

THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK

David Twohy

June 2, 2003

EXT. AQUILA MAJOR/BASILICA STEPS - DAY *

We RISE out of our opening BLACK SCREEN. Soon we're looking down the open maw -- the open head -- of an impossibly large statue, its feet rammed into the ground far below. PULL BACK MORE to reveal the statue as... *

A Conquest Icon, 1,000 feet tall. All around the icon lies utter devastation. Cities are burning slag-heaps, the fires creating a ceiling of leaden clouds. KEEP PULLING BACK to include... *

A dark specter of a man. He stands on the steps of some great basilica, his battle mask showing three grim, ever-vigilant faces. If a man can survey a battlefield with the pores of his skin, the LORD MARSHAL is doing so now. Attending are... *

VAAKO, a favored young commander, and THE PURIFIER, a priestly figure. All wear the armor of Necromongers. *

Done here, Lord Marshal moves up the basilica steps. Others follow. KEEP PULLING BACK to reveal the unthinkable: *

The basilica hovers high off the ground, suspended there by countless gravity engines. Leading other airborne ships, it rises heavenward. *

Necromongers, we now understand, are a space-faring race. They were mere visitors here. *

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CREMATORIA - PRE-SUNRISE

Hellscape: TWO GUARDS (#4 and #5) lug something across a twisted lavafield. They make their way to a pile of cremated bones, human bones, and here they drop... *

The body of a prison guard. Deep lacerations tell us he won second-place in some human cock-fight. An I.D. badge shows "V. Pavlov."

GUARD #4 *

Should we, uh, say something?

GUARD #5 *

Sure. Take all the time you want.
[I'll] wait for you inside.

He notes the pre-dawn sky, an angry red smear on the horizon. Forgetting all about eulogies...

CONTINUED:

The two guards hustle back to a bunker-like control room. They're scared of something out here. But what?

INT. KENNEL CAGES - SLAM

START on a pair of shining eyes, staring at us from the shadows of some cage. Could this be Riddick?

A security door unlocks. THREE MORE GUARDS (#1, #2, #3) appear. Their presence brings a BEASTLY HOWL from the thing with the shining eyes. Other BEASTS JOIN IN. No, no, no -- whatever these cages hold isn't remotely human. *

The guards muscle in a large box riddled with air-holes. Something stirs inside. It's an inmate, more sensed than seen.

GUARD #1
(to box)
Act like an animal, gonna slot you up like one.

GUARD #2
[Poor fuckin'] Pavlov. Never had a chance, one-on-one like that. *

GUARD #1
(to box)
You get what you give 'round here, Big Foe. But when you get it... aw, that's the thing. When.

GUARD #2
This one's always been trouble. *

I knew it. I smelled it. *

They reach an empty kennel slot. Now the tricky part: Transferring the inmate from box to cage. Warily, Guard #3 readies a riot rifle as the others open the transfer doors -- and step back fast. *

Nothing happens. *

The guards start jamming their sticks through the air-holes. Guard #1 gets in a tug-of-war over the maultstick, fighting with the inmate inside. Somehow, the stick gets turned around and jabs Guard #1 in the hand, drawing blood. *

Things are escalating. The guard with the riot rifle moves in... *

Just as the inmate blurs into the kennel cage. *

CONTINUED:

Transfer DOORS BANG closed. Locks are thrown. The guards blow sighs, glad it's done. As they leave...

"Big Foe" leans into the light and tugs on the cage lock. She can't be much older than 17. The BEASTS CONTINUE TO HOWL all around her.

GIRL

Can we SHUT THE GODDAMN NOISE?

It works for about two seconds -- then the HOWLS INCREASE. Woefully, the girl balls up and covers her ears, rocking child-like. "Big Foe," indeed.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PLANET U.V. - DAY

MERC #1 appears through snow squalls. He has his rhino-stopper shotgun at low guard and his senses on high alert.

Even though this is a world of white snow, it's dim here: A big feeble sun casts only ultra-violet light, making the snow and ice glow unnaturally. Soon Merc #1 spies...

A spill of purple blood.

MERC #1

(into radio)

Hang on, hang on....

Merc #1 sweeps a "dog nose" -- a DNA sniffer -- over the blood. The screen shows a schematic of an alien animal: It's a fanged, bipedal, white-coated horror identified as "Urzo Giganticus."

MERC #2 (O.S./RADIO)

Whatcha got? Doc-T?

Following the track, Merc #1 finds his first clean footprint. It's formidable.

MERC #1

(under breath)

Christ, all we need....

(into radio)

Hey, you know that big extinct thing? Well, it ain't. Watch your spine. Between this and our other [problem] --

CONTINUED:

Something takes him from behind. Something bipedal and white-coated. Some horror.

WHIP PAN TO:

MERC #2 elsewhere. Togglng his radio.

MERC #2
Say again. Codd, say again.

The only reply is STATIC. A shiver runs through Merc #2. Maybe it's the cold. Or maybe it's the thought of what he's tracking alone now.

EXT. ICEFALL - PLANET U.V. - DAY

Merc #2 reaches an icefall, transparent. He follows the front of the fall until he finds...

A face behind ice.

BOOM-BOOM! Reflexively, Merc #2 blows a jagged hole in the icefall. Did he hit something? No face now. He activates a light and eases into...

INT. ICE LAIR - PLANET U.V. - DAY

Someone's lair: A pot boils atop a discreet fire. An Urzo Giganticus hangs quartered, feet missing, the carcass quietly dripping blood in a pail. All the touches of home.

Merc #2 keeps his light moving. Now it reveals...

MERC #1, newly gut-shot by him. Someone bound Merc #1 with his own handcuffs.

MERC #1
(dying)
Behind you....

Merc #2 whips around to see...

Something SLASHING for his head.

Panicking, Merc #2 TRIGGERS HIS RHINO GUN WILDLY as he tumbles back through the icefall, falling on his ass, each DISCHARGE carrying a big recoil, each recoil sending him sliding over slick ground toward...

EXT. PRECIPICE - PLANET U.V. - DAY

A steep fall-off.

CONTINUED:

Merc #2 slides to a stop here, teetering between life and death, one hand clutching an anchoring rock, the other still gripping the shotgun.

CLOSE on his finger, easing off the trigger: One more shot will send him over the edge.

Now two Urzo Giganticus feet step into FRAME. BOOM UP to reveal that the feet are mere boots for...

An oversized man with a barbarous flood of hair. This is THE REAL PREY. Approaching brazenly, he squats in front of Merc #2, eyeing him calmly from behind goggles that reflect the merc's desperate face. Presently...

The Prey holds up an ear. "Yours?"

It's so cold that Merc #2 didn't realize. Gasping, he clamps a hand over his bleeding head. In doing so, he releases the rock that was his salvation...

And goes over. Falling, Merc #2 BLASTS A FEW PARTING SHOTS at...

The Prey. Not too worried, he backs away from the edge and turns around to find...

Some bad-ass nun-chuck guns. They belong to Merc #3, TOOMBS. Unlike Johns before him, Toombs likes to grin and jaw-jack. What he lacks in smarts, he makes up for in vicious charm.

TOOMBS

Two a' my best boys. Had real bright futures in the merc trade. And now cuzza you, CUZZA YOU, you sub-human piece of shit -- they won't be around to split the reward, will they?

Toombs laughs like a jackal. Stony silence from The Prey. Toombs starts circling, crowing -- but always maintaining his distance.

TOOMBS

Escapee from Koravan Penal Facility, from the Double-Max joint on Ribald S., from Tangiers Penal Colony...on the outs for the last 58 standard months...wanted on five worlds in three systems for, lesse, how many murders? Can I use all nine of my toes to count this up? Oh, yeah, baby, I bagged the Man
(MORE)

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CONTINUED: (2)

TOOMBS (CONT'D)
in Motion...the Killin' Villain
Himself....

He BAYS VICTORY. The Prey just waits. Waits for him to come down from his adrenal high. For him to come closer.

TOOMBS
C'mon. Fulfill the drill.

Toombs throws cuffs at The Prey, letting him do the honors. The Prey just stares. Toombs BLASTS A COUPLE "I'm not fuckin' around" SHOTS. Conceding the point...

The Prey cuffs his own hands behind his back -- no easy task, even if he makes it look that way.

Only now does Toombs step close, approaching from behind to check the cuffs.

TOOMBS
An' just for the file? The guy
all up on your neck right now?
"Toombs." The name of your new
shot-caller is ["Toombs"] --

*

Switchblade quick, RIDDICK springs high...dislocates his shoulders...and somersaults over Toombs' head. Two seconds ago, Toombs was gripping Riddick from behind, but now they stand reversed. And somehow...

The nun-chuck barrels are under Toombs' jaw.

RIDDICK
Your life or your ship. You
decide, "shot-caller."

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CLOSE on hardware hitting the snow -- some hidden blades, garrotes, radio gear. What Riddick really wants drops last: Toombs' ship-finder.

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INT. ICE LAIR - PLANET U.V. - DAY

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START on the dead Urzo Giganticus, strung up inside the ice lair. PAN OVER to Toombs, strung up right beside it. They look equally unhappy.

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EXT. FINGERPRINT TERRAIN - PLANET U.V. - DAY

As Riddick runs a razor's edge of terrain.

EXT. SNOW DRIFTS - PLANET U.V. - DAY

CLOSE on the ship-finder. It indicates a target dead ahead.

CONTINUED:

Riddick stands at a broad area of snow drifts. He flips the finder closed, triggers a switch on the case. Right in front of our eyes...

A merc ship unburrows from the snow. It's a low-slung, eight-man craft with a shovel nose, capable of hiding in a variety of terrain.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

TIME CUTS: Riddick aboard the ship. Unshuttering the windscreens. Warming up drives. Toggling through databases, finding his own record on file, opening it.

Moving past the top-sheet, he opens a "LEADS" file. "Now known to have survived re-entry crash on System M-344/G. Likely killer of Class-1 mercenary, 'William J. Johns.'" "Possible Riddick-sighting on Lupus Three...." Etc, etc.

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Riddick bites off a hunk of protein rope as he opens...

The "PAY DAY" file. Now we see the worlds where Riddick is still wanted, the prisons that will pay for his delivery. Each prison has been handicapped by mercs -- it's their best headwork on what a given slam will pay for Riddick. The rates range from "300K" to "750K." But there's one glaring exception:

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"1,500,000 U.D." Universal denomination. Hard cash.

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Riddick spits out the protein rope, opens the file associated with the cash offer.

CLOSE on the screen. The place reserved for a photo of the high bidder is empty, a banner bleating "PRIVATE PARTY." But the originating address reads...

"Planet: HELION PRIME. Region: NEW MECCA."

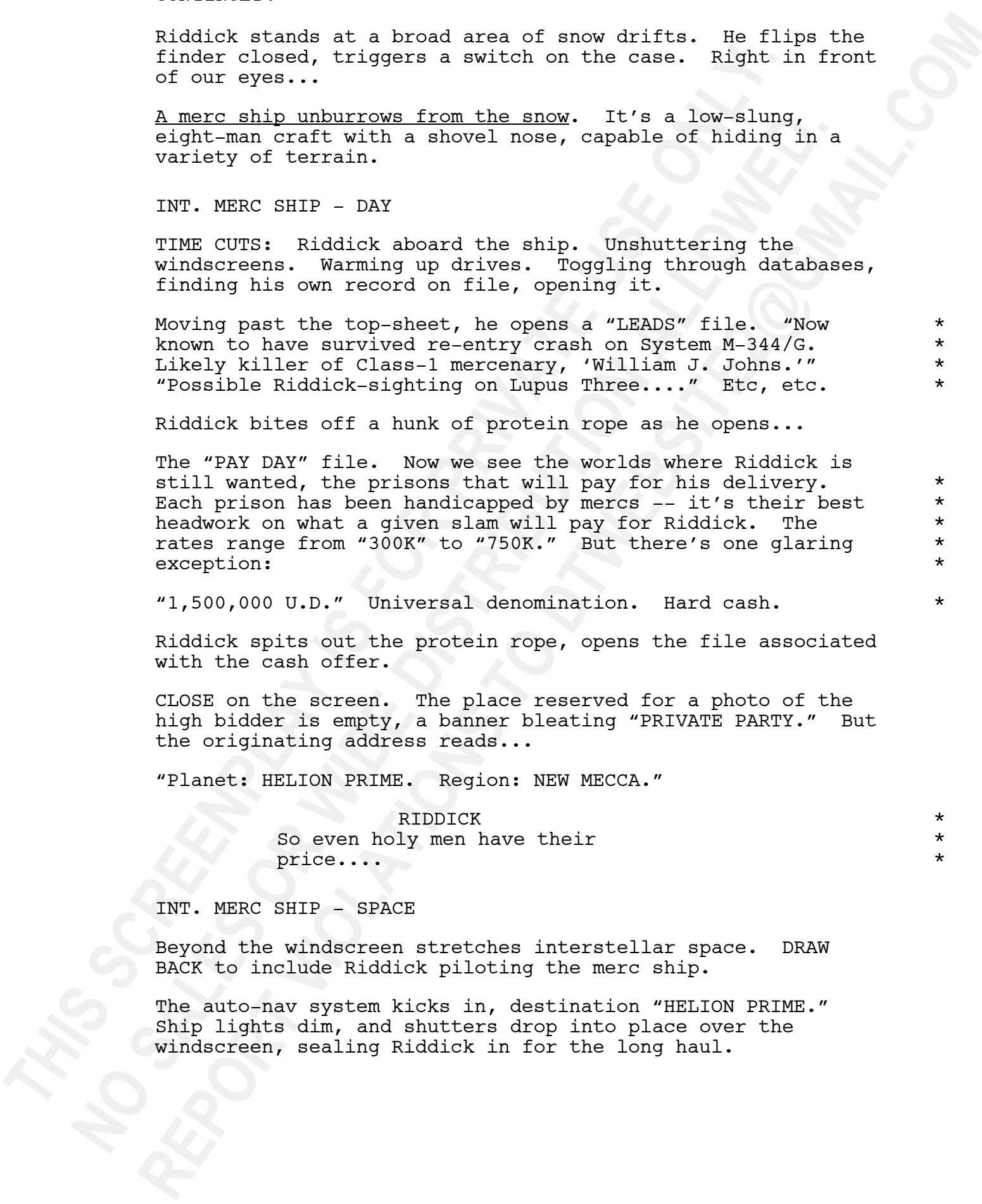
RIDDICK
So even holy men have their price....

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INT. MERC SHIP - SPACE

Beyond the windscreen stretches interstellar space. DRAW BACK to include Riddick piloting the merc ship.

The auto-nav system kicks in, destination "HELION PRIME." Ship lights dim, and shutters drop into place over the windscreen, sealing Riddick in for the long haul.



EXT. DEEP SPACE

As the merc ship plies the void of space.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MERC SHIP - DEEP SPACE

A nav-screen shows worlds within striking distance. Soon the planet "FURYA" clicks into the nearest position.

We find Riddick in the pilot's chair, the tubes in his arms circulating a kind of anti-freeze through his system. He sleeps restlessly.

Now TIME DILATES: A nav-clock slows to a stop...

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

"They say most your brain shuts down in cryo-sleep..."

A cryo-drip stops dripping...

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

...all but the animal side...

And Riddick's eyes drag open. Where did it come from? That voice? Nothing now. He's about to return to cryo-haze when...

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

...all but the primitive side."

A reflection in a nav-screen. There's someone behind him. Riddick spins to see...

A woman aboard ship. Aboard half his ship: The aft end is gone, replaced by a world of coral-like trees...of swirling updrafts...of gravestones. The world is "Furya," and the woman is SHIRÁH. *

SHIRÁH

(reading his mind)

Think of it as a dream, if you need to...

She approaches, and more of the merc ship vanishes as she drags her world even closer to Riddick. The effect is like a soft-edged rip in space.

SHIRÁH

But some know better. Some of us know the true crime that happened here on Furya. *

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

SHIRÁH (CONT'D)

(re gravestones)

We'll never have them back. But
we can have this world again.
Someday.

Riddick tries to shake it off. But she's still here.

SHIRÁH

Once you remember, you will never
forget.

Now Shiráh places a hand over her chest...lets it glow to
life...and reaches out to touch...

INT. MERC SHIP - HELION ATMOSPHERE - DAY

Riddick. Something JOLTS him awake. *

The nav-clock leaps ahead. Suddenly it's weeks later.

Riddick is alone now. He looks down where Shiráh touched
him. On his chest, a hand-mark -- a brand -- is vanishing.
Was it ever there? Over the radio:

CONTROLLER VOICE

Repeating.... All spaceports of
Helion Prime are closed to flights
that have not originated from this
locale. Unauthorized craft are
prohibited from landing.
Infractors will be fired upon.
Repeating....

A SECOND JOLT tears shutters right off the windscreens. *

EXT. MERC SHIP - HELION ATMOSPHERE - DAY *

Hawking the merc ship from above is a Helion fighter plane,
a one-pilot ship with wings like blades. Throwing wicked
contrails as it slashes atmosphere, the golden Helion fighter
rolls off into a flanking position... *

INT. MERC SHIP - HELION ATMOSPHERE - DAY *

...and appears out Riddick's port window. Air to air, the
pilot motions "Down... down...down...." Riddick sticks down
as if to comply... *

EXT. FOUR SHIPS - HELION ATMOSPHERE - DAY *

...but slips underneath the Helion fighter -- and BUMPS IT
right back. *

CONTINUED:

Debris flies off both ships; the Helion fighter spirals out of control.

INT. MERC SHIP - HELION ATMOSPHERE - DAY

RIDDICK
Never mess with a guy with a
loaner.

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Now with all the elbow-room he wants, Riddick jams his stick forward...

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*

EXT. MERC SHIP - HELION ATMOSPHERE - DAY

...and dives down toward a sun-washed surface.

EXT. APPROACH TO HELION - DAY

The merc ship flies low over a green-water ocean. Soon the waters give way to rangy sand dunes: We've reached shore.

Shedding speed, the merc ship circles a smoldering derelict craft on the dunes -- the result of someone else trying to make an unauthorized landing. The circling merc ship LEADS CAMERA to...

AN ESTABLISHER of Helion Prime: A capitol dome is seen, but even more eye-catching are the titanic solar beacons, huge temples of light now ablaze under a halcyon sun.

(NOTE: The economy of Helion is based on light. Helions capture it, store it, trade it, distribute it to far-flung worlds. What spice was to the House of Arrakis, light is to Helion Prime -- and its sister planets.)

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

RIDDICK'S POV: Approaching a sand dune, we fly right into it. Sand rushes over the windscreen; our world goes dark. So this is what it's like to be swallowed by a whale.

EXT. SAND DUNES - OUTSKIRTS OF HELION - DAY

The ass-end of the merc ship shimmies into the dune. Soon there's nothing left but a rut in the sand.

INT./EXT. ANTEROOM - CAPITOL DOME - DAY

(NOTE: This scene is one shot.)

*

Oversized doors throw open. A New Meccan man, IMAM, emerges from the capitol dome. Behind him, a session still storms

CONTINUED:

between POLITICOS, DEFENSE MINISTERS, and CLERICS of several faiths. But Imam has heard enough. As he pulls on a cloak...

A POLITICAL AIDE questions him with a look. *"What's happening in there?"*

IMAM

When all is said and done? Much will be said -- and nothing will be done.

Imam sweeps away. PUSH INSIDE a staggeringly large hall, this the capitol dome of Helion Prime. We KEEP PUSHING toward the center dais, sampling the debate along the way.

DEFENSE MINISTER

Shut down the beacons! We need to save the light, save all resources for this world!

POLITICO #1

We can't be slaves to fear! We cannot react to every rumor that --

MECCAN CLERIC #1

Rumor? Is it rumor that we lost communication with another world?

O.S. VOICE #1

We should try and make contact... negotiate with them....

O.S. VOICE #2

Who's even seen them? Who even knows what they want?

COPTIC CLERIC #1

Seven worlds, at least seven worlds have gone silent! What more proof do we need?

O.S. VOICE #3

Twelve worlds! My sources say twelve are gone!

POLITICO #2

But not one in this system! I share your concerns, but nobody here today knows where it'll happen next! Or even if!

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CONTINUED: (2)

DEFENSE MINISTER

Again I say it: Shut down the
beacons! We only make ourselves
more of a target the longer we --

POLITICO #1

(cutting through)

IF WE SHOW FEAR...if we shut down
the beacons and cower in the
dark...our sister worlds wither
and starve. For their children as
well as ours, we must stand our
ground. We are Helion Prime!
And we will do what we have always
done: Harvest the sunlight --
and then share it with all.

EXT. TRANSITION STREET - DUSK

Imam hurries along a Helion/New Meccan street. Lost in
thought, he barely notes the spectacle around him: Some of
the great solar beacons are coming on-line, surpassing the
setting sun with their brilliance.

EXT. HELION FROM SPACE

The evening side of Helion bores light into space, sending
its bounty of light to the colder, more distant worlds of
this system.

EXT. Y-STREET PLAZA - DUSK

Imam reaches "New Mecca," the Arabesque quarter.

Absorbed in the latest defense news, Meccans cluster at a
news kiosk, wearing personal headphones like stethoscopes.
Passing, Imam overhears...

MECCAN MAN #1

...so tall it touches the clouds...
and there is nothing around this
thing, this "colossus," nothing
left. It's their calling card....

MECCAN MAN #2

(dubious)

How is it possible? When no one
even sees them coming?

It weighs on Imam. Moving on, he narrowly misses...

Riddick's face on the news kiosk. It's wingtip footage that
shows him piloting the merc ship into Helion airspace.

CONTINUED:

MECCAN MAN #1

"Coming?" They may be here....

*
*

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NEW MECCA - DUSK

A group of Meccans cut deals with a seedy WAR PROFITEER. The air is charged, the words are hushed -- and the money is flowing.

*

CLOSER, we find Imam in the thick of things.

*

PROFITEER

When the crusade comes to town -- day or night -- you got 30 minutes to boot up, show up, and load up on that evac ship. If you're late, see the coffin-maker.

*
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*

IMAM

"Crusade?" Why do you call it this?

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PROFITEER

"Crusade"... "Plague of Silence"... "Hood of the Devil." People get awful creative when they don't know what they're talkin' about.

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Imam forks over some U.D. money. In return, the profiteer gives him two coin-like tokens. Made of pure light, the tokens radiate guiltily in Imam's hand.

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PROFITEER

'Sokay. Everyone's gettin' out.

IMAM

It's not for me.

PROFITEER

It never is.

Helion soldiers burst into the alley, forcing a RIDDICK LOOK-ALIKE outside for interrogation.

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*

Startled, Imam pockets his light tokens and hurries away.

*

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - IMAM'S PLACE - DUSK

*

Breathing hard, Imam enters. An illuminated wall glows to life, and the infusion of light calms him. Somewhat.

*
*

Imam starts upstairs -- but stops cold when he hears the SOUND OF A SCRAPING BLADE.

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*

CONTINUED:

RIDDICK (O.S.)

It was the worst place I could
find...

He sits in a darkened corner. Leaning over a water basin.
Shaving his head bare. So seldom used, the voice sounds like
uncoiled farm equipment.

RIDDICK

...some frozen heap...no real name,
no real sun...just to get away from
all the...brightness...all the...
temptation...just hoping to exist
in the shadows of nowhere. But
someone wouldn't let me do it.
Somebody couldn't leave bad enough
alone.

*
*

Now he makes eye-contact. Imam's silence speaks volumes.
With blade in hand, Riddick stands and approaches.

RIDDICK

I told one person where I might
go...trusted one man when I left
this place. Did I make a mistake?

*

IMAM

There is no simple [answer] --

Suddenly the blade is on Imam's neck. He never saw it
coming: It's just there.

RIDDICK

Did I make. A mistake.

IMAM

I give you my word, Riddick --
whatever was said was meant to give
us a chance, a fighting chance.
Were it not for the events of the
last few [months]....

Sensing new energy, Riddick looks O.S. Imam tracks his gaze
to a door, where a five-year-old girl now watches them
keenly. This is ZIZA.

ZIZA

(in awe)
"Riddick?"

Stepping up behind her is LAJJUN, 35, hair wrapped in a
towel, still wet from the shower.

CONTINUED: (2)

LAJJUN
(in dread)
"Riddick."

They all seem to know him -- if not personally, then by reputation. Riddick releases Imam and moves close to Lajjun, uncomfortably close, letting his eyes feast. Why does she suddenly feel so under-dressed?

RIDDICK
A wife.

IMAM
"Lajjun."

RIDDICK
You know, it's been a long time since "beautiful" entered my brain. How long has it been, Imam?

IMAM
Five. Five years.

We can almost hear the heartbeats in here beating overtime. Lajjun starts to steer the child out of the room.

RIDDICK
(re Ziza)
And this one....

IMAM
If you have issue with me...let it be with me.

RIDDICK
This one....

LAJJUN
"Ziza."

ZIZA
(to Riddick)
Did you really kill the monsters?
The ones that were gonna hurt my father?

Riddick slides a look at Imam. *"She knows that?"*

IMAM
Such are our bedtime stories.

Like magic, the knife in Riddick's hand vanishes from sight. It's a signal to Lajjun: *"Take your child away."* Lajjun complies.

CONTINUED: (3)

RIDDICK

Who did you tell? Who do I now
gotta put on a slab just to get
this pay-day offa my head?

IMAM

You wouldn't find them. Even if
you looked.

RIDDICK

Why would I look? When you can
bring them right to me?

EXT. STREETS - NEW MECCA - DUSKY NIGHT

Coming, a trio of black-robed men -- MECCAN HIGH CLERICS --
are moving through the streets. In the dusky sky above them,
we see a new feature glowing to prominence: A comet.

DIGI-MATCH TO:

INT. VERANDA ROOM - IMAM'S PLACE - DUSKY NIGHT

The same comet feathering across the sky. PULL BACK as...

IMAM (O.S.)

Nero died...the Roman empire went
into civil war...a new caesar came
to power and Old Earth was forever
changed. All under the watchful
eye of a comet.

Imam is at the veranda doors, looking out over rooftops.

IMAM

Just one more omen in a season of
omens.

(turning)

Coalsack is gone. The Aquilan
System, gone too. Helion Prime
shares its sunlight with all worlds
nearby. And if we fall, they fall.
And after that...

He notes Riddick playing with a Meccan plasma blade: He
passes the knife through some metal candle-sticks, severing
them cleanly. "Nice edge."

IMAM

Have you heard anything I've said?

*

*

*

CONTINUED:

RIDDICK
Said it's all circlin' the drain.
Whole universe.

IMAM
That's right.

RIDDICK
Had to end sometime.

EXT. STREETS - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

The three high clerics move purposefully through New Mecca.
An ILL WIND is rising, wiping trash through thinning streets.

INT. ENTRY/STAIRCASE - IMAM'S PLACE - NIGHT

A STRING OF BELLS JANGLE: Someone's here.

Lajjun unbolts the main door. The three clerics sweep inside
and move upstairs. Lajjun starts to close the door -- but
something unseen blocks it open a moment longer. Was it just
the wind?

INT. VERANDA ROOM - IMAM'S PLACE - NIGHT

The black robes enter.

IMAM
The one you want is now here.

Riddick draws closer, examining the clerics like lambs in a
slaughterhouse, yanking down face-cloths, expecting to
recognize the culprit. But no face is familiar. Riddick
wonders if he isn't being played. Tested.

RIDDICK
(sotto, at Imam)
"Even if I looked...."

He returns to the first cleric...the nervous one who can't
meet his eyes...the one who keeps throwing looks over
Riddick's shoulder. Just when Riddick seems to have his man,
Riddick wheels around fast...

And stops someone with an outstretched blade. Someone else.

RIDDICK
Whose throat is this?

AEREON materializes before our eyes. Visible only when
still, she's an ethereal being with a face that is sometimes
calculating -- or, as now, utterly disarming.

CONTINUED:

IMAM

This is "Aereon." An envoy from
the Elemental race.
(lays a calming hand
on Riddick)
She means you no harm.

Riddick just stares.

AEREON

If you cut my throat...I'll not
be able to rescind the offer that
brought you here. Nor tell you why
it's so vital that you did [come] --

RIDDICK

I'll take the blade off when the
bounty comes off.

Aereon smiles -- before doing a little pirouette and
vanishing.

AEREON (O.S.)

There is a story...

Suddenly she's elsewhere in the room, well clear of Riddick's
blade.

AEREON

...about young male Furyans, who --
feared for whatever reason -- were
strangled at birth. Strangled with
their own cords. When I spoke of
this story to the leaders of
Helion...

IMAM

(to Riddick)
I spoke of you.

RIDDICK

Maybe you should pretend like
you're talkin' to someone educated
in the penal system. 'Fact, don't
pretend. "Furyans?"

AEREON

The one race, I calculate, that may
slow the spread of Necromongers.

Catching on, Riddick starts a grim chuckle: They think he's
some player in their local drama. Some kind of hoodoo hero.

CONTINUED: (2)

IMAM

What do you know of your early years? What else was told you besides....

AEREON

Do you remember your homeworld? Where it was?

IMAM

Have you met any others?

AEREON

Others like yourself?

RIDDICK

Sister, they don't know what to do with one of me.

*
*

Hearing COMMOTION, Riddick moves out onto the veranda...

INT./EXT. VERANDA - IMAM'S PLACE - NIGHT

...and looks down. Helion soldiers are on the street below, doing door-to-door searches. And now they're BANGING on our door.

INT. IMAM'S PLACE - NIGHT

Lajjun returns, worried.

LAJJUN

They look for a man who came here today. They think he might be, uh, what is the..."ghesu?"

IMAM

"Spy." They must think you're a spy for the --

*

LAJJUN

(to Riddick)

Did someone see you come here? Did they?

MORE POUNDING downstairs.

IMAM

I'll send them away, but please -- one minute. Will you wait just one minute more to help save worlds?

Riddick vaults onto the veranda railing, ready to flee like an assassin into the night.

CONTINUED:

IMAM (CONT'D)

Or will you leave us to our fate?
Just as you left her?

Not much of a word, "her." But somehow those three letters stop Riddick from leaving.

INT. ENTRY/STAIRCASE - IMAM'S PLACE - NIGHT

The main door downstairs. Plasma blades are slicing through hinges and locks. The door crashes to the floor. Helion soldiers swarm inside. *

INT. VERANDA ROOM - IMAM'S PLACE - NIGHT

IMAM

We have some sway. Let us try and send them away. *

Imam and the clerics exit, closing doors behind them.

Aereon makes another quick move -- and just vanishes from sight. Unnerving how she does that. *

Soon the VOICES SUBSIDE beyond the drawn doors. Riddick checks over the veranda edge, expecting to see soldiers leaving. Instead...

It's Imam's family and the clerics who leave, put out by the soldiers. Roughly. *

AEREON (O.S.)

Consider it another test....

The voice came from right beside him. A beat, then Riddick moves lynxlike to the drawn doors. He lays an eye to the crack to see...

No movement beyond. Where did the soldiers go? CAMERA GOES UP AND OVER the wall...

INT. VERANDA ROOM DOORS - IMAM'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

...to reveal the soldiers massed on the flanks of the doors.
And Imam...

Is in the custody of a YOUNG SOLDIER. A knife on Imam's lips ensures his silence.

On the LEAD OFFICER'S nod, soldiers pulverize the doors and surge into the room beyond just as... *

INT. VERANDA ROOM - IMAM'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

The lights are extinguished.

RIDDICK
Come on in.

FIGHT SCENE: It's ten Helion soldiers versus Riddick -- versus Riddick in the dark: We see flashes of him snapping limbs, glints of his blades swinging lethally. INTERCUT...

RIDDICK'S POV: Dropping soldiers right and left. Seeing their faces grow more confused, more desperate. INTERCUT...

Helion WEAPONS SHOOTING WILDLY, chewing up the room. INTERCUT...

EXT. IMAM'S PLACE - STREET - NIGHT

Lajjun and the clerics outside. HEARING THE FIREFIGHT, seeing the muzzle-flashes on the ceiling of the veranda. Finally...

INT. VERANDA ROOM DOORS - IMAM'S PLACE - NIGHT

Everything GOES QUIET. Imam and Young Soldier stare at the dark room until...

Riddick emerges, calmly re-goggling.

Young Soldier realizes he's the only one left, and that just paralyzes him. Riddick slips the knife out of his hand -- and shoos him away. When they're alone again:

RIDDICK
You mentioned..."her."

IMAM
She, uh...she, uh...went looking for you. Followed your footsteps too literally, I'm afraid -- people died.

Riddick shakes his head: He never wanted that. Gravely, he starts downstairs.

IMAM (CONT'D)
She never forgave you for leaving....

*

*

*

*

*

CONTINUED:

RIDDICK

Wanted me to be some big hero.
That's always a mistake, Imam.
Always.

EXT. IMAM'S PLACE - STREET - NIGHT

Riddick exits the house. Lajjun and Ziza are here. *

ZIZA *

Are you gonna stop the new monsters
now?

Riddick looks from them to the veranda balcony, somehow
anticipating the appearance of... *

Aereon. She materializes, making eye-contact with Riddick
briefly before he turns and heads away, passing Ziza without
answering. Shadows swallow him whole. *

AEREON *

He doesn't even know [who he
is].... *

EXT. STREETS - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

CLOSE on the ship-finder, opening in a hand.

Riddick waits for the ship-finder to lock in and give a fix.
In seconds it does. Riddick strikes out in that direction.
But soon he clocks...

Para-military spotters on a rooftop. Agitated, they're
pointing skyward.

Riddick gets a clean sight-line, sees the comet in the sky.
But does it look different now? PUSH IN on Riddick's eyes,
those animal eyes.

RIDDICK'S POV: Of the comet. A second head is splitting off
from the first.

EXT. COMET - SPACE

CLOSER on the "comet." The second head is fracturing into
multiple heads -- and each head is a Conquest Icon. Covered
in ice, they were massed together to form the nucleus of what
only masquerades as a comet. And trailing the icons... *

An armada of Necro warships is emerging from the gaseous tail
of the comet. They're all heading for... *

Helion Prime. *

INT. ENTRY/STAIRCASE - IMAM'S PLACE - NIGHT

Soldiers are carting out their dead, the ones killed by Riddick. Imam and Lajjun watch grimly. Soon they hear the SCREAMING OF DISTANT LAUNCHES.

We FOLLOW Imam and Lajjun as they move outside...

EXT. IMAM'S PLACE - NEW MECCA - CONTINUOUS

...and look at the sky. It's being slashed with miles-long missile trails.

IMAM

[We take] nothing but Ziza.
Nothing but her and these.

*

He produces the light-tokens from inside his sleeve. They're pulsing now, ticking off seconds: The count-down has begun.

*

*

EXT. ROOFTOPS - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

Riddick climbs to rooftop-level. More munitions are coming on-line, FLAK AND TRACER CANNON joining the SCREAMING MISSILES as Helions just pour fire-power into the sky.

Riddick picks up the pace, sprinting over the rooftops, shielding his eyes against the brightest fire. He reaches a ledge...

...leaps a building gap...

EXT. MISSILE DOME - ROOFTOPS - NEW MECCA - CONTINUOUS

...and slams down on the other side.

*

The AIR STARTS QUAKING around him. Riddick looks up to behold...

Something unthinkably huge descending. It's a dark mass seen at night, defined only by the CANNON FIRE that detonates harmlessly against it.

*

Coming fast, the dark mass just SWALLOWS ALL OTHER SIGHT AND SOUND as it heads for one of the great solar beacons. Then...

A SHATTERING CONCUSSION rocks heaven and earth.

A 10.0 SHOCK WAVE blows Riddick off the rooftops.

EXT. UNDERGROUND STATION - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

*

As the aerial battle flashes and BOOMS overhead, Meccans scramble to reach the relative safety of underground transit stations. Fighting past the chaos we find...

*

Imam, Lajjun, Ziza. The same CONCUSSION HITS HERE.

The whole world goes pitch black.

*

EXT. HELION PRIME - NIGHT

WIDE SHOT: The lights of Helion are failing from the center out, all solar beacons extinguishing. And in that dark core, an impact cloud is growing.

EXT. STREETS - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

(NOTE: No cannon or missile fire for the next two scenes.)

RIDDICK'S POV: In dust-choked streets, Meccans are fleeing the epicenter, HOWLING, crying, SHOUTING as they try to escape whatever just happened. The only person moving toward the epicenter is...

Riddick. Soon he hears a RISING CACOPHONY: It's like a 1,000-piece orchestra warming up and starting to crescendo.

Riddick angles for the SOUND. Turning the corner of a shattered building, he comes to an unnatural stop.

EXT. ICON/SHATTERED SOLAR BEACON - NIGHT

With our CAMERA'S EYE, we see black dust clouds. Soon the curtains part, revealing a light source high in the air. Things are moving inside the light -- crawling? writhing? separating? What the hell are they?

Riddick unoggles. With his eyes, we now see...

RIDDICK'S POV: A Conquest Icon rises from the ruins of a solar beacon. The EERIE SOUND comes from Necro fighter planes REVVING THEIR GRAVITY ENGINES as they detach from the Icon -- and take to the air.

EXT. ORBIT - HELION - NIGHT

The Basilica Ship remains in low-orbit. It's beyond range of the FLAK THAT DETONATES beneath it.

INT. CONTROL VAULT - BASILICA SHIP - NIGHT

Necro navigators work genuflected in this baroque room.
They're overseen by Lord Marshal and...

VAULT OFFICER
One foot on the ground.

EXT. ABOVE HELION - NIGHT

(NOTE: For the next 20 scenes, we see action only by the
light of Helion ordnance. The darkness will be broken by
staccato flashes of intense light, branding the war images
onto our brains.)

Necro fighters are imposing: These are one-man, open-cockpit
dog-fighters with two gravity-spitting guns. But they're
just here to clear airspace for...

The incoming Warrior Ships -- these the leviathan troop
carriers and the second "foot" of the Necro invasion. Their
heavy armor resists GROUND FIRE as they descend.

EXT. SPACEPORT - HELION - NIGHT

Getting airborne fast, Helion fighters launch from the
spaceport...

And target the incoming Warrior Ships.

EXT. OVER HELION - NIGHT

Helion fighters gang up on one of the incoming Warrior Ships
and score A BIG WICKED-ASS KILL.

A Warrior Ship, decapitated, falling to the ground. It
EXPLODES -- then IMPLODES as its gravity engines miscarry.
It's an awesome sight.

EXT. STREETS - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

Imam, Lajjun, and Ziza run on. There are fewer and fewer
people on the streets now.

INT. WARRIOR SHIP - NIGHT

NECRO FOOT-SOLDIER POV: We're inside a dark holding area.
All around us are jostling bodies and glints of helmets.
Somewhere ahead, doors guillotine open. Suddenly we're
moving, funneling toward the doors amid a crush of bodies.
We surge outside and into...

EXT. LANDING ZONE - NIGHT

The Necro L.Z. The Warrior Ships are already on the ground, each 400 feet tall, each unleashing "the Legion Vast" upon Helion.

Vaako and Irgun. Leading the infantry charge, they drop battle-masks into place and head out.

INT. CONTROL VAULT - BASILICA SHIP - NIGHT

VAULT OFFICER
Second foot down, Lord Marshal. *

Lord Marshal stands on a lensing port, gazing down on Helion and the battle that rages far below. The Purifier joins.

LORD MARSHAL
All those poets...on all those
worlds...the ones who spoke of
battle as such an unsightly thing?
They never stood here, did they? *

From this vantage, he's right: It's like watching a lightning storm from space. Strange how, from a distance, war can actually be beautiful. *

PURIFIER
Perhaps this time, converts will be
easier to come by. *

LORD MARSHAL
I see it now: This world...soon
this system...battling on through
the dwindling outposts of man...
and then The Threshold. In this
regime, we will all cross The
Threshold. *

PURIFIER
Others have had your vision. *

LORD MARSHAL
But not with such clarity.
(like a fiat)
There will be one last Lord
Marshal. And he is right here. *

EXT. STREETS - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

IMAM
Ahead...just ahead....

CONTINUED:

Exhausted, filthy, harrowed, Imam and his family turn a corner and reach...

EXT. Y-STREET PLAZA - NEW MECCA - NIGHT *

A broad plaza. It's empty save for a few frantic shapes that dart the perimeter. Where is everybody? *

ZIZA *

This is spooooky. *

Imam gives her an aggravated look. *

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NEW MECCA - NIGHT *

Eerily, ground-debris starts rising into the air, caught in some gravitational eddy. Suddenly it's raining Necros, all riding the gravitational tides to the ground. *

TILT UP to reveal where the soldiers came from: Shaped like a sarcophagus, a Necro transport is dumping its payload. *

A platoon of 15 Necro soldiers now clogs the alley -- including one MORTAR-BEARER. The mortar is a small effigy of the Conquest Icon. *

EXT. Y-STREET PLAZA - NEW MECCA *

Plasma blade at the ready, Imam reaches a rotunda and scans the street beyond. Seems passable. He turns back to Lajjun, who waits across the plaza with Ziza, motioning for her to join him. But now... *

APPROACHING THUNDER: A brigade of Helion soldiers appears, entering the plaza from one side while... *

The Necro platoon double-times in from the other. Wielding only ceremonial hand-weapons, they seem like no match for... *

Helions. OPENING FIRE. *

IMAM *

(to Lajjun) *

NO! *

Imam starts for his family -- and is about to get caught in the gnashing HELION FIRE when... *

Two hands grab him... *

INT. ROTUNDA - Y-STREET PLAZA - NIGHT *

And sling Imam back into the shadows of the rotunda. *

CONTINUED:

RIDDICK *
Are you followin' me? *

The Necro platoon storms past them, closing ranks as they *
head for... *

EXT. Y-STREET PLAZA - NIGHT *

The Helions. The Necros burrow right into the thick of the *
brigade. *

Now Necros circle up, protecting... *

The mortar-bearer. Stabbing his mini-icon into the ground. *

Necros are getting pummeled by the Helions, dropping to their *
knees almost ceremoniously as they go down. *

The last to fall, the Necro mortar-bearer deploys a collar- *
ring as he dies: The head of the mortar cracks open and... *

POOMPH! Something missiles out the top... *

And stops high overhead, levitating, spinning. *

All 15 Necros are now dead. The Helions lower weapons -- *
"Hey, these guys weren't so tough" -- and consider the energy *
orb overhead. What the hell is it? Some kind of distress *
flare? *

INT. ROTUNDA - Y-STREET PLAZA - NIGHT *

IMAM *
Lajjun and Ziza. Just let me -- *

Riddick restrains him again, sensing there's a method to this *
Necro madness. *

RIDDICK *
When it's over. *

IMAM *
Let me go. I need to be with -- *

RIDDICK *
When it's over. *

EXT. Y-STREET PLAZA - NIGHT *

Eyes trained on the orb, Helions start retreating. But they *
find themselves blocked by... *

CONTINUED:

100 Necro soldiers. There was no sound of approach --
they're just there. And choking off a second street is... *

Another 100 Necros. And down a third street... *

Another 100. At their fore is... *

Vaako, the young Necro commander. He takes aim -- not on the
Helions -- but on the orb that still spins over the plaza. *

Following his lead, 300 Necro soldiers GANG-FIRE gravity
weapons. Their shots circle the orb, creating a whirlpool of
increasingly dense gravity that comes dropping out of the sky
like some Hammer of God on... *

The Helions. *

Seconds later, the only thing standing is the mini-icon.
The plaza is a carpet of Helion death. *

INT. ROTUNDA - Y-STREET PLAZA - NIGHT *

Imam is stunned, sickened. But Riddick... *

RIDDICK *

Beautiful.... *

The light tokens still beat in Imam's palm. But he's unsure
what to do. *

RIDDICK

Found a ship, looks ready to roll.
Come ride bitch if you want.

IMAM *

No, no, I'll stay to fight -- I
just need to get them across the
river first. God willing, we can
still reach the pick-up spot
before -- *

RIDDICK

You know, I'm sure God has his
tricks. But getting outta
hellified places no one else can?
That's one a' mine.

(a beat)

Get your family, Imam. *

EXT. HELION - NIGHT

ONE SHOT: In FOREGROUND, Vaako leads the Necro ground army
across a bridge. BOOM UP into a HIGH-AND-WIDE of Helion: We
see Vaako's goal in the distance: The capitol dome. More of *

CONTINUED:

those "Hammer of God" orbs are spinning over rooftops, and each time one drops from sight, we realize how many people have just died. *

EXT. BACK ALLEY #2 - NEW MECCA - NIGHT *

Following Riddick, Imam and his family run on. More Helion soldiers litter the ground here. *

Reaching a corner, Riddick spies something O.S. and quickly motions Imam back. Everyone takes cover a split-second before... *

A LENSING NECRO appears. Correction: TWO LENSING NECROS. *

(NOTE ON "LENSORS": Like all Necros, they're converts. But these are once-enemy soldiers who lost their faces, or parts thereof, in battle. Upon conversion, they traded in their damaged human senses for electronic ones. Think of them as Necro bloodhounds.)

The Lensors are part of a mop-up crew that includes IRGUN THE STRANGE, a Necro captain. Wherever the Lensors sniff out life, Irgun and others finish it off, PUMPING GRAVITY ROUNDS into the nearly-dead. *

CLOSE on Riddick, working the shadows as only he can. *

RIDDICK'S POV: Studying Irgun from behind. What we took for part of his helmet isn't: It's a blade running right through his lower skull, stabbed there by some long-ago enemy -- yet now kept as a trophy by Irgun. As a symbol of his mastery over pain. *

CLOSE on Riddick's hand. It rolls a blade slowly, contemplating attack. Should he do it? Right now? *

INTERCUT Imam, Lajjun, Ziza. Hiding opposite Riddick. Holding their breath. Holding their hearts. *

The mop-up crew moves on. We think the danger is past until... *

The trailing Lensor turns around -- and locks in on something. *

LENSOR POV: Of Imam, Lajjun, Ziza. Reading their fear. *

In a desperate gambit, Imam bolts into the open, hoping to lead the Necros away from his family. It works -- at least in part: Irgun gives chase, most of the mop-up crew following in his wake. But one Lensing Necro and a Necro foot soldier stay behind. *

CONTINUED:

LENSING NECRO POV: Closing in on Lajjun and Ziza. At the last second, the Lensor POV torques around 180 degrees, this move accompanied by THE SOUND OF CRACKING VERTEBRAE. Now we see Riddick's face filling the POV.

WIDER to show Riddick holding the Lensor by the head -- the head now worn backwards on its shoulders. He throws the thing down to the ground, letting it die beside the last Necro foot soldier, already dispatched.

LAJJUN
Imam...can you find Imam and bring him back....

EXT. BACK ALLEY #3 - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

Imam runs for his life, on his tail...

Irgun and three Necros. They stop and scan. Did they lose their prey? Now Irgun looks up to consider...

A small pedestrian bridge. Almost defying gravity, Irgun pounces to the top of the bridge...

EXT. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

And finds Imam crouched here.

Tired of running, Imam rises to full height. He locks eyes with Irgun and pulls his plasma blade. Fatalistically brave, Imam attacks first.

EXT. STREETS - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

Coming fast, Riddick hears TRILLING GRAVITY WEAPONS ahead.

EXT. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE - NEW MECCA - NIGHT

Riddick reaches the bridge. It's empty now. Hearing RETREATING BOOTS, Riddick looks off the side of the bridge to see...

Irgun and the mop-up crew double-timing away.

Now Riddick clocks blood at his feet. It leads off the other side of the bridge. He leaps up onto the parapet to find...

Imam's lifeless body. Dropped to the pavement below.

It's a hot blade in Riddick's cold heart. He had a chance to kill Irgun -- and didn't take it.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BASILICA SHIP/WARRIOR-SHIP PROMENADE - DAWN

THE PROMENADE SHOT: Basilica doors open. We peer into the dark maw of some cavernous space. Lord Marshal resolves out of shadow, soon reaching daylight. A NECRO CONQUEST SYMPHONY PLAYS: What "Ride of the Valkyries" was to Colonel Kilgore, this music is to Lord Marshal. Now he rises to take in... *
*

Helion by dawn. Before us stand the great Warrior Ships. They form a promenade that stretches from here to the capitol dome in the misty distance. Now the ships begin reorienting ...lowering their iconic heads...rolling their mass forward. Astoundingly, the Warrior Ships are bowing.

LORD MARSHAL

Let's go replenish the ranks.

EXT. WARRIOR-SHIP PROMENADE - CONTINUOUS

Vaako, Scales, Toal, and the Purifier trail as Lord Marshal descends the basilica steps and walks for the capitol dome. We're reminded of Hitler parading the boulevards of Paris.

DAME VAAKO falls in beside Vaako. She's carnal, ravishing, ambitious. And not in that order.

DAME VAAKO

Never fails to inspire, does it?
Each time a dynasty falls.

VAAKO

Remember your place.

DAME VAAKO

(hooking his arm)

My place is at your side, dear
Vaako. From now till UnderVerse
Come.

EXT. CAPITOL DOME - HELION - DAY

As a ceremonial act, two Necro fighters zero in on the huge Helion symbol atop the capitol dome. They hammer through the steel support like it was balsa wood. The symbol teeters... topples...

And CRATERS the ground. Helion Prime has fallen.

INT. CAPITOL DOME - DAY

The leaders of Helion -- politicians, defense ministers, clerics -- have been brought here, corralled at gunpoint by Irgun and Necro Elite Guard. The room goes quiet as...

Lord Marshal enters. *

LOW-ANGLE on his cloak-of-bones trailing him, RATTLING on each step as he descends toward the dais. *

He moves among the Helions. They involuntarily recoil, forming a perfect circle around him wherever he goes: This is the Necromonger Radius of Fear -- and no one had a bigger radius than Lord Marshal. Now he takes center-stage, appreciating the grandeur of this hall as the warm-up act begins. *

PURIFIER

In this 'Verse, life is antagonistic to the Natural State. Here, humans in all their sects are a spontaneous outbreak...an unguided mistake. Our purpose is to correct this mistake. *

REACTION SHOTS of Helions: *"Where is this going?"* *

PURIFIER (CONT'D) *

But let me tell you of another 'verse, a 'verse where life is welcomed. Cherished. A ravishing new place called "UnderVerse." But the road to that 'verse crosses over The Threshold... *

NECRO TROOPS

THE THRESHOLD...TAKE US TO THE THRESHOLD.... *

LORD MARSHAL

Which is what you happen to call "death." *

PURIFIER *

So it is our 'verse that must be cleansed of life so that UnderVerse can populate and prosper.

Helions RUMBLE DISCONTENT. It brings a fast sharpening of attention from...

CONTINUED:

LORD MARSHAL

Look around you. Every Necromonger in this hall -- every one of the Legion Vast that just swept aside your defenses in one night -- was once like you. Fought as feebly as you. Because every Necromonger that lives today is a convert.

MORE DISCONTENT, even louder. *

PURIFIER

(rising above)

WE ALL BEGAN AS SOMETHING ELSE.

(a beat)

It was hard for me to accept, too, when I first heard these words. But I changed. I let them take away my pain. Just as you will, too, when you accept that The Threshold to the UnderVerse will be crossed only by those who have received the Necromonger faith. For those who will, right now, drop to their knees and ask to be purified. *

BUILDING OUTRAGE: The Helions are growing bolder, beginning to think this is actually an open forum. *

POLITICO #2

You cannot expect us to do this... *

MECCAN CLERIC #1

Renounce our faith? *

POLITICO #1

No one here will do what you ask. It's unthinkable. This is a world of many peoples, many religions. We simply cannot and will not -- *

Lord Marshal approaches. Chillingly, a third arm -- red and ethereal -- separates from his body. This "astral" arm reaches inside the politico...fishes about for a moment... then violently rips something out and throws it on the floor for the everyone -- especially the gape-mouthed politico -- to see. *

It's a human soul. Red and ethereal. Silently screaming at the shock of being C-sectioned from the body of... *

Politico #1. An empty husk, he falls and dies. *

CONTINUED: (2)

LORD MARSHAL

Who will now bow and beg to,
someday, cross The Threshold?

*
*
*

Man by man, row by row, Helions drop to the floor. It's a mass capitulation that seems like an unanimous gesture -- until we see one figure still standing at the rear of the hall.

Riddick.

Vaako rolls his eyes. *"One in every crowd."* He crosses the floor and stops right in Riddick's face. *"Well?"*

RIDDICK

I'm not really with them.

VAAKO

This is your chance. Your one chance to take the Lord Marshal's offer.

RIDDICK

I sign with no man.

VAAKO

He's not a man. He is the holy Half-Dead who has seen the UnderVerse.

*
*
*

RIDDICK

Tell you what. I'm not much into the bow-and-beg thing...

*
*

Riddick jerks a chin at Irgun the Strange, already heading this way.

RIDDICK (CONT'D)

...but I will take a piece of him.

Irgun unsheathes two blades, ready for a splashy kill.

VAAKO

A piece you'll have.

Unarmed, Riddick holds his ground. Irgun crosses his blades: He's planning to scissor through Riddick's neck in one masterful move, until...

Riddick arms himself by wrenching the trophy dagger out of Irgun's head. Irgun looks astonished -- right before he looks dead, clattering to the floor in a heap.

It brings an AUDIBLE GASP from Helions. And stunned reactions from Necros.

CONTINUED: (3)

Mission accomplished, Riddick heads for the door.

LORD MARSHAL

Stay.

He approaches aggressively. The Radius of Fear that so affected the Helions seems lost on Riddick. Lord Marshal clocks that fact -- as does the Purifier behind him.

*

LORD MARSHAL

One of my best, Irgun.

*

*

RIDDICK

(unimpressed)

If you say so.

*

*

*

LORD MARSHAL

Rare, isn't it? The knack for turning your enemy's strength into his fatal weakness? Quite rare. So you like that blade?

*

*

*

*

*

Riddick gives Irgun's dagger a quick test drive, flipping and whirling it like a magician. He offers it.

RIDDICK

Half-gram heavy on the back end.

LORD MARSHAL

(pushing dagger back)

In our faith, "You keep what you kill."

*

(a beat)

*

Are you familiar to me? Did we meet on some distant field?

*

RIDDICK

You'd think I'd remember.

LORD MARSHAL

You'd think I would, too.

*

(to Vaako)

Bring him before the Quasi-Deads.

He sweeps away. Vaako and Elites form a threatening ring around Riddick. Riddick's hackles go up, and it's about to get ugly again, until...

DAME VAAKO (O.S.)

Perhaps the breeder would do it...

Dame Vaako shoulders her way in.

CONTINUED: (4)

DAME VAAKO

...if someone just asked him.
(to Riddick, the
"breeder")

It's a rare offer, a visit inside
Necropolis. Would you like to see
me there?

REACTION Lord Marshal: Pausing in the doorway. Not liking
Dame Vaako inserting herself into this.

REACTION Vaako: Liking it even less.

REACTION Riddick: Sizing up Dame Vaako as if she were 120
pounds of blue-ribbon beef.

RIDDICK

(to Vaako)
Stray piece?

VAAKO

Mine.

RIDDICK

Well, get in line tonight.

INT. NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

We're inside "Necropolis," a soaring cathedral at the heart
of the Basilica Ship. If the Pope had a summer home in Hell,
it would look like this. TILT DOWN from its impossibly high
ceiling to find...

Riddick being escorted inside behind Lord Marshal. Among
others, Dame Vaako and the Purifier keep pace with Riddick,
who tries to absorb it all -- the macabre statuary, the
absolute celebration of death.

DAME VAAKO

Six regimes of Necromongers have
called this home. Magnificent,
isn't it?

RIDDICK

I mighta gone a different way.

PURIFIER

True of us all.

They pass under a suspension bridge of figures -- living
people -- clamped into "purification rigs." Off Riddick's
expression...

CONTINUED:

PURIFIER

Converts. They learn how one pain
can lessen another.

They walk on, ushering Riddick down into...

INT. QUASI GROTTO - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

A dank circular grotto. No one else follows Riddick here.
From the doorway:

DAME VAAKO

The more you resist them, the
greater the damage will be.

RIDDICK/QUASI-DEADS (V.O.)

"'Them?' Who the hell is 'them?'"

Riddick looks around. That was his thought -- but it was
spoken by an EERIE CHOIR OF VOICES that come from...

Hollows in the walls of the grotto. Dark hollows.

The grotto DOOR SCRAPES CLOSED. Riddick is alone here now.
Or is he?

RIDDICK/QUASI-DEADS (V.O.)

"Something in there that's...."

(a beat)

"Who's saying that?"

Just outside, Lord Marshal nods to the Purifier. *"Any time."*
The Purifier passes a hand over a lensed panel. Instantly...

Riddick is pulled to his knees by a riptide of gravity.

INT. ABOVE GROTTO - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Elite Guards keep an eye on Riddick from above. Nearby,
Vaako and Dame Vaako do the same.

INT. QUASI GROTTO - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

One by one, large nautilus shapes roll from the hollows.
On the back of each nautilus rides a body posed like an
Inquisition victim on a medieval rack. Each body is draped
in a diaphanous death shroud.

WIDER. These are the five Great QUASI-DEADS, their ancient
bodies mere housings for still-functioning brains. Fully
deployed now, the Quasies surround Riddick.

CONTINUED:

(NOTE: Riddick's voice will be layered into bold-face dialog. Non bold-face dialog indicates pure Quasi voice.)

*QUASI-DEADS (V.O.)
Wondering...wondering about us...
realizing now we're in his head...
beginning to fathom the Dark
Thought. Trying to shut us out,
shut down the here-and-now...
resisting...but vainly...so
vainly....*

Eyes shut, Riddick starts flinching, spasming under the invasion of the powerful Quasi minds.

QUASI-DEADS (V.O.) *
*Thinking of escape now. "Always be
an opening. Wait for the chance
and attack it. It'll come, it'll
come...." Having many ideas now,
all swirling, chaotic....*

Watching through a Judas window in the grotto door:

LORD MARSHAL
Regress.

*QUASI-DEADS (V.O.)
New mindscape. Just hours old.
Wondering about some "envoy"...who
she is...and what she means by...
"Furyans?"*

That gets Lord Marshal's attention.

LORD MARSHAL
Again, regress again. Not hours,
but years. All the way.

INT. ABOVE GROTTO - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

DAME VAAKO
Have you ever seen him this way?
Lord Marshal?

VAAKO
What way is that?

DAME VAAKO
Oh, I don't know. Concerned?
Worried?

VAAKO
I don't see it.

CONTINUED:

DAME VAAKO
I must be mistaken.

INT. QUASI GROTTO - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Riddick's face fights the regression: He doesn't want to unlock this next door in his head. But soon...

THE INFANTICIDE MEMORY: A hand reaching out of space. Approaching a planet. Breaking the skin-like surface of the planet and pulling out life-forms -- tiny human life-forms, hours old. The children oozing through the fingers of the clenching fist, dropping away into the great void of space. One child still dangling, still hanging in there. Fighting for his life.

(NOTE: These are abstract images, nothing literal. They represent the dreams of a guy who has a pile of rusty razor blades where his brain should be.)

Abruptly Riddick goes Zen.

LORD MARSHAL
Where did he come from? His birth world? These are the things I need to [know]....

His voice trails off: The Quasies are now twitching erratically. Beneath the shrouds, their faces grow agitated.

QUASI-DEADS (V.O.)
Something...feedback in the Dark Thought...need to stop...stop the feedback before...before....

Lord Marshal shoots a look at Riddick.

QUASI-DEADS (V.O.) *
Keep him out...out of the mind-loop. Shut down the Dark Thought. Shut it down! Keep him away from us. Just keep him....

DAME VAAKO *
He's scanning the Quasies.... *

QUASI-DEADS (V.O.) *
Kill the breeder! Kill the Riddick, kill the Riddick, KILL THE RIDDICK....

The Quasies are spasming like epileptics.

CONTINUED:

The Purifier's had enough: He fires a hand over his console, cutting the riptide of gravity that holds Riddick. It's clearly an act of release -- but did he do it for the Quasies? Or Riddick?

*
*
*

Freed, Riddick grabs the Irgun dagger off the floor. He rises to full height.

*

PUSH IN TIGHT on Lord Marshal. What he's just seen -- and heard -- compels him to agree with the Quasies.

LORD MARSHAL
"Kill the Riddick."

INT. ABOVE GROTTO - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Three Elite Guards jump into the grotto. Vaako, too, vaults a railing...

INT. QUASI GROTTO - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

...and joins the fight.

Trying to get out of harm's way, the Quasies start rolling back into the walls.

Riddick takes out the first Elite with the Irgun dagger. The second Elite pounces on him as...

Vaako levels a gravity weapon on one side of the grotto...

And the third Elite takes aim from the other.

Riddick sees what's coming. He drops and rolls just as...

Vaako and the third Elite FIRE SIMULTANEOUSLY, their gravity charges converging at...

The second Elite Guard. His armor crushes like an aluminum can -- with him inside.

A gravity gun bangs to the floor. Riddick one-hops it, sweeps some SUPPRESSIVE FIRE around the grotto as he makes his way to...

The Quasies. Four of five have already rolled back into their hollows. Riddick grabs the last nautilus with his one spare hand -- and stops it dead in his tracks.

*
*
*

Vaako makes another run. But all he sees is...

*

Riddick vanishing into the hollow, slipping in just ahead of the nautilus that now seals and shuts.

*
*

CONTINUED:

He's gone. *

INT. ABOVE GROTTO - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY *

Dame Vaako is more impressed than she's been in a long, long time.

DAME VAAKO
Who is this man....

INT. ENGINE CRYPT - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Necro GRAVITY TENDERS work in a crypt below Necropolis. Around them we see the idling gravity engines: Large spinning orbs, dozens of them, move erratically between ports and wells, manipulating energy fields. Soon the Tenders hear a POUNDING not associated with the engines.

It comes from the ceiling of the crypt. It's being hammered from above, hammered by a gravity gun in the grasp of...

Riddick. He drops through the new ceiling hole and pauses to get his bearings. His whole attitude is, "Don't mind me -- just passing through." He reaches...

The first engine well. Riddick peers down to see...

Daylight. That's what he was looking for. But suddenly...

A gravity orb nearly takes off his head. It dropped into the well from a ceiling port -- and now blocks his exit.

Necro Elite appear. They draw weapons.

Riddick pulls his weapon -- but opts to use it as a monkey wrench, heaving the gun down the well, throwing it right into the spinning teeth of...

The gravity orb. It SHATTERS INTO A MILLION NEEDLES.

Riddick drops down the now-open well...

EXT. BENEATH BASILICA - HELION - DAY

...and lands in the ruins of buildings, crushed beneath the basilica ship. He's free.

EXT. BASILICA SHIP - HELION - SUNSET

TWO SARCOPHAGI SCREAM IN for a fast landing. Shock troops are already aboard. They're just here to pick up...

Vaako. Running down the basilica steps and springing aboard.

CONTINUED:

LORD MARSHAL (O.S.)

Vaako!

Lord Marshal appears at the basilica doors. This time Vaako would agree: He does look scared.

LORD MARSHAL

Whatever it takes!

EXT. POST-BATTLE STREET #1 - HELION - NIGHT

A battle-scarred street: Meccans and Helions are out in small numbers, some darting across streets, not wanting to be caught out at night, others digging through building rubble, searching for lost possessions. *

En route to his ship, Riddick appears. He doesn't think twice about... *

A MECCAN CLERIC. The man stops and clocks Riddick's direction. *

EXT. POST-BATTLE STREET #2 - HELION - NIGHT

Hearing GRAVITY ENGINES, Riddick slips into an alcove as... *

A sarcophagus appears overhead. Lensing Necros are hanging off the sides, faces sweeping.

HOLD on Riddick. While he waits for the THRUMMING ENGINE SOUND to pass, he spies... *

LITTLE GIRL LOST, standing out in the open, crying. She's about the right age, the right height. Is it Ziza? *

Riddick tries to dismiss it. But it looks just like her. As soon as the ENGINES RETREAT... *

Riddick emerges. Moves to the girl. Picks her up and sees... *

It's not her. It doesn't look anything like her now. As the girl cries even harder... *

The SARCOPHAGUS SWOOPS back into view. *

LENSING NECRO POV: Locking in on Riddick and the girl. On the girl's fear. *

In a blur of motion, Little Girl Lost gets dumped into the safety of a doorway as... *

CONTINUED:

Riddick runs on. The sarcophagus comes in low and fast behind him. It's seconds away from dumping shock troops on his head when...

*
*
*

THREE MISSILES streak out of the night...

And impale the flying sarcophagus. It CRACKS OPEN SPECTACULARLY, throwing bodies as it noses into the ground. But forward momentum keeps it coming right at...

Riddick. All he has time to do is duck as...

The sarcophagus, tumbling end over end, passes right over him.

IT CRASHES into a building and rocks to a burning stop.

A holy-fuck beat, then...

CYCLING WEAPONS turn Riddick's head. Four black-garbed figures step out of the shadows, all carrying weapons -- one a smoking missile-launcher. Their leader is the "Meccan Cleric," now uncowling.

*
*
*
*

It's Toombs.

*

MERC CO-PILOT
(reading instruments)
'Nother one circling. We should
move, we should move now....

These new mercs, male and female, are skittish about being here any longer than need be. But Toombs wants to crow before he runs.

TOOMBS

Two things you coulda done better:
First, trash the locator beacon
inside the ship you jacked. Second
-- and this is really the more
important part -- shoulda dusted my
dick when you had the chance.

He throws the cuffs back at Riddick.

TOOMBS (CONT'D)
Any questions?

RIDDICK
Yeah. "What took you so long?"

INT. SECOND MERC SHIP - NIGHT

The windscreen unshutters. The dark surface of Helion falls away beneath us. Mercs #3 and #4 are already HOO-AHING. *

MERC #4
In and out, unsuspected and undetected! Damn, I love a good smash-and-grab! *

MERC CO-PILOT
Stand by, stand by...picking up fields here.... *

MERC PILOT
Shit, here it comes.... *

MERC CO-PILOT
Some kinda scan. Readin' our BTUs, maybe. I dunno, I dunno.... *

TOOMBS
Let's drop one. *

The MERC PILOT yanks a gnarly lever...

EXT. SECOND MERC SHIP - ABOVE HELION - NIGHT

And the ship jettisons an engine. But instead of falling to the ground... *

The engine sprouts an airfoil and keeps flying. Spewing heat and exhaust, the decoy takes one heading...

While the merc ship fires up a cooler ion drive -- and takes another heading.

INT. SECOND MERC SHIP - NIGHT

Mercs hold their breath as they watch the field-indicators on their screens dropping...dropping...and going flat-line. The pilots sag in relief. On to other matters, Toombs ducks to the back of the ship... *

And Riddick. In lock-up. *

TOOMBS
So. Where do we drop your merc-killin' ass? Maybe Butcher Bay.... *

CONTINUED:

RIDDICK

Butcher Bay? 10 minutes every
other day on the dog-run. Good
protein waffles, too.

TOOMBS

Or hey, how 'bout Ursa Luna? Nice
little double-max prison.

RIDDICK

They keep a cell open for me.

TOOMBS

You know, all these joints now?
Health clubs for waffle-eatin'
pussies. Maybe we should think
about uppinn' our game here...
someplace truly diabolical....

Overhearing, mercs turn and look.

MERC CO-PILOT

(to pilot)

What the hell's he thinking? Now?

RIDDICK

(answering co-pilot)

He's thinking triple-max. Only
three of those slams left -- two
of 'em out of range for a shitty
little under-cutter like this with
no legs. That leaves just one.

Riddick just stole Toombs' thunder.

RIDDICK (CONT'D)

[That] is what you had in mind,
right? "Crematoria?"

TOOMBS

(to pilots)

Dope it out.

PILOT

I hate this run....

TOOMBS

Just do it.

RIDDICK

Dunno about this new crew, Toombs.
Skittish. Hey, did you tell 'em
what happened to your last crew?

CONTINUED: (2)

TOOMBS

You know, you were supposed to be
some slick shit -- an' here you
are, all back-of-the-bus.

(to Merc #4)

Change his goddamn oil.

Toombs turns away. Merc #4 takes his place, activating the
cryo-system hooked up to Riddick. Cryo-fluids flow into
Riddick's arms, replacing blood.

MERC #4

So, uh, what did happen to the
other guys?

Riddick goes dead-mouth, not wanting to deal with junior
mercs.

MERC #4

Ohhh...he don't wanna talk to me.
You know, Riddick, I'm gonna be
awake a lot longer than you....

Letting it hang there as a threat, Merc #4 finishes his work,
then slap-pats Riddick's cheek. "Nighty-night."

INT. SECOND MERC SHIP - LEAVING HELION

The pilot's hand finishes programming the auto-nav system.
Destination? "CREMATORIA."

EXT. LEAVING HELION - SPACE

Ion drive burning, the second merc ship spirals off into the
deep velvet of space.

EXT. SAND DUNES - OUTSKIRTS OF HELION - NIGHT

CLOSE on an area of molten glass. It was once sand, but it's
been vitrified by the hot exhaust of a ship. Running a hand
over the area is...

Vaako. He's here with a search team, including a Lensing
Necro. Scanning the sky, the Lensor alerts.

Vaako screws a tap into the small of the Lensor's back, right
at the base of the spine. The tap leads to a hand-held lens.

CLOSER on the lens to see what the Lensor sees: The image is
highly processed, but we make out an ion trail in the sky.
It's like sky-writing after it gets pushed around by wind.

CONTINUED:

 VAAKO
 (to officer)
 Take my Galilee team -- the one
 with the best Lensors -- and see
 this done.

*
*
*
*
*

INT. CONTROL VAULT - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Lord Marshal consults with his lead officers, Toal and Scales and the Scalp-Taker among those who huddle around...

A Necro extrusion map: It's an ever-changing relief map that extrudes features on demand. Under Toal's guiding hand, it reveals a problem area here on Helion Prime: An imposing Maginot Line defense.

 TOAL
 ...just south of the equator...
 here...defensive cannon, still
 active. All along this continental
 rift.

 LORD MARSHAL
 The body flails -- even after the
 head's been chopped.

 TOAL
 If we don't act soon, this area
 could reactivate beacons -- and
 start resupplying outlying worlds.
 The ones we need to starve out.

*

 SCALES
 Give it to me. I'll go straight
 into their teeth. It'll cost
 20,000 converts and two Warrior
 Ships -- no more, I swear it.

Unnoticed, Vaako enters. He watches the other officers for a moment -- then doing a private test, he approaches in absolute silence as...

 LORD MARSHAL
 While I do prize brute force,
 perhaps this approach...

Lord Marshal steers the map: We retreat from the Maginot Line...fly over a polar area...transit another equator...and soar over a second pole. The Maginot Line reappears. Only now we're behind it.

 LORD MARSHAL (CONT'D)
 ...is more artful. Remove these
 cannon first, attack the larger
 (MORE)

CONTINUED:

LORD MARSHAL (CONT'D)
placements at speed -- and you'll
catch them still watching the
northern skies. You see, as with
most, their blind spot...

VAAKO'S POV: Closing on Lord Marshal. Just when we think
we've caught him unaware, a "soul" head turns inside his
physical head. His astral face stares at us for a moment
before the physical face catches up.

LORD MARSHAL
...is right behind them.

VAAKO
(recovering quickly)
We found an ion trail. It leads
off-world.

LORD MARSHAL
Then you should be off-world,
Vaako.

VAAKO
I've already ordered a strike team
to follow as far as needed. *

LORD MARSHAL
Wherever The Riddick has gone, you
lens him out and cleanse him. You. *

VAAKO
Forgive me, but...isn't my place
here? Planning The Campaign?
Isn't this where I'm most -- *

LORD MARSHAL
Don't question it, Vaako.

The WORDS REVERBERATE inside the vault -- inside the whole of
Necropolis. It's meant as a warning to all officers.

LORD MARSHAL (CONT'D)
Take it on faith.

INT. PRIVATE QUARTERS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

VAAKO
It's a fool's run. Why care about
one man, one breeder? We have a
war to plan, a faith to spread, and
here he's ordering me off to....
(stopping with a
new thought)
Am I falling from favor? *

CONTINUED:

At a vanity, Dame Vaako applies her death maquillage.

DAME VAAKO

He's always been unsettled, the current Marshal. Unsteady. Some say he's too artistic for the job. Wouldn't be surprised if someone promoted him soon -- to full dead.

*
*
*

VAAKO

Take care what you say.

DAME VAAKO

Should I say it softly?

VAAKO

So it sounds more like a conspiracy?

DAME VAAKO

Why is it that when you breathe about the demise of him on the throne, everyone assumes a conspiracy? Why isn't that prudent planning?

VAAKO

We don't know who'll succeed him. There's Toal, Scales, the Purifier himself --

DAME VAAKO

Yet none of them with the simple elegance of "Lord Vaako."
(moving closer)
You can keep what you kill.

VAAKO

Stop.

DAME VAAKO

That is the Necromonger way.

VAAKO

STOP!

He spins on her, grabs her.

VAAKO

His death will come in due time. And not a moment sooner.

DAME VAAKO

Why?

CONTINUED: (2)

VAAKO

Because I serve him, we all serve him. It's called "fidelity."

DAME VAAKO

It's called "stupidity."

He whacks her, hard.

DAME VAAKO (CONT'D)

Well, finally some attention.

She comes right back at him, attacking with a sexual energy, bite-kissing him hard. Then just as abruptly she's petting his face, cooing him into a calmer place.

DAME VAAKO

You have such greatness in you.
I just wish you could see it like
I do.

(another kiss)

You know what I want?

*
*
*
*
*

VAAKO

He was meeting with the other commanders. And I came up behind him in perfect silence...

DAME VAAKO

I want to go down to Necropolis, right now...

VAAKO

And he knew. His half-dead soul sensed I was behind him.

DAME VAAKO

And if no one's around...when no one is looking...I'll get down on my knees...

VAAKO

He knows everything.

DAME VAAKO

While you sit on the throne.

In a bacchanal frenzy, she pulls him out the door...

INT. CORRIDOR - BASILICA SHIP - CONTINUOUS

...leads him down a corridor...

INT. UPPER ANNEX/NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - CONTINUOUS

...and surges to the balustrade that overlooks Necropolis.
But the energy ebbs when she sees a rare sight:

Lord Marshal is down on the main floor. He and the Purifier
are interviewing someone. It's Aereon.

DAME VAAKO
("why?")
An Elemental? Here?

*

VAAKO
One of the captives.

CLOSER on Aereon and Lord Marshal, speaking MOS. Though
there's a tension between them, there's something else, too.
A familiarity. A history.

DAME VAAKO
Doesn't regard her as a captive,
though....
(a new plan)
You be a good soldier and go after
The Riddick. I'll find out why the
Lord Marshal is so threatened by
him.

EXT. CREMATORIA - SPACE

A stark new planet: A super-hot sun scorches one hemisphere
while cold black shadow grips the other. In between lies the
terminator, a moving band of twilight. Presently...

The merc ship appears, sneaking up on the terminator from the
cold side.

INT. SECOND MERC SHIP - APPROACHING CREMATORIA

*

In wake-up mode, mercs are unhooking cryo-tubes from arms.

*

The female Co-Pilot checks on Riddick, finds him still out.
Or is he? Morbidly attracted, she edges closer...reaches out
with wary hand...and lifts his goggles. He's wide awake.

*

*

*

RIDDICK
Do you know you grind your teeth
at night? Sexy.

*

*

*

INT. SECOND MERC SHIP - APPROACHING CREMATORIA

*

Minutes later. Toombs finishes gargling from a bottle of
tequila. Up front now:

*

*

CONTINUED:

MERC CO-PILOT *
(off instruments)
I make 700 degrees on the day side, *
300 below on the night side...

TOOMBS *
(to Riddick) *
Lemme tell you -- if I owned this
place and Hell? I'd rent this out
and live in Hell.

Getting a "PERMISSION TO LAND" read-out, the pilots don *
eye-protection -- and switch to manual controls.

EXT. SECOND MERC SHIP - OVER CREMATORIA

The ship catches up to the terminator. Now it slews its tail
around 90 degrees to line things up.

INT. SECOND MERC SHIP - OVER CREMATORIA

MERC PILOT
Runnin' behind sked...let's line
this up fast....

TIGHT on Riddick. He's watching the screens. Listening to
the pilots' TECH-CHATTER. Clocking everything he can.

Instruments show "GEO-SYNCHRONOUS LOCK."

MERC CO-PILOT
Go.

The pilot jams controls forward...

EXT. SECOND MERC SHIP - OVER CREMATORIA

...and vomit-comets the ship into the atmosphere.

INT. SECOND MERC SHIP - OVER CREMATORIA

Riddick gets pinned to the back of his cage, pilots get
plastered to their chairs. Some of the mercs HOWL WITH
BRAVURA, trying to cover the fact that they're actually
browning their shorts.

EXT. CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

We see nothing but desolate landscape -- obsidian mountains
and fields of cooled glass. Distant volcanoes spew lava.
The sun is below the horizon. Suddenly...

CONTINUED:

The SECOND MERC SHIP SWOOPS INTO FRAME, leveling off hard, BUFFETING CAMERA as it rockets past. Wooooow.

INT. UNDERGROUND HANGAR - TERMINATOR

We're inside an underground hangar. Huge concrete doors are opening to reveal...

A runway.

INT. SECOND MERC SHIP - TERMINATOR

Over the pilot's shoulder, we spy a stone steeple ahead. It marks the hangar.

EXT. SECOND MERC SHIP - TERMINATOR

The merc ship flares, slows. Just as it touches down...

The rising sun explodes over the horizon.

INT. SECOND MERC SHIP - IN SUNLIGHT

Sunlight floods the interior. The ship actually heaves as if recoiling from the sun. A hairy moment as the Merc Pilot, blinded, struggles to keep his nose straight, just hoping they're heading for...

The hangar. It's coming up way too fast.

Co-Pilot hammers a red plunger: "PARTY POPPERS."

EXT. RUNWAY - CREMATORIA - IN SUNLIGHT

Instantly two emergency engines deploy on long cables...

And snap taut behind the ship, that action activating the engines like, well, "party poppers." BLASTING TO LIFE, the emergency engines fire back toward the ship, supplying a big shot of reverse-thrust.

INT. UNDERGROUND HANGAR - IN SUNLIGHT

The merc ship noses to a hard stop.

CIRCLE AROUND to see the side that got hit by sun: It's burned, blistered, smoking.

INT. SECOND MERC SHIP - IN HANGAR

MERC PILOT
And that's why I hate this run. *

INT. TRANSFER MONTAGE - UNDERGROUND HANGAR

In FAST BRIDGING SHOTS, we see:

New concrete doors opening, revealing a flat-bed sled poised at the mouth of a lava tube. This is Crematoria's subway system.

Still in chains, Riddick gets tossed onto the rear of the sled. Mercs hop aboard and take recumbent seats. Merc #4 sits on Riddick's chest. Unwisely so. *

The SLED LURCHES. In seconds...

INT. LAVA TUBE

We're traveling at 200 m.p.h. If you lose your grip on the sled, tough shit -- you're a goner.

A crude odometer ticks off kilometers: 5...10...15....

CLOSE on Riddick. He's timing the overhead lighting fixtures that blur past. When he has the cadence down...

He lurches his chest. Merc #4 levitates by a few critical inches -- and his HEAD SLAMS into an EXPLODING LIGHT FIXTURE. In a hiccup he's gone. *

Presently the other mercs notice. *"Are we a man down?"*

Toombs gives Riddick a suspicious look. *"What the fuck happened to him?"*

Riddick shrugs. *"Beats me."*

TOOMBS
(screaming to others)
Four-way! Four-way split!

CLOSE on the odometer: 20...25...30...."

Now the sled decelerates....

INT. LAVA TUBE/CONTROL ROOM DOOR

...and docks hard, banging a bumper. Toombs jumps off first, moving to the containment door that leads to the prison control room. As it GRINDS OPEN... *

CONTINUED:

The SLAM BOSS steps forward. *

BOSS
This is all you bring me? *
Just one? *

TOOMBS
One "expensive piece of ass." *
Got room, doncha? *

From somewhere deeper inside the prison, we hear BEASTLY
HOWLS (familiar from SCENE 8). *

BOSS
Oh, we always got room for more. *

INT. SLAM

(NOTE ON SLAM: It's run by what used to be the Russian
mafia. This is a free-market prison, so the less they put
into it, the more profit they make. Imagine a prison run by
a Russian HMO and you've got the picture.)

We're in a huge volcanic cavern under the control room.
An aperture in the ceiling opens...

And Riddick appears. He's being winched down through the
open core of the prison like so much meat. Around him are...

Ringed tiers, too many to count. One side of the prison has
been devastated by a lava flow that broke through and left a
great fall of hardened lava. We wonder how many people it
killed.

Riddick jerks to a stop. *

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SLAM

Toombs just stopped the winch that lowers Riddick.

TOOMBS
What in the bowels of Christ are
you talkin' about? "700 K?" *

BOSS
(to Guard #1) *
Remind him. *

GUARD #1 *
(eating pistachios) *
The Guild pays us a "care-taker's" *
fee for each prisoner, each year. *
We pay mercs 20% of that total fee, *
based on a certain life-expectancy. *
(MORE) *

CONTINUED:

GUARD #1 (CONT'D)

Now there are costs that have to be deducted, of course --

TOOMBS

I wired this in at 850. Now any other slam in the system would deal me that much, right now, no bull-shitsky.

BOSS

This isn't any other slam, is it?

GUARD #2

Don't take this one, Boss.

BOSS

See, Anatoli here has a nose for trouble. And this one...this "Riddick" guy....

GUARD #2

Big trouble.

Boss restarts the winch.

BOSS

700 K is good money.

INT. MIDDLE TIERS - SLAM

Riddick starts dropping again.

RIDDICK

Better take it, Toombs.

Convicts -- male and female -- clock Riddick as he descends through the big open core swept by searchlights. FEATURE an imposing figure, THE GUV.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SLAM

TOOMBS

Howzabout this: You open the safe hidden behind that console there, pull out the real books, show me what you shit-niks are gonna bank for a guy like Riddick -- all killer, no filler -- then we'll figger out my cut. Then I'll be on my way.

CONTINUED:

BOSS

Open my books? This is what you suggest?

TOOMBS

[In my head?] Wudn't a suggestion.

The air goes electric. Guards and mercs straighten, freeing up gun-hands, taking stock of weapons on the other side.

The WINCH MAKES A GRINDING SOUND that starts to work everyone's nerves. Toombs reaches out and stops it.

INT. BOTTOM OF SLAM

Riddick jerks to a stop about 10 feet from the bottom.

RIDDICK'S POV: Surveying the dark pit of the prison. Fissures in the ground belch a sulphurous steam. There's little sign of life down here until...

THREE YELLOW MEN appear, climbing out a ground-fissure. Everything about them -- clothes and skin -- is impregnated with sulphur dust. They wear mouth-filters and tote net-sacks of sulphur nuggets, mined from below. It's so hot where they came from that their boots have melted into gelatinous masses. Soon they spot...

Riddick. And his bitchin' boots.

The Yellow Men brandish slam-made pick-axes as they move into position under Riddick. They're just waiting for him to drop the last 10 feet.

Knowing a fight's coming, Riddick starts flexing, wrapping the chains against themselves, getting ready to use his body as a big human lever.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SLAM

Counterpoint to the tension, Boss takes out a bottle of private-stock, pours a couple shots.

BOSS

These are dangerous days -- if you believe the talk.

TOOMBS

Talk....

BOSS

About some army....about dead planets...about "them."

CONTINUED:

It hangs on air. "Them."

TOOMBS

Am I gonna get my money?

BOSS

I'll run the numbers again. You can stay as my guest. At least here, we're all safe, yes?

TOOMBS

I'll give it a day. One.

GUARD #1

And our days are 52 hours.

BOSS

Anatoli? Find our new friends some slots.

Boss yanks a second winch-lever and...

INT. BOTTOM OF SLAM

The winch-chain disconnects just as Riddick makes his Houdini move: He does a big roundhouse flip in the air...

Torques open his chains...

And sticks the landing. If chain-snapping were an Olympic event, Riddick would get a perfect "10."

Instantly Yellow Men attack.

Riddick catches the first blow, dislocates Yellow Man #1's shoulder, drives the guy's arm back until he impales his own spine with his own pick-axe. As Riddick starts dismantling #2...

Yellow Man #3 gets behind Riddick. Just as he swings for Riddick...

A chain appears on his neck, jerking him to a stop. Holding the other end of the chain is...

KYRA. She plants a foot in Yellow Man #3's back, forcing him down to his knees, then poises a blade over his back. Over a very special spot.

KYRA

(at Riddick)

Should I go for "the sweet spot?
Left of the spine, fourth lumbar
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

KYRA (CONT'D)

down -- the abdominal aorta. What
a gusher...."

Riddick removes his goggles.

KYRA

"How do I get eyes like that?"

RIDDICK

"You gotta kill a few people."

KYRA

Did that. Did a lot of that.

She releases Yellow Man #3 -- and now she and Riddick start
circling like two tigers thrown in the same cage.

RIDDICK

"Then you gotta get sent to a
slam...."

KYRA

Oh, but not just any slam -- some
loked-out ghetto shit-hole like
this. Only there wasn't any doctor
here who could shine my eyes --
not for 20 Menthol Cools, not for
nuthin'.

(mocking)

"We're gonna get you somewhere
safe." "You're gonna be good."
"Don't worry, I'm right behind
you." Christ, was there anything
you said that was true?

RIDDICK

Jack....

Suddenly she's in his face with a shiv.

KYRA

"Jack" is dead. "Jack" couldn't
survive. Don't you ever confuse me
with that person again.

Just as fast, Riddick strips her of the shiv, wheels her
around, runs her face-first into a cell door.

RIDDICK

Remember who you're talking to.

KYRA

Like I could ever forget?

CONTINUED: (2)

THE GUV (O.S.)

There are convicts, and there are inmates...

Two tiers up, THE GUV is working his way down toward Riddick. He's got a formidable crew with him.

THE GUV

A "convict" has a certain code. He learns the corners, he learns the pulse of the prison. A "convict" knows to show a certain respect when it is warranted...

Using the distraction, Kyra rips free from Riddick. She pulls another shiv out of thin air, and suddenly there's a cut on Riddick's face. A small one. Just a kiss of blood.

KYRA

I'm a new animal....

In an eyeblink she's gone -- leaving Riddick to deal with The Guv and his crew, now bottoming out.

THE GUV

An "inmate," on the other hand, is someone who pulls the pin on their fellow man...who does the guard's work for them...who brings shame to the whole game. And in this slam, "inmates" get someone right up in their mouth.

A Yellow Man starts to get up. Without breaking stride, The Guv kicks him in the mouth and puts him back down. *"Fuckin' inmate."*

THE GUV (CONT'D)

(to Riddick)

So which would you be?

RIDDICK

Me?

(goggling up)

I'm just passin' through.

The Guv smiles humorlessly. He holds up one hand, showing a banged-up wedding band.

THE GUV

I remember how gorgeous she was -- well, "gorgeous" in the right light. But for the goddamn death of me, I cannot remember her name

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (3)

THE GUV (CONT'D)

anymore.

(a beat)

This is Crematoria...

*
*
*

AMPLIFIED VOICE (O.S.)

Feeding time...comin' down the
chimney...feedin' time....

*

THE GUV

...and we're all here for the rest
of our unnatural lives.

*
*

20 tiers overhead, the aperture opens. Something is heaved through. As it tumbles toward us, it resolves into a big crate that...

SHATTERS OPEN on impact. Tins of sardines, hash, and dried fruit explode across the bottom of slam. It's like some food-drop into Ethiopia.

Prisoners -- scores of them -- materialize to gather what they can. The frenzy of "feeding time" is heightened by the HUNGRY HOWLS from somewhere far above. What are those things?

*
*
*
*

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VAAKO'S FRIGATE - DEEP SPACE

START on three Lensing Necros, heads sweeping, electronics sniffing. PULL BACK to find them attached to the front of a ship -- exposed to space. PULL BACK FURTHER to reveal the warship that looks like a drop-tailed wasp made of black steel. This is a Necro frigate.

*
*

INT. BRIDGE - VAAKO'S FRIGATE

On a wall-mounted lens, we see what those Lensors see outside the ship: We're following the ion trail, the one left behind by the merc ship.

Vaako is here, maintaining the course with his navigators. Soon he notes...

The Purifier entering. His presence bothers Vaako.

PURIFIER

Long journey.

(no response)

They can be a test, these deep runs
-- a test of our inner selves. Do
you find that true, Vaako?

CONTINUED:

VAAKO

I know some do.

PURIFIER

Just being so far from the
armada...your head can fill with
strange thoughts. Doubts. Don't
you ever have doubts, Vaako?
About The Campaign? About our Lord
Marshal?

Vaako's had enough of this elliptical talk. He squares off. *

VAAKO

If you're here to test my loyalty,
you succeed only in testing my
patience. First and always, I am a
Necromonger commander. *

PURIFIER

I wonder what that really means --
"always." *

Enigmatically, the Purifier moves on.

INT. MIDDLE TIERS - SLAM

Riddick is rinsing off in a spill of geothermal water. His
hand remembers the wound on his cheek -- that kiss from Kyra.
It brings his eyes to... *

Kyra herself. Watching him from a perch across the tier. *

Nearby, someone brews and barbers slam tea. CONVICT #3, a
spider-monkey of a man, fetches a cup for Riddick. *

CONVICT #3

Tobacco and moss tea, very good,
very fresh. Take it, take it. *

Riddick does -- but waits to drink, knowing nothing comes
free in slam. *

CONVICT #3 (CONT'D)

Aquila Major, that's my homeworld.
Have you heard anything? Anything
at all? *

The Guv approaches with his own tea. *

CONTINUED:

THE GUV *
 Word does filter down. An' the *
 word we heard...is that planets *
 are dying. *

Other convicts migrate closer. *

CONVICT #1 *
 Is it true? Is there some kind *
 of...crusade? *

RIDDICK *
 It's true where I was. And I was *
 on Helion. *

It RIPPLES through the population. "Helion...." *

CONVICT #2 *
 Six planets in the Helion System. *
 Which one are you -- *

RIDDICK *
 Helion Prime. *

Another RIPPLE OF UNEASE: "Helion Prime...." *

CONVICT #2 *
 I'm Four. *

CONVICT #1 *
 I'm Helion Six. *

Faces turn to The Guv, waiting for him to announce his *
 homeworld. He's preempted by the SOUND OF CLANKING DOORS *
 somewhere overhead. *

EXT. SALLY PORT - SLAM *

Transiting doors, Guards #5-7 appear -- each man struggling *
with a taut bridle. *

INT. MIDDLE TIERS - SLAM *

THE GUV *
 Doesn't matter. There's just one *
 world now. *

INT. SALLY PORT - SLAM

FAST CLOSEUPS: Guards detaching muzzles. Releasing bridles. *
 Stepping back fast to get clear of... *

Three hellhounds. *

CONTINUED:

(NOTE ON HELLHOUNDS: Though largely canine, hellhounds can appear at times strikingly feline. Their scaly, plated skin is slate-grey when at rest -- but they change color, flushing red when agitated or aggressive.)

Racing over a walkway, the first two hounds fly over CAMERA. HOLD on the underside of the control room, where we see four more guards descending through the aperture.

INT. VARIOUS TIERS - SLAM

CONVICT VOICES (O.S.)
Here they come...slot up, slot
up...get off the tiers....

The tiers start emptying around Riddick and The GUV.

THE GUV
(raging upwards)
A herd! A goddamn herd, IS THAT
ALL WE ARE TO YOU?

CONVICT #1
THE CULL IS ON!

THE GUV
(to Riddick)
Just don't let the howlers catch
you out. And if they do -- do not
make eye-contact.

EXT. SALLY PORT - SLAM

The last hound, "THRASH," needs to be encouraged into action with one of the guard's maulsticks. Thrash wears an ear-tag marked "#5."

EXT. MIDDLE TIERS - SLAM

FAST TRACKING SHOTS: Hellhounds on the run. Circling the tiers. One beast slides down a vertical section of lavafall, using its rear-facing claws as drag-skids. It leaves cuts in the rock.

INTERCUT WITH:

Convicts scrambling to find cells that close tight. One group resorts to grabbing a door off the ground and propping it up into place.

INTERCUT WITH:

CONTINUED:

Kyra. Artfully dodging one of the hounds. Leaping over the railing. Rappeling her way to the bottom of slam.

INTERCUT WITH:

Guards #5-7 walking upper tiers. Whistling.

INTERCUT WITH:

Guards #1-4 descending on the chain. They like to spotlight potential victims. Whether they do it for the hounds or their own amusement is anyone's guess.

INTERCUT WITH:

Two Yellow Men vanishing into a sulphur fissure. *

INTERCUT WITH: *

SLOW PRISONER #1 getting taken down by a hellhound. The second hound locks eyes on SLOW PRISONER #2 -- and gives chase.

INT. BEHIND WATERFALL - MIDDLE TIERS - SLAM *

Riddick. Sequestered behind the cascade of water. But through the water, out on the tier, he sees... *

A hellhound approaching. It starts past us -- but now doubles back, picking up a scent. Our scent. *

LOW-GROWLING, the hellhound noses through the veil of water. It's dog #5, "Thrash." He rises up on hind-quarters, stretching out to full length... *

And comes face to face with Riddick. *

Eyeshine to eyeshine.

INT. CELL - SLAM

Moving to the bars, an amazed Guv sees...

INT. MIDDLE TIERS - SLAM

Riddick slap-petting the hellhound. As the beast cools off to a slate-grey color, Riddick notes deep scars on its muzzle and body. It's been abused for years. *

RIDDICK

Yeah. Know how it feels.

A RECALL WHISTLE. With reluctance, Thrash leaves Riddick.

INT. BOTTOM OF SLAM

Bottoming out, Guards #1-4 jump off the chain. They adjust breather units and head for the lavafall area.

INT. BEHIND LAVAFALL - SLAM

This is the slum of the prison, ruined by the lavafall, and nobody lives down here by choice, nobody but... *

Kyra. In her very own hell-cell. She unstraps the door and starts to step out. *

GUARD #1 (O.S.)
And just when you thought the cull
was over... *

Handlights snap on, blinding Kyra. The guards are here. All four. *

GUARD #1
Make sure she's clean.
(off their hesitation)
C'mon, what is she? 50 kilos?
Search her. *

GUARD #4 enters the cell. In measured moves, Kyra turns around...puts her hands on a wall...and spreads her legs in classic search position.

The guards "ooooh": This is gonna be good.

GUARD #3
Too bad Pavlov couldn't see
this.... *

But inside the cell, Guard #4 hesitates: Is it too good? *

CLOSE on Kyra's booted foot. It rubs up and down the guard's calf muscle, calming him down -- and urging him on.

Guard #4 lays his hands on...

Kyra. Closing her eyes. Trying to mantra away the bad memories.

KYRA
(sotto)
'Sokay...it's okay...it's okay....

The guard thinks she's talking to him -- mistakenly so. It emboldens him.

CONTINUED:

CLOSE on Kyra's foot -- as steel gaffs unfold from the back of the boot. They're like spurs used in cock-fighting.

Just as Guard #4 reaches up between Kyra's legs...

She drives a gaff between his legs.

Impaled, the GUARD HOWLS.

Knee-jerk fast, Kyra breaks his nose with the back of her head. Grabs his maulstick. Whacks him hard, driving him into the cell bars. Boneless, Guard #4 slides to the ground.

En masse, the three remaining guards subdue Kyra and pull her out of the cell where they can have their way with her. But they're greeted by...

A dark shape. There's someone else down here. Someone drinking calmly from a cup.

RIDDICK

You should take your wounded and go. While you can.

The guards array against Riddick.

GUARD #3

Is there a name for this private little world of yours? And what happens there when we don't just run away? Huh? You kill us? With your soup cup?

They snicker. Riddick looks at the metal cup, sizing up its potential.

RIDDICK

Tea, actually.

GUARD #3

Whazzat?

RIDDICK

I kill you with a tea cup.

He inverts the cup and sets it down. He sets it down juuuuust so.

Guard #3's eyes flick between Riddick and the cup. "No way. There's no fucking way."

Kyra watches, intrigued.

Guard #3 eases back to Guard #1. He wants the okay to kill Riddick.

*

CONTINUED: (2)

GUARD #1

(shrugging)

You know the rule: They aren't
dead if they're still on the books.

Slyly, Guard #3 pulls a hidden blade -- then suddenly
rushes...

Riddick. Grabbing the cup. Slamming it down hard. Cracking
the rim all the way around -- serrating it. Ever see those
hole-cutters carpenters use for setting dead-bolts? That's
what Riddick just made.

He "sets" it into Guard #3's solar-plexis, twists through
some vital organs, and throws the guy back on his fellow
guards.

Dead. As promised.

Guards #1 and #2 flash maulsticks -- and anything else
they've brought to the party. They're ready to rumble
until...

Riddick picks up a food-tin key...displays it to the
guards...and sets it down right where he put the tea cup.
He sets is down juuuuust so.

A frozen beat, then...

Guards #1 and #2 grab their wounded. And go.

Kyra reclaims the cup from Guard #3's body.

KYRA

Death by tea cup. Damn, why didn't
I think of that?

RIDDICK

Not that I mind playin' "Who's The
Better Killer"...but maybe we can
get onto the next thing.

KYRA

Oh, you don't get off that easy.
Not when you started it. 'Sides...
(in his ear)
It's my favorite game.

She starts away, but a vicelike hand spins her around.
Riddick is tired of games.

RIDDICK

Did I hear right? You came lookin'
for me?

*
*

*
*
*

CONTINUED: (3)

KYRA

If that's what you heard, you missed the good part. Hooked up with some mercs out of Lupus Five -- said they'd take me on, teach me the trade, give me a good cut. But first job in, they flipped me to a pack of 'Golls. They slaved me out, Riddick. You know what that can do to you? When you're that age? When you're 12 years old?

She's selling the sympathy-thing. Riddick's not buying.

RIDDICK

I told you to stay in New Mecca. Did you not listen to me? I had mercs on my neck, I'll always have mercs on my neck -- and then you go and sign up? With those no-code wannabe badges? The same guys I was steerin' away from you?

Frustration building, he turns away and pounds the wall -- and he did it in lieu of pounding her. It cows Kyra. For about two seconds.

KYRA

What're you pitchin', Riddick? That you cuttin' out was a good thing? That you had my ass covered from half-way 'cross the universe?

RIDDICK

Mercs...she signed with mercs....

KYRA

(twisting the knife)
There was nobody else around.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SLAM

GUARD #5

Terminator approaching....

He's consulting an exterior temperature gauge: It shows -100 and rising fast. Anticipating some event, Toombs and a few of his crew enter. When the gauge hits absolute zero...

BOSS

Let's pop the cork.

EXT. CONTROL ROOM - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

Riding big screws, the control room rises out of the ground.
Huge vents louver open...

And START TO PURGE old air.

INT. MIDDLE TIERS - SLAM

A WINDSTORM greets Riddick as he makes his way back to the
middle tiers. The GUV is here, eyes trained on the control
room far above.

RIDDICK

So they do go topside...to swap
out air....

THE GUV

That ain't the only reason.

EXT. CREMATORIA - PRE-DAWN

On the surface now, guards dump the two culled inmates onto
that pile of cremated bones.

INT. MIDDLE TIERS - SLAM

THE GUV

'See, they wanna make room for
more.

EXT. CONTROL ROOM - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

The air-vents seal. The control room starts lowering into
the ground...

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SLAM

And the terrain starts vanishing from sight.

INT. UNDER CONTROL ROOM - SLAM

The control room docks at its "home" position. BIG LATCHES
SECURE the screws.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SLAM

TOOMBS

One way to clean house....

CONTINUED:

Toombs looks at the temperature gauge, already pushing +200. He's about to leave when...

A GROWING THUNDER. It gets louder and louder -- until it sounds like a million wildebeest passing overhead. Let's call this the "VTF SOUND."

Toombs and Co-Pilot recheck the gauge -- as it spikes to +700. *

MERC CO-PILOT
Jesus. What is that? *

INT. MIDDLE TIERS - SLAM *

Kyra joins. Even down here we hear the OMINOUS VTF SOUND. This is, truly, the worst place imaginable. *

RIDDICK
When it happens, it'll happen fast.
You can either stay here for the
rest of your unnatural life...or
be on my leg when I cut fence. *

Kyra shoots a hopeful look at Riddick -- which she promptly buries, realizing he was speaking to The Guv. Or was he? *

CONVICT #1
Nobody outs from this place. *

RIDDICK
I ain't "nobody." *

Riddick exits. The Guv looks off after him. *

KYRA
Go ahead. Fall for it. *

EXT. BASILICA SHIP - HELION - DAY

Necro troops escort...something...down the steps of the basilica. They angle for a waiting sarcophagus...

INT. SARCOPHAGUS - DAY

...and load up. Their "something" resolves into Aereon. She finds herself face to face with Dame Vaako, already aboard.

DAME VAAKO
Is it true Elementals have no
Guiding Spirit? *

CONTINUED:

AEREON

We have the teachings of Plato.

DAME VAAKO

And what has he taught you?
Something I should know?

AEREON

That the universe is comprised of
opposing strengths. It is upon
this one belief that all Elementals
have chosen to pattern themselves.

DAME VAAKO

I heard Elementals don't believe
in God...because they want to be
God.

They lock eyes. Aereon wonders how much she knows -- and how
much she's guessing.

AEREON

As Plato said..."It was a wise man
who invented God."

DAME VAAKO

You sidewind like a snake, Aereon --
I like you already. So you never
even pray?

AEREON

We calculate.

DAME VAAKO

Oh, don't we all.

AEREON

(clarifying)

We calculate the chance of future
scenarios...but always with an eye
on maintaining Neutrality. It
would be wrong to involve ourselves
in the day-to-day affairs of --

Dame Vaako motions to a NECRO PILOT: Rapidly, the
sarcophagus lifts away from the ground.

DAME VAAKO

When I see a non-believer walking
free in Necropolis...speaking to a
Lord Marshal as confidant...well,
I wonder why. I wonder what she
knows that I don't.

CONTINUED: (2)

Aereon falls quiet. Dame Vaako jerks a lever: A door opens right under them. Aereon braces herself just in time.

DAME VAAKO (CONT'D)
Let's start with "Riddick."

*

The sarcophagus picks up speed and elevation. Through the door, we see the blurring rooftops of New Mecca. This whole encounter is starting to remind us of how U.S. soldiers once interrogated Viet Cong.

AEREON
In truth, I don't know where he went.

DAME VAAKO
In truth, I'm more interested in where he came from.
(off Aereon's hesitation)
Do me a favor? Calculate the odds of you getting off this planet alive....

She borrows a long blade from a Necro soldier -- and places it across Aereon's mid-section.

DAME VAAKO (CONT'D)
And now cut them in half.

AEREON
It has to do with a fore-telling.
A prediction now more than 30 years old.

*
*
*

INT. QUASI NICHE - VAAKO'S FRIGATE - DEEP SPACE

Beneath its shroud, a lesser Quasi-Dead rests on a slab. From it Vaako hears the vicarious words of...

DAME VAAKO/QUASI-DEAD (V.O.)
"A young soldier once consulted a fore-teller. It was predicted that a child would be born on the planet "Furya" -- a man-child -- that would someday cause the soldier's downfall. His untimed death."

*

VAAKO
"Furya?" It's a ruin world. No life to speak of.

*
*

INT. LOWER ANNEX/NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - NIGHT

DAME VAAKO
For good reason.

Worlds away, Dame Vaako communes with her own lesser Quasi. This is the technology that lets them speak in real-time, unslowed by radio waves. This is Necro Internet.

DAME VAAKO (CONT'D)
The young soldier mounted an attack on Furya, killing all young males he could find -- even strangling some with their birth-cords. An "artful stroke," wouldn't you say?

INT. QUASI NICHE - VAAKO'S FRIGATE - DEEP SPACE

INTERCUT Vaako and Dame Vaako:

VAAKO
So this "solider"...the one who tried to outwit the prediction... would later become...

*

DAME VAAKO
That's why he worries...

VAAKO (CONT'D)
...our Lord Marshal. And that would make the man-child...

DAME VAAKO
...he worries he missed killing that child in its crib.

INT. CELL - SLAM

VAAKO (V.O./CONT'D)
...our Riddick.

*

Riddick. Lying awake on a cot, restless. Peeking behind that mental door opened by the Quasi-Deads.

THE INFANTICIDE MEMORY: The hand reaching down into a planet. Yanking out young life-forms. Oozing children through its fingers, dropping them through space. Is this the same story? Just seen through the barely opened eyes of a Furyan child? Now we take the memory further -- opening the last door and revealing the visage of "young soldier." His face is helmeted -- but the helmet has three faces.

CONTINUED:

RIDDICK
(a haunted whisper)
"Are you familiar to me?"

It brings Riddick to his feet. He's thinking, of course, of...

INT. LOWER ANNEX/NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - NIGHT

Lord Marshal. Approaching.

DAME VAAKO
Wait, wait, wait....

She dips her head in deference as Lord Marshal passes with Elite Guards. As he does...

His astral face turns and considers her, even though his physical body never looks her way. It's a chilling little reminder of Lord Marshal's vigilance.

VAAKO/QUASI-DEAD (V.O.)
"Are you there?"

DAME VAAKO
You do what your Lord asks -- you cleanse Riddick for him, and in doing so, you prove your undying loyalty. Perhaps then...

INT. QUASI NICHE - VAAKO'S FRIGATE - DEEP SPACE

DAME VAAKO/QUASI-DEAD (V.O.)
"...he'll finally let down his guard."

The Quasi's head lolls to one side, the connection ended. CAMERA DRAWS AWAY from the thought-lost Vaako to include... *

The Purifier, standing within earshot. He heard it all. *

DISSOLVE TO: *

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SLAM *

(NOTE: The floor-aperture is open in this scene, about 50 feet of chain spooled out. Call it "maintenance.") *

Two guards play chess with pieces fashioned from bullets. Soon Toombs and his mercs file in. They've been summoned by... *

CONTINUED:

BOSS

Good news first? Talked things
over with my amigos here, we'll cut
you in for 750 K.

*

Guard #2 has the safe open. He's taking out U.D. money --
lots of it. Toombs polls the faces of his mercs, who nod
like dash-board puppies. "Hey, 750 K looks sweet."

*

TOOMBS

What's the bad news? They closed
the local whorehouse?

Boss tosses a photographic plate in front of the mercs.
It shows deep space -- and a dark shape.

BOSS

One of our cargo-ships snapped
that. Crossed a shipping lane.

Toombs adjusts a slide on the frame, magnifying the photo.
Cracking pistachios between his teeth, Guard #1 peers over
Toombs' shoulder.

*

*

*

CLOSE on the photo. The dark shape becomes a Necro warship.

*

TOOMBS

Huh. Never seen nuthin' like it.

GUARD #1

Did someone say you came from
Helion Prime?

*

*

*

TOOMBS

Yeah? So?

*

BOSS

Our cargo guy, he says this thing
charts back to Helion Prime.

*

*

*

Toombs scratches his ass thoughtfully. Guard #2 is still
pulling out money. Are they emptying the safe?

*

*

BOSS

You know, Anatoli's got a nose for
trouble. And he thinks trouble
follows you here.

*

*

*

TOOMBS

(mentally backpedaling)
Look, we dusted our tracks and made
a clean exfil. There's no way we
didn't lose them. This is my

*

*

*

*

*

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

TOOMBS (CONT'D)

prisoner. Mine. Nobody else's.
And I want my money now.

*
*

BOSS

"Them?" So you stole a prisoner...
from "them?"

*
*
*

That last word carries all the dread of all nine circles of
Dante's Hell. It means "Necromonger."

*
*

Merc Co-Pilot double-takes at the guards who still play
chess: They're slipping bullet-pieces off the board -- and
into weapons.

*
*
*

Co-Pilot makes a play for her sidearm.

*

INT. MIDDLE TIERS - SLAM

The SOUND OF GUNFIRE REVERBERATES through the prison.
SELECTED CLOSE-UPS of Riddick...Kyra...others...looking up
to see...

*
*

The control room. It's like somebody set off a barge of
fireworks up there: Weapons are BARKING, BOOMING, SPITTING,
flashing. The control room lights die.

Just when we think the hellacious fire-fight may be over...

Someone bails out through the ceiling-aperture a second
before....

*

A MERC-MISSILE STREAKS through the control room.

The EXPLOSION ROCKS the prison below. Now it's over.
Riddick sees...

The bail-out guy clinging to the winch chain. It's Toombs.

*

Riddick backs up. Gets a running start. Uses the tier
railing as a launching pad to...

...soar across the open core of the prison...

...and slam into Toombs. They pendulum together face to
face. Toombs is trying not to panic -- but he's pretty sure
Riddick is going to eat cereal out of his skull.

RIDDICK

Shoulda taken the money.

*

He starts climbing the chain, ignoring Toombs -- except for
when he uses his head as a step en route to...

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SLAM

The control room. The only light comes from a few terminal screens on the floor. Riddick ungoggles.

RIDDICK'S POV: Bodies galore. Hard to tell if they were guards or mercs, but nothing's alive here.

Heading for the lava-tube door, Riddick bumps a lever: The sally-port doors open.

Riddick tries to activate the lava-tube door, now closed. But the actuator is dead. Broken? Or sabotaged? He pulls a security screen from a pile of rubble.

CLOSER on the screen. Between glitches, we see an image from beyond the door: The sled is blown off its tracks. It'd take a crane to fix it. There's no sign of life on this side, either.

INT. KENNEL CAGES - SLAM

It's dark in here. One hellhound gnaws on its kennel door, damaged in the fire-fight.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SLAM

Convicts trail into the control room -- The Guv, Kyra, others. Toombs reappears, climbing up through the aperture. Someone re-activates lights. *

CONVICT #1 *

(re the dead)

Mercs...some guards here...but it can't be all of them....

THE GUV

Check their slots, back in that area there...and be careful....

RIDDICK (O.S.)

Guards ain't there.

REVEAL Riddick. He's holding the photo-frame of Vaako's frigate.

RIDDICK *

(like Sherlock Holmes)

Figgered out Necros are coming. Plan was to clean the bank, ghost the mercs, break wide through the tube. But one merc got a shot off with this party-stopper here....

CONTINUED:

He picks up a smoking missile gun.

RIDDICK (CONT'D)
...an' took out the sled. Guards
rigged the door so no one could
follow, took off on foot...an' now
they plan to jack that ship in the
hangar and leave everyone else here
to die.

An impressed look from Toombs.

TOOMBS
How come you know all this shit?
You wudn't even here.

RIDDICK
(pissed)
'Cuz it was my plan.

INT. LAVA TUBE

Six guards (Boss plus Guards #1, #2, #5, #6, #7) are humping *
through the sled tube, wearing breathing lungs for part-time *
oxygen assist. At their rear... *

Guard #2 turns to look back in the direction of slam. *
There's nothing, no sign of pursuit. He scratches his itchy *
nose and keeps going. *

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SLAM

CLOSE on Riddick. He's focused on...

A few still-working instruments. The temp gauge is on the
rise, passing -150.

Convicts are trying to break open the door to the lava tube, *
but it's not happening. Suddenly... *

The big screws start turning. *

EXT. CONTROL ROOM - CREMATORIA - DUSKY NIGHT

The CONTROL ROOM HEAVES out of the ground. Through cracked
windows we see Riddick, at the controls, driving the crippled
control room to the surface. Kyra appears beside him.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - CREMATORIA - DUSKY NIGHT

KYRA
I know that look.

CONTINUED:

She's reading his mind -- and not liking the story. Other inmates gravitate to the window to contemplate the cold dusky night out there. They clue in fast.

CONVICT #1
Won't last five minutes.

CONVICT #3
Five minutes? 60 seconds in the sun will light you up like a match-head.

CONVICT #2
20-mile buffer zone. That's 30 klicks to the hangar.

CONVICT #4
What is it? What is he thinking?

CONVICT #1
30 klicks over that terrain.

Riddick collects weapons off the floor. And a bag of pistachios.

THE GUV
(mustering courage)
It's moving in the right direction, more or less. Stay behind the night and in front of the day....

RIDDICK
Gonna be one speed -- mine. If you can't keep up, don't step up. You'll just die.

He brushes right past Kyra. HOLD on her conflicted face.

EXT. CONTROL ROOM - CREMATORIA - DUSKY NIGHT

A WINDOW CRASHES outward. Riddick steps through...

And sets foot on the surface of Crematoria.

Convicts #1, #2, #3 ease outside, each loaded for bear. The Guv is right behind them.

THE GUV
Her name was "Ellen." I never really forgot. And we lived on Helion Prime.

Riddick nods, understanding. We think that's it -- until another window gets kicked out.

CONTINUED:

KYRA

I'm really not expecting this to work out, okay? Just sounded like a cool way to check out.

*
*
*
*

RIDDICK

Just one rule this time...

*

He tosses her an oxygen-cartridge.

*

KYRA

"Stay out of the light."

*
*

VOICE (O.S.)

'Til I get my pay-day...

Leading with a weapon, Toombs ducks outside.

TOOMBS

...technically speaking, you're still my prisoner.

RIDDICK

Don't move.

TOOMBS

Me don't move? What is this, Reverso World? You don't move.

RIDDICK

Better adjust that attitude. And whatever you do...do not point that weapon at me.

*
*
*

Toombs takes aim on Riddick -- and a hellhound fills FRAME, taking Toombs down in one big pounce: The beast was behind him the whole time.

It's a quick-and-brutal affair: The hound goes for the jugular as Toombs gets off a FEW GUT SHOTS. When it's over, Toombs is dead. And the hellhound...

Lies dying. Riddick moves closer. We see it's Thrash.

The Guv eyes the pre-dawn sky. Is it brighter? Brighter than just a few seconds ago?

*

THE GUV

Riddick....

*
*

RIDDICK

(to Thrash)

I know how it feels.

EXT. CREMATORIA - DUSKY NIGHT

With Riddick in the lead, the six escapees run over volcanic terrain -- part lava rock, part vitrified sand. Behind them, the control room is sinking back into the ground.

EXT. CRASH-BACK SHOT - CREMATORIA

START on the escapees, weapons shouldered, bounding over rough terrain. CRASH BACK into a WIDE SHOT where we see them as small figures. CRASH BACK AGAIN to reveal them as mere specks on the surface. CRASH BACK AGAIN. From this godly perspective, we've lost sight of the escapees altogether, but we can mentally place them inside the terminator -- the cusp between night and day -- as it crawls across the planet's face.

EXT. CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

TRAILING ANGLE: In front of the escapees is frigid night.

LEADING ANGLE: Behind the escapees is the glow of morning -- and the promise of death. They need to keep the sun below the horizon to survive.

ANGLE on Riddick: Eyes flashing. Searching the dark for a manageable route. Setting a tough pace as he...

...leaps a yawning fissure...

...and slams down hard on the other side.

INT. LAVA TUBE

Oblivious to the race they're in, the slam guards slow for a water break.

EXT. CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

ANGLE on Kyra: Sucking water on the run.

EXT. CREVICE RUN - TERMINATOR

The escapees descend into sinewy crevices. Soon the trailing five lose sight of Riddick: Which way did he go? Right or left? Now Kyra spots him...

On top of them. Somehow Riddick found a high road.

They climb the walls like monkeys on white sugar. As soon as The Guv clears the crevice...

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

EXT. CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

...he shoots a look back at the dawn glow. Brighter.

ULTRA CLOSE on The Guv's face -- and the first rill of sweat that runs down his cheek.

INT. MOLE-HOLE #1 - LAVA TUBE

The guards double-time up a rise, gaining some elevation inside the tube. Guard #2 -- Anatoli -- notes a vertical chute and hatch overhead. It's a "mole hole."

GUARD #2

Boss....

BOSS

(to Guard #1)

Grab a look.

GUARD #1

What the shit for? Because Anatoli says so?

BOSS

Because his nose says so.

EXT. MOLE HOLE #1 - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

Buried in the ground, a steel lid cracks through lava and elevates about a foot. Guard #1's face appears in the opening. He takes a quick scan topside.

HIS POV: Sun is still below the horizon. But unexpectedly six figures appear, topping a hill.

GUARD #1

What the hell is....

He levels his rifle just as...

EXT. NEAR MOLE HOLE #1 - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

Riddick makes a course-correction. Did he do it because of the terrain? Or because he spotted something?

INT. MOLE HOLE #1 - LAVA TUBE

Boss and Guard #2 scramble up beside Guard #1. They see Riddick's unmistakable silhouette leading the others off.

CONTINUED:

BOSS

Riddick....

*

INT. MOLE HOLE #1 - LAVA TUBE

Boss, Guards #1 and #2 drop back down. They throw a lever that seals the mole hole -- then exchange looks. "Should we be worried?"

GUARD #1

No chance do they get to the hangar first. No chance.

Boss isn't so sure. When he heads out, he's moving faster than before.

EXT. ASH RAIN - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR/ASH RAIN

It's raining ash here, pumped into the sky by the distant volcanoes.

The escapees appear on the run. Clothes are being stripped off and discarded. Ash clings to sweaty skin, giving convicts the look of tribal warriors.

*

Riddick picks up the pace, widening the gap between him and the others.

EXT. MOLE HOLE #2 - CREMATORIA - ASH RAIN

A second mole-hole cracks ground. Ominously, the barrel of an assault rifle eases out the opening.

GUARD #2'S POV: The escapees. Just silhouettes in the ash.

Guard #2 puts an eye to his rifle scope. Below him...

INT. MOLE HOLE #2 - LAVA TUBE - ASH RAIN

Other guards CHAMBER AMMO. This'll be a kill-everything ambush.

EXT. MOLE HOLE #2 - CREMATORIA - ASH RAIN

RIFLE SCOPE POV: Now the runners become recognizable. Strangely, it's Kyra in the lead.

GUARD #2

Hey. Where'd the big guy go?

BOOM UP to reveal Riddick standing on the mole-hole lid, right over the guard's head. He's got a big steel spike

CONTINUED:

poised overhead -- a stolen anchor of the mole-hole lid -- and now he brings it down like the mjolner of Thor.

KA-RUNCH. That was the guard's face.

The RIFLE FIRES spontaneously, drawing the attention of...

The other escapees. They charge into the fray.

INT./EXT MOLE HOLE #2 - CREMATORIA - ASH RAIN

The other guards scramble up the chute and start WAILING WEAPONS.

INTERCUT the two sides now: The escapees attacking the mole hole from different sides, closing in, ringing it like Eskimos at a seal hole, BARKING WEAPONS and giving as much as they take. The guards falling back, falling down, emptying clips as they FIRE BLINDLY up the chute, just hoping now to keep the escapees out of their tube.

Convict #3 goes down, permanently. *

So does Guard #2. *

Boss gets the lever thrown...

EXT. MOLE HOLE #2 - CREMATORIA - ASH RAIN

And the mole-hole lid seals to the ground. Still amped up, Kyra attacks the edges with the barrel of her weapon.

KYRA

Gonna go down there...find 'em...
just cut 'em up into bite-size
pieces and shit them over the
nearest cliff. C'mon, Riddick,
let's get Nitty Gritty on their
asses.

She looks to him for support, sees only his backside.
Picking up speed. Moving on.

EXT. CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR - DYING ASH *

Now five, the escapees run on. The ash rain has almost
stopped, but not the heat: It's probably +120 now. *

Running a ridge, Kyra draws alongside Riddick. Both are
rivering sweat. *

CONTINUED:

RIDDICK

You even care if you get out of
this alive?

KYRA

Not really.

Side by side, they leap off a ledge... *

EXT. LAVA BRIDGE - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR - DYING ASH *

...and land like two cats on a lava bridge. *

RIDDICK

Well, maybe I do.

He powers on. HOLD on Kyra for one heartbeat as she wonders
what he meant by that. *

EXT. SULPHUR FISSURE - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR *

The escapees run single-file through a sulphur-fissure. *
Soon it dumps them into open terrain, and here they all pile *
to a stop, seeing something we don't.

THE GUV

Oh, no. No, no, no, no....

It's a towering mountain of sulphurous rock. And it stands *
dead-bang in their way. *

EXT. TOP OF CLIFF - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

Our view is from on high. Great blades of light fill the
sky, fanning out from a sun barely hidden by the horizon.
We've lost sight of the escapees -- until we CRANE OUT over
the lip of a plateau and TILT DOWN. There they are, climbing
a steep cliff face.

EXT. THE CLIFF - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

Riddick is making speed even vertically, doing moves that
would make a mountain-goat nervous. But still...

It's a looooong way down.

Kyra is struggling. It's getting so hot she can't even touch
the rock without burning herself.

THE GUV

Like this. Your belt.

His hands are wrapped with belt-leather.

CONTINUED:

KYRA

Go, go, go -- I don't need your help.

He passes her. Kyra starts cutting up her belt to wrap her hands.

EXT. TOP OF CLIFF - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

In one strong move, Riddick propels himself to the top. From here, the plateau slopes away into a great undulating valley of crazed glass. And in that valley...

The rock steeple. The hangar.

As Convict #1 reaches the plateau, Riddick checks on... *

The hidden sun. Ominously, a sequin of light is growing at the edge of the volcano that blocks the sun.

For the first time in hours, Riddick covers his eyes with goggles. INTERCUTTING cliff face with plateau:

RIDDICK

(shouting)

Kyra?

KYRA

(shouting back)

What? *

RIDDICK

Get that ass moving!

Kyra finds a new gear, climbing hard, speed over caution now, anything to keep ascending.

The Guv reaches the top. He's just in time because...

That sequin explodes, blowing out our pupils.

EXT. THE CLIFF - CREMATORIA - SUNLIGHT

FAST SHOTS: Sunlight rakes Kyra...rakes Convict #2 nearby... rakes Riddick and The Guv and Convict #1 atop the cliff, driving them back into the shadows of the down-slope.

Kyra pivots into a crevice.

WIDE: The cliff face is pummeled by the sun. The only shade that remains is in the deep clefts, which is where we find...

Kyra. Trapped not far from...

CONTINUED:

Convict #2. Stuck in a different cleft. *

Above them, Riddick and the others hunker behind rocky outcroppings. INTERCUTTING: *

KYRA
Riddick?

RIDDICK
Yeah.

KYRA
'Know what I said about not caring if I lived or died?

RIDDICK
Yeah.

KYRA
'Knew I was kiddin', right?

She sounds like a kid now, like Jack of old, and it gets to Riddick. Guv notices Riddick eyeing a skein of cable he carries. Admonishing Riddick with his own words: *

THE GUV
"One speed...." *

Convict #1 peers around his outcropping, chancing a look toward the sun. His jaw drops. *

EXT. CREMATORIA - SUNLIGHT

A visible thermal front ("VTF") has appeared, created by the huge temperature differentials. IT THUNDERS across the landscape in an endless front, a mirage of mastadons forever chasing the sunlight.

And it's coming our way.

EXT. THE CLIFF - CREMATORIA - SUNLIGHT

KYRA
(seeing)
RIDDICK!

THE GUV
Jesus Christ...that's what it looks like.... *

CONVICT #1
Temperature differential.... *

CONTINUED:

RIDDICK

(to Guv, Convict #1)

Gimme cable, shirt, your water --
all of it. Then get the hell gone.
Go.

*

FAST MONTAGE SHOTS: Riddick punching into an overshirt, covering as much skin as possible. One end of a cable getting anchored to a rock, the other end wrapping Riddick's waist. Riddick drenching himself in water, head to toe -- and then arrowing into the open...

And vaulting off the edge. Vaulting into sunlight.

VERY WIDE: Riddick reaches the apex of his pendulum-swing, turns in midair as he starts the big downward arc...and frees up one hand in anticipation of snatching Kyra. Below him...

The VTF. It's reached the base of the cliff -- and starts climbing, moving in great tiger paws up the rock face, reaching for...

Kyra. Seeing it coming. But not seeing...

Riddick. A blur, he vacuums her out of the crevice.

Penduluming upward now, they ascend fast -- though not fast enough for Riddick, who starts running, sprinting sidelong up the cliff face. This is Batman's crack dream.

Wondering about his ride, Convict #2 braves the sunlight and looks for an escape route. But all he sees is...

*

Uprushing VTF. It takes off his face.

Riddick and Kyra come HOWLING over the lip of the plateau. And right behind them...

A wall of VTF shoots into the air. The cliff deflects it away from them as...

They roll into the shade of the down-slope. Steam just pours off Riddick as he rises. He holds a beat, perhaps recovering from the scalding he took, perhaps giving Kyra a chance to crawl to him on all fours and kiss his fucking boots.

*

*

*

KYRA

Hey, I woulda made it.

*

*

She powers on.

*

INT. LAVA TUBE

MULTIPLE SHOTS of the guards humping hard through the tube. They know they're on the home stretch.

EXT. HANGAR VALLEY - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

The Guv and Convict #1. To say they're "running" would be a language-crime: They're staggering across the cracked-glass landscape, tanks on empty. The cliff keeps the sun off their backs -- but that's only good for a few more minutes. Up ahead...

The rock steeple. It juts above the last rise. The hangar can't be more than 500 meters off.

EXT. BEHIND THE RISE - HANGAR VALLEY - TERMINATOR

Nearly on knees, The Guv and Convict #1 move up the glassy rise. Before they reach the top...

A hand grabs Guv's ankle.

RIDDICK

Dead mouth.

Riddick cocks an ear. At first, all we hear is LABORED BREATHING. Riddick covers Convict #1's mouth. Now we hear a LOW OMINOUS THRUMMING.

Riddick crawls to the top of the rise. Kyra worms up beside him. CRANE UP over the rise to reveal...

Necromongers. Vaako's frigate hovers beyond the landing strip, GRAVITY ENGINES RUNNING. Aided by Lensing Necros, foot-soldiers are sniffing around the hangar doors, now closed. At their fore is Vaako.

KYRA

And those would be....

RIDDICK

Necros.

KYRA

Shit. I hate not being the bad guys.

EXT. HANGAR - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

CLOSE on a Lensing Necro. It turns and "alerts" toward something O.S.

CONTINUED:

Clocking it, Vaako follows its cycloplan stare to the glassy rise. He signals for some soldiers to investigate. *

EXT. BEHIND THE RISE - HANGAR VALLEY - TERMINATOR *

This is as bad as it gets: The escapees are caught in a squeeze play, killer Necros in front of them, killer sun behind. Anxiety rises with the temperature. *

KYRA

Figure one minute to get inside that hangar. We gonna do this or not? *

RIDDICK

Wait. *

He cracks open some pistachios. *

CONVICT #1

What am I waitin' for? To turn into freakin' charcoal? *

RIDDICK

Just wait. *

PUSH IN on The Guv -- as he kisses his wedding ring for whatever luck it holds. *

EXT. HANGAR - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR *

Vaako's men are moving up the rise. Behind them... *

HANGAR DOORS RUMBLE open -- to reveal Boss and his guards. For a frozen moment, guards and Necros stare at each other like chickens staring at a card trick. "Huh?" *

Then WEAPONS START BLAZING.

EXT. BEHIND THE RISE - HANGAR VALLEY - TERMINATOR

RIDDICK

(to Kyra)

Now we get Nitty Gritty.

They charge over the rise.

EXT. HANGAR - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

Now the Necros are caught in the squeeze play -- slam guards on one side, Riddick's crew on the other. *

CONTINUED:

ONE STEP, ONE KILL: CAMERA PULLS BACK METHODICALLY in front of Riddick as he wades into the disarrayed Necros, stunning us with his brutal efficiency. The GUV and Convict #1 mop-up whatever slips past Riddick and Kyra -- which ain't much. Kyra fights as Riddick's partner, sometimes covering his back, sometimes taking the lead -- and sometimes fighting beside him as one lethal hydra, their four hands BLASTING GUNS and SWINGING BLADES and SNAPPING SPINES. They go through Necro...

...after Necro...

...after Necro, each step seemingly bringing a new kill.

(NOTE: Think of one-step-one-kill as a single bravura shot. We may inevitably cut away to other things, but the power of this scene is in its completeness.)

Vaako circles the fray, biding his time, just clocking Riddick as he angles for a flaking position.

Convict #1 goes down to NECRO FIRE.

On the far berm of the runway, the Purifier appears. He watches Riddick hack-and-slash his way closer and closer toward...

The hangar.

INT. UNDERGROUND HANGAR - TERMINATOR

Here Necros are winning: All the guards are dead now, save for the Boss. Knowing he's going down, Boss RATCHETS HIS WEAPON and makes a kamikaze run at...

Five Necro toughs. They bury him with GRAVITY-GUN FIRE.

EXT. HANGAR VALLEY - CREMATORIA

HIGH AND WIDE to show all of hangar valley. The combatants fight in the ever-shrinking shade of the cliff. The VTF surrounds the shade like a hungry thing, eating away at the edges, ready to devour everything inside.

EXT. HANGAR - CREMATORIA - TERMINATOR

Riddick, Kyra, and GUV reach the near berm of the runway. The GUV's amazed they made it this far.

THE GUV

(a war cry)

WE MIGHT GODDAMN WELL DO THIS!

CONTINUED: (2)

Furyan energy tracing Riddick's veins...moving up his arms...into his neck...and branching out across his head. His ears start running blood.

Vaako backpedals, sensing...

A SILENT DETONATION. ("Radius of Fury.") All Necros within 20 feet are suddenly shrapnel. All except...

The Purifier. The detonation doesn't even phase his body -- but it blows away his mind.

Beyond the runway, Kyra has rolled clear of the detonation. After an eerily quiet beat, she gathers herself and looks back over the berm. *

WHAT SHE SEES: All around, Necros are flat on their backs, most dead. At the epicenter, Riddick lies unmoving. Unbreathing. *

DESPERATELY CLOSE on Kyra's face. *

KYRA *

Riddick? *

Vaako gets up like a boxer in the fifteenth round. He, too, sees Riddick lying dead. Wanting to check the kill, he picks up a blade and starts closer, but... *

The sun flares over the horizon.

EXT. HANGAR - CREMATORIA - IN SUNLIGHT

WIDE: The whole runway bleaches out.

Kyra dives behind a rock rampart.

Vaako and other Necros fall back to their L.Z.

On the runway, Riddick's body starts smoldering. *

Kyra huddles behind the rampart, wondering if she could make it to the hangar -- wondering if she even wants to anymore. Suddenly the frigate fills FRAME behind her. *

Retreating Necros blur past, boarding the ship. *

PUSH IN on Kyra as she watches them fall back to safety. "*What do I do? Goddammit, Riddick, what do you expect me to do now?*" Suddenly she makes her move -- toward the frigate. *

On the runway, RIDDICK SCREAMS back to life: His pain is what saved him. *

CONTINUED:

He staggers for the hangar. Reaches the safety of the shade.
Scans -- and can't find her.

*
*

RIDDICK

Kyra?

*
*

He spins to outside world, seeing...

*

Vaako's frigate rising into view. At first it's unstable,
buffeted by VTF. But soon the ship levels out...circles
overhead...and arcs away toward the dark side of Crematoria.

Still off-balance, Riddick runs switches on a control box,
starting up the big turn-table that re-oriens the docked
merc ship.

PURIFIER (O.S.)

You'll go nowhere.

He steps out of shadow. In his hand is Irgun's trophy
dagger.

PURIFIER

Not until you hear the message I
carry. A message from Lord Marshal
himself: Stay away from Helion,
stay away from him. In return,
you'll be hunted no more.

RIDDICK

A deal...

PURIFIER

You each keep what you've killed.

RIDDICK

A deal with the guy who put the
cord on my neck.

It hangs on air.

PURIFIER

So you know.

(a beat)

This is your chance to walk away...
to live alone...or to find others
still outside the Necromonger way.

*
*
*

RIDDICK

How do I believe you? How do I
know there won't be more Vaakos
sent at me even if I....

CONTINUED: (2)

The Purifier opens his cloak and exposes his chest. There it is, the Furyan brand, radiating on a Necromonger.

PURIFIER

We all began as something else.

He steps past Riddick and heads for the hangar door. The trophy dagger clatters to the ground.

PURIFIER

The Necromonger in me warns you not to go back. The Furyan in me...he hopes for something else.

RIDDICK

Wait....

The Purifier walks into the sunlight -- and into the VTF blast-furnace. Flames erupt on his head and shoulders, yet he keeps walking.

THE PURIFIER

If only I could still feel the pain....

Before long he crumbles to his knees and becomes his own funeral pyre. The Purifier has purified himself with fire.

FADE OUT

EXT. CONQUEST ICON - HELION - PRE-DAWN

RE-ESTABLISH Helion with a cloud-scraping shot of the Conquest Icon, symbol of Necromonger invincibility.

INT. NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - PRE-DAWN

CLOSE-UPS: A new cloak being draped on someone's back. New armor-pieces being fitted. All the trappings of a Necro commander-general are being conferred upon...

Vaako.

Other commanders attend this ceremony, watching with envious eyes as Vaako is feted as returning hero. Nearby, Dame Vaako glows darkly.

LORD MARSHAL

I may have lost a Purifier, but I gain a First Among Commanders. Well done, Vaako.

(to Toal)

Convoke the others. This is a day of days.

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*

CONTINUED:

With a new sense of momentum, Lord Marshal hastens away. Other officers follow. Only Vaako seems immune to his own success.

DAME VAAKO
Look more pleased, Vaako.
You've killed his enemy and his
suspicions.

VAAKO
I just wish I could be sure.

DAME VAAKO
You saw him unbreathing. You saw
dead on the ground.

VAAKO
But this Riddick, he was no common
breeder. He dropped 20 of my team
without raising a finger.

DAME VAAKO
All mysteries are not miracles.
Not even in this religion.

Vaako is unconvinced.

DAME VAAKO (CONT'D)
If you say you're certain, then it
is certain. And we've already said
it, haven't we?

VAAKO
We have.

DAME VAAKO
This is what I saw in you. From
the first moment we first touched
eyes, I knew you would be this
close to the throne.

The front of Necropolis has cleared out. Dame Vaako pushes Vaako back onto the throne. If a blow-job can be given with just a kiss to the lips, Dame Vaako gives it now.

DAME VAAKO
Celebrate your greatness.

INT. CAPITOL DOME - DAWN

There's an air of anticipation from the 200 Necro officers assembled here: The next stage of The Campaign is about to launch. All come to attention as Lord Marshal enters.

CONTINUED:

LORD MARSHAL

I see it as clearly as I once saw the UnderVerse itself: This is our final march. Our enemies grow fewer, our ranks stronger -- and The Door now lies at our very fingertips. Oh, yes, there will be one last Lord Marshal -- and you have already laid eyes on him.

He takes a knee. Man by man, row by row, the officers do the same. In the absence of the Purifier:

LORD MARSHAL

Accept, O Great UnderLord, our numberless plans and prayers, and render our ardent devotion to Thee into favorable judgement as we, the Legion Vast, again take the field to finish your most charitable crusade...

The last Necros kneel -- revealing one man still standing at the rear of the hall.

LORD MARSHAL (CONT'D)

Let us strike with speed and strength...

Lord Marshal double-takes at the man. He's helmeted like most officers. But the thing is...the reason Lord Marshal notices him at all...is because he's standing in the exact same spot Riddick once stood.

LORD MARSHAL (CONT'D)

(by rote)

...as you defend us against the assaults of the unconverted...

Sensing something wrong, Toal rises and looks back. Other officers do likewise. Now Lord Marshal is on his feet, pushing through bodies, moving faster and faster as...

LORD MARSHAL (CONT'D)

...swell our ranks...and....

He reaches the rear of the hall. Where did the man go?

LORD MARSHAL (CONT'D)

There was an officer...still standing here....

CONTINUED: (2)

TOAL

Maybe just wounded. Slow to his
knee.

LORD MARSHAL

No, no, no, this was...someone
else....

He tears off a few helmets, checking faces. Worried reaction
from the officers: "Is the Big Guy all right?" HOLD on the
Lord Marshal, wondering if he's seen a ghost.

EXT. BASILICA/WARRIOR-SHIP PROMENADE - HELION - MORNING

Warrior Ships are loading foot-soldiers and converts.

EXT. BASILICA STEPS - HELION - MORNING

Necromonger nobility stream aboard the basilica. Dame Vaako
is here, looking out over the promenade, enjoying the
spectacle of departure day.

The basilica steps start retracting.

Turning for the inside, Dame Vaako catches a profile amid a
sea of profiles. It was just a glimpse -- the helmet covers
most of his features -- but it was enough to make her drop a
heartbeat.

She pursues the "Necro officer" inside...

INT. VESTIBULE - BASILICA SHIP - MORNING

...and claws through bodies to keep sight of him.

The basilica DOORS START GRINDING CLOSED. Just as daylight
dies, the "Necro officer" looks in her direction -- with a
flash of eyeshine.

The basilica DOORS BOOM CLOSED, locking down.

PUSH IN on Dame Vaako. Absolutely horrified.

INT. PRIVATE QUARTERS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

VAAKO

(stunned)

You mean, "On Helion?"

DAME VAAKO

I mean, "On this very ship."

CONTINUED:

VAAKO

Could you be wrong? Could our
minds just be fabricating what we
fear? COULD YOU BE WRONG?

DAME VAAKO

Not so wrong as you when you left
him alive.

(a walk-away beat)

It's twice a mistake...not only
your failure...but now the report
of success that.... How do we
salvage this...he'll kill us both
before our due time...how can
we....

VAAKO

It's got to be said. We have to
warn the Lord Marshal.

Vaako turns for the door. But now a Zen clarity comes to
Dame Vaako.

DAME VAAKO

I say give Riddick his chance.

It stops Vaako.

DAME VAAKO (CONT'D)

If he is half of what you think,
then he can at least wound Lord
Marshal -- and that is when you
must act.

VAAKO

(balking)

Just to take his place? Just to
keep what I kill?

DAME VAAKO

It is the Necromonger way.

VAAKO

(tormented)

Not enough...it's just not....

DAME VAAKO

Then do it for the faith.

(off his reaction)

He has fear. If he has fear, he
has weakness. If he has weakness,
he is unworthy of office. We do it
for all Necromongers.

CONTINUED: (2)

That sinks in. Trying to warm to the idea: *

VAAKO *

To protect the faith.... *

DAME VAAKO *

This can still be a day of days. *
But the timing must be flawless. *

They lock eyes. *"Are we truly going to do this?"* *

EXT. BASILICA SHIP - DAY *

Landing plinths separate from the ground.

INT. CONTROL VAULT - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Lord Marshal and his Vault Officer stand on the lensing port. Helion is spreading out under them, growing in breadth as the basilica gains altitude.

LORD MARSHAL

On my order.

EXT. WARRIOR-SHIP PROMENADE - HELION - DAY

The Warrior Ships are on the move, heads unbowing, bodies drawing to full height. Necros officers leave observation platforms and move inside. But far below...

Would-be converts leap onto the feet of the Warrior Ships, hoping for last-minute salvation.

INT. VERANDA ROOM - IMAM'S PLACE - DAY

A woman turns away from a window. It's Lajjun, on her face all the worry of the world. Is this the last morning of Helion Prime? *
*
*

INT. CORRIDORS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Single-minded, Riddick strides a corridor. His stolen cloak billows open for a moment, and we spy...

The nun-chuck shotgun -- and blades, lots of blades. Irgun's trophy dagger is among them.

Equally single-minded, Vaako and Dame Vaako stride a converging corridor.

INT./EXT. IMAM'S PLACE - DAY

The AIR THRUMS malevolently; the HOUSE SHUDDERS ominously. Lajjun moves outside with little Ziza and looks up in dread to see...

A Warrior Ship passing overhead.

EXT. WARRIOR SHIPS - OVER HELION - DAY

More Warrior Ships are forming up around... *

The Conquest Icon. Now its three heads begin bowing, creating a big open maw atop the Icon. *

The great guns of the Warrior Ships unsheathe. *

INT. CONTROL VAULT - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Just waiting for the order, the Vault Officer looks out over...

Necropolis. Necromongers are gravitating to wall-lenses, wanting a good seat for the coming devastation.

EXT. CONQUEST ICON - DAY *

The open Icon launches a targeting orb, sending it high into the Helion sky. An immense targeting orb. *

INT. NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Riddick appears. As the center of Necropolis thins out, a corridor opens up between him and...

Lord Marshal. At the throne, he confers with a group of Necros, some new converts among them. *

Riddick lays hand on weapons. He couldn't hope for a better shot. But just as he enters the kill-range... *

A female convert bows away from Lord Marshal.

It's Kyra.

Riddick stops cold.

Kyra sees the eyeshine inside the helmet -- and AUDIBLY GASPS. We don't know who is more shocked, Kyra or Riddick. *

KYRA *

I thought.... *

CONTINUED:

Now Lord Marshal spots the "officer" -- the one he saw at the rear of the hall -- and his soul flinches. *

LORD MARSHAL
(recovering)
Did my Purifier not find you? Or
did you not have the good sense to
listen? *

Lord Marshal motions for his Elite Guard. They approach with hackles up: Who is this officer none of them recognize? *

INT. UPPER ANNEX - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Vaako and Dame Vaako appear. They look down to the main floor to see...

Elite Guards encircling Riddick. Whatever advantage he might've had is long gone. *

INT. NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Knowing this could erupt any second, knowing that eyes are on her, Kyra approaches Riddick. *

KYRA
(re her uniform)
Just tried it on for size, an'
guess what? It fit. Fit in a lot
of ways.
(re his uniform)
Almost as good as yours.

RIDDICK
Where you comin' down? That's all
I wanna hear. *

KYRA
Just sounded so great, this
"UnderVerse" thing...so beautiful.
Like a place I could just start
over, you know? Where anybody
could. *

RIDDICK
Which side, Kyra?

She looks at all those Elites arrayed against Riddick. Even more are arriving, building a wall behind which Lord Marshal now vanishes. *

CONTINUED:

KYRA
(for Riddick only)
I thought you were dead....

She moves on, leaving him to his fate. Riddick closes his eyes, feeling the pain down in his marrow. CAMERA CIRCLES him to reveal...

One ear beginning to bleed.

INT. LOWER ANNEX - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Something rushes into FRAME -- and resolves into Aereon. Watching from an annex, she seems vitally interested in this end-game.

INT. NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

CLOSE on Riddick's fists. They begin seeping energy.

The Furyan energy crawls up both his arms -- and vanishes beneath his helmet. We wait for something to happen. Nothing does.

REACTION Elites, Lord Marshal: *"What the hell was that supposed to be?"*

Suddenly a contained, controlled RADIUS OF FURY shatters the helmet right off Riddick's head...

And BLOWS AWAY the flanking Necros.

Riddick pulls the nun-chuck shotgun and starts BARKING BOTH BARRELS at the disarrayed Elites.

CLOSE on Kyra. Watching Riddick whack-and-BLAST his way through the Elites.

CLOSE on Lord Marshal. Watching Riddick come closer and closer.

CLOSE on Lord Marshal's feet. Backing up.

The NUN-CHUCKS CLICK DRY. Riddick keeps swinging. Keeps dropping bodies. Keeps coming.

Lord Marshal can't believe what he's seeing. Thinking about escape now, he turns to flee.

One last ELITE GIANT stands between Riddick and Lord Marshal. Riddick unsheathes two blades, one in each hand, and proceeds to wow us with...

*
*

*

*

CONTINUED:

THE MOVE OF MOVES: Riddick rushing forward...sliding to his knees...one arm windmilling one way, the other windmilling opposite. The upper arm punches a blade into the Giant's heart as, simultaneously, the lower arm fires a blade between the Giant's legs...

And nails Lord Marshal in the back of the neck. It looks like a kill shot.

The Elite Giant falls.

But not Lord Marshal.

INT. UPPER ANNEX - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Vaako grabs a ceremonial pole-arm and starts forward, thinking this is the moment.

DAME VAAKO
(holding him back)
Wait, wait.... Half-Deads don't
die so easily....

INT. NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

His back to CAMERA, Lord Marshal cricks his neck, opening a gap between helmet and breastplate. The dagger falls free: It was only wedged there.

Turning around, Lord Marshal dabs a small cut on his neck.

LORD MARSHAL
Long time since I've seen my blood.
Maybe too long.

Forget about escape: Lord Marshal wants to confront his demons now. His astral body RAGES ACROSS THE HALL at Riddick, and his physical body catches up...

Like a battering-ram. IMPACT.

Riddick cannonballs backwards...

And CRASHES into a pillar hard enough to CRACK IT.

Lord Marshal approaches fast.

Riddick is back on his feet, pulling a blade, stab-lunging at...

The place Lord Marshal just stood: Now he's astral-jumping around Riddick, blurring from point to point, literally running circles around him. Riddick always stabs too late.

CONTINUED:

Needing to arm himself, Lord Marshal astral-flies onto one of Necropolis' gigantic statues. He breaks off an oversized war-pick, then launches himself like a guided missile toward...

Riddick. Dodging.

The WAR-PICK CRACKS FLOOR, shatters in half. Not missing a beat...

Lord Marshal swings the broken end, line-driving Riddick all the way back to...

The throne area. There he lies, stunned. Lord Marshal snatches up the nun-chucks and gets the chain on Riddick's neck. He's picking up where he left off 30 years ago.

LORD MARSHAL
They'll write poetry about this moment.

Someone buries a blade Lord Marshal's back.

BAYING, his astral face spins to look. We may expect Vaako behind him, but instead...

It's Kyra. She sunk a Necro spear into his back.

Lord Marshal flails the nun-chucks...

And sends her flying into the spikes of a throne column. They bite deep. *

INT. UPPER ANNEX - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

DAME VAAKO
Now. Kill the beast while it's wounded. Now. *

Vaako leaps the balustrade...

INT. NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

...and joins the fray. Wallowing on the floor, Lord Marshal sees him coming.

LORD MARSHAL
Vaako...help me....

Vaako raises his pole-arm lethally.

LORD MARSHAL
(aghast)
Vaako?

INT. UPPER ANNEX - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

DAME VAAKO
(like prose)
And in one fell blow....

INT. NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

(NOTE: Critical to this COUP DE GRACE SCENE is the notion that our physical Lord Marshal always follows the astral Lord Marshal. With that in mind, we shoot this scene in SLOW MOTION to clarify the choreography.)

Vaako. Tortured, he takes aim on the neck of...

Lord Marshal. His astral body surges clear. Lord Marshal thinks he's escaping the death-blow -- until his astral face looks up at...

Riddick. Standing over him with Irgun's trophy dagger. Starting his swing now.

Physical Lord Marshal. He snaps away from...

Vaako's rushing pole-arm. Missing by a whisker, it GOUGES THE FLOOR.

Physical Lord Marshal rushes to rejoin astral Lord Marshal. And in that moment of convergence...

Riddick finishes his swing, sinking his blade into Lord Marshal's skull, burying it to the hilt.

Perfect anticipation.

Perfect timing.

Perfect kill.

INT. UPPER ANNEX - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Dame Vaako seems stabbed herself.

DAME VAAKO
NOOOOOO....

INT. LOWER ANNEX - NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

But Aereon -- somehow Aereon looks content with the outcome. As if she had calculated it just right.

CONTINUED:

AEREON

Now what would be the odds of
that....

*
*
*

EXT. IMAM'S HOUSE - NEW MECCA - DAY

A STRANGE QUIET comes to the world. Still clutching Ziza,
Lajjun straightens and looks up again at...

The Warrior Ship. Sheathing its guns. Breaking formation.
Heading away from the Icon.

*

INT. NECROPOLIS - BASILICA SHIP - DAY

Lord Marshal. On the floor. Now a Full-Dead.

Kyra. Impaled. Also lifeless.

Riddick. He pivots away from her body and slumps into the
throne. In a matter of seconds, his expression changes from
bitter anguish to utter astonishment as he sees something
unfolding that we don't. Now we do one of the GREATEST
PULLBACKS IN THE HISTORY OF CINEMA, revealing all the new
Necromongers who have flooded into Necropolis -- and to
reveal each and every one of them in the act of kneeling.
Kneeling before the new Lord Marshal.

RIDDICK

(a dread whisper)

"You keep what you kill...."

CUT TO BLACK

*

*

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