

Nova Road
an excerpt by
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FADE IN:

INT. POLICE STATION -- NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: 2112

A lone woman (RAZA JACKSON) sits on a bench in the hallway with her hands cuffed behind her back.

Overhead, a television is turned to a news channel.

The video screen shows a shuttle running passengers to the orbiting International Space Station, where the Mayflower Colony Ship is docked.

ANCHOR (O.S.)

The Mayflower, the first colony ship destined for Mars is set to launch this morning at 0453 Eastern Daylight Time. Seventy families and all their belongings are set to depart momentarily from Florida's Cape Canaveral Launch Pad. Thousands have gathered to see the ship off. It is truly a great day to be watching this, and indeed, to be alive, as humanity takes that on giant leap toward a serious foothold off Earth. Shuttles have been running colonists up to the International Space Station since yesterday morning.

DETECTIVE LOUIE MILLER (male, 40-ish) walks down the hall, looking at his PDA.

He stops at the bench to collect Raza.

LOUIE

You know, we've seen a lot of you around here, lately. Come on, let's go.

RAZA

Where we going this time?

LOUIE

To see the Captain. He's got something he wants to talk over with you.

Louie leads Raza by the elbow down the hall to an open office door and knocks on it.

CAPTAIN PARKER (male, 50) is sitting at his desk, typing on his computer.

Louie knocks on the open door.

LOUIE (CONT'D)
Excuse me, Captain. Here she is.

PARKER
Thanks, Louie. Have a seat, Ms.
Jackson.

Louie uncuffs her and she sits.

PARKER (CONT'D)
It's too late at night for bullshit,
so I'll get right to it. We've seen
a lot of you around here, and I pulled
your file. Orphaned at 16, in and
out of foster care, 2 prior arrests
as a minor, one for possessing stolen
property and one for grand theft.
Since then, you've managed to keep
your nose clean which either means
you got smart or you've been very,
very lucky. Which do you think it
is?

RAZA
I don't know, Captain, why don't you
tell me?

PARKER
Well, I'm here to pull your ass out
of the fire. This is a one-time
deal, not subject to negotiation.
You're under arrest, accused of being
a drug mule, and when they pulled
you, they found 2 unregistered
handguns and a grenade in your car.

RAZA
Planted.

PARKER
I'm sure we're all glad to hear that.
The judge isn't going to look to
kindly on your criminal exploits,
though. These are pretty serious
offenses.

RAZA
So, what's the deal? What are you
selling?

PARKER
A choice, Raza. Military or prison.
(MORE)

PARKER (CONT'D)

I know you can't afford a lawyer
good enough to get you off on this,
so you either sign up for the army
or you do a long stretch in a box.

Pan camera back to video screen.

On screen is documentary video footage of a man shooting up.

ANCHOR (O.S.)

The drug problem that has existed
since time began has only seemed to
get worse in the century since
marijuana was legalized throughout
the United States. Men and women in
record numbers abuse drugs like
Heroin, Cocaine, and Crystal Meth.
Add to that the new designer drugs
that seem to hit the market every
day, and the DEA has a never-ending
workload.

EXT. GUN RANGE -- DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: 2120

LAMONT BLAKE (30, black) is on the range, test-firing a new
rifle.

Standing next to him is ROBERT MONROE (white, 25).

LAMONT

So, there's talk of the Mars colony
bringing up an independence vote
again.

ROBERT

Again? What's that, their 2nd time
this year? Their getting antsy.
Still, I can see why they want it.
Politicians on Earth don't give a
shit about them.

Lamont puts down his rifle and moves closer to Robert.

LAMONT

You're right. The brass here don't
want to hear that, but I'm with you,
buddy.

ROBERT

Are you thinking what I think you're
thinking?

LAMONT

I think so. We could AWOL ourselves out of this bureaucratic bullshit army and be on Mars in less than a week. You know they'd take us in a minute if the resolution passes. They're going to need a military with some experience.

ROBERT

Hang on, Lieutenant's coming. Just keep that shit under your hat for now.

EXT. SPACEPORT -- MORNING

Raza and a CO-PILOT are dressed in flight suits and carrying their helmets.

They are walking across the tarmac to their ship.

CO-PILOT

So, that's my story. Maybe one of these days you'll tell me yours.

RAZA

Yeah, maybe. Listen, just because this is our first time flying together doesn't make us soulmates. I keep to myself pretty much, and I like it that way.

CO-PILOT

I'm just trying to break the ice.

RAZA

I like ice. Leave it alone.

CO-PILOT

You're going to be a lot of fun to be with.

INT. CRUISER FARADAY, MESS DECK -- EVENING

SGT. ROBERT MONROE (white, 30-ish, battle hardened) & SGT. LAMONT BLAKE (40, black, bald, sarcastic and vindictive) are having a drink on the mess deck of the ship.

ROBERT

I don't care. She's a bitch and I can't wait for karma to ram her in the ass with a cactus.

LAMONT

I want that on tape. But don't let the brass hear you say that, she IS the Captain.

Robert starts to say something, but notices a Private passing by and clears his throat instead.

When the Private is gone, Lamont continues.

LAMONT (CONT'D)

If you don't watch it, you're going to get us both in trouble. Now as much as I agree with you, you'd better secure that shit post haste.

INT. CRUISER FARADAY, BRIDGE -- MOMENTS LATER

CAPTAIN WALKER (45, female) comes onto the bridge.

LT. TULLEY

Attention on deck!

All rise and stand at attention. After the Captain is seated, they sit.

CAPT. WALKER

As you were. Lieutenant, open a channel.

LT. TULLEY

Yes, ma'am.

CAPT. WALKER

Destroyer Michaelson, this is Captain Joan Walker of the Cruiser Faraday, please respond.

INT. DESTROYER MICHAELSON BRIDGE -- CONTINUOUS

CAPTAIN DONELLY (50, salt and pepper hair) sits on his bridge with a small command crew, and Capt. Walker on his screen.

CAPT. DONELLY

Come in, Faraday, we're receiving you.

CAPT. WALKER

Gentlemen, we're down to the wire, so I'll make this short and sweet. As you know, the Earth Coalition and the Mars colony have been in tense negotiations for the past few days.

(MORE)

CAPT. WALKER (CONT'D)
I would like to suggest that we hold off this battle until we see what transpires there.

CAPT. DONELLY
Captain, no cease-fire has been negotiated, and we don't give up without a fight. Speaking of fights, you can expect one directly.

CAPT. WALKER
Captain, we are prepared to repel borders, but know that we aren't seeking this fight. Please, let the negotiations work.

CAPT. DONELLY
Faraday, you may not seek this fight, but we are still at war, and ready or not, it's coming to you. Michaelson out.

Screen goes black and all communications are severed.

INT. CRUISER FARADAY, BRIDGE -- CONTINUOUS

When the ship goes dark, Capt. Walker jumps into action.

CAPT. WALKER
Raza, sound the alarm, prepare to repel borders.

LIEUTENANT RAZA JACKSON (female, 30s) hits a button on her console.

RAZA
Yes, ma'am. Alarm set.

Just then, a shrill alarm goes off all over the ship, and crew start gearing up for 'All hands on deck.'

RANDOM PRIVATE
I hope this is not another drill.

Soldiers emerge from the barracks in various stages of dress with their weapons.

Commands are shouted from various NCOs to underlings.

The ships engage in firing weapons and various maneuvers for close fighting.

After a minute, a different alarm sounds.

RANDOM PRIVATE #2

Sarge, what does that tone mean again?

LAMONT

That means they're boarding us.
Prepare for CQB...pass it on.

RANDOM PRIVATE #2

Aye, sir.

EXT. CRUISER FARADAY DOCKING PORT -- CONTINUOUS

A shuttle docks with the ship and when it lands...

INT. CRUISER FARADAY DOCKING PORT -- CONTINUOUS

Soldiers pour out, and are immediately met with pulse rifle fire. The attacking soldiers break through and into the ship.

Robert and Lamont are separated and in command of their respective platoons. Eventually, they come together, trying to crush the attackers in the middle.

The Earth force is defeated and asked to lower their weapons so they can be processed. One private refuses to lower his.

LAMONT

Kid, I'm trying to save you, now
just put the gun down, and we can
talk about this.

EARTH SOLDIER

NO! I can't. I don't surrender.

LAMONT

Look, kid, I know you're scared, I
am too, but this ain't the way. It
doesn't have to end here.

The kid looks around nervously and starts to lower his weapon, slowly at first, then drops it entirely. Quickly, he draws a pistol and readies it. Lamont shoots first.

ROBERT

Poor bastard...that kid must've been
15.

LAMONT

Yeah, well he won't be 16. Don't
second guess me.

ROBERT

No, that's not what I'm doing at all. I just mean it was a waste of a good kid.

RANDOM SGT. leads the prisoners off to the cell block.

LAMONT

Anyway, how do you know he was a good kid? Little bastard probably would have grown up to blow up a shuttle or something.

ROBERT

(tired of this topic)
Yeah, you're probably right.

INT. CRUISER FARADAY, BRIDGE -- DAY

Capt. Walker is on the bridge and is preparing to make an announcement.

CAPT. WALKER

Ladies and gentlemen, I have some fantastic news. The war for our independence has been declared over. We are now severed from Earth. Details will be forthcoming, check your briefing messages for further communications. Prisoner exchange will commence in one week's time.

INT. CRUISER FARADAY, MESS DECK -- LATER

Robert and Lamont are once again off duty and sitting around having a drink. This time, they have a partner. Joining them is Raza.

Their voices are all low, in an effort to avoid being overheard.

ROBERT

I thought you said you had something private you wanted to talk to me about? What's with bringing the Lieutenant with you?

LAMONT

What I've been talking about, well, I've had a couple of conversations with her, and she's down for it, too.

ROBERT

Ok, if you say so. I don't know, though. Lieutenant, if this is some kind of scam, let the record reflect that it was all his idea.

RAZA

Duly noted, Sergeant. Now, just hear him out first. Lamont, the floor is all yours.

Lamont looks around for extra ears before he starts, in a low voice.

LAMONT

Ok, we've all heard the buzz about Super Nova and the law clamping down on it.

ROBERT

Holy shit! You're not talking about running it, are you?

RAZA

Sergeant, just hear him out.

ROBERT

Lieutenant, with all due respect...

RAZA

Listen, Robert, first of all, I said just hear him out. Secondly, we're off duty. You can call me Raza.

ROBERT

(sighs)
Alright, continue.

LAMONT

Well, I've got some connections who can run it for us, and Raza can help us with security and providing military-grade weapons. All we have to do is supply it. So, what do you think? Are you in?

Robert thinks for a moment.

ROBERT

I'll have to get back to you.

EXT. SURVEILLANCE VAN -- EVENING

SUPERIMPOSE: BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

Police LIEUTENANT TEO CITLIA (40, short hair, Romanian) is dressed in civilian dress, and heads up a team of officers for a narcotics bust.

DRUG GANG hangs out in the warehouse.

INTERPOL AGENTS move in and get in position to cover every entrance and exit.

INT. WAREHOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

EDDIE PO (male, Asian, 30) is the leader of the faction buying the cocaine.

ALINA LUPESCU (female, Romanian) is the leader of the sellers.

ALINA
Gentlemen! So good to see you again.
And on time, too.

EDDIE
I'm glad we could make this
arrangement, Ms. Lupescu.

ALINA
As am I. Now, you requested a sample
bag?

EDDIE
Yes.

One of Alina's gang hands her the bag.

ALINA
Here you are.

One of Eddie's flunkies opens the bag and samples it.

ALINA (CONT'D)
Careful...that's uncut.

Eddie's flunky snorts it, bleeds from the nostril, and passes out.

EDDIE
(in Chinese, and to
self)
What the hell?

Eddie bends down, dips his finger in the bag to taste the wares, and spits the taste out of his mouth.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(in English)

You cut this with fertilizer! Are you trying to kill my customers?

Guns come from everywhere, from both gangs.

ALINA

No, Mr. Po, just you.

INT. SURVEILLANCE VAN -- CONTINUOUS

Teo and Gavril will speak subtitled Romanian.

TEO

What's going on? My earphones went dead?

GAVRIL

Just get another one. Here, I will put it on speaker.

EDDIE (O.S.)

(in English)

What is this? What have you done?

ALINA (O.S.)

Nothing you wouldn't have done yourself, if you could.

TEO

The deal went sour, everybody move in! Move in!

Teo and his assistant jump out of the van and run toward the action.

The Interpol agents bust in the warehouse from all sides.