

EXT. EARTH - OUTER SPACE

A narrow, distinct, white beam of light touches Earth as it spins peacefully. Silent. The other end extends back into the infinite darkness of deep space.

VOICE (V.O.)

After I found my father, I expected my life to change, but not like this.

EXT. SILVER BELL LAKE - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: PIMA, ARIZONA 2050

A small, sand-colored, camouflaged tent is parked near the water bank. OCTAVIA "OTTO" PHILLIPS, 17, White, ponytail, glasses, camo clothing, fixed on the distant beam of light. A hunting knife dangles from her hand.

OTTO (V.O.)

We all thought aliens would come from the sky. Nah, crossing THE LINK was way easier.

BRADLEY PHILLIPS, 40's, White, rugged, camo clothing, clutches a fishing line in the river. His head is on a swivel, always surveying the surroundings. Alert.

BRADLEY

Keep practicing.

Otto pulls her attention back to a nearby tree stump. She throws the knife hard but it misses her target.

OTTO

Darn it.

Bradley ties his fishing line to a sturdy rock and retrieves the hunting knife. He stands next to Otto.

BRADLEY

It's all in the wrist.

He easily throws the knife into the tree stump and grins. His smile turns into concern. The faint sound of a drone motor in the distance. Suddenly, Bradley drags Otto to the ground.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

(whisper)

Cowtan Catchers.

Bradley pulls a rope that drops their tent flat. As if rehearsed, Otto and Bradley pull up their hoods and hug the terrain. Motionless.

A large black drone lowers into the area. It hovers for a moment and zips off into the distance. Bradley carefully raises his head to be sure the threat is gone.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

We're good.

They slowly raise up from the dirt. Bradley spies Otto fidgeting with her pink wrist band nervously scanning the sky.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

We're gonna' be okay, Otto?

Otto eyes water over. She wipes under her glasses.

OTTO

It's not fair. None of this is
fucking fair.

Bradley steps back to look into Otto's eyes.

BRADLEY

You're right - what happened to
your mother wasn't fair, neither is
hiding from Cowtan Catchers. Fair
or not, we will get through this
together.

OTTO

I miss her so much.

Bradley opens his arms and Otto falls into them. He holds her tight and rubs her hair.

BRADLEY

I love you, Otto.

OTTO

(beat)

I wish we weren't white. What if
they catch us?

Bradley looks down at Otto.

BRADLEY

That won't happen - we're too darn
smart.

Otto's face is full of uncertainty. Bradley picks up on her anxiety and quickly salutes.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)
What's our motto, soldier?

Otto lazily salutes.

OTTO
When things are tough, we're
tougher.

Otto forces a smile. Bradley nods and takes out his compass.

BRADLEY
That's my warrior. My SEAL
brother's ranch is a few miles
away. We should be safe there until
we figure out our next move.

Bradley pockets the compass. The rock tied to the fishing line suddenly moves and he grabs the line.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)
Dinner's on.

OTTO
(sarcastic)
Oh, boy - fish again.

He pulls the line in. Otto stands next to him.

BRADLEY
Correct, but what type of fish?

OTTO
I hope it's the steak kind.

BRADLEY
Me too, kiddo.

Bradley drags a flopping catfish onto shore and cuts it open. Sadness sweeps Otto's face as she stares at the gasping fish.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)
Let's cook up this steak.

He picks up the fish. Otto rambles back to their camp.

EXT. TOP OF NEARBY RIDGE - CONTINUOUS

A BLACK MAN, tan camouflage, lies on the ground peering through night vision binoculars fixed on Bradley and Otto. He brings a walkie-talkie to his face.

BLACK MAN

Blanco one - Let Black know I think we got possible Cowtan's, one male and one female, near the Harris Ranch - over.

EXT. NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH - NIGHT

A one-story, worn, brown brick church rests in a decaying neighborhood, surrounded by boarded homes. Anti-alien propaganda posters decorate every structure.

Parked in front, is an old, matte black, spray-painted, SUV. CLIFFORD "CLIP" HARRIS, 40's, Black, beard, shifts in the driver's seat and aims binoculars at the church.

INT. NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH - NIGHT

Low-watt light bulbs dimly brighten the interior. Pews are held together with scraps of wood, windows boarded over. A repurposed mobile office podium serves as an altar.

PASTOR JAMES, 50's, Black, obese, sweats behind the podium. He yells scriptures, backed by LOUD organ notes. A sparse, all black, congregation either stands or dances in the pews.

PASTOR JAMES

Amen, church!

The congregation responds in kind. Pastor James motions to his wife BURNETTE JAMES, Black, 50's, short wig, to silence the organ. Soon, the congregation calms.

BURNETTE

Preach, Pastor!

PASTOR JAMES

God is good, Amen. Can I ask y'all something? Do you think God cares about the color of our skin?

EXT. NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH - NIGHT

Clip exits his truck. Two sheathed short spears crisscrossed on his back. He casually walks to the church entrance, sticks a high-tech blinking beacon on the door and enters.

INT. NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Clip strides up the isle. Emotionless. Immediately, Pastor James' focus shifts. He's unable to speak. The congregation turns to see who has his attention.

Clip stops in the middle of the isle. He's grim.

CLIP

Y'all know why I'm here!

A OLD MAN, 70's, male, gray hair, rises from his seat.

OLD MAN

Traitor! You a house nigga'!

Instantly, Clip unsheathes a short spear. The metal has a distinct golden shine. He HURLS it twenty feet into the Old Man's chest. The spear dislodges and zips back to his hand.

The Old Man's lifeless body falls onto the people sitting next to him. No help is offered. All eyes stay on Clip. He sheathes his short spear and slowly turns in a circle.

CLIP

No time for insults. You know their law. You know the punishment!

Mother's comfort whimpering children. Clip turns his attention to Pastor James.

CLIP (CONT'D)

Where is Blackbird and the illegal cowntans you're smuggling?

PASTOR JAMES

Who you're looking for, ain't here.

Clip grins. Slowly approaches Pastor James and stops in his personal space.

CLIP

Pastor, are you lying in God's house?

Pastor James stands defiant.

CLIP (CONT'D)
 Faaronan's be here soon. You know
 what they'll do to you - to this
 flock!

Pastor James makes eye contact with Burnette at the organ.
 She looks over the cowering congregation. Then her husband.

BURNETTE
 James -- please.

PASTOR JAMES
 No, Burnette.

CLIP
 (off Burnette's look)
 The first lady knows what to do.

Clip struts over to Burnette at the organ. He leans in.

CLIP (CONT'D)
 Save these people. Where are they?

BURNETTE
 Will you tell the Faaronan's
 Blackbird forced us?

Clip looks at his watch and nods to the congregation.

CLIP
 They're running out of time.

Burnette looks to the floor. She points to the far wall. Her
 voice cracks with emotion.

BURNETTE
 They're in the wall.

Pastor James exhales heavily but stands firm.

CLIP
 (to Pastor James)
 Bring them out now!

Pastor James shuffles to the far wall. He pops open a hidden
 wall door, leans in, and turns on a light. Clip pushes past,
 sticks his head into the opening. Backs away.

CLIP (CONT'D)
 Blackbird - Cowtan's! You are under
 arrest per Faaronan law alpha
 twenty-three. Come out!

Soon, several life-worn, white men, women, and children ramble out into church. Clip lines them up and places police grade zip ties around their wrists. All WHITE captives.

Pastor James stares at the white captives. He steps forward.

PASTOR JAMES

Brother, don't do this. What if they wanted to take black people?

CLIP

We had our turn. Now it's theirs. Where is Blackbird?

Pastor James shares a glance with his wife and extends his wrists to Clip. Burnette sobs on top of the organ.

PASTOR JAMES

I'm, Blackbird.

Clip studies him closely.

CLIP

No. Blackbird isn't old and fat. Where is he?

PASTOR JAMES

Ain't nobody else but them white people and me. My people are innocent.

CLIP

Let's hope the Faaronan feel the same. Turn around.

Clip binds Pastor James and leads his captives to the church entrance. The church roof RUMBLES. The walls and floors vibrate to a deep rhythm of a LOUD engine.

EXT. NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

A fifty-foot FAARONAN SCORPION, metallic black triangular futuristic craft, sharp edged, slowly lowers into the parking lot.

INT. NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Clip runs to a window and peers out.

CLIP

Shit - They're here. Listen up! All I give a shit about is these children. If you want to protect them, stay still - stay quiet.

Heavy footsteps approach the closed doors. Suddenly, the doors FLING open. Four Faaronan's known as THE FOUR enter.

They are human-like, glossy tar black skin, varied styles of burnt-orange hair, yellow pupils, solid, with sharp protruding skeletal features.

RAH, flowing hair, carries a golden long spear. NIL, mohawk, carries a HEAVY golden rod over his shoulder. TARI, curvy, braided pony tail, grips golden twin katana's in each hand. All are dressed in GREEN FUTURISTIC samurai armor, except one.

ZENTAN, crimson armor, buzz cut, body scars, strides in last. He levitates a large, slow-spinning, golden battle axe six inches above his open palm. Clip moves ahead to meet him.

CLIP (CONT'D)

(Faaronan salute)

Greetings, Zentan. I didn't expect you for this retrieval. I'm honored.

Zentan nods. Looks Clip over.

ZENTAN

Where is Blackbird?

Clip raises his head.

CLIP

Blackbird isn't here.

Zentan scowls but quickly regains composure. He looks over the white captives.

ZENTAN

Who is responsible for breaking the law?

Clip kicks Pastor James to the front of the group. Pastor James stumbles forward, catches his balance and stands erect.

PASTOR JAMES

I alone am responsible. Punish me.

Burnette moans loudly. People hug and pray. Pastor James surveys the room.

PASTOR JAMES (CONT'D)
 Do not fear these monsters. God
 will save us from our enemies. Pray
 to God!

Clip HITS Pastor James across the face. He spits blood.
 Zentan looks around the room. People pray intently. Zentan's
 spinning axe quickly gains speed. He steps to Pastor James.

ZENTAN
 I challenge your God to save you.

Zentan throws his spinning axe at Pastor James. It
 decapitates him and returns to his open palm. The
 congregation screams as his head rolls down the aisle.

ZENTAN (CONT'D)
 Where is your God? Faaronan's are
 your God. Beg for my mercy.

Prayers switch to pleading.

ZENTAN (CONT'D)
 I can not hear you!

People beg LOUDER. Children moan. Clip steps forward.

CLIP
 Zentan, with all due respect. Do
 what you will to the adults. They
 knew your law, but these children
 are innocent.

Zentan grips the handle of his axe. Bends over to meet Clip.

ZENTAN
 Why have we not scanned your life-
 mate, Mantan?

Clip carefully contemplates his answer.

CLIP
 The intel said Blackbird would be
 here. I will catch him, Zentan.

ZENTAN
 You have seven days to bring me
 Blackbird or I will scan your life-
 mate myself.

CLIP
 Allow me to take the Mantan
 children. The Mantan community will
 be grateful if you spare them.

People continue to apologize and beg Zentan for mercy. Zentan ponders.

ZENTAN

We have shown mercy. Mantans think we are weak. An example is required. Kill them all.

Zentan's elite soldiers ready their golden weapons. The men, women, and children plead for their lives. Clip shuts his eyes, opens them. Removed. He draws both short spears.

EXT. NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH - NIGHT

A old model navy passenger van parks at the end of the block. The ignition and headlights turn off. The Faaronan Scorpion sits idle in the church parking lot.

INT. BLACK PASSENGER VAN - NIGHT

The driver, black clothes, black RAVEN mask, rolls down the window. BLACKBIRD. Faint screams fill the air. Blackbird pulls back a curtain revealing several cowering white passengers.

He places a voice-changing device against his throat.

BLACKBIRD

The church is compromised. I'll drop you at a friendly, then you're on your own. There's a scorpion on the ground - keep quiet.

He closes the curtain. BANGS the steering wheel.

EXT. NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH - NIGHT

Clip, blood-stained, leads the group of white captives to the waiting Scorpion. A car ignition sounds in the distance. He sees a parked van, lights off, make a quick u-turn in the street.

The van quickly disappears from his view into the night. The Four exit the church. All enter the Scorpion but Zentan who stops at Clip's side.

ZENTAN

What is your objective, Cowtan Catcher?