

LAZARUS

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TITLE CARD: *"In 2013, the United States government initiated a program promoting advances in neural research. The goal was to unlock the mysteries of the human brain."*

TITLE CARD: *"The program was successful."*

TITLE CARD: *"The results were never published."*

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - STATIONARY CAMERA FOOTAGE

A windowless underground laboratory. Chemicals, tanks of biological samples, electronics. An anatomical model wearing a plastic pig mask stands in the corner.

In the foreground: four SCIENTISTS in white lab coats. We'll come to know them as FRANK, ZOE, NIKO and CLAY.

Frank works on a SUBJECT just below frame. The sound is muffled, the lighting stinks. Lousy production values.

CLAY

Feedback in the threes. Four. Four point two.

FRANK

Can we increase the omega?

NIKO

What, three points?

FRANK

Start with two.

Adjustments are made. Frank dabs the Subject with a sponge.

ZOE

We're rolling, right?

Frank glances at Clay expectantly.

CLAY

What? I did it last time.

Frank just stares him down. Clay sighs. He approaches the mounted camera. OUR POV JOSTLES as he lifts the camera off the tripod and re-centers it on...

...a large PIG, clearly dead, the back of its skull missing.
There are WIRES in its head, a breathing tube down its throat, and MILKY WHITE SERUM circulating into its veins.

CLAY (O.S.)
Good to go. Frank, you wanna tell
us what we're looking at here?

FRANK
A dead pig.

CLAY (O.S.)
Cool. Thanks.
(turns to Zoe instead)
Zoe? Walk us through.

ZOE
Okay. Basically, there are two
types of neurotransmission, right?
Electrical and chemical. What we're
doing here is using a combination
of the two to stimulate the glial
brain cells.

CLAY (O.S.)
And that's gonna do what?

She can't contain her excitement. Flashes a mischievous grin.

ZOE
It's gonna make this piggy dance.

TIME CUT TO:

The animals has been connected to the PULSE ARRAY, a homemade
device on a rolling cart, cobbled together from what appear
to be several discarded car batteries.

FRANK
Where are we in the amygdala?

ZOE
89.8 MHZ. 108.1 in the hippocampus.

FRANK
OK, start Event One in three. Two.

Zoe flips the switch on the Pulse Array. Nothing happens.

FRANK
Niko...?

NIKO
I got nothing.

FRANK
Spike the glutamate.

ZOE
We're losing it.

FRANK
Increase gain six points and push
serotonin--

Clay RACKS FOCUS on the pig's lifeless body. The wires
snaking out the back of its exposed skull.

The room's temperature changes. Excitement ebbing away as
disappointment sinks in. Another failure.

CLAY (O.S.)
We calling it? Boss?

FRANK
Get the psilocin compound.

NIKO
That formula hasn't been tested--

FRANK
We're testing it now.
(looks around)
Guys. It's already dead.

For a beat, nobody responds. Then Zoe crosses the room and
removes a VIAL OF WHITE SERUM from the refrigerator.

Frank gives her an encouraging nod. Clay continues to film as
she injects the serum into the subject's skull...

FRANK
All right. Hit her again.

Zoe flips the switch. Clay ZOOMS IN tight on the subject--

Aaaaand...you guessed it. Nothing happens. Frank exhales in
disgust. Pulls off his rubber gloves.

FRANK
Calling it.

Zoe goes to him, wraps her arms around him from behind. Holds
him close. Niko powers down the machine.

CLAY (O.S.)
Guys? Guys? I'm gonna throw out one
word, okay?
(dramatic pause)
Luau.

ZOE
Don't be an ass.

CLAY (O.S.)
Come on, you're gonna let all this
fine pork go to w--

Clay pans back down. THE PIG'S EYES ARE OPEN.

Suddenly the pig SPASMS VIOLENTLY, its entire body heaving--

Cries of alarm. Our POV lurching as Clay stumbles away--

The pig topples off the table and crashes to the ground,
trailing wires behind it.

CLAY
WHAT THE HELL, MAN!?!

FRANK
Check the vitals.

Clay racks focus on the pig. It lies lifeless on the ground,
its eyes cold and glassy, clearly dead. Zoe kneels and feels
for a pulse. Shakes her head at the camera.

ZOE
Nothing.

CLAY
Nothing, my ass! That thing just
jumped off the table!

FRANK
It was a muscle contraction. Just a
contraction.

A beat while this sinks in. Everyone deflating.

FRANK
It doesn't work.

ANGLE on the pig carcass. The feed jostles and goes dark.

Over our OPENING CREDITS, we glimpse a flurry of activity:

*Milky white SERUM draining from a syringe...a CRANIAL SAW
descending toward flesh...THERMAL IMAGING SOFTWARE...high-
tech DIGITAL READOUTS...a DEAD MOUSE skewered by a pin, its
legs twitching spastically...MICROSCOPIC shots of the serum
cells bonding to a DOUBLE-HELIX structure...*

...the serum cells are absorbed into the structure...

...and slowly, the double-helix begins to change.

TITLE CARD: LAZARUS

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Fall. A Jesuit college campus--*think Georgetown*--the quad filled with students enjoying the sunshine.

EVA marches down the sidewalk. Beautiful but intense. A no-nonsense girl, capable and focused.

She passes a group of solemn-faced Jesuit priests emerging from the school's ornate chapel. Pigeons roosting atop a statue of the Virgin Mary.

A group of STONERS are playing frisbee. One of them tosses the disc...a bad throw, sailing right for her head...

Without breaking stride, Eva snags the disc out of the air. The Stoner nods appreciatively at her quick reflexes.

STONER KID
Damn, girl, nice pick.
(readies for a pass)
Hit me!

Eva casually tosses the Frisbee into the nearest garbage can. Keeps walking. The Stoners stare after her.

Ahead she spots FRANK and ZOE, exiting Miskatonic Hall. Eva picks up the pace, hurrying after them.

EVA
Dr. Walton? Frank Walton?

FRANK
That's me.

EVA
(extending a hand)
I'm Eva.

FRANK
Uh...hi. Something I can do for you?

EVA
(noticing Zoe)
Hey, how's it going?
(back to Frank)

EVA (CONT'D)

Okay, before you say anything, just know: I've already got all my own equipment. I can shoot, I can edit, whatever you need.

FRANK

What exactly are we talking about here?

EVA

Me. Filming your work.

They stare at her like she's lost her mind. Frank smiles politely, then keeps walking.

FRANK

Thanks, but I think we're good.

EVA

No offense, but you're a long way from good. I saw the video. It's barely in focus.

FRANK

What video?

EVA

The one where you try to reanimate a dead pig.

Frank whirls around on a dime, comes back at her.

FRANK

What did you say?

EVA

I said I saw the--

FRANK

How the hell do you know about that?

EVA

There a guy named Clay on your team? Big guy, likes to drink, find a pretty girl at the bar and show her videos on his phone?

Frank and Zoe exchange annoyed looks. *Clay.*

INT. STUDENT UNION - SHORT TIME LATER

The conversation has moved to the nearby Student Union.

EVA

I gotta say, pretty ballsy doing this at a Catholic school. I'm surprised they signed off on it.

(Frank and Zoe share an uncomfortable look.)

They didn't sign off on it.

FRANK

The situation's complicated--

EVA

Hey, you don't have to explain. I'm not trying to blackmail you here. Seriously, you say the word and I'm gone forever. But if the stuff in that video was real? If you pull this off? You're gonna scare the shit out of a whole lot of people.

ZOE

That's not our problem.

Frank gives Zoe a sidelong look. That's not entirely true, and they both know it.

EVA

All I'm offering is the chance to tell your side of the story. I'll shoot what you want, when you want, and nothing gets published until you say so.

FRANK

And what do you get out of it?

EVA

I get to be in the room when you guys make history.

Frank and Zoe glance at each other, weighing the idea.

INT. MISKATONIC HALL LOBBY - SHORT TIME LATER

Frank and Zoe enter the lobby of Miskatonic Hall. Eva follows behind, looking pleased with herself. Frank swipes his keycard, and they board the elevator.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The elevator deposits the trio in a cavernous underground hallway. Zoe leads them past a COLD STORAGE ROOM. A darkened lab containing a hulking fMRI device.

FRANK

We're operating on a grant from
Werner-Goss Biotechnical, so you'll
have to sign a couple NDAs.

Eva nods, taking in her surroundings. This place is more than a little intimidating.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SHORT TIME LATER

Frank ushers Eva into the lab. Clay and Niko are at their workstations. Clay blinks in astonishment when he recognizes Eva. *The girl from the bar. Uh-oh.*

FRANK

That's Niko. Apparently you already
met Clay.

CLAY

Heeeeeey.

FRANK

Come on, I'll show you what we've
got so far.

(to Clay, on his way out:)

You and me are having a talk.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - LATER

Eva sits at a workstation, watching video of some of their prior experiments. Slowly, a smile spreads across her face. *This is even cooler than she expected.*

In the break room, Clay and Niko have arranged a complicated board game across the table. Clay plays another card.

NIKO

You're a dick.

CLAY

I'm the Lord of Catan. And I
deserve your respect.

NIKO

I don't even have any cards.

Eva enters the break room, fiddling with her phone.

EVA
Hey, Niko? I can't get any bars.

NIKO
Oh, yeah, we don't get much of a
signal down here. There's a
landline on the wall.

EVA
Cool.

She exits again. The boys stare after her.

CLAY
You're welcome, by the way.

NIKO
For what?

CLAY
Documentary Girl.

NIKO
She has a name.

CLAY
A name that means nothing to me.
(beat)
What? You don't think?

NIKO
She's...okay.

Niko glances through the window at...Zoe. *His real office crush.* Zoe catches his eye and flashes a friendly smile.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SHORT TIME LATER

Eva continues to review the existing footage. In the next room, Frank and Zoe watch her through the glass window.

FRANK
What do you think?

Zoe shrugs, unimpressed.

ZOE
Does it matter? It's not like we
can send her home now.

FRANK
She's not gonna tell anyone. Just
give her a chance. This could be a
good thing.

ZOE
(beat)
She's pretty.

FRANK
Hmm? Yeah, I guess.

Frank goes back to his work. Oblivious that he just gave the
wrong answer. Zoe watches Eva, a little concerned.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - DAY

Eva has mounted the video camera on a tripod. Frank and Zoe
stand stiffly before her, hands almost touching. The camera
quickly catches a glimpse of Zoe's ENGAGEMENT RING.

EVA
Aaaaaand...go.

FRANK
Hello, I'm Doctor Frank Walton.

ZOE
And my name is Zoe McDonnell.

Her voice is so formal it's almost robotic. Frank can't help
himself; he bursts out laughing. Zoe slugs his arm.

ZOE
What!?

FRANK
Sorry. Sorry.

EVA
Still rolling.

Frank takes a deep breath. Tries again.

FRANK
Hi, I'm Doctor Frank Walton.

ZOE
And I'm Zoe McDonnell.

FRANK
We're the Senior Researchers here
at the Lazarus Project.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(spreads his arms)
Welcome to our laboratory!

ZOE
(a split second late)
Welcome to our laboratory!

They instantly crack up. God, this is embarrassing.

ZOE
(to Eva, deadpan)
How was that? Was that good?

EVA
Oh, yeah. You guys are, like,
professional actors.

TIME CUT TO:

Eva at her workstation, editing footage together.

Onscreen, Frank holds up a SMALL VIAL OF WHITISH FLUID--

FRANK
We've bonded fast-growth B cell
tumors to speed the nerve fiber
regrowth.

TIME CUT TO:

Frank, demonstrating the Pulse Array device. He has filled a petri dish with WHITE SERUM. Wearing plastic gloves, he touches an exposed wire to the liquid--

FRANK
The Pulse Array uses timed charges
to activate the serum.

As the current flows through the petri dish, the serum begins to move. Tendrils of liquid rise from the dish, twining and undulating like living things.

TIME CUT TO:

Eva splices in footage of the pig experiment. The reanimated pig flops and twitches on the operating table--

ZOE (O.S.)
What we've done is actually create
a controllable feedback loop in the
autonomic nervous system--

TIME CUT TO:

Frank, natural, charming but intense, looks into the lens.

FRANK

Our goal is simply to give health care professionals more time to do their jobs. To prolong that period where you can safely bring someone back. With no cognitive loss, no long-term effects. It's about giving everyone that second chance they deserve.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - DAY

Data flowing across a monitor screen. Zoe points out the relevant bits. Frank and Niko listen with matching frowns.

ZOE

Look. Right here. Something's degrading the lipid bilayer.

NIKO

Could be the diffusion barrier.

Clay lounges in a nearby chair, puffing on an electronic VAPORIZER. He exhales a plume of smoke.

ZOE

What did I tell you about smoking in here?

CLAY

Umm. That it's awesome?

ZOE

You're a jerk.

Grinning, he exhales again, blowing the smoke in Zoe's general direction. She waves it away angrily.

FRANK

Knock it off, both of you.
(nods to the screen)
What's the membrane voltage?

NIKO

Minus sixty? Maybe less?

FRANK

So we need a larger depolarization.

ZOE

Except that fries the ion channels.

Clay takes another massive hit. Starts coughing.

CLAY

Not if we introduce a potassium-selective insulator into the serum and limit pulse durations to about 30 milliseconds. Give the pH and oxygen tension time to snap back. Boom.

(The others stare.)
What?

NIKO

That...could actually work.

FRANK

Hell yes it could.

Frank claps Clay on the shoulder. Zoe still looks annoyed with him, but she holds her tongue.

NIKO

You're so smart. And handsome.
(throws his arms around
Clay)
Take me now.

Clay shoves him away. Niko gets him in a headlock. The two friends playfully wrestle back and forth.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Frank sits at his desk, shuffling through research papers. Zoe appears behind him. Wraps her arms around him.

ZOE

Hey, you.

She kisses his neck. Frank merely looks annoyed.

FRANK

Babe, come on. I'm right in the middle of this.

Zoe releases him, her expression hurt. She leaves the room.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

Zoe, fast asleep in bed. She shifts restlessly, a frown darkening her face. Bad dreams.

As we PUSH IN on her sleeping face, we hear fragments of her nightmare. An ominous BANGING NOISE. MUFFLED VOICES crying out in panic. Just as the noises reach a crescendo...

Zoe jolts awake.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Frank finds Zoe sitting in the dark, her expression haunted. He takes a seat beside her.

FRANK
Same dream?
(She nods.)
Come back to bed, okay?

He touches her shoulder. She doesn't respond.

Frank leaves her there in the darkness.

INT. BREAK ROOM - MORNING

Eva breezes into the lab. Waves to Frank from across the room. He waves back a little too eagerly.

Eva passes Niko, fast asleep at his desk. Clay nods to her.

CLAY
Mornin', sunshine.

EVA
Is he asleep?

CLAY
Yeah. You wanna help me draw a wang
on his face?

EVA
(rolling her eyes)
Yeah, I'll get right on that--

She enters the main lab area and SCREAMS.

A DEAD DOG lies on the operating table, the back of its skull missing. Zoe stands over the cadaver, wearing medical scrubs, busy inserting a series of wires into the dog's brain.

INT. BREAK ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Frank sits with Eva. She rubs absently at her eyes, embarrassed by her reaction.

FRANK

He was scheduled to be put down.
The guys at the shelter, they said
everything was done very humanely.
He just went right to sleep.

Frank takes her hand.

FRANK

Look at it this way. If this
works...? We're giving him a second
chance. That's more than he would
have had before.

Through the window, Zoe watches uneasily as Frank continues
to hold Eva's hand.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - LATER

The moment has arrived. The dog's body has been arranged on
the operating table, secured by canvas restraints.

The team is gathered in surgical scrubs around the dog's
cadaver. Eva filming everything.

FRANK

Niko. You wanna handle the
walkthrough?

NIKO

Currently, we're attaching a series
of conductive polymer filaments to
the subject's amygdalae--

EVA (O.S.)

Here's all I'm hearing: "Currently
we're attaching the *zorblatts* to
the subject's *glorblon*--"

NIKO

Okay, fine. Um. Basically, we're
going to jump start the neural
reactions by stimulating different
parts of the brain with targeted
electrical charges.

The camera pans over to a tray of small glass vials. Each one
filled with some sort of milky white substance.

EVA (O.S.)

And what's this stuff?

NIKO
Synthetic blood, laced with the
Lazarus serum. We're doing a full-
body transfusion--

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - LATER

Hours later, we're well underway. The usual tubes and leads snake out from under a blanket which rises and falls in sync with an artificial lung.

Zoe lifts the dog's eyelids, shines a light in both eyes. The eyes are glassy white marbles, clouded with CATARACTS.

ZOE
Cataracts in both eyes.

Clay slips on an expensive pair of AUGMENTED GLASSES--

CLAY'S POV: The glasses display a constant stream of data, monitoring everything from electrical activity to the dog's internal temperature.

CLAY
All inputs within range.

ZOE
Blood oxygen good. Serum level
optimal.

Frank pauses. Realizes they've reached the moment of truth.

FRANK
All right, guys. This is it.

Zoe has removed her jewelry, drops it on the counter. She moves to the Pulse Array and grasps the lever.

ZOE
Starting at 800 volts. Event One,
pulse in three. Two. One.

She flips the lever. A SHARP ELECTRIC HUM fills the air as the current begins to flow...

...yet nothing happens. The dog remains motionless.

CLAY
No effect.

FRANK
Reset the array. One point two
kilovolts.

NIKO
One point two. Standing by.

ZOE
Event Two, pulse in
three...two...one...

BZZZZT! Another jolt of electricity...

FRANK
Clay?

Clay scans the dog's body with his augmented glasses.

CLAY
I got nothing.

Suddenly Eva JUMPS, letting out a gasp--

NIKO
What?

EVA
It moved! I think it just moved!

FRANK
It moved or you *think* it moved?

EVA
I don't know! Its leg! It did a, a
twitchy-thing!

CLAY
I'm telling you, guys, I'm flat
across the board here.

ZOE
It's just reflex muscle
stimulation. That's all.

EVA
I saw it! It moved!

ZOE
That's what muscle stimulation *is*.

As they argue, Niko leans in closer, peering into the dog's eyes, searching for any sign of life...until their faces are only inches apart...*we're convinced it's going to lunge to life any second...*

Then Niko shrugs. Straightens back up. Turns to Frank.

NIKO

I say we up the dosage to--

Behind him, THE DOG SUDDENLY JOLTS TO LIFE! Limbs flailing, a strangled SNARL erupting from its throat--

The dog whips violently from side to side, coughing up the breathing tube, straining against the restraints. The operating table rocks back and forth dangerously--

Everyone is YELLING over each other: "*Watch out!*" "*Don't let it bite!*" "*Someone grab it!*"

Eva pushes forward and grabs the flailing dog, wrapping her arms around its chest.

EVA

It's okay! It's okay!

The lab goes silent. The dog looks around in bleary confusion, blinking slowly.

Zoe glances at Frank. A soft, dumbfounded smile spreading across her face. *Holy shit. They actually did it.*

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SHORT TIME LATER

Frank holds a penlight up to the dog's eyes, slowly shines it back and forth. The dog's eyes follow the light. The milky white cataracts have vanished; the dog's eyes are normal.

NIKO

I thought you said he was blind.

FRANK

He was. Mature, stage five cataracts in both eyes. That's why they put him down.

The dog's eyes swivel from Zoe to Frank again. Zoe crosses her arms, suddenly a little creeped out.

ZOE

You think it's the serum?

FRANK

No. There's no way. There must have been some kind of a mistake.

Zoe watches the dog, unconvinced.

FRANK

No one breathes a word of this
until we know exactly what we have
here. Understood?

They all nod in agreement.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - LATER

Later that night, Clay produces a bottle of cheap champagne.
Toasts are made. Laughter and smiles all around.

The dog lies sedated on the table.

EXT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Zoe pulls her Volvo into the driveway of a duplex and exits
the car. She hurries around to open the door for Frank--

He emerges with a wrapped bundle in his arms. The dog's tail
protrudes from the blankets, hanging limply.

FRANK

God, he's heavy.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Frank and Zoe kneel in the kitchen, watching intently as the
dog limps into sight. Moving slowly, painfully. The dog finds
his water bowl and drinks noisily.

ZOE

What's his name again?

FRANK

Rocky.

ZOE

Rocky! Here, boy! C'mere.

Rocky's head swivels around. He stares at them blankly.

FRANK

Hey, Rocky. How you doing, buddy?

The dog gazes at them for a long beat...almost like he's
sizing them up...then he turns and limps back to his pile of
blankets. Settles to the floor. Closes his eyes.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Frank and Zoe sit on the couch, sipping wine. Both of them watching the sleeping dog.

ZOE

It's not just me, right? He's acting weird.

FRANK

He's in shock. Light nerve damage, who knows. Probably feels like he's got the world's worst hangover.

(takes another drink)

It's gonna take a few days to heal. Stitch all those neural pathways back together. You'll see.

Zoe looks unconvinced. Frank notices her reaction.

FRANK

What?

ZOE

(a little sheepish)

I don't know. I just keep thinking. What if we...pulled him out of Doggie Heaven or something?

FRANK

Doggie Heaven. How come wine always brings out the Catholic in you?

ZOE

All I'm saying is, if you're going to ask the big questions, you have to be ready to hear the answers.

FRANK

You actually think we're going to find something. Some kind of proof.

ZOE

(softly)

I think everyone deserves a second chance. And we're going to make that happen.

FRANK

I'll drink to that.

Frank finishes his wine, then guides Zoe to her feet.

But before they head for the bedroom, Zoe kneels beside the sleeping dog. Strokes his side for a moment.

ZOE
You're a good boy.

Frank and Zoe exit the room. Rocky remains motionless.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

The early hours of the morning. Frank and Zoe asleep in their bed. The bedroom door standing open behind them.

An OMINOUS HUM OF WHITE NOISE building in the background.

The dog appears in the doorway. He stands there motionless, silhouetted against the light. Just watching them sleep.

Slowly, the animal approaches the bed.

He reaches the bedside. Only a few feet from Zoe. She stirs in her sleep. Rolls over. Doesn't wake.

The dog takes another step closer. Until his muzzle is almost touching Zoe's exposed neck.

Zoe shifts in her sleep. Opens her eyes--

And finds herself staring at the dog. A tense beat.

Then Rocky licks Zoe's cheek. The picture of innocence.

He turns away and limps back out of the room. Zoe stares after him, concerned.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MORNING

Frank and Zoe enter the lab. Zoe holding Rocky's leash. The dog placidly hobbling along at her side.

ZOE
Look who's here!

Eva, Niko and Clay crowd around to pet the animal.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - DAY

The dog has been sedated and placed inside the fMRI machine. The team works quickly, adjusting various settings. Eva recording the events for posterity.

Onscreen, a three-dimensional thermal model of the dog's brain slowly rotates. Flashes of crimson and orange.

FRANK
What's our HDR?

CLAY
2.2 seconds.

ZOE
That's well within levels.

Clay slips on the AUGMENTED GLASSES. From his POV, the dog's arteries are GLOWING like they're filled with diamonds.

CLAY
Whoa, that's weird.

FRANK
What?

CLAY
The Lazarus serum. It's still present in his bloodstream.

FRANK
That's not possible. It's designed to dissipate in a few hours.

CLAY
I don't know what to tell you. I'm looking right at it.
(frowning)
Man. There's some weird activity in the brain stem.

Clay glances around, makes sure the others aren't listening.

CLAY
You sure you wanna keep this thing in your house?

FRANK
What's wrong?

CLAY
I'm just saying, one of the symptoms of Hypothyroidism is extreme aggression. He could go Cujo in a hurry.

Frank and Zoe absorb this. Zoe casts a wary glance at Rocky, still fast asleep inside the machine.

Meanwhile, Eva joins Niko at the monitor bank.

EVA
What's going on?

NIKO
(pointing to the screen)
See the orange stuff? That's blood flow, neural pathways, that kinda stuff. Which means if there was any brain damage, some of these sections would be dark.

EVA
But he's okay?

NIKO
He's more than okay. He's a hundred percent. Which is insane.
(Eva doesn't get it.)
When you die, it takes about five minutes for your brain cells to start decaying. That dog was dead for six hours. He should be a potato right now.

EVA
So...what's that mean?

CLAY
(calling out)
It means we're gonna be *riiiich!*

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - NIGHT

Late night. Frank sits alone in the lab, reviewing Eva's documentary footage. Onscreen, Rocky pads unsteadily across the room, his movements jerky and erratic. Frank dictates his notes into a digital recorder.

FRANK
So far we've seen three distinct phases of development. Phase one: subject is resuscitated through an infusion of DMT serum and targeted electrical stimulation.

Onscreen, we see Rocky's lifeless body. An infusion drip pumps milky white SERUM into the dog's veins.

FRANK

Phase two. The serum remains in the bloodstream, boosting metabolism, somehow amplifying the body's natural healing abilities.

Onscreen, Frank shines a penlight into Rocky's eyes. The dog's cataracts are gone, his vision restored.

FRANK

Phase three. Metabolic functions produce a potentially disruptive hormonal imbalance. Subject displays confusion. Marked signs of aggression.

Footage of the dog GROWLING at the camera.

Frank sighs, rubs his temples, frustrated.

FRANK

We've entered phase four. The subject's brain continues to create new neural pathways, at a rate we've never seen before.

(silent for a moment)

We're off the map here.

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

The group is finishing lunch. Cold pizza. Rocky dozes in the corner, ignoring Eva's attempts to play with him. She rolls a RED RUBBER BALL past his nose.

EVA

Come on, get the ball!

(to the others)

You think he remembers? Dying?

CLAY

Dogs don't have memories. So, no.

NIKO

Dogs have memories!

CLAY

They form associations. Leash means walk. Keys mean car ride. It's not the same thing.

NIKO

You're so full of shit. We're settling this right now.

He marches out of the room. Clay amiably follows.

Eva reaches through the bars and scratches Rocky's neck. The dog stares back at her with those blank, unsettling eyes.

EVA

What do you think, Rocky? Did you see a big white light?

FRANK

That part's actually true.

(Eva looks up.)

Ever hear of the pineal gland? It's full of something called DMT, which is the base compound for our serum. It's pretty much the most potent psychedelic on the planet.

Frank leans forward in his chair, fully engaged.

FRANK

But here's the thing. When you die, at the exact moment of death, your brain floods your system with this massive blast of DMT. And no one knows why. So when people see some white light at the end of a tunnel, or the Virgin Mary or whatever else, it's really just a bad trip.

Zoe speaks up suddenly.

ZOE

I don't believe that.

FRANK

Here we go.

ZOE

So everyone that's ever had a near-death experience, you're going to discredit all of that based on one theory?

FRANK

When the alternative is, what, Saint Peter and the Pearly Gates?

ZOE

Why not?

FRANK

Because it's a fairy tale.

ZOE

Look, whatever you call it--the soul, consciousness--it's still just neural impulses firing in your brain, right? So that makes it energy. And energy can't be created or destroyed. It can only be changed into another form. That's not superstition; that's science.

EVA

So what's your theory?

ZOE

I don't know. Maybe when we die, the DMT is there to...to help our souls move on. To wherever they're supposed to go. Maybe it opens the door for them.

FRANK

Yeah, that doesn't sound like superstition at all.

ZOE

I'm just saying, it's arrogant to think we have all the answers. To reduce everything that happens in the moment of death to some chemical equation. Because we just don't know.

FRANK

Yet.

His words hang in the air.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - LATE NIGHT

It's late. Most of the team has gone home for the night. Zoe sits at her workstation, reviewing the day's footage.

Suddenly Zoe pauses, glances around with a slight frown. Almost like she heard something.

The lab is dark around her. Shadows everywhere.

She shakes it off, returns to the footage. We DRIFT CLOSER--

When suddenly NIKO enters the frame, dropping a bag of TAKE-OUT CHINESE on her desk! Zoe jumps slightly.

NIKO

Ta-daa!

ZOE

Jesus. I thought you left.

NIKO

C'mon, I'm not gonna let you do all the work by yourself.

(waggles the take-out bag)

Got your favorite. What do you say?

TIME CUT TO:

Niko and Zoe, eating at the break room table.

NIKO

How's the dog doing?

ZOE

That thing creeps me out. It's unnatural, the way he just...looks at you? Like he's sizing you up.

NIKO

Yeah. Or he's just a dog. I used to have this miniature poodle, he would sit there and stare at the wall like it was some kind of math problem. They can't all be Lassie.

ZOE

You had a miniature poodle...?

NIKO

Avon Barksdale.

(shrugs)

I was really into *The Wire*.

Zoe snorts laughter. Niko smiles, encouraged.

NIKO

What about you?

ZOE

Not really a pet person.

NIKO

No, I mean...how are you doing?
With everything else.

Zoe shrugs. Picks at her food. Niko understands.

NIKO

Frank?

Zoe gestures helplessly to the ENGAGEMENT RING on her finger.

ZOE

It's just...when we got the grant,
we both said: the wedding,
everything else, let's just put it
all on hold. Because we knew this
was more important.

(shrugs)

That was three years ago. Now you
look at him, and it's like he
doesn't even remember the time
before. The only thing that matters
is the work.

NIKO

Maybe the universe is trying to
tell you something.

ZOE

Yeah. Finish this damn project.
(collecting herself)
Anyway. Thanks for the food.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MORNING

Clay is the first one to arrive the next morning. He drops a vinyl album onto his VINTAGE RECORD PLAYER. As the MUSIC begins playing, he glances over his shoulder.

From inside his wire cage, Rocky is watching him.

Singing along to the music, Clay pulls out his vaporizer. He takes a drag, then EXHALES the vapor directly into Rocky's face. The dog doesn't react.

CLAY

(as McGruff The Crime Dog)

"Help take a bite outta crime."

The dog stares at him, unblinking.

Clay doesn't notice as he roots through the fridge. He grabs some food and ambles out of the room.

He plops down in front of his computer, pulls up Facebook--

BANG! A sharp noise echoes from the break room, loud enough to make Clay jump. He spins around in his chair--

CLAY

Niko...?

No response.

The song ends. The record continues to spin, HISSING faintly.

Clay crosses the lab. Enters the break room, fumbles for the light switch--

Something CRUNCHES underfoot. At last Clay finds the light.

The cabinet doors are all standing open. Food strewn across the floor. Rocky's cage stands empty, the deadbolts thrown.

CLAY

Whoa.

He retreats back to the lab, moving carefully, looking around for the missing dog. A little spooked now.

CLAY

Rocky? Here, boy, c'mere...

Something RATTLES in the corner. Clay whirls, heart pounding.

The CRACKLE of the record player continues, a steady drone.

Nothing is moving. Shadows everywhere. Lots of places to hide. Clay swallows hard.

He approaches the operating table. The camera follows him as he bends down to peer beneath the table. But there's nothing under there. He straightens up--

Only to find Rocky standing atop the table, his muzzle only inches from Clay's face, GROWLING fiercely--

Clay hurls himself backwards and goes scrambling across the floor on his hands and knees, gasping--

His back hits the wall and he huddles there, looking around wildly. The dog has disappeared again.

Footsteps. Claws CLICKING against the floor tiles.

Moving slowly, Rocky trots into sight. Staring at Clay with those cold, glassy eyes.

CLAY

H-hey there. Good boy. Who's a good boy?

Clay clambers to his feet, preparing to bolt--

The sound that issues from the dog's throat isn't a bark, or even a growl. IT SOUNDS LIKE A FUCKING HISS.

The HISSING NOISE trails off, becoming a DRY, THROATY RATTLE that seems to echo in the enclosed space...

At that moment, the door swings open behind them. Eva stands in the doorway.

EVA

Why are you on the floor?

The dog pads over to Eva, wagging its tail, the picture of innocence. Clay stares after it, his chest heaving. At a loss to even begin to explain what just happened.

INT. BREAK ROOM - LATER

The dog has been returned to its cage, and Eva and Niko are cleaning up the food on the floor. The rest of the team is gathered around Clay, their expressions skeptical.

ZOE

Maybe you forgot to latch the cage.

CLAY

I didn't forget. You ask me, we should put that thing down. Now.

ZOE

At least you're not overreacting.

CLAY

Overreacting my ass. There's something wrong with that animal! It was acting like...like it was possessed or something!

FRANK

How long were you out of the room?

CLAY

I dunno. 20 seconds, tops.
(off Zoe's look)
And no, I wasn't smoking.

EVA

Guys?
(holds up a bag of chips)
This stuff was on the top shelf.
Even if you left the cage open,
there's no way.

Silence as they absorb that. No one has an explanation.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - NIGHT

Zoe, cleaning up the lab for the night. She enters the next room. Frank is sitting with Eva, reviewing their latest batch of footage.

ZOE
Hey. You ready to go?

FRANK
Oh. Go ahead and take off. I still
have to log some stuff.

Zoe hesitates. Not crazy about leaving them alone together.

ZOE
I can wait...

FRANK
No, it's cool. I'm probably gonna
be here late.

ZOE
Okay then. Bye.

But Frank has already turned away.

EXT. CAMPUS - NIGHT

Zoe heads for the parking lot. She passes the school chapel.
The eyes of the Virgin Mary statue seem to follow her.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SHORT TIME LATER

Later in the night. Frank has returned to his workstation. Eva still editing footage. Eva takes a PILL BOTTLE from her purse, swallows a few pills. Frank notices.

FRANK
What's that?

EVA
Nothing.
(Frank gives her a look.)
Seriously. It's not a big deal.

Frank shrugs slightly: *Tell me.* Eva is silent for a moment, trying to find the right words.

EVA

I've got this thing. A congenital heart defect. They found it when I was 16. The doctors said I probably had a year left, best case scenario.

FRANK

What happened?

EVA

A year goes by, doctors say this time you *definitely* have a year left. Every year, surprise, they say the same thing. So who knows.

(off his look)

That's not why I'm here, by the way. "Sick girl trying to cheat death" or whatever.

FRANK

Then why are you here?

She looks at him seriously.

EVA

When something that big happens to you, it kinda puts everything else in perspective, you know? You figure out, all of us, we've only got a little bit of time left to do something great, something that's gonna leave a mark on the world.

(beat)

If this serum works? It's gonna leave a mark.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Zoe tosses and turns in her bed. Dark dreams.

As we PUSH IN, we INTERCUT WITH--

INT. NIGHTMARE - MONTAGE

ZOE'S RECURRING NIGHTMARE, a series of rapid-fire, almost impressionistic shots that will only make sense later:

--A door at the end of a long hallway.

--BANGING ON THE DOOR. Sounds of violence, muffled shouts.

--Oily black SMOKE curling around the edges of the door.

--HUMAN FINGERS appear beneath the door, blackened and charred, reaching for help as we

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zoe's eyes snap open.

She looks around. Frank is fast asleep beside her.

She touches the small gold CRUCIFIX around her neck, whispering a quick HAIL MARY to herself:

ZOE
*Hail Mary, full of grace. Our Lord
is with you--*

As she speaks, she rolls over--

And finds herself face-to-face with a hideous BURNING FIGURE,
the skin charred and blackened, the eyes blazing with light!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zoe bolts upright in bed, drenched in sweat, gasping.

Frank--the *real* Frank--is sleeping peacefully at her side.

She sits on the edge of the bed, too rattled to go back to sleep. *Now her nightmares are having nightmares.*

EXT. MISKATONIC HALL LOBBY - MORNING

Early the next morning. Frank and Zoe arrive for work.

As they pass through the lobby, a pair of CAMPUS SECURITY GUARDS appear behind them:

GUARD #1
Dr. Walton? I need to ask you to
come with us.

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

An ornate office, desk overflowing with papers, books lining the shelves. Seated behind the desk is the CAMPUS PRESIDENT.

FRANK

--One, the animal was already scheduled for termination. Two, the procedure was carried out by the shelter. And three, in case you forgot: we brought him back!

CAMPUS PRESIDENT

Sit down, Dr. Walton.

FRANK

I'm not gonna sit down. We're on the verge of the biggest medical breakthrough in a century and you want to talk about some dog?

CAMPUS PRESIDENT

Sit. Down.

Frank takes a seat. The President shakes her head angrily.

CAMPUS PRESIDENT

Honestly, did you stop for even a second to think about the implications of all this?

(before he can answer)

83 percent of our student body identify themselves as religious. Alumni donors, that number gets closer to 90--

FRANK

This has nothing to do with religion--

CAMPUS PRESIDENT

You were the one who chose to conduct an unsanctioned experiment, in clear violation of both the review board and the grant agreement you signed. What was it?

(checks his papers)

To "study new methods of arresting neural decay in coma patients."

FRANK

Where do you think penicillin came from? Or Teflon? Or Coca-Cola? They came from accidents.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Accidents that led to new lines of inquiry. That's how science works. By evolving.

CAMPUS PRESIDENT

You're not evolving; you're playing God with a bunch of dead animals.
(a disgusted look)
You had to see this coming.

Frank has been silent, his mind racing. All the pieces slowly tumbling into place. Finally he looks up.

FRANK

How much are they paying you?

The President's face betrays the slightest flicker of guilt.

CAMPUS PRESIDENT

I have no idea what you're--

FRANK

There's no way you could have known about the animal trials, no way in hell. Which means someone fed this to you, specifically to get this project shut down.

CAMPUS PRESIDENT

I find that offensive--

FRANK

Who was it, Pfizer? Coronis? Let me guess, they're donating a science wing? Building a new student union?

CAMPUS PRESIDENT

Do I need to call security?

FRANK

Or maybe they just made the check out to you *personally*.
(off her reaction:)
You got your thirty pieces.

The President has heard enough. Reaches for the phone.

CAMPUS PRESIDENT

We're done here.

FRANK

We're not even *close* to done.

EXT. MISKATONIC HALL - SIMULTANEOUS

A fleet of WHITE VANS pull up outside Miskatonic Hall.

ANGLE on the CORPORATE LOGO painted across the door of each vehicle. *Coronis Pharmaceutical.*

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe leaps to her feet as a half-dozen ARMED GUARDS and CORONIS WORKERS march into the lab.

ZOE
What is this?

An elderly man in an elegant suit steps forward. So thin he's practically a walking cadaver. This is MR. WALLACE.

MR. WALLACE
You must be Dr. McDonnell.

A LAWYER hands Zoe takes a lengthy legal form. She hurriedly scans it. Her expression changes.

LAWYER
Effective immediately, all research material is to be considered the sole intellectual property of Coronis Pharmaceutical and its subsidiaries.

ZOE
What?!?

Chaos all around them. Coronis guards unplugging laptops, pulling hard drives, confiscating security key cards.

A guard reaches for Clay's laptop. Clay shoves him away.

CLAY
Hey, that's personal property!

In the break room, Eva sees everything. She slips a leash around Rocky's collar.

EVA
(whispering)
Rocky. Come on.

She quietly leads the dog through the back exit.

Meanwhile, Zoe looks to Mr. Wallace, her head still spinning.

ZOE

I don't understand. Our grant is from Werner-Goss Biotechnical.

MR. WALLACE

And as of two hours ago, Coronis Industries just became the majority shareholder in Werner-Goss.

Niko works desperately to save his open files. A guard reaches for the power cord on his computer.

NIKO

Wait, just give me two seconds--

The guard pulls the plug. Niko's screen goes dark.

Mr. Wallace opens the fridge. A guard removes the bags of Lazarus serum. Zoe storms after them, on the verge of tears.

ZOE

Why are you doing this?

Mr. Wallace nods to the lawyer, who clears his throat.

LAWYER

Pursuant to the grant agreement signed by Dr. Frank Walton, 5/26/10: *"Any violation of IACUC review board standards shall herein negate all claims of ownership and revert intellectual property rights back to the holding corporation."*

MR. WALLACE

Which, in this case, is us.

(with mock sympathy)

I'm sure this is difficult, but there's an important lesson here. There's always a consequence for breaking the rules.

EXT. MISKATONIC HALL - SIMULTANEOUS

Frank races back across campus on foot.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Frank arrives, panting and out of breath, only to realize that he's already too late.

The Coronis workers have already left. The lab has been partially cleaned out: all their computers, research notes and serum samples have been confiscated. Zoe sits huddled on the floor. She glances up at Frank. Tears in her eyes.

ZOE
They took everything.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

The team has assembled at Frank and Zoe's apartment. Everyone still in a state of shock. Clay is more than a little drunk.

Clay breaks out his vaporizer, takes a hit. Zoe makes a face.

CLAY
I was gonna buy a penguin. Dress him up in little costumes, take him to parties.
(shakes his head sadly)
It would've been awesome.

NIKO
Penguins are endangered.

CLAY
So?

NIKO
So you can't buy them.

CLAY
I wasn't gonna do it *legally*.
(to Zoe)
How about you, Z? What were you gonna do with your share?

Zoe gives him a withering look.

ZOE
We just lost everything. Our reputations, four years of our lives, everything. And you're talking about the money?

An unhappy silence descends. Eva stirs in her seat.

EVA
If they wanted the serum so bad, why not just give you all jobs?

For a beat, no one answers. Then...

FRANK

Imagine you're Coronis, and you hear about the Lazarus serum. Maybe corporate espionage, maybe it's just a routine acquisition, who knows. But either way, you realize this thing is a gold mine. So you buy Werner-Goss. That's step one.

(takes a drink)

Then you realize all it would take is one little anonymous phone call to the review board, and you'd have the legal right to take the serum for yourself. And suddenly you're not splitting the profits anymore; suddenly that money is all yours.

His words hang in the air. Everyone realizing that they've been outmaneuvered from the start.

NIKO

Come on. That's crazy. They're not gonna spend 50 million dollars just to get our serum.

(looks around the room)

...right?

No one answers.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Hours later. The table stacked with empty beer cans. Eva wanders into the next room. Kneels and pets Rocky. The dog stares back at her blankly.

In the kitchen, Zoe paces restlessly.

ZOE

Okay. Okay. Here's what we do. We bite the bullet. Call up Pfizer, Novartis, one of the big guys, and give them everything we have.

NIKO

Yeah, if they believe us. Is everyone forgetting we don't have any proof? The serum's gone, the data, all the footage we shot.

ZOE

What about back-ups?

NIKO

On the hard drives. Which they also took.

CLAY

All of it?

NIKO

Hey, I didn't know we were gonna get raided! I had to back it up somewhere.

CLAY

Goddamn it!

Frank has been silent this entire time. Zoe takes his hand.

ZOE

What are you thinking?

FRANK

We duplicate the experiment. It's the only way.

NIKO

Um. Tell me you're joking.

FRANK

We still have the Pulse Array. We walk away now, without our data, without proof? We're never gonna get another chance at this.

(beat)

The school won't start breaking down the lab until tomorrow. At the earliest. That gives us a good 12 hours. We prove the formula works, get it all on tape. And then we let the whole world decide.

CLAY

Duplicate it *how*? They took the samples.

(Frank hesitates.)

Right...?

In response, Zoe opens the fridge. Withdraws a tray containing dozens of bags of milky-white SERUM.

ZOE

We figured...just in case.

Stunned silence. Clay finishes his beer, crushes the can.

CLAY
What the hell. Let's do some B&E.

NIKO
This is insane.

FRANK
Miskatonic Hall has timed locks.
There's only one guard on duty, and
we know his routes. We can do this.

NIKO
And how are we supposed to get
inside? They took our key cards.

EVA (O.S.)
Um...

They turn to find Eva standing in the doorway. She pulls a
SECURITY KEY CARD from her purse.

EVA
Not all of them.

INT. MISKATONIC HALL - NIGHT

Eva buzzes herself into the lobby. Rocky pads along behind
her on a leash. She smiles to the SECURITY GUARD as she signs
into the logbook.

SECURITY GUARD
Working late.

EVA
(nods to the dog)
Tell me about it. Dr. Chernan wants
to keep him here for overnight
observation. Just the way I wanted
to spend my Friday night.

SECURITY GUARD
You know where you're going?

EVA
Sure do. Thanks!

Flashing her sweetest smile, she continues on.

INT. LOADING DOCK - MOMENTS LATER

The loading dock in the back of the building. Eva opens the rolling door. The rest of the team is waiting for her outside. All of them carrying bags of equipment.

They slip inside. The door closes behind them.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Eva unlocks the Lazarus Project Lab and they all duck inside. Leaving the lights off, they huddle on the floor.

We hear FOOTSTEPS from the hallway outside. The security guard, making his rounds.

Getting closer and closer. Until he's right outside the door.

Nobody moves. Nobody even breathes.

The guard finally continues onward. Vanishes from sight.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SECONDS LATER

Frank hits the lights. Zoe stores the samples of Lazarus serum in the refrigerator.

Niko has already fired up one of the computers. Hacking the security system's mainframe. He's fully in his element.

Eva lifts the handheld camera from its charger. She turns to find Frank standing behind her.

FRANK

If this goes wrong, if we get
caught down here, they could expel
you. No one's gonna blame you if
you don't want to stay.

EVA

I know.

She fires up the camera. Gives Frank an expectant look.

EVA

Are we gonna do this or what?

Frank smiles. The kid just earned her place on the team.

Meanwhile, Zoe approaches Niko's side.

ZOE
How's it looking?

NIKO
On a scale of one to shitty? Their
security system is shitty.
Aaaaaaand here it comes...

A series of windows appear on Niko's screen. SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE FROM THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE BUILDING. One of the windows shows the security guard in the lobby, reading a magazine behind his desk. Another shows the lab itself: Zoe leaning over Niko's shoulder.

ZOE
There. Can you loop that footage?

NIKO
Loop the footage?

ZOE
You know...like on TV?

NIKO
Orrrrr I could just stop recording.
It's not like that guy's gonna
notice the difference.

ZOE
That works too.

She turns away. Niko calls after her:

NIKO
You're amazing, Niko.

ZOE (O.S.)
You're amazing, Niko.

NIKO
You're damn right...

INT. COLD STORAGE LAB - SIMULTANEOUS

Frank opens a refrigerated storage unit along the far wall. He extends one of the trays, revealing...

A DEAD RHESUS MONKEY in a plastic bag. Frank carefully removes the monkey, then closes the door again.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SHORT TIME LATER

The monkey's body has been arranged on the operating table. The messy work has already been finished; the back of its skull peeled away, wires protruding from its brain. An infusion drip is replacing its blood with SERUM MIXTURE.

A flurry of activity. Zoe readies a syringe with concentrated serum, injecting it directly into the spinal column--

Clay slips on the AUGMENTED GLASSES. From his POV, we can see the GLOWING SERUM being forcibly circulated through the lifeless creature's bloodstream.

CLAY

Cells appear healthy. Full diffusion in 30.

FRANK

Give me 45ccs Trimexialin.
(to Niko)
How we doing?

NIKO

Neural overlay synced. Capacitors charged. Ready on my end.

ZOE

Serum blood ratio six point eight. Oxygen levels good.

FRANK

Someone check on the guard.

Eva lowers her camera just long enough to glance at Niko's hijacked security feed. The security guard is still lounging at his desk in the lobby.

EVA

He's still there.

Everyone looks at Frank expectantly.

FRANK

All right. Let's make some history.

Zoe reaches out, squeezes Frank's hand, gives him an encouraging smile. Frank smiles back.

ANGLE on the monkey's body. Its glassy eyes catch the light. Its teeth almost appear to be bared in a snarl.

The team takes their positions around the table. Frank glances at Eva to make sure she's filming. She shoots him a thumbs-up.

Zoe approaches the PULSE ARRAY--

FRANK

Event One. Count us down.

ZOE

First pulse, 11 kilovolts, in
three. Two. One.

Zoe throws the switch--

AND EVERYTHING GOES HAYWIRE.

SPARKS fly from the Pulse Array. Several of the overhead lights SHATTER in unison--

Zoe's posture goes rigid. The cords standing out in her neck, her entire body trembling. One hand still gripping the Array.

It takes the others a second to realize what's happening: *Zoe is being electrocuted.*

Frank lunges for her, but Clay grabs him at the last second.

CLAY

Don't touch her!

FRANK

NO!

Zoe continues to shudder and convulse helplessly. The air thick with a sizzling STATIC CHARGE, hissing and popping.

Thinking fast, Niko grabs a rolling equipment cart and SHOVES it toward Zoe as hard as he can--

The cart knocks her off-balance, breaking the connection. Zoe crumples to the floor in a boneless heap.

Frank crashes to his knees at her side and begins CPR, screaming orders between breaths--

FRANK

Get the defib! Hurry! Niko,
adrenaline.

(to Zoe)

You're okay. You're gonna be okay.

EVA

Omigod. Omigod.

It's absolute chaos. Clay and Niko collide with each other. Eva is hyperventilating.

Zoe's legs drum helplessly against the floor, beating out a staccato rhythm. Eyes rolled back, only the whites showing.

FRANK

Look at me! Look at me! You're
gonna be okay! Zoe!
(over his shoulder)
WHERE'S THE GODDAMN DEFIB?

Zoe's back arches sharply, lifting her halfway off the floor, her entire body rigid--

And then she collapses. Not moving. Not even breathing.

FRANK

No. No, no, no, no--

Clay returns with the defib unit. Frank presses the paddles against Zoe's chest.

FRANK

Clear!

ZZZZAAPP! Zoe shudders. Then falls still once more.

FRANK

Zoe? Stay with me, baby, okay? You
gotta stay with me.

Zoe's eyes are open. Glassy. Unseeing.

Eva lowers her camera. Tears running down her cheeks.

FRANK

Clear!

He shocks her again with the defib paddles. No response.

Niko returns, passes Frank a syringe of adrenaline--

Frank takes the syringe. Doesn't even hesitate before
HAMMERING THE NEEDLE INTO ZOE'S CHEST.

Eva winces, looks away.

Frank empties the contents of the syringe. Resumes
alternating between CPR and mouth-to-mouth.

For a long beat, the lab is silent, save for Frank's frenzied breathing. He's still muttering under his breath--

FRANK
Don't you do this...

Clay clears his throat. Touches Frank's shoulder--

CLAY
Frank--

Frank whirls on him, furious, tears in his eyes--

FRANK
Don't! Don't.

He goes back to work. Clay lets his hand fall away. Niko wanders the lab in a daze. Eva sinks to the floor, arms around her knees.

Frank continues to work on Zoe for a few more desperate moments. But at last he gives up. Collapses over her body, clutching her in his arms.

We hold on this grisly scene. Then DISSOLVE TO--

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Frank is still cradling Zoe's lifeless body. Clay paces.

CLAY
We gotta, I dunno, call someone,
right? Like the police?

One of Zoe's hands is clenched. Frank gently pries it open. Revealing that she forgot to remove her ENGAGEMENT RING.

He touches the ring and immediately jerks his fingers away; the ring is still burning hot. The skin around the ring is charred and blackened.

Frank gazes down at her. His expression hardening. Grief giving way to fury. *This is wrong.*

He stands abruptly. Lifting Zoe in his arms. Carrying her over to the operating table.

CLAY
What are you doing?
(suddenly getting it)
Frank. No.

FRANK
Clear the table.

CLAY

Frank, man--

With his elbow, Frank shoves the test monkey's body to the floor. Gently lowers Zoe onto the table.

NIKO

Whoa, whoa, wait a second--

FRANK

Get me some light.

CLAY

Can we just talk about this--?

FRANK

There's nothing to talk about. The serum works. We know it works.

CLAY

Yeah, and what if she comes back all messed up? Like the dog?

FRANK

That won't happen. We can adjust the levels, tailor her dosage.

Frank looks to Niko for support. Niko shifts miserably.

NIKO

I mean, hey, I want her back, too. But if this doesn't work? If the cops show up and we're cutting up a human body? We're going to jail. All of us.

FRANK

I don't believe this...

Frank turns to Eva. She shakes her head apologetically.

EVA

This isn't some lab experiment.
We're talking about bringing
someone back from the dead.

FRANK

We've done it once before.

EVA

Not like this. I'm sorry, but we're crossing a line here. Once we do this, we can't ever go back.

Frank is silent for a long beat.

FRANK
You should leave. All of you.

CLAY
Frank, c'mon, man--

Frank spins around. A feverish look in his eyes.

FRANK
I am not going to lose her! Not
like this.

He starts prepping the operating table. The others exchange helpless glances. Then, one by one, they join in.

No turning back now.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MONTAGE

--Clay setting up portable halogen lamps around the table--

--A breathing tube is inserted into Zoe's mouth--

--Infusion drips in her arms. The blood begins to flow, replaced by a milky white mixture of saline and the serum.

--Zoe's clothes have been removed. Frank drapes a white sheet over her body.

--Frank picks up the CRANIAL SAW, a hulking contraption with an ugly spinning blade.

--He places the blade's edge against the side of Zoe's temple. Then he hesitates. This doesn't just feel wrong; it feels like a *desecration*. Almost unforgivable.

The blade begins to SPIN--

CLAY
Careful.

FRANK
I know what I'm doing.

As the blade bites into flesh, we SMASH CUT TO:

--Later. A portion of Zoe's temple has been removed. A series of thin filament cables have been inserted into the opening, connecting her to the Pulse Array device.

--Frank takes the concentrated serum, carefully injects it--

FRANK
Niko. We good?

NIKO
I don't know. Half this stuff is
fried. I can't even get a reading--

FRANK
Are. We. Good?

Niko meets Frank's gaze. Swallows hard.

NIKO
Yeah. We're good.

FRANK
Clay?

Clay watches Zoe through the Augmented Glasses. Watching as
the GLOWING SERUM spreads throughout her body.

CLAY
Diffusion complete.

FRANK
Clear the body.

Frank slips on a pair of insulated RUBBER GLOVES, then grasps
the Pulse Array's voltage switch--

FRANK
9-point-5, event one. Pulse in
three. Two. One.

He flips the switch. Zoe's body SHUDDERS as the electrical
current screams through her system.

Frank powers down the Array. Zoe's body goes limp once more.
Still no signs of life.

CLAY
I got nothing.

Eva watches helplessly from the corner. The dog comes padding
over to her side.

Rocky stares at Zoe's body for a moment, then GROWLS, the
hackles on his back rising. Eva shushes him.

Frank feels for a pulse on Zoe's throat. Exhales angrily.

FRANK
Again.

NIKO
You're gonna blow the array--

FRANK
We're going again!

Frank looks ready to slug someone. Niko throws his hands up in disgust, turns away. Frank reaches for the voltage switch.

FRANK
9-point-seven, event two. Pulse in three. Two...

NIKO (O.S.)
Guys...?

Niko is standing over his computer, his expression worried. The security feeds still scrolling across his screen...

ANGLE ON THE MONITOR. The lobby is now empty.

NIKO
Where's the guard?

It takes a moment for this to sink in. Then Niko slams into his chair. Cycling through feeds as fast as he can--

NIKO
Hang on, hang on--

FRANK
Niko. Hurry.

The feeds scroll past. One deserted corridor after another.

FRANK
Niko!

Boom, there he is. The guard ambling down a corridor.

NIKO
(whirling around)
He's coming!

Frank and Clay exchange a look. Then they fly into action, flipping off the halogen lamps, shutting down monitors--

Eva risks a glance out the window. Sees the guard heading their way. Ducks back out of sight.

EVA
(hissing)
Hurry!

They extinguish the last of the lights. Frank hides Zoe's body under the white sheet. Then they hit the floor.

The beat drags out.

Everyone holding their breath. Eva crouched on the floor just beside the door, not daring to move.

INT. HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

The guard strolls along. Headphones in his ears.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SIMULTANEOUS

Now we hear the guard's FOOTSTEPS approaching. He's almost upon them--

Suddenly the guard stops. A tense moment of silence.

Then the footsteps continue down the hallway.

Everyone exhales. *That was too close.*

Eva glances across the room at Frank, crouched beside the table. Zoe's body hidden beneath the white sheet.

Frank glances at Niko and Clay, both of them huddled beside the Pulse Array device. Niko nods back; *"We're fine."* We PAN BACK to Frank--

Oh fuck. Oh Jesus.

BECAUSE ZOE IS NOW SITTING UP BENEATH THE SHEET.

It takes Frank a second to notice. Then he recoils, badly startled, landing flat on his ass--

Eva claps a hand over her mouth, choking back a scream--

Clay and Niko simply stare, jaws hanging open--

CLAY

Holy shit.

Frank stands. Takes a step closer--

Zoe remains motionless beneath the sheet.

FRANK

Zoe?

No response.

Slowly, carefully, Frank grips the sheet. Slides it away--
Revealing Zoe. Very much alive. Staring right at him.

FRANK
(whispering)
My God.

Zoe is still intubated. She doesn't react as Frank carefully slides the breathing tube out of her throat.

An uncertain beat.

Then Frank throws his arms around her, holding her tight.

FRANK
You're okay. You're okay.
(pulls back, takes her
face in his hands)
Let me look at you. How do you
feel? Baby?

She just stares back at him, unblinking. Frank's smile fades. Something is wrong here.

FRANK
She's in shock. Someone get a
blanket. Eva?

Clay and Niko sense they're intruding on something private and retreat to the far end of the lab.

Now Frank is alone with Zoe. He strokes her cheek. Gazing deep into her eyes, searching for any spark of life.

FRANK
Baby. It's me.

Eva emerges from the supply room, shakes her head--

EVA
I can't find them!

Frank turns away from Zoe to answer--

FRANK
Look on the top shelf!

The second his back is turned, Zoe's eyes snap into focus.
Swiveling around to stare right at Frank.

Frank turns back. Doesn't notice the difference as he reaches for her cheek again--

ZOE'S HAND LASHES OUT. Closing around his wrist in a vice grip. Frank cries out, startled--

Zoe glances around the room. Licks her cracked lips.

ZOE
(croaking)
Did...did I just die?

INT. BREAK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe sits huddled on a chair in the break room, swaddled in blankets. Frank is busy stitching up the wound in her temple. The others have gathered around, watching her closely.

FRANK
How do you feel?

Zoe doesn't answer. Instead she slowly reaches up and explores the side of her head with her fingertips--

FRANK
Careful.

Frank takes her hand and guides it away from the wound.

FRANK
We'll get you all patched up, don't worry.

EVA
What was it like?

All attention shifts to Eva. She looks embarrassed.

EVA
I mean, did you see anything? Like, Heaven...?
(mumbling)
Or, you know, wherever?

Zoe gazes at Eva. Like she's deciding whether to answer.

But before she can respond, Frank speaks up:

FRANK
Guys. Not the best time.
(nods to the door)
Start breaking down the lab. I want us ready to go in 30.

Eva, Clay and Niko file out of the room.

Clay and Niko pause just outside the door, watching Frank and Zoe through the break room window.

CLAY
This is messed-up, right?

NIKO
Nah. Totally normal.

Niko shoots Clay a dirty look. *You idiot.*

INT. MISKATONIC HALL LOBBY - SHORT TIME LATER

The clock hits midnight. The security guard shuts down his station and turns off the overhead lights. Exits through the main doors, LOCKING THEM behind him.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SIMULTANEOUS

Niko watches through the security feed as the guard leaves for the night.

NIKO
Aaaaand there goes the guard.

He glances back at Frank and Clay, waiting expectantly.

NIKO
We're clear.

FRANK
Let's get this over with.

INT. MRI LAB - SHORT TIME LATER

Zoe reclines onto the sliding steel table. Clay and Niko carefully slide the tray into the fMRI machine.

The machine rumbles to life, deafening in the enclosed space.

A THERMAL IMAGE of Zoe's body appears onscreen, shot through with streaks of brilliant white. The Lazarus serum, still moving through her veins.

A THREE-DIMENSIONAL THERMAL MODEL OF ZOE'S BRAIN appears on the monitor. Clay frowns.

CLAY
That's not right.

EVA

What?

CLAY

I dunno. Something's wrong with the scanner. Frank, you wanna take a look at this?

Frank joins him. His expression changes.

CLAY

That's too much neural activity, right?

FRANK

That's way too much.

Frank and Clay continue to argue over the readouts in low tones. We can't make out their conversation.

Eva sidles up to Niko, who is staring at the monitor.

EVA

What's going on?

NIKO

See how it's all lit up like that?

Sure enough, the thermal scan shows what appears to be tiny barbs of electricity lancing throughout Zoe's brain.

EVA

That's good, right?

NIKO

No. That's weird. You ever hear the saying, we only use ten percent of our brains?

EVA

I thought that was a myth.

NIKO

The myth is that we don't know what the other 90 percent does. Humans use the entire brain, but we only use ten percent *at a time*. A guy climbing a mountain is making different neural connections than some guy sitting at his piano, writing a song.

EVA
(nods at the screen)
Then how come the whole thing is
lit up?

NIKO
Yeah, well. That's the weird part.

INT. BREAK ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Frank leads Zoe back to the break room. Her behavior is still distant, a bit dazed. He guides her onto the couch.

FRANK
There you go.

ZOE
Shouldn't we, I don't know, be at
the hospital or something?

FRANK
We've got all the same equipment
here. I want to make sure you're
stable before we do anything else.
(off her reaction)
Hey. It's gonna be fine.

He caresses her cheek. Still can't believe his good fortune.

FRANK
Thought I lost you.

ZOE
You did.

FRANK
Don't say that. Here.

He pulls her ENGAGEMENT RING from his pocket, slips it back onto her finger where it belongs.

Zoe smiles faintly--

But as they make contact, the faint STATIC HUM that's been building in the background SPIKES in intensity--

Zoe jerks her hand back like she's been stung.

FRANK
What?

ZOE
What did you just say?

FRANK
I didn't say anything. You okay
there?

The overhead lights FLICKER gently.

Beside them, a pen suddenly goes ROLLING OFF THE TABLE. Frank absently returns the pen to the table.

ZOE
Yeah, no, I'm just tired.

The STATIC HUM in the background intensifies--

When Frank speaks again, Zoe MIMICS HIS SPEECH EXACTLY, their voices overlapping. Her expression distant, dreamy.

FRANK	ZOE
You've just been through a traumatic experience.	<i>"You've just been through a traumatic experience."</i>

Frank breaks off, startled. Zoe continues, her eyes unfocused, almost like she's unaware that she's speaking.

ZOE
*"You need to give your body time to
heal. So just try to get some rest,
okay? I'll be right outside."*

Frank lurches to his feet, his face pale. Because, of course, that's exactly what he had been about to say.

Zoe blinks, coming out of her fugue state.

ZOE
What?

FRANK
(forcing a smile)
...nothing. I'll come back and
check on you in a bit.

He moves to the door. Zoe calls out after him:

ZOE
Hey. I love you.

Frank hesitates for a split-second too long.

FRANK
I love you, too.

Again we hear that weird STATIC HUM. It almost sounds like WHISPERING VOICES. Zoe's smile fades.

Like she just heard something she didn't like.

Frank leaves. Zoe glances at the table again--

The overhead lights FLICKER. The pen SHUDDERS. Then, slowly, it rolls across the table towards her...

Just when it's about to tumble off the edge, the pen halts.

Zoe stares at it, concentrating fiercely.

Until, slowly, the pen rolls back in the opposite direction!

ANGLE on Zoe's face. Terrified by the implications of what just happened. *Did she just move that pen...with her mind?*

INT. BREAK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe sits on the edge of the couch, head in her hands.

WHISPERING NOISES. Humming in the air, circling around her.

Zoe grits her teeth. Feels like she's losing her mind.

Our POV ZOOMS around the lab, zeroing in on her fellow scientists, one by one. The whispers spike in intensity, and with a jolt we realize we're actually hearing the THOUGHTS of each character--

Their words are a confusing jumble, overlapping, impossible to make out. Instead we're left with only impressions:

EVA: Somewhat suspicious, worried that something is deeply, hopelessly wrong with Zoe...

NIKO: Doesn't trust Frank to do the right thing. He's thinking about calling for help, even if it means turning them all in to the police. Better safe than sorry.

CLAY: Just wants this to be over so he can go home and drink himself into a coma...

And finally FRANK: He can fix this, he knows he can. He just needs more time. But there's defiance and anger there, too. "This isn't my fault."

Zoe clutches her temples, overwhelmed.

Suddenly, everything goes dead SILENT.

Zoe looks at her left hand, eyes widening in horror--

The skin beneath her fingernails has become BLACKENED. Thin black veins radiate outward, like spreading corruption.

In fact, if you look closely, they almost resemble the burned fingers we glimpsed in Zoe's nightmares...

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe stands at the bathroom sink, frantically scrubbing at her blackened fingernails. It's not working. If anything, the corruption actually seems to be spreading.

ZOE

Come on...

She splashes cold water on her face. On the ceiling above, the florescent lights FLICKER ominously...

Zoe leans closer, peeling away the bandage on her temple--

She blinks. *No. That's impossible.*

The ugly wound on her temple has healed almost entirely.

She touches the raw pink flesh wonderingly...

SSSHINK! A hairline CRACK appears in the bathroom mirror, bisecting her reflection in half, making Zoe jump!

She moves her head slightly from side to side. Our perspective shifts from one half of the mirror to the next--

One side of the reflection mimics Zoe's movements exactly.

The other side simply stares back at her, unblinking.

Zoe stares at her reflection. Curiosity giving way to alarm.

Back and forth. One side normal, the other not.

Back and forth--

And suddenly her reflection is replaced by THE BURNING FIGURE! Blazing orange light spills from its eyes and mouth--

Zoe SCREAMS, stumbling away from the mirror--

But her reflection has already returned to normal.

Zoe eyes the mirror warily. *Screw this.* She turns away--

Only to find that she's no longer alone in the bathroom.

Rocky stands before her.

ZOE
Hey, boy.

The dog's lips pull apart in a snarl. The hackles on his back rising. His posture threatening, aggressive.

ZOE
Rocky...?

Growling, the dog starts toward her--

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A shrill YELP of pain echoes throughout the complex.

Then only silence.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Frank inserts a blood sample slide into a microscope. A slight rustling noise makes him turn.

Zoe stands before him, her expression stricken.

ZOE
(weakly)
I think something's wrong...

INT. BREAK ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Frank opens a box of empty syringes and places it on the table. Gives Zoe a reassuring smile.

FRANK
Just enough to help you sleep.

On the table behind Frank, the salt and pepper shakers VIBRATE SLIGHTLY. Frank doesn't notice.

Frank leans over and digs through a storage cabinet. He begins filling one of the syringes with a MILD SEDATIVE.

But the second his back is turned, A CHANGE COMES OVER ZOE. Her features twisting, eyes flashing with fury.

She's staring at the syringes. *It would be so easy to plunge one of them into Frank's exposed neck...*

Zoe reaches for one of the syringes, her hand trembling slightly, clearly waging some internal struggle--

She takes a calming breath and lets her hand fall to her side. Sanity prevails. *For now.*

Frank turns back with the syringe, oblivious to the drama that just took place. He takes Zoe's forearm.

FRANK

Ready?

She forces a smile as Frank injects the sedative.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe is fast asleep on the break room couch. In the main lab, the others are gathered around scans from Zoe's MRI.

FRANK

And I'm telling you, it's not physically possible!

CLAY

Why not? We saw it with the dog!

EVA

What's not possible?

CLAY

Her brain is forming new neural pathways.

(pressing the point)

She's evolving.

FRANK

Oh for Chrissakes, do you even hear yourself? *Evolving?*

CLAY

You got another word for it?

NIKO

Could the serum actually do that?

CLAY

You got me, man. It's not like we tested this crap--

One of the light bulbs on the wall suddenly FLICKERS ominously. They all fall silent, staring at it.

The light continues to flicker as Frank approaches--

He reaches out to screw the bulb back in--

The bulb suddenly POPS like a gunshot, loud enough to make them all jump! Frank jerks his hand away. Stares at the darkened bulb. *That was weird.*

INT. BREAK ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Eva enters the break room, carrying a blanket. Zoe is still fast asleep on the couch.

Eva keels and arranges the blanket over Zoe. Looks at her for a moment. All her suspicions momentarily forgotten. Zoe just looks so damned *innocent*. Almost childlike.

Eva places a hand on Zoe's forehead to check her temperature. Seems normal. She turns away...and stops short.

Eva finds herself staring at a SOLID WALL, covered with garish wallpaper, cracked and peeling with age.

The wall has materialized out of nowhere, cutting diagonally across the break room. It is, quite simply, *impossible*.

Eva touches the wall wonderingly. Glances back at Zoe--

Except Zoe is gone, replaced by another IDENTICAL WALL.

And Eva realizes she's no longer in the break room.

INT. NIGHTMARE - CONTINUOUS

Eva finds herself standing in the same dingy corridor we glimpsed in Zoe's nightmare. Some kind of apartment building.

The corridor appears to extend for miles in either direction, like some sort of demented optical illusion.

EVA

Hello...?

Her voice echoes back to her, ghostly and distorted.

WHAM! A sharp banging noise echoes from further down the hall, loud enough to make Eva jump.

EVA

Who's there?

(no response)

Frank? Zoe?

WHAM! The impact rings out again. Eva cautiously follows the sound until she reaches...

A LOCKED APARTMENT DOOR. Thin fingers of SMOKE are leaking from the cracks in the door.

Moving slowly, as if in a trance, Eva tries to turn the handle. It won't budge. She puts her ear against the door--

WHAM! Something hurls itself against the door from the other side. Eva leaps back, alarmed.

Now the door buckles and groans on its hinges. From the room beyond, we hear MUFFLED VOICES, crying out in agony.

BLACKENED FINGERS appear beneath the door, reaching blindly--

Eva backs away, horrified--

And nearly bumps into THE GIRL. She's perhaps five years old. A dead ringer for a younger Zoe.

EVA

Oh my God.

(kneels before the girl)

Um. Hi.

The girl stares at her blankly.

EVA

Do you know where we are?

The girl puts a finger to her lips. *Shh.*

The girl is holding something in her cupped hand. Cradling it tightly against her chest.

EVA

What do you got there? Can I see?

The girl extends her hand. Her fingers start to open--

WHAM! Behind them, the door shudders again. Eva glances back.

But when she turns to face the girl again, the hallway is empty. The girl has vanished.

Behind her, the wooden door silently swings open.

The doorway is pitch black. Like the mouth of some terrible beast, waiting to swallow her whole.

Eva turns slowly.

Sees the open doorway.

EVA
Hello...?

We can't see anything beyond the doorway. Just a gathering darkness, so black it almost hurts your eyes.

Eva takes a tentative step forward, passing through the doorway. We suddenly realize we can see Eva's breath MISTING in the chilled air.

Something RUSTLES in the darkness ahead of her. Eva freezes.

EVA
Who's there?

No response. Eva shakes her head.

EVA
Screw this.

She turns back--

AND THE BURNING FIGURE IS RIGHT THERE! Orange light spilling from its eyes and mouth like a blast furnace--

The Burning Figure seizes Eva by the wrist, catching her in a vicelike grip. Eva SCREAMS as we

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Eva writhes and thrashes on the break room floor, lost in a blind panic. The others try to restrain her.

FRANK
Eva! Eva!

Eva blinks. Draws in a shuddering breath. She's back in the break room. Zoe still fast asleep on the couch.

FRANK
Are you okay?

Eva manages a nod. Sits up.

EVA
What happened...?

NIKO

I don't know. You just fell over.
Started flopping around, like some
kind of seizure.

CLAY

Dude. Don't say the S-word.

FRANK

Take a breath. You're all right.
What do you remember?

EVA

(haltingly)

I was...somewhere else. A building.
And there was a little girl.

(struggles for the words)

The building was on fire. There
were people in one of the
apartments, they were trying to get
out. I could see their fingers
underneath the door...

As she speaks, Frank's expression changes. Concern giving way
to something like outright horror. Clay notices.

CLAY

Frank?

Frank clears his throat. Stands again.

FRANK

You should go lie down.

NIKO

What's that on your arm?

They all follow Niko's gaze.

A series of UGLY RED BLISTERS circle Eva's wrist. They form
the unmistakable shape of a HANDPRINT.

Eva stares at the blisters. *No. That's impossible.*

EVA

That's where it grabbed me.

NIKO

Where *what* grabbed you?

EVA

(whispering)

I don't know.

Her words hang in the air. No one speaks.

Frank stands at the window, staring out across the lab, his expression agonized. Clay approaches him from behind.

CLAY

You wanna tell us what the hell
that was?

Frank doesn't turn. His voice halting, uncertain.

FRANK

It happened when she was a kid. Her
mom had left her home alone, just
for a few minutes. The building
caught fire. The family in the next
apartment, they couldn't open the
door, couldn't get out.

(beat)

She never talks about it. There was
nothing she could do. But I know
she still feels guilty.

Clay glances at Eva.

CLAY

That sound like what you saw?

She nods wordlessly.

NIKO

How's that even possible?

EVA

Zoe said, when you die, there's a
compound in our brain. To help your
soul move on.

NIKO

The DMT.

EVA

She said it opens a door to
somewhere else.

(beat)

So what if the door never closed?

What if something else is trying to
come through?

No one has an answer for that.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SHORT TIME LATER

The others have adjourned to the main lab, leaving Zoe to slumber on in the break room.

Clay wraps a gauze bandage around Eva's burned wrist. Nearby, Niko and Frank are busy arguing in low tones.

FRANK

That's not an option--

NIKO

We can't do this by ourselves! We have no idea what's happening to her in there--

FRANK

Then we'll figure it out! That's what we do. We observe, we document, we analyze. We do our goddamned jobs.

(addressing everyone)

We have six hours to cover our tracks. We screw this up and we are all going to jail. So get to work.

He storms off.

NIKO

Asshole.

Clay finishes wrapping Eva's bandages.

CLAY

You good?

Eva shakes her head. *Hell no.*

EVA

It's like I was *there*. How's that even possible?

CLAY

I'm telling you, it's the serum. It's, like, unlocking that part of your brain that lets you do crazy psychic shit.

EVA

That's your big theory? Crazy psychic shit?

CLAY

You don't wanna know my theory.

EVA

Try me.

Clay glances around, makes sure Frank isn't listening.

CLAY

We designed the serum to have a 10 hour half-life. It does its job, then it gets cleared by the cells.

EVA

Right.

CLAY

But when we ran tests on the dog, the serum was still circulating. Which means it's still active.

EVA

Which means it's still making changes.

Clay nods grimly.

CLAY

There's a reason evolution happens really slowly. And right now, her brain is doing things the human brain was never designed to do. And it's not taking millions of years; it's taking *minutes*. I mean, Jesus Christ, I'd go crazy too.

EVA

You really think she's crazy?

Clay glances at the break room door.

CLAY

I think the sooner we get out of here, the better.

INT. BREAK ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Zoe tosses and turns in her sleep, her expression troubled.

Her lips move incessantly, whispering something we can't quite make out. A chant, perhaps. Or a prayer.

Like she's fighting some internal struggle.

And losing.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SIMULTANEOUS

Niko is seated at his computer. He waves Frank over.

NIKO

You're gonna wanna see this.

FRANK

What am I looking at?

NIKO

I logged in as Admin to scrub the security footage, right? Except see this? Admin2.

FRANK

So?

Niko points to a grid of data entries.

NIKO

So it's a dummy account. Once a day, it downloads a copy of everything on our system.

(Frank doesn't get it.)

Someone's been watching us. For *months* from the looks of it.

FRANK

The school?

NIKO

The school doesn't need to hack the system. I think it was Coronis.

Frank absorbs this, his expression darkening.

FRANK

When was the last time that thing updated?

NIKO

Twenty minutes ago.

FRANK

So they know we're here.

NIKO

If they don't already, they will pretty soon.

Frank flies into action. Storms into the next room.

FRANK
We're leaving. Right now.

EVA
What's wrong?

FRANK
I'll explain later. Get the dog.
Clay, help me with Zoe.
(calling out)
Niko?

Niko types furiously, deleting one file after the next.

NIKO
Working on it!

Eva enters the spare room and stops short. Rocky's cage is empty. There's no sign of the dog anywhere.

EVA
Where's Rocky?

CLAY
Should be in his cage.

EVA
He's not.

They all pause in their tracks. *That's...weird.*

FRANK
No one saw him?

CLAY
Well. He has to be around here,
somewhere, right?

FRANK
You've gotta be kidding me.
(to the others)
Let's make this fast. We find him
and we're out of here.

INT. BREAK ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

PUSHING IN CLOSER on Zoe's face. Her eyelids fluttering.
Whispering a frantic, desperate prayer.

ZOE
*Hail Mary, full of grace. Our Lord
is with you.*

ZOE (CONT'D)

*Blessed are you among women, and
blessed is the fruit of your womb,
Jesus.*

Fighting to hold the darkness within her in check.

The BEEPING of her heart rate monitor begins to speed up.

ZOE

*Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for
us sinners, now and at the hour of
our death. Amen.*

Her eyes snap open. They're SOLID BLACK ORBS.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

SECURITY FOOTAGE of Frank, Clay, and Eva exploring different sections of the basement.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Niko scrolls through the security system's logs. Finds footage of the group entering the sub-basement, taken earlier that evening. Isolates the file. Clicks **DELETE**.

A SOFT RUSTLING NOISE issues from behind him.

Niko whirls around in his chair. But nothing appears to be moving in the darkened lab.

NIKO

Guys?

INT. BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Niko cracks open the break room door, peeks inside.

Zoe still appears to be fast asleep.

Niko chews his lower lip. This time he leaves the break room door standing open, to keep an eye on Zoe.

Just in case.

INT. COLD STORAGE LAB - SIMULTANEOUS

Eva enters the room, glances around. The door swings shut behind her.

The room is refrigerated; her breath mists in the air.

She shines her flashlight higher. Revealing rows of sliding storage units built into the wall. This is the science department's MORGUE, where cadavers are stored until needed.

In the center of the room stands a refrigerated surgical table, the surface beaded with condensation. Atop the table rests a HUMAN CADAVER inside a cloudy plastic bag.

Eva gazes at the corpse for a beat, then turns away.

INT. ANOTHER LAB - SIMULTANEOUS

Another deserted lab. Clay takes a hit off his vaporizer, exhales more smoke. He's wearing the AUGMENTED GLASSES.

CLAY'S POV: He scans the darkened room with the Augmented Glasses. DIGITAL READOUTS pop up everywhere, hovering over each piece of electronics in the room.

CLAY
(to himself)
Doggie Vision...
(mumbling)
Where you at, you little shithead?

Clay waves his hands in front of the glasses. The thermal display leaves HEAT SIGNATURE CONTRAILS in the air. Clay moves his arms like a conductor, enjoying the light show--

A RUSTLING NOISE behind him. Clay spins around--

CLAY'S POV: The room is empty behind him. But now the Augmented Glasses' digital readouts begin to malfunction, FLICKERING and GLITCHING across the screen.

CLAY
The hell...?

He taps the side of the glasses. Then removes them--

CLAY'S POV: The Augmented Glasses come off--

And for just a split-second, we glimpse SOMETHING standing right in front of us!

We only have time to make out a few chilling details: *charred black skin disintegrating into ash. Flames crackling deep within empty eye sockets.*

Clay lets out a YELP of alarm, tumbles backwards--

But the BURNING FIGURE has already vanished. Just as suddenly as it appeared.

Clay looks around, rattled. Already feeling slightly foolish. *His imagination must be playing tricks on him...right?*

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SIMULTANEOUS

Niko throws another nervous glance over his shoulder. He's a little spooked now. Jumping at shadows.

SECURITY FOOTAGE: A static overhead shot of the entire lab. Niko working in the foreground. Zoe's sleeping form visible through the break room door.

Now we begin INTERCUTTING between the security footage and our regular camera. Back and forth. Back and forth.

Each time we cut back to the SECURITY FOOTAGE, we keep expecting to see that Zoe has disappeared from the frame.

But that doesn't happen. The suspense becoming agonizing.

BACK TO A REGULAR SHOT--

Niko thinks he hears something, turns in his chair--

NIKO

Okay, seriously? This is not coo--

Without warning, A DARK SHAPE drops from the ceiling, SLAMMING into Niko's desk like a mortar shell, sending equipment flying everywhere--

Niko SCREAMS, tumbles out of his chair--

He clambers to his feet. Staring in disbelief at...

Rocky lies sprawled across his desk. The dog's neck has been TWISTED ALL THE WAY AROUND, his eyes glassy and lifeless.

NIKO

WHAT THE HELL!?!

He looks around wildly. Then realizes something.

The break room is empty. Zoe has vanished.

He turns just in time to see the lab door swinging shut.

NIKO

Zoe?

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Niko bursts out of the lab. Looks around for Zoe.

There. At the far end of the hall, another door stands open.

Niko hurries after her.

INT. MRI LAB - CONTINUOUS

Niko enters the darkened MRI lab. Fumbles for a light switch. Can't find one.

NIKO
Zoe? Hello?

A slight RUSTLING noise. Niko follows the sound--

Nothing. The lab appears deserted. Above him, one of the electric lights suddenly FLICKERS dangerously.

Niko turns back...and finds himself standing face-to-face with Zoe!

NIKO
Jesus! What are you doing in here?

She lets her gown fall to the floor. Her body ghostly in the dim light. Niko is too stunned to react as she moves in closer, pressing up against him.

NIKO
Whoa, whoa, hey. You're just, oh
God, you're really naked--

ZOE
Shh.

She leans in for a kiss. Niko panics.

NIKO
Wait. Wait wait wait.
(in a rush)
Okay, I know you just had some
really traumatic stuff go down, and
maybe you're, um, confused--

The overhead light continues to flicker, creating a STROBE EFFECT, as she takes his cheeks. Her voice almost pleading--

ZOE
I just want to feel normal again.

She kisses him. Niko tries to pull away. But doesn't try very hard.

Then his arms are around her. Pushing her back against the wall, kissing her with a desperate hunger--

ZOE
Make me feel normal.

NIKO
No, wait, come on. This is wrong,
we...we shouldn't be...
(she kisses him again)
...oh God...you're really warm...

ZOE
Don't worry.
(whispering)
None of this is real.

As Niko nuzzles her neck, Zoe looks over his shoulder. A stainless steel fridge shows their twin reflections...

She wraps her arms around him, pulling him closer...

But as she watches, a THIRD ARM suddenly appears in the reflection, running its fingers along the small of Niko back!

The arm is HORRIBLY BURNED, little more than ash clinging to bone, the fingernails ragged red slashes.

Zoe can only watch in horror as the phantom hand digs its nails into Niko's back. He CRIES OUT in pain.

Blackened veins appear against Niko's skin as the CORRUPTION spreads across his back--

Niko looks to Zoe, dizzy with surprise and confusion--

Her eyes snap open, revealing that her pupils are SOLID BLACK ORBS. She SNARLS as we SMASH CUT TO:

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SHORT TIME LATER

Eva, Frank and Clay have all returned to the lab, where they discovered the dog's mangled body. Eva turns away, sickened, tears in her eyes.

Clay and Frank examine the dog's body.

CLAY
What the hell could have done this?

Frank doesn't answer. Instead he pushes past Clay and hurries into the break room, where he finds...

Zoe, sitting placidly on the couch. She yawns, stretching, like she just woke up.

FRANK
Are you all right?

ZOE
Yeah. What's wrong?

Eva looks around the lab. Realizing one of them is missing.

EVA
Where's Niko?

CLAY
He was gone when I got here.

EVA
(calling out)
Niko?

ZOE
I think he's in the bathroom.

The salt and pepper shakers on the table VIBRATE AGAIN, sharply. Eva catches the motion from the corner of her eye and whips around, but they've already fallen still.

Eva gives Zoe a hard look. *Something isn't right here.*

INT. MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Clay enters the darkened men's room.

CLAY
Niko! Come on, man, pinch it off.
Let's get out of here.

Silence.

CLAY
Yo! Niko!

He bends down, peering beneath the stall doors. Empty.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SECONDS LATER

Clay barges back into the project lab.

CLAY
He's not in the bathroom.

Zoe shrugs helplessly.

ZOE
That's what he said.

Clay looks around. On the verge of losing his shit.

CLAY
Hell with this.

He marches over to the landline on the wall. Frank looks alarmed.

FRANK
What are you doing?

CLAY
Calling Security.

FRANK
What?

CLAY
This is too much weird shit. I'm
done. They can arrest me, whatever,
I don't care. I'm done.

Zoe looks alarmed. A faint STATIC HUM begins to build...

Frank slams his hand down on the phone's cradle.

FRANK
Let's just think about this.

CLAY
You know what, Frank? Screw you.
You wasted three years of my life
because you can't read a contract.
You're not my boss anymore, and
you're not my friend.

A dangerous beat. The two men staring each other down.

FRANK
You want me to apologize? Fine,
done, I'm sorry. But you need to
think about what you're doing.
(nods to Zoe)
If this gets out, what we did here,
what do you think's going to happen
to her?

FRANK (CONT'D)

What, they're just gonna let her walk away?

(quieter)

They're going to take Zoe to some lab, and they're going to cut her open, and no one's ever going to see her again.

ANGLE on Zoe, absorbing this, suddenly frightened.

The STATIC HUM continues to build--

CLAY

You don't know that.

FRANK

It's what I'd do.

TIME SLOWS DOWN as we zoom around the room, zeroing in on each character, hearing their innermost thoughts:

CLAY: *"Fine, let them have her..."*

EVA: *"Zoe's dangerous. We can't trust her..."*

FRANK: *"No one's taking her away. She's my patient..."*

ANGLE on Zoe's face as she absorbs their thoughts. Realizing she can no longer trust her teammates. Realizing she's alone.

BACK TO REGULAR TIME--

Clay weighs the decision. Reluctantly shakes his head.

CLAY

Sorry, but no. No. I'm out.

He lifts the phone again--

TIGHT ON ZOE, as her expression darkens--

As Clay lifts the phone to his ear, the POWER GOES OUT throughout the entire complex.

A beat of stunned silence.

Without power, the lab is almost pitch black.

FRANK

Nobody panic, all right? It's fine.

Clay stares at the phone, suddenly dead in his hand. Not even a dial tone.

Frank opens a storage cabinet, removes several HIGH-POWERED FLASHLIGHTS. Distributes them to the group.

FRANK

Here.

EVA

Has this ever happened before?

CLAY

No, 'cuz it's impossible--

FRANK

It's just a black-out--

CLAY

You know how many emergency back-up systems they've got in this place? No way the power just goes out like that, no way.

Frank opens the lab door, shines his light down the darkened corridor. Glances back at Eva and Zoe.

FRANK

Stay here with Zoe, all right?
Clay, you're with me.

Frank and Clay depart, leaving the two women alone.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Clay and Frank reach the sub-basement's entrance. Frank tries the elevator button. Nothing.

Clay shines his light along the emergency exit stairwell. The metal door is AUTOMATED; it won't open with the power out.

CLAY

Think we could get this open?

They attempt to pry the door open, digging their fingers into the crack, bracing their legs. No use; it won't budge.

CLAY

Come on!
(raising his voice)
HELLO? ANYONE HEAR ME?

His voice echoes back, ghostly and distorted.

INT. ELEVATOR PIT - SHORT TIME LATER

Frank and Clay force open the elevator doors. Frank angles his flashlight upwards, illuminating--

THE ELEVATOR CAR, stalled on the floor above them. Blocking their path.

FRANK

Damn it!

CLAY

There's gotta be another way out.
Right...?

His words trail off as he realizes the grim truth.

Until help arrives, they're trapped down here.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - SIMULTANEOUS

Zoe gazes into the distance, her expression robotic. Eva watches her from across the room, a little creeped out.

Finally Eva can't take it anymore. She heads for the door. Zoe seems to notice her for the first time.

ZOE

Where are you going?

EVA

To find Niko.

ZOE

(abruptly)

You're not wrong, you know.

Eva pauses. Turns back.

EVA

What are you talking about?

Zoe gives her a slow, dreamy smile.

ZOE

You're thinking, I don't belong
here. I've never belonged here.

The blood drains from Eva's face.

ZOE

It's okay to feel that way. Because
you're right. You're not one of us.

ZOE (CONT'D)

You never were.

(She smiles sweetly.)

Some people are born for great things. And some are just there to hold the camera.

At that moment, the door bangs open, breaking the spell. Frank and Clay storm back in.

FRANK

The system's in lockdown mode.

EVA

Meaning what?

FRANK

Meaning everything's automated. Something goes wrong, if there's even a *chance* of contaminants being released into the wild, the whole building shuts down.

Clay tries his cell phone. No luck.

CLAY

Does anyone have bars?

(shaking his phone)

Come on, come on, COME ON!

ZOE

What about the elevator?

FRANK

Stalled on the floor above.

Eva gives Zoe a sharp look. There's something *phony* in Zoe's voice. She's entirely too calm about the situation.

EVA

(quietly)

What did you do?

The room goes silent. Everyone staring at Eva.

EVA

What did you do?

ZOE

(smiles calmly)

I've been in this room *with you* the entire time.

EVA
You're also the last person who saw
Niko.

FRANK
Eva--

EVA
No. Everything weird, it all
started when she came back.
(to Clay)
You said it yourself, the serum did
something to her brain!

Zoe's eyes follow the argument, but she has fallen silent.
The emotion slowly draining from her face.

FRANK
We'll discuss this later.

EVA
No, we'll discuss it now.

But Clay is on Eva's side. He approaches Zoe.

CLAY
I want to know what happened to
Niko.

Zoe stares him down. The ghost of a smile on her lips.

FRANK
Could we all just CALM DOWN?

Clay turns away in disgust. He pulls out his vaporizer.

CLAY
I'm telling you, man, this is
bullsh--

Clay puts the vaporizer to his lips--

SSSHINK! Without warning, THE VAPORIZER IS RIPPED FROM CLAY'S FINGERS AND DISAPPEARS INTO HIS MOUTH! Clay stumbles forward, gagging, his eyes going wide--

Nobody but Zoe saw him swallow the vaporizer. It takes them all a moment to realize something is very, very wrong.

EVA
Clay? Frank, help!

FRANK
What is it?

EVA
I don't know, he's choking--

Clay collapses heavily to his knees, then flops onto the floor. His legs thrashing helplessly, fingers clawing at his throat. Eva and Frank rush to his side.

EVA
Oh my God, Clay--

FRANK
Open your mouth! Let me see!

Clay's entire face has turned an ugly shade of purple. He opens his mouth, expelling a weak stream of VAPOR.

FRANK
There's an obstruction. I need some light! Hurry!
(to Clay)
Hang on, you're gonna be okay.

Eva grabs a flashlight, angles it down for Frank--

Clay arches his back in pain. Through the thin skin of his throat, we can faintly see the vaporizer's electric glow.

Zoe simply watches. Her expression vacant, almost bored.

Frank has found a pair of MEDICAL FORCEPS, and he inserts the tongs down Clay's throat--

STATIONARY CAM: Soundless SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE of Eva and Frank huddled over Clay's body. His legs still drumming mindlessly against the floor. The beat drags out.

Now Clay's legs have stopped moving. Eva might be crying; we can't tell. Frank works the forceps feverishly, still trying to remove the obstruction.

At last Frank pulls the dripping vaporizer from Clay's mouth.

But he's too late. Clay's eyes are wide and lifeless.

EVA
Oh my God.

FRANK
Clay, I need you to stay with me,
all right?

Frank begins administering CPR. It quickly becomes apparent that it's a lost cause. Clay is gone.

Eva turns in a daze and finds Zoe watching them with that same look of clinical detachment.

The two women stare each other down for a dangerous beat. A faint STATIC HUM building in the air.

EVA
(softly)
What did you do?
(louder)
WHAT DID YOU DO?

The static hum SPIKES in intensity--

Zoe blinks--

And when she opens her eyes again, they've become JET BLACK--

That's when every piece of glass in the room EXPLODES.

We SPEED-RAMP down to SUPER SLOW-MO, transforming the flying glass into a galaxy of glittering stars--

Eva closes her eyes, her hair RIPPLING in slow-motion, as the air around her fills with dancing shards of glass--

Through the storm of glass, Frank meets Zoe's gaze, his expression equal parts horror and heartbreak. Staring at the woman he loves. The monster he helped create.

Zoe cocks her head slightly. There's no humanity left in those icy black eyes. There's nothing there at all.

SPEED-RAMP BACK TO REGULAR TIME AS--

The SHOCKWAVE sends both Frank and Eva flying backwards.

Shards of glass embedded in the walls like throwing daggers.

The room lies in ruins. Equipment scattered everywhere.

Silence.

Frank forces himself to his feet. He finds Eva, half-buried beneath a pile of lab equipment, and helps her up.

They're both dazed and bleeding from dozens of tiny cuts, but for now the wounds appear superficial.

FRANK
You okay?

EVA
Where is she?

Frank finds his flashlight and carefully angles the beam around the room, sweeping it back and forth.

There's no sign of Zoe anywhere.

INT. MRI LAB - CONTINUOUS

Eva and Frank take refuge in the adjacent MRI lab. Both of them still reeling with shock.

EVA
(gasping)
She killed him. She killed--

Frank shushes her, pulls her behind a counter--

A SHADOW appears beyond the glass, gliding down the corridor.
Zoe. Searching for them.

Eva glances over. Her entire body stiffens--

Because NIKO'S CORPSE lies only a few feet away.

He's been smashed flat, the floor tiles forming a CRATER beneath him. His eyes wide and unseeing.

Eva claps a hand over her mouth, biting back a scream. Frank stares at Niko's body, horrorstruck.

In the corridor beyond, Zoe's silhouette pauses.

A dangerous beat.

Then Zoe continues down the passage, disappearing from sight.

Eva crawls over to Niko's side, but there's nothing to be done. He's been dead for a while.

EVA
(whispering)
Oh my God. Niko.

Frank is still reeling, hopelessly shell-shocked. His entire life ripped away in a matter of minutes.

EVA
She's not gonna stop. We have to do something. You know that, right?
(Frank says nothing.)
Frank!

Finally Frank looks up. He's made his decision.

FRANK
Yeah. I know.

Frank searches the nearby shelves. Opens the refrigerator.

Bingo. He withdraws a glass bottle and inserts a syringe into the opening.

FRANK
Embutramide. They use it to put
down lab animals.
(off Eva's reaction)
Just in case.

At that moment, they hear it: LOW, EERIE WHISPERING.

Getting closer by the second.

FRANK
You have to go.

EVA
What? No, no way, I'm not leaving
you here--

Frank turns to her urgently--

FRANK
Look. I'm gonna talk to her, try to
calm her down. But if that doesn't
work, if this goes wrong...she
can't leave the building, do you
understand?
(Eva starts to protest; he
interrupts:)
We can't let her hurt anybody else.
This is on us.

Eva nods miserably. The WHISPERS are getting closer.

EVA
Be careful.

FRANK
Go.

Eva turns and flees deeper into the lab. Ducks into its break room and eases the door shut--

Just as the main door swings open. Revealing Zoe, silhouetted against the darkness. Her eyes have turned entirely BLACK.

Frank holds the syringe behind his back as he starts forward--

FRANK

Stop, okay? Listen to me. I just want to talk.

She fixes him with a long, appraising stare.

ZOE

Then why do you have that syringe?

Frank blinks. *How did she know?* But he sets the syringe down on the table and steps toward her, both palms raised.

FRANK

I know you're confused. Frightened. Whatever's happening to you, it's not your fault.

(beat)

I'm the one who brought you back. You want to take it out on someone, take it out on me.

Zoe says nothing as he takes another cautious step closer.

FRANK

Because you know I would never do anything to hurt you. And I don't care how long it takes, I'm going to find a way to fix this.

He takes her hands. Staring into her eyes. Zoe looks uncertain for the first time. *She wasn't expecting this.*

FRANK

I'm not gonna let you go. Not now, not ever.

A faint flicker of hope in her eyes. She wants so badly to believe him.

ZOE

You still love me?

FRANK

Of course I do.

ZOE

(beat)

Then show me.

She places her hands on either side of his face, fingers against his temples. Panic flashes across Frank's face.

FRANK

What are you--

Frank jerks, his entire body stiffening, eyes rolling back. The air crackles with STATIC ELECTRICITY as Zoe forces herself into his mind. Reading his deepest, darkest thoughts.

And she doesn't like what she finds there.

Her expression hardens.

ZOE
That's what I thought.

Frank's skin begins to BLISTER and CRACK, turning to ash before our eyes. He convulses helplessly--

CRUNCH! Zoe's fingertips PUNCH through Frank's skin, disappearing into his temples, his entire head CAVING IN--

She releases him and Frank tumbles to the floor.

He's dead before he hits the ground, smoke rising from his charred body. All this happens in the blink of an eye.

Zoe turns unsteadily. Her eyes feverish with insanity.

ZOE
(calling out)
EVA...?

Hiding around the corner, Eva shuts her eyes tightly.

All throughout the lab, objects TREMBLE, rattling against the floor, some of them even levitating off the ground.

Zoe gazes around for another beat, then turns and glides out of the room, still moving like a sleepwalker.

Eva lets out the shaky breath she's been holding.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - CONTINUOUS

Zoe returns to the Lazarus Project Lab.

She opens the fridge. Revealing the last few vials of SERUM.

INT. ANOTHER LAB - SHORT TIME LATER

Eva emerges from the break room. A long beat as she takes in the horror.

Niko's body cratered into the floor.

What's left of Frank, still smoking on the ground.

Eva turns away, sickened.

INT. COLD STORAGE LAB - SIMULTANEOUS

Zoe stands at the workbench, carefully emptying another vial of serum into a plastic IV BAG.

We slowly PAN AROUND her, the camera circling the empty lab--

And as we finish our rotation...ZOE IS NO LONGER ALONE.

THE BURNING FIGURE stands beside her, motionless, slightly out of focus.

Zoe finishes filling the IV bag with Lazarus serum. The equivalent of a dozen doses all at once.

With trembling fingers, she peels back the bandage on her temple. Finds the exposed opening in her skull--

Carefully, slowly, she slides the IV needle into the opening. It makes a wet SQUELCHING NOISE and Zoe winces--

The IV bag begins to DEFLATE, as if squeezed by an invisible fist. The serum races down the plastic tube--

Injecting its contents directly into Zoe's nervous system--

She shudders, her eyes rolling back--

The STATIC HUM in the background becomes a jet turbine, building to a SHRIEKING CRESCENDO--

And then everything goes silent. Zoe opens her eyes.

Flashes a predatory smile.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Eva enters the Lazarus Project lab. Finds a FLASHLIGHT on the ground and aims its beam around the room--

Clay's corpse is still slumped on the floor...

The light passes over the dog's lifeless body, half-hidden beneath the plastic sheet...

Then her gaze falls on the MEDICAL EQUIPMENT scattered across the floor. Including the wicked-looking CRANIAL SAW.

Eva tapes her flashlight to the side of the drill--

Fills several syringes with deadly Embutramide--
Then sets off into the darkness.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Eva creeps down the darkened hallway. All senses on high alert. Her flashlight cutting through the gloom.

Something SKITTERS in the darkness ahead of her. Eva pauses, sweeping her beam back and forth.

But there's nothing there.

She reaches the emergency stairwell, runs her beam across the sealed door. No one's getting out through here.

Somewhere deep within the complex a DOOR SLAMS, the sound as startling as a gunshot. Eva whirls around.

Her flashlight plays down the corridor. The beat drags out.

SCRITCH. A faint scratching noise, coming from one of the nearby labs.

Eva cautiously follows the sound.

INT. COLD STORAGE LAB - CONTINUOUS

THE COLD STORAGE LAB. Rows of REFRIGERATED STORAGE UNITS stacked all the way to the ceiling. The shelves are all closed. Eva's beam dances across the aluminum surface.

As we saw earlier, there's a single medical cadaver arranged on the chilled surgical table in the center of the room, wrapped inside a plastic bag. Eva eyes it warily.

EVA

Zoe...?

No response. She glances back over her shoulder...

SCRITCH. There it is again, that faint scratching noise. Eva whips back around, heart hammering.

The cadaver remains motionless inside the bag. *Wait...did it just move?* Or are our eyes playing tricks on us?

Eva creeps closer. Never taking her eyes off the hazy silhouette inside the bodybag--

SCRITCH. Eva freezes.

Then, ever so carefully, she reaches toward the cadaver with the tip of her cranial saw...closer and closer...

The saw blade touches the plastic bodybag. Eva prods a little harder, jostling the body inside.

Nothing happens.

Exhaling, Eva takes a step back--

Revealing that THE REFRIGERATED STORAGE UNITS HAVE OPENED WHILE HER BACK WAS TURNED.

Each shelf has been fully extended.

Each one containing another cadaver inside a bodybag.

For a moment, Eva forgets to breathe. Frozen in her tracks. Just staring at the wall of corpses.

Suddenly the corpse on the operating table JOLTS UPWARDS VIOLENTLY, flopping inside the bag like a dying fish.

Eva SCREAMS, whirling away--

Just as the other corpses come alive all around her, twisting and writhing inside their plastic coffins--

And just as suddenly as it began, the room goes silent. The corpses fall motionless. They were never alive in the first place; *Zoe is toying with her.*

And Eva knows it. She turns slowly, her fear giving way to a sort of cold fury.

EVA

ZOE!

(beat)

WHERE ARE YOU?

A moment of breathless silence.

Then we hear it in the distance: MUSIC. Faint, distorted, the melody garbled and eerie. Hell's version of Calliope music.

INT. HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER

Eva makes her way down the corridor, following the music back to its source.

INT. LAZARUS PROJECT LAB - CONTINUOUS

And finally she returns to the place where it all began. The Lazarus Project Lab.

She quickly scans the shadows. The room appears deserted.

The music is emanating from Clay's old record player. As she approaches, the melody lurches and wobbles, distorted.

She reaches down and shuts off the record player. Silence.

As Eva looks around, the camera PANS UPWARDS. Just in time to see a DARK FORM go crawling across the ceiling above her, like some monstrous spider preparing to strike.

Something RATTLES in the darkness. Eva circles the row of workbenches, playing her light along the surface--

As her light falls across a desk lamp, the lamp VIBRATES again, producing a sharp metallic RATTLE.

EVA

Zoe...?

Something comes rolling out of the darkness. A RED RUBBER BALL. One of Rocky's old toys.

The ball comes to rest at Eva's feet. She steps over it, keeps moving--

EVA

I know you're in here.

When she speaks again, Zoe's voice comes drifting out of the gloom, MIMICKING HER EXACTLY.

EVA

You have to stop. The serum, it's changing you--

ZOE

You have to stop. The serum, it's changing you--

Eva trails off helplessly. *If Zoe is reading her mind, then Eva doesn't stand a chance here.*

Something TOPPLES OVER in the darkness. Eva pivots, shining her light in every direction.

When Zoe speaks again, she sounds almost amused.

ZOE (O.S.)

You were going to hand me over to them. The men in the white masks.

EVA
No. That's not true--

Eva's flashlight illuminates Clay's body--

ZOE (O.S.)
You wanted me gone.

On this last word, Clay's head suddenly lolls to one side,
the tendons in his neck CREAKING.

EVA
Oh my God.

She stumbles back, until her ass hits one of the workbenches.

ZOE (O.S.)
You asked me once, what happens
when you die. Do you want to know
what Hell is?

A SHADOW passes directly behind Eva, close enough to ruffle
her hair. Eva whips around, but there's nothing there.

ZOE (O.S.)
Hell is the worst moment of your
life, playing on a loop, and you
can't ever wake up.

TIGHT on Zoe's face, hidden in the shadows, practically
spitting out each word:

ZOE
Welcome to my Hell.

Eva looks around in alarm as the lab SHUDDERS around her.
Shards of glass JITTERING across the floor. Shattered pieces
of equipment TREMBLING and VIBRATING.

The STATIC HUM is building. Like another attack is coming.

Eva has heard enough. She fires up the cranial saw.

EVA
Alright, bitch. Have it your way.

And as we heroically PUSH IN on Eva...

Zoe's demonic face emerges from the darkness right behind
her, suspended from the ceiling like some giant bat!

Eva whirls around, but she's a split-second too late. Zoe
BACKHANDS her, sends her flying--

Eva hits the ground and goes skidding across the floor, losing the cranial saw in the process.

Where's Zoe? We've lost her in the chaos. Whirling black shadows everywhere you look.

Eva spots the cranial saw on the floor and dives for it--

Just as Zoe comes streaking out of the darkness! Zoe's hand closes around Eva's throat in a vice-like grip, even as Eva rams the spinning blade upwards--

But an invisible force halts the blade, only inches from Zoe's pale skin.

All around them, the lab suddenly BURSTS INTO FLAME! Fire crawling along the walls and ceiling.

Eva strains as the saw is slowly but surely angled back in her direction--

Zoe's lips crack apart in a demented smile. Up close, we see that Zoe's biological functions are beginning to break down: patches of DEAD BLACK SKIN are flaking and peeling away, dissolving like ash. Her eyes solid black orbs.

The saw is ripped from Eva's hands--

When Zoe speaks, her voice is DISTORTED, almost like there are two different people speaking at once:

ZOE
(mocking, DISTORTED)
*Hail Mary, full of grace. Our Lord
is with you.*

Zoe extends her hand...and Eva goes FLYING BACKWARDS--

SMASHING through the window and tumbling into the hallway--

INT. NIGHTMARE - CONTINUOUS

Except it's not the hallway we were expecting.

Eva finds herself lying in the same apartment building we glimpsed in ZOE'S NIGHTMARE. The wallpaper is cracked and peeling, the carpet festooned with ugly geometric patterns.

She looks back in confusion. Behind her, we can still see the burning LAZARUS PROJECT LAB.

Zoe stalks toward Eva.

ZOE
(DISTORTED)
*Pray for us sinners. Now, and at
the hour of our death. Amen.*

But just as she reaches the doorway, a chunk of BURNING DEBRIS falls from the ceiling, blocking her path.

Eva is on her feet in a flash, stumbling down the hallway, limping badly, each step a new agony--

At the far end of the corridor, the same young girl stands before one of the locked doors. It's YOUNG ZOE.

From the other side of the door, we hear a FURIOUS BANGING NOISE. Muffled VOICES, crying out for help.

Eva reaches the end of the hall. Young Zoe still hasn't noticed her. The girl appears to be in a trance.

EVA
Zoe. Zoe, it's me.

The girl doesn't respond. As before, she's once again holding something tightly in her clenched fist.

Eva risks a look back over her shoulder--

Zoe stands at the far end of the hall, wreathed in a halo of fire. The wallpaper cracking and peeling from the heat.

Eva takes the child's shoulders, speaking desperately.

EVA
Zoe, this isn't real! You have to
stop this!

The girl blinks slowly, uncomprehending. Still clutching that mysterious *something* tightly against her chest.

Gently, Eva takes the girl's fist and pries it open--

Revealing an old MATCH BOOK. The book is open, and several of the matches are missing.

Realization hits us like a thunderclap. ZOE IS THE ONE WHO STARTED THAT FIRE.

EVA
It was you...
(recovering)
Listen to me. Whatever you did, it
doesn't matter anymore. You can
still fix this!

The girl glances at the doorway, uncertain, fearful.

From beneath the crack in the door, BLACKENED FINGERS protrude. We hear voices SCREAMING in agony.

EVA

You can open that door.

She throws another desperate glance back--

Zoe is striding down the hallway toward them. The walls and floor catching fire around her, the air dense with smoke--

Zoe's skin has started to DISSOLVE, blistering and cracking--

A walking nightmare.

Eva turns back to the child.

EVA

You can still wake up.

The girl looks at Eva with something approaching hope.

Eva takes the girl's hand, guides it toward the door handle.

Zoe is almost upon them now. Most of her skin has flaked away, floating around her body like a galaxy of WHITE ASH, revealing what lies beneath:

THE BURNING FIGURE.

The Burning Figure seizes Eva by the throat. Eva screams as the CORRUPTION flows from the Burning Figure's fingertips, radiating outward across Eva's skin--

The handle turns.

The door swings open.

And a BLINDING WHITE LIGHT SWALLOWS THEM WHOLE--

We're struck by a series of SPLIT-SECOND IMAGES:

--Clay clowning around the lab, cracking everyone up...

--The team overjoyed after reanimating the dog. Everyone hugging each other, celebrating with champagne...

--Niko at his workstation. He glances up, smiles shyly...

--Frank and Zoe together, filming their introduction for Eva's video presentation. Zoe can't keep a straight face;

she keeps cracking up. Frank makes a joke and she collapses against his shoulder, howling laughter...

-Frank and Zoe work together. Frank says something, pulls her close. Kisses Zoe tenderly. Mouths the words "I love you."

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

REALITY SLAMS BACK INTO FOCUS. We're back in the underground corridor separating the research labs.

And we're TIGHT on Zoe's face as she's bombarded by these thoughts and memories. The guilt is overwhelming.

She murdered her closest friends, the people she loved most.

Zoe stares at Eva. Their faces only inches apart.

ZOE
(softly)
I'm sorry.

EVA
I know.

Zoe glances down...

Revealing that Eva has already PLUNGED ONE OF THE SYRINGES INTO ZOE'S HEART!

Zoe manages a small, tired smile. Slowly, her head dips forward, her eyes closing. She's finally at peace.

A tear slips from the corner of Eva's eye. Her expression is agonized. Triumph and heartbreak in equal measure.

Eva catches Zoe's shoulder, prevents her from toppling over--

Suddenly Zoe's head whips up. Her eyes have become SOLID BLACK ORBS, her lips drawn in a feral snarl--

This time Eva doesn't hesitate. She plunges the syringe into Zoe's heart, stabbing again and again, HOWLING wordlessly--

Zoe crumples to the floor. She blinks in slow confusion, the darkness in her eyes DISSIPATING, fading away...

She doesn't blink a second time.

INT. HALLWAY - SHORT TIME LATER

We drift down the empty corridor. The overhead sprinklers have kicked on, and a stream of water rains down.

In the distance, we hear a rhythmic BANGING noise.

The stairwell door is finally pried open, and a team of FIREFIGHTERS sweep down the corridor.

They find Eva crouched at the end of the corridor, cradling Zoe's lifeless body.

She squints against the glare of their flashlights. Too numb and exhausted to even react.

EXT. MISKATONIC HALL - SHORT TIME LATER

A crowd of spectators, police and rescue workers have gathered outside Miskatonic Hall.

Eva sits amidst a cluster of rescue workers, as they examine and treat her minor injuries. Her expression dazed.

Another set of paramedics emerge from Miskatonic Hall, pushing a gurney. The body hidden beneath a sheet.

As the gurney rolls past, Eva catches a glimpse of Zoe's lifeless face. Eva looks away--

And that's when she sees it.

The dog emerges from Miskatonic Hall, padding along. Nobody pays any attention to him.

But we would recognize Rocky anywhere.

As if sensing her presence, Rocky pauses and glances back at Eva. Briefly wags his tail.

And Eva suddenly understands. *The Lazarus serum stays in their system. Even after they're dead.*

The dog turns away. Pads off into the night. Vanishes.

Then Eva is running, pushing through the crowd--

The "paramedics" finish loading Zoe's corpse into the back of a WHITE VAN. They shut the back the door--

Revealing the CORONIS CORPORATE LOGO.

Coronis is stealing Zoe's body.

As the van begins to roll, Eva races after it.

EVA
STOP! STOP!

She reaches the passenger side window, hammers on the tinted glass. We can't see whoever is inside.

EVA
Listen to me, wait! The serum stays
in the bloodstream! That's how they
come back!

A cop grabs Eva around the waist, stopping her.

EVA
(howling)
That's how they come back!

The Coronis van turns the corner. Disappears from sight.

INT. CORONIS VAN - CONTINUOUS

The DRIVER glances in the rear-view mirror.

DRIVER
The hell was that about?

MR. Wallace sits in the passenger seat. The Coronis Representative stares ahead, his expression satisfied.

MR. WALLACE
It doesn't matter. We got what we
came for.

As they continue on, we DRIFT TOWARD the back of the van. The two "Paramedics" sit on either side of Zoe's body, still hidden beneath the plastic sheet.

ANGLE on Zoe's hand, dangling over the side of the gurney--

And ever so slightly, Zoe's finger twitches.

SMASH CUT TO
CREDITS