

THE PREDATOR

by

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Based on the characters created by Jim Thomas
& John Thomas

REVISED DRAFT
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SPACE

Cold. Silent. A billion twinkling stars. Then...

A bass RUMBLE rises. Becomes a BONE-RATTLING ROAR as --

A SPACECRAFT RACHETS PAST CAMERA, fuel cables WHIPPING into frame, torn loose! Titanium SCREAMS as the ship DETACHES VIOLENTLY; shards CASCADING in zero gravity--!

(NOTE: For reasons that will become apparent, we let us call this vessel "THE ARK.")

WIDER - THE ARK

as it HURTLES AWAY from a docking gantry underneath a vastly LARGER SHIP it was attached to. Wobbly. Desperate.

We're witnessing a HIJACK.

WIDER STILL - THE PREDATOR MOTHER SHIP

DWARFS the escaping vessel. Looming; like a nautilus of molded black steel.

INT. PREDATOR MOTHER SHIP

Backed by the glow of compu-screens, a half-glimpsed alien -- A PREDATOR -- watches the receding ARK through a viewport. (NOTE: we see him mostly in shadow, full reveal to come).

INT. SMALLER VESSEL (ARK)

Emergency lights illuminate a dank, organic-looking interior. CAMERA MOVES PAST:

EIGHT STASIS CYLINDERS

Around the periphery. FROST clouds the cryotubes, prevents us from seeing the "passengers." Finally, CAMERA ARRIVES AT --

A HULKING, DREAD-LOCKED FIGURE

The pilot of this crippled ship. We do not see him fully either, but for the record? This is our "GOOD" PREDATOR."

HIS TALONS dance across a control panel; a shrill beep..! Predator symbols, but we get the idea: ERROR--ERROR--ERROR--

Our Predator TAPS more controls. Feverish. Until --

EXT. ARK

A final tether COMES LOOSE, venting PLASMA energy, and --

Through the viewport, the Ark is enveloped by a BLINDING LIGHT -- then a SWIRL OF PARTICLE ENERGY, as we --

SMASH TO:

STARFIELD. Silence. Then --

THE ARK DROPS out of hyperspace. SHUDDERS into a NEW ORBIT...

Approaching what is, in fact, A DYING PLANET.

Ice caps melting; atmosphere toxified; the dominant species continually finding new ways to fuck things up.

Oddly, the only planet in our solar system not named after a God:

Earth.

INT. THE ARK - DAMAGED FROM THE GETAWAY

SPARKS, gagging smoke... Our Predator realizes he's on a sinking ship... He programs a new command sequence;

ON A MONITOR - A GRAPHIC

of the CRYOTUBES. A SCROLLING COUNTDOWN, commenced -- in Predator symbols. *A self destruct sequence..?*

One last thing:

The Predator taps the panel again -- and a *SLOT OPENS*, revealing A DEVICE like a Steampunk TV remote.

This is the KUJHAD. Remember it.

He extracts it from its slot and -- *K-CHK!* SNAPS IT into its own WRIST COMPUTER. Then he rises urgently, and...

EXT. STRATOSPHERE

The ARK SHUDDERS, penetrating earth's atmosphere, as: *WHOOSH!*

AN ESCAPE POD, JETTISONED...

From the main body of the craft.

A series of RIPPLING SHIMMERS engulf it, and before our eyes, *it auto-engages STEALTH CAMOUFLAGE -- and VANISHES..!*

Pause. Then... a rising swell of JUNGLE NOISES... It begins.

CUT TO:

A MAN IN TIGHT CLOSE-UP

Rugged face. Stubble. He's looking down, eyes red-rimmed with fatigue, as we HEAR:

A hollow TRICKLE of piss in plastic.

He finishes. Screws the top back on a thermos. Then lowers it, where it DANGLES ON A THIN NYLON LINE because we are --

EXT. CUBAN JUNGLE - DAY

WITH THE SOLDIER, *perched in a gnarled tree... THIRTY FEET OFF THE GROUND*. He shifts in his "nest." Brings to bear an M24 sniper rifle.

Meet LIEUTENANT QUINN MCKENNA, 30s.

On the BACK of his hand... a faded (yet prominent) CRESCENT SCAR. Souvenir of another fight.

SUPER: CAYO MUERTO, CUBA

WE HEAR a TALKIE SQUELCH -- then a tinny voice from his Bluetooth headset:

HAINES' TALKIE
VOICE (filtered)
Piggy One, copy.
(beat)
Piggy One, this is Piggy Two,
do you copy?

MCKENNA (into
headset mike)
I was peeing. Do you mind..?

ANOTHER RADIO VOICE joins the conversation, filtered:

DUPREE'S TALKIE
VOICE Piggy Three. I have a
question, over.

MCKENNA
Cut the chatter.

He cracks his neck, then adjusts his scope.

DUPREE'S TALKIE VOICE
Seriously. If you're the one
that went to market, right? That
means Haines and me, we get to
choose between the roast beef
and the staying home. Right?

MCKENNA

Dupree, I swear to God --

McKenna presses his eye to the rifle sight.

HIS POV - THROUGH HIS SCOPE

A MANSION. Neoclassical. Built in the 1850s, but painted hot Havana aquamarine. Surrounded by high walls and roaming SENTRIES. You guessed it: A *DRUG LORD'S COMPOUND*.

DUPREE'S TALKIE VOICE

I just wanna be the stay home piggy, that's all I'm saying.

HAINES' TALKIE VOICE

McKenna. We got a problem.

McKenna tenses.

MCKENNA

What is it?

HAINES' TALKIE VOICE

You can't be the one who went to market. You already went wee wee wee.

McKenna shakes his head; *he's so over these assholes*. He wipes away sweat, SWIVELS the rifle, SEEING:

A SMALL CONVOY, NOW

On the DIRT ROAD leading into the compound. BLACK SUVs.

MCKENNA

(all business)

Eyes north.

HAINES' TALKIE VOICE

I see it.

MCKENNA

Stay sharp. Ranging now.

He presses his eye to the scope, PANNING WITH:

THE SUVs

As they stop, dust rising. DRUG SOLDIERS besiege the vehicles -- roughly PULLING OUT several HOSTAGES with pillow cases over their heads.

A MAN in a silk shirt appears. The DRUG LORD faces the sagging hostages, contemptuous. His men raise their weapons.

MCKENNA
 (CONT'D) (into com)
 Target in the reticle, no cross
 wind. I'm not waiting, 10-50 out.

TIGHT CLOSE-UP ON HIS THUMB

As he slowly, silently, FLICKS the safety catch. He centers the Drug Lord's head in the crosshairs. Stops breathing.

All in all, a pretty crappy time for an EARTHQUAKE.

A deep bass RUMBLE, coming from... *where?* Above? As, utterly without warning --

THE TOP OF THE DRUG LORD'S MANSION -- SHEARED OFF BEFORE OUR EYES. A TSUNAMI of debris, blown loose. EXPELLED --

Whatever caused it, it's headed right AT MCKENNA.

He DROPS the rifle; GRABS his combat knife to CUT HIMSELF LOOSE -- TUMBLES, as the canopy of green ERUPTS--!

CUT TO BLACK.

TIME CUT: MCKENNA, ON THE GROUND

Amid sudden SILENCE. On his side now, face in the dirt...

SLANTED POV

Showing that the UFO just effectively *PUNCHED A TUNNEL in the jungle*, strewn with smoking debris and pulped branches.

He blinks. No telling how long he was out. A minute? An hour? He looks up, keys his headset:

MCKENNA (CONT'D)
 Piggy Team, do you copy?

In his ear, only STATIC.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)
 Goddammit, COPY!

Still: nothing but STATIC. McKenna stumbles to his feet. Feeling exposed. Trees, aflame. Smoke everywhere.

Exhales raggedly, all too aware he's squarely in

THE DEBRIS FIELD

left by the spacecraft. Only now, he's SEEING:

THE PREDATOR EJECTION POD

It lies hissing, spitting. Swamped in plant matter. He eases to a halt. Wary. Sights through

HIS SCOPE

And we notice, first off -- the HATCH. It's open, steam curling from inside. He stalks forward, past the muddy, smoking IMPACT CRATER. Looks down. Frowns:

DROPLETS OF FLUORESCENT FLUID

On the ground. Lying amidst them, something we recognize:

A Predator WRIST GAUNTLET. Discarded? Jarred loose?

Beside it, he notices something else: a tiny metal DEVICE that resembles a trilobite. A CLOAKING BALL.

McKenna stoops -- palms the alien-looking device...

HEARS VOICES.

He DIVES behind a fallen LOG. Snaps the rifle to his shoulder, sights downrange. 300 yards --

People are swarming out of the drug mansion. Fuck.

He nervously juggles the metal BALL.... absently depresses a SWITCH (*an electronic HUM*) --

He looks left -- all clear. Glances over his shoulder. Looks to his RIGHT -- *ohmyfuckingGod*.

Jumps a foot. A FUCKING PREDATOR.

Two feet away -- and it wasn't there a SECOND AGO. He scrambles backward, blinks:

The PREDATOR, stock still. No reaction. Simply lies there, all eight feet of it. Its MASK askew. We realize:

He's been there ALL ALONG. McKenna merely DE-CLOAKED him.

He holds his breath, cautious not to wake the sleeping beast. That said, he can't resist.

Licks his lips, reaches... cautiously LIFTS the dislodged BATTLE MASK worn by the Predator. Looks down, blanching --

At the insectile craziness this thing calls a FACE.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Fuck me.

He dry-washes his face with his hand. Scans the alien tech -- mask, gauntlet. *Evidence*. With quick, practiced moves, STASHES them in his pack --

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Sorry, bud. Without these, no one's gonna believe me.

He starts to go, STOPS. Looks back, says softly:

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Welcome to earth, brother. Just so you know..?
(lights up)
It only gets worse from here.

He turns. RUNS... As he leaves frame, CAMERA settles on the hulking, sprawled PREDATOR --

Its EYES SNAP OPEN.

EXT. JUNGLE - WITH MCKENNA - DAY

Moving through the overgrowth. Sudden CRACKLE of radio chatter:

HAINES' TALKIE VOICE (O.S.)

Repeat: switch to 30-30, Dupree, do you copy?

THEY'RE BACK ONLINE. Bingo. McKenna stops, keys his walkie:

MCKENNA

Piggy Two, respond, over.

HAINES' TALKIE VOICE

McKenna, is that you?

Now DUPREE'S voice joins in:

DUPREE'S TALKIE

VOICE Hi, guys. Can I just say -
- holy shit?

MCKENNA

We're blown. Move out, converge for extraction.

HAINES' VOICE

Copy that. I have visual on Dupree, I -- *what the fuck..?*

McKenna freezes.

MCKENNA
Did not copy that. Talk to me,
Haines.

HAINES' VOICE
I... There's something moving...
(beat)
Dupree, *break left, break left--!*

MCKENNA
Talk to me, what's happening??

A RATTLE OF MACHINE GUN FIRE -- *BRRRAPPP!!!* --

A series of strangled HUMAN SCREAMS. *HE DOESN'T NEED THE WALKIE, HE CAN HEAR THEM* --

McKenna CHARGES BACK in the direction he just came from.

He SNAPS his rifle to his shoulder; TEARING through the brush. HEARTBEAT thudding in his ears... as:

A NEW SOUND, NOW -- RISING.

A low, bass THUMPING -- *WHUP-WHUP-WHUP*. He looks up, SEES:

A BLACK HELICOPTER

Inbound, range 500 meters. What the hell? Skimming the treeline... *on a bee-line for the Drug Lord's compound*.

McKenna frowns: his extraction..? No. Impossible. *Wrong helicopter*. He heaves to his feet, switches on his mic:

MCKENNA (INTO MIC) (CONT'D)
Mayday. TIC in process. Bogey
inbound. AH-6 Little Bird, BLACK,
no markings. Who sent these gu--

The chopper UNLEASHES TWO AIR-TO-SURFACE ROCKETS.

A sudden, sky-high *whoosh*... McKenna, AGAPE -- They come vectoring in, remorseless. *DETONATE--!*

Say goodbye to the mansion. The sentries.

The Drug Lord. And his Soldiers. AND the Hostages. All gone in one horrendous, volcanic SECOND --

Pretty much the job McKenna came here to do. Except no prisoners, no witnesses, no mercy.

Scorched. Fucking. Earth.

The chopper BANKS sharply, coming in for a landing. BLACK-CLAD MERCS, already leaning out the sides...

MCKENNA

Debris pelting down around him. Stumbling, gun up --
Bursts through a thicket into a clearing --

BACK WHERE HE LEFT THE PREDATOR

But no Predator.

Just a sea of blood.

THE REMAINS OF TWO SOLDIERS; dressed like McKenna. Same
camo face paint, jungle khakis. His men.

McKenna spins, gun tracking. Sights down the barrel:

BLACK OPS MERCS

From the helicopter. Headed his way.

No way out. McKenna looks to his team; shredded. EVISCERATED.
Draws a shuddering breath...

BOLTS. Deeper into the jungle -- leaving them behind, as over
the scene, from everywhere and nowhere, a piercing SHRIEK --

An eerie PREDATOR WAR CRY, echoing... as we END SEQUENCE.

CROSS FADE TO:

EXT. BUSY CUBAN STREET (AGUJERO MIERDA) - DAY

Traffic. Choking fumes. Blaring Afro-Cuban JAZZ.

THREE CUBAN POLICE OFFICERS push through the locals.
Flashing an 8x10 PHOTOGRAPH. Chattering urgently.

CLOSE ON PHOTO

An Air Force Lieutenant in dress blues. Handsome.
Clean-shaven. McKENNA.

The COPS pass by an ALLEY, routinely peer inside --

Empty. DEAD END. Garbage cans, filth, dried urine. A CAT.
No sign of McKenna. They move on.

WE HOLD AS...

The brindled CAT begins to ripple. To distort.

GLASS-LIKE HUMAN CONTOURS

appear, against the surrounding stucco. A CRACKLE of energy, like TV static, AS --

A MAN materializes before our eyes. Bedraggled, unshaven. Edgy. MCKENNA.

HE'S USING THE PREDATOR'S CLOAKING BALL.

INT. SLEAZY CANTINA - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

AN UNSAVORY PATRON sits at a table, alone. A VOICE:

MCKENNA'S VOICE (O.S.)

Dominguez.

McKenna "DE-CLOAKS," again using the Predator device. Seems to WALK OUT OF THE WALL. DOMINGUEZ, suitably terrified --

McKenna TOSSES A BOX onto the table: THUNK--!

MCKENNA (SUBTITLED)

This needs to get across the border. U.S.A. No molestar, comprende?

McKenna sweeps side tattered DRAPES to reveal a squat, UGLY building. The U.S. CONSULATE.

MCKENNA (SUBTITLED) (CONT'D)

Mail out of the consulate has immunity. Get it on the embassy truck.

Dominguez eyes the parcel.

DOMINGUEZ (SUBTITLED)

I am very scared of the way you appeared to materialize out of the wall.

McKenna plunks 12 thousand pesos on the table. In English:

MCKENNA

Do it. Or I'll find you.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANTINA - DAY

McKenna steps outside, affecting nonchalance --

The CLATTER of M4s being hefted and aimed at his HEAD.

A SUITED MAN steps into view. Intense, calculating eyes. Clearly in charge. For the record? Agent TRAEGER, CIA.

TRAEGER

McKenna. You've been busy.

MCKENNA

Who the fuck are you?

Traeger flashes his ID. Gestures to the police.

TRAEGER

My friends here'll escort you to the airfield. Got a DC-8 all gassed up and ready to go.

MCKENNA

Wow. Thanks, pal. Where to?

TRAEGER

Can't decide. Either Six Flags, or a remote secure prison.

MCKENNA

I don't like roller coasters.

TRAEGER

There it is, then.

He FIRES from the hip. A DART embeds itself in McKenna.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN SCHOOL (GEORGIA) - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A proud sign:

LAWRENCE G. GORDON MIDDLE SCHOOL
"Home of The Warriors"

HALLOWEEN HAUNT 10/25
WELCOME PARENTS & STDS

CUT TO: A BLACK KNIGHT

as it topples a WHITE PAWN on a chess board.

INT. SCIENCE CLASSROOM - DAY

The room's hushed. Respectful. Because at lunchtime, those tabletops with the sinks? They make way for THE CHESS CLUB.

SIX or SEVEN games, in progress. The SCIENCE TEACHER eats his lunch at his desk, as... oh, yeah. We should probably mention THE AWKWARD KID

Eating a sandwich with the crusts cut off as he wanders, scrutinizes every game, like a NASA scientist.

This is RORY, 12.

He doesn't know it yet, but he's going to save the world.

EXT. SCHOOL BREEZEWAY - DAY

TWO BULLIES stand near a fire alarm, daring each other to pull it. Meet E.J. and DEREK. They will grow up, get bald, and attempt to sell you a car.

INT. SCIENCE CLASS - DAY

The alarm PEALS, deafening. EVERYONE's up like a shot, quickly SHUFFLING OUT of the room. Leaving:

RORY, who -- nobody notices -- is curled up in a FETAL BALL; fingers in his ears, eyes squeezed shut, the alarm like fingernails on a chalkboard to him.

E.J. AND DEREK appear at the door... Spot Rory, who flinches; a deer in headlights. The bullies move in for the kill...

DEREK

Hey, E.J., you hungry?!

E.J.

Hell, yeah! You know what I'm hungry for? An ASS BURGER!

He KICKS Rory. The nick-name confirms our suspicions: the awkward kid is awkward for a reason: *the autism spectrum*.

DEREK

Mm, that sounds delicious! A big, juicy ASS BURGER.

Derek gets his kick in. They're about to unleash more when -- the alarm STOPS. Sudden, unnerving quiet.

Time running out, E.J. and Derek look around for one last indignity.

They settle for this: *KNOCKING OVER ALL THE CHESS PIECES*. Every game ruined.

He and Derek trade a LAUGHING high-five, and they're GONE.

For a quiet, electric moment, Rory is alone in the room. His eyes flicker across the chess boards: *mental inventory*.

Beat. Then -- he SCRAMBLES INTO ACTION. It takes a moment to register what he's doing. Another to believe it.

He puts back every chess piece on every board exactly as they were before the fire alarm...

The Chess Club members filter in and return to their games, none the wiser. OFF Rory, beaming silently -- CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBS - DAY

Heading home. Rory LOPES along, talking to himself. Suddenly: a strident BARKING from behind a picket fence, where:

A PIT BULL

GROWLS and SNAPS from between the posts. Rory freaks; gives the dog a wide berth, clearly terrified.

INT. KITCHEN - RORY'S HOUSE - DAY

The sound of a KEY IN A LOCK, then Rory comes through the back door. Replaces the key under the porch mat.

A STAIN -- ON THE KITCHEN WALL

Briefly makes him FIXATE. Seepage. A WATER SPOT. He grabs a paper towel, delicately blots away the run-off -- goes to the refrigerator. On which, a hand-written note:

*SPENT 1.5 HRS CLEANING HOUSE.
IF YOU MESS IT UP, I WILL CUT YOU.
XOXO MOM*

A doorbell RINGS off-screen, and --

INT. FOYER - SAME

Rory opens the door, is greeted by a POSTAL WORKER.

POSTAL WORKER
Quinn McKenna live here?

Rory blinks, not sure what to say.

POSTAL WORKER (CONT'D)
Didn't mean to stump you. How's this: is Quinn McKenna your mom, or your dad?

RORY
 (nods)
 Dad.

POSTAL WORKER
 Now we're gettin' somewhere.

He upends a handcart -- dumps a big stack of LETTERS
 AND BOXES onto the porch.

POSTAL WORKER (CONT'D)
 His P.O. box payments are past due.
 I'm real sorry.

He starts away. Hesitates.

POSTAL WORKER (CONT'D)
 Guess he's not around much, huh?

Rory nods. Awkward. The postman frowns:

POSTAL WORKER (CONT'D)
 Lotta D.C. post marks. Government
 work?

RORY
 MOS 11B3VW3.

The postman, confused.

RORY (CONT'D)
 Military designation.
 (beat)
 He kills people.

The postman decides he's done here. Rory watches him go,
 as we PAN the huge stack of mail, so that WE SEE:

McKENNA'S PARCEL FROM CUBA.

CUT TO:

INT. DOG PARK NEAR U.C. BERKELEY - DAY

CASEY BRACKETT, 27, sits on a bench, red penciling papers.
 LEASHES dangle from one arm... a dog BARKS CRAZILY O.S.

CASEY
 (to unseen dog)
 Summer! Stop that! That's not
 yours, does it look like it's
 yours?

A JOGGER with a dog runs by; eyes Casey. Perhaps "ogles" would be more apt. He backtracks. Jogs in place beside her, catching his breath.

JOGGER
How's it goin'?

He huffs, as though having just pushed a boulder uphill. Elaborately towels his neck. A curt DOG-YELP, off-screen --

CASEY
(to unseen dog)
Teddy! Knock it off, you can
see she doesn't like that!

The jogger, persistent. Extends his hand:

JOGGER
Seen you around here. Doug Amaturro.

He conspicuously scratches the ears of his designer DOG --

JOGGER (CONT'D)
This is Barkolepsy. She has a...
sleeping thing. She's a lab--

CASEY
-- Labradoodle.
Hypoallergenic cross between
a poodle and a labrador.

Casey STANDS, starts to walk. Persistent Guy, following --

JOGGER
(impressed)
Right. That's right. Are you
a breeder?

CASEY
Science professor. Berkeley.

JOGGER
What do you teach?

CASEY
Evolutionary biology. The science
of how creatures change, adapt.

JOGGER
You mean, like... how a man changes
when he meets an attractive woman?

Casey grins sourly.

CASEY

More like -- survival of
the fittest.

JOGGER

You believe in that stuff?

CASEY

You mean science? Yeah. Yes, I
do. (beat)

It's funny, Darwin thought it
was about strength, agility,
intelligence... These days, you
just have to be a rich, fat
white guy.

JOGGER

I... what?

CASEY

Drop a CEO into the Serengeti. Only
question -- what color animal shits
him out. My vote? Reddish-tan.

The Jogger: *Gulp*. He nods slowly.

JOGGER

Um, I don't wanna hold you up so...

He BOLTS. Casey reaches in her jacket, fishes out a silver
FLASK -- swigs -- A kindly OLD LADY looks up, says:

OLD LADY

I couldn't help overhearing. Can
I ask you something, professor?

CASEY

Please.

OLD LADY

What do your students call you?

CASEY

"Professor," mostly.

OLD LADY

(smiles sweetly)
Maybe they should call
you Sunshine.

A VOICE interrupts:

VOICE

Doctor Brackett?

Casey turns -- THREE CIA AGENTS stand there. A SEDAN with government plates idles ominously behind them. The lead agent is CHURCH, 30s.

AGENT CHURCH

I understand you enjoy star gazing.

Casey blinks. WTF? THEN we get it: some kind of CODE.

AGENT CHURCH (CONT'D)

My men will take care of your dogs.
Would you come with me, please?

OFF Casey, rattled. CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNMENT SEDAN - SAME

Casey and the CIA man climb into the back. As the driver pulls out, she looks out the back -- at her dogs.

AGENT CHURCH (CONT'D)

Dog person, huh?

CASEY

Hey, they don't judge you, they don't lie. People have hidden agendas. Animals just love you, or-- tear your throat out. I kinda have to respect that.

Church hands her a file folder.

AGENT CHURCH

How are you with higher forms of life?

CASEY

I wasn't aware there were any.

As she opens the file, he shines a pen light to illuminate the TOP SHEET:

CLASSIFIED: PROJECT STARGAZER

The letterhead? A familiar eagle-and-shield insignia: CIA. The page has been stamped TOP SECRET:

MEMORANDUM FOR CLEARED PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: Class 4 Incursion -- Cayo Muerta, Cuba

Casey frowns. Glances at the agent. *Is this a joke?*

She speed-reads the next page. A BRIEF on the discovery of the ESCAPE POD in the jungle. Then -- 8X10 PHOTOS:

The debris field; the charred escape pod. Next -- MCKENNA'S MILITARY PORTRAIT -- *the one Traeger was showing the locals in Cuba*. She flips to THE LAST PHOTO; draws a sharp breath.

SATELLITE PHOTO:

Through trees, vines... a figure. Blurry. Indistinct.

It's a photograph of *THE PREDATOR*. As we PRE-LAP A CLAP OF THUNDER -- CUT TO:

EXT. CORPUS CHRISTIE V.A. - NIGHT

Lightning dances across the Texas plains as the clouds open.

SUPER: VETERAN'S ADMINISTRATION
 CORPUS CHRISTIE, TEXAS

 V.A. PSYCHIATRIST (OVER)
 So, you're denying what you said
 about some "thing" in the jungle?

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

MCKENNA sits in a plastic chair at a table, the rain beating on a skylight high above. He's wearing an orange jumpsuit.

 MCKENNA
 I thought this was a psych eval.

The V.A. PSYCHOLOGIST stands by, watching a MED TECH attach two pneumo-tubes around McKenna's chest.

 V.A. PSYCH
 That's right.

 MCKENNA
 So why the polygraph?

The Med Tech attaches finger pads and a blood pressure cuff.

 V.A. PSYCH
 It's common with high risk civil
 servants. We need to know if you
 pose a threat.

 MCKENNA
 I'm an assassin. Figured posing
 a threat was kind of the fucking
 point.

 V.A.
 PSYCH (smiles)
 I meant to the general public.
 (MORE)

V.A. PSYCH (CONT'D)
OR yourself. You've been...
struggling with PTSD, it's in your
file.

McKenna exhales. NOW he gets it.

MCKENNA
I get it. You're not here to find
out if I'm crazy -- you're here to
make sure the label sticks.

V.A. PSYCH
You think you're being railroaded?

MCKENNA
I can see the tracks on the floor.

Off the Psych's sudden raised eyebrow:

MCKENNA (CONT'D)
I don't really see tracks on
the floor. Relax.

The Psych nods:

V.A. PSYCH
But you do see a vast... cover-up.

The psychologist switches on the polygraph machine. A
laptop GLOWS with a graph of McKenna's vitals. Game on.

V.A. PSYCH (CONT'D)
Tell me about Cayo Muerto, Cuba.

MCKENNA
People died. I saw something I
wasn't supposed to. Pretty simple.

The psychologist looks at the polygraph. Barely a
flicker. All graphs straight as arrows.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)
You're gonna have to do better'n
that, doc. I was tortured for 48
hours in Kandahar.

V.A. PSYCH
You think I'm the enemy, don't you,
Lieutenant?

MCKENNA

I think you want me to say something crazy, so you can lock me in a room and throw away the room. That's what I think.

V.A. PSYCH

Maybe some time in a quiet room would do you some good.

MCKENNA

You know what would do me some good? Knowing who -- or *WHAT* -- killed my men. And what that thing in the jungle was. AND why the fuck a Black Ops helicopter conveniently showed up out of nowhere to make sure there weren't any witnesses.

(beat)

Knowing all that shit? THAT--?
That would do me some good.

The Doc looks at the polygraph screen. NOW some flickers.

PSYCH SPECIALIST

Let's talk about Kandahar.

Oh, shit. A SPIKE on the graph.

MCKENNA

Oooh, BIG spike. You got me now.

PSYCH SPECIALIST

You were pinned down. You lost a friend. You got captured, interrogated. Forget the details, but since then--? You spend most of your time in country... estranged from your wife and son because you don't feel like -- well, you deserve a normal life. You feel like a... stranger on your own planet, don't you, Lieutenant?

MCKENNA

(huge)

An alien, you mean?

The molecules in the air stop moving.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Like the one in the jungle, right?

His eyes gleam. A sick grin. Goadng.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Is that good? Is that what you
wanted? Do I get a cookie now?

ON THE POLYGRAPH MONITOR

All graphs SPIKING spastically. If he was fighting
the appearance of being crazy... he's failed.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

I think we're done here.

V.A. PSYCH

As do I.

CUT TO:

EXT. CORPUS CHRISTIE V.A. - NIGHT

Something like a prison bus idles in front of the
administration building, as STAFF escort McKenna into --

INT. V.A. BUS - DRIVING - NIGHT

McKenna DROPS into a seat. The bus jerks forward, RAIN
SPATTERING the windows. While, in the darkness...

SEVEN MEN in prison scrubs; eyes that have seen shit
that would turn your hair white.

McKenna notes a hulking form manacled beside him. Also in his
30s, with a comma of dark hair and a scar across one eye.

Meet NEBRASKA WILLIAMS. He notices McKenna's gaze.

WILLIAMS

Got a smoke?

MCKENNA

Pretty sure they don't allow
that on the bus.

WILLIAMS

(shrugs)

Can't blame a guy for trying.

After a pause:

MCKENNA

I'm McKenna. You?

WILLIAMS

Nebraska.

MCKENNA

Is that your real name?

WILLIAMS

Name's Gaylord.

MCKENNA

Good call.

McKenna looks out the window thoughtfully.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

How'd you snag a ticket on
this shitmobile, anyway?

WILLIAMS

(impassive)

Killed my C.O.

This gives McKenna pause. For servicemen, this is not
small potatoes.

MCKENNA

Any particular reason?

WILLIAMS

(another shrug)

Guy was an asshole.

McKenna sits very still. The bus drives on.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - ABANDONED MILITARY BASE - NIGHT

Desolate. Windswept. A small cluster of squat buildings
guarded by razor wire and 'NO TRESPASSING' signs.

AN HH-60 PAVE HAWK APPEARS

And SETS DOWN, dust swirling. TWO SECURITY MERCS jump
out, assist CASEY from the open hatch.

(NOTE: "Project: Stargazer" is guarded by Private CIA-
HIRE MERCENARIES like the ones McKenna saw in Cuba.

They are NOT U.S. MILITARY SERVICEMEN. The short version?
Stargazer = BAD GUYS; U.S. Military = GOOD GUYS.)

A GATE CLATTERS OPEN -- REVEALS a small, square
structure. The size of a one-car garage.

A MERC goes to the code box as Church hands her a clipboard:

AGENT CHURCH
Non-disclosure agreement.

CASEY
I signed that when they
recruited me, two years ago.

AGENT CHURCH
It's a rider. New information's
come to light in the last forty-
eight hours.

Reluctantly, she signs the NDA; is gestured forward. Church
remains behind -- conspicuously. *He doesn't have clearance.*

The code box emits a hollow CLICK! and BLAST DOORS
SLIDE OPEN, TO REVEAL:

INT. SECURITY CHECKPOINT - CONTINUOUS

Small, compact room. A TECHNICIAN stands at a work station.
Scanners; cameras; printers. On the wall: A BIG RED BUTTON.

QUICK CUTS - I.D. MONTAGE

as the TECHNICIAN scans Casey's RETINAS -- her HAND PRINTS
-- A BAR CODE prints out -- then Casey is stood against a
bare wall, and off a digital camera FLASH--

A LAMINATED PHOTO ID BADGE

Now hangs around her neck. She looks up, awkward. *Now what?*

The Technician turns to the big red button; SLAMS IT --

THE WHOLE ROOM SHUDDERS and we hear a WHINE from all
around us because... *THE ROOM IS AN ELEVATOR.* CUT TO:

INT. PROJECT STARGAZER

The elevator door slides OPEN TO REVEAL...

A VAST UNDERGROUND COMPLEX. TECHNICIANS bustle to and
fro, including (as Casey duly notes) some with lab coats
and scrubs. Casey is drawn into a small

VIEWING ROOM

Like an operating theater, looking down through raked
glass into the *MAIN LAB.*

She sees MED TECHS IN BIOHAZARD SUITS around a custom-built
table with stirrups and monitors. Take a breath now --

Because there, strapped to the table, is something she's waited her whole life to see: an actual, living, extra-terrestrial life form. In this case--?

A CAPTURED, UNCONSCIOUS PREDATOR.

An involuntary gasp from Casey, as we see in her eyes: her world has changed.

O.S. VOICE (COLWELL)

Ma'am.

She SPINS, almost jumps out of her skin. A bespectacled man in the doorway behind her: DOCTOR SEAN COLWELL.

COLWELL

Didn't mean to startle you. I'm Doctor Colwell.

He enters, shakes her hand.

COLWELL (CONT'D)

I'm told you pretty much wrote the book on evolutionary biology.

Casey's still rattled by the sight of the Predator.

CASEY

Four, actually.
(sheepish)
Um... books...

COLWELL

So you know your stuff. How'd they rope you into this..?

She looks back into the lab below. Pensive.

CASEY

I wrote a letter when I was six. Said I loved animals and... if NASA ever found a space animal, they should call me.

(beat)

Couple years ago, they put me on a short list because of a paper I wrote on hybrid strains. A computer had cross-referenced my letter.

COLWELL

(smiles)

NASA still had it, huh?

Casey shakes her head.

COLWELL
 (CONT'D) The Oval Office.
 (beat)
 I wrote the letter to Clinton. He
 thought it was cute so it's been
 in there ever since.

IN THE LAB BELOW

TRAEGER (the CIA man we met in Cuba) squints up through
 the glass of the viewing booth. Keys an intercom button:

TRAEGER
 (on intercom)
 Doctor Brackett..?

She nods, tentative. He gestures.

TRAEGER (CONT'D)
 Would you like to meet the
 Predator?

TIME-CUT TO:

INT. DECON CHAMBER

White. Sterile. Casey and Colwell enter through an
 airlock hatch. It SEALS SHUT with a HISS, air-tight.

PRE-RECORDED VOICE
Chamber secure. Remove garments.

CASEY
 (to VOICE)
 You're not gonna buy me a
 drink first?

She and Colwell start to strip, separated by a partition.

SERIES OF CUTS -- DECON

CASEY, NAKED in a new chamber -- the room flares WHITE
 HOT. BURNS OFF her outer layer of skin -- then:

PRE-RECORDED VOICE
Protocol complete.

She dons a HAZMAT SUIT, all business. Dismissive of her
 nudity. She knows she can halt traffic, doesn't much care.

Colwell appears beside her, also in HazMat. Goes to the
 door. Presses his eye and hand to scanners:

COLWELL
Colwell, Sean H.

The LAST HATCH SHUSHES OPEN, and Colwell leads the way into:

INT. MAIN LAB - CONTINUOUS

Traeger approaches her, hand extended:

TRAEGER
Thanks for coming. I'm sure -
- (an understatement)
-- you have questions.

CASEY
Two, actually.

She nods to the dormant Predator.

CASEY (CONT'D)
Why do you call it "the Predator"?

TRAEGER
Just a nick-name. The data suggests
it tracks its prey, seems to...
well, enjoy it. Like a game.

CASEY
That's a hunter.

TRAEGER
I'm sorry?

CASEY
That's a hunter. Not a predator.
Predators kill for food, to
survive. There's only one animal
on earth that hunts for sport.

Traeger tries not to roll his eyes; "liberal."

Casey paces beside the Predator. Regards its mandibled
features with something akin to wonder. Whispers:

CASEY
(CONT'D) You... are one
beautiful motherfucker.

TRAEGER
I'm going to assume your second
question is: why are you here?

An ironic grin from Casey. "Bingo."

TRAEGER (CONT'D)

Our test results yielded something a little... odd. We were wondering if maybe you could shed some light on it.

He nods to COLWELL, who produces a TABLET. He shows Casey a read-out. She studies it for a second... then blanches.

CASEY

Is this a joke?

COLWELL

(shakes his head)

We ran the genome sequence ten times. This specimen has --

CASEY

-- human DNA.

She looks at them, baffled. *How is that possible?*

TRAEGER

We know about spontaneous speciation. Mostly plants and insects, but --

COLWELL

-- some mammals. Sheeps, goats. Red wolves are known to be a hybrid of coyotes and gray wolves.

TRAEGER

Exactly. Possibly some form of recombinant technology, or...

CASEY

(interrupting)

Guys, I get

it. (beat)

You want to know if someone fucked a Predator.

INT. V.A. BUS - DRIVING - NIGHT

Trundling through the night; rain-lashed.

ON MCKENNA, ASLEEP

In the strobing dark; rain drums like GUNFIRE at the window.

MEMORY FLASH: RUBBLE-STREWN STREET - KANDAHAR - DAY

MCKENNA, several years younger, in desert camo, flak, full battle rattle. He and his squad TAKING COVER, breathless.

He glances at the SOLDIER next to him. Pale, trembling. Bleeding out from stray shrapnel.

The soldier KEENS with pain, as -- *urgent VOICES, close by. Speaking PASHTO.*

The wounded soldier MOANS loudly. *Shit. He's going to give away their position.* McKenna GRABS him; CLAMPS A HAND over his mouth as the TALIBAN SOLDIERS get closer --

And as the soldier BITES INTO MCKENNA'S HAND to distract himself from the overwhelming pain --

INT. V.A. BUS - DRIVING **(BACK TO SCENE)**

As MCKENNA WAKES. No startle-awake bullshit -- simply comes to. Fully aware. His HAND, near his head...

THE SCAR we saw in Cayo Muerte: prominent. Now we know how he got it. From the back of the bus, now, A VOICE:

COYLE

Hey, Baxley! Got a question for ya. How do you circumcise a homeless man?

He's addressing a prisoner at the front, BAXLEY, whose eyes thin to slits. Clearly, these two have a history.

COYLE (CONT'D)

Kick your mom in the chin!

One of the MPs at the front weighs in:

MP ON BUS

Shut the fuck up back there!

McKenna eyes his measly protein bar. Says to Williams:

MCKENNA

Dinner and a show. Great.
(indicates stoic BAXLEY)
He just sits there.

WILLIAMS

He'll kill him one of these days.

MCKENNA

What's stopping him?

WILLIAMS

He likes the jokes.

McKenna looks to a THIRD prisoner, talking to himself nervously, Tourette's: FLYBOY.

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

That's Flyboy. Three tours piloting Hueys. Now he gets jumpy when he's not in the air.

McKenna nods to an older Vet -- NETTLES.

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Nettles. Ordnance man. They gave him a medal for blowing up half a mountain in Mosul.

MCKENNA

Why's he here?

WILLIAMS

Blew up the other half,
too. (beat)
Everyone's got a story.
What's yours?

MCKENNA

You wouldn't believe me.

WILLIAMS

This is the batshit bus. Try me.

McKenna shrugs.

MCKENNA

All right.
(deep breath)
I had a run-in with a space alien.
They want to put a lid on it, so...
here I am.

Williams looks out the window, shaking his head. Tsk tsk.

WILLIAMS

Goddamn space aliens.

INT. MAIN LAB (PROJECT STARGAZER) - AS BEFORE

CASEY, examining the dormant Predator. Shines a penlight -- checks pupil dilation.

CASEY

You ran iris biometrics?

A nearby MED TECH nods. Casey turns to Traeger.

CASEY (CONT'D)
Do you have the file they gave me?
The incident in Cayo Muerto..?

Traeger nods to the med tech. The file is quickly produced and Casey FLIPS to the blurry photo of the Predator. Points:

CASEY (CONT'D)
In this photo, it's wearing
some kind of... atmosphere
mask, a biohelmet.

TRAEGER
We looked, believe me.

She notices something else:

CASEY
And look at the wrist computer.
Something's missing.

Sure enough, the Predator's wrist computer is OPEN -- *an empty slot where the KUJHAD should be*. She looks at Traeger:

CASEY (CONT'D)
Where are they?

Traeger and Colwell trade uneasy glances. After a beat, Casey re-opens the file. FLIPS to the photo of... McKENNA.

CASEY (CONT'D)
Is this the man who made
first contact?
(Colwell nods)
I'd like to talk to him.

COLWELL
He's en route to lockdown in
a military psych ward.

CASEY
Well, if you're going to
lobotomize him, can I ask him some
questions first?

INT. V.A. BUS - DRIVING - NIGHT

ONE OF THE MPS responds to a SQUAWK from his radio. SPEAKS ("Go ahead"). As he listens, his eyes drift to McKenna --

MP ON BUS
Read you five-by-five. Out.

EXT. RAIN-SWEPT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Gears GRIND. The bus steers to a HALT, sloshing water... promptly executes a ponderous and awkward U-TURN.

THROUGH GLASS: we push in on McKENNA, confused... CUT TO:

EXT. RORY'S HOUSE (GEORGIA) - NIGHT

Neighborhood SOUNDS: THRUM of cicadas, bad TV, distant sirens. A dinged Subaru Outback pulls into the driveway.

INT. RORY'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Rory's mom, EMILY -- pretty, 30s, beleaguered -- comes through the back door into the kitchen, arms weighted down by shopping bags. She CALLS OUT:

EMILY

Rory? I'm home! I got
you something! *Rory* -- ?

RORY APPEARS -- Mom gives him a quick kiss. She sees a stack of LANGUAGE BOOKS on the counter: *French, German, Swedish.*

EMILY (CONT'D)

You did one of these after school?

RORY

I did all of them after school.

She smiles, fumbles with a bag from Target.

EMILY

So look. I got you two options...

She pulls out TWO BOXED HALLOWEEN COSTUMES -- Like those Ben Cooper specials from yesteryear. In this case..?

EMILY (CONT'D)

Pirate..? Or Frankenstein..?

She holds up each with equal gusto; he regards her blankly:

RORY

What's Frankenstein?

EMILY

You know -- *Frankenstein*. Mad
doctor made him out of dead people?
Bolts on his neck? Walks around?

RORY

Like "Walking Dead"?

EMILY

No, Frankenst... Green skin? He met
Wolfman?

Rory looks at her like she grew a tail. Exasperated, she holds up the OTHER BOX as if her son just won a prize.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Let's go with PIRATE -- !!

But he's not really buying any of it. He takes the mask out of the box, reluctantly puts it on.

RORY'S POV: The sound of his BREATHING as, through the eye holes, WE SEE:

THAT WATER SPOT -- the one on the kitchen WALL, as

MEMORY FLASH:

Rory, a mere BABE in his mother's arms as McKENNA drives a FIST through the SPOT, for reasons long forgotten, and --

BACK TO PRESENT

It's been plastered over; yet the ghost of McKenna's rage continues to ooze out... Rory puts the pirate mask down:

RORY

It's too small. The guys'll...
you know.
(shrugs)
They'll still be able to tell.

RORY'S MOM

Tell what?

RORY

That it's me.
(sets the box down)
No big deal. Dad's always
telling me to be a big boy.

He starts out of the room.

EMILY

I love you, peanut.

RORY

(half-hearted; in
Swedish) Jag älskar dig.

His mom looks after him, blinking back tears.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Rory comes down the steps to his LAIR: recycled PCs, saved from dumpsters. Multiple ON-LINE GAMES glow.

A hanging sign reads: "CONTROL AREA."

Rory sits, fingers blurring as he speed runs through two games simultaneously. But gradually... his distraction wins. He turns to look at his work table, ON WHICH RESIDES:

THE PARCEL FROM CUBA.

He sucks in a sharp breath. Goes to it... and TEARS IT OPEN like a Christmas present. Reaches in, and removes...

Holy shit -- *THE BATTLE-SCARRED PREDATOR BIOHELMET.*

The iconic WAR MASK from five separate films. It DWARFS this suburban boy's delicate hands.

He examines it. Sets it aside, reaches for the next prize:

THE KUJHAD; the data-storage device. It GLISTENS in his grasp. He hefts it like a light-sabre. Then --

Curiously, hesitantly, *presses a button* on the device.

Nothing.

Emboldened, he presses another. And another. And another -- BLEEP--! *Oooh, shit.*

A DISPLAY BLINKS ON; GLOWING RED symbols scrolling in cryptic patterns. Rory's eyes widen as we -- CUT TO:

EXT. OUTER SPACE

Cold. Silent. OUR OPENING SHOT all over again, as...

A LOOMING SPACECRAFT enters frame. Bulbous. Cockroach-shaped. We've seen it before:

THE PREDATOR MOTHER SHIP

from our opening; docking gantry below still scarred and shredded from where THE ARK detached.

INT. PREDATOR SHIP - SAME

Quick, tantalizing glimpses of this new, different PREDATOR. *We still don't see him fully.* Not yet.

As we will come to learn: this is AN UPGRADE.

It taps a control pad -- and a DISPLAY APPEARS, similar to Rory's. Speaking of whom:

INT. BASEMENT - RORY

SCRIBBLES the symbols from the Kujhad on a PeeChee folder. Glances up --

The symbols CHANGE. Blip-! Just like that, a new sequence. Rory scrunches up his face. Huh.

Have you ever seen someone "do math" by using their fingers to create invisible equations in the air? Well, that's what Rory does now, except...

THE SYMBOLS HE WROTE LIFT off the paper, SUPERIMPOSED for us to see. He does some mental calculations, and --

The symbols RE-ARRANGE.

(NOTE: This is NOT REAL. It depicts Rory's mental process. We are literally watching him translate Predator language.)

He TAPS BUTTONS, causing the display to *CHANGE BACK*, and --

INT. PREDATOR SHIP - THAT MOMENT

THE UPGRADE REACTS as his READ-OUT CHANGES, too. A glitch? He taps the controls, REVERTING it to its previous version --

INT. BASEMENT - RORY

sees the DISPLAY CHANGE again -- and OVERRIDES IT exactly as he did before. "Take that!" And we realize --

Our kid is REMOTELY FUTZING AN INCOMING PREDATOR SPACECRAFT!

INT. PREDATOR SHIP

The Upgrade, all business. SLAMS IN A CODE, and

-- EXT. STRATOSPHERE - THE PREDATOR SHIP

With shimmering spasms, its STEALTH CAPABILITY is engaged and the ship literally VANISHES--!

INT. BASEMENT - ON RORY

Grinning at the new code sequence. *It's a GAME!* Gleefully, he punches in the same sequence, only IN REVERSE, and --

EXT. STRATOSPHERE

The transparent Predator Mother Ship BECOMES VISIBLE AGAIN--!

INT. BASEMENT - ON RORY

A VOICE from upstairs breaks the moment:

EMILY (O.S.)
You okay down there, kiddo?

Rory freezes, tries to sound like everything's normal.

RORY
Just playing games, mom!

EMILY (O.S.)
Love you!

RORY
Oui, J'aime ma mère!

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A TRACKING MONITOR

as a BLIP APPEARS. Then vanishes. Then RE-APPEARS.

INT. SATELLITE TRACKING STATION - NIGHT

A TECH SERGEANT in army khaki watches the blip on his scope.

SUPER: KAENA POINT TRACKING STATION -- OAHU, HAWAII

The analyst FLAGS his SUPERVISOR.

TRACKING ANALYST
Sir?

His uniformed SUPERVISOR walks over.

TRACKING SUPERVISOR
Whatcha got, sergeant?

TRACKING ANALYST
Weird-ass bogey, sir. What do
you make of it?

They watch as the blip VANISHES and RE-APPEARS sporadically.
OTHER TECHS look on curiously. The supervisor frowns.

TRACKING SUPERVISOR
Get me NORAD.

INT. MAIN LAB (PROJECT STARGAZER) - AS BEFORE

CASEY, bent over an electron microscope. Intent. Examining
the Predator's blood. Traeger, over her shoulder --

She rises from the microscope, sees a blood centrifuge nearby, a test tube rack just above it. In the rack is:
A SINGLE VIAL of membranous yellow substance. She frowns:

CASEY

Wait a minute.
(re: centrifuge)
If this is blood --
(re: vial)
-- then what's *that*?

Traeger looks vaguely discomfited. But before he can answer, a LACKEY approaches.

LACKEY

V.A. shuttle's here, sir.

EXT. DESERT - ABANDONED MILITARY BASE - NIGHT

Black-clad MERCENARIES wait for the V.A. SHUTTLE as it trundles toward the chain link perimeter.

INT. V.A. BUS - DRIVING - SAME

Prisoners, GRUMBLING. Flyboy calls out to the MP at the front (who, we should note, is bald as a cue ball).

FLYBOY

Hey, Kojak! When did they put the middle of fucking nowhere on the itinerary?

MP ON BUS

Zip it, Flyboy. We're just makin' a pit stop.

WILLIAMS

"Pit stop."
(to McKenna)
This is all your fault, isn't it?

McKenna, uneasy. It's beginning to seem that way. CUT TO:

INT. NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND, COLORADO

Fans of War Games will recognize the gallery and massive TRACKING SCREENS. Air Force PERSONNEL watch the bogey on

A HUGE MONITOR

where THE BLIP is seen moving toward the southern U.S...
A GENERAL oversees; STAFF SERGEANT at his side.

STAFF SERGEANT
Still inbound, sir. One
second they're on the grid,
the next they're ghosting.

NORAD GENERAL
Radio contact?

STAFF SERGEANT
Negative, sir.

The General chews on a pen. *What the fuck is it?* Finally:

NORAD GENERAL
Where's the 325th?

STAFF SERGEANT
Lackland, sir.

NORAD GENERAL
Have them scramble some jets.
Let's not take any chances.

INT. MAIN LAB (PROJECT STARGAZER) - THAT MOMENT

Traeger's AIDE approaches. Furtive:

AIDE
Sir, NORAD's reporting a
202 anomaly.

Colwell and Traeger trade looks. Casey sees this.

CASEY
Look, I know I'm new, but -- it'd
be swell if somebody would kinda
sorta, I dunno... *tell me what
the fuck is going on here?*

Traeger answers without missing a beat.

TRAEGER
This isn't the first Predator
we've encountered.

Casey stiffens. The revelation lands hard.

TRAEGER (CONT'D)
Apparently they use earth as a
kind of "hunting ground."

COLWELL

They've left things behind.
Evidence. Weapons. Some are
even stored in this facility.

CASEY

Your point -- ?

COLWELL

The point, doctor... is that our
satellite defense stations have
just tracked a new UFOB.

(nods grimly to the
dormant Predator)

Our friend here might have
company coming.

Traeger MUTTERS something under his breath --

CASEY

Excuse me?

TRAEGER

They're gnarly fuckers, that's all.
Took four of my best just to bring
that one down.

She blinks. Stares at him:

CASEY

I'm sorry. It took four--?

TRAEGER

That's right. So?

CASEY

So -- *a meth head can take
down four men.*

(re: Predator)

Look at it!

Traeger looks uneasy.

COLWELL

What's your point, doctor?

CASEY

My point is you brought it here. To
a location where you just happen to
store its weapons --

(beat)

*How do you know it didn't WANT
TO BE CAPTURED?*

That's when ALARM KLAXONS peal throughout the complex.

CASEY (CONT'D)

What's happening?

TRAEGER'S AIDE clutches a phone receiver. YELLS:

AIDE

Proximity alert, sir! Bogey's
inbound! Range two hundred miles!

At which point, without warning --

THE PREDATOR'S EYES SNAP OPEN. Just like that.

Alert. Calm. Calculating. We realize: it was playing possum.

CASEY LEAPS backward; liberates a TRANQUILIZER RIFLE from a nearby rack. She hoists it, BACKS AWAY -- full defense mode.

CASEY

EVERYBODY GET OUT! NOW!

She STABS the code for the DECON chamber. Hatch OPENS. She leaps inside, except -- she's the only one. *Everyone else is going for their SIDEARMS as --*

Bam--! The Predator MOVES. SNAPS ITS RESTRAINTS like they were paper. RISES from the table, as --

INT. DECON CHAMBER

The hatch CLOSES, sealing her in.

PRE-RECORDED VOICE

Chamber secure. Remove garments.

Casey, sweating. FUMBLING at the catches of her Hazmat suit.

CASEY

Come on, come on...

INT. MAIN LAB - THAT MOMENT

SECURITY MEN rush to restrain the Predator, but it SWIPES at them with its talons -- *DUCKS, PARRIES.*

TOSSES them like rag dolls. Speed and stealth, mind-numbing.

INT. DECON CHAMBER - WITH CASEY

SEEING THIS -- terrified -- while at the same time desperately trying to DISROBE. Blood SPATTERS the window --

INT. MAIN LAB - SAME

THE PREDATOR, rampaging.

COLWELL draws a weapon -- but it GRABS HIM by the hair; snags a scalpel in its other talon. Like a samurai --

BEHEADS HIM with the scalpel--! The next second, *SLICES OFF HIS HAND* -- Then BEE-LINES TO THE DECON HATCH...

Spoils in hand, PRESSES COLWELL'S HEAD and HAND to the scanners. Then, nightmarishly:

MIMICS the dead man's voice exactly:

THE PREDATOR
Colwell, Sean H.

A green light BLEEPS. *ACCESS GRANTED--!*

INT. DECON CHAMBER

Skin burn complete, Casey's scooping up her clothes, as -- the HATCH *SHUSHES* OPEN behind her. She SPINS, naked - clutching the tranq gun. --

And there's THE PREDATOR.

Trembling, breathless, Casey LEVELS THE WEAPON. Pulls the trigger: a dry *CLICK--!* Jammed.

The Predator cocks its head at her. *Is it... smiling?* And then -- it simply MOVES PAST her. SPARING HER. As Casey breathes in short terrified bursts, we --

CUT TO:

EXT. SKY OVER CENTRAL AMERICA - NIGHT

THREE F-22 RAPTORS slice the sound barrier -- following the Predator ship's last known position.

INT. F-22 COCKPIT - FLYING - NIGHT

ON THE LEAD PILOT as he checks his instruments. We HEAR:

RADIO CHATTER
Catfish one, approaching vector.
Triangulate SAM radar, over.

INT. UNDERGROUND CORRIDOR - THAT MOMENT

THREE TACTICAL MERCS spin round a bend, rifles up. As they clatter past an alcove, two MUSCULAR ARMS SWIPE OUT--!

GLTCH--GLTCH! TALONS puncturing flesh; severing brain stems. Two down. The remaining merc SPINS, gun up --

Predator, weaponless... Fuck it -- SCOOPS A MACHINE GUN IN EACH HAND.

BUDDA-BUDDA--! The merc topples. The Predator calmly DROPS the guns, retrieves *Colwell's head and hand from the floor.*

INT. DECON CHAMBER

Casey finishes pulling on her clothes, notices -- on the floor, splatters of phosphorescent GREEN BLOOD.

She looks back into the lab -- at the tranq gun CARTRIDGE on the rack. Then... something arguably more important:

The mysterious SPECIMEN VIAL she saw earlier.

INT. CORRIDOR - AS BEFORE

The Predator approaches a VAULT DOOR; again uses Colwell's VISCERA to override security. TOSSES THEM ASIDE and ENTERS:

INT. A HIGH SECURITY VAULT

Like a bank vault, but for Predator technology.

The Predator RUMMAGES; tossing items aside violently. Plainly looking for something... *but not finding it.*

Frustrated, it GRABS what it knows -- a new WRIST GAUNTLET, a PLASMA CANNON. Finally, snatches up a THIRD object:

A bent, scorched BATTLE MASK.

With this last, it does an odd thing: *lifts the mask to its eyes.* With one hand, taps a code on its side, *blip-!*

POV: THROUGH THE MASK

We're seeing what IT is seeing. Here's the weird part: Wherever it is..? It's not the room he's currently IN.

Blurry... faulty transmission. Still, oddly FAMILIAR.

We're seeing Rory's bedroom. WTF? CUT TO:

INT. RORY'S BASEMENT - SAME TIME

THE OTHER MASK, Rory's -- leaning against the wall, face outward. A green LIGHT blinking, as it transmits --

BACK TO POV - BLURRED

We see RORY at his bench, back to us... now we SNAP-ZOOM in to a spot on the wall, near the kid's head:

A drawing of a pit bull. Taped there, along with other drawings. In the corner, printed neatly:

RORY DECLAN MCKENNA, GRADE 6. GORDON MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Predator lowers the mask. Turns, with new purpose. Taps its wrist and... with a glitching SHIMMER, CLOAKS. *Vanishing.*

EXT. COMPOUND ABOVE - NIGHT

The V.A. bus STOPS, MID-COMPOUND. ALARMS continue to WAIL throughout the facility. SOLDIERS approach --

SOLDIER

Sit tight. There's been a breech.

INT. V.A. BUS - SAME

MCKENNA AND WILLIAMS, apprehensive. *What's going on?*

INT. UNDERGROUND CORRIDOR

Dressed and clutching the tranq rifle, Casey follows a trail of Predator blood to THE STILL-OPEN VAULT -- immediately sees it's been ransacked. *What the hell was it looking for?*

A bleeding MED-TECH stumbles around the corner, sees her:

DYING MED-TECH

Please... It... it MUSTN'T GET AWAY...

CASEY

It won't.
(nods grimly)
Not my space animal.

She turns -- sprints out of frame, and meanwhile

EXT. SKY - THE F-22S

Flying in formation. PILOTS scanning the horizon.

RADIO CHATTER

Catfish one, still no visual, check your six two and three, over --

INT. RORY'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - SAME

He's back to his video games. Because of course he is.

Then... bored, he picks up the *Kujhad*. *PUNCHES IN THE CODE* from before... just for the hell of it, and --

EXT. SKY OVER CENTRAL AMERICA - NIGHT

THE PREDATOR SHIP APPEARS OUT OF NOWHERE -- smack in the trajectory of the three Raptor jets!

RADIO VOICE #1
(filtered)
Holy shit!

RADIO VOICE #2
(filtered)
Heads up! Bandit! Three-zero-five!

QUICK CUTS -- AS THEY QUICKLY COURSE CORRECT

Milliseconds before impact --

INT. V.A. VAN - ABANDONED BASE - NIGHT

Something outside the bus catches McKenna's eye:

A DARK FIGURE -- emerging from a bunker in the distance. A hulking, lithe, humanoid chameleon shape. Shimmering....

McKenna nudges Williams, who squints... the thing FLICKERS; seems to VANISH in mid-stride. Williams stiffens --

WILLIAMS
Your little green friend?

MCKENNA
Yup.

WILLIAMS
Turns invisible?

MCKENNA
Yup.

WILLIAMS
Goddamn space aliens.

EXT. COMPOUND - UP TOP - THAT MOMENT

CASEY emerges, into the night. Tranq gun at the ready. Comes around the edge of a building, SEES a Predator BLOOD TRAIL --

INT. V.A. BUS - AS BEFORE

ALARM KLAXONS wailing outside.

McKenna, fraught. Struggling to concoct an escape strategy. Williams sees the look; doesn't like it.

MCKENNA
 (re: Predator)
 That thing killed my men.

WILLIAMS
 Yeah, they'll do that. Stay on
 the bus.

MCKENNA
 What are you, nuts? We gotta move.

WILLIAMS
 Exactly. Stay on the bus.

McKenna, thrown. Williams looks at him, sidelong:

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
 It's a bus.

He swivels his head -- a barely perceptible NOD to COYLE.

COYLE
 (erupts)
 Hey, Baxley! If your mom's vagina
 was a video game, it'd be rated
 E for everyone!

The SECOND MP rattles the cage door with his baton.

SECOND MP ON BUS
Knock it off!

COYLE
 Seriously, what's the difference
 between five big black guys and
 a joke?
 (beat)
Baxley's mom can't take a joke!

Baxley's out of his seat so fast he's a blur -- manacles
 clutched in his fists, he *WRAPS THEM AROUND COYLE'S NECK*
 -- *choking him*--! Coyle GASPS, SPUTTERS.

The second MP fumbles with his key ring as the first UNCLIPS
 HIS SIDEARM, adrenaline spiking. Yells to the prisoners:

MP ON BUS
Everyone on the floor, face down!

THE OTHERS OBEY; kneel with heads bowed, as --

The second MP UNLOCKS THE CAGE DOOR -- GRABS a Remington 870
 pump action from its mount. Both men RUN up the aisle to:

BACK OF THE BUS

As they pry the two prisoners apart, the first MP reaches for the baton on his belt, except: shit. *It's not there.*

BECAUSE BAXLEY JUST NABBED IT--! SWINGS IT into the back of the MP's legs. *HE GOES DOWN hard, as --*

SECOND MP whips the SHOTGUN UP. Barely time to register:

COYLE, *right in front of him, SHOVES the barrel with his palm* so it CLOCKS THE MP in the forehead -- CRACK! -- dropping him. Coyle GRABS the shotgun --

And *TOSSES IT TO WILLIAMS*, who SPINS, cocks it -- K-CHUK! -
- and levels it at the DRIVER.

WILLIAMS

Whoopsie.

THE DRIVER puts his HANDS UP as Baxley and Coyle -- *the best of friends now* -- snag the guards' keys and start unlocking the prisoners' shackles. A ruse from square one.

Shorn of his manacles, Williams takes the DRIVER'S SEAT.

MCKENNA

I need that alien.

WILLIAMS

Don't think he'll board the bus willingly.

MCKENNA

Just get me close.

WILLIAMS jerks the bus into gear... and GUNS IT.

EXT. COMPOUND - WITH THE PREDATOR

As it CLOAKS and DE-CLOAKS itself. One second, it's there. The next: GONE. Vanished.

IT LEAPS, parkour style. Alights on a rooftop, and --

Suddenly pauses, EARS PRICKED. It darts a look SKYWARD as, without warning --

THE PREDATOR MOTHER SHIP APPEARS

Blasts across the sky. Holy shit. Shearing through the atmosphere, and, with even LESS warning --

TWO F-22 FIGHTER JETS -- IN PURSUIT

Jesus. Flashing through frame, fucking DEAFENING, as

-- WITH THE V.A. BUS

It PUNCHES through a fence--! Chain link whipping away --

INT. V.A. BUS - DRIVING

WILLIAMS is DRIVING like a mad man, eyes darting between the SPACESHIP and the buildings below. MCKENNA yells:

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Open the door!!

He YANKS the Remington from Williams. Door, HISSING open --

MCKENNA DROPS SIDEWAYS

On the open steps, sighting up the barrel of the weapon. Cold intent. Everything goes SILENT.

GUNSIGHT POV

And there it is: through his sight, the trademark Predator DISTORTION. Nearing the tree line, CUT TO:

CASEY, ON THE RUN

Tops a ladder, swings onto rusty metal BRIDGE. High ground. Surveys the compound... *bingo.* BLOOD TRAIL, 12 o'clock.

A sudden RUMBLE, she looks down, SEES:

THE V.A. BUS

THUNDERING UNDER the bridge. She times her jump -- DROPS DOWN, ONTO THE ROOF -- *thunk!*

Swivels the TRANQ GUN, targeting the TREE LINE, just as

-- EXT. GROUND LEVEL - THE BUS

MCKENNA LEAPS FREE, shotgun tight to his chest. He TUCKS AND ROLLS. Comes up, GETS OFF TWO SHOTS -- too little, too late --

THE PREDATOR VANISHES

Over the perimeter wall. As an afterthought, the creature lashes out: SEVERES a LIGHT POLE -- it CRUMPLES DOWNWARD --

INT. V.A. SHUTTLE

WILLIAMS SEES the obstacle. *Shit! STANDS ON THE BRAKES* --

THE BUS

COLLIDES with the massive pole, tires BLOWN, as

-- ON THE ROOF - CASEY

Loses her footing; TOPPLES backward. Still clutching the tranq gun, she squeezes the trigger involuntarily, and --

THPPP--! A DART imbeds itself in her foot. She ROLLS OFF the top of the bus like a string-cut marionette, as --

EXT. COMPOUND - SAME

McKenna sees her pitch off the side, SCRAMBLES TO catch her.

Then quickly registers the ARMED SECURITY MEN moving in from all sides, and hastily (comically) FLEES just as --

WHOMP--! Casey LANDS on the ground with an ugly KLUD! She ROLLS OVER; groggy. So much for Prince fucking Charming.

AT THE BUS

The others SCRAMBLE OUT, as NEBRASKA WILLIAMS spots:

A small, open Quonset hut with a column of vintage, army green HARLEY MOTORCYCLES. He yells:

WILLIAMS
Get to the choppers.

EXT. COMPOUND - AT THE BUS

One of the MERCS sees Casey, on the ground: he taps a switch on his VIDEO HEADSET -- CUT TO:

INT. MAIN LAB (UNDERGROUND) - AS BEFORE

TRAEGER has his own glass-like headset with THE MERC'S POV:

SHOOTER (O.S.)
(awaiting the order)
Sir..?

Traeger sighs, deep regret:

TRAEGER
No witnesses.

EXT. COMPOUND - BACK UP TOP

The MERC, about to follow orders when a *BURBLING ROAR* fills the air, and --

McKENNA COMES OVER THE TOP

AIRBORNE on his howling HARLEY. Launches off an embankment.
FIRES MID-AIR, *blam-blam-!* takes out the dude's LEGS.

Lands. Fishtails madly -- steers toward Casey; pure
Steve McQueen. SCOOPS HER UP --

*And here come THE LOONIES; Williams in the lead! A phalanx
of crazy-ass Hell's Angels.*

The recovering mercs OPEN FIRE -- as the cycles
BLAST FORWARD, out of the compound, as we CUT TO:

EXT. SKY OVER TEXAS - THAT MOMENT

THE F-22S FLY alongside and above the NOW-VISIBLE
PREDATOR SPACECRAFT, rocking their wings.

ON THE LEAD PILOT (INTERCUT:)

RADIO CHATTER

Go, zero-two! Go zero-three!

AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES spew from the Raptors, and RIP ACROSS the
surface of the Predator ship. It bucks and WOBLES, as --

EXT. SKY OVER TEXAS - THE AERIAL PURSUIT

THE F-22s BANK OFF as the PREDATOR SHIP TUMBLES, smoking.

A glitching SHIMMER as it manages to CLOAK itself one
final time... *seconds before it impacts* --

And now, an odd sight -- one we hinted at in our opening:

An INVISIBLE CRASH. The leafy canopy EXPLODES, then
a careening DEBRIS FIELD *forming before our eyes* --

All that's missing is the ship that's CAUSING IT.

EXT. THE CRASH SITE - NIGHT

Tendrils of vapor rise, and...

INT. PREDATOR SHIP - SAME

Amidst choking smoke, the UPGRADE rises from its seat.

Touches a switch, and A PANEL OPENS, revealing a dank,
cramped COMPARTMENT. Inside, barely glimpsed --

The eerie silhouettes of *TWO slobbering, four-
legged CREATURES*... Whoa. CUT TO:

INT. RORY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Rory lies in bed. Wide awake. Peering into a tiny KEYCHAIN VIEWER with a light in it:

A PHOTO -- Father and son in happier times. RORY sighs. Rolls over. Turns on his bedside table lamp --

And there, on the nightstand, is THE KUJHAD.

The BIOHELMET sits beside it; eerie, beckoning. Rory reaches for the Kujhad, but it's no longer blinking.

Shit.

He THUMBS buttons to wake it up. Nothing at first. Then... it GLOWS RED. Success! Rory chews his lip, thinking. What next?

And then he learns the meaning of the phrase, "Be careful what you wish for." Because suddenly:

SHAPES, moving in his peripheral vision. He looks up. GASPS --

GIANT, MULTI-EYES SPIDERS

Crawling on the walls and ceiling. Out of nowhere. All around him/ Terrified, Rory starts to hyperventilate.

He STABS BUTTONS in a desperate bid to make them go away --

Then notices: the spiders are GLITCHING with electronic distortion. He double-takes, SEES --

MONOFILAMENTS OF LIGHT emanating from the biohelmet... it's the source of the images. Not just images:

HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS.

He picks up the helmet, lifts it to his face and...

BIOHELMET POV (INTERCUT:)

Like police video, the spiders are PRE-RECORDED IMAGES OF A PREDATOR HUNT ON ANOTHER WORLD.

At his fingertips is A VIRTUAL DOCUMENT of the Predators' travels across the galaxy.

He pulls the mask away, a stew of various IMAGES projected IN 3D all around him. Including something he didn't expect:

What appears to be A MAP.

At its center, a highlighted, ALIEN SHAPE. Blinking. A beacon, a marker? Or maybe, just maybe...? A *transponder*.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL MOTEL - NIGHT

NEBRASKA WILLIAMS smokes a cigarette in the blinking neon of the motel sign. He hears A SCUFFLE, turns to SEE:

NETTLES, emerging from behind the sign. Zipping his pants.

WILLIAMS

Nettles.

(nods to motel room)

There's a toilet in the room.

Nettles eyes widen, like he's just seen God.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A staccato KNOCK on the door (a code). FLYBOY opens it, lets Williams and Nettles back in.

CASEY's in the bed, sleeping off the tranquilizer dart -- THE REST OF THE VETS gathered around. McKenna, weary, says:

MCKENNA

Don't any of you guys
have someplace to be?

The Loonies trade glances. Shrug.

BAXLEY

V.A. Psych Ward?

COYLE

Military prison?

McKenna nods.

MCKENNA

Point taken.

WILLIAMS

So now what, chief? Your green
boy got away.

BAXLEY

I'm tellin' you -- TV news, bro.
They'll have to believe you.

MCKENNA

Right. And I have some land
in Florida to sell you.

BAXLEY

Just get somebody *credible*. Like
Channel 9. What's-her-name, the
lady with the big heinie --

COYLE

Fool, she's the meteorologist.

BAXLEY

She is?

NETTLES

(chiming in)

He's right -- one look at her
and you can tell whether.

The others trade looks -- what does that even *mean*? Then:

BAXLEY

If we can get someone to listen --

MCKENNA

And if 'if's and but's' were
candy and nuts, we'd all have a
merry Christmas.

Baxley subsides, grumpily. On the BED, CASEY stirs --
blinks awake. Alarmed to see THE LOONIES surrounding her.

CASEY

I love waking to the sound of
macho bullshit.

She grimaces. Fumbles out her CELL PHONE -- Incredibly,
McKenna GRABS the shotgun, COCKS IT: *Is he gonna shoot her?*

No. He GRABS THE PHONE, shoves it under a pillow, and -- a
muted BOOM--! The pillow's a smoking ruin. PHONE, vanquished.

CASEY (CONT'D)

(stunned disbelief)

Are you crazy--?

A beat. Then a SMALL CHORUS:

THE LOONIES

Maybe. A little. I dunno,
probably. (etc.)

McKenna ignores them. Turns to Casey.

MCKENNA

Use your head, lady. You want them tracing that phone?

NETTLES

(chiming in)

Question.

Everyone looks at him --

NETTLES

(CONT'D) (to McKenna)

How much you askin' for this land in Florida?

Casey huffs impatiently. She starts up, heads for the door --

CASEY

You guys can play house if you want, I have dogs to feed and midterms to grade --

MCKENNA

Don't be stupid.

She looks up sharply.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

They tried to put a bullet in your head back there.

(eyes smouldering)

You're expendable. Just like the rest of us.

That STOPS her. She exhales. Looks round at the "unit" --

CASEY

Expendables, huh? More like the Seven fucking Dwarfs.

Nettles grins bashfully -- Casey sighs.

CASEY (CONT'D)

Can I borrow a phone, at least? I need someone to feed my dogs.

She flops in a chair. Gazes up at McKenna.

CASEY (CONT'D)

You saw it first, didn't you? The Predator?

(off his quizzical look)

I read the file. Those men it killed -- yours?

McKenna nods, grim.

CASEY (CONT'D)

I figured. You may as well have written their script. Psycho ex-sniper. PTSD, divorced... even got a flaky kid who curls up in a ball, it's *perfect* --

McKenna's eyes blaze. She shrugs:

CASEY (CONT'D)

I'm just telling you what's in the file.

MCKENNA

It said "flaky?"

CASEY

That was an unfortunate embellishment. Can we move on?

WILLIAMS

(joining in)

We can start with what you were doing at a supposedly abandoned military base -- full of private soldiers. Mercs.

CASEY

I'm an evolutionary biologist. I was on call in case of... you know, *contact*.

McKenna thinks it over, paces. Stops, exhales raggedly...

MCKENNA

If we wanna keep breathin', we gotta find this thing. Expose it. We all agreed?

A look goes round. A bonding moment... exiles, all; perfect scapegoats. No none will miss them.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Good. First things first. What is it?

CASEY

The Predator? Well...
(shrugs)

It has human DNA, for one thing.

The loonies react. *WHAT?*

CASEY (CONT'D)

That's not all. I was there when
it escaped, it... I think it was
looking for something.

McKenna goes pale with realization.

MCKENNA

Its equipment.

He looks up -- realizes all eyes are on him.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

I took it. So I'd have
evidence. (swallows hard)
I... I think I know where
it's headed.

Pause. Nettles clears his throat:

NETTLES

We're gonna need some ordnance.

CASEY

"Ordnance"?

NETTLES

You know. Weapons and shit.

Nebraska Williams' brow furrows. Plotting.

WILLIAMS

I know a guy.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - (THE NEXT) EVENING

A parked, two-tone WINNEBAGO SUPER CHIEF. From inside:

TV SOUND (O.S.)

... the 41 year-old came to this
Texas home to meet our decoy, whom
he believes to be an underage girl.

INT. WINNEBAGO - EVENING

Every square inch CRAMMED with war mementos and weaponry.
Been to a gun show? That. A grizzled man in a WHEELCHAIR
watches TV. Master Gunnery Sergeant GARRISON CUTTER, 60s.

CHRIS HANSEN (ON THE TV)

And what are you up to today?

PERVERT (ON THE TV)
Nothin'. Just came to hang out.

CHRIS HANSEN (ON THE TV)
I see you brought some condoms and
some Mike's Hard Lemonade.

There's a RAP on the door, and Cutter ROLLS himself the
entire three feet to answer it as he RAISES AN M16. He
opens up enough to see a sliver of a face:

WILLIAMS
Gunny.

CUTTER
Well, if it ain't Nebraska
Williams.

WILLIAMS
Just wonderin' how'd you feel
about a little recon mission...

Cutter peers through the crack in the door, SEEING:

THE GROUP OF LOONIES in the moonlight. McKenna. The others.
The very uncomfortable, but equally appealing... CASEY.

Behind him: dirty laundry. Take-out containers. A cat YOWLS.

CUTTER
Let me check my schedule.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT (RORY'S HOUSE) - EVENING

Rory, in his "Control Area" wearing the Frankenstein mask
his mom bought him. He pulls it off, frowning. *Lame.*

Then -- a scuffling SOUND at the basement window. He turns to
SEE what appears to be...

A LARGE, FOUR-LEGGED ANIMAL

SNIFFING at the window. The neighbor's pit bull...?
It disappears -- he doesn't pay it much mind.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

EMILY does the dishes -- oblivious as RORY, clutching
something, furtively heads out the back door BEHIND HER.

PRE-LAP: the SOUND OF A DOORBELL RINGING, and --

INT. FRONT ENTRY - NIGHT (LATER)

Emily opens the door to reveal: TRAEGER, flanked by armed SECURITY MEN.

TRAEGER
Mrs. McKenna?
(flashes his ID)
Can we have a word?

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE (INTERCUT:)

REVEAL MCKENNA and the rest of the vets, HIDDEN IN THE BUSHES with field glasses and talkies. Williams aims A SHOTGUN MIKE at the house, allows them to hear the conversation:

EMILY
Let me guess: he's done something crazy.

TRAEGER
Why would you guess that..?

EMILY
Because the look on your face says he's not dead, and yet here you fucking are.

STEVENS notices a locked GUN CASE in the adjoining study.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Those are his. He's a hunter.
(sighs)
Look, I haven't seen Quinn for a year. He's on assignment.

TRAEGER
How about your son -- where is he?

EMILY
Around here somewhere. Why?

TRAEGER
Mind if we speak with him?

INT. THE BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Traeger and the security men come down the stairs, finding Rory's lair... but the kid? Nowhere to be seen.

RORY'S MOM
That's weird. If he's not in his room, he's always here. He said he was going trick-or-treating, but...

She frowns. SEES the two discarded costumes on his work table. *Why would he leave without his costume?*

EXT. SUBURBIA - NIGHT

RORY timidly roams the neighborhood, surrounded by costumed trick-or-treaters and their parents.

His head, ENCASED IN THE PREDATOR'S BIOHELMET.

The *KUJHAD*, clutched by his side. Swell costume. Navigating's a bit tricky, he stumbles a little --

RORY'S POV: Human HEAT SIGNATURES. Every direction.

INT. WINNEBAGO (NEAR RORY'S HOUSE) - NIGHT

CUTTER at the wheel, taking watch. At the NOOK in back, CASEY squints into a microscope. Murmurs, under her breath --

CASEY

It's like a supermatrix of
tryhydroxy and amino acids...

She pulls back from the lens. Blinks, incredulous:

CASEY (CONT'D)

With evidence of recombinant
gene splicing.

CUTTER

What's that mean?

CASEY

If I'm right..? It means they're
trying to upgrade themselves.

She picks up a TALKIE, keys it:

CASEY (CONT'D)

McKenna? I've found something.

EXT. OUTSIDE RORY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

McKenna's TALKIE SQUELCHES -- he quickly turns it down. Then he freezes -- notices something in the shadows:

THAT "DOG" FROM EARLIER. Sniffing at the basement windows.

INT. RORY'S HOUSE - SAME

Inside, Traeger ALSO hears it. Stops, looks toward the back of the house. Nods to TWO OF HIS MEN to check it out --

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - SAME

TRAEGER'S MEN EMERGE from the house and fan out.

WITH ONE OF THE SECURITY MEN

Flashlight up. He catches a glimpse of "the dog" as it pads away into the brush. Keys his talkie:

SECURITY DETAIL

I'm on it. Triangulate on my signal.

EXT. EDGE OF WOODS - NIGHT

The Security Man SLAPS a bug from his cheek. Then, a GRUNTING SOUND from nearby. He WHIPS HIS FLASHLIGHT ONTO -- AN ARMADILLO

Foraging in a pile of garbage. It looks up, beady-eyed --

SECURITY DETAIL

(CONT'D) You scared the shit out of me, you little walking helmet.

Which is when -- the armadillo SCREAMS (yes, they do that). It's looking past the Security Man, who HEARS a throaty CLICKING SOUND behind him, and SPINS, face-to-face with:

ONE OF THE FOUR-LEGGED CREATURES from the ship!

Yellow, albino eyes. MANDIBLES. The man turns to RUN --

BUT HE'S BLOCKED by the SECOND CREATURE!

QUICK CUTS - SAVAGE, MERCILESS

Strangled screams. IMPOTENT GUNSHOTS shatter the suburban stillness as --

EXT. RORY'S HOUSE - THAT MOMENT

TRAEGER bursts from the back door with his remaining Security Man. They RUSH in the direction of the screams and gunshots --

MOVING WITH TRAEGER

He stumbles to a mute halt, SEEING:

THE FIRST OF HIS MEN, splayed inside-out. The other one, nearby. Similarly crimson.

Traeger registers alarm, but oddly, not much surprise.
He keys his talkie:

TRAEGER
Team Edward to Team Jacob.
Secure the perimeter.

EXT. WOODS - SAME

MCKENNA AND THE MEN, guns up. CASEY joins them, GRABS a pair of night-vision binocs to SEE:

THE TWO PREDATOR HYBRIDS

Retreating into the night. She swallows; adrenaline pumping.

CASEY
Jesus...
(catches her
breath) They're dogs.

McKenna looks at her like she has antlers.

MCKENNA
Excuse me?

CASEY
The Predators -- they're
hunters, get it?

A mordant grin, despite herself:

CASEY (CONT'D)
They brought their fucking dogs.

INT. RORY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

McKenna SLAMS THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR, finds himself face to face with Emily -- *HIS WIFE*. Stone-faced:

EMILY
Hi, honey, you're home.

An awkward moment -- then she clocks *the shotgun in his hand*.

MCKENNA
Where's Rory?

EMILY
Oh, I get it. You think you
can just waltz in here and --

MCKENNA
I asked you a question.

EMILY
 (calling upstairs)
 Agent Traeger, he's down here!!

MCKENNA
 Nice try.
 (taps earbud)
 I was listening. Oh, and "*What's he done now?*" Thanks for that.

EMILY
 What was I supposed to say?

MCKENNA
 How about, "My ex-husband -- is my he all right?"

This catches her off-guard.

EMILY
 I thought you... hit bottom.

MCKENNA
 Not yet. But hey, the night's young.
 (repeats)
Where's our son?

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

McKenna bee-lines to Rory's "Control Area," SEES THE PARCEL he sent from Cuba. He shakes it. *EMPTY.*

MCKENNA (CONT'D)
Shit -- !

EMILY
 (on the stairs)
 What? He ordered some video games.

MCKENNA
 No no no no...

McKenna rifles through Rory's stuffs for any trace of the alien tech.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)
 The whole fucking reason I sent it to a P.O. box was so *I wouldn't put you in danger!* *Goddammit.*
 (turns to her)
 We need to find him -- NOW.

He BOLTS, heading upstairs again --

EMILY

Quinn, *you're scaring me.*

INT. HALLWAY - FIRST FLOOR

Back the way they came. McKenna tosses over his shoulder:

MCKENNA

So you let him order any
video games he wants?

EMILY

Excuse me?

MCKENNA

I specifically said -- *no first
person shooters, no combat games.*
You don't even check, do you?

EMILY

Whatever. He has, like, THREE.
Jesus--

He turns on her.

MCKENNA

THREE?

EMILY

Yes. And did you ever think that
maybe he plays them to *connect
with his father??*

(catches herself)

Oh my God, we're doing this.

She STOPS. Sees:

THE LOONIES, gathered in her living room. A comical moment
as they grin stupidly. Sheepish waves.

McKenna, meanwhile: snatching PHOTOS OF RORY from
walls, tables. School portraits, holiday pics --

EMILY (CONT'D)

What are you doing? Give me those!

(to McKenna, re: Loonies)

Who are these people?!

He calmly takes the pictures from her.

MCKENNA

They're my unit. They're soldiers.

She blinks, incredulous:

EMILY

They look like ushers at a
porno theater.

(to Williams)

No offense.

WILLIAMS

(to McKenna)

The wife..?

MCKENNA

For better or worse.

(waves a hand)

Emily? Loonies. Loonies? Emily.

EMILY

Wait, back up -- your
unit? (frowns)

What happened to Haines..? Dupree?

MCKENNA

They're dead.

(deep breath)

And the thing that killed them is
looking for Rory. SO. You can
think I'm crazy all you want --

He looks her dead in the eye:

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

But right now? Our son is in a
kill box.

He turns to the Loonies:

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

I want a grid search. Three teams.

He gives the first picture to Williams.

MCKENNA

(CONT'D) You go west.

(another picture for
Baxley and Coyle)

You two, east.

(one for Nettles
and Flyboy)

Up the middle.

He turns to Emily -- who's shrugging into her COAT. Snatching
up, of all things, a FIREPLACE POKER. He GRABS IT away --

EMILY

What are you doing? Our son's
in danger!

MCKENNA

That's right, and last time
I looked -- ?

(hefts his GUN)

This is match grade.

(the POKER)

This, not so much. But points
for originality.

He turns to the Loonies:

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Objective area's eight square
blocks. Parallel sweeps. Stay
on your radios.

(beat)

Find my son.

EXT. OUTSIDE RORY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

WILLIAMS AND THE LOONIES split up with military precision;
years of training back in play. McKenna turns to his wife:

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

They're gonna come back, and
they're gonna ask questions.

All that matters is our boy.

(hands her a phone)

This is a burner, I'll call you.

EMILY

I don't like what you do, Quinn.

I never did.

(grudging)

But watching you do it--?

MCKENNA

Turns you on, doesn't it?

A warm look between them; a history of good and bad
and everything in-between.

EMILY

Get out of here before I open
that gun case.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - SUBURBS - NIGHT

RORY lifts the Predator helmet, watches OTHER KIDS ringing
doorbells, collecting goodies. Timid to try it himself...

OFF-SCREEN VOICE

Hey, Ass-Burger!

Oh, Christ. IT'S E.J. -- *the bully from school*. Rory turns to go the other way. Finds himself boxed in by:

DEREK

What're you supposed to be?

RORY

Leave me alone.

E.J.

Or what -- ? *You'll wash your hands five hundred times?*

Rory hurries away. The bullies dog his heels, chuckling

-- EXT. A CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

Patchy lawn. Porch light OFF. The least inviting house on this or any block. Possible escape..? Rory heads up the steps. Looks back --

THE BULLIES

On the sidewalk, smirking. No turning back now. Gulp. He RINGS the doorbell. A BUZZ echoes from deep inside...

RORY

... *trick or treat..?*

A VOICE from behind the door:

STONER'S VOICE

Fuck off.

ON THE SIDEWALK -- E.J. and Derek CHORTLE with amusement.

Taking the hint, Rory turns. Moves stiffly toward the street. A door CREAKS OPEN behind him, and...

An unfriendly looking STONER appears in the darkened doorway.

STONER

Here's a treat, you little shit.

He *PITCHES SOMETHING* through the air -- *Splat!* A ROTTEN APPLE SMACKS Rory in the back of the head. Bullies, laughing...

The reaction is shockingly swift and

spontaneous. PREDATOR MASK POV

The interior of the helmet LIGHTS UP. Symbols, scrolling.
TARGETING INFORMATION. A tiny PLASMA-CASTER juts forth --
 UNLEASHES HELLFIRE.

ON THE PORCH - THE STONER

*is literally DISINTEGRATED as the doorway BLOWS OUT
 ALL AROUND HIM -- !*

EXT. A BLOCK AWAY - MCKENNA AND CASEY

see the EXPLOSION. Trade alarmed looks -- and RUN --

EXT. STONER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The front lawn, SMOKING. Rory turns toward the slack-
 jawed bullies, his face *the imposing PREDATOR BIOHELMET*.

The bullies almost shit their pants before FLEEING in abject
 terror --! Colored CHERRY LIGHTS flash over the scene --

POLICE CRUISER, INBOUND

Rory pulls off the helmet as a ROOKIE COP draws his weapon.

ROOKIE COP

Freeze!

But Rory panics, RUNS --

EXT. BACK ALLEY - RORY, HAULING ASS

And in his panic, *DROPS the Predator biohelmet*. He can't
 turn back -- so he *KEEPS RUNNING*.

INT. WINNEBAGO - DRIVING - NIGHT

CUTTER at the wheel, as an APB SQUAWKS from:

POLICE BAND RADIO

*-- male juvenile, ten to twelve
 years old, metal Halloween mask --*

Cutter grabs his talkie, SHOVES IT at the speaker of
 the police band radio.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - THAT MOMENT

CASEY AND MCKENNA ON THE MOVE. McKenna's talkie SQUELCHES:

POLICE BAND RADIO (CONT'D)

-- repeat: moving east on Woodruff.

McKenna swears. GRABS Casey --

MCKENNA
This way. Move.

EXT. BACK IN THE ALLEY

The PREDATOR DOGS emerge from the shadows. Sniffing. One snatches the FALLEN BIOHELMET in its mandibles -- CUT TO:

EXT. STONER'S HOUSE - SAME

More POLICE CRUISERS, BLOWING INTO FRAME.

They jolt to a stop, just in time to see the ROOKIE COP come running, panting and wheezing. He calls to the new arrivals:

ROOKIE COP
I lost him!

He stops. Puzzled. Looks left -- right --

ROOKIE COP (CONT'D)
Where's my fucking car?

INT. SQUAD CAR - FLASHERS TURNING

WILLIAMS drives, slews around a corner--! Keys his walkie:

WILLIAMS
Eastbound on Buckingham. The
kid's rabbiting, he's spooked.

CUT TO:

RORY, RUNNING

Between houses, terrified, THE KUJHAD clutched in his sweaty hand -- the very thing the Predator's after.

EXT. JIM & JOHN'S BAR-B-Q - NIGHT

RORY rounds a bend. STOPS in his tracks, path blocked by --

Christ. It's that fucking *PIT BULL* -- the one that taunts him on the way home from school. The dog GROWLS. Primal.

Then, oddly -- moves RIGHT UP TO RORY. Stops beside him.

Rory's brow furrows with confusion... Then, a decision. He reaches out, tentatively... *to pet the dog?*

The dog doesn't flinch. Their eyes meet. A sweet, unspoken recognition that they're not all that different: two earth creatures, just trying to get by.

Then the dog FREEZES. A throaty GROWL as it backs away from something OFF-SCREEN, and Rory TURNS TO SEE:

ONE OF THE PREDATOR DOGS

Snarling. Vicious. Rory gapes, thunderstruck --

Now the OTHER PREDATOR DOG appears! Thinking quickly: Rory STABS BUTTONS on the KUJHAD, and with that --

OTHERWORLDLY CREATURES APPEAR.

HOLOGRAMS. The Predator dogs RETREAT, fearful. Nice job, Rory. Until the images FLICKER, and FADE. *Damn!*

The sniffers turn toward Rory -- but just then, A VOICE from off-screen:

MCKENNA

Son!

AND THERE'S HIS DAD, shotgun in hand. McKenna cocks and FIRES at the sniffers -- *K-CHUK-BLAMM! K-CHUK-BLAMM!*

BUT THE SNIFFERS JUST KEEP COMING.

A SQUAD CAR SCREAMS into the parking lot and -- WILLIAMS ROLLS OUT onto the pavement before the car's even stopped. Levels the grenade

launcher. Click--!

Nothing. Fucking thing's jammed. As he struggles to fix it, the OTHER VETS MOVE IN, loaded for bear. OPEN FIRE on the Predator Dogs. A HAIL STORM OF ARTILLERY--!

The Sniffers barely flinch. *Just KEEP -- MOVING -- FORWARD.*

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Um, Gaylord?

Williams finishes a final adjustment on the launcher --

WILLIAMS

I thought I told you --

-- then *THROWS IT* into McKenna's waiting hands.

WILLIAMS

(CONT'D) Call me Nebraska.

McKenna SPINS.

WHOMMM--! FIRES A 40MM RECOILLESS GRENADE down the Predator dog's throat. A muted FWHHMPP! from within, and --

The creature BUCKLES. Punch-drunk. Finally topples as...

THE SECOND SNIFFER crouches to attack. But that's when Williams steps forward, a BOLT GUN in hand.

He levels it at the creature -- FIRES, AND --

THE BOLT impales the creature's forehead. It wavers. Lists. Walks in a lazy circle. Not dead but... no longer a threat. Nebraska Williams mutters ruefully:

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
Goddamn space aliens.

But his triumph is short-lived as he looks to THE POLICE CAR he stole: because standing on top, bathed in the strobing colors of the lightbar is...

THE PREDATOR.

It STOMPS down the hood of the car, on a bee-line for Rory.

McKenna pumps the shotgun, unloads: *BLAM--!* But the thing KEEPS RIGHT ON COMING.

INT. SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

Baxley at the wheel. He GUNS IT -- *SLAMS into the Predator from behind at high speed!*

EXT. PARKING LOT - SAME

Alas, nothing. The front fender is dented, but the Predator? Just glowers at Baxley like it's irked. *Then --*

CONTINUES TOWARD RORY... CASEY appears, CALLS out to McKenna:

CASEY
*That thing in his hand! THAT'S
WHAT IT WANTS--!*

MCKENNA RUNS -- grapples to wrest the device away from his son. But as always -- *THE PREDATOR'S FASTER.*

The Creature GRABS McKENNA! SLAMS HIM, hard, into an old, neon "Jim & John's" sign! It CRACKS and SPARKS--!

And just as we consider saying good-bye to our lead, McKenna watches, stunned, as the Predator THUMBS A BUTTON on its wrist gauntlet and, *believe it or not*, TALKS:

Guttural. Alien-sounding. But ENGLISH:

GOOD PREDATOR
... *Coming... for me ... Run...*

Then -- a throaty CLICKING SOUND. From off-screen.

The Predator *turns to look*. Stiffens; replies, that selfsame CLICKING. Defensive. Like two cats YOWLING at each other.

The remaining alien DOG *pricks up its ears* -- looking back toward the approach of its owner... its MASTER....

At which point, McKenna and the others turn TO SEE:

A MASSIVE SILHOUETTE

EMERGING from the darkness. *Rising up* --

On first viewing, it very much resembles the iconic PREDATOR. It seems, if anything, more HUMAN than prior versions.

McKENNA stands, blinking. Because this new, upgraded Predator? It's HUGE. TEN FEET TALL.

With a SHRIEK, THE WINNEBAGO slews into the parking lot, Cutter at the wheel.

INT. WINNEBAGO - ON CUTTER

as he catches his first glimpse of THE UPGRADE.

CUTTER
Baby Jesus on a pony.

Which is when:

OUTSIDE

THE GOOD PREDATOR RELEASES MCKENNA; raises its PLASMA CANNON-- and TRIGGERS A WITHERING BLAST at the Upgrade--!

Then another. And ANOTHER..! *Nothing*. Bupkis. Spit wads.

Because this new, UPGRADED Predator? Doesn't need armor. Its body, its skin -- IS armor.

RORY, MEANWHILE

Stock still. In shock. McKenna approaches --

MCKENNA

Rory? Come on.

Rory doesn't budge.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Son? We have to go. RIGHT...
FUCKING... NOW...

No time for negotiations, McKenna PICKS UP HIS SON,
backing slowly toward

THE WINNEBAGO

Where Cutter is frozen, gripping the wheel. McKenna and
the others board the vehicle slowly; *no sudden movements*.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

How fast does this thing go?

Cutter can't tear his away eyes from the upgrade.

CUTTER

Not fast enough.

WITH THE PREDATORS (INTERCUT:)

As the GOOD PREDATOR MOVES! As if to engage the upgrade --
to take him on. But that's what's scary. Because we thought
our INITIAL Predator was a big deal. Invincible. But this??

As Cutter STOMPS the gas, the UPGRADE PREDATOR WHIPS AROUND

-- COLLARS the smaller Predator -- HEFTS it --

LITERALLY TEARS IT APART BEFORE OUR EYES.

WRENCHES its spine loose -- RAISES ITS BLOOD-SLICKED TROPHY
to the full moon. Emits a primal, blood-chilling *SHRIEK*.

It spins toward the Winnebago -- turns its eyes on us
full blast -- and that's when we see it. REALLY see it:

The EYES. They've... evolved. Human-looking.

INT. WINNEBAGO - THAT MOMENT

Cutter GUNS IT--! and we INTERCUT:

EXT. SUBURBS - SERIES OF SHOTS - NIGHT

as the Winnebago SCREAMS along, SWERVING, *clipping parked
cars* -- OUR PRINCIPALS gawking out the windows at:

EERIE GLIMPSES

of THE UPGRADE, *in pursuit -- darting, leaping -- SPRINTING through the shadows alongside the SPEEDING RV.*

Speed, agility? Terrifying. The term "Predator" redefined.

INT. WINNEBAGO - DRIVING

CASEY, apoplectic, *points at THE KUJHAD Rory's still holding.*

CASEY

Goddammit, McKenna, that's what it wants! That thing!

A massive CRUNCH! as the huge vehicle JARS VIOLENTLY.

It's trying to get in.

RORY's curled up in a fetal ball. Not a fire alarm this time, but rather, CRIPPLING FEAR that's triggered his shutdown. And the Predator device--?

He's clutching it, as if for dear life.

CASEY (CONT'D)

For Christ's sake, GIVE IT TO HIM OR WE'RE ALL DEAD!

McKenna knows she's right. And with sudden, terrifying force, violently PRIES HIS SON'S FIST OPEN to wrench it free--!

Rory YELPS with pain and surprise as McKenna HURLS THE KUJHAD OUT an open window -- !

EVERYONE squints out the back of the Winnebago, glimpsing:

THE UPGRADE

as it scrambles for THE KUJHAD, and... SNAPS IT *into the slot on ITS OWN wrist gauntlet.*

A last nightmarish glance at our escaping heroes -- *then it DISAPPEARS into the night...*

INT. WINNEBAGO - DRIVING - NIGHT

The group just stares blankly, speechless. The only sound, the rhythmic RATTLE of the RV's Chevy 454 engine.

RORY winces, hands shaking. Afraid to look at McKenna. Less terrified of the Predator than the violence inflicted by his father. He HEARS BARKING, and --

OUT THE WINDOW - THE PIT BULL

Now maybe Rory's only friend, chasing the Winnebago and BARKING into the night... CUT TO:

EXT. JIM AND JOHN'S BAR-B-Q- NIGHT

TRAEGER stands over the gnarled remains of the "good" Predator. POLICE and FBI VEHICLES form a perimeter. With trembling hand, he clutches a cell phone, says:

TRAEGER

Traeger here. The asset's dead.

INTERCUT: INT. DARK GOVERNMENT FACILITY (AREA 52)

A stocky, four-star GENERAL, on the phone. Square-jawed, with vaguely malevolent, dark eyes. This is WOODHURST, 66.

WOODHURST

Explain.

TRAEGER

There's a new player, sir. Our nightmare scenario. The genetics are... unprecedented.

WOODHURST

An upgrade?

TRAEGER

Affirmative. Pulled our asset apart like a piece of taffy.

WOODHURST

Jesus...

(ice cold)

You spooks over at Stargazer -- you were going to tell me you had an asset in captivity, weren't you..? Funny how I was only notified once it had escaped.

TRAEGER

Of course, sir. It had only been 72 hours, we were ascertaining --

WOODHURST

Shut up.

TRAEGER

Sir, I --

WOODHURST

Shut up.

(beat)

Lies are wasted speech. You cross me again, I won't just kill you, I'll sell tickets. Understood?

TRAEGER

Understood... General.

WOODHURST

The asset brought something to earth. Something it wasn't supposed to have. Find it. Then bring it to me.

CUT TO:

EXT. OAK GROVE - NIGHTTIME

Very late now. The WINNEBAGO, cached in a grove of TREES. Crickets *chirrup*, peaceful... a breather, in other words.

McKENNA's perched in a TREE. On watch. Glances down at:

RORY, huddled among the loonies, drawing in the dirt with a stick.

The poor kid's shivering; barely holding it together.

CLOSE ON DIRT

We see what he's absently etching with his stick, oblivious -- it's a crude MAP. And: *we've seen it before...* CUT TO:

INT. RORY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

And a RINGING cell phone -- the burner McKenna gave Emily. Frantic with worry, she GRABS IT! HEARS:

MCKENNA'S PHONE

VOICE (filtered)

It's me.

EMILY

Please tell me he's okay.

EXT. OAK TREE - NIGHT (INTERCUT:)

McKenna, on the ground now, clutching a cell phone. Williams, having a smoke nearby.

MCKENNA

He's fine, he's with me. I'll
bring him home when it's --

Emily's eyes flicker off-screen, uneasy.

EMILY

It's okay, you don't have to
explain. Listen -- remember
our first date..?

McKenna, baffled.

MCKENNA

That night in Buckhead?

EMILY

Exactly.

And with that, she hangs up. No explanation. McKenna
frowns. WTF? Williams looks at him, quizzical.

WILLIAMS

"Night in Buckhead?"

MCKENNA

(nods; remembering)

Yeah... we were going at it in
my Trans Am that night, and --

Sudden realization.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

... cops were watching us...

INT. RORY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - REVEALING

His ex is, indeed, SURROUNDED BY BLACK OPS TECHNICIANS
with surveillance equipment. Before they can stop her:

Emily POPS the phone's SIM card, DROPS It into the sink's
garbage disposal -- *flicks on the water and the disposal.*

EMILY

You guys fucked with the
wrong family.

EXT. OAK GROVE - SAME

THE LOONIES are now climbing on and around the Winnebago,
stretching camouflage netting over it. RORY watches.

RORY

I don't think that's gonna work.

BAXLEY

What do you mean?

RORY

Wrong colors, wrong pattern.
They'll find us.

McKenna appears behind him. Puts a hand on his shoulder.

MCKENNA

I think they know what
they're doing.

Rory FLINCHES at the touch, and McKenna quickly withdraws...

EXT. IN THE WOODS

NETTLES walks the perimeter, armed. Suddenly -- a familiar, blood-chilling *CLICKING*--! HE WHIPS around.

But nothing. Shrubs. Dirt. Sudden SILENCE.

Then -- THE CLICKING'S CLOSER! Nettles SPINS -- A *FLASH OF THE PREDATOR DOG'S FACE* fills the frame, as...

EXT. GROVE - BACK TO SCENE

McKenna and Rory, sitting side by side. Awkward.

To break the tension, McKenna fishes in a pocket, produces a set of DOG TAGS. He hands them to Rory, who fingers them:

COLLETT, RORY T.
AIR FORCE 13006929

The kid looks at his dad, confused.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Friend of mine. From...

An involuntary glance at the TEETH MARKS on his hand.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

... from a long time ago.

Rory clutches the odd gift; oblivious to its significance.

RORY

Weird, us having the same name.

MCKENNA

Yeah.

(smiles)

Funny, huh?

Pause... then:

RORY

Mom says... you're a killer.

MCKENNA

I'm a soldier.

RORY

What's the difference..?

Good question. McKenna looks at his son.

MCKENNA

When you *like* it -- that's
when you're a killer.

RORY

(nods)

Mom likes killing spiders.

MCKENNA

I hate spiders.

RORY

(nods)

This is the most we've talked.

Pause... almost companionable. Then:

RORY (CONT'D)

I think it was a good guy.

MCKENNA

(bewildered)

Excuse me?

RORY

The alien. The smaller one. He was
trying to save us from the big one.
Almost like there's two sides.

(beat)

Maybe they're having a war.

McKenna feels a sober chill...

NEARBY - WILLIAMS

Tenses, hearing something in the woods. He SPINS, levels
his M16 into the darkness.

WILLIAMS

Company's coming.

Which is when NETTLES BURSTS OUT OF THE BRUSH -- *followed by that goddamn PREDATOR DOG! The surviving one; the one with the bolt in its forehead.*

But the group quickly realizes: it's not chasing him. It's merely *following him.*

NETTLES

Anybody got a goddamn Milk Bone?

They watch curiously as the thing wanders like an obedient (if addled) puppy.

FLYBOY

Jesus, Nebraska, you
lobotomized the poor sumbitch.

The Predator Dog starts toward Rory.

Instantly fearful, the kid GRABS a gnarled piece of wood and HURLS IT at the creature! It DUCKS -- turns to look at the fallen branch. Then... PADS AWAY to retrieve it.

In seconds, it RETURNS to Nettles and DROPS IT at his feet.

NETTLES

Well, I'll be go-to-hell.

He reaches to "pet" the thing. Gently takes its dreadlock-like appendages in his hand.

THE SNIFFER reacts oddly. Suddenly disoriented. The group LAUGHS. Even Rory smiles; a moment of respite. Camaraderie.

INT. WINNEBAGO - SAME

McKENNA enters. Gets himself a beer. CASEY says:

CASEY

Nice kid.

McKenna nods thanks. Sits.

CASEY (CONT'D)

You know... a lot of experts think being on the spectrum's not a disorder. Some think it might even be the next evolutionary step.

MCKENNA

All I know is, when his gram comes over, he ignores her and hugs a pillow she made.

CASEY

It's the same love. Just
deflected. (cautiously)
If I can offer an opinion... maybe
you're a little bit afraid of each
other?

He shakes his head, rueful.

MCKENNA

Nice spin, but... I think
we're both afraid of me.

He takes a swig of his beer.

EXT. OAK GROVE - OUTSIDE THE WINNEBAGO - THAT MOMENT

THE VETS continue to play with the beast's DREADS. As they're
touched, the Sniffer goes slack, wobbly. Like he's stoned.

INT. WINNEBAGO - SAME

McKenna, watching this through the window.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

What do you make of those--?
(gestures to his
hair:) The Marley shit?

CASEY

Maybe sensory receptors. Like...
cat whiskers.

MCKENNA

(sips his beer)
Anything else, professor?

She looks at him grimly --

CASEY

Just this.

-- and produces THE VIAL she stole from the lab.

CASEY (CONT'D)

They extracted this from the
Predator's spinal fluid. In
layman's terms, it's like
distilled "lizard brain." The part
that kicks in under extreme
survival conditions.

MCKENNA

So..?

CASEY

Remember I told you they rip
out peoples' spines?

MCKENNA

Sure. Trophies, you said.

CASEY

Right. But if a Predator's
first and foremost a survivor--
(beat)
Wouldn't it make sense to collect
DNA "souvenirs"?

MCKENNA

From... peoples' spines?

CASEY

Brain stem -- close enough. Look,
suppose, just suppose, that these
space creatures are... siphoning
off our lizard brain juice.

MCKENNA

You don't have to overdo
the "layman's terms" --

CASEY

I'm just saying... it might
explain the human DNA.

McKenna considers this.

MCKENNA

Collecting "survival" traits, from
the most high-end human specim --

CASEY

(interrupting)
Why stop there? Seriously --
why not other species, too?
(beat)
Extreme hybridization. That's why
they hunt. To extract the defense
mechanisms from the strongest,
the smartest, the most dangerous
species on every planet they
visit...

MCKENNA

To make hybrids.
(looks up, stunned)
Are you just pulling this out
of your ass?

CASEY

This new Predator, the bigger one
-- *it didn't need a mask*, you
notice that? And did you see its
fucking eyes?

(beat)

They're evolving,
Lieutenant. Changing.

MCKENNA

Or being upgraded.

CASEY

And here's the clincher.

(leans in)

Project Stargazer? The shit-
show that recruited me?

McKenna shrugs: What about it?

CASEY (CONT'D)

A stargazer's a type of flower; an
orchid. And not just any orchid --

MCKENNA

Holy shit...

(softly)

A hybrid.

Damn. McKenna gets up. Pacing. It's a lot to digest.

CASEY

That thing back there... the new
one, "Thing Two"? Probably top of
the line. "Thing One"? Last
year's model.

(re: the sniffer)

Old Yeller out there's another
kind. But none of them is the
essential Predator. You know why?
Because survival is. Because this --

She holds up the vial, locks eyes with McKenna.

CASEY (CONT'D)

This is the Predator.

A SOUND rises outside. Distant WHORPLE of chopper blades.
McKenna's up like a shot.

EXT. CLEARING - MOMENTS LATER

McKenna bursts outside -- looks to Flyboy, who's stock
still, gauging the sound of the incoming copter:

FLYBOY

Sounds like a Pave Hawk.
Sikorsky. (looks at McKenna)
Not civilian.

All McKenna needs to hear. He whirls round --

MCKENNA

Lights out! MOVE--!

THE LOONIES SCRAMBLE to turn off lanterns as McKenna DIVES into the Winnebago; renders it dark. Everyone freezes...

THE SIKORSKY ROARS OVERHEAD, a blinding SEARCHLIGHT raking the woods. Slowly, the SOUND diminishes. Then...

THE COPTER TURNS. Start back in their direction. *Shit!*

McKenna looks around. As the ersatz C.O., it's on him to form a plan. He looks at his "men." Motley as they seem, they're SERVICEMEN, U.S. Vets. And they're nothing if not loyal.

MCKENNA

(CONT'D) Best split up.
(to Nettles)
You and Flyboy, west.
(to Baxley and
Coyle) You two north.

FLYBOY

But -- what do we do?

And McKenna sees in their faces: *they don't want to go*. He grasps at straws to give them something. A mission.

MCKENNA

(to Flyboy)
We'll need air transport. Something that can outrun that Pave Hawk.
(looks at Nettles)
And maybe some incendiaries. Never know when we could use a diversion. Roger that?

And that's when: The Loonies, God bless 'em, *SALUTE* MCKENNA. He looks at them, abruptly moved.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Wish I had coordinates, but...

FLYBOY

We'll find you, sir.

McKenna nods. SNAPS back a salute. And with that, the LOONIES DISPERSE; grabbing weapons, disappearing into the woods.

CUTTER

(to McKenna)

They know it's a snipe hunt, right?

Rory's observed this whole exchange. A tentative VOICE:

RORY

What's a snipe hunt?

WILLIAMS

When you're chasing something you'll never find.

MCKENNA

(urgent)

Come on.

They turn to make a run for it. Get five yards before they're STARTLED by:

The PREDATOR DOG; gnarled stick clenched in its mandibles! Try as it might to be adorable, it's one ugly motherfucker.

As the HELICOPTER grows louder, Casey makes frantic "shoo-ing" motions. But the Sniffer isn't taking the hint.

She spies an errant GRENADE on the ground, SNATCHES IT UP. And LOBS it as far as she can, into a ravine.

The Sniffer drops the wood and RACES after it. Problem solved. Except --

THE SIKORSKY

Is now *circling the clearing*. GOD-LIGHT, stabbing down --

TIME CUT: EXT. CLEARING - THE SIKORSKY

Touching down. (Loonies and Sniffer, long gone.)

TRAEGER steps down from the chopper, wind WHIPPING. His men DRAW WEAPONS on Williams and Cutter, as...

TRAEGER

(re: Winnebago)

Whose idea was the jungle camo?

McKenna glances at Rory, who shrugs -- *told you so.*

TRAEGER (CONT'D)

Should have used Woodland. Might as well have shot up a signal flare.

He approaches Casey. Regards her with a grin, then -- extends his open palm. After a beat, she stiffly hands him THE VIAL.

TRAEGER (CONT'D)

There, now. That wasn't so hard.

His men rudely PAT DOWN McKenna and the others.

TRAEGER (CONT'D)

Where is it?

MCKENNA

Where's what?

TRAEGER

The device. It goes --
(mimes Predator's
wrist gauntlet)
-- right in here.

CASEY

We threw it out of the RV.
That thing has it.

Traeger ponders.

TRAEGER

You know what I think? I think it's time for some... robust discussion.

SMASH TO:

MCKENNA'S FACE

CRACK--! It SLAMS into the ground! Pummeled, caked with dirt. Purplish welts glisten, backlit by searchlights.

It'll take a minute, but eventually you'll get it: we are in an abandoned abattoir. A SLAUGHTERHOUSE.

EXT. HOLDING PEN - NIGHT

MCKENNA, on his knees. TWO BLACK-CLAD MERCS loom over him.

MERC

You hid it once. In the mail.
Where'd you hide it this time?

A BRUTAL KICK for emphasis. McKenna COUGHS blood.

MERC (CONT'D)

This is getting old, Lieutenant.
Cough up some more blood if you
agree.

Another KICK--! McKenna writhes in the mud... CUT TO:

INT. ABATTOIR OFFICE - SAME

CASEY, handcuffed to a chair. A few feet away, Traeger
pours himself a drink. Holds up the bottle:

TRAEGER

Can I tempt you, Ms. Brackett?

CASEY

(exasperated)
Just tell me, why are they
fucking HERE? If it's not to
hunt, then WHY?

Traeger regards her coolly, shrugs, smiles:

TRAEGER

Ms. Brackett, do you remember a few
years back when Hostess went bust?
There was a run on Twinkies.
Snapped up, coast to coast. "Get
'em while they last", remember?

CASEY

What are you saying, we're
Twinkies?

TRAEGER

(shrugs)
Think about it. How long before
climate change makes the planet
unlivable? Two generations? One?

Casey's blinks -- dawning realization:

CASEY

Jesus. We're an endangered
species, and they know it. That's
why they keep coming here -- they
want to snap up our best DNA
before it goes bye-bye.

TRAEGER

Exactly. Adapt themselves with
it, then... move in.

Casey blinks, stunned.

CASEY

What about their own planet?

TRAEGER

We think it's dying.

(frowns)

Well -- cooling, to be precise.
You read the file, they thrive in
a hot-house environment. Maybe
they want to make a move to ours.
It is getting warmer, you know.

Casey shudders.

CASEY

And your angle -- the upgrade
tech, am I right?

TRAEGER

(shrugs)

If we can upgrade ourselves? Become
the ultimate survival engines--?
Why wouldn't we?

Casey looks sick to her stomach.

CASEY

How would you disseminate it?
Who gets it?

TRAEGER

Whoever can afford it, of course.

He grabs her by the hair. Yanks tightly.

TRAEGER (CONT'D)

Now something is on that hijacked
ship, and I think you know what it
is...

INT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE - NIGHT

A rail system circles the room with meat hooks on it.

In one corner, a group of CRYPTOGRAPHERS study the familiar
PREDATOR HIEROGLYPHICS on a large DRY ERASE BOARD.

RORY SITS nearby, drawing with crayons. A lone GUARD keeps
watch on. Glances at Rory's drawing. Says, offhandedly:

GUARD

What's that?

Rory shrugs; doesn't look up.

RORY

Map.

GUARD

Map of what?

RORY

Where the ark is.

The CHATTER in the room STOPS. All eyes on Rory.

A CRYPTOGRAPHER approaches him, slow. Smiles tentatively. Points at the drawing, says:

CRYPTOGRAPHER

Um... do you mind if I..?

Another shrug from Rory. *Whatever.* The Cartographer takes the "map" to the Team Leader.

TEAM

LEADER (sotto)

Are you insane? He's a kid --

CRYPTOGRAPHER

A kid who had that biohelmet for twenty-four hours.

TEAM LEADER

Even if the ship is there, we still need the key to get in, the entry code's on the fucking KEY.

He gestures at the dry erase board; DOZENS of attempts to translate the Predator language into letters or numbers.

TEAM LEADER (CONT'D)

That sequence could be a hundred digits, for all we know--!

RORY'S VOICE (O.S.)

Twenty-two.

Every head in the room turns to:

RORY

I'm pretty sure it's twenty-two.

You can hear a pin drop.

TIME CUT: MINUTES LATER - SAME

Traeger approaches Rory, feigning nonchalance. Attempts a paternal tone:

TRAEGER
 Hi, Rory. I'm Will. I
 understand you know how to
 access the spaceship.

Rory nods, tense. Bites his lip. Traeger grins.

TRAEGER (CONT'D) Here's
 the thing. We work for the
 United States Government. Just
 like your dad.

RORY
 Except you're assholes.

Traeger's grin slips. Then he plasters it back on. Holds
 up Rory's drawing: the MAP.

STEVENS
 I won't argue. Question is... will
 you get me into this ship, or not?

Rory stiffens, wary.

RORY
 If you let my dad go.

Traeger glances at his lackeys. "Kid's good." He leans in:

TRAEGER
 Okay. You want to play grown-up,
 let's play grown-up. Man to man..?
 We're not going to let him go. Not
 until you give us what we want. But
 when you do -- I promise he'll go
 back to the V.A. hospital... where
 they will take good care of him.

RORY
 What if I don't tell you?

Traeger shakes his head with disappointment; *tsk tsk tsk*.

TRAEGER
 Oh, now, Rory... I thought we
 were playing grown-up.

EXT. HOLDING PEN - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

McKenna, face in the dirt. Groggy. Barely conscious. SEES:

HIS POV - RORY

being dragged to a waiting Sikorsky. Fueled, blades spinning.

MCKENNA STARTS TO MOVE, when suddenly --

OFF-SCREEN VOICE
Not so fast, slick.

THWACK--! Another KICK to his gut. THOSE FUCKING
MERCs, standing over him. He watches helplessly as
THE CHOPPER

Lifts off, WHORPLES into the night sky. As it does, one of
the mercs draws his sidearm to END this, says to his buddy:

MERC#1
Golf tomorrow?

MERC #2
Why not?

McKenna sees what he's doing -- COUGHS. Ropey spits of blood.

MCKENNA
... You know what... burns me
up..? (gasp, cough)
You never even... read my file,
did you..?

The mercs trade amused glances.

MERC #1
What makes you think that?

MCKENNA
'Cause you're makin' plans...
for tomorrow.

The mercs, VERY amused by this.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)
Worst part? Is you... making me
lie to my son. I really don't like
to do that.

MERC#2
What lie did you tell him?

MCKENNA, face to camera, grins:

MCKENNA
That I wouldn't enjoy this.

That's when his HAND DARTS OUT, SNATCHES the guy's forearm;
uses his other hand for leverage, and -- Crack--!

The MERC SCREAMS as McKenna SNAPS HIS FOREARM at an alarming angle, then GRABS the man's gun, *presses it into his eye* -- *BLAM--!* The MERC DROPS WITH A THUD as McKenna stands, levels the sidearm at the remaining MERC; frozen in place. Like the Predator in the lab, he was *playing possum*.

CUT TO:

INT. MEAT REFRIGERATOR

A walk-in. Williams and Cutter, sitting on the floor. They LOOK UP TO SEE:

THE MERC opening the thick, industrial door; McKenna holds him at gunpoint, says to the guy:

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Now the armory.

EXT. HOLDING PEN

A MERC rounds a corner -- EYES GO WIDE.

HIS POV -- the MAN MCKENNA KILLED, wedged into a corner. The guy turns to raise an alarm -- STOPS. His eyes widen.

AN INHUMAN SHAPE, *LOOMING* over him.

INT. OFFICE

A GUN at the back of CASEY'S HEAD. She closes her eyes, waits for the shot --

As, abruptly, we hear loud *clumping* noises from the corridor outside. FOOTFALLS, as

AN INTRUDER, NOW

Pokes his head around the corner. Snuffling, drooling. As benign as it is INHUMAN:

THE PREDATOR DOG. The sniffer.

Wagging its tail, no less. Sees Casey, the intended target of its current game-in-progress... and FYI, in its mouth?

THE GRENADE from the clearing.

It's FETCHED it. Brought it back. It DROPS the grenade -- CLUNK! -- right in Casey's lap. Her ASSASSIN, stupefied...

Casey wastes no time:

SNATCHES UP the grenade -- pulls the pin -- SHOVES IT down the guard's SHIRT BACK.

Promptly *BOLTS FOR THE DOOR*, dragging the CHAIR she's handcuffed to --

INT. CORRIDOR

Hits the deck as -- FWOOM!! -- the room BLOWS OUT BEHIND HER! Blood and dust and dry wall. Smoke clears, and...

THE PREDATOR DOG pads out of the room, unscathed. Drops a new toy at her feet. Wait, sorry. Not a toy.

The GUARD'S SEVERED HEAD.

Casey throws up a little in her mouth as she hears FOOTFALLS.

SEES McKENNA, WILLIAMS, CUTTER (in his wheelchair) come around a corner, armed to the teeth.

EXT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE - NIGHT

McKenna opens the door a crack. PEERS OUT:

HIS POV: SOLDIERS run around the perimeter, taking up firing positions to prevent their escape.

McKenna, Williams and Cutter trade looks. Shrug.

CUTTER	WILLIAMS
Duck soap.	Piece of cake.

They LOCK AND LOAD, no hesitation. CASEY gapes. *It's suicide.*

CASEY
See this? THIS is why the
army thinks you're crazy!

Except... a SOUND now. A low pulse; BASS VIBRATO from outside. MCKENNA peers through the crack again... and his eyes widen. An involuntarily gasp.

MCKENNA
You've got to be kidding me.

EXT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE - NIGHT - START ON AN ADVERTISING BANNER

FLAPPING in the wind. And on it, an airbrushed, scantily clad girl ("*A New Look for Sexy!*") being pulled by...

A PINK HELICOPTER. Yes, pink. The *Victoria's Secret* logo on the side, no less, as we REVEAL:

INT. STOLEN CHOPPER - FLYING - NIGHT

FLYBOY AT THE HELM, of course. The other VETS (NETTLES, BAXLEY, COYLE) in the back. THE LOONIES to the rescue!

EXT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE - THAT MOMENT

As the pink copter LANDS unsteadily and

-- AT THE EXIT DOOR

McKenna SHOVES IT OPEN, and... OUR HEROES RUN FOR IT, into the open, GUNS BLAZING--!

Williams PUSHES THE WHEELCHAIR at high speed; Cutter's M60 CHATTERING as hot shell casings SPIT out the side -- !

AT THE STOLEN COPTER

McKenna and Williams provide COVERING FIRE as Casey and the Loonies HEFT CUTTER ABOARD, then -- YANK HIS WHEELCHAIR IN.

INT. STOLEN COPTER - CONTINUOUS

This chopper was built for five people. Current load? EIGHT. Plus a wheelchair. Lufthansa, it ain't. As FLYBOY LIFTS OFF --

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Very inconspicuous.

FLYBOY

We had to kill seven Victoria's Secret models.

CASEY

Tell me you're joking.

FLYBOY

I'm joking. I'd sooner piss on the Mona Lisa.

He throttles up, pulls up on the collective.

EXT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE - SERIES OF SHOTS - NIGHT

As the copter rises, MERCS OPEN FIRE. Too little, too late --

INT. STOLEN COPTER

Flyboy looks to McKenna for direction.

FLYBOY (CONT'D)

You got a heading in mind, Lieutenant?

McKenna squints down at the rushing landscape. Casey points:

THE PREDATOR DOG

hauling ass, SOUTHBOUND.

CASEY

Follow that dog.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING - DAY IS BREAKING

On first blush, we're back in Cuba. Same tropical foliage, same humidity, same goddamn mosquitoes. Then we HEAR:

TRUDGING BOOTS. CRACKLE of radio crosstalk. And that's when we note: a long BUMPY GREEN ROCK.

Wait a minute. Did it just... *move*? Yes, it did. Because it's not a rock. *It's a fucking ALLIGATOR --*

Because we're in FLORIDA. The gator sinks into the swamp as

TRAEGER EMERGES

from the brush, flanked by A SMALL ARMY OF MERCS; poor Rory in tow. An AIDE clutches a hand-held GPS device.

TRAEGER'S AIDE

We're at the waypoint. Should be right here.

But the clearing is just that: clear. Then, Traeger notices:

TRAEGER

What are those?

They're DEAD BIRDS, laying on the jungle floor in a wide arc.

A MERC CHEWING TOBACCO

Examines them. Nudges one with his boot. He SPITS to the side, and -- splat! The spittle *HANGS THERE IN MID-AIR.*

Traeger sees this. Intrigued. Turns to a MERC.

TRAEGER (CONT'D)

Give me your weapon.
(takes the gun)
Paint pellets.

The soldier scoops some glycol pellets, hands them over. Traeger loads them -- FIRES, twice. *THOOK! THOOK!*

Eerily, the TWO SPLATS OF PAINT stay frozen in the air, COATING AN INVISIBLE SURFACE. Traeger points:

TRAEGER (CONT'D)

FIRE!

The entire brigade OPENS FIRE with a BLISTERING FUSILLADE!

RORY clamps his hands over his ears, SCREAMS silently.

Under the bombardment, a series of spastic SHIMMERS as, BEFORE OUR EYES...

THE PREDATOR SPACECRAFT APPEARS--! Its cloaking device short-circuited by the assault. Soldiers gape as --

Traeger tenses. Looks around. *Where's the Predator?* But nothing. *Silence.* A thin smile of triumph:

TRAEGER

(CONT'D) We beat it here.

(to his aide)

Get on the horn. Tell Woodhurst we have his space ship.

He turns to Rory -- ushers the boy forward, gripping his shoulder. SHOVES HIM toward --

THE SHIP'S ENTRYWAY

And next to the hatch... an ALIEN CODE BOX.

TRAEGER (CONT'D)

Open it.

Rory hesitates. Feeling all eyes on him, he relents. Reaches for the code box. TWO DOZEN DUMBSTRUCK SOLDIERS look on --

As a little boy inputs the code from memory.

SH-KKK! As easy as that, *the HATCH OPENS.* Traeger turns to his AIDE. Points. *You're coming, too.*

INT. THE ARK

A cavernous THRUM oscillates as Traeger looks around, petrified. The technology is clearly alien. Then he notices:

THE STASIS CYLINDERS

INSET around the periphery of the hold.

TRAEGER'S AIDE

What the hell are they?

TRAEGER

Property of Project Stargazer,
that's what they are.

(to his aide)

Tell the men to secure the craft;
get it ready for transport. I want
it moving before that... *THING* gets
here.

RORY, meanwhile, has noticed a control panel:

A MONITOR

On it, THE GRAPHIC depicted in our opening. The stasis
cylinders HIGHLIGHTED IN RED with time-code beside them.

Except the COUNTDOWN has stopped, MID-SEQUENCE...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STOLEN COPTER - FLYING - LATE AFTERNOON

No longer morning, it's late in the day... MCKENNA and
CASEY, eyeing the rolling country below. Palmettos,
swampland -- and, galloping in and out of sight:

THE SNIFFER. McKenna whispers:

MCKENNA

Go, baby, go. Run to papa.

Casey frowns. Points below, WHERE:

THE SNIFFER

has STOPPED; visible now on a low hill overlooking a
road closure, beyond which: *some kind of activity*.

MCKENNA raises his binocs:

HIS POV - ABANDONED DIRT ROAD

Not just "activity" -- it's THE ARK. Currently in transit --

THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS SWARM round a huge FLATBED TRUCK,
removing tarp from the spacecraft. Showers of SPARKS as they
solder towing rings; LASH steel cables.

INT. STOLEN COPTER - SAME

Flyboy pops a wad of bubble gum, says:

FLYBOY

Looks like they got it this far
by truck. Now they're prepping to
airlift it in.

Seeing something, Casey grabs McKenna's binocs.

HER POV: TRAEGER BELOW

In the eye of the hurricane, giving orders.

CASEY

There's that asshole, Traeger.

McKenna goes taut.

MCKENNA

That means Rory's down
there. (to Flyboy)
Take us down.

FLYBOY banks sharply, descends into the trees, as we --

CUT TO:

A SIGN

being strapped to a palmetto tree with wire:

DANGER: QUARANTINE AREA -- AIR FORCE PERSONNEL ONLY

EXT. FLORIDA HIGHWAY - DAY

A FIVE YEAR-OLD kid, cowlick, cutoffs, licking a
Popsicle, watches a SOLDIER put the sign up.

WIDER - A TRAILER PARK

where a dozen or so RESIDENTS have set up beach chairs to
watch. Not a lot to do in the trailer park, apparently.

GIRLS IN BIKINIS man A CUBAN FOOD TRUCK; boom-box BLARING.
A terrible Ricky Ricardo caricature advertises CUBAN
PETE'S. Then a bone-jarring BASS RATTLE as --

EXT. HIGHWAY - OUTSIDE TRAILER PARK - SAME

OUR MERRY BAND (McKenna, Casey, et al) crouched in the
trees near the trailer park, LOOKING SKYWARD as --

TWO BOEING VERTOL HEAVY LIFTING HELICOPTERS (HLH)

THUNDER overhead, en route to The Ark.

FLYBOY

Heavy lifting copters. It's
an airlift, all right.

The massive copters WHORPLE over an adjacent CRACKER
BARREL restaurant.

MCKENNA

We've gotta get closer to the
perimeter. Blend in somehow.

WILLIAMS

(scoffs)
Like *this*?

He gestures to the group, FESTOONED with AK's, AR-
15's, holstered glocks -- not to mention TRANQ GUNS.

CASEY

Stand out like a sore thumb.

MCKENNA

Yeah? When's the last time you
stopped in a crowd and said,
"Hey, that guy over there -- his
thumb looks sore." Be honest.

(beat)

Fine. We bag the guns.

Across the road, the CRACKER BARREL'S DOORS OPEN:

And out trudge three men, ALL STRAPPED to the fucking teeth.
Assault rifles. Pistols. They wave heartily at McKenna, hoist
a bucket of chicken --

MAN #1

Y'all hungry?

A ten year-old GIRL scrambles from under the porch,
sporting a CROSSBOW and a .44 Magnum.

NETTLES

Florida... We're blending.

COYLE

Hey, you wanna blend more? Shoot
the kid. Claim "Stand Your Ground."

WILLIAMS

Stab a gator and you'll
be practically invisible.

CASEY
 (exasperated)
 We done?

NETTLES
 One more.
 (thinks, changes his
 mind) Nah, we're done.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - SAME

Our heroes troop into the bustling TRAILER PARK, approach the CUBAN PETE TRUCK.

MCKENNA clocks the back of the truck, covered in ANTI-GOVERNMENT SLOGANS -- banners, placards.

MCKENNA (to
 Casey; sotto)
 You still have your Stargazer I.D.?

She nods, hands it over with apprehension:

CASEY
 You're gonna do something
 stupid, aren't you?

McKenna and Williams trade conspiratorial grins.

WILLIAMS
 Lady? You haven't seen stupid yet.

AT THE CUBAN PETE TRUCK

A fenced-off patch of SOD next to the truck hosts a few struggling tomatoes. The PROPRIETER ("PETE") tends it.

McKenna approaches.

MCKENNA
 Sir--?

PROPRIETER ("PETE")
 Call me Pete. What can I do
 for you?

MCKENNA
 Well, Pete, my name's McKenna.
 Until recently, I worked for the
 U.S. Government --

He flashes Casey's (temporary) government credentials.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

-- for THOSE people.

(points toward the
quarantine signs)

Well, guess what, brother? They're
at it again. A cover-up. You think
that's really a toxic leak in those
woods?

"PETE"

What, then?

McKenna adopts a solemn look.

MCKENNA

What if I told you... there's
something in those trees, and
it ain't no man.

Cuban Pete tenses.

"PETE"

It's Bigfoot, isn't it?

CUT TO:

INT. THE ARK - SAME

RORY is still inside the spacecraft, under guard. He
explores... casts his eyes round the interior, notices:

An EQUIPMENT ALCOVE. And in it... a *PREDATOR BIO-MASK*
like the one he wore on Halloween. He reaches for it --

GUARD

HEY! Don't touch that!

Rory JUMPS. Backs away, intimidated -- and

meanwhile: EXT. DIRT ROAD - SAME

The two MASSIVE HELICOPTERS hover overhead, deafening --

RAPPELLING LINES unfurl -- SPECIALISTS RAPPEL down, like
a SWAT TEAM. Tactical. Professional. And meanwhile --

EXT. ROADBLOCK OUTSIDE SITE

Heat. Cicadas. TWO SOLDIERS on a JEEP -- manning a
ROADBLOCK. They HEAR the roar of an engine, *look up.* WTF?

THE "CUBAN PETE" TRUCK

comes *BARRELING AT THEM*, terrible *CUBAN DISCO BLARING*, breeches the perimeter, and --

EXT. DIRT ROAD - THE ARK - CONTINUOUS

The food truck *TRUNDLES INTO VIEW* at high speed--!

SOLDIERS CONVERGE, flagging it down. Shouts, cursing -- like your bowels after a Cuban Pete's supper, this is all *highly irregular*, as --

UNDER THE TRUCK - BAXLEY

DROPS from an open floor hatch, *IMPACTS* the dirt, and -- quickly *ROLLS OUT OF SIGHT*, commando-style --

NETTLES, AT THE WHEEL

WRENCHES the truck to a halt, at which point:

PLUMP (YET WINSOME) BIKINI GIRLS

Come piling from within, all with laden trays of hot CUBAN FOOD. Soldiers, agape -- one of the girls flashes a GRIN:

BIKINI GIRL

Y'all brave boys gotta eat, right?

The OFFICER IN CHARGE steps forward, apoplectic:

OFFICER IN CHARGE

We have plenty of damn FOOD, now
get this thing turned around --

WITH COYLE - ON A HILLTOP

He watches through a sniper scope. Speaks into a throat mic:

COYLE

Shit. We went from Victoria's
Secret to this?

BELOW - INSIDE THE PERIMETER

BAXLEY spits, says:

BAXLEY

Relax. These guys are mercs-for-hire, they'd fuck a woodpile on the off chance there's a snake in it.
(suddenly)

Whoa.

BAXLEY'S POV:

From the TRUCK, now, emerges a FOURTH girl. Daisy Dukes, tied up shirt-top... long, blonde (borrowed) WIG --

CASEY, no less. She sashays PAST armed men, DO-SI-DOS right up to the officer in charge -- extends a hand --

Pulls him into a DANCE.

Salsa, rumba -- *something*. The girls cheer. The surrounding soldiers, guns wavering, as

INT. MOBILE COMMAND POST - SAME

TRAEGER looks out upon the scene, aghast:

TRAEGER

What in blue fuck is going on?

TRAEGER'S AIDE

Locals, sir. We're on it.

EXT. HILLSIDE - NEARBY

A LONE SOLDIER trots toward the truck. Muttering, shaking his head... Steps round a thicket --

An ARM lashes out. PULLS HIM IN. McKenna's coal-blackened face, inches from his --

MCKENNA

Where's the boy?

EXT. CLEARING - WITH CASEY

MUSIC, blaring. Girls dancing. Then, suddenly, Casey's wristwatch goes *BEEP-!* Her head snaps round -- she SHOUTS:

CASEY

NOW.

From the FOOD CONTAINER at her side, she lets drop a spherical object. It bounces..!

Shit. SMOKE GRENADE.

Pop--! Smoke, BILLOWING. Choking.

Cuban Pete's THREE DAUGHTERS, on it. Three quick tosses, *Pop-! Pop-! Pop-!* They drop flat, hands on their heads --

SMOKE EVERYWHERE. Cloying. TWO SOLDIERS stagger, looking for a target, when --

THUP!THUP! Both of them DROP LIKE SANDBAGS, thanks to:

WILLIAMS -- hidden under the FOOD TRUCK -- wielding
a TRANQUILIZER GUN, and --

CASEY

swiftly TASES the OFFICER in the side. He goes down -- she
 drops with him -- liberates his SIDEARM, rolls away --

COYLE AND BAXLEY, NOW

Chiming in with additional SMOKE CHARGES, as

OUR BOY NETTLES

SLAMS open the food truck's REAR DOOR, kicks loose two
 PROPANE TANKS, sets them rolling -- Snaps a rifle to
 his shoulder, and as they bounce and tumble, FIRES--!

DETONATES BOTH. They go up with a *whooooosh--!*
 Cascading flame... Debris, raining down --

TRAEGER, NOW

Emerges from his COMMAND POST to a scene of chaos.
 SMOKE everywhere. Flame. He BARKS into his talkie:

TRAEGER
 SECURE THE PAYLOAD! DO
 IT! (to his Aide)
 Bring me the boy. Now.

At which point, we abruptly (and oddly) CUT TO:

DARKNESS (COULD BE ANYWHERE)

A space. Cramped, disorienting -- where are we?

Then, a familiar, TALON-LIKE HAND raises an equally familiar
 device (THE KUJHAD). Commences *tapping out a code* --

EXT. THE ARK - ENTRANCE HATCH

TRAEGER'S AIDE appears at the hatch. Physically GRABS
 the GUARD posted to keep an eye on Rory:

TRAEGER'S AIDE
 We're taking 'er up! Where's
 the kid?

They both scan the interior... shit. *Where did he go?*

Not far. He steps out from the EQUIPMENT ALCOVE --
now wearing the Predator mask he found.

The mask's tiny PLASMA-CASTER swivels, *whrrrrrrr--!*

A volley of energy BLOWS THE TWO MEN OUT THE OPEN HATCH!

Rory starts to go. TRIPS -- falls, drops the MASK, it bounces away -- he looks up, cocks his head:

A HATCH OPENING behind him. A familiar, blood-chilling CLICKING SOUND, as...

THE UPGRADED PREDATOR, NOW

EMERGES, fetus-like from a FLOOR COMPARTMENT. He's been concealed aboard the ship the whole time.

THE NINE-FOOT PREDATOR RISES... towering. Ghastly.

Rory scrambles to his feet. LEAPS out the hatchway --

EXT. "ARK" - CONTINUOUS

-- hits the ground running. And screaming. And flailing. But at least he's OUTSIDE. And that's when

THE GROUND RISES UP

In his path. Literally comes alive, like a CREATURE --

AS MCKENNA STANDS

Trailing dirt. The SOD from the trailer park GARDEN strapped to his back. Face blackened. Eyes feral. He clutches his son:

MCKENNA

Easy, buddy. It's me. Dad.

Rory nods. McKenna looks up, STARTLED, as -- a FIGURE charges out of the smoke. It's CASEY.

AN OTHERWORLDLY HUMMING, NOW

Suffuses the air... low. Ominous -- Uh-oh. They look toward the SHIP, as it commences to VIBRATE -- oh, shit.

ON THE SHIP -- MOVEMENT, NOW

HATCHES begin to open. All around the exterior. Metal doors SLIDING UPWARD -- dark inside. Beckoning.

A CLATTER of assault rifles, SOLDIERS level their weapons...

THAT'S WHEN THE HYBRIDS EMERGE FROM THEIR PODS..!

SWARMING. Some on four legs, some *three*. Some upright -- others SCUTTling like crabs. So much smoke, so hard to see...

The soldiers *BLINDLY OPEN FIRE--!*

TRAEGER

NO! NO! KEEP THEM ALIVE -- !

THE HYBRIDS CARVE A PATH THROUGH THE SOLDIERS--! Obscenely SHRIEKING as they're pelted with bullets. Never stopping --

MCKENNA AND CASEY

Desperately casting around for a hiding place -- it's RORY who grabs his Dad's arm, POINTS:

MCKENNA

What is it, son?

RORY

In there. *The empty tubes.*

McKenna blinks. *Brilliant.* The VACATED CRYOTUBES, hatches wide open. He grabs Casey and the kid, bundles them inside:

INT. CRAMPED COMPARTMENT - MCKENNA

He SPOONS with Casey. Cradling his son, close. Hiding. The bear hug he longed for? Now a survival tool. RORY cracks one eyelid, unable to not look:

BRIEF, NIGHTMARE GLIMPSES

Of the ship's INTERSTELLAR PASSENGERS roaming the mist, killing. Each different, but all expressing a common trait:

The trademark mottled skull and mandibles of *THE PREDATOR*.

RORY SPOTS NETTLES

The HERO LOONY, shepherding GIRLS into the taco truck. Swinging up into the DRIVER'S SEAT, *except...*

Something between TUSK AND TALON comes through the windshield.

Rory SHUTS HIS EYES; bye-bye, Nettles.

AT THE MAIN HATCH - THE UPGRADE

Here he comes. Golem-like. Looming. Stalking majestically from the main hatchway as...

THE HYBRIDS

Converge on him. GATHERING. Circling their leader in ragged formation -- *almost a MILITARY greeting*. An unspoken order from the UPGRADE -- and with that, off they go, loping away -- Vanishing into the surrounding trees.

INT. CRAMPED COMPARTMENT

MCKENNA turns to Rory:

MCKENNA

Are you... are you okay?

Mckenna frowns. No answer. Rory's not looking at him. He's looking UP. Petrified... *because they're not alone*. Something's in here with them.

McKenna follows his gaze. A low animal CHITTERING, all too familiar... above them, hanging UPSIDE DOWN: not a holographic projection, but the real deal --

A SPIDER/PREDATOR HYBRID.

EXT. THE ARK - CONTINUOUS

They all SCRAMBLE OUT. SPIN back around, panicked, as THE HYBRID APPEARS.

Poised in the hatch, mandibles extended. As McKenna watches -- Rory taps the code, the hatch SLAMS SHUT --

BISECTING THE SPIDER PREDATOR--!

But the front half? *Still alive, STILL MOVING* --

CASEY AND MCKENNA BLAST IT TO TATTERS. As the thing finally, blessedly expires:

MCKENNA

(CONT'D) (gasping)

I hate spiders. If... if it happens again --

RORY AND MCKENNA

(nod, in unison:)

Let's call Mom.

EXT. RAILHEAD - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

Aftermath. A HAZE of smoke and debris hangs over the vacated ARK. Medics tend to the wounded.

McKENNA limps into view. Bee-lines to Traeger. Livid.

MCKENNA

It was in there the whole time, you asshole. *That was its goddamn PLAN!*

TRAEGER

Fool me twice, shame on me.

MCKENNA

Where was it going? *WHERE DID HE WANT YOU TO TAKE HIM--?*

TRAEGER

That's classified, Lieutenant.

Before McKenna can respond with action, Traeger **DRAWS HIS SIDEARM ON HIM;** a twinkle in his eye.

TRAEGER (CONT'D)

Kind of ironic, really. A trained sniper, dying from a headshot.

BLAMM--! McKenna flinches as -- BLOOD spatters his face.

A thousand-meter-a-second SNIPER ROUND just pierced TRAEGER'S HEAD. The guy drops, lifeless. *SHIT.* MCKENNA spins, eyes tracking downrange -- *Predator weapon--?*

Nope. M24 sniper rifle.

GENERAL WOODHURST, comes into view, flanked by ARMY troops.

WOODHURST

Good riddance to bad rubbish.

(NOTE: This is the General we saw on the phone with Traeger earlier.) He stops just shy of McKenna. Nods tersely:

WOODHURST (CONT'D)

Breathe easy, soldier. I'm on your side.

CASEY, RORY and THE LOONIES step forward to join McKenna.

Woodhurst regards them. Points to Rory, Casey, and Cutter:

WOODHURST

(CONT'D) You stay here.

(looks up)

The rest of you, come with me.

Casey puts a maternal hand on Rory's shoulder. A reassuring look to McKenna: "I'll take care of him."

TIME-CUT:

EXT. THE EVERGLADES - AERIAL SHOT - DUSK

A Cape Canaveral-like launch facility abuts what looks like an animal habitat. Vast swampland beyond.

INT. UH-72 LAKOTA HELICOPTER - FLYING - DUSK

Woodhurst rides shotgun. McKenna and The Loonies in back, looking down at the facility below.

MCKENNA

What am I looking at? Stargazer HQ?

WOODHURST

(shakes his head)

Stargazer was all Traeger. CIA black ops, corporate donors, all that shit. Wasn't us.

Off McKenna, stupefied:

WOODHURST (CONT'D)

Oh, yeah. Son of a whore went off the reservation. He was in it for profit. Practically stole that Predator for his little science experiments. He's also the one who framed you.

(beat)

It's not like I shot him just 'cause I felt like it.

CUT TO:

EXT. DIRT ROAD - THE ARK - AS BEFORE

CASEY can't help but eye THE SPACECRAFT curiously. Her army CHAPERONES, momentarily distracted; RORY nudges her, mischievous:

RORY

Wanna see what's inside?

CUT TO:

EXT. AREA 52 - DUSK

A BLAST of SOUND AND WIND as the TWO LAKOTA HELICOPTERS LAND inside chain link and razor wire marked with signs:

RESTRICTED AREA
NO TRESPASSING -- U.S. GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

Dust swirls as McKenna and the men jump out -- trade glances:

It isn't just the SOLDIERS MOBILIZING, or even the 40mm anti-aircraft guns... It's the urgency. *Like they're preparing for a siege.* Woodhurst leads them down some steps to

A MODERNISTIC BUNKER

Half-in/half-out of the ground. GREEN BERETS at the entrance.

WOODHURST

We don't have time for security checks, just behave yourselves and we won't have to shoot you.

MCKENNA

What is this place?

WOODHURST

"Area 52." Base of operations.

MCKENNA

For what?

WOODHURST

Defending earth from the Predators.

The doors YAWN OPEN, and --

INT. CORRIDOR - AREA 52 (MOMENTS LATER)

Woodhurst leads the men down a long corridor lined with DISPLAY CASES: Predator *SKELETONS; WEAPONS; BATTLE ARMOR.*

WOODHURST (CONT'D)

They've been coming here for years. Problem is, their m.o.'s changing. Dissension among the ranks. You saw it yourself -- that big one tore the other one in half.

They reach a security checkpoint. Walk right through.

WOODHURST (CONT'D)

Luckily, we have some...
"consultants" helping
us. (a hard look)
Hope you boys are wearing
your Depends...

Hydraulic DOORS SLIDE OPEN TO REVEAL:

INT. ANIMAL ENCLOSURE

Like you'd see at the zoo. But no lions, no tigers, no bears. Instead? Behind thick Plexi:

TWO PREDATORS turn to look at our heroes. Same size as our "good" Predator. They blink curiously.

WOODHURST (CONT'D)

There's a cold war going on, gentlemen. Seems it's heating up.

(re: Predators)

These two... are defectors.

Been here almost a year.

McKenna, at a loss. No words. Finally manages:

MCKENNA

They're okay with... with being cooped up in there?

WOODHURST

Oh, we let 'em out at night. Game preserve, next door. They're peace emmissaries but... hell, they're still Predators, they're gonna kill shit.

He lights a cigar:

WOODHURST (CONT'D)

That first one you met? "Tiny?"

(points to defectors)

He was on their side. Stole the ark with those hybrids so the big fuck couldn't use 'em against us.

WILLIAMS

Whoa. You're saying the first alien was... *friendly*?

MCKENNA

Fuck that. The son of a bitch killed my men.

WOODHURST

Hey, I never said he was a nice guy... just that he was on our side. Which brings us to the Big Bad --

(beat)

Who, unless I miss my guess, is on his way here right now. With his "team."

MCKENNA

But why? What's his end game?

Woodhurst shrugs:

WOODHURST

Like I said. Cold war.

(re: Predators)

He came to kill these two.

McKenna takes a moment. Looks up --

MCKENNA

So, he's... an assassin?

WOODHURST

That's right, Lieutenant. That thing out there's an assassin.

(icy glance)

Just like you.

MCKENNA

Say you're right. It takes out its targets, *then what?*

Without warning, ONE OF THE PREDATORS "talks"; its peculiar, throaty RATTLE of CLICKS over a scratchy P.A. speaker.

An AIDE hands Woodhurst a device with a small LED screen. He keys it like a walkie-talkie, says:

WOODHURST

Please repeat that.

The Predator repeats with more emphasis. Woodhurst looks at

THE LED SCREEN

A brief delay, we see: *Searching... Searching...* finally, a DIGITIZED VOICE issues from the device:

TRANSLATOR VOICE

"Protocol 3. The synthetic will identify and procure most evolved opponent."

The words hang in the air a moment.

WOODHURST

That's the thing, see -- it won't just leave. Not without souvenirs.

(beat)

It's going to choose the strongest, most worthy adversary, and --

MCKENNA

(finishing the thought)
 -- and rips out its spine for
 the DNA, to take back home.
 (turns to Predator)
 Is that about the size of it..?

The Predator SPEAKS AGAIN. Woodhurst looks at THE TRANSLATOR:
Searching... Searching... Searching...

TRANSLATOR

VOICE "About size."

EXT. AREA 52 - NIGHT

A SENTRY PATROLS. Stops, and squints at:

A four-legged ANIMAL, in silhouette. A coyote..?

Now, ANOTHER ANIMAL joins the first: no legs here at all.
Tentacles.

SENTRY

*Mudbug One, we got BAMFs at the
 outside wire, WE GOT BAMFS AT TH--*

WHOMP--!! ONE OF THE CREATURES TAKES HIM DOWN, DRAGS HIM.
Nothing left after ten yards but slicks of blood and sinew.

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - A ROW OF VIDEO MONITORS

Featuring the exterior: THE HYBRIDS, *cutting through
 the perimeter sentries.* Alarms start to WAIL, as

WOODHURST

Looks on, McKenna and the others bathed in the ice-blue
 glow of the monitors. The General licks his lips, says:

WOODHURST

Get 'em outta here.

MCKENNA

Who?

Woodhurst points at the Predators in the enclosure.

WOODHURST

Them. We'll hold off the
 others 'til you get away.

MCKENNA

Away WHERE--?

WOODHURST

The SHIP, for Chrissakes. If you
get them to the ship, *they know*
how to fly it.

His tone softens. Respectful.

WOODHURST (CONT'D)

Look, we've been watching you.
You're good at this.

(beat)

Just get 'em to their ride.
We'll handle the bugs.

McKenna and team don't ask questions. They MOBILIZE.
As Woodhurst calls after them:

WOODHURST (CONT'D)

I'm scrambling F-22's. Contact
them once you're in the air!

SERIES OF QUICK CUTS: BUNKER CORRIDOR

Lights FLICKER on and off, suggesting the Predators have
attacked the central power system.

Our heroes -- as well as the PREDATOR DEFECTORS -- GRAB
WEAPONS from the display cases. McKenna stuffs them in a
backpack: a Shuriken, a combistick, a biohelmet.

He puts on the mask, looks at Williams.

MCKENNA

(muffled)

I feel like an idiot.

WILLIAMS

You look like an idiot.

EXT. SERIES OF SHOTS - AREA 52 - NIGHT

VEHICLES come blasting up out of a tunnel, exiting
the compound. A HIGH SPEED CONVOY, on the move.

ARMY MOTORCYCLES. Behind them: JEEPS -- with *pedestal-*
mounted machine guns.

Imagine the Presidential motorcade but bristling with
artillery. And IN THE CENTER of the convoy, the key vehicle
-- the one WILLIAMS is driving:

AN M113 STRYKER ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER.

McKenna, Baxley and Coyle are on top as well as, yes --

THE TWO PREDATORS

Each armed with an M60 machine gun in one hand, a plasma-caster in the other. Ready to fight alongside our heroes.

Behind them, a continuous ROAR of gunfire -- *the army versus the HYBRIDS, off-screen.* Now, however, it becomes sporadic...

And then, rather suddenly, ceases altogether.

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Guess they took care of the bugs?

One of the PREDATOR DEFECTORS utters some guttural CLICKS. Williams consults the translator: *Searching... Searching...*

TRANSLATOR

VOICE "Fornicate."

MCKENNA, UP TOP

looks toward the rear of the gauntlet. They've got company.

MCKENNA

Incoming!

THE HYBRIDS

SCRAMBLE into view at high speed, picking up the scientists' scent. Drooling mandibles, flashing eyes... Nightmare time.

THE FIRST HYBRID LEAPS

ONTO the rear support jeep. Fanged. Clinging. A SOLDIER *RAKES IT WITH ARTILLERY-- BRRAAAPPPP--!*

The jeep JACK-KNIFES. The HYBRID leaps to the ground, *THE GUNNER'S SKIN IN ITS MOUTH -- !*

TWO MORE HYBRIDS

SCURRY behind the APC like racing dogs.

THE LOONIES AND THE PREDATORS unload on them, but one manages to LEAP onto the back! Teeth gnashing. It FALLS OFF, but quickly regroups -- HURTLES back, but --

BRAKK! BRAKK! Surgical bullet hits.

The thing BUCKLES. Plumes of GREEN BLOOD, as

-- MCKENNA

hangs off the back of the APC with a SNIPER RIFLE, taking well-placed shots. Beside him:

BAXLEY

Look at their necks, Chief!

McKenna blinks. "What??"

BAXLEY

(CONT'D) (pointing)

THEIR NECKS!

McKenna squints at:

THE HYBRIDS, IN PURSUIT

And there, sure enough, something resembling COLLARS.

McKenna raises the TRANSLATOR PAD; YELLS to the nearest Predator scientist:

MCKENNA

WHAT ARE THOSE COLLARS?!

The Predator BARKS and TRILLS between blasts.

CLOSE ON TRANSLATOR: *Searching... Searching...*

TRANSLATOR VOICE

"Self. Destruct."

McKenna, intense. Thinking quickly, he grabs the talkie from his belt, turns it on:

MCKENNA

(into Bluetooth)

Casey, it's McKenna! Are you there?

Do you have access to the ship?!

INT. ARK - THAT MOMENT (INTERCUT:)

Casey and Rory, INSIDE THE SHIP.

CASEY

(into Bluetooth;
sheepish) Um..?

She makes a face at Rory; "BUS-TED."

MCKENNA

Listen to me! The hybrids have some kind of self-destruct collars! Is there a way to --

Rory overhears this; GRABS Casey's talkie, excited:

RORY

Dad, it's me, I saw it! I saw the the program! The first Predator was trying to blow them up, but the sequence stopped.

MCKENNA

Can you do it?

CASEY

There was something about self-destruct in the file. The one Schaefer met in '87 left a pretty big hole.

RORY

These only have a ten-foot radius. We're cool. Sort of.

Casey turns, incredulous. Rory squirms, self-conscious:

RORY

(CONT'D) Maybe twenty.

(beat)

I, uh, saw it in the helmet.

Suddenly paranoid, Casey YANKS THE SNIFFER'S COLLAR OFF - - HURLS IT out the open hatch. The Sniffer CHASES AFTER IT, playing fetch again.

Casey WHIRLS -- sees RORY'S FINGERS, already tapping a CONTROL PANEL. She can't fight the urge to smile.

CASEY

He's on it, McKenna.

EXT. CONVOY - MOVING FAST

McKenna watches the hybrids darting after them.

MCKENNA

(into Bluetooth; tense)

I have visual. Any time now would be great.

INT. ARK - SAME

Rory hits keys, sweating.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Rory--?

RORY

I know, I get it. I'm TRYING!

CASEY looks around, frantic.

CASEY

Too far. We must be out of
range. (wit's end)
If only there was a way to
MOVE *this thing!*

EXT. CONVOY - WITH THE HYBRIDS

DARTING and WEAVING. Seemingly fixated on a single objective:

THE ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER

MCKENNA sees this, keys the translation device:

MCKENNA

*WHY ARE THEY IGNORING THE OTHER
VEHICLES--?*

The Predator near him speaks: KLIK-RATTLE-KLIK! On the
device: *Searching... Searching...*

TRANSLATOR

VOICE "We are target."

OFF McKenna, the color draining from his face --

CUT TO:

EXT. SMALL FLORIDA TOWN - NIGHT

THE APC careens into view. HYBRIDS close on its heels.

BAXLEY EATS IT

as, from nowhere, a hybrid LEAPS -- TEARS HIS SKIN OFF. The
body tumbles away...

COYLE, next in line. He doesn't go quietly. UNLOADS a
volley of ammo in the creature's FACE --

THE HYBRID CHEWS HIS SPINE OUT before it COLLAPSES,
dead weight pressing down on Coyle's ravaged corpse.

WILLIAMS, DRIVING

For the first time, he looks nervous. Glances down:

CLOSE ON GPS SCREEN

Showing the SPACE SHIP'S location. A quick glance tells us they are still a mile out.

WILLIAMS
 (into Bluetooth)
*Hey, Lieutenant, you got a
 plan, or..?*

ON MCKENNA

And his face pretty much tells the tale: nope. Then he spots something new. In the distance behind them, but growing...

THE PREDATOR, THE BIG BAD

SPRINTING like a cheetah, in pursuit. *CLOSING FAST.*

He sports TWO WRIST GAUNTLETS -- projectile arrows and CANNON. That's it. Lean and mean.

CLOSE ON MCKENNA

Carnage, all around. He looks at the Predator defectors; SCREAMS into the translation device:

MCKENNA
HOW DO WE WIN--??

BLEAT OF CLICKS from the Predator. *Searching... Searching...*

TRANSLATOR
 VOICE "Maybe not win."

WILLIAMS

looks at the GPS display. Frowns. SEES the ship-blip is now *MOVING TOWARD THEM.... WTF?* Which is when:

A HUGE SHADOW

falls over road. Blotting out the moon. Is it..?

It is.

THE ARK -- and it's fucking AIRBORNE--!

INT. ARK - THAT MOMENT

Dwarfed by the massive "Captain's chair", RORY is now wearing the Predator biohelmet, psychically linked to the technology. He works the controls, spins to CASEY:

RORY
 Taking her down... NOW.

Determined, he GRABS the control yoke. Just one problem

-- EXT. THE ARK

Landing this fucker ain't easy. Plus it's damaged, remember? The spacecraft BUCKS. WOBBLES --

INT. THE ARK

CASEY, flung sideways. Goes sliding --

CASEY

Are you trying to crash?? I thought you were some kind of genius, for chrissake!

RORY

I'M IN SPECIAL CLASS, OKAY?

A sudden LURCH. The DESTRUCT console JERKS in her hands, and she blinks, registering: *it moves*.

New idea.

She GRABS THE CONTROL PANEL, hauls it loose -- and PROPELS it across the deck toward:

AN ESCAPE POD.

We saw the first Predator use one: *at the start of the film.*

THE HATCH SLIDES DOWN, eclipses her from view

-- RORY

On it. Knows what to do, GRABS the control yoke, and

-- EXT. THE ARK

IT SWIVELS IN PLACE like a cannon, lining up, AIMING

-- INT. ESCAPE POD

CASEY sees a red button, SLAMS it, and *WHOOOOSH--!* LAUNCHES HERSELF. *The pod goes airborne --*

EXT. FLORIDA TOWN - MAIN DRAG - THAT MOMENT

It tumbles... SLAMS DOWN! Traverses the length of the street.

INSIDE: CASEY'S JOLTED, SCREAMING, AS --

OUTSIDE: THE HYBRIDS watch the pod SCREAM PAST them, hesitate with confusion. That's when WE SEE:

Tiny red LEDs on their collars are BLINKING...

And now? One by one, before our eyes, THE HYBRIDS EXPLODE AS THE SPACECRAFT SKIDS PAST THEM -- like a string of NUCLEAR FIRECRACKERS -- THOOM! THOOM! THOOM!

EXT. ATOP THE PERSONNEL CARRIER - MOVING

McKenna sees the sky behind them LIGHT UP from the detonating hybrids. But his exhilaration is cut short as he notices:

THE DEAD HYBRID on the top of the APC --

The LED on its collar *is blinking now.*

Oh, shit.

The TWO PREDATORS RAISE their wrist gauntlets -- THOOK! THOOK! LAUNCHING GRAPPLING HOOKS! Yank the corpse UP --

AND HEAVE IT OFF THE APC

Like fishermen throwing a marlin back into the ocean. Williams puts the pedal to the metal:

BA-WHOOM!! THE HYBRID EXPLODES, mid-air.

At which point, not to be outdone -- Williams promptly CRASHES.

SERIES OF SHOTS

The APC PLOWS through chainlink, *THROWING McKenna and the Predators off...* and meanwhile, back at the ranch --

EXT. ESCAPE POD

The hatch POPS OPEN... Casey half-crawls, half-TUMBLES out. Looks up, sweaty, feral --

ONE HYBRID LEFT. A weird, SATANIC looking thing, *rushing straight at her* --

It comes in range of the signal. BLOWS.

She dives for COVER behind the pod. Bits of PREDATOR-THING, raining. A dismembered TORSO arcs down. Hits the tarmac. Turns to her, STILL ALIVE, REACHING --

She rips out its spine.

The SNIFFER lopes up beside her. A proud hunting dog... admiring its Huntress. *An image to remember.*

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL STADIUM - NIGHT

McKENNA and WILLIAMS, sprawled. Groggy. Ten yard-line of a high school FOOTBALL FIELD. Williams nods downrange:

THE ARK IS DOWN

Just past the fifty yard-line. Imbedded in the turf.

AND THERE'S RORY

Limping from the ship. Disoriented.

McKenna starts toward him. His expression suggests that once he has the boy in his arms, he's not likely to let go.

At which point, the "DEFECTOR" PREDATORS RISE SLOWLY, throatily CLICKING... Grab their WEAPONS.

Then? Everything goes to hell. Striding across the field --

THE UPGRADE. Big as life.

Raises the GAUNTLET. *Promptly spikes an ION BLAST through each of the smaller Predators; DISINTEGRATING them --*

He BELLOWS victory: *Mission Accomplished.* Then PIVOTS. Mandibles twitching -- walks toward ITS CLOSEST REMAINING FOE, human or alien:

The kid. The loser. "Ass Burger."

The Predator SCOOPS HIM UP in one hand -- regards him clinically, with something akin to... RESPECT? Turns, now...

And enters the downed spaceship. With Rory.

MCKENNA

RORY!!!

The HATCH SLAMS SHUT.

McKenna stares in disbelief... then starts after them, the FULL meaning of this hitting him --

His son figured out how to fly the Ark; how to kill the hybrids. *So what does that mean to the Upgrade? Only this:*

RORY IS ITS MOST EVOLVED OPPONENT.

INT. THE ARK - A CRYOTUBE

As the Predator roughly *TOSSES RORY INTO IT* for safe keeping.
Screens *BLINK* to life; a deep *BASS RUMBLE* is heard as the ship *POWERS UP* for departure.

EXT. BLEACHERS - ON MCKENNA

As the spacecraft's engines *RUMBLE*, and -- *HE VAULTS up the bleacher steps--!*

Williams sees this. Trades a glance with Flyboy. They exchange "fuck it" shrugs, and *HAUL ASS* after him --

THE ARK RISES

Plasma exhaust *SPEWING*, as McKenna *SCRAMBLES* up bleachers --

THE ARK, now fifteen feet below the top of the stadium...
MCKENNA doesn't slow. Runs, *LAUNCHES into the air* --

Touches down, *WHACK--!* ON TOP OF THE SHIP. He yelps in pain. *ANKLE*, twisted, and meanwhile --

WILLIAMS AND FLYBOY, MORE SENSIBLE

Stand, looking down at him. Patiently wait as the top of the ship *RISES EVEN WITH THEM* --

STEP ON, like stepping onto an escalator.

McKenna shoots them a withering look.

That's when the ship *TURNS*, throwing the three men off balance. *THEY SCRAMBLE* to find handholds --

EXT. FLORIDA TOWN - THAT MOMENT

LOCAL POLICE CARS, screaming into view, flashers turning.
A MOTORCYCLE COP looks up, stunned. *SEEING:*

HIS POV - THE ARK RISING

Over the treeline.

He *GRABS* for his lapel mike -- but that's the same moment his handgun is *LIBERATED FROM ITS HOLSTER*, and he *WHIRLS TO:*

CASEY, aiming his own sidearm at him.

MOTORCYCLE COP

You don't want to do this, lady.

CASEY

There's a lot of shit I don't
wanna do, Ponch.

She mounts his Harley, ROARS OFF after the Predator ship.

EXT. THE ARK - AERIAL

Just in time for OUR VERTIGO SHOT -- as the ship ascends
with our three soldiers hanging precariously.

McKenna's backpack SLIDES away -- He flails at it, the
Predator weapons disgorging, tumbling earthward, *fuck --*

He hauls it in, secures it. Cups his ear, the one with the
BLUETOOTH inside. YELLS into the com over the RUSHING WIND:

MCKENNA

Rory, I'm on top of the ship!!
Are you okay?!

INT. ARK

Safe in his coffin-like tube, Rory is shocked to hear his
Dad. Puts his hand over his mouth so the Predator won't hear:

RORY

Mom was right. You are crazy.

EXT. ROAD BELOW - NIGHT

CASEY's stolen chopper ROARS in pursuit of the spaceship. She
sees something by the side of the road, BRAKES abruptly-- !

The items that fell from the ship. Dented, scarred:

*A Predator BIOHELMET. A few feet beyond it, A CLOAKING
BALL. Like the one McKenna used in Cuba.*

EXT. THE ARK - FLYING

Mid-air, Williams looks up, blanches. POINTS:

WILLIAMS

Uh-oh. On your six, chief!

McKenna squints, seeing something on the horizon.
Scratch that: TWO THINGS, on the horizon:

F-22 RAPTOR STEALTH FIGHTERS

Closing fast. The ones Woodhurst scrambled.

A SIDEWINDER LAUNCHES from one of them, AND --

INT. ARK

RORY, tense, peers from hiding at

A MONITOR

depicting the incoming air-to-air missile. Then a blinking DOTTED LINE begins to form, surrounding the ship. Rory taps his Bluetooth, FRANTIC:

RORY

Dad?? There's a force field
going online -- automatic!

MCKENNA (O.S.)

Um -- say again?

RORY

Just... JUMP! STRAIGHT UP, NOW!

EXT. THE ARK - SERIES OF SHOTS

No time to argue, McKenna YELLS THE ORDER to his men:

MCKENNA

JUMP--!

What happens next, happens quickly. The force field DOES engage, but first, THREE THINGS:

- 1) McKenna attempts to jump. STUMBLES. *Falls FLAT.*
- 2) WILLIAMS? He does jump. Straight UP, in fact.
- 3) FLYBOY, alas, does neither. He FREEZES, caught out, as --

THE INVISIBLE FORCE FIELDS BLASTS ON with an ionized CRACKLE!

Now, let's tally the result. First off --

MCKENNA is lying UNDER the field, which is just above him. A LOCK OF HIS HAIR feathers down, clipped.

NEBRASKA

COMES DOWN, boots first, ON TOP of the force shield!
Standing in mid-aid. Surreal. But sadly:

CONFUSED FLYBOY

has been cut off at the knees. SEVERED, he topples away.
His last flight.

NEBRASKA, NOW, DROPS DOWN

Hanging on for dear life. Lies splayed, palms flat, separated from McKenna *only by the force shield*. Without it, they'd be on TOP of each other.

SERIES OF SHOTS - THE INCOMING MISSILE

BLASTS OVERHEAD: a MISS. Passes them and RIPS FORWARD into --
THE TREES AHEAD

Vanishes. Pause... DETONATION.

Tower of FLAME. They're going to pass right through it. McKenna, breathless, under the shields. Protected.

Nebraska, not so much.

They face each other through the barrier. Lock eyes; inches apart a moment before:

NEBRASKA IS BURNED AWAY, flames engulfing the spacecraft.

INT. F-22 - FLYING - THAT MOMENT

The SECOND PILOT adjusts his HUD. *LOCKS ON the Predator Ark.*

F-22 PILOT

Two five-six, bogey's in my sights,
fangs out. Lighting up 'winders...

AN ALARM PIERCES: something's wrong. The PILOT looks to his radar, *shit, he's being painted*, as --

THE PREDATOR SHIP, RETALIATING

Hell, yeah. From the craft, an energy bolt LANCES UPWARD. Mere feet in front of McKenna, nearly INCINERATES him --

INT. F-22 - SAME

THE PILOT engages the ejection handle, and -- FWOOSH!
Pilot and seat both ROCKET AWAY AS --

The ship DISSOLVES into flame beneath him.

EXT. PREDATOR ARK - WITH MCKENNA

SEEING the jet go to PIECES, high overhead. He looks around, desperation mounting. Has a nutty idea.

He draws a gun, grips it tightly. Galvanizes, and --

LAUNCHES HIMSELF

ROLLS toward the edge, not stopping -- tumbles off the ship,
OVER THE FUCKING EDGE! We think it's suicide. But nope:

As long as he's inside the shield, he can RIDE the fucker.

Which he DOES. Slewing. Tumbling down an invisible slide.

CLUD--! Fetches to a stop. UNDERNEATH the craft.

Florida blows by beneath him. The only thing that's got his
back, utterly INVISIBLE. He decides not to look down.
Fixates OVERHEAD, instead, on:

THE EXPOSED SHIP'S BELLY. More specifically--?

The EMPTY PORT where an escape pod once nestled. He wrestles
his way inside, clinging to a strut. Sees a keypad, YELLS:

MCKENNA

RORY! What's the sequence?? I
watched you put it in, TELL ME!

INT. ARK - CRYOTUBE - INTERCUT:

Rory HEARS this, stammers:

RORY

To the pod?? I... I can't remember.

MCKENNA

Okay, do this -- TRY.

RORY

I can't think, it's mixed up in
my head --

MCKENNA

Dammit, son, I watched you! It
was one, two, then over three, up
two...

McKenna stops. Blinks.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Holy shit. I fucking KNOW it.

He begins frantically stabbing away at the entry pad.

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

Rory? You know how I always said
be a big boy?

RORY

Yeah?

MCKENNA
Screw it. Make yourself small,
kid. (beat)
DOWN! NOW!

The hatch slides back --

McKenna UNLOADS, shot after shot. Targeting any
BLINKING LIGHTS. BLAZES AWAY. Teeth bared, fearsome --

INT. THE ARK

The ship SHUDDERS violently as --

THE PREDATOR whips around in his seat, ALARM KLAXONS
PEALING. Registers the OPEN DOOR; a visitor. Doesn't miss a
beat. Raises an arm, FIRES --

McKENNA, BLOWN BACKWARD

THE BLAST knocks him loose. Sends him TUMBLING backward
into open air --

And we say "open air" because even as the energy shield
catches him, high over Florida, we can see it's
FLICKERING. Like a bulb before it goes out --

And then, it goes out.

McKENNA DROPS. Like a stone, even as

THE PREDATOR ARK, CRIPPLED

Begins descending. Pitching, yawing --

ALSO DESCENDING - MCKENNA

But *faster*. PLUMMETING, a thousand feet in the air. SEES:

A LONE PARACHUTE

Billowing. *THE EJECTED PILOT from the first F-22.*

MCKENNA ADJUSTS COURSE in mid-air; SLAMS into the guy, and
-- GRABS HOLD, breaking his fall, as

EXT. FLORIDA SWAMP - DAWN - THE PREDATOR ARK

PIERCES the trees, SKIMS ACROSS brackish water --
HURTLES INTO a fallen willow, CRACK--!

INT. ARK (INTERCUT:)

The VIEW PORT explodes outward. Predator, EJECTED..!

Exits, pinwheels through space...

Disappears into the BOG. Vanishes, submerged. The ship subsides, comes to rest in...

THE SWAMP

Primitive. Primordial. What the world was like before the dinosaurs. Silence...

McKENNA, NOW

CRASHES DOWN--! Through the branches. Breaking ribs, tearing skin. Tossed like a rag doll, until --

EXT. SWAMP - DAWN

He JERKS TO A HALT, hanging in a tree branch twenty feet off the ground. Much like when we met first him. Unconscious PILOT, strapped beside him.

McKenna takes stock. Looks down, at

THE MASSIVE FIGURE

RISING from the swamp. Back hunched; shards peppering its flesh. Rivulets of phosphorescent green blood...

THE UPGRADED PREDATOR

It's down to the two of them.

McKenna doesn't waste a second. He's already unlimbered his sniper rifle and he DOUBLE-TAPS the trigger, puts TWO IN ITS CHEST. And from there..? It never stops.

THE CREATURE

BELLOWS..! Stumbles back, collides with the downed ARK. Puts a hand out to STEADY itself, grips the craft --

Mistake.

INT. ARK - WITH RORY

RORY LEAPS to the console. Finds a flickering button, POUNDS it with his tiny fist --

And just like that, *triggers the FORCE SHIELDS.*

EXT. ARK

The Predator looks down, goggles --

Noting the neatly cauterized STUMP where its forearm was. The limb *DROPS AWAY* as the Predator looks on, dumbly.

McKENNA, MEANWHILE

Drops..! ROLLS -- comes up running. BLASTING shots at the creature. Dives behind a tree... And blinks. Because right in front of him, incongruously:

A MOTORCYCLE. Just lying there.

He snaps his gaze upward, hearing trees move -- seeing NOTHING -- as, without warning

CASEY, CLOAKING BALL IN HAND

Shimmers and MATERIALIZES BEFORE OUR EYES. Launches, snarling, from an OVERHEAD TREE BRANCH. Onto the Predator's shoulders..!

She grabs a fistful of DREADLOCKS. SLICES THEM CLEAN OFF--!

THE PREDATOR STAGGERS and WEAVES. Disoriented. CLAWING blindly at the air.

McKENNA tosses his rifle -- pulls the COMBISTICK --

Here we go. The final flurry:

THE UPGRADE

SWATS McKENNA aside. CASEY, sent tumbling. Then the Predator SPINS, startled -- struck by THREE BULLETS, as HOLY FUCK, THE GUY IN THE TREE!

The PILOT, has removed his Sig-Sauer from his nylon vest and, still strapped in, starts RAINING COVER FIRE --

PREDATOR, ONE SWIFT MOVE

Triggers an ION BLAST. Blows the tree to splinters. Obliterates him.

DEBRIS showers down. McKenna, scrambling...

THE PREDATOR

UNLOADS. Looses a veritable FIRESTORM. Triggers BLAST AFTER BLAST, churning up water, SHREDDING trees --

Our heroes can do nothing but duck and cover.

They're no match. CASEY is blown six feet through the air, HITS, rattled, and it's all over -- heroes, done. EXCEPT:

Now, above the din, a SOUND intrudes upon Casey's consciousness. Subtle at first, she squints --

Now WE hear it -- a heavy PANTING off-camera, as

THE SNIFFER

PADS INTO VIEW. Something in its mouth. IT DROPS IT at Casey's feet; an offering.

CASEY'S POV:

THE SELF-DESTRUCT COLLAR. The one she threw away earlier. It fetched it back.

At which point, everything proceeds like a BLUR:

Casey, no hesitation. She scoops it up, feverishly accessing buttons on her WRIST GAUNTLET --

Across the clearing, MCKENNA sees this, yells:

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

TOSS IT.

She doesn't ask questions. Slings it. Across the clearing to MCKENNA -- *who SNAGS it from air*, just in time to DIVE. Narrowly misses being INCINERATED --

He hits, ROLLS -- comes up in a combat crouch; *HAVING RETRIEVED THE PREDATOR'S SEVERED ARM.*

The one with the arrows.

He loops the COLLAR over the double-pronged PROJECTILES. Pivots, AIMS as --

CASEY, ON THE RUN

Triggers the last two digits in the arming code:

The LED BLINKS RED.

McKenna FIRES; takes the creature in the leg. IMBEDS. Pause...

THE EXPLOSION

HURLS THE PREDATOR backward--! Red smoke and flames subside, revealing...

A FIFTEEN FOOT CRATER.

Smoking. Seething... in the midst of it, the PREDATOR, a bloodied green mess. Writhing... barely alive.

MCKENNA and CASEY stagger forward, Casey in battle mode

RORY, NOW

Staggers out of the downed ARK... rushes to his father's side. They embrace, but McKenna's eyes never leave the Predator; rifle at the ready.

Cautiously, he reaches in his pack. Brings out the TRANSLATOR DEVICE. Keys it...

MCKENNA (CONT'D)

(to The Predator)

Who are you..? What are you?

The Predator, half-conscious, "answers" with its trademark rattle of TRILLS AND CLICKS. *Searching... Searching...*

TRANSLATOR

VOICE "I... warrior."

(beat)

"You?"

McKenna trades looks at Rory. A shrug. Not resigned, but... maybe a hint of pride?

MCKENNA

Same.

The creature points at RORY.

TRANSLATOR VOICE

"Warrior... NEW breed."

That's bizarre. For a moment we'd swear it's favoring the kid with a FOND LOOK, one of admiration --

Then it GOES for the kid.

The last of its strength, LASHES OUT, talons bared --

MCKENNA

Puts two SHOTS THROUGH ITS EYE.

The Predator slumps. Dead. McKenna's eyes shift to his son, spattered in green blood. Staring.

MCKENNA

Sorry.

RORY

That's okay. You can shoot
him again if you want.

MCKENNA

I'm good.

A COMMOTION, NOW, they turn their gaze skyward, as

SERIES OF SHOTS:

HUEYS come ratcheting in, CIRCLING the clearing.
SOLDIERS, rappelling down through TREE TOPS --

A PLATOON OF U.S. MILITARY

Touches down, immediately sprinting for the three
SURVIVORS, forming a makeshift perimeter --

WE HEAR A FAMILIAR SNORT

And the slobbering PREDATOR DOG pads into view. Bee-lines
to Casey, panting for her favor.

EVERY MILITARY WEAPON SWIVELS to draw a bead on it.

But like an Amazon warrior, Casey divests the nearest
soldier of his weapon. Spins, COCKS IT -- !

CASEY

You touch my dog and I'll kill you.

One of the soldiers RUNS up to them.

SOLDIER AT EXTRACTION SITE

Lieutenant McKenna?

The soldier hands him a cell phone.

McKenna puts the phone to his ear, perplexed. Then...
a relieved smile, and he hands the phone to his son.

RORY

(into phone)

Mom?

EXT. RORY'S HOUSE - DAY (INTERCUT:)

EMILY, on the front porch. Clutching a phone:

EMILY

Are you okay, honey?

His answer, drowned out by the ROAR OF A CHOPPER descending.

EMILY (CONT'D)

What'd you say, peanut?

Rory plugs his ears. SHOUTS:

RORY

Ich liebe auch tou!

But still, no good. The helicopter, deafening.

EMILY

WHAT??

Now the chopper DIES DOWN... just in time for us to hear:

RORY

I love you.

TIME CUT: MINUTES LATER - ON CASEY AND MCKENNA

Approaching the helicopter.

CASEY

It's weird. The file was all about how honorable these things are...

(re: upgrade)

But this one -- he wasn't about *hunting*. No sporting chance, nothing. Just slaughter.

MCKENNA

You said it yourself, it had human DNA...

(smiles sadly)

They're becoming more like us.

CASEY

(unsettled)

McKenna, did we... did we just start a war?

Now, a VOICE from the chopper:

VOICE (O.S.)

Negatory. The war's already started.

They both look up as, framed in the hatchway, REVEAL:

"DUTCH" SCHAEFER

The Predator's first adversary. Face haunted; etched by pain.

SCHAEFER
Dutch Schaefer, U.S. Special
Forces. Come with me.

RORY
Uh... me, too?

Schaefer nods, smiles grimly... says:

SCHAEFER
Especially you.

CUT TO BLACK.

CREDITS.