

"OUT OF TIME"

By

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INT. RUINED FACTORY - DAY

Three lonely figures stalk through a cavernous, ruined factory. The CAPTAIN holds their fist up and then points down, indicating that the party should crouch silently.

CAPTAIN

Data, check the signal.

DATA, science technician, checks a small, rectangular device.

DATA

Yep. It's supposed to be right here. This is where Alex's signal is transmitting from.

CAPTAIN

Then where are they?

The third member of the team, soldier GRUNT, stands and looks around.

GRUNT

I don't like it. What if this is a trap? If this place is surrounded, we'll never make it back to the ship.

The CAPTAIN also stands.

CAPTAIN

Then why worry?

DATA

Captain, if we have time -- or we're going to die anyway -- I'd like to run some tests. There's a strange chemical in the atmosphere that seems to be distorting Alex's signal.

GRUNT

Harmful?

DATA

Hard to say. Certainly amazing...

CAPTAIN

Grunt? Relax. Data? Focus. We need to find Alex. Find out what happened.

Suddenly: ALEX appears in a flash of light behind them.

ALEX

Captain!

DATA

Alex!

ALEX

You don't have much time. You have to listen to me: this place isn't safe.

CAPTAIN

Are there aliens?

GRUNT

Can we kill them?

DATA

Not if it's a new species!

ALEX

There were others, like me now, when I arrived. The creatures lured them here. When they capture you, they separate your thoughts from your body and allow them to live on, projected by their technology.

CAPTAIN

Why?

ALEX

So you don't realise you've been eaten until it's too late. This is all that's left of me: the echo of who I was.

DATA

Oh.

CAPTAIN

Don't worry, Data. We've got this...

DATA

No, I mean "oh". That chemical presence? It's the aliens. They're microscopic. And they're everywhere.

GRUNT

(looking around)
Great.

ALEX

You need to hurry. I can feel my signal weakening. They're almost-

ALEX's lips keep moving, but no sound comes out.

GRUNT

That was the starting gun.

DATA

What do we do?

CAPTAIN

Okay, team: rally on me! I have a wild, foolish idea...