

# STEEL CHAMELEONS

by William C. Martell

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"STEEL CHAMELEONS"

FADE IN:

EXT. ESTABLISHING. LOS ANGELES: 2029 -- DAY

Futuristic Los Angeles, tall silver buildings glittering in the sunlight. A monorail zips past.

A title is supered: "LOS ANGELES, OCTOBER 2029"

INT. AFTA INTERROGATION ROOM -- DAY

A pebbled glass window with the AFTA government logo and "Interrogation Room #7"...

Inside the room, a nervous INFORMANT gets the third degree from offscreen OFFICERS. Mag-cuffs on the Informant's wrists.

INFORMANT

They brought us here in shipping containers. Least a hundred of us. Told us we'd get papers - we'd still be illegals, you know, but no one would ever know. Told us we'd get jobs.

OFFICER (O.S.)

They gave you jobs.

INFORMANT

Pulled us out of the container but don't give us any papers. Tell us we need to earn them. We already paid, you know? Made us work in this factory --

OFFICER (O.S.)

Where?

INFORMANT

I just wanted a better life, you know?

OFFICER (O.S.)

Where is this factory?

INFORMANT

Sure, I'm an illegal, but --

The mag-cuffs suddenly slam onto a pair of mag-squares on the table in front of the Informant - yanking his arms. An electric shock sparks through him - he screams.

VIDEO MONITOR

The shock stops, the cuffs are released from the table.

## INFORMANT

There was a picture on the wall. A man with a hammer.

The Informant rubs his wrists...

EXT. ALLEY -- DAY

KEN ROYCE closes his Pippin pocket computer - cell phone sized - and the Informant video disappears.

Below the monorail, gritty streets - we're in the bad part of town and Royce looks right at home on these mean streets. The off-the-rack suit does little to disguise his rough edges.

On the wall near a doorway - graffiti of a man with a hammer.

Royce kicks the door open and rolls into the room.

INT. SWEAT SHOP -- DAY

A room full of ILLEGALS work machines under the watchful eye of a burley FOREMAN. When the Illegals stop for a moment to look at Royce, the Foreman smacks one with his cane.

ROYCE

Is that a cattle-prod?

Royce flips open his badge.

ROYCE

Inspection. No reason to worry, right?

The Foreman sticks close to Royce as he walks through the factory. The Illegals attempt to focus on their work.

One is the Informant - who doesn't look anywhere near Royce.

ROYCE

All these people have their work papers?

Royce looks in a trash can - filled with greasy fast food wrappers. Looks from Illegal to Illegal.

ROYCE

Lotta greasy food in there.

Royce locks eyes with a BLOND ILLEGAL as he walks past.

ROYCE

You people need your grease?

Royce turns a corner, notices a BROWN HAired ILLEGAL... Who has to be an identical twin to the Blond Illegal. Stops.

Smiles at the Foreman.

ROYCE

Those two better be twins. I think we should see their papers - see if the names match up, huh?

Suddenly, the Brown Haired Illegal bolts. Crashes through a stack of boxes, smashes out a back door...

ROYCE

Stop! AFTA Officer! Stop!

Royce gives chase... drawing a sleek futuristic gun. Other illegals chatter in some language.

INT. STAIRWAY -- DAY

The Brown Haired Illegal races up a staircase. Royce a landing behind him.

ROYCE

Stop or I'll shoot!

The Illegal doesn't stop - he hauls ass up the stairs.

ROYCE

Shit.

Royce gives chase, racing up the stairs. Landing after Landing. Higher and higher.

ROYCE

Stop!

Royce is two landings back - this Illegal can run!

The Illegal snatches a trash can from a landing door without slowing down, and fires it down the stairs at Royce.

ROYCE

Shit.

Jumps over the trash can, almost losing balance. Continues up the stairs carefully.

EXT. ROOFTOP, LOS ANGELES -- DAY

The Illegal blasts through the doors, stops, surveys the roof. Not a drop of sweat on him. His eyes move back and forth strangely - like a machine. Hears Royce's footsteps, finds a place to hide. Wham! Royce kicks through the door, gun ready. Sweat pouring off him after racing up the stairs.

ROYCE

I don't want to shut you down.

Royce moves across the roof, searching for the Illegal.  
Lots of steam vents and sub-structures to hide behind.  
Hears a noise to his left and spins...  
A bird takes flight.  
Royce almost shoots it.

ROYCE

Nowhere to run. Why not give up?  
Save us both some trouble?

Royce passes a steam vent - hears a sound behind him.  
Spins...  
Just in time to see the Illegal charging at him.

ILLEGAL

Screw you!

Royce fires.  
Misses - The projectile arcs around and hits a gas pipe.  
A strange pen-light like projectile.

Before he can re-aim, the Illegal slams a fist into his face.  
Knocking Royce to the ground.

Royce rolls to his feet, fires.  
Misses again.  
The projectile zooming over the Illegal's left shoulder...  
Arcs around and hits a steel vent pipe.

WHAM! The Illegal kicks the gun from Royce's hand.  
The gun goes skittering across the roof.

ILLEGAL

All we wanted was a better future.

Royce takes a punch to the face. He rolls his head away  
from the blow, and it just grazes him.

The Illegal spins and tries to hit Royce again.

This time, Royce is ready.  
He blocks and rolls away from the punch, pops up, left foot  
swings to connect with Illegal's shoulder.

Wham! Illegal fakes left, swings a foot around to the right.

Royce ducks under it.  
Grabs Illegal's leg with both hands and flips him over.

ROYCE

There's no future for you.

Illegal slams onto the roof, rolls, comes back to his feet.  
Not a bead of sweat on him. This guy's a machine!

ROYCE

Just a warranty.

The Illegal charges, hitting and kicking at Royce.  
It's all he can do to block the hits... some land painfully.  
The Illegal is driving him to the edge of the roof!

ILLEGAL

Warranty's for the life of the  
machine.

The Illegal lands a super-fast kick to Royce's face.

ILLEGAL

Must have hurt. You got a warranty?  
They replace any parts I tear off?

Royce swings a fist. The Illegal plucks it out of the air.  
Begins twisting it around.  
Forcing him to the edge of the roof.

Royce looks ALL THE WAY DOWN to the street below. Cars.  
Pedestrians. A really hard cement sidewalk.

ILLEGAL

Which you think will hit first? You  
or your arm?

The Illegal twists. Seconds before his arm snaps, Royce  
spins around, breaking free, and kicks the Illegal in the  
face.

The kick knocks the Illegal back...  
.....Rolling across the roof...  
.....Coming up with a piece of steel pipe!  
Charging at Royce!

Royce looks at his fallen pistol - way over there. Spots a  
board a few feet away. Grabs it and swings it at the Illegal.

Whack! Whack! Whack!  
The Illegal uses the pipe to cut the board down to size.

ILLEGAL

You can't win against steel.

The Illegal raises the pipe overhead...

Royce THRUSTS the ragged end of the board into his face.

Removing a layer of flesh... exposing wires and mechanisms  
and plastic skeleton. This guy really is a machine!

ROYCE

The life of the machine?

Royce rolls to his fallen gun, scoops it up, aims...

At the Illegal, racing at him, steel pipe overhead!

Royce fires.

Misses - projectile strangely following the steel pipe.

Fires.

Misses - projectile hits the steel pipe and connects.

Illegal almost on top of him!

Fires.

Hits the Illegal in the chest. The Illegal is kicked down.

The projectile sticking out of his chest.

ROYCE

It's over.

Royce starts to push a button on the gun - a second trigger.

The Illegal sits up, yanks the projectile from his chest seconds before it arcs and sparks (would have shorted him). He grabs the steel pipe and rises to his feet, using the gas pipe as a crutch. Bad move...

The projectile on the gas pipe also arcs and sparks... Bursting into flames! A jet of flame hits the Illegal, BLASTING him back to the edge of the roof as it ignites him!

The Illegal falls off the edge of the roof on fire. Falls all the way down to the street below.

Royce looks over the edge at the burning mess below.

ROYCE

Warranty expired.

EXT. SWEAT SHOP -- DAY

The burning android's hand moves as the plastic ectoskeleton melts. Soon, there is nothing left but a burning puddle and some metal parts.

EXT. TITLE SEQUENCE

James Bond titles. Flames and metal skeleton. Hot women. A man with a futuristic gun in silhouette. One woman turns and becomes another woman. Every turn might change the identity. A woman changes into a man. Everything can change - nothing is as it seems. Everyone's a chameleon.

INT. AFTA - LOBBY -- DAY

Ultra-modern lobby. A receptionist behind a desk answers on the second ring.

SECRETARY

Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,  
Firearms and Androids.

Behind a window with the AFT&A logo...

INT. AFTA - CONNERS OFFICE -- DAY

The charred android hand in a plastic evidence bag is dropped on the most expensive real oak desk in Los Angeles.

ROYCE

Cheap Chinese manufacturing.

CONNERS

Not on the desk!

Stuffy and conservative, LAWRENCE CONNERS is the stern father figure in charge of the Los Angeles branch of AFTA. Everything on his desk is perfectly placed, except for the evidence bag. Royce plops down in a chair, leaving the bag on th desk.

ROYCE

Gotta tighten up the borders. Too many of these things slipping through.

Connors uses the tips of his fingers to remove the bag, studying the report clipped on the outside. The evidence bag ends up in a tray near the door.

CONNERS

High impact plastic ectoskeleton?

ROYCE

That's why I had trouble hitting it.

Connors uses a wet-nap on his fingers.

CONNERS

And why did you have trouble waiting for the rest of the team?

Ultra-modern office - everything is wireless. A remote pad built into the desk controls everything... except Royce.

ROYCE

It was a hot lead. Didn't want them to scatter while some unit commander was still making plans.

CONNERS

This is a government agency, Royce, not a one man force.

ROYCE

The team was right behind me. We didn't lose any of them.

CONNERS

Yet we did have to close Spring Street for five hours to process a crime scene.



ROYCE

(nods to evidence bag)  
Give me a shovel, I could have scraped  
that thing off the street in ten  
minutes.

CONNERS

Do you have any idea what your raid  
cost this agency?

A rhetorical question - Conners hands him the cost report.  
Royce tosses it in the trash without looking at it.

ROYCE

Next time I'll try to be more careful  
where I throw out the trash.

Conners touches his desk-remote - a screen raises from the  
end of the desk and the lights dim slightly.

CONNERS

I'm sure the local authorities in  
Nevada will find that comforting.

ROYCE

They have their own AFTA branch.

CONNERS

But they don't have any agents of  
your caliber, Royce.

ROYCE

You're not transferring me to that --

CONNERS

Not permanently. They have a little  
problem. Eight amusement droids are  
missing from the DeLosi Resort in  
Las Vegas. They need someone to see  
that they are safely returned.

ROYCE

Amusement droids.

ON THE SCREEN

A commercial for the DeLosi Resort.

A mediaeval CASTLE in the fog.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Looking for the adventure of a  
lifetime?

A pair of KNIGHTS IN ARMOR battle each other to the death.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The DeLosi Amusement Resort in Las Vegas has all of the adventure you can imagine - and more! Dinner...

THE DINING ROOM of the castle filled with TOURISTS in period garb (but looking out of place) eating lavish portions of a feast with their bare hands. Drinking gallons of wine.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

An exciting battle...

Back to the BATTLING KNIGHTS, as one of them kills the other, takes off his helmet to expose a TOURIST FACE, and is hugged by his TOURIST WIFE.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Plus a night with a beautiful wench...

IN A CASTLE BEDROOM our TOURIST KNIGHT has removed his armor and is approached by a breath taking BEAUTY in a laced peasant gown. She kisses him and removes the gown.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Or a handsome Knight...

IN ANOTHER BEDROOM our TOURIST WIFE kisses and handsome KNIGHT... the same knight who was killed...

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

All for one low price. The DeLosi luxury resort. Just a thirty minute bullet train ride from Los Angeles.

THE CASTLE shimmers in the Las Vegas desert, surrounded by other hotels and casinos - a more crowded skyline than today.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Other available adventures include Western Gunslinger, Pirate's Cove, Roaring Twenties and Space Wars.

A quick image of each adventure.

INT. AFTA - CONNERS OFFICE -- DAY

Connors hits the remote and the screen disappears.

ROYCE

Anyone who screws an android...

CONNERS

Amusement Droids fulfill an important function, Royce.

ROYCE

That's why out of fifty-three states,  
they're only legal in Nevada and  
Congress is voting to build a fence.

CONNERS

They provide a way for people to  
work out their violent fantasies, in  
addition to disease free sex for  
those unable to control their libidos.

ROYCE

It's like screwing a toaster.

CONNERS

They're the most popular attraction  
in Nevada. Billions in tourist  
dollars.

ROYCE

Why don't they lo-jack these things?  
DeLosi could just go pick them up at  
lost and found.

CONNERS

And you could spend the next two  
weeks at your desk. Don't you think  
this is a better use for your unique  
skills?

Connors touches a control on his desk. Beep from Royce's  
pocket. He pulls out his Pippin pocket computer, flips it  
open. The screen reads "New File Received".

CONNERS

That's the complete dossier on DeLosi.  
He may have connections to the  
Faustino organized crime family in  
New York.

ROYCE

Glad to to be working for a good  
cause.

CONNERS

Try to stay out of trouble this time.

Royce moves to his feet, grabs the bag and splits.

EXT. DESERT -- DAY

The quiet desert between Los Angeles and Las Vegas...

A high speed mono-rail zips past.

EXT. LAS VEGAS SKYLINE -- DAY

Las Vegas shimmers in the sub with a million neon lights.  
New hotels, new resorts - the city reborn.

The monorail zips between casinos.

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP (MOVING SIDEWALK) -- DAY

Royce glides down the moving sidewalk, bathed in neon light.  
The city is alive with vacationers who have escaped their  
boring factory jobs for a week in sin city.

Royce passes several casino and resorts until he comes to  
the DeLosi Castle from the advertisement. Steps onto a moving  
sidewalk that takes him through 3D ads for the wonders of  
casino gambling, Robotic Adventures, and Android sex.

ROYCE

Viva Las Vegas.

He enters the Casino.

INT. DELOSI CASINO -- DAY

Royce strolls past slot machines and blackjack tables.

Panel-screens advertise the Adventures: Western Gunslinger,  
Pirate's Cove, Roaring Twenties, Space Wars and Knights.

At the back of the Casino are gaps between slot machine banks  
with video advertisements for the adventures. Royce pulls  
out a scanning device and runs it across the screens.

One of the screens makes the scanner beep. Royce pockets  
the scanners, notices a hidden video camera near the ceiling.  
Runs his hand over the screen until he finds a button...

A hand-scanner emerges from the screen. As Royce studies  
the hand-scanner, a SECURITY GUARD approaches.

GUARD

Can I help you with something?

ROYCE

How do you get through here?

The Guard puts a hand on Royce's shoulder.

GUARD

You don't. Authorized personnel  
only.

The Guard pulls him away from the door, Royce swings into  
action twisting the Guard's arm and slapping his palm against  
the hand-scanner. The door-screen zooms open.

ROYCE

Thanks.

Royce lets go of his arm, grabs his neck tie, drags the Guard behind him as he enters a hallway. Door closes behind them.

ROYCE

Which way is DeLosi's office?

GUARD

Screw you.

Royce swings his head into the wall.

ROYCE

Which way?

Swings his head into the opposite wall.

GUARD

Down the hall, to the left.

Royce pulls the Guard down the hall...

INT. DELOSI'S OFFICE -- DAY

The cliché mobster's office with a couple of major exceptions: A wall of self help DVDs, and a sand garden on the desk. Pleasant New Age music plays. GUARD #2 stands by the door.

MEL DELOSI looks like a mobbed-up casino manager on the outside, but he's got anger management issues. Because even the most minor problem might set him off, he's become afraid of conflict. Violent and nervous.

The door bell startles him.

DeLosi presses a button on his wireless desk and the Guard's face shows up on a monitor.

DELOSI

I'm busy - what is it?

GUARD (V.O.)

Got something for you.

The Guard's face is all we can see on the monitor.

DELOSI

What? I have to guess what it is?  
Money? A broad? Calisee's head on  
a plate?

GUARD (V.O.)

You may not like it.

Delosi hits the door lock button.

The Guard stumbles through the door, Royce holding his neck tie. The door wooshes closed, trapping them in the room.

DeLosi begins raking the sand in his garden.

Guard #2 pulls his gun, aims it at Royce. But Royce flicks the neck tie, throwing the first Guard into Guard #2. The gun skitters. Royce does some "Guard Fu" - spinning the Guard like a yo-yo into Guard #2, knocking him down.

DeLosi continues raking the sand, chanting his mantra.

DELOSI

This too shall pass. This too shall  
pass. This too shall pass.

Royce hefts both Guards by their neck ties - knocking their heads together. Controlling both larger men.

ROYCE

Ken Royce, AFT&A.

DELOSI

Is this an inspection? We aren't  
scheduled until March...

As DeLosi rakes, Royce looks at the Guards neck ties before releasing them.

ROYCE

Are these mob ties?

GUARD

No. We got them at Sears.

Royce looks at DeLosi.

ROYCE

You lost some androids. That's a  
class D controlled technology. Can't  
have those things just wandering the  
streets.

DeLosi stops raking. He's not gonna get shut down or wacked. Royce crosses to the desk.

DELOSI

That's what this is about? Why didn't  
you say so? Come barging in here  
like --

ROYCE

Maybe I should have said "allegedly"  
lost. You could have sold them on  
the black market, right?

DELOSI

Why would I do something stupid like that? Aside from being illegal, and I would never do anything illegal, there's no profit in it.

DeLosi presses a button on his desk and almost instantly a smoking hot SECRETARY enters through a hidden door, carrying a tray of drinks, drug inhalers, and transdermals.

DELOSI

Cocktail? Inhaler? Patch?

ROYCE

I'm on duty.

DELOSI

So am I.

He grabs an inhaler off the tray and takes a couple of hits. Then slaps on two patches... calming him a little.

DELOSI

You gotta look long term in this business. The life span of these droids is twenty years. Course, after two years the damned things are obsolete. If we just used them as pleasure droids, at a thousand credits a pop, I'd make more money in six months than I would selling them on the black market.

ROYCE

I don't know why anyone would want to screw a machine.

DELOSI

Hygiene. These things are cleaner than any woman you ever been with. No diseases, no parasites. Just hose them down afterwards.

ROYCE

Disgusting.

DELOSI

You'd do my secretary, right?

The Secretary brushes against Royce as she passes by. Like a cat rubbing against your leg. They exchange smiles.

ROYCE

That's different.

DeLosi smiles. Royce looks at the Secretary - an android?

DELOSI

I don't understand you do-gooders.  
Rules for everything. Anything that's  
fun has gotta be against the law.  
You want to regulate my life.

This steams him enough to rake a little more.

ROYCE

Just get rid of all the rules?

DELOSI

Why not? Nevada is like an oasis.  
It's all free market here. You want  
to do something fun that may be  
illegal in the other 52, go right  
ahead. Long as no one gets hurt.

ROYCE

How many people OD on transdermals?

DELOSI

That's their business and their life.  
How many people over-eat? Wreck  
their cars while talking on the vid-  
phone? Skip their work out and have  
heart attacks? But you don't make  
rules about food and vid-phones and  
not going to the gym, do you? Do  
you?

He's worked himself up enough to rake furiously.

DELOSI

(sotto)

This too shall pass. This too shall  
pass. This too shall pass.

The Secretary brings over the tray and applies a third  
transdermal relaxer to DeLosi's arm. Kisses him on the head.

ROYCE

No rules, no reason to track down  
your stolen androids.

Royce turns to leave. A calmer DeLosi smiles.

DELOSI

Who said they were stolen?

Stopping Royce. DeLosi slides a micro-drive into his  
computer, looks at the flat screen.

DELOSI

They were sent back to the factory  
for maintenance three weeks ago.



ROYCE  
Scheduled repairs?

DELOSI  
No. Upgrades and modifications by  
Zelazny himself. The details would  
probably offend you. Concerns their  
sex drives.

ROYCE  
You have the data-work?

DeLosi pulls the micro-drive and tosses it to Royce.

DELOSI  
If they were stolen, it was from  
Trumbull's factory in Carson while  
Doc Zelazny was retro-fitting them.  
(smiles)  
So you have no further reason to be  
here, do you?

ROYCE  
Serial numbers and I.D. snaps of the  
androids?

DELOSI  
On the drive.  
(points to micro-drive)  
Show Mr. Royce the door.

The two Guards grab Royce by the shoulders.

ROYCE  
Careful. New shirt.

They escort him out of DeLosi's office.

EXT. DESERT -- DAY

The desert bakes in the afternoon sun - beautiful...  
Until the monorail zooms past on its way to Carson.

INT. TRAIN CAR -- DAY

Royce presses an armrest button to darken the windows. Slides  
the micro-drive into his Pippen Pocket Computer, plugs in  
his earphone.

ROYCE  
Jessica?

JESSICA (V.O.)  
Yes, Ken?

THE PIPPEN'S VIDSCREEN

Lights, showing JESSICA, the hot interface - Royce's personal guide through his computer. Closest thing he has to a secretary... or steady girlfriend.

ROYCE (O.S.)

Let's look at the files on these droids.

Jessica smiles, and is replaced by a series of images.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Cindy Unit. Serial number 5289510.

CINDY - a sexy android in Pirate's Wench garb.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Agar Unit. Serial number 6392675.

AGAR - a huge android dressed as a Gunslinger.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Scotty Unit. Serial number 4729003.

SCOTTY - a muscular android in Knight's armor.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Tania Unit. Serial number 1749883.

TANIA - a hot, exotic android dressed as a Saloon girl.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Terry Unit. Serial number 2987364.

TERRY - a giant android dressed as a Pirate.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Whitney Unit. Serial number 8345527.

WHITNEY - a sexy android in a 1920s Flapper outfit.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Teddy Unit. Serial number 3379251.

TEDDY - a dangerous looking android in a Space Cadet suit.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Cutter Unit. Serial number 7398457.

CUTTER - a wirey android in a 1920s Gangster outfit.

JESSICA (V.O.)

According to shipping manifests, these eight units were returned to Trumbull Industries in Carson City, Nevada at 11:24 AM on June 17th at the request of Dr. Aaron Zelazny for upgrades.

ROYCE

What kind of upgrades?

JESSICA (V.O.)

Installation of series D-25 sexual response drive and surface replacement with liquid skin technology.

ROYCE

Liquid skin?

JESSICA (V.O.)

I'm sorry, Ken, I have no information about liquid skin. Not in my data nor central processing's data. It appears to be new technology.

ROYCE

Something Zelazny created?

JESSICA (V.O.)

Perhaps these eight were to be test subjects. It is possible that they were stolen for the new technology.

ROYCE

Who would do that?

JESSICA (V.O.)

Rival android manufacturers. Enemy governments. Third party ransomers.

ROYCE

Thanks, Jess.

JESSICA (V.O.)

My pleasure, Ken.

The vidscreen goes dark and Royce pockets the Pippen.

EXT. CARSON CITY -- DAY

The monorail zooms into Carson City, where Trumbull Industries skyscraper stands like a giant finger flipping off the world.

The Trumbull logo on the top of the building.

INT. MOVING SIDEWALK -- DAY

On a covered moving sidewalk, Royce watches for his exit:

Trumbull Industries.

Steps off the moving sidewalk, allowing the commercials on the wall screens to assault somebody else.

INT. TRUMBULL INDUSTRIES - LOBBY -- DAY

Royce steps into the huge lobby. A giant Trumbull Industries logo blocks his way - the reception desk. Royce ambles to the desk, where reed-thin blond-haired PHILIP stands guard.

PHILIP

Welcome to Trumbull Industries, may I be of service?

ROYCE

I need to speak with Dr. Zelazny.

Philip types the name into his console.

PHILIP

I'm sorry, Dr. Zelanzny can not speak with you today. Do you wish to leave contact information?

Royce pops open his ID.

ROYCE

Ken Royce, AFT&A. Official business.

PHILIP

Dr. Zelazny is still unable to speak with you today.

ROYCE

When will he be available tomorrow?

PHILIP

He will not be able to speak with you tomorrow. Do you wish to leave contact information?

ROYCE

When can Dr. Zelazny speak with me?

Philip types into his console again.

PHILIP

It seems that Dr. Zelazny will never be able to speak with you.

ROYCE

Do you want me to shut this place down?

PHILIP

I have no desires either way. Thank you for visiting Trumbull Industries.

Royce heads across the lobby to the elevators.

PHILIP

Sir? You do not have an appointment.

Royce flips off Philip, then notices the two huge SECURITY GUARDS moving from opposite sides of the lobby to intercept him. When he picks up pace, so do they.

PHILIP (O.S.)

You do not have an appointment.

Royce does a last minute evasion, away from the elevators to the back part of the lobby, where BELINDA HOYLE stands guard. Her conservative clothes can't disguise the body underneath. Belinda wants to be taken seriously - she's tough, no-nonsense.

ROYCE

I'm here to talk to Doc Zelazny.  
You know where he is?

BELINDA

Doc Zelanzny? He's right over there.

Royce starts past her, but she grabs him. Holds him in place.

BELINDA

But you can't talk with him.

ROYCE

That's what the guy at the desk said.  
Looks like you're both wrong.

Royce tries to remove her hand, she spins, twisting his hand and jamming it painfully behind his back.

BELINDA

When I say no, it means no.

Royce counters, twisting around so that he is holding her arm painfully behind her back. Almost as if the two were practicing dance moves. He pulls out his ID, shows her.

ROYCE

This says I get to talk to Zelazny.

Belinda does the counter move - and they end up just holding hands next to each other. She shakes his hand off hers, wipes her palm on his coat.

BELINDA

You can try. I'll take you to him.

Royce follows Belinda to the back corner of the lobby where a man lays face down on the floor. She puts on gloves, bends down next to the man and flips him over.

BELINDA

Doc Zelanzny. He wouldn't talk to me.

ZELAZNY's head has been bashed in. He's dead. Lifeless. Dressed in a lab coat stained with blood. Belinda lifts one of his hands - every finger broken backwards. The other hand is the same... and the arm is twisted around unnaturally.

ROYCE

What did that?

BELINDA

Walking stick. His. Over there.  
(nods to stick)  
Blood all over it. Gave it a DNA quick test - matches what we have on file for Zelazny. When Forensics shows we'll know more.

ROYCE

When did it happen?

BELINDA

I don't know. Just got here myself. Body's still warm, though.

She carefully lays Zelazny's arm down and pulls out her ID.

BELINDA

Dt. Belinda Hoyle, CCPD. Mind if I ask what your business was with Zelazny?

ROYCE

Eight missing androids. He recalled them for refurbishing. No one ever saw them again.

BELINDA

Looks like a dead end.

ROYCE

Depends on what's in his pockets.

BELINDA

You want me to CC you the report?

ROYCE

I'd rather see for myself.

BELINDA

Since when is murder a federal offense?

ROYCE

When it involves a Class D controlled technology. Who knows what might happen if they fell into the wrong hands?

BELINDA

They're sex droids.

ROYCE

You say that like it's a bad thing.

BELINDA

Let's get this straight, I don't need a partner, I don't need an assistant, I don't need a friend.

ROYCE

We have parallel investigations. We can work together or against each other.

BELINDA

My life would be so much easier if you just got the hell out of my way.

ROYCE

Who said life was supposed to be easy? Now, can we see what's in his pockets?

Belinda pulls everything out of Zelazny's pockets.

BELINDA

Keys, antacids, comb, handkerchief, wallet... license, credit cards - not robbery, everything's here but his company ID and travel card.

ROYCE

Don't need one where he's going.

Belinda puts everything in an evidence bag, then sets a laser perimeter alarm "tape" around the corpse and murder weapon.

BELINDA

That'll keep him until forensics shows.

ROYCE

Why would they kill him in the middle of the lobby in plain view of a half dozen security cameras?

She looks around the lobby - spots several security cameras.

BELINDA

They want to get caught?

ROYCE

Maybe Trumbull knows.

BELINDA

Can't just barge in on a man like that.

ROYCE

Watch me.

Royce crosses the laser perimeter, setting off the alarm. Belinda uses her control to reset it, then follows.

INT. TRUMBULL'S OFFICE -- DAY

The largest, most luxurious office on the West Coast. You could play tennis in here.

Royce is stopped at the door when a brown haired version of PHILIP puts a hand on his chest.

PHILIP

Mr. Trumbull is unable to see you.

ROYCE

Funny, I can see him.

DONALD TRUMBULL, the world's third wealthiest man, jogs on a treadmill while reading a report on a monitor and listening to something on an ear-bud. He oozes power and sophistication.

ROYCE

You sure you have no further use for that hand?

Philip lowers his hand, but doesn't step back.

PHILIP

You'll still have to make an appointment.

BELINDA

Told you so.

PHILIP

As I'm sure you can see, Mr. Trumbull is quite busy at this time.

ROYCE

I can wait.

Philip turns to a wall-screen and snaps his fingers.



PHILIP  
Scheduling.

The screen shows today's schedule minute-by-minute.

PHILIP  
Next available?

The screen flips through full days rapidly. Lots of them. After hundreds of days, the screen stops on a day with a ten minute blank line.

PHILIP  
Mr. Trumbull can see you next August  
13th at 2:35 pm.

BELINDA  
Should have brought a cot.

PHILIP  
You should have made an appointment  
two years ago. As I'm sure you know,  
time is money. Mr. Trumbull did not  
earn his position as the world's  
third wealthiest person by squandering  
his time speaking with the  
unscheduled.

BELINDA  
He's calling you names.

Royce presses his ID right up to Philip's nose.

ROYCE  
Maybe you didn't see this. I'm a  
Federal Agent. She's a cop.

Philip ignores the ID in his face, continues with prissy calm.

PHILIP  
Every second of Mr. Trumbull's life  
is scheduled and accounted for -  
there is no deviation. If I were to  
allow you to interrupt him, it would  
cause a ripple effect that would  
disrupt his schedule until...

Philip attempts to look over the ID at the wall screen.

BELINDA  
Next August 13th at 2:35 pm.

PHILIP  
Correct.

Philip smiles and daintily removes the ID from his face.

PHILIP

Shall I put you on the schedule for August of next year?

ROYCE

I'd rather see him now.

PHILIP

Have you not been listening? I'm afraid Mr. Trumbull will be unable to see you until --

Royce pulls a small tazer-disrupter from his pocket and zaps Philip mid-sentence. He goes rigid and falls over.

ROYCE

Looks like an opening in his day.

BELINDA

You can't just taze somebody.

ROYCE

SomeTHING - he's a machine.

BELINDA

He still has rights.

ROYCE

So does my tazer. After you?

BELINDA

No. You first, I insist.

Royce moves deeper into the huge office, approaching Trumbull.

ROYCE

Mr. Trumbull, sorry to disturb you, I'm Ken Royce with the AFT&A. I have some questions about...

Trumbull completely ignores him.

Royce studies him for a moment... then grabs the ear-piece and yanks it from Trumbull's ear. Trumbull spins to face Royce. Not a happy man.

TRUMBULL

Excuse me?

Royce displays his ID.

ROYCE

AFT&A - I have some questions.

TRUMBULL

You're not scheduled. Philip?

ROYCE

Taking a nap.

TRUMBULL

I don't have time for this --

Trumbull presses a button on the treadmill.

BELINDA

Doctor Zelazny is laying dead in your lobby. Someone beat his brains out - with his own walking stick.

TRUMBULL

And who are you?

BELINDA

Belinda Hoyle, Carson City PD.  
Homicide.

Trumbull steps off the treadmill.

TRUMBULL

You are costing me 3.5 million credits a minute.

ROYCE

Bill me.

BELINDA

He's going to need the money, with his top android designer dead.

TRUMBULL

You're positive he's been murdered?

BELINDA

He could have beat himself to death.

TRUMBULL

Zelazny was a brilliant individual. On the cutting edge of robot technology. Professor Kaydict's only living protege.

ROYCE

You guys still have Kaydict's head frozen in the basement?

TRUMBULL

Are you working together?

ROYCE

Yes.

BELINDA

No.

Trumbull focuses on Belinda, closing out Royce.

TRUMBULL

What do you need from me?

ROYCE

Full access to Zelazny's lab and files.

TRUMBULL

That's confidential information.

BELINDA

Security disks, lobby only, for the past hour - when Zelazny was killed.

TRUMBULL

I'll have security examine the disks and send you a detailed report.

ROYCE

Full reports on any work done on the eight missing androids.

TRUMBULL

Proprietary information.

BELINDA

I'm going to need to question employees who worked with Zelazny and search their work areas.

TRUMBULL

Is it your theory that Zelazny was killed elsewhere and his body moved?

BELINDA

No.

TRUMBULL

That's my answer as well. This is my company, my property - get a warrant.

ROYCE

This is a federal investigation.

TRUMBULL

Mr. Royce, my company manufactures a popular product for legal use. You can not regulate what the public wants.

ROYCE

You think the public always know what's best for them?

TRUMBULL

Let them find out on their own.  
Forget this fence and open the markets  
in the other 52 states.

ROYCE

Legalize these things across the  
country?

TRUMBULL

Android related entertainment is now  
the number one reason people come to  
Nevada. Why not let them enjoy the  
use of androids in their own state?

ROYCE

You want to open that pandora's box?

TRUMBULL

The fact that the AFT&A exists proves  
that it should not exist. If people  
will knowingly break the law to obtain  
an android, that law is unenforceable.  
It's contrary to the needs of society.

ROYCE

They've already taken our jobs.  
What's next? Our women?

TRUMBULL

The motorized vibrator has been around  
for eighty-seven years.

BELINDA

But they aren't much at cuddling  
afterwards. And they never buy  
flowers.

TRUMBULL

There was a time when no one had a  
computer in their pocket. Is that  
what you want today?

BELINDA

I want to find out who killed Doctor  
Zelazny. To do that, I need the  
security disk for the time of his  
death.

TRUMBULL

I'll notify security. You'll have  
access to the crime scene and the  
disk.

(turns to Royce)

But no unauthorized searches. No  
questioning of staff and employees.

(MORE)

TRUMBULL (CONT'D)

Deviate from this in any way and  
I'll have you removed from the  
premises.

Trumbull steps back onto the treadmill, plugs in his ear-  
piece. They are dismissed.  
Royce and Belinda head to the door.

Philip moves to his feet, groggy.

PHILIP

I'm sorry sir. They --

Royce hits him with the tazer on the way out, sending him to  
the floor mid-sentence.

INT. ELEVATOR -- DAY

Belinda and Royce stand on opposite sides.

BELINDA

Is that how you usually get  
cooperation on an investigation?

ROYCE

I don't let some asshole step on me  
just because he's rich.

BELINDA

I got my security disk. What'd you  
get?

Royce pulls out a company access card with the Trumbull logo.

ROYCE

A way to search the premises... and  
Mr. Priss gets blamed for it.

He pockets the access card as the elevator doors open.

INT. TRUMBULL INDUSTRIES - LOBBY -- DAY

Royce and Belinda exit the elevator, walk past the crime  
scene with the laser perimeter "tape" on their way to  
Security.

Takes a moment for them to notice that Zelazny's body is  
gone.

Royce starts to cross the laser beam, Belinda stops him.

BELINDA

Wait a minute.

She checks her control - no alarm.

BELINDA  
Didn't trigger the alarm.

ROYCE  
Impossible.

Now Royce breaks the beam... setting off the alarm... and enters the crime scene. The walking stick is still there. The pool of blood is still there. But Zelazny is gone.

Belinda resets the alarm and joins Royce at the crime scene.

BELINDA  
He couldn't just get up and walk away.

ROYCE  
Not with his head caved in like that.

BELINDA  
Let's check the security disks.

Royce sets off the alarm again as he bee-lines to Security.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE -- DAY

A room filled with security monitors - all of them hooded. Belinda and Royce watch the only unhooded security monitor.

Royce lifts one of the hoods to peek at another monitor. SECURITY GUARD #1 slaps his hand. Royce turns back to the approved monitor.

SECURITY GUARD #2 presses a button and images appear.

IN THE MONITOR

Business people walk back and forth in the back lobby... Then the image breaks up. When the image returns, Zelazny is laying dead on the floor. Bloody walking stick a few feet away.

BELINDA  
Spot-jammed.

ROYCE  
Jammers are illegal.

BELINDA  
So's murder.

The image zips - Belinda and Royce enter the frame. Examine the body. She puts up the perimeter. People walk back and forth in the background. Then the image breaks up again.

When the image returns, Zelazny's body is gone.

BELINDA

Department's got some data recovery experts who might be able to pull and image from that static.

GUARD

The disk doesn't leave this room.

ROYCE

Can we bring the experts here? They won't take up much space, and I promise they won't look behind the curtains.

GUARD

Trumbull said to show you the disk. You've seen it.

Security Guard #1 escorts them out. Royce takes a quick peek under one of the hoods on the way out.

INT. TRUMBULL INDUSTRIES - LOBBY -- DAY

The Security Office door closes behind Royce and Belinda.

BELINDA

What now?

Royce pulls out the access card.

ROYCE

I'm going to the repair shop to track down my eight missing androids. You're welcome to tag along.

Royce and Belinda cross the lobby to an elevator back. With a card key lock.

Royce inserts the access card, and the doors open.

VOICE (V.O.)

Thank you Philip 2243.

Royce gestures for Belinda to enter first, follows her inside.

INT. ELEVATOR -- DAY

The elevator buttons form a cross shape. Again the card is required.

Belinda looks up and down. Royce finds the answer across - three buttons marked "Tech" on the far left. He presses Belinda away so that he can press the last "Tech" button.

ROYCE

Going left?



The elevator doors close and they are pressed to the right wall of the elevator by the rapid movement to the left. Falling into each others arms for a moment.

ROYCE

Pardon me.

They extract themselves from each other. Act as if touching the other were torture. Move to opposite sides of the car.

BELINDA

This doesn't make any sense.

ROYCE

Why not? We both want the same thing.

BELINDA

No. Trumbull. His top man is murdered, but he doesn't seem to want it solved.

ROYCE

He doesn't have the time.

BELINDA

Killing Zelazny wasn't on his schedule. I checked.

ROYCE

No time for the crime.

The buttons light, until they come to the end of the line. This time they are ready, and barely brush against each other.

ROYCE

After you.

The doors open, and they step out.

INT. ANDROID REPAIRS -- DAY

A technician, KUTTNER, lovingly removes the chest plate of a sexy female Android, exposing a tangle of wires. Caresses her leg... it's not attached. On the counter are several broken Androids plus spare arm and leg units.

KUTTNER

See? Relatively painless, wasn't it?

Behind Kuttner - a never-ending motorized dry cleaning style rack, but instead of clothes, blank faced Androids hang.

When Kuttner starts to replace a drive, Royce's ID card blocks his progress. Looks up to see Royce and Belinda.

ROYCE

You were sent eight androids for repair.

KUTTNER

More like eight hundred.  
(gestures to rack)  
You'll need to be more specific.

Royce pops the micro-drive from his Pippin, hands it to him.

ROYCE

Model and serial numbers.

Kuttner inserts the micro-drive into his desk top.

ON THE SCREEN

The eight androids. Kuttner touches the screen and the motorized rack behind him begins moving. Hundreds of hanging androids moving around the room.

KUTTNER

Seven of them have already been shipped.

ROYCE

Back to DeLosi's?

KUTTNER

Negative.

BELINDA

If that means "no", where'd they go?

KUTTNER

Let's take a look.

Kuttner touches more menu options on the screen.

KUTTNER

Released to Doctor Zelazny at eleven seventeen this morning.

ROYCE

And what did he do with them?

KUTTNER

Shipped them somewhere.

ROYCE

Any chance you can be more specific?

KUTTNER

You'll have to ask Doc Zelazny.  
(MORE)

KUTTNER (CONT'D)

Records show they were placed in shipping containers and released to the Doc.

ROYCE

They can't just vanish.

KUTTNER

Zelazny has clearance I don't have. He finished upgrading them, signed them out, shipped them. End of story.

BELINDA

What sort of upgrades?

ROYCE

ArtIn chips? Inhibitor removal?

KUTTNER

That would be illegal under section 7.

ROYCE

You say one's still here?

KUTTNER

The Cindy unit. Want to take a look?

ROYCE

Sure.

Kuttner touches the Cindy image on his screen and the rack moves around and stops at the CINDY UNIT. A sexy Android in lace panties. A wet dream come true, designed for pleasure.

Kuttner removes her from the rack, places her on the work bench. Runs a hand over her body... then clicks a switch. Her eyes pop open, and she smiles.

CINDY

Hello, my name is Cindy. How can I see to your needs?

ROYCE

I have a couple of questions.

Cindy sits up, runs a hand over Royce's chest.

CINDY

Yes?

ROYCE

Why did Doc Zelazny bring you here?

CINDY

Upgrades.

ROYCE

What kind of upgrades?

Cindy leans closer... Slams Royce in the face and takes off running. Deeper into to the repair facility.

Belinda draws her gun and flips over the counter, gives chase. Royce staggers to his feet, hops over the counter, following.

INT. ANDROID STORAGE ROOM #1 -- DAY

The door of the Android Storage Room closes behind Belinda.

Her eyes search the dimly lit room for Cindy.  
Shadows everywhere.  
Belinda isn't alone.

Dozens of shut down Amusement Droids; Beautiful women in peasant outfits, pirate girl-garb and western saloon girl outfits, standing in neat rows... eyes frozen open. Spooky.

Belinda creeps deeper into the room, gun raised for battle. She looks down the rows of Droids, trying to spot Cindy.

Wham!  
The door bursts open behind her.  
Belinda spins, gun ready...

Aimed right at Royce's face.

ROYCE

That's a federal offense.

BELINDA

Shhhh.

Royce and Belinda begin creeping through the rows of Droids, searching for Cindy.  
Suspense builds.  
She could be hiding anywhere... waiting to pounce.

Wham!  
The door burst open again.  
Th spin and aim at...

Kuttner raises his hands.

KUTTNER

Don't harm the androids. They are valuable technology --

ROYCE & BELINDA

Shhhh.

Kuttner takes a step back and allows the door to close - leaving him outside the storage room and away from the guns.

Royce and Belinda continue searching the storage room, creeping down the rows of androids. Suspense builds.

Royce moves between two rows of Droids.  
A hand touches his back and he spins...  
Just a shut down android.

ROYCE

I just want to talk to you.

Royce hears a sound to his left - a beep - and spins.

A dozen blank faced Droids stare at him...  
None of them are Cindy.

Belinda creeps deeper, surrounded by blank-eyed Droids.  
She hears a beep from somewhere in the crowd.  
Aims her gun.

Royce moves toward the beep...

WHAM!

Cindy attacks from between two rows of Droids. Punching Royce in the back before disappearing into the sea of Droids again.

ROYCE

Shit.

Royce searches through the shut down Droids.

ROYCE

Talk to me, I won't have you shut down. Just tell me about Doc Zelazny.

BELINDA

You see her?

Royce shakes his head.  
A beep echoes.

WHAM!

Cindy attacks, knocking the tazer from Royce's hand.  
It skitters across the floor.

She jumps onto Royce's back, hooking an arm across his neck.  
Strangling him.  
Royce is turning blue.

Belinda looks across the sea of androids - but can't see Royce and Cindy fighting.

BELINDA

Royce?

No answer. A shoe squeaks. Belinda moves toward it.

Royce flips his head down quickly, throws Cindy off of him.

Cindy flies off of him, rolling gracefully between the droids.  
Lands on her feet, charging at Royce!

Royce fakes right, moves left...

Cindy corrects course, swings one lovely leg at Royce's head.  
THWACK!

Royce is almost knocked down.

He swings, throwing a punch at her face.

Cindy anticipates the punch, blocking it.

Royce throws a combination of punches and kicks...

Cindy smiles as she effortlessly blocks each move.

Like ballet - she's always there to block his swings.

Cindy is kicking Royce's ass!

Belinda weaves through the maze of a androids, following the  
sounds of hits and counter-hits.

BELINDA

Royce?

She breaks through in time to see Cindy gracefully block  
Royce's kicks... then flip over his head acrobatically,  
landing behind him and squeezing her arm over his throat  
again.

Belinda aims her gun - but Royce is in the way.

BELINDA

You're blocking my shot.

Royce grunts in response and tries to spin Cindy around to  
Belinda's gun.

Doesn't work.

Instead, he just spins around so that he's facing Cindy.

She kisses him...

Then lets go and slams him twice in the face.

Royce flies into Belinda.

They spill into the androids, bowling a few over.

Cindy beeps at the androids before cart-wheeling to the door.  
The other androids begin beeping and squirming - limbs  
tangling with Belinda and Royce.

Royce scrambles through the beeping androids for his tazer.

Belinda pushes androids away, raises her gun...

Cindy pops to her feet at the door and starts running.

Belinda fires twice.

But Cindy is gone - door swinging shut behind her.

ROYCE

You're wasting bullets.

An android beep-bops near Royce and he SLAMS it in the face.

ROYCE  
Shut the fuck up.

Joins Belinda at the doorway...  
Where she's examining a milky puddle.

BELINDA  
Looks like I hit her.

ROYCE  
Unless you hit the CPU or the  
neurologistics core, you won't even  
slow the thing down. Need one of  
these.

Royce pulls out his sleek futuristic gun.

INT. MAZE OF HALLWAYS -- DAY

Belinda & Royce follow the milky trail down the endless hall.  
Both have guns drawn.

Belinda continues down the milk trail, Royce pops open the  
first door they pass and looks inside.

INT. ANDROID STORAGE ROOM #2 -- DAY

Dozens of shut down androids standing in neat rows...  
Eyes frozen open. Spooky.

No milk on the floor inside.

INT. MAZE OF HALLWAYS -- DAY

Royce lets the door swing closed in time to see Belinda  
disappear around a corner. Instead of racing to catch up,  
he carefully opens every door in the hallway and looks inside.

INT. ANDROID STORAGE ROOM #3 -- DAY

More shut down androids - dead eyed.

No milk on this floor, either.

INT. MAZE OF HALLWAYS -- DAY

Royce gets to the corner, no idea what's on the other side.  
Spins the corner...

INT. MAZE OF HALLWAYS -- DAY

A figure in the shadows springs to its feet in front of him.  
Points something at him!

Royce can't get his gun up fast enough.

KUTTNER

You hurt her.

The technician pushes his milk-covered finger at Royce.

ROYCE

It was a bad robot. Now get out of my way before I hurt you.

Royce pushes past him, continues down the hallway.

KUTTNER

Please don't hurt her any more.

Royce sees Belinda at the far end of the hallway stop.

BELINDA

You coming, Royce?

ROYCE

Right behind you.

Belinda takes the corner... out of sight.  
Royce checks every door along the way.

INT. ANDROID STORAGE ROOM #4 -- DAY

More androids frozen in place, staring into space.

No milk on the floor here, either.

INT. MAZE OF HALLWAYS -- DAY

Royce follows the milky trail around the corner...

INT. MAZE OF HALLWAYS -- DAY

Royce sees Belinda at a door near the end of the hall.  
Stopped. Hand raised. She gestures quietly to Royce.

Then slides through the door.

Royce continues down the hall, not stopping at each door.  
Follows the milky trail to the door Belinda entered.  
That's where the milky trail seems to go.  
A big milky hand-print on the door - Cindy's.

But Royce bends down, studying the trail. It seems to double back from the hand-print door to a door across the hall.

Royce enters the room across the hall, gun ready.

INT. ANDROID STORAGE ROOM #5 -- DAY

The closes loudly behind Royce.



His eyes search the dimly lit room for Cindy.  
 Shadows everywhere.  
 Dozens of shut down androids in neat rows... eyes frozen  
 open. Spatters of milk on the floor.

ROYCE

All I want to do is talk.

From somewhere deep in the room, three beeps...  
 Echoed by every other android in the room.

Royce creeps deeper into the room, gun raised for battle.  
 He looks down the rows of androids, trying to spot Cindy.

INT. ANDROID STORAGE ROOM #6 -- DAY

Across the hall...

Belinda creeps between the rows of androids, gun ready.  
 A noise behind her.  
 She spins, hitting one of the androids.  
 It beeps...

Causing all of the other androids in the room to beep thrice.

Belinda aims her gun from android to android.  
 Where is Cindy hiding?  
 Belinda looks from face to face for Cindy.

INT. ANDROID STORAGE ROOM #5 -- DAY

Across the hall...

Royce is deep in the sea of androids.  
 Surrounded by blank faces.  
 Looking for Cindy's face.  
 After checking each face, he moves to the next - thorough.  
 A pair of panties on the floor - Cindy's.

ROYCE

I know you're in here somewhere.  
 Just step forward. I won't harm  
 you.

He comes to the last row, looking from face to face.  
 None are Cindy. How can that be?

Wham! The door blasts open - Cindy escaping!

Royce starts after her, but the androids all beep and twist -  
 blocking his way. He fights through the tangle of androids...

INT. MAZE OF HALLWAYS -- DAY

Belinda bursts out the door to room #6, sees someone running  
 at the far end of the hallway... fires her gun again and  
 again. Fires it until it clicks dry.

Hitting the runner with every single shot.  
The runner drops to the floor - dead.

Royce blasts out the door to room #5, gun ready.

Belinda spins, aiming at him.

ROYCE

You don't need a partner - I get it.

She lowers her gun.  
Royce jogs to the body.  
Unmoving.  
Huge bullet holes - exit wounds - in its back.  
Bends down and touches it - cold. Dead.

Belinda steps up behind him.

ROYCE

Nice grouping.

BELINDA

Thanks.

Royce turns the body over...  
It's KUTTNER the technician!

BELINDA

Shit.

ROYCE

Got that right.

They look at each other - wondering what to do.  
Belinda pulls and evidence bag from her pocket for her gun.  
A voice inches away startles them.

KUTTNER

I told you not to hurt her.

Belinda and Royce spin to see Kuttner standing behind them.  
Then Kuttner sees himself dead on the floor.

KUTTNER

Oh shit.

When Royce looks at the body, there's a pool of milky fluid  
seeping onto the floor. The body is wearing a different  
shirt than Kuttner - kind of frilly. Different trousers,  
too. And no shoes.

BELINDA

Who is this?

Kuttner takes out his pocket computer, runs the reader end  
over the android's arms. The computer beeps, shows a picture.

KUTTNER  
Your Cindy unit.

ROYCE  
How is that possible?

KUTTNER  
Liquid Skin technology.

The body changes from Kuttner back to Cindy. Kuttner strokes her as he clips her arms and legs together for transport.

BELINDA  
Huh?

KUTTNER  
Zelazny latest. He came up with a psuedoskin that can change shape. The android can customize their appearance to fit the individual's taste.

ROYCE  
In English.

Kuttner pulls the android back to the repair shop. Royce and Belinda follow.

KUTTNER  
Say you've done your Pirate Battle and you've got a thing for classic female pop stars, so you want to be pleased by Brittany Spears. The droid's skin changes and she BECOMES Brittany Spears.

ROYCE  
Who the hell is Brittany Spears?

KUTTNER  
Before your time.

ROYCE  
Why did it run? Zelazny remove the inhibitor chip while he was in there?

They enter the repair shop.

INT. ANDROID REPAIRS -- DAY

Kuttner puts the Cindy unit on the repair table, opens it up.

KUTTNER  
Let's see if there's an artificial intelligence chip in here --

The computer beeps. Kuttner stops, turns to the computer.

KUTTNER  
One of your units just shipped.

BELINDA  
Must have taken it to  
shipping/receiving before he was  
killed.

ROYCE  
Where's it going?

KUTTNER  
Our appliance warehouse in Maryland.

BELINDA  
Let's go.

ROYCE  
Where?

Royce and Belinda leave the repair shop.

INT. TRUMBULL INDUSTRIES - LOBBY -- DAY

Belinda and Royce stop in front of the giant Trumbull Industries logo and the reception desk.

ROYCE  
Maryland's a few feet out of your  
jurisdiction, isn' it?

BELINDA  
I'm following an active lead in the  
investigation of a murder.

ROYCE  
Let's get this straight, I don't  
need a partner, I don't need an  
assistant, I don't need a friend.

BELINDA  
We can work with each other or against  
each other, right?

Royce shakes his head and starts out of the building.

The brown haired Philip tries to stop him.

PHILIP  
Excuse me, sir, but ---

Royce hits him with the tazer, dropping him, leaves.  
Belinda a few steps behind.

EXT. SKY -- DAY

Purple sky, setting sun, wispy clouds...  
A supersonic jet shrieks past.

INT. JET CABIN -- DAY

As luxurious as the bullet train interior. Belinda sits next to Royce - who books hotel rooms on his pocket computer.

ROYCE  
I booked us in the Sherry-Netherland.  
Separate rooms.

BELINDA  
You act like they were born bad.

ROYCE  
Lady, none of those things were born.  
People are born.

BELINDA  
Engineered, whatever.

ROYCE  
Just doing my job.

BELINDA  
Your job. You take that bad android running a sewing machine in some sweat shop in Los Angeles. Move them to Carson City and it's a good android. Productive. Same android. Same job.

ROYCE  
It's the law. You break it, you pay for it. As simple as that.

Belinda nods and pulls herself away from him. Royce goes back to his pocket computer, searching for the address.

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. -- NIGHT

Washington Monument and the Reflecting Pond...

The supersonic jet shrieks past.

EXT. TRUMBULL'S WAREHOUSE -- DAY

The sun rises over a warehouse bearing the Trumbull logo.

In back of the factory, Royce opens the suitcase and pulls out an electronic device.

BELINDA  
What's that?