

DYSTOPIC:
A TALE OF TWO CHOICES

Written by

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After the world ends, the mystery, and the real war, has just begun..

Ohio, USA

FADE IN:

1. EXT. HELFEJLD PLAINS - MID AFTERNOON

The red sun of the planet, Lucille is on the way to setting, We follow a "V" of 3 wheeled ATVs from above as they make their way across the purple grasses.

The 5 man team, called a DAGGER, is dressed in identical gear, black ATV gear and helmets. On their shoulders are patches that signify they are Theta Patrol, and each has their names.

Most of the plains are crisscrossed with past patrols, but one section of downed grass catches the attention of the BACK LEFT rider, THETA DAGGER TWO, ERIC HEART.

ERIC (V.O.)

What's that impression in the grass at the base of hill 465?

MARIA (V.O.)

Dagger two, maintain coms discipline.
(beat) Provide a coherent query with details.

ERIC (V.O.)

Dagger two apologizes, the grass at the base of hill 465 is disturbed, do we have data on why?

MARIA (V.O.)

This whole area was reported clear by morning patrol, Lambda.

ERIC (V.O.)

Cool, a mystery. (beat) Request to investigate anomaly.

MARIA (V.O.)

permission granted, take Bravo, Me and Front pair will provide cover.

The two back ATVs break off and proceed to the left, the one on the right, Bravo, speeds up a bit to be just to the right and behind Two.

The now shorter "V" speeds off to the right to crest a nearby hill.

One and Alpha stand on their seats for a better vantage point.

Maria pulls out a set of binoculars to watch back pair approach the anomaly.

Now on the ground, we follow as 'back pair' stops a few meters from the anomaly, dismount and draw handguns.

As they approach, SUSAN RANSOM flips a control on her helmet to open a private channel to Eric

SUSAN

What do you think we'll find, E?

Eric switches to transmit on the private channel.

ERIC

If we knew what it was, we would not need to investigate, Sue.

As he responds, he pushes aside some of the tall grass and stops short, Susan bumps into him.

SUSAN

You're so mean, E. Umph. (beat) What is it?

She pushes past him and also stops short

SUSAN

They're naked!

Lying in the crop circle, on their sides head to foot are a set of platinum blondes

2. EXT. COMPOUND 928, 'HAWK'S FIELD' - MORNING

Establishing shot, flyover of compound

We see the large military style installation, most buildings are wide and squat with brick façades streets with few cars but a wide range of people most have on military style fatigues and suits, diesel punk meets MIB. some have sweats or 'pt' gear but those are mostly involved with some kind of PT (physical training; sweats, shorts, yoga pants, ect)

In the middle of all this is the medical tower, 20 stories glass and steel, modern aesthetic

Camera moves in toward the top floors of this tower and into:

3. INT. MEDICAL CENTER - RECOVERY ROOM 2010 - CONTINUOUS

Despite the star being orange and the sky a lighter shade of purple, the people still prefer white light inside, like before the spectral shift of the parent star.

Two women lie in medical beds on the top floor of the compound's 20 story medical facility. Outside the room the staff go about their business. The women are twins with platinum blonde hair but precious little else to identify them. They are: KALY (patient U-12-6-18) formally Celeste, And ALEISE (patient U-12-6-17) formally Casiopea, though they do not have their names at this point.

NURSE ABBY (V.O.)

It's been weeks, and they are still in comas, Medically, we can't find anything wrong.

DR. BISHOP (V.O.)

Well, hopefully this isn't a fool's errand and they do wake, we need to figure out why they are here, how they got here, and anything else we can.

NURSE MAY (V.O.)

I just hope they are nice, the last tribals we treated were mean, and idiots.

NURSE ABBY (V.O.)

Tribals have tats, they have no identifying marks, it's a real mystery.

Aleise moans and tries to roll, the wires and tubes connected to her prevent this, then, she snaps awake, hearing a voice only she can hear.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

You won't make it, this is a fool's errand!

In a panic she looks around.

She sees the medical equipment attached to her and begins to tear it off, paying no heed to the paper hospital gown that is also being ripped apart.

As monitors start to announce problems, a NURSE ABBY rushes in.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Too late! Now we have you.

Aleise sees the nurse and starts brandishing the IV pole as a weapon.

ALEISE

What the fuck is going on!

The nurse holds up her hands to show she is no threat.

NURSE ABBY

It's ok, we're not going to hurt you,
we are here to help.

Aleise starts to calm down, but is still panting and ready to bolt.

NURSE ABBY (CONT'D)

I know waking up in a strange place can
be a bit disorienting, (beat) Can you
calm down for me?

Aleise looks around working her jaw, troubling memories of spies and plots she can't place fill her mind.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

The mission is top priority, don't let
them know!

ALEISE

What! NO! Can, NO! You need to let me
go!

The nurse keeps calm, she had dealt with this kind of thing before.

She approaches the frantic Aleise

NURSE ABBY

How about we put this IV stand dow...
umf

Aleise knocks the nurse over and bolts out the room

The nurse activates a radio.

NURSE ABBY
Code Orange, Recovery!

3. INT. MEDICAL CENTER - RECOVERY WARD HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Aleise storms down the hall as the Nurse's message is announced on the loud speakers.

Patients avoid her, medical staff continue their business as the orderlies, two large women, TRISHA and SARAH, confront Aleise.

Though Aleise attacks them, they easily counter and have her in a hold as the nurse exits the room with Aleise's chart.

A doctor approaches, This is DR. BISHOP, the Senior Attending of the recovery ward.

He Casually checks over Aleise, despite her protests, the orderlies holding her steady.

NURSE ABBY
Sorry about that, Doctor, she was a bit more spooked than I anticipated.

She hands him the chart.

DR. BISHOP
Not a problem, Abby, this is why we are here, any news on the other one?

NURSE ABBY
Negative, May was entering to check her equipment as I exited.

DR. BISHOP
Well, let's see what we are dealing with.

He looks over the chart and makes some notes, then speaks to Aleise.

DR. BISHOP

I see you are spry, healthy, and finally awake. (beat) Do you happen to know who you are, or anything before the hospital?

Aleise calms for a moment as she thinks, the detached memories of conspiracy flash inside her head.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

LIES!

ALEISE

We, uh, uhm, no (beat) (suddenly active again) What did you do to me!

Bishop makes another note on the chart, hands it to Abby

DR. BISHOP

We did nothing other than rescue you from the plains of Helsejld. (beat) Now that you are back amongst the living, it's time to discuss compensation.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Now you're in trouble.

ALEISE

No, (beat) it's time for you to let me go!

She manages to elbow the right orderly and partially escape, but the left orderly was ready and quickly restrained her alone.

DR. BISHOP

Unfortunately, Miss. That is not currently possible. You now owe a debt to The State for your recovery and rescue bills.

Aleise stands as straight as she could and confidently declared:

ALEISE

I didn't ask for this, and I won't pay!

Bishop shrugs.

DR. BISHOP

There is no choice in this. (beat) Now,
we can do this the easy way...

The orderly's attention slackened and Aleise takes advantage of this and tries to bolt again.

Bishop takes a step back as the orderlies regain control.

As they get control back, Bishop withdraws a syringe and preps it.

As he approaches the right orderly, who wasn't restraining Aleise, holds her head still so the Doctor can easily inject into her neck.

DR. BISHOP

The hard way, it seems. Thank you,
Trisha, Sarah, take her to the cooler.

Now that she is unconscious the larger of the orderlies picks up Aleise like a baby as the second procures a gurney.

As they strap Aleise in NURSE May pokes her head out of the room.

NURSE MAY

Doctor, this one is awake now. She is
requesting to speak with someone in
charge.

DR. BISHOP

Thank you, May, I'll be right there.

4. INT. MEDICAL CENTER - RECOVERY ROOM 2010 - SAME TIME

Kaly sits calmly on her bed as May double checks the equipment, she also hears voices no one else can, but they are quieter, less aggressive.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

And so it begins.

As Bishop enters she smiles pleasantly.

KALY

Good morning, Doctor is it?

Bishop takes a seat next to the bed opposite of May.

DR. BISHOP

Yes, I am the Chief resident, and assigned to your, special case.

KALY

Nice to meet you.

DR. BISHOP

Likewise. (beat) What if anything, can you tell me?

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Nothing, that's the point.

She shrugs and shakes her head.

KALY

Not much, really. (beat) It's a bit embarrassing, but I was hoping you could tell me.

Bishop sighed.

DR. BISHOP

The only information we have, indicates you and your sister were rescued from the plains of Helsejld, under forced indoctrination protocols, in hopes that you could cast light on how you ended up there.

At the mention of a sister, the image of Aleise flashes in front of her.

KALY

Sorry, did you say, sister?

DR. BISHOP

Yes, identical woman, with a more, shall we say aggressive personality.

Her shoulders sag and she sighs.

KALY

Oh, I see. (beat) I take it she doesn't know anything either?

DR. BISHOP

Unfortunately, not. (beat) In any event, this is a unique situation where information could have been worth Resource. (beat) Are you sure you don't remember anything?

She thinks for a moment.

KALY

I'm sorry, no. (beat) Resource?

DR. BISHOP

Yes, your rescue has placed you in debt to The State.

KALY

Debt?

DR. BISHOP

Yes, nothing is free.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Not according to plan...

KALY

What if I refuse, to pay, I mean?

DR. BISHOP

In this case, desire is irrelevant. There have been instances in the past, recently really, where Tribal powers would get into situations requiring rescue. Sometimes they would claim memory loss, or something like, and they would flee, leaving us holding the bill. With ecological collapse, and (beat) certain other, problematic occurrences, that is not something we can afford. As such, it was decided that any debt incurred by the rescue and after events, would be assigned to the rescued party, and recouped, by force if needed. That stopped the problems fast.

KALY

I see, well, what If I can't pay?

DR. BISHOP

This was anticipated, The State is prepared to offer training in an appropriate field to pay off the debt, and probationary citizenship, for legal reasons...

KALY

Sorry, doesn't that mean more debt?

DR. BISHOP

Nothing is free. (he stands) But once all debts are settled, you will be free to become a full citizen, or leave, no harm no foul.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Back on track...

KALY

Oh, simple as that, hunh, (mirthless laugh) How long until the debt would be repaid?

He turns back and thinks for a moment.

DR. BISHOP

Well, there are a lot of factors, but I would say 3 to 5 years depending on work type and level. (beat) Oh, and there is the issue of your name.

KALY

What have you been calling me?

DR. BISHOP

Patient U-12-6-18.

KALY

I don't like that name.

NURSE MAY

Kaly is a nice name...

KALY

Kaly it is. How do I go about paying off this debt?

Bishop leaves the room and May starts preparing for discharge

NURSE MAY
First naturalization, then job
training, then work.

5. EXT. HAWK'S FIELD STREETS - LATER

Kaly, in donated miss matched clothes from the hospital staff,
stands just down the street from the medical center.

The residents of the compound, all intent on their own business,
walk past without comment.

Unable to figure out where to go, and too scared to ask for help
all she could do was stare wide eyed and fight the urge to
hyperventilate.

Soon she is approached by a helpful MP.

STREET MP
First time in compound?

No words come to her lips, he smiles reassuringly.

STREET MP
I'm sure after the wilds, even a modest
city such as Hawk's Field might be a
bit overwhelming.

She swallows hard.

KALY
It's incredible...

STREET MP
Yeah, I'm sure it is, where are you
trying to get to?

She starts to speak, but realizes she doesn't remember the name
of the building, she digs through her pockets for the scrap of
paper the information was written down on.

KALY
It's up, a building (beat) I was given
directions, but can't for the life of
me remember (beat), ah yeah, X96,
Central...

STREET MP

Ah, central billeting, it is this way.

He indicates she should follow him down the street, she falls into step right beside him.

STREET MP (CONT'D)

As overwhelming as this is, it's nothing compared to the Nat Center at Swan's Cove. I went through naturalization there, and boy howdy, that was a wakeup call.

KALY

You weren't always a Statesman?

STREET MP

Oh no, not by a long shot. I grew up on the islands of Katich,

As he waxes reminiscent about his old home, we see an island of post apocalyptic fishermen with an old but unusually well preserved US CVN style super carrier in the port.

STREET MP (V.O.)

We still had some semblance of order, the oceans fared better than the land, but even then, the spectral shift of Lucille decimated even us. I saw my chance after I helped refit one of the carriers, Hadrian's Pride. Haven't looked back since. Swan's Cove was my first true State experience.

We are now in a fly over of a modest Ellis island style immigration center surrounded by a destroyed 60s era New York

STREET MP (V.O.) (CONT'D)

An older city on the eastern coast. But that was nothing compared to the new Capitol, Eagle's Aery,

Now we see a 'futuristic' but still Dieselpunk style Dubai/Tokyo in the mountains.

STREET MP (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They put a lot of effort into making that city the pride of any nation,

ultra modern, man, I was glad to get
back to small towns.

Now we return to Hawk's field.

KALY

So, The State really is, (beat) good?

STREET MP

As good as the last super power on a
dying planet can be. (beat) Here we
are, central billeting. Next time, just
speak up, we're all here to help out,
can survive longer together than apart.
Light of reason guide you.

With that he nods and goes about his business.

There were a lot less people milling about in this area, and
that helped to reassure her.

Kaly looks at the 5 story brick façade structure. A large
rectangle building with more rectangles extending from the ends.

The entrance, right in the middle, has a set of cracked concrete
steps flanked on the bottom and top with large urns full of
dying plants. The windows were mostly intact, a few cracked
panes, the flashing starting to weather, this was an old but
well maintained building.

The whole area was awash with similar buildings, the only
notable differences were the numbers on the corners.

Kaly carefully starts up the steps

After a calming breath, she opens the door and enters.

6. INT. CENTRAL BILLETING LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The lobby was empty, a few chairs, some fake plants and generic
pictures

Across the lobby was the main desk built into the wall. It was a
chest high desk with a jar of pens made to look like flowers.

Just behind the desk was a board looking girl in a simple dark
suit, she wasn't wearing her Jacket, it was draped over the
chair. She stands to start reciting a standard greeting, she

glanced up every now and then in an attempt to remember the lines.

MELLISA

Welcome to Building X-96, central
Billeting for Compound 928, Hawk's
field Naturalization center. How can I
help you? (beat) Wait, I am supposed to
tell you my name, Mellisa Angstrom. How
can I help you?

After a moment of silence Kaly approaches the desk cautiously.

KALY

About an hour ago, I woke up in a
hospital bed, with no memories, and was
told to come here.

Mellisa suppresses a chuckle.

MELLISA

So, I guess you don't know your CID?

KALY

Doc Bishop said I was patient U-92, or
something or rather...

Mellisa looks through a pile of paperwork on a lower portion of
the desk.

MELLISA

Does Patient U-12-6-18 mean anything to
you?

Kaly snaps.

KALY

That's it, my name is...

MELLISA

Kaly no-last-name yet. The hospital
wired over most of your paperwork.
Hunh, don't even have a pending CID,
that's odd. (beat) until you have
something else, you should remember
your PID.

She gets a pen and scribbles the information on a note card and
hands it to Kaly.

While she talks she also collects some other paperwork into a manila envelope.

MELLISA

Yeah, The State is great and all, but you have to make an effort, nothing is free, and we are all working our damndest to survive as well as we do. Remember, it's a great honor to be one of the few thousand each year, less now for some reason, to be accepted as even a probationary citizen of our wonderful State. (beat) Be Proud, and serve with honor. (beat) Oh, and light of reason guide you, and all that. Now I'm going to ask you to have a seat, and I'll get someone to take you to your room.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Well, stage one and done...

With a sigh, Kaly looks around, finds a chair loosing is plush next to an old but well maintained coffee table covered with old magazines and sits heavily.

INT. CENTRAL BILLETING HALLWAY - LATER

Kaly is being led down the hall by the Barracks WATCH SUPERVISOR as he explains how things work.

The interior is almost as old as the exterior, this was a long hallway, waxed and polished, yet faded tiles, painted walls scrubbed within an inch of their lives, and utterly empty.

WATCH SUP

...We try not to overwhelm our inductees, but we do have basic expectations of everybody. Be on time, early if it can be helped, get your tasks accomplished promptly and aid your fellows when required. Most of the rest will be covered in indoc. When in doubt ask a superior. Here we are.

He stops in front of a door that is only distinguishable from the rest by a number 145

WATCH SUP (CONT'D)

Until you finish your naturalization, this will be your room. Once you are an actual Citizen, you will be relocated to something more comfortable and permanent while we get job data compiled.

KALY

Sounds good, any advice?

WATCH SUP

Yes, during your stay here, you will be expected to maintain your assigned area to a certain minimum. Failure to do so will result in additional debt, as others will have to be engaged to get it into standards.

He turns to the door and pounds loudly three times.

WATCH SUP

MALE ON DECK!

With that he opens the door and brusquely enters.

7. INT. CENTRAL BILLETING ROOM 145 - CONTINUOUS

The room was long with a squared off foyer area with half walls and hooks for jackets and below these were shoes, some had jackets, most were empty.

Along the sides of the main area were double deck bunk beds with lockers at the end. down the middle of the bunks were some circular tables and chairs.

The watch sup comes to a well worn spot on the off white, waxed but not polished floor.

As he stops, he is approached by a young lady with curly auburn hair who reads from a card.

Y'MIRA

Good afternoon, sir, or ma'am, I am name, or Y'mira Stoffton, third custodian of...

WATCH SUP

Where is the head custodian?

A girl calls from the back as she hurries to the front

APRIL

Right here, Sir. I was prepping...

WATCH SUP

I don't need excuses Cadet Young. You are the Head Custodian, you have earned your privilege of supervision. You already did your time. So will they. It is your duty to greet superiors, conduct shift inspections, keep the log up to date, accept and see off transfers. (beat) You supervise, they follow your direction. You have to learn to lead.

APRIL

Sir, I don't feel comfortable...

Y'mira motions to Kaly that she should follow her while April gets chewed out.

The pair carefully depart from the uncomfortable situation.

WATCH SUP

There are those that earn respect and use it, those that do and do not respectively, and those that never will achieve greatness. Which are you?

APRIL

But, sir, I don't understand...

The watch sup sighs and shakes his head, then takes on a more fatherly tone hoping to get through to her.

WATCH SUP

That, April, is why you are still here, after your classmates have all moved on. We are giving you the opportunity to figure it out, to get into a winner's mindset, so you won't be chewed up and spit out. You have to learn to embody citizenship before we can, in good conscience, allow you to be one.

He knew, and had expected, Y'mira to rescue Kaly from the situation and simply called after them.

WATCH SUP

Y'mira.

Y'MIRA

Yeah, Sup?

WATCH SUP

You are on duty, be professional.
Keeping a fellow out of the firing line
is a good idea, but you need to be
better at discretion and excuse
yourself next time.

Y'MIRA

Yes, Sir!

She salutes from the back of the room

WATCH SUP

See to it Kaly is berthed and ready for
her naturalization tomorrow.

With that, he turns on his heel and leaves a bewildered April.

Y'mira looks at Kaly.

Y'MIRA

Really, one day? That's fast, usually a
few weeks before a class begins when
people arrive.

KALY

You would know better than I, I just
came out of a coma.

CLARA

That was intense, kinda feel sorry for
April.

Y'MIRA

Yeah, don't know how such a timid mouse
got into the pipeline, but, Oh, Clara,
this is apparently, Kaly.

Kaly shakes Clara's hand.

Y'MIRA

Give April some space, keep sweeping
the floor, the day is almost over.

CLARA

Sure, the second custodian always obeys
the third.

The glare at each other for a moment, then Clara shrugs and
leaves.

Y'mira motions Kaly should follow again.

Kaly decides to try to be more friendly

KALY

So, Yamera, is it?

Y'mira shrugs

Y'MIRA

Close enough, Behal uses apostrophes
for emphasis, Yuh, meer, ah. Probably
the only one you'll meet, so its fine,
Behal tends to stay isolated. What's
up?

KALY

Is it a requirement to have a stick up
one's ass to be here?

Y'mira chuckles.

Y'MIRA

Not a requirement, but it does help
sometimes. For us post graduate cadets,
they like to see we can follow orders
and structure and stuff, and learn to
be assertive, or whatever. I hear, once
a full citizen, they expect a switch to
be flipped in your head and activate
critical thinking, I'll see how that
goes in a few months. (beat) 'Cause a
great nation does not suffer the weak,
nor does it reward those that do not
contribute fully.

KALY

And what constitutes 'contributing
fully', and why is April not?

They stop in front of the last set of bunks and they have no sheets, to the right is a simple wooden door with the word, 'HEAD'.

Y'MIRA

Well, that actually is a complicated question. What it comes down to, is what a person can reasonably be expected to do, and striving to be, well, better than average. April simply isn't assertive enough, a bit too timid. (beat) She is a floater, and floaters don't really go very far or very fast.

KALY

Uh hunh, so how do I know if I am fully contributing, or a 'floater'?

Y'MIRA

Well, (beat) my philosophy, which has served me well so far, is that you do what you've been told, don't be stupid, when you see an opportunity to advance, seize it, and seize hard. The longer you're around the more you'll see and understand. Don't worry, you'll catch on.

KALY

Right, well, I got a lot of stuff today, but this caught my eye.

She pulls out a piece of paper from her envelope.

KALY (CONT'D)

It says, indoc begins tomorrow at 0700. What's that?

Y'MIRA

A time, seven am, if that helps. Since you're not likely to get a watch any time soon, I'll put in a wake up for you. After that, you can make your own decision on wake up time, and put in your own time.

She opens one of the lockers at the foot of the bunkbed.

Inside is a set of sheets, a hygiene kit, including bar and liquid soap, toothpaste toothbrush, floss, ect, set out on the bag it is supposed to be in, and some white towels and washcloths and luffas, and a lock and key

Y'MIRA

This will be your bunk, you can choose top or bottom, these lockers go with the bunk, left bottom, right top. So long as there is not probable cause, it will remain unsearched. you can lock it if you wish, most do, but it's not really needed, I like the privacy...

KALY

So, what's all this in the locker?

Y'MIRA

They call it a welcome aboard package.

KALY

I thought nothing was free?

Y'MIRA

Well, yes and no. The State sees you as an investment, and each investment needs the greatest possible odds of being a success. Probably calculated into your initial debt anyway.

KALY

And where is everyone else?

Y'MIRA

This is temp housing, no one hangs here, not against the rules. or anything, its boring and only custodians have to stay, we don't even usually live here, we sleep in cadet housing.

KALY

Bathroom?

Y'MIRA

The door marked 'Head', toilets to the left, showers to the right, no offense, but you could probably use one.

8. INT. CRIMINAL CONTAINMENT, SMALL CELL - SAME TIME

Aleise sits curled up between the metal toilet and the wall at the back of the rectangular cell with a thickish but old tear resistant foam pad and ratty old military style green blankets

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Her brain is resisting the suppressant.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Well, we'll have to try compound,
1086...

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Thats untested, and not part of the
plan...

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

You want to tell them the plan failed
before it started (beat) Didn't think
so, now, restart the procedure.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Ugh, fine, charging HALO...

FB1. INT. SMALL DARK ROOM - PAST

This is an unreliable 'trippy' memory. Casiopea sits at a small electronics workbench building a device. The voices as well as the visuals are not quite recognizable.

Celest enters and watches for a few moments.

CELEST

How many of those are you going to
build?

CASIOPEA

We have a unique opportunity to follow
in the forerunners footsteps, we need
as many as I can build, aren't you
supposed to be helping?

CELEST

If the plan is a success, we will have
more and better resources, All that the
State has...

CASIOPEA

Your plan, not mine, and I don't think we can...

CELEST

WE, can't. That's why we are going through the procedure...

9. INT. CRIMINAL CONTAINMENT, SMALL CELL - PRESENT

As Aleise watches the door, a bolt clicks loudly and the door swings open. After a moment, a bespectacled man, DR. BRANDON enters and looks over her carefully.

DR. BRANDON

I really must apologize, these kinds of things don't usually...

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

KILL!

With a sudden ferocity she attacks him.

ALEISE

What have you fucks done to me!? Let me go or I'll stab you in the face with a soldering iron!!!

Guards intervene before she can choke the doctor, beat her off and evacuate the doctor, slamming the door behind them.

With a snarl, Aleise returns to her spot by the toilet.

10. INT. CRIMINAL CONTAINMENT, HALLWAY OUTSIDE CELLS - SAME TIME

The doctor straightens his clothes and makes a note on his pad.

DR. BRANDON

Well, that was exciting. (beat) looks like she may need a little more time to cool off. (beat) Thank you, boys, see that she gets some nutrient paste, can't have her dying of malnutrition on our watch.

11. INT. CRIMINAL CONTAINMENT, SMALL CELL - SAME TIME

Aleise glares at the door with a hatred.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

They are sitting on such potential, but they refuse to realize it.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

That's why they wont expect us to take it.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Do you really think we can?

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

They do, that's all that matters.

12. INT. CENTRAL BILLETING ROOM 145 - EVENING

Kaly sits on the top bunk which has been sloppily made in 'shower clothes', the white "T" and blue shorts provided in the locker, her 'borrowed' clothes hanging to dry on the rails at the head.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

What are you hoping to find?

CELEST (V.O.)

Answers.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Must be some question if you're putting yourself through all this.

CELEST (V.O.)

We all do what we must.

Y'mira enters in casual paramilitary clothes and strolls back to Kaly.

Y'MIRA

Still sitting in the dark, I see.
(beat) your clothes dry yet?

With a shrug, Kaly reaches over to check.

KALY

I've no place to go, and no idea how to get there. I thought you said custodians didn't hang out here?

Y'MIRA

We don't, but I thought my friend would be hungry.

KALY

Friends? Already?

Y'MIRA

Yeah, why not. (beat) Get dressed, me and the gang are going out for Annexation day, my treat.

13. INT. CRIMINAL CONTAINMENT, SMALL CELL - SAME TIME

Aleise nods off, groaning hoping the voices would go away.

The bottom section of the door has a small hatch that opens and a plate is slid through.

The hatch is closed and a small window is opened at eye level and LESLIE, F 20s looks in.

LESLIE

Thought you might be hungry.

ALEISE

Oh boy, more grey paste. No thank you.

LESLIE

No, I, it's grilled cheese, and cold cream of tomato, I like it, thought you would too.

ALEISE

Why would you do this, for me?

LESLIE

The paste is gross, and I like it, thought you would too.

Aleise crawls to the plate and bowl and sniffs it curiously.

ALEISE

It, smells good, I guess, thank you?

She starts eating.

LESLIE

You're welcome. (beat) I, I have to finish my rounds, I, I can come back later if...

ALEISE

I'm kind of tired...

LESLIE

Oh, sorry.

With that she quickly shuts the eye window.

14. INT. LEOPARD'S LODGE - LATER

The medium sized rustic eatery is moderately busy. There are tables, booths and even a small bar. Y'mira leads a reluctant Kaly through the tables to the back.

KALY

...Yes, I know, you said it's Annexation day, but what does that mean, especially to me?

Y'MIRA

First, I know you haven't eaten all day, and you need to put some meat on those bones. Secondly, the celebration itself is about the State finally finalizing the annexation of 16 border powers, roughly doubling its size!

They approach a group that includes Mellisa; Clara; DRACO, M, tall platinum blond and strong; VIKTOR VALE, M Average wearing glasses, and a few other women.

KALY

Isn't it dangerous to expand so quickly?

DRACO

Very astute, that's why negotiations were so long, and why, amongst other things, the borders have been closed. Now starts the long assimilation process. (beat) Do I know you?

KALY

Tough to say. I don't know me.

Mellisa looks over and brightens up, offering a hug.

MELLISA

It's Kaly no-last-name! Since when do you care about annexation?

KALY

Now, according to Y'mira.

Y'MIRA

She needed a meal and a friend, thought she should meet the gang.

KALY

So, (beat) you all work at the barracks?

VIKTOR

Nyet. I help out at therapy center. Were you not on ice?

Y'MIRA

We were all in the same class, Vik tested well for head shrinking, so he already has a real job. (to Viktor) I checked her in, you may be thinking of her sister...

MELLISA

Well, we're all family now, Draco-of-Karlsboro, Maybe you'll finally get help with those monsters in the mine.

DRACO

Really, children's stories, I stopped believing that long ago. I can't put my finger on it, but you having a sister tickles my brain even more. Are you sure we haven't met?

KALY

When you figure it out, I'd be happy to learn who I am.

15. INT. CRIMINAL CONTAINMENT, SMALL CELL - SAME TIME

Aleise dozes in her spot, the plate and bowl licked clean and shoved as close to the door as possible.

CASIOPEA (V.O.)

What if they suspect?

CELEST (V.O.)

Does a wolf mark the comings and goings
of a falcon?

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

Even if they don't, even if they don't
care, they are our enemy!

CELEST (V.O.)

A bloated enemy, overreaching. (beat)
We are small, but amongst legion, even
if not strictly on our side, all it
takes is a million cuts of any blade.
(beat) We are safe enough, for now.

INDISTINCT VOICE (V.O.)

What if they find out our planes? you
are heading to the heart of the beast
with bleached mind.

CELEST (V.O.)

Be prepared to crush them.

The bottom panel opens again, the dinner plate is taken out and
a new plate is slid in.

LESLIE

I brought you cinnamon toast, (beat)
Shoot, I have to go. Enjoy.

16. EXT. HAWK'S FIELD, STREETS - EARLY MORNING

Numerous light posts flicker all down the street, everyone who
is up this early are in a standard student uniform, black
pants/skirts, white blouse/shirt, black tie/cravat/neckerchief,
though most are in a standard black 3 piece suit.

All these students are making their way to the training hall,
building T-153, The NETC (Naturalization, Education, and
Training Center)

Apart from a few, the vast majority were 'zombie walking', and not inclined to conversation

Finally she stood below the three story edifice of mostly glass and concrete, there was a short pathway with some steps and a ramp and one could see into the lobby from the street.

The giant glass panels proudly displayed the symbol of The State (a falcon with its wings over a stylized version of the planet 'protecting' it from Lucille, with the phrase, 'Salvos En Odds' or 'Survival against the odds' in Latin), the naturalization corps seal, (a mother duck with 7 ducklings on a pond approaching shore, with the phrase, 'Nahn nudarib hayaatana kama kunaa mudaribin' or 'We train our relief as we have been trained' in Arabic), the compound's seal, just a hawk with the phrase, 'Teorainn na sibhialtachta agus na buile, or 'the border of civilization and madness' in Irish, and the name and number of the building in impactful font

Everyone else had already entered, with calming breath, Kaly made her way to the doors.

17. INT. NECT LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The State's seal was on the perfectly polished tiled floor, roped off with velvet ropes.

On the back was a small standing desk with a girl in similar attire to the other students, but her pants and jacket were a dark blood red, her blouse was rose pink and her thin red pink tie was in a loose trinity knot as opposed to the tight double Windsor of most others.

She watched Kaly approaching, judgmental of the hand-me-downs she still wore.

The girl, RAIN by her name tag, waited with an arched eyebrow for Kaly to start.

After a moment, Rain finally gives up waiting

RAIN

It's rude to stare, ask your question or move on.

Shocked that Rain was so rude when everyone else had been relatively nice she hesitantly approached and put her manila folder on the desk, to the annoyance of Rain.

KALY

Uh, Hi, yes, good morning. I am supposed to be in indoc...

Rain grabs Kaly's manila folder, opens it, looks over the schedule, pulls out a building map, circles the room and hands it all back.

RAIN

Down the hall.

Kaly waits a moment.

RAIN (CONT'D)

What?

KALY

Light of reason...

RAIN

You don't want to be late on your first day.

Kaly grimaces and starts off down the hall.

18. INT. NECT HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

Kaly makes her way down the hall looking at the map and doors trying to find the room.

She finally stands in front of the right door, 112 and hesitates.

As she is about to open the door, a man, SALIS CANUS, brushes by her and strides confidently to the front of the class, and starts logging onto a computer in the front.

SALIS

Make sure you shut the door, Miss.

19. INT. NECT ROOM 112 - CONTINUOUS

Startled into motion she enters, shuts the door and sits at one of the two open desks.

Salis is in a dark navy blue suit, perfectly pressed, creases that could cut steak. He eyes the class.

Kaly in her old hand-me-downs, and the rest in an eclectic assortment of gear from their old lives.

After raising an eyebrow he starts briskly.

SALIS

Good morning Probates, Light of reason
be on you all.

As Salis pauses, some try to grumble the standard State greeting, but he cuts the off.

SALIS (CONT'D)

I am Salis Canus, I will be your lead Facilitator for your journey to citizenship. You will refer to me as Mister, or Professor Canus, or simply, Sir. (beat) We have the unusual addition of a late student enrollment, I assume that is you, Miss. Under the circumstances I don't think it's appropriate to welcome you, but there are few polite options, please do all you can to catch up, I expect the rest of you to assist.

After a moment for this to soak in, Salis continues.

SALIS (CONT'D)

Now that you know me. It is appropriate that you get to know each other. (beat) Starting with row one, column one, stand and introduce yourself to the others.

The first man confidently stood and announced, his simple tunic was old but well maintained. He wore of many different leathers, perfectly tanned and sized. As he talks, we see a medieval-yet-modern castle surrounded by a star fort.

HEBRON (V.O.)

I am Hebron, Son of Horis. I hail from the now defunct Kingship of Korin.
(beat) this is my third...

We are back in the classroom.

SALIS

Stop right there. (Beat) Sometimes I don't have to spell it out, but in the interest of time; This is the State. Our citizens are the best. The greatest of people do not feel the need to boast, they never grovel. Telling us how hard you worked to get here stinks of seeking approval. It states that one is not confident and is seeking validation from others. It's undignified, don't do it. (beat) Instead, if you must talk of your skills, tell us how you will use them to bring glory to The State.

For a moment Hebron was gobsmacked, he could not think of words.

He finally sighs.

HEBRON

I am a builder and carpenter of highest degree.

With that he sits down, and Salis shakes his head and sighs.

He signals to the girl next to Hebron to stand.

She nods and cautiously stands, her tanned and ruff skin had many tattoos similar to Earth Nordic tats. As she speaks we see a wagon train making its way across the prairies.

ASYE (V.O.)

I, uhm, I am Asye, Daughter of Nora, I guess if that is how we are doing this, of the nomads of Solair. We are, my tribe was full.

As she finishes we are back in the classroom.

She moves to sit back down but Salis stops her

SALIS

You are no longer a Solair nomad, you are a citizen of The State, embrace it if you want to succeed. (beat) and to go along with that, what skills do you wish to inform us of?

She looks around nervously

ASYE

Weaving, (beat) leatherwork, I guess.
(beat) I am young with practical
survival skills, including hunting and
husbandry...

She sits down and shrinks trying to hide.

The next man, filled with confidence stands proudly

What was visible of his skin was scared and dried out from a lifetime in the harsh sun of a desert. His plates of armor made noises as he moved. The scene changes to a large gathering of modern RVs and semis with petrol processing containers and algae baths, ect.

AVEL (V.O.)

I am Avel, former Juggernaut of the
Sultan of Oper. (beat) I will serve The
State as a great warrior.

As he finishes another girl, ASEA, covered in tattoos depicting wires and circuit boards begins. We are now in a flyover of an advanced yet ruined and abandoned city.

ASEA (V.O.)

I am Asea Knowels. (beat) I am self
taught in communications and
electronics and other survival skills I
picked up growing up in the Skeleton
City.

We are back in the classroom as Kaly waits for the next student to stand, then realized they were all looking at her.

Felicia focuses on her glad everyone was focused on Kaly instead of her.

FB2. INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

Flash back. A cabal known as SPECIAL K meets in the dead of night. the leadership, CELEST Archon, f 20's platinum blond hair Blue eyes, her twin CASIOPEA Archon, CASTOR Szforza m 30's tall long black hair, KHADIGHA Molan f 30's, and LADISLA Borgia m 50's sit around a table waiting in silence.

A door opens and closes.

CASIOPEA

What's the verdict?

A messenger, FELICIA Escari f 20's light brown hair, enters

FELICIA

It's unanimous. The Elders have agreed to the terms. We have officially signed the treaty to be annexed by The State. It's over, I was selected to...

CELEST

It's over when I say it's over.

CASTOR

At this point, you would have to be in the Admiralty of The State to reverse this. We had influence here, and we still lost.

CELEST

Then, I guess I will have to become an admiral of The State.

KHADIGHA

They closed the borders, for the first time ever, they have recalled their recruiters and halted immigration.

FELICIA

Well, not really, the State diplomats have their picks, and selections from the annexed territories have been made. (beat) I will be heading to Hawk's field in a few hours.

CASIOPEA

And How does that help? What would a hydroponics farmer know of espionage? Besides, you said yourself, it's over, you are already set to be a Statesman.

FELICIA

I never said...

LADISLA

I'm open to suggestions. How do we circumvent the immigration moratorium? They have started to simply fly walk-ins to other territories?

CELEST

We give them a mystery, they will protect their citizens. We set up a puzzle and show up with the key.

CASIOPEA

And when they find out, they will brain bleach you, give you a compliant personality, and ship you off to some out of the way hole.

CASTOR

What if you were already brain bleached?

CASIOPEA

What good is a sleeper agent that can't remember their mission?

CASTOR

Brain bleaching isn't always permanent. They have studies to prove it. All we need is the right mix, and right procedure...

CASIOPEA

There's still no guarantee they will induct.

CELEST

If they have sufficient motivation, they will. Believe it or not, some of the others have contacts we can use.

20. INT. NECT ROOM 112 - PRESENT

Kaly is standing at her desk introducing herself.

KALY

...Good morning, Light of reason, I guess. I am Kaly. (beat) All I know, is that I was rescued from the plains of Helsejld, and now owe my ass to The State.

Salis nods.

SALIS

The State has my educational, and training opportunities for all. (Beat) I'm sure you will find your place. (beat, smile) And Light of Reason shine on you as well.

The next was an older young adult, her sandy Yellow hair was brushed and shiny, she had the look of one that had always had the finer things in life

SEBRON

I am the gr.. (beat) Sebron Jaines, a simple artist from the old city of Praie.

The next student was short, but powerful, the kind of woman that always got what she wanted.

She was dressed simply in stained off white robes tied with an old black belt with 5 red stripes on the end. As she speaks we are in a flyover of a large island of Japanese ascetics.

AIEKA (V.O.)

I am Aieka Imoto, I am the Shadow. I come from the island of Iga. And I will train others in matters of marital affairs and self defense.

We are back in the classroom. The next man, in blue coveralls, stands and nods.

GORDON

I am Gordon Hess, I am an electrician, plumber, and general handyman, State certifications pending.

The final student was a short blonde. She was dressed in well maintained casual cloths.

She waves awkwardly, lingering just a bit too long on Kaly, but inhales deeply.

FELICIA

Hi, I'm Felicia, an aquaponics farmer from the recently annexed Mt. Karlsboro, to the north. I will be the first to return as a citizen.

Salis moves to stand in front of his desk.

SALIS

Welcome all. Now that we're all friends, we can begin in earnest.
(beat) With the exception of you, Kaly, you all chose this, and had plenty of time to prepare, and you should have.
(beat) I am sure you all noticed, other probates are in uniform, in this case a black business suit. Full citizens can add color, certain functions require other uniforms, but that is beyond the scope, and you don't have that need or choice yet.

The class was silent for a moment.

Kaly raised her hand, and curious, Salis acknowledged

KALY

Yes, Mr. Canus. (beat) With what money should I obtain, well, anything?

SALIS

A very good question. (beat) For the majority of your indoc, I will endeavor to help you discover the answers on your own, but this is an important topic that has important implications on your health and welfare. (beat) You said yourself that you are, you all are, very deep in debt. There are items and locations, for trainees like cafeterias and certain training areas and stores, that have been placed on the critical list. No matter how deep in debt you are, you cannot be refused these things. (beat) Your first set of

uniforms, and more importantly three meals a day, are on this list. The rest have their temp IDs, I will get you yours by the end of day, and you will present this ID to the issuers of said items, and viola, you get them.

ASEA

For my own peace of mind, and that of others, I'm guessing, what constitutes a uniform, I see a lot of variations and when do we wear it?

SALIS

Uniforms are to be worn at places of employment, for you that is as a student, and you can wear them outside of classes, especially if you have nothing else. (beat) as far as what the uniform is, that's a bit complicated. Any long hair or beards should be brushed, combed, tied back or up, neat and presentable. Clothes are, for you, black pants or skirts, shorts can be acceptable, at times. White shirt or blouse, and black neckwear. Always clean and professional on the clock. We are professionals, remember that.

21. INT. CRIMINAL CONTAINMENT, SMALL CELL - LATER

Aleise still waits between the toilet and wall, glaring at the door.

The lock clicks and the two guards in riot gear threw open the door pointing their stun guns at her.

When she just stared, they parted a small woman, LESLIE put a chair in the middle of the room and Dr. Brandon enters and sits down.

DR. BRANDON

I see you are finally calm enough to have a rational conversation.
Excellent.

She glares at him.

ALEISE

You can take your psychobabble and shove it. (beat) I don't even know who I am, you don't know what it's like.

He makes a few notes on his pad

DR. BRANDON

You are correct, I have never been in this situation. I don't know of any that has. We in The State believe in individual choice above all

ALEISE

I, DIDN'T, CHOSE, THIS! SCWINEHUND!

DR. BRANDON

(sighs) Safety of our citizens is one of the few things that supersedes individual choice. I'm sorry, this was not an easy choice for us to make. We have to protect our people and, (beat) right now, you're not one of us.

ALEISE

Oh, but aren't I, you want me to pay this debt you claim I owe you, fucktard! Doesn't that make me one of you.

DR. BRANDON

Like I said, complicated and difficult choice. (beat) Verbal abuse can be expected in these circumstances. I have no way of knowing your name, how about I call you Aleise, at least until we learn more.

ALEISE

Better than patient U-12-6-17

He makes a note on his pad.

DR. BRANDON

Well, then, Aleise, last time I tried to asses you, you expressed a desire to, (checks notes) Stab me in the face with a soldering iron, of all things.
(beat) Do you still harbor that desire?

She thinks about it for a moment, visions of electronic work in her mind. She glances at a hopeful Leslie who smiles reassuringly and shakes her head.

ALEISE

I don't think that would be advantageous to me, no.

He nodded, stands and the chair is spirited away.

DR. BRANDON

Well, good. You are coherent, and calm, that is what is important right now. I see no reason to keep you here any longer.

He turns to leave.

She stands in a hurry, the guards take aim.

ALEISE

What now, a pat on the butt and good luck?

He turns with a raised eyebrow.

DR. BRANDON

Don't be silly, that would be harassment. (checks notes) You have been assigned forced indoctrination. You can either go to class, try to salvage a first impression, or go to the barracks and wait for tomorrow.

He tries to turn away again.

ALEISE

Do I get some kind of magic compass to lead the way?

DR. BRANDON

You know, I'm feeling a little generous today. Leslie will take you to either place as her last assignment for the day.

22. INT. NETC CAFETERIA - MIDDAY

The cafeteria is a large room of 2 distinct sections that can be sectioned off independently, as well as a half wall sectioning a que line with brass bars indicating the lanes. It is an older, musty building, but clean and maintained. Kaly and the rest of the class make their way through the que.

AIEKA

...So you really don't know who you are?

KALY

Why is that so hard to believe?

AVEL

Personally, I don't know how you can remember how to talk, but not anything personal.

ASEA

As I understand it, the brain's OS functions on different layers, speech is a much lower layer, and thus harder to reformat...

They approach the cashier and all but Kaly start digging through their pockets for their IDs.

CASHIER

First day?

SEBRON

Don't you have to scan...

CASHIER

I got you, easier paperwork this way, go on, its pizza today, enjoy.

With looks and shrugs all around the file through the turnstile and storm the buffet.

KALY

Pizza?

ASEA

Yeah, local dish, bread sauce and toppings. I don't care much for it, but it's edible. (beat) Growing up in the skeleton city, probably eat it even if it wasn't.

SEBRON

Do things seem well off, to you guys?

KALY

It was Annexation day, last night, that would shake things up, right?

AVEL

We're just probates, annexation doesn't mean anything to us, Except maybe Felicia...

FELICIA

What, I don't know anything!

AIEKA

Well, something is brewing. (beat) on the flight from Iga, the returning Statesmen were not happy. It was, tense.

KALY

Well, until we are real citizens, I guess it doesn't matter...

SEBRON

Well, looks like no tables big enough. Guess we'll have to split up. See you guys back at class.

23. EXT. HAWK'S FIELD, STREETS - LATER

Leslie and Aleise walk slowly down the street.

ALEISE

So, uh, thanks for the Pizza, and the other food last night.

LESLIE

Don't mention it. You really put it away, didn't you.

ALEISE

Well, not like I had a lot last night, (beat) oh no, I'm not blaming you, you did what you could. Probably more than you should...

Leslie shrugs sheepishly.

LESLIE

Well, everyone needs a friend. (beat) well, here we are.

Aleise looks over and sees the NETC and she is astonished.

ALEISE

Is this the barracks?

LESLIE

No, it's the training center. (beat) I know you wanted to go to the barracks and sleep or something, but, well, I think, well, you might want to try to salvage a reputation, as well as you can. (beat) For me? Please?

Aleise hesitates for a moment, but finally relents and sighs

ALEISE

Ugh, fine, I'll go.

LESLIE

Have fun at school!

24. EXT. HAWK'S FIELD, STREETS - LATER

The first day of indoc is done, Aleise joins Kaly on the way to the NATX (naturalization exchange).

KALY

They say we're sisters...

ALEISE

Yeah, get this through your thick skull, I don't know you, and I don't care about you.

KALY

While good to know, I don't know you either, by the way, but it doesn't mean you can't be friendly.

They stop in front of a small store front with signs to indicate restaurants and stores, even a theater.

ALEISE

Whatever, here we are, the NATX, what are we here to find?

Kaly starts up the steps.

KALY

We need uniforms, Mr. Canus suggests at least 3, some PT gear, again three sets, and spare toiletries.

Aleise sniffs the air and looks through a window to a food court.

ALEISE

What about pizza? Or grilled cheese?

Kaly tugs on Aleise to get her to follow her into the NATX proper.

25. INT. NATX - CONTINUOUS

The store is deceptively large, a convenience store like a large Walgreens, or small Walmart, with almost anything one could need. The pair walk through, largely ignored by all others.

KALY

We are low on funds, restaurants aren't on the critical list, and we've no means to cook the frozen ones. We only have 100 Peers of credit right now anyway, with 10 more each week until we are through indoc and reassessed...

They make their way, following signs, to the clothing section in the back

ALEISE

Peers?

KALY

Yeah, Production Resource, money.

ALEISE

That doesn't sound like a lot.

KALY

It's not, we are ass deep in debt and the cafeteria is free, so we can survive. (beat) Ah, here we are, clothes.

As Kaly starts looking for her uniform items, they are approached by a NATX employee

This is BRIAN, dressed in deep purple diesel punk inspired uniform

BRIAN

Welcome to Hawk's field Naturalization exchange, I am Brian. (beat) It seems you are fresh from the wilds and are having some attire issues. If you would like to wear your purchases out...

ALEISE

Are you suggesting I steal?!

BRIAN

What, no, I was offering to let you...

Aleise attacks Brian, causing quite the stir.

Brian defends himself, but Aleise's attacks are just too aggressive to fend off effectively.

A crowd gathers in the periphery and MPs in olive drab break the two up.

Two MPs cart off the foaming Aleise as the senior approaches Kaly.

NATX MP

Ma'am, can I see your CID?

Medics start to help Brian as Kaly fumbles for her temp card

KALY

I, uh, don't have it memorized yet, but here is my temp visa.

He scans it and hands it back as he starts to make notes on this data pad

NATX MP

Well, Kaly, do you know that one?

KALY

What, you mean Aleise? (beat) Not really, we were both in a coma for a while, I'm told we're sisters, but I've no memory of her, or my self for that matter.

He nods and puts his pad up.

NATX MP

So you don't know why she flipped out on Brian?

KALY

Uh, she's a crazy bitch.

He chuckles.

NATX MP

Right, so you claim no connection to her?

KALY

None.

NATX MP

Thank you for your time, light of reason guide you.

KALY

Thanks, you too, I guess.

As the medics try to help Brian away, he steps up to Kaly

BRIAN

It seems I am not going to be able to serve you. If you have any questions, however, any NATX employee, signified by our uniforms, will be able to help.

KALY

Thank you, and sorry about that. (Beat)
oh, and Light of Reason guide you.