

CRATER

by

Luke Pimentel

956 Lakeville Circle
Petaluma, CA 94954
707-318-7023
georgezip@att.net
WGA Registration #1550026

April 23, 2012

"CRATER"

Start on all black.

ESSEX'S VOICE
Juneau. Palau. Mariana.

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

PULL OUT to reveal a flat, clear computer screen.

ESSEX'S VOICE
Juneau. Palau. Mariana.

The three words appear onscreen, followed by a message prompt:
"FAILED WINDOW CONNECT."

NEW ANGLE

A pair of tough-looking eyes regard the screen with contempt.

PULL BACK to reveal ESSEX, 38, sitting in an ordinary office.

ESSEX won't beat your ass - emphasis on "won't" - but he
could if he wanted to.

ESSEX
(sighs)
Juneau. Palau. Mariana.

More failure. Essex tries again.

As he does, the PULL reveals a bank of surveillance monitors
sitting behind him.

INT. CAFETERIA/REC ROOM

A dozen or so INMATES stand in a line, getting mess food
dumped onto metal trays. They are dressed in matching grey
scrubs. A dozen or so other MEN sit at tables behind them.

The two men at the front of the line - HILL and SANCHEZ -
look on as a ladel of brown gunk is SPLATTED on their dishes.

COOK
Next.

As they walk away, three other INMATES approach with trays.

NEW ANGLE

Sanchez palms a homemade shiv.

As the other Inmates walk by, Sanchez swings the shiv toward
one of them. It catches the man square in the eye.

Inmate 1 HOWLS in pain. Sanchez dislodges the shiv and swings it toward the man's neck, slashing his throat.

As Inmate 1 falls dead, Inmate 2 drops his tray and brings his fists up, but before he can defend, Sanchez has already buried the shiv deep in his stomach.

Behind them, Hill tackles Inmate 3, attempting to stab him with his own shiv. Inmate 3 resists.

INT. OFFICE

The fight plays out on several of the monitor screens. Essex is oblivious. Right now he only has three words on his mind:

ESSEX
Juneau. Palau. Mariana.

ANGLE ON

Essex. Behind him - out of focus - the office door opens.

COLEMAN'S VOICE
(distant)
Essex.

Essex continues to focus on the screen.

COLEMAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)
(slightly louder)
Essex.

Essex doesn't look up.

COLEMAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)
(fully audible)
WARDEN!

THAT gets his attention. Essex snaps up, turns around, and finds himself facing an underling: OPERATIVE COLEMAN, 25.

COLEMAN
(gestures to screens)
Warden, the natives are restless.

Warden Essex immediately grabs a headpiece and swings his computer screen around.

ESSEX
(into mic)
Get me tracers.

INT. CAFETERIA/REC ROOM

Sanchez finishes off Inmate 2. Behind him, the rest of the INMATES stand impotently, until one finally speaks up.

INMATE 4
Someone stop this!

Nobody moves. Sanchez runs and double-teams Inmate 3, kicking him in the head while Hill slashes at him in full guard.

INT. OFFICE

Up pops a diagram of the Cafeteria/Rec Room. Several blips trace around the walls of the diagram. Several more blips mark the positions of the people in the room.

ESSEX
Too many people in the way... fucking
move!

INT. CAFETERIA/REC ROOM

Finally, Inmate 4 moves in, swinging his tray at Sanchez, trying to stop the attack. Sanchez turns around and swings the shiv at him.

Inmate 4 deflects the shiv, but can't counter for Sanchez's fist, which pile-drives him into a nearby table.

INT. OFFICE

One of the blips locks on its target.

ESSEX
Lock one...

INT. CAFETERIA/REC ROOM

Hill and Sanchez finally break Inmate 3. They set in on him, arcing their shivs up and down.

The room is filled with the sickening THUMP of impact noises.

INT. OFFICE

The other blip locks in.

ESSEX
Lock two.

INT. CAFETERIA/REC ROOM

The walls CRACKLE.

Two bolts of electricity SCREAM OUT into the room, catching Sanchez and Hill. FWAAAAAAAAM!

The shivs drop as both men are frozen in place.

FWAAAAP! The electricity is sucked back into the wall. Both men are sucked back with it.

SLAM! They are pinned to the wall, still shaking as the electricity sizzles through them.

Finally, the bolts disappear. Both men drop, unconscious, blood pouring from their noses.

A beat of silence. Then, a VOICE on a loudspeaker.

ESSEX (V.O.)

This is Warden Essex. We have
location tracers on all of you. Try
anything and you will be put down.

INT. OFFICE

Essex turns to Coleman.

ESSEX

(off mic)

Which gang are they?

COLEMAN

Joaquin's.

ESSEX

(off mic)

Who else is high-ranking?

COLEMAN

Uh... Ross and Alonzo.

ESSEX

(on mic)

Ross, Alonzo, and Joaquin. Bring
the attackers to the Northwest
Corridor, now.

(beat)

Everyone else, dinner's over. Back
to your cells.

INT. CAFETERIA/REC ROOM

A brief pause before all the inmates begin shuffling out of the room, except for three: INMATE ROSS, 23, INMATE ALONZO, 23, and INMATE JOAQUIN, 31.

JOAQUIN pairs the soul of a raging brute with the implacable resilience of an Old West gunslinger. During his days as a hit squad leader in Mexico, he was known to skin people alive.

He and his soldiers walk over to Sanchez and Hill.

INT. OFFICE

ESSEX

(on mic)

Operatives, watch those men.

He clicks off the mic and turns back to Coleman, SIGHING.

ESSEX (CONT'D)

Turn my back for one goddamn minute.
Where were you guys?

COLEMAN

Another fight over in Block 'A'. We
were helping Rigg's men break it up.

ESSEX

Two fights at the same time.
Diversion?

COLEMAN

(nods)
Maybe.

ESSEX

Bring all of 'em to the holding cells.
I'll be ready in five.

Essex gets up and heads for the door.

COLEMAN

Warden, we've never had a murder...
what are we gonna do about it?

The Warden exits without a reply.

INT. HOLDING CELL - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Essex stands, flanked by Coleman and another operative -
OPERATIVE SNYDER, 22.

They peer down at the two FIGHTERS who created the diversion.
Both have bruises and black eyes, but are otherwise uninjured.

ESSEX

One week in The Hole for fighting.
One week KP for involving other
inmates in said fight. You'll be
moved later. Get out.

Both men exit. They are replaced by the two killers, Sanchez
and Hill. Both men are lowered into chairs, as their legs
are still too weak to stand.

ESSEX (CONT'D)

Osvaldo Sanchez and Jeremiah Hill,
you are convicted felons in a maximum-
security penitentiary. Based on
evidence submitted to an outpost
tribunal, you've been found guilty
of murdering three fellow inmates.
Standard penalty for these actions
is execution.

The men are silent. Hill is pure ice; Sanchez wears a visible sweat.

A STERN-LOOKING WOMAN appears on a screen above them. The screen flickers with static and other interference.

ESSEX (CONT'D)

However, as inmates in the Central Op system, you are allowed a defense liaison at this time, in the hope of lessening your punishment. Do you have anything to say for yourselves?

HILL

I'm gonna enjoy raping your mother in Hell.

Unimpressed, Essex turns to the second prisoner.

ESSEX

Sanchez?

SANCHEZ

Real justice is coming. You will all bleed.

The stern woman gives Sanchez and Hill a glance of icy disdain before the screen cuts out.

Essex SIGHS, frustrated.

Onscreen, a message. "RECOMMENDED PUNISHMENT: MAXIMUM."

ESSEX

You give me no choice. You're hereby sentenced to execution in the gallows. Effective immediately.

(to Coleman)

Have them prepped.

INT. NORTHWEST CORRIDOR

Coleman and Snyder - bearing "electroguns", or electric assault guns - prop up a shackled Sanchez and Hill as they shuffle down the corridor.

A seemingly blank wall RISES UP.

INT. CAFETERIA/REC ROOM

The same room from earlier, revealed as a large central point in the building. They move to the right.

Two heavily-armored doors SLIDE OPEN...

INT. CELL BLOCK "A"

...and now they are in the first of two cell blocks, the Western-most of the two.

All the other INMATES are standing at attention, watching as the two attackers are led away.

COLEMAN

Dead men walking.

As they move toward a side hallway the end of the block, Sanchez and Hill see Ross, Alonzo, and Joaquin standing side-by-side.

Joaquin gives Sanchez and Hill the slightest of nods.

INT. CELL BLOCK "A" - GALLOWS

A short, squat, cramped room with a pair of doors at the far end. The doors SLIDE OPEN. They are cold, heavy, uninviting.

Sanchez and Hill are shoved in.

COLEMAN

May God have mercy on your souls.

The doors SLAM shut.

INT. GALLOWS ELEVATOR

The elevator descends downward, SQUEALING and WHINING loudly in protest.

Sanchez, realizing the gravity of the situation, crosses himself. Hill stares straight ahead, his eyes empty.

The elevator stops with an abrupt CLANK.

The doors slide open... and Sanchez and Hill find themselves confronted with...

EXT. SPACE

...the empty vacuum of a lifeless moon. Gray ash below, infinite stars above... and in-between, the upper lip of a seemingly endless, vertiginous cliff.

The air is immediately sucked from their lungs. Their eyes and lips swell, the moisture on them quickly freezing over. Their bodies convulse silently.

INT. OPERATIONS BUILDING - OPS ROOM

Warden Essex and the rest of the Operatives - Coleman, Snyder, OPERATIVE TRYER, 21, OPERATIVE WALKER, 20, and OPERATIVE BAY, 20 - watch as all this happens.

A clock on the wall passes ten seconds.

Operative Tryer, the medic, looks at a tablet display of vital signs.

TRYER
10 seconds. Hypoxia stage.
Convulsions and loss of vision.

EXT. SPACE

Both men's bodies hang in the zero-g. Their flesh turns blue as their brains lose consciousness.

INT. OPS ROOM

TRYER
Thirty seconds. Cyanosis stage.
Hearts still beating, but they're
unconscious. Blood will begin to
boil in about-

ESSEX
Tryer, for the love of God, stop the
play-by-play.

INTERCUT

The inmates, the operatives, and the executed, as the long, excruciating wait continues.

INT. OPS ROOM

The clock passes 1 minute 30.

OPERATIVE TRYER
90 seconds. Flatline.

ESSEX
(to Walker)
Call it.

OPERATIVE WALKER
Time of death, approximately 20 hours,
19 minutes, 23 seconds.

ESSEX
Anyone wanna say anything?

A rather immature Operative Bay - ops assistant - CHUCKLES
as he tests the joke waters.

BAY
What's for dessert?

Bad move.

ESSEX

Thank you, Operative Bay. You just
put yourself in charge of body
recovery and incineration.

The grin evaporates from Bay's face.

EXT. SPACE

The bodies of Sanchez and Hill hang motionless.

PULL OUT from them into a HIGH-ANGLE TRACKING SHOT, revealing
the whole of a diamond-shaped, courtyard-style PRISON,
centered in the plain of a massive impact crater.

This is SILHANOVA CRATER PENITENTIARY.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: "CRATER"

INT. CELL BLOCK "B" - THE HOLE - LATER

Operatives Walker and Snyder - muscle guys - throw the two
Fighting Inmates into a pitch-black cell, SLAM the door shut.

SNYDER

Have fun.

INT. HOLE

As the men tumble in, they receive JOLTS of electricity from
both the floor and the walls. As they react to each jolt,
they slam into another wall and are jolted again... and
again... and again.

The more they move, the more they suffer.

INT. OPERATIONS BUILDING - OPS ROOM

Operatives Coleman and Tryer sit at a long bank of computer
monitors. Tryer eats popcorn while watching the prisoners
fry on the monitor screen.

TRYER

Y'know, it's kinda like watching
popcorn pop.

Coleman rolls his eyes and gets up.

COLEMAN

Operative Tryer will be here all
week.

TRYER

(shrugs)
Hey, I try.

INT. WARDEN'S OFFICE

Coleman enters. Essex is back at his clear flatscreen, TYPING information into the blank fields of a standardized report.

ESSEX

A guy throws his life away just to tell me off, and the best he can manage is, 'I'm gonna enjoy raping your mother in Hell'.

COLEMAN

Tragedy, sir.

Essex signs the report by running his finger across the screen, then clicks "SEND", letting a SIGH hiss through his lips as he does.

COLEMAN (CONT'D)

Inmate Rigg is ready to see you.

ESSEX

Good, I'll be at the holding cell in a minute.

COLEMAN

Not the holding cell. Rigg says you have to walk the block this time.

A prisoner bossing the Warden around?

Essex starts to say something, then thinks better of it.

INT. NORTHWEST CORRIDOR

Essex walks, flanked by Walker and Snyder. The blank wall RISES UP.

INT. CELL BLOCK "A"

As they walk by each cell, the metal door of the cell becomes transparent, revealing the activity of the INMATE inside. One BURLY INMATE reads. Another BURLY INMATE stares at the wall, MUMBLING to himself. Another BURLY INMATE jacks off.

They stop outside the very last cell on the block.

INT. RIGG'S CELL

Essex enters.

He is not confronted by another burly tattoo exhibit.

Instead, the person sitting calmly at the back of the cell is a pale, thin, wan-looking 19 year-old girl.

This is INMATE RIGG.

ESSEX

Rigg.

RIGG

(smirking)

Warden. Nice back-up.

Essex gives her a look, then nods to Walker and Snyder. The cell door CLOSES.

ESSEX

Too good for the holding cells now?

RIGG

You too good to walk among your people every now and then?

ESSEX

I just killed two of 'em.

RIGG

Getting killed back is not what you should be worried about. You should be worried about-

ESSEX

I sent the report. Should get my reprimand in a few days.

RIGG

And?

ESSEX

Four months for each murdered inmate. One year for each execution.

RIGG

Shit.

ESSEX

(shakes head)

Turn my back for one goddamn minute.

RIGG

We were so close.

ESSEX

A month. One month away from being done. Central Op would've already been sending my replacement. They wanna have their cake and eat it, too - no prisoners killing each other, no prisoners executed. I can't avoid both.

RIGG

I don't care. The deal was, I get you through your little tour of duty in one piece, you get me and Liam out on the escape pod. I'm not waiting any longer.

ESSEX

Is that a threat I'm hearing? Are you giving orders now?

RIGG

No...

ESSEX

Last time I checked, I'M the Warden. If I don't have a choice, you don't have a choice.

RIGG

But you DO have a choice. There are three seats on that pod. Cut yourself free of this and go with us.

ESSEX

We've already been through this. I'm no deserter. And I'm not prepared to be hunted the rest of my life.

RIGG

Oh, okay. Just prepared to let your daughter die, then.

ESSEX

(quietly)
Too far.

Rigg's expression softens as she changes her approach.

RIGG

You're right. I'm sorry.
(beat)
How's she doing?

ESSEX

Don't know. Haven't been able to make contact with her. *Pro Vita* said the next window would be in Mariana. So far, nothing.

As he talks, Essex walks over to a small window in the side of the cell.

Peering through, he sees a young boy - probably 11 or 12 - bundled in a pile of blankets. An alarming amount of breathing tubes and other hospital apparatus extend away from his body.

This is INMATE LIAM.

ESSEX (CONT'D)
How's your brother?

RIGG
Good as can be expected. Barry keeps
him warm, I keep him breathing.

ESSEX
You and Barry have gotten cozy.

RIGG
Keeping prisoners in line is hard
work. Need a good I.T. guy for that.
You oughta know.

ESSEX
Just make sure he keeps the oxygen
turned on.

Essex turns to leave.

RIGG
Warden?

He turns back around.

RIGG (CONT'D)
I really appreciate what you've done
for us, but there won't be a better
time than now. The other inmates
know that pod exists, and they're
gonna start trying stuff. I can't
hold 'em down forever.
(beat)
Think about it.

Essex turns around again. As he does:

RIGG (CONT'D)
One more thing.

Essex turns back around, annoyed.

RIGG (CONT'D)
You sent Joaquin a message. I wanna
send him one, too. Tonight. I trust
I can rely on your approval for that?
(polite smile)
Non-lethal, of course.

INT. CELL BLOCK "A"

Walker and Snyder hustle to catch up as Essex damn near
sprints down the block, wanting nothing more than to be away
from this place.

They turn the corner and see several PRISONERS standing at the entrance to the corridor. The prisoners are transferring three body bags to Operative Bay.

BAY

Oh, hey Warden. Sorry.

Essex waits impatiently as Bay struggles to jostle all three bodies - plus the stretchers they are on - into the corridor.

INT. NORTHWEST CORRIDOR

Essex, blocked in by the stretchers, tries to move around them as Bay, oblivious, tries to wheel all three down the corridor at once.

BAY

Warden... sorry about earlier, with the joking and irony and whatnot... just trying to relieve tension with humor, y'know...

ESSEX

I get it, Bay.

He glares at Walker and Snyder, motioning for them to help.

They snap to it, awkwardly trying to maneuver the careening stretchers down the narrow hall.

BAY

Yeah, so, I was wondering, can we put off the incineration 'til tomorrow? I mean, we're all stressed out, and everyone just ate, and-

ESSEX

FINE. Just get the Hell out of my way.

BAY

Yes, Warden. Thank you, sir.

Essex finally pushes through the stretchers and leaves his men behind.

INT. OPS ROOM

As the Warden enters, he sees Coleman and Tryer sitting behind a large console.

TRYER

(to Essex)

All prisoners are accounted for and locked down. We're ready for lights-out.

ESSEX
Going to bed early. Coleman, you're
on night watch. Feed Barry.

Tryer leans over to Coleman as Essex heads for a large cabinet.

TRYER
(quietly)
Who's he sleepin' with tonight?

Essex opens the cabinet; it's filled with various liquor bottles.

He grabs a bottle of The Macallan 12-Year.

TRYER (CONT'D)
Sexy.

INT. OPS BUILDING - MAIN HALL

Essex walks glumly down the hall with his bottle.

He's almost to a doorway when he stops short, looks over, and changes direction.

INT. OPS BUILDING - POD CORRIDOR

Lights flicker on as Essex walks in. Beyond a sheet of thick protective glass, a large pod can be seen.

This is the escape pod Rigg was referring to.

INT. ESCAPE POD

Essex sits down heavily in one of the pod's three seats. He pulls out the bottle stopper, takes a swig, and begins to enter some info on the pod's control panel.

COMPUTER VOICE
Enter access code.

He reaches up as if to enter the code, but his hand stops halfway to the panel. He stares hard at the panel, takes another swig, then leans back, letting his body relax.

His eyes turn skyward as he sits there, drinking.

No escape for him tonight.

INT. CELL BLOCK "A" - LATER

Slow TRACK down the empty hall as the lights fade to darkness.

INT. OPS ROOM - LATER

All is quiet. The only person around is Coleman.

For the night shift, Coleman has traded in his Central Ops hat for a weathered San Francisco Giants baseball cap. He uses a tablet device to draw an illustration of a big city street scene.

He looks up as a BEEPING NOISE sounds from the console.

On a screen nearby, an image appears of a REALLY NASTY, ANGRY-LOOKING OLD GUY. When the man SPEAKS, his voice sounds vaguely synthesized.

NASTY OLD GUY
Feed me, asshole.

Coleman makes a face at the screen, then leaves, grabbing a small box from the desk as he does.

INT. OPS BUILDING - MAIN HALL

Coleman approaches a tiny window with bright harsh light coming out of it.

He peers in.

INT. OPS BUILDING - I.T. ROOM

The room is completely bare, save a cocoon-like hammock suspended from the walls.

Inside the hammock is a MAN... well, sort of. This "man" has hundreds of plugs and tubes snaking around and into various parts of his body.

His mouth, nose, and other orifices are covered by hard plastic, and a huge, clear plexiglass visor rings his head.

Through the visor, his unblinking, wide-eyed stare can be seen, watching as dozens of screens flash simultaneously.

This is BARRY, THE I.T. GUY, 32.

INT. MAIN HALL

Coleman activates an interface screen on the wall.

COLEMAN
Evening, Barry.

The nasty old guy pops up on the screen again. This must be Barry's avatar, as he looks nothing like the thing in the hammock.

NASTY OLD GUY AVATAR
You're late. You want the place to run right, feed me on time.

COLEMAN

Oh, so THAT's why you didn't interfere
when we had two fights going on at
once?

NASTY OLD GUY AVATAR

I just run the machines.

COLEMAN

Not what I hear when it comes to
Inmate Rigg. Ooh la la.

BZZZT! A jolt of electricity ZAPS the side of Coleman's
head. He falls over, dropping the box.

NASTY OLD GUY AVATAR

Get fucked.

These two words appear on the screen in gigantic font, along
with a silhouetted animation demonstrating what "get fucked"
looks like.

INT. OPS ROOM - COLEMAN'S DESK

A bank of security cameras. One of them lights up.

Three dark figures can be seen moving down one of the halls.

INT. CELL BLOCK "A"

The THREE SILHOUETTED MEN sneak toward three cells,
positioning themselves next to small, windowed control panels
similar to the one Coleman is using.

INT. OPS BUILDING - MAIN HALL

Coleman clambers to his feet, grabbing the box as he does.

He walks up to the screen, confronting the Nasty Old Guy
Avatar, who is glowering back at him.

COLEMAN

Y'know, one of these days when you're
not looking, I'm gonna drop a binary
bio-virus in your data stream. See
how well you run this place when
you're pissing acid out your ears.

Nasty Old Guy Avatar holds up a double-barreled shotgun.

NASTY OLD GUY AVATAR

Get offa my lawn.

COLEMAN

Don't you want your grub first?

Coleman takes the box and angrily SLAMS it into a square-shaped portal below the screen.

INT. CELL BLOCK "A"

As the three figures wait, access codes enter themselves into the control panels. The cell doors open with a slight HISS of released air.

INT. RIGG'S CELL

Rigg sits on the floor, headset on, surrounded by gadgets.

RIGG
(on radio)
Move in.

INT. CELL BLOCK "A"

Rigg's three henchmen rush in.

INT. CELL

Henchman 1 tackles a human shape splayed out on a narrow cot. He wrestles with it for a moment before realizing it is not fighting back.

The Henchman flicks on a penlight, and instantly sees that his hands and arms are covered in blood. He unwraps the figure from its sheet.

RIGG (V.O.)
(on radio)
What's going on?

The bloody figure in the sheet is the body of one of the men killed in the fight earlier!

HENCHMAN 1
Holy shit...

INT. OPS BUILDING - MEDICAL ROOM

TRACK IN on the three stretchers moved into the room by Bay. The body bags laying on top of them are now unzipped and empty!

INT. OPS BUILDING - MAIN HALL

Coleman walks angrily back toward the Ops Room. As he turns a corner...

WHAM! His face meets the oncoming barrel of an electrogun. He falls in a heap, unconscious.

From out of the shadows emerge inmates Ross, Alonzo, and Joaquin.

INT. OPS BUILDING - PERSONNEL QUARTERS

An ALARM BEGINS BLARING.

All the operatives are awakened from a sound sleep and stumble out of their beds. All except for Operative Bay, that is - he has a MOANING NAKED WOMAN gyrating on top of him.

As the other operatives run to investigate the alarm, Bay props himself up with his arms. As he does, his body passes through the body of the naked woman. Only then is it clear that he has been mounted by a hologram.

INT. MAIN HALL

Ross, Alonzo, and Joaquin fly down the hall as the alarm BLARES behind them.

Joaquin points them toward a specific room.

INT. POD CORRIDOR

As they run in, the lights are still on, and they can see a figure slumped over in the pod, asleep.

It's Warden Essex, still cradling his bottle of The Macallan.

They pause briefly, surprised, before Joaquin spurs them on.

JOAQUIN

Go!

Essex awakens. He finds himself facing three inmates, two of which are pointing assault guns at him.

Joaquin pulls a shiv and points it in the Warden's direction.

JOAQUIN (CONT'D)

Up.

Essex obeys, moving calmly.

INT. POD

Joaquin enters, spinning Essex around and shoving him roughly into a corner of the pod.

Essex stands still as Joaquin wraps one arm around his waist. The other arm holds the shiv to the Warden's throat.

Ross and Alonzo crowd in behind, guns leveled.

ESSEX

You can't kill me yet. I'm the only one who knows the access code.

JOAQUIN

Enter it.

ESSEX

Can't while you got me in a corner.

Gently, he begins moving to his left, toward the control panel. Joaquin keeps the shiv trained at his throat, but Essex knows the shape of the pod better, and as he moves, Joaquin's elbow gets caught on one of the corners of the pod.

This gives Essex just enough time to duck and RAM an arm into Joaquin's gut. Joaquin's arms fly up.

Using his other hand, Essex rams Joaquin into Alonzo, whose electric gun GOES OFF erratically, FRYING Ross. Ross drops.

Panicking, Alonzo pushes Joaquin away, drops the gun, and runs.

Essex throws a kick straight into Joaquin's face, SLAMMING his head against the pod wall. Joaquin drops, mouth bloodied.

As he falls, the shiv flies from his hand.

Essex picks up the shiv, turns, and FLINGS it out of the pod toward the retreating Alonzo. It flies ten feet before landing square between Alonzo's shoulders. Alonzo falls, CRYING OUT.

INT. POD CORRIDOR

Essex kicks up one of the guns with his foot, walks out of the pod, and gives him a full BLAST with the gun. Alonzo immediately goes limp.

As Essex relaxes his stance, all the operatives round the corner and skid to a halt, shocked at the sight of the Warden brandishing the gun.

TRYER

Sir, are you alright?

ESSEX

(gestures to Alonzo)

Check him.

Tryer kneels down and checks Alonzo's vitals.

TRYER

Breathing, but unconscious. Might be a coma.

ESSEX

Get him to medical. Make sure he's secure.

While Tryer tends to Alonzo, Essex and the other men move toward the pod. Ross still lies unconscious. Joaquin is propped up against the far wall, blood dripping from his mouth and nose.

He locks eyes with Essex.

ESSEX (CONT'D)

The Hole.

INT. CELL BLOCK "B" - THE HOLE - LATER

The two fighting inmates from earlier are dragged out of The Hole by Walker, Snyder and Bay.

They look like they've been through Hell.

WALKER

Your lucky night, assholes.

As they are dragged away, Ross and Joaquin are flung in.

INT. CELL BLOCK "A" - JOAQUIN'S CELL - LATER

Walker, Snyder and Bay toss the cell. They find more shivs, various gadgets, and several crudely-drawn diagrams of the prison.

SNYDER

(on radio)

Joaquin left instructions for his men. Looks like they were planning a full-scale uprising of some sort.

INT. OPERATIONS BUILDING - OPS ROOM

Essex watches surveillance video of the cell-tossing.

ESSEX

(on radio)

What about Joaquin? What was his plan once he left?

SNYDER (V.O.)

Your guess is as good as mine.

(beat)

Doesn't matter much now, does it?

Essex shrugs, then switches to a new surveillance shot; it's the bodies of the three murdered inmates being dragged out of the cells.

Behind him, Coleman walks up; his nose is bandaged.

COLEMAN

I'm sorry, sir. I didn't even see-

ESSEX

You're my best man, Coleman.
Apologies are beneath you.

COLEMAN

What do we do with 'em?

ESSEX

Three weeks in The Hole.

COLEMAN

Sir, they tried to-

ESSEX

THREE WEEKS. 'Till I can think of
something more persuasive.

INT. HOLE - LATER

Joaquin sits silently in a corner while Ross is jerked from wall to wall, sizzling in a stream of ELECTRIC SHOCKS.

Finally, Joaquin reaches out, grabs Ross, and SLAMS his head against the floor.

Ross regains his wits and slowly looks up at Joaquin.

JOAQUIN

Don't move no more.

He points to the walls, which have gone quiet.

JOAQUIN (CONT'D)

See?

Ross slowly rolls himself onto his back, holding what remains of his busted nose.

ROSS

That motherfucker's gonna kill us
when we get out.

JOAQUIN

He woulda killed us already. He
kill us, he get punished. And he
don't wanna get punished. He weak.

(beat)

When we get out, we make him pay.

TITLE: "THREE WEEKS LATER"

EXT. SPACE

A long flash of light streaks across the sky, like a meteor.

INT. OPERATIONS BUILDING - OPS ROOM - DAY

Coleman, Tryer, and Bay are all working the ops desk.

A light at Coleman's station begins blinking.

COLEMAN

Looks like we got incoming.

Bay looks over. His eyes light up.

BAY

My turn with the gun!

He vanishes from his chair, headed upstairs.

COLEMAN

(annoyed)

We don't even know what it is yet-

BAY

(running out the door)

MY TURN WITH THE GUN!

INT. OPS BUILDING - MAIN HALL

Bay stands outside closed doors, pacing frantically.

BAY

Clear it! Clear it!

INT. WARDEN'S OFFICE

Warden Essex is at his computer, watching a video.

On the video is a slightly younger version of himself, playing around with an ADORABLE YOUNG GIRL, about 7.

This is his daughter, MELANIE.

They look very happy.

He is interrupted by a flummoxed Coleman, who appears on a "talk" screen window.

COLEMAN

Warden? Please?

Essex looks over, seeing another screen that says "AUTHORIZE CLEARANCE".

SIGHING, he turns off the video and TYPES an access code.

INT. OPERATIONS BUILDING - MAIN HALL

The doors SLIDE OPEN, revealing a staircase.

BAY

YES!

INT. OPS BUILDING - TURRET STAIRCASE

Bay races up the stairs.

BAY

Please be an asteroid... please be
an asteroid...

INT. OPS ROOM

Coleman continues to monitor the incoming object.

COLEMAN

ETA two minutes. Still need a reading
on bogey type...

INT. OPS BUILDING - ASTEROID GUN TURRET ROOM

Bay has strapped himself into what looks like a massive, two-gunned WWII bomber turret on the roof of the building... only this baby is outfitted with ion cannons.

Bay spins the turret around, fingers on triggers. Teeth clenched, eyes squinted, he has his "kill 'em all" expression going with full mojo.

BAY

(on radio)

Coordinates locked in! I'm ready!
Gimme somethin' to shoot at!

There's a long, pregnant pause. Bay's eyes stop squinting, his excited grin fades.

BAY (CONT'D)

(on radio)

Coleman?

INT. OPS ROOM

COLEMAN

(on radio)

Nope. Lifeforms. It's a delivery
pod. Hold your fire.

INT. TURRET ROOM

Bay SLAMS the gun in frustration.

BAY

Aww, fuck!

INT. OPS ROOM

Coleman can't suppress a smile.

COLEMAN
(on radio)
Sorry, Bay.

As an ornate STRING OF PROFANITIES emanates from the speaker, Essex enters the room.

BAY (V.O.)
(on radio)
I mean, it's never a fuckin' asteroid
or meteor or kitchen sink or nothin'!
Can I just fire the thing to fuckin'
fire it?

ESSEX
(on radio)
No.

EXT. SPACE

The pod silently streaks toward the crater.

As it does, it fires thrusters which slow its momentum until it lands - roughly - on the surface, about a half-mile from the prison.

INT. OPS ROOM

Coleman puts the pod up on an exterior surveillance monitor. He zooms in.

COLEMAN
Looks like a safe landing. They
must be alive. There weren't supposed
to be any prisoner deliveries, right?

ESSEX
Don't know. Haven't heard from
Central Op since I sent the report.
Even the weekly updates are AWOL.

COLEMAN
Doesn't look like a Central Op pod...

ESSEX
(shrugs shoulders)
Retrieve it. We'll put electroguns
on it. If it turns out to be a giant
lizard... well, we'll have fresh
paint supplies.

EXT. SPACE - PRISON SUPPLY WAREHOUSE

A large door silently retracts open.

A Rover silently moves out.

INT. ROVER

LOUD BUMPING NOISES as Coleman pilots the Rover over the rocky/powdery surface of the crater, rapidly approaching the pod.

INT. PRISON - MAIN HALL/ENTRANCE

Essex, Walker, Snyder, and Bay stand with electroguns pointed at one of the entrance's two airlocks.

Through large windows, they can see Coleman's Rover approaching, cradling the pod in mechanical utility arms.

Slowly, the Rover maneuvers the pod until it connects to the airlock with a HISS of escaped oxygen.

The men raise their guns. The airlock opens...

...and out of it emerges a FIGURE wearing a green Central Op uniform identical to theirs. The Figure removes a baseball cap, revealing a pony tail of long black hair.

This is PURVIS - 28, tough, and attractive. She probably would've been full Latino a generation or two back, before the line got diluted by white guys.

BAY
(lowering gun)
Holy shit, it's a chick!

Everyone, including Purvis, turns to look at him. Purvis looks down, directing him toward her rank.

BAY (CONT'D)
(straightening up)
Ma'am.

Purvis turns to the other men, looking for the highest rank. She locks eyes with Essex.

PURVIS
Warden Essex?

She walks forward, extending a hand. Essex regards her with suspicion.

PURVIS (CONT'D)
You must be happy to see me. Senior
Corrections Operative Melanie Purvis.
I'm your replacement.