

Republic of Infidels

CHAPTER 6: "Let God Sort 'Em Out"

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. RAVE - NIGHT

Lucretia Byrne (early 20s), somewhere between a candy raver and a goth, sits with some other people in a lounge section while green and purple lights flash.

The MUSIC thrums as people dance, but Lucretia doesn't seem that interested. She's doped up, bored, and her friends seem to be mostly passed out. She gets up.

EXT. FERRY TERMINAL - NIGHT

Ignoring the no-smoking sign, Lucretia lights a cigarette as she waits for the ferry to dock in the small outdoor terminal.

A security guard eyes her - mostly for her figure, but she stubs out the cigarette and walks on.

INT. FERRY - NIGHT

Not a lot of people on this sailing. Lucretia slings her bag over her shoulder and goes to the restrooms.

ACCESSIBLE RESTROOM

Lucretia locks the door of the private restroom. She opens her bag, and lays out an antique opium smoking kit. As she does this, her sleeve slips and we see a row of scars.

The pipe only looks antique - there's a vaping device inside it. She loads it, measures out a dose using a dropper, and then takes a deep drag.

As she contemplates her own detachment, the lights flicker, and there is a mechanical RUMBLE as the ferry engines gutter. She seems fascinated by this development.

PASSENGER AREA

The few people in the passenger area murmur with slight alarm as the lights flicker again. They move towards the windows, apprehensive.

ACCESSIBLE RESTROOM

Lucretia, now fully high, leans against the wall. She smiles stupidly as she slides down, and lies on the cold tile.

The lights flicker again. She's already out by the time they go dark.

INT. FERRY RESTROOM - DAY

Lucretia wakes slowly, her eyes red and bleary. She looks around.

LUCRETIA

Fuck.

INT. FERRY - DAY

Lucretia wanders out into the seating area, squinting in the light. The ferry appears to still be on the water, but is surrounded by a dense yellow haze.

The forty-odd passengers are huddled together, some looking at phones, some staring out the windows.

She goes over to NATALIE (20s) a young student.

LUCRETIA

What is this?

Natalie, startled, looks up at her.

NATALIE

Where did you come from?

LUCRETIA

To be honest I'm not certain.

NATALIE

How can you not be certain?

LUCRETIA

Look, I smoked a bunch of poppy and passed out in the loo, can you just tell me what the fuck is going on?

NATALIE

No one knows. We've been out here for three days. Mobile network and internet's all gone dead.

Lucretia pulls out her phone.

NATALIE (cont'd)

The captain's set us on course for land but...there isn't any.

LUCRETIA

What do you mean there isn't any?

She looks at her phone, moves to go to the outdoor deck, but Natalie grabs her arm.

NATALIE

Don't.

Lucretia frowns at her. Natalie takes her to the window. Outside, the dead. Red, inflamed skin. Radiation. Lucretia looks at her, frowns.

EXT. HIMALAYA - NIGHT

In the distance, the ferry rumbles towards land.

INT. FERRY

The number of people who have succumbed to radiation poisoning has doubled. People are struggling for life, or trying to die faster.

INT. BATHROOM

Natalie and Lucretia have secreted themselves inside the private bathroom. The ferry's nautical compartmentalization has protected them.

Natalie shows Lucretia her chemistry textbook. They sit on the floor.

LUCRETIA

Wish I'd studied something worthwhile. Or anything at all.

NATALIE

Why didn't you? You're smart. You're pretty. There's a lot you could do.

LUCRETIA

Do us a favour, love. Stop speaking in the present tense.

Natalie sighs. She stands up.

NATALIE

I'm going to go look.

LUCRETIA

No, don't.

Natalie reaches for the door, but the ferry LURCHES with a squeal of metal.

EXT. FERRY - NIGHT

The ferry crashes into a mountain spur, and comes to a halt.

INT. LIFE BOAT

Lucretia, Natalie and a handful of survivors speed towards the flickering camp fires that dot the narrow beachhead.

EXT. BEACHHEAD

The survivors struggle up the beachhead. There are perhaps twenty left. Lucretia and Natalie make their way cautiously towards a fire.

A small group of people share a meal of salvaged food. They welcome the new group, and help them.

EXT. BEACHHEAD - DAY

It's been some time. More people have arrived, along with a container ship. People struggle to the shore. Lucretia watches, inured to the sight, as shots ring out.

The people scatter, but the radiation victims aren't quick enough. The bullets find them. Lucretia smokes a cigarette as she observes this.

One refugee, DARREN (40s) approaches her.

DARREN

Can I have one of those?

LUCRETIA

No.

DARREN

Come on. Don't be a bitch.

LUCRETIA

Are you deaf?

He is still for a moment. Then he lunges for her. She's equal to that - she steps aside, then kicks his legs out from under him.

Edward Blythe watches this from nearby, fascinated.

Darren, not strong to begin with, rolls on to his back. Lucretia smokes down the cigarette, then jams the cherry end into his eye.

He SCREAMS. Lucretia walks away -- right into Edward.

LUCRETIA (cont'd)

What do you want?

He looks at the screaming, whimpering Darren, then looks at Lucretia.

EDWARD

Would you like to be my girlfriend?

Lucretia contemplates him. She looks back at her victim. Then at Edward. She lights another cigarette.

LUCRETIA

All right, then.

INT. EDWARD'S BUNKER - NIGHT

Lucretia follows Edward into his half finished bunker. He's done well for himself, and she's impressed by his weapons collection, and more impressed by his bed. Rare luxury.

They fall on each other, kissing hungrily, undressing each other as they move towards the bed.

EDWARD

What is your name?

LUCRETIA

Lucretia.

EDWARD

Edward.

He pulls open her blouse, palms one of her breasts, a little tentative.

EDWARD (cont'd)

I've a confession.

LUCRETIA
I'm not a priest.

EDWARD
It's not that kind.

LUCRETIA
Fine. Confess away, Edward.

She unbuttons his jeans, yanks his belt out of them.

EDWARD
I've never done this before.

She stops. She stares at him. Is he for real?

LUCRETIA
Never?

EDWARD
Lifelong member of the gentlemen-only club.

LUCRETIA
Oh.

He drags her out of her leggings and shoves her back on to the bed, positioning himself between her legs.

EDWARD
So I'm trusting you to tell me what pleases you.

He enters her, and it's obviously good for both of them. As he starts to move in her, he grins.

EDWARD (cont'd)
Like this?

Lucretia, breathless, nods her encouragement. Then he laughs as she cries out.

FADE IN:

INT. SERGEI'S QUARTERS - MORNING

Sergei sleeps in his bed, completely out. Lucretia lies on the floor, bleeding, traumatized. After a moment, she looks up to check and see if he's really asleep.

Slowly, painfully, she gets to her feet. He's fallen asleep with his weapons on him. She's tempted - then he shifts, and she backs away. Quietly, shaking, she leaves the room.

INT. THE WALSH - STATEROOM - MORNING

Vikram sleeps restlessly. He's curled up on himself, and he twitches, and whimpers. He jerks awake with a gasp, eyes tearful and red.

He reaches over -- the other side of the bed is empty. He presses his hands to his head, tries to control his breathing...after a moment he's successful.

He scrambles out of bed and goes straight for the handheld radio on the nearby dresser.

He turns it on, punches in a MORSE CALL SIGN, and waits.

A beat.

He enters the MORSE CALL SIGN again.

INT. EDWARD'S BUNKER - MORNING

Edward lies on his bed. A MORSE CALL SIGN from his radio desk wakes him. His eyes open easily -- he's a light sleeper.

The MORSE CALL SIGN sounds again.

EDWARD
All right, calm down.

He sits down, and transmits some MORSE CODE. He counts off three seconds in his head, then reaches to the frequency knob and changes it over.

INT. CENTRAL BARRACKS - BASEMENT - MORNING

Lucretia, shaking, picking glass out of her skin and hair, holds the radio to her mouth. She tries to control her whimpering.

LUCRETIA
(whispering)
Edward.

INTERCUT LUCRETIA/EDWARD

EDWARD
Where are you?

Edward switches over from his desktop radio to a handheld as he scrambles to get dressed.

LUCRETIA
I'm at the barracks.

EDWARD
Can you get out safely?

LUCRETIA
I don't know. He can't do worse to me.

EDWARD
Lucretia--

LUCRETIA
There's something else.

Edward sits, and tries to work his boots on one-handed.

EDWARD
What is it?

LUCRETIA
He has Rachel Kori. She's locked up in one of the interrogation rooms.

Edward releases the talk button, and chuckles to himself. *Perfect.*

EDWARD
Stop sniffing. You're going to follow my instructions to the letter. Are you listening?

Lucretia wipes her face, winces from the pain.

LUCRETIA
I'm listening.

EXT. MARKET DISTRICT - MORNING

It's shaping up to be a busy market day. A large ship has come in with a lot of cargo, and people are haggling, arguing.

The crowds draw back slightly as Jackson One rolls along the centre of the high road. They're apprehensive but curious.

Delaware gets out, and Drozdova, Littlehawk get out with him. Kurosawa remains in the driver's side, picking at a blood stain on her sleeve.

Ahead of him, Delaware marches the beleaguered Lammergeier Igor ahead of him at the point his pistol. Igor limps, and dawdles, so Delaware kicks him in the back of the knees.

He goes down on his face. Everyone is completely fixated now. **That's one of Sergei's men.** No one is crazy enough to march a Lammergeier around at gunpoint.

Delaware gestures to Drozdova. She pulls Igor up by his shoulders to a kneeling position. He cries out as his broken arm swings.

Delaware looks around at them, meeting their eyes.

DELAWARE

My name is Captain Delaware Ford.
Tell your friends what you saw here
today.

Delaware takes a step back. He takes aim at the back of Igor's head, cocks his pistol, and FIRES, killing him execution style.

The SHOT rings out in the empty road. The Cradle's citizens look on, shocked. Igor twitches like a clubbed fish, then goes still.

INT. L-ATV - MORNING

Kurosawa looks on as Littlehawk, Drozdova and Delaware walk towards the vehicle. Then the radio CRACKLES.

ORTIZ (O.S.)

(filtered)

Calling Jackson One. Jackson One,
come in.

Kurosawa snatches the radio mic, opens the passenger side and waves it. Delaware trots forward, and takes it.

KUROSAWA

It's the major.

DELAWARE

(into radio)

Go, major.

INT. MARINE PERSONNEL TRUCK - MORNING

Ortiz rides shotgun, radio to her face, with a notepad pinned to the dash with her knees. She scribbles notations.

ORTIZ

(filtered)

We got a ping-back from an unknown, asking for you by name. They used a signal phrase instead of a call-sign.

INTERCUT Ortiz/DELAWARE

DELAWARE

All right, let's hear it.

-ORTIZ

"He Swore a Different Oath". That mean anything to you?

Delaware sets the mic down, and sneers.

DELAWARE

Edward.

He picks the mic back up.

DELAWARE (cont'd)

I've got it. Go get dug in. I might go off the grid for a while.

ORTIZ

Should I send someone if you go down for too long?

DELAWARE

Make it twelve hours. Over and out.

He hangs up the mic, digs out a pad from the glove compartment. The other get in. Kurosawa starts the engine and makes a U-turn.

Delaware scribbles out the name HUDSON in block letters, then sketches in the Morse Code. He punches in the MORSE CALL SIGN using the radio beeper.

He waits a beat, then TRANSMITS IT AGAIN. MORSE CODE comes back. He changes the frequency, then lifts the mic to his mouth.

DELAWARE (cont'd)

This better be good, you limey sadsack piece of shit.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - OUTSIDE - DAY

Lucretia stands before two guards, one of whom has already bled out, their blood black.

The other twitches and struggles weakly -- she's stuffed the other's glove in his mouth, and holds it there. In her other hand, she raises a handheld radio.

LUCRETIA
 Captain Ford. You don't know me, but Edward does. My name is Lucretia.

INTERCUT LUCRETIA/DELAWARE

DELAWARE
 All right, Lucretia. Tell me what you want.

LUCRETIA
 I'm at the Lammergeier barracks in Guildtown. They have Rachel Kori here, too.

DELAWARE
 Are you a prisoner? Or a Lammergeier?

LUCRETIA
 Neither. There's no time to explain. How long will it take you to get here?

He looks at Kurosawa.

KUROSAWA
 Twenty five minutes, if we're don't run into trouble.

DELAWARE
 (into the radio)
 Maybe 25. What am I driving into? I need details.

LUCRETIA
 Just get moving. Keep your eyes on the south wall.

The radio goes quiet. Delaware looks at it. Then at Kurosawa. She adjusts her course.

DELAWARE
 (into radio)
 Jackson Two, you alive?

EXT. CARGO BOX - DAY

Wailea and two Marines lounge around on the shady side. A third stands watch before the open end of the box, over which flaps a battered tarp.

Covered by another tarp, a family of three, presumably the residents of the box, sits gagged and tied together outside. Wailea rouses as the crackling of the RADIO sounds from inside.

INT. L-ATV - JACKSON TWO - BOX - DAY

Wailea squeezes over to the side, and gets in. He grabs the radio.

WAILEA
 (into the radio)
 Here, chief.

EXT. CARGO BOX - DAY

Wailea comes back out and rips down the tarp.

WAILEA
 Let's go, Marines.

The MARINE DRIVER (20s) heads in to start up the L-ATV. With a ROAR, he drives it out. The other Marines load into the back and the gun turret.

Wailea pulls the tarp off the family, and cuts them free. They look at him, bemused.

WAILEA (cont'd)
 Sorry for the inconvenience.

He gets into the passenger side.

WAILEA (cont'd)
 Aloha!

They stare as the L-ATV tears off.

INT. THE WALSH - STATEROOM EN SUITE - DAY

Vikram holds the radio to his face as he brushes his teeth. He still has shaving cream residue on his face, and he's combed his hair.

VIKRAM
(into radio)
What do you mean, she's "out of your hands?"

EXT. COEP COMPLEX SLOPES - DAY

Edward looks down through a pair of binoculars at the barracks, then lifts his radio.

INTERCUT EDWARD/VIKRAM

EDWARD
I have zero chance of snatching her from Sergei or Delaware. Let's say, in your gratitude, you recognize my appreciation of your preference for the latter scenario.

Vikram bristles. Then takes a deep breath. He heads out.

INT. THE WALSH - CORRIDOR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

VIKRAM
You're right. But will it work?

EDWARD
If Delaware keeps his head, if Lucretia keeps hers. I don't know how badly she's been roughed up.

VIKRAM
And Rachel.

EDWARD
Rachel is the least of my concerns. She knows how to look after herself.

INT. THE WALSH - BRIDGE - DAY

Vikram sits in the captain's chair and puts his hands together under his chin, biting his lip.

INT. CENTRAL BARRACKS - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Rachel hangs from her chains, exhausted. She can't fall asleep, but she's having trouble staying awake.

She becomes alert as the door open, then confused as she sees it's Lucretia.

RACHEL
Who are you?

LUCRETIA
Lucretia. I'm a friend of Edward's.

Rachel cocks her head, even more confused now.

LUCRETIA (cont'd)
We don't have much time. Your man is on his way, but I don't know what kind of army he's bringing.

She produces a key, and unlocks Rachel's chains. Rachel falls to her hands and feet, and holds her arms to herself.

RACHEL
Fuck. That hurts.

LUCRETIA
Can you walk?

RACHEL
I just need a minute.

LUCRETIA
We need to get away from here.

She goes to help Rachel up. Rachel notices the cuts and scrapes on her hands, and arms. And face.

RACHEL
What happened --?

LUCRETIA
No time. I hear you know how to use one of these.

Lucretia presses a black tactical knife into Rachel's hand. Rachel closes her hand on it, nods. She follows Lucretia out the door, both staying light on their feet.

INT. SERGEI'S QUARTERS - DAY

A LAMMERGEIER LIEUTENANT (30s) shakes Sergei awake. Sergei reaches for his pistol -- where is it?

SERGEI
Why are you touching me?

The Lieutenant straightens.

LIEUTENANT

Two American armoured ATVs heading
east from the Market District. And --

He's nervous now.

SERGEI

(dangerous)

And?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Sergei stands, looks at the empty chains where Rachel recently was, his mouth thin. The Lieutenant stands nervously at the doorway.

He picks up the iron key from the table, and looks at it.

SERGEI

How did she kill the guards from
inside the cell?

The Lieutenant doesn't say anything, just looks baffled.

EXT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Sergei walks out, and looks more closely at the guards.

Neither shows an immediate cause of death from their angle. Sergei cocks his head, and sees the black blood. Lucretia.

He reaches out and touches one of their cheeks with a knuckle. He notes the guard's empty holster.

SERGEI

Still warm. They could still be
inside. Lock down the building.

LIEUTENANT

Yes sir.

Sergei takes the assault rifle from one of the guards, and heads off in the other direction.

EXT. CENTRAL BARRACKS - DAY

Jackson One and Jackson Two nose up the ridge to where the barrack grounds flatten out, about half a KM from the barracks itself.

INT. L-ATV - DAY

DELAWARE

(to Drozdova)

Head that way. Get up as high as you can while still keeping an unobstructed view. We're going play them over to the northwest, keep them on us. Any kind of signal, get on the horn.

DROZDOVA

Yes sir. Good luck.

Kurosawa puts it in gear, and they head towards the northwest side of the barracks.

EXT. L-ATVS - GUN TURRETS - DAY

Littlehawk and the MARINE GUNNER (20s) signal to each other, and adjust their grips. Simultaneously, they start firing up the north west corner of the building.

INT. BARRACKS - CORRIDOR - DAY

Rachel and Lucretia move quickly and quietly. The sound of GUNFIRE from outside has drawn most of the Lammergeiers towards the source of the noise.

Rachel and Lucretia both duck into an alcove as one of the passing men stops, and glances down the hall.

LUCRETIA

Fuck it.

She steps out, raises Sergei's Desert Eagle. She FIRES, blows the man's face off.

RACHEL

What happened to staying low?

Lucretia looks down at the man's ruined skull, and sneers.

LUCRETIA

Come along.

Rachel follows behind her, and avoids looking at the dead man.

EXT. NORTH EASTERN SLOPE

INSERT: Edward's binocular perspective of Drozdova gaining the opposite ridge, and the approaching vehicles.

His view moves over to the ramparts and four towers, which are quickly filling with well armed Lammergeiers. The Lieutenant is in command. Where's Sergei?

Edward puts down the field glasses. He turns to the LOne6 80neMM Mortar he's set up, and makes a few adjustments. Next to it is a box of mortar shells.

From his vantage point, he sees muzzle flash from the 50 calcs on the L-ATVS, which are both now drawing crazy patterns as they swoop around the northwestern corner.

The Lammergeiers respond, and begin to move to firing positions to the northern ramparts

EXT. CENTRAL BARRACKS - NORTH SIDE - DAY

The L-ATVs streak across the north face, the gunners laying fire into the north rampart. Their armor is holding up well, and Kurosawa drives Jackson One with ace precision.

A couple of Lammergeiers fall from the tower, but the others have good cover.

EXT. NORTH EASTERN SLOPE - DAY

Edward picks up a mortar shell, gives it a little kiss, and pops it into the firing tube. It shoots up into the air, and arcs towards the barracks roof. Edward watches it.

It impacts the northwest tower, EXPLODING.

EXT. NORTH RAMPARTS - DAY

A knot of Lammergeiers is blown out of existence, while the others scramble to recover.

INT. L-ATV - DAY

Delaware and his crew look up at the edge of the explosion. He hangs out the window with his MOne6, so he has a good view.

DELAWARE
The fuck? Littlehawk?

EXT. L-ATV - GUN TURRET - DAY

Littlehawk follows the smoke trail.

LITTLEHAWK
Mortar, northeast, maybe half a km.

INT. L-ATV - DAY

KUROSAWA
Yeah, but who? It's not like we have friends.

DELAWARE
No. Not a friend.

He adjusts his aim, and shoots down a Lammergeier attempting to leave via the front gate.

KUROSAWA
Enemy?

DELAWARE
A mutual enemy.

KUROSAWA
So a friend?

DELAWARE
Watch where you're driving.

There's a CRUNCH as they go over one of the fallen bodies.

KUROSAWA
One more for the Gipper!

She spins around and hits a Lammergeier staggering to his feet. He rolls up over the hood.

LITTLEHAWK O.S.
What does that even mean?

KUROSAWA

I dunno, my *sofu* used to say it. He also said war is too important for generals.

Delaware yanks himself inside as a SPRAY OF BULLETS riddles the side. The RADIO CRACKLES.

WAILEA O.S.

(filtered)

My beast is running out of charge.

DELAWARE

(into the radio)

Get to the southwest corner and set up a redoubt.

INT. JACKSON TWO L-ATV - DAY

Wailea looks at his driver.

WAILEA

Flip it.

The driver does a mind-bending U-turn.

EXT. NORTH EASTERN SLOPE - DAY

Edward launches another mortar shell -- this one EXPLODES in the middle of the northern rampart. Watching this, he shivers like he's just orgasmed, and grins.

EXT. NORTH RAMPARTS - DAY

Part of the concrete parapet slides away, taking a few of the defenders with it.

EXT. L-ATV - DAY

Delaware now has a clearer shot at some of the Lammergeiers. He lays into them, SPRAYING them with fire. He smiles, satisfied with his work.

INT. BARRACKS - CORRIDOR - DAY

Lucretia and Rachel run full tilt towards a door with the word ARMORY stenciled on it. Two guards perk up as they see the women.

Lucretia fires repeatedly into them. One, despite the hole in his thigh, reaches for his pistol. Rachel steps into him and presses the knife up under his ribs.

She grabs the keycard from his body. It's slippery and she fumbles. It takes a minute to get the door open. She beckons to Lucretia -- you first.

Just as Lucretia ducks out of sight, Sergei and six of his best appear at the other end of the hall -- about fifty meters. Sergei spots Rachel.

SERGEI

BITCH.

An EXPLOSION from outside causes dust to shake from the ceiling. Sergei's crew flinches, but he's wild-eyed, doesn't register anything but his quarry.

Rachel ducks into the door.

INT. ARMORY - DAY

The room is filled with ceiling high racks of weapons. Rachel quickly locks the steel door -- GUNFIRE puckers it from the outside.

RACHEL

We don't have much time.

Lucretia goes through the rows, shoving boxes aside, searching for -- what? She finds it: a heavy duty plastic box with the inscription:

INSERT: MAJ. E.Y. BLYTHE - Lucretia snatches the box off the shelf.

LUCRETIA

(under her breath)
Edward, you lovely bastard.

RACHEL

Lucretia --!

LUCRETIA

Three minutes. Take this.

She tosses the pistol to Rachel as she passes by on her way to the southern wall -- partly obscured from sight of the front door.

RACHEL
I'm not a good shot.

LUCRETIA
(calling)
It's a fucking cannon, you can't
miss. Just point and don't go over.

Rachel looks over her shoulder, and leans back to see what Lucretia's doing -- she's setting up small sticky bombs on the wall.

A fire axe appears in the door, punching through the steel. Rachel gets a stronger grip on the gun, and attempts to get into the Harries position with the knife -- badly.

She gives up and shoves the knife in her belt.

Lucretia fires off the countdown, which begins with a BEEP. She backs up from the wall.

A SLAM as the fire axe cuts into the space above the handle.

RACHEL
Get out of sight.

LUCRETIA
He'll kill you.

RACHEL
He won't.

They both have to throw themselves to the side as BULLETS pound against door, widening the tear.

LUCRETIA
Right. Just stay clear of the
charges.

The COUNTDOWN BEEPS a two-minute warning. Rachel glances at it, and raises the pistol.

RACHEL
(to herself)
Give me this one. Just one.

EXT. ARMORY - DAY

Using his exemplary strength, Sergei wields the fire axe with one hand. One blow shears through the door jamb.

He raises his boot and with a CRUNCH and a SLAM, he kicks the door open. It CRASHES open, revealing Rachel, **Desert Eagle raised and ready.**

Sergei has the presence of mind to duck, **so the bullet passes through the heads of the two men behind him, blowing blood and brains all over the face of the third.**

Sergei is able to clear the twisted door, but the rest of his team are bottlenecked.

INT. ARMORY - DAY

Lucretia draws back into the shadow, eyes wide as she watches Sergei. She glances over to the charges, then looks at the detonator countdown in her hand.

INSERT: 1:02. 1:01. 1:00.

LUCRETIA
(under her breath)
Fuck.

Rachel, staggered by the recoil, sends three more shots wide over the door.

Sergei, using the flat of the axe, batters it out of her hand. It FIRES once more into the floor.

Rachel pretends to be overbalanced, but she **comes up with the knife.** Sergei jumps back but still gets a slice across the shoulder. He grunts.

Undeterred, Rachel comes on. She flips her grip and tries a reverse cut to the neck. Sergei stumbles on the corpse of his man, blocking the door.

He has to catch himself on the frame. He's unable to outmatch Rachel's footwork. She's too close.

She gets in, tangles her hand in his commando sweater collar, and raises the knife to his throat.

RACHEL
(Russian, subtitled)
Say "no", Sergei.

He stares at her, breathing heavily, nostrils flaring -- almost wants her to do it.

Lucretia, riveted by this -- looks at the charges.

LUCRETIA

RACHEL!

There's a BEEP, then a BEEP, then a BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP.

The wall EXPLODES, blowing a hole that allows daylight to stream in. The explosion knocks Sergei and Rachel back as the room fills with dust.

EXT. SOUTHEASTERN SLOPES - DAY

Drozdova sees the EXPLOSION. She gets on the radio.

INT. L-ATV - DAY

Kurosawa spins the wheel. Delaware lifts up the radio.

DROZDOVA O.S.

(filtered)

Breach in the southern wall.

DELAWARE

We heard it. We're on the way.

EXT. NORTH EASTERN SLOPE - DAY

Edward launches one more mortar round -- this one EXPLODES and covers the whole barracks roof with smoke. He gives his mortar tube a little pet.

EDWARD

Who's a good girl.

EXT. SOUTH WALL - DAY

The L-ATV skids to a halt next to the hole.

Delaware launches himself out of the passenger's side. Behind him, Drozdova raises her assault rifle. They wait as Wailea jogs over to join them.

Littlehawk covers them with the 50 cal.

INT. ARMORY - DAY

Delaware, Wailea and Drozdova make their way slowly into the room weapons raised. The armory is still filled with dust, but as it settles, the position becomes clear.

Sergei, bruised, but very much intact, holds Rachel back against his chest in a brutal grip. She pulls uselessly against the hand around her throat.

He meets Delaware's eyes as he lays the edge of the black knife over her left cheek. Blood beads from the thin diagonal slice.

DELAWARE

Let her go, and my word of honour,
you can walk away.

Sergei smiles. Rachel continues to struggle, not caring that she's making the cut worse.

SERGEI

Your little brother believed in
honour too, until I gutted him like
Christmas dinner.

Delaware fights down his reaction to this, barely.

DELAWARE

One chance.

SERGEI

(to Rachel, Russian,
subtitled)

Look at him, he really thinks I'll do
it.

Delaware takes a step forward, impulsively, then hesitates. He watches as Sergei slowly raises the knife away from her skin, then licks the blood off it.

Delaware snarls, then freezes as Sergei repositions the blade at Rachel's throat.

Lucretia, unable to stand it, kicks aside an ammunition box and steps out. The sound draws everyone's attention.

She grabs the fallen Desert Eagle, walks forward and aims it at Sergei's head.

Littlehawk opens up the 50 Cal, punching holes through them.

Under the cover of 50 CAL FIRE, Wailea and Drozdova are able to grab Lucretia, and haul her out to the L-ATV. Delaware and Rachel grab hands, and follow.

They all load into the vehicle. It speeds off.

INT. L-ATV - AFTERNOON

Lucretia lies across the laps of Drozdova, Wailea and Rachel. Rachel already has the medic kit open. Blood dries on her face.

Rachel cuts away her bloodied dress. She examines the wound. It's deep, penetrating the muscle. Lucretia whimpers in pain, lifts her head to look, but Rachel presses her back.

DELAWARE

How bad?

RACHEL

Bad enough.

Rachel pulls out a syringe of surgical glue. She swabs the wound with alcohol.

Rachel injects the wound with the glue. She shoves a small rectangular ultraviolet light into Wailea's hands.

RACHEL (cont'd)

Hold this over here. Try and keep it steady.

Rachel pulls out another syringe. She measures out a couple CCs, and injects it into Lucretia's thigh. After a moment, Lucretia begins to relax, and glaze over.

INT. CARGO BOX - EVENING

The L-ATV backs into the box -- it's just Kurosawa at the wheel. Rachel gestures to Delaware and Wailea. Together, they haul cinderblocks into the space.

Wailea and Drozdova bring Lucretia in on a spinal board. She's doped up, in and out. Kurosawa flicks the L-ATV's headlights on, illuminating the scene.

Rachel stands, chewing her lip. Delaware comes up behind her.

DELAWARE

What do you need?

RACHEL

Saline. A sharp blade. Stitching silk. A standard field medic kit should have all of those things.

DELAWARE

I can send for it, but it'll take at least thirty minutes, if the courier doesn't run into trouble.

Rachel considers.

RACHEL

That's too long. She could go septic in that time.

Delaware shifts his weight. Rachel gets a brainwave, and snatches his radio. She sends out a TAP - repeated Morse signals.

A beat. She waits. Then sends another TAP.

A longer beat. A string of MORSE comes back. She looks at Delaware.

RACHEL (cont'd)

(into the radio)

Listen to me and follow my instructions exactly.

EXT. BROKEN DISTRICT - CARGO BOX - A LITTLE WHILE LATER

Rachel, staring off into the middle distance, lifts the radio to her mouth and looks into the maze of boxes.

RACHEL

I see you.

The ROAR OF A MOTORCYCLE fills the air. Delaware ducks out in time to see Edward ride in on a battered Ducati.

Delaware balls his fists, but Edward's not interested in him. He takes his backpack and tosses it to Rachel.

He catches sight of Lucretia through the open door, sees the blood. He moves towards her. Delaware moves to block him. Edward looks up at him, spoiling for a fight.

Rachel looks through the bag.

DELAWARE
Is that everything?

RACHEL
It's enough.

She looks at Edward, cold as ice.

RACHEL (cont'd)
If he comes any closer, shoot him.

Edward, astonished and stung, looks between her and Rachel. Delaware draws his pistol and cocks it.

DELAWARE
Gladly.

EDWARD
(to Rachel)
What are you going to tell her?

RACHEL
That you knew exactly what Sergei would do with her once he captured me.

EDWARD
I warned her what would happen. Ask her.

RACHEL
I suggest you go back to my brother. You and Vikram deserve each other.

Delaware gives him a shove towards his motorcycle. He just stands there, looking forlorn. Delaware raises the pistol.

DELAWARE
Tell him I'm coming for him.

Edward says nothing. He walks back, picks the motorbike up, takes one last look, then fires it up and speeds away.

Delaware holsters the pistol. Rachel heads inside with the bag.

INT. CARGO BOX - NIGHT

Rachel washes up with some alcohol wipes in the light of the headlights.

Lucretia has a perfect row of neat new stitches. Wearing surgical gloves, Drozdova applies sterile tape over them. The patient sleeps, breathing lightly.

EXT. CARGO BOX - NIGHT

Delaware looks at Rachel as she walks out.

DELAWARE
How's the patient?

RACHEL
She'll live. She'll heal faster if she can maintain good nutrition and stay hydrated, but...

Delaware takes one of the alcoholic wipes from her, and begins gently clean the dried blood from her face. She closes her eyes, wincing slightly as it stings the cut.

Once the blood is gone, it's clear that it's superficial, almost invisible to the eye.

DELAWARE
You need to stop getting captured.

RACHEL
God, you're right. Sergei, Vikram, Edward. You.

DELAWARE
I didn't capture you.

RACHEL
No?

He takes one more careful swipe at the flaking blood, until her face is clean, the thin red line inflamed and raised.

DELAWARE
You were in the sovereign territory of the United States. I detained you.

Rachel considers this.

RACHEL
Is that distinction important to you?

He draws his knuckle lightly against the cut, and shrugs.

DELAWARE
It was still a shabby thing to do.

She gazes up at him. She melts a little.

RACHEL

I love you.

He pulls her close, and kisses her forehead. Then gently tilts her head back and kisses her mouth.

DELAWARE

You need some rest.

RACHEL

I want to look in on Lucretia before they take her home.

DELAWARE

All right. But I'm not letting you out of my sight ever again.

INT. CARGO BOX - NIGHT

It's much darker now without the L-ATV headlights. A lamp sits on the hood. Natalie backs a small battered SUV up to the open door.

Rachel squeezes past the L-ATV, Delaware right behind her. Natalie moves around her vehicle, and heads straight for her cousin.

Lucretia, conscious, continues to lie on the spinal board. She smiles dimly as Natalie approaches.

NATALIE

(tearful)

I told you. I told you, you fecking *omadhaun*, you daft idiot. What did you think was going to happen?

LUCRETIA

Yes, you told me.

RACHEL

She's right, you know. Only an idiot tries to tame a rabid animal. But you saved my life, so I'm grateful for your mistake.

LUCRETIA

Oh, I think we're quits, Kori.

She laughs -- then winces. Rachel grabs Edward's bag off the car hood and digs through it, coming up with a bottle of time release morphine pills.

She hands it to Natalie.

RACHEL

Make sure she takes these. Don't trade them.

She looks down at Lucretia.

RACHEL (cont'd)

Keep the stitches dry and clean. Don't move around for a couple of days.

LUCRETIA

Yes, Doctor.

Rachel smiles. She looks at Delaware, who comes around behind her to help Natalie lift her into the flattened out back of the SUV.

LUCRETIA (cont'd)

One more thing.

Rachel approaches. Lucretia extends her hand. Rachel takes it.

LUCRETIA (cont'd)

Make sure he feels it.

She squeezes Rachel's hand. Rachel nods.

Natalie closes up the back of the SUV, gets into the driver's side and pulls out. Delaware and Rachel watch.

Once they're clear, Rachel takes a deep breath, and staggers. She's exhausted.

Delaware catches her. He lifts her easily. She rolls her head against his chest, and looks up at him. He smiles at her.

DELAWARE

He would have been proud.

Rachel smiles weakly back. Then she's out like a light.

INT. LUCRETIA'S BUNKER - NIGHT

Natalie and SOLOMON (18) carry Lucretia to her room.

The bunker is situated near the strand -- it's a basement built of several joined boxes, buried in the ground. A window has been cut in the western wall.

They maneuver around mostly empty sleeping bags on the floor, and continue to the back room.

INT. LUCRETIA'S BUNKER - LUCRETIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Lucretia's room has a Victorian feel. There's a vanity with a scrolling framed mirror, and a well made bed, as well as old fashioned oil lamps. For now there's only moonlight.

They set her down on the bed.

SOLOMON

Tell me what you need, Lucretia.
Anything.

She touches his cheek.

LUCRETIA

Sleep.

NATALIE

Are you sure?

LUCRETIA

Just...sleep. Please.

SOLOMON

We'll be just outside.

She nods, smiles, then lies back as they leave. The smile drops from her face the instant the door closes.

She stares up at the ceiling.

LUCRETIA

How long have you been there.

Edward slips out of the shadow. He's a mess. His eyes are red. He goes to her side, drops down on his knees and grabs her hand.

EDWARD

Forgive me.

LUCRETIA

Oh, fuck off.

She yanks her hand away from him, then gasps from the pain. Edward pushes aside the bloodied fabric of her dress to look at the wound.

The stitching is perfect, but it's still a serious wound. Edward stares at it.

EDWARD

I'll skin him.

LUCRETIA

Why didn't you? You knew capturing Rachel would break my spell over him. You already knew he had her.

EDWARD

I thought I could get both of you out before that happened.

LUCRETIA

Why didn't you go to the Americans? Why didn't you just tell me the truth, Edward?

Edward swallows.

LUCRETIA (cont'd)

Because it wouldn't sit well with your new boyfriend, would it.

EDWARD

Damnit, I got you out, didn't I.

Lucretia sighs.

LUCRETIA

In the dresser. In the top drawer.

Edward tilts his head. She nods towards the dresser. He gets up and goes to it. He pulls out a case, similar to the make of the one from the armory, with his name on it.

He unlatches it, and looks inside, then closes it.

EDWARD

What do you want me to do with these?

LUCRETIA

I want to remind him what I can do, even if I can't do it myself.

Edward takes the case and crosses the room back to her side. He bends down to kiss her -- she lets him, softens a little.

LUCRETIA (cont'd)
Come back and tell me about it. I
want to hear about the look on his
face.

He nods, and lifts the case. Then he bends down and kisses her again.

EDWARD
Get well, my darling.

She doesn't quite smile. He leaves. She curls in on herself, and stares through the dark. Her eyes close - then she gasps in pain, and opens them again.

INT. CARGO BOX - NIGHT

Under the box tower is another box laid out lengthwise, with abandoned furnishings. Wailea's three Marines, Kurosawa and Drozdova doze on pallets.

At the far end, Delaware sits on the floor against the wall. Rachel sleeps against his chest. He strokes her hair, wide awake.

Opposite him is Wailea, also awake. Delaware gestures with a nod of his head.

DELAWARE
See if L-Hawk needs anything.

EXT. BROKEN DISTRICT - BIRDS NEST - NIGHT

Littlehawk mans a sniper rifle. She looks out over the southeastern skyline through a pair of binoculars. Wailea climbs up the crude ladder.

LITTLEHAWK
Visibility's going to shit.

WAILEA
Shit for them, too, right?

LITTLEHAWK
This is their ground.

Wailea takes the binoculars from her.

WAILEA
Heard from Oates?

LITTLEHAWK
No. Captain ordered a communications
black out.

WAILEA
I bet he misses you.

LITTLEHAWK
Okay, who told you?

Wailea grins, and holds up a slender engagement ring.

WAILEA
Found it on the floor of the gun
turret.

LITTLEHAWK
Give me that.

She snatches it out of his hand, and slides it on her
finger.

LITTLEHAWK (cont'd)
My fingers are getting skinny since
we've been out here.

She reaches behind her and hands him a pair of night-vision
binoculars. He messes with the settings.

WAILEA
Wish we'd stayed away.

LITTLEHAWK
I don't.

WAILEA
Yeah? Why?

LITTLEHAWK
I finally get to do my fucking job.

Wailea shrugs. Fair enough.

INT. THE WALSH - MAP ROOM - NIGHT

Vikram stands before a map of the Cradle suspended in the
air, his hand glowing with NCOM strands as he manipulates
it.

It shows a graphic representation of Marine positions to the north, and the Lammergeier positions surrounding them.

The Lammergeiers are scattered, while the Marines are an inverted wedge, fortified at the ends.

EDWARD

I did what you wanted.

Vikram turns to see him, crossed armed at the door. He looks haunted, but his eyes burn with something deadly. Vikram moves slowly towards him.

VIKRAM

My sister?

EDWARD

With the Americans.

VIKRAM

Lucretia Byrne?

Edward puts a hand over his face, like he's trying to hold in a sob.

EDWARD

Alive. Thanks to Rachel.

VIKRAM

Sergei --

EDWARD

Sergei dies.

Vikram nods.

VIKRAM

Tomorrow.

He pulls Edward into his arms. Edward just stands there for a moment. Then he drops his head on to Vikram's shoulder and begins to sniff.

Vikram gentles him, stroking his hair. He lifts his face and kisses him passionately. Edward, in spite of his misery, begins to warm to it.

Vikram then puts a hand on his chest and pushes him back slightly.

VIKRAM (cont'd)

Come look at this.

Edward does not want to look at this. He wants to bury his grief in Vikram. But he looks up anyway. Once he's looking, his interest is piqued.

EDWARD

Where are you getting this?

VIKRAM

Spy drone. Heat readings. I'm relying on time lapse captures to preserve battery charge.

He waves his hand, and the map begins to play, a jerky animation of Marine and Lammergeier positions.

The Marine wedge formation bulges in several places -- the Lammergeiers engage it, until another appears at the other end of the line.

EDWARD

They're not trying to take the approach. They're just putting on a show for the garrison.

Vikram points to the narrowing inlet.

VIKRAM

After the Arc, my father took soundings of the inlet from Deadwater to Shell Town. Here, it's 56.8 feet.

Vikram calls up another screen, and sets it up next to the first. It depicts ship weapons schematics -- the inner workings of fifty 70MM guns, built into the hull.

Edward steps closer to it, suddenly teased by the possibilities. This is his wheelhouse.

EDWARD

What's our draft?

VIKRAM

Forty.

Edward looks at the array of heavy weaponry glowing in the air with slightly renewed good humour. He presses Vikram to his side, strokes his hair and kisses it.

EXT. DEADWATER - THE CROWN APPROACH - DAWN

Ortiz and Lieutenant Haines gaze through the darkness into the junky, mostly abandoned slums.

WAILEA

Yes, sir.

EXT. BROKEN DISTRICT - CARGO BOX - DAWN

Rachel helps the rest of the crew load the two L-ATVs. She and Kurosawa pour petrol from canisters into the gas tanks.

DELAWARE

Do I ever want to know where you got that?

KUROSAWA

We made some new friends.

DELAWARE

I don't see them.

DROZDOVA

They're resting.

He goes to Rachel.

DELAWARE

We have eyes on the high road. No movement. Would you risk it?

Kurosawa looks over her shoulder, not really impressed by her C.O. his consulting his girlfriend.

RACHEL

It's a question of speed or stealth. Father built the high road, it's in good repair. As for other routes... you saw how it was.

DELAWARE

I see your point. I still want your opinion.

Rachel looks around. She's acutely aware that he's just put his team in her hands, and they are not too happy about it.

RACHEL

Split up the two teams. Take one up the strand. Take the other up the high road.

DELAWARE

Guns blazing.

She nods.

A SHIP'S WHISTLE BLAST sounds, turning the heads of everyone in the vicinity. Delaware steps forward, stares off at the still dark water to the west.

The Walsh, now less than a kilometer from shore, blazes to life as the lights come up. It clips along -- heading north.

Delaware gets into the front seat of Jackson One and gets on the radio.

DELAWARE (cont'd)
Major Ortiz.

EXT. DEADWATER SLUMS - THE CROWN APPROACH - DAWN

Ortiz and the nearest platoon of Marines all look anxiously to the southwest.

ORTIZ
(into the radio)
I heard it.

INTERCUT DELAWARE/Ortiz

DELAWARE
Get them out. Go south. He'll cut you to pieces.

ORTIZ
What about you?

DELAWARE
We'll try and meet you in the middle.

INT. BOX TOWER - MORNING

Littlehawk squints through her binoculars while Wailea shuttles gear down the latter.

LITTLEHAWK
There's something kicking up dust in the distance. A fuck of a lot of it.

WAILEA
What do you mean, something?

LITTLEHAWK
I mean something, asshole. The sun is right in my fucking eyes.

INT. THE WALSH - BRIDGE - MORNING

Edward slaps a panel on the wall. It opens to reveal a gunner unit, complete with a swivel chair, hand controls and triggers. He gets in as Vikram takes the captain's seat.

Vikram brings up a communications screen. He puts in a frequency.

EXT. THE CHOKE RIDGE - HIGH ROAD - MORNING

Sergei, now fresh in a clean commando sweater and his insignia, walks the ridge with a small team behind him.

They link up with two Lammergeiers standing guard over a kneeling Marine LIEUTENANT JONES (20s). He's tied up, battered, and gagged with his own belt. Terrified.

Sergei's radio BEEPS, and he ignores it, cracking his knuckles.

Sergei's radio BEEPS again.

SERGEI

What?

VIKRAM O.S.

Where are you?

Surprised to hear from his old comrade, Sergei cocks a brow at one of the lieutenants waiting on his orders.

SERGEI

The Choke. Why?

INTERCUT SERGEI/VIKRAM

VIKRAM

Good. Bring your forces north, but keep out of Deadwater.

Sergei, in no mood, sneers at the radio as he releases the button.

SERGEI

(mocking Vikram's
English accent)

*Bring your forces north, keep out of
Deadwater.*

He holsters the radio, and steps forward to look down at the Marine. He stares up at Sergei in abject terror.

SERGEI (cont'd)
Where were we, Lieutenant? Right. You
were telling me all about your unit's
position. Over that ridge?

Jones, unable to speak, blinks back tears.

 SERGEI (cont'd)
More than a hundred?

The kid looks away.

 SERGEI (cont'd)
Less than fifty?

Sergei grabs the end of the belt around his neck and drags Jones straight up to his feet. He struggles to get his feet under him.

He drags Jones over to the north-facing edge. We can see bursts of gunfire from strategic points. Sergei kicks the scout back to his knees.

 SERGEI (cont'd)
Tell them I'm coming.

He boots the Marine over the edge, and watches him fall. His MUFFLED SCREAM is briefly audible, before he hits the roadway with a sickening CRUNCH.

Sergei spits through his teeth, and grins, his mood improving.

INT. BOX TOWER - MORNING

Littlehawk looks out.

 LITTLEHAWK
Come on.

INSERT: Binocular view, dust, some kind of vehicle moving towards their position.

INT. BOX - MORNING

Wailea lingers at the bottom of the stairs. He begins to climb.

 WAILEA

(MORE)

WAILEA (cont'd)
 Anything?

INT. BOX TOWER - MORNING

Littlehawk continues to try to make it out.

INSERT: The shadow in the cloud resolves itself into the first of a line of T4-Armata tanks, less than two hundred meters away.

It lowers its barrel, aiming directly for her.

She throws aside her field glasses.

LITTLEHAWK
GET DOW--

The shell FIRES, **straight at her.**

INT. BOX - MORNING

Wailea goes wide eyed, and throws himself down on the floor.

EXT. BOX TOWER - MORNING

The shell rips apart the top of the tower with a SCREECH. Delaware, Rachel and the team all flinch. Another shell SCREAMS overhead.

Delaware runs straight into the cargo box.

INT. CARGO BOX - A FEW SECONDS LATER

He finds Wailea with Littlehawk's shredded body, trying to drag it out. Rachel comes up behind him.

Littlehawk's eyes are wide open. Rachel bends down, touches Littlehawk's neck. She looks at Delaware significantly: *dead.*

Delaware, eyes full of tears, grabs Wailea and yanks him up. Wailea pushes back against him.

DELAWARE
 She's gone.

WAILEA
 We can't --

DELAWARE
We can't stay here.

He shoves Wailea towards the door. Wailea hesitates.

WAILEA
We have to tell Oates.

DELAWARE
I'll tell him. If we live.

He looks at Rachel. She senses what this is costing him, nods. They all make their way out, leaving Littlehawk behind, the engagement ring still glittering on her finger.

EXT. BROKEN DISTRICT - DAY

AERIAL: The two L-ATVs pull back into the maze of slums as six T4-Armata tanks roll down the high road.

EXT. DEADWATER SLUMS - DAY

Ortiz and her Marines move as quickly as they can to make it to the transport vehicles, but the Lammergeiers have taken advantage of their retreat to press the attack.

In the water behind them, the Walsh looms, its row of twenty five starboard side OneTwo5 mm guns extended.

INT. BRIDGE - DAY

Edward maneuvers, the chair turning gracefully as he looks into the view screen. A camera mounted in the hull provides the image.

Vikram stands over by the window. He looks out at the scene, eyes traveling over the retreating Marines, the disorganized Lammergeiers.

VIKRAM
Do it.

EXT. DEADWATER SLUMS - DAY

The guns light up, and make a CRACKING BOOM as they FIRE. Ortiz, Haines and most of the Marines hit the deck. The ones that aren't fast enough are consumed by the heavy impact.

Two of the Lammergeier transport trucks EXPLODE. SCREAMS emit from one of them.

Half the Lammergeiers charging towards the Marine position are immediately cut down.

MARINE POSITION

Haines looks at Ortiz .

HAINES

How much ammunition does she have?

Plenty enough to wipe us out.

The guns FIRE again. A shell EXPLODES ten feet from them. They both duck down.

Ortiz rises to her feet, pulls out a whistle and BLOWS it. The Marines can't see through the smoke, but they can hear it.

They begin to crawl, hands and knees, towards her.

Her RADIO crackles.

INTERCUT /DELAWARE

DELAWARE

You alive?

Captain. We're in trouble. My scout's gone silent. The Walsh --

DELAWARE

Listen, there's heavy armor coming towards you. Can you evacuate?

Ortiz glances over to where the Marine transports are grouped, shielded from the Lammergeiers, but not the ship.

INT. BRIDGE - DAY

Vikram adjusts his aim, centers it on the transports. He jerks the trigger.

EXT. DEADWATER - DAY

The vehicles EXPLODE as the shell tears through their gas tanks. Ortiz and the Marines flinch.

We're on foot for the foreseeable future.

DELAWARE

Get some cover. I'll be there as soon I can.

Ortiz puts her radio down, and looks at Haines. Haines casts around - then nods towards the arches under the high-road.

ORTIZ

Low and slow.

EXT. THE CHOKE - DAY

Jackson One and Two nose through the narrow slumlane, obscured from view and below the main road where the tanks GRIND along.

INT. JACKSON ONE

Rachel, Delaware, and Kurosawa follow their progress.

RACHEL

Stop here.

Kurosawa, again at the wheel, looks around. She's red eyed from crying. She wipes her face.

KUROSAWA

Excuse me?

DELAWARE

Do what she says.

Kurosawa glares at him. Rachel doesn't wait, but gets out.

EXT. THE CHOKE - DAY

Rachel argues in Cantonese with an old man clutching a battered Honda motorcycle.

RACHEL
 (in Cantonese,
 untranslated)
 I can't be responsible for what
 happens to you if you can't see
 sense.

Kurosawa walks up behind him, and clubs him with the butt
 end of her pistol. She catches the bike before it heels
 over. She swings a leg over, and REVS it.

KUROSAWA
 Get on.

Rachel gets on.

RACHEL
 Stay close to the strand.

They speed off, kicking up sand and beach junk.

INT. JACKSON ONE

Delaware climbs into the driver's side. He fires up his
 radio.

INT. JACKSON TWO

Wailea, also red eyed with grief, answers. The Marines in
 the back seat load every gun they've got to hand.

WAILEA
 Go.

INTERCUT WAILEA/DELAWARE

DELAWARE
 You okay?

WAILEA
 No.

DELAWARE
 I need your help. We need to move,
 now.

Wailea takes a moment. He raises his radio.

WAILEA
 I'm ready.

EXT. THE CHOKE

The L-ATVs surge forward, tearing off parts of the slum shacks, and leaving angry, but helpless Cradle citizens behind them.

INT. SHIPYARD - AFTERNOON

Rachel and Kurosawa, now on foot, weave through the piled junk. Ship workers back away as Kurosawa levels the pistol at them. She points - down.

Rachel helps to bind them. The women peel off to begin their search.

EXT. RAMP ARCHES - DAY

Ortiz and her much diminished team huddle behind the scant cover of the arch. The OneTwo5s firing from the ship mostly go wide, but explosive shells IMPACT nearby.

Haines ventures a glance around the corner.

HAINES

Why aren't the Guard coming for us?

Ortiz nods towards the ship.

ORTIZ

Maybe they don't know yet.

Haines watches as one shell SCREAMS towards a Lammergeier redoubt, punching through it and leaving a streak of human gore behind.

HAINES

That's unfriendly.

ORTIZ

Question not, Lieutenant.

HAINES

Fine. What do we do?

ORTIZ

Meditate.

She sits up against the arch, plants her radio before her in the gravel, adjusts her whistle, and waits.

Another shell SCREAMS past, its nearby impact shaking dust from above them.

EXT. THE CHOKE - NARROW POINT - AFTERNOON

AERIAL

The tanks roll forward along the high road while Jackson One and Jackson Two split off. Jackson Two heads for the heights, just below the sight line of the lead Armata.

INT. L-ATV - JACKSON TWO

Wailea backs the vehicle up the steep curve, then throws it into park.

EXT. THE CHOKE - HEIGHTS

The Marines jump out and wedge blocks under the wheels. One climbs up into the turret, while the other stakes out a south facing observation point.

Wailea, holding a pair of assembled sniper rifles, follows. He hands one off the Marine, and looks out over the vista.

In the near distance, Wailea is able to see the sweep of the descending ramp, flashes of fire from the base of the Crown approach.

He pops the scope off the rifle and looks through it, while the Marine configures the radio earpiece. Wailea slips it on.

INSERT: Scope view. Wailea follows the now more intermittent gunfire from the ship, the occasional gunfire from the Lammergeier redoubts.

He finds the edge of Ortiz's unit, huddled under the arch, surrounded by blackened and blasted ground.

He touches his earpiece.

WAILEA

Found them.

EXT. THE CHOKE - BEACHHEAD

Delaware chivvies along some Cradle residents - they work to shield the L-ATV with their own, now-ploughed shanty homes.

He slips on his own earpiece and touches it.

INTERCUT WAILEA/DELAWARE

DELAWARE

Can you make the shot?

INSERT: Wailea scopes out the Lammergeier's parked personnel trucks in the barracks yard. The canvasses are off the backs. The side windows are down.

WAILEA

Littlehawk could do it easy. Me...
maybe 60 percent.

DELAWARE

I don't want to put pressure on you,
but we've only got once chance.

WAILEA

I've got it. Mahalo.

INT. SHIPYARD - AFTERNOON

Kurosawa and Rachel assemble the last of their supplies on canvas drop cloth. We catch a glimpse of twine, rope, tar, and wire.

Rachel looks at Kurosawa, and nods towards their prisoners. They both start yanking off their shoes.

A small pile of socks goes into the bundle. Rachel ties it to the back of the motorbike. She tosses a knife back to the captives as Kurosawa opens the throttle.

EXT. DEADWATER - HEIGHTS - AFTERNOON

Sergei's small contingent, mounted in an ATV personnel truck, navigates the narrow track that runs along the slopes.

They've overtaken the tanks now, and have a view of the battle below.

The truck halts. Sergei gets out of the passenger's side, a pair of binoculars in his hand. He looks out at the North Barracks, the blasted redoubts near the switchbacks.

He lifts his radio to his mouth, still surveying through the binoculars.

SERGEI

Tyrek.

He watches as one of the Lammergeiers shifts behind the barrier, lifting a radio.

INTERCUT TYREK/SERGEI

TYREK

Commander, they have us pinned down.

SERGEI

That's funny. I don't see anyone. I just see you and your company cowering like whipped bitches.

TYREK

But the ship --

SERGEI

(calm)

Vikram has the ship. Did you miss the dispatch?

Tyrek, slowly, lifts himself up and glances behind the redoubt at the ship, which is now sending the occasional burst of fire towards the Marine position.

SERGEI (cont'd)

Who's your second?

TYREK

Nero.

SERGEI

Summon her.

Sergei puts down the binoculars. One of his guard trots forward, AK-47 in hand. Sergei takes it, slides down the slope.

He glances into his binoculars again.

INSERT: AURELIA NERO (20s), rangy, tattooed, talks with Tyrek.

SERGEI (cont'd)
 (into the radio)
Give her the radio.

Nero takes it.

 SERGEI (cont'd)
Nero. Count backwards from three,
then move to your left.

Nero looks at Tyrek. Then at the ridge. Then, she steps
aside. Tyrek looks at her, confused --

A BURST OF FIRE hits Tyrek square in the chest. He goes
down, bloody geysers surging out of him. A bit splashes on
Nero, but she seems totally indifferent.

 NERO
 (into the radio)
Do you want me to move out?

Sergei lowers the rifle, and picks up the radio from the
ground.

 SERGEI
Set up a perimeter. Then come to me.

INT. RAMP ARCHES - AFTERNOON

The Marines sit around, anxious and idle. Haines fidgets,
his leg going in a reflexive twitch. Ortiz remains zen,
until finally, she grabs the young man's leg.

 HAINES
What?

 ORTIZ
Listen.

EXT. HIGH ROAD - AFTERNOON

The six Armata tanks GRIND down the road, leaving cracks in
the blacktop, towards a long tunnel built through the slope.

EXT. HEIGHTS OVER THE TUNNEL

Rachel and Kurosawa finish assembling sticky bombs. They
slide grenades into socks, tie strings to the pins, coiling
them carefully inside. They work quickly, in silence.

Then, each with a small bucket of pitch ready, set down their assembly of explosives. They watch as the tanks rumble towards them, maybe five minutes away.

KUROSAWA

This better work.

RACHEL

Anything that old runs on petrol.

KUROSAWA

Good. Because if it doesn't work, I'm going to shoot you.

Rachel looks over at her. Then back at the tanks.

RACHEL

If this doesn't work, you won't have to.

They lock eyes. Then each grabs their cache of bombs and heads off.

EXT. HEIGHTS - SOUTH TUNNEL ENTRANCE

Kurosawa scrambles over the rock, looking for decent cover above the southern entrance of the tunnel. The tanks pick up speed, now ten yards away.

Kurosawa sets up her bucket of pitch, holds one sock bomb ready.

EXT. HEIGHTS - TUNNEL MIDPOINT

Rachel, surer of foot, slides down to an alcove cut into the rock. There - a door. She keycodes in.

INT. TUNNEL ACCESS

Rachel shimmies through the narrow access tunnel towards the main tunnel. The carved ingress is also narrow, just enough space for her to stand out of the way of traffic.

The lead tank enters the southern end of the tunnel.

EXT. THE CHOKE - BEACHHEAD

Delaware, now hunkered down in the turret under the junky blind, watches the tanks roll forward, rigid with anxiety.

DELAWARE
(Sioux - Crow
dialect, subtitled)
Give her a fucking break on this one.

EXT. HEIGHTS - SOUTH TUNNEL ENTRANCE

Kurosawa watches the column, waiting, waiting, squeezing the grenade inside the sock.

INT. TUNNEL ACCESS

Rachel squeezes herself up against the wall as the tanks, with only a few inches to spare to either side, move slowly closer.

Moving quickly, she bends down, and grabs one of the socks. She dunks it into tar, and slings it directly into the path of the tanks.

INT. T4-ARMATA COCKPIT

On the view screen, the driver of the tank notices a rustle - but the tar has rolled through the dust and now just looks like road.

INT. TUNNEL ACCESS

Rachel works quickly, adding more grenades to the pile. Neat coils of twine unwind from her other hand as she pays them out.

EXT. HEIGHTS - SOUTH TUNNEL ENTRANCE

Kurosawa, watching as the last tank makes its approach towards the tunnel, moves forward, two bombs sticky and ready to go.

She sidles up to the flanking cement arch base, squishing herself into the tank's blind spot.

INT. TUNNEL ACCESS

The lead tank treads approach the edge of Rachel's hiding spot. She breathes - and breathes - measures the tread rotation -

She unpins a grenade, primes it, then stickies it to the top tread.

She shoves herself back behind the wall, getting as much cover as she can, counting backwards in her head. She takes up the little coil of twine and wraps it around her fist.

The tank rolls forward. The grenade on top of the clanks down, a few seconds from detonating.

Rachel risks a glance - the stuck bomb rolls down just as the others adhere to the forward moving tread.

The tread compresses the grenades - she yanks the twine, pulling the pins out just as the grenades go under.

INT. TANK

A small CLANK distracts the driver. He adjusts the viewer -- something on the tread? -- he can't tell. Then -- he catches just a slice of Rachel -- then FIRE.

INT. TUNNEL

The lead tank EXPLODES with such force that it HITS THE 12' ROOF of the tunnel, causing cracks to appear in the walls.

Rachel cowers from the fire and heat, but can't resist a glance as the northern end of the tunnel collapses in the inferno.

EXT. THE CHOKE - BEACHHEAD

Delaware tenses as the further end of the tunnel EXPLODES.

EXT. THE CHOKE HEIGHTS

Wailea, turned south, looks on with satisfaction as the tank crew that took his comrade's life is blown apart, flesh and blood visible in the shrapnel.

EXT. TUNNEL ENTRANCE - SOUTH

Kurosawa yanks the pins off her bouquet of sticky grenades and flings them under the treads of the last tank. She runs like hell.

INT. TUNNEL

The other tank CRASHES into the front, but doesn't catch. The Lammergeier driver emerges, coughing as he tries to find the source of the attack.

A SPRAY OF GUNFIRE just misses Rachel as she struggles through the now slightly sideways access tunnel.

EXT. TUNNEL ENTRANCE - SOUTH

The end tank EXPLODES, not as dramatically, but enough to come to a dead halt. The other four are effectively trapped inside the tunnel.

INT. TUNNEL ACCESS

The Lammergeier tears after Rachel. He's bigger, has a harder time getting into the small space. She kicks him in the face, but he gets hold of her foot.

She shakes him loose, pulls herself up through.

EXT. TUNNEL ACCESS - AFTERNOON

Rachel, blackened, red with burns, twists to get out of the doorway, and falls on her back. The Lammergeier draws a boot knife, shimmies through the opening.

She struggles, but he slashes down, aiming for her femoral artery.

A SHOT -- the top of his head comes off in a welter of blood. Kurosawa, pistol in the weaver stance, walks forward. She puts two more SHOTS in the soldier.

She then offers a hand to Rachel, and drags her the rest of the way out. Rachel gets to her feet - she opens her mouth to say thanks - Kurosawa waves it off.

The tunnel access passage collapses in front of them. They move to higher ground and watch as the twisted metal corpses burn on.

INT. THE WALSH - BRIDGE

Vikram and Edward share an apple as they watch the fore and aft tanks burn in the distance.

EDWARD

Neater work I could not myself have done. Little sister, you think?

Vikram looks anxious. He tosses the apple core away and goes back to the gunner chair, slinging himself into it. He opens a viewer on the American positions.

INSERT: At a distance, he finds Delaware, getting out of the L-ATV just as an exhausted Rachel and Kurosawa approach. He flings his arms around Rachel, then grabs Kurosawa, too.

Vikram lets out a relieved breath. Edward notes it, but his expression remains neutral.

EXT. THE CHOKE - BEACHHEAD - EVENING

Kurosawa gets behind the wheel of the L-ATV. Rachel and Delaware remain outside, indulging in a moment of deep post-near-death-experience making out. Delaware's radio beeps.

EXT. HEIGHTS

Wailea taps his ear piece, and looks through his scope down at the burning wreckage.

INSERT: Through the shimmering heat waves, Sergei, Nero and his tail approach the burning wreckage of the front tank. Sergei throws a visible tantrum, smashes his radio.

He takes Nero's, and sends an order.

WAILEA

Get ready.

EXT. DEADWATER

The Lammergeier platoon, some forty, load into the two open transports, which ROAR forward.

EXT. RAMP ARCHES

Ortiz and her team wait at the corner, watching the dust kick up. They wait... and wait... then, guns blazing, they rush out into the path of the transports.

They unload the last of their ammunition - but nothing gets near either of the personnel truck. The Americans turn, and run, in complete disorder.

EXT. THE CHOKE - BEACHHEAD

The Marines run for the not-very-good-cover of the slums, right where the beach narrows towards the slopes.

On the high road above, the tanks struggle to reverse, but are impeded by the still burning wrecks.

INT. L-ATV - JACKSON ONE

Kurosawa slams the gas while Rachel holds tight to the handhold next to the passengers' side. Above, Delaware mans the gunner turret.

AERIAL

Jackson Two, driven by one of Wailea's Marines and manned at the gun turret by the other, tears down the side of the mountain.

The Lammergeier transports, bristling with armed soldiers, race directly into the trap in pursuit of Ortiz's unit. Both L-ATVs overshoot.

EXT. HEIGHTS

Wailea, now at his sniper rifle, takes aim at the lead driver.

He glances behind him -- the middle tanks have almost freed themselves.

He turns his gaze back to his target. He waits for the angle --

He takes the shot through the driver's side window. It cracks but doesn't shatter as the round penetrates it. The driver, shot in the heart, dies instantly.

AERIAL/TURRET POV

Delaware and his counterpart surprise the Lammergeiers from behind. They massacre them in a HAIL of gunfire, just as Ortiz's crew grab on to wayward vehicle.

What little resistance remains crumbles as her team dispatches the rest of the force by hand. Haines pulls the dead driver out from behind the wheel and takes over.

Then, a SCREAMING SHELL flies down and hits the other transport, sending it off its wheels in a rush of exploding fire. **The rearmost tank has disentangled itself.**

INT. TRANSPORT

Ortiz slams the passenger door shut, looks to Haines.

ORTIZ

Time to go.

TRANSPORT - REAR

The Marines, bloodied, cling on to the hand rails. A few dead and dying Lammergeiers lay at their feet. They shove them overboard.

EXT. THE CHOKE

Another shell soars overhead, destroyed a shanty and maiming the people nearby. SCREAMS.

INT. L-ATV - JACKSON TWO

Wailea slings his sniper rifle kit into the back, and climbs in.

EXT. L-ATV - JACKSON ONE

As they, the transport, and two L-ATVs speed away, Delaware looks out at the destruction, satisfied. He locks off the turret, and slips down into the vehicle.

EXT. THE CHOKE - EVENING

Sergei, dangerously calm, gets down from his vehicle and looks around at the pile of scored, gunshot, gut stabbed soldiers strewn across the ground.

He looks at Auerelia, now Lieutenant Nero. She spits through her teeth. She doesn't give a fuck, and it seems to centre him.

His radio beeps. He looks to the massive silhouette of the Walsh.

VIKRAM
What happened?

SERGEI
I'm not in the mood.

VIKRAM
Let them run. I want you to come here.

SERGEI
To the ship?

VIKRAM
Bring your best. However many you have left.

Sergei's mood seems to lift as he considers the possibility. He looks over at Nero, then back at the ship. She follows his gaze.

SERGEI
I have a job for you.

They don't look at each other - just at the ship.

NERO
Yes, sir.

SERGEI
You're not going to fuck it up.

NERO
No, sir.

Her eyes linger on the ship, then meet his. They understand each other. They walk back to the jeep.

EXT. THE CHOKE - THE STRAND - DAY

The Jackson Team and personnel truck full of Marines assemble, sheltered by the slope. In the distance, the sound of TANK TREADS fades.

EXT. L-ATV - JACKSON TWO

Wailea noses Jackson Two up alongside Jackson One, and looks out the window at the Walsh, now retreating south away from the inlet.

INT. L-ATV - JACKSON ONE

Kurosawa drives Jackson One to meet the other vehicle and lowers the windows.. Rachel, sitting in the back behind Delaware, looks out at the ship.

KUROSAWA
(nodding towards the
ship)
Why are they retreating?

RACHEL
I don't know.

Delaware twists in his seat to face Rachel.

DELAWARE
Where's the best cover in the city?

RACHEL
Anything south of Broken Point. More
cement infrastructure, more density.

DELAWARE
Will Vikram shell it?

RACHEL
I don't know that either.

DELAWARE
He'd waste a lot of ammunition
killing innocent people. He has to
know that.

RACHEL
(nodding to the ship)
Delaware, most of them probably think
that's you.

He absorbs this.

DELAWARE
Well, then I guess the best thing we
can do is demonstrate that is not the
case.

EXT. L-ATV - JACKSON ONE

Kurosawa turns the L-ATV around to face south. Jackson Two and the truck full of Marines follows.

INT. BRIDGE - AFTERNOON

Edward and Vikram look out at the distant shoreline. Edward kisses Vikram. Vikram submits for a few seconds, then nudges him away.

VIKRAM

I need to concentrate.

Edward, hand on the back of Vikram's neck, returns his gaze to the view.

EDWARD

I see them.

VIKRAM

How many?

INSERT: Sergei and his 30 men sail towards the aircraft elevator.

EDWARD

30, maybe more.

VIKRAM

Send Ashram to me, then get out of sight.

Edward moves to go, then lingers at the door. Vikram looks at him, annoyed. Edward just waits expectantly.

VIKRAM (cont'd)

Please.

Edward grins, blows him a kiss, then leaves.

INT. BOAT - EVENING

Lieutenant Nero looks out at the approaching carrier.

She chews a plug of tobacco or something like it, then spits it into the water.

Sergei comes up behind her.

SERGEI

Are you ready?

She spits another plug of tobacco into the water.

NERO

The fuck you think?

Sergei leans against the gunwale, and looks at her, smiling.

SERGEI

No mistakes. Or I put all of you back where I found you. Whatever's left of you.

She ignores him, keeps her eyes on the ship.

EXT. HANGAR - EVENING

Sergei and his people climb up the cargo netting. Sergei reaches the top first, where Vikram is there to grab his hand and help him up.

Sergei and Vikram grin at each other as Sergei looks around, impressed.

SERGEI

I regret I ever doubted you.

VIKRAM

I'm sure that won't stop you in the future.

They grin at each other -- for an instant they're teenagers again: ambitious, contrasting, yet weirdly kismet.

INT. BERTHING - NIGHT

Ashram oversees the billeting of Sergei's troops. He also oversees, under Nero's critical eye, the hanging up of the Lammergeier weaponry inside a secure cage.

The guns are particular, a mismatch of automatic rifles and handguns, all of them decorated by their individual owner. Stenciled on them are Lammergeier skull insignia.

Ashram gives Nero a hard look as she hands her rifle. He puts it up, shuts the gate, and keycards it, locking it.

Nero gives him a stretched smile, then turns away to join her soldiers.

EXT. MARKET DISTRICT - EVENING

Rachel gets down out of the of the L-ATV, and Delaware exits the other side.

Kurosawa drives on slowly ahead of the transport full of exhausted, battered soldiers.

The people of the Cradle stay close to their doors and stalls, looking on apprehensively. They see Rachel, recognize her, and begin to whisper to each other.

Suddenly, Spirit -- the dirty blonde waif with the bulging eyes -- steps out in front of the sorry troop.

She points at Rachel. Rachel walks over to her, goes down on her haunches. Spirit whispers in her ear.

Rachel straightens, looks at Delaware.

RACHEL

Sergei went to the ship, and took his personal guard with him.

She seems fazed by this information. She stares hard at the ship.

DELAWARE

We need somewhere to rest, and refuel. Somewhere that's out of range. And Miryam's still out there.

Rachel looks at the little girl.

RACHEL

(Russian,
untranslated)

We need somewhere safe to hide.

Spirit points to the east. She pulls on Rachel's shirt, and Rachel turns to her.

SPIRIT

(whispers)

Nadia.

Rachel looks east. She knows where Spirit is talking about.

EXT. ACADEMY - EVENING

Rachel keys in, pushes open the door of the large concrete school building. Delaware posts his two freshest Marines at the chain link fence.

INT. ACADEMY - EVENING

Inside, the space is tidy, school supplies still in place, lessons written out on the board. Rachel goes to it, touches the chalk. Her mother's hand.

Rachel beckons the troop to follow. She and Delaware break away from the group as they search.

Rachel finds the breaker, and turns on the lights. Better, she finds a closet full of large water bottles, sealed and dated.

She pulls a field testing kit from her pack, and uses a knife to open up one of the bottles. She takes a sample using a dip card, and sighs when it turns blue.

She beckons to Delaware, who looks inside.

DELAWARE

What is this place?

RACHEL

We just call it the Academy. Mother established it shortly after the first wave of refugees arrived. The people who live here respect it as much as they respect anything.

DELAWARE

Helps that it's a fortress.

Delaware goes over to one of the windows, and pulls back a patchwork curtain. Outside, they have a clear view to the blackened timbers of the ruined CoEP complex.

DELAWARE (cont'd)

Would you put it past your brother to try and mortar us here?

RACHEL

I don't know what he'll do.

She goes to Delaware's side. He puts an arm around her, kisses her head. Then they turn and go to work, moving some of the cooler bottles out of storage.

INT. MAIN ROOM - EVENING

The group swarms on the water bottles, filling their own canteens and drinking deep. Then they settle back and break out some MRE's.

Rachel, Delaware, Kurosawa, Wailea and , confer together.

DELAWARE

I'm cutting communication to the Mark 8. They're in NCOM range, we can't expect Vikram to overlook them.

ORTIZ

So is this our home now? Or do we have a plan to break Vikram's gesture signature?

DELAWARE

I left Commander Savage with orders. I'm not going to repeat them now. Any one of us could get captured, and it's better that you don't know.

RACHEL

The Crown is the only place I'm positive Vikram won't shell. It's the only place that's well supplied and defensible with small numbers.

WAILEA

Gonna be a trick getting past those tanks if they're on the approach. It's mined from both sides.

DELAWARE

And I don't intend that any more should die. For now, we set a watch, and we get some rest.

INT. ACADEMY - OFFICE - NIGHT

Rachel looks through the books on the shelves, stacks of iPads, photographs of the Kori family. She picks one up one of Vikram and Nadia, clearly the day of his graduation.

She doesn't notice Delaware leaning up against the door frame.

DELAWARE

Find anything?

She turns, and sets the photo on the desk.

RACHEL

He loved them, you know.

Delaware's face is impassive as he looks down at the image.

RACHEL (cont'd)
Vikram was never embarrassed about being seen to love his parents the way most children are as they grow up. So I wasn't, either. He gave me that.

DELAWARE
Do you think he'll surrender?

She meets his eyes.

RACHEL
I'll have to think of another way.

DELAWARE
You should get some rest.

RACHEL
You're not resting.

DELAWARE
I can't. Every time I slow down, it catches up with me. My people are decimated. Joanie...she was Indian, like me. Cree. From Montana. Now that she's dead, I guess that makes me the last Indian.

He wipes tears away. He's hurting but he's holding firm. Rachel goes to him, kisses him.

RACHEL
I'm sorry I brought this down on you.

DELAWARE
You didn't ask for it.

He kisses her before she can speak. She reaches around him and shuts the door. He lifts her on to the edge of the solid oak desk, helping her undress.

They keep it quiet as they fuck on the edge of the desk, but the force is still enough to move the picture frame by inches, until it falls off the desk, the glass shattering.

INSERT: The photograph of Vikram, smiling with his mother.

INT. THE WALSH - CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Vikram watches Sergei put his feet up on the table, the remains of an excellent meal sitting next to them. They share a bottle of wine -- a pre-ARC vintage.

VIKRAM
It's like the old days.

SERGEI
But better.

Vikram cocks an eyebrow at him, but Sergei gets up, and explores the suite.

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

SERGEI
Very nice.

He notices the mussed up sheets. His nostrils flare, and he leans over to sniff the pillow. Then he looks at Vikram, who lingers in the doorway.

SERGEI (cont'd)
I know that cologne.

He sniffs it again, then looks at Vikram. He looks slightly puzzled.

SERGEI (cont'd)
You've been a bad boy, I'm very impressed. Who is it?

Vikram grins, uselessly.

SERGEI (cont'd)
I'll figure it out.

VIKRAM
I've no doubt.

SERGEI
What else have you been doing behind my back?

VIKRAM
Where did you get the tanks?

SERGEI
You tell me who you're fucking, and I'll tell you where I got them.

VIKRAM

Here. Let me show you something.

Vikram raises a hand, pulling at glowing threads that appear from his fingertips and seem to wave like sea anemones. A grid of infinitesimally small squares appears.

Vikram swipes like he's scrolling through a track, and the grid adopts shapes which appear almost human, but keep mutating.

Sergei looks on, fascinated, and then steps back as the nearly solid, three-dimensional figures of Rachel and Delaware appear.

The following scene plays out while Sergei watches in astonished fascination:

DELAWARE

I am not "desperate for conflict".

RACHEL

Is that so.

He activates the NCOM with a gesture. A version of Hudson's notebook manifests. He tosses it to her. She frowns, opens it. Reads it in English.

DELAWARE

(reciting)

"She has almost perfect recall and absorbs new information effortlessly. However, there is a lack of genuine confidence" -- he calls it a "a depressive malaise that stems from isolation."

Rachel throws down the book like it's a red hot coal.

RACHEL

Stop it.

DELAWARE

To wit: "she has no peers beyond her elder brother. I initially considering fostering her hopes to exploit her trust, but it seems as though her desperation has done the work for me."

Vikram snaps and the image freezes. He steps through Delaware to where Sergei stands.

SERGEI

And this is the Neurocommand.

VIKRAM

A tiny, superficial part of it.

SERGEI

May I?

Vikram makes an adjustment, setting a low-level clearance.

VIKRAM

The important thing is to differentiate your gestures as you differentiate your intentions. It's designed to be -- played, almost. You can type, like on a keyboard, or you can --

He strokes his finger across the air, moving the recording of Rachel and Delaware slightly forward, then halting it.

Sergei raises a hand and imitates Vikram -- the image begins to play again.

Sergei's expression hardens as he watches Delaware kiss Rachel, watches his hands on her.

He narrows his eyes at Vikram, who appears impassive.

SERGEI

How much of this have you watched?

VIKRAM

All of it. In case there was anything important.

Sergei focuses, reaches out into the air, and stops the image. His mood is punctured. He turns to Vikram.

VIKRAM (cont'd)

It was never going to be you. You know that.

Sergei looks at the recorded image. He gestures -- it plays through until she's sitting, alone, distraught.

He reaches out, touching her illusory cheek with his knuckles. Vikram frowns at this uncharacteristic tenderness.

INT. THE WALSH - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Sergei and Vikram stroll down the corridor.

Vikram demonstrates more functionality of the NCOM for Sergei, scrolling through weapons schematics almost identical to the ones on his chalkboards.

SERGEI

Does it work everywhere?

VIKRAM

Everywhere but the outer flight deck. Launching aircraft generates a lot of interference.

SERGEI

I didn't see many fighters.

Vikram opens another window, visual recordings of two transport choppers, an attack chopper, and two sleek looking fighter jets.

Sergei pauses, intrigued by what he's seeing.

SERGEI (cont'd)

What are those?

VIKRAM

F-500 Skyfox Hybrids. Useless until I finish the simulation, but very good to have.

SERGEI

Tell me more about the shipboard munitions. I liked watching them go through Ford's soldiers.

Vikram beckons him to follow, throwing a screen in front of them that floats ahead of them as they walk.

INT. MESS ROOM - NIGHT

Nero and the Lammergeiers eat well, while the Old Guard lounges, not interested in making conversation.

They're all ten of them sober men between the ages of 35-45, some of wearing wedding bands. They're clean shaven, dignified.

Nero works her way through her plate, and aims a fork at Ashram, who sits arms crossed.

NERO
You really think you're better than
us, don't you?

Ashram gazes at her for a long beat.

ASHRAM
Thinking doesn't come into it.

NERO
Why?

Ashram uncrosses his arms, and folds his hands on the
table - a disappointed manager.

ASHRAM
Because I'm a soldier, and you're a
bunch of hooligans.

Nero nods amiably. She beckons down the row. One of the
other female Lammergeiers, JACQUELINE VAIL (20) appears, and
sits next to her commander.

She's blonde, attractive, in a hard-boned kind of way.

NERO
Lieutenant Ashram thinks we're
beneath him.

VAIL
Is that so.

NERO
We were both prostitutes before
Sergio found us.

VAIL
Victims.

ASHRAM
You're still victims.

VAIL
Are you saying that it's better to be
a hooker than a fighter?

ASHRAM
A killer, you mean. That's what
Sergei made you. A nihilistic savage
with just enough brains to follow an
order.

Suddenly, all of the Lammergeiers prick up, like vultures who have scented a dying animal. Ashram notices, and so does his Old Guard.

Nero rises, cracks her knuckles, and looks down at Ashram, and his men.

NERO

Maybe you're right, Lieutenant Ashram. We might be the worst. But we're not the weakest.

Ashram rises with her, his eyes full of disdain.

She gestures. The rest of the Lammergeiers rise, and follow her out of the mess.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Edward lingers at the doorway, just out of sight. It's clear by his expression he's been listening. He moves off.

INT. BERTHING - NIGHT

Edward keycards into the weapons cage. In one hand, he carries the small hard shell case that Lucretia returned to him. He opens it, and pulls on some latex gloves.

He looks around at the mounted Lammergeier weapons, their sprayed-on insignia, and smiles grimly.

INT. LECTURE THEATRE - NIGHT

Vikram stands alone before a lectern, eyes downcast as though in deep concentration.

At the theatre entrance at the top of the amphitheater, Sergei stands watching. He descends, slowly, followed by his Lammergeiers -- but noticeably diminished in number.

There are ten, matched to Ashram's ten. They are, except for two slight young men, the women of the group, including Nero and Vail.

Ashram and his men make their way into the theatre as well. While they are stoic, they don't fail to notice the women.

They are all younger, fitter, wearing tank tops instead of fatigues to show their figures to better effect.

VIKRAM
I want you to help me recover her.

SERGEI
I already have her.

Vikram stares at him, shocked and enraged. The 3D image wobbles slightly with his agitation.

VIKRAM
Why didn't you tell me?

Sergei smiles. He shrugs.

VIKRAM (cont'd)
Where is she?

SERGEI
Safe. Well, safe enough. I didn't do anything permanent to her.

Vikram's eyes narrow. He stares at Sergei, about to open his mouth -- when Sergei headbutts him in the forehead.

Vikram goes down on his knees. The image disintegrates.

At the same time, Nero draws Ashram's knife out of its sheath and cuts his throat from behind, spine-deep. He chokes as his blood sprays.

She seizes the key-card clipped to a lanyard on his chest and sprints off full tilt for the door. The other Lammergeiers disarm the remaining Old Guard.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Nero runs straight through a crowd of Old Guard, into the door of the Lammergeier berthing.

INT. LECTURE THEATRE - NIGHT

Vail leads the take-down, her team skilled in physical combat. She floors the largest of the Guardsman.

He tries to get to his feet, but Vail gives him a kick to the ribs. Sergei looks on, ignoring the supine Vikram.

SERGEI
Look at you. Dropped by a bunch of girls.

He unholsters one of his Desert Eagles and tosses it to Vail. She shoots the Guardsman in the head. The others, seeing this, drop on their faces.

INT. BERTHING - NIGHT

The rest of the Lammergeiers wait, tensed and ready. Nero skids into the room, goes straight to the weapons cage and keycards it open. She passes out the Lammergeiers weapons.

INT. LECTURE THEATRE - NIGHT

Sergei crouches down next to Vikram, who is concussed and beyond being able to control the NCOM. He tries, using his right hand but the system sputters and jitters.

SERGEI

It's just a concussion. Stop being so dramatic.

Vikram tries to push himself away from Sergei, and gesture at the same time -- the lights flicker.

Sergei rises, walks around, and stomps his heel down on Vikram's right hand. Vikram SCREAMS.

INT. CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Nero and the rest of the Lammergeiers go through charge through the ship, firing into open door ways with their automatic weapons.

INT. COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

They burst into the common room where the bulk of the Old Guard lounge around. Nero, pulling her pistol, shoots three of them down.

NERO

Get on your knees, now.

They don't respond immediately. She takes Ashram's knife and hamstring the closest one. The Lammergeier behind her shoots another in the face.

They drop to their knees.

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

Darkness in the dark water for a long beat. Then, shapes in the water.

The dive team - Schick, his pilots, and French, Oates and Savage, swim through the dark water, aiming for the dim light that penetrates the water from the Walsh.

They do not carry flashlights, and go slowly, moving towards the ship.

INT. LECTURE THEATRE - NIGHT

The Lammergeiers zip-tie the wrists of the now face-down Guardsmen.

Vikram whimpers and curls in on himself, holding his now maimed hand. Sergei snorts, and steps over him, approaching the supine Old Guard.

Vail offers him the pistol, but he waves it off. Instead, he pulls his knife, weighing it in his hand.

SERGEI

Get them on their knees.

The Lammergeiers haul the men up, then step away to wait on Sergei's pleasure. He walks down the row -- then walks behind it.

He steps behind DESALIS (40s), takes his knife and slips the tip of it under his wedding band.

SERGEI (cont'd)

Sergeant Desalis. How long since you saw them?

Desalis says nothing. His lip quivers. Sergei walks around to face him.

SERGEI (cont'd)

I have T4 Armata tanks rolling up to the Crown approach. Antiques, but a 125 mm round will cut a man in half. I've seen it. Imagine what they could do to a little girl. Or an infant.

Sergei mimes an exploding child with one hand.

Desalis looks up at him, fearfully. It's clear the other men are waiting on him.

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The dive team swims closer to the dimly lit hull.

Suddenly, a sheet of green laser sweeps through the water before them. Savage gestures for the team to stop. She makes it clear through hand gestures: one at a time.

The sensor field returns, a bare second after its last sweep. Savage counts down on her fingers, and the instant the field passes, she propels herself through, hard.

Oates then follows her, repeating the process.

INT. LECTURE THEATRE - NIGHT

SERGEI

Here's the thing, Desalis. The man who ordered the approach undefended, who let me take it -- he's right here.

He walks over to Vikram and looks down at him.

SERGEI (cont'd)

Go on. Explain to them. Tell them how you told me to cull the infected and toss them into the Cradle's water supply. Tell them how your plan to kill your mother's weakest students poisoned her instead.

Sergei kicks Vikram in the ribs. Vikram rolls over again, blood dripping from his mouth.

SERGEI (cont'd)

Tell them how you ordered to me kill the American doctor before he told your sister the truth.

VIKRAM

(whispering, croaking)

You killed Mikhail. Your own father. Faked his suicide because you wanted his position.

SERGEI

I didn't fake it. I assisted. But you kept it secret to buy my loyalty. And it was your confidence in me that made it all right with them.

He indicates the row of captives. Then turns to them.

SERGEI (cont'd)

Return to my service. I won't lie to you. I do not let other men do my fighting. You're free to try and kill me, if you think you're hard enough. Just remember...if you fail, I will roast the bodies of your children and feed them to your starving widows. So consider carefully whether you want to make yourself my enemy.

He looks to Vail.

SERGEI (cont'd)

Take them to the brig to join the others.

VAIL

(pointing to Vikram)

What about him?

He tilts his head and looks at Vikram, who looks back at him with bloodshot eyes.

SERGEI

The flight deck.

Two of Sergei's Lammergeiers pick Vikram up by the arms and legs, and carry him away.

Sergei watches as his team carries out his commands -- taking the Old Guard out the side entrance, and carrying Vikram up to the back of the theatre.

Sergei takes a breath, reveling in his own performance.

Then, flipping his knife a couple of times, he follows behind Vikram, disappearing in the dawn light that floods through the door.