

**TEASER**

FADE IN:

EXT. MODEST HOUSE / GREEN BANK, WEST VIRGINIA - DAY

A modest house with a picket fence. In the image, a graphic reads: "GREEN BANK, WEST VIRGINIA - JUNE, 2021"

INT. MODEST HOUSE / KITCHEN - DAY

HOLLAND SR. (23), hurries around the kitchen, in a shirt and sweater with a briefcase, finishes a cup of coffee, puts the rest in the sink, kisses HOLLAND'S MOM, who's holding a baby.

HOLLAND SR.  
Don't get up, I have to run.

HOLLAND'S MOM  
So, we decided, right..?

HOLLAND SR.  
Decided what..?

HOLLAND'S MOM  
What's with you these days..?

HOLLAND SR.  
We're not sure yet.

HOLLAND'S MOM  
I thought we agreed on Joey.

She holds the cute baby's face so he can see it. Holland's Dad stops, smiles, understanding, moves to admire his son.

HOLLAND SR.  
Sorry for bringing my work home.

HOLLAND'S MOM  
Doesn't he look like a little  
Joey..?

HOLLAND SR.  
I thought he was going to be a  
little Holland.

She looks at her husband, smirks.

HOLLAND'S MOM  
Holland Junior.

He gives his wife a peck on the cheek.

HOLLAND SR.  
I'll see you for dinner.

EXT. GREEN BANK TELESCOPE - DAY

A sunny day surrounds the electron telescope, one of the most sophisticated in the world. A graphic reads: "GREEN BANK TELESCOPE"

INT. GREEN BANK TELESCOPE / MEETING HALL - DAY

A small room is scattered with a variety of ages and genders, lights slightly dimmed, the screen filled with a mass of numbers, behind the serious DIRECTOR, standing.

DIRECTOR  
As you know, at China's request,  
we've been reexamining their  
discovery of a long sequence coming  
from their given coordinates.

He changes the image on the screen behind him, focusing on a galaxy section with five blueish planets, one slightly larger, indicating bio markers, or atmosphere.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
After the software updates last  
year, we know that the signatures  
are coming from this cluster of  
five exoplanets in the temperate  
zone, showing bio-markers  
consistent with Earth's atmosphere.  
With the help of the N.S.A., we  
learned that the signatures are  
digital and not natural  
aberrations.

Holland and the others look at each other.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
In a briefing with the N.S.F.,  
yesterday, others, including the  
president, have classified the  
findings. You will all undergo  
security briefings. The scope will  
remain locked in its position.  
Holland is the team lead. Send all  
data files directly to him. That's  
it, everyone.

The briefing over, people start to disperse, Holland Sr and the Director making eye contact.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
I'll see you in my office.

INT. GREEN BANK TELESCOPE / DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Holland Sr is slightly harassed looking, compared to his elevated Director, sitting across from each other.

HOLLAND SR.  
Team lead. I'm not sure this is...

Director hands over a file, interjects.

DIRECTOR  
You'll be working with the best math and physics people we can find. It's all in sections.

HOLLAND SR.  
Sections..? It's not a good time.

Director's look is half smile, half wonder.

DIRECTOR  
There are hours and hours of it. It's unlike anything we've ever discovered.

Holland Sr exhales his trepidation.

HOLLAND SR.  
You want me to figure out what this all means..?

DIRECTOR  
Yes, Holland. What's wrong..?

HOLLAND SR.  
I just had a son. Isn't this like above my pay grade or something..?

DIRECTOR  
Ahh, a little helper. We've all had dreams of this, Holland. Make it yours.

**END OF TEASER**

ACT ONE

EXT. OUTER SPACE - NIGHT

A vivid galaxy swirls in the background, letting a modular, elegantly huge, off-white space cruiser, fortress like, enter frame. Flared at both ends, smaller ships can exit the front and enter through rear openings. A graphic types: "LIBERTY DAWN - APRIL, 2082"

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / ENGINE ROOM - NIGHT - FOLLOWING

Bright, sterile, massive, very high tech, letting only a low grade hum, reams of cables in trays, shining tubes connect to stainless vessels, revealing HOLLAND JR (61), wearing black glasses, running gear, jogging the perimeter of the engine compartment on an elevated track, his steps more springy than usual, hearing a good techno-beat for a man his age.

AT A LARGE CONTROL CONSOLE

Holland stops, takes a few breaths, looks over the panel's hard dials, then flips through menus on a touch screen.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT - FOLLOWING

Holland's music continues, grabbing a skip rope, bouncing to the beat with his eyes closed down the long flight deck past an array of really different military style flying ships, smaller and larger ones. The ship's FLIGHT DECK CREW watches Holland pass by, oblivious.

A BASKETBALL GAME IS BEING PLAYED

At the other end, PILOTS, FIGHTERS, and TECHNICIANS make two full teams of men and women in their 20s and early 30s, laughing and cheering. Holland swishes through a side door.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / SIMULATOR ROOM - NIGHT

In the grey room filled with two simulators, four young people test their skills. MAK (20), pilot, is paired with CORA (21) his co-pilot. In the second simulator JA (22), pilot, is paired with DAVID (23), her co-pilot, all defending against a multi-layered attack.

DAVID  
They're closing.

Mak does a looping barrel roll, losing them.

MAK  
Not any more.

JA  
You learned well. From me..!

CORA  
How bout I fire and you two can  
finish your pilot debate later.

Cora knocks the following ships off as Ja does a twisting barrel roll, taking out the rest of the ships, ending the simulation.

JA  
See that boys.

Mak smirks at Holland.

MAK  
We get it.

Holland sends a tempered expression to them all.

HOLLAND  
Run it again. When your life  
depends on it, you need to be  
better than just *getting it*.

Mak checks the time.

MAK  
We have a conference call today.

HOLLAND  
You have time to run it again.

They watch Holland exit, like, *don't look so happy*.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / AGRO CORRIDOR - NIGHT - FOLLOWING

Holland enters a long packed growing room, two botanic robots tending plants, the lights set down low, pauses to sample fresh peas next to banks of fresh lettuce and other fast growing greens, then continues down through the long corridor to another door, exiting.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / CREW LOUNGE - NIGHT - FOLLOWING

Holland is followed into a crew lounge, seeing screens everywhere, CREW MEMBERS watching news back home, sports, a large kitchen area with COOKS, seating, computing terminals, video feeds to the exterior views, he takes a water.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / GYM - NIGHT

Holland enters the gym, zoned into his music, full of universal gear, everything fixed to the floor, mirrors, a sparring mat. SIX WARRIORS, four men and two women, are going hard on the weights and sparring. Holland pauses to do a chest exercise before he exits.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / HOLLAND'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

With music that sounds classical playing, Holland's had his shower, in a robe, sits on the bed. His wife, KAT, around the same age, sits next to him, seeing his dour expression.

KAT

What's the matter..?

HOLLAND

Dad didn't sound that great the last time I talked to him.

She runs her fingers through his hair.

KAT

He's eighty-four now.

HOLLAND

He'll get to see what it looks like after all.

KAT

You better get dressed.

Holland dresses in formal looking natural fibers, a future suit look, combs his hair, puts his glasses on, socks, then shoes. While he does all this, a screen that rotates several pictures tells a story of his life.

SERIES OF PICTURES: ON THE WALL SCREEN

Shows many pictures, these being the most notable.

A) Holland as a young boy, Christmas with Mom and Dad.

- B) Holland held by his Mom, pointing at the large telescope.
- C) Holland's head poking out of a cardboard rocket ship.
- D) Holland, a bit older, being taught math by his Dad.
- E) Holland winning a math prize.
- F) Holland holding a MIT graduation certificate.
- G) Holland working with his Dad on a wall of equations.
- H) The Liberty Dawn under construction.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / BRIDGE - NIGHT

Holland strolls into the high tech bridge with ship controls, pausing at a smaller window to look reflectively outside.

HOLLAND'S POV - ALJIBAR AND FOUR SMALLER PLANETS

Not far from each other, or the Liberty Dawn, the ship now approaching the planet group.

BACK TO SCENE

Holland's joined by Ja, David, Mak, and Cora, all dressed for the Earth-link session with Holland Sr.

CORA

We need to laugh sometimes, no disrespect earlier, sir.

HOLLAND

I can't believe this is happening.

DAVID

This must be a proud moment.

HOLLAND

It will be for Dad.  
(looks, smirks)  
The impossible made possible.

MAK

Is it true we were invited..?

Holland looks out the window, careful with his words.

HOLLAND

Dad was possessed with everything about this project.

(MORE)

HOLLAND (CONT'D)

About making sure I'd be here to carry on his work.

(turns back)

We worked together on the numbers for the ship systems.

DAVID

They talk with numbers.

HOLLAND

It was a gibberish combination of scratches at first. Then Dad broke a code that turned the scratches into numbers and the numbers into math, which turned into a language of its own about physics and space time relationships. From all that came the Liberty Dawn.

JA

He ever talk about the *why* in all this..?

HOLLAND

There were a large volume of transmissions received over many years. Dad was the only one who collected the data. It was all classified.

They're joined by BETA (32), Communications Director.

BETA

We've linked TranSpace, the monitors are opening.

Twelve people sit around a large meeting table within the ship's futuristic administration bridge, computerized work stations and shining black floors. Holland Sr's image (now 84) comes up on a large monitor at the table head, he coughs.

HOLLAND SR.

Are you there, son..?

HOLLAND

We're here, Dad.

Holland's Mom leans in briefly, now 83.

HOLLAND'S MOM

I just want you to know how much we miss you, dear.

She pops back out, everyone smiles.



HOLLAND  
I miss you too, Mom.

HOLLAND SR.  
Are you making good time..?

Beta turns to Holland.

HOLLAND  
Let's show him the ship view.

Beta shows him their view of Aljibar through his monitor.  
They spend a moment, seeing his eyes fill at the sight.

HOLLAND SR.  
It's beyond imagination.

HOLLAND  
The ship is exceeding our  
projections. We're ahead of  
schedule.

Beta turns Holland Sr's monitor back to their conference.

HOLLAND SR.  
It won't be long before you send  
the first transmission.

HOLLAND  
Followed by a search party.

HOLLAND SR.  
I learned many new things  
throughout the course of this  
project.  
(he coughs again)  
The biggest thing was, *time waits  
for no one, especially me.*

Sensing weight in his voice, Mak tries to lighten the mood.

MAK  
Sir, this is Mak, I'm a pilot. I  
have a question.

HOLLAND SR.  
I know who you are, Mak. Not a  
single person sitting at your  
table, or on the entire ship, is  
there by accident. What's your  
question..?

MAK

Why did this planet go to all this effort to send this information out into the universe..?

Holland Sr turns to his wife in the room with him.

HOLLAND SR.

Will you excuse us.

He watches his wife leave the room, obviously struggling to build the answer.

HOLLAND SR. (CONT'D)

Beta, cut the transmission to Earth's command center.

Beta looks over to Holland, whose light nod says, *do it*. She completes his request.

BETA

You have a secure transmission to the ship now, sir.

MAK

I didn't mean this to be awkward.

HOLLAND SR.

It's not awkward. Their understanding of the inner workings of the entire universe is unlike anything you can dream of.

MAK

Will we discover answers to life's biggest questions.

HOLLAND SR.

You're there not just to discover answers. You will encounter a whole realm beyond our knowledge and understanding.

MAK

Is that why the findings were classified..? So we wouldn't think it was just cosmic spam, or something.

Holland becomes still and stares.

HOLLAND SR.

Those findings are still classified.

MAK

We can see the planet group. It won't be long before we begin to look for ourselves.

HOLLAND SR.

I am wishing you all luck and I will be thinking about two things. Your safety, and your discoveries.

Some looks on the bridge, Mak spooked by the innuendo.

MAK

Sir, I'm not sure about the others. But when I signed up for this mission, I imagined some sort of an advanced world theme park filled with safe fun for all.

Holland Sr just stares through the screen, pondering the obvious misunderstanding.

HOLLAND SR.

Ohhh.

MAK

If it's not, then what is this mission about..? You're talking to us now. There's no one else listening.

Holland Sr begins getting emotional, tries to buffer it.

HOLLAND SR.

Light attracts dark. Love attracts hate. Life givers attract life enders.

The firm heaviness of Holland Sr's account is palpable.

HOLLAND

Dad, it's okay. We're here to explore new worlds with intelligent life. Right..?

HOLLAND SR.

You're there to protect the beings of Aljibar against beings like us.

SERIES OF SHOTS - HOLLAND'S TRANSMISSION REACTIONS INTERCUT AS NECESSARY

A) In the Crew Lounge, concerned faces on ship staff.

B) On the flight deck, pilots, technicians, crew staff watch, looking at each other, like, *this isn't Disneyland after all.*

C) In the gym, nobody's working out, watching Holland Sr, looking at each other, like, *what are we walking into.*

BACK TO SCENE

Kat comes to Holland's side, looks around the table becoming more focused.

HOLLAND

You said this was about finding the secrets of the universe through these beings from Aljibar. Why do they need our protection..?

HOLLAND SR.

Because, son, the entire universe is subject to unidentifiable errors that nobody can correct. The *Universal Order* and the very laws that define it could perhaps be redefined.

HOLLAND

What are these beings doing on Aljibar that requires our help..?

HOLLAND SR.

They're building new technology that could change the *Universal Order*. If it falls into the wrong hands, or fails, a catastrophe that affects the entire universe's future and our existence will unfold.

There's a long pause of looks, trying to understand.

HOLLAND

But you always told *me* that we were being sent to try and understand a more advanced civilization.

Holland Sr retracts, forcing his words through discomfort.

HOLLAND SR.

None of us understand space and time like they do. All time will end before your mission ends if the dark actors around Aljibar disrupt what they are working to achieve.

Holland's confusion entwines emotion now.

HOLLAND

Dad... This mission is supposed to be about hope.

Holland Sr coughs again, gathers himself, exhales.

HOLLAND SR.

The twelve of you sitting at the table right now represent the only hope for the entire cosmos and the one who made it.

(he studies their faces)

It won't be easy and there will be difficult days. There remains in us a part that is good. A part they will recognize and use.

(looks widely exchanged)

One final thing. Work toward the light.

HOLLAND

Get some rest, okay Dad.

HOLLAND SR.

I'll talk to you all again some day. Good luck with everything.

Holland terminates the call from his end, leaving a blank screen and blank faces around the table. Holland stands.

HOLLAND

Start the transmission.

Beta nods, watching Holland move toward the window, staring.

BETA

Right away.

BORN

I suggest we address the crew on the flight deck.

Holland slowly turns back to them from the window, seeing and feeling their wanting looks, his lip quivers, then stops.

HOLLAND

Let them know.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

The flight deck is filled with every crew member. Holland is followed by Kat, Abas & Beta, Olas & Brea, Ja & David, Mak & Cora, the crew eagerly anticipating Holland's words.

They stop in front of the group, Holland slowly making his way to the middle of the two groups, slowly looks around.

HOLLAND

You'd expect me to have the perfect words to reassure everyone that we're not only going to survive, but that we're going to somehow thrive and *win*, whatever that means right now.

He takes a moment and turns, slowly scans their faces.

HOLLAND'S POV - SLOWLY SCANNING THEIR FACES

Seeing a variety of emotions from concern to strength that  
INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

BACK TO SCENE

HOLLAND

But I don't. What I had, was the hope that we had somehow moved past the need for conflict. This will always be my hope. But for now, this hope is just that, a *hope*. There are things that I second guess about my father's obsession with this mission and the Liberty Dawn. But the one thing I've never second guessed is his judgement about what's right and what's wrong.

Holland takes another break, scanning their faces.

HOLLAND (CONT'D)

What's in front of us is unknown. What's behind us is gone. Will we be known as explorers, endless warriors, saviors, defenders of the good, or something else..? It will be up to each one of us to make that determination in the minds of others, sometime in the unknown future.

An even toned beeping is heard in the flight deck, Beta's image coming up on a large monitor.

BETA

(ON SCREEN)

We have a return on the transmission coming from Aljibar. I'm sending it to the ship navs.

HOLLAND

Thank you, Beta.

(nods to Born)

Pep talk's over, I'm turning this over to your Executive Officer.

Born steps forward.

BORN

Aljibar is assumed to be friendly. Ja and David, Mak and Cora, are leading the scout party. Their first mission is to make contact and establish communication. The rest will keep their distance and be there if needed. Any questions..?

(no responses)

Heads on a swivel. Be safe.

EXT. LIBERTY DAWN - NIGHT

The Liberty Dawn floats just above Aljibar's atmosphere, seeing Ja and Mak's ships exit, followed by the rest of the fleet, turning over and down toward Aljibar.

EXT. ALJIBAR AIR SPACE - DAY

From the air, looking down over low vegetation and grasses, a network of ancient looking structures with large plazas and stepped pyramids. One sends a bright light. Ja and Mak's ships enter the picture below us.

INT. JA'S SHIP - DAY

Ja and Mak's ships are technically advanced fighting ships without windows, room for a pilot and co-pilot, outfitted with viewing screens and a touch screen instrument panel between them, steering and weapon controls nearby. All pilots and co-pilots wear headsets under clear helmets.

JA  
We'll land in the plaza.

DAVID  
We were invited, so they can't be upset that we came, right..?

JA  
You haven't been to my place at Thanksgiving.

INT. MAK'S SHIP - DAY

A ship identical to Ja's, Cora is analyzing the air quality and temperature as they get closer.

CORA  
The nitrogen, oxygen, argon, carbon dioxide, trace gasses, and water vapor levels are all virtually identical to Earth's. Temperature is seventy-three degrees, no wind.

Mak zooms the picture, seeing no one.

MAK  
There's no one outside.

EXT. ALJIBAR / PLAZA - DAY

Ja and Mak gently land their ships, stirring some dust when they land. The place has the look and feel of an eerie off-planet ghost town.

CO-PILOTS DAVID AND CORA

Stand in the open near their ships, the light from the stepped pyramid aims at them, forcing them to squint. A short column nearby hums loudly, they approach it.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Holland, Born, and others, watch David and Cora's progress on their monitors. Their reactions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

DAVID AND CORA

Stand near the column, the humming getting louder. Suddenly, the hum stops.



THE LIGHT ON THE PYRAMID

Begins to flash, then a new pulsing sound, alarming in nature starts. Several other lights on nearby structures flash.

SEVERAL DARK MENACING SHIPS STREAK IN OVERHEAD

Begin attacking with laser fire. David and Cora sprint back to their ships.

DAVID  
We're under attack..!

INT. JA'S SHIP - DAY

David gets in, Ja lifting her ship. Their conversation with Liberty Dawn INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

JA  
Mak..!

INT. MAK'S SHIP - DAY

Cora straps in, Mak's ship in the air.

MAK  
This isn't a drill..! We're under  
fire..!

CORA  
Weapons are hot..!

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / BRIDGE - DAY

Holland nods, Born and the others awaiting his decision.

BORN  
Engage..!

Concerned looks are shared.

**END OF ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

EXT. ALJIBAR AIR SPACE - DAY

Ja and Mak's ships are being heavily pursued under enemy fire, doing everything they can to avoid being hit, dodging and rolling.

INT. MAK'S SHIP - DAY

Mak and Cora both strapped in, their ship screens spinning, attempting to escape. Their reactions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

MAK

Multiple ships coming at us..!

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / BRIDGE - DAY

Holland, Born, and others, watch the assault unfolding on their monitors with horror. Their reactions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

EXT. ALJIBAR / RIVER BED - DAY

Ja and Mak race their ships over a dry river bed, twisting and turning to avoid getting hit. Actions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

INT. JA'S SHIP - DAY

Ja, intently focused, sees Mak under heavy fire behind her. Ship reactions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

JA

Mak..! What's your status..?!

INT. MAK'S SHIP - DAY

Mak's head swivels around, Cora charging the sonic weapon. Ship reactions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

MAK

We got a couple dozen at least..!

CORA

Charged and ready..!

MAK

Do it now..!

Cora sends the blast, bumping their already rocky ride.

TWO CLOSEST PURSUING SHIPS

Are knocked out of the chase, crashing to the ground.

IN JA'S SHIP

She rises out of the river bed to take a look, David seeing vegetation ahead, twisting barrel rolls to avoid the intense rear fire.

DAVID

More trees..!

JA

Let's see if they know the forest  
from the trees..!

IN MAK'S SHIP

Cora looks at Mak, seeing intense pressure behind them.

CORA

Will we know, that's the question.

MAK

Okay, let's do it..!

ON LIBERTY DAWN'S BRIDGE

Looks of concern are shared, watching the wild chase.

EXT. ALJIBAR / FOREST CHASE - DAY

From a high angle, Ja and Mak fly into a thick natural arch of trees and vines, entering an old growth area. Action INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

RACING THROUGH THICK VEGETATION

Avoiding trees, vines, rock formations, and remnants of ancient monuments with skilled precision, losing a few pursuing ships to crashes, a ship gains on Mak.

## IN MAK'S SHIP

Cora's sonic weapon is charged. Ship action INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

CORA

Sorry to ruin your day..! Fire..!

The ship shutters, Mak holding steady, looks back.

## THE PURSUING SHIP

Is knocked, sending it crashing into the trees. The remaining pursuers rise above the trees and fire down from above.

## IN JA'S SHIP

Ja and David show their frustration. Reactions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

JA

Mak, hold steady and stay in the trees..!

MAK

I plan to..!

JA

I'm going after them..!

MAK

Ja..! No..!

## ABOVE THE TREES

Seen from behind the enemy invaders, Ja's ship shoots out of the cover, rising sharply in an ascending climb, twisting barrel rolls over and around, getting behind her targets, taking a number of them, while a number of the invaders turn sharply, getting an advantage on her.

## IN JA'S SHIP

Her and David look at each other, in trouble. David charges his pulse.

JA

Mak, we're not looking very good here..!

(MORE)

JA (CONT'D)  
(to David)  
Are you charged..?!

DAVID  
Ready, fire..!

The pulse weapon knocks two more ships off their tail, but remain under heavy fire.

IN MAK'S SHIP

He sends Cora a look of concern.

MAK  
Sit tight, here we come..!

MAK'S SHIP SURPRISES EVERYONE

Shooting straight up through the trees, narrowly shooting up between Ja's passing tail and her pursuers, making a spectacular move of his own to loop around and fire, taking two of the invading ships, forcing the rest to scatter.

IN JA'S SHIP

Ja and David send looks of relief, looking at their surroundings.

JA  
Not the welcome we were expecting.

DAVID'S POV - NAVIGATION SCREEN

Seeing a slow blinking beacon in the distance.

BACK TO SCENE

David, perplexed, looks at Ja.

DAVID  
Beta, we're getting a beacon on our nav.

IN JA'S SHIP

Cora sees it too.

CORA  
We see it too. Who's it from..?

ON LIBERTY DAWN'S BRIDGE

Holland watches with concern, looks at Beta.

HOLLAND

It's not from us. Investigate with caution.

EXT. ALJIBAR / DESERT OUTLANDS - DAY - ESTABLISHING

From high in the air, Ja and Mak's ships slowly survey the desert landscape with no sign of active life on the surface, but full of reminders. A waste field of abandoned, huge ships, tech trash, and an ancient city of stone beyond that.

EXT. ALJIBAR / DESERT OUTLANDS - DAY

Their reprieve short lived, about a dozen more invading ships close in for another pursuit. Ja and David race their Explorer Series E-Class ships through and around the waste field, each taking an attacking ship down in the process. Action INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

MAK'S SHIP

Races straight up into the sky, tailed by two invaders. Action INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

FIVE OF LIBERTY DAWN'S FLEET JOIN IN

Two larger, more powerful Double Series D-Class, and three smaller Single Series S-Class ships. One of three S-Class ships breaks into the sky to assist Mak. Action INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

INT. WEASEL'S SHIP - DAY

WEASEL (20s), a wired ball of energy, readies to clean Mak's tail. He has *Sweet Home Alabama* cranked in his S-Class cockpit. His singing and reactions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

WEASEL

(singing)

Sweet home, Alabama..! Where the  
skies are so blue..! Sweet home  
Alabama..! Lord I'm comin' home to  
you..!

Weasel lets his target have it, taking them both down in a ball of fire.

WEASEL (CONT'D)

Ba, da, da, da, da, don, da, da,  
da, da, da, da, da, da, da, daaa.

MAK

Thanks Weasel..!

WEASEL

At your service, mah Mak..! If  
you'll excuse me, I've got so'more  
bad doggies that need a lesson or  
two..! Bow wow at'cha yah later.

ON THE LIBERTY DAWN

Born and Holland raise their eyebrows, exhaling.

IN JA'S SHIP

David and Ja stay focused, heat on their tail, wagging her ship to avoid multiple streams of laser fire, now relieved to see help has arrived.

DAVID

Welcome to Aljibar, friends..! Do  
us a favor and take care of this  
mess, will yah..!

A sonic blast takes down three of the closest ships as four of Liberty's ships roll down to offer support. The invaders are chased further out into the desert, leaving Ja and Mak's ships alone to investigate.

EXT. ALJIBAR / DESERT OUTLANDS - DAY

From a high angle, Liberty Dawn's five fleet ships isolate the ten remaining invading ships and begin taking them down in the waste field.

INT. JA'S SHIP - DAY

David sees the location beacon blinking on the screen between him and Ja, looks at her.

JA'S POV - NAVIGATION SCREEN

Showing they are close to the location.

BACK TO SCENE

JA  
Who and where are you..?

DAVID  
Look at this place.

IN MAK'S SHIP

Cora sees the beacon on her screen.

CORA  
It's coming from the big structure  
at the end of the plaza.

MAK  
Wha'do'you think this is..?

ON LIBERTY DAWN'S BRIDGE

Holland, Beta, Abas, Olas & Brea, watch their cautious arrival into the abandoned city, approaching the large entrance arch, sliding slowly under it, close to the ground. Interactions with investigating ships INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

ABAS  
Building a language profile is a  
priority.

BREA  
Might it be easier to educate  
them..?

EXT. ALJIBAR / ABANDONED ANCIENT CITY - DAY

Ja and Mak's ships slowly crawl past a giant acropolis into a huge complex maze of pillars, ruins, and large stone sculptures of strange animals. Other than a whiff of sand, there is no sign of life.



## A BRIGHT LIGHT SIGNALS THEM

From the top of a high stone monument at the end of a long plaza, from a sculpted head mounted on giant high arch that supports what looks like an Egyptian Pharaoh's head. Behind the arch is another very high, intricately carved, wall.

## IN JA'S SHIP

Ja sees the bright light at the far end of the plaza. Their conversations with Liberty Dawn INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

DAVID

We're seeing another light at the far end.

HOLLAND

We see it too. Approach with caution.

Ja's ship crawls slowly forward, trailed by Mak's ship.

## AT THE HUGE ARCHWAY

Ja and Mak's ships are parked on the ground, David and Cora are outside, all in their clear sealed head gear, slowly approaching the archway, pilots remaining in their ships. Their actions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

DAVID

You hear a hum..?

CORA

I can feel it. It's deep.

DAVID

This place is massive.

They both wander under the arch and pause there, look at each other, then around, feeling something peculiar.

CORA

You feel that..?

DAVID

Yeah.

HOLLAND

What's happening..?

DAVID  
 It's a tingle, energy of some kind.  
 (calls)  
 Hello..!

David's voice echoes a number of times, getting softer.

ON LIBERTY DAWN'S BRIDGE

Looks are traded, viewing a wide shot of them standing under the arch, barely seeing a stone door that opened in the wall behind David.

OLAS  
 Did you see that..!

Olas zooms the image, seeing the open door.

HOLLAND  
 Cora, David..! Behind you.

CORA AND DAVID

Remove LED light wands from their suits, both moving toward the newly opened door, pausing to look at the complex writing on the wall.

EXT. ALJIBAR / ABANDONED ANCIENT CITY / STONE WALL - DAY

David and Cora study the mass of complex inscriptions on the outside. David touches the wall. Their communication with Liberty Dawn INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

DAVID  
 Wha'do'you think it is..?

ON LIBERTY DAWN'S BRIDGE

Abas is huddled close to the monitor, trying to read it. Their interactions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

ABAS  
 Possibly a hybrid of languages.

CORA STUDIES THE WALL

Her glove scanning a portion, pointing as she speaks.

CORA

It resembles early Mesoamerican,  
there's a Rebus similarity, some  
resemble Mesopotamian styles and  
others Egyptian hieroglyphics.

AT THE DOOR IN THE STONE WALL

David and Cora turn on their bright LED light wands.

DAVID

We're going inside.

David's the first in, followed by Cora.

INT. ALJIBAR / ABANDONED ANCIENT CITY / ANCIENT ROOM - DAY

David and Cora, inside, their faces in their helmets lit, in awe of the wall's complex features. A humanoid statue holds an O ring over its head in the middle of the room. Their conversations with Liberty Dawn INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

CORA

We're seeing more complex carving  
and similar inscriptions on the  
walls and a statue.

The room hum grows as the intricately carved O ring on the statue begins to glow, changing colors, slow at first, then faster, turning into a solid white light.

DAVID

Are you seeing this..?

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / BRIDGE - NIGHT

Holland, Beta, Abas, Olas, and Brea are mesmerized by what they're seeing. Their communication with David and Cora INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

HOLLAND

It's stunning. What do you think  
it is..?

IN THE ANCIENT ROOM

The O's light and room hum fluctuates to its highest activity, projecting a holographic image of Aljibar and the four planets nearby that fills the room's interior space.

CORA  
I can feel it, *it's communicating*  
*with us.*

David looks around, feeling it too.

DAVID  
I can't tell you how we know this,  
but they want us to act.

ON LIBERTY DAWN'S BRIDGE

They are all mesmerized by the sight.

INT. JA'S SHIP - DAY

Ja sees her ship navigation begin to fill with all the complex mapping files for Aljibar and all the nearby planets, mystified. Her reaction INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

JA  
(hesitant)  
The ship nav just loaded a bunch of  
new mapping files.

INT. MAK'S SHIP - DAY

Mak touches his screen, seeing the files load as well. His conversation INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

MAK  
I'm getting them too. It's Aljibar  
and the neighboring planets.

IN THE ANCIENT ROOM

A spot glows red on the closest neighboring planet. The moment either David, or Cora, moves, the maps rotate, so they stop. Cora moves her hands, bringing the other planet down into focus, zooming in on the location.

ON THE MAP IS AN OBVIOUS MILITARY BASE

Showing hundreds of smaller ships like the ones they already battled, plus several larger ships with destructive weapons. The message is clear.

IN JA'S SHIP

She reluctantly looks at the base map images.

JA  
It's a military base.

IN THE ANCIENT ROOM

David and Cora look at each other.

DAVID  
I'm not an expert, but it doesn't  
look easy.

Cora widens Aljibar back into an expanded view.

ON THE MAP OF ALJIBAR

You can see the temperate zones, ancient settlements, ruins,  
and a large substructure within the planet that appears  
mechanized.

IN THE ANCIENT ROOM

David and Cora look at Aljibar's substructure, mystified,  
equally curious about what's behind all the walls and  
underneath the surface.

ON LIBERTY DAWN'S BRIDGE

Holland, Beta, Abas, Olas, and Brea are riveted by the  
revelations.

HOLLAND  
All right, that's enough for today.

EXT. LIBERTY DAWN - NIGHT

Hovering above Aljibar, Liberty Dawn's fleet of ships fly  
into its rear entrance.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Abas and Beta are studying the three dimensional map models  
with Born, joined by Olas and Brea. Abas zooms in the fully  
interactive map at the location. They're joined by Ja,  
David, Mak, and Cora, concerned.

BORN

Protected on both sides with high mountains and armed protection. There's only one way in.

Abas zooms in more and looks around. It's a huge military base. At one end are hundreds of attack ships, like the kind they just experienced. At the other end are larger ships with larger weapons.

MAK

Let's try it in the simulator to see if we can take the towers out first.

BORN

Okay. We fly in the morning.

CORA

Crew's getting together in the lounge. Why don't you take a break.

MAK

I don't have a good feeling about this. Go ahead.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / CREW LOUNGE - NIGHT

There's a celebration happening after a good day for the crew, boisterous and lively, drinks flowing, music playing, Weasel a master of ceremony of sorts.

WEASEL

(boisterous)

You guys are all fired for being too damn good today..!

SNIPE (22), black, male, muscular, shoots back.

SNIPE

Fired..! We're in outer space, Weasel..! That's a good name for you by the way..!

WEASEL

Yeah, Snipe, you and Zak gave it to me..!

(laughter)

To us..! We did good today..!

Weasel takes his shot, ZAK (21), white, chimes in.

ZAK

You need singing lessons, Weasel..!  
That was really bad today..!

Weasel moves between two couples, BENNY (22), black, male, and JUNE (22), black, female, on one side. NICK (24), white, male, is with CONNIE (23), white, female, on the other side.

WEASEL

(gestures)

Not as bad as Benny and June..!  
They took down four today..!

(cheers, gestures)

Don't forget Nick and Connie for  
puttin' the rest to bed..!

The toasts fresh, Ja, David, and Cora make their appearance in the middle of it, getting Weasel's gaze.

WEASEL (CONT'D)

Well, look who just wandered in..!  
Ja, David, and Cora..! Get some  
drinks in their hands..!

A few cheers, some embraces, drinks put in their hands, their smiles are vivid, but Cora's more distant. Weasel tones it down, siding with Ja, toasting her glass.

WEASEL (CONT'D)

That was some flying today.

JA

Your move to help Mak was life  
saving.

WEASEL

It was more than I expected on the  
first day.

JA

It was more than anyone expected.

WEASEL

You think it's always going to be  
like this..?

Ja tries withholding her concern.

JA

Enjoy tonight and get some rest.

WEASEL

Where's Mak..?

JA  
He's running simulations.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / SIMULATOR ROOM - NIGHT

Later, Mak is clearly frustrated, running the model. Cora, Ja, and David enter, seeing his frustration.

CORA  
What's wrong..?

MAK  
They have position no matter where  
we're coming from.

Mak sits, deep in thought. Looks at Ja, nods to the other simulator.

MAK (CONT'D)  
Get in.

JA IN HER SIMULATOR

Is drop diving her ship straight down from the sky onto a gun position, shrieking.

JA  
Are you crazy..! It's straight  
down.

Ja takes out the gun turret, but can't quite pull up again in time, crashing into the ships on the runway.

MAK IN HIS SIMULATOR

Dives straight down as well, taking the gun turret, but also can't pull up in time, clipping the ground obstacles, expressing disgust. He get out and stands.

MAK  
Come with me.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Ja stands next to Mak, David and Cora behind them, watching the Flight Team weld double air brakes on their wings.

JA  
What is this..?



Mak stares, confidently hoping.

MAK

It's something from a long, long  
time ago. A great, great  
grandfather showed pictures to my  
Dad. He showed them to me.

DAVID

We have one shot at this.

CORA

Practice is for beginners.

**END OF ACT TWO**

ACT THREE

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / CREW LOUNGE - DAY

Ja, David, Mak, and Cora are having breakfast with the crew, seeing Aqueas, the new planet they're tasked with visiting, looming in the monitor at the end of their table.

CORA

Does it have a name..?

JA

Aqueas.

Mak stares, takes a sip of coffee, zoned out.

DAVID

Mak's there already.

MAK

Everything Holland senior said about this place was dark.

Some looks suggest, *that's cheerful.*

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / HOLLAND'S QUARTERS - DAY

Kat spends a moment looking at the smaller planet on their suite monitor before clearing breakfast dishes. Holland emerges from the bathroom, cut in the neck from shaving.

HOLLAND

Hon, do we have anything for this..?

KAT

Sit down.

Kat finds a first aid kit, takes out gauze, puts pressure on the cut, applies a fresh piece, tapes it. When she finishes, Holland warmly holds her hand.

HOLLAND

Thank you. For everything.

KAT

Your crew needs you.

HOLLAND

Why are we here, Kat..? I ask myself that every day.

She sees his trepidation, motions, *out there*, with her eyes.

HOLLAND (CONT'D)  
I should go to the briefing so  
they'll think everything's going to  
be okay now.

KAT  
That's because it will.

Holland stands, indifferent, then exits.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Born briefs the pilots, crew, and Holland, in front of the monitor, showing the model of the terrain, gun positions, and base features.

BORN  
Ja and Mak are dropping straight  
down over the guns, and the rest of  
you are going to sweep in and take  
care of this mess on the ground.

Their looks suggest, *that's a massive base*, because it is.

HOLLAND  
If this feels like we're going to  
war, that's not our intention.  
We're dealing with new worlds with  
new problems and new ways of  
communicating.

BORN  
Are there any questions..?

Looks are passed around.

BORN (CONT'D)  
All right, let's get it done.

They disperse to their ships.

EXT. LIBERTY DAWN - DAY

The ship's entire fleet exits out the front of the Liberty Dawn.

EXT. AQUEAS AIRSPACE - DAY

Liberty's fleet of seven ships, led by Ja and Mak, are high above the base. Five fleet ships roll off and descend, leaving Ja and Mak in the high position.

INT. MAK'S SHIP - DAY

Cora watches their navigation screen.

CORA'S POV - NAVIGATION SCREEN

Seeing their tower location, nearly straight below them.

BACK TO SCENE

They trade looks, nod. Conversation with Ja INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

MAK  
Okay, this is it.

INT. JA'S SHIP - DAY

Ja exhales, looks over to David, putting her game face on. Conversation with Mak INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

JA  
Well, I don't see any reason to be all the way up here when we could just as easy be all the way down there. Wha'do'yah say..?

MAK  
I say it's time to get'er done.

JA  
If you insist.

EXT. AQUEAS / AIRBASE - DAY

Ja and Mak's ships turn over and down into a straight dive from high above, each ship focused on one gun site each. Action at the airbase INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

## AT THE GUN POSITIONS

On high steep mountain peaks on each side, an unusual looking GUNNER points up and alerts the other, screeching. Their lasers are aimed high, firing up at Ja and Mak's ships.

## JA'S SHIP

Lays on laser fire, continuously firing straight down while in a free fall.

## THE WING MODIFICATION ON JA'S SHIP

Is taking laser fire, receiving damage, becoming unstable.

## MAK'S SHIP

Lays continuous fire while in his free fall, straight down.

## ONE OF THE GUN POSITIONS

Is shut down, the Gunner slumped over.

## MAK'S SHIP

Takes heavy fire, his wing modification taking hits, making his ship spin, continues to fire, his ship unstable, just managing to end the second Gunner. Tries pulling out of the spinning dive, clipping a building on the ground, continues to barely fly through the base picking up additional fire.

## JA'S SHIP

Is also severely damaged, clipping the gun tower, suffering more damage, taking more fire over the base. Attempting to follow Mak's ship into the deep jungle at the other end of the base, both ships flying unsteady.

## LIBERTY'S FLEET

Storms over the base in unison, laying heavy laser fire, causing a series of major explosions, succeeding to destroy the base, receiving return fire on their way through.

## ON LIBERTY DAWN'S BRIDGE

Holland and Born stoically watch the base explosions with the others.

## SIX AQUEAS SHIPS

Fall in behind Liberty's ships, sending steady fire.

## IN ZAK'S SHIP

His head spins, taking the rear fire from behind, seeing his tails.

ZAK

Not sure what's happening up front,  
but I've got a half dozen on my  
tail..!

## ON LIBERTY DAWN'S BRIDGE

Holland watches with concern, nods to Born.

HOLLAND

Bring them home.

BORN

Good job everyone, bring yourselves  
back in one piece.

## LIBERTY'S FLEET

Escapes the conflict, lifting up and away without Ja and Mak's ships that continue into the jungle, the Aqueas ships continuing their hunt, following them into the dense brush.

## EXT. AQUEAS / THE LOST JUNGLE - DAY

Ja and Mak's ships hobble through a dark, dense jungle, full of fallen giant trees, ancient ruins, and predators of all kinds, passing a pair of giant dinosaur like creatures called Zirks, with long and large ambulatory arms.

## INT. MAK'S SHIP - DAY

Mak is struggling to keep his ship under control, let alone fly in such difficult conditions.

Cora's concentrating on the navigation, seeing nothing but jungle. Conversations with Ja's ship INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

CORA

It's nothing but brush, can we lift out of here..?

MAK

Our power's low, wings are damaged, and the modifications don't help.

CORA

We've lost transmission power.

MAK

We need to set down to conserve ship power. Ja, what's your status..?

INT. JA'S SHIP - DAY

Ja is also struggling to keep her ship flying, David also seeing that they're lost and they've lost transmission. Conversations with Mak's ship INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

JA

It's bad. We can't lift, or outrun anything right now without stopping to fix the engine and the wings.

DAVID'S POV - NAVIGATION SCREEN

Seeing a long winding canyon with a small clearing at the other end, also seeing the six pursuing ships.

BACK TO SCENE

David adjusts the screen, animated.

DAVID

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but we've got six of them on our backsides..! We're heading to a canyon on our left..! I suggest we dive in and follow it, take our chances there..! It takes us to a clearing at the other end..!

JA

We've got laser fire..!

## THE BATTLE IN THE LOST JUNGLE

Aqueas ships send laser pulses, causing explosions in the surrounding trees, unable to find Ja and David's hobbled ships that weave almost out of control. They weave through a small ancient site, where a plaza temple structure blocks a laser strike. Action INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

## IN MAK'S SHIP

Cora looks behind them, seeing ships on their tail. Conversations with Ja's ship INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

CORA

Initiating pulse fire..!

MAK

Not now, we have to conserve power.

## THE BATTLE IN THE LOST JUNGLE

Continues with Ja and Mak's ships barely conducting a series of barrel rolls through overgrown jungle, the Aqueas ships in pursuit, sending laser fire.

## IN MAK'S SHIP

Eyes turn to a near panic stricken Cora, who tries taking a couple deep breaths.

CORA

If you have any ideas, Ja..!

## IN JA'S SHIP

She sees a way through.

JA

The tree trunk..!

## THE BATTLE IN THE LOST JUNGLE

Follows the pursuit through wobbling twists and turns, both ships flying through a gigantic fallen tree's root base, where an Aqueas ship crashes, the rest on through an ancient temple, leading to a large ancient figure statue that points, following that direction to a bridge over a gaping canyon.



IN JA'S SHIP

David swivels back to the navigation screen.

DAVID

This is it..! Down we go..!

Ja and David look at each other, like, *what did we just get ourselves into.*

IN MAK'S SHIP

He and Cora look at each other.

CORA

And then what..?!

THE BATTLE IN THE LOST JUNGLE

Continues as all the ships dive into the canyon, five pursuers sending laser fire, all tasked with flying through this ugly mass of huge fallen trees draped with vegetation and vines, waterfalls, light that can barely penetrate through shafts, seen in the mist, still under heavy fire.

IN MAK'S SHIP

Are shared looks of doom, lasers firing around them.

MAK

What is this place..?!

CORA

Our worst nightmare.

IN JA'S SHIP

JA

Our power's getting weak..! How far is it..?!

DAVID

Not far enough if we can't get rid of them first..!

THE BATTLE IN THE LOST JUNGLE

Offers them a break when one of the trailing ships collides with a fallen tree before Mak's ship sheers a branch off.

With four ships in pursuit, they all fly under a waterfall, exiting into a slightly more open section of the canyon.

MASSIVE ZIRKS

Are languishing on huge fallen trees, grabbing huge flying creatures with their massive arms. One of the Zirks sees the approaching ships and lets out a loud roar. Heavy vegetation above them and fallen trees below demands that the pilots are going to have to fly through their arm reaches.

IN JA'S SHIP

Simultaneous looks of horror engulf them.

DAVID

What are those..?!

IN MAK'S SHIP

Cora is trying hard not to totally lose it.

CORA

Can anyone tell me what the hell this godforsaken place is..?! It's pissing me off..!

Mak glances back, like, *where'd that come from.*

THE BATTLE IN THE LOST JUNGLE

Sees Ja and Mak's ship with four pursuers and laser fire heading toward the Zirks.

IN MAK'S SHIP

Cora screams.

CORA

For god'sakes, Mak, will yah let them be the first to die..!

Another look from Mak, like, *you go girl.*

MAK

I'll go with that. Count it out, Ja.

IN JA'S SHIP

David nods, *good idea.*

JA  
Three..! Two..! One..! Now..!

THE BATTLE IN THE LOST JUNGLE

Ja and Mak simultaneously lift and reverse thrust, letting their four pursuers slide through, three of the four ships ending up into the arms of the Zirks, that grab and smash them to pieces, relishing their destruction.

The last Aqueas ship is now pursued by Ja and Mak's ships through and around the arms of the occupied Zirks.

JA AND MAK'S SHIPS

Simultaneously blast the remaining Aqueas ship into a fireball, watching it fall into the canyon.

IN JA'S SHIP

David and Ja see the ship power status warning.

JA'S POV - PILOT SCREEN

A thin red line of their power indicator, showing that their ship is completely out of power.

BACK TO SCREEN

JA  
We need to set down.

EXT. AQUEAS / THE LOST JUNGLE / CLEARING - DUSK

Ja and Mak's ships both set down in a clearing, both out of power. There's a large pond not far from them.

A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY

Sakras, very large dog like animals with huge heads and sharp teeth, grimace and growl from the edge of the clearing.

## OUTSIDE JA AND MAK'S SHIPS

The four of them are outside, taking a minute to get some air. David and Cora get the lights out for later. Mak finds a repair kit while Ja inspects the ships.

## JA'S POV - INSPECTING THE SHIPS

Showing significant damage to the wing structures, holes from laser fire, and the modification pieces that need to be removed.

## BACK TO SCENE

All manner of bush shaking and sounds, from bad to worse, can be heard around them in the jungle.

JA

They don't look great. If the power modules are damaged, it won't matter what the wings are like.

David sparks the end of a repair rod into a bright blue tip for cutting and small welds. The sounds continue.

CORA

Do we have any weapons..?

David finds a futuristic hand gun, gives it to Cora.

DAVID

It has three shots. For emergencies only.

David moves to find the other pistol for Ja.

CORA

This doesn't strike me as a quiet place after dark.

MAK

Let's start with the power modules. Maybe we can get out of here.

David returns with the other emergency gun, hands it to Ja.

DAVID

Keep your eyes open.

David and Mak, under one of the ships, open a panel.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / BRIDGE - NIGHT

There is grave concern around the conference table, the leadership group looking distraught. Kat and Holland, Abas and Beta, Olas and Brea, Mara and Born, listening to the end of Benny and June's account of what happened.

BENNY

They came down hard like they were supposed to and took out the tower guns, but it was a hard recovery and they both took hard knocks and some rear fire.

JUNE

We were right behind them. They were a little unsteady. When we all left, they kept going into the jungle. That was the last time we saw them.

HOLLAND

All right. Dismissed.

Holland and Born look at each other, then the others.

BORN

There's nothing showing up anywhere. They could be out of range, they could be in trouble, or something worse.

HOLLAND

I don't think I have to say what losing four of our best pilots would mean to the long term success, or failure, of this mission.

EXT. THE LOST JUNGLE / CLEARING - NIGHT

Cora and Ja are hearing major rushing in the bushes, looking with their lights.

CORA

Mak, something's out there..! I hear it..!

JA

Cora's right. We should get in the ships and wait until it's light.

## UNDERNEATH THE SHIP

David's holding a small light for Mak, tinkering with the power module, wags his head.

MAK  
The module is damaged.

DAVID  
Can we fix it..?

MAK  
It took a laser strike.

CORA (O.S.)  
Maaaak..! David..! You need to  
come out here.

## NEXT TO THE SHIP WITH JA AND CORA

David and Mak see Ja and Cora's angst in their flashlights.

CORA  
(terrified)  
What the hell are those..!

MAK  
(to the creatures)  
Hey there, we're just lost. Make  
yourselves at home.

There are four Hybrids, giant lizard like mutant creatures that stand on their back legs with bright yellow eyes and two fingered hands with sharp claws, sickly rattling their tongues in a rasp.

JA  
Is this their watering hole or  
their dinner stop..?!

A pack of Sakras move in from the other side, growling and yelping, ready to compete for the flesh. Ja turns her light, seeing the Sakras, their entrance to the ship blocked.

DAVID  
No sudden moves.

Ja and Cora slowly put the guns in David and Mak's hands, then Ja sparks the welding rod, alternating between the two groups of beasts.

JA  
Back..!

Gigantic roars precede the bushes being smashed open in the large moon light to reveal three gigantic Zirks, roaring their way forward.

CORA  
Unfortunately for us, it's their  
dinner stop.

Ja looks at their open ship doors, slowly moving to hers with David, Mak and Cora to theirs.

JA  
Nice and easy.

Two Hybrids move for Cora and Ja, getting two bullets each from Mak and David, killing them.

CORA  
Run..!

Then two Sakras attack, grabbing Cora and Ja by their legs, pulling them down, dragging them away. Cora screaming her head off.

CORA (CONT'D)  
MAAAAAAAAK..! SHOOOOT..!

JA  
HEEEEEELP..! AHHHHHH..!

Mak and David put their last single bullets into the Sakras, who are yanking and biting Cora and Ja's legs, bleeding. Mak grabs the hot pointer and jabs the Sakras, then another Hybrid yanks it from his hands, starts dragging him off.

MAK  
HEEEEEELP..! DAVID..!

David finds a branch and starts fighting with another Hybrid, a desperate struggle of survival, screaming and fighting, now being attacked from behind by Sakras too.

THREE ZIRKS BUST FORWARD

One grabs Cora, screaming bloody murder, another grabbing Ja, trying to punch it, lifting them both with their powerful arms, Sakras hanging off their legs as the third Zirk grabs a pair of Hybrids and starts eating one.

ABOVE THE JUNGLE BRUSH AND TREES

An ominous throbbing, powerful hum that pulses on and off in four second intervals, causes the wild beasts to pause, the women still in the hands of the Zirks.

A WIDE, PIERCING BEAM OF LIGHT FROM ABOVE SCANS OVERHEAD

The sound louder and louder, more ominous. Dart like devices are shot into the Zirks, making them dizzy, releasing the women, badly injured, crawling back toward their ships. Mak and David are severely injured, crawling, Cora crying.

CORA

(sobbing)

What now..! What's happening  
now..?!

MAK

Get in the ship and lock the door  
if you have to.

DAVID

Go, Ja. I'm hurt bad.

THE PIERCING LIGHT STOPS DIRECTLY OVER THE SHIPS

As the Zirks collapse and the other beasts escape, a steady breeze flushes the grass around them, then a mist falls, all four of them looking up, shielding the light, then together slump onto the ground in a daze.

DAVID'S HEAD LAYS SIDEWAYS ON THE GROUND

With his eyes open, fully dilated, motionless, not blinking.

DAVID'S POV - LOOKING SIDEWAYS

At the ground, brightly blown out from the strong light above, hearing the rushing breeze from something. He hears a mechanical sound, seeing a corner of his ship pass over.

DAVID CONTINUES TO LAY THERE, HIS SIDEWAYS VIEW LOCKED

Hearing strange sounds, then he sees TWO HUMANOID figures, fully covered in bulky protection suits, carry Ja on a stretcher of some kind. Then Cora's the next to be carried past. After what seems like a long time, David is turned onto his back.



DAVID'S VIEW, CATATONIC, LOOKING STRAIGHT UP

Seeing the bright lights of a ship, hearing it's strange sound, feeling the rush of wind on his face, seeing glimpses of figures in the bulky suits with larger eyes, the picture moving when they carry him into the ship.

THE IMAGE TURNS WHITE

Continuing to hear strange sounds.

**END OF ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

EXT. LIBERTY DAWN - DAY

Kissed in light from Aljibar's sun, five ships enter the Liberty Dawn's rear entrance.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Ja and David's ships still missing from the flight deck, seven pilots, Benny, June, Nick, Connie, Weasel, Snipe, and Zak struggle forward, met by Born.

NICK

The area around the base has been a hot zone since the strike.

CONNIE

We've double crossed our grid search across the whole jungle area where they were last seen.

ZAK

Even if they crashed, you think we would've found something.

BORN

It's been over three weeks. It's time for closure.

Frustration is seen on their faces.

WEASEL

If I have to go out alone, I will. But I'm not leaving our brother and sister's bones on some god forsaken mess of a planet.

SNIPE

Weasel's right. It's the code.

WEASEL

Next thing yah know, Earth'll be the one making some wild cosmic radio call to these creeps and that'll really be the end of it all, won't it..?

BENNY

Do we even know if any of this is real..? Or was it just a trap..?

JUNE

You ask me, this is lookin' like  
the biggest hoax in the entire  
universe.

Nobody noticed that Holland was standing off to the side,  
sending their eyes to the ground, like, *oh shit*.

BORN

Commander.

Holland approaches, his confidence obviously broken.

HOLLAND

I hate being called Commander.

JUNE

Sir. It's crew talk. It's how we  
deal with things.

HOLLAND

Perhaps if I had complained more  
when I was growing up, none of us  
would be in this mess.

They consider his humanity, trade looks.

BORN

All right, everyone take a break.

Born and Holland stand there, watching the crew exit.

HOLLAND

If I could take time back, I would.

BORN

We need to stay focused and come up  
with another option.

HOLLAND

They all had better options. David  
gave up law school for his  
patriotism and need to explore. Ja  
was the most naturally gifted pilot  
the academy had ever seen. Mak  
mastered machine learning early,  
making sure that machines work for  
us. Cora earned her doctorates in  
humanities and history by the age  
of seventeen.

BORN

This isn't your fault. We all knew  
the risks.

HOLLAND

Through flesh and blood, I inherit  
whatever befalls us on this  
mission.

INT. ALJIBAR / ABNER CIVILITY CENTER - DAY

From darkness, the light level slowly rises in a large white sterile room with no windows, four beds, statistic screens at the foot of each bed, Ja, David, Mak, and Cora each in a bed. At each bed is a robotic device that passes red light over affected areas and from which fluid lines run into their arms. With a gentle beeping sound, they begin to wake.

AT CORA'S BED

Her eyes slowly open, her hair wrapped in gauze like material, watches her leg being treated. She looks over to Ja's bed, seeing the same thing. Her voice is raspy and weak. They hear sounds around them like a hospital.

CORA

It feels good.

Ja's eyes slowly open, turning to Cora, her voice raspy.

JA

It's so warm.

AT DAVID'S BED

His eyes slowly open, moving them around, slowly finding Mak looking his way, slowly smiles. Their voices are all weak, strangely distant and affected by drugs. Adjusting their eyes as their bed backs slowly rise.

MAK

Look at this.

DAVID

*Is this what it feels like when  
you're born..?*

MAK

It can't be this good.

JA

They're sending breakfast in.

FOUR ROBOTS ON WHEELS ENTER WITH FOOD TRAYS

Enter, carrying trays a soft green brick shaped food with a spoon like utensil, handing them out. They look at each other, relishing the experience. David takes a bite, nods.

DAVID

Does it get *any* better..?

The robots leave the room.

AT JA'S BED

She hears the robot make a gentle whirring sound, seeing a purple fluid entering her arm. The others are receiving the same fluid, all taking deep breaths.

JA

(dreamy)

*They're constantly talking.*

Simultaneously, the small robots withdraw a small amount of blood from their arms.

AT MAK'S BED

He turns and stretches his neck, unfazed, taking a bite.

MAK

*That is delicious.*

AFTER EATING

The four robots exit with their trays. Then two new ones enter. They have touch screens mounted on them. One goes to David's bed, the other to Cora's, both child like, *dreamy*.

CORA

*They want to know everything.*

DAVID

*Okay, okay, these are numbers..*

CORA

*And these are letters..*

David begins drawing numbers on the screen, Cora letters.

DISSOLVE TO:

ALL FOUR PILOTS SITTING ON THE SIDE OF THEIR BEDS

Free of the fluid lines, dressed in their full flight suits and helmets. A gentle beeping precedes another set of doors that open. They stand together and exit.

INT. ALJIBAR / ABNER CIVILITY CENTER / ATRIUM WALKWAY - DAY

Ja, David, Mak, and Cora exit the healing room, seeing other patients before entering an atrium, still in a drugged state, greeted by beings with slightly larger eyes, smiling faces, covered in white protection suits and head coverings.

CORA'S POV - ABNER CIVILITY CENTER

The last one out, seeing everything in a floaty, dreamy state, her moves slower, being helped by a being in a suit. She looks over a railing to her left, pauses there, seeing layers and layers of dwellings, places of commerce, and learning, going way down.

Looking up, she sees a glass like pyramid cover, repairs going on with welding like activity, and beings on the many levels above them looking down at them with curiosity.

Continuing on her walk, to her right, she passes a room with clear glass, seeing a number of beings looking at their letters and numbers. A female approaches the window and puts her hand up. Cora stops, still in a drug induced state, awe struck by the being's smile, puts her hand up.

INT. ALJIBAR / ABNER CIVILITY CENTER / TRANSPORT TUNNEL SHUTTLE - DAY

All four pilots are in a fast moving quiet electric shuttle with two suited beings in an underground tunnel, the lights reflecting on their helmets, their eyes still distant.

INT. ALJIBAR / ABNER CIVILITY CENTER / SHIP HUB - DAY

All four pilots are entranced, seated in a room with dimmed lights, looking at a screen that shows them a forward view of the conflict they're going to become involved in at The Valley of Creation, acting like an instruction, speeding through sections, slowing down to show turns.

JA'S EYES

Scan the images robotically, making quick assessments.

MAK'S EYES

Memorize the route, not blinking.

BACK TO SCENE

The imagery ends. The lights in the room come on, the screen instantly turns into a window, seeing their ships right outside the room door. They exit through a door.

FOUR PILOTS APPROACH THEIR SHIPS

Not noticing how perfectly repaired they are, new shining finish, with other modifications they can't see. The two suited escorts open their ship doors. As each pilot is led to their ship, an escort pokes a small dose of something on the back of their hand before they board their ships.

JA AND MAK'S SHIPS BEING RAISED ON THE ELEVATOR

Rising up and past different levels, seeing welding and repairs of different infrastructure, passing a giant open area with a view to a vast sprawling underground mechanical construction with a massive purpose until the roof opens.

EXT. ALJIBAR / ABNER CIVILITY CENTER / SHIP HUB - DAY

Ja and Mak's ships are on the surface, stepped pyramid structures in the near distance, mirrored pyramid structures nearby, the dark attacking ships not far away, seen in the distance with smoke. Action INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

INT. JA'S SHIP - DAY

Ja and David take deep breaths, smile at each other, more like themselves, starting their ship, letting their screens come up, Ja doing a preflight check, seeming relaxed. Their conversation with Mak's ship INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

JA

Looks like all systems are normal.

David turns on the navigation screen, relaxed and normal.

DAVID

Everything looks good here.

JA

How you doing, Mak..?

INT. MAK'S SHIP - DAY

Mak and Cora nod, with everything up and running. Their conversation with Ja's ship INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

MAK

All systems check. We're good.

CORA

Let's do it.

JA AND MAK'S SHIPS LIFT

Just as fresh laser fire barely misses them. Both ships suddenly and sharply respond, darting upwards, each ship pivoting and firing at moving ships, taking several down, unlike anything they did before.

IN JA'S SHIP

She and David look at each other with surprise.

JA

Did our techs give our ship get a tune-up..? Let's see what else it's got..!

IN MAK'S SHIP

Mak and Cora are equally surprised.

MAK

Whatever it is, I'll take it. We have your back..!

CONFLICT OVER ABNER

Ja and Cora's ships race to disrupt the aerial assault over Abner, pausing to hover while they shoot down several ships.

IN MAK'S SHIP

His face is newly stern, something unseen before, swatting down ships like they were flies, looks at Cora and his ship.

MAK

I thought this would be harder.



IN JA'S SHIP

David's full of concern, seeing tons of approaching ships.

DAVID

It will be soon enough. There are dozens of ships heading our way..!

JA

Where is everybody..?! Okay, let's lead'em to the valley..!

Ja thrusts her ship forward.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - DAY

The mood on the flight deck is downcast, the crew moving slowly doing mundane tasks, cleaning the ships, doing diagnostic tests. Makeshift memorials have been erected in Ja and Mak's ship bays. Reactions to Ja's voice INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / BRIDGE - DAY

Everyone in the leadership group, with Holland and Kat, stand together, seemingly transfixed in the uncertain moment. Ja's voice pierces the uncertainty through the ship intercom. Reactions INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

JA

(through intercom)

Liberty Dawn..! Where you freaks at..?! We've got a nest of darkness on our tails and we need your help..! Someone get back to me..!

ON LIBERTY DAWN'S FLIGHT DECK

Everyone stops, hears Ja's voice, briefly cheering after her line. Two seconds later, they realize she's in trouble.

ON LIBERTY DAWN'S BRIDGE

Holland moves for the mic to answer Ja. His conversation with Ja INTERCUTS AS NECESSARY.

HOLLAND

Ja, where are you..?!

IN JA'S SHIP

They're frantic. Ja to David. Being swarmed by invaders.

JA

Send it..!

(to Holland)

We're fine, except for this mass of ships..! We've sent the location. Have the fleet meet us there.

EXT. LIBERTY DAWN - DAY

The remaining fleet begins to exit the front of the ship, angling down toward Aljibar.

EXT. ALJIBAR / ALJIBAR TERRITORIES - DAY - AERIAL

A pastoral image, floating over an open meadow region filled with Jooms, other strange animals and bird populations moving below is shattered by Ja and Mak's speeding ships flying below under hot pursuit and laser fire.

EXT. ALJIBAR / VALLEY OF CREATION - DAY - ESTABLISHING

From high above, we see a flat floored canyon of twists and turns filled with sculptures, checkerboard patterned sections, large columns, pyramid plazas, stone creatures, high arches, and Greek-like temples. The large twisting network reminds you of a natural race course with obstacles.

AT THE COURSE BEGINNING

Two huge standing humanoid statues with their backs against the canyon walls, each holding a side of huge O. Ja's ship comes flying through the middle of the O, being pursued by Aqueas invaders, sending laser fire.

JA'S SHIP POV - WEAVING THROUGH OBSTACLES

Barrel rolling under an arch at full speed, quickly rising over a sphynx, then flattens, all under fire. Her ship takes a sharp turn in the course, entering a narrow hallway corridor, dodging several mini arches, spilling out into another open area.

## JA'S SHIP REAR VIEW POV - SEEING PURSUING SHIPS

Sending laser fire with her ship in constant rocking motion to avoid contact. Two of their ships crash and explode, but there are several others, high and low, continuing the chase.

## INT. JA'S SHIP - DAY

Very tense, her eyes transfixed, automatically responding to her turns and adjustments, seen on screens in front of them. David turns, watching their pursuers.

JA  
We're heading into the towers..!  
Where are they..?!

DAVID  
I've got nothing..!

## BESIDE MAK'S SHIP

An Aqueas ship pulls next to his.

## IN MAK'S SHIP

Mak and Cora exchange cool, mechanical looks, competing for a narrow opening through an ancient church temple.

MAK  
Only one of us is going to church  
today..!

CORA  
Take him..!

With a slight grimace, Mak jerks his steering.

## AT THE ANCIENT TEMPLE

Mak's ship bumps the Aqueas ship into the stone structure, exploding it, allowing Mak to follow Ja's ship through a narrow chapel style structure with an O on top.

## AT THE ROCK TOWERS

From high above, Ja and Mak's ships enter a series of tall rock spires packed closely together, trailed by Aqueas ships firing lasers. Dozens of Aqueas ships hover over the towers and fire down, but Ja and Mak are moving too fast.

JA'S SHIP POV - WEAVING THROUGH ROCK SPIRES

Swiftly avoiding collisions, weaving through impossible gaps.

JA'S SHIP REAR VIEW POV - SEEING AQUEAS SHIPS CRASH

Behind Mak's following ship, both under continuous laser fire, an Aqueas ship crashes into a rock spire, exploding.

EXT. ALJIBAR / VALLEY OF CREATION AIR SPACE - DAY - INTERCUTS

Liberty Dawn's team of five ships roll down toward the rock spires blasting lasers, taking out the some Aqueas ships that continue firing on Ja and Mak's ships.

SHOOTOUT IN THE ROCK SPIRES

Liberty Dawn's fleet battles Aqueas ships above the rocks, taking heat off Ja and Mak, but attracting more heat.

IN JA'S SHIP

David and Ja's mood lightens, seeing the support from behind.

DAVID  
They're here..!

JA  
Welcome to the party everyone..!

IN BENNY AND JUNE'S SHIP

Hovering in a fierce shootout.

JUNE  
Thanks for the invite..!

IN NICK AND CONNIE'S SHIP

Delivering steady laser fire.

NICK  
We thought you crashed..!

IN SNIPE'S SHIP

Alone, his finger holding his fire switch.

SNIPE

I just hope it was personal..!

IN ZAK'S SHIP

He's calmly holding his fire button.

ZAK

Right now, I just wanna get this  
over with and get back to the ship.

IN WEASEL'S SHIP

Pivot firing, wearing yellow glasses, blaring and singing  
*Country Roads*.

WEASEL

Country roads, take me home...  
To the place, I belong...  
West Virginia, mountain mama...  
Take me home, country roads...  
Yeah, take that..! Good to hear  
your voice again, sister..!

TWO DOZEN AQUEAS SHIPS SWARM DOWN

Into the canyon spires, firing at them immediately.

IN JA'S SHIP

David wags his head, looks at Ja, a grimace on her face.

DAVID

Another wave..!

JA

They're a pain, aren't they..?!  
Give us a little room, everybody..!  
Ready Mak..?!

IN MAK'S SHIP

His face growls, letting a new part of himself out, receiving  
a strong look from Cora.

MAK

More than ready..!

## SERIES OF SHOTS - FINAL ASSAULT

A) Ja and Mak lead Aqueas ships through narrow canyon spires, causing several to crash.

B) From a high angle, Aqueas ships sending laser fire are blasted into the rocks by rear sonic blasts.

C) Ja conducts a spectacular rising barrel roll, looping back on the assaulting ships and takes out a more than a dozen of their ships, exploding a large number into the spires, then repeats the action, taking out more.

D) Ja's gaze is spellbindingly tough, almost mechanically driven, exchanging cool looks with David.

DAVID

Keep going.

David turns back to the chase, Ja scowls and keeps firing.

E) Ja leads the group down a narrow alley of spires, waves her wings, pulls up with Mak and hovers, letting Aqueas' ships through, taking a bunch down in forward fire, then they spin, taking a bunch more behind them.

F) Mak and then Ja hide behind a pair of rock spires for protection, popping out and back in a fierce fire fight with four remaining Aqueas ships, also hovering and firing from behind two spires. Mak continuously pounds the rock spires and collapses them onto the ships, ending the assault.

BACK TO SCENE

IN JA'S SHIP

Ja sends a fierce look to David, oddly entranced.

JA

How did we do..?

DAVID

Pretty good I think.

JA

Okay, let's go back to the ship.

EXT. LIBERTY DAWN - DUSK

The curvature of Aljibar's beautiful planet is bathed in both shadow and sun as the entire fleet returns, entering Liberty Dawn's rear entrance door.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - DUSK

Ja and David, Mak and Cora, exit their ships in full flight suits and helmets with blank faces, seeing their memorial remnants, unaffected. The other pilots and crew, Born and Holland, cautiously descend on them.

WEASEL

Welcome back.

Ja, David, Mak, and Cora blankly look at their expressions.

DAVID

It's always good to come back after a mission.

Born and Holland trade concerned looks.

WEASEL

Mission..! You've been gone...

Born raises his hand, like, *that's enough*.

BORN

All right..!  
(looks at the crew)  
Give us some time.

They wait for some distance, pilots and crew exiting toward the ship entrance. The four are still distant.

HOLLAND

We're just glad you're safe.

MAK

We did what we were asked.

BORN

You want to talk about it..?

JA

It was a hard fight today.

DAVID

We could of done more.

HOLLAND

From reports, you all did more than anyone thought possible.

CORA

We did our mission and we came home.

BORN  
Any idea how long the mission  
was..?

The four look at each other, like, *that's a dumb question.*

JA  
We left this morning with the rest  
of them.

Holland looks at Born.

HOLLAND  
Come with us.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / MEDICAL CLINIC - DUSK

A sterile white clinic capable of minor mishaps to major surgery, and all the diagnostic tools and medicines required to keep the ship healthy. Born and Holland are there with their partners, Mara and Kat, the ship doctors, in white.

BORN  
(quietly)  
Their last mission was on Aqueas.  
They resurfaced on Aljibar. They  
don't know they've been gone almost  
four weeks.

MARA  
They've seen a lot. Trauma can do  
that. It's a routine exam, some  
blood work. I suggest we don't say  
anything. Let it play out.

Ja, David, Mak, and Cora come into the clinic in white smocks, sit down on four chairs.

HOLLAND  
You know our ship physicians, Mara  
and Kat.

DAVID  
What's this about..?

MARA  
It's a routine check-up, David. We  
do it for all crew members. Today  
it's your turn.

KAT  
Who wants to go first..?



INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Two ship Flight Technicians, BARNS (32), and CURT (30), both no nonsense guys, check Ja's ship, Barns walking around it, running his hand over the surface.

BARNS

This is trippy. The air brakes are gone. No sign they were ever there. Beautiful new skin.

CURT

Let's take a closer look.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / CLINIC - NIGHT

Mara and Kat are cleaning the exam area, putting things away, Holland and Born sitting with Ja, David, Mak, and Cora.

BORN

It took longer than expected. Everything looks okay, but no flying for a while. Just bed rest and meals, we want you all back soon. Have a good night.

**END OF ACT FOUR**

**TAG**

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Born gets a tour of Ja and Mak's ships with Barnes and Curt as other Technicians and Flight Crew work close by, keeping an eye on the conversation.

BARNS

Not only did it return without the airbrakes, the skin's been redone. It's perfect work, flawless.

CURT

There's been some internal changes too. Modified engine plant, thrust modifications, new control arms for the steering.

BARNS

(quietly)

We're not much for politics and chit chat among the crew, but there's concern about what they might have been up to.

INT. LIBERTY DAWN / CLINIC - NIGHT

Holland stands with Mara and Kat in front of two large screens. A picture of Cora's head among multiple images, showing healed tri-claw rakes on her back, recovering leg damage, x-rays showing pins in shattered leg bones, other injuries as described.

KAT

This is Cora. Advanced reconstructive leg surgery in an advanced stage of recovery, given the time frame. Advanced recovery from deep raking wounds and internal injuries that were addressed through the abdomen. Blood work was way off for all of them. We don't know what the substances are, but likely from whatever surgeries they had.

They change the screens to Ja's head with a similar series of images and x-rays that summarize her injuries.

MARA

Similar situation with Ja, reconstructive leg surgery, again healing perfectly, she had open surgery in her abdomen, the same three claw raking pattern in several places, all healing, but these were horrific injuries.

They change the screens to Mak's head with a similar series of images and x-rays that summarize his injuries, switching to David's injuries part way through.

KAT

With the guys, they both had healing two claw injuries that were deep. David received surgery for internal injuries, Mak didn't. Mostly upper body. Overall, these were advanced surgical techniques.

MARA

They don't seem to have any idea what happened. It's sometimes how the brain protects us. It's unknown how it will manifest itself later. But we should encourage the crew not to talk about it.

**END OF TAG**