alive; mandibles clicking frailly, half his head burnt away. BROKEN TUSK watches the ailing PREDATOR slide a steel blade from its sheath and offer it to him. He takes it, knowing what has to be done. Rolling the knife

quickly over the back of his hand - the sort of elaborate trick seasoned Green Berets perform - he plunges it downward into the fallen hunter. This unpleasant task accomplished,

BROKEN TUSK straightens up and activates his wrist-computer. A dark shape blots out the light coming from the entrance; a small PREDATOR shuttlecraft, sleek and elegant. It hovers in the air with little more than a loud HUM, and extends a ramp. The surviving PREDATORS leap aboard, carrying their trophies with the reserved silence of men returning from combat.

One more thing need to be done. BROKEN TUSK bends down and flips a sequence of keys on the dead PREDATOR's wrist. A countdown is displayed in some unknown character-set, accompanied by a HIGH PITCHED BEEPING. He then turns and swiftly boards the craft which takes smoothly to the air, it's undergear retracting.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - DAY

A white-hot fireball erupts out of the fissure, the result of the PREDATOR's suicide-destruct mechanism. The shuttlecraft pulls quickly away, disappearing into the clouds.

EXT. SPACE

A large spacecraft is suspended in orbit around the planet; the PREDATOR Mothership. The shuttle heads swiftly towards it.

INT. PREDATOR MOTHERSHIP - DOCKING BAY

An airlock RUMBLES open and the PREDATORS file NOISILY into the Mothership's docking bay. An OLD PREDATOR crouched against a strut takes time out from carving something into a block of wood to briefly look up at them. Like the PREDATORS themselves, the ship is a curious mixture of old and new. An elaborate frieze written in alien script runs around the wall, with racks of sophisticated equipment recessed into it. Hatches lead off to various parts of the ship; we see BROKEN TUSK carry his ALIEN head off down one of them.

INT. PREDATOR MOTHERSHIP - VIEWING GALLERY

The gallery seems to be more mechanical than the rest of the ship. BROKEN TUSK enters, pausing next to a kind of readout device: a cylindrical tube containing a substance similar to mercury which constantly changes it's mass into shapes and alien text. He peers over the protective railing.

WHAT HE SEES is magnificent: a captive QUEEN ALIEN, the nucleus of the ALIEN society, fed by giant intravenous pipes. Each of it's limbs is tethered by straining clamps preventing any movement. To the rear, it's giant egg-sac glows and throbs, suspended by a jury-rigged sling. A SCANNING MECHANISM hangs above the EGGS the QUEEN lays, seemingly defying gravity. As each EGG is scanned by a blue triangular beam - similar to a PREDATOR gun-sight - it becomes translucent, giving us a view of the pulsing FACEHUGGER inside. This done, a manipulator are carefully loads several eggs onto a pallet, which then sinks into a

hatchway in the floor. It's an assembly-line of almost frightening mechanical efficiency.

EXT. SPACE

We see a pod ejected from the Mothership, rocketing away from the planet into deep space. The inference is obvious; the PREDATORS are seeding worlds with ALIENS to hunt.

INT. PREDATOR MOTHERSHIP - VIEWING GALLERY

The blue beam slides across one of the eggs, and suddenly changes to red, BEEPING rapidly. BROKEN TUSK sees the flowing display-tank alter from a rotating simulation of an ALIEN WARRIOR skull to a representation of a QUEEN's head. The manipulator arm swiftly grasps the EGG in question and moves it over to a protrusion on the floor. The causes the QUEEN to go berserk, straining at her bonds and SHRIEKING ferociously. She's obviously been through this before and knows what's about to happen. The protrusionsplits open, spilling out an intense white light: an energy-filled blast furnace. The manipulator claw opens, the EGG drops in, and is no more.

INT. PREDATOR MOTHERSHIP - LIVING QUARTERS

An orange light plays across a wall of skulls, casting dark shadows into long-empty orbs. BROKEN TUSK sprawls lizard-like across a flat slab of rock in the center of the room, inspecting his formidable arsenal of weaponry. Satisfied, he reaches out to run a finger across the jaw of his ALIEN trophy in an almost-erotic gesture. He regards it for a long moment as if coming to a decision of some kind, before finally getting to his feet.

INT. PREDATOR MOTHERSHIP - VIEWING GALLERY

The lights in the gallery are dimmer when BROKEN TUSK enters. He watches the cherry-red beam of the gliding SCANNING MECHANISM lock onto one of the EGGS, then runs his hand in sequence over the control board. The manipulator arm swings over, seizing the egg and loading it onto a waiting pallet.

BROKEN TUSK points his finger at the QUEEN and makes a guttural CLICKING SOUND from deep in his throat. The effect is not unlike that of a child firing an imaginary gun. As if reading BROKEN TOOTH's thoughts, the QUEEN lifts her crested head upwards and emits a venomous HISS of contempt.

EXT. SPACE

In CENTER FRAME, the planet sits still and green, awash with nebulous clouds. A hulking METAL FORM ROLLS RIGHT-TO-LEFT across our view, sunlight glinting from it's surface. It's a rectangular satellite-construction comprised of hundreds of communication dishes in a latticework of steel tubing. We hear FILTERED HUMAN VOICES O.S. Subspace chatter.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - MIDDAY

Imagine a world where every square mile is covered by a canopy of treetop foliage, and you've just drawn yourself a picture of the planet Ryushi.

Nestled amongst this lush rainforest is the Yutani-Templin Communications Relay Station. Several inverted-'U'-shaped suspension cranes painted bright yellow look down over a collection of preassembled buildings and roadways raised above the swamp on platforms, much like a truncated oil-rig. A navigation beacon flashes intermittently from a tall gantry tower above, while dominating the view is the sloping face of a communications array several storeys high. Off to one side of the platform is a gigantic many-wheeled haulage vehicle. A flock of bird-like creatures fly past.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

We're in the dark womb of a split-level command center alive with clusters of video readouts, somewhat reminiscent of a futuristic air-traffic control tower. On the upper tier, a large circular holo-display currently projects an image of the satellite we just saw. Thin trailers of paper flutter gently in the current coming from the air conditioning ducts, though beads of sweat still dot the foreheads of the people manning the consoles here. We move in on CASSIE DOLLANDER and ROB PARSONS, two monitoring technicians occupying a control bank. CASSIE listens carefully to something on her headset.

CASSIE

Ah, negative on that request commercial freighter 'Nan-Shan'. I've already got an inbound on that approach pending a beacon-fix. Hold on my mark until I get back with some confirmation. Rimward Traffic Control out.

She thumbs a button and leans over to PARSONS.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

How's it looking?

PARSONS worriedly shakes his head.

PARSONS

That's the second time I ran it, and it still reads the same.

CASSIE

Better tell the boss.

PARSONS pulls out a coin.

PARSONS

Toss you for it.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - EXECUTIVE OFFICE

HIROKO NOGUCHI is sweating heavily, a black forelock of hair falling across her Oriental features. Her eyes flicker warily from side-to-side as she holds the smooth length of the sword before her, trying to assess from where the next attack will come. She doesn't have to wait

long; two NINJA SWORDSMEN drop to the floor in front of her, striking without hesitation.

She expertly avoid the blows, parrying relentlessly. A persistent TONE begins to intrude O.S., like a telephone RINGING. She tries to ignore it, but her concentration is clearly broken. A THIRD SWORDSMAN appears from out of nowhere, his sword SWISHING towards her chest. The blade plunges deep into her stomach, emerging from her back. She glances down in annoyed disbelief.

HIROKO

Fuck! Holo off.

The SWORDSMEN immediately flicker and disappear. She sheathes the sword with one precise movement and crosses the wooden paneled floor to her desk. Mopping her face with a towel, she thumbs a stud. The RINGING TONE stops, the corporate logo on her flat-screen desk panel replaced with a black girl's face.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Noguchi.

CASSIE (O.S., onscreen)
Something just came up on Deep Space Tracking.

HIROKO

What kind of 'something'?

CASSIE (O.S., onscreen)
Easier if you come down and look.

HIROKO

I'm on my way.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - MIDDAY

An eight-wheeled articulated crawler rolls noisily through the rain, climbing an access ramp leading from the swamp to the outpost's empty main-street. A group of rhinos - brown two-horned quadrupeds indigenous to Ryushi - restlessly stir in their corral at it's approach. The crawler's pneumatics HISS gently as it comes to a halt, while somewhere off in the distance a dog BARKS.

DON KAMEN, a lean man in his forties. climbs down from the cab mounted five feet above the ground and squints up at the main relay antenna. He adjusts the cowboy hat on his head against the drizzle and crosses the street towards one of the buildings, ignoring a Pepsi sign CREAKING in the gentle breeze. A glass-paneled door SWISHES automatically open before him.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

KAMEN steps into the command center, nodding familiarly to the DUTY PERSONNEL. A long-haired labrador rushes up to KAMEN, wagging it's tail. Her name is BREWSTER. She's the base mascot. KAMEN reaches down and ruffles it's fur. He climbs the few stairs to the monitoring tier, pulling the French-plaited hair of ANNIE URIOSTE, an Italian systems-

mechanic with her hands buried in a disassembled console.

URIOSTE

You didn't wipe your feet coming in.

KAMEN

Well, it's okay. You didn't tell me it was monsoon season going out.

PARSONS looks up at KAMEN and grins.

PARSONS

Hey, buenos dias, cowboy. When d'you blow in?

KAMEN places his hat on PARSONS' head and THUMPS it down.

KAMEN

Just got back. Missed anything?

URIOSTE (snorts)

Yeah. We're almost out of beer.

PARSONS

Ahh, don't pay any attention to Urioste. She's still pissed that Noguchi wouldn't let her go off on your hunting trip.

KAMEN pours himself a cup of coffee from a BUBBLING percolator.

KAMEN

Wasn't my trip, I just did the driving. 'Sides, freezing my butt off out in the wet taking pot-shots at the local wildlife isn't my idea of a good time, either.

He sips gingerly from the cup of scalding liquid.

PARSONS

Where'd you leave them?

KAMEN

Camped out by the navi-beacon out on Linson's Range. They're making their own way back tomorrow.

CASSIE

MarsCo went belly-up on the Dow Jones.

KAMEN

Shit. When?

CASSIE

Yesterday. We got the Network feed from Gateway; it was the top story on 'Sixty Seconds'. Biggest market crash since twenty-four.

KAMEN looks ill.

KAMEN

Fucking great. I invested some money in them.

CASSIE

You win some, you loose some.

KAMEN

I lose 'em all, that's why I'm still out here on this rock. Anything else you wanna ruin my day with?

CASSIE

No, but I got something that might interest you.

HIROKO enters, pulling on a leather jacket.

HIROKO

What've you got?

KAMEN nods to her and receives a quick smile for his trouble. They turn to watch the display clear, replaced with a computer simulation of the neighboring solar system.

CASSIE

A pair of incomings. They popped-up on the medium-range about thirteen twenty-four local time.

PARSONS

We figured on it being a magnetic anomaly, but we ran a back-trace just to make sure.

CASSIE

Yeah. Turns out they dropped straight out of hyperspace.

The simulation ZOOMS IN, revealing two unidentified objects heading towards the planet in the center of the display. Computer notations accompany them.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Curious thing is, the mass detector says they're too small to carry a deep-space drive.

HIROKO

Sounds like a couple of escape shuttles.

PARSONS

That's what we thought.

HIROKO

Have you got an updated Lloyds' Almanac to cross-reff them through?

PARSONS

Done it already. Nothing matches.

CASSIE

And if you thought that was interesting, watch this...

HIROKO watches the course of the two objects simultaneously change.

KAMEN

Jesus.

PARSONS

Yeah, exactly. Those're pre-programmed course adjustments you're looking at.

KAMEN

Tactical nukes, maybe?

Everybody gives him a quick look, but nobody says anything. It's obviously not an appealing thought.

HIROKO

Where're they headed?

CASSIE

We ran a trajectory simulation. If they carry on along that path, it's possible they'll make intra-orbital insertion.

There's a great exhalation of breath, and everyone swaps significant glances. HIROKO seems worried. She scratches her forehead.

HIROKO

I don't know what to make of this. Get a copy of the telemetry relayed back to Antarctica Traffic Control. Better alert the nearest RimCorp Base, too.

PARSONS nods, suddenly serious.

PARSONS

Fort Powell. What do we tell 'em?

HIROKO

Just give them the facts. They can leap to their own conclusions.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - SWAMP - AFTERNOON

Down here in the swamp, the trunks of magnificent trees terminate in gnarled roots and disappear into watery murk, much like a Louisiana bayou. A group of attentive LEMUR-TYPE CREATURES suddenly bound for cover as a line of bullets THUDS into the wood nearby. Seconds later, a loud HUMMING NOISE intrudes O.S. and a pair of manta-ray-shaped hover-bikes with sleek lines and garnish decals SLAMS into FRAME suspended two feet above the mire, their powerful turbines kicking-up a swirl of spray. The two BIKERS skid to a halt and watch the CREATURES scatter. ACKLAND and YORK - men who on Earth might be called "good 'ol boys" - are both riding one-handed; powerful hi-tech rifles gripped in the other.

YORK (yelling)
You missed 'em, Ackland!

ACKLAND

Little fuckers move too fast. Let's do a sweep and catch 'em on the other side.

YORK nods his head, pulling his goggles down over his eyes. The two bikes ROAR off in pursuit.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - ENCAMPMENT - AFTERNOON

Up on a mud-bank, at the base of a sturdy gantry tower with two blinking blue lights atop it, stands the camp. It looks a little like a Bedouin bivouac, but up-close we can see the techno-fitted details. A hard-featured woman seated next to a solid-fuel burner sips from a mug, while her Vietnamese counterpart is manually loading large-caliber bullets into a belt-feed. They watch as ACKLAND and YORK roar past WHOOPING. MINH scrambles out of the way as a beer can lobbed by YORK CLATTERS to the ground near him.

MINH

Crazy idiots.

BEAUVAIS cups her drink with both hands, assessing him.

BEAUVAIS

Ahhh, they're just letting off some steam; don't let 'em get to you. Ackland and York aren't such bad guys when you get to know 'em. Just a couple of weekend warriors...

She peers curiously at the clunky cartridges MINH's thumbing into the belt feed. On the ground next to him is a widebore weapon on an over-the-shoulder guidance mechanism.

BEAUVAIS (CONT'D)

Nice howitzer you've got there.

MINH

Thanks.

BEAUVAIS

Good argument for gun-control. What are you going after, rhino?

MINH

Nah. I just wanna squeeze off a few rounds. 'Sides, they tagged the rhinos for the migration project, so they're protected. They'll dock you a month's pay for just mentioning it.

He peers into the belt and blows out some dirt.

MINH (CONT'D)

Sure wish there was something on this planet with a bit of fight in it, though.

EXT. DEEP SPACE

Against a sea of stars, a small metal shape HURTLES towards us, followed moments later by it's identical twin.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - BIG BERTHA - AFTERNOON

A strand of HIROKO's hair falls forward into her face, slick with rain. She brushes up at the miserable weather. She and KAMEN are standing on one of the twelve-foot-in-diameter wheels of the gargantuan haulage vehicle we saw outside the base earlier. Up on the side of the cab is painted a Nordic Valkyrie with an impressive bustline, next to which is

the legend 'BIG BERTHA'. Two mechanics, JAN GUTTIEREZ and KEVIN DILLER, watch KAMEN point something out to HIROKO from the vantage point of KAMEN's crawler parked in the swamp nearby.

KAMEN

See that sheathing on the suspension? Eaten away. Same thing with the pumps on the base air purifiers. The algae out here just isn't good on these new plastics.

HIROKO

We haven't used Big Bertha since we relocated the generator module. That was four months ago. I can't ask for them to keep bringing spares in on the shuttle, it's already costing too much as it is.

KAMEN shrugs.

KAMEN

If you want these things kept in working condition, that's the only choice you've got.

DILLER leans in to murmur quietly to GUTTIEREZ.

DILLER

Maybe she wouldn't be so tetchy if she got laid every once-in-a-while.

GUTTIEREZ

You offering?

A buzzer inside the crawler goes OFF. DILLER gets up to answer.

DILLER

Nah. Freeze my dick off.

HIROKO shakes her head dubiously at KAMEN's comment.

HIROKO

I don't know. I think we'll have to run it on a rota; one month down, one month operational.

DILLER leans out of the crawler's cab and calls across.

DILLER

Miss Noguchi! You're wanted in admin.

HIROKO

Thanks.

She turns back to KAMEN.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Let me sort this out and we'll go over the logistics in my office.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

HIROKO peers at the display with undisguised concern. A sense of urgency buzzes around the room.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

When?

CASSIE

Seven minutes ago, the third course change in an hour. Those incomings are going to skim past the communications platform just a little too close for comfort.

HIROKO

Can we move it to a different orbit in time?

PARSONS looks up from his board in harassment.

PARSONS

Already working on it.

HIROKO

Get off an all-bands emergency distress, and put it on a repeater.

She meets KAMEN's eyes.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Looks like you were right. Someone's lobbed a pair of smart-missiles at us.

KAMEN shakes his head.

KAMEN

Relay station like us out in the middle of the boonies; why bother? All you're gonna do is punch a temporary hole in the traffic control net. That'd be small potatoes even for terrorists.

PARSONS and CASSIE are all-business at the control board.

PARSONS

Can you patch me a temporary loop on DCMGS?

CASSIE

Okay, give me the numbers.

She flips a switch. A nearby screen changes to display an orbital path sketched out in rectangular neon blocks.

EXT. SPACE

A cluster of thruster rockets on one corner of the relay frame ignites, and the darkened bulk of the satellite begins to move.

EXT. DEEP SPACE

The two pods ROAR towards us at immense speed.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

The two blips on the holo-board representing the pods make a marked alteration in their course.

PARSONS

They've changed their heading again.

HIROKO

Compensate!

PARSONS

Punch me in a solution for their delta-vee.

CASSIE

What do you need?

PARSONS

A three-second burn to port, on my mark.

CASSIE

It's on the board.

EXT. SPACE

Framed against the green backdrop of Ryushi, the PREDATOR pods rocket towards the communications platform.

CASSIE

Picking up velocity.

HIROKO

Match it!

A bead of sweat trickles down PARSONS' temple.

PARSONS

Not gonna make it...

EXT. DEEP SPACE

The pod speeds THUNDEROUSLY into CAMERA, blotting out our view.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

One of the two blips on the holo-display vanishes, and three-quarters of the monitors abruptly turn to static. PARSONS curses.

PARSONS

Goddammit!

He pulls off his headset with weary resignation.

PARSONS (CONT'D)

We've lost the downlink. It's gone.

EXT. SPACE

The mass of the satellite tumbles end-over-end. A gaping rent is torn through it; something sparks and flashes within. The second pod accelerates off curving into the atmosphere.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - RIVERBANK - DUSK

A SONIC THUNDERCRACK BOOMS overhead; YORK looks up in time to see an object sear across the dusk sky. He pulls his bike to a stationary hover.

YORK

Shit! What's that?

ACKLAND has already dismounted as he watches the fireball hurtle to the ground. A BOOMING ECHO resonates across the forest, followed by a few plaintive SCREECHES from the planet's indigenous lifeforms, before settling back into an eerie silence.

ACKLAND

Meteor, I guess.

He raises a set of compact field binoculars to his face. THROUGH THEM he sees a thin haze of smoke rising from the treetops.

ACKLAND

D'you feel any impact shock?

YORK (uncertain)

Not really.

He lowers the binoculars and frowns.

ACKLAND

Me either. I tell you, I used to be with a mining outfit on Callisto, and when something like that hits... believe me, you know about it.

YORK

Do you wanna head back and call it in?

ACKLAND (hesitant)

I dunno... I dunno. Something about this feels funny.

He looks across at the plume of smoke snaking off into the sky.

ACKLAND (CONT'D)

That is the damndest impact I've ever saw...

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - IMPACT SIGHT - DUSK

The earth around the crater-rim is charred and cracked; some of the surrounding brush still aflame. A SCORPION scuttles inquisitively to the edge of the pit and stops, it's stinger twitching hesitantly. We HEAR a LOW HUM, and the SOUND of METAL-ON-METAL. Before the SCORPION can decide what to do, it's fate is sealed. A large METAL CLAW comes down, crushing it in an instant. A SECOND CLAW emerges, and a MACHINE heaves itself out of the hole, it's surface smoking with heat. It pauses for a BEAT like some giant tarantula seeking prey, then moves purposely outwards about twenty yards before halting. A hatch on the underside opens, and a complex delivery mechanism extends. After a moment there's a LOW CLUNK, and the mechanism retracts. In it's place is an ALIEN EGG. The MACHINE crawls off, vanishing into the long

reeds.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - NIGHT

HIROKO sits on the front wheel of KAMEN's crawler, her knees pulled up to her chin, staring off into a thin mist that makes the night impenetrable. Behind and above, the lights of the cranes and the communications array strobe on-and-off. Above the bar on the main street is a flicking neon sign erected after-the-fact, emblazoned with the words "TORCHY'S". The MUFFLED SOUNDS of MERRY-MAKING from within become momentarily louder, and HIROKO glances over to see it's pressure-door CRASH back, disgorging several drunken people. KAMEN follows them through. He spots HIROKO and heads over.

KAMEN

Hey, boss. Wondered where you'd gotten to.

HIROKO

I just... wanted to be put on my own for a while. Clear my head.

KAMEN

Didn't feel like whoopin' it up with the rest of us blue collars, huh?

She shakes her head, and manages a smile.

HIROKO

I've got a lot of thinking to do. 'Sides, the room was getting too crowded for me.

KAMEN

Not too much of the socializing type, then?

HIROKO

No, not really. More sort of the 'claustrophobic' type.

KAMEN LAUGHS. HIROKO is straight-faced.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

I'm serious. That's why I switched from orbiting to planetary installations.

KAMEN

Is that a fact.

HIROKO

Uh-huh. Used to get it pretty bad. I'd wake up in a cold sweat and want to claw open a vacuum hatch.

KAMEN

How long you been out here for now, anyway? Three months?

HIROKO

Four.

KAMEN

And before that?

HIROKO

Six month stint on Datus.

KAMEN

Only six?

HIROKO

What is this? 'Twenty Questions'?

KAMEN

Just curious. There's a lot of talk goes around.

HIROKO shrugs. Thinks about it.

HIROKO

I don't know. I guess I've just never found anywhere I really felt at home.

She hugs her knees again, and suddenly looks a whole lot more at ease. KAMEN spots a square glass balanced on one of the tire's wide treads.

KAMEN

What is that?

HIROKO

Real man' drink.

She offers the glass to him. He takes it and sniff cautiously.

KAMEN

Seltzer?

HIROKO

Want some?

KAMEN hands the glass back and raises his own bottle.

KAMEN

I'll stick with my own.

He sits with her and stares into the darkness.

HIROKO

Any luck raising Ackland's party?

KAMEN

Nothing. With the satellite down, we can't transmit over the mountain range. He's most likely sitting there wondering why he can't raise us.

HIROKO

First light, we'll take a chopper out there and tell them to head back.

KAMEN

'We'? You wanna fly out there with me?

HIROKO

Sure. Do me good to stretch my legs.

HIROKO takes a sip of her drink, her brow furrowing.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

This whole thing's got me spooked.

KAMEN hops off the wheel.

KAMEN

Don't worry about it. If the Network goes by the book, like everyone figures they will, a Marine gunboat from Powell'll drop-by for a look-see in four-or-five days. They can go poke around out there and find whatever it was hit us. All we've gotta do is sit tight.

HIROKO

Do you think Ackland'll sit tight?

KAMEN

There'd have to be a helluva good reason for him not to.

EXT. SPACE

A peculiar blue scanning beam plays over the rotating mass of the incapacitated satellite, examining every section. It comes to the rent torn through it, and pauses.

FROM THE SCANNER'S P.O.V., we see the structure of the satellite made up from a series of blue geodesic shapes. The damage registers as a cold, black mass.

The beam switches off and the hovering PREDATOR shuttle turns smoothly on its axis, thrusting towards the planet.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - IMPACT SITE - NIGHT

Shafts of torch-light fan out above the thick foliage in the darkness. YORK and ACKLAND wade through the chin-high reeds, cursing.

ACKLAND

Found anything?

YORK looks down at his data-stick, a handheld torch with a multi-purpose readout screen.

YORK

Nada. No radiation... no movement... nothing.

ACKLAND

Well, just keep looking. It's gotta be... whoa, Jesus!

ACKLAND falls toward onto something, and YORK comes running.

YORK

What is it?

ACKLAND steadies himself, and the two men shine their torches at the rhythmically-breathing SHAPE on the ground.

ACKLAND

It's a rhino.

YORK

Is it dead?

ACKLAND

No, it's still breathing. Kinda clammy though. Are you sure your stick's not broken.

YORK looks at the data-stick again.

YORK

Yeah, it's fine.

ACKLAND

God, I hope that thing didn't bring down a virus.

YORK

I told you we... what's that?

Their torch beams PAN ACROSS a three-foot high ovular shape.

ACKLAND

Looks like a spore. Fungus of some kind, maybe?

YORK

Bloody big if it is. Top's open.

ACKLAND steps cautiously forward to shine his torch inside.

YORK (CONT'D)

Careful...

There's nothing inside. ACKLAND looks disappointed.

ACKLAND

It's hollow. Think our rhino must've ate something that didn't agree with him.

A heavy gust of air blows unexpectedly across the clearing with a BANSHEE HOWL, ruffling their hair.

YORK

Let's get back and call this in.

ACKLAND

Wait a minute.

YORK reluctantly follows ACKLAND as he thrashes through the thinning foliage, coming out at the rim of the impact crater. It's beginning to partially collapse, water seeping in. YORK runs his beam over something at the bottom of the shallow pit.

YORK

What is that... is that metal fragments?

ACKLAND's maybe getting a little nervous now.

ACKLAND

This is very fucking weird.

He sees the churned earth, and the muddy trail leading off into the broken foliage.

ACKLAND (CONT'D)

It's like something came out of the crater and went that way...

There's a TINY CLICK, and ACKLAND looks over to see YORK taking the safety off his rifle. ACKLAND wordlessly unshoulders his too. They step around the crater and warily follow the ragged path to...

YORK

Another one?

ACKLAND prods this SECOND EGG with his gun.

ACKLAND

Yeah. This's closed.

There's a CRACKLING NOISE, and the top of the EGG peels neatly open in four sections. The two men jump back in alarm, and YORK LAUGHS nervously. Something organic is pulsing inside. ACKLAND cranes his neck forward for a better look...

There's an EXPLOSION of MOVEMENT. A spindly shape with a long segmented tail launches itself jack-in-a-box-style at ACKLAND. It's a FACEHUGGER. ACKLAND trips backwards, caught off-balance. His finger involuntarily squeezes the trigger of his rifle as he falls. A volley of shots describe and arc and light up the night with a PERCUSSIVE BOOM, and we...

CUT TO

...A SHORT DISTANCE ACROSS THE CLEARING. SOMETHING is watching them from the trees; something with a heat-vision P.O.V. A PREDATOR. We see the flare of ACKLAND's gunshots, then SNAP IN to see the multi-colored from of his body toppling over, trailing a purplish FACEHUGGER, before we...

CUT BACK TO

...One of ACKLAND's bullets taking a meaty chunk out of YORK's thigh as he races forward to help his friend. The HUGGER's tail is already around ACKLAND's throat, it's fingers scrabbling for purchase. YORK pulls at one set of digits, and manages to raise them for just an instant. What we see is horrific; the look of terror on ACKLAND's face, and the questing tendril on the HUGGER's underside trying to force it's way between ACKLAND's lips. In a second, it's all over; the FACEHUGGER struggles free of YORK's grasp, and clamps itself firmly on ACKLAND's face with a faint SUCKING SOUND. YORK shivers, then uses his good leg to propel himself a few feet away. He watches the hapless Teamster go rigid, then stop moving altogether.

YORK

Oh, God; oh, shit; oh, God.

The FACEHUGGER's tail slithers tighter around ACKLAND's neck; and as YORK quickly retrieves his rifle, we...

CUT TO

A PREDATOR-VISION SHOT, watching the color-bloom of YORK dragging ACKLAND's body away from the crater. It CLOSES IN on the FACEHUGGER, giving us a muted X-ray-type VIEW of circulatory fluid pumping around the HUGGER and into ACKLAND.

YORK's limping badly, a dark stain blossoming on his baggy fatigue trousers. ACKLAND's not a small man, and the physical effort of hauling him through the reeds makes him sweat profusely. There's movement on the ground, and YORK sees why; one of the LEMURS has fallen victim to another FACEHUGGER, which dwarfs it's small furry body. The HUGGER's fingers all ripple simultaneously as it strengthens it's hold; the movement akin to somebody drumming their fingers on a table-top.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - RIVER BANK - NIGHT

As YORK hauls ACKLAND onto one of the bikes, he hears a TICKING SOUND from the trees, like an engine cooling on a warm summer's day. YORK clutches his rifle and stares upward. There seems to be a VAGUE SHIMMERING FORM in the bough of a tree. Although it might be a trick of the light, he isn't sticking around to find out. YORK guns the bike to life and ROARS off above the swamp.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - IMPACT SITE - NIGHT

PREDATOR-VISION.

We're looking at the site in colours: the cold blue of empty ALIEN EGGS, and the warm reds of just-breathing ANIMALS rendered inert the FACEHUGGER parasites.

A group of PREDATORS appear in three-dimensional solidity, their camouflage cloaks deactivated. The LEAD PREDATOR SPLASHES across to the exposed roots of a tree and kneels down to examine an ANIMAL CORPSE curled up there. Most of it has been madly mutilated by something erupting from inside it's body. The PREDATOR looks up and scans the swamp, ignoring the swarm of FLIES buzzing in the air.

PREDATOR-VISION.

This time, an oscillating line appears to the left of our view, and a band sweeps quickly ACROSS the screen synchronous to us hearing different levels of SOUND STATIC. This abruptly stops as the oscillating line begins to moves in peaks and valleys. The PREDATOR is picking up radio waves. A HUMAN VOICE; albeit grossly-distorted.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

We hear a RAPID BEEPING; movement-sensors set up on tripods to warn against intruding animals. The sound brings BEAUVAIS out of her tent, bleary-eyed and fumbling with her pistol. She's suddenly wide awake

when she sees YORK's hover-bike, lit by the sensors' flashing red strobe. It skids to a halt against a mud-bank, sending up a spray of silt. YORK climbs off the bike and stumbles, then starts to unfasten the straps holding ACKLAND's body.

BEAUVAIS

Jesus Christ! What happened?

YORK

Give me a hand with Ack.

She races over to help YORK ease ACKLAND up.

BEAUVAIS

How bad is... oh my God.

As ACKLAND is turned over, BEAUVAIS gets her first look at a FACEHUGGER. She shies away, repulsed.

BEAUVAIS

What is that?

YORK

Don't... uuh... don't know. Help me... uuh... help me get him inside. Shit!

YORK grits his teeth, but the leg injury is too painful. He slumps slowly to the floor.

BEAUVAIS (yelling)
Minh! Minh, get out here!

INT. TENT - NIGHT

A portable neon light in the tent flickers, casting staccato bluish light over ACKLAND and the FACEHUGGER. MINH and BEAUVAIS stare at it in horrified fascination, while YORK pulls a tourniquet around his thigh. He winces.

BEAUVAIS

Have you tried prising it off?

YORK shakes his head.

YORK

I wanted to get him back here; get him back to base.

MINH

Forget it. We lost the satellite link. It's dead.

There's a long pause while everyone considers the options.

BEAUVAIS

We've got no option. We're gonna have to get it off.

MINH

Oh man...

YORK

Get real, Beauvais! That thing might chew his fucking face off for all be know!

The motion sensor outside begins BEEPING again. MINH catches BEAUVAIS' head-jerk.

BEAUVAIS

Minh...

MINH

Yep...

MINH hefts his 'howitzer' and leaves the tent. BEAUVAIS rounds on YORK, continuing.

BEAUVAIS

How do you know it's not already?

YORK

I don't, but I think we should just wait and let the Doc take a look...

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

MINH walks towards a line of flashing red strobes at the perimeter of the camp, the barrel of his weapon pointing casually forward. He studies the surrounding darkness. There's nothing out there. He shakes his head in disgust.

MINH (muttering)

Take a goddamn wrench to those things...

He thumbs a stud on the top of the 'howitzer'. There's a gentle WHINE, and the HISS of hydraulic cylinders as the harness mechanism lifts the weapon up. It darts quickly to-and-fro; a mechanical snake seeking a target. We see MINH's hand in CLOSE UP. In addition to the firing trigger, there's also a thumb button. He squeezes it...

The gun swings sharply around in a blinding movement, tracking something automatically. There's a THUNDEROUS RUMBLE as it fires-off three shots in rapid succession. Something that was only yards from MINH APPEARS and is blown backwards to CRASH against a tree bole, a mass of luminous green liquid and motion.

MINH (CONT'D) (dumbstruck)

God.

MINH watches the helmeted PREDATOR fall face down into the water with a SPLASH, then lie motionless. YORK and BEAUVAIS are out of the tent in an instant.

PREDATOR-VISION.

Three humans; in motion and 'hot'. The triangular mechanism of the PREDATOR's gun locks onto MINH.

A BLAST of plasma-energy rips a gaping hole through MINH's body, spraying blood across YORK. He topples dead to the ground, a look of pained surprise on his face. BEAUVAIS is there immediately, racing across and scrabbling for the 'howitzer'. She doesn't have time to take the harness off - she just slides her finger through the trigger guard and starts squeezing off random shots. The air shimmers as an unseen shape races at her. There's a loud

SWISH of sliding metal, and a telescopic spear appears out of thin air. It SLAMS through BEAUVAIS' body, lifting her off the ground and impaling her against a tree.

YORK watches in horror as BEAUVAIS' arms thrash around. A moment later her struggles cease, and she'd dropped to the floor like a broken marionette. There's a CRACKLING SOUND, and the hazy air around BEAUVAIS disappears. In it's place is a PREDATOR, a luminous green patch trickling from a wound on it's arm. It's head flicks around as it zeroes-in on YORK, the three red dots of the PREDATOR's cannon following suit. YORK's quick though, already up and running when the plasma bolt EXPLODES into the tree despite the pain in his leg.

His options are limited. The hover-bike is nearby. He sprints for that and his luck holds...the key's still in the ignition. He flips it. The engine COUGHS and then dies. YORK looks up. The wounded PREDATOR bounds across the clearing at frightened speed. YORK turns the key again, but the PREDATOR's almost upon him. The creature WHIPS an ornately-shaped lance from it's back and thrusts it...JUST AS THE ENGINE ROARS TO LIFE AND THE HOVER-BIKE RISES FROM THE MUD! The blade slices into the bike's body and jams there, while one of it's manta-wings SMACKS into the PREDATOR's jaw, sending it reeling backwards into the swamp.

YORK swivels the bike on it's axis as another plasma-bolt rips into the rear, melting away a sizable chunk of the bodywork. He sees a PREDATOR hanging from a tree, and the SHIMMERING of two more PREDATORS in their camouflage nearby. He's not sticking around to argue though. YORK jams the throttle hard and the bike shoots off into the bayou as more cannon-blasts blossom around him.

The group of PREDATORS appear in the camp and cautiously survey the area. The LEAD PREDATOR - the one with the distinctive armor - crosses to the tent and opens the entry flap.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

PREDATOR-VISION.

The extraterrestrial hunter scrutinizes the pulsing FACEHUGGER on ACKLAND for a long moment, but takes no further action.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

We PAN SLOWLY ACROSS the deserted campsite. There isn't a soul there, human or otherwise. The wind whistles eerily through the tree-boughs.

EXT. RAINFOREST AIRSPACE - DAWN

First light the next day, the sun rising on the horizon. A 'chopper' -

actually a twin-turbine heli-jet - flies in low above the veil of mist hanging over the treetops.

INT. CHOPPER - DAWN

The cockpit is small, a two-seater with room for cargo in the back. KAMEN's in the pilot seat, and HIROKO's riding shotgun. The controls moving by themselves, on autopilot. A REPETITIVE BEEPING causes KAMEN to look up from his magazine.

KAMEN'S P.O.V.

From out of the window of the 'chopper', we see the twin blue lights of the navigation beacon blinking on-and-off above the trees.

KAMEN nudges HIROKO awake.

KAMEN

Wake up. We're at the beacon.

He switches the controls over to manual and takes the chopper down. HIROKO rubs the sleep from her eyes.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - ENCAMPMENT - DAWN

Twin searchlights on the underside of the descending chopper sweep across the clearing. The encampment has been wrecked, much of it reduced to a twisted tangle of smoking debris. All-terrain gear lowers from the chopper, as it makes a watery landing in the swamp.

INT. CHOPPER - DAWN

KAMEN and HIROKO stare at the site in disbelief. KAMEN hauls an automatic pulse-rifle from the rear.

KAMEN

Looks like trouble.

KAMEN reaches under the pilot's seat and pulls out a hand-pistol. Passes it to her.

KAMEN (CONT'D)

Used one of these before?

HIROKO coolly examines it.

HIROKO

Fabrique Nationale tactical autoloader. Uses twelve mill hollow 'O' rounds, with through the barrel smart laser-sighting. Sure, I can handle this.

HIROKO's show-boating and KAMEN knows it, but he still can't help being a little bit impressed.

KAMEN

Okay. Watch were you point it...

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - ENCAMPMENT - DAWN

The two of them pick their way across mangled tripods and charred canvas. Part of the bivouac has collapsed - one of the guide ropes has burned through.

HIROKO (quietly)
Somebody picked an argument.

KAMEN

Yeah. Somebody won.

HIROKO

Check out the tent.

KAMEN nods and heads off that way, while HIROKO carefully inspects the wreckage dotted around the perimeter.

INT. TENT - DAWN

KAMEN opens the tent flap and peers inside. ACKLAND's on the cot, sweating heavily. There is no sign of the FACEHUGGER.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - ENCAMPMENT - DAWN

Across the clearing, HIROKO turns a piece of charred plating over in her hands before discarding it.

Her foot slips on an object sunk into the soft mud. It's MINH's 'howitzer'. A dark slippery patch coats the metal. She crouches down and rubs her fingers through it. Blood. KAMEN's VOICE intrudes, O.S.

KAMEN (O.S.)

I've found Ackland!

HIROKO

Hold on...

She begins to cross the camp, and her foot catches on a taut length of rope. SOMETHING swings down from the trees, hitting her squarely in the face and knocking her off her feet. HIROKO CRIES OUT in fear and surprise, then freezes at what she sees.

Two bloodied bodies dangle head-first from the bough overhead; BEAUVAIS and MINH. Each has been skinned and is beyond recognition. KAMEN hears her exclamation and is out of the tent in an instant. He stops in his tracks.

KAMEN

Jesus palomino...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - HELI-JET PAD - MORNING

It's raining again at the base. Under cover of an overhang, HIROKO watches as ACKLAND is trundled away from the 'chopper' on a paramedic trolley by GUTTIEREZ and DOC REVNA, an Indian woman in her late thirties. As KAMEN slams the 'chopper's side door, we see that HIROKO has left her leather jacket on the passenger seat. KAMEN runs after

REVNA clutching a clear plastic bag.

KAMEN

Wait a minute, Doc...

He hands the bag over to REVNA. She peers at the contents curiously. The FACEHUGGER is inside, stiff and shriveled.

REVNA

Is this it?

KAMEN

Yeah. Found it curled up in a corner of the tent. Any idea?

REVNA shakes her head.

REVNA

Never come across one of these before. Maybe the original survey team did. I'll run it through records and see what comes up.

GUTTIEREZ checks that ACKLAND's body's secure on the trolley. KAMEN raps him on the back to get his attention.

KAMEN

Hey, Jan. See if you can get someone to check out the chopper.

GUTTIEREZ

What's the problem?

KAMEN

She was running a little sluggish on the way back. Think the turbines might be playing up.

GUTTIEREZ

Give me twenty minutes and I'll do it myself.

KAMEN

Appreciate that.

REVNA interrupts.

REVNA

Where're the bodies?

HIROKO

Bagged and in the back. They're not a pretty sight.

ACKLAND is wheeled into a freight elevator. As KAMEN and HIROKO walk away across the rain-swept platform, a SHIMMERING FROM detaches itself from the rear of the chopper and lowers itself to the heli-jet pad.

PREDATOR-VISION.

A newly-arrived PREDATOR scans the towers and modules of the relay-station with great interest. An oscillating red line appears to the LEFT of the SHOT as the PREDATOR analyses HIROKO's voice-pattern.

PREDATOR (O.S., distorted)

Not a pretty sight. Not a pretty sight...

He reaches down to his wrist computer and activates it.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - IMPACT SIGHT - DAY

Under the cathedral-like light filtering through the trees above, a row of metal spikes have been driven into the earth. Four are topped with still-smoking ALIEN skulls. Two and empty.

PREDATOR-VISION.

A newly decapitated ALIEN head is turned around in another PREDATOR's hands in admiration. This PREDATOR thrusts his trophy onto the next spike, then stares at the vacant one for a long moment. His wrist computer BLEEPs for attention...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

With nothing to do, most of the screens are out and the remaining personnel bored. PARSONS is reading a magazine with his feet up on the console, uninterested in HIROKO and KAMEN's conversation nearby.

HIROKO

I'm going to need you to co-sign the report. Until we come up with something, this'll be treated as first degree murder.

KAMEN

Agreed.

HIROKO

When we get the link back, and I send this in, I.C.C.'ll throw a fit.

KAMEN

Ah, don't worry about I.C.C. They're the least of your problems right now.

HIROKO

What do you mean?

URIOSTE walks up, very serious. She interrupts.

URIOSTE

Sorry. Can I have a word?

HIROKO

Sure. What's up?

URIOSTE

Three-Pump failed a half-hour ago. The algae must have clogged up an intake duct.

KAMEN

Think I spoke too soon...

HIROKO

Again? How long before we start noticing the difference?

URIOSTE

I reckon it'll be another day before the smell gets unbearable. Beauvais usually fixes it, but... ah...

HIROKO knows what she means. BEAUVAIS is dead.

HIROKO

Can you handle it?

URIOSTE

Sure, I can manage. But I'm not going into the Pit on my own.

HIROKO (to Urioste)

Alright, get somebody from the auto-shop. (to Kamen) Is that alright?

KAMEN

Yeah, no problem. Ask Diller, he's good with his hands.

URIOSTE exchanges a grin with CASSIE.

CASSIE

I'll go along with that.

A SHRILL TRILLING from his console communicator makes PARSONS leap up to answer.

PARSONS

Parsons. (long beat) Yeah. Hold on.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - INFIRMARY

A CLOSE UP of an eye, bright blue and dilated. DOC REVNA's shining a hand-held light into ACKLAND's face. ACKLAND's regained consciousness, but is far from happy. He's sitting on the edge of a cot in the base Infirmary, an antiseptic room full of automated medical equipment. The Autodoc is suspended from the ceiling nearby, a circular cluster of sophisticated manipulator arms tipped with cutting blades and surgical paraphernalia.

ACKLAND

Hey, c'mon Doc, I feel fine. Really.

REVNA flicks off the probe.

REVNA

Headache? Dehydration?

ACKLAND

The head's okay, but I could sink a six-pack.

REVNA

Forget that. I want you off alcohol for at least seventy-two hours. I've got some toxin build-up tests still to run.

REVNA shakes her head and turns to KAMEN.

REVNA (CONT'D)

He's broken a fever that would kill a mule, but if he says he's alright I'm prepared to believe him. He's all yours.

HIROKO enters. She watches from behind KAMEN.

KAMEN

What happened out there, Ack?

ACKLAND (consternated)

What do you mean, 'what happened'? What am I doing back here? Where's York?

HIROKO (insistent)

What's the last thing you can remember?

ACKLAND thinks hard.

ACKLAND

We... watched a meteor hit over Linson's.

HIROKO and KAMEN exchange significant glances.

HIROKO

A meteor?

ACKLAND

Yeah, it impacted really off. We went out to the crash-site... and... uh... that's... that's all.

KAMEN

Nothing else?

ACKLAND

No.

KAMEN turns to REVNA.

KAMEN

Show him 'Fido'.

REVNA pulls out a cylindrical glass stasis tube from a wall rack. She hands it to ACKLAND. He studies the dead FACEHUGGER floating inside with morbid fascination.

REVNA

Ring any bells?

ACKLAND tries hard to think, but it's as if a wall's slammed down hard on his mind.

ACKLAND

Not really, no. Ugly little sonuvabitch. What is it?

KAMEN

We thought you might be able to tell us. I found it by your cot at the camp. You were out cold.

ACKLAND

What did York say?

HIROKO

York's vanished.

ACKLAND

Vanished?

HIROKO

Beauvais and Minh are dead, Ackland. York's gone awol, unless you can help us go some way toward disproving our suspicion, he's the prime suspect right now.

The news hits ACKLAND hard. He falters and leans back, addressing
REVNA.

ACKLAND

Can I... um... have some water? Please?

REVNA

Sure.

She goes to fetch a cup.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMISSARY

It's lunchtime, and the SOUND of machinery STEAMING food mixes with the CHATTER of the twenty-or-so personnel eating there. HIROKO and KAMEN are deep in conversation across a table.

KAMEN

Do you believe him?

HIROKO

Ackland? I don't know him well enough to say. If we were back on Earth we could run him through an Aldhoven test and find out for sure. There's not much we can do out here.

KAMEN stares hard at her. That's not much of an answer, and HIROKO knows it. She capitulates.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Alright then, For what it's worth... yes, I do.

KAMEN digs appreciatively into a container of food with his fork.

KAMEN

You should try this seasoned stuff. It's good.

GUTTIEREZ approaches the table carrying something.

GUTTIEREZ

Got a present for you.

He hands HIROKO's leather jacket over to her.

HIROKO

Oh, I've been looking for this! Where was it?

GUTTIEREZ

You left it in the chopper. Oh, and before I forget, Don? I ran that test you wanted on the turbines.

KAMEN

And...?

GUTTIEREZ

And, nothing. They checked out just fine.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - AFTERNOON

A metal rail surrounds the perimeter of the platform. DILLER leans against it down by the access ramp, smoking a cigarette and idly blowing rings into the air. BREWSTER pricks up her ears and begins to quietly SNARL. DILLER glances down at her curiously.

DILLER

What's the matter, girl? You smell something?

Now the rhinos are restless too. CASSIE walks across the concrete roadway to join them.

CASSIE

Rhinos look a little antsy,

BREWSTER stops SNARLS and progresses onwards to full-fledged BARKING.

DILLER

Yeah. Never seem 'em act like this before.

PREDATOR-VISION.

CASSIE and DILLER are 'warm', but the rhinos are BREWSTER are 'hotter' still. Their VOICES and BREWSTER'S BARKS are filtered to the point of unrecognizability, eerily distorted.

CASSIE'S the first to hear the SOUND.

CASSIE

Do you hear that?

DILLER straightens up, looking out into the surrounding trees. It's a FAINT HUM, getting LOUDER every second.

DILLER

Yeah...

A hoverbike appears, trailing smoke from one of its turbine intakes as it hurtles towards the base. Halfway between the trees and the ramp, it clips a fallen log and spins end-over-end. Its rider flies through the air and hits the swamp face-first. DILLER and CASSIE race down the ramp with BREWSTER YELPING excitedly in the lead.

CASSIE

I don't believe it.

DILLER splashes through the swamp and pulls the limp body out of the mire. It's YORK. Blood has caked around his wounded leg.

DILLER

He looks in a bad way. Help me get him up to Infirmary.

CASSIE

Wait a minute...

Something else has caught CASSIE's eye. A "something" almost two metres in length protruding from the rear of the wrecked hoverbike. Grasping the haft firmly, she works it free. CASSIE examines the PREDATOR spear, and slowly shakes her head.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Holy Mary...

PREDATOR-VISION.

The concealed hunter watches as the colorised human curiously turns the weapon over in her hands.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - INFIRMARY

REVNA sits at a desk and peers into a microscope. Every so often she GRUNTS in satisfaction and types something into her computer terminal. The stasis tube containing the dead FACEHUGGER stands to one side of the computer screen. The Infirmary is very quiet, and only the gentle THROB of the air-conditioning intrudes. ACKLAND tosses uncomfortably on his cot. He finally sits up and massages his chest.

ACKLAND

Oh. Oh God...

REVNA lowers her pen and looks across.

REVNA

What is it?

ACKLAND

It's nothing, Doc. Just a... touch of indigestion... something.

REVNA

Do you want a tablet?

ACKLAND winces in pain. His breathing's getting heavy. He nods.

ACKLAND

Uh-huh.

REVNA gets up swiftly and crosses to an automated pharmacy. ACKLAND's beginning to COUGH now.

REVNA

That sounds nasty. I'll give you a couple of Demazine.

ACKLAND nods again. His COUGHING has deepened, and now he's banging his chest with a balled fist. REVNA hurries over with three red tablets and a disposable cup of water. ACKLAND takes them gratefully and gulps them down. The effect is almost immediate; ACKLAND quietyens and an appreciative smile comes to his pale lips.

REVNA (CONT'D)

Better?

ACKLAND

Yeah...

Before he has a chance to elaborate, ACKLAND COUGHS once more. A thin spray of blood and saliva dots REVNA's white smock and speckles her cheek. ACKLAND's scrabbling fingers grab her lapels as he begins to hyperventilate. She pulls away, dragging him from the bed in the process. He falls to the floor, his MOANS growing in volume.

REVNA

Hold on, it's alright. I'm gonna give you a shot...

Her fingers tremble as she clumsily examines a tray of surgical instruments. She finds a pneumatic spray-injector, fully charged with a vial of amber liquid attached. ACKLAND SCREAMS and fall backwards onto the floor, his hands clawing at the air. REVNA fumbles with the injector control and gives him a blast in his upper arm. ACKLAND convulses once then goes still, his eyes staring fixedly at the ceiling. The Infirmary is deathly quiet once again.

We hear a gentle CRACKING, like twigs being snapped. REVNA watches in horrified fascination as a pool of blood spreads swiftly outward across the floor from below ACKLAND's corpse. REVNA shudders as the body moves a little, then is rolled over by something underneath it.

WHAT SHE SEES. ACKLAND's body slumps forward onto it's front, revealing a gaping cavity in his back. Bits of spine and ribcage are just visible. A CHESTBURSTER - the second stage of the ALIEN lifeform - pulls itself clear and wipes red gunk from it's body with a pair of still-underdeveloped arms.

Around it's head is a distinctive nascent crest. It kicks away from ACKLAND with a powerful push from it's legs, quickly gaining balance. After a moment appraising it's new environment, it stalks off behind a table. REVNA thinks quickly. She leaps forward and THUMPS a large red stud next to the pressure-door, which promptly RUMBLES closed.

The room is bathed in pools of shadows. Plenty of hiding space for the creature. REVNA hears breaking glass, making her start. She cautiously edges over to the Autodoc and looks up into the forest of probe-arms.

There's a wicked looking blade there, the kind used in major surgery. REVNA reaches up and twists the base; it detaches easily. Now she's armed. Stooped over, she begins to stalk the CHESTBURSTER...

There's a flurry of movement, and suddenly the hunter becomes the

hunted. The CHESTBURSTER vaults from the table at her with a SHRILL SHRIEK, and REVNA blindly swings her make-shift knife in defense. We hear a SIZZLE like frying bacon...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - INFIRMARY CORRIDOR

HIROKO sprints down the corridor and reaches the Infirmary. DILLER, CASSIE, and a few others are crowded around outside. YORK lays unconscious on one of the medical trolleys next to the door, making access difficult. Above them, a hinged flap on the wall lies open revealing a circular mechanism beneath. BREWSTER scratches at the bulkhead and WHINES. MUFFLED THUMPS come from within.

HIROKO

What happened?

DILLER

York just turned up outside. We're trying to get him into Infirmary.

HIROKO (astonished)

York...

HIROKO leans over to examine him, but a particularly loud CRASH from within the Infirmary distracts her.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

What's going on?

CASSIE

The door's sealed from inside. Doc Revna's in there, and it sounds like Ackland's going nuts.

HIROKO

Force the door.

DILLER

Can't. It's pressure sealed.

GUTTIEREZ races up and hands DILLER a wrench with a shaped tip.

GUTTIEREZ

Here...

DILLER

Thanks.

He inserts the end into the open flap and pulls hard, the physical effort showing on his face. The door grinds open about eight inches...

The bloodied CHESTBURSTER forces itself through the narrow gap, HISSING vehemently. Yellow fluid wells from a wound in it's crested skull, dissolving everything it comes into contact with. The small group gathered around fall back in panic, jarring YORK's trolley and knocking HIROKO to the floor. BREWSTER BARKS at the CHESTBURSTER, which tenses as if to leap.

DILLER brings the wrench down, but the CHESTBURSTER evades his blow and takes flight. It strikes at HIROKO, who reflexively draws her head

back and escapes with nothing more than a light scratch to the cheek. The ALIEN disappears down the corridor, leaving a trail of smeared blood and a series of acidic pits which melt the grillework flooring. GUTTIEREZ bends down and helps HIROKO to her feet. Shocked, she MUTTERS something to herself in JAPANESE, and regains some of her composure.

HIROKO

Get after it, don't let it get away!

DILLER stands there with the metal bar. Does she think he's nuts?

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Go on!

This galvanises DILLER. He races off in pursuit.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Jan, give me a hand over here.

HIROKO AND GUTTIEREZ try to force the door, but DILLER was right - it won't budge. HIROKO slips her arm through the gap and fumbles around blindly. She must have hit the control knob, because the door slides back. CASSIE looks inside.

CASSIE

Oh my God...

She turns away and retches. HIROKO steps through and goes pale. There are blood-smears over everything, and it's all GUTTIEREZ can do to stop BREWSTER from getting in there.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

PARSONS' finger traces a path along a set of computer schematics displayed on a suspended glass screen.

PARSONS

It left a melted trail on the deck all the way down to here...

HIROKO

What is that?

DILLER

Secondary fluidic shunt for the sewage system. I found the grating ripped right off. The little fucker was strong.

HIROKO

Where does that lead to?

PARSONS

Central Pumping. All the waste gets treated, broken-down, and flushed out into the swamp. If it wanted a quick exit then it really lucked-out.

HIROKO

You've checked that end?

GUTTIEREZ

Not yet, no.

HIROKO

Do it. I don't want that thing on my installation. I want it caught and destroyed.

KAMEN

Cornering it shouldn't be a problem. Each part of this station is basically a self-sufficient deep-space transport module running off external couplers. If we disconnect them and seal off every section, we've got a ceiling of about thirty-six hours on internal power. That should give us ample time to find it.

HIROKO

Alright. Pull some trackers and headsets out of stores, and I'll sign a release for the weapons. Cassie, organise a team roster and put it on the board.

CASSIE nods soberly. HIROKO looks at everybody, and her words are carefully chosen.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

I don't care how you kill this thing, just be careful not to get in it's way when it bleeds. You all saw what happened to Doc Revna.

There are nods of agreement and general enthusiasm all round.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Nobody wander off on their own until it's found. Keep in pairs. Diller, once the first team's done their sweep I want you to go down with Annie to Three-Pump while she replaces it.

DILLER

Okay.

HIROKO

One final point. Killing this sonuvabitch ought to be a reward in itself. However, just to add a little incentive... I'm authorizing a hefty bonus in the next pay-packet for whoever does.

This seems to appeal to those assembled there. There's a palpable buzz in the air.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Alright, let's get to it. New York rules apply.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - EXECUTIVE OFFICE

YORK is recounting his story to KAMEN and HIROKO in a hushed voice. Small beads of sweat stand out on his forehead and his eyes are haunted by remembrance. The man's a mess.

YORK

...I mean, these... these mothers were... were huge. They look like bushmen, but they had all this hi-tech shit strapped all over 'em.

They must've wasted Beauvais and Minh inside thirty seconds. Minh got off a couple of shots from that cannon of his, but he might as well have been using a B-B gun. I don't know how the hell I made it out of there alive.

He nods toward the PREDATOR spear in HIROKO's hands.

YORK (CONT'D)

The one I clipped with the hoverbike shoved that at me. Whatever it's made of, it went straight through a double-layer of honeycomb polyalloy composite like it was butter.

YORK shakes his head in fear.

YORK (CONT'D)

I don't wanna ever come up against those things again. Ever.

KAMEN claps the man on the shoulder to reassure him.

KAMEN

Don't worry about it, Yorkie. You're safe now. Go get some rest.

YORK nods. He gets to his feet and leaves the room. HIROKO waits until the door slides shut behind him.

HIROKO

So, what do you think?

KAMEN

What do I think? I think if those Marines from Powell don't shift their butts getting here, we're gonna get caught up to our necks in the middle of something we shouldn't.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

It's late, and the base's exterior lighting casts yellow pools of light across the metal and concrete thoroughfares. GUTTIEREZ and DE VRIES - a tough-looking Afrikaan woman with a thick accent - looks uneasily about them. Another GROUP of PEOPLE with trackers and guns are searching around in the BACKGROUND. Nearby, the vertical yellow column of a suspension-crane gantry towers high above.

DE VRIES

C'mon, man. One more sweep.

GUTTIEREZ

One more sweep... one more sweep. I'm getting tired of one more fuckin' sweep. We're been lookin' for this thing for three days now, and found zip.

DE VRIES

Ah, quit griping. Keeps you in shape doesn't it?

GUTTIEREZ

Hey! I was in shape before we started doing this.

DE VRIES pauses, listening to the sound from the surrounding forest.

DE VRIES

Listen to that...

GUTTIEREZ cocks his head and listens. He has no idea what she means.

GUTTIEREZ

Listen to what?

DE VRIES

That's what I mean. This is the quietest I've ever heard it. It's unnatural.

GUTTIEREZ shivers in the wind as he looks out into the impenetrable blackness beyond the confines of the base.

GUTTIEREZ

De Vries?

DE VRIES

Yeah?

GUTTIEREZ

Next time you have a thought like that? Keep it to yourself.

BREWSTER the dog stares in fascination at the rhinos through the meshwork fence of their pens. The animals move around in agitation. Not at her, but at something else...

DE VRIES

Something spooking the rhinos?

GUTTIEREZ

I dunno.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - SWAMP LEVEL - DUSK

PREDATOR-VISION.

The rhino's, the dog, and the two humans can be seen way above on the platform's edge, bright red.

Indistinct inside their camouflage cloaks, the small group of PREDATORS wade carefully through the water towards the base of the installation.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - PUMP ROOM

DARKNESS. DILLER and URIOSTE's VOICES heard O.S. in HUSHED TONES. The scraping of METAL-ON-METAL.

DILLER

What is that...is that it?

URIOSTE

No. I... think that's a regulator valve. Hold on.

There's more NOISE.

URIOSTE (CONT'D)

Ah, got it...!

About a dozen fluorescent strips ringing the small circular chamber illuminate. Three others flicker erratically, one of them remaining unlit. DILLER waves the tracker cautiously around and keeps his pulse-rifle level. He enters, followed by URIOSTE. She's carrying a portable - but bulky - piece of machinery.

URIOSTE

Are you getting anything?

DILLER (sarcastic)

Yeah, eyestrain. What's with the lights?

URIOSTE

They're always like that. Head-Office are real cheap when it comes to spares. Wave that thing in the corner...

DILLER sweeps the tracker carefully around. The small screen registers nothing.

DILLER

The room's clean.

URIOSTE

Great.

URIOSTE pulls at a two-piece hexagonal grating set in the center of the floor. It's heavy and thick with grease, but she doesn't seem to mind. Below it is what looks like a round metal plug. Recessed into its surface is a lever next to a central pressure valve, with handholds on either side. She turns the lever. There's a loud CLUNK, and a plume of steam JETS out of the valve.

URIOSTE (CONT'D)

Give me a hand with this.

GRUNTING, the two of them pull the thick metal plug clear of the pit. Murky water sloshes around below. URIOSTE pulls a second lever, and hidden pumps make the water level drop rapidly.

URIOSTE (CONT'D)

Pass me over that tripod, will you?

Leaning against the wall behind DILLER is a sturdy metal tripod topped with a block-and-tackle arrangement. A hook dangles below this, it's thick metal cabling going up through the block-and-tackle and connecting to the drum of a small industrial winch attached securely to the wall. DILLER hands the tripod over to URIOSTE. She splays the legs apart and inserts their tips into matching holes around the open pit.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

GUTTIEREZ and DE VRIES walk over to the rhino pen, BREWSTER pulling at her leash. GUTTIEREZ frowns at what he sees. All the rhinos are

nervously huddled together in the far corner.

GUTTIEREZ

That's real peculiar behavior.

DE VRIES fingers a rough metal edge.

DE VRIES

Hey, Guttierrez?

GUTTIEREZ

What?

DE VRIES

Take a look at this.

GUTTIEREZ moves over for a closer look. There's a torn hole in the meshwork, just big enough for a rhino to squeeze through. Blood and fragments of skin coat the edge of the gap.

GUTTIEREZ

One of 'em must have escaped.

DE VRIES

That's impossible, man. This fence is high-tensile. The breaking tolerance'd stand up to the strain of a rhino, easy. I know, I put it up.

GUTTIEREZ shines the flashlight along the deck. A trail of smeared blood runs all the way to the perimeter. The surrounding fence has been buckled and twisted. They cross to it and look down at the swamp. The torch beam sparkles on the murky water far below.

GUTTIEREZ

There's no way a rhino'd survive that drop.

DE VRIES

Goldsmith's gonna be plenty pissed at losing one of her babies.

GUTTIEREZ

That's a fact.

GUTTIEREZ' tracker starts to BLEEP. He raises it excitedly.

GUTTIEREZ (CONT'D)

Whoa, wait a minute...

DE VRIES

What?

GUTTIEREZ

Just got a reading...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

Most of the lights in Admin are off, and the room's deserted. PARSONS is seated away from his usual station at a console topped by ten

monitor screens, each displaying a securi-cam picture. He looks tired. KAMEN comes up behind him carrying two mugs of coffee.

KAMEN

How's it going?

PARSONS

Yeah, 'Good Evening' to you, too.

He takes the coffee gratefully and sips at it.

PARSONS (CONT'D)

Today's party's finished their sweep, the relief team's out there now. Everybody else is either asleep or running shift in the auto-shop.

KAMEN

You should hit the sack, too.

PARSONS

Nah, I'll stick it out for another hour or so.

KAMEN

What time's sundown?

PARSONS

'Bout five minutes.

KAMEN

Give me a yell is something happens.

PARSONS

You got it, cowboy.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

GUTTIEREZ sweeps the tracker slowly around, and BREWSTER begins to gently SNARL.

DE VRIES pulls on the dog's leash to quieten her.

GUTTIEREZ

It's up there somewhere...

He shoulders his rifle.

GUTTIEREZ (CONT'D)

Come on.

A metal ladder runs up the side of one of the base buildings.

GUTTIEREZ crosses to it and starts to climb the first few rungs.

DE VRIES

What? Are you nuts? Just the two of us?

GUTTIEREZ

I've seen this mother, De Vries. We can bag it, no problem.

DE VRIES

Forget it, man.

GUTTIEREZ

C'mon De Vries. Think of the bonus.

DE VRIES

Fuck the bonus. I hate heights. You wouldn't get me up there even if it wasn't night.

GUTTIEREZ starts to climb the ladder.

DE VRIES

What the hell are you doing?

GUTTIEREZ

Hey, fair enough. If you won't come, I'll handle it myself.

DE VRIES runs her fingers through her hair in frustration. Comes to a decision counter to what she wants to do...

DE VRIES

Wait a minute!

GUTTIEREZ stops climbing.

DE VRIES (CONT'D)

Alright, okay. Look...

GUTTIEREZ

What?

DE VRIES

I'll come with you.

BREWSTER BARKS. She drags the dog over to a metal stanchion and ties the leash around it.

DE VRIES (CONT'D)

But I'm going first...

GUTTIEREZ

Anything you say, Mammacitta.

She climbs around GUTTIEREZ and begins to ascend the ladder. BREWSTER WHIMPERS and plaintively BARKS after them.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOP LEVEL - DUSK

The rooftop is dark, mysterious. Pieces of retrofitted junk can be seen in silhouette, edged in light from way below. DE VRIES and GUTTIEREZ carefully step over the threshold. They speak in WHISPERS.

DE VRIES

Careful of that edging there...

GUTTIEREZ

Yeah, I got it.

Although we have an outstanding VIEW of the night lights of the base up here, the immediate gloom is impenetrable.

DE VRIES

Where's that flashlight?

By way of an answer, a powerful ray cuts a swathe through the air. DE VRIES takes the torch from him and shines it on the ground. Circular extractor fans rotate quietly in the gloom.

DE VRIES (CONT'D)

Still got him?

GUTTIEREZ

It's moving slow. About... eleven metres. On the left.

DE VRIES plays the flashlight across the rooftop.

GUTTIEREZ (CONT'D)

Little bit further...

The beam comes to rest on a protruding piece of apparatus. A short-range antennae, about seven feet wide.

GUTTIEREZ (CONT'D)

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Right there, right behind the antennae. I think we're got it cornered...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

HIROKO bends down to inspect a small plastic grating fitted flush with the roadway. The broken grillework is melted outwards. KAMEN and two other men - CALDWELL and THOMAS - stand behind.

THOMAS

The door to the food storage locker was smashed open. It must have come straight out of here.

HIROKO yawns.

HIROKO

Alright. Keep your eyes peeled.

She voices her concern to KAMEN.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

If it got out of the systems, it could be anywhere.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOP LEVEL - DUSK

It's very quiet, and we can hear the NERVOUS BREATHING of GUTTIEREZ and DE VRIES as they cautiously stalk forward.

GUTTIEREZ

Hold it, hold it...

DE VRIES

What's wrong?

GUTTIEREZ

I'm picking up another signal.

DE VRIES looks around, unnerved.

DE VRIES

What? Where?

GUTTIEREZ

Just behind us, over to the right.

DE VRIES shines her beam over the surface of the yellow crane to their rear, shifting her attention to-and-fro from it and the antennae.

DE VRIES

Can't see a thing. Are you sure?

GUTTIEREZ

Yeah, I...

The second blip on the small screen abruptly vanishes.

GUTTIEREZ (CONT'D)

Wait. Lost it.

DE VRIES

How?

GUTTIEREZ

I dunno. Might be a glitch.

From behind the metal disc there comes a SHUFFLING SOUND, followed by a METALLIC THUNK. This gets their attention. The two of them halt in their tracks.

DE VRIES

Oh, man. That's no glitch!

GUTTIEREZ

It's alright, it's cool...

DE VRIES

Is it still moving?

GUTTIEREZ

No, he's stopped; he's totally still. Just take it nice and easy, babe. Nice and easy...

A small many-limbed SHAPE hurls itself from the confines of its hiding place with a FERAL SHRIEK. DE VRIES YELPS in surprise, and looses off a spray of bullets.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

HIROKO looks up, startled by the sound of GUNFIRE. She sees the rooftop of one of the building modules lit by tracer fire. BREWSTER's tethered nearby, BARKING furiously.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - PUMP ROOM - PUMP SHAFT

A thick metal cable connected to her jacket harness suspends URIOSTE in the gloom of the Pump Shaft. In front of her is a machine-part we saw her carry earlier. With the strap of a flashlight clenched in her mouth, she's just finishing up bolting the part to the larger piece of machinery in an alcove, with simultaneously doing her best not to touch the walls which are covered by a thin layer of gunge.

The REPORT of DE VRIES' weapon can be heard even down here, perhaps more startling in the confined space. URIOSTE jumps, dropping the flashlight into the water in the process.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - PUMP ROOM

DILLER turns away from the winch and peers into and beyond the access tunnel leading outside. URIOSTE's VOICE floats up out of the shaft.

URIOSTE (O.S., muffled)
What was that?

DILLER (raising his voice)
Something outside...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOP LEVEL - DUSK

The wind whips at GUTTIEREZ as he blinks away his shock.

GUTTIEREZ

Holy shit...

DE VRIES keeps her torch beam on the moving shape. It halts by the edge of the roof, and stares at them.

DE VRIES

Oh, nice going, man! It was a lemur! A goddamn lemur!

GUTTIEREZ' radio headset CRACKLES to life.

HIROKO (O.S., on headset)
Guttierez, what the hell's going on up there?

GUTTIEREZ

Uh... sorry about that, boss. Everything's fine. False alarm, that's all.

DE VRIES glances around the rooftop, annoyed.

DE VRIES

Hey, look; let's forget it. There's nothing up here.

PREDATOR-VISION.

DE VRIES in CLOSE-UP, glowing brightly. Her VOICE replayed and

distorted.

PREDATOR (O.S.)

Nothing up here. Nothing up here.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - PUMP ROOM - PUMP SHAFT

URIOSTE's flashlight bobs up-and-down on the water below, still lit and well out of reach.

URIOSTE (disgustedly)
Shit.

DILLER (O.S., muffled)
What's the matter?

URIOSTE

I've dropped my torch into the water. Give me about... uh... a meter-and-a-half's worth of slack.

DILLER (O.S., muffled)
Okay.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - PUMP ROOM

DILLER crosses to the wall-mounted winch. On the mechanism's side is a luminous digital counter giving the current cable depth in meters. He pulls a throw-switch, and the display slowly changes from "8" to "9.5" as the cable feeds out.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - PUMP ROOM - PUMP SHAFT

URIOSTE descends the dingy shaft, partially abseiling off the walls. Her feet almost tread water. She's down as far as she can go.

URIOSTE (CONT'D)

Whoa, whoa...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - PUMP ROOM

URIOSTE's VOICE echoes up out of the pit.

URIOSTE (CONT'D) (O.S., muffled)
That's enough.

DILLER locks the winch-switch back into it's 'up' position. The WHINE of the cable-feed stops immediately.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - PUMP ROOM - PUMP SHAFT

URIOSTE stretches out to the floating lamp, flexing her fingers. It's... just... about... in... reach...

Six slender fingers EXPLODE from beneath the water's surface and clamp like a vise around URIOSTE's wrist. A sleek eyeless head follows, trailing a body straight out of a charnel-house nightmare. A SCREAM forms in her throat, rapidly cut-off as the ALIEN's other hand clamps

firmly over her mouth, jerking her downwards.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - PUMP ROOM

DILLER whirls in response to the CHOKED CRY from below. He sees the winch tripod above the shaft RATTLE, the cable going taut as an angler's line. The wall-mounted drum is yanked so hard the lever leaps from it's 'clamped' position, freely unspooling cable at a frightening rate. The digital counter flickers rapidly; "11...11.5...12...12.5...13..." DILLER watches the tripod's tubular legs buckle and collapse under the tremendous strain. He scrambles for the winch-lever and only just manages to lock it firmly into place; the over-stressed cable vibrating with a LOW METALLIC TWANG as it hits the shaft's edge. DILLER's moment of satisfaction is short-lived; the deep-sunk bolts attaching the mechanism to the wall are pull outward by the colossal force from below. He leaps aside, avoiding the heavy piece of machinery as it HURTLES towards him. Watches it disappear noisily into the conduit.

DILLER

Annie!

DILLER's quivering fingers grope for his flashlight.

DILLER (CONT'D)

Annie!

He feverishly reaches the shaft's edge and peers into the darkness.

WHAT HE SEES. The torchbeam picks out the biomechanical form of the ALIEN emerging from the sewage and effortlessly climbing the shaft walls towards him. Recoiling in horror, he makes a run for the door. Half-way there he remembers his pulse-rifle and dives to the floor, grasping it just as the ALIEN reaches the top. DILLER fumbles with the safety and give the creature a full BLAST on rock-and-roll, BLASTING it back into the pit.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOP LEVEL - DUSK

GUTTIEREZ and DE VRIES hear the gunfire from below.

GUTTIEREZ

The hell was that?

PREDATOR-VISION.

The PREDATOR's gaze SNAPS away from the two humans and down onto the platform below. He watches the infra-red shapes of other people running towards the source of the shots...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - PUMP ROOM

DILLER's on his feet and shakily heading for the exit as ANOTHER ALIEN's claws emerge from the exposed hole. He races across the threshold and SLAMS the thin inner door closed.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

In a HAND-HELD SHOT we're running with HIROKO's group along the narrow catwalk bridging the roadway to the Pump Room, KAMEN taking the lead. DILLER sprints out of the building like a bat out of hell and collides with him.

KAMEN

Kev, wha...?

DILLER breaks free of the other man's grasp. He looks as if he's about to say something, but never gets the chance.

There's a sound of TEARING METAL, and a HISSING seven-foot express train of teeth and biomechanical limbs ERUPTS from the shadows.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOP LEVEL - DUSK

PREDATOR-VISION.

Gazing down at the platform, an unseen hunter watches the swift black SHAPE of the ALIEN in amongst the group of humans...

From the corner of her eye, DE VRIES sees something moving nearby. She violently pulls GUTTIEREZ out of the path of the shimmering FORM that barges past them, launching itself from the rooftop.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

PARSONS sits bolt upright in his chair as the scene outside is relayed to his bank of screens by an exterior securi-cam.

PARSONS

Oh my God...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

With superhuman strength, the ALIEN brutally back-hands DILLER, splintering his skull and killing him instantly. His body caromes into THOMAS, knocking the man to the floor. The ALIEN turns to KAMEN, it's questing fingers closing around his throat and hauling him off the ground. The space on the catwalk is limited; there's so many people it's impossible to get a clean shot...

HIROKO

Move! Get out of the way!

HIROKO draws a bead on the ALIEN. She flips off the safety on her rifle. It's the tiniest CLICK, but the ALIEN somehow senses danger. It's skeletal tail lashes out, sending both her and the weapon flying. CALDWELL gets in for his shot, but the tail's there in a second. It strikes like a snake. Once. Twice. The stinger punctures CALDWELL's chest and throat. Nobody could survive something like that...

The ALIEN flicks it's skull back around to KAMEN. The man's head is inches away from it's eyeless face...a row of burnished metal teeth open...the toothed inner tongue ready to strike...

WHOOMPH. Something lands heavily close-up, jarring the catwalk. The

ALIEN drops KAMEN and WHIRLS. A spear wielded by an INVISIBLE FORM appears out of nowhere and PIERCES the ALIEN's midriff, spraying acidic fluid. The creature emits a OUTRAGED SHRIEK and flails around, it's ubiquitous tail arcing toward the camouflaged assailant. The STINGER makes contact: there's a SPUTTERING SOUND as the PREDATOR's cloaking device begins to flicker spasmodically, giving us peek-a-boo glimpses of it's natural form. Electrical sparks dance around the PREDATOR's ruin wrist-computer, luminous green blood welling from a wound in his arm...

From out of the Pump Room comes more NOISE, like metal being trashed in a compactor. HIROKO SCREAMS at KAMEN, who's COUGHING painfully next to the door panel.

HIROKO

Get the door!

KAMEN hastily slaps the 'close' button and both halves of the exterior pressure bulkhead RUMBLE together. A SECOND ALIEN appears from the shadows within and prises it's fingers into the dwindling gap, struggling for purchase. Despite the ALIEN's best efforts, the door motors are too powerful and the opening seals with a satisfying solid CLUNK. MUFFLED POUNDING comes from the other side.

Nearby, THOMAS has retrieved CALDWELL's weapon in the heat of the fight and is bringing it to bear on the PREDATOR. At the last possible moment HIROKO sees what he's about to do...

HIROKO

No!

Reflexively, she knocks the barrel away as THOMAS looses a volley of shots.

PREDATOR-VISION.

The PREDATOR's speech analyser plays back her vocal patterns as white-hot bullets sear the night.

PREDATOR

No!

PREDATOR-VISION.

SNAPPING IN for a closer look at her.

PREDATOR (CONT'D)

No!

One of the ALIEN's hands clamps firmly onto the PREDATOR's mask and wrenches it off. HIROKO stares at the PREDATOR's face in fascination. From the distinctive features, we see that it's BROKEN TUSK. The PREDATOR's good hand flashes down to his thigh, almost too quick to follow. In one rapid movement a circular 'smart-weapon' is brought up, slicing the front of the ALIEN skull away from it's head. In a feat of strength, the PREDATOR lifts his opponent's corpse on the end of the spear and hurls it over the catwalk railing...

Not wasting a second, BROKEN TUSK performs an almost-vertical bound of

some twenty feet with astounding grace. He grips a pipe running down the side of one of the building modules, then clammers over the roof's edge and finally disappears from view. BREWSTER continues to BARK frenetically.

HIROKO's headset has been knocked to the floor and a FRANTIC MUTED VOICE is coming from it. She picks it up, and presses the 'transmit' switch.

HIROKO (into headset)
It's alright, Rob...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

PARSONS listens to HIROKO, suddenly wide awake. The morning shifts are starting to filter in, and it's obvious to them something's wrong...

HIROKO (CONT'D) (O.S., on speaker)
Everything's under control. Wait a second.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

THOMAS is moving from DILLER to CALDWELL, checking them for signs of life. HIROKO catches his eye.

HIROKO (CONT'D)
Well?

THOMAS shakes his head. GUTTIEREZ and DE VRIES race across the platform to join the stunned survivors of the skirmish. GUTTIEREZ bends down by DILLER's body. THOMAS lays a hand on GUTTIEREZ' arm.

THOMAS
Come on, man. Leave it alone.

GUTTIEREZ
Oh, God. Dear Lord Jesus...

DE VRIES
This is like a bad dream, man. A bad fucking dream.

HIROKO thinks quickly, and comes to a decision. She speaks into her radio headset.

HIROKO
Rob? I want you to evac everybody from the non-connective modules into admin. That goes double for anybody...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

HIROKO (CONT'D) (O.S., on speaker)
...already out here. We're going to lock every bulkhead and seal the base.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

HIROKO turns her headset off and watches numerous rotating coloured

lights dotted around the platform start to blink on-and-off. KAMEN COUGHS a few more times.

HIROKO

Are you okay?

KAMEN rubs his throat. He nods.

KAMEN

I'll survive.

BREWSTER's BARKS cease, replaced instead with a TERRIFIED LOW WHINING.

DE VRIES

What's with the dog?

GUTTIEREZ jogs over to BREWSTER. Lowers his rifle to the ground and fumbles with the knot tying the dog to the pipe.

GUTTIEREZ

Hey; c'mon now, girl. It's alright. Let's just get this knot undone...

A spray of plastic shards EXPLODES not three feet away from GUTTIEREZ. The rifle goes skittering away out of reach, and he scrambles away as an ALIEN half-pulls itself out of the sewer overflow, wet and glistening...

KAMEN

Jan!

BREWSTER's a mass of fur, totally out of control. When the ALIEN lashes out to grab the HOWLING animal, there's nothing GUTTIEREZ can do. BREWSTER's legs are the last thing we see, thrashing helplessly as she's dragged down into the splinter-edged gap.

DE VRIES

Get out of there, man!

THOMAS grabs CALDWELL's rifle from the deck. He races towards GUTTIEREZ, with DE VRIES close behind...

THOMAS

Catch this!

From behind comes the SOUND of more rupturing plastic as biomechanoid limbs struggle up out of newly-broken ducts. THOMAS heaves the rifle over the heads of the emerging ALIENS. Although GUTTIEREZ snags it awkwardly, he quickly turns the barrel on the relentless creatures.

GUTTIEREZ

Chew on this!

DE VRIES races up to join them, SCREAMING as she fires. KAMEN glances down at this tracker's tiny screen. It shows clusters of signals, lots of them.

KAMEN (hollering)
They're all around, they're in the drainage system!

DE VRIES reacts swiftly, loosing a round of shots at the emerging ALIENS. GUTTIEREZ yells across to KAMEN.

GUTTIEREZ

Get your ass out of here, boss!

ALIENS are appearing everywhere. From the overflow ducts; over the platform edges; along overhead cable supports. Having taken on the genetic characteristics of their hosts, many of them are non-humanoid. All of them are living nightmares.

HIROKO

Oh my God...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - LIVING QUARTERS

CASSIE brushes her teeth in front of the wall-mounted mirror of her tiny bathroom-cubicle. A raucous emergency klaxon GOES OFF in the corridor outside.

CASSIE

Shit.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM FAR SIDE - DUSK

THOMAS, GUTTIEREZ, and DE VRIES are cut-off. As they race swiftly down the street, GUTTIEREZ tries hard to interpret his tracker's signals. A particularly loud BLEEP registers from a source immediately behind them. He glances over his shoulder and sees an ALIEN crawling down the outside of a module towards them.

GUTTIEREZ

De Vries!

DE VRIES' head turns. She sees the ALIEN and nails it with a rapid burst. It falls onto the concrete nearby, writhing in it's death throes.

The group round the corner of a building. Across the street from them is parked KAMEN's crawler.

GUTTIEREZ (CONT'D)

Inside, inside!

They scramble up into the cab. GUTTIEREZ throws himself into the driver's seat. An ALIEN sprints at the crawler with bared teeth. THOMAS looses a shot, blasting it backward into a Pepsi sign.

THOMAS

Yo' momma, boneface!

DE VRIES (to Guttierrez)
C'mon, man; punch this cow!

GUTTIEREZ fumbles at the ignition. They keys are there. He flips them, and the engine GROWLS to life.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE CATWALK - DUSK

PREDATOR-VISION.

From way up here, we've got an outstanding view of the humans running across the platform...

Crouching on a bright-yellow catwalk, BROKEN TUSK presses closed a panel on the small container balanced on his knee. Inside it are rows of metal instruments with a pristine surgical quality about them. BROKEN TUSK flexes his hand experimentally. Satisfied, he clips the medical kit onto his back before getting to his feet.

Standing around him are several other PREDATORS. All but one have their camouflage cloaks activated. The SOUND of GUNFIRE way across the station draws their attention...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

HIROKO and KAMEN bolt towards an external hatch, with KAMEN laying down a field of covering fire on full-automatic. The blaze of light from the rifle's barrel abruptly stops.

HIROKO

What?

KAMEN

I'm out of ammo. Get inside, get inside!

HIROKO hears a HORRIBLE NOISE nearby. A field of cows being slaughtered by machetes would sound like this.

HIROKO

They're in with the rhino!

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - RHINO PEN - DUSK

An ALIEN is SMASHED sideways into the one solid wall of the pen, broadsided and instantly crushed by a ton of FRENZIED rhino. It's yellow blood eats into the weighty quadruped, eliciting ANGUISHED BELLOWS of pain from the hapless creature.

ALIEN stingers slice through the air. Rhinos try to bolt but are intercepted by inhumanly powerful forces. It's wholesale carnage.

PREDATOR-VISION.

We're moving swiftly along the rooftops and surveying the melee below, lessening the distance with each second...

Several indefinable FIGURES plunge into the fray, creating anarchy within the ALIENS' ranks. The biomechanoids HISS with fury as the PREDATORS join battle against them...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

An ALIEN hurls itself through the air and onto the speeding crawler's roof.

INT. CRAWLER - DUSK

KER-CHUNK! The cab's occupants react as the thin roof buckles slightly. Skeletal fingers SLICE through, RIPPING at the metal like a can-opener.

DE VRIES

Jesus!

THOMAS raises his rifle and looses a fusillade of shots through the roof. One of them RICOCHETS off the interior, SHATTERING the windscreen. There's a THUMP from outside...

DE VRIES (CONT'D)

You got 'im!

Their triumph is short-lived. Globules of yellow acid perforate the roof like Swiss cheese, dripping down on them. GUTTIEREZ floors the brakes. The crawler swings through ninety degrees before SCREECHING to a halt.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

CASSIE enters admin at a run. Before, it was empty. Now it's sheer chaos. She shoves her way through dozens of grim-faced people. PARSONS is standing at a console, YELLING into his headset.

PARSONS

Seal everything now!

CASSIE

What's happening?

PARSONS

Cassie, thank Christ! We're under attack.

CASSIE

We're what!?

York races in, SHOUTING above the clamor.

YORK

The son-of-bitches got into 'E' wing! They're ripping it apart!

PARSONS

Fuck! Somebody get over there with some guns! Now!

CASSIE watches the scene unfolding on the banks of monitors. PEOPLE mouthing unheard words into camera. Bursts of STATIC. Fleeting glimpses of nightmarish SHAPES darting across the picture...

CASSIE

How many of them are there?

PARSONS

Too many.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM FAR SIDE - DUSK

GUTTIEREZ' group hurriedly exits the crawler. A cloud of acrid smoke rapidly fills the cabin.

DE VRIES (coughing)
Move it, man!

The dead ALIEN's corpse tumbles through the acid-eaten hole, falling into the cab's rear seat and promptly burning through that as well. Not far away across the platform, the massive doors to the auto-shop hanger are RUMBLING slowly closed...

GUTTIEREZ (shouting)
Hold the doors, hold the doors!

They don't hear him. The doors seal with a BOOM of finality.

DE VRIES

Over there, on the right!

THOMAS sees the two ALIENS nimbly climbing the platform's edge. He squeezes off about five shots, managing to kill the FIRST ALIEN...

THOMAS

These bastards ain't so tough!

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THOMAS looks concernedly at GUTTIEREZ.

THOMAS

Is that thing working?

GUTTIEREZ takes off the headset and scrutinises it closely.

GUTTIEREZ

Shit! The casing's cracked!

DE VRIES rips her headset off and urgently passes it to him.

DE VRIES

Use mine. Channel twenty-six.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

Despite their ferocity and weapons, it's clear that the small group of PREDATORS are being overrun by the ALIEN horde.

BROKEN TUSK's shoulder cannon swivels automatically, blowing away another attacker. Hearing a distinctive SCREAM, he looks across the platform. One of the PREDATORS, it's camouflage cloak flickering intermittently, is trying to resist being dragged down into a duct. The two ALIENS in either side plunge their tail-stingers into the PREDATOR's body, making it CRY OUT in agony.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - CORRIDORS

Pumped up with adrenalin, KAMEN reaches an intersection and encounters a harrowing tableau. An ALIEN blocks his way on the other side of a corridor bulkhead, holding a STRUGGLING MAN above the floor. It's piston-like tongue shoots into the MAN's skull, spraying gore.

The ALIEN sees KAMEN, and it's mouth twists into a bloody SNARL. Both KAMEN and the ALIEN lunge forward together, but KAMEN's got the edge by a split-second. He STRIKES a bright red switch and the overhead pressure bulkhead SLAMS down and locks into place. His breathing is heavy as he slowly backs away from the hatch...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM FAR SIDE - DUSK

The two ALIENS THOMAS killed must have been the scout party. Others appear, more cautiously this time...

DE VRIES

Hurry up and figure that thing out, man!

GUTTIEREZ is desperately trying to operate the tiny plastic microswitches on the headset with his fingernails.

GUTTIEREZ

What?

THOMAS

We've got company!

THOMAS brings his weapon to bear and pulls on the trigger. He gets off one shot, then nothing more happens. He looks at the counter on the side. It reads 'zero'.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Shit, I'm dry! You're up!

DE VRIES raises her rifle. She aims, and...

CLICK.

DE VRIES

I'm jammed!

THOMAS

You're what?!

She works the manual slide.

DE VRIES

It's locked solid...

THOMAS

Quick, give me the clip!

DE VRIES fumbles the ammunition clip from her rifle. It falls from her hands onto a plastic overflow grate. THOMAS leaps after it...about a second too late. It slips through the narrow gap, gone for good.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Oh, Lord! Please, no! Not now!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - EXECUTIVE OFFICE

HIROKO enters her office at a run. She crosses to an inset control box on the far wall and presses a button. Two exterior panels begin to slide closed behind the polycarbonate window.

KERSMASH! Fracture lines appear on the toughened plastic as it comes under assault from the razor-edge tip of an ALIEN's tail. In shock, HIROKO reflexively falls backwards onto the floor, scrambling away. She watches the creature precariously balancing on the this ledge outside, fighting against the closing shutters with simultaneously raining repeated blows on the window with it's tail.

The ALIEN leaps through the gap as the window gives way under the onslaught, showering splinters across the room. The twin shutters secure behind it, closing on the creatures tail in the process. It HISSES in indignation and thrashes about. Like a lizard, the segmented tail SNAPS in two. The freed ALIEN staggers a little before gaining balance, blood dripping from the laceration and penetrating the wooden floorboards. It sights HIROKO and hurls itself in her direction, an unstoppable killing machine...

HIROKO

Holo on!

Her VOICE quavers so badly with fear and panic, it's a wonder the computer can recognize it. FOUR NINJA SWORDSMEN promptly appear, forming a semi-circle between HIROKO and the ALIEN. The ALIEN halts, confused by this intrusion. It swipes at the pre-programmed holograms, bewildered by the lack of contact as it's claws pass through them.

Gaining on a few seconds of bought time, HIROKO flings herself towards the PREDATOR spear lying forgotten nearby. The ALIEN locks in on this sudden movement and charges through the holograms at her. HIROKO GRUNTS, swinging the spear with her full strength...

She's no super-athlete, but the cutting edge's advanced metallurgy does the job. It slices half-way through the ALIEN's skull and sticks there, spewing yellow fluid everywhere. HIROKO beats a hasty retreat as the dying biomechanoid falls to the floor, fumbling at the lodged weapon...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - CORRIDORS

HIROKO reels into the outside corridor. She SHRIEKS as her shoulders are seized from behind...

KAMEN

Come on!

HIROKO looks at KAMEN confusedly as he continues along the corridor.

HIROKO

That's the wrong way!

KAMEN

Detour. Other way's blocked...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM FAR SIDE - DUSK

Back outside, the ALIENS have sensed that something's amiss. DE VRIES turns desperately to GUTTIEREZ.

DE VRIES

You got any slugs left?

GUTTIEREZ looks down at the counter on his slung weapon.

GUTTIEREZ

Yeah. Uh...

DE VRIES rips the weapon off his shoulder. GUTTIEREZ completes his sentence.

GUTTIEREZ (CONT'D)

...Seven.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! DE VRIES tries to make each shot count. She sights an ALIEN crawling across the top of a group of cylindrical storage containers. Draws a bead on the metal tank and fires...

A molten ball EXPLODES outward, transforming the immediate vicinity into a blazing inferno. The ALIEN's body twists end-over-end, remaining immobile as it hits the deck. A curtain of fire ripples across the platform...

THOMAS

Yes!

Their victory is short-lived. The other ALIENS crawl cautiously forward, flames licking their faces but leaving them unharmed. We can clearly hear the HISSING of their internal jaws.

DE VRIES

Try again, man...

The headset in GUTTIEREZ' hand BLEEPS as it turns into the correct channel. He YELLS into it...

GUTTIEREZ

Matt! Open these damn doors right now, I'll ream your ass so bad these

things out here'll seem like the Easter Bunny in comparison! Swear to God!

THOMAS turns and hammers on the impenetrable plate metal.

THOMAS

Open the doors! Open the goddamned fucking doors!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! CLICK. GUTTIEREZ' bullets are gone.

DE VRIES

That's it! We're dead!

The first of the ALIENS rushes at them. This is the end. DE VRIES SCREAMS...

There's a blinding flash, and most of the ALIEN's head vaporises. GUTTIEREZ blinks in disbelief as hazy SHAPES comprised of refracted fire suddenly occupy the killing ground between the HUMAN and ALIEN antagonists. Intense bursts of light illuminate the platform as hi-tech PREDATOR weaponry far in advance of the humans' sears the air...

GUTTIEREZ turns at the SOUND of the huge metal doors GRINDING slowly open. Just enough for them to get through.

GUTTIEREZ

Move!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - AUTO-SHOP

THOMAS pushes DE VRIES through the opening, with GUTTIEREZ hurriedly following.

The Auto-shop is a large spacious workshop with three bays lining one wall. The front of a crawler pokes from one of them, while in the center of the room another crawler is raised above a maintenance-pit on a hydraulic platform. A handful of GREASE MONKEYS stands around the doorway, brandishing power-tools in lieu of firearms. A blonde surfer-type with long straggly hair rushes over to them. This is MATT, their savior.

MATT

Close it up, close it up!

GUTTIEREZ stares through the narrow opening as the doors seal back up. In the midst of the flames, the ALIENS are fighting a pitched battle tooth-and-nail with their unseen opponents. It's like a scene out of Hell.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - CORRIDORS

Clusters of rotating emergency lights wig-wag above HIROKO and KAMEN as they flee through the maze of long corridors leading to the Command Center. KAMEN is falling behind as they approach a junction.

HIROKO

Hurry it up.

KAMEN

Don't wait for me!

HIROKO and KAMEN race along the final corridor leading to the Command Center. Halfway down, KAMEN turns in response to a JARRING SOUND from the rear. The metal grating making up the floor is SMASHED violently from beneath.

KAMEN

Run!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

The PANDEMONIUM from the outside corridors gets the attention of YORK and everybody else in admin. He crosses to the bulkhead doorframe, and what he sees makes his eyes bug.

YORK

Jesus Christ!

He SHOUTS back into the crowded room.

YORK (CONT'D)

They're inside, inside the corridor!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - CORRIDOR

HIROKO and KAMEN try to outrun the tidal wave of twisted and broken steel that emerges in their wake. KAMEN YELLS with fright as an ALIEN claw pinions his ankle. He trashes about, clutching at anything to prevent himself being dragged beneath the floor. CRYING OUT is pain as slivers of edged metal slice into his hands...

HIROKO (anguished)

No!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

YORK stands frozen at the bulkhead frame, staring down the corridor in horror. CASSIE races up and pushes him out of the way...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - CORRIDOR

HIROKO looks furiously around. Spying an emergency axe in it's wall housing, she SMASHES the glass with her elbow, cutting herself in the process. HIROKO hefts the heavy tool, swinging it down onto the disappearing ALIEN's carapace with all her might...

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Bastard!

The blade bites deep, and yellow blood bursts from the threshing ALIEN's wound. Speckles of it dot KAMEN's leg, eating through the material of his trousers and into the skin and muscle beneath. He SCREAMS, a sound of pure intense pain...

HIROKO hurls the axe aside. She begins pulling KAMEN out of the hole as the caustic liquid seeps into the nearby electrical conduit. There's a SPARKING, followed by a FLASH and a SHEET OF FLAME. CASSIE steps through into the corridor, just as valves evenly-spaced along the length of the tunnel open up, jetting white high-density foam under extreme pressure. The hatch to the Command Center at the far end begins to close...

HIROKO

Cassie...!

CASSIE's head shoots around.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

YORK seizes a metal chair from behind a nearby console and wedges it into the narrowing divide. CASSIE squeezes through the gap and urgently HOLLERS to HIROKO...

CASSIE

It you don't... uh!... move your ass, you're gonna need a helluva diet to get through here!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

from CASSIE's P.O.V. we watch HIROKO supporting KAMEN and stumbling him along. Foam fills three-quarters of the corridor to their rear and is nearly up to their knees everywhere else. The chair's frame CREAKS ominously in protest...

YORK

Hurry up, we're losing it!

CASSIE's eyes widen in terror...

CASSIE

Behind you!

HIROKO turns to see the long, phallic head of an ALIEN emerge momentarily from out of the foam. Something yanks at KAMEN and he disappears beneath the surface with an expression of pained surprise...

HIROKO

Kamen!

HIROKO starts to thrash at the foam, but CASSIE reaches out and drags her away.

CASSIE

It's too late!

HIROKO

Nooooo!

The chair begins to buckle, collapsing in on itself...

YORK

It's going!

With a supreme effort, CASSIE yanks HIROKO through the gap. YORK vaults clear as the chair SNAPS in two, leaving the bulkhead to THUNDER closed. The two women collapse in a heap on the floor.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - DUSK

The battle outside is going badly for the PREDATORS. There's only three of them left, and one is BROKEN TUSK.

A projectile WHISTLES through the air towards an ALIEN, expanding in flight into a wire capture net. Barbed tips on each corner bite into the wall of a base module, trapping the enraged creature. Small motors WHINE as the thin metal pulls inward, slicing into the ALIEN's body...

The PREDATOR savors the scene for just a second...which is a second too long. ALIENS are all over him, clawing and ripping at his body. The shoulder-mounted plasma-cannon is unceremoniously yanked away and CLATTERS to the floor.

The PREDATOR goes down, groping for the self-destruct system on his wrist. He manages to stroke a fingernail across the activation bar, but gets no further. An ALIEN pounces at him, its tail descending. The PREDATOR raises his arm in reflex, but the stinger SMASHES straight through the buries it in his face-plate, taking out the wrist-computer in the process.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

HIROKO stares at the closed bulkhead with an expression of dazed disbelief.

PARSONS

Miss Noguchi?

No reaction. He tries again.

PARSONS (CONT'D)

Miss Noguchi!

HIROKO snaps out of it. She crosses over to the bank of monitoring screens.

HIROKO

What's the story?

PARSONS runs through each of the screens.

PARSONS

Everything on this module is locked and sealed. We've lost 'B', 'C', and 'E' wings, but 'E' was the only one we didn't manage to totally evacuate.

HIROKO

How many... how many people are missing?

CASSIE

Unconfirmed reports of eighteen or so far, but the numbers are all over the place.

HIROKO

What's our weapons situation?

DRISCOLL - a big guy with a beard - LAUGHS curtly.

DRISCOLL

Shit! Our armory's a big blue box from the back shelf of stores. We got about two clips left for an autoloader, and that's it.

HIROKO

Auto-shop?

CASSIE

Auto-shop's sealed, but those boys are cut-off.

HIROKO

Has anybody talked to them?

CASSIE

Not yet.

HIROKO

Do it.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOPS - DUSK

BROKEN TUSK and the other PREDATOR scramble up onto the rooftop in a bid to escape their unstoppable opponents. Back-to-back, they take up fighting positions. A few seconds later, the first of the ALIENS arrives.

Both the PREDATORS' shoulder cannons blaze, firing volley-after-volley. Still the ALIENS keep on coming, finally reaching the point where it's hand-to-hand...and nothing else.

It's a vicious, fast, and bloody on both sides. BROKEN TUSK takes flight; his companion is not as lucky. The other PREDATOR kicks an ALIEN from him and over the roof's edge. The ALIEN lashes out with lightning-fast reflexes, pulling the PREDATOR with it. Both creatures hurtle downward and hit a nest of cabling stretched across from one of the modules. Caught like flies in a spider's web. Both thrash about, severing cables as they do. Electrical sparks CRACKLE through the air...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

Everything electrical in the Command Center flickers momentarily, and the bank of monitors turn to static. There's an instant of silence collective concerns amongst those gathered there.

DRISCOLL

What the hell...?

PARSONS

Don't panic, people. We've just switched over to internals.

HIROKO

They knocked out the external feeds.

PARSONS

Looks like it.

CASSIE

Thirty six hours?

PARSONS nods.

PARSONS

Give or take.

CASSIE

We're not gonna make it, are we?

HIROKO

Get the auto-shop on-line.

PARSONS shakes his head.

PARSONS

Communications to auto-shop go through an F.O. link off the main trunk. That's down with the other feeds.

HIROKO

Well... try the headset.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - AUTO-SHOP

Spirits are low in the auto-shop.

MATT

I'm tellin' you, it's impossible. Nothing can grow and reproduce this fast.

THOMAS

Yeah. Right. You wanna go outside and tell them that?

DE VRIES

What's keeping those fucking Marines, man? They should'a been here by now!

THOMAS lashes out at an empty can, kicking it noisily across the floor.

THOMAS

Maybe they ain't coming. Maybe they don't even know we've got problems...

GUTTIEREZ

I don't wanna hear that kind of crap, Thomas. They're coming. Just a matter of time, that's all...

GUTTIEREZ' headset lies nearby. PARSONS muted VOICE comes out of it. One of the GREASE MONKEY's snatches it up and listens.

GREASE MONKEY

Yo! Guttierrez!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

PARSONS

Through now.

HIROKO

Jan, it's Hiroko. What sort of shape are you in down there?

GUTTIEREZ (O.S., on speaker)

Pretty damn good shape, considering. You can tell Don Kamen from me his people have got balls of steel.

HIROKO

Kamen didn't make it, Jan.

There's a pregnant PAUSE from the speakers.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Jan?

GUTTIEREZ (O.S., on speakers)

Yeah. I... we're still here. We're all... uh... all sorry to hear that.

HIROKO

Can you make it back?

GUTTIEREZ (O.S., on speakers)

Uh... I'd say that was a negative. If we open the doors, those things are gonna swarm inside. There's another problem, too.

HIROKO

What's that?

GUTTIEREZ (O.S., on speakers)

De Vries put a round through the storage tanks over by the west pier on the way in here. Right now, the stuff sprayin' out is just burnin' up, but if we get a blow-back, a good part of the station could go with it.

CASSIE

Oh, man...

HIROKO

Alright, let's keep calm. We've got to have an option of some sort... there's got to be a way out of this.

YORK

Oh yeah? Like what?

YORK's kept quiet, but everyone turns to him now. His tone is scathing and cuts to the marrow.

CASSIE

Well, what about those other things outside; those warriors? Maybe we can cut some kind of deal...

YORK looks around at them in incredulous disbelief.

***** PAGE 84 MISSING *****

INT. RYUSHI STATION - AUTO-SHOP

MATT walks nervously around, holding the headset. Everybody's eyes are on him.

MATT

Well, it occurred to me that we could use the overhead crane to load the admin module onto the back of Big Bertha. That way we could put a bit of distance...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

MATT (CONT'D) (O.S., on speakers)
...Between us and the station. Least 'till the guys from Fort Powell arrive.

HIROKO

That sounds promising. Can we operate the crane from here?

DRISCOLL

Nah. It's got programmable facilities, but it was never rigged for remote operation. Someone'd have to go up to the cab to get it up and running.

HIROKO

Which mean physically going outside.

DRISCOLL looks around uneasily.

DRISCOLL

Yeah.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER - LOWER DECK

A small group of people, most of whom we saw in the Command Center, are clustered around a section of the poorly-lit maintenance corridor. HIROKO's wearing a black hi-tech catsuit, a fetishist's dream. Across her shoulder is a pistol in a slung bandolier holster. She nods at a pile of clothing in DRISCOLL's hands.

HIROKO

Is this the suit?

DRISCOLL

Uh-huh.

She takes it from him. Slides her legs into the bottom half and pulls it up. YORK watches with an expression of incredulity etched on his face.

YORK

This is fuckin' lunacy! You're not gonna make it across the platform on foot!

CASSIE

Shut up, York.

HIROKO

No, he's right. Has anyone got a bike near here?

A REDHEADED GIRL looks around hesitantly, then raises her voice.

REDHEADED GIRL

I have.

HIROKO

Let me have the keys.

The GIRL rummages in her pockets and throws the keys over. HIROKO puts them in a pocket on the suit's sleeve.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Which one is it?

REDHEADED GIRL

Uh... the Hyundai racer. Yellow and black stripes.

YORK

Oh, yeah. Real inconspicuous...

HIROKO

Listen, I don't care if it's pink and purple polka-dots as long as it gets me there in one piece. Somebody loan me a headset.

CASSIE pulls off hers and hands it over. DRISCOLL's watching HIROKO fasten up the suit. He spots a mistake.

DRISCOLL

No, go back. Second clasp from the bottom.

HIROKO finds the offending clasp and locks it.

HIROKO

How much air-time have I got?

CASSIE

About thirty minutes. Those are slimmed-down tanks, so no stopping to admire the scenery.

HIROKO

Deal.

CASSIE

We've dumped the whole data-base from one of the cleaning remotes into the helmet. It'll project the route through the sewer system onto the inside of the glass as you go.

DRISCOLL

Yeah, I stripped down a motion tracker and hardwired it through to the helmet pick-ups, too. That's also on the display.

HIROKO

Sounds great.

PARSONS

It's not all good news. We had to take off the helmet lights. You'll be going in blind.

HIROKO

What? Why?

DRISCOLL

We had to. They were just too cumbersome for some of the conduits you're gonna have to negotiate. Besides, all the crap floating around reduces visibility to the extent where I doubt having helmet lights would have made that much difference, anyway. Maintenance lights down there oughta be enough to do the trick.

HIROKO

How tight are these shafts?

CASSIE and DRISCOLL exchange worried looks.

CASSIE

Tight. We chose a route we felt would reduce the chance of you running into any Aliens.

HIROKO takes a deep breath. Beads of perspiration dot her forehead.
PARSONS nods.

PARSONS

There's still time to back-out.

HIROKO

Forget it. I wouldn't ask somebody to do something I wouldn't do myself. Where's the disk?

PARSONS hands over a vinyl-wrapped packet.

PARSONS

Don't lose it.

HIROKO slips it into a breast-pocket and secures the flap.

HIROKO

Don't worry. I won't.

DRISCOLL hands several metallic objects to HIROKO.

DRISCOLL

Here. If you got to use 'em, make 'em count.

They're magazines for her gun. She slots them into the bandolier.

HIROKO

Thanks.

PARSONS

Let's just run through it one more time so I know you've got it straight.

HIROKO

Okay, I pull the access panel off of the console. Insert the disk, and press the green enabling button...

PARSONS (interrupting)
No. There's two of them.

She pulls on the zip and begins locking the harness clasps into place.

HIROKO

Sorry. Two green enabling buttons...

PARSONS

Right. When you've done that, don't waste any time getting out of there. Once that crane starts moving...well, it's bound to provoke some kind of response.

YORK hands over a sophisticated-looking power-tool.

YORK

You'll need this for the gratings. Trigger finger to operate, thumb button to switch over to the rivet gun. The sensors'll choose blade or socket heads automatically.

HIROKO

Right. (long beat) Okay, I'm set.

YORK and DRISCOLL lower the massive dome-fronted helmet over HIROKO's head. Auto-clasps lock into place as it brackets with the collar. PARSONS clips the slimline air-tank to her back, and DRISCOLL makes the connections.

PARSONS

Alright, let's open her up. Carefully, now...

CASSIE and the others hold their weapons and motion-trackers steadily at a fixed point on the ground. Two ONLOOKERS bend down to the pressure-hatch beneath the floor-grating. It's identical to the one DILLER and URIOSTE removed earlier. A plume of pressurised gas jets into the air, and they pull the metal sealing-plug free. CASSIE scrutinizes her tracker...

CASSIE

All clear...

HIROKO reaches up to her helmet and presses a chunky button on one side.

HIROKO's P.O.V.

We're looking through the transparent bowl of the helmet at the open shaft, braken water SLOSHING around it's rim. Superimposed lines of glowing neon appear on the visor's surface, a precisely overlaid duplication of the scene in computer-graphic form. A flatly-synthesised male

COMPUTER VOICE comes over the helmet speakers, O.S.

COMPUTER VOICE (O.S., on speakers)

Approaching 'A' module lower level venturiduct DS Oh-four...

HIROKO gets down on her hands and knees and crawls towards the opening. She stares at the murky water with mounting apprehension. Tries to reassure herself.

HIROKO

Okay. Okay.

She looks around at the impassive, staring faces. Summoning up her courage, she submerges the helmet...

HIROKO'S P.O.V.

The pale illumination of the lower level deck-lights gives way to absolute nothingness; a stygian nightmare. She SHUDDERS with horror and pulls her head free.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Oh...! Oh, God...

She WIPES frenetically at the slickly-coated visor, breathing heavily. Worried hands grab her.

CASSIE

Are you alright?

PARSONS

What? What's wrong? What is it?

HIROKO's eyes dart around, speaking volumes. She swallows hard and calms down.

HIROKO

It's alright. I'm okay.

Steeling herself, she takes a deep breath and plunges headfirst into the water once more...

HIROKO's P.O.V.

Everything goes to blackness again. The head-up-display presents a view of the unseen tunnel in cheerful candy-apple hues.

COMPUTER VOICE (O.S., on speakers)

Entering venturi duct, en route to secondary overflow sump DS oh four slash eleven...

YORK watches HIROKO's feet disappear into the shaft.

PARSONS

Seal it.

The heavy sealing-plug is dragged across the grating and positioned over the hole. YORK shakes his head.

YORK

Suicide run, man. Fuckin' suicide run.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - VENTURI DUCT

CASSIE wasn't kidding about the venturi-duct. It's only about half-again as wide as HIROKO. The only illumination comes from the hazy circle above. As the plug reseals the hole, even that's gone.

Something flickers. Two weak fluorescent tubes come on, lighting the murk with a faint orange haze.

CASSIE (O.S. on speakers)
All the comforts of home.

HIROKO

Thanks, Cassie.

CASSIE (O.S., on speakers)
Don't mention it.

She inches her way through the narrow space towards us, breathing heavily. The CLICKING of the motion-tracker in her helmet is overwhelming in the silence...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ANTENNA ARRAY - NIGHT

The station's massive antenna array is being transformed. Otherworldly shapes comprised of surreal creatures and protrusions are starting to cover it's surface. ALIENS drop from dizzying heights, exuding streams of gelatinous gunk from the four 'exhaust' pipes on their backs. They're building a nest of staggering proportions.

Unnoticed by the busy biomechanoids, faint sparks flicker from the crane catwalk high above...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE CATWALK - NIGHT

BROKEN TUSK sits on the catwalk floor, a small shower of sparks lighting his face. He's attempting to repair his broken wrist computer with an intricate tool. He removes it and presses a switch. The display glows briefly, then fades. He inserts it again. Electrical sparks CRACKLE across the computer's fascia, before burning out. BROKEN TUSK throws the ruined machine away in disgust.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - AUTO-SHOP

From our P.O.V. high up near the roof of the auto-shop we see THOMAS sitting on the raised hydraulic platform. He GRUNTS as he pulls a valve on the crawler's underside.

Across the room, the second crawler RUMBLES out of the far bay. One of the GREASE MONKEYS walks slowly backwards, waving it on.

GREASE MONKEY

Okay. Back. Back. Little bit more...

He steps into a pool of slippery residue and loses his footing.

GREASE MONKEY (CONT'D)

Whoa...shit!

The man crouches and runs a finger through the colorless goo on the floor. Scowls first, then frowns. It's sticky.

Over near the doors, MATT exhales deeply on a cigarette. DE VRIES is nearby, listening attentively as GUTTIEREZ gets a message on his helmet.

GUTTIEREZ

She just set off!

MATT claps his hands together - just once - to get everybody's attention.

MATT

Okay, people. Let's hustle...

There's a SCREAM from behind. They wheel around in time to see the GREASE MONKEY being tugged into the maintenance opening. THOMAS yells down from the platform.

THOMAS

They're comin' up through the pit!

A box with two large buttons - one green, one red - dangles from the ceiling on the end of a cable. MATT forces down the red control, making the platform lower. Several tons of machinery and crawler bring about the demise of the ALIENS as they reach the lip of the opening, CRUSHING their chitinous limbs to smithereens.

An ALIEN rolls out of the pit in time, scrambling for the safety of the nearby shadows. DE VRIES sights it.

DE VRIES

Over there!

One of the MEN has seen it. His head snaps up to a mammoth engine-block suspended from a winch high above. He LEAPS for the release-catch as the ALIEN passes underneath. Pulls hard on the grip. Chains RATTLE noisily as the block THUNDERS down. The ALIEN begins to look up, just a second too late. The heavy piece of machinery SMASHES into the creature, flattening it instantly.

Unseen by anybody, another ALIEN has escaped to the roof of the platform-bound crawler. It wraps it's long, bony fingers around the face of the MAN, stifling his CRIES and pulling him off the deck. The LOUD CLATTERING of his chainsaw bouncing off the floor-grating gets THOMAS' attention.

THOMAS

Mother-fucker!

THOMAS retrieves the fallen tool and jams the 'on' switch hard. The ALIEN's tongue shoots through the GREASE MONKEY's skull, showering THOMAS with a faint speckling of blood. The ALIEN discards the body and lunges at THOMAS, who counters bringing the chainsaw up.

The blade slices into the creature's throat, and up through it's head. THOMAS draws out the chainsaw quickly. Something happens to the PITCH of the blade, a peculiar sound...

The acid eats through the links of the chainsaw band. Like a metallic snake, it WHIPS off it's supporting frame.

Straight at THOMAS.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - VENTURI DUCT

HIROKO elbows her way further through the cramped water-filled duct. A wide grille directly in her path blocks further headway.

HIROKO'S P.O.V. Green neon flashes in her display, with accompanying notations.

COMPUTER VOICE (O.S., on speakers)
Progress to secondary overflow sump DS oh-four slash eleven impeded.
Grating must be removed to facilitate entry...

HIROKO (into headset)
Okay, I'm at the first access grate.

CASSIE'S VOICE is a little less clear now, with traces of STATIC drifting in...

CASSIE (O.S., on speakers)
Copy that. Be careful, now.

HIROKO

You betcha.

She places the tip of her power-tool over the first of the grille's anchoring bolts. The complex mechanism WHINES as it selects the correct wrench-tip for the job...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

PARSONS races up to the GIRL manning the communication console.

PARSONS

What is it?

GIRL

Auto-shop.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - AUTO-SHOP- CRAWLER CABIN

THOMAS is laid-out in the back seat of the crawler's cab, with DE VRIES and MATT trying to staunch the wounds from the chainsaw band's impact to his chest. GUTTIEREZ speaks into his headset mike.

GUTTIEREZ

Rob? We got problems.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - SUMP CHAMBER

THUMP. THUMP. SLAM! The grille is knocked out of its housing and floats lazily off into the water. HIROKO passes through the newly-created hole.

HIROKO'S P.O.V.

She finds herself in an upright cylindrical chamber, about five feet in height. Massive extractor fans churn dangerously where both the floor and ceiling ought to be. Kicking up a swirl of particles. Pale blue light filters down from above.

COMPUTER VOICE (O.S., on speakers)

Caution! Entering secondary overflow sump DS oh-four slash eleven. Grating must be removed to facilitate entry to Central Reservoir...

HIROKO (annoyed)

Yeah, yeah, yeah...

With difficulty, she straddles the floor turbine. A vortex of water swirls around her as she brings the power-tool up once more.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

PARSONS listens attentively. He CLICKS his fingers at CASSIE.

PARSONS

Where is she?

CASSIE

Comin' up the Central Reservoir.

PARSONS

Quick! Run a trace on the culvert leading off the auto-shop maintenance pit.

CASSIE's all-business, immediately calling-up the base floor-plan files on a monitor.

PARSONS (CONT'D) (into headset)

Is Thomas gonna make it?

GUTTIEREZ (O.S., on speakers)

Uh...difficult to say. I think...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - AUTO-SHOP

GUTTIEREZ looks on as MATT ties-off a bandage.

GUTTIEREZ (CONT'D)

...The chainsaw band might have punctured his lungs.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

CASSIE looks up, worriedly.

CASSIE

I found it...

PARSONS

And?

CASSIE

Drains right into the Central Reservoir.

PARSONS

Get her on-line. Now!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - SUMP CENTER

HIROKO's pulls her third bolt free. It drifts slowly downward, slipping between the vanes of the floor turbine.

A fragmented VOICE comes through on her headset, distorted beyond recognition. HIROKO's forehead knits together in concentration and annoyance.

HIROKO

What was that? I don't copy.

CLICK. CLICK. BEEP! The routine sound of the motion tracker changes suddenly. HIROKO turns her attention from the task-in-hand to study the tracker's helmet readout. THREE NEBULOUS BLOBS have appeared from off-screen. Heading straight for her position.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

CASSIE turns to PARSONS in frustration.

CASSIE

I can't reach her. Too much signal break-up.

PARSONS

Keep trying!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - SUMP CHAMBER

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP. The signals pick-up speed the closer they get. CASSIE's garbled VOICE isn't helping ease HIROKO's panic. She looks wildly around the chamber. The only way out the way she came in...

COMPUTER VOICE (O.S., on speakers)
Attention. Removal of restraining bolts it necessary to facilitate
access to...

HIROKO stabs the exterior helmet control. The COMPUTER VOICE ceases,
while the BEEPING from the tracker rises in both pitch and volume.
Whatever the signals are, they're almost on top of her...

HIROKO turns to the narrow entry duct. It's position makes it
virtually impossible to get back into. She tries anyhow.

BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP! A rush of displaced water flood into the chamber,
flattening her against the wall. DARK SHAPES THUNDER past the other
side of the grille like express trains in the night...going away from
HIROKO. She twitches in fear and disbelief as the BLOBS on the monitor
screen recede and finally disappear. The tracker's pitch returns to
it's hollow CLICKING.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

BROKEN TUSK tries to be as unobtrusive as possible as he picks through
the aftermath of the battle down by the now-empty rhino pen. He finds
something. A PREDATOR face-mask, with a massive crack down one side.
He turns it carefully over in his hands.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - CENTRAL RESERVOIR

HIROKO emerges from the water, a thin membrane of surface slime
adhering to her helmet. Blinded, she raises a gloved hand and wipes
the mucus away...

HIROKO'S P.O.V.

She's inside the Central Reservoir, a long cylindrical concrete tunnel
some eighteen feet in diameter. The water-level comes up about half-
way. What fills the remainder freezes her with revulsion...

She's found the main offshoot of the ALIENS' nest. Glued into the
curved walls by a secretive resin as BODIES. HUMANS, RHINOS, LEMURS.
Other ANIMALS. Most are dead, their innards blown open. The rest are
comatose, twitching occasionally. Every square inch not containing
bodies is filled with ALIEN EGGS. It's like Hell for real.

HIROKO reaches slowly up and reactivates her helmet readout.

COMPUTER VOICE (O.S., on speakers)
...Brrzzt. Traversing Central Reservoir en route to platform venturi
dust DS two-six.

HIROKO'S P.O.V.

She looks around and finds the exit point on the display. It's several
feet away. Under the surface. She wades swiftly through the water,
passing beneath something that gives her cause to pause. A large
PULSATING BAG, about ten feet long and roughly ovular in shape. It
might be translucent, but in this light it's hard to tell.

HIROKO submerges. Sure enough, there's the grille. She raises the

power-tool and starts extracting the bolts. BZZZZ! There's the first one, no problem. BZZZZ...BZZZZ! The second and third are just as easy. She goes for the fourth. BZZZ...CHUNK. Nothing happens.

HIROKO

Come on...

She bears down on the trigger again. The motor's not running. A tiny green LED flashes on the machine's side. It's locked solid. A malfunction.

COMPUTER VOICE (O.S., on speakers)

Attention. Removal of restraining bolts is necessary to facilitate access to venturi ducts.

There's only one recourse left to her. She jams down the thumb button...

KER-SLAM! The force of the rivet-gun propels her backwards, her internal suit-pressure making her rise to the surface. She wipes the slime from her helmet yet again...

...And finds herself staring at an ALIEN EGG, it's top cracking open in four neat sections. The FACEHUGGER leaps straight as her faceplate...

...And misses, it's fingers failing to gain purchase on the slippery dome. HIROKO kicks away from the spindly creature as it orientates itself on the water's surface, it's powerful tail propelling itself back toward her. It contracts on itself, preparing to leap. HIROKO raises the power-tool, reflexively squeezing the trigger again and again. Fat rivets RIP through the FACEHUGGER's body. It writhes around on the water's surface, a cloud of yellow acid billowing outward from it. HIROKO dives into the water again. She rams the power-tool at the final bolt.

BZZZZ! It's out! She levers-off the grille. Forces herself into the confined space beyond...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - VENTURI DUCT

Another poorly-lit shaft filled with murky water, though this one goes upwards on a diagonal slope. HIROKO braces herself against the walls and begins to climb.

COMPUTER VOICE (O.S., on speaker)

Traversing venturi duct en route to platform surface.

WHAM! An ALIEN's head squeezes through the opening behind her. It's claw snakes in, groping blindly just inches from her feet. She grits her teeth and puts more effort into her ascent.

WALLPO! It's hand closes around her leg, yanking her back. She tries frantically to gain purchase on anything. She fails. The ALIEN draws her nearer, it's other hand closing on the helmet's visor. Fracture lines appear on the glass, followed by cracks. Polluted water starts to flood in, while air-bubbles expand outward from the broken glass.

HIROKO drives the power-tool at the ALIEN and mashes the trigger. Rivets penetrate the creature's endoskeleton, making it draw back. A haze of yellow blood spills out into the duct. HIROKO pushes upward, coughing. She closes her fist around a lever above. Pulls on it with all her might.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

Internal pressure forces the metallic plug out like a champagne cork. It hits the platform with a loud CLUNK. HIROKO hauls herself from the shaft, trailing a cloud of smoke as the acid eats into her suit. She throws the helmet to the ground, SHATTERING the visor. Yanks desperately at the suit's release clamps, kicking the ruined garment off.

As promised, the yellow-and-black hoverbike is nearby. HIROKO starts towards it, then remembers the keys are in the sleeve pocket of the ruined pressure-suit. She drops to her knees and gingerly pokes through the smoking pile of cloth. Finds the flap, RIPS it open, and withdraws the keys.

SLAP! A glistening wet claw emerges from the open hole. HIROKO scrambles to her feet as the injured ALIEN pulls itself out. She tears across to the bike and rams the key into the ignition. The turbines ROAR to life, and it lifts smoothly into the air. HIROKO pivots the powerful machine around, avoiding the creature's questing grasp. Losing its balance, the ALIEN SMASHES into the deck.

HIROKO's guns the bike away, speeding along the platform. The fire over by the auto-shop rages out of control, a column of black-and-orange smoke rising into the air.

A DARK FORM hurls itself at her from an overhead cable-support. Yet another ALIEN. It lands awkwardly on the protruding front cowl of the hoverbike, gaining balance in an instant.

HIROKO twists on her controls, trying to dislodge the creature by sawing the bike side-to-side. The ALIEN's got a firm hold though, crawling hand-over-hand towards her. HIROKO releases her grip on both throttles simultaneously. Air-brakes cut in, and the bike SLAMS to a halt. The breath WHOOSHES out of HIROKO as her chest impacts with the surrounding roll-bar. The ALIEN is even less fortunate; momentum hurls it back onto the concrete. HIROKO guns the engine again, and the leading-edge of the manta-shaped machine's aerofoil catches the rising creature, neatly decapitating it.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE BASE - NIGHT

The hoverbike GROWLS to a halt by the base of the crane. HIROKO dismounts and draws her pistol. Takes in the sheer height of the ladder she's going to have to scale. Thumbs her headset.

HIROKO

Okay, I make it to the crane. You...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

Everybody in admin registers astonishment as her voice comes over the speakers.

HIROKO (CONT'D) (O.S., on speakers)
...Can all uncross your fingers.

A WHOOP goes up. Various hands are SLAPPED.

PARSONS

We copy, boss. Nice going.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE LADDER - NIGHT

HIROKO's climbing the ladder. She stops to catch her breath.

HIROKO

Yeah, well don't get too carried away; we're only halfway home.
Talk...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

HIROKO (CONT'D) (O.S., on speakers)
...To you shortly. Noguchi out.

PARSONS clicks his fingers to DRISCOLL.

PARSONS

Driscoll; you're up.

DRISCOLL's moving even as PARSONS speaks.

DRISCOLL

I hear you...

EXT. RHUSHI STATION - CRANE CATWALK - NIGHT

HIROKO reaches the top and sprints along the catwalk towards the Control Cab. She narrowly misses something metallic near the base of the handrail. If she'd taken the time to stop and look, she would have seen BROKEN TUSK's ruined wrist computer.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER - LADDER WELL

DRISCOLL flips open an access flap on one wall of the ladder-well. Printed on the inside is a set of instructions, with the following printed boldly in red;

CAUTION! EXPLOSIVE BOLTS - READ CAREFULLY!

He traces his finger along a line of text.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE CAB - NIGHT

HIROKO enters the cab at a run. She flips a row of switches, and the control board comes to life.

HIROKO

Access panel... access panel...

She finds it. Gets her fingers in the groove and slides it out. Beneath is a mini-disk drive with two buttons.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Bingo.

She pulls the vinyl-wrapped packet from her catsuit pocket. Carefully withdraws the disk and slides it home. Thumbs the first button, which glows an emerald green.

The board's flatscreen monitor lights up immediately. HIROKO studies it for a moment, then presses her headset link.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Okay, we're in business.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

PARSONS

Right. Auto-shop, you all set?

INT. RYUSHI STATION - AUTO-SHOP - CRAWLER CAB

Everybody from Auto-shop is crammed into the two articulated vehicles. GUTTIEREZ sits in the driver's seat of the first crawler. He glances out of the side window. MATT gives him a 'thumbs-up' from the cab of the second crawler.

GUTTIEREZ (into headset)

Say the word, and you won't see our asses for dust.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE CAB - NIGHT

HIROKO wipes a trickle of sweat from her forehead. She poises her finger over the second drive-button.

HIROKO

Alright. Here we go...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

Everybody in admin looks tense.

HIROKO (CONT'D) (O.S., on speakers)

Three...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - AUTO-SHOP - CRAWLER CAB

GUTTIEREZ leans forward.

HIROKO (CONT'D) (O.S., on headset)

Two...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE CAB - NIGHT

HIROKO blinks as the sweat drains into her eyes.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

One...mark!

She stabs the drive switch.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE - NIGHT

Smoothly maintained engineering comes to life. The enormous yellow crane starts to move on it's track-rails.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE CAB - NIGHT

The control board monitor is suddenly awash with information and schematics...

HIROKO

Okay, I'm out of here!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

PARSONS

Blow those suckers, Driscoll!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER - LADDER WELL

DRISCOLL raises a black device shaped like a cylinder with a handgrip on the end. Slots it into the mechanism beneath the flap and carefully turns it. A tiny red LED comes on.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER MODULE

Complex mechanical assemblies attach the module to it's supporting pier-platforms. There are a number of LOUD BANGS, similar to car engines misfiring. Explosive bolts release the tethers.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER - LADDER WELL

DRISCOLL reports into his headset.

DRISCOLL

Bolts blown!

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE CATWALK - NIGHT

HIROKO runs back across the catwalk. She might have missed the PREDATOR's damaged computer before, but she doesn't this time. Her foot comes down on it and she slips. The gun goes flying from her hand. HIROKO watches in horror as it teeters on the catwalk's edge for a moment...

HIROKO

No!

...Then goes over. She drops to all fours and peers over the side. Luckily it's only fallen about four feet onto a dirty ledge. She

reaches out for it...

INT. FIRST CRAWLER CAB

GUTTIEREZ pushes forward on the crawler's controls. The head-up display projected on the cab windscreen changes from 'NEUTRAL' to 'DRIVE'.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM FAR SIDE - NIGHT

The two crawlers TEAR OUT of the auto-shop's opening doors, headlights blazing.

INT. FIRST CRAWLER CAB - NIGHT

GUTTIEREZ braces himself as they speed on a collision course towards the ditched crawler they left outside auto-shop earlier.

GUTTIEREZ

Shit!

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM FAR SIDE - NIGHT

KER-SMASH! GUTTIEREZ' crawler rams the other vehicle off the roadway and through the platform safety barrier. It balances precariously for a second, until finally it's weight sends it plunging into the swamp in a CACOPHONY of STRESSED METAL and CRUMBLING CONCRETE.

INT. SECOND CRAWLER CAB - NIGHT

MATT

Yee-haa! Demolition derby, baby!

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOP LEVEL - NIGHT

Holding the cracked mask to his face, BROKEN TUSK looks up at the gigantic crane moving against the night sky.

PREDATOR VISION.

Although the helmet's nightsight is malfunctioning, it's still good enough to register the 'hot' infra-red shape of HIROKO on the catwalk.

The sound of the two crawlers hurtling across the platform gets BROKEN TUSK's attention.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE CATWALK - NIGHT

HIROKO gets a firm grasp on one of the railing rungs, anchoring herself. Stretches for the pistol with renewed determination. She brushes the barrel. Not good enough. Tries again. Success! Her fingers curl around the weapon, and she tugs it upwards.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

The two crawlers plunge into the curtain of flames spreading across the platform.

INT. FIRST CRAWLER CAB - NIGHT

DE VRIES YELLS at GUTTIEREZ over the ROAR of the flames.

DE VRIES

Hotter 'n hell out there!

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE BASE - NIGHT

HIROKO leaps the last few rungs from the moving crane onto the platform. She dashes towards the hoverbike, some thirty feet away. With no time to lose, she slides her boots into the foot-supports, which automatically WHIRR closed. Gropes for the ignition key...

Before she's even located it, the hoverbike moves. SCRAPING across the concrete. ALIEN claws appear around the edge of one of the bike's manta wings. She's parked the bike over a drainage exit!

HIROKO SPINS the key and guns the engine. The white-hot downblast from the turbine exhaust SPLASHES across the SCREECHING ALIENS. The vehicle tilts and KICKS forward.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

The two crawlers emerge from the conflagration, scorched and trailing fire. In the BACKGROUND, the crane-hoist centers over the admin module.

CATWALK P.O.V.,

looking straight down. Four lasers scan quickly around the module's edges.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE CAB - NIGHT

A blinking message on the crane's monitor screen:

POSITIVE MATCH. COMMENCE LIFTING OPERATION.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM FAR SIDE - NIGHT

The sound of SHREDDING METAL makes HIROKO look down. An ALIEN is hanging on the underside of the bike! She twists the throttle, reducing acceleration and causing the vehicle to drop several inches. Sparks shower the ground from where the creature makes contact with the roadway. The ALIEN's determination is astounding. It's tail SLAMS up through the alloy 'wing', anchoring it.

The biomechanoid starts to pull itself up, shifting the bike's center of gravity. She fights the controls, but finds herself swerving. One-handed, she takes aim. BLAM! BLAM! She misses the ALIEN, rupturing a fuel pipe instead.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

The crane's clamping mechanism closes around the admin module, locking into place.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

CLANG! Everybody reacts as the SOUND penetrates through the walls and ECHOES around admin.

PARSONS

Okay, people. Hold on tight...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

The crane hoists the module aloft, free of it's umbilicals.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

Pencils, disposable cups, and anything else not bolted down all roll from table-tops. Most are grabbed by their owners.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM FAR SIDE - NIGHT

HIROKO's bike veers blindly around the corner of a building, with HIROKO still SHOOTING. She looks up and her eyes widen. Ahead is the out-of-control blaze. A tongue of flame licks out across the platform, directly in her path.

HIROKO slides the gun quickly into her shoulder-holster and ducks for cover behind the bike's windshield. The ALIEN's head twists around, and they plunge into the inferno...

WHOOMPH! The liquid from the breached pipe ignites, trailing a plume of yellow flame. HIROKO jams down on the foot-release and wrenches the steering bar hard to the right. She leaps for safety as the burning bike with it's ALIEN passenger crashes through the station's safety-rail and plummets into the swamp.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM RAMP - NIGHT

The two crawlers THUNDER down the ramp. GUTTIEREZ' vehicle pulls into a tight right turn, while MATT's continues on it's course. The crane with it's underslug module continues to RUMBLE slowly forward.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM FAR SIDE - NIGHT

HIROKO mechanically tries to get up from the concrete roadway. Winces. Something hurts. She looks down at the back of her left hand. The skin has been scraped away.

A DISTANT NOISE, something else being broken. HIROKO turns. Through the conflagration, ALIENS are advancing.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - BIG BERTHA - NIGHT

GUTTIEREZ' smoldering crawler pulls-up alongside Big Bertha's titanic wheels.

INT. FIRST CRAWLER - NIGHT

GUTTIEREZ turns his head to one of the guys in the rear.

GUTTIEREZ

Take the wheel, Roy!

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - BIG BERTHA - NIGHT

GUTTIEREZ and DE VRIES exit the crawler in a big hurry. The moment they're clear, the vehicle starts up and is gone. DE VRIES is alert, the tip of her rifle probing their surroundings.

DE VRIES

C'mon, man! Let's shag it!

GUTTIEREZ begins climbing the tall ladder running up to the Bertha's cab.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

HIROKO's running along the platform, pistol clenched firmly in hand. She thumbs her headset.

HIROKO

Rob, it's Hiroko. Come in.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

CASSIE answers, holding on to the edge of her console.

CASSIE

Hiroko, it's Cassie. What's...

HIROKO's VOICE interrupts.

HIROKO (O.S., on speakers)
I've lost the bike and I'm cut-off.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

HIROKO spins around the corner, pointing her gun cop-stance.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

If I can get to the chopper, I'll meet you at the rendezvous. Don't wait for me.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

CASSIE

But...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

The heli-jet pad's just up ahead. The relief on HIROKO's face is enormous.

HIROKO

No 'buts'. Just do it. Noguchi out.

INT. BIG BERTHA - NIGHT

GUTTIEREZ and DE VRIES pile inside the surprisingly cramped driver's cab. There's a seat up-front, with another behind a small control fascia pointing out-back. DE VRIES hands over her rifle and slides into the rear. She flicks on an overhead light. Taped to one side is a black-and-white magazine cut-out of a naked male body-builder.

DE VRIES

Nice buns...

She gives the control board a cursory once-over. GUTTIEREZ calls back from his vantage point at the doorway.

GUTTIEREZ

Can you handle it?

DE VRIES powers-up the console.

DE VRIES

Piece of cake.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - HELI-JET PAD - NIGHT

HIROKO runs towards the waiting heli-jet. The flicker of an adrenalin-fueled smile plays on her face...the disappears.

Like a scorpion scuttling over a rock, the ALIEN climbs up on top of the grounded machine. It's head turn towards her. HIROKO starts to raise her pistol... then stops. Other ALIENS are descending the nearby navigation tower... straight for her.

HIROKO turns tail. She races over to a ladder running up the side of a building and begins to climb.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - BIG BERTHA - NIGHT

The shadow of the crane and it's cargo falls over Big Bertha's rear flatbed. Flashing warning strobes illuminate the twin hydraulic arms which rise up to meet it.

INT. BIG BERTHA - NIGHT

DE VRIES twists on the 'waldo' controls operating the manipulator hands.

EXT. SWAMP - NIGHT

ALIENS rise up out of the swamp below, and start to scale Bertha's balloon tires.

INT. BIG BERTHA - NIGHT

GUTTIEREZ fires a barrage down at the oncoming creatures. He HOLLERS back to DE VRIES.

GUTTIEREZ

Move it baby, or they're gonna be chewin' on my cojones!

DE VRIES

Couple more seconds!

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOP LEVEL - NIGHT

HIROKO takes flight across the rooftops with the ALIENS in pursuit like a pack of dogs. She vaults extractor intakes and retrofitted junk with ease. So do the ALIENS.

She cuts across a conduit overpass bridging two buildings across the main street, trying not to lose her footing. Just before reaching the other side, HIROKO slips and falls to her knees. Her headset drops thirty feet onto the concrete roadway. Her hand rests on something red. It's the cover for the explosive bolts connecting the conduit to the building. She scrambles onto the rooftop and flips over the hatch. Glances up. The ALIENS are already starting across. She pulls the primer cylinder out by it's handle. Jams it into the detonator, and turns...

She's practically on top of the bolts. The EXPLOSION is DEAFENING. With the clamp on this side free, the conduit falls into the street with a SCREECH of twisted metal. One of the ALIENS is pulverized by the falling debris, but the others survive. All HIROKO's managed to do is buy herself some breathing space...

She races across the building's roof. Reaches the other side...straight into a dead end.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - BIG BERTHA - NIGHT

The admin module locks onto Bertha's manipulator arms with a satisfying CLUNK. Autocouplers slot into place, and the crane releases it's load.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - COMMAND CENTER

The connecting jolt is even greater than before. Several larger objects CRASH to the deck.

INT. BIG BERTHA - NIGHT

DE VRIES

That's it! We've got it! Get us out of here.

GUTTIEREZ looses one last volley at the ALIENS. He pulls the cab door shut, and throws himself into the driver's seat.

GUTTIEREZ

C'mon sweetheart. Do your stuff...

EXT. SWAMP - NIGHT

Bertha's wheels GRIND to life, spilling ALIENS and crushing them under it's treads...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOP LEVEL - NIGHT

HIROKO's P.O.V. It's a straight drop thirty feet onto concrete, with

no ladders or any other way down. She looks desperately around for another avenue of escape.

The leering face of an ALIEN comes up over the roof's edge. HIROKO swings her pistol over and fires. It falls away...only to be replaced seconds later by two others.

Her gun goes dry. Quick as a flash, she ejects the spent magazine. She slaps the spare in and continues firing.

INT. BIG BERTHA - NIGHT

Big Bertha's heading away from the base into the surrounding trees. GUTTIEREZ grits his teeth as they plunge towards the high branches.

GUTTIEREZ

Get down!

DE VRIES hits the floor. The thick boughs impact with the cab, SHATTERING the safety glass.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOP LEVEL - NIGHT

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! CLICK. HIROKO's gun's empty. She reaches for another clip on her bandolier...then realises that was her last one.

The encircling ALIENS HISS triumphantly and close in. With no place to go, and no means of defending herself, HIROKO's a goner. The lead ALIEN's lethal double-barrel teeth open. It's almost on her. HIROKO **CRIES OUT...**

WHOOSH! The ALIEN's face is severed in half. A circular metal object blurs through the air and loops back on itself, almost faster than the human eye can follow. A massive form SLAMS down in front of HIROKO, pushing her out of the way. She hits the deck hard and gasps. BROKEN TUSK is standing before her. He skillfully catches the frisbee-like 'smart weapon', then throws it again.

HIROKO watches with awe as the PREDATOR joins battle against the ALIENS. HISSING ALIEN jaws are silenced by BROKEN TUSK's formidable fighting technique. Questing limbs are BLASTED and HACKED away by advanced PREDATOR weaponry. Acidic blood flows freely. The skirmish is surprisingly brief.

BROKEN TUSK and HIROKO stare at one another. BROKEN TUSK pulls a slung metal rod from his shoulder. Two barbed tips SCHNICK outwards, forming a spear. The PREDATOR looks at her, and his lip curls. It takes a second for HIROKO to realise he's offering it to her. Bewildered, she accepts it, pulling herself up.

A bright orange ball of flame mushrooms up behind, getting both of their attentions. BROKEN TUSK regards her. His mandibles CLICK-CLACK nervously...

HIROKO

Look. Don't take this the wrong way, but when I imagined the cavalry coming to my rescue... they never looked like you.

The PREDATOR turns away, seemingly uninterested.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

Another gout of flame BELCHES out of the churning mass in the middle of the station.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - ROOFTOP LEVEL - NIGHT

HIROKO turns her recovered headset over in her hands.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Broken. Useless!

She throws it aside. BROKEN TUSK stands beside her, keeping guard. Another DETONATION goes off behind, even LOUDER.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Jesus. I.C.C.'re gonna have to close the book on this place.

She SLAPS BROKEN TUSK on the arm.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Come on, Butch. Let's go.

She begins to walk away. BROKEN TUSK crosses to the safety barrier, peering over the side...

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Hey! I said come on!

The PREDATOR turns a deaf ear to her. He gauges the distance below, then throws himself off the platform's edge.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

What...?

She races across to the rail and gazes downward.

HIROKO'S P.O.V.

The PREDATOR wades through the swamp towards something she cannot see. HIROKO looks around the platform. She's suddenly very alone.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Shit!

She crosses to a maintenance ladder and begins to descend.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - SWAMP LEVEL - NIGHT

HIROKO SPLASHES through the swamp towards the PREDATOR. BROKEN TUSK has paused before a culvert nestled within the shadows of the platform piers, running directly out into the swamp. Most of the drain is underwater, with only about eight inches protruding from the water.

The thick metal grille covering it is mangled and twisted. Broken from within.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

You've got to be joking. No way am I going back in there!

No joke. BROKEN TUSK starts submerging to get across inside.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Hey!

BROKEN TUSK pauses for a moment. He gives her a look, then disappears into the blackness. HIROKO looks around. It's no fun being the last person left alive here.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Goddammit!

She takes several deep breaths, then reluctantly follows...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - CULVERT

HIROKO emerges within an air pocket inside the drain. She shivers. It's just as dirty and cramped as she remembers. Several of the maintenance lights down here are broken, and visibility is minimal.

HIROKO (CONT'D) (quietly)

Wha...?

BROKEN TUSK whirls, and clamps a hand across her mouth. She gets the message.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - CENTRAL RESERVOIR

They exit the culvert through another smashed grate. HIROKO finds herself back in the Central Reservoir again. She wades through the water behind BROKEN TUSK, holding the spear above her head. The two of them look very vulnerable in here. They pass beneath the PULSATING SAC HIROKO saw earlier. It looks riper now, ready to burst. An INSIDIOUS PULSING NOISE - like a heartbeat - gains in volume the further they travel.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - PUMP CHAMBER

They come out in a chamber some forty feet in height and dominated by an enormous pump. ALIEN gunk covers everything.

HIROKO gasps. High above it a QUEEN ALIEN, nesting on top of the vast mechanism. It's EGG SAC drapes around the pump; spiraling down around it. She seems to be asleep.

BROKEN TUSK ignores the QUEEN. His eyes are searching the multitude of forms - human and otherwise - cocooned into the walls. He finds what he's looking for. Up on one wall is another PREDATOR. Dead. It's stomach blown open.

HIROKO holds her spear tightly. FACEHUGGERS pulse malignantly, wrapped

around several trapped victims. A number of empty EGGS are scattered here-and-there.

BROKEN TUSK looks around. No ALIENS. He begins climbing the organic fresco, watching the QUEEN ALIEN carefully for signs of awareness. The bellows-like SOUND of her BREATHING is overwhelming. He reaches the entrapped PREDATOR. It's left arm is encased in a solidified mass of secreted resin. BROKEN TUSK raises his 'smart weapon' and activates it.

The SPLINTERING NOISE makes HIROKO wince. She glances up at the QUEEN. It's breathing start to change, and it's head moves...

BROKEN TUSK sees it too. He hesitates for a moment. The QUEEN settles, and her breathing goes back to normal. BROKEN TUSK resumes his work, chipping off the final chunk of coating. He sheathes the 'smart weapon', and flips open the other PREDATOR's wrist device. He withdraws the small manipulator device we saw earlier, and goes to work...

DOWN BELOW, HIROKO's backing away. She doesn't see the arm coated in slime that grasps at her hair. She shudders, stifling a SCREAM. Her eyes are wide as she turns...

It's KAMEN. He's been embedded into the biomechanical frieze. When he speaks, his voice is wracked with pain and suffering.

KAMEN

Hiroko...

HIROKO fearfully says something beneath her breath in JAPANESE.

UP ON THE WALL, BROKEN TUSK has finished his task. He slides the tip of a claw across the self-destruct mechanism. It's readout display illuminates with alien characters. He activates a button, and the readout begins to blink...

BELOW, KAMEN is talking to a sickened HIROKO.

KAMEN (CONT'D)

They...they snapped my legs to fit... fit me in here. I don't...remember what happened next.

HIROKO

What can I do?

KAMEN

I can... feel it moving around inside me. You've got to kill me.

HIROKO

I... I can't!

KAMEN

You have to...

HIROKO

No!

BROKEN TUSK appears as HIROKO's shoulder. He raises his right arm.
SCHNICK!

The wrist knives slice outwards. Red blood SPATTERS HIROKO's pale face. BROKEN TUSK grabs her arm roughly and pulls her away.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - CENTRAL RESERVOIR

BROKEN TUSK pushes HIROKO through the reservoir. An ALIEN EGG on a nearby wall PEELS OPEN. Before the FACEHUGGER even has a chance to spring, BROKEN TUSK swings his wrist-blades in a wide arc, cutting through the EGG and it's writhing contents.

The two of them reach the deep end and have to wade. HIROKO pushes herself along the biomechanical outcropping. Ahead of them is the PULSING SAC. Before they're even passed beneath it, they hear SOMETHING. A SOUND like water-filled balloons hitting wet concrete.

The SAC ruptures, spattering thick gloopy matter. A form comprised of slender limbs emerges from within. An IMMATURE QUEEN ALIEN. Though just-born, it's reflexes are razor-sharp. It lashes out at HIROKO and BROKEN TUSK. HIROKO ducks, and the QUEEN's claws embed themselves in BROKEN TUSK's shoulder, destroying his automatic cannon.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - PRE-DAWN

A VAST EXPLOSION rips through the base, broiling clouds of flame rolling across the platform and seeping into the drainage ducts.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - PUMP CHAMBER

Columns of fire jet from fissures and openings inside the Pump Chamber, rippling across the adult QUEEN ALIEN and her hapless victims. She begins to SCREAM, flailing around atop her metal throne...

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - CENTRAL RESERVOIR

The adult QUEEN's SHRIEK echoes through the reservoir, accompanied by a ball of fire that travels part of the way down. The IMMATURE QUEEN turns her head in reply, answering with her own YOWL.

BROKEN TUSK HISSES with hate, and brings his 'smart weapon' SLICING down through her arm, severing it at the wrist. HIROKO simultaneously DRIVES her spear into the ALIEN's chest. She grabs the injured PREDATOR and pulls him away from the thrashing creature.

HIROKO

Come on! Come on!

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - PUMP CHAMBER

The alien numbers on the PREDATOR self-destruct readout inexorably count down...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - PRE-DAWN

The metal plug HIROKO blew during her earlier escape still lies to one

side of the duct HIROKO and BROKEN TUSK crawl hastily out of. Fireballs are erupting all around now, making their situation precarious.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - CRANE CATWALK - PRE-DAWN

From a vantage point high above, we see HIROKO and BROKEN TUSK racing across the platform towards the heli-jet pad.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PLATFORM - PRE-DAWN

BROKEN TUSK stumbles and falls. HIROKO bends down to help him up, but the PREDATOR shoves her away. He doesn't want her assistance.

HIROKO

If you don't move your ugly butt, we're gonna end up barbecued! Come on!

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - HELI-JET PAD - PRE-DAWN

HIROKO runs towards the waiting heli-jet, with the PREDATOR close behind. The landing pad is made up of an intricate series of grilles designed to deflect downward exhaust gases. HIROKO's feet CLATTER across the metal...

KER-SMASH! The metal is SMASHED from beneath, right in front of her. The IMMATURE ALIEN QUEEN has made it out of the sewer system and has got the jump on them. HIROKO's forward momentum won't allow her to stop running...she's too close. Almost at the last moment, she jumps. Her claws brush her trouser leg, but close on thin air. She hits the deck and quickly closes the last few feet to the chopper.

BROKEN TUSK stops. ALIENS are appearing all over the pad and out of nearby drainage ducts.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

HIROKO slips into the chopper's pilot seat. She flips a bunch of switches and the turbines RISE in VOLUME from a LOW WHINE to a DULL ROAR.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - HELI-JET PAD - PRE-DAWN

An orange ball of flame mushrooms up behind BROKEN TUSK. With the ALIENS blocking his path, there's no refuge for him. Almost. The Navigation Tower looms overhead, nearby. BROKEN TUSK takes a calculated risk and LEAPS for it.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

The heli-jet flies pretty much like a standard helicopter. HIROKO pulls-back on the collective, and the turbines' pitch changes from a THROATY GROWL to a HIGH-PITCHED WHINE.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - HELI-JET PAD - PRE-DAWN

The heli-jet rises, a little unsteadily. The wash from the turbines

plays across the SHRIEKING ALIENS.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

HIROKO'S P.O.V. Through the canopy dome, we see BROKEN TUSK climbing the Navigation Tower, with the ALIENS close behind.

HIROKO

Okay, Butch. I can play cavalry, too...

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - NAVIGATION TOWER - PRE-DAWN

BROKEN TUSK scales the ladder as quickly as he can. As the top of the tower is a gallery catwalk surrounding the flashing beacon array.

The IMMATURE QUEEN, accompanied by a phalanx of warrior ALIENS, is almost upon him. The PREDATOR drives his wrist knives into the throat of a grasping ALIEN, which falls downward, writhing. It CRASHES into the QUEEN, who almost loses her grip on the skeletal metalwork. She HISSES, lashing out at the creature. Sends it hurtling to the ground.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - TOWER CATWALK - PRE-DAWN

BROKEN TUSK makes it to the top. There's not much space on the catwalk to maneuver. He looks around, then down. This is his last stand. Instinctively, he reaches down to his wrist for the self-destruct computer. Of course, it's not there.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - PUMP CHAMBER

The third row of digits on the alien destruct mechanism disappear. Time's running out...fast.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - TOWER CATWALK - PRE-DAWN

BROKEN TUSK SMASHES his foot hard into the face of an ALIEN. A BLAST of displaced air hits him like a sledgehammer. He turns...

HIROKO's heli-jet hovers stationary just a few feet away from the tower, the door on the co-pilot's side flapping open. She HOLLERS at the PREDATOR over the ROAR of the engines.

HIROKO

C'mon! Jump!

BROKEN TUSK looks down. It's a long drop...but it's the best option available to him. He jumps.

THWACK! His hands grip the door frame. The heli-jet wobbles slightly, it's center of gravity shifting. BROKEN TUSK hauls himself up and through the door as...

...KER-BLAM! A massive explosion mushrooms up from the base as the storage tanks below ignite. The shock wave buffets the chopper against the tower.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

BROKEN TUSK's P.O.V.

The grinning face of the young QUEEN gets suddenly closer as the heli-jet is propelled towards the metal structure.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - NAVIGATION TOWER - PRE-DAWN

CRUNCH! The chopper hits, knocking several ALIENS from their handholds. One of the QUEEN's arms SHOOTs OUT, wrapping itself around the port engine mount.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

HIROKO pushes on the stick. The heli-jet pulls away...then tilts violently to one side, engines desperately trying to compensate.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PRE-DAWN

The QUEEN is hanging from the beleaguered craft, it's weight drawing it slowly down. In the BACKGROUND, the Navigation Tower begins to slowly collapse.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

HIROKO wrestles the overtaxed controls.

HIROKO

Shit!

BROKEN TUSK turns towards her.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

In the back! In the back!

The PREDATOR may not understand her words, but he can follow the frantic jerking of her hand. He twists around to look in the chopper's rear.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PRE-DAWN

HIROKO pilots the heli-jet over the station's storage tanks. The conflagration below has gotten completely out-of-hand.

EXT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

The QUEEN is starting to struggle up, it's arms flailing for purchase.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

BROKEN TUSK pulls out a pulse-rifle from the rear. He quickly takes stock of it.

HIROKO

Watch your shots! If you hit the engine you'll blow us both to hell!

BROKEN TUSK goes for the trigger. His index finger won't slide into the trigger guard...it's too big! He takes the guard in both hands and

exerts pressure. SNAP. Problem solved.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - PUMP CHAMBER

BLEEP! There's only one set of digits left on the destruct device's display counter.

EXT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

A red dot of light runs across the QUEEN's head. She must sense it somehow. Her head comes round to bear...

BROKEN TUSK's got the pulse-rifle trained right on her.

BROKEN TUSK

Chew...on...this...!

BLAM! A round open a nice, neat hole in the QUEEN's head. She YOWLS. BLAM! A second round does the job. The QUEEN relinquishes her grip and falls, SCREECHING all the way down into the raging inferno below.

INT. RYUSHI STATION - SEWER SYSTEM - PUMP CHAMBER

The last segment of the destruct mechanism's display disappears. We hear a

HIGH-PITCHED TONE.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

HIROKO throws the joystick forward.

EXT. RYUSHI STATION - PRE-DAWN

The heli-jet accelerates hell-for-leather away. An incandescent BALL OF ENERGY expands outward, vaporising the station and most of the surrounding bayou for about a mile's radius.

EXT. LINSON'S RANGE - ENCAMPMENT - PRE-DAWN

Big Bertha's parked by the blinking blue beacon tower, site of the ill-fated hunting expedition. About a dozen or so people are milling around, smoking cigarettes or talking.

MATT and DE VRIES are leaning against the wheels of MATT's crawler. They feel the concussive shock-wave, and look upward.

Their P.O.V.

Above the treetops, a blinding white-light BLURS OUT the horizon...

MATT

Holy shit!

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

Gauges and other instruments are going crazy as the heli-jet rides the turbulence out.

EXT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

A chunk of metal is propelled through the air and RIPS into the chopper's starboard engine. There's a BURST of flame, then the extinguishers cut in.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

The heli-jet's bucking like a bronco now, and they're losing height rapidly.

HIROKO

We've lost the starboard engine! We're going down! Hold on!

EXT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

The chopper clips the tree boughs, and bounces.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

HIROKO and BROKEN TUSK are hurled around the cockpit like rag dolls. The glass cracks with the impact.

HIROKO'S P.O.V.

Leaves, twigs, and branches rush past as the heli-jet breaks through the canopy of foliage.

EXT. SWAMP - PRE-DAWN

The heli-jet PLOUGHS into the swamp floor with a sickening CRUNCH, spraying mud all around.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

The canopy implodes. A hail of glass shards RIP through the cockpit, spraying across HIROKO and cutting her skin. She SCREAMS.

EXT. SWAMP - PRE-DAWN

The chopper comes to rest in the swamp. The SQUAWKING of the local WILDLIFE O.S. gradually dies down.

INT. CHOPPER - PRE-DAWN

HIROKO moves her head, and GROANS. There's a nasty gash across her forehead. She turns to BROKEN TUSK. The door frame on his side is buckled and twisted. Part of the metal has sheared off, it's sharp end impaling him through the shoulder. The PREDATOR coughs luminous green blood.

HIROKO

We've gotta get you out of here.

EXT. SWAMP - DAWN

The sun begins to rise as HIROKO exits the heli-jet and goes around to

the other side. She manages to get the mangled door open. BROKEN TUSK's wound looks even worse up-close.

HIROKO (CONT'D)

Hold on. This is gonna hurt some.

HIROKO gets her arm under BROKEN TUSK's shoulder. The PREDATOR braces himself, and starts to move. The agony is excruciating; his mandibles open and he lets out a LEONINE ROAR.

HIROKO helps him out of the seat. The PREDATOR gets unsteadily to his feet. What happens next is totally unexpected.

BROKEN TUSK's throat BURSTS, fountaining green blood. Shocked, HIROKO gets out of the path of the PREDATOR's tumbling mass. She looks up.

The ALIEN stowaway on the roof of the chopper retracts it's sledgehammer tongue, it's head following her movements.

The PREDATOR's 'smart' weapon has dropped to the floor and is laying blade-down in the mire. HIROKO scoops up, activating it and scrambling away. She gets to her feet and holds the HUMMING disc before her.

The ALIEN climbs warily down from the heli-jet, and the two opponents face each other like sumo wrestlers. HIROKO assumes a defensive stance, holding the disc ready to strike. The ALIEN hisses, it's tail stinger coming around. It leaps for her, and battle is joined. The ALIEN lashes out, but HIROKO counters by swinging the weapon time and time again. With each thrust, surgically thin wounds open up on the biomechanoid's body. One of the ALIEN's attacks sends her reeling to the floor, it's stinger arching towards her. She parries, slicing the tail in half and struggling to her feet.

The ALIEN strikes again. HIROKO feints, then thrusts, lopping off one of it's hands. The ALIEN HOWLS with pain, blinding lashing out at her and sending the 'smart' weapon flying from her grip.

She's lost, and the creature knows it. It's lips curl into a SNARL.

KER-POW! KER-POW! The ALIEN's head DETONATES, and it's skeletal body slumps forward to SPLASH into the swamp...revealing BROKEN TUSK pointing the pulse rifle.

The dying PREDATOR GURGLES, his head drooping. HIROKO stumbles across to him. BROKEN TUSK's in a bad way, green gore is pulsing freely from it's throat. It gazes up at HIROKO.

BROKEN TUSK

Not...a pretty...sight...

And with that, the PREDATOR dies.

HIROKO look around. The sun is rising above the treetops, and the setting is serene. Somehow beautiful.

The speakers in the heli-jet cabin CRACKLE to life, jarring her.

VOICE (O.S., on speakers)
Rimward Tracking Station, this is the one thirty-second Rim Corp
Battalion operating out of the cruiser Tartarus from Fort Powell.
Please respond. Over.

There's a sound O.S., like a THUNDERCLAP. HIROKO surveys the horizon.

HIROKO's P.O.V.
A pair of MARINE DROPSHIPS float above the distant rainforest, their
weapons arms unfurled like exotic armed insects. Searchlights probe the
ground far below.

A shadow falls over HIROKO, blocking out the sun. A monstrous SHAPE
occupies the air above, delineated only by a telltale vibration. The
PREDATOR shuttlecraft lowers its cloaking device, extending landing
gear and a ramp. It touches down in the bayou with scarcely a whisper.

HIROKO watches the PREDATORS file slowly out. BROKEN TUSK's body is
borne aloft and carried back inside. The LEAD PREDATOR turns to
HIROKO. He crosses to her. HIROKO's face is reflected in the faceted
eyepieces of the PREDATOR's helmet.

The extraterrestrial hunter pulls out his telescopic spear. KER-CHUNK!
The tips lock into place. The PREDATOR offers it to HIROKO. She
accepts, a little confused.

There's a long moment. The PREDATOR is still standing there. Waiting.
HIROKO's eyes narrow. Her mind is working furiously. What do they
want?

She realises. It suddenly becomes clear. She smiles.

HIROKO
Yeah. Why not.

HIROKO glances back at the hovering DROPSHIPS, then walks around the
waiting PREDATOR and into the shuttlecraft without looking back.

The PREDATOR follows her. The ramp SLAMS closed, as we...

CUT TO BLACK
THE END