

Prisma City

For Jazz, it's just another typical night. Driving around the desolate, scrap-covered streets of Prisma City on her bike collecting batteries. Jazz wants nothing more than to go back in time, when the city was electric, teeming with life, and energy. Now, the place only exists as a memory.

Every night, Jazz takes the same route through the city. The same route she would take before the blackout. The route may seem odd and meandering, but this was on purpose. Jazz always takes the back streets and alleys to avoid confrontation. The route starts on the outskirts of town, a place known as THE CHOP, and ends at the POWER PLANT in the heart of the city.

The Chop is an odd collection of people and places, a reflection of the city as a whole. Driving down the street, Jazz passes by a diner, a library, and a armory, all in a line as if they belong together. Jazz pulls up to the library. The automatic doors on the outside are always locked, like most of the deserted city. But Jazz has a knack for finding even the smallest hole in the security system. Over the past two years, she has found an incognito entrance for almost every building in the area. By balancing between the two walls behind it, Jazz shimmies up and into the window.

The dusty interior hasn't seen the light of day for years, much like Jazz whose nightly expeditions through the city has turned them into a night owl. Sneaking through the different sections of the library, the shelves aren't filled with books but instead with terabytes of data. A server room. Before the blackout, Jazz would visit the library for hours, getting lost inside the

seemingly endless amount of information. The hum of the servers was comforting, the perfect background noise. Now, the room is silent. Without electricity, the library is dead and the information lost. Luckily, Jazz knows of a secret section in the very back. She climbs down a treacherous spiral staircase and into a small wooden door at the bottom. She shines a flashlight into the dark closet, the wooden shelves inside are lined with paperback books. Jazz takes off her backpack and pulls out a worn book. She places it back in its section and scours the shelves for a replacement. After meticulously combing through the books, searching for one she hasn't already read, Jazz comes across an oddity. Shoved behind a stack of non-fiction novels there's a small, black book. Jazz runs her fingers across the scorch marks and holes that are littered across the cover. It's mostly empty until she comes across a page scribbled with black ink: "If you're reading this, meet me at the Infra-Red."

The Infra-Red, a club in the heart of Prisma City. Jazz looks at the message, confused but intrigued. For the longest time, Jazz thought she was the only one left in the city. She shoves the black book into her bag and races out the door.

Jazz rolls over piles of smashed beer bottles and cigarette butts. The debris that litters the ground is a reflection of when the Infra-Red was still alive and full of chainsmokers. Jazz approaches the door. Above, a neon sign flickers with a red light. Jazz wipes her eyes in disbelief. Must've been a fluke. It flickers again, but this time the light stays on.

Jazz knows not to enter through the front door. There used to be a bouncer, he would say "25 credit entry" and Jazz would never have enough. This is how she found the loophole.

Sneaking onto the back patio and blending in with the smokers until they go back in to see the next band. Jazz hops down onto the old patio furniture, taking a peek through the glass door. A blue light flickers from inside. She wipes away a layer of dust on the door.

Inside there's a figure made of pure electricity. They stand in the middle of the room, floating and projecting a blue glow. A walking power supply, they light up the entire place making it look alive again. Jazz stares in awe. She remembers the scorch marks on the black book. Suddenly, the figure turns its head to face them. She hides behind the wall, breathing heavily.

"I'm not going to hurt you." A faint voice from inside. Jazz emerges from behind the wall. She looks around, seeing the Infra-Red as it used to be. Electric visions of a crowd. Dancing, eating, laughing, crying. Then, just as fast as it appeared, it was gone.

"Who are you?" Jazz replies, keeping a distance.

"Electricity" A voice comes from the figure, but it has no mouth. They reach out towards Jazz. Her hair stands up, caught in the static power. Visions of the electric city reflect in her eyes. She is stuck in this moment for just a second. Then, a bright spotlight shines through the boarded up windows, knocking her out of the trance.

"They've found us!" Electricity shouts.

"Who?" Jazz replies.

"The Surge Protectors!"

Just then, the wall explodes, sending Electricity flying and hitting the wall. All the power drains from their body. Standing beyond the flames and rubble are the Surge Protectors, masked figures with heavy metal weaponry strapped across their armor. They walk through the flaming, toxic remains of the Infra-Red without flinching.

“Come on,” Jazz replies, grabbing them from the ground. They’re barely conscious. Taking them over her shoulder, Jazz takes them towards the back of the building where their bike is parked. Jazz sets Electricity’s body onto the metal surface of the bike, sending a web of lightning into the engine. When Jazz revs the engine, it surges with power and propels them into the open road.

“Hold on to me!” Jazz yells over the wind. Electric arms wrap around her torso. As they go faster, bolts of lightning shoot off around them and the scenery starts to change. The ruins of the city are electrified. Jazz looks around, noticing the revival. Up ahead, two of the Surge Protectors emerge from an alley, aiming a net gun in their direction. With the press of the trigger, a net launches towards Jazz who takes a sharp turn.

“I’m taking us to the Power Plant!” She yells. They speed down the road, electricity trailing behind them. It spreads throughout the city, lighting up buildings in their wake. The Power Plant used to hold enough power for the entire city, but now it lies dormant. Jazz can feel the potential energy as she pulls in through the gated entry. All it needs is a spark. The Surge

Protectors arrive, but it's already too late. Jazz helps Electricity across the plant and approaches the Prism.

“Thank you.” A spark jumps from their outstretched arm and they disappear. The Prism lights up from inside and Jazz feels the heartbeat of the city once again.