

Proles

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Created in collaboration with the Highgate Purple Company 2024-25

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FOREWORD

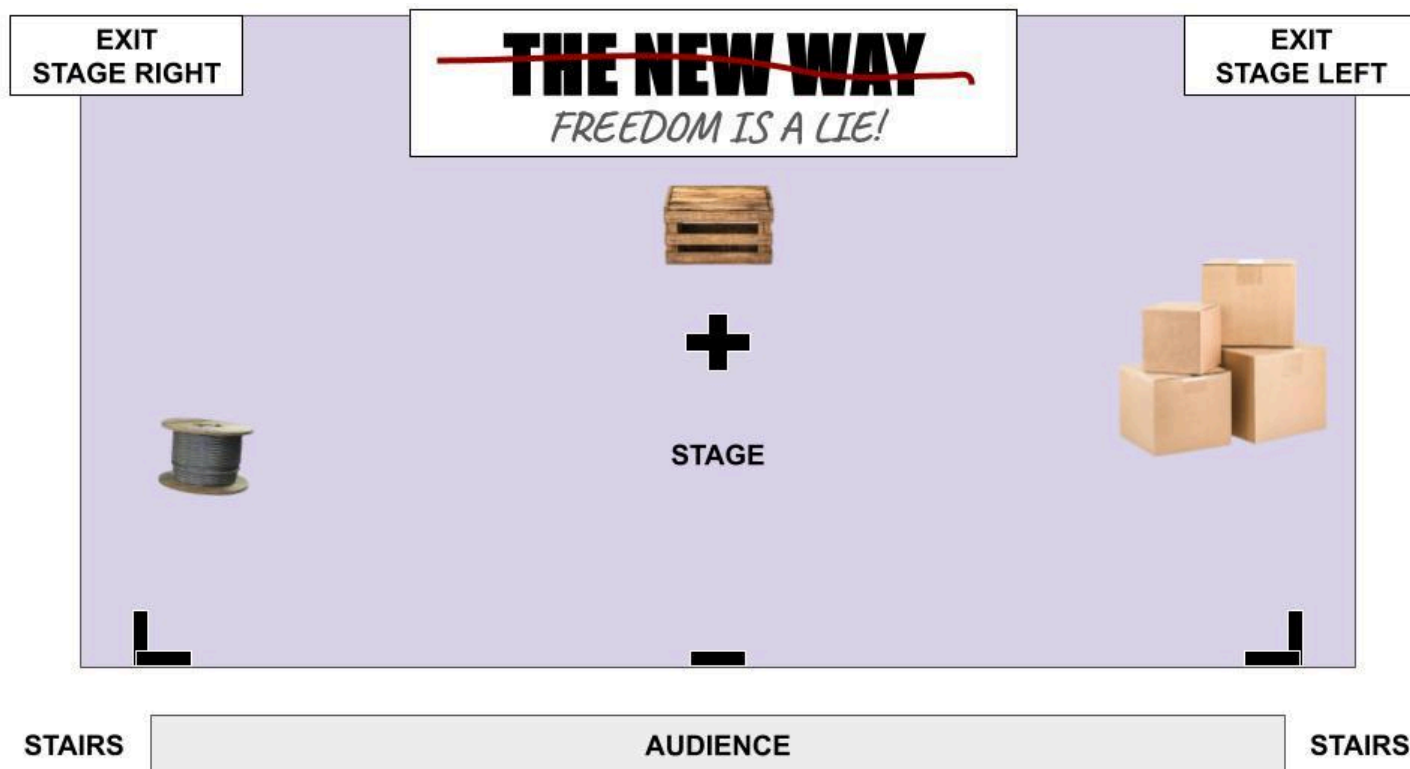
In the aftermath of the riots of 2084, society lies shattered beneath the iron grip of The Prime Order, an all-powerful regime built on surveillance, fear, and absolute control. Cities are no longer places of life and freedom but barren landscapes of ruins and propaganda, where resistance is swiftly silenced.

From the shadows of this broken world, a group of survivors, members of The Resistance, emerge, bound by their shared hope, desperation and determination. Each brings their own unique skills and together, they must navigate the treacherous streets of a ravaged city, evading watchful drones, ruthless Wardens, and the ever-present eyes of The Prime Order. Their only chance lies in reaching the city's central servers, a fortress of technological power, to install a virus that could spark revolution and bring the regime crashing down. Their journey will test their resolve, their unity, and their understanding of truth itself. The Resistance fights not just for survival but for a future where freedom might rise from the ashes.

Inspired by the unsettling dystopia of George Orwell's 1984, this play delves into the fragility of rebellion in a world where censorship is prevalent and propaganda reigns supreme.

This play was inspired by the role-play sessions with the Highgate Purple Company of 2024-25. Using the 'Role That Dice' system, the pupils explored an immersive world in an improvised drama setting. Through this process the pupils created the characters, lines and narrative for this play.

STAGING DIAGRAM - JACKSONS LANE THEATRE



SCENE 1: ABANDONED WAREHOUSE. EXT.

The RESISTANCE members are frozen in tableaux, backs to the audience, silhouetted against a faint, flickering glow of a graffitied wall that reads "FREEDOM IS A LIE".

Downstage centre in spotlight, hackers SKY and SOLAR crouch over a laptop, the screens glow illuminating their faces. A soft hum of static fills the silence.

SUPREME ENGINEER VO

The year is 2084.

The world has changed.

Democracy has fallen.

It did not fall in a single night.

It withered - slowly, inevitably.

SKY works frantically, typing away on the device.

SKY

(focused)

I've spoofed the node.

(pause as she taps the device, tension building)

Accessing now.

(pause for loading)

Confirmed.

We're in control of the data packets.

SOLAR

(pointing at the screen, sharp and direct)

Pull up all the data streams in the area.

SKY

(eyes narrowing, flicking through streams on the screen)

Looks like they're using end-to-end encryption.

(sighs)

Shall I try brute forcing?

SOLAR

That won't work.

(gesturing on the device)

Here. Let me try something.

SOLAR begins working, fingers typing purposefully.

SKY watches warily, scanning the shadows around them.

SKY

(nervous)

Careful. If you hit a decoy, you'll trigger their drones!

We don't need a swarm of sentinels on our location.

SOLAR

(focused)

Relax. I know what I'm doing.

(sudden pause, then triumphant)

Got it. I found a way in through a back door.

Look's like someone has been here already?

SKY

Maybe it was - The Resistance?

They look at each other, making a slow head turn and strong eye contact.

SOLAR

Coordinates downloaded.

(points to the screen)

Looks like they're all meeting outside the Ministry of Truth.

SKY

Let's move!

They pack up the laptop and exit stage quickly.

SCENE 2: THE PRIME ORDER HQ. INT.

COMMANDOR NOVA enters the spotlight, followed by **WARDENS: MANO, ASTRID** and **RAVEN**. The **WARDENS** stand rigid as **NOVA** stands downstage, looking out to the audience.

Her booming voice, cold, calm, and absolute, fills the theatre.

NOVA

Your objectives are *very* simple.

All dissenting voices must be silenced.

The old system is gone,

There is only *The New Way*.

NOVA salutes, placing a fist to her chest and then sharply to her side.

WARDENS

(saluting)

The New Way!

NOVA

(icy authority)

Stability is never enough for the ungrateful.

These *renegades* are naive and cling to myths of freedom.

They whisper in dark alleys.

These are poisoned whispers, spread by rebels.

They have forgotten the chaos before The Prime Order.

They have forgotten how humanity, when left unchecked, destroyed itself.

For seventy-two hours, they have rioted and caused chaos in this city.

Much like a virus attacking its host.

(pause - her tone drops, darker and measured.)

Our response will be decisive.

(slow, deliberate pause as she paces up and down, locking eyes with the WARDENS)

Lieutenant!

MANO

(stepping forward)

Commander Nova, my unit and I will bring a swift silence to the uprising.

We will restore control and put an end to their disobedience.

NOVA

(looking out to the audience, as though spying the unseen rebels)

But even now, in the cracks of our foundation, something stirs - a flicker of resistance.

MANO

They call it hope.

NOVA

Hope is the seed of rebellion.

And rebellion... is the enemy of The Order.

(sharp, final, unrelenting)

It must not prevail.

NOVA straightens, turns crisply, and exits stage left.

The remaining WARDENS pivot in perfect unison and march offstage.

SCENE 3: THE MINISTRY OF TRUTH. EXT

The spotlight fades and lights come up on the tableaux of THE RESISTANCE.
A tense crowd surrounds NEXUS who stands atop the platform.
SKY and SOLAR enter from the staircase stage left.

SOLAR

Look, it's about to start!

NEXUS

(slow and purposeful)

I remember a time - a time when freedom wasn't an illusion.
There was a time when our voices meant something.
But look around - look at what they have done.
The Prime Order - they've taken it all.
They've taken our autonomy.
They've taken our homes.
And now they're rounding up children, putting them into camps.
Make no mistake, these are not camps - they are prisons.
Prisons where names will be erased and their futures will remain unwritten.

(pauses, scanning the crowd, voice thick with anger)

They call it - The New Way.
But I ask you this: does *this* look like a new way to you?
Does this broken rubble - this regime - look like progress?

(voice rises, sharp and defiant)

I say no.
I don't accept their new way.
I don't accept their lies.
And I don't accept the Supreme Engineer,
Who dictates in the shadows, while our families are torn from us.
I say no!

(steps forward, commanding, resolute)

They want us to believe we're broken.
They want us to think that the fight is already lost.

(making eye contact with the crowd)

But I see you and I see your anger.
And beyond that, I see something more.
I see hope.

So I say to you: no more.
No more silence.
No more obedience.
Together, we will be the fire that will burn their regime to ash.

As NEXUS raises her fist high in the air, each character turns one by one to face the audience, mirroring the symbolic gesture of resistance. As they turn, they deliver their line with conviction, raising their fist in unison with the group.

FLO

They have bound us with fear, but we'll break free with courage!

L-E

Control is their weapon. Defiance is ours!

NESSIE

They took everything - together we'll take it back!

I-V

We were born to choose, not to obey machines!

SPARKS

They may break the stone of our walls, but they cannot break our spirit!

VIPER

Let them come. I'll show them what resistance really means!

COSMA

They built this cage, but together we hold the key!

LUNA

Even in silence, our truth will be heard!

LUMINA

This is *our* moment.

ASTRID enters from stage right and takes position upstage right, flanking the platform.

RAVEN enters from stage left and moves to upstage left, mirroring ASTRID.

Together, they create a sense of symmetry and containment around the stage.

MANO moves through the audience, positioning herself on the staircase stage-right, partially concealed among the crowd, she raises her pistol at NEXUS and fires.

The scene transitions into a SLOW-MOTION sequence of chaos as the gunshot fired by MANO reverberates through the space. NEXUS falls to the floor, her body crumpling as her raised fist drops lifelessly to her side.

The ENSEMBLE, now moving individually within their own space, begin to react, each embodying the panic and confusion of the moment. Though separate, their movements together create the illusion of a much larger chaos unfolding across the stage.

Some clutch their heads, stagger, or fall to their knees as though shielding themselves from invisible dangers. Others glance wildly around, reaching out to protect imaginary loved ones or calling silently for help. Their faces convey expressions of shock, grief, or defiance. Each movement is exaggerated in slow motion, amplifying the emotional weight of the scene.

As the tension builds to a crescendo, FLO moves towards the stairway downstage left, her voice piercing the air and snapping the actors out of the slow-motion chaos.

FLO

We need to move!

There's a safe house nearby - everyone, follow me!

The RESISTANCE break from their individual movements and exit via the staircase downstage left. LUMINA unable to follow exits backstage.

The RESISTANCE weaves through the audience, their escape now hurried and purposeful, as they hide in the heavens.

MANO moves downstage centre watching them run, with a focused smirk.

The WARDENS: ASTRID and RAVEN, step forward, joining MANO at centre stage.

MANO

I want every street, every alley, every shadow scoured.

From their chaos, we must forge order.

From their weakness, we must create strength.

This is the New Way

Gone are the globalists.

And their false promises of unity through open borders.

Instead they delivered only exploitation and corporate dominion.

Nations became markets.

Governments became puppets.

Elections became theatre.

And so the people cried out - desperate for a saviour.

We answered.

The Prime Order rose from the wreckage.

Find them.

RAVEN

They won't get far, Lieutenant.
We'll crush their pathetic rebellion under our boots.

ASTRID

You can rely on us.
There is no escape from The New Way.

MANO

The Supreme Engineer will accept nothing less than their complete obedience.

ASTRID

Understood.

RAVEN

We will bring them to salvation.
And, they will be brought to heel.
Or we shall leave their ashes in the streets.

The WARDENS stand in rigid formation for a moment, their cold and calculated expressions fixed, before exiting.

SCENE 4: THE SAFE HOUSE. INT.

The members of THE RESISTANCE return to the stage from their hidden positions in the heavens, moving quickly and purposefully. FLO leads the RESISTANCE, downstage centre where they climb up to the stage.

FLO

This is the safe house.
Let's get inside, quickly!

Once inside, they settle NEXUS down. Her breathing is shallow, and the wound in her body bleeds steadily. NESSIE, LUNA, and COSMA immediately get to work on her wound. NESSIE examines the injury, LUNA prepares makeshift tools, and COSMA works to comfort NEXUS.

NESSIE

The bullet's still in her.
We'll need to get it out now, or it'll only get worse.

LUNA

Sparks, find me some clean tools - anything I can use.
I can improvise from what you have in your kit.

SPARKS

On it.

SPARKS rifles through her bag, handing a pair of nose pliers to NESSIE.

COSMA

Tell me what I can do.

LUNA

Give her this.
(hands her an injection)
It will ease the pain.

COSMA gives NEXUS an injection which renders her unconscious.
LUNA begins the procedure, removing the bullet with NESSIE and COSMA's help.

LUNA

(to herself)
Steady hands.
Steady hands.

NEXUS remains unconscious as LUNA searches for the bullet.

After what feels like an eternity, NESSIE pulls the bullet out, holding it up triumphantly.

LUNA

Got it!

NESSIE

The bullet's out but the wound's already infected.

She'll need antibiotics.

COSMA

A dose of Metronide should clear the infection.

(checking her medikit)

We're all out!

NESSIE

(to the group)

We'll need to find a pharmacy.

SPARKS

Not happening.

That's too dangerous.

The streets are swarming with Wardens.

COSMA

We have to go.

We can't abandon Nexus!

SPARKS

It *ain't* happening.

You go out there and you ain't coming back!

NESSIE

If we leave her here, to die,

Then we're no better than them!

FLO

We can argue about morality later.

Right now, if we're going to complete the objectives - we *need* Nexus alive.

The group grows quiet, the weight of NEXUS's condition sinking in.

I-V steps forward, operating her pathfinder visor and projecting a faint map into the air.

I-V

I've mapped an interface of the city.

Looks like there's a pharmacy three blocks from here.

There's a route via the backroads.

It won't be easy - there'll be eyes everywhere

We need to move in a tight unit to avoid detection and keep us off their radar.

VIPER

I'll go.

I-V

We'll need someone who knows what we're looking for,

To make sure we grab the right meds.

NESSIE

I'll go.

VIPER

Everyone else stays here.

We'll be back within the hour.

LUNA steps forward, her expression hard but determined.

LUNA

We'll do what we can to keep her stable.

Be quick.

Be safe.

NESSIE

Nexus is a fighter - she'll hold.

You heard Viper, we'll be back here within the hour.

VIPER

(drawing her cipher pistol)

Let's move!

LUNA

Hey, just make sure you come back.

NESSIE and LUNA share a brief hug, before I-V, VIPER and NESSIE exit.

An unnerving silence fills the safe house.

SPARKS

(frustrated)

We're pushing our luck staying here.

It won't be long before the Wardens track us down.

And if the Wardens find us here, there won't be anyone left to save.

FLO

What choice do we have Sparks?

Shall we just leave Nexus here to die?

SPARKS

If we stay here, we might *all* die.

It's harsh, but it's the truth.

SOLAR

Without Nexus, the Resistance will fall.

SKY

And then there is no going back to how things were.

NEXUS raises her hand weakly, silencing them.

She struggles to sit up, reaching for her bag and handing it to L-E.

L-E

Hey, you're gonna be okay.

The bullets out, we're gonna get you some meds -

NEXUS

(interrupting L-E)

Take this.

See it through.

Save them.

Leave me.

L-E

Nexus.

We can't finish this without you.

We aren't going anywhere.

NEXUS

Survive.

Fight.

LUNA

Listen to me.

We're not giving up on you.

COSMA

You've risked everything for us.

We won't abandon you!

NEXUS

You're wasting time -

NEXUS coughs, a harsh, spluttering sound that shakes her whole body.

NEXUS falls unconscious again and the group falls silent, stunned by her words.

FLO

We're not wasting anything.

We're staying.

End of discussion.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 5: THE MINISTRY OF TRUTH. EXT

The stage is bathed in cold, sterile light.

The sound of a siren blares as MANO, ASTRID, and RAVEN stand at attention.

The voice of the SUPREME ENGINEER echoes throughout the space, calm yet chilling.

SUPREME ENGINEER V.O

Attention, all members of The Prime Order.

Operation Proles has been activated.

All units proceed with mission protocol.

ASTRID and RAVEN exchange confused glances.

ASTRID

Operation Proles?

RAVEN

I've never heard of it.

MANO

Of course, you haven't.

It was above your clearance.

The mission is now declassified and in action.

MANO steps forward, looking outward to the audience.

MANO

Operation Proles is a simple, yet brilliant idea.

All citizens under the age of 18 are currently being rounded up to be sent to training camps.

ASTRID

Training camps?

MANO

Yes, where they'll have the opportunity to learn to be better-functioning members of society.

Discipline, order, obedience.

All values of The New Way.

RAVEN

Understood.

What are the orders, Lieutenant?

MANO

For now, your focus remains on eliminating The Resistance.
They are the greatest threat to our success.
Their influence must be eradicated.

MANO pauses, approaches them looking at both with a calculating gaze.

MANO

A member of The Resistance was just sighted in the eastern quarter of the city.
Find her.

MANO begins to exit the stage, before turning to make a final comment.

MANO

Complete this mission and there are promotions on the horizon for both of you.

MANO exits stage.

ASTRID and RAVEN remain, their expressions uneasy.

ASTRID

Camps, for children?
That doesn't feel right.

RAVEN

Feel?

The Supreme Engineer knows what's best.
This will secure the future of humanity.

ASTRID

Secure the future by stripping away their childhoods?
By tearing them from their families?
These camps sound like prisons - for children.

RAVEN

Freedom is a dangerous thing.
Left to our own devices, humanity only destroys itself.
You know that.

ASTRID glances away, as though hiding her thoughts.

ASTRID

And what about the books?

They're burning everything that doesn't align with The New Way.

The Ministry of Truth is... rewriting history.

RAVEN

Books are dangerous.

They sow division and chaos.

(firmly)

The Supreme Engineer does not make mistakes.

And, it's not our *place* to question.

We enforce the will of The Order.

That *is* our duty.

RAVEN steps closer to ASTRID, studying her closely, her tone sharpening slightly.

RAVEN

You seem... unsure?

ASTRID

We have our orders.

Let's focus on executing the mission.

ASTRID makes firm eye contact before exiting.

RAVEN stands a moment, watching her go, before following after her.

SCENE 6: PHARMACY. NIGHT.

LUMINA sits centre stage, engrossed in '1984', flipping through its pages with eager anticipation. The silence is interrupted by faint footsteps approaching from the stairs downstage right. **I-V** leads **NESSIE** and **VIPER** into view, their movements cautious, whispering to avoid detection.

I-V

This is it - the pharmacy.

VIPER

That took longer than expected.

We need to move fast!

I-V kneels by the door and begins working on the lock.

LUMINA hears the noise, her body tensing, she quickly hides upstage.

I-V

Got it!

I-V, NESSIE and VIPER enter.

VIPER

Keep quiet.

Grab what we need and let's get back to the others.

I-V, NESSIE and VIPER fan out cautiously to search the space.

VIPER freezes, her body alert. She gestures silently to the others to stay quiet, her hand instinctively moving to her weapon.

VIPER

I know you're there.

Come out with your hands up.

LUMINA hesitantly steps into the faint light, hands raised.

The group stares at her in stunned silence for a moment before recognition sets in.

I-V

Lumina!

VIPER

You're alive?

I-V

What happened?

Why didn't you come with us?

LUMINA lowers her hands and approaches cautiously, her voice low and trembling.

LUMINA

When the gunshot rang out during the protest, the crowd surged,

And I lost you all in the chaos.

I tried to push through, but the crush of bodies forced me back.

I saw Nexus go down and I knew she'd need Metronide.

A Warden nearly caught me - I had no choice but to retreat.

So I ran, slipping through alleys, dodging patrols, until I was clear.

That's when I found this pharmacy.

I broke in, grabbed what I could.

I've been hiding here ever since, waiting for the cover of darkness.

NESSIE

You've been here this whole time?

LUMINA

I didn't have a choice.

There are patrols of wardens everywhere.

Is Nexus okay?

NESSIE

She's stable.

We got the bullet out, but she has an infection that's spreading fast.

That's why we're here.

Did you find any metronide?

LUMINA

The looters had already been, they took everything.

(holding up the vial of metronide)

But I did manage to find some.

I-V

Well done Lumina.

Okay, let's re-up on supplies and head back to the safehouse.

As the group begins to gather supplies, voices are heard offstage from the staircase downstage right. ASTRID and RAVEN enter, standing at the doorway. The group quickly hides.

ASTRID

The recon said a member of The Resistance was spotted in this block.

RAVEN

She won't have gone far.

I'll sweep next door.

You search this building.

RAVEN exits.

ASTRID kneels and scans the space by the doorway.

ASTRID

Someone's been here.

ASTRID steps into the pharmacy cautiously, her pistol drawn, noticing LUMINA's book centrestage, she pauses, inspecting the book.

VIPER emerges from her hiding spot, her cipher pistol aimed directly at ASTRID. The two freeze, guns locked on each other in perfect symmetry.

VIPER

Move and I *promise* I'll shoot!

NESSIE

Do it, Viper!

She's one of them!

I-V

If you shoot, every Warden in the block will swarm this place!

ASTRID eyes the cipher pistol in VIPER's hand and narrows her gaze.

ASTRID

Where did you get that cipher-pistol from?

Those are only issued to Wardens.

VIPER

I am - I was a Warden.

Until I realised the regime doesn't want to save humanity - it wants to destroy it.

The New Way is a lie.

And, once their systems are fully implemented, there'll be no way back.

No freedom. Just control.

ASTRID lowers her weapon slightly, her expression conflicted.

ASTRID

You're not wrong - I've seen what they're doing.
Teen Camps...

LUMINA

So they're not just rumours!
They're actually taking children from their parents.
And you're okay with that?

ASTRID

No, I'm not okay with it.
I want it to stop!
I want to help The Resistance.

VIPER keeps her gun raised, still wary.

NESSIE

Help?!
How do we know we can trust you?

ASTRID

What other choice do you have right now?

Before the group can respond, RAVEN's voice echoes from the staircase.

ASTRID gestures for the group to hide and quickly steps toward the doorway to meet RAVEN.

RAVEN

Astrid!
Astrid!
What took you so long?

ASTRID

Looters have been here.
Looks like they stole a few things and ran off.
The place is deserted now.

RAVEN eyes her suspiciously but doesn't push further.

RAVEN

Fine.

Let's get back to HQ.

ASTRID

Look, my flat is a couple blocks from here.

And, I need to grab a few things.

I'll meet you back at HQ.

Can you cover for me?

RAVEN nods and exits.

ASTRID hesitates for a moment watching her leave, before returning to the group, who emerge from their hiding spots once more.

VIPER

We need to leave - now.

It's too dangerous to stay here any longer.

I-V

Do we have what we need?

NESSIE nods.

The group begin to make their exit, stopping at the doorway as ASTRID speaks.

ASTRID

Let me come with you?

(pause)

I can help.

I-V

That's a gamble we can't afford right now.

VIPER

She could've just turned us in - if she wanted to.

NESSIE

(cutting in)

She's a Warden!

Do you think they just forget where their loyalties lie?

NESSIE moves to face ASTRID, accusing her.

NESSIE

You took an oath, didn't you?

You swore to uphold 'The New Way' - to keep people like us in check.

You say you want to help now, but when they come for us - which they will.

What then?

(to the others, firmer)

She'll choose them.

We can't risk it.

She's a Warden.

VIPER

Nessie, I was a Warden - remember!

I think she can help.

After a tense moment, the group nods reluctantly.

VIPER

(to Astrid)

You'll need to lose your tracking chip.

VIPER pulls out her blade and cuts a chip from behind her ear and dashes it in the floor, stamping on it to ensure it is broken. The group exit together, via the staircase stage-right.

As they leave, RAVEN re-enters from the shadows upstage, flanked by MANO and NOVA.

MANO

Commander, they'll lead us straight to Nexus.

RAVEN

And when they do, she'll be neutralised.

NOVA steps forward, glaring out at the audience with a cold, menacing expression.

NOVA

These defectors must be made an example of.

The lights dim as MANO and RAVEN exit cautiously, following the Resistance's path.

NOVA remains, staring hauntingly into the audience as the scene fades to black.

SCENE 7: THE SAFE HOUSE. INT.

NEXUS lies unconscious centre stage. The members of **THE RESISTANCE** are scattered around the stage, bored and visibly tense, as they wait for the others to return.

SPARKS restlessly paces, her movements sharp and agitated.

The rest sit quietly, lost in their thoughts.

Finally, **SPARKS** breaks the silence.

SPARKS

They've been gone too long.

We should've gone after them.

FLO

They'll be back.

SPARKS

Maybe they ain't coming back.

Maybe we should be finding a way *out* of the city.

FLO

They've barricaded us in.

There is no way out of the city.

SPARKS

There's always a way.

FLO

And what if we run into a patrol?

Tell me, what then, Sparks?

(firm)

They'll be back.

COSMA

Well, they'd better hurry.

If we lose Nexus, then this will all have been for nothing.

The Resistance will fall.

The Prime Order will crush what's left of us,

And they'll rewrite history to make sure no one even remembers we tried to fight back.

L-E

(firm)

The pharmacy's three blocks away.

We said we would wait.

So, we wait.

LUNA

It's the waiting that gets to you.

It makes you think - too much.

About every little thing.

About what could go wrong.

About what's already gone wrong.

The group falls into a brief silence, the tension thick.

FLO finally leans forward, speaking quietly but with weight.

FLO

I sometimes wonder how we got here.

I remember how things used to be.

Before The Prime Order.

L-E

You mean before they decided we were all just numbers?

Ones and zeroes living in their system.

Beneath their tyranny.

COSMA

This doesn't feel like living.

It's...existing.

LUNA

Before, we had the right to speak our minds without fear of retribution.

The freedom to choose our own paths.

We took these things for granted.

L-E

It wasn't just freedom.

It was the community.

People looking out for one another.

Now?

Now, we're given our rations.

Told to stay inside and called "efficient" if we don't ask questions.

SPARKS

They *want* us to forget.

To forget what it was like to actually *live*.

SOLAR

What was it really like?

I mean... you talk about freedom, but we've never known it.

SKY

I can't even imagine what I would do with all those choices!

FLO

Imagine being able to walk outside, anywhere you wanted.

Being able to say what you think and believe, without being arrested.

Being able to eat whatever you want to eat.

COSMA

And, not those bland, processed calorie packets.

Real food.

Food you could actually taste.

Food with texture, with flavour.

(pauses, almost wistful)

I miss *real* chocolate.

SKY

(curiously)

What did *real* chocolate taste like?

SOLAR

I've heard of it.

Never tried it, though.

What's the big deal?

L-E

Trust me, it's worth the fuss.

FLO

It's... an experience.

FLO moves closer to SOLAR and SKY to tell the story better.

FLO

Real chocolate *melted* on your tongue.
Imagine something so good.
So good you never want to stop eating it.
And, the more you eat, the better it gets.
And even when it makes you feel sick, you think, "Well, it was worth it."
And even after that, you'd still want more.
That's *real* chocolate.

SOLAR and SKY

(amazed)

Wooooaaahhhhh...

SPARKS

And now?
It's gone.
Like everything else.
The Prime Order took it from us.

SOLAR

I wish I could try real chocolate.
Even just once.

LUNA

It's not just the chocolate.
Every bit of farmland and every harvest - confiscated for "efficiency."
Mostly, I miss fruit - especially strawberries.

SKY

I thought strawberries were extinct.

LUNA

They are now.

LUNA pauses, her voice soft, her gaze drifting as though lost in a memory.

LUNA

I remember Mum, Dad, Nessie, and I...
We used to spend whole afternoons picking berries.
There was this little farm not far from where we lived.

LUNA moves downstage looking out to the audience, picturing the farm in her imagination.

LUNA

There were rows and rows of green leaves,
The sun shining down, and the smell of the earth, warm and alive.
Nessie and I would race to see who could fill their basket the fastest.
But Nessie always cheated -
She'd sneak strawberries from my basket and pretend she was winning.

(pausing to remember)

We'd take our baskets home and Mum would bake pies.
She used to say strawberries tasted like happiness.
And she wasn't wrong.
They were soft, sweet, and bright... just like those days.

(voice falters slightly, the warmth of her memory giving way to the weight of the present.)

But that feels like a lifetime ago.
A world away.
I never realised how fragile it all was.
The worst part is - I can't even picture it clearly anymore.

SPARKS

That's because *that* world doesn't *exist* anymore.
It is a distant dream that's slipped out of our reach.
The Prime Order is not going to stop until they've taken everything.

FLO

What's left to take?

L-E

The future - they want that too.
But we're standing in their way.
And as long as we're still here - they haven't won yet.

The group falls silent again, the weight of all their shared words sinking in.

The tension lingers a moment before the members I-V, NESSIE, VIPER, LUMINA, and ASTRID enter. The group immediately springs to their feet, rushing forward with relief and surprise.

SPARKS

About time!
We thought you weren't coming back!

COSMA

Lumina?!
You're okay!

L-E

We're so glad you're safe.

LUNA

(to Nessie)

I knew you'd make it!

The group embraces LUMINA, but their warm reunion falters when their attention shifts to ASTRID standing awkwardly at the back. The mood immediately changes, and the air becomes tense.

FLO

(pointing at Astrid)

What is *she* doing here?

SPARKS

You brought a Warden to our safe house?

Have you lost your mind?

NESSIE

It's not like that -

FLO

(Interrupting)

Not like that?

She's one of them!

VIPER

She helped us.

Back at the pharmacy, she could've turned us in but she didn't.

I-V

She had every chance to call in reinforcements,

But instead, she helped us escape.

L-E

(skeptical)

And you trust her?

Just like that?

LUMINA

She's made a choice!

A choice to help, when it could cost her everything.

VIPER

The same choice I made when I joined The Resistance.

NEXUS coughs violently, her breath ragged and sputtering.

COSMA

(urgent)

Did you get the Metronide?

NESSIE

Here.

NESSIE hands the vial of Metronide to LUNA, who kneels by NEXUS and prepares the injection. The group grows quiet, watching as NEXUS stirs weakly.

NEXUS

(waking)

What's happening?

LUNA

You're safe.

This will help.

LUNA administers the injection with care.

NEXUS relaxes slightly, her breathing steadying.

COSMA

Lumina - what happened to you out there?

When you didn't come with us,

I thought... I feared the worst.

LUMINA

I saw things out there - things I can't unsee.

Streets in chaos.

It's not just fear - it's a frenzy.

Like the world's already gone, and they're just picking at the bones.

We need Nexus to be okay.

NESSIE

The infection will clear, but she needs time to recover.

Before the group can fully process what's happened, loud sirens blare suddenly, filling the theatre with a deafening wail. Red and blue lights flash across the stage as the group freezes in fear. MANO and RAVEN appear on opposite staircases, flanking the space.

MANO

We know you are inside!

By decree of The Prime Order.

Surrender and lay down your weapons immediately.

RAVEN

Rebels, we have you surrounded.

You have no choice!

The group erupts into panic, talking over one another as the siren continues to wail.

I-V

They followed us!

L-E

They followed her!

SPARKS

I told you bringing her here was stupid!

SOLAR

We're trapped!

SKY

What are we going to do?

VIPER

Everyone calm down!

ASTRID steps forward suddenly, her voice firm and commanding.

ASTRID

Listen to me - I know this area well and I can get us out of here.

There's a route through the sewers.

But we need to move now.

The group hesitates for a moment.

COSMA

Can we trust her?

VIPER

She knows the city better than we do.

FLO

She's our only chance.

VIPER

Then, we don't have a choice.

Let's move!

ASTRID gestures toward a hidden exit near the back of the stage. The group quickly moves to exit, supporting NEXUS as best they can. The tension is electric as they prepare to leave.

MANO and RAVEN meet centre stage.

RAVEN

They're heading into the sewers.

Shall we follow?

MANO

Negative.

Let us not dirty our boots.

(speaking into her radio)

Activate the full swarm of sentinels.

The lights fade as MANO and RAVEN are stood in symmetry centre stage.

SCENE 8: UNDERGROUND TUNNELS. INT.

The stage is dimly lit, pulsating with flashes of deep red and cold blue.
A haunting instrumental begins - slow, rhythmic, building in intensity.

The RESISTANCE emerges from the staircase downstage right, their movements cautious, eyes scanning every corner as they step into the room. Without hesitation, they seamlessly flow into a pyramid formation at centre stage.

The ENSEMBLE moves as one in chorus, shifting between frozen images, embodying the play's core themes and defining moments.

March of the Oppressors

The ensemble stands rigid, backs straight, faces blank - bodies locked in formation like soldiers under The Prime Order. A sharp, synchronized salute.

Numbering of the People

The ensemble drops to their knees, hands raised as if surrendering. Some try to resist, but their attempts are frozen mid-motion, their individuality stripped away.

Control and Submission

A sudden shift - some characters grasp their own throats as if being choked, others reach out as if restrained by invisible chains. Their bodies strain against an unseen force, struggling but unable to break free, before slowly falling into uniform stillness.

Sentinels Swarm

A sudden jolt - one member of the RESISTANCE slaps at their arm, then another shakes off unseen creatures. Panic spreads, as they claw, stomp, and thrash, trying to shake free the sentinel spiders.

Escape

The ensemble leans forward in unison, arms pumping in slow motion as if sprinting through resistance. Some look over their shoulders, others stumble and recover. The movement intensifies, creating the illusion of running while remaining locked in formation.

Rebellion Rises

A slow-motion wave ripples through the group as they come to stand and their fists rise into the air - silent defiance.

SCENE 9: CITY SERVER HUB. INT. NIGHT

The music fades, leaving only the cold, mechanical hum of a server room.

NEXUS enters alone, kneels and instructs the others to enter once she has assessed the space is secure. **THE RESISTANCE** enters the space, kneeling and keeping out of sight.

NEXUS

This is it - the city's main server hub.

The heart of their entire system.

L-E steps forward looking at the lines of code displayed across a giant screen.

L-E

Look at this place - their system.

This is where they shape our lives.

We're nothing more than lines of code!

NEXUS places a hard drive in **SOLAR's** hands.

NEXUS

Everything we've fought for.

Everything we've sacrificed -

It all comes down to this.

(urgent but firm)

Upload this code to their server.

Let the truth tear through their network like wildfire.

SOLAR and **SKY** exchange a nervous glance before nodding, immediately getting to work. They crouch low, half-hidden in the corner, fingers over the keyboard as they begin their task.

I-V

I say we burn this place to the ground.

No more running.

Let's end this now.

The **WARDENS** - **NOVA**, **MANO**, and **RAVEN** - enter the space, weapons raised.

NOVA

Now, now... that wouldn't be very polite.

And I do hate bad manners.

MANO

All of you.

On your knees.

**The RESISTANCE freezes as MANO steps forward, weapon raised.
In the shadows, SOLAR and SKY keep working, unseen.**

MANO

I said on your knees.

**One by one, the RESISTANCE members sink to their knees, forming a line.
NOVA approaches NEXUS, her face twisted in amusement.**

NOVA

Nexus - Leader of the Resistance.

Reduced to a trembling, broken body.

Pathetic

(She leans in)

You think that wound hurts?

You have no idea how much pain is coming your way.

**NOVA stands and strides down the line, eyes scanning coldly.
She stops at SPARKS, pointing a finger.**

NOVA

This one.

**RAVEN yanks SPARKS up by the hair and drags her forward.
NOVA studies her, before drawing her pistol and raising it to SPARKS' head.
SPARKS doesn't flinch.**

SPARKS

Your scum!

Do it already!

**The group tenses, ready for the worst, but then NOVA hesitates.
A slow, unsettling smirk forms on her lips as she lowers the gun slightly.**

NOVA

Bring me the defector.

MANO shoves ASTRID forward.

NOVA

You are a disgrace to The Order.

(slowly extends the pistol toward ASTRID - grip first.)

But, I offer you a chance for redemption?

Prove your loyalty.

Kill her.

The group gasps. SPARKS' jaw clenches, her hands forming fists at her sides.

ASTRID takes the weapon, her hands trembling slightly as she raises it.

The room holds its breath.

SPARKS nods. ASTRID breathes heavily, her finger tightening on the trigger, about to pull it - but then she whips the gun toward NOVA instead.

ASTRID

Drop your weapons!

All of you!

Now!

MANO and RAVEN stiffen, their grips tightening on their guns.

NOVA, however, does not react. Instead, she smiles - calm, unshaken, and utterly in control.

NOVA

You didn't think I'd give *you* a loaded gun, did you?

A chilling pause. ASTRID pulls the trigger. Nothing.

The ENSEMBLE freezes, horror etched across their faces.

In the dim corner, SOLAR and SKY remain crouched, their faces lit by the flickering screens as distorted code floods the system. They exchange a final glance, adrenaline surging.

SOLAR

We're In.

SKY

Ready?

SOLAR

Ready!

SOLAR slams the key. A beat of silence - then, the entire server room erupts. Alarms blare, red emergency lights strobe, and a shrill mechanical scream of 'system failure' echoes.

SKY

We actually did it!

The code... it's not just breaking the system -

SOLAR

It's deleting it!

The alarms grow deafening, but among the chaos, something shifts.

The **RESISTANCE** members, though surrounded, though doomed, begin to smile.

One by one, each character steps forward, their faces illuminated by the failing red lights.

They turn to the audience, as if speaking to history itself.

FLO

They called us traitors.

SPARKS

They tried to control us.

LUMINA

And when we didn't listen.

L-E

They tried to erase us.

LUNA

We fought for something bigger.

ASTRID

We fought for freedom.

I-V

For the ones who were too scared to fight.

COSMA

And, for the ones who never had a chance.

VIPER

We fought because someone had to.

SOLAR

And even if no one remembers our names.

SKY

They will remember what we did.

NESSIE

And they will know that we won.

NEXUS

We are Proles.

**The WARDENS lift their pistols, steady and deliberate, aiming at The RESISTANCE.
A tense pause, time suspended.**

BLACKOUT.

A single gunfire shot rings out in the darkness, followed by complete silence.

END