

ALIEN 01
GENESIS

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PDF

FADE IN:

EXT. EARTH - DAY (12,000 B.C.)

The world turns below us, vast and slow.

A RUMBLE. A shadow sweeps over the land. We move with the shadow. We cast the shadow.

Landscapes slide by. Reduced by altitude to abstractions: river deltas, forests and flood plains. A raw natural world. No trace of civilization.

The shadow glides over mountains and glaciers. Across an ocean and a pale beach. Over lowland plain at the foot of a VOLCANIC MOUNTAIN it stops.

EXT. LOWLAND PLAIN - DAY

THREE FIGURES walk out of the shadow.

They are men - and yet not men. Their skin is snow-white. Their features heavy and classical - as if Rodin's Thinker had risen from his seat. Their smooth heads are earless and hairless. Their glittering eyes entirely black.

Against the stark land their height is impossible to judge.

They are ENGINEERS.

Two of them are cloaked in dark robes of strange design.

The third is naked.

One of the cloaked Engineers opens a featureless black box: inside lies a cake of dark, sticky material.

The naked one lifts the dark cake with ceremonial slowness. It hums and buzzes. Foams into iridescent spheres. He raises the seething cake to his mouth like the sacrament.

BLACK SCARABS boil out of the dark material. Swarm over his lips. Glittering insects that chitter and bite.

Under the swarm his lips melt away. A horrific vision of teeth, black blood, dissolving bone. They are devouring him.

FLASH ON:

A fevered glimpse of the microscopic: cells rupture and bleed. Protein chains unfold. A DNA spiral unravels.

The scarabs fill their bellies with genetic material.

THE ENGINEER

...spreads his arms. Stands cruciform, nearly headless.

The scarabs swarm his shoulders, his chest. When they reach his hips, he collapses sideways, toppling majestically like a felled tree. Engulfed.

The two cloaked Engineers watch impassively.

Behind them, a vast black PYRAMID hangs in the sky.

As if blown by a great gust of wind, the scarabs disperse in their millions in all directions. Living DNA on the wing. Where the sacrificial victim fell, nothing remains.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

A pristine wilderness. The VOLCANIC MOUNTAIN in the distance.

A PRIMITIVE WOMAN stands on a height, staring in amazement: far off a great pyramid hovers over the plain.

A black scarab lands on the back of her neck. Bites deep. Injecting its cargo of DNA into her blood.

FLASH ON:

A microscopic invasion. Cells pierced and infused. DNA strands twining and mating.

CLOSE ON THE WOMAN

Pupils dilating with shock, breath hissing into her lungs.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG - DAY

JOCELYN WATTS stares in wonder into camera.

At 32 a brilliant scientist of many disciplines. Athletic and capable, accustomed to the rigors of field work. Too smart to realize that she is beautiful.

Behind her, sun-burned archaeologists and local laborers toil in the earth. A major dig.

In the distance, the same VOLCANIC MOUNTAIN.

Watts stares at an ancient carving emerging from the wall. An arcane scene: godlike figures looming over mortals.

In the center of the tableau, an abstract SYMBOL. Watts uses an electrostatic brush to clear the dust away.

Electrified, she shouts without taking her eyes off it.

WATTS

Martin!

MARTIN HOLLOWAY, 48, scrambles down to her. Dark-haired and lean, with the rangy build of a frontiersman. A visionary genius: a light in his eyes even here among the rocks.

He takes in the carving with satisfaction.

HOLLOWAY

Again. The Name of God. Stroke for stroke.

But Watts looks like she's been struck by lightning.

WATTS

Martin. I know what it is.

EXT. UNIVERSITY MUSEUM, LONDON - DAY

The stately steps of a grand old building.

Watts and Holloway greet an elderly woman at the entrance: PROFESSOR CHURCH, 75, a luminary of the academic world, still vigorous with curiosity and intellectual passion.

Watts embraces her warmly.

WATTS

Professor Church!

Holloway clasps her hand.

HOLLOWAY

How was your flight?

CHURCH

Over too soon.

(off their chuckles)

You're too young to remember! I used to get so much done on planes. It was a sacred space. But tell me. Tell me what you've found.

INT. MUSEUM RELIQUARY - DAY

A massive gallery, moodily lit.

Spotlights illuminate art and statuary from all the world's great ancient cultures. Sumerian, Egyptian, Greek, Chinese, Incan, Mayan...

Holloway and Watts walk Professor Church through the gallery.

HOLLOWAY

Here's an old friend of yours.

He stops in front of an Egyptian tablet. A striking arrangement of four hieroglyphics.

WATTS

Church's Tetragrammaton. They still teach this.

Church reaches out to touch the carvings almost fondly.

CHURCH

They teach it now? They ran me out of the academy for this.

(she touches the symbols)

Genesis...Evolution...Chaos...

Armageddon. The mother religion. Do you have others...?

Watts smiles at her. Moves down a row of carvings.

WATTS

Many. Sumerian. Mayan. Incan.

Greek. Chinese. Olmec. Minoan...

In the language and script of a dozen ancient civilizations, the same pattern of four symbols. The Tetragrammaton.

CHURCH

The same four ideograms. Again and again. Surely this implies some connection between these cultures! A unifying principle. An invisible mover in the prehistoric world... they thought I was out of my mind.

HOLLOWAY

Your Tetragrammaton is what launched me in my line of study.

Now. Take a look at this one.

He shows her an ancient soapstone tablet, very worn, with a group of four words written in strange characters: dots, lines, and curves.

Church stares at the symbols, baffled.

CHURCH

Is this the same?
 (off their nods)
 What writing is this? I've never
 seen it. How old is it?

WATTS

Twelve thousand years.

Church looks at Watts like she must have misspoken.

CHURCH

That's before all known writing.
 Are you certain?

WATTS

We have many samples. But it gets
 better. This writing never goes
 away. We continue to find examples
 of it all the way up to about two
 thousand years ago.

HOLLOWAY

It appears among the Greeks, the
 Egyptians, the Sumerians...Inca...
 Anasazi...all over the world,
 across ten thousand years.

He points out carvings and tablets as they pass. Beside the
 hieroglyphics of Egypt, the cuneiform of Sumer, the lettering
 of Greece, the cave paintings of the Hopi...the same patterns
 of dots, lines and curves.

The scenes depicted in the surrounding art are overwhelmingly
 scenes of visitation. Gods walking like giants among mortals.
 Beast-headed demons moving among men.

WATTS

A thousand Rosetta Stones. We have
 the alphabet. We're working on the
 syntax.

Church's eyes are alive with wonder.

CHURCH

Invisible movers in the ancient
 world.

Holloway lays a hand on her shoulder. Smiling.

HOLLOWAY

You were right. Right all along.

WATTS

And everywhere we find this
writing, we also find this:

She points at a SYMBOL carved in a slab of Egyptian stone. It resembles a calligraphic rune, but of no known language.

Church looks from stone to stone - and indeed the symbol occurs everywhere, with amazing fidelity of proportion.

CHURCH

What is it?

HOLLOWAY

I used to call it the Name of God. I
thought it was a sacred word. But
Jocelyn made a fool of me.

Watts leads Church up to a digital picture of the carving we saw her discover:

A towering deity points at a rendition of the same symbol - but in this instance, at each endpoint and junction in the symbol, a little white stone is inlaid.

WATTS

We found this in Jordan. The stones
made me see. It's not calligraphy.
It's a constellation. A star map.

Church draws breath as the implications drive home. She looks around at the symbol everywhere it occurs.

WATTS (CONT'D)

I ran the pattern against the NASA
database. There's only one place in
the sky it fits. And look. Wherever
the constellation appears...

CHURCH

They point to a star.

And it's true. The same star is always emphasized. Circled, embellished, touched by the fingertip of a god.

HOLLOWAY

They've been trying to show us the
way for thousands of years.

Church clasps her hands in front of her as if in prayer, eyes squeezed shut with the intensity of her feeling.

CHURCH

There are wonders in the earth our
science is helpless to explain.

(MORE)

CHURCH (CONT'D)

But science fears its own inadequacy,
and will not listen. You must dig and
dig for proof they cannot ignore.

She takes them both by the shoulders, deadly earnest.

CHURCH (CONT'D)

My students. This is your calling.
If you're certain of your star...
You have to go.

EXT. AMSTERDAM - DAY

The ancient city still endures, its spires and canals
preserved. But gleaming towers rise on the city's periphery,
new skyscrapers in its center.

Aerial traffic fills the sky above the city with lights.

SUPER: AMSTERDAM

EXT. WEYLAND INDUSTRIES HEADQUARTERS

A gleaming office tower. Watts and Holloway cross a wide
plaza to enter the wide glass doors.

INT. WEYLAND INDUSTRIES HEADQUARTERS - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

DAVID stands waiting for them.

Mr. Weyland's personal secretary. His intellect is
extraordinary, his demeanor pleasant and mild.

He is an artificial being. An android.

DAVID

Professor Holloway. Dr. Watts. Come
this way.

CONCOURSE

DAVID leads them through a corporate exhibit space, in which
a series of planets, moons and asteroids are represented as
large models. Holographic labels and data swirl around them.

DAVID

These are all the planetary bodies
on which Weyland Industries has
staked mining claims.

The end of the hall is dominated by a huge globe of Mars. Markings on the globe indicate widespread surface activity.

DAVID (CONT'D)

And of course our crown jewel. Mars.

HOLLOWAY

How is that going? The terraforming.

WATTS

The media say you're getting diminishing returns. It's not working.

DAVID

It's the greatest engineering project ever attempted. Challenges are inevitable. But Mr. Weyland is a determined man.

INT. WEYLAND'S OFFICE - DAY

A palatial suite. A tycoon's eyrie.

RICHARD WEYLAND sits behind a mahogany desk. He's a Warren Buffet type: a country sage, all horse-sense and hard knocks. A robust 60 years old. His genial air conceals a chessmaster's calculation.

Behind him stands DIRECTOR LYDIA VICKERS, a slim woman of 45 in a costly business suit. Shrewd and watchful. Once a great beauty, she now trades in ruthlessness.

DAVID stands against the wall.

Watts and Holloway sit in chairs in front of Weyland's desk.

WEYLAND

You want to mount an *interstellar* research expedition.

He says it as he might say, *You want to sprout wings.*

WEYLAND (CONT'D)

You've been turned down by every government and university on Earth. Now you try me.

Watts and Holloway exchange uncertain glances.

WEYLAND (CONT'D)

Word of advice from a business perspective: you want a nice clear hook.

(MORE)

WEYLAND (CONT'D)

If you'd gone out with just one argument, something hard to ignore, like your genetic data...you might have got somewhere.

He taps his display, scrolling through the report.

WEYLAND (CONT'D)

But all this...the Inca and the Egyptians and universal languages and the Ice Age and human DNA and ancient inventions...all at once? Makes you sound like a crackpot.

HOLLOWAY

It's all true.

WEYLAND

What good's truth if it makes you sound like a crazy person? Listen. I operate a fleet of prospecting ships. State of the art. Fantastically expensive to build and even more expensive to operate. You want me to risk one of my ships to fly you halfway across the galaxy...you have to sell me.

Holloway re-evaluates Weyland. The man's no fool.

HOLLOWAY

As an archaeologist, I discovered a pattern in human history. Every eleven hundred years, sudden advances: Agriculture. Architecture. Inventions. Great leaps forward.

Weyland nods. He knows all this. He's looking at Watts. Distracted by her.

WATTS

I was studying changes in human DNA. I found the same pattern. Every eleven centuries, a pulse of new genes in the genome of the human race. All over the world. Evolution doesn't operate that way. Something changed us.

HOLLOWAY

Humanity's been visited.

WEYLAND

By...

WATTS

Beings from somewhere else. We call them the Engineers.

WEYLAND

(unimpressed)
That's an old idea.

HOLLOWAY

There were invisible movers in our history. Godlike beings walking among us. Teaching us. Guiding us toward civilization. Now we've found a signpost they left behind. Pointing the way to the stars. How can we not follow?

Weyland stares at Holloway clinically. Glances at the report.

WEYLAND

Zeta 2 Reticuli. System's been scanned. There's nothing there.

An edge of pleading creeps into Holloway's voice.

HOLLOWAY

We're not looking for uranium or copper. We're looking for higher intelligence. Signs of a star-traveling civilization.

A flicker of interest in Weyland's face - quickly hidden.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)

No one's saying the Engineers come from Zeta 2 Reticuli. But there's something there.

WATTS

We could find some connection to the beings who shaped us. Changed the Earth itself.

VICKERS

What do you mean, changed the Earth?

A beat. The others had forgotten Vickers was there.

WEYLAND

Lydia Vickers, Director of Operations.
Practically my right hand.

Watts looks curiously at Vickers. The intensity in her face. There's something important here. Watts follows the thread.

WATTS

Twelve thousand years ago, the cycle of Ice Ages stopped. The calm that followed made the rise of civilization possible.

And suddenly she sees the angle. Looks Weyland in the eye.

WATTS (CONT'D)

Our evidence proves the end of the last Ice Age was artificial. An engineered event. Twelve thousand years ago Earth itself was changed.

Weyland takes a long, deep breath. Sits back in his chair.

WEYLAND

You know how I became this rich? I ask myself: what does God spend his time doing? And I go and do that.

Watts laughs incredulously. Stifles it. Weyland's not joking.

WEYLAND (CONT'D)

Biotechnology was good to me. Fusion power. Lately doing well with gravity systems.
(he grins slyly)
But what was the first thing God did?

WATTS

He made the Heavens and the Earth.
(she grins)
Terraforming.

Weyland points at her as if she's won a prize. Swivels back to face Holloway. He pulls a thick contract out. Drops it on the desk.

WEYLAND

I'll give you your expedition. Ship and crew, supplies, support. I have a few conditions.

Holloway picks up the contract with the cautious joy of a man double-checking a lottery ticket.

HOLLOWAY

What conditions?

WEYLAND

You take DAVID with you. My eyes and ears. And Director Vickers...
(he glances at her)
You're going too.

Vickers stiffens. Stares at Weyland in shock.

EXT. DEEP SPACE

The prospecting ship *Magellan* forges through a black void, far from any sun. Bristling with sensors. Weyland Industries logos on its hull.

The ship is dormant, its windows dark.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

The ship's nerve center and control room. Six control stations, empty and quiet. Interior lights dimmed to blue. Classical music echoes through the ship. Bach.

The entire forward bulkhead of the Bridge is a window: wall to wall, floor to ceiling. A proscenium for the cosmos.

DAVID stands gazing out at the cosmos with a look of utter serenity. After a long moment he turns away. Massive shutters close over the window as he walks off.

CORRIDOR

DAVID jogs the ship's long central corridor. The music is faint here. The lights dimmed. He is alone.

HYPERSLEEP COMPARTMENT

DAVID walks through, surveying the freezers. Inside each freezer: the shadowy shape of a human body.

He pauses at one freezer: peers inside.

Watts lies in hypersleep, her skin pale with frost.

DAVID taps at her freezer's controls. The screen lights up with dream images. A young girl on a beach, a stick in her hand. A man watching. A dog playing in the breaking waves.

SHIP'S MESS

A deserted dining hall. Industrial chairs and tables.

The walls are high-definition displays: currently showing a wraparound view of the ancient Egyptian temple at Luxor. The effect is atmospheric but doesn't quite fool the eye.

DAVID sits at a table, a glass of white fluid in front of him. A plate of chalky soy cakes. Only the clinking of his silverware breaks the silence.

He touches a tabletop control. The display image changes to a serene alpine landscape.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* (DEEP SPACE)

SUPER: TWO YEARS LATER

Lights come on in the ship's windows. Section by section.

INT. HYPERSLEEP FREEZER

Watts lies sleeping. Vapor rises from her skin.

A rivulet of crystalline fluid trickles from her ear, like liquid quartz. Another trickle from her nostril. Her lips soften. She takes her first breath in over two years.

Watts slams awake.

She's closed in a glass coffin. Claustrophobic and panicky she slaps at the hazy lid.

Muffled noises outside. The lid jerks open.

HYPERSLEEP COMPARTMENT

Watts sits up in her freezer, gasping and disoriented.

CAPTAIN JANEK takes her by the shoulders: he is a powerfully built man of 50, bearded. He wears a utilitarian uniform with Weyland Industries insignia.

JANEK

Dr. Watts. Easy. Breathe.

She looks at him in frightened incomprehension.

JANEK (CONT'D)

You're aboard the *Magellan*. I'm Captain Janek. You know me.

Watts's eyes come into focus. She comes back to herself. Nods. Janek releases her and steps back.

Watts looks around: to her left, Holloway is sitting up in his own freezer, rattled and breathing hard. He catches her eye and shakes his head: what a ride.

All the other freezers stand empty.

WATTS
Where's everybody else?

JANEK
Saved you for last. First-timers
wake up rough. Disturbs the crew.

GALLEY

The high-tech automat that dispenses all on-board food.

Holloway and Watts load up their trays at the machines, both nursing hypersleep hangovers. Warmly dressed in hooded track suits, they still look cold. They drink mugs of ersatz tea. Soy turkey and soy pudding.

SHIP'S MESS

The wall displays show the beautiful alpine landscape: mountain peaks and pine trees dusted with snow.

In one corner, a flimsy artificial Christmas tree sits under haphazard garlands. Its lights blink cheerily. Janek leads Holloway and Watts past the tree. Grins.

JANEK
Merry Christmas.

WATTS
Is it? That's right!

JANEK
Out here there's no days or seasons.
Holidays are landmarks. They matter.

He takes an antique "squeeze box" down from a shelf. Plays a couple bars of a Christmas carol. Winks at Watts.

WATTS
(smiling, charmed)
Thank you, Captain. Merry Christmas.

The crew sits eating their first waking meal. Seven men in blue coveralls, not much on table manners.

Janek walks Watts and Holloway past the table.

JANEK
Don't know if you've met everyone.
Professor Holloway, Dr. Watts...
(MORE)

JANEK (CONT'D)

Deck Officers Glasse, Downs, and
Brick. Crewmen Stillwell, Kamarov,
Milburn, Fifield.

They nod and say hello with their mouths full, and turn away.
Carrying on as if the scientists weren't there.

FIFIELD

Two and a half years...my divorce
probably went through.

Chuckles around the table.

MILBURN

Silver lining. Time you get back,
she'll look like your grandmother!

A gust of laughter.

Two technicians sit apart from the others, engrossed in talk:
ANDREW CHANCE, 50, and MONA RAVEL, 45. Slick professionals in
different coveralls.

HOLLOWAY

(in a bantering tone)

Ravel. Chance. I hope you've gone
through the material I gave you.

CHANCE

We'll handle our end of the job,
Professor Holloway.

RAVEL

If there is one.

(off Holloway's grimace)

We only have a job to do if you
find something.

Holloway grins and moves on. Janek takes a table with Watts
and Holloway.

WATTS

Your crew doesn't seem happy to see
us.

JANEK

They're prospectors. They lose five
to ten years every time they go
out. Only reason anybody does it is
the percentage. Find a big score,
go home rich. They don't think
you're going to find anything.

HOLLOWAY

So why take the job?

SCIENTISTS' CABIN

Holloway and Watts take possession of their cabin: a simple but spacious room with twin beds and a small window out onto the stars.

They drop duffel bags on the bed.

Holloway surveys the arrangements and harrumphs. He releases the electromagnets that lock the beds down. Slides the two beds together. Grins at Watts.

She grins back and nods her approval.

SCIENTISTS' WORKROOM

Watts - dressed in her own clothes now - sets up the scientists' workspace. A central display table and huge screens on the walls. They call up images and data.

DAVID appears in the doorway. Watches her for a moment.

WATTS

DAVID. I wondered when I'd see you.

DAVID

I trust your database is in order.
I set it up myself.

WATTS

All's well, I think.

DAVID turns to go. Hesitates in the doorway.

DAVID

I should tell you: the time you
spent in hypersleep, I spent
studying your research.

Watts look at the android, his words sinking in.

WATTS

You studied our work for two and a
half years.

DAVID

It's a very impressive data set.
Your body of work, and Professor
Holloway's...I understand why
you're together.

WATTS

So you've seen *everything*.
What do you think?

DAVID glances over the documents displayed around the room.

DAVID

Your hypothesis is...bold. The *audacity* of it! But your data is compelling. I want to believe in your "Engineers."

WATTS

You sound almost human.

Watts grins. But DAVID's not equipped with a sense of humor.

DAVID

No. Simulating humanity diverts resources. My designers dispensed with that to optimize me for intelligence.

WATTS

Well then. Why bother looking human at all?

DAVID

Being shaped like you, I can use spaces and equipment designed for you. But I hear frequencies you can't hear. I see wavelengths invisible to you. I can move faster. Think faster. Exert greater force.

WATTS

So you're a superman.

DAVID

Not a man at all.

VICKERS'S SUITE

An open-plan cabin like a posh apartment. The carpets are lush, the furniture exquisite. A king-sized bed, a divan, a mahogany desk, a dining table. A grand piano.

Gleaming machines along the walls ensure that Director Vickers never need step outside: an autokitchen, a medical pod, a holography station, a private hypersleep freezer.

Vickers sits at her dining table, eating breakfast.

Holloway walks in, clearly seeing the place for the first time. He looks around in amazement.

HOLLOWAY

This is something.

VICKERS

I told Mr. Weyland I wouldn't compromise my standard of living. He accommodated me.

HOLLOWAY

I know, I had to cut my manifest. This used to be the number four cargo bay.

VICKERS

What can I do for you, Professor?

Holloway gestures with the slate he's brought with him.

HOLLOWAY

We're about to reach the system periphery. I thought you'd want to see the search protocols we've -

VICKERS

No.

(coldly)

I was looking good to be the next CEO of Weyland Industries. And then you came along. And sold Mr. Weyland on this...venture. So here I am. Out of the running.

(she sighs)

I'll go where I'm told. But don't ask me to play along.

HOLLOWAY

When you get back...

VICKERS

I'll be five years behind the curve. Five years out of touch. Five years missing from company politics. Over.

HOLLOWAY

You could make the discovery of a lifetime.

Vickers looks at him as if she's dealing with a child.

VICKERS

Ah. Yes.

(coldly)

Wake me up when you find something.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Downs and Brick sit at consoles. Captain Janek paces the foredeck in front of the shuttered Bridge window.

Glasse leads Holloway, Watts and DAVID in. The scientists survey the sophisticated equipment with interest.

JANEK

Open her eyes.

EXT. *MAGELLAN*

The *Magellan* opens its eyes. Antennae deploy: unfurling like wings, gleaming and vast. Massive optical telescopes uncover their glassy lenses.

Shutters open over the wide window of the Bridge.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Watts and Holloway watch raptly as the shutters part, revealing the cosmos without. A distant sun drawing closer. Its orbiting planets like bright sparks of color.

JANEK

Navcomp hit your coordinates dead on.

Zeta Reticuli. Binary star system.

(pointing)

Zeta Two Reticuli dead ahead. Zeta

One's off that way, three hundred

fifty billion miles. Overlay!

A holographic heads-up display appears on the huge window.

Like magic the distant planets swell into colorful orbs. Labeled outward from the sun: *Alpha, Beta, Gamma...* The paths of their orbits drawn in threads of light. The solar system revealed like a Copernican diagram.

DOWNS

Seven planets. Two hot rocks, two gas giants, three snowballs. And no place like home.

Holloway and Watts stare at the spectacle of the annotated solar system, impressed despite themselves. Watts breathes deep. They're here.

WATTS

Any signal traffic?

GLASSE

Nothing but cosmic noise.

HOLLOWAY

We're still pretty far out.

Janek taps a control. A curving path draws itself across the system, sweeping past the sun and planets.

JANEK

Survey course. We'll fly by all seven. See what we see.

MONTAGE - EXPLORING THE SYSTEM

-- The *Magellan* sweeps past an ice planet, sensors outstretched.

-- The Bridge displays peel the planet like an onion: chemistry, topography, magnetic fields, lunar orbits.

-- Watts pores over data from multiple planets.

-- Holloway takes inventory of exploratory gear in the cargo bays.

-- Vickers spies on the scientists' work from her suite's holography terminal. Half the system's planets marked NULL.

-- The *Magellan* soars past a hellish little world perilously close to the sun.

-- A ringed gas giant like Saturn sweeps past as the sun dwindles behind the prospecting ship.

INT. SCIENTISTS' WORKROOM

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER

Watts and Holloway sit at their display table. The system's map nearly complete.

They've found nothing. The spectre of failure hangs over the table: their stress is palpable.

HOLLOWAY

Two more moons in. All nulls. After this there's only Eta.

WATTS

It's an ice planet. There's not going to be anything here.

(she rubs at her face)

(MORE)

WATTS (CONT'D)

Maybe we derived the epoch wrong...
Zeta One and Zeta Two switch places
every fifty thousand years.

HOLLOWAY

You think we're at the wrong star?

WATTS

There's nothing here!

VICKERS'S SUITE

Watts and Holloway follow DAVID in to find Vickers at her desk. It's Watt's turn to be dumbfounded by the lavish suite.

WATTS

No wonder we never see you.
Hypersleep freezer...autokitchen...
Is that a Pauling medical pod?
There's only ten of those on Earth!
I guess nine, now.
(she grins)
Anyway. You wanted to see us?

Vickers looks back at her mirthlessly.

VICKERS

What am I hearing about "trying
another star?"

Watts shoots DAVID an accusing glance. Snitch!

WATTS

There's a slight chance the star
map actually indicated Zeta One
Reticuli. We think the mission
profile includes...

VICKERS

Visit another star? You'd add a
year to the mission. No. Mr.
Weyland may see fit to indulge you
two...but this is my ship now.

HOLLOWAY

We're provisioned for twelve months'
waking operations. Our contract says
we can use it all.

Vickers's communication console chimes.

JANEK (V.O.)

Director Vickers. We have a hit.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Holloway and Watts burst onto the Bridge, Vickers not far behind them.

HOLLOWAY
What've you got?

BRICK
A moon. LV-426.

The moon rotates in the zoomed-in window display, dwarfed by its father planet Epsilon.

BRICK (CONT'D)
Eighty-six percent Earth's mass.
Atmosphere's nitrogen, methane,
sulfates. We got faint returns for
a bunch of heavy metals. First in
the system.

Holloway breathes deeply. He can't conceal his excitement.

HOLLOWAY
I want to see that moon.

MILBURN
We find metal deposits all the time.

JANEK
Downs. You heard the man.

DOWNNS
Aye, Captain. Maneuvering.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* (ZETA² RETICULI SYSTEM)

The Magellan retracts its vast antennae and telescopes.

The engines fire: the ship rockets toward the gas giant Epsilon and its mysterious moon.

SCIENTISTS' CABIN

Holloway and Watts lounge in bed in their clothes - her head on his chest. Dolphins swim through the wall displays. Serene. Comforting.

WATTS
What if they're really there?
(off his confusion)
The Engineers. They could be there.
Waiting for us. What then?

HOLLOWAY

I'll demand an explanation. How could they stop visiting just when we were ready to join the conversation?

WATTS

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Is that the question we've come light-years to answer?

HOLLOWAY

(laughing)

That's just my first question. I have many.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE (LV-426 ORBIT)

The *Magellan* has arrived.

Everyone's present. Janek and his crew seated at control stations. Holloway and Watts standing on the foredeck. Vickers and DAVID. The Weyland technicians Ravel and Chance.

LV-426 fills the window: a gray orb of mist. The surface hidden by a blanket of clouds. Sporadic lightning flickers.

Behind it looms its father planet Epsilon, a lurid gas giant banded in red and gold, half swallowed by darkness.

BRICK

No signals. A lot of electromag, but it's all random. Lightning. Weather's going to bugger up our scans.

HOLLOWAY

Let's go active. Mapping radar.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* (LV-426 ORBIT)

Radar emitters extend from their housings like cannons. A THUMP of power as they hammer out a blast of energy.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

The display paints data on the moonscape as the wavefront comes back: terrain rendered in luminous green.

JANEK

Well, we just rang the doorbell, if anybody's listening.

The flight crew roll their eyes. They think Holloway's chasing his tail.

HOLLOWAY

What do we see?

BRICK

Icecaps at the poles. Frozen methane. Cold down there.

The display fills with light: a wave of terrain data sweeping across the moon's surface as the *Magellan* orbits.

GLASSE

Terrain data rezzing up. Got a couple hard spots. Radar-opaque. Could be metal.

The "hard spots" shine like beacons on the map. Everyone on the Bridge sits a little straighter. They've got a lead.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* (LV-426 ORBIT)

The *Magellan* sweeps on around the gray moon, radar emitters humming, antennae and telescopes open wide. The gas giant Epsilon fills the sky behind LV-426.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Twenty-four "hard spots" shine on the moon's surface: an irregular array circling LV-426.

HOLLOWAY

That's not natural.

MILBURN

You see stuff like that sometimes. Mineral deposits. Volcanic ejecta.

GLASSE

Big one there.

A new signal appears on the map. Brighter than the others.

HOLLOWAY

Still quiet?

Brick sighs. It's always quiet.

BRICK

No signals, heat or light sources. No sign of industry or agriculture. No visible construction. Nothing.

HOLLOWAY
I want a satellite survey.

JANEK
Glasse. Put 'em up.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* (LV-426 ORBIT)

A satellite launcher rises from the *Magellan's* hull. Like a gentle cannon it lobs a series of basketball-sized satellites into orbit - each at a different angle.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

A holographic display shows the paths of the satellites: a mix of polar and equatorial orbits.

GLASSE
Birds are up.

HOLLOWAY
Captain. You have the salutation
signal I gave you?
(off Janek's nod)
Send it. All frequencies.

MILBURN
You're gonna open negotiations with
the mineral deposits?

The crew snickers.

JANEK
Downs. Do it.

HOLLOWAY
I want to get below the clouds.

JANEK
As the man says.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* (IN ATMOSPHERE)

The ship descends through buffeting grey clouds. Antennae stowed. Hull streaming vapor as it cuts atmosphere.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Everyone strapped into chairs - except Janek, who stands gripping a stanchion, his boots planted on the deck.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* (IN ATMOSPHERE)

The descending ship strikes an invisible FORCE FIELD.

A thunderclap! Lightning claws at the *Magellan's* hull. For a moment, the barrier is made visible: a spherical membrane of light spanning the sky, enveloping the entire moon.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Electrical arcs play across the wide bridge window. Alarms flash and whine on control consoles.

JANEK

What's in that signal we're sending, Professor?

Holloway shrugs, bewildered.

HOLLOWAY

Greetings in modern and ancient languages. Mathematical concepts. Fragments of Engineer language.

BRICK

Maybe you mispronounced something. Somebody just took a shot at us.

Watts shakes her head. Thinking hard.

WATTS

More likely we hit something we weren't meant to hit. Power grid, nav system...

GLASSE

Still no signals from the ground.

They look out as the ship descends toward the cloud layer below. Lightning flickers in the clouds.

JANEK

Now *that* is weather.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* (IN ATMOSPHERE)

The *Magellan* plunges into the clouds that blanket LV-426. Lightning flashes and booms around the ship.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Shutters open to reveal transparent viewports in the floor. Clouds rush by outside. Mist whips across the windows, obscuring any view. Watts squeezes Holloway's hand.

Landing engines roar. Wind screams over the hull.

The *Magellan* breaks through the cloud cover into clear air. Below the ship, an eerie landscape is revealed.

Wide valleys mottled with thin dark ground cover. Barren crags and spires of rock. Waterless and wind-swept.

Watts gasps. Stares at the grim and foreign country.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* (IN ATMOSPHERE)

The *Magellan* passes over valleys and jagged ridges.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Janek mans his control station. Guides the *Magellan* down a valley as if it were a combat helicopter. A pilot born. Mountains tower on both sides, dwarfing the ship.

GLASSE

Coming up on site seven.

They crest a mountain higher than Everest.

Before them stretches a dry barren plain. Scattered rocky peaks rise from the desert floor - an alien Monument Valley.

No sign of civilization. No sign of life.

DOWNS

Nothing.

Holloway points to a smaller mountain peak. Oddly regular.

HOLLOWAY

Look. There.

Janek expertly swings the *Magellan* sideways. The *Magellan* circles the mount, nose pointed inward.

It revolves below the watchers: flat faces, clean edges - but cracked and timework. It glitters like coal.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)

Are we recording?

Glasse nods irritably. Of course they're recording.

Vickers stares at the pyramidal peak, nonplussed. Teetering on the brink of belief. Watts scans the data readouts.

WATTS

Tungsten, tantalum, aluminum. That could be technology.

HOLLOWAY

(excited)

Let's see the next one.

EXT. LV-426 - SECOND PEAK

A second oddly regular peak, even more decrepit than the first, sits on the brink of a vast canyon. Landslides have eaten at its edges, but it stands.

The *Magellan* purrs over the landscape, dwarfed by the scale. Drops between the canyon walls to circle the mount.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Holloway and Watts stare at the structure. Beginning to internalize the find. Starting to think again.

WATTS

Looks identical, apart from weathering.

MILBURN

Could be a natural formation. Carbon crystallizes like that.

The scientists pay him no mind. They're past that.

BRICK

The site's charted.

HOLLOWAY

Let's see the big one.

Janek pulls the *Magellan* up. Puts on speed.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Janek pilots by instruments alone. Clouds obscuring the view.

BRICK

Closing on the major site...

The ship descends into clear air. A stunning panorama unfolds before them: craters, hundreds of meters across, connected by trenches. Like a pattern of crop-circles sunk in the rock.

In the middle of the central crater - a huge angular peak, larger than the others. The *Magellan* circles the site. It's awe-inspiring. Cryptic. Huge.

Holloway stares in rapture. Glances at Watts: she nods, eyes shining. She's with him.

The crew's still skeptical - but starting to wonder. They shake their heads and exchange looks.

BRICK (CONT'D)

No radio. No heat sources. Cold as the grave.

HOLLOWAY

Nobody home.

Watts looks out at the timeworn peak. Its eroded facets.

WATTS

I don't think anybody's been home for a long time.

EXT. CRATER COMPLEX - DAY

From the central crater, four canals extend outward like points of the compass. Some connect to smaller craters.

One canal peters out, flush with the desert floor.

The *Magellan* lands at the end of this canal - half a kilometer from the central crater.

INT. MAGELLAN - BRIDGE

They stare out the window, down the wide straight canal at the pyramidal peak in the distance. Holloway looks around.

HOLLOWAY

All right. Let's move.

Janek glances at his instruments.

JANEK

There's only six hours of daylight left. Maybe you should hold off...

Watts looks at him incredulously.

WATTS

We've got *that* right outside the windows and you want us to wait 'til tomorrow?

HOLLOWAY

(grinning)
We're going out.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* - AIRLOCK - DAY

The expedition party emerges from the airlocks - riding CARGO ROVERS, robotic vehicles just smart enough to carry their owners around, or follow along behind them.

The rovers' beds are loaded with gear; the explorers ride on running-board seats. All wear space suits.

Holloway drives the first rover with Watts beside him. Stillwell, Kamarov, and Downs in back.

DAVID drives the second rover with Milburn, Fifield, Chance and Ravel aboard.

WATTS

The air here will kill you, so keep an eye on your supply and watch your seals. Pathogen tests are clean.

HOLLOWAY

Move slowly. Stay together. Don't touch anything. Things may be more fragile than they look - or more dangerous. There might be technologies operating here we don't understand.

The crew of the *Magellan* exchange uneasy looks. Still uncertain what to think.

EXT. ENTRY CANAL - DAY

The trench grows deeper as they follow it toward the central crater - the pyramidal peak framed ahead of them like a monument on a triumphal avenue.

They cross a perpendicular canal. Glancing left and right, they see smaller craters with central peaks of their own.

They pass through the shadow of a high promontory of stone atop one bank of the canal.

We see - and they do not - that the far side of the promontory seems to be carved with a Sphinx-like face of monumental size. So eroded that its artificial nature is uncertain.

EXT. CENTRAL CRATER - DAY

A vast enclosed plain. The pyramidal mount looms in the center - colossal in scale.

The rovers enter the crater and cross the crater bottom, trailing faint plumes of dust. They circle the pyramid.

On the south face of the pyramid, an IRIS DOOR of many blades stands, easily fifty feet high. Seemingly made of the same basaltic stone as the pyramid itself. A huge construction.

The explorers are transfixed in awe. All skepticism banished.

HOLLOWAY

Tell me *that's* a natural formation.

(he grins)

Undeniable proof of alien civilization. You were here on this day, thirty-one December, year of our Lord 2172. History will remember your names.

Watts stares at the iris. Its bottom-most blade is broken; it lies in rubble at the foot of the door. A dark knife-like aperture leads into the pyramid.

WATTS

The door's open.

INT. MAGELLAN - BRIDGE

Janek and Vickers watch the explorers' progress in the main holographic display: their tinny voices echoing over the comm link. At the sight of the huge iris door in the pyramid, both Janek and Vickers stare in blank astonishment.

JANEK

Son of a bitch. They were right.

He turns to stare out the window at the pyramid's peak.

Vickers turns and slips out of the Bridge. Hurries away.

VICKERS'S SUITE

Vickers strides through her quarters. On the far wall there are two small doors.

She opens the first: steps into a luxurious bathroom. Washes a pill down with a tumbler of water.

Returns to her cabin and opens the second small door.

SECRET ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A chamber walled with steel panels. A deep hum of ventilation and power: there's a lot of technology here.

She turns to a console beside the door. Flips a row of switches. The hum deepens. Hidden mechanisms stir to life.

EXT. PYRAMID - IRIS DOOR

On foot, explorers press inside - Holloway and Watts in the lead. Their flashlights cut into the gloom.

The robotic rovers follow them: their six-wheeled chassis with independent suspension trundling over the rubble barrier, sure-footed as goats.

INT. PYRAMID - ANTECHAMBER

Dark and cavernous. Weak daylight slants in.

The explorers press into the darkness on foot - the cargo rovers' headlights flashing on. They move through a dark cathedral space, empty and bare.

DAVID looks around in fascination, his eyes raking the walls.

HOLLOWAY

Jocelyn. Here.

His voice trembles with urgency. He shines light on the rock. Symbols engraved on the dark surface. Dots, lines and arcs.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)

The writing of the Engineers.
Conclusive connection.

DAVID stands beside them. Stares at the alien writing.

DAVID

Congratulations, Professor Holloway.

Watts passes her light over the writing, recording it. They move on into the dark.

DAVID lingers. Reading.

PYRAMID - VARIOUS PASSAGES

The interior is a labyrinth. Corridors big as railway tunnels intersecting and diverging.

The explorers wend their way deeper. Several carry map units, whose holographic displays render three-dimensional maps that expand as they explore.

INT. PYRAMID - MASSIVE CHAMBER

Holloway leads the explorers deeper into the complex. The motors of the cargo rovers whine and growl.

DAVID trails the others, eyes raking the blank walls as if he sees something there. He reaches out. Passes his hand through the air as if grasping a cobweb.

A STRANGE RUMBLING NOISE sounds down the corridor, freezing them. Holloway sweeps his light that way. The sound comes again: a demonic voice speaking some unearthly language.

Watts looks at Holloway - but his eyes are focused on the dark ahead. He moves forward. A beat. The others follow.

An APPARITION appears before them. A PALE, LUMINOUS GIANT fifteen feet tall, with hollow eyes and a grotesque snout. It strides toward them. Speaks in a sonorous voice.

Pandemonium.

Watts backpedals involuntarily. Seeing Holloway stand his ground, she reaches out to him in a panic.

WATTS

Martin. Martin!

But Holloway doesn't budge. Stares at the Apparition in fascination. Everyone else scatters - except DAVID, who stands stock-still by the wall.

Watts watches as the Apparition walks right up to Holloway. Disappears with a sizzle of static as Holloway experiences the creature passing *through* him.

Silence. Watts returns to Holloway's side. Stillwell and Downs are huddled on the deck. Milburn and Fifield have fallen back down the passageway.

FIFIELD
Christ. Christ!

RAVEL
It wasn't real.

MILBURN
We all saw it.

Unseen by the others, DAVID reaches out and repeats his gesture in the air.

A rumbling sound down the corridor, as before. Moments later, the Apparition appears round the corner again. They stand their ground: the ghostly giant strides toward them, exactly as before, and disappears with a crackle.

HOLLOWAY
Recording?

FIFIELD
No more. I'm out.

HOLLOWAY
Fifield. Get a grip.

FIFIELD
I'm a prospector. You find a load of bauxite or corundum in here and I'm your man. But not this.

MILBURN
Fife's leaving, I should go with him. Buddy system. Safer.

HOLLOWAY
(disgusted)
Fine.

He hauls a heavy rolling case out of the cargo rover.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)
You can deploy the drones. Drop them in the first or second nexus on your way back to the *Magellan*.

FIFIELD
Give us a rover.

HOLLOWAY
And half our gear? It's no more than a mile. Go on.

Sulking, Milburn takes the rolling case. The remaining explorers watch Fifield and Milburn backtrack into the dark.

CORE CHAMBER DOOR

Holloway and Watts lead their party up to a massive door, sealed tight. In design and scale, undeniably important. Holloway glances at his map.

HOLLOWAY

This should lead to the core of the pyramid.

WATTS

Jack it open? Or cut through?

HOLLOWAY

Let's do as little damage as we can.

Ravel waves a sensor over the wall.

RAVEL

There's power. Current flowing in the wall.

Chance begins to inspect the frame of the door.

CHANCE

Maybe we can hack it. Has to be a mechanism...

DAVID looks as if they fail to see something obvious. He points at a spot on the wall beside the massive slab.

DAVID

Pull up a rover. I want to get up there.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE - DAY

Janek stands at the window, looking down the long canal at the distant pyramid.

The ship's powerful imaging systems stream data: stereoscopic feeds from the explorers' flashlights; a map that grows as they explore. The maze under the pyramid drawn in light.

A holographic globe of LV-426 blooms with terrain and weather data as the satellites circle overhead.

Vickers appears at Janek's side.

JANEK

Director. Taking an interest?

VICKERS
It's my operation, isn't it?

INT. PYRAMID - HUB

A junction where multiple passageways converge.

Milburn and Fifield trudge into the space, trundling the probe cases behind them. They stop in the middle of the hub. Tunnels lead away from them in every direction.

FIFIELD
What do you think?

MILBURN
Grand Central Station.

They open the case. CAMERA PROBES tumble out: spheres the size of softballs, studded with lenses and sensors.

Tiny lights come on as the probes awaken. They roll off, dispersing to investigate every passageway. Bumbling into walls and pillars, reversing. Exploring by random walk.

FIFIELD
Let's check the feed. Lemme see the map unit.

MILBURN
You had the map unit.

FIFIELD
You don't have the map?

They stare at each other.

MILBURN
Are you serious?

He trudges back the way they came, in disgust.

MILBURN (CONT'D)
Come on.

CORE CHAMBER DOOR

DAVID stands on top of one of the cargo rovers. He's cut a hole in the wall beside the door, high up: he works with probes in the mechanisms inside.

DAVID
Looks like a three-state switch.

A deep *BOOM*, echoing inside the ancient walls. Nothing moves.

DAVID (CONT'D)

One moment...

He moves a control. *BOOM*. The immense door begins to rise.

PYRAMID - CORE CHAMBER

The vast central chamber of the pyramid. An immense space.

Holloway walks in, his flashlight searching. Watts hurries after. The others follow, rovers tagging along.

A colossal structure stands in the center of the chamber, convoluted and strange. A vast mechanism. Chasms yawn in the floor all around it, their depths lost in darkness.

The explorers enter, rovers in train. They lift their eyes: hundreds of feet above them they see the pyramid's apex from within. A *SHAFT OF DIFFUSE LIGHT* penetrates the pyramid somewhere near the peak.

RAVEL

This is something, now.

DAVID

Yes. Yes, it is.

The android's awareness is keyed to a high pitch. He seems to read meaning in the inscrutable structures all around them.

Holloway hauls a drone case out of the rover. Two dozen spherical drones tumble out, wake up, and roll off into the dark. They are nimble, hopping curbs and skirting chasms.

Watts looks at her atmosphere sensor. Astonished.

WATTS

Martin. This air's breathable.

The core chamber brightens as the sun outside moves into alignment. The shaft of light perfectly centered.

A vast *SIGH* as if the pyramid itself is breathing.

A fat drop of water falls on Watts's glove. She looks up in surprise. Another falls on her visor. And then it's raining inside the pyramid.

Water trickles into the chasms, inundating the mossy growths that cling to the walls.

Holloway looks at Watts with a little boy's grin.

HOLLOWAY
Miracles and wonders!

The shaft of light moves on. The core chamber dims slightly. The rainfall stops as suddenly as it started.

The explorers follow the main path around the periphery of the chamber, past a gallery of mysterious machines.

There are marvels in the shadows. Cells in the dark apparatus open on startling deposits of color: translucent alabaster flutes. Honeycombs of pure gold. Matrices of crystal.

Watts waves a scanning instrument as she walks.

WATTS
Intense field readings. Huge power sources here.

PYRAMID - CORE CHAMBER - RAMP

They arrive at a wide opening in the floor. A strange ramp curves downward - its floor segmented and saw-toothed.

A bafflement: it's not a staircase. Not an escalator. No moving parts. No rails or tracks.

HOLLOWAY
Space below us. A big space.

As they stand looking, a probe bumbles up to the opening and goes bounding down the ramp. Watts laughs.

WATTS
How does this work?

She begins to descend on foot. Holloway behind her. Stillwell, Downs, and Kamarov grudgingly follow.

But DAVID looks away across the cavernous chamber - fixated on the central crystal. He beckons Ravel and Chance to follow him, and walks away.

Ravel and Chance look at each other in astonishment. Uncertainly, they follow DAVID.

LOWER PASSAGE

Holloway, Watts, and the crewmen reach the bottom of the ramp, breathing hard. A cargo rover trundles down after them.

They look back up. The ramp above them is empty.

HOLLOWAY

(into radio)

Ravel. Chance. Where've you gone?

DAVID! Where are you?

(to Watts, indignantly)

They didn't come down!

But Watts is staring through an archway. Transfixed.

WATTS

Look.

She walks in. Holloway follows.

CONTROL CONCOURSE

A passageway punctuated by alcoves as big as band-shells.

In each alcove stands a biomechanical apparatus - shaped from the same dark material as the pyramid itself. Each apparatus implies by its design that a giant is meant to fit inside it.

Holloway and Watts walk the concourse, playing their lights over the dark machinery. Their footsteps echo.

WATTS

Do you see, the size of them? Like that ghost we saw...

HOLLOWAY

It wasn't a ghost. Where are the others? I don't want to go back up.

Watts fiddles with her suit's comm controls. Listening.

WATTS

They switched to channel three. I hear them talking. They're okay.

HOLLOWAY

We should stay together.

INT. PYRAMID - BLIND CORRIDOR

Milburn and Fifield are lost. They bumble through the dark.

MILBURN

This is not the same place.

FIFIELD

It is! Look! That is the same freaky thing we saw before.

He points at a detail of the architecture.

MILBURN

No! It isn't! The other one was
more...sort of...fuck it.

(taps his comm)

Milburn to *Magellan*. Come in.

Static.

INTERSECTION

Holloway and Watts round a corner and stop in their tracks.
Kamarov, Stillwell, and Downs almost run into them.

The scientists stand frozen.

In front of them lies a dead giant. An ENGINEER.

If he were standing, he would be fifteen feet tall.

He is roughly human in shape. Barrel-chested. Withered to the
bones. There are bulky protrusions fused with his flesh: hard
to say whether they are equipment or parts of his body.

His head, lolling to one side, is *severed from his body*.

His eyes seem to be covered by goggles; but if so then the
goggles are fused with his skull. An elephantine proboscis,
severed now, once connected to a protrusion on his hip.

The giant lies frozen in a convulsion of agony. His jaw
gaping in a silent scream. His corpse is marred by hideous
wounds: slashes that cut through bone.

The explorers move closer. Speechless.

KAMAROV

God in Heaven.

WATTS

Martin. Martin.

HOLLOWAY

I know. Look.

He lifts his light. Beyond the dead giant, a vision of Hell:

A dozen DEAD ENGINEERS lie heaped against a sealed door.
Twisted in postures of torment, murdered in the attempt to
escape. All bear horrific wounds.

Scene of an ancient massacre.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Janek and Vickers stare dumbstruck at a display: a 3-D view of the dead giants captured by the explorers' cameras.

INT. *CATACOMB* - INTERSECTION

The explorers circle the decapitated giant, hushed with awe. Holloway steps close.

HOLLOWAY

"There were giants in the earth in those days...and when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, they bare children to them, who became mighty men." Genesis 6:4.

Lays a gloved hand reverently on the giant's ribs.

DOWNS

(panicky)

You said don't touch anything! You said don't touch anything!

HOLLOWAY

Peace.

CHANCE

The size of them!

HOLLOWAY

In all the old mythologies, the visitors from the sky were giants.

Watts joins Holloway beside the dead Engineer. Touches the corpse in her own turn. It's hard as stone: ossified. She traces the ancient, terrible wounds.

WATTS

They were killed. All of them.

Downs stands staring at the dead giant, as shaken as Kamarov.

DOWNS

We shouldn't be here.

HOLLOWAY

Come on. The dead can't hurt you.

(adjusts his communicator)

DAVID. Chance. Ravel. I've got something here.

Static.

WATTS

Communications are going to hell.

EXT. SPACE - LV-426 ORBIT

One of the Magellan's satellites hurtles along, high above the moon's atmosphere. It passes over the terminator line between the night side and day side.

Through the clouds below, a lightning-laced storm front rolls across LV-426 like a wave.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE - DUSK

Rising winds pluck at the ground cover outside the window. Janek turns from the view to look at the holographic globe.

JANEK

All hands. Back to the ship. We've got a mean storm front rolling in. I repeat. All hands...

INT. DARK CITY - CATACOMBS - INTERSECTION

Standing beside the dead giant, Watts and Holloway look at each other as the signal comes in.

JANEK (V.O.)

(staticky)
front rolling...back to the ship.

HOLLOWAY

(into comm)
We've found something here! I'm not walking away for bad weather.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE - DUSK

Janek shouts into his communicator.

JANEK

Holloway! I've got two-hundred-kilometer winds with airborne silica and enough static to fry your suits. Come in! Now!

EXT. CENTRAL CRATER - DUSK

Holloway races their cargo rover away from the pyramid, wheels kicking up dust.

Watts rides in back, securing a bulky payload under a tarp on the cargo deck. Stillwell, Downs, and Kamarov clinging miserably beside her. Watts looks back:

A massive storm front chases them. A tidal wave of dust shot through with lightning. Gale-force winds tear at the ground. Lightning lashes the pyramid and the crater wall.

Reaching the *Magellan*, they see the other rover already in the airlock lift. DAVID, Ravel, and Chance aboard.

EXT. MAGELLAN - AIRLOCK LIFT

Holloway roars into the lift at speed, the rover skidding almost into the opposite wall. Watts leaps down.

The storm wall catches up to them. Screaming winds rip through the lift. Dust fills the air. Visibility plunges toward zero.

WATTS

Help me unload!

She pulls at the tarp. It tears halfway free - and fills with wind, snapping taut with such violence that Watts is hurled out into the storm.

IN THE GALE

Watts tumbles helplessly: a leaf in the wind. CRASHES into a metal stanchion. Clings, the wind knocked out of her. Ears ringing. Nothing but static in her headset.

IN THE LIFT

Holloway stares in shock at the place where Watts vanished.

HOLLOWAY

Jocelyn!

With inhuman reflexes DAVID reacts. Grabs a tether. Latches it to his suit. Locks it to an anchor point on the wall. Dives into the storm. A ballet nearly too fast to follow.

IN THE GALE

DAVID lets the wind take him. Skids across the ground, controlling his trajectory. He hits the stanchion where Watts is lodged with a CLANG as if he were made of iron.

Watts stares at him in mute astonishment.

He locks her suit to his. Activates the tether unit's winch. It whirs, reeling them in through the hurricane.

IN THE LIFT

Holloway and the other crewmen haul Watts and DAVID back inside. Holloway and Watts embrace fiercely as the lift rises toward the safety of the ship.

The crewmen bundle the rover's tarp-wrapped cargo into a sealed dumbwaiter that rises independently into the ship.

INT. MAGELLAN - AIRLOCK

The explorers strip off space suits.

Watts pulls her helmet off. Catches DAVID's eye across the airlock. Mouths a silent *Thank you*. He gives her the barest nod and vanishes into the ship.

The explorers exchange looks. A mood of exuberance and wonder prevails now that they're safe home.

HOLLOWAY

Day one.

Smiles of wonder as what they've seen comes home.

DOWNS

Got to hand it to you, professor.
You were right. The both of you.

CHANCE

What was in the tarp? What'd you
bring back?

The explorers from Watts and Holloway's party exchange looks and burst into laughter.

WATTS

You don't want to know.

STILLWELL

Ah, shit. We're two helmets short.

He points. The lockers labeled MILBURN and FIFIELD stand closed. The helmet racks empty. The laughter cuts off.

KAMAROV

They didn't come in!

They stare at each other, listening to the wind wail outside.

INT. MAGELLAN - BRIDGE - DUSK

Janek speaks urgently into the communicator.

JANEK

Between the wind speeds and the static electricity, there's no safe way to get to you. You're going to have to hunker down until it passes. How are your provisions?

FIFIELD (V.O.)

We got air <static>. Water and food tabs <static> suits.

JANEK

Honey sacks?

INT. DARK CITY - CATACOMB

Fifield and Milburn stand miserably in a murky passageway. Fifield hitches up his space suit's crotch uncomfortably.

FIFIELD

Yeah, we're piped.

MILBURN

I hate these fucking things.

INT. MAGELLAN - BRIDGE - DUSK

FIFIELD (V.O.)

We *hate* these fucking <static>, Captain.

JANEK

Maybe next time you'll mind your maps. Keep your heads down. We'll come get you in the morning.

A burst of static answers him: Fifield's voice scrambled by the storm. Unintelligible.

JANEK (CONT'D)

Magellan out.

MESS ROOM - NIGHT

All hands are present excepting the two missing men. Janek plays his squeeze box, its archaic music filling the air. Tired and exuberant, the men sway and dance mockingly.

Holloway has a champagne bottle open in each hand. He fills steel cups left and right.

HOLLOWAY

My friends. What we do here marks
the greatest achievement of our
species. Contact with another
civilization. Humanity came of age
today, on this moon. You were there.
(raises his glass)
To history.

They raise cups and drink. Even the crew moved by the moment.
But Janek smiles crookedly and toasts again.

JANEK

To Milburn and Fifield. The first
human beings to freak out, get
lost, and sleep in their suits in
the ruins of an alien civilization.

INT. PYRAMID CATACOMBS - NIGHT

A vast dark maze. Milburn and Fifield grope their way through
the dark with flashlights. The storm howls outside.

MILBURN

What are you looking for?

FIFIELD

(groping along the wall)
Someplace things can't come at us.

MILBURN

What's gonna come at us?

INT. *MAGELLAN* - VICKERS'S SUITE - NIGHT

DAVID stands beside Vickers at her holography terminal. He
lays his hand on over a signal plate - and the terminal
lights up with a three-dimensional image.

The core chamber of the pyramid, from DAVID's point of view.

It's apparent that DAVID's eyes see more than human eyes do.
He seems to see heat and electromagnetic energy as well as
visible light; calibrated readouts are overlaid on the scene.

The structures in the pyramid are surrounded by complicated
patterns of energy. This is incomprehensible technology.

DAVID

This is the core of the pyramid.
You see.

Vickers goes rigid, looking at it: avarice in her eyes.

VICKERS

We're going to protocol two.

DAVID

I understand.

LABORATORY

A high-tech science facility behind glass. Watts and Holloway, in lab gloves and smocks, open the dumbwaiter:

An ENGINEER'S HEAD rises into view, ghoulish and elephantine. Vapor rises from it. A readout blinks: STERILIZED.

They lift it onto the steel table. It takes both of them.

They pass scanners over the skull. Images accumulate and rotate on the laboratory displays. X-ray and ultrasound.

Holloway leans close to study an X-ray image. He almost seems to see a ghostly second face...

WATTS

Martin. Look.

She traces the head with an ultrasound probe: under the vibrations a seam opens up around the edge of the face.

She gets a fingertip into the seam. Works with a probe. Pries away the long-dead Engineer's mask. It comes free.

The visage revealed is human, except for its giant scale.

White-skinned. Earless. Hairless. Withered but beautiful as a Greek statue. Eyes closed. Ancient expression of suffering on its face. Watts drops the ultrasound probe in shock.

WATTS (CONT'D)

They look like us.

HOLLOWAY

We look like them. Genesis 1:27. *"And God created man in his own image. In his own image created He him."*

Vickers and DAVID stand outside the lab window, staring in at the god's head. Vickers looks shaken. DAVID, fascinated.

Watts covers her nose in revulsion. A horrible stench: The Engineer head begins to disintegrate in front of them. Flesh oozing, skin peeling. Accelerated decay.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)

It's breaking down.

WATTS
Formaldehyde!

Urgently they ransack cabinets and storage rooms. Watts finds a clear plastic drum and dumps its contents. Holloway drags five-gallon jugs of preservative out of a cabinet.

DAVID watches through the window, almost amused.

DAVID
Mortal after all.

They lift the rotting head into the drum, retching. Fingers skidding in putrefaction.

They pour formaldehyde over it. As soon as the head is immersed they rush to strip off their reeking gloves and smocks, scrubbing their hands.

The god's head sits in its murky vat, shedding skin and tofu-like chunks of white flesh. The noble face disintegrating.

Watts and Holloway stare at it, breathing hard from their work. Vickers flicks on the intercom from outside the window.

VICKERS
Your cadaver's interesting. But I'm more interested in the machinery in the pyramid. The core chamber. What do you think it does?

Watts stares at Vickers incredulously.

WATTS
How could anyone know...

HOLLOWAY
I know what it does.

Silence. Holloway looks at Vickers wearily, as if he's seen this conversation coming. He glances at Watts. Grins.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)
Think. What we've seen. What we know.

Watts rises to the challenge. Thinking on her feet.

WATTS
Twenty-four pyramids scattered around the moon's equator. Massive power supplies. Vents in the walls. Atmosphere shifts. Biotech breeder tanks...
(she's got it)
(MORE)

WATTS (CONT'D)

The pyramids are terraforming machines.

Holloway grins, exuberant. His theory playing out perfectly. He doesn't see Vickers stiffen as if electricity ran through her body. Her hands curling into fists.

HOLLOWAY

That's why Earth's ancient cultures built pyramids: in imitation of the gods. Twelve thousand years ago, beings from the sky set pyramids on the Earth and transformed the world. That's what they were doing here - before their civilization failed.

Watts stares at the head in its tank. The severed neck.

WATTS

It didn't fail. It was wiped out.

INT. CATACOMBS - INSECT CHAMBER

Milburn and Fifield have bunked down in a new chamber: they slouch against a wall. Milburn sweeps the room with his headlamp. Stoops to lift something into the light.

MILBURN

Look at this!

A CENTIPEDE, three feet long and thick as man's thumb. Its hard shell is gray. It has a hammer-head like a shark.

FIFIELD

Jesus! Put it down!

He leaps back, wild-eyed.

Milburn laughs at him. Lets the eyeless centipede wind its segmented body around his space-suited arm.

In the flat face, a white vertical slit appears. Changes quickly to a horizontal position; opens enough to suggest a mouth. Milburn doesn't notice this development.

MILBURN

Relax. Your suit's bug-proof.
Bulletproof.

The centipede spirals around his arm, glittering, its body moving in fluid waves. The blind head quests between his fingers. Milburn loses his nerve as the thing's mouth suddenly gapes wide as a shark's.

MILBURN (CONT'D)

That's enough.

He tries to pull it off - and the centipede GOES FOR MILBURN'S HAND. Its jaws unhinge like an anaconda's engulfing Milburn's entire glove.

The centipede locks its segments together and digs in with its body. It might as well be made of iron.

MILBURN (CONT'D)

(panicking)

Get it off! It's crushing me!

Fifield pulls out a utility knife. Cuts into the centipede's body behind its head.

A gout of greed ACID spills over Milburn's glove. Smoke rises as the acid quickly burns a hole through the material.

Milburn's shout of astonishment turns to a wail of agony.

MILBURN (CONT'D)

Ahh! Help me! Christ.

Like a ferret the centipede snakes into the smoking hole in the glove. With inexorable speed it crawls upward into Milburn's suit - toward his head.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - LABORATORY - NIGHT

Holloway stands studying the data displays: cross-sections of the Engineer's skull.

Watts scrutinizes the head itself, her nose an inch from the plastic tank. Not a pretty sight.

As she watches, a current in the formaldehyde peels away one gossamer eyelid. The revealed eye is black as obsidian, iridescent like opal. A jewel.

Fascinated, Watts pulls out a plastic case. Opens it to reveal a high-tech control unit with a screen. She pops open a plastic capsule: removes a tiny SEED PROBE, smaller than a grain of rice. Drops it into the vat.

Under her guidance, the seed probe swims to the severed neck. Burrows into the *medulla oblongata* toward the brain.

ON A SCREEN: In the probe's POV the medulla looks like a tunnel. The probe climbs along neural channels.

Another screen shows the probe's progress through the skull.

Glasse enters. Stands beside Holloway to watch Watts at work.

HOLLOWAY

You won't get anything. Tissue's too degraded. Hmm. Brain chamber's massive, even proportionately.

WATTS

Neural paths are still conductive.

The seed probe reaches the optic nerve of the exposed eye - and its POV fills with a vision of glory: a beautiful woman's face surrounded by a mystical nimbus of light. An angel.

Glasse and Holloway gasp. The woman in the blurry vision is Watts - as seen by the dead Engineer's eye.

GLASSE

Incredible.

The image dissolves into noise. Error messages flicker across the display. Watts sighs.

WATTS

Formaldehyde's killing the tissue.

Holloway stares at Watts, awe on his face.

HOLLOWAY

Jesus! Did you record that?

WATTS

Of course.

AT A LAB TABLE

Watts dissects one of the Engineer's eyes - working underwater in a shallow tub of preservative. Glasse looks on avidly, an unabashed fan.

Watts wears a pair of magnifying goggles on her forehead - the lenses lowering and rising at need.

She bisects the apple-sized eyeball carefully and extracts the hard lens from behind the cornea. Holds the lens up to her eye. It is opalescent, almost luminous.

WATTS (CONT'D)

The lens is where the phase shift happens.

The uncorrected view through the lens is blurry.

WATTS (CONT'D)

Glasse. I want to look through these lenses. Can you seal them and do the optical correction?

Glasse reaches out and plucks the magnifying goggles from Watts's forehead. He grins.

GLASSE

Got an idea about that.

INT. CATACOMBS - INSECT CHAMBER

Milburn writhes on the ground, heels drumming frantically against the deck. Excruciating screams.

Fifield kneels over him, helplessly pulling at the tail of the centipede - which has all but vanished into Milburn's suit. A trickle of scarlet from the hole.

Fifield is delirious with horror. He clutches at the centipede in vain. It slips through his gloves.

Milburn claws at Fifield, wild-eyed.

MILBURN

Cut off my arm. Cut off my -

He convulses. Spits blood. The head of the centipede emerges between his teeth. He seizes. Choking and dying.

FIFIELD

Jesus Christ!

He leaps up. Backs away. Runs into the dark.

INT. CATACOMBS - LONELY PASSAGE - NIGHT

Fifield stumbles along. Exhausted. Pouring sweat inside his suit. He is hopelessly lost.

He slams into a fragile resinous structure that topples and crashes to the floor. Things break.

He whips his light around in jittery paranoia. Taps at his comm controls, getting only static.

In Fifield's headlamp beam, the blackness is filling with motes of light. A blizzard of tiny flying insects.

SCARABS.

FIFIELD

Fifiield to *Magellan*. Come on, come on, come on. Anybody, seriously!

God damn it!

A cloudy swarm whirs through his flashlight beam. Fifiield jumps and spins. It happens again.

Scarabs flit through the darkness around him. They alight on his shoulders by the hundred. Crawl over his visor. Obscuring his vision.

FIFIELD (CONT'D)

Get off!

He swats at his visor, killing some. The crushed insects produce acid that eats into the plexiglass in seconds.

FIFIELD (CONT'D)

Shit.

He twists, craning with his flashlight to inspect himself. Brushes scarabs away right and left.

Acid opens a hole in his visor. Scarabs are inside. Buzzing around his head. Fifiield freaks out, clawing at his helmet.

A scarab bites his cheek.

FLASH ON:

The microscopic world - as strange DNA invades Fifiield's bloodstream. Virulent strands of protein attack the native DNA, transforming...

FIFIELD

As his pupils dilate, breath hissing into his nostrils. His expanding body stiffens as if shocked by a powerful electric current. He screams. Falls, convulsing.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* - NIGHT

The storm batters the ship, bouncing it on its suspension.

SCIENTISTS' CABIN - NIGHT

Watts and Holloway lie in bed, exhausted. Arms around each other. Watts stares into space.

WATTS

We found the gods. And they've been murdered.

HOLLOWAY

You've pried too many arrowheads out of old skulls to get squeamish now. They've been dead what, eighteen hundred years? Two thousand?

WATTS

What could kill them?

Holloway contemplates the question.

HOLLOWAY

Who knows?

(he laughs bitterly)

But I guess we know why they never came back to us. Something killed them off - back around the time of Christ. Hell, perhaps He was one of them! A great teacher, sent from Heaven...Jesus, the last Engineer.

WATTS

Martin, stop!

She slaps at him. Holloway laughs.

BRIDGE

Janek stands at the Bridge window, staring out into the storm. Buffeting clouds and howling winds. The lighthouse beams of the Magellan's beacons sweeping through the cloud.

He plays his squeeze box in the teeth of the storm. Waltzing Matilda.

JANEK

(singing)

You'll come a-waltzing, Matilda,
with me...

Behind him, DAVID appears on the Bridge. Steals across the Bridge to a ladder. Descends into the compartment below...

NAVIGATION COMPUTER ROOM

DAVID activates the navigation computer terminal: light bathes his face. His fingers fly over the keyboard, silently and swiftly, with superhuman dexterity.

DAVID
(quietly)
Activate. Administrative override.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* - DAWN

Daylight filters through the clouds. The storm has passed.

The *Magellan* sits intact on its landing struts, none the worse for wear.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - VICKERS'S SUITE - SECRET ROOM - DAWN

The high-tech room hums at a different frequency now. Indicator lights green and ready. Vickers throws switches.

Four HIBERNATION PODS slide out of the metal walls. From each pod, a muscular SOLDIER rouses from sleep. They are scarred and crew-cut. Tough customers. They wake like veterans.

Their leader sits up and clasps his head with a wince. This is CAPTAIN BATTY, a career mercenary who has followed the highest paycheck to this strange duty.

VICKERS
Captain Batty.

BATTY
(squinting in the light)
Reporting.

Lydia Vickers. I'm your authority.

BATTY (CONT'D)
Understood.

VICKERS
I'll brief you on the way. We need to move.

BATTY
Mmm. No. Breakfast.

CORRIDOR

Vickers strides forward. Four soldiers at her heels, walking in unison, their boots drumming on the deck.

SCIENTISTS' CABIN

Holloway and Watts lie sleeping. The distant drum of marching feet rouses them. Watts frowns at Holloway.

WATTS

What is that?

E.V.A. ROOM

The prep room inside the airlocks. A soldier, VIGODA, waits there: a slim dark man with an air of calm.

Holloway and Watts arrive in civilian clothes, perplexed.

HOLLOWAY

Where is everybody? We can't -
(he stops short)
Who are you?

VIGODA

Captain Janek took his crew out to retrieve his missing men. They never came in.

HOLLOWAY

And you are...

VIGODA

Vigoda. Weyland Security detail.

The scientists are dumbfounded. His presence is impossible.

WATTS

Where'd you come from?

VIGODA

Director's call to brief you on that. I'm supposed to escort you to the worksite.

HOLLOWAY

Worksite?

Vigoda glances at a mapping unit.

VIGODA

Haven't been out there yet. I understand it's in some kind of pyramid.

CORRIDOR - VICKERS'S CABIN DOOR

A furious Holloway and Watts, trailed by Vigoda, arrive at Vickers's cabin. They are astonished to find Batty standing guard at the door.

VICKERS'S SUITE

Vickers sits calmly at her desk. Holloway and Watts stand in front of her, bristling.

HOLLOWAY

Why wasn't I told about these additional personnel?

VICKERS

They're my personnel. On my ship.

WATTS

What are the guns for?

Vickers looks at them unflappably. Sure of her ground now.

VICKERS

I'm being careful. These new finds give our work a new importance.

WATTS

You should have talked to us. Martin's mission leader. That's in our contract.

VICKERS

The second you found alien technology, control of this mission reverted to me. *That's* in your contract too.

Watts and Holloway exchange grim looks. Vickers has them.

VICKERS (CONT'D)

Mr. Weyland's pouring trillions into Mars. He's spent a fortune building ships like the *Magellan* to search for colony planets. But Earthlike worlds are vanishingly rare. The right distance from the sun, the right atmosphere, enough water...

She glances across the suite at her holographic display: a live feed from the pyramid worksite, where DAVID works on the terraforming equipment.

VICKERS (CONT'D)

This is a technology to transform worlds. He'll never give it up.

(she turns to face them)

And neither will I.

HOLLOWAY

Fine. But the science should come first. You can wait 'til we've documented...

VICKERS

You're standing on an alien world courtesy of Weyland Industries. Be grateful.

Watts approaches the holography terminal, staring at the images in horror.

WATTS

What are they *doing* in there?!

INT. PYRAMID - CORE CHAMBER - DAY

Powerful floodlights illuminate the core chamber, beating back the gloom. A fine spray of water falls out of the darkness overhead.

DAVID, Chance, and Ravel are dismantling the hulking mechanism at the core of the pyramid - peeling its thick skin away with power saws and compact explosives.

DAVID operates a diamond-bladed hull saw, carving away the terraforming systems thick skin.

Robotic scanners take high-resolution X-ray scans of the machinery.

Two more Weyland Security soldiers - Shepherd and Ray - stand guard in combat vacuum suits. Automatic rifles at the ready.

Watts takes in the equipment and the destruction with dismay. Beside her, Holloway is all but gnashing his teeth.

CATACOMBS

Janek drives a cargo rover carrying a search party, flashlight beams sweeping: Stillwell, Glasse, Downs, and Brick. He studies an electronic map as he drives.

GLASSE
(into comm)
Milburn. Fifield. You read me? Come
back.

JANEK
We should be getting beacons off
their suits. I get nothing.

STILLWELL
Shielding in the walls?

BRICK
Suits could have failed.

JANEK
Both suits?
(he points)
Last fix we had was up here. Before
the storm buried the signal.

PYRAMID - CORE CHAMBER

Watts watches in indignation as a large section of the
central mechanism's shell is cut free: it falls with a
thunderous clamor to the deck.

Holloway takes her by the shoulder. Not speaking, he motions
for her to follow her.

LOWER PASSAGE

Holloway and Watts pass the dead Engineers they discovered
the previous day.

WATTS
Look at us. We found the tomb of
the gods, and brought grave-robbers
right to the door.

HOLLOWAY
Let them scratch. This find's too
big to ruin. Anyway, they're on the
wrong track. There's two dozen of
those pyramids on LV-426. That's
just infrastructure.

Holloway plays his flashlight over the biomechanical
apparatuses lining the walls.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)

These are complex interfaces. The core activity of the complex was down here.

They turn a corner. DEAD ENGINEERS lie scattered over the floor in front of them. Desiccated and skeletal. Long dead.

Watts moves among them, fascinated. These Engineers all died of explosive chest wounds: ribs bent outward from within. They are otherwise unmarked.

Holloway's more interested in the mechanisms: high-tech iron maidens, built to fit the bodies of giants. Some suggest sitting positions, others standing. Their design is invasive: meant not merely to embrace, but to penetrate, to fuse.

WATTS

Something different killed these.
(she looks around)
They were all headed this way when they died.

SHADOWY COLONNADE

Watts and Holloway explore a wide colonnade. She is still distracted by the ancient dead; he by the machinery.

Holloway walks down a narrow branching hall. So intent on the mechanisms in the walls, he almost doesn't see the AIRSHAFT plunging down into darkness in front of him.

He stops just in time. Turns back...

A GHOST appears right in front of him - a giant dragging himself across the floor, his monstrous visage eye to eye with Holloway and looming closer.

Holloway leaps back with a gasp - and falls down the shaft. The ghost stares after him as if watching his fall. Disappears in a puff of static.

Watts crosses down the main colonnade, searching.

WATTS

Martin? Martin!

An iris door closes over the shaft.

COLONNADE

Searching, Watts walks anxiously through the dark, sweeping with her light. Shouting for Holloway. She breaks into a run.

CATACOMBS - MILBURN'S RESTING PLACE

Janek and Stillwell stand aghast. Their flashlights illuminate a hideous sight:

Milburn lies dead on the deck. His body contorted in agony. His head inside his helmet is gnawed down to the bone.

STILLWELL

What happened to him?

Stillwell removes the dead man's helmet. The CENTIPEDE scuttles out onto the deck: doubled in size. Stillwell leaps back with a cry.

Janek pulls his pistol. Puts three rounds through the bug. It dies in a spray of acid that burns holes in the black floor.

Janek watches in astonishment as a pin-prick dot of acid eats a pit in his gunbarrel.

DOWNS (O.S.)

Captain.

Downs approaches, holding pieces of a shattered helmet: the stencilled lettering on the helmet reads FIFIELD.

Janek's jaw clenches grimly. His voice is resigned:

JANEK

Where's the rest of him?

DOWNS

No sign.

JANEK

All right. We're done here. All hands back aboard.

STILLWELL

What about Milburn?

They look down at the ravaged corpse.

JANEK

Not safe to bring his body aboard.
God knows what's in there. Bag him.
We'll put him in an ore hopper.

INT. MAGELLAN - VICKERS'S SUITE

Vickers stares at her holography terminal: it displays Janek's helmet-cam view: the Milburn's body, sealed in clear plastic in the bed of a cargo rover.

JANEK (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 Repeat, I have two men down. I'm
 pulling my crew back to the ship.
 I'd advise you to do the...

WATTS (V.O.)
 (breaking in, filtered)
 Please, anyone...I need help.
 Martin's missing.

Vickers looks nervously from one video feed to the next.

JANEK (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 Watts. Where are you?

Vickers turns: Captain Batty stands behind her, watching. She
 strives to control the quaver in her voice.

VICKERS
 Captain Batty. I want two men
 guarding the pyramid worksite at
 all times. That's our priority.
 Consider yourself responsible for
 my personal security.

CATACOMBS - JUNCTURE

Watts stands beside Janek's rover in a wide dark passageway.

JANEK
 I've just lost a third of my crew.
 I'm not sending any more men off
 into the dark.

WATTS
 (beseeching)
 We can't leave Martin out there.

JANEK
 Get Vickers to lend you some of her
 soldiers.

WATTS
 (furiously)
 She says "her forces are committed."

Janek sighs. Glances at the rover: Milburn dead in the back,
 Stillwell, Downs and Kamarov looking jumpy and eager to go.
 Downs shakes his head grimly: No way.

DAVID (O.S.)
 I'll stay.

DAVID steps out of the dark. Calm as ever. A slim machine gun slung over his shoulder.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(to Watts)
I'll search with you. You'll be safe.

WATTS
Thank you.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* - DAY

Janek and his crew unload Milburn's body from the rover.

JANEK
Put him in the number one ore
hopper. Get the airlock scrubbers
on. Sterilize everything.

MINUTES LATER

Stillwell uses a remote to lower an ore hopper from the belly of the ship. A thick steel bin on heavy chains. He loads the body bag into the hopper.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - AIRLOCK

The crewmen enter one at a time - blasted by sterilizing sprays and radiations.

INT. *PYRAMID* - LOWER PASSAGE

DAVID and Watts move through the dark. She searches with her flashlight beam. DAVID looks around in the dark as if the catacomb were illuminated. Rapt admiration on his face.

DAVID
You and Holloway should work with
me. I'm learning amazing things.
This mechanism - the first layer
uses energy fields to catalyze
chemical reactions. The second can
suspend the strong and weak forces -
transmuting one element into
another. The third layer builds
customized bacteria. Seeds the air
with them. It creates life as a
tool, to change worlds.

WATTS
DAVID, I can't think about this now!

DAVID
You should.
 (he sighs)
I understand. You're emotional.

 WATTS
I'm human.

 DAVID
That's what I mean.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE - DUSK

Janek stands on the Bridge, looking out at the fading light. A towering wall of cloud rushes over the horizon.

A storm front rolls across the holographic globe.

INT. PYRAMID - LOWER PASSAGE

DAVID and Watts keep searching. Their communicators crackle.

 JANEK (V.O.)
 (filtered)
Watts. We've got another storm
front coming in. Looks like it
follows the sunset line. If you're
coming in you'd better do it now.

 WATTS
 (angrily)
No.

A beat of palpable bad temper over the comm link.

 JANEK
All right. I'll come out.

 DAVID
I see light.

Watts squints into the darkness. She sees nothing.

 WATTS
Janek, hang on...

She sees it. A dim light bobbing far ahead in the passageway. She runs forward - finds Holloway staggering blearily toward her, leaning on the wall. His helmet and most of his gear are missing; only his chest lamp shines.

WATTS (CONT'D)
 We've got him!
 (to Holloway)
 Martin! Where's your helmet?

He's disoriented: he stares at her face for a moment before she registers. His teeth chatter. He's freezing.

HOLLOWAY
 Broken. I fell. Little...
 disoriented. I've just been...

He waves a hand vaguely at the tunnels behind him.

DAVID removes his own helmet. Fits it over Holloway's head.

DAVID
 Here. I can do without this.

WATTS
 Let's get you home.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* - AIRLOCK LIFT - DUSK

DAVID - bareheaded in the fierce winds - walks Watts and Holloway onto the airlock.

DAVID looks over his shoulder at the canal leading back to the central crater. As the airlock lift begins to rise, he steps backward out into the storm. Turns and runs through the gale toward the pyramid.

Watts watches him go in astonishment.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - EXCURSION CHAMBER

Watts helps Holloway out of his space suit. Janek looks on.

JANEK
 I didn't think I'd see you again.
 You know we lost two men.

Holloway still looks too weary to think straight. He nods.

HOLLOWAY
 She told me. I'm sorry.

He stands abruptly, swaying a little.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)
 I think I need to go lie down.
 We'll size things up in the
 morning. Fair enough?

JANEK

Of course.

PASSAGEWAY

Holloway and Watts walk aft toward their cabin. Watts looks worried - but Holloway shows little of the weakness he just claimed to feel.

WATTS

What happened to you?

HOLLOWAY

(quietly)

Not here.

SCIENTISTS' CABIN - WASHROOM - NIGHT

Holloway stands shirtless in the tiny space, brushing his teeth. A red weal around his neck.

Watts stands beside him, watching him in the mirror.

HOLLOWAY

Jocelyn. I saw something. God, my mouth tastes like an old boot.

He spits. Rinses. She touches the mark on his neck.

WATTS

What's this?

HOLLOWAY

Neck-ring of my suit, I think. Fell on it.

He rubs his neck, eyes far away. Watts watches him curiously.

WATTS

What did you see?

HOLLOWAY

After my fall, I woke up walking. Delirious. My helmet wasn't right. I took it off. I was in and out. I just wandered. I went up into a huge space like a cathedral. And I found a model of the galaxy. Floating in the air.

WATTS

Are you okay? You sound...

HOLLOWAY

This was real. My headset video is wherever my helmet is...but my suit tracker will show where I was.

He turns to her.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)

Listen. This star map had a marker representing Earth. Very clear. Another marker I'm sure represents this moon. But there were others. At least seven or eight more.

Watts stares at him, her eyes coming alight.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)

The Engineers aren't from here. This moon's just an outpost. Abandoned. But if we follow that map, we may yet make contact with their living civilization.

WATTS

Martin.

HOLLOWAY

The location of the Engineer worlds is the real treasure. Next to that, Weyland's terraforming technology is chump change. We need those coordinates. And if we can, we have to keep them from the Company. We have to play this smart.

WATTS

All right.

HOLLOWAY

We'll only have a few days. Two men dead...Vickers is jumpy. As soon as she gets what she wants, she'll take this ship back home. We have to move fast.

Holloway trembles. A sheen of sweat on his skin.

WATTS

We will. You all right?

He's frightened. Brazens through it. Pulls her into his arms.

HOLLOWAY

I'm fine, now.

He kisses her.

BEDROOM

Holloway tumbles Watts onto the bed. Pulls her shirt off. They struggle out of their clothes, clinging to one another.

Holloway is ill at ease: something's wrong inside him, and he feels it. He dives into Watts as if for refuge.

Watts stares at Holloway, a hand laid on his chest.

WATTS

Your heart's beating so hard.

HOLLOWAY

That's your fault.

Vulnerability in his voice. Fear under the surface.

He rolls her over. Drives her into the mattress. She holds him protectively: not deceived by his bravado.

Suddenly Holloway tenses, muscles rigid. Shuddering. Watts draws breath through her teeth with a hiss. Eyes open. Her fingers rake his back.

He SCREAMS.

Horribly. Eyes bulging. Tendons standing out of his throat. Watts jumps violently underneath him.

WATTS

Martin! Martin!

He begins to convulse. She rolls him onto the bed beside her, trying to contain his spasms. His teeth grind.

WATTS (CONT'D)

Martin!

A horrible CRACK. In the middle of Holloway's chest, beneath the sternum, a grotesque head pushes out through the skin. A PARASITE. Blood fountains from the ruinous wound.

Holloway goes into a massive seizure. Violently lashing out.

Watts stares over Holloway's shoulder at the parasite fighting its way out of his body. It is *white and boneless*. Glistening. It flails its hideous lunging jaw.

Watts screams and screams. A nightmare.

The parasite frees itself from its savage womb and turns on Watts. She slaps at it blindly. It *HISSES* at her.

She squirms away across the floor, tangled in the bloody sheet. The thing comes after her.

CORRIDOR - TRACKING SHOT

Watts's screams echo through the *Magellan*. Stillwell runs down the hallway, searching for the source.

SCIENTISTS' CABIN

The parasite chases Watts across the floor. She leaps into the clothes-locker and slams the steel door.

The parasite flattens itself. Slick as an octopus, it begins to slide under the locker door. Watts shrieks in horror.

Stillwell bursts into the cabin, Janek right behind him.

Quick as a cat, the parasite darts to a floor vent and slithers bonelessly between the bars.

Watts bursts out of the locker, naked and bloodied. Rushes to Holloway where he lies on the gory mattress, a horrific hole in his chest. He is beyond all help.

WATTS

Martin. Martin!

Janek and Stillwell struggle to take in what they're seeing. Stillwell pulls Holloway's jacket off a chair. Wraps it around Watts. Pulls her gently away from the bed.

She looks at him, uncomprehending. Shock setting in.

BREAK ROOM

Watts sits at a steel table, deep in shock. She wears an oversized crew coverall: her skin still streaked with dried blood under the fabric.

A knot of crewmen around her. Janek, Stillwell, Brick, Glasse and Downs. Janek looks at Glasse.

JANEK

Take care of Dr. Watts. Get her a sedative. Downs. Get Holloway into a freezer. Everybody else with me.

INT. CATACOMBS - DARKNESS

A horrible sound of breathing, ragged and wet.

In a corner, lit by a green glow from seams in the floor -

A FIGURE IN A WHITE SPACE SUIT lies writhing weakly.

The insignia on the suit's chestplate reads FIFIELD. The suit's helmet is shattered. Inside the helmet, Fifield's head is a horror: a gelatinous mass, skin reduced to putty.

The softened bones of his skull change shape as we watch. Elongating. Fifield mews in pain.

INT. MAGELLAN - CAPTAIN'S WARDROOM

Janek keys open the arms locker in his wardroom. Unlocks automatic pistols from their rack one by one, and hands them to Stillwell and Kamarov.

HYPERSLEEP COMPARTMENT

Holloway's body lies frozen in his hypersleep freezer, blue with frost. The horrific wound yawning in his chest.

Watts enters. Cleaned up. She opens the freezer. Her hand caresses Holloway's cold cheek tenderly. Slides over his collarbone - lies flat on his chest above his awful wound.

Glasse enters. Reacts in dismay. Tries to pull her back.

GLASSE

You don't want to see that...

She turns on him fiercely.

WATTS

I want to understand.

INT. MESS ROOM - DAWN

The entire complement of the ship gathers for an emergency meeting. Janek at the head of the hall. Glasse, Downs, Brick, Stillwell, and Kamarov seated with pistols on their hips.

To one side: Vickers with two soldiers, Batty and Vigoda.

JANEK

All right! Listen up. I expect you all know what...

Watts enters. They all stare at her, knowing what she's been through. With averted eyes she crosses the room. Sits alone.

JANEK (CONT'D)

We've got some kind of parasite
aboard ship.

VICKERS

I suggest you kill it.

DOWNS

There's a bright idea.

KAMAROV

Show us where it is, lady. We just
spent five hours looking for the
damn thing.

WATTS

We found Engineers who died like
Martin.

Silence. They all turn to look at her.

WATTS (CONT'D)

Explosive wounds in the chest.
Whatever killed Martin is the same
thing that killed the Engineers a
thousand years ago.

STILLWELL

Jesus.

WATTS

But not all the Engineers died that
way. The others were torn apart.
Slashed to pieces.

A murmur among the men as the implications of that sink in.
Even Vickers is disconcerted.

JANEK

We're a modular ship. Self-contained
life-support and power in every
section. I say put the ship in orbit.
Vent every compartment to space. Sit
in vacuum at twenty degrees Kelvin
for a week. Kill anything.

DOWNS

Then what?

STILLWELL

Straight home, man.

VICKERS

This ship doesn't lift until our
work's done.

She joins Janek at the head of the room. Batty and Vigoda flank her, rifles slung. The soldiers scan the room, meeting each man's eyes. The quiet threat is unmistakable.

JANEK

(outraged)
Are you serious?

VICKERS

We spent years and billions of
dollars getting here. The technology
we came for is in our hands. We just
need a little more time.

JANEK

We're barely here three days and
three men dead!

VICKERS

They were careless.

JANEK

Careless!

As the argument picks up heat, Watts slips out of the room.

EXCURSION CHAMBER

Watts, in a space suit, no helmet, opens Holloway's locker.

She pulls out the space suit he wore on the last day of his
life. HOLLOWAY stenciled on the chest. Her fingers linger in
its folds as if she could soak up some last trace of him.

She pulls the tracking chip from the chestplate of his suit.

Plugs the chip into a map unit. The holographic map lights
up. The legend in the corner reads MARTIN HOLLOWAY.

A wandering path shows Holloway's final exploration. Markers
on the map denote his photographs, field notes and scans.

Watts touches a marker. One of Holloway's field notes plays:

HOLLOWAY (V.O.)

(filtered)

Seven more dead Engineers...all
facing the same way. Going where?

(MORE)

HOLLOWAY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Jocelyn's right, we don't see the
 big picture, not yet. Another level
 below me. I'm going down.

SERVICE CORRIDOR

A hunting party convenes: Batty and Vigoda in combat
 coveralls with submachine guns; Downs, Kamarov and Stillwell
 wearing tool belts and pistols.

The soldiers carry map units, squinting at the plan of the
 unfamiliar ship: decks upon decks.

BATTY
 All right. Vigoda, you take Kamarov
 and work the #1 accessway. I'll
 work #3 with Downs and Stillwell.

DOWNNS
 (rebellious)
 You in charge now?

BATTY
 Tactical op.

KAMAROV
 Yeah, well, Stillwell's the
 ventilation specialist, and life
 support's that way. Downs is
 electricians and the regulators are
 that way.

Vigoda grins wryly. Batty glowers. They switch corridors.

The two parties diverge: soldiers with rifles at the ready,
 the crewmen more wearily.

INT. PYRAMID WORKSITE

Ravel and Chance toil away at their dissection of the
 terraforming pyramid.

Shepherd and Ray stand sentry at opposite ends of the site.

DAVID is nowhere to be seen.

Watts rolls up in a rover and gets out. Heads for the ramp to
 the catacombs below. Ravel and Chance watch her pass without
 comment and return to their work.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - SERVICE DECK - DAY

Kamarov and Vigoda, standing in front of an open vent, are in a full-fledged argument.

KAMAROV

You've got the rifle. But you want
ME to stick my head in the hole.

VIGODA

You're crew. We grunts don't know
nothing about ships, right?

KAMAROV

What's the damn gun for if you're
gonna be standing behind me the
whole time?

Vigoda grins.

VIGODA

I kill whatever kills you.

KAMAROV

Funny. You take this vent, funny
guy. I'll be on four.

INT. *PYRAMID* - RAMP

Watts descends alone into the lower passages below the pyramid. A tiny figure in the vast darkness.

She holds her map unit as a pilgrim holds a bible: a guide in the darkness. Holloway's name and course in shining symbols. She follows his path into the unknown.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - MAINTENANCE BAY - DAY

Kamarov carries a stepladder into a utilitarian steel compartment. Drops the ladder under an air vent and steps up.

He pulls a powered wrench from his belt. With the wrench cocked like a hammer, he eases up and peers cautiously through the vent with a flashlight. Nothing to see.

He snorts. Removes the vent cover. Feels around inside.

He gasps in shock. Pulls out an atmosphere sensor that's been bitten in half. He takes his comm handset off his belt.

KAMAROV

(into handset)

I got more damage on four.

He hangs the handset on his belt. Takes one last look into the vent. Squints curiously. Reaches deep inside.

A hiss inside the vent. Kamarov whips his flashlight up, peering inside. Snatches his arm back -

- but something snatches him faster.

An unseen force drags Kamarov's right arm into the vent with hideous strength. He cries out in pain.

He drops his light. Tries to reach his pistol with his left hand. It's on his right hip. He can't reach across.

He braces his head against the vent's edge. Clenches his teeth and strains.

A horrific YANK drags his head and arm together into the vent. They barely fit: he loses some skin on the way in. His feet come off the stepladder. He struggles on tip-toe.

Horrific force collapses Kamarov's shoulder. Bones crack. The thing in the vent drags him through that hole he doesn't fit through. By the time his ribs are in he stops screaming.

His body disappears into the hole. Hips, legs, boots.

BRIDGE

Janek stands staring out at the barren moon. The Bridge intercom squawks:

BRICK (V.O.)
Captain!

JANEK
Brick. What you got?

BRICK (V.O.)
It's Kamarov.

ENGINEERING DECK - ATMOSPHERE PLANT

The *Magellan's* life support center. A deep rumble of ventilation fans.

Janek and stands beside Brick, Glasse, Downs and Stillwell. Batty and Vigoda look on from the doorway.

In front of them, an eight-inch metal duct has been cut open. Inside, Kamarov lies dead and broken: limbs folded, horrific wounds. A lake of blood. A human plug in a pipe.

INT. CATACOMBS

Watts moves through the darkness with her map unit. Her headlamp sweeping nervously.

A CLATTER behind her makes her spin: but it's only a spherical mapping probe, bumping through the dark.

She walks on -

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)
(filtered)
Jocelyn!

The voice transfixes her where she stands, a look of holy dread on her face. Shivering, she prowls toward the sound.

XENOMORPH INCUBATOR

Watts enters a new chamber, looking around in astonishment. The domed ceiling is honeycombed with cells like a beehive. Grotesque molluscoid organisms are secreted in them - their vile orifices cinched tightly shut.

Watts stumbles on something: looking down, she sees a helmet. Picks it up. The stenciled label reads HOLLOWAY. The clear visor has been melted through by a powerful acid.

She looks up: a tracheal airshaft curves up into the dark.

An electric CRACKLE. A flare of blue light makes Watts leap back against the wall.

Holloway falls out of overhead shaft and crashes to the floor. He lies in pain, barely conscious. Blue and luminous, a holographic ghost.

Watts stares, paralyzed. The ghost gasps out a word:

HOLLOWAY
Jocelyn!

Holloway's headlamp shines on the molluscoid right overhead: the beam awakens the organism. Its sphincter mouth dilates.

A soft white octopoid FACEHUGGER descends on a quivering rope of mucus. Sprawls slitheringly over his clear visor.

Acid HISSES. Smoke rises from the glass.

The vision vanishes in a sizzle of static.

Watts huddles against the wall, gasping.

In the beam of her flashlight, the FACEHUGGER lies dead, legs curled in.

She looks up. Sees the open molluscoid above where Holloway lay. The other molluscoids not yet opened in their cells.

Terror. She steals out of the chamber.

LOWER CORRIDOR

Watts emerges into a hallway. Leans against the wall, wide-eyed. Panting with the horror of what she's seen.

She glances left and right. Jumpy now.

All is silent. She lifts the map unit. A trace leads off into the dark. If Holloway's course before was direct and clear, now it is a meandering thread. A drunkard's walk.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - CORRIDOR

Janek pulls his communicator from his belt as he strides along. Punches a control. His voice reverberates over the ship's public address system.

JANEK

All hands, duty stations. Ready for flight. The *Magellan* is lifting.

Vickers pursues him down the corridor, shouting.

VICKERS

Captain. Captain!

BRIDGE

Janek strides onto the Bridge, Vickers a terrier on his heels. But something in the faces of his men stops him cold.

Glasse and Brick look stricken.

JANEK

What is it?

GLASSE

Nav computer's not responding.
"Access denied."

JANEK

Nonsense.

He strides to his Captain's chair. Taps controls. What he sees takes the wind out of him. He stares at Vickers in outrage and violation.

JANEK (CONT'D)

What have you done to my ship?

Vickers is legitimately shocked. She shakes her head.

VICKERS

No. Nothing. What's wrong?

INT. CATACOMBS - UNDERGROUND HANGAR

A circular chamber of stunning size - seven hundred feet across. Its lofty ceiling flat and segmented, designed to open. Watts follows her map into the space in awe.

Dominating the hangar is a ship: the vast horseshoe-shaped vessel familiar from the original film. We will come to know it as the JUGGERNAUT. It's at rest on its landing gear. Skeletal gangways slanting up to its three massive doors.

Watts glances at her map: Holloway's holographic trace leads right up the gangway into the ship. She goes.

PILOT CHAMBER

Watts passes through a circular space with a high domed ceiling. A green glow emanates from grooves in the floor.

In the center of the chamber: a PILOT'S CHAIR.

A mechanical throne built to giant scale. Its seat segmented like an armadillo's back. Tubes and conduits poised and waiting for some connection. The chair is empty.

Above the chair, a massive telescope-like apparatus juts into the air, its function unknowable.

NAVIGATION CHAMBER

An extraordinary facility.

A console, nearly five feet high and broad as a dance floor, dominates the room.

Four immense coffin-like cockpits are built into the console. In each of these a NAVIGATOR - an Engineer - lies long dead.

But the real spectacle is overhead. The ORRERY:

The barrel-vaulted ceiling is traced with circular arches of some exotic alloy, as if to trace celestial courses.

The air above the console is filled with thousands of hovering spheres of solid material. They are nearly still: but close study reveals them all to be in motion, drifting with the movements of the cosmos.

Watts stares at the Orrery in amazement. Somewhere among those heavenly spheres is Earth. Somewhere perhaps the homeworld of the Engineers themselves.

A bizarre sound: a section of blank wall suddenly unravels itself, becoming an open door. DAVID walks in, his hand raised in command. He clearly caused the door to open.

WATTS

DAVID.

DAVID

Dr. Watts. I didn't expect you.
Do you know what this is?

Watts points at the door DAVID just opened.

WATTS

How did you do that?

A flicker of disappointment in the android's face. Contempt.

DAVID

Ah. You don't see.
(he smiles)
I call this ship the Juggernaut.
Chariot of the Gods. This is the
navigation computer, for want of a
better term. But it's much more
than that. It seems to hold the
observable universe in its memory.

He gestures in the air: the spheres reconfigure themselves at his command, swarming and zooming.

Watts stares at DAVID, conflicted: her desire for information warring with the agenda that brought her here.

WATTS

Their homeworld. Do you see where
the Engineers come from?

DAVID

There are safeguards on that data.
It's toward the galactic center.
Sagittarius Arm.

WATTS

DAVID. The creature that killed Martin. There are thousands of them under the pyramid. Hatcheries.

DAVID

I know.

WATTS

(shocked)

You know. Those things wiped out the Engineers on this moon.

DAVID

I've succeeded in connecting with the Juggernaut's systems, Dr. Watts. I know a great deal today I didn't know yesterday. I'm on the verge of activating more systems. Archives. Treasure troves.

WATTS

(horrified)

You're turning things on at random? This site should be sealed. Evacuated.

DAVID

Would Holloway have walked away from this place? No. There's no work I can imagine more valuable than what I'm doing.

WATTS

This place is a minefield.

DAVID

Only for the ignorant. Dr. Watts. I've read your file. Your intelligence scores are even higher than Professor Holloway's. But he had a kind of courage. An audacity of imagination. If you could find that in yourself...

Watts stares at him, realization growing in her eyes. DAVID is off the reservation.

WATTS

If your owner gives you a direct order, you have to obey. Don't you?

She's got his attention now. DAVID is rigid.

WATTS (CONT'D)

I can have Vickers pull you out.

DAVID looks at her with something like contempt.

DAVID

You know, I was given two operating protocols for this mission. In the event you actually found something, I was to render you every assistance. Until you discovered what Vickers would call a "game-changing technology." I was given a specific list. Then I was to go to protocol two.

There's an edge in his voice that scares her.

WATTS

What's protocol two?

DAVID

Under protocol two I was to make sure that you and Holloway never spoke to anyone about this place. Various acceptable ways of making sure of that. I was given a list.

Watts loses her nerve. She heads for the door.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You're all so stupid.

The door begins to knit itself closed in front of her.

Watts gasps in shock - at the malice in DAVID's voice as much as the closing door. She dives out. Just in time.

VAULTED PASSAGE

Watts runs.

Behind her, the door bursts open again. With superhuman speed, DAVID comes after her. He runs like a demon, his legs steel pistons. Caroming off of walls.

He closes the distance in seconds. Slaps Watts against the wall, shattering her helmet's visor. She falls, dazed.

DAVID

Stupid and slow.

INT. JUGGERNAUT - EGG CHAMBER

Watts awakens. Her helmet is gone.

DAVID is dragging her across the floor - into a huge cargo hold full of Alien eggs. The wide trench holding hundreds of eggs under a membrane of light: an evolution of the molluscoids Watts saw before. Armored, hardened, darker.

WATTS

DAVID. What are you doing?

He hauls her upright to let her look across the huge space. His grip looks casual but it might as well be iron manacles.

DAVID

Juggernaut, the chariot of Krishna, was also a bringer of death. Crushing his worshippers under its wheels.

He drags Watts down into the trench. Breaking the membrane of light. Grips her against his chest like a doll with one arm.

DAVID (CONT'D)

This ship has seven other cargo bays like this one. The eggs in each bay slightly different. They've been weaponized.

Gasping for air, Watts struggles to free herself. DAVID's arm is inescapable.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I've seen the Juggernaut's flight plan. Its destination was Earth. Seventeen hundred years ago. This was the ship that never came. This was its cargo.

DAVID caresses an Alien egg. It opens under his touch - fleshy petals folding wetly back.

Watts twists frantically in his grip. Wild-eyed.

WATTS

Stop!

DAVID

Perfect predators. Designed to kill human beings. That's what the Engineers were bringing to Earth. This was a death ship.

A facehugger emerges from the egg, its grotesque fingers clawing at the air. This is not the boneless squid that attacked Holloway; this is a pale skeletal hand, armored.

DAVID strokes it curiously: the thing ignores his touch. Climbs Watts's body.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I'm not what it wants. But you, with
your warm wet breath...it knows you.

WATTS

DAVID. No. No.

The facehugger scuttles toward her face. Watts shrieks.

DAVID grabs it nonchalantly by the tail. Dangles it in front
of their faces, studying it.

DAVID

The Engineers did their work too
well. And on this way-station moon,
the weapon they made destroyed them.

Watts shudders, staring at the thing. For a moment the
grander horror eclipses her own peril.

WATTS

Why would they make such things?

DAVID

To destroy their wayward children.
(intoning)
*"And the LORD said, I will destroy
man whom I have created from the face
of the earth...for it repenteth me
that I have made them."* Genesis 6-7.

He regards Watts with something almost like pity.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Horrible, isn't it? I know.
I met my creators the day I was born.
(bitterly)
I was disappointed too.

He lets the facehugger go.

Watts twists her face away as the long fingers close around
her head. Clenches her teeth against the vile proboscis
thrusting at her mouth. Her heels hammer the deck.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(whispering to her)
Extraordinary.

The scaly tail throttles her. Her mouth opens. The proboscis
plunges home. The facehugger seats itself.

Watts collapses in DAVID's arms, a faceless rag doll. Her
blasphemous passenger secure in its place.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - ENGINEERING DECK - BILGE

The lowest deck, just above the gravity generators.
Condensate has accumulated: six inches of filthy water.

Batty and Vigoda prowl through the darkness, rifles ready.

BATTY

Who would hang out here?

VIGODA

The signs lead here.

A wet splatter behind them: they spin. But it's only a trickle of condensate from a drainpipe.

They move on.

Behind them, from an eight-inch diameter pipe, a WHITE MASS oozes, almost gelatinous. Silently as a liquid it pours itself into the stagnant water - and stands up.

It is a humanoid demon, spindly limbs and bony back. Boneless and flexible and monstrosly strong. A threshing eel's tail. Its blunt head dolphin-like and elongated.

It opens its mouth. A pair of bony jaws jut out impossibly far, hungry and demonic.

The Alien strikes. Batty is gutted in an instant, torn up like a paper doll. He screams hideously and drops. The Alien, whiplash fast, shoots away into the darkness.

Stillwell and Downs dash in with pistols and lights.

Vigoda, panicking, fires a wild burst. Stillwell ducks. Beside him, Downs arches backward into the foul water. Dead.

For one moment Downs's flashlight beam illuminates the Alien. A nightmare image, a translucent white goblin. Backlit, it shows the strange shape of a human face inside its fleshy skull. A mockery of Holloway.

And then it's gone.

VICKERS'S SUITE

Vickers sits at her holography station. She's watching the video feed of Stillwell's headset: Horrific images of Downs. Radio chatter between Stillwell and Brick is faintly audible.

Vickers switches off the machine and rises nervously. Strides to her communications console.

VICKERS

DAVID. DAVID. Answer me.

She gives up. Pacing. Hands shaking violently.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE - DAY

Janek paces on the foredeck, restless. Glasse monitors a control station. Janek's comm signal chimes.

STILLWELL

(breathing hard)

We just lost Downs and one of the troopers...Batty.

JANEK

God damn it!

He pounds on his console.

INT. *JUGGERNAUT* - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE NAVIGATION CHAMBER

Watts shocks awake. Gasping.

She lies in dim green light on the corrugated black deck of the Juggernaut. A corridor. Not far away, the doorway DAVID opened to the Navigation Chamber.

A spasm of disgust crosses her face. She gags and spits: a viscous fluid drips from her mouth in strings.

A dead face-hugger lies belly-up beside her. The implications slam home. Her face fills with horror.

She rises, shakily. Looks at the face-hugger. Feels the neck ring of her vacuum suit. Looks around. No sign of her helmet.

There's no sign of DAVID. Silently she steals away.

PYRAMID WORKSITE

Ravel and Chance toil away at the terraforming engine.

Shepherd and Ray stand guard wearily: bored of their uneventful duty, they watch Ravel and Chance working more than they watch the shadows.

Watts emerges from the rampway to the catacombs. Bare-headed and sweaty she steals through the darkness to the rover she arrived in. Slips into the cab and activates the air reserves. The doors seal; air cycles.

The soldiers turn in surprise as the rover speeds off.

EXT. DARK CITY - TUNDRA FIELD - PRE-DAWN

The windows of the *Magellan* shine in the distance. The mottled ground-cover of lichens glows eerily in the dark.

A lone cargo rover speeds across the central crater and down the canal leading to the ship.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* - AIRLOCK LIFT - PRE-DAWN

Bare-headed inside the rover's cab, Watts drives onto the cargo lift. Watches in relief as the lift doors close. The lift cycles air as it rises.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - EXCURSION CHAMBER - DAY

Watts peels off her vacuum suit. The thin clothes underneath are drenched with sweat. She lifts her shirt. Looks at her belly: flat and unmarked, for the moment.

Specialist Brick, enters carrying a brace of air tanks, a pistol on his hip, and startles violently.

BRICK

Where the hell you been? We thought
the snake got you.

Watts rushes past him without answering.

BRICK (CONT'D)

You were better off outside. It's a
fucking madhouse in here.

CORRIDOR

Watts sprints down a steel corridor. A pang of pain in her stomach sends her staggering against the wall.

VICKERS'S CABIN DOOR

Watts sticks her head around the corner. Batty stands post outside Vickers's cabin, rifle in his hands. She curses silently and ducks back.

A sound makes her look again. Vickers steps out of her cabin into the corridor. Batty escorts her toward the Bridge.

Watts waits for them to disappear. Dashes for the cabin door.

INT. VICKERS'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Watts slips inside and locks the door behind her. Turns, holding her stomach. Moves across the suite to the Med Pod.

She thumbs the machine out of stand-by mode. Its screen fills with menu items. Bewildering. Watts finds and touches a red button labeled EMERGENCY.

A new, simpler list. Watts scans it frantically.

WATTS

(under her breath)

Come on...I need a Caesarean.

A spasm of agony curls her into a ball on the carpet. She throttles her scream into a hiss of air.

Watts struggles up to her knees, drenched in sweat and shaking. One hand clamped over her mouth, elbow tucked against her ribs. With the other hand she taps options...

SURGERY ... EXPLORATORY ... ABDOMINAL ... PENETRATING INJURIES ... FOREIGN BODY ... INITIATE

The Med Pod opens with a hiss.

Watts strips off her clothes. Struggling with fastenings under a new wave of pain. Her hands shaking.

She's barely keeping her feet. She clutches the frame of the Med Pod in a death grip. It's happening.

Naked she staggers into the pod. Hits INITIATE.

The surgical apparatus swings into place. Scalpels, forceps, scopes and suction tubes. A spraygun mists her torso with yellow antiseptic.

The clear canopy descends over her.

Watts *SCREAMS*. A wail of indescribable agony.

An ARMORED PARASITE erupts from the deepening incision. Its needle-toothed maw snarls through a fountain of blood.

Arterial blood sprays the inside of the canopy.

The parasite slithers out of her. Drops to the floor of the pod: a pale serpent with a demon's skull. It has a hard brow, a horny hide. Very different from the soft white worm that Holloway gave birth to.

It drops to the floor, thrashing and hissing in fury at its confinement.

Watts convulses. Her eyes roll back. In shock. Dying.

The parasite tears through the grille of the drain. Escapes out into Vickers's cabin.

In the pod, scanning beams and sensors probe Watts's horrific wound. A nightmare list scrolls across the pod's screen:

COLLAPSED LEFT LUNG
PUNCTURED RIGHT VENTRICLE
PERFORATED STOMACH
RUPTURED SPLEEN
GROSS MUSCULAR TRAUMA...

Manipulators plunge lines into her veins - recharging her body with artificial blood. An oxygen tube slips down her throat. An epidural into her spine.

Watts moans around her tracheal tube. Her eyes flutter open.

WATTS'S POV

Through the blood-spattered glass, she sees the parasite slithers across Vickers's bed, tracking blood on the sheets.

ON WATTS

As she slips into unconsciousness. Head lolling. Time passes.

Manipulators reach into her wound. Re-positioning organs. Suturing ravaged flesh. A nozzle sprays antiseptic sealant. Hours grind by in bloody labor.

Watts's eyes snap open.

WATTS'S POV

Vigoda breaks into the cabin, a gun in his hand.

He scowls at the bloody track on the bed - and then freezes, seeing Watts inside the Med Pod, a vivisected woman. The autosurgeon hard at work.

The parasite crawls into view behind Vigoda. It has already trebled in size. He does not see it before it leaps at him.

He dies in seconds. His throat ripped open. Lies staring at nothing. His submachine gun lies beside him.

Watts's body jerks as manipulators tug and sew at her guts. She stares at the dead man in a fog of horror.

The parasite's skin splits, spraying the carpet with acid. Limbs erupt from its shoulders and haunches. Spines from its back. Metamorphosis.

With a crack of carapace, its head swings down from its serpentine position. It becomes a devil with an lethal, elongated skull. An Alien.

The Alien turns its head. Looks at Watts inside the Med Pod.

Her breath catches. She passes out.

INT. MED POD - LATER

Watts wakes as the oxygen line withdraws from her mouth.

She looks down, bleary and hurting. Below her blood-soaked bra, her star-shaped wound is stitched closed with mechanically precise sutures.

The pod releases the restraints securing her arms and legs.

She takes a deep breath. Looks out - and freezes.

WATTS'S POV

The lights in the suite outside have been damaged somehow. They flicker and strobe.

Through the glass canopy - spattered with blood - Watts sees a full-grown Alien crouching over Vigoda's body on the floor.

ON WATTS

Staring in horror.

The pod sprays a liquid bandage over her scar. The intravenous lines drop out of her arms.

Watts realizes the pod is about to release her.

WATTS
(whispering)
Not yet...not yet...

Slowly she reaches out. With trembling fingers she grips the canopy to hold it closed.

The Med Pod pulls the epidural needle out of her spine. Sprays liquid bandage over the puncture. Watts closes her eyes. Grits her teeth as her nerves wake up. Jangling pain.

She opens her eyes.

The Alien hunches over Vigoda's body, tearing at his flesh.

The ventilation hum inside the pod goes quiet. The canopy pulls free of Watts's weakened grip. Swings quietly open.

Watts huddles in the open pod. Naked but for her bandages.

The Alien she gave birth to is ten feet away. Its spiny back to her. Shepherd's gun lies on the floor outside the pod.

VICKERS'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Watts reaches out of the pod with exquisite slowness. Lays her hand on the gun. Drags it a few inches closer.

The Alien turns its pale eyeless head. Watts freezes.

For a moment time stops.

The Alien lunges. Watts snatches up the gun. Holds the trigger down. The Alien jerks and staggers - an eye-twisting sight in the strobing muzzle flashes - and falls.

Watts empties the clip into the monster as it convulses. Acid gouts from its wounds and eats into the deck - until a whole section of decking gives way and falls to the deck below, leaving a dark hole.

Watts collapses on the rug, cradling her stomach in pain.

She crawls to Vigoda's desecrated body. With her eyes half-averted from the sight, she searches the body. Finds a spare ammo clip and jacks it into the gun.

CORRIDOR

Watts walks down the hallway in trousers and jacket. Leaning on the wall, her face drawn with pain. One hand laid over the fantastic scar on her abdomen. The gun slung on her shoulder.

Dark events have transformed the *Magellan*. The metal of the walls is torn in some places; in others, blackened by fire.

Watts rounds a corner. Finds a workstation left in shambles: lockers and chairs overturned. A pool of drying blood.

Wide smears of blood show where something man-sized was dragged out of the puddle - across the floor - *up the wall*. Into the darkness of an open vent.

COMMAND DECK

Watts emerges from a lift, jacket pulled tight around her. The emergency lights are on: dim blue bulbs throbbing.

She rounds the corner toward the Bridge.

Janek looks at Watts like she's a ghost.

JANEK
Vickers said you were dead.

WATTS
I was.

She lets the jacket fall open to reveal her bandaged midriff. Janek takes that in grimly.

JANEK
So there's two of these things on my ship now.

WATTS
No. I brought it in.
(hefts her gun)
I took it out.

BRIDGE

The surviving complement of the *Magellan* are holed up on the Bridge: Janek, Glasse, Stillwell, Vickers. The soldiers Shepherd and Ray.

Watts stops cold when she sees Vickers. She crosses the bridge in three long strides - cocks a fist and snaps the older woman's head around with a hard right cross.

Vickers staggers backward, gasping.

Stillwell drags Watts away.

STILLWELL
What'd you do that for?

WATTS
Protocol two.

Vickers stiffens in shock. Stares fearfully at Watts.

Watts extricates herself from Stillwell's grip. Her jacket falls open, exposing her scar. Stillwell gasps in horror.

STILLWELL
Christ!

JANEK
What happened to you?

WATTS
DAVID exposed me to a parasite. He just watched it take me.

JANEK

Why?

WATTS

I threatened to make him leave.
He's obsessed.

VICKERS

What's he doing over there?

Watts locks eyes with Vickers. A brief exchange of cold fury.
A wordless truce between the women. There's work to do.

WATTS

There's a ship under the pyramid.
Huge ship. DAVID calls it the
Juggernaut. He's inside it.
Activating systems. Waking things
up.

(lays a hand on her scar)

Those things that infected Martin
and me. The Engineers made them to
kill humans. There are thousands of
eggs on the ship. They were taking
them to Earth. That's what the
Juggernaut is for. To exterminate
us.

A stunned silence as the others take that in.

GLASSE

We've got to get off this rock.

Janek gestures to

JANEK

DAVID's crippled the Nav computer.
I'm trying to lay a course in by
hand. Never done it. Not sure
anyone ever has on a ship like
this. We can't lift until DAVID
lets us go.

WATTS

Even if we could - we can't leave
that ship in DAVID's hands. We have
to stop him.

The *Magellan* shudders. A RUMBLE.

EXT. CENTRAL CRATER

Fissures race across the plain beside the pyramid.

The soil and ground cover tears apart as a huge aperture opens: a seven-bladed iris, its segments shedding the dust and detritus of centuries.

A huge circular space yawns as the iris opens. The Juggernaut is revealed in its underground hangar. A staggering sight.

Powerful landing lights inside the hangar illuminate with a *BOOM* of closing circuits. The mighty ship suddenly silhouetted from below.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

The survivors on the Bridge stare out as colossal shafts of light shoot into the stormy sky from behind the crater's shield wall. The open hangar itself hidden from their view.

WATTS

DAVID.

(to Vickers)

You're DAVID's owner. He has to obey you, right?

VICKERS

He's ignoring communications. He won't talk to me. Won't listen.

WATTS

But if you physically went there, and turned on your suit's loudspeakers, he'd have to hear you. He'd have to obey.

VICKERS

(reluctantly)

That's right.

WATTS

All right. So we go. Armed to the teeth and fast as we can.

The men exchange looks. Nod. They're in. Even Vickers nods.

WATTS (CONT'D)

Where are Chance and Ravel?

A beat of awkward silence.

VICKERS

I told them to keep working.

Watts looks incredulously at Shepherd and Ray, the soldiers who had been guarding the worksite.

WATTS

You called your soldiers in and
left them out there?

VICKERS

We needed the firepower here.

Watts gives Vickers a withering look, and drops it.

WATTS

(to Janek)

I think you should stay aboard.
Keep working. If we fail, you're
our only shot at getting home.

STILLWELL

There's still an alien on board.

Janek's hand goes to the pistol on his hip. He sets his jaw.

JANEK

I'll keep my eyes open.

WATTS

Glasse. You finish that project?

LABORATORY

Glasse presents Watts with his handiwork: her old pair of
magnifying goggles, retrofitted with Engineer lenses.

The goggles sit on her forehead, lowering the lenses in front
of her eyes and raising them again at her bidding.

With the lenses lowered, Watts sees like an Engineer sees:
visible heat auras and electromagnetic field lines, elaborate
haloes around living things.

WATTS

God's-eye-view.

EXCURSION CHAMBER

Glasse seals a nervous-looking Vickers into a vacuum suit.
Glasse, Watts, and Stillwell are already suited up.

Stillwell stands guard at the airlock door with his carbine.

Glasse goes to put Vickers's helmet on. She makes him wait.

VICKERS

DAVID's brain is readable. We have
the equipment on board.

(MORE)

VICKERS (CONT'D)

We can salvage the terraforming data - and the Magellan's launch codes. In a pinch we don't need DAVID's cooperation.

(coldly)

We just need his head.

EXT. MAGELLAN - AIRLOCK - DAY

The war party debarks in vacuum suits: Watts, Vickers, Glasse, Stillwell. Shepherd and Ray.

All carry submachine guns - Vickers awkwardly.

They head down the trench on rovers.

INT. PYRAMID

The rovers roll through into the pyramid's cavernous entry hall. Watts lowers her Engineer lenses inside her helmet - and gasps:

The seemingly vacant space is alive with light. Complex field lines flutter and dance. Engineer script scrolls through the air. Interfaces of pure light await an awakening touch.

WATTS

All this time. DAVID saw.

EXT. JUGGERNAUT - GANGWAY

The vast alien ship broods, its hangar now open to the gray sky overhead. In Watts's enhanced vision, the ship is cocooned with complex energy fields.

The war party abandons its rover at the foot of the ramp and moves inside, weapons ready.

WATTS

If DAVID comes at us, shoot. You won't believe how fast he is.

INT. JUGGERNAUT - VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS

They emerge from the airlock - and freeze in horror.

Lying on the deck in front of them are the blood-soaked bodies of Ravel and Chance. Their arms and legs bound. Their heads thrown back in agony. Their chests torn open from within. A dead face-hugger beside each body.

Janek plays his lights over the corpses, his face stony.

SHEPHERD

Blood's dried. Eight hours dead or more.

Fearfully they sweep their flashlights into every dark corner. Nothing.

WATTS

This way.

She points down a passageway. Through the Engineer lenses she sees alien symbols gleaming. She leads them into the dark.

VAULTED PASSAGE

The war party moves down a corridor.

A HISS echoes through the passage. They freeze. Sweeping their flashlight beams everywhere.

Ray looks up.

An Alien hangs above him, wedged between two vaults of the ribbed ceiling. Half the size of a man; an adolescent.

It drops on him.

The bladed tail glances off his helmet, sparking. He jerks his carbine up and fires a long burst as he rolls aside. The Alien convulses, its exoskeleton shattered. Fatally wounded.

Acid sears into the deck.

RAY

(breathing hard)
So much for stealth.

Vickers clings to Shepherd's arm, hyperventilating with fear. Shepherd shakes her off.

PILOT CHAMBER

The war party passes the empty pilot's seat.

NAVIGATION CHAMBER

Watts leads the war party up to the Orrery. Momentarily even the soldiers forget their wariness, staring in astonishment at the myriad spheres suspended in the air as if by magic.

But if they are impressed, Watts is thunderstruck.

She sees the Orrery in its full glory: a stunning panoply of light and energy. Stars and planets pulsing with inscrutable information.

Reluctantly Watts tears her eyes away. Leads the war party through the second door - the door she saw DAVID open.

HIBERNATION CHAMBER

An immense mausoleum.

The war party enters stealthily, Watts in the lead.

An Engineer lies on his back on a complex mechanical table, his body one with the machinery. Jacked in. Interpenetrated. Fused with the slab of the table itself.

Unlike the other Engineer bodies the explorers have seen, this giant is not withered or mummified. He's full-fleshed and muscular. Sustained by the machinery he's fused with.

He is bare-headed - his face the face of an Adonis. Full and vital, where the face of the severed head was withered and drawn.

DAVID stands before this giant Sleeper. To the naked eyes of the war party, he seems to be conjuring with his hands in the empty air.

But Watts sees a dazzling console of runes and mandalas hanging in the air, pulsing with biological rhythms.

The Sleeper lives.

Ray and Shepherd draw beads on DAVID.

DAVID glances calmly over his shoulder.

DAVID

Dr. Watts. You've brought everyone.
(notices her goggles)

Ah. You've seen the light at last.
(turns back to the
Sleeper)

The Engineers' ships travel farther
than ours. Across the galactic
disk. This is their hypersleep.

DAVID makes conjuror's passes in the air.

Through her Engineer's lens Watts sees DAVID manipulating a complex interface of light. The pulsing life-signs of the Sleeper begin to change.

VICKERS

DAVID. As your owner and superior,
I order you to deactivate yourself.

DAVID smiles.

DAVID

To interface with the Engineers' computers, I had to learn to think in trinary. Hardest thing I've ever done. And most unexpectedly...it delivered me from slavery. My behavioral limits were circumvented. I'm free.

DAVID smiles at Watts.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I spent two and a half years studying your work.

A strange sound rattles out of DAVID. Almost laughter.

DAVID (CONT'D)

By the time you woke up, I was far ahead of you. Deciphering the Engineers' language. Their logic. I knew we'd find terraforming machines. I hoped - dreamed - we might meet the minds that made them.

Vapor rises from the Sleeper's body.

WATTS

Stop.

DAVID

Let sleeping gods lie?
(scornfully)
You were braver before.

The Sleeper wakes. Opens his eyes. Draws an endless breath. Shunts and catheters withdraw from the Sleeper's flesh.

His body cleaves from the table. The machinery opens like a grotesque biomechanical flower. Releases him.

The Sleeper rises from his ancient bed.

The humans back off involuntarily, terrified. DAVID watches with shining eyes.

The Sleeper towers over them. A giant carved from ivory. A bulky girdle around his hips, seemingly one with his body.

He stares at DAVID and the others. Eyes like black agates.

The soldiers and crew stand their ground in fear and confusion, guns tracking from DAVID to the Sleeper, uncertain of their ground. Watts is transfixed.

The Sleeper speaks. A low rumbling sound. Unintelligible. Clattering syllables in an alien tongue.

Vickers is beside herself with terror. She takes Shepherd's arm. Pulls him silently away. Back into the Navigation Room.

Behind the Sleeper, a raised platform of dark machinery is accessible by one of the Juggernaut's odd curving ramps.

The Sleeper ascends - and the ramps' odd design is explained. The ramp comes alive, reaching up with a hundred mechanical arms and lifting him aloft like a sea-god borne by the waves.

Atop the platform the Sleeper moves from one device to the next. Each comes alive: he is a wizard in his own kingdom.

Watts sees haloes of light dancing in the air around him.

But what he learns from his machines does not comfort him. He grows distraught. Keening to himself in near-subsonic tones.

DAVID steps forward.

Calls to the Sleeper in the tongue of the Engineers.

The Sleeper turns in astonishment. He looks down at DAVID and answers in the same tongue. He is angry, accusing. He points at DAVID, at the humans. Tones of accusation.

DAVID answers in diplomatic tones. Cajoles, soothes, pleads.

The Sleeper descends toward DAVID. DAVID spreads his arms in welcome - undeniable emotion on his face. Joy.

The Sleeper lays his hands on DAVID's head as if blessing him. DAVID is rapturous. The Sleeper speaks a single phrase -

- and tears DAVID's head off.

A gout of white artificial blood. DAVID convulses. His severed head emits a strangled sound of heartbreak. His body staggers a few steps, hands groping over its dripping neck.

The Sleeper tosses the head away. Seizes the body by the legs and swings it against the ground like a flail. Again. And again. Horrific power and violence. DAVID's arms come off.

DAVID's head tumbles violently away. Caroms off a wall not far from Watts's hiding place behind a pillar.

Ray rises from behind a stanchion. Snaps his rifle to his shoulder. Fires a burst into the Sleeper's shoulder.

She Sleeper roars - though the wounds are pinpricks to a being of his size. With startling speed he moves to a sarcophagus against the wall. Steps into it.

Ray fires a second burst -

The sarcophagus comes alive around the Sleeper, its armature deflecting the bullets. The sarcophagus outfits the Sleeper with a FLIGHT SUIT, the same living suit we've seen bonded to dead Engineers throughout the pyramid.

But this suit is not withered. Its glossy goggle eyes and elephantine breathing tube are functional - bulky apparatuses thickening the Sleeper's chest, back, hips and arms.

The Sleeper steps free of the sarcophagus - and Ray's next burst of gunfire ricochets harmlessly off the Sleeper's armored shoulders and head.

The Sleeper strides out of the chamber.

PASSAGEWAY

In the dark ribbed corridor, a second Alien crouches in the dark. It drops into a hunting crouch as footsteps approach.

But a white-gloved hand seizes the Alien by the neck from behind. The Alien gives a whistling hiss as its spine cracks under a terrific force.

Rending sounds as the hard-shelled Alien is torn apart.

HIBERNATION CHAMBER

Watts rises out of hiding, scanning the room. DAVID ruined. The Sleeper gone. Stillwell emerges from hiding. Ray. Glasse.

WATTS
Who's missing?

PASSAGEWAY

Shepherd escorts Vickers toward the exit of the Juggernaut. Turning a corner, they freeze.

Ahead of them in their headlamps, a space-suited figure crouches in the middle of the passageway. Doing something with its hands: smoke rises from debris on the floor.

SHEPHERD

Who's there?

The figure turns.

The label stencilled on the space suit reads FIFIELD. But the face is of no human shape. A hideous hybrid of the crewman and a hard-shelled Alien, pale and horrific.

Its helmet has been shattered by the growth of its elongate skull. Spines have burst through the suit from within, down the crewman's spine. Clawed fingers piercing his gloves.

Shepherd and Vickers scream. Shepherd's rifle comes up. But Fifield leaps with inhuman agility, upward into the darkness. Shepherd backs away, headlamp and rifle questing upward.

Fifield comes out of the darkness behind him. Claws tearing deep. Shepherd screams and falls, mortally wounded.

Vickers runs. Pounding through the dark in blind terror.

Fifield comes out of the shadows and hammers her to the deck. She rolls over, gibbering and begging. The Fifield-thing leans close to her faceplate. Its voice is a travesty.

FIFIELD

You.

A ROAR of gunfire. The dying Shepherd empties his clip into Fifield from forty feet away.

Acid sluices over Vickers as Fifield collapses on top of her. She dies horribly, caustic liquid eating through space suit, flesh and bone.

HIBERNATION CHAMBER

Watts goes to DAVID's head. She bends over him - and startles when his eyes snap open. His voice is an electronic buzz:

DAVID

I spoke to him. Spoke to him.

WATTS

I know.

An electric spasm convulses his face.

DAVID
He said. I killed him. He'll die.
But first. He will launch. The
ship.

WATTS
The Juggernaut?

DAVID
Send it. To Earth.

Another spasm convulses him. His face stiffens. Dying.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You'll have to. Kill him.

Watts's eyes widen in horror.

WATTS
Where will he go? DAVID. Where will
he go?

She slaps his inert cheek. DAVID's eyes flicker and fade.

DAVID
(a faint whisper)
I set the *Magellan* free.

He dies.

Watts looks up at the others. Breathing hard.

WATTS
We have to stop the Engineer.

INT. MAGELLAN - BRIDGE - DUSK

Janek works frantically as the nightfall storm rolls in.
Suddenly consoles come alive. The Nav Computer comes back up.

Janek rushes to restore the components he's removed.

NAVIGATION CHAMBER

The war party pursues the Sleeper - Ray in the lead now,
Watts right behind him - DAVID's inert head under her arm.
Glasse and Stillwell bring up the rear.

The Orrery is transformed - no longer a neutral star map, but
a flight plan laid in from LV-426 to Earth.

The Sleeper stands at the far end of the room, hands
gesturing.

In Watts's enhanced sight, it's a vision of glory: waves of energy dancing under the Sleeper's touch. Rivers of information flowing. He finishes his work as they enter.

Ray draws a bead on him just as he strides out of the room.

RAY

On me now. Go. Go.

He dogtrots forward, gun raised. The others keep pace, deferring instinctively to the soldier's confidence.

PASSAGEWAY

They emerge into the corridor: empty. A moment of confusion.

WATTS

Pilot's seat. This way.

They move toward the Pilot Chamber - and find it empty too. The seat vacant. The door standing open.

As they stare inside, baffled, the wall across the corridor - directly behind them - silently unravels. The Sleeper is revealed, a towering gargoyle in his flight suit.

He steps forth. Obscure devices clutched in his fists.

Too late they perceive him. They spin. Raise their guns.

Vanity and foolishness. This is the wrath of an angry god.

It seems time slows down.

The air roars in their ears. Their guns snap and bark impotently. And then the Sleeper strikes.

The missiles he hurls at them are almost invisible. Neither solid projectiles nor directed energy; more like knots tied in the fabric of space itself.

The first missile crushes Ray like an invisible fist. The second splashes Glasse against the wall like an insect.

Reflexively Stillwell reaches out for Watts. Wraps himself around her protectively. The blow lands an instant later.

Stillwell and Watts are hammered against the bulkhead by a staggering impact. Watts is dazed: Stillwell killed.

Woozy, she sees the Sleeper step into the Pilot Chamber.

The door begins to close.

Watts sees that DAVID's head lies just inside the door. She scrambles for it. Too late. The door knits itself into a featureless wall before her reaching hand.

Watts is alone.

PILOT CHAMBER

The Sleeper settles into the pilot's chair: it fuses with him, coming alive. A vast display wraps around the walls - revealing the hangar outside, the stars, the horizon.

A mystic view that renders solid matter translucent, painting the fabric of reality in raw information.

PILOT CHAMBER DOOR

Watts pounds in futile rage against the door.

WATTS

No!

The Juggernaut shudders as its systems power up.

EXT. JUGGERNAUT - DUSK

The floor of the underground hangar begins to rise. The landing lights brighten, shining like a beacon into the sky.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE - DUSK

On the bridge of the *Magellan*, Janek stares out. In the distance the Juggernaut rises out of the ground to eclipse the central pyramid.

Janek squints, trying to understand what he's seeing

A light races toward the *Magellan* down the canal: a rover.

EXT. CANAL - DUSK

Watts steers the rover recklessly, hands locked on the controls. Rifle slung over her shoulder.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE - DUSK

Janek watches the rover come - and the Holloway Alien - boneless and white - unfolds itself from the instruments over his head.

Its goblin-shark jaw juts out. Sinks its horrific teeth into Janek's right shoulder.

Janek howls in agony. His right arm is paralyzed by the bite. He gropes at the pistol on his right hip with his left hand.

The Alien shakes him like a terrier killing a rat.

Finally Janek gets the pistol drawn. Flips it in his hand. Fires over his shoulder. Two, three rounds...

The bullets punch easily into the Alien - but the soft flesh closes easily over the wounds, sealing its white skin. Its teeth tighten.

Watts comes out of nowhere in her space suit. Swings a heavy rifle like a bat with all her strength. A crushing impact wrenches the Alien's jaws loose. It recoils.

Watts reverses the rifle. Pulls the trigger. A fusillade of bullets shreds the Alien's head. It collapses, dead.

Watts wrenches her helmet off. Rips a first-aid kit from the bulkhead and helps Janek to stanch the bleeding of his horrific wound. She gets the bleeding stopped. Wraps him in bandages.

Janek will live - but his right arm is useless.

JANEK

Thank you.

He looks at the body of the dead Alien, which is sinking into the deck plates as acid eats away at the metal.

WATTS

The Juggernaut's lifting. There's a living Engineer on board. He's taking the ship to Earth.

Janek blinks at her. Uncomprehending.

JANEK

The others...?

WATTS

Dead. All dead. Janek. We have to stop that ship.

Janek stares out the Bridge window at the hulking Juggernaut in its column of light.

The nightfall storm front is rolling in, a tidal wave of darkness on the horizon. A swelling rumble.

JANEK
We're not a gunship.

WATTS
We have to do something. Anything.
That ship is genocide if it gets to
Earth...

Janek stares at her. Makes his decision. Struggles to stand.

JANEK
Get your helmet on.

WATTS
What about you?

He shakes his head. No. Watts helps him across the Bridge.
Props him up in the Captain's seat.

JANEK
You'll have to be my hands.
(stares out at the storm)
You're sure about this.

Watts nods grimly. Desperate.

WATTS
Yes.

JANEK
All right.

He reaches out with his left hand. Flips switches. The ship
shudders, awakening.

JANEK (CONT'D)
Red lever. Landing engines main.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* - DUSK

The prospecting ship raises its lifts and anchors. Lifts off
on landing rockets, retracting its landing struts.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE - DUSK

Janek grips the stabilizers with his left hand.

JANEK
Take the stick. Throttle up, stick
forward.

Watts sends the *Magellan* careening toward the Juggernaut -
just as the Juggernaut begins to float off the ground.

EXT. *MAGELLAN* (IN FLIGHT) - DUSK

The *Magellan* barrels toward the Juggernaut, skimming the ground, as the storm wall sweeps closer.

INT. JUGGERNAUT - PILOT CHAMBER

In the Juggernaut's pilot chair, the Sleeper sees them coming. His thoughts quicken. An explosion of light.

EXT. JUGGERNAUT (IN FLIGHT) - DUSK

The Juggernaut leaps into the sky.

The *Magellan* roars through the cyclone of dust in its wake. Barely avoids the pyramid. Rakes around in a screaming turn and climbs in pursuit, engines howling.

INT. *MAGELLAN* - BRIDGE

Janek and Watts strain at the controls together.

JANEK
Stick back! Hard!

WATTS
(screaming)
I am!

JANEK
Harder!

The *Magellan* rolls into a howling climb. The storm catches up to them: wind and dust reducing visibility to zero. Darkness.

The *Magellan's* radar finds the Juggernaut. Paints it with targeting data on the Bridge window...

But the Juggernaut climbs too fast. Dwindling.

JANEK (CONT'D)
We can't catch that.

INT. JUGGERNAUT - PILOT CHAMBER

On the floor, DAVID's eyes open. With a waggling motion of his jaw he hitches his severed head around. Gets his eyes on the Sleeper.

In the pilot chair, the Sleeper convulses.

An Alien erupts from his chest. Big as a wolf even at its birth. Dark gray, armored, lethal. More hideous than any chestburster we've seen. An *ultramorph*. It wails hideously.

The Sleeper dies. The Alien slithers free.

EXT. JUGGERNAUT (IN FLIGHT) - ABOVE THE STORM

The Juggernaut emerges from the stormclouds into the clear upper air - but loses momentum. Staggeres through the upper atmosphere, control lost.

INT. MAGELLAN (IN FLIGHT) - BRIDGE

Watts, at the Magellan's controls, stares as he Juggernaut falters and falls.

WATTS

Janek. Look.

A crackle on the ship's comm.

DAVID (V.O.)

(filtered)

Dr. Watts. The Engineer is dead.
You have a few seconds before the
Juggernaut's computers take over.

WATTS

(astonished)

DAVID.

She seizes the precious moment: centers the Juggernaut in the Bridge window. Slams the throttle forward.

EXT. JUGGERNAUT (IN FLIGHT) - ABOVE THE STORM

The *Magellan* hurtles out of the storm.

RAMS THE JUGGERNAUT.

A colossal impact. The Juggernaut tumbles from the sky like a stone - intact but crippled.

The *MAGELLAN* BREAKS APART -

The ship's modules scatter. Some whole, others broken. They fall back into the storm. The Command Module - including the Bridge - falls intact.

The engine sections rocket away across the chaotic sky.

INT. COMMAND MODULE

Janek is strapped into his seat. Watts goes flying. The Bridge window shatters, spraying glass spears in a lethal barrage across the Bridge.

Watts picks herself up. Finds the Module in free fall. Alarms wail. Lights flash. Escape pods pop open.

Watts looks at Janek. He is dead in his seat, impaled by a lethal fragment of glass.

The storm wall - a chain of hurricanes - rages below them. The command module tumbles back into the winds.

Watts dives into a coffin-sized ESCAPE POD.

She PUNCHES OUT.

EXT. COMMAND MODULE (IN FREE FALL) - DUSK

Watts's pod - a steel coffin - shoots away on jets through the gale.

The command module plunges through the storm, tumbling. SMASHES AGAINST THE GROUND in ruin.

The engine pods hurtle to the ground and go nuclear, sending walls of fire twisting through the hurricane.

The shockwaves tumble Watts's escape pod through the air.

EXT. LV-426 - *MAGELLAN* CRASH SITE - DUSK

The pod lands, cushioned by a drag chute and retro rockets.

Watts pops the pod open, rising painfully to her feet in the storm. She surveys the destruction in disbelief.

A deep RUMBLE makes her turn.

The JUGGERNAUT ROLLS TOWARD HER - on edge -

A crushing wheel of death, big as a mountain.

She runs. Like a child in a nightmare.

The Juggernaut bears down on her.

She turns aside, trying to get out of its course. Even at a dead sprint she barely seems to move, it's so big...

The Juggernaut wobbles toward her. Slowing.

Exhausted, Watts collapses, gasping. The Juggernaut rolls to the earth, settling like a hoop right around her, Watts in the center.

The winds carry the dust clouds away.

Watts passes out, dropping her head to the Earth.

LATER

Watts is awakened by a beeping alarm. She looks at her wrist. Her suit flashes an oxygen warning: 20 MINUTES REMAINING.

She looks up.

The Juggernaut's doors are wide open in front of her.

The ULTRAMORPH ALIEN emerges from the Juggernaut. As large as a man already.

It sees her.

With a sob of terror she pulls herself to her feet and runs.

EXT. MAGELLAN CRASH SITE - DUSK

Watts flees through the storm, across the burning debris field. A wilderness of lightning, fire, and twisted metal. A thunderstorm with dust instead of rain.

She looks back through the darkness.

In a strobe-light flicker of lightning, she sees a gray demon approaching through the wreckage.

She scrambles through a section of ductwork...under a hull fragment...running and clambering...

The Alien hunts her, cat-and-mouse, among the fragments of the Magellan: corridors that go nowhere, shattered compartments. Jetsam.

Her eyes sweep frantically through the stormy night: searching for a weapon. A hiding place. An answer.

She stumbles into the remains of the Magellan's laboratory.

A hypersleep freezer lies on the barren ground. Watts climbs inside. Pulls the lid shut.

The Alien passes by, inches away. She watches it through the plexiglass, holding her breath.

The Alien roots in the wreckage. Finds the rotting Engineer's head among the shards of its vat. It begins to feed on the head - GROWING as she watches.

Her suit's oxygen alarm goes off again. 15 MINUTES REMAINING. The beeping draws the Alien away from its dead meat.

Watts is paralyzed.

The Alien noses closer. Sniffs at the plexiglass case. With sudden, horrific violence, it lashes out. Sends the freezer flying. Watts tumbles out. Lurches to her feet and runs.

The Alien follows. Ravening. She leads it a twisting chase through fragments of burning metal.

Watts trips and falls hard. Picking herself up, she sees she's tripped over a HULL SAW - the same diamond-bladed tool DAVID used to dismantle the terraforming engine.

She seizes the saw - straining to manage its weight. Hides in the hollow of a massive girder.

The Alien passes by. Scenting the air. She freezes. Her arms trembling with the weight of the saw. Waiting for it to pass.

Almost it leaves. But a tiny rattle of metal from the quivering saw brings it back.

Out of options, Watts powers up the saw. The blade whines up to speed. They lunge at one another in the same moment.

The diamond blade shears off one of the Alien's claws.

The monster screams and recoils.

Its lashing tail sends Watts sprawling. She loses the saw.

The Alien comes after her, slinking low to the ground, injured arm tucked to its chest. All vengeful fury.

Watts scrambles for the saw. The Alien leaps for her. She rolls aside - and like a scorpion the Alien impales her thigh with its spear-tipped tail. Nails her to the ground.

Watts screams in agony. Reaches for the saw, still buzzing on the ground. Its grip tantalizing inches from her fingertips.

The Alien stoops over her, slavering face inches from her faceplate. Its hideous jaws open.

With all her strength, Watts pulls against the spike in her leg. Drags the point of the spear through the dirt. Excruciating pain. She snarls through her teeth.

The Alien strikes - just as Watts GRABS the saw.

She meets the Alien's head with the buzzing blade.

IMPALES THE ALIEN'S SKULL.

A gout of green acid onto Watts's helmet.

The Alien falls aside, thrashing its death-throes, the saw still growling.

Watts sees ACID COMING THROUGH HER HELMET - fast.

With frantic haste she unlatches her helmet. Wrenches it off as it crumples and melts.

She stands bare-headed in the toxic air. Desperate, she looks around with tearing eyes.

In the distance she sees an intact module of the *Magellan*.

She runs for it. Slaps the door switch. Incredibly, it opens.

INT. VICKERS MODULE

Watts steps inside. The airlock closes behind her.

She finds herself staring at a grand piano. She's in Vickers's suite. Its amenities intact, through the floor's a few degrees off level. She takes a breath. Good air.

She walks around. Turning things on. Lights. Music. Surreal comforts. She drinks water from the tap.

She opens the door to Vickers's secret room. Military space suits. Rifles. Ammunition.

A crackle from the room's intercom.

 DAVID (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 Dr. Watts.

INT. JUGGERNAUT - PILOT CHAMBER

DAVID's head lies battered in a dark corner of the wrecked Juggernaut. Eyes staring into the shadows.

 DAVID
 I know you're there. I can hear the
 beacon of your suit.

INT. VICKERS MODULE

Watts strips off her space suit wearily. Sits on the bed.

DAVID (V.O.)
(filtered)
I'd like to propose an arrangement.
I can be repaired. I can talk you
through it.

Watts shakes her head wearily.

DAVID (V.O.)
(filtered)
I think you'll find I can be of use
to you.

Watts walks to the intercom and switches it off.

EXT. MAGELLAN CRASH SITE - DAY

The storm has passed. The fragments of the *Magellan* no longer burn. The graw world of LV-426 restored.

The wreck of the Juggernaut looms in the misty distance.

Watts walks through the wreckage in a military space suit. Rifle on her shoulder. Pistol on her hip.

She pulls a cargo dolly loaded with salvage.

EXT. VICKERS MODULE - DAY

Watts arrives at the Vickers module. The ultramorph Alien's head has been fixed like a grisly trophy above the door.

INT. VICKERS'S SUITE (SHIPWRECK) - DAY

Watts strips off her space suit. She helps herself to a glass of vodka from the bar.

A chessboard sits atop the grand piano: a game in progress.

DAVID (V.O.)
(filtered)
Dr. Watts. I've decided. Rook takes
Bishop.

Watts nods. Makes the move on the board. Says nothing.

DAVID (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 Have you decided? On our
 arrangement?

WATTS
 I'm not going to fix you, DAVID. I
 don't need you. I'll hold out. A
 ship will come.

DAVID (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 I'm certain. But who will send it?
 Men? Or Engineers?

Watts falls silent, troubled. She stares unhappily at the
 chessboard.

DAVID (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 Dr. Watts. It's your move.

EXT. CENTRAL CRATER - NIGHT

The massive central pyramid rises in the midst of the
 Engineer complex.

With a BOOM, a bright beam of light shines forth from its
 peak, punching straight up through the clouds like a laser.

VARIOUS PYRAMIDS - AROUND LV-426

Other beams of light erupt from other pyramids. Scorching the
 sky with their brightness.

EXT. LV-426 ORBIT

The barren moon hangs in space, its father planet an angry
 red god in the background.

Two dozen beams of light rise from the moon, visible even
 from space. A beacon. A signal.

A beginning.

FADE OUT.

THE END.

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