

*It has been five years since the incident of the Resonance Cascade, Dr. Gordon Freeman had defeated the Nihilanth and had been placed into stasis by the Man in the Suit. Dr. Freeman has awoken in the same black abyss he had been placed in, time slowing to a crawl.*

*The Mysterious Man steps forth from the darkness, suitcase in hand. He adjusts his tie as his glowing eyes pierce through Gordon's mind.*

**“The Man in the Suit”:** Doctor Freeman....it has been quite some..time, since we last spoke. Given my employers' lack of interest with you as a subject..i've decided to take matters into...my own hands.

There has been recently a..disturbance, in time itself, a vibrant spot in our ever-expanding universe. It is too dangerous to explore myself..that is why I came right...to you. You have quite the brilliant mind...Gordon, that is why I believe you're the right man for the job.

This...small dimension, is filled with many beings from other realities, converging on one spot in time. I am interested to see how it...ticks. This is not your next mission, think of it more as a....game. Would you like to oblige, Doctor Freeman?

It is but a simple arcade...I'm sure you've handled worse in your time at Black Mesa, the owner seems to be hosting a...competition, of sorts. Alluding to a sort of...prize, as they call it. I believe you have much to gain from this...tournament.

*The Man opens his suitcase, it's empty, except for a rusted crowbar. Handing it out to Gordon, almost as if it was an offer he can't resist.*

**“The Man in the Suit”:** I believe you will need this, Doctor Freeman.

*Gordon, without much of a choice, grips the crowbar, adjusting his glasses and nodding at the Mysterious Man.*

**“The Man in the Suit”:** Good luck out there....Make sure not to lose too many....lives.

*Gordon's vision is taken over by a bright flash, by the time his vision adjusts, the black abyss no longer holds him, now standing in the middle of an arcade. The room seems empty, though.*

*Given the man of curiosity he is, he takes in his surroundings, exploring the arcade for any signs of life. After some time, he spots a tall, lanky machine conversing with a young-teen in a suit and hood.*

*Gordon silently approaches the two, and the robot swiftly turns around. Gordon steps back.*

**EDACRA:** OH, HELLO *THERE*. YOU'RE NEW, I DID NOT *PLAN* FOR YOU TO BE HERE.  
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

*Gordon stands there for a moment, blank. Then, his eyes widen, and he checks the inside of his suit for one of his belongings...*

*Gordon hands Edacra his government ID. Edacra inspects it.*

**EDACRA:** AH... DR. FREEMAN, I *SEE*. WELL, IT IS A *PLEASURE* TO HAVE YOU HERE.

*They hand him back his ID, and Gordon puts away his weapon. After the nightmare that was the events of the Resonance Cascade, something about this was... calming. Gordon hadn't gotten the chance to relax for more than a day now.*

*Gordon nods along to Edacra's words, and agrees to join their tournament. After this, he's brought to his own personal room, with a bed inside. Sweet relief at last...*