

I AM NUMBER 4

by

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Based on the novel by

Pittacus Lore

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The events in this film are real.

Names and places have been changed to protect the Lorien Six, who remain in hiding.

Take this as your first warning. Other civilizations do exist.

Some of them seek to destroy you.

FADE IN:

A BILLION STARS

pinprick the velvet-black sky that stretches over a vast sleeping jungle. A fingernail moon silvers the whispering canopy while gentle tendrils of steam rise.

TITLE ON SCREEN: REPUBLIC OF CONGO, AFRICA.

EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

CAMERA DRIFTS ACROSS the eternity of treetops until it FINDS A BUNGALOW.

It's 20x20 square, with a wraparound porch and simple wooden shutters. The structure is hidden in a clearing that's been crudely hacked out of the sweaty wilderness.

INT. HUT - NIGHT

Two beds draped in mosquito nets sit on opposite sides of the space. A TEEN BOY sleeps in one and a MIDDLE-AGED MAN lies in the other. Their ebony skin glistens in the swampy heat. The numbing THROB OF INSECTS fills the silence until

THE DOOR SOFTLY RATTLES.

The Teen's eyes fly open. Fear grips his face as he looks over at the Man, who is now upright and awake. They hold their breath, listening over the DRUMMING CHORUS.

ANOTHER RATTLE.

It's louder this time. Unmistakable. The Teen watches as the Man pulls a crystal-handled dagger from under his pillow and stealthily creeps to the door. The Man cautiously leans in and peers through the bamboo slats.

WHAT HE SEES: The empty porch. No sign of life.

Relieved, he turns back, opens his mouth to speak when his face contorts. He looks down and sees the tip of

A SERRATED METAL BLADE

protruding from his chest. As the sword is viciously protracted through the door, the Man meets the Teen's haunted eyes and whispers his last, desperate word...

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Run!

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

The Teen's naked feet pound the hot, wet earth as he sprints through the maze of trees. Flecks of moonlight ricochet off the crystal pendant that dangles around his neck. He moves impossibly fast. Faster than any human could.

A MONSTROUS HOWL

ECHOES as something otherworldly catches his scent and begins thrashing in pursuit. The Teen's face tightens with dread and the SHOUTS of his pursuers hammer his ears.

He doesn't look back, willing himself to survive. He races up a verge and fearlessly launches himself off the edge of

A 100-FOOT-WIDE RAVINE!

GOD SHOT LOOKING DOWN as the Teen leaps across the abyss. He kicks air as he arcs and finally touches down on the opposite lip. Chest heaving, he sees the hideous silhouette of

A HULKING BEAST.

It's called a Piken and skitters to a stop on the other side. It utters a chilling BANSHEE WAIL of frustration. Relieved, the Teen turns to make his escape when

A HAND

wraps around his throat. He is effortlessly hoisted by a TOWERING MAN with skin as cold and pale as alabaster.

THIS IS A MOGADORIAN.

He wears the long red coat of a Commander. We catch the briefest glimpse of his cruel magenta eyes as they scan the geometric symbol engraved on the Teen's pendant. Silhouetted against the giant jungle moon, he triumphantly raises

A SWORD.

Its serrated blade ignites with silver flame as it sweeps towards the Teen. The boy's DEATH CRY echoes as the CAMERA ZEROES IN ON the pendant that glows brilliant-bright.

FORM CUT TO:

THE SAME SYMBOL.

It glimmers to life on the ankle of another TEEN 10,000 miles away. His name's DANIEL and he's in the middle of a wild jet-ski race with TWO BUDDIES.

TITLE ON SCREEN: BIG PINE KEY, FLORIDA, USA.

The trio crisscrosses the turquoise sea while a party rages on the beach.

Daniel makes a kamikaze move, whips his jet ski past his opponents and victoriously pumps his fist. But his moment of triumph is cut short. His face contorts in agony as he feels

THE SYMBOL

searing into his skin. As he leans forward to grip his ankle, he cartwheels off the jet ski and viciously body-slams across the water.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

LOOKING UP as Daniel crashes into view. Needles of light flicker from the symbol. It's cauterizing into his flesh like a brand.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Daniel stumbles through the surf and collapses onto the sand, clutching his ankle. He rolls onto his side as a CROWD OF PARTYING TEENS gathers. A BLONDE GIRL leans down to help.

BLONDE GIRL

Daniel, what's wrong? Did you break your ankle?

But as she turns him over, she sees the light leaking from between his fingers and reels back.

BLONDE GIRL

Oh my God.

He stares up into the crowd's fearful faces, then staggers to his feet and takes off running.

EXT. INTERSTATE - DAY

The busy road runs parallel to an expanse of ancient pines. Through the trees, we CATCH THE SHUTTER IMAGE of a figure outrunning the hurtling vehicles.

EXT. COASTAL FOREST - DAY

Trees whip past as Daniel sprints down a sandy track. The pendant that knocks against his chest was carved by the same hand as the African Teen's, but the symbol is unique. He peels off to the right and bursts out onto a long drive.

A STILT HOUSE

sits at the end. It's cake-frosting pink and is built right on the edge of a coral-white beach.

EXT. STILT HOUSE - DAY

The door flies open and Daniel stands on the threshold. HENRI looks up from his bank of laptops that scroll with news feeds. He is decades older than his suntanned face betrays and you'd be way off if you guessed his accent was French.

DANIEL
Number 3 is dead.

Henri's eyes narrow with urgency. He is immediately on his feet, he kneels at Daniel's side and studies the symbol on the teen's ankle. It has stopped glowing but is painfully raw. Directly below this fresh wound are

TWO OTHER GEOMETRIC BRANDS.

They are the same size, but each symbol is subtly different. Time has transformed them into raised, snake-smooth scars. Henri's penetrating eyes look up at the shell-shocked teen.

HENRI
Did anybody else see this?

OFF Daniel's panicked nod...

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - STILT HOUSE - DAY

A GECKO

skitters across the ceiling, its glossy black eyes watch as Daniel frantically stuffs his clothes into a duffel bag. The walls are bare. No photos, no posters, no personality. Henri enters, holding a crate of computer cables.

HENRI
Taillights in five minutes. What we can't carry --

DANIEL
-- we burn. I know the drill.

EXT. STILT HOUSE - DAY

TIGHT ON A BOX. It's exquisitely carved and inlaid with an intricate geometric design.

Henri carefully hides it under the driver's seat of an old Jeep Wagoneer. It's the kind with wooden trim. He looks at Daniel who feeds homework assignments into a roaring FIRE.

HENRI
Time to go.

Daniel clicks the SIM card from his cell phone, snaps it in two and drops it into the fire. Bitter, he takes one last look at the glittering azure sea, then climbs into the Jeep. As the engine HUMS to life, CAMERA FOLLOWS

THE GECKO.

It darts up the fender, squeezes into the jamb of the trunk, and Houdinis into the vehicle with a flick of its tail.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAUSEWAY - DUSK

The Jeep powers across the long elevated bridge. The dying sun tints the clouds and the sky in violent apocalyptic hues.

DANIEL (V.O.)

This is the part I hate the most.
The running. But it's the only
thing in my life that's real. The
rest is a lie. My name. My
birthday. Even Henri. People
think he's my father. He's not.
His job is to keep me alive.

INT. JEEP - NIGHT - MOVING

Henri's eyes scan the rear view, on constant vigil. The speedometer never brushes past 60. Daniel has his head against the window, brooding, listening to an iPod.

DANIEL (V.O.)

We are hiding from the Mogadorians.
A brutal race that wiped out our
entire planet, Lorien.

EXT. USED-CAR LOT - DAY

Plastic flags whip overhead. Daniel leans against a silver SUV and watches Henri negotiate with the DEALER.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Only nine children escaped the
genocide. We were each given a
number and sent here to hide. I
don't know where the others are. I
only know when one of them is
murdered.

INT. BATHROOM - MOTEL - NIGHT

Daniel sits on the edge of a bathtub. He gently unwraps the bandage that covers his ankle and fearfully inspects the neat scab that has formed over the wound.

DANIEL (V.O.)

I got the first scar when I was eight. I woke up screaming. We lived in Vermont. The second was on a Tilt-a-Whirl at a fair in Michigan. I was 12. Yesterday was the third.

His finger traces the lines of the other two scars.

EXT. INTERSTATE - DAY

The lush tropical landscape has browned into flat, dormant farmland. The silver SUV charges through the bleak monotony.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Because of the spell our Elders cast, the Mogs can only kill us in order. That's the reason I've survived this long. But our enemy is relentless.

INT. SUV - NIGHT - MOVING

Daniel is asleep with his earphones on. Henri glances over, his mask of certainty momentarily slips. He looks like a soldier heading into a battle he knows cannot be won.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Now their hunt has turned to me. I am number 4.

CUT TO:

EXT. REST-STOP DINER - NIGHT

A tired neon sign illuminates the big rigs that RUMBLE past, headed to destinations unknown.

INT. REST-STOP DINER - NIGHT

Daniel sullenly stares at a stack of untouched pancakes. Henri slides into the booth, all business.

HENRI

Florida's clear. I sent a letter to the school and there's nothing in the papers.

DANIEL

I didn't even get a chance to say goodbye.

Henri keeps going, passes an envelope across the table.

HENRI

New IDs.

Daniel pulls out his birth certificate, reads the name.

DANIEL

Just when I think you can't get any
less original, you lower the bar.

HENRI

I'm not interested in originality.
I'm interested in untraceable.
There are 335,321 John Smiths in
the United States.

(Note: from this point on, Daniel will be called John.)

John looks at him, then abruptly gets up and storms away.
Henri drops \$20 on the table and calmly heads after him.

INT. ARCADE - REST STOP - NIGHT

A row of ancient arcade games blinks. John angrily stabs the
buttons of a Space Invaders machine as Henri approaches.
They are alone. John's eyes never leave the video screen.

JOHN

It's been so long since the last
scar.

HENRI

You got lulled into a false sense
of security. That's my fault.

John struggles to keep his temper in check.

JOHN

I liked Florida. I liked having
friends. I liked feeling normal.

Henri's face softens with paternal compassion.

HENRI

I wish that you could have a normal
life -- but you can't.

Only now does John turn and face him. His eyes blaze with
frustration.

JOHN

Then why fake it? Why not just go
hole up in the wilderness.

HENRI

That's exactly what Number 3 did.

John looks at him, confused. Henri pulls up an article on his iPhone and hands it to John.

HENRI

It's from an African news site. A man and his son went missing two nights ago. The locals think they were taken by strange beasts.

John understands the implication.

JOHN

Piken.

HENRI

The Mogadorians are natural-born hunters. Blending in is our best protection.

JOHN

So we just keep moving from town to town?

HENRI

Until I say otherwise -- yes.

John waits as a TRUCKER passes through the room. His voice softens but never loses its intensity.

JOHN

I want to be from someplace, Henri.

HENRI

You are.

JOHN

Lorien's your home, I don't even remember it.

John's tone rubs Henri the wrong way.

HENRI

Like it or not, it's your home too. You have a responsibility to those who died.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Henri and John climb in.

JOHN

I want a say in where we live.
(off Henri's face)
You already picked it, didn't you?

Henri REVS the ENGINE to life.

HENRI

Cheer up, you're going to be living
in Paradise.

CUT TO:

A frigid sheet of RAIN POUNDS the sign that's planted on the side of this narrow stretch of rural blacktop:

"WELCOME TO PARADISE, OHIO. POP. 5,243"

The silver SUV streaks past, its wipers working overtime. It kicks up a spray as it speeds down Main Street. The dinky storefronts are garishly decorated for Halloween.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The leaves are washed in a thousand shades of gold. The SUV barrels along the drive that twists through the woods.

INT. SUV - DAY - DRIVING

Henri pulls up in front of a small house. It sits by itself, surrounded by trees. Water sluices off the weather-worn garage in the yard behind it. A WOMAN steps out of a minivan to greet them.

JOHN

She looks even perkier than the
realtor in Florida.

A warm smile graces her round face and she's clutching a fruit basket. For the record, she is called ANNIE.

HENRI

What's your name?

JOHN

John Smith.

HENRI

Where are you from, John?

JOHN

Arizona.

HENRI

Why did you move to Paradise?

JOHN

Because you're an asshole.

John waits for a reaction but doesn't get one...

JOHN

Because my dad needs peace and quiet to research his book.

Henri nods and smiles wryly.

HENRI

This was a lot easier when you were 12.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

The front door swings open and Annie proudly escorts Henri and John inside.

ANNIE

Here we are. Home sweet home.

They scan the faded interior. The place is in desperate need of a makeover. A grandfather clock pensively TICKS at the end of the hall. Annie remains relentlessly optimistic.

ANNIE

First impressions?

HENRI

It's perfect.

Annie places the fruit basket on the dining table and begins turning on the lights.

JOHN

That's one word for it.

Stewing, John exits into the hall with his duffel bag. Annie reads the strained dynamic.

ANNIE

I feel your pain. I have a daughter his age. Apparently, I ruin her life on a daily basis.

John steps back in, holding a sun-faded poster featuring NFL great Bernie Kosar.

JOHN

This guy was covering a hole in my wall.

Annie's cheeks blush with annoyance.

ANNIE

I told the handyman to patch that before you arrived. I'm so sorry.

Henri is all charm, gently leads her to the front door.

HENRI

Don't you worry about it.

She nods, grateful.

ANNIE

We'll knock it off the rent. Keep the poster, Bernie Kosar brings good luck here in the Buckeye State.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The rain has stopped. The wind RUSTLES the trees. John lifts out the last box. As he closes the trunk, he doesn't notice the hitchhiking gecko hotfoot it out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT

Henri is busy setting up his computer station. John dumps the box on the floor.

JOHN

That's the last of them. I'm hitting the sack.

HENRI

I need a new photo first.

John crosses and stands against the wall.

HENRI

Say Paradise.

John gives him a withering look. Henri flashes off a shot. The camera is cabled to one of the laptops.

TIGHT ON LAPTOP: The image of John pixelates onto a digital grid and a face-recognition program begins to map his facial structure.

Henri turns to another laptop.

HENRI

I've imputed the new search words: Daniel Jones. Big Pine Key. Sunset High School. You think of any others?

JOHN

Yeah, this place sucks.

Henri swivels to face him.

HENRI

If there's a story or picture of you on the internet, this program will find it. Our enemy doesn't know who you are -- I want to keep it that way.

John nods, knows he's being a jerk.

JOHN

Sand Dollar Beach, that's where we were jet skiing.

Henri types it in when something SCRATCHES at the door. Their heads instantly turn towards the sound. Tense SILENCE.

SLOW PUSH IN ON THE DOOR as another SCRATCH echoes.

Henri is on his feet. He flicks off the lights and silently signals John to retreat down the hall. With the cool air of an assassin, Henri unzips a duffel bag and pulls out a sleek crystal-handled dagger. As he steps to the door...

INT. CLOSET - JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

... John crouches in the dark, clutching a baseball bat. Suddenly, the light in the bedroom buzzes back on. He holds his breath as the door swings open. He looks up and is relieved to see Henri.

HENRI

I found our intruder -- he's a little small for a Mogadorian.

At that moment,

A BEAGLE

slips between Henri's legs. It cocks its head, studies John's face, then pads forward and licks his cheek.

INT. KITCHEN - HOUSE - NIGHT

The dog greedily laps a bowl of milk.

JOHN

He's starving, doesn't have any collar or tags.

HENRI

Must have been dumped.

JOHN

You know, another pair of eyes and ears watching the house wouldn't be a bad thing.

Henri considers the request, nods. John playfully ruffles the dog's head.

HENRI

What are you going to call him?

JOHN

Since I need all the luck I can get -- how about Bernie Kosar?

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - MORNING

John enters, dressed in black, ready for his first day of school. He dumps his backpack on a chair. Henri places a plate with an omelette and perfectly browned hash browns in front of him.

JOHN

Wow. You outdid yourself. What's up?

Henri lifts a red backpack into view. John stares at it.

JOHN

I already have a backpack.

HENRI

This one has five days of rations, spare clothes, cash and a handheld GPS. Keep it with you at all times.

JOHN

Henri, come on.

HENRI

Game's changed. You're in the crosshairs now. You have to be ready to leave at a moment's notice. With or without me.

John stares at the backpack, takes in this new reality. He pushes the plate away, snatches the backpack and heads out the door. Henri stares at the omelette, tastes a pinch of hash browns, then puts the plate on the floor on his way out. It takes Bernie 2.5 seconds to race over and start to eat.

EXT. PARADISE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Jack-o'-lanterns stare out from the "HALLOWEEN BLOCK PARTY" banner strung across the red brick facade. Henri drives away. John slides the red backpack onto his shoulder when he hears a FAMILIAR BARK. He turns and is surprised to find

BERNIE KOSAR.

The little dog is sitting by the flagpole wagging his white-tipped tail. John crosses to him, baffled.

JOHN

Bernie, what the hell... were you hiding in the car?

He scoops the dog into his arms.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Hey, I was about to take a picture of the little guy.

John turns and finds

SARAH HARTE.

She's his age and is holding an old 35mm Nikon. There is something about her unforced beauty that is instantly enchanting. John shuffles, uncharacteristically nervous.

JOHN

He's not supposed to be here.
(to Bernie)
Go home. Now.

Bernie hops out of his arms and obediently runs towards home.

SARAH

He's really well-trained. How long have you had him?

John turns away.

JOHN

Sorry about your shot.

SARAH

No worries.

He begins walking towards the entrance.

SARAH

You just moved into the house on Old Mill Road. It's John, right?

John swings back, concerned.

SARAH

Don't worry, I'm not stalking you.
My mom said she rented it to a guy
with a son my age. Since I know
every other face on this quad, that
had to be you.

(beat)

I'm Sarah.

He nods.

SARAH

Where are you from?

JOHN

Someplace warmer.

SARAH

I don't think that qualifies as an
actual answer.

JOHN

I need to register.

She raises her camera to snap a shot of him.

JOHN

Whoa. What are you doing?

SARAH

Capturing your first day, even
though you're technically six weeks
late.

JOHN

Please don't point that at me.

SARAH

Afraid the camera's going to steal
your soul?

She lifts the viewfinder to her eye, adjusts focus. Annoyed,
he covers the lens with his hand.

JOHN

What's your problem? I said no.

SARAH

It's only for the yearbook.

John regains his composure.

JOHN

I'm not big into having my picture taken. Sorry.

As he heads away, Sarah watches, intrigued. CAMERA TRACKS TO REVEAL MARK JAYNE monitoring the encounter. He's the star quarterback and his chiselled jaw tenses with jealousy.

INT. HALL - PARADISE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Loaded with textbooks, John instinctively bows his head as he passes the black eye of a hall security camera and steps to a locker. He reaches for the combination lock when

A BACKPACK

viciously sideswipes him. The textbooks scatter across the checkerboard linoleum. John sees the culprit is Mark Jayne, who offers him a taunting grin. John fights his urge to react and watches as Mark struts over to his POSSE OF JOCKS.

VOICE (O.S.)

Welcome to Paradise, irony not included.

John looks at the teen standing two lockers down. He's got a battered skateboard tucked into his backpack and wears an Army surplus jacket. This is SAM GOODE -- genius by birth, slacker by choice. He nods after Mark.

SAM

His name's Mark Jayne. Quarterback, sheriff's son, he's three years into the best four years of his life.

John begins retrieving the fallen books. Sam helps.

SAM

Do yourself a favor -- stay off his radar.

JOHN

Didn't know I was on it.

SAM

You were talking to Sarah Harte.

JOHN

She was talking to me.

SAM

Mark and Sarah have been exclusive since Freshmen year.

John looks down the hall and sees Mark wrap his arm around Sarah's shoulder.

SAM

If there's another guy in her airspace, he shoots them down. You got a warning shot.

John piles the books into his locker.

JOHN

Maybe I'll fire back next time.

SAM

Look, you're new, so let me tell you how things work in this misnamed backwater. Football players are gods -- the rest of us are mere mortals. If you want to survive, keep your head down and don't make waves.

JOHN

You sound like my dad.

SAM

Obviously a wise man.
(beat)
I'm Sam by the way.

Sam extends his hand. John doesn't take it.

JOHN

Thanks for the download.

As he SLAMS his locker shut...

CUT TO:

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

It's an impressive structure with wraparound bleachers. The Junior gym class jogs around the track. John hangs in the middle of the pack, with his hoodie up, blending in.

They pass the GIRLS who are stretching on the pristine field. Sarah's eyes drift towards John. The COACH blows a whistle.

COACH

Alright, people. Let's hit the gym.

The assembled teens GROAN and fan off towards the mouth of a tunnel that stares out from the base of the bleachers.

INT. GYM - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

John emerges from the tunnel via a door by the stage. Some of his classmates are on the court, passing and dribbling.

COACH

Okay, half court, three on three.
Girls have this basket, boys have
that one.

CUT TO:

Two simultaneous games are in progress. John sits on the sidelines waiting his turn. He avoids eye contact with Sarah who is sitting in the shadow of the basket. However, he does notice Mark Jayne enter and approach her.

COACH

New kid, you're up. Show me what
you've got.

John steps onto the court and waits for the ball to come his way. He steals a glance and sees Sarah and Mark arguing. A blur of orange. John swings back and catches the ball. Just as he shoots, he's distracted by Sarah's upset voice.

THE SHOT

goes wild, misses the basket but hits the glass backboard with such force that it

SHATTERS.

Mark and Sarah are inadvertently forced to separate as shards rain down. All eyes turn to John, who's annoyed at his momentary lapse. TEENS HOOT. The Coach BLOWS his whistle.

COACH

Enough! Hit the showers.
(to John)
LeBron, grab a broom.

As the gym empties, John looks over and catches Sarah watching him. OFF this silent exchange...

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - DAY

THE INTRICATELY CARVED BOX

is clutched in Henri's hands. He heads down the hall and stops in front of the grandfather clock. Its tarnished pendulum sways. He unlocks the glass panel and slots the Box out of sight behind the clock's brass face.

Satisfied with the hiding place, he locks the front and takes the key. When he turns back, he finds

BERNIE KOSAR.

The dog is studying him with his head cocked.

HENRI

Let's keep this our little secret.

OFF Bernie's inquisitive eyes...

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

John joins the line. He sees Sarah sitting by herself, inspecting a photographic contact sheet. His view is blocked by Sam. John rubs his hands which are oddly sweaty.

SAM

First day here and you're already destroying school property. So much for not making waves.

John moves past him and grabs a tray. He's flushed and his face is now hot and red.

JOHN

It was an accident.

SAM

I hear the real spectator sport was Mark and Sarah's blowout.

John wipes his brow, distracted.

SAM

Dude, you okay?

JOHN

Fine.

At that moment, Mark Jayne and his buddy, KEVIN, cut in front of them. Annoyed, John taps Mark on the shoulder.

MARK

You got a problem?

JOHN

Line starts back there.

MARK

Football players get priority.

JOHN
Where's that posted?

MARK
Unwritten rule.
(re: Sam)
I'm surprised your boyfriend didn't
tell you.

Sam puts his hands up and backs away. Mark smirks at John.

MARK
If you don't know your place around
here, things can get rough.

John holds his ground.

JOHN
In that case, I guess I better ask
you where I should sit. I was
thinking about grabbing that chair
next to your girlfriend.

In a flash of anger, Mark whips up his tray, hammers it into
John's chest, knocking him to the floor.

MARK
You want to talk trash? Let's see
you back it up.

John tries to stand, but is suddenly overcome with a wave of
pain. He looks down at his hands and is alarmed to see

LIGHT

blooming from his palms! He quickly balls them into fists,
extinguishing the light from view.

MARK
Get up!

SILENCE has fallen. Still clenching his fists, John rises
and stumbles out into the hall. OFF Sarah's concern as she
watches him exit...

CUT TO:

EXT. PORCH - HOUSE - DAY

Henri is on a ladder, adjusting a hidden surveillance camera
above the front door, when Bernie starts BARKING. It's an
anxious, urgent BARK.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Henri steps inside and sees the dog is BARKING at --

THE GRANDFATHER CLOCK.

A shaft of white light blooms from within. The shadow of the swaying pendulum cuts across Henri's face. As he sprints for the door...

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

Disoriented, John staggers down the hall. Sam catches up.

SAM
Dude, hold up!

John leans against the wall, keeping his hands out of sight.

SAM
You look like crap. I'll get the nurse.

But as Sam runs off, John heads in the other direction.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Henri's SUV roars into view, whipping up a tornado of leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. DARKROOM - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

Strips of negatives hang on drying lines. John bursts in and SLAMS the door. He slips off his backpack, opens his hands.

TIGHT ON HIS EYES -- the brilliant light from his palms shrinks his irises to pinpricks.

The luminescence is crisp, mercury-glass bright and grows stronger every second. Suddenly, the door opens. John spins in shock. A figure strides through the blinding glare, gently takes his hands and folds them into fists.

IT'S HENRI.

John looks at him, confusion and fear etched on his face.

JOHN
Henri, what's happening to me?

HENRI

Calm down. You're going to be okay.

John angrily holds up one of his luminescent hands.

JOHN

On what planet is this okay?

HENRI

Yours.

(beat)

I need to get you out of here.

INT. HALL - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

John steps out of the darkroom wearing Henri's heavy coat. His hands are balled and stuffed into the pockets. Henri leads him quickly down the hall.

CUT TO:

INT. SUV - DAY - MOVING

John fearfully studies his hands which have returned to normal, then looks over at Henri who seems oddly calm.

JOHN

Okay, start talking. What the hell's going on?

HENRI

Your first Legacy is starting to manifest.

JOHN

Legacy?

HENRI

An extraordinary ability. Yours is called Lumen. They start a lot sooner on Lorien. I was beginning to fear yours would never emerge.

JOHN

You knew this was going to happen? Why didn't you say anything?

HENRI

I didn't want to worry you. You were already under enough pressure.
(sincere)
I'm sorry.

John acknowledges the apology, but looks at him, suspicious.

JOHN

What else have you been hiding from me?

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT

The curtains are drawn. Bernie Kosar dozes on the couch while John and Henri sit at the table, staring at the Box.

HENRI

This couldn't be opened until your first Legacy appeared. Ready?

John nods nervously. Henri places the fingertips of his right hand onto five petal-shaped discs inlaid onto the lid. John cautiously follows suit and places his fingers on the "petals" fanned across the opposite side.

THE DISCS

momentarily glow and a SHARP CLICK echoes from within. John and Henri pull their hands away and watch as the Box miraculously comes to life. Fissures of light sweep across the lines of inlaid stone, dividing the lid into sections that begin to twist and reform like high-tech origami.

JOHN

Whoa.

PUSH IN ON Bernie as he sits up and watches the Box unfold.

Like an intricate jigsaw, the sections finally regroup, creating a new pattern on the lid. It's a familiar geometric symbol. John touches the crystal pendant that hangs from his neck -- the symbols are an exact match.

HENRI

Open it.

John nods, cautiously lifts the lid, revealing a neat assortment of velvet pouches and an array of colored rocks. They range in size and color but all share a serene beauty.

JOHN

What are they?

HENRI

Crystals from Lorien's core.
They'll guide us in your training.

John tries to reach for one, but Henri slaps his hand away.

HENRI

Place your hand over them.

John follows the instruction and is amazed when a walnut-sized crystal floats up from the Box. It slowly begins to spin and project

A SWIRLING HOLOGRAPHIC GALAXY.

HENRI

Our solar system.

Henri points to a planet. Its oceans are dark with pollution and its sprawling continents are barren and treeless.

HENRI

That's what Lorien looked like thousands of years ago. We had all the problems that Earth has today. The planet was dying until our people made a collective decision to change and slowly Lorien began to heal itself -- that's when the Legacies started.

John watches as the spinning planet transforms before his eyes. Its oceans turn a vibrant chroma-key blue and the land masses become a lush emerald green.

HENRI

Only a select few developed these abilities. They became known as the Garde.

JOHN

That's what I am?

HENRI

Like your parents and grandparents.

John considers this new information.

JOHN

The other children in the ship...

Henri finishes John's thought.

HENRI

They're Garde as well. Once you've mastered your Legacies, we'll find them and face the Mogadorians together.

John looks at Henri, curious.

JOHN

What Legacy do you have?

HENRI

I don't have any and never will.
I'm your Cegan -- a teacher. My
job is not just to protect you but
to train you.

(beat)

Give me your hand.

Henri takes one of John's hands and pulls a cigarette lighter from his pocket. John flinches, unsure.

HENRI

Trust me.

Henri flicks a flame to life and sweeps it under John's outstretched palm.

HENRI

You feel that?

Amazingly, the flame harmlessly licks the skin. But when Henri moves the lighter further up John's arm --

JOHN

Ouch.

John jerks his hand away. Henri kills the flame, shrugs.

HENRI

When we're done, your entire body
will be shielded against fire.

John rubs his singed wrist.

HENRI

You'll get other Legacies too.

JOHN

Flying would be cool.

HENRI

You don't get to pick them off a
menu.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK. As John spins to the door, the shimmering galaxy fades and the crystal drops to the floor.

HENRI

Mogs don't knock.

Henri steps to his computer bank and examines a laptop featuring live feeds from a dozen surveillance cameras he's installed around the property.

HENRI

It's a girl.

John looks over his shoulder and reacts with surprise.

EXT. PORCH - HOUSE - NIGHT

John opens the door and finds Sarah amped.

SARAH

How'd you do it?

Her accusation startles him.

JOHN

Do what?

SARAH

Eviscerate the entire senior class?

She pulls a strip of overexposed 35mm film from her coat.

SARAH

I was in the darkroom before lunch and they were hanging on the line smiling and looking forward to the future. When I got back, I found 15 rolls of negatives wiped clean.

John shrugs innocently.

JOHN

I don't know what you're talking about.

SARAH

So you weren't in the darkroom today?

JOHN

No.

SARAH

Here's a tip. If you're going to lie, don't leave a big red backpack at the scene of the crime.

She swings his backpack into view. John is mortified. He struggles to find a plausible answer and silently tries to quell the feeling welling in his chest.

JOHN

I don't know what happened. Maybe it's a sign that you should invest in a digital camera.

SARAH

Digital sucks. Film tells the truth. Clearly, I'm not going to get that from you.

He watches as she angrily heads down the steps and climbs into her car. John glances at his palms and is surprised to find they are dimly luminescent.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Sarah's car sweeps out of the drive and powers towards town, unaware of the truck parked in the shadows.

MARK JAYNE

is behind the wheel and watches as her headlights fade into the night. OFF his simmering jealousy...

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Bernie Kosar waits expectantly as Henri pours "Doggie Chow" into a bowl. John steps in.

HENRI

Everything okay?

JOHN

She was returning my backpack.

He dumps it by the door.

HENRI

I think you should stay home from school for a couple of days.

JOHN

I'm fine.

HENRI

Just to be safe.

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

John lies on his bed, staring at his luminescent palms, conflicted by his emotions.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Moonlight cuts across Bernie Kosar who is SNORING peacefully at the end of the bed. John tosses and turns. He finally sits up, unable to sleep.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAWN

Nursing a mug of black coffee, Henri diligently scans the laptop screens. He's clearly never gone to bed. He looks up as John enters wearing track gear.

JOHN
I'm going for a run.

Bernie trots out and wags his tail pleadingly.

JOHN
Sorry, buddy, you couldn't keep up.

CUT TO:

START MONTAGE:

EXT. WOODS - DAWN

EPIC AERIAL SHOT LOOKING DOWN AT AN EAGLE as it soars above the rich kaleidoscope of trees. It almost seems to be following John, who is powering along a narrow track below.

CUT TO:

John moves at superhuman speed, leaving a blurring wake of leaves. His foot splits a log as he bounds over it.

CUT TO:

John charges towards a secluded stream. It's 30 feet wide. He doesn't slow, leaps off the bank and effortlessly hopscoches from boulder to boulder to the other side.

CUT TO:

EXT. HILL - DAWN

It offers a high-def view of Paradise. John reaches the top and is exhilarated by the sense of temporary liberation. He watches as

THE EAGLE

alights in a nearby oak tree. John bends to tighten his laces, his eyes fall on the trio of scars branded on his ankle. His happiness dims.

He grits his teeth and takes off for home. As he passes the oak, the CAMERA TRACKS TO REVEAL the gecko scampering down the gnarled trunk.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - PARADISE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Sam is at his locker. He glances over at John's, hoping he'll show. Disappointed, he joins the crisscrossing throng.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - DAY

John "practices" turning his Lumen Legacy "off" and "on". Henri watches as John's palms glow. John focuses intently, causing them to flare with sudden brilliance. Momentarily blinded, John jerks back and topples off his chair.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

Sarah sits in the stands, doing homework, watching Mark and the football team practice in the cold metallic floodlight.

ON THE FIELD the ball is hiked to Mark. He looks for an opening and fires a perfect spiral to the RECEIVER in the end zone. Mark thumps chests with Kevin and looks up at the stands, only to discover that Sarah is gone.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK PORCH - HOUSE - DAY

John's playing "supercatch" with Bernie. He watches as the little guy races back from the woods, clutching a ball. Panting with exertion, the dog lays it at John's feet. John smiles, swings back his arm and hauls the ball again.

ANGLE ON BALL: It arcs up, sails right over the garage and drops earthwards in the heart of the woods.

Unperturbed by the superhuman throw, Bernie hightails after the ball. Henri steps out and watches, amused, then tosses John a pair of black driving gloves. OFF John's eye roll...

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

TIGHT ON ONE OF THE GLOVES. It's now fingerless and on John's hand. He weaves through the preclass crowd and is about to head into the chemistry lab when he sees

SARAH

disappearing into a room at the end. He's torn, then makes a decision and does something he shouldn't -- he strides down the hall after her.

END MONTAGE.

INT. YEARBOOK ROOM - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

Sarah is alone, tacking photographs to a large board that's lying flat on the carpet. She hears the door CLICK, turns and coolly regards John.

SARAH

I think you have the wrong room.

She rises, walks past him and begins searching the photos scattered on the layout table in the middle of the space.

JOHN

Wanted to apologize.

SARAH

Does the apology come with an explanation?

He turns to go, has his hand on the door when --

SARAH

Wait.

He looks back. Her face softens.

SARAH

How about we delete Monday and start over?

She steps forward and extends her hand.

SARAH

I'm Sarah.

JOHN

John.

TIGHT ON THEIR HANDS as they shake. She checks out his fingerless gloves, amused.

SARAH

Nice gloves.

She crosses to the board, reaches down to lift it when John steps behind her.

He effortlessly picks it up and hooks it onto the wall. They stand back. John stares at the collage of high school images that captures a life he'll never know.

JOHN

You know all these people?

She nods.

SARAH

Curse of a small town. I've been around them my whole life.

(pointing to photo)

Kim Thomas. She peed in her bed at a sleepover when we were seven.

(pointing)

Neil Bailey. President of the Debate Club. Plays five instruments. Doesn't know he's gay yet.

(pointing)

Mrs. Ross. AP English. She's been here so long, she taught my mom and my four brothers. I'm the baby of the family in case you were wondering.

Her curious eyes scour his face.

SARAH

So what's your story?

JOHN

Not very interesting.

SARAH

Determined to keep the mystery alive, aren't you?

His finger arrows in on a photograph of Sarah. It's a candid and she's taking a shot with her trademark Nikon.

JOHN

You first.

SARAH

Okay. Recovering cheerleader. Wannabe vegetarian but I still love burgers. Dreams of being a photojournalist.

(beat)

I've never actually admitted that last one to anybody before.

JOHN
Your secret's safe with me.

She studies him, sensing a kindred spirit.

SARAH
You ever feel you don't belong in
your own life?

JOHN
Every single day.

SARAH
Wow. That almost sounded like a
straight answer.

They look at each other. There's a charged silence. The
moment is broken when --

MARK (O.S.)
What's he doing in here?

John and Sarah spin to find Mark. Sarah is flustered.

SARAH
I thought you were on two-a-days.

MARK
Coach wants me to rest my arm
before the scouts come. You didn't
answer my question?

SARAH
John was helping me move some
boards.

John turns to Sarah.

JOHN
I'm going to take off.

Mark doesn't take his eyes off John and blocks his way.

MARK
Seriously, Sarah, what's up with
this guy?

SARAH
I don't have time for this, Mark.

MARK
But you had time to go to his house
the other night.

Sarah looks at him, stunned by the admission.

SARAH
You were following me?

MARK
Just trying to figure out what's
going on with you.

Sarah's shock turns to anger.

SARAH
You've crossed so many lines I
can't even speak to you right now.

She hustles out of the room. Mark glares at John.

MARK
This isn't over.

OFF John, unmoved by the threat...

CUT TO:

EXT. STILT HOUSE - FLORIDA - DUSK

The sky is even pinker than the house.

INT. STILT HOUSE - FLORIDA - DUSK

A drawer flies across THE FRAME. The place has been totally trashed. Floorboards have been ripped up. Sofas shredded. Nothing has been spared. CAMERA DRIFTS OVER the debris to...

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - STILT HOUSE - DUSK

The mattress has been dissected and its guts lie scattered.

A TEEN GIRL.

kneels in front of John's old desk searching the drawers. She wears a biker jacket, combat boots and has a striking "don't-fuck-with-me" face. Frustrated in her search, she flings the desk against the wall. It splinters on impact.

INT. KITCHEN - STILT HOUSE - FLORIDA - DUSK

TIGHT ON THE STOVE -- a hand twists on the burners. Raw gas HISSES. The Teen Girl makes one final scan, then heads for the door.

EXT. STILT HOUSE - FLORIDA - DUSK

The Teen Girl strides down the steps and crosses to a sleek Ducatti. She slips on a helmet. PUSH IN on her Arctic-blue eyes as they focus on the house with a strange intensity.

KABBBBOOOOOM!

The house detonates. The concussive force of the blast rips the structure right off its stilts. Tornadoes of flame BLAST through the windows as the house catapults into the air.

Orange reflections flicker on the Girl's visor as she flips it down, REVS the motorcycle and SCREAM-PEELS down the drive backlit by the glittering inferno...

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

Sam catches John at the lockers.

SAM

Nice freakout the other day.

JOHN

Wasn't feeling well.

They twist their combination locks. Sam swings open his door, there's a HISSING POP and

A RED INK PACK EXPLODES.

It's the kind banks use to foil heists. In a shocking instant, Sam and the contents of his locker are splattered. It bears a gruesome resemblance to arterial spray.

JOHN

has his door halfway open and ducks back a second before the ink pack planted in his locker ERUPTS. The spray misses his face but violently spits across his chest and arms. LAUGHTER echoes behind them. John spins and finds Mark and his posse.

TIGHT ON John's hands as he balls them and an angry glow flickers through his gloves.

MARK

(to John, taunting)

Told you it wasn't over.

Behind them, Sam's laid-back persona cracks. He frantically clears his locker, looking for something. He finally pulls out a photo which drips with ink, reels at the jocks.

SAM

Assholes.

John looks back at Sam. Mark seizes his chance and launches a sucker-punch at John. But John sees it out of the corner of his eye and in a blur of motion whips up his hand and

CATCHES MARK'S FIST.

John squeezes it vice-tight. Mark grimaces in agony. His buddies back into the CROWD OF TEENS that has gathered. John leans in close.

JOHN
That sensation you're feeling --
remember it.

With a quick push, John shoves Mark back against the lockers. Mark DENTS a door and slides to the floor, his eyes flaring with lacerated pride.

JOHN
Show's over.

The crowd disperses. Mark gets to his feet and exits with his friends, but shoots John one final wounded glare...

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

Red, ink-stained water Hitchcocks down the drain. John wrings out his black T-shirt. He sees Sam's reflection in the mirror. Sam puts some clothes on the bench.

SAM
I raided lost and found.

He holds up a puke-green sweater decorated with red snowmen. John turns back to the sink.

SAM
I know. Nobody loses anything
cool.

He sits and begins to change.

SAM
Dude, the way you thrashed Mark
back there. Awesome move.

John acknowledges that with a nod. Whip-dries his shirt. Sam plucks up the photo. The ink is now dried and cracked.

JOHN
Who's in the picture?

Sam stares at it, nostalgic.

SAM
My dad. My real dad. I took it
the summer before he split.
(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

He dragged me and my mom all over the Yucatan. He was looking for evidence of ancient astronauts. All I got was Montezuma's Revenge.

JOHN

(deadpan)

Sounds like a fun vacation.

SAM

I know. Insane. He called himself an anthropologist even though he only made it through one semester of college.

He rises and tosses the ruined picture into the trash.

SAM

Always thought he'd come back one day -- who was I kidding. The guy's a joke.

As the BELL RINGS...

CUT TO:

EXT. PARADISE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

The football stadium rises like a monolith in the background. John strides towards the tree line, headed home.

SARAH (O.S.)

John.

He turns in surprise as Sarah approaches.

SARAH

I heard about the lockers. I'm sorry.

JOHN

I'll live.

He starts off again.

SARAH

I broke up with Mark.

He stops, slowly turns back.

SARAH

I've been thinking about doing it for a while... today just finally pushed me over the edge.

He studies her face.

JOHN
Why are you telling me?

She bows her head, suddenly embarrassed.

SARAH
I don't know.

JOHN
You made the right call.

The certainty of his voice soothes her. She looks up and holds his gaze. Their attraction is undeniable.

SARAH
Halloween Block Party's tonight.

JOHN
I saw the banners.

SARAH
I'll be on Main Street hiding behind my camera if you want to swing by.

He says nothing.

SARAH
I wasn't expecting an actual response. I could text you later. Do they have cell phones on Planet John?

She holds out her phone. John looks at it tentatively, then takes it. As he inputs his number, he hears the BLARE of a car horn, looks up and sees Henri waiting in his SUV.

INT. SUV - DAY

John climbs in.

HENRI
Wasn't that your friend from the other night?

JOHN
Her name's Sarah.
(annoyed)
I didn't ask for a ride home.

HENRI
Principal called. Said there was an incident.

John stares out the window, guilty.

JOHN

A guy was messing with me. I took care of it. Problem solved.

HENRI

You're stronger and faster because of Earth's gravity -- you shouldn't use that advantage to settle petty scores.

JOHN

It was no big deal. Don't blow it out of proportion.

HENRI

You can't risk everything over wounded pride.

JOHN

I wasn't looking for a fight. It just happened. Get off my back.

Henri pulls a printout from his coat. John unfolds it.

ANGLE ON PRINTOUT: It's from the Florida Keynoter website and features a photo of the charred stilt house.

John's gut churns as he stares at the image.

HENRI

Article says it was arson.

JOHN

We were clean. There's no way the Mogs can track us here.

Henri shakes his head, shifts into gear and starts off.

HENRI

They can track us anywhere. I think it's time you saw what you're really up against.

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Sunlight razors across workbenches cluttered with rusty tools. Henri and John stand in the middle of the space.

THE BOX

is open on the floor between them. John lifts his hand and holds it over the crystals.

ONE RISES.

It's white and as thick as two fingers. It floats in front of John's face. He tentatively reaches out. When he grips it, a shock wave of light blasts out, totally WIPING OUT THE FRAME and transporting him into

A VISCERAL MEMORY.

EXT. LORIEN - NIGHT

EXPLOSIONS rock and the SCREAMS of the dying echo. AN OLD MAN hustles A TERRIFIED BOY through the murderous bombardment. The air is choked with ash and smoke.

The boy is 7-year-old John. The man is his grandfather.

Young John glances up and sees

AN ARMADA OF BATTLESHIPS

eclipsing Lorien's two moons. The angular hulls of the craft are scarred from galactic battles new and ancient and unleash an endless crisscrossing FRENZY OF MISSILES.

GRANDFATHER
(in Loric with subtitles)
Keep moving.

EXT. TEMPLE - NIGHT

It wouldn't look out of place in ancient Rome. Young John and his grandfather race up the steps.

INT. SANCTUARY - TEMPLE - NIGHT

A statue of Lorien's most famous warrior, Pittacus Lore, towers in the middle of the chamber. His noble face is illuminated in a shaft of flame-tainted moonlight.

FOOTSTEPS ECHO!

Young John and his grandfather scramble across the space and straight into the path of

TWO MOGADORIAN SOLDIERS.

The Soldiers' pallid faces flash with smiles. Swords drawn, they move in for the kill when one is skewered in the throat by a crystal-handled dagger.

MAGENTA LIGHT

spurts from the wound. The Soldier's body fractures like glass and DISINTEGRATES in a shower of embers as he drops to the floor. The other Mogadorian spins and trades SPARKING sword strokes with

A CLOAKED FIGURE.

It's a violent battle of wills which ends when the Cloaked Figure kicks up the dead Soldier's sword and impales it into the Mogadorian's chest. The Soldier EVISCERATES in a cloud of HISSING cinders.

Young John watches in awed terror as the Cloaked Figure steps towards him and pulls back his hood.

IT'S HENRI.

He looks younger, the years of hiding have aged him. John's grandfather lifts a familiar crystal pendant from his neck and places it over Young John's head.

GRANDFATHER

This is your Capan. Go with him.

YOUNG JOHN

No!

HENRI

Your life is my life now. I will always protect you.

GRANDFATHER

(to Henri)

He must survive.

A BLAST scorches across the space. Henri spots

A MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

hunkered behind a column, his red coat billows behind him like a curse.

GRANDFATHER

They are already hunting you! Go!

Henri plucks a crystal ankle-dagger from his boot, grabs young John and charges up. As the Commander breaks cover, Henri hurls the dagger.

THE COMMANDER

dives out of its path but ROARS as the blade SPARK-RIPS across his right cheek like a hot poker.

EXT. TEMPLE - NIGHT

Henri yanks Young John by the hand. They take off in one direction while John's grandfather heads off in the other.

A MOGADORIAN TRANSPORT CRAFT

suddenly swoops between them. The HOWLS of its occupants ricochet through the night. The heat from its engines washes the ground, warping the destruction like a ghastly mirage as two bay doors open. Young John looks back through the heat-haze and catches a impressionistic view as

TWO PIKEN

leap out. Their reptilian bodies ripple with muscle and their oversize heads glint with raptor-like jaws. The Piken mercilessly rip into John's grandfather. Young John races to help, but Henri wrenches him back. CAMERA PUSHES IN TIGHT ON YOUNG JOHN'S FACE as he screams...

YOUNG JOHN
Nooooooooooooo!

THE MEMORY ENDS and we...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE - DAY

TIGHT ON JOHN screaming...

JOHN
Nooooooooooooo!

He drops the crystal and stumbles back. The experience has left him traumatized. Henri steps towards him, but John is too overwhelmed and runs out.

EXT. STREAM - WOODS - DAY

A stone angrily SKIPS across the water. John is about to toss another when Bernie Kosar trots into view. He ruffles the dog's fur but doesn't turn when Henri steps out of the woods and crosses to his side.

JOHN
I saw my grandfather. I saw what you did to the Mogadorians -- you saved my life.

HENRI
A lot of Lorics sacrificed their lives so that you could live.

John is still trying to process the memory.

JOHN

He said I must survive.

HENRI

The Elders had a plan. You weren't on that ship by chance. The nine of you were chosen for a reason. Even if only two of you live, together you'll pose a grave threat to our enemy.

Consumed by bitterness, John hurls another stone.

JOHN

You saw what they did to Lorien. How can nine or six or two of us take on that army? It's hopeless.

Henri knows he has to pull him out of this mournful funk.

HENRI

I never thought we'd get off Lorien alive -- but we did. I didn't know how we could survive on a strange planet -- but we have. I gave us six months before the Mogs found us -- it's been 10 years. Don't give up now.

Henri grips John's shoulders.

HENRI

You have the potential to do great things. Even if you don't see it -- I do.

JOHN

How can you put so much faith in me?

HENRI

Because your life is my life. If you quit, then everything I've worked for and sacrificed is meaningless.

(beat)

Remember -- nothing is inevitable.

The fragile SILENCE is broken when John's cell phone BLEATS. He scans a text.

JOHN
It's Sarah. The Block Party's
tonight. I'll say I can't make it.

Henri sees John is wracked with doubt and confusion.

HENRI
No... go.

John looks at him, surprised by this paternal gesture.

HENRI
You've had enough for one day.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - PARADISE - NIGHT

A Halloween parade drifts past the CROWDS packing the sidewalks. Icicle lights twinkle in the trees. EXCITED KIDS in costume zigzag past John. It's small-town Americana at its best. ET waddles by holding a JEDI's hand.

A SLAP ON GLASS.

John turns and is amused to find Sam standing among the mannequins in the display window of a sporting goods store.

INT. ED'S SPORTING GOODS STORE - NIGHT

An annoying CHIME plays as the door opens and John enters. The store is deserted. The stock needs to be updated and the shelves could use a dust. Sam approaches wearing an apron.

JOHN
You work here?

SAM
Not by choice.
(pointing to sign)
Ed's my stepdad. He's under the delusion that if people eat enough candy apples and kettle corn, they'll suddenly have the urge to buy sporting goods.

John plucks a hockey mask from the basket on the counter.

SAM
I put those on special tonight for any wannabe Jason Voorhees.

Sam pulls off his apron, revealing a T-shirt emblazoned with the words "Future Supervillain".

SAM

Screw this. Let me lock up. I'll hang with you.

He steps to the door and twists the closed sign into view.

JOHN

What about your stepdad?

SAM

He hit the tavern at 6:00. He's already hammered by now. I'll probably find him passed out on the doorstep. Every night is trick 'r treat at my house.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

John and Sam wander past the parade floats lined up along the road bordering the woods. Stalls sell hot dogs and cotton candy. John subtly scans the crowd.

SAM

She's over there.

John follows Sam's gaze and finds Sarah taking shots of some KIDS dunking for apples. She pulls the camera from her eye, sees John and smiles as he approaches.

SARAH

You made it.
(re: Sam's shirt)
Like the T-shirt, Sam.

SAM

Guidance Counsellor said I need to set goals for myself. Figured I'd aim high.

She looks back at John.

SARAH

What do you think of Halloween in Paradise?

John regards a particularly over-the-top float.

JOHN

They should pull out all the stops next year.

SARAH

Well, you haven't had the full experience until you've been on the Haunted Hayride.

She motions to the picnic area where TEENS are lining up to get on tractor-pulled hay wagons. The wagons lurch through the mouth of a giant cutout devil and into the woods.

SARAH

Give me a sec.

She steps to the face-painting booth. It's sponsored by the local realtor who is Sarah's mom, Annie. Sarah hands Annie her camera. Sam whispers to John.

SAM

I'm impressed.

Before John can respond, Sarah steps back.

SARAH

You guys ready?

SAM

Three on a wagon might get a little crowded. I'll meet you two on the other side.

He gives John a not-so-subtle wink of encouragement. John and Sarah join the end of the line and watch Sam head away.

SARAH

Sam's cool.

JOHN

Definitely unique.

SARAH

I haven't really talked to him since 8th grade. Mark had a tight circle. If you weren't a jock or cheerleader, you didn't exist.

JOHN

I'm glad you broke free.

SARAH

Me too.

OFF their growing connection...

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The path is lined with human heads piked to wooden stakes. SCREAMS, WAILS and GHOULISH HOWLS boom from hidden speakers.

OMINOUS POV: WATCHES from the trees as a wagon with John and Sarah RATTLES into view. It's driven by the GRIM REAPER.

FIVE GIANT RUBBER SPIDERS

drop from the trees. Sarah freaks as the arachnids dangle over their heads on wires. She rubs her hair, flustered, looks over at John, who is coolly amused by the cheap scares.

SARAH

Not even a flinch. None of this scares you, does it?

JOHN

I'm trembling on the inside.

He smiles.

SARAH

You can smile. I was starting to have my doubts.

She takes his hand. They CLATTER past a series of grisly tableaux:

A TEEN jerks and SCREAMS in mock agony as he is fried in an antiquated electric chair.

A BLOOD-SPLATTERED DOCTOR CACKLES as he hacksaws the legs off a CHEERLEADER chained to a gurney.

A squad of blood-hungry VAMPIRIC FOOTBALL PLAYERS attacks a rival team of WEREWOLVES.

EXT. CLEARING - WOODS - NIGHT

Ghosts float in the branches as the wagon LURCHES to a stop.

GRIM REAPER

Hell's Gate, everybody off.

The duo reluctantly clambers off the back and watches as the hay wagon circles back the way it came.

SARAH

Once we make it through, we're home free.

A SKELETON

pendulums in front of them. Sarah SCREAMS and clenches John's hand harder. A pathway of lights floods on, illuminating a skull-capped gate. The words

"YOUR NUMBER'S UP!"

are scrawled across it in fake blood.

EXT. TUNNEL - WOODS - NIGHT

John and Sarah step through the gate and enter a natural tunnel of dense, overhanging branches. A fog machine gently COUGHS, and spiderwebs stretch across the sides.

They are about 20 feet into the tunnel when the lights go out. Somewhere a CHAINSAW sputters to life. White strobe lights suddenly flare on and

TWO CHAINSAW-WIELDING ZOMBIES

burst through the gates behind them. The teens take off. It's like a flickering scene from a demented silent movie. The Zombies have almost caught up when the strobe abruptly ends. The SOUND of the chainsaws FADES and John and Sarah stop, panting and LAUGHING with relief.

SARAH
That was insane.

IT'S PITCH BLACK.

A werewolf HOWLS somewhere in the darkness. Something brushes past John's leg. He spins, suddenly unsure.

JOHN
What was that?

SARAH
Just part of the ride.

He turns, sees a flash of purple light and hears the rustle of HEAVY FOOTSTEPS on all sides.

JOHN
Are you sure?

As he steps forward,

A THICK BRANCH

cuts through the dark and viciously SMACKS John on the back. He drops to the ground like a sack. Figures emerge from the shadows and he hears a DESPERATE STRUGGLE behind him.

SARAH
Let go! Stop it!

John tries to stand, but a boot CRACKS him in the ribs. Another strikes the side of his face. He is surrounded. His attackers are brutal and unrelenting. Over the LOOPING SOUNDTRACK OF B-MOVIE NOISES, Sarah's muffled SCREAMS DIM.

JOHN
Sarah! Sa-

His voice is cut off as a fist SMASHES into his jaw and the steel cap of a combat boot SLAMS his groin. John staggers up but is viciously kicked back to the ground.

PUSH IN ON JOHN'S FACE as it hardens with blind rage. In a blur of motion he reaches up, grabs two of his attackers by their coats and hammers their skulls together. As they drop, John spins to meet his other two foes with

BLINDING PALMS OF LIGHT.

The assailants are illuminated in the phosphorescent glare. They're not Mogadorians but rather

FOOTBALL JOCKS.

One is Mark Jayne's buddy Kevin. They're wearing zombie makeup and military fatigues and have night-vision goggles strapped to their faces.

John angrily strides forward, palm outstretched.

NIGHT-VISION POV: Everything is an overexposed blur until --

WHAAAAM!!!

John brutally clotheslines one, then pummel-rams Kevin in the chest, sending him flying back 10 feet into a tree. Kevin slumps, out for the count. John arcs a glowing hand through the darkness.

SARAH IS GONE.

He plucks up the Jocks' fallen goggles and heads off with Terminator-like determination.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Sarah is carried through the woods by TWO ZOMBIE JOCKS in camouflage fatigues and night-vision goggles. She SCREAMS.

SARAH
Let go of me!

She futilely tries to wrestle free.

EXT. PICNIC AREA - WOODS - NIGHT

Sam is waiting by the exit to the hayride when he hears --

SARAH (O.S.)
 (in the woods)
 Help! Somebody!

Something about her terrified tone alerts Sam.

SAM
 Sarah?

She doesn't answer. He hesitates a moment, then charges into the woods.

INT. WOODS - NIGHT

Freaky shadows crisscross as John uses his luminescent palms to navigate his way through the labyrinth of trees.

INT. CLEARING - WOODS - NIGHT

Sam scrambles blindly through the darkness.

JOHN (O.S.)
 SARAH!

Sam turns in the direction of JOHN'S VOICE. He's about to head towards it when

TWO ZOMBIE JOCKS

trudge into view. Sam darts behind a tree. Suddenly, the area is flooded with preternatural white light. He can hear the sounds of a SCUFFLE and one of the Jocks flies past and CRASHES in a heap while the other SCREAMS.

JOCK (O.S.)
 You're blinding me! Stop!

Sam cautiously sneaks a peek, shields his eyes with a hand.

WHAT HE SEES: John pins the Jock to a tree and holds a luminous palm up to the lenses of the teen's goggles.

JOHN
 Where's Sarah? Tell me!!

JOCK
 Shepherd Falls. Now turn off that damn flashlight!

John rips off the Jock's goggles, then pile-slides him 15 feet into a rotten stump and takes off in a blur of speed. CAMERA STAYS ON SAM. OFF his stunned reaction...

CUT TO:

EXT. SHEPHERD FALLS - WOODS - NIGHT

A rocky promontory overlooks a crescent-shaped waterfall which drops into a swimming hole below. The Zombie Jocks carry Sarah into view and dump her in front of Mark. She's wild-cat angry when she sees him.

SARAH

Are you crazy! Where's John?

Mark nods the Zombie Jocks away.

MARK

Relax. It's a practical joke.

SARAH

I swear if you hurt him --

MARK

Why do you give a shit?

SARAH

Get out of my face, Mark, you're pathetic.

MARK

I'm the best thing that ever happened to you and I'm giving you one more chance.

Appalled by his hubris, Sarah turns to leave.

MARK

Don't walk away from me!

Mark grabs her. Sarah wrenches free, but loses her balance and falls back on the ground. Mark's rage is transplanted by concern. He steps towards her to help when --

JOHN (O.S.)

Back off!

Mark watches John step out. Blood trickles from a cut above John's right eye.

SARAH

John! Are you okay?

He nods. Mark looks past him, confused.

MARK

Where the hell are Kevin and Joe?

John holds up a clutch of night-vision goggles.

JOHN
They got spooked.

MARK
Hey, those are police property!

John flings them over Mark's head into the water.

MARK
I'm going to kill you!

With lightning speed, John grabs Mark's arm, spins him, pinning him to a tree. Blinded by rage, John jerks Mark's arm up behind his back.

SARAH
John! Stop!

Mark is in real pain. Transfixed with anger, John keeps twisting. Sarah looks at him, pleading.

SARAH
That's his throwing arm!

But he doesn't stop until she finally steps forward and slaps him across the face. Startled, John lets go.

SARAH
Football's all he's got.

John stumbles back, ashamed, and heads into the woods. Sarah offers Mark a look of disgust and follows after John.

EXT. TREE LINE - NIGHT

John charges into view.

SARAH
John! Wait.

Sarah catches up.

SARAH
I'm sorry, I didn't want you to break his arm.

JOHN
I'm not mad at you. I'm mad at myself.

She stops, faces him.

SARAH

I had no idea Mark would pull something like that. He has seriously gone off the deep end.

JOHN

The guy's in love with you. Wants you back.

SARAH

That's not love.

Their eyes meet in the moonlight.

SARAH

Walk me home?

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

It's a picture-book perfect neighborhood. Most of the houses are festively decorated with front-yard graveyards and cobweb-festooned trees. John walks with Sarah. They come to the prettiest house on the block.

SARAH

This is me.

John stares at the dozen jack-o'-lanterns arranged on the porch. They glare back with flickering bucktooth grins.

SARAH

I know. Wait until the Christmas decorations go up. My mom decks the halls with so many lights, you can see our house from space.

Stray TRICK-OR-TREATERS race past. She motions to the cut above his eye, concerned.

SARAH

You should see a doctor.

JOHN

For this? Wouldn't waste their time.

She looks at him, curious.

SARAH

You're not going to tell me how you took out those football players, are you?

He says nothing. She smiles.

SARAH
I really don't get you.

She steps closer.

SARAH
But I feel like I can trust you.

JOHN
You can.

The air is charged.

SARAH
Good night.

Sarah swings open the white picket gate.

JOHN
Wait.

As she turns back, John steps forward and kisses her. Although taken by surprise, Sarah quickly succumbs to his passion. However, as their kiss intensifies,

THE JACK-O'-LANTERNS

rise and hover in midair. Sarah has her back to them, but when John's eyes momentarily flicker open, he sees the orbs grinning back. Startled, he pulls away from her.

THE PUMPKINS

instantly drop and SMASH onto the porch, their candles blowing out on impact. Sarah spins and stares at the jack-o'-lanterns, pulp oozes through their cracked shells.

Suspicious, she slowly turns, looks at John for an explanation. He does his best to cover his stunned reaction.

Fat drops of RAIN begin to fall. John puts up his hood.

JOHN
I better go.

OFF Sarah, watching him melt into the downpour...

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT

Rain HAMMERS. Bernie is asleep on a blanket. John creeps into the darkness, soaked to the bone, when --

HENRI

I heard on the police scanner that eight boys were beaten up in the woods tonight.

Henri turns on a light, nursing a mug of coffee. Bernie wakes. John pulls off his hood. Henri looks at the cuts and bruises on John's face.

JOHN

They won't talk.

HENRI

That was a stupid thing to do. What were you thinking?

JOHN

They attacked me. If I hadn't defended myself, I'd be in the ER right now. Would that have been the better choice?

(stepping forward)

You've got to start trusting me!

Emotionally charged, John points his finger at Henri, accidentally causing the mug to telekinetically

EXPLODE.

Coffee and shards splatter across the floor. Henri looks at John, stunned. John shrugs sheepishly.

JOHN

I was getting to that. I got a new Legacy.

Henri absorbs that revelation.

HENRI

Telekinesis. That's a big step. Must have been triggered by the fight.

John doesn't correct him, averts his gaze.

HENRI

I need to teach you how to control these abilities. We'll start working on that tomorrow.

The conversation is suddenly interrupted by the repetitive WHINE OF AN ALARM. They cross to the bank of computers. Henri urgently stabs commands into a keyboard.

JOHN
What is it?

Henri pulls up a website.

HENRI
We got a hit on one of the search
words.
(scanning)
It's a paranormal blog. "They Walk
Among Us!"

ANGLE ON COMPUTER: A video buffers into motion. It's handheld and jerky. It WHIP-PANS over some sand and joins a group of Teens huddled over a figure lying in the surf. He's holding his ankle and light seeps between his fingers.

John's chest pounds with fear as he realizes...

JOHN
That's Sand Dollar Beach.

HENRI
Looks like a cell phone camera.
There's enough for the Mogs to ID
your face.

JOHN
Can you take it down?

Henri remains ice calm and starts typing commands.

HENRI
Working on it.

JOHN
I'm sorry, Henri.

HENRI
This isn't your fault. There's
still nothing to trace us here.

Henri glances up from his screen.

HENRI
This could take all night. Get
some sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT

John dumps his hoodie on the floor and slumps on his bed. He pulls his phone out of his jeans and sees a new text message from Sam. He CLICKS it open.

PUSH IN ON JOHN'S FACE as he scans the message with alarm.

He sits bolt-upright, gripped with dread. He checks the message again.

TIGHT ON PHONE: "I SAW WHAT U DID IN THE WOODS. NEED 2 TALK. 2NITE. MY GARAGE."

JOHN hits delete and clenches the phone in his palm. A bad night just got worse.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT

Henri is illuminated by the dirty glow on the computers. His fingers work the keys with expert precision. He's so focused on the task that he doesn't notice

JOHN

blur ACROSS THE FRAME of one of the surveillance camera screens and disappear into the woods.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John cautiously approaches. It's a '50s ranch style. The garage adjoins the house. The lights are out. RAIN bullets off the garage door which is partially concertinaed open.

INT. GARAGE - SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John slides into view. It takes a second for his eyes to adjust. A pickup sits under a white tarp. There's no sign of Sam until he Boo Radley's out of the shadows behind him.

SAM

I've narrowed it down to three possibilities: you're a genetic experiment, you're a freak of nature, or you're an extraterrestrial.

JOHN

I don't know what you think happened tonight...

Sam steps closer, watery reflections ripple down his face.

SAM

Your hands lit up like a firefly on crack, you tossed those football players around like crash test dummies, and you took off faster than an Olympic runner.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

(beat)

Did I leave anything out?

John silently reels.

JOHN

What do you want from me?

SAM

I just want to know who you are.

John looks at Sam, realizes he's not going to give up. He hesitates, then finally surrenders...

JOHN

I'm a survivor from a planet called Lorien.

Sam absorbs this confession with awe.

SAM

Your dad... he's from there too?

JOHN

Henri's not my dad. He's my Guardian. If he found out you knew about us, we'd be gone by morning.

(pleading)

I don't want to leave Paradise.

SAM

I won't tell anyone.

John nods, grateful.

SAM

There's something I want to show you.

CUT TO:

The tarp is whipped off the pickup truck. It's an old Ford. Sam and John stand before it.

SAM

The cops found it abandoned in the middle of Route 20, just south of White Sands, New Mexico. It was my dad's. He went missing six years ago. He was on one of his crazy fact-finding trips. He believed we weren't alone in the universe.

Sam rubs his hand across the hood, wondering.

SAM

Mom figured he was having an affair and took off. All these years I thought she was right. Now you're here.

JOHN

That doesn't prove anything.

SAM

It proves he wasn't crazy. I'm starting to think that he didn't bail on us... that maybe something else happened out there -- that he was taken.

The moment is broken by the SLAM of the front door and the sound of ANGRY FOOTSTEPS. Sam instantly tenses.

SAM

Guess the bar closed.

ED (O.S.)

Sam! Where are you?

His speech is slurred and aggressive.

ED (O.S.)

You think I wouldn't hear you locked up early!

John looks at Sam, shocked and concerned.

JOHN

You going to be okay?

SAM

If he finds you here, it'll be worse.

(beat)

Go.

Sam crosses to the door leading into the main house and heads inside. SHOUTS erupt almost immediately. John flinches, wanting to intervene, but finally turns, hustles under the garage door and slips into the night...

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY

Henri is hammering at the keyboard of one of his computers. John enters with two mugs of coffee.

JOHN
You look wiped.

Henri turns and smiles playfully.

HENRI
I wasn't the only who was up last
night.

John nervously hands Henri one of the cups and lies...

JOHN
Sarah texted me. I went over to
her house.

Henri buys the explanation and swings back to his computers.

HENRI
I've tried every trick I know, but
I can't crack that blog's firewall.

JOHN
There must be a way.

HENRI
We need to find where the site's
located and take it offline
manually. The URL source has been
run through a labyrinth of servers,
it could take weeks to track down.

JOHN
I want to help.

Henri takes a gulp of coffee and stands.

HENRI
You can. Get changed.

CUT TO:

START MONTAGE:

EXT. BACK YARD - HOUSE - DAY

TIGHT ON A WELDING TORCH as it's sparked to life.

Its flame HISSES as Henri sweeps it towards John, who is standing shirtless. Bernie watches, curious, as Henri washes the flame harmlessly up John's naked arm and torso.

INT. HALL - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

The walls are now adorned with Thanksgiving banners. John and Sam head past the lockers. Mark and the Jocks move out of their way, acknowledging the new high school dynamic.

INT. KITCHEN - HOUSE - NIGHT

Using his telekinesis, John strains to lift a tennis ball. It momentarily RATTLES, then stops. Henri is not impressed.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Bernie darts ahead as John and Sarah walk through a crimson cascade of falling leaves. As they kiss, the leaves around them freeze midair and slowly begin to drift upwards.

INT. GARAGE - SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John helps Sam with a dusty box. It's stuffed with Sam's dad's old papers and books. We CATCH tantalizing glimpses of images: Stonehenge, Machu Picchu, the Rings of Saturn...

INT. INTERNET CAFE - NASHVILLE - DAY

It's a Vandy student hangout. CAMERA DRIFTS over a row of computer terminals and FINDS the Teen Girl who torched the stilt house. She's studying her computer screen intently.

REVERSE TO REVEAL: She is watching the cell phone footage of John on the "They Walk Among Us" blog.

INT. KITCHEN - HOUSE - DAY

Under Henri's watchful gaze, John focuses on a tennis ball. It RISES. John grins in triumph, causing the ball to drop and bounce on the floor. Strike two.

INT. CAFETERIA - PARADISE HIGH - DAY

Mark silently stews when he sees Sarah and John sitting together at a table.

EXT. BACK YARD - HOUSE - DAY

Bernie pogos on his back legs, trying to bite the tennis ball that John telekinetically hovers just out of the dog's reach.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON A LAPTOP scrolling with endless lines of URL addresses. REVERSE TO REVEAL Henri studying the screen. Waiting. Watching.

EXT. BACK YARD - HOUSE - DAY

John is fully submerged in an old claw-foot tub.

GO TO JOHN'S DISTORTED VIEW LOOKING UP at Henri as he drops a match into the tub. The liquid instantly IGNITES and we realize John's lying in gasoline. He sits up, rests his hands behind his head as the FLAMES harmlessly lick his face.

INT. BACK YARD - HOUSE - DAY

The trees are now bare. John stands 20 feet from Henri and nods. Henri flicks the switch of an automated tennis ball server. John's face is a mask of concentration as the yellow balls fly towards him. He holds up his hand and the balls

STOP IN MIDAIR.

It's like they've hit an invisible wall two feet from his hand. They hang there. John sees a smile sneak onto Henri's face and momentarily loses focus, causing the wall to collapse and the balls to drop into the mud.

END MONTAGE.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Bernie looks like a drowned rat. He's sitting in the tub being scrubbed by John and Sarah.

SARAH

I don't see any family pictures around. I guess the photo aversion is hereditary.

He greets the observation with a shrug. She carries on.

SARAH

Your mom... grandparents. Is there anyone else in your life?

JOHN

They died.

SARAH

I'm sorry.

JOHN

It was a long time ago. It's just me and my dad now.

John uses a nail brush to clean the beagle's ears.

SARAH

I get the feeling he doesn't like me very much.

JOHN

It takes him a while to warm up to people.

Sarah considers this.

SARAH

Thanksgiving's tomorrow. Why don't you bring your dad and celebrate with us?

JOHN

I don't know. Are there going to be a lot of people?

SARAH

A tsunami of relatives. But don't worry, I'll shield you from the wave. Besides, I want everyone to meet you.

She playfully splashes him. Their faces inch closer. They begin making out hot and heavy until Henri suddenly walks in.

HENRI

I've found the --

Caught in the act, the teens lurch away from each other.

JOHN

Just giving Bernie a quick bath.

HENRI

You're clearly putting a lot of effort into it.

SARAH

I better hit the road.

(to John)

See you tomorrow. Twoish.

(grabbing backpack)

Bye, Mr. Smith.

OFF John as she hustles out...

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY

Henri sits in front of his computers. John enters with Bernie, who is wrapped in a beach towel. He begins drying the dog in front of the fire. Henri breaks the silence.

HENRI

I finally tracked the location of that blog. It's a house in Warsaw, Indiana. About four hours from here. I'm heading up there tomorrow.

JOHN

Sarah invited us to Thanksgiving. I told her we'd be there.

HENRI

Send my regrets.

JOHN

You shouldn't go alone. It could be dangerous.

HENRI

I won't risk taking you. I'll leave early and be back by five.

John looks up and sees Henri sitting in solitude.

JOHN

Don't you ever get lonely?

Surprised by the question, Henri swivels to face him.

HENRI

How could I? I have you.

JOHN

You know what I mean. All these years, there's never been anyone.

HENRI

We aren't like humans. Once we fall in love, it's for life. The pain of separation is unbearable.

Henri's face clouds with melancholy and he abruptly gets up. As he heads into the kitchen John studies him with new eyes.

INT. KITCHEN - HOUSE - DAY

Steam billows as Henri washes up. He keeps his back to John when he enters. John waits then softly asks...

JOHN

What was her name?

Henri slots a plate onto the draining board.

HENRI

Anastasia.

JOHN

You left her to save me.

HENRI

You're not responsible for what happened to her -- they are.

He slowly turns and regards John with deep paternal concern.

HENRI

I looked at her the way you look at Sarah.

(beat)

She can't come with us when we leave -- and we always have to leave, you know that.

John nods, not wanting to deal with that reality.

HENRI

I was hoping to protect you from that pain.

JOHN

You can't protect me from everything.

OFF Henri's sad smile of acknowledgement...

CUT TO:

EXT. SARAH'S HOUSE - DAY

The Halloween decorations have been replaced by a Thanksgiving display.

Wearing khakis and a pale blue Oxford, John tentatively walks up the front path. The warm sound of LAUGHTER drifts from inside. He takes a breath and rings the doorbell.

INT. KITCHEN - SARAH'S HOUSE - DAY

It's like a Norman Rockwell cover come to life. Every inch of counter space is filled with platters of food.

John watches Sarah, Annie, and a boisterous ASSORTMENT OF RELATIVES put the finishing touches to the Thanksgiving feast. KIDS rush in and out in a manic game of tag.

John is captivated by the sense of family and celebration -- things he's never known in his own life. Sarah steps over. She's wearing a funky-cool vintage dress.

SARAH
Come on, we're on gravy-boat duty.

INT. DINING ROOM - SARAH'S HOUSE - DAY

The table is decorated with garlands of autumn leaves and an elaborate pine cone centerpiece. Sarah places the last turkey-shaped gravy boat onto the table. She smiles at John.

SARAH
You look dazed.

JOHN
Just taking it all in.

She crosses.

SARAH
I'm glad you came.

They tenderly kiss until Annie bustles in carrying a steaming bowl of mashed potatoes.

ANNIE
Don't mind me.

She puts the bowl on the table and grabs Sarah's camera.

ANNIE
Let's get a picture of you two lovebirds.

Sarah cringes as Annie lifts the camera to her eye.

SARAH
Mom. No. John really doesn't like having his --

JOHN
It's okay. Let her take it.

The gesture means the world to Sarah. He puts his arm around her. Sarah nestles her face against his. As the flash WIPES OUT THE FRAME...

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Red candles flicker. Sarah's DAD is expertly carving the turkey. Everybody is at the table. John sits next to Sarah. She holds his hand under the table. It's Hallmark worthy until the carriage clock on the mantel CHIMES.

IT'S SIX O'CLOCK.

John looks at his phone. No messages. His brow creases with concern. He turns to Sarah, whispers.

JOHN
I need to check in with Henri.

He exits.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John speed dials as he steps out into the cold. He holds the phone to his ear. It rings three times and then is answered.

JOHN
(into phone)
Henri?

CLICK. The call is hung up. Suddenly on edge, John redials. This time it's picked up immediately.

JOHN
(into phone)
Henri?

MAN (V.O.)
(over phone)
Are you one of them too?

John reacts to the chilling menace of the Man's tone.

JOHN
(into phone)
Who are you? Where's Henri?

CLICK. John jerks the phone from his ear and stares at it, panicked. He paces, desperate and unsure, then gets an idea and punches another number.

JOHN
(into phone)
I need your help.

INT. DINING ROOM - SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The food is getting cold. Everybody is waiting for John. Sarah catches her mother's disapproving look.

SARAH
I'll see what's taking him so long.

EXT. PORCH - SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sarah steps out just in time to see John climb into a pickup truck. It's the one from Sam's garage.

SARAH

John!

He looks back.

JOHN

It's Henri. I have to go. Sorry.

OFF her confused disappointment as the truck SQUEALS away...

INT. PICKUP - NIGHT - MOVING

Sam is behind the wheel.

JOHN

Thanks. I owe you.

SAM

Anything to get out of Thanksgiving at my house.

He offers John a weary smile.

SAM

I checked out that blog on the way over. Saw the video. What was the deal with your ankle?

John pulls up his khakis, shows Sam the trio of scars.

JOHN

Death scars.

SAM

They kind of look like the symbols in my dad's research.

(thinking)

You guys don't --

JOHN

Abduct people? No.

Irritated, he covers them back up.

SAM

How about the ones you said were hunting you?

JOHN

They're capable of anything.

(urgent)

We need to get to Warsaw -- now.

Suddenly, John's cell phone RINGS. He snatches it up, but is disappointed to see the name "SARAH" flashing on the LCD. He hits ignore and the truck hurtles into the dark.

CUT TO:

EXT. WARSAW HOUSE - NIGHT

It's a dilapidated Victorian. Mist shrouds the yard which is littered with junked cars and trash. The pickup crawls to a stop in the shadows across the street.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

The teens sit in silence.

JOHN
Number 417. Henri tracked the URL
to that house.

Sam scans the street.

SAM
I don't see his SUV anywhere.

JOHN
He would have parked it across
town.

Sam opens the glove compartment and pulls out a revolver.

SAM
Stole it from Ed.
(beat)
Let's move.

John yanks Sam's arm away from the door handle.

JOHN
I called you because I needed a
ride, not a sidekick. If I could
have run here, I would have.
(beat)
Go home. I'll call you when I get
back.

OFF Sam as John climbs out alone...

EXT. WARSAW HOUSE - NIGHT

It's graveyard quiet. John nervously sneaks down the side of the house. His breath fogs as he inch-CREAKS up the wooden steps to

THE KITCHEN PORCH.

He squats in front of the door. He holds up a luminescent palm and uses it like a flashlight to sweep the interior.

WHAT HE SEES: Take-out boxes litter the filthy counter. The sink is swamped with dirty dishes. The light washes across a semiautomatic sitting by a packet of Lucky Strikes.

SAM (O.S.)
See anything?

Annoyed, John spins and finds Sam creeping towards him.

JOHN
I told you to go!

SAM
They might know where my dad is!

John realizes Sam is determined. He sweeps his hand back over the kitchen door. His palm illuminates a familiar

CRYSTAL-HANDLED DAGGER.

It's lying on the counter by the fridge.

JOHN
Henri's here.

John "turns off" his palm and reaches for the door handle. Sam anxiously swats his arm away.

SAM
Wait! Other than strength, speed and night-light, what powers have you got?

JOHN
Telekinesis -- but that's a work in progress.

SAM
No invisibility, X-ray vision, flight?

JOHN
Sam, we drove here.

Sam takes a deep breath, psyching himself up.

SAM
Okay. I'm ready. Let's do it.

But as John reaches for the door handle, the kitchen light suddenly turns on and a MAN enters. He's built like a wrestler and goes by the name of FRANK.

INT. KITCHEN - WARSAW HOUSE - NIGHT

With a Lucky Strike clenched between his lips, Frank picks up the packet on the table and is pissed to discover it's empty. He crushes it in his fist and crosses to the door.

EXT. BACK PORCH - WARSAW HOUSE - NIGHT

John and Sam are gone. Frank steps out and locks the door. He flicks away his cigarette as he heads down the stairs. CAMERA FOLLOWS the butt as it cartwheels into

SAM'S LAP.

He's crouched next to John at the side of the porch. He frantically begins trying to extinguish the stub. John clamps his hand over Sam's mouth and snuffs the cigarette between his fingers. Once Frank's safely around the corner, John releases his hand.

The duo silently climbs onto the porch. John squats in front of the door. His hand shakes as he holds it out towards the lock and concentrates.

SAM

Hurry up. Hurry up. Hurry up.

There's a LOUD CLICK.

SAM

You just dead bolted it! Way to go!

JOHN

New plan -- follow Lucky Strike. Text me if he comes back.

Sam sneaks off after Frank.

INT. KITCHEN - WARSAW HOUSE - NIGHT

TIGHT ON LOCK as the dead bolt turns by itself and the door swings open. John cautiously crosses the threshold. He holds up his right hand, dims his palm to a dull-blue glow. He retrieves Henri's dagger and tentatively heads into...

INT. HALL - WARSAW HOUSE - NIGHT

Everything is filmed with dust. It's freezing and John's BREATH FOGS in the hazy aura his palm casts. The naked floorboards CREAK. Fear bites as John scans the lifeless gloom, not sure where to start.

TIGHT ON HIS SHOE as it brushes a mousetrap. SNAP!

His breath catches in his throat. He "turns off" his hand. His heart thumps as he waits for something to react to the noise. But nothing does. As his eyes adjust to the dark, he notices a rectangle of light faintly leaking from the door that leads down into...

INT. BASEMENT - WARSAW HOUSE - NIGHT

The ancient stairs sag as John slowly descends. The space is illuminated by a single naked bulb. The sound of DRIPPING WATER hammers the silence. John scans the rabbit warren of rooms and sees a figure chained to a chair in the corner.

JOHN

Henri!

He races over. But as he reaches for Henri's gag, a YOUNG MAN steps out of the shadows holding a baseball bat. John turns too late and the bat strikes his left side. He drops the dagger as he falls to the floor, his ribs searing. The man, BRET, raises the bat again. John focuses his mind.

THE BAT

whips out of Bret's grip and torpedoes towards John -- who ducks out of the way as the bat flies past. Confused, Bret lurches forward. John scrambles for the bat, clenches it in his hand, and swings it into the young man's legs.

BRET

knocks the light as he topples into a column and CRASHES onto the cement, out cold. It's over in a violent blur. John sits stunned for a moment. The swinging bulb casts surreal shadows as he spins back to Henri, telekinetically "unlocks" the padlock securing the chains, and rips off the gag.

Henri is groggy and his face is swollen from brutal beatings.

HENRI

You shouldn't be here.

JOHN

Your life is my life, remember?

Henri tries to shake his drug-induced haze.

HENRI

I talked my way in. Thought the big guy was buying it.

He rubs a wound on his neck.

HENRI

I was asking him about the video
when the other one shot me from
behind... some sort of animal
trang.

(dispirited)

I'm getting rusty.

Suddenly, John's phone VIBRATES. It's a message from Sam --
"GET OUT NOW!"

JOHN

We have to leave!

John helps Henri up, they race for the stairs when Bret's
hand grabs John's ankle, tripping him to the floor.

JOHN

Henri!

Henri smashes his boot into Bret's face, knocking him out for
good. John staggers up, they spin for the stairs just as

SAM AND FRANK

head down them into view. Frank holds the revolver against
Sam's neck. Their shadows crisscross under the swaying bulb.

FRANK

Stay planted or I'll blow your
friend's head off.

Henri looks at John in shock.

JOHN

(re: Sam)

He came to help.

John and Henri put up their hands. John focuses on the gun,
but as the light bulb sweeps past, he causes it to EXPLODE.

THE ROOM PLUNGES INTO DARKNESS.

Henri body-slams Frank, sending the revolver skittering. But
as he wrenches Sam to safety,

THE KEYS

to the pickup fly out of Sam's pocket and slide under the
stairs. John flashes on his palm, casting everything in
eerie blue light.

On all fours, Frank scrambles for the fallen weapon. It's
almost within reach when he is lifted right off the ground by
an invisible force.

Sam looks over at John, impressed.

FRANK
(freaking out)
You're the one from the video!
You're the one they're after.

With tremendous telekinetic effort, John slams Frank against the ceiling.

JOHN
Tell me what you know!

Franks says nothing. John trains his palm light on the big man's face. It's like a blinding interrogation lamp.

JOHN
Start talking!

FRANK
I don't know what they're called.
The one in the red coat said he'd
kill me if I didn't do what he
wanted.

This revelation stuns Henri.

HENRI
The Mogadorians... they've been
here?

Frank nods in terror.

FRANK
He told me to call if anyone came
asking about the video.

Sweat beads John's face from the mental exertion.

JOHN
Did you?

FRANK
(re: Henri)
They wanted me to hold your friend
until they got here.

Henri urgently retrieves Sam's gun and his dagger.

HENRI
We need to go! Now!

John "releases" Frank, who drops onto the floor like a whale and is knocked out. At that moment, a razor-thin line of dust drops from the floorboards above.

SOMEONE IS UPSTAIRS.

John immediately extinguishes his palm. The trio stands frozen, necks craned up, ears pricked as the floorboards CREAK above them. They are definitely not alone.

INT. HALL - WARSAW HOUSE - NIGHT

FOUR MOGADORIAN SOLDIERS stalk through the house. Their long black coats SILENTLY sweep. One sniffs the air like a bloodhound and motions towards the basement door...

INT. BASEMENT - WARSAW HOUSE - NIGHT

BLAAAAM! -- the door is shredded off its hinges and flies down the stairs. The Mogadorian patrol storms through the cloud of splinters. Frank and Bret lie where they fell, but there's no sign of John, Henri or Sam.

Pissed, one of the Mogadorians strides towards a small blacked-out window. He punches out the glass with his fist and catches sight of Sam clambering over the back fence!

INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

John, Henri and Sam pile in.

JOHN

Sam, get us out of here!

Sam reaches into his jeans, then frantically checks his pockets.

SAM

I must have dropped the keys!

Henri keeps his cool, looks at John.

HENRI

Start the engine.

JOHN

I can't.

Henri's calm eyes never leave him.

HENRI

Yes, you can.

John nods, puts his hand on the dash and closes his eyes. The engine TURNS OVER but doesn't start. Sam looks up the street, panicked, as

A MOGADORIAN

climbs out of a black SUV and storms towards them.

SAM

Hurry up!

John's brow is furrowed with concentration. The Mog unsheathes his sword as he runs. With a superhuman leap, he lands on the hood -- TWAAAAACK! John and Henri spin out of the way as the sword SHATTERS the windshield and impales in the back of the seat, missing them by a mouse hair.

As the Mogadorian withdraws the sword to strike again, Henri sweeps up his dagger and stakes it into the Mog's neck.

VRRRROOMMM!

The engine ROARS to life. The Mogadorian tumbles off the hood, magenta light spurting from his wound. John turns to Sam, who is petrified, and SCREAMS...

JOHN

DRIVE!

Sam wrenches the shaft into gear and floors the gas. The Mogadorian EVISCERATES in a frenzy of embers. The truck bursts through the blizzard of sparks and STREAK-PEELS away.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT - WARSAW HOUSE - NIGHT

CAMERA TRACKS the swish of a familiar red coat as its owner slowly descends the stairs, PANS UP PAST his right hand, which methodically twists two meditation balls, TO REVEAL

THE MOGADORIAN COMMANDER.

He's the one who slaughtered Number 3 in Africa. His men part as he steps into view and crosses to Frank and Bret who are chained to chairs. A Soldier stands behind each one. Frank looks at the Commander in terror.

FRANK

I called you like I said. It's not my fault they got away!

The Commander steps into the moonlight that seeps through the window. We get our first good look at his face. A gnarled scar runs down his right cheek, identifying him as the same Mogadorian Henri wounded in the escape from Lorien. His skin is deathly pale and his eyes have a cold purple tint.

MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

Where did they go?

His accent is thick and his voice is unnerving.

FRANK

How should I know? The kid had me
pinned to the ceiling.

The Commander turns to Bret.

MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

Where did they go?

Bret is too freaked to even speak. The Commander nods to the
Soldiers. They grab Frank and Bret by the heads and yank
open their mouths. Frank watches in confused terror as the
Commander holds one of the meditation balls.

DOZENS OF TINY RAZOR-BLADES

suddenly flower open across its surface and viciously spin.
With cold-blooded calm, the Commander drops the ball into
Frank's mouth. OFF its terrible DRILL-LIKE WHIR...

CUT TO:

EXT. STRIP MALL - DAWN

Vermillion clouds streak the heavens. Sam's truck pulls up
next to Henri's SUV, which is inconspicuously parked in front
of a 24-hour pharmacy.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAWN

John turns to Sam.

JOHN

We'll meet you back at the house.

HENRI

We're not going back to Paradise.

(to Sam)

Thank you for your help, but you'll
never see us again.

Henri climbs out. Sam looks at John, confused.

SAM

Is he serious?

John nods, numb.

SAM

What am I supposed to tell people?

JOHN
 Nothing. Forget about us. We
 never existed.
 (beat)
 Goodbye, Sam.

OFF Sam as John climbs out...

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

It's a rundown dump on the bleak edge of a no-name town.

INT. SUV - DAY

John silently stews. BIKERS smoke at the edge of the grimy pool which is drained for the winter and rattles with frozen leaves. Henri steps out of the motel office with a key.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Henri lets John inside, chains the door and draws the sun-bleached curtains.

HENRI
 We leave at nightfall.

JOHN
 Henri, this is insane. They still
 don't know where we live.

Henri seethes.

HENRI
 It's only a matter of time. They
 know our faces. They saw Sam. How
 long has he known?

JOHN
 Since Halloween.

Henri is floored and hurt by the admission.

HENRI
 I trusted you and you lied to me!

John bows his head, can't meet Henri's gaze.

JOHN
 Only because I knew how you'd react
 and I didn't want to leave
 Paradise.

Henri paces, tries to quell his emotions.

HENRI

Now we don't have a choice. The Mogs are using humans to trap us. From this point on -- no more towns. No more schools. We're going off the grid until we find the others.

JOHN

No.

His tone is defiant.

HENRI

This isn't a discussion.

In a flash of pent-up anger, John holds up his hand and telekinetically sweeps Henri off his feet and pins him against the wall. Henri looks at him, stunned.

JOHN

I'm not leaving without saying goodbye to Sarah.

Henri fixes him with a steel-edged stare.

HENRI

Let. Me. Down.

Spent, John releases Henri who slides to the floor, shaken. The dynamics of their relationship forever changed. Henri finally stands.

HENRI

Give me your phone and IDs.

John hands him his cell phone and wallet. Henri opens the back of the phone and pulls out the SIM card. SNAP!

HENRI

John Smith dies today.

CUT TO:

EXT. WARSAW HOUSE - DAY

REPORTERS and LOOKIE-LOOS watch from behind the crime scene tape that crisscrosses the street. CAMERA ZEROES IN on

THE TEEN GIRL.

She's the one we saw in Nashville and who torched the stilt house. Her eyes study the STREAM OF POLICE that hustles in and out of the house carrying evidence Baggies and equipment.

INT. BASEMENT - WARSAW HOUSE - DAY

A CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHER methodically catalogs the grim, blood-soaked nightmare. He's in a full body suit and booties. The flashgun mounted to his camera whitewashes the space as a UNIFORM COP appears on the stairs.

UNIFORM COP

The Chief wants to send the morgue boys in and seal this tomb.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hope they haven't had lunch yet. These guys were gutted from the inside out.

He steps over to Frank's body which has been splayed open. As he flashes off some shots, the

TEEN GIRL

appears in the corner of his viewfinder. She's kneeling by Frank's severed head which has rolled a short distance from the body. The Photographer pulls the camera away from his eye and looks at the Teen Girl, confused.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Who the hell are you?

She ignores him. He glances at the only window which is 20 feet away on the other side of the room.

PHOTOGRAPHER

How'd you get in?

The Girl continues examining Frank's wounds. Totally unnerved, the Photographer shouts up the stairs.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hey, we've got a live one down here.

When he spins back, the Girl is gone, vanished into thin air.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S TRUCK - DAY

TIGHT ON A DIRT DEVIL as it snorts up beads of broken glass. REVEAL SAM cleaning the evidence of the previous night's adventure. Cardboard covers the missing passenger window.

EXT. DRIVE - SAM'S HOUSE - DAY

Sam climbs out of the truck and is startled by Sarah.

SARAH
Where is he, Sam?

SAM
I don't know.

He tries to avoid eye contact, but she is determined.

SARAH
What happened last night? I've
tried calling him all day. But his
number's no longer in service.

SAM
Forget about him, Sarah.

Incredulous, she grabs his arm.

SARAH
I'm not going anywhere until you
tell me what's going on.

SAM
He left with Henri and he isn't
coming back. Ever.
(pulling free)
I'm sorry.

OFF Sarah, shattered...

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWER - MOTEL ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

John stands under the steaming spray. Eyes screwed shut.
Naked and lost. TWO LOUD KNOCKS at the door.

HENRI (O.S.)
(through door)
Taillights in five.

EXT. MOTEL - LATE AFTERNOON

The GROUP OF BIKERS by the pool has grown four fold. They're
partying hard. Henri keeps his head down as he passes.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

The FEMALE CLERK stares at the TV mounted on the wall. She's
watching a local news report about the Warsaw house murders.
Henri enters. The window RATTLES as a motorcycle speeds past
and he slides his key onto the counter.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Henri steps in and is annoyed to hear the SHOWER still running. He strides to the bathroom door.

HENRI

John?

No answer. He KNOCKS. Still nothing.

INT. BATHROOM - MOTEL ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Henri shoulder-rams the door open. He whips back the shower curtain and stares at the empty tub.

JOHN IS GONE.

OFF Henri's grim concern...

EXT. HIGHWAY - DUSK

The sky is twilight blue. A gleaming Harley ROARS around the bend, going full throttle. John is on its back. The wind whips his hair. Eyes set forward. Headed back to Paradise.

CUT TO:

EXT. SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Annie opens the front door and is surprised to find John.

ANNIE

Little late for dessert.

JOHN

I need to talk to Sarah.

ANNIE

She's not here. Some friends dragged her to a party at Mark Jayne's.

John absorbs this news, turns. Annie steps out after him.

ANNIE

I don't usually pry into my daughter's love life, I certainly didn't want my mother in mine -- but Sarah's my youngest and she's special to me.

JOHN

She's special to me too.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The big, two-story property dominates the end of a cul-de-sac. TEENS stream up the drive. Cars are parked end to end down the street. CAMERA CRANES TO MEET John as he charges into view on the stolen motorcycle.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALL - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MUSIC THROBS. John works his way through the throng of partying TEENS. He passes a RED-HAIRED TEEN BOY recording the event on a FlipVideo camera. A hand grips John's shoulder. John turns to find Mark Jayne.

MARK

You weren't invited.

JOHN

Where's Sarah?

MARK

She doesn't want to see you.

John shoves him aside and heads for the sweeping stairs...

INT. BASEMENT - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's been transformed into a major makeout den. Candles line the windowsills and ring the edge of the pool table. TEENAGE COUPLES grope in the flickering half-light.

JOCK

Everybody upstairs! Kevin's going for the beer bong record!

The Teens immediately bolt for the stairs. In the giddy exodus, one of them accidentally brushes

A CANDLE

onto the white shag rug.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John heads down the burgundy hall which is lined with family portraits. He glances in the rooms as he passes.

INT. GUEST ROOM - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sarah and her friend, EMILY, sit on the bed with Mark's two dogs, Abby and Dozer. A wedge of light cuts across them as the door opens and John steps in.

SARAH

John!

She leaps up and hugs him. John waits as Emily exits.

JOHN
I'm sorry about last night.

She pulls away, her relief turning to anger.

SARAH
No. Not good enough. Sam said you were never coming back. What are you doing here?

JOHN
I couldn't leave without seeing you one last time.

She looks at him, crushed.

SARAH
So it's true. What's going on? What kind of trouble are you and your dad in?

JOHN
We're going to be fine.

SARAH
Damn it! Whatever it is, I'll understand -- just tell me the truth.

JOHN
The truth is I'm not who you think I am. You need to forget about me. Okay?

SARAH
Why are you acting like this?

JOHN
Because it's the only way to keep you safe.

SARAH
Safe from what?

He turns away, shields her from his torment.

JOHN
Goodbye, Sarah.

He doesn't look back as he walks out the door. CAMERA STAYS ON SARAH as she sinks onto the bed and the dogs comfort her.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Party-goers pack the hall and kitchen watching Kevin consume an impossible amount of beer through a funnel and hose.

TEENS

Drink! Drink! Drink!

Drained and numb, John heads the other way and fails to notice the smoke seeping from under the basement door.

EXT. MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John strides down the driveway, bleak-faced. He's about to straddle the motorcycle when he hears a muffled EXPLOSION. He looks back and sees

SMOKE

billowing from the side of the house. He bolts towards the front door, SCREAMS at a JOCK as he passes.

JOHN

Call 911!

As he races inside...

INT. MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's total chaos. Smoke and FLAMES plume up from the basement. Terrified Teens scramble. John thrashes through the crowd, SHOUTING --

JOHN

Sarah!

EXT. BACK YARD - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The panicked evacuation spills out. A window EXPLODES and orange flames lick the cold night air. John sees Emily stumble out clutching one of Mark's dogs, Abby.

JOHN

Where's Sarah?

EMILY

Went back for Dozer.

Another EXPLOSION rocks. A COUPLE of drunk Jocks CHEER. John looks back at the house. The fire has taken hold with incredible speed. The living room curtains are ABLAZE.

A DOG'S HAUNTING HOWL

cuts over the sound of the HISSING FLAMES. It's coming from the second floor. John charges past Mark, towards the house.

MARK

It's too late. You can't get through!

John ignores him and runs into the inferno.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FLAMES sprint up the walls and clouds of black smoke spew from the sectional sofa. Immune to the heat, John heads into the front hall and finds

THE STAIRCASE

is fully engulfed. Fearless, he clambers up the flaming steps. His jeans and shirt catch fire. He's almost reached the top when the staircase BREAKS AWAY behind him and DISINTEGRATES in a cloud of embers.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's a raging conflagration. The family portraits blister on the walls. John beelines towards Dozer's PLAINTIVE WAIL which reverberates over the UGLY ROAR of the fire.

INT. GUEST ROOM - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sarah is crouched by the heavy oak bed that dominates the corner of the room, COUGHING, eyes burning from the smoke and heat. Dozer is cowered underneath, HOWLING. Sarah desperately tries to move the bed but it won't budge.

CRAAAACK!

The door rips off its hinges. Through the smoky half-light, Sarah watches as John strides into the room, heroically backlit by flame.

SARAH

John!

(frantic)

Dozer's under the bed. He's too scared to come out!

John strides forward, grips the bed with one hand and effortlessly hoists it. Sarah looks at him, amazed, then scrambles forward and gently scoops Dozer into her arms. John puts the bed back down.

JOHN

Don't let go of him. I promise I won't let go of you.

As he lifts them...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The trio heads into the hall just as an 8-foot section of the floor collapses in front of them. Unfazed, John sprints forward and bridges the hole.

ANGLE ON SARAH as she stares at the burning chasm in terror and grips Dozer tighter.

John touches down on the other side and doesn't slow as he powers down the hall, which is a SHRIEKING tunnel of fire.

A BURNING BEAM

breaks free and swings down in front of them. Sarah SCREAMS, but watches in stunned amazement as John sweeps it out of the way with a telekinetic flick of his hand.

EXT. SIDE - MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The second-floor window SHATTERS as John leaps out holding Sarah and Dozer. A ROARING tongue of fire whips his back as he drops to the ground and touches down with Sarah and Dozer. COUGHING and shell-shocked, Sarah puts the dog down.

JOHN

You okay?

She stares at him, unsure.

SARAH

You walked through that fire
without getting burned. I saw you
stop that beam.

SIRENS wail in the distance.

JOHN

I'll explain everything... but not
here...

(offering his hand)

Sarah... please?

As they take off into the woods, the IMAGE FREEZES, then REWINDS. John and Sarah kneel in the shadows, then FLY BACKWARDS up through the window and INTO the burning house.

REVERSE TO REVEAL the Red-Haired Teen watching playback on his FlipVideo camera, amazed. He runs to the back of the house and finds Mark.

RED-HAIRED TEEN
 (re: video)
 Check this out, man!

PUSH IN as Mark stares at the footage, stunned.

CUT TO:

INT. WOODS - NIGHT

John and Sarah walk in SILENCE, dappled in moonlight. He catches her staring at him.

JOHN
 Please don't look at me like that.

SARAH
 I'm sorry. I'm still trying to process everything I saw and I keep coming to the same conclusion -- what you did isn't possible.

JOHN
 It is for me.

SARAH
 Who are you?
 (off his hesitation)
 For once please tell me the truth.

It's the hardest thing he's ever had to do.

JOHN
 My name isn't John. I don't have a name, just a number. 4. In fact, my whole life can be reduced to numbers: like 15 million -- that's how many light years it takes to get from my planet to Earth. 38 -- that's how many towns I've lived in. Or 3,671 -- that's how many days I've been running from an enemy that wants me dead. I lied to you, Sarah, because I lie to everyone. That's how I stay alive.

Tears of relief brim as he finally reveals his soul.

JOHN
 I shouldn't be telling you any of this. It's dangerous.

Emotionally spent, John leans against a tree. She steps towards him and brushes her hand down his cheek.

SARAH

I don't care. I just want to be with you.

JOHN

I want that too. But if I stay you could get hurt. I have to leave to keep you safe.

Sarah absorbs the bitter reality, reaches for his hand.

SARAH

There's something I want to give you first.

CUT TO:

INT. DARKROOM - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

A PHOTOGRAPH OF SARAH AND JOHN

sharpens INTO FOCUS. It's the one Annie took of them at Thanksgiving. John and Sarah stand in the eerie red glow. She gently tongs the image into a bath of fixing solution.

SARAH

So you'll always remember me.

With exquisite tenderness they kiss. John's palms shimmer. The intensity of the luminescence builds with their rising passion. They sink to the floor and the light crescendos in an ethereal flash that BLEACHES OUT THE FRAME.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The spinning lights of a trio of fire trucks FLARE THE LENS. CREWS hose down the last smoking embers. A DEPUTY approaches Mark, who is standing by a police cruiser.

DEPUTY

The FBI showed up flashing their badges. Wanna talk to you.

As he points to a black SUV that's parked down the street.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Mark climbs in the back. He looks around nervously as the vehicle starts off.

MARK

Where are we going? Is this about the fire? It was an accident.

Only now do we REVERSE TO REVEAL

THE MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

sitting in the back. His face is masked in shadow.

MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

We're hunting for one of the guests
at your party.

He holds up a netbook which flashes with the FlipVideo
footage of John's rescue of Sarah. It's posted on YouTube.

MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

Do you know this boy?

MARK

Yeah, John Smith. But I didn't
invite him.

MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

He's a fugitive. We've been
tracking him for some time.

Mark smirks, vindicated.

MARK

I'll help you find him.

He points to Sarah's image on the screen.

MARK

He's not at Sarah's, I already
checked. And one of my dad's
deputies drove by his house --
nada.

MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

He poses a great threat to us.
Where else could he be?

Mark pulls out his cell phone.

MARK

I've got Sarah's cell number, maybe
you guys can trace it?

The Commander takes the phone and passes it to one of his men
in the front. He looks back at Mark.

MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

Tell me everything you know about
John Smith.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sam is at the kitchen counter, watching the YouTube video on his laptop, when headlights bleed through the blinds.

EXT. SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sam steps out and reacts in surprise as Henri emerges through the headlight glare.

HENRI

John's not at the house. Is he here?

SAM

No, but he's all over the internet.

HENRI

I know.

He turns back to his SUV. Sam follows.

SAM

Those things from Warsaw -- they're coming, aren't they?

HENRI

Go back inside. This isn't your fight.

SAM

The hell it isn't. I'm coming with you.

OFF this declaration...

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL OFFICE - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

The crystal pendant glints against John's chest as he grabs a "Paradise High" sweatshirt from a supply closet and yanks it on. Sarah's phone suddenly RINGS, startling them.

SARAH

(into phone)
Hello.

She listens, then hands John the phone.

SARAH

It's Henri.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. SUV - NIGHT - MOVING

Henri careens through the night with Bernie and Sam.

HENRI
(into phone)
Where are you?

JOHN
High school.

HENRI
Get out now!

At that moment, all the POWER in the school DIES and the headlights of an SUV flash across the window. Fear registers in John's eyes as he realizes...

JOHN
Too late... they're here.

EXT. SUV - NIGHT

The Commander climbs out. Mark follows but is distracted as a trio of black SUVs speeds into the lot followed by a tractor trailer from which inhuman GROWLS echo.

MARK
What the hell's in there?

He looks back at the Commander who is arming up from the trunk of the SUV. Mark glimpses the arsenal of future-tech machine pistols, double-bladed swords and heavy-duty daggers. He backs away in fearful realization.

MARK
You guys aren't FBI.

Before he can run, a Mogadorian Soldier grabs him by the neck and constrains him. The Commander pulls

TWO BANDOLIERS

over his broad shoulders. The cartridges are made of crystal and swirl with purple light. Finally, he slips on his trademark red coat and spins towards the school.

INT. HALL - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

One of John's hands holds Sarah's while the other lights their way as they hurtle down the passage. They've almost reached the doors when they suddenly fly open and

A FIGURE

struts into view. We RECOGNIZE her as the mysterious Teen Girl. She swings up an awesome hand-cannon and FIRES right at them. THE BLAST scorches the air between John and Sarah but takes out the

MOGADORIAN SOLDIER

who was stalking up the hall behind them! John watches in shock as the Mogadorian keels over and SHATTERS into embers. John swings back to the Teen Girl as she strides forward.

SHE IS NUMBER 6.

SIX

You oughta keep your heroics off the internet.

JOHN

Who the hell are you?

SIX

Number 6. Where's your Capan?

JOHN

On his way. Where's yours?

SIX

Dead. The Mogs got her four months ago. We had been tracking them.

She heads past. John and Sarah follow after her.

JOHN

Tracking *them*?

SIX

We discovered they plan to attack Earth. The only thing standing in their way is the six of us.

The revelation hits John like a wrecking ball.

SIX

You know what that means?

John nods with new purpose.

JOHN

The war starts tonight.

SIX

First we have to get out of here alive and find the others.

Six leads them past the impressive trophy case.

JOHN

What are we up against?

SIX

There's a commander, a bunch of soldiers and two Piken. They'll have all the main entrances covered.

SARAH

The gym, there's a tunnel under the stage.

JOHN

It'll take us out to the stadium.

Six acknowledges that info with a curt nod. FOOTSTEPS. Six grabs John and Sarah by their arms and yanks them back against the wall.

They hold their breath as one of the Mogadorian Soldiers prowls straight past. He stops for a moment, then turns the corner. Sarah looks across at the mirrored trophy case and sees there's no reflection.

SARAH

We're invisible.

John realizes, turns to Six.

JOHN

You got any other Legacies?

SIX

I can control the elements. You?

JOHN

Lumen and telekinesis.

More FOOTSTEPS. John turns and watches in horror as the Mogadorian Commander and a trio of Mogadorian Soldiers sweeps into view. The Commander is holding

MARK.

He is ashen with fear. Sarah has to catch herself from screaming. John makes a move, but Six holds him in place.

SIX

Stay put. They want to draw you out.

JOHN

He's not dying because of me!

ANGLE ON THE SOLDIERS AND MARK. They're heading past the trophy case when JOHN'S VOICE booms out of nowhere.

JOHN (O.S.)
Mark! Linoleum! Now!

Mark rips free and hits the deck a second before the trophy case EXPLODES. Shards of glass rip into the Mogadorians and trophies torpedo off the shelves and impale the aliens against the far wall. The Mogadorians SCREAM as they flail.

John, Sarah and Six break cover. John wrenches Mark to his feet and they take off running. They dash around the next corner and find

HENRI, SAM AND BERNIE

sprinting towards them, followed by two Mogadorians! Six raises her hand-cannon, BLOWS one of the Mogs away, while John safely leads everybody into...

INT. LIBRARY - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

SIX
(to John)
Barricade the doors!

John telekinetically uproots a trio of bookcases that fly across the space and block the door. Sarah turns to Mark who is totally shell-shocked.

SARAH
What are you doing with them?

MARK
They said they were FBI. That John was a fugitive. What the hell's going on?

SIX
You've stumbled into a war. So shut up and keep your head down.

HENRI
I see age hasn't mellowed your attitude, 6.

Mark turns to John, guilt-wracked.

MARK
I didn't know they were trying to kill you.
(genuine, to John)
I'm sorry.

JOHN

This isn't your fault -- it's mine.

He offers Mark his hand. Mark shakes it. Suddenly, Bernie begins to GROWL.

SAM

What is it, boy?

Henri sees where Bernie is staring and realizes...

HENRI

He's telling us to run!

They take off a second before

A PIKEN

PUMMEL-RAMS through the wall in a shower of bricks, books and paper. It utters a glass-shattering ROAR. John looks back and sees Bernie bravely holding his ground.

JOHN

Bernie!

He watches as the beagle sprints forward and launches himself at the monster. Bernie clamps onto the Piken's neck. He's hopelessly outmatched and holds on for dear life as the Piken tries to buck him off. Then something amazing happens --

BERNIE BEGINS TO MORPH.

He doubles, triples in size and keeps growing. His features become reptilian, gecko-like, his fur turns to spines and in a matter of moments Bernie has transformed into a hulking

ALIEN CREATURE.

John looks to Henri as the truth of Bernie's origin dawns.

HENRI

Bernie's a Chimera. He came with us from Lorien.

JOHN

Guess I wasn't the only one keeping secrets.

HENRI

Somebody had to watch you when I wasn't around.

They exit while Bernie and the Piken continue to battle.

INT. HALL - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

John and Henri catch up to the others.

SARAH

The gym's this way.

A projectile HISSES past John's ear and DETONATES a row of lockers -- BOOOOOM! -- it's like an incendiary grenade. The paint blisters off the lockers as they are consumed by FIRE.

JOHN

sees two Mogadorian Soldiers hauling heavy-duty weapons that use the glass cartridges that glow on their ammo belts. One FIRES another round. John telekinetically RIPS a door off its hinges. It flies forward, blocks the charge and IGNITES. John spins back and SCREAMS --

JOHN

Go! Go! Go!

They take off. John follows and uses his telekinesis to fling cabinets, doors, benches anything he can to block the fiery onslaught. But the rounds are coming too fast and a projectile SMACKS him in the back. It's like being hit by napalm. As FLAMES wash across him, he looks up and snaps on

THE SPRINKLER HEADS

that run the length of the hall. A deluge sprays, dousing the fire. With his clothes smoking, John tears around the corner. The Mogadorians charge after him, but find

SIX IS WAITING.

BOOOOMM! BOOOOMM! She blasts them at point-blank range. Magenta light gushes from their wounds. Like rain hitting hot coals, their bodies HISS as they crack and cinder.

SIX

Keep moving!

Henri, Mark, Sarah and Sam race out of view. Then John sees something emerge through the smoky, water-choked haze.

IT'S THE SECOND PIKEN!

It utters a low, predatory GROWL and launches itself forward. Oddly, Six doesn't move. She closes her eyes and lays one hand on the flooded floor, turning the water to

ICE!

In a matter of moments, the hall has been transformed into an icy tunnel. The sprinklers spray snow. The Piken struggles to find purchase in this new frozen environment and slip-slides after John and Six, who disappear into...

INT. CAFETERIA - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

CRAAAAACK! The doors are DEMOLISHED as the Piken flails off the ice. It takes out a row of tables and chairs and skids to a stop. It ROARS in humiliated FURY, and its red eyes scan for John and Six who are nowhere to be seen.

The Piken prowls behind the serving counter. Snow beads off its back. Its monstrous nostrils suddenly flare, sensing something. It hunches lower and peers at the trays and pans that are stored below.

REVEAL JOHN AND SIX. They're invisible. John clutches Six's arm. They're lying between a stack of roasting dishes. Threads of foamy drool drip onto their faces as the Piken pokes its head further. Its ghoulish red eyes seem to stare right at them. With a final frustrated SNORT, it carries on.

INT. HALL - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

Henri, Sarah, Sam and Mark race into view. Sarah stops, panicked and afraid.

SARAH
Where's John?

HENRI
Right behind us.

He offers her his hand. She's about to take it when

A MOGADORIAN SOLDIER

steps out of the shadows. There is nowhere and no time for Henri and the others to run. But as the Mogadorian squeezes the trigger of his hand-cannon, the wall on his right

ERUPTS!

Bernie and the first Piken crash into the hall. They are still at each other's throats and don't even notice as they steam-roller over the Mogadorian, squashing him like a bug. The creatures SMASH through the opposite wall and out of sight. It's over in a violent blink.

INT. KITCHEN - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

John and Six sneak through the shadows. She steps to the door, but it won't budge.

SIX
They've blocked it. Use your
telekinesis.

JOHN
We're not leaving without my
friends.

SIX
Don't you mean the girl?

John ignores the jibe and turns back. Six grabs his arm.

SIX
I broke the Elders' spell to find
you. The Mogs can kill me now. We
have to go.

JOHN
We stay and fight.

OFF his determination...

INT. HOME ECONOMICS ROOM - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

Henri and Sam crouch behind one station while Sarah and Mark
hide in the one opposite. Henri pulls a selection of weapons
from the backpack. He hands one to Sam, looks over at Mark.

HENRI
You know how to use one of these?

MARK
My dad's the sheriff.

He slides two across the floor. The door opens. They swing
up to fire but find -- John and Six.

JOHN
Save it for the Mogs. Let's go!

INT. LOCKER ROOM - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

Bernie and the Piken pummel the rows of lockers which
COLLAPSE like dominos. Gashed and exhausted, the battling
duo SHATTER-SMASHES into

THE SHOWER STALLS.

Water SPURTS from a broken pipe. The Piken slips on the
slick tiles. As it struggles to right itself, Bernie seizes
the moment and sinks his fangs into the monster's neck.

THE PIKEN

desperately thrashes. Its talons viciously rip into Bernie's side. Ignoring the pain, Bernie doesn't let go until his foe finally jerks to stillness. As Bernie sinks to the floor, he MORPHS back into a beagle and lies spent and bleeding...

INT. GYM - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

John leads the group past the bleachers and points to the side of the stage.

JOHN

The door's over here. The tunnel
leads out to the stadium.

Sarah sweeps back the curtain, revealing a padlocked set of metal doors. John holds up his hand, snaps the lock and whips the chain free. The doors fly open,

TWO MOGADORIANS

spring out of the dark. One tackles Henri while the other blindsides John. Henri struggles until

BOOOOOM!

The BLAST cinders the Mog's head clean off. Henri looks over and sees Mark holding a smoking shotgun and nods his thanks.

The second has John pinned when it suddenly ROARS in agony and disintegrates into a shower of sparks, revealing

SIX.

She sheathes her dagger and helps John up.

SIX

Saving your life. My new hobby.

Sarah notices a smile of respect flicker between John and Six. PHHHHHHT! PHHHHHHT! PHHHHHHT! -- three Mogadorian knives razor the air. One impales Six in the shoulder. She slumps at John's feet. Henri opens FIRE on the

THE COMMANDER AND TWO MOGADORIAN SOLDIERS

who storm towards them. John SCREAMS to Sam and Mark.

JOHN

(re: Six)

Get her down the tunnel!

They grab Six by the arms and drag her into the tunnel. Sarah glances back at John and follows after them. Henri takes out a Soldier. John sweeps up his hand and

THE WOODEN FLOOR OPENS LIKE A ZIPPER!

The Commander and the other Soldier are sent flying as the planks rip free of their nails. John and Henri charge into the tunnel. The doors fly shut behind them and the bleacher stand rolls forward to seal the entrance.

INT. TUNNEL - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

Sarah is in the lead. Sam and Mark follow, holding the wounded Six. They've almost reached the end when

A MOGADORIAN

lurches into the mouth of the tunnel. Without a second's hesitation, Sam swings up his gun and BLASTS it. Mark looks at him in shock as they race through the embers. Sam shrugs.

SAM

I play a lot of Xbox.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

Sam, Mark, Six and Sarah hurtle across the field. When they reach the track, Sarah looks back and smiles with relief when John and Henri burst out of the tunnel.

JOHN

Don't stop! Get to the woods!

She nods and exits with the others.

John and Henri head onto the field after them when

THE SECOND PIKEN

leaps out of the mouth of the tunnel behind them. It's seriously pissed. It bounds straight towards John. Its fangs glint like barbed wire as it launches itself towards him. At the last second,

HENRI

nobly shoves John out of the way and is plucked into the Piken's jaws. The creature shakes him like a rag doll and flings him 50 feet down the field. John watches, anguished, as Henri lands in a heap.

JOHN

Noooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!

The Piken pivots, turns its crimson eyes on John. It almost seems to smirk. Its fangs are stained with Henri's blood. John's face hardens into a mask of rage.

He makes no attempt to flee as the Piken charges. As it springboards into the air...

ANGLE ON JOHN'S HANDS -- as they suddenly clench.

ANGLE ON THE GOALPOSTS -- as they're SNAPPED clean off their bases and fly skyward.

ANGLE ON JOHN -- as the Piken's shadow washes across him.

ANGLE ON THE PIKEN -- as it arcs towards John with its mouth open and teeth bared. Suddenly, the goalposts spear its flanks, impaling it like supersize BBQ forks.

The three-ton killing machine drops out of the sky and smacks onto the 20-yard line. John watches impassively as the red life-fire dies in its eyes and its head lolls to one side.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The stadium looms in the distance. Sam wrenches the dagger from Six's shoulder while Sarah and Mark anxiously watch.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

John sinks by Henri's side.

JOHN

Henri.

Henri GROANS as John cradles his head. His coat is soaked with blood and his torso is horribly mauled. John tries to drag him to his feet.

JOHN

Come on, taillights in five.

HENRI

I won't be coming with you this time. Save yourself.

JOHN

We go together!

Henri smiles, grateful, but at that moment

THE COMMANDER'S SWORD

flies past John and impales Henri in the chest. Henri utters a GROAN and his dying eyes meet John's.

HENRI

Find the others.

His voice is a GRAVELLED WHISPER.

HENRI

Your life is my life... always.

His eyes flutter closed and he slips from John's grip. Anguished, John doesn't notice his pendant momentarily flicker with a radiant blue light. He angrily spins to face

THE MOGADORIAN COMMANDER.

But in a blur of speed, the Commander steps forward, wraps his hand around John's throat and plucks him into the air. He's flanked by the remaining Soldiers. John's feet kick uselessly as he's lifted face to face.

MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

Number 4.

Three Loric pendants dangle from the Commander's belt like mocking trophies.

MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

Your Capan saved you on Lorien.

The Commander's voice hisses with cruel certainty. He wrenches his sword from Henri's corpse.

MOGADORIAN COMMANDER

But this moment was inevitable.

The blade shimmers with silver flame as he raises it.

John's eyes narrow as the sword sweeps towards him. This is the moment his adolescence officially ends. This is the moment when a warrior is born.

ANGLE ON BLADE as it SHATTERS into a million pieces, which flutter to the ground like glittering confetti.

John stares at the alien with calm confidence.

JOHN

Nothing is inevitable.

ANGLE ON JOHN'S HAND AS IT IGNITES.

The flame is hotter and brighter than 10,000 acetylene torches. He grips one of the Commander's bandoliers.

TIGHT ON THE MOGADORIAN'S FACE as he realizes it's over.

The glass cartridges detonate in a deadly chain reaction.

IT'S LIKE A NUCLEAR IMPLOSION!

John, the Commander, the Mogadorian Soldiers, in fact every goddamn thing in the stadium is obliterated in the

SUPERNOVA OF FIRE

that radiates across the field like a blinding ring of hell.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Sarah looks back as the blistering vortex of flame lights the night sky. Her breath catches in her throat.

SARAH

Oh my God... John.

Before anyone can stop her, she takes off running, sprinting for the stadium.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - PARADISE HIGH - NIGHT

It's a smoking ruin. The seats have melted into puddles. Sarah bursts into view. She looks across the devastated field. The grass has been reduced to a charred black carpet of stubble. Nothing remains of Henri or the Mogadorians.

SARAH

John!

She charges across the broiled expanse, hoping against hope. Then she sees John, lying motionless and naked, his clothes completely burned away. She stops, puts her hand to her mouth to stifle a sob, when he COUGHS and stirs.

SARAH

John!

Ash swirls like snow as she races to his side. They wrap each other in their arms. Neither wanting to ever let go.

CUT TO:

EXT. PICNIC AREA - WOODS - DAWN

The sky is cracked with the first light of day. Sarah is dressing Six's wound at a table. Six winces.

SARAH

Sorry, Girl Scout first aid didn't cover extraterrestrial dagger wounds.

Six smiles, grateful.

SIX

Thanks.

As the two teens size each other up, CAMERA FINDS Mark. He hangs up his cell and crosses to John and Sam, who are talking intently by the motorcycles. John is now wearing a pair of old jeans and a faded denim jacket.

MARK

The Sheriff's Department is starting to put up roadblocks. You guys better get moving.

Six and Sarah join them.

JOHN

You good to go?

SIX

Don't worry about me.

John nods to Sam.

JOHN

Sam, ride with Six.

SIX

We don't need baggage.

Sam steps in front of her, determined.

SAM

I have to find out if the Mogs took my dad.

Six turns to John, who is not bending, then glares at Sam.

SIX

You slow us down, I'll shoot you myself.

Sarah looks at John, tries to rein in her emotions.

SARAH

I want to come too.

JOHN

You need to stay here.

SARAH

Why?

JOHN

You could have died last night. I'm not putting you in danger again. Mark's promised to look after you.

Tears tumble down her cheeks.

SARAH

I don't want to say goodbye.

JOHN

I'll come back for you.

SARAH

When?

JOHN

When it's safe.

She bows her head, anguished. He gently lifts her chin.

JOHN

Where I'm from, we only give our heart to one person. I've given mine to you.

(beat)

I love you, Sarah.

Their lips meet and they kiss. It only ends when John hears an URGENT RUSTLE in the woods. They turn and watch as

BERNIE KOSAR

limps into view. Blood mats his fur and his face is scratched but he's alive. OFF John's relief...

CUT TO:

EXT. PICNIC AREA - DAY

Sam sits behind Six on her motorcycle. John holds Bernie as he straddles his Harley. Bernie morphs into a gecko and darts into his pocket. Sarah studies John and Six, unsure.

John THROTTLES the bike to life, then looks back at Sarah. He fights a pang of jealousy when he sees her standing at Mark's side. RAIN spits as the motorcycles start off.

JOHN (V.O.)

This is the first town I've left without Henri. The first one I have a reason to come back to.

John and Sarah hold each other's gaze, desperately trying to brand the image of their faces onto their memories.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The bikes blur past the "Welcome to Paradise" sign.

JOHN (V.O.)
He warned me the pain would be
unbearable if I left her. He was
right.

EXT. TEXAS PLAINS - DAY

A straight stretch of blacktop bisects the sunbaked flatness.

JOHN (V.O.)
But I don't regret it. The pain
reminds me what's at stake.

A dust trail plumes as the bikes power into view.

JOHN (V.O.)
We must find the others and face
our enemy together. I'm not sure
how we can stop them. But nothing
is inevitable. I know that now.

Thunderheads darken the horizon.

JOHN (V.O.)
I am Number 4.

His eyes are fearless and his face is undaunted by the
battles yet to be fought. He's ready to face a future
unmapped and uncharted. Ready.

FADE OUT.

THE END