

LOG 4 - ANDROID ENCOUNTER IN THE REACH

BY JAMES O'HARA

FADE IN:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS - RUINED OUTPOST - DAY (DISTANT FUTURE)

CAPTAIN TRARK, 30, pale, sullen air, in a dark combat suit, comes through the clearing to find the smoldering wreckage of a prefabricated hut and a HUMANOID ANDROID laid out on the ground close by.

The android's legs are GONE -- torn violently away.
Biomimetic fluid still leaks from the stubs.

Two CYBORG MARAUDERS, grotesque half-biological mutants, lie dead nearby. A bloody scene. And fresh.

Kneeling to the android, it sputters awake on Trark's touch.

ANDROID

Excuse me. I was in low power mode --
greetings.

TRARK

What happened here?

ANDROID

I was attacked. I'm afraid I've
sustained significant damage.

TRARK

(glances at the dead)
So did they.

ANDROID

Affirmative. But rest assured, it was
within defensive protocols.

TRARK

I believe you. I've come across their
kind before.

He looks at the android's wounds.

TRARK (cont'd)

You don't look too good.

ANDROID

(repeating)

I'm afraid I've sustained significant
damage. My name's Heider.

(MORE)

ANDROID (cont'd)
What's yours? I was once the central
guide of this outpost.

Trark ignores the android's rambling -- its name apparently
HEIDER.

 TRARK
I'm looking for a Matter Articulator.

 HEIDER
... A Matter Articulator?

 TRARK
A machine that can build anything you
tell it to.

 HEIDER
Is there such a thing?

 TRARK
The Engineers knew how to make them.
A long time ago.

 HEIDER
...incredible. I haven't heard of
anything like that. But if there is
such a device, it doesn't exist here.

The captain nods, scans the barren surroundings.

 TRARK
Is there a human settlement nearby?

 HEIDER
Some fifty clicks away there's an
industrial city. I've never been
there, but it's run by Trans
Corporation. I've heard they have a
team of scientists. And many humans.

 TRARK
 (standing)
I'll head there, then.

 HEIDER
 (take me with you?)
Wait. It's not easy to navigate.
There's a bog directly in the way.

 TRARK
You said you've never been there.

 HEIDER
I'm well versed in local topography.

The captain looks down at the wounded android. He doesn't look that light, but the navigational help could be useful. And leaving him seems cruel...

EXT. BOG CITY - OUTSKIRTS - LATER

Trark carries Heider strapped to his back -- a legless droid backpack. His legs have been crudely wrapped in rags.

A cold wind blows as they approach the ancient ruins of a long ABANDONED CITY, most of which has sunken into a bog.

HEIDER
Sometimes I come here to scavenge.
Perhaps we'll find something useful.

TRARK
Are there people here?

HEIDER
You mean you don't know?

Trark begins to clamber up a large concrete edifice -- a crumbled building enveloped by vines and lichen.

HEIDER (cont'd)
There were people here centuries ago.
They say they were able to bring the
dead back to life using only genetic
material. But I haven't heard of any
people in this region for hundreds of
years.

Trark comes to the precipice -- the ancient sunken ruins coming into view across a vast bog. What isn't submerged is entangled by voracious plant life. A bog city indeed.

HEIDER (cont'd)
Sometimes in life you take a journey
which takes you very far from home.
However, it is possible to search on
your own.

Trark studies the topography, ignoring Heider.

TRARK
It looks difficult to navigate.

HEIDER
(repeating)
-- sometimes in life you take a
journey which takes you very far from
home.

TRARK

Hey. What are you talking about?

Silence.

TRARK (cont'd)

Heider?

Trark turns. The android on his back is silent. Devoid of life -- Heider is gone.

Trark lowers the legless torso and lays it on the ground. He stands, looking down at what now resembles a lifeless doll.

Then he kneels and takes out his knife and begins to SLICE back Heider's scalp, peeling it away until a synthetic skull is revealed. From the top skull plate he withdraws an ION GENETIC CELL from the tissue chamber in Heider's head.

He places the cell in a small sealant bag and puts the bag into his pocket. Then he moves on. Into bog city.