

Republic Under Siege: Threat from Within

Based on the book

by

Michael J. Brooks

Screenplay

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FADE IN:

INT. IMMIGRANT DEPARTURE STATION - DAY

CHYRON: PLANET: SATELLITE ONE

CHYRON: COLONY THREE

CHYRON: IMMIGRANT DEPARTURE STATION

A wide shot of Satellite One's IMMIGRANT DEPARTURE STATION, bustling with TRAVELERS. On walls are GOVERNMENT BANNERS displaying slogans like, "Your New Life Awaits" and "Welcome to Eden."

Amid the crowd, AKANE SUGIMORI (18) sits on a steel bench, tapping her sneakered foot with jittery impatience. Her punk attire—ripped fishnet stockings, denim shorts, black crop top—makes her stand out.

A small duffle bag rests at her feet.

Her PARENTS, AKARI AND BENJIRO, sit on each side of her. They wear humble clothes, hands rough from labor, their faces proud yet sorrowful.

Akane glances around, eyes wary, picking at her nails. Her CRN (Citizen Registration Number) is prominently displayed on her wristband.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

At eighteen years old, Akane Sugimori had done it. She had escaped life on Satellite One, a life of back-breaking labor. A "better future" awaited her on Eden, the Commonwealth's motherworld. Lucky, damn lucky. Or so they said.

CLOSE-UP - AKANE'S FACE

Her face is pale, lips pressed tight in doubt. Around her, travelers chatter with excitement. But Akane is alone in her apprehension.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. COLONY THREE - INDUSTRIAL ZONE - NIGHT

A grimy, neon-lit ALLEYWAY in Colony Three's Industrial Zone. AKANE (16) slips into a narrow space between metal structures, peeking over her shoulder. She pulls out a small package from her backpack and hands it to a waiting TEENAGER, who quickly takes it and scurries off.

A GOVERNMENT DRONE hovers overhead, its scanning light passing narrowly above her. She freezes, holding her breath until the drone moves on.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Two years in her home colony's underground trade. She'd taken risks, broken laws. Anything to help her family get by. But those days are behind her. The immigration lottery has granted her access to the upper echelon of humanity.

CUT TO:

INT. IMMIGRANT DEPARTURE STATION - DAY

Back to Akane, lost in thought. Her fingers trace the faint scars on her knuckles from years of hard work. Suddenly, Akari's hand touches her shoulder.

Akane turns, and her expression softens.

AKARI

(speaking softly)
We're so proud of you, Akane. You have a real chance to make something of yourself.

Akane tries to smile but falters.

She overhears whispered discussions from other travelers about colony governments possibly declaring independence from Eden.

TRAVELER 1 (O.S.)

...independence, they say.

TRAVELER 2 (O.S.)

The government won't stand for it.

TRAVELER 3 (O.S.)

War's coming. You know it is.

AKANE

(to her parents, voice low and strained with emotion)
Do you guys believe the rumors? Do you think some colonies might declare independence from the government? If a civil war starts, you could be at risk. What if—

Benjiro grips Akane's hand.

BENJIRO

Don't worry about us or what's happening in the colonies. This is no longer your life. Your future is on Eden.

AKANE

(stifling a tear)
And what if I end up like so many others?

Benjiro's grip tightens. He looks at her with a fierce, almost desperate pride.

BENJIRO

You're stronger than that. We believe in you, Akane.

Akane and her parents share a tense, silent moment, her parents' pride barely masking their worry.

LOUDSPEAKER (O.S.)

Registrant C-Nine-Eight-Eight-Seven, proceed to boarding.

Akane glances at her wristband—C-9987—and her heart skips a beat. She and her parents stand, and they embrace. She then steps back from her parents, who cling to her hands until the last moment.

AKARI

Be joyful, Akane. Today's the beginning of something new.

Akane forces a nod, hoisting her small duffle bag over her shoulder. She turns and walks away, glancing back only once to see her mother, wiping tears from her eyes.

INT. DEPARTURE SHUTTLE - PRE-LIFTOFF - DAY

Two rows of seats run the length of the shuttle.

Akane sits next to the wall. She remains quiet, deep in thought about her loved ones and the difficulties of adapting to a new world. The tightness around her mouth and her restless movements betray every doubt and fear she harbors.

Conversations between travelers fill the air. Some discuss their dreams and aspirations. Others speculate about the possibility of colonies declaring independence and starting a war with the Commonwealth Government.

TRAVELER 4 (O.S.)

I can't wait to start my new life.

TRAVELER 5 (O.S.)

Glad I'm leaving the planet before war breaks out.

A magnetic, outgoing blond woman, SKYLAR GRACE (18), lowers herself in the aisle seat beside Akane. Her face is filled with hope for a bright future on Eden. She wears casual clothes that are as colorful as her character.

Skylar turns to Akane with a heart-warming smile and speaks amicably.

SKYLAR

Hi, I'm Skylar. Skylar Grace.
What's your name?

Akane, already feeling the absence of her parents and friends and unsure about the challenges ahead, is unenthusiastic about conversing with Skylar.

AKANE

(somberly)
Akane.

Even though Akane's greeting was lukewarm, Skylar remains persistent, trying to connect with her and lift her spirits.

SKYLAR

They say on Eden, all dreams can
come true. What's yours?

AKANE

People like us can't afford to
dream. We're barely scraping by.

Akane's uninspiring attitude doesn't faze Skylar. Her inner optimism is too strong to be dampened.

SKYLAR

(encouragingly)
Don't be so pessimistic. Anything's
possible if you set your mind to
it, Akane. Absolutely anything. As
for me, I'm destined for stardom.
I'm gonna be famous.

Akane's mood starts to brighten because of Skylar's infectious enthusiasm and ambitious dreams. A subtle smile tugs at the corners of her mouth, and her voice gains a touch of optimism.

AKANE

Well, Mom always says if you
believe in yourself, nothing can
stand in your way.

Skylar holds Akane's hand with a sisterly grip.

SKYLAR

Now that's the spirit, Akane.

The two women chat, becoming acquainted as they look forward to their new life on Eden. They are in their own little world, oblivious to the conversations of other travelers around them.

SKYLAR

So, what are you looking forward to on Eden? The skyscrapers? Flying cars? The beautiful beaches?

AKANE

Well, I heard that—

Akane's voice fades into silence as the scene transitions.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Amidst growing tension, some colonies declared independence from Eden and formed the Republic of Unified Colonies (RUC). In response, the Commonwealth Government mobilized the Defense Force. A violent conflict ensued.

MONTAGE #1 - WARFARE

QUICK CUTS: Explosions rock barren landscapes. Gunfire flashes. Rebels and Guardians shout and scream (O.S).

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Unfortunately, the Defense Force emerged victorious. To prevent further rebellion, martial law was imposed on all colonies, whether they had declared independence or not.

MONTAGE #2 - MARTIAL LAW

Military vehicles traverse the dusty pitted streets that weave between ramshackle living structures. Surveillance drones hover above despondent colony citizens who attempt to maintain a sense of normalcy in their daily lives.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

A group of rebellious dissidents formed an underground resistance called the Coalition. They were determined to continue fighting for colony independence.

MONTAGE #3 - COALITION PLANNING SESSION

Ragtag COALITION LEADERS huddle around a worn wooden table in a dilapidated room, planning their next moves. The table is covered with maps, datasheets, and tactical plans. The air is tense.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

After months of more war, a truce was finally reached and martial law was lifted, with the government promising reforms.

As for Akane—

MONTAGE #4 - AKANE ADJUSTING TO LIFE ON EDEN

Akane Struggles with Job Rejections - She sits in an employment office, receiving polite but dismissive rejections from recruiters.

Awkward Interactions in Public - In the marketplace, Akane faces sideways glances and icy stares from Eden citizens as she tries to navigate her new environment.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Akane learned that Eden society was not as welcoming to colony immigrants as she had hoped. She found herself walking unexpected paths and forming alliances she never would have imagined.

FADE TO BLACK:

TEXT ON SCREEN:

"REPUBLIC UNDER SIEGE: THREAT FROM WITHIN"

INT. CDF RESERVE BASE - PHYSICAL TRAINING CENTER - DAY

CHYRON: PLANET EDEN

CHYRON: COMMONWEALTH DEFENSE FORCE RESERVE BASE

A PLATOON OF 25 GUARDIANS are huddled in a semicircle, standing on cushioned floor mats.

They are dressed in their physical training gear, comprised of a short-sleeved black shirt emblazoned with a yellow "CDF" on the front, tucked into black shorts. They also wear elbow and knee pads, along with fingerless gloves.

Among them is a brown-haired Guardian named RANDAL (RANDY) SCOTT (22). He maintains a nearly perfect poker face, masking the stress of not knowing which of his new comrades might despise him. The subtle hints of anxiety in his expression are just barely noticeable.

The Guardians' no-nonsense PLATOON SERGEANT (30s) addresses them in an authoritative tone.

PLATOON SERGEANT

Today, we welcome Specialist Randal Scott to our platoon. He's a transfer from the active duty side.
(beat)
Anything you'd like to say, Scott.

RANDY

Only that I'm glad to be here—glad to serve.

A few Guardians aim hateful stares at Randy.

PLATOON SERGEANT

Alright, then.

The platoon sergeant paces back and forth and projects his voice loudly.

PLATOON SERGEANT (CONT'D)

I noticed some of you have gotten lazy. Just because we train once a month, then go back to our comfy civilian occupations, doesn't mean we can slack off. Understood?

The entire platoon responds with "YES, SERGEANT!"

PLATOON SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Good. The universe is full of threats. Combat readiness is essential. Find a sparring partner and start warming up.

The Guardians spread out across the mats. Randy pairs up with sergeant PAUL SHAFFER (30s), an intimidating man with a crew cut. They assume sparring stances.

Paul's voice drips with disdain toward Randy as he teases him.

PAUL

You thought coming to the Reserves
would give you a clean slate, is
that it, Scott?

Randy, frowning, doesn't respond. He and Paul move in slow, deliberate circles, eyes locked. Their footwork is calculated, their stance shifting fluidly between offense and defense.

PAUL (CONT'D)

The entire unit knows you were one
of them—one of the traitors. We
don't want you here.

Randy's jaw tightens. He watches Paul carefully, responding to each strike with a measured block, each feint with a subtle shift.

PAUL (CONT'D)

How can you even live with
yourself?

Fed up with Paul's verbal insults, Randy finally speaks.

RANDY

(tensely)
I did what I felt was right.

Paul scoffs, deflecting another strike before launching one of his own.

PAUL

Betraying your comrades?
Fraternalizing with the enemy? That
was the right thing to do, huh?
Bullshit.

Randy's patience frays. His blocks become less controlled, his counters more aggressive.

RANDY
Just shut up and spar.

PAUL
(strategically needling)
Seems like I'm getting under your
skin.

Randy's restraint snaps. He swings hard—too hard. Paul reads the attack, dodges, and in one swift motion, takes Randy down.

Randy lands hard on his back, breath forced from his lungs. Paul looms over him, smug.

PAUL
Word of advice, resign. The CDF
doesn't need turncoats like you.

PLATOON SERGEANT (O.S.)
Everyone, switch!

Paul walks away, chuckling.

Randy exhales sharply, irritation lingering.

Akane appears, leaning over him with confidence.

AKANE
I guess I'm your next dance
partner.

Randy pushes himself off the floor, rolling his shoulders as he stands.

RANDY
Let's see what you've got, Private
Sugimori.

AKANE
Call me Akane.

Randy and Akane settle into position, moving cautiously at first, trading light strikes and testing each other's reflexes. Akane's movements are fluid, precise. Randy matches her, their footwork weaving across the mat.

They pause intermittently to converse.

AKANE (CONT'D)

So, Shaffer giving you a hard time?

Randy remains silent, focused on sparring rather than conversation. His expression remains unreadable.

He and Akane halt their sparring exercise to catch their breath for a moment as Akane speaks.

AKANE (CONT'D)

Well, I hella respect you. I'm an immigrant from Colony Three. Because of you Coalition rebels, reforms are on the way. Life for my parents is gonna get better.

The sparring resumes.

AKANE (CONT'D)

You guys are my heroes.

Randy deflects Akane's next strike with ease. Her hero worship means nothing to him. He desires no tribute.

RANDY

Yeah, okay, whatever.

Akane frowns. Her words didn't brighten Randy's mood as she had hoped. She responds to his next blow with a quick counter.

AKANE

You don't sound too proud. What gives?

Randy dodges, then abruptly halts mid-motion. His stance straightens, hands lowering. He comes to a complete stop.

RANDY

Before I defected, I enforced martial law, killed Coalition rebels. And even though the Coalition did everything possible to avoid bloodshed, sometimes ... we had no choice but to end lives. It was self-defense.

(MORE)

RANDY (CONT'D)

(beat)

I watched friends of mine die on both sides. The war left me with pain you could never understand, Akane.

Akane's jaw tightens. She doesn't appreciate the assumption. Not one to be lectured to, her voice toughens.

AKANE

Just because I'm nineteen doesn't mean I'm unacquainted with pain.

RANDY

Really?

Randy moves without warning, sweeping her leg out from under her. She hits the mat with a controlled fall, but before she can react, he's already on her, pinning her down.

They lock eyes.

RANDY (CONT'D)

What would you know about pain, Akane?

Akane's gaze hardens, all trace of levity gone.

AKANE

More than you could imagine.

**FLASHBACK - INT. NONDESCRIPT ROOM - SKYLAR'S LAST MOMENTS
(PART 1 OF 3)**

We see a snippet of Skylar's last moments.

Akane stands in a plain, unremarkable room. Her heart drops and terror floods her face. Skylar is lying motionless on the bed, her deathly pale body marked with signs of violence. She had been killed by strangulation.

Words are scrawled across the wall:

IMMIGRANT BITCH
NADIR
WORTHLESS WHORE
KNOW YOUR PLACE

CUT TO:

INT. CDF RESERVE BASE - PHYSICAL TRAINING CENTER - DAY

Back to Akane still pinned by Randy, her eyebrows furrowed.

AKANE

My best friend lost her life for being an immigrant. I think about her all the time. So don't fucking lecture me about pain.

Randy holds his pin on Akane, silent. He sees the acrimony in her eyes. He senses her pain, and her strength. And he feels a connection.

PLATOON SERGEANT

Everyone, break!

All Guardians stop sparring.

PLATOON SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Be outside in battledress in twenty mikes. And don't be a second late.

Randy and Akane stand up. All Guardians head to the locker rooms, leaving Randy and Akane by themselves. As Randy turns to depart as well, Akane's sincere words stop him in his tracks.

AKANE

Hey, you gonna be okay?

Randy's back is still turned. His voice is strained with emotion, every word weighted with pain and loss.

RANDY

I'm not sure.

Randy, staring at nothing in particular, closes his eyes as the echos of war haunt his mind. A suffocating feeling overwhelms him.

GUNSHOTS, EXPLOSIONS, AND SCREAMS (O.S.)

Randy opens his eyes as the echos of war fade, then finally turns to face Akane.

RANDY (CONT'D)

I carry the war with me every day—
dead men and women forever
memorialized in my mind. And
because I sided with the Coalition,
every former comrade has turned
their back on me.

(beat, then with longing)
Including my lover, Stacie Spencer.

Akane is caught off guard.

AKANE

Wait, are you telling me Stacie
Spencer—a wealthy socialite, an
heiress to a fortune—joined the
CDF?

RANDY

Yeah, we enlisted together—served
together. We were inseparable. But
when I defected, she labeled me a
traitor, just like every Guardian
did.

AKANE

Maybe her mind has changed. You
tried calling lately?

RANDY

She never answers. She's completely
ghosted me.

Akane approaches Randy, each step measured.

AKANE

(thick with conviction)
Look, I know what it's like to feel
alone. To feel shunned. To feel
like an outcast. Sounds like you
could use some friends.

RANDY

Something tells me I won't be
making new friends anytime soon,
certainly not in the CDF. That's
for sure.

AKANE

I'm meeting up with some of mine
this evening. They're colony
immigrants like me. They'll respect
you. Come hang with us.

Randy hesitates. Solitude is easier. But something about
Akane's offer lingers.

AKANE (CONT'D)

C'mon, just for a few minutes.

Randy reluctantly accepts Akane's invitation.

RANDY

I guess it couldn't hurt.

AKANE

Cool. I'll give them a heads-up.
Let's trade contact info before we
leave today.

RANDY

Okay.

Randy makes his way toward the locker rooms. Akane watches
him go before calling out.

AKANE

Hey, for what it's worth: if the
Reserves had been deployed during
the war, I would've done the same
thing, join the Coalition.

Randy doesn't stop. He doesn't look back. He leaves, still
giving off loner vibes.

WOMEN'S LOCKER ROOM

The clang of lockers being shut reverberates.

Akane is now dressed in the CDF's black-and-gray camo-
pattern battle uniform. The rank is in the center and the
name tag is on the right.

She ties her boots.

Two FEMALE GUARDIANS put on their uniforms.

FEMALE GUARDIAN 1

The new guy's kinda cute.

FEMALE GUARDIAN 2

Yeah, but I heard he's one of the traitors.

Done tying her boots, Akane takes her phone from a locker and types a message.

ON THE SCREEN - Akane's text: "New prospect. Invited him to come this evening."

The phone buzzes with a response.

ON THE SCREEN - Simone's text: "Who is he?"

ON THE SCREEN - Akane's text: "One of the defectors. He transferred to my platoon today."

ON THE SCREEN - Simone's text: "We'll see if he's a good fit."

Akane smiles and closes the locker.

MENS' LOCKER ROOM

Randy, clad in battle uniform, gazes at a picture of STACIE SPENCER (22) on his phone. Ashy-blond hair drapes her shoulders, and she has piercing blue eyes.

The locker room clears out, Guardians returning to training.

Randy remains transfixed on Stacie's face. Haunted by both the war and the ache of lost love, he drifts into reminiscence.

FLASHBACK - RANDY AND STACIE TOGETHER

QUICK CUTS:

- Randy and Stacie holding hands on a nature walk.
- Stacie rests her head on Randy's shoulder as they watch the sunset.
- Randy tucks a loose strand of Stacie's hair behind her ear, smiling as she laughs.

CUT TO:

INT. CDF RESERVE BASE - MEN'S LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Paul's voice, laced with malice, snaps Randy back to the present.

PAUL (O.S.)
Hey, traitor.

Randy locks the phone, puts it in his pocket, and turns. Paul Shaffer and two GUARDIANS are coming toward him.

RANDY
Back off.

Paul edges closer.

PAUL
(threateningly)
Or what?

Paul pushes Randy's boundaries, invading his personal space.

RANDY
(shoving Paul back)
I said back off!

Paul retaliates, shoving Randy hard against a locker. The two Guardians with Paul snicker.

PAUL
Come on, take your shot. Beating
you down would make my day.

A brawl ensues. Randy lands some blows, but outnumbered three to one, he's quickly overwhelmed.

PLATOON SERGEANT (O.S.)
What's going on here?

The brawl stops.

The platoon sergeant gestures for everyone to leave.

PLATOON SERGEANT
Everyone, outside. Now.

Paul and the two Guardians file out of the room, then the platoon sergeant gets in Randy's face.

PLATOON SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Did you start that?

RANDY

Why am I the suspect? Because I'm a "traitor?"

PLATOON SERGEANT

Not a good impression, Scott. I got my eye on you. Now get your ass outside.

The Platoon sergeant departs. Randy's anger is visible.

RANDY

(kicking a trash receptacle)
Damn it!

EXT. OUTDOOR RESTAURANT - DAY

At the outdoor dining area, Randy spots Akane seated at a table in a quiet corner of the patio, away from the bustle of the other diners. Akane is with SIMONE CONYERS (30s), who is a black woman, and JAIME (JAY) LISTER (mid 20s), who is a black man.

Each has a drink in front of them, and a muted holographic news feed broadcasts above the center of the table.

Simone wears an outfit appropriate for warm weather, yet professional. Her polished appearance is evident from her manicured nails to her neatly styled hair. In contrast, Jay's clothing reflects his laid-back personality.

Akane is dressed in chic clothes that match her spunk.

Hovering DRONES deliver meals to diners' tables.

Akane springs to her feet and waves when she sees Randy.

AKANE

Randy!

Randy returns the wave, his heart not in it. Although he'd rather be at home, he figures it's good to connect with people who don't treat him like an outcast.

Akane sits back down as Randy takes a seat—Akane in front of him, Simone to his left, and Jay to his right.

RANDY

(flatly)
Hello, everyone.

AKANE

(to Randy)
For a second, I wasn't sure you'd show up.

RANDY

I always keep my promises, even the ones I'd rather break.

SIMONE

(to Randy)
I'm Simone.
(gesturing to Jay)
This is Jay.

JAY

(to Randy)
How's it going?

RANDY

(dryly)
Could be better.

Randy uses the keypad on his side of the table to order a drink. Simone taps the keypad on her side to unmute the holographic news feed.

CLOSE-UP - ANCHORWOMAN'S FACE

ANCHORWOMAN (NEWS FEED)

Wealthy entrepreneur, Damien Sykes, has declared his candidacy for Chief Executive. Here's what he had to say earlier.

DAMIEN SYKES (early 30s) appears on the holographic news feed, hair worn slicked back. Beneath his polished looks and disarming smile is a cunning, deceitful man.

CLOSE-UP - DAMIEN'S FACE

DAMIEN (NEWS FEED)

Our government never should've let
insurrectionists beat them into
passivity. And exonerating all
Coalition rebels is absurd. I will
set things right.

Simone sighs as a hovering drone brings Randy the drink he ordered, setting it on the table before gliding away. She taps a button on the keypad on her side of the table. The holographic news feed fades away.

SIMONE

(shaking her head)
Damien Sykes, the poster boy for
Purism.

JAY

(to Simone)
He's gotta be a Purist—without a
doubt.

Randy looks perplexed.

RANDY

Excuse me, a what?

Simone maintains a poised demeanor, every sip of her drink measured. She radiates the aura of a leader.

SIMONE

A Purist. A follower of an
extremist movement dedicated to
immigrant oppression. Cliques of
them exist in all our institutions.

Akane, Jay, and Simone speak purposefully, their words serving as clear warnings for Randy. He listens intently, shifting his focus to each of them in turn.

AKANE

Purists believe in the
stratification of humanity. And
they operate in total secrecy, so
barely anyone knows about them.

Randy seems to be digesting what he's heard so far.

RANDY

Are you saying these Purists are some kind of ... clandestine brotherhood?

AKANE

Exactly. And though most Purist groups act independently, they have the same goal: to ensure Eden's immigrant population stays at the bottom of society.

JAY

They also wanna keep colony citizens a buncha menial laborers, and they don't want any more immigrating to Eden.

SIMONE

Many threats to humanity exist. But the biggest is the one from within —from within our institutions. And we're telling you this so you can protect yourself from these fanatics.

Not seeing how Purists pose a threat to him, Randy shows no concern for his personal safety.

RANDY

(nonchalantly)
What grudge would they have against me?

SIMONE

They hate anyone who fought for Satellite One, us immigrants' homeworld. That makes you a target.

JAY

Basically, you fight for us, you might as well be one of us. That's how they think.

AKANE

(to Randy)
And no doubt some Guardians in our
platoon are Purists, like Shaffer.

SIMONE

(to Randy)
And you can be sure Damien isn't
the only Purist vying for office.
In a few days, six Parliament seats
will be decided. The anti-reform
candidates could be Purists too.

RANDY

(demandingly)
How do you guys know all this?

SIMONE

We're members of a unique social-
activist nonprofit. We know things
people don't.

AKANE

(to Randy)
You should come check us out.
You'll meet more immigrants like
us, people who respect ex-Coalition
rebels.

Simone shoots Akane a look, believing that inviting Randy
to their headquarters isn't prudent at this point.

Randy has heard enough. He lacks the mental capacity to
stress over Purists and doesn't feel any immediate threat
to himself.

RANDY

(standing to leave)
Look, it was a pleasure meeting you
guys. I'm gonna head home now.

AKANE

I'll call you.

Randy, back turned, walks away without another word.