

The Generation Protocol

by
Lucas Seidman

THE BEYOND

Glows of a billion stars flicker and galaxies appear as brush strokes on black canvas. It slowly revolves into view, the

GENERATIONAL STAR SHIP PHAETON

a behemoth bathed in shadow, moon-sized but man-made, its ION THRUSTER CORE nudging it deeper into the unknown.

Blue light flickers in the distance, becomes a WAVE OF ENERGY that washes over the ship, shown on a MAIN SCREEN in--

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Where computer warnings echo and the ship tremors while

PHAETON CREW MEMBERS

manipulate HOLOGRAM CONTROL STATIONS in a state of panic. They're attractive and fit beneath tight, one-piece uniforms, perfect poster children for the space age master race.

A door slides open and SHE walks in confidently, surveys all with a piercing gaze, the culmination of a millennium of the most beautiful and intelligent breeding over and over again.

AURORA (20s)

jumps up to the platform on which the NAVIGATOR'S CHAIR waits, powers it up, slides a pair of ELECTRONIC GLOVES on.

HOLOGRAMS materialize in front of her as she looks down to two Bridge Engineers, MARCUS and TOMOKO, in similar chairs.

MARCUS

Class Three Supernova!

The echo of steel flexing like a sub reaching crush depth.

TOMOKO

Protocol says seal off Sector Two!

AURORA

Ignore the protocol!

THE SCENE FREEZES ON AURORA'S MID-YELL FACE. A hologram in--

INT. NAVIGATOR ROMAN'S OFFICE - GSS PHAETON

Spartan and cold-looking. A bright-eyed grandfather,

NAVIGATOR ROMAN(60s)

stares at the image projected onto his desk, touches it:

AURORA (V.O. HOLOGRAM)
Ignore the protocol!

He shuts it off, looks up to the real Aurora sitting next to
SECOND OFFICER BENNETT(40s)

a snide, authoritarian prick that would kill her if he could.

AURORA
I didn't believe sacrificing crew-

BENNETT
Believe?!

He rips a computer out and a HOLOGRAM of a PROCESS TREE
materializes, highlights branches in sequence. As it does:

BENNETT (CONT'D)
Radiation event. Hull instability.
Loss of pressure. Your next action
was clear. Belief is irrelevant.
(to Roman)
This violation warrants suspension
of her Navigator Classification.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
Leave me alone with her.

Bennett glares as he stands, walks through the sliding door.

AURORA
All those people that would have
died...it was an impulse...

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
Compassion is a dangerous impulse.
(as Aurora's head hangs)
Yet each generation we lose more of
what it is our Mission to preserve.

AURORA
Humanity...

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
I won't punish you for displaying a
quality needed to remake our world.
Not on the eve of The Arrival.

AURORA
What about Bennett?

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
He does not understand the power of
second chances. Or is this three?

AURORA
The Arrival...I feel...emotions...
(he urges her on)
Is it possible that following
protocols isn't the only way to
ensure Mission success?

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
That question can get you sent to
rehabilitation. You know this?

She nods, embarrassed. He leans forward, grins. Very sly.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
Is it possible? Or is it certain?

EXT. THE CITY OF AVALON - DAY

A glorious medieval kingdom bathed in sunlight. Streets are
alive with THOUSANDS OF CITIZENS who couldn't be happier.

KRISTOFF(late 30s)

a bearded warlord wearing an AMULET with a ruby in the center
commands respect from all he gallops past as he leads

ARMORED AVALON KNIGHTS

on horseback through the inner city, holding the reins of
another horse to which a CLOAKED PRISONER is tied.

They reach a well-guarded fortress that protects the gardens,
monuments, and glistening pools surrounding the ancient

CASTLE AVALON

cut from alabaster bricks, towers rising high above all.

INT. LIBRARY - CASTLE AVALON - DAY

QUEEN ARIA(40s)

paces beneath a mural-covered ceiling. She's elegant and
beautiful, far from fragile, the leader all love to love.

A crash and Kristoff throws the prisoner into the room, yanks
him up and pulls back the hood to reveal gagged and bound

HALFORD(20s)

a handsome and pissed-off Prince Charming whose fiery eyes
scream that he has nothing to lose and everything to prove.

KRISTOFF
In the forest, My Queen.

He pulls a knife, cuts Halford's ropes, pulls out his gag.

KRISTOFF (CONT'D)
Mind your tongue or you'll pay.

HALFORD
Kiss. My. Ass.

They glare at each other. Kristoff bows to Aria and leaves.

QUEEN ARIA
Where were you going this time?

HALFORD
Scleryth worship darkness and you
would have me share a bed with one.

He spits on the floor. She slaps him so hard he stumbles.

QUEEN ARIA
In my travels I have seen cities
filled with naught but the rotting
dead, kingdoms in ruin. Beyond our
borders, the world is crumbling.
(his head hangs)
Only Scleryth magic can ensure that
we do not meet the same end.
(steps close)
Try thinking about your people for
once. Instead of yourself.

HALFORD
It's not them getting married.

She grabs his arm, pulls him through an archway out to-

EXT. BALCONY - CASTLE AVALON - DAY

Looking over the city and its hustle. CHILDREN play. MEN
labor at their crafts. WOMEN stand in groups talking.

QUEEN ARIA
You forget yourself, Great Prince.
The castle belongs to them. They
gave it willingly to our line in
The Beginning. They bow out of
respect, not fear. You serve them.

HALFORD (CONT'D)
I spend every day training or in
study. Now I must suffer this
marriage in service. When does it
end? When may I smile as they do?

Aria turns to him, shakes her head gravely.

QUEEN ARIA

You will be king. When Kristoff decides you're ready, you'll be named High Protector. If you think life is hard now, wait until your every moment is consumed as mine is, worrying about the fate of each of the people in all Seven Cities.

HALFORD

I'm supposed to do whatever is necessary for the kingdom. How is it possible to always know?

Both of them. Staring out at the city. She turns to him.

QUEEN ARIA

It isn't. Which is why you get your castle. He who must give the most must have the most to give.

HALFORD

What if it is not enough?

QUEEN ARIA

Then all that came before us means nothing and Avalon will fail.

INT. NARROW PASSAGEWAY - GSS PHAETON

Bright and sterile. Aurora swipes her ID BRACELET over a blinking control panel and one of many simple doors opens to--

INT. RESIDENCE CABIN - GSS PHAETON

KYLE(17)

sits at a COMPUTER TABLE in their common room. He has her eyes and skin tone and, like a machine, works a HOLOGRAM OF THE SHIP with one hand, LISTS and GRAPHS with the other.

KYLE

You failed a routine assessment.

He pulls a LIST from thin air. "AURORA 32608 - FAILURE"

AURORA

I thought they shut you out?

KYLE

To serve the Mission optimally I must fully understand the ship.

He tears the thruster core off and snaps his fingers. The ship breaks into its parts, like a trillion specks of dust.

KYLE (CONT'D)

We must adapt its technologies to
build a whole world from nothing.

She's down. Emotions show through. Desperation and Anxiety.

AURORA

I've been thinking about her again.

KYLE

Then you're wasting time. Again.

AURORA

But she gave us both life.

KYLE

Then could no longer contribute and
was recycled. That protocol has a
purpose, as do they all,
including the one you broke today.

AURORA

You're not even curious if he's
alive in the population?

KYLE

I have no use for a father. Family
structure downgrades performance.

AURORA

Why build a new world if you have
no one to share it with?

He stares at her like she's a freak as he continues typing.

KYLE

Because that is the Mission.

He's the model crew member. A robot. She's different.

INT. COMMUNAL FITNESS CENTER - GSS PHAETON

Aurora spars with a HOLOGRAM ATTACKER. Punch, kick, block.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O. SPEAKER)

Fitness enhances Contribution.

Her hologram becomes a message: "Fitness Regimen Completed"

INT. COMMUNAL SHOWER - GSS PHAETON

PERFECT MEN and WOMEN shower together. Lust is extinct.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O. SPEAKER)

Sickness hinders Contribution.

A laser scans Aurora. A HOLOGRAM pops up: "Bacteria Free"

INT. MEDICAL DECK - GSS PHAETON

Aurora enters a HYPERBARIC CHAMBER full of BLUE GAS.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O. SPEAKER)
All crew must receive general
inoculation before the Arrival.

INT. COMMUNAL CAFETERIA - GSS PHAETON

Aurora sits at an empty table amongst hundreds of full ones.
She bites into a a white cube, eats quickly and efficiently.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O. SPEAKER)
Reflection enhances Contribution.
Level blue personnel are entitled
to one half hour of recreation.

INT. INDOOR JAPANESE GARDEN - GSS PHAETON

Fake sunlight pours onto a hundred pathways. She stands
alone in an alcove staring at a CHERRY TREE, lost in thought.

COMMANDER GRAY (O.S.)
This one is my favorite.

HE steps so they are side by side and Aurora glances at

COMMANDER GRAY(40s)

a GI Joe with bulging muscles and a hard jaw line, but eyes
that brim with something more than soldierly callousness.

AURORA
Commander Gray. Security Force.

COMMANDER GRAY
And you're Aurora. The Navigator
says you're one of his finest.

They stare at the tree in uneasy silence for a while.

AURORA
Commander? Are you ever...afraid?

COMMANDER GRAY
My genetic makeup is nearly free of
fear. As is yours I should hope,
selected as Navigator's Apprentice.

She shrinks away, vulnerable. He notices, tries to comfort.

COMMANDER GRAY (CONT'D)
 Generations have lived knowing they
 would never see a new home. Birth,
 training, contribution, death.
 Now the cycle has been broken.
 (touches her shoulder)
 You're not afraid. You're excited.

She eyes the hand uncomfortably, not used to being touched.

AURORA
 Personal space?

COMMANDER GRAY
 I apologize.

She squirms, feels like a bitch as he walks off.

AURORA
 It was nice meeting you, Gray.

COMMANDER GRAY
 The pleasure was mine, Aurora.

INT. ARMORY - CASTLE AVALON - DAY

Kristoff and Halford sit on stools, huddled over a MAP and strategically placed pieces, like a mix of Chess and Risk.

KRISTOFF
 Recite the Pillars.

Halford looks at him doubtfully, scans over the board.

HALFORD
 As if I do not know them...

Kristoff knocks the table away. Swords unsheathed. Blades clash as they move in and out, left and right, up and down.

KRISTOFF
 Recite them or I will end you!

He thrusts his blade near Halford's throat, who knocks it away, fights back, strong and swift, barely keeping up.

HALFORD
 Each man is bound to his honor!
 (hacking, slashing)
 Life without honor is living death!
 (ducks, parries)
 To die in service to Avalon is the
 greatest glory a man can achieve!

Kristoff knocks his blade away, trips him, stands over him.

KRISTOFF
You know the words! Live them!

He rests the point of his blade on Halford's Adam's apple.

HALFORD
Would you do it?

KRISTOFF
If you keep living without honor
you are already dead.

HALFORD
I am finished running from duty.

Kristoff sees truth, sheaths his sword, helps Halford up.

KRISTOFF
You smell like a horse.

INT. BATH CHAMBER - CASTLE AVALON

Halford washes in a bubbly pool. Kristoff leans in the corner on a stool with his eyes closed, enjoying the rest.

HALFORD
Do you think my father would have
married me off like this?

KRISTOFF
Why wouldn't he?

HALFORD
I hear things. In whispers. It is
said the Scleryth worship darkness.

KRISTOFF
Try seeing the good in this.

HALFORD
Like what?

KRISTOFF
She'll worship you...in the dark.

HALFORD
Do you think I'm ready?

Kristoff grins, prepped for a birds and bees speech.

KRISTOFF
To be made a husband?

HALFORD
To be made a king.

The smile drops off Kristoff's face. It's a real question.

KRISTOFF

No one can make you king. It is a quality that comes from within.

HALFORD

But what if I never see war?

Kristoff gazes at the amulet on his chest, holds it up.

KRISTOFF

If this was the mark of a great leader, your mother would wear it.

Halford's pained by the cryptic answer. Harmony of a hundred trumpets outside. He frowns, disappears beneath the water.

EXT. THE CITY OF AVALON - DAY

Citizens line the streets bearing flowers, react to exotic MUSIC playing outside the gates. Hooves clack cobblestone as

THE SCLERYTH

appear, covered head to toe in ornate silks and masks worthy of the Venetian Carnival, beautiful and otherworldly.

First are the hundred SCLERYTH GUARDS with sinister masks.

Next, twenty gold and ivory CARRIAGES rumble through, masks of the SCLERYTH UPPER CLASS peering out of the windows.

Next are the SCLERYTH PLAYERS churning away on strange-looking instruments, their masks crying, laughing or blank.

Last in is an imposing WARRIOR IN BLACK, like a demon knight, accompanied by SCLERYTH ELITE GUARDS in spiked red armor.

A SMALL GIRL approaches, holds a flower to him. He bends down, takes it, studies it as the GIRL'S MOTHER snatches her.

They cower away in fear and he drops the gift and it's crushed under his horse's hoof as he gallops off.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Knights stand at attention in rows. Kristoff and Halford wait on the castle steps with Aria, watch the train enter.

Scleryth dance in choreographed lines around the lead carriage. It halts, the DRIVER dismounts and opens the door.

The horses and players bow in unison as a MAN in a smiling mask steps out, walks to the foot of the stairs and kneels.

YANUK(40s)

dark and with a long beard, pulls off his mask and bows low.

YANUK

Aria of the Seven Cities, the
Emperor of the Coast honors your
terms and sends his daughter, that
two kingdoms shall now become one.

QUEEN ARIA

Rise, Yanuk, Emissary of the
Scleryth, and bid your party rest.

Yanuk signals to the Scleryth, who remove their masks in
unison. All are dark men with TATOOS on their faces.

HALFORD

And they don't worship darkness?

Two masked SCLERYTH WITCHES step down from a rear carriage.

YANUK

The venue for the inspection?

QUEEN ARIA

Cherished ruins in the woods.

KRISTOFF

Is he to be measured like cattle?

HALFORD

Oh, now you're on my side?

QUEEN ARIA

Quiet. Both of you. Go.

Halford walks down to where the women wait for him. They bow
as he approaches, each takes a hand, and they lead him away.

Aria bows as the Scleryth begin another feat of choreography.

KRISTOFF

Their Emperor does not join them?

QUEEN ARIA

We only meet him after the wedding.

KRISTOFF

You're very familiar with their
rituals. And most accepting.

QUEEN ARIA

(she turns; he doesn't)
Follow them.

EXT. THE RUINS - DAY

Halford is led gently into a clearing where a Stonehenge-like structure stands, overgrown and crumbling, long-forgotten.

IN THE NEARBY FOREST

Kristoff creeps behind tree trunks, eyes on the prince.

SCLERYTH GUARD (O.S.)
You should not be here.

Kristoff whips around to where a SCLERYTH GUARD stands. The warrior in black, masked and on his horse, waits behind him.

SCLERYTH GUARD (CONT'D)
I speak for Kyron. Blademaster.

KRISTOFF
I take orders from no masked men.

Kristoff never stops glaring into KYRON'S black eyes.

SCLERYTH GUARD
He means no offense, but the ritual is private. Your queen has agreed to respect all of our customs.

KRISTOFF
Ensuring our prince is safe is one of my customs. I will do the same for the princess once she is queen.

Kristoff eyes them curiously. The guard isn't translating.

SCLERYTH GUARD
Kyron fears for her safety if two women are a threat to your Halford.

KRISTOFF
I trained him since he could walk.
(fingers his hilt)
If Kyron would like such a lesson, he has but to dismount and draw.

Kyron sizes him up, leads his horse away as Kristoff bows. He turns to the ruins, becomes disinterested and walks off.

EXT. WITHIN THE RUINS - DAY

As they lead Halford in, one blows a kiss and a sparkling MIST comes off her hand, surrounds and disorients him.

The dark and beautiful women strip down to loin cloths and GOLD BRACELETS, start touching him sensually and giggling.

WITCH 2
We wish to know your body.

WITCH 1
...to know your thoughts.

WITCH 2
...your fantasies.

WITCH 1
...your nightmares!

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Roman's in the Navigator's Chair giving orders to

CHIEF ENGINEER HITARO(40s)

head embedded with CIRCUITRY like a cyborg. Aurora leans against a wall. From the other side, Bennett approaches her.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
Aurora!

He motions for her and she walks over, Bennett on her heels.

BENNETT
What is she doing here?

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
I ordered her here. As punishment.

Bennett eyes them like they're all sinners, disappears.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN (CONT'D)
You know of Chief Hitaro, yes?

AURORA
Primary Systems Engineer. My brother admires you. Kyle 34983?

HITARO
Kyle makes me feel like I should be recycled for obsolescence. I look forward to his Contribution.

His HEAD BLINKS, receiving a message.

HITARO (CONT'D)
They've initiated the beam scanner.

He nods, walks off. Aurora looks around at the busy crew.

AURORA
This is it, isn't it?

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
We're approaching critical radius.
What's happening to the ship?

AURORA
We've reached prime trajectory and
are preparing to reverse thrust.
We'll be able to see the planet.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
And then?

AURORA
The beam scanner verifies
atmospheric and seismic stability.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
And then?

AURORA
The Arrival.

Roman nods, turns to a TALL CREWMAN at a control station.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
Are we ready to initiate reversal?

TALL CREWMAN
On your mark, in ten, nine...

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
Ready for your punishment?

Roman holds up the REMOTE CONTROL in his hand to her. She reaches out, staring deep in his eyes, kindred spirits.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN (CONT'D)
Go on, my child.

TALL CREWMAN
Four. Three. Two.

Both of their eyes get wide. She presses the button.

EXT. SPACE

The ion thrusters work ten times harder and the FRICTION of a SOLAR SYSTEM nips at the Phaeton as they hit the brakes.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

The Navigator pulls some goggles on, takes his seat.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN
Initiate beam scan.

EXT. GSS PHAETON

A HOLLOW WAIL and a thin RAY OF PLASMA blasts through space and quickly meets the sun lit side of the far off PLANET.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

TALL CREWMAN
Nitrogen 77%, Oxygen 22, Argon...

All the screens show the oceans, land masses, and ice caps of
THE NEW PLANET

MOONLESS, one of many in a system centered on a SINGLE STAR.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN (CONT'D)
That these eyes lived to see it.
(grabs a microphone)
Now hear this. Now hear this.
(he presses a button)
Welcome home.

INT. MULTIPLE DECKS WITHIN THE PHAETON

People are cheering, crying, proud The Mission is a success as they stare at the nearest screen and the new planet.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Warning alarms sound. The celebration dies down.

TALL CREWMAN
Interference in the stream.

EXT. SPACE

Where the beam meets the planet's atmosphere, PULSES OF ENERGY like ripples in a pond grow larger in magnitude.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

ON SCREEN: A SHOCK WAVE blasts like a hand reaching out. Aurora closes her eyes as Roman's face falls and head hangs.

INT. HALFORD'S CHAMBER - CASTLE AVALON - NIGHT

Halford shoots up in bed, naked and sweating, throws off the covers, turns to where Kristoff smokes a pipe in the shadows.

HALFORD
What happened?!

KRISTOFF
You tell me. The heat?

INT. BANQUET HALL - CASTLE AVALON - NIGHT

Laughter. Clinking of glasses. The Scleryth wear silks and GOLD BRACELETS, chat with AVALON HIGHER UPS, all arranged on plush couches surrounding a stage where the band plays. Halford sits with Aria and Yanuk, watching the celebration.

HALFORD

Your ways are most...unique.

YANUK

It is our custom that guests provide the entertainment.

He stands and whistles and all grow quiet. Torches are put out except those that flicker on the stage.

YANUK (CONT'D)

This moment, our hosts! On the morrow, our brethren! May I present Zira of the Coast!

A flash of gold and the PRINCESS appears from thin air in the most feminine of robes and masks as the band strikes up.

Sashes stream from her wrists as she moves with the seductive quality of a belly dancer, the discipline of a geisha.

She blows kisses and from her fingers drift WISPS OF SMOKE that take the shape of BIRDS that fly around and disappear, of FLOWERS that grow, bloom, and reduce to a million pieces.

One puff becomes a FACE that floats in and kisses the prince. In the corner, Kristoff rolls his eyes, chuckles proudly.

EXT. CASTLE WALL - NIGHT

A WATCHMAN hears tumbling stones, leans over to investigate. CRUNCH! He looks at the dagger in his chest and falls dead.

Standing over him, Kyron lets out a soft whistle and Scleryth Elite hop over, creep like Ninjas toward the castle.

Kyron looks out on the surrounding forest. Tree tops shake. Branches snap. People moving out there. LOTS OF THEM.

INT. BANQUET HALL - CASTLE AVALON - NIGHT

The show stops. Kristoff is distracted, walks out of the room as the princess removes her mask. Behold the beauty of

ZIRA(20s)

the most mysterious, seductive woman in the entire world. Yanuk smiles at Aria, who couldn't be more pleased.

Music and Zira dances closer, eyes locked with Halford's. He twitches, hears her WHISPERING IN SCLERYTH, looks around.

Only he can hear her. He turns back, lost in the depth of her dark eyes as she gets closer, the whispers louder. Her gold bracelets produce STATIC that collects in her palms.

Kristoff dives in and knocks the prince away as the energy in her hands is released, BLASTING A HOLE IN THE FLOOR.

Zira sneers at Halford, aims again, but not before Kristoff grabs a chair and hurls it at her, knocking her out.

Panic and pandemonium. Drawing of swords. The Scleryth turn vicious. The Avalon gentry scream. Kristoff rises, draws.

KRISTOFF (CONT'D)
TO ARMS! THE SCLERYTH ARE FALSE!

Aria turns to Yanuk, who pulls a dagger, thrusts it in her. Halford sees it, pulls a knife, leaps and slits his throat.

The Scleryth fight with both their magic and swords. Walls crumble. Blood spills. Halford cradles the dead queen until Kristoff tears him away, looks around. Time to run.

INT. HALLWAY - CASTLE AVALON - NIGHT

Knights join them and some are killed just as quickly as they meet pockets of Scleryth soldiers at every corner

INT. DUNGEON - CASTLE AVALON - NIGHT

Kristoff pushes a block, opens a hidden door as Kyron stalks in, sword bloody. An OLDER KNIGHT steps up to shield them.

OLDER KNIGHT
Get him out, Kristoff!

HALFORD
We shall fight!

Kristoff pushes Halford through the door, nods in gratitude. He glares at Kyron, bares his teeth and runs. Not this time.

The knights charge and Kyron runs them through with clean and effortless strokes, one badass motherfucker.

EXT. THE CITY OF AVALON - NIGHT

Energy bursts punch holes in the outer walls and

THOUSANDS OF SCLERYTH SOLDIERS

sprint through the front gates, meet undressed, ill-prepared

GROUPS OF AVALON MEN

who clash hard but the Scleryth are fast and merciless.

On a rampage, the enemy kick down doors, blast whoever's inside, light fire to buildings. Uncompromising destruction.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

A bush at the base of a tree thrashes and Kristoff emerges from a hatch in the trunk, Halford following closely.

Their attention turns to the city burning in the distance. The Scleryth are still entering the city, leveling it.

Screams of pain and death are carried by the wind and Kristoff's face betrays a single tear.

EXT. SPACE

The Phaeton drifts listlessly in a cloud of debris and bodies lost to the cold vacuum, still on course for the planet.

INT. MULTIPLE DECKS WITHIN THE PHAETON

In some: Emergency lights. Singed bodies and equipment. Crushed passageways. Sparks fly. Death and gloom.

In others: Injured crew recover, resuscitate, pry their way from tangles of fallen infrastructure. There is hope.

INT. MEDICAL DECK - GSS PHAETON

Aurora wakes to the sound of voices, rises. DOCTORS work on injured crew, DEAD BODIES stacked against a nearby wall.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - GSS PHAETON

She enters and all go silent, all eyes fall on her. Bennett is outraged, Hitaro stoic, OFFICERS standing behind them on either side of a real-time hologram of the crippled ship.

AURORA

Where's Roman?

BENNETT

Dead.

HITARO

We believe all other Navigator-class personnel were also killed. Leadership then passes to you.

BENNETT

That is ludicrous!

HITARO
That is the protocol!

COMMANDER GRAY (O.S.)
You're both wrong.

He lingers in the doorway, something clutched in his hand.

COMMANDER GRAY (CONT'D)
Not until a full accounting is made
can she be declared Navigator.
(to Bennett)
And that declaration is not based
on your personal assessment.
(raises a DATA STICK)
Roman left specific instructions
that this be shown to her.

INT. UNDAMAGED OFFICE - GSS PHAETON

Aurora sits in front of a screen, uploads a hologram. Roman appears on screen, a recording seemingly from long before.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN (V.O. SCREEN)
Generations have always known where
we were headed but have you ever
asked yourself why this place is
our destination? The following was
received over a thousand years ago.

The image flickers, changes to a communication from a
different GSS control deck where the CREW is celebrating.

In the background, screens show the planet being scanned.
Joyous NAVIGATOR CLARK appears, speaks to her.

NAVIGATOR CLARK (V.O. SCREEN)
This is GSS 243X. I'm embedding
coordinates in this data stream.
We found one. Perfect in every
way. Come one and come all.

The screen flickers again, back to Roman.

NAVIGATOR ROMAN (V.O. SCREEN)
The Phaeton was redirected. We
should have received more messages,
yet we did not. Many have believed
something terrible happened. The
burden of discovering what rests
with you, a task for which there is
no protocol. Before authorizing
the landing, make sure the planet
is safe. That is your mission now.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - GSS PHAETON

The officers are still arguing when she paces in.

HITARO

The hull is stable but life support will fail eventually. The beam scanner has been damaged as well.

BENNETT

Then begin repairs immediately.

HITARO

After evacuating non-repair crew.

BENNETT

Protocol is clear. There can be no landing unless a complete scan is performed. Until a Navigator can be appointed, power falls to me. We will repair the structural damage. Only after that will we devote resources to fixing the beam scanner and under no circumstances will anyone leave this ship.

Hitaro grunts, races out. Bennett turns to Aurora, grins.

BENNETT

Watch and learn.

He walks out, his posse of officers following close behind. Only Gray and Aurora are left. He looks at her, confused.

AURORA

I need your help.

EXT. ANCIENT FOREST - NIGHT

A Scleryth soldier halts his horse, peers into the darkness. Seeing nothing, he gallops off, passing a BOULDER FORMATION.

INT. BOULDER CREVICE - NIGHT

Star light leaks through to reveal Kristoff and Halford wedged across from one another, faces half-hidden by shadow.

HALFORD

We're cowards. We've no honor.

KRISTOFF

I kept mine. Though it pained me.

Kristoff stares at the rock face. Nothing but misery there.

KRISTOFF (CONT'D)
My father was Legion Master of
Gamon in the Savage Wars. He fell.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. MOUNTAIN WASTELAND - DAY

Dark. Gloomy. Clanks and screams of a RAGING BATTLE are heard but not seen through a thick mist that shrouds all.

YOUNG KRISTOFF(early 20s)

in bloody armor, screams wildly, kneeling over HIS FATHER, a sturdy man who has just succumbed to an axe to the chest.

KRISTOFF (V.O)
My spirit caught aflame.

A GROUP OF TWENTY SAVAGES

charge toward him and Kristoff picks up his sword, rips the axe from his father's chest and runs at them, possessed.

Legs are cleaved, arms and necks severed, guts run through. After a few moments, he stands alone in a pile of death.

KRISTOFF (V.O.)
Justice won the field that day.

HORNS sound and the savages retreat. Kristoff tears his helmet off, blood and sweat-stained, watches them flee.

EXT. THE KING'S TENT - DAY

Surrounded by a quickly erected camp filled with THE WOUNDED.

KRISTOFF (V.O.)
I was summoned to your father.

Dire stares from GUARDS at the entrance as Kristoff walks in.

INT. THE KING'S TENT - DAY

HEALERS and KNIGHTS attend to

KING ANTON(40s)

undressed, a puncture near his heart. He's the older version of Halford with a short beard and the same wild eyes.

Kristoff approaches. The king pulls him close so that the young warrior's ear is inches from the dying man's lips.

KRISTOFF (V.O.)
My son must be strong, he said.
(pulls Kristoff closer)
It is now a task for another man.

The king goes limp and Kristoff, pouring tears, closes Anton's eyes and stares at the AMULET hanging on his chest.

KRISTOFF (V.O.)
In that moment, I knew my path.

EXT. THE KING'S TENT - DAY

Kristoff emerges wearing the amulet now. Those waiting bow with respect as he mounts the nearest horse and rides off.

EXT. THE CITY OF AVALON - NIGHT

Kristoff trots through a new home he has never seen, nodding to those he has never known as he passes them in the shadows.

INT. THRONE ROOM - CASTLE AVALON - NIGHT

Queen Aria, much younger, sits on her throne, strangely detached as she gazes through a window out into the night.

One look at the amulet and she bursts into tears. Kristoff kneels before her, takes off the jewel, offers it up.

KRISTOFF (V.O.)
I pledged a life of service.

Aria lifts his chin so he'll look her in the eye. She places the amulet back over his neck and takes him by the hand.

INT. NURSERY CHAMBER - CASTLE AVALON - NIGHT

A NURSE MAID watches over a crib. A door opens and Kristoff and Aria pour in with the light, stand over BABY HALFORD.

Aria walks out with the maid, a last adoring glance over her shoulder before she closes the door, leaves the two together.

Kristoff takes Halford in his arms, unsure like any new father. He takes the nurse maid's seat and starts rocking.

KRISTOFF (V.O.)
I have watched over you ever since.

RETURN TO SCENE:

INT. BOULDER CREVICE - NIGHT

Halford leans forward, hate in his eyes. Kristoff notices.

KRISTOFF (CONT'D)
Rest. The Legions will assemble.
You will have your turn at war.
Decide what you will do with it.

INT. CARGO BAY - GSS PHAETON

Cavernous and dark. In the shadows, HUNDREDS OF SHIPS and CONSTRUCTION VEHICLES stashed in docks, unused for centuries.

TECHNICIANS prep a sleek, winged SMALL TRANSPORT for launch, removing it from heavy duty shrink wrap and fueling its jets.

TWENTY PHAETON SENTRIES

futuristic Marines, load supplies up the rear entry ramp as Commander Gray and Aurora walk in, Bennett close behind.

BENNETT
I am in charge of the ship!

AURORA
Hitaro presides over all external repairs. Including this one.

SENTRY LIEUTENANT DAVID(30s)

Gray's wall of muscle, second in command tosses him a rifle.

LIEUTENANT DAVID
Prepped for excursion.

BENNETT
This is against protocol!

AURORA
(boarding the transport)
Ignore the protocol.

She winks at him and he lunges for her, pulled back by Gray.

COMMANDER GRAY
It's within my power to detain you.

As the ship rumbles to life, alarms and flashing lights.

BENNETT
Once order is restored, I will see you punished for this.

COMMANDER GRAY
If order's restored, I may let you.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O. SPEAKER)
All personnel. Clear launch area.

Bennett is escorted away by the technicians as Gray boards and the ship begins to rise, floats into the shadowy expanse.

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

The team sits in the rear cargo hold and Gray joins Aurora in the cockpit. They hover through the bay INTO AN AIRLOCK.

AURORA

Bennett would rather watch people die than violate protocol.

COMMANDER GRAY

If we don't find 243X, he will.

A massive door groans shut of out sight. He looks over and sees her nervously drumming her fingers next to a button.

AURORA

Like you said, Commander. Excited.

COMMANDER GRAY

That's my girl.

The button flashes. She hits it. The engines ignite and in a ball of flame and gas, they're shot out to--

EXT. SPACE

Speeding directly for the DAY SIDE of the virgin planet.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Sheets of rain cascade through the thick canopy as Kristoff and Halford jump from behind the trunk of a redwood-sized tree, slosh through the mud into a cluster of bushes.

Two Scleryth Elite on horseback appear near them, searching. Kristoff pulls out a dagger and Halford does the same.

They knock the guards from their horses, slit their throats, mount up just as BLASTS OF ENERGY rip through the forest.

HORNS. Many Scleryth on the hunt. Halford and Kristoff stick close, barely evade more blasts that topple trees.

KRISTOFF

Separate!

They veer off in different directions. Halford jumps fallen trunks, pushes through the brush, ducks low limbs.

Hoof beats and soon there are Elite keeping pace with him. One pulls out a sword but Halford draws his and sticks him.

Another raises a hand to blast him but Halford slices the arm off, kicks him off his steed and turns into--

EXT. THE CLEARING - DAY

A flash of black and Kyron jumps his horse clear over Halford, knocking him to the ground. He dismounts, swings...

Grunting, the clang of steel and Kristoff's blade is crossed with Kyron's inches from Halford's face, his horse nearby.

Halford hits his feet, grabs his sword. Kristoff stares into the black eyes, removes the amulet and offers it to Halford.

KRISTOFF

Take the horse.

HALFORD

But--

KRISTOFF

I will find you on the way!

Halford sprints off as the warriors hack and slash. Kristoff's like a junkyard dog and finds his match in Kyron.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Halford's kicks the horse, makes it go even faster as he turns in all direction to sounds of horns and hooves nearby.

EXT. THE CLEARING - DAY

They come to a standstill and Kristoff head butts Kyron, sends him flying. Blood streams from beneath the mask.

Woosh, clang, Woosh! Kristoff's getting the best of him, cuts a deep gash into Kyron's arm, attacks harder and harder.

Kyron reels backward and Kristoff's ready to lay the killer blow when WHAM! he's knocked back by a surge of energy.

Kyron turns to where a few Elite stand like they've been watching for some time. He nods to them, picks up his sword.

Kristoff tremors, burned by the blast. He can barely raise his sword when Kyron knocks it away, stabs through his heart.

KYRON

(a rasping whisper)
Gratitude for this lesson.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Two Scleryth ride parallel to Halford as the chase continues.

One holds up a hand full of energy. Halford pulls a dagger, tosses it through the hand and the Elite falls.

The other rides next to him. Halford plunges his blade into his attacker as the Elite jabs a blade into his horse.

Halford and horse tumble and he rises quickly. The Scleryth horse gallops away with its slumped rider. More horns blow. Halford pulls his hood over his head, becomes the forest.

EXT. FOREST HILLSIDE - DAY

Aurora wears her air mask, carries a rifle, a supply pack strapped to her back. She scans a computer over a flower.

AURORA (V.O. RADIO)
So beautiful.

Fifty feet away, a PHAETON SENTRY scans the bark of a tree.

PHAETON SENTRY (V.O. RADIO)
CO2 in, Oxygen out.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)
We should move on.

AURORA (V.O. RADIO)
Return to transport.

The sentry walks off. Aurora follows, but stops at a tree, puts her rifle down. A golden caterpillar scoots up the trunk and as she reaches for it a twig snaps. She turns.

A Scleryth with a blade drawn swings a shield at her and she blocks it but her ID BRACELET SMASHES, falls to the ground.

He lunges. She's too quick. Ducks and rolls. He's about to slash down and kill her. UMPH! Halford runs him through.

He and Aurora lock eyes. First contact. Fascinated.

Energy blasts through the space between them and Halford turns to three more Scleryth on foot rushing at him.

He charges. Clink! Clank! Pierces one in the heart. Ducks a swing, meets another blade, runs one through. FIZZING.

He turns and the last Scleryth's palm is almost charged. WOOSH! That one drops, a smoking hole through his head.

Halford turns to Aurora, staring down the barrel of her rifle. They approach each other, weapons still raised.

HALFORD
You have magic! Are you Scleryth?

She's stunned. He speaks English? He's staring at the rifle. Her blast was very similar to the Scleryth energy.

AURORA

I'm Aurora.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)

...taking enemy fire! Aurora!

She runs but Halford grabs her, snags her mask off. He drops it and chases her. Gaining. Nicked by branches. Reaches. Tackles her and she's knocked out when her head hits a root.

He kneels down to her, wipes the blood from her temple as he admires her beauty. His neck jerks. Scleryth horns.

He sheaths his sword, lifts her over his shoulder, grabs her pack and rifle and disappears into the brush.

EXT. EDGE OF THE WOODS - DAY

The transport is powered down in high grass, Gray and his sentries kneeling behind supply crates, caught in a fire fight with DOZENS OF SCLERYTH ELITE in the tree line.

The rifles are more powerful and soon outgun the Scleryth.

Horns blow and they disappear into the forest. Watching them retreat, Gray touches his ear communicator.

COMMANDER GRAY

Aurora? Aurora?!

He pulls out his computer, focused on the readout as

SCIENCE OFFICER JEROME(30s)

walks down the ramp from the transport holding his own, the shortest, scrawniest Phaeton crewmen that exists.

COMMANDER GRAY

What's wrong with my signal?

JEROME

Electronics were damaged.

COMMANDER GRAY

Aurora's bracelet is deactivated.
Can we use the biological scanners?

JEROME

Not currently.

COMMANDER GRAY

What can we do?

JEROME
Fly. If we reconfigure.

Gray nods and Jerome marches off, then turns to his men.

COMMANDER GRAY
Search for her.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Aurora's slumped against a tree, stirs to life, rubs her head. Halford stands over her, blade leveled at her throat.

AURORA
You speak my language.

HALFORD
You speak mine. Why are you here?

AURORA
I'm looking for GSS 243X.

He stares at her like she's crazy. She gets frustrated.

AURORA (CONT'D)
Generational Star Ship 243X?

Again, he looks at her like she's nuts.

AURORA (CONT'D)
Do you know anything?

HALFORD
I know you do not belong here.

She spots her rifle and supply pack, eyes the way he holds his sword, then feels the ground for a large stone.

AURORA
What's that?!

As Halford's distracted, she smashes his wrist, elbows his throat, lands a punch to his temple, snatches her rifle.

AURORA
Don't move!

HALFORD
Or else?

She blasts a tree trunk and it falls like it was chopped. He holds his hands up, impressed as she pulls out her computer.

A MAP HOLOGRAM appears. Without a word, she walks away.

HALFORD (CONT'D)
Not the best choice.

After a moment, she turns back, sees him sheathing his sword.

AURORA
Why not?

HALFORD
Scleryth are swarming.

AURORA
What's a Scleryth?

The echo of horns. He points at his ear knowingly. She thrusts the rifle in his face, then the hologram.

AURORA
Take me to the nearest city.

HALFORD
Do you have a map?

She rolls her eyes, changes the view to two dimensional.

HALFORD
(cocks his head; points)
Here. We'll reach it by nightfall.

He's beaming. She's suspicious. She motions with the rifle.

EXT. EDGE OF THE WOODS - DAY

The Phaeton sentries have neatly piled their five dead and there's a separate stack of Scleryth bodies nearby. Gray stands by the ship, looking off into the distance.

LIEUTENANT DAVID
Ion blasts!

Gray walks over. The sentry's studying a Scleryth bracelet. He picks up his rifle, disassembles it. Only a few moving parts. The center is a silver coil, like a wound spring.

LIEUTENANT DAVID (CONT'D)
Draws in ions to create a pulse.

He pulls a pen out, turns it on, like a mini-light saber. He cuts the bracelet in half. Silver coils beneath the gold.

LIEUTENANT DAVID (CONT'D)
The same technology only weaker.

Gray kneels to an unmasked Scleryth, scans his bearded face. A hologram shoots out, a revolving DOUBLE HELIX.

Gray scans his own head and ANOTHER HELIX appears next to it.

COMMANDER GRAY
Human. But not like us.

JEROME
(from the Transport Ramp)
Communications are still down! We
should sweep in search of a city!

Gray nods in acknowledgment, looks out in the forest.

COMMANDER GRAY
Sentry team...load up.

Jerome disappears up the ramp, followed by the sentries. As the PROPULSION JETS fire, Gray reaches the ramp, turns back and stares at the forest in sadness as the transport ascends.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Kyron's staring intently at something on the ground when Scleryth arrive, some nursing rifle hits, crowd around him.

It's Aurora's oxygen mask. He bends down, picks it up and without a word, they walk off toward waiting horses.

EXT. PLAINS OF AVALON - DAY

Rolling hills covered with granite formations. The forest behind, Aurora and Halford walk toward the mountain range.

She marvels at the layers within the rock while he keeps watch on their front and rear for something specific.

AURORA
Stop here.

HALFORD
Tired already?

AURORA
Proper rest increases performance.

HALFORD
They teach weakness in this Aurora?

AURORA
Aurora's my name.

HALFORD
Where do you hail from, then?

AURORA
Generational Star Ship Phaeton.

Halford's confused. She searches for simpler words.

AURORA
From another world?

HALFORD
Star travellers?

AURORA
You know about us?!

Her seriousness breaks him into a chest heaving cackle.

AURORA (CONT'D)
But it's true!

HALFORD
Sure. For children at bedtime.

He tosses his head back in laughter, continues on.

HALFORD (CONT'D)
Captured by a mad woman! Ha!

He leads her toward where the rocks dominate the terrain, like rusted skyscrapers with narrow canyons in between.

EXT. CANYONS OF AVALON - DAY - LATER

Still walking, Halford eyes the rifle she holds half-pointed at him. His gaze travels over her curves and then up to her eyes. She's been watching him watch her the whole time.

HALFORD
What is the source of your magic,
this steel that spits fire?

AURORA
(under her breath)
Dark Age alien peasant...

They're getting closer to an intersection of many canyons.

HALFORD
Why does your weapon let loose the
same flame as Scleryth hands?

She opens her mouth to answer, but stop when it hits her.

AURORA
I...don't know...

She looks down an intersecting canyon. Tumbling rocks. Scratching. She turns, sees a MOUNTAIN LION leave its feet. BAM! It tackles her, knocks her down and her rifle away.

The beast tumbles, gets back on its feet and leaps but Halford snatches her away, hacks the lion's head off.

Wrapped in his arms, she stares at the pool of blood. He turns her, runs his hand over the scratch on her shoulder.

They lock eyes for a moment. All she sees is kindness. Then she snaps back into the moment and pushes him away hard.

AURORA
Don't touch me!

She runs over to the rifle, picks it up, aims it.

AURORA
Keep going!

HALFORD
(sheathes his sword)
That is twice I have saved you and
been punished for it, Aurora.

She's rigid as he walks off but then her eyes meet the ground in regret. Halford hears a HAWK'S SCREECH, starts singing.

HALFORD
The ale is strong!
The nights are long!
Another mug for Avalon!

ON TOP OF A LARGE FORMATION

PAIRS OF BOOTS scuttle over uneven rock, deathly silent.

EXT. CANYONS OF AVALON - DAY - LATER

Aurora has covered the claw marks with an adhesive bandage that she fidgets with, barely paying attention to Halford.

She freezes when a dagger meets her throat, now surrounded by

FIVE AVALON RANGERS

Dirty, cloaked men with long beards and untamed stares. One of them turns to Halford, pulls back his hood slowly.

TERRAN(40s)

a stone-faced tracker on the edge of being civilized, has eyes that see all. He notices the amulet, makes a faint bow.

HALFORD
Mind her closely.

Aurora throws her head back wildly, knocks her captor away.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

Hold!

She aims from one to the next as Halford eases toward her.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

It would be a shame to end such
beauty with needless bloodshed.

She's stunned, never been hit on. Then she aims at his head.

AURORA

I will kill you!

HALFORD

Then who will stop these men from
filling your skull with arrows?

Halford points up. RANGERS on top of the rocks, bows drawn taut. She gives up her rifle and a ranger takes her hands.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

See she's given ample water.

He walks away to Terran and the two take the lead.

HALFORD

You are Terran, Master Ranger, yes?

TERRAN

Yes, Highness. Why does she live?

HALFORD

She has magic I wish to understand.

TERRAN

I sense the Queen's wisdom in you.
When riders came with news of the
treachery, my heart fell.

HALFORD

And mine was ripped from me.

TERRAN

They said nothing of Kristoff.

HALFORD

We were separated in the forest.

Halford looks down, instantly pained, shakes his head.

INT. RESIDENCE CABIN - GSS PHAETON

Kyle's bandaged up, working on his damaged table. The ship in 3-D drifts for the planet, crashes down onto the surface.

His eyes light up and he grabs a DATA STICK, waves it around. The hologram is sucked into the stick and he rushes out.

INT. MAIN ENGINEERING DECK - GSS PHAETON

Undamaged and full of hologram tables and control consoles. HUNDREDS OF ENGINEERS are clustered around them, studying readouts of parts of the ship both internal and external.

Kyle slides through the crowded room to Hitaro and his team, focused on a hologram of the damaged thruster core.

KYLE

Your orbit solution leaves a sixty-four percent chance of failure.

Hitaro whips around. Information that could only come from--

HITARO

Unauthorized access again? What can you possibly contribute that the we haven't already?

KYLE

Each of us has something unique to contribute. If that wasn't true, then none of us would have purpose.

Hitaro nods. Kyle clears the table, waves the stick over it.

KYLE

Your solution fails because the thruster core has been damaged.

The ship in 3-D pops up, travelling toward the planet.

KYLE (CONT'D)

We've lost the power to slow down.

The rocket thrusters fire, slow it, but it still crashes.

KYLE (CONT'D)

We must use the planet's gravity. If we take this trajectory--

The table resets. The 3-D ship takes a different angle. The engineers grunt in frustration and Hitaro cringes.

HITARO

We have insufficient thruster power to reflect off of the atmosphere.

KYLE

I know that. I know you know that. But if we do it this way...

The Phaeton glances off the atmosphere and an explosion on the exterior of the ship rockets it away from the planet. The thrusters fire and the ship settles into perfect orbit.

KYLE (CONT'D)

At the peak of friction, we release liquid fuel reserves.

A MUSCULAR ENGINEER scoffs, hope flickering away from all.

MUSCULAR ENGINEER

There's no such protocol.

KYLE

Which is why you didn't try it.

Hitaro's stuck in thought, all eyes on him. He nods. The engineers move fast, manipulating equations and angles. The process takes place in 3-D a thousand times, stops.

HITARO (CONT'D)

Rate of failure?

KYLE

Eleven percent.

The Muscular Engineer runs more calculations, then nods. They all look at Kyle with admiration. Hitaro's thinking.

HITARO

Structure the sequence.

Everyone gets back to work quickly, including Kyle until Hitaro grabs him and drags him through the room into--

INT. HITARO'S OFFICE - GSS PHAETON

Hitaro leaves Kyle at the door, sits, types on his computer.

KYLE

I was serving the Mission.

HITARO

Trainees are not permitted mainframe access. No exceptions.

He comes to Kyle's file. STATUS: Trainee. He types and it changes. STATUS: Systems Engineer. He turns the screen.

HITARO

Now get back to work.

EXT. CANYONS OF AVALON - NIGHT

A few rangers march by torchlight, Aurora at their center.

Others travel in shadow all around like a pack of wolves.

She looks eagerly at Halford, walking by himself up ahead, tries to catch up to him but the rangers restrain her.

Halford spins around, sees her pleading eyes. He nods and the rangers back off as they walk together.

AURORA

Halford, my people need me.

Aurora looks up in the night sky in sadness.

HALFORD

You will remain with us.

They glare hard at each other, two stubborn young leaders. A ranger lets out a HAWK'S SCREECH and Halford's mood lifts.

EXT. PLATEAU - NIGHT

Looking out at the plains as far as the eye can see is

THE DAEDAL ENCAMPMENT

Rows of tents with bonfires burning between them where a LEGION OF AVALON SOLDIERS make preparations in the darkness. There are COMMAND TENTS at the center of the makeshift city.

INT. COMMAND TENT

AVALON COMMANDERS huddled over a map bow when he walks in. Fine engravings in their body-molded armor are accented red.

HALFORD

Who among you is Samos?

SAMOS(40s)

a monstrous Viking, steps forward, eyeing the amulet.

SAMOS

Where is Kristoff?

HALFORD

Fallen.

This strips the confidence from men and Halford, seeing this, walks over and joins them at the large parchment MAP:

The Seven Cities are inland, marked clearly. Lines lead from them to the plains, where the army will assemble. Beyond is the mountain range that runs parallel to the coast. On the other side of the range, a large X. Beyond that, the ocean.

HALFORD
Reports from the scouts?

By his look, Samos isn't ready to take orders from Halford.

SAMOS
No movement of Scleryth.

HALFORD
Then they retreat to the coast.

SAMOS
Is it truth that the Scleryth took
the great city with but one legion?

HALFORD
I have cut them down like reeds.
Fitted with armor and shield, we
will grind their bones to dust.

SAMOS
But you were fleeing.

HALFORD
Have you something to say?!

The commanders' eyes urge Samos to show respect and the
Legion Master resets himself, bows slightly.

SAMOS
Only that it is a different manner
of fighting, Highness.

Halford stares him down, then softens up, breathes in.

HALFORD
The magic from their hands is more
powerful than a hundred arrows
delivered to a single point.
(off their tensions)
But one could loose four arrows in
the time it takes to summon it.

SAMOS
What if they number so many that
the sum of this magic is too great?

HALFORD
Then we must take it away.

EXT. DAEDAL ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Halford nods to a YOUNG WATCHMAN posted outside as he enters--

INT. SUPPLY TENT

Aurora is sitting, hands tied to a vertical beam. Her rifle and supply pack sit on a crate near her. He picks the rifle up, sits on the crate, aims at her.

HALFORD
How would you stop me?

She fights the bonds, ducks from the barrel end in fear.

HALFORD (CONT'D)
I mean you no harm.

AURORA
Then why are you keeping me?

HALFORD
Why did you keep me?

AURORA
I needed you to guide me.

HALFORD
And so your question is answered.
Now answer mine. How can you drain
the magic from this...thing?

AURORA
You're too primitive and too
arrogant to understand.

HALFORD
Let's hope neither is true.

AURORA
It's called a high-intensity
electromagnetic pulse. An EMP.

Halford thinks about it, puts down the rifle.

HALFORD
Where must I go to find this E-M-P?

She nods to the sky. He scoffs, rises, and walks out.

INT. HALFORD'S TENT - LATER

He sits on a cot, the amulet in his hand, watching the torch burn within its jewel. A HORN outside, raising of an alarm.

INT. SUPPLY TENT

The watchman's recovering from being knocked out, horn in hand. Samos and Terran are staring at a pile of cut rope.

YOUNG WATCHMAN
She...she's a jackal in disguise!

HALFORD
She's not known to these lands and
will move carelessly. Find her.

EXT. PLAINS OF AVALON - NIGHT

Panting. Grunting. Boots thrash high grass as Aurora sprints farther away from the camp, in the middle of nowhere.

Movement near her. The outline of something large. She stops, waits as it approaches. It's a riderless horse.

She runs a hand over its mane and a WHISPER is carried to her by the wind. Scleryth bracelets flicker as they charge in the darkness, surround her. Kyron appears from the shadows.

EXT. SPACE

The Phaeton drifts toward the NIGHT SIDE of the planet, burns red as it meets the atmosphere and the planet pulls them in.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Bennett in the Navigator's Chair. Hitaro and crew at the controls. All of them nervous. Except for Kyle.

He lingers against a wall, not hoping but KNOWING that this is going to work as the ship begins to rumble.

Hitaro's focus on his hologram is intense. This is it. The ship drifts toward a dotted line, gets closer. They hit it.

EXT. SPACE

Vents on the Phaeton slide open. PFFFFFFT! Streams of liquid shoot out, reacts with the flames in a CONTROLLED EXPLOSION.

It dents the shield plating and thrusts the craft away from the planet. The reaction continues in the atmosphere as--

EXT. PLAINS OF AVALON - NIGHT

Kyron and party ride swiftly toward the mountains, Aurora draped unconscious over the front of his saddle. Red and orange reflect on his mask and his horse rears up.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

HITARO
(looks at Kyle)
Engage new protocol.

EXT. SPACE

The remaining thrusters in the core fire, push the sphere.

EXT. DAEDAL ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Halford stares up at the kaleidoscope of burning gases.

EXT. PLAINS OF AVALON - NIGHT

Terran and men gallop hard, keen eyes searching the dark.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

All watch the screens. The ship settles onto a dotted line drawn around the planet, continues along the path.

HITARO
Orbit achieved.

A chorus of relieved gasps and he walks toward Kyle, but before he'll speak, Bennett appears, smiling wide.

BENNETT
A fine contribution.

KYLE
Only a meaningful one, sir.

HITARO
We should discuss the evacuation.

BENNETT
There is no discussion to be had.

KYLE
Protocol requires you to listen.

Hitaro tries to quiet him, but Kyle's a believer. No chance.

KYLE (CONT'D)
Primary systems engineer must disclose a repair plan. Chief Hitaro has declared irreparability. At a minimum, non-essential crew should be shuttled to the planet.

BENNETT
Same code. Such a declaration can only be made after a diagnostics scan, which I've not seen because it has not been completed.

KYLE
You're jeopardizing the mission.

BENNETT
Who are you?!

He pulls Kyle to a wall-embedded display screen, swipes Kyle's bracelet, reads the information that appears.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
I should've known. You have her
same inferior genetic quality.

Hitaro comes from behind, rips Bennett away.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
Security!

Two Phaeton Sentries rush in through the door, on the alert.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
Detain Hitaro and see that this
trainee is confined to quarters.

Hitaro walks off with one guard without a fight. The other drags Kyle away kicking and screaming.

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT - NIGHT

Gray and David look out of the cockpit at blackness passing beneath. Suddenly, the controls flicker and then get bright.

COMMANDER GRAY
Jerome!

JEROME (O.S.)
Fully operational!

COMMANDER GRAY
Phaeton NavDeck, this is Gray...

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

The Tall Crewman stirs in his seat, turns to Bennett.

TALL CREWMAN
Communication from the surface.

BENNETT
On speaker.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. SPEAKER)
...attacked by hostile humanoids...

These isn't the information he was praying for.

BENNETT
Turn it off!

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT - NIGHT

Gray's listening for a response, gets nothing.

COMMANDER GRAY
Did they lose communications, too?

JEROME
No. The link's stable.
(looks at his computer)
Aurora's computer. Moving. Close.

COMMANDER GRAY
That's my girl.

EXT. DAEDAL ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Halford approaches where the rangers ride in from the night.
Terran dismounts, throws Aurora's supply pack and rifle down.

TERRAN
Signs of a struggle and horses
riding into the mountains.

Halford looks at the starlit range on the horizon.
RUMBLING. Streams of air blow grass and dirt around.

The transport drops out of nowhere and the Sentries pour out,
rifles raised, running right for the supply pack.

Rangers rip bows from their backs, swarm around the prince.

TERRAN
Keep back!

The Sentries create a firing line as more soldiers run in.

LIEUTENANT DAVID
Lower your weapons!

Gray steps to the front, approaches Aurora's pack.

TERRAN (CONT'D)
Keep back, I said!

Halford, standing in the center of the group, pensively
watches Gray kneel down, start touching Aurora's things.

He puts a hand on a ranger's shoulder, gently pushes down
one's bow, walks toward Gray as the Sentries twitch.

HALFORD
She was taken.

Gray holds a hand up to his men, stands up to face Halford.

He pulls a scanner, runs it over Halford's head. A hologram DOUBLE HELIX pops out. He runs it over his own hair.

A second helix pops up and they fuse together. A PERFECT MATCH. Gray holds up the scanner to his men, all in shock.

EXT. DAEDAL ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT - LATER

The Avalon soldiers have crowded around where the Phaeton crew sits on one side of a bonfire, Halford on the other.

COMMANDER GRAY
An electromagnetic Pulse?

Halford's face turns intense. He lusts for the power.

HALFORD
With it I would lay waste to their city and demand her release for the lives of their women and children.

COMMANDER GRAY
I don't have EMP equipment here.
And can't order it without her.

HALFORD
Aurora fights well with open hand.
Do you also have this skill?

COMMANDER GRAY
We're all trained the same.

HALFORD
And you'd risk death to save her?

COMMANDER GRAY
Without her, our Mission fails.

HALFORD
(turns to Terran)
Is it true you see night as day and can become as shadow?

TERRAN
It is true, Highness.

HALFORD
Can all Rangers do this?

TERRAN
Some better. None worse.

SAMOS
(steps into the firelight)
This is not a task for you, Prince!

HALFORD

I kept her from her duty and risked
the lives of their helpless. It is
no one's task more than mine.

SAMOS

Consider your people's fate first!

HALFORD

As many in their kingdom as in ours
and this chance to see them safe.

SAMOS

We have our own war to fight!

HALFORD

I heard children scream as they
burned! No one knows this better!

Samos shrinks away, feels the pain of the loss too.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

This war will be unlike any Avalon
has seen since The Beginning.
Aurora can give us certain victory.

SAMOS

Tis a wish for death to sneak into
the lair of the beast.

HALFORD

Should any man of Avalon risk less
with so much at stake?

All from Avalon admire the prince as he gets close to Samos.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

March as planned. Await my return.

SAMOS

And if you should not return?

HALFORD

Then I will have spared you the
trouble of following me into battle
when you do not measure me worthy.

Halford turns away, spun back around by Samos's iron grip.

The soldiers move for him but stop when Samos kneels.

SAMOS

I have dishonored everything.

Halford takes off the amulet, places it over Samos's neck.

HALFORD
Honor me by accepting this.

The big man's jaw clenches. All business. Gray's skeptical.

COMMANDER GRAY
We don't have weapons to give you.

HALFORD
We shall bring our own.

COMMANDER GRAY
Bows and arrows?

Terran strings an arrow, draws it back and lets go. It sails and crisply nicks the top of a torch, killing the flame.

COMMANDER GRAY
Can all of you do that?

TERRAN
Some better. None worse.

INT. SCLERYTH THRONE ROOM

Kyron drags Aurora through the darkness. They pass Scleryth whispering in the shadows. Men, women, and children.

A ray of light illuminates steps cut into stone and Kyron leads her up them to a throne shaped like a dragon, where

THE EMPEROR OF THE COAST

sits, silken robes beautiful, mask and head piece terrifying.

Zira appears from the shadows, unmasked, stands next to him. The two young women instantly hate each other.

THE EMPEROR
You are not from Avalon.

He removes his mask, revealing eyes that could kill with a glance. Wrinkles. Drooping skin. He's older than time.

AURORA
I'm from a far off kingdom.

Zira lunges and slaps her hard, gives Aurora a bloody lip. He tosses Aurora's air mask on the floor between them.

THE EMPEROR
What is your rank, Star Traveller?

AURORA
I'm...I'm nobody.

THE EMPEROR
Kill her.

AURORA
I'm the Navigator.

WHISPERS everywhere. They all know what it means.

THE EMPEROR
So young?

AURORA
Many were killed.

THE EMPEROR
By the reaction. This I know.

AURORA
What else do you know about us?

THE EMPEROR
That you never should have come.

EXT. COAST CLIFFS - NIGHT

A wild storm has set in and lightning cracks on the horizon, illuminates a high ROCK WALL that shields a city within.

WATCH TOWERS are set at intervals, a Scleryth Elite in each scanning the cliffs beyond for signs of movement.

BEHIND A BOULDER BELOW

Gleaming arrow heads, angled in different directions, are loosed. They whistle through the air, cut rain drops and--

--PFFT!PFFT!PFFT! pierce Scleryth necks, hearts and eyes. Halford lets out a HAWK'S SCREECH and the men jump from boulder to boulder, rifles and bows aimed at the wall's top.

They get underneath a DEMON STATUE and hold while Terran aims an arrow attached to the middle of a rope and WOOSH!

The rangers tug once it passes over the statue, forming a pulley system. Halford grabs one end and they hoist him up.

EXT. TOP OF THE WALL - MOMENTS LATER

The last sentry is pulled up and takes his place with the rest of the team. Halford and Gray are studying the

SCLERYTH INNER CITY

Dark. No signs of life. RECTANGULAR BUILDINGS are arranged in blocks like a medieval warehouse district from hell.

HALFORD
Spread out.

EXT. SCLERYTH INNER CITY - NIGHT

Sprinting through the rain. Peering through windows, down streets, into dark rooms. It's a complete ghost town.

INT. ROCK WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Sentries run in, see only rows of chariots and carriages.

INT. ROCK STABLES - NIGHT

Rangers creep in, see only HUNDREDS OF HORSES in a pen.

EXT. SCLERYTH INNER CITY - NIGHT

Teams run into an intersection from all directions.

HALFORD
This is no city.

COMMANDER GRAY
Could they be somewhere else?

HALFORD
The sum of things we do not know
about them is great.

Terran runs up with a few of the sentries.

TERRAN
A downward passage.

INT. SCLERYTH UNDERGROUND HARBOR

Networks of docks constructed in a cave looking out at the ocean. There's room for hundreds of ships but only a single

SCLERYTH GALLEY

is docked. Scleryth soldiers carry crates up a ramp, unfurl sails, adjust the oars in preparation for departure. Fifty feet away, an idle Elite is sucked into a dark cave.

Another on the dock notices him gone, walks toward the void.

BAM! Sentries charge out, rapid fire at the dock workers.

Those on deck are hit by arrows from Halford and his men following. The team charges up the ramp, secures the boat.

TERRAN
This one lives!

An arrow struck Elite writhes in pain, curses loudly.

COMMANDER GRAY

Hold him.

Gray whips out a computer. A hologram shoots out and WAVES WITHIN IT RIPPLE as the Scleryth speaks. It beeps. A match.

COMMANDER GRAY (CONT'D)

Where's the girl you captured?

The hologram flickers, spits out SCLERYTH WORDS. The Elite clams up but Gray twists the arrow and the Scleryth screams.

SCLERYTH ELITE (V.O. COMPUTER)

...to the island! The island!

EXT. SPACE

The Phaeton orbits over the DAY SIDE of the planet. Thirty foot tall MECHANICAL SPIDERS crawl on the shield plating.

INT. MECHANICAL SPIDER

The SPIDER DRIVERS in the head watch another spider settle a curved panel in position over the damaged shield plating.

EXT. GSS PHAETON

The second spider rears up and LASER BEAMS shoot from its front legs and WELD THE PATCH ON in a matter of moments.

With them are EXO-WALKERS, ten foot tall humanoid machines, climbing in and out of fissures caused by the explosions.

INT. NARROW PASSAGEWAY - GSS PHAETON

Sentries flank a residence door like living gargoyles.

INT. RESIDENCE QUARTERS - GSS PHAETON

Kyle's at his table, poking at streams of information.

COMPUTER (V.O.)

Access denied. Terminal locked.

He pounds the table in frustration, rubs his eyes. The data streams flickers, replaced by Hitaro's hologram head.

HITARO (V.O. HOLOGRAM)

Kyle?

INT. DETENTION CELL - GSS PHAETON

Hitaro sits on a bench, staring through a pane of glass.

HITARO (V.O.)
I need you.

Computers in Hitaro's head blink, his mind doing the talking.

INT. RESIDENCE QUARTERS - GSS PHAETON

Kyle gets frustrated again, rubs his temples.

HITARO (V.O. HOLOGRAM)
We're facing shutdown.

KYLE
Then he has to order the landing.

HITARO (V.O. HOLOGRAM)
Thousands would die first. Unless something changes, maybe more.

KYLE
What could change?

HITARO (V.O. HOLOGRAM)
You could repair the beam scanner.

KYLE
I tried accessing it but-

HITARO (V.O. HOLOGRAM)
You have to go to the source.

KYLE
They won't allow me access.

INT. DETENTION CELL - GSS PHAETON

Hitaro's temples pulse and his eyes narrow.

HITARO (V.O.)
Since when would that stop you?

COMPLETE DARKNESS

Running boots echo. Then a blue light can barely be made out. Getting closer. Closer. Now bright enough to reveal--

INT. VENTILATION SHAFT - GSS PHAETON

Kyle runs, a computer clipped to his arm, acting as both a flashlight and a MAP OF SHAFTS run through the ship like a circulatory system, thousands of miles in total.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)
Main intersection.

There's no floor where six tunnels come together and he leaps to the opposite side like a gazelle, barely breaking stride.

INT. VENTILATION SHAFT - LATER

Kyle's sweating, still running, still eyeing the map.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)
Intersection Down.

An intersection up ahead and he curls in a ball, drops into

A DOWNWARD SHAFT

Free-falling, fearless. The shaft begins to slope and BAM! He makes contact hard, rolls to his side, turns on his back and is now SLIDING along the curve, the air rushing by...

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O. SPEAKER)
Intersection left.

He slowly tucks himself together as he slides, hears a beep and WHAM! kicks out at the shaft wall, propelling himself

INTO ANOTHER TUNNEL

Where he somersaults into a run, a perfect machine.

INT. VENTILATION DUCT - GSS PHAETON - LATER

Kyle wipes away sweat, crawling now in a smaller shaft.

INT. BEAM SCANNER CONTROL ROOM - GSS PHAETON

Feet hit the floor as Kyle drops from the ceiling, catches his breath. He freezes. DEAD CREW MEMBERS everywhere. He stares at them, emotionless, turns to a nearby terminal.

PHAETON GUARD (O.S.)
Don't move!

A PHAETON GUARD holding a tablet computer glares at him.

KYLE
Didn't they tell you I was coming?

PHAETON GUARD
This is a non-access zone.

KYLE (CONT'D)
May I see the order?

He reluctantly gives him the tablet, and Kyle taps on it. WHAM! Kyle smashes him across the face, sends him toppling, knocked out. He turns back to control panel, starts working.

EXT. THE OCEAN - DAWN

The sun ascends from the horizon, glows orange on even swells that roll in against the boulder beaches of the circular

SCLERYTH ISLAND

from which no land can be seen. The buildings are composed of perfectly cut rock, like stone skyscrapers that surround

THE SHADOW FORTRESS

with statues of winged beasts perched on walls and roof tops, courtyards with fountains and gardens, all alive with the movement of the TENS OF THOUSANDS OF SCLERYTH who live there.

Ringed around the urban atoll, a perfect network of

STONE DOCKS

where HUNDREDS OF SHIPS are moored. A galley powers in from the ocean, propelled by OARMEN rowing to HEAVY DRUM BEATS--

EXT. SCLERYTH DOCKS - DAWN

It drifts into line with the unloaded and unmanned ships. Two SCLERYTH ELITE hop off, fasten ropes to bollards as the HARBOR MASTER approaches the vessel and calls up to the ship.

THE CAPTAIN steps onto the dock and squares up to him. The Harbor Master repeats himself, a question in SCLERYTH.

BENEATH THE CAPTAIN'S MASK AND HOOD

Commander Gray is listening to his communicator earpiece.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O. RADIO)
You are the last, yes?

COMMANDER GRAY
We are the last.

The computer DELIVERS THE TRANSLATION in Gray's voice and the Harbor Master studies them for a moment, then walks away.

The crew gathers on the dock, disguises still marred by arrow holes and laser burns. With a nod, they walk toward--

EXT. SCLERYTH WHARF - DAWN

making their way past Scleryth loading crates of produce, plant life, animals, and other spoils of the mainland.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)
Conform to their body language.

A few Scleryth bow to them and they do the same.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)
Don't draw attention to yourselves.

An archway at the end of the wharf leads into the
SCLERYTH MAIN STREET

HUNDREDS OF SCLERYTH moving carelessly. Some are masked,
some unmasked, some in fine robes and some in simpler tunics.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)
David?

INT. GALLEY CARGO HOLD

David watches a hologram of the island, building in detail.
After a moment, the island is completely mapped out in 3-D.

LIEUTENANT DAVID
Confirm.

And so begins **THE SEARCH:**

EXT. SCLERYTH MAIN STREET

Rangers pair with sentries, disappear into the crowds.

EXT. GARDEN

Beautiful women lay on posh couches, sip wine and laugh.

EXT. MARKET

Scleryth buying, selling, bartering.

INT. INDOOR BATHS

Men and women lounge in bubbling water, take in the steam.

EXT. TRAINING ARENA

Rows of youths practice sword moves in unison.

INT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE

Men cut apart a fresh cow carcass.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET

Halford and Gray walk through Old World Villas.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)
Residential.

INT. GALLEY CARGO HOLD

David's hologram shows the locations of all the teams.

SENTRY (V.O. RADIO)
Weapons supply.

SENTRY (V.O. RADIO)
Food supply.

As the info rolls in, segments of the map highlight areas:

INSIDE THE SHADOW FORTRESS

INT. GRAND DINING HALL

Where Scleryth eat buffet style, talk quietly in groups...

INT. MUSEUM

Full of artifacts and reconstructed animal bones...

INT. ARCHIVES

Children study scrolls and maps, write on parchment...

INT. TAVERN

Mostly soldiers kick back for a few goblets of wine...

INT. OBSERVATORY

A giant telescope looks through a hole in the roof...

INT. GRAND HALLWAY

Lined with statues and portraits of mythical beasts...

Wide halls and magnificent atriums. The culture is dark but beautiful, like the people, but there are no signs of Aurora.

INT. GALLEY CARGO HOLD

David is still watching the map intently. Sections gradually highlight until more has been discovered than not.

EXT. SHADOW FORTRESS TOWER - LATER

On a veranda, Halford and Gray pause to lean on a railing.

COMMANDER GRAY
Could they have another city?

HALFORD
Unto the edge of the world, I-

COMMANDER GRAY
What edge?

HALFORD
The world is flat as cut stone.
Surely, you must know this.

Gray scoffs, tensions growing between them.

COMMANDER GRAY
What if they took her believing we
are from Avalon? If I talk to them-

HALFORD
Have you forgotten our pact? You
led me to believe you were like us,
people of honor who live by a code.

COMMANDER GRAY
What use is honor or code if I can
find her another way?

They step closer now, face to face, about to fight.

HALFORD
Align with my enemies and I will-

COMMANDER GRAY
What? Come at me with your army?
(gets close)
My defense machines could destroy
your kingdom in an hour.

HALFORD
A claim to such power and yet you
are disguised. If it is true then
I call you a commander of cowards.

Gray puts him in a choke hold, leans him over the edge.

COMMANDER GRAY
I will kill you.

He says it in the same way that Aurora did before. Halford's
eyes widen when he realizes that and he stops resisting.

SENTRY (V.O. RADIO)
Commander. You should see this.

After another moment, Gray releases Halford and they readjust
themselves. Gray turns, starts to walk. Halford eyes him.

HALFORD
Your concern for your people is not
what moves you to save her, Gray.

COMMANDER GRAY
Neither is yours, Prince.

EXT. SCLERYTH ISLAND EDGE - DAY

They arrive where Terran and a Sentry wait. Terran points at
A STONE HUT

away from the buildings, big enough for just a few people.
Ten Scleryth walk toward it. One opens the door and they
march in single file, the last one shutting it tightly.

TERRAN
Too many enter for so few to leave.

Gray looks around. They're the only ones gawking idly.

COMMANDER GRAY
Make your way back to the boat.

INT. STONE HUT

Gray enters first and Halford makes sure the door's shut.
Only a few feet of flat floor before they get to a stairwell.

They walk down it and there's another plateau before more
stairs, like heading down a subway tunnel carved in rock.

HALFORD
It must lead beneath the water.

They get to the bottom and another plateau and Gray freezes.

COMMANDER GRAY
That's impossible.

EXT. SPACE

The Phaeton orbits over the NIGHT SIDE of the planet, the day
side getting close, spiders and exo-walkers still working.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

The crew breathes in heavy air that is no longer pure.
Bennett's in his chair, teeth grinding. He's losing it.
A group of workers enter, led by the Muscular Engineer.

MUSCULAR ENGINEER
Repairs are active, but there isn't
enough time to complete them. The
protocols are meant for deep space.

BENNETT
Is this space shallow?

The engineers do their best to hold back. Even for people who love adhering to protocols, they're ready to break them.

MUSCULAR ENGINEER
It's time to order the evacuation.

BENNETT
The protocol says we are to move the crew to the intact decks, seal them and continue repairs. Do it or find yourselves in detention.

The leader steps for Bennett, but the others restrain him. Bennett notices the disapproving glances from the crew.

BENNETT
You heard Gray! They were attacked! The planet is unsafe!

The crew slump, go back to work as Bennett sits back down.

EXT. MAIN HALLWAY - GSS PHAETON

The Muscular Engineer leads the pack, strides angrily.

MUSCULAR ENGINEER
This has to end.

INT. A DARK SPACE

Electricity hums gently. Halford and Gray stand close together, only faint light illuminating their masks.

HALFORD
Is this a good thing?

COMMANDER GRAY
It answers a few questions.

He turns to a screen in the wall of a space age ELEVATOR POD that can only be part of another Generational Star Ship.

EXT. UNDERWATER

The pod shoots through a TUBE miles down into the icy depths.

INT. ELEVATOR POD

The humming stops with a click. Then a beep.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O. SPEAKER)
Exit now.

The door slides open and Gray and Halford walk into-

INT. ENTRY DECK - GSS 243X

Identical to the Phaeton with touches of Scleryth decoration.

COMMANDER GRAY
We could wander forever.

HALFORD
This one may be smaller than yours.

COMMANDER GRAY
No. Every last inch is the same.

HALFORD
Then where is your dungeon?

INT. DETENTION DECK - GSS 243X

Gray walks in, passes glass cell doors, Aurora asleep in one.

ON A RAISED PLATFORM

six unmasked MEN play a board game like Mah-Jong. The WARDEN looks up at Gray, starts talking in Scleryth.

UNDERNEATH GRAY'S MASK

WARDEN (V.O. RADIO)
Why are you here, Surface Dweller?

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)
Taking the girl off the island.

A pause as the computer spits out the translation.

WARDEN (V.O. RADIO)
The Emperor would never order that.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)
I know.

Gray kicks the Warden, sends him flying. The men are on their feet quickly. Gray punches, kicks, blocks, chops... In a moment, he's the only one standing. Halford runs in.

COMMANDER GRAY
Get her out.

He hits a control and her door opens. Halford runs over. WHAM! Her boot, his chest and he crashes into the wall.

HALFORD
Three times now.

He pulls off his mask, tries to recover his breathing.

AURORA
What are you doing here?!

COMMANDER GRAY
Trying to rescue you.

She turns sharply, sees Gray stripping one of the men.

AURORA
You're with him?!

She walks away in frustration, takes the disguise from Gray.
One of the Scleryth stirs and Gray kicks him in the face.

COMMANDER GRAY
The transport's on standby. No
response from the Phaeton.

She tightens the uniform as Halford approaches.

HALFORD
Move quickly.

AURORA
(steps toward him)
I should break your-

Gray pulls her back and she turns, pushes him off.

AURORA
I'm the leader here.

COMMANDER GRAY
Then act like it.

She glares at them both as she pulls on her mask.

AURORA
We need to get to the archives.

COMMANDER GRAY
No time for that.

AURORA
Are you two coming or not?!

INT. NARROW PASSAGEWAY - GSS 243X

Empty and free of Scleryth decor. Aurora stops at a door,
rubs a layer of grime off of the computer panel next to it.

INT. ARCHIVE ROOM - GSS 243X

The lights flicker on in a perfect dome, banks of computers
lined against the walls with an open floor in the center.

HALFORD
What is this place?

Aurora walks to a computer, pull gloves from a charging dock.

COMMANDER GRAY
It lets us see the past.

She joins them in the center and they remove their masks.

A HOLOGRAM PANEL materializes in front of her as the floor appears to FALL OUT FROM BENEATH THEM, dropping them onto--

EXT. STAR SHIP HULL

Shimmering, nothing but space beyond. Halford stares in wonder at the curved metal extending farther than he can see.

AURORA
The mainframe is now autonomous.

Halford's jaw drops when he turns and lays eyes on

DOZENS OF GENERATIONAL STAR SHIPS

some complete, some mere skeletons being worked on by

THOUSANDS OF CONSTRUCTION SHIPS

weaving in out of the giants, attaching pre-fitted pieces of hull, steel girders, ion thrusters. In the backdrop,

THE DYING PLANET

looks like a racquetball that had a run in with a blow torch.

COMMANDER GRAY
The origin planet.

HALFORD
What happened?

AURORA
We didn't listen.

She hits a button and TIME FAST FORWARDS, the ships complete in moments and a second later their thrusters ignite and send them in different directions away from the dead planet.

INT. CLASSROOM - GSS 243X

THE CHILD(8) has dark features, sits at a desk with others.

AURORA
He's training to be a doctor.

COMMANDER GRAY

Who?

AURORA

The father of the Scleryth.

INT. MATERNITY EXAM ROOM - GSS 243X

THE DOCTOR (20s)

scans over a PREGNANT WOMAN, having a casual conversation.

AURORA

His contribution is flawless.

INT. RECYCLING CHAMBER - GSS 243X

ORDERLIES place an OLD CREWMAN in METAL POD, seal it shut.
One flicks a switch and liquid fills the pod, **MELTS THE BODY.**

HALFORD

What are they doing?

AURORA

Recycling due to obsolescence.

THE DOCTOR stands in the background and he suddenly twitches.
WHITE GOO travels through tubes into the ceiling.

INT. COMMUNAL CAFETERIA - GSS 243X

THE DOCTOR looks down at a tray of WHITE CUBES in disgust.
His eye twitches, peering nervously around at fellow CREW.

AURORA

He realizes he's going to die. It
drives him to insanity.

INT. LABORATORY - GSS 243X

They watch THE DOCTOR working alone at a terminal, checking
around suspiciously to make sure no one is watching.

FAST FORWARD. Months go by in seconds. The lab's empty,
full. Lights on, lights off. People in, people out.

AURORA

Birth, training, contribution,
death. He wants to break the
cycle...alter human nature.

The scene freezes. THE DOCTOR is now past forty years old,
grinning as he stares down at a hologram of a DNA strand.

INT. RESIDENCE BATHROOM - GSS 243X

THE DOCTOR injects himself with a syringe, starts shaking.

AURORA

He only slows down the process.

INT. MATERNITY EXAM ROOM - GSS 243X

THE DOCTOR injects a PREGNANT WOMAN with a syringe.

AURORA

He tries to unlock immortality.

FAST FORWARD. WOMEN come and go, all receiving injections.

INT. DELIVERY ROOM - GSS 243X

THE DOCTOR delivers a NEWBORN with DARK FEATURES, looks at the sweaty MOTHER and emotionless FATHER, perfect Aryans.

AURORA

They never suspect anything.

INT. CLASSROOM - GSS 243X

An INSTRUCTOR talks, FIVE YEAR OLDS listening. She stops. A realization. Most of them stand out as THE DARK BREED.

AURORA

Until it's too obvious.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS 243X

Navigator Clark is in his chair, studying a map of space.

AURORA

There's an investigation.

A SECURITY COMMANDER walks in, hands him a computer. He watches the screen and his eyes get wide, breathing heavy.

INT. LABORATORY - GSS 243X

THE DOCTOR works alone. The door slides open and a SENTRY RESPONSE TEAM bursts in, surrounds him, rifles aimed.

AURORA

They detain all of them.

INT. NARROW PASSAGEWAY - GSS 243X

An ALARM sounds and the residence doors open automatically.

INT. ANOTHER PASSAGEWAY - GSS 243X

A DARK CHILD is carried into the hall. His FATHER runs out yelling but a sentry smashes him in the face with a rifle.

INT. CLASSROOM - GSS 243X

SENTRIES swarm in, drag more DARK CHILDREN away.

INT. COMMUNAL CAFETERIA - GSS 243X

Tables overturned and DARK CHILDREN are snatched.

INT. DETENTION DECK - GSS 243X

Children are thrown into cells, packed like sardines. All turn to THE DOCTOR, in his own cell. They hate him.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - GSS 243X

Navigator Clark and OFFICERS engage in a heated argument.

AURORA

They posed no immediate threat.
There were other concerns.

Clark presses a button and a hologram appears, a map showing the ship getting close to THE NEW PLANET.

EXT. SPACE SURROUNDING THE PLANET

Watching the atmosphere send a WAVE OF ENERGY right at 243X.

HALFORD

This happened to your ship?

A CHAIN REACTION rips off engines, shreds the shield. ESCAPE PODS jettison from the hull, rocket toward the planet.

AURORA

Very few made it out.

She FAST FORWARDS and the ship is pulled toward the planet--

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Standing on the water, they watch as the ship crashes and

A MILE-HIGH TIDAL WAVE

roars for them. A flick of her wrist shoots them back to--

INT. ARCHIVE ROOM - GSS 243X

Aurora taps the hologram panel, the machines humming.

AURORA
The Mainframe was damaged in the
crash. It picks up here...

INT. ENGINEERING DECK - GSS 243X

The children have grown into TEENS, circled around hologram
tables showing damaged parts of the underwater ship.

AURORA
Everyone else died. But the
detention level kept them safe.

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

DARK TEENS pilot underwater toward the light.

AURORA
They set out to explore the planet.

The transport reaches sunlight, rises above the water line.

EXT. HILL TOP - NIGHT

Below the fires of a STONE AGE civilization burn.

COMMANDER GRAY
Survivors? From the pods?

AURORA
No mainframe. They had to start at
zero. Within a few generations,
the idea of a star traveller was a-

HALFORD
Bedtime story.

Aurora nods and they turn their attention to the dark teens,
standing next to their ship, studying their relatives.

AURORA
While they've barely aged, everyone
they knew is dead. They can't try
and rejoin this world. So they'll
stay hidden and create their own.

EXT. THE OPEN OCEAN

Standing again in the middle of nowhere. The world flickers.

AURORA
They start with the platform.

The shadow passes overhead. Carried by LIFTING SHIPS,

A CIRCULAR ROCK

attached to FLOATATION DEVICES underneath, the island base.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Teens unload crates filled with PAIRS OF ANIMALS from a CARGO TRANSPORT, like releasing them from Noah's Ark.

AURORA

Follow every protocol written to
remake the origin planet.

EXT. FUTURISTIC ISLAND - AN AERIAL VIEW

FAST FORWARD. A futuristic city is constructed street by street, building by building, the new civilization thriving.

Population swells. Ships fly to and from the mainland. Aurora touches the panel, sends them to--

EXT. FUTURISTIC MAIN STREET - DAY

Standing in the center of moving crowds, they watch the dark children, teens and young adults walking, talking, working.

COMMANDER GRAY

What goes wrong?

SHE FREEZES THE WORLD. Gets close to a DARK WOMAN whose eyes hold nothing but sadness. EVERYONE AROUND THEM IS DEPRESSED.

AURORA

Life becomes meaningless with no
more protocols left to follow.

She UNFREEZES THE WORLD and points up to a high window where a TEEN GIRL appears, silent tears streaming from broken eyes.

She jumps. Falls. Splatters on the street. A LITTLE GIRL, covered in blood, merely wipes it away and keeps walking.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

They stand in the corner watching the ISLAND LEADERS argue.

AURORA

They refuse to interact with the
survivors but they need a solution.

COMMANDER GRAY

They kept him alive.

Halford's confused. She presses a button, sends them to:

INT. ASSEMBLY DOME

A futuristic Roman forum where THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF THE ISLAND sits in stadium seating. SENTRIES lead the PRISONER in handcuffs to a microphone in the center of the floor.

His gaze washes over the crowds, centuries older but we've seen these eyes not once but twice before. THE DOCTOR.

And if he aged a hundreds of years from this moment, you would see the cold, ancient stare of THE EMPEROR.

THE EMPEROR (V.O. SPEAKER)
Now you see why I wanted to live
long enough to see a world full of
things they could never understand.

A spark in the eyes of all in the crowd. They start nodding.

Aurora MUTES the world, SPEEDS IT UP a bit. The Emperor's speech goes on for a long time, the crowd listening intently.

AURORA
He describes his solution...his
paradise. A return to a time
before humanity enslaved itself to
protocols, before technology
stripped away their feelings.

She UNMUTES the world, the citizens cheering loudly.

THE EMPEROR (V.O. SPEAKER)
But first we must destroy all
evidence of the other survivors!

The cheering stops. Finally, something they're not buying.

WOMAN (O.S.)
They don't threaten us!

THE EMPEROR (V.O. SPEAKER)
But they will. It is their nature.

Still the citizens are skeptical. The Emperor's keen eyes see this and he's calculating, trying to sway them.

THE EMPEROR (CONT'D)
We can never live among them.

MAN (O.S.)
Then we'll stay on the island!

THE EMPEROR
The only way to spare their lives
is to never have contact with them.

That was his best shot. They don't care. Whatever it takes.

THE EMPEROR (CONT'D)

Then they must fear you. Only then
will they leave you alone forever.

(holds up his hands)

Release me and I will show you how!

CLINK! The bonds shoot open, setting free their new savior.

EXT. FUTURISTIC MAIN STREET - DAY

The three stand in the center of it all. FAST FORWARD.

CONSTRUCTION SHIPS emerge from the water, begin tearing down
this city and remaking it into the Scleryth version.

COMMANDER GRAY

Are they just supposed to forget?

AURORA

No.

She expands the panel and it shows her VIDEO SEGMENTS, like
security cameras covering different parts of the island.

AURORA

The children born afterward are
never taught their history. The
older ones never speak of it. Only
few are permitted to go into the
ship. The rest of them are
tattooed...called surface dwellers.

COMMANDER GRAY

Separate classes?

AURORA

They manufacture a culture based on
old ones from the origin planet.

The Scleryth city is finished, docks built. Soon they're
wearing their masks and costumes, building boats, forming the
civilization that Gray and Halford saw during their search.

HALFORD

They have chosen to live like this?

TIME PASSES NORMALLY. He looks around at the busy market.

Scleryth laughing. Children playing. Couples kissing. The
culture has been transformed into one of feeling again.

AURORA

The numbness is gone.

She FAST FORWARDS, a hundred years passing in a matter of moments and then FREEZES. They Scleryth are depressed now in the same way they were before. Life has no meaning.

AURORA
For a while...

INT. SCLERYTH MEETING CHAMBER - NIGHT

The same island leaders, masked and costumed, take seats at a stone table. The Emperor sits at the head.

They remove their masks. Nothing but hatred flowing from all eyes to the old man, especially from a YOUNGER YANUK.

YANUK
The new generation is affected.
You can no longer blame technology
or protocols. It's something else.

The Emperor doesn't look bothered. Something up his sleeve.

THE EMPEROR
Isn't your every desire satisfied?
This is a paradise we've created.

Their eyes fall away. They ARE happy.

THE EMPEROR
But the Surface Dwellers have no
concept for any other way of life.
They must learn to appreciate this.

The Emperor looks around, sees how pissed they are.

THE EMPEROR
I discovered a solution to the
problem. We will build an army.

YANUK
The survivors are no threat to us.

THE EMPEROR
But who know that?

INT. MEDICAL DECK - GSS 243X

The leaders stand around an exam table. Strapped to it, a NAKED MAN with bulging muscles, face covered by an APPARATUS.

THE EMPEROR
I'm inserting all the information
we have on ancient warfare. He
will crave destruction...and they
will gladly follow his command...

INT. SCLERYTH METAL WORKS - DAY

CRAFTSMEN pound out armor, dip red-hot swords into water. Grating as they sharpen them on whetstones. Stacked against the walls, enough weapons and armor for an army of thousands.

INT. AUDITORIUM - GSS 243X

Rifles are stacked on tables, Scleryth disassembling them. They strip out the silver coils use laser cutters and high-tech machines to fit the element into the gold casing.

EXT. SCLERYTH BEACH - DAY

Kyron's in mask and armor, leading hundreds of Scleryth in a daily kata, swinging their swords slowly and deftly.

AURORA

He was bred to lead their army.

Halford turns to her, a solemn look that could kill.

HALFORD

I will end him.

EXT. SCLERYTH TRAINING GROUND - DAY

Zira lets a charge build in her hands, blasts a boulder to pieces. Scleryth examine the gold bracelets she's wearing.

AURORA

The Emperor's daughter.

HALFORD

And I will burn this witch.

AURORA

Threat of war keeps them focused.
Without it, he would lose control.

They follow her eyes to a CHINESE JUNK on the horizon.

EXT. SCLERYTH DOCKS - DAY

Scleryth surround the junk as it settles against the dock. On it, ANCIENT CHINESE TRADERS bow to them nervously. The Emperor charges both of his palms and starts BLASTING.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - GSS 243X

The Emperor sits at the head of a table, the oldest with him.

THE EMPEROR

Today it's a ship of wood, tomorrow
metal. How long until they fly?
(MORE)

THE EMPEROR (cont'd)
Each day we allow them to advance
is a day closer to the time we
allow them to ruin this world.

This strikes a chord with the older ones.

YANUK
Your plan?

The Emperor hits a button and a hologram shoots up in the center of the table. A single BLACK BACTERIUM. He points. Aurora freezes the scene, works on the hologram panel.

HALFORD
What is the meaning of this?

COMMANDER GRAY
That's the disease that's been
killing off the other kingdoms.

Aurora presses a button and the room materializes into:

INT. SCLERYTH THRONE ROOM

The Emperor's on his throne. Yanuk walks up the steps. He shakes his head. Some plan isn't working. Kyron appears.

THE EMPEROR
Half of Avalon is immune to the
disease. Make ready your army.

HALFORD
Stop it.

SHE FREEZES THE SCENE. Halford gets close to the Emperor.

HALFORD
Your ship contains great machines
that can destroy my kingdom, yes?
(Gray nods)
Then why do they risk open war?

She's back to typing on the hologram panel, sends them to...

EXT. SCLERYTH BEACH - DAY

Zira and the Emperor stroll side by side, mid-conversation.

ZIRA
Many will die in an even battle.

THE EMPEROR
Other star ships will come. We
must save the machines for them or
watch our world come crashing down.

Aurora's heard enough, turns to Gray. She powers off the machine and the world fades away, leaves them in...

INT. ARCHIVE ROOM - GSS 243X

She kicks a nearby computer in frustration, seething.

COMMANDER GRAY
Aurora. We have to go.

INT. DETENTION DECK - GSS 243X

Someone bangs to get in. An ENERGY BURST blows the sealed door inward and Zira rushes in, sees Aurora's empty cell.

EXT. NARROW HUT - DAY

Aurora, Halford, and Gray step out of the door. The crowds have thinned, mostly women and children. VERY FEW MEN.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)
All sentry teams to the boat.

LIEUTENANT DAVID (V.O. RADIO)
It was taken, Commander.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)
Find another one.

LIEUTENANT DAVID (V.O. RADIO)
They're all gone, sir.

EXT. SCLERYTH WHARF - DAY

Sentries and rangers linger by the archway as Gray, Halford, and Aurora look out on the docks where all ships have sailed.

LIEUTENANT DAVID
Perfect synchronization. It took them ten minutes to clear out.

HALFORD
In which direction?

TERRAN
To the mainland, Highness. Fully armored and smelling of war.

EXT. THE SKY - DAY

Hovering in place, hidden within the clouds, the transport.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O. RADIO)
Down on our position.

The ship drops down in a straight free fall toward the ocean.

EXT. SCLERYTH WHARF - DAY

Scleryth shouting, running. Gray turns. The streets clear out as Zira leads a SWARM OF SOLDIERS right for them.

COMMANDER GRAY

Go! Go!

They run down the wharf as the Scleryth blast away, run onto-

INT. SCLERYTH DOCK - DAY

Piled with supply crates, perfect cover.

COMMANDER GRAY

Return fire!

Sentries rip rifles from out of their robes, pair up behind crates as rangers run to the end with Halford and Aurora.

Crates are blown apart. Scleryth fall into the sea. The sentries are deadly accurate and their weapons are still more powerful. The FIRE FIGHT goes on, the Scleryth advancing.

Hissing. Something glittering in the harbor water, coming fast and WOOSH! the small transport surfaces, does a one-eighty and the ramp drops open at the end of the dock.

HALFORD

Protect their escape!

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

Rangers sprint in, grab their bows and quivers, rush out to-

EXT. SCLERYTH DOCK - DAY

Loosing arrows rapidly, bringing the Scleryth to a halt.

HALFORD

Phaetons! Hurry!

The Sentries leap frog from stack to stack of crates. Zira orders her men forward as more teams sprint up the ramp.

Only Gray and a sentry on the dock. They run for it, BOOM! a blast hits them. Halford sees Zira, smoking hands held up.

AURORA

Gray!

She runs for him as Halford shoots an arrow that soars right for Zira and SHE CATCHES IT in mid-air, sneers at him.

Zira ducks behind a crate to avoid Sentry rifle blasts as Aurora gets to the two men. The sentry's dead. Gray hangs by a thread, his body singed, blood streaming from his nose.

COMMANDER GRAY
I'm obsolete. Continue.

AURORA
We can make it!

HALFORD
AURORA!

The Scleryth get closer. She turns.

COMMANDER GRAY
Unchecked emotion. That's my girl.

AURORA
Why do you keep saying that?

Then it hits her. Her eyes get wide. He smiles grimly.

FLASHBACK:

INT. BEDROOM - GSS PHAETON

YOUNG GRAY(20s)

sits on a bed, drumming his fingers. The door opens and

AURORA'S MOTHER(20s)

walks in, beautiful and with Aurora's eyes. She closes the door, extends a hand. Gray rises and shakes it.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O.)
We were paired by the committee.

INT. RESIDENCE QUARTERS - GSS PHAETON

Gray walks in, sees Aurora's mother feeding BABY AURORA.

She looks up, can't figure out why he's staring with that goofy smile. This boy is IN LOVE. You saw it coming.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O.)
A simple directive. Two children.
One girl. One boy. Care for you
until your advanced training began.

INT. INDOOR JAPANESE GARDEN - GSS PHAETON

Aurora's mother stands in the alcove with the cherry tree. She turns to leave, pauses. Gray's been watching her.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O.)
I let an emotion overtake my life.

He pulls her close and mashes their lips together. She pulls back at first, then drifts closer. She feels it too.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O.)
It's called love.

INT. MATERNITY DECK - GSS PHAETON

Gray stands over BABY KYLE, smiling. He reaches down and hoists FOUR YEAR OLD AURORA up, points the baby out to her.

Something gets his attention and he turns. A PHAETON DOCTOR walks up to him, says a few words with no emotion.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O.)
And then I was ruled by pain.

INT. RECYCLING CHAMBER - GSS PHAETON

Gray has dark rings around his eyes, hasn't shaved or eaten. He watches as the woman he loves is sealed into the machine. ORDERLIES are confused when leans over the pod, kisses it.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O.)
I lost the will to function.

INT. RESIDENCE QUARTERS - GSS PHAETON

Kyle's in a crib. Aurora plays with a hologram. Gray sits in the corner watching them, completely out of it.

The door opens and Navigator Roman walks in, forty years old. He looks at Gray grimly, then the children, starts speaking.

COMMANDER GRAY (V.O.)
But Roman gave me a second chance.
I had to give you up and undergo
performance rehabilitation.

TWO SENTRIES enter the room, stand behind Roman. Gray takes a last look at his children and then walks out with them. Roman approaches the kids, kneels to Aurora, smiles at her.

RETURN TO SCENE:

EXT. SCLERYTH DOCKS - DAY

The fire fight rages. He coughs up blood, smiles proudly.

COMMANDER GRAY (CONT'D)
I've watched you and your brother
become everything I could hope for.

She starts crying, rubs her hand over his cheek. Halford's running toward them, dodging blasts, shooting arrows.

COMMANDER GRAY (CONT'D)
Kyle's so much like she was.
Focused and meticulous. And you're
like me. Strong and passionate.

She smiles through those tears. He takes one final soft look at her before brushing her hand off and growing cold.

COMMANDER GRAY (CONT'D)
And now you're going to have to
learn faster than I did what it
means to serve the The Mission.

HALFORD
We can carry him!

Her jaw stiffens. She gets it. She shakes her head.

AURORA
He can longer contribute.

Gray smiles proudly. Halford gets it, too. Looks away.

COMMANDER GRAY
That's my Navigator.

AURORA
Good bye, Gray.

COMMANDER GRAY
Good bye, Aurora.

Gray rolls, firing in a blaze of glory as they run into-

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

Just in time to turn back and see Zira blast Gray dead. As they hover off, Aurora snatches a rifle from a sentry.

She aims at Zira, fires wildly and almost falls out before Halford rips her back, holds her close. She turns to him.

AURORA
Four times.

She brushes past him, walks to the cockpit. Below, HUNDREDS OF SCLERYTH SHIPS with soldiers on the decks row toward land.

EXT. FRONT SCLERYTH GALLEY - DAY

Kyron stands on the bow, watches the transport fly away. He nods to an Elite, who pulls a COM DEVICE from under his robe.

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT - DAY

Aurora backs away to the space between the cockpit and cargo hold, leans against the wall, slides down so she's sitting. Halford sees Aurora's sadness and sits across from her.

HALFORD

I know this pain. A Scleryth
killed my mother in front of me.

AURORA

I don't need your comfort.

HALFORD

Of course not. I read this in you.

AURORA

You know nothing about me.

HALFORD

Don't I, though? Trained to lead
your people and given the chance
after great and dark forces align
against you. Choices you make in
these next hours will decide their
fate. We are the same, you and I.
Tasked with making our people safe
and it is far from being over.

She turns to him. Her face is stone, eyes broken.

AURORA

Is it? You heard him. If we land,
he'll do all he can to kill us.

HALFORD

Then do all you can to stop him.

AURORA

It's not that simple for us. There
are rules. There are protocols.
This planet is uninhabitable.

He doesn't understand, gets up, leaves her to her misery.

EXT. STEPPES OF AVALON - DAY

The transport comes down on rocky hills, the ramp opens and Halford and his rangers pour out. He stops when he sees

THE DAEDAL TENTS

have been set up again but he's confused, turns to Terran. Samos and captains approach and Halford stomps toward them.

HALFORD

Why do I see one in place of six?!

Nothing but shame and defeat in their eyes.

SAMOS

The main camp. It is cursed.

Halford's legs grow wobbly and then he jogs back into-

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

Halford rushes past the Sentries, kneels over Aurora.

HALFORD

The Sickness has spread to us. How
will you deliver the EMP?

The question doesn't register, then her heads snaps to him.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

I helped your father find you in
return for this power you have.

Her jaw drops. She shakes her head, stands and walks off.

He follows her into the rear where the sentries watch.

HALFORD

I must have it now!

She leans against the craft's wall, shaking her head.

AURORA

He shouldn't have done that!

HALFORD

You won't stand by his words?

AURORA

I...I can't.

He backs away, crushed. Then grabs and spins her around.

LIEUTENANT DAVID

Aurora?

Halford steps over to David, slaps his own forehead.

HALFORD

Here! Shoot me, Coward! That is
all you haven't done already!

David looks away in shame as Halford, walks out seething to-

EXT. STEPPES OF AVALON - DAY

Cursing under his breath. She runs out after him.

AURORA

Wait! Maybe we can help!

He skitters back to her. She stands her ground.

HALFORD

Your crew is not worth saving.

(leans close; glaring)

I curse the moment I met you.

He spits, walks off. David stands with her and watches him.

INT. HALFORD'S TENT - DAY

Halford races in. Kicks over a table. Smashes a lantern. Tears flow and he hears scraping. He turns. Terran stands in a corner, trimming the feathers on arrows to his liking.

TERRAN

I do not like the way men of Gamon
trim their fletchings. Now bowmen
of Boran. Those are real arrows.

Halford wipes away tears. Terran's face is free of judgment.

HALFORD

Why are you here?

TERRAN

I await your orders.

HALFORD

Even as I wail like an infant?

TERRAN

Mother and master killed. City
burned. Army cursed. Your hope
for Phaeton power is crushed and
you will most likely be dead by
nightfall. I weigh it victory you
do not cackle like a madman.

HALFORD

I'm not a spineless whelp to you?

TERRAN

You are young. But not spineless.

HALFORD

I am young. And afraid. Why does
a warrior skilled as you follow me?

Terran pauses for a good while, gives it real thought.

TERRAN

When Kristoff traded his life for
yours, he earned you this trust.

HALFORD

He was bound by oath to my father.

TERRAN

But Avalon is a higher master. His
life was devoted to protecting it.
He would not have sacrificed
himself to save you if he believed
The Legions would suffer for it.

Halford's confidence picks up. Terran finishes working.

HALFORD

Must I order so many men to die?

TERRAN

It is their homes under attack.
These men do not require your
permission to meet their end.

HALFORD

What do they require of me?

Terran gives it thought as he walks toward the door flap.

TERRAN

To do what must be done.

Terran leaves. Halford turns his all-gold plated KING'S
ARMOR on a stand, engraved with a hawk on the chest.

EXT. DAEDAL ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Soldiers nod to Halford as he walks through the camp, full
armor shining in the sun. He doesn't meet their eyes.

INT. DAEDAL COMMAND TENT - DAY

Samos and captains talk over the map as Halford stomps in.

HALFORD

The Scleryth army sails here.

SAMOS

Their numbers?

HALFORD

With our strength reduced to a
sixth, it makes no difference.

WHISPERS OF FEAR amongst the commanders.

SAMOS

You did not find the Phaeton Queen?

HALFORD

We found her. In a city beneath
the sea. Amongst men who travel
the stars and live forever, rooms
that see past as present and enough
things to spin your head backwards.

They whisper, then turn back to Halford with heavy hearts.

SAMOS

We would march to certain death.

HALFORD

If no force meets them, they have
free ride to slaughter our cities.
I will not stand by and watch this.
(meets their eyes)
Let each man make his own decision,
fight where and how he will. As
for me, I will keep my honor...

He draws a dagger, stabs it deep into the spot on the map.

HALFORD

...ride here and die as a man of
Avalon to the sound of steel
clashing with steel. Anyone who
wishes to come with me is welcome.

All are confused, look to Samos for direction. He takes the
amulet off, kneels, offers it up to Halford, who puts it on.
Samos rises, turns to the others as Halford walks out.

SAMOS

To war.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Bennett's reviewing a hologram with a few of his officers
when the Tall Crewman perks up from his station.

TALL CREWMAN

Aurora's on the com, sir.

Bennett grows tense, almost excited. Please have good news.
Her face appears as a hologram, floating in front of his.

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

Flying over the plains. She looks in his hologram eyes.

AURORA
GSS 243X will attack us if we land.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Bennett does a good job hiding his disappointment.

BENNETT
Return to the Phaeton immediately.

He powers down his screen. The crew on deck sag as he turns to them with his trademark self-satisfied, told you so grin.

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

She powers off the hologram, pounds the dashboard.

AURORA
An entire planet here and we're
forbidden to land on it!

JEROME
It's protocol.

AURORA
Is that your answer for everything?

JEROME
There is no other answer. It's the
purpose of the system. To govern
actions in service of the Mission.

AURORA
The people of Avalon have a system
too. It requires them to act.

JEROME
You would prefer to enter into a
conflict with no chance of success?

AURORA
I wish...we were more like them.

JEROME
We have the same DNA. How much
more like them could we be?

AURORA
The exact same?

EXT. PLATEAU - DAY

The transport kicks up dust as it lands. The rear opens and Aurora jogs out, runs to the edge, looks down at

THE INFECTED AVALON CAMP

at the bottom of the sloped rock face, FIVE LEGIONS WORTH OF TENTS set up in a complex array. Horses are sprawled out, wheezing. Not a soldier in sight. It appears lifeless.

EXT. INFECTED CAMP - MOMENTS LATER

Aurora carries a bag, pulls an air mask on, walks into-

INT. INFECTED TENT

INFECTED SOLDIERS lay in the darkness, pale and with raccoon eyes, clothes and hands stained from coughing up blood.

She kneels next to the nearest, scans over him. A BEEP and the hologram flickers and becomes the BLACK BACTERIUM. She's puzzled, studies it. Then pulls her mask off.

EXT. SMALL TRANSPORT - DAY

Sentries scan the craft as Jerome and David stand together over a hologram readout. Aurora blows by them into-

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

She mashes a panel and a COMPARTMENT in the floor opens up. Inside are supply crates and shrink-wrapped packages.

JEROME (O.S.)

What are you doing?

David and Jerome followed her in and are watching her. She digs through the storage space, finds a LARGE CONTAINER.

AURORA

We need the MedPak.

LIEUTENANT DAVID

No.

She freezes, rises, turns to them in disbelief.

AURORA

What did you say?

JEROME

We must return to the ship now.

AURORA

I gave you an order.

LIEUTENANT DAVID

Gray was in command. We are now subject to Bennett's orders.

She's fuming, shaking, looks from one blank face to the next.

AURORA
Gray would have helped them.

JEROME
That's irrelevant. He's dead.

LIEUTENANT DAVID
Your father adhered to protocol.

She hangs her head, sighs. Her face turns red. Tears begin to stream. She buries her head in her hands. Takes a step--

--WHAM! sends David flying, picks up a rifle, kicks out.

She's balanced on one leg, boot pinning Jerome's neck to the wall, rifle aimed at David as he recovers. All an act.

AURORA
Did you notice I am not my father?

David eyes a nearby rifle, Jerome's terror, Aurora's anger.

LIEUTENANT DAVID
Close enough for me.
(touches his ear)
Sentry Team, David...

A long pause as he and Aurora stare at each other.

LIEUTENANT DAVID
Unload the MedPak unit.

She drops her leg, points the rifle at Jerome.

AURORA
Contribute or be recycled.

EXT. COAST CLIFFS - DAY

The wall protecting the Scleryth city echoes with drumbeats as STEEL GATE DOORS open and rows of soldiers march out. Chariots. Knights. Well-drilled. Well-armed. Deadly.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS 243X

Scleryth at the controls watch a MAP of the mainland and dots swarming on the coast. Zira enters, walks to her father, who's in the Navigator's chair studying a stream of data.

ZIRA
Marching?

The Emperor nods. Zira studies him studying the holograms.

ZIRA (CONT'D)
Something troubles you....

The old man flicks his wrist and the holograms disappear.

THE EMPEROR
The girl shouldn't have been here.
It is a violation of protocols.
And we lost the transport signal.

ZIRA
What difference does it make?
Kyron will finish off the Avalons.
The other crew will stay in their
ship and repair it or be destroyed.

The Emperor admires her, wishes it was that simple.

THE EMPEROR
They fractured protocols already.
We can no longer anticipate their
actions based on this system.

The Emperor stares at the map, thoughtful.

THE EMPEROR (CONT'D)
There is nothing so unpredictable
as a human fighting for survival.

He looks over at a readout of the Phaeton in orbit.

ZIRA
They must dread the very thought of
this planet. We'll make Avalon an
example of what awaits them here.

They look at each other, twisted happiness fed by pure evil.

THE EMPEROR
Set their world on fire.

EXT. INFECTED CAMP - DAY

Sentries stand near the propulsion jets, sealing rigged-up
RUBBER TUBES into their intake housings that lead to a

MEDPAK CYLINDER MACHINE

affixed to a tripod, wired to MEDPAK COMPUTERS that Jerome
works on. The sentries give it a once over, nod to Aurora.

Everyone pulls on their air masks as she heads for the camp.

AURORA (CONT'D)
Do it.

Holograms flicker. Whirring as the machine sucks in air and it mixes with BLUE LIQUID falling in single drops like an IV, turns the clear core of the machine into a blue ball of gas.

JEROME (V.O. RADIO)
Initiate Propulsion.

Plumes of gas shoot from the exhaust, form an azure CLOUD WALL that swallows the camp. Aurora walks through mist into-

INT. INFECTED COMMAND TENT

A HUNDRED KNIGHTS

are barely visible in the ever-deepening haze, nearly dead.

A SCREECH. She turns, sees an ARMORED HAWK on the arm of

THE LEGION MASTER OF LYRIA

an infinitely burly general in orange armor slumped against a tent beam, eyes closed, face bloody. His chest heaves as he breathes in and out, each inhalation deeper and more lively.

Aurora kneels over him, gets close, lifts the scanner and a beam shoots out as he takes another breath. The HOLOGRAM:

TRACKS A SINGLE NANO ANTIBODY

into the warriors's black-speckled mouth and that's sucked

INTO HIS BLACK LUNGS

And exchanged for air, pushed through a tiny capillary

INTO HIS BLOODSTREAM

Full of the deadly bacteria. The antibody attaches to an

INFECTED BLOOD CELL

and comes to life. Legs shoot out and THE BOT slices into the cell, starts eating the black. It divides and the two bots continue eating black, dividing, eating, dividing again.

The CELL TURNS BLUE, flares with STATIC and starts pumping out MILLIONS OF NANOBOTS like a factory as the man regains consciousness and his eyes shoot open, tinged deep blue.

AURORA (V.O. RADIO)
It's working.

EXT. SPACE

The Phaeton orbits over the DAY SIDE of the planet.

The hull expands and flexes, heated by the sun's rays and as an exowalker tries to apply the last patch on a fissure, BOOM! a gas pocket erupts, blasts the machine into space.

ON DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE HULL

Explosions spew like geysers, crippling spiders and walkers.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Bennett listens to PANICKED YELLS on the intercom.

INT. DETENTION CELL - GSS PHAETON

Hitaro is sweat-drenched, leaned back, counting the minutes.

A door opens. The muscular engineer walks by, angry as hell.

PHAETON WARDEN (O.S.)
Where is your author-

BAM! A thud. The cell opens and Hitaro rises to his feet.

EXT. WIDE HALLWAY - GSS PHAETON

Hitaro leads TEN ENGINEERS confidently and with purpose. A YOUNG SENTRY runs up to them in a panic, blocks their way.

YOUNG SENTRY
Second Officer Bennett has...

BAM! Hitaro clocks him, keeps walking as one of the other engineers drags him into the nearest door, seals it shut.

INT. ANOTHER HALLWAY - GSS PHAETON

They reach a door marked SENTRY STATION. Hitaro works the computer panel. A beep and the door slowly slides open to-

INT. SENTRY STATION - GSS PHAETON

Rows of weapons, uniforms and body armor all guarded by the lone SENTRY DOORMAN. Hitaro runs in, picks up a STUN RIFLE.

BZZZT! A STUN BURST hits the doorman, knocks him out cold.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND

Halford's on his horse atop a hill, staring out at the field. The gloomy mountain range to his left, forest to the right.

THE SCLERYTH ARMY

swarms into view, boot stomps echoing and shaking the ground. Samos walks his horse up, stops slightly behind Halford.

HALFORD
Fight at my side?

SAMOS
It would honor me.

They dismount, smack their horses and watch them run off.
Samos pulls his axe. Halford his sword. They turn to--

THE DAEDAL LEGION

standing in rows, ready to die a thousand deaths rather than
leave the field. Terran and a hundred rangers stand in back.

HALFORD
Death calls! What is your answer?!

GRUNT. CLANK! CLANK! CLANK! as weapons strike shields.
Halford puts his helmet on, pulls his horn and BLOWS HARD.

HALFORD (CONT'D)
SLOW ADVANCE!

And in perfect cadence:

THE DAEDAL LEGION
SLOW ADVANCE!

THE SCLERYTH

separate into phalanxes, as well-drilled as the Legion.

A FRONT LINE OF CHARIOTS

is led by Kyron, who puts a fist up, halting the army.
SCLERYTH COMMANDERS stop behind him. He holds a hand out and

A SINGLE PHALANX

Double the size of the Daedal Legion, starts running forward.

HALFORD

walking at the Avalon front, pulls his horn and blows.

HALFORD
Halt!

THE DAEDAL LEGION
HALT!

TERRAN AND HIS MEN

run through the ranks to the front and string arrows up as
more Rangers with torches run in and light arrows on fire.

WOOSH! The VOLLEY arches onto a PATCH OF OILY DIRT and a
HIGH WALL OF FLAME

separates these Scleryth from the rest of their army. The
SCLERYTH COMMANDER screams wildly and they begin blasting
energy, taking out Avalon soldiers who shield themselves.

HALFORD
Broad Line Charge!

THE DAEDAL LEGION
BROAD LINE CHARGE!

The Legion comes shoulder to shoulder in a phalanx as THE
ARMIES CLASH in a tumult of blasts, clanks, roars, and blood.

HALFORD

fights with fury, waiting for this moment his whole life as
SAMOS

crushes everything, Scleryth so afraid they run from him as
TERRAN AND MEN

Cheat to the sides of the army and fire at the Scleryth as
KYRON

studies the fight, uncaring watching his soldiers die while
HALFORD

avoids an energy blast as the armies reach a stand still.

HALFORD
Wedge!

THE DAEDAL LEGION
WEDGE!

Men from the back to charge into the Scleryth lines by twos.
They fight side by side, back to back, and have literally
driven spikes into the Scleryth, separating them.

HALFORD
Crush!

THE DAEDAL LEGION
CRUSH!

Lines of red armor crush the enemy like a garbage compactor.
The Scleryth see they are outmatched, start retreating.

Kyron hops off his chariot as the retreating get closer. One gets near, YELLING IN SCLERYTH and Kyron turns his back.

In a swift move, he pulls his sword and beheads him, then holds up the bloody blade and points it at the Legion.

The entire Scleryth army rumbles forward to the sound of horns and drums, chanting as they march for the Legion.

HALFORD

Let them crash upon The Rock!

THE DAEDAL LEGION

ROCK!

The Legion forms a CIRCULAR PHALANX, rangers in the center.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! The Scleryth blast the oil patch, killing the fire wall, continue at a full on sprint.

HALFORD

Make them feel it in their bones!

The Rangers start firing arrows, bringing Scleryth down.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

That the word Avalon should make them cry out in pain if it is ever uttered louder than a whisper!

WHAM! the Scleryth collide with and surround the Legion. Spears thrust between shields, stab out, rip them apart.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

Rotate!

THE DAEDAL LEGION

ROTATE!

The phalanx spins like a carousel, a slow machine of death that cuts Scleryth to pieces. But the power of the bracelets sets in BOOM! takes out soldiers who are replaced and BOOM!

Terran lets go of an arrow, twitches, looks up where

THE ARMORED HAWK

Screeches, flying over the battle, gazing with blue eyes as

THE OTHER FIVE LEGION MASTERS

look down on the failing phalanx with glossy, blue eyes.

LYRIAN LEGION MASTER

Have you ever been so proud?

Jaws set, he blows his horn and they draw their swords.

LEGION MASTERS
FOR AVALON!

THE CURED AVALON LEGIONS

Charge, KNIGHTS ON HORSEBACK followed by FOOT SOLDIERS. All are snarling and with blue eyes. With their colored armor, they are like a rainbow river pouring over the battle field.

KYRON

takes a COM DEVICE from his belt, whispers into it.

EXT. THE OCEAN

The island in the distance, there are bubbles as GSS 243X RISES TO THE SURFACE. A portion of its hull breaks the water line. A DEEP BELLOW and a MASSIVE DOOR STARTS SLIDING OPEN.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND - DAY

The Scleryth run back to reset as the Legions smash them.

HALFORD

charges an Elite on a horse, runs him through and mounts up. He gallops to the Avalon horsemen fighting toward The Rock.

HALFORD
What is this?!

GAMON LEGION MASTER
Phaeton Magic, Highness!

Halford looks up as the Phaeton transport flies over low. He rips his horn out, thinks for a moment, blows hard.

HALFORD
Form The Talon!

EVERY AVALON SOLDIER
TALON!!

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

Aurora flies, Jerome as co-pilot.

AURORA
Maximum Damage!

IN THE CARGO HOLD

Sentries have rifles aimed. The rear opens and they BLAST.

THE BATTLE

Rages on, both armies shifting fluidly in tight formations.

EVERY AVALON FOOT SOLDIER

comes together in a crescent formation dozens of men deep as

THE SOLDIERS ON HORSEBACK

ride off as if running, take a wide arc and gallop back hard.

HALFORD

Claws!

SOLDIERS ON HORSES

CLAWS!!

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT - DAY

Aurora has the perfect view of the Avalon legions forming

THE TALON

Foot soldiers in an impenetrable block on one side and riders split into five lines and crashing through the enemy, as if a giant hawk's claw was grasping hold of the Scleryth Army.

KYRON

sees the Phaeton transport picking off his soldiers nearby. He roars and ten Scleryth elite huddle together in a pack.

They put their hands as close as they can and then BOOM! the blasts from their bracelets combines and smashes into the

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

Kills sentries and sends the cockpit into a frenzy of alarms.

JEROME

We're going down!

They're in a tail spin at an angle toward the tree line.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND - DAY

KYRON

Blows a horn and the Scleryth begin moving backward.

HALFORD

Cuts off a head, slices away an arm as Samos runs up to him.

SAMOS

They appear....to retreat!

KYRON

PRINCE!!

Halford lays eyes on Kyron headed for him, calling him out. He turns his horse to confront him when BOOM! his eyes follow a trail of smoke to where the Phaeton transport has crashed.

HALFORD

Aurora...

His head turns indecisively. Kyron. The ship. Kyron. The ship. He kicks his horse, heading for the downed ship.

Through the lines. Slash here. Thrust there. Ducks a spear. Breaks free of the fight and rides hard for her as-

INT. BEAM SCANNER ROOM - GSS PHAETON

Kyle stands at the control station, holds up his computer and a stream of information is sucked into it. He's finished.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O. SPEAKER)

Beam Scanner reactivated. Confirm.

As he walks for the door, the guard stirs to life. BAM! Kyle kicks him like Gray kicked the warden, sends him out.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

A GROUP OF SENTRIES in body armor marches in, spreads out. The leader breaks to the front, removes his helmet. Hitaro.

BENNETT

Hail the sentries!

The engineers dare someone to move with their aimed stunners. On the low, A WOMAN OFFICER types on her holograms.

INT. SENTRY COMMAND CENTER - GSS PHAETON

An alarm begins flashing at a control station. The SENTRY DISPATCHER sitting in front of it touches his earpiece.

SENTRY DISPATCHER

Response Team to NavDeck.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Hitaro turns to the Tall Crewman.

HITARO

Queue the Landing Protocol.

BENNETT

Follow his order and be recycled!

The crewman considers it, drops into his station and types.

TALL CREWMAN

There's a temporary block.

Bennett grins as Hitaro's team get nervous. They're screwed.

INT. SMALL TRANSPORT

Halford rushes in, past dead sentries, into the cockpit where Jerome is dead and Aurora barely alive. He lifts her out to-

EXT. SMALL TRANSPORT

Where the wall of smoke obscures the battle, and lays her down. Her eyes open, and she sits up, coughing.

HALFORD

You healed them!

AURORA

If only I could give you what Gray promised you.

HALFORD

I did not help Gray for the EMP.

AURORA

Then why?

HALFORD

A woman with such strength that men would follow her is quite rare.

AURORA

My crew only follows protocols.

Halford touches the amulet on his chest, grins.

HALFORD

Laws, trinkets, protocols. All meaningless. They follow leaders. You underestimate your people.

He takes the amulet off, drapes it over her neck.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

If I should die, all will know you by this and treat you as a friend.

AURORA

You can win outnumbered like this?

HALFORD
Good odds for Legions of Avalon.

They share a moment, interrupted by the rumbling of

SCLERYTH DEFENSE SHIPS

converging on the field from all directions. JET FIGHTERS.
HELICOPTERS WITH NO ROTORS. FLYING TANKS AND WARSHIPS.

AURORA
You can't fight them!

HALFORD
Hide yourself!

He bounds away as the SCLERYTH COMMAND SHIP passes overhead.

INT. SCLERYTH COMMAND SHIP

Zira's in starship body armor, standing behind men at
terminals coordinating the fleet as they blast the Legions.

Someone points out a blip below. Zira types and the hologram
forms an outline of Aurora hiding. She sneers, jogs-

INTO A PASSENGER SECTION

Where SCLERYTH SPECIALISTS carrying modern weapons wait. She
grabs a rifle from the wall, motions for them to follow.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND

Halford gets back to the army under fire, blows his horn.

HALFORD
SEPARATE!

THE LEGIONS
SEPARATE!

The Legions break up as the Gamon general rides to Halford.

GAMON LEGION MASTER
They number too many to divide!

HALFORD
Single men make smaller targets!

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

WHAM! Hitaro throws a bloodied-up Bennett against the wall.

HITARO
Give me the password!

EXT. HALLWAY - GSS PHAETON

A SENTRY RESPONSE TEAM creeps along a wall, remove canisters from their vests and spray foam in the outlines of doors--

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

BOOM! The walls blow in and the team quickly has Hitaro and his men covered in the confusion, ready to fire. Engineers give up, drop their weapons as Bennett stands tall, relieved.

BENNETT

Mutiny. Not for five hundred years
has the word even been spoken.

HITARO

People are dying!

BENNETT

Perhaps you should have been more
focused on your duty than mine!

HITARO

Your duty is to keep the Mission
intact! You fail as we speak!

BENNETT

And yet we have made improvements!
We can stabilize the hull! We may
lose some crew, but we can put an
end to this state of chaos doing
exactly what protocols demand-

HITARO

In a state of chaos, adherence to
protocol may be bypassed in the
interest of The Mission at-

BENNETT

The discretion of the acting
Navigator! I know the rules and I
will not be the first one in thirty
generations to break them! They
exist for times like these when the
weak lose their clarity of thought!

(glares at Hitaro)

Aurora has confirmed that the
planet is uninhabitable. Only a
full beam scan can refute that.

KYLE (O.S.)

There won't be a beam scan.

He lingers in a hole in the wall, glaring at Bennett.

BENNETT

There will be once it is repaired.

KYLE

I repaired it and studied the data.
The atmosphere is attracted to its
energy, a magnet for destruction.

BENNETT

We'll adapt the system.

KYLE

Impossible.

BENNETT

How do you know?

KYLE

Because I've run the equation four
million times since I saw you last.

A BRIDGE OPERATOR looks up from her control station.

BRIDGE OPERATOR

Energy clusters below.

BENNETT

On screen.

The screens show the blips of the defense ships firing.

BENNETT (CONT'D)

Do you see now? Whatever's down
there is waiting to destroy us.

KYLE

But the fact that they exist proves
that the planet is habitable.

The Bridge Operator presses a few buttons, confused.

BRIDGE OPERATOR

A communication. From Aurora.

KYLE

If we are still following protocol,
then you must put her on speaker.

Everyone looks at him like Kyle has a point. Bennett nods.

AURORA (V.O. SPEAKER)

Aurora calling Phaeton...

KYLE

Confirm, Aurora.

EXT. SMALL TRANSPORT - DAY

Aurora holds a rifle, hides amongst the wreckage.

AURORA
Kyle?!?! Where's Bennett?!

BENNETT (V.O.)
There's only one relevant question.
Is the planet safe?

She looks out on the war, watches ships blast sporadically.

AURORA
No.

BENNETT (V.O. COMPUTER)
Then what more is there-

AURORA
But there's air and water. And
life. Real life. Real people...

SAMOS

Slashing deftly, cleaving Scleryth two and three at a time.

AURORA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
If you saw what it looks like.

KYRON

Moves like a ninja through the legions, untouchable.

AURORA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Real humanity...

HALFORD

Fighting hard with two swords, dodging blasts, looking around
and seeing just how dismal things are for his Legions...

AURORA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You'd realize that to be human is
to fight for what we believe in...

AURORA

Staring out at the battle, sentimental and frustrated.

AURORA (CONT'D)
That if the ones who began the
Mission could see us so close to a
new home and afraid to fight for
it, they wouldn't recognize us...

EXT. SCLERYTH COMMAND SHIP

A cable shoots from a port and buries itself in the ground.
A hatch opens and Zira and her team start ziplining down.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

BENNETT

You would have me ignore protocol
and follow your orders instead?

AURORA (V.O. SPEAKER)

No. Follow what it is that makes
you human and do what's right.

This hits Bennett but he hides it. A BLAST over the speaker.

KYLE

Aurora! Aurora!

EXT. SMALL TRANSPORT

Aurora turns, sees Zira and the specialists running for her.
She drops her computer, sprints for the forest.

ZIRA

Kill the Navigator!

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Bennett paces, whispers low like multiple personalities were
arguing. He turns. Going to say something. Shuts up.

He leans against a wall, pounds it, lips quivering. A
comforting hand touches his shoulder. He turns to Kyle.

BENNETT

I can't. I can't even consider it.

KYLE

To serve the Mission, you must.

BENNETT

And once I do? Ignore protocols?

KYLE

They are imperfect.

BENNETT

They are a flawless system!

KYLE

Protocol says we must scan the
planet to complete the Mission. To
scan would lead to Mission failure.
(MORE)

KYLE (cont'd)
By logic, the protocols have failed
their purpose of saving humanity.

This strikes Bennett and his face relaxes, his body too.

BENNETT
How have I not seen this?

KYLE
We see what we choose to see.

BENNETT
And my choices have killed people.

KYLE
Possibly. But it's never too late.

BENNETT
I don't believe in second chances.

KYLE
We failed on one world and set out
to find another. The Mission is
our last hope for a second chance.

Bennett's face falls. He looks down, goes blank. He walks over to his chair and sits. Pulls a hologram up. Pauses. Thinks. Types. Two large cubes float in front of his face.

Hesitates. Shaking. Trembling. Gasping. And then looks at Kyle and pulls one cube over so they fuse together. Everyone sighs. The sentries drop their rifles. Kyle walks over.

KYLE (CONT'D)
Now that you've-

BENNETT
Chief Hitaro has the helm!

He stands and he and Hitaro make peace with a glance. He strides, gets to the door and the Tall Crewman jumps up.

TALL CREWMAN
There's no protocol for this!

BENNETT
Figure it out!

INT. MULTIPLE DECKS WITHIN THE PHAETON

LIGHTS FLASH. SCREENS FLICKER. THE GENERAL ALARM blares to warn the thousands of men, women, and children who stop typing, repairing, hauling, inspecting and welding to listen.

Their necks snap upward when they hear the unfamiliar words:

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)
All able crew to battle stations.
External ship defense in effect.

INT. HALLWAY - GSS PHAETON

Crew sprint in single file lines, fast but orderly.

INT. COMMUNAL CAFETERIA - GSS PHAETON

Filing out neatly. Purpose and determination on their faces.

INT. CARGO DOCK - GSS PHAETON

The entire space is lit up like heaven. CHILDREN join
TECHNICIANS ripping the wrap off vehicles, powering them up.
Hoses drop from the ceiling and the crew start fueling jets.

INT. CREW ARMORY - GSS PHAETON

OLDER CREW stand at stacks of body armor and rifles, hand
them to men and women in a perfect assembly line.

INT. CARGO DOCK - GSS PHAETON

Thousands of crew sprint toward their pre-assigned ships,
rifles in hand, armor on, ready to go to war.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Aurora thrashes through trees, trades rifle blasts with the
Scleryth Specialists tracking her down, led by Zira.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND - DAY

The fight rages. Numbers begin to count. Avalon succumbing.

The GAMON LEGION MASTER

is blasted from above, he and his horse going down hard.

A FOOT SOLDIER

is vaporized by three bracelet blast at the same time.

TERRAN

has run out of arrows, fights with a long spear. He sees
Halford nearby, taking on three Scleryth and rushes in. He
stabs one, Halford guts the others, and they both turn to

THE MOUNTAIN TOPS

where exowalkers and mechanical spiders climb over the rock
faces, breaking off boulders, speeding toward ground level.

TERRAN
Iron beasts!

HALFORD
Can they be brought down?

Terran runs over to a dead Scleryth with an arrow sticking from his chest, wrenches it free, strings it, and lets loose.

INT. SCLERYTH SPIDER COCKPIT

SCLERYTH SPIDER PILOTS laugh when the arrow hits the glass bounces off. One presses a button and rears up as it

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND - DAY

Pelts laser bursts at them and they dive and roll to safety. Terran looks at him gravely. Halford glances around.

HALFORD (CONT'D)
We will die fighting as one.

He pulls his horn and the two start backing away.

HALFORD (CONT'D)
Fall back!

THE LEGIONS
FALL BACK!!

The Legions run, separate from the Scleryth, also regrouping. Scleryth ships move in and start pounding Avalon hard.

The battle field is swallowed by A MASSIVE SHADOW and both armies freeze in place, all eyes aimed at the sky.

Clouds have peeled back to reveal THE SUN and a black disk covering it over, blocking out its light. Fighting stops.

EXT. SPACE

The Phaeton orbits directly between the sun and the planet--

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND - DAY

To produce the first SOLAR ECLIPSE in this world's history.

The ships stop firing. Spiders and exowalkers stop moving. Halford and Terran arrive at the front of the Legions.

TERRAN
Look how they cower.

He points. Kyron's marshalling his men back, all awestruck, as the ship sends the world into the dark FULL ECLIPSE--

EXT. THE FOREST - ECLIPSE

At the edge of a ravine, Zira stalks thinned out trees alone. The search party has grown more spread out, no one near. Zira freezes as rifle breaks the shadows, nudges her head.

AURORA (O.S.)

Throw your rifle.

Zira tosses it into the ravine as Aurora steps closer.

AURORA

Now your bracelets.

Zira grunts, rips them off, throws them down as well.

ZIRA

You can't shoot me.

AURORA

You're right.

She swings, but Zira ducks, kicks out, jars the rifle from her hands and it flies into the ravine as light reappears.

AURORA

I don't think you want this.

She lunges to strike, but Zira blocks her, kicks out, sends her flying. She is just as fast, strong, and well-trained.

ZIRA

We have those machines too.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS 243X

The Emperor watches a 3-D depiction of the planet-ship alignment on one hologram, blips shooting out of the Phaeton on another. He gets pissed, starts typing on his controls.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND

As the sun reappears, dark specs gets larger, shapes of the

PHAETON DEFENSE SHIPS

burning through the atmosphere. They break, engage Scleryth ships. Halford and his men cheer as the AIR WAR begins.

EXT. CLIFF'S EDGE

Punching, kicking, blocking, flipping. Zira snatches Aurora by the hair, reaches into her boot and grabs a knife. She holds it to Aurora's throat as Scleryth run toward them.

ZIRA
I find you weak as your culture is
weak. Both end today, Navigator.

AURORA
Is being a Scleryth that great?

ZIRA
We've evolved beyond humanity.

Aurora grabs the knife hand, twists and makes it SLASH
THROUGH HER OWN HAIR, taking Zira's upper hand away.

She spins, kicks out, watches Zira plummet to her death.

AURORA
Still can't fly.

Laser blasts just miss her head, Scleryth closing in on her
from the forest and she sprints along the edge of the cliff.

After a moment, she stops. Nowhere to go. Scleryth fire
from everywhere. Propulsions jets rumble and a mid-sized

PHAETON ATTACK SHIP

like a rotorless helicopter, rises from the ravine and the
side door slides open. Staring at her like a mad dog is
Bennett holding the biggest fucking ION MACHINE GUN there is.

BENNETT
Down.

She hits the deck as RATATATAT! Bennett sweeps side to side,
blows Scleryth apart, singes the trees like a napalm strike.

She gets up as more ships fly past them, jumps into-

INT. PHAETON ATTACK SHIP

And Bennett pulls his earpiece out and hands it to her.

BENNETT
Awaiting your orders, Navigator!!

They share a moment as she sticks it in her ear.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Kyle's at a control station, Hitaro in the Navigator's chair,
all of them watching the battle unfold on all screens.

AURORA (V.O. SPEAKER)
Form a perimeter and take positions
to protect the Avalon Army!

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND

The Legions form a TRIANGLE as the spiders and exowalkers rumble toward them, the Scleryth ranks splitting to make way.

Aurora's and other defense ships hover in, form a line, trading blasts with the machines, protecting the Legions.

EXT. GSS 243X

A LONG WAIL stirs and ripples the oceans as TWO CIRCULAR SLATS in the hull begin to slowly open.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Kyle sees a blip on his hologram, types furiously.

KYLE

Confirm that signature.

He PICKS UP THE HOLOGRAM, THROWS IT ACROSS THE ROOM and when it appears in front Hitaro, his eyes get wide.

HITARO

Aurora, this is NAVDECK!

INT. COMMAND DEFENSE SHIP

Aurora's standing with Bennett, overseeing the battle. a moment's pause to listen and her eyes brim with terror.

EXT. GSS 243X

GIANT ION CANNONS

Have risen and their stalks are now fully extended. BOOM! BOOM! GREEN PLASMA ORBS blast from them toward land.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND

PLASMA ORBS smash into and DISINTEGRATE two Phaeton ships.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS 243X

The Emperor grins now that he's back in control of things.

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

AURORA (V.O. SPEAKER)

Fire plasma cannons!

Hitaro turns to Kyle, who shakes his head.

HITARO

Aurora, the atmosphere-

KYLE
The atmosphere!!!

Hitaro stops as Kyle jumps into action typing.

HITARO
Hold on down there!

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND

Halford studies the Scleryth, finds Terran.

HALFORD
Three to one, yes?!

Terran scans the Legions, then the Scleryth. He nods.

HALFORD
Come with me!

They run off as two more plasma orbs destroy Phaeton ships.

INT. DEFENSE COMMAND SHIP - DAY

Aurora, Bennett and the rest trade blasts with a spider and another ship in a fervor, definitely overpowered.

A FLAMING ARROW crosses their eyeline and Aurora looks far below where Terran and Halford wave desperately at her.

AURORA
Take us down!

The pilot lowers them and the ship hovers nearly level with-

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND - DAY

As Aurora and Bennet hop out and Halford runs up to them.

HALFORD
Give it to me! Give me the EMP!

AURORA
EMP? We'll be defenseless.

HALFORD
And so will they!

He points at the Scleryth Army, waiting in their ranks.

BENNETT
They're outnumbered!

HALFORD
Use your power! Take theirs away!

Two more PHAETON SHIPS explode in a flash of green, pushing Aurora over the edge. She touches her ear communicator.

AURORA
Kyle, what's your status?!

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Kyle's working three holograms all at once at light speed.

KYLE
Leave me alone!

He pulls up schematics and diagrams of AIR MOLECULES.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND - DAY

Aurora looks up at the air war. Standoff. At the ships battling. Standoff. At the Scleryth army, vast and motionless. Then to Halford's men. The faces convince her.

AURORA
Phaeton ships down on my position!

The Phaeton ships still trade blasts with the Scleryth as they hover in from all directions, start slowly descending.

Scleryth ships form a ring around them, coming closer as plasma blasts over the mountain and blow apart Phaeton ships.

AURORA
Kyle!

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS PHAETON

Kyle puts the final touches on a TETRAHEDRON hologram.

KYLE
Ready! Ready!

AURORA (V.O. SPEAKER)
Do it now!

EXT. GSS PHAETON

GREEN STATIC charges at the beam scanner port and then starts pinging the atmosphere with QUICK BURSTS OF ENERGY.

Flickers. Sparkles. An ELECTRICAL STORM is churning.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND - DAY

From the low ground, Phaeton crew and ships are being hammered. Aurora takes out her earpiece, turns to Halford.

AURORA
You'll protect us?

HALFORD
With our dying breaths.

Aurora holds the ear piece to her mouth.

AURORA
Fire EMP.

INT. PHAETON DEFENSE SHIP

A HAND flicks a switch and a light begins blinking.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND

A SHOCKWAVE BURSTS FROM THE CLUSTER OF PHAETON SHIPS as

EXT. SPACE

BOOM! The Phaeton's Ion cannon fires a single plasma burst

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND

Scleryth defense ships go dead and start crashing, spiders and walkers stop working, and all rifles and bracelets die.

EXT. THE SKY

THE PHAETON'S PLASMA ORB rips through the atmosphere

INTO THE ELECTRICAL CLOUD

And pulls whatever element reacts with it straight down...

INT. NAVIGATION DECK - GSS 243X

The crew turn to the Emperor, who closes his eyes, defeated.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND

Has become a churning dust storm as the Scleryth ships crash and explode and the EMP radiates outward and disappears.

EXT. SCLERYTH ISLAND TOWER

Fearful Scleryth watch as the ENERGY WAVE hits GSS 243X and begins a CHAIN REACTION of explosions that causes a SHOCK WAVE to blow through the island, knocking down buildings.

EXT. THE BATTLE GROUND

The dust settles and Halford blows his horn, staring at the Scleryth like a lion ready to pounce, re-energized.

HALFORD
Shield.

THE LEGIONS
SHIELD!!

They cascade around the cluster of Phaeton ships and form a perfect rectangle between it and the recovering Scleryth.

The Scleryth Army is pinned between the mountains and the Legions but their numbers are still greater.

As they reform ranks, Halford studies their strengths. Then his eyes travel around to all of the dead Avalon soldiers.

Kyron blows a horn and the Scleryth advance at a walk. Halford's lost in his own world when Samos steps close.

SAMOS
Highness, what is the order?

Again, Halford takes in the sight of the dead. TIME SLOWS DOWN for him as he stares into the eyes of his dead brothers. His jaw goes tight as he comes to some profound realization.

HALFORD
Why do you ask me?

Samos looks around at the others like Halford's lost it.

SAMOS
You are the leader here.

Halford grins at Aurora as he realizes something.

HALFORD
And men follow their leaders...

He searches around, meets the eyes of a YOUNG SPEARMAN.

HALFORD
If I fall will you stop fighting?

YOUNG SPEARMAN
No, Highness! I will gladly die
for my honor upon this field!

Samos and Terran look nervous. The Scleryth draw nearer.

HALFORD
The fool in me chances they won't.

Halford looks at Terran, who nods, admiring him. Samos and Aurora remain confused as Halford's wheels spin. The Legions grow restless, the Scleryth now within arrow range.

SAMOS
Halford, it's time to act!

Halford turns to Aurora.

HALFORD
What of the Emperor?

She shakes her head. Dead. He lights up, bows with respect.

HALFORD
PROTECT THE PHAETONS ON YOUR HONOR!

The Legions grunt. Halford takes one last look at Aurora before walking toward the approaching enemy alone.

HALFORD
Samos! Terran! With me!

SAMOS
Where are we going?

HALFORD
To present our terms.

Samos is confused, looks to Terran, who saw this coming. They follow several steps behind, right toward the Scleryth.

SAMOS
What is he doing?

TERRAN
What he feels must be done.

AT THE SCLERYTH FRONT LINES

Kyron and the Scleryth Commanders are on horses, see Halford waiting in the middle, Samos and Terran behind him.

SCLERYTH COMMANDER 1
The Emperor will hear no surrender.

A third Commander pulls out his com device. It's dead.

SCLERYTH COMMANDER 2
He will hear nothing now.

All look to Kyron, who makes a decision, raises a fist.

The army clanks to a stop. A moment later, he and four of the Commanders break from the line, ride toward the middle.

The moment is tense as the two groups stare each other down and the Scleryth get within ten feet of the prince, stop.

SCLERYTH COMMANDER 1
You are outnumbered.

HALFORD
But am I outmatched?

It sinks in as the Commanders gaze at the ferocious Legions.

SCLERYTH COMMANDER 2
If we choose to let you surrender,
Prince, then we will offer terms.

HALFORD
There will be no surrender. This
war must be decided here and now.

SCLERYTH COMMANDER 3
Then why have you drawn us here?

Halford grins, turns to his Legions.

HALFORD
SINGLE COMBAT! IF I SHOULD FALL,
LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS AND SURRENDER!

The Legion front lines are unsettled. Samos opens his mouth to object but Terran silences him with a hard look.

HALFORD
(spins to Kyron)
I challenge you, Blademaster. Are
you ready to hear my terms?

Kyron's body tenses, glaring at the prince beneath the mask.

KYRON
Save your terms. I accept.

The Commanders ride away slowly and Terran pulls Samos back, leaving only Halford and Kyron staring at each other.

Kyron jumps off his horse, hits it and it runs off. He pulls blades from sheathes on his back and starts toward Halford.

Samos and Terran stand between the army and the prince.

SAMOS
Their warlord is a lion.

TERRAN
Halford is no lamb.

The two champions circle each other and the armies clang shields, rattle spears, scream as the SINGLE COMBAT starts.

Kyron is stronger, faster, but Halford holds his own. Sparks fly. Halford barely ducks under one blade, jumps over the other and Kyron throws a shoulder into him, knocks him back.

As they circle, Halford stares into the black eyes. Kyron's serene, a predator on the hunt. Halford fakes and tries to swing, but Kyron ducks out of his view, gone.

WOOSH! Kyron pierces through the armor to Halford's shoulder, pulls back right before Halford swings blindly at him.

The Legions tense. The Scleryth go nuts. Aurora's afraid. Samos moves to rush them but Terran grabs him.

Halford rips off his helmet and throws it, looks back at where the blood drains from his shoulder. It makes him wild and he charges, swinging deftly, forcing Kyron to back off.

They come to a stand still, sword and shield locked with sword and sword. Halford head butts Kyron with no effect.

KYRON

Is that all, Prince?

He lets go of one of his blades, punches Halford and sends him reeling, so fast he catches the sword before it falls.

Halford charges again, slices Kyron, who gets angry for the first time, lunges and pierces Halford through the gut.

Halford stumbles back as the Scleryth army goes wild again and now Kyron relaxes, holds his blades up, playing to them.

Terran looks upset for the first time. Samos is crushed. Aurora wipes a tear away. It's not looking so good.

Halford's stumbles like a wounded animal and Kyron hacks and slashes, slices Halford up, blood spilling everywhere.

He pierces Halford through his leg and the blade stays stuck, kicks him, sends him tripping over a body and Halford falls. And for the first time, Kyron laughs, deep and raspy.

KYRON

You cannot beat me, Prince.

Kyron looks back at the Legions, angry but motionless.

KYRON

I will order them slaughtered.

He sees Aurora, standing with the crowd, wearing the amulet.

KYRON

And my men will enjoy her.

Halford looks at the body he stumbled over. An OLD AVALON KNIGHT whose face is twisted in the anger of a war cry. It is a moment of realization. His turns to Kyron.

HALFORD

Because you have no honor.

Halford rips the blade from his leg, tosses it away. Kyron is surprised as he hoists himself up and resets.

KYRON

Your master's teachings failed you.

He lunges at Kyron and both fight with renewed energy.

HALFORD

He taught me more than war!

Now he's got Kyron on his heels. The Legion goes wild.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

Each man is bound to his honor!

(hacking, slashing)

Life without honor is living death!

(ducks, parries)

To die in service to Avalon is the greatest glory a man can achieve!

Kyron's fucked now, stumbles backward, overpowered. Halford knocks his blade away, spins and runs him through.

The Scleryth grow quiet. The Legions cheer. Samos and Terran exhale deeply. Aurora almost falls she's so relieved.

Kyron looks down where the sword is still lodged through his chest, pulls his mask off. His eyes are ALL BLACK, his face tattooed, a hideous beast of man, hairless and pale.

KYRON

How?

HALFORD

You had nothing to fight for.

Kyron drops dead in the dust as the armies react. Halford's so weak he nearly falls. Bloody. Dirty. Samos and Terran move for him but he raises a hand and they stay.

He limps toward the Scleryth, blood trickling in his wake. He jabs his sword in the ground and stares at the Scleryth.

HALFORD

YOUR EMPEROR HAS LIED TO YOU! THIS
WAR HAS ALL BEEN FOR NOTHING!

Turns back, looks at Kyron's body for a moment.

HALFORD
UNMASK YOURSELVES AND SEE ME!

The Scleryth Commanders act first, take off their masks and the rest of the army follows. All of them are furious.

HALFORD
LEAVE THESE LANDS AND NEVER RETURN!
AVALON WANTS NO MORE THAN THIS!

He wobbles a bit, losing strength, tries to hide it.

HALFORD
LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS AND KNEEL, THAT
I SHALL KNOW YOU HAVE HEARD ME!

The Scleryth are defiant, the Commanders looking to each other and shaking their heads. Halford becomes enraged.

HALFORD
KNEEL AND BE SPARED OR THE LEGIONS
OF AVALON WILL DESCEND UPON YOU!

The Scleryth Commanders eyes the Legions, ready to charge and then look to their own men. The fight is gone from them.

And then, in a long succession of clanging and clattering, Scleryth weapons hit the ground, followed by knees.

SAMOS

didn't see this coming, turns to Terran, who's stone-faced.

SAMOS
What do your keen eyes see, Ranger?

As the Scleryth kneel to Halford in a domino effect:

TERRAN
The moment a boy becomes a man...a
prince becomes a king...

He turns, looks at the relieved faces of the Legions. They would die if they had to. But they didn't have to.

TERRAN
...and Avalon's sons have been
spared by its High Protector...

HALFORD

looks upon the kneeling Scleryth, finally satisfied.

HALFORD
NOW GO AND BE FREE!

He pulls his sword from the ground and walks off. He stops, turns back and notices the Scleryth are confused.

HALFORD
RUN!

The Scleryth rise, thousands of them scattering toward the mountains, filing through its passes, shaking the ground.

Halford limps toward Samos and Terran, stops and stands in front of them, completely silent, his jaw tensed.

HALFORD
Are they gone yet?

Terran looks. The Scleryth are far away, getting further.

TERRAN
Mostly.

Halford sighs and then falls, his wounds getting the best of him. The Legion runs and swarms around him as he dies.

HALFORD
How did I do?

TERRAN
Just fine. My king.

Halford smiles weakly. Aurora breaks through the crowd and kneels to inspect his wounds. He sees blood on her hands.

HALFORD
It would have been nice, you know?

AURORA
What?

HALFORD
To have a Queen like you.

She blushes, looks deep in his eyes, goes back to work.

He tries to take her hand, but she slaps it away, stands and calls to members of her crew that have come to watch.

AURORA
Grab a MedPak!

The crewmen run off as she kneels, keeps inspecting the cuts.

HALFORD
Please. Let me go in peace.

She looks at him like he's crazy, leans down to whisper.

AURORA
You're not dying.

He's surprised as she pulls back and stares deep in his eyes.

HALFORD
I suppose I can't take that back.

AURORA
Do you want to?

He laughs, lays back to rest as he stares up at the sun.

HALFORD
No.

EXT. AVALON ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Bonfires reveal the faces of soldiers sitting together, the Phaeton crew interspersed within, all drunk as skunks.

SAMOS (O.S.)
(slurred shouting)
And to the bowman of Lyria!

All raise their pints of ale, slosh them as they clink mugs, take a long, hard draw. The thousands of them encircle

A MOUNTAIN OF BARRELS

Lit by torches, the biggest keg party this world has ever known. Samos, bandages stained with blood and tunic with beer, wobbles on top of the mountain, all eyes on him.

ALL TOGETHER (CONT'D)
The ale is strong!
The nights are long!
Another mug for Avalon!

Samos wipes his beard, throws his hands up to quiet them.

SAMOS
And let us not forget the Phaetons!

ALL TOGETHER
To the Phaetons!

They all drink heavier than German fratboys on Oktoberfest.

ALL TOGETHER (CONT'D)
The ale is strong!
The Nights are long!
Another mug for avalon!

Samos finishes his gulp, nearly falls off the barrel.

AVALON SOLDIER (O.S.)
 What of the king?!

SAMOS
 Is he yet old enough to drink?!

They all laugh hearty, quiet down when Samos gets serious.

SAMOS (CONT'D)
 Where is he?! Where is the king
 who commands an enemy to kneel...
 WHEN OUTNUMBERED THREE TO ONE!!!

They shout, clink mugs, quiet down again. Questioning looks all around. It's awkward. Halford isn't among them.

SAMOS (CONT'D)
 Do you know what I think?!
 (takes a sip; smiles)
 I think he welcomes the Phaeton
 Queen in the Avalon way!!

They cheer. Get her! And the party goes on without him...

EXT. PLAINS OF AVALON - NIGHT

Far away from the celebration, Halford stands, a blanket pulled around his shoulders, his breath rising as fog in the cold night air. He's covered in Phaeton medical bandages.

Thoughtful tears stream from eyes vacantly gazing at

THE DEAD AVALON SOLDIERS

Laying in long, perfect rows. Their wounds have been washed, hands folded to grip over their swords, resting as warriors.

The Phaeton deceased have been honored the same way, rifles in place of swords, as those who died gloriously in battle.

Shuffling of dirt and Halford looks behind to his left where the remaining original rangers stand at attention. He turns and Terran stands to his right, looking out on the dead.

HALFORD
 I feel it now, Terran. Part of me
 would take any of their places.

TERRAN

You now know what it is to be king.
(turns to him; proud)
They died as men of Avalon. Look
to leading our people.

Halford grabs at his chest for the amulet that isn't there.
Terran notices, looks toward the bonfires in the distance.

TERRAN (CONT'D)

Both jewels approach in the night.

HALFORD

Both?

Confused, he looks in the same direction but doesn't see HER
coming. He and Terran grin at each other knowingly.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

Such vision. How long has your
family called the forest home?

TERRAN

I am the first ranger of my line.

HALFORD

You were born in a city? Which?

TERRAN

Gamon.

(turns to the dead)

My father was Legion Master in the
time of your father.

Halford turns away, too, then twitches, something not right.

HALFORD

Kristoff's father...was Legion
Master of Gamon under my father.

TERRAN

Yes. He was.

Halford studies Terran, who's playing it off, turns away.

HALFORD

He was my more than my teacher. He
was a friend. Father. Brother.

TERRAN

I saw it your walk before you spoke
and I wondered if his spirit had
not crept into you in battle.

Another tear falls from Halford's face.

TERRAN (CONT'D)
It has been my honor to serve you.

HALFORD
Travel Well, Master Ranger.

TERRAN
Travel Well, My King.

Terran bows, walks to his Rangers. Halford turns and they all bow before following him into the night. He turns back to the dead, hears footsteps and Aurora walks up, confused.

AURORA
Why are you out here?

HALFORD
Someone must keep them company.

AURORA
But they're dead.

HALFORD
Those who die with honor do not
lose their value in death.

She sees how serious he is, turns to stand next to him.

AURORA
What will happen to them?

HALFORD
On the morrow, we will build pyres
and let the flames return all they
were to the land from which they
came with songs of bravery, of
battles won and heroes fallen.

Halford lays eyes on a dead Phaeton woman.

HALFORD (CONT'D)
Would you have us do the same for
your honored dead?

AURORA
That would be nice.

They stand for a while, still gazing at the bodies. A BEEP and she pulls out her computer, reads a hologram message.

AURORA (CONT'D)
The Sickness is gone. Forever.

HALFORD
Gratitude.

AURORA

We're setting up a base camp at the far edge of the forest.

HALFORD

So I noticed.

AURORA

There's unpopulated space here. We'll decide which is best and begin building our city there.

HALFORD

Then your people are truly safe.

She notices how somber he is, tries to make it better.

AURORA

We're going to rebuild Avalon. It will be completely the same.

He chuckles uneasily and she's more confused.

AURORA (CONT'D)

I thought that would please you.

HALFORD

Nothing could please me more than a full night's rest in my own bed. But look there, Aurora. Nothing can ever be the same.

He turns. In the distance, lights descend on the horizon. Phaeton ships ferrying the crew and equipment to the planet.

HALFORD (CONT'D)

Real magic. Great Machines. A lineage shared with both the Scleryth and travellers from a world so far away as to make the distance unfathomable. I fear even a kingdom so strong will collapse under the burden of this knowledge. The Avalon I have known can no longer exist in this new world.

The thought pains him and his pain affects her, both of them looking out on the dead. She begins to shiver in the cold, hugs herself to keep warm, watches her breath float up.

AURORA

I'm sorry.

HALFORD

It is not your fault.

He wraps her in the warmth of the blanket and they stand together, hugged tightly, staring into the night.

After a moment, she turns to him, looks up in his sad eyes. Her face warms his heart and they kiss, long and passionate.

EXT. PLAINS OF AVALON - DAY

Hundreds of trees have been hewn and joined to form a grand
FUNERAL PYRE

on top of a grassy hill. THE DEAD are stacked together, facing the sky and living Legions are dressed in robes, somber and dutiful as they turn to Halford, wearing a crown.

He carries a lit torch and touches it to the edge of the pyre ceremonially. Soaked oil catches quickly and soon a raging fire has engulfed the entire setup, smoke rising high.

The Legions start SINGING. Halford hears something, looks up. A PHAETON TRANSPORT flies high overhead toward them.

INT. PHAETON TRANSPORT

Aurora's at the controls alone, her HAIR CUT SHORT and evenly now. She flies over the hill, sees the burning pyre and that it's built in the shape of HAWK in the center of a SUN.

EXT. PLAINS OF AVALON - LATER

Far from the fire, Halford walks up to Aurora and they do nothing but stare at each other for a moment.

AURORA
Are you ready?

He looks back at the pyre, then turns to her and nods.

INT. PHAETON TRANSPORT

Aurora pilots them above the forest, through the clouds and soon blue gives way to black and they leave the atmosphere.

At the first sight of stars, Halford clutches the edge of his seat with white knuckles. She grabs his hand. Her softness eases him as they fly toward the drifting Phaeton.

INT. ARCHIVE ROOM - GSS PHAETON

Aurora leads Halford in by the hand to where Kyle waits.

AURORA
Halford, this is Kyle. My brother.

The two shake hands and Halford admires Kyle, awkwardly long.

HALFORD

It's you who destroyed the Emperor.
I owe you a great deal, Kyle.

Kyle thinks about it, modesty leaving him for the first time.

KYLE

I'm good at what I do.

HALFORD

Are we going to look into the past?

AURORA

I wanted you to see the future.

HALFORD

You can do this?! You should have
revealed it! We could have-

KYLE

It's not what you think.

Kyle and Aurora share a knowing glance as she shuts the door.

AURORA

It's one possible future. One that
I hope we can all agree on.

He pulls gloves from his pocket, slides them on and the
lights dim. They stand together as a HOLOGRAM PANEL appears.

AURORA

Show him the new protocols.

Kyle taps the panel and the room shoots them into-

EXT. THE CITY OF AVALON - DAY

In its current condition. Flamed out. Destroyed. Standing
on a main street, Halford gazes at the rubble with sorrow.

KYLE

We'll start by rebuilding.

FAST FORWARD. CONSTRUCTION SHIPS swoop in and start
REBUILDING THE CITY. Soon it's back to normal and the
streets are packed with Avalon citizens and Phaeton Crew.

Kyle slows the scene to normal pace, turns to Halford.

KYLE

Can your people keep a secret?

HALFORD
To what end?

Kyle grins, types, and then the Phaeton uniforms disappear, replaced by the same people wearing Avalon garments.

HALFORD
You wish to live among us?

KYLE
We want to become you.

Halford turns to Aurora. She nods. His kingdom has hope.

AURORA
You have much more to teach us
about humanity than we do you.

Halford glances at this world, the one he's always known.

HALFORD
But what of your machines? Your
weapons? Your ship? These things
cannot simply disappear.

KYLE
They don't have to.

He types, sends them shooting through a wormhole to-

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY

A fleet of lifting ships pulls SECTIONS OF A MOUNTAIN into the air and slowly powers straight up into the sky.

KYLE
We only have to hide them.

EXT. SPACE

Looking at the Phaeton as it rockets away.

KYLE
We have enough thruster power to
push the ship four hundred thousand
kilometers. It should be enough.

HALFORD
Enough for what?

The fleet of lifters tow the rocks into view. Kyle launches them into FAST FORWARD and they watch as ships cover the Phaeton section by section, TURNING IT INTO THE MOON.

KYLE
The Phaeton will stay in orbit
around the planet for all time.

Kyle flicks his wrist, sends them standing in the center of
INT. CARGO BAY

As the last ship is packed in and the lights shut down.

KYLE
Sealed inside will be the secrets
of all that we once were.

He types and once again they're floating in the vastness of
EXT. SPACE

The cargo bay door slides shut and a single ship moves the
final rock section into place, completing the perfect sphere.

KYLE
And if we pretend it was there all
along, no one will ever know.

It rockets toward the planet and dips below the cloud line.

EXT. GALLEY SHIP - DAY

Halford, Aurora, and Kyle stand on the deck as the FLIGHT
CREW is helped up from an emergency raft by AVALON SAILORS.

KYLE
Just as your people forgot where
you came from, after long enough,
future generations will let the
memories of the past fade and it
will be like nothing ever happened.

All turn to the landing ship as it sinks below the surface.

KYLE
So that's I why ask you, Halford.
(turns to Halford)
Will they keep the secret?

Halford looks at the ship above, now just the moon we know.

HALFORD
We will do what is best for Avalon.

Kyle nods, types and sends them shooting onto a street in

EXT. THE CITY OF AVALON - DAY

Where life continues exactly as it has for ages.

HALFORD

It is kind that you would do this.
But I cannot ask you to abandon the
knowledge of your people for us.

KYLE

We're not going to.

He grins, turns to Halford, then to Aurora.

AURORA

Your Ancient Laws are based on the
Protocols. Both are too important.
We don't have to abandon them...

KYLE

We just have to re-write them in a
way that everyone can understand.

He flicks his wrist and they're sent into-

INT. LIBRARY - CASTLE AVALON - DAY

SCRIBES sit around a table with rolls of parchment, writing
with quill pens, engaged in a serious conversation.

KYLE

We'll weave the beliefs of both
cultures into a single narrative
that all will be made to learn.

As time FAST FORWARDS and the Scribes write for years:

KYLE

Good and evil. Right and Wrong.
How to love. How to give.

The scribes slowly assemble the pages into a SINGLE BOOK.

KYLE

It doesn't matter how we provide
the lessons. As long as those who
live after us get the message.

Time returns to normal and the book is completed. The
Scribes smile with a sense of pride and one closes the cover
of a THICK, LEATHER BOUND BOOK.

KYLE

It will teach them how to live.

He stares at it with a smile as Halford considers it.

HALFORD

And what of your magic? It has saved us. We must not forget it.

AURORA

We will for now. But not forever.

She nods at Kyle, who sends them to-

INT. ASSEMBLY HALL - CASTLE AVALON

AMBASSADORS from the OTHER KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD sit at a table. CHINESE, JAPANESE, GREEK, EGYPTIAN, NATIVE AMERICAN. All listen to the Bennett, who is now the AVALON AMBASSADOR.

AURORA

We'll seek an alliance with the other kingdoms, earn their trust and then with their help we'll engage the Generation Protocol.

HALFORD

What is it?

Kyle types and sends them to

EXT. AVALON CITY STREET - DAY

And presses FAST FORWARD. Soon the people dress differently, the architecture changes. This is the RENAISSANCE PERIOD.

AURORA

We'll introduce technology slowly.

THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE EVOLVE TO THE 1600s. Horse drawn carriages. Running water. All is peaceful and normal.

KYLE

It's the nature of our kind to adapt and innovate...

THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE EVOLVE TO THE 1700s. Frilly clothes. Gas-lit street lanterns. A BALLOON flies overhead.

AURORA

Except our children and their children will guide the process...

THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE EVOLVE TO THE 1800s. Steam engine carriages. Taller buildings. The castle's a crumbling ruin.

KYLE

They will try to steer humanity
away from the mistakes of the past.

THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE EVOLVE TO THE 1950s. Skyscrapers.
Planes fly overhead. Electricity. A modern world.

AURORA

Eventually, this world will become
the one we would have made it.

THE HOLOGRAM WORLD SLOWS DOWN TO REAL TIME IN THE 2100s.
It's a megacity now. Flying cars. Buildings that touch the
sky. All that once was has been forgotten. Halford stares
in amazement, looks up to the moon, still orbiting.

HALFORD

Will they not uncover the truth?

KYLE

We hope they do.

AURORA

It'll be a lesson to them to
appreciate all they have, to take
care of all we've given them.

Standing on the futuristic sidewalk, Halford is speechless.

HALFORD

The Scleryth rejected this. They
believed it to be dangerous. Why?

Kyle turns to Aurora for guidance. She nods. Show him. He
types for a few moments and they are sent back to

INT. ARCHIVE ROOM - GSS PHAETON

A hologram MORPHS INTO A FLAT SCREEN and the room goes dark.

It starts playing STOCK FOOTAGE of every fucked up thing man
has ever done to fellow man since technology could record it:

Nazis march. Death camps. Pits of bodies. Nukes dropped.
Military parades. African civil wars. Race riots. Fish
kills. Factories churn smoke. Planes hit the Two Towers.

You name it, it's there, strobing in Halford's sad eyes, the
images burned in his mind as Aurora and Kyle turn away,
embarrassed and hurt by the world they came from.

KYLE

With greater power comes a greater
ability to destroy ourselves.

Halford turns to Aurora, somber and thoughtful.

HALFORD
This is what they feared?

She nods, just as somber. He turns back to horrific imagery.

HALFORD
We must do all we can to make it so
that the world we create will never
see such evil. How can we do this?

The images stop and the room becomes bright again.

AURORA
Teach them what's right and hope
they remember. It's all we can do.

Halford thinks about it, nods, feeling a bit more secure.

HALFORD
At least we have the chance.

INT. PHAETON TRANSPORT

Aurora at the controls, Halford next to her and Kyle standing behind them. They drift out of the loading dock and turn toward the planet, all they can see as they get closer.

KYLE
It's perfect.

HALFORD
And we must keep it that way.

EXT. SPACE

As the ship angles toward the glorious new world:

AURORA (V.O.)
What do you call it?

HALFORD (V.O.)
I don't understand.

KYLE (V.O.)
The planet. What's its name?

HALFORD (V.O.)
It has no name. Not yet...

AURORA (V.O.)
We'll think of something...

As the transport burns through the atmosphere and disappears below the clouds we HOLD on the spinning giant. The camera slowly rotates, changing our perspective of this world.

Oceans. Ice Caps. Land masses. Green and Brown. Deserts. CONTINENTS. They look FAMILIAR. And as the camera settles onto this plane, it's clear that this new world is indeed

EARTH.