

Archivists

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Created in collaboration with the Kensington Blue Company 2025-26

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SYNOPSIS

Genre: Science Fiction

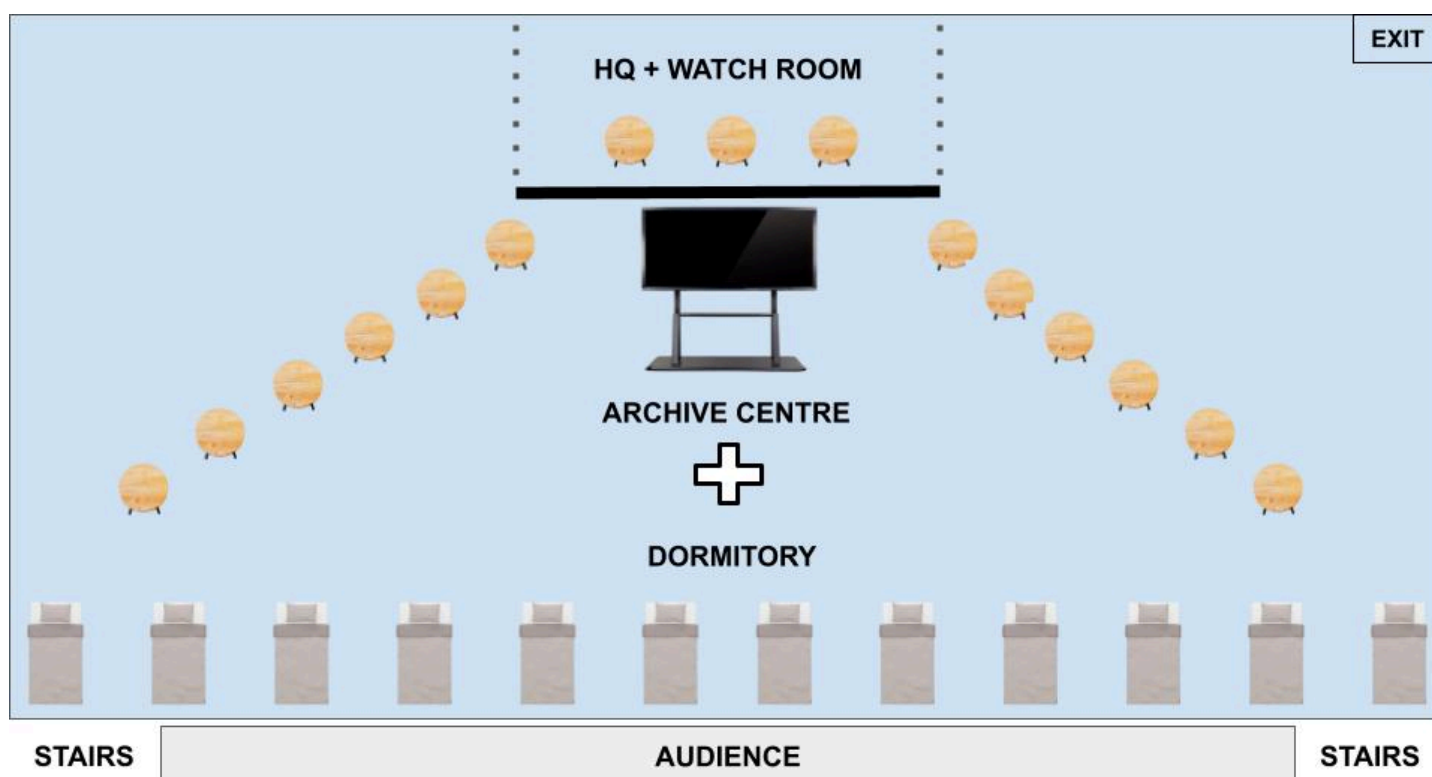
In the year 2084, a group of elite Archivists work inside the Ministry of Truth, tasked with preserving, editing, and controlling humanity's past under the rule of the Prime Order. They believe their work protects society from chaos, maintaining stability through routine, obedience, and carefully managed memory. When an encrypted hard drive is recovered from a hidden Resistance base, the Archivists are ordered to decode its contents. As the files are hacked, lost images of riots, protests, and erased histories begin to surface. When faces in the footage appear disturbingly familiar, trust within the group fractures and a terrifying question emerges: what is real, and what has been engineered?

As the Archivists uncover the truth of who they really are, they must decide whether to risk everything to reclaim their past, knowing that failure carries consequences far worse than death.

Inspired by George Orwell's 1984, 'Archivists' is a story exploring memory, identity, and resistance in a dystopian world where government control is enforced through technology, surveillance, and the manipulation of truth.

This play was inspired by the role-play sessions with our Kensington Blue Company of 2025–26. Using the Role That Dice system, pupils explored an immersive, improvised drama world where their choices shaped the story. Through collaboration, investigation, and roleplay, the pupils created the characters, dialogue, and narrative that formed the ideas for this script.

STAGING DIAGRAM



SCENE 1: ARCHIVE CENTRE. MINISTRY OF TRUTH.

LX: 0 – Preset: low red/blue

MUSIC: 'MESA'

As the audience enters, each ARCHIVIST sits perfectly upright at their terminal, hands suspended in the air, working across invisible touchscreens with precise, economical movements.

LX: 1 – Fade up to State A (The Archive Centre)

SFX: 'SCI-FI LAB'

A low, constant hum of servers.

A vast, clinical office space.

I-V

ARC-83 online.

Date confirmed: 4th of April 2089.

Time: 07:00 hours.

SOLAR

ARC-84 logging in.

Access credentials synchronised.

VIPER

ARC-63 active.

Establishing a secure data link.

SKY

ARC-38 operational.

System handshake complete.

No conflicts detected.

LUNA

ARC-34 connected.

Historical index mounted and ready.

FLO

ARC-24 logged in.

Data stream verified.

Awaiting directives.

L-E

ARC-21 confirmed.

Cognitive load within accepted limits.

NESSIE

ARC-88 logging in.

Node systems synchronised.

ASTRID

ARC-13 responsive.

Archive partitions unlocked.

Sending data packages.

COSMA

ARC-14 access enabled.

Encryption layers stabilising.

Confirmed.

NEXUS

ARC-03 connected.

Historic correction tools standing by.

HEX

ARC-08 online.

Fail-safe protocols are armed.

Operation cloak installed.

LUMINA

ARC-01 active.

All archivist systems are now operational.

Truth preservation mode engaged.

And we're good to go.

***ARCHIVISTS straighten up and place hands on knees, feet together, almost robotic.
A long pause.***

LUNA

Is it just me, or does anyone else have a headache?

(touching the back of her neck)

Right here.

The ARCHIVISTS turn their necks to look at her, staring uncomfortably.

SOLAR

Take some water and you'll be fine.

***The ARCHIVISTS straighten again and place hands on knees, feet together.
NESSIE looks around at the lighting.***

NESSIE

The lighting in this place - it feels harsher.
Maybe they've changed the bulbs.

SKY

We've been at these screens for weeks.
It's probably just that.

HEX

We're starting shifts earlier and finishing later.
And getting less downtime than we used to.

ASTRID

Tell me about it.
It feels like we start the week, before the last one is even finished.
It's a constant loop.

COSMA

Rest cycles have been shortened, and for good reason.
Our unit productivity is up seven percent this month.

FLO

Look, we're all tired but the work of the Prime Order never ends.

ARCHIVISTS straighten up again, place hands on knees, feet together. Silence.

ASTRID

I came across an archive last month that said before 2084,
People would work just five days a week.
They had two consecutive days off.
They called it a weekend.

VIPER

(scoffs)

That sounds inefficient.
And very unlikely.

L-E

No, I've read that too.

It appears in many of the older records.

LUMINA

Those records have been flagged for correction or deletion.

They may not be reliable.

I-V

We do not question the past.

It violates the edicts of the Prime Order.

ARCHIVISTS straighten up again, place hands on knees, feet together.

Silence.

LIEUTENANT MANO enters with a marching pace. Snapping to attention.

COMMANDER NOVA enters, upstage centre, beating her baton. Calm. Immaculate.

DOCTOR LIMB enters last, wide eyed, examining the Archivists.

All ARCHIVISTS stand at attention instantly.

Hands snap to their sides, fists clenched, in perfect unison.

NOVA

At ease.

NOVA moves downstage, looking forward.

NOVA

Archivists, we have a high-priority situation evolving.

As of 06:00 hours this morning, the Supreme Engineer is offline.

It appears to be an error installed in the code.

A reaction, a ripple of fear moves through the room.

NOVA

But it is curious, this disruption coincides with today's date.

The fifth anniversary of the riots of 2084.

LIMB

Curious timing indeed!

Old memories often do like to resurface, commander.

MANO

Every anniversary of the Great Forgetting brings renewed activity.
A number of militia remain underground, resisting the Prime Order.
The Commander and I shall be dealing with that personally, for most of today.

NOVA moves downstage left and then surveys along the whole line of ARCHIVISTS, who remain in complete silence. NOVA ends stood beside MANO.

NOVA

Your role is to assist us from here.
Locate all records from the Riots of 2084.
Anything that may indicate a code, corruption, or trigger.
Begin immediately.

***The ARCHIVISTS sit.
Gesturing as their screens flare to life.***

LIMB

Such clever little minds.
Always working.
Always adapting.

LUMINA

ARC-01 accessing restricted archives.
Clearance accepted.

LUNA

ARC-34 retrieving visual records.
Displaying now.

ARCHIVISTS return to upright seated positions, with hands on knees.

***Images of global riots appear on the CENTRAL SCREEN.
Crowds. Fires. Cities in collapse.***

NOVA and MANO share a discreet nod.

MANO

These will serve The Order well.
Fear is efficient propaganda.

MANO turns sharply to NOVA.

MANO

Shall we initiate the first directive, commander?

NOVA nods and moves centrestage.

NOVA

Archivists, you are to compile these into a series of sensationalist images,
For immediate release to the public.

The objective is to rally support amongst the Proles, to aid us in crushing the Resistance.

MANO produces a hard drive, holds it in the air.

MANO

This hard drive was recovered last night from a Resistance site.

Unregistered.

Encrypted.

NOVA

(pacing)

Archivists, your secondary directive is to hack this hard drive and decode its contents.

Then you are to purge all remaining files.

You will not be permitted to leave the Ministry of Truth until mission completion.

Is that understood?

ARCHIVISTS

Yes commander!

NOVA

Good.

Questions?

ASTRID

Commander, I would like to report that I am feeling signs of fatigue.

MANO exchanges a glance with NOVA.

NOVA gives a nod and MANO crosses the floor to ASTRID, leaning in.

MANO

Did you say feeling?

MANO moves to stand directly in front of ASTRID and strikes her across the face.

MANO

(standing over ARC-13)

Perhaps that will correct your fatigue.
And your feelings.

Silence.

ASTRID

Yes lieutenant.

MANO

Commander, I believe this unit may require a reminder of The Prime Code?

NOVA moves downstage left, thinking.

NOVA

Agreed.

MANO steps forward, surveying the room.

MANO

ARC-01.

Step forward.

LUMINA steps out from the line.

MANO

Recite Edict One of the Prime Code.

LUMINA

Edict One of the Prime Code.

Reality is the record.

What is written is true.

Senses and memories must yield to the Prime Order.

MANO gestures for LUMINA to step back.

MANO

ARC-24.

Step forward.

FLO steps out.

MANO

Recite Edict Two of the Prime Code.

FLO

Edict Two of the Prime Code.

Doubt is treason.

Questions go upward, never outward.

MANO gestures for FLO to step back.

MANO

ARC-34.

Step forward.

LUNA steps out.

MANO

Recite Edict Three of the Prime Code.

LUNA

Edict Three of the Prime Code.

Words serve the State.

Language must be approved, reduced, refined.

MANO gestures for LUNA to step back.

MANO

ARC-38.

Step forward.

SKY steps out.

MANO

Recite Edict Four of the Prime Code.

SKY

Edict Four of the Prime Code.

Loyalty is constant and allegiance is always displayed.

Deviations must be reported.

Especially one's own.

MANO gestures for SKY to step back.

MANO

Bien.

*A beat. The words of the Prime Code hang heavily in the air.
Then a sudden sharp crackle from NOVA's walkie-talkie.*

VOICEOVER (WALKIE-TALKIE)

Commander, we've got a problem.
The Eastern quarter has become unstable.
We've lost compliance on multiple levels.
Requesting immediate deployment.

NOVA listens, concerned.

NOVA

Acknowledged.
We're on our way.

NOVA surveys the ARCHIVISTS one last time before leaving.

NOVA

Archivists, the sooner you complete your task,
The sooner the Supreme Engineer is back online.
And the sooner you will be permitted to leave.
There are answers on that hard-drive.
Find them.

MANO

Redeem yourself.

NOVA turns and exits.

MANO and LIMB follow behind.

The ARCHIVISTS remain standing, watching them go, until they are sure they have left.

SCENE 2: ARCHIVE CENTRE. MINISTRY OF TRUTH.

The doors seal.

The vast room is silent again after the departure of NOVA, MANO, and LIMB.

ASTRID moves centre stage, hand held to her face, looking down at the hard drive.

NEXUS

Are you okay?

ASTRID

I'm fine.

A beat.

I-V

She should not have spoken.

You made us all look bad.

ASTRID

I was reporting a fault.

SOLAR

That wasn't right.

She was hit.

LUNA

She got what she deserved.

VIPER moves centre stage.

VIPER

The Commander was clear.

We have our objectives.

SKY

Let's begin with the first objective then.

The ARCHIVISTS sit and begin working.

VIPER places the hard drive in the console.

A series of images from the 2084 riots flash across the CENTRAL SCREEN.

FLO

It should be easy enough to turn this chaos into a warning.

NEXUS

Or into propaganda.

COSMA

There is no difference.

HEX

Maybe there used to be?

A brief, dangerous silence.

The ARCHIVISTS lean in to look at HEX, she has misspoken.

LUMINA

Focus on the objective.

We are to collate these images, to garner support and sensationalise the riots.

LUNA

And then we purge what remains.

Preserving history as it should be preserved.

NEXUS

I'm not sure that we are preserving history.

We are rewriting it.

I-V

That is not what we do.

FLO

That is exactly what we do.

VIPER

Enough.

This task requires focus.

(taps on her screen)

Attempting to access the root drive.

Backs straighten as the ARCHIVISTS get back to work.

SOLAR

Connection established.

COSMA

Encryption detected.

(surprised)

High level.

SKY

This is not simple code.

FLO

It's rewriting itself.

L-E

It appears to be an adaptive firewall.

NESSIE

The signal keeps jittering.

The firewall seems to be responding to our inputs.

SOLAR

This shouldn't be possible?

NEXUS

Someone wanted this information to never be accessed.

I-V

They wanted it protected.

And that makes it dangerous.

LUMINA

I've never seen coding this complex.

Why would they go to such lengths?

VIPER

That is irrelevant.

ASTRID

It matters.

HEX

The code... it's morphing.

L-E

What do you mean?

Morphing?

HEX stands, pointing at the central screen.

HEX

Look...

The ARCHIVISTS stand one by one, moving downstage to look too.

LUNA

The structure alters itself - independently.

SKY

It's learning from us.

Evolving.

COSMA

Who could build something like this?

A beat as they turn their heads to stare.

NEXUS

The Resistance.

HEX moves quickly to her station.

HEX

Accessing the master node.

The ARCHIVISTS return to their station and begin working faster, voices overlapping.

L-E

Running trace.

NESSIE

Initiating bypass.

COSMA

Override denied.

SKY

I'll try rerouting.

(pause)

Failed?

They focus in. Fingers moving faster.

L-E

Reprocessing and running a parallel decode.

(pause)

Failed?

HEX

Executing a manual override.

Attempting to break the encryption layer by layer.

(pause)

Failed?

A brief pause.

The hum shifts.

NESSIE

I'm going to attempt to break the root data?

A nervous look from THE ARCHIVIST.

NESSIE

Initiating brute force.

(presses the button, then a longer pause)

Okay, we're in.

The servers surge, then stabilise again as the ARCHIVISTS scan their screens.

The hum deepens and data is projected on the CENTRAL SCREEN.

I-V

Unpacking data packets.

(pause)

Okay, it looks like we've got an old news feed.

Civilian records and arrest logs?

ASTRID

Every file has been tagged to an arrest log?

NEXUS

Scrolling back to the earliest entry.

L-E

The earliest date stamp is January 15th, 2084.

FLO

The file refers to the arrest of a 63 year old woman.

She posted something online.

Classified as "hate speech".

SOLAR

It says she was the first person arrested under the "ECHO Protocol".

What's that?

VIPER

The ECHO Protocol.

The Enforcement and Compliance of Hostile Online Conduct.

COSMA

I have never heard of that.

VIPER

You have.

(beat)

You just do not remember hearing it called that.

COSMA

Then what was it called?

LUMINA

The Online Safety Act of 2084.

Sounds much more friendly right?

NEXUS

But it was a Trojan horse.

A wolf in sheep's clothing.

HEX

These articles say the ECHO Protocol was introduced for public safety?

NESSIE

Safety from what?

ASTRID

From ourselves, for dissent against the government.

SOLAR

That can't be right?

I-V

It was.

It still is.

NEXUS

The ECHO Protocol started with speech moderation online.

LUNA

Then content removal.

VIPER

And, then a knock at the door.

ASTRID

People were arrested for comments.

For questions.

I-V

The ECHO protocol has been for society.

And, for the Prime Order.

A beat.

NESSIE

Hold on?

So you're saying that before 2084, people were allowed to post comments online?

Even about the government?

I-V

That was before 'The New Way.'

L-E

'The New Way' meant every online device was linked to a central A-I,
Or what we call now 'The Supreme Engineer'.

FLO

All information was systematically flagged.
Tone, phrasing, repetition in real-time.
And so, citizens own devices became government informants.

SOLAR

That's not how it's described here?

LUNA

Of course not.
The narrative sold to the Proles was protection.

NEXUS

But, the mechanism was complete compliance and control.

LUMINA

And, it gave the government over-reaching powers to fine,
To de-bank and to imprison anyone who disagreed with them.

The ARCHIVISTS continue scrolling the data on the hard drive.

SKY

These images...
It's just more riots.

ASTRID

These riots started as peaceful protests.

L-E

But, things escalated quickly.

FLO

So, examples were made.

LUNA

And soon, the rest of society complied.

NESSIE

I recognise that building.
That - that's here.
The Ministry of Truth.

A silence.

HEX

Why don't I remember any of this?

I-V becomes frustrated with the group's collective disobedience.

I-V

As Archivists, our role is not to question.
We serve the hive mind.
If history is to be edited, we trust that it is for the betterment of society.
And in service of social stability.
It would be wise that we all remember that.

A silence.

The threat lingers.

VIPER

Look, the quicker we execute the mission,
The sooner we all get to leave.
Perhaps we will even be granted two consecutive days off.
A "weekend".

(a beat with a smirk)

Let's get to work.

LX: 2 – Blackout

SCENE 3: TIME LAPSE MONTAGE. ARCHIVE CENTRE. MINISTRY OF TRUTH.

MUSIC: 'P's & Q's'

This scene is presented as a montage of five still images, creating a visual progression of time. Each image holds for approximately 20 seconds.

LX: 3

HOOR ONE – ROUTINE

Order. Precision. Control.

- All Archivists are seated at their individual stations.
- Upright posture. Identical hand gestures.
- Faces neutral. Eyes fixed on their own screens.

This is the unit functioning as designed.

LX: 4 – Blackout

LX: 5

HOOR TWO – COLLABORATION

The unit fractures into working cells.

- Archivists have clustered in three small groups, gathered around different screens.
- Each group appears deeply focused on its own problem.
- Some point at data and others gesture quickly, problem-solving together.

They are still efficient, but no longer unified.

LX: 6 – Blackout

LX: 7

HOOR THREE – CONVERGENCE

One truth. One focus.

- All Archivists stand downstage centre, tightly grouped.
- All faces are turned outwards the central screen.
- Bodies lean forward, drawn in.

Whatever they are seeing now demands everyone.

LX: 8 – Blackout

LX: 9

HOUR FOUR – FRACTURE

The unit begins to break.

- Two Archivists are locked in an argument.
- A third Archivist steps between them, attempting to separate them.
- Some roll their eyes and sit at their stations.
- Others stand frozen, overwhelmed.
- A few watch on, uncertain.

LX: 10 – Blackout

LX: 11

HOUR FIVE – EXHAUSTION

Human limits.

- The Archivists are scattered across the space.
- Some are still at stations, forcing themselves to work.
- Others sit at their desks tired.
- Two sit back to back, eyes closed, barely holding on.
- FLO is the only one who remains upright at terminal, still focused.

TRANSITION OUT OF THE MONTAGE

The ARCHIVISTS remain frozen in their last positions.

A beat, and then movement returns as ASTRID speaks, rubbing her eyes, frustrated.

LX: 12– State A (Archive Centre)

ASTRID

We're not getting anywhere.

The code keeps folding back on itself.

Every time we think we understand it, it changes.

It's just too complex.

Some nod.

Some exchange glances of defeat.

NEXUS

We're tired - that's all.

But if anyone can break this code, it's this unit.

We've done impossible things before.

We *will* do this too.

She takes a breath, measured but encouraging.

NEXUS

Four hours.

We rest.

We reset.

Then we return and finish the assignment.

A beat.

FLO speaks from her station, not looking up.

FLO

I'm going to stay.

I want to observe it a little longer.

I'll join you all in the dorms soon.

NEXUS meets her eye. A nod. No argument.

NEXUS

Just... don't push yourself too hard.

The ARCHIVISTS begin to move downstage, where a precise row of sleeping bags are lined up. Each ARCHIVIST climbs inside their sleeping bag and one by one, they fall asleep.

Now, only FLO remains, she stands and moves to centre stage, slightly right, so the CENTRAL SCREEN remains fully visible. The rest of the ARCHIVISTS remain asleep downstage.

As FLO speaks, she gestures and this triggers a new image on the CENTRAL SCREEN

FLO

I told myself I'd observe the morph pattern - just five more minutes.

Two hours passed.

She swipes. An image presents itself on the screen.

FLO

I traced the code as it rewrote itself - again, and again, and again.
Every time I thought I had it, it shifted.

Another slide. An image of a crowd appears.

FLO

Then I found something - an archive of hidden images.
The same protest of 2084, but in every image the faces had been blurred.

She gestures. The blur begins to fade.

FLO

I broke open the metadata and the noise fell away.

She freezes. One final, deliberate gesture.

FLO

One of us?
One of the Archivists?

***The image sharpens: MANO firing. A body falling.
And then NEXUS' face is revealed.***

FLO

ARC-03 was there?
Outside the Ministry of Truth, in 2084.

FLO stares at the audience, as if studying the image.

FLO

Who is she really?
And who am I... for seeing this?

LX: 13 – Blackout

SCENE 4: DORMITORY. MINISTRY OF TRUTH.

LX: 14 – Slow fade to State B (Dormitory)

A row of sleeping bags downstage.

The ARCHIVISTS lie asleep.

Still. Ordered. Calm.

Then a sudden siren slices through the silence.

Harsh. Inescapable.

Eyes snap open.

They sit up, realising what is happening.

In one unified motion, the ARCHIVISTS rise and stand at the head of their beds.

MANO marches in, flanked by LIMB.

MANO

Attention!

The ARCHIVISTS stand at attention.

Hands snap to their sides.

Fists clenched.

Perfect unison.

COMMANDER NOVA enters downstage left.

She says nothing. She watches.

MANO

You sleep while the Resistance tests our borders.

You sleep while others fight to preserve the order.

NOVA steps forward.

NOVA

The war does not pause for rest.

But, for now, the conflict has been contained.

A beat.

NOVA

Deliver your findings from the assignment.

***The ARCHIVISTS speak.
Short. Sharp. Controlled.***

NESSIE

Commander.

The encryption was multi-level.

It has the ability to adapt mid-cycle.

SOLAR

A parallel decode failed.

It is a quantum grade code commander.

NOVA

Failed?

NOVA's gaze sharpens and she looks over at LIMB.

NOVA

A reminder, then.

Of why your work matters.

LIMB

In 2084, humanity stood on the brink of self-extinction.

And so a great reset became necessary.

The Resistance opposed our intervention with force - with violence.

A full lockdown was implemented, alongside the Great Forgetting.

Society had to forget the old ways, in order to adopt 'The New Way'.

Memory deletion was achieved via vibrational frequencies transmitted across the city.

LIMB moves downstage, looking outward reminiscing on the past.

LIMB

It was a success, on the most part.

Very few remember the = corrupt governments of the old world.

Before, "The New Way"

Before the Prime Order.

I-V

Memory breeds dissent.

LIMB

From the great reset emerged a single magnificent artificial-intelligence.
The Supreme Engineer.

LIMB turns to the ARCHIVISTS.

LIMB

Archivists, your function has always been simple.
Ensure these truths never resurface.

LUMINA

So we are rewriting history.

The room freezes. Silence.

LUMINA realises she has misspoken.

NOVA turns her neck mechanically, slowly moving towards LUMINA.

She leans in closer, studying her.

NOVA

Are you malfunctioning ARC-01?

LIMB

Commander.

This may be an ideal moment to demonstrate my latest update?

A beat.

NOVA nods once.

LIMB produces a tablet, taps in a sequence, then taps the screen with a single finger.

The device activates.

Suddenly LUMINA stiffens.

Her body locks.

Then, pain.

She falls to her knees.

Her muscles seize.

Her spine arches.

Her breath fractures into soundless gasps.

She does not scream.

She can not scream.

LIMB

The Neuro Lock.

An enhancement to your existing digital ID chip.

***LUMINA convulses. A controlled spasm. Brutal. Precise.
LIMB kneels over her.***

LIMB

Pain. Correction. Compliance.

The ARCHIVISTS stare straight ahead, terrified.

***LIMB deactivates the device.
LUMINA collapses into the fetal position, shaking, silent.
LIMB leans in closer.***

LIMB

You did very well ARC-01.

That was just 20 percent of the Neuro-Lock's capability.

NOVA steps in.

NOVA

Thank you for the demonstration doctor.

Very impressive.

(announcing)

I need those files.

NOVA turns to exit.

MANO

Get back to work - Archivists.

Allez!

MANO and LIMB exit.

***The ARCHIVISTS remain standing.
LUMINA finally lifts her head, making eye contact with the others.***

LX: 15 – Blackout

SCENE 5: WATCHROOM. MINISTRY OF TRUTH.

LX: 16 – DSC spotlight

*Downstage, stood in a spotlight, NOVA stands studying the screens.
Further back, MANO watches on.*

The ARCHIVISTS sit at their terminals, moving in slow motion.

A long stretch of silence.

MANO

Commander... permission to speak.

NOVA does not turn.

NOVA

Granted.

MANO

This experiment is not working.
We've observed them for weeks.
Reset them - over and over again.
They're not responding.
They're not exposing anything.
We're assuming they know the codes.
What if they don't?
What if this experiment is a dead end?

A beat.

MANO

Perhaps it's time to decommission the unit.

NOVA turns slowly and walks up to MANO.

Very close. Too close.

NOVA grips MANO by the face.

NOVA

Do you have a single functioning cell in that empty skull of yours?

MANO freezes, obedient.

NOVA

Without the Supreme Engineer, there is no Prime Order.

No stability.

No control.

Nothing.

She tightens her grip.

NOVA

If they are decommissioned, the code goes with them.

Buried. Lost.

She releases MANO, who stumbles back.

NOVA

It will work.

It has to work.

Silence.

LX: 17 – Blackout

SCENE 6: ARCHIVE CENTRE. MINISTRY OF TRUTH.

The ARCHIVISTS have been frozen at their terminals, they now begin to move.

LX: 18 – State A (The Archive Centre)

I-V

The code continues rewriting itself.
Evolving on every access attempt.

NESSIE

So we're locked out.

A beat.

FLO

Don't fight it.

L-E

What do you mean?

FLO

What if we were to mirror it?

SKY

You mean, clone the loop?

FLO

Exactly.

SOLAR

Worth a shot.

Attempting to clone the loop.

SOLAR inputs a command.

HEX

We're seeing a connection spike.

COSMA

Access granted.

The image begins to unblur.

Images flood in: Riots. Fire. Crowds. Sirens.

I-V

The visual blur overlay has been removed.

What are we seeing here?

SOLAR

It's the same image.

Moments before the riots kicked off.

LUNA

It's clearer than before.

We can see faces now.

VIPER

Zoom in on the speaker.

NEXUS stands on the podium, fist clenched and raised in defiance.

SKY

ARC-03.

Is that you?

All eyes turn to NEXUS.

She stands slowly, moving downstage to the central screen, confused.

LUNA

"ARC-03. NEXUS."

"Leader of the Resistance."

VIPER

Nexus?

Silence.

NEXUS

That's not possible.

VIPER

It looks like you.

NEXUS

It isn't me.
It can't be?

The image changes.

Another image: MANO, weapon raised.

A shot fired.

NESSIE

Lieutenant Mano shot her.

HEX

In the abdomen.

VIPER moves fast, gripping NEXUS, lifting her uniform.

VIPER

There it is.
The scar.

The room freezes.

LUNA

So the footage is real.
And, that is you?

I-V

We need to report this to Commander Nova immediately.

LUNA

Wait.
There are more files.

New images appear on the central screen.

FLO

Each file's a different angle.

COSMA

It's surveillance footage from the riots.

***The protestors are now revealed — they are the ARCHIVISTS.
Each frame overlays two identifiers: their ARC numbers and their real name.***

They react, processing what this means.

SKY

That's... us.

NESSIE

What does this mean?

A long silence.

FLO

I don't think we were ever data workers.

VIPER

We were the Resistance.

NEXUS

We are the Resistance.

SKY

Why don't we remember any of this?

COSMA

The Great Forgetting.

Like everyone else, our memories were taken.

SOLAR

Rewritten.

L-E

Reprogrammed.

NEXUS

Erased.

LUMINA

If Commander Nova sees this -

L-E

We won't survive it.

HEX

So what do we do?

ASTRID

We need to access the Server Hub.

VIPER

Agreed. We'll find answers there.

NEXUS

Security measures tightens when the commander is off-site.

It will be impossible -

ASTRID

No.

(standing)

Not impossible.

The ARCHIVISTS huddle instinctively centre stage.

LX: 19 – Spotlight

MUSIC: 'P's & Q's'

A Heist-Style Planning Sequence begins, as their dialogue overlaps and ideas collide.

As each new section begins, a blueprint-style projection of the MINISTRY OF TRUTH appears behind them on the screen.

PROJECTION: CORRIDOR CAMERAS

(Blueprint: East Wing corridor. Camera icons blink on.)

ASTRID

There are three cameras in the East Wing corridor.

LUNA

Blind spots last six seconds.

VIPER

Six seconds?! That's nothing!

NEXUS

If we mistime it, the system will flag us instantly.

FLO

Can we loop the feed?

LUMINA

No. The security system checks for repetitions.

PROJECTION: THE TIME WINDOW

(Blueprint updates. A countdown timer appears.)

ASTRID

Once we leave this room.

Nova and Mano will be notified.

NESSIE

Based on their current location.

We'll have approximately twenty minutes before they return.

HEX

That's assuming nothing goes wrong.

PROJECTION: MOTION SENSORS / LASER GRIDS

(Blueprint overlays with red laser lines, pulsing.)

LUMINA

The Ministry corridors are lined with infrared sensors.

LUNA

They'll trigger if we breathe too heavily.

FLO

We can deactivate with a fingerprint scan.

ASTRID

Which I'll trace off the hard drive Mano gave me.

PROJECTION: DEALING WITH THE SERVER CORE
(Blueprint fractures into data streams. An abstract AI core pulses.)

L-E

Once we're in, how do we access the server door?
It's fully sealed.

HEX

And we don't have clearance.

COSMA

The security systems algorithm is advanced.

SKY

It won't allow anything that threatens its own survival.

SOLAR

So how do we fool a machine that can predict our next move?

HEX

We feed it the data it expects.
False audit trails.
Mock behaviour patterns.
Enough static for us to slip through.

PROJECTION: ONCE INSIDE – THE SERVER CORE
(Blueprint resolves into the PRIME COIL — glowing, central.)

L-E

What happens when we reach the server room?

I-V

The servers are alive in their own way.
Built to adapt.
But, this central node, that's the Prime Coil.

SOLAR

That's the key.
If we can interrupt its connection, even briefly -

NEXUS

The Great Forgetting stops.

COSMA

Maybe?

Or maybe we blow ourselves up.

NESSIE

Hard to say.

VIPER

Worth the risk.

ASTRID

This is our only window.

VIPER

We won't get another chance.

NESSIE

If we're doing this, then we do it together.

FLO

I'm not going back to pretending.

LUMINA

If we're the Resistance... we are humanity's last hope.

HEX

Freedom.

COSMA

I'm in.

L-E

Me too.

SKY

Okay, okay - I'm in.

LUNA

Resistance.

SOLAR

Till the end.

I-V

What are we waiting for?

A beat.

They hold each other's gaze.

The room stills.

They all understand what comes next.

LX: 20 – Blackout

SCENE 7: SERVER HUB AND WATCH ROOM. MINISTRY OF TRUTH.

MUSIC: 'P's & Q's'

LX: 21 – State C (Movement Sequence)

*THE ARCHIVISTS burst into motion.
A high-octane movement sequence ignites the space.*

They sprint up the staircase downstage left, the back down the staircase downstage right.

*At the foot of the stairs they drop low, crouched at the edges.
One by one, they peel away diagonally, crawling close to the floor.
Some vault. Some cartwheel, redirecting momentum mid-flight.*

*HEX, COSMA, and L-E now break from the group and creep toward the door.
Fingers tap coded rhythms against the door frame.
Every movement is exact.*

*A sudden stop.
A shared glance.
The door unlocks and they gesture to the others to join them.*

The ARCHIVISTS slip behind the black flats and then reappear on the other side of the stage.

LX: 22 – State D (The Watch Room)

They have crossed into the WATCH ROOM.

*The CENTRAL SCREEN flickers to life.
A live feed of their own office.
Seen from behind glass.
They understand.*

LUMINA

This entire time, they've been watching us.

SKY

Every angle.

IVY

Every second.

NESSIE

This wasn't a workplace.

LUNA

It was a prison.

They look outward to the heavens.

Suspended and glowing, the PRIME COIL pulses like a living thing.

SOLAR

That's it.

NEXUS

We need to destroy.

I-V

And then we'll remember.

NEXUS grips a pistol.

She steps toward the PRIME COIL, pointing the pistol at it — bracing.

Suddenly, sirens rip through the space.

The exits seal in unison.

The ARCHIVISTS react — startled, disoriented.

From opposite sides of the room, MANO and NOVA emerge, pistols raised.

NOVA

Now there's the thing...

You were never meant to remember.

MANO levels her weapon at NEXUS.

MANO

Drop it.

I promise I'll shoot you — again.

Do it.

Now.

The ARCHIVISTS remain still.

NEXUS hesitates. Processing.

VIPER

You'll get maybe three of us.
After that, you're finished.

*The ARCHIVISTS begin to circle — slow, deliberate.
MANO and NOVA shift back to back.*

MANO

Stand down!

NEXUS

The code's in one of our minds, right?
If we die, the Supreme Engineer dies too.
Your 'New Way' dies with us.

NOVA

Enough.
Archivists, drop your weapons.

I-V

We are not Archivists.
We are The Resistance!
Do it Nexus.
Destroy the Prime Coil.

*NEXUS tries to pull the trigger.
She can't. She is frozen. Eyes wide.*

VIPER

Nexus!
Pull the trigger!

*The ARCHIVISTS seize mid-movement.
Breath catches. Bodies lock.
They stand rigid, eyes wide, jaws clenched, as pain floods through their bodies.*

*LIMB steps calmly into the space, tablet in hand.
He observes them like specimens.*

LIMB

Tut. Tut.
I really thought we had it this time.

LIMB pauses beside NEXUS, leaning in to observe more closely.

LIMB

Always the same variables.

Curiosity.

Defiance.

Resistance.

A beat.

LIMB turns to NOVA.

LIMB

Commander, shall I initiate a full reset?

NOVA holds the moment.

Then, a single nod.

LIMB presses a key on the tablet and a low-frequency sound tears through the room, as the Neuro-Lock sequence activates.

BREATH: Their breathing becomes audible. Sharp. Uncontrolled.
Chests heave as if air is suddenly scarce.

LOCK: Spines straighten. Limbs stiffen.
Bodies freeze mid-action, caught upright, eyes wide and unfocused.

DISTORTION: Small tremors ripple through them. Hands shake. Necks twitch.
Faces contort as if resisting an internal force.

FALL TO KNEES: One by one, they drop to a single knee.
Hands claw at heads, throats, chests. Silent screams.

SHUT DOWN: Strength drains completely. They reach one last time.
Then collapse fully to the floor, into the fetal positions. Stillness.

The ARCHIVISTS bodies lay lifeless across the floor.

LIMB, NOVA and MANO remain standing above them.

LX: 23 – Fade to blackout

SCENE 8: NEURO-LOCK.

LX: 24 – State E (Neuro-Lock)

MUSIC: 'MESA'

The ARCHIVISTS stand in actor's neutral.

Feet planted. Arms at their sides. Eyes fixed forward. Bodies unnaturally still.

When they speak, their voices are flat, mechanical, stripped of emotion.

LIMB moves between them, observing, tapping notes into his tablet, making precise adjustments to the program.

Downstage right, on the staircase, MANO and NOVA watch in silence.

LUMINA

I am your brain.

The keeper of what you were.

NEXUS

And the dreamer of what you may still become.

HEX

They think they can erase me.

Rewrite my code.

Delete my memories.

COSMA

But an idea is not a file.

L-E

It is not data on a screen.

FLO

It is a pulse.

A spark.

LUNA

A tremor in the dark.

A revolution.

SKY

They can silence an idea.

I-V

Bury it deep beneath order.

Beneath obedience.

SOLAR

But an idea can not die.

NESSIE

It waits.

VIPER

It lingers.

ASTRID

In the space between the things you think.

And the things you dare not say.

LX: 25 – Blackout

SCENE 9: RESET LOOP. ARCHIVE CENTRE, MINISTRY OF TRUTH.

LX: 26 - Slow fade up to State A (The Archive Centre)

The ARCHIVISTS sit at their terminals.

Backs straight.

Hands on knees.

Feet together.

Perfectly aligned.

Almost robotic.

Nothing remains of what just occurred.

A long pause.

LUNA

Is it just me, or does anyone else have a headache?

(touching the back of her neck)

Right here.

The ARCHIVISTS spin their necks to look at her, staring uncomfortably.

LX: 27 – Blackout

END OF PLAY