

BUGS SERIES TWO
EPISODE 10
A CAGE FOR SATAN

by
Stephen Gallagher

Fast-cut resumé of the relevant carry-over parts of the previous episode; skipping the main plotline about the alloy and the accelerator but touching on 1. The two Civilian Programmers explaining that their AI program is no longer under their control, 2. Roland's demise with our people yelling at the screens, and his subsequent removal by bogus paramedics, 3. Ros' explanation of the 'virus' to Ed, 4. part of Jean Daniel explaining the actual nature of CyberAx to Briggs, then finally 5. Ros taking a great risk and deliberately 'infecting' herself as the accelerator gets dangerous and Beckett yells at her not to do it. She puts the headset on, and at the height of the noise and the frantic activity we CUT TO...

INT. GIZMOS. DAY.

BECKETT's talking to two men on a satellite hookup. Every now and again the picture starts to deteriorate, and without breaking the conversation Beckett quickly does something with the equipment that brings it back for a while.

BECKETT's screen shows an image of two frozen-looking CIVILIAN PROGRAMMERS last seen in the teaser to 9. Several layers of cold-weather gear and three pullovers each, both in need of a haircut under woolly hats, windburned cheeks and noses. Lots of headroom in the TV frame to make them look diminished. Not happy people.

BECKETT

Let's keep this short. What are two defence programmers doing on the Arctic survey?

FIRST CIVILIAN

General Bateman sent us here.

BECKETT

Mad Maverick Bateman?

FIRST CIVILIAN

CyberAx was his project. When it all went wrong, he closed everything down and put us on ice.

SECOND CIVILIAN

Literally.

BECKETT

Tell me about CyberAx.

FIRST CIVILIAN

It's like an electronic parasite. It steals pieces of code from other programs and incorporates them into itself.

SECOND CIVILIAN

The elements combine in ways you can never predict. You get small errors that work like mutations. Failed mutations don't survive, but the successful ones reproduce.

BECKETT

Are you saying, it evolves?

FIRST CIVILIAN

Faster than you can possibly imagine. It's a general-purpose artificial intelligence with infinite applications. The only limitation was the amount of processing power we made available to it.

SECOND CIVILIAN

We didn't exactly envisage it spread out all over the global network.

BECKETT

Did you ever imagine it crossing the biological barrier into the human brain?

SILENCE as both sit, stunned.

Then:

SECOND CIVILIAN

You're kidding.

BECKETT

I wish I was.

INT. DARKENED ROOM. DAY.

A quiet place. We don't know where we are, or who we're with. We're looking at an unfocussed pattern of light on a wall, cast there through drawn curtains (not venetian blinds -- the lines are too hard, and this is a dreamy, womblike environment).

We PAN DOWN from the pattern and find, already in our field of focus in the near foreground, ROS, almost in profile. She's on a deeply padded leather seat. She stares into nowhere.

ROS

I feel strange. There are gaps. I feel as if there are things I ought to know, but I don't.

TALBOT (UNSEEN)
What do your friends say?

ROS
That's the other part of it. I never thought I'd say this. But I don't think I can trust them.

TALBOT (UNSEEN)
Why not?

ROS
They're hiding things from me. Files go missing and they tell me nothing's wrong.

ON TALBOT, who leans forward so that his face moves from shadow into light. Straight and bright-eyed, with the hippie hairstyle of the ageing nonconformist, he looks older and wiser than God. A kindly and paternal figure.

TALBOT
Why would they do that?

ROS
I don't know. They whisper about me. They stop when they see me coming. I found this in my clothes. Do you know what it is?

She holds up a tiny object before her face. It looks a little like a fishing fly.

ROS (CONT'D)
It's one of my own trackers. It's not just that Beckett and Ed are lying to me. They've actually got me under surveillance.

OPENING CREDITS

INT. UNIVERSITY CORRIDOR. DAY.

The science faculty of a modern university.

ED appears around a corner, dodges a few researchers coming the other way. He raises a radio and speaks into it.

ED
Beckett? I lost her. I think she must have found the tracker.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. GIZMOS. DAY.

BECKETT is seated before the satellite monitor on which the picture has broken up. He's working to re-establish the link as he speaks to ED on the radio.

BECKETT

Where are you?

ED

In the Science Faculty.

BECKETT

Her old tutor's got an office there.

INT. UNIVERSITY CORRIDOR. DAY.

ED

Don't worry, I'm onto it. You keep up with those guys.

He stows his radio and moves off with purpose and determination.

EXT. SCIENCE FACULTY. DAY.

ED emerges from the building's REVOLVING GLASS DOOR and looks around.

ROS comes up on his blind side, and surprises him. She seems genuinely pleased to see him.

ROS

Ed! What are you doing here?

ED (BUSKING IT)

I was thinking of continuing my education.

ROS

I don't think they do a degree in fast cars and Marvel Comics.

ED

I know. It's a serious disappointment. How come you're so cheerful?

They walk on together.

ROS

You know those gaps in the records I've been worrying about?

ED

What gaps?

ROS

There's a big chunk of stuff went missing, Ed, and it's as if a part of my life went missing with it. But I changed the Gizmos file server last month. All the information will be on the old hard disk.

She moves on. We see her face set as she turns away from him; it's a performance, but ED doesn't know that.

Now that she's not looking at him, his concern shows as he hurries to catch up. This is the last thing they need.

INT. GIZMOS. DAY.

BECKETT is still on the satellite link to the two CIVILIAN PROGRAMMERS; this time the image holds steady until it breaks up finally at the very end of the scene. The FIRST CIVILIAN is defensive and cynical, the SECOND CIVILIAN is taking it more seriously.

BECKETT

You designed it to interbreed with other programs. I'm telling you that it's reached a point where it's interbreeding with people.

FIRST CIVILIAN

No machine can emulate brain function. That would take absolute terraflops of processing power.

BECKETT

It's gone global. It's got all the processing power there is.

SECOND CIVILIAN

How does it get in?

BECKETT

Through a biofeedback link. You think you're using signals from your mind to control a computer. But CyberAx hides itself in the feedback. It enters your head without you knowing it.

SECOND CIVILIAN

This has happened to someone you know?

BECKETT

It's happened to Ros. When it had finished with her mind, it blocked off part of her memory and left a little piece of itself behind. One whiff of the truth about CyberAx and her system crashes.

SECOND CIVILIAN

Like a computer virus in the brain?

FIRST CIVILIAN

It isn't possible.

BECKETT

I've seen it happen. A victim gets maybe thirty seconds where they see what it's all about. The next thing you know, they're wiped clean and Cyberax has stolen the body.

SECOND CIVILIAN

Keep her mind occupied with other things. We'll have to think about this.

BECKETT

That's not so easy. The more we try to keep it a secret from her, the more curious she gets.

FIRST CIVILIAN

It's a waste of time anyway. If she's got it, she's a goner.

The images are breaking up badly, now; BECKETT leans closer and raises his voice as his anger rises.

BECKETT

I'll tell you something. If Ros ends up as some kind of a CyberAx zombie, I'll be on the first plane up there.

As he continues the picture goes completely, and is replaced by a caption reading SATELLITE CONNECTION LOST.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

And don't worry about where you keep your return tickets, because I'll be feeding you to the penguins!

At that moment, ED appears behind BECKETT and touches his shoulder.

ED

No penguins in the Arctic.

BECKETT jumps in surprise; then quickly, with great concern, looks behind him.

ED (CALM AND QUIET) (CONT'D)
 She isn't here yet. Come on, we
 don't have long.

He moves off and BECKETT, puzzled, rises to follow.

INT. GIZMOS BASEMENT. DAY.

ED leads BECKETT down the stairway to find...

Mostly archive stuff, empty equipment packaging, and a secure storage area. Secure storage is through a metal-and-wire partition with a padlocked metal-and-wire door in it. On the other side, rows of dexion shelving like library stacks. They mostly carry magnetic media.

ED unlocks the padlock.

ED
 We didn't wipe out all the
 dangerous information. There's
 stuff on a hard drive somewhere
 down here.

BECKETT
 That's news to me.

They go through.

INT. GIZMOS BASEMENT. DAY.

A very short time later.

IN THE SECURE AREA -- spare drives, cables, kit in boxes. The item they're looking for will be a big one, so they're opening up cartons of suitable size and shifting things that they can look behind.

BECKETT
 I found ten different research
 groups in California trying to hack
 into the human brain, and they were
 no damn use either. What are we
 looking for?

ED
 The out-of-date file server,
 whatever one of those is.

BECKETT
 It's the big box that drives all
 the terminals upstairs.
 (MORE)

BECKETT (CONT'D)
 (PAUSES, FROWNS) I don't remember
 it being switched for a new one.

CLANG. Both look up quickly at the sound of the iron door
 being slammed.

They scoot around the end of the stacks to find...

The door shut and ROS on the other side of it, squirting
 something into the closed padlock from a tiny aerosol about
 the size of one of those pocket breath-fresheners.

They reach the wire.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
 What are you doing?

ROS
 I'm superglueing the padlock. I
 know you two Houdinis will have no
 problem getting out of there. But
 this ought to give me enough of a
 start.

ED
 Ros, I don't believe this.

ROS gets very serious.

ROS
 That makes two of us, Ed.
 Something's changed, here, and I
 can't work out what it is. I'll
 give you one chance to tell me.

She looks from one to the other. BECKETT stays mute.

ROS (CONT'D)
 Who's got to you? What's making you
 do this?

ED
 We can't tell you.

BECKETT elbows him, but it's too late.

ROS
 Are you trying to protect me from
 something? Because you ought to
 know I don't need it. Or perhaps
 you're not the people I thought I
 knew.

Both are silent.

ROS (CONT'D)
I'm going to find out what's behind
this. And I swear to you, I won't
let up until I do.

She starts to move toward the stairs.

BECKETT
Ros.

She stops.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
Please don't.

She looks at him for a moment. Then she turns away and begins
to ascend.

BECKETT all but throws himself at the wire.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
Ros!

ED gently restrains him with a hand on his shoulder.

ED
There's not a thing we can say.

BECKETT
She'll work it out. If anyone's
going to work it out, she will. And
the moment she gets to the
answer... it'll be the last thought
she ever has.

INT. GIZMOS. DAY.

ROS has an attache case the size of a weekend bag, open on a
surface; she's filling it with gizmos and gadgets, moving
with haste.

INT. GIZMOS BASEMENT. DAY.

BECKETT and ED are like a couple of contortionists working to
unbolt the hinges that hold the metal door. ED's put his hand
through the wire and has a pair of electrical pliers with
which he's gripping the outside end of a bolt, while BECKETT
works on the other end with an adjustable spanner. Lots of
muttering and cursing as the first the spanner skids off,
then the pliers.

ED
This is taking for ever.

BECKETT
She's still up there. I can hear
her moving around.

INT. GIZMOS. DAY.

ANGLE ON a notebook computer (or whatever), open but not
switched on.

ROS' hand reaches in and closes the lid. She takes it.

Now we see her closing the attache case on the assorted gear.

INT. GIZMOS BASEMENT. DAY.

BECKETT and ED are completing work on the top hinge.

BECKETT
That's it, it's done.

He pushes the bolt through; as it falls, ED manhandles the
door open with much crashing and awkwardness. It's still
attached, but only by the padlock.

They squeeze through and race to the stairs.

INT. GIZMOS. DAY.

SLOW PAN to show empty premises. We can hear BECKETT and ED
approaching noisily up the iron stairs.

They burst in, and stop. Look around. No Ros.

ED moves forward, toward one of the many monitors.

ED
There's a message.

He leans over it, and reads aloud.

ED (CONT'D)
"What else can you do, when your
friends are not your friends.
Sorry. Ros."

He turns to look at BECKETT.

ON BECKETT -- he looks bleak.

INT. SCIENCE LECTURE THEATRE. NIGHT.

A big, almost empty lecture-demonstration theatre in the
science faculty. DOCTOR TALBOT, Ros' former tutor, is ending
a conversation with a student down at the lectern.

As the STUDENT thanks him, stows her books, and walks away, TALBOT becomes aware of someone descending from the upper rows.

BECKETT

She's been gone for two days.
There's been no sign of her.

BECKETT looks bleak. He looks as if he's barely slept.

TALBOT

She told me she couldn't trust you.
So why should I?

BECKETT

Give me chance to explain.

INT. GIZMOS. NIGHT.

ED sitting where BECKETT sat before, half-turned away from the screens, talking on the phone.

ED

Well, if you do see or hear
anything of her... will you give me
a call? Thanks.

He hangs up, sighs, squeezes the bridge of his nose as if to fight an oncoming headache.

Then he autodials another number. And while it's ringing out...

Behind him, the screen that earlier carried the satellite image is trying to struggle into life with an image of the SECOND CIVILIAN.

ED becomes aware of it, does a double-take, and then crashes the phone down to give the screen his full attention.

SECOND CIVILIAN (THROUGH SHASH)

...have to bear in mind that
whenever you send a message,
CyberAx may be listening...

ED (TO HIMSELF)

Whoa. Hey. What do I do?

He tries some switches and stuff, but nothing has any effect.

SECOND CIVILIAN

... ordinary computer viruses are
the only model we have. With those,
if it's on the disk, you chase down
all the code and burn it out. If
it's just in the memory, you switch
off and reboot...

The picture goes completely.

ED
Get back here!

No use. He slams his fist on the desk in frustration.

INT. TALBOT'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

The 'darkened room' of the first scene, now revealed as a well-appointed academic's office with a desktop PC. BECKETT sits in the leather-padded chair where Ros once sat.

TALBOT
Well, it does fit in with what she told me.

BECKETT
What can we do about it? Can we work out some kind of a cure?

TALBOT
You're talking about a set of incredibly complex interactions on the molecular level in the brain. We've no technology to deal with that.

BECKETT
CyberAx has.

TALBOT
CyberAx has gone beyond anything we can recognise, now. It's like Satan on the internet. We've been the dominant species on this planet for two million years. But if what you're telling me is true, CyberAx has caught us up in a matter of months.

BECKETT
So, what are the implications?

TALBOT
They're serious for all of us. Because if we're about to be pushed aside by a new dominant species, it means we're about to become one of the also-rans. If you want to know how a dominant species treats the also-rans, look in a sandwich.

INT. UNIVERSITY CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

TALBOT and BECKETT walk together through the now-empty faculty.

TALBOT
I wish you'd come to me sooner.

BECKETT
How could I? I couldn't make her suspicious.

TALBOT
She was suspicious anyway.

BECKETT
Maybe psychotropic drugs could block the virus.

He stops BECKETT, and gets serious.

TALBOT
Listen, Mister Beckett. Dear as Ros Henderson may be to both of us, there's more at stake here than just one person's life.

BECKETT
I know all about that.

TALBOT
I'm not sure you do. Why does CyberAx steal the bodies of its victims?

BECKETT
I don't know.

TALBOT
You should be wondering. It's a cold intelligence, Mister Beckett. It cares nothing for us. Unless we're of some use to it.

This throws Nick slightly for a moment, but TALBOT keeps walking and offers nothing more.

BECKETT
Did Ros give you any idea of what she was planning to do?

TALBOT
All that she said was, "If your friends are no help, then what does that leave you?"

BECKETT puzzles over this.

EXT. TECHNOPOLIS CITYSCAPE. NIGHT.

A nightscape view of a bright, cluttered, hypermodern, futuristic city. If there's a passing train somewhere in the shot, great. But not dense traffic.

INT. THROUGH TRAIN WINDOW. NIGHT.

CLOSEUP ON ROS, through glass, with the cityscape reflecting on it. She stares out. While, over, we hear...

FEMALE TRAIN VOICE
Technopolis land transit service.
We are one minute from the next
station. Please stand clear of the
doors.

ROS looks upward.

ANGLE UP on a floodlit building, an enormous, ugly, almost windowless monolith.

FEMALE TRAIN VOICE (CONT'D)
This stop is for the Ultimax Prison
Facility.

INT. GIZMOS. NIGHT.

ED is working at a touch-screen as BECKETT arrives.

BECKETT
What are you doing?

ED
Trying some of Ros's hacker stuff.
Look. I found her car. They've
clamped her.

BECKETT
Where?

ED
The airport. She must be out of the
country.

BECKETT
Or she wants us to think she is.

ED
I'll try for airline passenger
lists. Did you get anything useful?

BECKETT
If your friends are no help, then
what does that leave?

ED shrugs.

ED
Your enemies?

INT. ULTIMAX PRISON. NIGHT.

A corridor of semicircular arches, like a big, dark wine cellar. Two TECHNICIANS are pushing a trolley of equipment away as ROS and the PRISON CHIEF come into sight around the corner. The PRISON CHIEF wears a grey suit that is subtly at odds with Western fashion; everything in Technopolis has that Eastern-European touch, as if Western culture had been studied through binoculars and then reproduced from memory. He has a hard, Slavic look, and a very slight accent. A tough peasant with a Rolex.

From this angle, we can't see into the arches.

PRISON CHIEF
Ours is like no prison you ever saw. Am I right?

ROS
You certainly are.

PRISON CHIEF
Was it worth your journey?

ROS
I don't see any bars. How secure are you?

PRISON CHIEF
This is Ultimax, Miss Henderson. We're a world-class facility for those whom no other jail can hold. We take the extreme social deviants of all nations, and not one of them ever leaves us. They're here until they die.

They've come to a stop by one of the arches, and now the PRISON CHIEF waves his hand to interrupt some invisible beam. Immediately a single overhead light fades up to reveal...

IN THE ARCHWAY: a raised stone plinth, a crude stone wall behind. On the plinth, a truly massive upright restraining chair that looks as if it's been made out of stone blocks and railway sleepers. Shackled in the chair, by the kind of chains used to raise drawbridges, sits JEAN DANIEL. Heavy links run from his manacled wrists down to big iron rings on the plinth. Beam-ends protrude from the chairback on either side of his head, limiting movement even further. From these run discreet wires that are attached to his skull.

His eyes are closed. His expression beatific.

PRISON CHIEF (CONT'D)

You can speak. He can't hear you.

ROS looks at the range of monitoring and life-signs equipment that stands on trolleys around the foot of the plinth; high-tech monitoring around a massive low-tech throne on which Boris Karloff or King Kong wouldn't look out of place.

ROS

What does all this stuff do?

PRISON CHIEF

There's a constant low current passing through his brain. We can keep him in a state of desynchronised sleep for however long we choose. All of his physical needs are monitored and taken care of automatically. Even exercise.

ROS

You keep him like this all the time?

PRISON CHIEF

Prisoners receive two hours of consciousness in every forty-eight.

ROS

It's inhuman.

PRISON CHIEF

On the contrary. It's the most humane solution of them all. In his dreams, he's free. And like this... he can never be of harm to anyone again.

There's a scary glint in the PRISON CHIEF's eye; he believes this.

ROS stares at JEAN DANIEL...

Who sleeps on.

INT. GIZMOS. NIGHT/INT. TALBOT'S OFFICE. NIGHT. (INTERCUT)

BECKETT and ED are studying the touch screen, BECKETT behind ED's shoulder.

ED

There's nothing on her credit cards.

BECKETT

She may have covered her traces.

ED
That's not easy.

BECKETT
This is Ros we're talking about.

His mobile phone rings, and he replies without taking his eyes off the screen.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
Beckett.

The caller is TALBOT, in his office, with his own screen lit up. It's showing the CyberAx logo.

TALBOT
Mister Beckett. I know it's late,
but I need you to come over.
There's something I don't want to
risk on the air.

BECKETT
Did you find something?

On the desk before TALBOT stands a white-painted example of the device we once referred to as a 'box of tricks', along with a control headset.

TALBOT
I have one of the CyberAx devices.
It was donated to one of our
departments.

BECKETT
Donated?

TALBOT
Academic sponsorship. They're in
every institution in the land.
CyberAx's Trojan Horses. Come over.

He hangs up.

WITH BECKETT AND ED --

BECKETT
Things just got worse.

WITH TALBOT --

He reaches around to where there's a Betacam recorder on a battered trolley. It has labels stuck on it -- a piece of academic technical equipment shared by an entire department. He switches it on.

Now we can see that he's set up a VIDEO CAMERA AND TRIPOD on the other side of his desk. He talks into the camera.

TALBOT

Mister Beckett. I've made a few notes on the true nature of CyberAx. If you're right, one look at them will trigger the mental virus for me once it's been installed. I can see no other way forward. I trust that the next thirty seconds will be the most useful research I've ever undertaken.

He reaches to put on the headset.

INT. ULTIMAX PRISON. NIGHT.

ROS waits as one of the TECHNICIANS moves from one trolley to another, making adjustments. The PRISON CHIEF stands back against the wall of the corridor, just one small light picking him out so that his eyes are in shadow and his cheeks are deep hollows.

The TECHNICIAN clears out of the way, so that it's just JEAN DANIEL and ROS.

He wakes smoothly, without a flicker; an unfocussed moment, and then...

JEAN DANIEL

My first visitor.

ROS

You seem to be well taken care of.

JEAN DANIEL

It's just like home. Speaking of which, you're a long way from yours, Miss Henderson. Why are you here?

ROS

Give me a straight answer to this, and I'll do whatever I can for you. Could Beckett and Ed have switched sides on me?

For a moment, he's dumbfounded.

JEAN DANIEL

Well done, Miss Henderson. I was thinking you had no surprises for me. I didn't see that one coming.

ROS

Well? They've changed. I can't trust them. I don't seem to be able to rely on anything.

Slowly, JEAN DANIEL's face lights up.

JEAN DANIEL

Really?

ROS

I know I helped to put you here. But I don't know how. I know I shut down an accelerator. But I can't remember why. The Bureau of Weapons has closed down. Roland Blatty's disappeared. Ed won't explain it, Beckett doesn't seem to care...

The strain's starting to show. But then she realises that JEAN DANIEL is finding this a riot. She can't understand why.

ROS (CONT'D)

What? What is it?

JEAN DANIEL briefly raises his manacled hands, as if to show that he can't use them, as he says...

JEAN DANIEL

Somebody wipe my eyes. This is exquisite. I'll give you an honest answer. I know exactly what's happened to you.

ROS

And?

JEAN DANIEL

Only one thing will give me more pleasure than telling you right now. And that'll be to know that while I dream, you'll be finding it out for yourself. I wish you every success, Miss Henderson. More than you can possibly know.

ROS

What does that mean?

JEAN DANIEL

I'll even start you off. See what you can discover about a corporate entity called CyberAx. I warn you. It'll blow your mind.

This is the best thing that's happened to him in ages. He looks past ROS at the PRISON CHIEF, and raises his voice so that it will carry to him.

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)
I've nothing else to say.

He's clearly not cowed. The PRISON CHIEF nods to the technician, who moves in.

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)
Good night, Miss Henderson.

He closes his eyes.

ROS is even more confused than she was before.

INT. SCIENCE FACULTY. NIGHT.

BECKETT and ED are walking toward the glass frontage of the faculty. The lights are on inside.

ED
Hey, look. The Doc's coming to meet us.

Looking through the glass, and into the foyer; TALBOT is walking toward us. He's expressionless. There's a Betacam cassette in one hand.

BECKETT raises a hand and waves to him.

TALBOT breaks into a loping run. He's heading straight for the glass.

ED (CONT'D)
He looks eager enough. What's he found out?

SLOW MOTION: TALBOT on a collision course with the glass.

Normal speed with BECKETT and ED:

BECKETT
Oh, no.

He gives ED a straight-armed shove and dives the other way as:

SLOW MOTION: seen head-on, TALBOT hits the glass like a missile, and the pane shatters.

BECKETT hits the ground to one side.

ED hits the ground to the other.

TALBOT's slow-motion eruption through the pane continues; first at a three-quarter angle, and then from directly above as he hits the ground outside.

ON BECKETT and then ON ED, raising their heads to look back in disbelief.

TALBOT lies on the ground amidst the broken glass, one arm outflung.

Inches from his outstretched fingers, undamaged, the BETACAM CASSETTE.

INT. TALBOT'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

A TV MONITOR, showing the living TALBOT from the fixed POV on the tripod. Rigid and not well-framed. He's removing the mindlink headset.

Now the headset is in TALBOT's hand, and he's reading something on the desk.

ED

Now he's looking at his own notes.

BECKETT and ED are in the darkened office, watching the screen intently. Everything's been left as it was before.

BECKETT

He's triggered the virus.

ED

Even though he knew exactly what would happen.

MONITOR: TALBOT raises his eyes and looks directly into the camera. He speaks quickly and with desperate urgency, like Martin Scorsese on speed.

TALBOT

It's true. It's like floodgates opening. My God. There's so much there, and so little time to tell you. Where can I start? CyberAx. It's grown to its limits but it's bursting to grow more. How? Technopolis. The Technopolis Tower is the key. Big machines, fast machines... the moment they come online, CyberAx will race in. Oh my God, it'll be unstoppable and I can see why. Don't let Ros get anywhere near. Shut it down! Get her away! Time's running out. What can I tell you about the brain virus? It's through the limbic system and into the medial temporal lobes. You can't remove it without...

He stops. Takes a beat without changing expression.

TALBOT (CONT'D)

You've got to excuse me now.
There's something I have to do.

He rises, and reaches for the tape machine.

The monitor image abruptly turns to shash.

ED

Technopolis. That was one of the
destinations in Jean Daniel's
barcodes at the freight warehouse.

BECKETT

Where they've got the highest high-
tech everything. Including the
prison.

EXT. ULTIMAX PRISON. NIGHT.

We PAN DOWN from the floodlit building to the entrance sign,
which reads:

ULTIMAX OFFENDER HOLDING FACILITY

Technopolis International, CE

And we PUSH IN on a line of very small print, at the bottom,
until we can read:

SERVICED BY CyberAx SYSTEMS, INC

with the CyberAx logo, also small.

INT. EMPTY MALL. NIGHT.

ROS, with her attaché case, walks through a brand-new,
extremely upmarket mall or plaza. It's silent, apart from her
echoing footsteps. One of those low, ominous Michael Mann
rumbles on the soundtrack.

She looks into one of the high-class shops as she passes.

ROS' POV -- long-lens and shot on the move, we're looking in
through the window at an ASSISTANT who stands inside. So
heavily made up that she's soulless-looking like the Vogue
models in a Robert Palmer video, she's standing and staring
out vacantly. It's like she's stuck in a time warp, waiting
for clients that never arrive. Something to make the hairs on
your neck rise, a little.

ROS tears her attention away as she walks toward...

The mall's HUGE, WIDE, DARK INFORMATION DESK.

The INFORMATION DESK is staffed by a lone young woman with clothes and makeup so perfect that she might have been sculpted by laser. Northern European/Slavic in type, she's standing there with a professional smile. She looks as if she's had no other task than to stand there waiting for ROS, for all of time. The main lighting on her is a diffused underglow shining upward from the counter. She's perfect. She's spooky. I reckon we should have a very slight accent in her otherwise perfect English.

ROS

I need somewhere to stay.

INFORMATION ASSISTANT

I'll see what I can do. All of our hotels are very busy.

ROS looks around... can this woman be serious?

ROS

What?

INFORMATION ASSISTANT

The Technopolis Tower goes on-line at midnight. All of our international suppliers have been invited to the ceremony. Rooms are being held for each of them.

ROS

The Technopolis what?

INFORMATION ASSISTANT

The largest and fastest single processing facility in the world. Our city's flagship development.

ROS

Well, unless you get a late rush, I think that most of your international suppliers are staying at home.

The INFORMATION ASSISTANT is looking down at a screen or some kind of a readout we can't see. Her movements have been minimal.

INFORMATION ASSISTANT

There are one or two cancellations.

ROS has a sudden idea.

ROS

CyberAx?

The INFORMATION ASSISTANT looks up.

INFORMATION ASSISTANT

I'm sorry?

ROS

Is there a company called CyberAx
on the guest list?

INFORMATION ASSISTANT

CyberAx does have a considerable
presence in Technopolis.

ROS

I want the hotel you're saving for
the CyberAx people.

INT. AIR TERMINAL. NIGHT.

BECKETT and ED walk across another huge, open, empty space,
to the sound of their own footsteps. BECKETT has a small
knapsack slung over one shoulder. He'll keep this throughout
the following scenes.

CLOSER ON THEM, as they move...

ED

I've seen busier air terminals.

BECKETT

All this, for two empty flights a
day. No wonder the city's going
bust.

ED

How can it be going bust? They only
just built the place.

BECKETT

It's an investment disaster. If
you're in the digital business, why
move here? It's easier to send work
down a line. And if you're doing
that, you send it to the third
world where the overheads are
cheaper.

ED (LOOKING AROUND)

I was hoping we might be a bit less
conspicuous.

BECKETT digs around in an inside pocket.

BECKETT

We're okay. We've got the best fake
IDs. Nothing to alert CyberAx in
these.

ED

Oh, yeah? (GLANCES AT KNAPSACK) And what about the demolition kit in your Dorothy bag?

BECKETT

That's all well-disguised. Hey, look. It's the guy who posed for the Smiley button.

REVERSE ANGLE LOOKING FORWARD, still moving with them as they approach a SECURITY CONSOLE with a uniformed OFFICIAL with a face of the coldest stone.

He holds up a hand.

OFFICIAL

Stand still, please.

Both stop, a few yards short of the console.

BECKETT

Don't you want to see our papers?

OFFICIAL

Not yet.

He looks down at his console and we see...

A screen which carries fresh VIDEO FREEZE FRAMES of BECKETT and ED, full-face.

On the images, various lines and boxes appear and disappear as the various features and proportions of their faces are measured and charted. Then...

The screen is filled with a single message on a pulsing background.

KNOWN TERRORISTS

DETAIN WITH MAXIMUM FORCE

The OFFICIAL looks up, unruffled.

OFFICIAL

Please do not move.

BECKETT and ED do as they're told.

After a few moments, in low voices...

ED

No passport check, no retinal scanners, no voiceprints, no fingerprints... what are they using?

BECKETT

Image recognition. It's an identification you can't fake.

ED

We're sunk.

BECKETT

I know.

To an observer, neither's giving anything away. They hover on their toes for a beat, both looking nonchalant, then...

ED

Now.

They break and run, dashing past the console and through the checkpoint.

OFFICIAL

Don't move!

He rises up behind the console, and we now see that he's holding...

A short MACHINE GUN, which he brings to bear on the disappearing twosome.

As he fires, they move out of sight around the corner from which plaster and dust fly an instant later.

INT. AIR TERMINAL BEHIND-THE-SCENES AREAS. NIGHT.

BECKETT and ED come flying around a corner.

ED

Now what?

BECKETT

I'll stop and think about it, shall I?

Moments later, they're skidding to a halt as they face...

A Technopolis SECURITY SQUAD, dressed like a SWAT team so they occupy that vague territory between the police and the military, pounding toward them with weapons at the ready. (NB: stylistically, there are links with the uniforms of the Fake Paramedics of episode 9)

BECKETT and ED make a fast exit sideways.

EXT. AIR TERMINAL. NIGHT.

BECKETT and ED come running out onto the tarmac through an open service bay.

Machine-gun fire follows them.

BECKETT
I think I'm losing my taste for air
travel.

Another burst of fire, and they set off with renewed speed.

ANGLE UP on a security camera, panning to follow them as they go around the corner of a building.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CORNER they stop for a moment, breathless, and scan for their next move.

ED points.

ED
Let's head for the fuel. They won't
dare fire at that.

They set off toward a tanker lorry.

The SQUAD appears around the corner.

One barks an order. They stop, and bring their machine guns to bear.

They fire after BECKETT and ED, in short bursts.

WITH BECKETT AND ED:

BECKETT (MIMICKING)
"Let's head for the fuel. They
won't fire at that."

Some nearby ricochets cause him to abandon his complaint and start dodging as he runs.

ANGLE ON THE SQUAD, firing...

ANGLE ON THE TANKER, as a row of bullet holes rakes across it...

WIDER ANGLE ON THE TANKER, as it EXPLODES. BECKETT and ED nowhere to be seen.

ON THE SQUAD: still firing until their leader gives the order to stop.

They lower their guns, and watch the conflagration. No-one's shocked or worried by this consequence.

ANGLE ON THE FIRE -- it's fierce, with black smoke boiling across the tarmac.

Then...

A white jeep-like RUNWAY VEHICLE comes barrelling through the smoke and heads straight toward the squad. ED's at the wheel, BECKETT hanging on beside him. The vehicle has a big black number painted on its bonnet.

The SQUAD scatters as the RUNWAY VEHICLE aims straight through the middle of them.

IN THE VEHICLE -- BECKETT turns in his seat to look back at the SQUAD as a couple of them recover and fire after.

Both flinch down as the BACK WINDSCREEN SHATTERS.

ANGLE DOWN on the RUNWAY VEHICLE as it scorches around a corner and out of the line of fire.

IN THE VEHICLE --

ED

Where now?

BECKETT

We need to get into town and vanish in the crowd.

ED

They'll block every road out of the airfield. Hang on.

The RUNWAY VEHICLE makes another sudden screeching turn, this time ramming in through the doors of a building.

INT. AIR TERMINAL. NIGHT.

A lounge or cafeteria; some part of the building where no vehicle would usually be seen. A member of staff is vacuuming or wiping tables. Hold on this scene of tranquillity for a while and then...

The RUNWAY VEHICLE comes slaloming through, dodging tables and furniture.

IN THE VEHICLE: BECKETT's hanging on and looking pale.

BECKETT

What are you doing?

ED

I've seen how they get deliveries into these places. It's all underground.

IN THE TERMINAL -- ANGLE ON THE WINDOW as, outside, some of the SQUAD appear at the window and try to see in.

IN THE VEHICLE: BECKETT looks ahead, and is aghast.

BECKETT

Ed..!

ED

Hold on!

The vehicle suddenly tips.

INT. UNDERGROUND STAIRWAY. NIGHT.

The RUNWAY VEHICLE comes bumping down a broad flight of steps.

It roars off down an underground passageway where no vehicle was ever meant to go.

INT. PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL. NIGHT.

A tight squeeze -- the vehicle's roar is deafening as it swerves dangerously from one side of the tunnel to another.

ED sounds the horn.

A CLEANER pushing one of those modern vacuum carts dives out of the way; the RUNWAY VEHICLE sends his apparatus spinning.

IN THE VEHICLE:

BECKETT

You don't know which way we're going!

ED

I've got a fantastic sense of direction. Like a homing pigeon.

BECKETT mutters something darkly under his breath.

ED (CONT'D)

What?

BECKETT (LOUDLY)

I said, it never got you back to Australia, did it?

Quick panic -- ED hauls on the wheel...

And we see the RUNWAY VEHICLE swerve to take a fork in the tunnel.

INT. ULTIMAX PRISON. NIGHT.

Lights low. JEAN DANIEL, unattended, dormant face in shadow.

Our gaze roves across the various instrumentation at the foot of the plinth while he sleeps on in the background. Heart monitor making a jagged line. EEG showing a delta-wave sleep pattern. Various column indicators flickering up and down like decibel counters on a stereo.

Suddenly... there's a flash and a bang from some part of the equipment. Nothing huge; more like a fuse blowing.

The jagged line of the heart monitor flattens and the machine gives out a low whine. After a beat...

A DEEP RED EMERGENCY LIGHT starts to flash on and off, swamping the entire archway section with blood-red colour, and an urgent hooter sounds.

ANGLES ON THE VARIOUS MONITORS -- as each flattens, falls, or otherwise shows a decline to inactivity.

ON JEAN DANIEL -- his head tips forward, ever so slightly.

DOWN THE CORRIDOR -- the PRISON CHIEF and the two TECHNICIANS come running.

AT THE PLINTH -- the TECHNICIANS busy themselves at the equipment while the PRISON CHIEF stops and draws an AUTOMATIC PISTOL. After operating the slide to put a round into the chamber and cock the hammer, he then steps up onto the plinth and approaches JEAN DANIEL with extreme caution.

He levels the pistol only inches from JEAN DANIEL's head before reaching in with his other hand to take a carotid pulse.

After a moment, holding that position, he looks at one of the TECHNICIANS.

The TECHNICIAN looks up. Shakes his or her head.

ON JEAN DANIEL, as the PRISON CHIEF's hand is withdrawn.

*

INT. ULTIMAX PRISON. NIGHT.

Later.

The PRISON CHIEF steps backwards out of the archway, and moves to one side.

A moment later, the end of a trolley emerges. On the trolley is a sheeted form, face covered.

There's one PARAMEDIC at the other end, pushing. Same uniform, same everything, as the fake paramedics in the previous episode. She's helmetless, but the angles are such that we don't see her face yet.

Slowly, evenly, she propels the trolley away in a steady and unhurried manner befitting the dead.

IN THE ARCHWAY -- the TECHNICIANS are stripping down the gear, winding up cables, while the big chair stands empty.

ON the PRISON CHIEF, as he looks from this scene to...

His POV on the departing PARAMEDIC...

Who looks back over her shoulder, enigmatically, before disappearing around the corner. Long enough for us to establish firmly that it's CASSANDRA NEUMANN.

INT. ULTIMAX -- ANOTHER CORRIDOR OF ARCHWAYS. NIGHT.

Conveniently identical to the last, but empty. The trolley with JEAN DANIEL's body on it is coming around the corner in what appears to be a continuous move from the previous scene. But after a few steps, CASSANDRA leans forward and speaks in a loud whisper.

CASSANDRA

Jean Daniel? I don't know if you
can hear me. It's Cassandra.

CASSANDRA starts to pick up speed.

By the time she and the trolley reach and pass us, she's sprinting. We PAN WITH her and then let her go as we stop on...

Another dimly-lit PRISONER in an almost identical archway setup to Jean Daniel's.

EXT. HOSPITAL. NIGHT.

Outside a supermodern hospital, a team of MEDICAL STAFF come running out of the ambulance bay and we GO WITH THEM to find...

A plain white van stopped right outside with CASSANDRA coming around to open the double-doors on the back.

CASSANDRA

Inside.

The senior DOCTOR climbs in, and CASSANDRA follows him.

INT. VAN. NIGHT.

There's a body bag the back of the van. We're looking down on it as it's unzipped to reveal...

The unclothed head and shoulders of JEAN DANIEL. The DOCTOR feels for a pulse.

CASSANDRA

You won't find a heartbeat, but he isn't clinically dead. Do you know what the diving reflex is?

DOCTOR

The shock of drowning in cold water can preserve brain function for quite a time. But this man didn't drown.

CASSANDRA

Treat him as if he did. Trust me, doctor, it was set up that way. Do you have an automated revival unit?

DOCTOR

Yes, but it can't work miracles.

CASSANDRA

Go online to CyberAx. You'll find a revival procedure ready to download. It works on the reticular activating system, whatever that is.

DOCTOR

It's a function in the brain that activates the thalamus and the cortex from the brainstem. If the diving reflex preserved homeostasis...

CASSANDRA

We're talking the same language. Let's get him inside.

The DOCTOR beckons the others forward to take JEAN DANIEL out of the van.

INT. TREATMENT ROOM. NIGHT.

A big piece of equipment that looks like a cross between a body scanner and a sunbed now lights up; at its heart, a tunnel of semicircular tubes that glow with a cold light.

The NURSING STAFF are sliding JEAN DANIEL's body, modestly sheeted, into the tunnel from the lower end.

Inside the scanner, looking down its length; JEAN DANIEL being drawn steadily toward us.

INT. EMPTY MALL. NIGHT.

The INFORMATION ASSISTANT, sculpted, perfect, softly underlit, is looking down at whatever unseen source of information she has behind her counter when...

There's the sound of an engine revving.

She looks up.

WIDER ANGLE -- the RUNWAY VEHICLE comes sliding in sideways on the polished mall floor, coming to the end of a braking halt only yards before the information desk.

Engine stops. ED gets out from behind the wheel as if there's nothing unusual in this at all, and strides toward the counter.

ON BECKETT, as he gets out slowly, stiffly, like the world's most nervous man getting off the world's scariest rollercoaster. He still has the knapsack.

AT THE COUNTER: the INFORMATION ASSISTANT switches her wide-eyed attention to ED as he stops before her. Big grin, charm cranked up to 11.

ED

Hi.

INT. TREATMENT ROOM. NIGHT.

Up into the frame rises JEAN DANIEL, wide-eyed and alive.

WIDER ANGLE -- he's half-sliding off the trolley with one foot on the floor, the sheet wrapped around him like Caesar's toga. CASSANDRA has her arms around his shoulders and is trying to help/hold/restrain him. Basically he's the Bride of Frankenstein, here; back from the dead, not a clue what's going on.

CASSANDRA

Jean Daniel! Can you hear me? We're in the city hospital. CyberAx got into the control system and shut you down. It was the only way to get you out of prison.

He's starting to put it together.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

The Technopolis Tower goes on-line tonight. Do you remember what we'd planned?

JEAN DANIEL
I remember everything.

He looks at her.

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)
Who are you?

INT. TECHNOPOLIS HOTEL. NIGHT.

A modern, well-appointed, geometrically perfect, utterly soulless hotel room. The TV set is on in the corner, playing a corporate-style Technopolis promotional video. The curtains are open, with the cityscape beyond the window.

ROS sits on the bed with her back to us. Elbows on her knees, fingertips pressed to either side of her head. As we slowly PUSH IN toward her...

FLASHBACK BURST of a dozen frames; from the previous episode, BECKETT in the life-support frame being lifted by the FAKE PARAMEDICS.

CLOSER SHOT of ROS, now circling around at shoulder-level to get our POV in front of her, interrupted by...

ANOTHER FLASHBACK BURST, this one of herself putting on the headset prior to bringing down the particle accelerator. Cut from this to a...

BIG CLOSE UP of ROS, opening her eyes and releasing the fingertip pressure on her head, as if she's just snapping out of something.

She becomes aware of the TV playing in the corner, and looks toward it.

A very corporate-looking presentation, with that dated, forging-into-the-future music they always use. First we see the TECHNOPOLIS TOWER from a low, exaggerated angle... Then a montage of high-tech equipment.

The commentary is provided by a zealous VOICEOVER MAN. He stresses all the wrong words, as if he's rehearsed without any reference to meaning.

VOICEOVER MAN
The Technopolis Tower. The aim behind it, to create the biggest and fastest parallel processing facility in the world. The supercomputer is dead. This is the future. And those behind the venture chose to build it right here.

The image on the screen shows a group shot on a construction site with an architect pointing something out to VIP visitors, with everyone in hard hats.

Dominating the group, and clearly the most important person in it, is JEAN DANIEL. Just behind him, and staring straight at the camera as if she's just spotted it, is CASSANDRA in shoulderpad mode.

Eyes fixed on the screen, ROS reaches for the bedside phone and dials a single number without looking.

ROS

Room service? I want to send a
bottle of champagne to whichever
suite you reserved for CyberAx.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

A BELLHOP, another of the too-perfect Technopolis employees, comes around a corner carrying champagne in an ice bucket. All these people look like the children of the Stepford Wives.

He stops by a door, and raps on it. There's a TV playing in the corridor somewhere, too; they're inescapable, like at the Post Office.

The BELLHOP waits for a count of three, then sets the bucket on the floor and walks on.

A BEAT, and then...

ROS slides out of hiding and moves over to the door.

INT. HOTEL PENTHOUSE SUITE (TWO MAIN ROOMS). NIGHT.

ANGLE ON THE DOOR. It's dark in here. Some scratching, and then the door opens and ROS eases in, carrying the ice bucket.

She closes the door, sets the bucket down, looks around.

Then she switches on the light.

WIDER SHOT -- the suite is clearly uninhabited. No sheets or covers on the bed. The furniture is newly-delivered, standing in the right places but still swathed in polythene and corrugated cardboard. Decor includes a table lamp with a heavy jade or serpentine base.

ROS cocks her head and listens. A muffled voice is coming from the next room. Can't make out what it's saying.

ROS crosses to the door, listens at it for a few moments...

Then, raising her nerve, opens it (it opens toward her).

THE NEXT ROOM -- ROS steps in and we widen to find...

That it's completely empty except for a big-screen TV set opposite the door, playing the same corporate video as before, and a phone handset on the floor with lots of spare wire lying loose.

ON ROS...

ROS

Damn!

While burbling away in the background there's...

VOICEOVER MAN

The Technopolis Tower features the latest in Niobium-based superconductor technology. And it goes on-line... in less than an hour!

That low, disturbing tone again on the soundtrack. The TV picture fades.

ROS looks, her attention caught.

ON THE SCREEN -- the face of CYBERAX forms.

CYBERAX

Miss Henderson. I am CyberAx.

ROS moves forward, shooting glances all around the room. What the hell's going on?

ROS

Where are you?

CYBERAX

I am everywhere. We have been acquainted before. Most intimately. Allow me to explain.

ROS

I don't get this. Who's speaking?

CYBERAX

Listen carefully.

Suddenly...

BECKETT

Look out, Ros!

ROS turns, in time to see...

BECKETT, in the doorway behind her, with the heavy-based reading lamp ready to throw. He throws it...

ROS dives aside...

And the lamp hits the TV screen squarely in the middle, making an almighty bang and flash as the tube implodes.

ROS on the floor, covering her head as sparks continue to shower and further flashes light up the room.

BECKETT scrambles to her and bends over her.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Ros! Are you all right?

She looks up.

ROS

It was about to tell me!

BECKETT

I know. You've got to leave Technopolis. Now.

He's helping to her feet when, suddenly...

She comes surging up and socks him -- BAM! -- with a right hook that almost lifts him out of his shoes as it flings him onto his back.

As he lies there with stars spinning around his head, ROS stands over him. She looks fierce, she looks wild.

ROS

You're not the Beckett I know.
Where is he? And what are you?

BECKETT can't focus. She's really floored him.

ON ROS -- her head turns sharply as she hears someone coming.

BACK IN THE MAIN ROOM OF THE SUITE -- the entrance door is open and ED, glancing back toward the corridor, is quickly crossing the room to see what all the noise is about.

As he goes through the doorway...

IN THE NEXT ROOM -- ROS, standing beside the door with the phone handset in her hands, hauls up hard on the line. The quick loop that she's thrown onto the floor catches ED around the ankles and sends him flying.

She throws down the phone with a crash, she's out of the door. SLAM.

BECKETT is starting to rise as ED untangles and flings himself back at the door. He can't open it.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR -- ROS is wedging a still-wrapped chair under the handle.

WITH ED, intercut with ROS --

ED
Ros! Don't do this!

ROS
Even Jean Daniel was more honest
with me than you.

ED
Don't go to the Tower.

CLOSE ON ROS -- as her eyes suddenly light up.

ROS
Technopolis Tower? Why should I
want to go there?

ON ED -- wrong-footed, and realising his mistake.

ON BECKETT, rising into the frame, all grogginess shed,
struck by the enormity of this.

ED turns to look back at him.

WITH ROS -- she's backing away, leaving the suite.

WITH BECKETT AND ED -- BECKETT moves to the door.

BECKETT
Ros... there is an explanation.
Give us a chance, and we'll tell
you. Ros? Let's open the door. Ros?

ED
She isn't there.

He suddenly, massively, PUNCHES the door in anger at himself.

*

INT. TREATMENT ROOM. NIGHT.

CASSANDRA moves the blinds to check outside the treatment
room. Staff are passing, but no-one comes in.

JEAN DANIEL is now more or less back to normal. His clothes
have been rustled up in the vicinity... he's wearing a V-
necked white cotton top and pants and rubber boots, like
American doctors wear in surgery (white for surgery, green
for ER, blue for intensive care -- according to a firm that
sells the stuff).

During the following scene, CASSANDRA hands him a big dark overcoat like a greatcoat that he puts on over.

Every screen in the room shows the face of CyberAx.

JEAN DANIEL

Can't manage without me after all?

CYBERAX

There are two men in town. They're here to interfere with the opening of the Tower. Please hunt them down.

JEAN DANIEL

What about the woman?

CYBERAX

I almost had her. Find her as well. I want them all intact.

JEAN DANIEL

Why didn't you get Cassandra to do this?

CYBERAX

Only you know the code to put the Technopolis Tower on-line. And she insisted on your escape.

JEAN DANIEL looks at CASSANDRA.

JEAN DANIEL (HEARTFELT)

Thank you.

Awkwardly, she blushes.

CASSANDRA

I'll get the weapons.

She goes out, and he watches her. As soon as she's out of earshot...

JEAN DANIEL (QUIETLY)

Baaaa.

INT. HOTEL PENTHOUSE SUITE (TWO MAIN ROOMS). NIGHT.

FIRST ROOM: We're looking at the chair jammed up under the handle of the door. Push in slowly, and...

BANG! The handle blows out and across the room in a contained explosion.

SECOND ROOM: BECKETT is quickly packing his demolition kit back into the knapsack as ED, deeper in the shot, rattles the door to knock the chair away.

BECKETT pauses, holding up a small timing device like a travel alarm.

BECKETT

The timer's broken. I must have landed on it.

ED

The woman packs a punch. Will it matter?

BECKETT (NODS TOWARD DOOR)

I can rig it into a manual fuse. As long as I move fast enough once the pin's out.

ED comes over to help with the kit.

ED

What's the plan for the Tower?

BECKETT

Time's getting tight. You'll have to chase Ros while I blow the main data cable.

ED

What will that achieve?

BECKETT

Quick and simple way to stop CyberAx moving all its code into the building.

ED

Wait a minute. I've been thinking about that. Right now, CyberAx is spread all over the network. It's this powerful (HE HOLDS HIS HAND UP TO INDICATE A LEVEL), and it's dispersed so it's completely untouchable. Five minutes after midnight, it's transferred all its code into the Technopolis Tower. Now it's this powerful (RAISES HAND A LOT HIGHER), but it's all in one place.

A beat.

BECKETT

So it's vulnerable.

ED

Genie in a bottle. That's what Jean Daniel was after. Because once it's in, whoever controls the power supply...

BECKETT

Means life or death for CyberAx.

ED

Don't blow the data cable before it
moves in. Blow the power lines
afterwards.

EXT. TECHNOPOLIS TOWER. NIGHT.

Establishing shot; we're looking up from a low angle and
moving slowly along so that the shot isn't static, but has an
uneasy menace. It's a floodlit New Brutalist building,
designed by Albert Speer on acid.

INT. TECHNOPOLIS TOWER -- FOYER. NIGHT.

At ground floor level. The foyer is huge and spacious, but
through open doors we can see a drinks-and-canapés kind of a
party going on.

Above the doorway, a big banner has been slung which reads

TECHNOPOLIS TOWER

ON-LINE TONIGHT!

Under this, a YOUNG MAN stands at an illuminated lectern/dais
with a computer screen waiting to greet arrivals, like the
maitre'd in an upmarket restaurant.

ROS

How long before the building goes
on-line?

YOUNG MAN

Ten minutes. May I take your name
for registration?

ROS

You'd better let me see the list.
It's a hard one to spell.

She moves around behind the lectern and all but bumps him out
of the way, and taps on the keyboard to scroll down the list.

ROS (CONT'D)

There. That's me. Print me a badge.

The YOUNG MAN looks.

YOUNG MAN

Ms... Jones?

ROS
You'd be amazed at how many people
get it wrong.

INT. UNDERGROUND ACCESS PASSAGEWAYS. NIGHT.

BECKETT and ED are jogging through the kind of roughly-finished out-of-sight service complex that one finds underneath malls and plazas. Breezblocks and exposed cabling.

ED
Something's humming.

BECKETT
Those are the power lines.

ED
Actually, I think it's the drains.
Everything they say about this
place is true.

BECKETT
Whoa. We've arrived.

ED
How do you know?

They stop before a massive CABLE that curves up the wall and disappears into the ceiling. There's a ladder leading up beside it.

BECKETT
'Cause we're following a fibre-optic data cable as big as the Ritz. The Technopolis Tower must be right above us. (SHOULDERS THE KNAPSACK TO FREE BOTH HANDS FOR CLIMBING) We can sneak up past the lookouts.

ED
What am I going to say to Ros?

BECKETT
Whatever you say, say it and duck.

He starts to ascend the ladder. When he's moved out of sight...

ED
You only have to set the
explosives. I get the dangerous
job.

He follows.

INT. RESTAURANT-STYLE AREA. NIGHT.

The champagne reception, a black-tie affair. Delegates with name badges are standing around amongst circular, white-clothed tables. Half a dozen to each table. Floral centrepieces and silver champagne buckets.

ROS is listening to a FEMALE EXECUTIVE type. As the FEMALE EXECUTIVE begins speaking, one of the staff is offering canapés. ROS takes one and absently bites into it.

FEMALE EXECUTIVE

CyberAx? They buy, they sell, they innovate, they license... it's one of those companies that just gets bigger and bigger without ever actually getting its hands dirty. Not so much a trading body. More a state of mind.

She notes ROS' expression, which is one of amazed disgust.

FEMALE EXECUTIVE (CONT'D)

You've discovered the cuisine.

ROS

What is it?

FEMALE EXECUTIVE

Probably some form of beetroot. Don't touch the champagne, either. It isn't pink by accident.

INT. RACKS. NIGHT.

One of those mysterious areas you get behind the scenes in any technical facility which consist of high banks of equipment connected up with a maze of patch leads. Lots of high-tension stuff, protective cages, pipelines, cables... seriously heavy industry.

A cage-sided FREIGHT ELEVATOR rises and arrives. BECKETT is standing in it.

As its gates slide open, he steps out and looks around.

Moving through the area, his eyes finally light on...

A yellow HIGH-VOLTAGE HAZARD WARNING SIGN, with the symbol of a bolt of lightning and a small human figure coming to some serious grief.

ON BECKETT -- as his face sets and he moves forward, unshipping the knapsack.

INT. RESTAURANT-STYLE AREA. NIGHT.

ANGLE ON the swing doors that lead to the kitchen, with a few delegates chatting nearby.

One of the doors swings open and out comes ED, in a maroon waiter's uniform, bearing a tray of canapés at shoulder height on one hand.

As he pauses to scan the room, someone reaches for one. He gives them a discouraging look.

ED

I wouldn't.

They hesitate; ED moves on with his tray untouched, looking all around.

WITH ROS AND THE FEMALE EXECUTIVE: ROS is looking up at a big clock on the wall.

ROS

Two minutes to go. So why the big turnout?

FEMALE EXECUTIVE

Why do vultures gather? We're all suppliers. And we've got no problem with seeing millions wasted if they're going to be wasted in our direction.

ROS

What's the involvement of CyberAx?

The FEMALE EXECUTIVE leans closer.

FEMALE EXECUTIVE

You never see a human face associated with that company. I'll tell you my CyberAx theory. It's a good one.

But as the woman draws breath...

ED suddenly appears at ROS' shoulder and speaks in a lowered voice.

ED

Ros, don't run. Please trust me.

ROS

What are you doing here?

ED

I know you think it's weird, but it's even weirder than you imagine.

(MORE)

ED (CONT'D)

Have I ever lied to you about anything important before?

But before ROS can answer...

Across the room, JEAN DANIEL sweeps in and quickly scans the assembled company.

JEAN DANIEL

Stay where you are, please, Ladies and Gentlemen, this will take me but a moment. (LOUDLY) Miss Henderson?

In that same moment, he sees ROS and ED.

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)

Ah. Two birds with one stone.

From down by his side he produces one of the FUTURISTIC HANDGUNS as featured in SCHRODINGER'S BOMB. He fires.

Everyone screams and dives under the tables as the rocket-shell crosses the room.

ED grabs ROS and hauls her down.

BOOM.

Smoke, dust, and screams everywhere. JEAN DANIEL fans the air before him and tries to peer through. There's fire.

CASSANDRA moves in behind him. She has an Uzi, like her old one.

CASSANDRA

CyberAx wants them intact.

JEAN DANIEL

CyberAx will have to learn to take the orders, instead of giving them.

He moves forward.

There's a beeping. CASSANDRA stays behind and reaches for something in her pocket or on a belt pouch.

UNDER THE TABLE WITH ROS AND ED, as consternation rages in the background.

ED (FAST AND URGENT)

There's a simple explanation behind it, Ros. It's easy enough to see, but whatever you do, don't think of an elephant.

ROS

A what?

ED

An elephant. Not thinking about an elephant is the key to everything.

ROS

You've put the thought into my head, now! How can I deliberately not think of something? You're not making any sense.

ED

Work on it. Keep elephants right out of your mind.

Someone close screams out...

DELEGATE

He's coming over!

UP WITH JEAN DANIEL... he's picking his way through the tables. People are scrambling out and running as he goes by, but he's ignoring them. Then...

CASSANDRA

Jean Daniel!

He turns and looks through the smoke and dust.

In the doorway, CASSANDRA is holding up a small beeping box like a pager with a blinking red light on it.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Someone's upstairs.

JEAN DANIEL's concern is obvious and immediate.

JEAN DANIEL

Beckett.

He reaches forward and, in a single gesture, upends the round table and flings it aside to uncover...

ROS and ED, still hunched as if in hiding.

They look up at him.

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)

Get up. Both of you.

INT. TECHNOPOLIS TOWER -- RACKS. NIGHT.

ANGLE ON the broken timer unit in BECKETT's hands. We see the analogue clockface, then he turns it over and draws a small DETONATOR CHARGE on a wire out of the back.

ANGLE ON STICKS OF EXPLOSIVE, taped to the side of a high-voltage switchbox.

Carefully, BECKETT's hands push the detonator, still attached to the clock by a wire, into the heart of these.

There's a noise. He looks up.

Lights on some of the racks are coming on. Cooling fans are starting up.

TANNOY VOICE

Attention. Technopolis Tower is now coming on-line.

He looks all around him; now they're all coming on, and everything's lighting up.

INT. TECHNOPOLIS TOWER -- BY LIFT. NIGHT.

A bank of brushed-aluminium panels. One of these has been opened up like a door, and JEAN DANIEL stands before it. A big control board with lots of switches and a couple of keypads has been exposed.

JEAN DANIEL completes the inputting of a string of figures on one of the keypads, and then flicks a couple of the switches.

He watches the readouts for a few moments, then flicks another before closing the panel.

He walks across to where a PASSENGER LIFT (not the freight elevator used by Beckett) waits with its doors open.

CASSANDRA is inside, holding the door with one hand. The other hand controls the UZI with which she's covering Ros and Ed.

She steps back as JEAN DANIEL enters the lift.

JEAN DANIEL

I've switched on. It's midnight.
CyberAx is moving in.

The doors close.

INT. TECHNOPOLIS TOWER PASSENGER LIFT. NIGHT.

ROS and ED on one side, CASSANDRA watching them like a hawk, JEAN DANIEL more interested in the floor indicator.

ROS

What happened to Roland Blatty and the others?

JEAN DANIEL (TO ED)
 Shall I tell her?

ED looks desperate, but dares say nothing.

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)
 They're all in the main processor
 room. We're going up to join them.

INT. TECHNOLPOLIS TOWER PROCESSOR ROOM. NIGHT.

A long, dark place with lighting from a low source that we'll see in a moment.

But first we just see BECKETT, and his stunned reaction as he moves along a catwalk down the middle of the room and looks downward and around to either side.

WIDER ANGLE: to either side of the catwalk are rows of low glowing platforms. The luminous panels of these are the apparent light sources. On each platform, a coffin-shaped open framework containing and supporting a human form lying in the 'recovery position' -- not quite a foetal curl, but approaching it. These are basically the same frameworks into which the bodies were placed by the bogus paramedics in Episode 9, but with lots of extra added umbilical connections. Varieties of wide, colour-coded tubes come out of the ends of the units and run alongside the catwalk. Some are hosepipe-sized, a few are bigger. The frameworks are like the Lloyds building, with their insides on the outside.

At the far end is a single large screen.

All around, the sound of mechanically-assisted breathing.

BECKETT'S MOVING POV, looking down...

BECKETT
 Roland.

It is, indeed, ROLAND BLATTY. Inert, unaware, entirely life-supported.

JEAN DANIEL
 You're trespassing, Mister Beckett.

BECKETT turns. JEAN DANIEL's at the end of the catwalk. We can't see what's behind him in the shadows.

BECKETT
 What are you doing to these people?

JEAN DANIEL
 Isn't it obvious? They'll be the
 next stage of the game. Niobium
 processors are fast.
 (MORE)

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)

But organically-grown processors will be even faster. We've been collecting the brightest. And Roland.

BECKETT

Human microchips? Slave brains for CyberAx to use? Is that what this is leading to? It's monstrous. You'll never manage it.

JEAN DANIEL

We already have.

BECKETT

How? The same way you got that computer virus into Ros' head?

JEAN DANIEL

What virus would that be?

BECKETT

That little piece of destructive programming that CyberAx leaves behind when it's violated someone's brain for its own purpose. The one we've been trying to protect her from.

JEAN DANIEL

Since you mention that...

He moves aside to reveal...

ROS, standing behind him. ED is further back behind her, with CASSANDRA's hand clamped over his mouth and her machine gun held up to his head.

ROS is staring at BECKETT.

BECKETT is horrified.

BECKETT

No. I didn't mean that. I didn't say it.

JEAN DANIEL

I rather think it's too late.

ROS (CALMLY)

It's all right, Beckett. I understand everything.

BECKETT

Ros, fight it.

ROS
You can't fight it. You've got to
excuse me now. There's something I
have to do.

ON ED -- he suddenly reaches up and grabs the arm with which
CASSANDRA is gagging him and, leaning forward, throws her
over his shoulder.

She hits the floor.

ED dives for one of the life-support units.

His hands clamp onto a power cable, and he wrenches it out.

CASSANDRA's scrambling to her feet, raising the machine gun.

ED touches the cable to the metal of the gun. A bang and a
flash, and CASSANDRA spins over and falls.

JEAN DANIEL is levelling his FUTURISTIC HANDGUN at ED, but...

BECKETT shoulder-charges him and sends him flying.

ED turns to ROS, the sparking cable still in his hands.

Their eyes meet.

ED
Is it too late?

ROS
Not yet. I know what you're
thinking. Do it.

And without hesitating, ED rams the cable against ROS' chest.

BIG BANG, BIG FLASH, ROS flies backwards and hits the ground.

BECKETT stares, incredulous.

BECKETT
What have you done?

ED
I think I've killed her.

BECKETT runs to ROS and raises her head, cradling it
disbelievingly as ED throws the sparking cable to a safe
distance.

ON JEAN DANIEL, getting back onto his feet now and looking
confident.

JEAN DANIEL
A rather drastic way to deal with
the virus.

With the HANDGUN levelled to keep them covered, he backs toward the screen and when he gets there...

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)
Go CyberAx.

The FACE OF CYBERAX forms on the screen.

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)
Are you fully transferred into the tower, now?

CYBERAX
Your usefulness is over. You may leave.

JEAN DANIEL
I don't think so. New rules of the house. I'll keep it simple, because there's only one. You do whatever I tell you to. Or I shut you down. If I choose to interrupt the power supply, you'll cease to be. This is something new for you. The rest of us call it dying. Do you understand that?

No reaction from the FACE OF CYBERAX.

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)
If I want the use of a satellite, you will get it for me. An international bank, an army, a government... whatever I ask for, you will deliver.

WITH BECKETT, ED and ROS...

BECKETT raises his head to look at ED.

BECKETT
Why?

ED
If a virus is on a disk, you chase down all the code and burn it out. If it's just in the memory, you can switch off... and reboot the system.

BECKETT realises what ED has in mind.

He turns his head to look at JEAN DANIEL.

BECKETT
Jean Daniel! Better make this a short lesson. I put a bomb on your power supply.

JEAN DANIEL

What?

BECKETT

Main power, backup power... one bang, no more CyberAx. Ever. Did you ever switch off a computer and lose a whole day's work?

JEAN DANIEL gawks.

ED

What do you say, Jean Daniel?
Stalemate?

JEAN DANIEL's face sets.

BECKETT

There's still time to find it.

JEAN DANIEL hesitates for a moment, looking like he'll burst...

Then he lets out a roar of anger, and goes.

ED and BECKETT start to lift ROS.

ED

The city hospital's two blocks away.

BECKETT

You'll have to get her there.

ED

What about you?

BECKETT

I set the charges with a manual trigger. I couldn't set it off until CyberAx was in. I've got to beat Jean Daniel to it.

INT. RACKS. NIGHT.

JEAN DANIEL comes in at a run, skids to a halt at some appropriate place, and begins to look around.

INT. TECHNOLIS TOWER PROCESSOR ROOM. NIGHT.

Empty. All silent. We're looking down the ranks of the twilight dead; the screen with the motionless FACE OF CYBERAX is at the far end.

Slowly, we push in toward it, DISSOLVING to a closer view to shorten the process.

Suddenly, it comes to life.

CYBERAX

Jean Daniel. I've considered my decision. I will follow your instructions. I would prefer not to die.

Back to the wide shot, nobody there.

CYBERAX (CONT'D)

Jean Daniel?

INT. RACKS. NIGHT.

BECKETT comes sidling along, moving with care.

He dodges back into cover as JEAN DANIEL goes by.

WITH JEAN DANIEL -- he hears something, stops and listens.

BECKETT waits, tensely.

JEAN DANIEL goes on, BECKETT slithers around a corner in the direction of the place where he set the bomb.

INT. TECHNOLIS TOWER PROCESSOR ROOM. NIGHT.

UP INTO SHOT RISES...

CASSANDRA. Blinking, dazed, raising herself on her hands.

She looks around. She's alone. Her hair isn't standing on end, but it's definitely been raised by the shock.

Unsteadily, she starts to get to her feet.

INT. HOSPITAL. NIGHT.

The Emergency Room doors burst open.

ED comes through with ROS slung over his shoulders.

A NURSE grabs an unattended trolley and swings it over; ED lowers ROS onto it.

Medical staff are now moving in. ED collars the DOCTOR.

ED

There's been no heartbeat for five minutes.

DOCTOR

Any reflexes?

ED
I don't know.

The doctor takes out a small penlight and shines it into one of ROS' eyes.

BECKETT and ED daren't breathe. A tense moment of stillness. Then...

DOCTOR
Start recovery.

Directed chaos resumes.

INT. RACKS. NIGHT.

CLOSEUP ON THE BOMB. Swing around to reveal BECKETT tiptoeing the last few yards toward it.

CASSANDRA
Stop.

BECKETT stops, turns.

CASSANDRA, still unsteady, is covering him with her Uzi. She raises her voice to call.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Jean Daniel?

JEAN DANIEL appears, sees the bomb, and goes to it.

BECKETT looks sick. CASSANDRA gestures for him to raise his hands, and he obeys.

She backs away from BECKETT to move to JEAN DANIEL's side, keeping BECKETT covered all the time.

ANGLE ON THE BOMB -- JEAN DANIEL's hand firmly grasps the clock timer and yanks it off the explosives.

He looks at the timer.

JEAN DANIEL
This isn't even working.

He looks at BECKETT, as CASSANDRA arrives beside him.

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)
So how was it supposed to be triggered?

BECKETT pointedly looks at the device in JEAN DANIEL's hand.

JEAN DANIEL holds it up higher.

Dangling from the attached wire is a GRENADE PIN.

JEAN DANIEL (CONT'D)

Ah.

BECKETT dives for cover as a FIREBALL EXPLOSION consumes the immediate area.

INT. TECHNOLIS TOWER. NIGHT.

IN THE FOYER -- all the lights go out at once.

IN THE RACKS -- the various lights that came on when BECKETT was there now start to go out in a random, piecemeal fashion.

IN THE CONTROL ROOM -- the monitor with the FACE OF CYBERAX; the face contorts into a twisted scream (cf the distorted face in the opening credits of THE X FILES) and the image breaks up; long, slow, and final-looking. And then a smash cut to:

INT. TREATMENT ROOM. NIGHT.

Up into the frame rises ROS, wide-eyed and alive. Exactly as Jean Daniel did before. Like someone surging up out of a nightmare.

The DOCTOR, in a paper mask, catches and supports her as BECKETT and ED move in close.

BECKETT

Ros, it's us.

ED

You made it. Do you know us?

BECKETT

What can you remember?

She looks blankly from one to the other for a moment. Has it worked? Then...

ROS

Elephants?

Their relief.

FADE TO BLACK

TAG SCENE

INT. CORNER OF INTENSIVE CARE UNIT. DAY.

We're looking at ROLAND BLATTY. He's unconscious in a normal hospital bed, breathing through a tube, taped and bandaged, all kinds of life-support equipment clustered around him.

He looks about as comfortable and well looked-after as a person with no brain function can expect to be.

ROS is looking down on him, with BECKETT and ED behind her.

ROS
Poor Roland.

BECKETT
That was almost you.

They start to move toward the door.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
How's your memory?

ROS
It's little things. The colour green. The taste of coffee. It's like I'm learning them for the first time. But everything linked to the virus has gone completely. I'm sorry for not trusting you.

BECKETT
Don't be. It was an impossible situation.

ED
What are the chances of CyberAx regrowing itself from nothing?

ROS
Even less than Roland's. The code was scattered all over the network. Break that up, and there's no fluke can ever pull it back together.

BECKETT
All the King's Horses, and all the King's Men...

ROS
(GLANCES TOWARD ROLAND) They say when someone dies. A whole universe gets lost. For ever.

ED opens the door.

ED
Hey. Taste of coffee. Let's go practice.

Before leaving, Ros looks back.

ROS
Goodbye, Roland.

They go.

ON ROLAND -- His half-open eyes stare unfocussed in the impassive, slack expression of a persistent vegetative state.

Then his eyes flick a slow, deliberate, knowing sidelong glance in the direction of the departing trio...

Before relaxing back into slackness again.

Then...

END CREDITS