

EXPERIMENT

EXT. - SPACE (ASTEROID BELT) - N/A

The black object displays the unique angles of an object designed for radar stealth. It's flat black surface reflects little of the ambient light that falls upon it. The stealth shield is seen more by the stars it blocks from sight as it passes than its self.

INT. - MARINE READY ROOM - DAY

The compartment is filled with the naked and half naked bodies of men floating about in zero gee. All of the men are sweating profusely.

CHURCH

God damned fly boys could at least cool the ship a little bit!

WASHINGTON

Can't use the fins while stealthin' boot.

CHURCH

I told you not to fuckin' call me 'boot'.

WASHINGTON

Until you survive your first drop you're a boot and that's it, boot.

CHURCH

Wouldn't have to use the fins anyhow, they got heat sinks on these tubs.

WASHINGTON

Right, fire up the reactors to make boot happy. We catch a separatist missile and it's vacuum chewing for the rest of our short days.

DEWITT

Lighten up on the boot, Wash-  
ington, he ain't going to live  
out the day no how.

INT. - BRIDGE - DAY

The men here are sweating like the marines, but the crew of the ship are in their uniforms as they work their station. ARMAND, the ship's captain is floating in the center of the compartment, NOICE, a marine colonel is floating near him.

NOICE

I'll be glad when this op is  
over. I miss having a deck un-  
der me when I eat.

ARMAND

It's not being able to radiate  
the excess heat that's killing  
my crew. Four hundred fifty  
million kliks out and sol is  
still roasting us.

NOICE

Twelve more hours and this  
will all be over. Still no in-  
dication that they've spotted  
us?

Armand looks over to another part of the bridge to JONES the operations officer.

JONES

A few radars have swept over  
us, but no indication that  
they got a decent return. No  
searches, lock ons, or in-  
creases in power.

NOICE

They could be playing possum.

JONES

Not with us this close. We're the proverbial black cat in the cellar at midnight.

NOICE

You better be right. I don't want another Demos disaster.

ARMAND

Everyone's done what can be done. It's in God's hand until zero hour. I suggest you get some sleep until the briefing colonel.

Noice kicks off from a bulkhead towards the hatch.

NOICE

I don't need a navy man telling me when to sleep.

INT. - MARINE READY ROOM - DAY

The marines are now in one piece jumpsuits, equipment and gear float about as the men prepare. Washington is at one end of the compartment with a gunner sargent. Both men are covered in sweat.

WASHINGTON

Come'on gunny, let my squad suit up.

GUNNY

No body's armorin up until after the ops briefing, Washington. Your boys can sweat like the rest of us.

Gunny starts to push himself off away from Washington.

WASHINGTON

At least tell me what the op is, gunny.

GUNNY

I can't do that.

WASHINGTON

You mean you won't do it.

GUNNY

I mean I can't, they haven't told me or the captain yet.

Washington reacts with surprise, before he can recover Gunny pushes off a bulkhead and heads towards another part of the crowded compartment.

GUNNY

Make a hole!!

INT - WARDROOM - DAY

Armand and Noice are here as are Jones, LESLIE Engineering officer, BRYANT communications, and DAVIS executive office. It is evident that the air here is much cooler.

LESLIE

I cracked open some of the stored air, the whole ship should be much cooler in about 30 min, sir.

ARMAND

Good. Jones, what the status on the target?

JONES

We got a lock on their reactor. Its a good steady lock so they're haven't put any spin on it yet. I say that we caught'em before it was ready to move out.

ARMAND

Any intercepted communications?

BRYANT

Nothing, sir. We're between them and Cerese so if they tried to squirt a message through we would have nabbed it.

NOICE

How about helmet chatter?

BRYANT

Again nadda. I'd guess they're using wire between are their workers to maintain radio silence, its a bitch but it works.

LESLIE

EVA construction with a wire to each man? Bitch is an understatement.

ARMAND

Can't argue with results. If someone hadn't given Intell the orbital parameters we'd still be seaching for this chunk of rock. We'll let's brief the men.

INT. - MARINE READY ROOM - DAY

The men are much quieter now. Even in zero gee they form rows as though they are seated as they look to a large screen at one end of the compartment. The screen is filled with the emblem for the United Earth System government. The emblem disappears and is replaced by Captain Armand.

ARMAND

Men, it's time to end the speculation about why we are out here in the asteroid belt. Several months ago, Intelligence learned that the Ceres Separatists had began modifi-

cation of a near by asteroid. They're weren't constructing another base for the terrorist operations this time, they were planting engines on a piece of rock ten kilometers long. It's the separatists plant to bring this rock crashing down on Earth. We, you and I, are not going to let that happen. This upcoming assault can not be permitted to fail. We have every reason to believe that the terrorist are unaware that we have learned of their plan and the location of the asteroid, now you will stop this mad plan to murder millions of innocent people.

Armand floats out of the frame of the screen. In the moments before another person appears mummerings fill the compartment. It is clear that the men are shocked by the plans they had just heard. Marine Captain JENKINS, floating close to the screen turns to the men filling the compartment.

JENKINS

Pipe down Marines!! This briefing ain't over.

Noice floats into the frame of the large screen.

NOICE

Phase one of the op is establishing a presence on the asteroid itself. The platoon will be divided into two operational groups, Group Alpha will be composed of first and third companies, while second and fourth will be group Bravo.

Noice is replace on the screen by a computer simulation of the asteroid and the ship as it approaches it. As Noice speaks the computer animation illustrates his orders.

NOICE

(voice over)

Group Alpha will form up into a mass no wider than 200 meters across, Bravo will form up into a ring with a diameter of twelve kilometers with Alpha at the center of that ring. The entire formation will fire their jets for an intercept with the asteroid. Both groups will employ saturation fire to suppress enemy activity as they approach. Thirteen minutes seven seconds after firing their jets, group Alpha will execute a turnover and begin to decelerate.

The group of men in the animation at the center of the ring flip over and face away from the asteroid. The ring of men starts to pull away from the center group as the center groups slows their speed towards the animated asteroid.

NOICE

(V.O.)

Bravo will continue to lay suppressing fire to cover Alpha's landing on the asteroid. Once Bravo has passed the target, each man will activate his on board computer for a return to the MAXIS.

The animated men in the ring fly off in their own orbits after passing the asteroid and return to the ship.

CHURCH

Oh man! I wish I was in Bravo.

WASHINGTON

DeWitt, boot's scared.

CHURCH

Fuck off Washington!

GUNNY

Knock it off or you'll both be out without a suit!

NOICE

(V.O.)

With a successful landing, Phase two of the op will begin. Second company with head aft towards the engines being fitted on the asteroid, while forth company will head forward to assault the main docking hatch along the asteroid's axis. Second company will fit demolition charges to the engines to be detonated should our attack be repulsed, meanwhile fourth company will secure the hatch for docking by the MAXIS. Once the hatch is secured, fourth will proceed into the interior of the asteroid and its control spaces.

On the screen the progress of fourth company is projected through the asteroids as a moving cluster of red dots. The ship is seen closing until it has docked nose to nose with the asteroid.

NOICE

(V.O.)

Having taken the control spaces, fourth company will fire attitude jets on the asteroid to impart a spin.

The asteroid on the screen begins rotating about its long axis.

NOICE

(V.O.)

The rate of spin will be increase until the outer areas are subjected to one and a half gees. Under these conditions, and with the assistance on companies one and three, the separatists should provide little resistance.  
Suit Up! and good luck!

INT. - BRIDGE - DAY

Everyone on the bridge is in armored pressure suit. Their face plate are open, but hoses do connect men to their stations.

ARMAND

Tactical.

From a glowing panel near the center of the compartment and three dimensional image appears. In the center of the image is a computer representation of the MAXIS, far off to one side is a representation of the asteroid.

ARMAND

Put the chaff buoys on the display.

A field of widely scattered dots appear around the image of the ship.

ARMAND

Arm the buoys.

DAVIS

The transmission to arm could be received by the separatists, sir.

ARMAND

A risk I'm willing to take.  
I'd ready have them armed and  
ready than a moments delay if  
enemy started the firing  
first.

DAVIS

Aye sir.

Davis nods to a crewman. The crewman operates his panel  
then nods back. On the display all the dots around the ship  
switch colors to green.

DAVIS

Chaff buoys armed, sir.

ARMAND

Bring the power down on the  
laser batteries and have them  
ready to fire on command. We  
might be able to blind the  
target when the firing starts  
and save a few of those boys  
going across.

INT. - MARINE READY ROOM - DAY

The marines are now fully armed and armored. Their pressure  
suits are more heavily armored than those of the crew of  
the ship. On the backs of the suits, large propulsion units  
create an impression of imbalance to the marines. Jenkins  
is facing the assembled fighters.

JENKINS

Your disks have been loaded  
with the instructions for your  
inflight computers. I don't  
want ANYONE trying to eyeball  
this jump. I catch anyone  
switching off his flight com-  
puter and he'll be getting a  
suntan on Mercury! Now lock

and load and get ready to kick  
some ass.

Rifles are broken out of the armory and passed out to the waiting troopers. The rifles are affixed to mounts directly in front of each troopers center of gravity. After each rifle is fixed, the troopers thumb switches and the rifles swing about tracking by automatic computers.

GUNNY

By squads into you launch  
tubes.

INT. - BRIDGE - DAY

The atmosphere here is tense and quiet.

ARMAND

Detonate chaff buoys.

EXT. - SPACE (NEAR MAXIS) - NA

Spheres gliding along in orbits ahead and behind an around the MAXIS explodes without any sound in the vacuum of space. Millions of glitters bits of metal are spilled out from the sphere filling the space around the MAXIS.

INT. - BRIDGE - DAY

DAVIS

Chaff deployed. They know  
we're here now.

ARMAND

Commence laser bombardment of  
the asteroid, continue for as  
long as possible without risk  
to the marines. Signal the ma-  
rine to deploy.

EXT. - SPACE (NEAR MAXIS) - NA

The black shield around the MAXIS explodes suddenly, exposed the white skin of the ship. The ends of the ships lasers start tracking left, right, up and down as they fire. The laser fire from the ship is invisible except for the faint trails created as the laser burn through the cloud of

chaff around the ship. In the distance flashes of light can be seen pulsing on the surface of the asteroid. Along the length of the ship, numerous small doors open and armored marines start shooting. With precession greater than any ballet, the troopers start forming up into the two attack groups. The asteroid looks very very far away.

CHURCH

That's a long way to fall.

JENKINS

Maintain RF silence!

Church bites his lips under the captain's verbal attack. from inside his helmet Church can see the asteroid, but not the ship behind him. Streams of data spill constantly across the inside of his vision. His speed, distance from ship, distance from target, target speed, etc. Long moments go slowly by, then a message appears on the display on his visor. COUNTDOWN TO COMMENCE FIRE, the letters are followed by a countdown in seconds. When the countdown reaches zero, Church, and all the other marines, flip switches on control panels to the mounts where their guns are fixed. The guns start shoot and controlled patterns towards the asteroid. As the guns fire, tiny plumes are jetted from the propulsion units on their backs, correcting their course for the recoil.

INT. - BRIDGE - DAY

DAVIS

Group Alpha about to execute turnover.

ARMAND

Cease laser bombardment. It's up to them now.

EXT. - SPACE - NA

With absolute synchronicity the center groups of marine flip head over heels about their centers of gravity. They continue moving towards the asteroid, but they now face the direction they came from. Church inside his helmet strains to try and look behind, in the direction of his travel to-

wards the asteroid. On the display in his helmet the distance to asteroid and his speed towards it decreases.

INT - BRIDGE - DAY

ARMAND

We picking up anything from the asteroid yet?

DAVIS

Nothing. I'll give em credit, they're learning radio discipline.

EXT - ASTEROID - DAY

Church looks past his feet and sees the surface of the asteroid coming closer. He touches down near the base of the engine. Other troopers land. They advance toward a control complex. Church tries to walk but can't in the low gravity.

GUNNY

(filtered)

Thrusters, Church.

Church uses his thrusters and flies along the surface to the control complex pressure door. Two men are already placing explosives around the door. They clear away suddenly. Church quickly moves out of the door's path. The charges explode and the door flies away from the building. The troopers enter.

GUNNY

(filtered)

No pressure. They're ready for us. Dewitt, Church, behind me.

Dewitt and Church form up behind the gunny. They thrust to the side of the building, work their way to the door and pause.

GUNNY

(filtered)

I go left. Church, right.  
Dewitt, you back us up.

CHURCH  
(filtered)  
I go right, got it.

DEWITT  
(filtered)  
Behind you.

GUNNY  
(filtered)  
Let's do it.

The gunny lunges in, followed by Church.

INT - ASTEROID CONTROL COMPLEX - DAY

Both men fire their weapons as they enter. The muzzle flashes illuminate the barren room. They stop firing.

CHURCH  
(filtered)  
There's nobody here.

EXT - MOON - DAY

There is a large space complex on the surface. Landing beacons flash at the landing pad. A large SSTO is landing.

LANDING CONTROL  
(v.o.)  
Delta two niner, link established, cease on board control.

INT - SSTO COCKPIT - DAY

The pilot and copilot, wearing pressure suits, are monitoring the final approach.

PILOT  
Control, Delta two niner, link confirmed. On board control terminated.

LANDING CONTROL

(filtered)

Roger, two niner. Enjoy the  
ride.

COPILOT

I hate this part.

EXT - LANDING PAD - DAY

The ssto fires its engine and lands softly on the pad. As soon as the engine stops, the pad begins to lower itself into the complex.

INT - SSTO COCKPIT - DAY

Through the windows in the cockpit the pilots can see the surface disappear as they are lowered into the hanger. Two doors close over the top of the hanger as soon as the nose of the ship is clear. On monitors, the pilots watch the passengers begin to move around in their seats and a sealed gangway extended toward the ship. The pilots complete the check list.

COPILOT

Inertial guidance, off.

PILOT

Guidence off.

COPILOT

Terminal guidance link, off.

PILOT

Terminal guidance, off. Wait  
a second. It's not coming  
off.

INT - PRESSURIZED GANGWAY - DAY

The gangway is connected to the ship and passengers are beginning to disembark. Many are women and children.

INT - SSTO COCKPIT - DAY

PILOT

Control, Delta two niner, do  
you still have us linked?

CONTROL

(filtered)

That's a negative, two niner.

The copilot notices one of his engine displays changing.

COPILOT

The mixture controls have come  
back on.

PILOT

Turn 'em off.

The copilot's display reads "ignition"

PILOT

Shit. Delta two niner declar-  
ing an emergency.

EXT - MOON COMPLEX - DAY

The hanger doors blow off and the sides of the building  
blow outward. There is no sound. INT - BRIDGE - DAY

INT - CABNET MEETING - NIGHT

The PRESIDENT, Secretary of State CASEY, Chief of Staff  
POINDEXTER, CIA Director Stanton, and Secretary of Defense  
CROWE are meeting.

CASEY

Sixty eight passengers and two  
crew on Delta's SSTO, plus an-  
other hundred and forty-eight  
in the terminal itself. Both  
primary pads of West sector  
are out of service. One might  
be on line in six months, more  
likely a year. Until then,  
everything will have go across  
the surface.

CROWE

Two-hundred and eighteen? Jesus.

PRESIDENT

Who did this? I want them caught.

POINDEXTER

The ROL Action Committee has claimed responsibility. We think...

STANTON

Bullshit.

PRESIDENT

Pardon me, Mr. Stanton?

STANTON

I said bullshit, sir.

PRESIDENT

I know what you said. I want to know why?

STANTON

No Republic of Luna plot is going to blow up an SSTO, at least not on the moon.

POINDEXTER

They claimed responsibility.

STANTON

In their own terminal? Why not on the return? Why destroy what you're trying to liberate?

PRESIDENT

I presume you have the answer?

STANTON

At the moment, not a clue.

POINDEXTER

I suppose if the director spent time looking into real threats, instead of hoaxes, he might have one.

STANTON

A hoax is a bag of burning dog shit on the front porch, not a two billion dollar mockup in the asteroid belt.

CROWE

The ROL and the Ceres Separatists both want out from under UN control. They could be conspiring. You know, pull our ops people way out there then strike close to home.

CASEY

Two billion dollars buys a lot of weapons. Why waste it?

STANTON

And why not stage something big while Maxis is in the belt? She was nearly home and then they blow up some civies?

CROWE

The CS's demand that we stop funding UN activities would also help the ROL.

CASEY

If we stopped, the European Union, the Chinese and Japanese would still fund them. The Security Council would cut troops along the Mexican border. No contribution, no vote. We couldn't stop it.

CROWE

We could take care of ourselves.

POINDEXTER

And break every disarmament treaty we've got.

CROWE

So? Maybe we should.

POINDEXTER

So will everyone else. Do you know what it'll cost for a credible army?

PRESIDENT

I think we've gotten off the point, gentlemen. Just leave your reports with Mr Poindexter and we'll call it a night.

The reports are left with Poindexter and everyone but the President and Poindexter leave.

PRESIDENT

What do you think?

POINDEXTER

We've got a leak.

INT - BAR IN MOON COMPLEX - NIGHT

The bar is dimly lit. Many of the patrons are oriental. A group of men, and GREG, are drinking and watching an attractive woman who is sitting alone.

MAN1

What'cha think. She new?

MAN2

Get off it. The old one's just fine.

MAN1

For you, maybe. I like mine  
clean.

MAN2

'Fraid of a real woman?

They watch as she rebuffs a mans attempt to pick her up.  
She looks over at the group briefly.

GREG

See that? She looked over at  
me. I bet she likes me?

MAN2

Ya, I bet she likes you better  
for a hundred American.

GREG

Ya? Watch.

Greg goes over to the woman.

MAN2

This'll be good.

They watch but can't hear.  
She gets up and leaves, Greg follows.

INT - RENTED ROOM - NIGHT

Greg and the woman come into the room. It is dark. She  
leads him deep into the room before breaking away and turn-  
ing on the lights. When she does, there are two other men  
in the room.

INT - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Greg is tied in a chair, there is a bright light focused on  
him. Someone pulls the hood off his head. No one is visi-  
ble beyond the light.

MASON

Not very bright of you, fol-  
lowing Lisa like that.

Still I can't really blame  
you.

GREG

What's going on? Who the fuck  
are you?

MASON

Isn't it obvious? I wanted to  
chat.

GREG

About what? Who are you?

MASON

You can call me Mason, if you  
like.

GREG

Major Mason? Oh God. I  
didn't know what he was going  
to do. I just delivered the  
note. Honest.

MASON

Who is he?

GREG

I don't know. I never saw him  
before.

MASON

Why did you deliver the note?

GREG

He told me to. I thought he  
was with us.

MASON

You failed to think. What did  
this man look like?

GREG

Chink. Maybe forty.

MASON

Chinese, in his forties.  
There are thousands who reside  
here, not including tourists.  
I'd like a name, please.

GREG

He didn't give one.

MASON

You're not being very helpful.

GREG

I don't know him. Please, you  
gotta believe me.

MASON

Oh, I do. I do. It's just  
that I have the movement to  
think of. As a member your-  
self, you wouldn't want me to  
overlook anything would you?

The room is momentarily lit by the electric flash of a cat-  
tle prod.

INT - MOON COMPLEX WEST, UN ADMISTRATION - DAY

CARTER walks into the office. SINGH is already present.

CARTER

Mr Singh, I'm Randolph Carter,  
Texcorp's chief engineer.

SINGH

Good morning Mr Carter. It is  
a pleasure to have you here.  
How may I help you?

CARTER

I'm not sure how to say this  
delicately.

SINGH

Then you must say it bluntly.

CARTER

Yes. We heard of your incident four days ago. I'm here to bid on the project for Texcorp. I hope I'm not too late.

INT - STANTON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Stanton and his assistant are going over video. The pictures are of the exterior of the moon complex near an air lock. The video moves in to show what is left of Greg after experiencing zero pressure.

STANTON

Who tagged it?

ASSISTANT

Computer search. Didn't really need it, though. They found a note in his pocket.

(reading)

The Republic of Luna Action Committee denys any responsibility for acts of terrorism against any and all civilians. Such acts have been admitted by one of our members with the help of agents unknown. We have taken it upon ourselves to try, convict and sentence this individual, as we will with all others connected to him. We deeply regret the loss of two-hundred nine innocent lives.

(to stanton)

Someone even dropped a dozen roses at the terminal.

STANTON

Charming fellows. Can we make any connections with this guy?

ASSISTANT

Nothing. Not at least with the computer. I took the liberty of sending two assets to investigate.

STANTON

Good. We'll also need a swim team for this one.

ASSISTANT

Has the president authorized one?

STANTON

He will. But just in case, let's make sure they're a few steps removed.

ASSISTANT

Freelance?

STANTON

Christ no. Try going out of service. Maybe some of the special ops types. Be creative.

INT. - SYSNEW EDITORIAL OFFICES - DAY

SUHARA AMMANPOUR is here with senior members of the SysNews editorial staff. On a screen on the the assembled people are watching a poor quality recording of Armand's address to the marines before the assault on the asteroid. The address ends and MARK GOODALL switches off the screen.

MARK

No chance you're getting burned on this Suhara? It's legit?

SUHARA

I have conformation by other sources Mark. This is the reason the MAXIS left for the belt in such a hurry.

MARK

Sid, can we use this video safely? What can U.S.G. do to us for having it?

SID

Not much they can do. We're still a US company and they haven't signed away the first amendment.

SUHARA

Yet.

MARK

Jesus the Cesersians were going to hit us with the biggest rock since the Jurassic. Okay, Suhara hit the air with it. Ted alert all our divisions through the system to be ready, it really going to hit the fan when we break this one.

Everyone files out of the room except for Mark at his desk and Suhara. Mark doesn't say anything for several moments as Suhara stands there.

MARK

Okay, what do you want?

SUHARA

I need to get out to the belt.

MARK

Oh is that all? Just an 800 million kilometer trip?

SUHARA

This revolutions about to hit high gear, Mark. It's going to be a real shooting war soon.

MARK

We already have corespondents in the belt.

SUHARA

Not good ones. Anyway if there's a shooting war and I'm not covering it from the inside I'll be haunted by the shade of my great-grandmother. Come on Mark.

MARK

Jesus you've been hot fired since Demos. Okay you got it.

INT. - CERES COUNCIL ROOM - DAY

A large video screen dominates the room. On the screen a new feed from SysNews is playing.

NEWSCASTER

In response to massive public outcry, the United Earth System government today announced that the military presence in asteroid Belt will be increased. Two cruisers will be permanently stationed in the belt along with an increase in space marine forces to combat the growing terrorist threat. The silence of space is now broken by the rattling of sabers.

VICTORIA CABOT switches off the viewscreen angrily. She is a woman in her late forties. The compartment she is in is filled with men and women of all age groups.

VICTORIA

Terrorist threat! The ground hogs bought that story!

HAROLD

Someone modified that asteroid.

VICTORIA

UES did that! Who else has the resources to move a chunk of rock that big? I tell you they're setting us up. Set up that base and that phony raid, tell the ground hogs we plan to flatten them and the UES will get support for any military action deemed 'necessary'.

HAROLD

What are we going to do about it? We can't fight those cruisers.

SUSAN

Perhaps we should drop a rock on them. We couldn't do a big one, but we could a bunch of small ones.

There is a mummer of support from the other council members for Susan's plan. Victoria has to bang several time to regain order in the room.

VICTORIA

Fools! We got to win the people of earth on our side. The UES is our enemy not the ground hogs! We got to do two things. One; prove that the station is UES plot, and two; drive a wedge between the UES and the member states back on earth.

HAROLD

And how are we going to do that?

VICTORIA

I haven't a clue. America is the weak point of the UES, hell their president still calls it the god damn UN. We've got to make the American people think of our cause as no different than theirs in 1776.

INT. - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

The President and Stanton are here alone.

PRESIDENT

This is a hell of a thing to leak out. People all over the world are calling for blood.

STANTON

Frankly I don't know weather to laugh or to cry.

PRESIDENT

What do you mean?

STANTON

The whole story didn't leak out, sir. We look good 'cause we look like we stopped a major terrorist attack, but really we got duped and we still don't know by who.

PRESIDENT

Any progress on that end?

STANTON

No, sir. The asteroid's a dead end. I sent some assets to Luna to check out that angle.

PRESIDENT

You think ROLAC was behind it?

STANTON

ROLAC doesn't have the resources to pull it off either, but neither would they bomb their own facilities. I have a hunch there's a connection, but no facts. Yet.

INT. - LUNAR COMMUNICATION FACILITY - DAY

Suhara enters the complex. The walls are lined with privacy booths for communications. A young woman is seated at a reception desk in the front of the compartment.

SUHARA

I'm Ms. Ammanpour. I have a booth reserved.

WOMAN

If you would follow me please.

The young woman leads Suhara to a booth at the far end of the room. She opens the booth and points to a series of buttons inside.

WOMAN

These are the sound deadening controls, with these you can cancel outside and prevent anyone from eaves...

SUHARA

I'm aware of how they work. Thank you.

Suhara closes the door and quickly works the control. The video screen comes to life, but shows only a constantly changing computer generated pattern.

MASON

(filtered)

Ms. Ammanpour, I'm glad you took the time for this little chat.

SUHARA

Thank you for the interview. What is ROLAC's reaction to the incident in the 'belt?

MASON

(filetered)

Quite frankly, we don't believe it. The Ceres freedom fighters don't have the resources for such a massive operation.

SUHARA

MY information come from a well placed source that they did. Earth came with weeks of a disaster unparalleled in history.

MASON

(Filetered)

You're not on the air at the moment Suhara, not need for the hyperbole. The Freedom fighters of the solar system don't have the resources or the ignorance to conduct such attack.

SUHARA

Ignorance? Such an attack, is well placed could paralyze the whole UES command structure.

MASON

(filtered)

An the response of the population would negate any advantage gained from such an attack. Even now the peoples of

terra are screaming for our blood. This has not helped the cause of freedom in the solar system, it has hurt it. If anyone has benefited it has been the UES.

SUHARA

Are you suggesting that the UES built the asteroid base to justify a crack down?

MASON

(filtered)

The UES has certainly taken advantage of the situation to increase their military and espionage forces, but they could not have built such a complex in secret. Not even their 'black budgets' could have concealed it.

SUHARA

Well is Ceres didn't build it and the UES didn't, who did?

MASON

(filtered)

That is the question. I think a new player has entered the game. I don't know who it is, but I will find them out.

SUHARA

What side do you think they are on?

MASON

(filtered)

Why their own, of course.

The screens goes dead and only a hiss is heard from the speaker.

EXT. - LUNAR PLAIN - NIGHT

A lone, pressure suited, figure is cross the plain. The only light come from the stars and earth hanging over head. When the figure starts entering that sharp edge valleys of the moon, a lamp on his helmet lights to illuminate his way. The face plant of the figure is covered in light gold plate, hiding his features. The figure come to a small crater, perhaps only 50 meters across. He carefully climbs over the edge of the crater and descends into its inky blackness.

EXT. - LUNAR CRATER - NIGHT

The figure moves through the crater, the only light coming from his helmet light. On the side of a rock protruding from the crater, the figure begins a careful search. After several moments of working with the rock, he opens a panel on the side. He quickly operate several controls inside. In the center of the crater a dish rises from the lunar dust. It unfolds until it is several times it original size, then it rotates and points off towards the stars. The figure pulls a cable from the rock and snaps it into a jack on the side of his helmet.

FILTERED VOICE 1

Agent Omega reporting from  
Luna.

FILTERED VOICE 2

Proceed.

FILTERED VOICE 1

Phase one started. proceeding  
as expected with exception of  
lunar separatists. Separatist  
command suspects our exis-  
tence. recommend that Major  
Mason be eliminated.

FILTERED VOICE 2

Proceed.

EXT. - EAGLE STATION - N/A

Eagle Station is a large ringed station in orbit above Venus. Venus can be seen near the station shining like a great slivered ball in space. Between Venus and the sun a VERY LARGE structure can be seen. The structure is clearly far from finished. It's supports extend out for miles from its center. In the center is a large section clearly intended for habitation, the rest of the structure is clearly too frail for manned use.

A pressure suited man separates from the structure and start thrusting towards Eagle station.

BILL

I can't believe. I just can't believe it! Eagle station, this is Watterson come in! Eagle station the is Watterson come in!

INT. - C&C - EAGLE STATION

This area of Eagle station is at the center of the spinning ring and so has no gravity. People float everywhere as they attend to their business of running the station. STACY TRAN floats, tied only by a thin guide wire, at her communication station.

STACY

This is Eagle Station, go ahead Bill.

Stacy listens as Bill responds, but only she hears his voice in her head seat. She tries repeatedly to speak, but stops awaiting a break in Bill's report. Finally she gets her chance.

STACY

I understand Ensign. Report back to Eagle Station at once.....You're en route already? Excellent.

Stacy's hand moves to her computer keyboard. She quickly types in a command. On her screen the words appear. "Are

you sure?" She moves the arrow pointer to yes and activates the program.

EXT. - EAGLE STATION - N/A

Bill is heading back to Eagle station, his Manned thruster unit jetting gas powerfully into space. Suddenly the hose from his life support pack to his helmet explodes. The end of the hose which connects to the backpack comes free in the tiny explosion and starts whipping madly around him.

BILL

Eagle Station! Eagle Station!  
I have an emergency situation.  
I have lost life support. I  
need pick up at once!

STACY

(filtered)

This is Eagle station, we read  
your emergency, pick up in on  
its way.

BILL

They had better hurry! I have  
only the oxygen in my pressure  
suit remaining. I'll be dead  
in five minuets.

INT. - C&C EAGLE STATION - DAY

Everything is as it was a moment ago. There is no indication that anyone other than Stacy is aware of Bill's emergency situation.

STACY

E.T.A. on pick up is four  
minuets.

BILL

(filtered)

That's cutting too close Eagle  
Station.

STACY

We'll get there in time. Bill.

Stacy's hand move over her controls. A monitor come to life. On the monitor we can see the sun shield structure being built. The camera pans around until Bill is seen in the center of the frame. The picture magnifies until Bill can be easily see as a human figure.

BILL

(filtered)

It's been four minuets where  
the hell is that pick up?

Stacy stays silent.

BILL

Eagle station! Do you read me!  
Eagle station I need a pick up  
at once!

Bill starts franticly trying to plug his hose back into the backpack. He struggles furiously, but can not reach around to the connector. His struggles become slower and less coordinated. Then finally he moves no more. Stacy reach up and turns off the monitor. A tech at another station tries to catch Stacy's attention.

TECH

Stac! Hey Stac! You want to  
catch some lunch after your  
watch?

STACY

Sure, Bill won't mind.