

PROJECT PANTERA III: RECON BY FIRE

Written by

Reid Webber

May 2012
(c) 2012

CMR 467, Box 5699
APO, AE 09096

Or

Hans Rother Steg, 50
Oberursel, 61440 Germany

Email: reid.webber@gmail.com
Skype: reid.webber
(49) 6171-279-8368
(49) 1514-052-5636

PROJECT PANTERA III: RECON BY FIRE

FADE IN:

EXT. USS CONSTELLATION

The USS Constellation passes a star, heading towards a planet that looks similar to Earth, but with different land and ocean masses.

TRACI (V.O.)

The USS Constellation enters the solar system of the star, 61 Virginis in the Virgo Constellation. Their voyage of thirty-two point five Earth years nears an end and excitement builds as the star ship nears its destination, Pantera.

INT. BRIDGE CONFERENCE ROOM - SHIFT GREEN

The CAPTAIN CHRISTIAN (49), OPERATIONS OFFICER DAE-JONG (63, Korean American), MAINTENANCE CHIEF ISABELLA (45), and LOGISTICS CHIEF JACK (64) are prepared for a briefing from the Navigation Team, lead by KASANDRA (37).

PRESIDENT PAMELA (67), and VICE PRESIDENT ERIC (69) walk in and sit down.

Everyone takes their seats.

CHRISTIAN

Madam President, Mister Vice President.

Christian nods to Pamela and Eric.

PAMELA

Captain, please proceed.

CHRISTIAN

Kasandra, please go ahead and begin.

KASANDRA

Thank you. President Pamela and Captain Christian, we are currently ten shifts away from our destination. We are planning the final two steering corrections during the next Blue Shift.

(MORE)

KASANDRA (CONT'D)

This will bring us into a high altitude geosynchronous orbit.

PAMELA

Dae-Jong, once we arrive in orbit it's your mission as the Operations Officer.

DAE-JONG

As soon as we reach orbit we'll begin phase one, the scientific and mapping of the planet. The Ground Recon Team will prepare for the ground phase of the operation.

PAMELA

What's your initial concept and who will be leading the Ground Recon Team?

DAE-JONG

We are planning a split team of science and security on two shuttles. I have not decided on the team leader, but have lots of volunteers.

Everyone chuckles as if they have all applied for the Ground Recon Team.

Pamela looks around the room.

PAMELA

I know there will be a rush to the planet, but it has been here for at least the past thirty-two years. Let's give the Science Team enough time to do their job.

(looks sternly around the room)

There is no reason to risk lives and equipment in a mad rush to the planet. It's not going anywhere.

DAE-JONG

Of course. The Ground Team will be selected before Yellow Shift. They will be set up in the Operations Ready Room and begin analysis of possible landing locations in coordination with the Science Team.

ISABELLA

What about the shuttles and landing vehicles? Are they all set?

JACK

All set, just like I remember them.

KASANDRA

It will take some practise for the shuttle pilots.

JACK

We have been training in the simulators. The pilots are ready.

DAE-JONG

When we have a good idea of the best locations, then we can plan for Phase Three, setting up the base camp. Which will enable much better opportunities to study the planet.

PAMELA

(sternly)

That is still a number of shifts away.

ERIC

Everyone has a job to do. I know we are all excited and wants to help, but let's give the Ground Recon Team room to work, while being prepared to support their requests.

Eric looks around the room, everyone nods.

PAMELA

We are finally here. It has been a great journey; everyone has done an outstanding job. Make sure you tell your folks how proud I am of their efforts. Captain, as soon as we reach orbit, send Earth the code word, "Touchdown".

CHRISTIAN

It will be an honor.

All stand up and exit behind Pamela and Eric.

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - LATER

Pamela and Eric sit in the office in a relaxed manner. She is sipping tea, while he has coffee.

PAMELA

I was very surprised about the recent election.

ERIC

Why?

PAMELA

(surprised)

Why? I never expected to serve, let alone as president. I mean, you have been the Operations Officer for the entire trip.

ERIC

I was expecting to retire, but am humbled and honored to be chosen as the vice president.

PAMELA

You should be the president! Everyone should have voted for you, you are the logical choice.

ERIC

Don't underestimate yourself. You were the doctor for everyone on the ship. I might know how everything works and who is good at what jobs, but you know everyone.

Eric and Pamela look at each other.

ERIC (CONT'D)

You delivered every baby. They trust you with their lives.

PAMELA

I'm not ready for these big decisions.

ERIC

Don't worry. We are all here to help you.

Pamela takes another sip of tea.

PAMELA

What if I make a wrong decision?

ERIC
 Pamela, we all trust you.
 (relaxes, smiles)
 We made it here. Now we just have
 to set up a base camp and begin
 exploring our new home.
 (sits back)
 Too easy.

INT. OPERATIONS READY ROOM - SHIFT GREEN

BRYAN (47, African American) walks into the operations ready room where there are TRENT (31), NIKKI (37), and 25 CREW MEMBERS sitting in the room. He stands in the middle of the room until everyone stops talking.

BRYAN
 Listen up. All of you are probably wondering. Why you are sitting in the Operations Ready Room? Some of you might look around the room and think you are the best crew members on the USS Constellation?

Bryan looks Trent in the eyes.

BRYAN (CONT'D)
 Wrong! Each of you were chosen because you are the most expendable people on this ship. As guinea pigs. The rest of the ship won't even care if you don't come back after.
 (pause, looks around,
 yells)
 Setting foot on the planet!

All cheer, give high fives, and hugs.

ARABELLA (31) hugs Trent.

TRENT
 (yells)
 Quiet down, quiet down! Let the commander talk!

BRYAN
 Trent, your Team includes the shuttle pilots, security, and medics. Nikki, your Science Team includes eleven scientists. Your first job is to find the best landing locations for a base camp.

Trent and Nikki both stand.

BRYAN (CONT'D)

Trent, Nikki, take charge and prepare your teams. Be ready to go in fifteen shifts.

TRENT

Security Team, bring your gear down to the Hangar Bay. We are going to lay out all the equipment and load the shuttles right for once!

NIKKI

Science Team, we have a lot of work ahead of us, we'll load the equipment on the shuttles first. Arabella, get with Suzy and find the best landing spots.

Everyone gets up to start working, smiling, laughing, and shaking hands.

INT. REC ROOM - SHIFT GREEN

Eric and Jack are relaxing on a big couch in front of a wall of nine large TV screens. The Rec room is very quiet; through one of the large windows is the planet below. They are watching football both major and college, hockey, baseball, basketball both major and college, and several news channels.

JACK

Eric, check this out.

Jack points to a football game where an instant replay shows a great catch for a touchdown.

ERIC

Nice catch.

Eric uses his ACE to select a drink of juice which a robot brings to him.

JACK

Those robots are great. I'm not moving to the planet until the robots are working.

ERIC

Can you imagine these robots at a game?

JACK

Maybe Antonio can program them to yell, "Hotdog, peanuts, cold beer!".

ERIC

The kids wouldn't understand it.

LANCE (77) walks in.

JACK

The farting robots were funny.

LANCE

What are you two watching?

ERIC

We are enjoying the greatest American, male pastime; watching as many sports as possible at the same time.

JACK

While drinking cold beer.

Jack and Eric look at each other an fist bump.

ERIC

Care to join us?

Lance, happily sits down.

LANCE

Eric, I've never seen you actually, relax. Where's the cold beer?

JACK

Sorry, was just kidding about that, maybe once we start living on the planet.

LANCE

Don't disappoint me like that. Is this something new?

ERIC

When the ship slowed down, we started receiving all the updated video that Earth has been sending. So, we are catching up.

LANCE

Where's the football channel?

ERIC
Right in front, Steelers versus
Cowboys. Or Michigan versus Ohio
State.

LANCE
Sorry, where's the soccer and rugby
channels?

JACK
I never knew you were from across
the pond?

Lance uses his ACE to change a couple of channels.

LANCE
Excellent, here's Chelsea versus
Manchester United.

Lance uses the ACE on another screen.

LANCE (CONT'D)
And there is England versus
Australia in a cricket Test Match.

ERIC
Lance graduated from Cambridge at
nineteen. Michelle taught him to
speak American.

LANCE
I wouldn't say it was Michelle, but
rather a lack of English culture.

JACK
Fish and Chips, tea and biscuits,
Sheppard's pie, ale, cricket?

LANCE
Precisely.

ERIC
Hate to disappoint you, but we're
driving on the right hand side of
the road on Pantera.

TRACI (66) walks in.

TRACI
What are you guys doing?

JACK
Enjoying a Saturday.

ERIC
And Sunday afternoon.

LANCE
At the same time.

TRACI
(loudly)
I can't believe you come twenty-six
light years from Earth and all you
want to do is sit on the couch and
watch football!

LANCE
And soccer.

JACK
And cricket.

Lance fist bumps Jack.

A robot almost bumps into Traci forcing her to jump out of
the way as it delivers chips, dips, and snacks.

JACK (CONT'D)
It's a good thing we have the
robots.

TRACI
(huffs)
Boys. This is worse than on Earth.
Now you have robots to serve you,
you'll never get up!

ERIC
But they're not as pretty as our
wives.

Traci playfully slaps the back of Eric's head.

INT. HALLWAY - SHIFT YELLOW

ANNETTE (44) is walking down the hallway when RUSS (23) and
ERNST (22) race up behind her.

RUSS
(excitedly)
Mom!

ANNETTE
(startled)
Russ?

Annette turns, Russ hugs her.

RUSS
(excitedly)
Did you hear? Ernst and I are on
the Ground Recon Team!

ANNETTE
No. I didn't know that. That's
great.

RUSS
Yeah! We know. Ernst gets to fly
one of the shuttles.

ERNST
I can't wait to finally try the
real shuttle. We have to go pack
our gear!

RUSS
I'm on Security with Trent as the
lead!

Ernst starts to move forward and pulls Russ.

ERNST
Come on, we have to pack our gear!

ANNETTE
Do you have to be the first?

RUSS
(incredulous)
Mom?! Are you kidding?

ANNETTE
But, but it might be dangerous.
Please be careful.

Ernst starts jogging, Russ is smiling and happy and calls
back.

RUSS
(yells)
Don't worry Mom. I'll be fine!

Ernst and Russ high five and greet CREW MEMBERS as they run
down the hallway CHEERING.

INT. DINING ROOM - SHIFT YELLOW

Eric, Traci, Lance, MICHELLE (70), Jack, ERIN (60), THERESA (72), and several other older CREW MEMBERS sitting in the dining room. Traci and Michelle stack dirty dishes and utensils onto robots which take them away. On the big video screens are images of Pantera: land masses, mountains, new species of animals and plants.

THERESA

Jack, Erin, are you happy to be here, or not?

ERIN

I'm glad to be here.

JACK

It's good to be here, but I am sorry for my family, left behind.

ERIC

You two didn't have much of a choice.

MICHELLE

Traci almost didn't make it.

TRACI

That was a close one.

JACK

Why?

TRACI

I was pregnant with Trent and wasn't supposed to take the shuttle.

THERESA

Eric, I heard Traci found you watching football the other shift. Is that true?

Everyone turns to look at Eric.

ERIC

(embarrassed)

Jack was watching football, Lance was watching soccer and I was mostly watching baseball.

MICHELLE

You took a shift off?

ERIC
(embarrassed)
Yeah, it's not against the law is it?

THERESA
Eric, it's not the fact that you were watching football. But, you never took a shift off in what? Fifty Earth years?

TRACI
No matter how much I begged.

ERIC
We're here now. I can take a little break.

MICHELLE
I don't think you know how.

Everyone laughs, but Eric.

ERIC
Well, let's see.

Eric gets up and goes to a back room.

THERESA
Hope we didn't upset him too much?

TRACI
He'll be alright, he just needs some fiber.

Everyone laughs.

LANCE
He just needs another mission.

Eric comes out of the back room with a large wooden crate.

THERESA
What have you got there?

ERIC
One of the last shuttles up to the ship contained several crates, gifts from several nations.

ERIN
Like a time capsule of sorts?

ERIC

Yes, I guess so. I've been saving this one for the right occasion.

TRACI

Don't keep us waiting, dear.

ERIC

We all faced many challenges, but we stuck together and made it here to Pantera. It's time for our children to take the lead in discovering and building a new world.

LANCE

Just open the box.

Eric opens the wooden case.

ERIC

We deserve a little celebration.

Eric pulls out a bottle of champagne, followed by scotch, wine, beer, sake, vodka, and other expensive drinks.

Everyone cheers, claps, and breaks out cups.

MICHELLE

Eric, a few words please.

Eric raises his glass, everyone else follows.

ERIC

To those we left behind, to those who fell along the path, to you who are here, and to our children; our future. Welcome to the planet Pantera.

Everyone toasts: "TO PANTERA", clinks glasses and drinks.

INT. HANGER BAY - SHIFT GREEN

Trent inspects the layout and loading of equipment onto the small transports. He and his team of security people have a quantity of motorcycles, weapons, ammunition, medical bags, food, water, and other gear laid out in front of each transport.

CONNIE (22) and MICKEY (23, male) are working to put medical supplies inside a container.

JENNA (23) uses her ACE to practise flying a toy shuttle replica around while sitting on a box.

CONNIE

Mickey, it will fit, don't worry.

MICKEY

I wish you would stop doing that!

CONNIE

I can't help it.

Trent and Russ walk up.

TRENT

What's going on over here?

JENNA

Mickey and Connie are re-packing the medical supplies for the fifth time and Connie keeps reading his mind.

TRENT

Connie, you're not supposed to intrude on others.

CONNIE

I know, I'm sorry. It's a combination of emotions, excitement, and Mickey thinking too loudly.

MICKEY

(upset)

Now I think too loud?

JENNA

Why don't you two just get married. Like, right now.

Connie and Mickey both look up at Jenna, then Connie glances over to see Russ's reaction.

Everyone is laughing while Jenna still flies the small shuttle.

TRENT

Jenna, when are the scheduled test flights?

JENNA

Next shift, we're going to take both shuttles out and maneuver around the Constellation.

Jenna lands the toy shuttle on top of Connie's equipment, but then it tips over and falls to the floor.

CONNIE

That's encouraging.

ALICE (22) and Nikki walk up, joining the group.

ALICE

Trent, we have all the remote outposts loaded, five per shuttle.

TRENT

Good.

NIKKI

Do we have to set up the security robots?

Bryan walks up to join the group.

TRENT

Why do you ask?

NIKKI

I was thinking that we may not want to kill everything in a hundred meters. Things we are supposed to be studying.

TRENT

We have to protect the equipment. But you have a point.

RUSS

They are not on auto.

TRENT

There you go. You can study the effects of the rounds when we shoot something.

Nikki looks sternly at Trent, but everyone is laughing good naturally.

BRYAN

Trent, your father is here and needs a couple of minutes of your time.

TRENT

The two shuttles are loaded and will be ready for the flight tests next shift.

BRYAN

Excellent work. Team, get some rest and be ready.

Bryan catches Trent's eye and nods in the direction of Eric standing near the Operations Room doorway.

INT. HANGER BAY - MOMENTS LATER

Trent walks over to Eric near the doorway.

TRENT

Hi, Dad.

ERIC

Hi, Trent.

TRENT

Did you stop by to check on things? We're all packed and ready to start flight tests.

ERIC

Yes and no. I am proud of you and quite envious. Wish I was packing for the mission.

TRENT

It's pretty exciting to be one of the first on the planet.

Eric puts his hand on Trent's shoulder.

ERIC

It's a big responsibility, don't let excitement rush decisions and take shortcuts that will increase risks. If you land in three shifts or forty-three shifts, it won't matter. But, if someone is hurt or a shuttle damaged trying to go fast, it will not be justified.

TRENT

I understand.

ERIC
 It's time to discuss a family
 issue.
 (pause)
 Your mother is ill.

TRENT
 Ill?

ERIC
 Anna is with her in Medical.

TRENT
 (worried)
 What happened?

ERIC
 Anna's running more tests, so we
 should know more soon. Let's talk.

Eric nods in the direction of the door.

Eric and Trent start walking out of the Hangar Deck.

INT. MEDICAL ROOM - SHIFT GREEN

The Medical Room has four beds. Traci and a YOUNG GIRL (13, broken leg) occupy two and two stand empty. Next to each bed, incorporated into the walls are places for equipment such as IVs, blood, oxygen, and other medical needs. There are multiple video screens showing statistics and lab results and an extra two screens for the patient to use and currently showing different pictures of the planet.

ANNA (29) is standing next to the bed talking with Traci when Trent and Eric walk in.

TRENT
 Mom. How are you doing?

Trent hugs Traci, then Anna.

TRACI
 I'm fine. How are the preparations going?

TRENT
 We're working hard and will take the shuttles out for the first time, next shift.

TRACI
 Wonderful. I hope they still work.

Trent nods.

ANNA

Did you hear? April just had a baby boy.

TRENT

That's great!

TRACI

She's in the next room.

Trent looks at Anna.

NOTE: Only Trent hears Anna's thought.

ANNA'S (V.O.)

(thought)

Mom's brave, but isn't feeling well.

Trent nods to Anna with understanding.

TRACI

Trent, when do you take the first big mission?

TRENT

We are planning the first mission to the planet in about fifteen shifts.

TRACI

I am so envious, proud, and excited all at the same time. I can't wait to get to the planet! To walk barefoot on the grass, build a huge bonfire, roast hotdogs, and have a real cookout again.

YOUNG GIRL

You can do that? Have fires?

Eric and Traci laugh.

ERIC

I think we need to teach the kids a few camping tricks.

INT. BRIDGE - SHIFT GREEN

The Bridge CREW MEMBERS are extremely excited as they prepare fire the final thrusters to establish orbit around new planet. Kasandra stands near the PILOT. JULIE (49, Japanese American) stands behind Christian observing.

KASANDRA

Twenty seconds to final thrust.

PILOT

Roger, final thrust programed and ready to execute.

CHRISTIAN

Execute.

Everyone on the Bridge watch their monitors, all are quiet until the ship responds to the engine thrust.

KASANDRA

Captain, the USS Constellation has reached final orbit.

Christian smiles.

CHRISTIAN

Thanks, great work team.

Christian picks up his ACE and uses it to make the announcement.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

Attention. The USS Constellation has reached orbit. Touchdown!

Throughout the ship there is an audible CHEER. On the Bridge it is high-fives, and hugs, then back to work.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

External Operations, launch the satellites and begin shuttle flight tests.

Christian turns to MAGGIE (37) who is sitting at the 3-D map of the USS Constellation.

MAGGIE

Science Team, you are cleared to launch satellites.

LOREN (V.O.)

Roger, launching five satellites.

The 3-D Display shows the satellites moving outside the USS Constellation and establish orbits.

MAGGIE

Shuttle Falcon you are cleared for flight test, over.

JENNA (V.O.)

Roger, Shuttle Falcon beginning flight test.

The 3-D Display shows the Shuttle Falcon as it moves from the Hangar Deck.

MAGGIE

Shuttle Hawk you are cleared for flight test, over.

ERNST (V.O.)

Roger, Shuttle Hawk beginning flight test.

The 3-D Display shows Shuttle Hawk moving from the Hangar Deck to a position outside the USS Constellation next to Shuttle Falcon.

INT. SCIENCE ROOM - SHIFT GREEN

The Science Room is extremely busy. LOREN (49) stands in the middle of the room monitoring the work of the various CREW MEMBERS as they examine the information from various sensors.

There are different stations in the room: Flora, Fauna, Weather, Geology, Hydrology, and Mapping. Each use multiple screens for their work, which feeds a large 3-D map of the planet in the center of the room. The 3-D display continues to improve in quality as each station is able to confirm information and pass it to the 3-D display.

SUZY (31) is working with her ACE to identify locations on the 3-D map. Next to her, Arabella hovers over her shoulder pointing out locations.

ARABELLA

Suzy, did you find anything yet?

SUZY

No, not really.

ARABELLA

There's a spot right over there.

Arabella points to a green area on the map.

SUZY

Hydro reports the water table is too high. The shuttle will sink into the ground and get stuck.

ARABELLA

How about over here?

Arabella points to another location.

SUZY

No. That area is too dry. Weather thinks it gets less than 10 centimeters per year of precipitation.

ARABELLA

It's green.

SUZY

Geo says that's because of the rocks.

ARABELLA

(exasperated)

Come on, give me something.

SUZY

(whispers)

Get me on the Ground Recon Team.

ARABELLA

(whispers)

No, I can't do that. I'm sorry, but I didn't pick the team.

SUZY

(whispers)

You have to get me on the team. How can I do my job without touching the ground? Without studying the planets and animals? You know I have to be on the planet.

LOREN

Arabella, please leave Suzy alone so she can do her job.

Loren goes back to her work.

SUZY

Yes ma'am. Arabella's assisting with the maps on the top ten landing locations.

ARABELLA

(whispers)

You know I can't change the people on the team.

SUZY

(whispers)

Yes you can, ask Nikki. Tell her you need me on the team.

ARABELLA

(whispers)

I already talked to Trent and Nikki.

LOREN

(exasperated)

Arabella, if you don't leave. I will keep you here and let Suzy fill your position?

ARABELLA

On the way.

Starts walking out of the door.

Suzy kicks her in the butt on the way out.

ARABELLA (CONT'D)

(smiling)

Talk to you all later.

Everyone waves as Arabella leaves the room.

LOREN

Suzy, everyone will go to the planet soon enough. I need you here.

INT. OPERATIONS READY ROOM - SHIFT YELLOW

The Operations Ready Room has detailed images and the 3-D map of the different possible locations for landing. Locations are highlighted on the 3-D map with corresponding images on the video screens. Nikki and Arabella stand next to the 3-D map.

NIKKI

The Science Team identified about thirty-five suitable landing locations, any of which will make excellent base camps.

TRENT

Dae-Jong wants us to set up sensors on the potential base camps first. What's your number one spot?

NIKKI

There are at least ten very good locations and twenty-five possible options.

BRYAN

Nikki.

(stops Nikki from interrupting)

Where would you like to live? Just make a recommendation.

NIKKI

There is one area, here.

Nikki points to a place on the 3-D map.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

This area seems to fit most of the requirements. It's a large valley region with a river system providing excellent irrigation. It's large, about one thousand kilometers North to South and two thousand, five hundred kilometers East to West. The main river runs from West to East, then turning South to eventually empty into the sea. There are many types of plants and animals.

Jenna points to some large grassy areas.

JENNA

Looks like plenty of room for the shuttles and transports to land.

TRENT

But, why do you prefer this over the other nine places.

ARABELLA

The mountain ranges to East and West provides isolation from the jungles and other climatic zones. The situation creates a controlled environment that we can compare with other zones.

BRYAN

Keep working on this region, narrow down the best places for the base camp. Trent, get with Life Support on the base camp layout.

TRENT

At the last meeting we planned four to five buildings. Operations, science, security, and life support for up to one hundred people.

BRYAN

Jenna and Ernst, need to work out airspace control measures for the shuttles and transports with Maggie.

JENNA

No problems.

BRYAN

Nikki, good work, keep on top of it. I'll brief the President and let you know when we are ready for the first mission.

TRENT

What's the camp site named?

ARABELLA

I vote simple. How about, Base Camp One.

INT. CLASSROOM - SHIFT YELLOW

SELENA (43), Bryan and Arabella stand in from of the six and seven year old CHILDREN including BETSY (7), APRIL (7), GARY (7).

SELENA

Class, I asked a couple of friends to stop by and talk with you. My husband, Bryan, and one of the science team, Arabella.

(MORE)

SELENA (CONT'D)

They will be heading down to the planet in the next couple of shifts, but they've volunteered to come and talk with you.

BETSY

Miss Selena is very worried about you.

BRYAN

Thank you Betsy.

SELENA

Betsy, please respect the privacy of other people's thoughts. Arabella, she...

ARABELLA

Yes, I know, she has very good skills.

BETSY

I'm sorry.

BRYAN

As everyone knows we have arrived at Pantera and have deployed satellites that are sending back tons of information to our Science Team.

Arabella presses her ACE and the screens in the room start to show satellite images and some ground images of the planet.

ARABELLA

We are going through the massive amounts of data being received.

APRIL

How many animals have you found?

ARABELLA

Our sensors have only found seven species so far. They are large animals that live in the grassland areas, but I'm sure we will find lots of interesting animals when we land.

APRIL

Do we have to land on the planet?

GARY

Of course we have to land on the planet, that's why we are here.

APRIL

But, I like the ship.

BRYAN

April, don't worry, the ship will remain in orbit for many years. It will continue to support us as we build the base camp and grow into a space port. There will be many people who will work up here.

Bryan and Arabella's ACEs start RINGING.

The ACEs have the message, "Ground Team, report to Operations Ready Room".

SELENA

Is it time to go already?

Bryan stands up.

BRYAN

Looks like we have the green light.

ARABELLA

Bye class.

CLASS

Goodbye.

Selena stands up and walks with Bryan to the doorway, where they hug and kiss goodbye.

SELENA

See you in a few shifts?

BRYAN

We are just going to install some sensors and we'll be back in no time.

SELENA

I thought you were going to set up the base camp?

BRYAN

Not yet, but don't worry. You'll get some time off soon enough.

Selena hits him.

BRYAN (CONT'D)
See you later, class!

SELENA
Get out of here.

INT. OPERATIONS READY ROOM - SHIFT

Trent and Nikki are at the 3-D Display looking at information near one of the planned base camps.

BRYAN
Has the mission been approved?

TRENT
(whispers)
No.

Trent quickly moves over to Bryan so as not to disturb Nikki.

TRENT (CONT'D)
(whispers)
The mission was scrubbed.

Trent holds up his hand to stop Bryan from interrupting.

TRENT (CONT'D)
(whispers)
The Science team found something interesting, just listen.

NIKKI
What is your number estimate? From here, it looks like a couple of hundred.

SUZY (V.O.)
Our team here is in agreement. About three to four hundred is the best estimate available based on the foliage.

NIKKI
Do you see any near the river?

SUZY (V.O.)
No, just in the trees of this one area.

Arabella points to an interesting pattern of the trees along the side of a small hill.

ARABELLA

It looks like there is some type of pattern to these particular trees.

NIKKI

Almost like they started in the middle and grew outwards along the edge of this small river.

(to Suzy)

What's the size of the forest area?

SUZY (V.O.)

We're measuring about twenty square kilometers. It has an interesting pattern.

NIKKI

Arabella just pointed that out as well.

BRYAN

(whispers to Trent)

What is it?

TRENT

(whispers)

Looks like one of our possible base camp locations is already occupied.

BRYAN

(whispers to Trent)

Occupied?

TRENT

(whispers)

We're not alone.

Bryan looks shocked.

INT. BRIDGE CONFERENCE ROOM - SHIFT YELLOW

Meeting of the President and staff to discuss the details of the planet. Pamela, Eric, Dae-Jong, Loren, ASHLEY (60), KURT (49), DONNA (49), Suzy, Jack.

PAMELA

It has been an interesting turn of events. To come all this way, only to find the planet is inhabited.

Pamela takes a sip of coffee.

PAMELA (CONT'D)

Science Team, please bring us up to speed on who they are.

LOREN

We've been concentrating on the locations where we believe would make excellent base camps. Of course, the features that we are looking for such as mild climate, good drainage, water supply, flora and fauna, and defensible are the features that any other humanoid species would also seek.... Madam President, the Science Team has found evidence of one humanoid village.

DAE-JONG

Have you found evidence of other locations, yet?

LOREN

No, not yet, but we have every reason to assume there will be more villages.

ERIC

Is there any indication that they know of our presence here in orbit or have seen any of the satellites or remote probes?

LOREN

No. Based on their technology, they will have limited abilities to detect our presence.

ASHLEY

Can you give us some more details? I mean, this is pretty amazing.

LOREN

Suzy?

SUZY

There appears to be a small village of approximately three to four hundred humanoids. They probably planted the trees because the largest trees are clearly in the center where there appear to be several structures.

JACK

I didn't think this planet had any humanoids?

LOREN

Neither did any of us.

KURT

What do they eat? Do they grow crops?

SUZY

There are no signs of farming or raising animals.

DONNA

You are not describing anything that makes me believe they have advanced technology, mining skills, building skills, machines, ...or ...flight.

LOREN

No, we haven't seen anything that leads us to believe they are past the Stone Age, as far as technology is concerned.

DAE-JONG

Madam President, we have been carefully monitoring the situation and would like to begin operations down to the planet. The recon team is packed and prepared for the first mission. The current plan has us landing approximately three hundred and fifty kilometers from the humanoids, far enough to maintain distance, yet close enough for our sensors to monitor the situation.

PAMELA

Eric?

ERIC

This is our destination and we will need to go to the planet. Finding humanoid species is one part of our mission and we will need to figure out a way to share the planet. We need more information before making the final decision on where to establish a base camp.

Pause.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I recommend approving the plan, but we should start planning a diplomatic team and methods to make contact with them.

Everyone waits for Pamela to speak.

PAMELA

Thanks for everyone's hard work. I look at this big planet and wonder why, exactly, all of you want to land near these humanoids?

Everyone begins to talk at once.

Holds up her hands to stop people from talking.

PAMELA (CONT'D)

But I am also curious to know who they are and if we can live with them. The Science Team will need to continuously monitor their village and watch for any changes because of our actions. So, please modify your plan so that you land no closer than five hundred kilometers from the humanoid camp and shuttle operations cannot be seen by them.

Pamela looks around the room.

PAMELA (CONT'D)

Operations Officer, your plan is approved with minor modifications. Thanks.

INT. REC ROOM - SHIFT YELLOW

About a HUNDRED CREW MEMBERS of all ages are playing music and dancing, everyone looks happy and joking around.

INT. OPERATIONS READY ROOM - SHIFT BLUE

Trent and Bryan walk into the Operations Ready Room where they greet the rest of the team.

BRYAN

Recon team! Get it on, let's go!

Everyone in the room cheers and then starts putting on gear. The Security personnel have large suits similar to those used in the HALO video games. The shuttle pilots wear the lightweight version. The Medical and Science team personnel have lighter versions of the battle armor. Each suit has a helmet and a location to attach the ACE device allowing communication and interaction with each other and the ship.

INT. HANGER DECK - MOMENTS LATER

The pilots are ready first and start walking to the shuttles and climb into the pilot seats, followed by the medics, then scientists, and finally the security personnel.

INT. SHUTTLE FALCON - MOMENTS LATER

Jenna is sitting in the pilot seat of the shuttle looking at the Hangar deck in front of her.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Science Team?

NIKKI (V.O.)
Science Team is prepared.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Security Team?

TRENT (V.O.)
Security Team is ready.

BRYAN (V.O.)
USS Constellation, this is Recon One, requesting launch approval, over.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
Recon One, you are approved for launch, take your orders from External Operations.

MAGGIE (V.O.)
Shuttle Falcon, the hangar doors are opening and you are cleared for launch, over.

JENNA (V.O.)
Roger, Shuttle Falcon cleared for launch.

Jenna watches the Heads Up Display (HUD) on the window in front of her shows the hangar door is open.

She pulls back on a control mechanism to gently lift the shuttle into the air, backing it out of the hangar.

Once Jenna clears the hangar deck, she sees Shuttle Hawk following them into space. The Hangar Deck air lock closes once both shuttles are clear.

INT. SHUTTLE CARGO AREA - SAME TIME

In the back of the shuttle Trent and Bryan can see and monitor the situation and flight of the shuttles by various video screens.

TRENT (V.O.)

Looks good, should take about
fifteen minutes to the first point.

JENNA (V.O.)

Hold your helmets boys, here we go.

EXT. SHUTTLES - MOMENTS LATER

Shuttle Falcon is followed by Shuttle Hawk as they plunge through the atmosphere. The stratosphere's intense heat and turbulence is quickly replaced by the cool blue air of the planet. Everyone looks around at the sky and the clouds as the shuttles descend and over the mountain ranges and green grassland below.

BRYAN (V.O.)

Boys and girls, welcome to your new
home!

JENNA (V.O.)

Arabella, we will be landing at the
first position in thirty seconds,
over.

ARABELLA (V.O.)

Roger.

Jenna pilots Shuttle Falcon over the snow covered mountain range flying West, then over rolling hills with various types of trees to a valley area with a small stream and grassland. Jenna follows the navigation screen to find a small hill, then gently lands on a flat area.

JENNA (V.O.)

We're here.

EXT. HILLTOP - MOMENTS LATER

The tail ramp lowers and Trent is the first out onto the ground, quickly followed by Bryan and Arabella.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
 (laughing)
 Hey Trent, the scientists need some room to work.

TRENT (V.O.)
 Just making sure you're safe.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
 From what, the grass?

Trent and two Security Team members unload two large containers and set them on the ground outside the shuttle.

Something slithers quickly by in the grass.

Bryan uses large binoculars to scan the area while Shuttle Hawk circles above. The Security Team members open the containers.

Each container opens to release a ground and an airborne ROBOT which begin operations.

Arabella uses her ACE to check the ROBOTS video and information.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
 Science, first recon robots deployed, over.

SUZY (V.O.)
 Roger Arabella, the robot sensors are fully operational, over.

TRENT (V.O.)
 Let's go team. Shuttle Hawk, you have the next landing site, over.

ERNST (V.O.)
 Roger, follow me.

Bryan, Trent, Arabella and the rest of the team load up and the shuttle takes off.

JENNA (V.O.)
 Arabella, how was it?

ARABELLA (V.O.)
 The grass felt good.

INT. HANGER BAY - SHIFT GREEN

Bryan, Trent, Arabella, Jenna, Nikki, Ernst, and the rest of the team get out of the shuttles and walk to the Operations Ready Room. They take off their helmets and give fist bumps on the way.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Bryan, Trent, and Nikki are surprised as they walk into the room to find Pamela and Dae-Jong on the video screen and appears upset.

DAE-JONG (V.O.)

(sternly)

Bryan! What happened?

BRYAN

(happy, suddenly guarded)

Dae-Jong, Madam President, everything went according to plan.

DAE-JONG (V.O.)

(sternly)

Not according to the Science Team. Get up here and bring Trent and Nikki. Send your pilots up to External Operations for debriefing.

BRYAN

On the way.

Bryan turns off the video screen.

TRENT

What's that all about?

NIKKI

I don't know, but there is a lot of talking on the Science net.

JENNA

I got a bad feeling about all this.

BRYAN

Stand tall, it was an excellent mission and the next one is planned for two shifts.

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - SHIFT GREEN

Bryan, Trent, and Nikki walk into the President's Office where Eric, Dae-Jong, and Loren are already seated. The Science Team and Maggie are on the video screens.

DAE-JONG

Bryan, have a seat.

Dae-Jong points to the last available seat.

BRYAN

What's going on?

PAMELA

Bryan, did your team stray from the flight plan in any way?

BRYAN

No, absolutely not.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

Madam President, we'll review the black boxes on the shuttles, but we believe the shuttle was not visible.

DAE-JONG

Something happened at the village we were watching while you were on the mission. The village was attacked.

BRYAN

What? Why didn't anyone call us?

DAE-JONG

I thought you were monitoring the situation.

BRYAN

We were tracking the locations we visited to see if anything showed up. What happened?

LOREN

It looks like the village suffered almost thirty-five percent casualties. We are not sure what instigated the attack.

TRENT

What type of weapons were used?

SUZY (V.O.)

There were no explosions or signs of violence like artillery. The attackers swarmed over the village and the fighting was hand to hand and short range throwing weapons.

BRYAN

There must be a reason to attack the village. Resources. Food.

ERIC

Or slaves.

Everyone looks at Eric.

ERIC (CONT'D)

We are dealing with at least two groups, but most likely more. We know at least one is aggressive.

DAE-JONG

We need to plan for more security personnel for the base camp.

PAMELA

Before we think about the base camp. We need to understand more about the situation of these humanoids. How many are there? How many villages? Who are the leaders?

TRENT

Ma'am, the best base camp is hundreds of kilometers from the village.

DAE-JONG

We can look at other locations.

LOREN

We'll continue to monitor the various sensors and see if any of the humanoids approaches them. It's going to be challenging trying to understand the leadership.

PAMELA

Eric, Dae-Jong, Loren, I want to have a full cabinet meeting before the next trip to the planet.

INT. COMMON ROOM - SHIFT YELLOW

Arabella, Suzy, Nikki, Anna, Alice, Connie, and Jenna are sitting together in the Common Room. Around them, TWENTY GIRLS of all ages sit to listen to the stories. Robots come and go delivering drinks and snacks to the girls as they talk.

NIKKI

The planet was so awesome!

ARABELLA

The ground, the sky, the smells.

SUZY

What does it smell like?

ALICE

Do you remember when that planting pod ventilation broke for six shifts?

CONNIE

Yeah, just like that.

YOUNG GIRL

Was there any air movement on the planet?

ARABELLA

Yeah. It was a little rough for Jenna.

JENNA

No it wasn't! I just had to get used to it.

ANNA

Did you see any animals?

NIKKI

Jenna almost hit some big flying animal, like a bird or a bat.

JENNA

Stupid thing wouldn't get out of the way.

BETSY

How big was it?

JENNA

It was about that big.

Jenna holds her arms out at full length.

JENNA (CONT'D)

The thing was fast and just kept hovering around the nose of the shuttle.

ARABELLA

We landed at one place and found some interesting creatures. They looked like some type of bird, but with teeth instead of beaks.

SUZY

I can't wait to start collecting some for specimens!

APRIL

Did you find any dinosaurs?

ALICE

No, no dinosaurs. There were some large herbivore creatures, double the size of a cow and with spikes growing on top of its back.

JENNA

Yeah, they were weird!

SUZY

Are there any dangerous animals?

CONNIE

There was one that was attacking Russ until Alice shot it.

ANNA

You shot it?

ALICE

Yeah, it was crawling all over Russ's battle armor. So I shot it.

CONNIE

It exploded! Russ was so upset you shot him, he was hopping mad.

Alice, Connie, Arabella, and Jenna are laughing at their story.

JENNA

I thought we were under attack or something once Alice started shooting and Russ was yelling.

ARABELLA

You should see the back of Russ's armor! It's all covered with purple and blue goo from the creature.

ALICE

Yuck!

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SHIFT

Pamela, Dae-Jong, Eric, Loren, Bryan, Ashley, Christian, Maggie, TY (37), and AMANDA (42) sit at the large table in the conference room.

DAE-JONG

Madam President, we have everyone present and ready.

PAMELA

Please proceed.

DAE-JONG

We have developed a concept to establish the first base camp and would like your approval. First, Loren is going to update us on the situation.

LOREN

We found one small humanoid village that appears relatively peaceful with approximately two to three hundred humanoids left. When the shuttle returned to the USS Constellation, the village was attacked by another group of humanoids. We are not sure where the second group came from.

PAMELA

So, the shuttle had nothing to do with this event?

LOREN

No. None that we can tell.

PAMELA

Dae-Jong, please proceed.

DAE-JONG

Bryan, as the ground team leader, will brief the concept.

BRYAN

We propose to set up a small, temporary base camp of up to fifty people approximately eight hundred kilometers from the village. We already setup a remote sensor and no humanoids have been detected. The base camp will be a small headquarters, security section, and science section. It will take four shuttle lifts and two transport lifts to transport all the equipment and personnel.

TY

We will have a QRF force on the Constellation, prepared and ready with a thirty minute response time.

CHRISTIAN

The Navigation Team has computed the requirements to maintain a geosynchronous orbit that will maintain a position over the base camp. This will optimize shuttle and transport operations.

AMANDA

We are prepared to deploy three work stations and one sleeping quarter. There will be a resupply run every six shifts.

PAMELA

What is the plan for personnel returning to the Constellation?

DAE-JONG

We intend to minimize the transportation to and from the planet. The goal is to keep all plants, animals, soil, and water on the planet.

PAMELA

I'm very concerned about the humanoids. There is at least one aggressive group and we are not sure where they live. The base camp needs to be able to defend themselves until the QRF arrives, yet be able to evacuate quickly.

DAE-JONG

Bryan and Trent, let's look at keeping one, maybe two shuttles at the base camp at all times. Keep them configured for reconnaissance and aerial defensive.

LANCE

Madam President, the humanoids seem intelligent and must be able to communicate in some fashion.

CHRISTIAN

Probably, but which group do you want to talk to?

ERIC

Good question, Captain. We should have R and D look to build some type of system we can set up for the humanoids to find, maybe they want to communicate with us. In the meantime, we should identify and train a diplomatic mission.

PAMELA

Good idea. Ashley.

ASHLEY

Yes ma'am.

PAMELA

Please submit a list of the best qualified individuals. Eric, you have the lead on prepping the diplomatic team.

DAE-JONG

Madam President, do we have your approval of the concept of operations for the base camp?

PAMELA

Yes, launch as soon as the Captain has the Constellation in position. Take your launch guidance from External Operations and be prepared to brief myself, Eric, and the Captain every third shift change.

EXT. FLYING SHUTTLE - DAY

The landing team flies down in Shuttle Falcon and Shuttle Hawk to the landing site. The two shuttles complete a circle around the area and finally land on a small rise of ground next to a SECURITY ROBOT.

EXT. LANDING ZONE - MOMENTS LATER

The back of Shuttle Falcon opens and Trent leads the way out onto the ground. He looks around at the second shuttle hovering overhead.

Trent opens his helmet visor and takes a deep breath of fresh air.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
Always have to be first!

BRYAN (V.O.)
Looks like the guinea pig is still alive. Guess we should go ahead and stay here.

JENNA (V.O.)
Get out of my shuttle, I have to get back to the Constellation.

TRENT (V.O.)
Team, get the landing lights set up. We have work to do.

The GROUND RECON TEAM exits the back of the shuttle and begins setting up equipment.

EXT. LANDING ZONE/BASE CAMP - DAY

The landing zone has two large transports and about SIXTY CREW MEMBERS working to off load the transports and set up two small buildings.

Trent and Russ look around at the work, then climb onto motorcycles and ride off towards a small hill about a kilometer away.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
Trent, where do you think you're going?

Arabella drives up in a dune buggy type vehicle with Alice and Mickey. The vehicle is loaded with equipment, including TWO SECURITY ROBOTS on the back.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
Beautiful day for a drive.

TRENT (V.O.)
Thought you had duty in the Ops
Center.

ALICE (V.O.)
We have to set up a security robot
on that little hilltop there.

The vehicle and motorcycles are about even. Trent pops a wheelie, then starts to speed off.

TRENT (V.O.)
Have dinner ready for me when I get
back!

ARABELLA (V.O.)
It's going to be a lonely night for
you if you don't take me along!

RUSS (V.O.)
First one to the hill wins!

The motorcycles race ahead of the dune buggy.

EXT. OUTPOST - EVENING

A large bonfire in the middle of the camp illuminates the four main buildings, two shuttles, and the CREW MEMBERS of the landing party. Everyone is wearing their normal uniforms.

RUSS
Hey Medic.

CONNIE
Russ, you know my name.

RUSS
Connie, can you take a look at
this?

Russ points to his wrist where there is a large red circle with smaller blue dots.

CONNIE
What happened?

RUSS
I don't know. I remember some
small bug biting me.

CONNIE

You should have told me earlier.

Connie holds his wrist and examines the bite. She opens a small medical kit and looks for some ointment.

RUSS

Wow, that feels good. Thanks.

CONNIE

Thanks for what?

RUSS

It feels better already.

CONNIE

I didn't even start yet.

Russ blushes.

RUSS

Well.

ALICE

Russ, can you hear anything strange?

RUSS

No, not now. Did you ask Arabella?

ALICE

Look at her.

Arabella is sitting next to Trent. Together, they are looking at photos on Arabella's ACE.

ALICE (CONT'D)

You think she can hear anyone else?

Arabella and Trent turn their heads to Alice.

Alice smiles.

ARABELLA

Hey.

TRENT

What do you mean Alice?

ALICE

I'm hearing voices that I haven't heard before. Like, curious thoughts. But they come and go.

ARABELLA

I heard something earlier today
near outpost one, but it was so
faint and muffled I thought maybe
it was one of you here in camp.

Connie finishes wrapping up Russ's arm with a bandage.

CONNIE

There you go. But we need to check
on it every shift.

RUSS

Thanks.

TRENT

Russ, you take the Watch Officer
job in the Ops Center.

RUSS

I want to go out and explore.

BRYAN

You'll get out soon enough, don't
worry.

ALICE

Is anyone thinking about a strange
smell?

JENNA

You must be sitting next to Mickey.

Several people laugh.

ALICE

No.

Alice shakes her head.

ALICE (CONT'D)

The voice isn't any of us. It's
very strange.

RUSS

I heard that. Muffled like
covering your mouth.

BRYAN

It can't be those humanoids. They
are about eight hundred kilometers
away.

TRENT

No way. All the sentry robots give us three hundred and sixty degree perimeter. We'd know if they came close.

Arabella picks up her ACE and calls Suzy.

ARABELLA

Hey Suzy!!

SUZY (V.O.)

Yeah!

ARABELLA

What's going on with the humanoids?

SUZY (V.O.)

Nothing. They don't seem to move during darkness. What's going on down there?

ARABELLA

We're sitting around the campfire, enjoying grilled steaks.

SUZY (V.O.)

(upset)
I hope it's burnt!

TRENT

Suzy, I'll try to get you down on the next shuttle.

SUZY (V.O.)

(more disappointed than
sarcastic)
Yeah right. Don't worry guys, if we see the humanoids move, we'll call.

ARABELLA

See you later!

JENNA

Bye!

SUZY (V.O.)

Bye!

TRENT

With that, I'm going to check on Mickey in HQ, then do a patrol of the perimeter.

RUSS
I'm coming.

CONNIE
Not with that arm!

BRYAN
Alice, you go with Trent. Maybe
you will hear some of those voices
outside the camp.

Trent and Alice stand up and put on their battle armor.

TRENT
What's wrong with his arm?

CONNIE
He was bit by something and I want
to be able to check it out
regularly.

TRENT
Russ, switch with Alice and take
watch in the Operations Room for a
few shifts.

RUSS
Got it.

TRENT
See you in the daylight.

ALICE
Bye.

Everyone waves.

EXT. CAMP - MORNING

Trent walks through the camp, stopping to watch Arabella,
Connie, and Nikki working. In front of them are three
planters with different colored dirt and packages of seeds.

Trent walks over.

TRENT
Hi, how's it going?

ARABELLA
Thought you were out on patrol?

TRENT

I finished a little while ago.
Can't you read my mind?

ARABELLA

I've been listening for the other
voices. They kind of come and go
without a pattern.

NIKKI

How do you do that? Read minds. I
never understood how some of you
can do that.

ARABELLA

We just can.

CONNIE

We did a huge experiment in the
Medical Section many shifts ago.
Many of the people who were born on
the ship seem to be able to use
additional areas of their brain.
Some can lift objects. Some can
see other spectrums of light. Some
can read minds.

ARABELLA

You can't 'read minds', more like
listen to what others want you to
hear. If you talk to yourself,
then I can hear it. But only if
I'm listening and close enough.

TRENT

You know when people are getting
mad.

ARABELLA

When people are upset, all the
anger, emotions, and feelings come
through pretty clearly.

NIKKI

It's still cool. OK, this batch is
almost done.

TRENT

Strange color soils. Black and
brown I can understand, but bright
red and blue?

Nikki continues planting seeds.

NIKKI

There are four soils that seem promising based on their nutrient mixture. So we are testing a variety of vegetables. Don't worry about the color, the Science Team knows what they are doing.

ARABELLA

Don't look hungry, we still have a lot of testing before eating anything grown in the soil.

TRENT

When are you going to bring down the test farm animals?

NIKKI

Loren and Suzy want to send them right away but Kurt is concerned about them. We need more people here to monitor their reaction to eating the local grasses. So Dae-Jong won't approve it, yet.

TRENT

I thought Bryan said it was approved.

NIKKI

Yes, without the additional people.

ARABELLA

Dae-Jong is trying to hold back the mass of people wanting to come down here for a visit.

CONNIE

Some of my friends are already deciding where they want to build houses.

TRENT

(surprised)
What?

CONNIE

Yeah. Haven't you been playing the Pantera planet game?

TRENT

No.

ARABELLA

You play by planning to build houses and visit places around the planet. You can even pick who to marry and raise a family.

Arabella catches Trent's eyes, she smiles and shrugs.

ARABELLA (CONT'D)

But you know, it's just for fun.

NIKKI

I think the boys are still hooked on war, racing, and flying games.

TRENT

We already have a planned base camp, then grow to a star base. You can't go building everywhere.

ARABELLA

Why not? It's a free planet.

EXT. RIVERBANK - AFTERNOON

Trent, Mickey, and Arabella are near the small river about three hundred meters from camp. Trent and Mickey are dressed in battle armor with their helmets off while Arabella is wearing a normal uniform.

Arabella is testing samples of the water. A medium sized robot with eight wheels has a number of containers filled with water, sand, and rock samples.

ARABELLA

You guys should feel this water. It's so fresh and clean. Amazing.

She picks up a net and puts it in the water but fails to catch anything.

MICKEY

There's movement on the far shore.

TRENT

Where?

MICKEY

About four hundred meters and down stream.

Arabella stops her work and looks up. Trent and Mickey are aiming their weapons across the river.

TRENT
I don't see anything.

MICKEY
There!

Mickey points.

ARABELLA
He's just curious and hungry.

TRENT
You can hear him?

ARABELLA
Yeah, just basic thoughts. He's harmless.

TRENT
I still can't see him.

Arabella casts a net in the river again.

MICKEY
He's big. Like a mixture of a bear and an ox, but he moves like a cat.

ARABELLA
I got something!

Arabella is fighting with the net and pulls out a small fish. She dumps it into one of the tanks of water.

ARABELLA (CONT'D)
Yeah! First catch!

Trent's ACE RINGS. He looks at it.

TRENT
Mickey, you have guard duty. Arabella, pack up and get ready to return to the camp! I have to run!

ARABELLA
(yells)
I have animals to catch!

Trent sprints off and calls back over his shoulder.

TRENT
(sternly)
Back to camp! Now!

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Trent enters to finds Russ watching the video screens.

The 3-D Display table in the middle shows a three person team in a forest area. Two people are providing security and one is examining the plants and a waterfall. The 3-D Display adds details with every image sent to the computer network.

TRENT

What's going on?

RUSS

Something going on with the Recon team.

TRENT

What?

RUSS

Alice started hearing thoughts or voices.

TRENT

Like the ones she was describing around camp?

RUSS

No. Different. So, we put the QRF on stand-by.

TRENT

Excellent.

(into ACE)

Alice, what are you hearing?

The 3-D Display shows the person kneeling down, stand up and turn her head.

ALICE (V.O.)

Trent, the voices are jumbled. More voices than in the camp. These are a different tone, a lot more curious and much more defensive.

TRENT

Is it threatening? Are they close to you?

ALICE (V.O.)

It's hard to tell, it's all jumbled up.

She cocks her head.

ALICE (V.O.)
Whoever it is, they went away.

TRENT
We're going to have the QRF pick
you up in two minutes, be ready.

The team on the screen begins to walk towards the trees.

Suddenly, there is a blast of green liquid that hits the Recon team from the direction of the trees. The Recon Team fires their weapons into the woods. The live video feeds suddenly stop.

RUSS
QRF, launch!

Eric runs out the door.

INT. SHUTTLE CARGO DECK - MOMENTS LATER

Eric reaches the shuttle just as it lifts off the ground. He jumps into the back deck of the cargo area and is helped aboard by one of the crew.

JENNA (V.O.)
External Ops, Shuttle Falcon on QRF
mission, over.

MAGGIE (V.O.)
Roger, Shuttle Falcon. Shuttles
Pelican and Albatross, remain in
holding pattern.

Eric puts on his helmet.

INT. ERIC'S VISOR - MOMENTS LATER

Eric's helmet shows multiple video feeds from both shuttles and a map with the locations of personnel and shuttles.

ERIC (V.O.)
Hawk, take over watch.

ERNST (V.O.)
Roger, Shuttle Hawk is airborne.

CONNIE (V.O.)
Medical, three down. Shuttle
Falcon in route, ETA ten minutes.

ANNA (V.O.)
Roger Connie, we'll be ready.

EXT. RECON SITE - MOMENTS LATER

The shuttle arrives. The recon team lays prone with greenish liquid on their suits. There are SEVEN NEFEZ (greenish humanoids with long legs and arms, the main chest is small with a hard exoskeleton) around the fallen CREW MEMBERS looking at the equipment.

In the shuttle above, Trent and TWO SECURITY CREW MEMBERS lean out of the back ramp and shoot their weapons, quickly killing the group of NEFEZ near the recon team.

Connie leans out of the back of the ramp with a stretcher.

CONNIE (V.O.)
Team, be careful of the greenish liquid.

The shuttle sets down with the cargo ramp open.

Trent and a SECURITY CREW MEMBER step off shooting towards the woods. There are strange SCREAMS.

Connie and FIVE CREW MEMBERS with three stretchers run out and retrieve the three fallen crew members.

JENNA (V.O.)
Hawk, hit the tree line, they are all in there to my twelve o'clock!

Shuttle Hawk arrives and fires into the tree line in front of the Shuttle Falcon.

Trent grabs two of the dead NEFEZ and carries them into the cargo bay of the shuttle.

TRENT (V.O.)
Take off!

The shuttle takes off, quickly gaining altitude.

INT. SCIENCE LAB - AFTERNOON

Eric walks into the Science Lab where Arabella is studying the remains of the two dead NEFEZ that lay on foldable tables.

Arabella senses Trent, she turns and hugs him.

ARABELLA

(crying)

Is it true that attackers ate parts
of the recon team?

TRENT

I don't know. It's possible; they
were a mess. Back on Earth
predatory animals like sharks and
tigers would eat humans.

ARABELLA

(sarcastic)

Well, that makes me feel better.

Arabella cries more, Trent puts his arms around her.

TRENT

Arabella. I'm sad also, but we
need to know more about these
humanoids. What can you tell us so
far?

Arabella takes a moment to stop crying and wipes her eyes.
She looks sadly at Trent, but with a sniffle and a nod, she
starts to talk.

ARABELLA

(sniffles)

They are very interesting. We have
a lot more work to do.

She moves over to one HUMANOID to point out parts of the body
as she talks.

ARABELLA (CONT'D)

(gains confidence)

They have a combination of
exoskeleton for the body and
endoskeleton for the arms and legs
which are leathery and might be
able to rejuvenate. The
exoskeleton around the body and
head is hard, like armor. But once
pierced, the sudden loss of body
fluids from the bullets results in
quick death. It looks like they
have five hearts, one for the body
and head with smaller ones for each
leg and arm.

TRENT

What's with the blue fluid and why
are they green?

ARABELLA

The blue probably their blood, it's highly enriched with oxygen. I think they are green because they have Chlorophyll to supplement energy production.

Trent's ACE RINGS.

TRENT

Yeah.

RUSS (V.O.)

Trent, Bryan needs you in Ops.

TRENT

Roger, on the way.

Arabella touches Trent's arm.

ARABELLA

I didn't expect this.

TRENT

We lost the first friends, but we'll be ready next time. Good work.

Trent kisses the top of Arabella's head.

TRENT (CONT'D)

See you later.

He walks away.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - LATER

Trent enters the Operations Room where Bryan and Nikki are talking with Pamela, Eric, Dae-Jong, Loren, Anna, and Ashley who are on the video screen.

PAMELA (V.O.)

What happened to the recon team?

BRYAN

They were attacked and killed by some of the green humanoids.

ERIC (V.O.)

How were they killed?

NIKKI

They were hit by a green liquid
that ate through the battle armor.

Audible gasp from Ashley. Nikki nods her head.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

It's probably like some type of
strong, unknown acid.

DAE-JONG (V.O.)

How close to the humanoid camp were
they?

BRYAN

They were exploring near a
waterfall in a forest area about
one hundred kilometers from here.
Of note, the Science team is
comparing some of the tree samples
of the area with imagery from the
humanoid village. If there is any
linkage between the types of trees
and the humanoids, we may have
stumbled onto another village.

NIKKI

We are starting to think the
humanoids may be near specific
types of vegetation.

DAE-JONG (V.O.)

Excellent work. Developing
patterns of life will help
understand their locations and
habitats.

TRENT

There is something else. The recon
team was reporting an unusual event
just before being attacked. Alice
was hearing voices.

DAE-JONG (V.O.)

Were they different voices than
what you are reporting around the
camp?

TRENT

Yes, much different in tone and
intent. More ominous.

BRYAN

I'd like to send a shuttle with the humanoid bodies up to the Constellation for autopsies. Maybe R and D can understand their anatomy and vulnerabilities.

Dae-Jong is shaking his head.

DAE-JONG (V.O.)

We should check with Medical first. I would hate to introduce some type of disease or such on the ship.

PAMELA (V.O.)

I understand your request compared to the resources you currently have on the planet. Wounded crew members are one thing, but I will not allow the humanoids or other creatures on the ship.

DAE-JONG (V.O.)

Medical, Science, and R and D are already working round the clock on the data you supplied and the autopsies. Lakisha and Antonio are working on the destroyed battle armor.

ERIC (V.O.)

Bryan, just so you're tracking. We are building a diplomatic team and developing options to make contact with the humanoids in the first village.

TRENT

Hopefully not the same ones that just attacked us.

BRYAN

What can we do to help?

ERIC (V.O.)

Just be prepared to support the mission. When they go, they will have priority for the shuttles.

PAMELA (V.O.)

I'm sorry that we lost three wonderful people, but you are doing a great job.

(MORE)

PAMELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Bryan, start looking over the emergency evacuation plans. Dae-Jong, coordinate with Christian on emergency QRF and medical procedures. Eric, meet me in my office after this. Thanks.

INT. BEDROOM - SHIFT YELLOW

Suzy sits alone in the bedroom. One of the video screens shows pictures of Earth, one video shows pictures of her friends throughout the ship, one video shows pictures of Pantera.

Suzy picks up her ACE and calls Trent.

SUZY

Hello.

TRENT (V.O.)

Hi Suzy! How are you?

SUZY

Lonely!

TRENT (V.O.)

I bet. Wish you were here with us.

SUZY

I've been trying to jump on every shuttle.

TRENT (V.O.)

The planet is really beautiful. So many cool animals and plants.

SUZY

Rub it in a little more. Arabella has been sending tons of pictures and videos. We are working double shifts to study and classify all the flora and fauna.

TRENT (V.O.)

Awesome. We're planning to go to the beach tomorrow.

SUZY

They are letting you go after the attack?

TRENT (V.O.)

We have to keep exploring.

SUZY

I can't wait to put my feet in the sand. Then touch a mountain top and feel the snow.

TRENT (V.O.)

It's going to be great. But, I have to go now. Have to check on the perimeter with Russ.

SUZY

Stay safe!

TRENT (V.O.)

See ya later!

SUZY

Bye.

EXT. HILLTOP OUTPOST ONE - EARLY MORNING

Russ and Connie inspect the robot sentry on a small hilltop about eight hundred meters from the camp. It's almost sunrise and they each scan the horizon with powerful binoculars with night vision.

Russ cocks his head.

RUSS

What did you say?

CONNIE

Nothing.

RUSS

I thought I just heard you say something.

CONNIE

I told you to quit reading my mind.

RUSS

If I did that, why are you wondering who we are?

CONNIE

I was thinking about breakfast.

Russ waves for her to be quiet.

RUSS

(whispers)
Someone's watching us.

Connie starts to raise her weapon.

RUSS (CONT'D)
 (whispers)
 No, stop that! You'll scare them.

CONNIE
 (loud, stern whisper)
 Scare? My friend was just killed!

RUSS
 (whispers)
 This is different. They're scared
 of us.

Connie checks her ACE, switching between heat and imagery sensors from the robot.

CONNIE
 (whispers)
 The security robots don't show any
 activity.

Russ relaxes.

RUSS
 They're gone.

INT. R&D ROOM - SHIFT

ANTONIO (43) is working at a table with a tray of test tubes and a computer system. On the floor are parts of wrecked body armor.

LAKISHA (49, African American) walks in.

LAKISHA
 How's it going?

ANTONIO
 Don't know yet.

LAKISHA
 I need more than that!

ANTONIO
 I know.

Antonio runs his hand through his hair.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
 It was an acid.

LAKISHA

Even the guys in Security figured that out!

ANTONIO

It's unknown composition. An extract from a plant. It's like a living acid.

LAKISHA

Acids are not alive.

ANTONIO

I know, but this is. Look.

Antonio point to the video screen, a microscope view of green cells expanding and contracting with larger brownish black pieces.

LAKISHA

What is that?

ANTONIO

That's the acid. Those green ones are dying cells. The black pieces are probably bark. The cells were extremely acidic until mixed with the air. That's when they start to die and lose their acidic properties.

LAKISHA

Good work. Let's find a way to defend our friends.

ANTONIO

I'm working on it.

LAKISHA

What help do you need.

ANTONIO

Pizza and coffee!

INT. SHUTTLE - DAY

Jenna pilots the shuttle towards the mountains. The shuttle easily soars up and over the top of the snowy peaks. In the distance are two large creatures with wings are briefly glimpsed near a mountain, rocky ledge.

On the other side of the mountains is a tropical forest area with large rivers. There are millions of different birds flying above the trees.

Soon the forest gives way to a long beach and huge ocean.

JENNA (V.O.)
External Operations, this is
Shuttle Falcon, over.

MAGGIE (V.O.)
Go ahead Falcon, over.

JENNA (V.O.)
We're at the beach, no humanoids in
sight, request permission to land.

MAGGIE (V.O.)
Roger, approved to land, over.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
Jenna, put it down on that sand
bar.

EXT. SAND BAR - MOMENTS LATER

The shuttle circles the beach area and sets down on a sand bar with several trees and bushes that look similar to palm trees, but are blue instead of green in color. The cargo door opens for Trent, Arabella, Connie, and Mickey to exit and begin taking samples of the water, sand, trees, and small animals.

INT. SHUTTLE - LATER

Jenna is flying the Shuttle Falcon over the ocean, then over a sparse, bushy area. She pilots the Shuttle towards the mountains in the distance.

TRENT (V.O.)
Jenna, take us more to the left. I
want to see where the Recon Team
was attacked after we cross the
mountains.

JENNA (V.O.)
Alright.

Jenna directs the Shuttle slightly left towards a spot marked on the map, displayed on one of the video screens.

The Shuttle clears the top of the mountain ridge and follows a river that grows in size and creates a waterfall. The clearing is ahead with marks from the battle.

TRENT (V.O.)
Bryan, this is Trent, over.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Trent, what are you doing near the recon site?

Jenna circles around the site, but there aren't any NEFEZ visible.

TRENT (V.O.)
I wanted to see if the humanoids were around. But there isn't any sign of them.

JENNA (V.O.)
Nothing here? I don't see anything on the Infrared or Thermal scans.

TRENT (V.O.)
Bryan, I want to go check out the area.

BRYAN (V.O.)
I don't think that's a good idea. Why don't you come on back.

TRENT (V.O.)
Jenna will provide cover. Give me ten minutes to check the site out and see if we can find out more about them.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Two minutes. Touch and go.

TRENT (V.O.)
Roger. Let's go Jenna.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - MOMENTS LATER

The Shuttle Falcon sets down and lowers the ramp. Trent jumps off wearing battle armor and carrying his weapon. As the Shuttle lifts off, Arabella jumps out.

TRENT (V.O.)
What are you doing?

ARABELLA (V.O.)
Watching out for my Battle Buddy.

Trent works his ACE, his battle armor changes color to match the surrounding foliage colors.

Arabella does the same.

Trent looks around the clearing and sees a trail with greenish and bluish drops.

Arabella follows Trent into the woods and finds a location with several humanoid arms and legs.

TRENT (V.O.)
Guess we wounded a few.

CONNIE (V.O.)
What's going on? What did you find?

ARABELLA (V.O.)
A bunch of arms and legs, yuck.

Trent starts following another trail through the woods.

JENNA (V.O.)
Trent, time's up.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Russ, they're still on the ground.

Trent crouches and moves slower through deep bushes.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
Trent, they are nearby. Let's go.

TRENT (V.O.)
This is a good chance. We need to learn more about them.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Trent, get back on the Shuttle.

JENNA (V.O.)
They are in the jungle, we can't see them on IR or Thermal.

Trent makes his way through some bushes.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
(whispers)
Trent, close enough.

Trent settles down and lifts his weapon.

EXT. TREES - MOMENTS LATER

Through the scope, he sees a group of TEN NEFEZ about two hundred meters in front. The NEFEZ sit on low branches of one tree about three meters off the ground. On the ground, FIVE NEFEZ are laying, probably wounded or dead. One HUMANOID appears to be talking to the others.

TRENT (V.O.)
(whispers)
Arabella?

ARABELLA (V.O.)
(whispers)
They are talking about the battle.
One is saying something about the
shuttles, I think.

The NEFEZ look around. ONE NEFEZ jumps down on an ANIMAL and kills it, then climbs back up onto the tree.

JENNA (V.O.)
Trent, Bryan wants you on the
shuttle, right now!

TRENT (V.O.)
Just a minute.

NEFEZ TALKING is heard.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
They are talking about the battle
and a leader. I think he's called,
Korp or Borp. No wait, it's Skorp.

The NEFEZ suddenly look up into the sky.

TRENT (V.O.)
(yells)
Jenna! Get out of here!

JENNA (V.O.)
Where are you?

The NEFEZ spot the shuttle and look around. ONE HUMANOID points towards Trent and Arabella.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
(yells)
Trent!

TRENT (V.O.)
Time to go!

Trent fires three shots killing THREE NEFEZ.

EXT. WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Trent turns and follows Arabella through the woods along the trail.

TRENT (V.O.)
Jenna, the meet us at the clearing.

Trent and Arabella run together. The NEFEZ quickly match them and pass on either side using a combination of running, walking, and jumping between trunks of the trees. They move very fast and in front of them. Trent runs in front to clear a path.

NEFEZ approach Arabella from behind. Arabella knocks a ONE HUMANOID out of the way, then a SECOND HUMANOID.

TRENT (V.O.)
(yells)
Watch out!

A HUMANOID jumps from a tree on Arabella's head knocking her to the ground.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
(screams)
Ow!

Trent hears the scream, stops, and turns around racing back to Arabella.

Trent knocks the HUMANOID off Arabella, then shoots it and another attacking HUMANOID.

TRENT (V.O.)
Arabella!

Arabella doesn't move.

TWO more NEFEZ burst from the forest knocking Trent's weapon out of his hand. Trent engages them in hand to hand combat. Trent quickly uses his martial arts ability to flip ONE HUMANOID, then stabbing it with a large knife. Trent drops the other HUMANOID with a round house kick.

TRENT (V.O.)
Come on Arabella.

Trent picks up Arabella and lifts her over his shoulder and proceeds to run as quickly as possible, bursting into the clearing where the Shuttle Falcon sits with the ramp down.

Connie and Mickey kneel on either side of the ramp firing Shuttle mini-guns at NEFEZ behind Trent.

Trent, carrying Arabella, runs onto the ramp and the Shuttle Falcon lifts off.

TRENT (V.O.)
Connie, check her out!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SHIFT

Traci is sitting up in bed, Anna stands next to her checking an IV and various TV monitors showing medical statistics.

Arabella and Suzy walk in. Arabella has bandages around her arm and head.

ARABELLA
Hello.

Arabella gives Traci a hug.

TRACI
Hello Arabella. It's great to see you. How are you feeling?

ARABELLA
Not bad.

ANNA
It could have been a lot worse!

SUZY
You never should have gone there!

ARABELLA
I know, that's all I've been hearing about.

SUZY
Trent's in the dog house!

TRACI
His father chewed him out for risking your lives. He won't be leaving the base camp for awhile.

ANNA

Enough of that, let's change the subject. How's everything on the planet?

ARABELLA

Great.

Everyone laughs a little.

TRACI

Tell me all about Pantera!

ANNA

Mom, no more than ten minutes.

ARABELLA

The planet is beautiful! So many new species of animals and plants. I feel like Charles Darwin.

ANNA

But prettier!

Everyone laughs.

ARABELLA

(proudly)

Of course.

SUZY

We are cataloging all the different species and images as quickly as we can in the Science Division.

TRACI

What about the humanoids?

Arabella shudders a little.

ARABELLA

We think there are two groups of them. One group is obviously more aggressive than the other.

SUZY

They already attacked each other.

ARABELLA

No, I meant, this is probably another species.

ANNA

Wow! Really.

Arabella nods.

TRACI

How exciting. I dream of getting to the planet. To actually see and speak with an alien species.

(dreamily)

To smell the clear air, feel the wind, touch grass again.

SUZY

You will!

Traci coughs. She crosses her fingers while coughing.

ANNA

Here mom, take this.

Anna hands Traci a cup of liquid, which Traci drinks.

TRACI

I could listen to you for hours, but my time is limited and I need to ask girls something.

(Pause for a moment)

What is your plan?

ANNA

Mom.

Traci puts her hand up to Anna.

ARABELLA

What do you mean?

TRACI

It is admirable that you all waited for marriage until you reached the planet, but.

Arabella and Suzy both blush.

SUZY

We just. I don't know?

Traci reaches to hold both their hands.

TRACI

Girls. Trent is busy doing his job. Besides, there is no way he can choose between you. How can you two expect him to make a decision?

Traci smiles at them both.

TRACI (CONT'D)
You two will have to choose.

Arabella looks at Suzy.

ARABELLA
I can't. I can't hurt you.

Suzy has tears in her eyes and shakes her head.

SUZY
I can't either.

TRACI
Look at me.

They both turn to look at Traci, who is smiling.

TRACI (CONT'D)
We have watched you two grow into beautiful, wonderful women. Hard working, caring, selfless, best friends. Trent is a lot like his father. Duty, responsibility, honor, strength, and courage are natural for him. There is so much love in him for everyone on this ship, that sometimes standing next to him feels lonely.

Traci wipes a tear, but is still smiling. The girls have tears.

TRACI (CONT'D)
Eric knows everyone and every job on this ship.

ARABELLA
He is like a father to us.

TRACI
Yes, but he can't remember anyone's name.

They laugh and sniffle.

SUZY
I know!

TRACI
You are both going to be great mothers. You really are.
(MORE)

TRACI (CONT'D)

There are other, wonderful men who will love you and be great fathers, just as Trent will be.

SUZY

How do we?

TRACI

Doesn't matter. Flip a coin, play cards. Just make a decision and go tell him.

ARABELLA

We.

TRACI

You girls will always be best friends. Your children will be best friends.

Traci holds out her arms. Anna, Suzy, and Arabella all hug Traci.

INT. HALLWAY - SHIFT

Annette stops Arabella in front of a closed door. Arabella seems surprised to be stopped.

ANNETTE

(whispers)

Before we go in.

ARABELLA

Yes?

ANNETTE

(whispers)

How. How's he doing?

Annette grasps Arabella's hand.

ARABELLA

He's doing great! He really likes the planet and is Trent's right hand man.

Annette starts to cry a little.

ANNETTE

(worried)

When I heard about the attack, I was so worried. First, he was bitten by some bug and now this.

ARABELLA

He was on duty in the Operations Center controlling the response. Don't worry, you should be proud of him.

Annette wipes her eyes and nods.

ANNETTE

Ready?

ARABELLA

Yes.

Annette opens the door.

INT. CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Annette and Arabella walk into the classroom full of STUDENTS, Laurie, Ashley, and BILL (50).

ANNETTE

Class, look who I found walking in the hallway.

ARABELLA

Hello everyone!

The kids in the class respond with HELLO.

ANNETTE

Miss Arabella is returning to Pantera on the next shuttle. But, she wanted to come by and talk to us about her experience so far.

The kids are very excited.

ANNETTE (CONT'D)

Arabella, the class is yours.

ARABELLA

Thanks. The planet Pantera is wonderful! So many plants and animals.

BOY

Are the animals dangerous?

ARABELLA

Some are dangerous.

BOY 2

Are the animals big?

ARABELLA

We've found lots of small animals so far. Little bugs, slugs, worms. We even found a mouse like creature with feathers that lives in tunnels under the ground. When they pop up, they are covered with dirt.

BETSY

Yuck! Do we have to go to the planet?

ARABELLA

You can't stay on the ship your entire life.

APRIL

What about the mean humanoids?

ARABELLA

We will have to learn to get along with them. The planet is large and we all need a place to live. We just have to find ways to be friends.

EXT. HILLTOP OUTPOST ONE - EVENING

Trent and Russ stop their motorcycles near the robot sentry on the hilltop. They dismount the motorcycles, take off their helmets, and scan the horizon with binoculars. The sun has just set and the sky is dark blue/purple.

RUSS

This is where I heard the voices.

TRENT

At night?

RUSS

Yeah, mostly at night.

The scan the horizon again.

Russ tenses.

RUSS (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Don't move. The voices are back.

TRENT
 (whispers)
 Do they sound evil?

RUSS
 (whispers)
 No. Afraid, curious.

Trent slowly lowers the binoculars.

RUSS (CONT'D)
 (whispers)
 I think we are being watched.

TRENT
 (whispers)
 Where?

RUSS
 (whispers excitedly)
 Directly behind us, over the edge
 of the hill.

TRENT
 (whispers)
 Yell out if there are any changes.

Trent bends down to set the binoculars on the ground and remains low to the ground. He quietly moves down the hill in a crouch. He starts to walk around the hill.

EXT. HILLTOP OUTPOST - MOMENTS LATER

Trent is looking up the small hilltop and can see the back of Russ's head just over the top.

Trent sees a small bush in front of him near the top of the hill. He slowly crouches to his hands and knees, then makes his way slowly towards the top of the hill.

He approaches the small bush.

Suddenly the small bush moves.

A small, hairy head next to the bush turns around and Trent comes face to face with a FERGEL (small humanoid, leathery face and hands, short black hair covers the body like a mole).

Trent stops. The FERGEL stops. Both stunned for a moment.

The FERGEL ducks down into a tunnel in the ground leaving Trent staring in disbelief. Russ is facing Trent.

RUSS
That was fun!

Trent straightens up on his knees.

TRENT
Wow!

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SHIFT

Pamela, Eric, Christian, Dae-Jong, and Loren are sitting at the conference table. On the main video screen is Bryan, Trent, Nikki, and Russ.

PAMELA
Bryan, we're ready.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Trent and Russ discovered a new humanoid species.

LOREN
A new one?

RUSS (V.O.)
This species lives underground, not like the green species.

DAE-JONG
Is it dangerous?

TRENT (V.O.)
Not so far. They are very skittish and shy. They are too small to be dangerous.

LOREN
Did you communicate with them?

BRYAN (V.O.)
Kind of. This species seems to be the one some of the crew member are hearing near the camp. Probably muffled by the soil.

ERIC
Pamela, we've noted for many shifts that some of the crew members who were born during the voyage have developed some unique skills. I am sure you remember, we could never figure out why.
(MORE)

ERIC (CONT'D)

But it seems to offer a unique opportunity to communicate with these humanoid species.

DAE-JONG

We need to figure out who has these unique skills and see what we can do to improve them.

PAMELA

Eric, we may need another diplomatic mission.

ERIC

Yes, we might.

BRYAN (V.O.)

You better find a short person.

Bryan and Trent laugh.

TRENT (V.O.)

These humanoids are about three feet tall.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - LATE EVENING

Trent is alone in the Operations Room drinking coffee while watching the various sensors, 3 - dimensional table and videos.

Arabella walks in and approaches Trent from behind.

ARABELLA

Hi Trent.

She puts her hands on his shoulders.

TRENT

(tiredly)
Welcome back.

She starts to rub his shoulders.

TRENT (CONT'D)

That feels so good.

ARABELLA

You need to relax a little.

TRENT

I will when we're safe and I stop getting chewed out.

Arabella smiles.

ARABELLA

I got an earful on the
Constellation. What's going on?

TRENT

There are three missions out
checking the perimeter robots.

They both look at the map on one video screen with three
groups of two icons each.

ARABELLA

Have the humanoids found us?

TRENT

No. But we switched to night
patrols because we think they are
more active during the daylight.

ARABELLA

Nikki was telling me, they think
the humanoids are green due to a
type of chlorophyll property.
Probably have more energy during
the day.

TRENT

In case you didn't hear, battle
armor at all times during the day.

ARABELLA

I heard.

TRENT

Did you hear about the little
humanoids we found?

ARABELLA

Yeah, how cool is that!

TRENT

I think Russ is going looking for
them again tonight, why don't you
join him?

ARABELLA

I don't think so. I think Connie
would prefer to go with Russ.

Trent turns to look at Arabella and she smiles at him.

BRYAN (V.O.)

Trent.

TRENT

Go.

BRYAN (V.O.)

We just found a couple of paths
along the ground near security post
five.

TRENT

Nothing has shown up on video or
radar, over.

BRYAN (V.O.)

Roger. We'll set up another couple
of sensors to cover these trails.
Let's check them out in the
morning.

TRENT

Roger, out.

Arabella hugs Trent from behind.

ARABELLA

Make sure you get some sleep this
shift.

TRENT

I will.

Arabella starts to walk away.

TRENT (CONT'D)

Arabella.

ARABELLA

Yes?

TRENT

It's good to have you back.

She smiles and walks out.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF CAMP - EVENING

Russ, Connie, Jenna, and Mickey walk outside of the main camp
into the darkness. Russ leads the way and suddenly holds up
his hand and motions for everyone to stop and sit down.

RUSS
This is a good place.

MICKEY
Can you hear them?

RUSS
Yes.

MICKEY
Probably by that little tunnel over there.

CONNIE
Where? I don't see a tunnel.

MICKEY
It's over there, about 3 meters.

Mickey points to a spot in the dark.

RUSS
Mickey, we can't see anything but dark.

MICKEY
It's clear as day, but kind of orange color like looking through a filter.

CONNIE
You're seeing something none of us can.

MICKEY
I thought everyone could see like this.

RUSS
(whispers)
Shhh. I think they are here, let's move slowly to the tunnel.

JENNA
I'll....

RUSS
(whispers sternly)
No. You'll scare them.

JENNA
(whispers)
Russ, stop doing that! Know I hate it when you read my mind.

Mickey grasps Jenna's hand and pulls her slowly towards a small tunnel. The four sit down near the tunnel entrance.

MICKEY

(whispers)

I think there's one, I saw a little movement.

RUSS

(whispers)

Yes, he's watching us. Quiet now.

The lights from the camp provide a little illumination on a small FERGEL face at the tunnel opening. Slowly, the FERGEL raises his head and put his hands on the edge, pulling himself half out of the tunnel. Behind him in the tunnel are several others.

CONNIE

(whispers excitedly)

He is so wonderful.

RUSS

(whispers)

Please come out and talk with us.
We are friends.

JENNA

He looks like a troll thing.

Connie holds out her hand towards the FERGEL, who quickly backs down into the tunnel.

CONNIE

Don't be afraid, we're friends.

JENNA

Connie, if he thinks your scary now, he hasn't seen your hair in the morning.

Russ and Mickey try to hold back laughs.

RUSS

(whispers)

She wants to touch your hand. This is a sign of our friendship.

Connie leans over, stretching one hand towards the opening of the tunnel.

RUSS (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Her name is Connie. She is a
wonderful friend.

The FERGEL remains in the tunnel looking out. He slowly reaches out with one hand and tentatively reaches one finger to touch Connie's finger. The fingers have long retractable claws for digging.

JENNA

How can you do that? Look how
dirty his paws are.

RUSS

(whispers)

We are friends now.

The FERGEL pulls back his hand from Connie.

Connie turns her head smiling at Russ.

CONNIE

Incredible.

She feels a small hand in her's and turns back to see the FERGEL is half out of the tunnel and caressing her hand with his. Behind him, three other hands are reaching out of the tunnel trying to touch her.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

His hand is so cold, soft,
leathery, and gentle.

MICKEY

There are two or three more down
the tunnel behind him.

JENNA

You better sanitize your hands
before you enter the quarters
tonight. No telling what kind of
germs your collecting.

MICKEY

You're cold Jenna.

JENNA

I'd rather be flying.

CONNIE

(whispers)

What's your name?

RUSS

(whisper)

It sounds like Fergel. But I'm not sure if it's his individual name or what they call themselves.

CONNIE

(whispers)

My name is Connie. These are my friends Russ, Mickey, and Grumpy.

The FERGEL continues to touch Connie's hand along with three other hands reaching through the opening.

RUSS

(whispers)

He doesn't understand what you are saying, let me try. Fergel, I'm Russ and these are my friends: Connie, Mickey, and Jenna.

The FERGEL looks at Russ.

RUSS (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Where do you live? How many are in your family?

CONNIE

(whispers)

What's he saying?

RUSS

They live underground in a family because of some large flying creature. They think we are very brave to live above ground and think we will be eaten.

MICKEY

That's nice.

JENNA

Does he mean the shuttle?

RUSS

No, not the shuttle, some animal.

MICKEY

What about the humanoids?

RUSS

Who are the green people?

The FERGEL looks around nervously, shaking.

MICKEY
(whisper)
That got a reaction.

Everyone waits for Russ. Jenna is looking around, not paying attention.

RUSS
The green humanoids are evil. They
plant the bad trees that kill all
the plants and animals.

CONNIE
He's shaking.

RUSS
They have to go.

CONNIE
(whispers)
Bye, good night.

The FERGEL slowly retreat into the tunnel and close up the entrance with dirt.

JENNA
Come on. I want to get a little
sleep before QRF duty.

CONNIE
That was awesome!

They all stand, getting ready to walk back.

Connie, smiling like she knows the reaction, tries to give Jenna a high five.

Jenna backs away.

JENNA
Get away from me. Go wash your
dirty hands!

RUSS
Connie, we have to take the zero
five hundred patrol.

CONNIE
Meet you in the Ops Room at four,
forty-five.

EXT. HILLTOP - MORNING

Russ and Connie wear battle armor with jump packs and scan the horizon.

TRENT (V.O.)
On the way.

Russ's helmet visor display shows a blue figure on the map quickly approaching the hilltop position.

Russ turns when Trent drives up on a motorcycle.

TRENT (V.O.)
What have you got?

RUSS (V.O.)
Check out the robot sentry.

Russ points to a lump of leaves and sticks creating a net over the SECURITY ROBOT.

RUSS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's still functional, but was covered with vegetation.

TRENT (V.O.)
Interesting.

Trent bends down to exam the vegetation, careful about what he touches in case there is acid.

CONNIE (V.O.)
Why didn't they shoot it with acid?

RUSS (V.O.)
Don't know. I reviewed the back up video.

Trent slowly lifts the net off the sentry robot.

RUSS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
One moment the sensors work, the next they don't.

CONNIE (V.O.)
It's almost like they wanted us to come out here.

Trent immediately stands up and looks at her. She continues to scan the horizon.

TRENT (V.O.)
Ops!

MICKEY (V.O.)
Ops here.

TRENT (V.O.)
Go to full alert!

A SECURITY ROBOT fires its gun from the next position starts to fire.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Ops, what's happening!

MICKEY (V.O.)
Trent, Russ, and Connie are at Hilltop Outpost One. Outpost Two sentry robot opened fire at unidentified intruders. QRF is preparing to launch.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Good work, inform the Constellation.

TRENT (V.O.)
Russ, do you hear anything?

RUSS (V.O.)
It's the green humanoids! They're trying to cut us off from the base.

TRENT (V.O.)
Roger. You two fly back, cover me from above while I take the motorcycle. We better take the long way.

RUSS (V.O.)
Roger.

CONNIE (V.O.)
Roger.

TRENT (V.O.)
Ops, we're on the way back.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Roger. QRF is launching to check out the perimeter.

Trent mounts his motorcycle and points to the sky.

Russ and Connie both nod and rocket into the sky. At one hundred feet, small wings extend and they begin to fly.

CONNIE (V.O.)
Trent, head South!

EXT. FLYING - MOMENTS LATER

Russ and Connie look down to see NEFEZ encircling the hilltop.

Trent turns his motorcycle South and begins driving and shooting the NEFEZ.

Russ and Connie both start shooting NEFEZ in front of Trent's path.

RUSS (V.O.)
Trent, turn left.

Trent turns left to avoid a group of NEFEZ.

INT. TRENT'S VISOR - MOMENTS LATER

Trent's visor shows multiple images including a 3-D map showing the locations of all the crew members, images from four different cameras including the shuttle, and a targeting program annotates the closest NEFEZ in front of him. He fires his weapon, clearing a path of NEFEZ.

Russ and Connie are flying in front of him shooting down at the NEFEZ.

TRENT (V.O.)
Where are they coming from?

JENNA (V.O.)
Don't know.

CONNIE (V.O.)
They move fast!

BRYAN (V.O.)
Trent, turn away from base. We'll have Jenna meet you at rendezvous point marked on the map.

Trent sees a Blue X show up on his visor in a clearing ahead.

TRENT (V.O.)
Roger, got it.

The NEFEZ shoot a green jet of liquid from a large gun into the air hitting Connie in the arm and wing.

The acid has immediate effect of severing the wing and she falls out of the sky in front of Trent.

Trent fires small rockets from the motorcycle at the gun, destroying it quickly. Russ circles Connie, shooting at NEFEZ.

EXT. CONNIE'S POSITION - MOMENTS LATER

Connie lays in a heap on the ground. NEFEZ are moving closer to her position. Above, Russ is circling, shooting at the NEFEZ as they try to get closer to her.

Trent shoots three NEFEZ closest to Connie and skids to a stop next to her. He dismounts and quickly and accurately shoots all the NEFEZ in the immediate area. Trent strips off the jet pack. One arm is bloody and covered with the green goo.

TRENT (V.O.)
I got her, cover me!

RUSS (V.O.)
You have about fifteen seconds to
get out of there!

Trent helps Connie up. She is barely able to hold onto Trent's neck with one hand. Trent remounts the motorcycle, and drives off in the same direction.

RUSS (V.O.)(CONT'D)
Shuttle Falcon, MEDIVAC.

JENNA (V.O.)
Roger, on the way!

EXT. FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

Trent is riding the motorcycle and holds tight to Connie with one arm.

NEFEZ are gathering quickly along the route in front.

Russ is firing down at the NEFEZ around Trent and Connie.

Trent looks up to see the shuttle pass overhead. The cargo ramp is open with two CREW MEMBERS firing from either side.

TRENT (V.O.)
Jenna, keep flying!

JENNA (V.O.)

Roger.

The shuttle pulls ahead of Trent and lowers to twenty feet off the ground.

Trent uses a small rise to jump the motorcycle. In mid-air he pushes Connie into the back of the shuttle while the motorcycle falls below. Trent barely catches the edge of the ramp with his fingertips.

INT. SHUTTLE CARGO AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Russ reaches down and helps pull Trent into the shuttle.

TRENT (V.O.)

Go! Go! Go!

EXT. SHUTTLE - MOMENTS LATER

The shuttle quickly shoots into the air. Russ flies straight towards the camp.

JENNA (V.O.)

Ops, we got them.

TRENT (V.O.)

Drop me and go to the
Constellation.

The shuttle turns and heads straight and fast to the camp in the distance.

JENNA (V.O.)

Roger, five seconds.

The shuttle approaches the landing spot at the camp and flares about ten feet from the ground.

Trent jumps out.

Before his feet hit the ground, the shuttle is heading into space.

EXT. CAMP - MOMENTS LATER

Trent lands on his feet. Russ lands next to him and together they run to the Operations Room.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Trent and Russ enter the Operations Room where Mickey and Arabella sit monitoring the situation.

TRENT

Status!

MICKEY

Five wounded. Connie is in the Falcon headed to the Constellation. Six security robots off line. Shuttle Hawk in pursuit of fleeing humanoids.

ARABELLA

Estimate two hundred humanoids in the original attack, approximately one hundred killed.

BRYAN (V.O.)

Looks like the attack is over, but maintain one hundred percent security in case they return.

MICKEY

Roger.

NIKKI (V.O.)

Permission to retrieve some of the humanoids and weapons?

BRYAN (V.O.)

Approved, but take some security and one of the people who can hear them.

EXT. BASE - EVENING

The Pelican (has a large picture of a pelican along the nose), a large cargo shuttle lands. Eric, Erin, and thirty CREW MEMBERS exit in battle armor and equipment. Two CREW MEMBERS exit with two dogs each. The dogs are dressed with battle armor. Once the shuttle is empty, four stretchers are loaded onto the back of the shuttle.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - EVENING

Bryan, Trent, Nikki, Eric, and Erin sit at the small table.

ERIC

Bryan, Trent, Nikki, you three have done a great job. Pamela asked that I accompany the diplomatic mission and review our situation here.

BRYAN

This is a great location. But we didn't expect the humanoids to attack us. They must be able to move quickly or have some type of transportation that we don't know about.

TRENT

Got it. But this is a big planet.

NIKKI

This is the best location. The soil and water are excellent and clean. We've found hundreds of new species of flora and fauna.

ERIC

Like I said, you have done a wonderful job. I am confident that you will find and study every species on this planet.

ERIN

We've got three killed and five wounded, so far. It's a very dangerous part of the planet.

TRENT

There is another species of humanoid.

ERIC

We heard.

BRYAN

We are resetting the destroyed security robots and adding several more tonight.

ERIC

Good. Research and Development sent down a new gel to cover the battle armor. It should negate the effects of the acid weapons.

BRYAN

What about the diplomatic mission?

ERIN

We sent a radio to the first camp. They responded. We believe the village to be more peaceful than this group that attacked.

NIKKI

What if it's an ambush or a trick? They were trying to capture people today.

ERIN

It's a risk that we have to take sooner or later.

ERIC

Support the diplomatic mission and pack up all non-essential items.

BRYAN

We should give the impression we are here to stay.

ERIC

Tomorrow evening, be prepared to evacuate everyone and everything with thirty minutes notice.

TRENT

(confident)

Too easy.

Eric makes eye contact with Trent, he smiles and turns to Erin.

ERIC

Erin, make contact and give us your assessment.

ERIN

We'll depart in thirty minutes.

ERIC

Good luck. Don't worry, we'll keep you covered.

EXT. SHUTTLE - LATER

Eric, Bryan, Nikki, and Trent wave goodbye to Jenna as she pilots the shuttle into the sky. Erin is the only one not wearing battle armor.

Eric turns to the three of them.

ERIC

Listen up. All of you are doing a great job.

TRENT

But, we should be doing better.

BRYAN

We're responsible.

Eric crosses his arms.

ERIC

(sternly)

Yes, yes you are. You are learning to be leaders. It's not easy.

NIKKI

I don't know what we could have done differently?

TRENT

Neither do I.

ERIC

Leadership is hard but you were chosen because you can handle it. Look, we didn't bring these weapons and armor for fun. There's a big spaceship up there with lots of people wanting to help you, just ask.

TRENT

But.

ERIC

(sternly)

But what? Shut up and quit feeling sorry for yourselves. You are the leaders we need. Take charge!

(pause)

We travelled twenty-six light years. Do you think we are going to turn around and go back because the first camp didn't work!

TRENT

What's next?

ERIC

This camp is beautiful, but that means you can do it again. When the President makes a decision, don't argue, just move. Questions?

NIKKI

Got it.

BRYAN

No problem, we'll be ready.

TRENT

To easy.

They fist bump with a metallic sound from the armor.

ERIC

If you'll two excuse us, I have to talk with Trent a moment.

BRYAN

Come on Nikki, we have work to do.

TRENT

Be there in a minute.

Bryan and Nikki walk off.

ERIC

Your mom and I are very proud of you.

TRENT

Thanks. I was starting to worry.

ERIC

Don't. Look, you mom's not doing too well.

TRENT

She sounded fine last time we talked.

ERIC

She knows you have work to do and doesn't want to worry you.

TRENT

Should I go up on the next shuttle?

ERIC

No. Just call her and Anna every day.

TRENT

Day. I remember when she told me about the word. Now I understand.

Eric and Trent both laugh a little.

TRENT (CONT'D)

She always dreamed and talked about seeing the planet.

ERIC

She will. Once we have a secure base camp. I'll make sure she is one of the first down here.

TRENT

Love you, Dad.

ERIC

Love you, too.

They shake hands and hug with the battle armor.

INT. R&D ROOM - SHIFT

The R&D Room is a mess. Pieces of battle armor, fabric, test tubes, robots, blankets, plates, and CREW MEMBERS sleeping on the floor, chairs, and tables.

Antonio and Lakisha's heads are on the table when Antonio's ACE RINGS. He opens his eyes and turns on the video screen more from reflex than conscious action.

Nikki, Arabella, Trent, and Russ show up on the video screen.

NIKKI (V.O.)

Antonio! Wake up!

TRENT (V.O.)

R and D, anyone there?

ANTONIO

(groggy)

Yeah, we're here. What's up?

Lakisha lifts her head from the table, blurry eyed, she tries to focus on the video screen.

NIKKI (V.O.)
What are you doing? Sleeping?

ANTONIO
We have gone non stop since the first attack. Everyone crashed when the shuttle left.

TRENT (V.O.)
We have a couple of questions.

LAKISHA
(sleepily)
What's your question?

NIKKI (V.O.)
We're applying the solution to the battle armor, but we're not sure how long it will last?

ANTONIO
It will last until the goo hits you.

LAKISHA
One shot.

RUSS (V.O.)
So we need someone to be ready to spray us when we get hit.

ANTONIO
Or don't get hit a second time.

Russ nods.

ARABELLA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
What's in the spray?

ANTONIO
The green goo is a living acid that is extremely corrosive, but quickly breaks down when exposed to the air. So, the gel spray is a base that will neutralize the goo, hopefully long enough to let the air neutralize it. Just don't get to close to heat. Oh, and it's poisonous.

NIKKI (V.O.)
We haven't found any acids in the humanoid bodies.

LAKISHA

We think it's made from plants.

RUSS (V.O.)

Hey! Remember what Fergel said about plants killing the other plants?

TRENT (V.O.)

That's interesting, killer plant.

ARABELLA (V.O.)

Mickey wants to know if you have any medication or first aide procedures?

ANTONIO

No, sorry. We've been focused on prevention. Once that goo hits your skin, it's bad news.

NIKKI (V.O.)

We have to get going. Thanks for everything.

LAKISHA

We'll keep working with the Medical section to find a solution.

TRENT (V.O.)

Make sure you tell your team we appreciate all your hard work.

LAKISHA

Stay safe!

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - AFTERNOON

Erin, Travis, and Kasandra stand in a clearing dressed in normal uniforms. In front of them is a pole planted into the ground with a small light on the top.

TRAVIS

Are they out there?

KASANDRA

Yes, they're watching us.

ERIN

They turned on the signal light.

TRAVIS

There, in the tree line.

KASANDRA

We are here in peace. We are friends.

ERIN

Stand tall and stay calm.

A NEFEZ walks forward from the treeline and stops about twenty-five feet away, looking at them.

ERIN (CONT'D)

My name is Erin. What is yours?

KASANDRA

What is your name?

The NEFEZ makes a NOISE.

KASANDRA (CONT'D)

He is called Krot.

ERIN

Can he understand me?

KASANDRA

No.

ERIN

Ask him why they attacked us.

KASANDRA

Why did you attack our camp?

The NEFEZ makes a strange NOISE.

KASANDRA (CONT'D)

He didn't attack us.

TRAVIS

Must be the other group.

KASANDRA

We are new here and would like to be your friends.

The NEFEZ looks around at the trees and up to the shuttle, hovering overhead.

KASANDRA (CONT'D)

He is not sure yet. But he is willing to talk.

ERIN

Any evil thoughts?

KASANDRA
No, just curious.

Erin offers her hand.

INT. BRIDGE - SHIFT YELLOW

Christian picks up his ACE and calls Bryan.

CHRISTIAN
Bryan.

BRYAN (V.O.)
What's up?

CHRISTIAN
Are you tracking two large flying
objects?

BRYAN (V.O.)
Hey Russ.

RUSS (V.O.)
Yes. Michelle on the Constellation
has been tracking them.

MICHELLE
There are two objects flying near
where the recon team was attacked.
But it looks like they are heading
back over the mountain.

RUSS (V.O.)
That's where they came from.

CHRISTIAN
We'll keep an eye on them.
Hopefully the humanoids aren't
getting reinforcements.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Let us know if we need to launch a
shuttle and check it out.

CHRISTIAN
Speaking of shuttles. The next
shuttle will bring down the
protective wall along with the
invisible fence and more security
robots.

RUSS (V.O.)
What's an invisible fence?

CHRISTIAN

After the asteroid field, Antonio developed a type of force field. The system was designed to mount to the outside of the Constellation. Energy flows through a series of metal posts. Antonio modified the contraption. He thinks will create a fence about ten feet high.

BRYAN (V.O.)

Thanks, we appreciate everything. If it works, tell him to start making more.

CHRISTIAN

Stay safe, brother.

EXT. DOORWAY TO OPERATIONS ROOM - EVENING

Trent is sitting on the ground with his back against the wall in his battle armor. The helmet is off and his eyes are closed.

Arabella walks up and sits next to him. She moves around to make her battle armor fit comfortably so she can rest her head on his.

TRENT

Comfortable?

ARABELLA

Now I am. This stuff R and D made for the armor smells terrible.

TRENT

Are you sure the smell is from the outside?

ARABELLA

You might be right.

TRENT

Is the Science team all packed up?

ARABELLA

Yes, all set.

TRENT

Good.

ARABELLA

Why are you sitting out here?

TRENT

The stars and the sky are so peaceful and beautiful. It seems like another lifetime when we were on the Constellation.

ARABELLA

I never thought we would have to fight a war. Do you think they will attack again?

TRENT

Yes.

ARABELLA

Good. I wonder how the little Fergel survived?

TRENT

I don't think the green humanoids know about Fergel.

They look at sky for a minute.

ARABELLA

What's going to happen to us?

TRENT

We'll fight for a base camp somewhere. We can't live on the Constellation forever.

ARABELLA

That's not what I mean.

TRENT

I'm sorry, I'm focused on the mission at the moment.

ARABELLA

That's exactly what your mom told us.

TRENT

Who is us?

ARABELLA

Suzy and I.

TRENT

(tiredly)

Oh.

(pause)

(MORE)

TRENT (CONT'D)

I wish she would come down for a visit.

ARABELLA

She will.

Arabella holds Trent's hand.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SHIFT

Connie is laying in an intensive care hospital bed. Donna sits stroking her hair. Bill is asleep sitting in a chair, his head on his chest.

Traci and Anna walk in. Traci walks over and hugs Donna.

DONNA

(tears in her eyes)
Thanks for coming over. Look at my poor daughter.

TRACI

She's going to be fine.

Donna cries, then wipes her eyes.

DONNA

Anna. Thanks so much for taking care of her.

Anna hugs Donna.

ANNA

Don't thank me yet. We had to replace her arm above the elbow. She has a fractured skull and will need a lot of rehab.

DONNA

She's alive, that's what's important.

TRACI

How's Bill doing?

DONNA

He has been here kicking himself for not going to the planet to protect her.

ANNA

I have to go check on one of the other patients. Call me when she wakes up. See you later.

Anna departs.

TRACI

There's nothing he could do. She is better trained on security than he is.

DONNA

I know, but he's a father.

TRACI

She's a strong girl and now she has a super strong arm. Knowing her, she's going to wake up and expect to be on the next shuttle to the planet.

DONNA

Yeah, you're right about that.

Donna laughs a little.

DONNA (CONT'D)

How's Trent doing?

TRACI

He's doing fine, but they are all getting tired down there. On security almost continuously. Eric just went down to check things out.

DONNA

Everyone is all stressed out. I hope they come back up here where it's safe. But I know we need to be on the planet. It's like, we came all this way, for nothing.

TRACI

It's easy to have doubts. But together, we are strong.

Traci holds Donna's hand.

TRACI (CONT'D)

We made an incredible trip and we will find a way to fit on our new home, no problem.

(MORE)

TRACI (CONT'D)

Like moving into a new room and meeting all your neighbors.

DONNA

But what would we have done if some aliens wanted to live on Earth?

TRACI

Are you sure they aren't there now?

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - NIGHT

Eric, Bryan, Nikki, and Trent are sitting at the small table with two video screens in front of them. On one video is Erin in the back of the shuttle. On a second video is the Bridge Conference Room with Pamela, Isabella, Julie, Jack, Loren, Christian, Lakisha, Ashley, and Kurt.

PAMELA (V.O.)

Erin, congratulations on making contact with the humanoids.

ERIN (V.O.)

Thanks. We just finished another good meeting with them.

BRYAN

Were they the ones who attacked us?

ERIN (V.O.)

No. The leader of this group is called, Krot. About thirty years ago, they all crashed landed on this planet.

LOREN (V.O.)

(interrupts)

That explains a few things.

ERIN (V.O.)

Exactly. Krot and his group live in this camp. The group that attacked them and attacked you is led by Skorp. He rules over several camps and is very aggressive. The two groups split several years ago.

TRENT

Yeah, that's the leader we found.

BRYAN

What about the acid weapon systems?

ERIN (V.O.)

They built them from parts of their spaceship. The acid is extracted from the trees they cultivate. It's their most effective weapon to defend themselves from some aggressive animals.

PAMELA (V.O.)

Will they attack again?

ERIN (V.O.)

Yes they will. Until Skorp decides to stop or is killed.

Eric nods his head.

ASHLEY (V.O.)

We should vacate the camp and try again somewhere else.

Erin shakes her head.

ERIN (V.O.)

It won't matter.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Why not? What does he want?

ERIN (V.O.)

He wants a ship to leave the planet and return to his home.

ERIC (V.O.)

Interesting. Then it doesn't matter where we set up camp.

Eric rubs his chin, thinking.

JACK (V.O.)

What else do you need down there?

BRYAN

We could use some calvary.

ERIC

We're in a pretty good, defensible position right now. We can protect Fergel and his family and keep Skorp away from Krot and that village. We'll need to build a plan and understand our adversary before taking the offensive and creating stability for all of us.

PAMELA (V.O.)
 OK. Let's stay where we are.
 Jack, Kurt, let's build the
 calvary.

INT. RJ'S QUARTERS - SHIFT

RJ (48, fat from lack of exercise) is sitting in an easy chair watching a movie on the video screen. The room is a mess, dirty plates sit on the table. Two robots lay on the floor, their dented sides and broken wheels a testament to the abuse by RJ.

His ACE RINGS on the table next to him. He doesn't move.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
 RJ?

RJ
 Don't leave a message at the beep.
 Beep.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
 RJ. Answer me.

RJ
 Why?

ASHLEY (V.O.)
 I want to talk with you.

RJ
 I'm busy.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
 I wanted to let you know how great
 our daughter is doing on the
 planet.

RJ
 Great? You mean, she's still
 alive?

ASHLEY (V.O.)
 Of course! She's so brave and
 strong.

RJ
 Good. Then she can come get me out
 of here!

RJ tosses the ACE, the back pops off when it hits a robot before bouncing on the floor.

EXT. CAMP - MORNING

Bryan walks around the camp inspecting the new wall being erected around the camp. All the CREW MEMBERS wear battle armor and guard the walls.

Bryan climbs a ladder to the parapet, lifts his visor, and looks to the horizon.

The ACE RINGS, Bryan picks it up to see Selena.

BRYAN

Hello Love.

SELENA (V.O.)

Hi sweetheart.

BRYAN

How's it going up there?

SELENA (V.O.)

Pretty lonely without you. What have you been up to?

BRYAN

We've been working all night. Got a new wall around the Alamo.

SELENA (V.O.)

I wish I was there with you. It's so hard watching and not being able to help.

BRYAN

Don't worry, we'll be done soon. Then we can take a trip out to the beach.

The first rays of light break on the horizon.

SELENA (V.O.)

Jenna told me about a nice spot.

BRYAN

How are the kids doing?

SELENA (V.O.)

They are pretty upset that you got to go to the planet first. Your son is working on a new video game about the planet and shooting the bad humanoids.

BRYAN

Boys. Sounds like fun, can't wait to play it with him.

SELENA (V.O.)

I asked him to give you double the battle armor.

BRYAN

Thanks, I'll probably need it soon. What about Mary?

SELENA (V.O.)

Mary's busy organizing the first batch of test animals to go to the planet. She misses you a lot! She keeps begging Kurt to come down to the planet with the first chickens and pigs.

BRYAN

Soon, Love.

ERIC (V.O.)

Bryan.

BRYAN

Bryan here.

ERIC (V.O.)

Erin just called. Krot reports that Skorp is on the move. Get ready.

Bryan closes his visor.

BRYAN (V.O.)

Roger.

Bryan switches back to Selena.

BRYAN(CONT'D) (V.O.)

Looks like things are going to get busy. Gotta go Love.

SELENA (V.O.)

I love you, too.

EXT. OPERATIONS ROOM ROOF - MORNING

Trent and Eric stand on top of the Operations Room roof to survey the new wall around the camp with personnel stationed at key points.

Trent looks through his binoculars to see about two thousand NEFEZ as a swarm.

TRENT (V.O.)
 Bryan, looks like about two thousand or more. Hard to tell the way they are massed together.

LOREN (V.O.)
 That's what we estimate. But, it is hard to tell with our sensors from the ship.

SUZY (V.O.)
 The humanoid camp sites near the waterfall are vacant.

ERIN (V.O.)
 The key is Skorp, single him out and the rest will obey.

TRENT (V.O.)
 Arabella?

EXT. CAMP WALL POSITION ONE - SAME TIME

Arabella, Russ, and Mickey stand on the wall parapet with their weapons pointed towards the NEFEZ in the distance.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
 It's one mass of voices, too far away to single him out.

EXT. CAMP WALL POSITION TWO - SAME TIME

Bryan, Nikki, and two other CREW MEMBERS are prepared to fire their weapons.

RUSS (V.O.)
 They're in range, request permission to begin firing.

BRYAN (V.O.)
 Negative. Wait until they hit the fence. We need to give them every opportunity to turn around and leave.

EXT. HILLTOP - MOMENTS LATER

The SECURITY ROBOT stands guard, flashing lights at the mass of NEFEZ only two hundred feet in front.

A small group of NEFEZ cautiously approach the ROBOT. At one hundred feet, they are struck down by jolts of electricity from the invisible fence. They SCREAM. The mass responds by SCREAMING.

The NEFEZ shoot the green goo at the SECURITY ROBOT, but it falls short.

INT. TRENT'S VISOR - SAME TIME

Trent watches the events near the robot through his visor. The visor display is split into five screens: the map, security robot video, Russ's sniper scope, and an aerial view from the shuttle Pelican high above. The map shows the locations of every crew member, weapon system, shuttles, and buildings. Along the bottom of the visor scrolls various text messages.

TRENT (V.O.)
Looks like they found the new
invisible fence.

ERIC (V.O.)
Yeah.

SUPERIMPOSE: TEXT MESSAGE TO Trent, Arabella: Kick some butt, stay safe, see you soon, love Suzy.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Science was right about the range
on the acid guns.

EXT. HILLTOP - MOMENTS LATER

The NEFEZ begin throwing rocks and sticks near their fallen comrades and quickly realize the invisible fence is about ten feet high.

They begin throwing individual NEFEZ over the invisible fence.

The SECURITY ROBOT begins shooting the NEFEZ who respond with small acid dart guns.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Commence sniper fire.

EXT. CAMP WALL POSITION ONE - SAME TIME

Russ and Arabella begin taking long range sniper shots at the NEFEZ.

TRENT (V.O.)
Looks like they made it through the
fence.

ERIC (V.O.)
That sentry robot won't last long.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Team Bravo, fire.

Rockets shoot over Position One, originating from the center of the camp.

EXT. HILLTOP - MOMENTS LATER

The NEFEZ swarm over piles of trees and rocks, hastily put into position to avoid the invisible fence. The robot sentry is destroyed and the mass are beginning to surge forward towards the base camp when the rockets begin exploding in their midst.

They SCREAM and spread out, then surge quickly towards the camp.

EXT. CAMP WALL POSITION TWO - MOMENTS LATER

Nikki is behind an auto grenade launcher. She begins firing at groups of the NEFEZ.

Bryan stands next to Nikki looking through a pair of binoculars.

INT. SHUTTLE - SAME TIME

Jenna hovers the shuttle near the beach. The mountain range is in sight. She monitors the battle through the video screens and map above the windshield. On the map, there are two other shuttles next to her and two large shuttles hovering at a high altitude.

ERIC (V.O.)
Alamo.

JENNA (V.O.)
Here we go.

Jenna sets the shuttle in motion, quickly gaining speed and altitude to clear the mountains.

EXT. CAMP WALL POSITION ONE

Russ, Arabella, and Mickey fire almost continuously at the mass of NEFEZ now half the distance from the hilltop and moving quickly.

TRENT (V.O.)
Arabella, where is he?

ARABELLA (V.O.)
I'm kind of busy right now.

RUSS (V.O.)
They move fast! Watch out position two!

NIKKI (V.O.)
They are moving past us to position three.

The three shuttles appear behind the NEFEZ and start shooting them from an altitude of three hundred feet.

EXT. OPERATIONS ROOM ROOF - SAME TIME

Eric and Trent continue to scan the NEFEZ with binoculars.

TRENT (V.O.)
They are spreading out.

JENNA (V.O.)
They're hard to hit from this altitude, request permission to fly lower.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Negative. Take out their goo guns first.

ERIC (V.O.)
That might be him.

INT. ERIC'S VISOR - SAME TIME

Eric's visor has multiple videos and a map of the area. He concentrates on a cluster of red dots on the map almost directly in front of position two. He zooms in with a video showing a group of green NEFEZ.

Eric uses his ACE to mark the center of the cluster with a RED X.

ERIC (V.O.)
Nikki, pump a few rounds at the red X.

TRENT (V.O.)
Arabella?

ARABELLA (V.O.)
They want to find a weak point.

Explosions hit the cluster. The RED X and cluster move towards Position One.

EXT. OPERATIONS ROOM ROOF - MOMENTS LATER

Eric is kneeling and fires his weapon near the explosions in the distance.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
You missed!

TRENT (V.O.)
Is that him?

ARABELLA (V.O.)
Yeah, he's in that group.

The NEFEZ quickly surge forward all along the front coming to within one hundred meters of the camp wall.

EXT. SHUTTLES - MOMENTS LATER

The shuttles are hovering behind the NEFEZ and fire at the goo guns. The fire from the base camp walls is intense, but the NEFEZ are able to surge closer and closer, using the cover and their green color to blend in with the ground.

TRENT (V.O.)
Shuttle Falcon, hit that group again!

JENNA (V.O.)
Roger.

The shuttle fires a burst into one group of NEFEZ, who quickly scatter out of the way.

INT. ARABELLA'S VISOR - SAME TIME

Arabella sees multiple targets and continues to fire. The RED X scatters from the shuttle fire.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
He's still in that group.

TRENT (V.O.)
Yeah, but which one?

EXT. CAMP WALL POSITION TWO - SAME TIME

Bryan and Nikki continue to fire their weapons. The CREW MEMBER next to Bryan is on the ground, covered with green goo. The NEFEZ are only fifty meters from their position.

Bryan turns to his right as a group of NEFEZ swarm through a destroyed portion of the wall.

BRYAN (V.O.)
They broke through position three.

INT. ERIC'S VISOR - SAME TIME

The map shows four blue symbols mixed with many red dots and a gap in the wall by position three.

Eric turns to see fighting on the ground inside the camp.

TRENT (V.O.)
Arabella, are you sure he's in the group?

ARABELLA (V.O.)
Yes!

ERIC (V.O.)
They're breaking through.

Eric aims and starts shooting NEFEZ inside the camp.

BRYAN (V.O.)
Shuttle Hawk, cover Position Three.

A shuttle symbol moves to the position and begins firing at the gap in the wall.

EXT. CAMP WALL POSITION ONE - MOMENTS LATER

Russ and Arabella continue to fire at NEFEZ in front of them. Mickey has turned around and watches for NEFEZ in the camp behind them. There are explosions and shooting off to the right.

TRENT (V.O.)
Time to end this! Jenna, meet me
in the middle.

JENNA (V.O.)
Roger.

Trent arrives at the parapet with FOUR DOGS in battle armor.

TRENT (V.O.)
Mickey, cover us! Russ, Arabella,
follow me!

Trent jumps over the wall firing his weapons, quickly followed by Russ, Arabella, and the DOGS.

EXT. FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

Trent runs forward towards the cluster of NEFEZ where Skorp is expected to be.

Russ and Arabella move quickly behind.

The combined firepower, including Mickey's sniper fire, creates a path of dead NEFEZ.

The DOGS run in front and cover the sides, biting NEFEZ trying to attack the small group.

Green acid darts fly through the air bouncing off their battle armor.

Fire from a shuttle takes out NEFEZ around them.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
He's straight ahead!

BRYAN (V.O.)
(sternly)
Trent! Fall back!

TRENT (V.O.)
We can finish this now.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Falcon! Proceed to rendezvous
point!

TRENT (V.O.)
Jenna, ten seconds!

INT. TRENT'S VISOR - MOMENTS LATER

Trent, Arabella, Russ and THREE DOGS break through to the
small group of NEFEZ.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
(yells)
Second from the left!

Trent quickly aims and kills five of six in the cluster,
leaving the second from the left standing.

TRENT (V.O.)
Thanks!

Trent runs the last thirty feet and grabs SKORP by the neck,
lifting him off his feet.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
That's him! That's Skorp!

TRENT (V.O.)
Jenna!

The shuttle arrives, the tail of the cargo ramp directly in
front of them with TWO CREW MEMBERS firing to protect them.

TRENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
All aboard!

Arabella, Russ, and THREE DOGS quickly jump into the cargo
bay of the shuttle. Trent walks onto the ramp, still holding
Skorp by the neck over the edge.

TRENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(yells)
Go!

EXT. SHUTTLE - MOMENTS LATER

The shuttle leaps straight into the sky and hovers at three
hundred feet. SKORP is visible to everyone below hanging
over the back of the ramp, his feet dangling in the air.

INT. SHUTTLE CARGO AREA - SAME TIME

Trent continues to hold Skorp by the neck.

Skorp tries to grasp Trent, but can't get a grip on Trent's battle armor.

TRENT (V.O.)
Arabella, tell him to surrender!

Arabella lifts her visor.

ARABELLA
He doesn't understand the meaning
of the word!

RUSS (V.O.)
Look below, they stopped the attack
and are watching us!

ARABELLA
What will you give him to stop the
attack?

TRENT (V.O.)
Friendship, peace, security.

ARABELLA
He wants a spaceship. To leave the
planet and return home.

TRENT (V.O.)
We'll help him build one.

BRYAN (V.O.)
The camp is secure.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
No! He wants this ship!

Trent lets go. Skorp falls and grasps the edge of the ramp. Trent kneels and holds out his hand, his fist open. Trent lifts his visor and with steely eyes, looks directly at Skorp.

TRENT
His choice. We build together, or
his falls alone!

EXT. FIELD - SAME TIME

Skorp looks down at the field below. The NEFEZ are being killed.

A green goo gun fires straight up at him, but the goo falls back to the ground killing more. A shuttle fires, destroying the gun.

INT. SHUTTLE CARGO AREA - SAME TIME

He looks up at Trent's face and strong eyes. Then at Trent's extended hand, palm open. Skorp reaches up to grasp Trent's hand.

ARABELLA (V.O.)
Together! Pull him in!

Trent closes his palm and pulls Skorp into the shuttle cargo area.

EXT. CAMP LANDING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

The shuttle lands with the cargo ramp lowered. Trent, Arabella, Russ, and Skorp exit the shuttle. Their helmets are off and they walk to Eric.

Bryan and Mickey rush in with a wounded CREW MEMBER on a stretcher. Ten more stretchers with WOUNDED CREW MEMBERS lay on the ground.

TRENT
Mister Vice President, I'd like to introduce you to Skorp.

Eric holds out his hand. Skorp looks, then touches it with his hand.

ERIC
We look forward to better relations with you and your people.

ARABELLA
He asks where we are from.

ERIC
We can discuss that later. Go, take care of your people. Then we will meet to discuss plans for your ship.

EXT. CAMP - MORNING

The camp is clean and crew members are hard at work making repairs.

TEXT ON SCREEN:

TO: President of the USA,

The USS Constellation established a base camp on the planet Pantera. Nefez villages were discovered, a type of humanoid that we believe to be stranded space travellers. One village, lead by Skorp attacked our base camp but was repulsed with the loss of nineteen killed and twenty-six wounded USS Constellation crew members. A diplomatic mission is developing the conditions for peace and better working relationships. Pantera was found to hold more flora and fauna than expected, additional explorations continue.

FROM: USS Constellation

Very Respectfully,
Pamela
President

THE END

FADE OUT