

A BEAUTIFUL MIND

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Based on the biography
by Sylvia Nassar

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FADE IN ON:

EXT.-NORTH AMERICA-1947-DAY

The way the world looks to God. The odd puzzle geometry of sea and land pieced together as if by unseen design. CLOSER...

VAN NEUMANN (OVER)
Mathematicians won the war...

EXT.-NEW JERSEY-1947-DAY

Alternating squares of lawn and lot, criss-crossing highways, a game board of cement and grass. CLOSER STILL...

VAN NEUMANN (OVER)
Mathematicians broke the Japanese codes and built the A-bomb...

EXT.-PRINCETON UNIVERSITY-DAY

Rows of heads. PUSH IN on a single FACE looking skyward, as if he can see us. Uncommonly handsome. Piercing blue eyes. JOHN NASH.

VAN NEUMANN (OVER)
Mathematicians like you...

TRACK over the all male students to the head of the common. JOHN VAN NEUMANN, is delivering the matriculation speech.

VAN NEUMANN
But peace's flame burns all too briefly. Atomic weapons are within Stalin's reach. You are the vanguard of democracy and freedom. Today, we bequeath America's future into your able hands. Welcome to Princeton.

The crowd erupts in APPLAUSE.

EXT.-PRINCETON-PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION

Sunlight dapples the flickering autumn leaves. Students in formal dress mill. FIND two STUDENTS standing at a bar, sipping martinis.

ZWEIFEL is tall and wiry, like a scarecrow made of skin. SHAPELY is older, maybe 26, and handsome. Both watch someone in the crowd.

SHAPELY
Milnor's gonna get the brass ring if it kills him.

ZWEIFEL

He's used to pretty metal.
(taps his teeth)
Silver spoon.

REVERSE on the subject of their musings. A student with shaggy hair and fiercely intelligent eyes is pumping hands. MARTIN MILNOR.

ZWEIFEL

It's not enough he won the Carnegie scholarship.

SHAPELY

Has to have it all for himself.

CAMERA DRIFTS to a third figure standing near them at the bar. John Nash can't help but overhear their conversation. Zweifel notices.

ZWEIFEL

First time the Carnegie prize has been split. Now Milnor's all bent.

Nash nods, looks again at the young man working the crowd.

SHAPELY

He's set his sights on the new military think tank at RAND.

ZWEIFEL

They only recruit the best brain from each class.

SHAPELY

Milnor's used to being picked first.
(extends his hand)
Shapely. Symbol Cryptography.

ZWEIFEL

Shapes broke a Jap code. Helped rid the world of Fascism. Least that's what he tells the girls.
(extends his hand)
Zweifel. Atomic physics. And you are...

Just then a third FELLOW runs up. Breathless, clever face that resembles his name. FOX.

FOX

Am I late?

Zweifel and Shapely exchange a look. He's always late.

SHAPELY & ZWEIFEL

Yes.

FOX
(to Nash)

Hi. I'm Fox.

That's when Milnor emerges from the crowd to join his friends.

MILNOR

Ah the burden of genius. So many
supplicants, so little time.

Milnor's eyes light on Nash. The beat of recognition is so slight
it's almost imperceptible. Then he smiles.

MILNOR

I'll take a white wine.

NASH

Excuse me.

MILNOR

A thousand pardons. I simply assumed
you were the waiter.

FOX

Play nice, Milnor.

SHAPELY

Nice is not Milnor's strong suit.

MILNOR

An honest mistake. What with those
war ration shoes...

Nash's outfit does look off the rack compared to Milnor's couture.

NASH

It's not your first mistake. I read
your brief on Nazi ciphers.

With that, Nash offers a slight nod, turns and walks off.

FOX

Who was that masked man?

MILNOR

Gentlemen meet John Nash. The
mysterious West Virginia genius. The
other winner of the distinguished
Carnegie scholarship.

Off Milnor. He's still watching Nash go.

EXT.-PRINCETON-FRESHMAN DORM-SUNSET

The sun is low in the sky. Nash heads into the tall dormitory.

INT.-FRESHMAN DORM ROOM-SUNSET

Nash ENTERS. Small but well furnished. His clothes are still packed in trunks. Nash pulls off his tie, goes to the window.

Couples and LAUGHING groups move across the sun-drenched field. Nash rests his forehead against the glass. Alone.

The door swings open behind him. Unruly hair and a tuxedo that looks slept in whirl into the room. Meet CHARLES HERMAN.

CHARLES

The prodigal roommate arrives.

Charles begins stripping as he speaks. Nash stares in wonder as off come his jacket and bow-tie.

NASH

Roommate?

CHARLES

Did you know that a hangover is not having enough water in your body to run your krebs cycle?

Charles pulls off his pants, and hopping, both shoes.

CHARLES

Which is exactly what happens when you die of thirst.

Now finally his shirt, which he throws on the couch.

CHARLES

So dying of thirst would feel like the hangover that finally kills you.

He grabs a towel and heads for the door.

CHARLES

Nash, right? Happy to meet you.

NASH-CLOSE. Speechless.

CUT TO:

A TOUCH FOOTBALL GAME-CLOSE. A HAND moves into FRAME, outlining the players with wax boxes and vectors. WIDER...

INT.-NASH'S DORM ROOM-NIGHT

Nash has moved his desk in front of the picture window, sits now marking the players positions on the pane.

CHARLES

Officially almost human again.

Charles has ENTERED from the hall, hair wet, towel around his neck.

CHARLES

Officer, I saw the driver who hit me. His name was Johnny Walker.

Nash continues working as Charles opens the closet, pulls out bags which he apparently stowed before Nash's arrival. Begins unpacking.

CHARLES

I got in last night. Right in time for English Department cocktails. The cock was mine. The tail belonged to a lovely young thing with a passion for D.H. Lawrence.

Nash nods, still doesn't look up from his work.

CHARLES

Not easily distracted, are you?

NASH

I'm here to work.

CHARLES

I see.

Charles spots a bowl of wrapped amaretto cookies on Nash's desk. Nash covers the bowl before Charles can grab one, never once looking up from his pad.

That's when Charles actually climbs up on Nash's desk, sitting right in front of him.

NASH

Hey-.

CHARLES

Is my roommate a dick?

Charles reaches into his pocket and pulls out something. A silver flask. Waves it in Nash's face.

CHARLES

If we can't break the ice, how about we drown it?

EXT.-DORM ROOFTOP-SUNSET

Charles and Nash stand under the crimson sky on the roof of the dorm, passing the flask.

CHARLES

So how's it go? You the poor boy who didn't go to Harvard or Yale...

NASH

(brushes his shoulder)
That's me. Big chip.

CHARLES

Or the nerdy kid the other kids only liked for his brains?

Nash just shrugs.

NASH

My first grade teacher wrote, John has a beautiful mind. I was five.

CHARLES

Lots of smart people around here.

NASH

But that's all I am. Smart. I'm not warm. I don't do people well.

A couple of guys race, LAUGHING, past, tossing a moonrise football.

NASH

Half these guys already published. I can't waste time with books or classes. I have to come up with a truly original idea. It's the only way I'll distinguish myself. It's the only way I'll...

CHARLES

Matter.

Nash glances over to Charles, startled, then just nods.

Nash reaches into his pocket, pulls out two wrapped amaretto cookies. Hands one to Charles.

CHARLES

The cookies help.

Finally, Nash smiles back.

INT.-CLASSROOM-DAY

A MAN towers before the class. Wire-rimmed glasses. The oldest eyes in the world. PROFESSOR LEW HORNER.

HORNER

The Russians stated goal is worldwide communism...

Horner moves to the blackboard. Covered with arcane symbols, the hieroglyphics of high level math.

HORNER

It is on us to stop them. What we are looking for here is math with practical application. Morse's dot and dash. Einstein's torn atom. Numbers that can change the world.

A group of students stare up at him. Zweifel, Milnor, Shapely, Fox and several others. Only one chair is empty.

HORNER

Results, gentleman. Publishable. Applicable. Results...

TAPS the board.

HORNER

This is an actual Russian Air Force code. Can you break it? Mr. Shapely you're disqualified.

Shapley nods slightly, leans back, lights a cigarette. Horner scrawls a final set of symbols on the board.

HORNER

All right complete the sequence! Go!

MILNOR

Seven.

HORNER
 (scrawls more symbols)
 Good. Again. Hurry, their MIG 15's
 are heading our way.

ZWEIFEL
 Seventeen.

HORNER
 (scrawls more)
 Again. They're closing in on the
 Capitol.

MILNOR
 Six-

HORNER
 (scrawls more)
 Again. You can hear the roar of
 their Tupolevs-

MILNOR
 Seven-

HORNER
 (scrawls more)
 The warheads are armed-

MILNOR
 Seven, seven, one.

Horner sets down the chalk. Wipes the chalk dust from his hands
 with a series of CLAPS.

HORNER
 Washington owes you a debt of
 gratitude Mr. Milnor. Good work.

Horner looks around the room.

HORNER
 From now on, this is how you will
 think of numbers. Not as theory. Not
 as abstraction. As weapons.

Horner sits back on the desk.

HORNER
 My name is Lew Horner and I will be
 your teacher. Welcome to Mathematics
 in Thought and Action.

He glances at the empty chair. Then at his roster.

HORNER

Where the hell is...Nash?

Milnor looks out the window. FOLLOW Milnor's gaze into...

EXT.-PRINCETON COURTYARD-DAY

MILNOR (OVER)

He's looking for his original idea.

Nash is on his bicycle riding around the courtyard in figure eights, eyes half-closed, students scattering as he goes.

EXT.-PRINCETON GAMES QUAD-DAY

Stone gaming tables built into the wide cement courtyard. The last brown leaves whip like dervishes across the expanse.

Van Neumann stands with Milnor, Zweifel, Shapely and a few others over a GO board set with marbles.

VAN NEUMANN

We study games to study strategic behavior in conflict...

Fox pushes into the group.

VAN NEUMANN

Thank you for stopping by Mr. Fox. Put simply, the study of games is the study of war...

(OVER) a WHISTLING rises, crystal clear. BEETHOVEN'S MOONLIGHT SONATA. All turn to reveal Nash, walking backwards past them.

VAN NEUMANN

Good day, Mr Nash. Care to join?

Nash looks up, apparently startled by their presence.

NASH

Classes dull the mind and destroy authentic creativity. No offense.

VAN NEUMANN

None taken.

MILNOR

John's going to stun us all with his original idea.

ZWEIFEL
(mouthing)

Psy-cho.

MILNOR
Which is another way of saying he
doesn't have the nerve to compete.

Milnor RAPS the game table with his knuckles.

MILNOR
Scared?

A beat. Then Nash smiles.

EXT.-PRINCETON GAMES QUAD-MINUTES LATER

Nash faces Milnor across the GO board. The play is incredibly fast.
As they speak, they never take their eyes off the game board.

MILNOR
Let me ask you something, **John**.

NASH
Be my guest, **Martin**.

MILNOR
Fox and Zweif correctly predicted
stress fractures on Yeager's X-1.

NASH
Adequate work without innovation.

FOX
I'm flattered. Are you flattered?

ZWEIFEL
Flattered.

MILNOR
I've got two weapons briefs under
security review by the DOD.

NASH
Derivative drivel.

The pace of play has increased to an amazing speed, less and less
marbles on the board.

MILNOR
But Nash achievements: zero.

NASH

Is there an actual question coming?

MILNOR

What if you never come up with your original idea? How will it feel when I'm chosen for RAND and you're not?

Nash doesn't answer, concentrates on his play.

MILNOR

What if you lose?

And with that Milnor makes a deft move and takes the game. Nash sits there. Stunned.

NASH

You shouldn't have won. The game is flawed.

MILNOR

Ah, the hubris of the defeated.

Nash is furious, sweeps the board with his hand, rises and walks away. Milnor smiles, shakes his head.

MILNOR

Gentlemen, the great John Nash.

EXT.-PRINCETON DORM QUAD-SUNSET

Nash stands staring down at a GO board at his feet. His face lined with deep frustration.

NASH-POV. Different sections of the board suddenly go dark, patterns of squares rising and falling, forming different shapes with ever increasing speed.

PULL BACK AND UP TO...

EXT.-PRINCETON DORM QUAD-ACCELERATED TIME

HIGH ANGLE of Nash standing alone in the courtyard, head bowed. The sun sinks behind the horizon; the moon moves across the starry sky; and the sun rises again.

NASH-CLOSE. Eyes red in the early morning light. Still staring at the board. Finally, he blinks, as if for the first time.

EXT.-PRINCETON GAMES QUAD-MORNING

Fox watches on as Shapely and Zweifel play GO. Nash walks up and grabs the board in mid-game, marbles CLATTERING to the courtyard.

ZWEIFEL

What the hell-.

Nash pulls something from his back pocket. It's a knife. The others jump up. Nash has a maniacal gleam in his eyes.

SHAPELY

John, take it easy-

Nash lifts the board and in two deft strokes, slices away both sides, leaving a triangle. He drops the cut board on the table.

Nash turns and walks away. The others stare after him.

ZWEIFEL

He's totally lost it.

FOX

What a whacko, huh, Shapes?

But Shapely's not listening, he's staring at the new game board.

SHAPELY

Will you look at this....

EXT.-PRINCETON GAMES QUAD-AFTERNOON

TRACK down a row of two-player tables: All sitting over cut-down, triangular boards. FIND Van Neumann and Milnor walking the quad.

VAN NEUMANN

Your work on hydrogen fusion is impressive.

MILNOR

I know the boys at RAND are doing H-bomb research, sir. I'm hopeful-

But Van Neumann has become distracted by two students playing GO on the triangular board. He moves to them. Milnor follows.

VAN NEUMANN

What have we here?

STUDENT

It's derived from GO. But variant outcomes are made impossible by the shape of the board. Quite simply, it's perfect, sir.

VAN NEUMANN

Where did it come from?

STUDENT

I don't know. But it's called Nash.

INT. -LIBRARY-LATE NIGHT

TRACK PAST the Librarian, PAST oak tables and green reading lamps, FIND Nash drawing on the large circular window over the campus.

CHARLES (OVER)

You've been here two days.

Nash turns to find Charles behind him. John looks exhausted.

NASH

Milnor just published another brief. And I've come up with nothing...

Charles walks to the glass, appraises Nash's work.

CHARLES

Hell, no. You invented window art.

Nash gestures to the first pattern.

NASH

This group represents a game of touch football...

(off the second pattern)

This was a cluster of pigeons fighting for bread crumbs....

(off the third)

And this is a woman chasing a man who stole her purse....

CHARLES

You watched a mugging?

NASH

In competitive behavior, someone always loses...

CHARLES

My niece knows that. She's nine.

NASH

If I could devise a stratagem where nobody loses, the effect on arms negotiations...

Nash's jacket hits him in the chest. Nash looks up, startled.

CHARLES

When was the last time you ate?

Nash stares at him blankly.

CHARLES

You know, food?

Charles grabs Nash's wax pencil from his hand, shoves it in his pocket, begins walking away.

NASH

You have no respect for the peril of the free world, do you know that?

CHARLES

Pizza. I have respect for pizza. And maybe beer...

A beat. Then Nash follows.

EXT.-OLD HOME BAR-PRINCETON-NIGHT

Warm amber light shines through the window of the bar as students push inside, out of the deepening cold.

INT.-OLD HOME BAR-NIGHT

(OVER) LES BROWN on the jukebox. Students party with co-eds from neighboring schools. Shapely charms a few girls at the bar.

Nash is at the pool table. Makes a bank shot. Chalks up again.

ZWEIFEL (OVER)

Who's winning, you or you?

Zweifel stands with Milnor, who is holding two beers. Hands one to Nash. John takes the bottle, puzzled.

MILNOR

That new game board is impressive. Lousy name. But impressive.

That's when Fox arrives. Gestures the Waitress for a beer.

FOX

Hey. Oh, hey Nash. Wilson tanked.

ZWEIFEL

What?

FOX

Bell Labs new transistor blew his schematics out of the water.

MILNOR

Those calculations took him a year.

FOX

Packed up in the middle of the night. Just gone.

Milnor looks at his beer, raises it in silent salute. Drinks.

ZWEIFEL

Hey, Nash, somebody's trying to get your attention.

Shapely, arm now securely around a luscious brunette, is gesturing Nash over. The blond GIGGLES, averts her eyes.

Nash puts down his cue warily, heads towards the bar.

MILNOR

This is gonna be good.

INT.-OLD HOME BAR-MOMENTS LATER

Nash is at the bar with BECKY, the blond co-ed. The two stand there in awkward silence. The moment stretches on. Finally...

BECKY

Maybe you want to buy me a drink.

Nash appraises her clinically. When he speaks now, his words have a deliberate quality that belies their speed.

NASH

Look, I don't know exactly what things I am required to say in order for you to have intercourse with me. But could we assume I've said them? I mean essentially we're talking about fluid exchange, right? So, could we go right to the sex?

BECKY

That was sweet.

She SLAPS him across the face.

BECKY

Have a nice night, asshole.

She walks off. John turns to face the bar.

VOICE (OVER)

Want a piece of friendly advice?

WIDER. Charles has sidled up beside him.

NASH

Is 'no' an actual option?

CHARLES

You may be a genius, but when it comes to the calculus of human emotions, you don't have a clue. So buy them drinks. Smile. Nod a lot. And maybe keep your mouth shut.

NASH

What's unfriendly advice sound like?

Charles CLAPS him on the shoulder and grins.

CHARLES

I especially like the fluid exchange part.

With that, Charles ruffles his hair and heads for the door. Nash turns back to the bar. Alone.

EXT.-PRINCETON-FINE HALL-DAY

The commons are pristine fields of snow. The stony facade of Fine Hall glistens, icicles hanging like sparkling whiskers.

VAN NEUMANN (OVER)

Perhaps your academic progress has suffered from too much isolation...

INT.-FINE HALL-MATH DEPARTMENT HALLWAY-WALKING

Nash and Van Neumann are walking the long hall, squares of winter sun and shadow gliding across their faces.

VAN NEUMANN
Human connection gives us
perspective. Friends...

NASH
I don't make friends.

VAN NEUMANN
Why not?

NASH
Apparently I'm an asshole.

Van Neumann would laugh if John wasn't dead serious.

VAN NEUMANN
The faculty is completing mid year
reviews. We're making preliminary
placement recommendations.

NASH
RAND would be my first choice, sir.

Van Neumann stares at him incredulously. Finally, shakes his head.

VAN NEUMANN
The game is clever, John. But your
fellows have attended classes,
written briefs, published papers-

NASH
I'm still searching for-

VAN NEUMANN
Your original idea. I know.
(softening)
We had such high hopes for you.

They have come to the door of the math faculty lounge. Professors
sit over small tables being served tea by tuxedo-clad waiters.

NASH
What are they doing?

A professor has risen and crossed. Now he does something peculiar.
Takes his pen from his pocket, lays it in front of a seated man.

VAN NEUMANN
The pens is one of the oldest
tributes at Princeton.

More and more faculty are rising, lying their pens down in front of the smiling man.

VAN NEUMANN

Reserved for a member of the
department who makes the
achievement of a lifetime.

Van Neumann takes his own pen from his pocket. Then he pauses, notices the hunger in John's eyes.

VAN NEUMANN

What do you see, John?

NASH

Recognition.

VAN NEUMANN

Try seeing appreciation.

NASH

What's the difference?

VAN NEUMANN

(taps his head)

The difference isn't here.

(taps his chest)

It's here.

John just stares at him blankly.

VAN NEUMANN

John, I asked to see you because
your record doesn't warrant any
placement at all.

NASH

Sir, I can still-.

VAN-NEUMANN

No, son. You can't. I'm sorry.

John stares at him. Van Neumann smiles sadly. Then he walks inside, leaving John alone, looking in.

INT.-NASH'S DORM ROOM-LATE AFTERNOON

Nash stands, forehead against the picture window, staring out. The glass is covered with elaborate wax patterns.

NASH

I can see it, come on, come on...

Nash CRACKS his head, hard, on the glass, spiderwebbing the window.

CHARLES (OVER)

Jesus.

WIDER. Charles is sitting up on his bed, looking sleepy, sheet around his shoulders. He puts his feet on the floor. Smiles grimly.

CHARLES

What did that window ever do to you?

John turns to him now, the despair on his face palpable.

NASH

I can't fail. Do you understand?

John turns back to look back out the window. When his VOICE comes again there is a defeat that is chilling.

NASH

This is all I am.

John SLAMS his head into the glass again, hard.

CHARLES

John, stop-

John spins, pleading eyes full of rage and anguish.

NASH

I can't fail. There's no reason for me then. Do you understand? Do you?!

Charles stares at him a long beat. Finally...

CHARLES

...Yes.

This seems to give Nash some small comfort. A long beat. Then he walks to the desk, begins to pull it backwards from the window.

NASH

No more staring out. Face the wall.
Read their books, attend their
classes...

Charles stares at him a beat. He nods slowly.

CHARLES

You're bleeding.

Charles rises, hands him a towel. As John begins to tamp his forehead, Charles puts his hands on the edge of the desk.

CHARLES

You know, friend Nash; if you want to win your own way...

Charles pulls the desk back from the window, but doesn't let go. Instead he bends, as if for traction.

CHARLES

You can't play by their rules....

Charles begins shoving the desk towards the window...

NASH

What are you-

The desk HITS and SMASHES through the glass.

EXT.-DORM ROOM-LATE AFTERNOON

The desk blows through the window, tumbling two stories to the ground in an EXPLOSION of wood and floating sheets of paper.

EXT.-DORM ROOM-CONTINUOUS

Nash stands with Charles looking down, out of the broken picture window at the still settling debris.

CHARLES

Heavy.

Nash nods, can't help a shocked grin.

NASH

No witch's slipper. Good thing.

CHARLES

Your answer isn't, face the wall. It's not in their books and in their classes. It's out there, right where you've been looking. When they tell you to look away, you've just got to look closer. Do you understand?

Nash stares at him a beat.

NASH

You're kind of strange, aren't you?

CHARLES

Coming from you, do you have any
idea how much that scares me?

INT.-OLD HOME BAR-NIGHT

(OVER) Sinatra on the juke. Our boys are playing pool. John sits
alone, staring at the floor.

MILNOR

The Soviets just barred the UN from
entering North Korea.

SHAPELY

Germany's next. They'll build a wall
right down the middle. Watch.

ZWEIFEL

Russians were cold once. Thousands
died. They will not be cold again.

MILNOR

Incoming.

Milnor is gesturing to the door. About six women have entered the
bar. Well, five and one. The BLOND in the lead is simply, perfect.

PAN ACROSS the guys' stunned faces.

INT.-OLD HOME BAR-LATER

The group sits talking, casting furtive glances at the Blond and
her girlfriends a couple of tables away.

MILNOR

I'm going to buy her a drink.

NASH

That's creative.

ZWEIFEL

Will she want a large wedding?

SHAPELY

One beauty, too many suitors.

FOX

Swords, gentlemen? Pistols at dawn?

MILNOR

We apply Adam Smith's benevolent
hand.

FOX

In competition, individual ambition
serves the common good.

SHAPELY

Every man for himself.

ZWEIFEL

Those who strike out end up with her
friends.

John nods. Then his gaze fixes on the girls.

ZWEIFEL

She's looking over. I think she's
looking at Nash.

MILNOR

He may have the advantage now. But
wait until he opens his mouth.

But John doesn't respond to the taunt. Instead he continues to
stare intently at the girls.

MILNOR

Nash? Hey, Earth to Nash.

But Nash doesn't take his eyes off the girls' table.

NASH

Adam Smith was wrong.

MILNOR

What are you talking about?

*NASH-POV. The girls' table grows dark, only the blond girl
highlighted, moving into the foreground.*

NASH (OVER)

If everyone competes for the
blond...

*NASH-POV. Images of all the boys surround the blond, then blow
apart like fragments of glass, leaving the blond standing alone.*

NASH (OVER)

...we block each other and no one
gets her.

*NASH-POV. The other girls rise into the foreground, images of our
boys pairing off with them.*

NASH (OVER)

...So then we go for her friends...

NASH-POV. All the other girls suddenly go dark, leaving our group standing alone.

NASH (OVER)

...But they give us the cold shoulder, because no one likes to be second choice. Again, no winners.

NASH-POV. The blond girl goes dark.

NASH (OVER)

...But what if none of us go for the blond...

NASH-POV. Now images of the boys pair up with the remaining girls.

NASH

...We don't get in each other's way, we don't insult the other girls.

NASH-POV. The world goes dark except for the couples which twirl like a mobile of arabesques in a victorious swirl.

NASH (OVER)

That's the only way we win. That's the only way we all get laid.

All are staring at him.

NASH

Adam Smith said the best outcome for the group comes from everyone trying to do what's best for himself.

MILNOR

Yes, Nash, it's the basis for all of modern economic theory.

NASH

He was wrong. The best outcome comes from everyone trying to do what's best for himself and the group.

MILNOR

Nash, if this is some plan for you to get the blond alone...

But Nash isn't listening. He's already pulling on his coat.

NASH

Don't you see? Adam Smith was wrong.
The father of economics was wrong.

And with that he's grabbed his coat, heading out the door, his puzzled friends watching on.

FOX

Could he be weirder?

HOLD on Milnor. Face darkening with concern.

EXT.-NASH'S DORM ROOM WINDOW-NIGHT

Nash sits bent over his pad, working. Within the window frame Nash continues to work, time passing normally. PULL BACK AND OUT...

EXT.-NASH'S DORM-ACCELERATED TIME

Outside, snow covers the building, then melts, and tendrils of ivy snake up the concrete facade and bloom, all while Nash works on.

INT.-VAN NEUMANN'S OFFICE-DAY

Van Neumann sits across the desk from Nash, holding Nash's handwritten paper in his hand.

VAN NEUMANN

You came up with this on a dating excursion?

Nash simply nods.

VAN NEUMANN

You realize this refutes one hundred and fifty years of economic theory?

NASH

I do, sir.

VAN NEUMANN

That's rather presumptuous, don't you think?

NASH

Yes, sir.

Van Neumann stares at the young man. Drops the paper on his desk.

VAN NEUMANN

Well, Mr. Nash, this document may be the single most important work on competitive bargaining I have seen.

NASH

Thank you, sir.

VAN NEUMANN

It has immediate applications to current peace and arms negotiations. You'll get any placement you want. Most of the top programs will let you bring two support people.

NASH

I'll take Fox and Zweifel sir.

Van Neumann raises an eyebrow. Leans back in his chair.

NASH

I did it, didn't I sir?

VAN NEUMANN

Yes, John. You did.

EXT.-THE PENTAGON-WASHINGTON DC-DAY-1951

Sun breaks on the monolithic stone building.

VAN NEUMANN (OVER)

Where will you go?

INT.-THE PENTAGON-WAR ROOM

Lit map-boards of the cold war globe. The hulking behemoths of early IBM computers. A young CAPTAIN stands on a grillwork landing.

CAPTAIN

General, the team from RAND is here.

REVERSE. Two uniformed TECHNICIANS, a senior ANALYST and a GENERAL stand before a wall papered with sheets of numbers.

GENERAL

Show them in.

The Captain hits a button. A red wall light goes green. Three MEN in raincoats ENTER, faces obscured by the shadows of their hats.

CAPTAIN

General Wilson, this is RAND team leader...

The lead man removes his hat to reveal...

CAPTAIN

...Dr. John Nash.

Close cropped hair. Four years since we have last seen him.

GENERAL

Glad you could come, Doctor.

Nash nods. Hands his overcoat and gloves to one of his Aides. He is wearing a slim black suit and tie. The General nods to the Analyst.

ANALYST

We have been intercepting radio transmissions from Moscow.

GENERAL

The computer can't detect a pattern. But I'm sure it's code.

NASH

Why is that, General?

GENERAL

Ever just know something, Dr. Nash?

Nash actually smiles.

NASH

Constantly.

Nash moves to the wall papered with code.

GENERAL

We have developed several ciphers-

But Nash raises his hand, silencing the officer. He stands still, just staring at the numbers. Then Nash begins to WHISTLE.

PUSH IN ON Nash's eyes. In the black ocean of his pupils, the reflected rows of code begin to move, forming shifting patterns.

PULL BACK ON Nash, still staring at the wall. Hours have passed, folks sitting, jackets hanging on chair backs, coffee cups empty.

NASH-POV. Series of numbers darken as others rise, a cascade of rapidly changing patterns, endless permutations until...

NASH

There.

Nash opens his hand to a pencil from one of his rising Aides. He walks to the wall, begins circling various numbers. All stare.

NASH

I need a map. North America I think.

The General and the Analyst exchange a look. The General nods and the Captain illuminates a map Board of North America.

NASH

These are longitudes and latitudes.

Nash is already marking the map board.

NASH

They appear to be routing orders.
Ways across the border into the US.

Nash glances upwards. From a glass booth overlooking the room, a MAN is watching him. Fine dark suit. Thin tie.

NASH

Who's Big Brother?

GENERAL

Excuse me?

But when Nash looks up again, the booth is empty. The Man has gone.

NASH

What are the Russians moving,
General?

But the General just claps him on the shoulder.

GENERAL

You've done your country a great
service, son.

The General turns, Nash watching as the men begin tearing down the sheets of code from the wall.

EXT.-MIT CAMPUS-CAMBRIDGE-AFTERNOON

A black sedan slows at a gate manned by uniformed soldiers. One soldier nods, waving the car through into...

EXT.-MIT-RAND COMPOUND-AFTERNOON

High fences. A section of buildings that essentially comprise a small military base in the center of MIT's campus.

Nash emerges from the car, past scholars and military personnel. Vanishes into a large, single story building. RAND headquarters.

INT.-MIT RAND HEADQUARTERS-WALKING

Bustling. And hot. Nash is walking down a long, sun-lit corridor. A fellow falls into step with him. It's Fox.

FOX

Home run at the Pentagon.

NASH

Have they actually taken the word classified out of the dictionary?

FOX

Please. This is the military. The only place information travels faster is high school.

NASH

Fox, how about you call me chief or boss or something?

FOX

How about you blow me?

NASH

That's what I figured.

Nash strips off his jacket. Another figure falls into step with them, a file folder in his hand. Zweifel.

ZWEIFEL

Air conditioning broke again.

NASH

Exactly how are we supposed to keep the world safe for democracy if we're stewing to death?

INT.-MIT RAND HEADQUARTERS-NASH'S OFFICE-CONTINUOUS

Large. Sunlit. Walls covered with mathematical symbols, technical schematics. Nash peels off his shirt, leaving only his t.

NASH

Two trips to The Pentagon in four years.

FOX

That's two more than we've had.

ZWEIFEL

(hands Nash a file)

It gets better. We just got our new assignment.

NASH

Moscow has the H-bomb...

Zweifel and Fox exchange a look. They know what's coming.

NASH

Stalin's practically loading V2's with biological payloads by hand...
(slaps the file on the desk)
And we're doing stress tests for a new dam.

Nash begins rifling his mail. A letter to Charles Herman at U Texas. Stamped: Return To Sender-Address Unknown.

ZWEIFEL

You made the cover of Forbes. Again.

FOX

Please note the use of you not we.

FORBES-CLOSE. Nash lifts the magazine from his mail pile. The cover reads, America's geniuses. Four portraits. John looks pissed.

NASH

It was supposed to be just me.

ZWEIFEL

John, exactly what's the difference between genius and most genius?

NASH

Everything.

FOX

(rolling his eyes)
He's your son.

ZWEIFEL

Anyway, you've got ten minutes-

NASH
I've always got ten minutes.

FOX
Before your first class.

NASH-CLOSE. Actually pales.

NASH
Can't I get a note from a doctor?

ZWEIFEL
You are a Doctor. And no. You know
the drill. We get facilities...

FOX
MIT gets America's great minds of
today teaching America's great minds
of tomorrow. Poor bastards.

Fox thrusts a briefcase into Nash's arms.

ZWEIFEL
Have a nice day at school.

NASH
(heading for the door)
Screw you both. Really.

And with that, he's gone.

ZWEIFEL
Oh to be a fly on the wall.

CUT TO:

A HARD HAT is JACK-HAMMERING one of the cement walkways. DEAFENING.
PULL BACK THROUGH A WINDOW TO REVEAL...

INT.-MIT CLASSROOM-AFTERNOON

(OVER) The CONSTRUCTION RACKET. Maybe two dozen grad students sit
restlessly at their desks, sweating, fanning themselves, windows
open to the meager breeze.

Nash ENTERS in his t-shirt. He deposits his briefcase on the desk,
stares out at the class like a soldier eying the enemy.

NASH
What the hell is that racket?

Nash begins closing windows, shutting out the CONSTRUCTION NOISE.

STUDENT

Can we leave one open Professor?
It's really hot, sir...

Nash has returned to the board. Turns to face the boy who spoke.

NASH

Your comfort comes second to my ability to hear my own voice. Personally, I am certain this class will be a deadly waste of both your, and worse, my time. But, here we are. Attend or not. Complete the assignments at your whim. We begin.

PAN across the stunned faces. A beat. Nash returns to the board.

NASH

This non-linear equation should take you several months to solve....

Nash trails off. A GIRL, maybe 20, has risen. Exquisite. Powerfully intelligent eyes. A dancer's body. This is ALICIA LARDE.

NASH

Miss...

She crosses the room, turns now and holds Nash's gaze a beat. Then she pushes open a window.

Folks just stare, stunned, as she pokes her head outside, begins TALKING. We hear only random WORDS, then LAUGHTER.

THROUGH THE WINDOW. The Construction Workers move off.

See the look she gives him, as stunning as it is impassable. A beat. Then Nash offers the barest nod. Turns back to the board.

NASH

As I was saying, this equation..

PULL BACK over Nash as Alicia continues around the room, opening every window to the breeze.

EXT.-MIT RAND-HEADQUARTERS-DAY

Nash is climbing the front steps towards the main doors.

VOICE (OVER)

Professor Nash...

Standing on the path is a single figure. Slim black suit.

MAN

Big Brother at your service.

Nash inspects the Department of Defense photo ID and badge, embossed with a government seal. Meet WILLIAM PARCHER.

NASH

So, what can I do for the DOD?

EXT.-MIT-RAND COMPOUND-WALKING

Parcher is leading Nash away from the main RAND building, deeper into the fenced off military compound.

PARCHER

Impressive work at the Pentagon.

John just nods.

PARCHER

Oppenheimer used to say genius sees the answer before the question.

NASH

You knew Oppenheimer?

PARCHER

His project was under my command.

NASH

Which project?

(eyes widening)

That project?

Nash stops, terribly impressed. William just shakes his head.

PARCHER

It's not that simple, you know.

NASH

You ended the war.

PARCHER

We burned up two hundred thousand people in a heartbeat.

NASH

Great deeds come at great cost.

William's smile, coming now, is very old.

PARCHER

Conviction is a luxury of the those on the sidelines.

William resumes walking. John falls into step.

PARCHER

No close friends. No family. Why is that, John?

NASH

Get to know me.

Parcher's LAUGH catches Nash by surprise.

PARCHER

There are endeavors where your lack of personal connection would be considered an advantage.

NASH

What are those?

PARCHER

But what distinguishes you, John, is that you are, quite simply, the best natural code breaker I've ever seen.

They have come to a row of warehouses at the rear of the compound. All abandoned, paint chipping, windows boarded up.

PARCHER

Ever been here?

NASH

We were told during orientation these warehouses were abandoned...

PARCHER

That's cover. Military speak for a lie.

They have arrived at a warehouse at the end of the row. New windows, a fresh coat of paint. A soldier standing guard salutes.

PARCHER

Your life exists on the surface of a mighty ocean. What lies underneath, forces colliding, ready to break the surface at any moment and shatter the calm, that's my world.

NASH

Good speech.

PARCHER

It should be.

(sad smile)

I've made it enough times.

William walks to the door, pulls it open.

INT.-MIT RAND COMPOUND-PARCHER'S WAREHOUSE

Sprawling. White suited Technicians scurry back and forth amidst hi-tech computing machines and giant illuminated globes.

NASH

This isn't possible. Half this technology is a good ten years off.

PARCHER

We have labs like this all over the nation. We use them to exploit our best minds.

William leads the ogling Nash through the maze of equipment towards a large glass office.

PARCHER

Minds like yours.

INT.-MIT RAND-PARCHER'S OFFICE

Nash sits across the desk. Photos of William with Roosevelt; with Einstein; in a Colonel's uniform with an allied liberation force at the gates of a concentration camp.

PARCHER

(noticing his gaze)

Dachau. Man is capable of as much atrocity as he has imagination.

William looks off a beat. Eyes that have seen too much. Then...

PARCHER

By telling you what I am about to tell you I am increasing your security clearance to Top Secret.

William slides a form with a government watermark across the desk.

PARCHER

Whether or not you agree to assist in this operation, disclosure of secure information can result in imprisonment. Get it?

NASH

What operation?

PARCHER

Please sign.

John signs the form, slides it back. William nods. Then he lifts a small remote control, points it at a blank TV screen in the wall.

NASH

(off the remote)

Those are a good idea.

ON SCREEN-A placard reading Eyes Only is replaced by black and whites of a giant factory, US soldiers scattered in every frame.

PARCHER (OVER)

This factory is in Berlin. We seized it at the end of the war.

ON SCREEN-Closer shots of large, complex production equipment.

PARCHER

Nazi engineers were attempting to build a portable atomic bomb.

NASH

What?

William looks up at John a beat, then back to the screen which now shows a device no larger than a television.

PARCHER

The Soviets reached this facility before we did. The technology evaded our capture. We lost the damn thing.

NASH

You're telling me the Russians have a handy atomic bomb?

PARCHER

Yes.

William just stares at him, letting this sink in.

NASH

The routing orders at the Pentagon.
They were for this...

PARCHER

A splinter group of the Soviet Army
calling itself New Freedom intends
to detonate the bomb on U.S. soil.

NASH

Where? When?

PARCHER

All we know is that their target is
not military. They hope to incur
maximal civilian casualties in order
to initiate a nuclear conflict.

NASH

Why?

PARCHER

Because they can win.

Simple as that.

NASH

...What's the payload?

PARCHER

Two kilotons. The ground burst will
kill 30,000. Another 100,000 will
die from radiation spill.

NASH

God help us.

PARCHER

Take a number. Intel suggests New
Freedom's sleeper agents here-

NASH

In the U.S.?

PARCHER

Mccarthy is an idiot. Unfortunately,
that doesn't make him wrong.

PARCHER

New Freedom is communicating to its agents through codes embedded in periodicals and newspapers. That's where you come in. We need your unique abilities.

Nash stares at him.

NASH

Tell me what you want me to do.

INT.-PARCHER'S WAREHOUSE-MOMENTS LATER

Nash and William stand over a monitor manned by a Technician.

PARCHER

Commit this list of periodicals to memory.

John looks at the list. Nods.

PARCHER

Scan each new issue. Look for any possible hidden codes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT.-PARCHER'S WAREHOUSE-MOMENTS LATER

William stands with John at another work-station. A Technician has lowered what appears to be large x-ray machine over his arm.

TECHNICIAN

This may be uncomfortable.

The machine makes contact with John's arm and HISSES.

NASH

. What the-?

The Technician lifts the machine, shines a black light over John's wrist. In a fresh welt above his wrist we see a series of numbers.

PARCHER

He implanted a radium diode under your skin. It's safe. These numbers will change over time. They're access codes to your drop spot. Here is its location...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT.-PARCHER'S WAREHOUSE-SUNSET

John emerges from the door, blinking into the dying light.

PARCHER (OVER)

You can tell no one of your work.
Just proceed with normal life. Avoid
new people. And assume at all times
you are being watched.

NASH (OVER)

So what am I now? A spy?

PULL BACK AND UP over John standing in the courtyard. Alone.

INT.-MIT RAND HEADQUARTERS-NASH'S OFFICE

A LIFE MAGAZINE-CLOSE. A PEN ENTERS FRAME circles certain
occurrences of certain words, then crosses them out. WIDER.

Nash sits behind his desk, pen in hand. (OVER) a KNOCK.

NASH

Come.

Nash looks up to see a figure standing in his doorway. Alicia, a
soldier-escort behind her.

ALICIA

Boy, you must really be important.

Nash stares a beat. Then he shakes his head.

NASH

It's all right, Mike.

The Soldier tips his hat to Alicia and is gone.

NASH

How did you get in here?

Alicia throws her hair and GIGGLES, the very picture of a sex
kitten. Then she brings the intelligence back into her eyes.

ALICIA

Testosterone is a girl's best
friend.

Nash GRUNTS, returns to work as Alicia steps into the room.

ALICIA

What are you working on?

NASH

Classified.

ALICIA

Come on. Tell.

NASH

Ask me again, I get to shoot you.

Nash looks up, despite the kidding in his eyes, he looks tired.

ALICIA

Everybody waited half an hour.

Nash simply stares at her.

ALICIA

Class. You missed class today.

NASH

Oh.

He resumes working. Alicia slides a single page atop his magazine.

ALICIA

The equation you left on the board.
I solved it.

Nash barely glances at her paper as he hands it back.

NASH

No. You didn't.

ALICIA

You didn't even look.

NASH

There's an error in the second to
last sub-valuation.

Alicia stares at him. Then looks back at her equation. Frowns.

NASH

(without looking up)

Your second proof is elegant though.

Alicia beams. Nash continues to work. She doesn't move.

NASH

You're still here.

ALICIA
I'm still here.

NASH
Why?

ALICIA
I was wondering, Professor Nash, if
I could ask you to dinner.

Nash looks up at her. Stunned.

ALICIA
You do eat, don't you?

NASH
On occasion.

He sizes her up. A long beat, then...

NASH
Leave your address with my office.
I'll pick you up Friday at eight.
...We'll eat.

Nash goes back to work.

ALICIA
I'm dismissed now?

NASH
You're dismissed now.

Alicia smiles a wry smile, starts for the door. Nash calls after...

NASH
One more thing.

Alicia turns back to him, sunlight through the window striking her face so perfectly it steals your breath.

NASH
What's your name?

EXT.-BOSTON-GOVERNOR'S MANSION-NIGHT

Hundreds of tiny white lights illuminate the giant stone mansion, glittering in the darkness like a Christmas ornament. Limos pull through the circular drive, disgorging passengers.

NASH (OVER)
Governor, may I present...

INT.-GOVERNOR'S MANSION-NIGHT

A resplendent black tie party. Nash stands just inside the doorway.

NASH

Miss Alicia Larde.

WIDER. Standing beside Nash in a stunning black dress before the Politician is Alicia. She smiles, warmly bemused.

INT.-GOVERNOR'S MANSION-MOMENTS LATER

Alicia and Nash inspect a Rothko on the wall. Alicia is rivetted.

ALICIA

I think God must be a painter. Why else would we have so many colors?

Nash nods. But he's not listening, looking instead at two non-descript MEN at the bar. They notice his gaze, look away.

NASH

(distracted)

So, you're a painter?

ALICIA

That's not actually what I said.

She raises her hand. Faint paint-stains color her skin.

ALICIA

But, yes.

The two Men at the bar are watching Nash again. This time, when they catch his eyes, they move off.

ALICIA

I'm also a burlesque dancer...

Nash nods, following the Men with his eyes.

ALICIA

I started stripping for the infantry in France, then moved up to fly boys. They call me Cha-Cha physics.

NASH

Um-hmm.

He's still staring across the room. That's when she kicks him, hard, in the shin. He starts. That got his attention.

ALICIA

Here. Me. Practice human contact.

He stares at her a beat. Then he nods. She smiles again, warm.

ALICIA

Champagne would be lovely. I'll be outside.

EXT.-GOVERNOR'S MANSION-LATER

Alicia stands on a terrace talking to a handsome young man.

YOUNG MAN

And what brings you to Boston?

ALICIA

Theoretical physics.

The fellow LAUGHS. Waits for her to join in. A beat, then...

YOUNG MAN

You're kidding, right?

ALICIA

Have you met my husband? He's just out of prison.

WIDER. Standing behind the man is Nash, two beading flutes of champagne in his hands.

YOUNG MAN

What? Oh. Excuse me.

The fellow heads off. John hands her a glass, comes to stand next to her. They stare out across Beacon Hill at the glittering city.

ALICIA

Nothing like a little gab about relativity to throw the pick-up process into high gear.

Nash nods, glances inside the door. The same two Men.

ALICIA

Why don't you just talk to them?

NASH

Who?

ALICIA

The two men who keep staring at you?

Nash looks startled. Alicia begins backing towards the door.

ALICIA

I used to stare before I met you
too. You're famous, remember?

NASH

Alicia, wait-

Alicia opens the balcony door, face to face now with the Men.

ALICIA

Hi, there.

The Men stare at her, startled. Then emerge onto the balcony.

MAN 1

Sorry to ogle, Dr. Nash. Win Mcgee,
First Bank of Boston.

MAN 2

Yes. Apologies. Just wondering, any
thoughts on technology stocks?

HOLD on Nash. Not convinced.

INT.-GOVERNOR'S MANSION-GARDENS NIGHT-WALKING

Nash and Alicia walk the gardens. They cross into a dark field
surrounded by elms, sky overhead a glittering canopy of stars.

ALICIA

Oh.

(spellbound)

When I was a girl, I used to try and
count them.

NASH

Pick a shape.

ALICIA

What?

NASH

An animal, anything.

ALICIA

Okay. An...umbrella.

NASH-POV. As he holds the night in his gaze. The sky grows dark
except for a series of stars. They do in fact form an umbrella.

NASH

Look.

Nash steps behind her, taking her hand in his and guiding her eyes, pointing out the pattern in the stars; Alicia LAUGHS with surprise.

ALICIA

Do it again. Do an octopus.

EXT.-GOVERNOR'S MANSION-NIGHT-WIDE ANGLE-SECONDS LATER

Nash stands with Alicia under a sky that is totally black save several glittering constellations. An umbrella. An octopus. A rose. A donkey. A ballerina.

Two tiny figures in a universe all their own.

EXT.-CAMBRIDGE-BROWNSTONE-SUNSET

A car pulls curbside. Fox emerges.

INT.-BROWNSTONE-SUNSET

Fox KNOCKS on an apartment door. Nothing.

FOX

Nash? Nash?

The door is ajar. Fox pushes into...

INT.-BROWNSTONE-NASH'S APARTMENT-DAY

Small and sparse. No sign of Nash. (OVER) Sounds from...

INT.-NASH'S APARTMENT-SUN PORCH

Windows face bright rooftops beyond. Nash stands over a sea of magazines, spread out on the floor around him.

FOX

And I was sure you were house trained.

Nash looks up, startled.

NASH

Do you always just walk into people's apartments?

FOX

I'm not going to be the weird one in this interaction.

NASH

I'm working.

FOX

And which of our projects involves papering your apartment with Life?

NASH

It's classified, Fox.

FOX

I'm serious. You missed the irrigation conference today. Zweif and I did the best we could. But the brass were there to see you.

NASH

I'm close to something here.

FOX

To what?

(a beat)

You skip work. You miss briefings. Me and Zweif, we're worried about you.

Nash is now taping magazine pages to the wall. Fox lifts a file of articles off a cabinet. All on Hiroshima.

FOX

We're not doing anything on the Hiroshima bomb...

Nash retrieves the file without speaking, deposits it out of Fox's reach on his desk.

FOX

That was polite.

NASH

Did you know the initial blast was so bright it left only shadows?

Nash looks at Fox for the first time. His eyes aren't just tired. They're haunted.

NASH

The flash seared them on park benches, on schoolyards, on sidewalks. They're still there.

Fox starts to speak. But Nash just raises his hand.

NASH

I'll be back at work tomorrow.

Fox stares as Nash goes to his desk and resumes working. Apparently Nash doesn't have anything else to say. Finally Fox leaves.

HOLD on Nash as (OVER) the door SHUTS.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT.-NASH'S APARTMENT-SUN PORCH-NIGHT

Nash is standing over his sea of torn pages. All around him shifting patterns rise and fall with ever increasing speed.

Suddenly, the rapid cascade of patterns freezes, all the dark shapes falling away, leaving a single pattern hovering in mid air.

Nash gathers up several pages and the map, puts them in a gray RAND envelope. He takes a stick of sealing wax, lights the wick...

EXT.-CAMBRIDGE STREET-NIGHT

(OVER) CRICKETS. Nash is walking, alone, past large houses set apart on larger lots, his sealed, grey RAND envelope in his hand.

He stops before a giant wrought iron gate, behind which sits a resplendent white colonial mansion, lights burning in every room.

On the gate, a small keypad is illuminated by the purple glow of a tiny bulb. Nash stares at the keypad, reaches forward.

NASH'S WRIST-CLOSE. In the purple light, a new set of numbers appear beneath the surface of his skin.

He rubs his wrist in wonder. Then enters the numbers into the keypad. The lock CLICKS open. Nash pushes the gate wide.

EXT.-CAMBRIDGE ESTATE-NIGHT

Beyond the gate is a free standing mailbox. Freshly painted wrought iron, dug into the firmament, secured with a heavy padlock.

Nash slides the gray envelope into the mail slot. (OVER) A sudden RUSTLING from behind him.

Nash spins. The bushes across the road move. Just the wind?

EXT.-CAMBRIDGE STREET-NIGHT

Nash has slipped back out through the gate, is pulling it LOCKED behind him. (OVER) More RUSTLING, this time to his left.

NASH

Hello?

Nothing. Nash turns, starts moving, first a jog, then a run towards his car parked at the end of the street.

INT.-NASH'S CAR-CAMBRIDGE STREET-NIGHT

Nash climbs in, SLAMS and locks the doors. Leans his head against the steering wheel. Catching his breath. Freaked.

EXT.-WALDEN POND-DAY-HIGH ANGLE

High above the forest rimmed iris of blue that was the heart of Thoreau's imagination. CAMERA TILTS DOWN...

NASH (OVER)

On your mark... Get set...

DOWN past Cardinals swooping from tree to tree towards the edge of the pond where two small figures bob.

NASH (OVER)

Go!

EXT.-WALDEN POND-WATER'S SURFACE-MOVING

CAMERA rushes over the water's surface towards two figures swimming the breast stroke, coming head on in a dead heat across the pond.

Nash is in the lead, Alicia maybe three strokes behind him. Both are swimming fast. But the race is John's.

He pulls himself up onto the shore. A few seconds later Alicia hoists herself onto land beside him.

Both are beautiful, fit and trim. Their breathlessness is as much a function of their glistening proximity as their exercise.

ALICIA

You're supposed to let me win.

Nash just smiles at her.

ALICIA

I love this spot. Sometimes, I come here to paint.

Another smile from Nash. The silences stretches on.

ALICIA

You don't talk much, you know that?

NASH

I've been told I talk too much.

ALICIA

No. I mean about, you know, what's really going on?

NASH

It's classified....

ALICIA

I'm not talking about work, John.

John stares off a beat. Then he looks back at her.

NASH

Numbers add up. Human interaction is unpredictable.

ALICIA

You're not good with people. Don't you think I know that?

NASH

What I'm not good at is polishing my interactions to make them sociable. I have a tendency to expedite information flow by being direct. Often I don't get a good result.

ALICIA

Try me.

John stares at her a beat. Then...

NASH

All right. I find you attractive. Your aggressive moves towards me indicate you feel the same. Still ritual requires we continue a number of platonic activities before we can have intercourse. I am proceeding with these activities, although, to some extent, all I really want is to have sex as soon as possible.

Alicia stares at him a beat.

NASH

Are you going to slap me now?

She leans in and kisses him on the mouth.

ALICIA
How was that result?

EXT.-NASH'S APARTMENT-LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Dark. The door swings open, flooding the room with yellow hall light. Alicia stands wearing John's shirt over her bathing suit.

NASH
Wait here a second.

John moves through the living room, grabbing from every surface magazines and newspapers covered with scrawls. He hurries into...

INT.-NASH'S APARTMENT-SUN PORCH-NIGHT

John throws his work into a filing cabinet, begins gathering up papers here too. He glances out the window.

A black sedan sits parked across the street. Inside two men sit. A beat. John draws the shade.

A HAND grabs his shoulder. John spins. Alicia stands behind him. She's taken off her shirt, now wearing only her bathing suit.

ALICIA
Cleaning up your dirty magazines?

NASH
I told you to wait.

And she begins pulling off the top of her bathing suit, stripping it down to her waist.

ALICIA
I couldn't.

And he goes to her.

INT.-NASH'S APARTMENT

Nash and Alicia make love on the desk under the slatted light spilling in from the street. PAN DOWN...

On the floor are several of John's newspapers, marked up with his code-breaking scrawl. Fallen to the floor. Forgotten.

EXT.-BEACON HILL-DAY

Nash stands atop the hill, looking out at the city beyond.

Suddenly downtown Boston erupts with a low nuclear cloud. Next comes the white light, then the blast wave, leveling buildings, whipping toward Nash in a colossal wave of ruin.

INT.-NASH'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Nash bolts up in his bed, sweating and breathless from the nightmare. He looks down at Alicia, asleep peacefully beside him.

EXT.-MIT COMMONS-DAY

Nash sits under a tree, marking up another magazine. A little girl (MARCEE, 9) walks up to him.

MARCEE

What ya doin'?

Nash looks up at her.

NASH

I am attempting to isolate patterned recurrences across periodicals across time. And you?

MARCEE

Chasin' pigeons. You talk funny, Mr. Nash.

NASH

(frowning)

Do I know you?

MARCEE

My uncle says you're very smart but not very nice so I shouldn't pay you no mind if you're mean to me.

NASH

And who might that uncle be?

VOICE (OVER)

The prodigal roommate returns.

Nash looks up and standing over him is Charles. Nash grins.

EXT.-MIT CAMPUS-WALKING

Nash and Charles stroll together. Marcee runs a few yards ahead, chasing pigeons, eyes wide with a child's fascination.

CHARLES

My sister got herself killed in a car crash. Husband was too drunk to know he was too drunk to drive. I took Marcee in.

NASH

She's so small.

CHARLES

She's young. That's how they come.

Marcee runs at the pigeons. To her dismay, they don't react.

CHARLES

I'm doing the great authors workshop at Harvard. D.H. Lawrence.

NASH

Very fitting. Very fancy.

CHARLES

Well, I have been reading about you. How are you, John?

NASH

At first it was all bureaucratic. Nothing I did mattered. Then something came up. ...I can't talk about it.

CHARLES

Top Secret, Black Bag, Black Ops?

NASH

Something like that. And....

CHARLES

Yes.

NASH

I've met a girl.

CHARLES

You buried the lead.

NASH

She's beautiful and brilliant...

The two walk in silence. Then...

NASH
Should I marry her?

CHARLES
Hell, you buried the whole story.

NASH
I mean, it all seems to add up. But
how do you know for sure?

CHARLES
Nothing's ever for sure. That's the
only sure thing I know.

That's when Marcee runs up, her expression grave.

MARCEE
I can't make the pigeons fly.

NASH
Put your arms up and roar like a
monster.

MARCEE
Are you being mean and I shouldn't
pay you no mind?

A beat. Then Nash smiles.

EXT.-MIT COMMONS-DAY

Two men and a little girl, arms high, ROARING like monsters, race
through the pigeons, the birds soaring away, taking flight.

EXT.-APARTMENT ROOF

Nash and Alicia drink beers, watch the last of the sunset.

NASH
Charles used to say, if you want
divine inspiration, give God an
unobstructed view.

ALICIA
And what quandary requires the help
of the All Mighty herself?

NASH
I am trying to determine if our
relationship warrants commitment.

Alicia LAUGHS, looks away.

ALICIA

Give me a moment to redefine my
girlish notions of romance.

(smiles)

Okay. So, how goes the task?

NASH

I require a proof. Some kind of
verifiable empirical data.

ALICIA

You say the sweetest things.

He just stares at her blankly. She smiles.

ALICIA

How big is the universe?

NASH

Infinite.

ALICIA

How do you know?

NASH

I know because all the data
indicates that it's infinite.

ALICIA

But have you seen it?

NASH

No.

ALICIA

Then how do you know for sure?

NASH

I just believe it.

ALICIA

It's the same with love, I imagine.

Nash stares out at the sunset.

ALICIA

The part you don't know. Is if I
want to marry you.

HOLD on Nash. That really hadn't occurred to him. He blanches.

NASH

Alicia...

ALICIA

Oh no. Don't even think it. You're looking at a really big ring...

EXT.-WALDEN POND-SPRING

Shapely, Fox and a few of Alicia's friends hurl rice. John and Alicia pose as folks snap pictures.

John notices a figure standing at the edge of the trees. William.

A flash catches John's attention. When he turns back to the woods, William is gone.

EXT.-CAMBRIDGE STREET-NIGHT

NASH'S WRIST-CLOSE. In the glow of the purple light, a new set of numbers shine through the skin. WIDER.

Nash punches in the codes, pushes open the gate, a new sealed grey RAND envelope in his hand. He drops the envelope into the slot.

(OVER) a SCREECHING of tires. CAR HEADLIGHTS turn onto the street. Nash stands frozen, the car bearing down on him.

Suddenly the car SCREECHES to a halt. A figure is SHOUTING from the driver's seat.

PARCHER

In! Fast!

INT.-CAR-CAMBRIDGE STREET-NIGHT

William GUNS the engine before Nash's door is even closed.

NASH

What the hell-

PARCHER

Are they following?

NASH

Who?

(looking over his shoulder)

Shit!

OUT THE BACK WINDSCREEN. Another set of headlights SCREECHES around the corner, in close pursuit.

PARCHER

The drop has been compromised.

(OVER) a sharp CRACK. The back window shatters.

PARCHER
(shouting)

Down.

John ducks. William cuts around the corner, SLAMMING John, hard, into the car door.

PARCHER

Take this.

William, still steering with one hand, tosses something onto the seat. A revolver. Nash just stares at him blankly.

PARCHER

Return fire.

NASH

I don't know how-

PARCHER

Out the window! Shoot, goddamnit.

EXT.-BOSTON STREETS-NIGHT

The pursuit car is gaining. A shadowy figure leans out of the passenger side window, gun in hand. He FIRES.

INT.-PARCHER'S CAR-BOSTON STREETS-MOVING

(OVER) Another CRACK. A bullet lodges in the windshield between Nash and William, spider-webbing the glass.

PARCHER

Shoot the fucking gun.

Nash just stares at the weapon. William grabs the revolver, tries steering with one hand and SHOOTING out the window with the other.

EXT.-BOSTON STREETS-SHORE OF THE CHARLES-NIGHT

William's car turns onto the riverfront, the chase car in close pursuit. William and the shadowy gunman exchange FIRE as the two cars race along the moonlit edge of the Charles.

INT.-PARCHER'S CAR-MOVING

PARCHER

Hang on. I'm going to try and get a better shot.

NASH

(frantic)

Can't we just get away?

William spins the wheel, hitting the brakes, wheels SCREECHING...

EXT.-BOSTON STREETS-SHORE OF THE CHARLES-NIGHT

William's car spins broadside. The pursuit car is bearing down on them. William aims out the window and FIRES, SHOT after SHOT.

The pursuit car keeps coming. William let's off a final VOLLEY, the pursuit car now virtually on top of them.

At the last instant, the villains' windshield SHATTERS, the pursuit car skidding off the road and flying, hard, into the water.

INT.-PARCHER'S CAR-MOVING

CLOSE on John's eyes. Wide with disbelief.

EXT.-SHORE OF THE CHARLES-NIGHT

William and Nash emerge from their car, watching as the last signs of the sedan are swallowed by the black water.

NASH

You just-

PARCHER

(adrenalized)

Don't think about it. It never happened. Do you understand me?

Nash nods dumbly.

PARCHER

We have a leak. They know our operative is at RAND. They just don't know who.

John manages to nod again.

PARCHER

Keep working. We'll contact you.

(OVER) a distant SIREN. William hands him the gun.

PARCHER

Keep it. You may need it.

John looks down at the gun in his hand. A beat. Then he tosses it away onto the seat of William's car.

EXT.-SHORE OF THE CHARLES-NIGHT

John watches as William's car pulls away. Then he turns and stares into the dark waters. Terrified and alone.

INT.-NASH'S APARTMENT-LATE

Nash ENTERS. The apartment has changed. A woman's touch. Alicia is sitting on the couch, wrapped in a blanket.

ALICIA

Baby, I was worried.

She rises, the blanket falling away to reveal a belly three months pregnant. She rushes to her husband, wrapping her arms around him. But he stands there, still, like a ghost.

ALICIA

Fox said you left the office hours ago. When you didn't call...
(pulling back)

John...?

He just shakes his head. Kisses her on the cheek distantly. Then he goes into the study and closes the door.

Alicia tries the knob. Locked.

ALICIA

Baby, what is it?

No answer. She bows her forehead against the door.

ALICIA

John, please answer me. John?

But from beyond the shut portal, only silence.

INT.-NASH'S SUN PORCH-NIGHT

Alicia's paintings rest on easels. Nash sits at his desk. A beat. Then he buries his head in his hands and begins to cry.

INT.-MIT-CLASSROOM-DAY

John stands at the window, staring out at the parking row. A black sedan pulls up. Two suspicious men in trench coats and hats emerge.

NASH-CLOSE. Really nervous.

Then two women emerge from the car, followed by their kids. Not hit men, just two families. WIDER

John turns to face a classroom full of students, all staring at him with confusion. His eyes are hollow as he moves to his desk.

NASH

(off booklets on his desk)
Here is the final exam I will be giving in ten weeks. Class participation is neither expected nor desired. Have a nice day.

Nash walks out, leaving the group of stunned students behind.

INT.-MIT HALLWAY-AFTERNOON

Nash is walking down a corridor. (OVER) FOOTSTEPS behind him. He turns over his shoulder. No one. Resumes walking.

Again FOOTSTEPS. He picks up his pace. So do the FOOTSTEPS.

Nash breaks into a run, down the corridor, ducking just inside an alcove, back pressed against the wall, BREATHLESS.

The FOOTSTEPS grow LOUDER, closing until...Alicia and Zweifel turn the corner, stop and stare at Nash.

ALICIA

What are you doing? Didn't you hear me calling you?

John rubs his eyes, shakes his head. He didn't.

ALICIA

I wanted to surprise you for lunch. Zweifel said you'd be here. John...?

NASH

I'm just tired is all. Thanks, Zweifel.

Nash leads Alicia off. He doesn't notice the look she throws over her shoulder at Zweifel who just stands there, watching them go.

EXT.-MIT-PARCHER'S WAREHOUSE-AFTERNOON

Nash approaches the warehouse which houses William's lab. The same armed soldier stands at the door.

NASH
I need to see William.

GUARD
He's not on site today, sir.

NASH
When will he be back?

GUARD
I'm sorry, Professor.

A beat. Nash heads off.

INT.-MIT RAND HEADQUARTERS-HALLWAY-DUSK

The setting sun draws long shadows out the windows. Nash pulls his office door closed. He turns, practically colliding with William.

NASH
(jumping back)
Christ.

PARCHER
You were looking for me.

Nash takes a second to gather himself.

NASH
I can't keep doing this. I'm getting
paranoid. Any time a car backfires-

PARCHER
I understand. Better than you can
possibly imagine.

William looks away. His eyes are terribly sad.

PARCHER
Great deeds come at great cost. Your
words, John.

William puts his hands on Nash's shoulders.

PARCHER

We're closing in on the bomb, in large part due to your work. Isn't your fear a small price to pay?

NASH

You have to guarantee you can protect me. Protect my family.

William's tone is steely when he speaks.

PARCHER

I told you attachments were dangerous. You chose to marry the girl. I did nothing to prevent it. Don't make me regret that.

NASH

What do you mean, prevent it?

William's answer is only silence.

PARCHER

The best way to insure everyone's safety is to continue your work.

NASH

That's bullshit. I'll just quit-

PARCHER

No. You won't.

NASH

Why the hell not-

PARCHER

Because I keep the New Freedom from becoming aware that you work for us.

Finally, John realizes William's eyes are dead.

PARCHER

If you quit working for me, I quit working for you.

In the dying light, William turns, heads for the front door.

NASH

(shouting)

Parcher! PARCHER!

Fox emerges from his door, stares at Nash, obviously concerned.

FOX

You okay? Who are you shouting at?

But Nash doesn't answer, just stares after William as the door kisses closed behind him.

INT.-NASH'S APARTMENT-SUN PORCH-LATE NIGHT

Nash sits, his back to us, in the dark, staring into space.

ALICIA (OVER)

John..

She flicks on the light, standing now in the doorway, a three month old infant swaddled in her arms.

NASH

(spinning)

Turn it off.

We see his face now, unshaven, cheeks hollow, eyes wide.

NASH

(shouting)

Turn off the light.

He is up fast, SLAMMING his hand on the wall, extinguishing the light. His fast moves have scared the baby who has begin to WAIL.

Nash moves to the window, knocking over Alicia's easel and half finished painting. He hurls the canvas out the door.

NASH

I want this stuff out of here.

John raises the drawn blind a bit and peeks out.

OUT THE WINDOW. A black sedan. An identical car pulls up beside it. A shadow inside the first car points towards John's apartment.

A beat. John lets the shade fall again. He turns now to face his wife and WAILING child.

NASH

They're out there.

ALICIA

Who's out there?

John just stares at her. When his VOICE comes, it's soft.

NASH
Go to your sister's.

ALICIA
John, what's going on? Please,
you've got to talk to me-

NASH
(exploding)
Go. Now. GET OUT!

John rises and SLAMS the door. He sits back at his desk, peers again out the window, then hugs himself, rocking slightly.

INT.-NASH'S APARTMENT-HALLWAY-CONTINUOUS

Alicia rocks her baby in her arms, her ruined canvas at her feet. She pauses over the phone. A beat. Then she lifts the receiver.

EXT.-HARVARD UNIVERSITY-DAY

Nash climbs the steps of the Mathematics building. His suit looks slept in, his hair a wild garden. He keeps looking behind him.

Nash pauses by a sign that reads: GUEST LECTURER-JOHN NASH. A beat. He checks over his shoulder again, then heads inside.

INT.-HARVARD UNIVERSITY-MATHEMATICS BUILDING-DAY

John is walking skittishly through the lobby when a small, familiar figure runs up to greet him. Marcee.

MARCEE
Mean Uncle John, Mean Uncle John.

She raises her hands high over her head, bares her teeth and looses a savage GROWL.

MARCEE
See, I remembered.

NASH
You sure did.

He lifts her up in his arms and hugs her, tight, eyes closing against the smell of her small girl's hair. Sets her down.

CHARLES
Someone really needed a hug.
(clasps John's hand)
Saw you on the slate. Couldn't miss
hearing the inimitable John Nash.

Nash's smile is weak.

CHARLES

What is it? What's wrong?

NASH

I'm into something. ...I need help.

CHARLES

(darkening)

What? Tell me...

John looks like he's about to speak. Then...

VOICE (OVER)

Professor Nash...

A GRADUATE STUDENT stands at the open door to the lecture hall. Beckoning John. Apparently his lecture is about to begin.

NASH

We'll talk after. Okay?

Before Charles can stop him, Nash heads inside.

INT.-HARVARD-LECTURE HALL

John stands on stage, a blackboard scrawled with numbers behind him. He is speaking, staring out into the audience.

NASH

...And so we see that conventional number theory breaks down in the face of relativistic exploration...

Nash's voice trails off. A couple of MEN have ENTERED at the top of a stairway, wearing overcoats and hats.

NASH

Sometimes, our expectations are betrayed by the numbers...

Nash's voice trails off again. Another MAN has emerged at the top of the other stairway, also in overcoat and top hat.

NASH

Excuse me.

Nash is staring at the young Graduate Student in the front row.

NASH

Is there another way out of here?

Folks look puzzled. The Student, confused, points to a side door.

NASH

I'm sorry.

Nash turns and rushes off stage, out the side door. The audience stares in befuddled wonder.

EXT.-HARVARD MATHEMATICS BUILDING-DAY

Nash emerges from a side door, moving fast towards the street. A figure blocks his way. It's the lone Man from one of the stairways.

MAN

Professor Nash.

Nash stops cold in his tracks. Spins. The other two Men are standing right behind him. Nowhere to run.

MAN

Let's avoid a scene, shall we?

NASH

What do you want?

MAN

My name is Dr. Rosen. I'm a psychiatrist.

NASH

Right.

ROSEN

I'd like you to come with me, John.
Just for a chat.

NASH

And if I say no?

ROSEN

I have a court order signed by a judge. I hope we can proceed without any unpleasantness.

John offers a charming smile.

NASH

Well I suppose I don't have much choice.

He begins towards the Man, then hauls off and DECKS him, hard, across the face. Bolts towards the street.

The two Men are on him in a second, grabbing him, restraining him.

NASH

Get away from me. Don't you think I
know who you are?

Rosen approaches, pulling a hypo from a case in his coat.

NASH

(shouting)

Help! Somebody, please.

Folks are watching. At the top of the steps, Charles and Marcee
have emerged. John spots them.

NASH

Charles. Help. They're Russian
spies.

That's when Rosen sinks the needle into his arm.

ROSEN

(gentle)

There now. All better.

Nash's struggling begins to slow as the medication takes effect.

ROSEN

(to the crowd)

Everything's all right here.

The two Men stuff John into the back of the car as Rosen climbs in
next to the driver.

INT.-SEDAN-MOVING

Nash stares out the window at Charles coming fast down the steps,
Marcee behind him.

Nash raises his hand towards his friend, finding only window glass
between them as the car pulls away, leaving the university behind.

CUT TO:

NASH-POV. DARKNESS. Then light through the blinks of slowly opening
eyes reveal Rosen's peering face.

ROSEN

John...

INT.-OFFICE

Nash lays on a couch, Rosen sitting over him. Leather chairs, an oak desk, degrees on the walls. Picture perfect.

ROSEN

John, can you hear me?

Nash blinks. Takes in Rosen. Tries to sit up. No luck. He looks down. His hands are bound.

ROSEN

Go easy. The Thorazine takes a little while to wear off.

(off John's hands)

I'm sorry about the restraints. But...

(rubs his chin)

You have a hell of a right hook.

NASH

Where am I?

ROSEN

Mclean Psychiatric Hospital.

NASH

You can cut the shrink act, okay?

ROSEN

Who do you think I am, John?

NASH

I know who you are. You work for a group called the New Freedom.

ROSEN

I see.

NASH

I don't know anything else, okay? I'm just a code breaker. That's all.

(a beat)

What are you going to do with me? Are you going to kill me?

ROSEN

No. I'm going to try and help you.

John nods, then he shoves Rosen onto the floor. Jumps up, tries for the door. But he goes down, hard. His ankles have restraints around them too.

John looks up from the floor. What he sees chills his bones. Sitting on a window seat in the corner are two figures. Charles and Marcee, staring at him expressionlessly.

NASH

Charles?

But his old friend says nothing, just sits there impassively.

NASH

Say something. Why won't you answer me? ...What are you doing?

Rosen has stood, gone to the desk and pressed a buzzer. The door swings open and two burly orderlies ENTER.

NASH

Oh, Charles, not you. You can't be one of them. Not you.

But Charles and Marcee show no expression, just sit, watching on.

NASH

(small)

Marcee?

The Orderlies pull John standing. Rage rises in him like a tide.

NASH

Answer me, Charles. Say something.

Rosen has moved in front of Nash. Stares at him a beat.

ROSEN

Who are you talking to? Tell me who you see.

NASH

(flaring)

You know damn well. It's Charles.

ROSEN

Where?

NASH

(virtually hysterical)

He's right there. With Marcee. He's sitting right there.

Rosen stares at him a beat.

ROSEN

There's no one there, John.

Rosen nods and the Orderlies begin dragging him out.

NASH

What are you talking about? They're right there. They're right there.

John is growing hysterical.

NASH

What are you doing? Say something, Damn it Charles please just say something.

The Orderlies drag Nash into the hallway, Charles and Marcee staring after him like the dead, unmoving, perfectly still.

EXT.-MCLEAN HOSPITAL-DAY

Lovely steeped brick buildings situated on resplendent browning lawns. Folks wonder like ghosts. A sprawling palace of the mad.

INT.-MCLEAN HOSPITAL-DAY

John Nash sits on a cot in a cell, rocking, mumbling. PULL BACK...

INT.-MCLEAN HOSPITAL-HALLWAY

Alicia stands watching John through the window of his cell. She turns now, eyes red, to face Rosen.

ALICIA

What's wrong with him?

ROSEN

John has a disease called schizophrenia.

Alicia can't even ask what he means, only shakes her head.

ROSEN

He's lost his ability to tell the difference between what is real and what is imagined.

ALICIA

The men? The ones he thinks are following him?

ROSEN

Schizophrenics are often paranoid.
They see conspiracies everywhere.

ALICIA

But John's work...I think he deals
with conspiracies.

ROSEN

Seeing conspiracies, finding hidden
codes, these are the hallmarks of
schizophrenia. But in John's world,
these behaviors are accepted, even
encouraged. As such, his illness may
have gone untreated far longer than
is typical.

ALICIA

What do you mean? How long?

Rosen takes a minute before he speaks. Then...

ROSEN

Possibly since graduate school. At
least that's when his hallucinations
seem to have begun.

ALICIA

What are you talking about? What
hallucinations?

ROSEN

Two, so far, that I am sure of. An
imaginary roommate named Charles
Herman. Also a girl named Marcee.

Alicia looks at Rosen like he's the crazy one.

ALICIA

Marcee is Charles' niece. Charles
isn't imaginary. He and John have
been best friends since Princeton.

ROSEN

Have you ever met Charles?

Rosen holds her gaze, watches her glimpse then discard the panic.

ROSEN

Has he ever come to dinner?

ALICIA
He's always in town for so little
time. Lecturing.

ROSEN
Was he at your wedding?

ALICIA
He had to teach.

ROSEN
Have you ever seen a picture of him?
Have you ever spoken with him on the
phone?

ALICIA
...This is ridiculous.

But her words carry more conviction than her eyes.

ROSEN
I contacted Princeton. According to
housing records John lived in a
single. There was no Charles Herman
in attendance when John was there.

EXT.-MCLEAN HOSPITAL-GARDENS-NIGHT-WALKING

Rosen and Alicia walk the tree lined paths. Over the horizon hangs
a low harvest moon, plump and yellow.

ROSEN
Charles and Marcee are fantasies.
But to John they appear as real as
you or I.

ALICIA
Doctor, there's probably just a
records error at Princeton.

ROSEN
I was with John when he saw them.
There was no one there.

She hugs her coat tighter.

ROSEN
I believe John's world is laced with
delusions. Like dreams walking
through his waking life.

ALICIA

This is absurd.

ROSEN

Which is more likely, that your husband, a mathematician with no military training, is a government spy fleeing renegade Russians...

ALICIA

You're making him sound crazy-

ROSEN

...Or that he has lost his grip on reality?

Alicia starts to speak. Then purses her lips, not sure what to say.

ROSEN

The only way I can help John is to show him the difference between what is real and what is in his mind.

ALICIA

What John does is classified.

ROSEN

He mentioned a supervisor at RAND. William Parcher. Maybe he can clarify things for us. But I can't get to him without clearances.

Alicia stops, eyes narrowing.

ALICIA

You want me to help you get the details of my husband's work?

Rosen's sudden smile seems forced.

ROSEN

John thinks I'm a russian spy. Is that what you think?

Alicia is silent. Holds Rosen's eyes.

ROSEN

You called me, Alicia. You knew something was wrong.

ALICIA

He wasn't sleeping. I wanted someone to talk with him. Zweifel recommend-

ROSEN

So your Mr. Zweifel, is he part of this conspiracy as well?

Alicia stares at him a beat. Unsure. Then...

ALICIA

This was all a mistake. He's just over-tired. I'll take him home now.

ROSEN

Alicia, no one wants someone they love to be sick.

ALICIA

What I want is my husband released.

She's growing agitated. Rosen's smile is full of compassion.

ROSEN

John's been given something to sleep. Come back in the morning. Nine AM-.

ALICIA

I'm not leaving him here.

ROSEN

He attacked me. I've committed him Alicia. It's not up to you anymore.

She stares at him, fighting back the fear.

ROSEN

After you've had a good night's rest, if we still can't agree on what's best for John I'll release him into your custody.

Alicia stares at him. Nowhere to go. Finally...

ALICIA

Nine. And I want him ready to leave.

And with that she walks off. HOLD on Rosen as he watches her go.

INT.-MCLEAN HOSPITAL-NASH'S CELL-NIGHT

John stands at the window, staring through the mesh as Alicia's tiny form separates from Rosen's, walks off under the yellow moon.

EXT.-NASH APARTMENT-NIGHT

Dark. A light burns in the bedroom window.

INT.-NASH BEDROOM-NIGHT

Alicia sits in bed, rocking her swaddled infant in her arms. Spread on the comforter before her are several strewn envelopes. Each addressed to Charles Herman. Each stamped Return To Sender.

Alicia reaches for the phone, begins to dial a number, wearily, as if for the hundredth time.

CAMERA DRIFTS across the bed to an open address book and FINDS Charles Herman's name and number. (OVER) The RING signal is replaced by a recorded VOICE.

OPERATOR (OVER)

The number you have dialed is a non-working number. Please try again.

HOLD an Alicia's face. Eyes hollow, like a ghost's.

INT.-MCLEAN-ROSEN'S OFFICE-MORNING

A CLOCK-CLOSE. Reads 9:00. PULL BACK TO REVEAL Rosen sitting behind his desk, looking at the door. No Alicia.

EXT.-MIT RAND COMPOUND-MORNING-LONG SHOT

Alicia stands at the Guard Booth. Fox runs up, late, to greet her, taking her hands in his as the Guard raises the barricade.

EXT.-RAND-MAIN HEADQUARTERS-MORNING

Alicia stands with Fox and Zweifel. Both men seem uncomfortable.

ZWEIFEL

What did the Doctor say?

Alicia just shakes her head.

FOX

Oh, man.

ALICIA

I need to know what John's been working on.

ZWEIFEL

Alicia, you know we can't talk-

What she does now is extraordinary. She SLAPS him across the face.

ZWEIFEL

(stunned)

It's classified-

And she SLAPS him again. Harder.

ZWEIFEL

Alicia-.

And a third swing. But this one he catches by the wrist. Looks at Fox. Back to Alicia.

FOX

You better come inside.

INT.-MIT RAND-NASH'S OFFICE

Fox pushes open the door. The walls, ceiling and windows are covered with scrawled magazine and newspaper clippings. The work is, without question, bizarre, perhaps even mad.

ALICIA

Oh my God.

INT.-MIT RAND-NASH'S OFFICE-MINUTES LATER

Alicia sits with Fox and Zweifel. She is trying to hang on, her eyes fierce, determined.

ALICIA

Why didn't you say something? I mean, all this...

She gestures to the magazine papered ceiling.

ZWEIFEL

Alicia, John's always been, well, you know, weird.

FOX

I mean he used to ride his bicycle in figure eights for days straight.

ZWEIFEL

But he's a genius and in our business, geniuses get way with it.

FOX

Especially here.

ZWEIFEL

He said he was doing code breaking. That it was eyes only. Top secret. Part of the military effort.

ALICIA

Was he?

Fox opens his hands before him.

FOX

It's possible. Directives come down all the time that some of us aren't cleared for. It was possible.

ZWEIFEL

But not likely. Lately he seemed more and more agitated. Then, when you called...

ALICIA

So this is all he's been doing every day? Cutting up magazines.

Fox and Zweifel exchange a look.

FOX

Not exactly all.

EXT.-MIT RAND COMPOUND-WALKING-DAY

Nash, Alicia and Fox are walking the row of abandoned warehouses.

FOX

He keeps coming down here.

ZWEIFEL

We figured he was thinking.

FOX

He used to do that a lot at school. Just thinking.

ZWEIFEL

He'd go inside. You'd hear him sort of...talking to himself.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL...

The three of them face the warehouse that housed William's secret lab. No fresh coat of paint. No new windows. No guard at the gate.

Alicia climbs the steps, pushes open the door.

INT.-WAREHOUSE-DAY

No secret lab. No personnel. Just sunlight painting the columns of dust through the windows. No one has been here in a very long time. PULL BACK as Alicia stands alone in the giant, empty space.

ALICIA

(turning)

I need John's supervisor. I need to talk to William Parcher.

FOX-CLOSE. His frown is inscrutable.

EXT.-MCLEAN-GARDENS-MORNING-WALKING

Crisp. Sunny. John and Rosen walk, John's hands bound before him. A burly ORDERLY paces them, a few feet behind. Patients mill.

ROSEN

You seem calmer this morning, John.

NASH

Well it seems obvious by now that you're not going to kill me. You can imagine that's a load off my mind.

Rosen can't help but smile.

ROSEN

You still think I'm a Russian spy?

NASH

You still want to pretend you're not?

ROSEN

You are a rational man. Let me appeal to your rationality. Why do you think I didn't see Charles and Marcee in my office?

NASH

I think you did see them. I think this is all some kind of attempt to brainwash me.

ROSEN

And why would I want to do that?

NASH

To break me. To find out what I know.

Rosen nods. He doesn't seem surprised.

ROSEN

So Charles and Marcee, they are part of this conspiracy too?

NASH

You must have recruited him. Maybe you threatened Marcee.

ROSEN

And your wife. She phoned me. Is she part of this as well?

John stumbles a beat. Then recovers.

NASH

My behavior must have seemed erratic to her. She's confused.

ROSEN

Is she, John? Or is it possible that you're confused?

Rosen motions across the courtyard. A white haired man stands in a corner, gesturing angrily, TALKING to thin air.

ROSEN (OVER)

For years people have referred to madness as being without reason. But that isn't true. That fellow is as reasonable as you or I.

The white haired man begins to plead and SHOUT.

ROSEN (OVER)

We simply cannot see his reason. We cannot see the invisible adversary who makes him so angry. But he can, as clear as he sees you or I.

Rosen stops, puts his hand on John's arm.

ROSEN

Look back on the times with Charles and Marcee.

NASH

I won't play this game with you.

ROSEN

Is it possible that, like him, you were really alone?

NASH

I won't indulge this.

ROSEN

John, insulin shock has been known to reduce schizophrenic delusions.

John stops, anger flashing in his eyes.

NASH

The other shoe falls. What do you want to give me? Sodium pentothal?

ROSEN

Just insula-

John knocks Rosen's hand away with his bound wrists. Despite his spiking temper, John seems almost relieved.

NASH

Spacebo, Comrade Rosen. I told you, I don't know anything. I'm just a code breaker.

(voice rising)

But if this means an end to this goddamned charade, then come on. Drug me.

The Orderly has moved in. John spins to face the man.

NASH

Come on!

But Rosen stops the Orderly with a gesture. Turns to face Nash.

ROSEN

John, treatment only works if you want to get well. I won't give you the medication until you ask for it.

This turn seems to throw John. His expression darkens.

NASH

This is insane.

Rosen's expression is sad.

ROSEN

Yes, John. I'm afraid it is.

EXT.-CAMBRIDGE STREET-DAY

Alicia is walking up a familiar street. She stops, looks up.
REVERSE ANGLE...

EXT.-CAMBRIDGE STREET-MANSION-DAY

The same house we've seen before. And terribly different. Broken windows. Dilapidated side boards. Long ago deserted.

Alicia walks to the front gate. The remains of an aging lock pad hangs by wires. Broken. She pushes the gate, CREAKING, open.

EXT.-CAMBRIDGE MANSION-DAY

An old mailbox sits ahead. A rusting pad lock hangs at its base.

Alicia looks up at the empty house. Then she lifts a large rock and begins HAMMERING away at the lock, face set with determination.

INT.-MCLEAN-NASH'S CELL-DAY

Nash sits alone in his cell. Spread out before him are documents from Princeton. His housing form. A class list.

HOLD on John as he stares at the documentation. A beat. Is that a crack in his resolve?

Then he wipes the materials onto the floor, angry. Draws his knees up to his chin and sits, face fixed once again with determination.

INT.-MCLEAN-COMMON ROOM-EVENING

Alicia sits alone, uncomfortable. Other patients occupy other tables. Many wear the vacant stares of the damned. Alicia's eyes go to an opening door.

John ENTERS, escorted by two Orderlies. He sits at the long table across from her. The Orderlies retire to a table not far off.

Alicia reaches across and takes his hands, holds them in hers. The pain on her face is palpable.

ALICIA

John, I'm so sorry.

NASH

(nodding)

At first, I thought you were one of them. But I've been thinking about it. They used you, Alicia. Of course I must have looked mad to you.

ALICIA

I was so worried.

NASH

It's going to be all right. But we have to speak quietly. They may be listening. There may be microphones.

Alicia bites her lip, tries not to react.

NASH

I'm going to tell you everything, now. I'm breaking protocol. But you've got to know. You've got to help me get out of here.

John rubs his wrist.

NASH

Damn implant.

(a beat)

I've been doing top secret work for the government. There's a threat of catastrophic proportions. I think the Reds must think I'm too high profile to simply do away with. So they're trying to keep me here. So I can't do my work.

Alicia is staring at him, fighting back the tears.

NASH

Go to RAND. You've got to get in touch with William Parcher. He can-

ALICIA

(too loud)

Stop! Just stop!

Folks in the room stare. Nash sits back, stunned. Alicia gathers herself. Takes a breath.

ALICIA

John, I've been to RAND. There is no William Parcher.

NASH

Of course there is. I've been working for him. I've been-

ALICIA

What, John? Breaking codes? Dropping them in a secret mailbox for the government to pick up.

NASH

How could you...?

ALICIA

Fox followed you one night. He thought it was harmless. Loyal Fox.

Alicia has reached into her bag. Lifts something onto the table.

ALICIA

None of its been real, John.

And with that, she deposits on the table a stack of gray RAND envelopes. All still sealed with John's seal.

ALICIA

They've never been opened.

John tears one open. Inside, his pages of code. His marked maps. Never picked up. Never seen by anyone.

ALICIA

There is no William. There is no conspiracy. It's all in your mind. You're sick, John. Don't you understand, you're sick.

Alicia begins to cry, the tears coming now, streaming down her cheeks. Finally she bows to John's hand on the table, pressing her cheek to the back of his palm, body racked with trembling SOBS.

HOLD on John as he looks from his weeping wife to his work. He lifts a torn magazine page, marked and scrawled.

HOLD on John. On his face, for the first time, fear.

INT.-MCLEAN-ROSEN'S OFFICE-NIGHT

Rosen sits over his desk. The door opens and a NURSE ENTERS.

NURSE

Doctor. It's Nash. Code red.

Rosen is up fast.

INT.-MCLEAN-NASH'S CELL-NIGHT

Rosen UNLOCKS Nash's cell and ENTERS to find Nash, his back to the door, standing in a pool of blood.

ROSEN

John?

Nash turns, holding his wrist in his hand. Blood is spilling through his fingers.

As Rosen gently takes John's hand he notices a brad from under the mattress frame, torn free and bloody on the floor.

NASH

There's nothing there.

The flesh on top of John's wrist has been gouged away, almost to the bone. The Nurse hands Rosen a wad of gauze. Rosen begins to dress the wound. John is crying.

NASH

There's no implant. There's nothing there.

INT.-MCLEAN-TREATMENT ROOM-DAY

Small. A single gurney sits in the middle of the floor. A NURSE stands by a silver medical table.

The door opens. Nash shuffles in wearing hospital clothes and paper slippers. He sits on the gurney. Draws up his legs and arms.

INT.-MCLEAN-OBSERVATION ROOM-DAY

Rosen and Alicia watch through a plexi window.

ROSEN

This, right now, is the final nightmare of schizophrenia. The horror of not knowing what is true, what is real and what isn't.

Leather restraints are pulled tight around his wrists and ankles, his forehead.

ROSEN

Imagine if you suddenly learned that the people, the places, the moments most important to you were not gone, not dead, no, worse, had never been.

The Nurse places a plastic bit in his mouth. Lifts the hypo.

ROSEN

What kind of hell would that be?

Alicia touches the divide as the Nurse swabs John's arm, looks to Rosen for the nod. She puts needle to flesh. Alicia turns away.

INT. -TREATMENT ROOM

See Nash as his body arches into the agony of insulin shock, eyes rolling up, SCREAMING through the bit as we PULL BACK AND UP...

EXT. -MCLEAN-HIGH ANGLE

(OVER) Nash's GROWLED SCREAM. We continue up, higher and higher, Mclean disappearing in the first falling storm of snow until the world is a wash of white...

DISSOLVE TO:

WHITE CHERRY BLOSSOMS-CLOSE. PULL BACK TO REVEAL...

EXT. -LAWN-PRINCETON-SPRING

Rows and rows of cherry trees, blowing in the breeze. Alicia and Fox walk away from us along the bank of a brook.

ALICIA

Two a week. For six months. The treatments were...difficult.

REVERSE ANGLE. Alicia seems older. It's her eyes.

FOX

But he's better?

ALICIA

He's in remission.

Fox's eyes ask the question.

ALICIA
(reciting)

Schizophrenia has no cure. But with medication and a low stress environment the patient can hope to approximate a normal life.

Fox just nods. They continue on. A lovely white colonial is visible in the distance.

ALICIA
The doctor thought a change of scenery. Somewhere peaceful. After RAND terminated his contract-

FOX
Zweifel and I tried to-

Alicia stills him with a casual wave of her hand. She has about her the odd self-possession that comes with close proximity to madness.

ALICIA
You can't very well have a madman keeping government secrets, can you?

She looks off, gaze going well past the visible horizon.

ALICIA
You'd be surprised how many people don't want crazy in their lives.

Fox wants to speak, he just doesn't know what to say.

ALICIA
John always spoke so fondly of Princeton. I thought, maybe being here, near familiar surroundings...

FOX
Alicia, how are you?

ALICIA
The delusions have passed. I see pictures of the Jews from Europe. They have this look in their eyes. Hard and stunned at the same time. Like they're trying to find an entire world that's been stolen out from under them. That's John too, I think. Lost.

There is definitely about her an odd feeling, both strong and fragile, like giant plates of shifting ice.

FOX

No, Alicia. How are you?

For a moment she seems not to be able to even understand the question. Then...

ALICIA

You know Heisenberg's uncertainty principle?

FOX

(puzzled)

The properties of the object are influenced by the observer.

ALICIA

(nodding)

Often what I feel is obligation, or guilt over wanting to leave, or rage, against John, against God. But then I look at him and I force myself to see the man I married. And he becomes that man. He's transformed into someone I love. And then I'm transformed into someone who loves him. It's not all the time. But it's enough.

Fox walks on, amazed at this woman.

FOX

John is a lucky man.

ALICIA

And so unlucky.

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-PRINCETON-DAY

Nash sits on the porch swing, staring at a pad of equations, pen in hand. Fox climbs the porch steps.

FOX

Hey, Chief.

Nash looks up. He seems pale, drawn, as if part of him has gone missing, been replaced by shadow.

NASH

Finally. A little respect.

Nash gestures to an empty porch swing.

NASH
Have you said hello to Harvey?

FOX
John, I-

NASH
Relax. What good's being nuts if you
can't have a little fun?

FOX
Jesus, John.

Alicia appears and hands John two red pills and a glass of water.
She kisses him on the head and leaves them again.

NASH
Well, I must say it's nice to know
you were real.

He swallows the pills, takes a long drink.

FOX
Zweifel wanted to come but...

NASH
Squeamish?
(off Fox's shrug)
I suppose I would be too. But alas,
I'm stuck with me.

FOX
Ah, I know that feeling.

Nash actually smiles.

FOX
Have you been to campus? Milnor's
running the math department.

NASH
God, don't tell him what happened to
me. He'll have finally won.

Fox gives a sad smile.

FOX
I've missed you, John.

Nash seems sincerely puzzled.

NASH

Why?

Fox finds his answer blocked by a lump in his throat, looks away.

NASH

I've been working on solving the Riemann Hypothesis...

Nash slides his pad over to Fox.

NASH

If I dazzle them, they'll have to reinstate me. But the medication makes me blurry.

Fox's smile tries to hide the fact that Nash's calculations don't seem to make much sense. He slides back the pad.

FOX

There are other things beside work.

John stares at him.

NASH

What are they?
(taps his temple)
This is who I was.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-KITCHEN-NIGHT

Alicia is doing the dishes. John stands staring at the kitchen table. He lifts a napkin, toys with it curiously, like an alien come to Earth for the first time.

ALICIA

(turning off the tap)
Is everything all right, John?

NASH

What do people do?

By Alicia's expression, this question is not coming for the first time. But she rallies herself again for the answer.

ALICIA

This. Just this.
(smiles)
No conspiracies. No earth shattering discoveries. Just this.

NASH
Everything is so meaningless.

ALICIA
It's life, John. Activities
available. Just add meaning.

John nods, but by his expression, he surely doesn't understand.

NASH
What do I do now?

ALICIA
You could take out the garbage.

NASH
(smiles)
World famous mathematician turned
schizophrenic takes out trash. Now
that's something.

ALICIA
There you go. Onward and upward.

He lifts the trash bag, walks out the kitchen door. Alicia begins putting the dishes away. (OVER) We hear Nash TALKING.

ALICIA-CLOSE. Terrified. She spins as John re-enters.

ALICIA
Who were you talking to?

NASH
The garbage man.

ALICIA
Garbage men don't come at night.

NASH
I guess here they do.

Alicia stares at him. Unsure. Then a figure passes the window. A garbage man after all, throwing the bag into a truck HISSING past.

ALICIA
John, I'm-

He takes her in his arms. She folds into his chest. Normal life has become a mine field.

NASH

It's all right. Everything's going
to be all right.

But by his expression, he seems anything but sure.

INT.-SUN PORCH-DAY

Nash sits over his pad. He stares out the picture window. Then tries to write. Stares at the line of equations. Gibberish.

Nash presses his pencil into the paper, crushing through the lead, finally SNAPPING the hilt.

INT.-NASH BEDROOM-NIGHT

John lays on his back, Alicia curled beside him. Spring moonlight pours in through the open window.

Alicia kisses his neck tentatively, then his face. John lies still as a statue. He tilts his head away, strokes her head platonically.

NASH

I'm sorry. The medication...

Alicia surrenders, sliding back down and laying on his chest. HOLD on her face, sad eyes open in the moonlight.

INT.-NASH LIVING ROOM-AFTERNOON

John stands with his SCREAMING baby in his arms. He seems entirely unsure how to handle this unwieldy little human.

Alicia comes in from the kitchen. She SLAMS John's medication and water glass on the table.

Then she scoops up her child in one hand, retrieves the fallen pacifier from the floor with the other.

She feeds their son the binky, the child's CRIES instantly stilled.

Alicia exits with the baby. John stands in the middle of the room, sad, helpless. No good at real life. He stares down at his pills.

INT.-NASH KITCHEN-SUNSET

Alicia stands staring into the mirror. She begins fixing her hair, finding several streaks of premature grey.

Her fingers drift down to her cheek, trace the lines there. HOLD on her as she stares at her expression, one suddenly so very old.

A beat. Then she pulls the mirror off the wall, throwing it, SHATTERING to the floor.

Alicia leans back, sliding down now against the wall, knees coming up to her chin as she begins to CRY.

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-NIGHT

John is pouring the shards of the mirror off an impromptu cardboard dustpan into the trash can. He turns, heads back into...

INT.-KITCHEN-NIGHT

Alicia is setting his medication and water on the table. She looks worse than she ever has. Eyes dark and hollow. What a toll, this.

NASH

Alicia-.

ALICIA

You're not the only one who gets to go crazy around here, you know.

(brave)

I'm fine.

She lying and they both know it.

ALICIA

I'm going to bed.

(off his pills)

Eat up.

John smiles. Then he nods. She kisses his head, goes out the door.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-SUN PORCH-NIGHT

Glass enclosed. Moonlight beams in through the large windows, illuminating the dark forest beyond the lawn.

John sits at his desk, staring at the pills and water before him. A beat. Then he opens a drawer.

INSIDE THE DRAWER. Maybe five days worth of his pills. Not taken. John drops the two new tablets inside. Closes the drawer.

Nash looks at his desk. Piles of unopened mail. Several math journals. He notices a New York Times. He opens the paper.

NASH-POV. Columns of articles. Suddenly the text goes black, characters rising into the air in a perfectly revealed pattern.

(OVER) A RAP as something hits the window. Hard.

John peers out into the night. Someone, a silhouette, darts across the lawn. John is up, fast, moving into the hallway.

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-NIGHT-CONTINUOUS

Nash shoves open the screen door, stares out into the night.

NASH

Who's there? Hello?

(OVER) CRICKETS. A figure bolts across the green, little more than a shadow, racing towards the tree line and then gone.

NASH

Hey!

Nash takes off in a sprint after the fleeing specter.

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-NIGHT

The figure disappears into the dark tree line, Nash racing fast across the lawn in close pursuit, bursting now, into...

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-FOREST-NIGHT

Nash continues running through the trees, slowing now, finally coming to a stop deep in the dark forest. He looks around. Moonlight. Night bird CRIES. But no sign of the mysterious figure.

(OVER) A RUSTLING. Nash spins to his left, a shadow darting from tree to tree, there, then gone into the darkness.

NASH

Hello?

(OVER) ANOTHER RUSTLING. Nash spins to his right to glimpse another darting shadow, vanishing into the night.

NASH

Who's there?

That's when John is grabbed from behind. His arms are pulled backwards in restraint as a figure steps out of the darkness.

Hat and trench coat make him little more than an elegant shadow. As he approaches, his face becomes visible in the moonlight...

NASH

Parcher.

PARCHER

It's good to see you, John.

William nods and the MAN behind Nash releases him. As the stranger steps into the moonlight we see he is a U.S. soldier.

PARCHER

What's wrong? Cat got your tongue?

NASH

(finally)

You're not real.

William wraps his arm around Nash.

PARCHER

Don't be ridiculous. Of course I am.
Let's take a walk.

He begins leading Nash deeper into the forest.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-NIGHT

Alicia lies in bed, her sleep fitful, moving under the covers. A small MOAN escapes her lips, victim to dark dreams.

EXT.-FOREST-NIGHT

William and his guard have led John to an old tool shed on the edge of the property.

PARCHER

The bomb is armed and stationary.

William has walked to the front door.

PARCHER

Knowing your situation requires you
keep a low profile, Mohammed. We
brought the mountain to you.

William pulls open the door, the night flooded with sudden white light. William bows and gestures with his arm, ushering him inside.

INT.-TOOL SHED-NIGHT

Bright. Men in lab coats move back and forth in front of high-tech decoding equipment. William leads Nash to a giant, lit map board.

PARCHER

We have narrowed the location of the
bomb to the Eastern seaboard. But
we're stumped. Their codes have
grown increasingly complex....

John stares at him.

PARCHER

What?

NASH

You're hallucinations. Products of my imagination. Dr. Rosen said...

PARCHER

Rosen? That quack? Schizophrenic break from reality, right? Inability to tell what is real from what is imagined? Psychological bullshit. Do I look imagined to you?

NASH

RAND has no record of you...

PARCHER

Do you think we list our personnel?

John just stares at him.

PARCHER

I'm sorry you had to go through this. Your stay at Mclean must have been...disorienting. Your wife meant well, I'm sure. Your actions must have looked quite bizarre to her. We had no idea she'd go ahead and have you institutionalized. But once she did.... You were calling attention to yourself. I thought it best you stay put until the scrutiny passed.

NASH

But Charles and Marcee....

PARCHER

After your lecture, our operatives approached Charles. We needed someone to keep an eye on you. Someone you would trust. He's turned out to be quite good, actually. If only he didn't insist on carting that child around everywhere.

William nods and two figures emerge from the shadows. Charles, and behind him, Marcee.

MARCEE

Uncle John, Uncle John.

She races to him and leaps into his arms. He holds her so tight.

MARCEE

You're gonna squeeze me 'till I pop.

John reluctantly sets her down, his expression darkening.

NASH

At the hospital. Why couldn't Rosen see you?

PARCHER

I can explain everything. But I need you to trust me.

HOLD on John a beat as he stares at William.

PARCHER

I've gone to great trouble to get you back. Now, make me owe you. I can restore your status at RAND. I can tell the world what you did...

William walks right up to him, stares into his eyes.

PARCHER

I need you now, soldier. We all do.

John looks at Charles. At little Marcee. Finally...

NASH

I was so scared you weren't real.

PARCHER

We can't afford a repeat of last year. Your wife can't know.

NASH

I have to tell her. She thinks I'm-

PARCHER

We'd be putting her at risk. It's for her own protection. Hers and that brand new boy of yours.

William extends his grasp. Nash stares a beat. He takes his hand.

PARCHER

Welcome back.

INT.-NASH BEDROOM-NIGHT

Alicia lies asleep. John stands over her, staring. Then he turns. William is standing in the door way. John heads towards him.

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-NIGHT

Nash crosses the dark lawn, into the forest.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-TOOL SHED-NIGHT-MOS

Nash stands amidst the high tech machinery, before a light board covered with maps and code, lecturing to a team of analysts.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-FRONT HALL-DAY

Nash is carrying the baby upstairs as Alicia heads outside.

ALICIA

There's a storm coming.

NASH

I'll draw his bath.

Her concern flashes for only a second. But he registers it anyway.

NASH

I'm his father, Alicia.
(softening)

It'll be okay.

Alicia's forced smile is full of hope for truth in his words. She heads outside.

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-DAY

Storm clouds are assembling on the horizon. Dark. The wind is fierce. Alicia gathers blanket and toys. (OVER) A BANGING from the woods just beyond the house.

Alicia looks up at the SOUND, puzzled. A beat. Then she leaves the detritus on the lawn, begins heading towards the BANGING.

EXT.-FOREST-DAY

Alicia walks through the trees. In just minutes the sky has grown darker. The wind has picked up, MOANING now.

(OVER) The BANGING has increased in both tempo and volume. She heads towards...

EXT.-TOOL SHED-DAY

The door to the old shed has been left ajar, BANGING in the wind. It begins to rain, the sky pelting her with big, heavy drops. Alicia approaches the shack. She pulls the door open.

INT.-TOOL SHED-CONTINUOUS

ALICIA-CLOSE. Face broken with horror. PULL BACK TO REVEAL...

The entire shed, walls, floor and ceiling are covered with scrawled newspaper and magazine clippings, the hallmarks of John's madness.

EXT.-LAWN-HIGH ANGLE-STORM

See Alicia, tiny from this height, racing across the lawn towards the house. Lightening. (OVER) The dull THUD of distant thunder.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-STORM

Alicia pushes inside. Looks in the living room. No sign of John. (OVER) From upstairs the sound of WATER RUNNING.

ALICIA

No.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-STAIRWAY-CONTINUOUS

Alicia is racing up the stairs. (OVER) The sound of RUNNING WATER has grown LOUDER. Another lightening flash. A CRACK of thunder.

INT.-NASH BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

Alicia bursts into the bedroom in time to see Nash struggling to close a window. The baby is nowhere in sight. (OVER) The sound of RUNNING WATER is loud from the bathroom.

NASH

(back turned)

I've almost got it. Charles, hold the baby up. Make sure he doesn't slip into the bath...

FOLLOW Alicia as she rushes into the room, past John's startled expression, and freezes in the open bathroom door.

ALICIA

No!

INT.-NASH BATHROOM-CONTINUOUS

The baby is in the tub. Alone. The water is almost up to his chin, seconds from drowning. Alicia moves with lightning speed, grabbing her child up and into her arms.

ALICIA

Precious baby, precious boy.

She clutches him for dear life. Spins to face John who's standing there, eyes wide with panic.

NASH

Charles was watching him. He was okay. Charles was watching him.

INT.-STAIRWAY-SECONDS LATER

Alicia is moving down the stairs, fast, baby in her arms. Nash is chasing after her.

ALICIA

How long, John? How long have you been lying to me?

NASH

You don't understand. It's for your protection. The work is top secret.

ALICIA

Don't you get it yet? There's no one here.

NASH

They've been injected with a cloaking serum. It's part of the war against the conspiracy. I see them because of a chemical that entered my bloodstream when my implant dissolved....

John's VOICE trails off. Alicia has spun around, is staring at him.

ALICIA

Don't you even hear how you sound?

NASH

I'm not crazy. It's all real.

Alicia starts moving again, John following her into...

INT.-LIVING ROOM-CONTINUOUS

Alicia lifts the phone.

ALICIA
I'm calling Rosen. You need help.

That's when William steps into the doorway.

PARCHER
You've got to stop her, John.

NASH
What?

ALICIA
(blood draining)
Who are you talking to?

PARCHER
We can't afford to let her slow us
down again.

NASH
Alicia, please. Put the phone down.

ALICIA
John, you're scaring me.

PARCHER
You'll go back to the hospital.
Countless people will die.

William takes a step into the room.

PARCHER
I can't let that happen.

Alicia has begun dialing the phone. Hands unsteady, trembling lips
finding the numbers.

PARCHER
Great deeds.

William unbuttons his jacket, revealing his holster.

PARCHER
Great cost.

ALICIA
(into the phone)
I need to speak to Dr. Rosen-

William reaches for his weapon. His eyes are sad.

PARCHER

I'm sorry, John.

NASH

No!

John SLAPS the receiver out of Alicia's hand, sending the phone SMASHING against the wall.

Alicia steps back against the wall. John stands facing her. The baby WAILS in her arms. When her voice finally comes, its WHISPER.

ALICIA

Get away from me.

NASH

Alicia-

ALICIA

(screaming)

GET AWAY!

John takes a step back from the force of her VOICE, and she's out, pushing past him into...

INT. -NASH HOUSE-HALLWAY-CONTINUOUS

She's grabbed her bag, heading for the door. She spins to face John who just stands in the hallway, watching.

ALICIA

You want it to be real. Your secret life is more exciting. You think I don't know that? But this is all there is, John. Me. Your baby. This house. Just this.

NASH

Alicia-

ALICIA

Can you find one reason that this all doesn't make sense? Can you find one reason not to believe in them? To believe in us instead?

John starts to speak. But no words come.

ALICIA

I love you. But that's nowhere near
enough any more.

And with that, she pushes out the front door into the pouring rain.

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-HIGH ANGLE-STORM-CONTINUOUS

John stands in the open doorway, watching his wife disappear down
the walkway in the pouring rain towards their car.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-HALLWAY-CONTINUOUS

John stands staring outside.

William steps into the doorway behind him. Watching.

Another figure begins descending the steps. Charles.

A third tiny form tugs his hand. Marcee.

The front door SLAMS closed in the wind. PULL BACK AND UP to see
Nash there, alone in the house with his ghosts.

EXT.-NASH DRIVEWAY-STORM

It's pouring. Alicia is putting the baby in the passenger seat. A
hand touches her shoulder. She spins to face her husband.

NASH

She never gets old.

His lips are shaking, mixing with the rain now, his falling tears.

NASH

Marcee can't be real. She never gets
old.

The two just stand there staring at each other in the pouring rain.

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-PRINCETON-LATE AFTERNOON

The storm has broken. Crimson light stains the old colonial.

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-PORCH-LATE AFTERNOON

Nash faces a familiar figure across the porch. Dr. Rosen.

ROSEN

Do you see them now?

Nash manages a brave smile.

NASH

Yes.

REVERSE ANGLE. Marcee sits on the porch playing Jacks. Charles stands in the doorway, shaking his head disapprovingly.

ROSEN

Why did you stop your meds, John?

NASH

I couldn't work. I couldn't help with the baby. I couldn't touch her.

(a beat)

Is that better than being crazy?

ROSEN

We'll try a higher run of insulin shocks. Then a new med-

NASH

There has to be another way.

ROSEN

The disease is degenerative. You're getting worse...

Nash looks again at Marcee.

ROSEN

Without treatment, the fantasies may take over entirely.

NASH

Please. I can't go back there.

ROSEN

I'm sorry, John. You have to.

INT.-NASH BEDROOM-EVENING

PAN ACROSS open dresser drawers, a suitcase half packed on the floor, FIND Nash sitting on the bed, holding a closed book between his palms, staring into space.

ALICIA (OVER)

Almost ready?

Alicia stands in the doorway, her expression brave.

ALICIA

Rosen's waiting outside.

Nash looks up to his wife, his smile sad enough to snap your heart.

NASH

I can't.
(simple truth)
I won't survive it.

ALICIA

He said you might say.... He has
commitment papers for me to sign.

Nash nods, so terribly tired. What he expected.

NASH

This is just a problem. I have to
find the solution. It's what I do...

She steps towards him but he stops her with a gesture. Only as he
looks up do we really see the toll this is taking on him.

NASH

Maybe you won't sign them. Maybe
you'll give me some time to try and
figure this out.

He rubs the book in his hand.

NASH

But whatever you do, I think Rosen's
right about one thing. You shouldn't
be here. I'm not so safe anymore.

Alicia stands in the doorway. Staring at her husband.

ALICIA

Would you have hurt me, John?

A figure races past behind her, like a ghost, startlingly fast,
then gone. He looks up at his wife.

NASH

I don't know.

Nash has to look away. How else to blink back the water brimming in
his eyes? When he looks up, she is gone.

HOLD on Nash as he lets his head fall into his hands, palms taking
the weight of his defeat. PUSH IN on this single figure. Alone.

ALICIA (OVER)

Rosen said to call if you try to
kill me or anything.

REVERSE. Alicia ENTERS. Offers a wry smile as John stands. (OVER)
An ENGINE starts, FADES away.

ALICIA

I don't think he thinks this is a
very good idea.

Nash's stares at her, confused. She takes the book from him, turns
it over in her hands.

ALICIA

You're not the only genius in the
family, you know?

She walks to him, their faces close, her voice coming quiet.

ALICIA

In sickness and in health...

She takes a rose embroidered handkerchief, wipes the tears now
spilling from his eyes.

NASH

Alicia-

ALICIA

Don't. I'm scared and I need you to
tell me everything's okay and you're
awful with words so just don't.

What he does, he reaches out and takes her in his arms, holding
fast, holding on to her for dear life.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT.-STUDY-NIGHT-DAWN

Nash and Alicia sit on the floor reading amidst a sea of books.
Outside the window, orange and red streaks rake away the stars.

ALICIA

(glancing up)

It looks like a dream.

Nash MURMURS. Then he looks up at her, brow furrowing.

NASH

What?

ALICIA

The sky. It looks like-

NASH
Rosen said dreams are walking
through my waking life....

John closes his book.

NASH
What's the difference? Between life
and a dream?

Alicia takes a beat, considering. Then...

ALICIA
Life feels more real-

NASH
How? Be specific-

ALICIA
...Emotion.
(a beat, nods)
I can't feel my dreams as deeply as
I feel the people in my life.

NASH
But I don't do people well. I don't
relate to them. My greatest
connections have always been...

Nash taps his head.

NASH
Need a mathematical solution, my
mind creates one. Need a best
friend, an important career, my mind
creates those too...

ALICIA
Are you saying that's why you're
sick or because your sick?

But Nash isn't listening.

NASH
What if I buried myself in people?
In places? In the every day? Sank
myself into reality. Wouldn't real
life elbow out the ghosts? Wouldn't
the dreams fade? Wouldn't I wake up?

ALICIA

John, this is all just theory. No one just wills away schizophrenia.

NASH

Why not?

ALICIA

It's not math. You can't think your way-

NASH

No. Not think. ...Feel.

(taps his head)

No more life of the mind...

(pats his heart)

I have to live a life of the heart.

Alicia stares at him, equal parts confusion and concern.

EXT.-PRINCETON UNIVERSITY-MORNING

Fall. Through swirls of falling color, students move across the common. The clothes may be different, but it's the same Princeton Nash entered so many years ago as a Freshman. PUSH IN TO FIND...

EXT.-FINE HALL-DAY

Nash stands before the steps to the building. Takes a step towards it, then a step back, repeats the tiny dance of indecision.

He stops, takes something out of his pocket. Alicia's rose embroidered handkerchief.

Holding it tight like a talisman, he heads up the steps and inside.

INT.-MATH DEPARTMENT-OFFICE

A fellow sits, head bent over a desk, his face not yet visible to us. (OVER) A KNOCK.

MAN (OVER)

Come.

Nash ENTERS, stands in the doorway.

NASH

Hello, Martin.

The fellow looks up, familiar face going from confusion to shock. It's Milnor.

MILNOR

Jesus Christ.

NASH

No. I don't have that one. My savior complex took a different form.

Milnor just stares, his expression almost impossible to decode.

MILNOR

John...

Then he stands, comes around the desk, and does something almost unimaginable, he wraps his arms around Nash and holds him.

NASH-CLOSE. So stunned he has to blink back the tears. Milnor finally steps away, holds his shoulders at arms length.

MILNOR

I heard what happened. I wanted to write. I tried Mclean but you had left and I just... God, how are you?

NASH

Nutty as a fruitcake. And you?

MILNOR

Look. Look here.

Milnor pulls John to his book shelves. There, beneath medals and prizes are pictures of Nash, Milnor, Fox, Zweifel and Shapely. Young, full of hope for the future.

MILNOR

God, do you remember us?

NASH

(off the medals)
You won after all.

MILNOR

They were wrong, John. No one wins.
You heard about Shapely?

Nash shakes his head.

MILNOR

Lung cancer. Last year. All those damn cigarettes. Thought you knew.

Nash just shakes his head. He didn't.

MILNOR

Sit down. Please.

Nash does. Milnor returns behind his desk.

MILNOR

I'm so glad to see you. What brings you back to Princeton?

CHARLES (OVER)

Tell him you're a genius-

Nash spins over his shoulder to see Charles in the open doorway.

CHARLES

Tell him you're mission-

John reaches around in his chair and SLAMS the door in Charles' face. Turns back to face Milnor, who stares a beat. Then smiles.

MILNOR

You were saying?

NASH

You're going to ignore what I just did?

MILNOR

What are old friends for?

NASH

Is that what we are? Friends?

MILNOR

Of course. We always have been.

A beat. Then John just shakes his head.

NASH

I think being a part of a community would do me good. I know it's a lot to ask. And now that I'm here it occurs to me you'll probably say no. But I was wondering, could I kind of hang around?

Milnor stares at him across the desk, this arch rival, this old friend. It is a moment before he speaks. Then...

MILNOR

Will you be needing an office?

EXT.-PRINCETON GAMES QUAD-DAY

Two students at a games table play Nash on a triangular board. One keeps glancing over his shoulder nervously.

WIDER. Standing behind him is Nash in his baggy suit. Rocking on his heels the way he does, he looks like a madman.

NASH

(stepping forward)

You might try protecting your-

STUDENT

Take a hike, huh weirdo.

NASH-CLOSE. Taken aback. A beat. HOLD on Nash standing alone.

INT.-FINE HALL-HALLWAY-AFTERNOON-WALKING

A young ADJUNCT is walking Milnor fast down the long hall.

ADJUNCT

So the old guy tries to get into the library but he doesn't have ID...

MILNOR

Why can't people read their memos...

ADJUNCT

And he goes totally nuts...

They arrive at the picture window at the end of the hall. Milnor looks down, expression darkening...

THROUGH THE WINDOW-COURTYARD-HIGH ANGLE

Amidst a crowd of gaping students, Nash is storming the courtyard in tight figure eights, CURSING at the empty air.

MILNOR

Shit!

EXT.-COURTYARD-AFTERNOON

Nash walks his figure eights. William keeps pace, matching Nash step for step, right in his face.

PARCHER

Is this what you are, Soldier? Some useless ghoul. The local madman?

NASH

Get away from me!

PARCHER

You're going to end up old, in a cell. Worthless. Discarded.

NASH

Go to hell!

PARCHER

And while you rock and drool, the world will burn to ashes.

Two campus cops peel away from the inside of the crowd, heading towards Nash. Milnor gets there first, grabbing Nash.

MILNOR

(shakes him)

John? John.

Nash stops. Faces Milnor. William stands behind them.

MILNOR

I'm sorry...

Nash is looking around. At the gaping students. The still wary security guards. All staring at him.

MILNOR

I just heard what happened...

But John has stopped listening. His eyes are hollow with embarrassment, defeat. A beat. Then he walks off towards the gate.

MILNOR

Nash...

But John keeps walking. William smiles. Opens his arm.

PARCHER

Ladies and Gentleman, the great John Nash.

INT.-NASH LIVING ROOM-EVENING

Nash sits on the couch, shirt untucked, tie half off, staring at the floor. His face, his posture, a portrait of surrender.

(OVER) The BANGING gets LOUDER. Finally, Nash rises. As if moving through molasses, heads towards the kitchen and the SOUND...

INT.-NASH HOUSE-PANTRY-EVENING

Alicia sits on the floor next to the open back of the clothes dryer. Pieces of fan and belt are spread out before her.

NASH

I was wrong. I don't think-

ALICIA

Can you check the motor?

Nash stares at her. Then he leans over, lifts the part.

NASH

There's carbon build up on the rotator grooves...

Nash squats, shaves a groove with a screwdriver.

NASH

Try it now...

Alicia replaces the part. Tries the power. A HUM but no action.

ALICIA

It still won't work.

Nash looks at the assembly. Tries the switch. Feels the machine.

NASH

It just ran hot. Maybe try again tomorrow.

Alicia nods.

NASH

Rosen was right. I can't do-

She reaches forward, touches her finger to his lips to quiet him.

ALICIA

Maybe try again tomorrow.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-LIVING ROOM-LATER

Alicia ENTERS, toweling grease off her hands. No sign of John.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-TOOL SHED-NIGHT

John opens the door, turns on the light. No lab. Just walls and walls of clippings.

PARCHER

Welcome back.

William stands in the corner, arms crossed.

PARCHER

Close the door.

John stares at him a beat. Then he obliges.

PARCHER

I want you to listen to me very carefully. None of this is real.

Nash can't help but stifle a LAUGH of surprise. William smiles.

PARCHER

Ironic, I know. But true. Think about it? Do you really believe Rosen would just leave you in the house after you hit Alicia?

NASH

I didn't hit-.

PARCHER

That Princeton would let you hang around, ranting at their students like a madman? That you could think your way out of a disease?

William steps away from the wall, walks towards him.

PARCHER

Rosen drugged you, John. You're in a cell at Mclean. This is all a hypnotically induced hallucination to keep you from doing your work.

William has moved close.

PARCHER

It's 1954. Mind control through chemicals is the rage. We're doing it. They're doing it. To you. What you need to defeat them is belief. Not in me. But in your unique value. Belief in yourself. Surrender that and thousands die.

Nash stares at him a beat. Then he reaches up and grabs a clipping.

NASH

You're the one who's not real.

He tears the clipping down. William looks him right in the eyes.

PARCHER

You see us. We see you. Who's to say?

Still holding his gaze, Nash tears another clipping from the wall.

NASH

I am.

William leans in close. And smiles a smile to freeze your heart.

PARCHER

You're still talking to me.

INT.-PRINCETON-FINE HALL-CONTINUOUS

Students file into a classroom. Nash stands at the door facing Charles and Marcee, Alicia's handkerchief in his hand for courage.

CHARLES

You can't ignore me forever.

NASH

You were a good friend to me. The best. But I won't talk to you again.

Nash bends on one knee before Marcee and touches her tiny cheek.

NASH

Or you either, baby girl.
(kisses her head)
Goodbye.

A PROFESSOR comes to the doorway, stops to stare at this odd man on his knee, kissing thin air. Nash rises, turns to the Professor.

NASH

I was wondering if I might audit your class?

PROFESSOR

I'm sorry, you have to be enrolled-

The young Professor's eyes narrow. He seems suddenly flustered.

PROFESSOR

Oh. Of course. Dr. Milnor mentioned.
It's...it's an honor sir.

John is about to step over the threshold of the door. He stops.

PROFESSOR

Is something wrong?

NASH

It's my first class.

And with that, he steps inside. Charles and Marcee follow.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-NIGHT

John wakes. Rises to get a drink of water. He pulls open the bathroom door but beyond there is only solid wall. He spins...

INT.-MCLEAN-CELL-NIGHT

Small. Dark. Windows barred. John looks around wildly, heart sinking with shock and dread. William steps out of the shadows..

PARCHER

We don't have much time. This is the
real world. Don't let them drug you
again. Hang on, Nash-

(OVER) The door UNLOCKS. Opens. A Nurse steps in, hypo in her hand, face hidden by shadow. She steps forward into the light. Alicia.

INT.-NASH BEDROOM-NIGHT

Nash jolts awake with a start. Alicia is sitting up beside him.

ALICIA

John? Are you all right?

He stares at her a beat. Not so sure.

NASH

Give me time...

EXT.-PRINCETON LIBRARY-DAY

Morning breaks on the old stone building.

INT.-PRINCETON-LIBRARY-DAY

TRACK PAST a librarian, PAST oak tables and green reading lights.

A couple of STUDENTS stand before the large circular window, covered now with wax markings. The symbols seem disorganized.

STUDENT

Gibberish.

The second begins wiping off the window.

VOICE (OVER)

Get away! Don't touch that!

They turn to find Nash, towering over them, face distraught.

NASH

Get away, do you hear me? Get away.

STUDENT

Freak.

They walk off. Nash goes to the window, with his wax pencil begins trying to reconstruct the symbols.

A beat. Then he touches his head to the glass, defeated, looks down at the courtyard below. What he sees is startling. See it now...

EXT.-GAMES QUAD-DAY

A slightly older Nash stands at a gaming table watching two kids finish a game of Nash. After they leave, he makes a move.

One of the kids returns to grab a forgotten book. Notices Nash's move. Nash starts to explain, looks over the boy's shoulder to...

EXT.-COMMON-SPRING

A slightly older Nash sits amidst a group of students under a tree, listening to Milnor give a seminar.

Nash seems out of place. Marcee plays with his hair but he ignores her, taking notes. Nash looks to see...

EXT-COURTYARD-DAY

A slightly older Nash walks in figure eights, silent as William SHOUTS in his face.

Students pass without a second glance, folks used to him by now. Nash looks towards...

EXT.-PRINCETON-MAIN GATE

A slightly older Nash sits under a giant weeping willow, having a picnic with Alicia. Nash LAUGHS, looks up towards...

EXT.-PRINCETON LIBRARY WINDOW-DAY

A figure looks down at campus through rows of symbols that cover the glass before him. It's Nash, ten years older than when we left him here.

INT.-LIBRARY-1970'S

Nash finishes writing on the pane. The symbols are now orderly, their sequences in long, graceful lines.

He takes a step back, appraises his work. Allows a slight nod and walks off.

PAN RIGHT. Two STUDENTS, one SKINNY, one FAIR, have been watching. They move to the window, stare at the equations.

SKINNY STUDENT

Oh, man. Look at this...

FAT STUDENT

I think he solved Riemann...

INT.-LIBRARY-MINUTES LATER

Nash works over his pad at one of the oak tables. Marcee sits on the table top in front of him, reading Green Eggs and Ham.

VOICE (OVER)

Professor Nash?

John looks up to face the Skinny Student.

STUDENT

You are John Nash, right?

Nash looks at him and smiles.

STUDENT

You solved the Riemann Hypothesis.

NASH

Actually there's an error in my last line of code. But I'm getting there.

The Student PLONKS his textbook on the table. Opens it.

STUDENT

I've been studying your bargaining equilibria.

TEXT BOOK-CLOSE. Under the title FUNDAMENTALS IN MATHEMATICS is Nash's Bargaining Equilibria.

NASH

Hang around long enough and you become famous.

STUDENT

It's all I want. To be like you. Come up with something totally original, you know?

John looks at this boy, the ambition in his eyes. So bright, so familiar. The kid slides his notebook towards Nash.

STUDENT

Maybe you'd take a look...

NASH

When was the last time you ate?

The boy stares at him blankly.

NASH

You know, food?

Nash closes the boy's notebook. Reaches into his brown paper lunch bag and removes a sandwich.

NASH

The woman loves mayonnaise.

He slides half his sandwich across. Pats the chair next to him.

NASH

Why don't you tell me how you're adjusting to school? I know how difficult it can be...

EXT.-PRINCETON-GAMES QUAD-DAY

Nash sits at one of the games tables over a go board. Milnor walks up, older now, sits down across from him.

MILNOR

How many times did we sit here? A hundred?

NASH

A hundred lifetimes ago.

MILNOR

My secretary said you were looking for me.

NASH

I was thinking I might teach.

MILNOR

You're a terrible teacher, John.

NASH

Details, details.

Milnor stares at him.

MILNOR

What about, you know... Are they gone?

NASH

Oh no, they're not gone. Maybe they'll never be.

Nash looks. Sitting across the path are Charles, William and Marcee. The stare at him with little emotion.

NASH

But I've gotten used to ignoring them. And I think, as a result, they've kind of given up on me. Do you think that's the way it is with our dreams and our nightmares? That we have to keep feeding them for them to stay alive?

MILNOR

But they haunt you?

NASH

They're my past, Martin. Everybody's haunted by their past.

Milnor looks up. Shapely, Fox and Zweifel race past. All young. He looks back at Nash and the cool autumn day is empty once more.

NASH

Do you understand?

MILNOR

Maybe. Almost.

A beat. Then John stands.

NASH

I've got to go. Alicia still worries if I'm late. You get a lot of attention when you're crazy.

MILNOR

I'll talk to the department. Maybe in the Spring semester.

John nods, begins to head off.

MILNOR

Hey, Nash.

Nash spins. Milnor TAPS the game board in front of him.

MILNOR

You scared?

John stares at him. Then he grins.

As John goes and sits back down PULL BACK AND UP over these two old friends, playing with the hearts of the boys they once were.

EXT.-NASH HOUSE-TWILIGHT

Lights burn. Alicia's car pulls into the driveway.

INT.-NASH HOUSE-TWILIGHT

An unfinished painting sits on an easel. Walden Pond in winter, trees lifeless, but off the ice, a sparkle that might be hope.

The door opens and Alicia ENTERS. Looks around. The phone receiver hangs off the hook, swinging by the cord. Her expression darkens.

ALICIA

John?

INT.-CAR-PRINCETON-DRIVING-NIGHT

Alicia drives, expression intense. Looking. She spots a man in a doorway, RANTING. She slows. Just a stranger.

Alicia takes a beat, gathers herself. Drives on.

EXT. -PRINCETON-NASH'S DORM-NIGHT

Nash stands on the same roof where he and Charles passed the flask, so very long ago.

ALICIA
Looking for divine inspiration?

John looks at her. A beat. Then into the distance again.

NASH
Milnor's dead. His car crashed on 95. He was buying a goldfish.

ALICIA
Oh God, John, no. I'm so sorry.

NASH
And I thought, what if I suddenly wake up in a cell and you're the enemy. What if the world shatters again and I can't hold on?

She stares at him, eyes sparkling in the moonlight.

ALICIA
But you held on.

NASH
I held on.

He turns to face her, to look right into her eyes.

NASH
Because none of that felt as real, as the chance of losing you.

He looks up at the glittering panoply streaking the night sky.

ALICIA
Do you see the umbrella?

NASH
No. Just stars.

ALICIA
(pointing)
Here. Let me show you.

As she slides her arm around him, HOLD on this couple. Standing together against all the dark in the world.

INT.-FINE HALL-DAY

NASH-CLOSE. Clean shaven, hair cut short. Dazzling.

NASH

I can do this. They're only kids, right? What can they do to me. Write slanderous comments on bathroom walls. How bad could it be?

(a beat)

Horrible. It could be horrible.

From this angle John might be talking to himself. PULL BACK TO REVEAL he's not alone. Alicia is standing behind him.

NASH

(hands to his chest)

Oh no. Where's-

His face is suddenly child-like with panic. She reaches into her purse, takes out what he was looking for. Her handkerchief, which she folds and places in his pocket.

He smiles at her.

NASH

Thanks.

He turns and heads into the classroom. Alicia stares at him through the door as the kids settle.

INT.-CLASSROOM-DAY-CONTINUOUS

NASH

When I was a student here, they used to say you had to be certifiable to take this class.

John's smile is brilliant.

NASH

Now it seems you just have to be certifiable to teach it.

The kids BREAK out in LAUGHTER, the tension broken.

NASH

My name is John Nash. And I am going to be your teacher. Welcome to mathematics in thought and action.

ALICIA-CLOSE. Eyes bright with pride.

HOLD on the CLASSROOM DOOR as Alicia slowly DISSOLVES. The hallway CHANGES COLOR once, then AGAIN, time passing until we are...

INT.-PRINCETON-FINE HALL-1990's

THE DOOR swings open. Nash emerges amidst a gaggle of students. His suit is tailored, his face covered with a close beard. The way the students cling to him, JABBERING, this man is one fine teacher.

MAN (OVER)

Professor Nash?

A MAN is standing by the doorway. This is HOWARD KUHN. Nash's smile is polite, but vaguely puzzled. Turns to one of his students.

NASH

Do you see him?

The student nods.

NASH

You'll forgive me. I'm always suspicious of new people.

Although Kuhn is puzzled, the students seem to take it in stride. They just like this guy.

STUDENT

See you next week, Professor.

Nash watches them go, smiling, paternal.

NASH

I have a son that age. Harvard.
(rolls his eyes)

So, now that you are real, who are you and what can I do you for?

Kuhn takes a beat before speaking. Then...

KUHN

Professor, my name is Howard Kuhn. I am here to tell you you are being considered for the Nobel Prize.

INT.-FINE HALL-WALKING-MINUTES LATER

Nash and Kuhn walk. Students who pass greet Nash.

NASH

I'm sorry. I'm just a bit stunned.

KUHN

Over the last ten years your bargaining equilibria has become a foundation of modern economics.

They have come to a familiar doorway. It's the faculty lounge.

High Tea is in progress. The formal dress is gone. The students are multi-national, the waiters women. But the ritual is the same.

KUHN

Shall we have some tea?

Nash stares through the door a long beat. When he looks back at Kuhn, his eyes are sad.

NASH

I'm not formally a member of the department. I...

There is a tragic tenderness to his expression, an acknowledgement of all that has been lost to time.

KUHN

I guest lectured here before the war. I'm sure it will be all right.

He puts his hand on the small of John's back. John looks at him warily and then, finally, steps over the threshold.

INT.-FINE HALL-MATH FACULTY LOUNGE-DAY

Nash and Kuhn sit across from each other. A young girl serves them tea from a silver service. Nash smiles at her.

NASH

Things have changed.

The sentence seems to resonate more deeply to him than he had intended as it rolls off his lips. He grows pensive a beat. Then...

NASH

I thought the nominations for the Nobel Prize were secret. I thought you only knew if you won or lost.

KUHN

That is generally the case, yes. But these are special circumstances. The awards are substantial. They require private funding. As such, the image of the Nobel is quite important...

Kuhn stops a beat. Takes a sip of tea.

NASH

So you came here to see if I was crazy. To see if I'd screw everything up if I actually won. Maybe dance at the podium or strip naked and squawk like a chicken.

It's Nash's tone that put's Kuhn at ease.

KUHN

Something like that, yes.

Nash stops, stares off. Then...

NASH

Would I embarrass you? Yes, I suppose it's possible. You see, I am crazy. I am dependant on the newer medications. I still see things that are not here. But I choose to ignore them. Like a diet of the mind. I do not indulge certain appetites. My appetite for patterns. And perhaps my appetite to imagine, even to dream. I have lost much. But...

He opens his hands.

STUDENT

Professor Nash?

John looks up. A young faculty member is staring at him. He reaches into his pocket, lays something down in front of him. It's his pen.

WIDER

Another teacher stands behind him. He too lays his pen down before Nash. And now everyone in the room is rising, coming to him, laying their pens down, one after another in a growing tribute to a lifetime of accomplishment.

KUHN

What...?

The pens keep coming. Nash opens his mouth to answer. But he can't, eyes suddenly flooding with tears for this journey taken so very far.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT.-ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY-NOBEL CEREMONY

A giant hall. Full. Nash stands at the podium, blinking his eyes. Hundreds sit watching, as camera flashbulbs finally cease.

But Nash just stands there. A long beat. And even longer.

KUHN-CLOSE. In the audience. Concerned.

ALICIA-CLOSE. In the front row. Starting to worry.

BACK TO NASH. Still standing there. See what he sees. Hundreds of faces staring back at him. Finally, just when all seems lost...

NASH

Thank you. Thank you for your
patience.

But he's not looking at the speech before him. He's not looking at the Audience. He's looking only at Alicia.

NASH

I have always believed in numbers.
In the equations and logics that
lead to reason. I was wrong. It is
only in the mysterious equations of
love that any logic or reason can be
found. Perhaps it is good to have a
beautiful mind. But a better gift is
to discover a beautiful heart.

*And suddenly there is no one else in the room but the two of them,
Nash's magical vision revealing the patterns of the heart.*

NASH

Thank you for your belief in me
after so many years. You are the
reason I am here today.

Nash reaches into his breast pocket and takes out something familiar. It's her rose embroidered handkerchief.

NASH

You are the reason I am.

And with that he tucks the handkerchief in his suit pocket.

NASH

Thank you.

The room EXPLODES with APPLAUSE, suddenly full again. Zweifel stands, his APPLAUSE ever more enthusiastic, as does Fox, and then those around them, all rising in ovation.

ALICIA-CLOSE. CLAPS as hard as the rest, full of love and pride.

John just stands on stage. Taking it all in. Then, finally, he bows, folks APPLAUDING even so loud that Nash can't stifle a LAUGH.

INT.-ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY-COCKTAIL RECEPTION

John stands with Alicia and amidst the dwindling well wishers.

ALICIA

Time to go?

NASH

Yes, please.

He helps her on with her wrap. That's when he sees them, standing by the door. Three familiar figures. Charles, Marcee and William.

Then William does something odd. He gives Nash a small salute.

ALICIA

What is it? What's wrong?

He turns to his wife. His smile is long in coming, but when it comes, it melts the worry on his face along with our hearts.

NASH

Nothing. Nothing at all.

He takes her hand, turning his back on them, man and wife heading away together, outside, into the light and gone.

FINAL FADE TO BLACK.