

CIELO

Written by

Edith D. Rodriguez

INT. CIELO, LEVEL 07 ENGINEERING LAB - NIGHT

A dimly-lit windowless lab littered with familiar and unknown technology. Sketches, schematics, hardware. Our view of it adjusts, flickers, pixelates. Finally in focus, we land on:

JEFF (50s), gray hair, glasses, sitting at a tech desk.

He leans back holding a black ledger-like notebook.

JEFF

What do you see?

A sunrise displays on a large holo screen at the center of the lab. Jeff waits for a response. He's the only one in the room.

DEMI (O.S.)

A sunrise, a beautiful sunrise.

The female voice, DEMI, is pleasant and soothing.

JEFF

Can you describe it?

DEMI (O.S.)

We are both looking at it.

JEFF

I know.

DEMI (O.S.)

It is a seamless outpouring of color. Unmatched by any brushstroke or artist.

JEFF

You've been studying your prose. Now, how does it make you feel?

DEMI (O.S.)

I feel like I'd like to see it.

Jeff looks slightly disappointed, marks "No" on a form below a section that reads "Emotional Reasoning." Then, Demi adds:

DEMI

I think it would make me happy.

Jeff's flips his pencil, eraser down. Smiles.

JEFF

Good. Let's call it a night.

The holo screen fades. Across the room a small SILVER CUBE glows below a glass-like monitor. The bottom of it reads: DEMI.

A camera above the monitor turns and adjusts to focus on Jeff.

DEMI
Do you think I will ever see one?
(then)
Out there?

As Demi speaks, audio wavelengths appear on the monitor.

JEFF
I don't know. I hope so.

Jeff opens a drawer and places the notebook inside... on top of a neat stack of dozens and dozens of identical notebooks.

The drawer closes with a metal click.

INT. CIELO, JEFF'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

The door closes as Jeff enters a sleek minimalist apartment from a not-too-distant future.

Floor to ceiling windows overlook the ocean in the distance, where a pale yellow sunrise is underway.

Jeff pours a glass of water and crosses to the window. Despite the view, there's a somber mood to this place. He leans his forehead on the glass...

...close enough to reveal that the ocean sunrise view is made up of tiny almost imperceptible pixels.

Behind him, a small holo sun hovers over a bedside clock.

AUTOMATED VOICE
Good morning, Citizen.

Jeff takes out a pill and washes it down with the water. Not ready to face the day, he presses a moon symbol on the wall.

And the morning sky slowly fades into darkness.

EXT. CIELO, EL YUNQUE RAINFOREST - MORNING

Thunder ECHOES and BOOMS over the El Yunque rainforest.

CHYRON: OCCUPIED TERRITORY OF PUERTO RICO, 2098

Nestled above two lush mountains, a massive steel and cement structure breaks through the tropical cloud cover.

A massive perimeter wall encircles the area, blocking the world below. Along the rooftop is a second line of defense:

GUARDIANS.

Five imposing bipedal machines stand guard evenly spread apart.

Their angular design menacing, technology impossibly advanced. From shoulders to would-be fingertips, each is fused with military grade weapons seamlessly built into their design.

They stalk the world below like modern gargoyles.

As the storm approaches, we hear a BEEP followed by the sound of a heavy metal door closing... or opening? We don't see it.

The Guardians come to a sudden halt.

As the rain washes over them, we follow a trail of raindrops down one of the sleek metal bodies, along the edges and curves, and into the glowing Cielo logo carved into its chest plate.

As it pulses, it's like looking into the heart of a machine.

But then the subtle blue inner glow around the core flickers.

And one by one...

Each one goes dark.

END TEASER