

NEXUS

Short Film

Written by

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Darkness. The sound of METAL SCREECHING, harder and harder.

A gap opens, light shines through. It's an old door, and someone is trying to open it from the other side.

APOCA-LUCY (O.S.)  
It's stuck! Grab that end.

The door slowly opens a bit more.

ASHLEY (O.S.)  
Mom, we can't fit--!

A GROWL, far in the distance. The door SNAPS shut.

APOCA-LUCY (O.S.)  
Come on! Quick! Hold that open.

The door slowly opens a bit. Apoca-Lucy puts her arm through the gap and throws inside a DIT: A round, high tech metal device, what a smoke detector made by Apple would look like.

The DIT sticks on the floor inside and lights up.

It splits into four corner pieces, like a Transformer. The pieces spread on the floor to form a door-sized rectangle.

With a FLASH the inside of the rectangle opens into a portal, a NEXUS, out to the rooftop.

APOCA-LUCY (38), intense and focused, peeks in through the nexus, gun in hand. She gets inside with roll.

APOCA-LUCY  
It's clear. Come on.

Apoca-Lucy helps ASHLEY (16) through the nexus. Once both are inside, Apoca-Lucy grabs one of the corner pieces of the DIT. The nexus closes and the DITs SNAP into her hand.

ASHLEY  
Do you think we lost them?

APOCA-LUCY  
I don't know. Let's just find that blaster and get out.  
(beat)  
This way.

2 INT. LOBBY - POST APOCALYPTIC - DAY

2

They make it to a lobby, there's a big window and a stairwell that goes down. Through the window we can see the L.A. skyline, destroyed and long abandoned.

SUPER: "PRESENT DAY - 8:39 AM"

APOCA-LUCY  
Downstairs, all the way.

Ashley heads down the stairs, Apoca-Lucy stops to look at the skyline, then looks back inside, nostalgic. She looks at the DIT on her hand as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

3 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

3

The blueprint of an early DIT prototype is projected behind Apoca-Lucy. She nervously presents to the BOARD OF DIRECTORS, particularly the chairman, AARON HARRIS (60).

APOCA-LUCY  
...with the Nexus technology,  
countries could save billions. That's  
Billions, with a 'B'.

SUPER: "TWELVE YEARS AGO"

APOCA-LUCY (cont'd)  
Why build a bridge or a tunnel when  
you can use a Nexus?  
And not just across a river or lake.  
Open a Nexus to Australia and you  
could drive directly from Sydney into  
the 405.

She clicks a button triggering a cheesy Power Point transition that REVEALS: An illustration of a freeway with several exits heading to Hong Kong, Sydney and London.

The board looks impressed. Harris goes over the project documents, Apoca-Lucy anxiously awaits for his thoughts.

HARRIS  
Very interesting Ms. Jones... would  
these devices just stick anywhere?

APOCA-LUCY  
Any surface as long as it's flat.

(CONTINUED)

He reads something...

HARRIS

What's this on parallel universes?

APOCA-LUCY

(cautiously excited)

Oh, that's the next phase sir. It's really exciting...

We can make adjustments to the core, increase the output and, in theory, visit alternate realities.

HARRIS

(laughs, skeptic)

Alternate realities? Really? You could go through that door thing and meet a different version of me?

APOCA-LUCY

Yes-- It won't sustain a doorway like this, but I could create a blast that switches an area between universes.

HARRIS

I see... very interesting. But--

(beat)

But you're in the wrong reality, because there's no way in this universe that I approve this project.

APOCA-LUCY

But sir--

HARRIS

Look. You're brilliant, probably the best we have, but--

Parallel universes? We're a military tech company Ms. Jones, not a Star Trek Convention.

He signals her to leave. She has no words.

Harris and the board go back to their business. Apoca-Lucy heads to the exit, but stops halfway. Turns around and takes a deep breath, for courage.

APOCA-LUCY

(her voice breaks)

I think you're making a big mistake... sir.

Everyone goes quiet. Harris turns to her...

(CONTINUED)

HARRIS

What's that?

APOCA-LUCY

(nervous)

This could be the discovery of the century and-- If you won't back me up I'll... I'll take it somewhere else.

HARRIS

No you won't. Anything you create here belongs to the company.

APOCA-LUCY

If you don't believe in it you'll have no problem releasing it to me.

HARRIS

And why would I do that?

Apoca-Lucy takes a second. She's making this up as she goes.

APOCA-LUCY

Like you said, I'm the best one here, and if you don't let me work on this project I-- I quit!

Everyone is surprised she just said that, even Apoca-Lucy. Harris is unsure. He looks at the board, they're nervous, shaking their heads to not let her quit. He caves.

HARRIS

(reluctant)

Alright then. Fine.

Apoca-Lucy can't contain her excitement.

4 INT. LITTLE ASHLEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

4

SUPER: "FOUR YEARS LATER"

Apoca-Lucy reads to 8 YEAR OLD ASHLEY

APOCA-LUCY

...and he became a real dog. The end. Now get some sleep.

LITTLE ASHLEY

Why do I have to go to sleep and you don't?

(CONTINUED)

APOCA-LUCY

Pft! I'd love to sleep. But you know how you have an important test at school tomorrow?

Little Ashley nods.

APOCA-LUCY (cont'd)

Well I have a very important test at work tonight, so I have to go.

LITTLE ASHLEY

You're going to work? Now?

APOCA-LUCY

Don't worry, I'll be just a few steps away... now go to sleep.

Apoca-Lucy kisses her good night and leaves.

5 INT. APOCA-LUCY'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

5

Apoca-Lucy comes in from the hall and gets her lab coat, she looks at her watch... she's late.

She pulls out a DIT and sticks it on a empty wall. It beeps and immediately opens a nexus into a long industrial hallway. DR. CHANG (44) waits on the other side.

CHANG

Ready?

APOCA-LUCY

Yeah. Sorry, I'm late. Let's go.

6 INT. LAB OBSERVATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

6

Dr. Chang and Apoca-Lucy walk into an observation room that looks over a huge lab with an enormous spherical device surrounded by dozens of pipes and cables.

Apoca-Lucy goes through some reports.

CHANG

...the core finally stabilized, we are ready to go but-- I still have to insist on the frequency assessment. We still don't know what we will find in any of the alternates, and--

(CONTINUED)

APOCA-LUCY

This again? I already told you.  
There's no way to know until we  
actually do it.

CHANG

But--

APOCA-LUCY

No! We're ready. We took all the  
precautions. Turn it on.

Chang presses a few buttons. The ground shakes, the machine  
starts, whirring faster and louder every second.

LITTLE ASHLEY (O.S.)

Mom?

They turn around, little Ashley stands by the door.

APOCA-LUCY

Ash, What are you doing here?

LITTLE ASHLEY

The light in my room broke.

APOCA-LUCY

(at Chang)

Can you stop it?

CHANG

It'll take two days to restart.

APOCA-LUCY

Shit.

(thinks)

Keep it going. I'll be right back!

Apoca-Lucy grabs Little Ashley and runs out of the lab.

7 INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

7

Apoca-Lucy and Little Ashley come through the Nexus back  
into the house.

APOCA-LUCY

What did I say about going in there?

A deep thud rumbles through the Nexus.

Ashley and Apoca-Lucy look at the hall, it looks like  
lightning is striking on the other side. Another big thud.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

APOCA-LUCY (cont'd)

Stay here.

Apoca-Lucy peeks in through the Nexus and hears a bunch of screams and chaos in the distance.

A hermetic door at the end of the hall is RIPPED open. REVEALING a muscle filled, human-like creature called a FORT: Picture a human sized Hulk with gray skin and sharp teeth. He's stained in blood, it's not his.

Apoca-Lucy freezes in fear. The FORT screams at her. She falls back on her butt. Ashley stands behind her.

He charges at them. Apoca-Lucy crawls to the Nexus, he jumps at them but she closes the Nexus right before he makes it.

Apoca-Lucy looks at her daughter, frozen in fear. Apoca-Lucy is just as scared.

8 INT. LOBBY - POST APOCALYPTIC - PRESENT TIME - DAY

8

Back in the present. Apoca-Lucy remembers this with pain.

ASHLEY

Mom! Are you coming or what?!

Apoca-Lucy snaps out of it and heads down the stairs, leaving the lobby empty.

SUPER: "PRESENT DAY - 8:39 AM"

Flashes and static fill the screen, like a TV switching channels. This is our TRANSITION TO:

9 INT. LOBBY - DAY

9

The EXACT SAME SHOT. But everything is clean and in good shape, the buildings in the skyline look great.

The SUPER stays through the transition, it's the same time.

LUCY (38) walks in, a heavy canvas bag hanging from her hand. She leans against the railing.

She looks like Apoca-Lucy except she wears a clean lab coat, almost sterile. Her face is softer and sadder though.

DING. The elevator. Dr. Chang comes out of it and heads towards the hall.

(CONTINUED)

LUCY

Dr. Chang!

Dr. Chang turns toward Lucy.

CHANG

Oh, Lucy, hi.

LUCY

Did you get my request for the Nano-charger chips?

CHANG

I did. However I do not think we--

LUCY

I promise, it'll be worth the--

CHANG

I am late for a meeting. Can we discuss it on Monday?

LUCY

Of course, thanks-- Oh, you have--

She gets close and fixes his shirt neck.

CHANG

(awkward)

Um... thank you.

Chang goes away. Lucy stays, In her hand she now has Chang's employee ID. DING. The elevator, she gets in.

10 INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

10

Lucy rides the elevator. She nervously sees the screen as it displays the floors: 3, 2, Ground, -1, -2, etc.

She pulls a folder labeled "Nexus" from her bag and opens it on the Freeway Illustration from her presentation.

DISSOLVE TO:

11 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

11

The same presentation as before. The freeway illustration is on the projector, we're ahead in the scene now...

SUPER: "TWELVE YEARS AGO"

(CONTINUED)

HARRIS

...but you're in the wrong reality,  
because there's no way in this  
universe that I approve this project.

APOCA-LUCY

But sir--

HARRIS

Look. You're brilliant, probably the  
best one here, but--  
Parallel universes? We're a military  
tech company Ms. Jones, not a Star  
Trek Convention.

He signals her to leave. She has no words.

Harris and the board go back to their business. Lucy heads  
to the exit, but stops halfway. Turns around and takes a  
deep breath, gathering her courage to speak up...

But she doesn't. Not on this universe. Her chest deflates  
and she exits the room, hating herself.

12 INT. LITTLE ASHLEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

12

SUPER: "FOUR YEARS LATER"

Lucy reads a story to 8 YEAR OLD ASHLEY.

LUCY

...and he became a real dog. The end.  
Now get some sleep.

LITTLE ASHLEY

Why do I have to go to sleep and you  
don't?

LUCY

Pft! I'd love to sleep. But you know  
how Mr. Skinner always gives you the  
worst homework?

Little Ashley nods.

LUCY (cont'd)

Well my boss, Mr. Harris, left me a  
very bad homework that he needs by  
tomorrow. And until I get my own  
project I have to do what the little  
fu-- fudgy man says.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

LITTLE ASHLEY  
(laughing)  
You said fudgy.

LUCY  
(laughs in relief)  
I did huh? Okay. Go to sleep.

Lucy kisses her good night and leaves.

13 INT. LUCY'S HOUSE KITCHEN - LATER

13

Lucy is alone in her pajamas, hunched over her breakfast table with a soldering iron. Blueprints and electronic pieces are spread all over while she works on some gadget.

She's having a hard time staying awake.

LITTLE ASHLEY (O.S.)  
Mom?

Lucy gets startled. She burns her finger and instinctively drops the soldering iron, it lands over a blueprint.

LUCY  
Ash, you scared me!-- What are you doing up? It's five in the morning!

LITTLE ASHLEY  
The light in my room broke.

LUCY  
Baby, I told you. Darkness is just a lack of photons, there's nothing to be afraid of.

This is not very comforting for Little Ashley.

LUCY (cont'd)  
Okay. Turn on the big light and I'll be there in two minutes. I just gotta finish this circuit.

LITTLE ASHLEY  
Okay.

Little Ash leaves. Lucy zones out for a bit, exhausted.

She smells something, looks down: The blueprint is starting to smoke and burn. She's so tired it takes her a moment...

(CONTINUED)

11. 13

13 CONTINUED: 13

It finally sinks in, and in a jolt of adrenaline, she quickly grabs the blueprint and runs outside.

In the rush, she forgets about the soldering iron, which lands snugly between another sheet and a little rubber hose.

We follow the hose down to a tank... HYDROGEN.

14 EXT. LUCY'S HOUSE YARD - CONTINUOUS 14

Lucy shakes the sheet in the air until the fire is out.

She hears something and turns back at the house. The kitchen is on fire. She starts running desperately.

LUCY  
Fire!... Ashley! There's fi--

BOOM! The whole house EXPLODES in front of her.

Off Lucy's shocked face, we DISSOLVE BACK TO:

15 INT. ELEVATOR - PRESENT TIME 15

Lucy is about to break into tears.

DING. The elevator opens. She looks at the screen: Sector B. She recomposes herself and walks out of the elevator.

16 INT. SECTOR B BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS 16

Lucy walks through a metal bridge over a HUGE CONCRETE PIT that leads to a heavy vault door.

She swipes Chang's ID card over a digital pad, the thick door starts opening.

Before it's open all the way, an alarm starts whirring. The lock pad turns RED with a message: *ID Reported STOLEN*.

The vault door starts closing again. Lucy doesn't know what to do, but she instinctively squeezes into the vault through the gap, barely missing being squashed by the heavy door.

Flashes and static as we TRANSITION to:

17 INT. SECTOR B BRIDGE - POST APOCALYPTIC - CONTINUOUS

17

The SAME SHOT. On this version the door to the vault is ripped open and the bridge half destroyed.

The door that comes from the outside is almost shut, Apoca-Lucy and Ashley barely squeeze through and come in.

They run over the bridge, but stop abruptly when they get to where it cuts off. The gap to the vault is too big to jump.

A GROWL in the distance. They're coming.

Apoca-Lucy pulls out the two DITs and pairs them.

She jumps as high as possible and throws one of the DITs inside the vault, it sticks to the floor.

ASHLEY

Where are you putting the other one?  
It's not gonna stick here!

Apoca-Lucy sees a flat wall twenty feet under the vault door. She throws the second DIT there, opening a Nexus between the wall and the vault.

APOCA-LUCY

(to Ashley)

You're first!

She looks at the Nexus down in the pit. It's low enough that they can make it, but pretty damn far. She gets nervous.

ASHLEY

No, it's too high!

BAM. The door behind them gets slammed so hard it bends in.

APOCA-LUCY

I'm not jumping without you.

BAM. They're almost here.

ASHLEY

I'll do it, just-- go first... you  
can cover me from the other side.

Apoca-Lucy debates it real hard, finally...

APOCA-LUCY

Fine! But hurry.

Apoca-Lucy runs and jumps off the bridge, head first.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

She dives clean through the Nexus and into the vault floor.

Ashley gathers her courage-- BAM. The door is SMASHED open.

A FORT walks into the bridge. He screams and charges against Ashley. Apoca-Lucy pulls out her gun...

SLOW MOTION: Scared-as-hell Ashley runs to the gap and jumps off, the Fort jumps right behind her.

Apoca-Lucy shoots at the Fort, her gun spits tracer rounds that light up as they fly. Her clip runs out of bullets, but the Fort finally dies in the air and falls into the pit.

Ashley undershoots the Nexus, but hangs on to the edge by her fingertips.

Apoca-Lucy rushes to the Nexus to help Ashley. WHIP PAN TO:

18 INT. VAULT - NIGHT

18

The place is clean again, but the alarm is buzzing. Lucy smashes the lock pad shut, then finds a box: *Nano-chargers*.

She pulls out of her bag a HANDMADE DEVICE with a little screen and wires sticking out, looks like a high tech bomb.

She empties the rest of the bag on the floor: A bunch of papers and blueprints, including a picture of her with Little Ash.

She grabs two Nano-charger chips and uses the blueprints to plug them into her device.

She sets down the device and pushes a button. The screen displays: *Charging. Blast in: 0:30, 0:29, 0:28, etc.*

She grabs the picture of her with Ash and closes her eyes.

The camera PANS and takes us back to...

19 INT. VAULT - POST APOCALYPTIC

19

Apoca-Lucy helping a final pull to bring Ashley up. They stumble into the vault, knocking down a small cabinet.

A GROWL on the other side of the bridge, they turn.

A HUGE FORT is looking at the dead Fort on the bottom of the pit and gets PISSED. He sizes up the gap and gets ready to run for it.

(CONTINUED)

Ashley checks her gun, empty!

APOCA-LUCY  
We need to find that blaster.

BEEP. Ashley hears something. She digs into the rubble and finds a CYLINDRICAL DEVICE, like a high tech, flash-grenade.

ASHLEY  
Mom! I think I found it...

Apoca-Lucy sees it. It's beeping and flashing faster and faster, about to go off. She doesn't know what to do.

SLOW-MO: The Fort sprints toward the edge of the bridge and JUMPS over the gap.

Apoca-Lucy hugs Ashley over the blaster.

The Fort lands in the vault. They tighten their hug and close their eyes. The beep of the blaster goes steady.

The Fort jumps at them, the blaster blows light all over.

Suddenly, the Fort is gone. An alarm is whirring in the background, but the vault is pristine, except for a 10 feet circle around them.

The detached hands of the Fort lay just inside the circle.

They smile and hug, they made it!

Their celebration stops when Apoca-Lucy sees across the room: Lucy is looking at them in complete shock.

All three of them are dumbstruck.

BEEP, Lucy looks down, her device has 3 seconds left. She panics and tries to turn it off.

BEEP, 2 seconds. She can't turn it off.

BEEP. 1 second. She looks at Ashley and Apoca-Lucy again.

BEEP. No time left.

Everything turns quiet, as the three of them share a moment of understanding. Lucy smiles with a new-found peace.

Her device goes off and she disappears in a blast of light, leaving only a circle of the messy vault in her place.

FADE OUT.