

T O U C H



Tales Of The Red Thread

By

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Part One

$$1 + 1 = 3$$

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

On an EXTREME CLOSE UP of a PENCIL LEAD as it writes a series of NUMBERS onto paper.

1.1687539879013689270....

The VOICE of ten year old JAKE BOHM NARRATES with uncanny authority and vocabulary, belying his age. He has the staggering gift of a rare genius. (*The following montage is completely silent, save the sound of the pencil lead SCRATCHING on paper and Jake's voice.*)

JAKE (V.O.)

The ratio is 1 to 1.618, over and over and over again. The patterns, mathematical in design, are hidden in plain sight. You just have to know how to see them...

The CAMERA arrives at the last "0" in the series of numbers and PUSHES IN on it until we realize that the "0" has become --

A perfectly round LOAF of unbaked BREAD.

WIDEN to see six other identical LOAVES lined up on a wooden plank. We're in a small, cramped kitchen in a suburb of Baghdad. (*Although we won't know this until the next scene in this story line.*)

ABDUL KOZARI, (17), stands against the wall staring concerned, as two older MEN lean over an OVEN, kibitzing about how to fix it. Another MAN pulls his head from the oven, a screwdriver in his hand. He looks at the other men with the somber look of a doctor about to deliver terminal news.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Things previously called chaos are now known to follow subtle fractal laws of behavior. Galaxies, plants, snowflakes, clouds, rivers, sea shells.

Off Abdul's concerned look, we --

CUT TO:

KATE GRAHAM, (23)

pretty, black, or more accurately half black, singing at the top of her lungs, swaying back and forth to some rousing music that we cannot hear. We WIDEN to find Kate in the back row of a CHURCH CHOIR.

She's the only person of color here in this all white Church filled with conservative looking white people.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Fractals are unpredictable in specific details yet deterministic when viewed as a total pattern...

We FREEZE on a TIGHT CU of Kate joyously singing, and we,

CUT TO:

SIMON PLIMPTON, (33)

in a rumpled, slept-in suit, standing at the British Air check-in counter at Heathrow airport.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...Chance occurrences aren't just chaos. They are designed. Predetermined by mathematical probability.

He sets his suitcase onto the CONVEYOR BELT, places his carry-on bag on top and searches through it for his passport.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...The numbers define it all...

We SEE his CELL PHONE FALL OUT of his bag and onto the conveyor belt behind his suitcase. He does not notice.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...They point to the connections between all things...

CLOSE ON the CELL PHONE. We see a "CARE BEARS" STICKER on it, the obvious handiwork of a child.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...Even the ones that make no sense at first...

We PUSH IN on the phone until the BLACK CASING around it FILLS the FRAME entirely. PANNING OFF of this BLACK VOID --

AN IMAGE OF EARTH

like a blue marble suspended in the vastness of space.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
6,919,377,000 people live on this planet.

(MORE)

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Today, the average person will say
 2,250 words to 7.4 other individuals.
 We'll send over 240 million emails.
 96 million text messages.

We SNAP ZOOM to a SATELLITE SHOT looking straight down over
 the island of MANHATTAN.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...In New York city alone 8,391,881
 people will make 7,556,000 cell phone
 calls today.

The SATELLITE view ZOOMS IN on the lower Westside (Meat
 Packing district). HOVERS over a single BUILDING.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 57 people live in 31 apartments in
 my building, along with 19 dogs, 11
 cats, 5 birds and a lizard in 7D.

JAKE BOHM, (10)

We're looking straight down at him sitting crossed legged on
 a metal grate, suspended high above the ground. It's hard
 to tell from the TIGHT FRAME, but it feels like he's sitting
 on what looks like a fire escape.

Jake has his head down, feverishly writing the aforementioned
 elaborate SERIES of NUMBERS into a TATTERED NOTEBOOK, as
 though he's channeling them from some distant vantage point.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I was born 3,486 days ago on October
 26, 2000. I've been alive for ten
 years, nine months and seventeen
 days.
 (beat)
 And in all that time...

Jake looks up, as though right into CAMERA with a vacant,
 detached look in his eyes.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...I've never said a single word.

The image now SLAMS from his face to --

INT. AIRPORT LOST AND FOUND - DAY

MARTIN BOHM, (37), stands at the Lost and Found counter in
 the baggage area of JFK airport. He's wearing a baggage
 handler's UNIFORM, but looks like he was meant for something
 more ambitious than sorting bags.

Martin has a somber, haunted demeanor. He's a man with a secret.

As he waits, a little impatiently, he notices a NEWSPAPER laying open on the counter. Something catches his eye. He slides the paper over for a closer look. Stares down at an article with the headline, "**Muller Denied Stay, Execution Date Set.**"

Martin eyes the article. Something about it haunts him.

LOST AND FOUND GUY (O.S.)
Batteries are all dead on these ones.

Martin looks up to see Lost And Found Guy approach with a small CARDBOARD BOX filled with 35 old CELL PHONES. Martin looks up from the article.

MARTIN
That's okay.

Martin slaps a TWENTY down on counter.

LOST AND FOUND GUY
What the hell do you do with these things, anyway?

Martin musters just enough energy to qualify as conversation.

MARTIN
My son... likes to take them apart.

Martin picks up the box and starts to carry it away.

LOST AND FOUND GUY
Hope he ain't making no bombs with'em, like they do over there in Iraq.

MARTIN
(without looking back)
Me too.

INT. AIRPORT - LUGGAGE PROCESSING AREA - DAY

Martin exits, carrying the box. We MOVE with him through the back area where 1,000 pieces of luggage revolve on giant CONVEYOR BELTS.

Suddenly, **RIIINNNGGG!** It's one of the phones in the box. Martin, startled, digs through the phones, finally finding the culprit.

THE PHONE WITH THE CARE BEARS STICKER ON IT

Martin stares it, curiously. Then answers, cautiously --

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Hello?

A MAN'S VOICE squeezes through the tiny speaker. British accent. It's Simon Plimpton, whom we met in the MONTAGE.

SIMON (O.S.)

I want my phone back.

MARTIN

Who is this?

SIMON (O.S.)

The owner of the phone you are illegally in possession of.

MARTIN

(WTF?)

I am not illegally possessing any...
It was in the Lost and Found.

SIMON (O.S.)

Where?

MARTIN

JFK airport.

SIMON (O.S.)

New York?! Jesus...

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. TRAIN STATION - MUMBAI, INDIA - NIGHT

SIMON stands at a pay phone in this crowded Indian station. He looks even more disheveled than the last time we saw him.

SIMON (O.S.)

...Look, I don't care how you got it, I just want it back. It's been forty eight hours, people phone-skipping it around the globe.

MARTIN

Phone skipping?

SIMON (O.S.)

The latest craze. Find a phone that doesn't belong to you, leave some video message or a questionable contact in it and send it forward. It is neither as amusing nor clever as it sounds. So can I please have my phone back?

BACK TO MARTIN

who looks harassed by the whole damn thing.

MARTIN

Can't you just get a new one?

SIMON (O.S.)

It's not the phone I need. It's a photograph I took with it. Of my daughter. It's her birthday tomorrow and... it's a long story, so if you could just--

MARTIN

Alright, alright, fine. How do I get it back to you?

Suddenly, Martin's own phone RINGS in his shirt pocket.

SIMON (O.S.)

I'm in Mumbai on business. I'm staying at the --

MARTIN

Hold on a second, my phone's ringing.

Martin sets down the Care Bears phone on top of a piece of luggage on a conveyor belt in order to answer his own phone.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Hello?

We DON'T HEAR the other side of this conversation, but Martin is suddenly alarmed.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

What? Ah, Christ... When did he... nevermind. I'll be there as fast as I can.

Martin hangs up his phone, grabs the box of phones and takes off running. We TILT DOWN to Simon's PHONE still on top of the SUITCASE, as the conveyor belt STARTS UP and begins to MOVE. We hear SIMON'S VOICE squeeze through the tiny speaker -

SIMON (O.S.)

Hello! You still there?!! Hello?!!

EXT. CELL TOWER - DAY

We CRANE UP and OVER the metal crow's nest to reveal --

JAKE

sitting crossed legged, still writing NUMBERS in his NOTEBOOK.
(We realize that this is where he was in the opening montage).
 We're somewhere way the hell on the outskirts of the city.
 Open fields stretch for a mile to the nearest suburb.

CAR TIRES

SKID to a stop. WIDEN as Martin swings the car door open
 and RISES into a CLOSE UP. He looks up to see Jake perched
 on the crow's nest a hundred feet up this CELL TOWER.

MARTIN
 (exasperated)
 Dammit... Jake.

Two COP CARS and a FIRE TRUCK are already here, a few
 ONLOOKERS.

A FIREMAN makes his way up the precarious metal LADDER that
 rises up the tower.

Another CAR pulls to a stop next to Martin's. Out steps a
 doughy looking guy whom we'll call SCHOOL COUNSELOR. Martin
 looks at the Counselor with disdain.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR
 (fumbling to explain)
 I don't know how this happened again.

MARTIN
 I'm paying good money to keep my son
 safe at your school. Are you grasping
 the irony of that?

SCHOOL COUNSELOR
 That's just it, Mr. Bohm, the money
 isn't good enough.

Martin just glowers at the Counselor, then reaches back into
 his car to the BOX of used cell phones. Grabs a FEW and
 shoves them into his jacket pocket and takes off running
 toward the tower. Yells up at the FIREMEN --

MARTIN
 Wait! Don't come near him!

They turn to see Martin approaching. One of the COPS shakes
 his head disgusted.

COP
 You got any idea what that kid of
 yours is costing the tax payers?

In the b.g. A CELL COMPANY WORKMAN climbs out of his truck and approaches quickly.

MARTIN

You didn't have to call the fire department this time.

COP

The hell I didn't. I've wasted half a day waiting for him to crawl down.

MARTIN

(re: the Fireman)

Well he's not coming down at all if that guy gets near him. I told you, no one can touch him. You have to let me get him down.

COP

And take the chance of both of you falling? Forget it.

MARTIN

I didn't say I was going up there. I'm scared of heights. Don't worry, I have another idea.

Martin looks at the Cop pleadingly. The Workman arrives and breaks the tension.

WORKMAN

I just changed the combination lock. How'd he get through it again?!

Martin stares at the Cop, who finally relents. Turns and YELLS up to the FIREMAN, now halfway up the tower.

COP

Come on back down, Lenny! The kid's dad is here!

Lenny, the Fireman halfway up the tower, looks back down at them. Shrugs, and starts back down the ladder. Martin approaches the foot of the ladder. Cranes his neck.

MARTIN

(calmly)

Jake?! Come on down now, okay buddy?!

ON THE CROW'S NEST

Jake finally stops his single minded focus on filling in NUMBERS in the notebook and looks down to see his father at the foot of the tower. His expression betrays nothing.

MARTIN

reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out the USED CELL PHONES that he got from the box. Holds them up.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Got a present for you! See?!

Martin waves the phones over his head.

JAKE

blinks a couple of times. Cocks his head to the side. Then a small, almost imperceptible smile curls to his lips.

CUT TO:

THE BASE OF THE TOWER - MOMENTS LATER

Jake climbs off the ladder and approaches Martin with a blank stare. Martin calmly hands him the cell phones as promised. The Firemen and Cops all exchange looks, what the hell...?

Jake takes the phones and saunters slowly off towards his dad's car, staring down at the cell phones. He passes the School Counselor, who stares sheepishly before approaching. When Martin sees him coming he turns and walks away.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR
Mr. Bohm, please!
(Martin doesn't stop)
We can no longer float your payments!

Martin stops. Turns back.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR (CONT'D)
I know it's been hard since you lost your job.

MARTIN
(snaps)
I have a job.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR
(snaps back)
You've had ten jobs!
(after a beat)
In two years...

Martin just stares. The truth stings.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR (CONT'D)
I wish you luck with your son.

And with that, he turns and walks off. Martin stares for a beat, then the Workman approaches.

WORKMAN

Lucky there wasn't no rain today.
That thing gets wet he coulda gone
up like a torch.

The Workman shakes his head and turns to walk off, then --

WORKMAN (CONT'D)

Does the time 3:18 mean something
special to that kid?

Martin's answer is a blank stare.

WORKMAN (CONT'D)

All three times he's tripped the
alarm on the security system at
exactly 3:18. Some kinda weird
coincidence.

Martin stares for a beat, then without expression --

MARTIN

I don't know anything about that.

The Cop approaches Martin. He pulls out a CITATION BOOK and pen. Flips it open --

COP

I'm gonna have to report him this
time. This has to stop.

Martin sighs and looks back at Jake, making his way to the car, oblivious to the havoc he's wreaked. Then looks back at the Cop, nods, sadly resolved --

MARTIN

Yeah... I know.

INT. ABDUL'S HOUSE - BAGHDAD - MORNING

CHRIS ROCK

PROWLS on stage in one of his HBO specials, microphone in his hand, but with no sound. WIDEN to see we're looking at a SMALL TV in the bare living room of Abdul's house.

ABDUL

prowls back and forth in unison to Chris Rock, a WOODEN SPOON in his hand as a microphone. He's pantomiming all of Chris Rock's moves. When Chris gestures, Abdul gestures. When Chris stops and flashes a wide grin, so does Abdul.

ABDUL'S MOTHER (O.S.)
 (in Arabic)
You look like an idiot.

Abdul stops and turns to see his MOTHER in the doorway.
(Italics = Arabic.)

ABDUL
 (in English)
 I'm practicing my English.

ABDUL'S MOTHER
*Great, the Americans left us their
 wonderful language along with a whole
 country in ruins.*
 (points to TV)
*And this filth? This is the real
 legacy.*

ABDUL
*It's Chris Rock. I'm learning all
 his moves. When I get into the comedy
 clubs I'll make a fortune.*

ABDUL'S MOTHER
What comedy clubs?! This is Baghdad!

ABDUL
 (undaunted)
*You'll see. Then we won't have to
 sell bread for the rest of our lives.*

ABDUL'S MOTHER
*Well we won't have to worry about
 that since we no longer have an oven!*

This stops Abdul. He looks at her seriously. Abdul's mother
 puts her hand to her mouth, overcome with emotion.

ABDUL'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
*Your father is in the kitchen, sitting
 vigil, too much pride for you to see
 him cry. No oven, no bread. No
 bread, no money. No money, no house.*

Abdul just stares at her, feeling the weight of this family
 catastrophe. Abdul crosses to her. Embraces her.

TARIK (O.S.)
You ready?

Abdul turns to see TARIK, (18), a little pudgy, wearing jeans
 and a Ben & Jerry's T-shirt.

ABDUL

(to his mother)

I have to get to school. Don't worry, mother, I'm going to figure something out. I promise. I don't want you to worry.

ABDUL'S MOTHER

You're a good boy, but there's is nothing to be done to fix the oven. We are in Allah's hands now.

She turns and walks away. Tarik looks at it Abdul, confused.

TARIK

Did I miss something?

Abdul doesn't answer. Just picks up his books and heads for the door, blowing past Tarik.

INT. MARTIN'S CAR - DAY

Martin drives, silent but fuming. A man at his wits end. A long beat, then trying to remain calm --

MARTIN

You can't do this anymore, Jake.

He looks over at Jake, who doesn't respond -- too engrossed in his box of cell phones.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

The police filed a report this time. You know what that means...?

Still no response.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

You remember the courthouse? The lawyer with the bad toupee? We're already on thin ice...

(really worried)

This isn't good...

Another beat, then he changes tack --

MARTIN (CONT'D)

It's your mom's birthday today. We're all the way out here... might as well go pay a visit, huh?

He looks over at Jake, who just keeps his attention focused on the phones, as we DRIFT out the window and up to the sky --

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

We DRIFT DOWN from the darkening sky to find Martin and Jake arriving at a grave.

ON THE GRAVESTONE

The name **"Emily Bohm - April 3, 1968 - September 11, 2001"**.

We TILT DOWN and find a METAL BADGE has been placed on the grave. Martin bends down and picks up the badge.

CLOSE ON THE BADGE

New York Fire Department. "STATION 318". Martin turns to see that Jake is looking at it with interest. He holds it out to Jake, who takes it. Then opens his notebook and jots down the number "318", CIRCLES it.

Martin stares back down at the grave. There's no sadness in his eyes. No self pity. In fact there's nothing.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

A Hopper-esque WIDE SHOT. Martin fills the car with gas.

INSIDE THE CAR

Jake plays with his phones. He looks up and out the window --

At a SCHOOL BUS parked in the parking lot. The BUS DRIVER tends to an overheating engine. KIDS in the bus play inside.

CLOSE ON JAKE

staring out the window at the other KIDS - the gap between their normalcy and him is huge.

MARTIN

finishes filling the car, returns the nozzle to the pump. Then notices Jake staring at the school bus. He notes the intensity of Jake's stare.

Suddenly, Jake climbs out of the car, NOTEBOOK in hand, and makes a bee line for the back of the bus.

AT THE BUS

Some of the KIDS notice Jake and begin to HECKLE him for his obviously strange demeanor. "Hey freak, stay away from our bus"... etc. Undaunted, Jake MOVES to the back of the bus and opens his notebook, quickly scrawls down the license plate number.

Martin hurries over to retrieve him.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Jake, come on now, let's leave the bus alone, okay?

But Jake seems transfixed by the license plate. The BUS DRIVER has now noticed.

BUS DRIVER

He okay?

MARTIN

Yeah. Just got a thing about school buses lately.

(to Jake)

Tell you what, I bet they've got Fanta at the store here. You'd like that, right? Come on, I'll get you a Fanta.

But Jake just continues to stare at the license plate. Martin finally follows his gaze to it.

CLOSE ON THE LICENSE PLATE

The last three digits are **318**.

Martin's eyes narrow with a recognition. He stares for a beat, then looks down at Jake, still transfixed by these numbers, and we --

CUT TO:

INT. GAS STATION MINI-MART - MOMENTS LATER

A TV mounted near the ceiling plays FOX NEWS with the sound off. On SCREEN a PRISON INMATE is being led down a long institutional hallway. Underneath the image a CAPTION reads, "Kentucky Governor denies Stay for Muller".

The CAMERA DRIFTS DOWN to find Martin staring at the silent image on the TV. His blank expression looks through the TV. He stands in line at the counter with Jake, a bottle of ORANGE FANTA in Martin's hand.

Jake stares at the MAN in front of him in line. The Man is big, burly with a PONYTAIL. He steps up to the counter.

PONYTAIL

Lottery ticket please. 87 1 9 20 31
11.

Jake watches as the LOTTERY TICKET is placed on the counter next to Ponytail.

As Ponytail pulls some bills out of his wallet to pay, Jake reaches out and picks the ticket up off the counter. He stares at it, then takes off running with it, out the door.

PONYTAIL (CONT'D)

Hey! What the hell are you--?!!!

Martin looks up to see this insane moment play out as Ponytail takes off chasing after Jake, who barrels --

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MINI MART

And heads for the car. Jake climbs in and SLAMS the door.

PONYTAIL

stumbles out of the mini-mart and lumbers after him.

PONYTAIL

You little fuckin shithead!

Ponytail slides to a stop at the car and tries to open the door. Jake has locked it.

PONYTAIL (CONT'D)

Give me back my goddamn ticket!

Martin now comes running up to the car.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, I'll take care of this.

PONYTAIL

(pissed)

You'd better take care of it.

MARTIN

(feigning calm)

Open the door, Jake.

Martin looks inside and sees Jake feverishly WRITING down the lottery numbers into his NOTEBOOK.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Jake! Open up.

Ponytail POUNDS his fist on the window.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Hey! I told you I'll take care of this.

PONYTAIL

Yeah, I'm waiting.

MARTIN

Jake. Come on, open up the door.

PONYTAIL

I swear to God, kid... I'm counting to three. One... Two...

MARTIN

You touch my car again and I'll--!

CLICK. The door opens. Jake steps out. Hands the ticket calmly to Martin. Ponytail YANKS it out of his hand.

PONYTAIL

You oughta keep that kid in a cage.

He turns to walk away, but Martin snaps. Grabs Ponytail by the shoulder and spins him around.

MARTIN

What did you say?!

Ponytail reacts, and in one fluid motion PUNCHES Martin in the gut, doubling him over in pain and dropping him to one knee. And with that, Ponytail walks away. Martin winces as he GASPS for air. Looks over to see Jake obliviously staring at the lottery numbers in his notebook.

Martin is at a complete loss. We SNAP back to the Hopperesque tableau again, and --

INT. KARAOKE LOUNGE - NIGHT

KATE GRAHAM (from the opening MONTAGE) sings an infectious version of Bob Marley's "Three Little Birds - Don't Worry 'Bout a Thing". But now we hear her, and Kate is a terrific singer and dynamic performer.

The SHOT is HAND-HELD and has a "VIDEO" quality. We REVERSE to see it's being filmed by the CAMERA in the CELL PHONE with the CARE BEARS STICKER on it.

NILES BORNE, a nerd of the highest order, is filming with the phone. He's the classic pretty girl's platonic best friend. We're in a cheesy karaoke bar filled with drunk BUSINESS PEOPLE.

We watch Kate's big finale and the drunken crowd RISES in a STANDING OVATION. She is obviously way too talented for this shitty place.

Niles turns the phone towards himself and says right into the camera, with a thick IRISH ACCENT --

NILES

Ladies and gentlemen, the song
stylings of the next global phenom,
Kate Graham. Play it forward, pass
it along. Start your fan clubs here.

KATE makes her way through the crowd of admirers, as Niles
hops down off the table and joins her.

NILES (CONT'D)

I'm star struck. You killed tonight.

KATE

And now for the post performance
depression.

She grabs her ORANGE FANTA off the table and heads for the
door. Niles looks at her concerned, then follows her.

EXT. HOTEL - OUTSIDE THE KARAOKE LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

Kate sits on the curb, sipping her Fanta. Niles sits.

NILES

How is it you always end up sitting
on the curb?

KATE

It's the obvious place to ruminate
on all the things I'll never be.

NILES

I'll have none of that. Half the
company is here because of you.

KATE

They came to get drunk.

NILES

And to listen to you. The guys in
accounting have your photo up on the
break room wall.

KATE

A little reality check here, Niles.
I'm singing in a Karaoke lounge at
an airport hotel.

NILES

Well, no one said the road to stardom
wasn't paved with...
(can't think of right
word)

KATE

Shite?

NILES

Yes, sometimes. And hard knocks. The road to stardom is paved with hard knocks.

KATE

Face it, I'm going to be working two cubicles down from you for the rest of my life. I always thought I'd make some kind of impact, some kind of difference. But that's never gonna happen.

NILES

I am a believer in the butterfly effect.

KATE

(rolls her eyes)
Oh god, here we go.

NILES

(undaunted)
Step on a butterfly here in Galway and wham, a piano falls on some poor bastard in New Jersey. We all have a destiny, and yours is to be a mega star.

(holds up Care Bears phone)
And this here is the rocket ship that launches it all.

KATE

(sure...)
A mobile phone.

NILES

Doug in sales got back from New York today and someone had stuck this phone in his bag. It was dead, so he gave it to me to charge. Turns out the phone is some kinda viral marketing stunt. It's been clear around the world in the last 48 hours. You should see all the messages and videos in here. I'm telling you, done right, this is how you start a forest fire. It's like a pollen burst ready to explode. I even provided a twitter link to the official Kate Graham website.

KATE
What Kate Graham website?

NILES
The one I'm building when I get home
tonight.

Kate looks at him, incredulous.

KATE
So, let me get this straight. There's
a video of me in that phone singing
at a karaoke bar on the outskirts of
Galway, Ireland.

NILES
Yes.

KATE
And you're going to send that phone
out into the ether and people are
going to find it and discover me.

NILES
(matter-of-fact)
That's right.

KATE
And just like that I'm a mega star?

NILES
(total confidence)
Exactly.

Kate stares at him. Then abruptly stands.

KATE
I'll see you tomorrow.

And she walks off.

NILES
You'll see! Big star! Viral
marketing! Can't fail!

But she just keeps walking. He looks down at the phone in
his hand, wondering what to do next. Just then, A JAPANESE
BUSINESSMAN comes out of the lounge, rolling a SUITCASE behind
him.

He walks right past Niles and approaches a parked TAXI, twenty
feet away. Sets his suitcase down at the trunk of the car
and walks to the driver's side to negotiate with the driver.

Niles' eyes narrow with an idea. He quickly stands and hurries to the suitcase. He unzips the front pocket. (*We NOTE that the zipper has an ID TAG attached to it with a JAPANESE FLAG emblazoned on it.*)

Niles slips the CARE BEARS PHONE into the pocket and quickly ZIPS it back up, just as the trunk POPS open.

The Japanese Businessman walks to the back of the car as Niles nonchalantly stands and folds his arms, pretending to be a disinterested pedestrian. He quickly walks off, watching the Japanese Businessman load the suitcase into the trunk.

Off Niles' self-satisfied look --

INT. PONYTAIL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON THE LOTTERY TICKET

as it's tacked to a CORK BOARD. WIDEN to see that it's one of HUNDREDS of other LOTTERY TICKETS. Each of the tickets share the IDENTICAL sequence of numbers. He's been playing the same numbers for what looks like years. WIDER still and we see --

PONYTAIL

step back and look at the cork board. We're in his small, dark, cluttered home. The home of a single man who doesn't get out much. Off Ponytail's somber expression as he stares at the cork board full of LOTTERY TICKETS --

INT. MARTIN'S LOFT - NIGHT

We're LOOKING DOWN on Martin asleep, his head resting on the kitchen table next to an open FILE. There are PAPERS and CLIPPINGS spread out on the table around him.

We're not sure what it is we're looking at, but there are CRIME SCENE PHOTOS, COURTROOM TRANSCRIPTS, a PHOTO of a GUN, several EXTREME CU'S of the GUN'S SERIAL NUMBER. FINALLY, a MUG SHOT of a MAN, the name "**FRANK MULLER**" on the placard held beneath his chin.

A FOLDED NEWSPAPER with the same article we saw earlier, "**Kentucky Governor Denies Stay, Execution Date set**", rests near his hand. We PUSH IN on Martin until he suddenly BOLTS UP, as though from a dream. He composes himself when he realizes where he is. Looks at the clock.

It's 3:18. He stares at the time. That's odd. He lifts the newspaper and looks at the article, as though reminding himself what he was doing here. Then looks up to see --

JAKE

standing in his doorway. It's a big BOO!

MARTIN

Jesus, Jake. You scared the hell
out of me. What are you doing up at
this hour?

But Jake turns and walks away. After a beat, Martin follows.

IN THE MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Martin, the newspaper still in hand, crosses through the
loft. We note a woman's touch to the decor, nicer than we'd
expect for a baggage handler at the airport. Martin rounds
the corner to --

JAKE'S ROOM

and stops. Jake sits on the floor with the BOX of cell phones
in front of him. He's arranged a DOZEN PHONES on the floor
in a SPIRAL SHAPE. In the center of the spiral --

JAKE'S NOTEBOOK

open to the page with the BUS LICENSE PLATE and LOTTERY
NUMBERS written on it. Underneath these, written in large
numbers -- 3 and 18. Martin doesn't notice this. But we
do.

Martin sits down cross-legged on the floor with Jake, who
just continues to neatly arrange his dead phones. Martin
reaches out to place his hand affectionately on the back of
Jake's head, but stops inches away. This is as close as he
gets. He pantomimes caressing him. After a beat --

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I want to believe I'm more than just
the guy who feeds you, but maybe
that's asking too much... of both of
us. You don't even know who I am,
do you?

Jake of course doesn't respond.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Maybe it's because I never told you.
Told you that I used to be somebody...
Someone who believed in things.
Someone who wanted to find the truth,
and write it down. I worked at a
newspaper, did you know that?

(MORE)

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 (holds up the newspaper)
 For this one. And I was good at it,
 too. Even won some awards.

Martin looks off wistfully, then points to the article about Muller.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 But that was before this...

He stops when he realizes he's just talking to himself. He straightens himself.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 (looks right at Jake)
 Your doctor says you're going to be
 bigger than me. How the hell is
 that going to work?

Jake stares at his phones. Martin sighs. Then stands and crosses to the bed and pulls back the covers. Pats the bed.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 Get some sleep, okay?

Jake looks over at the bed. Stands up and crosses to it. Climbs into bed. Martin blows him a kiss, turns off the lamp on the night stand and heads for the door.

We MOVE with Martin, when we notice a slight LIGHT CHANGE in the room behind him. A GLOW. Martin senses this and turns back around. Stares. His eyes react as he sees --

THE PHONES

on the floor have all LIT UP. Come to life. Martin stares, confused by this. He walks over to them. Looks down. Each of the six phones has the same SERIES of NUMBERS illuminated on the screen.

He looks up at Jake, who's just staring at the phones.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 How did you...?

But he stops as he realizes something. He looks at the NOTEBOOK in the center of the spiral. Picks it up. The LOTTERY NUMBERS that Jake copied from Ponytail's ticket.

He checks the phones. The numbers on each phone are identical to the lottery numbers. Off Martin, wondering what the hell this is all about --

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. PLANE - NIGHT

Simon, our British businessman, sits mid-row in the coach section, as PASSENGERS load bags into the overhead compartments, pre-flight. Simon stares at his new cell phone, debating whether to make a call. A moment of decision, then he dials a number. After a beat --

SIMON

Hi, it's me... Oh, yeah, no it's a new phone.

INTERCUT with:

INT. CHILD'S BEDROOM - FLAT - LONDON - DAY

NELL PLIMPTON (31), sits on a little girl's bed in a little girl's room, holding a phone to her ear. She looks somber, tired.

NELL

What do you want, Simon?

SIMON

I just thought I'd call and check in.

NELL

(impatiently)

Uh huh...

SIMON

See how you were doing.

NELL

(cold)

I'm okay.

There's a long beat. We've obviously dropped in on something very tense between them.

SIMON

I was going to try to make it home for her birthday.

NELL

(without affect)

Why?

SIMON

Nell, please.

NELL

I'm sure you're very busy.

SIMON

I'm on a plane to Tokyo. There's a new chain of Italian bakeries opening and this could be a huge account. But I can make it back there by tomorrow night.

NELL

I don't see the point.

Simon takes a long beat, trying a new tack --

SIMON

I'm going to try to make it anyway.

Nell doesn't respond. Finally --

NELL

Is that all? Because I have to go.

SIMON

Yeah, that's all...

(then)

Wait... Last summer in Bristol... that hotel we stayed at on the beach. We were all so happy there.

NELL

What about it?

SIMON

Did we take any photos besides the ones from my cell phone?

NELL

No. Why?

SIMON

(after a beat)

Nothing. Nevermind. Like I said, I'll try to be there.

NELL

It's okay.

CLICK. She hangs up. As we PULL BACK slowly, leaving Nell sitting on the edge of the bed, a blank stare on her face, we PRELAP a DOORBELL RINGS, and --

CUT TO:

INT. LOFT - DAY

CLOSE ON THE FRONT DOOR

as it opens to reveal CLEA HOPKINS, 27. Fresh faced, professional. There's a hint of Tracy Flick from "Election" in her. Business attire, briefcase at her side.

CLEA

Mr. Bohm?

REVERSE on Martin in the doorway. Jeans, t-shirt, barefoot, coffee mug in his hand. He stares, suspiciously --

MARTIN

Who wants to know?

CLEA

(extends her hand)

Clea Hopkins, Child and Family Services.

Hearing this, Martin's jaw tightens. Ready for a fight.

MARTIN

What happened to "Miss" Lebowski?

And he says "Miss" with utter disdain.

CLEA

She's on maternity leave.

MARTIN

(deadpan)

You're kidding. God help us all.

Martin makes a big show of looking down the hallway in both directions. Stares back at her defiantly --

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Where are the men in white suits?

CLEA

I'm sorry?

MARTIN

You're here to take my son, right?

CLEA

I've come to do an assessment of his current situation to determine a proper course of --

MARTIN

Bullshit! The kid's had three strikes against him since he was eight. And you people have been circling the building ever since --

This is a macho display, as he takes a step forward.

CLEA

Sir, I'm just following protocol based on the recommendation of the facility where your son's been --

MARTIN

Facility?! He'd have been safer if I'd left him in a cardboard box in Times Square every day! And if you think I'm going to just let you walk in here now and take my--

CLEA

(surprisingly tough)

I'm here to do my job, Mr. Bohm! I told you, I've come to evaluate your home situation and report my findings!

(then)

Now, either you let me in to do that, or you leave me no choice but to file a hostile encounter report. Trust me, you don't want that.

A Mexican standoff. A long beat, then Martin acquiesces, and swings the door open. As she steps through, she hands him a folded NEWSPAPER.

CLEA (CONT'D)

Your paper.

He takes the NEWSPAPER and lets her in.

INT. LOFT - SAME

Martin, holding his newspaper, closes the door behind her. Clea takes in the place. We sense her trying to sum up their "situation" by the look of the loft. She's impressed. She pulls a FILE from her folder, opens it.

CLEA

I'll just ask a few questions if you don't mind.

MARTIN

Knock yourself out.

CLEA
You still working as a doorman?

MARTIN
I've been a taxi driver, construction worker and baggage handler since then.

Clea just stares at him.

CLEA
That's a lot of instability. There were problems with those other jobs?

He looks at her, still defiant --

MARTIN
I guess I'm still trying to find myself. I was thinking brain surgeon next.

CLEA
(checking the file)
You have a Masters degree in Journalism from University of Wisconsin.

MARTIN
Three of my life years down the drain. These days all you need is a cell phone and a laptop and you too can be a journalist. Who knew?

CLEA
Yet you lost your job at the New York Times.

MARTIN
I was fired.
(beat, explaining--)
Had a little trouble maintaining my objectivity on a story I was covering.

CLEA
So I guess you never found the gun?

Martin looks at her, taken aback by this.

CLEA (CONT'D)
(admitting)
I followed the story in those articles you wrote.

Martin looks at her. Then shakes his head slightly.

MARTIN

I looked for two years. All I found was the bottom half of a pawn shop ticket. There's seven thousand pawnshops in this country and it could be at any one of...

He stops, not wanting to go any further. An awkward beat as Clea looks around the loft, then --

CLEA

Look, not to be presumptuous, but you're living in a 3000 square foot loft in the Meat Packing district, which it says here you own....

MARTIN

It belonged to my wife. She was a stockbroker. The 90's were good to her.

CLEA

Still, must be worth an awful lot. You could probably get enough for it to take care of you and your son for quite a while.

MARTIN

She left it in a trust in my son's name. Her parents are the executors. It's their decision.

Clea sees she's not getting very far with this line of questioning. Changing tack --

CLEA

I'd like to meet Jacob, if I could.

MARTIN

(matter-of-fact)
He's right behind you.

She blinks, confused, then turns, a little startled to see

JAKE

sitting at the kitchen table eating a bowl of cereal.

CLEA

Wow... you're a quiet one, aren't you? Hello, Jacob, I'm Clea.

She crosses enthusiastically to him, extending her hand.

MARTIN

I wouldn't do that if I were you.
 (when she stops)
 Unless you're up for peeling him off
 the ceiling.

Clea looks at him, confused.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

He doesn't let anyone touch him.
 Ever.
 (off her look)
 Don't take it personally. I don't.
 (then)
 Look, I can explain about the incident
 yesterday at the cell tower...

Martin crosses to the kitchen table, sets the NEWSPAPER down.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

...He's had this fascination with
 cell phones lately and I think he
 somehow got it in his head that --

Martin suddenly stops, staring at the newspaper, his back to
 Clea. There's a long beat, as she wonders what's going on.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(under his breath)
 My God...

Clea's eyes narrow curiously. Suddenly, Martin snatches up
 the newspaper, spins around and RUNS toward Jake's room.

IN JAKE'S ROOM

Martin slides to a stop. Looks down at the phones, still in
 a SPIRAL on the floor. Except now, all of them are "dead"
 again. He picks one up. Tries to turn it on. Nothing.

Clea appears in the doorway behind him, thoroughly confused.
 She watches as he picks up another phone, tries to turn it
 on. It's dead, too.

CLEA

Mr. Bohm?

MARTIN

(a little crazed)
 The numbers. They were all here.

He turns and looks at Clea, who looks back at him like he's
 nuts, which he pretty much looks right now.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Last night. These phones. They had numbers on them. All the same. Lit up like a Christmas tree.

CLEA

I'm not following you here.

Martin hands her the newspaper. The headline reads, "**BIGGEST LOTTO WIN IN NEW YORK HISTORY**". The winning NUMBERS listed right under the headline. The same ones from the phone!

Under that, a subheading - "**Lucky Winner Still At Large**".

Martin picks up the NOTEBOOK from the center of the spiral. Sure enough, the numbers are still there. Circled.

MARTIN

Look! He wrote these down yesterday.
It's like he knew...

He points to them and thrusts the notebook towards Clea. She looks at the numbers, then checks them against the newspaper. Holy shit. He's right.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(mind racing)
How could he have known?

Off Clea's narrowing eyes --

EXT. STREET - BAGHDAD - DAY

Abdul and Tarik walk down this dilapidated street. Eight years of war show on the face of it. (*Italics = Arabic*)

ABDUL

It sucks royally. My dad will have to go back to Mosel to get work with his brother. Without the oven we lose everything.

TARIK

So how much is a new oven?

ABDUL

A lot. Like eight hundred thousand dinar. Might as well be a billion.

Tarik comes to a stop, looks off down the sidewalk.

TARIK

There's only one way I know to make eight hundred thousand dinar.

Tarik gestures with his chin. Abdul follows his gaze to the end of the block, where --

TWO MEN wearing JALABIYAS and Muslim headgear, stand in front of cafe, conferring closely with one another. There's something nefarious about their demeanor. Alright, I'll say it. They look like TERRORISTS.

Abdul stares at the two men. One of them turns and seems to look right at Abdul. He's wearing MIRRORED RAY BANS. A chill runs down Abdul's spine.

ABDUL

Oh sure, I'll volunteer to blow myself up. There's a genius idea.

TARIK

Your parents would have the cash by nightfall.

Abdul looks at him, and Tarik starts to laugh, breaking the tension of this absurd idea. Abdul just keeps walking.

ABDUL

I'm serious, can we focus on how I'm going to buy a new oven?

TARIK

*(getting an idea)
Maybe you don't HAVE to buy it.*

ABDUL

Right, cuz you just happen to have an oven lying around.

TARIK

I'm not saying it would be easy to get the oven in question, I'm just saying I know where one can be gotten.

ABDUL

Are we gonna play 20 questions or are you gonna tell me.

TARIK

Hassam's.

And he just lets that sit there.

ABDUL

Hassam's... the restaurant? The one with the funny guy who tells the jokes?

(MORE)

ABDUL (CONT'D)

(off Tarik nods)

Doesn't Hassam's need an oven if it's going to continue to be a restaurant?

TARIK

I'm just saying... I know where Moshe Hassam keeps his key when he closes up at night. Right on top of the door sill so the butcher, who just happens to be my cousin, can make his delivery in the morning before he opens.

ABDUL

You're saying we steal Hassam's oven?

TARIK

You asked me if I knew where you could get an oven.

ABDUL

That's insane. And so are you!

(starts to walk)

They'd cut our hands off in the town square if we got caught.

TARIK

Hey, don't blame me, I'm just the guy with the solution!

Abdul stops. A long beat before he turns back around. Stares at Tarik. Finally --

ABDUL

What time did you say he closes up?

INT. PONYTAIL'S HOUSE - MORNING

The front door opens and in steps Ponytail, wearing an old pair of sweats and sneakers, carrying the morning NEWSPAPER and cup of Dunkin Donuts coffee.

He opens the newspaper and lays it on the table, then turns to head into the kitchen. But he stops, his back to us. A beat, then slowly turns and looks down at the headline.

We PUSH IN on his eyes as sees the same headline.

He crosses to the newspaper and picks it up. Stares at it. A long beat, then calmly crosses to the PHONE on the wall. Picks up the receiver and dials a number. After a beat, we hear a WOMAN'S VOICE answer "Hello" through the tiny speaker --

PONYTAIL

Hi. It's me...

There's a long silence on the other end. Then --

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

(stunned)

Randy? My god... it's been ten years...

PONYTAIL

(after a beat)

I'd like to come home now.

And as he looks down at the headline, "**BIGGEST LOTTO WIN IN NEW YORK HISTORY**" --

INT. LOFT - DAY

Clea sits on the sofa staring at the notebook. Martin paces in front of her, completely lit up by this.

CLEA

...There are strange coincidences around us all the time. And autistic children often have a heightened--

MARTIN

(snaps, impatient)

-- Ability for numbers! You think I don't know that?!

CLEA

I'm sorry. Of course you do.

(then, confessing)

This is only my third solo case and I'm still working on my interpersonal skills.

MARTIN

Great, I get the one with the training wheels.

CLEA

Mr. Bohm, your son has a diagnosis of Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, the most severe form of autism. There is no positive outcome for this...

(off Martin's silence)

It's not uncommon for the guardian to feel a lack of human connection to these children...

MARTIN

Unless that's exactly what he's trying
to do. Connect!

Martin starts to pace.

CLEA

Mr. Bohm... Please.

(then)

The truth is, the State believes
that it is time for Jacob to be
institutionalized to keep him from
harming himself or others.

MARTIN

But if he's finally communicating...!

She looks at him, frustrated that she's not getting through.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Jake climbed that tower three times.
And each time the security camera's
caught him at exactly 3:18.

CLEA

I don't see what any of this has to
do with--

MARTIN

For two weeks now he's set every
clock in the house to *this* time.

Martin crosses to a nearby dresser, turns a clock around.
Sure enough it reads, "3:18".

MARTIN (CONT'D)

And then there's this.

He yanks open a drawer, pulls out another NOTEBOOK, just
like the one that we've seen Jake using. Hands it to Clea.
She opens it and leafs through the pages.

Every page is scrawled from top to bottom with the same three
digits over and over - "**318, 318, 318, 318, 318, 318....**"
Page after page after page. Clea looks up, intrigued.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

He's trying to say something. And I
didn't even realize it.

Clea stares at him for a long beat, then --

CLEA

What you're talking about is just wish fulfillment. I know you love your son, but--

MARTIN

You're saying I'm making it all up.

CLEA

I'm saying that human connection is a powerful need. It can drive us to see meaning where there isn't any.

MARTIN

Three cases into a career and you've got it all figured out, don't you? You know it all.

CLEA

I know enough to recognize someone who's underwater, who's given up too much. A career, a wife...

MARTIN

My wife and I had an appointment to see a divorce lawyer on September 12th, 2001. Don't try to make me a cliché.

CLEA

(undaunted)

Either way, your life is now dominated by a child that you can no longer control. Have you ever truly communicated with him? Does he even know who you are?!

That stops him in his tracks with no clever comeback.

CLEA (CONT'D)

That's not your fault. No one is judging you for that.

He looks at her and we see tears starting to well in his eyes.

CLEA (CONT'D)

There's a board and care facility fifteen blocks from here. The best in the city. At the end of his two week evaluation period you will be given a chance to make your case for custody. It will be based on your ability to control, care for, and communicate with him.

Martin slumps down onto the arm of the sofa.

CLEA (CONT'D)

Once he's out of the house, I think you'll see that you'll both be better off with this arrangement.

Martin lowers his eyes as he listens to this.

CLEA (CONT'D)

Sometimes you just have to get out of a bad situation to finally see what's best for everyone.

And she says this with a kind of understanding that tells us she's speaking from experience. Off Martin looking at her, tears in his eyes --

INT. HOTEL ROOM - TOKYO - DAY

We're in a FIXED, LOW ANGLE, looking at the SUITCASE with the JAPANESE FLAG on the ID tag that belonged to the Businessman whom we met in Galway, Ireland. It rests on one of those hotel suitcase stands. In the b.g. We SEE only a PARTIAL VIEW of the rest of the hotel room. (We HOLD ON this FRAME for the entire scene.)

Somewhere off FRAME we HEAR two people speaking. One is a TEENAGE GIRL, whom we will come to know as MIYOKO. (*Italics = Japanese*).

MIYOKO (O.S.)

Wow, Ireland, cool. My friend Izumi and I are like in a fan club for a band from there... The Morticians. You know them?

JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN (O.S.)

No.

MIYOKO (O.S.)

So... are you like just passing through Tokyo?

JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN (O.S.)

I live here. Just don't feel like going home yet.

MIYOKO (O.S.)

That's cool. So why don't you just like go clean yourself up a little first.

JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN (O.S.)

*Then maybe I can take that outfit
off of you.*

Miyoko GIGGLES. And now we see a PAIR of LEGS cross the FRAME, the Businessman in dark slacks. The bathroom door CLOSES. A beat, then another PAIR of LEGS APPEAR. These belong to MIYOKO, (17). Although we only see her legs, we know that she's dressed in an iconic JAPANESE SCHOOL GIRL costume - high top socks, short pleated skirt, etc.

We SEE the back of her LEGS as she turns and we sense she's staring right at the suitcase. She crosses quickly to it, leans over it so we just SEE the bottom of her chin.

We HEAR the FAUCET turn on in the bathroom, allowing cover for Miyoko to unzip the bag and RIFLE through its contents. She pulls out a PASSPORT WALLET, opens it and a couple hundred thousand YEN bills tumble out. She scoops them up, tucks them down her blouse into her bra.

She continues rifling through the suitcase. A beat, then pulls out the CELL PHONE with the CARE BEARS STICKER on it. She turns it over in her hand, examining it. Then clasps it in her palm and races out of frame. O.S., We HEAR the hotel door OPEN and CLOSE.

A beat. Then the Businessman's LEGS emerge. We sense that he's looking down at the ransacked suitcase. We HOLD ON his legs, not knowing what to do.

JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)

Shit.

INT. BOARD AND CARE FACILITY - DAY

In a WIDE SHOT, looking down a long corridor, Martin stands with Jake and Clea in this old, rambling building that feels more like a warm, funky school than an institution. Martin holds the CARDBOARD BOX full of cell phones.

Jake has his BACKPACK on for his two week stay. He stares at the floor.

MARTIN

It's only for two weeks. I'll see you everyday. I promise.

CLEA

We have tons of fun things for you to do here, Jake. You'll see.

MARTIN

(RE: the box of phones)
 These'll keep him busy for a while.
 When he gets agitated try giving him
 an Orange Fanta. That usually calms
 him down. That and popcorn. He'll
 want to count all the kernels before
 he eats it.

CLEA

Give us twenty four hours before you
 come back for the first visit.

MARTIN

You hear that, Jake. I'll be back
 tomorrow.

Clea extends her hand to Martin. He shakes hands with her.

CLEA

You're a very brave man, Mr. Bohm.

Martin looks at Jake. An obligatory hug is so painfully
 missing. Martin and Clea both pick up on this awkwardness.
 Clea smiles, then she and Jake turn to leave.

Martin watches them walk down the long corridor, wishing
 that Jake would turn to look back at him, if only for a split
 second. He does not. And they disappear around the corner.

Martin stares at the empty hallway after they're gone. Then,
 something draws his attention to the floor in front of him.

It's Jake's NOTEBOOK. Martin stares at it, wondering how
 and why it is here. He bends down and picks it up. Off
 Martin, wondering if there's meaning in this --

INT. WOMAN'S BATHROOM - TOKYO SUBWAY - DAY

CLOSE ON THE CARE BEARS PHONE

as KATE'S VIDEO from the karaoke lounge plays on its small
 screen. WIDEN to see the phone on the edge of a sink.

Miyoko and her friend IZUMI (17), have nearly completed
 changing out of their schoolgirl uniforms and into full-on
 HARAJUKU costumes (Google it). Izumi is staring at Kate's
 video, as Kate reaches her finale. (*Italics = Japanese*)

MIYOKO

*I think she's like a huge star in
 Ireland. We could start the Tokyo
 chapter of the Kate Graham fan club.*

IZUMI

*Every fan club we join like dies
before we can even spread the word.*

MIYOKO

*We have to make sure the contents of
this phone gets someplace where
everyone can see it.*

IZUMI

How?

MIYOKO

*You know Ando's brother, Takezo?
Guess where he works? He like
programs the jumbotron at Shibuya.
And he like likes me.*

IZUMI

*Awesome. Then who do we pass the
phone to next?*

MIYOKO

*(looks at her watch)
I've got another client at 4:00.
(smiles)
And he has to catch a plane to Dubai
in like three hours.*

IZUMI

*And what if someone there starts a
Kate Graham fan club?!*

The two girls GIGGLE at this.

MIYOKO

*Okay, here's what we do. We get t-
shirts made like just like we did
for Magnetic Death and we --*

And as the girls go running quickly out of the bathroom --

INT. AIRPORT GATE COUNTER - DAY

CLOSE ON A COMPUTER SCREEN

The words "**autism**" and "**cell phones**" TYPE into a GOOGLE SEARCH FIELD. A beat, then a GOOGLE RESULTS PAGE appears with a LIST of websites.

WIDEN to see Martin sitting at the computer at one of the empty airport gates, wearing his baggage handler uniform.

CLOSE ON THE SCREEN

The CURSOR MOVES down the list and hovers over a website that says "**PODOLSKY INSTITUTE**". We see the subheading "Electro-magnetism - microwaves and autism".

Martin's eyes narrow with interest. He CLICKS on the LINK. A crudely made website appears, a nearly blank page with the words, "**You have questions. We have answers.**"

Under it, a YOUTUBE LINK to the Charlie Rose Show. A distinguished looking BORIS PODOLSKY, 70, (think Andre Gregory) sits across the round table from CHARLIE ROSE in the iconic darkened studio.

Martin clicks on the LINK. The YOUTUBE VIDEO begins --

CHARLIE ROSE

You're saying the epidemic in autism is all because of cellular technology?

PODOLSKY

No, I'm saying, that cellular energy, microwaves, electromagnetic radiation, these hold the answers to a new and higher state of consciousness for mankind.

Charlie looks at him, incredulous.

PODOLSKY (CONT'D)

And these children who are experiencing these connections are here for a reason. We need to learn from them.

And with this bold pronouncement, the video FREEZES on Podolsky's cocky grin.

MARTIN

leans back, mesmerized by this. He clicks back to the HOME PAGE, where the only other thing on the entire page is an address. We PUSH IN on "**Podolsky Institute, 318 West Tesla Street, Bronx, NY**". Off Martin staring at the number 318 --

EXT. PROFESSOR PODOLSKY'S HOUSE - DAY

An old row house. Working class would be generous. Martin stands on the porch, his finger hovering over the doorbell. A moment of hesitation, then -- RINGS the doorbell.

A beat, the door opens, revealing BORIS PODOLSKY. A shadow of the man on the Charlie Rose Show. Scruffy, two week growth on his face, bathrobe. He scowls at Martin --

PODOLSKY (O.S.)
 (flash of anger)
 The one those bastards wouldn't
 publish! Explains it all. Human
 life comes down to just
 electromagnetic energy and
 connections...

Podolsky emerges from the kitchen and plops down a bag of
 pretzels and two ORANGE FANTAS. Martin looks down at the
 soda in front of him like it's a rabbit that's been pulled
 out of a hat.

PODOLSKY (CONT'D)
 ...And there are those among us,
 mostly kids, who are radars for this
 connection...

MARTIN
 But my son doesn't even talk.

PODOLSKY
 Unnecessary. An evolutionary speed
 bump. Like your pinky toe. You
 have to think of these kids as air
 traffic controllers for
 interconnectivity. That's their
 purpose.

Martin listens, unsure if this man is mad or a savior.

PODOLSKY (CONT'D)
 He pretty advanced with the numbers?

MARTIN
 Numbers? Yeah, he has been his whole
 life.

Martin shows Podolsky the notebook. Podolsky flips through
 the pages.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 I actually thought math might be my
 ticket in with him. When the interest
 started I tried to teach him how to
 add one plus one. But he corrected
 me. Wrote one plus one equals three.

PODOLSKY
 And what exactly is one plus one
supposed to equal, Mr. Bohm?

MARTIN
 (what?!)
 Two.

PODOLSKY

For you, maybe. And maybe for everyone else in the world except for your son.

(then)

For him, one and one equals three. And if you can let him teach you that, you'll be at the center of the universe with him.

Podolsky suddenly stops at one of the pages in the notebook. Something has caught his attention.

PODOLSKY (CONT'D)

Has your son ever taken a math class?

MARTIN

No.

PODOLSKY

Had a tutor?

MARTIN

I told you, he doesn't even talk.

PODOLSKY

Read a math book?

MARTIN

Never.

PODOLSKY

(impressed)

Then he discovered the Fibonacci sequence on his own.

MARTIN

The what?

PODOLSKY

These numbers...

He shows Martin a series of numbers in the notebook. "8,5,3,2,1,1,0,1,1,2,3,5,8".

PODOLSKY (CONT'D)

The patterns found in nature, over and over again. The curve of a wave, the spiral of a shell, the segments of a pineapple. It's a mathematical sequence discovered by a twelfth century mathematician named Fibonacci.

Podolsky leafs through a stack of papers, finds a PHOTO of a collage of patterns in nature - FLOWERS, SEGMENTS of FRUIT,

SHELLS, GALAXIES, etc. (Among these images, we note the "spiral" shape that Jake created with the cell phones.)

MARTIN

What does any of this have to do with--?

PODOLSKY

Your son sees these patterns. Everywhere. It's all numbers to him -- The past, the present, the future. He sees how they're connected.

Martin can't help but think about the lottery numbers...

MARTIN

You're saying he can predict the future?

PODOLSKY

If the patterns lead him to that, yes.

Martin stands, starts to pace.

PODOLSKY (CONT'D)

The universe is made up of precise ratios, patterns. All around us. You and I, we don't see them. But if we could...

(like he's seeing God)

...Life would be magical beyond our wildest dreams. A symphony of numbers and patterns, a quantum entanglement of cause and effect where everything and everyone reflects on each other like facets of jewels strung together in a giant net. Every action, every breath, every conscious thought connected. Imagine the unspeakable beauty of the universe he sees. No wonder he doesn't talk.

MARTIN

You're telling me my son sees all of that?

PODOLSKY

(ominously)

Mr. Bohm, your son... sees everything.

Off Martin, his world turning upside down -

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. REC ROOM - BOARD AND CARE FACILITY - DAY

Jake sits on the floor, TOYS scattered around him. He ignores them all, writing numbers instead into a NEW NOTEBOOK. Clea enters with two bags of POPCORN. Sits down next to him. Forces a smile and holds out one of the bags to him.

CLEA

Your dad said you like popcorn.

He doesn't look up at her, so she sets the bag down in front of him. After a beat, Jake looks up at it.

CLEA (CONT'D)

Go ahead. You can eat it.

Jake lifts the bag. A beat, then dumps the popcorn out onto the floor. He starts to SORT it into little PILES. Two kernels in one pile, one in another, two, seven, four, etc.

CLEA (CONT'D)

I see you're arranging them into little piles there. Can I count those with you?

He doesn't even look up at her. She starts to count --

CLEA (CONT'D)

Let's see, there's two in that one and one in that one and two there. Then seven, four, six, three...

As she counts, he writes down the number in his notebook - **212-746-3742**. She stares at the number curiously, then --

CLEA (CONT'D)

That's my mother's phone number... I haven't thought of that number in years.

No sooner does she say that when her cell phone RINGS, startling her. She reaches into her pocket and pulls out her CELL PHONE and stares at it.

CLOSE ON THE PHONE'S SCREEN

On the caller id - "**212-746-3742**"

Clea nearly drops the phone. She turns and looks at Jake, who has now crossed to the wall and is standing by a CALENDAR. It's open to the month of MARCH.

He circles the number "18" and steps back. Looks right at Clea with a beatific expression.

Clea stares at the circled number, and suddenly a realization hits her. Torn between the incessant RINGING of her phone and what she's realizing from the calendar, she finally answers her phone numbly --

CLEA (CONT'D)

Mom...?

We PRELAP the sacchariny sweet, cheerful, automated VOICE of --

AUTOMATED JULIE (O.S.)

(recorded voice)

Hi, I'm Julie, your Amtrack reservation assistant...

INT. BATHROOM - PONYTAIL'S HOUSE - DAY

CLOSE ON THE LOTTERY TICKET

WEDGED into the frame of a mirror. WIDEN to see Ponytail in his bathroom, in front of the mirror looking at himself with a blank expression. Nearby, the phone is on SPEAKER.

AUTOMATED JULIE (O.S.)

Please say the name the of destination you're traveling to.

Ponytail reaches and wraps a hand around his ponytail. Pulls it around his neck to the front.

PONYTAIL

(deadpan)

Louisville, Kentucky.

Ponytail lifts a PAIR of SCISSORS to his ponytail.

AUTOMATED JULIE (O.S.)

Louisville, Kentucky. Okay. Now, please say the location of your departure.

PONYTAIL

New York City.

CUUUUTTT. He SLICES the scissors through his thick ponytail. And as the hair tumbles into the sink, we --

INT. LOFT - DAY

Martin stands in the doorway of Jake's room, holding the notebook in his hand. He looks down at the cell phones still arranged in a spiral on the floor.

Martin flips through the pages of the notebook. Comes to the last page, where the numbers correspond to the lottery ticket and the number **318**.

Several of the numbers are CIRCLED, arrows pointing from one to the other. Martin takes a pen and writes down the circled numbers in a sequence. Sure enough, two of the numbers are **3** and **18**.

Then, an idea strikes him. He divides the numbers by putting a "-" between the grouping. Looks at it. It's a telephone number. A **212** number. As he stares at the telephone number --

CUT TO:

A COMPUTER SCREEN - A MOMENT LATER

A "REVERSE DIRECTORY" website appears. The telephone number we just saw TYPES OUT into the search field.

WIDEN to find Martin working on his LAPTOP at the kitchen table. The FILE on the Frank Muller case still scattered around him. He types away. Hits enter. A beat, then an ADDRESS comes up on the screen. He CLICKS on it and up pops --

A GOOGLE MAP IMAGE with a PIN stuck in it, designating the exact location. It's midtown Manhattan. East 42nd St.

MARTIN

Grand Central station.

He stares at the image. Then reaches for the phone. Dials the number... It RINGS and RINGS, but no one answers.

He lowers the phone, stares off. His gaze lands on the papers from the Muller file. He spots something protruding from beneath a sheet of paper -- Pulls it out. It's a torn TICKET STUB. The kind you'd get at a dry cleaners or a pawnshop. He stares at it. The ticket number is "**318**". Holy shit.

Just as BANG, BANG, BANG, an incessant KNOCK at the door.

THE FRONT DOOR - SECONDS LATER

swings it open, revealing --

CLEA - an odd look on her face. Martin looks at her confused. Before he can ask her what she's doing here --

CLEA

318.

(off his look)

It's today's date.

Martin stares at her. Then the realization takes hold.

MARTIN

March 18th.

CLEA

I thought I owed it to you to tell
you I figured it out.

Martin's mind races as he tries to make sense of this.

CLEA (CONT'D)

This doesn't change anything. Just
wanted you to know.

She turns to leave. He calls after her --

MARTIN

You came all the way here to tell me
that? You could've called.

CLEA

(stops, doesn't turn)
I know.

There's something she's not telling him. She finally turns.

CLEA (CONT'D)

The numbers aren't just a coincidence,
are they?

MARTIN

No. None of it is.

CLEA

He predicted a call from my mother.
I hadn't spoken to her in eight years.
How is that possible?

MARTIN

He sees things. Connections. The
past, the present, the future...

CLEA

The future? That's impossible...
Isn't it?

MARTIN

He's trying to tell us about
something.

CLEA

But... what? Why?

MARTIN

To stop it from happening. Or make
it happen. I don't know.

Martin holds up the torn PAWNSHOP TICKET.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

The pawnshop ticket from the Muller case. It's all connected somehow. And whatever it is, it happens today, March 18th.

(realizing)

At... Grand Central station. He wrote down this phone number. I traced it to a phone there. It's got something to do with that phone. In...

(looks at his watch)

...Twenty two minutes from now. At 3:18.

CLEA

Twenty two minutes?

MARTIN

You've got a car, right?

Off Clea nodding her head, knowing this is insane, but completely sucked into it nonetheless --

INT. CINDER BLOCK BASEMENT - DAY

A BURLAP BAG dumps FORTY CELL PHONES onto a table under a HARSH bare bulb of a hanging lamp. A PAIR OF HANDS sorts through them and we SEE that --

The CARE BEARS PHONE is among them. ADJUST to find we're in a dingy basement. It's dark, but we see the silhouettes of THREE MEN. Two of them wear Jalabiyas and Muslim head gear. The other has on an OAKLAND RAIDERS JERSEY.

We cannot make out faces, but we do make out the MIRRORED RAY BANS on one of them, as we realize where we've seen these guys before. The three men speak in **ARABIC** --

RAY BANS

DCI codes?

RAIDERS JERSEY

Untraceable?

RAY BANS

Sim cards? Batteries?

RAIDERS JERSEY

All of them. Freshly charged.

Ray Bans sorts through the phones. Picks up the CARE BEARS phone and accidentally presses a button on the keypad.

The screen suddenly COMES TO LIFE with a VIDEO set to the SONG from Kate's performance at the karaoke lounge. It's a SERIES of QUICK CUTS of DIFFERENT people, one after another after another. All standing in the same place, SHIBUYA, Tokyo, wearing the same t-shirt with "Kate Graham Fan Club" written in big block letters on the front.

The QUICK CUTS has the effect of a TIME LAPSE sequence. It's got a playful, MUSIC VIDEO quality to it. It ends with Miyoko and Izumi speaking in *Japanese* into the CAMERA. They GIGGLE and wave good bye and the video CLICKS OFF.

Ray Bans turns to the other two men, with a WTF expression --

INT. CLEA'S SAAB - DAY

Clea drives, Martin in the passenger seat.

CLEA

If we find this phone there... what then?

MARTIN

I don't know. Wait for a call maybe...

CLEA

Tell me we're not both completely insane.

MARTIN

You're asking the wrong guy. Turn here on 22nd!

CLEA

22nd? Shouldn't I take 24th?

MARTIN

Construction on 24th. Turn right here!

OUTSIDE THE CAR

SCREECH, tires SQUEAL as the rickety Saab FISHTAILS around the corner.

FROM ABOVE 22ND STREET

the traffic is like a parking lot. The Saab SKIDS to a stop, a BUS and four CARS pull into place behind them, blocking them in.

IN THE CAR

CLEA
22nd, huh? Any other great ideas?

THE SAAB'S DOORS

fly open and Clea and Martin scramble out and take off SPRINTING. We CRANE UP as they weave in and out of the deadlocked traffic and take off up the sidewalk.

MARTIN
The **A** train!

They disappear down a subway station.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL - DAY

The massive CLOCK reads "**3:16**". We TILT DOWN to find Martin and Clea running across the large main hall, trying to decide where to look first. They stop, turn in all directions.

AT THE INFORMATION BOOTH

Martin SLIDES to the counter, GASPING for breath. Slaps down the scrap of paper with phone number on it, shoves it to the INFORMATION WOMAN behind the counter.

MARTIN
Where in the station would I find
the phone that has this number?

The Information Woman slowly inspects the paper.

INFORMATION WOMAN
I don't recognize it.

CLEA
It's here at Grand Central station!

INFORMATION WOMAN
All official numbers start with a
785 prefix. But we got lots of shops
and restaurants here. You might
wanna check those.

Martin and Clea look at each desperately. They don't have time for that! Then Martin looks up at the giant clock. The SECOND HAND CLICKS to 3:17. Shit.

MARTIN
You go that way! I'll go this way!

He takes off running, leaving Clea looking in all directions.

Martin SPRINTS through the crowd, swimming upstream, bumping into COMMUTERS, desperately trying to look over the oncoming horde. He stops. Frantic. Which way to go? Then, through a gap in the passing heads of the commuters he sees --

A PAY PHONE - WAY OFF IN THE DISTANCE

at the end of a the LONG TRAIN TUNNELS, fifty yards away. Martin stares, transfixed. That's it! Suddenly, a MAN in a dark suit, his back to us, steps up to make a phone call.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

NO!

IN THE TUNNEL

Martin sprints towards the phone - as he approaches --

MARTIN (CONT'D)

S'cuse me. I need that phone! I'm waiting for a call.

The Man ignores him and doesn't turn around for the following exchange, so we DO NOT see his face. Martin cranes his neck to look at the phone's number above the keypad - sure enough, it's the right number!!

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Sir, I really need the phone.

The Man ignores him. Martin paces as the Man continues to talk on the phone. Martin fumes. He looks up at the giant clock just as CLICK, the second hand moves to **3:18**.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Look, man, you've gotta get off the phone right now!

The Man, his back still to us, lifts his index finger up, the universal "just a sec" sign. Martin, furious now, grabs the Man by shoulder.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

You don't understand! I have to use this phone!!

And he spins the Man around, revealing PONYTAIL - except he no longer has a ponytail, and he's clean shaven.

Martin stares at him, as he suddenly recognizes him. Ponytail takes even less time.

PONYTAIL

YOU! What the fuck's your problem?!

And WHAM! He hauls off and COLDCOCKS Martin, who staggers back for a moment, then regains his footing and CHARGES, tackling Ponytail and SLAMMING him against the wall.

The two men ROLL to the ground in an ugly, awkward mano a mano. A small CROWD forms and suddenly a burly PORT AUTHORITY COP pushes his way angrily through the crowd.

COP

Alright, that's it! Break it up!
Break it up!

The big Cop bodily hoists both Martin and Ponytail off the floor. Slams them against the wall.

PONYTAIL

He started it.

MARTIN

He was hogging the phone!

COP

Fine, it'll all go in the report.
Now let's go.

Martin grabs onto the wall to keep himself from being dragged.

MARTIN

I can't! I'm waiting for a phone
call!

PONYTAIL

I've got a train to catch!

COP

Sorry. Shoulda thought of that before
you started a fist fight on Port
Authority property.

PONYTAIL

(sneers at Martin)
Thanks a lot, asshole.

Off Martin staring back at the phone as he's pulled away --

EXT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - AFTERNOON

RAIN pours down as Clea leans against a parking meter impatiently under an umbrella. She looks up to see Martin come out of the station. He glances up at her and lowers his eyes and just starts walking. She rushes to catch up.

CLEA

They said you got in a fight over a
phone. So you found it?

MARTIN
 (matter-of-fact)
 Yeah. I found it.

CLEA
 Well... what happened?

MARTIN
 Nothing happened. Except I had time
 in there to think about how insane
 it was to believe that any of this
 meant anything... that I was going
 to find some kind of closure or
 redemption. He can't connect to me.
 He never will. You were right. It
 was wish fulfillment.

Clea looks crestfallen.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry I dragged you into this.

With that, Martin heads across the street, leaving Clea to
 watch him go. He turns back --

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 I'm not going to fight the custody
 for Jake. I'll come by tomorrow to
 sign the papers.

Off Clea, her eyes awash with conflicting emotions --

EXT. STREETS OF BAGHDAD - DAY

Abdul and Tarik stand in the shadows near a truck. They
 peer around the edge to see --

HASSAM'S

a neighborhood RESTAURANT down the street. Abdul looks at
 it with trepidation in his eyes. (Again, *Italics = Arabic*).

ABDUL
Moshe Hassam... That's Jewish, right?

TARIK
I don't know. I guess.

Abdul thinks about it a bit. Then --

ABDUL
You ever notice that Jews are funny?

Tarik just stares at him.

TARIK

Jews are funny?

ABDUL

Jews are funny. It's part of their culture. We're not funny. There's tons of Jewish comedians. Why aren't there any Iraqi comedians?

Tarik looks at him like he's nuts, then --

TARIK

Look around. You see anything funny about living in Iraq?

He gives Abdul an "I rest my case" look.

TARIK (CONT'D)

You want to be funny, maybe you should become a Jew.

Abdul looks at him, then smiles.

ABDUL

You see, now that's funny.

And he pats Tarik on the back, but Tarik stops him with a SHHHH, and points towards the restaurant, where --

MOSHE HASSAM, short, balding, a gentle looking man, comes out with his five year old DAUGHTER. She hovers by his legs as he lowers the grate on the restaurant door. He LOCKS the PADLOCK and looks around suspiciously in all directions before placing the KEY on ledge above the door.

Then hoists his daughter up onto his shoulders and starts walking towards --

ABDUL AND TARIK,

who duck back behind the truck to wait for Hassam to pass. As he does, Hassam's daughter looks right at Abdul. Something silent passes between them. She finally smiles and waves to him. Abdul gives a half hearted wave back.

When they pass, Tarik stands.

TARIK

Okay. So, we go get my cousin's truck and we wait until just before curfew. We carry out the oven and drive it to your house. Easy peasy.

But Abdul is still watching Hassam and his daughter round the corner. He lowers his eyes.

ABDUL
*It isn't right. I can't do this.
 I'm not a thief. And you should be
 ashamed of yourself.*

Tarik shrugs.

TARIK
I was just trying to help.

ABDUL
*I know. But I need to figure this
 out by myself.*

He starts to walk.

ABDUL (CONT'D)
 (over his shoulder)
I'll see you tomorrow.

Off Tarik, watching his friend walk away.

EXT. STREET - BAGHDAD - LATER

Abdul walks slowly, deep in thought. He rounds a corner. Tears in his eyes. He stops. Slumps down to the curb. Puts his head in his hands. A long beat, then looks up. Wipes his tears, ashamed and angry at his emotions.

He looks up and spots something. His eyes narrow, transfixed by what he's looking at it. And now we see it.

RAY BANS AND HIS PARTNER

sitting at a cafe table speaking animatedly to one another.

As Abdul stares at them, we SLOWLY PUSH IN on his eyes, as a steely resolve takes root --

INT. LOFT - NIGHT

ON THE TV

An overly perky WEATHER GIRL delivers the bad news of the worst STORM of the year hitting the tri-state area. We PULL BACK to find Martin slumped on the sofa in the darkened loft. He has a GLASS of SCOTCH resting on the armrest.

He takes a sip, then sets the glass down clumsily on top of the FILE of the Frank Muller case. The glass tips and spills onto it.

Martin sits up quickly, pissed. Stands up and carries the dripping file to the sink. Shakes the liquid out into the sink, then stares at the soaked file.

In a fit of frustration and anger, he opens the garbage drawer under the cabinet and tosses the file into the trash.

As he turns back to head for the couch, he passes the PHONE on the counter. There's a BLINKING RED LIGHT on it.

He stops. Looks at it. Presses the button on the phone.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

(on recorder)

Mr. Bohm, my name is Randall Burke. I was a fireman with Ladder Company 318. On September 11th, 2001 I was on the 87th floor of the north tower of the World Trade Center. I found a woman alive, barely conscious. She was bleeding pretty bad... It was your wife, Emily.

Martin stares at the phone in disbelief as in the b.g. We can HEAR Martin's VOICE on the recording --

MARTIN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Sir, I really have to use that phone!

And we now realize who this is. So does Martin.

PONTAIL'S VOICE (O.S.)

I carried her down 31 flights of stairs. The smoke was everywhere and I couldn't see, I couldn't breathe. I just couldn't carry her any farther. I set her down, checked her pulse and I told myself she was already dead. But the truth is, I don't really know if she was. I've been thinking about her for ten years, and...

(beat)

...I have some money now I want to give to you. It's a lot of money...

Again, we HEAR Martin's VOICE interrupt --

MARTIN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Look, man, you've gotta get off the phone right now!

We HEAR a commotion, then CLICK, the phone HANGS UP.

Martin is stunned by this. He sobers up quick as, O.S. on the news we HEAR --

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

Sixteen children and one bus driver
owe their lives to one man tonight.
Retired fireman Randall Burke...

Hearing this, Martin whips around to look back at the TV.

ON TV

a PHOTO of a younger RANDALL BURKE (Ponytail) in a fireman's uniform.

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

...Pulled the children from a burning
bus that had rolled into a ravine
below the Triborough bridge.

Martin, wide eyed, walks over to the TV and stares as --

The image on TV switches to a LIVE FEED of the CRASH SITE.
It's pouring RAIN as a REPORTER stands in the swirling POLICE
LIGHTS. In the b.g., a BUS lies tipped on its side, CHARRED
from fire.

REPORTER

Mr. Burke, you are quite a hero
indeed. In your own words, can you
tell us what happened?

The CAMERA PANS to Ponytail. He looks into the CAMERA self
consciously.

PONTAIL

Just in the right place at the right
time, I guess. I got to it before
the fire got too bad and just started
pulling kids out and--

He suddenly stops talking and looks off, oddly. The Reporter
looks uncomfortable.

REPORTER

Mr. Burke are you alright?

PONTAIL

I've played the same lotto numbers
every week for 10 years. 9, 11,
2001, 87th floor, 31 flights of
stairs.

(snaps out of it)

I guess if I hadn't missed my train
today, I never would've been walking
here. It's kinda amazing how things
work out sometimes, isn't it?

REPORTER

(whoa...)

I'm sorry, what were you saying about the lotto numbers?

But Ponytail just turns and walks away.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

Mr. Burke! Those are the winning numbers!

We PUSH IN on Martin, as the implications of this whole crazy day dawns on him like a ton of bricks. And suddenly, he reacts, snapping out of it. He grabs his keys and races out the door.

EXT. TOKYO STREET (SHIBUYA) - NIGHT

Tokyo's version of Times Square. We've all seen it before, lit up with giant JUMBOTRONS and massive pedestrian crosswalks. Simon leans against a building, as great hordes of HUMANITY wash past him. He's talking on a cell phone.

SIMON

Simon Plimpton, 44-773-9879-934.

INT. CALL CENTER - DAY

WE CRANE UP OVER a sea of CUBICLES, each containing dreary OFFICE DRONES with a headset on, speaking to customers, past NILES, speaking animatedly with a customer. We ARRIVE at --

KATE'S CUBICLE

to FIND Kate, looking bored with her life --

KATE

Your account has been verified. How may I help you, Mr. Plimpton?

INTERCUT WITH Simon --

SIMON

I've been trying to find my phone for three days, and now I'm getting a recorded message. Something about an invalid territory.

KATE

Certain territories are blocked to our customers, usually for security reasons. If your phone's in one of these areas, I'm afraid I won't be able help you.

Simon sighs. Leans back against the wall. In the b.g.,

MIYOKO AND IZUMI

stand on the curb, staring up at the --

GIANT JUMBOTRON

as it comes to life with the VIDEO of Kate singing at the Karaoke lounge. It's there for all of Tokyo to see, fifty feet high. Simon, of course, is completely unaware of the serendipity of this.

KATE (CONT'D)

Maybe it's time for you to get a new phone.

SIMON

(snaps, annoyed)

I got a new phone! But I need what's in that phone. Could you GPS it, or just call the number for me?

Kate gives an annoyed look.

KATE

I could, but we're not supposed to do that.

SIMON

There's a photo in the phone. And I need to see it. I can't really explain other than... It's someone I won't ever see again... So please. You sound like a very nice person. You're Irish, right?

KATE

Sir, I really am not suppo--

SIMON

I come to Ireland a couple times a year. I sell restaurant supplies and I always enjoy the Irish, such friendly people.

(off her silence)

Look... I know it's a long shot, but could you just do this for me?

Kate sighs --

KATE

I'll have to put you on hold.

She presses a couple of buttons on the counsel of her phone and dials the number on the account --

CUT TO:

EXT. MARKETPLACE - BAGHDAD - DAY

TIGHT ON ABDUL'S FACE

He's sweating. Looks pale and agitated, like he's about to leap out of his skin. We ARM AROUND him to reveal that we're in the middle of --

A CROWDED OUTDOOR MARKETPLACE

HUNDREDS of PEOPLE shop at open stalls. Abdul moves slowly toward the middle of the crowd. **Suddenly, RIIINNNNGGG!**

Abdul GASPS and FREEZES, his eyes WIDE. He looks down at his chest, covered by a jacket, zipped up high. **RIIINNNNGGG!**

Abdul moves quickly behind a stall. Fumbles to unzip his jacket to reveal a VEST FULL OF EXPLOSIVES!!

Right in the middle of the vest, WIRES protruding from it, is the CARE BEARS PHONE! It's the bomb's **DETONATOR**.

It RINGS again and Abdul finally reaches down and carefully lifts the phone. He pulls it towards his face, still attached to its umbilical of RED and BLUE WIRES.

He winces in anticipation as he presses the "answer" button, inches from his face. And over the tiny speaker we HEAR --

KATE (O.S.)
Hello? Is anyone there?

ABDUL
(cautious, in English)
Who is this?

INTERCUT WITH KATE

KATE
Sir, it seems you're using a phone that doesn't belong to you.

ABDUL
(numbly)
They just put it on me... I don't...

KATE
Sir?

ABDUL
To explode the bomb.

Kate blinks, unsure that she just heard that right --

KATE
I'm sorry, did you say...?

ABDUL
A bomb. The phone, it's the
detonator.

Kate sits up. Oh shit!

KATE
Sir, where are you?

ABDUL
I am not a bad person. When you
hear about this on the news you will
tell people I wasn't a bad person.
Yes?

KATE
No, you can't do this. You have to
stop.

ABDUL
I have no choice.

KATE
We always have a choice. Think of
the lives... the people... And if
you can't think about that then think
about yourself. You must have a
life you dream about, a future--

ABDUL
Dreams! I have no dreams. I'm a
fool. I wanted to be a comedian.
Like Chris Rock.

KATE
I love Chris Rock.

This gets Abdul's attention.

KATE (CONT'D)
We're all fools for our dreams.
Maybe someone can help you reach
yours.

ABDUL
(snaps)
No. No one can.

KATE
I mean, what would it take? What
would make you not want to blow people
up?

Abdul stops and actually thinks about it for a moment.

ABDUL
A new oven.

Kate's eyes narrow at this non sequitur.

KATE
An oven.

ABDUL
For my family.

Then... the nickel drops --

KATE
Restaurant supplies.

ABDUL
What?

KATE
I know someone who can get you an
oven.

Abdul's eyes widen a little at this... Is she serious?

KATE (CONT'D)
So here's what we're going to do.
I'm going to disconnect this phone
now so it can't detonate anything.
And you're going get yourself out of
this situation and call me back when
it's safe. Do you understand me?

Off Abdul's eyes, narrowing --

EXT. TOKYO STREET (SHIBUYA) - MOMENTS LATER

Simon is still here, but now he's turned and staring up at --

THE GIANT JUMBOTRON,

where we see a series of family PHOTOS in a SLIDE SHOW, one
after another. And it doesn't take us long to realize that
Simon is in some of these photos with Nell and a six year
old GIRL, whom we presume is his DAUGHTER. This is the
contents of his phone playing on the JUMBOTRON!

One of the PHOTOS FREEZES on an image of the three of them on the beach together. A happier time. It's a like a Kodak moment on this fifty foot screen.

He stares with a gaping, stunned expression, his phone still pressed to his ear. Then, bursting through the tiny speaker --

KATE

Mr. Plimpton. I found your phone!

But Simon just continues to stare, tears in his eyes.

KATE (CONT'D)

Mr. Plimpton?

And off Simon, finally finding closure --

INT. BOARD AND CARE FACILITY - NIGHT

Martin barrels through the doors and sprints down the long corridor, as Clea comes rushing out of the office.

MARTIN

The numbers. They were right!

CLEA

Oh, thank god you're here. I've been trying to call you.

MARTIN

(on a roll)

Jake predicted it all, the bus, the kids, 318, the lottery, everything!

CLEA

He's gone!

This finally stops him.

MARTIN

What?

CLEA

Jake. He's gone. I went to check on him before I left and he was gone. I thought maybe he'd tried to go back home. I was just going to start driving around to look for him.

Martin thinks for a beat, then --

MARTIN

He's not going home.

CLEA

What? How do you know?

But Martin has already turned around and started running --

MARTIN

I just do!

Clea, confused, runs after him.

EXT. CELL TOWER - NIGHT

The STORM is at full strength, POUNDING RAIN, HOWLING WIND.

JAKE

stands precariously on the edge of the crow's nest. He stares up at the sky, the rain hitting his face.

JAKE (V.O.)

There is an ancient Chinese myth
called the Red Thread of Fate...

INT. CUBICLE - CALL CENTER - DAY

The CAMERA FLOATS OVER Kate standing over Niles' shoulder looking at a computer screen. On the screen, "The Kate Graham Fan Club". On it, a VIDEO of Kate's performance on the 50 foot screen in Shibuya.

JAKE (V.O.)

It says the Gods have tied a red
thread around our ankle...

INT. ABDUL'S HOUSE - DAY

Abdul stands with his mother watching as his father supervises three men positioning a NEW OVEN into place where the old used to be.

JAKE (V.O.)

...And attached it to all of the
people whose lives we are destined
to touch...

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

A FRONT DOOR

opens, revealing NELL PLIMPTON. She stares placidly.

We REVERSE to find Simon standing in the doorway. He holds up the CARE BEARS PHONE, gives a slightly sad shrug. Nell looks at him, and we see the briefest of detente in her eyes.

JAKE (V.O.)
 This thread may stretch or tangle,
 but it will never break.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

Randy Burke (Ponytail) stands in line to get on a bus, his suitcase at his side. He hands the bus driver his ticket and climbs onto the bus.

JAKE (V.O.)
 I'd like to believe that's true.

We MOVE past the sign above windshield that reads "**Louisville Kentucky**", as Randy makes his way to a window seat. And as he stares out the window, we --

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

JAKE ON THE TOWER

the wind and rain on his face, staring up to the sky.

MARTIN'S CAR

SLIDES to a stop in front of the tower. The doors swing open and Martin and Clea climb out.

Martin looks up to see Jake on the tower --

CLEA
 My god... What's he doing up there...?

Right on cue, a LIGHTNING STRIKE LIGHTS UP the sky and THUNDER EXPLODES.

Martin and Clea exchange a look and take off RUNNING to the base of the tower. The CAMERA RUNS with them.

MARTIN
 Jake!! Come on down, buddy! You
 hear me?!!

But Jake doesn't even look his way. He just keeps staring up.

Martin reaches into his pocket and pulls out his CELL PHONE, holds it up over his head.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 I've got a phone for you, Jake!!
 Just come on down and get it!

Still no response.

CLEA

You have to go up and get him.

Martin gives her a withering look.

MARTIN

I can't.

(off her puzzled look)

I'm afraid of heights.

She looks at him like, what?! He realizes how that sounds. A moment of decision. He shoves his cell phone into his BACK POCKET and starts up the LADDER as another LIGHTNING STRIKE fills the sky with BLINDING LIGHT.

AT THE CROW'S NEST

Martin arrives at the metal grated floor, reaches up onto the rail and PULLS himself up and over to safety, clutching it with fear and vertigo.

Jake doesn't turn around. He's eight feet away, standing on the outside of the railing staring up at the rain filled sky. Martin has to shout to be heard over the storm.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Jake!

(Jake still doesn't
turn)

Jake, dammit! Listen to me! I'm
your father!

Tears begin to well in Martin's eyes. He takes a couple steps closer to Jake. Behind him, Clea has now climbed up. She hoists herself over the rail, but Martin doesn't notice.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I did what you wanted me to! I
followed the numbers! Those kids...
they were saved because of you!

Jake still doesn't turn around.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I don't know if you understand a
word I'm saying! I don't know if
you even hear me! But I hear you,
Jake, do you understand?!

(softly)

I hear you now.

A long beat, then Jake slowly turns around. He climbs over the rail and looks at Martin. Then RUSHES to him and in one fluid motion, WRAPS his arms around his father's waist!

Martin GASPS, so stunned by the mere touch of his son. As he slowly moves to return this affection, Jake PULLS AWAY quickly, now holding Martin's CELL PHONE that was in his back pocket. It wasn't an embrace after all. He was just trying to get his phone!

Jake quickly DIALS a number on the keypad. He looks up at Martin pleadingly. Thrusts the phone back to him. Martin looks at Jake, then at the phone. He slowly reaches out and takes it from him. Looks at the illuminated telephone number on the phone's screen.

CLEA

Go'head... call it.

Martin looks back up at Jake for confirmation. There is none. So, in a leap of faith, Martin hits "dial". After a tense moment, a MAN'S VOICE answers on the other line --

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

This is Ernie's. Can I help you?

MARTIN

My name is Martin Bohm... I know this is going to sound crazy... and I can't really explain how...

(ominously)

...But I think we're supposed to find each other.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hey, you got something to pawn, you called the right place. Otherwise I can't help you.

Martin's eyes narrow as a sudden realization stabs him.

MARTIN

What did you say?

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

This is Ernie's pawn shop. How can I help you?

And off the beginning of this new adventure, we CRANE UP and OUT, HIGH ABOVE this strange tableau, the storm raging over this darkened cell tower, three small human beings trapped on this tiny perch in the midst of nature's epic force --

FADE OUT:

THE END