

Erasmus Book Two FAILSAFE

By

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For

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Panel	Description	Dialog
1.1	Flashback--BLACK & WHITE. Establishing shot of Ombudsman's One Tower, amidst their Justice and Processing district.	Caption: Ombudsman Justice & Processing--Ontario region, North America Caption: 2188.10.15.09:50 Caption: "You say he told you to go upstairs, tried to stop you coming closer."
1.2	RICO, thirteen years old, sits in the witness stand of a small Ombudsman courtroom. He is flanked by a JUDGE, several BARRISTERS, and a PROSECUTOR who stands opposite, questioning him. His shackled father TRAVIS sits at the far side of the courtroom looking down at his feet, his own LAWYER staring off into the distance, clearly bored.	RICO Right. PROSECUTOR Why was that, do you think? RICO Because he didn't want me to see what they had done to her. PROSECUTOR "They?" RICO The people who killed her.
1.3	Over Rico's shoulder on the prosecutor.	PROSECUTOR Rico is it possible that your father didn't want you to see what happened in the kitchen... because you might have seen some key piece of evidence linking him to what had just happened?
1.4	Close on Rico.	RICO Putting aside the issue of his barely having enough time to say hello, let alone work up a motive, and forgetting the fact that he'd just been verbally threatened by a dangerous, powerful rival... no sir, he did not strike me as someone trying to prevent me seeing key pieces of evidence. I know my father, and he was clearly in shock.

Panel	Description	Dialog
1.5	Close on Travis, slowly coming out of his stupor.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
2.1	The prosecutor looks over at the judge.	PROSECUTOR Your honor, a sidebar?
2.2	The prosecutor leans over the judge's stand to have a quiet word while Travis and his attorney watch silently.	
2.3	Close on the judge, looking over his notes on a holographic display.	JUDGE The record will be redacted to remove the witness's previous statement.
2.4	Rico turns to the judge.	RICO What? Why? JUDGE The witness is excused. RICO That's it? We're done?
2.5	Rico stands, looking at his father, arms open.	RICO This is bullshit. JUDGE Bailiff-- RICO It's okay. I'm going.
2.6	As he passes his defeated father's table, Rico stops, looking at him again.	RICO Whatever they make you say, we know what happened. JUDGE The witness will leave the courtroom. RICO Don't give up, dad. It doesn't end here.

Panel	Description	Dialog
2.7	Rico exits through the rear doors, taking one final look back over his shoulder at his slumped father.	RICO I won't be thirteen forever.

Panel	Description	Dialog
3.1	Back in present day, RICO, now 22, sits alone in a small city apartment, studying maps on holographic displays that hover in a semi-circular wall at eye level.	Caption: McPherson Group Employee Housing GA22--Boston region, North America. Caption: 2198.02.27.21:12
3.2	Rico walks in the rain through a McPherson business district, past closed boutique stores and open fast food places, night clubs and convenience stores, bleeding neon light into the steamy, rain soaked night. BOUNCERS stand outside the clubs watching him pass. He wears a pair of jeans, dress shirt, and unzipped hoodie jacket, carrying a simple one-strap messenger bag over one shoulder.	
3.3	Rico walks out of the GUARDED exit of McPherson's territory (two-lane road and sidewalks with sentry booths), into the CROWDED street markets and tent city of the "unaffiliated" people that make their home in the cracks (0.5 kilometer-wide strip of "no man's land") between corporate territories.	
3.4	A long, tall panel, Rico stands amongst garbage, looking up at an enormous concrete PILLAR, shielded from the rain by the big bridge above, at a border crossing between McPherson Group and BTS (Brilliant Tertiary Solutions) territories--a raised highway road where big cargo trucks and cars are able to travel the half kilometer between BTS and McPherson border walls, (over the walls).	

Panel	Description	Dialog
3.5	Rico continues to walk in the rain with his hood on and hands in pockets, tracing the line of the border wall, passing people's shanti town and tent homes, crammed in together wherever they can fit. KIDS run around under dim streetlights playing soccer while shady looking LURKERS stand in the shadows between homes watching Rico pass. Groups of HOOKERS and the occasional PIMP find shelter from the rain under balconies and food tents in background also.	
3.6	Rico stands beneath another raised bridge, this time a single rail Mag Lev train platform, on thinner metal pylons with framework that is smaller and easier to climb.	
3.7	Over Rico's shoulder looking up, his POV of a train zipping by from McPherson to BTS territories overhead.	
3.8	Silhouetted by its shadows, Rico climbs the pylon and its framework quickly, making easy work of the high, precarious climb.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
4.1	Wide--Rico runs along the mag lev track toward BTS territory.	
4.2	Rico walks through a quiet suburban street with hands in pockets and head down, hood on, almost invisible in the rain, toward BRILLIANT TOWER, lit up in the distance.	Caption: BTS Shareholder Residential DB-R1--Boston region, North America. Caption: 2198.02.27.23:22
4.3	FINLAY BRILLIANT stands in his office at its large window, one of the many floor to ceiling windows in a 360 degree circle around his four hundred and fourth floor penthouse OFFICE. He watches the STORM CLOUDS outside, sipping on green tea. Behind him, DAVID RAN paces the room, PDA held to his ear.	DAVID Of course he won't. He's not obligated to testify. FINLAY David. Stop.
4.4	As Finlay turns back to David, he puts the PDA to his shoulder.	FINLAY Hang up the call. Draft a statement.
4.5	David puts the PDA to his ear.	DAVID Mr. Chairman? We're done.

Panel	Description	Dialog
4.6	Finlay walks to his desk, sitting down.	FINLAY Brilliant Tertiary Solutions acknowledges its responsibilities stemming from the Orbital Rail misfire that claimed eighty-one thousand, nine hundred and five lives recently in Isidis. An internal investigation has found that the firmware vulnerability used by unknown hackers to target McPherson Group's central business district was the product of gross incompetence, and ongoing negligence, by former Executive Craig Parse. BTS has forwarded these findings and supporting evidence to Ombudsman investigators, who are now in the process of building a case against Mr. Parse. FINLAY Every effort is being made to ensure that such vulnerabilities do not recur, with some of the world's foremost security experts contracted to deploy a patch to all affected hardware, by midnight UTC.
4.7	Close on Finlay, looking David hard in the eye.	FINLAY That's our final word on it. Mailer doesn't have the nutsack to move on us while he's hanging by a thread with his own board.

Panel	Description	Dialog
5.1	Wide as MARCUS TROY rides a motorcycle--similar to, but newer than, the model he rode on Mars--through light freeway traffic on a highway that traces the scenic, sunny Fortaleza coastline. Shimmering blue harbor waters stretch out in background, towering hotels lining the coast in the distance, yachts and cruise ships traversing the waterways.	Caption: Ombudsman Heritage Transit Corridor--Fortaleza region, South America.
5.2	Closer on Marcus as he exits at an offramp with other cars and motorbikes.	Caption: 2198.02.28.07:10
5.3	Marcus, now wearing a tinted motorcycle helmet, sits watching a small block of two-floor TOWNHOUSES--older European style, crammed between taller modern apartment blocks in the armed services housing district of Ombudsman's Fortaleza housing spread.	
5.4	On the opposite side of the road, a SUITED MAN sitting in a black TOWNCAR, parked in front of a 'No Parking' holographic sign, directly in front of the townhouses, seems to notice Marcus.	
5.5	Marcus, hidden behind the helmet's dark visor, stares back at him.	
5.6	The same framing as Marcus looks up.	
5.7	Mid-shot, on the second level of the two floor townhouses, at a window containing a flower box, ALEX EAMES leans outside, holding a pot plant.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
5.8	Wide, over Marcus's shoulder as the guy in the suit gets out of his car, eyes locked on Marcus, waiting for traffic to clear as he prepares to cross the road toward him. In the background, above the suited man, Alex hangs the plant out in the sun.	
5.9	Pull back further and higher as Marcus pulls out into traffic in his own lane, the suited guy watching him speed away, a hand on his hip, as if about to draw a concealed gun.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
6.1	Finlay Brilliant sits in one of the comfortable chairs at the center of his office, looking out at the city, glass of scotch in his hand.	ERASMUS (off panel) Fin.
6.2	Somewhat startled, Finlay spins in his chair to see ERASMUS sitting at his desk.	FINLAY Jesus!

Panel	Description	Dialog
7.1	Erasmus looks down at the solid, varnished wood desk, tapping a gloved knuckle on it.	ERASMUS I like this. Real wood.
7.2	Finlay stands, wary.	FINLAY You would have tripped at least one of four hundred safeguards to get this far. FINLAY Tower security will swarm in at any moment, so make this fast, stranger. ERASMUS Not likely. I'm prepared, and careful. I do this for a living.
7.3	A two shot, Finlay taking half a step backward, while Erasmus remains seated behind the desk.	ERASMUS Don't keep clicking your panic button. I'm EM-shielding most of the floor. FINLAY Just tell me something first... McPherson put the hit on me?
7.4	Erasmus shows Finlay his empty palms.	ERASMUS I'm no assassin, Finlay. I'm the guy who bought five minutes on your Elysium Orbital Rail.
7.5	Over Erasmus's shoulder on Finlay, who frowns, bemused.	FINLAY Ah. Then you're blackmailing me. ERASMUS No, not blackmail either. I'm here to do business. FINLAY Then it's appropriate that you wore your business suit.

Panel	Description	Dialog
7.6	A mid-shot on Erasmus at the desk, his arms resting on it, hands pressed together--a dominant, business-like pose.	ERASMUS Let's discuss a problem of yours named Giancarlo Timu.

Panel	Description	Dialog
8.1	VARGA WATTS and Rico stand at the open side door of a UH-62 Dingo HELO, following Kuala Lumpur's mag lev rail track that winds between tall buildings at the seventieth floor. They both wear full body armor with no helmets, holding the handrail above their head for support. The interior of the helo is lit only dimly by red light.	Caption: "Giancarlo was a Ranger. One of the first handful to go through genome refurbishment, when it was a pilot program on Io."
8.2	GIANCARLO TIMU stands in the laser-lit corner of a crowded nightclub in McPherson Group's Kuala Lumpur territory, wearing the same suit and earpiece as other BOUNCERS standing nearby, standing chest, head and shoulders over a sea of dancing PATRONS.	Caption: "He did his time and got out, long before Safe Ground statutes were ever a blip on anyone's radar."
8.3	Marcus stands facing the bar, a bottle of water in front of him, watching Giancarlo shaking hands with another bouncer in the bar MIRROR. At the same time, Giancarlo loosens his tie, getting ready to finish his shift.	Caption: "He was recruited by McPherson Group on Mars, to bootstrap their program. BTS waited four years, then made him a better offer. We reverse engineered everything McPherson and Ombudsman had done to his genome, and leapfrogged both of them entirely unnoticed."
8.4	Wide, outside the still thumping night club on a Kuala Lumpur street corner zoned for night time entertainment. PATRONS pour in and out of other similar establishments nearby. Giancarlo walks away from the club with a sports bag slung over his shoulder, wearing shorts and tank top now, waving to the door BOUNCER as he departs into the night.	Caption: "McPherson have been sore about it ever since. They could never prove we took him, until the day he went back to them."

Panel	Description	Dialog
8.5	Over Marcus's shoulder as he runs along the rooftops, silhouetted in foreground, following Giancarlo who we see in background on the street below, turning to walk up a single flight of stairs to a first floor MAG LEV TERMINAL.	Caption: "They've had him stashed somewhere in Kuala Lumpur for two years. I heard a rumor they made him an overpaid security guard."
8.6	On the mag lev terminal platform, Marcus stands pretending to read a holographic billboard, keeping an eye on Giancarlo who stands nearby, waiting for the train amongst a small crowd of PASSENGERS.	Caption: "Giancarlo is a turnkey solution to shut us down overnight. They can use his living RNA segments as evidence of our program, without ever disclosing their own."
8.7	On the train, Marcus sits right up front while Giancarlo can be seen behind him in background, squeezed in. Marcus looks down at his PDA, hitting buttons on the holographic interface.	Caption: "Until Giancarlo is disappeared, McPherson have BTS by the balls."
8.8	Wide, looking down, as the UH-62 hovers above a speeding mag lev to match its speed exactly, ERASMUS and ORPHEUS dropping onto the train's roof from both sides of the Dingo.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
9.1	Wide on the train as Orpheus and Erasmus move up the second carriage.	Caption: McPherson Group transit corridor CDT/53--Kuala Lumpur region, Asia
9.2	Erasmus prepares to tear open an access panel from the roof of the train while Orpheus stands ready with a gas grenade.	Caption: 2198.02.25.11:12 ERASMUS Greenlight.
9.3	Close on the grenade as Orpheus pulls the pin.	
9.4	Erasmus tears the panel off its mountings while Orpheus tosses the fogging grenade in.	
9.5	In the cabin, Giancarlo crouches forward, taking up three seats. Other passengers are noticing the yellow gas venting in through the ceiling grates.	
9.6	On top of the train, Erasmus and Orpheus ready their rifles, aimed at the fogging access panel.	
9.7	Giancarlo tears through the roof of the train behind them, catching them off guard.	SFX WRRRNCH
9.8	Wide as they spin around, aiming their weapons at him.	ERASMUS Giancarlo-- GIANCARLO Tell Finlay Brilliant to go fuck himself.
9.9	Giancarlo LEAPS from the train.	GIANCARLO Smell you later.

Panel	Description	Dialog
9.10	Giancarlo falls backwards toward the roof of a glass tower.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
10.1	Giancarlo falls through the glass ceiling.	SFX FRSSSSSSCH
10.2	Giancarlo smashes through the glass floor/ceiling to the next level, destroying a chandelier in the process.	
10.3	He falls through a large atrium...	
10.4	Still falling...	
10.5	Giancarlo lands in a glass bar, sending bottles and patrons flying.	
10.6	Giancarlo slowly stands, covered in cuts and pieces of glass sticking out of him.	
10.7	He trudges away, toward the exit.	
10.8	Erasmus lands between Giancarlo and the exit.	SFX THUD! ERASMUS Stop it.

Panel	Description	Dialog
11.1	Erasmus runs at Giancarlo, drawing his sword.	GIANCARLO Last chance, guy. No more horseplay. I'll kill you. ERASMUS Not if I take your arms.
11.2	The sword lands in Giancarlo's collarbone, going no further.	SFX THNK! ERASMUS Holy shit. What are your bones made of?
11.3	Giancarlo slaps Erasmus away.	
11.4	Giancarlo runs for open lift doors.	
11.5	Erasmus leaps to his feet, already firing his SMG.	SFX BRRRRRRRT
11.6	The rounds impact on the closed doors.	
11.7	Erasmus speaks into the display on his forearm.	ERASMUS Descending from ninety, Orpheus. He's bleeding now at least.

Panel	Description	Dialog
12.1	Giancarlo crosses the hotel lobby at a jog.	
12.2	He exits through the large revolving door.	
12.3	Giancarlo is stopped in his tracks by automatic gunfire.	SFX BRRRRRRRRRT BRRRRRRRRRT BRRRRRRRR
12.4	Pull out wider as Orpheus walks toward him, firing a rifle at Giancarlo's chest and face.	SFX BRRRRRRRRRRRT BRRRT CHK-CHK-CHK
12.5	Orpheus tosses the empty rifle aside, drawing a sidearm from his hip.	
12.6	Orpheus continues firing at Giancarlo's upper torso and face.	SFX BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!
12.7	The pistol also clicks empty.	SFX CHK-CHK

Panel	Description	Dialog
13.1	Giancarlo looks up at Orpheus, on the edge of defeat.	GIANCARLO That's you in there, isn't it Varga? GIANCARLO Men of our size are rarely granted the anonymity of masks.
13.2	Orpheus looks down at Giancarlo, softening.	ORPHEUS All we need is a marrow core. The RNA tags. Don't make us kill you, just to take a sample.
13.3	Giancarlo lunges at Orpheus, a telegraphed punch that he ducks under easily, winding up for his own counterpunch.	GIANCARLO Horseshit! GIANCARLO If Finlay sent you, he only wants me dead or in custody.
13.4	Orpheus swings back with a left hook that knocks Giancarlo off his feet.	SFX FUNT
13.5	Giancarlo lays sprawled out on his chest, face resting on the pavement, out cold.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
14.1	Looking down at a small twin-engine SHUTTLE from above as it circles the BTS Tower, preparing to land on the shuttlepad that's molded into the tower at its 2/3 point, large enough for 4 ships to land. Beyond the small ship, and the tower, morning traffic crawls through inner CBD streets.	
14.2	Finlay and David Ran stand on the landing pad, watching the shuttle come in.	FINLAY It sets a dangerous precedent, David. DAVID We can double security, shuffle the deck with your meetings and travel. FINLAY It won't matter. The message was clear. He can get to me anywhere, at any time.
14.3	On David, over Fin's shoulder.	DAVID What do you suggest? FINLAY We don't know enough about him, or who he fronts for. FINLAY Our first aim should be to identify the man behind the mask, and then the men behind him.

Panel	Description	Dialog
14.4	The shuttle lands, Fin and David walking to it.	DAVID We're sifting the logs of the agent who brought him on as a client, best we could get is a Mars-based ident making the initial call and command session to the rail. DAVID It comes in filtered by default, mainly to protect our own deniability. FINLAY What was the alias used, on the ident?
14.5	As Finlay walks up the three small steps to the shuttle's side door, David checks his PDA.	DAVID Erasmus.
14.6	Finlay and David sit in the rear eight-seat cabin, a luxurious suite complete with minibar and expensive fittings.	FINLAY Why does that sound familiar? DAVID Desiderius Erasmus, the Dutch humanist. FINLAY No, that's not who I'm thinking of. FINLAY Something else...
14.7	The shuttle takes off, bound for orbit.	FINLAY (from shuttle) Something closer to home.

Panel	Description	Dialog
15.1	Giancarlo kneels in a windowless steel room with his arms secured to the floor by thick alloy chains.	GIANCARLO I hear you out there, breathing. I remember your heartbeat, Varga.
15.2	Pushing in closer on Giancarlo, looking up at the single dim blue ceiling light.	GIANCARLO Will you take off that mask and face me like a man?
15.3	Looking over Giancarlo's shoulder, a heavy alloy door begins to roll open, a silhouetted figure standing in its shadows.	GIANCARLO Is it time, Varga?
15.4	Rico enters the room, in black t-shirt and the Erasmus armor pants/boots, crouching in front of the enormous Giancarlo.	RICO Giancarlo. I'm sorry we had to meet like this. GIANCARLO I'm not. It's been more than fifteen years for me, living in captivity. GIANCARLO Every day holding back. GIANCARLO I stupidly didn't kill you in the skybar.

Panel	Description	Dialog
15.5	Over Rico's shoulder, on Giancarlo, a malicious smile beginning to creep across his damaged face.	GIANCARLO But when I break free of here--and I promise, the only thing I have left to do in all my life is break free--there will be nothing left to hold all of me back. GIANCARLO This chain that you all have so aptly furnished me with, signifies my fifteen years bound to decorum and ritual, wading through the huddled masses. GIANCARLO So please, don't apologize. You've given me the greatest gift of all--someone who deserves my full attention, and a stage on which to play my self.
15.6	Over Giancarlo's shoulder, on Rico, who half grins.	RICO Gosh, that's a little bit hostile. I'm hoping you'll calm down when you hear what I have to offer. GIANCARLO Don't embarrass us both. RICO All things being equal, I'm sure you'd rather tear apart Finlay, am I right?
15.7	Close on Giancarlo, who breaks Rico's gaze, looking at the floor.	GIANCARLO Brilliant's untouchable.

Panel	Description	Dialog
15.8	Close on Rico.	RICO I can only imagine the avenues he's explored, to find your strings and pull. RICO Finlay views the things that people love as their attack surfaces. RICO We can give you a way to pull back. RICO To rid yourself, and the world, of his influence.

Panel	Description	Dialog
16.1	A two shot.	GIANCARLO How would you suggest I do that?
16.2	Rico holds the Erasmus UVIR faceplate, pressing it to his face.	
16.3	A two shot as light blue gas begins to rise from the floor around them, Giancarlo frowning, looking confused.	RICO Soon enough.
16.4	KIRK VANDERBOLT gives his opening introductions to camera on his nightly talk show.	VANDERBOLT Our guest this evening is CEO of Brilliant Tertiary Solutions, and recent recipient of the Mueller Humanities award for his tireless efforts to improve safety standards on assembly floors throughout the colonized worlds... VANDERBOLT Please welcome Finlay Brilliant.
16.5	A shot of Finlay in the guest's chair, smiling affably.	FINLAY Thank you, Kirk. It's good to be back in the hot seat, fire at will.
16.6	Vanderbolt half smiles.	VANDERBOLT For some time, there have been accusations leveled against your firm and yourself, alleging an off the books genetic refurb program, in violation-- FINLAY Well that's-- VANDERBOLT --of both Safe Ground and the Earth Accords.

Panel	Description	Dialog
16.7	A two shot.	FINLAY Since those statutes were enacted by Ombudsman almost thirty years ago, there have been similar claims made about <i>any</i> successful organization with fingers in the genome pie. FINLAY It doesn't matter if we're trying to cure cancer, or researching other fields of life extension, it always comes back to the mind-numbingly ill informed notion that we're somehow attempting to breed super soldiers here on Earth. FINLAY Believe me, there are more profitable avenues of enterprise. The risk involved in violating binding Ombudsman statutes, opening ourselves to Sol-wide sanctions... it makes any attempt futile. The notion itself would be laughable, if not for the fact that it's accompanied by very tangible negative perception and scrutiny. FINLAY Perhaps I should also flag my concerns that every time I come on your show Kirk, we discuss these same tired, baseless claims. If you're not part of the solution...
16.8	Back to Kirk.	VANDEBOLT Then let us move on to the Isidis situation, and border tensions reigniting between BTS and the McPherson Group after five years of relative stability.

Panel	Description	Dialog
17.1	Complete darkness.	GUARD #1 (unseen) Who is that? GUARD #2 (unseen) Someone get a Ranger unit out here. This guy doesn't look right.
17.2	Close on Giancarlo, laying outside on concrete, on his side, slowly waking up.	
17.3	As he gets up on his elbows, we see three OMBUDSMAN GUARDS over his shoulder, all aiming their weapons at him.	
17.4	Pull out wider, revealing Giancarlo laying sprawled on the concrete landing pad of an Ombudsman spaceport, surrounded by armed GUARDS. In background, space haulers and troopcarriers land and take off.	
17.5	Back on the Vanderbolt show, Fin sips water while Vanderbolt fires off his next question.	VANDERBOLT I suppose that brings us to the events of last week, when two distinctly different models of BTS Orbital Rail were commandeered and retasked over Mars, allegedly by an unknown third party. FINLAY Of course.

Panel	Description	Dialog
17.6	Close on Vanderbilt.	VANDERBOLT One of those rails, we believe, killed forty Rangers on a training exercise in foothills outside Isidis. VANDERBOLT While the other killed more than eighty-thousand people in McPherson Group's One district in Elysium, on the opposite side of Mars. VANDERBOLT Your executive Craig Parse has been sentenced by Ombudsman to life in prison after being found negligent in the deaths, but as yet nothing is known about the hackers themselves, the people who hijacked these BTS rails to destroy Ombudsman forces, and the solar headquarters of, one would argue, your most fierce enemy. All without BTS assistance.
17.7	Close on Finlay.	FINLAY I'm pleased to report that we have found some further leads on the attackers, which we've since passed on to Ombudsman. VANDERBOLT Anything you're able to share here? FINLAY The leader appears to call himself Erasmus.

Panel	Description	Dialog
17.8	A two shot.	VANDERBOLT Hm. As in, one of the three Generals perhaps? FINLAY Generals? VANDERBOLT Of ancient Rome. You've heard the tale, no?
17.9	Close on Fin, looking suddenly, pale--SHOCKED.	
17.10	Pulling out wide as Finlay stands, unbuttoning the mic from his lapel.	FINLAY I need to leave. VANDERBOLT I'm sorry?

Panel	Description	Dialog
18.1	Finlay leans in the doorway at the exit of the studio, light-headed. David rushes to his side, while in background, Vanderbilt continues speaking to camera.	VANDERBOLT Well, ah, there it is. A busy man about town, always rushing off to the next engagement. We'll move straight on to Manny Hoto's light-hearted look at micrograv golf resorts when we return. FINLAY Get me to the shuttle. DAVID Fin? Are-- FINLAY I know who it is, and what he wants.
18.2	An Ombudsman HELO circles Giancarlo from fifty feet above the tarmac as he punches and tears his way through waves of Ombudsman spaceport GUARDS and armored Enforcement TROOPS, all trying to subdue him, some squeezing off ineffective rifle or sidearm shots while trying not to hit each other.	
18.3	Onboard the helo, a SIDE GUNNER reloads while screaming into his headset mic.	SIDE GUNNER Those men are being torn to shreds! SIDE GUNNER Send in Osprey and Baritsu. Do it while we still have a chance to pin him down!
18.4	Wide as the helo fires a stream of tracer rounds at Giancarlo, the circle of soldiers around him pulling back.	Caption: "Baritsu has been deployed, Gray-four. Thirty seconds."

Panel	Description	Dialog
18.5	Closer on Giancarlo, holding up a pair of body-armored soldiers as human shields to deflect the tracer shots from above.	Caption: "Hold your fire, he has hostages." Caption: "Clear the area, Gentlemen. Baritsu is on approach."
18.6	Wide as the soldiers around Giancarlo all flee, and he drops the two dead ones that he holds. Even the helo backs off. Giancarlo is hurt, but not too bad--mostly cuts and scrapes.	
18.7	Looking down, an MCU on Giancarlo as he looks up, squinting in the sunlight.	
18.8	Looking up, past Giancarlo, we can see something big falling from the sky towards him.	
18.9	Wide, Giancarlo stumbles as something big lands directly behind him, kicking up dust and splitting the concrete beneath their feet into four big shards that tip inwards.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
19.1	BARITSU--an enormous, armored refurb soldier with twin samurai swords at his waist, kneels at the center of it all when the dust clears.	
19.2	As Giancarlo turns toward him, Baritsu stands, drawing the longest of his two katanas.	GIANCARLO I've heard of you. GIANCARLO The archer, the aviator, and the swordsman. Right? GIANCARLO So where are your friends?
19.3	A SPEAR pierces Giancarlo from above and behind, skewering him through the shoulder blade, down and out through the lower ribs while he looks down at it, poking out of him.	GIANCARLO Gnk.
19.4	The spear ELECTROCUTES Giancarlo, sending tendrils of purple plasma arcing in a single bright burst, to finally knock him off his feet, smoking and burned.	
19.5	From above we see OSPREY descending on electromagnetic mechanical wings, in body armor, toward the fight--while Baritsu CHARGES at Giancarlo with the sword raised above his head in a classic samurai attack run. Giancarlo has fallen back on his side, laying on the concrete, seeming dazed, one hand on the spear which still sticks out of him.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
19.6	Giancarlo gets to one knee and puts out his hand with his palm facing Baritsu to defend the blow, arm outstretched. The sword slices right through his palm, down the length of his forearm, through his bicep, finally resting buried in Giancarlo's shoulder, stopped by the mass of his carbon fiber shoulder bone.	GIANCARLO WRAAAAAAAUUUUGH!
19.7	Giancarlo tries to punch at Baritsu with his other fist, but Baritsu takes one hand from the handle of his (still buried) sword and catches the punch.	SFX WRMP
19.8	Baritsu squeezes, crushing Giancarlo's bare fist with his big, armored hand.	SFX krnkle GIANCARLO ARGH!

Panel	Description	Dialog
20.1	Baritsu takes a step back, flicking the blood from his sword as Osprey lands beside Giancarlo, who has fallen onto his side unconscious, both of his damaged arms sprawled out in front of him, blood pooling quickly around him.	BARITSU Let's get this guy secured, then call him a medic.
20.2	Wide as Finlay's shuttle approaches the North American coastline, toward Boston.	Caption: "When news reached them that Caesar had declared the republic an empire, three Generals marched on Rome without their armies."
20.3	Inside the shuttle, Finlay stares out the window while David listens.	FINLAY Erasmus, Atheus, and Orpheus. They had all seen combat, all risen through the ranks as soldiers, then officers, loyal to the republic. FINLAY They swore an oath to each other, and to their men, that they would sit outside the city gates until Caesar restored democracy, or had them murdered for their trouble. FINLAY They ordered every Centurion who supported them to lay down arms and refuse to fight, as a nonviolent show of support, then officially made their demands known to the great gate's commanding officer.
20.4	The shuttle approaches BTS tower from the sky.	Caption: "Although they demanded that no enlisted man accompany them to the outer wall, they were soon joined by tens of thousands of soldiers who deserted Rome upon hearing their story."

Panel	Description	Dialog
20.5	Inside, Finlay turns to David.	FINLAY The three generals lasted twelve years, sitting at the gate. A sort of informal camp sprang up around the walls, an outer ring to the city comprising of only former Centurions and their families, friends and supporters. FINLAY The city grew so large that the soldiers' economy outgrew that of the capitol. FINLAY On the day that the outer ring was to elect their own democratic government, Caesar sent provocateurs out into the soldier city, starting riots and lighting fires.
20.6	Finlay and David exit the shuttle on the BTS tower helo pad, while TECHNICIANS move into place around the landed shuttle, prepping it for the next flight.	FINLAY A third of Rome's outskirts lay in ruin when the fire was finally contained on the third night, but for Caesar it was a victory. FINLAY The three generals, and the majority of their supporters died in the fire. FINLAY The idea that Rome had ever been a republic was redacted from the public consciousness within a single generation.
20.7	Fin and David enter the tower in silence.	FINLAY The man who told me that story was obsessed with it. FINLAY He said it was the model for every society that followed, including ours.

Panel	Description	Dialog
20.8	Fin and David stand in Fin's private lift, ascending to the penthouse floor. We look up at them, looking also at the ceiling vent between them.	FINLAY I want you to look into something, David.
20.9	Erasmus crouches in the shadows atop the lift as it zips by floors, looking down at them through that same ceiling vent, three listening devices jammed into it, pointing down.	FINLAY (off panel) Find out where Ombudsman have stashed an off-grid prisoner--Travis Arnette.
20.10	David taps his PDA.	DAVID Who is he? FINLAY A friend, once. He saw me very clearly, and held me at arm's length when I tried to save the poor guy from himself. FINLAY Travis also sat at the city wall, to stare down the new emperor, and was immediately wiped from existence. DAVID You think he's the man in the mask? FINLAY It's possible. DAVID Not according to this. They have him checked in on Prison Asteroid Toutatis. Nine years.

Panel	Description	Dialog
21.1	In the Odessan hotel where Ella was last seen in our previous issue, Kirk Vanderbilt stands inspecting the frame of the door to the room where she stayed.	
21.2	In background, one of the two Enforcement OFFICERS who told her to jump appears in the long hallway, walking towards Kirk.	OFFICER #1 Sir? KIRK Hm?
21.3	Kirk looks up at the officer as he joins him there at the door.	OFFICER #1 Is this your room, sir? KIRK Are you an employee? Of the hotel? OFFICER #1 No, sir. I'm McPherson Group Enforcement, we had a complaint that someone was lurking around up here. KIRK That was fast , I only just got here.
21.4	Close on the officer.	OFFICER #1 Can I ask what you're doing here, sir?
21.5	Kirk points at the door.	KIRK Wondering why this one room has a brand new door, while all of the others don't. OFFICER #1 Sir? KIRK One of my employees, a lovely lady named Ella Stevens, was staying in this room last week.

Panel	Description	Dialog
21.6	A two shot as the officer avoids Kirk's gaze.	OFFICER #1 I heard about that, the suicide. KIRK Tragic story, really. OFFICER #1 Of course.
21.7	Kirk and the officer walk away from the room, back toward the elevators.	KIRK Well, that's it I suppose. I just had to see the place where it happened. OFFICER #1 In future, please check with the hotel staff, they can't have you wandering around unescorted on guest floors. KIRK I will indeed.
21.8	A lone, shadowy figure stands in the overgrown garden of the house that was once the Arnette home.	
21.9	A bird's eye view of the figure, seen via a screen full of tracking information, and a square targeting reticle that hovers over the shadow.	Caption: "Sir? We're seeing someone down there, in the yard."

Panel	Description	Dialog
22.1	Finlay sits behind his desk, talking to a holographic panel, a PILOT's face displayed in it.	FINLAY Do you have an ident? PILOT (onscreen) Negative, we're moving in closer. FINLAY Hold for denser terrain, Colonel. FINLAY We need to assume this one is a refurb. If he hears you coming, if he even smells you, there might not be another thread to follow.
22.2	Alex walks along the beach-side footpath with a messenger bag slung over one shoulder, wearing bulky headphones. BEACHGOERS run and play around her.	
22.3	Wide as she passes a large aquarium, its big three-floor tanks displayed on the outside of the building with sharks and other fish swimming. The silhouettes of aquarium PATRONS on the inside of the building are visible through the glass.	
22.4	Closer on Alex, from the same side. She pauses, looking up, frowning, as if sensing something. In background, a lone figure visible through the glass, watching her.	
22.5	The same framing as last panel, she turns to it, looking at the blurred, shadowy figure through two sheets of thick glass and 10 feet of salt water. It stares back at her.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
22.6	Alex buys a ticket in the aquarium lobby.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
23.1	Alex walks through the aquarium tunnel, a glass arch featuring views of fish swimming to the left, right and above, curving right around. PARENTS and KIDS walk by on either side of her. She looks up at the fish.	
23.2	Over Alex's shoulder, just as she sees him, reveal Marcus, standing beneath a giant shark swimming over his head. He stands there in the shimmering light defiant, powerful, waiting for her to approach.	
23.3	Alex moves carefully to his side, looking worried.	ALEX You have to get out of here! They're watching me. MARCUS Oof. Four years, sweetheart. And that's how you say hello? ALEX Marcus!
23.4	He scoops her up, kissing her, almost lifting her off her feet.	ALEX Mmr!
23.5	He pulls back, smiling at her.	MARCUS Don't worry. There's a method to all this.
23.6	Marcus backs away, beginning to turn.	MARCUS I'll find you when it's safe. MARCUS I love you Alex.
23.7	Mid shot on Alex as she watches him go.	

Panel	Description	Dialog
24.1	Establishing shot, a MAUSOLEUM TOWER (600 floors) in the center of Boston's urban sprawl. Outside it is a dark, marble stone, with name plates where windows would normally be.	
24.2	Rico stands in one of the interior floors, looking at a single tomb.	
24.3	Pushing in closer, we see over his shoulder that it belongs to 'Sandra Arnette'.	SOLDIER #1 (off panel) Rico Arnette?
24.4	Rico looks across the floor to see a single, armored SOLDIER approaching him cautiously, with rifle aimed.	
24.5	Rico takes a single step towards him, pausing as he catches sight of a second SOLDIER out of the corner of his eye, approaching from the opposite side of the floor.	SOLDIER #2 Don't do it, Captain. All floors locked down, snipers on every rooftop. Air, armor, you know the drill.
24.6	Rico slowly backs up against his mother's tomb as the two soldiers converge to hold him at gunpoint.	SOLDIER #1 (into radio) Ten-forward, suspect in custody. Stand by.
24.7	The floor begins filling with armed Enforcement TROOPS, not armored like the first two, but mean looking, as the second soldier reaches for Rico's wrist.	
24.8	A wide shot of the mausoleum tower, as one of its upper floors explodes from one side of the building, raining stone and bones down on the streets below.	Caption: "Contact! Contact! He's--oh God. Send everything! Swarm now! Cont--"