

*PSYCHEVERSE 199X*  
**ATLANTA GEORGIA RPG**

STORY BY / WRITTEN BY  
KHOLI HICKS

FROM THE LUMENScape Entertainment System UNIVERSE

DRAFT ONE - OCT 26, 2021

Kholi hicks  
kholi . hicks @ gmail . com

**CUTTING BETWEEN A BLACK VOID AND LIVE COMBAT, LIKE BEING BIRTHED INTO A NEW WORLD.**

**EXT. COBBLESTONE ALLEY - NIGHT**, a very dark-skinned quarterback of a man in a red floral shirt, wielding a giant black sword, dashes into combat against FOUR AMIGOS with MELEE WEAPONS. HE LUNGES...VANISHING IN A BLUR, REAPPEARING with his sword buried in one thief's chest.

BLACK VOID.

WOMAN (O.S.)

The headset feels funny.

MALE SPEAKER (O.S.)

Funny weird or funny haha?

AUDIENCE MEMBER (O.S.)

(snide) That's a quote for the packaging!

LOW AND EMBARRASSED LAUGHTER from an unseen audience.

MALE SPEAKER (O.S.)

I respect the jab, allow me to parry.

Black sword collides with a WHIP OF JAGGED MIRROR SHARDS—*shatters* it. Mr. Floral skewers its wielder through his rib cage. Zero blood...but KNOCKS THE VOMIT out of him.

MR. FLORAL spears an AXE TOTING THUG with his giant sword, impaling him, then clocks the thug with a MEATY LEFT HOOK: blood sprays and a FUTURISTIC HEADSET clatters to the cobblestone ground.

**This headset was not visible until the moment it was knocked off of Axe Thug's face.**

BLACK VOID.

MALE SPEAKER (CONT'D)

Apologies. Technical difficulties.

Thief THREE, open backpack in hand, suffers a mighty slash from Mr. Floral—shoulder to opposite hip. He drops to his knees...backpack spilling ELVISH KNIVES, A JADE STATUE, few WADS OF CASH onto the concrete.

Thief three suffers a knee to the jaw, *invisible headset knocked visible*. Mr. Floral stomps the headset to bits as someone rushes him from behind. He spins to attack--

Right into THE BARREL OF A HANDGUN. GLOCK 19.

A VIEW of the lethal encounter from behind a TEEN'S DIRTY HAND *just* as it CLAMPS around a FIST-SIZED 10-SIDED DIE: the gunman erupts into flame, WAILING.

DEMENTED GRIN PIERCING THE SHADOW, belongs to what can accurately be described as a PYROMANIACAL CUB SCOUT with headphones on (blue and gold hat, matching sash, navy button-up with fire patch on it and a hoodie under that), reveling in the WAILING OF A MAN ON FIRE.

Watching from a safe distance, undetected, an ELDERY WITNESS to the CHAOS AND FLAME REFLECTED IN HER WIRE-FRAMED GLASSES. Can't see the bottom of her face.

ELDERY WITNESS (O.S.)

Well alright then.

OFF THE REFLECTION.

**INT. DARK AUDITORIUM - ON THE AUDIENCE**, rows of seats filled with suits and reporters. Little red dots of LIVE CAMERAS observing from various angles. COUGH.

WHITE TEXT FADING IN: SUMMER, 1983

A late thirties WOMAN stands center stage: jeans, plaid shirt, futuristic gloves on, a clunky backpack, and an equally futuristic virtual reality headset on.

Behind the CLEAR VIZOR, her eyes peer out over the crowd.

OLIBANUM, an early twenties tall tanned and quick man doing an ironically passible Tom Hanks circa 1982, walks around her *diagnosing his new product in front on national television.*

OLIBANUM

Our investors must be crying right now.

He CLICKS *something* on the headset: THE VIZOR bursts to life, vibrant and distinct neon magenta light startling the woman. She smiles.

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

Real reaction folks. Reminder, I am the only paid actor on stage today.

Olibanum earns himself a collective QUIET LAUGH.

THE HEADSET sings a soft tune that LOOPS IN HER EARS.

Her renewed giddiness for what feels like "something new" to be discovered fuels the audience.

WOMAN

I see a bunch of blinking shapes.

OLIBANUM

Our fractal pattern, it's calibrating.  
Only takes a few seconds to complete.

His hand directs her attention deeper into the FRACTAL PATTERN flashing in her vizor. Her smile grows. Tranced.

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

And then the headset sort of just...

The headset's boundaries vanish from her peripheral, magenta light fading from any light source with less intensity than a security light. Back to normal.

WOMAN

Where did the pretty magenta light go?

ANOTHER IMAGE FADES INTO SIGHT. An entirely different world, alive and thriving, stacked on top of the "real world": flora sprouting from every corner, dangling from the walls and ceiling. Insects appear before her eyes, flitting around the heads of oblivious audience members.

It's like a hologram of a parallel existence yet "filled in" and realized, minus the tell-tales of artifice that would suggest this is really a video game. No lagging, no glitching, nothing.

A PHANTOM LAYER that only she can see right now.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Now that's groovy as shit.

She cups her mouth. Olibanum and the audience LAUGH.

OLIBANUM

(mid laugh) Lumen is expanding once more. Yesterday it was our color changing light bulb, the day before that our computer controlled radio towers with greater signal reach in rural states--currently scaling into big cities. Today, it's Lumen's take on video games.

MOVEMENT SIDE STAGE, prowling from dark and lush curtains strung of ethereal vine, a FURRY BALL OF LIGHT: it's a long-eared fennec fox feline hybrid with light ebbing through its core. We'll call it a [FENNEX].

**[ ] : Brackets specify when something or someone exists only on the Phantom Layer. Expanding on this later.**

Making its way to the edge of the stage, this finely furred, living lantern seamlessly alternates between fox-like trots and feline-esque prancing.

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

A living, ever expanding mixed reality.

WOMAN

Can you see this? Can they see this?

She creeps toward the [fennex]. *Toward the edge of stage.*

AUDIENCE MEMBER

Watch the stage!

WOMAN

Oh! I can see it! Wow. I already forgot about the headset, that's trippy.

AUDIENCE POV, the Woman still wearing that headset, backpack, and gloves. She leans in toward the [fennex]—her backpack's shifting weight throwing her balance off.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Well I didn't forget about the backpack.

THE AUDIENCE relaxes. Olibanum jogs to her.

OLIBANUM

Heavy battery backpack. Could take years to shrink that down. UNLESS, there's a collective need to focus manufacturing and...that's dull.

(before she can react)

Here let me.

Olibanum UNPLUGS / DISCONNECTS A CABLE from the headset, helping to remove the backpack, sliding it off stage.

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

Battery life. Check.

The AUDIENCE CLAPPING as the woman kneels toward the [fennex], and it bopping toward her.

WOMAN

It's like it can see me.

OLIBANUM

Maybe it wants to go for a ride.

She's reaching out to touch the creature, and it springs onto her hand, ascending from her wrist to her shoulder.

WOMAN

I felt that. On my hand.

OLIBANUM

The gloves.

She throws her gloved hands up like "how could I have forgotten that detail?", and Olibanum's audience LAUGHS.

The [Fennex] leaps down, offstage and into the audience.

WOMAN

But I could feel it on my shoulder too.  
Can nobody feel that in the crowd?

Olibanum stands back, she points out [fennex] in the audience, people turn to look. See nothing.

OLIBANUM

It's called Specter Touch, which is just our mumbo jumbo for Phantom Limb Syndrome

WOMAN

Mind is convinced the body follows and I know the rest.

OLIBANUM

You know the rest!

WOMAN

Why the gloves then?

OLIBANUM

You're always one revelation ahead of me.

As Olibanum helps her out of the gloves one at a time, the revelation earns LIGHT APPLAUSE from the audience. The smarter people in the crowd remain silent, un-phased by the show of emotions over their own personal experience of nothing so far.

WOMAN

Everyone needs to see. It's right there.

OLIBANUM

This next bit was stolen from someone I admire deeply and hope to meet one day.  
Can everyone have a look under your chairs please?

SHUFFLE and CREAK as trade show attendees take their seats. One by one, headsets popping onto heads, magenta lights flickering on in the dark. A woman YELPS.

WOMAN IN AUDIENCE

There it is!

OLIBANUM

Everyone remain seated please, the headsets are tethered to your chairs.

She points the [fennex] out, perched on MAN IN CROWD's shoulder like a ghost pet. He reaches up, "touches" it, pushes his hand through, not there but he can "feel" it.

MAN IN CROWD

(nervous laugh)This is extremely weird.

He wants to stand, cable attached to the headset reminds him to remain seated. No harm done.

OLIBANUM

This is a seated ride folks!

THE AUDIENCE, alive with WHISPERS, interacts with the [FENNEX] roaming from shoulder to shoulder. It returns to stage and leaps onto Olibanum's shoulder.

LARGE LETTERS spelling out LumenScape descend behind him, covered in [exotic flora], equally [fantastical fauna] flying or frolicking around the billboard.

**The image presented is reverent Contemporary Fantasy.**

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

Welcome everyone to your new old home.  
LumenScape! A world that exists on top of yours, designed by Lumen Inc.

APPLAUSE, but no one stands. A justified sitting ovation.

Olibanum waves two people onto stage: MELICHI, early twenties, a half-japanese man with a smile on his face, pressed slacks and white white Reebok's. A permanent mirth infects his entire persona with "bounce", from his head turns to his strut.

And MUR—a very fresh-faced black woman. Twenty-three at best with a soft brow and deceptively business lethal attire on. Grin on her face highlights her big afro, currently puffed back with a magenta ribbon. She's the only one of the three rocking magenta.

Applauding with the crowd. Right now, these three are partners.

BLACK.

PSYCHEVERSE TITLE INTRO SEQUENCE:MUSIC: JAN JAMMER'S MIAMI VICE THEME (FULL LENGTH)

**This entire montage is presented as a mini documentary with a (Wild West Of Technology Age theme) that feels like a John Hughes movie opener.**

**Underneath the pizzazz of clever edits of news clippings and interviews, 70s style cut out animation of people running as fast as cheetahs, and footage from different cameras of superhuman feats or supernatural frights, it feels like a new technology (LumenScape) is being rapidly introduced to a world that has only known magic up until 1982. And this technology is drastically altering the planet before anyone can truly understand what it is.**

**There are many details to be had in this sequence, but the most important details will always be very visual.**

Archival footage of Los Angeles City waking up in the early 80s. Don't focus on the cars because that's too much money. **Followed by images depicting the impact LumenScape and LUMEN,INC have on the social landscape, beginning from year of release.**

CHRISTMAS, 1983 (SCANNING NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND INSERTING NEWS REPORT CLIPS) - KIDS UNBOXING LumenScape HEADSETS. **LUMEN FENCING (THE SPORT OF SWORD COMBAT) IS THE FIRST SUSTAINING TREND OF LumenScape.** KIDS FENCING AT SCHOOL EVEN BECOMES A PROBLEM. KIDS FENCING AT SCHOOL BECOMING A PROBLEM.

**SUMMER, 1984 (NEWSPAPER, NEWS FOOTAGE) - YOUNG MAN DIES WHILE DRIVING WITH LumenScape HEADSET ON.**

SUMMER, 1984 - (NEWSPAPER) DRIVING WITH ANY ACTIVE LumenScape HEADSET ON IN THE VEHICLE IS IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION OF LICENSED DRIVER OR LEGAL GUARDIAN, MORE ENORMOUS PENALTIES.

**SUMMER, 1984 - (NEWS FOOTAGE, PRESS VIDEO BITS OF FOUNDERS: MUR, OLIBANUM, AND MELICHI) LUMEN, INC DONATES MILLIONS TO THE BETTER SAFER ROADS FOUNDATION, DONATE TO INSTALL TIGHT SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR LumenScape USERS. CITIES ACCEPT.**

CHRISTMAS, 1984 - LumenScape HEADSET BEST SELLING TOY IN THE US. DEMOLISHES SALES OF OTHER VIDEO GAME SYSTEMS IN THE US, SLOWS DEVELOPMENT OF HOME CONSOLE GAMING SECTOR TO A CRAWL IN THE US.

TABLOIDS, 1985 - LUMEN, INC BEHIND STRANGE OCCURRENCES, REPORTED INJURIES CAUSED BY "WILD BEASTS" IN LumenScape.



NEWS OUTLETS, 1985 - LUMEN, INC CONSPIRACY DEBUNKED, PEOPLE BEHIND HOAX ADMIT "IT WAS ALL MADE UP".

NEWS PAPERS, 1988 - LUMEN STOCK PLUMMET, NO NEW INNOVATIONS. COMPANY ON THE WAY OUT?

LumenScape LS2 HEADSET, SUMMER 1990 - LUMEN, INC RELEASES THE SLEEKER, UPDATED LumenScape 1 (LS1); NO LONGER CLUNKY AND UGLY; VOICE CALLING TO FRIENDS;

**ANNOUNCES A SECOND NEW, ADVANCED USER HEADSET: LS2, COMES WITH A MUST-WEAR HAPTIC SUIT FOR INCREASED IMMERSION. DO THINGS IN LumenScape YOU COULDN'T BEFORE. SHIPS WINTER 1990.**

OLIBANUM DEMONSTRATES NEW PERIPHERALS (FOOTAGE FROM THE PRESS EVENT WITH TEXT ON THEM FOR DETAILS): LUMENCRAFT, material created by Lumen Inc that exists in both THE REAL WORLD and PHANTOM LAYER simultaneously. SHAPE LumenScape TO FIT YOUR DESIRES. **THE EXAMPLE ON STAGE IS CUTTING DOWN A PHANTOM TREE WITH A LUMENCRAFT AXE STANDING CENTER STAGE, DEMONSTRATES WHAT IT LOOKS AND FEELS LIKE TO INTERACT WITH LumenScape. BACKWARDS COMPATIBLE WITH ALL LumenScape HEADSETS. SHIPS SPRING 1991.**

MELICHI MISSING, OLIBANUM AND A COLLECTED MUR RECEIVE APPLAUSE SIDE BY SIDE. NOW, THEY ARE A FAMILY.

PHANTOM GRAIL BOOM, SUMMER 1992 - KID IN LOS ANGELES FINDS A RARE LumenScape ITEM, SELLS IT FOR 1,000USD.

ONE MONTH LATER, (FOOTAGE DIRECTLY FROM A VIDEO CAMERA, FOOTAGE FROM NEWS REPORTS, NEWS CLIPPINGS): MISSING KIDS IN GEORGIA FOUND TRAPPED IN AN ABANDONED AMUSEMENT PARK, LOCATED RARE LumenScape ITEM NOW KNOWN AS "PHANTOM GRAILS" BY UNDERGROUND COMMUNITY FORMING; KIDS SELL GRAIL FOR 40,000USD, BUYER UNKNOWN.

(FOOTAGE FROM DIFFERENT VIDEO CAMERAS, LumenScape COMMERCIALS) URBAN LIFE MAKES ROOM FOR GRAIL HUNTERS, PEOPLE DEDICATED TO FINDING AND SELLING PHANTOM GRAILS. LUMENCRAFT WEAPONS ARE NOT UNCOMMON TO SEE IN YOUNG SOCIAL GATHERINGS, IMAGINE IF COSPLAYERS WERE MORE REASONABLE AND PUBLICLY ACCEPTED AS A WAY OF LIFE.

(LumenScape COMMERCIAL) MARIA SUAVE PLUGS HER LumenScape HEADSET INTO A CONVENIENT CAR DOCK FOR VOICE CALLS. TICK. JOE SUAVE, EQUIPPED WITH HIS LumenScape GARDEN TOOLS, MANSCAPES A HYBRID LAWN OF FANTASTIC FLORA AND ORDINARY GRAVEL, TO KEEP PEOPLE AWAY FROM THE PRETTY FLOWERS.

WINTER, 1992 - LUMEN, INC CEMENTED AS INNOVATORS OF THE 21ST CENTURY. IMAGINING BIG EXPERIENCES IN SMALL PLACES, OR FIVE MILLION NEW REASONS TO SAVE THE PLANET.

WAR ON LumenScape, 1993 - SENATORS PUSH MORE REGULATIONS ON USAGE OF LumenScape, CITING CASES OF DEATHS OCCURRED WHILE SPECIFICALLY SEARCHING FOR FICTIONAL ITEMS IN A VIDEO GAME.

**(NEWS REPORTS, VIDEO CAMERA FOOTAGE, INTERVIEW FOOTAGE WITH OLIBANUM, TABLOID PAGES OF RUMORS): LUMEN, INC CEO SURVIVES EMERGENCY HEART SURGERY AFTER SPONTANEOUS FAILURE, 1993 - MUR GOES MISSING, REPORTS OF CEO AND FOUNDER ACTING STRANGE; FOUND DAYS LATER BY PARTNER, WHERE SHE SUFFERED A HEART ATTACK OF UNKNOWN CAUSES.**

**The rest of this camera footage zips by in flashes of images, like the final seconds of a late 80s or early 90s show opener, supporting the crescendo in the music:**

UNDERGROUND LumenScape, 1993 - COMMUNITY RISING OUT OF ITS INFANCY, BIG MONEY BEING EXCHANGED AS PHANTOM GRAILS BECOME OFFICIAL RARE ART.

UPTICK IN LumenScape RELATED PHENOMENON, 1995 - LumenScape NOW KNOWN AS PHANTOM LAYER AMONGST SUPER USERS; UNDERGROUND NETWORKS TALKING ABOUT A DRUG THAT LETS YOU HIT A NEW LEVEL OF IMMERSION IN "LumenScape"; BIG RUMORS OF BIG LIES BREWING.

**THE TITLE FADES AND FLICKERS IN OVER A BLACK HOWL:**

# **PSYCHEVERSE 199X**

## **ATLANTA GEORGIA RPG**

**EXT. LUMEN, INC HEADQUARTERS - DAY**, observing from a birds eye view the **LUMEN HQ - CAMPUS**, surprisingly modern in design. It's as if they've aped \*pple's entire aesthetic.

**INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - SAME**, perfect yet sterile white overhead lighting fills the space. The only occupant is **late thirties MUR dressed in a cream white pants suit**—new and persistent grey hairs spotting her dark hair which is held back by the same magenta ribbon.

She's rinsing her hands beneath an automatic faucet.

Drying with a fluffy towel, she **TENDS TO A ROGUE BUTTON** on her open blouse, revealing the **top of a surgical scar** that runs down the center of her chest like a zipper, disappearing beneath the blouse's sharp collar.

Sparing no second glance to her scar, Mur slips from the bathroom into a **INT. CORPORATE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS** stretching thirty feet in either direction. Magenta light strips line the floor while inset ceiling lights create a sunset haze from above.

These vivid hues clash at Mur's jawline, her always-present magenta ribbon pops.

Minding the human traffic as she steps out, two medics buzz by, Mur acknowledges one of the medics with a softened smile—a **blonde with sizzling green eyes**, ponytail choked through the back of a LUMEN baseball cap.

Mur cranks through the oversized, heavy glass doors and into the space across from the bathroom.

**INT. LUMEN HQ - BOARDROOM - CONTINUOUS**, a **nearly forty Olibanum**—in hand, perched on the edge of a giant conference table. It's set in the center of a bright space designed to pitch an expanding LumenScape experience to suits with deep pockets.

WHITE TEXT FADING IN: 1996

Olibanum looks up, toward the commotion of Mur entering.

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

"Kids see man flying at night in LumenScape. Bad omen!". Bad omen.

Mur approaches the large table, Olibanum transfers his rear end from table top to chair.

MUR

Don't show that to Melichi.

OLIBANUM

Yeah, it'll just make his head bigger than it already is.

He leans further into the table, taking lower ground.

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

Hi Mur, how are you?

MUR

Great Oli. How are you?

OLI

Ship's stable. Wanted to ask you for a favor while you're in Georgia.

MUR

This sounds like it's going to be bad for me, but shoot.

She sits on the edge of the table.

OLI

Really? I tried to not sound like it wasn't going to be a big deal. This is why I can't win at any poker games.

MUR

Oli...focus.

OLI

RIGHT. Number of retailers had to process returns because some headsets weren't able to establish a network connection. I had an engineer take a look...the bulbs in defective headsets are off by several lumen and slightly off by hue. His manufacturing tolerances are slipping.

MUR

Talking to that man is torture.

OLI

Agreed. We just need someone to visit him. In person. So he feels as special as the day we gave him millions of dollars.

MUR

I'll stop by. In exchange for my sacrifice please get Melichi out of his headset. Fluids and exercise, please. You know how his condition works.

OLI

I'll send lunch down to his place.

Mur frowns.

OLI (CONT'D)

He looks much better to me Mur. Doctor said he's doing great. This is new to me as well you know?

MUR

I do know, but I don't trust Kullenbusey on this one. And he's on the other side of the country.

OLI

He trusts you. The guy won't even call me friend but we're rebuilding half a hospital for

MUR

Oli stop fucking around. Get Melichi out. Three days, "A" day. Wake him up.

OLI

Alright. Okay you are absolutely right.

MUR

Anything else?

OLI

OH WAIT

Oli leaps from his seat with genuine excitement, drops behind the table top then returns with a perfect, paper-wrapped gift in hand. Complete with bow on top.

OLI (CONT'D)

Tell the kiddo I said Happy Birthday.

Mur accepts the gift and Oli's incoming hug. It is genuine. A "for old time's sake" embrace that's just the right amount of brief for both.

MUR

Thank you. I'm sure whatever it is she'll love it.

Oli sits on the conference table, even ground.

OLI

Ya know, for someone that's deathly terrified of heights, you've sure been flying home a lot lately. Just in case you forgot.

Mur turns and wanders out, places to be.

MUR

Thanks for reminding me.

OLI

If you're going to see Melichi please ask him to stop flying around in public.

MUR

Tell him when you take his headset off.

Mur exits.

Olibanum fixates on the door, then out of the tall windows. Suspicious or nervous, too early to tell.

THUMBS HIS BROW.

**INT. LUMEN HQ - HALLWAY - NEXT**, back in that "magenta sunset" hallway, Mur melts into light employee traffic with the sparkling gift in hands, striding toward the FAR END OF THE HALL--

Standing beside shiny elevator doors, obviously waiting for Mur, is PEACH, late twenties and not completely out of place in a skirt and blouse—short dyed-blond bob cut and forever squinting. At any given moment Peach is fighting to contain a wild grin...so people don't think (or realize) she's high as hell.

MUR (CONT'D)

Can you take this to the car?

Mur hands Peach the gift, treating it as if it were from a highly regarded family member.

PEACH

Absolutely.

MUR

And come right back. Don't smoke on company time.

PEACH

Never smoked a day in my life.

Elevator doors part, spill faux daylight into the scene.

MUR

Mmhmm.

The women waltz onto the **INT. ELEVATOR**, about face.

On the ELEVATOR PANEL, Peach presses and holds a button labeled "M", Mur scans her card. Teamwork. The LUMEN BOOT-UP JINGLE chimes from the panel's speaker.

PEACH

Bet there's a gun in here. That seems like something he would give as a gift.

Mur looks at Peach like "???". And Peach, calling upon the might of every muscle in her face to contain her grin...makes a gun firing motion at Mur a few times, elevator doors slide closed as Mur cracks up.

**INT. LUMEN HQ - "M" FLOOR - NEXT**, magenta hall and elevators doors opening. Peach, gift in arms, blocks the SAFETY SENSOR with her heel: her stilettos feature four-sided dice emblems at the heel.

Mur exits, leaves Peach behind at the elevator doors.

Mur extracts, from her pocket, a small vial with a dropper top. She drips two droplets on her tongue—ELEVATOR BUZZING startling her.

Peach is battling to keep the elevator doors open until they relent, along with the BUZZ. Apologies on her face.

**INT. LUMEN HQ - MELICHI'S LAIR - CONTINUOUS**, drenched in magenta light. Warm white accents to taste, Melichi's is a more modern subterranean loft than actual lair: separate areas for a television, kitchen, and a hardly used Nordick Track thigh master.

Center room is Melichi—very specifically thirty-two, reclined in a comfy chair, clunky LumenScape beta headset on, IV bag stand beside him.

Big glass door soundless when Mur enters, she beelines to Melichi, avoiding collision with anything in his space.

Arriving at Melichi and looking THROUGH HIS VIZOR: the headset's intense magenta light piercing his eyelids, making pupils almost visible.

Mur's attention drifts from his face to BRUISE ON HIS RIGHT ARM, IV fluid line medically taped to his skin.

She cradles his arm, COVERS THE BRUISE with her palm. Just holds him...*someone's behind her*.

MELICHI (O.S.)

Marie had a hard time finding a vein.

Mur is unfazed, gently tucks the bruised arm against his side, turns to face a young Melichi—looks the same as he on stage in 1982. A [not-really-there Melichi].

**NOTE: MELICHI'S BODY ALWAYS LOOKS OLDER THAN [MELICHI].**

MUR

Your arm looks terrible.

[MELICHI]

But the IV's already helping. You were absolutely right about getting fluids in my body.

MUR

That's not the point.

[MELICHI]

The bruises always go away. Trust me I'm fine. What's up? I heard the loud ass elevator buzzer going off.

MUR

Let's get out of here. Come home with me.

[MELICHI]

I was planning on making a surprise visit for Netra's birthday. But I can race you there right now.

He hops, as if he's going to fly through the ceiling.

MUR

You know I can't fly. I can't even feint.

[MELICHI]

You can fly, you're deathly afraid of heights. Big dif. And feinting is the gateway to flying, let me teach you?

MUR

(on topic please) Melichi...

[MELICHI]

Hear me out, let's throw a little party.

Melichi leads Mur and her focus away from his real body.

[MELICHI]

I'll fly over to hang out this time. I bet we can get Oli and Little Dean there.

(MORE)



[MELICHI] (CONT'D)

Pace too, and we'll have a free for all brawl like old times then go to that arcade for bacon dogs. Then do a sleepover at the Inn. It'll be tight.

MUR

That sounds great. But even better if you were in person.

[MELICHI]

Who knows right?

MUR

Why are you trying to get rid of me?

[MELICHI]

Checking on some kids hunting a monster. Rumor says it's guarding a rare grail.

MUR

Did you start the rumor?

[MELICHI]

Yes.

MUR

And you made the monster.

[MELICHI]

Guilty.

AT THE DOOR, Mur hugs [Melichi]. Shouldn't be possible.

MUR

Melichi...you need sleep. Not the occasional nap. Real sleep. It will all still be here after you're rested.

[MELICHI]

I'm fine. Trust me.

He leaves her, almost bouncing away.

[MELICHI]

Besides. Gods don't sleep.

Mur rests eyes on [Melichi] as if it may be the last time...then turns to exit.

[Melichi], *wearing a different version of his ever present smile*, launches through the ceiling. His real body left to lie peacefully—doesn't notice **the BRUISE ON HIS ARM is much smaller.**

**INT. ELEVATOR**, Mur returning, Peach finally allowing the elevator doors to glide closed. They stand in silence as the elevator rises. Mur's fighting back tears.

She wipes her lids with her fingertips.

MUR

(quiet) Grab your things, we're going to the jet early today. Don't clock out.

Peach nods.

JET ENGINE OVERHEAD.

**INT. MUR'S PRIVATE JET - SKY - SUNSET**, nervous Mur at a window seat—something zips by the plane: [an opal and green dragon] weaving through sunlit nimbus.

The [dragon] flickers in and out of existence, but less like a glitch and more like human eyes imagining things.

Mur rubs her eyes then slides on a custom LS2 headset that resembles reading glasses. She looks out of the window again, the [dragon] no longer flickers, just as brilliant as before. Back to "normal".

Peach—wearing faintly tinted and chunky sunglasses on her forehead, approaches with a slim glass of ginger ale and passes it off to Mur.

PEACH

What's out there?

MUR

Dragon.

Peach lowers the sunglasses over her eyes: now she sees the [dragon], just the same as Mur.

NETRA

I thought you liked those?

MUR

It's not the dragon.

Peach drops to a knee in the seat across from Mur.

PEACH

You worried Olibanum's gonna shoot us out of the sky and take complete control of Lumen.

MUR

What are you taking about.

PEACH  
He's crazy as hell.

MUR  
Call him Mr Roth. And who told you that?

PEACH  
Someone at the office.

MUR  
Stop lying, nobody told you that.

PEACH  
I'm lying but that's just my opinion.

MUR  
You lied. That's not an opinion. And you can't say stuff like that Peach. About Oli. Besides he's not that crazy.

The cabin shudders from turbulence, not only quieting the conversation but also pushing Peach into a less playful state of mind.

She wants to say something, but the [dragon] sweeps by the porthole, bathing the entire cabin in [jade sparkle].

MUR (CONT'D)  
What could I have done differently?

PEACH  
To avoid what?

MUR  
Things coming down to the wire like this.

They sit and watch the final moments of light fading from the sky. The dragon's colors becoming subtly and tastefully luminescent in the same instance.

RELAXING INTO BLACK.

**EXT. GREY EBBING WOODS - ABSOLUTE NIGHT**, in the middle of nowhere looking up at a GLOWING CANOPY OF HANGING GREY-GREEN SPANISH MOSS. Home to both insects and [insects of different hues], yet not overrun with life.

WHITE TEXT FADING IN: JESUP, GEORGIA

A [FENNEX CUB], dim little lavender light shining through its tummy, bounds from the darkness and over fat roots, moving toward a TINY SECURITY LIGHT in the distance.

Moving toward the distant tree line, it hops and bops [insect] after [insect] causing them to burst into fragments that are immediately absorbed into its [fur], intensifying the inner [lavender light].

Then leaving the tree line with a [healthy lavender glow] the [fennex cub] leaps onto a dark **JESUP, GA - COUNTRY ROAD** and RIGHT INTO THE GRILL OF A MOVING TRUCK--

The vehicle passing is like a drawn curtain revealing the [fennex cub], *safe and sauntering* by a CHUNKY WOODEN SIGN that reads GILMORE INN, on toward **EXT. GILMORE INN - MAIN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**: this is an old country home built at the top of a slope, featuring a creaky bench swing out front. Upon that bench sits the bright cyan apparition of a girl sketching in what absolutely must be a MYSTIC BOOK...a wired phone from the late 1980s pinched between her jaw and shoulder.

"GHOST" GIRL

(laughing into the phone) Nuh-uh! Wait wait did he throw up ON you?...BOOOOO.

[Mystic Book] lending its ghastly cyan vibes to the round, brown face and reflective pupils of NETRA—an always warm and analytical early teen with gothic spirit and a 90's R&B popstar outer shell. Her oversized LUMEN W/FILA (pronounced Lumen WITH FILA) all-weather jacket hides her basic and equally branded crop top and jeans.

NETRA

(As she sketches) He was probably just nervous plus that part of the maze is really scary with a headset on.

The [fennex cub] leaps unto Netra's shoulder, a living ornament of soft lavender light, completing Netra's contemporary fantasy prophet vibe.

She juggles the clunky phone from one shoulder to the other and leafs through the pages of her [**CODEX**]:

**This [book] is a visual journal as much as it is a spell book, as much as it is a tome of lost stories and lyrics.**

NETRA (CONT'D)

Yup. I started screaming when...YEAH the part where the eyes are chasing you in the dark! AHHHHHH!

One page features sketchy apparel and lots of bangle designs. On THE NEXT PAGE are PHRASES, QUOTES and LYRICS, verses chipped away at or altered as they're rewritten.

ONE FULLY REALIZED DESIGN of a BOOT WITH WINGS ATTACHED TO THEM has color and stark lines. An icon or logo.

As Netra converses, HER LUMEN STYLUS refines a "WINGED BOOT LOGO" one line at a time, the [book's "magic"] allowing Netra to redraw over the sketch without the need to erase first, refining her ideas rapidly.

NETRA (CONT'D)

Time rest and give your kindness to the nearest.

She slides her stylus from the edge of page to center, dragging an illustration of a clock icon into existence.

**For each word that Netra's handwritten in her [Codex], the book conjures images of that word, which she uses to fully recognize an idea. This is called ENCHANTING.**

NETRA (CONT'D)

Time rest, give your kindness to the nearest.

(into the phone)

I'm trying to make the haste enchantment stronger. "Worthy"? Instead of "nearest"? Time rest give your kindness...

Helped by the voice on the phone, REWRITING ONCE MORE--

NETRA (CONT'D)

"AND". Okay "Time rest AND give your kindness to the WORTHY. Haste."

(now like an incantation or prayer)

Time rest and give your kindness to the worthy. Haste. You're right. Making it specific makes it stronger.

RUMBLING VEHICLE ENGINE on approach, Netra ignores the sound and the headlights sweeping over her entire vibe.

Those headlights belong to a sleek BLACK BRONCO (1994), prowling onto the gravel driveway. Engine dying first, headlights switched off a second later.

Big doors swing out to free Peach and Mur, driver and passenger respectively.

NETRA (CONT'D)

Hold on.

THUMPING CAR DOORS finally encourage Netra to set the [codex] aside, but she also lifts away her custom LS2 HEADSET, revealing it: more like Ski Goggles.

The LumenScape layer vanishes, along with the [fennex cub], but Netra's [codex] remains on the bench.

NETRA (CONT'D)

(to Mur) I thought you were going to call when you got in?

Mur's hoisting luggage out of the Bronco's back seat.

MUR

We tried.

Peach SKITTERS TO and LURCHES AT NETRA with a favorite aunt type of excitement, Netra recoils into LAUGHTER.

PEACH

If that's my eldest on the phone tell her to get off and do homework.

NETRA

She wants to talk to you.

Netra gives Peach the phone.

PEACH

Hello? Hello?? Nobody's here.

NETRA

Guess you have to hang it up then.

PEACH

Well played.

Peach retreats through a dusty, wobbly screen door spotted with moth remains, into the house. The phone's extra long, cumbersome coiled cable dragging behind her.

PEACH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

MISS BETTY!

Then Mur, arriving in time for Netra's embrace. She surrenders Olibanum's Gift in exchange for a looser PSI on Netra's torso squeeze.

MUR

You're gonna break my heart.

NETRA

That's not funny mom.

MUR

Says you.

NETRA  
Is this from Oli?

MUR  
Yeah.

Peach pops back to the door, BANGING the dusty screen.

MUR (CONT'D)  
Please.

PEACH  
Where's Miss Betty?

NETRA  
Down at the river.

Mur hands the luggage off, leaving them to tend with while she walks around side of the house.

VANISHES IN THE DARK.

**EXT. GILMORE INN - THE LAYOUT - NEXT**, the massive "backyard"—sloping down into a courtyard that looks like something transported from rural Prague. A stone fountain in the center of cobblestone walkways that lead to the doors of four cabins, surrounded by oak trees with grey glowing hanging moss. [Insects] landing or taking flight.

These cabins were from a time when this place was once a summer camp, but have been converted to rooms for stay, thus what was once "CAMP GILMORE" is now "GIMORE INN". A total fantasy vibe.

Furthest left is Cabin A. The lights are on.

Far right, breaking up tree line with a wide dirt trail, is a **EXT. DARK TRAIL HEAD** of an equally dark, winding trail—*round white circles (like eyes) coming closer in the darkness.*

They are the reflective glasses of a grey-haired person armed a with a lantern of white light.

This is BETTY, late sixties grey...a chameleon of a woman that uses her innate ability to vanish in plain sight in order to gather survival data in a rapidly changing environment.

Mur appears at the trail head.

MUR  
Why are you down at the river mama?

BETTY

I saw Melichi walking down the trail.

MUR

Is he gone?

BETTY

Yeah he flew off before I got there.

Betty hands Mur the "LANTERN": a basket filled with mushrooms and [mushrooms], some are crushed to bits. The [mushrooms] are the source of the white light.

BETTY (CONT'D)

Stepping all over the mushrooms and messing up my growth timing.

MUR

He's scared.

They turn from the trail head and climb the slope to the main house.

MUR (CONT'D)

I thought you said the cabins were going to be closed while I was here?

Mur eyes Cabin A and the two silhouettes pacing back and forth inside. One large and one small, a man and a boy.

BETTY

Those are your backup drivers.

MUR

What?

Betty HUSHES MUR.

MUR (CONT'D)

(hushed) My backup what?

THEY CLIMB THE SLOPE.

**INT. MAIN HOUSE - KITCHEN - NEXT**, a gathering of women around an old two-piece, wooden table. Peach with her elbows on the table, Netra leaning over her book in exhibition mode. Mur with her hands on her forehead.

STRESSED.

MUR (CONT'D)

Please, please please tell me you did not tell them anything about me. Please.



Betty sets plates of red beans and rice in front of the Netra and Peach, shuffling around while having this little argument with Mur. It's hard to tell who's on the offense or defense.

BETTY

I just told them that I would need them to drive my daughter somewhere, and you would pay them very well if they kept their headsets on.

MUR

You're always second guessing me.

BETTY

I'm not second guessing you, I'm second guessing that Pace. He's a snake.

MUR

We had this conversation three times. Pace is trustworthy, he's also my best bet for a driver because he knows what we're up against.

BETTY

They know all of that stuff Pace knows too. They're Treasure Hunters.  
(reminder to herself)  
Grail Hunters, they like being called grail hunters.

MUR

Pace would do anything to keep Melichi safe.

BETTY

And because you and Melichi are like this  
(she crosses her fingers)  
That automatically means Pace is supposed to keep you safe too?

MUR

We don't know who these people are.

BETTY

You don't, because you aren't on the ground in the community. These are good young men.

MUR

I'm not saying they aren't good people, I'm saying I don't know them.

BETTY

Well I do. And I trust them. And you trust me.

Betty sets Mur's plate down on the table, it's the only one with a slice of toast.

NETRA

You're both right...it's not an argument.

MUR / BETTY

That's not the point.

Netra's eyes bulge, back to minding her business.

PEACH

Should we go over the highway routes.

MUR

No. Right now we're all overthinking.

Mur fires a look off at Betty, who throws her hands up like "no fight here."

As a new conversation brews, Mur forces herself to eat...but she notices PEACH IS QUIETER THAN USUAL, like she's got something to say but now's not the time.

OFF OF MUR'S SUSPICION.

**INT. MAIN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - JUST AFTER DINNER,** Betty's in a tall, cushioned, throne-like chair that's probably twenty plus years old. Television's on, baseball game and she's very into it.

**KITCHEN - SAME,** Mur and Netra take care of the dishes. Peach enters, flicking her hands dry after a wash.

MUR (CONT'D)

You.

PEACH

Hm?

MUR

You stopped talking at dinner. I don't think I've ever seen you chew with your mouth closed.

PEACH

You're funny.

Peach joins them at the sink.

PEACH (CONT'D)

I didn't want to bring this up earlier because of the whole Pace thing, but did you talk to Marie before we left?

MUR

No, I did see her in the hall.

Mur turns to give Peach her undivided attention.

MUR (CONT'D)

What did she say to you?

AS PEACH TELLS IT.

**INT. LUMEN HQ - MELICHI'S LAIR - EARLIER THAT DAY**, it's MARIE THE BLONDE MEDIC (from the hallway earlier) and MEDIC TWO, arriving by elevator to FLOOR M.

MEDIC TWO holds the elevator doors open while Marie strolls at a casual pace—with a duffle bag of supplies, into **MELICHI'S LAIR - CONTINUOUS**. She plants the bag and sets up near by Melichi's body: stand, clear medical hosing, IV bag and NEEDLE...

And she's got this creepy feeling, like *someone's watching her from corners*. It makes her pause, but she dares not look.

Her eyes on MELICHI'S BRUISE, in worse condition than it was by the time Mur left, (as this is earlier in the day, and Mur won't visit Melichi until after this moment.)

The proximity of NEEDLE-TO-BRUISE makes Marie very nervous. She sews this needle through his skin and into a vein with the caution of a mother self-administering life-saving fluids to a very sick and delicate child.

Her reward is relief and a fine layer of temple sweat, she wipes it away while taping the needle down gently.

And THE FEELING of being watched again, which causes her to pack her things and jet from the space. Her paranoia manifesting into a presence observing her as she escapes.

This presence must be [Melichi]...

WATCHING MARIE.

**INT. MAIN HOUSE - KITCHEN**, back to the tail end of Peach relaying Marie's encounter.

PEACH

Is he dangerous?

MUR

No. Not Melichi. Never. But I can't get near him anymore and the only person that can...

She trails, because she doesn't want to put that truth out into the world.

MUR (CONT'D)

Our best case scenario is that I'm here, in Georgia, whenever his condition gets to the point where he can't keep a headset on long enough to stop us from getting to him

PEACH

Before Kullenbusey does.

Mur nods.

NETRA

You never told us...what are you going to do with the seeds?

MUR

Put him to sleep, hopefully for a long while.

PEACH

Starting to sound like it'll be any day now.

MUR

Any minute now.

And in the **LIVING ROOM - SAME**, Betty's glasses are reflecting the television's contents: someone's being wheeled off of the astro on a stretcher.

BETTY

Bless his heart.

OFF THE REFLECTION.

**INT. MAIN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER**, earthy pinch pleat curtains drawn, warm lamp light. This place is every-grandmother's-house USA.

Betty sleeping in her big, worn, non-reclining chair. Peach awake at one end of a large couch, invested in late night television. Netra sleeping at the opposite end of the same couch, [codex] by her side.

**INT. MAIN HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME**, Mur looks out of the back facing window: CABIN A's lights go out.

**LIVING ROOM - NEXT**, Mur waking Netra to send her off to bed, drawing Betty's blanket back unto her shoulders.

MUR

(at Netra) Can I borrow your LS2?

Peach hands over her sunglasses.

**EXT. GILMORE INN - RIVER TRAIL - NIGHT**, Peach's sunglasses transport Mur into LumenScape on her walk. At night, endless cascading hanging moss is home to [flickering insects] and more [dully glowing flora].

Mur's under-lit by the [plant life] below, looks like she's on a mission through a world that's lost the battle between good and pyro.

Approaching a **EXT. NURSERY - SAME**, built around a large tree, backed by a river alive with all sorts of [LumenScape marine creatures]. The same, foreboding dark fantasy atmosphere flourishing here but less threatening.

**INT. GILMORE INN - NURSERY - NIGHT**, Mur enters the [bioluminescent lit] nursery, weaves through tables of potted plants, arriving at the tree.

She fixates on a **MUSHROOM PATCH**: the wooden flooring's designed to avoid disturbing fruiting bodies of a mycelium network beneath the soil at the tree base. Some mushrooms growing up along the tree trunk.

Many of the mushrooms TRAMPLED TO PIECES.

Mur kneels, pushes her fingertips around in the mushroom salad, separates [mushroom bits] from mushroom bits. CLOSER ON HER FINGERS and *chunks of [fungus] lightly magnetized to their identical chunks of fungus.*

Mur contemplates.

BLACK.

**EXT. CLEVELAND, OHIO - 1996, 5:00PM EST**, The city's in first phase of its daily wind-down cycle.

**EXT. ABANDONED MALL - LATE AFTERNOON - NEXT**, the mall's frontal facade feels like a labyrinth entrance: desolate parking lot spotted with lamp posts sunken into the cracked black asphalt, resembling boat oars floating in a black sea.

Shards of glass remaining from giant windows make the once 80's-fabulous entrance look more like the face of a snaggletoothed has-been, but never clownish. [Fat Vines] spawning from its dark throat.

YOUNG SCREAMS OF TERROR ring out, no one to witness FOUR TEENS fearfully sprinting from the mall's mouth.

A [GIANT COBRA], traits slightly off (like someone's idea of a cobra) slithering nightmarishly quick, hissing and snapping at the heels of Nike Air Max 90s, stops at parking lot's edge like a land stuck serpentine guardian.

[MELICHI] steps just outside of the entrance to watch the fleeing adventure party. He twirls a [BANGLE with a SNAKE HEAD carve into it] around his wrist, then slips back into the abandoned mall.

The [Giant Cobra] slithers by him, into the darkness.

**INT. ABANDONED MALL - NEXT**, desolate and rundown, the atmosphere here is similar to a haunted ship: [glowing flora] illuminating moss and fungus lined walls, reed-skewered concrete slabs scattered around.

If the [UNDEAD BLACK BEAR], *lingering in the shadows* just paces ahead, can't kill you...the heart attack from it **LUNGING AT YOU FROM THE SHADOWS**—causing you to fall and rip your neck open on a jagged block of concrete absolutely will.

[Melichi], hands in his pockets, walks, steps on, and weaves beneath obstacles.

He looks OVER THE RAILING unto the SECOND AND THIRD FLOORS. The second almost entirely a maze where fallen support beams have become bridges while twisted iron rods make easier paths unreachable.

The Third floor seemingly less hazardous communal space built around a [thriving green tree and flower bed] set inside of a round, raised plot.

[Melichi] leaps the banister from top floor to **THIRD FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**, landing like a two pound sandbag. He scans for adoration..."anybody see that?"...

Then strolls into the eerie, gutted JC PENNY.

AN OVERHEAD VIEW of the layout, the [Giant Cobra] slithering down to the third floor in this same moment.

[MELICHI]

Stay.

The [Giant Cobra] coils around the stone centerpiece.

**JC PENNY - NEXT**, a continuation of haunted and foreboding. Dark, save for a [BUBBLING FOUNTAIN of cerulean water] TRICKLING at the far end of the decaying department store delivering all of the light here.

FOLLOWING [MELICHI] as he approaches the fountain— [HUMANOID EYES] spring open in the surrounding darkness.

They are [The Watchers].

[Melichi] stops at the [fountain], picks up a [large mug] and scoops himself a drink of the [shimmering blue "water"']. *The consistency is slightly thicker than water, but you wouldn't call it anything BUT water.*

He CHUGS, then sputters and COUGHS on his big gulp, slumping to sit at the [fountain's edge]. Loosening his [tie] as if he can't breathe proper.

[The Watchers'] relentless stares creeping toward him.

OLIBANUM'S FAINT VOICE penetrates [Melichi's] thoughts.

[MELICHI]

One second.

OLIBANUM

(through Melichi's "ears")

Melichi. MELICHI.

[Melichi] rises, tipping the [mug] over, CONTENTS SPILLING into a [cerulean puddle]—jogs to the entrance with [The Watchers] hunting him to the edge of darkness.

**THIRD FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**, [Melichi] bursts from the darkness—short on breath, and leaps into flight.

THROUGH THE DINGY SKYLIGHT.

**LUMEN HQ - MELICHI'S - SAME BUT 3:10PM PST**, Olibanum's here with a print of the Cleveland Daily in hand. He paces near Melichi's unconscious body, grumbling about his "inability to catch a break"--

[Melichi] drops through the ceiling, lands behind Olibanum. Spooks the shit out of him.

OLI

You're killing me with the flying man, just come back. You don't have to fly all the way here.

[MELICHI]  
I said I was on my way.

OLI  
You mumbled, you didn't say anything.

[MELICHI]  
Chill. What's going on?

OLI  
Third time in Cleveland in three months.  
You have kids getting injured treasuring  
hunting in abandoned malls.

[MELICHI]  
(minor correction) Grail Hunting.

OLI  
I don't care what they're called!

[MELICHI]  
You should? Everything I do on my side  
bolsters the work you're doing.

OLI  
You're gonna do it again, you're gonna  
get someone hurt really bad.

[MELICHI]  
It's fine. I'll seal the mall off.

OLI  
You know how hard those accidents are to  
clean up. Work with me man.

[MELICHI] / MELICHI  
I said it's fine!

**Yes, [Melichi] and his real body shout simultaneously.**

Oli's shocked stiff. [Melichi] takes a seat on the floor  
beside his own body.

OLI  
Are you okay?

He kneels beside [Melichi]—something catching his eye on  
the way down--

[MELICHI]  
Dose is wearing off, makes me irritable  
that's all.



Oli rises in the middle of [Melichi's] explanation, LOOKING DOWN AT real Melichi's purple arm band—no...the purple bruise wrapped around his arm like a band, spotty and deepening. Growing.

OLI

What did you do man.

[Melichi] stands again, more pissed than horrified when he sees the bruising.

OLI (CONT'D)

Did the Medic do this?

[MELICHI]

No. It's fine.

OLIBANUM

You told me this wasn't a problem.

[Melichi] and Melichi (real body) simultaneously descend into a violent coughing fit, every little action mirrored by the other but slightly out of sync, prompting Olibanum into action.

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

Kay time to come back.

[MELICHI]

Don't!

Olibanum pulls the headset off of Melichi's head: [Melichi's] actions slow to a crawl, then [he] disintegrates into rays of [bright light] beaming upward through the ceiling, into the sky by extension.

Melichi, real body, still COUGHING UP LUNGS. Oli GRABS MELICHI'S OPPOSITE ARM to help him sit up.

Melichi faints.

OLI

Melichi. HEY.

He confirms Melichi's pulse, lays him back down and dashes to the voice panel near the door.

Oli jabs the emergency button.

OLI (CONT'D)

(into the com) I need medics down here RIGHT now. And Wesley, send Wes.

Oli bounds back to Melichi's side and--

OLI (CONT'D)

Ho...ly...shit.

Melichi's opposite arm has a deep bruise in the shape of a handprint, precisely where Oli recently grasped.

A security guard, MARIE THE MEDIC and MEDIC TWO enter, followed by a suspiciously neat, twenty something, overly proud squire type named WESLEY.

WESLEY

What's going on?

OLI

Clear the parking lot for an ambulance, we need to move him VERY carefully.

Wesley turns to deliver marching orders.

OLI (CONT'D)

Wes! I'm not done. THINK. Please.

MARIE THE MEDIC walkies for a stretcher while helping MEDIC TWO on vitals.

WESLEY

Sorry.

OLI

Call Kullenbusey, brief him thoroughly then make sure the jet's fueled and ready. Okay, now you can go.

Wesley takes his time leaving.

OLI (CONT'D)

(at himself) I offered to build that guy an entire hospital, *right* here...freaking...

(to Wesley)

Wait! Ahh. Uhm. I'm forgetting something. Someone.

WESLEY

Dean. He's got a fencing match today.

Oli points at Wes.

OLI

WES. *Thinking!* Cancel lovingly for me.

Wesley finally makes a break for the door.

Marie looks OVER HER SHOULDER, she can see elevator doors closing, numbers lighting up, her cue to stand.

MARIE

They're lagging on the stretcher. I'm going to give them a hand.

OLI

Is he okay?

MEDIC TWO

He's stable but the faster he gets to a hospital the better. Any hospital.

OLI

Okay go.

Marie makes eye contact with Medic Two, dashes out.

**INT. LUMEN HQ - HALLWAY - NEXT**, Marie slips into employee traffic, clocks Wesley vanishing through a door at the opposite end of the hall. Stretch team up ahead--

MARIE

Double check the frame, you cannot risk the patient moving around much. Please, be extremely careful strapping him in.

They nod, pausing to give the stretcher a check as Marie jogs into the **LUMEN HQ - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS**, cleaving through through a handful of employees just returning from lunch.

**EXT. LUMEN HQ - CAMPUS COURTYARD - NEXT**, She power walks to a nearby payphone, drops coins and dials from heart.

OPERATOR VOICE

Please enter your message.

Marie dials "N O W". POUND.

HANGS THE RECEIVER.

**EXT. JESUP, GA - WAREHOUSE - 5:30PM EST**, Peach scrunched down in the Bronco's driver seat, studying that GEORGIA HIGHWAY MAP: numbers and notes penned all over the roadways, HIGHLIGHTED TRAVEL TIMES written in ink.

Netra's in the passenger seat, her [book] open to an imitation of Peach's map. Netra's version features little "random" icons beside the highways instead. Checkpoints.

Peach looks OUT OF THE WINDOW at Mur in her blue blazer, signature magenta ribbon in her hair, currently being talked at by a round man in a cowboy hat.

PEACH

I bet he's talking her ear all the way off and she can't get away from him.

NETRA

Probably. How is it in LA?

PEACH

It's fun but not as off the chain as Atlanta. You want to go to LA?

NETRA

No. I'm just curious that's all.

PEACH

Yes you do.

Netra SMILES.

IN THE DISTANCE—Mur checks her Star-tac, apologizes and quickly trots toward the Bronco.

PEACH (CONT'D)

Look now she's running away.

NETRA

Nuh uhn!

Netra leans to look out of Peach's window, sure enough Mur's running...while texting with an urgency that doubles after she presses send.

Peach's LAUGH fades with the realization that something bad is happening.

PEACH

Jump in the back Netra.

Peach fires up the Bronco as Netra leaps into the back.

THE BRONCO swerves backward up to Mur with a frame rocking stop, she hops into the passenger seat.

PEACH (CONT'D)

Right now?

MUR

Right now.

Mur slams the door, shuddering with dread.

NETRA

Don't worry Mom.

Netra places her hand on Mur's shoulder to help absorb some of her dread.

Peach cranks the Bronco into D1.

PEELS OFF.

**LUMEN HQ - LOBBY - NEXT**, Marie trucks back in. The scene is Melichi being carefully wheeled out, Oli at his side.

Oli weaves into Marie's path. She stops.

OLI

Hey, where did you go?

MARIE

To make sure the lot's clear for the ambulance.

She directs his attention THROUGH GLASS DOORS, an ambulance just pulling up. Oli steps out of her way, she jumps in to help wheel Melichi out.

Wesley jogs up with an update.

WESLEY

Kullenbusey wants us to bring him now.

OLI

What exactly did he say?

WESLEY

"Please bring him to me immediately, there is no time to waste." I was just putting it in my own words.

OLI

(over Wes) That... WIERDO. I swear.

WESLEY

We can follow the ambulance straight to the airport, smooth flight puts us in Atlanta three and a half hours max. I'll cancel your plans for this evening.

*Something* hits Olibanum like a damned lightning bolt.

OLIBANUM

Where is Mur.

WESLEY

Jetted off to Atlanta yesterday,  
remember?

Oli's unable to contain his own neural meltdown.

OLIBANUM

RIGHT--of course. Everything is so  
chaotic right now.

Oli jogs for the exit.

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

See if you can find her and let her know  
what happened, ask her where she is then  
let me know immediately. Call Kullenbusey  
back and tell him Mur is in Georgia. And  
DON'T cancel my plans with Dean. Get him  
on the plane. He gets a kick out of this  
shit more than fencing anyway.

Wesley—wearing the expression of a young man being kept  
out of the loop (but knows way more than assumed), bounds  
to the front desk and picks up the receiver.

DIALS A NUMBER.

**EXT. GILMORE INN - 5:45PM EST**, Bronco skidding up to the  
dusty curb, the women barely giving it time to rock to a  
stop before they're out and marching toward the house.  
Mur breaks off, destination: trail head.

MUR

You know what to do, like we practiced.

**INT. MAIN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**, Netra and Peach shower  
Betty with quick hugs in passing.

BETTY

Everything okay?

PEACH

It's time to go Miss Betty.

BETTY

Oh! Alright let me just get my bag.

Betty scurries from kitchen to living room.

**EXT. GILMORE INN - NURSERY TRAIL - NEXT**, Mur is mid-  
stride, on a solo side quest while sending a TEXT  
MESSAGE: PACE WHERE ARE YOU? NOW.

Stress all over her face, Mur pockets her phone and removes her little vial. She drips three large drops from the dropper onto her tongue, then slides on her custom LumenScape 2 headset: thick black frames featuring a tiny, stubby antennae and a little dial. The LUMEN logo stamped in bright magenta. Business fun.

**From now on, until specified otherwise, Mur will be wearing these glasses. They will become iconic.**

The [LumenScape] layer materializes atop the real world, real time, adding a [shimmer] to the day.

This feels like HOPE.

Mur removes, from the other pocket, a small, frumpy [leather sack] with an abnormally long [leather tie].

**So, italicized nouns in brackets [like this] indicate that something exists on both the *Phantom Layer* and the *Real Layer* simultaneously. [One] & One = [One]**

**In this case, the sack has a REAL WORLD LEATHER COUNTER PART and a [PHANTOM LAYER "LEATHER" COUNTER PART]. The natural "magnetic" effect of these [TWIN LEATHER SACKS] existing in the same space is the basis of LumenCraft.**

**This leather sack is useful for storing [phantom items] that only exist in LumenScape. Otherwise, you'd have to hold that item in your hand while inside of a moving vehicle or lose it forever.**

**Likewise, if the [leather sack] existing only on the phantom layer were not attached to a real world counter part, it would also "fall through" the vehicle's floor.**

She opens the leather sack, dumping its contents: [ashes] from a [decayed plant scattering in the wind].

**INT. GILMORE INN - PRIVATE NURSERY - NEXT, Mur at the MUSHROOM PATCH digging into the soil with a HAND SHOVEL.**

THE REAL WORLD HOLE is just that, a hole in the ground, but also reveals [**three glowing gumball sized, almond shaped "SEEDS"**] attached to the [*fungus mycelium*].

**Because of the "layering of another layer on top of the real world" effect, it would be like seeing another "layer" where the spores have yet to be unearthed.**

Mur swaps her current shovel for another [*HAND SHOVEL*], comprised of a [*handle*] and [*shovel head*], and very carefully CHISELS the [*spores*] out of the [*soil*] one at a time, dropping them into her special [*leather sack*] at the same rate.

She drops her tools, scoops over the hole.

HAULS ASS.

**INT. BRONCO REAR CABIN - NEXT**, Netra (LUMEN X FILA coat on) and Peach (now in nursing scrubs complete with LANIARD) help Mur (wearing a low crew neck t-shirt) into the back of the Bronco and into an adult-sized crate with a LUMEN label on the side. A furniture dolly beside it.

Mur ties the [*leather sack*] to the leather belt holding up her jeans. In the next moment, she's on her Star-Tac CLICKING DOWN TO "PACE" AND CALLING OUT...instantly getting his voice mail. Mur claps the Star-Tac closed.

Netra looks rather concerned for her mother.

Betty shuffles out of the main house with an ATLANTA BRAVES 1995 World Series Champions t-shirt on and big ol' purse under her arm, approaching the Bronco--

MUR / BETTY (CONT'D)

Mama / Oh right, we need them boys.

*Mur will NEVER live this down. EVER.*

Betty does an about-face and scurries around the house to the **EXT. CAMPGROUNDS - CONTINUOUS**, coming to a stop at the top of the slope, overlooking the cabins in her navy Atlanta Braves T-shirt.

BETTY (CONT'D)

HEY YOU TWO. LET'S ROCK!

She "jogs" away, trusting her call was plenty enough.

CABIN A...surrounded by a thin yet spookily effective layer of ground fog from the nearby river—with its opened door and nightmarishly dark interior forebodingly juxtaposed against the waning daylight hour, feels like a den of demons and Betty has summoned them from slumber.

**INT. BRONCO - SAME**, MUR'S PHONE buzzing with an incoming call. Netra has the crate's top in her hands.



NETRA

I put a new enchantment on your bangle  
and left it in the kitchen. It's next to  
Olibanum's Gift.

Mur, still focused on her phone until it stops buzzing.

NETRA (CONT'D)

Mom. The bangle. Don't forget it.

MUR

I'll remember.

Netra doubts that.

Mur removes from her pocket the vial of liquid. She  
prepares to hand it over, along with her Star-Tac, yet  
not without final reminders to Peach and Netra.

MUR (CONT'D)

Watch your speed, don't give the cops any  
reason to even look at you.

(to Netra)

No headsets in the car.

Netra rolls her eyes.

PEACH

Quicktrip, just before the 20.

MUR

Straight to the hospital.

Mur hands Netra her Star-Tac and vial.

MUR (CONT'D)

Tell me if anyone calls.

She takes one FINAL LOOK DOWN at the [*leather sack*]  
attached to her belt, then lays back, adjusting her  
custom LS2 glasses so they're tight on her face.

Netra grabs the top of the crate, ready to seal Mur in.

MUR (CONT'D)

No headsets.

NETRA

Mom! Breathe...breathe.

Mur BREATHES as Netra slides the crate's cover on.

**INSIDE OF THE CRATE**, air holes plenty and enough room to  
move her arms, but still cramped and claustrophobic.

Mur calms her POUNDING HEART then reaches up to the glasses on her face, HER FINGER ROLLING THE DIAL from the word "OFF" to "THE MAX": magenta light floods her eyes.

FADE FROM MAGENTA.

**EXT. GILMORE INN - CAMPGROUNDS - NEXT**, gliding low and on the heels of the TWO CABIN GUESTS as they seep from the cabin's darkness, trudging over cobblestone and up the slope toward the main house.

**R.K, early twenties former high school tight end (the football players that form the frontline) turned "treasure hunter"**. He's wearing a RED FLORAL PRINT BUTTON UP and a fresh, large bandaid on his cheek bone. A firm nylon backpack on his shoulder.

The boy walking at his side—**two feet shorter twelve year old little brother type in a Cub Scouts shirt and hat, and headphones is AUDIO**. Jeans cuffed, exposing his ankles being swallowed whole by hand-me-down high-tops.

His sleeve long enough to just barely obscure a **bracelet made of tiny dice with flames carved into them**.

These two are not brothers but move as if they are.

R.K pulls a repurposed pill bottle with stickers on it from his pocket: little rectangle-shaped "candies" rattle inside. He shakes one into his giant palm, breaks it in half and gives the other half to Audio.

The boys pop their candies into their mouths and CRUNCH down on them—CAR TIRES SCREECHING up ahead inject urgency into their intro moment.

**Sometimes we will refer to R.K and Audio as "THE BOYS".**

**EXT. GILMORE INN - OUT FRONT - CONTINUOUS**, Bronco's right where it slid up in a rush earlier.

The boys turn the corner in time to see, running toward the Bronco as well, **AN EIGHTEEN YEAR OLD MUR in a right rush to give orders**.

She's wearing what "feels" like a roller derby uniform (Black with Sunset accents). Matching Pumas, long black socks, starched cargo shorts held up by a wide belt to which the [leather sack] is bound. Her jacket's got an OUROBOROS pin on it (snake eating its own tail, like an infinite sign). **Custom LS2 with the stubby antennae** on her face looks more retro than ever.

She examines the boys as a stranger should, their chaotic energy reminding her that they are wild cards.

MUR

You're driving right? Jesup airport.

R.K

You're the daughter?

MUR

Yes. Please we have to go.

Mur grabs the top of the Bronco and pendulum's through the opened window like a pro. Audio mimics her, succeeds.

R.K

(at Audio) stop showing off.

R.K makes his way around back of the Bronco, heading to the other side but on the way he examines the NORMAL LOOKING PLATES. Noticing in the process—through the rear window: that adult-sized crate.

OFF OF HIS SUSPICION.

**INT. BRONCO - CONTINUOUS**, R.K plops into the driver's seat to find keys waiting in the ignition. He yanks his door closed.

Audio, staring at Mur over the side of the passenger seat, extends his hand for a shake. Clearly baiting her.

R.K (CONT'D)

That's Audio, I'm R.K like arcade without the D.

MUR

Nice to meet you. My mother told you I'm paying you, right?

R.K

Oooh yeah.

MUR

And double checking, you're also comfortable with wearing your headset at all times, knowing full well that it's against the law to drive with any active headset in a moving car?

R.K

I'm allergic to reset timers. Forgot I had my headset on until you said something. And he sleeps with his on.

MUR

Great. We're on a very tight schedule.

R.K CRANKS THE BRONCO.

**INT. MAIN HOUSE - HALLWAY**, as if warned by the RUMBLING ENGINE outside, the [fennex cub] bounds from a bedroom and into the hallway, into **THE KITCHEN** and onto a counter where Olibanum's Gift sits. It's still wrapped.

SET BESIDE OLIBANUM'S GIFT is a bangle with a flying boot icon carved into it, just like Netra's illustration.

Barely a second to admire it before the hurried [fennex cub] snatches it from the counter top, leaps from kitchen wall to **LIVING ROOM** floor and springs THROUGH A CLOSED WINDOW (like a ghost fox) to **EXT. MAIN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**—*landing with the bangle dangling from its mouth.*

It sprints toward the moving Bronco and leaps **INT. BRONCO** via Audio's opened window, bounding seat to seat then pouncing Mur in the back seat.

The surprise causes R.K to pump the break—Audio rocks violently into the dash, falling into the floorboards.

R.K

What was that?

In this moment, Mur takes the bangle and pops it onto her wrist before either boys can focus on it.

MUR

(quietly) Crap. Crap crap crap.

**From now on we'll refer to the [FENNEX CUB] as [LYRIC].**

R.K

Is that your fennex?

MUR

Yes. It comes with us. We need to go.

R.K

Crazy.

Audio climbs back into the seat, only to be rocked right into the floorboards again by R.K's lead foot on the gas pedal, **THE TIRES** peeling off at the concrete but not without first giving us the chance to notice the green flashing light of a tracking device hidden deep in the SUV's under-carriage.

**INT. BRONCO - JESUP ROAD - NEXT**, five minutes later at best. Flickering shadows from the sea of Georgia pines zipping by on either side. R.K's attention is drawn to Audio—who's twisted in his seat, looking into the back.

R.K checks the rear view: Mur looking out of the window, worried as hell. [Lyric] looking forward, as if it doesn't notice Audio exists.

R.K (CONT'D)

You look familiar...you're a pop star right?

Mur doesn't answer, which is her answer.

R.K (CONT'D)

Are we transporting something rare and expensive in that crate back there?

Mur, still avoiding eye contact.

R.K (CONT'D)

I'm not a grail thief.

**By now we should understand that GRAIL is the word LumenScape enthusiasts use in place of TREASURE.**

MUR

(genuine, small laugh) That's exactly what a grail thief would say.

[Lyric] pounces Mur, disrupting her demeanor...or just Mur's imagination.

MUR (CONT'D)

(more polite) I was told ahead of time that you were both grail hunters.

R.K

If you're a rare collector you've probably heard of us. Arcade, Audio? We're Phantom Arcade With Audio.

MUR

Is that your...band name?

R.K

No that's the label we sell grails under. We were some of the first down here in Atlanta but we're trying to get to LA so we can really grow our brand. We sell only the rarest. After this job, though.

R.K initiates a fist bump with Audio.

MUR

Happy to help. And sorry to be so curt.

R.K

It's cool, you're on a mission.

(lead in he's been looking for)

Miss Betty made it sound like you were older and kind of famous or something.

MUR

What did she tell you about me?

R.K's going to say "nothing" but before he can fully answer...THE TREE LINE GIVES WAY to a few miles of open, sprawling land and the DISTANT **JESUP AIRPORT - SAME: TWO MEN IN SUITS** hover near a BLACK GSXR (SPEED BIKE, 1993) and an ICE WHITE BMW SEDAN (1995), both parked on the airport's apron right in front of Mur's private jet.

The plane's staircase already deployed.

Mur leans into the reveal, nervousness visibly spiking.

MUR (CONT'D)

Please get me to that plane as fast as you can.

R.K GUNS IT.

**EXT. AIRPORT APRON - MUR'S PRIVATE JET - SAME**, only one other jet here where it concerns this story. MUR'S PILOT stumbles down the staircase, ass plants but quickly pops up to run back to the hangar.

A thirty-at-best, black haired and lean olympian stuffed into a deep charcoal suit quickly descends the staircase:

**The ill/fondly spoken of PACE. He exudes the demeanor of a loyal mobster debt collector with a lightning quick bite that could become in-discriminatory at any moment.**

Sand camouflage tactical gloves on his hands are a curveball but feel natural. A sapphire earring pops with his suit.

Pace walks past the other two suits, toward the Bronco prowling ever closer a distance away.

**INT. BRONCO - SAME**, settling into a parked position. Mur climbs over the back of Audio's seat to pull herself out of his window and to her feet.

MUR (CONT'D)  
 Stay here, touch nothing.  
 (barking at [Lyric])  
 Stay!

[Lyric] sits back in the seat like a lil' human.

Mur looks confused by the beasts obedient response, but turns to walk away from the Bronco.

R.K  
 Bodyguards, private jet, rare LumenScape  
 pet. She's definitely a pop star in LA.

R.K leans into his daydream, supported by the wheel.

R.K (CONT'D)  
 We're gonna be selling to people like  
 that soon. Just watch.

Audio nods. That sounds awesome.

**EXT. AIRPORT APRON - SAME**, an invisible line's been drawn across a battleground of black asphalt and [fantastic flora]. Pace leading his two buddies on one side, blocking Mur's plane as she approaches solo.

MUR  
 You put me in a really bad spot Pace.

PACE  
 I understand Miss Mur. I apologize.

MUR  
 We can talk about it later, but right now  
 we should get on that plane and head to  
 Atlanta. Please.

PACE  
 Just a few minutes.

MUR  
 I don't have a few minutes.

PACE  
 We know.

From the rear waistband of her cargo shorts Mur extracts a TACTICAL SLINGSHOT: smoke grey, militant. Precise.

The suits, stalking toward Mur, whip out, *FUTURISTIC [DEFORMED HATCHETS]* with large, laser-sharp blades.

THE HATCHET BROTHERS.

**IMPORTANT:** These [*Deformed Hatchets*] have a [**HATCHET BLADE**] and a real—likely weighted, handle. Meaning the blade is not "real" but the handle is. Handle & [*Deformed Blade*] = [*Deformed Hatchet*]

**BRONCO - SAME**, R.K sits up into the intensity of Mur's moment, then LOOKS BACK at the large ominous crate.

Audio puts his game down, observes.

[Lyric], paws on the window, worry animating on its brow.

R.K

I don't think those are her bodyguards.

BARK, from the back, R.K looks over his shoulder, [Lyric] lookin' right at him to confirm he's right.

Another long glance into the back of the cabin, at THE SUSPICIOUS CRATE.

R.K (CONT'D)

They're about to rob her. They're grail thieves.

Audio drops his game, grabs the door handle, GRINNING.

R.K's BIG FISTS yanking his backpack open.

One hand diving inside, exposing for the first time [*another bag*] within, just barely noticeable but there if you look: he extracts a dirty, heavy, leather-wrapped sword hilt without a blade attached to it.

Instead, it has what looks like [a carrying handle] where the blade should be.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE SWORD HILT and its [second handle: gorgeous gold infused cursive phrases carved into it].

R.K (CONT'D)

Let's smash their headsets and take their shit.

Audio NOD NODS, face mutated into the most pyro wide-eyed and opened mouthed smile, he's nearly salivating.

FINALLY, REAL DANGER.

**AIRPORT APRON - SAME**, Mur's attention snaps to the thuds of slamming car doors behind, ready to admonish. Halted by a vision:



R.K holding the sword hilt in one fist, THE [SECOND HANDLE] IN THE OTHER.

**ONE SECOND LONG VFX SHOT, EXTREMELY DETAILED:** R.K ripcords the second handle away from the hilt, a [BLACK BLADE WITH GOLD CURSIVE SCRAWLED ON IT (about five and a half feet long and a foot wide) springs into existence. GHASTLY GOLD CURSIVE looks like it's coming from within the black blade's form].

**This sword is called [ONYX GHOST], or [ONYX] for short.**

R.K hoists his [Onyx Ghost] out to his side. It looks heavy and he wields it as if it were, suggesting the handle has real weight.

A shocked look on Mur's face: she recognizes that sword.

R.K (CONT'D)  
("BARK") DROP THE HEADSETS, BACK UP.

WITNESSING THIS MOMENT FROM HIGH ABOVE, and only getting the "real world" perspective: Mur in a stand off with Pace and the Hatchet Brothers. All of their LumenScape headsets are visible. But, as R.K and Audio stroll up behind Mur to "back her up"--

**BATTLE STRIP (VFX):** the LumenScape layer materializes over the real world and the headsets feather away as if they were figments of everyone's imagination.

Additional [wild flora growth] crawling the edges of the airport's asphalt surfaces, framing the apron and runway. All well maintained despite not being "real".

**This is called BATTLE STRIP ("strip" referring to the defined area of a fencing match). These sequences are shot like a cinematic FIGHT NIGHT BOXING MATCH. While detailed on the page, the edit will be twice as fast with interspersed slow-mo to highlight fight-altering actions...meaning the fights last two minutes at best.**

It feels like R.K and Audio have officially joined Mur's quest party.

Pace melts into a fighting stance after seeing [onyx].

PACE  
(let's go) Yo...

On cue, Hatchet Brothers rush by Mur, targeting the boys.

Mur whirls on her heels to cut them off—three vicious red streaks nearly claw her entire face off.

Pace, [long, red, visibly man-made claws] now jut from the knuckles of his tactical gloves, crackling with life.

PACE (CONT'D)

You were better off solo.

Mur—slingshot aimed at Pace's face, pulls back on the sling: a rapidly expanding [pellet of pure energy] instantly materializes between her knuckle and thumb.

She lets rip, the [pellet] emitting a sharp whistle and a neon tracer in its wake, zipping toward PACE'S FACE. He deflects with his claws, SPARKING HIM BLIND--

He barely squints.

AUDIO "bounces" away from the incoming [*Hatchet Assault*], almost always launching from one point to the other instead of running about. Coupled with his small size, he's gazelle quick--

And leaping backward into the path of R.K SWINGING HIS ENORMOUS SWORD MORE LIKE A RIGHT HOOK before we even see it. AUDIO DUCKS IN THE KNICK OF TIME, black blade narrowly missing the Hatchet Brother's noses. R.K's tank-like presence and menacing slash drawing their focus away from Audio.

R.K is whip-fast despite the weight and size of his [sword], **parrying** Blue's [hatchet]...

**The term "parry" means to deflect an opponents incoming attack, by weapon or physical means.**

...retaliating with a lunge meant to impale. The Hatchet Brothers are equally matched: Blue sidesteps the lunge, Red attacks from the side—FORCING R.K TO PARRY while walking backward TOWARD THE WHITE BMW.

THERE'S AUDIO the pyro cub scout, releasing the air from the BMW'S back tire with a house key...the front tire already flat. As the fight draws nearer, he sneaks around the rear and toward the black GSXR, about to DROP KICK IT—he stops. Backs away to reassess what he should do about this beautiful bike. THINKING HARD.

R.K swings his mighty [sword] into Blue's [hatchet]. He's fully expecting to decimate his opponents weapon—BLUE WHIRLS AROUND AT THE LAST MOMENT, chopping deftly into R.K's right, bare bicep with the laser sharp [hatchet blade]: **120FPS later it CONNECTS**, slicing flesh open--

LODGING IN R.K'S BEEFY ARM, blood spilling from a new and very real gash that *shocks the shit out of Blue* just long enough for R.K to kick him away...leaving the [hatchet] wedged in his bicep.

R.K goes to remove the [weapon], but RED IMMEDIATELY ENTERS THE FRAY—slamming [blades] with R.K, pinning him against the BMW's doors.

R.K

HEY! A LITTLE HELP HERE?!

AUDIO, fixated on the task of releasing the air from the tire of the speed bike—TILTING AND FALLING on him...but he catches it, struggling to lay it gently. Scouts honor.

NEARBY, MUR AND PACE exchanging blows: Mur moving with an elf-like grace and speed, dodging or initiating while rapid-firing her slingshot. Pace is just as fast.

Mur's got just a second to look toward R.K, now seeing the [hatchet] buried in his arm, her eyes bulge in her skull at this unexpected bloody revelation.

MUR

(deeply worried) Oh no oh no no no

Mur **dives into her [leather sack]**, pulling from it a pellet and insta-firing it at Pace's face. He blocks with his palm this time, THE FATTY SOUND OF DENSE IRON IMPACTING GLOVED FLESH. It stops him in his tracks, shaking the pain from his hand. BLOOD DRIPPING down his wrist.

He was not expecting to be struck by a REAL OBJECT.

Mur breaks toward R.K, firing at PACE AND RED alternatively. BOTH LEAPING away from the streaking projectiles (RED FREEING R.K FROM THE SIDE OF THE BMW), Pace dodging more like a struck cat.

RED AND BLUE, are back with a MELEE ASSAULT OF LUNGING FISTS AND [HATCHET] ATTACKS, to which R.K responds with more urgency than ever—tearing the [hatchet] from his arm to use as a second weapon to parry.

MUR SLIDES into R.K's shadow out of nowhere and matches his scramble backward--

MUR (CONT'D)

Block me!

She places her palms to his spine and bows her head—  
MUR'S HANDS emit a glow visible in the shadow of R.K.'s  
towering form.

HIS BICEP GASH clots and seals, as if the damage is being  
"reversed", reducing the size of the gash.

**She is healing R.K. He's too busy defending to notice.**

Mur's healing is interrupted by PACE VAULTING IN to help  
the brothers. Seemingly suspended in mid-air above R.K.,  
[red claws] poised to slash him to ribbons--

FINALLY, BIKE TIRE FLATTENED, AUDIO TURNS to acknowledge  
the madness ten long feet away—**AND TELEPORTS IN A BLUR--**

**RAMPING TO 120FPS** as Audio reappears right in front of  
Pace with a kick that knocks the clawed assassin out of  
mid-air. In this slowed down moment, the surprise from  
Audio literally blinking into the fight from ten feet  
away GIVES R.K AN OPENING to knock Red's [hatchet] out of  
his hand, sending it flying backward, [ONYX GHOST] READY  
TO CARVE THEM IN HALF WITH A FOLLOW UP SWING.

The incoming threat of a [titanic black blade] causes Red  
and Blue to leap back, BLURRING OUT OF EXISTENCE—  
APPEARING NEAR THE BMW just in time for Blue to catch  
Red's flying [hatchet]. **(BACK OUT OF SLOW MO)**.

Pace tumbles back and away, barely toes-to-the-ground  
before he's forced to narrowly dodge a leaping left and  
right hook from his shorter, fast-as-hell teen assailant.

THE RIGHT LEAPING HOOK from Audio half an inch from  
Pace's brow, a miss—NO, Pace's invisible LS2 headset is  
gently tapped up but not off.

**We're reminded that the fighters can see each other's  
headsets, and the LumenScape layer.**

Pace's headset has been Mur and Audio's target all along.

MUR (CONT'D)

Get him off his feet!

On a dime drop, nimble little Audio corkscrews down into  
a razor sharp low spinning heel kick. Pace leaps right  
over the leg, practically warned by MUR—who's got her  
slingshot aimed and COCKED WITH A PELLET. She releases--

THE PELLET slams into PACE'S TEMPLE/PACE'S LS2 headset,  
shards of thick plastic spraying into the air, **BLASTING  
IT OFF OF HIS HEAD at 120FPS**: his [crackling red claws]  
vanish at the same rate.

Pace's LS2 is knocked visible, clattering across the concrete at the same time that his [Sapphire Earring] is popped into the air.

**It's as if the [Pace's Sapphire Earring] no longer has an [ear] to exist on, so it's sent flying. Free to pick up for anyone that might be walking by with a headset on.**

AUDIO dives in to snatch [Pace's Sapphire Earring] out of the air. He fist pumps. RARE GRAIL ACQUIRED.

Mur runs by Pace—from her POV Pace's [red claws] remain, suggesting that his [clawed gloves] still exist whether he's connected to LumenScape or not.

The Hatchet Brothers turn attentions to Mur, ready to give chase--

PACE

It doesn't matter.

They cease pursuit, watching Mur sprint up the staircase to her private jet.

**INT. MUR'S JET - COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS**, controls have been smashed just enough to ground the plane.

Mur backs out, sparing no time for shock.

**INT. AIRPORT APRON - NEXT**, our boys stand twenty feet away from Pace and pals. R.K ignoring his still bloody but smaller gash.

BLUE

(to R.K) You mind?

R.K wags the [*hatchet*].

R.K

How much you think I can sell it for?

Blue smirks.

PACE

You're very calm having just been sliced open by a hatchet that doesn't exist.

R.K

Why are you calm after watching someone getting sliced open by a hatchet that doesn't exist?

PACE

You're avoiding my question.

R.K

Yours wasn't a question.

Mur is back on the apron and in a hurry, joins the boys. All three retreat to the Bronco without fully turning their backs on Pace.

R.K (CONT'D)

You're supposed to get on the plane.

MUR

It's not gonna fly.

**LEAVING THE BATTLE STRIP FROM AN OVERHEAD SHOT.**

Mur jumps into the back of the Bronco where a nervous and bouncy [Lyric] waits.

Audio and R.K linger outside of the big Bronco doors, R.K with his backpack, tossing the [hatchet] in and pulling a knot of medical gauze out.

R.K

The deal was driving, I would've liked to have avoided getting cut today.

MUR

That wasn't supposed to happen and I told you to stay in the car.

R.K

We thought they were grail thieves. It wouldn't be the first time someone's tried to rob us since we've been here.

MUR

Take me to Atlanta, I'll double the money. Cash.

Not enough to budge the boys.

MUR (CONT'D)

And a supply of that drug you two've been messing with.

Audio and R.K look to each other for confirmation on the choice they've both already made.

This moment is their final opportunity to return to a version of this world they have already mastered in a sense. Because they know that going any further will expand it in life-threatening and mind-altering fashion.

**AIRPORT APRON - SAME,** Pace examines his BROKEN LS2.

Blue and Red join Pace, who's pulling off his BLOODY GLOVE: the gross bruise in his palm is bleeding, as bad as a fresh paintball wound.

PACE

What is she saying?

HATCHET TWO

Too far away, want us to follow?

Pace points to the BMW, sideways leaning thanks to two flat passenger-side tires, then observing R.K and Audio hopping into the Bronco. It u-turns and speeds off.

PACE

We slowed her down for now. That was our job.

(on a thought)

There's probably an air pump in the hangar.

Red takes a brisk walk to the BMW, drops into the driver's seat and starts the car. Door still hanging open, he steers it carefully and very slowly toward the hangar. Flat tires groaning from the weight.

BLUE

Sorry back there, the little one, I didn't know he could feint.

**FEINTING in this world is a "glitch" where, by moving extremely fast and with utter intent, you temporarily "disappear" on the LumenScape layer. But in the real world, you'd see a "feinting" person moving very fast.**

Pace, pulling his glove back on, turns to scoop up his headset now.

PACE

We paid the price for assumptions, that's all. After the tires I'd like you two to handle something for me.

Blue follows the limping BMW to the hangar as Pace retrieves his TRASHED HEADSET: a little DIGITAL COUNTER inside of the vizor labeled RECONNECT: 01:32...01:31...

Pace frowns, another limitation on top of his own physical and emotional barriers.

OFF OF HIS SILENCE.

**THE BRONCO SPEEDS BENEATH A HIGHWAY SIGN: 341,** headed for the sunset backed cityscape of Atlanta in the distance.

**INT. BRONCO - SAME**, R.K bandaging his arm with one hand, steering with the other. Audio is knees in seat again, staring back at Mur.

R.K

(at Audio) Cops will see you before they see the headset.

Audio flops down and resumes his handheld gameplay.

R.K (CONT'D)

How do you know about LSX?

MUR

LSX?

R.K

The drug?

MUR

No, before all of that. Who are you two and how did you meet my mother?

R.K

Miss Betty? MANNNNNNN--

**EXT. JESUP STRIP MALL - NIGHT**, feels like "The Mall" as a chill spot in the 90s, but future retro. A small slice of society but a direct reflection of how LumenScape's become so woven into the fabric that users and non-users have seamless interactions while eating, drinking, and laughing in groups.

**EXT. ARCADE - SAME**, where a crowd's drawn around AUDIO—dirty like he's been playing outside all day and boredly kicking ass on a fighting game cabinet (KILLER INSTINCT).

He actively scans for a challenge, not one in sight.

**EXT. NOODLE SHOP - SAME**, in the parking lot with a healthy line.

R.K, sweaty and dirty, [*backpack*] dangling from his shoulder and [*Onyx Ghost*] buckled to a holster between his shoulders, steps up to the counter—BEHIND WHICH two people serve food.

The NOODLE CHEF, a retired 80s hong kong action star type, leans on the counter, looking down at R.K from his raised position. He gives R.K the twice over.

NOODLE CHEF

Try the spicy beef. Good stuff after a day out hunting.



R.K.'s been read for a Grail Hunter.

R.K

Can I have two of those?

Noodle Chef fills two styrofoam containers with Spicy Beef Ramen, drops an extra egg in both, then seals and bags them tightly. He hands the package off to R.K.

R.K (CONT'D)

What do I owe you for the extra protein?

NOODLE CHEF

Going on a break right now, step around back. Would love to see what you're selling.

Noodle Chef removes his apron and hangs it on his shoulder, the SECOND EMPLOYEE takes his position.

R.K shimmies out of line with his dinner, [*Onyx Ghost*] strapped to his back drawing eyes and WHISPERS from people nearby as he makes his way around the food stand.

He's also got the attention of FOUR AMIGOS (punks thugs and thieving types). The BOSS AMIGO has a dingy [*mirror-like broadsword*] mounted to his hip.

**EXT. NOODLE SHOP - BACK - NEXT**, lit by an almost perfectly sunset hue'd security lamp, R.K and Noodle Chef stand at a small wooden table and chairs meant for employee breaks.

ON THE TABLE a [beautiful jade statue], a [RING OF VINES WITH AN INSET GEM], and a handful of [fantastic short swords] of various and intricate design.

**This is a look at the grail-centered COMMERCE. [Grails] are treasures that can be found on the [Phantom Layer].**

**They range from common-to-rare, with rare being the type of treasure that might require you to go on a treasure hunt in caves filled with typically terrifying [beasts].**

**Thus the term GRAIL HUNTER was born. They're the Indiana Joneses in this alternate modern world and the profession is rising in popularity as people become more and more willing to fork over large sums of real cash to own them.**

Noodle Chef picks up the [ring] and examines it.

R.K

Sorry, I sold all the really good stuff.

NOODLE CHEF

My wife loves the jewelry. Hates real jewelry, but loves this not-all-there stuff. Go figure.

He eyes [*Onyx Ghost*] on R.K.'s back.

NOODLE CHEF (CONT'D)

How much for the sword?

R.K

You don't want to know.

NOODLE CHEF

You and your tall friend are kind of the talk around this little nook right now.

R.K

Who us? Nah. (Do say more)

NOODLE CHEF

Big grail hunters coming down from the city, getting through the mazes out in the catacombs and taking the big treasure. People get jealous. I'd be careful showing that sword off.

R.K snaps [*Onyx*] off of his back, hands it over to Noodle Chef—the WEIGHTED HANDLE surprising him.

NOODLE CHEF (CONT'D)

...this thing weighs fifteen pounds easy.

He's trying to twirl it, but the weight makes his actions look sluggish and slow. Still looks kinda cool.

R.K

Twenty. It took us four months, non-stop, to get to that sword. I spent more money staying at the Inn than I have on rent. And that's with the nice old lady discount.

Noodle Chef tosses [*Onyx*] back to R.K as if testing him.

R.K catches it, spins it around like it's made of plywood and SNAPS IT into the back holster between his shoulder blades. The blade HUMS. SUCH FLAIR.

R.K (CONT'D)

I'm definitely showing this off.

Noodle Chef grins.

NOODLE CHEF

I'm guessing you didn't spend three months trying to get this one.

He holds up the [ring].

R.K

Two days but injuries were sustained.

NOODLE CHEF

Gotta respect the hard work.

Noodle Chef extracts a wad of bills from his pocket and leafs through more than five twenties.

R.K

Ring for the noodles?

NOODLE CHEF

Must be my lucky day.

Noodle Chef pockets his money while pulling a [small box] from another pocket. He drops the [ring] inside.

R.K stuffs his [grails] into his [backpack] and swings it over his shoulder.

R.K

You were a hunter?

NOODLE CHEF

Never, but always wanted to be. Used to spar with my little girl, but she surpassed me. I'm better off in the kitchen. Think I'll just open up a little mentorship program where I feed the youth good food and take 'em out on little grail hunts.

R.K

That sounds tight.

NOODLE CHEF

You seem like you're headed somewhere.

R.K

Yeah, this was the last big one here.  
(motioning to [Onyx])  
We're gonna chill by the river before we both head off to LA.

NOODLE CHEF

Big move.

He wraps his chef's apron back around his waist.

NOODLE CHEF (CONT'D)

Good luck to you friend. Stop by for another round on me if you're ever back down this way.

R.K

Thanks for the food.

R.K and Noodle Chef part ways.

**EXT. ARCADE - NEXT**, R.K WHISTLES for Audio, who leaves the arcade machine and skip-runs off to R.K—unknowingly drawing BETTY'S attention in the process.

She's parked on a bench outside of the busy arcade, smiling, people watching. A happy place.

She watches the boys slip into a nearby alleyway...followed by those FOUR AMIGOS. Those punks, thugs, and thieving types.

Betty's smile drops.

BETTY

Oh shoot. Well.

She pushes to her feet.

**EXT. ALLEYWAY - SAME**, following the Four Amigos who track their unsuspecting prey.

BOSS AMIGO

Yo! Let me get that sword.

R.K looks back with an incredulous confusion on his face, instantly clocking the danger from tone alone.

R.K

(sigh) Not for sale man. Sorry.

BOSS AMIGO

Who said anything about buying?

Boss Amigo draws his [mirror-like broadsword] then WHIPS IT—the blade fragmenting into jagged segments, forming a [MIRROR WHIP] now three times as long. It [SLASHES R.K'S SKULL INTO HEMISPHERE'S]. His CHEEK SLICED OPEN in the real world.

The pain causes R.K's head to WHIP TO THE SIDE, incidentally hiding the injury from his attackers—AS EVERYTHING GOES BLACK.

But only for one long second. We're invited back into the real world with a fuzzy view of things / R.K lifts his headset off of his face, blinking away the haze of sudden disconnection. His cheek gash is very real.

INSIDE OF HIS HEADSET: 02:38, 02:37...

He pushes the headset onto his forehead instead, where it clings. As if it were made to be worn on the forehead securely in times like these.

**NO LONGER SEEING THE PHANTOM LAYER, CUTTING BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN REAL WORLD AND MIXED REALITY (LumenScape).**

Seeing the Four Amigos' headsets for the first time, four different designs instill a sense of "main character" in each of them, even if they're following a typical thief gang hierarchy. They're like a GUILD OF THIEVING AMIGOS.

ONE OF THE FOUR

Let us see your inventory.

BOSS AMIGO

We want those headsets too!

Audio looks back to R.K, makes a PINCHING MOTION with his hand then sprints ahead.

R.K

Hey take the food! THE FOOD!

R.K's cheek bleeding, [*backpack*] bouncing around on his shoulder—noodle containers QUAKING IN THE BAG, then SLOSHING in the bag. Unsealed. R.K attempts to save them by gently tossing the bag into a NEAT PILE OF TRASH BAGS.

It bursts, dinner spilling all over bags and concrete.

R.K (CONT'D)

(to himself) I'm gonna kill every last one of you.

Now free of his burden, R.K's speed doubles. For his large size he is damned fast.

His chasers TRAMPLE SPICY NOODLES and beef, falling behind R.K by one second—long enough for R.K to vanish around a sharp corner.

R.K pulls his [backpack] off in the same instance that he rounds that sharp corner and into a **COBBLESTONE BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS**: preserved old cobblestone lends a European look to an alcove-style back alley shared by a number of two story buildings, an iron walkway with twisted safety rails built into some of the buildings for second story access. Battle Arena.

THE FOUR AMIGOS turn the corner...completely missing AUDIO—WHO'S SPRAWLED AND CLINGING to the underside of the iron walkway above like the weirdo Cub Scout he is.

He watches them dash under one after another into the **COBBLESTONE BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS, BATTLE STRIP**: drone's-eye view of cobble terrain as the LumenScape layer materializes over it all.

R.K awaiting them on the other side of this designated battle strip with his LS2 visible on his forehead, [Onyx Ghost] in one hand and Backpack in the other. This stance is an open invitation to come and try it.

The Four Amigos fan out as they stalk toward R.K, Boss Amigo's three cronies revealing their weapons: [AXE], [KATANA], and the FOURTH AMIGO has nothing.

BOSS AMIGO

We're not giving you time to reconnect.  
Drop all of your shit and move on.

R.K

(to Fourth Amigo) I see. You're the guy that has to hold everything your friends steal huh?

Boss Amigo brandishes the [Mirror Whip].

R.K (CONT'D)

No way you got that rare on your own. And the sword thing doesn't fit you at all.

BOSS AMIGO

This idiot's gonna fight blindfolded.

R.K

Yeah...

R.K points to THE pyro CUB SCOUT EMERGING from the deep dark alleyway behind them, causing the four to look over their shoulders. *Pincer Attack*.

R.K (CONT'D)

And so are you.

BOSS AMIGO, distracted by Audio's entrance, gets SLAPPED IN THE FACE with a flying [backpack]—all tangled around his head and blinding him, prompting his crew to descend upon R.K.

(FULL CIRCLE TO THE BATTLE FROM PAGE ONE, NOW WITH NEW POINTS OF VIEW ON WHAT'S HAPPENING.)

R.K.'s [onyx ghost] collides with the [katana], their silhouettes filling in the blanks of a fencing inspired [sword] fight that's being taken rather seriously, even if Katana Amigo is severely out classed.

Smack dab in the middle of a BLADE TO BLADE EXCHANGE, the CLASH FLASHES US **OUT OF LumenScape** to the real world--

The swords are not really there, just the handles and headsets...but KATANA AMIGO's [katana] hilt is still being ripped right out of his hand by the "impact".

Shock on his face suggests this has never happened before AND that it shouldn't be possible at all.

Before he can recover from surprise, R.K dashes toward him and LUNGES, extra inertia from the twenty pound sword hilt adding demonic speed to his attack—ramming his "invisible" sword into Katana Amigo's chest.

**THIS IS FEINTING, BUT LET'S REPLAY DIFFERENT POVS:**

**REPLAY, FROM THE LumenScape SIDE:** R.K VANISHES IN A BLUR OF MUTED COLOR, reappears [RAMMING HIS HUGE SWORD] through KATANA AMIGO'S CHEST.

**BACK TO THE REAL WORLD AND REPLAYING ONCE MORE FROM A WIDE PROFILE:** R.K using the inertia from his obscenely heavy handle to aid in his lunge (an act that would probably rip a lesser man's shoulder from the socket). He stops about two feet short of Katana Amigo—who lurches from "invisible" impact--

R.K lifts Katana Amigo several inches off the ground with his "invisible sword", his sneakers dangling.

**This looks spooky, like Katana Amigo's possessed or being lifted by a ghost.**

Katana Amigo grabs at the "invisible blade", can touch it, but can't do anything about it.

R.K (CONT'D)  
Hurts like hell doesn't it?

**IN LumenScape**, Katana Amigo impaled by [onyx] and being pulled back to earth by gravity—splitting him in half. No gore but his eyes roll back into his skull, suggesting this feels like an UNBEARABLE, NAUSEATING ACHE.

R.K rips [Onyx Ghost] out of Katana Amigo's chest, spins into BOSS AMIGO'S incoming [Mirror Whip] attack: [Onyx Ghost] decimates the [segmented, whip-like blade] on impact, shattering it into a million glittering pieces--

The shimmering mirror fragments **GLITTER US BACK OUT OF LumenScape**, just in time to witness R.K whirling his his heavy sword handle from six to three o'clock...ramming the invisible blade into Boss Amigo's rib cage, **SLIDING BACK INTO LumenScape VIEW** as it impales him from right to left flank.

Boss Amigo lurches, doubles over and VOMITS onto the cobblestone. Winded and trying to parse what just happened, shadows from the continuing brawl dance around on his face, he pulls his SHIRT UP.

The flesh where R.K "impaled" him is deeply bruised.

[Shattered Mirror Whip] lying useless on the ground, Boss Amigo reaches behind his back and pulls forth a GLOCK 19. *The fantasy is over.* He leaps to his feet.

Audio, watching from the mouth of the alley, is suddenly elated. Finally...*a challenge.*

A HEADSET CLATTERS TO THE GROUND, reconnect timer displays 9:58...9:57...R.K stomps it to pieces.

Then—sensing Boss Amigo's presence approaching from behind, spins around to strike and comes nose-to-barrel with the Glock 19.

Although Boss Amigo has the gun, he is SHAKING.

BOSS AMIGO

Just give me the sword and we'll go away.

R.K

Oof. You should have lead with that.

AUDIO raises his right hand, **the [bracelet of little fire dice]** rattling around his wrist, [glowing red hot and hotter by the second]. As he brings his OPENED PALM UP BESIDE HIS FACE, a [red marbled 10-sided die] warps into existence, floating effortlessly within his palm as if it were tethered to his movements.



HIS FINGERTIPS rotate the die and RAPIDLY TAP ITS NUMBERED FACES in sequence: 4386423. He CLAMPS HIS PALM around the [die], it blinks transparent red.

BOSS AMIGO [EXPLODES INTO FLAMES] "on cue", WAILING. He drops the Glock and stumbles backward SCREAMING, making every attempt to pat [the blaze] out.

Audio's twisted grin lit red from by the [pulsing red die] in his fist.

R.K looks down on Boss Amigo **from his very real world point of view**, watching him slump to his hands and knees...skin peeling from an invisible blaze.

**IN LumenScape**, from Audio's POV...the [flames] dissipate revealing sunburnt skin, some areas peeling.

Three of the Four Amigos—beaten, confused and fear-filled, dash by Audio, who's walking toward the Glock on the ground.

He kicks it to Boss Amigo, who's face is moist with tears that are likely intensifying his burning agony.

BOSS AMIGO

My skin.

R.K

You know how hard it is to find a Whip Blade? I didn't want to break it.

R.K's LS2 CHIMES, he pulls it back down over his eyes, returning himself to LumenScape.

R.K fans his [*Onyx Ghost*] in front of Boss Amigo's miserable face. Before he wouldn't have flinched, now he cowers. A new kind of pain burned into his memories.

BOSS AMIGO

I'm sorry man just let me go.

R.K

Next time we let you burn to death.

Boss Amigo crawls around Audio, stumbles into a sprint back from whence he came--

Running right by Betty, who's standing deep in the alleyway that lead them all here. Undetected.

Audio turns to acknowledge the sensation of a voyeur nearby—Betty is gone.

The boys stash broken headsets, [weapons], and their hard earned CASH in R.K's [backpack].

R.K picks up the shattered [mirror whip], tests it out: it still has a few segments of blades left.

R.K (CONT'D)

Can still get a few hundred for this.

SHOVES IT INTO HIS BAG.

**EXT. GILMORE INN - NIGHT**, the sound of a PLASTIC BAG SHAKING before R.K and Audio step up to the dusty curb, passing Gilmore Inn's wooden sign (NO VACANCY). Continuing down the walkway toward **THE CABIN GROUNDS - NEXT**, where Betty sits at THE FOUNTAIN, "minding her own business".

R.K (CONT'D)

Hi Miss Betty.

BETTY

Is that the one ya'll been after?

R.K points to the sword on his back.

R.K

Don't ambush us for it.

BETTY

Oh I don't want that. But glad you finally got it. Ya'll were getting beat up pretty bad for a few months there.

R.K

Yeah. Barely made it home with dinner this time.

R.K motions to his recently sliced cheek.

BETTY

Home you said? This place?

Audio takes advantage of R.K's distracted state and LEAPS UP to snatch [Onyx Ghost] from its back holster. He dashes away before R.K can chase.

R.K

That's a THOUSAND DOLLAR HANDLE YO. You better not ruin it!

R.K sits down on the fountain edge with Betty.

R.K (CONT'D)

We've stayed in a few different inns but this one feels like home already...I'm kind of sad we're leaving.

BETTY

Well you can always come back when you've made it big. Hopefully the Inn will be bigger, too. Big changes coming.

Audio's in his own world, focused on his sword form. The boy moves lightning quick, looking much like a professional fencer with a giant ass sword.

R.K sits down on the fountain edge with Betty.

R.K

True. When we do come back, hopefully it'll be by choice, not necessity.

BETTY

What do you mean by that?

R.K

We have just enough to leave, but I don't know what's gonna happen when we get there. Hopefully I can sell this thing off fast.

Motioning toward the [onyx].

BETTY

Just enough is kind of scary. I reckon you'll get more than a little for that sword, though.

R.K

I wish we could keep more of what we find. Feels like it'll be worth even more some day, but we have places to go.

(answering her question)

So yeah, a little more money would definitely make a big big difference. That's why we go after the big stuff. We always end up finding small grails to sell, that keeps us going in between.

Betty pushes her frames to the bridge of her nose and rises to her feet.

BETTY

Well let me get you a band-aid for that cut you have, and ya'll can use the washer for your clothes.

Her glasses catch the [glowing LumenScape terrain], the reflection making it look even more dangerous, dark.

BETTY (CONT'D)

But first let me ask you...

(she leans in)

How is your driving?

OFF OF BETTY'S GLASSES.

**INT. BRONCO - NEXT**, BACK ON THE ROAD TRIP WITH MUR at the tail end of that story and Mur's feeling a bit relieved, also concerned.

[Lyric], little fennex cub, is still stirred from the fight on the airport apron. Mur tries to calm the beast.

MUR

I told her that place was getting too wild for her to hang around at.

R.K

Now your turn: if you knew we were going to get hurt, why didn't you warn us?

MUR

First...I told you to stay in the car. Second, you weren't supposed to be here at all. You guys are wild cards, how would I know you're on something which reminds me...why on EARTH would you walk around on LSX when any old idiot could jump you for your inventory and seriously hurt you?

R.K

You can't get to any of the good grails if you aren't willing to break a leg on LSX...or die honestly. And it takes a while to wear off. We're fine.

Something about being told "we're fine" endears her to the boys fully now. She relaxes.

R.K (CONT'D)

The claw guy was supposed to be your driver huh?

MUR

Yes...Pace was a beta tester at Lumen and he's a good friend...of a good friend. He was supposed to be my driver as well. I don't know why I didn't see that coming.

R.K

What do you know about LSX?

Mur jumps at an opportunity to explain LSX, despite R.K's pre-existing knowledge. [Lyric] hops on her shoulder.

Audio stares at [Lyric], who ignores him.

MUR

Everyone has their analogy for it but here's my version. I think of LumenScape in levels: level one, you can see and have limited interaction with LumenScape. You can touch the exotic flowers and you pick up light loose objects bits of wood, catch insects, and yes if you find a loose flower, you can even pick that up. But you can't pull the flowers from soil and rearrange them.

R.K is aware of this, but continues listening to Mur's grave yet enthusiastic sales pitch.

MUR (CONT'D)

The second level of immersion is with a Pro LS2 and the mandatory haptic suit included that lets you "feel LumenScape". If that setup, you can actually pick the LumenScape flowers, you can also hold larger, "heavier" objects. Say like catching a large animal. You still couldn't walk across a bridge that only exists in LumenScape because it's not real. Add LSX into the mix at level two and you get level three. That's when you're able to walk across a bridge that only exists in LumenScape.

R.K

Run across. You can't walk across or you'll sink. You have to run across it. Feels like a tiny thousand needles being jammed into your funny bone, and your entire body is one big funny bone target.

Audio SHIVERS so hard his eyes roll back into his skull, suggesting he absolutely *hates* that feeling.

MUR

You'll also get hurt if anything in LumenScape attacks you. Like the monster you had to kill on the other side of the fake bridge you had to run across to get to that sword.

R.K's is shocked at the accuracy of Mur's description on how he acquired his magnificent sword, [*Onyx Ghost*].

MUR (CONT'D)

Or like the four grail thieves you had to fend off. But they weren't on LSX, just you two. They're lucky otherwise HE would have burned that guy to death.

Audio pretends to stare out of the window, counting cars.

R.K

That guy had a gun, he got what was coming to him. Besides we knew they weren't on it, there are easy giveaways...those guys at the airport, I couldn't tell at all. And they were fast as hell, faster than Pro Fencers.

MUR

That's because they're always on it.

Audio whirls around, giving Mur his undivided attention.

MUR (CONT'D)

If you two are at level three when you're on LSX, then Pace's with his modified headset allows him to reach level four on LSX. It'd be like going from 100 to 1000. He lives his life at level four. He's faster and stronger on top of being in the best shape of his life.

Audio mock faints from excitement, *he's found his next real challenge.*

R.K

But we beat him.

MUR

I don't think he was prepared for you two...meaning he had no idea if you were on LSX, so he was pulling punches.

Audio agrees with her, but R.K waves that off, no facts here please.

R.K

So his headset goes to the max?

MUR

No, but his beta headset does. He treats that thing like a tattered old lucky t-shirt and barely wears it.

R.K

I get it now. You take LSX too and your headset goes to the max. That's why you're faster than they are.

MUR

Something like that. Yeah.

R.K

Something like...well if he's at level four but you're faster, then what else could level five be?

The haze of realization gradually overtakes R.K's face. It's like he's just learned the world's biggest secret.

He goes to pull his headset up...

MUR

Don't take your headset off or you won't be able to see or hear me until it reconnects!

R.K secures the steering wheel, accidentally jerking the vehicle out of lane but correcting fast. Someone HONKS.

R.K

(into the rear view)

You're not really here.

**AUDIO**

(puberty deep voice) DUH. Man FINALLY.

[Mur] and [Lyric] snap to the sound of Audio's voice.

R.K

Oh okay, here we go. Know it all. If you knew why didn't YOU say something?

[MUR] / [LYRIC]

You can talk??? / >\_>???

AUDIO

Nobody said I couldn't talk. And I didn't want to spoil it for either of you.

R.K

Okay smart ass, why does she have a headset on then?

Audio flips around, waiting for [Mur] to come clean. [Mur] removes her LS2, it makes no difference on or off.

[MUR]

Fake.

AUDIO

It's made of LumenCraft, it exists on both sides so if anyone knocks the headset off

[MUR]

They'll think I'm a real person.

AUDIO

That's how she shot homeboy's eyes out. Some of her slingshot bullet thingies are LumenCraft too.

[Mur] pulls a [PELLET] from her [leather sack] and holds it out to them both. It hums with a [dual sort of existence], and isn't entirely iron.

R.K

(challenging) Then ALL LumenScape rules apply to you. Which means you're like a ghost but have to abide by gravity.

[MUR]

Lumen refers to it as "specter" but yes, you can say ghost and yes, all of the rules apply to me.

**From here on, the term SPECTER (defined as an apparition or copied image of something) will specifically refer to a person being [fully in LumenScape].**

R.K

Okay so you can walk through walls but that means you fall through floors...then you shouldn't be able to sit in the car...

Sitting up into his own realization, then looking around, DOWN AT THE [Glossy Custom Steering Wheel].

R.K (CONT'D)

This is all LumenCraft?

[MUR]

Everything but the top.

[Mur], smiling, raises her hand through the long sunroof.

**EXT. [BRONCO] - SAME,** her exposed [fingers] wiggling against the wind.



R.K

Now that I think about it...your  
LumenScape pitch sounds really familiar.

R.K clocks [Mur] in the rear view, her smile dwindles as she pulls her hand back down.

R.K (CONT'D)

I'll take you to Atlanta, you give us the SUV and the LSX stash you mentioned. Keep the money, and we'll pretend like we never heard or saw anything. Deal?

[MUR]

Are you sure you're up for this?

R.K

You seem like a customer that pays promptly so yes, yes I am sure.

[MUR]

I'm counting on someone finding us soon.

R.K

Who that Pace guy?

[Mur's] too slow to correct R.K's assumption before he's on to another one.

R.K (CONT'D)

You think we can't beat him?

[MUR]

Not if he's serious next time, and you don't have to. Just get me there on time.

R.K

Pssh. How long do we have?

[MUR]

Just under an hour at most.

R.K

Bet.

R.K plunges his sneaker into the gas pedal, [Lyric] leaps INTO THE BACK with Mur.

**EXT. HIGHWAY 241 - SAME**, the [Bronco] charges forth, overtaking another car.

[MUR] (O.S.)

We can't get there if you get arrested for reckless driving.

**EXT. LUMEN CORPORATE JET - SAME**, currently streamlining through clouds over Middle America, while inside of the **LUMEN CORPORATE JET - SAME**, Marie seated near the front.

She turns in her seat to look toward the **BACK OF THE PLANE**, Oli is seated and on a wired phone. Melichi—still unconscious, on oxygen and a heart rate monitor (*BEEP*), reclines on a seat-to-bed deal next to Oli--

HIS BRUISES are slightly worse.

OLI  
(worrisome) Thanks for reaching out Pace.  
I'll update you soon.

Wesley approaches as Oli hangs the phone.

WESLEY  
Anything I can do?

Melichi stirs to life, tugging at his oxygen mask.

MELICHI  
Where are we?

WESLEY  
Less than an hour out from Atlanta, a helicopter's waiting to transport us to the hospital helipad.

OLI  
We're taking you to Doctor Kullenbusey.

MELICHI  
Oh...that.

Oli waves Wesley away.

MELICHI (CONT'D)  
(to Oli) You mind? Right pocket.

Oli digs a VIAL out of Melichi's pocket, it looks similar to Mur's vial. He drips three clear drops of liquid on Melichi's tongue, then rises to sift through a cabinet.

He pulls from the cabinet a chunky beta headset.

OLI  
Tell me something man. Anything.

Oli gently works the headset down over Melichi's face then clicks it on. Magenta light floods Melichi's eyes.

[Melichi] appears near the front of the plane, right beside a ten year old boy with a bowl cut and chunky glasses. This is DEAN, a deceptively innocent looking youth that appears to have gotten lost on his way back to the cartoon he's originally from.

DEAN

Hi Uncle Melichi.

[Melichi] draws Dean's eyes to a [BANGLE] orbiting around Dean's little wrist: it features a bear's head carved into its surface.

[MELICHI]

How's training with Ursa been?

DEAN

Pretty good!

[MELICHI]

Here. Hold onto Lilith for me.

[Melichi] pulls his [SNAKE BANGLE] off and gives it to Dean. It's like Christmas morning for the boy as he slips it around his wrist. It orbits Dean's wrist just same as the [Bear Bangle]. Two versions of the same type of item.

OLI

Don't summon that on the plane Dean. I'm not kidding.

Dean fires a LOOK BACK AT OLI, the boy's eyes are soulless, uncanny valley. Like he's a living doll.

OLI (CONT'D)

And don't give me that look either!

Dean spins back into his seat and examines his new toy, eyes returning to their sparkling, childlike state.

[Melichi] walks by Wesley on his way to the back of the plane, Wesley avoids eye contact.

[MELICHI]

Wes.

WESLEY

Mr. Chantalangsy.

Oli follows [Melichi] with his eyes.

[MELICHI]

Why are you looking at me like that?

OLI

You told me it was fine, like you always do. Everything's fine.

[MELICHI]

Where is Mur?

OLI

Pace met up with her at her private jet. In Georgia. He said she was "specter".

That makes [Melichi] uneasy.

OLI (CONT'D)

What are you two planning?

[MELICHI]

Pace is doing me a favor.

OLI

Not Pace. Mur. You and Mur.

[Melichi] hunts for an excuse.

OLI (CONT'D)

She happens to be in Georgia at the same time your condition goes from "fine" to critical and I get the impression Pace was waiting for Mur at her jet.

[MELICHI]

It's between me and her.

OLI

What is she doing Melichi?

[MELICHI]

I don't know, that's what Pace was there to find out.

He's lying.

OLIBANUM

Melichi, what is Mur planning?

[MELICHI]

I don't know.

OLIBANUM

Then why are you scared?

[MELICHI]

Why are you?

OLIBANUM

Because whatever it is, it's important enough for Mur to do things that Mur doesn't do. Like risking being caught SPECTER in a dense city like Atlanta. She's not alone either. She's got Grail Hunters with her and Pace said one of them has YOUR sword. The kind of tabloid shit storm we'll have to sail through if they talk to anyone about what they've seen while they're with her.

[Melichi] turns to leave the one-sided inquisition.

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

Hey!

Oli lurches to grab real Melichi's arm, yet in that instance both [Melichis]—his real body and his specter form, grab Oli's wrist in the same spot. Overlapping with each other.

[MELICHI]

Don't.

OLIBANUM

We're not done talking.

[MELICHI]

I'm going to find Mur.

Wesley appears, as if on cue, chunky laptop in hand. His presence prompts [Melichi] to drop Oli's wrist.

WESLEY

She's probably on Georgia 341.

Wesley extends his BLOCKY LAPTOP to Olibanum, screen-facing: there's a map of Georgia Highways with tables of data beneath it, *the same paths that Peach's map had penned off*.

**The tables are route timings for multiple trips, with the shortest times for each row in red text.**

OLI

What am I looking at?

WESLEY

I had Mur's Bronco bugged in Georgia, this is the data.

Oli's eyes damned-near pop out of his skull.

OLI

Miss Smith. NEVER Mur to you and sorry,  
WHAT?

[Melichi] looms over Wesley, intent undefined.

[MELICHI]

Very quintessential Wesley of you. Makes  
me wonder...why are you still on our  
payroll?

(leaning in with a smile)

Do you know?

OLI

Leave it alone. Go and find Mur.

[Melichi] shoves by Wesley while looking down on him,  
makes his way to the plane's sealed exit.

He walks right through it.

**EXT. [LUMEN CORPORATE JET] - SAME**, against the warmth of  
sunset sky, [Melichi] plummets through one fluffy cloud  
and the next beneath until he hits open sky.

Eyes closed and concentrating, a [SPHERE OF BLUE LIGHT]  
materializes beneath his falling form, descending toward  
the patchwork of rural land below at the same rapid rate  
as [Melichi].

From the ground, out in the backyard of a tiny little  
home, a little FLOWER GIRL IN AN EQUALLY SMALL HAPTIC  
SUIT, [exotic flower] in one hand, [*hand shovel*] like  
Mur's in the other. Planting the [flower] in a BIG, well-  
maintained [fantasy garden], nearly the size of her home.

A sound in the distance (that can only be described as an  
ORGANIC YET SYNTHETIC WOBBLING OF STEEL) draws the flower  
girl's attention to the sky to witness [Melichi]'s  
humanoid form being swallowed up by a SPORADICALLY  
ROTATING HOLLOW TRIANGLE.

It folds itself out of existence.

The flower girl stares at empty sky for some time, then  
goes right back to potting her plant.

FLOWER GIRL

No thank you.

**INT. [LUMEN CORPORATE JET] - SAME**, Oli studies Wesley's  
nefariously acquired map and the very detailed data on  
Mur's routes.

They all lead right into Atlanta, specifically EMORY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, right in the middle of the city.

WESLEY

I thought something was up when Mr. Chantalangsy sent Pace to Georgia.

Olibanum sets the laptop aside, rises, and stalks right up to Wesley. He's not much taller but feels like he's towering over him.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

And Mrs. Smith's been doing speed runs on all of the highways for months, like in preparation of a moment like this. Maybe he's in on it as well.

Olibanum's roiling, almost volcanic silence makes Wesley rethink that last part.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

Maybe he's not.

OLIBANUM

You bugged my partner's vehicle, months ago, without anyone telling or asking you to do so?

WESLEY

Yeah. I was thinking.

OLIBANUM

THINKING ABOUT WHAT?!

Wesley SHRINKS.

WESLEY

You're always keeping tabs on Mur's whereabouts and

OLIBANUM

She had a HEART ATTACK recently!

Wesley looks like...something isn't adding up with Olibanum's response.

OLI

My partner, my LONG TIME FRIEND, who I FOUNDED this company with, who gave YOU a job, had a HEART ATTACK. We couldn't find her for weeks right before it happened. So of course I'm "keeping tabs" on Mur's whereabouts. But you're thinking right?

This snaps Wesley back into defense mode.

OLIBANUM

Do you know what kind of fire and  
brimstone would rain down on this entire  
ship if even one person saw Mur's vehicle  
being BUGGED by my ASSISTANT? THINKING?!  
What if she KNOWS it's bugged?! What  
position does that put us in?!

WESLEY

I'm sorry.

OLIBANUM

I'd let Melichi throw you from this plane  
if I cared any less for your apology.

Olibanum reclaims his seat.

WESLEY

Can I have my laptop back?

Olibanum deadeyes Wesley, who returns to his seat with  
his tail tucked between his legs.

Dean twists out of his seat, moves to Wesley and sets his  
hand upon the hurt fella's shoulder.

DEAN

It's okay to cry.

Wesley goes from sniffing to soft sobbing.

DEAN (CONT'D)

(SNIFFLE) Don't cry too much or you'll  
make me cry too.

Dean's tears bubble over. Full on empath.

Olibanum sits with the laptop and all of its data, he'd  
be lying if he said it was useless.

OLI

Specter...in Atlanta.

ON THE MAP, he connects with his fingertip the highways  
to their routes. The longest route is three hours and  
fifteen minutes.

OLI (CONT'D)

(LOUD) Melichi can you hear me?

No response from Melichi, just like before, but Oli  
doesn't seem surprised by that.



He grabs the phone and dials out.

**HIGHWAY 341 - SAME**, Pace is speeding up the highway solo on his crotch rocket, clamshell backpack on his back and helmet on his head.

The INSIDE OF HIS HELMET'S VIZOR plays the LUMEN BOOT UP TUNE. He checks his six for traffic, transitions from highway lanes to highway shoulder.

Combat boots on the ground to stabilize the bike, Pace removes his helmet, grabs his Star-Tac cell phone from his coat pocket and flips it open. Speaker.

PACE

I'm here.

**Bouncing back and forth from either POV for this conversation.**

OLI

Pace, no one on this plane is telling me anything I want to hear. I know you don't have any answers because you literally don't ask any questions.

Pace's face, for just a brief moment, is racked with guilt at this truth.

OLI (CONT'D)

I need another sane brain to think with me here. Did you see Mur's body?

PACE

No, probably in the truck with her.

OLI

Or she has two of those Broncos.

This is a conclusion Pace has already arrived at judging by the look on his face, there's a chance he isn't going to share it with Oli...But Oli is waiting for confirmation, like he knows Pace has info.

PACE

Shell game.

OLI

Yes.

PACE

Second car could be anywhere by now.

OLI

Not anywhere, just headed toward the city. On a different route.

Oli looks at the map, finds the second shortest route at two hours and fifty five minutes.

OLI (CONT'D)

(to himself) She wants us to take too long guessing at which car her real body's in because she thinks we're not gonna risk hurting anyone to stop her.

PACE

She thinks or she knows?

OLI

You know what I mean. Also you're the guy that doesn't ask questions, remember?

Pace gnaws his lip.

PACE

I sent the brothers up the 20, I'm taking 41. Figured she would be on one or the other for sure.

Oli refers to the map and Pace is right: GA-20 is the second most likely path.

OLI

Looks right. You're a REAL THINKER PACE.

Wesley slides down in his seat.

OLI (CONT'D)

Cut her off on the 41, do whatever you can to slow her down.

PACE

We tried this one already.

OLI

Try it again! I don't need you to stop her I need you to buy time until someone tells me exactly why she's racing us to Atlanta. By the way, do you have any idea? You are one of Melichi's really good buddies.

PACE

I'm positive I only know as much as you do, sir.

Oli relents almost immediately, as if he has no intention of verbally dueling with Pace.

OLI

Sorry man, this is beyond stressful. Can you please work with me here? Just slow her down a little. For me and Melichi.

PACE

On it.

Pace folds his Star-Tac and pockets it, swings off of his bike.

OPENING HIS BACKPACK: inside a worn baseball cap, dirty old tennis shoes, a chocolate leather coat with faux fur lining. He pulls the coat out, revealing a dirty, squarish and clunky beta headset with a tall antennae.

Pace looks down into this bag for a long moment.

Helmet and leather coat on in the next moment, Pace is back on his bike and bursting into traffic. The bike's SINISTER ENGINE BUZZ fading into the distance.

**INT. [LUMEN CORPORATE JET] - SAME**, Oli hangs the receiver, gives Melichi a once over: Melichi's condition is stable but the bruises have surely grown even more.

Oli frowns, grabs Wesley's laptop from the seat and walks down the aisle. He returns the laptop to its rightful owner then places a hand on Wes' shoulder.

They talk, a tough love kind of chat.

OFF OF MELICHI'S VIZOR.

**INT. [BRONCO] - SAME**, the sun's getting very low but the ATLANTA CITYSCAPE isn't too far away now.

AUDIO'S STARING AT [LYRIC], and [LYRIC] IS STARING BACK.

[MUR]

(laughing) It's just a fennex cub. Can I see your flame band?

Audio scrunches his sleeve up and holds his arm out for [Mur], showing her the [FLAME BAND]. She looks it over with a certain kind of fondness.

[MUR]

Who taught you how to use it?

AUDIO

Me.

[MUR]

You can cast more than one spell without it killing your headset connection?

Audio nods.

[MUR]

That's...far out.

R.K

But it takes a huge toll on his body. You know how it works?

[MUR]

Yes. It once belonged to me.

[Mur] extends her arm, pulls her sleeve up to expose similar bangles dangling from her wrist, including the one that she nearly forgot on the counter at home.

She mimics running with her pointer and middle fingers, Audio gets it. He smiles now.

[Lyric] sits up, very proud.

[MUR]

Why don't you talk?

R.K looks at Audio. He looks at R.K like: ???

R.K

Because he has his DAMNED MUSIC ON ALL THE TIME and can't hear anyone, and if he does he just pretends like he can't hear.

[MUR]

(laughing) I don't get it, both of you have a future in fencing. Lumen pours so much money into the sport it's not even funny. AND you can feint, do you realize how difficult feinting is?

R.K

Yup!

[MUR]

Then why are you Grail Hunting?

R.K

Damn schools with great fencing programs cost too much!

(MORE)

R.K (CONT'D)

And you can't even rise in the sport unless you know someone. But you can't "know someone" unless you go to the schools with great fencing programs.

[MUR]

(realization) that's...upsetting.

R.K / AUDIO

Yup!

R.K (CONT'D)

Maybe you should do something about that.

R.K looks into the rear view, and Audio NODS: NICE BAIT!

[MUR]

When did you realize who I was?

R.K

I watched an interview with you explaining LumenCraft and immersion years ago. You sounded exactly the same, really excited.

AUDIO thumbs up.

R.K (CONT'D)

The newspapers always refer to the founders as The Three Wise Men, so I totally forgot.

[Mur] bobs her brow at that fact.

[MUR]

Yeah well...

R.K

Man I can't even process half of this just yet, so forget about whatever else you're not telling me. Don't even want to know. But what happens if we don't make it in time?

[MUR]

I'm going to lose someone I love very much. He's the one responsible for LumenScape becoming everything it is to users like you and Audio. Fencing as the central combat "system" for users was his idea. So are all of the monsters the mazes and labyrinths.

(MORE)

[MUR] (CONT'D)

The grails you love to hunt, so by extension the money you make selling them. If he dies, the future of LumenScape will die with him.

R.K reassess the mission with a new kind of clarity. Audio, reading R.K's expression, buckles his seatbelt.

[MUR] notices R.K TOUCHING HIS BLOODY gauze, reminding her about that *healing thing she did earlier*.

[MUR]

R.K, I need to tell you something.

R.K

Nope! Don't want to hear it!

AUDIO

I can't hear anything either by the way.

ON [Mur] and her incredulous expression—OVER HER shoulder OUT OF THE REAR WINDOW quarter of a mile behind the [Bronco]:

Something strikes the highway with the intensity of a meteorite, decimating the ground on impact.

Dust and smoke from the explosion mushrooming, shrouding vehicles on the road for a number of seconds.

THROUGH THE REAR WINDOW, [smoke] billows, thick—vehicles drive right out of the chaos, *unharmd and unaware*.

R.K

What was that?

[Mur] rotates in her seat, looks out of the REAR WINDOW at the settling [dust cloud]. Hearing that eerie, ORGANIC YET SYNTHETIC METAL WOBBLE. She knows that sound.

**EXT. [BRONCO] - SAME**, tailgating the [black SUV], porous concrete and lane paint zipping by below. The [ground] cracks up through highway asphalt, [something] burrowing at top speed just beneath the surface.

JUST THE TOP of a [JAGGED SPHERE OF BLUE PLASMA] rising above ground level, [Melichi's blue sphere].

**INT. [BRONCO] - SAME**, [Mur] and [Lyric] looking back THROUGH THE REAR WINDOW as the [plasma ball] rises higher still. It hovers up and over the vehicle. [Mur], [Lyric] and Audio tracking its path overhead through the sunroof.

R.K getting his first good look when the [plasma ball] comes to hover about fifteen feet above the above and in front of the [Bronco], moving at the same speed.

[MUR]  
Don't stop driving.

[Mur] rises into a crouch within the moving vehicle.

R.K  
What are you doing?

[Lyric] jumps on the seat, ready to follow.

[MUR]  
Lyric, STAY.  
(to. R.K)  
He's alone, I'm going to try to talk some sense into him before it's too late.

[Lyric] worriedly watches [Mur] slip *through* the sunroof.

R.K  
He WHO? WHO is alone?! WHAT IS THAT?!

**EXT. [BRONCO],** FROM BEHIND AND UP HIGH, watching [Mur] climb her way onto the roof--

ENTERING A FRAME WITH an enormous warm sun setting behind THE CITYSCAPE OF ATLANTA 1996 in the distance, and the [blue anomaly] pulsing near. [Melichi] speaks through it.

**While [Mur] must SPEAK UP over traffic, [Melichi's] voice naturally booms.**

[MELICHI] (O.S.)  
You don't look surprised to see me.

[Mur] walks to the front of the [vehicle]--

[MUR]  
CAN'T HIDE FOM THE GAME MASTER RIGHT?

right down the windshield, onto the Bronco's hood as—the pulsing [plasma ball] expands in a horizontal line in either direction, both ends streaking diagonally toward one point, forming a [Neon Vector Triangle]:

Early twenties [Melichi] is beamed into existence, hovering effortlessly at the [triangle's] center...tie waving in the wind--

Big ass smirk on his face.

[MELICHI]

You brought real grail hunters with you!  
That's very exciting, really.

[MUR]

(grinning) OF COURSE YOU WOULD LOVE THAT.

[MELICHI]

Overheard ya got two of those LumenScape  
With Hot Wheels Edition Broncos.

[MUR]

OVERHEARD? OLIBANUM DOESN'T LIKE WHEN YOU  
PRETEND LIKE YOU DON'T HEAR HIM.

[MELICHI]

(grinning) I know.

[Mur] kneels on the port (left) edge of the [Bronco's hood], like a horseback rider preparing for a trick.

[MELICHI]

Shell game's not gonna work. There's no  
way your body would be out of arm's reach  
with the world going to shit around you.  
I know you too well Mur.

[MUR]

(to herself) I'm aware of that too.

[Mur] anchors herself where possible then slips down the [Bronco]'s side. She grabs the [driver-side mirror], LOOKS OUT AT jagged shapes moving at lethal speeds in traffic, GAZING DOWN BELOW the concrete speeding by.

DEEP BREATHS.

**EXT. HIGHWAY 20 - SAME**, the WHITE BMW from the airport dips in and out of gaps in traffic at eighty-plus miles an hour--

Blowing right by a sign—65 MAX LIMIT. This is Georgia: five over limit earns you reckless driving.

BLUE IN THE PASSENGER SEAT, on the look out—SPOTTING a black Bronco identical to Mur's up ahead.

THE BMW breaks over double lines, into the carpool lane and adds another ten miles per hour to the SPEEDOMETER. SCREAMING up the lane.



**INT. BRONCO(B)**, PEACH IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT. She hears the HIGH TORQUE ENGINE SCREAMING CLOSER, looks out of her window just in time to see the BMW zipping by three lanes over—watching the white sedan still as it sloppily hops from lane to lane until it's *right in front of Peach*.

FROM THE BMW looking through the rear window at BRONCO(B), Miss Betty is passenger and a silhouette surrounded in magenta light seated in the back.

The BMW drops back—SLOWING DOWN, SPEEDOMETER falling from 75 to 65 until it's just in front of the Bronco...and still slowing down further.

Peach confirms on HER SPEEDOMETER, needle dropping from 65 to 60. The BMW's trying to pace her. *Slow her down*.

BETTY

Look at these snakes...you gonna let them mess with you like that?

PEACH

Hell no, Miss Betty.

PEACH'S SNEAKER NUDGES THE BREAK / SMALL HANDS WHIP THE LARGE WHEEL TO THE LEFT / STOMPING THE GAS PEDAL--

BRONCO(B) ROARING / LEFT SLICING THROUGH TRAFFIC / NARROWLY MISSING REAR BUMPERS / NOTCHING INTO TRAFFIC TWO LANES OVER. BUTTER.

OUT OF REACH FOR NOW.

RED

*Shit.*

RED STOMPS THE GAS, VEERS TO THE RIGHT.

THIS IS A RACE OF WITS BEFORE SPEED.

**CUT FROM [BRONCO(A)] AND BRONCO(B) POVS—INSIDE AND OUT, CLOSE ON SPEEDOMETERS AND TIRES, CLOCK CHECKS AND GEAR SHIFTING WHEN APPROPRIATE:**

**[BRONCO(A)] - HIGHWAY 341, Back to [Mur], clinging to the side of the [Bronco]. R.K rolls the window down.**

[MUR]

I'll draw him from the car. Don't stop driving, straight to Atlanta. Get Lyric to the hospital no matter what.

R.K looks BACK, at THE CRATE, reminding himself that *Mur's body might be inside*. He nods, mission accepted.

[MELICHI]

You shouldn't have brought those Grail  
Hunters with you.

[Lyric] looks worriedly at [Mur] through the window, and  
[Mur's] just about to jump when:

R.K

Why can't you fly like him?!

[MUR]

What?!

R.K

Why can't you fly!?

[MELICHI], HIS ANGST CONCEALED BENEATH A MASK OF  
EMOTIONLESS STARES, RAISES HIS RIGHT HAND—PALM FACING  
UPWARD--

*A six foot tall, three feet wide [STONE WALL] erupts from  
the ground fifteen feet in front of the [Bronco].*

R.K immediately registers the danger he's in and so does  
[Lyric], NOW LEAPING through the sunroof OUT INTO THE  
OPEN WORLD--**Taking us to a very intentional, DRIVER'S  
SIDE, WIDE PROFILE MASTER SHOT of this**

**LITERAL SPLIT SECOND:**

**(THIS SEQUENCE WILL BE MONUMENTAL, CUTTING BETWEEN THE  
WIDE PROFILE MASTER AND STRATEGIC INTERIOR SHOTS TO  
HIGHLIGHT THE CHAOS. ALTHOUGH DETAILED ON THE PAGE...IT  
IS A LITERAL SPLIT SECOND IN THE STORY'S TIME—WITH  
APPROPRIATE USE OF SLOW-MO, GIVING US OPPORTUNITY TO  
ASSEMBLE THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING PRESENTED THUS FAR.  
EVERYONE IS THE MAIN CHARACTER. EVEN THE BRONCO.)**

FROM THE WIDE PROFILE MASTER: [MUR] CLINGING TO THE  
MIRROR / [LYRIC] MID-AIR ABOVE THE BRONCO / R.K WHIPPING  
THE WHEEL TO THE RIGHT—TOO LATE / THE [Bronco's] FRONT  
LEFT HEADLIGHT IMPACTING THE [STONE WALL]. THE [BRONCO]  
and BRONCO FORCEFULLY SEPARATING—THE [BRONCO]'S FRONT  
END SHATTERING AS IT SPINS AWAY--

**It looks as though THE SPIRIT of the moving vehicle is  
suffering a surely catastrophic accident while THE BODY  
sustains lighter but noticeable damage simultaneously—  
HEADLIGHT POPS, GRILL BENDING BUMPER FOLDING INWARD.**

**If you're wearing a headset, you'll see the Bronco's  
spirit reacting as if it's an entirely different  
"material" than the real vehicle it's layered upon.**

The spirit bends and twists, folding until finally a portion **SHATTERS AWAY**. Like a glitch in a video game.

**INSTANT REPLAY - OVER R.K'S LEFT SHOULDER LOOKING AT THE [STONE WALL]—WE ARE GOING TO DIE:** R.K WHIPPING THE WHEEL TO THE RIGHT—TOO LATE / BRONCO'S LEFT FRONT IMPACTS THE [STONE WALL], DEVASTATING SOUNDING COLLISION ROCKING THE CABIN NOTICEABLY BUT NOT LIKE A CAR WRECK OF THAT MAGNITUDE SHOULD, **INSTANT 240FPS (SUPER SLOW MO):**

R.K LURCHING RIGHT TO AVOID THE WALL OF STONE RIPPING THROUGH THE CABIN—SHAVING HIS LEFT BICEP BLOODY RAW.

**FINAL INSTANT REPLAY - WIDE PROFILE MASTER, [MUR] AND [LYRIC] IN THE MIDDLE OF THEIR HEROIC LEAPS / BRONCO VISIBLY LURCHING FROM IMPACT/ RAMPING TO 240FPS:** [BRONCO] SPINNING SIDEWAYS--

INSIDE OF THE BRONCO WATCHING THE [BRONCO] ROTATE INWARD ON R.K AND AUDIO / R.K AND AUDIO BRACING FOR PAIN / THE [BRONCO] SLAMMING INTO THEM / THE BOYS LURCHING LIKE THEY'VE BEEN HIT BY A WAVE / [BRONCO] WASHING OVER THEM.

**Like a wall of wet needles the Bronco's Spirit, knocked off course and spiraling, collides with and oozes through the boys. It looks like portions of their spirits are being shredded away on impact.**

**WIDE MASTER SHOT, 240FPS TRAILER SEQUENCE:** watching the scraps of the Bronco's spirit spray away in the wind as it continues its off axis twirl away from its real body. The background for [MUR], RISING STILL IN HER HEROIC LEAP WITH [LYRIC] away from the Bronco's driver side mirror.

She's hovering above the ground with her big ribbon-held fro in motion and her shocked, saddened expression mutating into one of anger and confusion. A magenta light brewing beside her, out of sight.

The BRACELET AROUND HER WRIST (with the WINGED FEET carved into it) glows from one end and back unto itself, activating. The light BLIPS at the WINGED FEET--

MUR IS AT THE PEAK OF HER LUNGE and with the Bronco's shattered spirit still spraying away behind her, the bracelet pulsing FULL BLAST. The SOLES OF HER SNEAKERS "blip to life" neon Magenta and FLARING the **SCENE OUT OF HYPER SLOW MO, but not out of the wide profile angle.**

[She] and [Lyric] hit the ground running. [Mur] galloping into a gliding dash that looks more eerie than expected—she isn't "bouncing" as she runs and her sneakers leave behind wisps of magenta. Both the [fennex cub] and our heroine all over the place..[Mur] can barely keep up.

At the same time, the [BRONCO] WHIRLS AWAY and to the right through PASSENGERS IN A MUSTANG CONVERTIBLE. They feel and see nothing.

**Imagine if those passengers had been wearing headsets and were at least aware of what'd just happened.**

And then BACK AGAIN, The Bronco's spirit boomeranging back toward the body.

R.K has a split second to show just how NAUSEATING that feels, and AUDIO one split second less than that to gather his wits and POINT TOWARD the Bronco's Spirit coming back at them full speed.

R.K (CONT'D)

Oh god.

Audio leaps to the ceiling, grabbing the edge of the Bronco through his opened window--

BECOMING A SORT OF CEILING ORNAMENT just as the [BRONCO] SWINGS RIGHT BACK INTO PLACE, narrowly avoiding being doused in that god awful feeling again.

But it slams into R.K, knocking this behemoth young man to the side, pulling at the edges of his face.

ON THE OUTSIDE, [MUR] and [LYRIC] finding their rhythms...as the [Bronco] snaps into place—tethered like a cosmic strength magnet to the real body, impact rocking the Bronco on its tires.

***Coming full circle on the concept that a user can be hurt or healed through LumenScape, it's as if the "spirit" is infinitely drawn to the "body", and if one suffers trauma then the other must absorb some of the damage.***

[Mur] lags behind and out of sight, Lyric slowing down to match her speed...until Mur is able to catch up with the fennex cub and the Bronco.

**FULLY TAKING US OUT OF THE "LITERAL SPLIT SECOND" SEQUENCE WITH AN UP-TO-THE MOMENT UNDERSTANDING OF THIS MIXED REALITY'S MECHANICS...**

[LYRIC]

(familiar voice) MOM!!

**SIKE JUST KIDDING.**

[MUR]

NETRA?!

**EXT. HIGHWAY 20 - TWILIGHT**, WHITE BMW BREAKING, FALLING BACK IN FRONT OF THE BRONCO / PEACH'S SNEAKER RIDING THE BREAK / BETTY SLIDING FORWARD IN HER SEAT--

AND NETRA INTO HER SEATBELT:

She's doused in magenta light from the ski goggles (custom LS2 headset) on her face...completely ignoring her mother's wishes. Her [codex] is open in her lap, SHINING BLUE LIGHT FROM BELOW.

NETRA'S RIGHT HAND flinches, securing the [codex] as inertia threatens to send her out of her seat.

**SPEEDING DOWN HIGHWAY 41**, [Lyric] running beside [Mur].

[MUR]  
GET BACK IN THE CAR!

[LYRIC]  
THE SEED! THIS MIGHT BE YOUR ONLY CHANCE!

[Mur] narrowly dodges a van on the road--

**INT. CRATE - PERFORATED HOLES**, Mur's very real body—raggedly breathing and sweating through her t-shirt. Her CHEST(HEART) PUMPING, drawing attention to the surgical scar on her chest, just peaking over the sweat-soaked collar.

[LYRIC]  
CALM DOWN. THE CARS CAN'T HURT YOU.

[MUR]  
THAT'S NOT THE POINT!

[MUR] **CALMING HER BREATHING**, and [LYRIC] matching Mur's pace until gradually they're running at the exact same gait. [Lyric's] fur HUMS with a new life. SYNC.

[LYRIC]  
I'VE GOT SPEED TO SPARE, BUT YOUR HEART  
CAN'T TAKE THIS FOR TOO LONG!

[Mur] draws her slingshot effortlessly while running, veers off to avoid a vehicle while also pulling back on the sling UP CLOSE AND IN DETAIL, an iron-dense knot of hot white plasma growing in size.

With each passing second that she keeps the sling cocked, the plasma also changes hue, white to blue to NEON GREEN.

[MUR]  
LET'S MAKE IT COUNT!

[LYRIC]

**RIGHT!**

[Mur] and [Lyric], moving like missiles with neon trails, overtake the speeding [Bronco]. Objective accepted.

INSIDE OF THE [BRONCO], R.K cradling his shaved-raw and bloody arm...doing all he can to contain his annoyance.

Just in time to see, OUT OF THE WINDSHIELD, [Mur] and [Lyric] *streaking ahead*, toward [Melichi], brilliant magenta streaking behind them.

**Framed by the vehicle's large windshield, this entire image feels like a haunted techno-fantasy baroque painting of two gods feuding in a modern world, with the twilight cityscape of 199X ATLANTA GA as the backdrop.**

**In the trailer, this image will give you the full scope of the world, yet at the same time will force you to pause in order to ingest the rich color and detail. It will feel like the beginning of something brand-ass new.**

One more time, [Mur] and [Lyric] streaking ahead, this is their fight.

[MUR]

YOU'RE GOING TO HURT SOMEONE!

[MELICHI]

I'm not hurting them, you are.

This...what [Melichi's] just said to her...it triggers [Mur] like no other, as if it holds double meaning just for her. For the time being, she's gotta fight back raw screams every word she speaks.

MUR

(booming like [Melichi]) Are you out of your mind?!

*She lets rip*, her [neon green bullet] SCREAMING at LIGHT SPEED toward [Melichi's] face. The sound it makes is devastating and unholy, like a RAILGUN FROM HELL.

[Melichi] takes the shot to his FOREHEAD, flailing backward from impact, nearly falling out of orbit--

**INT. [LUMEN CORPORATE JET] - SAME**, the flesh of late-thirties Melichi's face—thousands of miles above the country, splits instantaneously where [Mur's bullet] struck him. Blood trickles down over his temple, pooling against the foam edge of the beta headset.

Oli doesn't notice, he's still on the LAPTOP, busy trying to out-think Mur from this side.

**RUSHING DOWN HIGHWAY 341 - SAME**, Melichi's forehead also opened here, but whatever that is dripping from his gash isn't blood: it seeps upward, dissipating into the sky.

[MELICHI'S SMILE] deceives in an instant, portraying a man that's having an absolute blast—just another mask to hide how royally pissed he is right now.

And [Mur's] "charging" her slingshot.

[MELICHI]

Who are you trying to save?! ME? OR YOURSELF?

[MUR]

THE FUTURE. OUR FUTURE!

**VFX: HORIZONTAL SPLIT SCREEN WITH LUMEN CORPORATE JET!**

[MELICHI] / MELICHI

You're LYING!!!

**INT. LUMEN CORPORATE JET**, it looks like Melichi's having a bad dream, YELLING IN HIS SLEEP, causing to Oli leap out of his skin.

Marie tears out of her seat, bag in hand. *She was ready.*

Spotting the blood, Oli scrambles to Melichi's side...only to see the cut and now a slowly expanding bruise around it.

MELICHI (CONT'D)

You feel guilty and YOU'RE LYING!

The intensity of [Melichi's] accusation coupled with the bright magenta light of his beta headset causes Oli to stumble back and away. Guilt and confusion on his face.

Marie arrives with what looks like the softest towel on the planet and presses it up against Melichi's face—THE DARK BRUISE is blooming from beneath the towel, down the side of Melichi's face.

OLI

Pull him out.

MARIE

We don't know what forcing a disconnect right now will do. He has to come back on his own. Tell him to come back.

OLI

MELICHI!

**BACK ON THE HIGH SPEED ARGUMENT AND RIGHT INTO THE FURY.**

[MUR]

YOU'RE WRONG!

[Melichi] directs [STONE WALLS] from the ground, guiding [Mur and Lyric's path], forcing them to STREAK ACROSS THE HIGHWAY TOWARD THE MEDIAN, leaping into oncoming traffic, avoiding vehicles now on their way to the far side of the road--

GIVING [MELICHI] AN OPENING TO FOCUS THE [BRONCO].

R.K

Oh shit oh shit

AUDIO CLICKS BACK INTO HIS SEATBELT and braces like he's on a roller coaster straight to the morgue.

A [STONE WALL] bursts from the ground ahead, R.K whips the wheel WEAVING BETWEEN CARS AND [STONE WALLS].

And [Melichi], high above, willing the gauntlet of [STONE WALLS] into existence one by one with a wave of his hand—WHAP, one of [Mur's] projectiles blows through [Melichi's] hand.

He FEELS THAT. SCREAMING WITH ANNOYANCE. Returning his FOCUS TO [Mur], [STONE WALLS] ripping up through the ground in front of she and [Lyric] at a hellish rate as they sprint BACK TOWARD THE MEDIAN, [Lyric] narrowly dodging one wall, [MUR] leap-frogging the same one--

**BOTH JUMPING THE MEDIAN FOR A 120FPS TWILIGHT SKY POSTER SHOT—that sends them right into a bus.**

AND OUT THE OTHER SIDE, completely fine but now out of sync. [MUR] IS HAVING TROUBLE BREATHING, LOSING SPEED.

[LYRIC]

MOM! YOU HAVE TO STOP!

[MELICHI]

MUR STOP RUNNING!

**INT. CRATE**, Mur's struggling to breathe here, body paying the toll for her meta-human "specter" abilities.



**LOSING SPEED AND ALMOST OUT OF BREATH ON HIGHWAY 341,**  
 [Mur] reaches into her [leather sack] and pulls out one vibrant gold [seed]. One of three that she dug up from the mushroom patch before this all went down.

[Mur] loads the [seed] into her sling, plasma growing...and GROWING around the [seed].

[Lyric], emboldened by the sight of the [seed], begins to glow with enthusiasm. Little canine jaw **CLENCHED** as she zips ahead of [Mur], leaving behind a trail of dust upon which [Mur] sprints on—her speed doubling.

[MELICHI]  
 YOUR HEART CAN'T TAKE IT!

[MUR]  
 NEITHER CAN YOURS!

OLI  
 (IN [MELICHI'S] HEAD) Melichi LEAVE HER ALONE!

MARIE ON THE CORPORATE JET, holding the bloody towel to Melichi's face who's still in his beta headset.

MARIE  
 (warning) We can't stop the bleeding until the headset's off.

Oli leans over Melichi.

OLI  
 Melichi! Leave her alone!

BRONCO(B) AND THE BMW LOCKED IN A NEAR BUMPER TO BUMPER DANCE / OVERHEAD SHOT: BOTH CARS DROPPING BACK IN TRAFFIC, CARS HONKING / PEACH HOOKING A RIGHT ONTO THE OFF RAMP--

OFF RAMP GRIDLOCK LESS THAN A QUARTER MILE AHEAD.

RED WHIPS THE WHEEL / WHITE BMW STREAKING PAST PEACH FURTHER TO THE RIGHT, OBJECTIVE: OVERTAKE / BETTY SCOWLS AT THE BMW FORCING ITSELF INTO THE LANE TO THE RIGHT--

PEACH HARD LEFTS AT THE LAST MOMENT.

BRONCO DRIVING UP THE LITTLE OFF RAMP SLOPE / LAUNCHED TWO FEET INTO THE AIR.

INSTANT REPLAY- FRONT VIEW, in the same moment the Hatchet Brothers are tricked onto the off ramp, the Bronco SWEEPS UP THE little hill toward the highway and **into 120FPS**, two feet off the ground but it feels like ten, reminds us of the legendary BIG FOOT MONSTER TRUCK.

THE BRONCO HITS THE GROUND BOUNCING.

NETRA'S SKI GOGGLES POP UP AND OFF OF HER HEAD—

Bouncing around the cabin until it slides beneath the back seat.

NETRA

SHIT!

BACK WITH [MUR] AND [LYRIC], but the little fennex cub STUMBLES AND TRIPS, TUMBLING AWAY—costing [Mur] her additional momentum right when she TAKES THE SHOT: this magnificent gold beam sounds like THE CHIRP OF ONE THOUSAND HOPEFUL ANGELS--

[Melichi's TRIANGLE just NARROWLY DEFLECTS], one side shattered like glass, the other two folding in on him—a look of pure terror on his face as he vanishes.

[MUR]

NO! NO NO

The [Bronco] continues blasting up the highway.

R.K

The exit is coming up!

[Mur], seeing the HIGHWAY 41 EXIT, weaves through traffic toward the [Bronco], JUMPING back onto the side as the vehicle veers off unto a quieter road.

[Lyric] skittering about on the highway, confused as vehicles speed past, over and THROUGH HER. She is safe, but justifiably rattled.

**INT. BRONCO(A)**, [Mur] drops through the sunroof AND TUMBLES between the seats.

R.K (CONT'D)

We gotta go back for your fennex.

Face buried in her arms, [Mur's] breaths are HOARSE.

MUR

No. We can't.

R.K

But

[MUR]

PLEASE. One second I'm gonna lose the connection if I don't focus.

R.K.

Your body is in the back, you can just reconnect right?

She doesn't answer.

R.K. (CONT'D)

Oh. Shit.

**EXT. HIGHWAY 41 - SAME**, catching Bronco(B) slicing in and out of traffic, making up for lost time. Netra flips around and **LEANS OVER THE BACK SEAT**, and grabs the **CRATE LID** and pulls it off--

Mur's sweat soaked, overheating body there. She's breathing raggedly, chest **HEAVING**.

PEACH

Mom you need water.

**CUTTING BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN BRANCOS WHERE EFFECTIVE:**

[MUR]

No. I'll choke

MUR

Just give me a second. Keep an eye out.

R.K, wrapping his **OTHER ARM**, now bandaged on both, checking on [Mur] because she's **SNIFFLING QUIETLY**.

Netra watching her mother's real body in the crate, **TEARS ROLLING DOWN** Mur's cheek from under her glasses.

Netra wipes her mother's face.

R.K, head cranked, watching the **BALLED UP** [MUR].

R.K

That's the guy we're going to save?

[MUR]

Yes.

R.K

You got alot of family drama going on.

[Mur] LAUGHS into her arms.

[MUR]  
Who doesn't?

R.K  
True true.

She finally sits up, wiping her [face], her breathing has stabilized but the ordeal has taken a toll on her.

The smile on Mur's face eases Netra.

PEACH  
Sorry about that.

NETRA  
It's okay, she's safe.  
(it hits her)  
SHIT. MOM!

Netra squirms around in the cabin, HAND UNDER THE SEAT to fish her ski goggles out. GOT 'EM.

MUR  
Stop cursing.

Netra grabs the crate cover.

NETRA  
Going to get [Lyric]. I'll catch up.

After covering Mur's body, she sits back, buckles in and pulls her goggles on. Firing them up.

FADE FROM MAGENTA.

**EXT. HIGHWAY 341 - SIDE OF THE ROAD**, Lyric is safe, playing on the shoulder—shaking her head as Netra returns to the pilot seat.

[NETRA]  
Let's go girl.

[Lyric] BARKS, hunkers down and SPRINTS for it.

OFF [LYRIC'S DUST].

**INT. [LUMEN CORPORATE JET] - NEXT**, late-thirties Melichi is awake and hunched over, left half of his face a solid deep bruise, the color of his face is split down the middle. His head wrapped in bandages, BANDAGED HAND DRIPPING BLOOD.

OLI

Buckle up, we're about to land.

Melichi buckles in with his good hand.

OLI (CONT'D)

Never thought I'd see the day you lose a fight to Mur.

Melichi rolls his eyes up to Oli, who sits and buckles in as well.

MELICHI

You have my vial...do you mind?

OLI

Dose you? I absolutely do mind. I'll have everyone on this plane hold your rotting body down while you scream and curse me to hell before I dose you again. At least not until we get you to Kullenbusey.

MELICHI

I'm not rotting.

OLI

What is GOING. ON. WITH. MUR?

MELICHI

She's trying to "wake me up" from my "godlike delusions" because my "real body is" "going to perish".

OLI

That's very specific.

MELICHI

She tried it before. A few years ago.

MELICHI RECLINES.

**Playing like snippets from a psychological-horror film, underlined moments in Melichi's story are haunting yet revered moments.**

MELICHI (CONT'D)

She has something on her property.  
Gilmore Inn. I don't know if it's also in  
the mushroom patch or somewhere else...  
when she started distancing herself from  
the company then went missing for a week?  
I found her standing still in her plant  
nursery, facing her specter. Completely  
separated.

(MORE)

MELICHI (CONT'D)

I'm pretty sure she was there for a good day or two, just standing there. Just her and her specter looking each other right in the eyes like they were not from the same person. I broke her out of whatever spell she was in and she hasn't been the same since.

Oli leans forward into Melichi's story.

MELICHI (CONT'D)

Few months later she begged me to come visit Netra and Miss Betty. While we were there, she wanted me to see something at the mushroom patch. She said it would change my life again, like the day you showed me the Phantom Layer.

Oli waves his hand, don't say that out loud.

MELICHI (CONT'D)

Whatever she saw split her in half, like she didn't know who or even what she was.

OLI

And it scared the shit out of you.

(off of Melichi's silence)

Did she tell you about anything she saw?

MELICHI

Not in any great detail. Bits and pieces. But overall she kept calling it The Truth. That's it.

Oli digests a beat.

OLI

Is that why people keep spotting you flying over cities man? Because you're flying to Georgia, stomping all over Mur's mushroom patch? Are you crazy?

Melichi rolls his eyes.

OLI (CONT'D)

Mur's truth is her truth. Doesn't mean it's yours or anyone else's.

Melichi cracks a smile for once, but it soon fades.

MELICHI

You can't let her get to me before Kullenbusey.

OLIBANUM

What is Kullenbusey's deal?

Melichi hangs his head a bit, it's not because he's ashamed, more like disappointed. The plane approaches the runaway.

MELICHI

He's convinced we can successfully separate my body from my specter.

Oli is gobsmacked.

OLIBANUM

He's crazy right?

Melichi lays back in his seat, JET ENGINES SPOOLING, BODY RUMBLING FROM A ROCKY LANDING.

OLIBANUM (CONT'D)

Melichi he's crazy right?

CLOSING HIS EYES.

**EXT. HIGHWAY 41 - DUSK**, not much traffic at all. A HIGHWAY COP sits in his brown impala, CHEWING HIS GUM, speed gun aimed down the road. Very much loves his gig.

One of the [Broncos] tears around the off ramp.

Highway cop sits up, honed in ON THE [BRONCO] as it passes by: R.K., Audio, and [Mur] all have headsets on.

[MUR]

Did he see you?

R.K.

Georgia cop, he saw us before he saw us.

HIGHWAY COP cranks his wheel, tears onto the road.

R.K. (CONT'D)

Everyone just stay quiet.

Audio nods, zips his lips.

**EXT. HIGHWAY 41 - EMPTY SIDE ROAD**, R.K. turns off onto a road and puts the vehicle in park.

Highway Cop pulls off twenty or so feet behind and rises from his squad car, walking right for the [Bronco].

HIGHWAY COP

Evening. Any reason why ya'll are driving around with headsets on?

[MUR]

Take the ticket, I'll fix it after. Get him away from the car so we can go.

R.K.

Shh.

HIGHWAY COP

Sir?

[MUR]

(WHY DID YOU JUST) Cops don't wear headsets, R.K. He can't see or hear--you just messed us all up.

R.K.

Sorry that was a sneeze.

HIGHWAY COP

License and registration.

R.K. hands over his license while Audio fishes the registration from the glove compartment. While they deal with the cop, [Mur] looks from window to window, especially the rear window. ON EDGE.

R.K.

It's my aunt's car.

Highway Cop gives them the thrice over then walks back to his vehicle.

R.K.

You're making me really nervous back there.

[Mur] rises, crawling through the sunroof to STAND ATOP THE [Bronco]. Scouting into the distance of the quiet, endless stretch of Georgia road flanked by rows of trees, dark on either side. She's anxious because--

[MUR]

Come on come on.

ATLANTA IS RIGHT THERE, the nighttime cityscape closer than ever before.

R.K.

She can do all of that illegal stuff about erasing records or whatever right?



Audio nods, trust.

Highway Cop gets out of his vehicle, done.

[MUR]

Yes.

Highway Cop steps to R.K.'s window.

HIGHWAY COP

You're looking at license suspension for a year, but you can get it reduced in court. Show up.

[Mur] kneels to drop back in, goes deathly still at RUSTLING IN THE TREE-LINE NEARBY—it's [Lyric]! Bounding out and onto the [Bronco] beside [Mur].

[LYRIC]

Pace is coming!

THE SINISTER BUZZING approaches at WARP SPEED--

Mur turns just in time to track PACE on his bike, SPEEDING BY. They make eye contact.

Highway Cop breaks away, running back to his vehicle.

[Mur] drops back into the vehicle with [Lyric].

[MUR]

Follow the cop car.

R.K

He's not catching that bike and neither are we. Not a chance in hell.

[MUR]

That's not the point!

R.K realizes what [Mur's] thinking, fires up and PEELS AWAY, rushing to follow the highway patrol vehicle. Falling WAY BEHIND BOTH INTENTIONALLY, but at least they have a traffic escort of sorts--

TOWARD THE NEON NIGHT CITYSCAPE OF ATLANTA, nightfall darkening the sky gradually, giving birth to a faint [aurora borealis] over the city at the same rate.

WHITE TEXT FADING UP: ATLANTA, GA

**EXT. ATLANTA ROAD - NEXT**, Peach's Bronco rushing along on a service road surrounding the large complex of EMORY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, about a mile away from the emergency room parking lot.

Betty squinting out of the window at A HELICOPTER FLUTTERING toward the hospital as well.

**EXT. EMORY UNIVERSITY - NIGHT**, Atlanta's premiere hospital has a new wing currently under construction, the rest of the campus functioning as normal. Work paused for the day out of respect for staff and patients.

The helicopter docks ON THE **ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS**, blades spinning down. The occupants of duck out: MARIE THE MEDIC helping bandaged-up and half bruised MELICHI safely to the ground. OLI following with DEAN at his side...WESLEY the last one off.

They're greeted by PACE—beta headset in hand, standing just behind a spindly man in a starched white 50's-style doctor's uniform. Wire frame glasses on his face, his high and stiff collar choking the shit out of him—NAME TAG READS:

**DR. JOSIAH KULLENBUSEY, M.D. - PATHOLOGIST.**

Melichi and the Medics stop in front of Kullenbusey.

KULLENBUSEY

(not at all like you'd think he sounds)  
It looks like you got here in the knick  
of time young man.

MELICHI

Like my new look?

KULLENBUSEY

It's ill-fitting.

MELICHI

You don't look so hot yourself.

KULLENBUSEY

Pace, could you escort Melichi to the  
thirteenth floor?

Pace nods, turning to lead them to the stairwell.

KULLENBUSEY (CONT'D)

(to Melichi) Have a drink on me while you  
wait.

Melichi smirks, following behind Pace.

DEAN

Dad can I stay up here with you?

OLI

Not right now bud

(kneeling)

But how about that helicopter ride? Way better than winning an easy old fencing tournament right?

DEAN

It was sick, and I still hate you.

OLI

Thanks for the reminder son. Run ahead with the others, I'll catch up.

DEAN

Okay see ya Dad!

Dean turns, sprints to catch up with the others.

KULLENBUSEY

Please be as discrete as possible.

Marie offers Melichi a towel. He accepts with a warm smile, flips it over the dark half of his face. Now he looks like any normal patient in distress.

MARIE

I'm going to get more medical supplies.

MELICHI

Don't be late.

She snaps attention to Melichi, he's still smiling just as warm as before.

Still twenty plus feet away from the stairwell, Marie zips ahead of Pace to the door—weasels through it and rushes into **THE STAIRWELL**, not bothering to look back as she descends the stairs two at a time.

Pace can feel Melichi watching him for a reaction, but doesn't make any odd move to stop Marie.

BACK ON THE HELIPAD, Oli watching the others carefully escort Melichi into the stairwell, door closing.

KULLENBUSEY

Pace told me Mur was held up by police just outside of the city. That's unfortunate. I predicted she would be here by now.

OLI

Lucky you. I'm really not a fan of how this is playing out by the way.

KULLENBUSEY

You were amply warned there would be very serious complications as Melichi's body approaches its limitations.

OLI

Your choice of words leaves a lot to be imagined Kullenbusey. He's not having complications, he's SUFFERING and we had to fly across the country for gods sake...why did you have to build here in Atlanta man?

KULLENBUSEY

Tax credits.

OLI

But we're paying for the construction!

KULLENBUSEY

You're welcome. Now we're colleagues. Melichi understands the risks he's taking. Seems you don't?

OLI

What if you're wrong?

KULLENBUSEY

This is what Melichi wants.

Oli squints at that.

OLIBANUM

What if you're wrong Kullenbusey?

Kullenbusey turns, walking away from Olibanum.

KULLENBUSEY

That's a question for you to answer, Olibanum. I'm just assisting Melichi in taking the next step into a fully integrated LumenScape future.

Looking over his shoulder.

KULLENBUSEY (CONT'D)

Join me if you'd like to finally see where your money is going.

Olibanum follows a distance behind Kullenbusey.

FROM A DRONE'S-EYE VIEW, watching Kullenbusey and Oli leaving the helipad...while on the ground at the same time, Betty with Peach—still in nursing scrubs, wheeling Mur's Lumen crate through the emergency doors.

**EXT. ACCESS ROAD - SAME**, [Bronco(A)] driving around the hospital perimeter, can see the Helicopter on the helipad and Peach's stationary Bronco in the emergency room parking lot.

**INT. [BRONCO(A)] - SAME**, [Lyric] and [Mur] up against the window.

[LYRIC]

I'm going ahead.

AUDIO

I KNEW IT.

R.K

Knew what?

AUDIO

The fennex, someone's controlling it.

R.K

HA. If you didn't have your headphones on all the damned time you would have heard them screaming at each other on the highway. Now look who's behind.

Audio waves it off.

[LYRIC]

You guys have issues.

[Lyric] bounces off of R.K's seat and OUT OF THE WINDOW, landing safely and sprinting toward the hospital across grass and sprawling parking lot.

[MUR]

I'm disconnecting now. Please listen...Pace will try to stop you from coming in if he thinks my body is still in this car. He won't be the same person you fought earlier.

(to Audio)

If you fight him, you will get hurt.

Audio nods.

R.K

We can take care of him.

R.K flexes his bandaged right arm, testing his wound—wincing at the pain of re-opening it. FRESH BLOOD seeps through the bandage.

[Mur] notices...PLACES [HER HAND] ON R.K'S SHOULDER, THE CABIN GRADUALLY FILLED WITH LIGHT, drawing R.K and Audio's attentions to [MUR] healing R.K's right arm.

R.K (CONT'D)

You can heal.

LIGHT REFLECTED ON AUDIO'S FACE, his mesmerized gaze reflecting the fact that his mind just imploded.

The light dies. R.K flexes his right arm once more, PULLING THE BANDAGES OFF TO REVEAL: dried blood, but no gash, just a thin white line where it once was.

R.K (CONT'D)

Hell yeah.

He starts to unwind the other, FRESH BLOOD SPOTTING from his [stone wall] rash. HISSSS.

R.K (CONT'D)

Oh shit, you only healed the right one.

Quickly re-wrapping his bleeding large scrape.

[MUR]

That was all I could spare, I have to conserve what energy I have left for

R.K

I get it. We're fine.

[Mur] smiles.

R.K (CONT'D)

I don't know what's gonna go down in there, but how can we help?

[Mur] leans back in her seat.

[MUR]

Keep Pace outside as long as you can, then get as far away from here as fast as possible. I don't know what'll happen if I manage to get to Melichi. I'll find you both when this is all over.

R.K / AUDIO

Bet. / Good luck.

[Mur] nods.

[MUR]  
(to someone else) Okay ya'll, I'm ready.

[Mur's] actions slow to a crawl, her image BEAMING INTO **THE NIGHT SKY**, melting into the [aurora borealis]...it shimmers just a bit brighter--

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME**, like coming out of a coma, eyes adjusting to the floor of the room, HEAD LIFTING to see Marie, Betty—with Mur's LS2 in hand, Peach and [Lyric] are all here.

MUR IS STANDING UPRIGHT in the Lumen crate, rubbing her eyes. Marie helps her sit on the nearby medical bed, handing Mur a bottle of thick water.

MARIE  
Glad you made it. This will replenish your body.

Mur cracks open the bottle, gives it a mighty plastic warping chug.

PEACH  
They got here right as we did.

Mur lays back, hands on her forehead, in a dream haze but trying to come out.

MUR  
Thank you Marie.

MARIE  
How can I support?

MUR  
There are two Grail Hunters with my Bronco, probably outside the E.R. One of them needs medical.

MARIE  
Make it out alive, all of you.

Marie nods, grabs her bag and leaves the room.

Betty wipes Mur's LS2 with her shirt and hands it over.

BETTY  
Can't lay down now.

Mur takes the glasses, sits back up and slides them on. Betty gives Mur the little vial.

Mur jumps to her feet, checks her [*leather sack's contents*]: The seeds have been CRUSHED to pieces, but ONE IS NEAR WHOLE, glowing like the "last chance".

She closes the bag.

MUR

You two wait for me with Netra's body at the Bronco. If things go south...leave.

Mur hugs Betty, then Peach.

BETTY

How bout them boys huh?

MUR

That's the same as I told you so.

Betty throws her hands up as Mur leaves her corner team behind.

PEACH

Hope ya'll can talk it out.

MUR

We tried that already remember? I'm done talking. Let's go Lyric.

[Lyric] rushes ahead and through the door as Mur physically pushes it open, exiting the room.

**INT. HALLWAY - SAME**, sterile with new everything: walls and doors, ceiling tiles, lights. Melichi, little Dean, Pace and Wesley arriving at two large glass doors, not unlike the glass doors of Lumen HQ's conference room.

There's a large elevator right across from the doors.

MELICHI

Wesley, why don't you take Dean outside for some fresh air.

(to Dean)

Remember to relax and open your hand.

Dean nods, Wesley shamefully enters the already waiting elevator with Dean. The doors close on them, headed down.

Pace holds one of the glass doors open for Melichi, they enter **INT. THE 13TH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**, dark but haunted by a familiar cerulean light coming from [A FOUNTAIN AT THE FAR SIDE] of the still under-construction space.

They walk toward it.



MELICHI (CONT'D)

Questions so far?

PACE

Too many.

MELICHI

Start with one. Any.

PACE

(struggling not to crack) What if you're wrong Melichi? What if being human is all we have? What if you don't fully make it to the other side?

MELICHI

That was three, I'm impressed.

Silence between friends that have just broken ground, they come to stand beside the fountain, both men lit by [sloshing blue "water"].

MELICHI (CONT'D)

I'm trying to find answers as well.

Pace nods, pulls his squarish beta headset onto his skull...so very cyberpunk.

MELICHI (CONT'D)

Your ear's looking scarce...tell me I wasn't right about the Grail Hunters.

PACE

Jury's still out...but that kid...

Melichi grins as KULLENBUSEY AND OLI enter from the glass doors a distance he and Pace.

MELICHI

(between us) Make sure The Quiet Ones meet.

PACE

Count on it.

They bump fists, feels like it may be the last time, then Pace turns to walk toward the glass doors—passing Kullenbusey and Oli on the way.

OLI

You're not staying with us?

Pace continues on, barely motivated to speak...

PACE

I'm off the clock.

He slips back out into the **HALLWAY**, walking right into waiting elevator doors...turning his headset on.

FADE FROM MAGENTA.

**THE 13TH FLOOR - SAME**, Oli and Kullenbusey joining Melichi at the bright fountain.

OLI

Water? That's what this is about? Water?

KULLENBUSEY

This fountain was just floating in midair until you came along and built this wonderful ladder for me to access it.

Kullenbusey strolls around the [fountain], proud father.

KULLENBUSEY (CONT'D)

I constructed this identical pool atop the fountain and filled it with the purest water a man could ever hope to taste. It is a mirror image.

Oli looks to Melichi, who's invested in Kullenbusey's sales pitch.

KULLENBUSEY (CONT'D)

This is where your body will have its final rest as you fully transition.

OLI

Final rest?

Kullenbusey and Oli lock eyes.

OLIBANUM

I'd like to talk to Melichi for a moment.

Kullenbusey nods, makes his way to the glass doors and out, disappearing into the hallway.

OLI

You've been drinking this shit for how long now? For what reason?

MELICHI

Years. He thinks blood is the link, and drinking the water yadda yadda

OLI

Yes. He's out of his fucking mind.

MELICHI

Possibly.

OLIBANUM

We're done here, let's go. Also the smell of all this LumenCraft while it's curing. So rank.

Oli goes to walk away, Melichi stops him.

MELICHI

Stop kidding around Oli. This would change everything. We're remaking the world, dude. Imagine how much stronger we would be if I were full Specter...

(leaning in)

You wouldn't need Mur's Mushroom patch anymore, she'll be out of the picture.

Olibanum is visibly calculating his next response, but at warp speed...as he has just realized he's been placed in a very unpleasant position. Fencing master.

OLIBANUM

Is it worth trading your life for?

MELICHI

You tell me...

The *longest one second beat* on the planet occurs here.

OLI

Whatever you want, I support you.

MELICHI

It's been a wild ride either way huh?

OLIBANUM

I couldn't have done it without you.

Melichi's face...goes empty. A mere interpretation of what Melichi has been up until this moment.

They lock fists, brothers for life...but Olibanum has a tighter grip that expected...Melichi looks...confused.

OLI

Told you I'm the better game master.

Melichi's confusion...mutates into *wide eyed amazement*.

**IN THE HALLWAY**, Kullenbusey checking his watch, waiting for things to move—RAPID FOOTSTEPS FROM THE END OF THE HALL drawing his attention, a menacing POV of an unknown entity closing in on him at demonic speeds--

It's MUR—HEADSET FULL BLAST, and [LYRIC], supplying Mur with all the speed she'll ever need, and Kullenbusey can only watch as MUR STOPS / PIVOTS / SMASHES THROUGH THE NEW GLASS DOORS--

**THE 13 FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**, GLASS DOORS CRASH INWARD, SHATTERING—MAGENTA TRACES are Mur and [Lyric] blasting into the dark space, *lighting it the fuck up*.

**EXT. EMERGENCY ENTRANCE - PARKING LOT**, R.K leaning against the [Bronco], watching A KID WITH A BOWL CUT and his DEFEATED-LOOKING CHAPERONE sitting outside—GLASS EXPLODING NEARBY and MAGENTA LIGHT FLICKERING inside of the under-construction building.

R.K jerks to attention, looking up at the beginning of the end.

**INSIDE OF THE BRONCO - SAME**, Audio spots the MAGENTA LIGHT SHOW above, drawing him out of his game.

R.K rips the keys out of the Bronco's ignition...

R.K

Forget this. We're going inside.

Audio puts his game down, UNBUCKLES HIS SEATBELT and turns in his seat to grab R.K's bag--

WHAM. The entire [Bronco] LURCHES left, like it's just been t-boned.

**INSTANT REPLAY - FROM ABOVE, what really happened:** PACE, carried by titanic momentum, SNAP KICKS the rear quarter panel of [Bronco] WARPING THE QUARTER PANEL—SHATTERING THE [BRONCO]'s rear quarter panel. The Bronco lurches R.K, sends him TUMBLING across the black asphalt.

**INSIDE**, Audio being flung around like a rag doll—SLAMMING HIS FACE against the Bronco's steel frame, CRACKS HIS HEADSET'S VIZOR on the right side and knocks his headphones off...

FOR THE FIRST TIME, WE CAN HEAR AUDIO'S MUSIC JUST AS IT FADES OUT: (insert the end of your favorite song here).

The Cub Scout's EARS RINGING. Looking out of the windshield from his DISORIENTED, CRACKED POV...Pace walking by the nose of the [Bronco]—BETA HEADSET WITH THE ANTENNAE. Magenta light on full blast, HIS EYES WIDE OPEN BUT PUPILS ROLLED BACK INTO HIS HEAD.

Just white eyeballs, AS IF HE IS POSSESSED, but completely in control of his existence.

FINGERS ON HIS RIGHT HAND WIGGLING RAPIDLY, PACE walks toward R.K, who's resting on his knees...

R.K (CONT'D)

Man...we aren't leaving here til we kick your ass. I promise.

**BATTLE STRIP VFX: wiping LumenScape's fantasy layer into existence from top left of screen to bottom-right.**

Pace's clunky yet appropriately grungy headset vanishes from his face as we **RAMP TO 240FPS**: his nervously wagging fingers SLOW DOWN, [a second set of fingers flowing with each other, like an apparition].

Pace's pupils fill in against white eyeballs: UNCANNY VALLEY, PRECISE. VIEWING TWO WORLDS AT ONCE BUT ACCEPTING THEM AS SEPARATE EXISTENCES FEEDING INTO EACH OTHER.

SMASH CUT TO:

**THE 13TH FLOOR, from an overhead shot that defines the layout but fits perfectly for this very moment, JUST MUR IN HER HEADSET on full blast and bee-lining for Melichi and Oli, SLINGSHOT COCKED BUT NOTHING IN THE POUCH--**

**BATTLE STRIP VFX: wiping the LumenScape fantasy layer into existence from bottom left to top right, revealing [Lyric] running into combat with her...AND A [GOLDEN SEED] IN THE SLINGSHOT'S POUCH.**

**MELICHI BREAKING OLI'S GRIP** just as MUR TAKES THE [GOLDEN SHOT]—BOTH MEN FEINT simultaneously, vanishing...MISSING A SPLIT SECOND WHERE MUR'S PRESENCE BLURS AS IF SHE HAS FEINTED *but she goes nowhere*.

**MELICHI REAPPEARS BESIDE MUR**, she has her sling cocked already with a [GREEN CHARGE].

MELICHI

Nice try--

**ANOTHER [MUR] APPEARS BEHIND MELICHI**, identical to the existing Mur—SLING COCKED AND READY TO FIRE.

It takes a moment to realize this, but [Mur used that moment to feint], leaving her real body behind...to *trick Melichi*...

He realizes he's been had and ONE UPS [MUR], FEINTING JUST SLIGHTLY TO THE SIDE—AS MUR RELEASES HER SHOT:

THOUSANDS OF SHARDS OF A SHATTERED SEED BLANKET THE SPACE LIKE SHOTGUN PELLETS **RAMPING TO 240FPS** catching Melichi's face igniting with a brand new kind of passion.

MELICHI (CONT'D)

(to Mur) What a moment.

He relaxes into his fate as his body is [perforated with gold and green shards]--

Melichi tumbles lifelessly to the floor nearby, UNCONSCIOUS.

Mur, [Lyric] and Oli dive to his side--

OLI

Did you hit him? Did it work?

MUR

I hit him.

Mur rolls Melichi to his back: HIS BRUISES ARE SPIRALING OUT OF CONTROL, spreading across his entire body.

[LYRIC]

Mom!

Mur and Oli whirl around to see [Melichi] materializing in the middle of the 13TH floor—he looks lost, confused, and without any of Melichi's mirth or spirit.

A [Specter of Melichi].

MELICHI'S BODY begins to SLIDE ACROSS THE GROUND toward the entity, drawn like an industrial strength magnet to his rogue [specter]. Mur and Oli grab him by his clothes, prohibiting him from sliding.

MUR

Oli, that isn't Melichi.

Oli doesn't need a second explanation, especially as [Melichi's Specter] begins to stalk toward them.

OLI

You're the party healer, what do we do?

MUR

Give me everything you've got.

Oli nods, places his hand on Mur's shoulder.

MUR (CONT'D)

(to [Lyric]) Are you ready?

[Lyric] leaps onto Mur's shoulder opposite shoulder—hums with a new purpose as Oli's "essence" begins to flow into and through Mur--

She radiates warm sea foam green from her core, lighting up her eyes something eery.

Mur takes Melichi's LIMP HAND IN HERS, bruise creeping down his wrist—STOPPING AND REVERSING.

[LYRIC]

I've got energy to spare!

MUR

Make it count.

As if she's a [*Conduit of Life*], Mur's healing kicks into overdrive—REVERSING THE PERSISTENT BRUISING all over Melichi's body.

The haunting [specter] draws nearer, feels like more like a tank than a ghost. REACHING OUT as Melichi's bruise rewinds into their original points: ARM, FACE.

THE [SPECTER]'S FINGERTIPS touching Oli's arm, SUCKING LIFE FROM HIM, bruising his arm.

OLI

Hurry it up Mur THIS THING IS ON ME.

Mur and [Lyric] clench through SWEAT AND SHAKES, pushing out the last of the bruise—UNDOING MELICHI'S nasty hand injury.

[LYRIC] FADING, running out of juice QUICKLY.

[LYRIC]

GO GO GO

SEALING MELICHI'S FOREHEAD GASH—as the [specter] freezes in place, then stands upright. Unmoving.

The light show here dies out, everything is still...and Mur releases Melichi.

His body moves a puppet on strings, piloted by the still existing magnetism, rising to in front of the [specter]--

MELICHI'S EYES GRADUALLY OPEN, his first breath STEAMY...he stands unmoving, unflinching, STARING EYE TO EYE with the entity that was just after his life.

Oli cradles his arm, a new bruise there. This one is not going away any time soon.

OLI

Now what?

Mur, tired as hell, stands...[Lyric] falling from her shoulder, landing in a heap...SLEEPING.

MUR

We wait.

OLI

How long?

MUR

As long as it takes.

OLI

So we're supposed to stand around and just...wait?

MUR

Stop fucking around Oli.

OLI

Fine fine. You make the call, I can shut down this wing...

MUR

I'm moving him to Gilmore.

OLI

That works too. I'm going to check on Dean...things got so bizarre I forgot he was even here.

MUR

Tell him I said hello.

Oli shuffles carefully around Melichi and his [specter], then goes for the shattered glass doors.

MUR (CONT'D)

By the way...I'll no longer be working in the office.



Oli pauses.

OLI

Sounds like a new chapter for everyone.

He wanders out into the **HALLWAY**, Kullenbusey nowhere to be found.

Oli takes the Elevator down.

Mur walks over to Melichi, looks between he and the entity staring back at him.

MUR

I'll be right back, I promise. Take your time, it'll all be here when you wake up.

Mur leaves her partner to rest.

FADE TO BLACK...

**NO WAIT.**

**EXT. PARKING LOT - REPLAY**

THE QUIET ONES MEET:

**...OVER ENDING CREDITS, TO JAN HAMMER'S FULL MIAMI VICE THEME. *This sequence is the juicy shit the kids came to see, showing a glimpse of everything to come from LumenScape Entertainment System's new universe. Reading is optional at this time, watching it play out before your eyes will be an undeniable treat.***

**BATTLE STRIP VFX: wiping LumenScape's fantasy layer into existence from top left of screen to bottom-right.**

Pace's clunky yet appropriately grungy headset vanishes from his face as we **RAMP TO 240FPS:** his nervously wagging fingers SLOW DOWN, [*a second set of fingers flowing with each other, like an apparition*].

Pace's pupils fill in against white eyeballs: **UNCANNY VALLEY, PRECISE. VIEWING TWO WORLDS AT ONCE BUT ACCEPTING THEM AS SEPARATE EXISTENCES FEEDING INTO EACH OTHER.**

R.K rises from his knees, dusts off.

R.K

Making sure I understand this, every attack you make counts twice because you're controlling your body with your specter right?

DEAN

Yeah!. The damage he takes counts twice  
as well...if you can hit him.

R.K looks over his shoulder to see DEAN, behind him just  
ten to fifteen feet away. The boy is spirited and ready  
for trouble. PINCER ATTACK.

R.K

I can respect that.

(talking past pace)

AYE! DON'T LEAVE ME HANGING UNTIL YOU  
DECIDE IT'S DANGEROUS ENOUGH TO JUMP IN.

GOLD SPARK AND GOLD DUST fills the inside of the  
[Bronco]...then stirring from within draws [Pace's]  
focus: Audio emerges from the vehicle's shadowy interior,  
grinning mad, shivering with lunacy--

There's a bright magenta SPIDERWEB CRACK IN THE FABRIC OF  
REALITY HOVERING IN FRONT OF HIS RIGHT EYE, right where  
he cracked his vizor.

He's dragging R.K's heavy-looking [Onyx Ghost] behind  
himself, the [giant black blade kicking up gold and neon  
sea-foam sparks that have a "designed" feel to them].

In his other hand—[Pace's Sapphire Earring], which he  
happily flaunts before hiding it away in his palm.

Pace...doesn't like that at all...

DEAN

WHOA! AWESOME! CHECK MINES OUT!

Dean raises his right hand, with the speed of a viper,  
LILITH THE GIANT DEFORMED COBRA slithers over top the  
hospital and coils up behind Dean, HOOD FLARED--

BITING DOWN ON DEAN'S RIGHT HAND, dragging the boy from  
his feet. DEAN SCREAMS AND CRIES.

[PACE]

DEAN! RELAX. OPEN YOUR HAND.

Dean snuffles, calms down as the [Cobra] sets him  
down...OPENING ITS MOUTH AS DEAN OPENS HIS PALM.  
Controlled by the boy.

Audio's eyes LIGHT UP.

[PACE]

Round two...

[Pace] FEINTS—vanishing in a blur, PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE.

**THIS FIGHT WILL BE DOWN TO EACH INDIVIDUAL MANEUVER.**

Audio's [fire die] appears in his right hand, fingers dialing seven digits at warp speed. CLASPING THE DIE just as [Pace] reappears in front of AUDIO—greeted by a TOWER OF FLAME erupting in his face. LEAPING to safety.

To YANK HIS SLEEVE UP: SKIN SINGED AND RED, but he's back on the kid in a flash.

Audio stalks backward, away from [Pace] with R.K.'s [sword] dragging, dialing the same number at a rapid rate; [Pace] dodging [flame columns] erupting like landmines in his path until he's in range for an attack.

[Pace] spots an opening, warp speed dashes to Audio; 1965917; Audio's GRIN IGNITES; [PACE] realizes he's made a HUGE mistake.

Like a flamethrower from hell, Audio blows a [bone charring column of flame] from his mouth. [Pace] fails to dodge in time, hisses like a hurt cat, leaps back a solid ten feet; pulls up his COAT SLEEVE: borderline second degree burn on his very real skin.

AUDIO THE pyro CUB SCOUT [BLOWS FLAMES ALONG R.K.'s sword, it ignites], [Flame Sword].

With [Pace] nearly back on top of him, Audio HURLS THE [FLAMING SWORD] toward R.K—who catches in time to stop the [COBRA] from chomping down on him...LOCKED IN BATTLE WITH THE [GIANT SERPENT] being controlled by Dean.

[Pace] AND AUDIO FEINT together—[PACE] predicting Audio's actions...UPPERCUTTING the teen straight up into the air.

Audio GRABS HIS OWN FACE in pain, [RAINS HELLFIRE] down on [Pace] and the entire world...

FADE FROM FLAMES.