

Pivot Paradox
a sci-fi pilot screenplay
by Wytemi

SERIES LOGLINE:

In a realm where dreams hold all secrets, a memory-gifted teenager with shadow dream powers joins a band of Dream Walkers to invade and profit off the dreams of the rich while evading capture by both the police and the dream god's Acolyte.

PILOT LOGLINE:

When a nobody teenager is recruited by a band of dream walkers, he must infiltrate a powerful businessman's dream, but their plan spirals into a nightmare, threatening their mission and survival.

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EXT. SKYSCRAPER

A skyscraper stands piercing alone through a space with nothing but clouds.

HINGE (O.S.)

Dream Walker: Latch! Lucid test!

LATCH (O.S.)

Copy Dream Walker: Hinge! Targeting
Trey Redding! Attempt four.

SUPER IMPOSED - *Trey Redding's Skyscraper - Dreamscape*

INT. MODERN OFFICE

Footsteps running through a business office

Sounds of FAXES, papers RUFFLING, STAPLING, keyboards
TAPPING, and phones RINGING.

HINGE(30); a muscular, black man in a t-shirt and an ONI
MASK, is running past office workers with a shotgun. Next to
him is LATCH(28); an Asian woman wearing street clothes and
Bini and the same Oni mask, is carrying an auto rifle.

HINGE

I'm sick of redoing this man's
dream. Where the hell is his
vault?!

LATCH

Stop complaining. We'll find it
eventually.

The workers pays them no mind. In fact, all of their faces
are turned away.

However, there are Swat Teams with masks marching after Hinge
and Latch.

HINGE

This didn't show up in the report!

LATCH

He's a billionaire, of course he's
gonna have access to the Swat Team
IRL.

Bullets fly over their heads. They duck.

HINGE

Latch, toss a grenade!

Latch pulls out a Pineapple from her bag. She yanks the leaves and tosses it at the Swat Team.

PING, then BANG! It explodes.

HINGE (CONT'D)
Why a pineapple?!

LATCH
This isn't my dream, I don't make
the rules.

Hinge pulls out a pocket watch. It's blank, only showing one arrow pointing to what looks like 10 till 12:00.

Swat Team march through the smoke.

HINGE
The Shades are coming through!
We're running out of time!

Latch screams and fires an entourage of bullets at the Swat.

She manages to shoot the mask off a swat team member. It has no face!

A Swat shoots Latch, her arm bleeds and she screams in pain!

Hinge grabs Latch

HINGE (CONT'D)
Run!

A bullet nearly hits Hinge in the head by millimeters

Hinge and Latch run past office cubicles. The SWAT SHADES chase them.

MODERN LOBBY

Hinge and Latch burst through office doors into a large open lobby with abnormally tall pillars rising endlessly.

They slam the door shut. Hinge checks his watch. 5 min. left!

There's an unnaturally large, distorted insignia on the floor: GOODWAYS THRIFT CHAIN.

Hinge and Latch hold their guns close. It's quiet.

At the lobby's end stands massive double gold, gaudy doors.

LATCH

How big does your ego have to be...

Behind them, a massive shadow appears from the door and extends up to Hinge and Latch's feet.

Flat, jagged eyes and a serrated mouth appears on the shadow. It's name is PARADOX, a shadow dream demon.

HINGE

What the hell is this?

A hundred Shadow spikes SHRED the office doors into a thousand shards.

A fuller flat jagged body of Paradox steps through the door. His shadow under the duo's feet subsides back to Paradox.

Hinge cocks his shot gun and starts BLASTING!

The bullets phase right through him! Paradox laughs.

PARADOX

Oh dreamer? I'm coming for you.

Hinge and Latch move closer to the gaudy doors. As they step onto the insignia, Nine masked, numbered MUSCLE GUARDS, drop from the ceiling armed with riot gear. They're surrounded.

LATCH

We found the vault.

HINGE

But who's that guy?!

Paradox marches forward with a deep bellowing laugh.

PARADOX

I just wanna talk.

It transforms it's shadowy arm into a sharp, serrated sword.

HINGE

I dunno who you are shadow, but this ain't your dream!

He fires his shotgun, but it's in vain.

LATCH

Hinge! It's a lost cause! I'm ending this!

Latch FIRES her rifle at the window. The glass shatters. Clouds fill the room.

INT. SCIENCE CLASSROOM

WYATT RHODES(16); Weird combo of Japanese and American cowboy style clothes, wakes up to MR. GLASS(40) TAPPING his desk.

MR. GLASS
BOY! Wake up!

Wyatt bursts awake, his tattered, disheveled cowboy hat falls to the floor.

WYATT
Wh-wh-TWO! Answer's two!

He holds up three fingers. The students giggle and murmur.

STUDENT 1
SLEEPY JOE!

STUDENT 2
(manically)
BOI---!

STUDENT 3
He can't be bothered to afford an alarm clock.

STUDENT 4
Or a proper wardrobe.

Wyatt sees the whiteboard full of written information.

MR. GLASS
Boy, How do you possibly hope to pass this class if you don't take any notes?

Wyatt blows into his eyeballs as Mr. Glass hands him a test.

Wyatt looks out the window and notices HINGE; a Beefcake of a man wearing a muscle shirt and a biker jacket, smuggling something in a distant ally.

WYATT
Wasn't he in my dream?

As the teacher starts wiping the information off the board, Wyatt memorizes the information.

The teacher finishes clearing the board.

MR. GLASS
Alright. Begin your test.

Wyatt quickly answers all the test answers.

He's the first done. He stands, puts on his hat, grabs his things, walks to the teacher's desk, and drops the test in front of him.

Mr. Glass reviews his test with the answer key.

MR. GLASS (CONT'D)
All the answers are right...

WYATT
It was easy.

MR. GLASS
This class isn't *easy*.
(Calls on phone)
Yes, I'd like to send a kid to the
honor office...yes... the same one.

Taunting Oos whisper among the students.

INT. HONOR OFFICE

MS. LYON(30); tall unattractive woman in an ugly tie dress. Current year Election adverts and voting flags spewed about her office.

MS. LYON
This is the 3rd time this week I've
seen you here, boy.

WYATT
I have a name, Misses Lyon...

MS. LYON
(interrupts)
As do I, and it's MISS Lyon. Your
rampant cheating is beyond
incomprehensible.

WYATT
I'm not cheating. I just remembered
the board.

COUNSELOR
No one just remembers a board full
of science formulas without a shred
of notes.

WYATT

Dunno what to tell you besides
feeling like a gazelle in the Lyons
den.

Paradox fingers quotations as he says Lyon's name.

MS. LYON

I grow tired of your mockery. Your
demeanor is deplorable...

Her rambling fades.

Wyatt stares out the window. He sees Hinge climbing a fence.

Wyatt's pocket buzzes. He pulls out a cheap flip phone, flips
it open, and finds a text:

BRAD

(text)
same as usual, right now.

WYATT

That's not ominous at all.

MRS. LYON

Boy, are you listening to me?

Wyatt stands, grabs his stuff, and storms out of the room.

MRS. LYON (CONT'D)

Hey! Get back here!

EXT. CAMPUS

Wyatt shoves through the front doors of the school. A
SECURITY GUARD chases him.

SECURITY GUARD

Hey kid! Stop!

Wyatt rushes from campus onto the...

NYC STREETS

Wyatt runs past pedestrians across the city streets.

Wyatt runs past an annoying election solicitor.

ELECTION SOLICITOR

Vote Democrat! Vote Democrat!

Wyatt shoves the solicitor.

WYATT
Out of my way!

Wyatt turns behind him and notices that no one is following him. He sighs.

Wyatt turns down a dark, eerie alleyway.

Two older gang members: BRAD(20), and CHAD(19) emerge behind him carrying firearms.

WYATT (CONT'D)
(condescending)
Brad...Chad...How's your day?

BRAD
Where's my money, punk?

WYATT
Hadn't made any yet...Brad. By the way, is your name short for Bradley, or is your mum a redneck or somethin', cause I can't think of anyone stupid enou....

Brad punches him in the face. Wyatt falls. He shakes it off and stands.

CHAD
Where's our money, punk?

WYATT
Why? Not hitting your sales quota so your bothering me about it? I thought this was a...
(gestures with hands)
Work your own pace kinda job.

Brad snickers, comes in close to Wyatt, stares at him, then slams him into the brick wall and pins him.

Brad rifles through Wyatt's pockets, tossing loose change and empty food wrappers

WYATT (CONT'D)
You know, most people ask me out first before going for dessert.

Brad pulls out a small clear plastic bag containing coke.

BRAD
 Look at this pansy. He's too...
 (kicks Wyatt)
 scared to sell.

CHAD
 (laughing)
 You gettin' soft on us, punk?

WYATT
 Look, there's no one buyin'. Plain
 and simple. And the few that are, I
 got chased out by other gangs.

Brad lifts Wyatt up and wraps his arm over his shoulder

BRAD
 How 'bout this.

Brad points to a man leaning on the edge.

BRAD (CONT'D)
 That man's been havin' a hard day.
 Sell him this, and I'll cut you a
 break.

Brad snickers. Brad and Chad lean on the edge as if to watch
 an embarrassing show. They both taunt him.

CHAD
 Go on kid.

BRAD
 Woof...Woof...Woof.

Wyatt approaches CASEY(40); male, in civilian clothes. Wyatt
 sits next to him suspiciously.

Casey is reading a newspaper on a recent Election Debate
 between a dozen candidates.

WYATT
 (full of himself)
 Hey...I see you're having a hard
 time.

CASEY
 Aren't you supposed to be in
 school?

WYATT
 I just thought that maybe, you
 could use a little somethin' to
 take your mind off.

Wyatt pulls out the bag, and the Lonely man grabs his wrist and pulls a badge out of his pocket.

WYATT (CONT'D)
You're a cop.

CASEY
You're under arrest for soliciting...

Wyatt slams the cop's wrist on the metal railing, freeing his grasp, and makes a run for it.

CASEY (CONT'D)
(in radio while running)
Officer Casey to S5, kid on the run, need backup!

Wyatt runs through the city streets, pushing through crowds.

He spots Hinge up ahead, sticking out from the crowd like a sore thumb.

WYATT
It's that man again...

He follows Hinge down an...

ALLEY,

He hunches beneath a dumpster. Casey runs past the alley. Wyatt sighs in relief.

Hinge kicks a door angrily.

Wyatt shimmies forward and follows Hinge into the...

BASEMENT HIDEOUT

Wyatt creaks the door slowly and shimmies inside.

JAVAN (O.S.)
Tori! Where's the last number we tried?

TORI (O.S.)
46356

JAVAN (O.S.)
This is the fifth time in a row we have to do this.

Wyatt preens over the stairs.

TORI NAKAMURA(code name: LATCH), and JAVON BISHOP(code name: HINGE) wear street clothes and work over a cluttered table of pictures, sketches, and files. They're a strange duo.

WYATT

Some conspiracy goin' on here.

Javon tosses something irritated on the table.

JAVON

I'm tired of this! How many times do we have to do this?!

TORI

Javon, take a break.

Javon huffs and slams his hands on the table.

Tori grabs his hand. He calms down and they walk upstairs as a couple.

Wyatt moves to hide under a table with a torn cloth.

Javon and tori leave. The SOUND of a door CREAKING CLOSED.

Wyatt emerges. He walks down the stairs.

Wyatt trips on a rope bundle and falls to his feet.

As he gets up, his foot is caught by a loose rope loop. He doesn't notice.

WYATT

I hope they didn't hear that.

Wyatt walks over to the operation table.

He runs his fingers across the pages.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Are they hitmen?

Wyatt's feet shuffle the floor. *The rope is quite long.*

On the board is a very rough sketch art of 2 gaudy doors.

An adjacent image of a security pin pad and a long list of scratched-out codes.

WYATT (CONT'D)

And a keypad, and a bunch of numbered guards.

Wyatt sees an upturned chair on the floor. Two other chairs sit neatly under the table

Wyatt hears a door creak open. His heart starts racing.

JAVON (O.S.)
How many more times are we gonna try these cursed codes?!

TORI (O.S.)
Maybe we haven't tried some of the ones you scratched out!

JAVON (O.S.)
We did try them! You're memory sucks!

Wyatt looks around. He notices a support beam. He rushes to it and climbs.

Javon kicks open the door. Tori follows

TORI
My memory's fine!

TORI (CONT'D)
Fine enough to make us have to keep repeating the same dream over and over? Boss is gonna have our heads if we don't secure whatever twisted secret that pimp has in there!

Hinge stops and looks around the room. It's a scattered mess.

JAVON
Tori, did you make a mess?

TORI
Uh, Earth to dreamer...you were with me.

JAVON
Someone's here.

Hinge and Latch each grab a BASEBALL BAT. They trudge slowly.

JAVON (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Did we mess up somewhere?

Wyatt holds tightly to the ceiling support beams.

Beneath his foot is a loose rope; Wyatt doesn't notice.

TORI

How?

JAVON

Someone knows about our operation.

Javon notices a rope hanging from the side and grabs it.

He ponders it for a moment, then YANKS IT.

Wyatt yelps as he's torn from the ceiling.

The rope tightens around his leg and he hangs upside down.

WYATT

Uh...HIYA!

Javon and Tori walk circles around him.

TORI

Who are you?!

WYATT

I followed you. You two are up to some super shady stuff...

Hinge rests his bludgeoning weapon on Wyatt tauntingly.

JAVON

You're gonna tell me who you are before you lose your vocal cords.

WYATT

Oh...you're the team leader! Here I was thinking the nice lady was!

Hinge rests his weapon at Wyatt's throat. He gulps. Wyatt points to the picture of the businessman.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Hehe, So...when the news catches wind that CEO is dead...

TORI

Listen here punk, I'm not afraid to beat your sorry mouth so hard you fly through the clouds.

JAVON

Don't test us.

Tori searches Wyatt's pockets. Finds nothing.

WYATT

How bout we negotiate? I join your group, you show me the ropes, I don't go to the POs...and you don't have to kill a young and innocent boy.

Wyatt makes a puppy dog face.

TORI

Aren't you that boy we heard runnin' from the PO's? You're not in a negotiating position.

WYATT

I only see two of you, but there are three chairs. Sounds like you're down a member.

JAVON

Who's gang are you from? I'll be sure to send 'em your tongue.

He grabs Wyatt's shirt and hoists him up; nose to nose.

WYATT

I was right?!. Makes sense why the chair was flipped over...I was totally guessing.

Javon aims his weapon and Wyatt shields and squirms.

HINGE

Latch, tie him to a ferry. Make sure he drowns and is shredded by the propellor.

He drops him. Wyatt falls to the floor.

Javon pulls out a serrated dagger.

WYATT

Please! I beg you! I-I have useful skills!

JAVON

Now what could you possible offer?

WYATT

I-I-I have a photographic memory!!

Javon chuckles. He grabs a pen and and notebook off the operation table and scribbles on it.

He shows the notebook to Wyatt for only a brief second, its a long series of numbers.

JAVON

Humor me.

WYATT

3 1 4 1 5 9 2 6 5 3 5 8 9 7 9 3 2 3
8 4 6 2 6 4 3 3 8 3 2 7 9 5 0 2 8 8
4 1 9 7 1 6 9 3 9 9 3 7 5 1

Javon and Tori exchange stunned looks.

Javon slashes the rope and Wyatt falls down hard.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Woo! A second more and I would have fainted!

TORI

What do you want?

WYATT

A job.

JAVON

HAH! The new generation thinks he can get some easy money by threatening us. Well, this ain't no drug war.

TORI

You're memory is impressive. We'll give you a chance...but first, you do somethin' for us.

WYATT

You mean like a blood pact kind of thing? I guess, but I'm not too fond of blood.

Tori punches Wyatt out cold.

CUT TO BLACK

BASEMENT - NIGHT

Wyatt groggily wakes up on the lounge chair. He looks around confused, Hinge and Latch are nowhere to be seen.

He looks outside to see it's night.

As he stands, he kicks a radio on the floor. He picks it up.

WYATT
Hello? I'm awake...thanks for the
bruise on my face.

Wyatt clips the walkie to his belt while walking to the stairs.

He turns a corner to the stairs and finds a deep, black crater on the floor leading to nothing.

WYATT (CONT'D)
Hey, guys? This ain't funny...

Wyatt backs up, but another crater opens behind. He's caught off balance.

He regains balance and jumps across the small hideout, but a crater opens beneath him and he falls into a...

BLACK ABYSS

Wyatt free falls through the black abyss. AHHHH

The sound of a radio call coming from Hinge.

HINGE (RADIO)
Lucid Test.

Wyatt fumbles for the radio while freefalling. He raises the radio to his ear.

HINGE (RADIO) (CONT'D)
Lucid...TEST!

WYATT
Y-Y-YES! I'm here!

LATCH (RADIO)
Glide down to that plane

WYATT
What plane?!

The abyss is lit up by brightly colored clouds.

A Cessna plane flies under Wyatt.

He lands atop the wing. He holds on for dear life.

WYATT (CONT'D)
You're trying to kill me!

A door appears on the side of the plane.

He shimmies across the wing but falls back a bit.

LATCH (RADIO)
Hurry up and climb.

WYATT
Easy for you to say!

Handles form out of the metal of the plane.

WYATT (CONT'D)
This is surreal.

He grabs metal handles. He continues this very slowly.

WYATT (CONT'D)
Almost...there...

He reaches the door of the plane.

He crawls through the door and enters a...

BLACK VOID

The door closes behind Wyatt. He walks slowly, aimlessly.

WYATT
I made it...wherever this is.

INT. WATCH TOWER

HINGE and LATCH stand in a small watchtower.

Latch watches Wyatt wander through the black void.

Hinge is pacing. His Oni mask sits on the window sill.

Latch starts swaying tiredly, sleeping with her eyes open.

She talks to her Oni mask.

LATCH
(sleepy gibberish)
I feel naked without wearing my
face.

HINGE
Put it on...or not. I don't care.

LATCH
Do I look naked to you...Oni?

The watch tower shimmers and shifts.

WYATT

Feels the ground shaking. The black floor glows

WYATT
Guys? What's goin' on?

HINGE

notices the dream world changing. He turns to Latch and realizes she's drifting.

Hinge claps his hands in front of Latch's face.

HINGE
Lucid Test! Hinge to Dreamer. This is your dream world, remember?

She blinks fast, rubs her eyes, and wakes.

LATCH
Sorry...Being the dream host is...

HINGE
Tiresome...I know.
(beat)
This punk's shown no sign of any useful skills!

Latch rubs her eyes, trying to stay awake.

HINGE (CONT'D)
Send in the shades.

WYATT

wanders the black void. SHADES, black silhouettes, emerge from the shadowy floor.

They slowly approach Wyatt.

HINGE (O.S.)
Alright punk, see how you fair with 'dem Shades.

WYATT
What are these things?!

LATCH (RADIO)

Humans are able to remember faces we've seen, but we're terrible at dreaming new ones. We call these faceless, hollow people: Shades.

The Shades encroach further, cornering Wyatt.

WYATT

They don't seem very human to me!

HINGE (RADIO)

Awe, little boy afraid of the dark?

WYATT

At least give me something!

A handgun appears and falls on Wyatt's head.

WYATT (CONT'D)

OW! Tryna give me brain damage?

LATCH

A *thank you* would be suffice.

Wyatt works the handgun, cocks it, and starts shooting.

Wyatt seems to handle himself okay in close firing combat.

More shades appear behind him. He spins around and empties a round on them.

CLICK! He empties the handgun and reloads it.

Hoads more appear and slash at Wyatt.

A faceless launches Wyatt into the ground. He groans.

INTERCUT

Hinge sits down and rubs his eyes.

LATCH (CONT'D)

Where does a kid learn to shoot?

HINGE

Pfft. It's close hand combat, just about anyone can hit a close target.

Latch watches Wyatt struggle against the Shades.

LATCH

This is painful to watch.

Sounds of Wyatt's pathetic, distant, battle cries as he attacks the faceless hoard.

HINGE

We should never have been followed.
We were careless!

Hinge chucks his radio at the floor angrily.

HINGE (CONT'D)

I wanna tie him to a rock and throw
him into the Hudson River!

LATCH

We're not doing that!

HINGE

Why not?!

LATCH

We have a hard enough time
remembering details from the
Dreamscape! And this kid just
happens to have a photographic
memory!

Latch looks over the window to see Wyatt crawling away like a baby.

LATCH (CONT'D)

Oh, come on...

WYATT

kicks away at Shades as he crawls for his katana. It's just out of reach.

He aims his gun, but CLICK! Out of ammo.

LATCH (RADIO)

Kid, this is pathetic!

WYATT

I'm trying!

Wyatt Opens his round to find it empty, he's out of replacements. He closes it back.

A Shade launches above Wyatt.

He aims his handgun and BANG!

WYATT (CONT'D)
 Huh, so if this is a dream, then
 theoretically...

He kicks to his feet and starts firing again.

He bum-rushes the Shades, shooting wildly.

CLICK! Runs out of ammo.

Wyatt unloads the empty round, puts it inside his shirt, then
 pulls the empty round back out and reloads the gun.

He aims and fires. BANG BANG BANG!

WYATT (CONT'D)
 HAAAAHA! I own this black void!

Wyatt clears the room. He stands silent. He cringey blows off
 steam from his finger.

WYATT (CONT'D)
 I did it.

WATCHTOWER

LATCH
 That...was...

HINGE
 The worst initiation I've ever
 seen.

LATCH
 He cleared the room. But how? I
 gave him limited ammo?

HINGE
 You're not serious.

Latch presses a button.

WYATT

sees a pedestal rise from the black floor.

Atop the pedestal is an ONI MASK. He leans in his radio.

WYATT
 You want me to put *this* on?

LATCH (RADIO)

Yup...

WYATT

Hey, your Japan people called. They want their mask back!

A shade appears, forms a human hand, then SLAPS Wyatt. Then it disappears.

Wyatt rubs his red face.

He dons the mask and looks around in the void confused.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Now what?! I beat your dumb shadow friends up.

A light emanates from Hinge and Latch. He hears a CRASH from above and looks up.

GLORIOUS SLOW-MOTION BADASS DUO

Wyatt shields his eyes from the falling glass.

Latch lands on the ground of the black void.

WYATT (CONT'D)

That...was...AWESOME! How do I do that without breaking my legs?

Latch and Hinge point a shotgun at Wyatt.

LATCH

You did well kid, but this initiation ain't over yet. How'd you get more ammo out of that gun?

Wyatt smirks and pulls out the empty round and shows her.

WYATT

All I had to was fake I was getting a new round, and there it was...more ammo.

Latch stares for a moment, then can't help but laugh.

LATCH

Alright, I'll give you points for being clever.

HINGE

Who are you?

Hinge is not in the mood

WYATT

(snark)

Oh, well, I'm a human kid who's
from Queens. I love pizza...

Hinge and Latch cock their shotguns and step forward.

WYATT (CONT'D)

(nervous)

Okay...Okay. I'm Wyatt Rh...

LATCH

STOP!

Wyatt gulps.

LATCH (CONT'D)

First name only.

HINGE

Okay...Wyatt. How'd you find our
hideout?

WYATT

I was runnin' away from the PO's.
Was set up by my *buddies* to sell
coke to an off duty PO.

They stare at him for an uncomfortable moment.

WYATT (CONT'D)

So...Who are you guys?

LATCH

We're dream walkers. In IRL, I'm
Tori, and Hinge is Javon.

WYATT

So you invade people's dreams.
You've gotta be nuts.

HINGE

Look around you kid. You wanted a
job, this is it.

LATCH

As soon as you do this, you're in
this team.

WYATT

How much money is there to make in
this...dream walking gig?

HINGE

Either join and find out, or never
wake up.

Wyatt thinks about it a moment.

WYATT

I got nothin' else in my life. Why
not?

They lower their weapons.

LATCH

Know the rules of the Dreamscape.

Latch dreams up a whiteboard to appear before them. Text
writes itself on the board as she states the rules.

LATCH (CONT'D)

- 1) Follow the physics of the
dreamer
- 2) Always answer to Lucid Tests
- 3) Always go by your codename in
the dreamscape, and never use it
IRL.

WYATT

(interrupts)

And, what is my codename?

HINGE

(smirks)

Pivot

WYATT

What kind of name is that?

HINGE

So that you will know to curb your
attitude if you wanna stay alive.

WYATT

It's a dream world. Worst thing
that'll happen is I wake up.

LATCH

Last rule: If you die in the
dream...

HINGE

You never wake up

Wyatt now given the codename: PIVOT, stands shocked.

EXT. DREAMSCAPE CASTLE

A castle floats grand among the dream clouds

ACOLYTE; a man with cloudy white hair, wearing a Toga and open-toed shoes, walks among the pristine cloud gardens.

He passes cloud guards and enters the...

INT. DREAMSCAPE CASTLE

He walks up the grand, hypostyle, marble stair past opal statues and pristinely crafted artistry.

Acolyte reaches the top where SOMNION; a divine woman in a toga, sits upon a throne, tapping her fingers.

Acolyte kneels before Somnion.

ACOLYTE

Oh, Somnion, Goddess, of dreams...
(beat, exasperated)
why am I here?

SOMNIUM

Your disrespect never ceases to amaze.

ACOLYTE

What do you need? I got a long scroll of other crap you gave me...

Acolyte unravels a comically long scroll.

Somnion SNAPS her fingers.

The cloudy white tile under Acolyte flies. He falls on his face. His nose bleeds.

SOMNION

We have a problem.

ACOLYTE

If you give me a tissue, we can fix the problem.

Somnion whisks her hand up and Acolyte is flown upwards and lands on his back. He groans.

ACOLYTE (CONT'D)

Just come out with it already!

SOMNION

We have an interloper invading
dreams.

ACOLYTE

Yeah, the Lucid Walkers. We're
doing the best we can. There's a
bunch of 'em!

SOMNION

We have a Paradox among us!

Acolyte sits up

ACOLYTE

...Oh...What's a Paradox?

SOMNION

(facepalms)

This is what I get for making a
human my Acolyte.

(pauses)

All you need to know right now is
that the Paradox is the greatest
threat to the dreamscape.

ACOLYTE

Do you at least know who this
Paradox is?

SOMNION

If I did, I wouldn't be sending
you. Now go to earth and stop the
Paradox from ever dreaming again.

ACOLYTE

...Is there anything else I should
know about this...Paradox?

SOMNION

Since you've been so kind as of
late...I'll let my *capable* Acolyte
figure it out.

Acolyte stands and walks away from Somnion

ACOLYTE

You haven't paid me for the last
excursion to Earth.

Somnion whisks a strong wind at Acolyte.

EXT. DREAMSCAPE CASTLE

Acolyte is flung outside by the wind.

He lands in front of the cloud guards. They snicker.

EXT. ALLEYWAY

Wyatt is leaned against a wall next to the hideout door.

He twiddles his thumbs thinking.

WYATT

Absurd...dream walking. What have I
gotten myself into? Not like I had
much choice.

Heavy sigh.

Tori comes outside and leans against the wall.

She looks to the street, counts cars, then looks back.

TORI

What were the colors and makes of
the last 4 cars that...

WYATT

(interrupts)
Grey Silverado, black Lexus,
hideous white fiat, and a old-ass
Honda.

TORI

Huh...You don't seem like the type
to run off, kid.

WYATT

I said I'd do it, so I'm doing it.

TORI

Where'd you learn to shoot?

Wyatt makes finger guns and does a PEW PEW gesture.

WYATT

Ever been to those VR labs? Used to
go there all the time till they
up'd the rates.

Tori stares for a moment, then laughs

Wyatt rolls his eyes.

TORI

You learned from a video game?

WYATT

I know its hard for you old folk,
but tech has advanced far enough
where simulations are almost real.
The dreamscape is no different...
and yet...

TORI

The dreamscape is different,
because we are interrupting the
natural state of dreamers.

WYATT

So how did you two love birds get
into this niche business?

TORI

Oooh, that's a bit too personal.

WYATT

You want to know a lot about me,
but I can't know anything about
you? Double standards.

TORI

We're the ones who run this
operation...

WYATT

(interrupts)

Then who's this boss feller?

TORI

(curls lip, annoyed)

We're in charge of this operation,
and when we bring someone in, we
need to know we can trust them to
not fail, or kill us. Think you can
do that?

WYATT

You're memory must be real bad if
you need to drag a photographic
memory into dreams.

TORI

You seemed quite eager to offer it.

WYATT

You had a knife to my face.

TORI

Oh big, baby. This ain't no drug cartel. We're on another league.

WYATT

So what is it you need me to do?

TORI

When we're in the dreamscape, you can't be thinking. You'll drift and lose connection, and every second in the dreamscape matters.

WYATT

What is the dreamscape anyways?

Tori leans in real close.

TORI

Prove your worth to us, and we'll show you.

Wyatt lets out a big sigh.

INT. BASEMENT - EVENING

Tori and Javon are ruffling papers at the operation table.

Javon drops a file on the table and opens the pages.

He flips to a page on TREY REDDING(40); a heavyweight man wearing gold chains and a pristine suit.

Javon studies the file.

WYATT

What's your beef with Trey Redding? Isn't he a philanthropist?

Strings connect pictures like a conspiracy board.

Tori runs her finger along the table

TORI

Trey Redding has been using Philanthropy as a disguise for nefarious under-the-table trades.

WYATT

So what? What's there to profit from?

TORI

We believe his mind contains
valuable secrets we can sell on the
black market. That's where you come
in.

Hinge slams down a pile of papers regarding Trey Redding.

JAVON

He was funneling billions of US
cents into political bribes to keep
his enterprise at the top.

WYATT

Cents?

Hinge jots down on paper, shows it to Wyatt for a sec, then
removes it.

HINGE

How many cents symbols

WYATT

27 and a half. Can we move on now?

Hinge looks at his paper, counts the symbols, then notices
the last cent sign misses the cross.

Pivot grabs a sketch of the 9-key security pad.

WYATT (CONT'D)

This where his secrets are?

TORI

After a few tries, we finally found
his vault. Every dreamer has one,
somewhere in the back of their
subconscious they store lots of
valuable secrets.

Javon lays a crude map of Trey's dream on the table.

JAVON

Memorize this map.

Wyatt looks at the map for only a few seconds.

WYATT

Done. Not a very hard labyrinth.
You two suck at this.

JAVON

You barely looked at it!

TORI

Javon, we don't have time, our boss wants whatever sick secrets we have. Let's just go in.

JAVON

You trust him?!

Tori grabs her headset and earpiece, ignores his question.

She lies down on a couch.

JAVON (CONT'D)

Kid, if you screw this operation up for us...

Javon pulls out a handgun from under his shirt on his back.

WYATT

Okay...okay...I'll just...go in with you, and...remember stuff.

Javon lies down and puts an earpiece and headset on. His feet propped up.

Wyatt lies down on the couch and reinserts the earpiece and headset.

WYATT (CONT'D)

(tired, dreary)
Okay...so now...what?

Wyatt falls uncurious.

His spirit suddenly emerges from his body.

Tori's (now codenamed Latch), and Javon's (now codenamed Hinge) spirits emerge too.

PIVOT

WOAH! Am I dead? No... I'm still there. Why didn't this happen before?

LATCH

The initiation was a test room we designed within the dreamscape. This is the real thing.

Latch and Hinge jump through the window and fly up.

PIVOT

Tori! Wait for me!

HINGE (RADIO)
CODE NAMES! This is the dreamscape!

Pivot winces from her yelling in his ear.

He moves to the back of the room, then runs and jumps through the window screaming.

SKIES OF NYC

Pivot flies up towards Latch and they ascend to the clouds.

Hundreds of other spirits drift up sleeping.

PIVOT
We're not the only ones?!

LATCH
They're normal dreamers! We're going up fully Lucid!

PIVOT
Does the headset make us Lucid or something?! I thought Lucid dreaming was a myth!

LATCH
Only a small few can do Lucid dreaming, but even then, they can only Lucid dream in their dream space. The headset bypasses that restriction and gives us free reign of the dreamscape!

As they pass the skyscrapers, Hinge and Latch transform into their Dreamscape outfits.

Pivot only transforms his Oni Mask.

LATCH (CONT'D)
Answer to Lucid tests always, and don't drift into the dream.

PIVOT
Alright mom.

HINGE
HINGE TO LUCID WALKERS, LUCID TEST:
Who are we tracking?

LATCH
TREY REDDING! CEO of the charity thrift chain: Goodways!

They are closer to the dream clouds. Latch's eyes grow heavy. She tries to stay focused.

HINGE
PIVOT, I DIDN'T RECEIVE A RESPONSE!

PIVOT
Oh! Uh...um...

HINGE
LUCID...TEST! PAY ATTENTION! WHO ARE WE TRACKING?!

PIVOT
The CEO of a charity...something. Redding person?

HINGE
Good enough.

They pass through the dreamscape clouds.

EXT. DREAMSCAPE

The trio rises through the clouds in a triangular formation.

LATCH
Pivot! Tap your Oni mask, it's the dream version of your Lucid headset.

Latch taps it and a display pops up with a thousand routes.

PIVOT
WOAH! Which route do I take?!

LATCH
Stay in formation, and focus on Trey Redding!

PIVOT
Trey...REDDING

The routes disappear and display one clear path. The Trio follows the route through a colorful cloud vortex.

INT. GOODWAYS WAREHOUSE

Hinge and Latch rush hundreds of warehouse worker Shades.

Pivot shakes his head and looks around confused.

PIVOT

How did we get here?

HINGE

Stay focused! Don't drift, and
don't show your face!

Latch rushes out from a donation container.

Hinge slides across the hard floor shooting his shotgun.

LATCH

HINGE! More Shades are incoming!

50 more Shades appear from double doors.

HINGE

There's no end to them!

Pivot realizes he's holding a standard handgun.

PIVOT

What do I do again?

HINGE

FIGHT!

FIGHT!

LATCH

Pivot rushes the hoards, shooting wildly

Hinge runs up to the double doors and holds it down.

Hoard of Shades bang at the doors.

Pivot slays one Shade. It falls motionless to the floor.

PIVOT

I did it! I got one!

HINGE

Sweet, now would you get over here!
This psychopath dreams his workers
as meat fodder!

Hinge rushes to a large container and pushes it over.

Pivot and Latch jump out of the way.

The container falls in front of the door and seals it shut.

PIVOT

Hey! A warning would be nice!

They look around the now quiet warehouse.

Hinge pokes at a motionless Shade.

HINGE
We're already off to a great
start...

Hinge looks at his watch. Just shy of half-passed.

HINGE (CONT'D)
We lost a lot of time.

PIVOT
I don't have a watch.

HINGE
Every dreamer has a watch. Check
your pockets.

Latch searches his pocket to find a blank pocket watch. It's just shy of half passed.

Hinge and Latch move towards a grand hallway.

PIVOT
Stop! You're going the long way!

HINGE
Then Where are we supposed to go?

LATCH
We at least know this route!

Pivot looks around the room. He spots a door.

PIVOT
This way!

Hinge and Latch rush off. Pivot runs close behind.

INT. STAIRWELL

They rush into a tall stairwell. Pivot looks up exasperated.

HINGE
I don't remember no stairs last
time.

LATCH
Or any time! How did you know this?

PIVOT

You're the one who wrote the map!
There was a shaft that led straight
to the vault.

Hinge grumbles, then bolts up the stairs.

PIVOT (CONT'D)

Don't you have, like, high tech
grapple hooks to skip the stairs?

HINGE

No!

No!

LATCH

Pivot sighs, then jogs up the stairs

The trio rush up the stairs

INT. MODERN LOBBY

The trio burst through the stairwell doors.

HINGE

The kid was right. How did we not
find those stairs in our other
runs?

LATCH

I don't remember.

Pivot leans over the door exhausted.

PIVOT

That...was...terrible!

HINGE

It's a dream! You're not actually
exercising!

PIVOT

Well...it certainly...feels like
it...I can feel my chest pounding.

Pivot leans against a wall

HINGE

Get up.

Hinge yanks Pivot to his feet and pushes him forward.

They stand before the Gaudy doors and the 6 columns.

LATCH

Hey Hinge, do you think that shadow creature will show up again?

WYATT

What shadow creature?

HINGE

We've been through here 5 times now, and that was a one time thing.

WYATT

What shadow creature?

LATCH

It could show up! I'm not interested in being killed by something so unpredictable

HINGE

Then shoot the window. We'll try again.

WYATT

What shadow creature?

HINGE

Kid, go stand over there and memorize the guards about to drop.

Pivot sighs and walks away from the insignia.

Nine Shade Guards drop from the liquid ceiling. Just like last time.

LATCH

It's just as it was last time!

]Hinge and Latch bum rush with their shotguns firing wildly.

Pivot stands and watches.

PIVOT

The big one is 8. The smallest one is 4. The skinny one is 9. 2...

Pivot continues surveying the guards.

PIVOT (CONT'D)

1...5...3...7...6

Shade Guard 9 rushes Pivot.

Pivot reacts quickly with his handgun, slashing it down.

All nine Shade guards are taken down.

PIVOT (CONT'D)
I got one!

HINGE
You better know what the code is,
or I'll toss you out that window.

Pivot looks at the motionless faceless security guards for a moment.

He prances over to the security keypad and types in the number: 849215376. PING! Green light.

The gaudy doors open automatically.

HINGE (CONT'D)
Okay...

Hinge steps in. Latch follows.

PIVOT
That's it? No, thank you?

They ignore him. He follows them.

TREY REDDING'S OFFICE

The trio slowly trods through the grand open office space.

They pass a pool full of exhausted FACELESS in bathing suits.

PIVOT
Wouldn't they usually be...

HINGE
(interrupts)
Don't even think about it.

In the center of the pool is a king bed risen from the water on posts made from gold.

TREY REDDING(40); a heavyweight man wearing gold chains, is asleep on the bed with FACELESS women.

They move past them to a grand desk in the back. A file sits on the desk reading: BLACKMAIL.

PIVOT
Only in dreams would blackmail just
lying around.

LATCH

This is normal. Get past the security, and all their secrets are found lying about.

Pivot's watch displays three-quarters passed.

PIVOT

Already? Time flies when you're dreaming.

As Pivot touches the file, a WARNING SHOT is shot inches away from his fingers.

Trey is holding a gold handgun.

TREY

Don't touch my property.

PIVOT

Too late!

Pivot grabs the file and begins to speed-read.

Trey grabs the sheets and throws them in the air, appearing in a pristine business suit.

Trey lunges for Pivot.

Hinge jumps in and attacks Pivot.

HINGE

PIVOT! MEMORIZE THE FILE!

Pivot rushes to a wall and continues speedreading.

Trey kicks at Hinge, launching him into the air.

Latch attacks Trey and kicks his gun away.

Hinge stands and lunges for Trey. The two hold Trey down.

HINGE (CONT'D)

How's that file readin' goin'?!

PIVOT

Working on it!

Trey grasps his gun and shoots Pivot in the shoulder.

PIVOT (CONT'D)

AH! He shot me!

Pivot shimmies back, holding his wound.

Trey pushes Latch and Hinge off.

Try rushes towards Pivot.

Hinge jumps off his back to his feet, then rushes Trey.

Hinge does a slide kick to knock Trey down.

Pivot lunges to a corner. He quickly surfs the pages. He looks at the time, 10 minutes left.

Hinge jumps up, grabs Trey's feet, then slams his face into the ground adjacent to Pivot

PIVOT (CONT'D)

BRO! I'm tryna study here!

Hinge motions to lift Trey again, but Trey kicks Hinge and jumps free.

Hinge rushes Trey, using his body to ram him into a wall.

Trey pushes Hinge hard. He goes flying into the bed.

A Shade woman in lingerie swoons over Hinge

HINGE

Oh nuh-uh, I'm not playin' into this twisted fantasy.

Hinge kicks at the Shade women.

Trey walks over to Pivot who's still speed reading.

Pivot gets up and starts running to another corner.

Trey runs after him, but Latch jumps at him.

Trey and Latch stand, facing each other.

Trey neck his neck. Latch cracks her knuckles.

They box each other violently. Latch dodges Trey's blows.

Pivot blindly shoots his gun at Trey as he stands. BANG BANG BANG!

Hinge rams into Trey, grabs him, swings him over his shoulder, and runs with him held over his head, then rams him HARD into the floor.

Latch stands disappointed.

LATCH

What gives?! I had 'em.

Pivot continues speed-reading through the blackmail file.

HINGE

Pivot! What's taking you so long?!

Pivot speeds through the files with his finger running down the pages.

Hinge drives around the massive pool shooting at Trey who's hanging on his handlebars.

A stray bullet flies into the window and CRACKS the glass. Clouds leak through the windows.

Clouds swirl around Latch.

LATCH

(dreary)

Hinge! I'm...losing...conscious...

Latch collapses, falling and disappearing into the clouds.

HINGE

LATCH!

Hinge stands, then runs after Trey.

Trey kicks Hinge away and moves towards Pivot.

As Hinge falls to the floor, he drifts into sleep and then disappears

Pivot finishes reading and holds the file high like a trophy.

PIVOT

Hinge! Latch! I finished the file!

Trey finally grabs hold of Pivot, grasping Pivot's throat.

TREY

Did your parents ever teach you not to read classified information?

Trey throws Pivot into the pool. The file flies everywhere.

HINGE

KID!

Clouds encircle Hinge. He passes out and disappears.

UNDERWATER

Pivot holds his breath and swims around.

The pool is much deeper than what he saw above.

He starts to swim up, but the surface appears far away.

Trey dives into the pool and swims quickly after Pivot.

Pivot paddles away from Trey, trying not to open his mouth.

He turns around quickly and narrowly dodges Trey's grasp.

Trey turns and grabs Pivot.

TREY

(muted, underwater)

I can't let you leave. You know too much.

Pivot squirms and writhes underwater. He struggles to hold his breath.

TREY (CONT'D)

You worthless swine, think you can invade my domain and rob me?

Pivot closes his eyes.

Suddenly, the water around Trey and Pivot turns black. Paradox appears as a shadow before Pivot.

PARADOX

Oh, what a pity. You're about to be killed.

Pivot stares at Paradox's flat eyes.

PIVOT

(inner thoughts)

I'm about to be killed, and now there's this shadow creature taunting me.

PARADOX

I'm no mere shadow creature.

PIVOT

It can hear me?!

PARADOX

I can, but I can only hold this dreamer for so long. He'll waking soon. Hehehehehe.

PIVOT

What do you want?

PARADOX

None of the dream walkers want to pay me any attention. They always run away.

Paradox swirls around Pivot. He appears behind.

PARADOX (CONT'D)

You're about to die a horrible death. But I can stop it. Let me save you, and I'll give you everything I have to offer. I just need a handshake.

PIVOT

That sounds more like snake oil. Where I come from, there's always a catch!

Pivot writhes, trying to hold his breath and not drown.

He's going pale.

PARADOX

You don't seem to be in a negotiating position.

PIVOT

I'd rather die than be someone's servant.

PARADOX

Servant? Who said anything about that? I can see into your mind. You've never had any real choice in your life. Even the dream walkers forced you into this job. Come with me, and I'll give you your freedom.

Beat.

PARADOX (CONT'D)

So what will it be?

Pivot thinks for a moment...

PIVOT

I'm not ready to die yet.

Pivot raises his hand to shake Paradox's.

PARADOX

Consider my power at your
disposable! HAHAHAHA

Paradox shakes Pivot's hand.

Paradox absorbs inside Pivot. He shakes and writhes as he takes in Paradox. It hurts, but he can't cry out or he'll drown!

The pain stops, and time resumes. He closes his eyes.

TREY

You're not waking up from this
nightmare, Dream Walker.

Pivot shoots his eyes open and his body lights up in a black shadowy effect.

Pivot opens his mouth and breathes underwater. He takes a big, deep breath.

He shoves his hand through Trey's chest, grabs his spine inside him, then...

Pivot dives up fast with Trey towards the surface like a rocket.

GAUDY OFFICE

Pivot, grasping Trey, flies from the pool towards the window.

WHILE MIDAIR: Pivot transforms into a gaudy, strange combo outfit with slicked hair with red highlights, a Japanese kimono shirt, cowboy boots, a cowboy hat, an upturned Japanese style jacket, and a flickering effect of a black shadow around him.

A revolver appears in hand, and a katana sheathed to belt.

Pivot and Trey fly over the Office and through the window.

Pivot shoves the revolver into Trey's mouth

PIVOT

You're not waking up from this
nightmare, dreamer.

Trey's eyes bulge in fear. He shakes his head no, but...

PIVOT (CONT'D)

Bang.

A BANG from Pivot's revolver into Trey's mouth.

The clouds envelop both Pivot and Trey.

INT. BASEMENT HIDEOUT - MORNING

Wyatt wakes up to Tori and Javon standing before them with their arms crossed.

WYATT

...Do I have something on my face?

TORI

What happened in there?

WYATT

What do you mean? You were there, weren't you?

JAVON

We've been up for almost an hour waiting for you to wake up.

TORI

You were the last one in the dreamscape. What happened?

Wyatt grabs a blank journal and scribbles in it quickly.

WYATT

(while writing)

Trey pulled me underwater. I couldn't breathe. I...OW!

Pivot feels a sharp pain in his shoulder where he was shot in the dream.

TORI

Anything we feel in the dream, our bodies feel.

WYATT

Uh...other than...

Wyatt doesn't want to tell them he made a deal with Paradox.

WYATT (CONT'D)

I swam out of the water with Trey.

Pivot makes finger guns. Pew Pew Pew.

Pivot flips to the next page and writes more

WYATT (CONT'D)

I threw Trey through the window!

Pivot finishes writing. He's a really fast writer.

He hands the journal to Hinge.

Hinge looks it over. It's a list of blackmail names.

JAVON

This is...interesting.

(beat)

What happened to Trey?

WYATT

Well, I shot him. It was just a dream anyway. We got his secrets, and...

He makes a finger gun gesture to his head.

PIVOT

I'm awake.

Hinge tosses the journal on the table, stands, and rubs his head.

WYATT

What? Do I got somethin' on mah face?

JAVON

Tori, get this to the boss.

Latch grabs the notebook and exits the hideout.

WYATT

So when do I get paid?

Hinge leans over the table.

JAVON

When the boss says we get paid. Be back here tomorrow.

WYATT

Well that's anticlimactic.

Pivot jumps to his feet and skips out the door.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Fine, see ya.

Hinge sighs. He picks up a red marker and draws a RED X over Trey's picture.

EXT. NYC STREETS

Wyatt walks with the beat to imaginary tunes.

Wyatt drums on walls and rails.

The election solicitor is there again, this time ringing a bell.

ELECTION SOLICITOR

Vote Democrat! It will save our country!

Pivot passes by the annoying Election Solicitor.

WYATT

Shut up!

On his backside, the shadow of Paradox replaces Wyatt's shadow.

Paradox raises a shadow hand and makes the solicitor trip.

EXT. DREAMSCAPE CASTLE - ARCHIVES ROOM

Acolyte is rummaging through an archives room.

ACOLYTE

I'll never get used to this filing system.

Acolyte moves on to another file cabinet

ACOLYTE (CONT'D)

Back in my day, we used scrolls, and everything was pristinely organized...not like this haphazard cluster,

Acolyte spots a very old drawer labeled PARADOX

ACOLYTE (CONT'D)

Ah...there we are.

Acolyte opens the drawer and surfs through the aged files.

He spots an old scroll pushed between some files.

ACOLYTE (CONT'D)
Now that's more like it. Someone
should fire that librarian.

Acolyte kisses the scroll and the unravels it.

It details a black figure among a sea of dark clouds.

The castle is in the center, destroyed. There's text written.

ACOLYTE (CONT'D)
*If the Paradox is allowed loose
upon the Dreamscape and left
unbound, chaos shall fall. In time,
the fabric of dreams will unravel,
and the realm of mankind shall
collapse.*

ACOLYTE (CONT'D)
Where's the origin story?

Acolyte rummages through the file cabinet...nothing.

LIBBY; a funny-looking librarian made up entirely of clouds
and wearing reading glasses, appears behind Acolyte.

LIBBY
Uh...Ahem...Acolyte?

ACOLYTE
Hmm? OH! Would you happen to know
where I can find the origin story
of the Paradox?

LIBBY
Uh...sorry, no...I wanted to show
you something.

Libby hands Acolyte an NYC newspaper. It reads: TREY REDDING
FOUND BRAIN DEAD IN PENTHOUSE.

LIBRARIAN
Our sources say a Dream Walker
killed a dreamer.

Acolyte looks up nervously.