

THE MESSENGERS:

PILOT:

"AWAKENING"

Written by

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PRODUCTION DRAFT

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EYE PRODUCTIONS

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. HOUSTON MEMORIAL - NIGHT

A spectacular NIGHT SKY. The milky way. Infinite. Gradually, the stars fade, light pollution creeping in, and we start to hear the SOUNDS of a city hospital. Voices and traffic...

We drift down from the sky, past the HOUSTON MEMORIAL RISING SUN LOGO, to the front entrance of a hospital...

Amid the comings and goings, a nervous, hollow-eyed teenager, GARY (18), eyes a pair of young men dressed like GANGBANGERS. One sits on the ground, upset, as the other paces...

The front doors push open and two nurses emerge at the end of their shift -- ROSE ARVALE (20s), a beautiful African-American woman, and her FRIEND (20s), chatting away, upbeat --

FRIEND

How did you know?

ROSE

He asked me if women know their ring sizes. And I was like, 'oh, of course, for instance I do...'

FRIEND

Real smooth.

ROSE

So smooth.

As Rose passes the Gangbangers, Gary stands up, and we see he's gripping a HANDGUN in his pocket...

FRIEND

You know, I'd almost lost faith until you guys. Maybe there's still hope for me.

Rose gives her the kind of smile that melts hearts -- but then a wave of vertigo hits her, and she stumbles.

FRIEND (CONT'D)

Whoa there. Are you okay? Rose?

A chill runs up Rose's spine...

ROSE

I've got a bad feeling.

Rose turns slowly to see Gary moving toward the Gangbangers, then stepping PAST them -- toward Rose -- pulling his gun -- as she stares, not recognizing him --

GARY

His name was Death, and Hell followed with him.

BANG! -- Gary shoots her. BANG! -- again.

Rose crumples to the ground before her horrified Friend. And Gary, blinking in shock, drops the gun and takes off --

As the life leaves Rose's eyes, she continues to stare straight up into the cosmos --

THE MESSENGERS

OMITTED

JOSHUA JR. (PRELAP)

Does God want us to fear him?

INT. CHURCH OF THE ETERNAL REDEEMER - AUDITORIUM - DAY

A theater that seats 2,000. And it's full. And everyone is rapt by charismatic, fiery preacher JOSHUA SILBURN JR. (mid 20s), whose voice is amplified by a headset microphone.

SUPER: SEVEN YEARS LATER; HOUSTON, TEXAS

JOSHUA JR.

Does he? Is that what you think?

The congregation shake their heads, murmur: "no, never."

JOSHUA JR. (CONT'D)

I don't think so either, friends.
My father's teachings...

A nod to JOSHUA SILBURN SR. (60s), a white-haired dynamo from a different era, who sits next to a big-haired Texan Woman, among a group of church elders on the stage behind Joshua Jr.

JOSHUA JR. (CONT'D)

...show us that God wants us to LOVE. He want us to love Him, to love our neighbors, to love, most importantly, *ourselves* -- as we are His creations...

He pauses, reading the audience, pulling them close, intimate...

JOSHUA JR. (CONT'D)

I ask you to remember John 10:10.
"I have come that they may have
life, and that they may have it
more abundantly." That's what Jesus
brought to humanity. LIFE.

A CAMERA records Joshua Jr.'s sermon -- as we fly into the
camera lens, through wires -- out the roof --

Joshua Jr.'s voice crackles with static, broken into packets
of information -- and suddenly we are in --

EXT. GEOSTATIONARY ORBIT

22,000 miles below, Earth curves out, a marbled blue sphere.

A COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE glints in the sun, swimming into
view, collecting a CHATTER OF DATA, out of which we hear:

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)

Believe in our Lord Jesus Christ,
friends, and you have nothing to
fear... not destitution, not the
Devil, not Judgement -- nothing --

BLINDING LIGHT and ROAR OF HEAT -- reflected in a solar
panel, what looks like a burning meteor FLASHES past the
satellite, barely missing it --

EXT. NDSA OBSERVATORY - DAY

Gears groaning, hydraulic pistons engaging -- a huge RADIO
ANTENNA DISH rotates, tracking a signal --

SUPER: NEW MEXICO

ALAN HARRIS (early 30s), a handsome, laid-back techie, sits
in a lawn chair set up just outside the open back of an NDSA
CONTROL VAN in the shadow of the nearest dish, monitoring
data on a laptop that's connected via cable to the "mission
control" area in the back of vehicle.

He watches a PICK-UP TRUCK kicking up dust as it drives along
a row of these dishes, coming to a stop next to the van.

VERA IVANOV, an intense, brilliant spitfire, jumps out of the
pick-up and heads for Alan, who looks up --

ALAN

Were you nice? You said you'd be
nice.

VERA

Did you know that his office features, and I counted, seven photos of him standing over dead animals? Three in Africa?

ALAN

Though colorful, that's not exactly an answer to my question...

VERA

He said we're looking for ET in the middle of a budget crisis.

ALAN

So you weren't nice.

VERA

All I did was make the observation that he's probably just as qualified to judge the work of a team of radio-astronomers as he is to hold public office.

ALAN

I'm worried about where you're going with this...

VERA

I mean his daddy's oil money, right? It obviously qualifies him for both.

ALAN

You actually said that to him?

Vera's look says: you know I did.

ALAN (CONT'D)

The man is a U.S. Congressman.

VERA

The man is an idiot.

ALAN

An idiot who holds the purse strings.

As she looks over his shoulder at the laptop...

VERA

Tell me we've found something earth-shattering in the last three hours.

ALAN
Another new pulsar.
(pause)
You're stalling.

VERA
(pained)
Fifty percent cut.

Alan lets this sink in... it's worse than he feared.

ALAN
You shouldn't have said the oil
money thing, Vera.

VERA
You weren't there. He wasn't giving
an inch.

ALAN
You could've convinced him, if
you'd wanted to.

VERA
I shouldn't have to convince people
like him.

ALAN
I respect you, you know that. And
you're technically my boss. But I
want to you to do the math on this
one. A fifty percent cut? That
means I'm gone at the end of the
month. No dissertation, no post-
doc, no career.

Vera feels terrible, and wants to apologize, but --

VERA
We'll figure something out. I
promise.

Before they can discuss further, a BEEPING alarm from inside
the van interrupts them -- they both look at the screen --

VERA (CONT'D)
What the -- ?

A few KEYSTROKES, and Vera and Alan peer at the screen. We
don't see what appears there, but whatever it is --

VERA (CONT'D)
Whoa.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - TUSCON - DAY

A group of TEENAGERS on MOUNTAIN BIKES pedal down a cookie-cutter street, passing by a modest, well-kept house...

SUPER: TUSCON, AZ

In the driveway next to a car, an adorable girl in a ballet outfit, AMY (7), focuses on completing a chalk drawing on the pavement, of a RISING ORANGE AND YELLOW SUN...

Lugging a bag of kid stuff to the car, Amy's mother, ERIN (mid 20s), bubbly despite the stress, stops to look...

ERIN

Wow! You're getting good at those sunrises, Van Gogh.

AMY

I don't want to be Van Gogh. He cut off his ear.

Erin tickles her -- and Amy giggles, in heaven.

ERIN

And your ears are so cute, too!

The RINGING of Erin's cell phone. Erin pulls away.

ERIN (CONT'D)

In the car, kiddo. Buckle up.

Erin answers the phone.

ERIN (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hello?

Amy keeps coloring. Erin mouths "go!" Amy moves around the car to get into the passenger seat...

ERIN (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hello? Who is this?

As Erin turns away and lowers her voice...

ERIN (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Ronnie? If that's you... I swear. I know what you're trying to do, but she's not going with you. You hear me? As long as I live, not again.

With the door open on the other side of the car, Amy listens, distressed...

ERIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(into phone)
I'm hanging up.

Erin hangs up and turns -- as Amy closes the passenger door and buckles her seatbelt. Uncertain if her daughter overheard, Erin climbs into the car...

OMITTED

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY

SUPER: JUAREZ, MEXICO

A deserted airfield. Next to a SMALL PROP PLANE, a Cartel Underling pins a bloodied RAUL (early 30s) face down on an wooden crate, arms bound behind him, as his fellow Cartel Lieutenant lifts a terrifying MACHETE above Raul --

RAUL
(Spanish, subtitled)
[You've got this all wrong. How long have you known me? It wasn't me! I can prove it! Wait!]

As the Lieutenant is on the verge of bringing the blade down to decapitate him, Raul flinches, but --

BANG! BANG! BANG! Gunfire rings out and blood spatters across Raul as the two Cartel men fall to the ground, dead.

Raul scrambles to his feet to see a VAN speeding toward him, a man hanging out the window with a RIFLE. The van stops and two plainclothes FEDS -- one OLDER (50s), putting aside his rifle, one YOUNGER (30s) -- jump out and approach.

OLDER AGENT
Que pasa, amigo?

In perfect English, amped up on adrenaline --

RAUL
What the hell took you so long?

As Raul kicks one of the prone Cartel bodies --

RAUL (CONT'D)
I can't take this anymore. Five years underwater, man.
(MORE)

RAUL (CONT'D)

My cover is so blown. I got what we need, and I'm out. I'm out, man, I'm out.

The Older Agent steps closer, calming him...

OLDER AGENT

We got you, okay? Don't worry. You're out, we get it. That's why we're here.

YOUNGER AGENT

We're gonna get you back across the border.

Raul starts to calm...

RAUL

No more of this. I'm done.

As the Younger Agent goes around behind him, cuts his bindings, freeing his hands.

OLDER AGENT

Absolutely. You earned it.

He hands Raul a cloth to wipe his face --

OLDER AGENT (CONT'D)

But we've got El Jefe over a barrel now. You did get the coordinates, right?

RAUL

Yeah, I got 'em. Plus, there's a shipment in the plane.

The Older Agent claps Raul on the back.

OLDER AGENT

You are one hell of an agent, amigo. Let's load the shipment, then get you back to the good old U S of A.

As they move to the plane, Raul finally lets himself smile...

OMITTED

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

The front doors swing open and a stream of high school students rush out. Among them, but somehow separate, PETER MOORE (17), emerges and looks up to the sky, transfixed --

SUPER: LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

As he sees, in the blue sky, a BRIGHT LIGHT, like a shooting star, but half the speed, FLASHING briefly --

ALICE (O.S.)
Hey. Hey. Peter.

He finally looks over to see ALICE (16), a flower-child born decades too late, standing next to him --

ALICE (CONT'D)
Space cadet. Are you even listening?

PETER
Sorry?

She just looks at him a moment, a little exasperated. They start walking...

ALICE
I was trying to ask when you were heading to Lindsey's tonight...

PETER
I'm not sure I'm going. It'll be too...

ALICE
Too... much fun? You can't swim laps *all* night... and also I want you to drive me home...

OUT OF NOWHERE, a hand SLAPS the back of Peter's head, HARD.

Peter moves to defend himself, but his attacker has already bounded by him. SAM (17), a rough, muscular hick backed by two other HICK THUGS, turns around to sneer --

SAM
Ya know, hanging out with this chick ain't foolin' anybody.

Peter's eyes burn into the ground, and we can feel the fire trying to get out... but he remains quiet, still.

SAM (CONT'D)

We all know you're gay.

Alice looks from Peter to Sam.

ALICE

Hey Sam. Is it true that Susan
broke up with you because you have
a really small... I mean I heard
just like a miniscule --

Sam turns red as his friends start to crack up.

SAM

You better shut up --

ALICE

Vocabulary. I was going to say
vocabulary. Did you think I was
saying something else?

Peter can't help but laugh. Sam glares at him.

SAM

Next time I see you, you're dead.

He turns on a dime and storms off -- swatting away the jokes
of his friends. Peter's smile fades.

PETER

That didn't help, Alice.

ALICE

What, I'm just supposed to sit
there?

PETER

It's hard enough without you
defending me.

He leaves. Alice watches him, then looks up, to the SKY.

CUT TO:

ON A SCREEN

A computer model of the trajectory of an OBJECT, speeding
through the atmosphere toward Earth...

ALAN (O.S.)

Yeah, it's something anomalous,
that's for sure...

EXT./INT. CONTROL VAN - DEEP SPACE OBSERVATORY - DAY

Vera and Alan stand at the back of the van, each with a laptop, tracking different variables. Excited --

ALAN
You getting it?

VERA
Yeah, yeah...

ALAN
Seriously, what could this be?

VERA
Angle of atmospheric entry and
current speed suggest...

She hits a few keys, reaching over Alan to his laptop, hitting a few keys, working in sync, a real familiarity...

VERA (CONT'D)
Let's see...

Manipulating a few variables on the screen, aligning with a topographical map...

VERA (CONT'D)
Whatever it is, it's going to hit
in about fifteen seconds right
around...

She's stunned. Alan studies the screen and hops back into the van. But Vera's already heading around the front --

Vera steps in the front of the van in time to see --

A FALLING STAR -- a bright light cutting across the sky, bigger and CLOSER than Peter saw it --

Vera gawks as the light disappears behind a rise -- a BEAT of nothing. Then: A BLINDING FLASH --

And a PULSE OF ENERGY expands -- RUSHING toward Vera -- but she can't pull herself away, fascinated, eyes wide -- as a wave of nearly invisible distortion HITS her --

And passes right through -- causing the slightest disturbance in Vera, like a SHIVER AT THE MOLECULAR LEVEL --

And now there's something EMPTY about Vera's unmoving eyes, as she stands frozen. Then she COLLAPSES, unconscious...

At the back of the van, the electronic equipment around Alan
BLINKS OUT and GOES HAYWIRE -- Alan pulls his hands back --

ALAN
Okay, not cool...

He yells out the open door...

ALAN (CONT'D)
Vera! Something freaky is going on!

As he starts to fiddle with the controls again...

EXT. HIGHWAY / INT. ERIN'S CAR - TUSCON, AZ - DAY

Music on the radio. Erin drives and Amy in her tutu bops
along to the beat and pops GOLDFISH CRACKERS from a small
clear plastic bag. Fast:

ERIN
Washington?

AMY
Olympia.

ERIN
Texas?

AMY
Austin.

ERIN
Kentucky?

AMY
Frankfort.

ERIN
Frankfort?

Amy nods. Crunching a Goldfish.

ERIN (CONT'D)
Are those fishes delishes?

Amy smiles, nods...

AMY
Can we go to Texas this summer?
I've never been to Texas.

ERIN
You've not been a lot of places.
You're seven.

AMY

I *know*.

ERIN

I do have a cousin in Houston.

They're silent for a moment. The music.

AMY

I'm not going to Dad's anymore?

ERIN

No, sweetie...

AMY

Did he do something wrong again?

Erin looks to her daughter, seeing the confusion in her eyes.

The MUSIC suddenly crackles with STATIC and the dashboard lights FLICKER -- Erin turns to see an almost invisible wave of distortion, like a mirage, rapidly approaching...

As Amy, oblivious, tries to tune the radio, the sound comes back in... and she looks to her mother --

Who is FROZEN, eyes unmoving. Erin goes LIMP --

AMY (CONT'D)

Mom?!

As the car veers toward a concrete pillar --

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY

-- the plane cargo door SLAMS SHUT, closed by the Younger Agent. Raul carries a few cellophane-wrapped bundles to the van, where he places them on top of a large pile.

The Older Agent slices open one of the packets, and out spills a WHITE POWDER. Taking some between his fingers, he peers closely. He makes eye contact with the Younger Agent, then turns to Raul --

OLDER AGENT

There will be a lot more at the drop site, right?

RAUL

Along with evidence to put El Jefe away for good.

The Older Agent takes out a SAT PHONE, as the Younger Agent moves behind Raul...

OLDER AGENT
You have the coordinates on you?

Raul taps his head.

RAUL
Safer here.

OLDER AGENT
(to Younger Agent)
What a pro this guy is.

He starts to dial the SAT PHONE...

OLDER AGENT (CONT'D)
We gotta call in the location so we
can get a team there right away.

Raul's eyes narrow, suspicious, then he notices the plane's PROPELLER slowly start to spin on its own... odd...

OLDER AGENT (CONT'D)
So why don't you just tell me the
coordinates now? Hey, you
listening?

And as the plane's RADIO goes static, playing FRAGMENTS of flight control directives, that same almost imperceptible WAVE of distortion approaches and passes through Raul, causing that molecular-level SHIVER --

And Raul FREEZES, eyes empty -- and COLLAPSES --

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - POOL - DAY

Peter stands at the edge of the pool in racing shorts. He fits on his swim GOGGLES, stretches out and --

UNDERWATER. The crystal blue of a pool. Then SPLASH -- Peter dives in.

Here, Peter is perfect. A self-sufficient machine, propelling himself forward with controlled, powerful strokes...

Until -- the lights FLICKER, and there's a kind of ENERGY VIBRATION, the slightest *distortion*, in the water --

And with that strange shiver, Peter's eyes FREEZE OPEN under water -- and his strokes cease --

JOSHUA JR. (PRE-LAP)
...And before we all go our
separate ways this afternoon...

Floating facedown, bubbles escaping his mouth, unconscious...

INT. ETERNAL REDEEMER - AUDITORIUM - DAY

Joshua Jr brings his sermon to a close, as the congregation prepares to beat the rush to the parking lot...

JOSHUA JR.

I pray that you may prosper in all things, just as your --

He cuts off in the middle of his sentence, caught off-guard by something -- and the audience members notice...

JOSHUA JR. (CONT'D)

Do you hear that? *Who is that?*

The lights FLICKER. And only Joshua, in fear, sees the now nearly subliminal wave of distortion passing through, but not seeming to affect, the rest of congregation. As it reaches him, he FREEZES and COLLAPSES -- GASPS from the audience --

BROADCAST CAMERA FOOTAGE: several staff members RUSH to him --

EXT. CONTROL VAN - NDSA OBSERVATORY - DAY

Alan jumps out of the van and rounds the front of the vehicle. He spots Vera, who lies sprawled in the sun. He rushes to her, shakes her --

ALAN

Vera! Wake up!

He checks her vitals... for breathing... for a pulse... Horror on Alan's face...

ALAN (CONT'D)

God... no, no...

In the wide vista, Alan and Vera are just specks --

CLOSE ON: A MAN'S SUNBURNT FACE

More than just sunburnt. Like his flesh has been singed and still smolders. Pulling out, we're in the...

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The sun beats down on the THE MAN's naked body, fetal in a patch of blackened, steaming sand. He's muscular and lean, his whole body as burnt as his face...

And he's not breathing. DEAD. Until...

He GASPS, COUGHS. He pulls himself up, peels open his dry, bloodshot eyes...

As he staggers to his feet like a newborn foal, we see the sand around him is scorched black in a STAR-SHAPED PATTERN exploding ten meters wide. An IMPACT SITE.

He looks down at the blistered skin on his arm, and the burns begin to HEAL before our very eyes, the skin smoothing...

The Man looks up to the sky, directly into the blinding SUN. He stares, without blinking, without discomfort...

And SMILES.

Blast out on the WHITE HOT SUN --

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. ETERNAL REDEEMER - AUDITORIUM/STAGE - DAY

Move with Joshua Jr, pallid and lifeless, as he is lowered onto a carpet by two church INTERNS. A YOUNG INTERN (19), baby-faced, starts tentatively examining Joshua Jr...

...As a self-possessed Joshua Senior stands nearby in the center of the stage, addressing the departing congregation.

SENIOR

Do not worry, brothers and sisters.
My son is well. Joshua is well. You
know how the young are. They never
sleep. Go in peace. May God be with
you.

...Just behind him, Church ELDERS and PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS are in a state of quiet PANIC. Removing his microphone, Senior turns to them --

SENIOR (CONT'D)

What was that? Was that planned?
(no answer)
Well, what's wrong with my son?

All eyes turn to the terrified Young Intern, kneeling over Joshua Jr...

YOUNG INTERN

He's not breathing...

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY

A little wary, Younger Agent kneels next to Raul's motionless form, feeling for a pulse. He looks up to the Older Agent.

YOUNGER AGENT

Maybe it was a heart attack?

OLDER AGENT

Well hell. At least he saved me a
bullet.

He gives the body a kick. No response.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - POOL - DAY

The LIFEGUARD drags Peter out of the pool. He is cold and blue. A couple of KIDS gawk as the Lifeguard begins CPR...

EXT. NDSA OBSERVATORY - DAY

Vera GASPS AWAKE -- stunning Alan who is leaning over her, fumbling with instructions to a portable defibrillator --

VERA

Michael!

She blinks back to reality, as Alan recovers... with tears in his eyes --

ALAN

Vera. You're... okay.

VERA

Yeah, I'm okay. I just... I just must have been dehydrated...

Alan stops Vera from getting to her feet...

ALAN

You should probably stay sitting. I called 911. You seemed... not good.

VERA

I'm fine. Call them back.

ALAN

You sure? Because my name is Alan.

Vera looks at him, confused.

ALAN (CONT'D)

You said Michael. When you woke up.

This throws Vera. She ignores the obvious question...

VERA

We gotta go find out what the hell that was. The impact...

She pushes herself up to stand, but staggers, almost falling. Alan steadies her...

ALAN

How about we wait a minute and you drink some water?

She looks him in the eye.

VERA

Do you want to go find something to justify our budget, or not?

He cracks a smile.

ALAN

Glad to have you back.

EXT. STREET - CAR WRECK - DAY

GROANING of metal as hands pull open the door of Erin's totalled car. FLASHING LIGHTS of an ambulance. Erin is lifeless and bleeding. It's nightmarish. Hands reach in, cut her seatbelt, pull her out --

Two PARAMEDICS lay her down on a stretcher. One checks for a pulse, shakes his head, calling it -- when suddenly --

ERIN SITS UP, GASPING! The Paramedics start in surprise. Erin blinks, gaining her bearings -- remembering --

ERIN

Where's Amy? *Where's my daughter?*

Almost in response, an ambulance BLARES ITS SIREN, taking off in a hurry --

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - POOL - DAY

The Lifeguard's hands pump Peter's cold, blue chest. It seems hopeless -- until Peter COUGHS AWAKE -- HACKING OUT water on the cold cement...

He comes out of the blur, shaking his head awake, and lifts his eyes to see -- a FEW STUDENTS staring at him...

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY

Raul's corpse is splayed where he fell.

Nearby, the Younger Agent hefts bundles of drugs into the van, Raul's body behind him. He wipes the sweat from his brow and bends to pick up another bundle --

And when he turns back around, Raul is standing up, staring at him. The Younger Agent's jaw drops. The Older Agent walks around the plane --

OLDER AGENT

We thought you were dead!

RAUL

What happened?

As Raul moves to the men, a wave of *TINNITUS* hits him, and he staggers back, wincing --

OLDER AGENT
You alright there?

Fragmentary words reach Raul in the midst of the noise --

YOUNGER AGENT (V.O.)
...three to the chest...

Raul takes another step back, and the ringing in his ears leaves as fast as it arrived. He shakes out the cobwebs.

OLDER AGENT
What's wrong, buddy?

RAUL
Just a... headache.

OLDER AGENT
You're all right. Had a tough day.
We just need to call in those
coordinates, then we'll sit you
down...

The Younger Agent moves toward Raul, and again the *RINGING* hits Raul, stronger -- and he grabs his head, closing his eyes -- the pain unbearable -- and words reach him --

YOUNGER AGENT (V.O.)
*...for the money... sorry,
Isabel...*

Raul stumbles back, and again the tinnitus ceases. Raul looks back to the agents...

RAUL
Who's Isabel?

The Younger Agent seems stunned.

OLDER AGENT
Isabel? What are you talking about?

The Younger Agent whips out his gun, trains it on Raul --

YOUNGER AGENT
She's my wife. How the hell do you
know her name?

OLDER AGENT
Slow down. We're all on the same
side here.

RAUL

You're here to kill me, aren't you?
"Three to the chest", right?

OLDER AGENT

No one's killing anybody --

The Younger Agent steps toward Raul --

YOUNGER AGENT

He knows. What's it matter? Yeah,
we're here to kill you and --

In an expert move, Raul grabs the Younger Agent's arm, using him as a shield and taking his gun as the Older Agent pulls his own gun. *His head ringing, but fighting through it --*

RAUL

I don't want to do this, man, just
let me go.

The Older Agent calculates for a second, then lifts his gun, firing -- BANG! BANG! -- hitting the Younger Agent in the chest, killing him, and CLIPPING Raul in the arm -- as Raul RETURNS FIRE, popping the Older Agent twice in the chest --

Catching his breath, reeling, Raul surveys the carnage -- the agents both dead at his feet --

OMITTED

OMITTED

INT. ETERNAL REDEEMER - AUDITORIUM/STAGE - DAY

HANDS, palms down. Several ELDERS, Senior among them, muttering prayers, eyes closed... above us... above...

Joshua Jr, whose eyes are in the process of blinking open. He lifts his head, looking around, disoriented --

And makes eye contact with the gobsmacked Intern who struggles to find his voice...

YOUNG INTERN

Um... Everyone? Everyone?!

One by one, the Elders open their eyes to see Joshua Jr... Senior is astonished, sincerely euphoric.

SENIOR

Josh. Joshua, you were gone...
Praise Jesus...

But Joshua Jr seems too disoriented to respond... Something clarifies for him, and he turns to his father --

JOSHUA JR.

I need to make a broadcast.
Tonight...

SENIOR

Anything, son. We must share our
miracle.

Joshua Jr stands...

JOSHUA JR.

If only that were all...

The others look to Joshua Jr, but he turns away from them...
Whatever has happened to him, he is *changed... haunted...*

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Erin, looking haunted herself, still too shocked to cry,
paces in front of a VENDING MACHINE, agitated. As a FEMALE
DOCTOR walks past -- Erin moves to her --

ERIN

Can you tell me what's going on?

The Doctor stops. Delicately...

FEMALE DOCTOR

She's still in surgery. We'll know
something soon.

As the Doctor starts to move off, a HANDSOME POLICE OFFICER
(mid-late 20s) with an angry bearing bursts through a door.
He moves right for Erin...

HANDSOME OFFICER

Where the hell is she?

ERIN

It was an accident...

HANDSOME OFFICER

Nothing's ever your fault, is it?

Erin pulls herself up, vulnerable but defiant. The Doctor clocks the confrontation --

ERIN
Our daughter's in there, and this
is what you do?

The Officer, RONNIE, Erin's ex-husband, seethes, as the Female Doctor steps over --

FEMALE DOCTOR
Sir. This woman has been through a
lot, and you need to --

RONNIE
Stay out of this.

Ronnie moves closer to Erin, whispering so just she can hear him... as the Doctor watches them...

RONNIE (CONT'D)
The police report is going to say
you were drinking...

ERIN
But that's not true.

RONNIE
It's true if it says it's true.

ERIN
Don't do this, Ronnie.

The Doctor finally steps forward, having had enough.

FEMALE DOCTOR
That's enough. This woman is under
my care. You leave her be. Now.

Almost vulnerable, Ronnie takes one last look at Erin...

RONNIE
If she dies, I swear to God...

Ronnie turns and storms off, brushing past the Doctor.

FEMALE DOCTOR
Honey, are you all right?

Erin, her face a mask, looks past the Doctor to the vending machine, staring at SOMETHING...

We finally see it: A BAG OF GOLDFISH CRACKERS.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

A WRECKER is parked in front of an abandoned, BROKEN-DOWN CAR at the side of the road, hood popped. A stoner MECHANIC (40s), nametag: "JOHNNY", works on his back halfway underneath the car. He thinks he hears something and looks over... nothing. He goes back to work...

Then a SHADOW passes over him. He glances over and sees a pair of dirty, BARE FEET stride into view. He slowly pushes himself out to see --

THE MAN, stark naked but healed of his burns, standing above him. Johnny takes a beat, then reaches for his cell phone...

JOHNNY

Definitely calling the cops, bro.

But the Man flashes him a dazzling smile. A handsome devil. And lifts his hand in a gesture: wait.

THE MAN

Friend. I seem to find myself in need of some clothes.

Phone poised in his hand, Johnny looks at the Man curiously.

JOHNNY

I'm not sure I can help you?

But the Man just smiles.

EXT. DESERT ROAD / INT. ALAN'S CAR - DAY

Alan drives Vera, who is monitoring a handheld GPS DEVICE while also talking on her cell phone.

VERA

(into phone)

I completely understand. Yes, absolutely. Thank you.

She hangs up, and drops the act.

VERA (CONT'D)

That was strange.

ALAN

What was strange?

VERA

Houston says they've got it covered. But they're seven hundred miles away.

ALAN

Maybe they know something we don't.

VERA

This is a meteor event. It's definitely our territory.

ALAN

You know, if it's a meteor, it'll still be there tomorrow.

VERA

The energy from the impact knocked me out, Alan. That's weird. And that's exactly the reason why we need to go out there, now.

ALAN

Did I just try to advise caution? I should know better.

VERA

Whatever's out there...

Vera glances down at her GPS, looks back up at the road...

VERA (CONT'D)

...We're going to be the ones who find it.

As they pass a broken-down car and wrecker...

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

Slamming the trunk of the car closed, a figure steps into view. Fully clothed. Nametag: Johnny.

The Man, now dressed in the mechanic's clothes, wiping the dirt from his face with a rag, watches Alan's car pass...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Alan's car traverses an expanse of rolling desert...

INT. ALAN'S CAR - DAY

The RADIO plays MUSIC as Alan drives. Vera looks from the GPS, out the window...

ALAN

You know, Vera, when I first got to you out there... maybe it was just me being panicked, but I couldn't find your pulse.

VERA

Well, my heart is obviously still beating.

The SONG on the radio ends, and NEWS cuts in...

ALAN

Yeah, I do see that now. But it was still pretty scary...

RADIO NEWS (V.O.)

If you're just tuning in, you may be wondering what caused those weird hiccups in electrical systems this afternoon...

But Vera interrupts, turns up the radio...

VERA (CONT'D)

Wait, listen...

And they do so, with growing incredulity...

RADIO NEWS (V.O.)

...Government sources tell us that you can thank a giant *solar flare* for a burst of radiation that disrupted radio signals across North America...

VERA

What? There was no solar flare. Also, we are government sources.

Vera silences the radio --

VERA (CONT'D)

Who told the news it was a solar flare? The brass?

(MORE)

VERA (CONT'D)

There was definitely an impact. Why not just say it was a meteor?

ALAN

Please let it be aliens.

Vera smirks.

VERA

Not this again.

ALAN

A guy mistakes a drone for a UFO one time, and he loses all credibility?

Vera smiles. But as she looks out to the open road, there's uncertainty creeping in...

OMITTED

EXT. RIO GRANDE - DAY

Dripping wet, stripped down, carrying his clothes and shoes in a plastic bag, Raul climbs up the banks of the river.

Reaching the edge of a wooded area, he cinches tight the makeshift tourniquet around the wound in his arm.

He takes a last look back the way he came --

The flowing RIO GRANDE. Mexico and his old life behind him.

With a deep breath, he turns away and heads into the woods...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Peter, back in his school clothes, walks next to a pompous PSYCHIATRIST (40s), who carries a clipboard --

PSYCHIATRIST

I know high school can be a difficult time, Peter. Do you sometimes feel hopeless?

PETER

Hopeless?

PSYCHIATRIST

About the present or the future?

PETER

Is this how you interrogate people who almost drown?

PSYCHIATRIST

Your previous suicide attempt is in your file, Peter.

Peter goes cold.

PETER

That was a long time ago, and it doesn't have anything to do with today. I was swimming, and the next thing I know, I'm coughing up water. That's the end of it. I have practice tomorrow. Early.

The Psychiatrist studies Peter, seeming to acquiesce...

PSYCHIATRIST

We'll need to notify one of your parents, then you can go.

PETER

Notify the group foster home. Where I live. Is that not in your file?

They stare at each other.

OMITTED

OMITTED

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Alan's car pulls off a dirt road at the base of a hill. As Alan gets out, he stops short, seeing something...

ALAN

Vera, do you know where we are?

Vera climbs out, eyes locked on the GPS...

VERA

33.6773 North, 106.4754 West. I know exactly where we are.

ALAN

Not exactly what I meant...

He indicates, and Vera looks up to see what Alan sees: a SIGN that commemorates the TRINITY NUCLEAR TEST. Vera pauses at the sign, realizing...

VERA

Trinity...

And she forges ahead, up the rise...

ALAN

So... we're saying that a meteor
just happened to land at the exact
spot where the first nuclear bomb
was tested?

But Vera is barely listening as the land opens up before
them, revealing --

EXT. DESERT - IMPACT SITE - DAY

The black star-burst IMPACT SITE where The Man first awoke.

Vera carefully steps into the crater itself, as Alan pauses
at the edge of the still-smouldering black sand...

ALAN

This is... incredible.

Vera crouches down and picks up a BLACK ROCK from near the
center of the impact. Examines it...

VERA

The sand melted. Extreme heat.

ALAN

It's like tektite.

VERA

That's what I'm thinking.

Alan moves into the crater... and takes a deep inhalation...

ALAN

And that smell...?

She sniffs the rock... not pleasant...

VERA

Sulphur.

ALAN

Exactly.

VERA

That plus the melting suggests
meteor.

She hands the ROCK to Alan, who also looks closely.

ALAN

Doesn't the location, Trinity, feel like... too much of a coincidence?

VERA

You think it was aimed? Like a weapon?

ALAN

It would explain our bosses being hush-hush. The news story. It's either another weapons test... or someone trying to make a point.

VERA

But we traced the trajectory back. It didn't come from Earth.

ALAN

(half-joking)

You know what I'm thinking.

Vera shakes her head and rolls her eyes, but the wheels keep turning...

VERA

Not aliens, but something. Something that somebody wanted to keep us from knowing about.

Before they can consider further, they hear a RUMBLING SOUND... and turn to see a cloud of DUST... as a CARAVAN OF MILITARY VEHICLES encircles the crater...

ALAN

What makes you say that?

Off Vera's expression --

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. ETERNAL REDEEMER - AUDITORIUM/STAGE - NIGHT

Alone on the empty stage, seated in front of a camera in the darkened auditorium, Joshua looks down, contemplative, like he's alone in the world. The light shifts slightly, and --

Joshua looks STRAIGHT INTO the camera. It's unsettling.

JOSHUA JR.

This is a special broadcast. At
4:10pm today, on live television,
I, Joshua Silburn Junior, died.

Senior watches his son addressing the camera. It's clear he doesn't know where this is going -- which he doesn't like.

JOSHUA JR. (CONT'D)

And yet, here I am. *Why?*

Joshua's intensity reaches through the screen...

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - COURTYARD - NIGHT

Peter emerges from side door of the school into an empty, dark courtyard. Walking down the BREEZEWAY, he shivers, chilled by the night air... a faraway look in his eyes...

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Erin, that same faraway look in her eyes, moves through the hallway, the Doctor leading her, supporting her by the arm.

They come to a door and pause. Erin looks to the Doctor, who nods... With trepidation, Erin steps forward...

OMITTED

OMITTED

INT. HOSPITAL - AMY'S ROOM

When Erin SEES her daughter, looking so small and fragile in the hospital bed, hooked into a respirator -- it hits her like a punch in the gut.

ERIN

Amy...

Barely holding in her anguish, she kneels next to the bed, taking her daughter's hand...

On the side of Amy's head is visible, extending beyond the bandages, an incision from major surgery, sutured shut...

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Peter walks up the driveway of an upscale suburban home from which emanate a throbbing BEAT and PULSING LIGHTS -- a raucous HIGH SCHOOL PARTY --

A few DARK FIGURES loiter in the shadows in front of the house. One of the figures moves into the light... SAM...

SAM

What do you think you're doing here?

Peter backs up, but Sam's two friends circle behind him. Peter's trapped. He takes a defensive stance, but it's three to one...

They rush Peter, who struggles, but is overwhelmed, knocked to the ground. As Sam's boot KICKS into Peter's side --

INT. PARTY HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

The MUSIC is loud here. Drunk teens dance -- oblivious to the attack that's visible just outside --

INT. ETERNAL REDEEMER - AUDITORIUM/STAGE - NIGHT

Joshua begins to grow more heated. Whereas before his "death" he seemed polished, there's something ragged in him now...

JOSHUA JR.

I have seen... such things that would make your blood freeze...

Senior, concerned, catches the eye of the Stout Elder...

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

A fist slams into Peter's bloodied face, and he staggers...

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)

I have had a vision of the future...

Two of the thugs lift Peter, propping his limp form against a CAR, pinning his arms behind him --

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)
I have seen the face of God...

INT. HOSPITAL - AMY'S ROOM

Erin's tears begin to flow...

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)
...And it is a terrible thing to
behold...

She bows her head over her comatose daughter, praying...

We move in on Amy's motionless eyes... but there's nothing...

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Peter's eyes peel open, stinging with blood, to see Sam, in
his face, menacing...

SAM
Say you're gay. Say it.

Peter, in terrible pain, seems terrified. He gathers himself
to speak -- Sam moves closer -- and Peter SPITS in his face --

INT. HOSPITAL - AMY'S ROOM

Erin holds her face close to Amy's bandaged head. Tears
stream down her cheeks...

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)
The Wheels of Revelation have begun
to turn...

Focus on: a TEARDROP falls to her daughter's forehead... like
a blessing, a baptism...

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)
There will be Chaos and War...

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Sam wipes the spit from his face, furious -- and starts to
PUMMEL Peter...

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)
And what we do now will mean
everything...

Sam's friends let go of Peter's arms and back away, stunned
at how far this has gone. Peter falls to the ground...

INT. ETERNAL REDEEMER - AUDITORIUM/STAGE

Joshua stares into the camera...

JOSHUA JR.

For the great day of his wrath is
come...

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Sam turns away, thinking he's finished Peter...

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)

...And who shall be able to stand?

But then Peter gets up, his expression CHANGING...

PETER

Hey, Sam.

Sam turns to see him. Sam's friends don't intervene as Peter, covered in blood, looking like a newly risen demon, moves toward Sam...

INT. ETERNAL REDEEMER - AUDITORIUM/STAGE

As Joshua speaks to the camera, out of our hearing, Senior turns to the Young Intern, who mans the broadcast controls...

SENIOR

Cut him off.

YOUNG INTERN

It's going live...?

Senior glowers at the Intern, whose hand is on the switch...

SENIOR

End it.

With Joshua...

JOSHUA JR.

Heed my words, or perish. *For I am
a Messenger of God.*

FLICK OF THE SWITCH.

CUT TO:

A BEAT OF BLACKNESS... then...

INT. HOSPITAL - AMY'S ROOM

Close on: Another of Erin's TEARS falls... landing on Amy's eyelid... which twitches...

THEN OPENS --

The wound from her surgery CLOSES, HEALS before our eyes -- sutures falling out...

Amy blinks, coming to --

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

As Sam backs away, Peter comes at him, and lands a SERIES of VICIOUS PUNCHES... Sam stumbles against a car...

And Peter grabs him by the throat... lifting him off the ground a few inches...

Seeing this, Sam's friends take off running...

There's a moment of fear in Sam's eyes...

Before Peter hefts Sam's full weight and SMASHES him against a CAR -- Sam's head SHATTERING the WINDSHIELD --

INT. HOSPITAL - AMY'S ROOM

Amy looks around, regaining her bearings. Erin still hasn't seen her daughter is awake.

AMY
Why am I here?

Erin is astonished --

ERIN
Amy! You're...

She can't even get it out, hugging her. Amy sits up, apparently unfazed by her injuries...

ERIN (CONT'D)
Stay still, honey, you're hurt...

Amy pulls away the bandage from her head...

AMY
Where?

Nothing seems wrong with her... Erin is baffled.

ERIN

You don't feel anything?

Amy shakes her head, no, confused...

AMY

What's going on?

Erin looks at her daughter, then to the door, deciding...

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Peter's chest rises and falls, as he calms... the PARTY still raging inside the house, as if nothing has happened...

He moves to Sam's motionless form, and sees...

A POOL OF BLOOD blooming -- Sam's eyes fixed open --

DEAD.

Peter backs away, horrified...

In the shattered glass of the CAR WINDOW, he views his own reflection -- and he's astonished to see --

He has WINGS -- broad, moonlit, feathered WINGS --

LIKE AN ANGEL.

As we pull back, we move behind him... and see... the wings are *only in the reflection*.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Alan and Vera sit on the back bumper of a MILITARY VEHICLE. A stoic SOLDIER stands guard next to them. Vera eyes the lights that illuminate the top of the rise, a trail of soldiers climbing up. She turns to the Soldier --

VERA

Hey, guy. Why are we being held?
Can you answer me that?

The Soldier doesn't respond. Vera stands up, just as CPT. ZACK BARTON (40s), African-American, an air of authority, strides up, with an AIDE. The Aide hands back their IDs.

CPT. BARTON

My apologies, Doctor. You can go.

VERA

Oh, you're *allowing* us to leave?

ALAN

Maybe we should just --

VERA

My associate and I were tracking the extraplanetary object that made impact here this afternoon. This is my site as much as anyone's, and I will have you defer to the National Deep Space Agency's authority under its charter from the Executive Branch.

CPT. BARTON

It's for your own safety. You could have been exposed to environmental toxins.

VERA

Oh really? Would that be from the solar flare? Or some other cover story? What are you hiding?

Vera gestures to a group of soldiers carrying SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT...

VERA (CONT'D)

You see that? I know what that is. It takes core samples. I need to be a part of this. I need your data.

As she steps closer to Barton, the Aide and the Soldier both move forward, as if to intervene -- and Vera stops.

VERA (CONT'D)

What are you going to do? Take me to Guantanamo? I hope you don't think I'm leaving here without an answer...

Barton is unreadable.

CPT. BARTON

Sgt. Andrews will escort you to your car.

The silent Soldier, Andrews, steps forward and takes Vera by the arm. She yanks it away. Staring daggers, like she might lash out. Barton doesn't break eye contact. Alan clocks the Aide subtly putting his hand on his gun, poised.

ALAN

Vera, I think we should go.

Finally, she turns and heads in the direction of the car -- Andrews and Alan accompanying her.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Watching them leave, Barton, stands next to a MILITARY VEHICLE. His Aide brings him a special SAT PHONE. Barton dials, waits for answer, then listens--

CPT. BARTON

Yes sir, for the moment.

(pause, listening)

My recommendation? We keep a close eye on them. This is not resolved.

He climbs into the vehicle...

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Ronnie strides through the hallway with purpose... coming to the open door of Amy's room...

Ronnie stops dead when he sees the bed is EMPTY. His stomach drops. He flags down a passing NURSE...

RONNIE

What happened to the girl that was in this room? Amy Calder. Where is she?

The Nurse looks into the room, confused... and Ronnie SLAMS his hand against the door jamb in anger --

OMITTED

INT. PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT

The door opens and BOOM -- the earth-shaking BEAT hits us --

As Peter staggers in, colored STROBE LIGHTS illuminate his bloodied face and torn, blood-soaked shirt -- a vision straight out of hell --

Drunk TEENS dance and make out in the debris-strewn house, as Peter moves down a hallway. Those who notice Peter back away, freaked out, giving him room to pass as he searches...

In the back, the crowd thins. The scattered teenagers all stare at Peter...

Peter clenches his fists, ready to explode again. He spins when he feels a hand on his shoulder --

But it's Alice, who is stunned at his appearance.

ALICE

What happened!? Are you okay?

She pulls him through the back door, outside --

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

The music is quieter here. Alice steers Peter away from the other revelers and to a more private nook. She pours some water from a bottle onto the sleeve of her sweater...

ALICE

Do we need to call an ambulance?

She starts wiping away the blood...

PETER

It's not as bad as it looks...

ALICE

Who did this to you?

Peter won't answer.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Was it Sam? We have to call the cops, Peter, he can't get away --

PETER

Stop.

He pushes her away... She stares at him, hurt.

PETER (CONT'D)

He... He's dead.

ALICE

How...?

Peter's look says enough. Alice is taken aback.

ALICE (CONT'D)

It was self-defense. It was, right?

He's silent for a moment. Then...

PETER

I have to leave here, Alice.

ALICE

You can come to my place. For the night. My mom won't --

PETER

I mean... *leave*.

ALICE

No...

PETER

You can't save me from this, Alice.

Tears well in her eyes. He reaches up to touch her face...

PETER (CONT'D)

Something is happening to me...

He KISSES her. A passionate, real kiss. He pulls away, leaving her reeling... they stare into each other's eyes...

Outside, police SIRENS squawk, and Peter sees the blue of their lights --

PETER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry...

He moves toward a rear gate. Then turns back...

PETER (CONT'D)

I'm confused about everything, but I know how I feel about you.

Her heart breaking, she manages a smile. Then he's gone -- as he slips out the side, avoiding a couple of POLICE OFFICERS as they arrive on scene --

OMITTED

EXT. NDSA OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

Alan's car pulls to a stop next to Vera's truck, which is parked alongside the CONTROL VAN.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Alan looks over to Vera. She's still pissed about Barton.

VERA

I'll make some calls. We'll go back tomorrow. We need samples.

He takes two impact ROCKS from his pocket, hands one to her.

ALAN

You can thank me later.

She shoves him, playfully.

VERA

I owe you.

ALAN

See the like... striations? If we can identify those impurities, we can figure out what this is...

As she examines the rock in the moonlight...

VERA

I can't explain it, but ever since the impact, I feel... kind of upside-down. But this does help.

Vera opens the door --

ALAN

You sure you don't want me to drive you home? I worry about you.

She gives him a look.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Generally, because of the emotional detachment. And also specifically, because of the passing out.

That gets a smile.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Not to mention, who is this Michael guy?

Her mood darkens, and he senses it...

ALAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry if I...

VERA

He's someone who's been gone a long time.

(pause)

And I'm feeling fine. Really.

ALAN

Okay, well...

He reaches over to give her a hug goodbye. It's a bit awkward.

VERA

Goodnight, Alan.

She starts to climb out...

ALAN

Call me when you get home? So I know you made it okay?

VERA

I will.

Then she climbs out and is gone.

A CHOPIN PIANO NOCTURNE begins, bringing us into...

INT. ETERNAL REDEEMER - LOBBY - NIGHT

An empty, modern, moonlight lobby. Joshua sits at a GRAND PIANO, his eyes closed, as the NOCTURNE continues...

As we move around Joshua, we see his HANDS aren't moving. The keys are PLAYING THEMSELVES, as though Joshua is controlling them with his mind...

Senior walks up behind Joshua and watches for a few seconds, unreadable... then he reaches to the side of the piano --

-- and FLIPS the OFF SWITCH. The PLAYER PIANO stops playing. There was no magic after all.

SENIOR

This episode you had, it was very traumatic, I know, but it's no excuse. What you said today, it isn't our message. We counsel hope, not fire and brimstone.

Joshua lifts his eyes to his father, ready to face him.

JOSHUA JR.

I have... a new message.

SENIOR

When I started Eternal Redeemer, it was twenty folding chairs in a dirty basement. I built it. And what you're saying could bring us down.

JOSHUA JR.

This has nothing to do with you.

SENIOR

To hell it doesn't.

Joshua doesn't want to say this, but --

JOSHUA JR.

If everyone knew who you really are, Dad... what you've done...

Senior's eyes burn with fury, but he bottles it in --

SENIOR

This *new message* of yours... If you continue this *sacrilege*, you will not be welcome in my church.

JOSHUA JR.

It's not *your* church. It's God's church.

SENIOR

So be it.

He turns and walks out.

Joshua holds his hands above the piano keys. He closes his eyes, focusing... for a long beat...

PINGGG. A PIANO KEY plays, out of view. Joshua's eyes OPEN.

OMITTED

EXT. VERA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Vera walks away from her truck, toward her house. Low-slung, one with its environment. A lonely outpost.

INT. VERA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

As Vera enters her house, she takes the ROCK from her jacket pocket and looks at it a moment before setting it on the table by the entrance.

As she moves on, she thinks she hears something. Vera steps quietly to her open bedroom door --

INT. VERA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

As Vera enters, on high alert, and spots her OPEN LAPTOP on her bed, we see a FIGURE sitting in a chair behind her...

Uneasy, Vera heads for her her bedside table...

Suddenly a LIGHT switches on behind her -- Vera nearly jumps out of her skin and spins around to find --

THE MAN, still wearing the mechanic Johnny's uniform, sitting in a chair next to an illuminated LAMP.

THE MAN

I figured you needed some light.

Primed with adrenaline, Vera grabs a HANDGUN from her bedside table, and points it at the Man. But he's unfazed.

VERA

This is loaded. Don't move.

THE MAN

I don't need to move. You'll come to me.

END ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. VERA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Trying to tamp down her fear, Vera keeps the gun on The Man.

VERA

What do you want?

THE MAN

You've been chosen, Vera.

Vera moves closer, and spots his nametag --

VERA

Johnny, I'm not sure what you think you're going to get --

THE MAN

That isn't my name. These clothes were... a gift.

VERA

Who are you?

THE MAN

Who I am doesn't matter. What matters is what I know.

She pulls out her cell phone.

VERA

I'm calling the cops.

THE MAN

It's about your son.

Vera goes cold.

VERA

What do you know about my son?

THE MAN

Look at your computer.
(she doesn't move)
Look at it.

Wary, she moves to the open laptop computer, hits a key...

On the screen: a VIDEO CLIP starts to play, the sounds of CHILDREN PLAYING in the background...

A BOY, about eight years old, a mop of brown hair, jogs into frame, all smiles. A soccer ball comes flying toward him...

With dexterity, he stops the ball and begins to dribble... The camera pushes in on his face... and as he looks up, right at us, the image FREEZES...

And because of something in his expression... Vera *knows*. She lets out an involuntary gasp. It's like a punch to the gut. The Man stands up, moves toward her...

THE MAN (CONT'D)
It's Michael. He's alive.

The video begins to play again... and Vera can't take her eyes off it... her world inverted, sent spinning...

THE MAN (CONT'D)
This is from just last week. He's grown up, hasn't he? I know who took him. I know why.

VERA
Tell me.

THE MAN
I can tell you where to find your son. I just need you to finish a job for me, first.

OMITTED

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

A FLAT-BED TRUCK pulls into a gas station and parks. In the back, a tarp covers lawn equipment. A HAND pulls aside an edge -- and Raul, looking pale, peers out...

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Inside the station, a groggy Amy stands with a harried Erin, who passes a few energy drinks to the bored CLERK, who rings them up... Erin looks closely at her daughter...

ERIN
(to Amy)
You're okay? You don't feel funny?

AMY
Mom! I keep saying. I'm fine.

ERIN
Okay. You want a snack? Delishes fishes?

Amy shakes her head, no. Her eyes drift up to a television, playing silent NEWS... a brief clip of Joshua's telecast...

DING! The front door of the gas station opens. Erin glances over, and sees --

RAUL. They make eye contact, and despite everything they've both been through lately, there's a spark. Erin smiles, and Raul manages a smile back. In another life, maybe...

On the NEWS, RAUL's MUG-SHOT appears. A breaking story: he's wanted for the killing of two FBI agents in Juarez...

The Clerk hands Erin her change, and she grabs Amy's hand.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Let's go, kiddo.

Amy's eyes leave Raul's mug-shot to land on Raul himself. She looks back up to the screen. Yes, it's the same guy. Raul follows her gaze... sees himself.

Erin and Amy walk out -- DING! -- Amy turning back to stare at Raul, as they head for their car...

Raul has a moment to decide. The Clerk looks at him blankly.

DRIP. A drop of blood falls to the floor from Raul's sleeve.

INT. RENTAL CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Erin arranges her energy drinks in the cup holder of her rental car. Fumbles for her keys in her purse...

Amy looks out the window, to see Raul coming toward the car... Erin is oblivious...

AMY

Mom? MOM!

The back door swings open and Raul is suddenly in the back seat, gun pointed at Erin -- who's too stunned to scream --

Raul *winces*, like he's hearing the ringing again, then hardens himself...

RAUL

Stay calm. Stay quiet. I won't hurt you... Or your daughter...

Erin is petrified.

RAUL (CONT'D)
Just give me a ride, and I'll let
you go. Nod you agree, okay?

Erin grips her daughter's hand, and nods.

RAUL (CONT'D)
Good. Now start driving.

EXT. INTERSTATE - NIGHT

The headlights of an EIGHTEEN-WHEELER approach. Brakes
GROANING, it pulls to the side of the road, ahead of where
Peter walks --

His hoodie zipped up, Peter steps to the side of the cab, as
the TRUCKER (50s) peers out of the window, eyeing him with
curiosity...

TRUCKER
You on the run, buddy?

PETER
No sir.

TRUCKER
I believe that. Why not.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Peter climbs into the cabin next the Trucker, who puts it
into gear and pulls back onto the highway...

TRUCKER
Houston all right?

PETER
Sounds good to me.

The curving highway ahead...

INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

...becomes a straight stretch across flat country, through a
different windshield. Erin drives, staring ahead, holding in
her panic. Nervous, Amy looks back at Raul, who gives her a
smile.

RAUL
Don't be scared.

AMY
I'm not.

RAUL

Good, I didn't think so. You're pretty tough. My brother has a little girl. Just like you. Her name's Nadia.

AMY

(to Raul)

Where are we going?

ERIN

Honey, don't talk to him.

AMY

Why not?

RAUL

Houston. We're going to Houston.

AMY

That's lucky.

RAUL

Lucky, huh?

ERIN

(stern)

Honey, don't --

AMY

We were going there anyway. It's lucky you picked us.

ERIN

Amy, what did I say? No more talking. Do your drawing.

Amy frowns, takes out her sketchbook. But...

AMY

Why are you going to Houston?

RAUL

Nadia and her dad. They're in Houston. I need to make sure they're okay.

Erin glances at Raul, intrigued by his answer...

OMITTED

EXT. VERA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The sky above is large and full of stars.

INT. VERA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Vera sits at the small table, closing the computer, the gun still next to her. The Man stands across from her. It's almost intimate.

THE MAN

It should be easy. She's already basically dead. She has been for seven years. Killing her will be a mercy.

Vera finally looks up.

VERA

You're crazy. You're completely insane.

THE MAN

Do I seem crazy to you?

VERA

Why do you want this?

THE MAN

If you had the chance to kill a mass murderer... Would you take it?

VERA

You're saying this woman is... what?

THE MAN

She's a threat.

VERA

To you?

THE MAN

To *everything*.

VERA

Then do it yourself.

The Man turns away.

THE MAN

I can find someone else.

He starts for the door. Vera jumps up, menacing with the gun.

VERA

If you take another step, I swear --

The Man turns back to her, steps toward the gun. Close.

THE MAN

You swear? You swear what?

Vera hesitates.

THE MAN (CONT'D)

You won't kill me. Because killing me kills your son. It kills the possibility of ever seeing him again.

Vera's resolve is weakening...

THE MAN (CONT'D)

I am your only hope.

She lowers the gun.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Peter rides next to the Trucker. Both silent.

THE MAN (V.O.)

You experienced things today that you don't understand, Vera...

A ROSARY hangs from the rear-view mirror. Peter stares at the slowly spinning CRUCIFIX...

INT. VERA'S HOUSE / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Grabbing items from a drawer, Vera finishes packing a duffle.

THE MAN (V.O.)

You're trying to deny it... but you feel it...

Vera's CELL PHONE begins to BUZZ. She glances at the screen: "ALAN". After a moment, she hits IGNORE.

INT. ALAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Sitting in the driver's seat, Alan leaves a voice message, looking at his impact ROCK...

ALAN

You said you'd call me. Call me. I think I figured it out. The impurity. So just... call me back.

EXT. VERA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Vera climbs into her truck with her duffle bag, and pulls away into the dark...

THE MAN (V.O.)
Nothing is random... nothing is a
coincidence...

And she doesn't see Alan's car drive up, Alan watching her leave, confused...

INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

As Erin drives, she glances at Raul in the rear-view mirror. He's staring out the window, lost in thought.

THE MAN (V.O.)
...Everything is happening for a
reason...

As if sensing her look, Raul looks over and meets Erin's eyes in the mirror. She looks away.

INT./EXT. VERA'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Vera drives down the dark road. A sign indicating the distance to HOUSTON is illuminated by her headlights.

THE MAN (V.O.)
And you have an important part to
play.

INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

In the passenger seat, Amy has fallen asleep with a pastel in her hand -- in the midst of finishing another drawing of a YELLOW RISING SUN -- which becomes --

EXT. HOUSTON MEMORIAL - DAY

-- An eerily similar RISING SUN, this one the LOGO on the side of a building we recognize from the opening, HOUSTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL... the same place where Rose was shot...

INT. CAR - DAY

Staring at the rising sun logo -- or, rather, at a WINDOW nearby -- Joshua sits in his luxury car. In a daze.

HONK! The car behind Joshua BLARES its horn and Joshua snaps out of it -- disoriented.

Ignoring the BLARING HORNS, Joshua gets out of his car -- his eyes still focusing on the WINDOW --

INT. HOUSTON MEMORIAL / PATIENT ROOM - DAY

-- As inside, a nurse, Rose's Friend from the opening, seven years older, fixes the blinds and steps away from the window.

She HUMS to herself over the SOUND of a VENTILATOR MACHINE, and straightens a vase of FRESH FLOWERS next to the framed photo of Rose and her fiance.

In the bed, on life support -- is ROSE, in a coma.

EXT. HOUSTON MEMORIAL / STREET - DAY

Joshua clammers onto the roof of his car, where he stands. The cars behind him BLAST horns, and a MAN SHOUTS at him.

JOSHUA JR.

God has spoken to me! He has chosen me to bring you this warning. He is angry. He is disappointed in his children.

He glances to the hospital, as if feeling a presence there, but then turns back to the people nearby...

JOSHUA JR. (CONT'D)

The End is here, with us! But our War is just beginning. Listen to me!

Passersby gawk, and a few start to RECORD on their PHONES, as Joshua's voice rises above the cacophony of the traffic...

JOSHUA JR. (CONT'D)

The line will be drawn here, where I stand! We must choose a side.

INT. HOUSTON MEMORIAL / ROSE'S ROOM - DAY

In the room, Rose's Friend, shaking her head at the crazy man outside, passes in front of an EMPTY CHAIR next to the bed, making a final check of the ventilator.

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)

We must prove we are worth saving...

And when she passes it again on her way to the door --

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)
Because the gates of Hell are wide
open....

THE MAN IS SITTING IN THE CHAIR. Waiting.

JOSHUA JR. (V.O.)
And Death is coming for us all.

And as the Man's mesmerizing eyes bore into the deepest,
darkest recesses of our souls...

We move in on ROSE'S HAND... and her finger TWITCHES...

END OF SHOW