

LAZARUS RISING

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OVER BLACK:

We hear the distant sound of an AMPLIFIED ARABIC VOICE - a Muezzin, reciting the MUSLIM CALL TO PRAYER.

Over the voice rises the steady BEEP-BEEP-BEEP OF AN EKG.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRIAGE HOSPITAL JUST OUTSIDE CAIRO - DAY

CLOSE ON:

AN EYE SNAPS OPEN. The cornea is dark red. The color of blood.

The BEEPING speeds up. Fast. Too fast.

A HAND grasps at the air. It's covered in dark, black welts.

THE EYE darts back and forth. The BEEPING becomes a single, long BEEEEEEEEEP.

THE HAND drops onto a soiled white sheet. THE EYE stares straight ahead. Lifeless.

A slender, gloved hand reaches out. As it gently closes the staring eye, we REVEAL:

A PRETTY YOUNG NURSE wearing glasses over a respiratory mask. She traces an UNFAMILIAR RELIGIOUS SIGN over the dead man's emaciated corpse and turns off the EKG beside his cot.

The long BEEEEEP falls silent.

The Muezzin CALL TO PRAYER sounds out again. The Nurse looks up at the BLAZING SUN, shielding her eyes. And out across--

A VAST DESERT PLAIN. Thousands of beds stretch across the sand, filled with the dead and dying.

A handful of doctors and nurses scurry from patient to patient. Hopelessly outnumbered.

At the far end of the plain, barely visible in the heat-haze, rise the GREAT PYRAMIDS OF GIZA.

The nurse turns back to the dead man. She checks for a pulse.

The skin of the man's wrist PEELS OFF in her hand.

The nurse stares at the smear of dead skin on her fingers. Horrified.

POP. POP.

EXPLOSIONS sound in the distance. Artillery?

BANG!

Another EXPLOSION, much closer. A SHADOW falls across the nurse, the bed, the entire compound. She looks up. Reflected in her glasses, we see--

A HUGE BALL OF FIRE AND METAL is FALLING FROM THE SKY.

The nurse opens her mouth to scream, and--

A CITY-SIZED STARSHIP, enveloped in a halo of flame, CRASHES into central Cairo.

The ship EXPLODES like a sun going nova. A SHOCKWAVE OF FIRE flies outwards, obliterating everything in its path.

The city.

The hospital.

The Pyramids.

EVERYTHING is consumed by FIRE.

EXT. INTERSTELLAR SPACE

BLACK.

One by one, stars bleed into the darkness. A loud, mechanical RUMBLING breaks the silence.

The LAZARUS lumbers into view.

It is a vast, ugly, cancerous tumor of a ship. Like a living thing cobbled together from a thousand different designs and technologies. Worn out by centuries of neglect.

TITLE OVER:

CONTAGION SHIP: LAZARUS

YEAR: 2349.

TIME ELAPSED SINCE EXILE: 299 years, 11 months, 27 days.

ESTIMATED TIME TO EARTH ORBIT: 23 hours, 47 minutes, 15 seconds.

The time to Earth orbit TICKS DOWN, like a CLOCK THAT'S COUNTING DOWN:

14 seconds

13 seconds

12 --

INT. SERVICE CORRIDOR

Cramped, cluttered, claustrophobic. Every square inch of the walls and ceiling are covered in battered pipes, rusted mechanical equipment, damaged computer monitors.

Steam HISSES. Dim lights FLICKER. From a dozen small panels, red warning lights BLINK ominously.

ABEL (30s) races nimbly down the narrow corridor, jumping over or ducking under the stalagmites and stalactites of machinery.

He looks like he hasn't had a decent meal, a shower or a good night's sleep in about a thousand years. Across his face are tattooed three red lines, like the claw mark of a jungle cat.

Abel stops at a huge power terminal, home to the brightest of the blinking lights. He stares at it. Kicks it. Again.

On the third kick, the terminal lets out a disturbingly human-sounding WHINE. The red light blinks out and dies.

ABEL

Shit.

Abel pulls on a pair of ancient gloves and wedges his arm into the gap between the wall and the terminal. Trying to reach the reset switch on the back of the machine.

He strains at the effort. Wincing.

Can't. Quite. Make it.

With a dissatisfied GRUNT, he pulls his arm back. It jerks. Doesn't come loose.

He's stuck.

Abel grimaces. Jerks his arm again.

Nothing. He's caught, his arm wedged shoulder-deep behind the big machine.

Abel SWEARS under his breath. Braces himself. And YANKS his arm.