

The Messenger

An
Original Screenplay
By
Tim Morell

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FADE IN:

Letters form on a Black Screen to the SOUND of a TELETYPE.

DATELINE - WASHINGTON:

IN RESPONSE TO GROWING ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL UNREST, THE UNITED CORPORATE COUNCIL MET IN THE CAPITOL TODAY TO ANNOUNCE THE FORMATION OF NEW, CORPORATE STATES. THOUGH ENDORSED BY THE PRESIDENT, THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MET WITH OUTRAGE BY BOTH THE HOUSE AND SENATE, WHO HAD BEEN CALLED INTO EMERGENCY SESSION....

The teletype stops abruptly and the screen goes black.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The sign reads G&M PLUMBING & HEATING. It's RAINING.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

In a shabby, top floor apartment, GIDEON DEBOSE wakes from a nightmare. Cold sweat changes to cold menace. He rises.

LIGHTNING FLASHES through the window, briefly illuminating the hard, muscular frame of a man in his late twenties.

A FREIGHT ELEVATOR -

with Gideon inside, descends slowly into

THE BASEMENT -

The furnace dominates. To one side is an overfilled coal bin. Gideon steps from the elevator, goes to the bin, and pulls it away from the wall, exposing a hole in the bricks.

He pulls out a METAL GUN CASE wrapped in canvas. He removes the cover and takes out a KEY attached to a cord around his neck. He inserts the key; the lock CLICKS open.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Gideon walks through the rain, carrying a TOOLBOX.
Across the street, a movie theater advertises *Yojimbo*.

He passes a POINT OF LIGHT MISSION where people line up, waiting for food. Nearby, a graffiti covered VIDEO KIOSK blares out its messages of consumption.

He passes a bench sign: Can't afford the things you want? just say, "charge it". It's like having money in the bank.

EXT. HIGHRISE - NIGHT

The building rises majestically into the darkness. Armed Guards patrol the perimeter. Gideon stops at

THE GATEHOUSE -

He hands an ID CARD to the Guard, and lays his palm on a photocell attached to the gate.

THE GUARD -

runs the ID through a computer terminal. An image of Gideon appears on the screen with the words, SECURITY CLEARED.

The Guard gives him the card and motions him through as the gates slide apart. Gideon crosses the concourse to the

FRONT OF THE HIGHRISE -

He slips his ID card into a slot and lays his hand on a red photocell. It turns green. He takes his card and enters.

INT. HIGHRISE - NIGHT

Two Guards flank the door. On the back wall is an enormous metal rendering of the ARMAMENTS LOGO and its legend: PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH. Directly under it is the elegantly imposing desk of the RECEPTIONIST. Gideon goes over.

RECEPTIONIST

May I help you?

GIDEON

I came to service the heating.

He hands her his ID. She clears it through a TERMINAL.

RECEPTIONIST

It's rather late, isn't it?

GIDEON

It's your heat.

He takes his card and turns to go. She reconsiders.

RECEPTIONIST

I'll give you an hour.

Turn this in when you leave.

She hands him an ACCESS CARD with a TRACER attached.

GIDEON

Right.

He goes to

THE ELEVATORS -

which are out of sight from the desk. An ORDERLY passes, pushing a SERVICE CART towards a private car.

GIDEON -

slips the access card into a slot; the elevator closest to him opens. He reaches in, pushes the button for the basement, and drops the card on the floor.

THE RECEPTIONIST -

watches the tracer's signal descend on her Security Board.

THE ORDERLY -

steps into the elevator pulling the cart in behind him. The doors are about to close when a hand forces them back.

ORDERLY

I'm sorry, this is a private car.

Gideon's focused gaze alerts the Orderly and he reaches for the alarm button. The cart is in the way.

Gideon puts his hand over the man's mouth and shoves him to the back of the car as the doors close.

INT. PENTHOUSE LOBBY - NIGHT

The elevator opens. Gideon gnaws on a chicken leg from the cart. The Orderly lies dead on the floor. Gideon takes the Orderly's Access Card and steps out.

A BRASS PLAQUE on the door reads, The Director. Gideon tosses the chicken leg and uses the access card.

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

The ARMAMENTS DIRECTOR is at his desk, talking into a VIDEO PHONE, and shaving with an electric razor. The desk fronts a picture window overlooking a terrace.

DIRECTOR #1

How did that ad go? We liked it
so much we brought the country.

He laughs. The door opens.

DIRECTOR #1

Hold on a second. Just leave
the tray on the desk.

GIDEON(OS)

I didn't bring it.

DIRECTOR #1

Who are you? What are you doing here?

GIDEON

Delivering a message.

The toolbox is suddenly a SAWED-OFF SHOTGUN. The Director ducks under a charge that destroys the back of the chair.

The second BLAST drives him against the window; the third knocks him through it. ALARMS go off.

MAN ON VIDEO PHONE

What's going on? What's happening?

Gideon blows the screen apart and drops the shotgun on the desk. He takes off his coat. A heavy caliber HANDGUN and a compact ASSAULT RIFLE are holstered beneath it.

Gideon frees the rifle. He gets TWO GRENADES and several AMMO CLIPS from the toolbox. He loads a clip, shoves the rest into his coveralls, and kicks open the doors.

SECURITY GUARDS -

rush out of the elevator. Gideon cuts them down and claims his ride. The doors close.

INSIDE THE ELEVATOR -

The indicator counts down the floors. Gideon takes a grenade and sets the timer for five seconds. He arms it on the third floor.

The elevator stops. Two seconds. The doors start to open. Gideon shoves the grenade through the crack and covers up. The doors help absorb the BLAST.

GIDEON -

steps into the carnage. Bodies lie scattered on the floor. Two Guards come at him. He fires. They join the others.

Two more Guards come from the lobby. He turns too late. Bullets bite into his leg and arm. He goes down firing. The Guards don't get a second chance.

Gideon struggles to the elevator, slips the access card in with a bloody hand, and waits.

THE RECEPTIONIST -

lies nearby, dazed and bloodied. She sees Gideon and the HANDGUN of a fallen Guard. Gideon levels the rifle at her.

She backs down. The elevator arrives. So do more Security Men. They open fire. Gideon backs into the car with the assault rifle blazing. The doors close.

GIDEON -

ejects the first clip and reaches for the second. It comes out pierced by a bullet and covered in blood. He tries to jam it in place. It won't go. He drops the rifle and draws the HANDGUN. The doors open.

INT. HIGHRISE'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

The ALARMS are blaring. Gideon steps out, sees no one.
He arms the last GRENADE and sends it up in the elevator.

SECURITY MEN -

wait for the elevator to open and rush in. The First Man sees
the grenade and tries to back out. He doesn't make it.

A UTILITY TUNNEL

Gideon keeps low to avoid the pipes. He comes to a water tight
hatch. He opens it and climbs down the shaft to

A SEWER -

The shaft ends in a platform. Thirty yards from the platform is
a ladder leading to the street.

GIDEON -

lowers himself into the water and is swept away. He fights to
keep his head up as the current drags him towards the ladder.
He's just able to grab it.

Gideon pulls himself up and rests. He begins to shake. His
grip tightens on the ladder; it shakes. His rage builds and
explodes. The SCREAM echoes through the sewer.

"TEN YEARS LATER"

EXT. STREET - DUSK

A different time and place. An Industrial city, DECORATED for
CHRISTMAS. CHRISTMAS MUSIC comes from a VIDEO KIOSK which uses
an AI GENERATED FEMALE ANNOUNCER to send out its ads.

FEMALE ANNOUNCER

Remember, in today's Corporation
opportunity is just around the
corner. If you have training in
structural, electrical, or mechanical
engineering an exciting, well-paying
career could be waiting for you.

The INDUSTRY CORPORATION LOGO appears on the screen.

FEMALE ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
Progress; Production; Prosperity;
All brought to you by Industry.
The corporation of tomorrow, today.

EXT. GARAGE - DUSK

A stylized version of the Industry logo is stamped on the garage's sign along with the words Corporation Approved.

INT. GARAGE - DUSK

SECURITY CRUISERS, modified black Police cars with Corporation logos emblazoned on the door panels, fill up the work bays.

The FOREMAN, a heavy-set man wearing an old baseball cap, oversees the work of his three mechanics. One of them, TOOLEY SHOLES, works under a particularly worn-out car.

FOREMAN
How's it look, Tooley?

TOOLEY
Not so good.

Tooley slides out on a dolly. He's a well-built man in his thirties with a strong, competent face and quiet attitude.

TOOLEY
The manifold's cracked, the
valves are shot, and the
carburetor needs to be rebuilt.

FOREMAN
Other than that, it's fine,
right? How about that trans?

TOOLEY
If I do some work on it now, I
might coax another year out of it.

FOREMAN

Forget it. Let em haul it back
to us when the thing drops out.
So that's valves and a carburetor.
What about this manifold?
We have anything?

He jots everything down on a work order.

TOOLEY

I doubt it.

FOREMAN

Run out to salvage tomorrow
and see what you can pick up.
Just remember to bill em the
price of a new one.

TOOLEY

Even if it isn't.

FOREMAN

Yeah. You got a problem with that?

TOOLEY

You're the boss.

FOREMAN

Co-operation, that's what I like.

He tosses the work order in the car.

FOREMAN

I'm outta here. You guys finish
what you're doing then knock off.
Don't forget to lock up.

He gets his coat and goes out. The other TWO MECHANICS stop
working as soon as he's gone.

MECHANIC #1

I'm finished.

MECHANIC #2

Yeah, me too.

MECHANIC #1

Hey, Tooley, we're going to
Digger's, you wanna come?

TOOLEY

I think I'll stick around awhile
and work on this trans.

MECHANIC #2

What for? You heard what he
said, he don't care.

TOOLEY

It won't take long. Maybe I'll
catch up with you later.

MECHANIC #1

We'll save ya a seat.

They go. Tooley gets a rag to wipe the oil from his hands.
Beneath his right thumb is a TATTOO of the Industry logo. He
rubs it without effect, gets some tools, and gets back under the
car.

You've just read the opening scenes of

THE MESSENGER.

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