



Nerve

2.03

Written by
Joshua Legg and Joseph Burdette

Story by
Michael Heriford

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. AVALON - HATCH'S ROOM

SHARDS OF A BROKEN MIRROR litter the ground.

A DROP OF BLOOD splatters onto the glass.

THE CAMERA crawls up the leg of a man until it stops at a bleeding clenched fist. Another blood drop torrents out.

GOING HIGHER the camera stops at the profile of a face. It's HATCH. He is callous, sterile, he seems different. He is staring intently at what is in front of him.

THE CAMERA orbits around Hatch until it stops at what he is focused on.

THE OUTLINE OF A MIRROR. It is the area of the wall where there once was a mirror. A few broken shards still linger on the wall. Where the fragments are missing, the wall is unblemished in stark contrast to the tattered bulkhead surrounding it.

Hatch locks eyes with his reflection...until the scrap of mirror loosens from the wall and shatters on the ground.

DISTANT VOICE (O.S.)

Who are you?

DISTANT VOICE 2 (O.S.)

What do you want?

HATCH

(plainly)

I don't know.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. AVALON

Avalon, in all her sub par glory, hangs in space in the middle of one of the most heavily armed convoys of small ships ever seen.

The focus, however, is not our hero ship, but a small shuttle so ridiculously armored it almost looks like it should fall out of the sky any moment.

The armored shuttle slowly makes its way to the comparatively massive Avalon and patiently waits for her cargo ramp to fully descend.

INT. AVALON - CARGO BAY

ZORIN, ISAAC, SHERA, CARLISE and RIDEK all stand in the center of the cargo bay, all extremely well armed and sharing a uniform uncomfortable look.

A slow pan around reveals the cargo bay long closed and the armored shuttle slowly opening its main ramp. The scene is somber and quite tense.

Slowly, after the shuttle's ramp extends to its full length just a bare meter away from the waiting five Avalon crew, a group of six extremely tough looking human men walk out with military precision, setting themselves up at uniform points all along the ramp and standing at full readiness.

After that procession, a second group of EVEN MORE heavily armored guards emerge, though this time they carry a large metal box shaped not unlike a coffin.

RIDEK

There he is...

The second group makes their way over to Zorin, setting the casket-box down with a heavy THUD.

LEAD GUARD

You the captain?

Zorin flashes his own impressive array of weapons before replying, making sure to display his still massive size compared to the human guards.

ZORIN

I am.

LEAD GUARD

Are you prepared?

ZORIN

We are.

The lead guard nods and, with their custom military precision, the other guards kneel down next to the box and open it with a loud HISS.

They stand a moment later in unison, all five pairs of hands helping to lift up a male humanoid form from a very restful looking prone position. They lift him in an almost Frankenstein-like pose, giving the scene a very creepy air.

As we see the male for the first time, the first thing we notice is the extremely large, form-fitting white mask that covers his jaw, preventing him from even making the slightest jaw movements. The second thing we notice are the twin trails of dark spots running down the side of his face. He's a trill.

LEAD GUARD

Ezias Reia. The most wanted man in over eight systems, convicted of multiple murder, arson, burglary, animal cruelty, cannibalism and public indecency charges. Sentenced to three hundred consecutive life sentences without parole at the Renakar prison.

(beat, to Zorin)

His transfer papers.

Zorin looks down at the prisoner then at the guard, gruffly taking a very beat up PADD and reading it with disinterest.

LEAD GUARD

We're paying you a pretty large sum for this transfer, Captain Zorin. I trust you'll keep your ship safe and the cargo safely confined until you arrive at your destination.

ZORIN

Don't worry. We will.

The lead guard smiles and nods to his small army again. The six guards on the ramp quickly retreat into the shuttle while the other five surrounding the Trill quickly connect dozens of heavy metal shackles and chains onto his body. They hand a single chain-like leash to Zorin.

LEAD GUARD

Then we leave him in your charge.

The other guards all retreat in unison, entering their shuttle and closing the ramp with absolutely no pageantry.

There is a silent beat. The crew stares both at Ezias and the shuttle with profound disbelief and fear.

ISAAC

That it?

ZORIN

That's it. You'll have the cell ready in time?

ISAAC
As it'll ever be.

Shera is the first to get any closer to Zorin and the eerily quiet but fully alert Ezias.

SHERA
You sure he's awake?

EZIAS
(muffled)
Sure as shit, darlin'.

The five recoil in horror at Ezia's outburst, but quickly recover.

EZIAS
Now can someone work on getting
this mask off my fuckin' face so I
can breathe?

Shera slowly reaches forward before Zorin stops her with a calm but forceful hand on her shoulder.

ZORIN
No. As long as you're on my ship,
you stay bound.
(beat)
Completely.

EZIAS
Aww, come on. You can't believe all
those stupid charges the court put
on me. I didn't eat anyone but that
one family way back then-

ZORIN
Shut up.

There is a long, very uncomfortable beat.

EZIAS
So... what's for lunch today?

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. AVALON - GALLEY

Shera and Ridek sit alone in the cramped galley, sitting across from each other at a small table at the center of the room. A single plate of shrimp-like animals lies between them, half eaten but still strangely appetizing.

RIDEK

Okay, so maybe I can't eat sixteen at once, but I know for a fact you can't.

SHERA

Whatcha want to bet on it?

Ridek smiles darkly.

RIDEK

A week of waste extractor duty.
(beat)
With no gloves.

SHERA

You're sick.

RIDEK

Well, if you don't think you can do it...

SHERA

I'm not saying that, it's just...
(pause)
Make it thirteen and I'll do it.

RIDEK

Thirteen? That's a little unfair isn't it?

SHERA

(batting eyelids)
Oh, come on. You're a big tough guy and I'm just a little girl.

The cute staredown lasts for but a moment before Ridek sighs.

RIDEK

Fine. Thirteen. But you have to fit them all in or the bet's off.

SHERA

Yeah, sure.

There's another silent beat, but this one is tense and emotional.

RIDEK

Ready?

SHERA

Ready.

With quick and dramatic angle cuts, punctuated by very dramatic music, Shera proceeds to stuff thirteen of the shrimp critters into her mouth, puffing her cheeks comically in the process.

SHERA

(muffled)

Thirteen!

Ridek sits quietly, his mouth wide open in astonishment.

RIDEK

Wow.

Shera smiles with her shrimp-stuffed mouth, exposing some of the creatures in the process. And in another extreme display, proceeds to chew and swallow them all at once.

SHERA

(gasping)

Shouldn't have made that bet, Ridek.
I've been swallowing bigger things
than that as long as I can remember.

Once again, a silent beat.

SHERA

Did I just-?

RIDEK

Yeah, you did.

SHERA

Dammit.

RIDEK

Don't worry, I won't tell anyone.

SHERA

Thanks.

The two smile in a sweet moment before:

ZORIN'S COMM VOICE
Zorin to Shera, report to the cargo
bay.

Ridek and Shera slump in defeat.

SHERA
It's not my turn, is it?

RIDEK
Guess so. Zorin's good at
remembering that stuff.

SHERA
(whining)
But I had to do it two days ago.
Guy creeps me out.

RIDEK
Maybe he trusts you more than
anyone else. Even me.

SHERA
Yeah, I guess.

Shera quickly stands, leaving Ridek alone to watch her leave.

CUT TO:

INT. SAN FRANCISCO - HATCH'S APARTMENT

Just like it was back in the first episode, Hatch's tiny apartment is a complete mess, with every flat surface absolutely covered with piles of various possessions, mostly clothes and dishes from meals long eaten.

HATCH (O.S.)
The hell?

Hatch enters the scene from the door, wandering into a scene he hasn't seen in over a year.

HATCH
How'd I get here?

Suddenly, from the balcony window, ADELE TIERNAN of all people appears!

ADELE
You're not truly back home, Thomas.

And from the bedroom, CHALA walks into view!

CHALA
 Think of this more as... well...
 how can I put it?

ADELE
 You're hallucinating.

Hatch, surprisingly, doesn't look too shocked.

HATCH
 Thought so. Never would have two
 women in my room unless they were
 cleaning or-

CHALA
 Shut up. Even though we're in your
 head it doesn't mean we can't kick
 your ass.

HATCH
 Sorry... I guess.
 (beat)
 But why am I... we here?

ADELE
 We're here to help you, Thomas.
 (beat)
 To help you make a decision.

Hatch isn't really listening, he bends down to clean up a
 few piles of cloths right in front of him.

HATCH
 And what is that?

ADELE
 I don't know. It's your decision.

HATCH
 Real helpful.

CHALA
 Hey, it's not like we chose this
 hallucination for you, Hatch.
 You're doing this all to yourself.

HATCH
 Hey, I'm not offended or anything,
 it's just when two girls enter my
 fantasies, it's not usually to help
 me make some kind of decision.

CHALA

First, that's gross. Second, maybe all this is your brain trying to get you to do the right thing for once.

HATCH

Yeah, right.

ADELE

You've done good in the past, Thomas.

Hatch looks over the two dream women for a second before he sighs and closes his eyes.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. AVALON - HATCH'S ROOM

Hatch sits on his bed as if suddenly awoken, his hair a mess and his eyes bloodshot.

HATCH

What the hell?

He's alone and confused, but his eyes are inevitably drawn to the broken mirror on his wall.

HATCH

Whoah, how'd that happen?

Searching for some clue in his room, he finds nothing. Giving up, he slides back under his covers.

CUT TO:

INT. AVALON - CELL

The cell is clearly a makeshift prison built out of living quarters, but an admirable job was made creating a solid cell. Inside the steely bars is Ezias, still bound but conspicuously without his mask like before. He stands in the center of the room and we see that he is a very tall man, scraggily gray hair messed across his forehead, and his bright blue eyes look almost demonic. He glares at the guard on duty... KHRANTIC.

EZIAS

Have you ever tasted Andorian?

KHRANTIC

So it's true! You're a cannibal.

EZIAS

Not in the strictest sense being that cannibals only eat members of their own species. I'm not an Andorian -- or Deltan. Or Betazoid. Or Trill.

(a pause, realizing his words)

Oh wait. I guess I am.

KHRANTIC

I can't believe you!

Khrantic may appear mentally slow, but he clearly has a sense of morality.

EZIAS

What, that I eat meat to survive? Or that I don't have the same arbitrary lust for life as the rest of you people? What desire do you have to live? To scrape out a meager life on this tub of filth?

KHRANTIC

I'm perfectly happy.

EZIAS

You lie. I can always tell when an Andorian is lying. It's the eyebrows that give it away, believe it or not. I already know you better than your probably know yourself! You long to be like me! You desperately want something more in your life than scrubbing plasma ducts all day. You want what I have: adventure. To try something new, to live a life of excitement! But I'm sure you were brought up to believe that you can't have that life, that you must adhere to society and it's rules and suppress that longing to spiral out into new, uncharted waters. I've done that forbidden exploration and I'm proud, no matter what the rulers of my world deem as 'moral' and you want that too! Live life to its fullest, eat to live! Eat the living!

Khrantic looks mildly confused but mostly shocked at Ezias' outburst. There is a long, awkward silence.

EZIAS (CONT'D)

Now that that's out, Andorian isn't that good. Meat's real stringy.

Khrantic can't help but bury his face in his hands. The door opens and Shera enters with Zorin.

KHRANTIC

Oooh, joy. I can leave now!

Khrantic stands and prepares to leave, but Zorin stops him.

ZORIN

(whispering)

You didn't talk to him, did you?

A look of guilt washes across his face.

KHRANTIC

He did most of the talking.

ZORIN

You aren't supposed to talk to him, only shoot his hide if he tries something. It happens again, I'll put you in there with him with seasoning and marinade.

He nods in anxiety and Zorin allows him to leave. The beefy Hirogen approaches the bars and stares Ezias down.

ZORIN

I took the mask off under the conditions that you keep the yapping to a minimum.

Ezias smiles and points to Zorin.

EZIAS

You never expected either of us to meet that condition. You KNEW that I wouldn't obey that and knew you'd end up putting the muzzle back on. Thing is, I believe you're regretting taking it off in the first place.

ZORIN

Damn straight.

EZIAS

You think that I might be leading you into some devious plot. I talk to your Andorian friend, you conclude that you have to put the muzzle back on, but then what? What am I planning now? Do you dare enter this cell and find out?

Zorin looks back to Shera, who shrugs tentatively.

ZORIN

I took the mask off as a sign of good faith. We have a deal, but if you keep yammering on and blow this deal to anyone else on this ship, I'll come into that cell and kill you myself. Devious plots be damned.

EZIAS

But then you wouldn't get that reward.

ZORIN

You murdered children. Destroyed lives. Your death is reward enough for me if it comes to that.

EZIAS

What would your crew think?

ZORIN

Stick to the deal and we won't have to find out and you can spend the rest of your life living out your sick life in holo-tubules.

Ezias nods. Zorin returns to Shera, who's loading her own large rifle.

ZORIN(CONT'D)

I know he won't stay quiet, but I expect you to.

SHERA

Won't utter a peep.

ZORIN

Good. You know our deal with him.

SHERA

Of course.

Zorin nods and looks back at the criminal they're hauling.

He leaves and Ezias' eyes are locked on Shera for a moment.

EZIAS

Have you ever tasted Andorian?

Shera cocks the gun and points it at him menacingly.

CUT TO:

INT. AVALON - GALLEY

The door slides open and Hatch walks in, stretching his arms and letting out a large yawn. He proceeds to the pantry and ruffles around a bit, returning it a bowl of dark soup. He eyes it.

HATCH

If I weren't so damn hungry, this would look sick.

He sits at a rickety table near a few windows and begins to down it, clearly growing more accustomed to the taste. Suddenly, a hand appears on his shoulder. He jumps up in mild fright! It's Adele.

ADELE

Jumpy Thomas?

He rolls his eyes at her.

HATCH

Not you again. Look, I'm even asleep. You don't need to hang around.

She raises an eyebrow at this remark as he takes to his food again.

HATCH(CONT'D)

I'm not perfect, but I know I've never talked to myself before. I don't need you here to make it seem like I'm not doing just that. You're still just in my head.

Adele sits across from Hatch and looks completely lost. He looks at her, then around the room.

HATCH(CONT'D)

Where's Chala?

She can barely contain a rising laughter.

ADELE

Hatch, I'm not a figment of your imagination. I'm right here.

HATCH

Prove it!

ADELE

Prove it? It's the truth!

She touches his hand. He seems to accept this as proof enough, realizing his mistake.

HATCH

Oh...

(a beat)

Shit.

ADELE

Please don't tell me your dreaming of me and Chala...

(realizing her words, disgusted)

Oh god!

HATCH

No! No, nothing like that. I'm not a perv. I just woke up, didn't know if I was sleep walking or not.

It's obvious he's trying to cover up.

ADELE

I've been meaning to talk with you. How have you been holding up lately?

HATCH

Fine I guess. Why?

ADELE

Well, everyone else seems to be taking all the stress of life lately in different ways. Just wanted to see how you were doing.

HATCH

You the counselor on board now?

ADELE

It would seem like I'm getting there. Do remember when we were left on Xantoras a few months back? How I said that we've been...

Suddenly, Hatch stands up and turns away from Adele.

HATCH

(urgent)

Hey, I gotta go. I'm late for my duty shift today.

ADELE

I thought today was your day off.

HATCH

No day off for Thomas Edward Hatch, I'm a busy guy. I'll catch you later Adele.

He promptly exists. Adele extremely suspicious at Hatch's sudden departure, but remains content, almost like this was expected.

CUT TO:

INT. AVALON - HATCH'S ROOM

Thomas stumbles in, panting slightly. He shakes his head and looks annoyed at what has transpired. He steps into the middle of his room and looks at the shattered mirror in front of him, his distorted reflection lingers in our sight for a moment. Chala appears behind him.

CHALA

How long will you keep this up?

Running every time someone wants to reminisce?

HATCH

As long as it takes I guess.

CHALA

As long as it takes to do what? What's your plan?

HATCH

I really don't know. How should I?

CHALA

(louder)

You're the one intent on going through with it, you should know!

He turns to face her, his expression angry. She's no longer there. He nods to the empty room around him.

HATCH

I should. I should know what I'm doing here.

Looking back to the mirror.

HATCH
Who am I now?

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. AVALON - CORRIDOR

CARLISE and SIREN walk down one of Avalon's short hallways, sharing a rare peaceful moment.

CARLISE

So I heard you have decided to keep that bun in the oven.

Siren nods, not entirely comfortable with the conversation.

SIREN

Word travels fast, doesn't it?

CARLISE

There's not much else to do but gossip when the only job Zorin will take is escort service for a single nutjob. I keep telling him there's plenty of other shit out there to smuggle, but he just won't listen.

SIREN

Maybe he's concerned you'll smoke or drink our entire cargo away before we get to port.

CARLISE

Hey, now that's a low blow! I've been clean for six.... two... an hour.

SIREN

Sure you have.

The two women continue to walk for a moment more.

CARLISE

So it it true?

SIREN

Yeah, I guess.

CARLISE

Even though the baby could... y'know... kill ya?

Siren stops for a bit, considering her words.

SIREN

There are some things in life you just have to do, you know? I don't always think I know why, either, it's just something I know is right.

CARLISE

Wow, not what I expected to hear from you.

SIREN

Now what's that supposed to mean?

CARLISE

Don't take it critically. I just meant... you've learned... a lot from recent events.

SIREN

Maybe I have.

The two are suddenly interrupted when Hatch storms by, his face curled with frustration.

CARLISE

It's polite to say "Excuse me", doucebag.

Hatch doesn't stop, he just turns around for a moment.

HATCH

Sorry.

Hatch disappears down the hall.

SIREN

Does he seem different to you?

CARLISE

Sovari kept him longer than any of us, and only your bother's intervention saved him. There's no telling what that poor guy's been through lately.

Siren shakes her head in pity before beginning to walk once more.

As she does, the camera makes a sudden, jarring and unexpected move down the corridor along Hatch's path, finally catching up with him after half a second.

He's standing right in front of the only window in the area, staring not into the empty space outside, but two reflections perfectly mirrored behind him.

CHALA

You'd better decide quick, Tom.
You're not getting any younger.

ADELE

You must decide the right thing to do.

HATCH

What if I can't?

"Adele" smirks.

ADELE

You can't do anything else. No matter what you think of yourself, you know you'll do the right thing...

(beat)

When you figure out what it is.

CUT TO:

INT. AVALON - CELL

Shera stands right before Ezias, both of them locked in a mortal stare.

EZIAS

Five hours and not a peep. You're a loyal one, aren't you?

Shera is silent, she just keeps the gun on the prisoner.

EZIAS

Five hours. You must be thirsty. Or at least have to take a nasty piss. You see, I'm lucky. Your generous captain gave me a nice clean bucket to do my business in. Too bad someone's gonna have to clean it up eventually.

Still silent. Ezias groans in frustration.

EZIAS

Fuck, girl! When is your shift gonna end so I can get an easier mark?

On perfect cue, Hatch suddenly appears. Shera turns in surprise but keeps her gun trained on Ezias.

SHERA
 (whispered)
 Don't you have the day off?

HATCH
 (normal)
 No, not really. I'm just here to help.

Shera stands quietly for a moment, slowly starting to squirm in extreme discomfort.

After a moment and a slight squeal, Shera suddenly **SHOVES** the gun into Hatch's hands and begins to run out of the room.

HATCH
 Wait, what?

SHERA
 Gotta take a piss. I'll be right back, promise!

Shera's gone in a second.

Hatch looks Ezias over warily, his unease plain on his face.

EZIAS
 So you're the little bitch everyone talks about.
 (mockingly)
 Oh, I was tortured and kidnapped and wah wah wah.

Hatch slowly raises the gun.

HATCH
 Shut the fuck up.

EZIAS
 Oh, so you can speak after all, not like that mute little girl.

HATCH
 I won't repeat myself.

Suddenly, Ezias' voice is cut off by:

CHALA (O.S.)
 He can help.

Her voice disappears suddenly.

EZIAS
 You hear me, son?

HATCH

Not really.

EZIAS

I said, I never tasted human before, but I've heard the rumors. Greasy, fatty, too red for someone as conscious of their figure as me.

Hatch just stares at the odd comment.

EZIAS

Oh, I guess they didn't tell you my past, huh?

HATCH

No, they told me. I just don't really care.

EZIAS

This one's got brass balls, doesn't he?

HATCH

I could make a really bad pun right now, but I won't.

Ezias is silent for a moment, a silent rage seeming to build behind his eyes, threatening to explode at any second...

...Until he bursts with peals of laughter!

EZIAS

Goddamnit, you're good.

Ezias laughs for a bit before noticing Hatch's depressed mood.

EZIAS

Looks like something's getting your panties tied.

Hatch doesn't reply, he just holds the gun on Ezias steadily.

EZIAS

Ever hear about Reia?

HATCH

No.

Ezias smiles coolly.

EZIAS

Well, if your eyes are as bad as they say they are, you probably don't notice these little black spots on my side.

HATCH

Huh, you're right. Didn't see them.

EZIAS

'Means my species was blessed to evolve right next to another sentient form of life, ungrateful little-ass slugs that fit in us where babies usually grow in others.

HATCH

That sucks.

EZIAS

For the girls, yeah. But the good thing is these slugs live for, like, forever, so we get all their memories and stuff when we get all bonded together and shit.

HATCH

Sounds gross.

EZIAS

Yeah, but I feel kind of special that my little slug is over two thousand years old.

Hatch is suddenly on his feet, interested and intent on Ezias. The gun is almost forgotten.

HATCH

What?

EZIAS

Knew that would get your attention.

(beat)

Yeah, Reia is the stupid thing festering in my gut, supposedly my first punishment as dying slugs are supposed to emit poison or something.

(beat, dark grin)

Hasn't died yet.

HATCH

And you have all its memories?

EZIAS

Sure do, but most of them are pretty fuzzy. 'Specially the really early stuff... stuff from the 23rd century.

HATCH

(desperately)

What? What do you remember?

Ezias stands cool and silent.

EZIAS

First, you gotta get rid of that gun.

Hatch is uneasy for a moment, staring both at Ezias and the pistol in his hand. After a tense beat, he gingerly drops it at his feet.

HATCH

Tell me everything.

Ezias' smile only grows.

As he begins to speak, we slowly:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AVALON - BRIDGE

Zorin, Siren and AZEL are all present on the bridge, staring at the small viewscreen. It's easily apparent they have a bird's eye view of the cell and Hatch's conversation.

We join just as Hatch drops his gun.

ZORIN

THAT IDIOT!

AZEL

There was a reason we all agreed Hatch wouldn't guard him.

ZORIN

Have a long talk with your cousin about following my orders when you next see her, Azel.

Azel doesn't flinch or bat an eye.

AZEL

Will do.

The trio watches as Hatch edges closer to Ezias, hanging on every inaudible word.

ZORIN
Dammit, Ava, turn your speakers up!

CUT BACK TO:

INT. AVALON - CELL

Hatch is mere inches from Ezias' cold face, his eyes wider than a child's.

HATCH
...And then? What happened?

EZIAS
I told you, for the millionth time,
the little fucker in me doesn't
remember the rest! He just
remembers some holovid of your girl
and that captain guy getting
arrested for killing you.
(beat)
Melanie, wasn't it?

HATCH
Yeah, yes! Arrested?

EZIAS
Arrested. For killing that guy- you.

HATCH
I can't believe it... she... that
bitch.

EZIAS
Sorry, dude.

Hatch's eyes move past Ezias, momentarily lost in his own world.

CHALA (O.S.)
Stop dicking around and talk about it!

ADELE (O.S.)
You know the truth. You must decide.

CHALA (O.S.)
DO IT!

The sudden, harsh words snap him out of the reverie.

HATCH
Have you ever... never mind.

Ezias is suddenly intrigued and presses closer to his bars.

EZIAS

What?

HATCH

No, it's nothing.

EZIAS

No, come on. I've been doing all the talking. Would be nice if someone said something for a change.

Hatch is silent.

CHALA (O.S.)

(very distant)

DO IT!

ADELE (O.S.)

(very distant)

DECIDE!

HATCH

It's just that... I know you're this horrible killer and all, but have you ever... or did your slug-thing... make you think twice?

EZIAS

What?

HATCH

Did you ever have second thoughts about doing... what you did?

EZIAS

Why, you thinking of killing anyone?

Hatch is shocked, clearly confused by the question.

HATCH

What?

EZIAS

(smiling)

Don't play these games with me. C'mon, fess up. You're thinking of killing someone, aren't you?

Hatch is still, the question disturbing him like no other.

Suddenly we:

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION CELL - FLASHBACK

Hatch is alone in a small concrete room, wearing his normal clothes but sporting many of the same injuries we saw on him in 2x01.

SOVARI enters the scene after a moment.

SOVARI
I trust you took this time to
decide your answer?

HATCH
(forcefully)
I'm not gonna do it, you bastard!

SOVARI
But they left you for dead. They
forgot about you back on that
station, took that undeserving
clone and left the real Thomas
Hatch rot in our clutches.

HATCH
That's a lie. My friends- Zorin,
wouldn't do that.

Sovari looks genuinely interested.

HATCH
Didn't think I'd figure it out, did
you? I know what I am.

Sovari smiles and takes a contemplative pose.

SOVARI
Ah, but do you know WHO you are?

Hatch looks at the Cult leader.

HATCH
Uh, duh.

SOVARI
No. You don't. You may be the
physical representation of an
aberration to the Prophet's will
physically, but mentally, your very
soul, is different.

HATCH
Not following.

SOVARI
Come, I'm going to take you with me
to the Hringhorni. My command ship.
We're going to meet some of your
so-called friends.

Sovari moves forward and, almost gently, unties Hatch's restraints and allows him to stand.

SOVARI
So, would you like to hear a story?

Sovari leads Hatch out of the room as we:

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. AVALON - CELL

Ezias fills the frame as Hatch looks more and more confused.

EZIAS
I can tell. After two thousand
fucking years of life in this
shithole galaxy, I can tell. You've
got the killer instinct in ya.

A FLASH!

INT. MEDICAL ROOM

Hatch is lying naked on a white bed, a small group of doctors hovering over him. The familiar Cult symbol hangs on a distant wall.

DOCTOR 1
His synapses are firing normally.
He might revive soon.

DOCTOR 2
Sovari did a number on him, didn't he?

DOCTOR 1
Sure did. It's a wonder he's even
alive.

ANOTHER FLASH!

INT. SOVARI'S CHAMBERS

Hatch stands before Sovari, a blank look on his face.

SOVARI
Who are you?

FLASH!

INT. CULT BEDROOM

Hatch, dressed in white robes, lies peacefully on a clean bed.
Slowly, a man in red robes walks in, gently nudging Hatch to awake.

CULT MAN
Mister Hatch.

Hatch's eyes flutter open.

CULT MAN
We have much to discuss.

FLASH!

INT. AVALON - CELL

HATCH
No... no... it can't be...

EZIAS
What?

Hatch is totally gone from Ezias, almost blindly stumbling about as the realization washes over him.

HATCH
No! NO! No no no no no no!

EZIAS
Kid, you're scaring me.

FLASH!

INT. SOVARI'S CHAMBERS

SOVARI
What do you want?

Hatch, still with the blank look on his face, replies simply:

HATCH
To destroy Avalon.

SOVARI
Why?

HATCH

Because you- the Prophet- wills it
to be so.

SOVARI

Excellent.

FLASH!

INT. AVALON - CELL

Ezias, still confused, begins taking delight in Hatch's
distress.

EZIAS

There's something lurking behind
there, boy. I see it. I bet there's
something to you not even you know.
Something deep down and forgotten.
Like a memory you've forced down.

(short laugh)

Goddamn you're the best guard I've
ever had!

Hatch is still immobile, staring into space with intent.
Chala and Adele's voices still ring out, but are now fading
away. Hatch's confusion slowly dies as he sorts the thoughts
out.

HATCH

I know what to do now!

EZIAS

Come again?

Hatch walks up to Ezias with a predatory move, picking up
the gun and shoving it into the criminal's face with
violence previously unseen.

HATCH

For helping me choose what I must
do, I'll let you live for now.

(beat)

But you're unfortunately just as
doomed as the rest of us.

Ezias' joking demeanor is gone, replaced with the cold fire
we saw with Khrantic.

EZIAS

Oh this is some bullshit. You lure me in with getting me to talk and have a good time then you come in all psychobabble trying to get me to crack. Prolly trying to get rid of my holotube time, aren't ya? Trying to see if I'm not stable enough for the treatment?

Ezias is livid, pacing like an animal. Hatch just stares. The voices of Adele and Chala keep repeating through the entire scene.

EZIAS

The fucking truth is I never looked back, not once. From that first little vole I tore apart to the last Bolian I ate on the street, I never once thought twice. I enjoy what I do. I live my life, you schemin' fucker. I listened to only my own heart and not that touchy-feely "don't hurt others" crap society shoves down all our throats. My heart, my soul, is the only thing that rules my fuckin' body, not some legal code, not some government prison system. 'Cause you know what? The killing is just half of it. You wanna know the other half?

(beat)

It's the freedom. The liberation. I know I'm better than all you fucking sheep 'cause I live my life. You follow your little rules, do your little jobs on this piece of shit spaceship, just waiting for your miserable lives to end.

(dramatic pause)

And then there's me. I'm free. I do what I want, when I want because I know that's the only way to live. The only purpose in life. You think the uncountable not-thinking species in this galaxy live by rules already written in ancient books and moral codes? No! They live. They live to eat, to fuck, to sleep, and to just keep living.

(MORE)

EZIAS (CONT'D)

That was the first thing I learned and will be the last thing I think of when my time's up. And you know what? I'm gonna die with a smile on my face 'cause I know I lived a life. Yeah, I ended a few others but that's just 'cause they were in my way. No, none of them really deserved it, but does the prey deserve to die when the predator eats them?

Hatch just stares as Ezias vents, hanging onto every word.

Eventually, the Trill calms down, staring back at Hatch.

EZIAS

Okay, your staring's just creeping me out now.

Hatch is silent for a long moment, conscious enough to move his eyes away from Ezias. It's clear he's in his own world... again.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SAN FRANCISCO - HATCH'S APARTMENT

Hatch is alone in his apartment, surprisingly, completely clean and spotless. Adele and Chala are on either side of him, their hands placed gently on his shoulders.

CHALA

Figure it out, yet?

ADELE

Have you chosen?

HATCH

I... think so.

Hatch slowly begins to move past the dream women, to his closed front door.

ADELE

What have you decided?

Hatch closes his eyes for a moment before opening them slowly, almost menacingly.

HATCH

What I was meant to do.

He opens the door and, into a blinding light, steps out.

CUT TO:

INT. AVALON - BRIDGE

Zorin is on his feet as he watches the recent events. The sound is on just as Ezias' speech ends.

ZORIN

Goddammit! Get Hatch out of there now!

Azel nods and begins to walk out when:

ZORIN(CONT'D)

Wait.

(beat)

Shit, I'll go with you.

On the viewscreen, Hatch simply walks out as a ranting Ezias jumps and rails against his bars, the gun on the floor again, but frustratingly out of reach.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. AVALON - CARGO BAY

Hatch is alone in the cargo bay, sliding his hand on the not-so-sleek lines of his shuttle and the various cargo containers littered around it.

Slowly, he moves to the rear of the shuttle and a small port that looks hastily welded on, but almost completely invisible to the naked eye. With a tug, the port is exposed to reveal a good sized container filled to the brim with explosives and other dangerous looking implements.

Hatch is almost shocked that he's made this discovery. He calms and takes a few small bombs into his hands before standing to full height, looking into the dented window of his shuttle. Chala and Adele appear in the reflection.

ADELE

Are you sure this is your path? Is this who you are?

CHALA

Is it what you want?

HATCH

Yes.

ADELE

You're still fighting yourself, Thomas. Even though Sovari might have convinced you in some base way that this is the right path, you are still Thomas Hatch. You know this is wrong.

CHALA

Screw that. You're the clone. A cheap copy bought by the Cult for a suicide mission. Who knows where the real Tom is by now? The question is how are you going to make your mark on this world?

ADELE

Who cares if you were cloned? You have his memories, his thoughts, his feelings-

HATCH
But not his soul.

Chala smiles. Adele looks deeply saddened.

ADELE
So this is your path?

HATCH
I can't do anything else. It's what
I was meant to do. What I was...
bought for.

ADELE
But you could do so much better!

CHALA
What better way to make your mark
than going out with a blaze of
glory!? The real Hatch is never
going to experience that!

ADELE
There is better glory than killing
all of your friends.

HATCH
I have no friends. They're are all HIS.

Hatch places a single explosive on his own shuttle.

ADELE
Please, think about what you're doing.

HATCH
I have. This is all I have.

Hatch finishes placing the bomb and looks up quickly. Adele
is gone. Chala remains.

CHALA
If it's any consolation, I think
you're doing the right thing.

HATCH
Whatever.

Hatch walks away. As he does, Chala disappears like a wisp
of smoke.

INT. AVALON - CELL

Zorin and Azel burst into the small room just as Ezias'
fingertips brush against the discarded gun.

Zorin is over to the hand in a split second and stomps down hard. Ezias cries out loudly.

EZIAS
The hell was that for!?

Zorin doesn't reply, instead, he reaches down and pulls Ezias to his feet with the injured hand, Ezias is nearly in tears.

ZORIN
What were my rules?

EZIAS
Hey, I didn't start any of this!

ZORIN
Wrong. You could have kept your mouth shut. You could have kept nice and still on the little cot we provided. You could have spent this journey in peace.

Ezias nervously smiles.

EZIAS
I am who I am.

Zorin growls and shoves Ezias back through the cell with his still injured hand.

EZIAS (CONT'D)
YOU FUCKER!

Zorin turns and, without pity or compassion, pulls out his gun and shoots Ezias in the leg. The prisoner drops to his knees instantly.

ZORIN
You broke the rules of our agreement. I have not. You're going to keep quiet for the rest of our journey or so help me, I'll kill you right here.

Even though he's cradling his wounded hand and leg, Ezias still smiles.

EZIAS
A guy after my own heart.

Zorin grunts and moves to Azel. He shoves his large gun into the smaller man's arms.

ZORIN

I don't care what he says or does,
if he so much as begins to speak,
shoot him.

AZEL

(hopeful)

In the leg?

ZORIN

The heart.

Azel looks downtrodden as Zorin moves to exit.

AZEL

Hey, where you goin'?

ZORIN

To save my ship.

Azel looks puzzled as Zorin exits. Ezias simply nurses his wounds.

INT. AVALON - ENGINEERING

Avalon's engineering is almost completely empty, save a single figure snooping around the warp sphere.

Hatch is not smiling as he places another bomb onto Avalon's warp core, in fact, he's crying.

Suddenly, a beep sounds over the comm.

AVA

Tom, just what in the nine hells
are you doing!?

HATCH

Shut up, Ava.

AVA

Are those- are those... bombs?
Isaac did this to me once, took a
week to get them off. Id rather not
go through that again if you don't
mind.

HATCH

Shut up.

AVA
 And what's with all this damn
 rudeness? C'mon, you can tell me if
 this is some kind of joke. You know
 me and jokes.

HATCH
 Shut UP!

In an unexpected fit, Hatch HURLS a timer at the sole
 speaker Ava's voice emanates from.

Ava is, expectedly, shocked.

AVA
 Um... yeah. I think I'm just gonna
 tell Zorin where you are now.

Hatch doesn't respond.

CUT TO:

INT. AVALON - CORRIDOR

Zorin tears down Avalon's halls, armed with two pistols and
 an array of other weapons on his belt. He's ready for anything.

As he walks, the comm beeps:

AVA
 If you're looking for Hatch, he's
 in engineering.

ZORIN
 Thank you.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. AVALON - ENGINEERING

Hatch is alone, fully in tears as he stares at Avalon's warp
 sphere, now completely covered in an array of bombs and
 other explosives, all of them connected to a small detonator
 he idly palms.

ADELE (O.S.)
 Who are you?

CHALA (O.S.)
 What do you want?

Hatch begins to stop his crying as time passes, overcoming
 his fear with impressive will.

As he stares into the warp sphere, a ghostly image of Sovari appears.

SOVARI
The aberration. The abomination.
Destroy it. Destroy it now!

But his image is soon joined by Adele's.

ADELE
You choose what you want. You're
better than this!

And then Chala.

CHALA
It's what you know is right!

And then, unexpectedly, Ezias!

EZIAS
Do what I know you're itchin' to do.
Get it over with.

The four faces drift in and out of focus, repeating their message over and over again until:

ZORIN
HATCH!

Zorin's real reflection destroys all the fake ones, his angry countenance and pointed gun a frightening sight.

ZORIN
I should have known there was
something different about you.

Hatch smiles almost like Ezias.

HATCH
When did you figure it out?

ZORIN
I think I always knew. From the
first moment we took you on board.

Zorin cocks his gun, a menacing sound if there ever was one. Hatch only laughs in his face.

HATCH
Too bad it's not that simple.

ZORIN

It's not. It was Pau'Zauric. Before he destroyed the Confederate ship, he told us who you really are. I didn't want to believe it, but now I see he wasn't lying.

Hatch nods.

ZORIN(CONT'D)

When was the switch? Where's the real Hatch?

Hatch laughs in an eerie parallel to Ezias'.

HATCH

The very man who exposed me, Zauric, brought me onboard because Sovari knew the Avalon would keep flying. The Avalon, the slipperiest little shit in the whole galaxy. Every time the Cult come near and grab hold of this ship, you somehow manage to get away. I was the last resort. Remember Chala? She took the real Hatch after the Rosani mission and Zauric brought me onboard after the Phoenix incident as part of his Cult orders.

Zorin nods.

HATCH(CONT'D)

As for your real Hatch, doesn't really matter. It's been weeks since he's been with the Cult.

ZORIN

Tell me where he is.

HATCH

You'll never find him. In His name I swear your precious friend is light years behind us, rotting in a cell alone, cold and wishing he never was born.

Zorin points his weapon at Hatch again.

HATCH(CONT'D)

Sorry. You'll have to kill me first.

He raises the detonator menacingly.

ZORIN

Fine.

In slow motion, Zorin moves forward, intent on capturing Hatch. Hatch, on the other hand, quickly raises his detonator and begins to press it, Zorin is not fast enough!

When Hatch suddenly falls to the ground, dead.

Siren stands behind Zorin, not holding a gun but her open palm, with each silvery tentacle outstretched into Hatch's head.

The detonator drops like a stone.

Back in real time, Zorin turns to see his savior.

ZORIN

Thank you.

SIREN

You know what this means, though.

ZORIN

Indeed.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AVALON - AIRLOCK

The familiar airlock of Avalon is devoid of life until:

EZIAS (O.S.)

What the hell is this!?!

Zorin and Ezias quickly come into view from down the hall, the Hirogen bodily carrying the Trill, easily restraining him.

ZORIN

You broke my deal.

EZIAS

And you shot me!

ZORIN

I've decided on a better punishment.

Ezias tries to squirm but fails both in pain and Zorin's vastly superior strength.

EZIAS

This isn't fair!

ZORIN

I don't care.

Zorin reaches the airlock and dumps Ezias into it. Siren and Azel slowly appear behind him.

ZORIN

We talked. I should not have taken this job. You added an unstable element to an already damaged family. I just regret not seeing it sooner.

EZIAS

The fuck are you talking about!?

ZORIN

I'll accept the loss of pay from failing to deliver you to your captors.

EZIAS

You're insane! Come on! Don't do this!

ZORIN

You never deserved the holotubules.

EZIAS

Please! No.

Zorin locks eyes with Ezias for a moment.

ZORIN

I'm doing what's best for my family.

Zorin presses the airlock button without pity, watching the shocked and still blood stained body of Ezias drift into space.

Zorin turns to Siren and Azel and sighs heavily.

AZEL

That was pretty cold.

ZORIN

I know, but he nearly destroyed my ship.

AZEL

(confused)

Uh, no, that clone-Hatch-thing-whatever did. And Siren did her shiny hand trick to get him.

ZORIN

Ezias planted the seed in his already damaged mind. This was just another Cult plot against us.

(MORE)

ZORIN (CONT'D)

(beat)

Just like Rosani...

Zorin turns on his heel and begins to stride down the hall.

SIREN

So what do we do now?

Zorin doesn't turn around.

ZORIN

We get the family together.

Siren nods and follows Zorin out.

AZEL

Does this mean I don't get his room,
now?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SPACE

Avalon flies forward with intent, her warp engines flaring to life with all their awesome power.

Quickly, Avalon makes a turn to show off these impressive engines before she bursts with intense red and green light.

And then she's gone.

AZEL(V.O.)

Anyone know where we're going?

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE