

SUPERCOLONY

John Royan

johnkroyan@gmail.com
johnroyan.com

FADE IN:

EXT. URANIUM CITY - CANADA - DAY

Dense white fog wafts by. Clearing to unveil a sign spanning a FOREST ROAD:

URANIUM CITY WELCOMES YOU

The remote Canadian mining town faintly visible through the mist at the end of the unpaved road.

We hear MUSIC approaching: *"We are family! I got all my sisters with me. We are family! Get up everybody and sing!"*

The song blaring from an old Ford pickup pulling a trailer that comes down the road.

INT. OLD FORD - DAY

DR. P. A. MEDFORD, a free-spirited, middle-aged woman, drives along singing to Sister Sledge's disco hit.

DR MEDFORD

(really into it)

"We are fam-i-ly!... I got all my sisters with me. We are fam-i-ly!..."

THE FORD AND TRAILER

pass under the sign and putter away.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dr Medford sits across from BOB and GINGER HOWETT (40s) and their seven-year-old son JIMMY. Dr Medford holds up a small terrarium containing a live, black, inch-long ant.

DR MEDFORD

This is amazing. Do you know that? I've never seen anything like it. It is two and half times larger than any other *Formica pergandei* I've ever seen. Thank you for sending it to me.

Jimmy beams.

JIMMY

You're welcome.

BOB HOWETT

Is it something important? That's a quite a drive from Chicago...

(hopeful)

I mean, is it valuable?

DR MEDFORD
Scientifically, yes, certainly. Where
did you find it?

JIMMY

checks with his dad then looks back at their guest.

CUT TO:

THE OLD FORD TOWING THE TRAILER - TRAVELING

Up a slope along the rim of an abandoned URANIUM MINE, a
mile-wide scar in the land with a blue pond at its base.

AT THE POND EDGE - IN THE SHALLOWS

Radioactive waste barrels entombed in the mud, leaking streams
of green and yellow ooze.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Dr Medford pulls into small clearing in the woods and parks.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

She takes the small terrarium from her pocket and views the
black ant inside.

DR MEDFORD
Your Highness, you were well-behaved.
Did you enjoy your visit with Jimmy?

She goes to a row of large terrariums housing exotic queen
ants stacked against the trailer wall. Stick-on labels read:

"DORYLUS GRIBODOI (Driver Ant, Ghana)"

"ODONTOMACHUS BAURI (Jumper Ant, Costa Rica)"

"CAMPONATUS SAUNDERSI (Exploding Ant, Malaysia)"

"SOLENOPSIS INVICTA (Fire Ant, Brazil)"

DR MEDFORD (CONT'D)
Okay now, back inside.

She drops the queen into the large terrarium, labeled:

FORMICA GIGANTEUS (Slavemaker Ant, Canada)

EXT. TRAILER - TWILIGHT

Dr Medford sits outside smoking a massive joint, savoring
the beauty of the northern Canadian wilderness.

Sparrows in the grass. Crickets TRILLING. A SCREECHING owl bursting from the trees at the edge of the clearing.

She pops a Twinkie in her mouth from a pile of snacks on a table beside her. Suddenly notices the CRICKETS HAVE STOPPED.

She looks around, curious, when all at once the sparrows fly off and a deep silence falls over the woods.

DR MEDFORD

Ow!

She bolts up and knocks an ANT THE SIZE OF A MATCHBOX off her hand. Brushes two more from her pants. A strange SQUEALING SOUND rolls toward her from out of the trees. She peers through the dim light and SEES...

The grass in front of her home QUIVERING WITH MOVEMENT.

She stares at the undulating ground in utter astonishment.

DR MEDFORD (CONT'D)

(breaths out)

Jesus, no.

She runs back to her home. Stumbles through the front door and grabs a shotgun above the door. SCREAMS and falls to the floor, the shotgun landing beside her.

VIEWED FROM A DISTANCE

A black mass, like a tide of oil, engulfs the RV.

DR MEDFORD

crawls along the floor in agony, ants all over her. She grabs the shotgun as a lamp sparks and the lights go out and everything goes BLACK...

Through the dark...

DR MEDFORD (CONT'D)

Oh, God... God...

Then a THUNDEROUS BANG followed by silence. We hold on the BLACK SCREEN... hear HEAVY BREATHING...

SMASH CUT TO:

DR. JENNIFER JACKSON "JEN" (25) - (PRESENT DAY)

racing through a SERIES OF GOVERNMENT OFFICES past frenetic officials and staff clearing out desks, computer files, etc.

She runs by a TV on CNN...

ON THE TELEVISION

A map of the United States with a shaded area extending from central Canada down to Texas and as far east as Virginia.

ANDERSON COOPER (V.O.)
 ...CNN can now confirm that most of the Midwest has been completely overrun and now the entire eastern seaboard is threatened. Washington D.C. and the seat of government are currently being evacuated with...

THE BROADCAST CUTS TO:

THE USS NIMITZ

ANDERSON COOPER on deck, an F-14 Tomcat landing behind him.

ANDERSON COOPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...President Clemens expected to arrive here on the Nimitz within the hour. Secretary of Defense Baird--

PICKUP JEN

Rushing down a HALL. Bursting through a door into an...

OVAL OFFICE - THE OVAL OFFICE

Quiet as a tomb. Jen stands over the Great Seal on the rug. Breathes and thinks. Dashes from the room.

Down a CORRIDOR toward a cluster of SECRET SERVICE AGENTS guarding an exit to the SOUTH LAWN where the PRESIDENT is being escorted to MARINE ONE.

She reaches the agents. Flashes a badge. Tries to pass.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 1
 (grabs her)
 Sorry, ma'am, that's as far as you go.

JEN
 I have to see the President!

A SENIOR AGENT steps up.

SENIOR AGENT
 I'm sorry, Dr Jackson, that's impossible. The President is-

JEN
 Listen to me!
 (MORE)

JEN (CONT'D)

I don't have time to explain, but I have to speak to the President! Oh, for God's sake, you know who I am! Why I'm here! Now stop wasting time and take me to the President! NOW!

Senior Agent thinks and decides. Rushes her out onto the SOUTH LAWN to a barrier of Marine guards.

SENIOR AGENT

(shouts over the helicopter)

Wait here!

He runs to the President who has just entered MARINE ONE. Speaks to her under the HURRICANE WINDS of the blades.

PRESIDENT HELEN CLEMENS (69) looks back at Jen. Apparently knows her. Locks eyes and gives her a cold hard stare.

HOLD ON JEN

Her bold unwavering eyes.

MATCH CUT TO:

JEN

in her quaint APARTMENT, eyes staring. Tucked up on her couch in morning dishabille, drinking coffee, looking at

a PHOTO on the wall of a six-year-old girl standing with a woman beside a train. A small suitcase in the girl's hand.

Jen studies the scene, remembering. Looks around the perfectly silent room.

Diplomas and awards on the wall. FLASHES OF WORDS: HARVARD - ENTOMOLOGY - SUMMA CUM LAUDE and PRINCETON give clues to her considerable accomplishments.

A tournament photo of Jen, a black belt in jujitsu, throwing a man over her shoulder.

Next to it, an idyllic poster of "Tahiti": looks like a portal to paradise. Below it...

A terrarium with two Mongolian gerbils. Cute little guys who resemble mice. Heads popping out of a nest of confetti.

Jen opens the lid. Feeds them sunflower seeds.

JEN

Good morning... All right, Madame Curie, cut it out. Share with your husband.

She puts an empty egg carton in with them.

JEN (CONT'D)

Here, help save the world, remodel your house.

The two gerbils attack it with their teeth, adding the filings to the mound of shredded cardboard that comprises their nest.

Jen picks up mail from a tabletop. Flips through it: Letters from OXFORD... MIT. A third from NATURE magazine.

She drops the Oxford and MIT letters in a waste basket. Opens the one from Nature - a receipt for a published article.

Jen checks her iPhone, an online account designated "TAHITI FUND". The recent deposit. Notes her new balance: \$241,000.

She checks the time on her phone: 7:40.

Walks down a hallway toward a bedroom.

At the open door she reaches up and grabs hold of a pull-up bar. Does a quick leg raise - effortlessly touching her pointed toes to the bar from a dead hang.

She drops lightly to her feet and steps into the BEDROOM where she finds a beautiful HISPANIC GUY sleeping face down on the bed.

Jen pauses to admire his perfect back, the shining brown contours of his muscular body.

She slides a manicured nail gently up the sole of his foot.

JEN (CONT'D)

C'mon, lover, better get up. Time to go.

The man groans inaudibly under the sheets. Jen walks over and throws open a curtain.

CLOSE ON a tattoo on Jen's upper arm - the Japanese Kanji symbol for speed. She gets dressed - jeans, a blouse. Puts on a colorful motorcycle jacket and pulls up a zipper.

EXT. HALLWAY - JEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Jen and Hispanic Guy pass a neighbor's door where LOUD DISCO MUSIC plays. Jen bangs on it with her fist as she walks by.

JEN

Turn it down, Toby! People are sleeping!

The door pops open and a white guy (50) with a rainbow afro steps out wearing a velour shirt and Speedo underwear.

TOBY

This is America! Don't tell me what to do! I can do what I want!

Jen, at the elevator, just shakes her head and steps inside. VOOOMMMMM!! The roar of a Suzuki Bandit 1250S motorcycle starting up takes us to

An UNDERGROUND GARAGE where Jen revs up the bike.

Pulls out onto the STREET with Hispanic Guy holding her from behind her. Peels out and pops a wheely.

EXT. STREETS - WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

Jen weaves the bike expertly through early morning traffic.

JEN

(over her shoulder)
Where do you live?

HISPANIC GUY

Just drop me back at the bar. I've got the day-shift today. I start in an hour.

EXT. BAR - DAY

Jen turns onto a street in a commercial district. Brakes before a neighborhood bar.

Hispanic Guy hops off the bike.

HISPANIC GUY

You're a dangerous lady. You know that?...

(cracks a sexy smile)
Am I gonna' see you again?

Jen gives him a kiss.

JEN

Not likely.

She rides away. Leaves the guy staring after her wondering what just hit him.

HISPANIC GUY
 (mutters ruefully)
 Shit.

EXT. STREETS - WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

Jen rides down an avenue toward the Washington Monument.

EXT. MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY - SMITHSONIAN - DAY

Cruises past the entrance to the museum where colorful banners hang from the front columns. One reads: "AMAZING ANTS!"

INT. EXHIBIT HALL - SMITHSONIAN - DAY

The enlarged frightful face of a leaf-cutter ant on a screen.

JEN (O.S.)
 Now there's a handsome fellow.

STUDENTS laugh, watching a slide show hosted by Jen.

JEN (CONT'D)
 And this is his home...

NEXT SLIDE: An ant nest excavation twenty feet deep, fifty feet wide - scientists and laborers working all around it.

JEN (CONT'D)
 ... A nest in Brazil. Some scientist had the clever idea of pouring cement into it to form a cast. What you're looking at is the excavation. All those tubes you see are tunnels connecting the different chambers. The whole thing is more complex than New York City's subway system. And the amount of dirt removed and sheer scale of the construction is equivalent to humans building the Great Wall of China. Only these ants did this in a matter of weeks.

ANOTHER SLIDE shows a graph representing the timeline of ants, dinosaurs, man.

JEN (CONT'D)
 And ants have been making these amazing structures for nearly a hundred and thirty million years.
 (to a LITTLE GIRL)
 Which means they were here long before the dinosaurs.

NEXT SLIDE: a map showing figures of ants on all continents but Antarctica.

JEN (CONT'D)

And you'll find our little friends on continents and islands all over the world, except Antarctica.

LITTLE GIRL

Then why do they call it Ant-arctica?

Laughter. Lights up. Slides off. Jen puts away her notes and slides her laptop into her bag.

JEN

All right kids, that concludes the show. I hope you all enjoyed it. For anyone interested I'm hosting a Reddit AMA on ant pheromones tomorrow at one. And I'll be here for a few more minutes if you have any questions. Otherwise, please follow your teachers into the next hall where you can learn more about our "Amazing Ants".

Most of the kids file out, but a few teenagers hang around.

SMART GIRL

Dr Jackson, my science teacher says that it's ants and not humans who really dominate the Earth. Is that true?

JEN

Yeah, in a way. They outnumber us a million to one. And in evolutionary terms there's simply no comparison, ants are a far more successful species than humans. So you could say it's ants who really have supremacy over the Earth; but it's on a whole other level.

SMART GIRL

But could they ever really take over?

JEN

From their point of view they already have. But they're no threat to us because of our vast difference in size. Frankly, we humans are more a threat to ourselves.

SMART BOY

You mean global warming?

JEN

Among other things.

COOL KID

I don't think we're so bad for the environment. We build dams, plant trees, *cultivate herbs*.

(over snickering)

Besides, I think global warming's overrated.

JEN

Does your science teacher agree with that?

COOL KID

No, but my dad does.

More laughter.

JEN

Well, leaving the facts of global warming for another day, consider this: So far science has only been able to identify about ten percent of the world's species. The other ninety percent of plants, animals and micro-organisms are unknown to us. And yet for the last hundred years we've been destroying that biodiversity at an incredible rate, putting one fourth of the world's species into extinction. Many before we even know they exist. We may be the supreme rulers of planet Earth but as far as other species are concerned they'd be a lot safer if it were the ants.

Jen heads for an exit with the group of kids shadowing her out. A loud cry of *Hajime!* (*Begin!*) carries us to a...

MARTIAL ARTS DOJO

Where Jen stands alone in the middle of the mat. Legs planted. Hands on hips. Eyes focused straight ahead. Streams of perspiration trickling down her cheeks.

From out of nowhere male and female students, all black and brown belts, come at her one at a time.

Jen's skills are fluid and lethal... using Nage... Oku... and Shinnin techniques she puts all comers on the mat.

An audience of students kneeling on one side of the dojo watches the exhibition.

When it's over and her last opponent takes a fall, the students applaud and the sensei, a woman in her sixties at the head of the class, nods in approval at Jen.

Jen bows respectfully to her sensei between breaths.

EXT. DOJO - DUSK

Jen leaves the dojo in street clothes holding a gym bag. Walks down the street to her motorcycle. Suddenly a black Suburban whips around a corner and stops. Two men in suits step out: Homeland Security AGENTS WILSON and EDWARDS.

AGENT WILSON
Dr Jennifer Jackson?

Jen takes the measure of the serious men blocking her path.

JEN
Yeah. Who wants to know?

AGENT WILSON
(flashing a badge)
I'm agent Wilson; my partner, agent Edwards. We're with Homeland Security. We need you to come with us, right away.

JEN
What?... Look, I'm not going anywhere with you. I'm on my way home.

The cold hard stares of the agents say otherwise.

JEN (CONT'D)
What's this all about?

EXT. ANDREWS AFB - NIGHT

The black Suburban speeds across the tarmac. Stops before a building beside a hangar. In the pale glow of the outdoor lights the two agents get out and escort Jen inside.

INT. OFFICE - ANDREWS AFB - SAME

Secretary of Homeland Security ARLINGTON ADAMS stands at a window watching Jen approach. Adams is a big man, world-weary and imposing. A wise old bear in a dull suit.

Next to him in a wheelchair is DR. PAUL TOLAN (70). Dr Tolan is African-American, thin and frail, but with enough intellectual energy to power a city.

SECRETARY ADAMS

She looks awfully young.

DR TOLAN

I wouldn't have asked for her if she couldn't do the job.

SECRETARY ADAMS

(reads a file)

She got a PHD at eighteen?

DR TOLAN

Yep.

SECRETARY ADAMS

So she's smart.

DR TOLAN

If she were a physicist, she'd be an Einstein. Smart enough?

SECRETARY ADAMS

I don't know, Paul. Who goes from being a full professor at Princeton to a docent at the Smithsonian? Who's she hiding from?

DR TOLAN

Everyone.

Adams shares a meaningful look with Dr Tolan. Turns to go.

SECRETARY ADAMS

Well, you comin'?

DR TOLAN

You go ahead. I'll be in.
(hands him a box)
Put the hook in first.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM - ANDREWS AFB - CONTINUOUS

Jen sits alone at a table in the sterile room, waiting.

Adams walks in holding the box. With him is COLONEL AARON WEBER who carries a laptop. Aaron's in his thirties, handsome and powerfully built. A man of sly humor and grand experience. Someone born to command.

SECRETARY ADAMS

Dr Jackson, sorry to keep you waiting...

(MORE)

SECRETARY ADAMS (CONT'D)

(taking a seat)

I'm Arlington Adams, Secretary of Homeland Security. This is Colonel Aaron Weber, my associate.

AARON

(with a nod)

Doctor.

JEN

I'm meeting with the Secretary? How serious is this?

SECRETARY ADAMS

We don't know yet. That's why you're here.

JEN

Those *polite* gentlemen who picked me up said it was imperative I come here immediately, but couldn't say why. Now what could you possibly want with me? And why all the rush?

Adams slides over the box he has placed on the table.

SECRETARY ADAMS

Take a look at that.

Jen opens the box and she is thunderstruck by what she sees.

JEN

(softly)

Oh, my god.

In the box is a dead TEN-INCH ANT. Jen reaches for it.

AARON

I wouldn't do that.

(off her look)

It's slightly radioactive. It's not dangerous, but you shouldn't handle it without gloves.

Jen's astonishment is quickly eclipsed by bursting excitement.

JEN

Where'd you find it? This is incredible! Are there others?

SECRETARY ADAMS

Dr Jackson, that's precisely what we're afraid of.

A new reality dawns on Jen.

JEN
(voice trailing off)
I see. A colony of such ants...

SECRETARY ADAMS
It was found in a Chipewyan village
in Northern Saskatchewan.

He looks to Aaron who pulls up a map on the laptop.

AARON
(showing Jen)
Here, up around Uranium City and
Lake Athabasca. Two such villages
and a truck stop have been attacked
with virtually no trace of the people
left behind. The only body found
was this woman who hung herself.

Aaron pulls up a photograph of a body hanging from a ceiling
with most of the flesh stripped off the bone.

Jen stares at the horrific image.

SECRETARY ADAMS
I'm handling this directly because we
don't want a word of it getting out.
There's not a department in Washington
that doesn't leak like a sieve and
the last thing we need is to start a
goddamn panic. You're here to lead
an investigation, if you're willing.
You'll be working with Canadian
authorities of course, but I want my
own personnel on the ground.

JEN
Why's that?

DR TOLAN (O.S.)
Because we believe the colony is
moving south.

Jen turns to Doctor Tolan entering the room in his wheelchair.
By the look on her face she would rather it were the ants.

DR TOLAN (CONT'D)
Judging from the timing and vector
of the attacks, they could be across
the border into North Dakota in a
matter of days.

He wheels up beside her.

DR TOLAN (CONT'D)

Hello, Jen.

JEN

(rather cool)

Paul.

SECRETARY ADAMS

Your ah... mentor here, wanted to go himself, but I wouldn't hear of it. And when the world's foremost authority on ants gives you a recommendation, well...

JEN

(to Dr Tolan)

Now you're recommending me? That's a switch.

Dr Tolan takes the sharp remark without comment.

JEN (CONT'D)

(looks at the ant)

How'd you get the specimen?

SECRETARY ADAMS

Canadian officials sent it to us. To get our attention I suppose. (adds ironically) ...I wouldn't have believed them otherwise.

DR TOLAN

Apparently their top myrmecologists are unavailable. Professor Carrington is somewhere in Borneo, and Jacob Barnhardt is laid up with pneumonia. So they've turned to me. And I, for obvious reasons...

(taps the wheelchair)

...have recommended you.

JEN

(re. wheelchair)

When did this happen?

DR TOLAN

Remember that helicopter I buzzed around in on weekends? Finally put it into a tree.

Jen weighs it all: the incredible ant, her former mentor's involvement, the anxious faces of the men before her.

JEN

No, thank you. I'll pass.

Adams looks at Dr Tolan in disbelief.

AARON

Ma'am, I'll be leading a highly-trained security team assigned to protect you. You won't be in any danger.

JEN

How gallant of you, Colonel.

She looks at Dr Tolan and Director Adams.

JEN (CONT'D)

Is there anything else?

Secretary Adams turns to Dr Tolan for help.

DR TOLAN

Give us a minute.

Secretary Adams and Aaron leave the room. Before he goes Aaron studies Jen with a respectful gaze - impressed by her courage to stand her ground.

DR TOLAN (CONT'D)

I hope this decision has nothing to do with me.

JEN

It doesn't.

DR TOLAN

Then why?

JEN

I'm not interested.

DR TOLAN

The hell you're not.

Jen thinks. Pulls the box closer. Looks again at the ant.

JEN

(humorously)

I get a team?

DR TOLAN

There is a significant element of danger in this.

JEN
You don't say.

Jen handles the box.

JEN (CONT'D)
Radioactive, huh?

DR TOLAN
(nods)
Um, hmm.

JEN
What's in it for me? I can't afford
to be off work.

DR TOLAN
What'll it take?

JEN
Ten grand.

DR TOLAN
All right.

JEN
A week.

DR TOLAN
Still workin' on the Tahiti fund?

JEN
Halfway there.

DR TOLAN
You know, Jen, there are a number of
people who live in Tahiti.

JEN
Not that many. And they speak French.
I don't.

A PROPELLER BUZZES TO LIFE

A green C-145A Skytruck powers up on the tarmac.

EXT. C145-A - ANDREWS AFB - NIGHT

Jen and Aaron approach the plane. Shouting to one another
over the BLARE OF THE ENGINES.

JEN
So what do I call you, Colonel Weber?
Sir? Great Lord Protector?

AARON

Aaron will do, *Doctor* Jackson.

JEN

It's Jen, please. Or we're not on speaking terms.

They climb the short airstair and enter the plane.

EXT. ANDREWS AFB - NIGHT

The big green albatross of an aircraft takes off.

EXT. SKIES OVER AMERICA - NIGHT

Soars over a black landscape sprinkled with lights.

INT. SKYTRUCK - MOVING

Up the aisle between rows with four seats. Our first look at Aaron's team: a young, multiracial group in fatigues.

In the very back of the plane sits CAPTAIN VIRGINIA "GINGER" CAMPOS reading a report by herself.

STAFF SGT. ANG CHUN sits across the aisle studying her with admiring eyes. Ginger feels it and side-glances at the handsome Chinese-American. Smiles coyly and turns away.

IN THE NEXT ROW - PRIVATE BOBBY "STYX" ROBERTSON grooves to a tune on his iPhone. Tapping out the beat on his armrest.

CORPORAL LINUS "MARBLER" EKMARK dozes beside him. The big Swede drops a massive paw over Styx's black hand.

MARBLER

(eyes closed, drowsy)

I can feel that.

Styx removes the big hand. Waits. Starts tapping his foot.

AHEAD OF THEM - IN SEATS JUST OUTSIDE THE FLIGHT DECK - are SPECIALISTS IUDS TURNER and LARRY LAXALT. Turner and Laxalt sit as far from each other as they possibly can.

Turner drinks coffee from a styrofoam cup. A Confederate flag tattooed on the inside of his wrist.

Laxalt flips through a Sports Illustrated. Looks briefly at an ad with a handsome man. Laxalt looks, and is, the most macho man on the plane. He just happens also to be gay.

ON THE FLIGHT DECK

Aaron flies the plane. Jen, in the co-pilot seat, goes over the report marked TOP SECRET on Aaron's laptop.

AARON

Mind if I ask what changed your mind about coming?

JEN

(reading the report)
He threw in a dental plan.

AARON

Yeah, well, that'll do it. Got me in the Air Force.

Jen looks over and smiles.

AARON (CONT'D)

So why ant scientist? How'd you get interested in that?

JEN

Oh, I don't know, goes back to when I was a kid, I guess. I put a stick into a Fire ant nest and got stung up and down my arm. I couldn't believe something so small could hurt me so bad... Been a fan ever since.

AARON

I had an ant farm when I was kid. It didn't last a week. My uncle told me they could lift fifty times their own weight so I kept putting rocks in it for them to move around. I think they died of exhaustion.

Jen appreciates the quip with a grin, pages through the report. Comes to the photo of the woman who hung herself.

AARON (CONT'D)

(re: the photo)
Ever seen anything like that before?

JEN

Yeah, once, in Africa. Driver ants. They killed everything in their path: a baby, some dogs, even a tethered horse. And they were nowhere near the size of what we're dealing with.

Aaron's gaze falls again on the photo, the magnitude of the coming danger driven home to him.

EXT. CANADIAN FORCES BASE (CFB) COLD LAKE - DAY

The C-145A drops toward a runway out of a colorful sunrise.

ABE MARCEL (65) A Chipewyan tribal policeman watches it land.

Marcel stands off by himself near a group of CANADIAN SOLDIERS beside three Milverados: the military version of the 4-door Chevy Silverado.

MOMENTS LATER

Aaron's team unloads their gear from the plane. Ang picks up a PX shopping bag. Puzzled, he looks inside: a new tackle box, sunglasses, women's clothes with price tags on them.

JEN (O.S.)

It's mine.

Ang turns and hands it to Jen.

JEN (CONT'D)

I travel light.

Jen takes the bag. Turns and looks for Aaron. Who stands a short way off in council with Marcel and a Canadian Army officer, MAJOR BILL LEVEILLE (50).

Aaron breaks away and comes over to Jen.

AARON

Apparently our clearance to operate in Canada hasn't come through yet. So it looks like we're gonna' be on hold for a while.

JEN

The hell we are. I didn't come all this way just to hang out in the middle of nowhere.

She strides past Aaron to Major Leveille.

JEN (CONT'D)

Are you going out to the site today?

MAJOR LEVEILLE

Yes, ma'am... in about ten minutes. I take it you must be the ant scientist.

JEN

I am. And why is it I can't come with you?

MAJOR LEVEILLE

Well, ma'am, you can, but these American soldiers haven't been cleared yet to conduct operations on Canadian soil. They'll have to remain here.

JEN

But I'm good?

MAJOR LEVEILLE

Yeah.

JEN

Well, then there's no problem. Shall we go?

AARON

(coming over)

Hold on a second! You bet there's a problem. We're here to protect you. You're not going anywhere without us.

JEN

Oh, yeah? Just watch me.

AARON

Hey look, lady-

JEN

No, you look. I'm not here under your command, Colonel. I'm a private citizen. And since this Major has no objection, I'm going. Got it?

Aaron's crew has stopped unloading to watch.

Aaron, ticked off, turns to Major Leveille.

AARON

Is there a problem if I come along as an observer?

Major Leveille appears amused by the whole thing.

MAJOR LEVEILLE

Fine with me.

Aaron swings his eyes sharply back to Jen who takes the sunglasses from her bag and puts them on. Grins smugly and walks off toward the vehicles.

MAJOR LEVEILLE (CONT'D)

What's with her?

AARON
 (starting after her)
 She's lost her broom.

EXT. SASKATCHEWAN PLAINS - DAY

The three Milverados fly down a remote dirt road. The open countryside and blue dome of the sky dwarfing the vehicles.

INT. MILVERADO #1 - SAME

Marcel drives with one hand on the wheel. Major Leveille beside him. Jen and Aaron a yard apart in the back seat.

Leveille throws his arm across the seat and smiles at Jen.

MAJOR LEVEILLE
 So whaddya' think, Doc? Any idea
 where our little friends come from?
 What's behind all this?

He drops his hand on her knee. She removes it.

JEN
 Touch me again, Major, and I'll touch
 you back.

MAJOR LEVEILLE
 (smirking)
 Sorry. Didn't mean nothin' by it.

Jen looks out the window.

JEN
 I've got no idea what's behind this.
 That's what I'm here to find out.

MARCEL
 (chimes in)
 I'll tell you what's behind it.

Everyone looks at Marcel.

MARCEL (CONT'D)
 It's Mother Nature fighting back.

Jen smiles knowingly.

JEN
 The Gaia Hypothesis?

MARCEL
 Yep, that's it. We've messed with
 her world and now she's pissed.

AARON

(to Jen)

The "what" Hypothesis?

JEN

Gaia, the Greek goddess of the earth,
(with a nod to Marcel)

Mother Nature if you will. It's a theory that looks at the earth as essentially being a living organism; a great mother to all life. She creates life, nurtures it, makes adjustments to maintain it, and does whatever it takes to protect it.

AARON

From what?

JEN

From anything that threatens the balance of life.

AARON

Like us?

JEN

Yeah, like us.

EXT. CHIPEWYAN VILLAGE - DAY

A sad little hamlet out on the plain where a dusty white road ends at a dozen shacks are the Chipewyan's homes.

The three Milverados cruise down main street and stop.

Jen takes in the eerily silent town with a prolonged gaze.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

- Jen takes pictures with her phone.
- A soil sample. That she puts in her tackle box.
- Aaron INSIDE A HOME. A little girl's doll on the floor. He bends down and picks it up. His eyes fixed on a streak of dried blood smeared across the floor.
- The Canadian soldiers hang with the vehicles. Leveille checks his watch. Walks passed a soldier and rolls his eyes.

He walks around the SIDE OF A HOUSE and finds Jen kneeling in the dirt taking a soil sample. She stands and turns.

Emits a small gasp at finding Leveille suddenly there.

MAJOR LEVEILLE
Did I you scare you?

JEN
I didn't hear you coming.

Major Leveille moves in a little closer.

MAJOR LEVEILLE
Worried about the big ants?
(smiles creepily)
Got your heart pounding?

He places his hand over Jen's heart, touching her breast.

Quick as a cat Jen pins his hand to her chest, presses forward and pushes his hand back painfully over his wrist.

Major Leveille CRIES OUT and buckles in pain... when Jen, lightning-quick, grabs his shoulder, sweeps out his leg and slams the big man hard to the ground.

Major Leveille looks up at her through a cloud of dust.

JEN
I told you I'd touch you back.

Jen walks off.

The justly humiliated Leveille left on the ground.

PICK UP Marcel wandering around. Pausing BEHIND A HOUSE, studying the terrain. Jen comes up from behind.

MARCEL
It's a helluva' mystery, isn't it?

JEN
Did you find any nests?

MARCEL
Nothin' around here.

Jen looks with interest into the distance.

JEN
You check those rocks?

Across the white haze of the plain sits a cluster of rocks more than a mile away.

CUT TO:

THE THREE MILVERADOS SPEEDING ACROSS THE BARREN PLAIN

White spirals of dust thrown up in their wake.

A TRUCK WHEEL grinds to a halt.

Doors open and everyone gets out.

AARON

(shouldering his weapon)

All right, help me out. Just what is it we're supposed to be looking for?

JEN

Any sign of a nest: small trails, mounds of dirt, any holes.

Jen's gaze falls on Leveille who looks quickly away.

MAJOR LEVEILLE

All right guys, you heard her. Fan out.

The armed soldiers disperse at a disinterested pace.

Jen walks the perimeter of the ROCK FORMATION which rises like a lumpy brown monument out on the plain.

She moves in and out of the rocks. Stops and thinks.

Suddenly spots one of the ants scurrying across the ground. A black TEN-INCH FORMICA foraging for food.

Jen takes a clear container from the tackle box. Covers the ant and shimmies it inside. Stares at the CAPTURED ANT.

The ant STRIDULATES: CHIT-TA-CHIT-TA-CHIT, a rubbing sound ants make that resembles radio static or the shake of Maracas.

Jen scans the area. Spots...

Five other TEN-INCH FORMICAS answering the call. They scramble out of the rocks. Race away.

Jen stomps on one. Kills it. Chases the others who run past Aaron.

JEN

Aaron! Aaron, stop them! Don't let those ants get back to the nest!

Aaron rushes over and stomps on an ant. Missing a couple times before he gets it.

The other three racing away across the flat dry earth.

Aaron unslings his weapon and FIRES! Leveille and two other Canadians hustling over.

AARON
 (aiming)
 Shoot 'em!

The black specs race across the white ground heading straight for a large boulder.

BULLETS SMACK the dirt around the ants. Kicking up dust. Nailing one ant!

Two Canadian soldiers run after the ants FIRING as they go.

HITTING an ant... Leaving one last ant racing to the boulder.

Aaron sites it. FIRES!

And OBLITERATES the distant black spec... Fragments flying into the air. Falling into a hole at the base of the boulder.

Jen stares at the boulder, the two soldiers halfway there.

JEN
 Oh, no.

Suddenly a BLACK MASS pours out of the hole.

JEN (CONT'D)
 (to the Canadians)
 Run! RUN!!

THE TWO CANADIANS

Stand frozen by the sight of the approaching ants. They raise weapons. OPEN FIRE!

Aaron, Major Leveille and the other Canadians join in, unleashing a barrage at the front line of the ants.

HOT LEAD RIPS into the insects. Splatters them every which way. But the flood of ants comes on.

The two Canadians turn and run. The ants overtaking the slower man. Rising up his legs, bringing him down SCREAMING!

Jen carries the captured ant and dashes over to Aaron. Pulls him toward a truck.

JEN (CONT'D)
 Everyone, in the trucks! Now!

Aaron and Jen get in and look back at the Canadians.

One writhing under a pile of ants. The other running like an Olympian, eyes wide with terror.

Major Leveille and his men FIRE their weapons. Try to save him. To no avail. The ants catch the man and take him down.

MAJOR LEVEILLE

Let's go! GO!

He waves his men back to the trucks. Major Leveille and Marcel getting in one truck, the last four soldiers another.

AARON AT THE WHEEL - WITH JEN

Speeds backwards. Whips the truck around and floors it!

MAJOR LEVEILLE

Starts his truck. Jams it in drive and pulls a U-ey.

MARCEL

(banging the dash)

C'mon man, MOVE! MOVE!

Leveille floors it and off they go.

THE FOUR CANADIAN SOLDIERS

Pile into their truck. Their driver with one eye on the ants. Fumbling with the key... DROPPING IT!

His comrades shouting! Frantically pushing power window buttons that don't engage with the engine off.

CANADIAN SOLDIERS

C'mon! Get us outta' here!

Too late. The wave of ten-inch ants slams into the Milverado.

Up the tires. Through the open windows. The trapped soldiers quickly overwhelmed. Bitten and stung a hundred times.

MAJOR LEVEILLE

Looks in his rear view mirror. SEES...

A mound of ants where a truck had been.

He checks his speedometer. Pegged at sixty.

Looks up at a boulder in his path!

MARCEL

LOOK OUT!

Leveille veers. Tilts. FLIPS AND CRASHES!

The big green truck rolls over the plain like a toy. Crunches to a stop upside down in a cloud of dust.

A wave of ants closing in. Arriving... Encasing the vehicle.

Moments later, Major Leveille breaks through the shattered windshield covered with ants. He crawls along the ground. Tries to rise, SCREAMS horribly then drops out of frame.

AARON AND JEN'S TRUCK

Speeds away. Putting distance between themselves and the great BLACK BODY OF ANTS pooling over the plain.

HERE ENDS THE WEBSITE EXCERPT OF SUPERCOLONY. IF YOU'D LIKE TO READ THE SCRIPT IN ITS ENTIRETY, REACH OUT TO ME AT johnkroyan@gmail.com.