

SCENE 1

SFX: Traffic. Bikes rev suddenly, whooping and cheering, and then pass by. Horns honk as police sirens start.

MUSIC: Banger by | e s c p |.

SILVER:

Vic! Any sign of him?

VIC:

I'm looking, I'm looking! Lay off, Silver. Nova, what about you? See anything?

NOVA:

I... think he went that way? My augmentation's not focusing..

SILVER:

Ride down that street and chase the lead.

SFX: Police sirens.

VIC:

Hey, six up!

OZ:

Let's have some fun!

VIC:

Already on it!

SFX: Vic scrapes the Corrector's car. They roll down the window.

CORRECTOR:

Watch it, Berserker! You're on a bike, we're in a car.
You're at a disadvantage.

OZ:

Boss, they've got cargo!

SFX: Knocking on glass.

CITIZEN:

Help!

OZ:

Aw, they're not Berserker blood.

VIC:

Well, the more the merrier! Another criminal on the streets... let's break them out anyways!

SFX: Vic hits the car with his bike.

CORRECTOR:

Geez, what are you, Category J?! Back off before I start blasting!

VIC:

You wanna see *really* crazy? Check this out!

SFX: Lighter flicking. We hear fire roar.

CORRECTOR:

Holy—

VIC:

(LAUGHS) Alright, bust the window, Oz!

SFX: Breaking glass.

CITIZEN:

Thank you!

VIC:

Hop on, buddy, I'll drop you off.

OZ:

I'm riding on! More Correctors to terrorize ahead. Meet you there!

VIC:

Gotcha! Berserkers, Ride On!

OZ:

Berserkers, Ride On!

SFX: Motor revving.

VIC:

Alright, let me give you a scan...

AUGMENT:

Successful rescue. No apparent injuries.

SFX: A success noise plays.

VIC:

Heh. Nice.

CITIZEN:

I... I really don't know how to thank you.

VIC:

Just stay off the streets here. Berserker territory.

CITIZEN:

Okay.

SFX: Vic jumps back onto his bike.

NOVA:

Vic!

VIC:

What's up?

NOVA:

Correctors got me in a bind—I'm riding between three of 'em, no exits! I'm surrounded!

Check your augment, mine's sending a signal where I am!

VIC:

Hang on, I'll be there.

SFX: Vic rides up.

CORRECTOR 1:

Target surrounded. Come on, bring 'em in.

CORRECTOR 2:

Watch out, Vic Vass on your right...

AUGMENT:

Targeting augment activated.

SFX: Time slows down.

AUGMENT:

Focus, then wink to target-

VIC:

Come on... Yeah, yeah.

SFX: Vic winks and targets three Correctors.

AUGMENT:

Targets acquired! Fire when ready!

CORRECTOR 1:

Watch out! He's got that augment on him!

SFX: Vic fires at all the Correctors.

AUGMENT:

All targets hit! 100% accuracy, 62% increase in reaction time! +30 points in cred!

VIC:

Nice! That's my personal best today.

AUGMENT:

Alert! Wall incoming!

VIC:

Oh, it's on now. Let's try this!

SFX: We hear Vic execute a series of tricks and then slam down onto the pavement, accompanied by a series of success noises.

NOVA:

Risky as ever, Vic. Thanks for saving me, you got there in the nick of time!

VIC:

All high-speed chases need a little showmanship.

SILVER:

Well, enough fancy tricks. Keep your eye on the goal.

VIC:

Heh. I always do.

AUGMENT:

Eagle eye augment activated. Locating...

VIC:

Got him! Head down 18th Street, I'll cut him off on the R.

SILVER:

Stick with me, Nova. Ride on!

NOVA AND VIC:

Ride On!

SFX: Revving.

BRIGGS:

Goddammit!

SILVER:

Nova, to the left.

BRIGGS:

Stay away from me!

SFX: Blaster fire.

VIC:

Whoa! Hey, that's no way to greet us!

SFX: Another shot, which connects with Vic's arm. An error sound effect to indicate pain.

VIC:

Ow.

BRIGGS:

That should have taken you out...!

VIC:

(TAUNTING)

I forgot, you never went up against me, huh? You'll regret that!

SILVER:

Hang right, Vic.

VIC:

Oh, are you tossing out-

SFX: Clatter, then a popped tire.

BRIGGS:

Caltrops?!

SILVER:

Always come prepared. Nova, now! Block his path!

NOVA:

I'm on it!

SFX: Nova slides in front of Briggs.

VIC:

Alright, and... night, night, Briggs!

SFX: A heavy thwack.

SCENE 2

SFX: Heartbeat.

SILVER:

Well, there, he's waking up. How you doing, Briggs?

SFX: Cloth and rope rustles.

NOVA:

Do you want me to take the gag out of his mouth?

SILVER:

No. I think he can answer by just nodding or shaking his head.

What do you think? Is that good for you?

BRIGGS:

(MUFFLED PROTEST)

VIC:

Oh, quit struggling. And it's not like you actually get a say in the matter since... well, you know.

Oh, I'm moving too fast. Let me just ask—did you miss us?

(HE LAUGHS) Trick question.

SILVER:

You wouldn't miss us if you didn't leave, but you're not gonna leave. No one abandons the Berserkers. Vic, Nova. What's the oath?

VIC AND NOVA:

When you join the Berserkers, you're blood for life!

VIC:

Throw away your past and Ride On with us.

And there's only two ways you leave the Berserkers. You die... or you get kicked out.

SFX: Briggs finally gets the gag off of himself.

BRIGGS:

You guys are crazy! I just thought that I was joining for-
for shits and giggles, and you guys are turning this into
some sort of cult! I just wanted to mess around, get some
cryptos while I was at it!

VIC:

Aw, you're breaking my heart, man.

SILVER:

And to think I wanted to train you to get good at this.
You're resourceful and tough. You're quick on your feet,
obviously. So much potential. It's a real tragedy.

BRIGGS:

No, no, no, wait, please-

NOVA:

You're not gonna kill him *now*, are you?

VIC:

Well? What do you think, Silver? Should we?

SILVER:

Well, you did ask me to give him a second chance.

But he deserves this. Rough him up.

VIC:

With pleasure.

BRIGGS:

Please don't-agh!

SFX: Vic punches Briggs. A success sound plays.

VIC:

This is what you get. (HE LAUGHS) Come on, do something,
tough guy! (HE CONTINUES TO LAUGH)

SFX: An ominous drone plays, interrupted by-

SCENE 3

SFX: Water running. Vic tears a cloth bandage and wraps his hands.

NOVA:

Hey, Vic.

That was... that was weird.

VIC:

What? Oh, come on. You get used to it. This augment makes it more exciting. I don't know why you turn it off so much.

NOVA:

Still getting used to it, I guess.

VIC:

It's only your third month with it. When you have it as long as I do, it's like second nature, I'm telling you.

NOVA:

Helps that you installed it yourself, I bet.

SFX: Nova fiddles with the radio.

RADIO:

The trail is quickly growing cold on the Lola Sunn case. After her disappearance last week from her conference, she was last seen on the north side of Glasshouse with her colleague, Dr. Haven. The union Zero Zero seems to have been involved with her...

VIC:

Turn that off, will you?

SFX: Nova turns the radio off.

VIC:

Look, I can tell you're still feeling weird about what just happened.

NOVA:

(SIGHS) ...I guess so.

VIC:

Come on, spill.

NOVA:

It's just... I dunno, you told me that you did messy business. I didn't think it was to other Berserkers. You said we're supposed to be family.

VIC:

Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey. We are family. It's just... family's gotta have a little tough love every now and then. That's one thing my old family had right. And you know, Silver's even taught me a lesson or two. We're better than just the family you're born with—I mean, I know we're closer than you ever were to your messed up parents.

NOVA:

Yeah.

VIC:

And I get it. I know it's kind of weird. But if you stick with me, you know I'll keep you safe. I'll always have your back.

NOVA:

(THEY LAUGH) Thank you, Vic. I'll always have yours too!

SFX: Vic pats Nova on the shoulder.

VIC:

Alrighty, let's get over to Silver. I'm pretty sure he wanted to brief us on whatever we've gotten hired on now.

SFX: They walk and open a door.

OZ:

There you two are.

SILVER:

Let me fill you in on what you missed. Landlord in the Subiro Hill wants us to go tear up some of the buildings there so she can collect insurance. Sounds simple enough, but she also doesn't technically own the entire area there—the property's jointly shared, but she wants the full cut of cryptos. She also knows you're with us, Vic, so she asked you to hack into a couple different systems and change the deed ownership solely to her. Guess she's pinching cryptos since she can't be asked to do it legally.

OZ:

Somebody's popular.

VIC:

Haha, very funny. I hope that doesn't mean you're leaving me out of all the fun? I've been getting that itch to actually destroy some stuff.

SILVER:

Not at all. If you can finish fast enough.

VIC:

Silver, come on!

SILVER:

Hey, you're an important part of this team. Nobody hacks like you do. You're the best console cowboy in the whole Metropolis. That's why you're leading the Berserkers with me.

VIC:

Alright, alright, I'll do it. Quit trying to sweet talk me.

SILVER:

Good. Take this disk—it's got all the info you need from her on it.

VIC:

Don't wait up, but leave a little something for me to tear up too, okay?

SILVER:

Sure, okay.

Oh, before I go—where'd you stash Briggs? He's not dead, is he?

VIC:

Augment said he was fine, just incapacitated. He'll live.

SILVER:

Well, keep an eye on him and tell me if he wakes up then.

VIC:

Will do.

NOVA:

Are we heading out now?

OZ:

Yeah. You can ride with me, Nova. You know, since your bike still needs to get fixed.

SFX: They walk away.

VIC:

(SIGHS) Hope this'll be quick.

Briggs? Hey.

SFX: He pushes Briggs.

VIC:

Hmm. Still out.

AUGMENT:

New mission assigned by: Silver! 20+ points of approval!

VIC:

Let's see what's going on with this disk. Open up this deck...

SFX: A digital beep.

AUGMENT:

Neural link established.

SFX: Vic scrolls through the details.

VIC:

Yeah, yeah... database protected by... okay...

AUGMENT:

50+ points of experience for clearing this hacking job!

VIC:

What, 50? This must be pretty easy. How are the speed runs looking?

AUGMENT:

The fastest hack job this week with 50+ points of experience was completed at 10m57s. Top of the leaderboard is Uberkidgamma7!

VIC:

Ah, hackers really are losing their touch these days. Guess not everyone's made for hacking with augmentations.

Well, no time to waste. Downloading these files...

AUGMENT:

HackSysEntertainment Build 2.4 booted.

VIC:

God, I really gotta change that name.

AUGMENT:

Game selection.

VIC:

How about a Western? They do call me a console cowboy.

AUGMENT:

Western theme selected.

MUSIC: Cowboy Sting by Kevin McLeod.

VIC:

(CHUCKLES)

MUSIC: Neo-Western by Kevin McLeod.

VIC:

Navigate around this partition... let's see... what bypass can I use here...

SFX: Video game noises play as Vic types and navigates these obstacles.

VIC:

Yeah, I'll get this done in no time.

BRIGGS:

(GROANS)

VIC:

Ooh, *three* password protections? Should've shelled out cryptos for a fourth.

SFX: Success noise!

VIC:

And... time.

AUGMENT:

You completed your hacking in 2m04s. New personal best! You earned 80+ reputation for claiming top position in the leaderboard!

VIC:

I guess I really am the best, huh?

BRIGGS:

Hey.

VIC:

Hm?

SFX: Vic turns off his augment.

BRIGGS:

What the hell is wrong with you?

VIC:

Didn't expect you to be awake already. Silver's right, you are tough.

BRIGGS:

Answer the question.

VIC:

Oh, lots of things are wrong with me, Briggs. You gotta to be a little more specific.

BRIGGS:

Silver's literally beat you for stepping out of line and you turn around and do it to me? Seriously, what's wrong with you?

VIC:

Like I told Nova, it's called tough love.

BRIGGS:

You don't seriously believe that do you?

VIC:

I said what I said.

BRIGGS:

You're brainwashed.

VIC:

Does going on about conspiracies do something for ya, buddy? It's getting kind of weird.

BRIGGS:

How do you not see it? The way you always pretend to be a family with these people... God, it's freaking *weird*. Maybe I'm not on good terms with my family but at least I didn't leave them to die.

VIC:

Where do you guys keep hearing that?

BRIGGS:

Well, why else are you the leader of the most wanted gang in the whole damn Metropolis? You're the one that takes the motto to heart. I hear Silver put you up to it. "Throw away your past" or whatever.

VIC:

Okay, I'm not talking to you anymore.

BRIGGS:

You know, most of us on the outside think you're all a joke! Well, yeah, maybe you started as a real gang, but now you just... take jobs from landlords and vandalize property. They used to call you a Corrector killer! And now I hear Silver's got a deal with some of them. That's why you have all these lame ass jobs now.

VIC:

You think you're any different, Briggs? You think you're better than us? You're not. *You* wanted to join *us*—and when things got real and we had to off someone, you're the one that bailed! We wasted three weeks hunting your ass down so it's your fault that we're taking jobs from schmucks to keep us afloat. Yeah. Keep living in your fantasy world where you're right.

BRIGGS:

Oh, that's REAL rich coming from the guy who put an augment in his brain. I bet you don't even remember what the world is like without it. That's why you think everything's a game. But keep running away from reality, Vic! It's all gonna come crashing down eventually—

SFX: Vic grabs Briggs.

VIC:

Hey, you wanna be unconscious again? Then keep talking. Or I'll make you unconscious forever.

SFX: Message incoming sound.

VIC:

What.

SILVER:

Vic, where are you? Thought you didn't wanna miss the fun.

VIC:

Ah, right.

SFX: Vic drops Briggs.

BRIGGS:

Augh!

VIC:

Gotta go.

BRIGGS:

Only 'cause Silver asked you to.

VIC:

Yeah, I'm sorry no one gives enough of a shit about you to trust you with anything. I guess that's why no one's coming looking for you, huh?

BRIGGS:

Shut up.

VIC:

That's what I thought. You're just jealous.

BRIGGS:

You're gonna regret leaving me alone.

VIC:

Not as much as you're gonna regret talking back to me.

SFX: Vic punches Briggs.

VIC:

(HE LAUGHS) Don't forget your place.

SFX: Vic walks off. A bike revs, general sounds of destruction.

VIC:

Hey, Blaze! Where's Silver and Nova?

BLAZE:

Off checking out if there's anything on the top floor. You wanna take out these pipes with me?

VIC:

In a minute. Watch Rocketshot, will you?

BLAZE:

Sure.

VIC:

And don't even think of riding her while I'm up, got it?

BLAZE:

Yeah, fine.

SFX: Vic goes up the stairs.

SILVER:

Hey, look who made it! All finished with the hack then?

VIC:

Yeah, just like you asked.

SILVER:

Atta, Vic! Knew it was a good idea for you to get that augment.

NOVA:

Think I found something good here!

SILVER:

Oh yeah? Toss it over.

NOVA:

Found some bleach and hair dye under the sink! I was looking for a new hair color. Think I'd look good in blue?

VIC:

I think so. Is this stuff still good?

SILVER:

Yeah, this place wasn't abandoned too long ago. I gotta tone out my hair too.

VIC:

Is there anything else here? Valuables, anything we can junk or sell?

SILVER:

Saw an old computer deck in the back of the closet. Think I'll grab that too, then you, me, and Nova can tear this place to the ground. Sound good?

VIC:

Whatever you say is always good, Silver.

SILVER:

Heh.

SCENE 4

SFX: A radio tunes.

MUSIC: Grunge Rock Instrumental by Wayne John Bradley.

NOVA:

Ugh, Silver, quit hogging all the bleach, I need to use it too. The red's not gonna mix well with the blue.

SILVER:

What, you don't wanna have purple hair?

NOVA:

No, it'll look too close to Vic. Everyone already thought I was copying him.

SFX: A drawer opens.

VIC:

Hey, the red was cool, man. Until you ruined it by washing your hair so much, don't know why you do that. That's why it washed out to pink.

SILVER:

You should be glad it didn't end up *hot* pink, Nova. Then they'd really think you were copying.

VIC:

And besides, I'm the only one who can really pull it off.

NOVA:

Pfft, come on.

VIC:

It's true! That's why Silver never lets me dye his hair.

SILVER:

No, it's because I look way better with it white.

NOVA:

(JOKINGLY)

Yeah, keep frying your hair like that and you'll lose it before you're forty.

VIC:

If he makes it to forty.

SFX: They all laugh.

SILVER:

Aren't you glad no one tells you what to do anymore?

VIC:

Yeah, you could say that again.

NOVA:

My parents never wanted me to dye my hair either. Or get piercings. I don't know what they'd think about the fact you opened my brain up, Vic.

SILVER:

He's not the only one who did that, I helped.

VIC:

You get a whole new world opened up to you with augmented reality, buddy. It'd be a waste of your talent if I didn't install it.

SILVER:

The two of you are genuine diamonds in the rough. Takes a special kind of person to be with me. Quick thinkers, great assets—

NOVA:

I can't tell if I dyed it evenly in the back.

VIC:

I'll check.

AUGMENT:

Scan complete.

VIC:

Looks fine.

SILVER:

I'm glad you're with me now. Instead of where you were before.

NOVA:

Are you kidding? I'd never go back.

VIC:

Me neither. Not even if I still had the chance to. They'd never let me be who I actually am. Not like how I am with you guys.

SILVER:

I know. They're not your blood anymore. I promised we'd always stay together, and I'm not breaking that promise any time soon.

NOVA:

I've gotta rinse this out now, Vic.

VIC:

Yeah, lean over the tub.

SFX: Water running again.

SILVER:

Ah, there's blue all over my hands.

NOVA:

So, what do you guys think? Does it look good?

VIC:

Take a look for yourself.

SFX: We hear the lights audibly buzz.

NOVA:

(WINCES) Ow. Ugh...

SILVER:

You good?

NOVA:

Yeah, just... just the lights again.

VIC:

Damn, you're still pretty sensitive with the augment, huh? Think I might've crossed a couple wires wrong in your head. Silver, let's turn off the lights.

SILVER:

They'll be fine, it'll pass.

VIC:

But—

SILVER:

Don't baby them.

NOVA:

(STILL CLEARLY IN PAIN)

Yeah, I got it, I can handle it.

VIC:

Fine, *I'll* get the lights.

SILVER:

Hah. You're still too soft.

VIC:

Lay off, man.

SILVER:

Toughen up, both of you. Seriously.

NOVA:

Sorry, Silver.

VIC:

Ah, don't worry about it. You're right, you'll get used to it.

SFX: Beep down.

AUGMENT:

-10 points of approval from Silver.

VIC:

...Sorry, Silver.

SILVER:

Aw, I can't stay mad at you. C'mere.

SFX: Silver tousles Vic's hair.

VIC:

Hey, come on man, I just washed my hair!

SILVER:

Hah, you love it.

VIC:

Pfft.

NOVA:

Hey, I think I'm okay now.

SFX: Switch turns on.

SILVER:

Glad to hear it. Now move over, I need to use the mirror.

SCENE 5

GANG MEMBER:

(GROANS)

LOLA:

Hold still. I'm almost done.

SFX: She snips a thread.

LOLA:

Finished. You're okay.

GANG MEMBER:

I don't *feel* okay.

LOLA:

You're stable.

SFX: Her tools clatter.

LOLA:

(SIGHS) What in the world is going on out here in the Metropolis...?

GANG MEMBER:

Hell are you talking about?

LOLA:

Nothing. I guess... well, you're all so territorial. Gangs staking each other's territory, blasters firing in all directions... it's not exactly what I expected.

GANG MEMBER:

Don't tell me you're a Delta or something.

LOLA:

Um, let's go with "something" for now. I've just never been in a place with so much violence.

GANG MEMBER:

Hah. Haven't been out much then. The metropolis is full of it, even in ways you can't see.

LOLA:

I'm sorry you couldn't go to the Correctors. I could still call them. I couldn't stay if I do, but...

GANG MEMBER:

Geez, I was joking. You still think the Correctors are protecting anyone?

LOLA:

Aren't they?

GANG MEMBER:

(LAUGHS, THEN WINCES) Oh man. Don't make me laugh or I'll bust the stitches in my side. People like you really don't get it.

LOLA:

Well, I'm sure they could help you more than me. I just wanted to stabilize you before it got any worse.

GANG MEMBER:

Did you see what happened?

LOLA:

Yes, you got caught in the crossfire of that turf war and the Correctors went to chase after that gang instead of helping you--I suppose it was probably their priority at the moment, but I'm sure they'd want to pursue justice for you.

GANG MEMBER:

I guess you'd think it was a turf war if you didn't know me.

Lady, they were shooting at me. At us. That was my gang.

LOLA:

Oh--

GANG MEMBER:

Yeah.

LOLA:

Well, why didn't they stop and help you? Your gang, I mean.

GANG MEMBER:

They were saving their own skin. I don't blame them. At the end of the day, it's everyone for themselves. And with a Corrector on your tail... well, there's nothing you can do once you're caught. Better to live on another day. Besides, I'm still alive? Thanks to you, I guess.

LOLA:

It's no trouble.

GANG MEMBER:

Hah. Well, I've gotta get up and moving--

LOLA:

You'll hurt yourself--

SFX: The gang member gets up anyways.

GANG MEMBER:

(GRIMACING IN PAIN) Yeah, well, no use in me staying in one place while they're still hunting me down. See ya.

SFX: They hobble off.

LOLA:

I guess that's good advice for me too. I'd better pack up and move.

SCENE 6

SFX: Blankets rustle. A message notification sound, followed by many more.

VIC:

(HE YAWNS) Ah, what time is it?

SFX: Augment boots up.

AUGMENT:

It's currently 4h13, 12 seconds. You have several missed messages. Current ranking on the leaderboard is...

VIC:

Aw damn, it's way too early for me to be getting messages. Nova. Nova, you awake?

NOVA:

Hm?

VIC:

Where's Silver...?

SFX: The door bangs open.

NOVA:

Whoa, geez!

VIC:

Silver!

SILVER:

We have a big problem. Get up, now.

VIC:

What's going on?

SILVER:

Cobalt Fangs are challenging our turf, we need all hands on deck like five seconds ago. Get up!

NOVA:

Okay, I've got my gear powered up, let's go!

VIC:

Your bike's still out.

SILVER:

Nova, go with Vic and ride Hotshot—

NOVA:

No, I can't. We're the only two augmented people in the gang. I'll ride with someone else. But you and Vic need to ride alone.

VIC:

Okay. Right. Blaze, hey, Blaze!

BLAZE:

Over here.

VIC:

Take Nova this time. Oz!

OZ:

What's up?

SILVER:

Take the rear this time around.

OZ:

Got it.

BLAZE:

Hey, where the hell is Briggs?

SILVER:

What?

OZ:

Shouldn't he be riding out with us too? You said *all hands*.

BLAZE:

He wasn't looking too good the last time I saw him.

VIC:

Which was when, exactly?

BLAZE:

Sometime yesterday 'round 21h00?

NOVA:

You mean no one's seen him for seven hours?!

VIC:

Plug into the security cameras, Nova.

SFX: They do.

NOVA:

Oh no... oh *no*.

SILVER:

Where'd he go?

NOVA:

Looks like Briggs made a call sometime around 1 a.m. and snuck out around 2:30 a.m.

VIC:

What? Where'd he make the call from?

NOVA:

Our comms system. Guess he lost his.

VIC:

I'll grab the data and analyze it while we're heading out.

SILVER:

Good idea. Ride out, Berserkers! These are our streets!

SFX: Revving!

MUSIC: Homeworld Co

AUGMENT:

HackSysEntertainment--

VIC:

Not now.

SFX: Beep, beep.

AUGMENT:

Wink to select playback.

SFX: Beep.

BRIGGS:

Come on, you gotta get me out of here! These people, they're basically holding me hostage at the Berserkers base. I can give you the coordinates, just come as soon as you can!

AUGMENT:

Call was made to Corrector Station 44.

VIC:

Goddamn *traitor!*

AUGMENT:

Information transferred to USER: Nova.

NOVA:

Vic, Silver, do you copy?

SILVER:

I hear you loud and clear.

NOVA:

So... what happened? He gave away our position to Correctors?

VIC:

Yeah. I'll bet they paid off the Fangs as more muscle to take us out with. Might be better for us to retreat.

SILVER:

And lose our base? Hell no. This is our territory. And he needs to pay. Maybe you should have killed him instead of giving him a second chance.

VIC:

Yeah, maybe.

NOVA:

We're coming up on the Cobalt Fangs' first wall of defense on the southeast now--you're right, Vic, they've got Correctors behind 'em too.

SILVER:

Nova, you find me that traitor and I'm gonna end him.

VIC:

Don't you mean *we're* gonna end him?

SILVER:

Heh. You got that right.

SFX: Revving.

FANGS:

(LAUGHING) It's the Berserkers!

NYX:

Alright, scumbags. Ready to give up your turf to us?

SILVER:

How's that tracker in your arm treating ya? Last I checked, you're all criminals too.

VIC:

Yeah, don't try to play the hero.

NYX:

This thing's coming straight out of my arm the second we capture you. So right now, we're playing nice with the law. I hear you've been treating some of your newbies too rough. I'd say not rough enough if they're snitching on you.

SFX: The other Fangs laugh.

SILVER:

So what, Briggs asked for your lot and the long arm to take care of him?

NYX:

Correctors have been trying to take you out for a long time, Berserkers. And we get rights to this neighborhood if we help 'em out. Get 'em, girls!

SFX: The Fangs spring into action.

FANG 1:

With pleasure!

FANG 2:

You got it!

SILVER:

Vic, give me the rundown!

VIC AND AUGMENT:

Okay, three to your right, one to your left!

SFX: Silver takes them out.

AUGMENT:

Motion detected.

SFX: Vic ducks underneath a crowbar swing.

VIC:

You didn't actually think you'd get me with that crowbar did you?

FANG 2:

Hey, get back here!

SFX: Vic speeds past.

SILVER:

I took out two of 'em, lost visuals on the other.

AUGMENT:

Tracking...

VIC:

Behind you!

SFX: Silver knocks her out.

NYX:

Take out Vic Vass, girls! Silver's only muscle!

VIC:

Sounds like they're underestimating you.

SILVER:

That's a first.

SFX: Comms rings.

BLAZE:

How's defense going?

SILVER:

Not bad. Pretty slow, actually.

VIC:

Eight more coming our way.

SILVER:

I'd better show what I'm made of, huh? Wouldn't want them to get the wrong idea.

SFX: Silver hits a button on his bike. A laser cannon charges.

VIC:

Big guns already, huh? I'll get out of your way.

SILVER:

Ready, aim, fire!

SFX: It fires. Success sound!

VIC:

Yeah!

SILVER:

That'll teach 'em. Keep on riding!

NYX:

Fangs, capture the base! This tracker's not getting out without us capturing these two.

SFX: Laser fire over the comms.

SILVER:

What's going on, Blaze?

BLAZE:

Nova and I aren't doing so hot—we called Oz as backup, but he crashed three streets back into a Corrector van—argh!

SFX: They swerve.

BLAZE:

We're still tailing Briggs, but we need you here!

SILVER:

Send your position now. We'll be there.

VIC:

What about Oz?

SILVER:

He's probably dead. Just stay focused.

SFX: Laser fire.

SILVER:

And don't get shot.

AUGMENT:

Target: Nova; Blaze; and Briggs detected moving.

VIC:

I got sights on them. We gotta move in, though.

CORRECTOR:

Get away from the Corrector van, Berserkers!

SILVER:

Hey, asshole! Nice job getting the Fangs *and* the law to protect you, coward!

BRIGGS:

Back off, Silver! The Berserkers lost! I'm not coming back!

VIC:

We don't want you back! We want you dead!

SFX: A sudden low hum.

AUGMENT:

Magnetic field increasing.

VIC:

What the hell?

CORRECTOR:

Whoa, whoa, whoa, what the hell is that?!

BLAZE:

I'm losing control!

SILVER:

Hang back, Blaze! I'll get Nova. Vic, handle the Fang!

VIC:

On it.

NYX:

What do you think of the magnets, Berserkers? Sure makes it hard to steer, huh? Now get back here.

SFX: The hum gets stronger.

AUGMENT:

(GLITCHING) Magnetic field increase. May interfere with augment.

VIC:

Argh!

SFX: Vic crashes into the magnetic field.

BRIGGS:

Do something, we're getting drawn in too! Open the door!

SFX: The hum grows louder.

NYX:

You're coming with me!

SFX: Vic stabs her.

NOVA:

There's an opening! Get Briggs!

SILVER:

On it!

NYX:

Vic Vass, you bastard!

SFX: She punches him and grabs him by the throat.

VIC:

Get your hands off of me!

AUGMENT:

(GLITCHING) Alert! Silver is in danger! Alert! Nova is in danger!

SFX: Flash!

SILVER:

Nova, get ahold of yourself!

NOVA:

It's too bright—Silver—I can't—

SFX: Time slows down again.

AUGMENT:

Silver using Nova as a shield from Target: Briggs will result in fatality.

VIC:

Come on, come on, highlight the best path--

AUGMENT:

ERROR. Cannot calculate at this time.

VIC:

No!

AUGMENT:

Nova's fatality is imminent in seven... six...

VIC:

NO!

NYX:

Stop squirming.

VIC:

Let go!

SFX: Vic slashes forward with his knife.

NYX:

Agh!

VIC:

Silver, this way!

AUGMENT:

Five... four...

SILVER:

Stop!

AUGMENT:

Three... two...

VIC:

NOVA!

AUGMENT:

One.

SFX: Thwack.

SCENE 7

SFX: Click. Heartbeat.

LOLA:

Pupil blown out on the right eye; swelling is already starting.

VIC:

(GROANS)

LOLA:

Can you hear me?

VIC:

(MUMBLES)

LOLA:

I'm gonna have to operate. Oh god... okay, focus, Lola. Focus...

SFX: Vic drifts back into unconsciousness. And then--

VIC:

Nova!

LOLA:

Oh! Oh, my goodness.

VIC:

It's too quiet. What the hell?

What's with the bandage? Did something happen to my eye?
Who are you?

LOLA:

I—

VIC:

And what's going on with my augment?

LOLA:

Hey--please don't hit your head. That's not gonna work. That's... um... well... I'll answer your questions. First, you were injured pretty badly, yes. You got severe head trauma from whatever firefight you got into. You... well... there's no easy way to say this...

VIC:

Did you turn it off somehow?

LOLA:

You were very lucky that the head trauma didn't cause you any more damage than it could have. The steroids stopped the swelling fairly well. But the augment that was in your head... it broke inside of your brain. I had to perform enucleation and pull it out entirely to stop the bleeding.

VIC:

Enucleation? What does that mean?

LOLA:

I had to surgically remove your left eye.

If I didn't, it could have caused a hematoma and you could have lost brain cells.

VIC:

Oh...

Oh my god.

LOLA:

Maybe if I had gotten to you faster... but it took so long for everyone to clear out, I could hardly get to you and the other three.

VIC:

Was it Nova and Silver?

LOLA:

I... um... don't know who they are. It was a woman and two men. The men didn't make it.

VIC:

Did they have blue hair? Or white hair?

LOLA:

No. They both had your colors on them though.

VIC:

That must've been Blaze and Oz then. That's... wow.

LOLA:

I'm really sorry.

VIC:

I'm sure you did everything you could.

This is... this is all so weird. I can't even really tell if I'm in pain or not.

LOLA:

The pain medication should have mostly worn off by now.

VIC:

I'm sure it has... I've just relied on my augment to tell me everything. I don't really know if this is what pain's supposed to feel like. I can barely tell if I'm supposed to feel relieved right now.

LOLA:

I'm sure you have a lot of mixed feelings. That augment seemed like it was custom made.

VIC:

Yeah. Made it myself. And installed it myself too, with a little help from Silver.

LOLA:

Oh wow. That seems... exceedingly dangerous.

VIC:

(CHUCKLES)

LOLA:

But that's incredible. It was so complex; it far exceeded a lot of medical research I'd seen on in-brain artificial enhancers. You're very intelligent.

VIC:

Thank you. Glad I didn't lose it to the surgery.

LOLA:

It'd be a real tragedy. I could tell you used that enhancer for lots of things, including hacking. If you don't mind me asking, why'd you get into... all of this?

VIC:

What, being in a gang?

I don't know, I guess I just... fell into it.

LOLA:

You seem better suited to hacking than to violence.

VIC:

I mean, it's sort of like the same thing, in a way? Or like... some of it is. It's about being free. With my augment, when I'm hacking, when I'm riding out in the streets, I'm me. And lots of people have tried to hold me back or make me gain their approval one way or another. But I left them behind.

I've been hacking for a long time, and it was fun. And then when Silver convinced me to get the augment, it was even more fun. I'd never really gotten to have that before. The Berserkers get me.

LOLA:

I understand. Doing things out of necessity, then staying there because that's all you think you're good for... I... yeah. I really do get it.

VIC:

I... thank you.

LOLA:

And I think you deserve a second chance. I think you could get out of this life. Look, I'm trying to do something. And I need a computer expert. I mean, I don't mean to be too forward, but do you know about the union Zero Zero?

VIC:

...I'm sorry, what was your name?

LOLA:

I didn't say it yet.

I'm Lola Sunn.

VIC:

Lola? I've heard that name before. Wait a minute... you're wanted by Correctors.

LOLA:

I guess I am.

VIC:

I mean, that makes two of us. But if you're trying to talk me into joining something with you, like I said, I've got a lot of heat on me already. And I'm with the Berserkers. For life.

LOLA:

But it's not just anything I'm trying to get you to join—it's something that'll change the Metropolis. The world you're in right now, it's so small.

VIC:

You don't know me like that.

LOLA:

No, what, what I meant to say was-

VIC:

Look, Lola? I really owe you one for saving my life. And I appreciate you listening to me. But I have to make sure Silver and Nova are okay. So I've gotta find them.

LOLA:

Your eye's gonna need more time to recover.

VIC:

The Berserkers and I will figure something out. They're my everything. The next time we meet—if we meet again—then maybe I'll consider it. But this'll probably be the last time we talk.

LOLA:

Wait!

I'm sorry, what's your name?

VIC:

It's Vic. Vic Vass.

LOLA:

Well, Mr. Vass, take this. It's my comms info. If you want to contact me. Not necessarily about the whole Zero Zero thing, just... if your eye or your head starts giving you trouble, I could still help you out. And you don't owe me anything for it. I just don't want you to get hurt.

VIC:

Thanks. Uh... S-see you around.

SCENE 8

SFX: Underpass traffic.

SILVER:

Gimme a light, will ya?

NOVA:

Here you go.

SFX: Nova lights a cigarette. A metallic rustle to the side.

NOVA:

Targeting... huh?

Vic?

SILVER:

What did you say?

VIC:

Silver! Nova! I found you!

SILVER:

What the hell? We thought you died a month ago.

VIC:

Longest month of my life.

NOVA:

What happened to you? I don't even need to scan you to know you're in bad shape.

VIC:

I... well, that hit to the head Briggs gave me didn't treat me too well. Some street medic saved my life but my, uh... my eye didn't make it.

SILVER:

Aw, well, that's no big deal. We can design you a cybernetic one.

VIC:

No, I tried to get one two weeks ago. I guess the way she pulled it out means I can't get one that sees. But hey, I'm compensating. Look, look, look, check this out. I can still aim alright! Wait, I just need to find something—alright, there! Look at this, look at this! Look!

SFX: Vic tosses a can up in the air. It falls to the ground.

VIC:

Wait, hold on, I had it yesterday. I can do it! *I can do it—*

NOVA:

...It's okay, Vic. Don't push yourself.

Beat.

VIC:

Hey, you got Hotshot! You don't make a bad pair with her.

NOVA:

Ah. Thank you.

VIC:

Yeah. I wanted to give her to you eventually, so... yeah.

SILVER:

Nova can help me wire your augment to a new bike. And to the other eye as well. Probably pretty weird to not be able to have the visual input. Oh, and you'll be excited to hear this! I got rid of the whole pain input, instead of numbing it like I did with you. I bet it'll help you out.

VIC:

What, hey, that's... dangerous.

SILVER:

I'll show you. Nova, give me your lighter.

NOVA:

Here.

SFX: Silver clicks it on.

SILVER:

Put your hand on the flame.

SFX: Nova does.

VIC:

Oh God...

NOVA:

See, it doesn't hurt! It's kind of weird, but like you said, Vic, you kind of get used to it.

SILVER:

I mean, I can turn it off if Nova's gotta feel the pain, but y'know, trust Silver to recross some of those wires in your head.

VIC:

Silver, that's not okay!

SILVER:

What did you just say to me?

VIC:

You can't just do that, especially if YOU'RE the one with the controls!

SILVER:

Vic. Don't forget your place. What I did with Nova was just like the approval system we put in your brain. You didn't have control of that either. And you're losing points with me right now.

VIC:

Well, you know what? I don't even have my augment in me anymore. That medic had to pull it out of my head to stop me from dying. I had to track you down MYSELF!

Did you two even look for me?

NOVA:

When your augment went offline, we thought you probably died.

VIC:

Look, whatever. Let's just get back to base.

SILVER:

We don't have one anymore. Still trying to establish a new place for the members we still have alive—

VIC:

Right.

SILVER:

And, well... you're not coming with us.

VIC:

What?

No, wait, I'm... I'm sorry Silver, I didn't mean what I said.

SILVER:

That aside, you don't even have your augment.

VIC:

But... I... I can still hack! I'm still as fast as I used to be!

NOVA:

I hate to say this, but you're not on the leaderboard anymore. In fact, you don't have *any* cred. Cred's everything, you told me that.

VIC:

I could get a new augment installed, I could—

SILVER:

Hey, you know as well as I do that putting in a new one's not worth it. You can't hack, you can't shoot. Give it up, Vic.

VIC:

But you said we're blood. Berserkers for life? I'm still alive!

SILVER:

Are you stupid? You're getting kicked out. You don't have a place here.

VIC:

Silver...

SILVER:

Come on, Nova.

VIC:

Nova, please.

NOVA:

I don't wanna lose any points with Silver. I'm sorry, Vic.

SFX: Silver and Nova drive off.

SCENE 9

SFX: Rain.

VIC:

Last thing I'm gonna do is pawn off this comms and then... that's it, I guess.

Oh, there's still... I guess I didn't erase her comms info from here.

Guess I should say my goodbyes to someone.

SFX: Vic dials Lola's comms. She picks up almost immediately.

LOLA:

Hello?

VIC:

Hey.

LOLA:

Oh—Mr. Vass! It's, um. It's good to hear from you. It's almost been two months. How is your eye? And your head? I've been concerned about you.

VIC:

I don't think it's really gonna matter soon.

LOLA:

...What's wrong?

VIC:

Nothing's wrong. It's just... yeah, I don't know. Don't worry about me anymore? Just wanted to tell you that before I go.

LOLA:

Go where? Mr. Vass—I mean, Vic.

Where are you right now? It sounds like it's raining where you are. I must be nearby. Just... please let me know? I'll come meet you.

VIC:

I'm off exit 29.

I think I need help.

LOLA:

It's okay. I'm here. Stay on comms with me. What's going on?

VIC:

God, you know? You were... you were right. My world was small. Now it's nothing.

They didn't want me back. I kept telling myself it was a test, cause Silver tested me a lot when I first joined. Maybe it was a mistake and he'd come find me, but how would he find me—

LOLA:

Breathe. It's okay.

VIC:

I'm sorry, you don't even know me.

LOLA:

It's alright. I'm listening.

VIC:

I don't really know anyone. I threw everything away to be with them and I don't have anyone to talk to but a stranger that cut my head open what seems like lifetimes ago. And it's so damn quiet without the voice in my head. Life was like a game with it being there. It told me how to be charismatic and win points. Like a straight line, a clear path. A way from A to B. Now there aren't points anymore. I'm not the good guy I thought I was. I barely know what I'm doing without it saying what I should do.

There's nothing. They're gone. And I can't stop thinking I should be too.

SFX: Footsteps stop behind Vic.

LOLA:

That's not true.

VIC:

You... you came here? For me?

MUSIC: Self-Sacrifice by Eli Ramos.

LOLA:

Vic, I know what it's like to be rejected from somewhere. I'll spare you the details but... I know how hard it can hit. Especially if that's the thing you've known forever. But you're not your augment. You are not your skills. When I met you, I found you perfectly charming on your own and that was after I'd taken the enhancer out. I know you got that injury trying to save someone. And the choice to do that... that wasn't the enhancer, that was you. It was magnetized beyond repair when I took a look at it.

You don't have to make yourself worth something to get approval. Just by being alive, you are worth something.

VIC:

Thank you.

LOLA:

Here, take my jacket. It's freezing.

Come on, let's get somewhere dry. I found this abandoned radio station and we can stay there until you figure out what you want to do.

SFX: They walk.

END EPISODE.

ELI:

Hi, Eli Ramos here, creator and editor of Under the Electric Stars, an Aster Podcasting Network production. If you liked this episode, please share it with your friends

and rate and review it wherever you're listening to us. You can find us on our website at undertheelectricstars.com or find us on social media: we're @utes_podcast on Twitter and [undertheelectricstarspodcast](https://www.tumblr.com/undertheelectricstarspodcast) on Tumblr. You can also find us on Patreon at [mxeliramos](https://www.patreon.com/mxeliramos), that's M-X-E-L-I-R-A-M-O-S. You get access to behind the scenes, annotated scripts, and early access to episodes and the money you give directly goes to supporting our actors that help make this show possible. Please support us if you have the means. Our voice talents are as follows: Kevin Paculan as Vic Vass, Chaitrika Budamagunta as Lola Sunn, Jim as Silver Gallo, Robin Guzman as Nova, Chris Francis as Briggs, Josh Hazeghazam as Oz, Tyler Drake as Blaze, and Kai Ramos as the Augment. Additional voices were provided by yours truly. A special thanks to Fran Carr and Ezra Lee Buck, \$20 Patrons on our Patreon, and to all of our Patreon supporters. We appreciate your patience as we took a break after Season 1 of Under the Electric Stars. These episodes are the interstitial between Season 1 and Season 2, which we're currently casting for. Check our Twitter—again, that's @utes_podcast—for more details. And to everyone, thanks for listening, and see you in Metropolis West soon.