

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-1

FADE IN.

EXT. JEEP-PALLAS-NIGHT

A jeep turns a tight corner at full speed, and stops on a dime.

PALLAS, an athletic, well-dressed woman wearing dark shades and a suit, steps out.

She walks into an apartment building and walks out a few moments later.

Pallas calmly gets in her jeep and drives away.

The building blows apart just as Pallas leaves the frame.

She pulls out her cel-phone dials, and continues driving while talking into it.

PALLAS

Call Hazard. (beat) Last mission completed. (beat) Hey, I can do that kind of thing in sleep. Tell the client that I accept.

She hangs up and turns on the radio and accelerates into the neon-lit night.

INT. OFFICE-TANEKA-SUNSET

TANEKA, a powerfully built businessman, takes in the sunset.

He turns aNay and looks at a box Nith toys in it. An accordion. A jack-in-the- box. A plastic hammer. A toy bow. He tosses them all into the garbage.

TANEKA

Time for new toys.

His phone rings.

He picks it up.

TANEKA

Hello. (beat) She has accepted? (beat) Excellent.

He puts the phone down

He turns to the sunset.

TANEKA

The day is almost over.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-2

EXT. SKYSCRAPER-KABUKI

The blimp turns, revealing KABUKI, a hyper teen-age Japanese girl on giant screen.

KABUKI

Good evening, Upper San Angeles. It's a Thursday, November 21, 2019.
It's Scorpio's last day as he heads into Sagittarius. The Archer. A
man with piercing arrows or something...harder. For those not quite
ready to go to bed (giggles) sorry, to sleep, check out The Sakura
Party Ring. Those who know, know where it is.

EXT. DARK ALLEY-COUPLE

Kabuki fades into the background as A COUPLE passionately embraces.

We go past the couple, into the alley, towards a lit garbage can.

CAPTAIN THOMAS STEEL, a muscular man in tight military-style clothes, stands over
HACHIRO "DISH" MIFUNE, a Japanese teen-ager in almost-fashionable clothes, who has
a wire leading from his head to a deck (a highly modified notebook computer with a blinking
light), and another wire leading to a what appears to be a digital watch, worn by Steel.

COMP

Download complete.

Dish comes out of his meditative state.

DISH

Talk about primatech. Soka, your onboard comp checks.
Just make fewer notes or make it SOTA, soka?

STEEL

I'll try.

Dish pulls both wires out; one wire reels into the deck, the other into Dish's forehead.

A limo pulls up and two MR. JOHNSONS, "gentlemen" in three-piece suits, dismount.

STEEL

Do we meet at the dump next? That would fit the established pattern.

MR. JOHNSON #1

Is your team assembled and ready?

STEEL

Do you have the floorplans?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-3

Mr. Johnson #2 pulls a briefcase out of the limo, opens it and hands a 2" compact disc over to Steel.

Steel hands the disc to Dish reflexively.

Dish pulls out a wire, plugs in and slides the disc into his deck.

The deck's screen starts spewing data, mostly maps.

Dish gives a thumbs up.

Steel turns back to Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON

The remainder of your fee will be deposited
upon completion of the extraction.

STEEL

Do you want him dead or alive?

MR. JOHNSON

We would prefer not having to worry about neurological repair.

They mount up and ride off.

The couple disengages and Nalks over to the garbage can. CASS, a blond in tight leather, holsters her pistol. RAMONE, a kid in loose leather, sheathes his knives.

Dish's screen goes dead, and the light stops blinking. Dish comes out of his trance.

DISH

The data's GTG.

STEEL

Everything okay?

DISH

Even the secret passages are red-painted. Go time?

STEEL

You have an easy-access jackpoint?

DISH

Yeah. A vendamech just two-decameters from target.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-4
Its cred-checksys provides an easy back way in.

STEEL
Good. Sounds like go-time to me.

INT. LAB-TOSHIRO

TOSHIRO, an elderly scientist, makes notes on his clipboard as four boys leave his lab.

Toshiro smiles, beaming pride, as the last boy leaves.

EXT. ALLEY-VENDING MACHINE

Ramone goes up to a vending machine bearing the Sakura logo and pulls it away from the wall.

RAMONE
Just think, Dish; you could enough from this op to take of your problem!

Dish rips a cord from the vending machine and plugs it into his deck.

DISH
What problem?

RAMONE
Girls. Or is it boys?

DISH
Virtual girls are no problem whatsoever.

RAMONE
Think you should try reality for just once?

DISH
Have you lined up an appropriate interface?

RAMONE
Yeah, but let's complete this first, okay?

DISH
Just remember to pick me up.

Dish plugs in and closes his eyes.

Ramone walks off.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-5

MATRIX. SAN ANGELES-DISH'S ICON

A hi-res digitized metropolis spreading from San Francisco to Los Angeles, in living neon: The Matrix. Corporation logos rule the landscape. Varied icons, representing people and data, fly through this world.

ZOOM to a close-up of Nhat used to San Francisco as DISH'S ICON, a computer-modeled old-fashioned busboy, rezzes up.

DISH

LAN-arrival OK. Corp. LochHQ. Ref-point Sakura

He flies towards a monstrous pagoda.

DISH

Crypto-rithims go.

Dish throws a fork at a door in the pagoda; the fork fades in a silver glow. He goes through the door.

DISH

Map-out go flag-passkey.

A line of red dots apears and he follows it.

He enters a long hallway and goes past two samurai.

As he goes down the passageway, the samurai animate and charge him.

Dish ducks and the samurai go past him.

DISH

Oh please. IC-melter load.

Computer code flashes through Dish's metallic eyes as the two samurai charge.

DISH

Reflecs cloud go.

A cloud of spoons appears and encircles Dish. As the two samurai stab the spoon cloud, Dish leaves it and flies up the hall.

Several empty hall Nays later, he sees the line of red dots lead to a daimyo's mask. He picks it up and puts it on. An image of samurai armor forms over, but does not hide, his icon.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-6

DISH

Passkey accepted. Map-out directory: sec-dot-lobby-dot-main.

A line of red dots leads Dish to an obviously digitized version of a rice paddy, complete with peasants.

He looks around a moment before spying a camera.

He goes to the camera, looks in it, and pulls a wire from the “ground”. He follows the wire to another camera and looks in it. His hand “creates” a knife and sticks it into the camera. The camera turns blue.

DISH

Note to self: SakuraSec Sucks. SecCams tied into weapons systems, making the weapons as easy to override as the cameras are.

Code flashes through his eyes. He throws a fork at the camera; the fork becomes a silver glow, which then covers the camera.

DISH

Soka. Weapons declawed. Main mission complete; time for fun. (grins)
Execute: more filelist pipe grep gamato-dot-splat-dot-splat-dot-secret.

He flies straight up, and opens a door from nowhere and goes in.

INSERT SHOT-STEEL'S WATCH

The time on the watch is replaced by digital writing: These security systems are a :-)! Now touring—Dish.

EXT. SAKURA BUILDING-STEEL

Steel smiles, then waves to Cass (readying a rather large pistol) and Ramone (who is on a HMMWV, behind its M60). Steel takes off at a run, crashes through a plate-glass door, falls, and scans the area.

INSERT SHOT-STEEL'S EYE

Scanning the area, defenses and personal arms outlined in red, the image of an elderly scientist is blinking just below the main screen. The entire room is quickly scanned. He scans back to the scientist.

INT. SAKURA LOBBY-STEEL

As Steel rolls to his feet and takes off on a sprint, Ramone spreads cover fire through the lobby.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-7

As he does so, several banks of machine guns come out of the walls and go back in.

Steel smiles.

STEEL
Good going, kid.

Steel runs up to the scientist.

STEEL
Time to go, professor. Ready?

GAMATO
Well, yes, I suppose so. Do you think that
I could say good-bye to the fellas first?

Steel sighs in exasperation as he just grabs the scientist and runs to Nards the door.

Several guards have now started shooting at Steel.

Two shadows blur past the gaurds; they stop shooting.

Steel spins, executing a sweep kick while holding Gamato.

The blurs fly into the Nall, resolving into KHAN and RAJA, two thin, almost-feline humanoids.

Steel continues on.

Cass enters the scene, a literal blur.

She leaps above Steel, delivering a kick to DAIMYO, a female with a metallic sheen to her body.

Daimyo flies into a wall as Cass lands.

A shadow falls acroos the door as Steel nears it. YOMI, a sumo wrestler with a pole-arm now bars the way.

Steel stops, smiles and gives a thumbs-up.

FX: MACHINE GUN FIRE.

Yomi turns around, glaring at Ramone, who is acting innocent despite the smoking machine gun in front of him.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-8

Gamoto goes flying through the air towards Ramone, who catches him.

Yomi is puzzled as he watches, but is suddenly lifted and tossed towards Daimyo.

Steel gestures at Cass and they run out to the HMMWV as Ramone slides into the driver's seat and Gamato into the passenger's seat.

MARTRIX. SAKURA NET-DISH'S ICON

Dish sees a package on a pedestal. He "creates" a sprayer. He sprays the package, "creating" two packages. The second package melts into the spray. Dish dissolves the sprayer and flies off.

EXT. STREET-HMMWV

The HMMWV is charging out of the area. Cass is behind the machine gun.

A net drops over the vehicle.

It slides, almost crashing into a telephone pole.

A figure drops from a building. GENIN STORM, a ninja weilding a corssbow, walks to the HMMWV.

She stares at the HMMWV.

Only Gamato is in the HMMWV.

A steel arm reaches past her, and pulls her down.

Steel walks past her unconscious body.

Everyone remounts the HMMWV and they head off.

STEEL

So much for the great Seppuku Sempai.

EXT. ALLEY-DISH

Dish unplugs just as the HMMWV carrying the team shows up.

It stops, Dish gets in, and they drive off.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-9

EXT. BACK STREETS-JEEP

Pallas drives past the Sakura Building, with its destroyed lobby. She slows down just long enough to get a good view of the area, then accelerates away.

PALLAS

That kid will so easy to track!

INT. MONITOR ROOM-SAKURA

KATSUNA, a young technician, watches a blip on a screen and its movement on a map.

Sakura appears on a monitor behind him.

Katsuna is surprised, but quickly regains his composure.

SAKURA

Has he escaped yet?

KATSUNA

No, sir. He's just approaching The Barrens now.

SAKURA

Then do it.

Katsuna turns toward his computer almost overshooting it.

KATSUNA

No problem, sir. As per sub-paragraph (looks at a paper)
G-1298821-alpha, I, Technician's Apprentice Katsuna Tachihama,
under direct authority of Chair-man Sakura, am now utilizing
fail-safe device implanted upon signature of said contract.

Katsuna pushes a big red button and Natches the blip disappear.

KATSUNA

Fail-safe device successfully utilized. He'll
go boom soon enough. No more problem. Sir!

SAKURA

Nice job, Technician Katsuna.

Sakura disappears from the monitor.

KATSUNA

One of the big boys noticed me! YES!

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-10

Katsuna gets up and dances around his chair.

EXT. ALLEY-HMMWV

Steel, Cass, Ramone and Dish have left the HMMWV.

Prof. Gamato is getting out when he starts to choke.

Smiles fade as Prof. Gamato panics and runs.

When he collides with a wall, he blows up. Real good.

Steel looks at the mess with his cyber-eye; he then goes over and picks up a deformed ball bearing and tosses it in disgust.

STEEL

An M1934-Device, Detonation Remote Actuated. Utilizes a microwave pulse to destroy subject's neuro-system and environs. Cute.

RAMONE

No bonus, then, I take it?

CASS

You take it right.

.STEEL

Comp: Add a dampener and mag-scrambler to the list of mandatory items. (beat) I don't want to report this one.

CASS

It could be our little secret.

DISH

However, in advance of a depressive state, I should communicate that I initiated a transfer in ownership of his rescomfiles.

Would not Messrs. Johnson demonstrate a positively directed financial reciprocation?

Dish grins as he Cass scowls in confusion.

Ramone's eyes roll skyward.

RAMONE

Translation: Don't get depressed, I have his files. How much do you think they're worth?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-11

Steel smiles.

STEEL

Good going, kid! Properly deciphered, that data could actually be worth more than the bonus.

DISH

Soka. I'll fax-home within two diurnal cycles. In the intervening chronological period, however, I had best return to The Facilities of the Teen-age Nightmare. Seeya!

Dish walks about half a block away, gets on a motorcycle and speeds off into the night.

CASS

Time to seriously check out my English-English translation program.

RAMONE

Actually, I think he's trying to crash it; when he's not working around you, he uses normal kidspeak.

CASS

Great.

The rest of the group splits up.

A street-cleaner cleans up the Gamato mess.

Kabuki passes the scene.

KABUKI

This just in from the Sakura NewsNet: Prof. Gamato Taksa quit Sakura Corp., apparently as part of a labor dispute. Sakura Corp. spokesman, Idaru Agmatsu, said that they Nere sorry that things could not be worked out. Professor Gamato was noted for his research on cybergenetic controls as well as his explosive temper.

INT. JEEP-PALLAS

Pallas stops for a red light.

She reaches down for her laptop and turns it on. She pulls out a headset and puts it on.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-12

The light changes; she goes.

PALLAS

Time to do some research. Subject: Appearance.

A picture of Ramone shows on-screen. It goes through various angles, and shows him fully-clothed and shirtless.

PALLAS

Subject: History.

COMP

Subject Sakura test subject. Affiliated with Taneka
Mushashi. Self-extraction two years ago.

PALLAS

Great. Subject: Status.

COMP

Property of Sakura Corporation; reward exists for return.

PALLAS

Interesting. Crossref with local celebs.

COMP

San Paulo has a reward on his capture as well.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-13
PALLAS

Okay; e-mail San Paulo: I have Ramone in my
sights; what's the status of reward? End.

COMP

Autoserver response. Read?

PALLAS

That was quick. Yes.

SAN PAULO (VOICE)

Reward is open. If he is alive. Also, an
interesting and profitable option exists.

PALLAS

Respond: Send me the details.

INT. SAKURA HEAD OFFICE-SAKURA

SAKURA MUSASHI, a businessman who is very much in command, sits reading a DataNet computer screen on his cherrywood desk.

JIMBEI, a plain executive in his mid- thirties, is making notes on a Portable Assistant Pad (PAP).

A KNOCK comes from the doors far across the office.

Sakura motions to Jimbei and quits the screen in no particular hurry.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-14

Jimbei opens the door, letting in JOSHIRO, an aging scientist. He goes straight to the desk and bows.

SAKURA

Good afternoon, Joshiro.

JOSHIRO

Good afternoon, sir.

Sakura taps the screen a few times, then turns it off.

SAKURA

I trust the wife and children are fine. Has the project borne fruit yet?

Joshiro straightens up and presses a watch button.

A BOY, in a schoolboy's uniform enters.

He removes his shirt, folds it, and snaps to attention just behind Joshiro.

Joshiro beams.

JOSHIRO

Hai. This boy is but the first. Please inspect him, sir.

Joshiro snaps his finger; the boy lowers his head.

Sakura strides over and inspects the boy like a fine piece of art, with special attention to the back of his neck.

He nods his approval.

SAKURA

Excellent work, Joshiro. The incision is invisible and there is none of the discoloration noticeable of your earlier work.

Has the imprint taken?

JOSHIRO

Why not see for yourself, sir?

Joshiro pulls a wakizashi from his jacket and hands it to Sakura. Sakura takes the offered blade.

SAKURA

Now, boy, hold the the knife. (The boy takes the knife)

Boy, show me seppuku.

The boy kneels on his shirt. He inserts the sword just above his navel. He smoothly pulls it all the way left, then right, then back to the center. He pulls it to his neck. He takes out the blade, cleans it using his shirt, and collapses.

SAKURA

Excellent. And how is his will affected? If some obstacle presented itself, could he think around it and continue the mission?

JOSHIM-HINAMI NEON-16
JOSHIRO

No, sir. The chip completely overrides the brain. However, the chip utilizes the calcium in the subject's skeleton as an antenna to allow a comptroller to feed solutions on the fly.

SAKURA

Excellent technology. Allow vacations and raises as you see fit. The team has earned them. Then, disband the team.

Joshira's jaw drops. It takes a moment for him to regain compusure.

JOSHIRO

But, sir, the costs of the project...How will you recoup them? The project, sir—

SAKURA

—was to find a way to train our ninja quickly and cheaply. But without the capability of thinking on his feet, he is worthless.

JOSHIRO

But, sir—!

SAKURA

Dismantle the project. NOW.

Joshira nods and leaves, Jimbei opening the door for him.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-17

A maintenance crew enters and starts cleaning up the mess.

Sakura and Jimbei quickly return to Nork.

INT. DORM HALL-DISH

Dish Nalks from the shower in just his twel. He passes ICHIKUN, a cute schoolgirl, pausing just long enough to watch her walk by.

TENGU, a muscular boy grins, yanks Dish's towel, and holds it up. Dish stares in horror at the towel. The boy whistles.

Dish panics, running to his door, activating the palm-pad, and rushing in just as Ichikun turns around.

INT. DISH'S ROOM-DISH

Dish rushes in, goes to his dresser, grabs a pair of shorts, and puts them on.

He takes a moment to catch his breath, then puts on his glasses and a shirt and sits in the middle of his immaculate room.

He puts a disk in and plugs in. starts blinking.

A light on his deck

MATRIX SKYLINE-DISH

A gift appears next to Dish's icon.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-18

DISH

Crypto-slash go.

His arm straightens out, and pair of scissors appears in it. He starts slashing at the package.

A snake appears out of nONhere and coils around the package. Dish stops slashing; the scisors fade aNay.

DISH

Crypto-forks go.

He acts like he is tossing a ball; a stream of forks appearsd and hits the snake. The snake, hit all over by the forks, starts to fade.

Before it does so completely, Dish tosses a single fork in it; it starts to blink. Dish rescues the package, then allows the snake to derezz.

He opens the package.

INT. MONITOR ROOM-KATSUNA

Katsuna sits at terminal. He plays back the security tape, finally finding a clear picture of Steel.

He outlines the picture, erases the background, then morphs the picture into a standing form. He touches the taskbar, hitting a search command.

Within moments, data spews all over his screen, ranging from military records to police reports.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-19

After copying and saving it, he e-mails a copy of it to Taneka.

FX: BEEP!

He slaps his head. He rummages around his pockets and brings out his key-chain pet and strokes it.

He quickly puts it away.

INT. APARTMENT-JOSHIRO

Joshira is at his private bar, getting thoroughly sloshed.

He puts down his drink and stares at his reflection in a mirror.

He picks the drink up and finishes it.

He tosses the empty glass at the mirror.

He looks at his new reflection.

JOSHIRO

That's better.

He falls down.

He gets back up.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-20
JOSHIRO

Guess I'd better get back to work. I still have
those boys coming in. Wish I still had a nurse.

He giggles as he leaves.

INT. DISH'S ROOM-DISH

Dish jacks out, starts saving the new copy of the file, grabs his key-chain pet and flicks out his cell-phone. He starts pressing buttons on the toy.

DISH

Poor boy; Wanna play? (into the phone) Call SteelArm.
(pauses) Cap, the file has been deciphered. Call me at Tyrell's.

He hangs up and walks over to his dresser and starts pulling out clothes.

DISH

I wonder who Ramone found for tonight? (beat)
I wonder if I should be scared?

INT. JOSHIRO'S LAB-JOSHIRO

Joshio sits next to a lab table.

He looks at a nearby jar.

JOSHIRO
Deadly Ebola

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-21

Joshio Fujisawa

Honorable death.

Joshio grabs a hypodermic needle.

JOSHIRO

Little angels fly

Three hidden assassins

Circuits in the head.

Joshio giggles.

JOSHIRO

Three little angels

Looking for sin and disease

Finding dirty souls.

He fills a hypodermic needle from the jar and injects himself with it.

JOSHIRO

Fly little angels

Until your errand completed

Then the circuit fries.

Joshio slumps, then falls forward.

EXT. TYRELL'S-DOORWAY-NIGHT

Tyrell's Bar and Grill is a small dance club tlith a large crowd just outside it.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-22

Kabuki flies past.

KABUKI

Welcome to the weekend, partiers! It's 10 o'clock on a
Friday night! Here I am at Tyrell's Bar and Grill: All
fantasies served hot!

The crowd roars.

Kabuki grins.

KABUKI

Do you know where your Sakura Condoms are?

Most of the crowd either brings one out or slaps a pocket. Kabuki grins coyly and flies into the night.

Ramone parks his Harley, and walks over to Dish, already in line.

RAMONE

How'd school go today?

DISH

Usual humiliation. Is the target inside?

RAMONE

Only one way to find out...!

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-23

Ramone grabs Dish and pulls him through the club's door. The doorman gets out of Ramone's way.

INT. SAKURA'S OFFICE-SAKURA

Sakura is throwing darts. Jimbei enters, flanked by Taneka. Jimbei waits patiently; Taneka keeps glancing at his watch.

SAKURA

Jimbei, take Taneka's watch from him, please.

Jimbei takes Taneka's watch and tosses it in the garbage. Taneka panics.

TANEKA

That watch—It was Grandfather's!

JIMBEI

An ancestor's artifacts should only be kept as long as you remember why the ancestor kept them.

Sakura sets his darts down and turns towards the two men.

SAKURA

Precisely, Jimbei.

Taneka glares.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-24
SAKURA

Taneka, while you are in my presence, only my time matters.
(beat) We know who the infil-trators are. They stole no data of
importance and they failed. (beat) Taneka, what is the most
appropriate action?

Taneka thinks for just a moment.

TANEKA

Make them examples for future raiders.

SAKURA

What, post their heads outside on a pole? That is the
way your grandfather would have reacted. He was also the
first chairman voted out of office.

JIMBEI

The raid showed excellent tactics, sir. I would hire them.

Sakura turns to face Taneka squarely.

SAKURA

It is far better to have a highly skilled mercenary on
your payroll than your enemy's. Have a vehicle made ready,
Jimbei. You will attempt to educate young Taneka on how to
hire mercenaries.

Jimbei bows, then leaves.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-25

Taneka does the same.

Sakura calls a file up, puts his watch next to the computer; numbers go across the face of the watch.

Sakura summons a messenger and gives him the watch. The messenger runs after Taneka.

INT. TYRELL'S-RAMONE

Ramone is talking to A GIRL, wearing almost nothing but her heavy makeup, pointing to heavy-drinking Dish.

She smiles and the two walk over to him.

She grabs Dish.

As they disappear down a dark hall, a devilish grin starts spreading on Ramone's face.

EXT. STEEL'S BUILDING-DOOR

Jimbei walks up to the building and presses a button.

A buzzer rings.

No response.

Jimbei rings again.

Steel comes on over the intercom.

STEEL

Sorry, but I don't know you and if I don't know you, you don't get in.

JIMBEI

You recently visited my place of business, Mr. Steel.

STEEL

You sell explosives?

JIMBEI

Not exactly. You raided the Sakura Building. The tactics utilized were very efficient. My superior has authorized me to offer you about a job, a straightforward security check, which could grow into more profitable work.

STEEL

I am no saririman; salaries are too much like an anchor, and an anchor can drown you.

JIMBEI

It can also keep you grounded.

STEEL

I like flying free. (beat) Nyah, hire me free-lance or don't hire me at all.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-27

JIMBEI

I understand your feelings, sir.

STEEL

If you truly understand my feelings, then leave.

JIMBEI

I am also including access to whatever other services that you or those under you should require.

STEEL

I run a decent gym, and I've got a street doc that I can actually trust. Besides, I don't like your employer's incentive to loyal service. Forget it. Have a good night. Really.

COMPUTER VOICE

Full defenses have been armed.

Jimbei doesn't move.

COMPUTER VOICE

All intruders have 10 seconds to vacate the premises.

Jimbei walks back to the car.

As he does so, a laser hits the spot where he was standing.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-28

Jimbei wipes his forehead as he enters the limousine's backseat.

INT. BADLY LIT HALLWAY-DOOR

The girl pulls Dish to the wall, and she ends up between him and the wall.

He tries to kiss her, but she dodges him and runs to a door, and through it.

He watches her, then follows.

INT. LIMO-JIMBEI

Jimbei steps in, lets a breathe out, and pours himself a gimlet.

Taneka is guzzling sake.

TANEKA

So, now do we get to have fun?

JIMBEI

We have a problem. He refused the offer outright, and apparently he knows of the loyalty enhancer.

TANEKA

Then kill him. Simple solution.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-29

JIMBEI

Too simple a solution: We would lose too many people to make it economically feasible. However, if we draw him
it out....

TANEKA

I have an idea...Where is the girl?

Jimbei starts pressing buttons on his PAP.

INT. MANSION FOYER-JOYBOY

A JOYBOY, a teen-age boy in barely-fitting grunge listening to a Sakura portable CD player, stands waiting.

A BUTLER, finding the boy distinctly distasteful, motions for him to follow.

INT. WELL-LIT ROOM-DOOR

The door opens.

The Girl comes in; Dish soon follows.

She starts stripping.

Dish puts his back to her, and struggles to unbutton his shirt, take it off, and remove his T-shirt, grinning the entire time.

When he gets it off, he turns around, eyes closed, and drops his pants.

He opens his eyes: He smiles as her dress is pulled higher and higher up her body, past her shapely legs and then past her bare buttocks.

His grin disappears and he starts turning pale as The Girl removes her dress.

Dish frantically pulls his pants up, grabs his shirts, and runs out of the room.

INT. BEDROOM-JOYBOY

The Joyboy is shown in by The Butler and shown the way to the sholler. The Butler leaves.

The Joyboy removes his clothing and heads to the shower.

JUDGE MAYNARD, a tall, handsome man, enters the room. He looks into the sholler, nodding appreciatively.

JUDGE

The toys get better every year. I can't wait to see next year's model.

He strips and heads into the shower.

INT. TYRELL'S-CROWD

Dish pauses just long enough to put his shirt on, then runs out the hallway and through the main door.

Ramone watches this and grins.

RAMONE

Wonder what his problem is? It's not like he's never seen a naked transvestite before!

A GIRL walks up to Ramone with a credit card; he nods.

He follows her out the door, where a man starts following them.

THE GIRL

He's just the john.

RAMONE

And I'm just the bodyguard.

THE JOHN

So this is what they mean by safe sex....

INT. BEDROOM-JOY BOY

A sleeping Judge has his arm around The Joyboy.

The Joyboy takes his hand off Judge's chest, revealing a tattoo of an accordion on Judge's shoulder.

The Joyboy slips out of the arm and steps out of the bed. He pulls his pants on.

He pulls a knife from his pocket.

He walks over to Judge and calmly slits his throat.

Judge wakes just long enough to panic.

The joyboy then picks up the telephone receiver and pecks out a number.

JOYBOY
I am dead.

He dresses completely, taking his time. He puts the knife in Judge's hand, a pistol in Judge's other hand.

He puts the pistol in his mouth and presses Judge's finger down.

FX: BLAM!

INT. GYM-STEEL

A lifter is spotting Steel.

FX: BEEP.

Steel puts the weights down.

STEEL
Yes?

COMPUTER VOICE
E-mail from Dish has arrived. De-crypt and display?

STEEL
Affirmative.

A screen comes down. Steel walks over to it as number display then resolve into images.

The display shows an implantation of a device, then flashes to a close-up of the device. It then goes to a schematic of the human body, showing the device on the upper vertabrae.

STEEL
Interesting. So that's what Sakura is up to nowadays. Computer, analyze device and ascertain completion date.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-32
COMPUTER VOICE
It was completed a week ago.

STEEL
Number of implantations?

COMPUTER VOICE
Four definite implantations. One additional possible.

STEEL
Total number of devices made?

COMPUTER VOICE
Five.

STEEL
Great. Get Mr. Johnson on the phone.

COMPUTER VOICE
Affirmative.

Steel leaves. As he does so, the gym fades and the spotter disappears, leaving just a bench and a bar.

EXT. BACK ALLEY-RAMONE

Ramone is guarding a back alley.

TWO THUGS come up.

THUG # 1
Okay, boy, stand aside.

RAMONE
Only if you promise to go away.

THUG #2
We don't make those kind of promises.

RAMONE
In that case, you need to know that I'm on watch here.

THUG #1
Not for long.

Thug #2 charges as Thug #1 pulls out a gun.

Ramone drops to the ground, letting Thug #2 fall over him. He pulls and throws a knife in one motion.

Thug #1 falls.

Thug #2 rolls back on Ramone, who rolls out of the way and towards Thug #1.

Thug #2 stands, as does Ramone.

Ramone pulls Thug #1's gun; Thug #2 smiles.

Ramone pulls the trigger. Nothing happens.

THUG #2
Won't work without his ring.

Ramone looks at the gold ring; he sees the prong in it, then looks to the connector in the gun.

RAMONE
Most thugs can't afford such a basic protection.

THUG #2
We're in demand.

Thug #2 charges; Ramone spins around and hits him with a knife.

RAMONE
Not anymore.

WOMAN'S VOICE (OS)
Everything okay?

RAMONE
Yeah.

MAN'S VOICE (OS)
Back to business.

EXT. BACK-ALLEY-STEEL

Steel pushes some buttons on his comp.

A limo pulls up.

Two MR. JOHNSONS leave the car.

MR. JOHNSON #3

Good evening, Mr. Steel. Where is the professor?

STEEL

He is one with the wall. Why didn't you warn me about the loyalty device?

MR. JOHNSON #4

Our apologies, Mr. Steel; we thought that you could handle any situation, as per your site. Our mistake.

STEEL

As per that site, I was to be told of all special risks. My apologies, gentlemen; I thought that you were literate. My mistake.

MR. JOHNSON #3

And the reason for this meeting, if the professor no longer has a physical presence?

Steel brings out the disk.

One of the men takes it.

STEEL

As per contract: "Any information gained is to be offered for sale." Our decker took a tour of the LAN-scape. The files should complete the contract.

MR. JOHNSON #4

It's just you; there's not even a radiofreq from you. What's to stop us from taking what we want?

STEEL

My comp is keyed to a psychswitch; a mere thought and...

Steel makes a gesture like an explosion.

MR. JOHNSON #3

All right, then let's see it.

Mr. Johnson #3 brings out a mini-deck and places a pair of goggles on. Steel hands him the disk. He places the disk into the mini-deck.

He soon begins to shake. Mr. Johnson #4 takes a pulse.

He falls over.

MR. JOHNSON #4
Interesting reaction.

He signals to the limo; gunmen begin to pour out. Steel runs for the main street. The gunmen begin to fire; Steel turns down a sidestreet.

A gunman follows Steel to the street, but shrugs at the entrance.

Mr. Johnson #4 steps over to the mini-deck and crushes it under his foot.

MR. JOHNSON #4
No bonus, Mr. Steel.

INT. TYRELL'S-RAMONE

Ramone walks up to his spot and takes a sip from his drink.

Behind him, A LARGE MAN gives A GIRL a wad of cash and points to Ramone.

The Girl marches over as The Man disappears into the shadows.

She places herself next to him.

GIRL
I like your jacket.

She reaches inside his jacket and massages his chest.

RAMONE
That's not my jacket.

GIRL
Is your heart beating fast?

RAMONE
It is now.

GIRL
Is that the only thing I've done for you?

He puts his drink down and grabs her.

They leave.

INT. CONCERT HALL-CASS

Cass and THE METRONUCLEAR STRIKE, a leatherclad metal band, finish a slow song.

The crowd throws bottles and cans, which are deflected by a metal screen.

CASS

The animals didn't like it.

LEAD GUITAR

Sounds like they need a whip.

CASS

A metal whip.

A beat starts up, like a gentle rain. The synthesizer starts up, and the rain becomes a monsoon. Then the guitar rips through it, a bolt from hell, followed by a crash of cymbals.

The band stops as Cass lets fly a single high note, the eye of the storm.

As Cass and the band go into a full-metal storm, we PAN to the door as Taneka slips in, playing with a security badge.

EXT. ALLEY-RAMONE AND GIRL

The Girl leads Ramone down an alley.

She pulls him into a fence, and pulls off his jacket. He kisses her up and down; she returns the favor, giving special attention to a jack-in-the-box tatoo.

He arches against the fence as she brings her hand down his body.

She disappears from sight. FX: TWO CLUNKING SOUNDS

Ramone brings his bare feet up for a moment.

He lets her tie him to the fence.

She puts her hands on his eyes and he closes them.

She unbuttons his pants and they hit the ground.

She gently strokes his torso, then walks off.

Ramone's eyes open; he is alone.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-37

RAMONE

Where did you go?

Ramone opens his eyes and panics. out of his bonds, but to no avail.

He tries to bust

The Large Man, a muscular Mexican in loose denim, comes out of the darkness.

Ramone panics.

RAMONE

San Paulo? Where's the girl?

San Paulo grins like a shark smelling blood.

INT. BACKSTAGE-CASS

A guard walks up to Cass.

GUARD

Ma'am?

CASS

Yes?

GUARD

The manager would like to see you.

CASS

Okay.

She walks off.

The guard starts counting a wad of money.

EXT. ALLEY-RAMONE

Ramone is tied to a fence; San Paulo is gloating.

SAN PAULOS

I could carve you into pieces and sell you to a sausagemaker.
Or I could just rip your throat out and sell the poor dumb boy
to some pervert. Then again, snuff pictures are coming back; how
would you like dying in one, final, fiery moment?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-38

RAMONE

I would like you to untie me or get the girl back here.

SAN PAULOS

I need information.

RAMONE

You need a shrink.

SAN PAULOS

I have information to trade.

RAMONE

Does it come backed by several zeroes?

San Paulos smiles as he cuts Ramone free. Ramone quickly pulls his pants up.

RAMONE

Wasup?

SAN PAULOS

I need some local info. Can you help?

RAMONE

I drink with the local action and play the occasional bodyguard.

SAN PAULOS

Okay. So try this. I was about to talk with some minor-leaguer about past debts when I hear that he drills some joyboy and then himself. (beat) Right. (beat) Here, look at this.

San Paulos fishes a picture out of his vest.

RAMONE

And Dish said that was "unacceptable behavior"!

SAN PAULOS

What's wrong?

RAMONE

This is no joyboy.

SAN PAULOS

This is a surprise.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-39

RAMONE

A joyboy has a med-tat just below his ear; it's shows he's not toxic.

SAN PAULOS

This boy doesn't have one, or any street-wear, for that matter.
Interesting.

RAMONE

This boy had to have gone to a prep school! Wait'll I tell Dish!

SAN PAULOS

Interesting observation. Especially when you know the minor
leaguer's fear of guns.

RAMONE

Why would someone go after your meal ticket?

SAN PAULOS

That's where you come in.

RAMONE

Why should I care?

SAN PAULOS

He had a tatoo. Of an accordion.

Ramone's jaw drops.

RAMONE

Excuse me?

SAN PAULOS

He belonged to The Toybox.

RAMONE

Great.

SAN PAULO

Interested?

RAMONE

Do I have a choice?

SAN PAULOS

No. I have taken the liberty of finding you a shadow.
She'll sew herself on soon.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-40

RAMONE
Call me Peter Pan..

SAN PAULOS
Exactly. Get me that information.

San Paulos disappears into the darkness. Ramone pulls on his jacket and heads back into the club.

INT. OFFICE-DOOR

Cass enters.

She stiffens, and starts removing her clothes.

She panics.

TANEKA
(from the shadows off-stage)
How well do you perform I wonder?

Taneka comes out of the shadows.

TANEKA
You are a lovely marionette, yes? Your nervous system has been replaced by fiber-optics and servos. Electronic systems. Systems that an outside source can control and override.

CASS
But—

Cass stops, and throws herself into Taneka's arms. Taneka embraces her and pulls her in tighter.

TANEKA
Just remember two things: I could have but I did not.
Tell Mr. Steel to accept my offer.

Taneka fades into the shadows as Cass falls.

She runs to the nearest panic button and presses it.

FX: SIRENS

Guards appear from nowhere.

Cass pounds a wall, leaving an impression in the metal.

INT. RAMONE'S SLEEPER CUBE-RAMONE-DAY

Ramone slams his alarm and rolls over, squinting at the sunlight streaming in. He turns on the TV for the morning news, and dresses quickly.

He grabs a power bar, spills out of the sleeper cube and sprints to the elevator just down the hall. His TV turns off and his cube closes as he just makes the elevator.

INT. DORM ROOM-DISH

Dish finishes putting on a tie. He puts his key-chain pet into his pocket. He puts his books in a backpack, and turns off his deck.

DISH

Time to deflate a balloon....

INT. OFFICE CUBICLE-RAMONE

Ramone turns on his computer monitor. There is no keyboard or mouse.

Ramone puts on "reeves"-a headset with an eyepiece and a microphone. A dot appears on the screen; the dot moves when he moves his head. He pulls a menu down by moving his eyes and blinking. He soon has a series of advertisements continually cascading over part of the screen and a hamster playing on the screen.

He checks his mail.

RAMONE

So, Drs. Scott and Cameron are still having problems
with that woman and her "mech Xenomorph" hallucination.
Anything interesting?

Ramone deletes the spam and corp-drivel.

He sees a nell reflection on his screen. He begins to press a button, but a gloved hand stops him.

PALLAS

That would put a damper on a potentially beautiful relationship.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-42
RAMONE
I can deal with beautiful relationships.

Pallas retracts her hand.

PALLASS
Good morning, Mr. Pan. I'm Pallas.

RAMONE
How did you get past security?

PALLAS
Why should they harass your research assistant?

RAMONE
And what are your qualifications?

PALLAS
Well, I do have a degree in archaeology.

RAMONE
Interesting.

PALLAS
Nonetheless, let us accentuate the positive. You are a highly skilled researcher, and I usually win debates.

RAMONE
Non-violently, I hope.

PALLAS
Also, the kid's case falls within your purview, so---

RAMONE
---no one will question me investigating the case.
(beat; he smiles) Yes, this is starting to become a very beautiful relationship.

Pallas smiles.

RAMONE
Guess we start with that kid's picture...

Ramone takes a picture from his jacket and feeds it into his computer.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-43

INT-CLOSE SHOT-CYBER-ROOM-STEEL

Steel sits in the middle of a room littered with computer monitors, flatscreens, and TV tubes, all of which are on and tuned to something different.

Steel has a keyboard in each hand.

STEEL

Interesting little disc.

Steel puts a pair of goggles on, and plugs them into the deck.

MATRIX SAN ANGELES-STEEL

STEEL'S ICON is a parodied G.I. Joe. A huge disc flies in front of him; he stops it and pulls a plug from his arm.

He plugs into the disc and is hit by a kaleidoscope of color. He pulls the plug.

INT. CYBER-ROOM-STEEL

Steel is shaking and sweating as he jacks out.

STEEL

A feedback loop. Great.

INT-LONG SHOT-CONFERENCE ROOM-KATSUNA

Katsuna finishes a series of finger-stretches and sits down. He pulls out a small panel, a joystick, and a small keypad from his backpack and starts to set-up a game. He pulls out his key-chain pet and plugs it in. Dish walks in, followed by a crowd. He pulls out his pet, plugs it in, and then himself.

KATSUNA

You know the rules and the risks?

DISH

No add-on files. .If I lose, I have to streak across campus.

KATSUNA

Good.

DISH

But I plan to win the scholarship money.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-44
KATSUNA
Dream on.

DISH
Hot-runners never run naked!

Dish plugs in his goggles.

Katsuna throws a switch.

MATRIX ARENA-WARRIORS

A neon blue T. Rex with a neon pink “K” on its paws the ground, then it lowers its head and charges a white dishwasher with a brown “D” on it.

The dishwasher braces, then jumps over it. A pair of knives appear in his hands, and he slices the T. Rex.

The T. Rex turns, and Dish jumps back over him, slicing him again.

The T. Rex starts blinking.

Dish tosses the knives straight into the T. Rex, and it glows. The T. Rex tries to swipe Dish with its tail.

Dish jumps over it and a fork forms in his hands. He twirls it like a baton; the T. Rex charges.

Dish stabs him and the T. Rex derezzes then rerezzes. The T. Rex goes berserk; Dish simply goes through the same routine. Same effect.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM-KATSUNA

Katsuna pounds the table.

The crowd shakes Dish’s hands and pats him on the back.

Katsuna unplugs Dish’s pet, puts the set-up in his backpack and storms out.

INT-MED SHOT-RAMONE’S CUBICLE-RAMONE

Pallas comes in with two cups of coffee; Ramone is doing a high speed search. He takes the proffered cup and absently drinks from it. He sprays it out.

JOCHIM-~~RAMONE~~ NEON-45

I hate it black! (throws it away) This is fascinating stuff. Several boys have disappeared from a local prep school. Four of them at the same time, and last seen with a doctor.

PALLAS

Okay, but are you sure they didn't just go off on their own?

RAMONE

Very. According to the interns' gossip-net, one of them went samurai-style, and, well, a "host" shot one before slashing himself.

Pallas grabs a sandwich from a passing vendor-bot.

PALLAS

And the other two?

Ramone grabs a yogurt and a spoon from the same vendor.

RAMONE

Already checked. They're still unaccounted for. I've already checked my usual sources, but they've only seen the usual runaways and gangster wannabes.

Pallas is struggling with the sandwich's wrapper.

PALLAS

Could it be an underground experimenter? Or a frankenstein?

Ramone talks between spoonfuls of yogurt.

RAMONE

Nah...There were no cybernetics on the bodies, not even a jack. Besides, the MO is a non-match: A frankenstein stays away from anyone that may be missed.

PALLAS.

And prep boys are never missed.

RAMONE

But a random experimenter...?

Pallas takes a knife from her jacket and debates using it.

PALLAS

Okay. A corp stitch? Using the boys as subjects?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-46

RAMONE

The school was Sakura Prep; the parents could stir up negpub circus.

PALLAS

The two boys could have been samurai-wannabes, trying to prove themselves.

RAMONE

They definitely died happy. But even dying of pride would not have caused that level of endorphins, even assuming one of them died during intercourse.

Pallas is using the knife to open her sandwich.

PALLAS

What about the cancerous growth found in each body? Wouldn't that much brain-cancer have made the boys suicidal?

Ramone shoots a garbage-basket with the yogurt cup. It sinks in.

RAMONE

That much cancer would have made them vegetables. However, what about a burnt-out organic implant—

PALLAS

—which would cause a boost, as well as their activities, if it carried any programming.

RAMONE

So I wonder if someone from Sakura is in the picture, even if it's just as weaponeer. (stands up and putting his chair in) Time to call it a day?

Pallas sheathes the knife and tosses the sandwich into a nearby garbage bin.

PALLAS

Sure. (beat) But let's stop at a fast-food place...

INT-LONG SHOT-DORM ROOM-DISH

Dish takes his tie off and changes into something less formal.

He puts his key-chain pet into his pocket. His cel-phone rings.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-47

DISH

Hey! Was up, Steel? (beat) Some-one must have covered the file with something psychotropic. (beat) Yeah, I just decrypted them; I figured they could worry about the secondary defenses.

(beat) What? Idiot! Okay, I'll have a safe version for you by morning, okay? Seeya! Gotta see what Ramone has cooked up for me tonight!

Dish runs out.

INT-MED SHOT-TYRELL'S-BAR

Pallas wipes her mouth. Ramone looks at the remains of the burger.

RAMONE

If that was just a bit famished, I'd hate to see hungry.

PALLAS

The advantages of knowing I have a three-hour work-out tomorrow.
Back in a sec; I want to check some of my mailboxes.

As she leaves, Dish runs in and sits where she was. Ramone goes to pat him on the back, but Dish just glares Ramone. Ramone pulls back.

The bartender rolls his eyes skyward as he sees Dish, then puts a canned soda next to the kid.

Dish opens the soda and takes a long drink.

RAMONE

Sorry about that! Besides, it was his idea! I couldn't resist!

DISH

Next time, resist.

A GIRL passes by.

Dish stops glaring at Ramone just long enough to watch her.

He quickly returns to glaring.

Ramone gets up.

RAMONE

Let me make it up to you, okay?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-48

Dish cocks an eyebrow.

RAMONE

You're just a prep boy! Girls that you want don't want you,
and girls that want you you don't want! You won't get her if you
do it! C'mon; let me do this for you!

Dish bangs his head against the counter top. He leaves it there.

DISH

(to himself) I am so going to hate myself.
(to Ramone) Okay. Do it.

Ramone runs after the girl.

Dish watches him, on the edge of his seat.

Dish pounds the counter top when they separate.

Ramone comes back, very serious. Dish finishes his soda and motions for a new one.

DISH

So, who's next on the list?

RAMONE

She is! Gave me her key, and directions! Now, get going!

Dish puts the soda down and runs off.

RAMONE

Five. Four. Three. Two. One.

Dish appears back at the table.

Ramone gives him a paper and the key, and Dish runs off.

Ramone finishes off his drink.

Pallas returns. He turns to Pallas.

RAMONE

Do you like rock-and-roll?

PALLAS

No; why?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-49

RAMONE

Okay, stay here then.

Ramone smiles enigmatically as he gets up and leaves.

Pallas, annoyed, follows.

INT. APARTMENT-GIRL

The Girl from Tyrell's, in a robe, is getting the place ready for something.

FX: KNOCK

She walks to the door and she opens it.

Dish comes in; she hands him a beer and her robe flies open.

Dish's jaw hits the floor.

She covers up.

He chugs the beer.

DISH

Could I get another beer, please?

INT. HALLWAY-PALLAS AND RAMONE

Pallas and Ramone walk past a plate bearing the legend:

THE HECTOR-XANTH HOTEL BUILT 2010

They are looking at room numbers.

RAMONE

Hey, at least we're on the right floor this time. Just a few rooms more...

PALLAS

Yeah, right. So, who is this person we're looking for?

RAMONE

She's a former affiliate of the Sakura Corp. I'm curious if she knows any Sakura frankensteins.

PALLAS

Wait a sec...A corp using its own kids? That would be...okay,

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-50
that I could expect. But so blatantly?

RAMONE

Exactly. And probably blaming it on an accident of some sort.
After all, if it looked like to cancer to you, it would look
the same to any scully. But it would be entirely different to
someone in the know.

Ramone stops at room #1138.

Pallas comes up beside him.

PALLAS

And here we are.

INT. HOTEL ROOM-DISH

Dish finishes another beer.

She removes the robe and goes into bed, and gestures for him to come in.

Dish takes his shirt off, but his motions are getting slower and slower.

Dish falls on top of the bed.

The Girl smiles.

GIRL

Oh, Ramone is going to love this....

INT. BALLROOM-DANCERS

There are two crowds: people talking and the people dancing.

MARGARET "MADGE" TAYLOR, of the New England Taylors, passes by a mirror. She
pauses to look at herself then walks away, eyes closed.

Madge smiles Histfully as she Hatches COLLIN, a handsome lad, dancing with a succes-
sion of partners.

MADGE

If I were but a third as old...

Collin catches her Hatching him and excuses himself from the crowd.

He grabs Madge's hand and gentlemanly kisses it.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-51

COLLIN

Miss, could I have this dance?

MADGE

I would be honored, but do be gentle.

COLLIN

I would ask that of you.

They start waltzing across the floor.

INT. CASS' APARTMENT-CASS

Cass is staring out over the city. A revolver is in one hand.

Ramone stays where he is; Pallas trips.

In a blur, Cass has the gun at Pallas' forehead.

CASS

Why do you want to live?

INT. BALLROOM-MADGE AND COLLIN

Madge and Collin are dancing in a silent room.

Their eyes meet.

COLLIN

That was fun.

MADGE

That it was. Too bad we have to leave.

COLLIN

By ourselves?

MADGE

I didn't plan on it.

COLLIN

But my curfew....

MADGE

Oh, I plan on tucking you in.

She pulls him out the door.

INT. CASS' APARTMENT-ALL THREE

Cass has a gun aimed at Pallas; Ramone is standing still.

CASS
Make it good.

PALLAS
A good job, a career, and knowing that the world knows that
I'd kill the first person to lay a hand on my daughter.

CASS
And if I pulled the trigger? What would happen to your little precious?

PALLAS
Her grandfather would have a lot more visitation time.

CASS
Your job can be done else by someone. Why shouldn't I shoot right you now?

EXT. EMPTY STREET-CAR

Collin is driving recklessly, almost on purpose. Madge clings to him.

FX: SIREN

A flashing light. Collin begins to slow down, but Madge gestures for him to keep it up.

The police car comes alongside the car, begins to gesture them over.

The policeman's jaw drops, then he waves and leaves.

Madge waves at the departing officer. Collin smiles at her, and the car begins to pick up speed.

INT. CASS' APARTMENT-TRIO

Cass' aim is wandering; Pallas and Ramone are ready to spring.

PALLAS
Better question: Why should you shoot me?

CASS

Why not? In a random universe what matters a random death?
Do you consider your life random?

PALLAS

Mostly. I have a daughter who does what feels good, a boss
who sends me on so many errands that I'm hardly home, and I've
met people that can end my so-called life with a well-placed glance.

CASS

And what would happen if your leg went lame? Or you lost your sight?

INT. MADGE'S PENTHOUSE-DOOR

The door opens slowly. Madge comes in, followed by Collin. She closes the door.

Her hand lingers on the light switch for a moment, then pulls away, leaving the room in
darkness.

She shoves Collin onto her bed then walks into the bathroom.

She throws a pillow and a tube to him; he catches the pillow by its strap and almost misses
the tube.

MADGE

When I come back, you'd better be wearing just the pillow and the lotion.

She closes the bathroom door.

Collin hurriedly strips down to his under wear, and brings the pillow into place, removes his
under wear, then starts putting the lotion on.

INT. APARTMENT-CASS AND PALLAS

Cass' aim is beginning to really wander. Pallas grabs her gun and puts it next to her temple.

PALLAS

Permanent injury? I do have a Master's in archaeology;
living the passive life doesn't scare me. Hell, I would welcome it.

CASS

And if you were forced to sell your body for food? Could
you? Even for your daughter?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-54
PALLAS
I'd kill myself first. Of that I'm certain.

CASS
Life isn't.

PALLAS
Yeah, well, life is what you make of it. So, are you going to shoot or what?

The hammer goes back.

INT. MADGE'S PENTHOUSE-COLLIN

Collin is rubbing the lotion on. As he rubs the back of his neck, his hair goes up, revealing a long scar.

INT. CASS' APARTMENT-TRIO

Pallas is holding Cass' gun to her head. Ramone is uncertain what to do. Cass has the hammer back.

PAN to the ceiling.

FX: BANG!

INT. MADGE'S BATHROOM-MADGE

Madge is looking at herself. in the mirror as she types on a computer keyboard, with "SCANNING" on its screen.

MADGE

He really is a handsome boy. Just to whom does he belong? I'll use him, even make him enjoy this evening, but who sent him into my parlor?

Collin's picture comes on screen.

MADGE

So, a Sakura Prep boy, eh? And a business major wannabe, at that? (smiles) Guess tonight he learns about how humiliating mergers can sometimes be....

She turns the computer off.

INT-MED SHOT-CASS' APARTMENT-TRIO

There is a hole in Cass' arm. Ramone is looking for bandages. Pallas is looking at the wiring hanging from the arm.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-55

PALLAS

I thought...I thought that that system was nothing but theory.

CASS

Neat, huh? The Sakura Body Wire. Model 511-875-Gamma. Main Utilization: Replacement of Damaged Nervous System. I got it when my nervous system was destroyed thanks to my "condition." I'm stronger, faster, more agile than anyone else.

PALLAS

What happened last night?

CASS

I thought the control was internal-only. (beat) I thought I was in complete control. (beat) I was wrong.

RAMONE

So, someone used The Wire to—

CASS

—show me how little control I really have.

INT. MADGE'S PENTHOUSE-COLLIN

Collin, Nearing nothing but a small pillow and the sheen of lotion, sits on the bed.

Madge comes in, wearing just a towel.

MADGE

Stand up so I can take off the covers.

Collin stands, facing Madge.

She goes to the kitchen counter, and grabs a small package from a drawer.

The pillow falls to the floor.

She circles around him.

She stops, facing him. She shoves him into the bed, and throws the package at him.

MADGE

That's the only safe thing about tonight.

He puts the condom on.

She pushes him down.

The towel falls, revealing a hammer tattoo on her back.

INT. CASS' APARTAMENT-TRIO

Ramone is repairing Cass' arm; Pallas is still thinking about implications.

PALLAS

And just because you raided Sakura yesterday.

RAMONE

There are still two people on that list. Did you get his name?

CASS

Some blacksuit, name of Taneka. I think. Said he wanted to make a point with Steel.

RAMONE

Steel has probably already had his visit then. You were easily available, so you were second. Dish is next.

CASS

And this is one sick puppy. I'd hate to see what'll happen.

RAMONE

I already know what he'll do.

Ramone bolts for the door; Pallas and Cass run after him.

EXT. TYRELL'S-KABUKI-SUNRISE

Kabuki is flying past the harbor.

As she flies into the dawn, she puts on a pair of sunglasses.

KABUKI

Sakura DigiDisks has bad news for collectors. Talks fell through with Lucasfilms on distributing Star Wars: Trilogy3, 25th Anniversary SE.

Kabuki sips orange juice.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-57

KABUKI

It won't be available by Quazz-mas. In sorta-related news,
Ewan McGregor is now old enough to play the Original Ben: Happy
Birthday, Ewie!

Kabuki flies into the dawn.

INT. MADGE'S PENTHOUSE-COUPLE

Madge pulls away from a sleeping Collin.

She picks up a phone and pecks in a number.

MADGE

Yes, Charles? I'll need the limo ready by seven. No,
not for me; I'll need you to drop off a visitor.

Madge hangs up.

MADGE

I'll need to start up an investigation against Sakura Enterprises;
I don't want them to be the only one with a bargaining chip.

INT. OFFICE-SAKURA

Sakura is looking off into the horizon as Jimbei comes up to him.

JIMBEI

Nice sunrise.

SAKURA

Too bad it's not mine.

JIMBEI

There are plenty left to watch.

SAKURA

I have no idea which will be the last one I'll see.

JIMBEI

A dawn is a new day; you should look forward to it.

SAKURA

Why? A truly new day would be one without me.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-58

JIMBEI

You could choose your successor and retire.

SAKURA

And if I could?

JIMBEI

Monasteries always accept new monks.

SAKURA

I'm too young for meditation and too old to learn.

JIMBEI

Not necessarily.

SAKURA

Let's just try to enjoy it.

Jimbei pours them both tea; Sakura sips his.

INT. MADGE'S BATHROOM-COLLIN

Collin leaves the shower.

He picks up his cel-phone.

COLLIN

Call Home. (beat) I am dead.

INT. MADGE'S PENTHOUSE

Madge opens a window and looks out at the sunlight, its orange tint giving the metal city it covers the slightest rusted look.

She sighs, then looks over at Collin as he leaves the bathroom in just a towel.

He walks over to the bed, and "innocently" drops towel. As he "tries" to pick it up, Madge throws a comforter on him and pulls him close.

He pulls her even closer, and pushes her to the window. She locks him in a hug.

He pushes them both out the window.

INT. HOTEL ROOM-DISH AND GIRL

The sunlight streaming in wakes Dish up and he notices The Girl next to him. He looks under the sheets and notices his nudity and the girl's.

He smiles as he makes the obvious conclusion.

He gets up and gets dressed in a hurry.

As he leaves the room, the girl "wakes up", grinning.

Kabuki flies past as Pallas parks the jeep as Ramone and Cass pour out. Cass blurs to the door.

CASS
It's closed!

RAMONE
Okay, then we'll have to go around it then!

Pallas comes up to Ramone, checking her ammo.

PALLAS
I left the message, as requested. Who's Mary Jane?

RAMONE
Not even you want to know.

Ramone rushes to the rear of the building, quickly followed by the girls.

Dish walks past the jeep, dazed.

He gets on the next bus.

INT. LIMO-TANEKA AND JIMBEI

Jimbei is finishing a breakfast roll; Taneka gulps down some pills.

JIMBEI
Steroids and a multivitamin... Anticipating trouble handling the boy?

TANEKA
Yes. But not from the boy him-self.

JIMBEI
But what could some schoolboy do to the Great Taneka?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-60

TANEKA

Please. He hangs out with an ex-Marine, a cyborg, and a mobidaru. And the mobidaru knows me.

JIMBEI

Interesting. He still lives?

TANEKA

Yes. He belongs to that group that attacked us yesterday.

JIMBEI

I thought you had killed him.

TANEKA

Apparently he's tougher than I thought.

JIMBEI

You aren't afraid that he will spill your secrets?

TANEKA

He's more scared I'll spill his.

Taneka scowls at Jimbei.

Jimbei leans back.

EXT. TYRELL'S-STEEL-DAY

Steel shows up in the HMMWV.

Ramone, Cass, and Pallas come running out.

RAMONE

What'd Mary say, Steel?

STEEL

A "Taneka" stopped by and grabbed something called "Truth Serum". (beat) Nice place. Really.

RAMONE

It was one of Taneka's hangouts; I figured he'd go there sooner or later. Especially if a boy was involved.

PALLAS

This guy some sort of molester?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-61

RAMONE

We'd be lucky if that was the case. He's a brainscanner.

INT. DISH'S ROOM-DISH

Dish, still groggy, gets into his room and crashes.

He almost falls asleep, then bolts upright.

DISH

My homework!

Dish boots up his computer, and turns the speaker on.

COMPUTER

HomeHork Program v5.8. Beginning: Analytical Geometry.
Several problems were left unsolved. Ready to complete?

Dish puts on his reeves.

DISH

Sure.

COMPUTER

Trapezoidal tub, 8 m by—

The tube implodes and the speakers smoke.

DISH

I kneH this stuff was dangerous.

Dish's chair gets spun around and a gun is planted on his forehead.

We PAN up the arm.

Taneka is staring down it.

TANEKA

Don't you hate it when reality intrudes?

EXT. PALLAS' JEEP-PALLAS

Pallas is driving furiously. Ramone is putting together his pistol.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-62

PALLAS

I thought brainscanning was made illegal years ago.

RAMONE

It was.

PALLAS

So why Dish?

RAMONE

He's the perfect brainscaneer. He has a jack, and he deals well with metaphorical constructs.

PALLAS

In short, because he's decker.

RAMONE

Bingo. And if he got to Cass—

Pallas speeds up.

INT. DISH'S ROOM-TANEKA

Taneka is hooking some wires onto a pair of glasses. He takes Dish's glasses off, and puts the wired glasses on him.

Dish is scared.

Taneka eases down onto Dish's bed and puts on a matching pair of glasses.

Lights go on in his glasses, and the same lights show up on Dish's glasses.

DISH

You made a mistake coming here.

TANEKA.

Oh, I'm not scared of your friends. And you're not so tough.

DISH

Not in the real world.

TANEKA

Bring it on.

Dish tries to break out.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-63

FX: BELL

Taneka panics, grabs all the equipment he can, and runs for the door.

DISH
Good idea.

Ramone rushes in.

RAMONE
You okay?

Dish just nods.

RAMONE
I was worried.

DISH
Good that someone was.

RAMONE
He was going to brainscan you.

DISH
Not a chance. Taking me on there is like taking on Steel here. I hope.

Steel, Cass, and Pallas come in.

STEEL
He got away. Time to pull together?

DISH
Yeah, but not here. Security will be here in a fell moments.

STEEL
Tonight then?

RAMONE
Sure.

All but Dish leave. He begins cleaning up. He smiles to himself.

DISH
I couldn't leave anyway. I have a field trip today. With Ichi-kun.

INT. LIMO-TANEKA

Taneka fumes as Jimbei pours coffee.

TANEKA
No more nice guy.

JIMBEI
You assault the cyborg, you try to brainscan the boy, and
NOW it's "no more nice guy?"

TANEKA
You doubt me?

JIMBEI
I don't. That's what scares me.

The limo stops.

Jimbei exits.

Taneka pulls out his phone, thinks for a moment.

TANEKA
So he has friends. So do I.

INT. MUSEUM-ICHIKUN AND DISH

Ichikun is looking at the exhibits. Dish comes up with a pair of sodas. Ichikun takes one; they both sip.

ICHIKUN
This is so dreary.

DISH
This is great!

ICHIKUN
Really? I thought SOTA Has your creed.

DISH
Learn history or repeat it.

ICHIKUN
Looks like I'll be repeating it.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-65

DISH

Let me tutor you. Soka?

ICHIKUN

In what?

DISH

Uh, history.

ICHIKUN

As long as we don't get one.

DISH

There goes my afternoon. (pause) Soka. What section is your class on?

ICHIKUN

Current history. We've got events down, and were just getting to technology.

DISH

Like the V-Helm?

ICHIKUN

Yeah.

DISH

Okay. See that?

Dish points out a pair of yellow diving goggles, heavily wired, and a large tank filled with water.

ICHIKUN

The Sakura Virtual Helm.

DISH

Actually, it's the Serling Goggles and Tank. The Tank immersed the user in water, creating a sensory-deprivation environment.

ICHIKUN

Allowing someone to impose a false---virtual---reality onto the user through the goggles.

DISH

See? You're getting it already.

ICHIKUN

That lead to decking?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-66

DISH

Yep. Allowing meditation and bio-feedback techniques instead of the tank, it's the same concept. My jack is better than both because of its portability.

ICHIKUN

So you just "jack in"? You don't need to meditate.

DISH

Any good decker can reach nirvana in a second. Meditation focuses on all without focusing on anything; by concentrating on a specific task we remove all extraneous distractions and get the job done. Wannabes can't and don't get past the gate.

ICHIKUN

Implants are so nasty. I won't ever get one.

DISH

Your loss.

INT. LAB-KATSUNA

Katsuna is typing furiously.

A phone rings.

Katusna hits the speakerphone button.

Taneka's voice comes on over the intercom.

KATSUNA

Engineering. Katsuna here.

TANEKA

Excellent.

KATSUNA

Can I help you, sir?

TANEKA

You lost a game, Katsuna.

Katsuna scowls.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-67

KATSUNA

Yeah. So?

TANEKA

Upset?

KATSUNA

A little.

TANEKA

Ever lose before?

KATSUNA

Never.

TANEKA

Embarassed?

KATSUNA

Some.

TANEKA

Want some payback?

KATSUNA

Of course.

TANEKA

I have proposition for you, Katsuna.

KATSUNA

Which is?

TANEKA

Are you ready to serve, Katsuna?

KATSUNA

If it means revenging myself, of course. Sir.

TANEKA

Of course, technician.

KATSUNA

Then I am yours, sir.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-68

TANEKA

Good. Now meet me at—

Katsuna grins. With too many teeth.

INT. OFFICE-RAMONE

Ramone and Pallas are working furiously.

RAMONE

I wonder why Sakura is trying to nail us?

PALLAS

I can't believe you guys took on Sakura and expected to live.

RAMONE

I'm more surprised that they did anything about it.

PALLAS

Really.

RAMONE

Well, yeah. The files show that Gamato was on the way out;
the extraction was a joke.

PALLAS

But their pride?

RAMONE

They would have put on a minor investigation, then let it die. Gamato
was slowing things down.

PALLAS

Then you did them a favor.

RAMONE

Strange, but true.

PALLAS

So what's going on?

RAMONE

I don't know.

Ramone looks at some files as Pallas rolls her eyes and picks up a file.

INT. APARTMENT-CASS

Cass is reading magazines. She tosses the magazine down, then heads over to her window.

She stares out to the Sakura logo.

She turns away fuming, then heads to the phone.

She picks it up the phone book, looks up a number, then pecks a number into the dial.

CASS
Hermes Moving Company?

Cass pulls down a window shade.

INT. MUSEUM-DISH AND ICHIKUN

They stop in front of a steel cage with bells and whistles on it.

It has a sign:
"SOTA by Hamas".

DISH
Hardly.

ICHIKUN
"Hardly"?

DISH
It's a cage with all those bells and whistles. That's not SOTA.

ICHIKUN
I though technology had to have all the bells and whistles it could
before it was "SOTA."

DISH
Take a car, for example.

ICHIKUN
Okay.

DISH
It has a power system, a braking system, and various safety features, wrapped up in a
nice-looking shell.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-70

ICHIKUN

Okay.

DISH

Each system, even the appearance, helps it get somewhere quickly, efficiently, and safely, right?

ICHIKUN

Which helps sell the car, especially the appearance.

DISH

If it went 0-60 in .1 seconds, got 6000 miles per gallon, and was indestructible, it could look like a pile of garbage and still sell well.

ICHIKUN

Well, okay.

DISH

Being aerodynamic helps its speed, and those curves help shift the energy of a crash to somewhere there aren't people. Basic physics.

ICHIKUN

If you say so.

DISH

Being SOTA, "state of the art," is being perfectly adapted to the needs of the situation. Bells and Hhistles don't exist on SOTAtech; they just slow the machine down.

ICHIKUN

Really. So do you date with bells and whistles, or SOTA?

Dish is stunned.

She leaves the hall.

Dish runs after her.

DISH

So you do want to have a history!

INT. GYM-STEEL

Steel is lifting weights.

Weight in hand, he sits upright.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-71

STEEL

Interesting.

He stands and lets the Heights drop.

STEEL

Computer, access Gamato disk.

COMPUTER VOICE

Accessed.

STEEL

Seperate IC from main program. Also, elminate any unnecessary links.

COMPUTER VOICE

Estimated time of completion: 6 hours, 17 minutes.

STEEL

Go ahead.

COMPUTER VOICE

0% Completed.

Steel returns to lifting weights.

STEEL

I know Dish disabled the IC, but I wonder if Sakura hid something...?

EXT.

MUSEUM-DISH AND ICHIKUN

The students are getting on the bus.

ICHIKUN

Seeya back at school! Thanks!

She disappears onto the bus.

Dish turns and walks away.

DISH

Yes! (beat) At least, it's a beginning.

INT. OFFICE-PALLAS AND RAMONE

Pallas gives Ramone his coffee. She takes out her knife and goes after a sandwich.

PALLAS

Any success on Paulo's problem?

RAMONE

Some. A new victim was found. Same endorphine levels, same burned out something.
Weird.

PALLAS

Why?

RAMONE

I'm starting to think that Gamato's death and Paulo's problem are linked.

PALLAS

Why?

RAMONE

Gamato was working on some sort of mind-control, right?

PALLAS

Right.

RAMONE

Well, there are four victims here. Two were schoolboys, and two were political leaders.
The first was a businessman, and the second was a corrupt judge.

PALLAS

True. But both could be bought.

RAMONE

And Paulo Nanted to buy them off. Someone else Nanted victims.

PALLAS

How does that link them?

RAMONE

Not a direct link. Just pointing out that Paulo and our unknown are tracking the same
people. We need to determine who the next person would be.

PALLAS

And then prevent the death? Why?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-73
RAMONE
Because we're the good guys?

PALLAS.
We're paid by the bad guys to make sure bad people are saved.

RAMONE
It's a matter of perspective.

PALLAS
If that makes you sleep better at night.

They go back to work.

INT. LIMO-TANEKA

Taneka is mixing himself a drink.

He takes a sip from it.

TANEKA
I'm the brains, Katsuna can be my hands, but I need a body.
Preferably a muscular one.

Taneka drums his fingers on the limo's seat.

The fingers slow.

They are soon pecking numbers on his cel phone.

INT. HALLWAY-DISH

Tengu grabs Dish and shoves him into a Nall.

TENGU
Prepare to die, geek!

As Tengu grabs for Dish's underwear, his hand is pushed down.

Tengu finds himself shoved into the wall by Ichikun.

Ichikun grabs his underwear.

ICHIKUN
Not today, jerk.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-74

Dish drops. Smiling.

Tengu drops. Grimacing.

Dish grabs Ichikun's hand and they run off.

DISH

I thought you didn't .want to make any historywith me.

ICHIKUN

Obviously you misunderstood.

DISH

What about making time?

She pushes him into a wall and walks off.

DISH

I need a translator. With a medical background.

INT. APARTMENT-CASS

Cass is packing. As she finishes, she dusts herself off.

FX: BUZZ!

She opens her door and moving men come in.

She smiles.

INT.

LIMO-TANEKA

Taneka puts his cel-phone down.

He slowly grins.

TANEKA

The pieces are almost in place.

Taneka drinks his sake.

TANEKA

So, Uncle, how long until the next day comes?

INT.

CLASSROOM-DISH

Dish is working on an experiment.

Tengu comes up, several of his goons behind him.

Dish continues working.

TENGU

How do you feel about helping us get an "A?"

DISH

Not good.

TENGU

Too bad. You don't have a choice.

DISH

There's always a choice. (beat) Did you pay my fee?

TENGU

I don't pay.

Dish takes a beaker and pours it onto Tengu's shoe.

The shoe starts smoking.

DISH

That's either just smoke, or acid. I would decide quickly and act quicker..

Tengu and his goons look at each other, then start running.

THE TEACHER comes up.

TEACHER

Hachiro! What was that?

DISH

An interdisciplinary query, sir?

TEACHER In English?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-76

DISH

Basically, a chemical reaction (melting shoe rubber) provoking a philosophic dilemma (would he harm me?) using psychological reasoning (did I create some sort of emotional scar?) resulting in a medical diagnosis (I'm going to need help). Sir.

Dish returns to work.

The Teacher looks at him strangely, then turns away.

TEACHER

And he's only getting a "B"?

The Teacher returns to work.

INT. OFFICE-PALLAS AND RAMONE

Ramone stops and Pallas looks on his screen.

RAMONE

Okay, Pallas, let me run a scenario past you.

PALLAS

Okay.

RAMONE

A ninja takes years to train, right?

PALLAS

Which costs Sakura millions, and sometimes just results in a cheap death.

RAMONE

Right. So they try to forego the training process using a new version of brainwashing.

PALLAS

Using a biotech-based circuit that enforces its commands with endorphins.

RAMONE

But the assassin can't think clearly because of the endorphin rush, which means that he must be under constant supervision, right?

PALLAS

And he can only be used for a single, short-term mission because of the potential to build up a resistance to the endorphins, eventually needing more than he can produce.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-77

RAMONE

Now, we know that there's one implant victim left, right?

PALLAS

Right. And we know that the boys were meant for a single missions, with simple commands.

RAMONE

Right. Okay, so we have at least three criteria for each assassination: a corrupt civic leader, a use for boys, and a some sort of problem with Sakura Corp.

PALLAS

Autopsy reports in regarding the older victims. (beat) Weird. Nothing in common. (beat) Tatoos.

RAMONE

Tatoos?

PALLAS

Yeah. A hammer on the judge and an accordion on the businessman.

Ramone does some quick typing.

RAMONE

Whoa.

PALLAS

News?

RAMONE

Yeah. We have the a connection.

PALLAS

Really? Speak.

RAMONE

The Toybox. (beat) This isn't good.

INT. LABRATORY-SHOSHONE

ARTHUR SHOSHONE, a Native American scientist, checks some readings on a computer.

He holds his breath while he waits for the computer to give its readout.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-78

A BOY, a slim Native American in a lab coat, comes in.

Shoshone starts to grin, slowly. The tenseness evaporates.

SHOSHONE
YES!

He holds the boy, then shoves him away.

SHOSHONE
A quick steam bath, then dinner. Tonight we celebrate.

He leaves.

The boy is right behind him.

INT.

CLASSROOM-DISH

Dish stares out the window at Ichikun in her P.E. outfit. He sighs and returns to his test.

INT. GYM-STEEL

Steel is mixing something. It's purple with green streaks, liquid, and glowing.

COMPUTER
Warning: Hazardous substance detected.

STEEL
Location?

COMPUTER
Mixer.

STEEL
Override warning.

COMPUTER
Warning overridden.

He stops the mixer, takes off the lid, and drinks.

He grimaces as he does so.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-79

He quickly puts it down.

COMPUTER
Incoming mail.

STEEL
Summarize.

COMPUTER
The next victim has been determined.

STEEL
Excellent. Feed me the data, then prepare the hummer.

Steel finishes the drink, grimacing the entire way.

INT. APARTMENT-CASS

Cass sits among boxes.

She looks out her window. There is no glowing sign outside.

She smiles and starts to unpack.

INT. STEAM ROOM-SHOSHONE

Shoshone walks into the steam bath wearing just a towel.

There is a bow and arrow tattoo on his shoulder.

Shoshone relaxes.

The boy walks in, in just a towel, his hands covering his front.

SHOSHONE
Are you okay?

The boy drops his towel.

Shoshone stares at what he sees.

Three grenades fall to the floor.

BOY
I am dead.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-80

The explosion engulfs most of the locker room.

INT. SAKURA'S OFFICE-SAKURA

Sakura is watching "On The Waterfront." He is reading a book, occasionally looking at the television.

Jimbei walks in.

Sakura does not move.

SAKURA
How is Taneka doing.

JIMBEI
He is a rabid dog.

SAKURA
Then put him to sleep.

Jimbei bows then exits.

Sakura sits up. Attempts to get back into the same position. He gives up.

SAKURA
He could have been a contender.

He points a remote at the television and turns it off.

INT. TYRELL'S-RAMONE

Ramone is nursing a beer.

Pallas comes from the bathroom. Cass joins up with her.

Steel comes in and heads for Ramone.

A credit card is thrown on the counter and a soda appears next to it. PAN to watch Dish pick it up.

RAMONE
Hail, hail, the gang's all here.

STEEL
Great. I got Gamato's disk decoded.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-81

RAMONE

And I've got a working theory on why Taneka's on us.

STEEL

Shoot.

RAMONE

Ever here of a Dr. Joshiro Fujisawa?

STEEL

He was Gamato's superior. They were working on some sort of
"bio-cerebral augmentation."

DISH

A brain-booster?

PALLAS

An implant designed to allow outside control and additional skills.
Backed by an endorphine generator.

RAMONE

Turning prep-schoolers into ninja-in-a-can.

STEEL

Interesting. (beat) But what about Taneka?

PALLAS

You're not going to like the answer.

DISH

Which is?

PALLAS

Each target was actually a member of a group under Taneka's authority called the
"Toybox."

RAMONE

And he's getting ready to fill his Toybox up again.

CASS

Why does he call it his "Toybox"?

RAMONE

It's a group of mercenaries that he hires through a series of shell companies.
He plays with them and tosses them out.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-82

PALLAS

They recently tried to extract a Sakura scientist.

DISH

Tell me someone else did it, too.

STEEL

Taneka hired us? Just for a pretext?

RAMONE

Looks like it. And he's hired us before. Now he's going to try to kill us.

PALLAS

The last group he softened up just before sending an assassin squad after them.

RAMONE

The assassin squad died, but so did the group.

DISH

Great. I hate finals.

CASS

Pass or die, kid.

DISH

Can I get a crib sheet?

The group leaves.

EXT. TYRELL'S-GROUP-NIGHT

Pallas and Ramone get in her jeep and speed off.

Steel and Cass get into his HMMWV and rev up; Dish runs out and into the HMMWV. It quickly disappears.

INT. HMMWV-GROUP

Steel is flying through the streets as Dish struggles with the belt.

Cass is on the radio, talking to Pallas and Ramone.

CASS

We're headed where?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-83

RAMONE

999 Bear Street. It's at the intersection of Bear and Misty.
On the right.

CASS

Shoshone's? Arthur Shoshone?

PALLAS

The one and only. He likes having a boy on staff, helping
with the books. Especially one of Native stock. His own brand
of affirmative action.

STEEL

And one was hired just recently.

PALLAS

Yep. Hired through a local agency with a seventh-generation
link with Sakura.

CASS

And since Shoshone is heavy into biotech he would probably
find the implant, right?

RAMONE

Not this one. It's too close to the base of the spine.

STEEL

Great. Can you fax me his picture?

RAMONE

It's on its way.

EXT. SHOSHONE'S-PALLAS AND RAMONE

Ramone leaps out of the jeep. He motions for Pallas to drive off.

She looks puzzled until she looks past him. She reverses quickly.

Ramone drops down.

Taneka walks by, talking to the Seppuku Sempai surrounding him. Each of them is wearing
business casual.

Yomi is in front. Raja and Khan flank Taneka. Daimyo is just behind him, and Genin Storm
brings up the rear. Katsuna runs to catch up.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-84

Taneka signals for them to spread out. All but Yomi disappear.

Pallas taps Ramone's shoulder. Ramone grabs it, and almost forces Pallas into the car he is behind.

RAMONE

This could be interesting.

PALLAS

The Seppuku Sempai?

RAMONE

Yep. Sakura's creme de la creme. Has Shoshone been informed of the situation?

PALLAS

I left a message.

RAMONE

Has he responded yet?

PALLAS

No.

RAMONE

We need to assume he's dead.

PALLAS

I guess. (beat) Steel wanted me tell you we've got a new boss.

RAMONE

"We've"?

PALLAS

Yeah, some idiot thinks I'm part of the team.

RAMONE

Okay, I'll bite. San Paulo?

PALLAS

He's not that wealthy.

RAMONE

I'll wait to ask Steel, then.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-85

PALLAS

Steel just wants you play nice with him, okay?

RAMONE .

I'll have to tell Steel my price just went up then. "Being Nice" is not part of the basic package.

PALLAS

Sure. (beat) So, you ready to tell me how you know so much about Sakura?

RAMONE

No, not just yet.

PALLAS

Okay.

They sneak back to the group.

EXT. PARKING LOT-LIMO

A limo parks next to Steel's HMMWV.

Jimbei steps out of the limo.

JIMBEI

I presume the check cleared.

STEEL

What's the mission?

JIMBEI

Ever shoot a rabid dog?

STEEL

It's messy.

JIMBEI

You need kill only Taneka. We will pay a bounty on any others.

STEEL

Then we'll get started when the rest of the team shows up.

Ramone and Pallas walk up.

Ramone and Jimbei go on guard instantly.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-86

JIMBEI

Taneka figured that you would be coming here.

RAMONE

He still wants me?

JIMBEI

Like a hunter wants the lion.

Ramone turns to Steel.

RAMONE

What's the mission, Steel?

STEEL

Search and destroy.

CASS

What are our targets?

STEEL

Taneka. His team.

CASS

And our teams?

STEEL

Pallas and Dish. Cass and Ramone. Jimbei and myself.

RAMONE

The plan?

STEEL

Split up; I'll send targets en route.

Cass hands out the weapons and ammo.

They split up and walk off.

Steel and Jimbei walk slower than the rest.

STEEL

You are aware that my honor requires that I give you, as my employer, a chance to back out.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-87

JIMBEI

And you are aware that mine, as my lord's samurai, will not let me.

Steel smiles.

STEEL

Two old robots following their programming to the end.

Jimbei returns the smile.

JIMBEI

Or two men doing what they must.

STEEL

Not much difference.

JIMBEI

The men are motivated.

They salute each other then disappear into the building.

INT. BUILDING-PALLAS AND DISH

Pallas and Dish sneak along the hall.

They turn a corner.

Daimyo and Yomi are standing there.

They fall back.

PALLAS

We could try to sneak back.

DISH

They saw us.

PALLAS

Oh well.

They turn back.

Daimyo and Yomi are charging them.

Dish and Pallas roll past them, go up on one knee and turn around.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-88

Daimyo and Yomi turn around.

Dish and Pallas look at each other, shrug, and start firing at Daimyo and Yomi.

Daimyo and Yomi are knocked into the wall.

Dish and Pallas high-five each other.

Daimyo and Yomi rise groggily to their feet.

Dish and Pallas look at each other.

DISH

We should have ran.

PALLAS

Now would be good.

They rise and turn around, running down the hall.

INT. HALLWAY-KHAN AND RAJA

Khan and Raja are walking down the hallway.

Cass and Ramone slip in behind them.

Ramone coughs.

Khan and Raja turn, claws coming out of their hands.

RAMONE

Khan. Raja. You know me. Do you really wish to oppose me?

KHAN

You may be the newest—

RAJA

—you aren't the best.

CASS

Nah. That's me.

Khan and Raja roar.

Cass blurs, catching them by the throat and tossing them behind Ramone.

Ramone launches himself at them.

Cass blurs.

After some screeching, there is no movement.

Two bodies fly from the end of the hallway.

Cass and Ramone walk down the hallway.

CASS
Two down.

RAMONE
Five to go.

INT. HALLWAY-STEEL AND JIMBEI

Jimbei and Steel are walking down the hallway.

A rock rolls in front of them.

Steel spins around and fires.

A blood-covered Genin Storm falls down.

STEEL
Oops. I was supposed to look at the rock right?

JIMBEI
Right. I need to look at our training program.

The body moves.

Jimbei shoots it.

STEEL
Making sure?

JIMBEI
I've gotten too used to the boardroom.

STEEL
That was a decent shot. If you're better there, I think we need to team up.

Jimbei hands him a business card.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-90

JIMBEI

Fax me a proposition.

The two walk down the hall.

INT. ROOM-TANEKA AND KATSUNA

Taneka looks around the room as Katsuna straps himself into a chair.

Taneka relaxes and heads over to Katsuna.

Katsuna pulls a wire from behind his ear.

KATSUNA

This should prove interesting.

TANEKA

It had better. Steel, Cass and that mobidaru will take out that group easily.

KATSUNA

I just need a little diversion.

Katsuna falls back in the chair.

Katsuna and Taneka are immersed into darkness.

FX: A whispered hiss comes from the speakers.

KATSUNA

Play time.

INT. HALLWAY-DISH

Dish runs full speed down the hall.

He passes a closed door.

He runs back and tries the door; it's locked. He runs on.

Pallas quickly follows him.

PALLAS

Too bad we can't use that cleaning droid we just passed.

Daimyo and Yomi are jogging behind them.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-91

Dish and Pallas have to jump over a small ridge.

PALLAS

Too bad we can't raise the wall we just hurdled over.

Dish stops and smiles directly ahead.

Pallas almost ploughs through him, but catches herself.

PALLAS

Um, Dish....

Dish runs, then slides to the wall.

He pulls a cord out of his head.

DISH

Too bad they pissed me off.

Dish plugs in.

A wall cuts off Daimyo and Yomi.

The hallway starts to shake. Grinding sounds come from the seperated hallway.

The door shakes.

Screams are heard.

The wall goes down.

A nearly unrecognizable Daimyo and Yomi fall down.

They are not getting up.

A dark shadow disappears down the hallway.

PALLAS

What was that?

Dish's voice is coming from a speaker.

DISH

That was that cleaner bot we passed. It fluffs, folds, and mops the floor with the bad guys.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-92

PALLAS

I definitely need to get one.

DISH

Katsuna's in the system. You guys take out Taneka; Katsuna's mine.

PALLAS

Will you be okay?

DISH

Yeah. I hope.

PALLAS

If you need help, yell. I'll be right here.

She checks her weapons.

INT. HALLWAY-CASS AND RAMONE

Cass gets a few feet ahead of Ramone. She speaks on the mike. Steel responds on the radio.

CASS

Okay, who's left?

STEEL

None of them, all of us.

RAMONE

Just Taneka and Katsuna, then?

STEEL

Basically.

RAMONE

Dish on-line yet?

STEEL

Yeah. Pallas is with him. Everyone else, meet at my coordinates.

CASS

Roger.

She and Ramone look at each other; she gestures for him to move forward.

They start moving.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-93

A wall comes down between them.

Ramone goes for his mike.

RAMONE
Cass, get moving!

CASS (on radio)
I'll get Steel!

RAMONE
Gotcha!

TANEKA (OS)
Hello.

Ramone turns around.

PAN to Taneka.

TANEKA
You. Me. One last dance.

RAMONE
I don't dance. You know that.

TANEKA
Then time to learn.

RAMONE
Nah. My dates are basically meet, talk, straight to business.

TANEKA
We've met. We've talked.

Taneka unsheathes his katana.

Ramone pulls out a pair of knives.

They charge each other.

MATRIX FOREST-KATSUNA

Katsuna, in T-Rex form, is charging through the forest.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-94

A cloud of knives narrowly misses him.

Katsuna turns around.

Dish is in an apron and a cap, weilding a water spray.

KATSUNA

You're going to wish that you had killed me.

DISH

Why? Killing someone is no fun...

Katsuna charges.

INT. HALLWAY-CASS

Cass slides into Steel and Jimbei.

CASS

Ramone was seperated.

STEEL

Okay. It looks like Shoshone got the message, allowed us in—

JIMBEI

Actualy, I did. This is a Sakura shell, after all.

CASS

Which means that Shoshone is most likely dead.

STEEL

Probably. Which means that we're next.

JIMBEI

Right after Ramone.

STEEL

That's comforting.

CASS

So. When do we help Ramone?

STEEL

You two go help Ramone. I'll help the kid.

CASS

Cass and Jimbei start heading for Ramone.

Steel starts pulling a wire out of his arm.

INT. HALLWAY-TANEKA

Taneka prepares a heaven-to-earth strike.

Ramone comes in, dodges the strike, but is unable to land with one of his daggers. They both dive away, roll, end up on their feet.

TANEKA

All the others were destroyed long-distance. No close contact.

RAMONE

But me you're going to kill me in close combat, right?

TANEKA

Do you honestly hope to win?

RAMONE

No. Just seriously hamper you until Steel and Company get here.

TANEKA

They won't. They can't.

RAMONE

Listening to that knocking. Is it your heart or Cass and Steel demolishing that flimsy wall?

TANEKA

It's just a noise. We are in a factory.

RAMONE

Not that kind of factory.

TANEKA

It is the kind of factory that you should be very comfortable in.

RAMONE

It does feel faintly like home.

TANEKA

And it's where you'll die.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-96

RAMONE

Today is a lousy day to die.

TANEKA

Pencil me in.

RAMONE

Would putting you under “outgoing” be okay?

Taneka slashes at Ramone.

MATRIX FOREST-DISH

Dish is narrowly avoiding Katsuna’s teeth.

Dish falls down and nails Katsuna with a foot sweep.

He acts like he’s pitching a ball; forks appear from the point the ball would have been released.

Katsuna dodges all of the forks.

DISH

Do you want to quit now?

KATSUNA

No. I will kill you for embarrassing me in front of my employer.

DISH

That was a possibility. Don’t play with fire unless you know you might get burned.

KATSUNA

I was wearing an asbestos suit.

DISH

Suits can be torn.

KATSUNA

It had iron thread.

DISH

I had a can op—

An explosion forces the two apart.

They look in the direction of the blast.

Steel is holding a bazooka.

STEEL

I appreciate that this is a metaphorical environment, but you two were getting silly.

Katsuna charges Steel.

Forks hit Katsuna in the back.

DISH

DIE!

Katsuna flickers and derezzes.

STEEL

About time.

DISH

Heh. That was stupid.

STEEL

Nothing stupid about that.

DISH

That was a virtual death, not a real one. In about five minutes, he'll be back! I needed to trace his connection, but my volley of delete commands, the forks, removed all trace of him from the LAN-scape.

STEEL

Can you find him in other ways? Checking monitors?

DISH

If he's in the building, yes. But I have about five minutes. He was probably knocked for a loop, and some of his deck's wiring is fried. Basically, he has to recover and fix his deck.

STEEL

If you can find him before that, we can nail him, right?

DISH

Right. If you can search real-world, I'll go at it here. Okay?

STEEL

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-98
Okay, and I'm sending Pallas to help the others.

DISH

Okay. You'll have two sets of coordinates on your watch. Send her to the first, and then the second. Some people will appreciate what she finds there.

Steel derezzes with a quizzical look on his face.

DISH

And the clock ticks...

Dish goes into the distance.

INT. HALLWAY-CASS AND JIMBEI

Cass and Jimbei are trying to ram through a wall.

JIMBEI

This is getting us nowhere.

PALLAS

Excuse me, guys.

Pallas comes walking in with cutting torch. Jimbei and Cass walk out of her way.

PALLAS

I heard Ramone was locked in. Sorry I couldn't find a key ring.

Pallas starts cutting through the wall.

INT. HALLWAY-RAMONE

Ramone ducks a sword blow, and attacks Taneka, who just moves out of the way.

TANEKA

Even you have limits.

RAMONE

Yeah, same as you.

A circle of door falls in a cloud of smoke.

Jimbei, Cass and Pallas come out.

Ramone rolls over to them.

Taneka runs down the hall.

RAMONE
Let him go.

JIMBEI
What? Why?

RAMONE He'll be back.

JIMBEI
Can you guarantee that?

RAMONE
Of course.

JIMBEI
How?

Ramone opens up his jacket and shows Jimbei his tatoo.

RAMONE
I am the last.

JIMBEI
You are the mobidaru?

RAMONE
Yes.

CASS
What's going on, Ramone?

PALLAS
Now's the time.

RAMONE
Yeah, I guess it is.

MATRIX VIDEO SHOP-DISH
Dish is in what looks like a television wasteland.

He is looking at each monitor.

He tosses them down in frustration.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-100

DISH

Okay. Where is he?

Dish continues looking.

INT. HALLWAY-GROUP

Cass and Pallas are looking at Ramone. Jimbei is not pleased.

RAMONE

Taneka is not a well person.

JIMBEI

I know.

RAMONE

He created his "Toybox" squads to vent his frustration. Each of us was expert at something. Judge was a demolitions expert, Margerette legal, and Arthur business. I was the combat specialist.

JIMBEI

A hostile take-over team. Interesting.

CASS

Like you and the others.

PALLAS

How many squads have there been?

RAMONE

Only three. The other squads were killed in the field.

JIMBEI

Looks like he was tired of you.

RAMONE

Yeah, looks it.

PALLAS

So why the vendetta?

RAMONE

I'm the link to a past he'd rather forget.

JIMBEI

Yes. However, his activities were beginning to undermine his authority.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-101

RAMONE

So he needed to get rid of the last of his Toybox squads.

PALLAS

So he was using us to get to you.

PALLAS

Yeah. (beat) He called you a “mobidaru.”

JIMBEI

An “idaru” is an illusionary person. The “mob” is a shortened form of “mobile.” Thus, a “mobile imaginary person.”

Cass and Pallas look at Ramone.

CASS

You’re an android.

RAMONE

The one and only. And very defective.

PALLAS

In what way?

JIMBEI

He was able to circumvent his programming and escape.

RAMONE

Exactly.

JIMBEI

And it was Taneka’s stupidity that allowed you to escape.

RAMONE

He eliminates me, he eliminates his past. Completely. And he can create a new future. For himself.

JIMBEI

Not now. He has already lost that option.

RAMONE

Yep.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-102

MATRIX VIDEO SHOP-DISH

Dish looks in one of the monitors and sees Katsuna fixing his deck.

DISH
You are so mine.

Dish presses mid-air.

A small pad appears.

Dish starts pressing buttons.

INT. HALLWAY-STEEL

FX: BEEPS

Steel looks at it his watch for a moment.

STEEL
I'll be there momentarily, Dish.

Steel picks up the pace.

INT. HALLWAY-GROUP

Cass, Pallas, Ramone and Jimbei are sneaking down the hallway.

FX: CLANKING

FX: LOUDSPEAKER SCREECH

TANEKA (OS)
Ramone. Let's dance.

RAMONE
Taneka. Get therapy.

Taneka comes into view. He is wearing a powered suit, making him look like a robot with only his face visible through the faceplate.

CASS
Hey, at least he's finding better toys.

PALLAS
And me without my monkeywrench.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-103

JIMBEI

Can we get serious here?

A rocket flies in their direction.

Everyone dodges.

Except Cass.

She rips up a sheet of metal.

She deflects the rocket.

CASS

This is no longer amusing.

RAMONE

Time to get serious, people.

INT. ROOM-KATSUNA

Katsuna is finishing repairs on his deck.

Steel bursts in.

STEEL

It's over. Put your hands down and you can walk.

Katsuna frowns as he puts his hands down.

KATSUNA

I don't think so.

Katsuna plugs in before Steel can do anything.

Katsuna slumps down.

DISH (from speaker)

You gave him the choice, Cap. He has to live with his decision. Or not.

Blood comes from Katsuna's ears and nose.

STEEL

Electrical feedback. Right?

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-104

DISH (from speaker)

The nastiest card in my neon deck. Yeah. I'm feeding the coordinates for the others to your watch. Seeya!

Steel turns and walks out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY-CASS

Cass has ripped a section of wall and is using it to deflect rockets and bullets from Taneka.

JIMBEI

Okay. This is fun.

CASS

It won't last much longer.

RAMONE

No problem. Pallas, can you get Dish on the radio?

DISH (from speaker)

Like I wouldn't monitor you guys. Whatcha need, Ramone?

RAMONE

How many robots on this level?

DISH

Six cleaners, eight vacs, and twenty-three messengers.

RAMONE

Can you send the vacs first, then follow with the cleaners?

DISH

But that'll just waste ammo. None of them stand a chance against him.

Steel runs in.

STEEL

Do it, Dish. He's an easy target without his ammunition.

DISH

Consider it done, Fearless Leader.

The four of them duck into a nearby hall as a host of shadows pass them by.

The amount of blasting is temporarily increased.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-105

TANEKA
DIE! DIE! DIE!

The blasting stops.

The group peers out. The carnage is horrible. Metal is torn and shredded, oil and fuel cover everything.

STEEL
Looks like...home.

Taneka moves in.

CASS
He is mine.

Cass jumps into Taneka's faceplate.

Taneka screams.

Cass penetrates. Hard.

Her leg, covered in gore, comes out the other side.

Ramone pulls her out.

STEEL
Jimbei, the check?

Jimbei pulls out his credit card.

JIMBEI (grumpy)
Do you accept credit?

STEEL
Smile. Consider it the beginning of a beautiful relationship.

JIMBEI
Ending the beautiful relationship with my wife didn't cost this much.

STEEL
If it was like mine, then it was definitely the beginning
of a beautiful relationship.

Steel grabs the card and walks off.

JOCHIM-HINAMI NEON-106

JIMBEI

I need a receipt.

STEEL

That's what she said, too...Or was that the girlfriend who caused the divorce? Uh, no problem.

EXT. CARS-GROUP

The group gets into their respective cars.

Kabuki flies on by.

KABUKI

Sakura announced his heir today on national news. (she goes digital) He has decided to become a digital entity. "No one can take my place or they tJould have," he was quoted as saying. (she returns to normal) In other news, Sakura right-hand man Jimbei Sorita has formed a partnership with a local mercenary to create what looks like a potentially successful security-testing group. They already have a dozen clients. Only time will tell what happnes with the new group.

Kabuki glides into the night.

FADE OUT.