

Override

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

A landscape of ruined buildings. Rusted cars and skeletal remains covered in vegetation. Apocalypse aftermath...

SUPER - CHICAGO USA MAY 2057

Two FIGURES pick their way through the rubble: CORPORAL WATTS(24)wearing military gear; and a SECURITY ROBOT known by a design number - XT69420.

The robot is humanoid shaped, with shiny metal parts. Two lenses act as eyes. It carries an assault type rifle.

Watts has the same rifle as well as a scanner. The robot surveys the area as they walk, reeling off data in a neutral, metallic voice.

XT69420

Radiation and other contaminants  
zero...chance of mutant encounter  
approximately thirty percent...

Watts looks up from his scanner. Ahead is a large building, with cracked pillars at the entrance. A battered but intact sign reads: THE FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

WATTS

You're a new model of robot, right?  
I haven't worked with any like you.

XT69420

I'm a contract prototype.  
Economically efficient.

WATTS

Ah, yes. The budget cuts. We're  
taking the cities back from the  
mutant forces but we still have to  
deal with 'the cheapest options'.  
Same old story.

He sighs. Looks around at the wrecked city. A small green light starts to glow on his scanner, unnoticed for now.

WATTS

So how does your contract work?

XT69420

A task is offered, planned and a quote given. If accepted, the task begins, with payment is made at the end of each day until completion.

WATTS

Damn, thats convenient. I've never heard of a career that pays you each day. So you made that a stipulation in your agreement?

XT69420

Affirmative. I'm a 'day laborer'. It was popular in the early to mid part of last century.

WATTS

I'll be damned. I wish I c\_\_

Suddenly, his scanner emits loud BEEPING sounds. Green arrows point in the direction of the old museum.

WATTS

We got contact. With something.

XT69420

My sensors indicate life.

WATTS

Mutants?

XT69420

Negative. Life form is human.

The robot checks the load on its weapon. Heads towards the museum entrance. Watts follows, the BEEPING getting louder.

INT. MUSEUM - DAY

The shattered roof lets in light but its still shadowy in the corners. Both Watts and the robot engage headlamps.

A stairwell leading to a closed door reads 'STAFF ONLY' in faded letters. The scanner points to it.

XT69420

Target within. Begin sanction protocol now.

WATTS

Sanction? No, there may be humans in there. We don't go in shooting.

XT69420

Contract stipulates XT has tactical priority. Ratified by US military October twenty fifty five.

WATTS

I...what the hell is this bullshit? I lead this recon. My orders. Understand...mister 'day laborer'?

The robot says nothing. Goes down the stairs, kicks open the door. A large storage room is visible. The hum of machinery from huge generators. They step through.

INT. MUSEUM BASEMENT - DAY

Watts flicks a switch and lights come on. One half of the basement is filled with upright metal pods. There has to be hundreds of them. Control consoles line one wall.

WATTS

Power is still on. What can you tell me about this place?

The robot inserts a plug into a console. Watts moves closer to the pods. The green arrow leads him to the nearest pod.

XT69420

Cryogenic units approximate date of manufacture February twenty twenty eight. An emergency bunker.

WATTS

From before the war?

XT69420

Affirmative.

WATTS

Hmm. This seems to be the only pod still operational.

Watts puts down the scanner, examines the pod. Pushes a button. Behind him, the robot tenses. Raises the rifle.

A HISS of air. The front of the pod opens like a door. TOWNSEND(25) tumbles out, clutching a backpack. He rolls over, sits up. GROANS, holds his head.

TOWNSEND

Finally out of there. Water, do you have water? I need my pills.

He rummages through the backpack, takes out a small container. Watts kneels, gives him a canteen. Townsend opens the container, washes a pill down. Closes his eyes.

TOWNSEND

Damn migraines. Just lucky they were in my back pack when...

He looks around for the first time.

TOWNSEND

When the sirens went off.

He gets to his feet shakily. The robot steps forward.

XT69420

Alien life form identified.  
Sanction effective immediately.

WATTS

Alien? He's a human. Stand down.

The robot's lenses start to flicker. It aims the assault rifle at Townsend. Watts dives forward, hitting the robot arm with his shoulder as the rifle fires.

WATTS

Run!

Townsend stares as the soldier grapples with the robot. He grabs his pack, manages to shuffle to the door, disappears.

WATTS

XT69420, desist. I order you.

XT69420

Negative.

The robot shoves him away, runs to the door. Watts falls back against the consoles. Retrieves his rifle then follows.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Townsend emerges from the museum. He stops as he takes in the destruction. Turns as the robot appears.

TOWNSEND

They...the fools. They did it.

The robot fits a new magazine, brings the muzzle up. Watts crashes out, already FIRING. The titanium tipped rounds smash into the robot, cutting it in half.

Watts approaches. The robot crawls towards its rifle. Watts puts more rounds into the metal head, shredding it.

TOWNSEND

It was trying to kill me. Why?

WATTS

It's programmed to do that. But it... I need to inform Command about these rogue machines.

TOWNSEND

Thank you for saving me.

WATTS

You're a human like me, not a mutant. You weren't a threat.

TOWNSEND

Mutant? Christ, what kind of war happened while I was in that pod?

WATTS

A bad one. Sixty percent of the world's population died.

Townsend gazes at the wrecked city.

TOWNSEND

A lot of this damage seems...old.

WATTS

Brace yourself for a shock. Its the year twenty fifty seven.

Townsend sinks to his knees. Takes out the pills.

TOWNSEND

Can I have some more water, please?  
I can feel the mother of all  
migraines coming on.

FADE OUT