



MQ-LC4

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERTED HIGHWAY - DAY

Heat waves refract off blacktop distorting leafless, charred trees. Abandoned cars dot the freeway.

A buzzing grows in the background. As we move down the highway, the telemetry words crawl--

Extreme heat from global warming had claimed human lives. To combat the heat, we began seeding the clouds with silver iodide to cause rain. But with rains came hoards of mosquitos triggering an epidemic of arboviruses rendering the Culicidae the deadliest animal in the world.

We fought back creating the perfect soldier, the MQ-LC4, a mosquito-like nanobot drone assassin. We did not speculate it would choose killing us over its own kind. We had created our own hell: a weapon of mass destruction.

And one day the end came. The national emergency warning went out. No one was prepared.

BUZZING, loud now. We stop over a heap of rotting road-kill.

A CROW lands. Pecks and tugs at worm-like guts.

It dodges a MOSQUITO flying about its head while its feet dance to avoid burning on the black top.

It pauses to swallow down a rubbery string of intestines. Just long enough for the *strange* insect to land.

UP CLOSE: A METALLIC EXOSKELETON. A CAMERA AND MICROPHONE PROTRUDE NEXT TO A MINIATURE SYRINGE PROBOSCIS. ON ITS BANDED ABDOMEN, THE LETTERS: **MQ-LC4**.

It sinks its needle into the host, and the crow falls over dead. *Something* grows inside the crow's body. Bulging. Distorting. It hemorrhages from its eyes and beak. Profusely.

And then the bird explodes. Blood & feathers coat the screen.

TITLE APPEARS OVER the spatter: **MQ-LC4**

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. PASTURE - DAY

A quiet field dotted with dead COWS.

The only sound is labored breathing coming from a FIGURE in a welding mask and wrapped in wire screen.

The figure hurriedly attaches bells, nails and washers to a wall of metal screen held up by rope and farm tools.

Figure stops breathing. Can see widened white eyes through the tinted welding shield.

DEAD SILENCE until --

-- Ta-da-tap-tap. Ta-da-tap-tap.

An MQ-LC4 honed in on the target pecks away so hard against the mask, it bends its deadly proboscis syringe.

Figure calmly slips a hammer out of the tool belt. Raises it. SLAMS the hammer against the helmet splitting the plastic.

Figure spins around. Stomps on the MQ-LC4. Crushing it.

Figure picks up boot slowly, stares down waiting to see --

-- the damn thing sputters back to life. Buzzing. Grappling.

Figure takes off in a mad dash for a farmhouse. Stops connecting extension cords along way.

Jingling from the items hung on the wire mesh. Danger!

Figure races to the house. Cord in hand.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A small face watches from behind a window as Figure approaches. Clunks up the porch.

Shoves the prongs into the outlet.

Dashes inside closing the door.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The Figure pulls off and drops the mask. Thin girl, gaunt face, PILAR, 17, falls to her knees. Sobbing.

Small arms encircle Pilar who quietly wipes tears away.

Pilar turns to PRYNNE, 8, miniature spitting image, blond hair, blue-eyed. Same face that was watching from the window.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Pilar puts a bowl of beans in front of Prynne and takes a seat at the table.

Prynne wolfs the beans down. Her sister sits without food.

Only a few bites left, Prynne pushes the bowl to Pilar, but Pilar pushes it back.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Prynne joins Pilar at the window. They stare out.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Porch light illuminates two fresh graves marked with wooden crosses off to the side. In the distance, MQ-LC4s hit the wall of mesh screen and burst into miniature fireworks.

INT. PRYNNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Something wakes Prynne.

She crawls out of bed. Walks to the window.

Puts her face up against the glass.

An MQ-LC4! Its wings rattle the old glass. Its hungry syringe pecking away like a woodpecker on a tree full of bugs.

Prynne staggers back. SCREAMS!

Pilar rushes in. Grabs Prynne by the arm. Backs out of the room slamming the door.

INT. PILAR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Prynne trembles in bed watching Pilar board-up windows.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

All of the cabinets are open. And bare. No food at all.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Pilar checks Prynne over. Wrapped in wire screen. Kitchen gloves cover her hands and arms. A spatula in both hands. A bicycle helmet covered with screen, foil and plastic wrap.

Pilar puts a piece of duct tape on her split welding mask and slips it over her own face.

She picks up a propane torch. Secures it in her tool belt.

She turns back to Prynne who gives the thumbs-up. They exit.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Pilar and Prynne walk side by side down a deserted road.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Pilar and Prynne stand in front of a brick house. The front door - wide open.

Pilar goes first, motions for Prynne to follow.

INT. RANCH HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Pilar steps in pointing the torch in front of her. Ready. She scans area then motions for Prynne to follow.

INT. RANCH HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

A kitchen full of FLIES. The kind that come for dead things.

Prynne swats at them with her rubber spatulas while Pilar checks the cabinets.

First one empty. Second..empty. Third....jackpot!

Pilar takes Prynne's hands and they dance around in a circle celebrating their find.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - AFTERNOON

Both Pilar and Prynne carry bags of food. Prynne stops. Takes off helmet. Sweltering heat. Beads of sweat run down her neck. Pilar quickly rushes over, puts the helmet back on.

She leans in close. Face to face. Her welding mask touching her sister's homemade helmet. Reassuring until --

-- a flash of light hits Pilar's eye.

Alerted, she stands.

An ominous buzz. Grows louder.

And louder.

Pilar spins. The sun is blotted out by a swarm of MQ-LC4s, and they are coming straight for the girls.

Pilar drops her bags, food spills out. She fumbles for the torch motioning Prynne towards the woods line.

Prynne takes off in mad dash for the lifeless forest.

Pilar waves her arms. Takes off her welding mask. And the smell of ready flesh attracts the robotic killers.

Once she has their attention, she takes off the opposite way racing down the dirt road towards a pond up ahead.

MQ-LC4s gaining.

Pilar dodges off the road. Races for the water.

Her feet pound the ground.

Her heart beat races. Thump-thump! Thump-thump!

She ditches the torch which rolls into the brush. Jumps into the water with a big splash.

EXT. POND - CONTINUOUS

Pilar holds her breath under murky water. Silvery reflections dance on the dark water's surface.

Bubbles slip from her lips. She struggles holding her breath. Tiny bubbles escape once more.

The reflections finally disappear.

Big bubbles explode from her mouth. She swims for the surface piercing the calm water. Gasping.

Can see the metallic soldiers shimmering in the sun as they fade in the distance. What about Prynne??

INT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Pilar, still dripping wet, busts through the front door. Drops the torch on the wooden floor while rushing through the house desperately searching for her sister.

PILAR'S BEDROOM

Pilar rushes in -- to an empty room.

PRYNNE'S BEDROOM

Pilar rushes in -- to an empty room.

About to walk away when something catches her eye. She rushes to the cracked window. Prynne runs across the field.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Pilar races out on the porch. Smiles. Tears of joy! She waves at Prynne who's running...faster than ever. Because Prynne's running for her life!

Buzzing and blackness fills the sky. An ominous swarm of MQ-LC4s dip down hot on Prynne's trail. And gaining.

Pilar grimaces. She scrambles in, comes back out wielding the propane torch.

She races out. Points the torch into the sky. Trained on the fucking MQ-LC4s.

WHHHOOOOOOOOLLFFF! Fire shoots into the sky. Some of the metallic monsters go for the flame. Sizzle and explode.

At full speed, the girls race towards each other. Closing.

Prynne slides into the grass past Pilar who sends flames into the sky roasting at least twenty MQ-LC4s. They pop and crash.

BUT there are too many. Pilar drops the torch. As last effort, she dives on top of Prynne covering her completely.

MQ-LC4s hit Pilar, stinging her back. A hundred poisonous proboscis penetrate flesh. So many until Pilar is covered in a metal coat of the robotic killers.

A dead silence.

One MQ-LC4 retreats pulling its dagger out of Pilar's back. The others follow suit. The swarm flies away.

Pilar's back swollen. And bulging. Blood seeps out of a hundred tiny holes.

Pilar's body moves. Could she be alive?

Little Prynne crawls out from under her dead sister.

She falls down cuddling her arms around Pilar.

She sits up. Wipes her tears away. Then grabs Pilar's welding mask and pulls it over her little face.

Prynne stands up. She is small. But mighty. And alone.

FADE OUT.