

**EXT. DOSIA DISTRICT**

An anthracite bike with a matte finish floats past the stories high scaffolding that lines the empty streets. The bike's whisper is occasionally interrupted with a gentle roar caused by the poor condition of the road.

THE BIKER, clad in a casual outfit with a backpack on her back, compares her surroundings to her navigation. Everything the bike whirls past is under construction and uninhabited. And yet a red dot indicates her destination is approaching.

The bike then decreases speed and halts on the side of the road. She turns off her head-protection. Her eyes trail slowly upwards.

A cement rectangle towers over her. A billboard next to the gate features a countdown:

THE PILLAR - DOSIA'S PRIDE - OPENING IN  
11 MONTHS 20 DAYS 6 HOURS 35 MINUTES

THE BIKER gets off her bike and stuffs her head-protection earpiece in her pocket. She walks over to the gate whilst keeping an eye on her surroundings. Nothing.

A welcoming device next to the gate notices THE BIKER's presence and switches on. A friendly automated voice:

WELCOMING DEVICE (V.O.)  
Welcome to 'the Pillar'. Please  
identify yours-

THE BIKER puts her phone against the device, which immediately starts calculating something.

WELCOMING DEVICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Welcome 'AVERIE NASH'. Your  
identification has been accepted.  
(calculates)  
Your meeting with-  
(scrambled noises)  
on Tuesday, March 20th at 10am is  
expecting you on-  
(calculating)  
The 53rd floor.

The gate starts opening. AVERIE moves onto the grounds surrounding The Pillar.

WELCOMING DEVICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
The Dosia District wishes you a  
pleasant day.

**EXT. THE PILLAR - GROUNDS**

AVERIE walks past the large machinery and a collection of windowpanes, all just sitting there, collecting dust.

A SECURITY GUARD greets her with a nod at the entrance of the building. AVERIE stands still and spreads her arms and her legs. After a few seconds the SECURITY GUARD nods again.

SECURITY GUARD

Follow me.

AVERIE follows as the SECURITY GUARD walks around the building to-

**INT. THE PILLAR - INDUSTRIAL ELEVATOR**

The elevator crawls up the side of The Pillar. AVERIE watches as her view of the grounds expand into a view of the district. Grey columns attacked by gusts of sand, the only movement in the area.

In the distance, across the river, she can make out the complexes floating above the city, their chrome sparkling in the sun, casting a shadow on the high-rises below.

**INT. THE PILLAR - 53RD FLOOR**

The elevator door opens with a crash and the SECURITY GUARD leads her onto the 53rd floor. Their footsteps reverberate across the concrete while the strong winds are caught in a transparent net wrapped around The Pillar. It's eerily quiet.

They come upon a doorway without a door. The SECURITY GUARD halts in front of it and then nudges AVERIE to go inside.

AVERIE enters another wing. This one is decked out with some furniture: a SUIT [mid-30s] sits on one of the fold-out chairs overlooking the district, while two WORKERS are fiddling around with some equipment set up against one of the walls.

A TECHIE [early 20s] greets AVERIE with a full-body hand-scanner and takes her further into the room. She guides AVERIE to a wooden chair.

AVERIE sits down. On a side table next to the chair sits a console. The TECHIE squats next to the console and starts tapping around on it.

This is AVERIE's que to get out her portable console. It's a small device, clearly custom built. She remotely connects to a device named 'THE NASH PIT' and waits.

Then, the SUIT gets up. He chews away whatever he was eating, plops his plate on a table and walks over to AVERIE. His shirt looks worn, his face grey with sleeplessness.

SUIT  
Your fifth year, huh?

AVERIE  
Seventh, but legal since five.

SUIT  
(impressed)  
A veteran.

AVERIE looks at the TECHIE typing away.

AVERIE  
The briefing didn't say how much.

TECHIE  
45.

SUIT  
Can you carry that?

AVERIE  
Of course, but it would've been nice to know that up front.

The SUIT checks his phone, puts it away again. The TECHIE nods at the SUIT. Ready.

She plugs something in her console, then hands AVERIE the other end of a cable. AVERIE gives the cable a frown.

SUIT  
I don't want any of this going through the air.

AVERIE  
This is definitely briefing material, mister-

SUIT  
(interrupts, tries out a smile)  
I hope you understand.

AVERIE  
I'm sorry, the carrier protocol states that-

SUIT  
(interrupts)  
I'm aware of the protocol, but I  
can't have any of this-

AVERIE  
(continues)  
-physical transfers are prohibited  
to be performed on site and-

SUIT  
(interrupts)  
This is how it has to go.

AVERIE stops talking.

SUIT (CONT'D)  
Take it or leave it.  
(smiles)  
You understand.

AVERIE  
This really isn't a discussion. I  
can't suddenly-

SUIT  
Okay, thank you for your time,  
Averie.

He turns around and walks back to his view. TECHIE closes her console.

AVERIE  
(relents, panics)  
It'll cost you extra.

SUIT  
(turns around)  
How much?

AVERIE  
A thousand.

SUIT  
That's a lot for a cable.

AVERIE  
I'm taking quite a risk here, so  
it's a bargain.

SUIT  
These are *our* files. It's *our* risk.  
(beat)  
700.

AVERIE

Doing an unbriefed physical transfer.

(beat)

I'm giving you direct access to my architecture.

(beat)

900.

SUIT

It's a shared risk then. 500.

AVERIE says nothing. The SUIT rubs his forehead with a pained expression.

SUITS

900.

(to the TECHIE)

Go ahead.

AVERIE rummages around in her bag and produces her own cable. She gives one half to the TECHIE. The other half is protected by a plastic casing, floating in a milky fluid. She takes the cable out.

AVERIE takes off her sweater and folds up a sleeve on her t-shirt. She then lifts her right arm and fingers around to reveal-

A small socket. She plugs in the sanitised end of cable, it clicks in her armpit. She taps on her console, gives the TECHIE the go. Access.

AVERIE glances over at the SUIT who's taken his phone out and is swiftly typing and tapping. She then sees the files pour in on her console.

SUIT

How long will this take?

TECHIE

5, maybe 6.

Silence.

AVERIE

Just to be clear, the swap is still the same right?

SUIT

(doesn't look up)

Yes.

AVERIE  
Tomorrow, noon, Rita's Cafe?

SUIT  
(looks up)  
Exactly. Your pick-up fee is  
transferred.  
(he puts away his phone,  
smiles)  
Thank you for your time.

He walks back to his chair overlooking the city, leaving  
AVERIE to stare at the indecipherable jumble of numbers and  
letters dance on her screen.