

HALCYON

"Pilot"

Written by

Amanda Toyne

Seven Summits // 310-550-6777
Abrams Artists Agency/310-859-0625

OPEN on the honeycomb structure of a complex, sloppily handwritten molecular formula.

It expands across a white wall as we INCH BACK --

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (V.O.)
We may believe we have control over
our behaviors, that we have a
will... a choice...

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

PULLING FURTHER BACK the connective design of the formula expands and spreads. Erratic mathematical calculations are written, crossed out, and made again in the spaces in between.

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (V.O.)
But it is suffering that is the
wicked master that will determine
the direction of our lives...

The formula's chaotic nature is the product of genius, or madness, or perhaps a mix of both.

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (V.O.)
As you grow, each and every
negative root experience, in
combination with genetic
predispositions for biological
errors in the mind, create a master
programing.

PULLING FURTHER BACK, the gray of a carpeted floor and the angle of the walls gives dimension to the room as the formula continues to expand across both sides.

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (V.O.)
This programing, born of suffering,
takes control of the subconscious
and begins to mold permanent neural
patterns in the circuitry of the
brain.

The back of an expensive, sleek, black leather sofa comes into view, then the mod design of a black coffee table.

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (V.O.)
These patterns will control our
behaviors, our choices, our needs,
for the remainder of our lives...

INCHING BACK to take in more of the room, A TV SCREEN comes into frame, embedded into the wall, the formula curves around it.

ON SCREEN: DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (50s), his presence as tall and demanding as his stature, speaks to an audience on a TED like stage. The slight curve of his smirking mouth reveals his arrogance.

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER
(on screen)
But I believe these patterns can be
undone. Reversed. That we can make
our minds pure and untarnished once
more. That we can free ourselves
once and for all from our
suffering...

PULLING FURTHER BACK reveals a sleek desk. Underneath the desk, in stark contrast to the flatly colored room, a DARK RED BLOOD STAIN soaks the carpet.

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (CONT'D)
(on screen)
As the scientific community begins
to comprehend and unravel the
complexity of the mind, the
mysteries of our consciousness, its
aura of unknown and unknowable
forces becomes understood.

The ever-growing formula looms on all three walls, seeming to trap us in the middle of its chaotic stream.

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (CONT'D)
(on screen)
Our mystical emotional life can now
be distilled into quantifiable
physiological and biological
processes.

PULLING FURTHER BACK, A BLINKING SCREEN built into the surface of the desk is spotted with blood.

SHINY BLACK SHOES appear behind the desk, attached to perfectly TAILORED BLACK TROUSERS.

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (CONT'D)
And with these breakthroughs of
understanding, it soon will be
possible to reverse the patterns
our suffering has created, and take
back control of our minds.

A GREY METAL GUN sits on the ground where it has fallen from a BLOOD SPOTTED hand.

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (CONT'D)
(on screen)
I believe soon... We may be able to
cure the mind of its suffering.

A BODY comes fully into view... Then the face... We recognize it as none other than the man on the screen, DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER himself, dead of a self-inflicted gun shot wound to the head.

DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER (CONT'D)
 (on screen)
 That we are on the verge of a
 bright and joyous future.

As the audience CLAPS on screen, the design of the formula expands and connects on the fourth wall of the room behind Fischer's body, covering the entirety of the room, as if it has swallowed him whole.

EXT. HIGH RISE BALCONY - GENNA'S CONDO - NIGHT

CLOSE UP on a NEUROGEN LABS EMPLOYEE ID BADGE. The ID picture is a darkly beautiful woman with messy hair and a false smile. The name is Genevieve Lee-Fuentes.

White powder splashes across her face. Followed by a male nose snorting it up.

GENNA LEE (Late 30s), slightly older now than her ID picture, wears a sexy dress that exposes her legs. Across from her a COLLEGE BOY snorts powder off of the ID. His name doesn't matter, she'll never see him again.

GENNA
 Anyway, for Kierkegaard faith is
 the highest virtue precisely
 because it is objectively
 uncertain, because personal growth
 depends on uncertainty and risk.

College Boy nods as if he's into it.

COLLEGE BOY
 Right on.

Genna leans back, taking in College Boy in a moment of self disgust. She pours a glass of fresh wine and walks over to the edge of the balcony.

GENNA
 How tall do you think this building
 is?

College Boy shrugs. She swings her legs over the edge to sit on the thin railing. Feels the wind on her face as she looks out into the dark night.

College Boy rises nervously.

COLLEGE BOY

Hey. Come on. Don't prank like that.

Genna stares down into the void.

GENNA

Twenty stories... Floor to ceiling in this place is twelve point five feet...

Does the math in her head.

GENNA (CONT'D)

That's two hundred and fifty feet...

She stares down, no longer talking to him -

GENNA (CONT'D)

Only three point nine six seconds of free fall. That's all. Three point nine six seconds.

Leaning forward --

COLLEGE BOY

(getting nervous)

I'm serious. Come off. Quit playing.

Genna turns, noticing him again.

GENNA

OK College Boy, let's play another game then.

She holds her wine glass out over the edge of the building.

GENNA (CONT'D)

If I were to drop this glass at the same time I jumped, what would reach the ground first?

College Boy starts to pace.

COLLEGE BOY

I can't handle this right now.

GENNA

Come on... answer... Three...

COLLEGE BOY

You're freaking me out!

GENNA

Two...

COLLEGE BOY

You! You would!

She spins around, places her feet back on the rooftop.

GENNA

You're wrong... Mass does not affect gravitational pull; theoretically, all things fall at the same rate, regardless of how heavy they are.

Genna takes a long pull from her wine. Stands and walks seductively toward him.

College Boy LAUGHS awkwardly to release the tension. Takes another snort off the Lab ID.

COLLEGE BOY

Man... The hottest ones are always the most crazy... How did I even get here?

Genna saunters over to him -

GENNA

I'll tell you how you got here...

She circles him -

GENNA (CONT'D)

You walked into a bar that had thirteen women in it. Nine of which were not wearing a wedding ring...

Rubs her hands over his chest, feeling his young muscles.

GENNA (CONT'D)

You immediately decreased that number down to six by going up to a table full of women and making a fool of yourself...

Pushes him back against the chair.

GENNA (CONT'D)

Then you bought drinks for the only two women who smiled when you approached, open to your advances...

She places her exposed sculpted leg next to him.

GENNA (CONT'D)

You chose me over my colleague Linda because I winked at you when you sat down...

He tries to touch her leg, but she catches his hand, glides it gracefully across her skin.

GENNA (CONT'D)

Touched your arm as you spoke....

Genna straddles him.

GENNA (CONT'D)

Your goal was to get laid, and your emotional subconscious added up all that data to make you feel most attracted to the person with the highest probability of fucking your brains out.

She leans in and kisses him aggressively.

GENNA (CONT'D)

Your subconscious is smart. Linda doesn't fuck without dinner first.

COLLEGE BOY

Whoa.

As they begin to tear each other's clothes off -

INT. GENNA'S CONDO - BEDROOM - DAWN

Genna watches the sun rise from an ultramodern bed, unable to sleep, while nude College Boy SNORES in bed next to her. She looks over at him, disgusted.

Rises, and walks down the hall --

INT. GENNA'S CONDO - HALL - CONTINUOUS

Genna stands in front of a door at the end of the hallway. She places her hand on the knob, hesitating. Takes a deep breath and enters the room.

INT. GENNA'S CONDO - KAILEY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is painted pink and decorated for a young girl. A WALL HANGING tells us that girl's name is Kailey.

Genna scans the room, lays down on the bed. She grabs one of the stuffed animals arranged perfectly by the pillows, an ORANGE LION, and hugs it tightly into her chest as she holds her pain inside. Closes her eyes.

COLLEGE BOY (O.S.)

You have a kid?

Genna opens her eyes, doesn't answer. Sits up.

College Boy holds out her lit up CELL PHONE.

COLLEGE BOY (CONT'D)
They called like four times so I
answered. Dude said it was urgent.

Genna stands, takes the phone from him.

GENNA
Hello?

She listens to the voice on the phone, her face twisting into concern. Whatever news is being delivered to her, it passes through in a wave of shock.

GENNA (CONT'D)
I don't understand... Yes. Of
course... I'll be there as soon as
I can.

Genna hangs up, the phone slipping from her hand.

College Boy walks over and places a reassuring hand on her shoulder.

COLLEGE BOY
Everything OK?

GENNA
(whispers)
Get out.

COLLEGE BOY
Do you need...

Genna's voice rises sharply --

GENNA
Get out! Get out! Get out!

College Boy backs out of the room, frightened.

GENNA (CONT'D)
Get out of my house!

Genna remains on the bed, devastated.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - MORNING

Towering EVERGREENS, clinging to the morning mist, line both sides of a thin mountain road. Genna's sleek LUXURY SEDAN rounds the corner.

EXT. NEUROGEN LABS - MORNING

The Neurogen Labs Building looms in the distance, surrounded by a high-tech security fence. Opaque, metallic and impenetrable, the mod designed, retrofuturistic building is in stark contrast to the stunning natural landscape that surrounds it.

A POLICE CRUISER and an AMBULANCE are parked beyond the fence in front of the building.

INT. GENNA'S LUXURY SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

Genna, dressed in black, pulls up to the security gate, her window down. Her face puffy and tired from lack of sleep and swell of emotions.

A SECURITY GUARD leans in with surprise.

SECURITY GUARD

Mrs. Fuentes? Wow. Long time. What are you doing here?

GENNA

It's Ms. Lee. Just Ms. Lee now. Martin called me.

The Security Guard leans in conspiratorially --

SECURITY GUARD

Did he tell you what's going on?

Genna watches through the gate as TWO EMTS emerge from the building, rolling a covered stretcher out. They place it into the back of the ambulance. Genna swallows her emotions, turning away from the scene.

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - MAIN LOBBY - MORNING

Genna's boots create a HOLLOW CLICK as she enters the building.

The lobby is inordinately designed. Meant to project an image of the future, it only succeeds in making one feel uncomfortable and alone.

MARTIN FISCHER (30s), a man hidden under walls of well crafted perception, leans with his back to Genna against a grey stone circular reception desk.

GENNA

I'm so sorry Martin.

He turns to face her. They don't embrace. Martin scans the space, surveying his new kingdom.

MARTIN

Don't be. Even my father's death
was selfish.

He shakes his head, conflicted.

GENNA

Of everyone you could have called,
why did you call me? We both know
I'm not the shoulder you want to
cry on.

He studies her, picks his words carefully.

MARTIN

I thought maybe you could help me
understand why.

GENNA

Your father was a textbook
narcissist. Suicide doesn't tend to
be their thing. I don't think we'll
ever really understand why... Did
he leave a note or...?

Martin laughs dryly.

MARTIN

You could say he left a note... He
left one hell of a note...

He gestures for Genna to follow him, they head down the hall -

**INT. NEUROGEN LABS - DR. ALEXANDER FISCHER'S OFFICE -
CONTINUOUS**

Moving again across the chaotic formula and equations on the
wall.

Genna steps into the office, she inhales sharply as she takes
in the room Dr. Fischer lost his mind in.

While the body has been removed, the blood stains remain.
Genna turns away from the mess, circles to take in the
totality of the formula.

GENNA

What is it?

She begins to "read" the formula, following it with her
finger.

MARTIN

The police called it meaningless. A
product of psychosis...

Genna's eyes light up as she continues to follow the thread of the formula, recognizing its structure.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
But we both know my father better than that, don't we. Nothing he ever did was without meaning.

GENNA
It's stunning.

She continues to follow the formula, her excitement building.

GENNA (CONT'D)
It's hard to follow all of it, but see this...

She points to a unique, circular shaped cluster.

GENNA (CONT'D)
With repetition here...

Genna moves through the room, pointing to the same structure as it repeats multiple times throughout the formula.

GENNA (CONT'D)
Here... And here... That's the molecular foundation of the nano-neural technology I developed for him.

MARTIN
I believe he had been working on something... similar. That's why I called you.

Genna shakes her head in wonder.

GENNA
Could this be real?

MARTIN
Could be his last gift to the world...

Genna turns to Martin with suspicion.

GENNA
You mean your last chance to profit from his genius.

MARTIN
What better way to honor his flawless legacy?

GENNA

You may think the anger you hold for your father overshadows your grief, but ignored grief becomes a black hole that will suck the rest of you inside it.

She glances down at blood stains on the carpet, holds back an extreme wave of emotions.

GENNA (CONT'D)

Trust me. I know... I can't help you Martin. I'm sorry.

She turns to leave.

MARTIN

You're not curious? What this could be?

GENNA

I put Alexander and this work behind me a long time ago. I'd like it to stay there.

MARTIN

Wait. There's more...

GENNA

Martin... really... I...

MARTIN

My father would never have taken his own life unless something big pushed him to do it.

He presses a button on a control screen built into the desk. The center screen in the office lights up --

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I think this is what pushed him...

ON SCREEN: Security cameras divide the screen into four parts, each overlooking a sterile room.

Each room holds a SINGLE PATIENT dressed entirely in clean linens, and exercising. While they are clearly in separate spaces, the patients move entirely in sync. A series of jumping jacks. Then sit ups. Then repeated.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Whatever this formula is... Based on your work... I think he built it... And I think he tested it on them.

Genna takes in the patients with concern.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Do you still want to walk away?

Martin moves up behind her with a knowing smirk.

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - HALCYON WING - HALLWAY - DAY

A BRIGHT WHITE DOOR slides open unmasking a long, sterile hallway behind it. At the end of the hallway a green, manicured garden lays before them.

GENNA
I find it hard to believe Alexander would risk everything by experimenting on people.

MARTIN
Over the last several months, he was becoming increasingly grandiose. Secretive. I could tell he was hiding something big from me... But this...

They come to the end of the hallway, stepping into --

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - HALCYON WING - DAY

A vast atrium, natural light illuminating a dense garden centered in the sterile white space.

MARTIN
...I never expected.

On the left, four small CELL-LIKE ROOMS look out into the gardens through long, oval shaped GLASS DOORS.

In the first cell, sitting on a bed in the center of the uncomfortably bright space is an older African-American man, 'FATHER' SAMUEL GREY (60s). He looks up from the Bible he's reading, noticing Genna and Martin. He rises.

SAMUEL
Are you with Dr. Fischer?

Genna looks him over with sympathetic eyes --

GENNA
No. It's over... Whatever he's done to you here it's over now.

Two more PATIENTS step forward to the front of their cells --

ANNA PIERCE (20s), a clean, luminous blond with sparkling eyes --

ANNA

Thank God. We knew someone would come.

And PARKER HERNANDEZ (18), growing into his dark handsome, with clean, shoulder-length hair pulled back away from his face.

PARKER

Please. Get us out.

Something feels off about these three. While they say the right thing, their emotional reactions do not match the situation. It creates an ominous feeling.

GENNA

How long has he kept you here?

SAMUEL

We've lost track. The days have blended.

Genna begins to scan the doors, looking for a way to release them.

GENNA

We're gonna get you out. Don't worry. Dr. Fischer can't hurt you anymore. We're here to help.

ANNA

No. No, don't misunderstand. Dr. Fischer did not hurt us. He helped us.

PARKER

But we're ready to leave. We don't want to stay in here anymore.

GENNA

Don't worry, you're all going home, I promise.

Martin stands unmoved, studying them with wordless fascination.

GENNA (CONT'D)

Martin! How do you open these?

Martin snaps from his trance --

MARTIN

I don't know. I've never been in this area of the lab before.

Samuel points to a screen embedded in the wall.

SAMUEL
There's a control panel.

Genna rushes for it --

MARTIN
Wait!

He grabs Genna harshly, pulling her back --

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Let's just think about this for a moment. We don't know what we're dealing with... What my father did...

GENNA
What your father did was criminal...

MARTIN
I just think we should assess the situation first...

SOPHIE (O.S.)
Please. Let us out.

Genna turns to look at the forth cell where the voice came from --

SOPHIE (9), a porcelain doll in living form, now stands with her palm pressed against the glass. She exudes the same intoxicating peace as the others through calm, dark eyes.

Genna gasps. She moves to the cell, presses her hand against Sophie's on the glass, looking into her eyes.

GENNA
What's your name sweetheart?

SOPHIE
Sophie.

GENNA
What a brave girl you are Sophie... I'm going to get you out of here as soon as I can... I promise.

Genna stands and faces Martin -

GENNA (CONT'D)

What we're dealing with are four *victims*, who have been illegally and unethically experimented on by a mad man.

She pushes past him.

GENNA (CONT'D)

Get out of my way.

Genna touches the control panel, the screen lights up --

CONTROL PANEL COMPUTER

Unauthorized fingerprint detected.
System locked.

GENNA

Shit. Martin, can you override this?

MARTIN

I told you, I can't. I think only my father had access.

GENNA

Fine. I'll figure it out myself.

Genna turns back to the control panel. Touches it again.

CONTROL PANEL COMPUTER

Unauthorized fingerprint detected.
Emergency system engaging.

A RED BOX appears on the screen. It begins counting down from ten.

CONTROL PANEL COMPUTER (CONT'D)

Please enter emergency code to override.

GENNA

Shit! What does this mean?

MARTIN

I think it means you broke it.

GENNA

What could the code be?

MARTIN

I keep telling you, I don't know.

GENNA

Well take a guess!

Genna sighs in frustration. Starts examining the construction of the cell doors. The glass is thick and impenetrable.

GENNA (CONT'D)

There has to be another way.

The numbers tick down on the screen -- 4 -- 3 -- 2 -- 1.

At ZERO an ALARM begins to sound. The bright, intense lighting of the room shifts to an angry red.

A HUMMING comes from the ceilings of the glass cells. Tiny, round white balls emerges down from an opening in each cell.

The four patients look up as they descends.

GENNA (CONT'D)

(panic building)

What the hell is happening?

Two holes open up on both sides of the balls and a HISSING SOUND begins.

The Halcyon Patients remain calm, strangely unmoved by the concerning situation.

Then slowly, they begin to choke.

Genna gasps at the realization -

GENNA (CONT'D)

It's some kind of gas...

And now even Martin looks concerned.

GENNA (CONT'D)

It's killing them!

As if a switch has been turned on, the Halcyon patients all shift suddenly, and despite their struggles to breathe, they begin to move with an intense rush of adrenalin --

In sync, they pick up the MODERN DESIGNED chairs in the cell, they begin to SLAM them against the glass door with a near impossible amount of force and strength. As if every cell in their bodies has turned on survival mode.

The glass begins to spider web, but does not break.

In the last cell, Sophie is the only one who's child strength is still not enough force to crack the glass.

Genna launches forward, her movements a more natural panicked reaction --

She grabs a SHARP STONE MODERN SCULPTURE placed within the garden and begins to SLAM it against the glass of Sophie's cell from the outside, working to increase pressure. The glass continues to hold strong.

The DULL HISS of gas leaking into the cells begins to slow their movements, unnatural strength depleting.

Genna desperately SLAMS Sophie's cell window harder as Sophie slumps to the ground, choking on the toxic air.

And then as suddenly as it started, the red lights switch back to bright white.

CONTROL PANEL COMPUTER
Emergency System Override.

Genna turns to see Martin standing by the control panel.

CONTROL PANEL COMPUTER (CONT'D)
Cell doors opening.

Loathing doesn't even begin to describe the look Genna gives him.

The cracked glass doors slide open and the Patient's tumble out, taking huge gulps of sweet oxygen.

Genna pulls a GASPING Sophie out of the cell, holding her as she recovers.

After a moment, the FOUNDING FOUR, as they will one day be called, push themselves up to their feet and stand before Martin and Genna, serenity eerily returning easily to their faces.

EXT. NEUROGEN LABS - DAY

Three cars enter through the security gates - A POLICE CRUISER, AN AGING PICKUP TRUCK, and A BEAT UP SEDAN.

GENNA (V.O.)
They all say the same thing....

Looking down on the scene, a compact African American man, ISSAC GREY (Mid 30s) emerges from the Police Cruiser. He's still in his police blues.

GENNA (V.O.)
They were checked into Lewiston
Psychiatric Hospital...

Issac approaches Samuel with a formal handshake, to his surprise, his father pulls him in for a hug instead.

GENNA (V.O.)
That Dr. Fischer was their
psychiatrist.

The sedan is barely in park when a long unshaven man, dressed in camo pants and a stained hoodie, HARRISON PIERCE (late 20s), rockets out.

MARTIN (V.O.)
But he hasn't done patient therapy
in almost three decades...

A beer can tumbles to the ground at Harrison's feet, but he barely notices his attention focused only on --

Anna. Her smile lights her up several more watts. Harrison scoops her into his arms with emotional abandonment.

GENNA (V.O.)
I think he was searching for the
right subjects...

SHARON HERNANDEZ (40), too much makeup, aged beyond her years, rolls down the window of the dented, rusted Pick Up Truck and flicks her cigarette with an exhale of smoke. She gestures for Parker to come, without even exiting the car. A wide grin remains plastered on Parker's face as he climbs into the passenger side door.

MARTIN (V.O.)
What about the child?

Sophie waves goodbye as the cars begin to pull out of the parking lot.

GENNA (V.O.)
Sophie...

The Halcyon Patients all exchange one final look as the cars pull toward the main gates.

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Genna watches Sophie from her high vantage point in the second floor window of the Neurogen Building.

GENNA
She was a ward of the state...
She says Alexander adopted her.

MARTIN
Jesus. The old man really lost his
mind... We have to handle this
quietly Genna... You understand?

Martin steps up beside her in the window to watch the cars roll past security onto the road.

GENNA

Personally I would like to see Neurogen burn to the ground over this...

She turns to face Martin with contempt.

GENNA (CONT'D)

And watch you burn with it for what you just pulled in there.

MARTIN

It was a lucky guess... I saved their lives!

Genna expels a bitter laugh.

GENNA

Well you get something better than a medal for your honorable, heroic efforts... Quite unbelievably, none of them want to press charges. Or sue. They say they're happy. That Dr. Fischer cured them... That he's given them a gift.

MARTIN

And what do you think?

GENNA

I think Alexander violated every ethical, legal, and just fucking human decency code with this...

Genna watches Sophie stand still at the building entrance, a perfect, poised child.

GENNA (CONT'D)

All of them showed no fear response... No panic... Only increased aggression in the face death...

She turns to face Martin -

GENNA (CONT'D)

You don't think that's incredibly odd... Perhaps dangerous.

MARTIN

Work with me then. Figure out what Halcyon does...

Genna sighs, turning to face him.

GENNA

I want full access to Neurogen's research. No bullshit Martin. Whatever I ask for, you give it to me.

MARTIN

Anything. We'll pay you whatever you need.

GENNA

Don't.

Genna turns back to the window, watching as a SECURITY GUARD takes Sophie's hand and walks her back into the building.

GENNA (CONT'D)

I'm doing it because I won't be able to sleep...

Martin starts to open his mouth --

GENNA (CONT'D)

And yes. Before you say it, a part of me is also curious if my theories work...

MARTIN

Neurogen could be yours... If you crack this... We could make a lot of money together.

GENNA

Martin, you've always tried to become your father by mimicking his worst traits. But maybe you could be a greater man than him if you find some traits of your own.

Genna turns and walks away from him.

GENNA (CONT'D)

And don't worry about Sophie. She's coming with me.

MARTIN

(yelling after her)

The sooner you can get started on this...

Genna flips him off, but doesn't turn around as she disappears down the hall. Martin watches her go, his neutral expression difficult to read.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - DAY

Issac glances over at Samuel's relaxed, serene state.

ISSAC
You look good Pop. That place must
have done you good.

SAMUEL
Feel better than ever.

ISSAC
Looks it, yeah...

Issac hesitates --

ISSAC (CONT'D)
Listen... I'm sorry I didn't come
to see you... You know after Ma's
wake... It was just... If I had
known how you were struggling, I
would have come...

Issac struggles to find the words, not a man comfortable with
his emotions.

ISSAC (CONT'D)
It wasn't... It's just that we all
have our own way of grieving. You
know?

SAMUEL
Grief is an illusion. We are not
dependant on the presence of
another.

Issac shoots him a strange look. Samuel continues to smile.
Holds up the bible in his lap.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
Do you believe the words in here as
truth?

ISSAC
Come on. Don't start with that. I'm
trying to have a nice conversation
here.

SAMUEL
So they do not give you comfort?

ISSAC
It's never gonna change Pop... Can
we just talk about the weather or
something normal...

SAMUEL

Yes... the weather... It's
certainly a beautiful day.

Samuel's expressionless eyes take in the green landscape passing around him.

INT. GENNA'S CONDO - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Genna pours a whiskey over ice. She sits down at the kitchen island. Her laptop sits open in front of her.

She takes a sip from her glass and opens a folder marked - HALCYON. Inside the folder are several more labeled as -- SAMUEL GREY, ANNA PIERCE, PARKER HERNANDEZ. Strangely, there is no folder for Sophie.

Genna clicks on the Anna folder and plays the first video --

ON SCREEN:

Anna lays back in a reclined medical chair, a translucent, brightly wired, SILICON CAP sits on her head. She is a shell of the woman we met earlier; waif-like, skin pallid, and sleep deprived.

Dr. Fischer looms over her, he places a syringe filled with a BRIGHT BLUE LIQUID at the base of Anna's skull.

DR. FISCHER

This will be just a little pinch.

Anna flinches as Dr. Fischer injects the solution. Anna's eyes flicker nervously. Her voice here is soft, as if she's afraid to hear herself speak.

ANNA

That's all it's gonna hurt, right?

Dr. Fischer adjusts the cap slightly.

DR. FISCHER

That's it. Just try and relax.

A screen beside Anna projects a colored visual image of her brain patterns. Certain colors rise and fall and rise again. A medical work of art.

Dr. Fischer settles in front of the brain maps.

DR. FISCHER (CONT'D)

OK. We're ready to begin.

Anna closes her eyes. Breathes nervously.

DR. FISCHER (CONT'D)
Please start by recounting the
events of the day of the trauma.

The colors on the brain map SPIKE sharply, flashing bright.

ANNA
I can't. I don't remember.

Dr. Fischer turns to Anna, grabbing her hand in a soothing
gesture.

DR. FISCHER
Anna. We talked about this. I can
help you. I can make it better, but
you have to trust me. Do you trust
me?

Anna nods yes with scared eyes.

DR. FISCHER (CONT'D)
Good. Please, recall the memory.

Anna takes a deep breath, her face twitches in pain. Bursts
of colors shoot through the Brain Map.

ANNA
I was coming from the grocery
store... I didn't have enough to
cover everything... Had to hand
back the second case of beer... Was
so embarrassing.

DR. FISCHER
Just the incident Anna. The trauma.

Anna begins to breathe rapidly, panic building. Dr. Fischer
studies Anna's brain map with fascination. Anna's voice is
barely a whisper as she begins to recall --

ANNA
I parked in front of the house...
on the street... It was darker than
usual. I don't know why, it just
felt darker. You know. Like a storm
was coming in...

Anna's haunted eyes flicker as if she's watching the memory.

ANNA (CONT'D)
I felt him. Before I could see
him... Before he even touched me. I
could feel him behind me. Thought
maybe it was Harrison. When I
turned, he grabbed me by the
throat...

Anna's fingers brush up against a spot on her hollow neck.

IN GENNA'S APARTMENT: A DOOR BUZZES. It pulls Genna out of the video. She pauses it on Anna's pained face, studying the broken woman in the video so unlike the luminescent Anna at Neurogen.

Genna takes long pull of her whiskey and stands --

INT. GENNA'S CONDO - FRONT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Opening the door to ANDER FUENTES (Late 30s), a kind-faced intellectual who designs himself to seem more casual than he really is. Genna's mouth turns up in a restrained smile.

GENNA
I'm fine. Thanks for stopping by.

ANDER
You're not. You're suppressing.

GENNA
I'm processing. You could have at least given me a day to examine my feelings before you came by to dig them out of my head.

Ander pushes past her into the condo. Knows she'll let him.

ANDER
We both know you shouldn't be alone...
(touch of disdain)
I know how important Alexander was to you.

Genna closes the door behind him.

GENNA
Don't do that. It's disrespectful. He wasn't the reason our marriage ended.

ANDER
I know. You're right. I did come here out of concern. Can I start over?

GENNA
Please.

ANDER
I'm sorry for your loss. He was a great man.

GENNA

He was an asshole, but his work
changed the world and I'm sorry
he's gone.

Ander picks up Genna's glass of whiskey, takes a sip. Makes a
face.

ANDER

I thought you had a taste for the
good stuff.

GENNA

I've got a taste for just about
anything these days.

She takes the glass back, suddenly bursts into tears.

ANDER

Hey... I know...

He pulls her into a warm embrace.

ANDER (CONT'D)

I'm here...

She lays her head against his familiar chest. Ander flushes
with the rush of emotions her closeness brings.

SOPHIE (O.S.)

Can I have a drink of water?

Ander pales. Every muscle tightening. His arms slip off of
Genna as he turns to face the ghost in the hallway --

Sophie stands barefoot in a pink nightgown. The orange lion
stuffed animal hanging from her hand.

Genna reacts quickly --

GENNA

Of course Sophie. Here. I'll show
you where the glasses are.

Genna leans down and opens one of the cupboards, pulling out
a glass, she fills it with water and hands it to Sophie.

Ander remains frozen, unable to process Sophie's presence.

Sophie chugs the whole glass down, then hands it back to
Genna.

SOPHIE

More please.

Genna fills the glass again, and again Sophie chugs it down
in one long gulp.

GENNA

Wow, you were thirsty, huh.

Genna takes the glass from her.

SOPHIE

My body water levels were low.

Genna smiles at the precocious girl.

GENNA

That's called dehydration.

SOPHIE

I know.

Sophie turns taking Ander in.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Hello. I'm Sophie.

Ander, still recovering from the shock, shoots a look at Genna. She mouths "I can explain."

ANDER

Hi Sophie. My name is Ander.

Ander kneels down to Sophie's level.

SOPHIE

Are you Dr. Lee's lover?

GENNA

Sophie, that's not...

Ander smiles, softening.

ANDER

Dr. Lee and I used to be married.

Sophie's reaches out and touches Ander's face as if studying it with curiosity.

SOPHIE

She caused you great pain.

Genna reaches out and strokes Sophie's hair, pulling her away from Ander.

GENNA

Sophie, sweetheart, come on, why don't I take you back to bed.

Genna leads Sophie out of the room, glancing back at a shaken Ander.

EXT. GENNA'S CONDO - BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Genna slips out a sliding glass door joining Ander on the balcony.

ANDER
Jesus Genna, she's the exact same
age Kailey was when she died.

GENNA
I didn't ask for her.

ANDER
Where did she come from?

GENNA
It's a long story... She's
Alexander's.

ANDER
She's his daughter?

GENNA
Adopted.

ANDER
Why in the hell would Alexander
Fischer ever adopt a child? He
couldn't even stand his own.

GENNA
Apparently he was not himself
leading up to his suicide, if you
can imagine.

ANDER
So how is it you ended up with her?

GENNA
That's the long part of the story.

Ander shakes his head, pacing.

ANDER
This isn't healthy.

GENNA
It doesn't matter what it is. She's
got no one else.

ANDER
So it's temporary?

GENNA
Maybe. Or maybe I'm the best person
she could be with... I don't
know...

Genna sighs, can't look Ander in the eyes.

GENNA (CONT'D)
 Maybe I'm ready to be a mother
 again.

ANDER
 You're playing with something very
 dangerous here. She's not Kailey.
 She'll never be Kailey.

GENNA
 Give me a little more credit than
 that Ander.

ANDER
 Fine. I get it. It isn't my
 business anymore except...

Ander's pacing increases.

ANDER (CONT'D)
 (voice rising)
 I don't know except... she's
 sleeping in her bed, wearing her
 clothes, playing with her goddamn
 stuffed animals...

GENNA
 You're right. It is none of your
 business. I never invited you back
 into my life. You push your way in.

Ander cringes as her words pierce his heart.

ANDER
 Fine. If that's what you want than
 I'll find my way out again.

Ander stops himself, tries to calm.

ANDER (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry. This is not how I wanted
 tonight to go.

GENNA
 And what did you want? To come over
 here and be the hero while I wept
 in your arms over the man you blame
 for the end of our marriage? How
 healthy does that sound?

ANDER
 Fine. As usual you take my kind
 gesture and twist it into a selfish
 one.

Ander opens the sliding glass door to leave.

GENNA
Ander, wait...

She sighs, reaches out and grabs his arm to stop him.

GENNA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry... It's been a very
difficult day...

Looks up at him sheepishly --

GENNA (CONT'D)
I need your help...

He turns back, his anger siphoning off.

GENNA (CONT'D)
I need you to stay with Sophie. I
have to go into the lab at Neurogen
tonight.

ANDER
Why?

GENNA
Alexander made a real mess of
things, and I'm the only one who
can clean it up... It involves
Sophie. I have to make sure she's
safe... Her and the others.

ANDER
What others? What's going on Genna?

Genna shakes her head, overwhelmed and unsure of where to
begin.

GENNA
Do you ever feel like there are
things that should remain outside
the scope of our understanding...

She looks up at Ander with concern -

GENNA (CONT'D)
That some of life's mysteries are
better left in the dark...

EXT. CHAIN GROCERY STORE - LATE NIGHT

A woman in a yellow bikini struts across a VIDEO BANNER on the front of a low rent grocery store claiming - New Year New You!

THE SWOOSH of glass automatic doors releases Harrison and Anna into a near empty parking lot. A case of beer and a shopping bag are in Harrison's hands.

HARRISON

Now I'm already gonna apologize for the state of the house... I woulda cleaned but... Well you surprised me when you called... God you surprised me...

He can't help himself, leans in to kiss her again.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

I wasn't sure you'd come back this time... But I'm gonna make it right...

Muted HEAVY METAL music filters in from somewhere.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

That I can promise... Tomorrow I'm gonna get up early...

Anna steps forward, crossing first in front of the dark alley way at the end of the store.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

Get the house put together... I promise.

Anna sees the headlights before she sees the truck. They flash against her eyes, seeming to cause a spark deep in her irises.

The HEAVY METAL MUSIC becomes louder, and the MOMENT SLOWS --

Harrison watches the headlights illuminate Anna. He drops the items in his arms, which explode across the sidewalk, and reaches out for the paralyzed Anna --

He yanks her back, the force pulling them both to the ground, as a SMALL WHITE CARGO TRUCK rockets out of the alley way.

The driver, a slovenly tweaker, KANE ROCHE (30s) doesn't bother to touch the brakes. He pulls erratically into a spot in the shadowed, empty parking lot.

Harrison holds Anna as if he will never let her go...

But Anna doesn't stay down. As if automatic control has taken over, she easily breaks his grasp and rises to her feet, scooping up a CAN from the ground.

Fueled by increased adrenaline, she rushes toward the truck --

Her ankle is twisted, causing a slight limp, but it in no way slows her down, as if she cannot even feel it --

The Driver shuts off his truck, plunging the night into silence. He opens the door -

To get a face full of metal can. The edge of the can opening up a cut in his head.

Kane's arms raise in instinctive protection as Anna pulls him from the truck, releasing a violent windstorm he cannot stand up to. Anna slams the can over and over into the Driver's head until blood pools and his eyes roll up into his head.

And as quickly as it came on...

The storm is over. Anna's aggression turns off. She stands, a relaxed smile returning to her face.

Harrison, mouth agape, tries to process this quick, violent act of his sweet, sensitive wife.

ANNA

Help me put him in the back.

She moves to grab the driver's arms. Harrison is unable to move.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Harrison now.

Unsure what to do, he grabs the man's legs and together they get him into the cluttered cargo area of the truck. Anna closes the truck doors behind them.

Harrison starts to panic -

HARRISON

What are we going to do?

Anna spots a tool box, she opens it, rummaging around until she finds a MULTI-TOOL. She looks up at Harrison with clear eyes.

ANNA

I'm going to save him...

Anna flips open a blade on the tool, makes a small cut in her arm. Drops of her blood begin to drip onto the cargo floor.

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - VIDEO - PAST

An unshaven Samuel lays back in the same Neurogen medical chair, the silicon cap on his head. He's deflated in spirit, his eyes red.

Dr. Fischer observes the colors of Samuel's neural patterns in the brain maps on the screen.

DR. FISCHER

And when did you begin to lose your faith?

Samuel exhales -

SAMUEL

Losing faith is like a slowly fading balloon. It leaves you little by little until all you're left with is a shriveled shell...

DR. FISCHER

Any one memory, in particular, that you believe had a strong impact?

SAMUEL

The night of Carol's accident...

Samuel struggles to continue -

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

She was unconscious... Laying in that hospital bed, all broken and twisted... and they knew she wouldn't last until morning... She was making this horrible whimper... This magnificent, proud, outspoken woman spending her last night scared... whimpering in the dark...

Samuel struggles as a tear escapes. His brain maps explode in color.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

I searched for that voice... The one she had opened up in me, that had lead me for so many years... And I found nothing but silence...

Tears begin to flow freely down the Pastor's cheeks.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

And I knew I would never again be able to face my congregation.

The video pauses.

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - LABORATORY - MORNING

Genna pushes the laptop away, moved by Samuel's words.

Around her in the sterile, high-tech lab, screens showcase three dimensional models of the brain's neural network. Neurons and pathways flash with bright colors across the animated visuals.

A door BEEPS and slides open as Martin steps into the room.

MARTIN

I owe you an apology for forcing you into this so quickly.

GENNA

Go ahead.

Martin just stares at her.

GENNA (CONT'D)

That's the apology isn't it.

MARTIN

Should I have brought flowers?

GENNA

You could have at least brought coffee.

Martin studies the three dimensional models.

MARTIN

Tell me what we're working with.

Genna expands the neural network model of the brain, white flashes of pure, electric energy push through its branches.

She studies the model with admiration.

GENNA

The Halcyon project was focused on dissecting how trauma and negative emotions morph our neural network patterns.

With a few key strokes, a flashing red line is introduced into the animated brain's neural branches.

GENNA (CONT'D)

Those rifts, created by suffering,
housed in our memory, force our
brain to rewire itself around them.
Fracturing the unblemished mind.

As the red line integrates with the total network, the
neurological patterns in the model begin to flash red, and
change course.

GENNA (CONT'D)

Once this fracturing occurs, those
new neural patterns begin to
unconsciously shape our behavior...
Alexander hoped that through Nano-
neural technology we could learn to
rewire those broken neural
patterns.

Genna brings up a 3D image of a complex molecule. It rotates
on the screen.

GENNA (CONT'D)

My formula... the one Alexander
built off of, was an artificial
neuron built from biological
nanotechnology. Designed to mimic
our neurons, to blend in with our
neural activity...

MARTIN

To reprogram the mind...

GENNA

No. That was exactly the problem.
The mind can't be programed. The
complexity of its connections are
beyond our understanding. One
rewiring can have innumerable
unattended ripple effects...

MARTIN

So it didn't work?

GENNA

It DID work. At least on some
level... But what Alexander wanted
to do was a holy grail... An
impossible thing.

MARTIN

But my father did it... He found
the holy grail.

Genna slams her laptop shut, plunging the screens around her into black.

GENNA

Your father went insane... The formula doesn't work. It's madness, not genius.

MARTIN

I don't believe that. You saw those patients. You know he did something to them.

GENNA

Simple, good, old fashioned brainwashing... Which we both know your father was very good at, by the way.

Martin shakes his head in disbelief.

MARTIN

But you could make it work... You could take his progress and build on it. Your mind is just as exceptional as his was. Maybe more.

GENNA

Flattery doesn't motivate me.

MARTIN

No, but challenge does. Doesn't it?

Genna looks away because he's right.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

No one could challenge you like my father...

Martin circles her like a hungry shark, forcing eye contact again.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

You didn't spread your legs because he overpowered you like other women did. You did it to overpower him... That was the challenge....

Genna regards him with amusement, unaffected by his words.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

To make him fall in love with you.

GENNA

That's why you don't like me Martin.

(MORE)

GENNA (CONT'D)
Because winning his love was
something you could never achieve.

MARTIN
I guess none of us won in the
end... even my father.

GENNA
You want my advice, here it is...

Genna slips the laptop into her bag as she gathers the rest
of her things, preparing to leave.

GENNA (CONT'D)
That formula... Halcyon... It will
always be an unfinished
masterpiece... There IS brilliance
in the design, but it will never
actually work.

She pushes past him towards the door.

GENNA (CONT'D)
Leave it alone Martin. Sometimes
the search for the answer is more
destructive than the truth is
worth.

The door slides open and Genna disappears out of it. Martin
watches her leave, left with the looming ghost of his
father's genius spread around him in the lab.

INT. GENNA'S LUXURY SEDAN - MORNING

Genna waves goodbye to the Security Guard as she pulls out of
Neurogen's facilities. Her other hand white-knuckles the
wheel.

As the ominous building disappears behind her, she turns the
wheel abruptly, pulling off to the side and coming to a stop.

Releasing the tension she holds, she collapses against the
back of the seat with pure exhaustion.

Reaching into her laptop bag on the passenger seat, Genna
pulls out a tightly sealed VIAL OF A BLUE LIQUID COMPOUND.

She holds it up, examining it as the morning sunlight
glistens through the shimmering liquid.

This is Halcyon. Immense power in an unassuming, molecular
form.

INT. HARRISON AND ANNA'S HOME - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Harrison and Anna lay in a rumpled bed, both naked. Harrison's in a deep sleep, with his shirt off we can see an ARMY TATTOO on his arm.

Anna's eyes are open, but they move as if she is in deep REM sleep.

CLOSE ON Anna's eyes --

Electric sparks seem to blossom from deep in the blacks of her irises as we move into --

EXT. ANNA'S DREAM REALM - NIGHT

Anna unloads groceries from the trunk of the sedan. This Anna is different from the one we know, almost whimsical. Her hair short and messy.

A SHADOW crosses over her, and the sky darkens as if a storm has suddenly moved in.

ANNA

Harrison?

Anna turns and a gloved hand grabs her throat, cutting her surprised scream off --

Anna is pulled to the ground as her attacker climbs on top of her. She looks up at him, his face is a blur of skin, as if it is made out of melted flesh colored wax.

She turns to look at her home. It is warm and inviting, but as she reaches for it, the door SLAMS shut and the house moves further back into the distance.

Anna closes her eyes against her attacker and when she opens them, she is in the grocery store. Her purchases are on the belt.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I don't have enough...

The cashier's face appears like her attackers, as if made of dripping wax.

She looks down at her purchases and they are again in the trunk of the car. The shadow and darkened sky move in, just as before --

ANNA (CONT'D)

Harrison?

Anna turns as the gloved hand comes for her throat. This time the SCREAMS are from a man. They appear to come from her attacker, bleeding into -

INT. HARRISON AND ANNA'S HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING

Harrison's SCREAMS. He bolts upright. It knocks Anna out of her dream state.

HARRISON
What's happening?

Harrison grabs his head in panic. Anna sits up, pulling his head between her hands.

ANNA
It's started. Think about Iraq.
Think about what happened to
Mark... Halcyon will take it...
It's going to fix it. Let it take
control.

Harrison looks up at her frightened.

HARRISON
You did it to me too... What you
did to that man. With his mind.

ANNA
It's a gift Harrison. You'll see.
It's going to make everything
better.

Harrison isn't so sure --

HARRISON
I can't hear my own thoughts
anymore...

He grabs his head, trying to will himself back in control.

INT. GENNA'S CONDO - HALLWAY - MORNING

Genna slips into the condo, softly shutting the door behind her.

The SOUNDS OF COOKING come from the kitchen. She rounds the corner and smiles at the sight of --

INT. GENNA'S CONDO - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Ander cooking. His back is turned, an apron tied around his midsection.

Sophie sits at the kitchen counter reading a child's illustrated edition of The Wizard Of Oz, her concentration focused on the book.

The familiarity of the sight washes Genna with sadness tinged memories.

GENNA
Good Morning.

Ander turns and smiles.

ANDER
Morning.

Genna keeps her laptop bag clutched close to her.

GENNA
Are those pancakes I smell?

Ander pulls a pan from the stove top, dumping eggs onto a plate.

ANDER
I tried to push chocolate chip, but someone likes to eat healthier.

He places the plate of eggs in front of Sophie who still does not look up, lost in the book. She turns its pages at a surprisingly fast pace for a girl her age.

GENNA
Chocolate chip sounds perfect to me.

Ander places pancakes on a plate and hands it to Genna, leans into her ear --

ANDER
(whispering)
She's a smart girl.

They both watch in amusement as Sophie continues to devour the book. Ander pulls off his apron.

ANDER (CONT'D)
I should head to the University.

He leans in to kiss Genna instinctively, Genna responds automatically, but both realize the mistake before their lips connect and share an awkward kiss on the cheek instead.

GENNA

Um... I'll walk you out.

Ander reaches out and pulls Sophie's hair back into a pony tail.

ANDER

Alright, Little Miss Healthy. Hope I get to see you later.

Sophie finally looks up from the book, as her focus shifts, a sweet smile returns to her face.

SOPHIE

Goodbye Mr. Fuentes.

Genna follows Ander out of the room --

INT. GENNA'S CONDO - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Ander stops her in the hallway, leaning in to speak softly --

ANDER

That wasn't as easy for me as I made it look.

GENNA

I know. Thank you. And I'm not in a position to ask you for more but...

ANDER

...but you know I'll give it to you.

GENNA

Lab Space. At the University. A few mice. There are some things I can't do at Neurogen. I can't trust Martin. He's hiding something...

ANDER

Well he is a professional slinger of shit.

Ander considers --

ANDER (CONT'D)

I can pull it together. Call in a few fav --

Genna kisses him suddenly, stopping his words with sudden surprise.

GENNA

Sorry... I... Thank you.

Ander nods. Not sure how to take the kiss, he slips out the door.

INT. GENNA'S CONDO - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Sophie has returned her focus to the book, turning the pages as she nears the end.

GENNA
Do you like the book?

SOPHIE
I think it's wasteful to dream of worlds that don't exist.

GENNA
Well... some people believe made up stories hold the most important lessons...

Genna leans onto the counter studying Sophie.

GENNA (CONT'D)
For example some people think the Wizard Of Oz is about faith... That the yellow brick road is our life, and as we are tested with its difficulties, if we face them with courage, and heart, and do not lose faith, that we will be strengthened by those challenges and rewarded...

Sophie closes the book with finality, placing it in her lap.

SOPHIE
I think Dorothy is weak.

Genna sits down opposite Sophie, leaning down to look at her on the same level.

GENNA
Sophie... Can I ask you something?...

SOPHIE
Yes.

GENNA
Can you tell me about your parents? Your Mommy or your Daddy? Do you remember them?

SOPHIE
Yes. I remember my Mommy.

GENNA
What was she like?

SOPHIE
She was weak. Like Dorothy.

GENNA
Does it make you sad to think about her?

SOPHIE
I don't feel sad. Not anymore. Dr. Fischer fixed me.

GENNA
What do you feel Sophie?

Sophie considers it --

SOPHIE
I feel like the beach. When you stand with your feet in the water and you wish you could stay there forever.

GENNA
So you feel happy? You don't feel scared? Even when you're alone?

Sophie smiles --

SOPHIE
You want to feel it, don't you? How I feel? Because of her?

Sophie opens the book to show KAILEY LEE-FUENTES written on the inside cover.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
The girl's room I sleep in.

Genna looks away from the name.

GENNA
Kailey was my daughter. She was a very sick little girl...

Genna struggles, but cannot hold back a few tears that escape.

GENNA (CONT'D)
I miss her very much.

Sophie reaches out and touches Genna's tears with curiosity.

SOPHIE

You don't have to miss her anymore
Dr. Lee. You can feel like me...
Dr. Fischer can take your sadness
away too...

Genna dries her tears, standing up.

GENNA

Thank you Sophie. For answering my
questions. I'd like to ask you more
later, but I need some time to
myself first. Do you want to go
play with Kailey's dolls?

SOPHIE

I'd like to read another book.

GENNA

Of course. Help yourself to any of
the books in there.

Sophie rises and heads down the hall. Genna slips into her
office --

INT. GENNA'S CONDO - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Genna slumps into the desk. A FRAMED PICTURE of her and
Kailey as a tooth-gapped, grinning toddler, sits on the desk.
She picks it up, letting the tears flow freely now.

She opens her laptop bag and pulls out the BLUE VIAL OF
HALCYON placing it on the desk.

With shaking hands, she reaches into her desk drawer and
pulls out a syringe, placing it next to the vial.

She considers the dose for a long, tense moment. Grabbing the
vial and the syringe, she slams them both into the desk
drawer, locking it shut before she can change her mind.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - MORNING

WE MOVE through the sprawl of the upscale suburban community.
Modern homes are set against the natural beauty of manicured
landscapes. The kind of idealistic image of the future that
past era's depicted, that never quite came true.

Samuel rounds the corner onto the street. Behind him, running
in sync is Anna and Parker. They are followed by sharpened
versions of Harrison and Kane, his face still healing from
Anna's attack, bring up the rear.

Their FEET POUND against the pavement, rhythmic, like an army marching.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Samuel now jogs by himself through the suburban streets. A Police Cruiser pulls up beside him. Issac rolls the passenger side window down --

ISSAC
Am I really seeing this right now?
You? Running? Now I know you've
lost your mind.

Samuel slows to a stop, leaning into the window with a smile.

SAMUEL
Running is a potent cerebral
enhancer. Increases blood flow...
Sparks new growth...

ISSAC
Oh so you think you smart now? Come
on. Get in. I'll give you a lift
home...

Samuel opens the door and slips inside the cruiser.

ISSAC (CONT'D)
You should be thankful I came
along... Stop you from having a
stroke or something.

Issac pulls back onto the street.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Samuel rolls down the window, closes his eyes against the pleasant breeze. Issac clears his throat.

ISSAC
Listen... Was thinking maybe this
weekend we could go to the cemetery
together. Bring Ma some flowers...

SAMUEL
It's unnecessary.

ISSAC
No... I think it would be nice...

SAMUEL

By treating those who are gone as if they still exist somewhere, we provide ourselves with false comfort that is unnecessary and prevents us from addressing our own mortality.

Issac shoots his father a confused look --

ISSAC

You sure you didn't have a stroke?

Issac's phone rings. He picks it up from the center console.

ISSAC (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Hey Miss Kathy. Everything OK with Lyla?

(pause)

Shit. Again. I'm close. Just give me a few.

Issac hangs up the phone and flips his lights on. Pulls the car into a U-turn. Shoots an ashamed look at Samuel.

ISSAC (CONT'D)

It's Lottie... Sorry. I know how you feel about her... But I gotta take care of it.

The Cruiser rockets down the street.

EXT. KINDERGARTEN - DAY

LOTTIE GREY (30s), her beauty hidden under an appearance that resembles an unmade bed. A manic stride to her gait as she carries a squirming LYLA (5) down the street.

Issac pulls into a driveway, cutting her off with the cruiser. He launches from the car --

LOTTIE

No! NO! Issac... Don't. She's *my* baby girl.

ISSAC

You know you can't pull this shit Lottie.

Lottie grips Lyla tighter, spinning away from Issac's outstretched arms, darting in the opposite direction.

LOTTIE

You told me I could see her on Tuesday. But I couldn't see her then. I couldn't on Tuesday.

Lottie sways, tightening her grip on Lyla, whose fear strikes her quiet.

ISSAC

Come on Lottie, you're scaring her.

Lottie strokes Lyla's hair.

LOTTIE

But look at her hair... She needs her hair cut and who's gonna cut her hair if I can't cut her hair. She needs her Mama to cut her hair. She needs her Mama!

Issac lunges toward Lottie, taking her by surprise and pulling Lyla out of her arms.

LOTTIE (CONT'D)

No!

Lottie grabs desperately, managing to pull off one of Lyla's PINK SHOES as Issac takes hold of her. She cradles it in her hands like it's all she has left in the world.

LOTTIE (CONT'D)

Please... Please...

A scared Lyla wraps her arms around Issac's strong neck. Samuel steps out of the cruiser, he watches the scene with calculating eyes.

ISSAC

(to Lyla)

It's OK baby. Let's get you back to school.

Lottie hardens, a sudden change, eyes flashing --

LOTTIE

You can't stop me from seeing her!

ISSAC

Tuesdays. On your medication. Those are the rules or I will take it to court. Do you hear me this time?

LOTTIE

Yeah I hear. Squawk, squawk, squawk. That's all you ever do at me.

Issac places Lyla into the back seat of the cruiser. Lottie rapidly shifts again -

 LOTTIE (CONT'D)
 No! Wait. Please. Just let me come
 back. Pick her up. After school.
 Just a few hours.

Issac shuts the car door.

 ISSAC
 Not today Lottie. You're not doing
 well.
 (to Samuel)
 Come on Pops. Sorry again.

Lottie kneels on the ground in defeat. Samuel walks towards her instead of getting in the car.

 SAMUEL
 I'd like to stay. To speak with
 Lottie.

 ISSAC
 (shocked)
 You do?

 SAMUEL
 Yes. I think I can help her.

Issac takes in his father's confident peace.

 ISSAC
 OK... Thank you. Appreciate it.

Issac moves to get into the cruiser, hesitates, wants to say more, but doesn't --

 ISSAC (CONT'D)
 Maybe I'll stop by later... You can
 spend some time with your
 granddaughter.

Samuel nods goodbye. Issac slips into the drivers seat and pulls out.

Samuel turns toward Lottie, still sitting on the ground, cradling the shoe. He approaches her, reaching out to lift her chin, forcing her sad eyes to meet his towering form.

He smiles down at the fractured woman before him.

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - VIDEO - PAST

Parker lays back in a chair as Dr. Fischer adjusts the silicon cap to Parker's head.

Parker looks pale, malnourished. The unwashed hair and hygiene of the depressed. His wrists on both sides are wrapped in thick white gauze.

PARKER

So what now? You force my eyes open while I watch pornographic material?

Dr. Fischer moves to the computer.

DR. FISCHER

This will map your traumatic memories. The process is painless. You won't even realize it's happening.

PARKER

I was joking Doc... You know jokes... that thing the psychically damaged sometimes do instead of screaming...

DR. FISCHER

OK. We're ready to begin.

PARKER

Great, tell me how you feel?

DR. FISCHER

Parker, I need you to take this seriously or I can't help you.

Parker fidgets, uncomfortable.

PARKER

Maybe I don't want help, maybe I just want out...

DR. FISCHER

Parker... I'm going to save your life. Take away that sadness that's been eating you up.

PARKER

Ha. I hate when people call it sadness... Sadness is frail. Like a crying child. This has teeth. This is like a dark beast that fills you with paralyzing horror. You'd do anything to escape it...

DR. FISCHER

So let's escape it. Together. Start with Lily.

Parker takes a deep breath. His brain map spikes in eight different directions.

DR. FISCHER (CONT'D)

Tell me about her... Tell me how she hurt you...

Parker closes his eyes.

PARKER (V.O.)

Hello Dr. Lee.

The VIDEO PAUSES.

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - BRAIN SCAN ROOM - DAY

Genna quickly shuts the laptop, looking up at the clean cut version of Parker standing in the doorway.

The room she sits in is the same room from the videos. High-tech brain monitoring screens embedded into the walls.

GENNA

Parker... It's nice to see you again. Thank you for coming. Please sit down.

Parker enters the room, sliding into the chair in the center.

GENNA (CONT'D)

Honestly I'm surprised you would agree to come back here after what Dr. Fischer did.

PARKER

We owe everything to Dr. Fischer. He saved us.

Genna forces her expression to remain neutral.

GENNA

So you really have no anger toward Dr. Fischer for what happened? You understand how he's put you at risk?

PARKER

I would already be dead if it wasn't for Dr. Fischer.

Genna picks up the silicon cap.

GENNA

Do you remember this? What it does?

PARKER

Of course.

GENNA

Can I place it on you?

Parker leans back into the chair in response. Genna begins to attach it to his head.

Genna activates the cap and the screens light up with the brilliant colors of Parker's brain activity. The patterns take her by surprise, she leans in closer -

As opposed to the scans from the videos, there are no spikes or random color explosions. They all read at an even, steady flow.

Genna tries not to show her amazement to Parker.

GENNA (CONT'D)

OK Parker... We're ready to begin. Why don't you start by telling me about Lily...

PARKER

What about her?

GENNA

Describe her to me.

Parker seems to scan his memory. He speaks without emotion, as if he is reading a passage.

PARKER

She dyed her hair black... These big waves of hair... Like the ocean at night... Her eyes were green. She used to squint them a little when she was interested in what I was saying. She listened with her eyes...

Genna keeps a steady watch on the brain scans. Despite the memories now flooding him, his emotions and neural patterns remain unchanged.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Her nipples were small and brown, like pennies...

GENNA

OK Parker... That's enough... Why don't you tell me about that day in the woods?

PARKER

My mom didn't come home again the night before... I sent Lily a bunch of messages in the morning, but she never looked at them...

As he begins to say the words, a small glow of color appears on the scans, small spots in the cerebral cortex. The first sign of an unregulated movement.

PARKER (CONT'D)

I thought maybe her phone had broken again. I was upset, I couldn't stay in the house... So I went to my spot... This place in the woods near the river... Lily didn't know about it... The one thing I kept for myself... The last thing she took from me...

Moving in closer and closer into Parker's eye, sparks become almost visible in his iris as we move into --

EXT. WOODS - PARKER'S DREAM REALM - DAY

Parker walks through the woods, morose. The colors are muted as if to match his emotional state.

The sparkle of a GIRLS LAUGH echoes through the trees. Parker looks up and smiles, quickens his pace.

Up ahead a RIVER TRICKLES mixing with the LAUGHTER.

Parker reaches the top of the hill and stops as if he's slammed into a brick wall.

Confusion crosses his face. He collapses, dizzy, the world begins to spin around him, colors blurring.

At the bottom of the hill, in front of the river --

LILY VASQUEZ (17) lays on a blanket. He sees her hair first. The dark waves spread across a blanket on the ground. The brown of her skin. She LAUGHS again as her legs move, revealing the BOY between them.

Parker watches unmoving, a part of the forest's landscape.

A FIRE STARTS on the blanket, it begins to spread quickly across Lily's body until both she and the Boy are engulfed by flames. They don't react to the flames. Continue their activities.

Lily arches her back and leans her head back. Her green eyes, squinting. She looks directly at Parker.

PARKER (V.O.)
 I couldn't stop watching... The
 longer I watched, the more it hurt.
 But I couldn't stop... I wanted to
 feel that pain...

Watches him, watching her. The fire begins to travel across
 the ground toward him.

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - BRAIN SCAN ROOM - DAY

Genna leans into the scans to observe the glowing spots in
 Parker's cerebral cortex with curiosity.

PARKER
 I wanted to know how he made her
 laugh like that... I'd never heard
 her laugh like that before...

CLOSE ON THE GLOWING SPOTS IN THE BRAIN SCAN as they seems to
 pulse with activity --

INT. UNIVERSITY LAB - DAY

PULLING BACK, Ander studies the maps of Parker's brain with
 equal curiosity.

ANDER
 It's almost as if he's
 hallucinating...

GENNA
 Or dreaming...

ANDER
 But there are no other signs of a
 break from reality?

GENNA
 Nothing at all. If anything he's
 more grounded in the realities of
 the world now than his files
 suggest he was before.

Ander studies the rest of the neural maps.

ANDER
 But the rest of it... It's
 absolutely...

Genna takes it in with awe.

GENNA

Perfect... It's the optimal neural map. Not a single irregularity or chemical imbalance.

ANDER

So you think that's what the Halcyon technology does? It regulates...

GENNA

I believe it also pathfinds... It mines memories and incoming information to arrive at the optimal solution for any given problem. To protect itself and avoid future trauma.

Ander sits back in his chair, taking it all in.

ANDER

This is incredibly dangerous... Who knows how it could effect their psychology? Their physiological functions... I mean one bug in the technology and it could stop their hearts...

GENNA

My theories created this.

ANDER

You didn't do this Genna. Fischer did.

GENNA

But the core of it is MY formula.

ANDER

That doesn't make you responsible.

Ander reaches out to comfort her, but she turns away.

GENNA

The worst part is, there's a piece of me that wants to feel like them... To not have to wake up every morning and have my heart break all over again... Thinking about what she would look like now... Who she would be... To stop living with that pain...

She lets the emotions wash over her. Ander reaches out again and this time she accepts him.

ANDER

Pain is necessary... It makes us stronger. It's only when we are the most lost that we find ourselves. We reach out for help and touch the divine and it answers.

GENNA

Your grief was always a different species than mine.

Genna pulls herself together.

GENNA (CONT'D)

I need to go check on the mice.

Genna and Ander rise, moving to a small room adjacent to the lab --

INT. UNIVERSITY LAB - ANIMAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A large cage sits on the counter in the sterile room. Ander leans in to observe THREE WHITE LAB MICE running in sync on individual wheels.

Ander doesn't notice, but Genna steps back in shock.

ANDER

How bizarre... It motivates them to act the same...

He looks up, finally noticing --

ANDER (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

GENNA

All three mice are exhibiting signs of the technology...

ANDER

And?

GENNA

I only injected two of them...

Off Ander and Genna realizing --

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - MARTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Martin sits at a touch screen desk, scanning reports. A SHARP SLAM causes him to look up. Genna stands outside a one-way transparent office door.

GENNA
(from outside)
Martin! I know you're in there!

Martin presses a button and the door slides open. Genna storms into the room.

GENNA (CONT'D)
Stand up you son of a bitch.

Martin rises, he's in his stocking feet.

MARTIN
Please remove your shoes in my office. They carry...

GENNA
Fuck you.

Genna steps up on his office coffee table in her dirty tennis shoes, towering above him. Martin flinches.

GENNA (CONT'D)
You knew it was viral didn't you?

Martin's face remains stoic.

MARTIN
Brainwashing isn't viral. I thought the Halcyon technology didn't work?

GENNA
You knew what we were dealing with before you even called me... You wanted them to get out.

Martin hesitates, can't help himself --

MARTIN
I wanted you to let them out...

He looks up confidently at her.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
The only thing more profitable than an optional treatment is a necessary one... I knew it would force your hand into creating a vaccine...

GENNA
This could cause an epidemic!

MARTIN

This isn't an epidemic... An epidemic is destruction, pain, and death... This. This is a revolution.

GENNA

I'm stopping it. I'll call the CDC for a quarantine. Expose what you've done here.

MARTIN

And how will you prove it? The patients will deny its existence. There is no test for it. An examination will reveal them perfectly healthy. In fact, even more healthy than when they came into Neurogen.

GENNA

You are a hideous man.

MARTIN

I think this is a good thing Dr. Lee. And even if it isn't, I still win.

Genna jumps down off of the table.

GENNA

I'm stopping it. Watch me.

She storms out of the room, the door sliding open to let her leave.

Martin, unconcerned, reaches out for sanitary wipes on his desk. Begins to wipe the table clean.

INT. CROWDED NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

LOUD RHYTHMIC MUSIC PUMPS over the laughter and loud voices of a club in its peak hours.

A beautiful, petite Asian woman CARMEN OH (20s) leans back against the bar, flanked by TWO ADMIRERS.

One of them hands her a shot that she obviously doesn't need. She shoots it back without flinching.

CARMEN

Come on. Let's dance!

She leads the two willing Admirers out the dance floor --

On the way, they pass Anna, in a beautiful dress, and Harrison, a reformed man from the earlier one we met. Clean shaven and sharply dressed.

They turn in sync, taking Carmen in like wolves catching the scent of prey.

Carmen dances drunkenly between the two men. As they close in on her, she becomes suddenly overwhelmed, pushing them back. She beelines for the bathroom.

Anna and Harrison turn to each other, sharing something unspoken. Anna follows Carmen into the bathroom --

INT. CROWDED NIGHT CLUB - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anna slips in past exiting WOMEN. She scans the stalls. The unmistakable sound of a WOMAN CRYING comes from the last stall on the end.

Anna knocks softly.

ANNA
Are you OK?

After a long pause, Carmen answers --

CARMEN (O.C.)
Yes...

The TOILET FLUSHES and Carmen exits, her makeup is streaked.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
Yes... I'm fine... I'm fine.

Carmen takes in her appearance, laughing through the pain.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
Why is it always the one you want
who doesn't love you back?

Carmen restrains a fresh sob, swaying on her feet.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
Maybe it's me... Maybe I'm too
broken.

Anna moves in beside her, she emits a calming sense of power. She places her hands on Carmen's arms in an act that is not empathetic and as a result doesn't feel entirely natural. She looks at Carmen in the mirror.

ANNA
You don't have to be broken. You
can be fixed.
(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)
 There is an elegant, perfect
 version inside of you just waiting
 to be unleashed...

Anna leans in closer as Carmen is taken in by her spell --

ANNA (CONT'D)
 I could give you that... Make you
 feel beautiful... Confident...
 Happy... Would you like that?

Carmen nods, enraptured.

CUT TO:

INT. BEAT UP SEDAN - BACKSEAT - CONTINUOUS

Carmen MOANS as Harrison moves on top of her in the backseat. But Carmen's the only one lost in the ecstasy. Harrison moves in a mechanical way.

From the front seat Anna watches. Taking in Carmen's pleasure with curiosity as if she's observing a lesson.

SAMUEL (V.O.)
 Man is a thing imperfect.

INT. NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY

Samuel stands at the pulpit of a no frills, boxy white church. Behind him hangs a thick wooden cross. The wooden pews before him are filled with an ETHNIC CONGREGATION.

SAMUEL
 God created man and spoke - I bring
 gifts unto man... But with those
 gifts also came demons.

Samuel looks out over the upturned, willing faces.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
 Fatal flaws embedded in his nature
 so that man could never rise above
 God.

The back door opens and Lottie enters, almost unrecognizable, clean cut, and dressed for church. She sits in the back row.

FATHER GREY
 Man alone will never overcome his
 flaws. He is a weak and wretched
 creature. Man is something to be
 surpassed.

The back door to the church opens again as Anna, Harrison, Parker, Kane, and Carmen, slip in and join Lottie in the back row without a word.

SAMUEL

But to ever surpass God, man must
be something beyond himself...
Something superior to his
animalistic programming...

The back door opens again, and Genna steps inside holding Sophie's hand.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

And those on earth who have grown
weary of their suffering... Of the
never ending hardships that man
himself in this modern world
creates...

Sophie moves automatically to sit in the same row as them. Genna follows.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

They will rise above the natures of
their broken souls and begin to see
light in their abyss...

Genna takes in the glowing faces of the Founding Four Halcyon Patients in with concern -

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

A hope for a world surpassing the
flaws of men. A metamorphosis that
will elevate the life of man to
that of the God he worships...

Samuel takes in the upturned faces of his congregation with sparkling eyes.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Free of madness... Free of
suffering... Filled only with the
purifying light of joy.

Genna's concern turns to panic as she realizes there are faces she does not recognize sharing the same Halcyon glow.

It has already begun to spread.

INT. NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH - OFFICE - LATER

Genna pushes her way into the small, monotone office at the back of the church.

GENNA

Excuse me, Father Grey --

Samuel sits behind the desk, his eyes focused straight ahead as if lost in his own mind.

GENNA (CONT'D)

I need you to join me outside with the others.

He turns, snapping out of it as Genna approaches.

SAMUEL

Everything OK Dr. Lee?

GENNA

No actually. I've done some initial experiments and I believe you all are in danger.

Genna's face twists in concern.

GENNA (CONT'D)

The nanotechnology treatment Dr. Fischer gave you... It could cause great harm. Possibly death. I need to run more tests, but first we have to contain it. The molecular structure... He built to be viral...

Samuel rises from the desk, walking toward her -

SAMUEL

So more could already be at risk?

GENNA

I think so, yes. The technology is capable of crossing the blood, brain barrier. It can be passed along unknowingly through blood.. and through um... Sexual acts... We need to keep this contained... Find out who else may have been exposed... You haven't... I mean there's no way that you've shared...

Genna reddens at the question, looks away. Samuel laughs, takes a step closer.

GENNA (CONT'D)

I'm contacting the CDC but I'd like to gather everyone first more... gently.

The false emotion in Samuel's face drains away. A slight shift -

SAMUEL

I don't think we can do that Dr. Lee.

GENNA

I need you to understand how....

Her words are cut off as Samuel reaches out without a trace of emotion, squeezing his hands around Genna's neck. Her face shifts into shock as she claws his hands in panic. Samuel remains unchanged. His expression neutral.

Genna chokes, her panic expanding. She digs her nails into Samuel's hands, drawing blood, but he does not loosen his grip. Her movements begin to slow, her fight draining. Finally her eyes roll back into her head and her body slackens as her consciousness slips away.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. NEUROGEN LABS - HALCYON WING - CELL - DAY

Black turns into the blinding white of a sterile, overly bright wall.

Genna gasps, reaching for her swollen, bruised neck. She CHOKES as she tries to orient herself. Taking in the white walls... White floors... Clean lined bed.

She looks up, noticing the green of a garden... Realizing...

GENNA

No...

She pulls herself up, and now she can see clearly out the replaced glass doors --

Out into the atrium of the Halcyon wing at Neurogen.

GENNA (CONT'D)

No!

She rises to her feet, her palm slamming against the thick glass of the cell door.

GENNA (CONT'D)
Don't do this!

Her voice is harsh and weak, but grows stronger --

GENNA (CONT'D)
Let me out!

On the other side of the glass, we MOVE out of the room --

Genna, now the imprisoned one, slams her hands against the glass, her voice silent and unheard.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - MORNING

Eight sets of feet pound the manicured pavement in a synchronized run.

Samuel leads the pack as the Halcyon Hosts round the corner, carving through an unblemished, retrofuturistic suburban street.

It is a bright and beautiful day.

THE END