

CHAPTER 9



DECKARD'S FINAL STRUGGLE

Chapter 9 - Deckard's Final Struggle

A ground car speeds through a tunnel under L.A.'s busy streets, it's siren blaring, it's police radio alive with excited chatter. Rick Deckard listens with interest as a "sector alert" is broadcast to all units.

Not far away on a fog-shrouded avenue a group of street people wander in search of anything interesting to steal. They are small, possibly children, one of which has eyes which seem to be lighted and flash on and off. Another is



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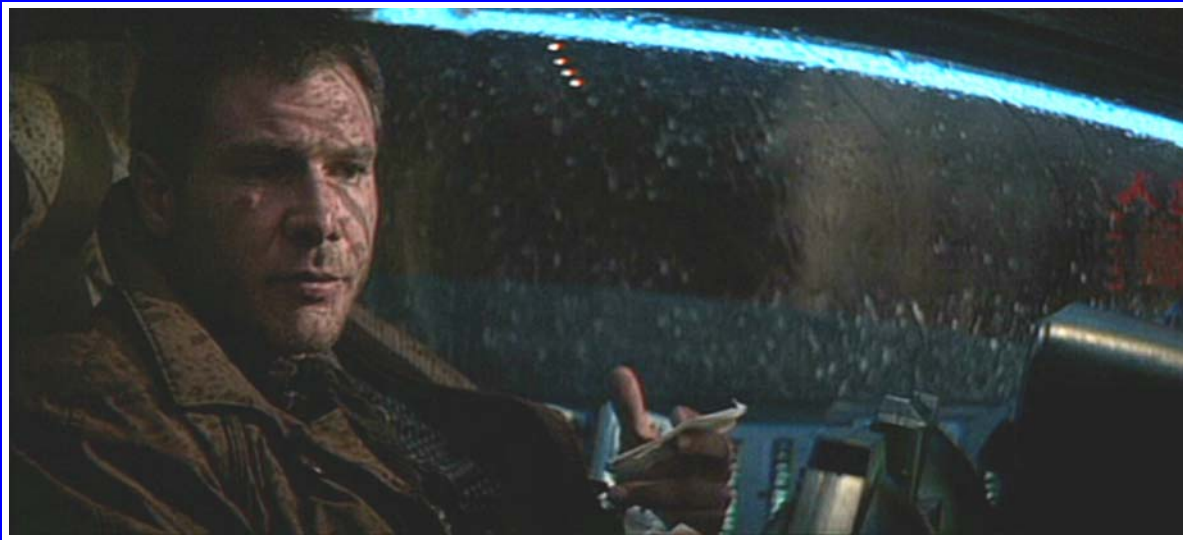


carrying a frayed section of wiring - he pinwheels his left arm with it as though it were a prized

weapon.

"Hey! Voddin dex sie bun dexe!" yells the tallest of the group of four as he notices a parked car nearby, its rear lights illuminated. "Hey! Voddin dex sin bun dex..." he says again and waves to the others in his group to take notice of potential "prey".

Inside the car, Deckard listens to Bryant give a description of a hot crime scene, "...the body identified with Tyrell is a 25 year old male Caucasian, named



Sebastian... J. F. Sebastian. Address: Bradbury apartments, nine sector, an add.. 46751. I want you to go down there and..."

Silently, from behind, a police spinner glides in to check out Deckard's car.

"This sector's closed to ground traffic..." a rather stern voice announces over the spinner's bullhorn as the street people who were casing Deckard's car scramble for a hiding place, "... what're you doing here?"

From inside his rain-splashed auto, Deckard answers matter-of-factly, "I'm workin', what're you doin'?"

"Arresting, that's what I'm doing," comes the terse reply.

"I'm Deckard, Blade Runner, two sixty three fifty four. I'm filed and monitored."

"Hold on, checking." A pause, then... "Okay, checked and cleared. Have a better one!" At that the hovering spinner's exhausts belch plumes of vapor as it quickly rises into the rainy night sky, all the while Deckard nonchalantly looking over his notes.

He dials a number on his in-car vid-phone and waits as it buzzes for a connection. His screen flickers a bit, then a woman's face ap-

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pears - it's Pris, left behind when Roy and J.F. left for their fateful meeting with Tyrell.

"Hello?" she says somewhat tentatively.

"Hi, is J. F. there?" Deckard asks.

"Who is it?"

"Uhhh, this is Eddie, old friend of J. F.'s." Deckard replies with a smile but he gets no answer as the connection is immediately broken and he is presented with a blank screen.

"Ooh!" he says to himself, " 's no way to treat a friend..."

Suddenly Deckard looks up as he hears scrap-



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ing noises coming from the roof of his car. It's the group of street people scavenging for anything they can find. Deckard hits the gas peddle and speeds off, his car splashing through deep puddles as one of the street people falls to the pavement. They dance and cavort around a large metal box, presumably ripped from Deckard's car.

Deckard continues down the street coming to a stop in front of the Bradbury Building as another spinner speeds by above him. He sits looking at the huge, carved letters above the entrance portico of the building as his car door raises



open, gull-wing style. Slowly he gets out and lingers a while, still looking up at the building. Inside, a female form - Pris - sits with a thin, transparent veil over head. She quietly waits....

Cautiously, Deckard walks between the huge pillars of the building toward the entrance, a theater marquee with its bright neon letters shining across the street behind him. Upstairs, Pris slowly swivels her head at the sound of a door opening down below...

Deckard quietly closes the door, pauses for a moment, then enters the huge, vaulting atrium of

the Bradbury Building, its Victorian-era wrought-iron staircases and open-air elevator shafts mute, a light from somewhere above casting soft illumination through the misty atmosphere within the enclosure. Above, through the building's ornate skylight, the ubiquitous blimp slowly floats by, a Japanese woman is seen on the blimp's huge display screens singing a plaintive melody accompanied by a koto, or stringed instrument. "Oooooooh..... ituuuumeh," she sings as Deckard looks up at the

stairways surrounding the atrium, surveying the situation. Then he begins

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climbing, forsaking the elevator knowing that silence, in this case, would be virtuous.

Quietly, but quickly, Deckard steadily continues upward. About halfway he pauses to look around again, then proceeds as he unholsters his blaster and readies it for whatever or whoever may come. His demeanor grows more cautious the higher he climbs, pausing occasionally to look upward for any sign of movement. Inside Sebastian's quiet apartment, Pris still sits in anticipation.

Sebastian's home is on the top floor and the light over his door is lit invitingly



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as Deckard nears it. Now he pauses after climbing the last flight of stairs, hiding behind a newel post and getting his bearings. He continues toward Sebastian's door, cautiously but with determination, his blaster held with both hands, pointing skyward. He stops before the threshold, noticing the door is slightly ajar, soft light from inside painting his body with a diffuse glow. He lowers his blaster, pointing it in the direction of the open door, then is momentarily distracted by a noise downstairs. He slowly continues toward the door but stops when he hears footsteps





and voices.... "Home again, home again, jig-gidy, jig. Good evening J. F." It's Sebastian's "friends" marching up to greet the visitor, thinking their "maker" has returned home.

Deckard silently slides between the open doors as he watches the odd scene of one of the little people strutting his stuff. Deckard follows him with his blaster as the little man marches across the room and, as before, bumps into the door jamb letting out a hearty "oof!".

Pris, now knowing her adversary has entered her new-found domain, smiles and readies herself.

Deckard proceeds forward again through the foyer and into the living room of the apartment, looking around all the while, blaster still pointing ahead. He walks through a maze of dolls, toys and manikins, some of which are whirring and buzzing. Off to the side one mechanical doll laughs continuously with a male voice, shaking himself with seemingly boundless mirth. On the other side of the room a full-sized female doll slowly turns her head to the side as she raises her hand, then turns her head back as her hand descends. In the center of the room there sits one

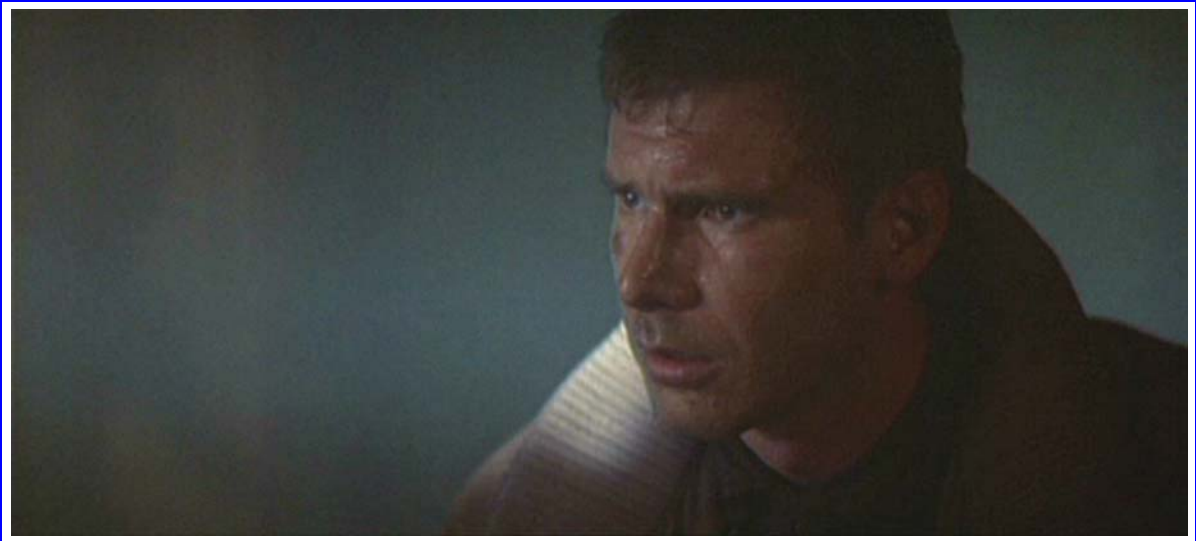
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doll with a blond wig, covered with a full, transparent veil. She looks as though she is wearing a raccoon's mask...

Deckard, who has moved to the back of the room, turns and notices the silent, unmoving doll wearing the veil. He slowly approaches toward her from the front to get a better look. Fascinated by her appearance, his blaster trained on her, he takes hold of her veil and slowly pulls it off her head... she is still unmoving.

Suddenly, with a scream, she springs to life, knocking a surprised Deckard to the floor with her foot. It's Pris,



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of course, beginning the fight for her life.

As Deckard crawls on the floor on all fours, Pris performs a series of fast somersaults which brings her down on top of Deckard, catching his head between her legs. She squeezes hard with her thighs, Deckard grimacing with the pressure. Pris's expression is one of total, unbridled rage. Now she grabs his head and turns him around so he is facing up at her. Then she boxes him three times hard on both sides of his head with her balled fists then dropping the dazed blade runner to the floor writhing in pain.





Pris runs off into the other room to ready herself for another somersaulting attack. But this time Deckard, who quickly gathers himself, is ready as he rolls over to face her and fires his blaster while she is in mid-air. He ducks as she sails over him and lands hard against a wall, screaming in pain. Then he watches in rapt fascination as she lay on her back wildly flailing her arms and legs like a broken machine, all the while screaming continuously. Deckard gets up and watches this incredible display for a moment, then with a grimace fires again. Pris's body lets out one last scream and convulsion then falls

silent, dead, her blood staining her body suit. Her final death-rattle echoes throughout the mostly empty building as Deckard struggles to his feet and limps over to look down upon his latest victim.

Outside in the atrium an elevator noisily comes to a halt at the top floor. It's Roy, returning alone from his deadly rendezvous with Tyrell. He steps off the elevator quickly but cautiously, stopping momentarily to survey the corridor. Inside, Deckard is striding down the hallway of Sebastian's apartment, looking for potential hiding places in anticipation of Roy's return.

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Roy slowly approaches the apartment, pouring rain from outside leaking through the Bradbury's roof, splashing all around him.

Now Deckard finds a suitable place in a room at the end of the hallway. He closes the door partway and takes up station there. He readies himself, pointing his blaster back down the hallway. Outside, a rotating light casts bright beams through the mist and down the hall.

Very cautiously, Roy stops short of the apartment's portico for a moment, then enters. He sees the now-dead body of his lover, Pris, laying on the floor, her tongue protruding slightly



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between her lips. For a moment Roy stands over her, a look of deep sadness clouding his face. Then he turns for a moment, sensing the presence of someone else nearby. Meanwhile, Deckard keeps watching the hallway, blaster ready, knowing it won't be long before Roy shows.

Roy, now bending over Pris's body, slowly turns her face upwards and stoops to kiss her cold lips. When he backs up, her tongue is no longer showing between her lips.

A dark shape steps into the hallway Deckard is guarding. Deck-



ard fires instantly but Roy is faster, diving across the hall out of harms way as the blaster charge explodes in a bright fireball at the far end of the hall.

Deckard, now beginning to show some desperation looks around for a new hiding place.

From down the hall Roy yells, "Not very sporting to fire on an unarmed opponent. I thought you were supposed to be good..." Deckard's blaster is still raised as he turns and moves down another hallway. "Aren't you the.... good man?" Roy continues, taunting his opponent.

Deckard is now frozen in

place, blaster raised, waiting for Roy to appear again. His hands holding the blaster are near a wall streaked with rivulets of rainwater cascading downwards.

"Come on.... Deckard," says Roy, "show me... what you're made of!"

As Deckard slowly and deliberately inches forward, the wall to his right suddenly explodes as Roy's fist smashes through, grabbing Deckard's gun hand and pulling it back to Roy's side.

"Proud of yourself, little man?" Roy asks rhetorically, anger and pain showing on his face as he holds

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Deckard's hand, still grasping its blaster. Deckard struggles to get free but can't. Now Roy, with a grunt, pulls the blaster from Deckard's fist and puts it under his armpit. Then he grabs Deckard's pinkie finger and with a grimace of effort says in a loud voice, "This is for Zhora", and bends it quickly backward, the crack of a dislocating finger joint echoing loudly, Deckard yelping in pain. He takes Deckard's ring finger and says more quietly, "This is for Pris", again bending it backwards as Deckard yelps in pain a second time. Roy now takes the blaster and replaces it in Deckard's damaged hand.



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"C,mon Deckard! I'm right here. But you've got to shoot straight," Roy says, tauntingly.

At this point Deckard pulls his hand back through the wall and takes the blaster in his left, undamaged, hand. Then he quickly obliges to Roy's "shoot straight" admonishment by raising the blaster and firing blindly in the direction of Roy's voice, then retreating as fast as he can.

"Straight doesn't seem to be good enough!" Roy exclaims, "Now it's my turn. I'm gonna give you a few seconds before I come." As Roy turns his head, a grazing



up, weeping silently, and with Pris's blood on his finger makes a vertical mark from below his nose downward over his chin, a single tear falling from his eye. Outside, Deckard is still frantically looking for a way to escape his situation.

Roy, still leaning against the wall near Pris, lets out a low howl, like a grieving wolf as Deckard stops for a moment, grabs his two dislocated fingers and snaps them back into place as he howls in pain. Roy now lets out a much louder howl as Deckard enters a room with shuttered windows, the sound of flies echoing loudly. He comes to

wound on the right side of his face can be seen above his ear, the blood streaming down his neck.

Now he begins counting... "One! Two!"

At that, Deckard runs out of the room and opens a door to another. He enters, his face grimacing in pain as he backs into the room, covering his retreat.

Back at the scene of Pris's death, Roy is again leaning over her, grieving. "Three..." he says, on the edge of tears as he tenderly caresses Pris's face. "Four." Then he moves his hand slowly down her breast to the huge entry wound in her abdomen. "Pris..." He raises

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one of the shuttered windows that has bright lights on the other side shining, sweeping him with rays of brilliant luminescence. He pulls at one of the slats only to discover chicken wire is also covering the entire height of the window. Outside in the hall, Roy's howl now changes tone... he almost sings, "I'm commmmminnnng!!"

Deckard steps to another slatted window and bangs on one of the boards, again to no avail. Suddenly, Roy yells, "Deckard! Four, five..." Deckard wheels around and notices a book case that rises all the way towards the high ceiling of the room. He sees



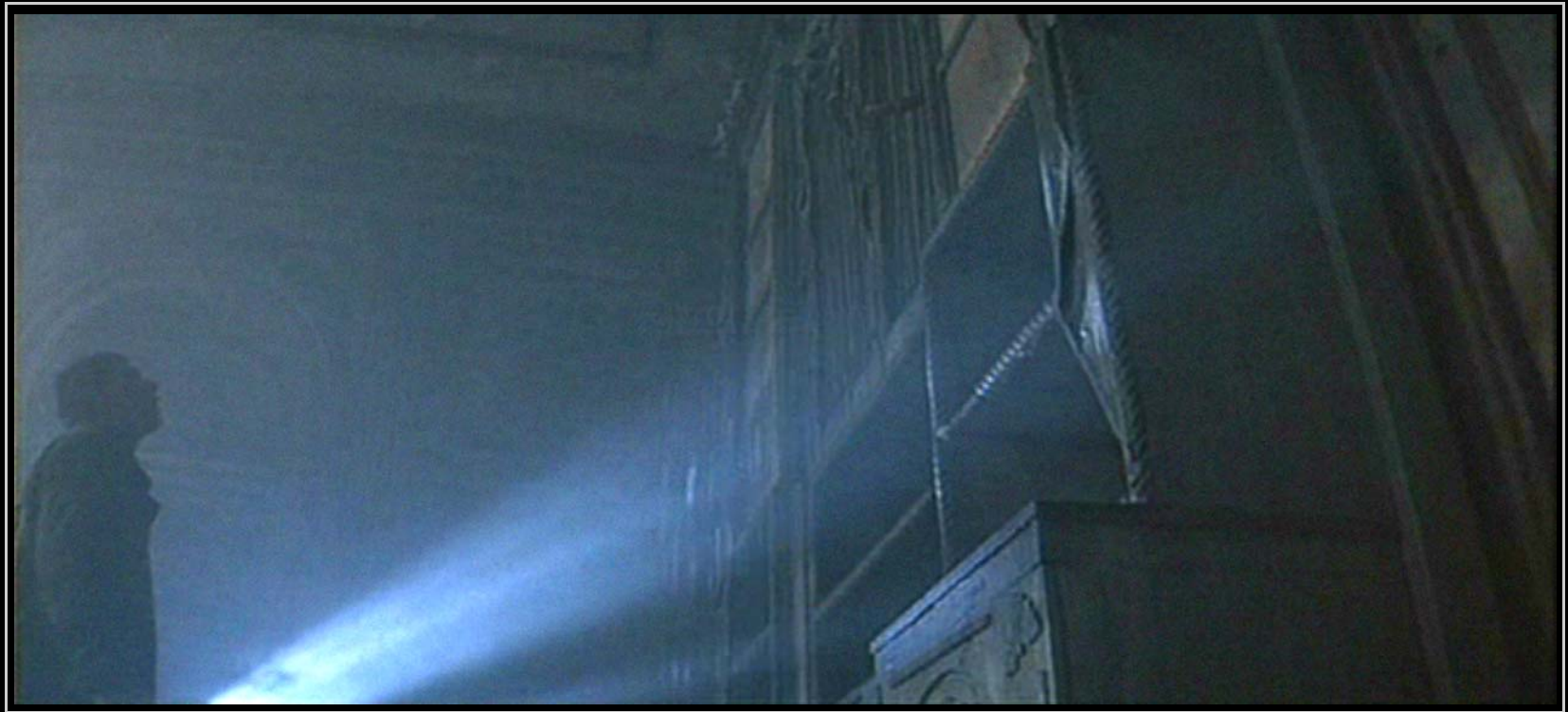
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a hole in the ceiling...
"... How... to stay alive!" Roy continues.

Now Roy can be seen running swiftly down a hallway, shirtless, pantless, wearing only long shorts. As he traverses the length of the hallway he makes loud, animal-like panting noises.

Back in the other room, Deckard is slowly making his way up the front of the bookcase toward the hole in the ceiling. He works hard at finding handholds on the slippery wood as rainwater pours through the hole. With his elbow he breaks some old panes of glass









that are part of the bookcase. Roy lets out another wolf-like howl as Deckard, much to his dismay, drops his blaster. But he's already too far along in his climb to try to retrieve it, knowing also that Roy is not far behind.

Roy, laughing, runs at top speed along a corridor with more slatted windows.

Now Deckard is almost at the top of the book case as Roy stops behind another window, looks between two slats and yells, "I can see you!" Climbing on top of the bookcase, Deckard painfully reaches one arm up into the hole and carefully squeezes his head

and upper body through the narrow opening. He looks around for a moment as the relentless rain continues to pour on top of him. Then he hoists himself the rest of the way out.

In another room, next to a window, Roy struggles with his right hand that is closing uncontrollably, a sign of his impending death. "Not... yet! Not..." he says to himself as he struggles to open his fingers, even using his teeth to try to pry them open.

Deckard, after having made it through the ceiling hole, now finds himself in a dirty, dingy bathroom. Ex-

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hausted, he momentarily sits on the edge of a claw-foot bathtub to wrap a handkerchief around his damaged hand as thunder peals outside.

Roy, still struggling with his own hand, looks around for something he can use to relax the tightened muscles. Looking at the floor he sees the head of an old square-headed nail sticking out of a bare floor joist. He bends down and easily pulls it out. Then, grimacing and grunting with pain he pushes it through the palm of his hand. Not far away Deckard is tying up his hand with a handkerchief, both combatants seemingly in a strange kind of synchronic-



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ity.

"Yes!" Roy exclaims as he examines the nail now sticking out the back of his hand. It's becoming apparent that both he and Deckard are on each side of a tiled bathroom wall, Deckard hears something and looks around to try and get his bearings. Suddenly, he hears a whine accompanied by the head of Roy ramming through the wall opposite where he's standing. Deckard stares wide-eyed at this rather incredible scene as Roy says sternly, eyeing his opponent, "You'd better get it up... or I'm gonna have to kill ya! Unless



you're alive, you can't play and if you don't play..." before continuing, Roy painfully pulls his head back out of the newly-made hole while Deckard frantically looks around for a weapon, finding and wrenching a section of pipe from another wall.

Now Roy is free again and faces Deckard with wild-eyed rage, "Six! Seven! Go to hell or go to heaven!"

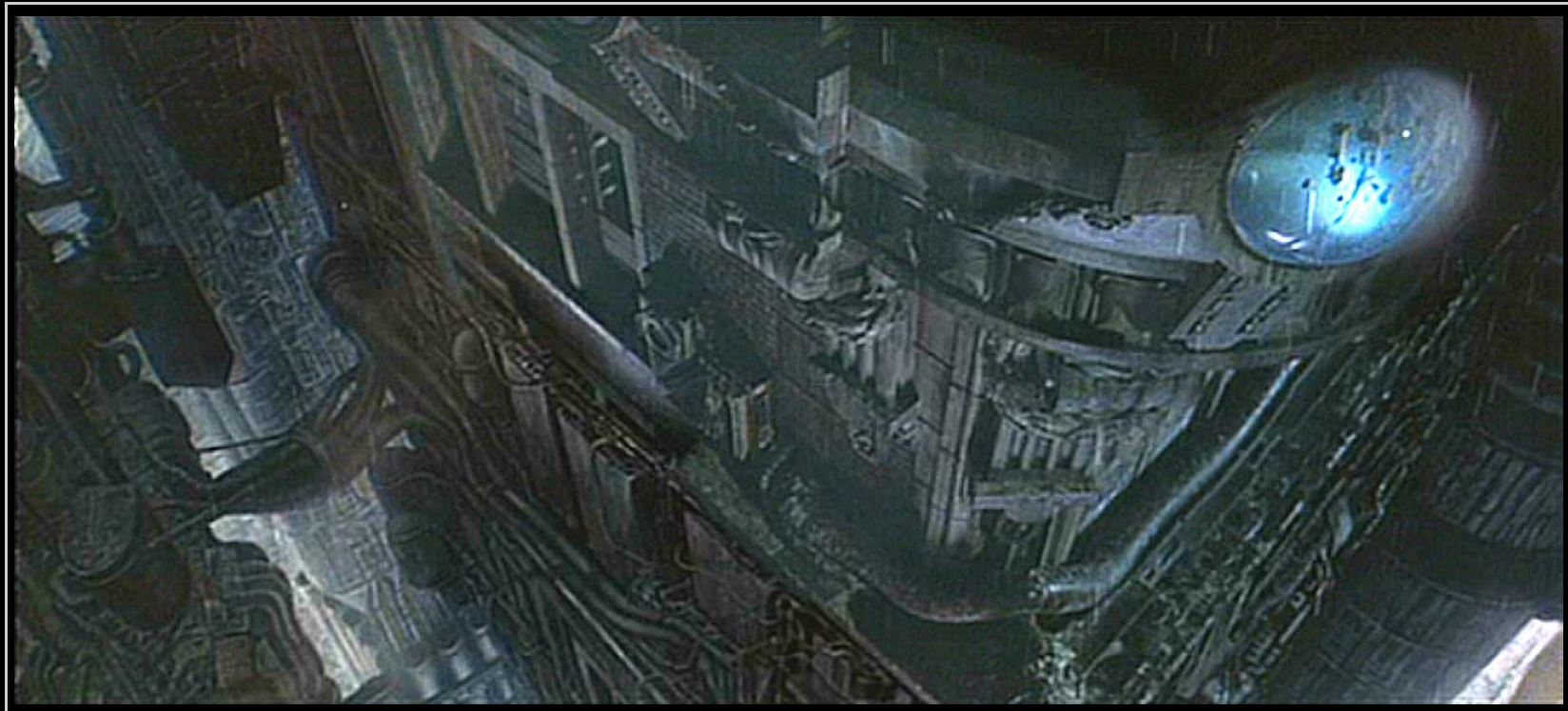
With all his strength, Deckard swings the pipe and smashes it across Roy's forehead, the force knocking Roy back against a window, breaking it. Then Deckard swings again hitting Roy in the face

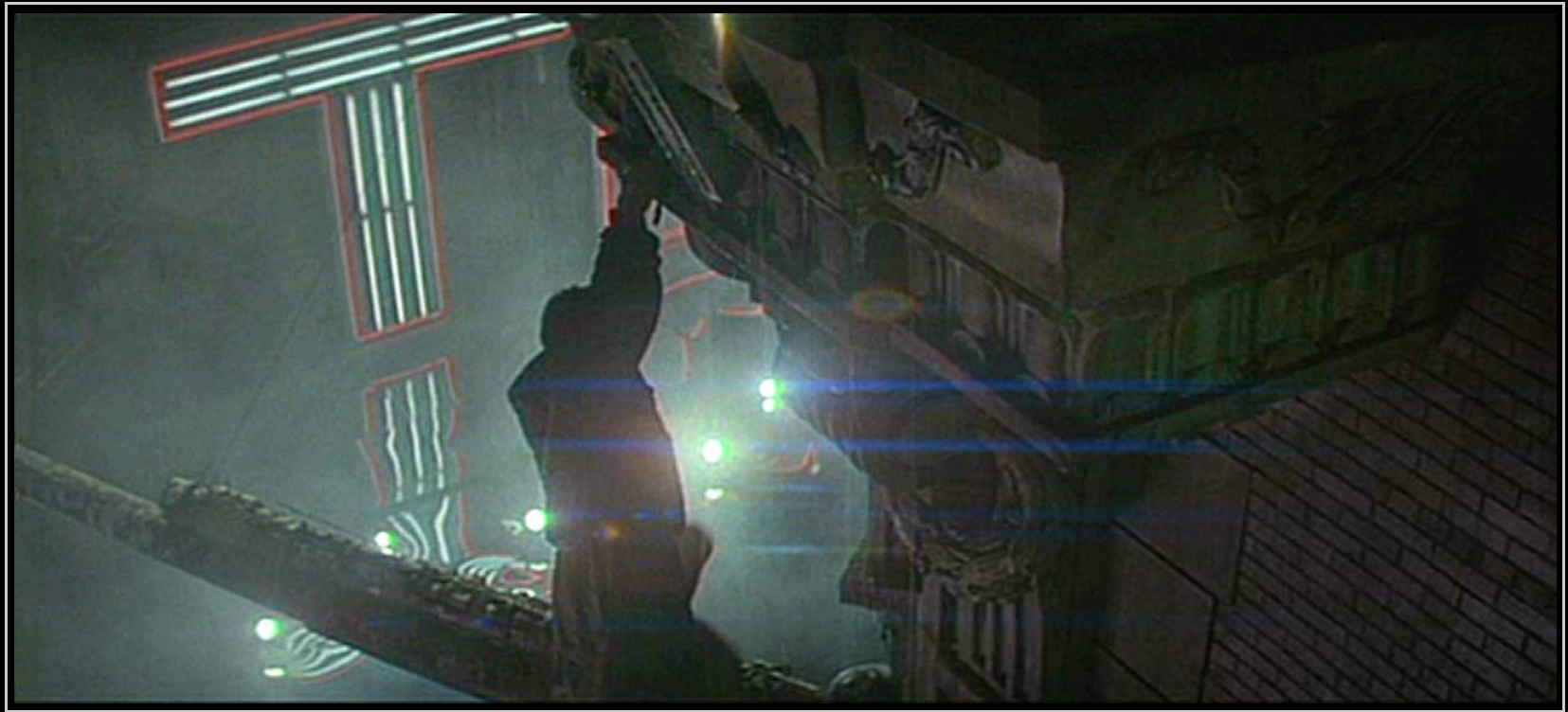
but this time Roy grabs at the pipe, pulling it out of Deckard's hands, at the same time yelling with seeming glee, "That's the spirit!!"

Deckard wildly runs into another room full of pigeons that try to fly away in panic. Roy stays put for the moment, watching as Deckard kicks out a boarded-up window but stops short, realizing he is a long, long way above streets. He then carefully steps out onto the window ledge and grabs for a pipe nearby that swings him out over the abyss... He regains his composure and swings back onto the ledge grabbing for any secure hand-hold he can find.

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Inside, Roy begins howling again and with a grunt, rushes toward another window. Outside, Deckard is making his way carefully, mindful of the wet masonry, around a corner. But he is forced to stop by the scene of Roy kicking out a nearby boarded-up window.

"That hurt!" Roy says to a surprised Deckard, again scrambling to get away. "That was irrational, not to mention, unsportsmanlike. Ha ha ha! Where are you going?" he says as he watches with fascination Deckard painfully climbing up the elaborate outside wall masonry, trying to gain the roof. Finding handholds he inches along



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but slips and barely hangs on as he dangles over the street below.

Roy laughs again, then closes his eyes for a moment, leaning out the window and letting the ever-present rain cascade over his face. Then he darts back inside.

Deckard continues his arduous climb, finally getting his hand over the edge of the roof cornice searching for secure purchase along the slippery stone. Then he hauls himself to safety, momentarily lying on his back, spent, trying to regain some strength. Down below, Roy runs from room to room, look-





ing for his own way out. Deckard, now slowly getting up, briefly looks at his damaged hand, then crawls to his feet amidst puddles of water atop the roof, surrounded by huge rotating windmills. He carefully picks his way between the windmills, while rotating lights cast beams across him and the relentless rain. Then he sees a hatchway in front of a huge neon "TDK" sign and bolts toward it but stops short when the hatchway bursts open and Roy climbs out onto the roof, ready for the final battle.

Without hesitation, Deckard turns, runs toward the edge of the roof and launches himself across

the chasm toward another building. He barely makes it, holding on desperately to a metal bracket that juts out over the street below. Deckard is almost completely out of energy now as he struggles just to hang on, lacking enough strength to pull himself up onto the roof.

Across the way, Roy, holding a white dove in his hand, walks to the edge of the other building, momentarily watching Deckard's struggles. Then he turns, walks back a few paces and prepares himself. He pivots around, pauses and, with a look of determination, takes a run at the building where Deckard

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hangs for his life. Roy easily makes the jump as Deckard watches in resignation.

Roy slowly looks down at Deckard who is beginning to lose all strength, now hanging just by his fingertips. Roy's expression changes to... compassion? Sadness? and says to Deckard, "Quite an experience to live in fear, isn't it? That's what it is to be a slave."

Deckard's right hand slips leaving him with one last, tenuous grip with his left. Roy smiles at this progression of events.

The end has come for Deckard and just before he loses his hold he mus-



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ters one last act of defiance by spitting at Roy. Then he falls...

But, lightning-fast, Roy reaches down and catches Deckard at the wrist. With all his strength, Roy slowly but surely pulls Deckard back from the brink, up and over the cornice then throws him down onto the roof.

Deckard, mustering what little strength he has left, crawls backwards on his behind to come to rest against a masonry pillar, expecting the worst from Roy.

But Roy doesn't attack or even move forward, he simply sits down to eye his counterpart. He,







himself is now beginning to fade, his ultimate fate stealing upon him. He still holds the white dove in his hand, Deckard eyeing him warily.

Roy looks at his exhausted opponent saying with a smile, "I've.... seen things you people wouldn't believe, hmm.

Attack ships on fire off the Shoulder of Orion. I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhauser Gate." Deckard can only watch in mute fascination as Roy's life slowly ebbs away as he continues, "all those... moments, will be lost, in time, like tears... in... rain. Time... to die." He smiles one last time at Deckard, then bows his head and expires, Deckard watching helplessly. The captive dove is released from Roy's hand and flies upwards into the rain-soaked sky.



Deckard sits there for a long time looking at his former adversary, then barely notices as a police spinner rises up and over the ledge to land nearby.

A voice rings out to break Deckard's reverie.... "You've done a man's job, sir!" It's Gaff, leaning on his cane, looking over the odd tableau before him. "I guess you're through, huh?"

"Finished." Deckard replies wearily and musters a faint smile.

Then Gaff throws Deckard's lost blaster toward him, turns and walks carefully back toward his parked spinner, head bent against the pouring

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rain. But he's not finished as he again turns and says loudly, "It's too bad she won't live! But then again, who does??"

Deckard's expression is one of surprise as Gaff leaves the scene.

Back at his apartment, Deckard exits the elevator and slowly walks across the causeway toward his door. When he sees it ajar he stops and looks both ways before entering, checking for anyone else who might be around. Then he swings the door wide, backs up with his blaster out and ready and enters, calling Rachael's name. He warily



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moves through his apartment, searching.... "Rachael?"

He steps into his bedroom and sees a form under a sheet on his bed.... "Rachael?" He slowly approaches and with his gun hand takes the sheet and carefully lifts it to reveal a silent Rachael, as if in repose. He leans down and rests his cheek on her head, letting out a sigh of relief as he happily realizes she's still alive. He tenderly kisses her cheek as she turns her head to look up at him.

"Do you love me?" he says to her.

"I love you."





"Do you trust me?"

"I trust you."

Then he leans down again to kiss her.

A bit later the door to Deckard's apartment slides open to reveal a wary blade runner, checking the hall outside. "Rachael," he says. Rachael, now dressed and wearing an overcoat steps into view. Deckard motions her to stop as he moves out into the corridor toward the elevator door. He motions her to step forward and as she quickly walks past him to step into the elevator, her foot knocks over a small form that was standing, unnoticed, on the corridor floor.

Deckard now spies the little shape and bends down to pick it up. Surprised, he sees it is an origami folded in the shape of a unicorn, an obvious clue that his old nemesis, Gaff, had been there. As he examines the little, silvery unicorn, Gaff's earlier words ring through his mind.... "It's too bad she won't live! But then again, who does?"

Deckard nods his head knowingly as he crushes the unicorn in his fist. He then strides toward the elevator where Rachael is waiting. The door closes....

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THE END

