

INCEPTION
THE BIG UNDER

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Based on Characters from the Motion Picture *Inception*
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PANEL

The crowded and vibrant Ginza district glows brightly in the Tokyo night sky.

PANEL

JAPANESE PEDESTRIANS cross the jam-packed street.

PANEL

One PEDESTRIAN looks up at us like he's become aware of something that does not belong.

PANEL

The entire block of Pedestrians have frozen in place. They all look forward, suspicious and alert.

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PANEL

Above the city street, we see two fast approaching objects rocketing toward the maze of Pedestrians. SPORT BIKES.

PANEL

The two SPORT BIKES race down the Ginza. One of the Riders is tall and lean, donning ALL-BLACK GEAR including a matte-black full-face helmet. The reflective visor blocks any hint of the Rider's face, making him appear menacing and extremely focused.

The other Rider is dressed in a more flamboyant outfit comprised of different colored gear. His visor is flipped up on his Mohawk helmet allowing us to see that he is a JAPANESE PUNK in his twenties. Slung over his shoulder and hanging off his back is a samurai sword.

PANEL

We are behind the two Riders as they weave their way through the frozen Pedestrians. From the looks they are getting, we can tell they are the reason why these Pedestrians have become suspicious and alert. But now they're making them angry.

PANEL

Coming to the end of the block, both Riders lean their bikes down toward the pavement, executing tight right turns.

PANEL

Above- as the Riders whiz around the corner- the crowd of Pedestrians begin to chase after the Riders.

Page: 3

PANEL

As the two Riders bullet down the street, the Punk Kid turns his head to glance over at the Black Helmet Rider.

PUNK KID
This is where you lose, old man!

PANEL

Above the two Riders: the Punk Kid swerves into the Black Rider's bike.

PUNK KID
Rise and shine!

PANEL

The bump forces the Black Rider over into oncoming traffic. Headlights illuminate him.

SFX: CAR HORNS.

PANEL

From the Black Rider's POV: an oncoming car is right on him.

PANEL

The Black Rider pulls back on the handlebars, popping a wheelie just before the bike and the car make impact.

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FULL PANEL

The Black Rider ramps off the front end of the car and launches into mid-air.

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PANEL

The Black Rider lands next to the Punk Kid.

PANEL

The Punk Kid unsheathes the samurai sword slung over his shoulder.

PANEL

The Punk Kid points the blade at the Black Rider's front tire, trying to slash it.

PANEL

The Black Rider grabs the Punk Kid's wrist.

PANEL

The Black Rider twists the Punk Kid's wrist, forcing the blade down into the Punk Kid's own gas tank, puncturing it.

PANEL

The Black Rider grips the sword handle tight and accelerates, slashing the Punk Kid's gas tank completely open. Gas spews out.

Page: 6

PANEL

The Black Rider speeds ahead, leaving the Punk Kid behind.

PANEL

With an empty tank, the Punk Kid comes to a dead stop. He hurls his helmet off.

PUNK KID
Damn it!

PANEL

Over the Punk Kid's shoulder- the horde of Japanese Pedestrians from the Ginza sprint toward him. All of them have faces full of rage.

PUNK KID
This is gonna suck...

Page: 7

PANEL

Over the Black Rider as he cruises down toward the end of the block- a YAKUZA stands calmly in the middle of the street.

PANEL

The Black Rider brakes hard (tires smoking across the pavement) coming to a stop just next to the Yakuza.

PANEL

The Yakuza continues to stand calmly, looking forward. The Black Rider looks slightly over at the Yakuza.

YAKUZA
Congratulations. Another win, Saito-san.

PANEL

Close on the Black Rider looking back at us. Reflected off his face-mask is the horde of Pedestrians rushing now down the block toward him. One of the Pestrrians holds the Punk Kid's helmet like a war trophy.

YAKUZA (OS)
I'd leave now if I were you.

PANEL

The Black Rider glances down at the sword in his hand.

PANEL

The Black Rider arcs the samurai sword over his head.

PANEL

Close on the Black Rider just as he drives the blade into his own chest.

Page: 8

PANEL

A pair of closed eyes. SAITO'S eyes.

PANEL

The eyes snap open.

YAKUZA 2 (OS)
Your winnings...

PANEL

We are in the basement of a Noodle Shop. TWO BIG YAKUZA GUYS guard the door.

The YAKUZA we saw in the dream is still asleep in a lounge chair.

YAKUZA 2 sits in a rolling desk chair in front of Saito and the Japanese Punk Kid, both of whom are reclined in lounge chairs and are awake. Saito and the Punk Kid are connected intravenously to the PASIV Device, which sits open on a table between them and the sleeping Yakuza (who is hooked into the PASIV Device as well.)

Yakuza 2 hands Saito a stack of cash.

YAKUZA 2
Ten percent goes to the house.

PANEL

Saito is up on his feet, placing his winnings into his suit jacket. Behind him, the Punk Kid sits forward in the chair.

PUNK KID
Go again? Double or nothing.

SAITO
I'm late. And you already have nothing.

PANEL

The Punk Kid watches Saito walk to the door.

One of the Yakuza Guards opens the door, revealing a long line of other JAPANESE YOUTHS waiting their turn to play.

PUNK KID

How 'bout we play a real game, old man?
Death Droids! I'll kick your ass awake before
you even get off the first shot!

PANEL

Saito is through the door. He tightens the knot of his tie.

SAITO

Keep dreaming.

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PANEL

Saito walks past the line of Japanese Youths. One of the Youths eyes Saito as he walks by.

PANEL

The Youth looks back over his shoulder at us as he watches an off-panel Saito leave the basement. This is TADASHI.

PANEL

It's night in Tokyo. We are looking at the front of the Noodle Shop. Traffic races past in the foreground.

Saito has exited the shop from a side door that leads to an adjacent alley. He lifts his arm hailing a taxi.

SAITO

Taxi!

PANEL

Saito slides into the back of the cab.

SAITO

Train station.

In the distance behind him, we see someone else is in the alley.

PANEL

It's Tadashi, standing in the shadows. Watching Saito.

PANEL

Over Tadashi's shoulder as he places a phone to his ear. Saito's cab speeds off in the background.

TADASHI

(into phone.)

It's Tadashi...

PANEL

Arthur has the phone to his ear. He looks concerned.

ARTHUR

Alright. Tail him from his house in the morning. I want to get a handle on how he goes to and from work. Thanks...

PANEL

Cobb and Nash sit at a table in their hotel suite, sifting through a dossier on Saito. Arthur enters the room. (Tokyo glimmers in the night sky outside the windows.)

ARTHUR

We got a problem. My tail just followed Saito to an underground dreamcade. Apparently, he's a regular there.

NASH

Big deal.

PANEL

Arthur stands over Cobb and addresses Nash.

ARTHUR

The big deal is now we know Satio's familiar with the dream-share. If he's been playing games inside it, he's probably got command over the dream.

COBB

We'll use it to our advantage then.

PANEL

Over Arthur's shoulder. Cobb looks up at Arthur and hands him part of the dossier.

COBB

Any guy who goes to a dreamcade likes to exert his dominance. We'll satisfy the urge and put him in a castle where he is king. Cobol's dossier will tell you what Saito's tastes are. Study it so you can figure out what to design.

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PANEL

Arthur sits at the table and points to Nash.

ARTHUR

Why am I designing the dream? Nash is the architect.

COBB

Nash will be busy building our insurance policy. One level up.

ARTHUR

We're building two levels?

PANEL

Close on Cobb.

COBB

If Saito becomes lucid down there like you fear, he's going to sniff us out. If that happens, we need another environment to take him to where he can feel absolutely certain that he is awake and conscious.

PANEL

Over Cobb's shoulder. Arthur looks perplexed.

COBB

A place that couldn't exist in a dream.

ARTHUR

Like what?

PANEL

Cobb grabs a folder among the papers spread across the table.

COBB

Every two weeks, Saito flies to Venezuela to meet with his petroleum contacts. Last time he went, he stopped at a dress shop on his way to the airport.

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PANEL

A JAPANESE ATTENDANT at the dress shop holds up a RED COCKTAIL DRESS for Saito to look at.

COBB (VO)

He bought a red cocktail dress. A very expensive one. And had it gift-wrapped.

PANEL

Saito walks down the stairs of his private plane followed by a squad of SECURITY GUARDS. He holds the bag from the dress shop.

COBB (VO)

When he travels to Venezuela, his company has him assigned twenty-four hour security. They are on him tight.

PANEL

Saito, dress shop bag in hand, enters his hotel room. Security Guards stand guard down the length of the hallway.

COBB (VO)

They even book out the entire floor of the hotel to keep access under control. But on a couple of occasions, Cobol's surveillance team has caught Saito slipping his detail.

PANEL

Night. Saito slips out of his hotel. He holds the bag from the dress shop.

COBB (VO)

On his last trip, he snuck out the first night. Taking with him the dress he bought in Tokyo. He returned the following morning...

PANEL

Morning. Saito hurries back to the hotel. Sans bag.

COBB (VO)

...but without the dress.

PANEL

Cobb opens up the folder and pulls out an 8x10 photo. Arthur and Nash are curious.

COBB

Three nights later, Saito met with a high-ranking Venezuelan Government official and his wife for dinner. Look at the photo.

PANEL

Cobb holds up the photo, which shows Saito shaking hands with the Government Official.

Cobb's finger points to the man's wife, SONIA, who stares at Saito. She is wearing the red cocktail dress Saito bought in Tokyo.

COBB

Recognize the dress?

PANEL

Over Cobb's shoulder, Nash leans back in his chair. Smiles.

NASH

Saito, you dog.

COBB

If word got out about the affair, it would ruin Saito's interests in Venezuela. So I'm assuming he's taken precautions. One of which must be a secret hideaway where they meet.

PANEL

Cobb addresses both Arthur and Nash.

NASH

So we're going to build his love nest.

COBB

Yes. And we're going to use it as the primary level of the dream.

ARTHUR

Sounds grand. But how are we going to replicate an environment when no one knows what it looks like?

COBB
We're going to find it.

PANEL

Close on Cobb's face.

COBB
Get packed, Nash. We're going to Venezuela.

Page: 14

PANEL

A wide shot of Caracas, Venezuela in the day.

PANEL

An SUV pulls up outside a nice café.

PANEL

Through the POV of a pair of binoculars- we see two SECURITY GUARDS opening the back door. Stepping out of it is SONIA.

COBB (OS)
There she is.

PANEL

From the window of a building some distance away, Cobb has binoculars to his eyes. Nash hovers in back looking through a pair of his own.

COBB
I see only two guards.

NASH
Who's the guy approaching the car? The stiff in the suit.

PANEL

From the binocular POV- Sonia coldly embraces the MAN IN THE SUIT. This is her husband.

COBB (OS)
Looks like the husband.

One of the security guards has his hand perched on his hip.

COBB (OS)
The guard with the hand on his hip. He looks armed. The other one probably is as well.

PANEL

Cobb and Nash lower their binoculars, but still keep watch out the window.

NASH
You want my advice? We go to Saito and blackmail him. Tell him he pays us double what Cobol's paying us or else we spill the beans on the affair. That'll be helluva lot easier than getting to *her*.

COBB
We'll get to her.

NASH
Yeah, how do we get past the two armed guards?

PANEL

Close on Cobb raising the binoculars to his eyes.

PANEL

Through the POV of the binoculars- we see the back of Sonia as she follows her husband into the café. Her guards remain at her side.

COBB (VO)
Get to her in a place where her guards can't go.

Page: 16

PANEL

Night. We are outside a church. A fog has started to roll into the area.

PANEL

We are in a confessional booth. We can make out the profile of a PRIEST behind the ornate metal divider.

PRIEST

May the Lord be in our heart to help you make a good confession.

PANEL

From another angle, we discover that Sonia is in the booth. Head bowed, a crucifix wrapped tightly around her praying hands. She looks distressed and guilty.

SONIA

Bless me father for I have sinned. It's been almost a year since my last confession. During that time I have- I have committed a great offense against my husband.

PRIEST (OS)

Tell me your sin.

PANEL

Close on Sonia as she looks up to face the Priest.

SONIA

I have fallen in love with another man.

Page: 17

PANEL

From an overhead angle (above the cross on the steeple of the church), we see Sonia stepping out onto the street from the church doors. The fog is thicker now.

PANEL

Close on Sonia. The thick fog has her concerned. Sweat beads on her forehead.

MALE VOICE (OS)

Hey Lady.

PANEL

Over her shoulder, we see that the fog blankets everything. We can barely make out the shapes of the other buildings.

SONIA

Who is that?

MALE VOICE (OS)

Over here.

PANEL

Wide as she looks down the sidewalk, trying to find the source of the voice.

SONIA

I can't see you. What do you want?

Page: 18

PANEL

A HAND grabs the strap of Sonia's purse.

PANEL

A MALE, whose face is shrouded in the fog, shoves Sonia to the ground and runs off with her purse.

SONIA

NO!

PANEL

Over Sonia's shoulder as she points to the Man disappearing into the fog down the street.

SONIA

Stop him! Somebody help me!

PANEL

Wide as PEDESTRIANS emerge from the fog and chase after the Man.

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PANEL

Cobb stands in the fog, waiting.

MALE VOICE (OS)

Cobb!

PANEL

Cobb turns to look in the direction of the voice. Emerging from the fog is NASH. In his hands is Sonia's purse.

COBB

Quick! Give it to me!

PANEL

Cobb rifles through the purse as Nash takes a peak.

NASH

She's got a gun in there?

COBB

That's because she's protecting this.

PANEL

Cobb finds a DIGITAL CAMERA in the bag.

PANEL

Cobb examines the LCD SCREEN of the camera. Nash keeps watch.

COBB

You should get out of here now.

NASH

Don't take long!

PANEL

Cobb dumps the contents of the purse on the street as Nash runs off into the fog.

PANEL

Cobb hovers over the items like he just found the purse. The Pedestrians emerge out of the fog. Cobb points in the direction Nash ran.

COBB

He dropped the purse. And ran away.
Down toward the bridge!

PANEL

The Pedestrians run off after Nash. Sonia appears. Hurries over to her stuff.

SONIA

Oh my God! Thank you!

PANEL

Sonia kneels down by her things, stuffing them back in her bag. Cobb joins her to help out.

SONIA

What did he take? My wallet?

Page: 21

PANEL

Cobb finds the wallet and hands it to Sonia.

COBB
This yours?

PANEL

Sonia opens her wallet. Her money is still in it.

PANEL

Sonia looks at Cobb, confused.

SONIA
Why would he steal my purse and not take my money?

COBB
Maybe he was looking for something else.
Something more valuable.

SONIA
What do you mean? Like what?

PANEL

Cobb holds up the digital camera. On the LCD screen is a photo of Saito.

COBB
A secret.

PANEL

Sonia reaches for the camera, but Cobb holds it back.

COBB

I've looked at the photos. Some are of you. Some are of Mr. Saito. Most of them are of the both of you together. You seem very much in love.

SONIA

You have no right...

PANEL

Cobb picks up a pen from Sonia's stuff on the street.

COBB

If you want them back, I need information. You and Mr. Saito meet in a secret place. I need to know where that place is.

SONIA

Why, so you can hurt him? I won't let you.

COBB

You shouldn't worry about me hurting anyone. You should worry about who your husband will hurt if he sees these photos.

PANEL

Close on Cobb.

COBB

All I'm after is something Mr. Saito has locked away in that room. Give me the address and you get to keep your secrets. And then no one gets hurt.

PANEL

Sonia grabs the pen and writes the address down on Cobb's hand.

PANEL

Cobb stands up (looming over her.) He hands her the camera as he reads the address on his other hand.

SONIA

What is in that apartment that you think you will find?

COBB

That's between Mr. Saito and I.

PANEL

Over Sonia's shoulder, we see Cobb walking away. Sonia quickly sifts through her stuff on the ground looking for something.

SONIA

No! I won't let you steal from him.

PANEL

Sonia's hand finds her gun among her stuff.

PANEL

Sonia takes aim at Cobb.

SONIA

If you don't stop, I'll have to...

PANEL

Cobb continues forward. Completely calm.

COBB

I know.

PANEL

Wide from above.

SFX: BANG BANG.

Sonia shoots Cobb.

Page: 24

PANEL

A pair of closed eyes.

PANEL

Wider. The eyes belong to Cobb, who snaps awake.

NASH (OS)
You get it?

Steam hazes the frame.

PANEL

Cobb, Nash, and an unconscious Sonia are in a steam room of a spa (Sonia is draped in towels and lying on a folded towel that acts as a pillow.)

Cobb unhooks himself from the PASIV Device.

COBB
I got it. Her guards still waiting in the lobby?

NASH
Yeah, but her appointment was over ten minutes ago. We gotta go.

PANEL

A FEMALE SPA ATTENDANT comes into the room as Nash packs up the PASIV Device. Cobb hands the Attendant a stack of cash.

COBB
Take us through the back entrance.

FEMALE ATTENDANT
Follow me.

Page: 25

PANEL

Cobb picks a lock to a door while Nash keeps watch.

PANEL

The door swings open. We are in Saito's secret apartment (this will look exactly as it does in the film.)

PANEL

Cobb enters the room. Nash follows.

NASH

Saito's quite the romantic. What a dump.

COBB

Smart. No one would ever think to look for him here.

PANEL

Cobb turns to Nash.

COBB

If we're going to build this environment in the dream to make him think it's real, you have to make sure you have every detail right.

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PANEL

Nash examines a shaft of light streaming in through the window, illuminating the far wall.

COBB (OS)
How the light shines through the windows...

PANEL

Nash crouches down and examines the red and white tiled floor, noticing a divot.

COBB (OS)
How the floor slopes...

PANEL

Nash runs his finger over the dust on a nightstand next to the bed.

COBB (OS)
How the dust collects on the furniture...

PANEL

Nash studies the ceiling, paying attention to the paint cracks.

COBB (OS)
Where the paint is cracked on the ceiling.

PANEL

Cobb surveys the room himself.

COBB
If even one feature is off, he's going to know. And then we're finished.

SFX: Ring.

PANEL

Cobb has a phone to his ear, walking towards the bathroom. In the foreground, Nash continues to study the room.

COBB

Yeah?

PANEL

Close on Arthur.

ARTHUR

The police came to Saito's office an hour ago. His associates just got word of Kaneda's disappearance. Saito's holed up at his house right now, but...

PANEL

Cobb examines the bathtub. The phone is still to his ear.

COBB

But what?

ARTHUR (OS)

There's a good chance he'll go into hiding. If we're going to pull this extraction off, Cobb, we've got to move. Now.

COBB

Alright. Set things in motion and get us on the next flight out. We'll hit him in the morning.

PANEL

Nash steps into of the bathroom. Cobb, pocketing his phone, points to the tiled shelf at the foot of the bathtub.

COBB

We'll use this to set up the kick. You good with everything else?

PANEL

Nash points to his head.

NASH

It's all up here.

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PANEL

Saito slips on his suit jacket, ready to leave for work.

SFX: Ding.

PANEL

Saito opens his door. His HEAD OF SECURITY bows.

HEAD OF SECURITY
Saito-san.

SAITO
Please. Come in.

PANEL

The Head of Security and Saito look at each other.

HEAD OF SECURITY
I spoke to the police, again, this morning.

SAITO
And?

HEAD OF SECURITY
No sign of Kaneda-san. His family hasn't
seen him in days.

SAITO
Good.

HEAD OF SECURITY
Good?

PANEL

Saito tightens his tie in the mirror. Reflected in the background is the Head of Security, looking concerned.

SAITO

Kaneda-san has done his part. Now I'll do mine.

HEAD OF SECURITY

As your Head of Security, Saito-San, I insist that you let us take measures to protect you. I will get my best driver and guard to escort you to work to make sure nothing happens...

SAITO

No need.

PANEL

Saito looks over his shoulder to his Head of Security.

SAITO

I will take the train.

Page: 29

PANEL

A Bullet Train enters a train station.

PANEL

Saito boards the train.

PANEL

From the Compartment Car, we see Saito heading into a private compartment.

PANEL

Saito opens the door to the private compartment.

PANEL

Inside the private compartment is Tadashi and Nash, sitting across from each other next to the window. Nash looks up at Saito and smiles. Tadashi reads his comic.

PANEL

Over the shoulders of Cobb and Arthur- Saito enters the private compartment. An ATTENDANT is walking towards the compartment from the other end of the car.

COBB

Did you take care of the attendant?

ARTHUR

Yeah. He's ours.

COBB

How long do we have?

ARTHUR

Half-hour before Saito's stop.

PANEL

Arthur looks concerned. Cobb glances at his watch.

ARTHUR

This strike you as being too easy? He's practically setting himself up for us.

COBB

This time tomorrow, Cobol Engineering will be breathing down our necks, Arthur. I'll take easy whenever we can get it. Lets just finish the job and get off this train.

ARTHUR

The attendant's going in now.

Page: 31

PANEL

Tea is poured into a cup.

PANEL

The Attendant hangs Saito's suit jacket as Saito sips his tea.

PANEL

Saito's eyes begin to roll up into his head.

PANEL

Saito's head sags, unconscious.

PANEL

His hand holding the teacup falls, spilling the tea onto the floor.

PANEL

Cobb grabs the teacup from Saito's hand and passes it back to the Attendant. Arthur makes his way into the compartment holding the PASIV Device.

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PANEL

Full frame of the crew hooking themselves into the PASIV Device.

The Attendant closes the compartment door.

Arthur hands Tadashi an MP3 Player.

ARTHUR

Under no circumstances does anyone come in that door while we're under. When the countdown reaches twenty seconds, put the earphones on Nash's ears and press play.

TADASHI

Okay.

COBB

The movement of the train is going to make things interesting down there. So keep on your toes.

PANEL

Tadashi kneels down next to the case, finger on the infusion trigger.

TADASHI

Ready?

PANEL

Close on Cobb.

COBB

Sleep tight.

PANEL

The Bullet Train leaves the station.