

"Sides"

by
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This room is very small - not much larger than a closet. There are no visible windows or doors. The ceiling is very high up - more than two dozen feet from the floor. From it, hangs a single dull, flickering light bulb, which casts flittering shadows on the bare walls. A single wooden chair is bolted to the checkerboard floor. Slumped unconscious on that chair is TREVOR LLOYD. He is in his mid-40s. His hair and clothes are disheveled.

He starts to stir and stretch.

LLOYD

(groggily coming to)

Oh. . . boy!

(beat)

I *have* to stop drinking the house wine at Ernesto's. It packs *quite* a punch.

Lloyd comes to and looks about, taking in his surroundings.

LLOYD

What the. . . Where am I?

(calling out)

What is this place? Answer me!

A great, booming VOICE is heard, seemingly emanating from everywhere.

VOICE

Trevor Lloyd, agent of the Confederation, you have been found, in a fair trial, to be an enemy of the -

LLOYD

Trial? I don't remember any trial. Show yourself. Who are you?

VOICE

I am the Voice of the Alliance. You, Mr. Lloyd, agent of the Confederation, are my prisoner.

LLOYD

Where am I?

VOICE

You are a prisoner of the Alliance, against which you have committed countless crimes.

LLOYD

The Alliance? I didn't know there were enough of you left to get a crap game together, let alone to take prisoners.

Lloyd starts patting down various spots on his suit jacket, one after the other.

VOICE

Do not bother to look for your suicide pills. We have taken them from you.

Lloyd reaches down to his right shoe.

VOICE

Even *that* one. We know all the usual hiding places.

Lloyd gets up from his seat and takes a couple of steps, which is about all the small room will allow.

VOICE

Sit down.

LLOYD

I don't take orders from *anyone* with the Alliance, and I don't listen to a voice.

Lloyd starts dashing his head against one of the walls, opening some small cuts on his face.

VOICE

Sit down, Mr. Lloyd. You are being foolish.

LLOYD

(growing winded)
You won't keep me in this cage
. . . I'll *kill* myself first. . .
There are ways other than suicide pills!

VOICE

I said *sit* down.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD

(more winded)

Come in here and make me, or are you a *coward*?

VOICE

I can stop you from here. This is your final warning. Stop this ridiculous behavior now or you will regret it.

Lloyd continues his attempted suicide.

LLOYD

(winded)

Go to hell!

VOICE

Remember that I gave you a chance.

Visible electricity crackles along the floor, jumping onto Lloyd's body. He screams in pain, but continues his attempted suicide - as best he can.

VOICE

The floor is electrified. The chair is the only grounded place. Sit down.

In great pain, Lloyd feebly carries on.

LLOYD

(shuddering)

You won't hurt me! . . . I wouldn't still be alive if you didn't want something.

VOICE

The current is at a low setting. I can easily increase it if you continue to disobey.

LLOYD

(shuddering)

Like I said: go to hell!

The electrical current along the floor increases. Lloyd shakes as the arc hits him. He screams in *great* pain and drops to the floor, still conscious.

VOICE

Return to your seat!

(CONTINUED)

Lloyd slowly crawls to the chair, hoisting himself onto it with great effort. The electricity stops abruptly.

VOICE

You have made a wise decision.

LLOYD

(breathing heavily)
Don't be too proud of yourself
. . . It was *my* decision. . . You
didn't enter into it.

VOICE

If you say so. It is the duty of
every Confederation spy to attempt
suicide if he falls into the hands
of his sworn enemy, the Alliance.
Your superiors would be proud of
the. . . *improvised* attempt you
made.

(beat)

Would you like our doctors to tend
to your cuts and bruises?

LLOYD

(catching his breath)
No! I'm not having any Alliance
butcher touch me.

VOICE

Butcher? Our doctors are highly
trained medical men and women who -

LLOYD

Who I wouldn't trust to look at my
sick cat.

VOICE

I see the Confederation is still
engaging in propaganda about the
harmless people of the Alliance.

LLOYD

You didn't bring me here for a
political discussion.

(beat)

How *did* I get here?

VOICE

I'm not surprised you don't
remember. The crystals have been
known to have a certain amnestic
effect.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (4)

1

LLOYD
(reflecting)
I remember going to Ernesto's for
dinner right from the airport. It
had been a long flight and I was
really hungry. . .

FADE TO:

2 INT. ERNESTO'S RESTAURANT - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

2

The restaurant is bustling with activity. Violin music is
playing in the background, as happy customers eat and
drink their fills.

ERNESTO, a large, jovial man, greets Lloyd as he walks
through the restaurant's front door.

ERNESTO
(with open arms)
Trevor Lloyd, my friend. It is so
good to see you again. It's been
too long.

Ernesto briefly gets Lloyd in a bear hug.

LLOYD
It's good to be here, Ernesto.
I've missed chef Mario's cooking.

ERNESTO
You have been traveling again?

LLOYD
Yes, I have - extensively. I just
got back. My business requires a
lot of traveling.

ERNESTO
So you have mentioned.

LLOYD
I saw your special on the board
outside. It sounds delicious.

ERNESTO
It is. I had some a little
earlier. Mario has outdone
himself. Would you like your
regular table?

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD

Please.

ERNESTO

I will seat you personally. Shall
I bring some of the house wine?

LLOYD

That would be *perfect*.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ERNESTO'S RESTAURANT - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Ernesto approaches Lloyd, who is at his customary table.
Several empty dishes and glasses are in front of him.

ERNESTO

Are you enjoying your dinner?

LLOYD

(between bites)
It's *fabulous*. You should add this
special to your regular menu.

ERNESTO

Perhaps we will. I will speak with
Mario about that.

Lloyd suddenly puts down his fork and looks strangely
ill.

LLOYD

(with great effort)
Uhm. . . Ernesto. . .

ERNESTO

(concerned)
Is something wrong? You have gone
white as a ghost.

LLOYD

(with great effort)
I'm not. . .

A tall man, walking by, suddenly stops. BRADLEY is
surprised to see Lloyd.

BRADLEY

Well, as I live and breathe,
Trevor Lloyd! Long time no see,
old buddy.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD
(softly; with great
effort)
I. . . I don't. . .

BRADLEY
Are you OK, Trev?

ERNESTO
I think he's taken ill.

BRADLEY
That's too bad.

ERNESTO
He said he just got back from a
long trip.

BRADLEY
Could be jet lag.

ERNESTO
You know Mr. Lloyd?

LLOYD
(weakly)
But. . . don't. . .

BRADLEY
Know him? We grew up together!
(beat)
Look, Ernesto, I was just leaving.
How about I take Trev home? His
house is right on my way.

ERNESTO
That would be most kind of you.

With some effort, Bradley gets Lloyd out of his chair and
throws one of Lloyd's arms around his shoulder.

BRADLEY
Come on, old buddy. I think it's
time for you to get some shut eye.
You'll feel better in the morning.

Lloyd is like a rag doll. He cannot even lift his head
up.

LLOYD
(weakly)
Er-nes-to. . . I. . .

(CONTINUED)

ERNESTO

Thank you, Mr. Bradley.

BRADLEY

It's the least I can do for an old pal. Let me settle his tab. What does he owe you?

ERNESTO

Oh, no, no, no! I can't allow that.

BRADLEY

But he ate all this food.

ERNESTO

Mr. Lloyd is a regular customer. He and I can speak of this at some other time. When he is well again, please tell him I was asking about him.

BRADLEY

I'll do that. Come on, old buddy.

Bradley starts walking Lloyd out of the restaurant.

LLOYD

(very weakly)

No. . . I. . .

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A SMALL, STRANGE ROOM - LATER

Lloyd is seated in his chair.

LLOYD

You put something in the wine.

VOICE

In the *food*, actually.

LLOYD

I can't believe Ernesto would do this to me.

VOICE

It was not him. Our people bribed one of the waiters to put some crystals in your food.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VOICE (CONT'D)

The boy was more than willing to take the money.

LLOYD

(angrily)

If I ever find out who he is. . .

VOICE

You will not, and soon it won't matter. He will be dead shortly. I hope he spent his bribe money quickly.

LLOYD

Why kill him?

VOICE

There can be no loose ends.

LLOYD

What do you want with me? You should know that I won't tell you anything. You won't get any information from me except my service number.

VOICE

We do not *need* you to tell us anything. We can get any information we desire from you with our mind sifter. What we want is for you to join our side.

LLOYD

(chuckles)

You have to be kidding.

VOICE

I am quite serious.

LLOYD

Why would I do that?

VOICE

For reasons that will become clear. To escape this room, for one.

LLOYD

I've been in worse places.

(CONTINUED)

VOICE

Really? Let's see if you still believe that after the days, weeks, and months go by. You'll notice there are no sanitation facilities here. We have likewise made no provisions for food or water.

LLOYD

That's against the Bursatz Treaty on the treatment of prisoners of war.

VOICE

We. . . don't. . . care. Besides, no one knows that you are here. You are not a prisoner of war; you were not captured in a military action. I suppose one could say that you have been. . . *kidnapped*.

LLOYD

That's a pretty fine line to tread.

VOICE

The Alliance has always treated your POWs by the rules laid down in the Bursatz Treaty. You will not receive such consideration. We can keep you alive indefinitely, against your will if necessary.

LLOYD

I won't join your side - ever. You may as well not bother trying.

VOICE

It is no bother. Over time, you *will* wear down.

LLOYD

Don't bet on it. I'll never wear down enough to join the likes of you.

VOICE

We shall see. We will have a *lot* of time together.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD
(sarcastically)
Lucky me.

VOICE
I have neglected to mention one
special feature this room has.

LLOYD
Aside from the electrified floors?

VOICE
Yes. Watch the wall directly in
front of you.

There is an odd sound, like wind chimes. Very gradually,
the wall in front of the seated spy starts to *thin*. Lloyd
looks at this quizzically.

LLOYD
What's going on?

VOICE
The wall's molecular structure is
breaking down.

We faintly see and hear many angry people on the other
side of the thinning wall. They *slowly* become more
visible and loud.

VOICE
There is an angry mob outside of
this room - a crowd of people to
whom you have brought much sorrow
and tears by your spying against
the Alliance.

LLOYD
(dismissively)
I never hurt anyone.

VOICE
Your reconnaissance actions
allowed your Confederation's
military commanders to plot deadly
attacks on the innocent people of
the Alliance. You are *hardly*
blameless! Those people know you
are in this room. They are widows,
widowers, parents who have buried
their children when they could
locate the small bones left from
your incendiary bombs.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VOICE (CONT'D)

That mob would *dearly* love to get into this room and have their vengeance on you.

LLOYD

You would never. . .

VOICE

All that remains between those vengeful people and the relative safety of that chair is a wall - a *porous* wall - that is under my control. From my panel, I can make the wall's atoms as dense or thin as I choose. I can even drop the wall entirely with the press of a button.

LLOYD

You're bluffing. You want me to switch sides. You would never do -

The shimmering sound grows louder. The wall noticeably becomes even thinner. GRED, an angry man, is heard.

GRED

(yelling from the other side)

There he is. I'm gonna kill him!

Gred's burly arm pops through a weak spot in the thinning wall and grabs Lloyd by the throat.

GRED

I'm gonna crush your scrawny neck, you murdering scum!

The crowd grows excited and begins cheering. Lloyd squirms in his chair, attempting to remove Gred's hand from his throat. He gags and struggles to breathe. Even with both hands, he cannot free himself.

VOICE

Does *that* feel like bluffing?

LLOYD

(gurgling)

Get him. . . to stop!

VOICE

The man with his hand around your throat is named Gred.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VOICE (CONT'D)

He lost his only child in the
Battle of Clopim, where *your*
spying led to an impressive kill
ratio for your commanders.

LLOYD

(gurgling)

I. . . can't. . . *breathe!*

VOICE

I've only lowered the wall's
density enough to allow his arm to
enter your cell.

(beat)

Imagine if I were to drop the wall
entirely. Angry, bereaved people
would rush this room and tear the
flesh from your bones like hungry
wolves attacking a fresh kill.

LLOYD

(gurgling)

Get him to. . . let. . . *go!*

VOICE

That will do, Gred. Let him go
now.

GRED

I'm gonna kill him for what the
Confederation did to my boy!

VOICE

You have been warned.

The wind chime sound grows to full. The wall solidifies
to the point where we can no longer see or hear the mob
outside. Gred screams as, with a sickening crunch, his
arm is severed by the solidifying wall and drops to the
floor of the small room.

LLOYD

(gasping for breath)

You chopped off his arm!. . . He
didn't get it out in time!

With disgust, Lloyd gets off of his chair, picks up
Gred's bloody, severed arm, and tosses it to the corner
of his cell.

LLOYD

(slowly getting his
breath back)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

LLOYD (CONT'D)

I can't believe you did that to him! You people really do have no respect for life.

VOICE

Gred's inability to react in time is not my fault.

(beat)

Since this room has no sanitation facilities, his severed arm will remain where it landed. Let it serve as a reminder to you of the danger that lurks outside. In time, you may find it a tasty morsel.

LLOYD

You're *sick*!

VOICE

Your choice is now clear. You were ready to take your own life to avoid becoming an agent of the Alliance. If you refuse to join us, I can drop the wall and allow everyone outside to enter. Will you be so willing to die at *their* hands as you were at your own?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A SMALL, STRANGE ROOM - LATER

Lloyd is seated on his chair. Aside from a few creaks as he occasionally shifts his weight, there is silence.

VOICE

Mr. Lloyd?

There is no response.

VOICE

(emphatically)

Mr. Lloyd?

LLOYD

Shhh! I'm resting.

VOICE

Resting?

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD

There isn't much more I can do in this shoebox.

VOICE

You could be out of this shoebox in a minute if you make the correct decision.

LLOYD

So you've mentioned.

VOICE

Do you know how long you've been here?

LLOYD

No.

VOICE

Your troops have carried out several more raids on nearby Alliance villages.

LLOYD

Glad to hear it.

VOICE

Dozens of people have been killed; many more are injured, including children.

LLOYD

The fortunes of war.

VOICE

Your people are beginning to suspect that you've been snatched. We've heard chatter on the radio.

LLOYD

Good - then I'll be found soon.

VOICE

You have missed several meals.

LLOYD

I've been wanting to drop a few pounds anyway.

VOICE

You are very cool under pressure. My congratulations.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VOICE (CONT'D)

I can see why you are one of the
Confederation's top men.

(beat)

Now it is time for the next step
in our journey together.

Some heretofore-unseen gaps in one of the side walls
open, and white gas sprays into Lloyd's cell.

LLOYD

What's that?

VOICE

Anesthetine gas. Its effects, I'm
told, are much like drifting off
to sleep. Breathe deeply please.

Lloyd hurriedly takes in a deep gulp of air and covers
his mouth with his right hand.

VOICE

Oh, come now, Mr. Lloyd. How long
do you think you can hold your
breath? A minute?

The force of the gas increases.

VOICE

You will eventually *have* to
breathe. When you do, your lungs
will fill with the gas. It is time
for our doctors - excuse me, our
butchers - to get the information
we want.

After a minute or so, Lloyd's hand drops from his mouth.
He swoons and falls to the floor.

FADE TO:

Lloyd is lying in a heap on the checkerboard floor. He
begins to stir. A medium-sized bandage is visible on his
forehead.

VOICE

Time to wake up, Mr. Lloyd.

Lloyd groans and sits up on the floor, his back against
the chair. He rubs his aching forehead and discovers the
bandage.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD
(coming to)
What did you do to me?

VOICE
It's only a bandage.

Lloyd struggles to remove the bandage.

LLOYD
(angrily)
What did your *butchers* do to me?

VOICE
Leave the bandage on. It's for
your own -

Lloyd grunts as he tears the bandage from his forehead,
revealing a large wound.

VOICE
. . . your own good.

Lloyd gingerly feels the wound with his fingers. A small
bit of blood appears on his fingertips.

LLOYD
(angrily)
What did you do to me? Answer me!

VOICE
You know very well that our mind
sifter attaches to the skull to
penetrate the brain.

LLOYD
(incredulously)
You tapped into my *brain*?

VOICE
To get the information we wanted.

LLOYD
You *are* butchers. All of you!

VOICE
I witnessed the procedure. It was
fascinating. You have an
incredibly ordered brain. We were
able to get all the information we
needed. . . and more.

Lloyd stands and starts pacing the room.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD

(sarcastically)

Good for you.

VOICE

Your mother's name was Estelle.
Your first pet was a dog named
Sparky. Your first girlfriend was -

LLOYD

Why do you need to know that? That
stuff has *nothing* to do with my
career.

VOICE

The mind sifter merely copies what
we select to the computer's
database. With such a prize as
you, we had no way of knowing what
information might prove useful.
Our doctors instructed the sifter
to copy *everything* from your
brain. They're sorting through the
database now to separate the wheat
from the chaff.

LLOYD

You'll gain nothing, you know. My
people suspect I've been taken.
They'll change *all* their plans.
The information you took from me
is already obsolete. You're losing
the war, and you'll keep losing
the war.

VOICE

Don't you think we know that?

LLOYD

(surprised)

You admit it?

VOICE

Of course we're losing the war. We
know we're losing the war. Every
day is a struggle to feed the
women and children left fatherless
and homeless from the destruction
your Confederation has wrought. We
are well aware that if things keep
going as they are, we will
ultimately lose.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD

Then why all this trouble?

VOICE

We know what you have done for your side. Many of their most successful campaigns against our people would never have been possible without your reconnaissance. We need more than the information in your head. We need you.

LLOYD

I told you to forget it.

VOICE

If you're telling the truth about your military commanders rendering the information in your head useless -

LLOYD

I am.

VOICE

Then what we truly need is your skill as a spy. If you come over to the Alliance -

LLOYD

The word is "defect."

VOICE

Yes, it *is*. If you defect and focus your skills toward the preservation of the Alliance as you have done for the Confederation for so many years, it could be the turning point of the war for us.

LLOYD

Don't count on it.

VOICE

I haven't told you how well we treat our spies. They are regarded as the finest members of our citizenry. Children idolize them for their daring exploits. Some people pray to them or ask the Almighty to keep them from harm.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VOICE (CONT'D)

Our spies live in the most
beautiful homes we have to offer,
eat only the finest food, and keep
company with only the most
beautiful of women.

Lloyd stops pacing and looks up to the ceiling.

LLOYD

No wonder you're losing the war.
You've got your spies doing
everything *but* spying.

VOICE

Mr. Lloyd, in some finite period
of time, our doctors and military
men will succeed in going through
all the information we copied from
your brain. We will know what we
want to know - even if it *may* be
rendered obsolete.

LLOYD

It will be.

VOICE

After that, if you still adamantly
refuse to join us. . . my
superiors will see very little
reason to allow you to live.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A SMALL, STRANGE ROOM - LATER

Lloyd has dozed off on his chair.

Suddenly, the wall thins. The crowd laughs as they grab
LANA, a female bystander.

LANA

(screaming)

Let me go! Take your hands off me!

They throw her into Lloyd's cell. She nearly falls upon
entering, but is able to regain her footing. The wall
quickly solidifies behind her.

Lloyd wakes suddenly and rushes to her.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD

(anxiously)
Are you alright?

LANA

I *think* so.
(beat)
Who are you?

LLOYD

The name's Trevor. What are you
doing here?

LANA

I don't know. That crowd outside
. . . they're sure mad at
something.

LLOYD

So I've seen.

LANA

I was walking by on my way to
work. Some big guy grabbed me and
threw me in here.

LLOYD

For no reason?

LANA

He said something like, "Let's see
how *she* does."

(beat)
What is this place?

LLOYD

It's my cell - my home away from
home.

LANA

It sure is *small*. My apartment's
bigger.

She spots the severed arm in the corner of the cell and
lets out a shrill scream. She begins eyeing Lloyd with
great caution.

LANA

(nervously)
Is that. . . what I *think* it is?

LLOYD

Yes, but I didn't do it.

(CONTINUED)

LANA

(nervously)

Then who did? I don't see anyone
else in here.

LLOYD

What's your name?

LANA

(uneasily)

Lana.

LLOYD

Lana, you have to believe me: I
didn't do that. I swear I won't
harm you.

LANA

(emphatically)

I want to get out of here.

LLOYD

So do I.

Lana raps frantically on the now-solid wall for a few
seconds.

LANA

(confused)

Isn't this the way I came in?

LLOYD

It is.

LANA

But it's a *solid* wall. How. . .

LLOYD

The wall can be dropped or raised
at will.

LANA

(confused)

I don't. . .

LLOYD

Let me try to explain.

(beat)

My name is Trevor Lloyd. Does that
sound at all familiar to you?

(CONTINUED)

LANA

No. Should it? Are you a movie star or something?

LLOYD

(chuckles)

No - nothing like that. I'm a Confederation spy.

LANA

Are you any good?

LLOYD

Very good.

LANA

I don't have much time to follow the war. I know that I *should* be more concerned about the fighting, but between work and home, I simply don't have the time. I only wish it were over.

LLOYD

Me too.

(beat)

I was kidnapped and brought here. My jailer is trying to break me and make me switch sides.

LANA

Your *jailer*? I don't see anyone else.

Lloyd gestures toward the ceiling.

LLOYD

He's up there.

LANA

Up. . . where?

LLOYD

Somewhere above us - up near the ceiling, I think. He controls the wall.

(calling)

What's wrong, inquisitor? Have you lost your voice? Cat got your tongue?

(CONTINUED)

LANA

(confused)

Who are you calling to?

LLOYD

Him. He's up there, believe you me. He's never been at a loss for words before.

LANA

(unconvinced)

And *he's* holding you here against your will?

LLOYD

Yes.

LANA

Who is he?

LLOYD

I don't know. I've never seen him. Some Alliance big shot, I suppose.

(calling)

Is she part of your game? I'm not going for it! I told you I won't defect!

LANA

I don't want to be here. I want to go home to my little girl. Can *I* talk to this guy?

LLOYD

You can try.

Lana takes a couple of steps and looks up hopefully.

LANA

(calling)

Hey, up there! I want to get out! I'm here by mistake! Open the door and let me go!

LLOYD

He seems to have laryngitis all of a sudden.

LANA

That's a nasty cut on your forehead.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD

He and his pals did that to me.
Some machine they call a mind
sifter.

LANA

Does it hurt?

LLOYD

A little.

(beat)

I'm sorry I can't offer you
anything to eat. My jailer hasn't
fed me since I've been here.

LANA

You haven't *eaten*?

LLOYD

They've knocked me out and given
me some shots to keep me going.
It's all part of their game to get
me to come over to their side.

(beat)

All I can offer you is a place to
sit. My chair is all I have.

LANA

If they've come in here, there
must be a door. We should look for
it.

LLOYD

Believe me, I have. They must get
in through the wall. I've been up
and down every inch of these walls
as far and as low as I can reach.
I've found nothing.

LANA

(scared)

How long will I be here?

LLOYD

I don't know. I don't even know
why you're here. He probably
knows.

LANA

I'm *not* part of this.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD

You may be a part of it and not even know.

Lana takes a good look around the cell.

LANA

(nervously)
I don't like it here. It's cold, and, with all the shadows, it's spooky.

LLOYD

I'm not crazy about the place either. I'll try to keep you safe.

LANA

Thank you.

LLOYD

But, Lana, if he drops the wall again, I can't say what might happen.

LANA

(scared)
I understand.

DISSOLVE TO:

Lloyd is asleep on the floor. Lana is asleep on the chair.

With a low shimmering sound, the wall thins. The crowd from before is still visible outside, but they are quiet now. A MAN's arm reaches in and grabs Lana by the ankle. He starts dragging her out of the cell. She wakes suddenly and tries to grab at the chair.

MAN

(from outside)
Got her!

LANA

Let me go! Trevor! *Help!*

LLOYD

(groggily waking)
Lana. . . wh-what is it?

(CONTINUED)

Lana, clawing uselessly at the checkerboard floor as the man pulls her along, is nearly outside.

LANA
He's got me! *Help!*

Lloyd quickly jumps to his feet.

LLOYD
(urgently)
Hold on!

LANA
(yelling)
Trevor!

As soon as Lana is out of the cell, the wall quickly solidifies. Lloyd runs into it face first, re-opening the wound on his forehead and falling to the floor. Blood begins to ooze from his forehead.

LLOYD
(screaming)
Lana!

VOICE
She is *gone*, Mr. Lloyd.

LLOYD
You're back?

VOICE
I was never away - only *quiet*. I have been watching the two of you the whole time.

LLOYD
Don't you hurt her!

VOICE
She will not be harmed.
(beat)
Did you enjoy having companionship again?

LLOYD
So it *was* a trick?

VOICE
As an Alliance spy, you would have *much* companionship.

LLOYD

No!

VOICE

I was afraid you'd say that. As I knew they would, my superiors have told me that you are to be done away with if you do not agree to defect immediately. Now is the time to decide.

LLOYD

Or you'll do what?

VOICE

My order is to drop the wall and allow the mob to enter. It will be up to those bereaved people if your death is quick or interminable.

(beat)

This is *absolutely* your last chance.

(slowly)

Will you join us?

LLOYD

(adamantly)

No.

VOICE

A shame.

(beat)

I'd give you a few seconds to prepare, but then how does a man prepare to be torn to bits?

LLOYD

I don't need any preparation. Drop the phony concern *and* the wall.

Lloyd sits proudly in his chair, awaiting his death. After a few seconds, he starts to breathe nervously. He shuts his eyes.

The wall begins to thin. We hear and see the angry mob. Their noise stops quickly, as though turned off, and there are a few odd seconds of silence.

Lloyd, confused, opens his eyes just a bit. The angry mob has vanished. He sees three people, in Confederation uniforms, approaching him - including his female COLONEL. She kneels beside Lloyd's chair.

(CONTINUED)

COLONEL

You can open your eyes now,
Trevor.

Lloyd slowly and cautiously opens his eyes. His old friends, FRED and JOHN, are looking at him, concerned.

LLOYD

(longish beat)
Colonel? Fred? John?

FRED & JOHN

(together)
Hiya, Trev.

LLOYD

You got here *just* in time! I was
done for. Talk about the cavalry!

COLONEL

You were never in danger.

LLOYD

Of course I was!

COLONEL

Come in here, Agent Lockhart.

LOCKHART approaches through what was the porous wall. When he speaks, Lloyd recognizes his voice as the voice of his Alliance jailer.

COLONEL

Say hello to Agent Lloyd.

LOCKHART

Hello, Lloyd. It's good to finally
meet you in person.

LLOYD

It's *you*.
(beat)
What the hell is going on here?

COLONEL

All of this has been a test. You
are still in Confederation
territory.

LLOYD

(befuddled)
But Gred's severed arm, Lana -

(CONTINUED)

COLONEL

All staged.

LLOYD

(irritated)

Why - and why *me*?

COLONEL

We needed to test your loyalty.

LLOYD

(angrily)

My loyalty? I've been a model spy for years! What right do you have to -

COLONEL

We have intelligence that at least one of our people is an enemy agent.

LLOYD

And you thought it was *me*? Come on, Angie, you know me better than that!

COLONEL

The intel was good. We had to look into it. The safety of the Confederation was at stake. We couldn't rule anyone out - not even *you*.

LLOYD

I can't *believe* this! Do you know what you put me through? What am I saying? Of *course* you do. . . you did it!

COLONEL

Every agent will be tested. I'm proud to say that you've passed.

LLOYD

(exasperated)

I. . .

COLONEL

You must want a shower and a meal.

LLOYD

You *bet* I do!

(CONTINUED)

Lloyd uneasily gets out of the chair. He shrugs off the Colonel's offer of assistance and walks shakily out of his cell and into the night.

FADE TO:

As in Lloyd's previous visit, many diners are scattered around the restaurant, enjoying themselves. Ernesto greets Lloyd as he walks inside.

ERNESTO

Mr. Lloyd, *wonderful* to see you again!

LLOYD

And you, Ernesto.

ERNESTO

You are well?

LLOYD

Yes. I'm sorry about what happened the last time I was here.

ERNESTO

Not to worry.

LLOYD

My doctor said that my, uhm, blood sugar had dropped very low. I'd been flying so much, I had forgotten to eat. I'm sorry for any trouble I caused you.

ERNESTO

Tsk! Tsk! It is already forgotten. As long as you are well.

LLOYD

And I want to pay you for that aborted meal of mine.

ERNESTO

Of course, but we can speak of that later.

Ernesto gestures at Lloyd's bandaged forehead.

ERNESTO

You are injured.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD

This? It's nothing. I slipped on the ice.

ERNESTO

Shall I show you to your customary table?

LLOYD

Not tonight. I'm meeting Mr. Sackett here. He said he would be in your private dining room.

ERNESTO

Yes, he is there now. Please follow me.

DISSOLVE TO:

10

INT. ERNESTO'S PRIVATE DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

10

There are a few dimly lit tables. Ernesto's patrons are enjoying a meal and conversation. Lloyd approaches SACKETT, who is seated at one of the tables, and takes a chair across from him. They speak in hushed tones.

LLOYD

Thank you for meeting me on such short notice, Sackett.

SACKETT

You're welcome. I must say that I was surprised to receive your call.

LLOYD

I was surprised to place it.

SACKETT

Are you absolutely sure you want to go through with this?

LLOYD

I'm considering my options. This is something I want to look into.

SACKETT

What made you think of defecting?

LLOYD

I can't work for people who don't trust me.

(CONTINUED)

SACKETT

I can understand that. We of the Alliance would never doubt you. We would consider it an *honor* to have you join us.

LLOYD

That's nice to hear.

SACKETT

We were thinking you might be most valuable to us as a double agent, at least in the beginning.

LLOYD

I'd be open to that idea.

SACKETT

So what can I tell you about spying for the Alliance?

LLOYD

(beat)

Is it true what I've heard about the ladies?

FADE TO BLACK.