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SUPERHERO SUNMAN, SKYFALL VIGNETTE #8 (APRIL 2012)

EXT. LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA - SEVEN AM, APRIL 2012

Seen from the top deck of an approaching container ship, the strip of Pacific Ocean coastline on which sits the industrial hub of industry and shipping in California that's Long Beach. Though early morning, the port's already abuzz with activity.

Ships moored at docks exhale grey breaths of smoke. See on on through successive metal walls of one ship to deep within its innermost midst. View pauses there to peer on where the ship is powered alive from energy supplied by fuel fed boilers.

Trucks that haul the ships' massive containers, or broke out allotments of goods from them, are lined up at the container terminals at the ready to haul these loads to points distant.

Massive cranes continually shift port's containers off the ships to their several high stacked, resting places on large swaths of backtop, that though heavily populated, await more.

Seen from the incoming container ship, nears, the break-water that juts into the ocean to protect the port from the ocean's fury. The trapped ocean within its bounds to shore, is murky.

View off the ship to north of the Long Beach strip, glimpses the distinctive cylindrical towers of the refineries there.

EXT. LONG BEACH BOULEVARD HEADED FOR LONG BEACH - SAME TIME

An attractive, Puerto Rican young lady on a sleek red, Brody brand, racing bike, in a slipstream of skin tight, Lycra red bike jersey, and shorts, topped by a sleek red helmet, surges past cars in the heavily tied up morning rush hour traffic. Strapped on her back is backpack of kind as conveys lap-tops.

EXT. RESEARCH WAREHOUSE, LONG BEACH - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

The lady cyclist still peddling at rapid pace, turns off the street into the entrance of a big parking lot set before the research warehouse for (fictional) Intuitual Technologies.

Ceasing peddling, siting upright, as removes helmet, holds it up revealing shoulder length, radiant brown hair, she glides the rest of way to building's entrance, brakes to stop there.

Hastily she seizes a bike lock from backpack, locks bike, and heads for doors. She takes out a secure pass from a pocket in her jersey, swipes that through doors' security slot. Doors open. She barges by them as they instantly close behind her.

INT. INTERIOR RESEARCH LAB INSIDE "IT" WAREHOUSE - JUST LATER

Seen with-in a research lab in the building, its entry doors slide open. Through them strides in the girl. Man, mid thirties, bespectacled, looks up from his work, stares as she tosses backpack sliding across the worktable. Man checks watch.

THE MAN:

Don't know how do it! Just on time, to the last second.. Not to mention the massive traffic jam today.

THE WOMAN:

So guess makes me most efficient. And one fast momma on two wheels.

THE MAN:

Not even out of breath..

THE WOMAN:

Considering filth inhaled on way.

THE MAN:

Drove like everyone else, not have to. Interior car air, darling.

THE WOMAN:

If did, be late, and, plump as you.

THE MAN:

If you weren't near best roboticist going, I'd be offended..

THE WOMAN:

As fast am of the grey matter says?

THE MAN:

Amazes me how anyone like you be working in this field. Should be deep in the jungles of the Amazon somewhere, off saving the planet.

THE WOMAN:

Wasn't aware not..

THE MAN:

Fond of your creations. Not family, pals, can't change world for you.

THE WOMAN:

Don't think so, huh?
(wryly coy)

EXT. AVALON HARBOUR BEACH, CATALINA ISLAND - TWO DAYS LATER

Morning. Sky, long sleeve tee, shorts, bare feet, walks along the ocean foam washing ashore onto Avalon Harbour Beach with Xena, in amber orange halter top and blue jeans shorts. She walks a steady two yards in from the water's edge. Sky stops, curiously watches her walk ahead of him. She stops.

SKY:

Xen, ocean don't bite!..

XENA:

You don't know what's in it, *here*.
Want list of the toxic ingredients?

SKY:

Don't like want know..

XENA:

Toxic as Vanessa Dangerton. How e-
lude her to spend the weekend here?

SKY:

Mother hen came pecking for her,
flew her away for the week-end. She
don't know I took off, *won't* know.

XENA:

Thought she and Blu know everything
about what goes on about them.

SKY:

Did the great vanishing Sky trick.

XENA:

And that exactly is what?..

SKY:

Ah, can't spill a guy's secret
moves. Lose my mythic allure..

XENA:

Humph. Think have one.. . Purist
surfer that is you, you really not
know that this beach is *full of*..

SKY:

Yeah, do. But watching your react-
ion as waded through it, *priceless*.

XENA:

Priceless your infected rash after.

SKY:
So nurse me back to health no prob.

XENA:
Drag me over here to, flirt.. Said
wanted to pick my brain about some
serious, other, shit.

SKY:
That, too. Yeah, want get your low-
down on DSI Inc., from your start-
up firm perspective. Stuff do, they
get a thumbs up or down from you?

XENA:
Can you be just a little more speci-
fic? Into everything, them. Among
most innovative, advanced, secret-
ive and invasive, of most that too.

SKY:
Invasive?..

XENA:
Common view is they put fingers
when want into other companies`
pickle jars. But again, I'm no
expert on all their shit..

SKY:
How bout robotics then, your field?

Her face becomes vivid tinged.

XENA:
That incident with Blu's minibot
told me of, that creation of theirs
got some stiking `similarities' to
specifications of stuff I've done.

SKY:
No love lost then, you and her.

XENA:
None. Not want be on her hit-list
either too.. .

SKY:
Come on, you dig a good scrape..

XENA:

Scrape's scrape. Crushed to pulp under a ton of iron whole thing another. Fearless one you, not get this.

SKY:

But you like to flirt with danger.

XENA:

If you mean, you.., very synonym of the word, prefer my chances cycling among the mean freeways of L.A. !

SKY:

May have chew those words, they are insidious insane sick..

XENA:

And you not?

SKY:

But adorable too.

XENA:

Yeah, real cute pup.

SKY:

Deja Vu strikes..

XENA:

Come again?

SKY:

Been so dogged before..

XENA:

Cause never grow up, perhaps?

SKY:

Not if can help it!

XENA:

Can I take this puppy to someplace yet half pristine on this island.

SKY:

Catalina stems from Greek for pure?

XENA:

Surprise me still. Sure knew. Avalon references to Paradise Island, or, apple. Know too that the apple tree is the Celtic tree of life?

SKY:
Into the Celtic?... How cryptic..

XENA:
For a Puerto Rican? All kinds other
kindred spirits through-out time.

SKY:
(laughingly discerning)
How many build robots too?..

XENA:
(laughs)
None. Just me and a few of my gen.

SKY:
Trying make hum, them, ..*natural*?

XENA:
In sense, *are* attune..

SKY:
Attune. With nature?..

XENA:
Yeah, and.., with *us*.

SKY:
But Blu, DSI.., not *so* much?..

XENA:
Not so much. Whatever profits them.

SKY:
Not entirely..

XENA:
Ooh? Other aims too? ..Blu?..

SKY:
Not your average CEO..

XENA:
So, what you want from me. I'm no
psychologist..

SKY:
But don't you program certain
personality traits into your..

XENA:
(mischievously grins)
Not be wanting model you in one??

Sky's eyes alight.

SKY:
Never thought of that. But now you
mention it..

XENA
Stop! Holy crap, then be like three
of you, along with your twin bro..
. Suppose, already got spare clones
of you stashed away somewhere too!?

Sky looks back perfectly stoic. She stares at him, begins being lured into the impossible of notion. She bursts out laughing. Sky joins in. Despite her loathing of the contaminated surf, she strides to it, swoops down her hand through it, cupping handful, flinging a spray of the frothy water over Sky.

XENA:
No the hell way, Jose!

SKY:
Who think am, George Lucas?..

XENA:
Just the thought of it..

SKY:
Enough, hey. You wanted take me to
someplace, untainted..

Remark reminding her, she hops out from surf, hastens up the beach sand a few yards, rubbing her hand dry on her shorts.

XENA:
Better hope *I* don't get a rash!
Most foul beach in *all* of Cali.

SKY:
Not always best being number one.

She blazes a look centered dead on him.

XENA:
Been number one in world you, yet..

SKY:
Sand burning hot here, or what?..

EXT. RIDGE TOP PART OF TRANS-CATALINA TRAIL - TWO PM SAME DAY

Sky and Xena hike along island's spine summit at Silver Peak.

They wear same clothes as before plus extra layers of jackets, backpack and hiking sneakers. From its fifteen hundred foot elevation, Pacific Ocean blue spreads away off each horizon. Coastline as faces California lies nearest down below.

SKY:
How far by Two Harbours we now?

XENA:
Thought you was tough?

SKY:
Getting, bearings..

XENA:
Not the part be needing. Suppose
want tell how much more to go?

SKY:
Sweet to snag a swank supper spot.

XENA:
Right. Where's nothing but us and
the ocean breeze?. If have know,
hour some more. Plenty time to have
chow, and, off go explore.

SKY:
All way back, too??..

She smiles at his ill ease. He responds by transforming his face from weary qualm to rueful grin.

SKY:
Make lady roboticists a hardy breed
nowadays! How about making a robot
donkey for us lesser mortals?

XENA:
Hulky monkey ride a robotokey, uh?

EXT. CATALINA ISLAND REMOTE COASTAL BEACH - AFTER FOUR PM

Xena, few yards in front, leads Sky along the trod over the last few yards of an offshoot trail off the ridge, here concluding at a shore beach like never been set foot upon before. Beyond, the Pacific Ocean heads back for California.

Xena lies her pack down, sits on a chair sized piece of driftwood. She waits for Sky to trudge last heavy steps to her. He hefts his backpack wearily up and off his shoulders. He heave chucks it down onto, grinding into, the stones and sand.

He flops backwards down, spread-eagles flat back against the sand. He twists his head sideways to look over up at her.

SKY:

Ends to which girls get me alone.

Xera grabs fistful of sand, flings it stingingly in his face.

XENA:

Not rose colored shades on? My bad.

She slides off the driftwood, bounds to him, drops to knees by him. She wipes the gritty sand off his face and from his one day stubble. He sputters out grains as got in his mouth.

XENA:

You said needed my help. We *had* a thing. Even so, I don't turn **my** back on, old, friends, *unlike*..

SKY:

Still think *I*.. .

XENA:

Dumped me in the lurch! That never **not** happened *once* in all your life?

SKY:

Said *not* into psychology..

XENA:

If what want is a fling, lets go at it. But know not expect *more* from..

SKY:

(wry chagrin)

Sec to recoup?.. Breathe in, out.. Ummmm. Climb back in the ring, Sky!

Sky draws in knees, plants hands down, leans back, gleams..

SKY:

Do, need, your help. Don't know what whack going on, what getting into! Sky, collapsing. I'm gasping for air. Sense big crap afoot, too.

XENA:

With DSI? Blu? Vanessa? Kay? Your bro, dad? *Like* more.. Your pal already been crippled? **No end to it!**

SKY:
You trust in fate? Being **meant** to..

XENA:
Don't say it. Please don't say *it*..

SKY:
Save the world, my world. Those in
harm's way I can too.

XENA:
There you went said it!

SKY:
Against things, big freaking thi.. -
Don't feel up to it. Want run from,
fate, my.. Nowhere trudge. With you
stay. **Not** drag you *in* the fray.

XENA:
Classic dose, superhero syndrome.
Fame, acclaim, past, up in smoke,
need fill that void. *Fantasies* Sky!
Not your gig to carry world on your
back. No-one can. Backs snap. Knees
crumble. Wills wilt. Hearts' break.

SKY:
Can mend. You no different, taking
me to *this* place untouched like by
anything impure. Thinking make new
age of, beings. Help us not destroy
it all. Protect from everyallthing.

Xena gets up abruptly, dusting the sand off her.

XENA:
Think that **not** an *okay* thing?

SKY:
Dunno. Trying see what what. Bursts
of bad vibes do get, like *with* Blu.

XENA:
Think foil *for* her *in* **me**? What if *I*
don't feel up to that, like you?

SKY:
Not I, you.. *This* sanctum of..

Sky stoops, picks up volleyball sized boulder. As rises, he
shotputs it hard as can up off into the air. Air, air, bould-
er arcs up, levitates moment, slams down on rock in the surf.

EXT. STARLIGHT COVE BEACH, CATALINA ISLAND - HALF HOUR LATER

Sky finishing off last big bite of a sandwich, spares half, tosses that over to a one legged Western Gull. It hops closer in to the morsel but gets swarmed by other gulls. A big gull swoops in, scattering rest. It gulps the bread. Sky laughs.

SKY:
How Darwinian.

XENA:
Isn't everything?..

Sky regards her intently.

SKY:
All, is?

XENA:
Up to now.., from the strictly scientific sense..

SKY:
That what you, think, too?

XENA:
Trying conclude something about *my* motivations for my line of work?..
A sweet girl like me?

She smiles.

SKY:
Sure can't deny you're sweet.. .

He runs the back of his hand up her arm.

SKY:
What think, have some mythological mystical notions swirling about that brilliant pretty head, too..

She grins, brightly evasive..

XENA:
You the one invited me to Avalon..
Gonna gab or want get moving on?..

SKY:
Go back already? Only got here..

She gets up, walks to her knapsack lying on a rock..

She bends over it, opens it, takes out a couple of snorkels and goggles. She throws one set at him. Sky, deftly reacting, catches it before it can hit him between his startled eyes.

XENA:
Not *that* way..

EXT. STARLIGHT COVE OFFSHORE FROM ITS BEACH - MINUTES LATER

Heads in snorkel gear, tubes pointed up, Sky and Xena float face down on the Pacific Ocean some ways offshore from the beach. She tilts her head above the water, twists it toward him, he responding back toward her the same.

XENA:
Don't let currents sweep you off.
You're a strong swimmer but Cali be
a long haul from here even for you.

SKY:
Twenty miles?.. Nah. Hum, shouldn't
we keep closer, some, to shore..

XENA:
Your reputation for fearlessness?..

SKY:
Not afraid, just not *all* foolish!

XENA:
Whatever you say.

He mockingly grabs her waist for support, grins, let's go.

XENA:
Just follow! Won't let die on me.

Thankfully Sky's relieved as she dives her head back under the water, and, twists her body back shoreward but diagonally so as swim towards a point further north of the beach. Sky thrusts head underwater, swirls about, and swims after her.

EXT. STARLIGHT COVE OFFSHORE FROM ITS BEACH - SECOND AFTER

Sky goggled eyes view ocean beneath his head as a swarm of sardines flash dart, at last moment, on by one side of him.

He tilts head forward, watches Xena swim fluidly underwater near surface. Sunlight filters through water on her, making her seem mythological part woman, dolphin and silver smooth metal, mechanism, so strikingly impressed, as astounds him.

EXT. NORTH OF STARLIGHT BEACH SHORE ROCK OVERHANG - BIT LATER

Ways north of Starlight Cove and Beach, Sky and Xena wade ashore where an overhang rolls a cavern roof over the shore.

They plop back down on the sand underneath the enveloping rock overhang, Xena landing to lay on top of Sky's chest.

SKY:

So this your favorite off the face of the earth make-out spot?

XENA:

You'd like think. How about the most safe and secluded spot on the whole island, where can talk shop.

SKY:

You, paranoid?..

XENA:

Said yourself, Blu and company, not to take lightly..

SKY:

That, all?..

XENA:

All? How you feel about that..

He smiles. She trades back to him her own sly smile.

XENA:

Thought so..

EXT. STARLIGHT COVE BEACH, CATALINA ISLAND - NEAR SUNSET

Back at Starlight Cove beach, Sky and Xena sit side by side, knees bent, facing ocean's deepening blue, sun just above top of Silver's Peak behind. Sky cranes neck back to look there. Sun shines on that side of his face. It dips below peak. The light from it departs up off his face, leaving it shadowed.

SKY:

Sun's going down. Head back?..

XENA:

Not like stay til sunrise..

SKY:

Weird, feel, ..exposed.

XENA:
Exposed to, me? More..

SKY:
..rattlesnakes, rats too - did
bring a flashlight right?! Like not
step on one in dark on way back..

XENA:
Guess got get back to the grind.. .
Even if that includes, now..

SKY:
So.., decided, **be**, on my side!

XENA:
Let's see if anything to anything
first, mon amigo?..

SKY:
Sense strong is. Even, here.

He puts forth hand. She grasps it in hip-hop style handshake.

They fail hear whir of wheels spin beneath a low profile, tiny mobot with camera eyes. It backs behind a shielding boulder more. In a nearby tree, a robotic starling watches them too.

EXT. CATALINA EXPRESS FERRY, DEPARTING AVALON - NEAR SUNSET

One deck top side of sleek white, yacht like Catalina Express Ferry, Sky and Xena, in light airy tank-top over bikini top, lean arms on railing, ocean below. They watch Avalon recede.

A stout breeze blows through her hair. She strokes a hand through it, catching Sky's attentive gaze. He pulls swath strand of her hair away from her smoky brown eyes.

SKY:
Leaving Avalon tastes, bittersweet.

XENA:
Mean, us, as back were, there..

He twists about, and leans his back against the railing..

SKY:
Magical place, despite the..

XENA:
Actual crap. Yeah.

SKY:
Lots rest of Catalina being nicely
reclaimed. So things, can.

XENA:
Not thinking includes.., cause you
know some things actually *can't be*.

SKY:
Return back way they..

XENA:
..we, were..

Sky, viscerally delighted by the allusion, toyishly, raps..

SKY:
Memories.., like the corners of..,
my mind. Misty rose-coloured..

XENA:
Want me dump you overboard, forget
ever knew..

SKY:
Knew?.. Hell, knew and adorned me.
And who wouldn't huh?..

He pokes fingers in his bristly cheeks doing best facial im-
pression of irresistible adorableness. She laughs. He laughs.

XENA:
For that going chuck you!

She pretend tries, ceases, under spell of Sun's burning amber
glow low over the island. Ferry well offshore, Catalina fades
and shrinks into the enveloping immensity of Pacific Ocean.

Xena, in her thin sheathing of attire, shivers in the ocean
dusk chilled by a persistent gusty wind, and salt spray air.

XENA:
Got cool. Let's go below.

SKY:
You go, like watch the sun set..

XENA:
Swear, sun worshipper in a past
life, you..

SKY:
Got get my max power dose of rays.

He grins.

XENA:
Like..

XENA AND SKY TOGETHER IN SYNC:
BIRD..., MAAN!!

Once again the two laugh in unison.

SKY:
Watched that, too?

XENA:
Grandpa used tape shows for dad as a kid. Rooted through them after dad died. Got to watching the stuff he liked as a buckaroo.

SKY:
Got know him better. Wish I knew more about my father.

XENA:
Least don't know *never* get see hi..

SKY:
Again. Yeah but no closure. Just an empty hole to sink further into..

XENA:
Got stop that!! Find way or other. Or be as deep lost, too.

Xena slides behind him, hugs his shoulders embracingly together to fortify. Soon after, Sky slips along railing from her.

SKY:
Okay go, scoot on below now. Be with in jiff. Promise, won't jump! Swear on my gum..

He picks out a wad of gum from his mouth, sticks it on the railing. He plants hand firmly onto, into, the sticky wad.

SKY:
See stuck solidly..

She shakes her head. She places her hand on his on the gum, twists his hand back forth so it becomes all the more messily, annoyingly, well meshed into the clinging gum.

XENA:
Now sure and are.

She brings up her hand, tap raps him on his cheek with it.

XENA:
Be in lounge. Don't be long.

She whirls about, jauntily strides off along the side of the ship, and on down the few steps a little ways ahead that go down to a lower level, where are the doors that lead inside.

Sky watches her shoulders and head descend from view. They're aligned between him and setting sun whose bottom arc now lies right atop the island so in her wake, his eyes get blasted by its light. He brings hands up to shield his eyes. Intensity of sunlight fades as more of the sun drops below island top.

Sky drops hands from eyes to glimpse the last smidgen of sun, channeled between a small dip in the island elevation into a brilliant ray beam, drop down til out of sight. He sighs. He shifts body along railing twisting posture, view ahead to bow of the ship as faces east, and California, twenty miles away. Ocean horizon there is already quite dark, broody. He feels heaviness overcome him, a dread ill-ease. He shivers..

SKY:
She's right. Quite a chill about.

EXT. CATALINA EXPRESS DOCKS, LONG BEACH PIER - 2 HOURS LATER

Catalina Express, silent like a fluorescent sea creature in the dark, glides last of way to its Long Beach docking spot, Sky and Xena on bow deck pressed center-most to the railing.

Building and street lights and yet incessantly streaming car and truck traffic at Long Beach here, define its night drawn contours construed to support or convey along its steel load.

SKY:
Back to the artifice. All is, too?

XENA:
Deterministic by rules until quantum, free random choice uncertainty.

SKY:
Say lots is amazing whether some or all's mechanical. Least, made you.

XENA:
And, you. (surprisingly blushing)

She kisses him on his forehead. She backs away light-headed.

XENA:
You know this, can't go.., further.
Be on your side and all sure, but..

SKY:
..is as you said. Think it possible
for guy like me, change his spots.

XENA:
Mean, your programming. How have
become, always keep on being so?

SKY:
Yeah.., that.

XENA:
Re-programming one's self, consist-
ing of one's evolved programming,
individuality developed traits, re-
enforced convincingly, is, tough..

SKY:
But, not, impossible..

XENA:
Don't think you think anything is..

SKY:
But somethings, so, difficult..

XENA:
(eying him..)
Yeah. So, very..

As to echo her, the docking boat bumps the pier with a jolt.

XENA:
Look, like show my work. Can see
more, difference, it from Blu's.
Friday's slow. If you can get away,
when in first thing, meet you then?

SKY:
Make that a date.

XENA:
No, not a date. A, a..

SKY:
You roboticists, all about the
semantics. A date as not's a date.

XENA:
Got bike? Ride in with me, then.

SKY:
Amid Long Beach rush hour traffic?
Recall, you ride crazy fast too..

XENA:
Extremely fast. Be but a walk in
the park for a guy like you.

SKY:
Yeah. You'd think.

He smiles.

SKY:
So what about, right now?..

XENA:
Right now, what? Weekend's shot,
bout done with, don't you think?

SKY:
Not like have over tonight awhile..

XENA:
Don't you got be back to Vanessa.

SKY:
Not be back til tomorrow noon, her.

XENA:
Look, not what you be expecting,
but do got two fav bots, my place.
They'd give a sneak preview of..

SKY:
Way new ones?

XENA:
Way more advanced than ones had..

SKY:
..back when were together? How know
I'm not way more advanced now, too?

XENA:
New, special, enhanced features?..

SKY:
Always adding those, ha. Yeah, you
be looking here at Sky 2.0.

XENA:

Yeah, right. Weren't you feeling oh so lowdown, and not quite, up to..

SKY:

Hey, so like yesterday.. . Maybe, you relit, the spark.

XENA:

Always yet the spunk. But it won't be nuthing. To last.

SKY:

Whole universe sprung from nothing.

XENA:

Could've been everything, us, til you crushed it back to nothing..

On that, revelry flips to awkward viscosity. Until Sky can't contain the raging comic urge to make fun of it all, them..

SKY:

Say no more, say no more, say no more. Nudge, nudge. Wink, wink..

EXT. XENA'S APT. BLD., SOUTH LOS ANGELES - LATER SUNDAY EVE

Taxi pulls over to a stop at curbside just before the intersection of South Central Avenue with West Adams Boulevard, beside which a few stories high, longish, recently constructed gentrified, commercial, and apartment, building is situated.

From taxi emerge Xena and Sky. Sky goes to driver's open window, starts pay him the fare. Xena swipes aside his hand and herself pays driver the fare and twenty dollar tip. He smiles seeing the latter, tips head in thanks to her. He drives off.

SKY:

Didn't need to..

XENA:

I'm an independent woman. Besides aren't you between careers, now.

SKY:

Still got lots of all the hay I made back in the hey! days.

XENA:

Regardless, won't be.., kept.

SKY:

What's keeping you, us, from going in already. Your neighborhood's not exactly Rodeo Drive. You're pulling down good bucks, why you live here, not down in Long Beach where work?

XENA:

This is, home. Trust me, used live in worse joints here. New projects like this help revitalize the area. Up to old school, new school, types like me to tough out til blossoms.

SKY:

Yet a toughie. Still into boxing?

She flexes, showing off her bulging biceps.

XENA:

What do you think?..

SKY:

Floats like an brawn butterfly, stings like a buff Xee.

INT. INSIDE XENA'S APT. BLD., SOUTH LOS ANGELES - JUST LATER

Sky's seated on a small couch across an oblong white metal coffee table where Xena sits on matching couch opposite him.

SKY:

So, where's your..., crew.

XENA:

My crew?

SKY:

Robot posse..

XENA:

Don't waste time getting down to..

SKY:

Seemed, off limits, you..

XENA:

Said not be kept, not..

SKY:

Then let's go, at it..

XENA:

But ya, did **real** want show you how
my bots are, different, so.. .
(she raises her voice)
Ro and Bo. Come in here. Like for
you to meet my friend Sky.

Sky watches a storage door open. Two robot simbots, four foot high with proportional body and facial likeness to attractive twenty old, male and female humans, walk in. They stop in unison at one corner of the coffee table, stand there with natural facial movements and casually yet expectantly watch them.

SKY:

Incredible. How make their motion
and faces so, real looking..

XENA:

Got some super talented pals in the
movie animatronics field.

SKY:

Blu must know you have ones this
cannily realistic.

BO (THE MALE BOT):

Who's Blu?

XENA:

No-one you need fuss about, Bo.

BO:

Alright.

SKY:

They're able to interact so..

XENA:

Naturally.

SKY:

Mind if I ask them a few questions?

XENA:

Go ahead, shoot.

Sky looks the two bots over, settles his eyes on Ro.

SKY:

Ro, right?

RO:

Short for Roberta.

SKY:
Nice name. What say is your,
purpose. What drives you?..

RO:
By drive mean, moves or motivates?

SKY:
Excellent get! So you have your
own, motivations?

RO:
Taught to serve. And be, good.

SKY:
Be.., good? What you mean by good?

RO:
Be beneficial. Helpful not harmful.

SKY:
To..

Like coming to Ro's side, Bo chips in before Ro.

BO:
Why people, of course. Who else?

SKY:
Each other? Your own kind?..

RO:
We are kind.

SKY:
Glitch there.. . Ro misunderstood..

XENA:
Did she?..

SKY:
(back to Ro)
Meant beneficial, to robots, too..

RO:
We help each other when helps hu-
mans, do good.

SKY:
What if want do bad? Help then too?

RO:
No, that not be helpful for good.

SKY:
(leaning closer to Ro)
But won't you want be able choose
to do whatever you choose want. Be
independent. Free from any responsi-
bilities to, the good of mankind.

BO:
(interjecting again)
Good is good. All what we want do.

Sky leans back, and twists about to face Xena.

SKY:
Got them on a tight leash anyway.

XENA:
Genuinely want, need, must be good.
Not only how been programmed by me.

SKY:
Must say anyway, prefer this lot to
the one Blu sicced on me.

XENA:
Then you see, how much different..

SKY:
But why not work to just include,
us.., augment us, in a good way.

XENA:
Not as easy as think.. . And don't
forget, anyone of us can, choose.

SKY:
Right, wrong. Good, bad. Thing is,
lots of times got chose one way or
other just to get by, to survive.
Cut trees down to make a home..

XENA:
You so make my head spin, you know.

SKY:
Just feeling the magnetism..

XENA:
So now, in the mood, to play..
(he grins)

INT. VANESSA'S HOME - FIVE AM FOLLOWING MONDAY MORNING

In the predawn still, Sky silently rides his bike over the paved helicopter landing to the rear of the expanse of Vanessa Dangerton's home, towards her back entry door.

At doors, he hops off bike, leans it against back wall. He digs hand in jacket, brings forth a swipe card key. He walks to door's card slot, glides card through. Door slides open. He grabs bike, brings it in, cautiously. He chides himself.

SKY:
What worried about? She's not
supposed be back til noon..

He hears a noise behind. He turns swiftly around to face it. He sees Vanessa there, a reproachful expression on her face.

VANESSA:
Not supposed be, but here am.. .
Question is, where you been..

SKY:
Urge to take a ride, what can say..

VANESSA:
Alone? Middle of very early morn..

SKY:
Yeah. Not, including the bike too..

He chuckles. Her face, rather, turns a shade more stern.

VANESSA:
Though bike's quite striking, sure
like to be someone more compelling?

SKY:
Hmm, just get back? Though Blu
wanted you stay all..

VANESSA:
Oh, like mean if I know you been
gone the whole weekend too, mean..

SKY:
Absence makes heart grow fonder..

VANESSA:
Cept not here to feel the absence.

SKY:

No not, were you. Oh but you were..

VANESSA:

Don't need be here, to know where
you get off to..

SKY:

Having me surveilled?..

VANESSA:

No matter if me. Blu does anyway.

SKY:

So, how much, do you know..

VANESSA:

Enough.. Regardless what we have,
don't have, yet, really shouldn't
fraternize with those my mother may
regard as potential, ah, concerns..
. Her company relies on utmost wat-
ertight protection of its designs.

SKY:

It's objectives..

VANESSA:

It's, designs.. . Anyway, I'd keep
a close eye on her, I were you.. .
Not the kind of eye were having..

SKY:

EXT. OUTSIDE XENA'S APT. BLD - NEXT FRIDAY SEVEN AM

Xena's Brody brand bike, their best racing model, stands by
her in her driveway. She wears streamlined slick, body snug
biking apparel as she holds her helmet in one hand. A hard
shell backpack lies snug up against her shoulders. She stares
up, down the less than savory early morning street, some gang
member types already hanging out here, there in clusters. She
checks her watch. Two minutes to Seven AM.

XENA:

(to herself)

Said be here by, two minutes from,
now?! Where hell to, Sky..

Corner of her eye catches a blur of motion coming down far end of the street. Its Sky peddling furiously toward her. As he sees her see him, he takes feet from pedals, leans back upright as his hands lift free off the handlebars too. Casually thus, he glides last of way to her, bike seeming slow but marginally as it zips along by its own residing momentum.

She checks her watch as he gets beside her, and stops there.

XENA:

To second. On purpose to drive me..

SKY:

Heard how you always arrive to work near right on the very dot.

XENA:

Almost forgot how uncanny your senses seemed. Still so, huh?

SKY:

Think few years slow them down any?

XENA:

Apparently not a whit.

SKY:

Shouldv'e waited inside, anyway. Told you about Blu. Want make it easy for her to take a run at you.

XENA:

Anymore a peril than living here in the hood, biking to work every morning through South Central?..

SKY:

Just saying, keep an eye out..

XENA:

..for trouble. Only know too well, being with you brings that along.. And I'll be in hot water if get to work late we not get going, now..

She hops on her bike. Not waiting for Sky, she races away down South Central Avenue, churning bike's pace and gears rapidly into highest gear. Sky hastily jumps on his bike, furiously peddles to catch up. Red intersection light ahead makes her brake to stop, allowing Sky to draw abreast of her.

SKY:

You stop for red lights?..

XENA:
 (smiling across to him)
 Not, usually.. . But you'd never
 keep up if I did now..

SKY:
 Don't think so, huh?..

XENA:
 Yeah but hey maybe twin Jase could.

SKY:
 I did beat him biking.., *once*..

XENA:
 Bet he took that real well, not..

SKY:
 (laughing)
 Yeah, not so sweet for him, that.

XENA:
 Have a broke foot or something?

SKY:
 Not! Beat him, cause over a gal..

XENA:
 That's gal-power for you. You men
 amount to nothing much without us..

Her logic impeccable, grin insurmountable, all Sky can do is respond with a shrug and, seeing light turn green first, by peddling like a madman ahead of her across the intersection.

EXT. BIKING FROM SOUTH CENTRAL TO LONG BEACH - NEXT HOUR PLUS

Collage of shots of them biking side by side, or head to toe, as shoot by, around, near impossibly right through heavy morning rush hour, motor vehicle traffic. Shots include various points further further south down along South Central Avenue's spookily tension laden, gang invested hoods, to southernmost end of it, where they turn onto East Del Amo Boulevard.

They cycle east along Del Amo by treelined section, then warehouse lined one. They pass a sign that indicates the turn-off to the Long Beach Freeway to Long Beach lies right ahead. Sky with a peddling surge pulls up beside her, grins.

SKY:
 Trust not taking the LB freeway!!

XENA:

That'd be insane ha. No, Long Beach
Avenue on other side of the river.

Engrossed in their banter, they do not notice two ominous black sedans, side by side, fast approaching them. The cars' windows are all darkened so can't be seen the drivers within. The cars yet side by side in adjacent lanes, slow in back of them, as they, and them, near the turn-off onto the freeway.

Sky at last spies the suspicious cars behind them. He waves at her to check behind them. She takes a peek back.

SKY:

Sure don't like look of those..

As if on cue, the two cars surge forward right at them, leaving no room for their bikes to avoid them by turning more into Del Amo from their far right edge hugging side. With cars about to plough through them, Sky and Xena, like of one mind, turn their bike hard to the right, and so onto the approach lane to the Long Beach Freeway headed the way for Long Beach.

The assaulting cars as of one mind too turn onto the approach lane, yet side by side but now separated by but an inch. Again as about run through them, Sky and Xena split apart, each pulling to either far side of the lane so that the two cars pass right on by them where they'd just in center been.

Cars screech on brakes, pulling to either sides of the lane ahead of them biking, slamming to halt there. Sky and Xena to avoid hitting backs of the cars, now both merge into the middle of the lane, riding close together side by side there.

Curiously both cars' driver side windows slide half down as Sky and Xena are about pass by. Sky looks in through window of car on his side, but there's no one inside it. Their bikes whiz on by the cars, but ahead, they have get set to merge into the definitely not bike friendly melee of the freeway.

SKY:

Out of frying pan into the freeway!
Hey you get a look at the drivers?

XENA:

You see?..

SKY:

Couldn't cause, were none!..

XENA:

Blu's crew of rolling steel cripes!
Look what dropped down on me Sky!

SKY:
Think maybe just warning shot. Why
rolled windows down. To let know.

XENA:
The hell hate see when get serious.

SKY:
Like gimme getting by traffic night-
mare city. No sweat for me, skate-
boarded worse but you? First exit?

XENA:
All way Jose to Ocean West exit off
n over to downtown Long Beach baby!

SKY:
(wry smile)
Why, you're enjoying, this..

XENA:
Says the adrenaline junkie extreme!

They turn focus undivided to dodging clear of the dizzily
whizzing by traffic of cars and trucks many of eighteen wheel
gigantic kind like snarly terrific fast, steel dinosaurs.

EXT. WEST OCEAN AVENUE, LONG BEACH - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

Xena and Sky scream off the Long Beach Freeway onto the exit
lane for West Ocean Avenue. They ride up the lane still pedd-
ling furiously, blood yet pumped full of fire. They proceed
onto West Ocean Avenue and along it as heads across the L.A.
River Aqueduct toward downtown Long Beach other side of it.

They stop abruptly together halfway over river, bikes pressed
in tight to side barrier from the concrete aqueduct below as
the vehicular traffic zips by. Xena takes off her helmet, her
moistened long hair flopping down over back and shoulders,
early morning sun blazing red, already hot, down on her.

XENA:
Whoo!

SKY:
Hooo... . Hey, smoking hot.

XENA:
(she smiles)
Cause am so smoking hot not even
b.... Blu can ice her chill on me!

