

COUNTDOWN FROM INFINITY
E1: RICHARD AND ORION PARSONS, #25

Written by

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EXT. ERAT SLUMS, AFTERNOON

OVERLAY: 2116 AD, ERAT SLUM OUTSKIRTS, 10:43 AM

A wide view of futuristic metal slums, with large docked spaceships in the backdrop. Several factories churn out huge amounts of black smoke into the air. Airships fly to and fro. On the streets below, it is a scene of chaos. People clog up the streets, trying to make their way to the spaceships. One takes off. A large commotion rises. We see the people hurrying more.

INT. A METAL SHACK, AFTERNOON

A dilapidated and mostly empty metal shack. From a window, RICH (14) watches the spaceship take off. Behind him, his brother ORION (30) quickly packs items from a kitchen table into a bag. We see several more of these bags by the front door. By the door, a robot, 20743 watches silently.

ORION

Come on, Rich, we've got to hurry.
They're going to leave without us.

RICH

They're leaving already.

Orion zips up the bag and thrusts it at Rich.

ORION

All the more reason to leave right now.

RICH

You keep saying that.

ORION

Because we have to leave right now!

A chime from Orion's pocket. Orion takes a phone out of his pocket, looks at it, puts it back in.

ORION (CONT'D)

Come on. Uncle Jerry's already on one of the ships. Number 14.

Orion writes something on his hands quickly. Another spaceship takes off. It bears the large number "14" on its side.

RICH

Isn't that 14?

Orion leans out the window and looks at 14 leaving.

ORION
(to himself, quietly)
Shit.
(to Rich, referring to
bags)
You think you can handle half?

RICH
What about the robot?

Orion looks at 20743. It looks back at him.

ORION
Alright. You think you can handle a
quarter?

EXT. METAL SHACK, AFTERNOON

Rich and Orion exit the shack, each carrying a single bag. 20743 follows, carrying the rest of the bags. It struggles. Rich notices and takes a bag off it. It nods in thanks.

The crowd is already flooding past the shack. Orion spots a taxi bus in the middle of the crowd. He waves at it. The taxi driver shakes his head, points to his backseat, crammed with people.

TAXI DRIVER
Family! Sorry!

Orion digs in his pockets. He produces the phone.

ORION
For free!

The driver ponders.

INT. TAXI BUS, AFTERNOON

Orion, Rich and 20743 sit in a few seats, shoulder to shoulder with people.

Rich pokes his head out the window. Aircraft fly closely over the buildings. There's commotion on the rooftops of the buildings. A grappling hook shoots out and strikes one of the aircraft. It crashes down on another rooftop. As the bus passes by, Rich looks at people swarming over the crashed aircraft as its pilot and crew get out. The bus makes a turn. A gunshot rings out. Rich gets back in the bus.

He looks at 20743, who's been monitoring the scene as well.
Rich looks down.

RICH
Why were they flying so low?

Rich looks over at Orion, who's busy filling out two sheets
of paper.

ORION
(distracted)
What?

20743 taps Orion on the shoulder. It points out the window,
where there's several other aircraft flying high in the sky.
Some are hit by electromagnetic devices and land gently, out
of view, on rooftops.

Rich reads the papers. He counts them. Only two.

RICH
Where's the one for the bot?

ORION
We aren't bringing him.

RICH
What?

ORION
I can't explain this right now.

RICH
I think you can! Why aren't we
bringing the robot?

ORION
You just said it. He's a robot.
We're people.

RICH
Well he's a person too!

Orion looks at Rich, then at the front of the bus.

ORION
I really don't have enough time for
this right now. Come on. Bus is
about to stop.

RICH
No, Orion! Why don't we take the
bot?

The bus stops. People stand up and try to make their way off the bus. It's chaos.

TAXI DRIVER

Alright! We're at the terminal!
Everyone off!

ORION

Rich! Hold my hand! We're getting
off now!

Rich grabs Orion's hand and, after a pause, 20743's. More and more people push themselves between them.

ORION (CONT'D)

Rich! You still holding on?

Orion gets off the bus. He looks down. Rich is nowhere to be seen.

ORION (CONT'D)

Rich! Rich!

Orion tries to get the attention of people by him, but no one listens to him.

ORION (CONT'D)

Hey! Rich! Where are you?!

Suddenly, a robotic hand grabs Orion's. 20743 hoists Orion onto its back, and walks towards the terminal gates, brushing past anyone in its way.

ORION (CONT'D)

(to 20743)

Where's Rich? I lost him! Do you
have him?

The robot powers forward.

ORION (CONT'D)

I- I got his paper! He's lost
without me! Put me down! I gotta
find him!

They reach the terminal gates. A TICKETMASTER is busy letting people through. 20743 puts Orion down.

ORION (CONT'D)

(to Ticketmaster)

Have you seen a little boy, about
14, pass through here?

TICKETMASTER

Papers?

ORION

Please, I- he's my brother, I've gotta take care of him-

TICKETMASTER

You got papers?

Suddenly, 20743 thrusts a note in Orion's face. It reads: "He'll make it."

Orion looks at the note for a beat, then produces the two papers.

ORION

Yes. I've got papers. For two.

The Ticketmaster reads the papers, motions to a kid standing by Orion.

TICKETMASTER

You and him?

Orion looks at the kid. Then at 20743.

ORION

No. Me and the robot.

The Ticketmaster chuckles to himself, then stamps the papers and hands them back to Orion.

TICKETMASTER

Ship 25. Next!

20743 tightly grips Orion's hand and leads him through the crowd. The ship rises in view. It has the number 25 painted on its side, as well as the words "New Horizons".

He looks down at his hands, then the robot. They don't have any of the bags.

Orion takes one look back at the clamoring crowd by the gate, the scenes of chaos in the slums. Then he looks forward, grim resolve in his eyes.