

MANIFESTO

Pilot

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N.B.: The pilot unfolds over two time periods, 1995 (the main plotline) and 1997 (the frame narrative). All 1997 scenes have their slugs tagged "(1997)" with a yellow highlight.

MAN'S VOICE

*I want you to think about the mail for a minute. Stop taking it for granted like some complacent sleepwalking sheep. And really THINK about it. Trust me, you will find the U.S. Mail a worthy object of your contemplation.*

Fade in on:

**A SHINY BLUE MAILBOX**

On a dreamy suburban street. Trees and birds and kids walking home from school.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O)

*A piece of paper can cross a continent like we're passing notes in class. I can send you cookies from the other side of the world. And all I have to do is write your name on a BOX, put on some stamps, and drop it in.*

A mailman unlocks the mailbox. Letters and packages tumble out. We pick up one BOX, wrapped in brown paper and tied with string. Addressed in neat block capitals.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O)

*You see, it only works because every single person along the chain acts like a mindless automaton. I write an address and they just... obey. No question. No deviation.*

In QUICK CUTS we follow THE BOX through the its journey:

Bouncing in the back of the mail truck... Hand-cancelled, tossed in a bin at the Post Office... Speeding through a maze of conveyor belts, sorters, readers in a huge distribution facility... Then into a bin, and rolled into another delivery truck.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

*No pause to contemplate eternity, or beauty, or death.*

A luminous grasshopper springs away as a mailman's boot flattens the grass outside a shiny glass office building.

**INSIDE THE OFFICE BUILDING**

A heavily pregnant secretary takes the box. Calls her boss out. GIL MURRAY, a genial, balding bureaucrat. Excited to get this odd piece of mail.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O)  
*Even YOU, for all your protestations  
of free will, if a box comes with your  
name on it, you can't even imagine  
doing anything other than OBEY.*

Written on the box -- "OPEN IMMEDIATELY."

Gil considers the return address. Shrugs. Tries to open the package, but it's swathed in layer after layer of tape.

GIL  
Jeez o Pete, musta bought stock in  
Duct Tape.

SECRETARY  
I know, huh?

Gil and his secretary joke around, trying to pry the package open. Finally Gil retires to his office to work on it.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O)  
*Well. It's not your fault. Society  
made you this way. But you're a  
sheep, living in a world of sheep.*

IN GIL'S OFFICE, Gil works like crazy to open this box he knows nothing about. Straining at the lid.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O)  
*And because you're all sheep, because  
all you can do is OBEY, I can reach  
out and touch anyone, anywhere. I can  
reach out and touch YOU. Right now...*

Finally, the lid of the box pops open. And then --

#### **OUTSIDE THE OFFICE BUILDING**

We see a FLASH and the windows BLOW OUT and a millisecond later, a FIREBALL blossoms from the shattered windows.

The SONIC BOOM sets off car alarms all along the street. SCREAMS from inside the building. And over the MAILMAN'S gaping face,

**TITLE: MANIFESTO**

Then we cut to:

**A LUSH FOREST. (1997)**

Vast and empty. Birdsong, wind in the pines. The smell of the dark, moist earth. Silent and still and pure.

In the distance, A MAN slips silently through the trees. The only person for miles. One with the forest.

He sees something. Kneels, digs at the base of an ancient tree. Unearths a cluster of magnificent MORELS. Gathers them into his bag.

We never would have seen them. But THE MAN does.

This is the man we all secretly wish we were. A modern Thoreau. Strangely out of time -- it could just as easily be 1854 Walden, instead of 1997 NorCal, which is what it is.

#### **DEEPER IN THE FOREST (1997)**

Birdsong. The man whistles. The bird responds. He spots the nest high in the branches. Gazes up at it. Drinking it in. The leaves, the birds, glowing in the sun.

#### **AT THE EDGE OF A CLEARING (1997)**

The man kneels over a RABBIT RUN -- a dense arching form in the grass. Tiny pawprints in the earth. The faintest noise of movement. He follows it through the bracken, to

A RABBIT IN A SNARE. Still alive, dangling from a loop of paracord on an elaborate figure-four trap.

The man takes it in his hands, comforting it. Whispering to it. Maybe a prayer, maybe words of comfort.

The rabbit calms down under his touch. Relaxes in his hands.

He holds it to himself. Staring into those black, wet eyes. So alert to everything--to life, death, eternity, silence...

And then we CUT TO:

#### **A DEAD WOMAN [1995]**

Eyes open, bugged-out. Staring blankly. In the b.g., the blighted CITY spread out below. Vast and bleak.

THE MAN from the woods stares down at the woman. Into those glassy black eyes.

It's TWO YEARS EARLIER -- 1995 -- and the man is a lifetime younger.

This is JIM "FITZ" FITZGERALD (33). Clean-cut, badge on his belt and FBI TRAINEE ID on a lanyard around his neck. But something a bit gawky and awkward about him -- like the suit doesn't fit quite right and it's not the suit's fault.

He's staring down at the DEAD WOMAN. She's tiny, about 25, lying on her side on an APARTMENT TOWER ROOFTOP. Ugly red bruises around her neck, clothes ripped open.

Fitz, lost in the dead body, absorbing every detail. Broken fingernails. Bruises. Gold necklace with a "Chai" charm.

DOUGLAS' VOICE

Fitz?

Fitz doesn't respond. He's noticing: The necklace's chain is broken -- it's been draped over the body.

DOUGLAS' VOICE

Fitz. You care to join the rest of us?

Fitz snaps out of it. And now we see:

There are a dozen other people on the rooftop. Uniformed cops around the perimeter, sealing the crime scene.

EIGHT AGENT TRAINEES from the Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU), all men, 20s, suits, busy working in their binders.

Their professor, JOHN DOUGLAS. Late 50s, three-piece suit. A blowsy, avuncular Albert Finney-type.

A second man hovers at Douglas's side--a silent, benevolent vagueness in a cardigan we'll call MISTER ROGERS for now.

FITZ

Yeah. Sorry about that.

Fitz's accent tags him immediately as blue-collar Philly.

He hurries to join the class. The TRAINEES snicker at the class weirdo. Fitz is the odd man out -- TEN YEARS OLDER than the others, socially awkward too, but it's not only that.

DOUGLAS

Okay, my profilers. You've inspected the crime scene, you have the police reports. Tell me about our killer.

A cowed silence. Then, weakly:

HANDSOME TRAINEE

There's really NO forensic leads?

DOUGLAS

When there's a dead body present, everyone's flustered, scared, jumping to conclusions. The profiler's job is to be detached. To be the scientist.

(MORE)

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Just look at the evidence and start at the beginning.

A silence. Then the profilers-in-training start jumping in. First, CRAIG ROSEN (20s), the stats-geek, looking up from the binders he has spread out in front of him:

ROSEN

Okay. Matrix one. Disorganized or organized?

HANDSOME

She was strangled manually, and then with her own purse strap. No tape for her mouth, no ropes, no weapon. A disorganized murder, unplanned, opportunistic.

PUDGY

Fits the victimology too, right? He wasn't hunting for her. But he saw her, 4'11", 80 pounds, realized he could get away with it, and acted impulsively.

DOUGLAS

Total impulse? Random act of violence?

ROSEN

No. The sexual element. This is a fantasy he's had for a long time. He didn't think he'd ever get to act it out. But he's wanted to.

HANDSOME

Big porno collection. No meaningful relationships with women.

DOUGLAS

Good. But go deeper. What else?

Silence. Then:

FITZ

He lives in the building. Or works here. Janitor, maybe.

HANDSOME

We can't say that for sure.

FITZ

He dragged a struggling woman through a door marked "Alarm will sound."

Everyone turns to look. Sure enough, "Emergency Exit Only."

FITZ

You don't do that unless you know the alarm's broken and nobody's on the other side. So he lives here. Maybe works here, a janitor, a super.

ROSEN is hard at work running the numbers. Looking up the statistics in his binders. He's good at this.

ROSEN

So if we're talking probabilities. Disorg, non-pen sex assault, high-risk location... We're looking for a white male, 20 to 30, unmarried, possible record of sex crimes, blue collar job, lives with parents or relatives. Statistically speaking, that's the profile.

DOUGLAS

And the \$64,000 question: Will he do it again?

ROSEN

(doing the math)  
Historically, with this profile...  
Reoffense rate is... three percent.  
This is one-and-done.

DOUGLAS

Everyone agree with that?

All the trainees say "yes." Except Fitz. Douglas raises his eyebrows. "You have something to say?"

FITZ

They found her like this? In this position?

PUDGY

Yeah. Strangled her, dumped her, fled.

FITZ

He didn't dump her. Look at where the semen is. He strangles her, jerks off, THEN he moves her. It's a cold, rational act. He POSED her.

ROSEN

So? That doesn't change the analysis.



FITZ

Look at her necklace. Hebrew word, *chai*. A good luck charm. He placed it there. To send us a message.

The other trainees groan --

PUDGY

Oh man, Mister Letters. Everything with you is a crossword puzzle...

FITZ

No. Look again. Look at the charm. Now look at the body.

And now everyone falls silent. Because they see what they all missed: the woman's body is posed in the form of a *chai*.

FITZ

It's a message. 'Good Luck.' He's making fun of her. And sending us a message: 'Good luck finding me.' That's not a man who's panicking. It's a man who finally acts out his dream, and realizes it's EASY. So easy he can take his time, have some fun. Pose the body. This changed him. Look out there. For him, it's like the whole city was watching and couldn't stop him. He'll do it again. He's planning it right now.

Douglas and Mister Rogers exchange a glance. The other profilers react -- annoyed, skeptical.

PINSTRIPES

That's just speculation. As opposed to a data-driven analysis we can back up.

HANDSOME

Not even speculation. It's *guessing*.

DOUGLAS

It's not guessing.

The students all fall silent. Turn to Douglas, their sensei.

DOUGLAS

He's making contact. Seeing through the killer's eyes. The data is essential, but that flash of INSIGHT? That's what takes you to the next level. It can be misleading, but in this case, Fitz is right.

(MORE)

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

The guy did two more before they caught him. Fall of 86.

(claps his hands)

Good work everyone! Hilda, extraordinary. Thanks for your help.

And the DEAD BODY stands up, takes a bow, and gets her clothes back on. The cops applaud her, then start breaking down the set-dressing. The whole thing was just an exercise.

**INT. ON THE STAIRWELL DOWN**

The student profilers trudge down the cruddy staircase. Handsome buzzes past Fitz, claps him on the shoulder.

HANDSOME

Seriously, that was pure classroom. You think out in the real world people are going to sending us coded messages in D.B.'s? Not everything's a crossword puzzle, Gramps.

ROSEN falls in alongside Fitz. Still looking at his notes, trying to figure it out.

ROSEN

What makes this a SCIENCE is that it's quantifiable, probabilistic, repeatable, right? That's what science IS. If what we do isn't stats-based, what is it?

FITZ

It's science. But it's the science of the MIND. And the mind is not rational. That's the whole point.

ROSEN

Okay, sure. But where's the line?

They reach the ground floor, squint as they emerge into

**EXT. THE TOWER COURTYARD - DAY**

The trainees head toward their white passenger van.

GLASSES

Hey, who was that guy with Douggie D? Like, Fred Rogers is in da HOWSE!

Guffaws from the trainees. As they load into the van:

DOUGLAS (O.S.)

Fitz! You're with me.

Douglas stands by an idling black TOWNCAR. Waves Fitz over. A glimpse of MISTER ROGERS waiting in the back seat.

Some schoolyard OOHs from the trainees -- is Fitz in trouble? -- as they slide the van door closed.

**IN THE BACK SEAT OF THE TOWNCAR**

Fitz sits across from Douglas and Mister Rogers.

DOUGLAS

This is Jim Fitzgerald.

FITZ

Fitz. And you are?

Mister Rogers doesn't answer. Hiding behind a bland smile even as he launches right into hardball questions.

MISTER ROGERS

Why are you ten years older than everyone else in your class?

FITZ

Uh, well... I started out as a beat cop. Bensalem, outside Philly? Did that ten years before joining the FBI.

MISTER ROGERS

You're too smart to have been walking a beat for ten years. What happened?

FITZ

I wrote a parking ticket. Chief asked me to fix it, guy was a friend of a friend. I refused. So.

MISTER ROGERS

What, you're like the Serpico of parking tickets? Some people would call that stupid. Or at least overly literal.

FITZ

Sure. But it's still the right thing to do.

MISTER ROGERS

You ever been told you don't play well with others?

FITZ

My whole life. But if I believe something, I'm gonna say it.

(MORE)

FITZ (CONT'D)

If I think something's wrong, I'm gonna say so. It gets people really ticked off. It can really mess with my career. But it's how I sleep at night.

Mister Rogers takes this in. Nods. Hands Fitz a TYPED LETTER in a plastic sleeve.

MISTER ROGERS

Take a look at this letter. Tell me what you see.

Fitz looks the letter over. Then chuckles.

FITZ

You're making fun of me. You're making fun of me, right?  
(off their bafflement)  
Oh. It's just, the guys call me...  
But you're talking about the emordnilap, right? "Dad, it is I."

MISTER ROGERS

Um... Explain.

FITZ

Oh. It's a word thing. First letter of each sentence: "Dad it is I."  
Which, okay, no big deal. Except it's an emordnilap. Like a palindrome, except it spells one thing forwards and a different thing backwards.  
"Dad, it is I. Is it I, Dad?" Why?  
Is this part of the exam?

Douglas and Mister Rogers share a look. Mister Rogers takes the letter back.

MISTER ROGERS

It's not part of the exam.

FITZ

Who's the letter from? Did you not know about the--

DOUGLAS

Thanks, Fitz. You can get out now.

They let him out. Fitz watches them drive off. More confused than when he entered.

**EXT. THE FBI'S QUANTICO CAMPUS**

Fitz rejoins his classmates. Walking across the FBI campus toward their dorm.

They pass OTHER FBI AGENTS busting down doors, raiding the shoot house, practicing judo. Meanwhile the BAU Trainees are hefting their BOOKS and BINDERS.

**INT. THE DORM HALLWAY**

The BAU Trainees cross paths with some beefy SWAT guys. It's like jocks and nerds in high school. The SWAT guys chant "ooga-booga" as the profilers scuttle past.

SWAT DUDE

Look out for the juju-men!

ROSEN

(muttering)

Muggles...

FITZ

What's a muggle?

**INT. THE DORM ROOM - DAY**

A few interconnected rooms with bunk beds. The trainees all PACK THEIR BAGS. Moving back home.

PUDGY

I love you guys, but it's gonna be awesome not to be sharing a bedroom with eight dudes.

HANDSOME

Oh come on, you know you're gonna miss my sweet man-musk. One last whiff.

His armpit in the guy's face. They laugh.

Rosen and Fitz pack their bags. Fitz folding everything very precisely. Rosen, still dwelling on the SWAT jocks.

ROSEN

How is it that fifteen years later and we're still the nerds and they're still the jocks? I outrank those guys, and still...

FITZ

Profiling 101. We have a fixed psychological nature that reveals itself in our actions, whether we intend it or not. You compulsively make yourself the nerd because somewhere deep inside you--

ROSEN

(annoyed now)

Yeah, yeah. Thank you, Fitz. It takes one to know one.

FITZ

I wasn't a nerd. I wasn't! Even the nerds wouldn't hang out with me.

ROSEN

(laughing)

Hate to break it to you. Still true now, buddy. See you at graduation.

(running after the others)

You guys getting a drink?

Someone turns the dorm light off. Fitz goes to the switch, turns it back on. Keeps on packing, alone in the empty dorm.

**INT. A SMALL AUDITORIUM AT QUANTICO - THE NEXT DAY**

Douglas stands at the podium, smiling out over the government-issue graduation ceremony. The BAU seal behind him.

DOUGLAS

Congratulations. Your training is complete. Welcome to the Behavioral Analysis Unit.

The trainees and their FAMILIES applaud and WOOOP.

DOUGLAS

You're now part of the elite brotherhood of FBI agents who have to explain what the hell we do, to EVERYBODY, for the rest of our careers. So while your families are all here in one place, I'm going to explain it to THEM so you'll have at least someone in your life who don't think you're some crazy witch-doctor. YET. Just ask my ex-wife. Heh.

Polite chuckles.

DOUGLAS

Criminal profilers study a criminal's behavior for clues to their psychology and behavioral patterns. We then use that to help capture the them. We look at HOW a crime was committed, and use those clues to build a profile of the MIND that committed the crime. To understand what kind of person they are, why they acted this way, and how they might act in the future.

(beat)

You're going to encounter a lot of skepticism. A lot of people who think we're quacks. But we are SCIENTISTS of the MIND. We are pioneers on the final frontier of law enforcement. And in the very worst cases the FBI deals with, you will be their only hope.

This sinks in with the grads. Then, calling names, receiving diplomas, handshake photos in front of the seal. Finally:

DOUGLAS

Agent James Fitzgerald.

Fitz receives his certificate, badge, and, to his surprise:

DOUGLAS

With commendation for superior merit.  
Congratulations, Fitz.

Smiles, handshake, FLASH! Then -- the ceremony's over and everyone is reuniting with their families and

FITZ runs toward his FAMILY. His two sons, DAVEY, 12 and SEAN, 6, race up the aisle and leap into his arms.

SEAN

Go Dad, go Dad, go Dad!

FITZ

Ooh, I missed you guys!

He waddles down the aisle with both boys on him. Toward

ELLIE, his wife. Harried, tired but her face lights up when she sees Fitz. She stands--revealing a VERY PREGNANT STOMACH.

ELLIE

Oh Jim... I'm so proud of you. And sooo glad you're coming home. Thank God.

Fitz just holds her tight. It feels wonderful.

**EXT. FITZ'S HOUSE - BENSLEM, PA - DAY**

White picket fence in the Philly suburbs. A big celebratory cookout in full swing.

It's all for Fitz, but he's lingering uncomfortably around the edges. Sipping a Sprite. Watching all these big salt-of-the-earth blue-collar Philly families devour the hot dogs and burgers and beer.

IN THE SIDE YARD

DAVEY clinks beer-bottles with Fitz's meaty older brother, UNCLE JEFF, and Fitz's DAD, a caved-in old alkie who showed up half-wasted and is now all the way under.

Davey sip the beer, pretends to like it. FITZ comes running.

FITZ

Hey! Davey. Put that down. Jeff, what are you doing? He's twelve.

FITZ'S DAD

Here he is, the smartest guy in law enforcement. Like the skinniest kid in fat camp! Heh.

FITZ

Yeah, thanks Dad. Davey: put it down.

Davey CHUGS. Fitz grabs it away, dumps it out.

Uncle Jeff shakes his head. Notices Fitz's Sprite can -- he's the only one here not drinking. It catches in Jeff's craw.

UNCLE JEFF

The thing about your dad, he's spent his life collecting pieces of paper to prove he's better than everyone else. But he won't even have a beer with his own brother. Whatcha think about that.

FITZ'S DAD

Hey Jim-boy, how many more degrees you think it's gonna take before you can figure out what the hell's wrong with you?

Jeff guffaws. Before Fitz can respond -- SIRENS, and a POLICE CRUISER comes screeching up.

BOB YEZZI (33) hops out, roaring with laughter. A cop's cop, Philly tough-guy Italian. He vaults the fence, rushes to Fitz and wraps him in a big, back-slapping hug.



YEZZI

Jesus, Jim. Look at you! Friggin unbelievable!

Yezzi grabs a beer, ching-ching-chings for silence, and gives a toast. Ultra-sincere and just bursting with pride.

YEZZI

Fitz and I walked the beat for ten years. I've seen Fitz go from the black sheep of his family... to black sheep of the foot patrols... To black sheep of the detective squad. Now, finally, he's found his calling. To be the black sheep of the FBI.

(Laughter)

But seriously. When I was out drinking and watching the Eagles, Jim was heading to night school. When I was napping in the squad car, Jim was studying. When I was chasing guys down alleys, he was back in the car "studying"! I'm trying to say, this guy didn't get nothing given to him. He WORKED for it. He earned it. Proud of you, bud. Cheers.

Cheers.

**INT. IN THE KITCHEN - DAY**

Ellie and HER MOTHER prepare the desserts. Ellie's sister JANET is perched on the countertop with a highball.

JANET

He should be throwing us a party. Four months of training, yeah right, it's a vacation! Off at Camp Quantico while the rest of us pick up his slack.

ELLIE'S MOTHER

Well, the commendation is wonderful but I'm just happy that he'll be back at a desk and coming home at 5 every day. Those boys need a father, that's the long and the short of it.

ELLIE

Mom, could you take this outside?

Ellie's mother carries a strawberry pie outside.

JANET

You know you're making the same mistake that Mom did with Dad. "He's a cop, therefore he's a saint." Well all the citations in the world won't make him a good person. A good husband, a good father. I hope you know that.

ELLIE

You know what, Jan? I'm PROUD of him. You can talk c - r - a - p about him all day, but at the end of the day, he's out there saving LIVES. He's the one out there killing himself so that people like YOU can be safe in your homes. It's not easy. For any of us. But it's RIGHT. Now carry this out.

Ellie shoves a pie into Janet's hands.

**EXT. IN THE YARD - LATER**

Fitz and Ellie meet each other's eyes across the cookout. Share a long, sweet look. And everybody else falls away.

**INT. FITZ'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT**

Fitz and Ellie alone together at last. Making out on their bed. Tender. His hands in her hair, her lips on his ear.

Then, little Sean in the doorway. In his footie pajamas.

SEAN

Um, can I have a bedtime snack?

Fitz and Ellie groan. Ellie grins up at Fitz.

ELLIE

Now THIS is when it's really really good to have you back...

He rolls his eyes, laughs. Rolls off her and goes to take little Sean's hand.

**INT. SEAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Fitz lays in Sean's tiny bed. Sean snuggles up and instantly falls asleep. A moment later, Fitz falls asleep too.

**INT. THE LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT MORNING**

Fitz plays with his sons, delighted to be rolling around on the carpet with them again. He builds a Lego pirate ship, shows it to Sean.

SEAN

I don't like pirates any more. Amy told me they were pretty much bad guys.

FITZ

Who's Amy?

SEAN

She used to babysit us on Saturdays. She was awesome. She knew all about humuhumunukunukuapua'as.

FITZ

About humu-*whats*?

SEAN

Humuhumunukunukuapua'as. If you don't know, I can't explain.

AT THE TABLE, Davey is building and painting Warhammer figurines -- little fantasy warriors for a tabletop wargame.

Fitz sits, watches as Davey assembles them with great skill. X-acto knives and dental tools. Fitz inspects a tiny knight.

FITZ

Very nice. What are these?

DAVEY

Grail Knights. But I'm thinking about switching to Chaos. See? I bought Nurgle to try him out.

He shows Fitz what he's painting -- an obese pusbag demon.

DAVEY

Bretonnians used to be awesome, but now Chaos is way stronger. Joe and Fat Chris pretty much win every time now.

FITZ

Maybe it's better to lose as a knight than win as a demon. Take the high road, fight for humanity, you know?

DAVEY

If you lose as a knight, Nurgle turns you into a Nurgling after you die. So either way, you're a pusbag in the end.

Fitz nods. Such is life. Then, delicately:

FITZ

Hey, Mom mentioned something about Miss Gately. You been getting into trouble in her class?

Silence from Davey. And then:

DAVEY

Aunt Janet says you're just a selfish s-h-i-t and you only became a profiler to get away from us.

FITZ

Language! And she didn't say that.

DAVEY

I only spelled it. And it's true. Sean heard her. Aunt Janet came over one night and had tee martoonies.

FITZ

Huh. And what'd your mom say to Aunt Janet?

SEAN

She said you'd be head of the FBI someday. And that every marriage has downs and ups. And Aunt Janet wouldn't know what it is to be in it for the long haul anyway.

Fitz laughs.

FITZ

See, one day when you're looking for a woman to marry, that's what you're looking for, right there.

**INT. SAINT CHARLES BORROMEIO CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY**

Sunday morning. The Fitzgeralds, freshly scrubbed and in their Sunday best, singing a hymn.

Receiving communion. Davey declines, gets a blessing instead. Fitz shoots Ellie a questioning look. She shrugs.

Shaking hands with the old priest after Mass. Chatting with old friends.

**EXT. MAIN STREET - LATER**

All-American, blue-collar small town. The Fitzgeralds carry boxes of muffins back to their car.

Fitz double-takes -- he spots DOUGLAS sitting in the DINER across the street. Eating breakfast with someone. Weird.

**INT. FITZ'S HOUSE - SUNDAY MORNING**

Fitz and Ellie lie on the couch while the boys watch Earthworm Jim on TV. Fitz does a crossword while Ellie leafs through Parade, her head on his lap. She smiles up at him.

ELLIE

THIS is what I really missed.

Fitz nods. Him too. Then, the DOORBELL. Neither wants to move. But finally, Ellie hauls herself up. After a moment:

ELLIE (O.S.)

Fitz! It's for you.

Fitz puts down his crossword. Not without regret.

**IN THE HALLWAY**

Fitz stops short. DOUGLAS and MISTER ROGERS in the doorway. A moment of awkwardness. They're not supposed to be here.

DOUGLAS

Sorry to bother you on your Sunday.

FITZ

Yeah, we were just, uh, enjoying being back together. As a family.

DOUGLAS

Of course. Apologies. But we have something to discuss with you.

Fitz pauses a moment. Considers his FAMILY in the living room. Then these two men on his doorstep. He doesn't want to let them in. But finally, he steps aside.

**EXT. IN THE WOODS - DAY (1997)**

Fitz threads his way back through the pines. Towards home. The dead rabbit hanging from his belt. We see the tendril of smoke rising from the chimney of his cabin in the woods.

He comes to his tidy little VEGETABLE GARDEN in a clearing. One of the boundary stakes is trampled. He kneels to fix it. Then his hair stands on end.

BOOTPRINTS in the soil.

Fitz goes on high alert -- Notices DARK SHADOWS moving in the trees -- MEN IN THE WOODS. Someone's out there. COMING FOR HIM.

And then we CUT TO BLACK.

END ACT ONE.

ACT TWO.

**INT. FITZ'S SITTING ROOM - DAY** [1995]

Fitz and Ellie show the men into the formal sitting room. Everyone stands there, waiting for Ellie to leave.

ELLIE

Can I bring you something? Coffee?

DOUGLAS

We won't be long. Thank you, though.  
You have such a lovely home.

She doesn't want to leave them alone with Fitz. But finally:

ELLIE

...I'll bring in some coffee.

She leaves, and the men sit. Douglas leans forward.

MISTER ROGERS / TURCHIE

Fitz, my name is Terry Turchie. I'm one of the lead agents in the Unabom Task Force.

FITZ

UTF? Wasn't that mothballed? I thought Unabom was over.

DOUGLAS

Six years, not a peep. They thought he was dead. But he's back.

TURCHIE

Three new mail bombs, better than before. Latest one a week ago in Sacramento. Timber lobbyist.

Turchie starts dealing crime-scene photos onto the coffee table. THE BOMBING we saw in the opening. The office turned inside out, the BOSS torn to bloody shreds. Fitz winces.

FITZ

You're sure it's him. Not a copycat?

TURCHIE

We're sure. And we need a profile.

DOUGLAS

I want to send YOU. You're best I've ever trained.

(MORE)

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

And this is a career case on a silver platter. It's one month. You go out there, build the profile, come back to the BAU with a big gold star.

Fitz takes this in. Staring down at the grisly photos. The boss, blown apart. The cratered desk.

The door opens. Everyone scrambles to hide the photos as Ellie brings coffee and muffins.

DOUGLAS

Thank you Ellie, that's really lovely.

As soon as she leaves, the photos re-emerge again. And Turchie adds the "Dad it is I" LETTER from the car ride.

FITZ

This is from him? From Unabom?

TURCHIE

Thirty FBI agents have been looking at this letter for eight months, and none of them saw the emordnilap.

FITZ

Well. That's just because it's a stupid word thing.

TURCHIE

Maybe. But we've had profilers working on this thing for fifteen years. And we're right where we started. I want to bring in a guy who sees things differently. Like it or not, that's YOU.

FITZ

Look, I'm really flattered. But I've been away from my family for too long. I can't do that to Ellie and the boys.

DOUGLAS

(standing to leave:)

Do me a favor. Think about it. Keep those photos. That guy with his face blown off? He had a wife and kids too.

This lands with Fitz.

**INT. IN THE HALLWAY - DAY**

Ellie shows Turchie and Douglas out the door with relish. Turns to Fitz, arms akimbo. *Well?*



FITZ  
I turned them down.

ELLIE  
Good. Because right now, you need to solve the mystery of the missing shin pads. BOYS, YOU BETTER HAVE YOUR CLEATS ON!

**EXT. THE SOCCER FIELD - DAY**

The great ritual of suburban family life. Dads screaming while their kids play. Fitz and YEZZI watch their sons from the BLEACHERS. Talking.

YEZZI  
Are you SERIOUS? You said NO? Why?

FITZ  
In the back of my mind, it's like: Maybe I only made it this far because nobody was really paying attention. I got lucky. But really I don't deserve to be here. And when I get to the UTF, with all the best agents in the country looking at me? The Emperor has no clothes.

YEZZI  
DUUUUUUDE. Think about it. They came and chose YOU out of all the dudes in the whole COUNTRY. To profile like the worst dickhead in American history. A neighborhood guy, a guy I used to walk the beat with, and they're gonna fly you to California? I mean, I never even been on a plane!

FITZ  
California. That's another thing I just never got.

YEZZI  
Surfing and babes! What's not to get?  
(leaping up, BELLOWING:)  
REF! THAT WAS A HANDBALL! WAKE UP!

**INT. THE GROCERY STORE - LATER**

As Fitz waits in the checkout line, he sees: on the covers of all the magazines, THE UNABOMBER SKETCH. Those black aviators, staring out at Fitz. Until he's snapped back by

CASHIER  
Your total is...

**EXT. FITZ'S FRONT PORCH - LATER**

Fitz carries groceries in. Sean and Davey wave their plunder-- a bag of Oreos and a big motorized toy truck. Ellie, angry.

FITZ  
They snuck is past me!

Sean's truck blares the loudest CANNED SFX you've ever heard. Ellie can't help but laugh.

ELLIE  
Those batteries better run out fast.

FITZ  
God. I pray.

THE GODDAMNED TRUCK  
BACK IT UP! LET'S PLAY SOME MUSIC!

As Fitz brings the groceries inside, the MAILMAN drops off their mail and a brown-paper PACKAGE. Sean scoops it up and runs inside.

SEAN  
I call dibs!

And SOMETHING occurs to Fitz. He hurries inside after Sean.

**INT. THE KITCHEN**

Fitz watches as Sean tries to pry the box open. Realizing -- it's a signature Unabom package. It could even be the exact same box we saw in the opening -- brown paper, lots of tape, "OPEN IMMEDIATELY"...

FITZ  
Sean, wait. Who's this from?

ELLIE (O.S.)  
It's from my mom! Cookies.

FITZ  
Let me open this, Sean.

SEAN  
You're the one who bought us Double-  
Stuff Oreos, Dad! Don't pretend  
you're all anti-cookies now.

Fitz grabs the box. Trying to hide his anxiety.

FITZ

Gimme the scissors. I'm gonna open it.

Standoff. Then Sean hands over the scissors.

Fitz cuts through the layers of tape. Hesitates. Then opens the flaps and----

Nothing. Just cookies from Grandma.

Sean and Davey grab the package and start fighting over it.

Fitz sits there. Staring at the table. Nothing happened. He's crazy for thinking something might have. But -- for him, it's like a bomb went off.

#### **IN THE UPSTAIRS OFFICE**

Fitz sits in the armchair. Looking at the PHOTOS of the Sacramento bombing again. Can't let it go.

Sean comes in with a book, climbs on his lap. Fitz quickly hides the photos away.

SEAN

Will you read me Tootles?

Fitz reads. The smell of his son's hair. Ellie in the doorway, watching them with a smile. And those grisly photos hidden behind his back.

Fitz, torn in two. Love versus duty.

#### **INT. SORRENTO'S RISTORANTE - NIGHT**

A nice Italian place. White tablecloths, candles.

ELLIE

This is really nice. It's just so good to be here with you, Jim.

Fitz nods. Takes her hand. His face is etched with guilt.

ELLIE

I know that look. *That's* not why we're here, is it?

(visibly wilting:)

Oh. Ooof. Jim.

FITZ

I just want to... open the discussion.

The WAITER brings their food. They stare down at it in awkward silence.

FITZ

I told them no. And I meant it. But it's Unabom. That's the case. And, the package today? Your mom, she wraps her packages just like he does. And I realized--it's not some abstract thing. There are packages out there, right now, with bombs inside them. And it could be someone's KIDS that open them. It could be Sean, opening a box from grandma and then...

We can see Ellie fighting to stay strong. Staring down at her hands clasped on her pregnant stomach.

FITZ

And I could be the one who makes sure that never happens again. I could make a difference in the world. Finally. After a lifetime of being, honestly, a pretty mediocre cop.

ELLIE

How... how long is it for?

FITZ

It's a month. Then I'm right back here. I swear.

Ellie nods. Working so hard not to cry. Then she looks around the restaurant.

ELLIE

You know, my dad would do the exact same thing, back when he was a detective. He'd take my mom out for a nice dinner so she wouldn't make a big scene when he broke the news that he's taking some big case and wouldn't be around for months and months.

FITZ

I'm sorry, I didn't mean for this to--

ELLIE

No, my point is: for them, that nice restaurant? It was Buzzy's Roast Beef. I'm trying to say -- look at us, here. This is a big step up.

Talk about finding the silver lining. Then she stands.

ELLIE  
I gotta pee again. Pregnant,  
remember?

**IN THE WOMEN'S BATHROOM**

Ellie alone in the stall, peeing. Fighting to hold it together.

The baby, moving around. And then she can't stop the tears.

**AT THEIR TABLE**

Fitz, waiting alone in the restaurant. Staring out the window at the city whirling past outside.

Ellie returns, red-eyed but re-composed. Sits.

ELLIE  
It's the right thing to do. It is.

WAITER  
Do we have room for dessert?

ELLIE  
(immediately)  
OhGodYes.

**INT. FITZ'S KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Back at Fitz's house, Janet is waiting.

FITZ  
Hi Janet! Thanks so much for  
babysitting.

Janet just looks at him. Hand on hip, sucking her cheek. She turns to Ellie, whispering as Ellie moves past her.

JANET  
Omgod, were you crying? What did he  
do? Did you tell him what we talked  
about?

ELLIE  
Janet. Thank you. But good night.

The BOYS are watching from the stairs.

DAVEY  
What's going on, Dad?

FITZ  
Nothing. Bed! Now!

**INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - LATE NIGHT**

Fitz, watching his family sleep. Ellie, tossing and turning. The boys sound asleep. Sean clutching his new truck.

**EXT. THE FRONT PORCH - LATE NIGHT**

Fitz sits out on the porch. Looking through the crime scene photos again. Gazing out over the silent neighborhood. Alone in the universe. God's lonely man.

**EXT. FBI HEADQUARTERS, QUANTICO VIRGINIA**

Fitz badges through the SECURITY GATES with his shiny new BAU badge. Inside, we see THE BAU HEADQUARTERS, housed in a boxy poured-concrete tower on the Quantico campus.

**INT. THE BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS UNIT HEADQUARTERS - DAY**

Day one in the BAU for all the recent grads. Distinctly unglamorous. Pinning Demotivational posters to fabric-walled cubicles. Windows 3.1 desktop computers stiiiiil booting.

ROSEN

Big day, Fitzie! Look. Tagging case files for the database. Grab a stack! I'll teach you Excel. It's fun.

Rosen is already in his own heaven: spreadsheets, stacks of manila folders, a poster reading "Stats: The Final Frontier."

FITZ

Thanks but no thanks. I'm going on special assignment.

PUDGY

How did YOU get a special? What is it?

Fitz mimes locking his lips. DOUGLAS drags himself into the office, deeply hungover. Fitz tails him into

**INT. DOUGLAS'S OFFICE - DAY**

Douglas unpacks his briefcase and tote bags. Legal pads, crumpled papers -- and airplane bottles of scotch half-hidden at the bottom. Douglas looks over his dark glasses at Fitz.

DOUGLAS

I'm writing a book. "He Who Fights Monsters."

FITZ

"...must take care not to become one." Blech. That old chestnut.

DOUGLAS

Lemme give you some life advice. When someone tells you the name of their baby, or of their book, the only acceptable response is, "Love that name. It's perfect." Wanna try that?

FITZ

That's not in my nature.

DOUGLAS

Just try. The reed, not the oak.

FITZ

"Love that name. It's really perfect."

Douglas glances out into the office.

DOUGLAS

I take it from all those hangdog looks out there that you're taking the Special Assignment.

FITZ

Yessir. I'll do it. I'll take Unabom.

DOUGLAS

Good man. Go home, pack your bags. And remember, Fitz! "He who fights monsters..."

And off Fitz's groan, we CUT TO:

**EXT. FITZ'S CABIN IN THE WOODS - DAY (1997)**

Fitz approaches HIS CABIN. Log-built, handmade. Striking similarity to Thoreau's cabin. The kind of place we imagine retreating to. But -- SHADOWS move inside.

Fitz moves in a low crouch back toward the trees. The searchers spot him, circle behind him. Surrounding him--

Fitz's hand goes to the HATCHET on his belt --

FITZ

You're on private property! I'm law enforcement!

Then -- a fat FBI GUY in a suit comes out onto the porch. Fitz's mouth falls open.

FAT MAN

We know, Fitz. Now put down the axe  
and get in here.

**INT. FITZ'S CABIN - DAY (1997)**

Small and minimal. Franklin stove, bed, table, chair, books.

More FBI honchos inside -- Turchie, older now, floating  
wraithlike in the background.

The Fat Man, JIM FREEMAN (60s). Fitz's old boss, the heavy  
complacency of highly-praised mediocrity.

And "MAD MAX" NOEL, 50s, a corpulent windbag, walking around  
the shack, pawing Fitz's things.

NOEL

Jesus, look at the boy genius now,  
huh? Living like an animal.

These guys are all going to blend together for now, but  
that's okay. For now, what's clear is that these are men  
Fitz knows, and is not happy to be seeing again. The air  
between them thick with history and tension.

FITZ

What are you doing in my house?

NOEL

We tried to call. But since you've  
gone Full Teddy K on us...

Fitz flares. Snatches his notebooks back from Noel, shoves  
them away. Freeman motions for Noel to back off.

FREEMAN

We don't want to be here. You're  
pretty much the last person I want to  
be talking to. But... we need you.  
Ted Kaczynski's turning his trial into  
a circus. Fired his lawyers, refused  
an insanity defense, refused a plea  
deal. He's contesting the search  
warrants that YOU wrote. It's a  
nightmare. He could WALK.

NOEL

We want you to get into the room with  
Ted Kaczynski. Face to face.  
Interrogate him, get a confession.  
Close this thing.



FITZ

Send in someone else. ANYBODY else.  
I'm done.

NOEL

Ted says he'll only talk to the man  
who actually caught him. And for  
whatever reason he thinks that's YOU.

FITZ

It IS me. You guys were chasing your  
tail for years until I came in and...

Fitz stops himself. Not worth it.

FITZ

You guys took my life, and you put it  
through a shredder. Now I've finally  
pieced something back together,  
something GOOD. And you want me to go  
BACK IN? Screw you.

NOEL

WE never put you through a shredder.  
You did that all on your own. In  
fact, you BUILT the damn shredder just  
so you could jump in! Everyone else  
walked out of the UTF with promotions,  
commendations... hell, Douglas even  
has a book deal. Embossed cover, the  
whole bit. You know that?

Fitz feels a sting of betrayal at this.

FREEMAN

We're asking you, Fitz. We could  
order you... We could have the Forest  
Service come in here and--

FITZ

You wanna threaten me?! Get out of  
here. GET! OUT!

A momentary stand-off. Nose to nose. Then Freeman backs  
off, and the FBI guys all retreat to their cars. All except--

**EXT. OUTSIDE THE CABIN (1997)**

JOHN DOUGLAS. Sitting on the woodpile, waiting for the  
others to clear out. Blowsy, gone to seed, but still keeping  
up the three-piece suit and the Freudian-analyst pose.

FITZ

You too, huh? Hope this isn't keeping you from your book tour. Them, I understand. They're cattle. But you were supposed to know better. You were supposed to look out for me.

DOUGLAS

I know. I'm here to make amends. Those guys are only here because if Ted breaks, they all get fat promotions. This is their Hail Mary -- "maybe old Fitz can save our careers."

Fitz gives a sardonic laugh.

FITZ

I shoulda guessed.

DOUGLAS

But. They're right. This is your chance to finally look the Unabomber in the face. And settle this.

FITZ

I found him, I caught him, I put him in jail. It's settled!

DOUGLAS

I mean settle this for YOURSELF. So you can have a LIFE. A FUTURE. You were the best student I ever had, Fitz. You're better than this. You deserve MORE.

FITZ

More than WHAT? My life is good now. It's... It's good. I'm FREE. I'm finally free.

Douglas sighs. Takes in the cabin, the trees, the birds and the woodsmoke and pine. Shrugs. Maybe Fitz is right.

DOUGLAS

I think about you out here sometimes. Sometimes with pity. But more often with envy. You had the guts to do it, to do what everyone else just fantasizes about or watches on TV. But. However beautiful, however free... You still have monsters under the bed.

Douglas nods to Fitz's cabin. To the big STEAMER TRUNK hidden under Fitz's bed. And Douglas heads for his car.

A moment later, all the FBI cars drive off down the dirt track. And Fitz is all alone once again.

He glances inside at the box under the bed.

Then he turns, grabs an AXE, and starts splitting firewood like he's Lizzie Borden.

**INT. FITZ'S CABIN - EVENING (1997)**

Alone again. Carrying in armloads of firewood.

On the table, a hundred dollars in cash, with a note: GAS MONEY. Fitz crumples the bills, flings them away.

Tends the fire, skins the rabbit he caught. Trying to get back to his life. But the knife keeps slipping.

**LATER THAT NIGHT (1997)**

Fitz lies in bed. Something gnawing at his mind. Then, finally, flings the covers off. Drags out the HUGE STEAMER TRUNK under the bed. Opens it.

Inside, an intense mound of documents, photocopies, color-coded indices... photos of letters, of the UNABOMBER, of his CABIN... And, buried underneath it all, a wooden box.

Fitz digs it out. Flips it open. Stares into it a long while. We don't see what's inside. Then he snaps the box closed. Shoves it away, back into the darkness.

Fitz searches in the corner of his room. The crumpled gas money. Flattens the bills out on the table. Considers them.

**EXT. IN THE WOODS - NIGHT (1997)**

Fitz, dressed now, wades through the undergrowth with a LANTERN. Clears away branches, revealing an old CAR hidden in the brush.

The car ROARS to life. An explosion of wings as nightjars burst into the sky, vanish into the night. As Fitz rolls out.

END ACT TWO.

ACT THREE.**INT. FITZ'S HOUSE - ON THE STAIRCASE - DAY**

DAVEY and SEAN sit on the staircase. Glumly awaiting their father's departure.

A CAR HORN outside. The TAXI out the window.

Fitz kisses Ellie, lugs his suitcase out of the bedroom.

FITZ

C'mere, guys. Gimme a big hug.

Davey slumps over and gives a sulky cold-fish hug.

Little Sean refuses to move. Angry at Fitz.

SEAN

Aunt Janet was right. You'd rather go hang out with psychos than be with us.

The TAXI honks again.

FITZ

Sean, honey-- I'll explain it all later. But right now, let's just have a nice hug, okay? Please. Now.

Sean stands, hard and hateful, and allows his father to hug him. Submission, not love. The best Fitz is gonna get.

**INT. THE TAXI - DAY**

Fitz watches through the rear windshield as the house disappears behind him.

**IN THE BEDROOM**

Ellie's veneer of toughness crumbles. She sits on the edge of the bed and buries her face in her hands. Sobbing.

**ON THE STAIRS**

Davey watches the cab disappear. Emotionless.

Sean pointedly refuses to look. Sitting on the steps, his back turned to his brother, to the window, to everything.

**IN THE CAB**

The house passes from view. Fitz turns to face what's coming.

And as the world glides past his window, we dissolve to:

**I/E. FITZ'S CAR / A SUPERHIGHWAY - DUSK (1997)**

It's 1997 now and Fitz is driving his old beater, making his way out of the woods.

Driving down A SUPERHIGHWAY at dusk. Swimming through the otherworldly sea of lights and cars.

Fitz struggles to process it all. The speed, the lights, relentless, crushing. Finally, he slows. Pulls over at

**A HIGHWAY OVERPASS (1997)**

Fitz gets out. Looks out over the vast cloverleaf below. Profoundly alone.

A CRICKET on his clothes, having hitched a ride. It hops down, hesitates, then leaps into the traffic and is gone.

And the look in Fitz's eyes -- they're the eyes of a prophet. He SEES something in all this.

**INT. A GAS STATION - DUSK (1997)**

Muzak and fluorescent lights. Fitz hands the crumpled Gas Money bills to an attendant. Takes the key-on-a-broom-handle. On the TV, Will Ferrel plays Ted Kaczynski on SNL.

IN THE BATHROOM, Fitz washes up. Considers himself in the mirror. Not good, but there's nothing more he can do.

**EXT. OUTSIDE AT THE PUMPS - DUSK (1997)**

Fitz pauses to watch an AIRPLANE pass overhead. The endless contrail burning red in the sunset. And then we CUT TO:

**EXT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - DAY [1995]**

Establishing.

**INT. AIRPORT ARRIVALS - DAY**

Fitz, bewildered as people stream past him. Then, striding toward him through the crowd is --

TABBY MILGRIM  
You have that new-profiler smell.  
Tabby Milgrim.

TABBY MILGRIM (25). A street agent fresh out of the Tenderloin's piss-soaked alleys. Four-Non-Blondes NorCal, short, stocky, could be Hispanic or Native American. Ill-fitting pant suit but whatever, why you looking anyway.

TABBY

I'm your new partner. Actually, I'm the whole Behavioral Unit. C'mon, let's get you out of this craziness.

#### **OUTSIDE AT THE CURB**

Tabby's car is a mint-green 1985 Subaru Justy. Total beater. THE OFFSPRING blare from the tapedeck. She shoves the In-n-Out wrappers off the passenger's seat so Fitz can sit.

TABBY

(by way of apology)

Night school. Its sucks butt. Plus University of Phoenix is about a fart and a half away from losing accreditation. But whatever. As long as I get my degree before they go under, we're all good.

A beat-up Intro to Psych textbook under Fitz's feet. Tabby flashes a peace sign to the airport cops as she drives off.

FITZ

Oh. But if you're Behavioral, you must've done some training at the BAU, right? So you can kinda guide me through a little.

TABBY

Hell no! I'm just a street agent. But I'm studying Psychology, so I guess that's why they put me in Behavioral. Plus I'm good with people, so.

FITZ

Oh. Great.

(looking out the window)

The flags are all half-staff. Your governor die or something?

TABBY

Nah man, way more important. You didn't hear? Jerry Garcia died.

FITZ

You're joking, right? ... You're not joking. All the flags in the city, for... Huh.

TABBY

All the flags in the friggin STATE. Your first time in NorCal, huh?

FITZ

He was in the Grateful Dead?

TABBY

Oh, maaaaan... Fitz... You have much to learn, man-cub. Much to learn.

**EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF SAN FRANCISCO - DAY**

Winding through the nest of highways. A glimpse of the Bay far in the distance, between warehouses and discount motels.

**EXT. THE UNABOM TASK FORCE HEADQUARTERS - DAY**

Tabby pulls into an old HOLIDAY INN. The Holiday Inn logos have been torn off, leaving just the motel's decrepit shell.

**IN THE ENTRYWAY**

TERRY TURCHIE meets at the security booth and signs them in.

TURCHIE

You ever been on a big operation?

FITZ

I was on this one bank robbery that was pretty huge. We had like fifteen full-time agents. Pretty intense.

Turchie grins at this. "Cute." And pushes open the double-doors to the Unabom Task Force. Fitz's mouth falls open.

TURCHIE

Welcome to the Unabom Task Force.

**INT. THE UNABOM TASK FORCE BULLPEN - DAY**

Fitz takes it in. Dwarfed, AWED by the scale of it. He's never seen anything like this.

HUNDREDS of agents work in the massive central BULLPEN. It's crammed with detectives' desks. Management offices around the edges and off the mezzanine.

Fitz was not prepared for this. He trails Tabby through the bullpen, gawking. The country mouse in the big city.

Veteran FBI agents everywhere -- thick, jewelled men chewing donuts and shuffling paper. Fitz stares, starstruck, at one extra-thick, extra-jewelled agent.

FITZ

That's T-Rex Benson! He took down the whole Bad Axe Militia cell. He's... I mean, he's a legend.

TABBY

If you say so. We got a lot of big resumes around here. And then we have... THESE guys.

At one of the very few computer terminals, a whole team of agents is gathered to play Minesweeper.

TABBY

Unabom Task Force is a three-agency investigation. But FBI is in charge. So ATF and Postal Service Inspectors figure the FBI's gonna get all the credit anyway, so why work. Classic inter-agency cooperation. Look, they're starting the briefing.

#### **INT. BRIEFING ROOM - DAY**

A remarkably obese Special Agent gives the on-boarding PowerPoint to the new arrivals.

OBESE

Arrright, listen up. We're gonna rip this bandaid off quick.

Fitz furiously takes notes in a legal pad. Tabby plays Snake Xenia on her flip-phone. She's heard this a dozen times.

OBESE

We're hunting the deadliest serial bomber in history. The Unabomber. He's been planting and mailing bombs for 18 years. 17 bombs, four killed, dozens injured. And we have really no friggin clue who he is or why he's doing this. He calls himself "F.C." We call him Unabomber because his early targets were Universities and Airlines.



Clicking through SLIDES of each bombing, map/photo/victims. The details aren't important -- it's about feeling the flood of death and destruction up on screen.

OBESE

1978, Northwestern. Second one there in '79... November 1979, nearly takes down American Airlines flight 444... 1980, United Airlines president gets his face blown in... More university bombs in 81, 82, 82, 85, 85... Boeing in 85... Two computer shops in 85 and 87, and that's when we got our only eyewitness, who gave us this.

On the screen: the famous black-and-white sketch of the Unabomber in glasses and a hoodie.

OBESE

Then, nothing for six years. We thought he was dead, or maybe finally got laid.

(chuckles from the room)

Then, *he's baaaack*. Epstein at UC. Gelernter at Yale. The Exxon Valdez's PR guy, Mosser. And just last week, Gil Murray in Sacramento. Why these targets? Why now? Why's he doing this? No clue. So we got good old-fashioned legwork and forensics. That's our play.

FITZ

(raising his hand)

What forensic leads do we have right now?

OBESE

I'm getting to that. Please let me continue.

(without transition)

We have no forensic leads. Not even one partial print. But, we figure eventually he's gonna screw up. And maybe he already did.

Obese clicks through to a slide of a typed letter.

OBESE

The letter itself is blah-blah-blah. But forensics discovered THIS:

INDENTED WRITING on the letter: "Call Nathan R 7:00 PM".

OBESE

We figure he wrote himself a Post-it on top of the letter. That's our first real lead. FBI agents are now interviewing every single person named Nathan R-something in the country. Our plan b is to look for Nathans with an "R" middle name.

FITZ

(softly, to Tabby:)

Is he serious? There must be... ten, twenty thousand Nathan R's. More!

Tabby just shrugs.

OBESE

Our second big lead is that the addresses he uses all come from one particular edition of "Who's Who." So right now we have agents visiting every public library in America to see if librarians have noticed anything suspicious. And... that's it. Have a great day, don't forget to tip your driver.

And suddenly the briefing's over. Fitz, shocked --

FITZ

That's it? Eighteen years and that's all we've got?

TABBY

Yup, pretty much. Next on our tour...

**INT. THE CALL CENTER - DAY**

An old ballroom set up with a hundred telephones. Secretaries answer calls, take notes, type up reports and add them to a growing mound of paper.

Agents file in, drop forms in the inbox, grab fresh forms from the outbox, file out. One after another, like ants.

FITZ

What IS this?

TABBY

They set up a tip line and announced it on every TV news show. So now we get 250 calls a day. And every single one has to be followed up on.

(MORE)

TABBY (CONT'D)

Hundreds of agents all over the country, verifying that no, Grandma didn't actually see the Unabomber in her dumpster. How's that make you feel?

FITZ

Actually, kind of excited. Seriously. They need us. Our profile will be the lens that focuses all this wasted energy. Isn't that exciting for you?

TABBY

...Mildly.

Turchie plops his head in, beckons Fitz.

TURCHIE

Ready to meet the boss?

FITZ

I thought you WERE the boss.

#### **IN THE HALLWAY**

TURCHIE

I'm your priest. I'll guide you through troubled waters. But your bishop and the Pope are in there. Max Noel. And His Holiness Jim Freeman, who holds the keys to heaven and hell.

Turchie points to

#### **THE CORNER OFFICE**

We met FREEMAN and NOEL at Fitz's cabin. Old-school good-ol-boy alpha-jocks. Freeman's Big Man on Campus and relishing it. "Mad Max" Noel is Freeman's foul-mouthed pit bull.

Freeman has his feet on the desk and is telling a dirty story. He waves Fitz and Turchie in.

FREEMAN

The new head-shrinker? You're just in time! Look at this, we just got the tip that's going to break open the case. Lady calls, says she's dead certain she just went on a date with the Unabomber. Because who else would take her out on a lovely date, make sweet love like an angel, and then poop on her kitchen floor on his way out? Fits the profile, right?!

Freeman and Noel are cracking up. Noel wipes a tear.

NOEL

Best part is, we got five agents canvassing the area looking for the Mad Crapper of Spokane. Imagine that guy's face when G-men show up on his doorstep demanding a stool sample!

Turchie, smiling politely, pats Fitz on the shoulder and mildly floats out the door. Not one of the boys.

FREEMAN

Welcome aboard, Fitz. We sent Turchie to bring back the best man he could find. That's you.

Fitz pumps Freeman's hand. Genuinely in awe.

FITZ

Sir, I'm honored to be working with you. I studied your cases at the academy. The Spring Hill killer. And the Sheffield abduction? I think any other agent that would have ended in a murder-suicide. And Agent Noel. The Black Panthers sting in 1981. I've always wanted to ask you, how did you know when to go in?

NOEL

Well, it comes down to trusting your gut, and when you go, go balls-out.

FITZ

Well, I'm just really excited to be here and to learn from you both.

FREEMAN

(eating it up)

I love that attitude. So look, here's what you'll be working on.

Freeman hands Fitz a document. Fitz looks it over, confused. It's a single page of short sentences. Noel reads it aloud.

NOEL

"Low IQ. Formerly employed by an airline. Mechanic or technician. No higher education, possibly little/no high school. Raised in Ohio (Cincinnati or Cleveland likely)."

FREEMAN

That's your foundation. Your job here is to take that, and flesh it out.

FITZ

Uh, what is this?

NOEL

It's the current profile.

FITZ

Well... mm... Where's the rest of it?

Noel and Freeman share a grin.

FREEMAN

That's what I like to hear. Flesh it out. Lot of bullet points, lot of technical words. Couple of weeks, get it turned in nice and neat, no typos, get you back home. Okey doke?

FITZ

Well, that's not-- I mean, this isn't really a profile. It's not scientific, it's just... guesses.

NOEL

No offense, but calling a profile "just guesses" is a tautology.

FREEMAN

Look, this profile came out of ten years of work. TEN. YEARS. Okay? It's not gonna change in the next three weeks. Except maybe the "wood" thing.

FITZ

Wood thing?

FREEMAN

There was a theory. That F.C. was obsessed with wood. That maybe he had erectile dysfunction. And now that he blew up this Mosser guy... Well, Moss, that's like a plant... So that proves it. That can go in the profile now.

NOEL

Christ, I can't wait to give that to the press.

(MORE)

NOEL (CONT'D)

Be sure to make it sound all official in the profile, "a propensity for softness in the genital region." And watch their faces as they figure it out. That's what makes this job fun.

Fitz looks from Noel to Freeman to the "profile." Confused.

FITZ

I gotta be honest here. I think we need to throw this away and come at it fresh, unbiased.

FREEMAN

Love the enthusiasm. But that's not what you're here for.

Noel stands. Meeting over. Walks Fitz out.

NOEL

The way you help this investigation? Take this profile, flesh it out, we all get gold stars. Great to have you on board. You wanna hear some war stories, come out for a beer with us tomorrow. Freddy's, it's our place. Old-school Frisco, you'll love it.

Fitz is left standing there in the hall. Shell-shocked. Staring at the single-page psych profile in disbelief.

FITZ

Ten years?!

**INT. THE BASEMENT SERVER ROOM - DAY**

Fitz trails Turchie as he walks through a SUBTERRANEAN SERVER ROOM. Overseeing the construction of a high-tech MASSIVELY PARALLEL PROCESSOR.

TURCHIE

Washington gave them a checklist. A new profile is one of the boxes on that list. They don't really even want to have a profiler here at all. But I have faith in you. I'm sure there's lots of quality work you can do -- *within* the parameters Freeman gave you.

Fitz starts to protest, but Turchie ever-so-gently guides him toward the exit.

TURCHIE

It'll all make more sense as you get acclimated. Thanks for coming down.

**INT. A SIZZLER STEAKHOUSE - DAY**

Or some other grim roadside chain. Fitz and Tabby having dinner. He's brought his legal pad, his notes, a thick folder of papers. Trying to wrap his head around everything.

FITZ

Is this how the investigation ought to be run? I mean, every single "Nathan R" in the country? That's insane!

TABBY

Is it? That's like our only lead.

FITZ

There are a ton of leads. But they're all behavioral, psychological. A good profile would tell them who to look for. I mean, shouldn't we at least know what kind of person we're looking for BEFORE we canvass every single library in the country?

TABBY

It's just the way system is set up. Look at it from an inside perspective. The UTF has been looking for F.C. for fifteen years. Everyone figures it'll go another fifteen, so either they die here or get promoted out. And the way to get promoted is to say, I followed up on 30,000 tips, I got a quote in Newsweek, I released this new sketch and now we have ten thousand agents chasing leads all over the country. So actually, if you're Freeman it's better if we don't know who we're looking for. Cause he looks like he's busting ass. Leaving no Nathan unturned.

FITZ

Even though it's all a farce.

TABBY

Sure, bruh. That's how the game works. Hell, I'm banking on the same thing. Put in my time, get seen going hard, get my ticket off the street.

(MORE)

TABBY (CONT'D)  
Besides, we might find Nathan R  
tomorrow, crack the whole thing wide  
open.

Fitz tries to protest, but Tabby just grins.

TABBY  
Yours is not the reason why, yours is  
but to do and die. You're a cog in  
the machine, Fitz. Embrace it.

FITZ  
Isn't this California? Isn't this  
supposed to be where everyone comes to  
be free?

TABBY  
It used to be. But then they got  
ahold of it. Now it's just like  
everywhere else.

FITZ  
Who's "they"?

TABBY  
Just... they.

**INT. TABBY'S CAR - LATER**

Tabby drives Fitz to his new apartment.

TABBY  
Didn't Turchie tell you what happened  
to the last two profilers they had out  
here?

FITZ  
No. What?

TABBY  
Well if he's not telling you I'm not  
gonna tell you.

FITZ  
What happened to them?

TABBY  
Never mind, forget I said anything.  
You're better than they were anyway.  
Don't worry. You'll be fine.

And she cranks up the Smashing Pumpkins and drives on. To:



**INT. FITZ'S EFFICIENCY APARTMENT - EVENING**

Fitz waves goodnight, wheels his suitcase into his empty efficiency apartment. Sterile, white-walled, institutional.

LATER, talking on the phone with Ellie.

FITZ

It's... I'm in so far over my head, you have no idea. This is like turning the Titanic. And what if I do turn it, right into the iceberg?

ELLIE is lying in her bed, struggling to stay awake.

ELLIE

You won't. Have faith.

(yawns)

How's California? Have you started surfing yet?

FITZ

Someone called me "bruh" today. That was pretty different.

Ellie laughs.

FITZ

It's like Dances with Wolves. Closer to the Indians and the animals out here than to my own people.

ELLIE

(nodding off)

Oof, I gotta go to sleep. The time difference and everything.

FITZ

Sorry. Of course. Talk to you tomorrow. Love you.

Fitz hangs up. Alone again.

**EXT. THE APARTMENT BALCONY - EVENING**

Fitz stands on the balcony of his apartment. Staring out.

The sterile apartment blocks crouch in the shadow of a massive SUPERHIGHWAY INTERCHANGE.

Fitz stares up at the towering cloverleaf. The knotted undersides of the roads. Dwarfing him. The HOWLING of thousands of cars. And we CUT TO:

**INT. A UNIVERSITY LECTURE HALL - NIGHT (1997)**

NATASHA SCHILLING (30s) stands at the front of the lecture hall. Giving an undergrad lecture in linguistics. Tweedy, fragile, reserved. The sense she's lived through tragedy.

NATASHA

Now, can you hear the position of Steven's vowels when he speaks? And the shift compared to S.E.? This is--

FITZ settles into the back row. The students don't know what to make of him. Whispering among themselves.

Natasha stops short. Stares at Fitz like she's seen a ghost. But then pushes on with the lecture. That's the kind of person she is.

NATASHA

Ahem. ... those vowel positions are relics from Colonial-era British accents. Steven, will you read again and we'll map your vowels.

LATER, the lecture finishes and the students file out. Leaving Natasha and Fitz alone in the room.

Fitz walks down the steps toward the blackboard. Stops.

They don't know what to do or to say. Finally, she extends a hand. They shake.

They're both disappointed by this. But don't do anything more.

And then, for just a moment, we come BACK TO:

**THE SUPERHIGHWAYS [1995]**

Towering over Fitz as he stands alone on his apartment balcony.

Endless, looping, roaring.

END ACT THREE.

ACT FOUR.**INT. THE UTF BULLPEN - THE NEXT DAY**

Fitz and Tabby survey their desks.

They've covered the entire double-desktop with documents and folders. Piles are marked "Forensic Reports," "Victimology," "Scene Photos," "Written Communication."

Fitz considers the file box of papers still to be sorted.

FITZ

We're gonna need a bigger desk.

Tabby snorts a laugh.

Fitz and Tabby heave at a dusty Tanker Desk in the corner. It barely moves. Two RUBBERNECKERS notice, come over to help. As they're carrying the desk across the room:

RUBBERNECKER

New profiler, right? What've you got there? Our performance reviews?

SECOND RUBBERNECKER

Because if you're looking for people to send home, we can suggest a few.

FITZ

That's really not what I do.

RUBBERNECKER

Of course. Wink-wink. But between us: you get Hankins to lie down on your couch, you will be shocked.

SECOND RUBBERNECKER

Shocked.

RUBBERNECKER

Shocked. That guy should not be carrying a sidearm. You'd be doing everyone here a favor.

They drop the desk into position.

FITZ

Really, that's not what I do.

RUBBERNECKER

Sure, sure. But -- Hankins. "H" as  
in Headcase.

Fitz and Tabby look at each other as the two agents walk off.

TABBY

Maybe you SHOULD look into this guy.  
Sounds like a headcase.

FITZ

If the FBI got rid of every headcase  
here, who'd be left?

**AT THEIR DESK - HOURS LATER**

Fitz and Tabby, exhausted. Fitz thrown down one of the  
Unabomber letters, rubs his eyes.

FITZ

Well, I'm not seeing the "wood" thing.  
(off Tabby's look)  
They want me to do a thing about  
F.C.'s erectile dysfunction.

TABBY

(laughing)  
What is it with men and their dongos?  
You should do it. You write that  
report, you'll be on CNN tonight.  
Probably have Bob Dole on too,  
plugging Viagra as a national-security  
issue.

FITZ

But it's b.s. The whole profile is b.s.

TABBY

I dunno. They've been saying  
mechanic, Cincinnati, airlines for  
years now. Really consistently.  
There must be some reason.

FITZ

Wrong. Conventional wisdom,  
preconceptions, assumptions, throw em  
all out. Blank slate. We know  
NOTHING about F.C. Nothing but what  
the evidence tells us.

He picks up the photocopy of the Gelernter letter.

FITZ

Like when he talks about 'All you guys with advanced diplomas...' Is he actually "low-IQ, no higher education" and resents smart people? Or is he really smart, maybe HAS a bunch of degrees himself, and KNOWS we're going to be reading the letter and is HOPING we don't think too hard about it?

You can see the epiphany on Tabby's face. She takes the letter, looks at it again. With fresh eyes.

TABBY

I... wow. Yeah. I don't know.

FITZ

Exactly. We don't know. We don't know anything. And if you look at that, you're gonna close your mind down.

He crumples up the old one-page profile.

FITZ

So we start over. Let's make our ask-list. Everything we're gonna need.

TABBY

(still staring at the letter:)

Dayum...

**INT. TURCHIE'S OFFICE - DAY**

Turchie flips through Fitz's ask-list while eating pasta salad out of a tupperware container.

FITZ

This is just to get us started. Fresh eyes.

Fitz checks out the Disney paraphernalia filling Turchie's office. The pasta salad, Mickey Mouse tie, CapriSun, blandly vacant manner. *What's up with this guy?*

TURCHIE

That sure is a lot of stuff. Lot of shoe leather you're asking for.

FITZ

I need to start getting into F.C.'s head.

(MORE)

FITZ (CONT'D)

That means seeing EVERYTHING -- the bombs themselves, full victimology, every report. Especially the early stuff. EVERYTHING.

TURCHIE

Mmm. We have what, nine letters from the Unabomber right now? And you got photocopies of all of them, right?

FITZ

Uh, yeah. But if I'm going to build a full profile--

Turchie cocks his head, gives Fitz that Fred Rogers smile.

TURCHIE

Why do you think I brought you here, Fitz? You're the word man. Meaning, I'm sure you can find some amazing stuff in those letters. So you don't really need any of this other stuff.

FITZ

I mean, if this investigation has the resources to interview every single Nathan R in the country... Right?

TURCHIE

Well. It's priorities. Picking your battles.

Turchie slurps the last drops of his CapriSun. Then walks Fitz to the door.

TURCHIE

Look out there with me.

They stand together at the mezzanine rail, looking down into the bullpen below. Turchie puts his hand on Fitz's shoulder. Gives him a gentle smile.

TURCHIE

Look at how many agents we have here. How many mounds of papers. No one paper is going to solve this case. Do what you've been asked, make sure everything's spelled right, add in that stuff about wood. I know it's silly, but a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down. Right?

FITZ

But--

TURCHIE

Shh now. You are a tiny little speck of dust in the eternity of the universe. Accept that, act accordingly, and enjoy.

Turchie pats Fitz on the back, gives a reassuring smile. Then disappears into his office.

Fitz stares down at the bullpen. Baffled, confused -- Mister Rogers just told him that he was an existential null.

**BACK AT HIS DESK - A MOMENT LATER**

Fitz flattens the old profile back out. Stares at the typewriter on his desk.

Then he sees the folder of photos that Douglas gave him. The Sacramento bombing. Opens it. Seeing the victims once again.

And he decides. Grabs his ask-list from the drawer. Strides into

**INT. FREEMAN'S OFFICE**

Freeman and Noel look over Fitz's ask-list. Sigh.

FITZ

Respectfully. If I'm going to write up a profile, put my name on it, I'm going to do it RIGHT.

NOEL

How many profiles have you created? Outside the classroom, I mean.

FITZ

...This is my first.

NOEL

There you go. So let me explain how this works. Your role here is to fulfill the duties laid out by the S.A.C. That's Freeman. I understand you have lots of training, lots of capacity, and a tremendous future ahead of you. But right now, all that's required of you is obedience.

FITZ

All I'm asking for is the freedom to do excellent work for you. That's all! It's a win for everyone.

(MORE)

FITZ (CONT'D)

Otherwise your profile is going to hamper the investigation, not help it.

Freeman leans across his desk. Commanding.

FREEMAN

When your only tool is a hammer, son, everything looks like a nail. You're a profiler. You think the profile will catch him. Turchie's a gearhead. He thinks it's all about his computer. But he's just the xylophone. You're just the piccolo. And I got a whole orchestra to conduct! I gotta make sure everyone's playing together, and playing the same tune. I know you can play the piccolo better than anyone in the world. I know you want there to be an awesome piccolo solo in the second movement. But you gotta play from the sheet music I give you. Otherwise the whole thing falls apart.

FITZ

But shouldn't the big picture be based on the actual man we're trying to capture? I.e., on a good profile?

NOEL

The only way we're going to catch the Unabomber, the only way we catch ANYONE, is forensics. Plain and simple. You could spend six months writing up the world's best profile. But nobody's going to read it. That's not what we're looking for. We're looking for fifteen pages, no typos, and "wood."

He shoves the one-page profile back into Fitz's hands. Freeman, still encouraging in his way:

FREEMAN

You're a piccolo! Embrace it. Sometimes we need that high note, we really do, and it's gonna be GREAT when you play it out for all to hear. But most of the time, you just sit there in silence. But in the end, you'll take a bow with everyone else, and you'll be a hero too.



**INT. FREDDY'S BAR - THAT NIGHT**

Nearly the whole UTF packed into the old-school dive. TABBY, practically the only woman in the place but holding her own.

Fitz collects a SODA WATER from the bar. Tries to look purposeful. Total outsider. The guy next to him shouts:

BAR GUY

The Griz. What do you think?  
 (as Fitz draws a blank:)  
 Heard you were from Philly. Grizelli?  
 The Eagles?

FITZ

Uh, I'm from Philly. But who's  
 Grizelli? He's a player?

BIG GUY

Are you serious? Hey Lem, get a load  
 of this. I ask this guy what he  
 thinks of The Griz...

Fitz flees into the crowd. Overhears his hero, T-REX BENSON:

T-REX BENSON

You gotta talk to Ryan, he's got this  
 one tape where this tiny chick takes  
 like thirteen inches, it's wild...

Then Fitz suddenly finds himself face-to-face with NOEL, deep in his cups. Noel flings an arm around Fitz's neck, pulls him in for a noogie.

NOEL

Ho, there he is, Mister Piccolo-Dick!  
 That was hilarious today! Look at  
 this guy, he's got the Terry Turchie  
 special: glass of soda water and a  
 face like he just farted in church.  
 You a Mormon or something?

FITZ

No, I just... I don't drink.

NOEL

That's what Turchie says too, but I  
 don't know. He seems like a magic-  
 underwear type, doesn't he? Word of  
 advice: keep your cheeks clenched  
 around him. With Turchie, you'll  
 think you're getting tickets to the  
 Magic Kingdom, even while he's  
 slitting your throat.

(MORE)

NOEL (CONT'D)

Least with me, you know where you stand. I think you're a dog turd, Fitzie, but I give you the respect of saying so to your face. That ain't nothing.

Noel finally releases Fitz. Turns back to T-Rex's porn story. Fitz flees into

**INT. THE BAR BATHROOM**

Fitz, wedged at the urinal between two big drunk cops. The guy pissing to his left starts telling him:

DRUNK PISSER

You know he's from Cincinnati. You're the profiler, right? Cincinnati for sure. And he's into WOOD. Josh thinks he's a faggot. Josh, tell him.

Then, from the guy pissing to Fitz's right:

OTHER DRUNK PISSER

I'm telling you, that's why he got fired from his airline job. Got caught sucking some dude's dong. Now he's pissed off. Think about it.

Flush. Fitz, staring after them. Are you kidding me?

**BACK IN THE BAR**

The STRIPPERS come out. Dancing on the bar.

Fitz takes in the sweaty room, packed with obese, drunken men drooling over past-their-prime strippers. Disgusted. TABBY is eyeing the strippers too.

FITZ

We're here to catch a terrorist who's mailing bombs to families. What is this?

TABBY

Everyone here's away from home. It's like... summer camp. The things we do when we're alone, huh?

Fitz shakes his head. Wedges himself into

**THE PAYPHONE BOOTH**

In the back of the bar. Calls home. Reaching for a lifeline. But -- no answer. Leaves a message.

FITZ

It's me. I'm-- I know it's late there.  
But I wanted to hear your voices.  
Someone's voice. Uh, I love you. Bye.

BACK AT THE BAR, Fitz finds Tabby. She's chatting up one stripper. Showing her a BABY PHOTO, which she immediately hides from Fitz. Fitz shouts in Tabby's ear:

FITZ

I'm taking the car. You'll need to  
get a ride.

TABBY

You going home already?

FITZ

No. To Sacramento. To do my JOB.

TABBY

Sacramento?! Fitz, c'mon--

Fitz holds out his hand. Tabby reluctantly hands over the keys.

**I/E. TABBY'S CAR - NIGHT**

Fitz cranks the engine until it finally starts. NINE INCH NAILS on the stereo.

He tears off through the night. Angry, alone. And we CUT TO:

**INT. NATALIE'S DARK APARTMENT - NIGHT (1997)**

Two rescue pittbulls whining at the door, upset by the sounds of the locks opening. Many, many locks.

Then, Natalie leads Fitz inside. The two dogs circle, upset. Natalie crouches, coos at them.

NATALIE

It's OK, guys. He's a friend. It's OK.

FITZ

What happened to Buster and Darby?

NATALIE

We found them good homes. These guys are just temporary too. Jasper and Winston. They're good hearted, just scared of everything. Can't blame them, poor guys. What they've been through.

Fitz considers this for a moment. Looking down at the dogs in Natalie's arms. At himself.

FITZ

What's with you and the rescue dogs?

NATALIE

Yes. Good question.

They consider each other. Natalie, crouched holding the dogs back. Fitz in the doorway. Uncertain. Where to start?

NATALIE

Where have you been, Fitz?

FITZ

Out. You know.

NATALIE

Like, off the grid?

He nods. Clears his throat.

FITZ

Look, uh... I know I screwed up. The things I said, I did back then... But uh... I don't have anyone else. I have nowhere else I can go.

NATALIE

It wasn't supposed to go like that, Fitz. You know?

FITZ

I know. I just... I'm trying to...

He goes silent. Staring at the floor.

Natalie sighs. Goddamn rescue dogs... But she can't help herself.

NATALIE

Lemme get these guys in the kitchen...

**I/E. TABBY'S CAR / SACRAMENTO - NIGHT [1995]**

Winding through the empty streets of Sacramento. Homeless guys in the underpasses. Dark, anonymous government buildings. Then he pulls up in front of

**EXT. THE CALIFORNIA FORESTRY ASSOCIATION BUILDING - NIGHT**

We recognize it from the opening. Fitz recognizes it from those photos. Blown-out windows boarded over with plywood.

Fitz parks outside. Prowls around the building. Finds a side entrance, pops the door open. Creeps inside in the dark.

**INT. THE FORESTRY ASSOCIATION OFFICE - NIGHT**

Fitz slips under the police tape, through the boarded-up door, into

**THE BOMB SITE**

Dark, silent wreckage. Fitz walks through, taking it in. Inhaling the scent of the scorched carpet, the sulfur, the vague tang of iron.

He's strangely calm and at home here. Like a man walking into an ancient, empty church.

The shrapnel holes in the walls, the ceiling panels burnt and blown upwards. Family photos on a desk, smashed and shredded.

Mundane office life turned inside out, turned alien. Then, asking aloud:

FITZ

What are you doing right now? F.C....

**IN GIL MURRAY'S OFFICE**

The whole room burned black. Swiss-cheesed by shrapnel.

A strange thrill as Fitz identifies BLOODSTAINS on the carpet. Touches them. Smells the iron, the gunpowder.

We're watching Fitz take his first, halting steps into the mind of the Unabomber. MAKING CONTACT. Talking to him:

FITZ

You want to be here. You want to be here, touching this, savoring it. But you can't be. So what do you do?

He gazes out the window at the dark street below. Everything closed up, dark. Except a NEWSSTAND/LIQUOR STORE across the street. Fitz stares at it. REALIZING something...

**INT. FITZ'S EFFICIENCY APARTMENT - LATER**

Fitz struggles through the door. Carrying a huge stack of newspapers and a case of beer.

He drops it all on the floor and immediately starts in --

Tearing into the newspapers, clipping EVERY SINGLE ARTICLE about the SACRAMENTO BOMBINGS.

And suddenly he's deep in his flow as a profiler -- Eyes closed, sitting in the dark, re-living the bombing...

As he homes in on phrases and details in the newspaper descriptions, we SEE THEM: Gil Murray and his pregnant secretary struggling with the package... A receptionist fetching scissors... Gil Murray in his office...

At first, it's all sketchy, blurry, details not filled in...

But as the night wears on and the clippings multiply, the accumulated details get added into the IMAGINED BOMBING. Looping, getting sharper and sharper...

ANOTHER BEER disappears as if of its own accord... Joins a growing pile of empties...

A photo of Gil Murray, and Fitz SEES HIM now... In slow motion, joking around as the package explodes and then-- Flying glass, screams, terror and light... Every angle, every point of view... a flood of details, of images...

FITZ

This is the best part, isn't it...

Hours have passed and Fitz is surrounded by newspaper clippings and empty bottles and hours have passed and he doesn't even know how that happened... Murmuring:

FITZ

The things we do when we're alone...  
All the things you have to keep  
hidden...

(then, REALIZING:)

You're ALONE. You're all alone with  
so much inside you and nobody to tell  
it to... Except the newspapers. And  
what happens when the newspapers stop  
listening? You need more, you need to  
see your name, your work...

And then, the faintest TAP-TAP-TAP sound at the edge of his perception...

Fitz follows it, drunk now and half-asleep... Back through the dark apartment...

And then, in the back bedroom, a glimpse of A PRESENCE -- For just an instant, THERE'S SOMEONE THERE. And then --

BLACK.

END ACT FOUR.

ACT FIVE.**FITZ'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING**

WHITE MORNING LIGHT blasting in. A sea of beer bottles. Clippings everywhere. Fitz, passed out on the floor. Groaning awake because

THE PHONE is ringing. He staggers over. Answers.

FITZ

Hello?

ELLIE

Fitz! Are you okay? What's going on out there?

FITZ

(crumpling)

Oh, Ellie... God, I-- I need you guys here, Ellie. I can't be alone on this. I just can't do it.

ELLIE

You promised me you were coming right home... Wait--have you been drinking?

FITZ

Just beer. Just one beer.

ELLIE

Jesus. Jim. Don't do this to me again--

FITZ

I'm not.

ELLIE

After the last time--

FITZ

I'm NOT. This is NOT like last time. I promise.

ELLIE

...Okay. Good.

FITZ

I tried reaching you last night.

ELLIE

I know. It's three hours later here,  
Jim. Remember? That's one a.m.

The DOORBELL. TABBY there to pick him up.

FITZ

Sorry, El. I'll call you back, okay?

**OUT ON THE PORCH**

Fitz tries not to let Tabby see the wreckage as he emerges.  
Unsuccessfully. Tabby stares at him.

TABBY

Jesus, what happened last night? Are  
you okay?

FITZ

I'm fine. Let's go.

**INT. NATALIE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT (1997)**

Fitz, sitting. Trying to explain himself to Natalie.

FITZ

I keep thinking, if I can figure out  
how I got here, if I can find the  
moment when I could have turned away  
and I didn't. Where did it begin,  
where did I start down this path. The  
moment I made contact, it was...

Natalie brings him a coffee. He sips gingerly.

NATALIE

You wanted him in your life.  
Secretly, somehow, you wanted that.

FITZ

I think I did. But I don't know why.  
I don't know why I could have wanted  
that. How I, how anybody, could...

He trails off. Confronting something broken in himself. Then:

FITZ

I tried to end it. I don't know if it  
was because I was scared... or because  
I was thrilled.



**INT. FREEMAN'S OFFICE - MORNING [1995]**

Fitz bursts into Freeman's Office. Energized. In charge. Interrupting Freeman, Noel, and Turchie.

FITZ

Newspapers. They're his window on the world. It's his proof to himself that he exists. The newspapers are going to be the key to this whole thing. You have to at least give me access to our clippings archive.

NOEL

I send my mom a copy every time I get my name in the Times. I can have her get out the scrapbook for ya. Other than that, you want clippings? Clip.

Noel grabs a pair of scissors and tosses them to Fitz.

FITZ

Are you serious? You're not tracking this? Right now, the Unabomber is combing through the New York Times and the Sacramento Bee for any new detail to savor, and you're not even bothering to see what he's seeing?

NOEL

The Unabomber is a low-IQ mechanic with a ninth-grade education. He's watching Sally Jessy Raphael, not reading the friggin Times!

Fitz blows up:

FITZ

You ever think the reason you've gotten nowhere in EIGHTEEN YEARS is that you've been underestimating him? That just maybe he's not some dummy mechanic, but that he's been running circles around all of you for years?

A silence falls over the room. Freeman purses his lips. Considering Fitz. He shakes his head, heaves a sigh.

FREEMAN

Fitz. Buddy. You're breaking my heart. You really gotta decide here: You gonna follow my orders, or you gonna go home?

On Fitz's face, his answer.

**INT. THE UTF BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Tabby watches, dismayed, as Fitz packs his desk.

FITZ

It's all good, Tabby. If they want that watered-down b.s., I'm not the right guy anyway.

**INT. NATALIE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT (1997)**

Then, finally confessing Natalie:

FITZ

The reason I came here. They asked me to go in. Talk to him. Interrogate him.

Natalie sits across from him at the table. Taking this in. She looks grim.

NATALIE

You're not going to do it.

FITZ

I said no. But I need to go. I need to confront him, to get answers.

NATALIE

You have the answers. God, I tore myself apart to help you GET those answers. You solved the case. You caught him.

FITZ

Not those answers. Answers for myself. And for us. I want you to come with me. To help me.

Natalie slumps over her coffee. Not what she wanted to hear.

**INT. NATALIE'S BEDROOM - LATER (1997)**

Natalie sits on the floor next to her bed. TEARS in her eyes. The dogs come up and lick the tears off her cheeks.

**INT. FITZ'S EFFICIENCY APARTMENT - DAY [1995]**

Fitz packs his bags. Leaves the mess. Good riddance.

**INT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - DEPARTURES - DAY**

Fitz talks on the payphone with Ellie.

**IN ELLIE'S KITCHEN**

Ellie leans on the wall in relief.

ELLIE

Oh. That's-- I mean, that's awesome for us. But you don't sound happy, huh?

FITZ

I'm glad to be coming home to you guys. I am. But I feel... like I'm running back to mommy with my tail between my legs.

And then, FITZ'S NAME is called over the loudspeaker. Being paged to the gate. Fitz signs off, hangs up the payphone.

AT THE GATE, the woman hands him the courtesy phone.

TURCHIE'S VOICE

'Dad it is I.' You need to come back here. Right away.

FITZ

Turchie? Sorry. Find someone else.

TURCHIE'S VOICE

We don't need someone else. We need YOU. I patched it up with Freeman. Because we need a word guy now. We need 'Dad it is I.'

FITZ

(sensing something wrong:)  
Why? What's happened?

TURCHIE'S VOICE

You were right about the newspapers. He reached out, like you said he would. Get back here. NOW.

TABBY comes running up. Her car idling outside.

TABBY

FITZ! There you are. C'mon, c'mon--

**INT. FITZ'S HOUSE - LATER**

Ellie gets the news on the phone from Fitz's superiors. Wilts.

**UPSTAIRS**

Davey listens in on the extension:

ELLIE'S VOICE

*No, I mean if he's not able to come home now... I understand.*

Davey slams down the receiver. Stomps upstairs into --

**INT. DAVEY'S ROOM**

Davey punches a pillow clear across the room. Pulls a Newsweek special report on the Unabomber from under his mattress. Begins combing it for details.

Knights and demons facing off on his bedroom shelf...

**INT. THE UTF BULLPEN - DAY**

An emergency BRIEFING in progress -- everyone freaking out -- the whole place, buzzing, frenzied -- Turchie rushes to meet Fitz and Tabby:

TURCHIE

He's made a bomb threat against LAX, the whole place is shut down. New York Times, Washington Post, Penthouse, Newsweek... They're all going crazy. They got a package--

FITZ

Another bomb?

TURCHIE

No. Something else -- look.

Fitz pushes his way through the crowd. Sees the table in the front, where, in front of Freeman and Noel,

THE MANIFESTO sits.

A stack of typed pages, wrapped in brown paper and string.

Fitz approaches the table. A look passes between him and Freeman. Acknowledging -- Fitz is back on the case. But Freeman's not happy about it.

Noel growls under his breath:

NOEL

You screw this up? We will crucify you.

Fitz nods. Accepting this.

And as Fitz reaches out for the Manifesto, we CUT TO:

**I/E. NATALIE'S CAR - NIGHT (1997)**

Natalie drives through the night. Dark country roads. Fitz, cleaned up now, stares out the window.

NATALIE

You know, Fitz. Whatever this is, it didn't start two years ago. It didn't start with this case. It started a long, long time before Unabom. It must have.

FITZ

I know. But I just don't know when I started to feel that way. Powerless, caged. Like we're sleepwalking through our own lives. Eating trash and watching TV and working to become what other people think we should be...

Natalie shakes her head.

NATALIE

That's what everyone feels. Everyone feels like that, all the time. "Pinned and wriggling against the wall."

FITZ

That's what I can't understand. Everyone feels that way. But what do they do about it? Nothing. We LIKE it. We like being crushed and powerless. Because somehow, freedom is more terrifying to us than slavery.

NATALIE

There's nothing TO do.

FITZ

There's got to be something. Nobody does anything about it at all. Nobody even tries. Nobody except for HIM.

NATALIE  
Yes, Fitz. But he's EVIL.

Silence from Fitz.

NATALIE  
He's EVIL, Fitz.

More silence from Fitz. And then -- Fitz points to the turnoff.

FITZ  
It's down here.

**EXT. THE MEGAMAX PRISON - NIGHT (1997)**

Barbed wire and searchlights and misty darkness. Natalie pulls to a stop out front.

Fitz gets out. Starts for the entrance.

NATALIE  
Wait! Listen, Fitz. You're not a stray dog to me. You understand?

Beat. He looks at her through the car window.

NATALIE  
I'm not looking for someone to take care of. I'm not.

FITZ  
I know that. That's why I'm here. To put this all right. I think we can make it work again. But not until I figure this out. The monster under the bed.

A beat. She nods. Then watches him walk away.

Toward the huge prison gates. Into the darkness.

END OF PILOT.