

If I Were: Intro Cutscene v2

written by

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EXT. AN NGOAI (AHN NWAI) - BEFORE DAWN

SILKEN FOG encases the sky in a thick, impenetrable cocoon. The thin veneer of silence is soon gnarled by a single STASIS POD plummeting from GALLIA-- straight to the remnants of AN NGOAI below.

The pod sweeps...

Past the flattened buildings of the NORTH, their yellow-green rooftops embroiled with the dirge of dying embers. All while the massive GALLIAN FLAG looms above all in its wake.

Past the rotting bodies lining the CENTRAL FIELDS, their skin embroidered with shrapnel and bullets. A few straggling CHILDREN - no older than 5 or 6 - flee from MECHANICAL BEASTS, stale bread squeezed against their chests.

And past the photos littering the streets of the SOUTHERN CAPITAL - GIA VANG (ZA VANG) - as it sends ash and wanted posters of ANNGOAIAN INSURGENTS flying into the air. The pod zooms straight into the fuming, entangled network of--

INT. GIA VANG SEWERS - CONTINUOUS

-- the SEWERS below, drawing the baffled glances of DDEMONIC LICHES in their path. Before long, the pod reaches an encampment teeming with tattered tents and comes to a stop.

It WHIRS and CLICKS with machinery as it deploys its claws into the ground, held firmly in place.

The LICHES gather around the pod with incomprehensible murmurs as the pod's ENGINE hisses again. Before long...

Through the glass, we can see the cybernetic soldier LIEN (17 to 19, non-binary), sleeping, connected to tubes; unperturbed by the Liches' increasingly excitable cacophony.

Static crackles in Lien's head. First, unintelligible.

Then... as the frigid but soft-spoken voice of a woman.

 ELODIE (V.O.)
 Up to the drawl of mindless noise
 now, are you?

Lien's lashes flutter as they draw a weak, weak breath-- thin and high like a rusty cog in a dysfunctional machine.

ELODIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Hush now. You need not consume
precious energy on dull and taxing
matters beyond our required scope.

The soldier draws another breath and slowly... one agonizing millimeter at a time... forces their eyelids open.

But their eyes are HAZY and GLAZED OVER.

From within the pod's cramped steel walls, Lien watches the Liches' shadowy figures crowd against the glass window. The Liches' chatter, their pounds against the chambers, tumble into an unbearable avalanche of sounds.

And Lien flails, still restrained by the tubes.

 ELODIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
How... unexpectantly eager of you.
I did not take you to be someone
so moldable. No matter...

Again, the pod SCREECHES. As the tubs disengage with a resounding *PLOP!*, the pod gate opens with a SWELLING SEA OF WIND AND CLOUDS, concealing Lien's sole step.

One STOUT LICH pokes its head into the opened pod, expectant.

But it is empty.

It tilts its head, confused, as the other Liches swarm in...

... only for a SEARING GOLDEN LASER to blast them from overhead, detonating a large explosion!

The sheer force of the blast burns holes through the Liches caught in its path and forces the others to disperse with frantic cries. Mist and fluttering lights swirl around them.

Behind the Liches, Lien lands with a wobble, smoke wafting from the barrel of their INTRICATE CANNON. Lien shakes their head in an attempt to dispel their remaining lethargy.

 ELODIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You and I have results we must
achieve; strings we must measure
and thread. So do what it is that
needs to be done.

While Elodie is speaking, the Liches wail towards the soldier with an ear-splitting sound-- one that elicits nothing but a blank, thousand-yard stare and nod from Lien.

Lien twirls the cannon in their hand, allowing its parts to shift and unravel into the form of a MATCHLOCK. Its revolving chambers pulse with golden energy.

 ELODIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 See to the destruction of every
 Lich in the sewers.

Just like that, Lien readies their gun towards the surrounding Liches, their lips parting...

 LIEN
 Order... acknowledged.

TRANSITION TO GAMEPLAY.