

LINKIN PARK PROJECT
A THOUSAND SUNS

Treatment by
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REEL FX
BEDROCK STUDIOS
GRANAT ENTERTAINMENT

PROLOGUE

We open on the urban sprawl of LOS ANGELES. Dusk bathes the city a dirty orange haze, as we slowly glide towards - ROGER'S PARK, CRENSHAW - where a small cluster of TEENAGERS shoot hoops in a run-down court. We focus on one kid in particular, JAKE WEST (15), as he effortlessly weaves the ball between his opponents. A fellow team mate tells him to stop hogging, so Jake shoots it over to, TY WEST (18), his older brother. Ty skilfully dribbles up to the basket, LEAPS, and pulls off a perfect slam-dunk. The opposing team scoff in frustration as Jake and Ty punch fists. Ty grabs Jake in a playful headlock, "Not bad, little bro. Maybe one day you'll swap those dorky computers for a pair of Kobe V's and go NBA like me. Jake chuckles, "yeah, right." And as the ball bounces back into play...

A group of GANG-BANGERS approach the courts... Their leader, TERIUS (21), scopes a pile of back-pack's and items courtside which belongs to Jake and his friends. He casually walks over and swipes the brand new LAKERS JACKET hanging from one of the bleachers. Jake spots Terius and Ty immediately takes off after him, but abruptly stops when a GUN is pulled on him. Ty grits his teeth as Terius offloads a volley of threats and insults, daring him to make a move. After a tense beat, Terius and his crew casually exit the courts... Ty is pissed, that jacket meant a lot to him. It was a gift to his brother and he worked damn hard to buy it. Someone needs to stand up to these guys. Jake tells him to forget about it, but this only infuriates Ty more. Maybe it's about time Jake stood up for himself and fought his own battles for once. Jake tries to assure his brother he did not mean it that way, but Ty is already gone, leaving Jake courtside as we CUT TO:

Later that NIGHT, moving down Jake's street to find his modest HOME wedged between a liquor store and a vacant parking lot - looks like we're somewhere in Baldwin Hills. Jake is writing code on his laptop at a tiny desk in his ROOM - walls plastered with video game and movie posters, and a massive Linkin Park poster. He's hacking into an mp3 player and customizing it for himself. Why? Because he can. Jake is a brilliant computer whiz, and despite the lack of opportunity in his neighbourhood, and the fact that his parents are hovering just below middle-class, Jake is destined for great things - and he knows it. We watch as Jake works the keyboard with the grace and skill of a pro, then pauses... Looks up at an old photo of Ty and himself... Jake now moves down the HALLWAY to Ty's room. He wants to apologise for coming off like a douche'. The last thing Jake wants is his big brother to think he's ungrateful. That jacket also meant a lot to him. Jake knocks... No answer, and slowly enters, only to find the room empty and Ty's window wide open - CUT TO:

TERIUS' LIVING ROOM, littered with gang-bangers: playing X-Box, smoking weed, counting wads of cash, weighing baggies of crystal. Terius enters the room, wearing Jake's Lakers jacket. He goes to take a seat on the lounge and suddenly hears his name called from outside, "YO, TERIUS!" Terius grabs his handgun and moves to the front door with his men.

OUTSIDE, Ty stands in the middle of the street, holding a baseball bat. Gang members pour out of the house, followed by Terius. "Aww, man, you really are a stupid motherfucker. You don't bring a baseball bat to a gun fight, homie." Ty insists he's not here for any trouble; but he's not leaving until he gets that jacket back. Terius examines the jacket, and in a sarcastic

tone, decides that he's going to keep it. Ty knows this is going to get ugly, but he's not going to back down from this thug - he tells Terius that without the gun, he could easily wipe the street with his ass... Terius puts down the gun and rips off the Lakers jacket - he's more than willing to test that theory... As the FIST FIGHT rages on, gang members cheer and whistle, but when it looks like Ty is getting the upper hand, Terius brutally knees him in the groin - immediately dropping Ty to the curb. One of Terius' men casually tosses the handgun to him. Ty's POV: looking up as Terius looms over us, grinning, gun pointed directly at us. Ty begs for his life, but Terius simply says, "like I said, you a stupid motherfucker." POP! POP!

INTERCUT WITH: Jake standing further down the street, SCREAMING, NOOOOO! He just saw his brother murdered in cold blood. Terius fires off some shots at Jake as he takes off down the street... We track with Jake, crying and screaming... His whole world just fell apart. And the screen FLARES TO WHITE:

...taking us through a series of DISSOLVES IN SLO-MO: Homicide cops interviewing Jake on the side of the curb as sirens strobe the scene of the crime... Jake's parents (PHIL and AUDREY) being held back by police as they cover Ty's body with a white sheet... Bystanders gawk out of windows, front yards and porches throughout the street... Cops interview them - as usual, nobody saw anything... The screen FLARES TO WHITE again:

Fading us back into the bowels a POLICE PRECINCT, where Jake stands with a homicide detective (Sgt. Gerick) behind one-way glass, watching a perp line-up... He takes a deep breath, and then picks out a haggard looking Terius from the line-up... Even though Terius can't see him, he knows Jake is watching... They lock eyes, and as we push in super-tight on Jake, the opening of "CATALYST" kicks in, smashing us to our TITLE SEQUENCE...

ACT ONE

BZZZT, BZZZT, BZZZT... Close on ALARM CLOCK DIGITS: 7.30am. An older Jake, now 25, springs out of bed. Apart from a more sophisticated computer set-up, his room has not changed much at all. SUPER: TEN YEARS LATER. In the KITCHEN, now dressed in a hoodie and jeans, Jake quickly drains the last of his juice and kisses his mom goodbye -

OUTSIDE - Jake wheels his beat-to-shit motorcycle out from the garage - behind him we notice a dust-sheet draped over a hidden car. Before Jake puts on his helmet, he spots an elderly lady being mugged further down the street. The thug shoves her to the ground and takes off with her bag. Jake stares for a beat, and then continues on, mad at what he just saw, yet equally disgusted with himself for not having the courage to do anything - CUT TO:

Jake riding towards DOWNTOWN... As he weaves through the heavy morning LA traffic, "WAITING FOR THE END" kicks in... Jake's office is an OLD LOFT SPACE nestled in the heart of downtown. He works for a start-up tech firm called DOMINO, which specializes in CLOUD COMPUTING and VIRTUAL NETWORKING SOLUTIONS. In the tech world, these guys are on the front lines of cutting edge, and the big boys have taken notice. Google is on the brink of investing millions into their company, and Jake is a key player. Jake moves through the expansive floor, dotted with computer consoles and open offices. This looks like

the inside of a typical tech firm: essentially young STAFF, a relaxed vibe, with a mix of IKEA furnishings, drink and candy vending machines, and playful elements such as retro pin-ball machines, flat-screen TV's, console video games, and clusters of comfy bean-bags.

Jake greets some fellow colleagues and takes a seat at his desk – which is wrapped in two 30' flat-screen monitors. Jake grabs a Red Bull from the mini-fridge under his desk, boots his system up, cracks his knuckles, and... “Coffee?” Jake looks up to see ARIEL MATTHEWS (23), the new gorgeous receptionist, smiling back down at him. Jake is immediately mesmerized by her beauty and when he tries to reply, mumbles out something incomprehensible. Ariel just smiles patiently as Jake finds his voice. “Umm, no, thanks, I'm fine.” Jake notices a little twinkle in her eye as she smiles and moves on to the next cubicle.

LATER THAT DAY, in the BREAK ROOM, Jake and Ariel find themselves alone. After some small talk, Jake notices she's carrying a small SQUEEZY TOY and uses that to break the ice. She tells him that it relieves stress. She won't go anywhere without it – it's kind of like a good luck charm. Jake is curious about why she would need good luck, but Ariel changes the subject to Jake's work. Jake explains what he does regarding Cloud Computing, and the process involved, and how it's similar to an electrical grid, where the world can access virtual servers and applications on demand – he is certain that this will one day revolutionize the way people work and do business online. But what really gets Jake excited is its future potential for applications, and that's why he's here – Cloud Computing may one day evolve into a sort of global collective consciousness, where each and every person will be plugged-in, virtually connected to the next person, both through mind, body, and soul.

Ariel stares blankly at Jake, although she can appreciate his passion, she does not really understand the concept - so Jake slides over closer to her and continues to explain: “Ok, imagine Facebook or Twitter, multiplied by a billion, where every status update or tweet is an immediate thought shared by millions.” Ariel isn't sure she'd want to the rest of the world to have the ability to know her personal thoughts - there would be no privacy or individualism left. Jake understands where she's coming from, but believes that in a way, we already are sharing everything with each other. It's called the COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS, and it's only going to grow as time goes on. He uses the example of pregnant crickets that are able to communicate the dangers of a Wolf Spider to their young without them even being born. The information is already out there, we just need a delivery system to access it.

Ariel shakes her head; that is single-handedly the most insane thing she's ever heard. They both crack up laughing. We can tell Jake is quickly becoming smitten with the new receptionist, and Ariel is definitely intrigued with him. She finds him a little quirky, even dorky, but cute none the less. Time to get back to work - Ariel finishes her salad and thanks Jake for the little chat on unborn crickets. It's been kind of hard getting to know everyone, as this is only her first week at Domino. As Ariel gets up to leave, Jake knows it's either now or never – he musters up all his courage: “Hey, I was wondering if you don't have any plans later, maybe we could grab a bite after work.” Ariel's expression darkens slightly, it's as if she'd love to, but something is stopping her. She gives Jake a forced smile, and just when his

heart is about to shrivel up from the awkwardness of being blown off, she agrees. Jake can hardly hide his excitement – she leaves the room with a smile, which takes us to:

THEIR FIRST DATE, where Jake and Ariel are enjoying themselves at an up-market Sushi Bar, chatting, giggling, and even flirting a little. Ariel is interested to know how Jake managed to score seats at this place with such short notice. Jake says he just got lucky with a cancelled reservation. Ariel knows he must have had this date planned for a while. That makes her smile. She listens as Jake discusses the Google deal, and if it does go through, how it will give him enough income to help his parents move into a bigger house – and a better neighborhood. Jake notices Ariel suddenly looks a little uncomfortable, and is worried she might not be enjoying herself. She leans in closer, gently resting her hand on his, and tells him that as much as she appreciates his efforts to impress her with this expensive restaurant, at the end of the day, she'd be happy just to grab a bite at Bubba Gumps. Jake apologizes for not knowing this, and admits he was perhaps trying a little too hard, but Ariel assures him that everything is ok – and that she likes Jake for who he is. They both lock eyes for a second, causing Jake to blush. Ariel teases him, and as they both start laughing, we CUT TO:

LATER, outside the Sushi Bar, Jake offers to give her a ride home on his bike, Ariel politely declines, so Jake offers to pay for a cab, but again, she refuses because she has a friend who only lives a few blocks from Sunset, and is fine walking there by herself. Somehow Jake senses that she's not being entirely honest with him, but no way is he going to let her walk these streets alone – he assures her that the bike is safe, and insists on giving her a ride home, offering his helmet for her to wear. Ariel reluctantly accepts the ride, warning him that she does not live in the best neighborhood – which is fine with Jake, neither does he.

As they cruise down the FREEWAY, Ariel clings tightly to Jake...he smiles.

They eventually arrive at ARIEL'S APARTMENT BLOCK, somewhere in South Central. Jake pulls to the side of the curb and Ariel climbs off and hands his helmet back. She thanks Jake for a great night and gives him a quick kiss on the cheek. Jake's smile quickly disappears when several GANG-BANGERS exit the apartment and spot them. Ariel assures Jake she'll be fine, as she knows these guys quite well. They aggressively call out to Ariel, giving dirty looks at Jake. With a forced smile, Ariel says goodbye and quickly takes off towards the front door, as she passes the gang-bangers, they whistle and grope at her ass. One guy shoves her through the door, hard. Jake starts his bike, glaring back at them - "the fuck you lookin' at, homie?" Jake grits his teeth and rides off down the street...

LAER THAT NIGHT, "THE REQUIEM" plays in the background as Jake lays in bed staring at the ceiling, thinking about Ariel. Something about the way those guys treated her troubles Jake. It was as if she was a piece of meat, a slave, being told to hurry up and get back inside.

THE FOLLOWING DAY, when Jake enters Domino's front doors, Ariel greets him cheerfully. She apologizes for the way those guys acted last night, but insists that she grew up with them, and they were just being dicks. They're kind of like big brothers to her, so

sometimes they can be a little over-protective. But Jake ain't buying that explanation, and knows damn well there's more to it than she's letting on. He knows a thug when he sees one.

LATER THAT DAY, Jake is at his cubicle busy writing code- his POV: we watch him work the keyboard like an instrument – like an extension of his hands. Various CODE languages stream down the screen at blistering speeds. It's as if Jake is about to become immersed into the very screen itself, when his iPhone BEEPS with a message from Ariel: "R U FREE FRIDAY NIGHT?" A smile spreads across Jake's mouth before he replies back...

THAT FRIDAY NIGHT after dinner, Jake and Ariel stroll along the Santa Monica pier... A chilly breeze whips up and Ariel nestles into Jake's arm. They admire the crowds of tourists and locals lining up for the beautifully lit Ferris wheel. It's a perfect night – perhaps romantic even. Jake pulls out his cell and asks if he can snap a PHOTO of him and Ariel together – for Jake, this is a night to remember. They pose for the photo; Ariel hugs him, cheek-to-cheek.

AT THE END OF THE PEIR, Jake stares up at the night sky – there are a few stars out tonight which is rare for LA. Jake has always been fascinated by the universe and what could be out there. The sheer immensity is both humbling and inspiring to him. In many ways, it influences his work. Ariel ponders the question of whether there's anyone else out there. Jake's confident there is – he forms a circle with his thumb and index fingers, and holds it up to the sky, squinting through it. "Must be at least a thousand suns in this tiny circle alone - I'd like to think at least one of them has a planet orbiting it with two people like us, wondering the exact same thing." Ariel smiles, she really likes Jake. He's different from all the other guys she's dated, and she can tell he has a good heart. Jake catches Ariel looking directly into his eyes... Jake smiles, Ariel leans in and they kiss tenderly for the very first time... Ariel's phone suddenly starts RINGING. Ariel apologizes and takes the call, moving away from Jake, further down the pier - seems important. Jake notices that she's talking softly yet taut to whoever is on the line. She hangs up and tells Jake that she has to get going. Jake asks what's up, but Ariel shrugs it off, saying her mom needs help at home cleaning the house. Jake glances at his watch - its 9.30pm at night. Ariel once again reiterates that she's got to get going, and starts heading back towards the ferris wheel... Something is wrong. Off Jake's frown, CUT TO:

A CAB RANK outside the Holiday Inn. Ariel thanks Jake for dinner, gives him a quick peck on the cheek and jumps into a cab, leaving Jake alone with a million questions...

Gang-bangers loiter around the front of ARIEL'S APARTMENT BLOCK. They spot a BLACK G-RIDE with chrome rims, pull up to the curb. We can hear muffled Hip Hop emanating from inside. The driver, A MASSIVE DUDE, gets out and opens the passenger-side door... TERIUS steps out, older now, but no less menacing. A huge scar trails down his left cheek; someone must have shanked him in prison. We also notice that he's no longer dressed like a thug – he's wearing an expensive Armani suit, and is dripping with gold. He scans the street; take a deep hit off his blunt cigar as the gang-banger that told Jake to fuck off earlier (SWEETS) approaches and shakes his hand. Terius asks if the shipment has been

cut and repacked. Sweets nods. “Where’s your mule?” “On her way.” As Sweets leads Terius into the apartment block, Ariel pulls up in a cab. Sweets glares at her, “where the fuck you been, girl?” “At dinner with a friend.” Sweets grabs Ariel by the cheek, gets real close to her, “hanging around people I don’t know makes me nervous.” Ariel snarls back, “you don’t own me, Sweets!” “The hell I don’t! Get your ass inside!” He pushes her inside the door.

INSIDE SWEET’S APARTMENT, Terius inspects the SHRINK-WRAPPED BRICKS OF DRUGS. Ariel enters the room and Terius looks at her with a sinister gleam in his eye...

THE NEXT AFTERNOON – Jake is worried that Ariel has not shown up for work today. He catches a female assistant walking past, and asks if she’s seen Ariel today. She shrugs, “nope, must have called in sick.” Again, Jake checks his email and phone messages, and decides he’s going to ride over there and confront her. He grabs his jacket and helmet and before he can exit the building, his BOSS calls him in for an important video conference meeting with Google. Jake has to take this meeting...

THAT NIGHT, Jake works at his desk, and sends Ariel another text message: WHERE R U? CALL ME! Phil suddenly knocks and enters his room, says there’s someone from work here to see him – Jake spins to see Ariel standing behind his dad at the door. Jake’s father winks at him while closing the door. Ariel looks like she’s been crying. Jake asks if she’s all right, and whether she’s been getting his messages. She has – and apologizes for not responding, but she came over because she wants to tell him something very important. She sits on the end of his bed... Jake joins her. She really likes Jake, but there’s something that she just can’t allow him to get involved in. She’d never forgive herself if Jake was hurt. Ariel tells him about those gang-bangers, and how they control everything in her apartment block. They run intimidation and extortion rackets on all the tenants, and they push drugs throughout the neighborhood. They’ve been harassing her parents for money – which is why Ariel still lives at home. Her father was just laid off his job after thirty years, so she’s been helping her parents by contributing a percentage of her income to Sweets – and if she doesn’t pay up every week, he keeps threatening to kill them. Ariel has also been forced to appease him by running drugs, making drop-offs and pick-ups at various locations throughout the neighborhood. She feels trapped and there’s nothing she can do about it. Jake is outraged, but understands that going to the police will most likely mean a bullet for Ariel and her family. Ariel is scared, as these guys are ruthless and they have her by the throat. This is why she was at first hesitant about dating Jake, and bringing him back to her neighborhood. She doesn’t want him involved. As she pours her heart out, Jake comforts her... A long beat... She looks into his eyes, they kiss... And as they start to make love passionately, the beautiful piano intro of “IRIDESCENT” rises from the background, and we slowly DISSOLVE TO:

THE NEXT MORNING, a naked Jake crawls out of bed. He watches Ariel sleep and as the morning light finds her face, he marvels at her beauty. Ariel stirs, opens her eyes to find Jake standing there watching her. He bends down and kisses her good morning which brings a smile to her face. Audrey suddenly knocks at the door, “breakfast?” Jake bolts to the door and stops him from entering, “Yeah, I’ll be down in a minute, mom.” Ariel emerges from

underneath the sheets, cracking up – Jake holds a finger to his lips, “Sssssshh.” As Jake throws on a pair of jeans and opens his cupboard, Ariel spots a PHOTO of Jake and Ty. “I never knew you had a brother.” Jake freezes, staring directly at the Lakers jacket hanging in front of him. “Yeah, he died a few years ago.” Ariel senses that Jake is not interested in talking about it, so decides not to push it... Jake sighs, and takes a seat next to Ariel - turns out there is a dark secret in his life as well. He used to have an older brother but he was murdered...and to this day, Jake believes it was his fault. A neighborhood thug stole his Lakers jacket from him, which was a present from his brother. Jake didn’t want to confront the thug to get it back, so his brother did instead. He went to over there and they began to fight in the street, but he was shot twice and killed instantly. Jake followed him over there and saw the whole thing. He’s been living with this everyday for the last ten years, and there’s not a day that goes by where Jake doesn’t think his brother died fighting for Jake – over a stupid jacket. Ariel spots the Lakers jacket hanging up over his cupboard. She kisses Jake and asks what happened to the guy who shot Ty. “After the shooting, the cops found him a week later. I identified him as the killer, and we were told it would be an open and shut case. The Judge gave him seven years for manslaughter - a slap on the wrist. He was out in four.” Ariel asks his name. “His name was Terius DeAndre.” Ariel’s face pales...Alarmed, Jake asks her what’s wrong...Ariel quickly gets up and starts dressing. She tells Jake she has to go, and that she can’t see him for a while – she storms out into the hallway and down the stairs, passing Jake’s confused parents. Jake follows her down, equally confused...

They both spill out onto Jake’s STREET, Ariel takes off, Jake catches up, grabs her, but she shoves him away and tells him to stay back. Confused, Jake watches her disappear down the street... Jake knows that when he mentioned the name “Terius”, she freaked out. Why?

LATER, Jake RIDES his motorcycle to Ariel’s apartment block...As he idles down her STREET, people watch him, clearly noting he’s not from around here. Jake gets off his bike and enters the block, searching for Ariel’s apartment number, finds it and begins knocking... Ariel’s FATHER answers, and knows exactly who he is. “She’s not here right now, son.” Jake refuses to leave, claiming that his daughter knows something about her brother’s murder, but Ariel’s father begs him to stray away as it’s dangerous for him just being here. “When she comes home, I’ll let her know you came by.” Jake leaves defeated....

As he walks back OUTSIDE to his bike, Sweets and several other gang-bangers spot him. They race over and block his path. “Yo, it’s that little punk-ass bitch who can’t seem to take a hint.” Jake turns to Sweets, “screw you, where’s Ariel?” WHACK!!!! Sweets clocks Jake in the side of the head, while his men drag him off his bike and start beating the shit out of him... Just when it looks like Jake is about to be killed, someone stops them... Terius has arrived. Despite his bloodied face, he immediately recognizes Jake and smiles. “Take him inside. Now!” As they drag him into Sweets’ apartment block; Ariel appears from inside her apartment, SCREAMING for them to let Jake go. Terius barks at her to get back inside and mind her own business. Sweets’ apartment door SLAMS shut – CUT TO:

Heavy breathing... Jake nodding in and out of consciousness, he's tied to a chair... Terius takes a seat next to him, twirling a SMALL BATON. Sweets and his men stand around, watching, sniggering at Jake. "And just when I thought I'd seen everything, this motherfuck shows up again. Man, I sat in a cell for years, waiting for this day. Now I get to finish you off, just like I did with your punk-ass brother. Only difference is, it won't be so quick." Jake SCREAMS at him with rage, tries to lunge for him, but can't move – Terius casually gets up and BELTS Jake in the head with his baton – the world goes BLACK, smashing us to:

ACT TWO

"FALLOUT" raises from the darkness... WE GLIMPSE Jake's world again in a HAZY, FOGGY POV... We're in an ALLEY... Graffiti everywhere... We catch the rim of a rusty dumpster in one corner... A SCRUFFY HOMELESS MAN appears, leans over us, looking into our eyes... BLACK AGAIN... Now we're in a HOSPITAL... E.R. staff frantically rushing us down a corridor... Overhead lights strobe by... Smash back to BLACK...

Fading us back in on Phil and Audrey talking to a SURGEON in the E.R. waiting room... Audrey is beside herself with grief as Phil tries to contain her. The Surgeon also tries to comfort her, but tells them they should start making the appropriate arrangements: Jake is in a severe coma. He took a bullet to the head and will most likely not recover. His brain is technically dead... But there is one last procedure they can try, but it is somewhat experimental and they would have to sign papers, allowing him to legally proceed with the surgery. Phil immediately agrees, "Whatever it takes. We can't lose another son." The Surgeon is quick to point out that this is in no way a guarantee, as Jake's condition is quite dire, but it is worth a try. They understand and agree anyway... CUT TO:

Sweets entering his APARTMENT... Looks more like a storage bunker with guns and drugs everywhere. There's enough evidence here to put this moron away for life, but like he cares. He walks into his BEDROOM and immediately notices something is not right... Someone has tossed his room. He squats over to a cored out HOLE IN THE WALL, covered up with a piece of drywall. He wedges it open... Empty. A single \$100 note is neatly placed in the center. A silent "Fuck you!" from whoever ripped him off. Off Sweets, fuming mad...

CRACK! Sweets KICKS in Ariel's apartment door... Apart from some shabby furniture, the apartment is EMPTY. Ariel and her parents are gone. Sweets flips open his cell and calls –

Terius, who's in the back of a pimped out LIMO, having a drink with a Sgt. Gerick. As Sweets relays the message, he shoots a tense, pissed off look at Gerick then hangs up, "Someone just ripped us off seventy grand. Fuck!" Terius tosses his drink into the glass bar, shattering it to pieces. Gerick leans forward, pissed, "You do realize that's two fuck-ups in one week, right? First the little brother of that punk you clipped turns up in an alley way, miraculously clinging to life, and now people seem to be happily helping themselves to our money. You need to get your shit together, otherwise I can't protect you. If I can't protect you, that means I'm not making money, and if I'm not making any money, that means you're

in prison.” Terius takes it on the chin, “Alright, I’ll figure something out.” “Just as well I attached a tracking chip inside that cache.” Terius looks at Gerick, confused. “What, you really think I trust any of those goons you roll with? Figured if any of you decided to get rip me off, I could easily locate the money.” Gerick pulls out a GPS TRANSPONDER DEVICE from his jacket, smiles and exits the limo, leaving Terius madder than hell...

Jake’s EYES SNAP OPEN... Breathing hard, face lathered in sweat. Is he alive, or dead? His head is wrapped in a mass of bandages, with tubes flowing out of both arms. Electronic equipment beeps next him. For a long beat he just lies there, gathering his thoughts... Synapses in his newly altered brain firing up, learning how to move his body again... He tries to prop himself up on one elbow...Bad idea... Jake’s head begins to throb with pain...

We follow one of Sweets’ THUGS casually enter the hospital WARD, carrying balloons and a get well card. He smiles at a passing nurse and approaches the Ward’s info desk, politely asking a young Doctor for a patient by the name of “Jake West.”

Jake looks around his room, FLASHES of his ordeal coming back to haunt him...He’s remembering what happened to him... He spots something: nestled amongst the get well cards: Ariel’s SQUEEZY TOY, resting on his bedside table... “Ariel?” She’s been here to visit him? Suddenly the thug enters the room, closes the door behind him. Jake tries to speak but his mouth is too dry. “Sup, homie? Got a little message from my boy Terius”, he raises a silenced pistol, and takes aim, but before he can pull the trigger, Jake begins to convulse on the bed, and the thug seems paralyzed, unable to move... What the hell? Jake looks up at the thug – for some strange reason he can control his opponents movement... The thug looks scared out of his mind, and rightly so, the gun begins to involuntarily turn towards him, and before any of us can digest what’s happening - PFFT! - The thug shoots himself in the head, drops into a heap, crashing over equipment...

Close on Jake... For a beat he just stares at the dead thug... He’s just somehow managed to cause a man to kill himself... “What’s happening to me?” Jake suddenly clutches his head, more throbbing... The pain is almost unbearable; he rips out the drips from both his arms, causing blood to arc across the room. A young NURSE enters the room and SCREAMS. Jake blasts past her and takes off down the corridor, wearing nothing but his hospital pajamas. A beefy looking Doctor approaches Jake and tries to stop him, but somehow Jake causes him to fling across the corridor without laying a finger on him. Jake screams with pain again – his POV: Blurry, everyone rushing by, ghost-like, too fast for us to process. And we can HEAR EVERYTHING. Thousands of voices, electronic devices, thoughts, cell phone conversations...EVERYTHING. It’s a wall of information and its sending Jake crazy.

Jake makes it OUTSIDE to the hospital car park, via a stairwell. We follow him, squinting from the sun, hobbling quickly, and panic increasing. The fuck is going on? Is this a bad dream? Jake looks down at his bleeding arms. Nope, definitely not. We can hear SIRENS growing in the distance, but Jake heard those five minutes ago, he breaks out of the area...

Sgt. Gerick sits at his desk working. We're somewhere in his PRECINCT late at night. (Note: This is the same precinct that dealt with Ty's murder) His department is pitch-black, except for the single lamp that illuminates his desk. On his PC screen, he brings up Terius' official MUG SHOT from the LAPD data base. We scan down his extensive rap-sheet as Gerick examines it... Suddenly his cell rings. "This is Gerick." We literally see Gerick's face morph into sheer rage. Someone has just given him some very bad news – CUT TO:

EARLY NEXT MORNING, Phil stands on his tiny porch, chugging on his mug of coffee, deep in thought. Clearly he's still reeling from Jake being in a coma – and has very little sleep this past few weeks. He watches a group of parents walk their kids to the school bus stop. Suddenly he hears a rustling noise above him... Sounds too heavy to be an animal. Someone is climbing in through a window upstairs. Phil races back inside the house...

Phil makes his way down the HALLWAY, now holding a steel pipe. He shoots a glance into Ty's room (left exactly how it was before he died), and can now hear someone in Jake's room, rummaging about. He braces himself - 1...2... BOOM!

He RIPS open the bedroom door open, only to find Jake standing there, shaved head laced with stitches, half-dressed in jeans and a t-shirt. Phil drops the pipe as his legs give way from shock. "J-Jake?! Phil moves to embrace him "Stay away from me, dad, I'm not right." Jake stumbles back... "What did those doctors do to me?" Crying with joy, Phil has a million questions... "I... I don't know. Son, you were left for dead. We took a chance on a radical new type of brain surgery... They told your mother and I that you'd be in a coma with very little chance of recovery... Oh, my god, it worked. They saved your life." "It was Terius, dad. He's still here. Ariel knows him - works for him. That's why she left that morning." Phil stands there in shock, trying to process everything Jake is saying... He moves to hug his son again and immediately jolts back in pain. For some reason it's hurting him to be this close. Jake grabs his back-pack and hooded top, but before he exits the room, "I need to find out what's happening to me, and help Ariel... I love her. Tell mom, I'll be back, I promise." And just like that, Jake disappears...

ACT TWO/MIDPOINT

In the GARAGE, Jake stands in front of the concealed car – WEARING HIS LAKERS JACKET. He glances at the keys in his hand, and rips off the sheet revealing THE SWEETEST RED MUSTANG you've ever laid eyes on. A sheer work of art. His father's pride and joy. Approaching POLICE SIRENS drone close-by... As Jake hops in and REVS the engine, the opening of "WRETCHES AND KINGS" assaults our ears... Unmarked cop cars skid to a halt outside – Jake TEARS out, drifting across the street in a plume of rubber... A few cars back, Gerick spots Jake screaming away in the Mustang, radios all units to pursue... The chase is on...

CHOPPERS POV: as Jake hammers down the freeway, with six cop cars on his ass... He weaves in and around other cars with an almost supernatural skill. He shuts his eyes and we

go to his ghost-like POV: He's using his MIND'S EYE to NAVIGATE between other cars, amazing us with his near misses, and flawless precision. It's as if he knows exactly what everyone's doing and where they're going to be. Jake is somehow tapping into the COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS. Gerick and his convoy of cops struggle to keep pace...

Gerick positions himself directly behind Jake, and gets his partner to lean out the window and shoot out the tires, but as soon as he does, Jake starts swerving across lanes, making it impossible to get a clean shot. The cop fires anyway... Gerick tries to mimic Jake's evasive driving and nearly clips another cop car. Gerick on the radio again, barking orders for a road block at the upcoming exit ramp... Suddenly COP CARS START FLIPPING up into the air like pancakes... Commuters start swerving and crashing into each other as they attempt to avoid the cop cars tumbling down each lane. Gerick swerves hard, narrowly missing a cop car as it barrels across the freeway -

On Jake, still has his eyes closed... His newfound power to manipulate objects and see thoughts and information is growing, and he's getting a handle on how to use it. He opens his eyes and we immediately see they are now different... Glowing white like hot pearls.

Jake hammers up alongside a large truck that has STEEL PIPING stacked and fastened onto its trailer bed. He swerves hard in front of the truck, taking a sharp exit ramp off the freeway, causing the truck to hit the brakes – Gerick also hits the brakes and nearly ploughs into the truck, which has nearly jack-knifed. Gerick exits his vehicle and starts flagging down the other oncoming cop cars to stop. He runs across to the freeway barrier and watches Jake's mustang below, disappear around a corner. Gerick's partner is already on the radio giving dispatch a description of the vehicle and where it is most likely headed –

SWEET'S APARTMENT - is chock full of gangbangers watching the NEWS LOOP, where a TV chopper follows the freeway chase between Jake and the cops. Sweets clenches his jaw when he spots the suspects name across the news ticker – Jake West. He gets up to grab his cell when – CRRRRAAAACK – the entire side wall to his apartment BLOWS OUT. Sweets' men automatically reach for their weapons, but one by one their bodies begin to fling across the room, smashing into the opposite wall. Through the dust and rubble, Sweets can see a figure standing silent and still, energy rippling in the air around it. "What the--?" Sweets raises his gun and before he can squeeze the trigger, his hand is crushed into a pulp by an unseen force. He screams in agony and drops to his knees... Frightened now, he wearily looks up to see Jake standing there, with energy rippling around him. Suddenly, Sweets' eyes begin to BLEED, and as he screams we SMASH TO:

LATER THAT AFTERNOON, we slowly move towards a dinky little MOTEL somewhere in the sleazy end of Hollywood Blvd... We zoom right through a grimy top floor window, into ARIEL'S ROOM - where she plunks her backpack down on the sofa, unzips it and pulls out a small wad of dollar bills. She peels off two notes – her cell rings – she glances at the number – relief seeps across her face. She answers the call. "Mom? You made it ok.... Yes, I'm fine." While she talks to her parents, Ariel zips up her bag, and our camera pushes through and

finds bundled bricks of cash hidden inside... We continue to macro in until we locate the tiny TRACKING DEVICE, clipped onto the corner of a single \$100 bill.

OUTSIDE on the street, where Gerick sits alone in his unmarked police car, chuffing on a cigarette – eyeing the seedy motel. He slowly gets out, flicks the cigarette away, and makes his way up to the motel stairwell... CUT TO:

LATER THAT NIGHT, Terius' G-RIDE pulls into an undercover car park... The beefy driver gets out and opens the door for Terius, who gets out and scans the empty carpark... "Yo!" When Gerick emerges from the shadows behind a concrete pylon, Terius storms over to him. Gerick puts his hand on his weapon and tells him to keep his distance - his eyes never leaving Terius' bodyguard - who also has his hand stuffed into his bulging jacket. "What the fuck is going on, man. Where's our money?" Gerick tells him to relax. "Relax? LAPD just found the remains of my men. I wanna know who did this, and I want them dead." "Wake the fuck up you moron, who do you think did it? You gang-bangers are so fucking thick. No wonder you spend more time in, than out. Come here, I wanna show you something."

Gerick casually walks around to the TRUNK of his car and flips it open... Terius looks at his bodyguard and then follows... Ariel is gagged and bound inside the trunk, squirming, muffled screams. She goes to sit up and Gerick cold-cocks her in the jaw – knocks her out. Gerick opens the back seat of his car and tosses a bag full of cash at Terius. "Every cop in LA is looking for this kid, but we can't afford to let any of them find him before we do." Gerick pulls Ariel's CELL from his jacket and also tosses it to Terius. "All we need is to do is send him a text, convince him to meet us somewhere – and bingo!" Terius glances down at the cell's screen which shows Jake's number, he smiles, and then looks back up at Gerick...

ACT THREE

Somewhere UNDERNEATH A BRIDGE, alongside a desolate LA stormwater drain, Jake lays in the back-seat of his Mustang, shivering, sweating, veins bulging in a fever-like state. He clasps the side of his skull, head throbbing again. "Why is this happening to me?" We notice he now looks...different. Jake's CELL BEEPS, he pulls it out of his jacket and checks the message – whatever it says, it's enough to jolt him upright. His POV on cell screen: "I need to speak with you. Domino @ 11pm tonight. Ariel x" Jake is reeling from the message, when several homeless CRACKHEADS wander over, mesmerized by his sweet car. One of them cracks his knuckles, the other pulls a switchblade... "Yo, you lost or something." Jake already knows this is not going to end well...for them.

He gets out of the car, staggers onto his feet, head still throbbing. "Whoa, the fuck is with your eyes, man?" Jake's eyes are flickering pale white, he looks like he's going blind, although it's far from it. "I don't want any trouble, guys. I'm just trying to sleep off a hangover." "Yeah, well, you gotta pay tax if you wanna sleep here, fool."

One of the crackheads flicks open his switchblade, and LUNGES for Jake – who manages to side-step the attack, but drops to his knees in pain, (we've established that every time Jake

uses these powers, it's extremely painful.) The crackheads pile on top of him, beating and kicking him. The one with the switchblade moves in for a final blow – but suddenly - Jake begins to SCREAM with an inhuman shrill... The crackheads cover their ears in pain, and begin to levitate off the ground.... BOOOOOOOM – A HUGE BURST OF BLUE ENERGY, as Jake heaves the attackers off of him. The energy blast had so much force, the Mustang tumbles down the concrete slope, turning it into a buckled heap.

Two COPS in a patrol car hear the explosion and spot the ripple of energy emanating from underneath a distant stormwater drain. The cruiser cuts across lanes and heads out towards it.

Jake surveys the damage he's just done – it total shock. The crackheads have been blown to the other side of the drain – all are dead. He looks down at his trembling, glowing hands, totally freaked out. Whatever this power is, it's causing him to lose his mind. All he can think about is getting to Ariel. For some reason whenever he's with her, he feels normal. He snaps his gaze to the bridge above, he can hear a distant SIREN approaching... Jake takes off...

IN THE DOMINO CARPARK, Gerick heaves Ariel out of his trunk, and walks her to the security door. “What's the code to get in?” She taps the keyboard and the door unlocks...

DAWN is starting to break over DOWNTOWN, as Jake makes his way to Domino. The streets are eerily quiet. Jake somehow causes the security cameras to switch off as he punches the code into the keypad and enters the main door. It's still dark INSIDE as he makes his way up to his office floor... “Ariel?” Another text message beeps on his phone – “Top floor.” Jake cracks open the fire escape door and makes his way upstairs...

TO THE TOP LEVEL, where Domino's executives work. It's an expansive loft space, with panoramic views of the city. Jake can sense danger, something is not right. “Easy there, kid.” Jake spins to see Gerick holding a handgun to Ariel's temple. Sobs escape her bruised lips. “Who are you?” Gerick smiles, “I'm the cop that's been on your ass since you started killing people. I'm not sure how you're doing it, but I can tell you, every cop in the city is on their way here to break off a piece of your ass. And you know what? I'm not going to give them the luxury. It'll be a few minutes before they arrive up here, so we're gonna play a little game of, *do what the fuck I say or she dies.*” Jake edges towards them, Gerick tightens his grip. “What do you want with her?” Gerick starts to back up against an office doorway... Ariel sobs harder now. Jake is confused, but his anger is rising. “I want you to lie down and kiss the carpet.”

Jake turns to see an ARMY OF POLICE CARS and SWAT gathering outside below – sirens blaring - BANG! Gerick shoots Jake – sending him flying out a window... Glass shatters. Ariel screams. Gerick pushes her towards the gaping window, “time to take a little trip with your boyfriend.” Suddenly SPOTLIGHTS appear as a POLICE CHOPPER hovers outside, illuminating Jake as he clings to the window seal. Gerick flashes the badge around his neck to the pilot, and continues on – Ariel screaming as he rushes her towards the window... “Struggling only makes my case sound better. You jumped on your own accord.” Close on

Ariel, as we hear a thought inside her head: “Get down!” Ariel immediately elbows Gerick, drops to the floor and skitters away – and before Gerick can react – THE CHOPPER COMES FLYING TOWARDS HIM AND EXPLODES INTO A MASSIVE FIREBALL... Jake uses his powers to fling Gerick out the window and into the chopper – Gerick becomes a human torch, SCREAMING as he tumbles to the street below -

Down on the STREET, officers and SWAT snap the attention when they see hear the explosion and see a GIANT FIREBALL hurling towards them – landing on a row of patrol cars, causing another huge explosion – Gerick follows half a second later – KA-BOOOOM!

Ariel rushes to the window seal and helps pull Jake back inside... They collapse into a heap. Jake examines his shoulder – a clean shot, went right through tissue. He winces as Ariel hugs him, sobbing heavily. “How did you do that?” “I don’t know. Ever since the operation, I can manipulate solid matter. I can see thoughts and information, but it hurts me to do it.” Ariel kisses him again. “I’m so sorry; I shouldn’t have left you that day. I was just so scared. I thought you were going to die, and I couldn’t live with myself.” Jake assures her, nothing was her fault. He asks who Gerick was, “he was a dirty cop who must have been working with Terius.” Ariel continues to tell him how she stole drug money from Sweets’ apartment, and fled the neighbourhood, but the money had some sort of tracking device attached to it, and he found her. Luckily she managed to get her parents safely out of town before she was kidnapped. Jake now understands, but they must move quickly, those cops will be up here any minute. ON A SPEAKER PHONE down below, the COPS order them both to surrender. Ariel wants to flee the city with him. Jake knows an outside fire escape they can use, but they can only access it via the roof. Ariel notices Jake’s eyes, and she can feel the hairs on her arm starting to rise – it’s like there’s an electro-magnetic energy around him. They both take off...

TO THE ROOFTOP of Domino, where the first thing that strikes us is the breath-taking view of LA- and the first rays of SUN are starting to filter through the early morning HAZE. Holding hands, Jake and Ariel weave around the positioned sat-dishes and TV antennas, making their way to the fire escape. Jake looks out to see incoming TV choppers approaching across the Los Angeles horizon... Suddenly, out of nowhere, Terius appears from behind an air-vent, automatic assault rifle pointed directly at Jake. Ariel backs away with her hands up... Terius tells her to get to her knees. “Well, well, looks like it’s gonna be third time lucky with you Jake.” Ariel begs him to put the gun down, “shut the fuck up, bitch! You think you can steal from me?” Terius raises his rifle, and before he can fire off a shot, Jake flings Terius up in the air... Jake puts one hand out – blue power sizzling between his fingers - Terius begins to scream as he is torn apart from a molecular level... It’s excruciating to watch, but Jake has finally killed the man who has caused so much ruin and pain in his life. BANG! Jake’s eyes go wide – he drops to his knees. Terius’ broken corpse drops to the ground with a sickening crunch. A police sniper has shot Jake from a hovering chopper. Jake is wounded badly, with blood streaming from his abdomen. Ariel rushes towards him, but is told to freeze and get to her knees. She obeys, as SWAT members pour out a fire escape door... Sweeping the roof.

Cuffed and shoved to the floor, Ariel cries as watches Jake dies... “ROBOT BOY” plays while Jake’s glowing eyes begin to dim, but his stare never leaves her... DISSOLVE TO:

Ariel being interviewed by police, as she explains everything... As they walk her out of an interview room, she notices a small group of cops have gathered around a mounted flatscreen TV, watching the BREAKING NEWS: *the body of a suspect who was shot by police this morning, during an incident at a downtown office block, has disappeared from the LA county morgue.* Ariel’s stunned expression gives way to a grin, and a tear trickles down her cheek...

TAKING US TO DARKNESS.

Fading us back in on, JAKE’S PARENTS HOME, where his mother and father sit at the kitchen table having breakfast. Photos of Jake and Ty adorn the small kitchen bench. Suddenly there’s a loud KNOCK at the front door. Phil gets up and opens it, only to find TWO GOVERNMENT AGENTS standing there. “Can I help you, folks?” “Mr. West, my name is Agent Ruther’s, and this is Agent Banks. We’re from a special branch of the NSA. Have you had any contact with your missing son?” Off Phil’s confused look, we CUT TO:

NEW YORK CITY... And as we weave through the peak hour of TIMES SQUARE, we find Ariel nestled among the hordes of early morning commuters. We can tell some time has passed, as Ariel looks refreshed and radiantly beautiful. Her phone vibrates with a message; she pulls it out of her jacket and checks the screen... Caller unknown... The text message says: “LOOK UP!” Ariel looks up, and on EVERY VIDEO SCREEN IN TIMES SQUARE: THEIR DATE PHOTO APPEARS. Jake and Ariel at Santa Monica pier, smiling, cheek to cheek. Ariel stops walking, and stares in amazement... She begins to cry as we CUT TO:

The same ELDERLY LADY who was mugged earlier, as she carefully locks her front door, and gingerly makes her way out the front gate onto the street. Out of nowhere, the same MUGGER zeroes in on her, and is about to snatch her handbag when he is flung into the side window of a parked car – CRUNCH! The mugger collapses into a heap on the curb. Bleeding from his forehead, he wearily looks up:

THE SILOHUEETTE OF JAKE TOWERS OVER HIM, THE MORNING SUN BEAMING FROM BEHIND, MAKING HIM APPEAR GOD-LIKE. As Jake moves closer to the camera we can see he’s wearing his Lakers jacket, and we catch a quick glimpse of his face – almost too quick to make out any detail, but we can see his EYES are now GLOWING COMPLETELY WHITE – linger for a second more, before we SMASH TO BLACK:

A new hero has been reborn.