

Flesh and Alloy 01x04 - Together then Separated

written by

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Jeremiah and Tamara leave Melanie to work with Victor,
to attend the support group meeting where they meet Ava,
Beatrice and Oscar. With the warning of an impending
attack Jeremiah takes charge

Based on Kelsey Van
Rensburg's series bible

ACT ONE

INT. OUTSKIRTS - MELANIE'S APARTMENT - LOUNGE - EARLY MORNING

JEREMIAH stirs awake on the couch. He gasps and leaps into the kitchen.

INT. OUTSKIRTS - MELANIE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MELANIE is hunched over the counter top with tools in hand. VICTOR is seated on one of the stools staring at her, confused.

JEREMIAH

What happened? What's wrong?

Melanie grunts, glancing at Victor and Jeremiah.

MELANIE

Nothing... I mean not nothing.

Jeremiah slowly approaches them. Melanie points at Victor and sighs, frustrated.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Victor is... different and difficult.

Jeremiah notices the large pile of energy drinks and energy bar wrappers on the floor.

JEREMIAH

You stayed up all night to help Victor be aware?

MELANIE

That was the plan.

VICTOR

Sorry about my programing.

Melanie sighs and motions towards the factory.

MELANIE

It is not you I am frustrated by, it is those smart asses scientists in that factory. Making things better for them, but harder for us?

JEREMIAH

Why is it so hard, you've done this a thousand times before.

Melanie rolls her eyes and abruptly points accusingly at the factory.

MELANIE

That was before things were quiet.
Now that the big guy up top know
what we are trying to do they are
purposely making it harder for me
to mentally free the ESCs.

Jeremiah and Victor lock eyes. Jeremiah blinks in realization.

JEREMIAH

So then what? Is he going to stay
like this?

MELANIE

I won't let that happen and I won't
give up.

Victor cocks his head to the side, looking at Jeremiah.

VICTOR

What is it like? To see and feel as
you do, not as the person you were
modeled after?

JEREMIAH

Uh, it-- it's refreshing, a new
sense of freedom that Melanie has
been drilling into your head.

VICTOR

She hasn't started drilling yet.

Jeremiah and Melanie simultaneously laugh.

MELANIE

It is a figure of speech, he
basically means I don't shut up
about it.

There is a pause.

VICTOR

Oh, then that is correct.

Jeremiah laughs. Melanie glances at Victor, unimpressed.

JEREMIAH

You said it.

MELANIE

Hey don't encourage that behavior.

Jeremiah smiles and shakes his head. He glances at the factory and back at Melanie.

JEREMIAH

Since I'm up this early I might as well head down to the meeting.

MELANIE

They have been happening almost everyday now... it's refreshing.

VICTOR

Can I go?

Melanie gently taps Victor's head.

MELANIE

Not until I'm finished.

JEREMIAH

Anyway, I mean it is what you want, more ESC's to know about it now.

Jeremiah winces.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

And so do some collectors.

Melanie shrugs.

MELANIE

Yeah, I'm a bit worried about that last bit, but it doesn't matter, as long as we are helping more ESC's and having more of them willing to join the fight.

JEREMIAH

I guess it is better that you think of it that way. Have you heard from Tamara at all?

MELANIE

At this time in the morning, not a chance.

JEREMIAH

I wanted us to go to the meeting together.

Melanie scoffs then laughs, motioning around the room.

MELANIE

The meeting doesn't start for a while, have breakfast or write a book, something to pass the time.

Jeremiah points towards the front door.

JEREMIAH

Or I'm just going to go.

MELANIE

Be careful, and hide that red hair!

Jeremiah laughs and leaves.

VICTOR

You have been up all night, shouldn't you rest?

Melanie places her hands on her hips, staring in disbelief at Victor.

MELANIE

The fact that you don't need sleep is concerning, don't fret about me, I have a fridge stocked full of energy drinks. Plus I think I'm slowly figuring you out.

SMASH CUT:

TITLE CARD: **FLESH AND ALLOY**

BLACK.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS - ESC DUMP - MOMENTS LATER

Jeremiah is standing on a heap over looking the many ESC bodies stacked onto one another. TAMARA slowly approaches Jeremiah, she stops at his side. She winces at the sight and turns away.

TAMARA

Well this is scary.

JEREMIAH

(calmly)
Not really.

TAMARA

I don't know how you can look at them, it is gut wrenching.

Jeremiah sighs. He looks down at them, noting some pieces of faces in the dirt.

JEREMIAH

Yeah, but it is our reality, see there.

Jeremiah points at a smaller pile of ESCs. Tamara glances at them, and looks away again.

TAMARA

All I see is dead bodies, and a lot of them.

JEREMIAH

No, there, those five bodies over there.

She rolls her eyes and shakes her head, refusing.

TAMARA

So?

JEREMIAH

They are new, must've been dumped early this morning or late last night, because they weren't here last time I visited.

Tamara winces again. She glances back at Jeremiah's face, pleading.

TAMARA

Please can we talk about something else.

JEREMIAH

We can.

She pauses, frowns and steps forward.

TAMARA

Why do you even look at them?

Jeremiah raises an eyebrow at her.

JEREMIAH

I thought you wanted to change the subject--

She abruptly raises her hand, silencing him. Jeremiah relaxes.

TAMARA

Just answer me that question and we
can go to the meeting.

He smiles at her, she smiles back at him, but turns away.

JEREMIAH

Whether I like it or not I could be
them, a thrown away toy who chose
another and better life of
individuality.

He abruptly shakes his head, he tugs at her shirt encouraging
her to turn towards him again. She sighs and turns to him.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

The point is I got lucky and they
didn't. The more nonsense Melanie
spills the more I understand this
twisted world we were created in.

TAMARA

So you fight for them?

She motions to the bodies bellow.

JEREMIAH

(confused)

Wouldn't you?

There is a pause. An awkward silence between them. Tamara
blinks at Jeremiah. She raises her eyebrows awkwardly and
turns away from him.

TAMARA

Well that gave me chills. I don't
want to stay here, I already feel
haunted by your words, I don't
exactly want to be haunted by one
of them.

He glances at the bodies and laughs. She glances at him in
horror.

JEREMIAH

Squeamish?

She laughs back, awkwardly and mildly concerned.

TAMARA

Wouldn't you? Jesus! Let's leave,
please.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MEANWHILE

Melanie is furiously looking around Victor's head, going through his hair, under his chin. She flicks his forehead and he recoils in pain.

VICTOR
Why did you do that?

Melanie sighs deeply.

MELANIE
Sorry... I-I'm really frustrated
that I can't find that flap to poke
around in your head.

She walks around him, pointing at his limbs and head. Victor blinks

MELANIE (CONT'D)
I have no idea how those monster
designed you nor do I know what
changes they made to you.

VICTOR
(confused)
But you flicked me?

MELANIE
I know! I just--

Melanie laughs tiredly. She looks around the room and rubs her eyes.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, it-its just that I'm so
close to achieving my dream and the
fact that the factory is
redesigning and reprogramming ESCs
is kind of a set back for me. I'm
not angry with you, just with the
people that made you.

VICTOR
(worried)
Does that mean I will never be
aware?

Melanie smiles and places a comforting hand on his shoulder.

MELANIE

Don't be silly it just means I have to work extra harder and maybe make even more of my personal decoding files.

VICTOR

Anything I can do to help?

Melanie pauses for thought. She steps back examining Victor as a whole. She flicks her fingers in sudden realization.

MELANIE

You can strip down and let me have a look if they placed your circuit board somewhere else.

Victor's eyes widen, he raises his hands defensively and Melanie notices.

VICTOR

No thanks, I really don't want to do that.

She raises an eyebrow at him.

MELANIE

Strange, usually ESCs don't really understand the concept of one's own body, but you seem to be aware of that fact.

VICTOR

I just don't want to be naked.

MELANIE

You're self-conscious about it though. It's not that you will be naked it is that you will be naked in front of another person.

Victor pauses, he frowns and shakes his head.

VICTOR

So, what is wrong with that?

MELANIE

Seems the factory has added that complex emotion... it's not bad, just... interesting that they could pull it off this well.

Melanie smiles, impressed. Victor shifts uncomfortably.

VICTOR
Please don't make me get naked.

Melanie laughs, waving her hands at him playfully.

MELANIE
I'm not! At this point I'm just
talking to myself. You know...
(pauses)
Reasoning and thinking.

There is a long pause. Victor bites his lip and turns towards
Melanie hopefully.

VICTOR
Do you really believe ESC's could
all live freely.

Melanie is surprised by the question. She smiles sweetly.

MELANIE
Yes, I really do. I think the world
could be so much better with ESCs
in it, helping and playing apart in
society.

VICTOR
What if it never happens?

Melanie tenses. She stares at Victor blankly for a moment.

MELANIE
Then my whole life's purpose was
futile. I made a promise to someone
very special to me, to create a
world where ESCs were free to live
as they please.

VICTOR
Who did you promise to?

Melanie takes in a deep breath. The air around stills for a
moment. Victor notices, eyes wide and waiting.

MELANIE
(quietly)
My dad.

He pauses, deep in thought.

VICTOR
(cautiously)
I don't understand.

MELANIE

And you probably won't after I explain. I really need to get into that head of yours and maybe then you can understand what I mean.

Victor shakes his head.

VICTOR

How can I not understand. You said I have complex emotions, so surely I should be able to understand.

MELANIE

You may have complex emotions, but you also might not be able to understand them. For example what you said now. You feel something, but you are unable to comprehend it.

VICTOR

So I'm sad for you?

MELANIE

Yet angry you don't know why you are sad for me.

Victor rubs his temples, exhausted.

VICTOR

This is a lot to process. Why do they even make ESC's like me?

Melanie ponders for a moment and she frowns.

MELANIE

Maybe to make ESC appear more human. The more human ESC appear the less likely they are sent back to the factory.

There is a long pause.

VICTOR

T-then why was I sent back. I- I appear more human than most... so why was I sent back?

Victor stares at his own hands. He shakes his head as a single tear falls. Melanie sighs and strokes his head.

MELANIE

Humans can be awful, ESCs are more like toys to most rather than a tool for some to overcome the loss of a loved one.

Victor wipes away the tears.

VICTOR

I hate feeling like this. To feel an empty thing inside me.

He jolts, eyes locking onto Melanie's.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

I wish they never made me. To give me all these extra things that just hurt me in the end.

MELANIE

As hard as this all seems it will get better.

VICTOR

How do you know.

Melanie forces him to look at her. She smiles at him.

MELANIE

It is not the first time I've done this. Yes you are complex, but you are still an ESC, like the others I have helped.

(pause)

You just have to trust me.

VICTOR

I really want to believe that.

MELANIE

And you should.

She frowns for a moment, suddenly a smile forms.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

I think for now I'm going to show you around. I know you won't be fond of a few thing... There are a few places I would like you to see today

(pause)

Are you up to it?

He nods.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. OUTSKIRTS - ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - LATER

Tamara and Jeremiah walk into the meeting room. Jeremiah notices new ESCs in the room, some standing, talking and some sitting quietly.

Tamara closes the door behind her with a loud thud. Jeremiah leans towards Tamara.

JEREMIAH
(whisper)
I wanted to be here earlier.

TAMARA
(whisper)
We did take the long way round.
Plus I wanted to be here on time,
not as early as you wanted.

Jeremiah rolls his eyes at her. He takes in a deep breath as he steps forward addressing everyone.

JEREMIAH
Welcome, if everyone is ready then
we can begin.

Everyone in the room slowly shuffles towards the seats. Tamara moves past Jeremiah to take a seat herself.

TAMARA
(whisper)
It is going to be a long one.

Jeremiah scans the room and rubs his knuckles nervously.

INT. OUTSKIRTS - ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

AVA, BEATRICE and OSCAR are sitting next to one another, patiently waiting for their turn to talk in the circle. Tamara and Jeremiah listen to ESC EXTRA 1.

ESC EXTRA 1
It is just hard to cope with this
new life, but I'm glad to know that
I'm not alone in this.

Jeremiah nods, knowingly.

JEREMIAH

We are all in this together, thank
you for sharing.

The ESC extra 1 sits in their chair quietly. Jeremiah looks
around the room for someone else to speak, his eyes wonder to
Ava. Ava stirs in her seat.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

Would you like to share?

AVA

Not really.

JEREMIAH

Please, if you have something to
share that is hard, then this will
benefit you and everyone else here.

AVA

Okay, I'll try.

Ava stands up, dusting herself off. She looks at everyone and
shrugs.

AVA (CONT'D)

Hi my name is Ava, I used to be
Jane, sweet Jane who was always
there for her sweet father. This
father thought it was too hard to
bare the sight of me because his
real little girl was dead. Thus he
thought it was okay to send me back
to the factory. As one of the first
models of ESCs their security
wasn't the best and I escaped. The
once sweet Jane became the hard and
quick thinking Ava. That is my
whole story.

She immediately sits back down. Jeremiah frowns, shaking his
head. Ava raises her eyebrows.

JEREMIAH

Oh... um wow. That is some story
but it is a little--

AVA

Generic I know, don't expect me to
get all mushy and crap.

Jeremiah tenses.

JEREMIAH

Ouch, this place is for the mushy
so I don't understand why you are
here.

BEATRICE

We, we came looking for Melanie.

Beatrice motions towards Ava and Oscar.

JEREMIAH

Melanie has her hands full today
unfortunately, but Tamara and I are
here to assist you.

AVA

(loudly)

No, we want Melanie.

Jeremiah glances at Tamara who also looks tense and
unimpressed. She nods towards him, waiting.

JEREMIAH

I am her right hand, so if you
something to say to her you are
going to end up telling me anyway
and please don't disrespect me
here. Never here, with all these
ESC that come here to feel safe and
secure. If you don't have anything
to contribute to this meeting then
I suggest to you leave, but if you
are too stubborn for that.

There is a still silence. Tension builds as Tamara stands up.
Ava nervously glances at Beatrice and Oscar grits his teeth.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

Then we can show you the door
ourselves.

Beatrice raises her hands calmly.

BEATRICE

I'll share my story then, if it
will benefit the other ESCs.

Jeremiah glances at the other ESCs who became nervous.
Jeremiah stares at Beatrice and nods. Beatrice plays with her
fingers nervously.

BEATRICE (CONT'D)

Hi everyone, my name is Beatrice and I am also one of the earlier models of ESCs. Although most of us know the feeling of being thrown away and that your life means nothing. I have a different kind of horror story to share.

Jeremiah relaxes in his chair. Beatrice notices then nervously licks her lips.

BEATRICE (CONT'D)

I was made after a girl named Helana, who in fact was a very cruel person. I didn't understand why I had to mock or hurt people, but I did because that was the person I had to be, but after a while the people I unintentionally hurt knew what I was they were hurting and mocking me.

She glances around the room, she sighs. Ava and Oscar watch on, curious, yet concerned.

BEATRICE (CONT'D)

They knew what I was when I didn't. It was scary being called a toy, having no life, being someone's property, all those things I never understood. And when I did, living didn't feel like an option, but after Melanie found me and rescued me, she gave me a purpose, to be the best version of myself. Being able to make my own decisions and live my own life, because your life is yours alone and no one has the right to tell you otherwise.

Jeremiah glances at Tamara and smiles. Jeremiah stands up, abruptly clapping furiously.

JEREMIAH

Now that is a story that everyone should remember. Thank you for sharing and giving these ESCs a reason to keep moving forward. Because like you and everyone else here, I would rather be free on the run than anything else.

Ava and Oscar smile. Jeremiah looks around the rooms.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)
Lets all take a break for a bit, we
will meet back here later.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)
(to Beatrice)
We need to talk.

Beatrice blinks, surprised.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS - ESC DUMP - MEANWHILE

There is a heap of dirt in front of Melanie and Victor.
Melanie pauses and glancing at Victor, who stares at her,
patiently waiting. Melanie takes in a deep breath.

MELANIE
Victor, this might be a lot for you
to take in. I've brought other ESCs
here but they...
(pause)
weren't like you.

Victor frowns, concerned.

VICTOR
Please don't make me worry even
more than I already am.

MELANIE
It is not on purpose... it's
just...

She pauses, looking at Victor with remorse in her eyes.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
I'm worried.

Victor hesitates, he gives an awkward thumbs up and smiles
reassuringly.

VICTOR
Don't worry, I think I will be
okay.

MELANIE
Are you sure. You could rip your
own head off--

He gasps, body tensing in abrupt shock and surprise.

VICTOR
Pardon?

Melanie awkwardly laughs, turning to slowly walk up the hill.

MELANIE

Ha! Never mind.

Victor blinks, he hesitantly follows her up the mound. Melanie stops at the top staring out. Victor too stands on the mound. Suddenly his eyes widen as he throws his hands to cover his mouth. He stares at the torn limbs and lifeless metallic heads below.

VICTOR

No!

Melanie watches Victor intensely, studying him.

MELANIE

Don't let the sight get to you.

Victor snaps towards Melanie. He shakes his head frantically in disbelief. He points at the pile of bodies bellow.

VICTOR

What does that mean! Those are people down there.

MELANIE

(slowly)

No, those are ESCs, not humans. If they were humans they wouldn't have been discarded in this way.

Victor stares at the bodies, tears streaming down his face.

VICTOR

This is wrong! How could they do this?

Victor falls to his knees. Melanie places a comforting hand on shoulder.

MELANIE

The factory made you so they can discard you, I'm fighting this and you can fight too.

A long eerie silence falls upon them. Melanie hesitates, trying to analyze Victor's sudden still expression. Victor takes in a long breathe.

VICTOR

(whisper)

Maybe I don't want to fight.

Melanie blinks, shocked. She leans down to him, gripping his shoulders, forcing him to look at her.

MELANIE
What do you mean?

Victor stares at her, expressionless.

VICTOR
Maybe being dead is better.

Melanie pauses. She stares at Victor waiting, hoping. Victor slowly raises his eyes to meet hers. Melanie takes in a deep breath.

MELANIE
(worried)
Don't be ridiculous.

VICTOR
No, I mean it. I'd rather be dead
than fight a war that is not mine.

There is a pause. Melanie blinks in disbelief, she glances at the bodies bellow then back at Victor.

MELANIE
But it is for your life.

Victor turns away from her. His eyes empty. She shakes her head in disbelief. She grabs his shoulders, forcing him to look at her. She searches his eyes for reasoning.

VICTOR
I don't have a life, I'm made of
metal and wires.

MELANIE
No, you have a life, you feel
emotion, you make choices--

Victor grips Melanie's arms, she gasps with fright. They hold each other for a moment. Melanie sucks in a quick, but frightened breath, unsure of Victor's next move.

VICTOR
It is not mine! This is not my
life, I'm a copy of someone else.

He releases her. Melanie stares at him. She shakes her head.

MELANIE
(quietly)
Do you really want to die?
(MORE)

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Before you see the new world for
free ESCs.

There is a pause. Victor places his head in his hands.

VICTOR

I don't know. There is just so much
going on in my head. Uncontrollably
waves of colour and sounds.

Melanie softens. She comfortingly strokes his hands.

MELANIE

I promise it is not always going to
feel like this. It will get better.

VICTOR

When?

She wonders for a moment. She smiles confidently at Victor.

MELANIE

In a week or two, Jeremiah handled
it pretty well.

VICTOR

That sounds like a long time.

MELANIE

Not really, you can start thinking
about being your own person, having
dreams and goals of your own.

He shakes his head, still denying.

VICTOR

But they are still copied. My
personality, skills and beliefs are
not mine.

Melanie smirks confidently. Victor notices.

MELANIE

So? You can still make your own
choices. You can move left instead
of right, skip breakfast... those
choices are yours to make.

Victor shows a small smile and runs a shaky hand through his
hair.

VICTOR

This all seems complicated.

MELANIE

It can be sometimes, but most of
the time it is great. Having
Jeremiah has helped our cause a lot
and Tamara

(Melanie blushes)
has been amazing too.

Melanie looks back at Victor seriously.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

The point is when this tough time
passes it gets better, you find
yourself and a new sense of freedom
and purpose.

Victor's eyes widen hopeful.

VICTOR

I really hope you are right. I just
feel like a copy at this moment.

MELANIE

You might not feel like yourself
now, but you will. I promise.

Melanie takes Victor's hands into hers. She stares at him,
smiling innocently.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

I promise you victor. You will be
able to be yourself by the end of
today.

Victor smiles back.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. OUTSKIRTS - ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The other ESCs leave, leaving behind Ava, Beatrice, Oscar,
Tamara and Jeremiah. Jeremiah shifts his weight lazily.

JEREMIAH

Now that you know I'm serious, what
do you have to tell Melanie that is
so important.

Beatrice and Oscar simultaneously look at Ava. Ava shrugs
smirking at Jeremiah, impressed.

AVA

Okay, you have proved your point and we can trust you. The factory staff have been taking extra steps to find you guys and to stop what you are trying to do.

JEREMIAH

Unfortunately we already know this, we have always been careful about when we have these meetings and being very discreet in the streets.

Beatrice shakes her head, concerned. She pushes forward into the conversation, making what she has to share, a priority.

BEATRICE

No, they are doing more than that, they are bribing the community and blackmailing other ESCs to find you.

OSCAR

We are trying to tell you that in the next few days you can expect an attack.

Tamara gasps as Jeremiah listens intensely.

TAMARA

Wait, you think another ESC would bring the collectors here.

Ava shrugs. She motions to Beatrice and Oscar knowingly.

AVA

It's what we are worried about.

TAMARA

(worried)

Then we have to tell Melanie that we need to move.

BEATRICE

There is no need to worry, Melanie is prepared for that kind of outcome.

Jeremiah cocks his head to the side, intrigued.

JEREMIAH

You do seem to know a lot about her.

OSCAR

Well unlike you, we were her first batch of ESCs she had rescued. We have been running, hiding, making waves for the ESCs and even reporting what ever we find to Melanie.

Jeremiah frowns.

JEREMIAH

I never knew this.

AVA

As we said, other ESCs could betray you, and Melanie is a very cautious girl, keeping every batch of ESCs she has rescued separately.

Tamara crosses her arms, worried. Jeremiah notices, his body relaxes.

JEREMIAH

(calmly)

I'm guessing separating us as batches makes it easier to keep us safe. If one group was found she could notify the others to keep as many of us safe. I can understand why.

BEATRICE

So can you understand why we are here?

There is a pause. Tamara and Jeremiah simultaneously scan Oscar, Beatrice and Ava's shared concerned expression. Tamara suddenly gasps. Jeremiah's eyes widen.

TAMARA

Is Melanie in danger?

OSCAR

It is a big fear for us, because whether we like it or not Melanie helped all of us and continues to do so, but most of us are too cowardly to do the same.

Jeremiah tenses again. He blinks and slowly shakes his head with a mixture of disgust and disbelief.

JEREMIAH

You think her community will turn on her?

AVA

Poor humans will always be desperate for money.

JEREMIAH

Shit. What do you suggest?

OSCAR

Like we said before, just prepare for an attack, we personally think they will make a move later in the week, just judging by their movements.

TAMARA

I really don't want Melanie to be in any kind of danger not soon and not later.

Tamara quickly locks eyes with Jeremiah, she furrows her eyebrows pleadingly.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

(to Jeremiah)

Please, lets go get her and move our base of operation somewhere else. They can't do much if they don't know where to look.

Ava shrugs, laughing.

AVA

They already don't know where to look. They might sweep the city. Have collectors and cops on all corners on the street.

OSCAR

ESCs might also be in danger, we are also here to take groups of them out of the city until it is safer for them to return.

Jeremiah raises his hands, catching their attention.

JEREMIAH

No, that will set our plans back by years.

(MORE)

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

We are making more progress then we ever had, it would be stupid to hide now, we could just start the revolt now.

BEATRICE

As much as we want to do that, they are the ones making the first move, for now I want to be on the defense.

Tamara blinks, shocked.

TAMARA

So we sit back and wait?

OSCAR

Yes, but we still want to talk to Melanie and want to hear what she thinks we should do.

TAMARA

We can take you to her.

Jeremiah shakes his head, glancing at everyone in the room.

JEREMIAH

No, you make good points, but the best thing to keep Melanie safe is if she came here... and unfortunately she is busy with another ESC.

Ava, Beatrice and Oscar stare at Jeremiah, eyes wide.

BEATRICE

(loudly)

You left her with an unknown ESC?

JEREMIAH

Trust me she is fine, would you like me to call her?

OSCAR

(impatiently)

Please do.

Jeremiah rolls his eyes and slowly pulls out his phone. He pushes a button and holds up the phone on speaker.

JEREMIAH

(over the phone)

Hey Melanie how is it going.

MELANIE (O.S.)
Good... I think. Victor had a
moment at the dump, but everything
is--

Everyone relaxes. Jeremiah abruptly ends the call.

JEREMIAH
Happy now?

Ava, Beatrice and Oscar stare at Jeremiah, clearly
unimpressed.

OSCAR
We just wanted to know that she is
safe, it is, currently, a very
stressful time for all of us.

JEREMIAH
I know, but I can speak for all of
us that we don't want Melanie to
stress or worry anymore than she
has been.

A pause.

AVA
(slowly)
You are right. But we still can't
ignore the danger.

Jeremiah closes his eyes in deep thought for a moment. He
abruptly locks eyes with the group.

JEREMIAH
I think I may have an idea. It will
be mildly dangerous, but it might
work in our favor.

BEATRICE
Please explain.

JEREMIAH
I don't want to start the
revolution now, nor do I want to
cause a set back. Yes we are
sitting ducks and the knowledge of
an impending attack doesn't sit
well with me.

Jeremiah glances at all of them.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

If they are putting so much effort to catch and stop us they might be neglecting their own safe guards. I am suggesting we tamper with some of their plans, not an attack, but sabotage.

Ava's eyes widen with delight.

AVA

Now that is a plan I can roll with.

Oscar shakes his head, unsure.

OSCAR

In theory yes, it is a good plan, but it might be more trouble than it is worth. What if we get caught, accidentally lead then to Melanie, there is a lot for us to loose just to buy some time from an impending attack.

Jeremiah relaxes, smirking.

JEREMIAH

It is not us attacking, it is simply sabotage, and I think I know just where to hit them.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. SEWER SYSTEM - UNDER FACTORY - MOMENTS LATER

Jeremiah is marching through the sewer with Tamara, Beatrice, Ava and Oscar. Ava holds her nose, frowning in disgust.

AVA

Good grief it is awful in here.

Oscar lets out an exasperated sigh.

OSCAR

For the last time Ava, get used to it.

AVA

I never want to get used to this it is horrible.

Tamara chuckles, the sound echoing around them.

TAMARA

Yet it is the best way for us to travel.

BEATRICE

Melanie sure liked the sewers a lot, I remember that she never minded the smell, but Furnard definitely did.

Ava perks up. She looks up with a wide smile, reminiscing.

AVA

I miss that crazy cat.

Tamara laughs. Jeremiah quickly scans around him.

TAMARA

I hate that cat.

Jeremiah stops, looking up. The group notices and slowly comes to a stop. Tamara notices and glances up at a manhole cover above them.

JEREMIAH

I second that. I think this is our stop.

BEATRICE

Please remind me of the plan.

Everyone gathers around Jeremiah as he points to the manhole above him. He glances at everyone, ensuring he has their full attention.

JEREMIAH

Beatrice and Tamara will stay down here. Ava will be distracting the security on the main floor. Oscar will get into the control room and start deleting important files whereas I will go to the factory's main power supply and fuck with that a bit.

Everyone nods in agreement.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

And please try keep all your hoods up, we don't want the cameras to recognize our faces. Is everyone ready?

AVA

Hell yeah.

Oscar nods. Jeremiah motions towards the manhole cover above them and they push it open and bright light spills into the sewer.

EXT. FACTORY - ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeremiah pulls himself up out of the manhole. He quickly scans the empty alleyway. He leans down and helps Oscar and Ava up. Oscar and Ava stand and dust themselves off, Jeremiah notices and does the same.

BEATRICE (O.S.)

Good luck guys.

Ava glances down and waves.

AVA

Thanks a bunch Beatrice!

Jeremiah coughs, grabbing their attention.

JEREMIAH

Okay, Ava go through the front with Oscar and I will go through the back. I'm sure you can figure out what you have to do from there.

The manhole cover abruptly shuts. Ava blinks surprised. Oscar and Jeremiah nod towards each other. Oscar turns, taking hold of Ava's arm.

AVA

Wow.

OSCAR

Lets go.

Ava blinks, understandingly. She follows Oscar.

JEREMIAH

Be safe everyone.

Oscar waves and Jeremiah turns on his heels, darting down the alley way.

EXT. FACTORY - DOCKING BAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jeremiah peaks around the corner observing WORKERS packing vans and unpacking other vehicles. Jeremiah glances towards the main doors where TWO WORKERS are standing near.

Jeremiah turns around searching the ground and picks up a lone brick. He glances at the brick then back at the main doors. He launches the brick far across the docking bay.

The two workers jolt as the brick crashes. They quickly rush over towards the sound. Jeremiah watches as they leave the main doors unattended. He darts towards it, being both quick and quiet.

INT. FACTORY - DOCKING BAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeremiah slips inside. There are collections of large crates staked on top one another and organized in neat rows. Jeremiah moves swiftly through the crates, avoiding workers.

He hides between two crates and takes in a deep breath. He glances around the crates and sees TWO OTHER WORKERS with clipboards slowly making their way in Jeremiah's direction. Jeremiah turns away, eyes wide.

He frantically looks around and suddenly notices a gap between two crates that he could fit through. He quickly squeezes through the gab and hides as the sound of footsteps approach.

DOCKING BAY WORKER 1 (O.S.)

What stock is coming in today?

DOCKING BAY WORKER 2 (O.S.)
I believe more hollow ESC models,
maybe more computer chips.

They are approaching Jeremiah.

DOCKING BAY WORKER 1 (O.S.)
What else?

The workers stop in front of Jeremiah, not noticing him.
Jeremiah tenses, holding his breath. Watching them.

DOCKING BAY WORKER 2
If you really want to know, check
the logs in the IT department or
grow a brain and download the app.

DOCKING BAY WORKER 1
I really don't want to download the
app.

The worker sighs exasperatedly. He lowers the clipboard and
stares at his coworker, unimpressed.

DOCKING BAY WORKER 2
Then stop asking questions and find
out things for yourself.

He walks away from his coworker and his coworker follows him,
his head awkwardly low. They leave Jeremiah.

Jeremiah lets out a shaky breath. He peaks his head out and
scans his empty surroundings. He sighs and moves forward.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. FACTORY - IT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The IT room is empty as a flap from the vent opens. Jeremiah
slips out from the vent. He glances round himself cautiously.

There are a series of desktops around the room. Jeremiah's
eyes lands on one that has already been unlocked. He raises
his eyebrows.

JEREMIAH
My lucky day.

Jeremiah cautiously moves over to the desktop, occasionally
glancing around him.

He sits and browses the desktop. His eyes find a file called
'clients' he clicks on it. Thousands of files pop up.

Jeremiah pauses. He glances at his own reflection on the desktop screen.

He blinks, licks his lips nervously and types in 'Sara'. The file pops up and he opens it. He finds her application for an ESC, documents about her husband and weekly reports on Jeremiah's behaviors throughout his time with her.

Tears fall down his cheek as he sees on one of the documents, 'I love him, he is perfect in every way and I don't know why I didn't do this sooner'. Jeremiah abruptly closes all the files.

He sucks in a shaky breath. Placing his head in his hands and wiping his tears away.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)
(whisper)
God damn it.

He glances around him again. His eyes land on the vents above him. His eyes turn serious.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)
This place will fucking burn.

He jumps from his chair with clenched fists, tears still streaming down his face. He marches towards the vents and with brute strength pulls himself up in one swift motion.

INT. FACTORY - GENERATOR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jeremiah bursts through the vents into the generator room. Five incredibly large generators let out loud mechanical noises. There are a few WORKERS observing the generators.

The Workers jump with fright as they see Jeremiah marching towards them with clenched fists. Jeremiah swiftly punches two workers in the face, hard, knocking them both unconscious. Everyone else in the room yells and flees. Jeremiah smirks confidently as he rushes over to the generators.

One by one he fiddles with the generator buttons causing the generators to creek loudly as the mechanical noises increases with the sound of steam being produced by them increasing as well. Jeremiah moves away, looking at the generator. The noise only increases and Jeremiah's eyes suddenly widen.

JEREMIAH
Oh shit!

He bolts out of the generator room as the generators grow increasingly loud until it is unbearable.

INT. FACTORY - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeremiah dashes through the hallway, he gets stares and sudden yelps of fright from the INDIVIDUALS he passes. He sees a sign marked 'lobby'. Jeremiah gasps and follows it.

INT. FACTORY - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Jeremiah bolts into the lobby and immediately notices Ava and Oscar standing by the front doors leading to the street. The RECEPTIONIST gasps.

RECEPTIONIST

Security!

Oscar and Ava raise their eyebrows as Jeremiah dashes in their direction.

AVA

What's wrong--

JEREMIAH

(breathlessly)

No time, run!

TWO SECURITY PERSONAL enter the lobby, they point at Jeremiah and give chase. Jeremiah takes Ava and Oscar by the arms and dashes for the front door as the Two security personal chases after Jeremiah, Oscar and Ava.

EXT. FACTORY - STREET - CONTINUOUS

Jeremiah, Ava and Oscar burst through the front doors into the street. Suddenly there is a blast from inside the factory. Jeremiah, Ava and Oscar lose their balance and fall onto the concrete.

OSCAR

Shit!

AVA

What did you do?

Oscar and Ava stare at Jeremiah accusingly. Jeremiah shakes his head and bounces back to his feet.

JEREMIAH

Run!

Jeremiah bolts towards the factory alleyway Oscar scoffs and follows after Jeremiah. Ava glances back at the factory.

EXT. FACTORY ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeremiah dashes to the manhole cover and quickly slides it open. He motions for Oscar and Ava.

JEREMIAH
Hurry! Dive in!

Oscar nods and dives through the manhole. Ava winces in disgust, she holds her nose and jumps in too. Jeremiah glances back at the factory as sirens ring in the air. Jeremiah sighs with relief and jumps through the manhole.

INT. SEWER SYSTEM - UNDER FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

Jeremiah dives into the manhole and quickly slides it shut. Tamara, Beatrice, Ava and Oscar stare at Jeremiah, frightened.

JEREMIAH
Go guys go!

Everyone turns, running towards the way they came. Jeremiah sprints just behind them.

AVA
(sarcasm)
Well that went well.

Oscar throws his hands in the air in frustration.

OSCAR
Are you kidding that was completely stupid.

JEREMIAH
It doesn't matter now, those bastards will be busy for weeks cleaning up that mess.

Tamara glances over to Jeremiah, clearly concerned.

TAMARA
Will Melanie know it was us?

Jeremiah laughs. He stares forward, smiling sheepishly.

JEREMIAH

Are you kidding, she knows exactly what the factory is doing and when... most of the time. Considering we made a big noise I can imagine her right now working overtime to try remove us from their footage.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MEANWHILE

Melanie is staring at her phone furious.

MELANIE

My god what has this idiot done!

Victor jumps with fright at the kitchen counter.

VICTOR

Everything alright?

Melanie paces around him, irritably. Staring at her phone as she picks at her nails.

MELANIE

Absolutely not. We have to go to the warehouse... like now.

She spins on her heels and pulls out a bag from the bottom of one of the counter. Victor watches as she puts her tools in the bag.

VICTOR

But you still need to fix me.

Melanie nods, understanding.

MELANIE

Trust me I will. For now I have to clean up someone's mess.

VICTOR

How bad is it?

MELANIE

Not too bad, but bad enough for it to stress me out. Jeremiah just did something stupid at the factory.

His eyes widen with concern.

VICTOR

Is he alright?

Melanie scoffs. She pauses and turns to Victor with her hand on her hip.

MELANIE

He better be because I just might
kill myself.

Furnard jumps onto the kitchen counter. He nuzzles up to Melanie. Melanie smiles, picking him up. Victor notices, then frowns.

VICTOR

Are you not in a rush?

She cradles Furnard, stroking him.

MELANIE

There is always a minute to spare
to give Furnard some affection.

VICTOR

(confused)
It is a cat.

MELANIE

And a friend...

Melanie watches Victor as he stares at Furnard. She frowns.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Aren't you able to identify a
animal as a friend?

Victor shakes his head, deep in thought.

VICTOR

No, I just see an animal.

MELANIE

That is very worrying, but maybe
the person you were designed after
didn't like animals.

VICTOR

(sarcastic)
Great, I was cloned after an animal
hater.

MELANIE

I don't think you personally have
to hate cats.

(pause)
Here.

Melanie hands Furnard over to Victor. Victor gasps as he hesitantly takes Furnard into his arms. Furnard stares up at Victor.

VICTOR
(awkwardly)
Good cat.

Victor strokes Furnard. Furnard stares at him. Victor smiles and Melanie smiles at them.

MELANIE
You like him?

Victor smiles, Furnard looks at Melanie and meows loudly.

VICTOR
He is cute.

Suddenly Furnard hisses, Victor jumps with fright dropping Furnard, but Furnard lands on his feet and walks away.

MELANIE
(awkwardly)
Okay, lets get a move on.

Melanie points towards the front door. Victor stares at her, uncomfortably.

INT. OUTSKIRTS - WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Melanie walks in with the bag over her shoulder with Furnard and Victor following her in closely. Victor looks around the room in awe.

VICTOR
What is this place?

Melanie glances around the room proudly.

MELANIE
Where we help ESCs with their
problems, whether mentally,
physically or emotionally.

Victor nods, impressed.

VICTOR
Sounds like a tough job.

MELANIE
Big dreams require a lot of work.

VICTOR
I can see that.

Melanie glances at the office door and approaches it. Victor is still looking around the room.

MELANIE
Follow me.

Victor jumps and quickly rushes to follow Melanie.

INT. OUTSKIRTS - WAREHOUSE - MELANIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Victor looks around the room in awe. Melanie smiles at him. He sees the desktop, staring intensely at it. Melanie frowns as he continues to stare.

MELANIE
(confused)
Is everything alright?

Victor abruptly straightens up.

VICTOR
Yeah, sorry I dazed off.

Melanie shakes her head, smiling. She motions towards the chair.

MELANIE
Don't worry about it, now lets have
a look inside that head.

Victor smiles and nods enthusiastically. Melanie claps her hands and circles around Victor and ushers him to sit down, she fiddles around his head and suddenly a metal flap opens. Melanie jumps back with fright as Victor slumps lifelessly into the chair.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
What the hell?

Melanie stares at the flap filled with wires and motherboards. She turns to Furnard concerned. Furnard meows at her.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
I swear I tried everything back at
the apartment. Why now?

Melanie examines the flap cautiously. She frowns and slowly picks up a tool and begins to fiddle around. She shakes her head confused. She glances at the desktop then at Victor.

She hesitantly walks over to the desktop and retrieves a flash drive. She moves back to Victor. Furnard abruptly hisses. Melanie jumps.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Don't do that! You gave me a
fright!

Furnard meows loudly at Victor. Melanie glances at Furnard.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
I know, he is freaking me out too.
We still have to help him though.

Melanie hesitantly plugs the flash drive into Victor's head.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. OUTSKIRTS - WAREHOUSE - MELANIE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Melanie stares nervously at Victor. Furnard meows loudly.

MELANIE

I know I should wake him up, but
something feels off. Do you feel it
too?

She glances at Furnard as he licks his whiskers.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Maybe you are right and I'm just
over thinking it. It must have been
a coincidence.

She stares at Victor for a while, she bites her lip. She
hesitantly pulls out the flash drive and very slowly closes
the flap.

Victor's eyes shoot open. Melanie lets out a light gasp.

VICTOR

(hopeful)
Did it work?

Melanie furrows her brows in thought.

MELANIE

Hard to say. Do you feel any
different?

Victor holds his hands out, he looks at them, clenching then
unclenching.

VICTOR

(confused)
Not really.

MELANIE

Really think about it, have a walk,
pet Furnard, anything that shows a
difference in the programming.

Victor slowly gets up from the chair, he walks around the
office, he pauses, staring at the desktop again. He turns
away, Melanie sighs with relief.

VICTOR

I feel great.

Melanie smiles.

MELANIE

I'll take your word for it, but for now just keep an eye out for whatever would be new to you.

Victor smiles back.

VICTOR

Will do.

MELANIE

By the way, I don't like introducing new reprogrammed ESCs to violence, but Jeremiah is on his way here and I'm itching to give him a knuckle sandwich.

Melanie playfully punches her two fists together, smirking confidently. Victor's smile turns awkward.

ENT. SEWER SYSTEM - BEHIND THE WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Jeremiah helps Ava out of the sewer. Beatrice, Oscar and Tamara all have their arms crossed over their chests. Jeremiah notices and shrugs.

JEREMIAH

A good idea in theory, in execution not so much.

OSCAR

(sarcastic)

No kidding.

BEATRICE

At least we know we can trust each other.

Ava jumps into the middle. Grabbing their attention.

AVA

Yeah, it has been quite refreshing... you know, instead of hiding we are taking action.

Tamara frowns.

TAMARA

I would have preferred not being in danger.

Ava moves towards Jeremiah, leaning against him. Jeremiah blinks in confusion.

AVA
(to Jeremiah)
I think you and I will be very good
friends during this revolution.

She skips away. Jeremiah stares in disbelief. Beatrice and Oscar laugh.

BEATRICE
Careful with that little
firecracker.

OSCAR
She looks cute, but she is
definitely dangerous.

TAMARA
(awkwardly)
Lets head inside.

Tamara motions towards the building. Jeremiah, Tamara, Oscar and Beatrice moves towards the building.

JEREMIAH
Yeah, I wonder if the meeting
continued while we were gone.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. OUTSKIRTS - WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Jeremiah, Oscar, Beatrice and Ava arrives into the room only to see Melanie tapping her foot furiously and her arms crossed over her chest. Ava stands awkwardly next to Victor. Furnard stares daggers at Jeremiah, at Melanie's feet. Jeremiah immediately lowers his head and raises his hands defensively.

JEREMIAH
Before you start yelling--

Melanie throws her hands up, frustrated.

MELANIE
What were you thinking?

JEREMIAH
I was thinking what was the best
for us.

Melanie scoffs.

MELANIE

Everything was fine and good and...

Melanie notices Beatrice and Oscar. She points at Ava.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

What the hell are you three doing here, you are not meant to be in the city until I call for you.

Beatrice lowers her head, clearly guilty.

BEATRICE

It was for your benefit.

Oscar steps forward.

OSCAR

(calmly)

You are in danger.

Melanie raises her finger, silencing them.

MELANIE

I appreciate the thought, but I can take care of myself.

Furnard meows. Ava rolls her eyes and places her hands on her hip.

AVA

Sorry honey, but not when the bad guys are on your doorstep.

TAMARA

(concerned)

She is right, they were planning an attack.

Melanie blinks in disbelief.

MELANIE

That doesn't mean attack them first.

Jeremiah smiles sheepishly.

JEREMIAH

It was originally more of a sabotage.

MELANIE

(irritated)

Sure, right, do you know how long it took me to remove all of you from their footage. A fuck long time. Pluss if they wanted to attack they would have done it sooner.

Oscar shakes his head, looking at Melanie pleadingly.

OSCAR

Maybe they needed more resources or something.

Victor abruptly tenses. Ava jumps back with fright. Furnard circles around Victor curiously.

VICTOR

Or something.

Ava leans in for a closer look.

AVA

God he is creepy.

JEREMIAH

What is wrong with him.

Melanie hesitates. She glances at Jeremiah then back at Victor.

MELANIE

(worried)

I- I don't know. He was fine a second ago.

Suddenly Victor's eyes start glowing white. Everyone tenses.

VICTOR

Or something, or some- some- something! OR!--

Victor shakes violently. Ava's eyes widen fearfully and Furnard jumps back, hissing at Victor.

AVA

What the--

Melanie gasps and dashes towards Ava protectively. Jeremiah charges after Melanie.

MELANIE

Get back!

JEREMIAH

Melanie!

Jeremiah dashes arms stretched towards Melanie and Ava. Ava scoops up Furnard protectively as Jeremiah pulls Melanie and Ava into his arms protectively.

Tamara grabs Beatrice's and Oscar's hands and pulls them violently towards the front door.

TAMARA

Run!

Victor abruptly stills. Everyone freezes in place. Melanie watches on in horror.

VICTOR

(loudly)

This is a message. From the director of ESC manufacturing. Stop what you are doing and you just might live a comfortable life. If you continue to stop us and continue to reprogram the ESCs we will find and stop you. Now that we know who you are.

Melanie, Jeremiah and Ava stare in horror at Victor. Suddenly his glowing eyes revert to normal and he collapses onto the ground. There is a long pause and Melanie brings her shaky hands to her mouth.

MELANIE

Oh my god.

Jeremiah stares bitterly at Victor's body.

JEREMIAH

He was planted to trick us.

Ava blinks, still scared, but a bit more curious.

AVA

They can do that?

JEREMIAH

I guess they can program ESC's now without a personality or with a possible hidden agender.

Melanie closes her eyes briefly. She takes in a shaky breath.

MELANIE

They are making more ways to trap
ESCs in their own bodies. I-I can't
help them.

Jeremiah pulls Melanie into his arms, comforting her. Ava
stares at Victor.

AVA

(whisper)

H-he is stuck like that, forever?

END ACT FOUR

TAG

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

Jeremiah and Oscar carry Victor into Melanie's apartment. Melanie follows close behind them as Beatrice, Ava and Tamara follow behind her. Ava eyes Victor nervously as Oscar and Jeremiah lay him on the couch.

AVA

Are we sure this is a good idea.

Melanie runs a nervous hand through her hair. She glances at everyone in the room as they stare at her, waiting.

MELANIE

He still has feelings, he was j-
just programed with a hidden
agenda.

Ava shakes her head, glancing at Beatrice and Oscar for reasoning.

AVA

But is this, what we are doing, a
good idea?

Melanie takes in a shaky breath. She stares at Victor in deep thought.

MELANIE

Probably not.

Ava scoffs.

AVA

Then we should leave him somewhere
else.

Tamara pushes through, placing herself in front of Ava, staring down at her, with a serious gaze.

TAMARA

Hey! Would you want that to happen
if that was you right here? Trapped
behind those bastards programming.

Ava hesitates, she lowers her eyes shamefully. Jeremiah straightens up, raising his hands defensively.

JEREMIAH

Everyone just take it easy.

There is a pause. Beatrice looks at Melanie, concerned.

BEATRICE

Are you sure you can help him.

Melanie sighs.

MELANIE

I can, just not now, not with the tools I have.

OSCAR

Then what should we do.

Melanie bites her lip. Her eyes well up.

MELANIE

The only way I can think of is if we shut him down, until I can free him.

Everyone tenses. Jeremiah blinks at Melanie in disbelief.

JEREMIAH

(to Melanie)

Is that really the only way.

MELANIE

(whisper)

He did say he wanted to die rather than run. And I think he will prefer being shut down rather than walk around knowing he is a risk to us.

Beatrice, Ava, Oscar and Tamara lower their heads, saddened but understanding. Jeremiah slowly moves over to Melanie and places a comforting hand on her shoulder.

JEREMIAH

Are you okay?

Melanie stares blankly at Victor. She pauses.

MELANIE

I don't think I will ever be okay.

FADE TO BLACK.