

Courage To Love

By

Lee M. Field

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Lee M. Field
317 East 8th Street
Rome, GA 30161
lfield42@gmail.com
(706) 233-2904

EXT. CITY SKYLINE - EARLY EVENING

Earth but not the one we know. Passing through spires of Porcelain and steel reaching way into the heavens. We descend, piercing the veil of clouds.

This is Romanus the imperial capital. On this earth ancient Rome never fell. It continued on eventually spreading the entire globe, with colonies on the Moon and Mars.

VOICE

Romanus, powerful, the new capital
of the Empire.

We continue down coming to a columned lined marble building. The words engraved on it's front mantle IMPERIAL SENATE.

INT. IMPERIAL SENATE - EVENING

Continuing on into the building gliding over Senators and other staff.

VOICE

After centuries of civil war, the
people finally had enough of
Caesars who cared only for
themselves.

Through Building we go to another chamber.

INT. IMPERIAL SENATE CHAMBER - EVENING

Rows and rows of Senate seats curved around a central throne. In it sits one man, dressed in Traditional attire, toga and Gold Laurel Crown. This is Caesar Dionitian (55)seasoned politician and loved by the people.

VOICE

The Empire was reorganized. The era
of Imperial entitlement was gone.
Now they are elected.

Caesar looks over documents, the general running of the government. A Routine day.

VOICE

But for all it's outward polish
there still lurked the poison which
had threatened it so long ago.

Several senators are in a hot debate Caesar listens.

(CONTINUED)

VOICE

For hearts of men can be cruel,
without mercy.

SENATOR

We have had more reports from the
Martian colonies of this Cult
Leader calling himself THE ONE.

SENATOR TWO

What the hell does that mean?

VOICE

But sometimes hearts can be
changed, all we need is the courage
to love.

Caesar adjusts in his chair tired and a little bored.

CAESAR

So what, he's a little leader on
that backwater colony of Mars. What
possible harm can he do.

Caesar is flanked by his son MARCUS(24) sitting beside him.
Even though Caesars are elected, their sons act as a back up
if the Caesar dies in office or can't fulfill his term.

Marcus is brash headstrong and really self centered. He has
been pampered all his life. He knows he doesn't live up to
his Father's expectations but tries.

MARCUS

Mars is the center of all we hold
sacred. If we allow this cult to
thrive it could cripple the empire.

CAESAR

As I said this is nothing, it will
blow itself out. By the end of the
month they'll be worshiping
something else.

Marcus settles back into chair.

CAESAR

Really Marcus, why can't you be
more like that friend of yours
Trajan.

MARCUS

Trajan is a brute meant for the
games.

(CONTINUED)

CAESAR

Strong runner good strategic sense.

Another Senator approaches Caesar, this is Brutus Villa (50) Trajan's father. He and Caesar are old friends.

BRUTUS

How's the campaign coming?

CAESAR

I think I'm good for one more term.

BRUTUS

Not if I can beat you in the outer provinces.

They share a professional laugh, they may be friends but they are political rivals.

CAESAR

How's Trajan?

BRUTUS

Well, he scored high marks on his entrance exam to Officer Candidate School.

CAESAR

He'll be a Centurion before you know it. To bad my son here couldn't have tried out.

MARCUS

Only to follow in your footsteps Father.

CAESAR

That remains to be seen.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Trajan (24) walks arm in arm with Lucila (23). Trajan is tall strong, fit, a poster Child for the army. Lucila fiery red hair, petite, gorgeous. They are the world to each other, madly in love.

They walk along happy and giddy, eventually heading into a restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The place is packed they move through the crowd finding a vacant table. Music is blaring making it hard to hear. A waitress in retro 1950's dress comes up to them.

WAITRESS

What'a ya have hun.

TRAJAN

Two beers, no make that a bottle of you best wine.

LUCILA

We can't afford that.

The waitress cocks her head to one side wanting them to hurry up.

TRAJAN

Yes we can, and a large pepperoni.

LUCILA

I'll have to work overtime.

TRAJAN

No you won't.

Trajan pulls out a slip of paper.

TRAJAN

Officers candidate school. I've been accepted and given a years stipend to settle in.

Lucila overjoyed almost jumps over table giving him a huge hug kissing him all over. From across the room a very drunk Marcus watches them.

He downs another shot of whiskey then staggers over to them.

MARCUS

Hey my friends!

He almost falls all on them.

TRAJAN

We're the ones celebrating, but it looks like you beat us to the punch.

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS
Cel-celebrating, cel-brating. Oh
fuck it, what?

LUCILA
He's been accepted to academy.

MARCUS
That's great, great!

The waitress comes back with wine and pizza. Marcus fumbles
for his wallet almost dropping it.

MARCUS
Here dis is on me.

TRAJAN
No, No we-

MARCUS
One of the perks of being the son
of Caesar. At least I can do this
right.
(beat-to waitress)
Keep da change.

WAITRESS
Thanks toots.

MARCUS
Toots, Toots I have you know I'm-

Trajan takes his arm and settles him down.

MARCUS
No fucking respect.

TRAJAN
Easy buddy, things are that bad.

MARCUS
No, you have the respect of your
Father and MINE!

LUCILA
Your Father loves you. Your second
only to him in the Empire.

MARCUS
Only if he dies.

TRAJAN

Hey lets enjoy the night. Tomorrow why don't you join me for my morning run. Your Father is usually out doing his, show him your every bit the man you can be.

LUCILA

Trajan's right, stop wallowing in self pity and do something about it. Show him you are above the Special interest groups, use your influence to curb their power. Use your mind Marcus to get rid of them so real change can happen

Marcus puts his arms on their shoulders. Thrilled at adoration.

MARCUS

What would I do without you? Oh and I have a little gift for you.

Marcus pulls out a diamond studded collar pin, Trajan's name engraved on back

TRAJAN

Oh this is too much.

MARCUS

Your worth it buddy.

They dive into pizza and pour the wine.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The three emerge from evening celebration. A luxury limousine sits waiting with two armed Praetorian guards holding door open.

MARCUS

Looks like my gilded ride is here.

TRAJAN

Government never sleeps?

MARCUS

No just the Crystal Blue chip.

TRAJAN

I never had one.

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS

Great stuff you can access internet
and virtual worlds. Down side is
they can track your movements. Can
I give you a lift home?

TRAJAN

No we'd like to walk.

MARCUS

Suit yourself see ya tomorrow, nine
am?

TRAJAN

Sharp.

Marcus gets in, guards close doors get in and drives off.

LUCILA

Crystal Blue?

TRAJAN

It's something new. Government
officials started using them as a
safeguard against possible
abduction then it evolved like
internet. Like he said you can
access all sorts of entertainment
in your head.

LUCILA

Sounds like mind control.

TRAJAN

(laughing)

No, but it is highly addictive.
I've seen guys retreat into their
own virtual worlds not even aware
of reality.

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Marcus pulls out a vapor cigarette and fires it up. It's
loaded with something else. The guards smell it.

GUARD

Heroin your highness?

MARCUS

Just drive, nine am at the river.

INT. TRAJAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

I little one story above garage dwelling. Cramped but comfortable. Posters for join the Army and Trajan's favorite gladiator teams. A Fat Head of one particular Gladiator RUFIO.

Trajan and Lucila open door kissing, they can't get their clothes off fast enough. The TV is on we here a reporter.

REPORTER

And in a surprise move, Rufio king of the games has decided to retire.

TRAJAN

What?

He turns his attention to TV where a Live News Conference is taking place. Rufio big and almost Zen Like manner explains his reasons.

RUFIO

I feel the time is right. The games have become too materialistic. I mean, when you have players who sacrifice their own limbs for bionic ones just to get an edge, it's ridiculous.

A reporter raises his hand, Rufio recognizes him.

REPORTER

But wouldn't you say that is just all part of it. Before we had steroids and that killed people.

RUFIO

No that's not the point, where do you separate man from machine?

REPORTER

We've heard rumors that men may be replaced altogether, with Battle Bots.

RUFIO

Well I'm glad I won't be a part of that. I'll remain with the Mars Avengers as a trainer.

Other reporters clamor for another question. Rufio waves them off and leaves the podium.

(CONTINUED)

REPORTER

There you have it, the Greatest
Gladiator of all time stepping down
out of conviction. Now a recap of
last nights game.

The TV flips to a recorded broadcast of the Mars Avengers
against Neptune's Warriors. Twenty teams of Gladiators pair
off, they do not fight to the death. Adorned in traditional
Gladiator attire but updated with sensors and heads up
displays. Looking more like robots the swords are real, if a
player receives five touches, he's out. The contest goes on
till only one remains and that team wins. At anytime another
player can assist their fellow teammate. Death only comes to
a player who performs too poorly in a season then the match
is to the death.

LUCILA

I hate those barbaric games.

TRAJAN

It's just for fun these guys earn
millions.

LUCILA

What of that poor fellow last year.

TRAJAN

Cassius? Well, it happens he sucked
the past three seasons.

LUCILA

He was killed Trajan, by one of
those bionic things!

Lucila sits down on bed beside him. Trajan looks lovingly
into her eyes.

LUCILA

I'm just glad you didn't get sucked
into all that, remember that
recruiter last fall?

TRAJAN

Old news.

LUCILA

(smiling)

Now it's off to OCS, you'll be a
Centurion soon.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN

And from there Praetorian, and the
Senate.

They laugh and coo only as lovers can excited about the
future.

EXT. RIVERBANK - MORNING

Trajan looks at his watch it's right at nine. He is punctual
he has to get run in before work. Frustrated that Marcus has
stood him up again, he sets off on run.

The sun beams in his face the City of Romanus sprawled out
across the river. He picks up pace his heart pounding in
chest. Ahead a group of Praetorian surround a jogging
Caesar, moving up the trail like some weird train.

Trajan has a big smile on his face as Caesar approaches him.
They slow to greet one another.

CAESAR

Trajan! OCS Congratulations!

TRAJAN

Thank you sir, how goes the
election?

CAESAR

Your father is putting up a good
fight.

Trajan and he laugh as the continue on their runs. Trajan
watches them disappear around bend he starts back in full
stride. Then BOOM!!

The explosion sends Trajan to the ground. Smoke everywhere,
he gets up and runs back to check on Caesar. He moves
through dust and smoke it finally clears. Body parts
everywhere the Praetorian caught the brunt of the IED.

Caesar is on ground coughing up blood a large hole in his
side, the wound is mortal. Trajan falls to knees.

TRAJAN

Caesar!

Caesar raises his hand to bring Trajan closer. Gurgling
blood.

(CONTINUED)

CAESAR

Do - do not let Marcus-

Then he breaths his last and dies. Trajan scared, stands he
Caesars blood all over him.

A helicopter swoops in and armed guards rappel down
surrounding Trajan. A Centurion, looking more like a
detective, flies his car to a stop opposite and jumps out.

He looks at dead Caesar mouth agape then notices blood on
Trajan.

CENTURION

What happened?!

TRAJAN

I heard an explosion, and this.

The guards move in and restrain Trajan.

TRAJAN

I know this looks bad.

CENTURION

Bring him.

INT. IMPERIAL SENATE CHAMBER - DAY

Marcus sits upon the throne looking out of place. He puts on
good show of mournful son.

A Senator reads the official decree.

SENATOR

Marcus Tubulos Dionition do you
assume the role of Caesar until
such time an emergency vote can
take place?

MARCUS

I do.

SENATOR

And Marcus Tubulos Dionitian will
you relinquish those powers after
said election.

MARCUS

(half smile, lying)

I do.

(CONTINUED)

SENATOR

Then by the power and authority of
the Senate I declare the Caesar.

He steps back and all the Senators stand and give one arm
salute and cry out.

HAIL CAESAR!

Marcus stands.

MARCUS

I cannot fill my Father's shoes,
but with your help we can make it
through this dark time.

INT. JAIL CELL - EVENING

Trajan still in bloody clothes sits chained to chair. An
interrogation table in front of him.

In steps the Centurion, briefcase in tow he slams it hard on
table, and sits down.

CENTURION

Okay why did you assassinate
Caesar?

TRAJAN

I didn't!

CENTURION

Then why was this next to one of
the bomb fragments.

The Centurion pulls out plastic bag and shakes it on to
table. A small pin with his name engraved on back.

TRAJAN

That was a gift from a friend of
mine. Marcus, he gave it to me last
night.

CENTURION

This isn't looking good for you.

TRAJAN

I don't understand.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Lucila bursts through the door running up to Watch Commander.

LUCILA
Where's Trajan Villa?

WATCH COMMANDER
He's giving a statement, you can wait over there.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

The Limousine pulls up escorted by a dozen Praetorian on motorcycles. Security is tight, Marcus is hustled inside guards surrounding him.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

He steps in with confidence everyone stops what they are doing and give one arm salute as in Senate chamber they shout out.

HAIL CAESAR!

MARCUS
I want to see him.

Lucila comes running up to him, a guard intervenes and restrains her.

MARCUS
No, its alright she's with me.

LUCILA
Marcus he didn't do this.

MARCUS
Shush, not now come with me.

The guards escort them back to Trajan's cell.

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

The Centurion stands and salutes as Marcus and Lucila enter.

MARCUS
Leave us.

(CONTINUED)

CENTURION

But sir?

MARCUS

Now!

The Centurion does as he's told. Trajan has a pleading look on his face.

TRAJAN

Marcus you know me, I loved your Father.

MARCUS

I know, but your father's election wasn't going so well.

TRAJAN

You think I did this for political reasons.

Marcus sits in front of him stoically.

MARCUS

No.

LUCILA

Then you get him out of here.

MARCUS

I can't the police have evidence and you were at the scene.

LUCILA

But your Caesar.

MARCUS

Only by Senatorial decree.

Trajan looks deep into Marcus eyes.

TRAJAN

You suspect someone else.

MARCUS

Yes, those followers of THE ONE.

LUCILA

Here?

MARCUS

We've heard they have factions springing up.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN
You manufactured my arrest.

Lucila not believing her ears.

LUCILA
What?

MARCUS
I needed someone to go to the
source and flush out this character
once and for all.
(beat)
I needed someone I could trust.

TRAJAN
I ought to!

MARCUS
It will be show trial. No harm will
come to your family. You will go to
Mars and ferret out this traitor.

TRAJAN
In the mean time, my Father's good
named will be tainted forever.

MARCUS
He will be well compensated. When
you return a hero of the Empire all
will be forgotten.

Trajan struggles with chains mad as hell. He screams at
Marcus.

TRAJAN
Your mad Marcus, catch the real
killers.

MARCUS
I'm trying to save an empire!

INT. PRISON SHIP - NIGHT

The Prison ship comes into orbit around Mars it descends
through clouds. Mars has been reclaimed, it still has it's
reddish color but new oceans have formed through generations
of terraform.

Trajan sits alone in handcuffs. Two pilots sit at the
controls.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN
Could I get a little room service?

PILOT
Shut up Traitor.

Trajan shakes his head. The two pilots get up and walk back to holding area. They put on parachute bags and open bay door. Donning goggles they laugh at him.

TRAJAN
What are you doing?!

PILOT
Heard you were to be an officer.

PILOT 2
Then Pilot the ship fly boy.

They salute him and jump out laughing.

TRAJAN
Marcus!

Trajan struggles with his handcuffs. The ship is picking up speed the ground is coming up. It buffets wildly. Trajan finally maneuvers his arms from behind his back and under legs.

He runs to pilots seat looking frantically around the controls. He doesn't know what he's doing. He grabs steering wheel pulling back yoke.

The craft seems to stabilize a bit. Looking around at terrain. He has passed over seas and is heading into deep desert.

Miles and miles of endless sand dunes.

TRAJAN
(to himself)
Gotta land this bird. Oh shit
Trajan what are you doing?

He eases the yoke downward. He is still traveling too fast. It's going to be an uncontrolled crash. He prays.

TRAJAN
Bless me oh God Mars.

EXT. MARS - DAY

He hits the sand with a thud the ship rolls end over end. Trajan is thrown from his seat. He hangs onto seat belt the centrifugal force has him in the air.

Looking out window he sees a cliff face coming up. Terror in his eyes. Quickly looking around, the hatch door still open.

A decision, with all his might he flings himself out just in time.

The craft pummels over the side. Trajan has managed to grab the cliff face and is dangling over a cavernous canyon.

The ship explodes below him. He pulls himself up and over.

Panting safe at last, he notices that his handcuffs have been sheared apart in the crash.

He laughs to himself and lies down resting.

Some time passes he reflects on situation, looking around.

TRAJAN

Well I passed over the sea. That's south I think, shit.

He doesn't think too much about it and gets up and starts walking.

EXT. DESERT - LATER

The sun is high, but it's not real hot a strong desert breeze furls his hair.

Ahead a small dust cloud maybe humans or the Pilots!

He sees a small outcropping of stones, he hides watching.

A group of hooded people approach they are Martian Monks. Devoted to the God Mars they lead a strict warriors code.

Honor is everything to prove yourself worthy you have to pick a fight. These guys don't play.

Trajan decides to chance it, he approaches them. He must not show fear or they'll kill him on the spot.

They stop seeing him, their hoods hide their faces.

(CONTINUED)

MONK 1

Do you seek a challenge?

TRAJAN

No I'm lost.

MONK 2

We are all lost brother.

MONK 3

Only through the brotherhood can we be found.

MONK 1

Do you value your life?

TRAJAN

Yes.

MONK 2

Would you fight to save it.

TRAJAN

Look fellas I just want some information.

MONK 3

Those are prisoner shackles. Did you kill your jailer?

TRAJAN

No I was abandoned, my ship crashed.

MONK 1

If you tell the truth, fight to defend it.

The lead Monk throws a sword at Trajan's feet. Trajan an Oh Crap Look!

The Lead Monk takes off robe revealing himself it's RUFIO (38) god of the games.

Rufio assumes classic attack posture.

RUFIO

Prepare to defend yourself.

TRAJAN

No I'm your biggest fan.

He hears the unsheathing of many swords. He's doomed any which way. He lunges for the sword.

(CONTINUED)

Rufio comes down hard but Trajan deflects it. Trajan, while smaller, is more agile. He pivots around slightly nicking Rufio on shin.

Rufio doesn't acknowledge pain he presses the attack. Hacking and driving Trajan back.

Trajan stumbles, Rufio raises sword swinging downward.

Trajan rolls out of way jumping back to feet. Rufio astonished at his speed.

Rufio swirls around Trajan has caught him off guard. Now it's Trajan's turn. Rufio is now on the defensive.

Trajan is like a mad dog yelling.

TRAJAN

All I wanted was directions!

Finally one massive blow from Trajan. He knocks Rufio's sword from his hand. Now, Trajan's sword is at Rufio's throat.

Rufio starts to laugh as do other Monks, they take off Robes laughing and applauding. They are all Members of the Martian Avengers team.

Trajan doesn't know what to make of it.

RUFIO

Good work kid. Need a job.

TRAJAN

What?! Why the disguises?

The second Monk speaks he is Titus (28).

TITUS

Groupies.

RUFIO

We believe in the old order and train outside the comforts of a modern gym.

TITUS

You never know when your going to run into a fan base. Then they will follow you around like puppies.

RUFIO

Let's get those shackles off.

TITUS

The law doesn't really bother us out here. But better not to attract attention.

RUFIO

Come we will talk more.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Trajan and others sit around an open campfire. They roast an animal they killed. It is strange looking, not a normal critter.

TRAJAN

What is that?

TITUS

We call em Dust Rats.

RUFIO

The last of the indigenous life.

TITUS

Before they reseeded Mars with earth animals.

Titus checks the meat, it's done to his satisfaction. He portions it out to others. Trajan smells it, he doesn't like it.

Titus and others laugh.

TITUS

It's better than it smells.

RUFIO

High energy content.

Trajan gingerly takes a bite. A not bad look. He devours it, famished. Rufio leans back against rock relaxing.

RUFIO

You gonna tell us about it.

TRAJAN

I'm not sure if I should.

(CONTINUED)

TITUS
We really don't care.

TRAJAN
I was accused of assassinating the
Emperor.

RUFIO
Dionitian? Have they held a general
election?

TRAJAN
No.

TITUS
Who replaced him.

TRAJAN
His son Marcus.

Titus almost gags on his food.

TITUS
Marcus?! That little twit.

RUFIO
So? it's only temporary.

TITUS
I was in school with him. He used
to torture animals, got a real kick
out of it. He's dangerous.

RUFIO
So he sent you here as an exile.

TRAJAN
No, he wanted me dead. The Pilots
bailed out, I had to crash land the
ship.

TITUS
The Gods must be with you.

TRAJAN
He told me some story about finding
this Character called THE ONE.

TITUS
THE ONE?!

TRAJAN

You know him?

TITUS

What I know of him you wouldn't believe.

Rufio understands what Titus means he gives him a gentle nod.

RUFIO

Tell him.

FLASHBACK BEGINS:

TITUS (V.O)

It was in the old City MARS ONE.

Titus is walking on a city street like a New York scene today, but dirty and cluttered. Beggars on sidewalk.

Street vendors hawk their wares.

TITUS (V.O)

They kept the ORIGINAL COLONY as it was. The elders thought best to keep site as a homage to the past. So it has remained that way. The Festival Of Mars is still held there.

Titus continues on examining goods. He Barthers some, but it's just a tease.

TITUS (V.O)

Every year religious zealots descend on the City to pay respect to Mars. Sometimes even an Emperor will grace our little planet.

(beat)

Mars used to be a tourist attraction till flights to Venus became Popular.

RUFIO (V.O.)

Stick with the story.

Titus again walking, minding his own business. He sees an old man crippled and begging. Pity in Titus eyes. People just pass him by, indifferent.

(CONTINUED)

TITUS (V.O)
I saw him there, unwanted and
alone. I felt the urge to put him
out of his misery.

Titus feels for his sword.

TITUS (V.O)
An honorable death.

Then a hand on Titus sword. Titus turns to a young bearded
man in late 20's. He's dressed in a worn T-Shirt and ragged
jeans. He wears flip flops.

TITUS (V.O)
I looked straight into his piercing
blue eyes and I understood.

TRAJAN (V.O.)
Understood?

TITUS (V.O)
That the man would be okay.

The stranger bends down to the beggar and takes his hand.

STRANGER
Rise.

The crippled man gets to his feet just as though he had
stopped to take a rest. The people go about their business
not noticing the little drama.

Titus stares in disbelief. The young man turns to Titus,
smiles, and simply leaves.

FLASHBACK ENDS:

Titus is in a lost gaze. Most of the group remain silent,
the story sinking in. One of the other Gladiator's, Crixus
(20's) rough, and mean, erupts in laughter.

CRIXUS
More a drunken tale.

TITUS
It was true I tell you.

RUFIO
Well if it be, the marble Gods we
worship may be just that, marble.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN
Could be just a bag of tricks.

TITUS
Then why is the Empire so
interested in him.

The group rests on the debate and settles down to sleep.

INT. TRAJAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucila watches TV, there is a knock at the door it startles her. Opening, it's Marcus, he has a grim look on face.

LUCILA
What do you want?

MARCUS
I had to tell you before it got on
TV.

LUCILA
Tell me, tell me what?

MARCUS
There's been an accident.

LUCILA
Trajan?

Marcus steps in. He braces her.

MARCUS
Trajan tried to escape. In the
scuffle the ship lost control.
Everyone was killed.

Lucila slaps and beats on him.

LUCILA
You bastard! You fucking bastard I
hate you!

A Praetorian opens door, Marcus shoos him away.

MARCUS
(to Guard)
It's okay.

Lucila falls into Marcus arms wailing and crying uncontrollably. Marcus strokes her hair trying to calm her down.

(CONTINUED)

LUCILA

Now I have nothing. I'm all alone.

MARCUS

No, no I'm still here, you'll never want for anything. Come stay at the palace for a while.

LUCILA

You'd do that for me.

MARCUS

I owe you both, it was my fault. I never should have tried this.

LUCILA

It was reckless.

MARCUS

If only Trajan would have trusted me. I don't know what went wrong.

INT. IMPERIAL SENATE - DAY

Marcus sits on the throne looking polished and in control. Two armed Pratorian on either side of him.

The Senate files in Brutus Villa obviously distraught and worried takes his seat. The other Senators find their places.

The air is tense.

MARCUS

You are all aware of the past days events.

A Senator rises.

SENATOR

Caesar I must protest!

MARCUS

Sit down! I'm within my rights to call an emergency session!

SENATOR

On what grounds!

MARCUS

My Father was Killed!
(calming down)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS (cont'd)
The facts will render my case.
Senator Villa would you rise
please.

Brutus rises knowing whats coming.

MARCUS
As you know your son assassinated
my father.

BRUTUS
He did no such thing!

MARCUS
The facts are plain. But the
motive, until now, was unclear. In
his statement to avoid capital
punishment, Trajan revealed to me
that what he did was to ensure your
election to Caesar.

The Senate erupts in protest. Marcus stands in a commanding
mode shouts.

MARCUS
And, that like minded Senators
where in on the plot to secure
prime cabinet spots!

BRUTUS
My son would never betray his
Emperor. Why haven't you brought
him before us?!

MARCUS
Trajan Villa is Dead!

Brutus looks like someone has punched him in the gut. He
stumbles back to his seat sick.

MARCUS
Brutus Villa you are under arrest
for treason.

The Senators even louder we hear.

WHAT PROOF?

THIS IS AGAINST CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

OUTRAGEOUS!

The Guards come and take Brutus away.

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS

As a further safeguard I am
enacting Emergency Order Number 4.
This Senate is hereby suspended
until a full investigation can be
performed!

Through all their blustering the Senate is stunned into
silence. They stand there not believing what has happened.

Other Guards rush in to quell any unrest.

Marcus now omnipotent nods to them the guards move in and
herd the Senators out.

Marcus bodyguard and Praetorian Cato (35) dark skinned black
hair steps up. Cato is intelligent and wise.

CATO

Sire you have the Praetorian
support but suspending the Senate-I
don't think that-

MARCUS

(cutting him off)
Your job is not to think. You could
be replaced too.

Marcus in a huff walks out Cato and other guard at his side.

EXT. SENATE - DAY

The Guards lock and seal Senate Chamber and leave. The
Senators mill around and talk among themselves.

SENATOR

Suspension.

SENATOR TWO

How will he spin this?

SENATOR THREE

The public will never go for it.

SENATOR

WE may have underestimated him.

Marcus walks past them, they bow a little keeping silent.

INT. PALACE LUCILA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Lucila is in her state room, it is bigger than her entire apartment. She looks around, a beautiful dresser with lots of makeup. On to closet filled with clothes all the latest fashions.

She looks at labels, astonished.

LUCILA

All my size.

She tries on shoes, a perfect fit. Like a kid in candy store, she smiles a little. Then an image of Trajan comes to her.

She flits out and turns on TV. It shimmers on, an image of Marcus fills the screen.

MARCUS

I want to assure the public this is only temporary. The House Investigative comity is working hard to uncover any further plots against this Government.

The screen switches to another reporter on the street amongst a huge crowd of protesters.

The Reporter has to cover ears to speak.

REPORTER

As you can see this surprise has not gone well for the young Caesar.

The reporter turns mic to a close PROTESTER, intervening.

REPORTER

What do you think of this announcement?

PROTESTER

It's criminal, I mean how can he maintain the government?

Marcus enters room.

MARCUS

They're like Children frightened of a little change.

(CONTINUED)

LUCILA

What you've done goes beyond all reason.

MARCUS

It will be for the best, you'll see.

LUCILA

How?

MARCUS

Wiping out corruption. You said it yourself everything revolves around special interest groups. The real problems never get solved.

LUCILA

But by LAW Marcus not decree.

INT. GOVERNMENT LAB - NIGHT

Marcus and Cato enter the large environmental lab. A technician hovers over a computer screen. On it we see a scan of the human brain.

The nerdy Technician is surprised and nervous at Marcus visit. This is Joshua (40) loner, only comfortable around computers. He is a cyborg tech.

MARCUS

How goes it?

JOSHUA

Fine, we'll be ready soon.

MARCUS

I hope so, I'm walking on thin ice.

JOSHUA

Once I've crossed linked the system you'll have total control.

MARCUS

Total?

JOSHUA

Absolutely, they will follow your decree to the letter.

(CONTINUED)

CATO
I'm sorry sir, what?

MARCUS
Remember the Crystal Blue Chips the senators were so fanatical about?

CATO
Yes for protection.

MARCUS
Exactly. I had one implanted too.

JOSHUA
You see with everything interconnected through the web you can access everyone at once.

MARCUS
What ever I think they will do without question.

Joshua kind of giggles like a mad scientist.

JOSHUA
One big super brain.

CATO
But not everyone has one. Certainly not on Mars.

MARCUS
That's where these come in.

Marcus walks over to a control panel and presses button.

A large screen draws back revealing a large hanger. In it, thousands of BATTLE BOTS. Robotic killing machines.

MARCUS
A military contract I procured. Now I even have an army at my fingertips. I told you you could be replaced.

Cato is stunned by such a vast plan. He makes sure that Marcus knows his loyalty.

CATO
I will be proud to lead them.

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS

I know you will. Now we must give the people some entertainment till we can implement our little plan.

CATO

Entertainment?

MARCUS

Games Cato, Games.

CATO

Gladiators?

MARCUS

I want you to go to Mars for and exhibition game with my Battle Bots. We will start a betting pool nothing satisfies the masses better than gambling and sports.

Marcus leans in on glass staring at his Frankenstein Creations.

MARCUS

Man verses Machine. Which will win.

EXT. MARS DESERT - DAY

Rufio and Trajan spar with one another. Rufio's grace, and fighting elegance evident.

Trajan tries to emulate, but to no avail, he seems to have lost the advantage he had before.

Rufio parries, long deliberate blows, its all Trajan can do to fend him off. Trajan waves to HOLD UP.

Trajan trying to catch his breath.

TRAJAN

Wait a minute.

RUFIO

You won't have a minute in the arena.

He then begins his attack again in deadly earnest.

Trajan does better.

(CONTINUED)

RUFIO

That's right pace yourself.

Rufio swings for Trajan's head. He ducks and swings around.

He deflects the blade coming from behind.

RUFIO

Control your fear.

(beat)

Anticipate.

TRAJAN

A blow to the left will throw your
opponent off balance.

RUFIO

Correct, compensate.

Rufio testing, swings wildly left. Trajan dodges, comes
around and scores a touch in the small of Rufio's back.

RUFIO

Good, but not enough to kill. Just
enough to piss him off. Anger is a
powerful motivator, remember. He
could still have enough fight in
him to kill you.

TRAJAN

Why do fight like these games are
to the death.

Rufio stops, resting, breathing heavy. He's in that Zen like
state again.

RUFIO

Maybe they should be.

TRAJAN

Even in their long history they
were rarely to the death.

RUFIO

That's right, made patrons wealthy,
and Stars of the Gladiators.

TRAJAN

Well nothings changed then.

RUFIO

The men have. When your no longer
living on that edge, life isn't as
sweet.

(CONTINUED)

Titus approaches the two slinging them towels to wipe their sweat. Trajan and Rufio towel off.

TITUS

Don't let him rag on you too much,
we've all heard this speech before.

RUFIO

And little you've learned.

TITUS

On the contrary, it's made me rich.

RUFIO

It's all about the money, there is
no honor anymore.

TRAJAN

You referring to the Bionics?

RUFIO

It's not their fault, they just
want their cut.

(beat, long pause)

I fear that man will be replaced by
something else altogether, a victim
of commercialism.

TRAJAN

I think you need one of those Mar's
Priest Robes.

They all have a big hardy laugh.

A low rumble in the distance accompanied by a small red dust
cloud. Titus ears perk up.

TITUS

They found us.

TRAJAN

Found? Who?

RUFIO

(sighing)

The men who hold the purse strings.

A Desert Rover on wheels pulls up. The driver in goggles
obviously irritated sits up on back of seat.

Flipping goggles up the red dust outlining his eyes.

Mad as hell.

(CONTINUED)

DRIVER

I wish you wouldn't pull these stunts. I've been all the way to Mars One and the Pyramids trying to find you.

RUFIO

Missed me?

DRIVER

Get the fuck in, the Manager is mad as hell.

TITUS

Season's over, we have our down time.

DRIVER

Shut up, somethings big has come up.

TRAJAN

What?

DRIVER

Who the fuck are you?

RUFIO

Never mind, what?

DRIVER

They don't tell me squat, just do!

EXT. MARS TWO - DAY

The City is clean but still not as impressive as Romanus. No skyscrapers here, a subtropical landscape with palms.

A planned city with a perfect grid pattern. Large Colosseum in it's center.

The Rover pulls up next to it. A sign above the entrance in neon reads HOME OF THE MARTIAN AVENGERS.

Rufio and others grab their gear and head into the building.

Glass doors automatically open.

INT. COLOSSEUM - DAY

The Colosseum is empty. Vendor kiosks stand shuttered til next season.

Passing by automatic ticket gate to escalators.

Down the group goes to the Training area.

Through swinging doors they pass.

INT. TRAINING ROOM - DAY

Walls lined with lockers benches in the middle. Free weights and other workout equipment to the side.

Other of their teammates are there in various states of undress and working out.

This is not an all male sport there are female Gladiators too. They are not shy around one another, this is just a job to them.

Trajan notices one female leg pressing a thousand pounds.

She hardly strains at all.

RUFIO

A Bionic, had both her legs replaced.

Rufio heads to his locker, the word TRAINER above it.

He opens and tosses gear in. One of their other teammates approaches them.

TEAMMATE

Enjoy your camping trip.

RUFIO

You should try it sometime, fresh air would clear that thick skull.

TEAMMATE

Don't test me old man, you ain't king of the games no more.

The Teammate demonstrates his power bending a steal barbell.

He walks away disgusted.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN

You have many friends like that?

RUFIO

Too reliant on technology.

TEAMMATE TWO

Good to see you.

Titus joins them.

TITUS

What's up?

TEAMMATE TWO

Don't know, got a message to come in or forfeit weeks pay. I was on my way to Earth. I wanted to get away before that Festival of Mars and all the freaks show up.

RUFIO

Know what you mean.

The swinging doors open and in walks the Manager (50's). He's dressed in a typical Red Jumper with the Mar's Avengers Logo in Gold across it. He chews gum.

Beside him a man in a suit, he looks like money. Slick back gray hair an air of aristocracy, this is Antoninus (Tony) Sulla (65) owner of the Mars Avengers.

Once a Senator he was part of the Military Industrial complex made a fortune on weapons designs. Kind of sleazy, but fair.

MANAGER

All right huddle up.

Everyone breaks from what they are doing and forms circle around manager. He holds a clipboard then hoists leg up onto Bench and leans on it.

Tony clears his throat, he's edgy but confident.

MANAGER

Alright settle down.

TONY

We have a bit of a situation. One that will ultimately prove whether men continue in the Arena.

(CONTINUED)

TITUS
(sarcastic)
OOO! Sounds dire.

MANAGER
Can that.

TONY
Our New Emperor wants games.

RUFIO
Well tell him to get in line. The
season doesn't start for six
months.

TONY
Not that simple. He wants to
replace you with Battle Bots. No
huge salaries, no egos to groom.

Tony walks around group eyeing them up and down. These guys
are expensive he knows the upside to this.

TONY
No housing, No Medical costs, No
Uniforms. It's just pure profit.

RUFIO
Sounds like you've already sold
out.

TONY
No! The Games are more than money
to me.
(pause)
That's right Rufio. Men still need
heroes, Gods if you will. They need
something to look up to, to be
better than themselves.

Tony continues amongst the players.

TONY
That's why I have a little wager
with the Emperor.

TITUS
Wager?

Tony has a gleam in his eye, prideful.

TONY

A bet! That any one of you can stand up to one of them!

TRAJAN

These are machines, we don't know anything about them.

TONY

Who's this?

MANAGER

I don't know.

Rufio stands and slaps Trajan on the shoulder, smiling.

RUFIO

The best natural talent I've seen in a long time.

TONY

I see. Anyway this thing has gone global. There are betting pools all over earth and the colonies too. What'ya say.

TITUS

What's in it if we win?

TONY

It's not we its who. One man one Battle Bot, winner take all.

RUFIO

Winner take all?

TONY

This match is unto the death.

The team explodes with anger, shouting.

TEAMMATE

To the death?!

TEAMMATE TWO

That's illegal.

RUFIO

Death matches were outlawed Centuries ago.

(CONTINUED)

TONY

Well new time new rules. The Senate has been suspended. The Caesar uncovered a plot within the Senate to assassinate his father. Brutus Villa was arrested he and his son conspired to kill him.

Trajan starts up Rufio pulls him back shaking his head no.

TEAMMATE

Count me out.

The others agree with him S/O

NO WAY MAN

NOT FOR ALL THE GOLD OF ZEUS.

RUFIO

I'll take that bet.

TRAJAN

You'll be killed.

RUFIO

Better to die with honor, than a slave to a machine.

TONY

Good, we'll show them what a real Gladiator can do.

INT. PALACE - NIGHT

Lucila is now dressed to the nines perfect hair and make up. She sits in the parlor, looking bored and sad. A bird in a gilded cage.

Marcus enters, looking proud and in control. He walks over to bar and pours himself a drink.

MARCUS

You look lovely.

LUCILA

What am I to do all day? I lost my job you know. They think I'm the fiance of a Traitor!

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS

Why work? You have everything you need.

LUCILA

This is all temporary Marcus. When the Senate reconvenes and I'm sure they will after the House sees there's no grand conspiracy. A new vote will go out for a general election.

MARCUS

Are you sure?

LUCILA

What have you done?

MARCUS

Nothing, nothing at all.

Marcus has a cat like grin on his face as he sits sipping his drink. He stands up and goes to window all Romanus spreads before him.

There is some gaiety in the streets below.

EXT. ROMANUS STREET CORNER - NIGHT

A large neon billboard with Rufio's picture on one side and the Battle Bot Image on the other. It reads MAN OR MACHINE WHICH WILL WIN.

In the middle of it is a scoreboard with the odds numbers. A Booky stands below it taking money.

People line up to place their bets. He hawks his business.

BOOKY

Alright, Alright, Alright! Who's gonna win? I got ten to one odds!

We hear:

I'LL TAKE SOME OF THAT

OKAY ME TOO!

The Booky takes their money. The Line and crowd grows.

INT. GOVERNMENT LAB - DAY

Marcus and Cato are with the Joshua. He finishes up some calculations.

JOSHUA
That's about it.

MARCUS
(nervous)
Will I feel anything?

JOSHUA
Might give you a slight headache at first.

MARCUS
What about the others?

JOSHUA
They won't know a thing.

CATO
Not like Zombies?

JOSHUA
No, everyone will behave pretty much like normal. Except they'll agree with whatever you say.

MARCUS
Impressive.

CATO
Should a man have so much power?

MARCUS
Throw the switch.

Joshua flips it on a whirring noise. Marcus twinges a little, then settles down.

MARCUS
Whew that was a rush!

JOSHUA
Your good to go.

MARCUS
Lets give this a little test.

Marcus and Cato leave the lab.

INT. GOVERNMENT BUILDING - DAY

They take the elevator up to the fiftieth floor. Casually they mill around, People stop and salute him.

A young pretty business woman seems to be talking to herself. She sits on an open balcony.

CATO

She's connected with CRYSTAL BLUE.

Marcus walks up to her, she stands.

WOMAN

(to herself)

I'll have to call you later.

MARCUS

Please, I hope I'm not interrupting.

WOMAN

No Sire.

MARCUS

What a beautiful day.

WOMAN

Yes it is.

MARCUS

I think it would be a good Idea to see if you could fly.

WOMAN

I've always wanted to try.

MARCUS

Well do it.

WOMAN

Good Idea!

Before Cato can react the Woman stands up on Balcony railing and flings herself off.

Cato stunned runs over to railing the woman hits with a thud below.

MARCUS

Well it works.

Marcus turns and leaves nonchalant.

EXT SENATE CHAMBER - DAY

The Senators file in one by one a Reporter Stands in front of TV Camera.

REPORTER

In one of the quickest House investigations in history they found no further evidence of conspiracy.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER - DAY

The Senators take their respective seats, they get settled in, then Marcus enters with Guards. The Senators stand and Shout:

HAIL CAESAR!

Marcus sits and then Senators do likewise.

MARCUS

Sorry for the inconvenience Senators.

SENATOR

You were only being cautious.

MARCUS

My deepest apologies to you Senator Villa.

BRUTUS

Quite alright Sire.

MARCUS

Now Gentleman a vote. I propose that in order to establish a more stable government we return to the idea of that Great Caesar Augustus. Autocratic rule by decree, only this way can we get rid of corruption and special interest groups.

The Senate stands up and applauds. Brutus comes up and shakes his hand.

MARCUS

So I take that as a yes.

(CONTINUED)

BRUTUS

Good work my boy! HAIL CAESAR.

Marcus stands thanking them and takes a bow.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

MONTAGE BEGINS

Rufio and Trajan train together.

They run and climb the mountains. Trajan is getting ripped.

Atop cliff wall they spar with swords. It is elegant their moves are perfectly orchestrated.

Slow-motion as:

Trajan attacks -- no fury, just control-- Rufio tries to deflect the blow, Trajan anticipates - he swings his sword elegantly - Rufio blocks it -- Trajan counters.

Rufio presses forward, his sword slashing masterfully, forcing Trajan back, Rufio counters with complex moves as he retreats --Trajan keeps moving forward, calm -- finally Rufio's sword is swept aside in one clean movement.

MONTAGE ENDS

RUFIO

Good, your balance is better.

TRAJAN

Still a little off on thrust.

RUFIO

That will come in time.

TRAJAN

You nervous?

RUFIO

About the fight? No, when it is time for a man to die, it's time.

TRAJAN

How can you be so casual about it.

RUFIO

It's not casual, I value my life as much as the next man.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RUFIO (cont'd)

There comes a time though when death is the preferred outcome. To make a stand, cross this line and no further.

TRAJAN

So even if you fall, you will have won.

RUFIO

Exactly. You learn quick, but do not think to much in the arena. Let instinct guide your actions.

TRAJAN

You get a little cerebral.

RUFIO

So it's been said.

They laugh and start up again with the training.

INT. ARENA LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The big event has arrived. Rufio prepares for battle. The chants and low thunder of the crowd above reverberates through the room.

Trajan helps him into the old traditional gear updated to modern standards.

First the Baltues (sword belt) heavy made of thick leather.

The Manica - Protective arm wraps, equipped with pressure sensors.

The Cuirass - Breastplate, also updated with vital sign readouts. The team DOCTOR checks the readings

DOCTOR

Pulse 101, respiration 40,
heartbeat 30 beats per minute. Your
as cool as them come Rufio.

Rufio pulls on the leg grieves.

Finally the heavy Galea - Visored helmet, beautifully adorned with a gold crest. Trajan flips on the switches.

We see heads up display through Rufio's POV. He attaches earpiece and microphone.

(CONTINUED)

Rufio hoists up his large shield as Tony presents him with his sword. A traditional ritual of the owner.

TONY

Good Luck.

Tony means it, almost Fatherly he pats him on the shoulder.

Trajan steps back admiring the magnificent site.

RUFIO

For Honor.

The other teammates look on solemnly. Trajan can't bring himself to speak.

Then, alone Rufio turns and climbs the incline to the Arena floor.

EXT. ARENA - DAY

Rufio marches stridently through the gaping triumphal arch.

The crowd roars giant display screens line the roof his every move plastered on them.

The Crowd chants Rufio!, Rufio!

Rufio raises his hand in acknowledgment. Another screen flickers on in the Caesar Box. Marcus appears, broadcasting from Earth.

Marcus speaks from the screen.

MARCUS

Hail Rufio!

RUFIO

Hail Caesar! We who about to die salute you.

INT. ANNOUNCER BOX - DAY

ANNOUNCER

The scene is electric ladies and gentlemen!

ANNOUNCER TWO

Rufio looks at the top of his form!
It's the moment of truth.

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER
Man verse Machine which will win!

EXT. ARENA - DAY

The opposing arch opens. Rufio steadies himself but still cool and confident, the crowd goes silent.

Rufio and crowd stare at gaping black hole of entrance, nothing, then the sound of a whirring noise mechanical.

Moments pass like hours, then it appears a shiny humanoid. Metallic arms and legs, gyros and servos whine as it slowly plods forward.

It's heavy, thuds reverberate on the soft sand. It stands roughly Rufio's size. A Robot Gladiator complete with traditional armor.

Rufio assumes battle stance the Battle Bot mimics him.

An unnerving sight, the crowd is breathless.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Trajan and other team members watch, uneasy. The Manager has his headset on, with clipboard he jots down moves.

Tony beside him, a worried look, not expecting this.

The Manager whispers into MIC.

MANAGER
Forfeit Now!

Tony a look.

EXT. ARENA - DAY

Rufio breaths in and out pacing himself.

RUFIO
Too Late.

Rufio takes the initiative and lunges at Battle Bot. Rufio fights well, with a strange elegance, his body flowing like liquid - he strikes a few blows, the Battle Bot unweilding.

The clanks on sword against metal seem useless - the middle seems unprotected maybe a weak point. The Battle Bot holds sheild tightly guarding it.

(CONTINUED)

The Battle Bot makes it's move many quick thrusts driving Rufio back, he's in trouble.

The Battle Bot is fast and unrelenting motivated by programming nothing more.

Cornered -- the Battle Bot is slicing at him -- it is a desperate battle -- Rufio is losing -- his sword is slammed away -- the Battle Bot raises his sword for the kill --

And with a sudden roar Rufio EXPLODES into action he dives for his sword -- he comes up, swings slashes at the Battle Bot.

It is a dazzling display of Rufio's skill -- he moves towards the Bot at amazing speed -- spinning around he hacks the back side of the Bots neck.

The Blow rattles something, the Bot is disoriented.

Rufio's turns, he drives on, the Bot ever unsteady.

The Crowd on their feet

Rufio! Rufio! they chant!

EXT. EARTH STREET - NIGHT

The large open theater where Booky is taking bets is going wild, money exchanges hands quickly.

A large neon read-out ticks away numbers as odds go up and up.

INT. PALACE - NIGHT

Marcus sits in his viewing box the camera trained on him. Lucila sits beside him.

Marcus fidgets in chair he's losing money and prestige. It's going badly for him, and he's pissed.

MARCUS

I invested heavily in these tin cans!

EXT. ARENA - DAY

Rufio gaining the edge. The Bot is wobbly from all the blows. Circuitry begins to smoke.

Then it comes, Rufio deflects the Bots shield and thrusts into it's middle, disabling it. The Bot Crumples a mass of wires and metal spark, it's dead.

The Crowd on it's feet.

INT. PALACE - NIGHT

Marcus stands irate.

MARCUS
Get me that Owner, what's his name?
Tony!

Marcus picks up the phone.

MARCUS
Tony!

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY/PALACE - NIGHT

Tony on the phone with Marcus.

TONY
Yes Sire it was a great match.

MARCUS
(scheming)
How about we double the odds.

TONY
Sir?

MARCUS
I wager two of my bots against your man.

TONY
Sir my man is exhausted.

MARCUS
I'll pay your teams expenses for the next year.

Tony's in financial straights, he takes the bet.

(CONTINUED)

TONY
You got it.

MARCUS
You won't regret it.

TONY
Send in two more Bots.

The rest of the team is aghast. Trajan steps up.

TRAJAN
You've got to be kidding.

TONY
I never kid.

EXT. ARENA - DAY

Rufio triumphant, parades with his arms outstretched soaking up the crowds adoration.

The opposing entrance doors swing up and two more Bots appear. Rufio stops in his tracks looking at them.

The Crowd settles down, stunned

INT. ANNOUNCER BOX - DAY

ANNOUNCER
What's this?

INT. PALACE - NIGHT

Marcus cunning as a cat appeals to Rufio's ego.

EXT. ARENA - DAY

Marcus on screen speaking directly to Rufio.

MARCUS
What do say Rufio. Still think Man
is better than machine.

RUFIO
He will always be, there's no
loyalty in a machine.

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS
Prove it, see if your teammates
come to your aide.

Rufio defiantly salutes him and prepares for Battle.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The team bows their heads they aren't going to risk their
lives.

Even Titus is reluctant. Trajan stares in wonderment at
inaction.

TRAJAN
So your just going to leave him?

TITUS
He picked this fight.

EXT. ARENA - DAY

The two Bots circle Rufio like wolves. Rufio firing on all
senses plans strategy. He speaks into Mic.

RUFIO
Okay Boys give me a plan here.

There is no response. Rufio taps MIC.

RUFIO
Come on.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The Manager hangs his head low and takes off MIC.

TRAJAN
What are you doing?

EXT. ARENA - DAY

Rufio goes on the offensive. He strikes the first blow. The
bots easily deflect it. They've adapted anticipating his
moves.

RUFIO
(realizing)
The first was a test!

(CONTINUED)

The Bots engage him. More aggressive, a little panic in Rufio. They bore in on him, to his credit Rufio manages to keep pace.

Blades swing and slash, it is all a blure, back and back Rufio goes. A Bot jumps over and behind him a quick swing of it's sword catches Rufio in the shin.

Off balance he staggers back. Rufio into MIC

RUFIO
I'm in real trouble.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Trajan can't stand it no more he grabs MIC from Manager. He's on the run he rips sword from a sheath and a Helmet.

Like a bull out of the gate he slams through locker room door and up ramp.

TRAJAN
I'm coming hold on!

EXT. ARENA - DAY

Trajan flies through open arch at a dead run. Rufio is cornered. Too late the Bot with no Mercy kills him.

TRAJAN
NOOOOO!

Rufio drops like a stone dead.

Trajan like a mad man plummets into the Bots swinging wildly. Pushed on by pure adrenalin and grief.

He takes one with relative ease catching it off guard.

The crowd is going wild.

INT. PALACE - NIGHT

Marcus victory short lived.

MARCUS
Who the fuck is this?

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The team is glued to the screen they cheer.

TITUS
Go kid!

TONY
He's good.

EXT. ARENA - DAY

One on One Trajan and the Bot. The Bot has regrouped using Rufio's tactics. But Trajan is aware of them.

He parries as the Bot pounds away. Finally Trajan surges up with on final explosive bolt of energy.

His sword comes crashing down on the Bots head a crack is heard. The Bot spins around wildly and crashes itself into the wall exploding.

The crowd is stunned by this strange new gladiator. But then an enormous roar grows from the crowd -- wave after wave of adulation for the hero of the day.

Trajan looks around taking it all in

Then he turns to the Imperial Screen. Marcus glaring down at him. Trajan returns his stare at Marcus through his helmet mask.

The crowd is intrigued, growing quiet. What is going on?

Then Trajan deliberately takes off his helmet. He shouts.

TRAJAN
It is I Marcus!

INT. PALACE - NIGHT

Lucila stands her breath taken away staring disbelievingly.

Marcus at a loss for words. He grabs the phone.

MARCUS
Arrest that man!

LUCILA
You bastard!

She hauls off and slaps him hard.

EXT. ARENA - DAY

Armed guards pour from the Archway, Trajan surveys the situation. Takes his best guess and runs from the nearest exit.

Guards seal it, he runs to the wall spectators reach down and help him over the railing.

The Crowd surges around him, cloaking him from view. They move towards the exists. It is getting out of control.

The guards can't hold them back they spill out into the streets in all directions.

EXT. STREET - DAY

In the confusion a young girl takes Trajan's arm. She pulls him into an alley way.

GIRL
Come with me!

TRAJAN
Who are you?

GIRL
A friend.

They disappear in the confusion. The crowds and guards running everywhere.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - DUSK

The light is fading, buildings cast long shadows. The girl leads Trajan to an old warehouse. She gently raps on the door.

It opens a bearded young man with striking features appears. The look of apprehension across his face, this is Peter (20 something).

PETER
Were you followed?

GIRL
No.

PETER
How can you be sure, the police are everywhere.

He reaches out and grabs them both hauling them inside.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DUSK

PETER

How many times have I told you, not to come by without doing a walk by.

GIRL

I'm sorry, this one needed our help.

PETER

(to Trajan)

And who are you?

TRAJAN

Look Pal, I don't like being on this blessed rock anymore than you do. So why don't I ask the questions.

PETER

Looks like a Gladiator to me.

TRAJAN

Good guess.

GIRL

I'm Mary, this is Peter.

Trajan backs down a little, coming off the adrenalin rush.

TRAJAN

Sorry I just saw my best friend killed.

MARY

They were going to kill him too when-

PETER

You decided to bring him here. Mary for the love-

A Voice from the shadows speaks up another young man appears a hippie type. Long hair and a well groomed beard. Thirty something he wears a flowered shirt, worn blue jeans and sandals.

(CONTINUED)

YOUNG MAN

Exactly Peter, for Love. That is why I am here.

TRAJAN

And who are you?

YOUNG MAN

One who has been foretold.

PETER

Master I do not mean to be rude but we know nothing about him.

TRAJAN

Master? You a slaver?

YOUNG MAN

Of sorts, a master of men's hearts.

TRAJAN

You speak in riddles.

YOUNG MAN

We help all those in need.

There is an aura that seems to surround the young man, Trajan senses it. Then other followers appear surrounding them.

TRAJAN

You're THE ONE aren't you?

THE ONE

I go by many names but that one has stuck.

He laughs a little breaking the tension between them THE ONE puts his arm on Trajan's shoulder.

THE ONE

Come sit with us.

EXT. MARS LANDING PORT - DAY

Lucila exits landing vehicle escorted by several ladies in waiting. Cato is there waiting for her with other guards.

CATO

My Lady we are to take you in for safe keeping.

(CONTINUED)

LUCILA
I am the consort of the Emperor you
will do no such thing.

CATO
It is by his order that I follow.

LUCILA
(speaking softly)
He has become a monster Cato.

CATO
We shouldn't speak of such things
here.

She understands.

CATO
(to other Guards)
Leave us.

LUCILA
Walk with me.

CATO
There is something you should know.

LUCILA
You have orders to kill me.

CATO
If you do not cooperate.

LUCILA
Cooperate for what?

CATO
Crystal Blue.

LUCILA
The Security Chip?

CATO
He has turned it into something
perverted. Once a person has it
implanted he has total control of
your actions.

LUCILA
How is this possible?

(CONTINUED)

CATO

I do not know but, I saw him ask a young woman to jump to her death. Why do you think the Senate approved his emergency powers.

LUCILA

He will not stop.

CATO

We have one option the festival of Mars is underway. He will take no action to violate it's sanctity.

(beat)

You can disappear.

Cato produces a worn and shabby cloak.

CATO

Take this, disguise yourself as one of the Pilgrims to the festival

EXT. MARS ONE - DAY

The streets are filled, it is a carnival atmosphere. Mars Monks draped in red hooded cloaks wander the streets.

People bow and steer clear of them. One man feeling a call challenges one of them.

The man assumes a combat position. Without even removing his cloak the Monk strikes catching the man off guard. The man's head falls to the ground as the rest of him crumples.

Lucila makes her way past this, keeping her head low and covered.

On and on through the city searching for something, anything. Finally exhausted she spies a cheap motel.

EXT. CHEAP MOTEL - DAY

She raps on a glass covered office. A greasy ATTENDANT opens glass.

ATTENDANT

We're all full up lady.

LUCILA

Please anything.

(CONTINUED)

ATTENDANT

Something might free up in an hour
or so.

Lucila then notices the little Ladies of the night milling around. This is nothing more than a brothel. The thought sickens her.

LUCILA

Thanks anyway.

Leaving, she notices a small group collecting near a Retro Drive In Theater. A man wears a Sandwich sign which reads FOOD FOR THOSE IN NEED. Lucila's stomach growls.

LUCILA

(to herself)

Maybe someone has a place to stay.

EXT. DRIVE IN - NIGHT

She eases across street cars whip by, she approaches the young MAN. He is a bit shabby but has a kind face.

MAN

Hello. I'm Andrew.

LUCILA

Lucila.

ANDREW

Greetings Lucila.

LUCILA

What's going on?

ANDREW

Just what it seems, food for those
in need.

LUCILA

Some look rather well fed to me.

A Fat man and Woman pass by.

ANDREW

There are different kinds of food,
one for the stomach the other for
the soul.

(CONTINUED)

LUCILA
Well, I could use both.

ANDREW
All are welcome.

Lucila proceeds inside there are thousands there. Some in cars some sitting on the roofs. She makes her way to the front where a large platform stands in front of screen.

Many people sit on the ground chatting in restless anticipation. We hear snippets of their conversations.

I saw him perform a miracle.

He made the dead live again.

He heals the lame.

Lucila doesn't know what to make of this bohemian crowd.

She walks on looking for a place to sit. Then a VOICE one she is all too familiar with cries out her name.

VOICE
Lucila!

LUCILA
(turning quickly)
Trajan!

Trajan pushes through the ever growing crowd to get to her. Lucila pushes from her end, their love driving them forward.

TRAJAN
Lucila!

LUCILA
Trajan!

Finally the crowd parts a little seeing their endeavor. Lucila and Trajan fall into each others arms.

The mad passion of separation welling over them. They gobble each other up. Trajan kisses her all over she returns the love.

LUCILA
Oh baby! I thought you were dead!

TRAJAN
Almost was. How did you get here?

(CONTINUED)

LUCILA

Marcus took me in. I had no where to go.

TRAJAN

You mean!?

Trajan pushes her back.

LUCILA

No, we never slept together. He never pushed that. I became like his consort, I guess he thought I would eventually fall in love with him.

TRAJAN

So part of this was for his love of you.

LUCILA

Maybe, a little, but when I saw you alive on the screen I caught the next shuttle to Mars.

TRAJAN

I'm sure you were followed.

LUCILA

Only as far as New Mars. I have an alley, one that is close to Marcus.

TRAJAN

Who?

LUCILA

Cato, Captain of the Praetorian Guard.

TRAJAN

You can't trust them.

LUCILA

This one, I believe I can.

Peter comes up to them all welcoming.

PETER

Come, to the front and take a seat, the Master comes.

(CONTINUED)

LUCILA
(to Trajan)
What is this?

TRAJAN
Something wonderful. These people
aided my escape, they took me in
and hid me from the Praetorian.

LUCILA
What kind of cult have you gotten
yourself into?

TRAJAN
It's no cult, come and listen.

Peter guides them through the crowd to a spot right below
the stage. They take their seats.

TRAJAN
Remember that story about THE ONE.

LUCILA
Yes.

TRAJAN
This is his group.

LUCILA
He's got quite a following.

TRAJAN
Listen to his words and you'll
understand.

EXT. DRIVE IN STAGE - NIGHT

THE ONE walks on the stage the crowd starts to settle down.

THE ONE
Evening folks. Anybody hungry?

Hands go up.

THE ONE
WE have plenty for everyone.

Peter quickly steps up on stage with a hot dog serving box,
and drink cooler.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Master the oven broke and vending machine went down. All we have is this box of hot dogs and what's in the drink carrier.

ANDREW

We cannot possibly feed this multitude.

Lucila overhears the conversation.

LUCILA

(quietly, to Trajan)
Well, can we find a place to eat afterwards?

TRAJAN

Watch.

THE ONE

IT will be enough.

With that, The One reaches in and pulls out a hot dog and then a drink. The followers of The One start passing out the food to the crowd.

This goes on and on hot dog after hot dog. THE ONE continues on until everyone has been fed. Lucila watches in amazement.

Finally all have eaten. Trajan and Lucila finish up their Hot Dogs.

THE ONE

Everybody full.

The Crowd acknowledges.

THE ONE

Now let me feed the soul.

THE ONE begins, everyone in hushed silence listens. Lucila is enthralled and mesmerized by message.

EXT. MARS LANDING PAD - DAY

A Large impressive transport vessel glistening with weapons, this is CAESAR ONE, Marcus personal Carrier.

The Bay door opens and a metal gangplank descends. Marcus departs flanked on either side by armed troops. He is met by Cato and several of the Hooded Martian Monks.

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS

I hope things are going as planned.

CATO

All is going well. We had her followed.

MARCUS

Is he with her?

CATO

Yes Sire.

We can see the anger and jealousy in Marcus face.

CATO

We also have tracked down THE ONE.

MARCUS

(surprised)

Excellent!

A Martian Monk steps up hearing the revelation.

MARTIAN MONK

Your Highness it is very important to quell this ONE. Especially on the eve of our most sacred of Holidays.

MARCUS

Do not worry, I We will have justice and bring stability back to the Empire.

EXT. DRIVE-IN STREET - NIGHT

The crowd starts to drift out. Trajan and Lucila walk arm in arm.

LUCILA

I thought I'd never see you again.

TRAJAN

It had crossed my mind too.

LUCILA

When Marcus told me you were killed I didn't know what to do - I -

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN
Shush don't blame yourself.

Mary pushes her way through the crowd.

MARY
Trajan! Trajan!

Trajan and Lucila turn. Lucila eyes her warily.

MARY
What did you think?

TRAJAN
I have never heard such a speech.
(beat, introducing)
Oh this is my fiance Lucila,
Lucila, Mary. She helped me escape
the guards.

LUCILA
Thank you.

TRAJAN
They have been kind to me.

Then screams the sounds of commotion. People flee everywhere. Tear gas canisters explode, the air is quickly filled with smoke. A chocking man bumps into them.

MAN
The Praetorian, they're rounding up
everybody.

MARY
How did they find us!

She looks at Lucila.

LUCILA
It wasn't me.

A thought drifts into her head. Cato giving her the cloak to disguise herself. Lucila takes the cloak off. She frisks it finding a lump.

LUCILA
I was tracked, Cato!

Then Cato strides into view, all pleased with himself and ready for a fight. Another Guard grabs Trajan. Lucila and Mary back up.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN
Cato, I knew it.

CATO
God of the Games if only for a day.
You could have had it all.

TRAJAN
It's all a lie Cato. One fabricated
by technology and fed by greed. It
cannot last.

CATO
(sarcastic)
What ever does?

TRAJAN
Love.

CATO
Love?! I expected more from you.

TRAJAN
Then you'll get it!

Trajan gut punches the guard holding him and grabs his sword. The Guard reaches for his gun, but Lucila kicks it out of his hand.

Lucila picks it up and trains it on Cato.

MARY
No Lucila, don't! Remember the
Master's words.

LUCILA
Your Master not mine.

She takes deadly aim straight at Cato's head. Trajan steps in front of her.

LUCILA
Trajan what are you doing?

TRAJAN
No baby, this is between me and
Marcus. My fate was sealed long
ago, you still have a chance.

LUCILA
I'm not loosing you again.

TRAJAN
I'll hold them off as long as I
can.

Mary grabs Lucila's arm and pulls her away.

MARY
Come on.

TRAJAN
(to Mary)
I'm sorry some things are worth
fighting for, even love.

Mary and Lucila disappear in the ensuing chaos. Cato pulls his sword out. He starts to circle Trajan.

CATO
I must say I have been looking
forward to this.

TRAJAN
Careful what you wish for.

Trajan lites into him with full fury. Cato blocks and counters.

INT. DRIVE-IN - NIGHT

Peter and THE ONE are huddled with another group, strangely they do not cough from the ensuing gas. Mary and Lucila run up to them.

MARY
We have a distraction.

The S/O of clanking metal, a sword fight in progress. The One raises up.

THE ONE
This is not what I want!

MARY
Come master we must go.

PETER
She's right.

THE ONE
I do so because Prophecy has not
been seen through yet.

They all leave amongst the confusion, people are being arrested and thrown into vans.

EXT. DRIVE-IN STREET - DAY

The guards have cordoned off a circular perimeter around the combatants.

Cato and Trajan are locked in deadly conflict. Cato is holding his own, he has some skill.

TRAJAN
You fight well.

CATO
I have something to fight for!

TRAJAN
Only money, only money.

Pissed off, Cato flies into him a quick flurry of thrusts and parries. Trajan backs up, he stumbles on the curb the sword is dislodged from his hand. Cato comes in for the kill.

Cato raises his sword high over his head.

Trajan, with one eye on Cato fumbles with his other hand to find sword.

He finds and quickly grabs it as Cato descends Trajan throws his sword straight into Cato's throat.

Stunned and shocked, Cato gurgles as blood spews everywhere. He falls like a rock to the pavement.

The other guards shocked grab Trajan and put him in shackles. They throw him into an awaiting police van with others.

INT. MARS IMPERIAL ESTATE - DAY

Nothing like the imperial palace on earth, this is more of a country estate. Red clay walls are adorned with fossils from Mars past.

Many past emperor's busts line it's halls. Trajan is marched in under heavy guard they proceed to an awaiting office.

INT. MARCUS OFFICE - DAY

Marcus sits behind desk going over some paperwork. Two Martian Monks on either side of him.

The guards shove Trajan through door.

MARCUS
That will be all.

The guards leave.

MARCUS
Please, have a seat.

TRAJAN
I prefer to stand.

MARCUS
Whatever, this is not going to go well for you, you know that?

TRAJAN
You tried to kill me once before and it didn't work.

MARCUS
I have full support of the Senate and most of the people too.

TRAJAN
Only through subterfuge.

MARCUS
Oo! Big words I didn't know Gladiators were educated.

TRAJAN
Get to point Marcus.

MARCUS
Point?!

TRAJAN
Your guards could have killed me while they had the chance.

MARCUS
Your to popular to kill now.

Marcus gets up and walks to an open wet bar. He pours himself some scotch.

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS

Like a drink?

TRAJAN

I don't drink with the enemy.

MARCUS

Come on that's an old line. Think of something more creative like I don't drink with you because I hate your fucking guts.

TRAJAN

That's about right.

Marcus circles Trajan studying him.

MARCUS

We will find your little band sooner or later. It's just a matter of time.

TRAJAN

Really?, could have fooled me.

The remark inflames Marcus, he slings drink across room it crashes to the floor. He gets right in Trajan's face, a guard hearing sound enters room gun drawn.

MARCUS

Now let me tell you something. I am going to round up all those followers of THE ONE including your precious Lucila and put them in the arena then let the Battle Bots have at it.

TRAJAN

Not even a Monster like you would do that.

MARCUS

I would do anything to restore order in the empire.

TRAJAN

There was no disorder till YOU Killed your father.

Marcus back hands him across face. Trajan pulls back with bloody lip.

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS
Treasonous Dog!

TRAJAN
The truth hurts when said aloud
doesn't it.

MARCUS
No one would believe you.

TRAJAN
That's right because you control
their thoughts. There is a way to
cure that.

Marcus gets the threat.

MARCUS
Now that we understand one another,
let me propose a different
scenario.

TRAJAN
I'm listening.

MARCUS
You find this ONE again and bring
him to us. I will drop all charges
against you and spare the others
lives.

TRAJAN
What about THE ONE?

MARCUS
His fate was sealed long ago when
he went against the Gods.

TRAJAN
There is only ONE true God.

The Martian Monks throw off their cloaks in anger.

MARTIAN MONK
Blasphemer!

MARCUS
Settle down. Think Marcus, what
does this ONE offer that I can't.

TRAJAN
Peace for one.

MARCUS

But your not a peaceful man. How could you deny your ancestry, the glory of the Roman Empire. Your family can trace it's line back to the ancient Caesars. A proud family with proud Roman Traditions and values.

TRAJAN

Something you've forgotten.

Marcus returns to his seat behind the desk tired of the argument.

MARCUS

Will you do it or not?!

TRAJAN

Lucila would not be touched?

MARCUS

You have my word.

TRAJAN

Your word doesn't mean much.

MARCUS

I love her too.

A look of regret on Trajan's face he and Marcus lock eyes.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Trajan creeps in the shadows careful not to be followed. A Martian Monk approaches, he ducks into an ally.

With his back to wall Trajan waits for Monk to pass, then he pounces on him and drags him into the ally.

With several powerful blows he knocks the Monk unconscious. He then dons the Monks robe.

Satisfied he's disguised he exits ally.

EXT. ARENA - NIGHT

Titus is leaving the building his sport bag in hand. Trajan waits in shadows then steps in front of him.

Titus stops a bit perturbed.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN
(low disguising voice)
Do you seek a challenge?

TITUS
Look Monk, I'm not in the mood.

TRAJAN
Rufio would not approve.

TITUS
(softly)
Trajan?

TRAJAN
It is I.

TITUS
By the Gods what are you doing
here?

TRAJAN
I need your help.

TITUS
Name it.

TRAJAN
Not here, their are too many ears.
In the desert where we first met.

TITUS
When?

TRAJAN
Later when the Moons have set.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Trajan sits on the small outcropping of stone. Then the
sound of footsteps approaching it's pitch black.

Trajan holds his breath waiting for their signal.

TITUS
I seek a challenge.

Trajan exhales, relieved.

TRAJAN
Praise be.

(CONTINUED)

TITUS

Okay what is this all about. First you exiled here because you killed the Emperor, then you try and save Rufio and they try and have you arrested.

TRAJAN

It is more complex than even that.

TITUS

Your talking like Rufio.

TRAJAN

Okay to put it simply Marcus has mutated the Crystal Blue chips to control peoples thoughts. That's how he manipulated the Senate. They had them implanted for security purposes.

TITUS

And everyone else got a hold of them, like the old cell phone craze.

TRAJAN

Exactly.

TITUS

So why didn't he simply implant you.

TRAJAN

I'm not sure maybe he had to get me out of the way before he could go ahead with his scheme.

TITUS

Big if.

TRAJAN

Anyway I'm not sure if I will be compromised so, that's where I'll need your help.

TITUS

For what?

TRAJAN

A Back Up Plan. Marcus wants me to find THE ONE and bring him in. Then he says he will let the followers alone.

(CONTINUED)

TITUS
And you don't believe him.

TRAJAN
Not for a minute.

They continue on in hushed conversation.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Trajan makes his way along the side street. He is aware he is being followed. He catches glimpses of a Cloaked figure darting in and out of the Festival Crowd.

He jumps into ally trying to allude his follower. Glancing out he sees they are still coming his way.

Quick a thought, as the figure starts to pass Trajan reaches out and grabs it pulling it in.

The figure struggles with his grasp.

TRAJAN
Why are you following me. Marcus-

FIGURE
Trajan! It's me!

TRAJAN
Lucila!

Lucila removes her hood they kiss passionately.

LUCILA
I thought I had lost you again.

TRAJAN
Not this time. I have a way out.

LUCILA
How?

TRAJAN
I can't tell you now. Where are the others?

LUCILA
Hiding in the old Quarter.

TRAJAN
Take me to them.

EXT. MARS ONE OLD QUARTER - LATE AFTERNOON

The oldest part of the city run down and dirty. Grimy neon signs mark rundown restaurants and businesses. Vagrants line streets looking for handouts.

Trajan and Lucila walk the polluted sidewalks approaching a dilapidated Burger shack.

A man is waiting outside, he seems nervous and cold. Trajan notices several of the followers sitting around inside.

From inside Mary sees them and runs out.

MARY

Trajan, we feared the worst.

TRAJAN

We have to talk.

MARY

You look ill, what is the matter.

TRAJAN

Marcus let me go to find The One and bring him in.

Lucila steps back surprised and shocked.

TRAJAN

(to Lucila)

I'm sorry I kept you in the dark.

(back to Mary)

We have to get him out of the city, I have friends that can hide him on the far side of the planet beyond the Desert Plains.

LUCILA

The PLAINS are almost totally inaccessible.

TRAJAN

The dust storms making flying and surveillance impossible.

LUCILA

Yes it would be perfect.

Mary shaking her head no.

(CONTINUED)

MARY
He will not leave.

TRAJAN
Let me speak to him at least.

MARY
We were about to have dinner. Come
and join us.

They proceed to the door the Man waiting outside holds the door open for them. Mary stops and introduces him.

MARY
Trajan, Lucila this is Judas.

Judas nervously shakes their hands.

JUDAS
Hey, you cool, right, uh good to
see ya.

They all proceed inside.

INT.BURGER JOINT - DUSK

Worn linoleum lines the floor, yellow bar stools along the Bar. About fifty years of grease and soot on the appliances, a flash fire waiting to happen.

A few customers, probably regulars sit sipping coffee. A fat Cook prepares meals behind counter.

In back, a small sit down, dine in area. THE ONE sits at head of a table the others around him.

The Cook plops a load of burgers and fries onto a tray.

COOK
Order Up!

MARY
Could you help me with this while I
get the drinks.

TRAJAN
Sure.

Trajan takes tray of food and sets in middle of the table. Mary and Lucila are close behind with the drinks.

They take their seats.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN

Who was that creepy dude.

MARY

Judas? Don't mind him he a recovering addict, he's a little strung out now.

THE ONE

Everyone is well I hope.

PETER

Fine master.

TRAJAN

Sir, I'm sorry but I have to interrupt.

THE ONE

Do not worry, what is it?

TRAJAN

(flustered)

What is your real name?

THE ONE

I am the Son of God, Jesus.

TRAJAN

Thank you.

JESUS

Is that all you wanted my son?

TRAJAN

No, master you need to leave the city.

JESUS

I cannot leave, prophecy hasn't been fulfilled.

TRAJAN

You have too, I cannot emphasize this enough.

Jesus takes a burger and splits it in half the others each take a burger from the platter.

JESUS

I tell you now that one of you who is eating with me now will betray me.

(CONTINUED)

PETER
Not I Lord?

Trajan has a worried look up his face. Mary gives him a look.

JESUS
Bless this food oh Lord, eat, this
is my body do in remembrance of me.

Everyone takes a bite of their burger. Jesus takes his soda and blesses it then drinks.

JESUS
Drink for this is my blood and
covenant with you.

Everyone complies and drinks.

TRAJAN
Who is it that will betray you.

JESUS
One who shares my bread.

Judas sitting next to Jesus still strung out.

JUDAS
Hey man may I have that last piece
I'm starving.

Trajan notices the move, Judas grabs last half of burger then gets up and leaves.

TRAJAN
Master we have to go now!

LUCILA
Please come with us.

JESUS
I cannot.

Trajan and Lucila stand.

TRAJAN
We must go, I'm sorry.

JESUS
I know what is in your heart. Good
resides in both of you. Have the
strength to carry what I have said
with you. We will meet again in the
Kingdom of heaven.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN

I hope so. We have a transport to the border, meet us at the last marker if you change your mind.

Lucila hugs Mary.

LUCILA

Thank you.

MARY

Be well.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Judas makes his way along the dark side streets. He is trailed by Marcus and Lucila.

TRAJAN

Leave it to Marcus to find a Junkie to do his bidding.

LUCILA

Leave him be it's not worth it.

TRAJAN

I will not get my life back at the expense of another.

Judas has picked up the pace, ahead of him a security van pulls to sidewalk.

Trajan and Lucila duck into shadows.

Judas approaches van the window slides down. Inside one of the Martian Monks peer out.

JUDAS

Hey man, they are going to be in park later.

MARTIAN MONK

You've done well.

JUDAS

Have you got it man?

MARTIAN MONK

We always keep our agreements.

The Monk produces a bag of some sort of drug. Judas grabs it and runs away.

The Van leaves. Trajan and Lucila speed after Judas.

EXT. ALLY - NIGHT

Judas finding a private spot kneels down and and takes out dirty syringe. He pours powder in spoon, then lights a lighter under it. It burns down to a liquid.

Trajan spots him, running up he kicks drugs out of Judas shaking hands. Judas like a mad dog scrambles for his fix.

Lucila picks up syringe.

LUCILA

So this is worth a man's life?

JUDAS

Hey man that's mine.

TRAJAN

You pathetic worm, what did you tell them.

JUDAS

It ain't like he gonna really die anyway. Didn't you hear the resurrection part.

Trajan grabs him off the ground holding him up by his shirt collar.

TRAJAN

He was your friend and took you in.

JUDAS

I don't need nobody man.

LUCILA

Leave him be, it's not worth it.

TRAJAN

We have to warn them.

LUCILA

It's too late.

TRAJAN

I can't just let them walk into a trap.

(CONTINUED)

LUCILA
Better them than you.

TRAJAN
What are you saying.

LUCILA
I'm saying lets get our life back.

Judas tries to get free but Trajan pins him hard against wall.

TRAJAN
You heard his words how can you turn your back.

LUCILA
His words Trajan, not yours. This world we live in cannot be like that, it never could.

TRAJAN
But to know the inner peace.

LUCILA
Peace, Peace, Peace it's all a dream.

TRAJAN
I have to Lucila.

LUCILA
No you don't.

Lucila produces a Tazer and Zaps Trajan. A look of disappointment on his face as he falls to ground unconscious.

Judas starts to run.

LUCILA
Wait! If you want to live.

Judas stops dead in his tracks and turns nervously.

A cab is approaching, Lucila steps in road to wave him down.

LUCILA
Help me get him into the Cab.

The cab inches to the curb. Lucila and Judas push Trajan in. A rough looking Cabbie behind wheel smoking cigar.

CABBIE
Too much of the festival?

LUCILA
Yeah, can't hold his liquor.

JUDAS
What about me?

LUCILA
Get lost before I turn you in
myself.

CABBIE
Where to?

LUCILA
The outer Perimeter.

CABBIE
That'll cost ya.

Lucila flashes a large emerald ring at him.

LUCILA
That's not a problem.

CABBIE
Yes Ma Am!

EXT. PERIMETER HOTEL - NIGHT

The Cab pulls into the dusty old Perimeter Hotel. A dust storm has whipped up, it howls. The hotel is haven for thrill seekers going on trips to the deep desert.

A hideaway to get lost and not be seen. No frills just a stopover with bed and shower.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Lucila cradles Trajan's head. The cab stops

CABBIE
We're here lady.

LUCILA
Wait right here.

She gets out into the full furry of the blowing storm and runs inside. Moments later she emerges and runs back to cab.

(CONTINUED)

The Cabbie gets out and helps her with Trajan to the room. She digs in purse and pays Cabbie generously.

CABBIE
Thanks Lady.

LUCILA
Could you keep this quiet.

CABBIE
What?

LUCILA
Don't tell anyone about the fare.

CABBIE
Oh right.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The Cabbie gets Trajan in the room for her and plops him on the bed. The Cabbie tips hat and leaves.

She sits down by Trajan who is moaning in he sleep. Lucila runs her fingers through his hair.

LUCILA
It was for the best my love.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Sun beams through the cracks in the curtains. Lucila is snuggled beside Trajan both sound asleep. Then a loud pounding on the door.

Lucila awakes startled and worried. Thinking the worst she peers out gently folding back curtain.

She sees no cars or security vehicles then she strains to see around corner, it's Mary.

She pounds even harder. Frantic. Lucila opens door.

LUCILA
What!

MARY
They arrested him!

Trajan rouses from the noise. Mary rushes into room and starts to beat on Trajan.

(CONTINUED)

MARY
(screaming)
It was you, It was you!

TRAJAN
No, It was Judas.

Mary collapses into Trajan's arms crying. Lucila looks ill.

Trajan gives her a look. Trajan sets Mary down on bed.
Lucila turns on TV. On it live coverage, a Reporter gives
account of event.

REPORTER
Again the so called Son of God AKA
THE ONE has been arrested. A
lightening raid in the early
morning hours captured this leader
of the cult following at a local
park.

A Commentator O/S asks:

COMMENTATOR
What about the rest of his
Lieutenants, Peter, Andrew and the
others?

REPORTER
No word, it seems they may have
escaped in the confusion.

TRAJAN
I've got to get to him.

LUCILA
We all will go.

TRAJAN
(sarcastic)
What about us, what about our
future?

LUCILA
I was selfish.

TRAJAN
Yes you were. How are we going to
get there.

MARY
My van, I parked around back just
in case.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

An old beat up van with ripped up seats and a hand painted exterior. No air and held together with chewing gum and prayers.

Trajan loads everyone in then gets behind wheel and takes off.

EXT. JAIL - DAY

A small group of protesters line up outside gate. Guards walk a perimeter. A large viewing screen hangs from the guard tower.

On it, Jesus is on Trial the Martian Monks presiding.

Jesus looks fatigued his face gaunt.

Trajan parks the van and they all depart. Mingling with the crowd they go unnoticed.

TRAJAN

I've got to get in there.

LUCILA

There's no way.

TRAJAN

They're going to kill him you know that don't you.

LUCILA

Capital punishment was outlawed.

TRAJAN

Remember we're dealing with Marcus, he sees this guy as a threat to his authority. He will execute him unless we can get him out.

MARY

Maybe a distraction.

TRAJAN

It'll have to be a good one.

MARY

Come on.

They return to van Mary rips part of her blouse off. Then she opens gas tank lid and places cloth in hole.

(CONTINUED)

MARY
Got a lighter?

LUCILA
Here.

TRAJAN
When did you start smoking?

LUCILA
The day you disappeared.

Mary lights cloth.

MARY
Run!

They take off towards the gate reaching it moments before the explosion. The Van is hurled into the air. The Prison RAID Klaxon sounds, guards react pulling out weapons. People run in all directions.

Trajan takes his chance and scales the fence, he dashes for the inside.

Mary and Lucila huddle together out of sight.

INT. PRISON - DAY

Trajan makes his way down the steal corridor. Using only his nose as a guide. The Prison is Strangely quiet and deserted.

Stealth fully he maneuvers around corner. Some guards appear crossing an adjacent corridor. They push Jesus in front of them, he stumbles. The guards kick him to his feet.

Trajan notices he's been badly beaten, anger rises in him.

He takes action moving in behind them. He grabs first Guard silently breaking his neck. He goes for the other, but the Guard is too quick they wrestle for gun it falls to ground.

JESUS
Trajan no! It is my destiny!

With that Marcus appears from around the corner with a host of guards around him. He smiles like the cat who ate the Canary.

MARCUS
Ask and you shall receive.

The guards immediately take Trajan into custody.

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS

Here I thought I had lost you forever and what do you do? Walk straight into Prison.

TRAJAN

Let him go Marcus.

MARCUS

Oh he's not going anywhere. The Monks and I declare him a heretic denying the Gods.

TRAJAN

There is only one true God.

MARCUS

You sound like a Parrot! There is only One True God, There is only one true God-quit droning on about it.

TRAJAN

I curse the day I ever called you friend.

MARCUS

I need no friends. Take him away.

Trajan struggles to free himself but to no avail. The Guards drag him away.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

Order has been restored most of the protesters have been dispersed. Lucila and Mary remain out of sight.

MARY

Whats happening? Where's Trajan?

LUCILA

I don't know, but we can't stay.

MARY

No I'm not leaving the Master.

LUCILA

Trajan will find him, now we need to go.

Reluctantly Mary agrees.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The atmosphere on the street is indifferent. Mary and Lucila wander aimlessly waiting for Trajan.

Ahead a crowd has gathered at a large viewing screen. On it a reporter on the scene inside prison addresses the news.

REPORTER

A failed breakout attempt was thwarted by security forces. WE have a report someone has been taken into custody, but no word of who or what condition they are in. The Execution of the cult leader turned traitor is scheduled for three o'clock today. WE will be covering that live.

MARY

Three! What time is it now?

Lucila glances at her watch and shows to Mary, it's three on the nose. The view screen switches to the execution chamber. Jesus is lead in and strapped to the lethal injection table.

The needles are inserted in to Jesus arm. The injection table is raised to an upright position. With arms outstretched it resembles a cross.

The warden enters the room.

WARDEN

Any last words.

JESUS

Father forgive them, they no not what they do.

The Warden glances to the viewing booth. He nods head and throws switch on wall.

Mary is wailing, the crowd is somber watching the event. Lucila cradles Mary.

On screen Jesus twitches a little then stops. A Doctor comes in and examines him. Then nods head, it's all over.

REPORTER

There you have it, the Cult leader calling himself THE ONE is dead.

(CONTINUED)

MARY
(screaming)
NOOOOOOOOOO!

Over head clouds gather into thick rolling black boil. Thunder claps and lightening flashes. The wind whips up to to full fury.

Lucila holds onto Mary watching sky in fear.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

Marcus steps out onto the covered breezeway of Prison. The sky is black as midnight. The wind howls, dust blows everywhere. More lightening and thunder.

Marcus looks a little nervous. A guard beside him is about to loose it.

GUARD
Maybe he was what he said.

MARCUS
Your frightened by the wind.

Marcus covers his head with cloak and proceeds to awaiting limo.

INT. PRISON JAIL CELL - DAY

Trajan strapped securely on bunk, beats his head lightly against wall for failing. He looks out window at storm.

The cell door opens, in steps Joshua and another guard. He wheels in some medical equipment.

TRAJAN
Who are you?

Joshua doesn't answer him.

JOSHUA
(to guard)
Hold his head.

The Guard quickly gets Trajan in a headlock. Joshua produces an Ear Otoscope, he looks in Trajan's ear then squeezes a little trigger on the device.

Something shoots in Trajan's head, it produces a ringing sensation. Trajan winces.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN

What did you do to me?

Again Joshua doesn't answer and simply leaves the room. Trajan's head is spinning he passes out on cot.

EXT. MORGUE - NIGHT

A cab pulls to stop in front of morgue the rain continues to pour down. Lucila and Mary exit cab and walk up steps.

LUCILA

It may be risky for you let me go first. I still have my Imperial ID License maybe Marcus hasn't canceled it.

MARY

No, we go together.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

The Night station nurse goes over some paperwork. Lucila and Mary proceed to his desk. The nurse, a husky Black Man is intent on his work.

LUCILA

Excuse me, we are family of The One.

MARRY

We'd like to see his body.

NURSE

Got any ID?

Lucila fumbles through her purse extracting her imperial ID License. The Nurse looks at it, impressed.

NURSE

Family of yours?

LUCILA

More like a friend, this is his sister.

NURSE

Okay come with me.

They walk down small hall to Morgue Freezers.

INT. MORGUE FREEZER ROOM - NIGHT

About a dozen freezer units line the wall. The Nurse opens one in middle and slides out covered corpse of Jesus.

He peels blanket back revealing face and upper torso.

Jesus face is badly bruised.

LUCILA
They tortured him.

NURSE
I'll give you guys a moment.

LUCILA
Make arrangements for body to be
sent here.

She produces a piece of paper with directions to cemetery.

NURSE
But I have orders for him to remain
here.

LUCILA
I'll change that.

Summoning up all her courage she pulls out her cell phone.

INT. MARS IMPERIAL ESTATE/MORGUE - NIGHT

Marcus sits alone in his study all full of himself, he's had a good day. He sips a whiskey and props his feet up on desk.

His cell phone buzzes on his desk, looking at caller ID:
LUCILA

MARCUS
Where are you?

LUCILA
I'm at the Morgue. I want you to
release the Body.

MARCUS
Oh hell no, and have some martyrs
grave for people to make a
pilgrimage to.

(CONTINUED)

LUCILA

Do this one decent thing and I will
come back.

MARCUS

What of Trajan?

He's playing with her and she knows it.

LUCILA

I know you have him in custody.

MARCUS

What if I do?

LUCILA

Drop the charges and let him go.

MARCUS

You are making quite the demands. I
could charge you with aiding and
abetting a known felon.

LUCILA

But you won't. It's me you want.

MARCUS

Clever girl, I harm him you hate
me. If I let him go then there is a
chance, maybe?

LUCILA

Maybe, Marcus.

MARCUS

Let me speak to the Station nurse.

Lucila hands phone to Nurse.

NURSE

Yes Sir right away.

EXT. MORGUE - EARLY MORNING

The sun is just breaking above the horizon the city is
still. A hearse waits outside as Jesus Body is brought out
and loaded in.

The rain has stopped Lucila and Mary get into cab. The small
little funeral procession moves on.

EXT. MARTIAN CEMETERY - MORNING

The Cemetery founded when the Martian colonies were young is large. Many of the older tombs were carved out of the red rock facing cliffs. Now these older tombs have come into disrepair allowing poorer families a place to lay their loved ones. If you have the money, one can be arranged.

Lucila bargains with one of the grounds keepers, he motions her to follow him.

They wind their way to the back of the cemetery. One of the tombs is open and being cleaned.

Lucila inspects it and pays the man. The Funeral Director and attendants carry coffin inside.

A Military van approaches it stops in front of tomb. Two Armed Praetorian Guards get out.

LUCILA

What is this?

PRAETORIAN 1

Security Mam.

PRAETORIAN 2

The Emperor wants it guarded so no one will steal the body.

Lucila agrees. The Groundskeeper seals tomb with concrete and stone. Mary and Lucila wipe their eyes and leave.

INT. DINER - DAY

Mary and Lucila sit at a booth in an average eating establishment. The kind designed for local workers, it has seen it's better days.

Mary just picks at her food, Lucila eats with a coming appetite.

LUCILA

You have to eat something.

MARY

I can't believe how the others abandoned him.

LUCILA

Just human nature.

(CONTINUED)

MARY

But Peter and Andrew. They were there from the beginning.

LUCILA

Weren't you?

MARY

Me?

LUCILA

I just thought you and he were - you know.

MARY

No, nothing like that. Although that was what I did to get by.

LUCILA

What changed?

MARY

The Master found me. I was strung out on drugs and I had just robbed a little old lady, but I wasn't very good.

(pause, slight laugh)

She started beating me over the head with her cane. I thought she was going to kill me. Then the Master happened by and calmed her down, with one look from him she forgave me. He told me that if I believed in him all sins would be forgiven. That's all it took and here I am now clean and sober.

LUCILA

And here you are now.

MARY

You do not really believe in him?

LUCILA

I'm not sure.

The chime rings on the entrance opening. Lucila looks up from her coffee. She blinks twice it's Trajan.

Lucila jumps from the booth and throws herself into Trajan's arms. She kisses him all over, but it's bittersweet.

(CONTINUED)

LUCILA
Are you okay?

TRAJAN
Great never better. For some reason
Marcus just let me go.

LUCILA
I know.

TRAJAN
What?!

LUCILA
I told him I would marry him if you
were released.

TRAJAN
How could you?

LUCILA
We were never going to be safe, I
had to.

Trajan sits down with them a little stunned but reserved.
Now he seems agreeable.

TRAJAN
Maybe it is for the best.

LUCILA
(disturbed)
Yes it is but I thought-

TRAJAN
No, it's okay I really want to
pursue this Gladiator thing.

LUCILA
But it's so dangerous.

TRAJAN
I've been promised a forty million
dollar contract.

LUCILA
The Gods have smiled on you then.

TRAJAN
Yeah my first gig is tomorrow. The
closing games of the Festival of
Mars. It's going to be big and I'm
the headliner.

(CONTINUED)

LUCILA
What is it?

TRAJAN
I'm starving.

Trajan motions for the waitress.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Lucila is beside Trajan in bed but awake. Mary is in opposite bed tossing and turning.

Lucila gets up and goes to window. Pulling curtains back she sees lots of police vehicles going back and forth. A little curiosity crosses her face.

She glances back at her sleeping man with sadness.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

The morning sun beams through the curtains. Shining on Lucila's face she wakens. Mary is sitting on edge of bed, still shell shocked from the past couple of days.

LUCILA
Good morning.

MARY
I've got to go.

LUCILA
Where?

MARY
The tomb, I've just got to see it one more time.

LUCILA
(sympathetic)
Okay, but I'll go with you.

She glances back at Trajan still sleeping.

MARY
We'll be back before he wakes.

INT/EXT. CAB - DAY

Lucila looks out at the never ending sand. The air between Mary and herself is somber. The cab enters the graveyard gates, the groundskeeper waves them through. The Cab stops at rise just below tomb.

Lucila gets out first, Mary slides across seat.

They trudge up the hill towards the tomb they are appalled at what they find. The tomb is open and the Guards are gone. Mary can't move, Lucila run's inside tomb.

INT/EXT TOMB - DAY

Jesus body is gone! Suddenly a voice from behind. Lucila turns, there sitting at the opening is a young boy (10). Blond hair, dressed in simple white t-shirt, jeans and tennis shoes.

He's making circles in the sand with a stick.

BOY

The one you seek is not here.

LUCILA

I can see that were is the body?

Mary stands outside the tomb crying. Unable to go in she stoops down and looks inside she sees the boy.

BOY

Why are you crying?

MARY

Where have you taken him?

VOICE (O.S.)

Who is it you are looking for?

Mary turns the sun is in her eyes she can barely make out who it is. She squints thinking it's Ground Keeper.

MARY

You should know, the man we buried here two days ago.

(pause)

Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.

(CONTINUED)

VOICE

Mary.

MARY

(recognizing)

Master it is you.

JESUS

Do not hold onto me now, go tell
the others I have not yet risen to
my Father.

Turning quickly to tomb.

MARRY

Lucila! come quick.

Lucila comes running out.

LUCILA

Marcus has taken the body.

MARY

No he hasn't, look he is here.

LUCILA

There's no one.

Mary swirls around there's nothing, only the sound of the
wind.

MARY

He was right here. He has risen,
just like he said he would.

LUCILA

No sweetheart, it was Marcus he
didn't want a Martyrs grave.

MARY

No your wrong I feel it. I have to
tell the others.

She and Lucila take off for the cab.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The cab stops at a busy intersection Mary jumps out slamming
door excited. Mary hollers back at Lucila.

(CONTINUED)

MARY

I will call you later.

LUCILA

(to Cab Driver)

Hotel please.

INT HOTEL ROOM/IMPERIAL RESIDENCE - DAY

Lucila opens door and enters calling for Trajan. The room is empty, she goes to bathroom. The phone rings she answers it.

LUCILA

Trajan, baby where are you?

MARCUS

No Trajan, but you can call me
Baby.

LUCILA

What have you done with the Body?

MARCUS

What body?

LUCILA

You know exactly what I mean,
Jesus, he's gone.

MARCUS

I posted guards just so that
wouldn't happen!

LUCILA

Well he is.

MARCUS

By the Gods now they will believe
his lies. It's a good thing I took
proactive steps.

LUCILA

Proactive steps?

MARCUS

Something special for the closing
games. I want you there, remember
our agreement.

LUCILA

Yes.

She looks out window an IMPERIAL LIMO escorted by several security vehicles enter Hotel parking lot. Lucila regretfully hangs up phone.

INT. ARENA IMPERIAL BOX - NIGHT

Lucila is dressed to the nines, fine makeup and a gorgeous new hairdo. She sports lots of fine jewelry diamond earrings and pearl necklace.

Marcus sits beside her gloating as he looks out over filling arena. The crowd trickles in, it is a carnival atmosphere. Modern Music blares over the loud speakers.

MARCUS

You look lovely.

LUCILA

Don't charm me, your no good at it.

MARCUS

Still a vipers tongue, be careful I could change my mind.

LUCILA

Don't worry I'll put on a good show for the crowd.

MARCUS

They love me.

LUCILA

They fear you and Your Battle Bots.

Lucila smiles and waves at the growing audience. Marcus beams and follows suit waving.

CRYSTAL BLUE Kiosks are giving out free samples. People line up for implants. Spectators clamor for new experience we hear some talk.

SPECTATOR 1

I hear you'll feel like your right there in the arena.

SPECTATOR 2

Won't it feel weird?

SPECTATOR 1

Na! I have a buddy who has one, loves it. Hurry up the games are about to start.

(CONTINUED)

The Arena is filling quickly, trumpets announce the closing ceremony of the Festival of Mars. Vendors mill their goods through crowd.

More and more spectators fill the stands in ever growing excitement. The Announcers bait the them with promises that CRYSTAL BLUE will give them A SHOW THAT THEY WILL NEVER FORGET.

Finally, the arena lights dim. More trumpets in a full orchestral crescendo, then dead silence.

A single spotlight illuminates Marcus he stands, the crowd goes wild. Marcus eats up adoration he motions for silence.

The crowd quiets. Marcus begins slowly.

MARCUS

Citizens of Rome! A new age has dawned no longer will we be shackled with special interest groups who line their pockets at the expense of others!

The crowd roars.

MARCUS

We will return to the Glory days of our distant past when the games stood for something.

INT. ARENA - NIGHT

The floor of the arena recedes back and a platform emerges, on it are several dozen of Jesus followers.

Dressed in prison orange their hands and feet are bound.

They are scared and shaking. The crowd chants MARCUS!
MARCUS!

INT. IMPERIAL BOX - NIGHT

Lucila panicked, pulls at Marcus he turns, put off.

LUCILA

What are you doing?

MARCUS

Giving the games some real meaning.
(back to Crowd)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS (cont'd)
The Cult followers of the
blasphemer Jesus have put a blight
on our proud traditions. Today I
offer them as a sacrifice to
appease our Gods.

LUCILA
No! Marcus, NO!

MARCUS
Sit down my dear or I will add you
to them.

The Crowd is now a Mob wanting blood, egged on by Marcus control of the CRYSTAL BLUE Chips. They are out of their minds.

MARCUS
And Now I give you a New God of the
Games!

INT. ARENA - NIGHT

The opposing Archway slides up. A figure steps up into the opening then the flood lights hit him.

The Figure raises both hands, sword in one the Crowd cheers!

Lucila gasps.

MARCUS
Trajan!

The Crowd chants TRAJAN, TRAJAN, TRAJAN.

Trajan steps out into the adoring crowd.

INT. IMPERIAL BOX/ARENA - NIGHT

Lucila fearful of what is about to happen. Marcus picks up Mic.

MARCUS
Make it quick and painless one
quick blow to each.

TRAJAN
(listening to earpiece)
Yes Sire.

(CONTINUED)

MARCUS
(to Lucila)
Now, watch as your golden boy turns
into a killer.

Lucila can't stand it she jumps up and screams over the balcony.

Trajan moves closer to box and salutes with sword raised.

LUCILA
Trajan No!, NO!

TRAJAN
Those who are about to die, Salute
You!

Turning to his victims he shutters his visor. At that Moment TITUS jumps from the stands into the arena.

Running with deadly earnest he draws his sword. He slams into Trajan with full force.

Trajan knocked off feet quickly recovers. He attacks with full fury. Titus blocks the oncoming blade. In a pleading voice screams.

TITUS
Snap out of it Trajan!

Trajan comes on ever more aggressive attack, attack!

TITUS
The Crystal Blue Chip!

TRAJAN
I don't know what you're talking
about!

The crowd is roaring, their voices barely audible above the clang of steel.

TITUS
You said something like this might
happen - the desert Remember.

TRAJAN
Shut Up!

They continue in their deadly conflict. Man against man to the death. Swords are a blur as each one tries to gain the upper hand.

(CONTINUED)

Marcus loves the added extra excitement he glances indifferently to Lucila.

Lucila's eyes are locked on the spectacle

TITUS

Do you really want to kill me?!

TRAJAN

I have to!

TITUS

Why?!

TRAJAN

Because your trying to kill me.

TITUS

No I'm trying to stop you!

From the stands another voice cries out.

MARY

Trajan! Remember the Master!

LUCILA

My love, do not do this!

Trajan is backing Titus into a corner. Something begins to register in his head, but he can't stop.

Marcus glaring at him keeping pressure on with violent thoughts. The crowd is Churning with venom.

Titus miscalculates a blow. Trajan takes advantage and thrusts blade deep into Titus chest.

Shock and begging eyes from Titus as he drops his blade.

Trajan as if a man come out of a spell loses all ferocity.

His hand drops from sword as he catches Titus from falling. Trajan hugs Titus close as his life slips from him.

TRAJAN

I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

TITUS

(gasping for air)
It's not your fault.

TRAJAN
Don't go old friend.

Titus stares off into oblivion as if seeing some vision we don't. The Crowd has gone still.

TITUS
Don-Don't worry, I-I see him, you
were right if only you-you believe-

Titus sighs his last, his eyes dilate, Trajan gently closes his friends eyes and lays him on ground.

Marcus stands furious and screams into Mic.

MARCUS
Kill them all!

Trajan rips out earpiece and dis guards helmet. He spits at Marcus and turns and addresses crowd.

TRAJAN
Romans! Listen to me, the Crystal
Blue Chips have been altered. You
are under control of one man!
(beat)
A man so vile and ambitious that he
had his own father Killed. The True
Caesar Dionitian would not allow
autocratic rule, Rome belongs to
the people.

LUCILA
Some people you can't control.

MARCUS
Shut up bitch.

Marcus closes eyes pouring on concentration. Trajan holds his hands to his head.

Crowd starts in low growl kill!, Kill!, KILL!

TRAJAN
NOOOOO!

MARCUS
Kill them.

Trajan falls to knees still clutching head. He feels for Titus sword, then in one final act of defiance stands and hurls it at Marcus.

The blade slashes through Marcus sleeve barely injuring him.

(CONTINUED)

It clanks to floor beside Lucila.

His concentration broken, he twirls to one of his guards and grabs his gun.

He fires at Trajan the Bullet catches Trajan in the shoulder slinging him to ground.

Marcus screams.

MARCUS

Let loose the Battle Bots! Kill
them all!

It's the last thing he ever does Lucila buries the sword to the hilt in his Back. The Blade protrudes through front of chest.

Marcus coughs up blood not believing turning to Lucila.

He crumples to floor dead.

With Marcus dead the CRYSTAL BLUE chip has no power the crowd comes out of their trance. Some are actually surprised at the blood in the arena.

EXT. ARENA - NIGHT

Lucila runs out to Trajan she falls to her knees next to him. He's wounded but not mortally.

She wraps her arms around him.

TRAJAN

Help me up.

LUCILA

Forgive me.

He gives her a glance and she knows instantly he does.

TRAJAN

Got your attention didn't I.

LUCILA

(small laugh)

Well, don't do it again.

Trajan turns to address crowd once more.

(CONTINUED)

TRAJAN

People of Rome! A nightmare has ended let us always be on guard for anyone promising more than they can deliver. We now have a better way, to find peace within ourselves. There was One who showed us that way but we would did not hear his words. There are those among us now who know the truth.

(to Guards)

Release the prisoners! These people will help you. Listen to them.

Trajan scans the crowd he catches site of Mary who is beaming. For a quick brief moment he thinks he sees Jesus but then he's gone.

TRAJAN

The words are true. There is but one God and he is with us always.

Trajan turns to Lucila she smiles and they kiss and embrace passionately. The Crowd cheers.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END