

# ***DARK MATTER***

Episode #109

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TEASE

[PREVIOUSLY ON: ONE discovers that THREE is a suspect in his wife's murder, SIX fails in his bid to avenge himself on the terrorist Leader, discover FIVE has their memories buried in her subconscious, delve into FIVE's subconscious and see scene where Emperor beats FOUR for going easy on his half-brother while the Commander of the Royal Guards looks on, FOUR discovers the Emperor dead and the Empress blames him, FOUR contacts his half-brother: "Hello, brother"].

1 VFX - SPACE

1

The Raza hurtles through FTL.

TWO (PRE-LAP)

Okay, let's go over the new supplies.

2 INT. SHIP - MESS

2

TWO, tablet in hand, oversees inventory of the various things they picked up on their last space station stopover. ONE, FIVE, and SIX are also in attendance as they go over the various boxed and packaged items -

TWO looks down into FIVE's box -

TWO

Did you get the parts you were looking for?

FIVE

They didn't have a compatible regenerator assembly, so I thought we might go with these lithium oxide canisters instead.

TWO

Is that a yes?

FIVE

Yes. I also got these welding goggles that are both practical AND cool.

She dons her new goggles.

TWO

If you say so.

TWO throws a look to SIX.

TWO (CONT'D)

Whaddaya got?

He holds up a whack of packaged meats.

SIX

Real meat. Finally. And protein packs. I'm putting these on ice.

And he heads into the back as TWO nods at ONE, who explains what's in his box -

ONE

New stock for the infirmary: sterile gauze, sutures, antibiotics, and happy pills.

TWO inputs, as THREE enters with a crate and sets it down on the table.

TWO

What's that?

THREE

Whiskey. Wasn't on the list, but I remembered for you.

He starts unpacking the bottles. ONE finds himself staring at THREE, who notices.

THREE (CONT'D)

What are you looking at?

ONE looks away, saying nothing.

TWO consults her tablet.

TWO

Someone was supposed to pick up seeds for hydroponics.

FIVE

That was Four.

TWO keys her comm.

TWO

Four, this is Two. Please respond.

(beat)

Four, where are you?

Still nothing. She exchanges curious looks with the others.

3 INT. SHIP - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE FOUR'S QUARTERS 3

SIX looks on as THREE hits the console. The door slides open to reveal - an empty room. THREE keys his comm.

THREE  
He's not in his room.

4 INT. SHIP - TRAINING ROOM 4

ONE, TWO, and FIVE in the empty room - the katanas conspicuously missing off the wall. TWO keys her comm.

TWO  
He's not here either. And his blades  
are gone.

ONE  
So where the hell is he?

5 EXT. PLANET - FOREST -- DAY 5

We hear approaching footsteps and FIND - FOUR trudging through the snow. We SWING AROUND TO REVEAL -

He is headed toward a solitary figure standing in a clearing. We recognize AKITA (MASAHIDA), Commander of the Ishida Royal Guard. FOUR approaches, then stops, a good five yards away.

FOUR  
Where's my brother?

AKITA  
I'm sorry, Uji. He couldn't make  
it. I'm here in his place.

FOUR  
I don't like surprises.

AKITA  
Then my apologies - because you're  
not going to like this one.

And suddenly, a half dozen members of the Ishida Royal Guard, armed with swords and sidearms, come out of hiding. FOUR is completely surrounded. And as they close in we -

END TEASE

ACT ONE

6 EXT. PLANET - FOREST CLEARING -- DAY

6

FOUR is surrounded by a half dozen members of the Ishida Royal Guard armed with swords and sidearms. Akita, their Commander, stands some five yards away, facing him.

AKITA

Drop your weapons and step back.

The royal guards stand ready to move in. Very carefully, FOUR reaches down to his belt buckle - CLICK - and holds something up: a gadget that resembles a small deck.

FOUR

I have a surprise of my own.

FOUR shuts his eyes. Akita, realizes, closes his eyes and brings his arm up to shield his face -

AKITA

Shield your eyes!

Before the royal guard can act, FOUR triggers the device. It emits a blazing white FLASH. The guards are temporarily blinded. As they react - so does FOUR. In a series of QUICK CUTS he: draws his blade, delivers multiple slashes.

ON Akita standing apart, lowering his arm and blinking -

AKITA'S POV of the suffusive brightness fading to reveal a tableau: FOUR, in a fighting stance, katanas lowered; the surrounding royal guards frozen in place. Beat. They all drop, leaving FOUR standing alone.

The two combatants eye each other intently: Akita, hand on pommel, ready to draw; FOUR, swords lowered, waiting for him.

7 INT. SHIP - BRIDGE

7

ONE, TWO, and FIVE discuss while the Android brings up the ship's schematics on one of the screens.

ONE

Most of the time, he just blends into the background. You don't even notice him until he speaks up or takes the last of the carrots.

(MORE)

ONE (CONT'D)

(beat)

Maybe next time we need to implement  
some sort of buddy system.

TWO

It wasn't an oversight. I remember  
him coming back from the station.

SIX (O.S.)

So do I.

THREE and SIX walk in.

SIX (CONT'D)

He WAS here.

THREE

Well not anymore. Unless he's hiding  
somewhere.

Like it's the stupidest thing he's ever heard -

ONE

Why the hell would he be hiding?

FIVE

I sometimes hide out in the vents  
when I want to be alone to think.  
And get away from all the shouting.

ANDROID

I'm tracking the location of his  
comm.

It lights up on the ship's schematic.

ANDROID (CONT'D)

It's here.

TWO

Onboard the ship?

ANDROID

On the bridge.

FIVE spots it on a console and holds it up, all smiles.

FIVE

Found it!

SIX

He left his comm but packed up his gear. Okay, it's pretty clear he wanted us to leave without him.

FIVE

But why? He seemed happy with us.

THREE

He seemed nothing. That guy was harder to read than that book you lent me.

ONE

That book is a classic.

THREE

Whatever. The pig is a wimp and that spider's a know-it-all.

TWO

We should go back for him.

SIX

So that what? We can confirm what we already know?

ONE

He owes us an explanation.

THREE

No one owes anyone on this ship anything. He's gone. Let it go. Let HIM go.

Beat. TWO and FIVE exchange knowing looks.

ONE

What?

TWO

There's something you should know...

8

EXT. PLANET - FOREST CLEARING -- DAY

8

FOUR and Akita face-off. FOUR has his sword drawn and waits as - Akita's hand hovers over the pommel of his own weapon. Beat. Beat. Beat. Suddenly, Akita draws and rushes forward. FOUR adjusts his stance in expectation.

The two clash in a crescendo of steel and fury - thrusting, slashing, parrying, pressing, countering. They're both damn good, their movements fluid, their melee almost dance-like.

FOUR scores first blood, nicking his opponent's left shoulder, but Akita spins off the blow and thrusts. FOUR parries the blow and back-pedals. Akita presses, gets in a score of his own - a nick to FOUR'S left arm, then a slash to his side that FOUR manages to avoid for the most part.

It's a hard-fought battle. Both combatants are almost flawless. Almost. Akita presses. FOUR wards off a series of blows - until the last one catches him, a slash on his right thigh. He winces, lowers his guard and -

Akita disarms him, sending his katanas flying off into the snow, then delivers a backhanded face shot with his pommel that drops FOUR to his knees. It takes FOUR a couple of seconds to regain his bearings. He shakes off the cobwebs, starts to rise - Akita steps in and delivers another blow to the back of his opponent's head. FOUR drops.

ON Akita, sword in hand, standing over the unconscious form of his opponent - and the corpses of the royal guards.

9

INT. SHIP - MESS

9

The conversation has moved to the mess where ONE, TWO, THREE, FIVE, and SIX sit at the table, discussing over drinks.

SIX

He's royalty?

TWO

A prince who was next in line to the throne - until he was accused of murdering his father, the Emperor.

FIVE

But he didn't do it. They're blaming him, but it wasn't him.

ONE

And how long have you known this?

FIVE

A while.



ONE

Didn't we just have a conversation about honesty and trust and not keeping things from each other?

FIVE

Well it was personal information. It was up to FOUR to share it.

ONE points to TWO.

ONE

Then how come you told her?

FIVE

Oh, she knows everything.

TWO

It's true. I do.

THREE

What the hell does that mean?

(beat)

Four's a prince.

(to SIX)

He's a terrorist and you -

(indicating ONE)

Well we still haven't figured out your deal. But enough with the secrets. Now is there anything else anyone here needs to come clean about? Because we'll eventually find out sooner or later. Anyone?

Beat. ONE stares daggers at THREE and then, catching himself, drops his gaze. TWO looks away, her hand instinctively going to her bandaged neck. No takers.

SIX

Okay, back to the issue at hand.

What do we do?

THREE

Are you kidding? This changes everything. We have to go back.

ONE

Oh, NOW you want to go back for him.

THREE

If he's innocent, then we should be there - to support him. That's what friends are for, right?

SIX

And, by support him, you mean be there when he regains the throne so that we can take advantage of him?

TWO

We could all benefit from having a friend like that watching our backs.

SIX

If this is true, it's not going to be as simple as him just going back and taking the throne. He's been on the run for a reason.

FIVE

But his step-brother will help him.

SIX

His step-brother is probably emperor now. Why the hell would he help?

FIVE

Because FOUR always used to look out for him growing up. They were close.

SIX

Well now they have a kingdom coming between them. He could be walking into a mess of trouble. And so would we if we follow him. Which is probably why he didn't tell us.

They fall silent as the Android steps into the room.

ANDROID

I contacted the space station authority. According to their security section, someone matching Four's description boarded a merchant freighter early this morning. The ship is presently in FTL but once it drops out, I'll attempt communication.

10 EXT. PLANET - FOREST CLEARING

10

FOUR awakens, seated on the ground, propped up against a tree. He goes to rise - but can't. He grimaces. REVEAL - his wrists have been bound. He tries to push himself up, using his feet, just starts seeing success when -

AKITA

Don't bother.

Akita approaches carrying a backpack. He drops it and hunkers down beside him.

AKITA (CONT'D)

I'll knock you out and carry you if I have to.

He unpacks a kit - gauze, antiseptic, instruments.

FOUR

I'll go willingly. That's why I came.

AKITA

Is it? A more skeptical observer might assume you actually came here to kill your brother.

FOUR

It wasn't his fault. We're both victims of circumstance. But I'm disappointed he didn't come. He gave his word.

Akita starts treating FOUR's wounds.

AKITA

Gave his word to a kin-killer. What's that worth?

FOUR

Coming from an emperor, a lot I would think.

FOUR winces as Akita works on him.

FOUR (CONT'D)

Why bother with this? Just kill me now and be done with it.

AKITA

It's not my place to pass judgement  
on you, ouji.

FOUR

That's for my step-mother.

AKITA

It's a decision for the Royal Court.

FOUR

And you have no opinion either way?

AKITA

It's not my place to have an opinion.  
My duty is to serve at the pleasure  
of the court.

FOUR

And what is their pleasure?

AKITA

For me to return you to Zairon to  
face justice - and your inevitable  
execution.

And, off FOUR -

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

11 INT. SHIP - MESS

11

ONE walks in and finds SIX, seated alone, mug in hand, whiskey bottle on the table. ONE grabs a mug and joins him.

ONE

Running a quality check on the whiskey  
I see. So? What's the verdict?

SIX

Haven't quite decided. This is going  
to require a very thorough analysis.

SIX pours ONE a double shot.

ONE

People on this ship have an annoying  
habit of wandering off.

SIX throws him a look. They drink.

ONE (CONT'D)

Can I ask you something?

Off SIX -

ONE (CONT'D)

Are you going to go after him again?  
The Leader?

SIX takes another sip in lieu of a response.

ONE (CONT'D)

You went to a lot of trouble to find  
him. And you almost had him. I'm  
wondering if something like that  
makes you reconsider - or does it  
just make you more determined?

SIX

He made me an accomplice in the deaths  
of thousands and I wanted to kill  
him for it. Nothing else mattered.

He pours them each another shot.

SIX (CONT'D)

So I tracked him down and I got him.  
(MORE)

SIX (CONT'D)

At least I thought I did. But you know what? It didn't make me feel any better. The hatred was still there. It just shifted.

ONE

I don't understand.

SIX

Alive, he was the target, the source of all my anger. But when I thought he was gone, well there was only one person left to blame for all those deaths.

ONE knows he's talking about himself.

ONE

He tricked you.

SIX

I let myself be played. Of course I don't remember how it happened. I don't remember any of it. Maybe it was my blind commitment to the cause. Maybe I was just stupid. Either way, I'll never forgive myself.

ONE

You still haven't answered the question: are you going to go after him again?

SIX

Eventually. But I'll take my time - partly because I want to do it right this time, but mostly because, for now, I really want someone to hate beside myself.

They are interrupted by the Android who steps into the mess.

ANDROID

Sorry to interrupt, but I was finally able to contact the captain of that merchant freighter.

ONE

Is Four onboard?

ANDROID

Not anymore. They dropped him off at a former mining colony, apparently on an isolated and rather lawless planet.

SIX

Why would he go there?

ANDROID

According to the captain, his passenger offered little in the way of conversation.

SIX

Sounds like our boy.

ONE

Alright. Set a course.

ANDROID

Already done.

Suddenly, TWO's voice comes over their comms -

TWO (O.S.)

This is Two. When you get a chance, could you swing by the storage room?

12 INT. SHIP - STORAGE ROOM

12

TWO and THREE oversee a bunch of scattered boxes.

TWO

We've got some heavy boxes to lift and I need you guys to spot me.

13 EXT. PLANET - FOREST -- DAY

13

Akita is stitching and dressing FOUR's wounds.

FOUR

Wouldn't want me to bleed out before my execution. Imagine how disappointed everyone would be.

AKITA

Nowhere near as disappointed as I was to see you show up. I thought you were smarter than that.

FOUR

And I assumed my brother would be more honorable. I suppose we're even then.

AKITA

No, ouji. I'm afraid you got the worst end of this staff.

FOUR

You almost sound disappointed.

Akita locks eyes with FOUR, informs him -

AKITA

You had so much potential.

FLASHBACK TO:

14      PIECES OF FLASHBACK FROM EPISODE 106      14

-- Four is punished for going easy on his step-brother.

CUT TO:

15      INT. PALACE - TRAINING ROOM -- DAY      15

A young FOUR is stoic as a younger Akita tends to his wounds.

FOUR

I hate him.

AKITA

This is normal. I often despised my own father growing up.

FOUR

Your father was a great man who served this house with honor. Mine is a tyrant. He's petty and cruel.

AKITA

Your father loves you. He's preparing you to take the throne someday.

(beat)

You need to be strong and not allow emotions to get the best of you.



ON FOUR staring ahead, the hate in his eyes evident, focused -

FLASHFORWARD TO:

16 EXT. PLANET - FOREST -- DAY - PRESENT DAY 16

Akita finishes dressing the wounds, packs his kit away.

AKITA

Time to go.

Akita helps FOUR to his feet, gives him a gentle shove.  
They start walking.

17 INT. SHIP - STORAGE ROOM 17

TWO and THREE are stacking boxes. ONE and SIX enter.

TWO

Oh, good. Stack 'em there.

ONE hunkers down, grabs one end of a large box.

ONE

Somebody want to grab the other end?

SIX grabs the other end, lifts it out of ONE's hands, and  
walks off with it.

ONE (CONT'D)

So what happens when we get to the  
planet?

THREE

We find him and we bring him back.

ONE

Brilliant plan. Did you brainstorm  
that one or was it solo effort?

SIX

Finding him may be tricky - especially  
if he doesn't want to be found.  
But, for the sake of argument, say  
we do manage to catch up to him -  
it's unlikely he's coming back.

TWO

So what are you saying? We should  
forget about him?

SIX

He left. Like it or not, that was his decision.

THREE

Ah, people change their minds all the time. Look at me. At one point, I was all set to leave.

ONE

Well that's what you wanted us to think anyway - until you realized nobody gave a damn.

THREE

Actually, I stuck around to see how long it would take everyone to figure out you were a fraud. Not that long it turns out.

ONE punches him. THREE is momentarily stunned and then, quickly recovering, launches himself on ONE. They brawl.

TWO

Hey! HEY! Knock it off!

TWO catches THREE's wrist and gives it a twist, dropping him to his knees while SIX wraps up ONE and hauls him off.

TWO (CONT'D)

I said knock it off!

THREE

Ow, ow, ow! Okay!

TWO

What the hell's wrong with you two?

THREE

Ask your boyfriend, he threw the first punch.

ONE

I got nothing to say.

ONE shrugs SIX off and walks away. TWO releases THREE who carefully tests his wrist.

THREE

You ask me, the guy's been in space too long. He's losing it.

TWO and SIX exchange rueful looks.

18 EXT. PLANET - FOREST -- DAY

18

Akita and FOUR trek through the snow-covered brush.

AKITA

You couldn't have picked a more remote location.

FOUR

Independent territory, no government for you to buy off, and an area so densely forested you can't land a shuttle within miles of here. I chose well.

AKITA

Which is why we have to pick up the pace. We don't want to be caught out here after dark.

FOUR

Afraid of some wild animals? Loosen my bonds and give me back my blades. I'll protect you.

AKITA

From what I hear, on this world, wild animals would be the least of our problems.

And off that ominous revelation -

19 INT. SHIP - ONE'S QUARTERS

19

ONE lies on his bed, reflecting. A KNOCK at the door.

ONE

Come in.

TWO walks in, throws her hands up in the classic WTF gesture.

ONE (CONT'D)

He started it.

TWO

Try again.

ONE

He deserved it.

TWO

Irrelevant.

ONE

How is that - ?

TWO

He's an obnoxious loudmouth, everyone knows this. So what?

ONE

Maybe I just got fed up.

TWO

No. I expect that kind of macho crap from him; not you. You're smarter than that.

ONE

I'm smarter, so I should know better. He's stupid, so he gets a pass.

TWO takes a seat on the bed with him.

TWO

I just want us to be honest with each other. We can do that, right?

ONE

Sure.

But something about the way he says it...

TWO

Right?

Beat.

ONE

I know why I assumed Jace Corso's identity and snuck aboard this ship.

Off a surprised TWO -

ONE (CONT'D)

I came here to kill THREE.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

20 VFX - SPACE 20

The ship hurtles through FTL.

21 INT. SHIP - ONE'S QUARTERS 21

ONE and TWO sit at the monitor.

ONE

I ran a data search using my genetic scan from the transfer pods at our last stopover. This is what it came back with.

ONSCREEN, we see the archived news report detailing the deaths of ONE's wife [see episode #8].

ONE (CONT'D)

I had a wife. And he killed her.

TWO scans the onscreen data.

TWO

It says he was a suspect. The charges were never proven.

ONE

Because they never caught him to stand trial. Obviously, I decided to take matters into my own hands.

He stares at a picture of his former wife.

TWO

Do you remember her? Even a little?

ONE

No. Should that make a difference?

TWO

You tell me. How do you mourn someone you don't remember?

ONE

I don't know. All I know for sure is that this -

Indicating his surroundings -

ONE (CONT'D)

Is my life now. Trapped in this flying metal box, on the run, constantly looking over my shoulder. And he put me here.

TWO

No, you put yourself here. And when you did, you had to have known it was going to end badly.

ONE

I shouldn't have had to make that choice.

TWO

But you did. And that's on you. If he killed her, that's on him - but that was a lifetime ago. Someone else's lifetime. And now, like it or not, he - and everyone else on this ship - are all you've got.

ONE

And how long do you think until we turn on each other? Until someone sells us out?

Off TWO -

ONE (CONT'D)

It already happened once. You said it yourself - according to FIVE, whoever wiped our memories did it because they thought we were dangerous. Meaning what? Meaning they wanted us nice and docile so they could either take the ship, or collect the bounty on our heads, or both.

TWO

Again, a lifetime ago. We've already proven - no one remembers.

ONE

So what're you saying? We're all new people now? Fresh start? Everyone gets a do-over?

TWO

There was a time not too long ago when you would've agreed that we could change, try to make up for past deeds.

ONE

That was before -

TWO

Before you found out you weren't one of us.

ONE falls silent. Considers, then -

ONE

Some people turn bad - circumstances push 'em in the wrong direction. I get that. But some people are just born that way. They lie, cheat, murder, and steal. And they'll turn against you - sooner or later - because it's in their nature. Three is rotten to the core.

Off TWO -

ONE (CONT'D)

You know I'm right. We might all sleep better cutting our losses.

TWO

Well, lucky for me, I don't sleep.

She goes to the door and holds up, offers ONE a parting shot -

TWO (CONT'D)

You do this and there will be repercussions.

ONE

I know.

She leaves ONE to consider his options.

22 EXT. PLANET - FOREST

22

Akita and FOUR trudge through the forest.

FOUR

Aren't you going to ask me?

AKITA

Ask you what?

FOUR

About the night in question. If I murdered my father?

Akita forges quietly ahead.

FOUR (CONT'D)

You're not curious?

AKITA

The truth will come out eventually.

FOUR

Why wait?

AKITA

I'm delivering you as ordered. Regardless of what you say, it won't make a difference.

FOUR

Even if I'm innocent?

AKITA

Even if you tell me you're innocent.

They walk on in silence. Beat. Then, FOUR -

FOUR

I spoke to you that night, in the corridor.

AKITA

You were drunk, ouji. And very angry. I should have escorted you back to your room. Instead, I let you go - and that decision will haunt me to my dying day.

FOUR

I'd just learned Hiro was being sent away.

AKITA

Your brother was destined for the diplomatic corps. The court was no longer a place for him.



FOUR

He was my brother; a prince. He belonged by my side. My father banished him to spite me.

AKITA

You could accuse your father of many things, ouji, but he was never impulsive. His decisions were always carefully considered, with the best interests of the Empire in mind. You may not have liked it, but sending Hiro away was the right thing to do. He'd become a distraction to you.

FOUR

Then how ironic that he now sits on the throne while I'm the thorn in everyone's side.

AKITA

Your father always feared your impetuosity would be your downfall.

FOUR

No. It was my predictability.  
(beat)

When I went to his room to confront him, my father was already dead. My step-mother had cut his throat and then simply waited for me to show up. She was expecting me, fueled by wine and fury. And I, predictably, obliged.

They walk in silence. FOUR gauges Akita -

FOUR (CONT'D)

You don't seem surprised. Is it because you think I'm lying or because I'm confirming something you already suspected? Which is it, Akita-san?

Akita considers, and then -

AKITA

As I said, I should have stopped you.

And on they go.

23 INT. SHIP - TRAINING ROOM

23

SIX working out on the flat bench. He strains under the weight of the heavy barbell.

SIX'S POV looking straight up at the ceiling as the barbell slowly comes into view as he lifts, then slowly out of view as he lowers. Into view as he lifts, and out of view - FIVE suddenly pops her head into view, smiling down at him.

FIVE

Hiya!

SIX, the barbell suddenly pinned to his chest, struggles under it's enormous weight as FIVE strolls over and grabs a seat. She snacks on an apple and watches him strain, bug-eyed and red-faced, to lift the barbell up -

SIX

(grunts)

And finally manages to land it on the overhead bar catcher.

SIX (CONT'D)

(gasping for breath)

He throws her a furious look. She takes a causal bite -

FIVE

I think you're lifting way too heavy.

He silently moves off to start on his dumbbell workout.

FIVE (CONT'D)

Y'know, you've been kind of grumpy lately.

SIX

I've had a lot on my mind.

She watches him workout. Beat.

SIX (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. If you're looking for someone to play games with, try the Android.

FIVE

I'm not here to play games. I'm here to learn. I want you to teach me how to fight.

SIX

No.

FIVE

Why not? You were teaching One.  
And I'm as much a member of this  
crew as he is.

SIX sets the dumbbells aside.

SIX

No, you're not. You're not like us,  
and you shouldn't want to be like  
us.

(beat)

We crossed a line and we can't ever  
go back. We can't undo all the hurt  
we've done. And no matter how fast  
or far we fly this ship, sooner or  
later the past is gonna catch up  
with us. And when it does, there'll  
be hell to pay.

FIVE

So teach me how to protect myself.

SIX

You want to know how to protect  
yourself? Walk away. Take your  
share of what's owed you, get off at  
the next space station, and buy  
yourself a ticket to anywhere you  
want to go. Disappear and start  
over again. Save yourself.

FIVE

I don't want to go. You guys are my  
friends.

SIX

No, we're not. We're just a bunch  
of strangers thrown together by  
circumstance.

(beat)

You know how many of us would jump  
at the chance to abandon ship if it  
meant we could be free and clear?  
Every last one of us.

He falls silent when he realizes she is near tears.

SIX (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Look, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. I just don't want to see you pay for our mistakes.

FIVE stands up, suddenly angry -

FIVE

Well too late. I almost died for you guys, trying to dig out YOUR secrets from inside my head. And when that crazy robot tried to destroy the ship, she was trying to kill all of us - including me. So I don't care what you say. I AM a member of this crew. And if you don't like it, maybe YOU should go.

She storms off. He watches her go, then takes a seat, defeated. It's been that kind of day.

24 EXT. PLANET - FOREST -- DAY

24

Akita and FOUR trek through the snow-covered forest.

AKITA

Do you remember the time your father took you hunting?

FOUR

(honestly)

No.

But it was a rhetorical question -

AKITA

It was an act of desperation on his part. In one afternoon, he was hoping to succeed where years of training had failed.

(beat)

It was sad in a way. He was so frustrated by unmet expectations that he'd convinced himself it could all change with the flight of a single crossbow bolt.

FOUR

I suppose I disappointed him. As usual.

AKITA

(laughs)

Oh, you outdid yourself on that day. Your father was furious. We went home empty-handed and, if I recall, you went to bed with an empty stomach.

FOUR

Any particular reason why you're regaling me with anecdotes of my past failings?

AKITA

I trained you myself. You were a skilled swordsman, but you lacked the killer instinct - much to your father's displeasure. So I ask myself - how does someone who cried and refused to shoot a simple boar carve the eyes from all six members of a royal patrol sent to apprehend him, and then leave them behind, alive but mutilated?

FOUR

I imagine with great patience and a very steady hand.

AKITA

It was an act of sheer brutality.

FOUR

My father would have been proud.

AKITA

Well, you've far exceeded his expectations.

FOUR

And yet I didn't kill him - but you're delivering me to the person who did.

Akita still refuses to be engaged.

FOUR (CONT'D)

It's quite a tidy little plot when you think of it. Murder the Emperor and then blame me, take me out of the picture so that her own son can take the throne.

(MORE)

FOUR (CONT'D)

(beat)

Tell me, Akita-san, has your sense of duty managed to smother what remains of your conscience?

Akita holds up.

FOUR (CONT'D)

You talk of honor and your allegiance to the throne, but all you really are is a co-conspirator, a traitor to my father and everything he stood for.

Akita snaps, grabs FOUR and shoves him up against a tree.

AKITA

I was like a father to you in ways he never was. When you had doubts, I was the one to encourage you. I trained you, protected you, refused to give up on you even when your own flesh and blood was prepared to do so. I fought for you when no one else would because I believed in you.

FOUR

Then believe this - the usurpers will pay and I WILL retake my throne. But I need your help, Akita-san. One last time.

Akita-san falters a little. You can tell FOUR's words have struck a chord and he's thinking about it. But then -

BANDIT #1 (O.S.)

Hate to interrupt this dance -

Akita lets go of FOUR. Both men throw a look to a rough-looking fellow who has stepped out of the brush clutching a sidearm. Four more shabbily-attired men step out from the surrounding forest, armed with blades.

BANDIT #1 (CONT'D)

But you fellas look lost.

Click. Akita and FOUR turn - Behind them, another bandit steps out of the brush holding a shotgun. He has them dead to rights.

BANDIT #1 (CONT'D)

And this is a bad area to get lost  
in.

And off Akita and FOUR we -

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

25 EXT. PLANET - FOREST

25

Akita and FOUR are surrounded by five rough-looking types.

AKITA

My name is Akita Masahida. I'm here fulfilling my duties as a royal officer of the Court of Ishida. This man is a wanted criminal and I'm returning him to face justice. I request safe passage through your territory in the name of the Principality of Zairon.

BANDIT #1

As the self-appointed governor of this territory, I'm going to have to refuse your request for safe passage and ask you to surrender your valuables - for inspection.

Akita eyes the smiling bandits.

AKITA

You'll be compensated for your help.

BANDIT #1

Oh, yeah? How much you got?

AKITA

Nothing with me, but once I've delivered the prisoner -

BANDIT #1

You'll come back.

AKITA

You have my word.

BANDIT #1

I'd rather have your boots.

He motions with his gun.

BANDIT #1 (CONT'D)

Toss your weapons aside.

Akita throws FOUR a look. We see -



Akita surreptitiously cuts FOUR's bonds with a dagger.

Akita steps away and holds his arms out. One hand holds the hidden dagger, the other FOUR's swords. Beat.

And, suddenly, he spins, throwing the dagger and striking the shotgun-toter just below his left shoulder, causing him to loosen a blast - high and wide. Simultaneously, he tosses FOUR his swords.

FOUR catches them, turns and takes cover behind a tree as -

Bandit #1 opens fire. The first couple of shots miss Akita, hit the tree, one catches Akita's left arm - and then the Commander of the royal guard is on him. He slashes, mortally wounding the Bandit #1 who drops his gun and falls just as -

The shotgun-toter gets off another blast - catching Akita in the back. Akita goes down. The bandit scrambles to reload his shotgun - But FOUR closes the distance between them and slashes his throat, then turns to deal with the other bandits while Bandit #1 bleeds out, thrashing and -

BANDIT #1 (CONT'D)  
(screaming)

Two bandits rush FOUR who dispatches them quickly, not even breaking stride as he marches toward the injured Bandit #1.

The final bandit backs away, fearfully, watching as - FOUR locks eyes with him, strides up and, without taking his eyes off the last bandit, skewers Bandit #1, silencing him -

BANDIT #1 (CONT'D)  
(silenced in mid-scream)

The final bandit turns and runs, stumbling through the forest.

FOUR throws a look over to Akita lying facedown in the snow, either unconscious or dead, then starts after the final bandit. He doesn't rush, but moves with purpose.

The last bandit looks back over his shoulder, sees him coming. Doesn't watch where he's going, trips and falls. He tries to scramble to his feet, hurrying, unbalanced as -

FOUR closes the distance between them - silent, determined. The last bandit rolls onto his back and throws his hands up.

LAST BANDIT  
Please. I have a wife, children!

FOUR leans in, runs him through, and casually informs him -

FOUR  
They can do better.

FOUR steps back from the wide-eyed bandit, gives a flick of the wrist to snap the blood off his blade, then marches back -

To the scene of the carnage. He steps up to the spot where Akita fell - but Commander is no longer there. FOUR senses something, turns - And stares down the barrel of the bandit leader's sidearm, now in the hand of an injured Akita. BEAT.

AKITA  
Your swords, ouji-san.

FOUR takes off his swords and tosses them at Akita's feet.

26 INT. SHIP - STORAGE ROOM

26

THREE sitting on a crate, snacking on some CRUNCHY treats he has broken out of another crate. He throws a look up at TWO standing in the doorway, pops another into his mouth -

THREE  
One day I'm scraping by on powdered porridge and the next, I'm eating all the dehydrated veg chips I can stomach. Success is sweet. And salty.

She grabs a seat on a crate opposite him. He tosses over a package. She helps herself.

THREE (CONT'D)  
Every time I taste the green ones, I get a tickle in the back of my mind. -  
Like I almost want to remember something but can't. Only the green ones.

TWO tries a green one. Nothing.

THREE (CONT'D)  
Wondering if I think hard enough, or eat enough, I might remember.

TWO watches as he performs a sequence of impressive gun tricks - fast-draw, spinning, rolling, backspinning. Someone doesn't get that good overnight. Or over the course of the several weeks they've been awake.

THREE (CONT'D)

It's like FOUR with his swords or SIX flying the Marauder or FIVE fixing things. It came to me - by instinct.

TWO

Muscle memory.

Off THREE who holsters his weapon -

TWO (CONT'D)

It's an action you repeat so many times that it creates a long-term memory in your brain, one so powerful that flying or fixing - or that - becomes automatic. Like breathing, you don't even need to make a conscious effort.

THREE

Right. So that term we keep using - "mindwipe" - aint exactly accurate. "Mind-smother" makes more sense. I'm thinking that even though our memories got dumped into the kid's subconscious, they're still in our heads too. Like echoes, weak but still lingering.

TWO

And maybe still accessible?

THREE

Could be those muscles aren't as strong. They just need a little help is all.

He pops another green one into his mouth. Considers. Then -

THREE (CONT'D)

Still nothing.

TWO

Given recent experience, be careful what you wish for.

THREE

I'm not a looking-back type of guy, but I feel like I've got to try. Out of respect for her, my memories of her, I've got to try.

TWO silently surveys him, then gives an almost wistful smile.

THREE (CONT'D)

What?

TWO

For better or worse, whether we remember or not, our pasts made us who we are. Sara may be gone, but she's a part of you now. I can see her influence.

They share a meaningful look.

TWO (CONT'D)

Tell me something. When you found out he wasn't really Jace Corso, why'd you keep One's secret?

THREE shrugs. No big deal.

THREE

I told you. I saw an opportunity, decided to take it.

TWO

And you weren't worried about potential consequences?

THREE

That guy's about as dangerous as white bread.

TWO

I'm talking about you. You didn't consider that, if the rest of us found out, it'd hurt your standing with this crew?

THREE

I didn't think I had a standing.

Off a stonefaced TWO -

THREE (CONT'D)

Yeah, okay, I considered it but decided to play the odds. I was wrong, what do you want me to say? I learned a valuable lesson? Sure. No more secrets. We need to trust each other.

TWO

Do we?

THREE

You saying we don't?

TWO

As I said, we are who we are and, more than likely, we'll fall back on old habits - muscle memory: killing, thieving -

THREE

Betraying?

TWO

Someone gutted our memories because they figured that would make us easier to handle, and, probably, easier for them to turn us in. One of us is a traitor. Want to play process-of-elimination?

THREE

Okay. The kid. Gadgets and computers are her thing. Double-dealing and conspiracy - I don't think so.

TWO

Six is a terrorist with over ten thousand lives on his head. That type of rap sheet doesn't offer much in the way of deal opportunities.

THREE

Four's got that weird nobility thing going for him. He'd sooner cut his own arm off than dishonor himself by betraying us.

TWO

Which leaves only three possibilities. Me, you, or him.

THREE chews on that.

27 EXT. PLANET - FOREST -- DAY

27

Akita and FOUR have resumed their trek. Akita walks behind, the gun leveled at FOUR's back. But it's slow-going. FOUR glances back, sees that Akita is unsteady, in obvious pain.

FOUR

We should stop.

Akita ignores him.

FOUR (CONT'D)

The only way you're going to reach that ship is if I carry you - and I'd rather not.

Akita stumbles and stops to catch his breath. FOUR turns.

FOUR (CONT'D)

Let me dress your wounds. You have my word I won't attempt to escape.

Akita eyes him -

FOUR (CONT'D)

Unlike my brother, my word actually means something.

Akita considers, then lowers the weapon and unslings his backpack. He takes a seat on the ground.

FOUR takes the kit out of the backpack and turns to face Akita who has already taken off his shirt to reveal his ruined back - age-old scars pockmarked with shotgun pellets.

FOUR (CONT'D)

This will be painful. You should take something.

AKITA

No. It'll clear my head.

FOUR pours some antiseptic over the wounds. Akita grimaces. FOUR takes a seat behind him and proceeds to tend to the wounds: carefully tweezing the pellets out of his back.

AKITA (CONT'D)

I've long-served the Emperor with honor, sacrificed and risked my life for the Court of Ishida. But this is by far the most difficult thing ever asked of me. I wish they'd sent someone else instead.

FOUR

Anyone else would probably be lying dead in the snow back there.

AKITA

True.

(beat)

A part of me looked forward to seeing you again, actually facing you in honest combat after so many years of training.

FOUR

And was I a worthy adversary?

AKITA

You always were. Even more so on this day. But I honestly wish you had reconsidered your agreement with Hiro and not shown up.

FOUR

On that we can agree.

AKITA

You claim your innocence, and you appeal to my conscience, but you don't press your most persuasive argument: I owe you my life.

FOUR is silent. Clearly, this is news to him.

AKITA (CONT'D)

Why don't you mention that?

FOUR

Do I need to?

OFF a contemplative Akita we -

FLASHBACK TO:

28 INT. PALACE - CORRIDOR -- DAY - FLASHBACK 28

Akita is marched down the corridor under escort.

29 INT. PALACE - WAR CHAMBER -- DAY 29

EMPEROR ISHIDA and two of his generals are consulting O.S. monitors when Akita is marched into the room. A furious Emperor Ishida addresses him -

EMPEROR ISHIDA

Three fleet destroyers, forty-eight fighters, and over twenty-six thousand lives lost - the greatest military defeat in the history of Zairon. What do you have to say for yourself, Commander?

Akita throws a look to the generals. They glare back at him balefully. He has no friends in this room.

AKITA

I offer no excuses. I saw the opportunity to press an advantage and took it.

EMPEROR ISHIDA

You blundered into a trap.

AKITA

I was reckless. I accept full responsibility for my actions.

The Emperor relents, surprised by Akita's response. Beat.

EMPEROR ISHIDA

Is it possible one of your generals forced your hand by striking preemptively?

AKITA

No, kotei-sama.

Again, the Emperor tries to offer him an out.

EMPEROR ISHIDA

I'll ask you again, Akita-san. Is it not possible that one of your generals - say, Endo-san who perished in the battle - responded rashly to the enemy provocation, forcing your hand?

Beat.

AKITA

No, kotei-sama.

EMPEROR ISHIDA

Do you know what this means?



AKITA

For failing in my duties as an officer  
of this court - death.

EMPEROR ISHIDA

Very well. You give me no choice  
but to order your execution.

FOUR (O.S.)

Do that and you'll be killing an  
innocent man.

EMPEROR ISHIDA

What are you doing here, Ryo?

FOUR

Accepting responsibility for the  
failed attack on the Pyrian armada.

The Emperor throws a look to Akita who informs him -

AKITA

Your son had nothing to do with -

FOUR

While I appreciate the Royal  
Commander's desire to shield me from  
your wrath, I respectfully remind  
him I'm no longer a boy in need of  
his protection.

(then, to the Emperor)

I alone bear sole responsibility for  
this disastrous campaign. I gave  
the order to attack.

AKITA

Kotei-sama -

The Emperor silences Akita's protests with an upraised hand.  
He locks eyes with his son.

EMPEROR ISHIDA

You? Ordered a full-scale assault  
on the enemy forces?

FOUR

You're always bemoaning my lack of  
killer instinct. I assumed you'd be  
pleased.

The Emperor blinks first, stepping away and addressing Akita -

EMPEROR ASHIDA  
Akita-san, you're dismissed.

Akita knows better than to argue. He leaves.

FLASHFORWARD TO:

30 EXT. PLANET - FOREST -- DAY - PRESENT DAY

30

FOUR finishes dressing Akita's wounds.

AKITA  
We've never spoken of that day.  
(and, more importantly -)  
I've never thanked you.

FOUR gets up.

FOUR  
Done.

Akita puts his shirt back on, rises as well. He turns, and looks at FOUR.

AKITA  
I owe you a debt. And that debt  
will be paid -

ROYAL OFFICER (O.S.)  
Commander!

A half-dozen armed members of the Ishida Royal Guard approach, led by a ROYAL OFFICER. They take up position around FOUR. A couple have their sidearms out.

ROYAL OFFICER (CONT'D)  
Where's the rest of your squad?

AKITA  
Dead.

The guards exchange looks. Beat.

ROYAL OFFICER  
Your orders, sir?

Akita steps up to FOUR and tells him -

AKITA  
I'm sorry, ouji-san.

Then steps back.

AKITA (CONT'D)

Arrest the prisoner.

And as the Royal Guard moves in to take custody we -

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

31 EXT. PLANET - FOREST -- DAY

31

Akita, FOUR, and the rest of the Royal Guards on the move.

ROYAL OFFICER

You were late, so I decided to come  
for you.

AKITA

And well you did.

They trudge on for a few steps, but suddenly the smiling  
Royal Officer spots something up ahead and holds up, losing  
the smile. Everyone else follows suit. REVEAL -

TWO standing up ahead.

TWO

Thanks, boys. We'll take him off  
your hands from here.

AKITA

Who's "we"?

TWO

Me and my armed friends surrounding  
you.

Akita and his men look around at the surrounding trees.

AKITA

This man is wanted for the murder of  
Emperor Ishida Nihei of the  
Principality of Zairon. He's being  
returned to his homeworld for trial.

TWO

That man is wanted back on our ship.

She throws a look to FOUR.

TWO (CONT'D)

Let's make it official since you did  
leave and all. Want to come back?

FOUR

Yes, I would very much like that.

TWO

You see? He'd rather come with us.

AKITA

He doesn't have a choice in the matter.

TWO

Ah, that's where you're wrong. The only ones who don't have a choice here are you guys.

Akita and his men scan the surrounding forest. Is she bluffing? Beat. Beat. Beat.

AKITA

Lieutenant!

On his signal, the Royal Officer raises his weapon to FIRE at TWO who - has already anticipated and dives for cover as -

GUNFIRE ERUPTS. The Royal Officer is hit. FOUR jumps Akita and they both go down as the rest of the royal guards scramble for cover and return fire -

On ONE hiding behind a tree, exchanging fire with the enemy. He stops firing and shifts his aim, just a couple of feet to his right and suddenly - he has his weapon aimed at THREE who, back to him and oblivious, fires at the enemy.

On ONE working up the courage. Considering...

ONE's gun wavers and abruptly adjusts and fires, taking down a guard who had flanked them and was sneaking up on THREE. THREE startled by the gunshot, throws a look to the fallen guard, then over at ONE. He signals "thanks" with a wave.

ONE offers a nod back, then resumes firing at the enemy.

The GUNFIRE DIES DOWN. ONE, TWO, and THREE step out of hiding. On the ground, someone stirs. It's FOUR, lying atop Akita. He gets up. Akita rolls over, looks up at FOUR - who offers him his hand. Akita takes it and allows himself to be helped up.

TWO

We spotted this group when we landed and followed them when they left their ship. SIX is waiting for us back at the marauder, about thirty minutes that way.

She motions. FOUR nods, takes his swords back as Akita surveys the bodies.

AKITA

The decision is no longer mine to  
make - thankfully.

FOUR turns to face his old friend. Akita extends his hand -

AKITA

I wish you luck, ouji, but know this -  
should our paths ever cross again, I  
WILL fulfill my duties as an officer  
of the Royal Court and bring you in.

FOUR

Of that I have no doubt.

Akita gives a little smile and the two shake hands. FOUR  
steps away and then is struck by a thought.

FOUR (CONT'D)

Akita-san, I want you to deliver a  
message to my brother.

AKITA

Of course.

FOUR turns and runs him through.

Register the shock on all their faces - ONE, TWO, THREE, and  
of course Akita, who spits up a little blood. FOUR steps  
aside, withdrawing his blade. Akita drops to his knees,  
then pitches forward into the snow. Dead.

ONE, TWO, and THREE can't believe what they've just witnessed.  
They watch as FOUR flicks the blood from his blade, sheathes  
his sword, and starts off in the direction of the shuttle.

ONE, TWO, and THREE exchange uncertain looks. Then, follow.

PAN BACK TO the corpses of the royal guards - and Akita face-  
down in the snow.

33 INT. SHIP - CORRIDOR F

33

SIX walks up to an open vent (grill missing) and leans up against the wall beside it. He KNOCKS, then starts talking -

SIX

Listen, I know you're in there. I wanted to say I'm sorry.

(beat)

Of course you're a member of this crew. You've earned your place here with us. And you've earned the right to make your own decisions.

(beat)

Doesn't mean I've changed my mind. I still think you're better off as far away from us as possible. But truth is, when the time comes that you do decide to leave, I'm gonna miss you kid. I'm gonna miss you a lot.

He waits. Nothing. He throws a look to the vent, goes to peek inside - and FIVE pokes her head out.

FIVE

And I'm sorry I said you should go. And for calling you a big dumb jerk.

SIX

You called me a big dumb jerk?

FIVE

Later, when I was alone in my room.

SIX

Well, I guess I deserved it.

(beat)

Now come on out of there. The Android says we're about forty minutes out from a planet with waterfalls, pristine beaches, and tree fruit so sweet it'll burst your eyeballs.

She disappears, then backs out. He helps her down.

34 INT. SHIP - MESS

34

ONE sits alone, deep in thought. THREE grabs the seat across from him and plunks two mugs and a bottle of whiskey down on

the table. He pours, slides one of the mugs over to ONE.  
He toasts -

THREE

Okay. You're up one.

He downs his drink, refills his mug -

ONE

One what?

THREE

That time on the freighter, you saved me from getting blasted out into space but then, later, I saved your ass from those zombies. On the space station, we saved each other so I'm calling that a draw. When that robot tried to fly us into the sun, I saved all of us - but you saved me later. And then today. So, you're up one.

ONE

I wasn't keeping score. But me being up one sounds about right.

He takes a shot, grimaces. THREE refills his mug.

ONE (CONT'D)

We just stood by and watched him kill an unarmed man.

THREE

Didn't give us much time to react. Besides, it was a personal matter.

But ONE is less than reassured. ONE eyes THREE. He could be talking about FOUR, but he could just as easily be talking about THREE -

ONE

Can't help but wonder what kind of person we've brought back onto this ship with us.

THREE

Hopefully, one that'll step up for us if we ever need him to.



35 INT. SHIP - TWO'S QUARTERS

35

TWO is at her monitor, perusing some O.S. data. There is a KNOCK. She quickly kills the screen.

TWO

Come in.

The door slides open. It's FOUR.

FOUR

Am I interrupting?

TWO

No. Just doing a little research on ship systems, hoping to make myself a little more useful.

FOUR

I wanted to thank you. It was wrong of me to leave without explanation.

TWO

So why did you?

FOUR

Truthfully? I didn't want to involve you; have you risking your lives on my behalf.

TWO

While I appreciate that, you've got to understand - we didn't just come back for you. We came back for us. We're more than just acquaintances who come and go now. If we don't fight for each other, no one will.

FOUR

Then some day, with your help, I'll take my rightful place on the throne. And on that day, I'll remember my true family - after I've dealt with the old one.

36 EXT. ZAIRON - ISHIDA PALACE -- DAY

36

Establish.

37 INT. PALACE - QUEEN'S CHAMBER -- DAY

37

THE QUEEN is seated in front of a mirror, applying her make-up when she hears -

HIRO (O.S.)  
Mother?! MOTHER?!

She sets her applications aside, stands up and turns to face the entrance in expectation of - her son, FOUR'S half-brother, HIRO who marches into the room.

HIRO (CONT'D)  
You tricked me!

She stares back at him impassively.

HIRO (CONT'D)  
You sent Akita-san in my place and now he's dead. Akita-san is dead!

THE QUEEN  
Better him than you.

HIRO  
I gave Ryo my word that I would meet him. He vowed to tell me the truth about what happened to father.

THE QUEEN  
We already know what happened. Ryo murdered him.

HIRO  
No. He claims it was a conspiracy from within the court.

THE QUEEN  
With who's backing?

HIRO  
He didn't say. He would only reveal the details of the plot once we were face to face.

THE QUEEN  
And you believed him?

HIRO  
Ryo has never lied to me.

Hiro is near tears. The Queen takes the young Emperor in her arms and consoles him.

HIRO (CONT'D)

I gave him my word. You made me a  
liar.

THE QUEEN

No, my son. I've made you an Emperor.

END OF ACT FIVE

TAG

- 38 VFX - SPACE 38  
The Raza flies in sub-light.
- 39 INT. SHIP - TRAINING ROOM 39  
FOUR runs through his stances - grim, determined.
- 40 INT. SHIP - THREE'S QUARTERS 40  
THREE sits up in his bed, finishing up that classic book:  
Charlotte's Web. He angrily fights back tears.
- 41 INT. SHIP - MESS 41  
ONE, TWO, FIVE and SIX are playing a raucous card game -  
slapping their hands down, retrieving cards -  
  
  ONE/TWO/FIVE/SIX  
  (laughing)  
Suddenly - the ship shakes. They fall silent.  
  
  TWO  
  What was that?
- 42 INT. SHIP - TRAINING ROOM 42  
FOUR has stopped training. Again, the ship SHUDDERS. He  
sheathes his blades and heads out.
- 43 INT. SHIP - CORRIDOR F 43  
THREE rushes out of his room as - the ship again shakes,  
knocking him against a wall. He rights himself, hurries  
out.
- 44 INT. SHIP - BRIDGE 44  
The Android stands on the bridge. The rest of the crew  
arrive. He informs them -

ANDROID

Three Ferrous Corp destroyers just  
dropped out of FTL.

TWO

Get us out of here.

ANDROID

Their opening salvo took out our FTL  
drive.

(beat)

We're not going anywhere.

And, as we see the three Ferrous Corp cruisers approaching  
dead ahead through the window (VFX) -

We play this on our crew and -

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW