

Crusader: No Remorse Intro

by
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1st Draft

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EXT. THE CITY - DUSK

A futuristic city under brooding sky. Many wingless aircraft glide over the ruins of a once-proud city. Many structures still stand, but none without apparent damage and decay. Smaller craft can be seen circling various sectors of the city as if patrolling. One or two disappear into the grid of buildings to land. Others are leaving the site for other destinations.

SUPERED TITLE

"DATE: 2493.2 WC"

"REBEL INSTALLATION, ECHO SECTOR"

"ENGAGEMENT POST-OP ROUTINE"

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

A blasted, wasted avenue intermittently lit by failing streetlights. Building facades fallen to ruin. Years of disuse have taken its toll but there is evidence of fresh abuse from a recent battle. An ominous, hovering craft appears over the street. Spotlights flare and play across the avenue. A smaller vehicle settles on the street and discharges several armor-clad troopers into the archway of a building guarded by other troopers.

END SUPER

INT. SUB-LEVEL PASSAGE

Dank. Abandoned. The walls are slick with effluent. Detritus covers the floor. In the foreground, scavengers skitter about. The drip of water, distant machinery, skittering. A new sound emerges from the background noise, a heavy, rhythmic thud can be heard through the surrounding structure.

The scavengers pause, looking up.

Light bounces off the convolutions in the far wall. RACK FOCUS to walls as light-beams play off surfaces and dust-motes in the air. The scavengers skitter away. Footsteps can be heard approaching and the dull, rhythmic thud emerges into a particularly heavy tread. Shadows play off the walls.

POV MECH

The screen is rastered with graphics and command-lists overlaying the view of the surroundings. The image sways slightly. Three armored troopers walk ahead. These are STUTGART, OWENS, and CRUSADER. STUTGART, at point, carries his weapon at ready with finger poised. CRUSADER follows. OWENS slight of build and talkative, carries his weapon casually and follows the other two.

Background noise and footsteps filter through electronic system. Clicks, whirrs and bleeps of robotic system underlay that. Voices are distorted by throat-mics. Blips and bleeps of com repeaters can be heard as each trooper speaks.

OWENS (INTERCOM)

You are kidding aren't you? You'd rather be walking into a skag's sights than cleaning up after the tech-toys?

STUTGART (INTERCOM)

Of course not. I just prefer to see my target...

OWENS (INTERCOM)

...so they can target you.

COMMAND (INTERCOM V.O.)

Cut the chatter Are Three. We need to wrap this quick-stat.

INT. SUB-LEVEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The troopers round the corner of the sub-hall one by one followed after a moment by a bi-pedal MECH bristling with weapons, tools, spotlights and cameras. This is the source of the heavy footfalls.

REVERSE

The group continues into the room. A jagged opening into a larger chamber is evident beyond. The troopers approach and line the sides with the mech poised center.

PAST GROUP INTO LARGER CHAMBER

Multiple entrances are evident. Any one could contain an ambush.

STUTGART (INTERCOM)
 OK. It get's tricky here. Owens
 pick up the rear.
 (to Crusader)
 You go left.

REVERSE

STUTGART (INTERCOM)
 Command, we have a tac-sit here.
 We're ready to move. Suggest mech-
 unit take point.

COMMAND (INTERCOM V.O.)
 Hold please.

MECH-VISION POV

Graphics overlay mech's view of chamber beyond.

COMMAND (INTERCOM V.O.)
 (a beat)
 Scanning.
 (a beat)
 Agreed.

The view lurches.

OTS MECH

The mech is instantly on the move into the large chamber.
 The troopers follow.

REVERSE

The larger chamber is lined with crates of various sizes. The
 mech approaches with troopers in tow in close formation
 looking at all points and glancing around obstacles.

STUTGART (INTERCOM)
 Keep it tight.

OWENS (INTERCOM)
 (apprehensive)
 This is not fun.

STUTGART (INTERCOM)
 It's not supposed to be. Now cut
 the noise.

They proceed further into the chamber. The mech is anything but quiet. As it proceeds forward, it efficiently clears the crates and detritus in its path.

OTS GROUP

The mech takes a couple more steps, pauses a half-second, then swings to face one of the openings to the left. It assumes an attack posture.

MECH POV

Enhanced image of dimly lit sub-hall past opening with graphics outlining the features and listing life-form statistics. CRANE DOWN.

REVERSE OF MECH

The mech lowers its bulk to gain a better view of the sub-hall. Spotlights filter through the broken mesh of the opening. The mech is obviously too big to fit. Stuttgart's head appears around an edge then ducks back.

OTS STUTTGART

The troopers have now flanked the sub-hall opening as the mech retreats a few paces. Stuttgart in the foreground with Crusader. Owens on the far side. Safeties are off and weapons are at ready.

STUTTGART (INTERCOM)

Command. Tac-sit. Life-forms detected. Mech cannot, I repeat, cannot engage.

COMMAND (INTERCOM V.O.)

Acknowledged Are One. Sub-hall too small for assist. Use triangulate recon procedure. Capture all essential personnel.

OWENS (INTERCOM)

Oh great.

COMMAND (INTERCOM V.O.)

You have a problem with that Are Three?

OWENS (INTERCOM)

No! No.

STUTGART (INTERCOM)

Owens, take point.

A look and pause from Owens then he proceeds into the sub-hall cautiously. Crusader follows.

FROM INSIDE SUB-HALL

Owens steps into the sub-hall with Crusader close behind covering Owens. Stuttgart appears at opening edge and backs in facing outwards. The mech holds in the chamber outside.

REVERSE OTS OWENS AND CRUSADER

Owens and Crusader inch forward. In the far end of the sub-hall, some trash shifts slightly.

OWENS (INTERCOM)

I've got something!

REVERSE OWENS AND CRUSADER

Owens steps left, Crusader right. Stuttgart turns and advances to left side.

MECH POV

The troopers move towards the end of the sub-hall. Trash visibly shifts.

OWENS (INTERCOM)

I've got it! I've got it!

STUTGART (INTERCOM)

Probably just a scavenger.

HIGH OTS OWENS AND CRUSADER

Trash shifts again revealing two terrified children cowering in the filthy corner of the sub-hall.

OWENS (INTERCOM)

They're kids!

REVERSE

The troopers relax, weapons at rest. Stuttgart steps up between the other two.

STUTTGART (INTERCOM)
 What do we do with these scags?
 Command, we have some civilians
 here. Non-threat. Advise.

COMMAND (INTERCOM V.O.)
 Hold please.
 (a beat)
 Eliminate collaterals and move on.

Owens and Crusader are visibly disturbed.

OWENS (INTERCOM)
 What?! Command, would you repeat
 that command?

COMMAND (INTERCOM V.O.)
 Operation behind schedule.
 Eliminate all collaterals. Comply
 Are-Team!

ON OWENS

OWENS (INTERCOM)
 We can't do that! Sarge, what do
 we do?!

ON STUTTGART

STUTTGART (INTERCOM)
 (emotionlessly)
 We do our job soldier.

Stuttgart raises his weapon and draws a bead on the children. Owens reaches out to stop Stuttgart. A bang, and a strange hole appears in Stuttgart's armored helmet and he lowers his weapon. Blood seeps from the open wound. Stuttgart slips down out of the frame revealing Crusader with his sidearm.

MECH POV

Agitated graphics and text. "Weapons Threat", "Weapons Discharge" and "Monitor Function Failure."

COMMAND (INTERCOM V.O.)
Are-Team! Advise! Are-One monitor
failure! Advise!

REV OWENS & STUTGART

OWENS (INTERCOM)
What?! What?!

Crusader turns and aims his weapon at Owens' head.

CRUSADER (INTERCOM)
It's not supposed to be like this.

COMMAND (INTERCOM V.O.)
Tee-Are One-Oh-Three, neutralize
scenario! Repeat, neutralize
threat!

The whine of a turbine cycles up.

MECH POV

New graphics appear as the mech appears for attack. Crusader reacts to the threat from the mech, but Owens is too engaged with Crusader to notice. Crusader leaps left behind a support structure just as the mech opens fire. Owens, caught in the fire, jitters and dances.

REVERSE OWENS

Owens dances. Then slips sideways and to the floor. The mech ceases fire.

MECH POV

Overlay graphics scan for life signs.

REV CRUSADER BEHIND SUPPORT BEAM WITH MECH BEYOND

Crusader's weapon is at ready. He is breathing heavily. All else is silence.

MECH POV

Nothing moves.

Then, a blur of some object flashes past camera and out of lower frame.

LOW MECH OTS

The mech retreats and looks at floor between its feet.

MECH POV

The scanner graphics identify the object as a grenade just as it explodes in the lens. The view whirls wildly, the lens shattered, and settles to that of the ceiling. Graphics flutter wildly as the mech attempts to analyze and repair its failing systems.

MEDIUM MECH

Mech is on its back facing the ceiling. The lens assembly is twisted and tortured. A beat. Then, Crusader steps from the sub-hall.

MECH POV

Crusader enters mech's view, watches a moment, raises his weapon, and fires point-blank. A flash then instant systems shutdown, the image shrinking to middle of frame and graphics fluttering away.

TITLE - "CRUSADER: NO REMORSE"