

## JACKED UP

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JACKED UP

FADE IN:

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

DENSE foliage, steamy, DIM sunlight, and soft JUNGLE NOISES.

CWO2 ERIC GAHL (38) quietly steps onto an animal pathway. He is tall, athletic, and heavily armed. Camo paint fails to hide numerous FACIAL SCARS.

BEAT.

Gahl motions slowly, then creeps up the trail, a SUPPRESSED carbine held at high ready.

ELEVEN indistict, camoed SOLDIERS quietly enter the trail, following at intervals.

All jungle noises abruptly STOP.

Gahl signals "freeze" as he scans in front of him.

The soldiers stop in their tracks. Eyeball whites FLASH as they all scan the area.

BEAT.

A twig SNAPS to the FRONT.

Gahl FIRES. His carbine POPS softly, its action MUFFLED.

GRUNT. A human body CRASHES in the underbrush.

Sporadic fire ERUPTS from the undergrowth.

A soldier lobs a GRENADE. Others FIRE into the foliage.

The team backs up the trail as...

WHAM! The grenade EXPLODES.

Hostile fire STOPS.

A SCREAM O.S.

Unintelligible SHOUTING.

PAUSE.

Hostile FIRE resumes.

THUMP. A round hits Gahl's chest plate.

He GRUNTS, but returns fire and races after his teammates.

A soldier covers as Gahl BOUNDS towards the front.

Artillery rounds begin EXPLODING around them.

Someone SCREAMS O.S.

WHAM. A round EXPLODES, launching Gahl into the air.

Gahl SLAMS into the ground, a leg MISSING, the other SHREDDED. An arm is BENT at an unnatural angle, his head BLOODY.

The team MEDIC kneels beside him and pulls out a tourniquet.

MEDIC

Hold on, chief! I gotta tie off  
your leg so we can get ya outta here!

GAHL

(grimacing)

Where's my leg?! I spent alotta  
money on a tattoo and I'm not leavin'  
it behind.

The medic secures the tourniquet and motions to a soldier bounding past.

Gahl SCREAMS as they lift him onto the medic's back.

The WEAPONS SERGEANT runs up and waves bloody DOG TAGS.

WEAPONS SERGEANT

L-T's smeared all over the place!  
Can't carry him back! Move!

They all run for it.

A last shell EXPLODES, then SUDDENLY...

Everything is QUIET.

EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING - DAY

Attack aircraft ROAR overhead, FIRING into the jungle.

A troop-carrying helicopter comes in FAST. Door gunners spray suppressive FIRE as it touches down.

The soldiers rush to the helicopter. A couple lift Gahl inside. The rest climb aboard.

The helicopter ROARS into the sky as aircraft STRAFE the jungle.

INT. MEDICAL AID STATION - DAY

The doors BURST open.

Two stretcher bearers rush an unconscious Gahl to a table.

The closing doors momentarily SILHOUETTE medic and commo sergeant, both BLOODY and HAGGARD.

Doctor JERALD ARVA (35) and several nurses rush over and grab handfuls of Gahl's clothing.

ARVA  
One. Two. Three. Go.

They shift Gahl onto the table as the stretcher bearers hurriedly exit.

Arva and his team quickly cut off Gahl's clothes and work on him in earnest.

Doctor KENNETH YORK (30) enters as Arva accesses information on a nearby TOUCH SCREEN. York glances at the screen.

YORK  
What the hell happened to him? His organs are jelly.

ARVA  
A shell landed on top of him.

YORK  
I believe it... we aren't equipped for this. All we can do is ice him until the next lift arrives.

ARVA  
We just got it. The tech hasn't even run diagnostics yet.

YORK  
Burton's not a tech. He has a Ph.D. in engineering. He also designed the damn thing. Besides, we have no choice. If we don't get this guy in stasis now, he's done.

Arva chews his lip for a moment.

ARVA  
Do it.

York motions to the staff. They quickly wheel Gahl through another set of doors.

INT. MEDICAL AID STATION - LAB - DAY

CARL BURTON (25) turns as they wheel Gahl towards a large "coffin" with small displays and a touchscreen.

BURTON  
(what the hell?!)  
It's not ready yet.

YORK  
No time. He's dying and there's nothing else we can do.

BURTON  
But...

YORK  
Get him inside! Now!

Burton rapidly taps at the touchscreen. Digital gauges fluctuate, then stabilize.

Gahl GURGLES slightly and TWITCHES.

Arva quickly checks Gahl's carotid pulse.

ARVA  
We can lose him any second.

Burton taps a key. A low HUM starts. He nods to the onlookers.

The doctors and nurses carefully lift Gahl into the machine.

Small robotic arms POP OUT from the sides and insert needles and other stuff as the lid slowly closes.

ARVA (CONT'D)  
(to Burton)  
Well?

Burton checks the readouts.

BURTON  
It's working. His heart will soon be beating only a couple of times a minute.

YORK  
When can we evac him?

BURTON  
Technically, right now, but whatever carries him will need to be set up  
(MORE)

BURTON (CONT'D)  
for it. I'll call for reachback.  
He'll be out of here by morning.

ARVA  
He won't last that long.

BURTON  
Yes, he will. He's going into  
indefinite stasis. He'll be held  
at...

A small read-out SHOWS "34.7F/1.5C."

BURTON (CONT'D)  
... 35 degrees. He'll keep.

ARVA  
This isn't a Thanksgiving turkey.  
He's a man.

BURTON  
He's also alive because of this  
machine. Now, if you'll excuse me I  
need to arrange his evac.

Burton and the nurses exit. Arva and York remain.

ARVA  
He's alive, but what did we save?  
Most of his organs are mush, so his  
brain probably is too.

YORK  
We can't do much for him now, but in  
the future, we'll be able to restore  
him.

ARVA  
In the meantime, he'll be drooling  
all over himself in some V-A hospital.

YORK  
No. We'll keep him on ice.

Burton returns.

BURTON  
The bird'll be here first thing in  
the morning. Be glad. We saved a  
man who would have died.

Burton leaves.

Arva scowls at York.

ARVA

If "they" experiment on this poor bastard, we'll all rot in hell.

YORK

I never took you to be squeamish.

ARVA

Kiss my ass. Clinical trials are one thing, but experimenting on a human being is another... especially without his consent.

YORK

He's a prime candidate for the latest in regenerative medicine. That means a normal life. What more can we give him?

ARVA

A choice.

YORK

Someday, but not now.

York exits.

Arva touches the "coffin."

ARVA

(softly)

Best of luck, Chief.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - VAULT ROOM - DAY

A DARKENED "coffin," stenciled with "GAHL-00001", sits in an otherwise empty SMOKED glass-faced vault.

A white-coated technician checks read-outs as York and Arva talk softly.

MARTINA YORK (5) watches, utterly fascinated.

YORK

Told you he would keep. The two year mark and he's still stable.

ARVA

I never said he wouldn't. I questioned the ethics of doing it. There's a difference.

YORK

Doesn't matter now.

(MORE)

YORK (CONT'D)  
He's some kind of genetic anomaly.  
His family has no history of heart  
disease, cancer, or the other diseases  
plaguing the rest of humanity. He  
may provide a cure for them all.

Arva looks at York in ALARM.

ARVA  
He's not a damn lab rat!

YORK  
Relax. We aren't experimenting on  
him... well, not directly. We're  
using blood and tissue samples.

ARVA  
How convenient. So, you'll just  
keep him on ice?

YORK  
Right now we don't have a choice,  
but don't worry. When I eventually  
become director, you'll get to help  
him all you want. I'll see to it.

ARVA  
I hope you mean it.

Arva stalks off.

York goes a different direction. Martina follows.

MARTINA  
Daddy, what's a amomaly?

YORK  
It means he's very special, sweetie.  
Very special.

NEW ANGLE

WALL of plate glass windows SHOWS contemporary vehicles and buildings.

Lighting FLICKERS in TIME-LAPSE.

The vaults fill with bodies in stasis. Futuristic dials and screens replace older ones.

BEAT.

Time returns to NORMAL.

Lab technicians in smocks transfer Gahl's "coffin" to a LEVITATING flat cart.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Gahl lies on an operating table, tubes and wires stuck everywhere. His EXTENSIVE WOUNDS are fully revealed.

Medical personnel watch robotic arms work on different body parts.

ANGLE ON GAHL'S OPEN SKULL

A robotic arm deftly picks out bone fragments.

Gahl BLEEDS slightly, but it quickly stops. Brain tissue visibly REGROWS.

RESUME SCENE

An older, graying York in a futuristic "Mao-suit" watches from an overhead glass observation room.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - VAULT ROOM - DAY

Technicians return Gahl's coffin to its place in the vault.

BEAT.

Lighting FLICKERS in TIME-LAPSE again.

More changes as time goes by.

BEAT.

Time returns to NORMAL.

ANGLE ON PLATE GLASS WINDOW

Futuristic vehicles, sleek airships, and a mix of old and futuristic buildings.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - REGENERATION LAB - DAY

Gahl floats in a large, vertical glass tank, arms and legs TODDLER-SIZED. Wounds are thin, pink LINES, not even scars.

ANGLE ON GAHL'S BACK

His spine is SPLIT from neck to coccyx like an emerging insect.

A submersible robot HARVESTS tissue from the split.

## RESUME SCENE

Arva (65) watches Gahl as York (60) talks to LINUS DANYLUK (40) in the b.g.

Martina (now 35) walks past. She is thin and attractive in her professional clothes.

Arva glances furtively at her.

ARVA  
(softly)  
Soon.

She nods slightly without breaking stride or looking.

York sees Martina and half-heartedly waves.

YORK  
(to Danyluk)  
He'll be done in a few hours. After that, put him back in stasis. You're my head tissue engineer, so it's up to you to produce results or I get someone else.

Danyluk nods and exits.

York turns to Martina as she approaches.

MARTINA  
Ready?

YORK  
(realizing)  
Ah, sorry. I meant to tell you. I need to be in a virtucon. Can we try again tomorrow?

Her eyes show disappointment, but she smiles slightly.

MARTINA  
Sure. Just let me know.

YORK  
My treat next time, honey.

York is oblivious to her hurt as he rubs her arm in passing. His footsteps ECHO softly as he exits.

Martina sighs and exits.

Arva's eyes soften as he watches Martina go.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - HALLWAY - DAY

York walks with a purpose. Burton (55) joins him and matches his stride.

BURTON

The SecGen called several times for an update.

YORK

What did you tell him?

BURTON

Nothing. He told me to shut the hell up and let you know he called.

YORK

I'll take care of the SecGen. You light a fire under Danyluk's ass. He lacks urgency.

BURTON

How?

YORK

That's up to you. Just get him moving.

Burton slows and takes another corridor, lost in thought.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM - NIGHT

Multiple monitors with different IMAGES of the vault room.

Technician MATT AARONSON monitors them

Martina enters, eyes puffy.

MATT

Just in time. They're about to pull him out.

Martina grabs a chair and watches intently.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - VAULT ROOM - NIGHT

Gahl's EMPTY case lies open.

TWO scruffy men dressed as technicians place Gahl on a flat cart and cover him with a hospital blanket.

Danyluk enters, lost in reading a futuristic e-reader.

The scruffy men stop and look at each other.

Danyluk glances up, surprised. He rushes over and grabs Scruffy Man #1's hand. Scruffy Man #1 winces in pain.

DANYLUK

What the hell are you doing?! Nobody authorized this!

Scruffy Man #2 whips out a small device and ZAPS Danyluk.

Scruffy Man #1 grabs Danyluk as he falls.

Scruffy Man #2 catches Danyluk's tablet in mid-air, ZAPS it, then tosses it into Gahl's coffin.

They unceremoniously toss Danyluk into Gahl's coffin, slide it into the vault and close the door.

Scruffy Man #1 shakes his hands in pain and taps his temple.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Martina REACTS to what she watches.

MARTINA

Frack! They're gonna get caught.

Matt taps another screen.

MATT

Relax. I substituted previous footage of the empty vault room, overlaid the actual time code, erased entry records... blah, blah, blah... it's fine. Best of all, I'm sending key files to dead accounts that suggest York's butt-boy Danyluk sold them and ran off. There's even a body in Gahl's vault if anybody checks, so it's win-win for us. Seriously, the stasis tube turns on automatically when the vault door closes. Danyluk's out for the count.

Matt taps several keys.

MATT (CONT'D)

And a Mister Jamison is now a patient assigned to a room. We're good.

Martina looks skeptical.

MATT (CONT'D)

Really. I took care of it.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - ARVA'S OFFICE - DAY

Arva reads off of a flexible screen. With a SIGH, he pauses and sets it down.

Arva opens a drawer and pulls out a small photo of Martina as a girl.

ARVA  
(under his breath)  
You don't deserve a daughter like  
her, you bastard.

Arva tosses the photo back into the drawer and closes it. He gets up, grabs a white coat, and exits.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - HALLWAY - MORNING

Burton strides down the hallway.

A faint CHIRP.

BURTON  
Yes?

PAUSE.

BURTON (CONT'D)  
I'll be right there.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Sterile. Horizontal windows high on the wall show BLUE SKY.

Gahl (looking 20) sleeps peacefully. SUDDENLY, he awakens and looks around like a caged wild animal.

Arva, dressed in a physician's coat and a stethoscope around his neck, watches quietly.

ARVA  
Ah. Mr. Gahl, you're awake.

Gahl only manages a croak. He clears his throat.

GAHL  
(soft)  
Where the hell am I? Last I  
remember...

Gahl lifts the blanket off his legs and looks down.

ARVA  
You're disoriented. Give yourself  
time to adjust.

Gahl drops the blanket and stares ahead.

GAHL

I remember looking down and a leg  
was gone. The other was hangin' by  
some meat... there's no tattoo.

MOUTH-BREATHING NURSE enters. She gestures with one hand,  
her eyes flit around, as she hands Arva a small packet.

MOUTH-BREATHING NURSE

Mr. Jamison's meds, doctor.

ARVA

Thank you. I'll take care of it.

She leaves. Arva tosses the packet on the bedside table.

GAHL

Those aren't mine.

Arva fills a small cup with water.

ARVA

She got the name wrong. Please take  
the pills. You need real sleep.

Arva leaves, closing the door behind him.

Gahl struggles to his feet, heading to the bathroom.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - PATIENT ROOM - BATHROOM - DAY

Lights come on as Gahl stumbles inside. He splashes water  
on his face before glancing in the mirror... and is STARTLED.  
He gingerly touches his YOUNG face.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - SECURITY OFFICE - DAY

A security officer points to something on a screen.

Burton leans over, but shakes his head.

BURTON

Keep looking. He had to leave tracks,  
electronic or otherwise.

Burton rushes to the door.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - ARVA'S OFFICE - DAY

Martina sits in a chair, waiting. Arva scowls at her as he  
enters.

ARVA

Are you trying to expose us?

MARTINA

If he asks, I will say you're  
mentoring me for a possible career  
in medicine.

Arva sits down behind his desk.

ARVA

Why not just tell him we're lovers?  
That's just as believable.

MARTINA

I've been extremely careful. Besides,  
we haven't given them a reason to  
suspect anything.

ARVA

Whatever. Gahl's scheduled for  
another sampling and amputation series  
in three days. We need to cut him  
loose tomorrow. Be ready.

MARTINA

I will be... It's strange that I  
finally get to meet him. I've seen  
him so much over the years, I feel  
like I already know him.

ARVA

Get to know him even more once he's  
out. Help him any way you can because  
once they realize he's gone, they'll  
look real hard for him... and you  
too. They probably don't know what  
he looked like at twenty, so he may  
get a good head start.

MARTINA

We're as ready as we can be... I  
need to go. I'm going to try and  
take dad to lunch. Maybe if I keep  
working on him, he'll see reason.

ARVA

(saddened)

He won't change, sweetie. He's always  
been like this.

MARTINA

He's my dad. I have to try.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Gahl paces in his patient gown and socks.

INTERN walks in and tosses a box on the bed. He gestures as if turning pages on an invisible book.

INTERN

Your clothes, Mr. Jamison. You're scheduled for a check-up. Please be in alpha clinic at seven in the morning... sharp.

Without looking back, the intern leaves, closing the door.

Gahl opens the box and holds up futuristic-looking clothes.

GAHL

Great. George Jetson meets Disco.

INT. RESEARCH LAB - NIGHT

York stands over SCIENTIST as he examines Gahl's harvested tissue in a large TRAY.

YORK

Well?

SCIENTIST

He's a gold mine. This stuff alone can provide dozens of treatments.

YORK

Okay. Keep his body hooked up, but remove his head... and use growth inhibitor so it doesn't grow back. He's just a donor now, so renumber him and stick him in a new vault.

SCIENTIST

Doctor Danyluk...

YORK

Where the hell is he?

SCIENTIST

I don't know. He said he was going to check...

YORK

Have Gahl back in the vault by noon. I need to be in an important virtucon, so tell your boss not to disturb me.

York exits in a hurry.

Scientist carefully moves the tray to a glass-fronted case.  
A digital readout above the door reads 37C.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM - NIGHT

Matt watches the monitor...

ANGLE ON SCREEN

... as scientist closes the case and exits the lab.

The VIEW ZOOMS IN on the case.

MATT (O.S.)  
Let's see. Turn off the alarms...  
reset to sterilize... authorization...  
Danyluk.

RESUME SCENE

Matt BEAMS and throws his arms in the air.

MATT (CONT'D)  
Transformulate that! Up yours, York!

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - YORK'S OFFICE - NIGHT - LATER

York enters. Burton waits for him.

YORK  
Yes?

BURTON  
We have a problem.

YORK  
Okay.

BURTON  
It seems Danyluk has disappeared,  
but not before sending some of our  
most sensitive files to unknown  
people.

York's face darkens.

YORK  
What files? When?

BURTON  
We're still trying to figure that  
out. It gets worse.

YORK  
Worse?! How?

BURTON

It appears he also destroyed the tissue samples.

York virtually falls into his chair, digesting the information. A RANGE OF EMOTIONS cross his face before he manages to ask...

YORK

Where is the bastard?

BURTON

We're trying to figure that out too. His trackers are offline, so we have no idea right now.

York jumps to his feet and storms around his desk.

YORK

(raging)

What the hell?! Son-of-a...

Martina enters, taken back by York's outburst.

MARTINA

Is everything alright?

YORK

No. Everything is decidedly not alright. In fact, it downright sucks right now.

MARTINA

Your blood pressure, Dad.

YORK

Believe me when I say I never have to worry about my blood pressure again.

MARTINA

Okay. Let's get away for a while. You know, go to dinner, so you can relax. I'll buy.

YORK

Now is not a good time.

MARTINA

(stung)

It never is. In fact, it's never been my whole life... or Mom's.

YORK

Leave her out of this. Besides, she  
betrayed me.

MARTINA

Only after you drove her away.

YORK

Don't tell me you're turning against  
me too.

MARTINA

I'm not! You're pushing me away.  
I'm your daughter and this dickhead  
sees more of you than I do.

Burton glares at her.

York jabs a finger in her direction.

YORK

You never understood me or what I  
have been trying to do!

MARTINA

I guess I never will since you won't  
let me in... I'm transferring out of  
the city... permanently.

YORK

Go! Run away like your whore mother!

ANGLE ON MARTINA

... as she hurries out. Tears stream down her face.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - BALCONY - NIGHT

Arva walks towards stairs. He STARTS.

ARVA'S POV

... of Martina wiping away tears as she hurriedly makes for  
the building exit.

RESUME SCENE

Arva starts to shout, but checks himself and regains his  
composure.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - ALPHA CLINIC WAITING ROOM - MORNING

Gahl sits quietly.

An ELDERLY MAN sits staring into space, breathing loud.

WHOOSH. The waiting room door OPENS.

Three young patients walk in. They gesture like slow-motion conductors and talk softly to each other.

Gahl stares.

The elderly man scowls and looks at Gahl.

ELDERLY MAN

Damn morons! Can't have a conversation unless they're jacked off, hooked up or whatever the hell they call it. Dumbasses are two feet apart and probably on video with each other!

GAHL

I... don't understand.

ELDERLY MAN

Ya hafta damn near punch 'em to get their attention.

(to the patients)

Betcha couldn't find your own asses with both hands and a map!

GAHL

I was overseas and... I had a smart phone.

ELDERLY MAN

More like you been under a rock. Everybody's has implants in their brains, eyes, ears, prob'lly their asses too. They can tell you the weather in Berlin, but can't screw without looking up how to do it. Dumb bastards!

Mouth-breathing nurse opens the door as an ELECTRONIC VOICE calls out.

ELECTRONIC VOICE

Resident Jamison. Please follow the nurse to your exam room.

Gahl jumps up, sidesteps the closing door, and follows mouth-breathing nurse.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Mouth-breathing nurse gestures and talks softly as Gahl stands there, lost.

MOUTH-BREATHING NURSE  
I see you aren't on our system... or  
any system, Mr. Jamison. You never  
had it done, poor thing.

GAHL  
My name's not... I'm a little new at  
this.

MOUTH-BREATHING NURSE  
(attention fading)  
The doctor will see you soon. Please  
have a seat in the chair.

Mouth-breathing nurse closes the door.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM - DAY

An agitated Martina, now in casual clothes, hovers over Matt.

MARTINA  
Start rerouting the feed and loop  
it.

Matt's hands move in a manual ballet.

Various SCREENS display images from around the medical center.

Arva FLASHES momentarily on one.

MARTINA (CONT'D)  
Go back to #3.

More hand motions, then Arva APPEARS, walking down a hallway.

MARTINA (CONT'D)  
I'm on. Gotta go.

She rushes out.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

There is a KNOCK.

GAHL  
Come in.

The door opens.

Arva walks in and closes the door.

ARVA  
How are you, Mr. Gahl?

GAHL

Aside from miraculously vanished scars and weird dreams, I'm good.

ARVA

Regenerative medicine has advanced considerably in the last few years... one of the few areas that has... Eh, we harvested stem cells from you to grow new parts and they are still adapting to their new functions, but you're healthy enough to be discharged.

GAHL

Where do I report?

ARVA

Report? For duty? You were discharged long ago. You're a civilian now.

GAHL

What?! If I'm gonna be fully healed, what's preventing me from returning to active duty?

ARVA

The military is different now. Semi-intelligent drones do all the work. People merely interface with them. Besides, you have an auto-immune condition that rejects any kind of hardware. You would be unfit for military service anyway.

GAHL

Can't you do some kind of gene therapy on me? I don't want to stick out like a broken nose.

ARVA

I'm afraid your condition is so rare that any requests to study your case would be denied out-of-hand.

GAHL

(irritated)

So, what happens as it progresses? Lose my hair? Get fat? Pecker falls off? What?

ARVA

You'll be fine as long as you don't have anything implanted, including non-reactive materials like pure titanium and other stuff. Any immune-suppressants we gave you would have very unpleasant side-effects.

GAHL

What about anti-rejection meds? I knew a guy who had a kidney transplant and he seemed fine.

ARVA

They're no longer made since body parts are now grown using a patient's own cells. I'm afraid you will have to get used to a certain amount of distance from the rest of society.

GAHL

That's fine. I'd rather not be one of those zombies I saw in your waiting room. I just want my life back. I already lost a few years.

ARVA

You don't understand. You were placed in stasis, a kind of hibernation, over thirty years ago.

GAHL

Wuh? Thirty?! Why didn't you say something before?!

ARVA

With everything else you're adjusting to, I didn't want to overwhelm you... you're going to get a new start. You have to...

GAHL

New start?! I had a wife... well, ex-wife, but I had kids. My parents! I don't even know if they're alive or...

ARVA

Oh, they're alive! I checked once you were coming out of stasis. Here's their contact information. I couldn't find your kids' location, but between your ex-wife and parents, I'm sure you can find out.

Arva hands Gahl a plastic CARD and a small square of PAPER.

ARVA (CONT'D)

You're one of the few people around who can read cursive... uh, my contact info is on the other side. Let me know how you're doing when you can.

GAHL

(dazed)

I just want to go back to my room. I need to get my brain wrapped around all this.

ARVA

You can't... go back to your room. Someone else is already in it. You're being discharged today. Now, in fact. That's why you're here. I'm giving you your final check-up and you're fine.

GAHL

That's it? You're just kicking me to the curb like a cheap hooker?

ARVA

We have to discharge you. Rooms are in short supply. Find a veterans' home near your family. There you will find all kind of support to help you start over.

GAHL

I have more questions! I don't even know where I am.

ARVA

You're in Bethesda... I'm sorry, Mr. Gahl. Please see the discharge clerk in the lobby for directions. I have to see another patient now, but please contact me once you get settled somewhere. Good luck.

Gahl watches in disgust as Arva hurries out.

GAHL

(sarcastic)

Thanks.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - YORK'S OFFICE - DAY

York looks uses a HUGE wall-mounted VIDEO SCREEN to view images of Gahl's limbs at various stages of growth.

There is a CHIME.

YORK  
(scowling)  
Yes?

SECRETARY (V.O.)  
The Secretary General for you, sir.

York frowns.

YORK  
The SecGen? What's he want?

SECRETARY (V.O.)  
Didn't say, sir.

York straightens his clothes.

YORK  
Very well. I'm here.

The big screen FLIPS to the pudgy, balding SECGEN (50s).

YORK (CONT'D)  
Mr. Secretary. How may I help you?

SECGEN  
Sorry to interrupt, Ken. I'm getting ready to open the Polity Council and I need a progress report.

YORK  
We're on schedule. Why?

SECGEN  
There's a no-confidence vote coming. There shouldn't be any reason to worry, but I'm getting all of my assets lined up.

YORK  
A no-confidence vote?! Like my old man used to say, this is a dictatorship, not a democracy.

SECGEN  
Thanks for clearing that up for me. Look, once I sort out who's behind this vote, be ready to start full-scale production. Keep that facility safe until this is over. I'm going to need leverage. Out here.

PAUSE.

The screen switches to an image of Burton.

BURTON

Yes?

YORK

Increase security in the vault room  
and labs. We may have a problem.

BURTON

Who gets access?

YORK

Only essential personnel.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - LOBBY - DAY

Gahl approaches the DISCHARGE CLERK, who gestures like a crazed conductor as her eyes dart around.

Gahl clears his throat softly.

She talks and gestures.

GAHL

(irritated)

Excuse me!

She STARTS and squints at him, but continues gesturing.

DISCHARGE CLERK

How may I help you, resident?

GAHL

I need to check out or whatever.

He holds out the plastic card.

She uses a finger to tilt it slightly. A faint light FLICKS from one of her eyes and over the card.

DISCHARGE CLERK

No outstanding charges. Your classification... has been upgraded to one-hundred percent disabled.

GAHL

I'm not disabled, especially not a hundred percent. I'm better than ever.

DISCHARGE CLERK

No offense, resident...

GAHL

Stop calling me that. It's not resident, comrade, or whatever. Got it?

DISCHARGE CLERK

Ookaay... Well, you are finished here, Mister Jamison.

GAHL

My name's not...

DISCHARGE CLERK

(overlapping)

Do you have a housing assignment?

GAHL

I don't even have a picture of my kids.

DISCHARGE CLERK

(overlapping)

I see you're a veteran of the U.S. military... funny you don't look that old. Oh, well, just visit any veterans' home and you will be admitted for free. Have a peaceful life, Mister Jamison.

She resumes gesturing and turns away.

GAHL

(irritated)

Thanks.

Gahl walks to the entrance. He pauses before stepping outside.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - YORK'S OFFICE - DAY

York enters his office. Arva waits in a chair.

YORK

Make it quick, Jerald. A lot's happened in the last several hours.

ARVA

Yea, I know. I saw Martina leaving in tears last night.

YORK

Which is none of your business.

ARVA

I'm making it mine. I lost my daughter, and I'll be damned if I will stand by while you lose yours to stupidity and stubbornness.

YORK

I'm telling you to stay out of it.

ARVA

Ken, please don't drive her off. You'll regret it the rest of your life.

YORK

Another word and you'll regret it the rest of your life.

ARVA

You're not listening. She's your daughter. Your own flesh and blood.

YORK

That's it! Pack your shit. You're leaving tomorrow. Say anything else and I'll have you arrested.

Arva turns and shuffles out, smiling ever so slightly.

Burton rushes in, ignoring Arva in passing.

YORK (CONT'D)

What?!

BURTON

We found Danyluk. He was in the vault.

YORK

How did he get back into the facility? His pass codes were revoked.

BURTON

No, I mean he was inside the vault.

York blinks as he processes the information.

YORK

Which one?

BURTON

Gahl's.

YORK

Then where the hell is Gahl?

BURTON

Obviously not where he should be.

YORK

No shit! Were you able to I-D who did it?

BURTON

There is nothing unusual recorded on any system. It's like nothing happened.

YORK

Damn it! What else can go wrong?

BURTON

Danyluk will be fine. Once the grogginess wears off, we may be able to get some answers out of him.

YORK

To hell with him. He's a dumbass.  
Pull Gahl's military records.

BURTON

Already tried that. His files were deleted once we declared him dead. I have people looking for any surviving next of kin from social records. Being tier one special ops, there wasn't much info on him.

YORK

When you do find a relative, send someone to try and get photos of him when he was young. We only have images of him older and scarred or when he was regenerating. Why didn't anyone take pictures of his face?!

BURTON

We never had to deal with this situation before.

YORK

(snapping)

Shut up. That was rhetorical. Just go do what I told you.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Martina leaves a non-descript building. She casually looks around before walking off.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - EXTERIOR - DAY

Crowds of gesturing pedestrians walks briskly in orderly lines. A few elderly shuffle along without gesturing.

Gahl walks through the area in amazement.

BODMOD LEADER fake gestures as he watches Gahl intently.

BODMOD LEADER  
(softly)  
Got him.

EXT. CITYSCAPE - DAY

Immaculate. Even sterile.

Pedestrians gesture and walk in orderly lines.

Nearly SILENT lines of perfectly spaced cars WHIZ BY.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - YORK'S OFFICE - DAY

York stares outside, brooding. SUDDENLY, he snaps his fingers and shouts to the air.

YORK  
Burton!

The big screen turns on with Burton face.

BURTON  
Sir?

YORK  
Forget about finding his family. No time for that. Find the best photos we have, then run them in reverse through an aging simulation. It may not be exact, but it is good enough to put out a bulletin.

BURTON  
Will do.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - DUSK

Martina glances at a hand-held device as she moves with a purpose.

MATT (V.O.)  
The trackers you're using to find him can be hacked. So, when you find him, destroy all the microdes as soon as you can.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM - DAY

Matt's hand hovers in the air.

MARTINA (V.O.)

Will do.

MATT

Keep in touch. Out.

Matt brings up TRANSFER ORDERS for Arva. The "destination" block reads "Nome, Alaska". He quickly taps the air and "Dallas" replaces Nome. In the "reason" section, he puts in "observe and assist."

MATT (CONT'D)

You can thank me later, Doc.

An alarm BLARES.

Matt frantically taps the air and gestures.

MATT (CONT'D)

Shit. Time to go.

He "pulls" up a large image. The word "Initiate" appears. He pokes at it.

Matt gets up and hurriedly exits.

Screens FRITZ and sag. Other equipment smokes and melts.

FLASH TO WHITE:

EXT. PARK - DUSK

Machines mow perfectly manicured grounds and clean sidewalks. A few people walk while gesturing and talking.

Gahl sits on a park bench, exhausted and confused. He lies down and stretches out.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT - LATER

Soft lights. Insects chirp and buzz.

Gahl jerks awake. He is alone.

His stomach growls. He sighs and gets up.

EXT. CITY - SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Gahl weaves around people who gesture and talk to thin air.

Bodmod leader follows at a discreet distance.

LUDDITE MAN watches from a street corner.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Gahl enters a gaudy faux art deco diner.

Bodmod leader stops gesturing and walking to just watch.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Gahl takes a seat facing the entrance.

Waitresses walk and gesture as they take orders and deliver meals.

Gahl gestures to oblivious waitresses. FINALLY, he grabs waitress PAM, who pulls back and looks through him.

PAM

I'm sorry... sir. I can't... you  
seem to be off-line.

GAHL

I just want to order food. Is that  
possible?

PAM

I will have to handjam this one...  
what do I do?

She gestures in sweeping arm movements.

EXT. CITY - SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Bodmod leader takes notice as Martina enters the diner.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Gahl watches with growing irritation as Pam fumbles.

Martina walks up, smiling slightly.

Gahl glares at her.

MARTINA

You look like you could use some  
help.

He relaxes slightly.

GAHL

You're not one of these zombies?

PAM

Zom... bay? That's not on the menu.

GAHL

(to Pam)

I wasn't talking to you.

MARTINA

Nope. I'm all human. Allow me.

(to Pam)

We'll have the bentos with a couple  
of nova rolls and chilled Jazzies.

Pam nods and ambles off.

GAHL

What the hell is a jazzy?

MARTINA

Iced jasmine tea with vitamins and  
minerals.

GAHL

Sounds... interesting.

MARTINA

No need for causticism, resident.

GAHL

The next person who calls me  
"resident" will have my foot so far  
up their ass...

Martina leans close and looks around.

MARTINA

(whispering)

Whoa. And violent too. You are  
seriously hyperanti-social. That'll  
get you split rapido-like.

GAHL

What?

They go silent as Pam brings their order.

Martina holds up her wrist to show a metallic bracelet.

Pam leans close. A thin RED LIGHT erupts out of her eye and FLICKS across the bracelet. She leaves without a word.

MARTINA

Dinner's on me. Where were we?

He wolfs down his food.

Martina is surprised at his manners.

Gahl notices and slows down.

GAHL

Thanks. I'm a little out of sorts.  
I just... woke up from an extended  
coma after an accident.

MARTINA

Funny. You don't look like you just  
left the crank house.

Gahl washes his food down with the jazzy and grimaces.

GAHL

Yah!... Look, I just want to find  
my ex-wife so I can see how my kids  
are doing.

MARTINA

Where's she livin'?

GAHL

Dallas.

MARTINA

Wow, that's over two thousand klicks.

GAHL

Can't I get a redeye?

MARTINA

What's that? A drink? Slang for a  
jìnu?

GAHL

Huh?

MARTINA

Huh for the drink or the prostitute?  
Wipe it. Flying is restricted these  
days. Unless you're on party  
business, you use the rails.

GAHL

(thoroughly confused)  
Democrat or Republican?

MARTINA

Huh?

GAHL

Forget it. What do I need to do?

MARTINA

Okay, here is how you get to the  
nearest BULEV station...

GAHL

BULEV?

MARTINA

Bullet-Levitated train. Like a  
MAGLEV, only better.

EXT. CITY - PLAZA - NIGHT

Gahl weaves through crowds flowing in multiple directions.

ANGLE ON ADVERTISING HOLOGRAM

A news bulletin interrupts a sales pitch. The NEWSCASTER is superficial and sickeningly upbeat.

NEWSCASTER

Attention residents and citizens.  
Attention please. Isolated incidents between anti-social obstructionists have occurred. Please view such incidents from a safe distance and upload them to peace enforcement. Your assistance is appreciated in identifying enemies of peace.

EXT. BETHESDA TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Gaudy retro Art Deco station. In the b.g., a BULEV departs.

Gahl hurries towards the main entrance.

INT. BETHESDA TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Gahl hesitates in front of a turnstile like airport security. He waves his card at it. Something CHIRPS and he hurries through.

Bodmod leader approaches the turnstile and looks around as if seeking a way inside. He scowls.

BODMOD LEADER

(softly)

Can't continue pursuit. He's on the train leaving from platform 5.

BEAT.

BODMOD LEADER (CONT'D)

(louder)

There are four major cities along  
that route! How am I supposed to  
tell which one he's going to?

INT. BULLET TRAIN - NIGHT

Gahl sits in a spartan window seat, brooding.

People around him mutter and gesture.

Gahl leans against the headrest. SUDDENLY, there is a...

VOICE #2 (V.O.)

(faint)

Welcome resident. Sit...

Gahl jerks away from the seat back and tentatively touches  
the headrest. There is a slight HUM. He leans back again.

VOICE #2 (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Welcome, resident. Sit back and  
enjoy a trip on the world's safest  
mass transit system, the BULEV...

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAWN

The rising sun lights vast tracts of cropland. There are no  
trees or livestock anywhere.

The elevated BULEV track cuts across the fields like a Roman  
aqueduct.

The BULEV ZOOMS by in a BLUR and a WHINE.

EXT. DALLAS TRAIN STATION - MORNING

A carbon-copy of the first.

Behind the station, a BULEV stops. Beyond that, a plane  
takes off from a runway.

EXT. DALLAS TRAIN STATION ENTRANCE - MORNING

Gahl looks around with tired, blood-shot eyes. He LOCKS  
ONTO a building. Recognition and relief show on his face.

GAHL

Great. Only twelve blocks to go.

EXT. MIRIAM'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The entrance is blank glass--no handle, no buzzer, nothing.

Gahl looks around.

GAHL  
How in the hell...?

Gahl waves at rapidly gesturing JUMPSUIT MAN walking by, but is ignored. He holds out a hand to stop him.

Jumpsuit man goes BUG-EYED, but stops.

JUMPSUIT MAN  
(squinting)  
May I help you?

GAHL  
My... ex-wife lives here. I need to let her know I'm downstairs. May I borrow your phone?

JUMPSUIT MAN  
My... phone? What's that? Wipe it.  
Her name and dwelling number?

GAHL  
Miriam Gahl. G-A-H-L at 5-918.

Jumpsuit man gestures as his eyes dart around as if speed reading an invisible screen. Finally, he taps the air.

JUMPSUIT MAN  
Resident Gahl, Miriam? Are you the term partner of...  
(to Gahl)  
What is your name?

GAHL  
Eric... Gahl.

JUMPSUIT MAN  
(back to call)  
Eric Gahl.

BEAT.

JUMPSUIT MAN (CONT'D)  
Thank you, resident. I will send him inside.

The door CLICKS and SWISHES open.

Gahl slaps jumpsuit man lightly on the shoulder and darts into the door.

GAHL  
Thanks for the help... citizen.

Jumpsuit man resumes walking, but shouts to Gahl.

JUMPSUIT MAN

I'm only a resident! I'm not a party member yet... I think that was a real counterculturalist. He's not jacked up.

INT. MIRIAM'S APARTMENT - ENTRYWAY - DAY

A KNOCK on the door.

MIRIAM GAHL (65), thin and pale, hesitates at the door. She haltingly gestures, then...

The door OPENS to REVEAL Gahl.

INT. MIRIAM'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Miriam is obviously nervous as she leads Gahl into the living room. She gestures and frets before sitting down.

GAHL

It's... good to see you Miriam.

MIRIAM

You look the same... no, it's definitely him. He looks the same as when we met.

GAHL

Who are you talking to?

MIRIAM

A friend... no, he was a soldier before the transformulution.

GAHL

Miriam! Please call your friend back later. I need you to focus.

Miriam gestures once and forces herself to stop. She taps her right temple and blinks as if walking into bright light.

MIRIAM

I'm sorry. This is a shock to me.

GAHL

Imagine how it is for me. I lost three decades of my life and everything I knew is gone.

MIRIAM

Last time you saw me, I was... well,  
now I'm an old woman... What do you  
want?

GAHL

Where are our children?

MIRIAM

I... don't really know.

GAHL

How can you not know?

MIRIAM

They used to call during the holidays,  
but the world is different now. We  
are different... besides, we thought  
you died, so we moved on. Last I  
heard they each had a couple of kids.

Gahl rubs his temples. Finally, he looks back at her.

GAHL

So, you have no idea how to get ahold  
of them?

MIRIAM

No.

GAHL

Okay... well, thanks. May I use  
your bathroom before I take off?

She points down the hall.

MIRIAM

First door on the right.

INT. MIRIAM'S BATHROOM - DAY

Small, utilitarian, and Spartan.

Gahl looks around as he pees.

There are generic hygiene products on the sink and...

A wall charger holds a chromed dildo.

He makes a face as he finishes.

Gahl glances closer in the sink mirror as he washes his hands.  
He stretches his skin and looks at his hair.

GAHL  
Don't think I'll ever get used to  
this.

INT. MIRIAM'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Miriam talks softly and gestures as Gahl quietly returns.

MIRIAM  
... Apparently, he's been frozen all  
of this time. First I knew he was  
alive was when someone called and  
asked if Eric could come up...

PAUSE.

MIRIAM (CONT'D)  
That's the thing. He's not even  
jacked up. He may as well be dead...  
no, I'm popping a Remarex and going  
to sleep. I need it.

Her voice FADES as Gahl leaves quietly.

EXT. DALLAS TRAIN STATION - DAY

Arva and Martina part ways and head off in different  
directions.

BEAT.

Matt steps off the train and glances around before walking  
off.

In the b.g., a cargo plane lands.

EXT. DALLAS AIRPORT - CARGO AREA - DAY

Busy and crowded with nondescript cargo planes.

Bodmod leader, dressed as an airplane maintenance worker,  
exits the rear ramp of an aircraft. He casually strolls  
towards a hangar.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - YORK'S OFFICE - DAY

York lies on his couch, snoring softly.

A CHIME sounds

York snorts and sits up.

YORK  
Yes?

The big screen TURNS ON. The SecGen stares back with dark circles under his eyes and pasty skin.

YORK (CONT'D)

Damn, Mr. Secretary. You look like hell.

SECGEN

I was up all night jousting with rogue partymembers. What's your excuse?

YORK

Making sure you have what you need to stay in power. What's the word?

SECGEN

We won... barely. I still don't know who was behind it, but I have to play nice as forty-eight percent supported a no confidence vote.

YORK

Just arrest them.

SECGEN

That's my worry. How is production coming along?

YORK

We're getting there.

SECGEN

I hope so... for all of our sakes.

EXT. OUTSIDE PARENTS' APARTMENT BUILDING ENTRANCE - DAY

Gahl walks with a scowl.

Bodmod leader ducks out-of-sight as Gahl scans the crowd.

Gahl, on the heels of another man, ducks into the building.

INT. PARENTS' APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

Gahl scans the area as he approaches the front desk.

The CLERK gestures and looks around as if watching a fly.

GAHL

Excuse me.

The Clerk gestures tentatively, then all but panics.

CLERK  
(muttering)  
Wuh? No I-D code, no...

GAHL  
I need to see if you have an elderly couple living here.

The clerk gestures as if pulling aside a curtain. His eyes bug out as he looks directly at Gahl for the first time.

CLERK  
How did you get in?

The clerk looks around frantically, then backs away.

GAHL  
I'm sorry. Anybody with the last name of Gahl, G-A-H-L, live here?

The clerk sweeps from the side to the front of his face. He gestures and squints slightly.

CLERK  
Yes... there is a couple living on the second floor... Flat 217.

The clerk turns and disappears into a back room.

GAHL  
(muttering)  
Good thing I'm not a criminal.

INT. PARENTS' APARTMENT - DAY

His elderly FATHER and MOTHER seem "almost" happy to see him, but distracted as they gesture, their eyes darting.

His ancient GRANDMOTHER sits nearby in an old chair. Her glazed expression shows she is "not-all-there."

FATHER  
Well, alot has changed since you... left. We adapted as best we could, but Grammy gradually went downhill.

Gahl gives his father a puzzled look.

GAHL  
How long has she been like this?

MOTHER  
(turning invisible  
pages)

She was withdrew after you died, but  
the brain degeneration happened only  
in the last few. Her disease is so  
rare, we could never get approval to  
have it studied.

FATHER AND MOTHER  
(in unison)  
"... the greatest good for the  
greatest number."

Gahl blinks rapidly for a second.

GAHL  
I... I need to go. How do I contact  
you?

MOTHER  
It's easy. Just look us up on the...  
oh, you aren't jacked up.

Gahl squeezes his father's shoulder and kisses his mother.

FATHER  
Take care, son. It was good to see  
you.

MOTHER  
Love you, honey.

His father walks towards the door.

Gahl walks over to his grandmother and leans down to kiss  
her.

Grandmother blinks and looks at him. SUDDENLY, she recognizes  
him and her eyes tear up.

GRANDMOTHER  
Eric, my boy. They told me you died.  
Did you come back to take me to  
heaven?

GAHL  
No, Grammy. I'm alive...  
(chokes up)  
I have to go, but I'll be back later.

GRANDMOTHER  
Please don't go, sweetie.  
(MORE)

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)  
You and your grandfather are the  
only two people I miss. The rest  
are like walking dead.

Gahl sniffs, his eyes well up as he gently touches her cheek.

GAHL  
I know, Grammy. I know.

GRANDMOTHER  
Come back later and we'll talk more...  
I love you, my boy. Be care...

Her eyes glaze and she lapses back into a waking stupor.

Gahl squeezes teary eyes shut as he kisses her forehead.

Gahl's father holds the door open with one hand and gestures with the other as Gahl hurriedly leaves.

EXT. OUTSIDE PARENTS' APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Gahl exits the building and numbly enters the flow of people.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

Mid-way across, Gahl slows, then stops.

People part around him like a river flowing past an island.

Gahl faces the cars waiting to go. He glares at the passengers.

The light turns GREEN.

BEAT.

A CHIME SOUNDS and an electronic voice ECHOES.

ELECTRONIC VOICE  
You are obstructing the flow of  
traffic. Please move immediately.

Gahl stands firm, glaring around him as he balls his fists.

ELECTRONIC VOICE (CONT'D)  
You are in violation of district  
traffic code twelve. Move immediately  
or face arrest.

Martina APPEARS out of the crowd.

MARTINA  
(frantic)  
What are you trying to do?! Get  
yourself lobotomized?! Come on!

She tries to grab his arm.

Gahl pulls back and glares at her for a moment.

Martina looks around nervously at the gesturing sheep.

MARTINA (CONT'D)  
(pleading)  
Please.

Gahl reluctantly follows her.

The street returns to being a smooth flowing machine.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Martina punches Gahl in the arm.

MARTINA  
What the hell is wrong with you?!  
You may think you are dealing with a  
bunch of sheep, but the people running  
things don't tolerate disruptive  
behavior. They'll calm you down  
permanently. Your photo's probably  
being run now... and mine too,  
asshole.

GAHL  
What're you talking about? I never  
see any police. The lemmings just  
plod along.

MARTINA  
You don't know what you are dealing  
with. It is not a good idea to draw  
attention to yourself. All deviant  
behavior and obstructionism is  
corrected. Anybody that gets picked  
up comes back... different... calm.

Gahl shakes his head in confusion and irritation.

GAHL  
Okay, don't stand out... got it!...  
Have you been following me?!

MARTINA  
No. I'm in town on business.

GAHL

I don't believe you.

MARTINA

Look, just watch your ass. This is a conflict zone. Competing insurgent groups are struggling for power. So, be careful... I gotta go. I'll find you later.

GAHL

How the hell are you going to do that? I don't even know where I'm going next.

MARTINA

I have my ways and leave it at that.

She hurriedly disappears into the crowd.

INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - BASEMENT

Matt and store clerk JORGE LOPEZ look over monitors.

ANGLE ON A MONITOR

... as Martina exits the alley.

JORGE (O.S.)

Gahl's face is probably being run right now.

MATT

Nope. Before I left Bethesda, I activated one of my algorithms that will superimpose random faces on Gahl every time he's on camera. It is very subtle and hard to detect. It should camouflage him from all visual surveillance.

ONSCREEN, a bald guy in Gahl's clothes emerges from the alley.

JORGE

Just make sure you only give him male faces. You screw that up and his cover will dissipate rapido-like.

Matt gets a serious look.

MATT

I tested it for two years to get it right. Now, let's see about getting him here.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Gahl walks close to an interactive HOLOGRAM avatar advertiser. The hologram responds to passersby, except...

It acts confused as Gahl approaches. It momentarily "fritzes," then addresses him.

HOLOGRAM  
(sickeningly cheerful)  
Hello, resident...

Gahl glares at it.

GAHL  
Piss off!

The hologram SMILES.

HOLOGRAM  
I don't understand... How may I  
help you?

Gahl sighs.

GAHL  
Where's the nearest library?

The hologram PAUSES.

HOLOGRAM  
I am sorry. That institution no  
longer exists. How about a used  
bookstore?

GAHL  
Where?

PAUSE.

HOLOGRAM  
There is an antique bookshop a short  
distance from here. Uploading  
location...

GAHL  
Just tell me where it is from here!

HOLOGRAM  
Certainly. Three blocks on your  
current heading, then right for seven  
more blocks.

GAHL  
Uh, thanks.

The hologram smiles again.

HOLOGRAM  
A pleasure. Have a nice day,  
resident.

The hologram switches to advertising clothes as Gahl resumes walking.

INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - BASEMENT

Jorge pats Matt lightly on the back.

JORGE  
Good job. Were we detected?

Matt shakes his head negatively.

MATT  
The new wormlets did their job. He  
should be upstairs soon.

Jorge exits as Matt turns back to his screens.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - YORK'S OFFICE - DAY

York and the SECURITY CHIEF looks at FOOTAGE of Martina leaving the alley, then Gahl with a bald guy's head.

YORK  
So, what you're telling me is that  
my daughter is consorting with a  
counterrevolutionary that changes  
his face constantly.

The points at the screen.

YORK (CONT'D)  
Yea. Yea. The clothes are the same  
both times. I got it. What else do  
you have?

SECURITY CHIEF  
Well, we backtraced where the overlay  
coding was uploaded. It came from  
the southeast, but it bounced around  
nodes so much we can't even pinpoint  
the real state. However, it seems  
to be related to a building that  
burned last night... with an illegal  
computer lab in the basement.

(looking hard at York)  
Sir, the coding is everywhere and it  
has changed into a thousand different  
(MORE)

SECURITY CHIEF (CONT'D)  
forms, so we can't purge it from the system. There is also no way we can tell what face will be showing up next. The clothes are common, so looking for someone based solely on what he is wearing will be extremely difficult.

York rubs his temples as his jaw muscles FLEX.

YORK

Gahl couldn't do this on his own.  
Find out who else helped him and  
round them up.

SECURITY CHIEF  
What about Ms. York?

YORK

You just worry about my orders.  
Other people that will see to her.

INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Jorge sits behind the counter, reading a worn coffee table book. He yawns slightly as Gahl walks up.

Gahl looks around, taking in the store contents and Jorge.

JORGE  
Morning, friend.

GAHL  
You're not a digital zombie.

JORGE  
Sorry?

GAHL  
Nothing. Hey, do you have any history books covering the last thirty years?

Jorge shakes his head sadly.

JORGE  
Nope.  
(lowering his voice)  
Well, nothing with any truth.

GAHL  
What do you have?

JORGE

Other than a few party-issued commemorative editions, there hasn't been anything published in a long time. All of this is pre-regime stuff they ignore. They got rid of the offensive stuff long ago.

GAHL

So, what's been happening the last thirty years?

JORGE

It's better if I show you.

Jorge motions for Gahl to follow.

INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - BACKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jorge thumps the wall with a knuckle.

A small panel POPS open showing a small cubby with a DVD inside.

Jorge grabs the DVD.

JORGE

Nobody's made these in years. Most people couldn't tell you what it is.

Jorge opens a cabinet. Inside is a small cathode-ray tube TV and a cheap DVD player. He inserts the DVD.

JORGE (CONT'D)

This'll help clear things up. Just come on out when you're done.

Jorge exits, closing the door behind him.

Gahl grabs a old folding chair and sits in front of the TV.

CLOSE ON TV

The title "Transformulution" APPEARS.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) Images of riots and police shooting people.
- B) Urban warfare between fighters dressed in street clothes.
- C) Distorted American symbols overlaid with totalitarian state imagery.

ANGLE ON GAHL

Light from the TV illuminates him as he stares mesmerized.

A narrator DRONES ON.

INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Jorge leans against the counter, talking with Luddite man.

LUDDITE MAN  
Is he watching it?

JORGE  
Yea, but will he get it? He's so disoriented, who knows what he'll believe?

LUDDITE MAN  
He's trained to fight behind enemy lines.

JORGE  
He was never prepped for this kinda mission. We don't even know what they did to him all those years. He could be about to amp up and start killing people.

LUDDITE MAN  
I'll bet my life he won't.

JORGE  
You're betting mine, too.

LUDDITE MAN  
He'll adapt... and we need him.

JORGE  
Matt's given him some electronic cover. Somehow he gives him a different face with every camera.

LUDDITE MAN  
Did he also think to change Gahl's clothes?

Jorge gets a blank look.

JORGE  
Oops.

Luddite man walks towards the door.

LUDDITE MAN  
Keep me in the loop.

EXT. DECREPIT ALLEY - DAY

Martina SQUEEZES through a boarded up door in a vacant building.

INT. VACANT BUILDING - DAY

Martina uses a small flashlight as she goes to a wall and dislodges a loose brick, then another, and another.

EXT. DECREPIT ALLEY - DAY

Martina squeezes back through the boarded up door and carefully pulls a BACKPACK through. She quickly puts the backpack on and hurries off.

INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - DAY - LATER

Gahl exits the backroom.

Jorge dozes, but starts awake as Gahl walks up.

JORGE  
(groggy)  
Well?

GAHL  
What the hell happened while I was...  
away.

JORGE  
The video said it all.

GAHL  
A dictatorship?

JORGE  
You all never truly believed it could happen. Not here.

GAHL  
You all? Are you special?

JORGE  
I wasn't born until after it happened.  
So, don't blame me.

GAHL  
Uh, is there a veterans' home here...  
somewhere... maybe?

Jorge nods.

JORGE

Yea, friend. When you leave the building, hang a right...

EXT. NEARLY EMPTY SIDEWALK - DAY

A decrepit part of the city. Occasional people talk gibberish and gesture.

A scruffy stray dog approaches. It shies away from everybody.

Gahl kneels a couple of meters away.

The dog wags its tail and assumes a submissive posture.

SUDDENLY, a large autonomous aerial vehicle APPEARS overhead. It zaps the dog, which collapses.

The dog's tail wags reflexively as its eyes fix and glaze.

A grapple SHOOTS out of the aerial vehicle and RETRIEVES the dog's body, then WHOOSHES away.

Gahl stares in shock. The few people around are oblivious.

INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - BASEMENT - DAY

Jorge hurries downstairs.

MATT

Is he gone?

JORGE

Yea. Hey, I was thinking. Does your algorithimthingie change Gahl's clothes as well as his face?

Matt gets a sheepish look.

MATT

No.

JORGE

Fix it... See, that's why I'm upstairs and you're in the basement.

EXT. VETERANS' HOME - DAY - LATER

Gahl climbs the steps leading to the entrance. Bodmod leader appears at the top.

Gahl glances around for potential threats.

BODMOD LEADER  
Please don't be alarmed, Mr. Gahl.  
I only want to speak with you.

Gahl subtly assumes a defensive posture.

GAHL  
Should I know you?

BODMOD LEADER  
No, but I assure you I am a friend.  
Notice I am not jacked up.

GAHL  
That's debatable. In my time, "jacked up" meant something else entirely.

BODMOD LEADER  
Let me have a moment of your time.

GAHL  
Better hurry. I get pissy when I'm tired and hungry.

BODMOD LEADER  
Your service is still needed...

GAHL  
(overlapping)  
No way in hell I'm working for a dictatorship.

BODMOD LEADER  
I'm not asking you to. We are working to replace it... quietly, in the shadows... with a "Reunited States." We need soldiers who know how to fight... that's you.

GAHL  
Not interested. You're running out of time and wasting mine. Better hurry before I get physical.

BODMOD LEADER  
You are almost invisible to everybody and everything. You're perfect. You can be in the shadows, helping us lay the groundwork to overthrow the Presidium and the Polity Council.

GAHL  
Do you really expect me to join you without even knowing who you are? Leave me alone.

Gahl moves past Bodmod Leader, who continues talking.

BODMOD LEADER  
You will never fit into this  
abomination of a society. It's  
unsustainable and it's destroying  
humanity. We need you... Chief...  
Eric.

Gahl storms inside, leaving Bodmod leader standing alone.

INT. VETERANS' HOME - LOBBY - DAY

Run down, seedy.

An old man grousing at Gahl as he approaches the front desk.

The RECEPTIONIST doesn't make eye contact as she hands him a worn key with a faded number tag.

GAHL  
I didn't even...

The receptionist distractedly points.

RECEPTIONIST  
(overlapping)  
Second floor. You'll see the door  
from the top of the stairs.

Gahl shrugs and makes for the stairs.

INT. VETERANS' HOME - SECOND FLOOR HALL - DUSK

Luddite man confronts Gahl at the top of the stairs. He holds up his empty hands.

Gahl wrist-locks him and quickly searches for weapons. Satisfied, Gahl spins luddite man back around.

GAHL  
What is with you people?! Somebody stopped me on the way in, too.

LUDDITE MAN  
I'm not with the government. In fact, I'm trying to overthrow it.

GAHL  
That's what the schmuck outside said. Are you wanting to restore the US too?

LUDDITE MAN

That which has been destroyed can never be remade as it was. We want to bring down the dictatorship, but leave its replacement up to the people... Once we free them from this technological slavery.

GAHL

Well, that's a new one. I suppose you want me to join you too.

LUDDITE MAN

I doubt you will. I will help you just the same. In doing so, perhaps you'll come around.

GAHL

Why should I trust you?

LUDDITE MAN

You have no choice. All sides will first try to recruit you, then kill you to prevent their enemies from doing so.

GAHL

(menacingly)

"All" sides? Does that mean you or your people will try to kill me if I don't join you?

LUDDITE MAN

No, of course not. We're the good guys.

GAHL

I suggest you leave now.

LUDDITE MAN

You have no idea what you are up against. Just stay out of sight.

Luddite man hurries downstairs.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Martina hurries along as she reaches behind her to the backpack.

INT. VETERANS' HOME - ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Fully clothed, Gahl dozes on a twin-sized bed in a small, undecorated room.

There is a subtle NOISE O.S.

Gahl's eyes POP open. He gets up quietly.

The door BURSTS open. Hall LIGHTS silhouette a BIG man.

Gahl launches at him.

Big man is fast and strong, but uncoordinated.

Gahl dodges and blocks, landing hard punches and kicks.

GAHL

Enough of this, bastard!

Big man goes down HARD, but quickly struggles to get up.

Gahl pounces, snapping big man's neck with a CRACK.

Gahl spins as...

... a winded Martina enters. She aims a pistol-like device at the big man.

MARTINA

(amazed)

You beat him by yourself?

GAHL

I've had practice. What the hell are you doing here?

MARTINA

I... I told you I was going to check up on you.

Martina yelps.

Big man tries to STAND. His head wobbles on a broken neck like fuzzy dice on a mirror.

Martina "fires" at big man. There is no noise or light.

The big man SPASMS and JERKS as he COLLAPSES.

WISPS of smoke waft from Gahl's collar and breast pocket. His card falls to the floor as he hurriedly sheds his jacket. The card slowly MELTS.

MARTINA (CONT'D)

Cow farts! I should have gotten rid of the microdes sooner.

GAHL

Microdes?

MARTINA  
Uh, micro devices.

GAHL  
Ah, that's how you tracked me. You  
didn't put them on my clothes, so  
they were on me when I left the  
hospital... Doc what's-his-face is  
one of you.

MARTINA  
Good reasoning.

WISPS of smoke waft off big man.

Gahl looks closer.

GAHL  
What's his deal?

MARTINA  
He a bodmod... and a pretty advanced  
one.

GAHL  
How about speaking English, damn it?

MARTINA  
Body modified person. What you used  
to call...

GAHL  
(overlapping)  
A cyborg. Why not just say that?

There is a NOISE O.S.

Martina motions to Gahl.

MARTINA  
Come on. We have to get out of here  
before more show up. I only have a  
few shots with this.

INT. VETERANS' HOME - SECOND FLOOR HALL - NIGHT

Elderly veterans warily come out of rooms. One wears a old,  
dingy Army veteran's ball cap with sergeant-major rank  
(SERGEANT-MAJOR).

GAHL  
(to Martina)  
Hold up a sec.

Gahl approaches sergeant-major.

GAHL (CONT'D)

Sergeant-major, can you spare a jacket  
for a veteran that's been on ice for  
thirty years?

Sergeant-major looks him up and down, then disappears inside his room.

BEAT.

Sergeant-major returns and tosses Gahl a well-worn, but serviceable jacket.

SERGEANT-MAJOR

Hooah. Give 'em hell , soldier.

Gahl smiles and nods before he and Martina flee downstairs.

EXT. VETERANS' HOME - NIGHT

Gahl and Martina flee into the night.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - UPPER FLOOR - NIGHT

Two men watch from a DARKENED room.

BARTON (V.O.)

Negative. Follow them, but do not interfere.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Gahl cautiously follows Martina.

Martina grabs Gahl's hand and pulls him into an alley.

GAHL

If you're trying to be subtle, you're failing miserably.

Martina gives him a look and fishes a chem-light from a pocket.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The two watchers look into an empty, dead-end alley.

INT. SANITARY (STORM) SEWER

In the ORANGE glow of the chem-light, Martina and Gahl wade through a nearly flooded tunnel. A rusty, spiderweb-covered door APPEARS out of the darkness.

INT. YORK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Burton strides in.

York turns from a screen displaying images of artificial human body parts.

YORK

Have you seen these?

Burton glances at them.

BURTON

They look like prosthetics. Why?

YORK

They appear to be the last gen artificial replacement parts. Once we began regrowing limbs, they became obsolete. So, why are these so heavily enhanced? Somebody with parts like these would have the strength of a gorilla... if they still existed.

BURTON

Could they be prototypes parts for drones?

YORK

I found them in the home appliance division.

BURTON

I'll look into it... Surveillance just got a hit on Martina. She's in Dallas.

YORK

Dallas?! What the hell is she doing there?

BURTON

Don't know. Just thought you would want to know.

YORK

Damn right I do. I'll take it from here. I need you to look into those artificial body parts. Something smells and I don't like it. There is too much weird stuff happening now. I need some answers.

Burton nods and exits.

INT. MAINTENANCE TUNNEL

They're both soaked.

Martina squeegees water from her hair.

Gahl shoulders the maintenance door closed.

GAHL

Please tell me that was only rain runoff.

MARTINA

Mostly. Come on. We're almost to a safe house.

INT. BODMOD FACILITY - NIGHT

Bodmod leader sits at a desk talking to the air.

BODMOD LEADER

Clearly. That just means we advance our schedule. It was always too slow for your liking anyway... Can't wait to make your move, can you? Don't worry. We'll be in complete control soon enough. Out here.

INT. DALLAS - DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Arva sags slightly as the last patient leaves.

HEAD NURSE looks at him with a cold expression.

ARVA

Is it always this busy?

HEAD NURSE

We're never fully staffed like where you came from.

ARVA

I guess this will take some getting used to.

HEAD NURSE

(suspicious)

Is your party membership in good standing?

ARVA

Would I be allowed to practice medicine if it weren't?

HEAD NURSE

Of course not. It just seems strange someone with your credentials would want to come here.

ARVA

I realize we just met and this is only the end of my first day, but you need to mind your place. I owe you neither an explanation nor a reason for anything I do. While I am here observing and assisting, you will give me the proper respect due my rank and position. Are we clear?

HEAD NURSE

Yes, doctor.

Anger darkens her face as she exits.

Arva breathes a sigh of relief.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

They enter the room.

Martina locks and bolts the door.

Gahl is obviously irritated.

GAHL

I needed a shower, but not a freezing one. Why the bath?

MARTINA

It's a trick we use to get by thermal trackers and other devices. The huge amount of cold water helps mask heat signatures.

GAHL

Can't they just use satellite imagery to track people?

MARTINA

Not anymore. The amount of junk floating around up there makes low altitude space flight almost impossible. There are some older satellites at higher altitudes, but nothing can get through to repair them. So, the regime has to rely on ground-based surveillance these days.

GAHL

That's good to know. Where's your bathroom?

Martina nods at a hallway as she peels off her soaked jacket.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - YORK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

York strides with a heavy tread into his office. He waves a hand and his video screen TURNS ON.

YORK

Danyluk.

Danyluk APPEARS on-screen looking very unhappy.

DANYLUK

Yes, sir.

YORK

Time to redeem yourself. I want you in Dallas as soon as possible. Martina's there. I think Gahl is too. Bring them back to me... and don't screw it up.

DANYLUK

Yes, sir.

YORK

I need Gahl alive. Anybody that gets in the way, do whatever.

DANYLUK

What about your daughter?

YORK

Anybody.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - NIGHT

Gahl walks into the living room, lost in thought.

MARTINA (O.S.)

(from the kitchen)

You hungry? I'm making dinner.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gahl enters to see...

Martina's shapely rear protrudes from an open refrigerator.

Gahl momentarily gets a gleam in his eyes, then refocuses.

MARTINA

What would you like to drink? I  
have soy milk, fauxcoff...

GAHL

(muttering)

Fauxcoff? Sounds like an insult.

MARTINA

Hmm?

GAHL

Nothing. Where are the plates?

MARTINA

Second cabinet on the right.

Gahl casually retrieves a couple of cheap plastic plates.  
As he takes them to the table, he looks at her appreciatively.

GAHL

Do you have any real coffee and maybe  
some milk from a cow?

Martina bumps the refrigerator door closed with a hip.

MARTINA

Nope. Those were all banned after  
the transformulution. Cow farts  
harmed the environment and milk isn't  
good for you. At least that's what  
they tell the people.

Gahl scowls.

GAHL

What? Your glorious government can't  
make milk from genetically modified  
bacteria or grow coffee in a  
greenhouse?

Martina places slotted trays on the table and peels back the  
opaque plastic covering them.

MARTINA

I'm sure they can. Personally, I  
think they do make that stuff for  
elite consumption. The rest of us  
make do with artificial stuff.

Gahl leans forward to examine cubes of varied-colored "food."

GAHL

Great. Top of the food chain and we  
can't even eat real meat.

MARTINA

We may have been at the top, but we're seeing evidence human development is stopping, if not reversing.

(see his hesitancy)

Relax. The food's been tested, so we know it's safe... Anyway, our scientists think the reliance on the virtual world is causing people to lose mental functions. Brain functions are atrophying because of digital dementia and other conditions caused by the implants.

GAHL

That's... disturbing.

MARTINA

You don't know the half of it. I don't want to talk about it now. Hurry up and eat. I'm cold and I want to warm up with you.

GAHL

Wah?

Martina smiles with a gleam in her eye.

INT. DALLAS - DOCTOR'S OFFICE - SUPPLY ROOM - NIGHT

Arva looks through shelves and shoves blood transfusion supplies into a small zippered bag.

Head nurse walks in and REACTS to him being there unexpectedly.

HEAD NURSE

May I help you, doctor?

Arva recovers quickly.

ARVA

Actually, yes. I need to see your inventory list and recent orders. There are a lot of items we may need, but don't seem to have.

Head nurse softens for a moment.

HEAD NURSE

We are chronically short of a number of items and never receive them no matter how many times we place an order.

ARVA

I may be able to help. I can't evaluate you all fairly if you aren't given the tools to do your jobs.

HEAD NURSE

Thank you.

She looks on a shelf and grabs SOMETHING. She pauses at the door and turns to Arva.

HEAD NURSE (CONT'D)

I may have been too quick to judge you, doctor.

She exits.

As soon as the door closes, Arva hurriedly fills the bag.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING - DAY

The air circulation system Hisses.

Gahl and Martina lie in a tangle of limbs and covers.

Martina nuzzles his chest and sighs.

MARTINA

That was nice. Thank you.

GAHL

I'm a little out of practice.

Martina smiles and raises up on an elbow to look at him.

MARTINA

Do you ever wonder how we got to this point?

GAHL

Circumstances, I guess.

MARTINA

No, I mean humanity.

GAHL

(smiling)

I know what you meant. I'm the wrong person to be asking that question. In my mind, I was on a combat patrol in some third-world shithole a month ago. I just woke up to find my kids are scattered who-knows-where and my parents are digital zombies.

(MORE)

GAHL (CONT'D)

Even my grandma is all but dead.  
I'm trained to lead soldiers in war,  
but the Army I was part of isn't  
even a historical footnote. So, I'm  
stuck looking for a new direction  
and purpose. I can't even jack up  
like everybody else... which reminds  
me. Why aren't you?

MARTINA

The official reason or the real one?

GAHL

The real one, of course.

MARTINA

I'm what the authorities would call  
the ultimate counter revolutionary.  
I did not want the implants on  
religious grounds.

GAHL

I can understand that. My parents  
were kind of indifferent, but my  
grandpa was a fire-and-brimstone  
Baptist. He was my mentor and  
encouraged me to enlist, if I wanted  
to. He was a vet himself and told  
me before I left on my last tour  
that he respected me... and loved  
me. I got this tattoo...

Gahl points to his bare arm.

GAHL (CONT'D)

... which is gone. Why do I have to  
lose everything?!

MARTINA

What's wrong?

GAHL

I know I was wounded real bad before  
they put me in hibernation. I thought  
they were dreams, but I remember my  
leg was gone... and there they both  
are. Good as ever and not even a  
scar. I'm even young again.

Martina sits up ABRUPTLY.

MARTINA

Did you say young again?

GAHL

Yea. I'm a good twenty years younger.

MARTINA

They didn't just use regenerative stasis to heal your wounds. Accelerated stem cells and genetic recoding! That's got to be it. Bastard! I can't believe he did it.

GAHL

I don't understand.

MARTINA

They modified your DNA to accelerate healing, but they also altered you to self-regenerate... You are mutating into something else. I can't believe I didn't see it, but I never knew you before you were healed... you're young.

GAHL

They harvested my own cells to repair me. What's the problem?

MARTINA

Immortality is an abomination and an affront to God! He gave us a finite life to live. It is up to us to make the most of it.

Martina lies back as she sobs slightly.

Gahl tries to touch her, but she pulls away.

MARTINA (CONT'D)

Please don't.

GAHL

That's funny. Your beliefs don't preclude sex outside of marriage.

She glares at him.

MARTINA

That's unfair!

GAHL

Well, you just met me.

MARTINA

I... I need to leave.

Martina gets up and starts getting dressed.

Gahl gets up and puts on his pants.

Martina stops momentarily to admire his physique, then gets a sad look and starts packing her small bag.

Gahl hurries into the bathroom.

GAHL (O.S.)  
Give me a minute to get dressed.

Martina wipes away tears as she reaches into her backpack and tosses another EMP pistol on the bed.

Gahl walks backs in, shirt on, socks on, shoes in hand.

Martina puts on her backpack and exits.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Gahl follows her to the door, where she pauses.

Martina holds up a quarter-sized, skin-tone colored device.

MARTINA  
I need to put this on you.

GAHL  
(wary)  
What is it?

She splits the device into two parts and sticks half on each of his temples.

MARTINA  
A fauxjack. It lets you link into the system, but only gives sight and sound. It'll also help you blend in better. Because it's not an implant, it has to put out a lot of power to tap into the right brain regions. Anybody else would probably get brain cancer, but I bet you're immune. It's untraceable and constantly jumps nodes, so nobody should be able to use it to find your location... not even me... in case I'm compromised.

She puts a hand on his chest and looks into his eyes for a moment, then kisses him lightly on the lips.

Without looking back, Martina quietly leaves, closing the door behind her.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY - MINUTES LATER

Fully dressed, Gahl sits in a chair, moping, as he examines the EMP pistol.

There is a KNOCK on the door.

Gahl aims the pistol at the door, and warily approaches it. He opens the door a crack and peeks outside.

EXT. SAFEHOUSE - MORNING - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Bodmod leader stands there looking slightly uncomfortable.

Gahl steps out, tucking SOMETHING into the small of his back.

BODMOD LEADER

I saw your lady friend leave, so I  
know I didn't interrupt anything.  
May I come in?

GAHL

Sure. I'm leaving anyway. Oh, and  
don't bother watching this place. I  
won't be coming back.

Gahl closes the door and walks off.

BODMOD LEADER

I'll walk with you.

EXT. DALLAS - SIDEWALK - DAY

Danyluk looks haughty and completely self-assured as he walks with two übermen. He wears an earpiece.

DANYLUK

(to the air)

No, do not grab her yet. Just keep monitoring her movements. As soon as she links up with the target, let me know. I'm doing my own surveillance on another target.

EXT. RUN-DOWN STREET - DAY

Cracked and buckled sidewalks. Abandoned buildings with gaping windows

Gahl and Bodmod leader walk together almost casually.

GAHL

So, I have to put up this false front  
and can never live a normal life.

BODMOD LEADER

I don't know how much your doctors told you, but your condition affects less than one-thousanthd of one-percent of the population. It isn't economical to find a cure, so you cannot join the utopia anyway.

Gahl snorts in derision and waves a hand around.

GAHL

Virtually all of the sheeple in this "utopia" are brain-dead and can't function without their jacks.

BODMOD LEADER

As I told you before, we can restore the United States to what it was. That's why we need people like you.

GAHL

Someone recently told me that once something is destroyed, it can never be rebuilt like it was. Thanks anyway.

Gahl walks away.

Bodmod leader calls out as the distance between them grows.

BODMOD LEADER

It'll happen! With or without you!

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Martina hurries without running.

MATT (V.O.)

Smart move tagging the pistol. If he stays on his current heading, he should emerge near Transformulution Square.

MARTINA

Just get me there ahead of him. Things are coming to a head.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING - DAY

Gahl ducks inside an open doorway.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - DAY

Gahl climbs over rubble, picking his way into the interior.

He faces through an interior doorway as he touches his temple.

GAHL'S POV

... of the interior overlaid with a semi-transparent interface. Gahl reaches for "objects" and they RESPOND.

RESUME SCENE

Gahl tentatively gestures and taps the air. PAUSE.

MIRIAM (V.O.)

Hello?

GAHL

Miriam?

MIRIAM (V.O.)

Eric? I didn't think you could get jacked up.

GAHL

Miriam, I'm not... getting a good signal, so I can only hear you.

MIRIAM (V.O.)

Why are you calling? I told you I've moved on.

GAHL

Yea, I got it. I just wanted to ask why before I leave for good.

MIRIAM (V.O.)

Why what? Why I gave up?

GAHL

Yes.

MIRIAM (V.O.)

I couldn't take the loneliness even before we divorced. I cheated on you, but the guilt was too much. Then they told me you died. So, I started doing virtual stuff. Now, it gives me all I need. You're part of the old world. I can't live there with you.

Gahl gets a disgusted look.

GAHL

Really? The dildo in your bathroom says... I'm sorry.

(MORE)

GAHL (CONT'D)  
I hope you find whatever passes for  
happiness these days. Good-bye,  
Miriam. I'll never contact you again.

Gahl taps his temple and sags momentarily.

A NOISE snaps him alert.

Two bodmods race from the far side straight towards him.

Gahl whips out the EMP pistol and "shoots" them.

The lead bodmod tumbles in a heap and flops around like a  
beheaded chicken.

The rear bodmod tumbles as well, but struggles to get back  
up.

Gahl "fires" again.

Nothing happens.

Gahl tosses the pistol.

The second bodmod, face drooping on one side, gets up and  
lurches towards Gahl.

Gahl foot sweeps the bodmod, sending it to the floor again.

On the way down, the bodmod SLICES at Gahl's leg with a blade.

Bodmod leader tears through the doorway with several bodmods  
on his heels.

BODMOD LEADER  
Enough! Both of you, stand down!

Gahl steps back. He looks down.

ANGLE ON GAHL'S LEG

The gash CLOSES from each end like a ziploc® seal closing.

RESUME SCENE

Gahl glares at the BODMODS coming towards him.

As Bodmod leader approaches, he motions to the two downed  
bodmods. Other bodmods carry the downed ones away. Several  
more bodmods enter.

Gahl picks up a length of pipe and takes a fighting stance.

GAHL

Who's next?

BODMOD LEADER

They were only supposed to grab you,  
not try to kill you...

The Bodmod leader glances at Gahl's healed leg.

BODMOD LEADER (CONT'D)

... which would have been more  
difficult than we thought.

Gahl steps to the side without pain or limp.

GAHL

Care to try?

Bodmod leader smiles.

BODMOD LEADER

Damn, you can heal rapido-like. I'd  
like my doctors to examine you, but  
you probably won't consent to that,  
will you?

GAHL

No.

DANYLUK (O.S.)

He isn't yours. He's ours.

Danyluk and several übermen come in another entrance. They stop opposite the bodmods.

Gahl remains to one side, not directly in front of either group.

Both sides glare at each other in a face-off.

BODMOD LEADER

He's not your kind.

DANYLUK

You think he's yours.

GAHL

Look, assholes. I can speak for  
myself. What do you want?

Danyluk glances at Gahl.

## DANYLUK

When we remade you with a stem-cell treatment, you were half-way to being one of us anyway. You join us and we'll have the edge over these tinkertoys and the government. We can take power.

## BODMOD LEADER

(to Danyluk)

You fool. We are already taking power... from the inside and there's nothing you can do to stop it. Besides, he's no more like you than he is like us. His only value to you is the healing he can provide. And don't think you're walking out of here with him. I have more men outside.

## ÜBERMAN LEADER

So do I.

Danyluk jumps at Bodmod leader. They meet head-on.

Both sides tear into each other in a swirling, bloody melee.

Gahl slips out unnoticed.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - YORK'S OFFICE - DAY

York and Burton engage in an intense meeting.

## BURTON

I understand that, but the whole southern quadrant is flaring up. It's really hot in Dallas. We don't know if Danyluk has been compromised or it is simply a communications glitch. Either way, one of us should be there with security forces at the ready.

## YORK

Well, shit. I can't leave. The SECGEN nominated me for a seat on the Polity Council... and the council approved it. So, when I'm not here, I have to be in my council seat.

## BURTON

Congratulations. You are one step closer to becoming SECGEN yourself.

YORK

Thanks, but hold your congratulations.  
 This is becoming an all-or-nothing  
 deal. If I fall, we're all screwed.  
 That jackass Danyluk was never suited  
 for this. Why do you think you have  
 always been my deputy?

Burton smiles sheepishly.

BURTON

Thanks. I'll do my best.

YORK

I hope so for both our sakes. Now  
 get your ass to Dallas. Take as  
 many men as you need. Just keep me  
 in the loop. I'm sick of surprises.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Danyluk flees with several übermen. All are bloody, but functional.

Two übermen run up from the opposite direction.

DANYLUK

Where the hell were you? It was a  
 stalemate. You could have tipped  
 the balance in our favor...

One of the übermen smiles.

DANYLUK (CONT'D)

You found her?!

(to the others)

Go back and have the labs readied.  
 With her, we'll get Gahl yet.

EXT. PARENTS' APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Gahl "piggy-backs" on another man entering the front.

INT. PARENTS' APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

Gahl casually passes the front desk and jogs up the stairs.

The clerk gestures, his eyes flick around, not seeing Gahl.

INT. PARENTS' APARTMENT - DAY

Gahl's father gestures and talks softly as he opens the door.

FATHER

Who...

GAHL

It's me, dad. Can I come in for a minute?

FATHER

Oh, it's Eric. Hey, son. Sure, come in... Is something wrong?

GAHL

(surprised)

You haven't seen me for thirty years and you ask if something is wrong. Are you so disconnected from reality, you don't see that's crazy?

FATHER

No, I'm connected. In fact, my signal strength is excellent.

Gahl's father shuffles into the room.

Gahl hangs back.

Gahl's father sits down in his chair and continues gesturing.

MOTHER

Is someone here, honey?

FATHER

It's Eric. He's back.

MOTHER

That's nice. Would you like a drink, sweetie?

GAHL

No, mom...

MOTHER

Which reminds me. A sensor on the fridge is off. It called a tech, but I didn't confirm the service call, so they canceled it.

FATHER

I got the note too. I already confirmed it. See.

MOTHER

Oh.

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)

Eric? Is that you?

Gahl quickly walks down the hallway.

INT. PARENTS' APARTMENT - GRANDMOTHER'S ROOM - DAY

Gahl peeks in the door.

His grandmother sits in an old style glider resting under a shawl. She beams when he enters.

GRANDMOTHER

My boy. It is so good to see you.

Gahl tears up slightly as he kisses her cheek.

She wraps her arms around him and holds him for a second.

As he stands up, she sniffs slightly, but smiles.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

I remembered you were here. I don't know how long this will last, so I have to speak my piece quickly... I can't stand living in this abomination of a world. Thankfully, I'm not going to last too much longer.

GAHL

Grammy, don't talk like that. You can't go. I need you now. You are all I have left.

GRANDMOTHER

Everybody dies, Eric. Everybody. It is what you do in life that defines your time here. You can be at the mercy of events like your parents or you can try to get in front like your grandfather...

She peeks around him towards the door.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

(softly)

After they told us you died, he became very active politically, especially after the transformulution. He died during a protest for veterans' rights. The authorities claimed it was a heart attack, but he never had heart trouble before.

GAHL

What can I do? I can barely survive here much less lead a revolution.

## GRANDMOTHER

I may be losing my mind, but I can see. What I see is a warrior who led men in war. If anybody can overthrow those heartless bastards, it's you. You have to fight...

(pointing)

Please hand me that jewelry box.

Gahl grabs a JEWELRY BOX off a dresser and hands it to her.

She takes it and dumps out the contents on her lap, then pulls something inside.

## GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

Your grandfather got this box in Yugoslavia when it existed. It has a secret compartment... here we go.

Something clicks and she pulls out a SILVER STAR MEDAL.

## GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

This is his silver star for one of the wars he fought in.

She reaches in the box again and pulls out another.

## GAHL

He earned two silver stars?

## GRANDMOTHER

No, honey. This is yours. One of your teammates gave it to your grandfather after you supposedly died. He told us how you delayed the enemy long enough to get your men out... They thought you died in the hospital.

Gahl stares into space for a moment.

## GAHL

I remember losing my legs, but I woke up with normal limbs.

## GRANDMOTHER

They grew you back together. Make the most of it.

## GAHL

How?

## GRANDMOTHER

Your grandfather believed in you.

(MORE)

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

I believe in you. Your training and smarts will show you how to overthrow this evil we live under...

(cups his face)

Honey, I will always love you.

Gahl chokes up... just a little.

She touches her forehead to his, tears stream down both of their cheeks.

GAHL

I love you so much, Grammy. And I miss grandpa so much right now.

GRANDMOTHER

Me too, sweetie. Me too. But don't dwell on that. Whether you believe in heaven or not, it doesn't matter. Even oblivion is better than this living hell. But I know I will see my love again.

(backs away slightly)

Now, go and don't you dare look back. There's nothing left for you here. Focus on what you need to do.

Gahl embraces her one last time.

She smiles and pats his cheek through tears.

EXT. PARENTS' APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Gahl comes down the steps, determination on his face.

Luddite man moves to intercept him.

LUDDITE MAN

Ah, Mr. Gahl. I hope your family is well.

GAHL

Actually, they're all dead. Only one of them realizes it. What do you want?

LUDDITE MAN

I think you now see that this hideous society is unsustainable. We need you to...

GAHL

(overlapping)

I told you. I'm not interested.

LUDDITE MAN

Interested or not, you're in it.  
You are already off-grid and we can  
easily make you invisible to the  
eyes and ears of the regime.

GAHL

And do what? Wet work? You want me  
to whack a few people? I've thought  
about doing that to you.

Luddite man loses his smile.

LUDDITE MAN

I am not the enemy here. Until  
recently, you were in a holding tank  
being used for graft and transplant  
material. In a few days, your  
transformation will be complete and  
you'll grow strong... very strong.

GAHL

How do you know that? Were you one  
of the geeks who experimented on me?

Gahl steps toward him with malice.

LUDDITE MAN

No, I didn't. I had nothing to do  
with it. The regime did. I am trying  
to get you to see reason. I won't  
do anything to betray you. Please  
do the same for me.

GAHL

Fine. I won't do anything to you...  
yet. But don't get in my way.

Luddite man steps aside.

Gahl leaves.

EXT. CROWDED STREET - DAY

In the b.g., Luddite man discretely follows Gahl.

Beyond Luddite Man, THREE übermen watch from a doorway.

Gahl rubs his jaw and winces. He stops in front of a mirrored  
store window and opens his mouth as he leans in close.

ECU INSIDE GAHL'S MOUTH

A wisdom tooth partially pokes through the gum.

RESUME SCENE

Gahl pulls back in shock.

GAHL

I had them pulled forty years ago.

In the b.g. Martina frantically pushes through the crowd towards him.

SUDDENLY, Danyluk reaches out of a doorway and YANKS her inside.

Luddite Man DARTS into a doorway, an übermen on his heels.

Gahl spins around.

There is a sea of people moving in orderly lines, except...

Two übermen move toward him with purpose.

Gahl darts into the SLOW moving vehicle traffic.

The übermen follow.

The light turns RED. Traffic stops.

INT. CAR - DAY

In the driver's seat, business man gestures and talks softly.

Outside, Gahl fumbles for a handle. Finally, he kicks in the side window and slides inside NASCAR-style.

Business man STARTS and retreats to the passenger seat.

EXT. CROWDED STREET - DAY

The übermen rush toward the car.

INT. CAR - DAY

Gahl attempts to "take the wheel."

The controls don't respond.

Gahl taps lights and stylized images, but nothing happens.

EXT. CROWDED STREET - DAY

Übermen #1 grabs at Gahl through the broken window.

Gahl yanks him head-first into the edge of the car roof and punches him HARD in the throat.

Überman #1, face bleeding heavily, grabs at his throat, GASPING. He collapses between the traffic lanes.

INT. CAR - DAY

Überman #2 tries to open the passenger door.

Gahl gets out.

EXT. CROWDED STREET - DAY

Gahl runs for it.

Überman #2 tries to follow just as...

Traffic resumes, quickly picking up speed.

Überman #2 tries to dart between cars, but is run over.

PAUSE.

A BLOODY, FLOPPING corpse emerges from underneath the vehicle.

Alarms BLARE and traffic SCREECHES to a halt.

INT. BOOKSTORE - BASEMENT - DAY

SCREENS show Gahl getting away.

Matt smiles as he looks at Jorge.

JORGE

That was too close.

MATT

I think he could have taken out the second guy too.

JORGE

Not worth the risk. Good job using the traffic to stop him.

MATT

Too easy. I just turned off the proximity and collision sensors on all of the... Oops.

(tapping keys)

I forgot to turn them back on. Don't want a little old lady getting splattered.

Matt gestures.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Gahl forces himself to slow down and walk normal.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Danyluk carries a squirming Martina through an alley.

At the far end, Burton appears.

Danyluk smiles evilly.

A squad of armed security men gather around Burton.

Danyluk throws Martina to the ground and runs away.

Martina lies semi-conscious as Burton walks up.

Several security men start after Danyluk.

BURTON

No! We'll get him later. Take her to lock-up. Then broadcast a bulletin on all channels that we captured an insurgent and post her picture. That might draw him in.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER - YORK'S OFFICE - DAY

York looks at documents on the large screen. A flashing symbol appears.

York scowls, then gestures.

A STILL of Arva appears. The CAPTION reads, "Updated location - Dallas, Texas."

YORK

He's supposed to be in Alaska. Open reassignment orders... Arva, Jerald.

An official document appears, with Arva's ID photo.

YORK (CONT'D)

Assignment Dallas? Med building  
3141. Signed by... me! Damn it!  
Martina and Arva are together!

York gestures madly.

YORK (CONT'D)

(sputtering)

Why didn't I see this? Well, they made their own misery.

York STABS the air.

Burton APPEARS on a screen with BUILDINGS and TRAFFIC in the b.g.

BURTON

Yes?

YORK

Arva's there. Add him to the list  
and order a pick-up ASAP. I'm sending  
his location now.

BURTON

Yes, sir. We have Martina, but  
Danyluk got away.

YORK

(somber)

What did you do with her?

BURTON

She's on her way to a holding cell.  
If you want her dead, you'll have to  
get someone else.

York is nonplussed at Burton's insubordination.

YORK

No, not unless it becomes necessary.  
Keep her there. As for that dipshit  
Danyluk, kill him on sight. I've  
had enough of him.

EXT. CROWDED STREET - DAY

Gahl looks around, getting his bearings. Frustrated, he  
taps his temple and casually enters the flow.

GAHL'S POV

The interface SUPERIMPOSES over the crowds flowing past him.  
Gahl gestures like everybody else.

GAHL

(softly)

Contact... Arva, Jerald.

The image FRITZES momentarily. STATIC O.S., then VOICE #3.

VOICE #3 (V.O.)

Searching... Do you wish to speak  
with Dr. Arva or view his location?

GAHL  
Speak... Bethesda is too far to visit.

VOICE #3 (V.O.)  
Dr. Arva's current location is Dallas,  
not Bethesda, resident.

Gahl looks both surprised and relieved.

GAHL  
Location then.

EXT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - PARKING LOT - DAY

Officers rush to load into numerous personnel carrier-like vehicles.

The vehicles PEEL OUT and ROAR off.

A unmarked panel van pulls in and parks.

A side door opens.

Two security officers get out. BURLY OFFICER pulls a cuffed Martina out and marches her toward a door. The other pulls out a cuffed and hooded Luddite Man.

INT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - BOOKING AREA - DAY

Burly officer pushes Martina into a seat and holds up his I.D. to the BOOKING OFFICER.

BURLY OFFICER  
Two prisoners to house until further notice.

BOOKING OFFICER  
Park 'em there. An officer'll take 'em back to the cells in a minute.

Burly officer and booking officer point their I.D.s at each other.

Needle-thin lights bounce back-and-forth from them.

INT. POLITY COUNCIL HALL - ATRIUM - DAY

York stands back from the huge double doors leading inside. He takes a breath and walks up to them.

The huge inner chamber door, throwing light on him. He grins BIG in wonder and enters.

INT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - CELL BLOCK - DAY

Two officers escort Luddite Man and Martina to the cell block.

Luddite Man and Martina are rumpled, but not hurt seriously.

LUDDITE MAN

He's not what you think he is.

MARTINA

He never was. I just didn't know it.

LUDDITE MAN

I mean he's as human as you or me.

MARTINA

I don't see it that way. He's virtually immortal, heals superfast, and is like some comic superhero. How can you call that human?

LUDDITE MAN

It's not what's on the outside that makes us human, it's what on the inside. Most of the people walking around are human in body, but mentally they are no more advanced than the bugs that no doubt live in this place. They exist, but don't really live.

The guard guides Luddite Man into a cell.

The grill (door) slides closed.

The other guard continues guiding Martina further down the block. She hangs her head and sniffs back tears.

LUDDITE MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

He won't give up on us! I feel it!  
So, don't you dare give up on him!

INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - BASEMENT - DAY

Matt and Jorge sit in front of the bank of screens, watching.

Suddenly, "alert" FLASHES on a screen.

MATT

It's starting. Wanna watch.

JORGE

Bet your ass I do. Let's see it.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

A battered satellite powers up. It transmits a signal briefly, then powers down.

EXT. OUTDOOR MALL - DAY

Crowds flow in all directions.

Gahl taps his temple.

GAHL'S POV

... of a semi-transparent local map superimposed on reality. He gestures doors to open and blocks others.

Weird COMPUTER CODE appears momentarily.

BEAT.

The digital imagery FLICKERS and FRITZES.

RESUME SCENE

The lights in the mall flicker as well.

GAHL  
(to himself)  
Whoa. That ain't cool.

INT. POLITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - DAY

Huge governmental meeting place like the U.S. House of Representatives' floor, but cold and sterile.

SECGEN and York talk to one side as other members talk in small groups scattered around the chamber.

A member sits in a council seat. He blinks and looks at his SHAKY hands. He puts them in his lap as a SWEAT BEAD slowly runs down his temple.

A second member walks past. SUDDENLY, he lurches slightly, but quickly catches himself.

A third member's ear TWITCHES noticeably. He scowls and tries to be casual as he rubs his ear.

EXT. STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Gahl LOCKS ON a medical building in the distance. He loses himself in the crowd as he weaves his way towards it.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The Police vehicles sit stranded in HEAVY TRAFFIC.

INT. LEAD POLICE VEHICLE - DAY

POLICEMAN #1 talks into a throat microphone.

POLICEMAN #1  
Damn it. I said we need traffic  
cleared. They aren't gettin' out of  
the way. Over.

There is muted STATIC.

Policeman #1 throws his hands up and glares at the driver.

POLICEMAN #1 (CONT'D)  
Frackin' system's down. I can't get  
through to anybody.

INT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - DAY

Luddite Man sings a HAUNTING SONG that ECHOES.

PUDGY GUARD walks up.

PUDGY GUARD  
Hey! Shut up!

Luddite Man keeps singing.

PUDGY GUARD (CONT'D)  
If ya' don't shut up, I'm gettin' a  
cart and gaggin' ya.

Luddite Man looks at the pudgy guard with a haunted look,  
but keeps singing.

PUDGY GUARD (CONT'D)  
Have it yer way. I'll be right back.

The guard walks swiftly does the rows of cells, Luddite Man's  
song ECHOES as he goes.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Arva is behind the check-in window, talking to the  
receptionist.

Gahl barges inside.

Arva does not look surprised, merely tired.

GAHL

I need to talk to you... please.

ARVA

(to the receptionist)

Hold my appointments.

Arva motions to follow.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - EXAM ROOM - DAY

Gahl fidgets slightly as Arva sits down with a sigh.

GAHL

What's happening to me?

ARVA

You're becoming what your genes could  
make you... with help from science.

GAHL

And what is that?

Arva points at Gahl's cut pants leg.

ARVA

Virtually immortal. You will heal  
even faster and get stronger as  
evidenced by your lack of a wound.  
I should think that eventually you  
will be able to rip a full-grown man  
limb-from-limb.

GAHL

Will I still be... human?

ARVA

Oh, yes. Your own genes were merely  
triggered in specific ways. Any  
children you have will be normal.

GAHL

Then why are people chasing me if  
they can't use me to create clones  
or something?

ARVA

Key people in society who call  
themselves übermen were the main  
force behind your long freeze. You  
were their source for gene therapy  
and transplant stock. They only see  
you as a donor, not even a real  
person.

(MORE)

ARVA (CONT'D)

What is more, you are like a universal stem cell donor. Once the change is complete, a simple blood transfusion from you will be like a fountain of youth. Recipients would effectively start over as a twenty year old.

GAHL

Son-of-a...

ARVA

I'm afraid it gets worse. The cyborgs want your brain, or rather what's in it. Your skills, knowledge, even muscle memory from your military training are nothing more than programming to be downloaded.

GAHL

They can't jack into my brain. My condition...

ARVA

(overlapping)  
... was induced... by me, actually.

GAHL

What?!

Gahl starts to rise, fist flexing.

Arva motions for calm.

ARVA

It saved your life... For a time, anyway, but that's changing.

GAHL

I'm tempted to kill you now.

ARVA

At this point, it would be a release. Look, I hardened you against implanting the interfaces, so you can't jack up. Memories, knowledge, everything that makes you who you are cannot be backed-up, downloaded, or even hacked. The changes are so profound that even if parts of your brain were surgically removed, who you are would be lost... forever.

(MORE)

ARVA (CONT'D)  
Physically, you would heal like  
nothing ever happened, except that  
you would be mentally another person.  
Eric Gahl would effectively die.

GAHL  
That sucks...

The door ABRUPTLY opens.

Head nurse stands in the doorway, a patient directly behind her. She scowls at them, then looks HARD at Gahl's bloody pants leg. She quickly closes the door.

ARVA  
You have to leave. My bitch of a  
head nurse is no doubt calling the  
authorities right now... If it means  
anything, I tried to protect you  
from them as best I could.

GAHL  
It doesn't, but some people would  
say that's better than letting me  
die. Is there a back door?

ARVA  
Hang a right out of this door, last  
door on the left. The stairway opens  
where they probably won't be. Wait!  
Take this.

Gahl opens the door, but pauses to look back. He accepts a small zippered case from Arva.

ARVA (CONT'D)  
You'll know what to do with these.  
Just let it flow for about a couple  
of minutes, then the process should  
take about twelve to sixteen hours.

Gahl ponders the case for a moment.

GAHL  
Why didn't you transfuse yourself?

ARVA  
I already screwed up this life. I  
don't deserve another.

GAHL  
I know you tried to do right, but  
you have no idea the hell I'm going  
(MORE)

GAHL (CONT'D)  
through. What's worse is that I have to see it through, no matter what happens.

ARVA  
If it means anything, I'm about to pay for my sins, but I'll buy you the time you need to get away. Just blend in.

Gahl throws open the door and hurries out.

The lights FLICKER.

Arva sighs and leaves the room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - BEHIND RECEPTIONIST'S AREA - DAY

Police swarm into the waiting room.

Head nurse holds the door open for them as she points at Arva.

HEAD NURSE  
There's the counterrevolutionary!  
He was harboring a reactionary...

Policeman #1 throws her to the floor and cuffs her.

HEAD NURSE (CONT'D)  
Wait! I called you. I've been nominated for party membership! I'm going to be a full citizen!

Another policeman picks her up.

Head nurse screams and struggles.

An officer punches her in the stomach.

Head nurse collapses and is carried away.

Policeman #1 approaches Arva and looks at his name tag.

POLICEMAN #1  
I know you're a full citizen, but that means nothing now. However, I won't treat you like the others if you don't resist.

ARVA  
Thank you. I won't.

EXT. BUILDING ANNEX ENTRANCE - DAY

The police haul everybody out -- the staff, even patients.

EXT. DESERTED ALLEY - DAY

DISTANT sirens wail INTERMITTENTLY.

KEN, a dumb-looking officer (30), strolls along, looking up fire escapes and checking locked doors.

A solid metal door without a handle CLICKS and opens with a finger-width GAP.

Ken tries to look into the gap.

The door opens briefly and a hand YANKS him inside.

INT. ACCESS TUNNEL - DAY

The door CLICKS shut. A dim light shines weakly down a dank concrete tunnel.

Gahl uses pressure points to subdue Ken.

GAHL

What's your name?

KEN

K... K... Ken.

GAHL

Okay, Ken. Where are your buddies?

KEN

I'll tell ya nothin'. You'll be lobotomized like the rest...

Gahl presses SOMETHING in Ken's back.

Ken opens his mouth to scream, but Gahl chokes it off.

GAHL

Let's try this again, sweet pea.  
Where are the others?

Gahl releases Ken's throat.

KEN

(gasping)

They're loadin' up the pris'ners and any witnesses who're in the office.

GAHL

Witnesses?

KEN

Yes, this warn't for the public.  
Anybody who was there'll be docilized.  
Same with yer girlfriend and yer  
other friends.

GAHL

What are you talking about? I came  
here alone.

KEN

You were with a counterrevolutionary.  
Social officers detained her earlier,  
but couldn't find ya... yaren't goin  
to kill me, are ya?

GAHL

Where are they now?

KEN

A few blocks nort a'here in the  
detention wing of the H-Q peace  
enforcement station. Ya can't get  
inside without gettin' caught. I  
kin take ya in. I promise I'll go  
easy on ya.

Gahl looks him up-and-down for a second.

GAHL

Take off your clothes.

KEN

Yah, Gad... not that! I don't have  
anythin' agin yer type, but...

GAHL

I need your clothes, dumbass.

Ken is visibly relieved as he strips down while Gahl maintains a hold. Finally, Ken gets down to his underwear.

SUDDENLY, Gahl SNAPS Ken's neck.

EXT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - PARKING LOT - DAY

Only a few vehicles and nobody outside.

Dressed in Ken's uniform, Gahl approaches an entrance marked "Authorized Entry Only."

As he moves to "swipe" his newly acquired ID, the door opens.

TWO officers walk out. OFFICER #4 nods to Gahl while OFFICER #5 chatters away.

OFFICER #5

Ken's a moron... he prob'ly fell down a storm drain. I hope I don't hafta go down the sewer again to find his stupid ass.

OFFICER #4

Maybe he jest got locked in the buildin' durin' the round-up.

(to Gahl)

Sar'nt.

INT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - HALLWAY #1 - DAY

The closing door BLOCKS the rest of the conversation.

Gahl YANKS loose the cover for the locking mechanism and RIPS loose a handful of wires.

There is a momentary SIZZLE and a few WISPS of smoke.

Gahl casually tosses the cover and wires away.

A young officer (Tip) steps out of an office. He smiles at Gahl...

... who punches him in the throat and snaps his neck.

Gahl eases the body inside the office, snatches the ID, and closes the door.

INT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - OFFICE - DAY

STATION CHIEF reads over an IPAD-like device as he distractedly opens the door.

Gahl stands in the doorway.

Station chief is startled, but quickly recovers.

GAHL

(faking accent)

Sorry, sir. Where's everybody? I just transferred here and cain't find nobody to sign me in.

STATION CHIEF

Most of 'em are on a raid roundin' up some counties. The rest were just called out cause our res'dint idiot's missin' at the site. Just me and Tip here now.

GAHL

Good.

Gahl quickly and fatally takes the station chief down.

Gahl pulls the station chief's body all the way into the office and grabs his ID.

INT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - HALLWAY - DAY

Gahl steps back into the hallway and closes the door.

The lights GO OUT for a moment, then come back on.

INT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - DETENTION WING - DAY

Gahl "badges in" using one of the IDs. He examines a digital screen on the wall as he wipes sweat off his brow.

BEAT.

Gahl sways on his feet. He steadies himself with the wall.

ANGLE ON SCREEN

Martina's name and status SHOWS on cell #3, along with several people in other cells.

INT. PEACE ENFORCEMENT SUBSTATION - DETENTION WING - CELL #3 - DAY

Martina casually looks up from her bunk. Her eyes go wide and she backs up to the wall.

MARTINA

Are you even human now?

Gahl swallows hard.

GAHL

What the hell are you talking about?!  
Look, I just risked everything to  
rescue your ungrateful ass. Are you  
coming or not?

MARTINA

I... can't, Eric. I don't know if  
you are a bodmod or a überman. Either  
way, I can't leave with you.

Gahl grinds his teeth for a moment, then takes a breath.

GAHL

Okay, then follow me and take off  
once we're outside. At least I'll  
know you're safe.

MARTINA

Leave me.

GAHL

You would rather be lobotomized than  
be around me?

MARTINA

(crying hard)

I'll leave after you do.

Gahl backs out of the cell. He tosses the ID towards her.

GAHL

Take it... or does the fact I touched  
it mean you can't use it now?

Martina silently grabs the ID off the floor.

Gahl takes off running. He stumbles to the door, tottering slightly as he badges out.

INT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - HALLWAY #2 - DAY

Luddite man is strapped to a gurney, gagged and completely immobilized.

Gahl shoes SQUEALS to a stop.

Luddite man shakes his head vigorously.

Gahl removes the gag.

Luddite man stretches his jaw a moment.

LUDDITE MAN

Leave me.

GAHL

Not you, too. Martina just told me  
to piss off. Are you afraid to be  
around me because you think I'm no  
longer human?

Luddite man looks at him with a very weary expression.

LUDDITE MAN

No, Mister Gahl. I don't want help  
because I am done.

GAHL

Now, that I understand, but I need  
you. I can protect you and you can  
advise and guide me. Together we  
can maybe change this world.

LUDDITE MAN

I will only slow you down... besides, you don't need me for all of that. You really don't know what you are becoming, do you?

GAHL

Everybody keeps asking me that.

LUDDITE MAN

Barring being vaporized or chopped up into little pieces, you are extremely hard to kill. The problem will be keeping your humanity. As your mortality fades, so might your empathy for the rest of us. Frankly, nobody can predict how much you will change. The kicker is that you will be superior to BOTH the cyborgs and the übermen... especially after today.

GAHL

What happens today? I saw something when I linked to the net and weird stuff has been happening ever since.

LUDDITE MAN

Ah, you saw the "dart" infiltrating the network. By now, it's firmly entrenched and set to execute its programming when the trigger time hits. It's completely irreversible. Everything will come to a grinding halt everywhere that is linked, including the bodmods.

GAHL

Everything is tied to the network. Innocent people will die.

LUDDITE MAN

Yes. The toll will likely be in the millions, but that's unavoidable as the second prong of the attack is just as bad.

GAHL

There's more?

LUDDITE MAN

Oh, yes. The übermen are infected with an airborne virus released in the water supply. It is completely harmless to everybody else, but for them, well...

GAHL

That's just great, you bastard!

LUDDITE MAN

They deserve far worse considering how many people they killed.

GAHL

You don't get it! I am the source they used for their genetic rebuilds! I wondered why I've been shaky and sweating my ass off! The virus is probably killing me too.

LUDDITE MAN

What?! We had no way of knowing the virus would affect you too. We had no choice!

Gahl pulls out his small bag and plops it down on the gurney. He unzips it and pulls out needles, tubing, etc., and put them together.

Luddite Man realizes what he is doing and struggles in his bonds.

LUDDITE MAN (CONT'D)

No! Don't...

Gahl replaces the gag.

GAHL

Well, let's see if I'm a fountain of youth or poison to you.

Gahl uses an alcohol patch to swab a spot on Luddite Man's arm. He then grabs a needle and holds it up.

GAHL (CONT'D)

Ready?

Luddite Man shakes his head vigorously and makes NOISES.

GAHL (CONT'D)

Me too. Let's do it.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Martina exits the grounds and swings out onto the street.

The SOUND of sirens get LOUDER.

Martina quickly swings into an alley.

Police vehicles ROAR past.

INT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - DETENTION WING - DAY

SEVERAL officers march the medical building prisoners to cells.

The officers stand in front of the closed cells looking puzzled.

Arva is last in line with Officer #1.

OFFICER #1

System's completely down. We don't even have video feed. You'll have to use your keys to open the cells.

The officers pull out keys and unlock cells. They herd the prisoners in.

Head nurse tries to kick the officer holding her. He TOSSES her into a cell and slams the door closed.

Gahl glances at Martina's empty cell as he approaches. Arva looks up and their eyes LOCK. Gahl smiles.

Gahl GRABS an officer's pistol out of a holster and shoots him between the eyes. He quickly takes out the rest with head shots. There is almost no blood.

GAHL

These small caliber pistols aren't worth a shit for any real fighting. We need something with more power.

Arva grabs a pistol off officer #1.

ARVA

I'll help you in a bit. I have to take care of something before we do anything else.

Gahl gathers other pistols and ammo magazines as Arva approaches head nurse's cell.

Arva smiles REAL BIG.

HEAD NURSE (O.S.)

What are you doing?!

Arva raises his pistol.

Head nurse SCREAMS.

As Arva fires, the barrel FOLLOWS an unseen body falling down. He empties the magazine.

Gahl stuffs magazines into every pocket he can. He sticks a pistol into the waistband in the small of his back. The other pistols he takes apart and scatters the pieces.

Arva walks up. He thumbs the magazine release. The magazine CLATTERS to the floor.

ARVA

She called them knowing full well everybody would be lobotomized. As long as she became a full citizen and party member, she didn't care.

Gahl hands Arva several magazines.

GAHL

We're not done yet. I have a new plan and I need your help executing it. To do that you need to change into a uniform and help numbnuts in the next wing do the same.

Arva smiles and looks around the dead officers.

ARVA

Keep the riffraff out while I change.

INT. POLITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - DAY

York walks up behind the SecGen.

YORK

Mr. SecGen?

The SecGen turns.

York is visibly SHOCKED.

SecGen is PALE and his face TWITCHES in random spots. One eyeball is partially HEMORRAGED.

SECGEN

(slurring his words)

Make it quick. I'm on in five.

YORK

Mr. SecGen, something is wrong... with you and about half the council. Look around.

PAN AROUND CHAMBER

Scattered all over, members appears to be either deathly ill or twitching as if in the start of some kind of fit.

RESUME SCENE

SECGEN

The show must go on, Ken.  
(leans closer)  
I named you my deputy. If I'm  
incapacitated, you must take over.

York swallows HARD.

YORK

Yes, sir.

SecGen nods and heads to the podium.

INT. HQ PEACE ENFORCEMENT STATION - DETENTION WING - DAY

Arva emerges from a cell dressed in a police uniform. He puts on a peaked police cap.

ARVA

How do I look?

GAHL

Like a damn fool, but it'll work.

Luddite Man emerges from another cell, skin ashy, jacket buttons misaligned and cap askew.

Arva moves to help Luddite Man.

ARVA

(to Luddite Man)

What the hell is wrong with you?

Gahl has his ear to the door, listening.

PAUSE.

Gahl turns to the other two.

GAHL

Let's get the hell out of here.  
Other door.

ARVA

What about the people in the cells?

GAHL

If we let them go, it would give us away. Besides, with what's happening, they will not be hurt anytime soon.

Gahl runs to the other door. Arva and Luddite Man try to keep up.

LUDDITE MAN  
We aren't going to be running the  
whole time are we?

GAHL  
Nope. I'm grabbing the chief's  
cruiser. He won't be needing it  
anymore.

INT. BUILDING (ÜBERMEN) - HALLWAY - DAY

Übermen lie scattered in the hallway, twitching and contorting  
as they die.

INT. BUILDING (ÜBERMEN) - OFFICE - DAY

Danyluk convulses as blood streams out of his ears, eyes,  
nose, and mouth. Another übermen chokes and slumps. There  
is a DEATH RATTLE.

INT. BUILDING (BODMOD) - HALLWAY - DAY

BODMODs lie on the floor twitching and contorting.

INT. BUILDING (BODMOD) - DAY

Bodmod leader and his underlings slump over a conference  
table. All have CHAR MARKED temples; eyes SPLIT OPEN like  
spoiled grapes; blood TRICKLES from their ears.

INT. BETHESDA - POLITY COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

At the podium, the SECGEN drops, convulsing and foaming at  
the mouth.

WIDE SHOT

... of the chamber.

Members collapse all over the place and die as either bodmods  
or übermen.

Normal humans in the chamber are PARALYZED with shock. Some  
SHOUT. Others SCREAM.

York glances at the SECGEN with no emotion as he steps over  
him and stands at the podium.

YORK  
(amplified)  
Ladies and gentlemen...

The ROAR of the audience dies a little.

YORK (CONT'D)  
Citizens, I call this emergency  
session to order. Take your seats...

EXT. STREET - DAY

Deserted neighborhood. Street devoid of cars and even debris.  
Buildings are empty shells.

The Station Chief's car slows and turns sharply. It's motor WHINES high as it LURCHES over the curb and sidewalk to SMASH through the remains of a set of glass double-doors.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - DAY

The car maneuvers past empty floor-to-ceiling shelves and stops out-of-view of the street.

Gahl, Arva, and Luddite Man get out.

ARVA  
Pop the hood. We have to disconnect  
the power cells or the car can be  
tracked.

Gahl reaches inside and something CLICKS as the hood POPS up slightly.

Luddite Man "drunkenly" pushes Arva aside and raises the hood the rest of the way.

LUDDITE MAN  
(slurring words)  
It isn't enough. Backup batteries  
will still broadcast a signal.

He grabs a cable connector and wiggles it free. He pulls another and carefully plugs them together.

ZZZT!

A few WISPS of smoke rise and dissipate.

Luddite Man unplugs the cables and drops them.

LUDDITE MAN (CONT'D)  
There. The secondary batteries are fried now, but the main ones are okay. Just plug it back up and you have a working car that is off the grid and its trackers won't work.

GAHL  
That's why I need you. Come on. We have a few blocks to go.

INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - BASEMENT - DAY

Jorge and Matt watch monitors that periodically FRITZ.

Martina stumble/runs down the stairs.

Jorge turns.

JORGE

We thought you were a goner. We're losing connectivity as the system shuts down, so we couldn't find you.

MARTINA

I got rolled up with some others, but Eric got me out.

MATT

Eric?

MARTINA

Gahl.

Matt and Jorge exchange a quick glance.

JORGE

What next?

MARTINA

We wait. Fire up the backup systems. When the main system finally shuts down, we need to be up and running.

INT. VETERANS' HOME - SERGEANT-MAJOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

Worn room and furniture, but clean and tidy.

There is a KNOCK on the door.

Sergeant-major emerges from another room and opens the door.

Gahl and Arva stand there in their police uniforms.

Sergeant-major is puzzled, but recognizes Gahl.

SERGEANT-MAJOR

You're not the police.

GAHL

No, we're not Sergeant Major, but nobody questions the uniforms, so we go where we want.

SERGEANT-MAJOR

What can I do for you?

ARVA

It is more what we can do for you.  
May we come in?

Sergeant-major steps aside to let them enter.

INT. VETERANS' HOME - ROOM - DAY

Luddite Man lies on a dingy bed, his breath slow and steady.

ECU

... of his eyes. Crow's feet visibly FADE, bags under his eyes slowly SHRINK.

INT. POLITY COUNCIL - SECGEN'S OFFICE - DAY

York fumes as several screens show only electronic SNOW. His AIDE stands to the side, fidgeting.

YORK

What the hell?! Can I get ahold of anyone?

AIDE

Sir, we have some of the best people on the problem. It is only a ma...

York spins.

YORK

We don't have time! That is what I am trying to tell everybody!... You know what? We're going old school.

AIDE

Old school, sir?

YORK

Gather every page, aide, clerk,... anyone who's not security or a council member and have them report to the council floor immediately. We have a lot of work to do.

EXT. CITY - DAY

Traffic GRINDS to a stop. Advertars DISAPPEAR. Traffic lights GO OUT. EVERYTHING shuts down.

People stop gesturing, puzzled. They look around in stunned silence. A few gesture frantically, panicked.

## INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - DAY

Jorge walks to the entrance and locks the door. As he reaches for an old, FADED "Open" sign, his eyes bug out.

Security police and Burton exit vehicles and jog towards the bookstore. Burton holds up a hand-held device.

Jorge runs for it. He ducks behind the counter.

The door BLOWS inward and police begin to enter.

Jorge pops up long enough to lob a LIT molotov cocktail.

The cocktail BURSTS at the feet of the lead officers.

The men scream and push back as their legs BURST into flame.

Another officer fires a BURST at Jorge, STITCHING him across his chest.

Jorge lurches into the back room.

## INT. ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE - BASEMENT - DAY

SLAM. CLANG. There the sound of feet CLATTERING down the stairs, then a body falling.

Matt and Martina rush to help Jorge. They are shocked at seeing him BLOODY.

JORGE

(gasping)

They're here. I blocked the door,  
but we gotta blow this place.

MATT

Martina, help Jorge over to that  
wall. I need to...

JORGE

No! They got me real good. I'm not  
going anywhere. Get her out of here.

Matt squeezes Jorge's shoulder and nods. He runs to the back wall where a large cabinet stands. He grunts as he pushes it away from the wall, revealing an old brick archway.

Jorge tries to stand, but fails. Martina helps him to his feet.

Jorge points to a box on the wall by the bank of screens. She half carries him to it.

Jorge pries open the box and removes SOMETHING, then collapses in a swivel chair.

O.S., BAM... BAM.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
They're coming. Hurry up and get out of here.

MATT  
Please come with us. We can get you help.

Jorge smiles and coughs, blood sprays out of his mouth.

JORGE  
No can do skippy. Now get the chiquita out of here.

Matt tears up slightly.

MATT  
Got it, bro.

Jorge tosses Matt a small flashlight.

Martina nods and ducks into the archway, Matt on her heels.

BAM. BAM.

JORGE  
Hey! Pull the damn rope! Do I have to do everything around here?

Matt pops his head back in and reaches into a dark recess. He pulls out a coil of rope attached to the ceiling and recedes into the dark.

BEAT.

There is a RUMBLE as the arch collapses, completely blocking the opening.

Jorge sags, head on his chest.

WHAM!

There are numerous feet CLATTERING down the stairs.

A couple of officers sweep through. Satisfied, they stand by as Burton calmly walks down.

Burton takes in the banks of monitors, computer equipment, and turns to face the collapsed arch.

Jorge's head wobbles badly as he looks Burton in the eyes.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
You're too late. They got away and  
you're not gonna catch 'em.

BURTON  
How are you going to stop me? You're  
practically a dead man.

JORGE  
Then it's a good thing I have a dead  
man's switch, pendejo.

Jorge smiles through BLOODY lips and holds up a small remote,  
his thumb holds down a red button.

Burton and the officers leap at Jorge.

EXT. STREET - DUSK

The Front of the bookstore blows outward in a TERRIFIC  
fireball as the building COLLAPSES in on itself.

INT. BRICK-LINED TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

There is a thunderous RUMBLE.

In the dim light of the flashlight, a few BRICKS fall out of  
the ceiling. DUST kicks ups.

Martina and Matt COUGH.

MARTINA  
I've got to get topside. People  
will be needing guidance.

They press on.

INT. VETERANS' HOME - NIGHT

Gahl sits in an old RECLINER, IVs hooked up to both arms and  
his femoral arteries. There is food in his lap and on a  
nearby table.

Arva hoists two full bags of BLOOD and transfusion kits.

ARVA  
When you said you had a plan, I had  
no idea this would be it.

Gahl swallows a bite and takes a drink.

GAHL

It's perfect. I have a couple of hundred military veterans from a bunch of different specialties. They hate the regime and have nothing to lose, so making them young gives them a chance to make a difference again. I just need to keep fueled up so I can keep the blood flowing.

ARVA

I found several medics, so I transfused them first. Once they wake up, they can help. The only limits are how much blood you can produce and how quickly you can replace it.

GAHL

Then keep the grub coming. I'm just getting started.

The lights flicker and come back on DIM.

ARVA

We may be doing this by candlelight.

EXT. CITYSCAPE - DAY

Auto traffic is snarled.

Pedestrians mill around, nearly panic-stricken.

A train stops on an overhead rail.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Martina separates from Matt. She climbs a large box truck and strides onto the roof.

MARTINA

Citizens... Citizens! I know you are scared. We all are. But a new day is here...

The crowd listens as she speaks, softly at first then more forcefully.

FADE OUT:

THE END