I'VE BEEN HERE MORE THAN TWO MONTHS. LONG ENOUGH TO DRIVE A MAN INSANE.

BUT IT ONLY MAKES ME MORE FOCUSED.

DISTANCE TO OBJECTIVE: 3451 KM
AFTER ALL, I’VE LIVED IN DARKNESS BEFORE.

ANY PROGRESS, MYERS?

SORRY, GENERAL. THAT’S A NEGATIVE. STILL NO CHANGE.
WHEN POULL THINK THE OLD MAN'LL FINALLY REALIZE "METALLO" OVER THERE HAS LEFT THE BUILDING?

YEEH, THIRTY-ONE MONTHS ON "VEGETABLE DUTY."

WHEN DO YOU THINK THE OLD MAN'LL FINALLY REALIZE "METALLO" OVER THERE HAS LEFT THE BUILDING?

GENERAL LANE, SIR. I MEAN NO DISRESPECT, BUT THE POINT REMAINS...

WE'VE SPENT NEARLY THREE YEARS REPAIRING AND UPGRADING SERGEANT CORBEN'S SYSTEMS TO FULL OPERATIONAL STATUS. YET, HE STILL HASN'T REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS.

CONSIDERING THE MASSIVE TRAUMA HE ENDURED—HIS HEART BURST OPEN, HIS BODY POURED BY SUPERMAN, HIS MIND CONTROLLED BY ALIENS, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE—HIS BRAIN COULD BE IRREVERSIBLY DAMAGED. HE MIGHT NEVER RECOVER.

MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST TRANSFER THE SERGEANT TO WALTER REED HOSPITAL FOR LONG-TERM CARE. I'M AFRAID THERE'S NOTHING MORE WE CAN DO.

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT, MVERS. BRIZUELA?

THAT MAN'S MISSION DESIGNATION IS "METAL-ZERO," NOT "METALLO!" HIS NAME IS MASTER SERGEANT JOHN CORBEN.

HE SACRIFICED EVERYTHING IN THE SERVICE OF HIS COUNTRY! YOU WILL SHOW HIM RESPECT!

Y-YES, SIR.

SORRY, SIR.

A: "JOLT?"

EVEN IF THAT WERE MEDICALLY POSSIBLE, HIS BODY IS ALREADY POWERED BY A MINIATURE REACTOR. WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GIVE HIM A STRONGER "JOLT"?

SINCE SERGEANT CORBEN'S SYSTEMS ARE OPERATIONAL, MAYBE HE JUST NEEDS A JOLT TO GET HIM GOING, LIKE RESTARTING A HEART WITH A DEFIBRILLATOR.

THIS CAN.
“IT’S CALLED KRYPNTONITE.”

All systems are down. Fuel core is clear for removal.

Careful now. This is toxic enough to give your grand-children cancer.

Where’s my secure containment?

Right here, sir.

Kryptonite fuel in place.

I don’t know, sir. Do you think this can work?

I don’t know. But, really, what else can we do?

No way to know, but, really, what else can we do?

BRINGING SYSTEMS ONLINE.

Monitoring autonomic response.

“THERE BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD...”

Come on, John. You can do this.

“WAKE UP.”
That first kryptonite rush was...

...beyond words.

I felt invincible! Like nothing could touch me.

Yeah, right.

If only I'd known what was coming...

Distance to objective: 3324 km
LOOK AT THAT TRAINING EXERCISE! HE'S A ONE-MAN BATTALION!
THAT SEEMS PRETTY DAMN FIT TO ME!

PHYSICALLY, PERHAPS.

HOWEVER, HE STILL SHOWS CLEAR SIGNS OF SEVERE PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA.

IN FACT, EVEN BEFORE "METAL-ZERO," I SEE SERGEANT CORBEN'S FILE ALREADY SHOWED A DISTRESSING PATTERN OF REPRESSED EMOTIONS IN DAILY LIFE, WHICH MANIFESTED AS EXCESSIVE FORCE IN THE FIELD.

"EXCESSIVE FORCE?" IN A WAR ZONE?

BOTTOM LINE, SIR: IF YOU INSIST ON SENDING SERGEANT CORBEN BACK INTO ACTION, I CAN'T BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENS.

"YOU'RE NOT RESPONSIBLE, LAZAR! I AM!"

"YOU'RE OUTRANKED, CAPTAIN, AND OVERRULLED!"

THAT MAN DESERVES A CHANCE TO SHOW WHAT HE CAN DO!

WE'VE GOT TROOPS OVER SEAS WHO NEED SUPPORT..."
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

*DANN JOHN CORBEN IS GOING TO GIVE IT TO THEM!*

WHAT'S GOING ON.

*PR? IT. GIVE ME A SITREP. OR AV. I__7. WE WERE SENT ON A SEARCH-AND-DESTROY MISSION TO NEUTRALIZE AN INSURGENT ARMS CACHE.*

*U/H, I MEAN... S-SORRY, SIR, YOU MUST BE SERGEANT CORBEN, METALLO.*

OH, SORRY. THEY, UM, THEY BRIEFED US YOU WERE COMING, BUT, WELL... IT'S HARD TO BE PREPARED...

DROP IT. GIVE ME A SITREP. OKAY. RIGHT.

WE WERE SENT ON A SEARCH-AND-DESTROY MISSION TO NEUTRALIZE AN INSURGENT ARMS CACHE.

SO?

PROBLEM IS, THE INSURGENTS STASHED THE ORDNANCE UNDER A HOSPITAL. SO NOW, WE'VE GOT A BAND OF HOSTILES HOLED UP INSIDE, USING OVER A HUNDRED NONCOMBATTANT STAFF AND PATIENTS AS HUMAN SHIELDS!

UH-HUH. NO PROBLEM.

SO THERE IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO EXCELLENT!
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED.
ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN CIVILIAN CASUALTIES! WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?!

I GOT RESULTS. YOU MEAN LIKE YOUR "RESULTS" IN THE VILLAGE YOU RAIDED LAST WEEK? OR THE INFORMANT YOU INTERROGATED?

THEY FOUND PIECES OF HIM SPREAD OVER A THREE-BLOCK RADIUS!

BUT THIS HOSPITAL FIASCO TOPS THEM ALL!

CELL PHONE VIDEOS OF YOUR LITTLE STUNT ARE SPREADING ACROSS THE INTERNET LIKE WILDFIRE! PROTESTS AGAINST "U.S. WAR CRIMES" ARE EVERYWHERE.

DID YOU EVEN CONSIDER HOW THE PENTAGON WOULD REACT?

WAIT. WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

THIS CAN'T GO ON. I HAVE MY ORDERS.

I'M SORRY.

THE JOHN COREN I USED TO KNOW DESERVED BETTER.

AN UNMANNED DRONE...
I couldn’t believe it. They tried to kill me!

My own government tried to kill me!

Sam Lane tried to kill me!

In a way, I’m grateful. For these months of solitude. They’ve given me time to figure things out.

To see it all clearly.

Lane betrayed my loyalty.

Just like his tramp daughter, Lois. Betrayed my love.

That’s probably why Lane brought Superman to the base in the first place, years ago—-to trick me into putting on this suit and giving up my humanity!

And then he killed me.

But I fooled them all. My mechanical body distills oxygen from water. It withstands the water pressure. It never gets tired.

I might be too heavy to swim across an ocean—

--but I can still walk.

And now that I’m home--

Distance to objective: 98 km
--EVERYONE WHO BETRAYED ME IS GOING TO PAY!

BRING ME SAM LANE!
LANE! COME OUT, YOU COW—

THOOOM!

OH, SO THAT'S HOW YOU WANT TO PLAY IT, HUH?

BRING IT ON!

STAND DOWN!

YOU WANT ME? HERE I AM!

BUT I WON'T SACRIFICE MY MEN TO YOUR RAMPAGE!

YOU MEAN LIKE YOU SACRIFICED ME?!

EASY, SON.

I'M NOT YOUR "SON!"

YOU MEAN LIKE YOU SACRIFICED ME?!
I trusted you! And what did you DO?

You betrayed me! Turned me into this...thing! Used your daughter to crush my heart!

How dare you?!

For years, I gave you every opportunity! Hell, I even approved you as a worthy match for my own daughter!

You're the one who betrayed my trust! Mine, and this country's!

Your actions overseas—and here, today—make it all too obvious that you're completely out of control.

When orders came down from the very top to neutralize Metal-Zero as a threat, I had no choice but to agree.

I didn't like pushing that button, but I did my duty!

Always hiding behind your duty, aren't you?

Well, I'm not going to pretend. I'm going to enjoy shredding you to bloody ribbons!

But that's nothing compared to what I'm going to do to your daughter...

For what? Your pet, Superman?

"Pet?" Ha! Even if I trusted that alien, he's gone dead or missing!

Superman...dead? Before I could take revenge? No!

But did you really think Project: Steel Soldier ended, just because you took a nap?

If you were Metal-Zero...
I remember Brizuela, the golden boy who was in competition for the Metal-Zero program.

Hey, Brizuela! What lies did Lane tell you to make you give up your heart?

No lies! I knew the risks.

It's an honor to defend my brothers in arms, and this is second-generation armor--I've still got my heart!

Yeah? Let's see what we can do about that!
NOT A CHANCE! MY ARMOR IS SUPERIOR TO YOURS IN EVERY WAY—STRONGER, TOUGHER, FASTER!
I'M WHAT YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN—INSIDE AND OUT!

AND I'M THE MONSTER?

SO THIS IS HOW IT IS NOW? HE'S THE HERO?

WELL...

GOOD TO KNOW.

MUAHHH!

WOOOO!

I CAN LIVE WITH THAT.

SEE, THAT'S WHY YOU'RE GOING TO DIE TODAY.

THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY THIS ENDS, CORBEN!
STAND DOWN! OUT OF RESPECT FOR YOUR PAST SERVICE, I DON'T WANT TO KILL YOU!

NOW...

WHAT IS IT NOW? HE'S THE HERO?
BECAUSE YOU DON'T WANT TO KILL—

GET A MEDIC IN HERE! MOBILIZE A SUPPORT TEAM!

--BUT I DO!

BRIZUELA--!

COME ON, SIR! WE'VE GOTTA PULL OUT-- NOW!

K... NO! G... GET TO THE SH... SHELTERS! TAKE C... COVER!
“SHelter?”
You think a shelter will keep them safe? I’ll—

Oh, no.

My orders are... to neutralize you as a threat... and that's what I'm going... to do.

Self-destruct engaged.

E-even if.
NOTHING IS HIGHER PRIORITY, MVERS, NOT UNTIL EVERY SCRAP FROM THOSE CYBORGs IS ACCOUNTED FOR.

I WANT TO MAKE SURE METALLO'S DEAD.
BECAUSE IF THERE'S EVEN A SHADOW OF A DOUBT THAT HE SURVIVED--

REPAIR THEM?

I KNOW HOW COMMITTED YOU'VE BEEN TO SERGEANT CORBEN ALL THESE YEARS, BUT, CONSIDERING ALL OF THE DAMAGE TO THE BASE, SHOULDN'T WE ASSIGN THEM HIGHER-PRIORITY DUTIES?

BUT WHY? WE CAN'T POSSIBLY REPAIR THEM AFTER ALL OF THIS...
HEAVEN HELP US ALL.

SO WHY'D YOU GUYS PULL ME OUT OF THERE, ANYWAY?

CHEATED OUT OF MY REVENGE FOR NOW.

WE'VE BEEN SCOUTING FOR NEW BLOOD. WHEN I SAW THE TERROR YOU STRUCK THROUGH THAT ARMY BASE...

TALENT.

I KNEW WE COULD USE YOU.

DAMAGED BAD.

YOU STRUCK THROUGH THAT ARMY BASE...

WELL, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I NEED YOU? SOME FREAK DRESSED UP LIKE A SCARECROW--

THERE'S NO GOING BACK NOW. MY OLD LIFE IS OVER.

I'M OFFERING YOU THE CHANCE TO JOIN A NEW ARMY, A NEW BROTHERHOOD.

NO MORE JOHN CORBEN.

NOT EVEN METAL-ZERO.

PLEASE.

DESpite MY CHOICE OF CLOTHINGS, I AM STILL A PSYCHOLOGIST.

A CAREER SOLDIER LIKE YOURSELF, SUDDENLY ALONE-- CUT OFF FROM YOUR ENTIRE SUPPORT NETWORK?

WELCOME TO THE SECRET SOCIETY.

I'M OFFERING YOU THE CHANCE TO JOIN A NEW ARMY, A NEW BROTHERHOOD.

MY ASSOCIATES CAN REPAIR YOUR BROKEN BODY. AND, BETTER YET--

THEY CAN OFFER AN OPPORTUNITY.

FROM NOW ON--

...I'M METALLO.
GREETINGS! I AM THE CALENDAR MAN REPORTING TO YOU FROM THE END OF THE WORLD. FOR LACK OF A BETTER DESIGNATION...

...I AM CHANNEL 52!

THE PHRASE THAT SIGNALED A NEW WORLD ORDER! THIS IS HOW THE CRIME SYNDICATE ANNOUNCED THEIR ARRIVAL!

THEY LED AN ARMY OF SUPERPOWERED CRIMINALS... THE SECRET SOCIETY... THEIR CHOSEN HARBingers OF DOOM.

IN THEIR FIRST TRANSMISSION TO THE WORLD... ULTRAMAN, SUPERWOMAN, OXMAN...

POWER RINGS AND DEATHSTORM DECLARED THE JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA TO BE DEAD.
AND HERE IS JOHNNY QUICK ALONG WITH WHAT I BELIEVE TO BE THE ONE KNOWN AS ATOMICA.

I HAVE DETERMINED FROM SOCIETY MEMBERS HERE IN GOTHAM CITY THAT ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE GROUP, GRID, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WORLDWIDE OUTAGE OF POWER AND COMMUNICATIONS.

IRONICALLY, IT WAS THE ARRIVAL OF THESE OBERLORDS THAT FREED ME FROM MY... PREDICAMENT IN THE GOTHAM UNDERGROUND.

REALIZING THAT THE ENSUING CHAOS COULD RESULT IN THE END OF ALL RECORD KEEPING, I KNEW I HAD TO ACT.

WITH A GAS POWERED GENERATOR AND COMPUTER SCAVENGED FROM EMPTY OFFICE BUILDINGS I AM NOW.. FINALLY... THE KEEPER OF ALL DAYS AND DATES.

AS THE DAYS GO BY I FIND MORE AND MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING THE NEWS THAT ARKHAM ASYLUM, BELLE REVE, BLACKGATE, IRON HEIGHTS AND STRYKER'S ISLAND PRISONS HAVE ALL BEEN=BREACHED AND THEIR INMATES RELEASED.

WITH THOSE PRISON BREAKS SWELLING THE RANKS OF THE SECRET SOCIETY AND NO HEROES SHOWING ANY SIGNS OF RETALIATION, WE ARE LEFT TO WONDER WHAT IS NEXT.

WHATEVER THESE DAYS, WEEKS AND MONTHS MAY HOLD... I WILL BE HERE RECORDING THE EVENTS.

I AM THE CALENDAR MAN AND I AM CHANNEL 52.