

UNDER THE SUN

(WORKING TITLE)

Written by

Charlie Carucci

**BEGIN ACT 1**

FADE IN:

**EXT. ABANDONED SCIENTIFIC FACILITY - AFTERNOON**

CHYRON: "Desert Wilds - Outer Stretch"

Wide shot of the facility surrounded by large sand dunes. The burning sun reflects off the rusting metal. We can see a small group of people approaching the building.

**EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE OF FACILITY - ONGOING**

Close-up shot of a key around RIO's neck. Her hand moves to hold on to it tightly as she approaches the facility. The camera slowly moves up to her face.

Rio, a woman in her 40s, wears a lightweight protective jumpsuit and carries a backpack with a visible glass chamber for holding water. Her uniform and equipment matches those of her fellow expeditioners. There are 6 of them in total, including a young girl.

Rio approaches the front entrance and starts knocking her hand against the ancient metal until she hears a hollow sound. A cuff around her wrist produces a slim screwdriver. She uses it to pry a panel off the wall, exposing a dusty key pad.

Rio kneels down in front of the young girl, FAY. She is about 10 years old with sunkissed skin and big curly hair. Fay has a nervous look on her face as Rio removes the key from around her neck and places it in Fay's hand.

RIO

Okay remember Fay, I need you to wait out here and hold on to this for me. We're going to be right back.

ARNOLD, a smug man wearing thick glasses, around the same age as Rio, approaches her from behind.

ARNOLD

I still don't understand why we're trusting the kid with the key.

Rio's face shows frustration but she calms herself and turns to face Arnold.

RIO  
If we lose this key, that's it.  
Game over. We have no idea what's  
waiting for us in there so while we  
go in to scope out the scene, Fay  
here is going to stay outside and  
keep the key safe. Got it?

Arnold scoffs and crosses his arms. Fay looks up and tugs on  
Rio's jumpsuit.

RIO (CONT'D)  
Hmm?

FAY  
But... mama I-

RIO  
(interrupting Fay)  
Listen love, I know it sounds scary  
but it's gonna be fine. We'll be  
okay, I promise.

Fay looks scared but nods hesitantly. Rio kneels down again.

RIO (CONT'D)  
If we're not out by sunset, take my  
pack and go get help. Got it?

FAY  
Help? Where would I even go?

RIO  
(after a beat)  
Head north until you reach the  
valley. You'll find people there, a  
lot of them. They might not be as  
friendly as the people back home  
but no matter what, you have to  
tell them what's going on. You  
understand?

Fay looks surprised but nods and puts the key around her  
neck. Rio takes off her pack and places it next to Fay.

RIO (CONT'D)  
That's my girl.

Rio moves to the keypad and inputs a series of numbers before  
the metal doors start to screech as they slide open. Arnold  
is the first to enter.

ARNOLD  
Let's get this over with.

RIO  
(sarcastic)  
That's the spirit Arnold.

The remaining expeditioners enter through the doorway. Rio is the last one. She stands in the precipice and looks up toward the sky.

RIO (CONT'D)  
It's hard to believe we're here.

Rio turns to look at Fay and smiles.

RIO (CONT'D)  
But things are finally going to change.

The camera is focused on Fay as we hear the doors slide and then clunk as they close. A moment passes and then we hear a few small squeaks. Fay gasps and looks up.

The doors seems to have caught the attention of a rat, who is now curious about Fay. She's startled and backs up. The rat does as well but it doesn't run away.

After a moment a slight smile forms on Fay's face.

FAY  
Where did you come from little friend?

Fay reaches her hand out to pet the rat but it still seems nervous and backs away again.

FAY (CONT'D)  
Oh, no I'm sorry. I'm not going to hurt you.

The rat stands on its hind legs and starts squeaking more urgently. It turns and scurries around the side of the building.

FAY (CONT'D)  
Wait! Where are you going?

Fay grabs Rio's pack and follows the rat.

#### **EXT. SIDE OF FACILITY - ONGOING**

The rat scurries over some sand dunes that are creeping up the side of the building and ducks through a rusted hole in a vent cover. Fay reaches the vent cover and peers inside to see the rat waiting for her.

FAY  
Where are you taking me?

Fay kneels in front of the vent cover and hesitates for a moment, contemplating whether she should follow her mother's instructions or follow this creature.

Her curiosity gets the best of her and Fay removes the cover to follow the rat. Suddenly we hear a faint humming as machinery in the building comes to life.

**INT. FACILITY VENTS - ONGOING**

The machinery grows louder as Fay and the rat continue to crawl down the vent, until we hear a muffled shout.

RIO  
(muffled)  
No! Wh-what have you done?!

FAY  
Mama?!

The rat squeaks to get Fay's attention. It's in front of another vent cover. Fay hurries in that direction and tries to move the vent cover but it won't budge.

FAY (CONT'D)  
MAMA!

A loud hissing noise begins and on the other side of the vent cover, we can see a black cloud slither along the floor, spreading outwards until it suddenly pounces on something off-screen.

We hear a man cough and then begin to choke. A body slumps to the floor, its face landing so we can clearly see it from the vent. It's skin ashen gray and so gaunt it would be completely unrecognizable if not for the thick glasses it's wearing. Arnold is dead.

Fay screams and kicks the vent cover off its screws.

**INT. CENTRAL FACILITY CHAMBER - ONGOING**

Fay tumbles out of the vent and scrambles to her feet inside this spacious chamber. The hissing sound appears to be coming from a large cylindrical machine in the center of the room, where more of that black cloud is pouring out onto the floor. Three other bodies lay lifeless around the center of the room.

FAY  
(yelling over the hissing)  
MAMA! WHERE ARE YOU?

We hear muffled thumps and Fay turns to the source of the noise. Rio is behind Fay, locked inside a glass case about the size of a phone booth. She is screaming something but we can only hear her fists slamming against the glass.

The rat scurries onto Fay's shoulder.

FAY (CONT'D)  
MAMA!

Fay begins running toward her mother. We still can't hear Rio but we can see she is mouthing one word over and over again. The camera gets closer and we can just barely hear her through the glass.

RIO  
(nearly inaudible)  
RUN!

The hissing and the sound of the machines suddenly drops as the black cloud rapidly spins into a tall swirling column in the center of the room. Then... BOOM.

Like a sonic blast, the cloud bursts outwards, shattering all the sand caked windows of the facility. Rio has to cover her ears but the case she is trapped in remains intact. Fay is knocked off her feet and thrown out one of the shattered windows. Her back slams into a large dune and she's knocked unconscious.

CUT TO BLACK.

**EXT. SIDE OF FACILITY - ONGOING**

Fay is only out for a few moments but when her eyes open again, she is completely shaded from the sun. She is dazed and it takes her a second to collect herself.

FAY  
Mama... Mama no... No!

Fay's eyes go wide as she takes in what she can see above her.

The column of black clouds now reaches up into the sky, creating a dark storm overhead that eclipses the sun.

FAY (CONT'D)  
NO!

Fay attempts to run back toward the facility but she is thrown back again as purple lightning strikes the ground in front of her.

The scorched sand begins to shake and suddenly a black crystal spike shoots out of the ground. More crystals begin shooting out of the spike, forming a long pointed hand.

The rat tugs on Fay's sleeve. She scoops him up and begins running away from the facility.

**EXT. ABANDONED SCIENTIFIC FACILITY - ONGOING**

Same wide shot we started with, but now we can see the localized storm overhead begin to slowly grow, shooting more lightning into the sand as Fay escapes.

CUT TO:

**OPENING CREDITS**

FADE IN:

**INT. NORTHERN GUARD PRECINCT LOCKER ROOM - MORNING**

CHYRON: "Gaia - The Last City"

The camera faces a closed locker. We hear the tumbler turn back and forth until the lock clicks open. Inside the locker is a red and silver uniform and one photo of a woman and a very young girl smiling.

With the discipline of a soldier, LAYLA puts on her uniform piece by piece. She is in her 60s and the bags under her eyes indicate she's never taken a break in her life.

As Layla ties the laces on her boots, two other guards enter the locker room. They are mid conversation.

LI

Yeah fuckin' right. Your cousin is on something, I'm tellin' you.

WARD

Hey listen, he's a good kid alright. If he says he saw it, I believe him.

Officers LI and WARD are younger members of the precinct. Most would consider them better gossips than guards however.

LI  
I still think he's on trip tabs.

WARD  
Ehh shut up Li.

Li and Ward notice Layla lacing up her boots. Layla pays no attention to them.

LI  
Thompson you gotta hear this. Ward here says her cousin saw a cloud. Poor kid thinks it's going to rain.

WARD  
Told me he saw it the other night when the dust settled a bit. And what's so wrong with believing something good could be out there, right?

Layla finishes tying her boots and stands up from the bench she was sitting on. She goes to close her locker but she stops for a moment.

LAYLA  
If you think there's anything but death waiting out there, you're a fool.

Layla glances up at the photo of the woman and the young girl. The woman is clearly Layla, but at a much younger age. After a beat she slams the locker door and walks out of the room.

LI  
(sighs)  
Classic Thompson, always with the doom and gloom.

#### **INT. PRECINCT BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Layla walks across the bullpen. Other guards are chatting or enjoying breakfast before starting work. Some guards stare at her as she passes. She pays them no mind.

As Layla nears the elevator, she is stopped when CAPTAIN FIELDS, a straight faced woman in her 50s with a very tight bun, calls out to her.

CAPT. FIELDS  
Lieutenant Thompson! Can I see you in my office?



**INT. CAPTAIN FIELD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Layla enters the office and Capt. Fields is already sitting down at her desk. Capt. Fields sighs as she leans back in her chair. She points at Layla then motions her finger towards the chair opposite her own.

Layla sits.

CAPT. FIELDS  
I'm gonna be honest with you,  
Lieutenant because I consider you a  
friend.

LAYLA  
What's this about Captain?

CAPT. FIELDS  
(sighs)  
Layla, I have been captain of this  
precinct for 16 years. You've been  
here since day one and I have  
never, not once, seen you take a  
day off.

Layla remains silent for a moment.

LAYLA  
(confused)  
I'm sorry Captain, but I don't  
understand what the problem is.

CAPT. FIELDS  
The problem?!  
(scoffs)  
Layla I know what today is for you.  
I remember when she went missing.

Layla remains silent again.

CAPT. FIELDS (CONT'D)  
Listen, this is a stressful job.  
You know that. I know that. The  
fact that you would rather be here  
today, than literally anywhere else-

A buzzer blares twice from the office door. Layla and Capt. Fields turn to face the door as a slender-framed middle-aged man wearing a long maroon suit coat enters the room: GOVERNOR RAMOS. He's carrying a leather briefcase.

GOV. RAMOS  
(surprised)  
Oh! My mistake. I didn't mean to interrupt.

CAPT. FIELDS  
Not at all Governor. Please, come in.

Capt. Fields stands to shake Gov. Ramos' hand. Layla follows suit.

CAPT. FIELDS (CONT'D)  
Governor this is Lieutenant Layla Thompson.

GOV. RAMOS  
Ahh well, it is a pleasure to finally meet you, Lieutenant. I've heard a lot about you.

LAYLA  
It's an honor, sir.

They all sit. Gov. Ramos places his brief case on the floor.

GOV. RAMOS  
Your captain has told me about your unbridled dedication to protecting this city.

Layla looks toward Capt. Fields, who nods.

CAPT. FIELDS  
Truth is Lieutenant, the Governor here has asked for your help in a little project he's putting together.

GOV. RAMOS  
That's right! You see Lieutenant, I am dedicated to ensuring the people of this city get what they need, and that includes water.

Layla listens intently. This is her first time meeting the governor and she wants to make a good impression.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)  
The water scarcity problem here in Gaia is only getting worse. But it is a problem I intend on solving.

LAYLA  
(skeptical)  
And how's that, sir?

Capt. Fields eyes turn to daggers toward Layla for her not-so subtle skepticism. Layla makes eye contact with the captain and adjusts herself in her seat to sit up straighter.

GOV. RAMOS  
I've tasked a group of scholars with studying our water mines and after careful examination they've managed to identify 3 other possible aquifers that we may be able to start collecting from.

Gov Ramos let's a proud smile pass through his professional demeanor when he sees Layla is genuinely impressed.

LAYLA  
I have to say governor, that's an impressive find. But are you trying to tell me there's been huge reserves of water right under our noses this whole time?

GOV. RAMOS  
Well, not exactly.

Gov. Ramos reaches down to pick up his brief case and place it on his lap. He unclasps the latches and flips the case open. Inside the case are several documents but sitting on top is a security photo of a shady looking man.

Layla's face sours.

LAYLA  
Cyd Greers.

GOV. RAMOS  
So you're familiar with him?

LAYLA  
I've run into him a few times, yeah.

CAPT. FIELDS  
We've never been able to pin anything on the guy but we know he's working with the Blue Faction. Word is he runs their water smuggling operation.

Gov. Ramos places the photo on Capt. Fields' desk.

GOV. RAMOS

This picture was taken yesterday by the water mine security system. Somehow this man managed to sneak into the mines and steal the coordinates for those aquifers without anyone noticing.

Layla picks up the photo and holds it in her hand.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)

The aquifers are outside of the valley. Somewhere buried underneath the desert wilds.

Layla looks up at the governor with a look of shock on her face.

LAYLA

Oh really? Under the desert wilds? You sure these scholars of yours know what they're looking for?

CAPT. FIELDS

(frustrated)

Lieutenant, please! We have a real opportunity here.

GOV. RAMOS

I understand your suspicions. It's hard for me to believe it myself, but yes, these aquifers are real. However, Gaia will never receive that water without these coordinates. I need your help to track this man down and get them back.

CAPT. FIELDS

Could be our chance to catch this bastard red-handed once and for all. What do you say Layla?

Layla stares at the photo for a moment.

LAYLA

(sighs)

You really believe there might be something out in that desert worth searching for?

GOV. RAMOS  
Lieutenant, if there's anything  
worth finding out in that  
wasteland, this is the first step.

Layla folds up the photo, stands, and places it in the pocket  
of her uniform.

LAYLA  
(thinks for a beat)  
Then I better start looking.

Gov. Ramos stands to shake Layla's hand again.

GOV. RAMOS  
Lieutenant Thompson, I think this  
is going to be the beginning of a  
very beneficial partnership.

## **BEGIN ACT 2**

CUT TO:

### **EXT. GAIA STREET - AFTERNOON**

Layla leans against a wall on a crowded street facing a dingy  
dust covered building. She is paying close attention to the  
door where a large BOUNCER is posted. A sign above the door  
looks like it once said "THE WATERING HOLE" but the paint is  
so chipped and faded, it now reads as "THE HOLE".

A stout man in his mid to late 50s, wearing a leather eye  
patch approaches the door. The bouncer pays no mind to RED  
QUIL as he pushes the door open and enters the building.  
Layla waits a moment and then follows.

As Layla approaches the door, the bouncer steps in front of  
her. He grabs Layla's shoulder to stop her from getting  
closer.

BOUNCER  
I think you're in the wrong place  
officer.

Layla sighs and quickly grabs the bouncer's wrist. She flips  
him onto his back, knocking the wind out of his chest, then  
pins him down with her knee.

LAYLA  
Next time, don't touch me.

The door to The Hole bursts open. Red stands in the doorway and looks down at Layla and the bouncer.

RED  
Layla?! What the hell are you doing  
here?

CUT TO:

**INT. THE HOLE - MOMENTS LATER**

Red stands behind a bar with a dark granite counter. He pulls down one of the few bottles on the shelf behind him and pours Layla a glass of whiskey.

RED  
Sorry I'm all outta ice. Had to  
give the last of it to your  
sparring partner.

He nods toward the back of the bar, where the bouncer is sitting at a table, holding a rag filled with ice on his bruised shoulder.

LAYLA  
(laughs)  
You really let this place go Red.  
What the hell happened?

Red pours himself a glass and downs it.

RED  
You fuckin' know what happened. You  
just don't wanna admit it.

LAYLA  
(sarcasm)  
There's that hospitality I  
remember.

RED  
Listen, ever since that damn snake  
Ramos sat in his big chair, you  
boot-lickers have been picking us  
off one by one.

Layla's face remains emotionless as Red reaches down to grab a holographic tablet from underneath the bar. He slams it on the table and starts swiping through profiles of different people, all with word "BANISHED" overlaid across the file.

RED (CONT'D)  
Fifty-two. Fifty-fuckin'-two  
faction members have been sent out  
into them goddamn wilds this year  
alone.

LAYLA  
You know the rules Red. Blue  
Faction or not, you steal water,  
you're not welcome here anymore.

Red opens his mouth to speak but Layla holds up her hand as  
she finishes her drink.

LAYLA (CONT'D)  
Stop. I'm not here to talk water  
and I'm certainly not here to talk  
politics.

RED  
Yeah? Then why are you here?

Red pours himself another drink. He does not offer one to  
Layla. She drops the security photo on the bar.

LAYLA  
Cyd Greers. Where can I find him?

RED  
(scoffs)  
You got some real nerve you know  
that? Why would I tell a red vest  
like you anything about Cyd?

Layla stares Red down without breaking eye contact for an  
uncomfortable moment before putting the photo away.

LAYLA  
(sighs)  
Last time I was in here was 15  
years ago, to the day. I came in  
looking for V. You remember that  
day?

Red's face softens. He touches his eyepatch and nods.

LAYLA (CONT'D)  
I looked everywhere for her Red.  
Everywhere. And when I came to you  
so desperately asking where the  
FUCK my daughter went, you had the  
nerve to look me in the eye and  
tell me you didn't know.

Layla slams her hand on the bar.

LAYLA (CONT'D)  
No one would tell me where she went  
and I haven't seen her since. So I  
think on today of all days, you owe  
me a little goddamn information.  
Don't you think?

Layla takes Red's drink and finishes it. Red remains silent  
for a moment, contemplating what to say to her.

RED  
(sighs)  
Cyd's on a job. He's taking the  
market route so if you leave now,  
you might still catch him.

Layla stands up from the bar and turns to leave. She walks  
past the bouncer who keeps a nervous eye on her.

RED (CONT'D)  
But I swear Layla, if you're the  
reason that number gets to fifty-  
three, I'll be taking back what you  
took from me.

Layla turns over her shoulder as Red lifts up his eye-patch  
to reveal the mangled scar tissue that occupies the area  
where his eye used to be.

LAYLA  
(laughs)  
Don't worry. I'm not gonna hurt  
him.

Layla walks out the door and slams it behind her. The bouncer  
flinches and then lets out a sigh of relief.

CUT TO:

**EXT. CENTRAL FRUIT MARKET - LATE AFTERNOON**

A blazing sun beats down on the tops of the colorful canopies  
that provide shade to the bustling market below. Layla  
casually browses a market stall while eyeing her  
surroundings.

An old woman across the aisle is exchanging pleasantries with  
a fruit seller. Layla's eyes shift. A couple is arguing over  
a purchase one of them made. Layla's eyes shift again. A  
small child excitedly runs toward something a few stalls over  
and accidentally bumps into a mail carrier.



He's using a mechanical backpack to transport a large barrel. He almost tips over when the child hits him, but he manages to catch himself. The mail carrier turns to look at who ran into him and Layla catches his face. It's Cyd Greers.

Cyd and Layla's eyes meet. His eyes go wide as a smirk appears on her face.

CYD  
(whispers)  
Fuck.

Cyd flips open his jacket and reaches down to his side where a large handgun is holstered. Layla's smirk disappears.

CYD (CONT'D)  
(addressing the crowd)  
Alright everyone. No one has to get hurt here today.

LAYLA  
Greers wait! Don't do this.

Cyd pulls out the handgun slowly and points it towards the crowd. It looks like a revolver except there is a small solar panel where the hammer would normally be and the cylinder has been replaced with some kind of heavy duty battery.

CYD  
Just clear a path and we can all go back to our business.

A collective gasp comes from the crowd and they all begin to shuffle out of the way. Layla looks down with disappointment and does not move. Cyd points the gun towards Layla.

CYD (CONT'D)  
You too officer. Step back for me.

Layla begins walking toward Cyd. The crowd is hushed as he holds his confident position for a moment, before his expression breaks and panic sets in.

CYD (CONT'D)  
Fuck!

Cyd fumbles with the gun as he swipes his thumb over the gun's solar panel. He pulls the trigger releasing a crackling beam of solar energy.

The beam sails past the market crowd directly towards Layla. Just as the beam and Layla are about to collide, a shield made of hardened light forms from her wrist and deflects the beam into the sky. Layla begins running without missing a stride.

CYD (CONT'D)  
FUCK! FUCK! FUCK!

LAYLA  
Last chance Greers. I just wanna talk.

Cyd turns and runs from Layla. She follows after him as he runs down the market aisle, pointing the gun at whoever gets in his way. He shoots at two of the canopy supports as he passes by them, bringing the canopy down in front of Layla.

Layla produces more hard-light, this time in the form of a long chain. She wraps the chain around the top of a market stall and pulls herself up and over the fallen canopy.

When she lands on the other side, Layla sees Cyd turn into a distillery warehouse.

#### **INT. DISTILLERY WAREHOUSE - ONGOING**

Layla turns into the warehouse and sees the shelves are full of barrels that look just like the one Cyd is carrying on his back.

LAYLA  
Shit.

Layla walks slowly down the aisle of shelves, listening carefully. A barrel further down the aisle falls off the shelf and tumbles to the floor and Layla immediately runs in that direction.

Time slows down as Layla's ears twitch. She hears the sound of Cyd's gun charging and quickly dives to the ground. The beam blasts through one of the whiskey barrels and grazes Layla's back. She winces as she hits the ground.

LAYLA (CONT'D)  
Damnit Greers!

Cyd walks forward until he is standing over LAYLA, still pointing the gun at her. He swipes his thumb to charge it again. LAYLA goes to get her shield ready but sparks just fizzle out of the damaged part of her armor. The power converter was hit so her hardlight projector is useless.

CYD  
I'm sorry Thompson... but this is  
just too important.

Cyd holds the gun steady for a moment, then pulls the trigger. A flash produces from the barrel, and flickers out. The gun's solar reserves are empty.

CYD (CONT'D)  
Fuck...

Layla spins on the ground and swipes CYD's legs out from under him. He falls to the ground and drops the gun. Cyd groans and Layla slowly stands, holding her back where the beam hit her.

LAYLA  
I just wanna talk.

A floodlight switches on, lighting the dark warehouse to focus on Layla and Cyd. They squint their eyes and both look toward the source.

GOV. RAMOS  
(shouting from a distance)  
Well look at this!

Just behind the source of the floodlight is Gov. Ramos, flanked by a handful of his private security guards.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)  
You work quickly Lieutenant.

CUT TO:

**INT. GOV. RAMOS' OFFICE - EVENING**

Layla is alone in the office as she waits for the governor to arrive. The room is decorated with antiques of the previous world. Rusted non-solar weapons hang on the back wall and age-worn books line the shelves. Layla glances at the spines while holding her injury.

Gov. Ramos walks in and looks surprised to see Layla.

GOV. RAMOS  
Lieutenant what are you still doing here? You need to tend to that wound.

LAYLA  
Oh I've been through worse.  
(after a beat)  
(MORE)

LAYLA (CONT'D)  
You really have quite the  
collection here. Did you find all  
these pieces yourself?

Gov. Ramos smiles and looks at Layla just long enough to feel  
uncomfortable.

GOV. RAMOS  
You didn't answer my question  
Lieutenant.

LAYLA  
I came to ask why you were  
following me Governor.

GOV. RAMOS  
Oh I assure you, it's not personal.  
You'll find I am a man who always  
has a backup plan, just in case.

Gov. Ramos stares at Layla again.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)  
But I have every reason to trust  
you, don't I Lieutenant Thompson?

Layla silently nods her head. Gov. Ramos grins.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)  
Fantastic!

The governor raises his hands and a holographic keyboard and  
display appears above his desk. He looks away from Layla and  
begins typing.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)  
Thank you for doing your part to  
protect our city Lieutenant. Now,  
if you'll excuse me, I need to do  
mine.

Gov. Ramos continues typing. As Layla turns to leave, she  
notices a file appear on his screen. It looks like the ones  
Red showed her earlier except this one is for Cyd Greers.  
Gov. Ramos updates the file and the word BANISHED is overlaid  
across Cyd's information. He leaves the file on the display,  
like he wants Layla to see it.

LAYLA  
Sir, is Greers being banished? We  
haven't even had a trial yet.

Gov. Ramos grins.

GOV. RAMOS

Ah yes, as much as it pains me to do this, it appears the barrel Mr. Greers was carrying when you apprehended him was filled with water stolen from our mines. Apparently the aquifer coordinates were not the only thing he took that day.

Gov. Ramos continues to type.

LAYLA

Were you able to recover the coordinates at least?

GOV. RAMOS

Unfortunately, Mr. Greers destroyed the file he stole and therefore the coordinates are lost.

LAYLA

So we have no additional water sources?

GOV. RAMOS

Well that is the case for now. I will have my experts re-analyze the mine system to find those coordinates again but it will take time.

LAYLA

Shouldn't that be our top priority? I don't see how banishing--

Gov. Ramos stops typing and stares at Layla. His expression swiftly changes from polite to fierce.

GOV. RAMOS

Water theft is a capital crime Lieutenant. Mr. Greers' trial has been waived and the banishment ceremony will commence tomorrow morning. You will attend won't you?

Layla hesitates for a moment, than bows her head.

LAYLA

Of course Governor.

Layla remains silent and opens the door. Gov. Ramos goes back to his typing.

GOV. RAMOS  
I look forward to working with you  
again Lieutenant.

LAYLA  
(hesitantly)  
Likewise, sir.

We see Layla walk out the door and close it behind her  
without looking back.

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. LAYLA'S APARTMENT - ENTRANCE - NIGHT**

We hear a series of clicks and see the front door to Layla's  
apartment swing open as she enters.

Soft blue florescent light from the holographic billboards  
outside filters in from a window in the next room, which  
highlights a series of photos hanging on the wall of Layla  
and a young girl. Layla stands in the hall for a moment and  
sighs.

**INT. LAYLA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - ON GOING**

Layla quickly prepares some grain based meal. She retrieves  
the components, mixes them in a bowl, and places it into a  
microwave-like appliance with extreme discipline. It's clear  
she does this every night.

**INT. LAYLA'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - ON GOING**

Layla carries the steaming bowl as she passes by a closed  
door. The photos can be seen a little more clearly now.

**INT. LAYLA'S APARTMENT - LIVING AREA - ON GOING**

The room is littered with boxes of varying sizes all filled  
with cases.

Layla turns the knob on the side of a rectangular device  
sitting on top of a small cabinet. A long slit on top of the  
device builds up a blue glow as Layla moves to sit on an  
uncomfortable couch on the opposite side of the room.

A holographic screen projects from the device on the cabinet.  
The screen shows a PSA for water conservation. Layla starts  
eating her meal as she watches the PSA end and a news program  
begin.

NEWS ANCHOR  
(from the screen)  
Fruit supplies continue to dwindle  
due to crop withering in  
agriculture center 13.

Layla continues to eat her meal.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)  
(from the screen)  
Agriculture specialists have yet to  
determine the cause of --

A clunk is heard from the other side of the closed door in the hallway. Layla's head immediately whips towards the door and she drops her bowl of food.

LAYLA  
(surprised)  
Shit!

**INT. LAYLA'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - ON GOING**

Layla puts her ear up to the closed door. No sound comes through.

**INT. LAYLA'S APARTMENT - SECOND BEDROOM - ON GOING**

It's incredibly dark in the second bedroom until we see the door start to creak open. Layla's silhouette appears in the doorway.

The bedroom is decorated with colorful posters and hand-made crafts. Every surface is covered in a healthy coating of dust, aside from a device with a non-holographic screen that is laying face down on the ground.

Layla enters the room cautiously and looks around without turning on the light. She doesn't see anything else suspicious. Layla slowly reaches down to pick up the tablet.

She moves to put the tablet down on the shelf it fell from when her eyes meet the gaze of a rat sitting there.

Layla yelps at the sight of the rodent and her body tenses. The rat squeaks and skitters into a corner as a response to Layla's sudden movement. Layla's eyes soften and her muscles relax.

The rat cowers in the corner as Layla reaches down to scoop it onto the tablet.

Layla opens the shutters on the bedroom window and places the rat on the window sill.

LAYLA

Go on bud. I'm not looking for a roommate.

The rat looks up at her curiously, squeaks, then heads outside.

Layla watches as the rat scurries across a rooftop under the light of the moon. She looks down and tries to turn on the tablet she's holding but nothing happens.

Layla places the tablet on the desk. We see her walk out of the bedroom and close the door behind her. The camera pulls back and passes through one of the open window shutters. It continues to pull back until the rat stands up on its hind legs to pop into the frame.

**EXT. RESIDENTIAL QUADRANT - ON GOING**

The rat runs across various rooftops and squeezes through a grate at the base of a guard tower.

**INT. RESIDENTIAL QUADRANT GUARD TOWER - AIR VENTS - ON GOING**

The break room of this tower can be seen through a grate in the air vent. Li and Ward are sitting at a table.

WARD

I'm telling you! The Banished are out there and they're waiting to team up against us.

LI

Did you decide to fry your head in the sun today? Cousins seeing clouds, now this nonsense.

The rat scurries past the grate as the guards are talking.

**EXT. RESIDENTIAL QUADRANT GUARD TOWER - ON GOING**

The rat exits through another grate and climbs up a few bricks to reach a thick cable.

LI (O.S.)

No one survives out in the desert wilds, you idiot.



The rat runs along the cable which extends out beyond the outer city wall toward a solar farm just on the edge of the valley.

LI (O.S.) (CONT'D)

No one.

**BEGIN ACT 3**

SMASH CUT TO:

**EXT. NORTHERN CITY GATE - MORNING**

A pair of city guards drop Cyd Greers to his knees in front of the gate. He's wearing a white jumpsuit and a blindfold. His hands are bound behind his back. Spectators of this event begin hollering with excitement.

The crowd is massive and energetic. Nearly everyone from the city is in attendance. The spectators are positioned behind where Cyd is kneeling and are blocking off the roads leading away from the gate. A line of guards stand in front of the crowd to prevent anyone from getting too close to Cyd.

**EXT. TOP OF NORTHERN CITY GATE - ONGOING**

Layla emerges through a door leading to the area on top of the wall. There are several other guards from her precinct up here. Layla hesitates in front of the door for a moment, then Li pats her on the shoulder.

LI

Nice job Thompson! Never thought  
I'd see Slippery Cyd in the white  
suit.

Ward pokes in from behind Li.

WARD

White's not really his color is it?

Layla moves Li's hand off her shoulder and walks away. Ward shrugs and Li rolls their eyes.

Gov. Ramos is standing nearby on a balcony overlooking the gate with his private security personnel. He spots Layla and nods toward her with a grin on his face. Layla nods back unassured and then approaches him with caution.

GOV. RAMOS  
Lieutenant! Just the person I was  
hoping to see.

LAYLA  
Good morning Governor.

GOV. RAMOS  
It is a good morning isn't it? And  
to think, this is all thanks to  
you.

Layla remains silent. Her eyes are focused on Cyd who is  
kneeling in the center of the street leading to the gate,  
flanked by two city guards on either side.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)  
Lieutenant, I think it would only  
be right for you to be the one to  
see through Mr. Greers' banishment.

Layla's attention is suddenly thrown back to the governor.

LAYLA  
Oh sir, that's really not  
necessary...

GOV. RAMOS  
Nonsense! The honor is all yours.  
Please, my guards will escort you  
down there.

Gov. Ramos motions his hand towards two of his guards who are  
standing at the entrance of an elevator on the edge of the  
wall.

LAYLA  
No really sir, I don't think--

Gov. Ramos' face turns fierce and he motions his hand again.  
Layla nods and moves toward the elevator. She begins to ride  
down with Gov. Ramos' private security guards at her side.

As the elevator moves down the wall, Gov. Ramos starts his  
speech. Layla's eyes scan the surrounding the gate.

GOV. RAMOS  
(over a loudspeaker)  
Welcome citizens! Today we behold  
the delivery of justice for our  
city!

The crowd cheers, except for one person. Red Quil stands in the center of the crowd, his one eye staring directly at Layla with malice. Layla's breath quickens and her eyes widen.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)  
(over a loudspeaker)  
This individual has betrayed our  
city.

The crowd boos. Red continues to stare. Layla's heart pounds in her chest.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)  
(over a loudspeaker)  
He is charged with the crimes of  
water theft, hoarding, and illegal  
distribution. For these crimes, the  
accused is henceforth exiled!

The crowd erupts into cheers and applause. The elevator reaches the ground and Red is no longer visible among the sea of people. Layla shifts her eyes to focus on Cyd.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)  
(over a loudspeaker)  
Gaia, our home, our heart, will no  
longer be tainted by his misdeeds.

Layla puts on her helmet and begins walking toward Cyd. The two guards at his side nod at Layla, then move back to let her take over.

Layla positions herself behind Cyd and stands tensely. He turns his head in her direction but the blindfold still covers his eyes. The crowd hushes.

Guards on either side of the gate wall begin flipping a series of switches, then simultaneously turn a key on their respective consoles.

A deep thunk and the sound of gears turning can be heard as the large gate starts to slide open.

Layla removes the blindfold from Cyd's eyes.

LAYLA  
(muffled through the mask)  
Alright Greers, on your feet.

Cyd remains on his knees and doesn't move.

CYD  
You gonna make me?

Layla quickly picks Cyd up by the back of his collar and pushes him forward.

LAYLA  
(muffled through the mask)  
Come on now Greers, this is your  
cue. Don't make this any harder  
than it already is.

Cyd stumbles but regains his balance. He hangs his head down and continues to refuse to move.

CYD  
You know I'm not the thief here,  
right?

LAYLA  
(muffled through the mask)  
Seriously Greers, if you don't move  
it's only gonna get worse.

Cyd looks up at the balcony where Gov. Ramos is standing.

CYD  
You have no idea what's at stake--

**EXT. TOP OF NORTHERN CITY GATE - ONGOING**

Cyd is interrupted as an alarm blares from the guard tower. Ward is on top of the wall and reaches for a radio.

WARD  
Intruder alert! An outsider is  
approaching the gate.

LI  
Fuck me...

**EXT. NORTHERN CITY GATE - ONGOING**

Layla's head whips up to look at the gate. She takes off her helmet and squints to get a better look.

Beyond the gate, a small figure runs at full speed toward the city. It's Fay. A rat runs alongside her.

The crowd shrieks and starts to scatter away from the gate.

LAYLA  
What the hell is--

Something hits Layla on the side of the head and shatters. She falls to the ground and for a moment she's dazed. Broken glass surrounds her.

Through her blurred vision she can just barely see Red Quil standing on the edge of the panicked crowd, staring at Layla while casually tossing another bottle in his hand. Cyd moves in front of Layla and crouches down to get in front of her face.

CYD  
(winces)  
Oooh. Don't worry. Maybe your pal  
the governor will give you some  
ice.

Cyd runs off into the panicked crowd, hands still tied behind his back. Red Quil stares for a moment longer than turns to follow Cyd. A few guards try to run after him but he's already gone.

Fay rushes in through the opened gate and is met by a handful of guards, all with hard-light projectors trained on her.

HIGH RANKING GUARD  
Seize the outsider!

One by one the guards start firing blue glowing nets at Fay. She reacts quickly and is able to dodge out of the way of their shots. One of the nets accidentally catches another guard.

Layla slowly stands back up while holding her head and sees Fay dancing around the other guards with ease. It's like she's playing with them.

Fay slides under the legs of a guard and the rat jumps onto her shoulder. The rat points his nose in a direction and squeaks. FAY nods and turns to run that way when...

Layla grabs hold of one of Fay's arms and pulls her back. The rat squeaks in shock, falls to the ground and scurries away. Layla produces a set of hard-light cuffs and slaps them on Fay's wrists.

LAYLA  
Play time's over kid.

Fay begins to scream and kick as Layla lifts her onto her shoulder, fireman style.

LAYLA (CONT'D)  
Where the hell did you even come  
from?

Gov. Ramos peers down from his balcony at the chaotic scene below.

GOV. RAMOS  
LIEUTENANT THOMPSON!

Fay stops screaming. Both her and Layla turn and look up to face Gov. Ramos. His usual composure is gone. His teeth are clenched and his eyes are furious.

GOV. RAMOS (CONT'D)  
Bring. Me. The child.