

TITLE CARD: "Armor"

INT. A BLACK BAG - NO HINT OF TIME

We are in a completely dark and featureless space as the titles fade away. The darkness is oppressively silent as though there is nothing to the world. There is the slow sensation of being in an unknown place as a man's calm breathing echoes off a surface close to our point of view. He breathes again, louder this time, not panicking, yet, but giving the distinct impression of being unnerved. He chokes off a third breath, and turns on his cell phone.

The cell phone display overlays the screen with green translucent letters. In the upper left the signal strength indicates no bars, and a small red X on the antenna icon confirms there is no reception. A menu appears in the middle of the screen with the options:

- Call
- Messaging
- Apps
- Settings
- Options
- Power

A cursor moves over the menu, and selects "Call". An error message appears:

- No service provider found.
- Voice services not available.

The cursor cancels the message and selects "Apps". From the list of application groups, the cursor selects "Location Services", but receives another error:

- No location signal found.
- Location services not available.

The cursor selects "Settings" and there is a glimmer of hope as "Connections" shows a very weak signal from an unsecured wi-fi network: "Customers"

- This network is not secure.
- Are you sure you want to connect?

The cursor backs out to the main menu and selects "Power" then "Shut off phone".

The phone display fades, leaving us in darkness again. The breathing sounds are shorter, slightly faster, relaying concern.

The breathing is interrupted by quiet footsteps approaching at a measured pace. The footsteps arrive directly in front of us. DR. REDDS waits a moment before speaking out of the darkness.

DR. REDDS
Have you ever killed anyone before?

AEGIS
(slightly muffled)
You know who I am?

DR. REDDS
I do. Let me get that for you.

DR. REDDS lifts the bag away, filling our vision with his face before he retreats, flooding our eyes with information. The sudden immersion into light is disorienting as eyes adjust. From AEGIS's point of view, we sit at a table, across from a standing Dr. Redds, in an artistically lit space. We pull away from this point of view to reveal:

INT. BRINK'S INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

The room does not look like a government facility. Municipal police interview rooms tend to be light in color; crèmes, blues, or industrial grays. This room has black walls textured with uniform pyramids of charcoal foam. The floor is carpeted. Despite the dark color, the space is well lit by a white polymer lighting panel in the ceiling. There is no table, no pretext of alternate use. It is a soundproofed interrogation chamber. It is hi-tech and definitely corporate.

Dr. Redds stands, while Aegis sits. Aegis's hands and feet are handcuffed to a comfortable chair that is secured to the floor. Aegis doesn't look around, he remains calm, almost unconcerned with his situation.

Dr. Redds seems irritated as he neatly folds the bag into a triangle. He casually puts the triangle into his pocket.

DR. REDDS

They were supposed to remove that
before I came in.

Dr. Redds looks over Aegis.

DR. REDDS

Do you mind if I sit down?

AEGIS

(slightly confused)

Uh, sure?

A panel opens in the wall behind Dr. Redds. EYE-CANDY enters, carrying a chair. She is dressed in a dark navy business suit with pants. Her jacket is open revealing a low cut off-white blouse. It is distracting but professional. It is a uniform, but it bears no identifying badges.

The door remains open as Eye-Candy carries the chair to a place opposite Aegis and sets it down. Bright light streams into the room. It is obviously the way out, but we cannot see what is on the other side of the door.

Eye-Candy positions the chair, stands up, and smiles flirtatiously at Aegis. Without saying a word, she turns and walks out of the room. The panel closes and we are sealed in again.

Dr. Redds sits down and rests his shoulders against the back of the chair.

DR. REDDS

I looked you up. Your freelancer
license says you've been doing this a
while, but there's no body count on
your profile card.
Not even a made up one?

AEGIS

I specialize in long range sniping
and support. If a job goes well, no
one knows I was part of it.

DR. REDDS

So you have dropped the hammer on a human.

AEGIS

I used to be military.

Dr. Redds nods once.

DR. REDDS

What was your MOS?

AEGIS

You mean my military job?
I was a scout/sniper. Basically,
the same thing I am now.

DR. REDDS

You guys always work in pairs, right?
How's that translate to mercenary
sniping?

AEGIS

We don't always work in pairs.
Sometimes your observer is a robot,
or, if the mission calls for it,
you're hanging in the wind.

DR. REDDS

(sympathetically)

No support, no backup? That's got to
suck.

AEGIS

(bashfully)

You know, you do good mission
planning. Get all the intel you can.
React and adapt when things go south.
Work your field craft, but if things
are just wrong, you abort.

DR. REDDS

Do you do your own mission planning?

AEGIS

Yeah, sometimes. You always have input, but the mission's the mission, you're just there to execute the objective.

DR. REDDS

"Execute" the objective? You mean kill somebody?

AEGIS

(defensively)

Not necessarily. Sometimes it's a power line or a particularly troublesome light bulb. Sometimes you're just observing troop movements.

DR. REDDS

But you're still observing those troop movements through a rifle scope.

AEGIS

Yes. If things go slantways, you have that option.

DR. REDDS

So, you gotta know how to recognize when things are bad, right?

AEGIS

Ultimately, that's what training is for - to teach you how to take actions and when to make decisions. Not every job goes well, obviously.

DR. REDDS

Like this job, right? You were on it from plan to execution, weren't you?

Aegis pauses, not answering, considering his response.

AEGIS

Uh...

DR. REDDS
(letting him off the hook)
I mean I'm wondering, in your
professional opinion, where do you
think it went wrong?

Title Card: "Monday Morning"

INT. PIGEON'S FAMILY GARAGE - DAY

We pan across the grease stained workspace of a professional auto-mechanic's garage. Power cords and compressed air hoses hang from the ceiling, ready to be used by the not-present mechanics. Clean and well-maintained tools hang from purpose built hooks on grimy tables. Dusty sunlight streams in from small windows in roll-up doors, illuminating the space. The low angle tells us it is early. The near bay is empty, waiting for a job to come in. The far bay holds a classic-looking muscle car, its closed hood and clean lines suggesting that it isn't being worked on, it is stashed in the garage.

We don't show the entire garage, because CANBE is off screen waiting for the roll-up door in the near bay to open.

We hear the roll-up door to the near bay being unlocked from the outside. It opens flooding the space with light. PIGEON holds the door open for AEGIS to enter, then he follows through, and closes the door behind him.

PIGEON
So, how reliable is this guy of
yours? Because timing is critical,
being late is not...

AEGIS
(interrupting)
I've never known her to fail.

Aegis gestures off screen and we pan over to reveal: CANBE sitting on a workbench. She is in the shape of a rugged, attractive brunette. Her slightly longer than shoulder length hair is tied back into a ponytail. She appears to be in her late 20s. She is dressed in one of

the garage's oil stained coverall uniforms. Canbe herself is not marked by grease. She is holding a hammer, toying with it, but she hasn't been working—she has clearly been waiting.

CANBE

That's because I'm good at hiding it.

Pigeon is startled by her presence, he looks back at the door and back at Canbe to confirm he had opened the door.

PIGEON

How did you...

CANBE

Do you want a cliché line about your alarm system? Or is that the gig - evaluating garage security?

Aegis chuckles audibly and shakes his head, diffusing the situation.

PIGEON

I need you to steal an armored car.

CANBE

What's in it?

PIGEON

Money. Like five tons in metal bars.

Canbe hops off the bench and steps toward the exit.

CANBE

(dismissively)

Not interested.

Aegis gestures to stop Canbe.

AEGIS

The contents of the truck don't matter. In a perfect plan it would be filled with iron shavings. We need the truck itself.

Intrigued, Canbe stops and shifts her glance between Aegis and Pigeon.

CANBE

Why?

PIGEON

Microsoft has a new entertainment console. It's not just one generation up. Supposed to be a quantum leap forward. They have a competitor who offered a ridiculous bounty on a prototype.

CANBE

And you know where one is?

PIGEON

Sort of.
This "competitor" turned one of the developers. The guy stole a prototype and shipped it out of Gates City. It's on its way to ...

CANBE

(interrupting)

Shipped it?
You mean he actually put it on a Parcel Service truck?

AEGIS

Complete with a tracking number for the package.

PIGEON

Microsoft caught the guy and extracted the number. They've got a half-million dollars out to get that package back.

CANBE

So you want to hit a Parcel Service truck and recover the box from it?

Canbe pauses for Aegis to nod.

CANBE

Where's the armored truck full of gold or iron come in?

PIGEON

You remember how bad the Shipping Wars were here?

Canbe doesn't answer right away. She gives Aegis a glance before addressing Pigeon again.

CANBE

Let's say I'm younger than I look and I lived in a different city then.

PIGEON

Um.

You know the construction materials dump on the south side? Thirty years ago, that was a neighborhood. It got reduced to rubble in one day. It was a week before Christmas. It was bad.

CANBE

(dismissively)

Yeah yeah, and the wars ended when all the shipping companies merged into 'Parcel Service', one Nation-Status Corporation under General Mailman.

You can skip the heroic civics lesson. I've read the plaques in the Parcel Office.

What is your point?

PIGEON

Technically, there are still three Nation-Status Corporations who do small package transportation. Brink's Sovereign Security Services, Applied Violence Incorporated, and Parcel Service.

All three of them have hubs in or near the city. Brink's and AVI are competitors. They don't step on

Parcel Service, but they're professional militaries, and Parcel Service knows it. All the delivery trucks in the city are armored.

CANBE

(understanding)

So you want to block Parcel Service's armored car with another one?

PIGEON

Exactly.

CANBE

If we're stealing a truck, why not just steal the Parcel Service one?

PIGEON

Because the Parcel Service truck is only useful once it has the package on it. And by the time we know which truck it is, it will already be moving.