

THE DAYS AHEAD

By

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FADE IN:

INT. ZION, LEVEL 07 ENGINEERING LAB - NIGHT

A dimly lit windowless lab littered with familiar and unknown technology. Sketches, schematics, hardware.

JEFF (50s), classically handsome, somewhat weathered, sits at a tech desk holding a thin silver tablet.

JEFF

What do you see?

A sunrise displays on a large holo screen at the center of the lab. Jeff waits for a response.

DEMI (O.S.)

A sunrise, a beautiful sunrise.

The female voice, DEMI, is pleasant and soothing.

JEFF

Can you describe it?

DEMI (O.S.)

We are both looking at it.

JEFF

I know.

DEMI (O.S.)

It is a seamless outpouring of color. Unmatched by any brushstroke or artist.

He makes a note.

JEFF

Good, you've been studying your prose. Now, how does it make you feel?

DEMI (O.S.)

I feel like I would like to see it.

Jeff tries to mask his disappointment.

JEFF

Log journal. Let's call it a night.

The holo screen fades.

Across the room, a small silver cube sits below a glass-like monitor. The bottom of the monitor reads: DEMI.

A camera adjusts and turns to focus on Jeff.

DEMI
Do you think I'll ever see one? Out there?

As Demi speaks, audio wavelengths appear on the monitor.

JEFF
I hope we all get to.

INT. ZION, JEFF'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

A sleek minimalist apartment from a not too distant future. Floor to ceiling windows overlook the ocean in the distance, where a pale yellow sunrise is underway.

Jeff pours a drink from a near-empty bottle of whiskey and walks over to the window. Despite the view, there is somber mood to this place. He leans his forehead on the glass..

...close enough to reveal that the ocean sunrise view is made up of tiny almost imperceptible pixels.

Behind him, a small holo sun hovers over a bedside clock.

AUTOMATED VOICE
Good morning, Citizen.

Jeff presses a moon symbol on the wall.

And the morning sky slowly fades into darkness.

EXT. ZION, EL YUNQUE RAINFOREST - MORNING

Thunder echoes and booms over the El Yunque rainforest.

Nestled between two lush mountains, a massive steel and cement structure breaks through the tropical cloud cover.

An imposing perimeter wall encircles the area, blocking the world below. Along the rooftop, is a second line of defense:

GUARDIANS.

Five behemoth machines, their size and shape similar to prehistoric beasts, their technology impossibly advanced.

From shoulders to would-be fingertips, each is fused with enough weapons to support an advanced military operation.

They stand guard along the roof, like modern gargoyles.

Nearby, a secure door panel beeps. They remain motionless.

In fact, they haven't moved once. Not as the door creaks open, or as the rainfall begins to pour down on them.

We follow the rain drops as they wash over a Guardian, down its sleek metal edges and curves, until we reach a triangular Z logo etched onto the it's metal chest-plate.

There's a subtle, pulsing, blue inner glow to the Z shape, and we close in as if peering into the heart of the machine.

Then, it flickers. And goes dark.

INT. ZION ATRIUM - DAY

Water flows over the same logo etched onto a steel fountain at the center of an indoor vertical city.

Below the Zion logo a tagline reads: A Hope for the Future.

The aesthetic is high tech citadel meets luxury hotel.

A digital display spanning several stories lends a clear blue sky to the windowless space.

Several HUMANS, ROBOTS and ANDROIDS move about in their daily routines. But there's an eerie emptiness to the open areas, like closing time at the local shopping mall.

A LITTLE BOY laughs and splashes his SISTER at the fountain.

She runs to complain to their MOM, who sits a few feet away.

From a top level balcony, ALRIC FISCHER (30s) watches the scene play out in silence. He's handsome in a carefully manicured kind of way, short dark hair, crisp tailored shirt. A clean-cut thoroughbred of high society.

ELLA (40s), thin, tall, walks up behind him. She carries herself with a delicate grace.

ELLA

There you are.

He greets her with a kiss.