

CONSPIRACY NUTS

Written by

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"Conspiracy Nuts"

FADE IN

MONTAGE: RANDOM MONDAY MORNING ROUTINES

A variety of alarm clocks ringing at 7 AM. Hands slapping them off, people springing out of bed.

Runners preparing for a morning run. Lacing up shoes, stretching, running along the early morning streets or treadmills.

Coffee brewing, being poured into cups. Some with designs or sayings like "World's Best Boss" or "Caffeine Power!"

A subway platforms full of anxious commuters, leaning out to see if the train is coming.

Heavy rush hour traffic, horns blowing, bicycle commuters weaving in and out.

Business attired commuters walking briskly on busy sidewalks, buying newspapers.

People jamming into elevators, running up stairs.

Busy offices, phones start ringing, desktop computers booting up.

INT. DUFFY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

DUFFY O'CONNOR (30's, fat) is sprawled on his bed snoring peacefully.

Duffy has the look of someone who likes to eat and doesn't like to shave. Several days growth of beard struggle around his chin while extra pounds struggle out from beneath his T-shirt.

His blissful slumber is interrupted by a loud banging on the door.

Duffy dives to the side of his bed screaming in terror.

DUFFY

What!?! No! Aaaah!

Duffy peers over the rumpled bedsheets with a toy Star Trek phaser pistol in his hand.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Who is it? I have a gun.

VIOLET MURPHY (70's) is heard from the door.

VIOLET (O.S.)  
Oh, Duffy, stop it. You wouldn't  
know what to do with a gun if you  
had one. Now open this door, silly.

Duffy wraps himself in the bedsheet.

DUFFY  
Violet? What are you doing here?

His apartment is a mess of sci-fi memorabilia, dirty clothes  
and mismatched furniture.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Just a second! Ouch!

He steps on something under a shirt and falls.

VIOLET (O.S.)  
Take your time, dear.

Violet Murphy enters wearing a sweatsuit and carrying  
groceries and a suitbag.

DUFFY  
Hey, why do you have keys to my  
place?

Violet gives him a kiss on the cheek and hands him the suit  
bag.

VIOLET  
I bought this building last week.  
As the owner, I have the right to  
inspect each unit.

Duffy's sheet falls to the floor and he's standing there in  
his boxers.

DUFFY  
I don't know how I feel about my ex-  
mother-in-law checking out my unit  
whenever she wants.

Violet begins putting the groceries away in his fridge, as  
Duffy wraps the sheet around himself again.

VIOLET

Honey, you're not clever. Now honestly, Duffy, this place is a mess. You need to get organized. But first, you need to get in the shower and get ready for your interview. You need a job and I'm going to make sure you get there on time.

DUFFY

Don't worry. It's a lock. The hiring manager is a friend of mine and it's not until 1 this afternoon. Tons of time.

VIOLET

Nothing's a "lock". Your "friend" won't hire you if you miss the appointment, which is at 11 this morning.

DUFFY

It's at 1! I wouldn't make a mistake like that.

Violet pulls out her cellphone and Duffy's voice can be heard from the speakerphone.

DUFFY'S RECORDED VOICE

Hi, Vi, how's it going? Got that job interview on Monday. It's at 11 and get this: the guy is an old buddy of mine.

She pauses the message.

DUFFY

I should probably get in the shower.

She presses play again.

DUFFY'S RECORDED VOICE

Check this out, I figured out how to tap into the TV cable in this old rat trap, so free cable! Fight the man! Death to slumlords! Yay for me! I am so awesome. Talk to you later!

DUFFY

I'll call the cable guy.

VIOLET  
 Already on their way. Don't worry  
 about that now.

Indicates the suitcase he's still holding.

VIOLET (CONT'D)  
 That's what you'll wear for your  
 interview today.

DUFFY  
 Huh? What is this anyway?

VIOLET  
 It's one of Carl's suits. It should  
 fit you now.

DUFFY  
 Come on, your husband is like twice  
 my size. I'll look ridiculous.

VIOLET  
 Do you even own a mirror?

DUFFY  
 What's that supposed to mean?

VIOLET  
 I mean you've put on at least 50  
 lbs in the last 6 months. You can't  
 even fit into that T-shirt.

DUFFY  
 50 lbs!?! You're crazy. Okay, I've  
 missed a few workouts here and  
 there, but 50? No. No way.

Violet holds out the suit jacket for him.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 Game on, lady. This is going to  
 look like a tent on me.

It's a perfect fit. He stands like a male model for a beat.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 I'm thinking the green and black  
 tie maybe?

Violet nods smiling.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 Right, okay. Shower.

VIOLET

Duffy?

VIOLET (CONT'D)

You've been through a tough time,  
but you need to put your man pants  
on and stop being such a little  
bitch.

DUFFY

I need a better lawyer. My ex gets  
the house and I get the angry ex-  
mother-in-law?

VIOLET

You're lucky to have me around.

DUFFY

Thanks for the suit. I'll have it  
cleaned.

VIOLET

Get ready for your interview or  
you'll be late. Most people in the  
world are already at work by now.

INT. LARGE UNDERGROUND PARKING LOT - MORNING

DR. SATISH NRIPENDRA (50's, large, serious) crosses the empty  
parking garage as he clips a security badge to his lapel.

ROAN HAYES (40's, handsome) is heading in the same direction.

They both stand waiting for the elevator.

Roan glances at Dr. Nripendra's badge.

ROAN

Excuse me, you're Dr. Nripendra,  
right?

DR. NRIPENDRA

Do I know you?

ROAN

Dr. Satish Nripendra?

DR. NRIPENDRA

(annoyed)

Yes. What do you want?

ROAN

I just wanted to say I'm sorry.



ROAN

Not for long, baby! Put her in gear, I'm on my way!

Roan tosses one of the cylinders. It explodes with a loud bang and flash, spewing a noxious smoke everywhere. The guards are dazed and coughing, giving Roan one small chance.

He runs toward the closed gate. A black van can be seen at the top of the ramp.

As he runs, he twists the other cylinder and throws it as hard as he can. It sticks into the metal grate.

The cylinder explodes like a mini-handgrenade, leaving a large enough gap for Roan to run through.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE PARKING DECK - DAY

A black van's side door opens and Roan dives in, tires smoking as SLANE (30's, beautiful) peels out. Roan tosses a mocking salute to the guards as they stumble out after him.

INT. SLANE'S VAN - DAY

Roan has joined Slane, sitting in the passenger seat.

SLANE

Mission accomplished?

ROAN

Of course. Thanks for the assist, baby.

SLANE

Seatbelt.

Roan chuckles smugly, but straps on the seatbelt.

SLANE (CONT'D)

And don't call me "baby".

Slane presses a button on the dashboard and Roan immediately jerks convulsively as if he's being hit with a taser.

Slane pulls a pen from her jacket and speaks into it as she makes a U-turn.

SLANE (CONT'D)

Package acquired. Returning to station.

DEEP VOICE  
(from pen)  
Excellent work, Agent Slane.  
Welcome to the SYN Group.

INT. LOBBY OF OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Duffy runs from the elevator to the glass doors of the reception area of an office suite.

He does his best to smooth his hair and straighten his clothes as he approaches the RECEPTIONIST'S (20's, attractive) desk. The name card on the desk says "Becky Oliszewski".

DUFFY  
Hi, Miss Olliechew? Ollisoo?  
Ohlisszoo? Becky! I'm Duffy.

BECKY  
Can I help you?

DUFFY  
I'm here to see my old pal, Wally.  
Wally Hammerson. Yep, we go way  
back.

BECKY  
Through that door, have a seat.  
Wally's running late, but help  
yourself to coffee and doughnuts.

Duffy sucks his gut in.

DUFFY  
Doughnuts? I'm more a fresh fruit  
kind of guy, but I don't snack  
between meals anyway. You know,  
unless it's a protein shake after a  
workout or something.

Duffy crosses the lobby.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
(mumbling to himself)  
Free doughnuts, huh? I definitely  
want to work here.

He opens the door.

INT. LARGE MEETING ROOM - DAY

Duffy is faced with at least a dozen SHARPLY DRESSED MEN AND WOMEN sitting around a large conference table.

A big plate of untouched doughnuts are in the center of the table.

Everyone in the room looks at Duffy expectantly.

DUFFY

Crap.

Duffy closes the door behind him.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

You're all here to see Wally?

Everyone nods or says "yes".

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Crap.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

(boss voice)

Thank you all for being here today. Unfortunately, Wally has been delayed and will need to reschedule with all of you. If you'd be so kind as to give me a copy of your resumes, I'll pass them on and we'll be following up with you.

People start gathering their things and pulling out their resumes.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Come on, let's go. We've got another meeting in here. Show me some speed!

He speaks to each candidate as they exit.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Thanks. Sorry. I know. Couldn't be helped. He'll call. Really. Love that tie.

He smiles at an attractive young woman.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

This is your cell number right? Did you get some doughnuts? They're free.

One very SLICK LOOKING MAN (late 20's) is the last to leave.

SLICK LOOKING GUY

This is the second time I've had to reschedule this appointment. I'd like to speak to Mr. Hammerson's supervisor please.

DUFFY

That's me, sport, and frankly, I feel you. This your resume? Let me make a note here.

He writes "asswipe" in the margin.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Between you and me, I've not been happy with Wally's work of late and if I can speak candidly, we're going to have a more managerial position available shortly that I can really see you in. We need to keep this on the downlow for now.

Duffy slaps the "asswipe" on the back as he propels him out the door into the lobby.

INT. LOBBY OF OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

ASSWIPE

I look forward to speaking with you, sir.

DUFFY

I am, too. Drive carefully.

Becky tries to ask Duffy a question but he shrugs and ducks quickly back into the room.

INT. LARGE MEETING ROOM - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

WALLY HAMMERSON (late 20's) enters the conference room.

Duffy is at the table in front of a big half empty plate of doughnuts.

Duffy grabs a paper towel in an attempt to clear some of the doughnut debris from his face and shirt.

Chunks of glazed shrapnel fly from his mouth.

DUFFY

Wally! Hey, man! How's it going?  
Look at you. Wow, I'm really  
impressed. How's everything going?

WALLY

Duffy. Great to see you again.  
Thanks for coming. Weren't there  
some other people in here? I was  
expecting to be doing interviews  
for the rest of the morning.

Duffy looks around to confirm he's the only one in the room.

DUFFY

There was a couple of guys in here,  
but they just grabbed some  
doughnuts and left. I think they  
were pissed about having to wait,  
but I just shuffled some other  
things around so I could meet with  
you.

WALLY

Thanks. Sorry I'm kind of late.  
Tell you what, since it's just you  
and me, let me give you a tour.

INT. THE LOBBY - DAY

BECKY

Mr. Hammerson? There was...

Duffy turns to her, his back to Wally and gives her a wide-eyed pleading look.

DUFFY

(boss voice)

Before I forget, Wally's going to  
give me a tour of the place, but  
there was a couple of guys in there  
earlier and they made kind of a  
mess.

He mouths the word "Please" so Wally can't see.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

If you don't mind, could you get  
someone to straighten the room up?

Becky rolls her eyes.

BECKY

Sure, Mr. O'Connor, not a problem.

DUFFY

Thanks, you're the best. I owe you.

He mouths the words "Thank you" and turns to Wally smiling.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

She's really great.

WALLY

Couldn't get anything done without her. Come on, this way.

INT. A LARGE CORPORATE CUBICAL FARM - DAY

Wally uses a security card to open doors as they make their way through the maze of corporate workspace.

People come and go, passing Wally and Duffy as they walk down one of the rows of cubicles.

WALLY

How long's it been? 3 years? What you been up to?

DUFFY

I stayed on at SymTech for another year after you left. Then took the severance they offered when the company tanked. I took some classes, took some contracting gigs here and there. Now I'm ready to get back into the biz full time.

WALLY

You were always one of the best managers I ever worked for, but are you cool with this? I was your intern. Is it going to be awkward my being your boss?

DUFFY

It'll be fun. Where's my office?

WALLY

(laughing)

This is still the interview.

DUFFY

You know I can do the job. I tried the "boss thing" and I hated it.

(MORE)

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Too much paperwork, too much red tape. Computer Support is what I'm good at. Solving problems, thinking on my feet, that's my superpower. Besides, I'm the only one who showed up for the interview.

WALLY

Yeah, that's weird.

DUFFY

Hush now, don't think about it too much. Give me a shot for a couple of months. If it doesn't work out, you can have me shot. Deal?

WALLY

I do have to leave for a conference in Atlanta this evening. The rest of the crew is already down there, so it'd be great to get this job filled before I go.

Duffy gives him the big-eyed puppy look.

WALLY (CONT'D)

(laughing)

Okay, okay! No more puppy looks, that kills me!

Wally opens his notebook and writes a figure down.

WALLY (CONT'D)

How's this for a starting salary?

Duffy takes the notebook, looks at the figure and scribbles on a new page.

DUFFY

Let's just see what you think of this.

He hands the notebook back, Wally bursts out laughing.

P.O.V on Wally's notebook: a hastily drawn cow on a motorcycle jumping over a flaming buss.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

No? You sure? Then your offer is fine.

WALLY

Come on, I know a place you can work from until we can find you a permanent desk.

DUFFY

I was thinking of starting fresh first thing Monday morning.

WALLY

Duffy, it is Monday. It's best we get all that red tape started right away.

DUFFY

Just give me a workstation, network access and more doughnuts and I'll clear more tickets than any two guys you've got.

WALLY

I know you know how to get over on the system and just get stuff done. But this place is different, this is a government contract facility. Lots of security, lots of red tape.

DUFFY

(muttering)

I hate this job. Is it 5 o'clock yet? Feels like I've been here forever.

Duffy loses sight of Wally and quickly realizes he's lost.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Crap! Where'd he go?

He speaks to a MAN (30') wearing headphones and working at a computer in a cubicle.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Hey, chief! Did you see which way Wally went?

HEADPHONE MAN

Sorry, what? Wally? Wally Hammerson?

DUFFY

You know which way he went?

HEADPHONE MAN

I think he's in Atlanta, isn't he?

DUFFY  
Which way is that?

HEADPHONE MAN  
Atlanta, Georgia?

DUFFY  
Got it. Thanks.

Duffy trots down the aisle looking for Wally.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
This is crazy. I could be lost in  
here for days. I could starve! It's  
already lunch time.  
(calls out)  
Hey! Wally! Where are you?

Wally is several rows away.

WALLY  
Duffy? Where are you? I'm over  
here!

Duffy jumps up in place to get a better view over the cubicle  
row walls.

DUFFY  
Wally? Hold your hands up or  
something, buddy!

Wally jumps up to see if he can see Duffy. Their jumps are  
mistimed, they both just miss seeing each other. They scurry  
in different directions looking very much like two lab mice  
in a test maze.

WALLY  
Stay where you are! I'll come  
to you.

DUFFY  
Stay where you are! I'll come  
to you.

DUFFY  
Okay!

DUFFY

WALLY  
Okay!

WALLY

They both stop where they are for a beat.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
This is nuts!

Duffy starts waving his jacket in the air.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Wally! Look for my jacket! Wally!

Wally finally catches up to Duffy.

WALLY  
Hey, get lost?

Duffy hugs him in mock joy.

DUFFY  
Thank God you found me! I was so scared. Some big kids chased me and a mean dog barked at me and it was getting dark! Don't ever leave me again, okay?

Several co-workers eye the pair, Wally pushes away from Duffy's hug.

WALLY  
Let's not hug in the office.

DUFFY  
If this is leading up to us sharing a room in Atlanta, then you can just forget about it, mister!

WALLY  
I'm going to Atlanta, you're staying here.

DUFFY  
You never take me anywhere.

INT. A CUBICLE IN ANOTHER PART OF THE BUILDING - DAY

The cubicle is filled with boxes of printing paper and office supplies.

Wally stops at the entrance to the packed cubicle. Duffy keeps walking.

WALLY  
Duffy!

DUFFY  
Really? There's no room. How about I just take this office over here? It's small but I could be comfortable here.

INT. DR. NRIPENDRA'S OFFICE - DAY

Duffy steps across the hallway into the large office turning on the lights. The sign on the door reads "Dr. Satish Nripendra".

Several framed photos are on the bookshelf which contain pictures of Dr. Nripendra along with presidents, the Pope and other famous world leaders.

Wally pulls at Duffy's arm.

WALLY

No! Oh no, don't go in there.

Wally pulls Duffy out, shutting off the light and closing the door behind him.

INT. DUFFY'S NEW CUBICLE - DAY

WALLY

He's a big wheel. He's hardly ever here, but when he is, just don't bother him.

DUFFY

I promise to avert my eyes.

WALLY

Just try to make room here however you can and stay out of that office. I'll be gone this afternoon, but you'll probably get a call from the security guys. They have some kind of new process you have to go through to get your network login and door access badge.

DUFFY

Are there any more doughnuts?

WALLY

Just do whatever they ask you to do so we can get you started right away.

DUFFY

Submit to the will of my new corporate masters. Got it. I live to serve.

WALLY

I hope I'm not making a mistake by hiring you.

Duffy puts a hand on his shoulder.

DUFFY

Me, too.

INT. DUFFY'S CUBE - DAY - LATER

Duffy has built an elaborate archway, somehow stacking the boxes in a rounded arch in front of his cube. Just as he's putting he last box in place, the phone on his desk begins to ring.

DUFFY

(Italian accent)

Vitelli's Pizza, what kind of pizza you want?

SECURITY TECH JAY

(from phone)

What?

DUFFY

(Italian accent)

What you mean "what"? I don't know what kind of pizza you want. You tell me.

SECURITY TECH JAY

(from phone)

I don't want a pizza.

DUFFY

(Italian accent)

Why you call for pizza if you don't want pizza?

SECURITY TECH JAY

(from phone)

Is this extension 2344?

DUFFY

(Italian accent)

No, you call wrong number. Good byes to you!

Duffy hangs up, but keeps his hand on the phone. When it rings he snatches it up and speaks in his normal voice.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Good afternoon. Duffy O'Connor speaking. How may I help you?

SECURITY TECH JAY  
 (from phone)  
 Is this extension 2344? Duffy  
 O'Connor?

DUFFY  
 Yes, it is. How can I help?

SECURITY TECH JAY  
 (from phone)  
 This is Jay, in Security. I'll need  
 to get your supervisor to authorize  
 you so I can get your login account  
 set up, get a laptop delivered to  
 you and get your access badge  
 issued.

DUFFY  
 My supervisor is probably gone by  
 now.

SECURITY TECH JAY  
 (from phone)  
 I really need a managers  
 verification before I can issue you  
 your security clearance.

DUFFY  
 We're both computer geeks, Jay,  
 help a brother out.

SECURITY TECH JAY  
 (from phone)  
 Sorry, can't do it. Isn't there  
 anyone around there who can just  
 tell me you're authorized?

Duffy looks across the hallway at Dr Nripendra's empty  
 office.

DUFFY  
 Hold on a sec. Excuse me, Doctor  
 Nripendra? Can you talk to this  
 really cool guy from security for  
 me?

(Indian accent)  
 Why are you bothering me?  
 (normal voice)

Sorry, Doctor I just need you to  
 vouch for me so I can get my  
 security clearance.

(Indian accent)  
 Yes, yes, of course. Tell them to  
 call me, my good friend!

(MORE)

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 (to tech on phone)  
 Call Doctor Nripendra. You got his extension?

SECURITY TECH JAY  
 (from phone)  
 Dr. Nripendra? Really? Wow. He's vouching for you? May I put you on hold, sir?

DUFFY  
 Do what you've got to do. I'll wait.

Duffy dashes across the hallway to Nripendra's office and snatches up the phone as it rings.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 (Indian accent)  
 Yes, I know all of it. I want you to listen to my voice fully. Duffy O'Connor is my trusted friend. I want him to have the highest possible clearance. You hearing this? Without him we are doomed! Doomed! I have need of his valuable services, he is to be my best ally. You understand?

SECURITY TECH JAY  
 (from phone)  
 Yes, sir.

DUFFY  
 (Indian accent)  
 The highest level! And a really nice laptop, too. Now, go away from my phone.

Duffy dashes back to his cube but his foot catches the corner of his archway made out of paper boxes. The arch collapses on him, the heavy copier paper filled boxes knocking him down. He scrambles to his feet and reaches his desk just as Jay comes back on the other end.

SECURITY TECH JAY  
 (from phone)  
 Mr. O'Connor? You there?

DUFFY  
 You get what you need from my pal, Neerya? Knee-eye? That guy?

SECURITY TECH JAY

(from phone)

Yes, sir. I'll have a technician sent over there right away with your equipment. Thank you, sir.

DUFFY

You guys are doing great work. Bye!

Duffy looks at the carnage of boxes scattered all over the floor.

INT. COMPUTER SECURITY OFFICES - DAY

The empty control room looks like NASA's Mission Control room. Monitors everywhere showing streams of data and two cramped workstations decorated with various sci-fi and comic book memorabilia.

The door buzzes open and LARRY and NEAL (30's, computer nerds) waddle in, both carrying huge chunks of cake balanced precariously on paper-plates.

LARRY

You can't just say "Superman". You need to quantify which version of Superman you're talking about.

NEAL

Kirby, of course.

LARRY

Then the answer is: Yes, he would beat the Hulk.

NEAL

You mean Kirby's Hulk.

LARRY

Of course.

(nods at Neal's monitor)

You've got an incoming.

NEAL

So do you.

LARRY

I'm eating.

Neal unlocks his screen to find a blinking purple flag on a message.

NEAL  
I've got a purple request for  
access.

LARRY  
(impressed)  
Seriously? Don't see those very  
often.

NEAL  
I've never seen one. What do I do?

Larry holds out his hand like he's waiting for a tip. Neal sighs and hands him the rest of his cake. Larry greedily dumps it on his own plate.

LARRY  
Offering accepted. Bring up the  
SC97 database and add the name. Who  
authorized the request?

As Neal follows Larry's instructions, Larry unlocks his own screen and sees a blinking red flag on a message.

NEAL  
Nripendra.

Larry reads his red flag message: "Top Priority: Lock Nripendra file."

LARRY  
(confused)  
When did that request come in?

NEAL  
I don't know. I guess while we were  
at Nancy's birthday party. Why?

LARRY  
No big shakes. Do your thing, then  
I've got to lock the database down.

Neal is typing on his keyboard.

NEAL  
(nervous)  
Are we in trouble? I told you one  
of us should've stayed here.

LARRY  
Don't worry about it. It's fine.  
You done?

Neal hits "enter" and nods nervously. Larry types on his keyboard and with a flourish hits "enter".

LARRY (CONT'D)

And we're all good. Send Tully to deliver the hardware.

On both screens a progress bar creeps along until it reaches 100% then reads: "Nripendra, Satish: account deactivated. O'Connor, Duffy: account activated."

They exchange nervous looks.

NEAL

Larry?

LARRY

We're good. Really. We're good.

INT. DUFFY'S CUBE AREA - DAY - LATER

GERN TULLY (20's), a skinny technician sent from security, is standing at the entrance to a cave made out of boxes full of copier paper.

A piece of paper is taped over the entrance to the waist-high cave which reads, "Follow this map" with a hastily scrawled, but very complicated map on it.

GERN

Hello?

DUFFY (O.S.)

Welcome, bold adventurer, to the Cave of Lost Souls. If you be made of iron, venture forth. Have you the will of a hero? The strength of the griffin?

GERN

Are you Duffy O'Connor?

DUFFY (O.S.)

Some know me by that name. Some would call me a king. Others would call me a slave.

GERN

Okay.

DUFFY (O.S.)

Have you the map?

GERN

Yes.

DUFFY (O.S.)

Then draw your steel and enter.

Gern pushes his messenger bag ahead of him as he moves through the tunnel.

Following the small twists and turns he comes out into Dr. Nripendra's office. Duffy has made the remaining boxes into a throne, which he now sits on grandly like a king.

When Gern emerges, Duffy tosses a handful of confetti made from torn up copier paper at him.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Let all the kingdom rejoice! Let the bards sing songs of your victory! Our kingdom has a new champion! What is your name stout fellow?

GERN

I'm Gern Tully.

DUFFY

Seriously? Whatever. I knight thee Sir Gern of Tully.

Duffy puts both hands on Gern's shoulders.

GERN

You're not going to kiss me are you?

DUFFY

Not until you're promoted to Duke.

Duffy crosses to the desk, reclines in the big office chair and puts his feet up.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Sorry, I was bored. I hope you brought me a cool laptop. Doctor Nripendra specifically said I should get the very best.

GERN

Hold on, sir.

Gern starts rummaging through his fully packed messenger bag. He pulls out a notecard.

DUFFY

The "sir" thing was really cool at first, now it's starting to creep me out. How about just calling me "Duffy".

Gern checks the hallway, satisfied no one else is around he closes the door and stands in front of the desk.

GERN

I guess it's okay to do this here.  
(reading)  
Good Afternoon, sir. Welcome to the Council of Five. Many have dreamed of the power you now hold, but few are chosen to enter the ancient ranks of the Council.

DUFFY

I got you. You're messing with me.

GERN

Sir?

DUFFY

Continue, Sir Gern.

GERN

(reading)  
We who serve, know but little. The Council knows all.

DUFFY

(nodding imperiously)  
That's very true. Where's my new stuff? I want to check my e-mail, surf some porn and go home.

GERN

There's more I'm supposed to read here.

DUFFY

Don't care! I want my new laptop and it better be a cool one!

Gern places a small black box on the desk in front of Duffy.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

I hope there isn't a ring in there.

GERN

Good one, sir. Are you familiar with this model of the Tempest device?

DUFFY

(faking it)

You'd better give me a quick demo to refresh my memory.

GERN

Yes, sir. This is the Tempest model 47. The octagonal crystal processor runs at just over 22 million petaflops and holds...

DUFFY

(stunned)

I'm sorry, you said this runs at 22 million petaflops?

GERN

Yes, sir. I'm sorry, the versions you're used to probably run much faster.

DUFFY

(acting cool)

Since this is the best you've got, it's cool. Continue.

Gern presses the top of the box and large holographic display jumps up in front of Duffy.

A green beam of light flashes in Duffy's face.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

What the hell?

GERN

You should've already been in the database. There must be a glitch somewhere. The device couldn't find your identity records, so it had to give you a full flash. I do apologize.

DUFFY

No problem. Full flash. Right. Makes sense to me. This is mine now, right?

Duffy starts typing on holographic keyboard and moving objects in the 3-D space around acting like a kid with a new toy.

GERN

If I can continue the demo?

DUFFY

No need. See ya!

GERN

(reading)

Thank you for your attention. This concludes our training session.

DUFFY

Got it. Bye!

GERN

Is it okay if I use a door here? I haven't had lunch yet and it's Make Your Own Taco Day at the Red Mesa Facility.

DUFFY

You're still here? Use the door. I don't know how else you're going to leave.

GERN

Thank you, sir. I love those tacos!

DUFFY

Tacos? Really? I could go for a taco.

Gern presses the top of his own black box and a full-sized glowing trans-dimensional doorway magically appears next to him.

Duffy can see a cafeteria through the door, ASSORTED OFFICE WORKERS sitting at tables, laughing, carrying trays of food to the sound of light jazz music.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

What the hell?

GERN

I'm sorry. Would you care to join me?

Duffy can only nod.

GERN (CONT'D)  
Don't forget your Tempest, sir.

DUFFY  
After you, Sir Gern.

Duffy sees a slight shimmer and Gern is through the glowing doorway, heading toward the taco bar.

Duffy closes his eyes.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Tacos. Just think about tacos.

Like Alice, he steps through the looking-glass.

INT. RED MESA CAFETERIA - DAY

Duffy is immediately standing in a large, corporate cafeteria. Assorted office workers are eating, chatting and generally enjoying their lunch break.

Suddenly Duffy's picture appears on a large monitor. The less-than-flattering picture was taken when his new Tempest flashed him, making him look like a rabbit in the headlights of an oncoming car.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
(over loudspeakers)  
Good afternoon everyone. Please stand and welcome Council of Five member, Duffy O'Connor.

Everyone in the cafeteria stands and applauds briefly. The applause dies down and everyone continues to stand, smiling at Duffy.

DUFFY  
Hi. Thanks? How are the tacos?

Everyone nods smiling or speaks enthusiastically about the tacos.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Okay, cool. I'll let you get back to them then. Thanks.

He waves and the cafeteria is once again filled with light conversation and even lighter jazz music.

Gern is at the taco bar when Duffy runs up to him, grabbing his elbow.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 (whispering)  
 What the hell is going on?

GERN  
 It's Make Your Own Tacos Day. It's  
 really fun!

DUFFY  
 I don't know how to tell you this,  
 but I was just kidding around and  
 now I just don't know what I'm  
 supposed to do.

GERN  
 First, you get a taco, then you add  
 either beef or chicken. See?

Gern starts demonstrating the complexities of taco building.  
 Several people join them at the bar, smiling at Duffy.

Duffy snatches the beef serving spoon. Gern continues to move  
 down the taco bar.

DUFFY  
 (muttering to himself)  
 I know how to make a taco. Let's  
 just take this one step at a time.  
 Make a taco or three, eat some  
 lunch and we'll figure this all  
 out.

INT. RED MESA CAFETERIA - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Duffy joins Gern at a table. Duffy's plate has a small pile  
 of fully packed tacos. Duffy looks around to make sure nobody  
 is listening to them.

DUFFY  
 I think I did something stupid.

GERN  
 You can go back and get chicken  
 instead of beef. They really don't  
 care.

DUFFY  
 Will you stop with all the taco  
 talk already!!?!  
 (deep cleansing breath)  
 Okay, let's take this slow. Where  
 are we?

GERN

I thought you heard me. This is the Red Mesa Facility.

DUFFY

I don't know where that is.

GERN

It's about 3 miles under the Denver Airport.

DUFFY

Under? You mean underground?  
Denver? We're under Denver?  
Colorado? We were just in Virginia.  
Now we're in Colorado?

GERN

Yes, sir. Denver is in Colorado.

DUFFY

We're in trouble. I faked  
Nripendra's voice, I've never met  
the man! I just wanted to get my  
login and a nice laptop. I'm in  
tech support, it's my first day. I  
was just kidding around and now I'm  
here.

Gern's mouth is hanging open in shock. A large chunk of taco falls out of his mouth and hits his plate.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

That's how you stay so skinny? Let  
me try that.

Duffy takes a large bite out of his taco, chewing it carefully before opening his mouth and letting it fall out onto his plate.

Gern is still staring at him blankly.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

I think I'll stick to the usual way  
of eating.

Duffy stuffs the rest of the taco in his mouth.

Still no reaction from Gern. Duffy waves his hand in front of Gern's face.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Anybody home? Gern?

Duffy picks up a taco from Gern's plate and waves it under Gern's nose.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Want your taco?

GERN  
Yes, please. Thank you.

DUFFY  
You okay?

GERN  
Yes. It's fine, thank you.

Gern takes a big gulp from his soda.

DUFFY  
That's good. A good stiff drink  
will fix you right up. That's it,  
drink it down.

Gern burps loudly.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Nice table manners.

GERN  
You're serious, aren't you? You  
faked your way in here? Do you have  
any idea how much trouble you're  
in?

DUFFY  
I'm starting to get an idea, but a  
pal of mine has a saying, "You only  
get in trouble if you get caught."

GERN  
Your pal?

DUFFY  
He's up for parole next year, but  
don't change the subject. How are  
we going to get me out of this?

GERN  
There's no "we" here! I've got to  
turn you in. You're just going to  
have to face the consequences.

DUFFY

I really don't want to lose my job over this. I was just trying to cut through the red tape.

GERN

Lose your job?

(laughs morosely)

That's what you're worried about? Let me ask you a question: What's the worst possible torture you can think of?

DUFFY

I know this game. Worst possible torture? Okay, I saw this movie one time about a guy who kidnapped hitchhikers and...

GERN

Whatever you are thinking of, multiply it by 1000, have it last for years and you won't even be close. They're going to think you're a spy for ANGEL.

DUFFY

Who's ANGEL?

GERN

What? How could this happen?

DUFFY

It happened and you're going to help me get out of it.

GERN

No. No way.

DUFFY

You gave me the Tempest thing, brought me here, read me that Council of Five thingy, whatever. Just take me back home with your magic box and we'll just forget it ever happened.

GERN

You're right. They'll never believe I wasn't in on it. What are we going to do? We're in trouble.

DUFFY

Welcome to my world. Let's finish lunch first, okay?

INT. RED MESA CAFETERIA - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Duffy's plate shows no signs of tacos.

DUFFY

Best. Tacos. Ever. You going to finish yours?

GERN

We need to get you out of here. I should be able to wipe your Tempest device, but deleting your record on the main database isn't going to be easy. I don't have access. If someone asks Doctor Nripendra about you, we are royally screwed. This is horrible! I was almost off probation.

DUFFY

Probation? What did you do?

GERN

I don't want to talk about it. You really don't have any idea what's going on here, do you?

DUFFY

It's easier to cope with impending doom if you just ignore it.

GERN

Maybe I should try that.

Gern closes his eyes for a second.

TWO BIG GUARDS approach their table.

GUARD #1

Council Member O'Connor? We are to escort you to the Council of Five meeting.

GERN

Impending doom.

DUFFY

Hi guys. Not a good time right now.  
It's Make Your Own Taco Day! I'm  
going to skip this meeting.

GUARD #1

I'm sorry, sir, but your attendance  
is mandatory. Is this your  
assistant?

GERN

NO!

DUFFY

Yes! My assistant will  
accompany me. Come along, my  
trusted assistant. I need  
assistance and you are  
supposed to assist me like an  
assistant.

Duffy and Gern follow the guards.

DUFFY

(to the escort)

So, chief, where's the meeting?

GUARD #1

The SYN Group Council of Five  
always meets in the Council Hall at  
the H.G. Wells crater.

DUFFY

You're right. I was just testing  
you.

GUARD #2

How could we be your escorts, sir,  
if we didn't know where to take  
you?

Gern looks close to passing out.

DUFFY

Exactly.

The guards glance at each other but follow orders.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Where's this H.G. Well's crater?

GERN

The moon.

DUFFY

What moon? You mean, *the* moon?

The two guards are standing on either side of a glowing door. Through the door, a long brightly lit hallway can be seen. Another GUARD can be seen sitting at a desk at the end of the hallway, in a small waiting area, apparently guarding a large metal door.

Duffy takes a deep breath and struts through like he does this every day.

GERN

Duffy, I mean, sir? Don't forget about the gravity difference.

INT. H.G. WELLS CRATER LOBBY - NIGHT

DUFFY

The what-ity difference? Whoa!

Duffy flies forward in slow motion, pinwheeling his arms in a futile attempt to regain his balance.

Gern and the guards watch as Duffy sails slowly to the ground, skipping forward like a flat stone on a pond before settling, face down on the floor.

Gern kneels down next to Duffy.

GERN

You okay?

DUFFY

(burps)

Doughnuts and tacos and low gravity. This is going to be a spectacular display.

GERN

Do not barf!

Gern helps Duffy to his feet. Duffy rises and floats up a few inches before coming back down. Duffy grips Gern's arm as he struggles to walk down the hallway looking like someone trying to tap-dance on ice.

WAITING AREA GUARD

Welcome Council Member O'Connor. The rest of the council is waiting for you.

DUFFY

That door all the way over there?

(burps)

Okay, I can do this.

Gern helps him to the door.

WAITING AREA GUARD

I'm sorry, sir, but this is a meeting of the Council of Five only.

GERN

Darn, I really wish I could go in with you but, Council of Five only, right? I'll just head back.

DUFFY

No you don't!  
 (to guard)  
 I order you to keep him right here until I get back. I can do that right? You have to follow my orders? Is that cool?

The guard puts his hand over his heart and bows his head.

WAITING AREA GUARD

We who serve.

DUFFY

(to guard)  
 Thanks a lot, buddy.  
 (to Gern)  
 Stay!

The large metal door slides open and Duffy manages to get through.

Gern stands nervously as the guard stares at him.

GERN

How's it going?

WAITING AREA GUARD

Okay, I guess. I was about to go to lunch when they called this big meeting.

GERN

I didn't get to finish my tacos. Any idea what the big meeting is about?

WAITING AREA GUARD

Some kind of problem with Doctor Nripendra.

GERN

(more panic)

Doctor Neeyah? Good old Doc  
Neeripee? Problem with him, is it?  
You want a taco? I could go and get  
us a couple.

WAITING AREA GUARD

You're supposed to stay here.

GERN

I kind of forgot. I'll just wait.

He wanders over to the couch and tries to look casual picking up a magazine as he waits, not noticing it's upside down.

GERN (CONT'D)

(muttering to himself)

We're in so much trouble.

INT. A DARK ALCOVE BEYOND THE FIRST DOOR

Duffy is waiting to be let into the council chamber. A green laser scans him. A blast of trumpets sound as the pressure door opens with a hiss of hydraulics and a computer voice announces his arrival.

DEEP COMPUTER VOICE

Council of Five member Duffy  
O'Connor arriving.

INT. THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - NIGHT

The room looks like the library of a wealthy gentleman. Comfortable looking chairs, tall bookcases filled with books and a cheery looking fire in the fireplace. A large window overlooks the desolate moon landscape.

FOUR OLDER MEN are in the room, laughing at some remark one of them just made.

COUNCILMAN JOHN (60's) is the first to shake Duffy's hand.

JOHN

Welcome! I'm John, it's a pleasure  
to meet you. Have a seat.

DUFFY

Yes! A chair! I mean, nice to meet  
you too.

He drops into a big comfortable chair and bounces up from the seat cushions rising almost to the ceiling.

JOHN

First time, huh? Don't worry, you'll get your moonlegs soon enough.

He nods at a very, very old DWIGHT (100's) in a wheelchair

JOHN (CONT'D)

Dwight there was puking his guts up for days the first time he was here. When was that, '48?

DWIGHT

Bah, let's get on with it.

JACK (80's) stands and crosses to the bar.

JACK

O'Connor, is it? Jack. You Irish Catholic?

DUFFY

Yes. Yes. Catholic. Irish. Me.

MASON (70's) laughs drunkenly from the couch.

MASON

I guess we'll have to make you Pope now!

The men laugh, except for Dwight.

DWIGHT

Let's stop all the clowning around! Who is he? What kind of name is "Duffy"? The agreement was none of us would name successors until we all agreed on each other's candidates!

JOHN

Duffy, I suppose you know why you're here.

DUFFY

Yep, Council of Five and all that. Yep.

DWIGHT  
(cackling loudly)  
Ha! Doesn't have a clue! Look at  
him.

JOHN  
Duffy, we need to talk about Satish  
Nripendra.

DUFFY  
Uh oh. Look, here's the thing, I  
just wanted to...

JOHN  
He's dead.

DUFFY  
Really? That's great! I mean that's  
a great tragedy. That's what I  
meant to say.

DWIGHT  
What's wrong with this clown  
anyway?

JACK  
Satish was assassinated.

MASON  
We bagged the assassin, but the  
rest of us need to be careful. We  
could be next.

JOHN  
And Satish named you as his  
successor just minutes before he  
was killed.

DWIGHT  
Before? I still say it was after!

JOHN  
We've all seen the logs, it must've  
been a computer error. We don't  
know you and your file is encrypted  
we can't access anything beyond  
your cover identity.

MASON  
(laughing drunkenly)  
If we didn't know better we'd all  
think you're just some slacker  
computer nerd!

All the men laugh loudly again, except for Dwight. He puts on a thick pair of glasses and glares at Duffy.

DUFFY

(laughing too loudly)  
Wouldn't that be something? If I was really just some poor, helpless computer guy just trying to figure all this out and not get killed? That's a wild thought, right?

JOHN

We need to ask you some questions. You know, just to fill in the blanks.

MASON

Get the boy a drink already. You want a drink?

JOHN

What would you like?

Duffy almost manages to suppress a burp.

DWIGHT

What'd he say?

DUFFY

I'd really love a ginger ale.

JOHN

Coming right up. How do you know Satish? You two must be close if he chose you to inherit his place on the council.

John hands Duffy a small plastic bag filled with ginger ale. It has a small straw at the top. Duffy tries to suck the liquid out, but nothing comes out of the straw.

JACK

And being named at nearly the same time he was assassinated by an agent from ANGEL? I admit, I have some grave concerns. I think we all do.

The men all look at Duffy expectantly, while Duffy continues to suck on the straw.

DUFFY

I think this thing is broken.

MASON

You gotta squeeze it.

Jack and Dwight exchange a suspicious look.

Duffy squeezes too hard and the bag of ginger ale explodes all around and on him.

John hands him a napkin.

JOHN

About your relationship with...

Duffy burps again from way down deep.

DUFFY

I'm going to throw up or out or whatever you do on the moon. Where's the little councilman's room?

JOHN

Right through that door.

Duffy stumbles, floats and bounces as fast as he can to the bathroom. The pressurized door hisses open and slides shut behind him.

DWIGHT

For the love of money! He's a plant from ANGEL! Let's just kill him before he kills us.

JACK

Something's not right here.

MASON

He's just jerking us around. Nobody's as big an idiot as he's pretending to be.

JOHN

No, I'm with you two. Nripendra would never have gotten mixed up with an idiot like that.

A long scrapping sound can be heard. The men look up at the ceiling to the source of the sound.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(on the sound)

What is that?

EXT. OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - NIGHT

A LONE FIGURE in a sleek space suit slides down the side of the dome trailing a long thin wire. The figure stops outside the large window of the room the council are sitting in.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Duffy has his head in a vacuum toilet of the luxurious bathroom just off the council meeting room. As he throws up, the vacuum toilet engages creating a seal around his head as it flushes powerfully.

DUFFY  
Help! It's got me!

INT. THE COUNCIL MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

The council members stare at the window. The space-suited figure is hanging upside down outside the window.

DWIGHT  
What the hell?

The space-suited figure gives them all the finger and slaps a small device with a red blinking light to the glass.

JACK  
It's a hit!

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

The figure presses a button on the wrist of the suit and the wire snaps taut, tugging the figure back the way it came, toward the top of the dome.

The device detonates destroying the protective window followed by the sudden, silent decompression of the room the council were in. Furniture, books and the four council members fly out through the window and bounce along the moon landscape, kicking up huge amounts of dust.

As the reflection from the Earth illuminates the darkened faceplate of the helmet, Slane's face can be clearly seen, smiling in satisfaction.

INT. H.G. WELLS CRATER LOBBY - NIGHT

Alarms go off, lights flash, the guard jumps to his feet drawing a nasty looking sidearm. Gern drops to the floor hands raised in complete surrender.

GERN

It wasn't my fault! I surrender!

WAITING AREA GUARD

There's been a pressure breach in the meeting room. Stay behind me! We've got to see if any of the council survived.

GERN

Pressure breach? But if you open the door we'll die!

WAITING AREA GUARD

On your feet! The auto-sealant will cover the breach and the room will repressurize. Get up!

INT. THE COUNCIL MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

A clear plastic sheet slides into place, sealing the hole created by the explosive device while powerful fans kick.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Duffy is clutching the edge of the sink from his knees as he struggles to his feet. He glances up at the flashing red alarm light over the door.

DUFFY

Man, they make a big deal out of somebody tossing his cookies around here.

(to his reflection)

What's the plan, smart guy? I don't know, bluff maybe? Great idea! In any case, if I don't see you again, it's been fun.

The door slides open with a hiss.

INT. THE COUNCIL MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is empty now. No books, no furniture and no accusing council members.

DUFFY  
Where is everybody?

The guard from the hallway jumps in with pistol drawn. Duffy drops to his knees in surrender.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
It wasn't my fault!

WAITING AREA GUARD  
(to Gern)  
Help him!

The guard rushes to a control panel on the wall.

WAITING AREA GUARD (CONT'D)  
We've got to get you to safety,  
sir!

GERN  
(smirking)  
You just caved right away, huh?

Duffy rises and motions to Gern to lean closer.

DUFFY  
(whispering)  
Shut up.

A section of the floor opens revealing a sleek rocket car pointed down a long dark tunnel.

The two escort guards burst in.

WAITING AREA GUARD  
Get the councilman in the  
transport!

The two escort guards grab Duffy and hustle him in the rocket car. The waiting area guard grabs Gern and tosses him in the seat next to Duffy.

WAITING AREA GUARD (CONT'D)  
You too, surrender monkey!

Heavily padded bars, like on a roller-coaster, slide quickly over their shoulders as the canopy slides into place. The powerful jet engine roars to life.

The three guards bow to Duffy, hands over hearts.

ALL THREE GUARDS  
We who serve.

WAITING AREA GUARD

Good luck, sir. You are the only surviving member of the Council of Five. The SYN Group is now in your hands.

The rocket car slides forward slowly as the floor hatch closes.

INT. ROCKET CAR - NIGHT

The only light is coming from the control panel.

DUFFY

(snickering)

"Surrender monkey", huh? That's a good one.

GERN

I don't know what he was talking about.

DUFFY

He was talking about you. You're a surrender monkey.

GERN

Quit calling me that.

DUFFY

Surrender monkey.

GERN

I'm serious. Quit it.

DUFFY

Ook. Ook. Ook. I surrender. Give me a banana!

GERN

That's it!

Gern tries to turn in his seat to punch Duffy, but the heavy padded restraints hold him rigidly in place. The best he can manage is some feeble slaps at Duffy's arms.

Duffy retaliates as best he can and a very lame slapping fight ensues.

DUFFY

Okay, okay enough. We'll call this a draw for now. Where are we going?

(MORE)

DUFFY (CONT'D)

At this rate, it's going to take forever.

The rocket sled putters along the track slowly.

GERN

This must lead to some safehouse somewhere. What happened? Did you kill the rest of the council?

DUFFY

What are you talking about? I was in the bathroom. Those scarey guys are all dead?

GERN

There was an explosion. Holy crap! The guard said you're the only member of the Council of Five left.

DUFFY

Now that it's just us, what the hell is this Council of Five? Just what have you gotten me into here?

GERN

What? Me? You did this!

DUFFY

Let's not play the Blame Game. Just tell me, what's going on here?

The jet engine afterburners explode, Duffy and Gern are slammed back into their seats, screaming like kids on a wild roller-coaster ride.

The rocket car flies through the darkness following tracks down a twisting tunnel.

EXT. MOON SURFACE - NIGHT

They are rocketing by tall gray mountains, the Earth hanging in the sky over them.

DUFFY

What-is-the-Syn-Group?

GERN

Can't-talk-can't-move.

DUFFY

Tell-me-or-I'm-going-to-punch-you-in-the-balls!

They fly through a glowing trans-dimensional portal.

EXT. EARTH DESERT - DAY

Now rocketing across a vast open desert on Earth.

Another portal opens in front of them.

EXT. AMAZONIAN JUNGLE - DAY

They zoom across a jungle valley.

Another portal.

EXT. DEEP UNDER OCEAN - NIGHT

Large sea creatures can be seen as they rocket by. The track takes a steep dive into a dark crevasse.

Another portal.

EXT. UNDERGROUND SUBWAY TUNNEL - NIGHT

They whip by a subway track platform, a group of commuters lean out to watch them pass, the wind whirling by with almost hurricane force.

Another portal.

EXT. SNOW COVERED MOUNTAIN - EARLY EVENING

The rocket sweeps across a valley and up another snowy mountain. A snow covered villa can be seen in the distance. The sled races toward an opening under the villa.

INT. COUNCIL SAFE HOUSE - THE VILLA - EARLY EVENING

Powerful retro rockets fire and the rocket screeches to a halt inches from a large barrier in the lower level of the villa.

CLIVE (60's, butler) waits. As the canopy opens, he helps Duffy from the smoking vehicle. Gern crawls out on his own.

Duffy falls to his knees hugging the Clive's feet.

DUFFY

Thank you! Thank you! You saved us!

CLIVE

You're quite welcome, I'm sure, sir, but I am only your butler. Clive.

Duffy gets to his feet.

DUFFY

Just glad to meet you, Clive. Don't make a big deal out of it.

CLIVE

Of course not, sir. You've both had a difficult journey, I'm sure. If you'd be so good as to follow me, I can escort you to your quarters.

Clive steps on a moving sidewalk, the kind often found in large airports. Duffy and Gern follow.

The entire mansion looks like it may have been built entirely with gold, silver and marble. The hallway is full of expensive furniture and paintings.

GERN

Clive? Where are we?

CLIVE

This is the northern most Council safehouse. I assure you, you are quite safe here.

Heavily armed guards salute as they pass.

DUFFY

I really feel safe. How about you, Gern? Feel safe?

GERN

Uh huh.

Clive opens two massive oak doors into a large living room filled with expensive furniture.

INT. SAFEHOUSE SUITE - EARLY EVENING

CLIVE

I'm sorry for the rather spartan conditions, sir, but your safety is our primary concern. To your right, is the master bedroom.

(MORE)

CLIVE (CONT'D)

Your assistant can either use the smaller bedroom on the left or other accommodations can be made for him.

DUFFY

You're cool with the smaller crib, right?

GERN

(sarcastically)

Yes, sir. Naturally.

DUFFY

Clive, this is great. Thanks!

CLIVE

Will there be anything else, sir?

DUFFY

No, we're good. We got some super secret council stuff to work on. Maybe later, we can hang out or something. Are there any strip clubs around here?

CLIVE

As in entertainment venues? I'm afraid not, sir. We are in one of the most remote locations on Earth. However, if it's female companionship you require...

DUFFY

Clive, you dog! Now you're talking! Give me a pound!

Duffy holds out his fist. Clive hesitantly lifts his fist up to match it, Duffy smacks his fist into Clive's.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Yeah!

CLIVE

You can rely on me, sir.

Clive salutes, hand over heart, head bowed.

CLIVE (CONT'D)

We who serve.

Clive closes the doors as he leaves. Duffy begins walking briskly around the large room.

GERN

Did you just tell him to bring us  
some hookers?

DUFFY

No! Did I? I don't think so.  
Anyway, where's he going to get  
some hotties way up here in the  
mountains? I just wanted to get him  
out of here.

GERN

The whole instantaneous  
transportation thing still hasn't  
sunk in, I guess. Whatever. We need  
to talk.

DUFFY

Finally! Yes!

Duffy drops down in a large leather chair and puts his feet  
up. Gern sits on the couch opposite him.

Duffy immediately discovers a small panel of buttons in the  
arm of the chair.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Hey, what's this?

He presses one of the buttons and the chair starts making a  
low humming sound as it vibrates. When Duffy speaks, the  
vibrations make his voice sound different.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Thiiissss iss aaawessooommmme.

GERN

Come on, Duffy. This is serious!  
We've got to figure out what to do!

DUFFY

Oookaaaay buuut yooou've goot  
tooooo trrryyyy thiiiiissss.

Duffy presses a button on a similar panel on the couch Gern  
is sitting in.

GERN

Noooo dooonn't Duuuuffy woooowww  
yooou'rrre riiight thiiiiissss.  
iiiss grrreeeat.

DUFFY

Seeeee? Oookaaaay nooow telllll meeee  
whaaat theeee Sssynnnn Grooop  
iiiiis.

GERN

Theee whaaatt? No!

Gern jumps up.

GERN (CONT'D)

I can't think with that thing on.

DUFFY

I caaannn.

Gern begins pacing around the room while he talks.

GERN

Okay, here's the deal: You know all those crazy conspiracy theories? Like UFOs, New World Order, Secret Societies and all that? Well it's all true and The Syn Group is behind it all. Every government secret, every secret society, every secret, the SYN Group is in charge of everything. The whole world is run by the SYN Group and right now, you're in charge of the SYN Group.

DUFFY

Oooookaaaaay.

Gern turns off the chair.

GERN

Will you pay attention? Don't you get it? You're in charge of the whole world. Everything. The price of oil. When and where it rains. What music is popular. Who wins the Superbowl! Everything!

DUFFY

Come on. Knock it off. Nobody is in charge of all that stuff. It just happens. Right?

Gern waits.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Right?

Gern shakes his head.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Let's go over this again. What am I  
in charge of?

GERN  
Everything.

DUFFY  
What do you mean "everything"?

GERN  
What does the word "everything"  
mean where you come from? Every.  
Thing. All. Things. Everything.

Duffy turns on the chair again. Gern turns the chair off  
again.

GERN (CONT'D)  
No! You've got to deal with this!

Duffy closes his eyes.

GERN (CONT'D)  
What are you doing now?

DUFFY  
Quiet. I'm dealing with this. Give  
me one second.

Duffy opens his eyes and stands up. He rubs his hands  
together as someone who's about to start a big household  
chore.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Okay! Got it. I know exactly what  
to do.

INT. SAFEHOUSE SUITE - NIGHT - A FEW MINUTES LATER.

Duffy is sitting at a large desk in front of his Tempest  
device. Gern hovers behind him nervously as the sound of a  
ringing phone is heard.

GERN  
I don't know about this.

DUFFY  
No, I have to do it. He's the  
world's most important man and he  
needs to hear this.

MALE VOICE ON PHONE  
(on speakerphone)  
Hello? How can I help you, sir?

DUFFY  
Is this George Lucas?

GEORGE LUCAS  
(on speakerphone)  
Yes, sir.

DUFFY  
You know who I am, right?

GEORGE LUCAS  
(on speakerphone)  
Yes, sir.

DUFFY  
Alright then, I want you to listen  
to me carefully. You are going to  
release the original Star Wars  
trilogy on blu-ray with none of  
those weirdo changes or new special  
effects. Just like they were  
originally shown in the theaters.  
Got it?

GEORGE LUCAS  
(on speakerphone)  
I understand, sir. We who serve.

DUFFY  
Yeah! That's right! Han shot first!  
Say it!

GEORGE LUCAS  
(on speakerphone)  
Han shot first.

DUFFY  
Louder!

GEORGE LUCAS  
(on speakerphone)  
Han shot first!

DUFFY  
Big fan! Bye!

Duffy hangs up, looking extremely pleased with himself.

GERN

Seriously? You have the power to do anything and that's the first thing you do? You can change the world, Duffy!

DUFFY

You have your image of a perfect world and I have mine. Okay, you're right, time to get serious. We should do something like make gas prices cheaper or stop world hunger, right?

GERN

Yes, of course, but you can't just, I mean, there's probably procedures and...

DUFFY

I'm the High-and-Mighty Grand Master Poobah of Everything and I don't have to deal with procedures, red tape or any of that bureaucratic crap anymore! I'm The Man, buddy! Let's do some good stuff! Let's save the world!

There's a knock at the door. Three STUNNINGLY BEAUTIFUL WOMEN (20's) dressed in flowing silk robes enter.

MARISSA

Good evening, Master. I'm Marissa, this is Jedda and Shae. We offer ourselves to fulfill your every desire.

The women wait while Duffy and Gern try not to drool.

DUFFY

Let's save the world later, okay?

GERN

I think you're supposed to choose.

DUFFY

Huh? Oh, okay.

Duffy walks toward the three women like a general inspecting his troops.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Yes, very nice. Clearly the choice is obvious. I'll take all three.

Gern rolls his eyes. The girls exchange impressed looks and big smiles.

GERN

I bet you were an only child.

DUFFY

That's pretty selfish, isn't it?  
Did you...?

SHAE

(pouting)

I'm sorry, Master, but we are for  
you only. Unless, of course, you  
command us to pleasure your  
assistant.

DUFFY

No, no, it's okay. He's fine.  
Right, Gern? I mean, wow, she just  
looked so disappointed there, you  
know?

GERN

It's okay, I've got a girlfriend.

DUFFY

Sure, of course you do.

Duffy winks at the women, they all giggle appropriately.

GERN

What's that supposed to mean?

Duffy looks around as if trying to find someone.

DUFFY

Is your girlfriend here in the room  
with us now?

GERN

Just go and have fun. I'm tired.  
I'm just going to go to bed. We'll  
get started in the morning.

DUFFY

You don't tell me what to do. I say  
what's what around here, buddy boy.  
Come on, ladies. Let's go have some  
fun. I'll see you later, Gern.

GERN

Excellent idea, oh High-and-Mighty  
Poobah.

Duffy hustles the ladies into the master bedroom giving Gern a big smile and a thumbs-up from the doorway.

DUFFY

Dude, they called me "Master". How cool is that?

He slams the door shut.

Gern shakes his head, walks over to the desk. He shuts down the Tempest machine and turns off several lights before going into his bedroom closing the door behind him.

Duffy's door immediately opens and the three women step out briskly. Hair mussed, they are adjusting their clothing.

Duffy follows tucking his shirt into his pants.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

I've kind of been not dating lately and, well, you know.

MARISSA

You were wonderful, Master.

JEDDA

Such power.

SHAE

We will have your pizza delivered immediately, Master.

Duffy waves yawning and sits in the big chair again.

DUFFY

Thanks, you're all great. I'm going to do some council stuff now. See you later!

The women exchange a few eye rolls behind his back as they leave.

Duffy looks at Gern's door.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Nah, he'll just want to work. Besides, the little guy's probably tired.

He notices a huge television screen hanging from the wall in front of him.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 Duuuude! That's what I call a TV!  
 Where's the remote?

He picks up a television remote control, but it only has one small button. He presses it and the television snaps on immediately.

COMPUTER VOICE FROM TV  
 Good evening, sir. What may I show you?

DUFFY  
 Who are you?

COMPUTER VOICE FROM TV  
 I am your automated entertainment host. If you can describe it, I can create it.

DUFFY  
 Like midget wrestling or something?

COMPUTER VOICE FROM TV  
 Of course, sir. Would you like the midgets to fight to the death?

DUFFY  
 No! Really? Maybe. No! So you can create any kind of show I want to see?

COMPUTER VOICE FROM TV  
 Of course, sir.

DUFFY  
 So like if I wanted to watch an episode of "Gilligan's Island" with Sean Connery as the Skipper?

Immediately the screen displays the opening to "Gilligan's Island" as Duffy stares in amazement.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 Wow.

INT. SAFEHOUSE VILLA - MORNING

Duffy is snoring peacefully on the couch, the television is still on. His pants are on the table, he's sleeping in his boxers. Several pizza boxes, crusts and a general mess surround him.

Sean Connery's voice can be heard berating Gilligan.

Clive turns off the television and shakes Duffy's shoulder gently.

CLIVE

Sir?

DUFFY

(mumbling sleepily)

Go away. My interview isn't until  
1. Tons of time.

CLIVE

Sir? There's a Justice  
Pronouncement scheduled for this  
morning.

Duffy screams and falls on the floor.

DUFFY

No! It was just a dream! No!

Gern runs into the room.

CLIVE

Sir, I'm sorry!

GERN

Snap out of it, Duffy!

Duffy jumps to his feet trying to act like the boss.

DUFFY

Ah, good morning, Clark.

CLIVE

It's Clive, sir.

DUFFY

Yes, it is. What can we do for you?

CLIVE

As I said, sir, there's a Justice  
Pronouncement scheduled for this  
morning. Apparently, none of the  
other members of the council had  
named successors. As the only  
current member of the Council, I'm  
afraid you'll be presiding alone.

Clive walks to an alcove and presses a button. Behind his back, Duffy looks questioningly at Gern. Gern shrugs his shoulders.

The buttons open a door to a large control room with two consoles.

GERN

Cool. We're doing a remote conference, right?

CLIVE

Yes, sir. You will be communicating with the Hall of Pronouncement from here.

Duffy is struggling into his pants.

DUFFY

(whispering)

You know what he's talking about?

GERN

(whispering)

Kind of. I know how to use that equipment anyway.

DUFFY

(whispering)

Cool. Okay.

(louder to Clive)

We're good. Thanks buddy. We could go for some breakfast if you've got something working in the microwave.

CLIVE

We who serve.

Clive bows as he exits.

Duffy and Gern enter the control room.

INT. VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The small room has a large desk in the center, with control panels on either side. There's a small camera pointing toward one of the chairs. The setup looks somewhat like a television news desk. Behind the chair is a large logo: the Earth with five hands gripping it tightly with blood red letters is the word "SYN".

DUFFY

(off SYN logo)

That's pretty intense.

GERN

(off video equipment)

Right, you sit there. This is just some kind of video conference. Apparently, you've got to give a speech or something.

DUFFY

Huh? What? Why? To who? Can they see me? Can I see them?

Gern takes the other chair opposite Duffy; flicking switches, typing commands and checking display panels.

GERN

Sit down, just relax. You'll be fine. This thing should have a masking feature.

DUFFY

A what?

GERN

It's digital avatar. It's a computer image that will be presented for the video that will act like you. You know, it'll change your features, disguise your voice, stuff like that. Now quit bugging me for a minute while I try to figure all this out.

DUFFY

You said you were on probation. What did you do?

GERN

I really don't want to talk about it.

DUFFY

Come on, you know I can get you off probation.

GERN

Good idea. Thanks.

DUFFY

I need to know what you did first.

GERN

No.

DUFFY

I need to know you've learned your lesson. Was it because you lied about having a girlfriend?

GERN

That's not a lie! I do have a girlfriend!

DUFFY

I believe you. Almost. So, what did you do?

GERN

We're almost ready to go here. Just talk to the camera. That monitor there will show your avatar on the other side.

DUFFY

Yeah, yeah. I got it. Come on, man. Talk to me. I can't believe you did something really bad.

GERN

I made an unpopular decision.

DUFFY

And?

GERN

A couple years ago, I was promoted to a pretty high ranking position in Populace Control.

DUFFY

What's "Populace Control"?

GERN

That's the group that makes people feel small and helpless against the decisions of big corporations and governments. I was a VP in the Entertainment Division.

Duffy's blank stare prompts Gern to continue.

GERN (CONT'D)

You know how a TV show comes out that's really popular? Then it gets cancelled and they always say it's because not enough people watched it?

DUFFY

That never made sense to me.

GERN

That's usually a lie. It's done to make people feel like they're in the minority. Like what's important to you, isn't important to the majority of the population. And no matter how much you squawk, organize online petitions or letter writing campaigns, it won't matter. That way people feel less powerful and less likely to try and make changes.

DUFFY

That's really cold. How'd you get in trouble?

GERN

I cancelled a show that was really, really popular and it caused a lot of trouble.

DUFFY

What show?

GERN

When you're ready to talk, flip that silver switch to the right. The mike is right there and the camera is there. What show? I cancelled "Star Fire".

DUFFY

(suddenly very serious)  
What did you say?

INT. HUGE DOOMED COLISEUM - NIGHT

A massive modern version of the Roman Coliseum.

Tens of thousands of followers wearing red and black hooded robes and carrying torches are packed into the seats surrounding a raised dais in the center of the coliseum.

The crowd is shouting enthusiastically as TOBIAS (late 50's) walks up the steps to the raised platform.

He raises his ceremonial staff and the arena falls silent.

TOBIAS  
We who serve!

THE CROWD  
We who serve!

TOBIAS  
We are gathered to hear judgement.  
The beloved Council of Five will  
make pronouncement on the fate of  
our most hated enemy, Roan Hayes,  
an agent from ANGEL!

The crowd boos loudly as Roan Hayes, strapped to a large upright platform rises out of an opening in the dais next to Tobias. Roan struggles but the metal bands hold him tightly.

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

GERN  
The silver switch, flip it to the  
right.

DUFFY  
No, before that.

Duffy distractedly flips the switch not noticing the camera light going from red to green.

GERN  
I canceled "Star Fire".

INT. HUGE DOOMED COLISEUM - NIGHT

A SKULL with fiery eyes surrounded by smoke and flame appears on a huge Jumbo-Tron video screen in the coliseum.

The crowd cheers loudly at the awesome sight. Tobias leads the crowd in a chant of "We who serve! We who serve! We who serve!"

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Thousands of tiny voices are chanting "We who serve!" from the headphones which are not on Duffy's head at the moment.

DUFFY  
What did you say?

GERN  
Huh?

INT. HUGE DOOMED COLISEUM - NIGHT

Gern's responses aren't heard in the arena, the microphone only picks up Duffy's voice, the fiery skull avatar mimicking his facial movements.

A hush has fallen over the crowd.

The "DuffySkull" avatar on the screen repeats itself to the masses in a voice that makes Darth Vader sound like Mickey Mouse.

DUFFYSKULL

I said, what did you say!

Tobias takes up the chant again, encouraging the assembled masses to chant even louder than before.

CROWD

We who serve! We who serve! We who serve!

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

GERN

I cancelled "Star Fire". Why? Were you a fan?

DUFFY

I need to ask you a question.

INT. HUGE DOOMED COLISEUM - NIGHT

The crowd stops chanting.

Roan stares back at the fiery skull defiantly.

DUFFYSKULL

How could you destroy something so perfect and so beautiful? What kind of person does that?

ROAN

I killed Nripendra because he was evil! Just like all of the Council of Five!

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

GERN

Just what did that show have that made it so special?

DUFFY

Intelligence, action, comedy? These things mean nothing to you?

INT. HUGE DOOMED COLISEUM - NIGHT

Tobias is as confused by the question as everyone, including Roan, but he jabs Roan in the ribs with his staff anyway. The staff gives Roan an electric shock.

TOBIAS

Answer the Council, you dog!

ROAN

I don't understand the question!

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

GERN

So did "Scooby Doo" and it didn't cost 3 million dollars per episode to produce!

DUFFY

I did not just hear you make comparisons to "Scooby Doo".

INT. HUGE DOOMED COLISEUM - NIGHT

Tobias jams the electrified staff into Roan again. Roan stifles a scream of pain.

TOBIAS

Never do that again, dog!

ROAN

What the hell are you talking about!?!

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

GERN

You're right. I shouldn't compare "Star Fire" to "Scooby Doo".

DUFFY

Good.

INT. HUGE DOOMED COLLESEUM - NIGHT

ROAN

You won't win, monster! I'm only one soldier! ANGEL is an army. You can't defeat us all!

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

GERN

Now, if I had to compare "Star Fire" to another show...

DUFFY

Be very careful, buddy boy, the next words out of your mouth will determine your fate.

INT. HUGE DOOMED COLISEUM - NIGHT

Roan spits at the screen. It earns him an extra long jolt from Tobias' electrified staff.

TOBIAS

Master, do you wish to pass judgement on the prisoner now?

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

GERN

I'd have to say "Star Fire" is more like "The Love Boat"!

DUFFY

That's it! Now you've done it! You've crossed the line, buddy boy! I've put up with a lot from you...

INT. HUGE DOOMED COLLESEUM - NIGHT

DUFFYSKULL

...with all your "Ooo, look at me. I'm so smart. I know how to do stuff." Well, now you've just shown the whole world what a total crap-for-brains you really are!

The assembled fanatics murmur among themselves in confusion.

ROAN

Do your worst, you bastard!

Now the crowd focuses their attention on Roan again, loudly calling for his death.

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

GERN

I think something's happening. Did you flip the switch yet? Put on your headphones.

DUFFY

Will you quit telling me what to do? You're not in charge here. I'm in charge. Okay? You are not the boss of me.

GERN

Headphones!

Duffy looks around the desk for the headphones, bitching and mumbling to himself.

INT. HUGE DOOMED COLISEUM - NIGHT

The crowd is hushed now and the sounds of DuffySkull's mumbling fill the arena.

TOBIAS

My lord? What is your verdict?

DUFFYSKULL

Wow, these are cool. Hey, I see a guy down there. Yo, dude! Up here! We'll settle this. Did you like that show "Star Fire"?

ROAN

What?

Tobias jams him with the electrified staff again. Roan fights back a howl of pain.

ROAN (CONT'D)

What is going on here? Did I like what?

DUFFYSKULL

The TV show "Star Fire". Did you like it?

ROAN

I don't have much time for television.

DUFFYSKULL

Oh right, you spend all your time reading Shakespeare and listening to opera. Answer the question!

Tobias threatens him with the staff again.

ROAN

Alright! Alright! I watched it a couple of times. It was okay, I guess.

DUFFYSKULL

What do you mean "okay"? Did you like it or not?

ROAN

What kind of game are you playing?

DUFFYSKULL

Answer the question! Did you like "Star Fire"?

TOBIAS

Speak, dog!

ROAN

No! I didn't like it. I thought it was predictable and a little boring.

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

GERN

Who are you talking to?

Gern comes around the desk to see Duffy's video monitor.

DUFFY

What! How can you say that?

Duffy slams his hand on the desk in anger, inadvertently punching a red blinking button on the console.

INT. A HUGE DOOMED COLISEUM - NIGHT

The crowd goes wild as Roan is dropped through a trap door.

DUFFYSKULL

Hey! Quit pushing me! Get off!

TOBIAS

Judgement has been pronounced! The prisoner will be executed in 24 hours! We are adjourned!

The crowd picks up the chant "We Who Serve!" again.

INT. SMALL VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Gern is struggling with Duffy. Gern finally moves Duffy out of the way so he can see what Duffy was seeing.

Gern flips the silver switch back to the left and the green light over the camera and microphone goes off.

GERN

Duffy! Was that on the whole time?

DUFFY

No! Maybe. Okay, yes, it was probably on, but it's your fault!

GERN

What? How is it my fault?

DUFFY

You cancelled "Star Fire"!

Duffy lunges at Gern. Gern runs around the other side of the desk.

GERN

You're insane! Stay away from me!

Duffy stops, already out of breath.

DUFFY

I've had it with you. You're a jerk and you work for an evil empire and you killed my favorite TV show!

GERN

What's wrong with you? It's just a TV show! Are you so disconnected from reality that you have to escape into fantasy?

DUFFY

Right now, all I want to do is escape reality! I didn't ask for this! I just want out!

GERN

You have the ability to change the world. If I had that kind of power...

DUFFY

...you'd use it to make people feel small and helpless? Like their voices don't matter? Maybe I haven't done much with my life, but are you proud of what you've done with yours?

The realization of what Duffy just said hits them both.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

I guess I haven't really done much with my life. My wife, I mean, my ex-wife was always telling me she wanted me to be more ambitious.

GERN

Really? You should let her know you're running the whole planet now.

DUFFY

Meh, she'd just ask when I'm going to be promoted to running the whole solar system.

GERN

I do feel pretty bad for doing what I did.

DUFFY

Yeah?

GERN

I really liked "Star Fire".

DUFFY

(laughing)  
It was a great show wasn't it?

GERN

(laughing)  
It was!



DUFFY

Me either because according to this, ANGEL was in charge of everything up until about 50 years ago. Then, about 75 years before that the SYN Group was running things. ANGEL before that, on and on.

GERN

It's like two football teams. Different uniforms.

DUFFY

But they're all playing the same game. We've got to talk to that guy. The agent from ANGEL.

GERN

Roan Hayes? If this is all a big football game, he's the super-star quarterback. He's not going to want to talk to you.

DUFFY

He's a captive audience right now.

GERN

What are you going to say to him?

DUFFY

I'm going to ask him to take a message to his bosses.

INT. THE SUITE'S MASTER BEDROOM - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Duffy is standing in front of a large mirror wearing a ceremonial robe of red and black. Clive is behind him adjusting a gold sash which is draped across Duffy's shoulder.

DUFFY

I don't know. Do I look stupid?

GERN

Yes.

Clive looks alarmed.

GERN (CONT'D)

But in a really impressive way, "sir".

DUFFY

I look pretty awesome in it, but is it really necessary, Clive?

CLIVE

Sir, you are expected to wear the ceremonial robe of office when interrogating a prisoner. I only worked on it last night with the expectation that you might want to wear it today.

DUFFY

Well, since you put all that time in.

CLIVE

Your escort has arrived.

Duffy and Gern are startled to see Slane standing in the doorway. She's now wearing the uniform of one of the SYN Group's armed guards; black and red, lots of leather and armor.

DUFFY

Aaah! Where the hell did you come from? Don't kill me!

CLIVE

Sir, this is Agent Slane, our newest convert from ANGEL. She's a fully-trained combat operative and will be acting as your bodyguard today.

DUFFY

Gern here is all the protection I need. He's small, but he's fierce.

Gern gives Slane his best "fierce" face, which is as about as fierce looking as a sleeping puppy.

Slane looks at Gern with a cold, intimidating stare.

GERN

I think she wants to come with us.

DUFFY

That uniform looks kind of uncomfortable. Feel free to loosen it up.

SLANE

He said bodyguard, "sir", not  
bodyguard with benefits.

Gern barely smothers a snicker.

DUFFY

What do you think of this robe  
thing?

Slane looks him over from head to toe.

SLANE

You look very impressive, "sir".

GERN

Just like I said.

DUFFY

Let's go see this Roan guy.

CLIVE

Sir, you should also know that  
Agent Slane is the one who captured  
Roan Hayes. He's been our number  
one adversary for years.

DUFFY

Wow, cool. Nice one.

Slane pulls her sidearm and fires a blast of electricity,  
like a mini-lightning bolt. Clive goes down shaking like a  
taser victim.

Slane turns the gun toward Duffy.

Duffy screams and covers his face.

Gern leaps at Slane, grabs her wrist and jams the gun's  
barrel into his own stomach. He's holding her arm with both  
of his little hands.

SLANE

What are you doing? You want a  
jolt?

GERN

You pull the trigger and you'll get  
it too.

DUFFY

Good work, Gern! Don't let go!

SLANE  
(smiling coldly)  
This uniform is uncomfortable.

GERN  
Okay.

SLANE  
It's uncomfortable because it's  
insulated.

GERN  
This is going to hurt.

He winces, eyes closed.

Nothing.

GERN (CONT'D)  
Aren't you going to shoot me?

SLANE  
I don't know. Something's not right  
here.

DUFFY  
Don't shoot him or me. What are you  
so mad at me about? I was just  
kidding about taking off your  
clothes.

Slane looks deep into Gern's eyes.

SLANE  
Why did you do this?

GERN  
You killed the other members of the  
council didn't you?

SLANE  
Yes.

DUFFY  
Oh man, what's this all about?

Slane takes her finger off the trigger. Gern slowly releases  
his grip. Slane holsters her sidearm.

SLANE  
Just who are you two idiots really?

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

SLANE

This is just ridiculous enough to be believable.

DUFFY

Even the part about Gern having a girlfriend?

SLANE

No, that part I don't believe.

GERN

Hey!

SLANE

What was your plan when you got to Roan?

DUFFY

I want a truce between ANGEL and The SYN Group. I want Roan to take a message back to his bosses that I want to meet with them.

SLANE

Why?

GERN

This all has to stop. The two groups fighting each other makes no sense.

DUFFY

Maybe both groups unite or something.

SLANE

Do you read a lot of comic books?

DUFFY

Yeah, so?

GERN

Why are you doing this, Slane? What do you want?

SLANE

To end the SYN Group's hold on the world. Their evil must be stopped.

DUFFY

ANGEL isn't much better.

SLANE

What? How can you say that? I've dedicated my life to ANGEL. Do you know what I've sacrificed? What I've done? Roan is important to me! I had to do it! I had to! It was the only way I could get close enough to take out the rest of the Council!

DUFFY

So you pretended to turn traitor?

SLANE

Yes. Roan and I came up with the plan to take out the heads of SYN, knock off their leadership. Then ANGEL would be forced to attack and take down SYN once and for all. But Roan and I argued about how to go about it. Roan thought he could pick them off one by one. I knew it wouldn't work. He's good, the best, but I knew the rest of the council would go to ground as soon as he got the first one. Even if he could bring himself to do it, they'd never believe Roan was a traitor. He's a rock star in our world. So, I pretended to switch sides. It was the only way to get close enough to them.

DUFFY

You tried to kill me before? On the moon?

SLANE

How did you make it out alive?

DUFFY

Let's just say I've got a few tricks up my sleeve.

GERN

He was puking in the bathroom.

DUFFY

Dude, you are the worst wing-man ever!

(to Slane)

It was still a trick though.

Clive lurches out from the master bedroom looking like the morning after the Night of the Living Dead.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
You're looking pretty toasty.

CLIVE  
Right away, sir.

Clive stumbles toward the door.

SLANE  
He'll be okay in a few hours.

Clive walks into the door face first.

DUFFY  
Dude, open the door first, okay?

CLIVE  
It would be my pleasure, sir.

Clive opens one of the doors and walks face first into the closed one. After weighing all his options, he finally decides to walk through the open door. He steps out onto the moving conveyor belt in the hallway and begins to walk the wrong way.

He is seen just outside the doorway, walking in place.

GERN  
Hey Clive!

CLIVE  
Your toast will be ready  
momentarily sirs!

They all watch Clive walking in place for a few beats.

Duffy sighs.

DUFFY  
I don't think we're going to get  
any toast. Let's go.

INT. A HIGH-TECH PRISON - DAY

Duffy and Gern, escorted by Slane are walking down a long hallway lined with HEAVILY-ARMED GUARDS toward a guard post. Guards snap to attention as Duffy passes.

Slane approaches the SERGEANT (40's, tough).

SLANE  
Council of Five member O'Connor to  
see prisoner Roan Hayes.

SGT.  
Acknowledged. Scanning.

A green scanning beam washes over the three. A green light  
blinks on over the door and with a whoosh of air, it opens  
slowly.

Duffy breathes again.

SLANE  
(whispering to Duffy)  
Don't act so relieved, "sir".

DUFFY  
(muttering to himself)  
Right. I'm cool. I'm supposed to be  
here. I'm doing good. I'm doing  
good.

SLANE  
(whispering)  
Would you relax?

GERN  
(whispering)  
Everybody just relax.

DUFFY  
(whispering)  
You two need to relax. Quit telling  
me to relax. Why do people do that?  
The worst thing you can do to  
someone who's panicking is to tell  
them to relax. It's like telling  
someone on a ladder not to look  
down.

The SGT eyes them suspiciously.

SLANE  
(whispering)  
How about if I tell you to relax or  
I'm going to put another hole in  
your head, "sir"?

DUFFY  
Much better.  
(to the Sgt) )  
What are you looking at? Let's go.  
(MORE)

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Take me to Roan Hayes' cell now or I'll transfer you to, I don't know where, but it'll be really crappy and you won't like it.

The SGT snaps to attention and bows, hand over heart.

SGT.

We who serve. This way, sir.

DUFFY

This is going pretty well, don't you think?

GERN

You really have an amazing capacity to ignore reality, don't you?

DUFFY

Well, like a great man once said, "If life hands you lemons, bite into them and go hell yeah, I love lemons! What else ya got!?!"

GERN

That sort of makes sense.

DUFFY

Really? Explain it to me then.

The SGT stops in front of a cell door.

SGT.

This is the prisoner's cell, sir.

The SGT is waiting for Duffy to do something.

SGT. (CONT'D)

Sir? Your hood?

DUFFY

What about it?

SLANE

"Sir", he's reminding you that when a council member meets with an outsider, the council member's face must be hidden. Remember, "sir"?

DUFFY

Oh yeah, right. The hood wearing policy. Good one.

When Duffy flips his hood up a device is activated within the hood which generates a deep, dark shadow completely obscuring his face and changing his voice.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 (DuffySkull voice)  
 Okay, let's...Oh man, this is so cool. My voice sounds awesome! Gern! Check it out!

GERN  
 Yes, "sir". It's great, now just don't do the...

DUFFY  
 (DuffySkull voice)  
 Luuuke. Luuke.

GERN  
 Really, don't do that.

DUFFY  
 (DuffySkull voice)  
 I am your Mother!

GERN  
 Really? Come on.

DUFFY  
 (DuffySkull voice)  
 Look in to your heart. You know it to be true!

Duffy notices the look he's getting from Slane.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 (DuffySkull voice)  
 Sheesh, lighten up everybody. I was just trying to break some of the tension here. Okay, SGT FrownyPants, open the door already.

The SGT opens the outer cell door.

INT. A SMALL AREA IN FRONT OF A CELL - DAY

Roan is doing push-ups.

DUFFY  
 (DuffySkull voice)  
 How's it going? Little workout, huh?

SGT.  
On your feet, dog!

ROAN  
I'm busy. Come back later.  
88...89...90...

The SGT jabs Roan with a shock staff.

ROAN (CONT'D)  
(to Slane)  
Traitor! How could you do this?

Slane snatches the shock staff from the SGT.

SLANE  
Leave us. The council member wishes  
to interrogate the prisoner alone.  
Right, "sir"?

DUFFY  
(DuffySkull voice)  
Huh? Yeah. Alone. Beat it.

SLANE  
Before you go, open the cell.

SGT.  
(to Duffy)  
Sir? Are you sure?

DUFFY  
(DuffySkull voice)  
Am I?

Slane nods.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
(DuffySkull voice)  
Yes, I'm sure, I think.

SLANE  
And turn off the cameras.

SGT.  
(to Duffy)  
Sir, for security we'll need to  
keep video on, but we will mute the  
microphones to keep your  
conversation private.

DUFFY  
 (DuffySkull voice to  
 Slane)  
 Is that okay?

Slane rolls her eyes.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 (DuffySkull voice)  
 I mean, yeah. Good, do that then.  
 Now, go on, scoot. We've got like  
 council stuff to do in secret here.

The SGT slides a card through the lock and presses a combination into the keypad. The bars of the cell slide open.

Roan looks like a tiger eyeing three fat antelopes.

Slane hands the shock staff to Gern and puts her hand on her sidearm.

The SGT leaves, bowing then closing the outer door behind him.

ROAN  
 This is a dream come true. I  
 suppose it's only fair to tell you  
 (to Slane)  
 that you're going first,  
 (to Duffy)  
 Then you,  
 (to Gern)  
 And I don't know who you are, but  
 I'm going to kill you if I have  
 time before the guards stop me.

INT. THE GUARD POST - DAY

The SGT watches the scene in Roan's cell carefully.

SGT.  
 Stand by with an Intervention Team.  
 First sign of trouble, we flood the  
 cell with sleep compound and rush  
 it to save the Councilman.

INT. ROAN'S CELL - DAY

Slane looks over her shoulder at the camera. The small light goes from green to red.

SLANE

Roan, knock off all the tough talk. I did what I did because you gave me no choice. I killed the rest of the council.

ROAN

You what? Then who's this bozo?

DUFFY

(DuffySkull voice)

Who's a bozo? You mean me?

SLANE

He's just a bozo. It's a long story, but right now, he's in a position to help us bring down Syn forever.

DUFFY

(DuffySkull voice)

I'm not a bozo.

GERN

Let's not get sidetracked on the whole "bozo issue". We want a truce between SYN and ANGEL.

SLANE

We need you to set up a meet with the ANGEL Leadership and the Council of Bozo.

ROAN

Not likely. When ANGEL's Leadership hears about this, it'll be an all out assault.

GERN

And what will that accomplish? Is ANGEL any better at running things than SYN? This war has to end.

ROAN

The ANGEL Leadership might not want to meet.

SLANE

Just get the message to them, Roan. We'll handle the rest.

ROAN

You broke my heart, baby.

SLANE

I've kind of missed you calling me that, but quit it.

DUFFY

(DuffySkull voice)

You want us to leave you two kids alone? Seriously, if you start making out how's that going to look on camera?

SLANE

Roan, I'm going to let you grab my sidearm. It's fully loaded. You can choose to kill us all...

DUFFY

(Duffyskull voice)

Whoa! Wait a second!

GERN

Bad plan! Bad plan!

SLANE (CONT'D)

...Or you can trust us to get you out of here.

DUFFY

(DuffySkull voice)

So, what are you going to do?

ROAN

Do you trust me?

DUFFY

(DuffySkull voice)

Not really.

ROAN

Then I guess you'll just have to trust that I trust you.

SLANE

I trust you, Roan.

DUFFY

(DuffySkull voice)

You do, do you? Gern and I don't really know you all that well, Slane.

GERN

And you did betray your last boss and you're betraying your current bosses now.

SLANE  
(to Gern)  
Hand me the shock staff.

Gern reluctantly hands his only means of defense over to Slane.

SLANE (CONT'D)  
I'm going to jab this at you.

ROAN  
I'm with you, baby, I mean, Slane.

INT. THE GUARD POST - DAY

The SGT is watching the monitor.

SGT.  
Something's going on in there. What  
is she doing?

GUARD  
(chuckling)  
Looks like she's going to give him  
some motivation.

INT. ROAN'S CELL - DAY

SLANE  
Get ready, baby. Here it comes.

Slane thrusts the shock staff forward at Roan. He takes the hit, but spins quickly and snatches the staff out of her hands. He twists her around and puts her in a neck hold using the staff as leverage. With his free hand he grabs her weapon from it's holster.

INT. THE GUARD POST - DAY

SGT.  
Hit the sleep gas! Intervention  
Team with me!

Alarms go off. The SGT leads a team running down the hall toward Roan's cell.

INT. ROAN'S CELL - DAY

Duffy is acting like a silent movie star, performing for the camera by waving his arms in mock terror.

DUFFY  
(DuffySkull voice)  
Oh no! He's escaped! Whatever shall  
I do?

Roan has Slane from behind, his gun to her temple. He's discarded the shock staff.

ROAN  
Quit screwing around you idiot and  
give me your Tempest!

DUFFY  
(DuffySkull voice)  
What? No way! Nobody said anything  
about that! It's cool and it's  
mine!

Gern jumps on him and they wrestle for it. Gern finally wrenches it away from Duffy. Gas starts pouring out of the vents. Gern tosses it to Roan.

INT. THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE - DAY

The guards have reached the door. The SGT reaches out to the handle and ZAP! A burst of electricity throws him across the hallway into the other wall.

INT. ROAN'S CELL - DAY

Roan had jammed the shock staff under the handle of the door.

The sleep gas is starting to effect them. Roan manages to open a dimensional doorway with Duffy's Tempest.

ROAN  
(to Slane)  
Let me hear you say it once more,  
Slane darling.

SLANE  
(whispering)  
For the world.

He pushes Slane away and jumps through the dimensional doorway just as it closes.

Slane staggers forward knocking the shock staff away from the door before the gas takes hold and she slumps to the ground.

Duffy and Gern are already curled up on the floor asleep.

INT. AN ANGEL OUTPOST - DAY

There is a flag on the wall. A blue globe with gray wings surrounding it. The word "ANGEL" is written in gray across the globe.

Roan falls to his knees as the dimensional door closes behind him. Several GUARDS wearing dark blue and gray uniforms leap to their feet and level their weapons at him.

COLONEL LERRY (50's, tough, military), is in charge of the guard post.

COL LEERY  
Hold your fire! Hold your fire!  
It's Hayes!

ROAN  
Leery? Get me a medic!

COL LEERY  
Medic! Move your ass!

The medic rushes over with a field medical kit. The guards help Roan to a chair.

MEDIC  
Where are you injured, sir?

ROAN  
Just shaken, not stirred. I got a dose of sleep compound on the way out. Give me a stim.

MEDIC  
Sir?

ROAN  
I need to get a message to the Leadership now and I need a clear head. Stim. Now!

COL LEERY  
Do it.

The medic administers the stimulant.

COL LEERY (CONT'D)  
How did you escape?

ROAN  
It was Slane. She's still on our side. Her and a couple of useful idiots.

COL LEERY  
Slane and who?

Roan stands, buzzing like a Starbucks barista.

ROAN  
Oh yeah, finest kind. Get me to a  
comm station. I'll explain on the  
way!

INT. ANGEL COMMUNICATIONS STATION - DAY

A communications tech hands Roan a satellite phone.

COMMUNICATIONS TECH  
You've got an encrypted signal,  
sir.

ROAN  
Thanks. Leery, I need the room.

COL LEERY  
You heard the man. He's making a  
call. Everybody out.

The guards leave the room.

COL LEERY (CONT'D)  
I'll be outside. Make it quick, I  
want the medics to look you over  
then we need to debrief you.

Leery pauses at the door.

COL LEERY (CONT'D)  
Is this it? Is the war over?

ROAN  
Yes. One way or another, it ends  
tonight.

COL LEERY  
For the world.

ROAN  
For the world.

Leery nods smiling as he leaves.

COMPUTER VOICE FROM PHONE  
Roan Hayes verified. Speak your  
message after the tone and it will  
be heard by the ANGEL Leadership.

A message tone is heard and Roan takes a breath.

INT. COUNCIL SAFE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Clive has a large silver platter of toast in one hand as he tries to wake Duffy by shaking his shoulder gently.

DUFFY  
(mumbling in his sleep)  
No Marissa, I love all of you  
equally. AAAAH Don't kill me!

Clive jumps back almost spilling the plate of toast.

CLIVE  
It's still only me, sir.

DUFFY  
Quit sneaking up on me when I'm  
having a dream like that!

CLIVE  
I do apologize, but you have an  
urgent message.

Clive hands Duffy his Tempest.

DUFFY  
Hey! My Tempy-what's-it! I thought  
that Roan guy swiped it.

CLIVE  
Agent Slane discovered it in her  
pocket, sir.

DUFFY  
I'd better check this message.  
Probably big secret council stuff.  
What's all that?

CLIVE  
For some reason, I thought you  
might want some toast, sir.

Duffy grabs a slice and stuffs it in his mouth.

DUFFY  
I don't have time for toast right  
now.

Clive starts to take the platter away, but Duffy grabs another slice.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
No, no, just leave it.

Clive bows and heads to the door.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
And bring me some strawberry jam.

CLIVE  
We who serve.

DUFFY  
And some of that purple jam too!

CLIVE  
As you wish, sir.

Clive closes the door behind him.

Duffy activates the Tempest and sees the blinking message light.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Slane and Gern are in the living room.

Duffy enters wearing the ceremonial robe and looking very serious.

SLANE  
You alright?

GERN  
Clive said you got a message. Was it the ANGEL Leadership? Do they want to meet?

DUFFY  
Agent Slane, there's an abandoned airstrip near Roswell, New Mexico. The warehouse there, it's where you and Roan met for the first time.

SLANE  
How did know that?

DUFFY  
That's where the meeting is. Tonight at 10 PM. Put together a team for backup.

SLANE

You'll have 3 dozen armed troopers with you.

DUFFY

Gern, we'll need total communications blackout once we're on site. No messages in or out and no trans-dimensional portals. Can you handle that?

GERN

I'll take care of it.

DUFFY

That should do it. Now, let's get something to eat. It's going to be a big night.

INT. ANGEL STAGING AREA - NIGHT

A platoon of ANGEL SOLDIERS are checking gear, loading weapons, sharpening knives.

Roan motions Leery over to one side, away from the others and opens a small back-pack.

Leery sees a foot-ball sized silver container with a small digital counter.

ROAN

It's a Suck Bomb.

COL LEERY

Never heard of it.

ROAN

That's the point. You and I were both born into this war with the Syn Group. We win a battle, they win a battle, but there's no decisive victory. We're too evenly matched. That's where this baby comes in.

COL LEERY

How?

ROAN

When this thing detonates, it opens a tiny black hole. Everything within 5 miles will get sucked into a hole about the size of a dime.

COL LEERY

Damn. The Angel Leadership approved this?

ROAN

No. I think the Leadership's been compromised. Every time a plan like this is presented, they shoot it down or the Syn Group finds out about it. Not this time. This time we take out the last of the Council of Five forever.

COL LEERY

I'm with you, Roan. What about Slane? From what you said, she seems to think this Duffy guy is for real.

ROAN

He's got her fooled. No way he's that big an idiot. I'll get Slane out. You just wait for my signal to open the portals and get our troops out. That fat idiot and his men will stand around congratulating themselves then BANG! Like I said, it ends tonight.

COL LEERY

For the world.

ROAN

For the world.

INT. LARGE AIRCRAFT HANGER - ROSWELL - NIGHT - LATER

A large moon shines through the big double doors at one end of the hanger. It's now full of packing crates, stacked high against the walls and scattered around the floor.

Roan stands on one side of the large hanger. He checks his watch. Col Leery stands next to him. They are flanked by several dozen armed ANGEL soldiers wearing dark blue and gray uniforms with SWAT gear including gas masks.

Across from them, on the other side of the hanger, a shimmering trans-dimensional portal appears. SYN Group soldiers pour out and take up positions on either side of the portal. They too are geared up for trouble, their black and red uniforms are augmented by SWAT gear and gas masks.

Slane steps through the portal. She scans the room, locking eyes with Roan. She gives the room another quick once over then she whistles loudly.

Gern steps through the portal carrying a laptop.

Duffy walks through the portal.

Duffy isn't wearing his hood. Everyone can see his face.

He looks very serious, very much in control.

The ANGEL troops tense like a firing squad waiting for the command to fire.

The portal closes. Gern gives Duffy a thumbs up.

GERN  
(quietly to Duffy)  
We're dark, boss. Nobody comes in  
or out. Good luck.

Duffy steps forward into the big open space between the two groups.

INT. ANGEL SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

ROAN  
Keep me covered. Wait for my signal  
then give them hell.

COL LEERY  
You got it.

Roan presses a few buttons on the Suck Bomb in his back-pack and leaves it behind a crate.

Roan steps out to meet Duffy in the center of the "No Man's Land".

INT. MIDDLE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Duffy and Roan face each other like two gunfighters.

DUFFY  
The ANGEL Leadership didn't come.

ROAN  
They sent me to speak on their  
behalf.

DUFFY

No, they didn't, Roan. In fact, you haven't even spoken to them. Nobody has for the last few days.

ROAN

I underestimated you. I thought you were just some idiot.

DUFFY

You're an excellent judge of character.

ROAN

There's only one way you could know no one's heard from the ANGEL Leadership.

DUFFY

I didn't kill the Leadership.

ROAN

Fire!

The ANGEL soldiers open fire ducking behind crates for cover. Roan pulls his sidearm and fires as he runs back. Three shots hit Duffy squarely in the chest, knocking him off his feet.

SLANE

Fire! Fire!

The warehouse is now full of gunfire and flashes of mini lightning bolts.

INT. ANGEL SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

ROAN

Leery! Open the portals! I'm going after Slane.

Col Leery tries to open the portals, but his watch is blinking a message: "Signal Blocked. Please try again later."

COL LEERY

We've got a problem!

INT. SYN SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Gern rushes forward and grabs Duffy by the robe, dragging him back toward the SYN Group side. Slane jumps forward and gives him covering fire while helping him drag Duffy behind a large crate.

Duffy groans in pain.

GERN  
You're alive?

DUFFY  
I hope not.

He brushes a few slugs off his chest.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Bulletproof, but man, that hurts.

Slane starts shouting orders to the SYN troops.

INT. ANGEL SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

ROAN  
What do you mean you can't open a  
portal? The timer is running!

COL LEERY  
That's why I said we've got a  
problem!

ROAN  
We've got to defuse the bomb! Give  
me a hand!

INT. SYN SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

DUFFY  
(loudly)  
Everybody cease fire! Stop  
shooting!

He can't be heard above the gunfire.

INT. ANGEL SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Roan and Leery have the back-pack open and are pulling the  
Suck Bomb out. Roan pulls out a multi-tool and Leery a small  
kit bag of tools.

The timer on the bomb has 4 rows of changing alien  
characters.

COL LEERY  
Why don't we just tell them we've  
got a bomb and to quit jamming the  
signal?

ROAN  
Even if they believed us, they'd  
only open portals for themselves.

Roan carefully works the small access panel with his knife.

ROAN (CONT'D)  
(grinning)  
Besides, you and I have defused  
dozens of bombs. All we have to do  
is trace the wire from the battery.

They open the small panel and look inside.

COL LEERY  
No wire. No battery.

The interior of the bomb is a collection of blinking  
crystals.

ROAN  
We've got a problem.

The first set of characters on the timer goes blank. The  
other three blink a bit faster.

INT. SYN SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The loud gunfight continues.

GERN  
Duffy, your hood. Hit them with the  
Vader voice!

DUFFY  
Good one, Gern!

Duffy flips the hood up.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
(DuffySkull voice)  
Everybody stop shooting. Cease  
fire! By order of the Council of  
Five, I command you all to cease  
fire!

The SYN Group soldiers stop shooting.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
(DuffySkull voice)  
Listen to me! Roan! Roan Hayes!  
Stop firing! I just want to talk!

INT. ANGEL SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Roan and Leery are examining the Suck Bomb.

COL LEERY  
Where did you get this thing?

ROAN  
The Visitors.

COL LEERY  
You should never deal with those  
guys.

ROAN  
Not helping.

DUFFY (O.C.)  
(DuffySkull voice)  
Roan? Can you hear me?

Roan whistles loudly, the Angel troops stop firing.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
(DuffySkull voice)  
Now I'm going to stand up. Roan?  
Don't kill me, okay?

ROAN  
(loudly)  
Fine. Say what you've got to say.  
I'm kind of busy over here!

INT. SYN SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Duffy pulls off his hood. He's now speaking with his  
unaltered voice.

DUFFY  
And nobody else is going to kill me  
either, right?

Duffy slowly rises to his feet.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
First, let's all just put our guns  
down. Everybody. Just lay them  
down.

Slane is the first to do it on the SYN Group side. Following  
their example, the soldiers on both sides reluctantly lower  
their weapons.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Thanks. Let's all just calm down.  
Big breath in, everybody. Come on.  
You guys all drink too much coffee.  
I want everyone to go out after  
this and get their blood pressure  
taken.

Nobody laughs, the mood is still very tense.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Seriously. Okay, now let's lose the  
masks. Come on, those things can't  
be comfortable. Let's just talk  
face to face. That's it, everyone.

One soldier on the SYN Group side pulls off his mask, others  
around him do the same.

Soon everyone is pulling their gasmasks off.

INT. ANGEL SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Leery is peering over the crate at Duffy.

COL LEERY

What is he up to?

ROAN

Ignore him. Does this look like a  
power source? It feels warmer than  
the other crystals.

The third set of alien characters on the timer go blank.

INT. SYN SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Both sides have removed their gasmasks.

DUFFY

Good. Thank you.

Duffy points to one of the SYN Group soldiers at the end of  
the row.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Seriously, dude, that's some nasty  
looking razor burn.

There are a few chuckles from the SYN Group soldiers near  
him.

SYN GROUP SOLDIER #1  
Yes sir, the mask really irritates  
it.

                  DUFFY  
I'll bet it does. They make you  
shave every day?

                  SYN GROUP SOLDIER #1  
Yes sir.

Soldiers from both sides nod in agreement.

                  DUFFY  
Really? You, over there.

Duffy points to an ANGEL soldier.

                  DUFFY (CONT'D)  
In the gray and blue jammie-jams.

A few people on both sides laugh quietly.

Duffy takes a few steps into the middle ground between the  
two groups.

                  DUFFY (CONT'D)  
No, on the end. You. Why did you  
join up with ANGEL?

The soldier coughs nervously.

                  DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Take your time.

                  ANGEL SOLDIER #1  
Okay, after I got out of the  
Marines...

There are several enthusiastic "Hoo-Rahs" from both sides.

                  DUFFY  
Hey, nice, you got some fellow  
jarheads here.

More laughter. The ice is definitely melting.

INT. ANGEL SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The second set of characters goes blank, the last set is  
blinking and changing quicker.

Roan is cautiously feeling around under one of the blinking crystals.

A small snapping sound.

ROAN  
Damn! Something just came loose.

The crystals begin pulsating faster.

INT. MIDDLE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

DUFFY  
Keep going.

ANGEL SOLDIER #1  
Okay, sir, I was looking for a job,  
and this pays pretty well. More  
than being a cop, I guess.

Lots of nods in agreement.

DUFFY  
Right, okay. You.

Duffy points out someone on the SYN Group side.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
Dark hair, right here.

SYN GROUP SOLDIER #2  
Me?

DUFFY  
The money's good?

SYN GROUP SOLDIER #2  
Sure, not bad. We have to buy our  
own uniforms though.

Soldiers nod on both sides, murmuring their assent.

DUFFY  
Everyone pays for their own  
uniforms?

A voice calls out from the ANGEL side.

ANGEL SOLDIER #2  
And we pay for our ammo.

SYN GROUP SOLDIER #3

Us too!

Some general grumbling over that one.

DUFFY

Interesting. How much vacation time do you get?

Voices from both sides call out "six weeks".

More laughs.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Seriously? Six weeks? I wonder how much I get? I know I don't get 6 weeks. It's paid? Six weeks paid? To start?

People laugh and confirm it.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Well, crap.

More laughs from both sides.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Anyone seeing what I'm getting at here? Bueller? Bueller?

Everyone chuckles at the movie reference. One soldier speaks up, raising his hand.

ANGEL SOLDIER #3

Yes sir?

DUFFY

You're raising your hand?

ANGEL SOLDIER #3

You called? My name is Bueller.

Big laughs from both sides.

DUFFY

Okay, that's right, I did call your name, but, you know, the movie?

Bueller laughs along with everyone else as he realizes his mistake.

INT. ANGEL SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

ROAN

I think I've got it. This one, the one that slipped, it's flanked by these two. If we can push them both and break the seal at the same time, I think it'll cut the connection to the power.

Leery reaches in to get a grip on the other crystal.

COL LEERY

Okay, got it.

The bomb's last set of alien characters is a blur.

INT. MIDDLE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

DUFFY

Bueller, help me out here. Are you getting my point?

ANGEL SOLDIER #3/BUELLER

We're like them? They're like us. Just people doing a job?

DUFFY

You're on the right track. Anyone else? Nothing?

INT. ANGEL SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

ROAN

Ready? On one. Three. Two. One!

They both lean down, pressing the crystals at the same time. Nothing.

COL LEERY

They didn't budge. What now?

The bomb readout shows the characters getting smaller and spinning faster. The crystals are blinking even faster.

A quiet beeping can now be heard in sync with the crystals rapid blinking.

INT. MIDDLE OF THE WAREHOUSE

Duffy steps out to the center between the two sides.

DUFFY

Everybody who's a double agent,  
switch sides right now. Come on,  
don't be shy. This is important. If  
you're a double agent, just walk  
across the room and join the right  
team.

One ANGEL soldier takes a step forward tentatively before looking around. Then he continues to walk to the SYN Group side.

One on the SYN Group side takes a hesitant step forward. Another joins him. They cross to the ANGEL side.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Good, there you go. Anybody else?  
Come on, don't be shy. We'll figure  
it out eventually anyway.

Now most everyone steps forward crossing the room causing more big laughs. There are some good-natured cat-calls from each side.

INT. ANGEL SIDE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

ROAN

I know this will work! Do it again  
and this time really jam down on  
it! Three. Two. ONE!

A double snap and the crystals go dark, the timer goes blank.

Roan and Leery slump against a crate, big sighs of relief.

ROAN (CONT'D)

Told you.

COL LEERY

You didn't have a clue, did you?

ROAN

Not a one. What the hell is  
everybody laughing about?

Roan and Leery stand and take in the scene Duffy's exercise is creating.

INT. MIDDLE OF THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The two groups are still working out who's on who's side.

DUFFY  
 Come on! Are you kidding me?  
 Really? I thought one or two, but  
 holy Saint James Tiberius Kirk!  
 That's almost everybody.

Bueller puts his hand up again.

ANGEL SOLDIER #3/BUELLER  
 Sir?

DUFFY  
 Again with the hand? You're killing  
 me. What? You have a question?

ANGEL SOLDIER #3/BUELLER  
 Yes, what if you're a triple agent?

Everyone stops, looking at Duffy for the answer.

DUFFY  
 A what?

ANGEL SOLDIER #3/BUELLER  
 A triple agent. What if you're  
 really a triple agent?

DUFFY  
 That's a good question. Thanks,  
 Bueller. All the triple agents go  
 back to where you were originally.  
 Go ahead. He's got a point. Come on  
 now.

About half the ones who moved originally start walking back  
 to their original sides. Most everyone by now is in the  
 center of the hanger laughing together as they try to make  
 their way to one side or the other.

DUFFY (CONT'D)  
 Enough! Everybody just stop where  
 they are. Have I made my point?

The laughter fades.

GERN  
 We're all the same. We're all  
 really one big group, not two  
 separate groups.

DUFFY  
 Thank you, Sir Gern, yes. That's  
 it.

(MORE)

DUFFY (CONT'D)

It's always been one big group, you've all been setup to fight each other to keep you off balance. The whole thing has been run by five guys.

(to Roan) )

Nice of you to join us.

ROAN

You seem to be handling things fine without me. Are you saying the Council of Five who run The Syn Group and The Angel Leadership, our leaders are really the same five men?

DUFFY

I know it sounds crazy.

ROAN

Everything you say sounds crazy, but this is making sense to me.

DUFFY

I got the message you sent to the ANGEL Leadership.

Duffy holds up his Tempest and plays Roan's message.

ROAN'S RECORDED VOICE

*Angel Leadership, this is Agent Roan Hayes. I'm planning an assault on the final member of the Council of Five. I'm going to set up a meeting at the Roswell site for tonight. Unless I hear otherwise, I'm going forward with my plan. I take full responsibility. For the world.*

DUFFY

You didn't get a reply because I'm the only one left, Roan.

ROAN

(smiling)

I was wrong about you.

DUFFY

Which time? When you thought I was an idiot or when you thought I was an evil genius?

ROAN

Both.

The soldiers on both sides laugh.

Bueller raises his hand.

DUFFY

Just say it, dude.

ANGEL SOLDIER #3/BUELLER

That means you're in charge, right sir?

Duffy opens his mouth to answer.

ROAN

Yes, he's in charge now.

Roan salutes Duffy.

ROAN (CONT'D)

For the world!

The ANGEL soldiers reply loudly.

ANGEL SOLDIERS

For the world! For the world!

Slane shouts to the SYN Group soldiers.

SLANE

We who serve!

The SYN Group soldier respond enthusiastically.

SYN GROUP SOLDIERS

We who serve! We who serve!

Slane and Roan lead their groups in chants of their slogans. Each group chanting their slogans loudly, over and over, until it becomes one phrase, one chant, one army.

SOLDIERS

We who serve for the world! We who serve for the world! We who serve for the world!

The soldiers cheer wildly as Duffy jumps up on a crate raising his arms like a rock star.

DUFFY

Great work everybody! Now head  
back, get cleaned up and we'll all  
meet at Red Mesa for a midnight  
Make Your Own Taco Party!

More big cheers.

Slane and Roan meet for a big kiss in the middle of the room.

Duffy joins Roan and Slane. Gern types a few commands and the  
soldiers start collecting their gear and heading toward  
bright shimmering portals which have opened. There's a lot of  
laughter and chatter.

SLANE

Nice work, sir.

GERN

What's next, boss?

DUFFY

No way, I am so not the boss.

ROAN

I'm as surprised as anyone to be  
saying this, O'Connor, but if not  
you, then who?

DUFFY

I can only think of one person who  
should have this job.

INT. COUNCIL SAFEHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Duffy's ex-mother-in-law, Violet is standing in front of a  
mirror admiring Clive's newly created robe which is a mix of  
the SYN Group and ANGEL's colors.

There is no hood.

CLIVE

I did my best in the time I had,  
but this sash just doesn't look  
quite right.

VIOLET

Clive, it looks wonderful. You  
really are a marvel. You know, I'm  
new here and there's a lot to do.  
I'm going to depend on you to help  
me.

Clive bows with his hand over his heart.

CLIVE

We who serve for the world, ma'am.

INT. LARGE MEETING ROOM - MORNING - A FEW WEEKS LATER

Duffy is sitting at the large conference table in the meeting room where he dismissed the other candidates for his new job. There's a couple of dozen ASSORTED CO-WORKERS enjoying cake and ice cream. Duffy looks at the snacks longingly but instead takes a bite out of an apple. Gern gives him an encouraging nod while enjoying his own slice of cake.

A large banner hangs on the wall: "Congratulations Wally!"

The receptionist Becky walks in and hands Wally some paperwork. She gives Gern a wink as she leaves. Gern smiles and winks back.

DUFFY

(quietly to Gern)

That's your girlfriend?

Gern nods grinning.

DUFFY (CONT'D)

Dude, you're my hero.

WALLY

While we're waiting, I thought you guys might be excited to hear "Star Fire" is coming back. Looks like all the petitions and email campaigns worked.

There is scattered applause and excited chatter. Duffy and Gern do a subtle fist bump in celebration.

WALLY (CONT'D)

I just want to thank all you guys. I'm going to miss you, but I'm leaving you in very capable hands. Duffy, you've really stepped up in the last couple of weeks. You're going to do great as my replacement.

DUFFY

Good luck in Atlanta, Wally!

Duffy starts a round of applause, the group of co-workers join in.

The applause is interrupted by the meeting room door opening.

WALLY

Everyone, I'd like you to welcome  
our new department head, John  
Simperton III.

Duffy's locks eyes with his new boss: "Asswipe" from the  
group of candidates he conned into leaving before being  
interviewed.

JOHN "ASSWIPE" SIMPERTON III

You!

DUFFY

(to Gern)  
We're in trouble.

FADE TO BLACK.