

THE RED PILL

Written by

Chris LaMont & Joe Russo

REPRESENTATION:

THE GERSH AGENCY  
Greg Pedicin  
(310) 274-6611

HOLLANDER ENTERTAINMENT  
Russell Hollander  
(310) 845-6050

OVER BLACK:

*Twenty-two years ago, a bacterial virus ravaged the globe. Millions died at the hands of a disease known as THE SCOURGE. For the first time in human history, governments worked across borders to engineer a way to attempt to contain the pandemic. They called it...*

**THE RED PILL**

FADE IN:

SPRAWLING. A never-ending mecca of metal, cement and modern Americana. We're outside a...

EXT. MALL - DAY

The sun scorches a parking lot.

It's an endless sea of family-mobiles at total peace with their consumerism until...

A SHADOWY STRANGER LUMBERS PAST.

His long hair stringy. His dirty clothes unkempt. His shoulders slump forward. Heavy. Pitch-black sunglasses cover his eyes. His pale skin is cold... SICKLY.

The Stranger stops at the threshold of the mall. He can't control his hacking cough.

Nervous, he looks over his shoulder. Checks behind him -

Only car-after-car.

He turns his attention back to the shopping mall entrance.

There's no way he isn't going inside....

INT. MALL - DAY

Burl Ives reverberates off every wall. Decorations and lights glisten. In a colorful castle, a SANTA CLAUS hears the Christmas wishes of all the good little boys and girls.

It can only mean one thing -

It's the holidays. And the mall is PACKED.

SHOPPERS everywhere. Hustling and bustling, balancing bags and wrapped packages haphazardly in hands. Hunting for the perfect deal for that someone special.

And in the middle of all this - *The Stranger*.

He whips off his sunglasses. His bloodshot eyes take in every inch. They look *ravenous*.

His attention darts in every direction. He shudders. Every sound. Every voice. They seem to drive him crazy. Calling his attention THIS WAY. THAT WAY.

He puts his hands over his ears - hoping to stop the cacophony penetrating his brain.

People notice. Murmurs spread. *This guy doesn't look right.*

And then The Stranger sees something that STOPS HIM COLD -

A SECURITY GUARD. And he's got eyes on The Stranger.

The Guard grabs his radio. Talks into it. From this distance there's no way to know what The Guard said, but...

THE STRANGER'S EYES GO WIDE. Somehow - he did.

The Stranger BOLTS. Pushes everyone in his way. Trying to find somewhere to hide. The Security Guard hot on his heels.

Up ahead - an escalator. Maybe a change of floors will give him the advantage? The Stranger CHARGES at it.

He knocks A FAMILY out of the way. Takes the moving steps down two-at-a-time until -

HE COMES TO A COMPLETE HALT.

The Stranger nearly falls when he sees - **MEN IN HAZMAT SUITS.**

A dozen of them. Surrounding the base of the escalator. Armed with cattleprod-like tasers. Electric currents BUZZ across the tips.

These aren't delicate, easily rippable HazMat suits. They're tactical. Like body armor.

Panicking, The Stranger turns back up the descending stairs.

Now people SCATTER away from him. Parents grab their kids. They don't want to TOUCH HIM.

The Stranger is nearly at the top of the escalator when -

MORE HAZMAT SUITS CIRCLE ABOVE.

The Stranger is trapped. Boxed in on a machine that will never stop carrying him to his fate.

He looks around quickly - maybe he can JUMP?

Frozen Shoppers watch the scene unfold. Men. Women. Children. All eyes locked on him.

He looks below. Those electrified weapons menacingly SIZZLE AND SPARK.

NOWHERE TO RUN.

He accepts what's about to happen. Puts his hands in the air.

As he reaches the bottom, The Hazmat Team is on him. High-tech handcuffs lock into place.

They surround The Stranger, corralling him toward the exit.

The Stranger takes one last look at the shoppers he rattled -

And they're back to doing whatever it was they were doing before the interruption - back to their shopping.

The Stranger's life is over and *they don't care*.

A forceful push from one of the Hazmats snaps The Stranger out of his trance. He moves along toward wherever-the-Hell they're taking him. But we linger.

We settle on a futuristic motion-poster. An advertisement...

No - a government notice masked as cheery holiday marketing.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention logo displayed proudly on top.

On it - a smiling, ethnically-diverse family readies a non-denominational, P.C.-friendly celebration:

"THIS HOLIDAY SEASON - DON'T FORGET TO TAKE YOUR RED PILL".

CUT TO:

THE LAST RED PILL POPS FROM ITS SEALED COMMERCIAL PACKAGING. We're in...

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

And we meet DAVID MACREADY following the C.D.C.'s mandate.

Without a second thought, he tosses the little pill in his mouth. Dry swallows.

Checks the mirror - too much stubble. *Time to shave.*

As he slathers on shaving cream, we get a look behind him -

You can tell a lot about a person from their bathroom. How clean it is. How new. And this is a *nice* master bathroom. If David's not upper-middle class, he sure wants to be...

He slides the razor along his face when - BANG!

The bathroom door flies open. Startled, David NICKS himself. Blood comes quickly.

DAVID

Shit!

He turns to see - ALEXIS MACREADY.

David's always-on-top-of-it wife. While David wears boxers and an undershirt, Alexis is already dressed for the day.

ALEXIS

Did you cut yourself? I'm so sorry!

David examines the wound. Looks worse than it is. Cuts from shaving always do.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

Let me see.

(she examines his cheek)

Just a flesh wound. You'll live.

Goes back to shaving. SWIPE.

DAVID

I love that *you* get to lock *me* out of the bathroom, but when I'm in here for two minutes, you get to barge right in.

ALEXIS

That's marriage. Part of the double-standard you willingly signed up for.

David smiles. He rinses off the razor. Takes another swipe.

Alexis hits a reset on the conversation -

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

Can you take Liam to school?

DAVID

Not today. Why?

ALEXIS

I've got a meeting with the Dean this morning. He's promising me tenure - again.

DAVID  
And I've got to show the DeWinter house. Hopefully I won't bleed all over the buyers.

ALEXIS  
Then being fifteen minutes late will give you extra time to stop bleeding.

David knows he's not winning this battle.

DAVID  
Okay. Okay.

ALEXIS  
Thank you.

She gives him a kiss. Gets shaving cream all over her mouth. Makes a face and wipes it off.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
Yuck. That seemed like a better idea two seconds ago.

David laughs. It turns into a BARKING COUGH.

Alexis' eyes move to the counter. Notices David's empty package of Red Pills.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
You take your pill today?

David gives her a "well-duh" look.

DAVID  
(sings a jingle)  
Like the commercial says - "Keep The Scourge away, Take your Red Pill ev-er-y day".

She picks up the carton.

ALEXIS  
Well, you're out - again.

DAVID  
That just happened. I'll pick up my monthly on the way home.

ALEXIS  
Fine, just don't forget.

DAVID  
Did *YOU* take your dose?

He gets "The Look".

ALEXIS  
I'm the responsible one here.  
Remember?

She heads out the bathroom door.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
See you tonight. Love you!

DAVID  
Love you too.

Off David's next razor SWIPE we...

CUT TO:

SWISH-SWOOSH. SWISH-SWOOSH. SWISH-SWOOSH.

Windshield wipers kick back-and-forth, barely fighting a torrential downpour. We're in...

INT. HONDA CRV - MORNING

David, now dressed in a shirt and tie, complete with toilet-paper stuck to his cheek, looks out through the windshield.

DAVID  
This'll kill my open house.

He turns to LIAM - busy playing on his phone.

At thirteen, Liam defies classification. He's neither jock nor geek. He's one of the millions of kids that fall in "the middle". And he's not happy about it.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Figures... The one day-a-year it rains in Phoenix.  
(eyes the SCHOOL ahead)  
I'll pull up as close as I can.

LIAM  
Whatever.

His nonchalant reply doesn't phase David. Typical teen-speak.

The bumper-to-bumper traffic eases and David deftly navigates into a spot by the school's front door. Cars HONK behind him.

DAVID  
Alllllllright. We're here--

LIAM  
--See ya.

And Liam's already out the door with a SLAM.

DAVID  
"Thanks Dad"?

David watches his son trudge off in the rain -

CARS HONK AGAIN and DAVID REMEMBERS THE TIME.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Shit.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEWINTER HOUSE - DAY

Briefcase over his head, David splashes through the rain toward the DeWinter House -

A classic Phoenix suburb. A new-ish, cookie-cutter three-bedroom. It's surprising that it's on the market...

David races up the walkway and sees -

TOM AND ALICIA JOHNSON. Young couple. Likely first-time buyers shielded from the elements by the front door overhang.

DAVID  
So sorry, folks! Traffic. You must  
be The Johnsons!

He shakes their hands.

TOM JOHNSON  
Forget your umbrella?

David looks at his soaked briefcase. *Off to a great start...*

DAVID  
It's in my wife's car.  
(switching gears)  
Why don't we go inside?

CUT TO:

INT. DEWINTER HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Hardwood floors. Vaulted ceilings. David's voice echoes mid-spiel as he walks The Johnsons into the spacious living-room.

DAVID  
Four bedrooms. Twenty-seven hundred  
square feet. Good, solid  
construction.

He bangs the wall for effect.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
You have any kids?

ALICIA JOHNSON  
Not yet - but we're hoping.

DAVID  
It'll make an amazing starter home.  
Great park around the corner. Lots  
of families in the neighborhood.

TOM JOHNSON  
We're concerned about the price...

David looks surprised by this.

DAVID  
That it's too... *high*?

TOM JOHNSON  
That it's too *low*.

ALICIA JOHNSON  
We've always found that when a deal  
seems too good to be true...

TOM JOHNSON  
...it probably is.

David sighs. He's about to unload some heavy shit -

DAVID  
Okay, I'm not one of those agents  
that sweeps things under the rug.  
This property *does* have a history.

David circles the room, admiring the home's craftsmanship.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
The previous owners were young.  
They had their whole lives ahead of  
them. Just like the two of you.  
But... they contracted The Scourge.

The Johnson's faces say it all - this fact *scares* them.

TOM JOHNSON  
I knew it.  
(turns to Alicia)  
I told you - didn't I tell you?

DAVID

Mr. Johnson, I promise you that the new owner followed every C.D.C. precaution. The previous structure was demolished. Everything here -  
(he spreads his arms wide)  
Was built from the ground-up.

This reassurance isn't helping...

DAVID (CONT'D)

Look, there hasn't been anyone around here with The Scourge since then. And there's plenty of Red Pill dispensaries nearby. There's nothing to worry about!

David's losing them. He takes one last run at it -

DAVID (CONT'D)

If there's a reason this seems like the deal of a lifetime that's because it *IS*. The DeWinter's would love a couple like you to move in.

David tries to read them. Searches for a glimmer of hope.

DAVID (CONT'D)

What do you think?

CUT TO:

INT. DEWINTER HOUSE - EVENING

Running water. David's in front of the kitchen sink. Sounds like he's hacking up a lung.

He spits out bright yellow phlegm. Taps the faucet and the water washes it down the drain.

He's tired. Tie loose. Hair disheveled. We can tell The Johnsons said no... That everyone did.

He KICKS the cabinets in frustration and - HIS FOOT GOES RIGHT THROUGH THE WOOD.

Either this house isn't as well-built as David thought, or he doesn't know his own strength. As David pulls his foot out -

DAVID

Perfect...

*Today is NOT David's day.*

CUT TO:

SWISH-SWOOSH. SWISH-SWOOSH. SWISH-SWOOSH. We're back in...

INT. HONDA CRV - NIGHT

Still raining, David pulls off the traffic-filled street and into a C.V.S. PARKING LOT. He swings around the back of the building to a drive-thru lane -

JAM-PACKED WITH HONKING VEHICLES.

DAVID

Shit.

Exasperated, he crawls to a stop. This isn't the first time he's had to wait for The Red Pill. Won't be the last.

CUT TO:

LATER

David is FINALLY at the front of the line.

He pulls up to an ADVANCED VENDING MACHINE. It's filled with rows and rows of **THE RED PILL**.

A video screen plays a commercial for the drug. David hums along to the familiar jingle: *"Keep The Scourge away, Take your Red Pill ev-er-y day"*

He swipes his Driver's License and then, like a candy bar or bag of chips, a box of Red Pills LANDS in a convenient-to-reach tray. In a pleasant computer voice -

VENDING MACHINE

Thank you, David MacReady.

He grabs the box and DRIVES OFF.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - NIGHT

David slams his car door shut. He hurries inside. Late again.

He moves past twinkling Christmas lights, reflecting off puddles in front of his home.

As he walks to the front door, we get a good look at the residence. It's just as nice (and just as cookie-cutter) as the house David is trying to sell.

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

David rounds the corner to hear laughter. Alexis and Liam's.  
But as soon as Dad walks in, it STOPS.

DAVID  
Sorry I'm late. The drive-thru was  
packed.

ALEXIS  
You know how it is at the holidays.  
Everyone's getting their dose last-  
minute before they travel. It's  
worse than the post office.

David sees Alexis doing the dishes.

DAVID  
I miss dinner?

ALEXIS  
In the fridge.

David turns to Liam, buried deep in his phone -

DAVID  
Was it good?

LIAM  
(without looking up)  
It was okay. Just chicken.

DAVID  
Something to look forward to then.

Alexis gives David "The Look". Liam sees this and...

LIAM  
I'm going to my room.

David turns to Alexis. Hands still playfully on her hips.

DAVID  
I'm sure it's delicious, honey.

With a satisfied smile -

ALEXIS  
Better.

CUT TO:

LATER

A fork stabs reheated chicken. The family's Golden Retriever -  
CHEWIE - waits patiently like a Buddhist Monk.

David and the dog make eye contact. David rolls his eyes. He tosses the dog a scrap and Chewie CATCHES it mid-air.

DAVID  
Don't tell your Mom.

CUT TO:

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A gas-fireplace crackles. The lights dimmed. The room illuminated by a flickering, ultra-thin T.V. and the twinkling lights of a Christmas Tree. *It's cozy.*

It's so cozy David's conked out, Chewie snuggled at his feet.

When the snoring starts, Alexis stops reading her book.

She tip-toes over. On closer inspection, she notices how SWEATY David is. She touches his forehead. It's DRENCHED.

ALEXIS  
Yuck.

She wipes her hand on her pants. Jostles him -

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
C'mon. Time for bed.

Groggy, David wakes and follows Alexis. As does Chewie.

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - BEDROOM

Alexis navigates David into their bed. As she does, David's barking COUGH returns.

He crawls on top of the bed, clothes still on. Passes out on top of the covers. Involuntarily coughs again.

Alexis eyes David with concern.

CUT TO:

A BOX OF THE RED PILL. A hand reaches to grab it. We're in...

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - BATHROOM - MORNING

David shuts the bathroom mirror and jumps when he sees -

Alexis. Behind him. Arms folded. *Uh oh...*

ALEXIS  
Go to the doctor. *Today*. Please.

David fumbles with the Red Pill box. Opens it. Pops the first pill out of the foil packaging.

DAVID  
It's just a cold. I was out in the rain all day yesterday...

ALEXIS  
We're not supposed to take chances like that. Early detection...

DAVID  
...Stops the infection. I know, Lexi, but I don't have time.

ALEXIS  
Go see Doctor Alonzo on campus. He'll squeeze you in.

David opens his palm. Shows Alexis The Red Pill. He takes it.

DAVID  
I haven't missed a dose. *I'm fine*.

He puts his arms around Alexis. Looks her in the eyes.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
I promise.

ALEXIS  
Go. See. Doctor. Alonzo.

David breaks the embrace. Frustrated.

DAVID  
You know I need to get the DeWinter house under contract before we fly back home for Christmas. We *need* that commission or else we're flying red-eye.

ALEXIS  
And we *need* you around here even more. If you don't call and make an appointment, I will.

Once again, she gives David "The Look". Yet another fight he can't win. Off his defeated expression we...

CUT TO:

A COLD STETHOSCOPE PRESSES AGAINST SKIN. As David breathes, we realize we're in....

INT. ARIZONA STATE CAMPUS - STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES - DAY

Where we meet DOCTOR ALONZO - a middle-aged doc with an impressive full head of hair.

DOCTOR ALONZO  
One more time. Breathe in...

And David complies. Bored - he scans the room: A healthy number of STD awareness posters mixed with Red Pill ones. This is *definitely* the campus medical center.

DOCTOR ALONZO (CONT'D)  
And out.

David exhales.

DOCTOR ALONZO (CONT'D)  
Well, I'm going out on a limb here,  
but - you've got a cold.

DAVID  
That's what I told Alexis.

DOCTOR ALONZO  
She wasn't wrong to send you.  
Initial Scourge symptoms can be  
masked by the common cold. Hard to  
tell this time of year.

Alonzo kicks his stool back and rolls over to his desk with a tablet containing David's file. As he types some notes -

DOCTOR ALONZO (CONT'D)  
Let's double your dosage... And  
send you for some blood work. They  
can do it across the hall.  
Results'll be back in a few days.

A prescription prints from the tablet. He hands it to David.

DOCTOR ALONZO (CONT'D)  
Just to be safe.

David forces a smile. Back to the long-lines at CVS...

CUT TO:

INT. STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES - BLOOD CENTER - LATER

A NURSE preps a NEEDLE. Flicks David's forearm. Finds the vein.

NURSE  
Are you scared of needles?

DAVID  
Only when they hurt.

David flinches as he feels the "pin prick". Blood flows from his arm and into the tubing. The nurse smiles warmly.

NURSE  
See. Not so bad. I'll give you some orange juice on your way out.

DAVID  
(making-a-bad-joke)  
How about a lollipop?

NURSE  
(smiles as she leaves)  
Cute.

David leans back in the cold, leathery chair. Tries to look anywhere else but the sight of his own blood. His eyes move to the far side of the room -

Instead of the privacy one might expect, there are A DOZEN stations filled with STUDENTS having their blood drawn.

It's just part of life in The Red Pill world...

CUT TO:

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Chinese take-out cartons spread the table. David slurps away on egg-drop soup - the sworn enemy of colds.

Alexis, using chopsticks with typical American deftness, munches away while Liam chows down on an egg roll.

ALEXIS  
Aren't you glad you saw the doctor?

David rolls his eyes and takes the bowl of soup in his hands. Drinks the rest right from it. That's his answer.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
You'll thank me tomorrow.

DAVID  
I popped by your office after the bloodletting - Jeanette said you were meeting with the Dean.

ALEXIS  
Something about retooling the tenure committee - bringing in a new evaluation process...

DAVID  
So more of the same.

ALEXIS  
They're dangling the carrot just a little longer.

DAVID  
It's been "just a little longer" for two years now.

Alexis' eyes move to Liam. He's not paying attention, but...

ALEXIS  
Let's talk about this later.

David matches her gaze. Gets it. *Bad time to pick a fight.*

DAVID  
(awkward pivot)  
So, Liam, when's winter break?

Liam rests his fork on the table.

LIAM  
You don't have to change the subject. I get it. Work sucks like school sucks. And Mom can't leave 'til I get free tuition. Who says I even WANT to go to college?

Both parents reel from that blow. How to recover...

DAVID  
So much for my follow-up question about how your day was.

Luckily, they're saved by the bell. The DOORBELL that is. Chewie starts barking his head off.

David and Alexis share a look. *Who's gonna answer it?*

DAVID (CONT'D)  
I'm the one with the cold...

Alexis pushes out her chair.

ALEXIS  
Fine.

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - FOYER

Alexis rounds the corner and STOPS in her tracks -

RED AND BLUE FLASHING LIGHTS SPILL IN FROM THE OUTSIDE  
IGNITING THE DARKENED FOYER.

ALEXIS  
David... You better get out here.

Alexis inches closer to the door. Her heart in her throat.

DAVID (O.S.)  
What? Why?

THE DOORBELL RINGS TWICE - MORE INSISTENT.

ALEXIS  
*Just do it.*

Adrenaline pumping now, Alexis unlocks the door. Wraps her  
hand around the door handle. She holds Chewie back as she...

OPENS IT.

Her jaw nearly hits the floor. She steps back in shock -

**MEN IN HAZMAT SUITS.**

Too many to count. Like the ones in the mall. Centers For  
Disease Control logos displayed on their chest plates.

All at the MacReady's front door.

HAZMAT SUIT #1  
Is David MacReady currently on the  
premises, Ma'am?

David appears in time so Alexis doesn't need to respond -

DAVID  
Holy shit.

Alexis turns to David for answers. He doesn't have any.

HAZMAT SUIT #1  
We need to come in.

CUT TO:

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - BEDROOM

The Hazmats are EVERYWHERE.

With state-of-the-art gadgets that do *God knows what*, they  
scan the MacReady home looking for - SOMETHING.

We follow one as his machine beeps from the bedroom to the...

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Where he gets a small spike on the lit-Christmas tree....

Past another Hazmat giving Liam some sort of blood test...

And finally he moves into...

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - KITCHEN

Where Alexis is being administered that same blood test.

On the other side of the table, David tries to iron out what the fuck is going on -

DAVID

I was just at the Doctor!

Through his protective visor, we can tell that Hazmat Suit #1 is going through the motions....

HAZMAT SUIT #1

We're here as a precaution. Early stages of The Scourge resemble--

DAVID

--The common cold. Yeah, I know.

HAZMAT SUIT #1

Your blood work was inconclusive. We need to bring you in for a complete diagnostic.

He turns to his associate working with Alexis.

HAZMAT SUIT #2

Negative.

The Hazmat suit checking Liam walks back in.

HAZMAT SUIT #3

The boy is clear too.

HAZMAT SUIT #1

Interesting...

He makes a note on his tablet.

HAZMAT SUIT #1 (CONT'D)

This is good news. Symptoms *usually* manifest in everyone the subject comes in contact with during the first forty-eight hours of gestation. Your wife and son must be up-to-date on their Red Pill.

Hazmat Suit #1 turns to his subordinates.

HAZMAT SUIT #1 (CONT'D)  
 Let's pack it up.  
 (back to David)  
 Looks like we caught this just in time. Let's get you to the Processing Center. If you have it, they'll know. They're doing some amazing work there. One day, we might even beat this thing.

Alexis and David share a hopeful look.

ALEXIS  
 You mean... you're close to a cure?

Hazmat Suit #1 turns to Alexis -

HAZMAT SUIT #1  
 Well, we're always working with experimental procedures in an effort to stop the degradation at the cellular level--

ALEXIS  
 --So the answer is no.

And that's when LIAM WALKS IN. His eyes lock on his parents. It's easy to see the normally unwavering teen is wavering.

LIAM  
 Mom!? What's happening?

David takes the lead. Walks over to his son. Gets eye-level.

DAVID  
 I've got to go with these men.

LIAM  
 Why?

DAVID  
 They need me for a couple tests. No big deal. I'll be home--

--He turns to Hazmat #1.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
 Tomorrow?

HAZMAT SUIT #1  
 That's the best-case scenario.

DAVID  
Hey - you and your Mom are fine.  
There's nothing to worry about.  
I'll be back soon.

Liam nods.

LIAM  
Okay.

David pulls his son in for a hug. The Hazmats break it up.

HAZMAT SUIT #1  
Less physical contact, the better.

David backs off. Alexis reaches out and takes David's hand.

Hazmat #1 reaches out to stop her - then thinks better of it.  
Lets them have their moment...

ALEXIS  
See you soon, right?

He squeezes her hand. Smiles.

DAVID  
Sure.

He lets her go and turns.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Alright guys, I'm ready.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - NIGHT

A team of Hazmats lead David out of his home and toward a militarized C.D.C. Mobile Unit. It's like an angry-looking hummer by way of science.

By now, NEIGHBORS have spilled out of their homes.

David watches as they whisper to one another. He can imagine the things they're saying. He knows that if it wasn't him, he'd be out there gossiping right alongside them.

As David is ushered into the C.D.C.'s vehicle -

He turns to see what he's leaving behind. His home. Warm with the glow of Christmas lights. And more importantly - His family. Alexis. Liam. Chewie.

They all watch helplessly. Unsure when they'll see him again.

David shares a final nod with Alexis. Still so much to say...

And then - the doors whine and close with a THUD.

He's gone.

CUT TO:

ASPHALT. Painted white lane dividers WHIP by. We're moving FAST. We look up and see...

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

...The C.D.C. vehicle BARRELING down the highway. Siren SCREAMING, red and blue lights BLAZING.

The vehicle turns off the highway onto a paved road twisting through the Arizona desert.

In the middle of the sprawling darkness -

A CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL FACILITY lighting up the night like a concrete oasis.

CUT TO:

A DOOR OPENS - SPILLING LIGHT INTO A PITCH BLACK ROOM.

A shadowy figure fills the door frame. Halogen lights BUZZ to life spotlighting a...

INT. C.D.C. FACILITY - CLEAN ROOM

David cautiously steps inside a sterile, metallic chamber.

With a hydraulic HISS, the door SNAPS SHUT behind him.

He looks around. Steel table. Overhead shower. Mirror.

AN INTERCOM CRACKLES -

VOICE (O.S.)

Please remove your clothing, sir.

David's eyes move to the speaker on the ceiling -

DAVID

Excuse me?

VOICE (O.S.)

Sir, please remove your clothes.

DAVID

Why?

VOICE (O.S.)

You are entering a sterile environment. All potentially infected items must be removed and destroyed.

Resigned, David removes his belt. Takes out his wallet.

DAVID

I've got a lot of cash in here...

No answer. Whoever's on the other end isn't very sympathetic.

David unbuttons his shirt. Slides his pants off.

He stands uncomfortably in his underwear. *Now what?*

VOICE (O.S.)

Sir, please remove your underwear.

If it wasn't assumed before, it's pretty clear now -

*They are watching David.*

With a grimace, David grabs the elastic band to his boxers and nearly JUMPS as -

WATER BLASTS from the shower-head above him.

David side-eyes the mirror. *Must be two-way.* This is going to be... awkward. The C.D.C. won't give David privacy, but we will - as we...

CUT TO:

INT. C.D.C. FACILITY - HALLWAY

TWO HAZMATS lead David - clad in a hospital gown and now-sterilized eyeglasses - down a never-ending hallway.

They pass sealed-room-after-sealed-room. A window in each door. David glimpses PEOPLE at various stages of infection...

Some look strung out. Sick. Others, like David, look relatively healthy. Normal. Eagle-eyed viewers might notice THE STRANGER from our opening getting an injection...

David can't help the sinking feeling that this place is less like a hospital and more like a prison.

CUT TO:

INT. C.D.C. FACILITY - EXAMINATION ROOM

With another hydraulic HISS, The Hazmats escort David into an examination room. Everything about it is cold. Metallic.

They gesture to the examination bed, if you can call it that. It's more like a metal slab...

David climbs on it and lays back down. He settles in -

DAVID  
Okay, now what?

HAZMAT SUIT #1 hits a button and -

METAL RESTRAINTS SNAP AND **LOCK** INTO PLACE, pinning David down. Across his arms. His legs. His forehead.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
What the Hell?

David tries to get free -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Is this really necessary!?

The Hazmats don't answer. They just watch David struggle.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Hey - I asked you a question!

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)  
And I'm happy to answer it.

Footsteps.

David tries to glimpse whoever's approaching. *Can't*. From this angle it's impossible to get a good look.

Luckily - THE EXAMINATION TABLE MOVES.

It tilts forward, bringing David perpendicular to the floor, giving us our first glimpse of another Hazmat...

HAYLEY PARKER. But to you and me, it's *Doctor* Hayley Parker. She's usually the smartest person in the room.

HAYLEY PARKER  
My name is Doctor Hayley Parker. I run this research facility.

DAVID  
Okay - what's with the restraints?

HAYLEY PARKER  
It's in your best interest.  
(looks to the Hazmats)  
(MORE)

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
 It's in *all* our best interests.  
 Some patients don't take what I'm  
 about to tell you... *well*. David -  
 can I call you David?

David nods as much as he can given the restraints.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
 David, I'm sorry to meet like this.

A look of pity crosses her face. She feels for him...

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
 I've been doing this a long time.  
 So I know what you're thinking.

As she talks, she preps a tablet computer. Presses a button  
 and David's table lays him back into a prone position.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
 I've studied hundreds of patients  
 infected by The Scourge. It's a  
*devastating* infection. The  
 challenge we have is that it  
 continues to evolve. Every time we  
 make an advancement, the virus  
 mutates.

Using a remote control, Hayley brings an x-ray-looking  
 scanner over to David.

With the click of a button, it slowly moves down David's  
 body. As it does, a screen behind them displays, in real-  
 time, David's skeletal and muscular read-outs.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
 That's why there are facilities  
 like this all over the world. To  
 help us fight back.

Hayley walks over to David.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
 Do you know *HOW* the Red Pill works?

DAVID  
 You take it every day.

Hayley laughs. Shakes her head. Not what she meant.

HAYLEY PARKER  
 It never ceases to amaze me how  
*good* the marketing is. You've been  
 taking the Red Pill for - *what* -  
 half your life? And you never  
 stopped to ask *what* it's doing  
 inside your body?

DAVID  
It's fighting The Scourge.

HAYLEY PARKER  
And it does that via nano-  
technology that moves at the  
cellular level - destroying  
bacteria created by The Scourge -  
*eviscerating it.*

She smiles. Impressed by the science.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
It's a thing of beauty...

Back to Earth -

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
But the infection constantly  
mutates. We're always upgrading the  
technology. Like your smart phone.  
When the operating system has bugs,  
you download firmware updates,  
right? Patches.

Hayley walks over to the display screen.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
The Red Pill is just like that.  
We've had two-hundred-and-forty-  
seven updates in the last five  
years alone. All to make sure eight  
billion people wake up with the  
promise of a new day.

She points to the display.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
But your body, David, is carrying  
the most recent mutation of the  
virus. In fact, it's the most  
advanced version we've ever seen.

She types into her tablet.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
Let me show you...

ON SCREEN: Blood at the cellular level. A metal-looking  
substance SMASHES into green bacteria - destroying it.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
This - is how The Red Pill normally  
works day-to-day. And *this...*

ON SCREEN: NOW the green bacteria OVERTAKES the metal.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
...is what's happening inside you  
right now.

David watches - totally confused.

DAVID  
How? I take my pill. I've never  
missed a dose!

Hayley returns to David's side.

HAYLEY PARKER  
It's just nature. Natural  
selection. It's nothing you did.

She places a sympathetic, gloved hand on his shoulder.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
I'm afraid it's the luck of the  
draw. The *bad* luck of the draw.

David thinks. Desperately searches for a solution -

DAVID  
The Agent at the house. He said  
there's a cure!

HAYLEY PARKER  
He said what he's supposed to.  
We're *working* on a cure. Have been  
for over twenty years. But - *with*  
*your help* - we'll gather enough  
data to stop this new version of  
The Scourge. We can upgrade The Red  
Pill and give humanity a fighting  
chance.

DAVID  
But what about me...?

Heartbreak fills Hayley's eyes. She hates this part.

HAYLEY PARKER  
David, you have The Scourge. I'm  
sorry, but there is no cure.

And it sinks in for David. *He's not going home...*

DAVID  
But my family...

Hayley nods. Sees that David understands now.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Can I see them again?

She shakes her head.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Can I call them? Just to let them  
know what's going on!? Please?

HAYLEY PARKER  
(lying)  
I'll - see what I can do.  
(honest)  
But it's best for them - and for  
you - if it's a clean break.

The weight of the world has just fallen on David -  
He will never see Alexis again. Liam. Chewie. His family.  
Hayley tries to console him -

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
David - your sacrifice will save  
the lives of billions. Men, women,  
children. *Your family*. The world  
may never know your name, but when  
you die, you'll die a *hero*.

DAVID  
What if I don't want to die a hero?  
What if I want to *live*?

HAYLEY PARKER  
I'm afraid nature already made that  
choice for you.

And with that, she turns her back and heads for the exit.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
We'll start testing in the morning.  
Try and get some sleep. Tomorrow's  
going to be a long day.

DAVID  
Doctor Parker - wait...

And the Hazmats follow Hayley out.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Wait!

The door SNAPS shut behind them. It LOCKS.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
WAIT!!!

But it's no good -

David is trapped here. Alone. His mind races.

He's going to spend the rest of his life as a lab guinea pig and, unless he does something about it, he's going to die -

*Very, very soon.*

David tries to get his breathing under control.

Slowly he does. Calmer now, David looks around the room -

The high-end, fancy equipment. *Taxpayer dollars at work...*

Unfortunately, there's nothing he can reach to help him break the metal restraints. Frustration fills him -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
This isn't happening...

He squeezes his eyes shut. Hoping it will all go away.

It doesn't. And that's when ANGER takes over...

HE PULLS AGAINST HIS RESTRAINTS.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
THIS ISN'T HAPPENING!!!

And much to David's surprise - the arm restraints GROAN.

He stops. Looks down at the arm bands... *Did he do that?*

David's face lights up - AN IDEA.

With a few shallow breaths to get the adrenaline pumping -

DAVID PULLS AGAINST THE RESTRAINTS WITH ALL HIS MIGHT.

Veins in his arms look like they're about to EXPLODE. Every muscle STRAINS.

Again, the metal GROANS. But this time the restraints BUCKLE.

David can't believe it. Neither can we. *How's he doing this!?*

Encouraged, he ROARS one last time. PULLING AGAINST THE METAL BINDINGS AND - **SNAP**. One metal arm BREAKS OFF!

David reaches over - assists his left arm and - **SNAP**.

David's hands are free.

He reaches up to his forehead restraint -

If he can break the arm bands, why couldn't he do the same for the other restraints?

He fingers at it. Tries to get a grip on the tight metal.

Satisfied, he STRAINS. Pushing his wrists up-and-away from his forehead. The metal GROANS. He keeps PUSHING and PUSHING.

His triceps want to EXPLODE. And he SCREAMS - **SNAP**.

David shakes his head loose. Looks to his feet. They're next.

With greater confidence now, David pushes his foot forward -

The stronger leg muscle RIPS through the restraint with ease.

**CLINK-CLANK**. And David is free of his bindings.

He looks around the sealed room - *Now what!?*

David's eyes land on THE DOOR. He tries to open it - *locked*.

Desperate for a way out, he looks to the broken restraints. The metal used for the door doesn't look much different.

He walks to the door again. Places one hand on it. Then another. Readies himself to push -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
This is crazy...

His eyes go back to the examination table. *If he could break free from that...* David finds his motivation. He can do this.

And with a football-like stance David -

PUSHES INTO THE LOCKED METAL DOOR WITH ALL HIS MIGHT AND SLAMS into the unmovable--

INT. C.D.C. FACILITY - HALLWAY

--And THE DOOR SNAPS OFF ITS HINGES. Falls with a THUD.

David stands there in shock. He looks at his hands -

DAVID  
What's happening to me?

Then he remembers where he is. Exposed in his hospital gown outside his room. He looks down the hallway - **all clear**.

It may look like a prison, but it's a medical facility - No one expects you to escape. They expect you to die.

And David RUNS.

CUT TO:

INT. C.D.C. FACILITY - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

THE UNBLINKING EYE OF A SECURITY CAMERA.

It sweeps the hall. Back-and-forth. Over-and-over. From around a nearby corner - David eyes it. Watching. Waiting....

A NOISE darts his attention to -

A HERMETICALLY SEALED METAL DOOR HISSES OPEN revealing -  
TWO HAZMATS.

David hugs the wall tight. Hopes they don't see him. Luckily, they turn in the opposite direction.

And as they do - SO DOES THE SECURITY CAMERA.

Before the door can SLAM back down -

DAVID RUNS AND GRABS THE BOTTOM OF IT.

His muscles go TAUT as he fights its whirring gears.

His eyes move to the security camera - seconds from turning back in his direction!

With a grunt, David uses his newfound strength for one final SHOULDER PRESS, LIFTS the door and ducks underneath.

As the camera is ABOUT TO CATCH HIM--

INT. C.D.C. FACILITY - HAZMAT STAGING AREA

--David lets the door SLAM shut behind him. Close call.

David looks around. Empty Hazmat Suits line the walls -  
*It's a sterile staging area.*

Well, now that David's been here... It's not sterile anymore.

David pries open the next set of doors and walks into...

INT. C.D.C. FACILITY - LOCKER ROOM

Rows and rows of LOCKERS. David crosses to them, but FREEZES when he hears - **VOICES.**

And these voices belong to C.D.C. EMPLOYEES on the far side of the room dressed in street clothes.

David slips behind the end of a locker row. Holds his breath.

He peeks out the side -

As the two EMPLOYEES leave. David exhales. Alone again.

He walks to the lockers. Each designated to a C.D.C. Employee. He lands on HOLLANDER, GREG.

David examines the locker door - it requires a FINGER I.D.

Tries it on the off chance... RED LIGHT.

DAVID

Shit.

Then, with a half-smile, *David remembers...*

He grabs the locker and RIPS the door off its hinges.

Inside - Jeans, T-shirt, shoes, a hat. David eyes the loot.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Perfect.

CUT TO:

EXT. C.D.C. FACILITY - PARKING GARAGE

BOOP-BOOP. Greg's CHEVY BOLT unlocks. David hurries down a row of cars to it. Climbs inside.

The engine purrs to life with all the noise a hybrid can muster. David quickly pulls out of the parking space.

INT. CARL'S BOLT - CONTINUOUS

David navigates the garage. Ahead - A GUARD SHACK.

A NIGHT SECURITY GUARD sits inside, binging Netflix on his tablet. David's car cautiously rolls up.

The Security Guard puts the tablet down. Approaches the shack's window. *There's no way this works...*

But the Security Guard motions David through. Gives him a friendly wave.

And David notices the EMPLOYEE DECAL on Carl's windshield.

He returns the wave and drives as the gate arm OPENS. *Just another day leaving the office.*

David steps on the gas, putting as much distance between him and the C.D.C as he can.

As the car rounds the bend, we hear the WAH! WAH! WAH! of security alarms BLARE...

CUT TO:

EXT. ARIZONA NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Rows of nearly-identical homes line a peaceful and quiet street until -

HEADLIGHTS WHIP AROUND THE CORNER. Tires SCREECH. It's the Bolt. DAVID BURSTS OUT THE DRIVER'S SIDE DOOR.

He dashes into an alley behind the houses. David's feet CRUNCH through tiny stones covering the ground.

Out the other side of the alley and back on cement, David runs toward his intended destination - HOME.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - DAY

David BANGS on the front door. Chewie barks and barks.

Finally - Alexis answers. Can't believe what she sees...

ALEXIS

David!?

Chewie jumps all over him with excitement. Alexis looks him up and down. *He's real.* But she can't help but wonder -

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

Whose clothes are those?

David pushes past. Heads inside...

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - FOYER

DAVID

They're Greg Hollander's.

Alexis watches David as he heads down the hall with purpose -

ALEXIS

*Who's Greg Hollander?*

INT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - BEDROOM

David bursts into his bedroom, Alexis on his heels.

ALEXIS  
David - who is Greg Hollander?

David opens the closet. Pulls out - A SET OF LUGGAGE.

He throws it on the bed and opens it. Pulls out smaller suitcases like Russian nesting dolls. Starts unzipping.

DAVID  
There's no time to explain. We need to get out of here - NOW.

ALEXIS  
What? Why!?

David stops what he's doing. Turns to Alexis.

DAVID  
I escaped.

ALEXIS  
What do you mean you *escaped*?!

DAVID  
Lexi - *they're coming for me.*

LIAM (O.S.)  
Dad?!

David and Alexis turn - see their son, toothbrush in his mouth. Totally confused.

David runs over. Hugs him tight.

DAVID  
Liam -  
(turns to Alexis)  
I thought I'd never see you guys again.

LIAM  
Dad - who's coming for you?

David returns from the clouds. He hands Liam a suitcase -

DAVID  
Pack some things. Right now.  
Christmas break came early.

Alexis stops him -

ALEXIS  
Wait. Wait. Wait. *We're* not going  
*anywhere*. Not until you explain  
what's going on!

David looks around the room. His gaze lands on a HEAVY  
LOOKING armoire. David points to it.

DAVID  
This thing - *which I hate by the*  
*way* - remember how many guys it  
took to move it in here?

ALEXIS  
I don't know. Three? What's that  
got to do with anything?

David walks to the armoire. Wraps his arms around it.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
What are you doing? Be careful--

And with a modest amount of strain Alexis and Liam watch as -  
DAVID LIFTS THE ARMOIRE OFF THE GROUND.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
--That's heavy.

He easily sets it back down.

LIAM  
Whoa...

ALEXIS  
How did you...?

David shakes his head.

DAVID  
I don't know. *Something* is  
happening to me. I need time to  
figure it out. Time the C.D.C.'s  
not going to give me.

He puts his hands on Alexis' shoulders. Looks into her eyes.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Please trust me. I have to leave -  
(looks to Liam)  
We have to leave.

She nods.

ALEXIS  
Okay.

David smiles at them both.

DAVID

Okay.

Off our reunited family all now on the same page we...

CUT TO:

THE WHEELS OF A SUITCASE ROLL HAPHAZARDLY DOWN A DRIVEWAY.  
We're outside...

EXT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - NIGHT

Liam hands off his luggage to David, who throws it in the C.R.V. Alexis and Chewie sit inside.

DAVID

That's it?

LIAM

Yeah.

Liam heads for the back as David climbs in the driver's seat. Doors slam shut. The ignition turns over.

INT./EXT. HONDA C.R.V.

From behind the wheel, David looks at their house. Warm, inviting, Christmas lights twinkling along the rooftop.

But it's no longer safe.

Resolved, David puts the car in reverse.

DAVID

Everybody hold on.

Hits the gas. But immediately SLAMS THE BRAKES!

His jaw drops as he stares into his rear-view mirror.

A HEAVILY ARMORED C.D.C. MOBILE UNIT.

RED and BLUE lights illuminate the Honda's interior.

*Fuck.*

Liam stares at the vehicle and realizes -

LIAM

We're boxed in!

A crackle BOOMS from a loudspeaker on the vehicle.

HAZMAT SUIT (O.S.)  
David MacReady - you're in  
violation of Civilian Medical Order  
Eleven Thirty Eight. Exit the  
vehicle with your hands in the air.

David looks to his family... and unbuckles his seat belt.

ALEXIS  
What are you doing?

DAVID  
Don't worry. I have a plan--  
(eyes the Mobile Unit)  
I think...

He pops open the car door. Chewie BARKS his head off.

ALEXIS  
David - wait!

Her only answer is the car door's *ding-ding - ding-ding - ding-ding* as David climbs out of the S.U.V.

DAVID WALKS SLOWLY TO THE C.D.C. VEHICLE.

HAZMAT SUIT (O.S.)  
(through speaker)  
Put your hands behind your head and  
knees on the ground!

David makes eye contact with THE HAZMAT DRIVER.

He hears the HYDRAULICS of the C.D.C. Unit's door opening -

Whatever David's going to do, he's out of time to do it -

David turns -

Makes eye contact with his family. Nods. *He's got this.*

And David -

RUNS STRAIGHT AT THE VEHICLE.

With EVERY MUSCLE on the verge of rupturing David grabs the bumper - **AND LIFTS.**

Nobody can believe what they're seeing.

DAVID PICKS THE FRONT OF THE MOBILE UNIT UP OFF THE GROUND.

LIAM  
COOL...

ALEXIS  
It's... That's *impossible*.

And yet it's happening. Right in front of them.

With a PRIMAL ROAR, David's got the vehicle up and balanced on its back tires.

The HAZMATS trying to exit from the side door lose their balance and FALL BACK INTO THE BOWELS OF THE VEHICLE.

David switches his grip to finish the job -

WITH A FINAL PUSH, HE DROPS THE VEHICLE BACK.

It lands HARD. Flat on its rear, standing like a monolith to The Red Pill.

David looks from the mobile-unit to his grease-covered hands.

*He did it.*

And then - A COUGHING FIT.

David struggles to catch his breath in between vicious-sounding barks. But through it he hears -

ALEXIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
David! Hurry!

And David remembers where he is... TIME TO GO.

Adrenaline pumps as David BOLTS to the C.R.V. Climbs in. Jams the car in reverse. Liam holds Chewie tight.

DAVID  
Okay - NOW hold on!

And the C.R.V. BARRELS down the driveway. Right past where the Mobile Unit had blocked them.

The dazed Hazmats try to climb out of their vehicle, only to watch the MacReadys tail lights disappear into the night...

CUT TO:

INT. HONDA CRV - NIGHT

Streetlights whip past, periodically illuminating the MacReadys. They sit in awkward silence. *How do you explain what just happened?*

Realizing David is driving without a destination -

ALEXIS  
Where are we going?

DAVID  
I... I don't know.

Liam pushes Chewie to the side and leans into the front -

LIAM  
When do you think we'll be able to  
go home?

DAVID  
(totally unsure)  
After we figure all this out.

Liam processes that evasive response...

LIAM  
When's that?

David struggles to answer. Alexis comes in with the assist--

ALEXIS  
--Soon, honey.

Liam thinks some more.

LIAM  
So I get to skip school?

DAVID  
If that's okay with you.

LIAM  
*Are you kidding!?* That's the best  
news ever.

Alexis interrupts -

ALEXIS  
That's it!

David and Liam turn to her.

DAVID  
What's it?

ALEXIS  
Go to campus.

She unlocks her phone.

DAVID  
Who are you calling?

Alexis gives David a knowing look. Her pleading eyes say it all. David's not going to like this...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
No. Not him.

ALEXIS  
Who else can we call?

DAVID  
I don't know. How about *anybody*?

ALEXIS  
You have a better idea?

He doesn't have a good answer. *Knows she's right.*

Someone on the other line picks up...

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
Bobby? It's me. I'm sorry - I know  
it's late. Can you meet me? ...Now?  
...Your office? It's an emergency.

She holds her breath waiting for a response.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
I appreciate it. See you soon.

She hangs up and looks ahead at the upcoming intersection -

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
(to David)  
Turn here.

David bites his tongue and does what he's told.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARIZONA STATE CAMPUS - BIOLOGY WING - NIGHT

Plate-glass buildings mixed with wanna-be Frank Lloyd Wright architecture surround an open-air campus mall.

Alexis waits outside one of them.

A MAN rounds a corner. Waves. She returns the gesture. Under the glow of a street light, we get a look at -

DOCTOR BOBBY COHEN. More handsome than any University Professor has the right to be. His British accent doesn't hurt, either.

BOBBY

Lexi - I was surprised to hear from you.

ALEXIS

Sorry for dragging you out so late.

He walks up. Puts a familiar hand on her shoulder.

BOBBY

You know you can always call me...

Bobby reads the look of concern on her face.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

And Alexis turns.

From a darkened corner - David and Liam, with Chewie on a leash, walk out. Alexis returns her gaze to Bobby -

ALEXIS

We need your help.

Bobby and David lock eyes. Each man is clearly NOT happy to see the other. *There's history here...*

Bobby turns back to Alexis -

BOBBY

Then let's go inside.

CUT TO:

INT. ARIZONA STATE CAMPUS - BIOLOGY WING - LAB - LATER

Part-classroom, part research facility, Bunsen burners and beakers line the high-end space. Alumni (like the ones who will sell this screenplay) have been generous.

From Bobby's look, he's obviously been brought up to speed -

BOBBY

He has The Scourge?! And you brought him *here*!? Are you trying to kill me?

ALEXIS

You don't understand!

BOBBY

I guess I don't.  
(to David)  
(MORE)

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
 No offense, David, but you're  
*dying*. We need to get you to the  
 C.D.C. for proper precautions!

This stings the family.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
 (to Alexis)  
 And you should know better.

ALEXIS  
 But-- The C.D.C. said Liam and I  
 are okay. That David didn't infect  
 us. And he can do these... *things*!

BOBBY  
 (skeptical)  
 What kind of *things*?

She turns to David. *Demonstration time.*

David scans the room. Finds a rack of heavy-looking computer  
 servers stacked SKY HIGH. He walks over to it. Grabs hold.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
 What are you doing?

And David answers by LIFTING the rack off the ground. Liam  
 smiles. Alexis turns to Bobby smugly -

ALEXIS  
*THAT* kind of thing.

Bobby can't take his eyes off it.

BOBBY  
 (to Alexis)  
 We might have to rewrite our grant.  
 (to David)  
 And David, please put that down.  
 It's expensive.

David does. After a moment to contemplate -

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
 I think we need a sample of your  
 blood. *Right now.*

CUT TO:

LATER

A HOLOGRAM DISPLAY LIGHTS UP THE FRONT OF THE ROOM. A digital  
 map of David's blood. Bobby looks puzzled.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
 When did you stop taking your pill?

DAVID  
I haven't.

BOBBY  
Well your bloodstream looks like  
you stopped *weeks ago*. By all  
accounts - you should be dead.

DAVID  
But I'm not.

BOBBY  
No, you're not. Lexi - take a look.

Alexis slides up to Bobby as he points -

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
All traces of The Red Pill are  
almost *entirely* out of his body.

Bobby turns back to David.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
That's why the C.D.C. was so quick  
to bring you in. What's happening  
to you flies in the face of  
conventional science.

DAVID  
They said the virus had advanced.  
And they needed to study me to  
upgrade The Red Pill.

BOBBY  
That's not entirely accurate...

ALEXIS  
What do you mean?

Bobby pulls up a holographic control sample side-by-side.

BOBBY  
Normally, what we expect at this  
stage is *cell degradation* - that's  
what killed off three-percent of  
the world's population in the  
initial outbreak...

Bobby zooms in even further -

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
...The Red Pill's primary function  
is to fight the Scourge. But in  
this case, *your body is fighting*  
*The Red Pill*.

He points at one of the cells - working faster now than even back at the C.D.C. lab monitors.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
You're body's making the pill  
useless. In fact - I'd go so far as  
to say The Red Pill IS what's  
making you sick.

Bobby shakes his head. Marveling at this phenomenon.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
I've never seen anything like this  
before. Your cells are *evolving*.

ALEXIS  
Like a mutation?

Liam perks up -

LIAM  
You mean like the X-Men?

Bobby laughs.

BOBBY  
Well, not *unlike* the X-Men.  
(to David)  
David, your cells are still  
changing. And rapidly. Is there  
anything else unusual you can do?

Before they have the chance to debrief any further -

CHEWIE STARTS BARKING at the window. Something has him riled.

And that's when they all hear - WHOMP-WHOMP-WHOMP-WHOMP.

Everyone hurries to look outside.

*Helicopters.*

Three of them. C.D.C. logos on the side. Spotlights move up-and-down the buildings and campus lawn.

DAVID  
*It's them.*  
(turns to his family)  
We have to go.

ALEXIS  
How did they find us?

Realization flashes across Liam's face.

LIAM  
I know.

He walks over to Alexis's purse. Pulls out - HER CELL PHONE.  
Throws it on the counter along with his.

LIAM (CONT'D)  
They must've tracked our phones.

David and Alexis share a concerned look. Bobby takes charge -

BOBBY  
Liam's probably right. Lucky for  
you, this building's cell reception  
is for shit. They might know you're  
nearby, but there's no way they  
know *exactly* where.

DAVID  
But we can't hide in your lab  
forever. They'll search the place.

Bobby smiles - cocksure.

BOBBY  
Good thing I have a plan.

CUT TO:

INT. ARIZONA STATE CAMPUS - BIOLOGY WING - BASEMENT

The exact opposite of the Apple-chic facility upstairs, the  
Biology Wing's basement looks ancient, filled with relics of  
machines used to educate in decades past...

Bobby leads David, Alexis, Liam and Chewie through them. They  
hear footsteps above. *The C.D.C.*

BOBBY  
(whispers)  
There's a series of old tunnels  
underneath campus, used to run the  
heating back in the Fifties -

They come to a HEAVY LOOKING DOOR. A rusty lever holds it  
shut. Bobby struggles with it. Through grunts -

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
Go South and meet me at my car in  
the McClintock garage. I think we  
can slip out from there.

Frustrated, Bobby gives up. Clearly the lever is jammed.

DAVID  
May I?

David steps in. Grabs hold. With relative ease, the lever GROANS and the door OPENS.

He shoots Bobby a look. The two men size each other up. *But now's not the time for competition...*

BOBBY  
Right. Well, I'll take these -  
(grabs the family's  
phones)  
And try to lead them away.

Alexis grabs Bobby's arm -

ALEXIS  
Be careful.

He nods, but not before sharing one last look with David.  
*Each unsure of the other.* And then the family and Bobby head  
their separate ways...

CUT TO:

INT. ARIZONA STATE CAMPUS - UNDERGROUND TUNNELS

Pipes run along the dark corridors as far as the eye can see.  
David carefully leads his family through this underground  
maze (*If you're wondering, they're a real thing. Look it up.*)

DAVID  
Are you sure we can trust him?

ALEXIS  
Who? Bobby?

DAVID  
Yeah.

They approach a heavy door - McClintock Ave. Their exit.

ALEXIS  
Look, what happened is in the past.

David shoots Alexis a sideways glance. *Is it?*

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
*Besides - I bet you piqued his  
interest enough to make sure you're  
not handed over to someone else.*

With a laugh, David easily muscles open the ancient door.

DAVID  
I hope you're right.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARIZONA STATE CAMPUS - PARKING GARAGE

About as many cars as you'd expect for a campus that houses seventy-thousand people. The family sneaks along them.

ALEXIS  
That's his Mercedes.

And there Bobby's car sits. But no Bobby.

DAVID  
But where is he?

David walks over to the parking garage ledge.

ALEXIS  
David - stay back here.

He waves her off. Looks out. In the distance -

THE C.D.C. And they're everywhere.

The helicopters have landed. HAZMATS have infiltrated the Science Wing. And the MacReady Honda is surrounded. Leading the team with purpose is DOCTOR HAYLEY PARKER.

DAVID  
They must've tracked the car too...

He turns back. Asks again -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Where is he?

ALEXIS  
He'll be here...

A husband and wife stare down. Luckily, Liam interrupts -

LIAM  
Mom?

They both turn to their son.

LIAM (CONT'D)  
How did you know which car is his?

Alexis' voice catches. David turns away. *Smart kid...*

BOBBY (O.S.)  
Thank God, you made it.

They turn to see Bobby. He approaches the garage ledge.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
Watch this...

The family crowds around. They see - HAYLEY SHOUT ORDERS AND QUICKLY LEAD THE C.D.C **AWAY** FROM THE GARAGE.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
(to Alexis)  
I put the phones in your Dean's office. Maybe he shouldn't have waited so long to give you your tenure review.

He smiles and pulls out his car keys. BOOP-BOOP.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
What do you say we get out of here?

CUT TO:

EXT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Yet another quality, cookie-cutter Arizonan home. The type you can afford with a cushy university gig and no kids. Bobby's Mercedes is parked out front.

INT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM

Cozy. Well furnished. And thanks to a weekly cleaning-lady, better maintained than you'd expect from a single guy.

David sits bedside as Liam and Chewie curl up to go to sleep.

DAVID  
You gonna be okay in here?

LIAM  
I think so.

Gives Liam's shoulder a pat.

DAVID  
Try to get some sleep.

But Liam's not done -

LIAM  
Dad... Are you gonna die?

David chews on this. *How to answer...*

DAVID  
I'm not planning on it.

Liam processes...

LIAM  
Good.

David nods. There's so much to say, but he doesn't have the words... He heads for the door instead.

LIAM (CONT'D)  
Dad?

DAVID  
Yeah?

LIAM  
Since Mom's in the teacher's college... Why does she know some biology professor so well?

David's lucky his son can't see the look on his face.

DAVID  
Your Mom and Bobby worked on an education grant last year. The schools teamed up to see how The Red Pill affected learning.

LIAM  
What did they find out?

David mulls over the best way to answer. Settles on -

DAVID  
A lot.

He flips the light.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Get some sleep, buddy.

David shuts the guest bedroom door...

INT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

...And stops to listen - He can hear voices.

Alexis and Bobby talking. As if they're in the next room...

BOBBY (O.S.)  
Your husband wasn't exactly  
thrilled to see me.

ALEXIS (O.S.)  
Does that surprise you?

BOBBY (O.S.)  
Last time he gave me a black eye.  
Imagine what he could do now...

David opens a door. Then another. No Alexis or Bobby.

David presses forward to the stairwell. We can hear them  
crystal-clear, but they're nowhere to be found...

INT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

David tip-toes down the stairs, careful not to interrupt the  
discussion, but--

--He finds the living room empty. No Bobby and Alexis. Yet...

BOBBY (O.S.)  
When I saw you called - I thought  
you had maybe changed your mind.

ALEXIS (O.S.)  
You know I can't do that.

David creeps around a corner. The voices are even louder now.

He's at the threshold before the kitchen. Bobby and Alexis'  
shadows stretch on a nearby wall. David listens again -

Even though they're whispering, David hears them perfectly.

BOBBY (O.S.)  
Well, you can't blame me for  
keeping up hope.

ALEXIS (O.S.)  
It wasn't a good idea then, Bobby.  
And it's not a good idea now.  
(shakes her head)  
*Especially* right now.

We watch as Bobby's shadow puts a sympathetic hand on Alexis.

BOBBY (O.S.)  
Maybe after all this is over...

And that's when David clears his throat and enters--

INT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

--Interrupting this private reunion. Bobby quickly removes his hand from David's wife. *It's awkward...*

BOBBY  
Oh, David. Is... Liam settled in?

DAVID  
He's down for the night.

Sensing tension between the men, Alexis changes the subject -

ALEXIS  
Bobby found a Cal Tech researcher.  
Tim...

Bobby points to his tablet. An online academic journal.

BOBBY  
...His name's Tim Simon. He used to be the Chief Engineer at the C.D.C. for Samuel Landau. Sadly he was forced to join us lowly academics after Doctor Landau passed.

DAVID  
Samuel Landau. Like "Creator of The Red Pill" Samuel Landau?

BOBBY  
The one and the same. If anyone knows as much as Landau did before he died, it's got to be Tim Simon.

Alexis turns to David, hopeful -

ALEXIS  
Up for a road trip?

CUT TO:

INT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Furniture has been pushed around and an air mattress blown up. It groans under David's weight as he tries to get comfortable. Next to him, Alexis can tell he's restless -

ALEXIS  
You alright?

DAVID  
Except for my cough? Yeah.

ALEXIS

No. I mean... Being here. I just didn't know who else to turn to.

David ruffles his pillow. *Not what he wanted to talk about.*

DAVID

No, I get it. But...

He trails off. Alexis notices -

ALEXIS

But what?

DAVID

He still has feelings for you.

Alexis knows he's right.

ALEXIS

But they've never been returned.

DAVID

Physically...

ALEXIS

Physically.

David shuts his eyes.

DAVID

Look. We've been doing good since then. We'll leave tomorrow and then I never have to see him again. Things can go back to normal.

Alexis takes that in...

ALEXIS

Can they?

David realizes how naive that comment was. *Things are far from normal.*

DAVID

Let's get some sleep. We have a long drive ahead of us.

Alexis lays back. Closes her eyes.

ALEXIS

I love you.

DAVID

I love you too.

CUT TO:

DAVID'S EYES. Shut. Restful. Still asleep. Daylight blasts through curtains. We're still in...

INT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

David's eyes flutter when -

ALEXIS (O.S.)  
David... Wake up.

And David's eyes SNAP open. Takes in the overly-bright room. Remembers where he is. Last night comes flooding back to him.

DAVID  
I'm up.

David coughs. His body needs to get the gunk out.

He looks to his nearby pack of Red Pills. *Remembers what Bobby said about them making him sick...*

Instead of taking one, he pockets them.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
What time is it?

Alexis doesn't answer immediately. David finds that odd...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
*What?*

And Bobby walks in and answers -

BOBBY  
It's half past two.

David looks around. Finds a clock. Bobby's right.

DAVID  
*In the afternoon!?*

David hops up with as much grace as one can have getting off an air mattress.

ALEXIS  
I tried to get you up. It was like trying to wake the dead.

He puts his jeans back on.

DAVID  
Dammit - we gotta go.

In response, Bobby drops a bag on the table.

BOBBY  
Then you're going to need this.

He reaches into the bag pulls out -

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
Cash.  
(jingles keys)  
And a rental car - it's a Prius -  
not so bad. And...  
(with a flourish)  
A burner phone.

David eyes the phone suspiciously.

DAVID  
Where'd you get a burner phone?

BOBBY  
(smiles matter-of-factly)  
Walmart.

David nods - half surprised, half impressed.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
Let's get you on the road.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

CHIRP-CHIRP. David unlocks the Prius.

The MacReadys wheel their suitcases to the car. Bobby stands with Chewie leashed at his side.

As David and Liam pack the car, Alexis turns to Bobby.

ALEXIS  
Sure you're okay to watch Chewie?

Bobby looks to the dog -

BOBBY  
We'll get on fine. I could use the  
company - and - before I forget...

He pulls out his credit card -

ALEXIS  
What's this?

BOBBY  
For hotels. Security deposits. You  
can't get a room without one and  
you certainly can't use yours. They  
track those things.

Alexis takes it.

ALEXIS  
Right. Not really used to this...

BOBBY  
A prerequisite for us Brits - it's  
mandatory to watch James Bond.

She laughs, but can't bring her eyes up to his.

ALEXIS  
(whispers)  
I don't know how to thank you.

This gets David's attention. His hearing STILL razor sharp.

BOBBY  
(whispers)  
You don't have to.

And their eyes meet. *Something still there... **BAM!!***

David SLAMS the trunk, breaking them from their trance.

DAVID  
Time to go.

BOBBY  
Right, well then, I'll ring as soon  
as I reach Doctor Simon.

Alexis turns, heads for the car -

ALEXIS  
Thanks again.

David opens the driver's side door. About to get in -

BOBBY  
Oh, and David?

The two men exchange a chilly glance.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
Do be careful.

David nods. The most gratitude Bobby's going to get. Off the  
CAR DOOR SLAM we...

CUT TO:

EXT. I-10 FREEWAY - SUNSET

The sun casts an orange glow over the flat expanse framed by impressive rock-formations of all shapes and sizes.

Cutting it down the middle - the I-10 freeway. The MacReady's Prius races along the seemingly never-ending road.

EXT. QUARTZITE REST STOP - EVENING

A dusty, "pass-through" town only good for gas and fast food.

The Prius pulls into a rest stop across from a sign for one of Quartzite's highlights, their "REALLY GOOD FRESH JERKY". Not World's Best. Just *really good*.

CUT TO:

A gas handle POPS. Tank's full.

LIAM

Dad... I'm hungry. Can we stop?

ALEXIS

I'm starving too.

DAVID

I think we should keep going.

Off their reactions - it's clear they don't.

Giving in, David looks around. Tries to find something of substance... McDonald's, Burger King, Carl's Jr. Then -

DAVID (CONT'D)

(points)

How about that sports bar?

As he gets back in the Prius -

DAVID (CONT'D)

It *would* be nice to sit down for a few minutes.

CUT TO:

INT. SPORTS BAR - NIGHT

Big-screen LED televisions line every inch of this watering-hole illuminating a tough-looking crowd - a mix of down-on-their-luck LOCALS and road-weary TRUCKERS. Half-burnt-out Christmas lights are strung up around the bar.

David leads Alexis and Liam to an open table. A battle-hardened WAITRESS with a cigarette tucked behind her ear and breasts pushed up way-too-high-for-her-age brings menus.

WAITRESS

Get you folks somethin' to drink?

Liam - without taking his eyes off her boobs -

LIAM

Coke for me.

ALEXIS

Water with lemon, please.

David leans in -

DAVID

What kind of I.P.A.'s do you have?

The waitress raises an eyebrow. Looks around. *Have you seen this place?*

WAITRESS

Honey - we've got *real* beer. Bud, Coors, Miller.

DAVID

(disappointed)

Coors'll do.

She jots down the order.

WAITRESS

Be right back.

She spins, leaving the family to make conversation...

DAVID

When we cross into California, we'll find a hotel to crash.

ALEXIS

Okay. How're you feeling?

David stops - how *does* he feel?

DAVID

I don't feel any worse.

ALEXIS

Good. I'm not a huge fan of sick David.

LIAM

Me neither.

An awkward silence... David breaks it -

DAVID  
Some vacation, huh?

That gets some smiles. Too bad they don't last long...

Cell phones EVERYWHERE start buzzing and ringing. One of those Apple alerts that RIPS through a room.

The family watches as the bar's patrons check their phones.

Then - every single television's regularly-scheduled sports broadcast is interrupted by...

A horrible, emergency broadcast-like screech. BREAKING NEWS.

On Screen: A WARNING FROM THE C.D.C.

It's a state-issued photo of a fugitive with The Scourge.

It's very clearly - **DAVID**. His face smiling on EVERY screen.

Murmurs quickly spread throughout the bar. People turn in the direction of David's table.

David, Alexis and Liam feel their stares. From behind the bar, The Waitress gives David a hard look.

Quietly, so only his family can hear -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
I think we should swing through a drive-thru instead.

Without hesitation -

ALEXIS  
Let's go.

LIAM  
Good idea.

David pulls out some cash and leaves it on the table.

DAVID  
So much for that beer...

As he follows his family to the door, David takes one last look at the patrons.

ALL EYES ARE ON HIM. Some start DIALING their phones.

There's nothing David can do, but hurry out the door...

CUT TO:

INT. PRIUS - NIGHT

Carl's Jr. bags litter the car as David slurps down the last of a milkshake. Hands on the wheel, their headlights cut through the desert night.

ALEXIS  
They'll know we're headed to  
California.

DAVID  
But they won't know where - farther  
we get from Arizona, the better.

Liam pops up from the back seat.

LIAM  
Hey - remember when we drove to  
Disneyland a couple years ago?

*Weird time to bring that trip up, but...*

ALEXIS  
Yeah, honey. What about it?

LIAM  
Didn't we have to stop at, like, a  
security check-point at the border?

DAVID  
Yeah...

Liam points.

LIAM  
Is that it?

And through the windshield, David and Alexis see -

A BORDER CHECK POINT. Proudly displayed across the top:  
"WELCOME - CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE STATION". Christmas  
wreathes on either end.

A line of traffic snakes from it - **They're searching cars.**

LIAM (CONT'D)  
(to David)  
Think they're looking for you?

David and Alexis share a look of PANIC.

CUT TO:

DAVID. We're so close on his face it's claustrophobic.

It's dark. We can hear all the noises of the car. The hum of  
the engine. The squeaking brakes. And we realize...

INT. PRIUS - NIGHT

DAVID IS STUFFED IN THE BACK OF THE PRIUS UNDER THE LUGGAGE.

Alexis sits in the driver's seat. Liam next to her. They're two cars away from the Border Crossing and look nervous.

They watch as a BORDER PATROL AGENT waves the cars along.

LIAM  
I think they're just letting  
everyone through.

ALEXIS  
That's good. Okay - we're next.

LIAM  
Mom?

She turns to her son -

LIAM (CONT'D)  
Just... *stay cool*.

Alexis hopes she can.

As the Prius CREEPS toward the Border Crossing, The Border Patrol Agent stares at them - something catches his eye.

Instead of waving them through -

HE PUTS HIS HAND UP FOR THEM TO STOP.

Alexis obeys. Her palms sweat against the steering wheel...

The Agent approaches. Gestures to roll-down the window. As she does, The Agent clicks a flashlight on.

BOARDER AGENT  
Evening, Ma'am.

Looks the car over - twice. Stares hard at Liam who looks like he's about to puke.

IN THE TRUNK

David holds his breath. Sinks into the bottom of the car.

THE FLASHLIGHT moves to the backseat.

BORDER AGENT  
Are you carrying any citrus, plants  
or animals?

Alexis reacts like he's speaking a different language...

BORDER AGENT (CONT'D)

Ma'am?

Finally - it registers.

ALEXIS

No. No, we're not.

The Agent takes one last look -

BORDER AGENT

Okay then. Welcome to California.

Satisfied, The Border Patrol Agent waves them through.

ALEXIS

Happy Holidays.

BORDER AGENT

You too.

She hits the gas. As The Border Crossing gets further away, everyone breathes a huge sigh of RELIEF.

CUT TO:

THE GROAN OF ANCIENT MACHINERY. Then... ICE. We're at a...

EXT. CHEAP MOTEL - NIGHT

David waits for the shitty ice machine in this shitty motel to finish filling his shitty room's bucket.

Satisfied-as-he's-gonna-be, David walks back to their room, but stops when he hears -

Alexis in the stairwell. The BURNER PHONE pressed to her ear.

And it's not like David has to wonder who she's talking to -

*HE CAN HEAR IT ALL.*

ALEXIS

We're in someplace called Indio.  
It's just east of Palm Springs.

BOBBY (O.S.)

And you're okay?

ALEXIS

Did you see the news alert?

BOBBY (O.S.)

I think everyone did.

ALEXIS

I keep wondering... Are we doing the right thing? I feel like everyone's looking at us. We're just normal people. No one's ever noticed us.

(tears fill her eyes)

And now...

She trails off.

BOBBY (O.S.)

I noticed you.

Alexis laughs. Just a little.

ALEXIS

Shut up.

A quiet moment. She can almost imagine Bobby smiling.

BOBBY (O.S.)

Listen - I tried to connect with Tim Simon, but he never rang back. But I'm a persistent bastard. His assistant told me that he's got some gala tomorrow at the Langham Huntington Hotel in Pasadena.

ALEXIS

What for?

BOBBY (O.S.)

Who knows. They're always throwing galas for assholes like that.

Another smile from Alexis.

BOBBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I'll call back with an update.

ALEXIS

Okay.

BOBBY (O.S.)

And Alexis? You are doing the right thing.

They hang up. But Alexis isn't so sure... And from around the corner, David's not either.

CUT TO:

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The click of a remote. Over-and-over. Liam flips through channel after channel on a bulky, old television.

David enters, ice bucket half-melted thanks to eavesdropping.

LIAM  
There's like seven channels. Three  
of them are in Spanish.

DAVID  
Maybe we should shut it off and get  
some sleep then?

They turn as Alexis walks in.

ALEXIS  
Hey.

DAVID  
Hi.

ALEXIS  
Bobby called.

DAVID  
Any luck on the Cal Tech guy?

ALEXIS  
Not yet. They're throwing some  
banquet for him tomorrow night so  
he can't reach him.

DAVID  
Figures...

David can see how distraught Alexis is.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
We'll get to him. It'll be okay.

Alexis smiles. Nods. *Will it be okay?*

CUT TO:

David's eyes. Closed. Asleep. But underneath they're moving.  
Fast. Like he's having a seriously BAD DREAM.

Then... A SCREAM.

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - LATER

David wakes with a start. He sits up. Looks around the room -

Alexis and Liam are safely sleeping away.

ANOTHER SCREAM. A cry for HELP.

It's coming from outside. The noise doesn't seem to bother anyone else - **ONLY HE CAN HEAR IT.**

EXT. CHEAP MOTEL

David quietly shuts the door behind him. Runs to the railing and looks over the parking lot -

No one there. But then -

MORE SCREAMS. Muffled. Desperate. And they sound like they're coming from a SEMI-TRUCK across the way...

David rushes across the parking lot.

He approaches the semi - the screams getting louder and louder the closer he gets...

It's a WOMAN. Fighting. Struggling. David looks around -

*He's the only one who can do anything...*

With a deep breath, he musters up the courage and -

**RIPS** THE TRUCK DOOR OFF ITS HINGES.

David looks inside the vehicle. Makes eye contact with -

A gnarly TRUCKER. Big, beefy. The kind of man that can crack a tree trunk in half. His pants down around his ankles.

And underneath him in the bed of the cab - A YOUNG WOMAN. Mascara stains her face.

David tries to say *something*, but they're ALL stunned.

TRUCKER  
What *the fuck*?!

David steps back as the Trucker climbs off The Woman. Pulls up his pants. He steps out of the now-doorless cab.

The Trucker rolls up his sleeves, showing off his MASSIVE forearms.

TRUCKER (CONT'D)  
You're gonna pay for that.

And The Trucker SWINGS. His punch fast. Furious.

DAVID SIDESTEPS IT.

And instead of David's face, The Trucker's hand SMASHES into his own vehicle. He screams in PAIN.

By now, The Young Woman is out of the semi. Starts screaming -

YOUNG WOMAN  
HELP. HEEEEELLLLLLP!!!

This only enrages The Trucker MORE.

He swings again. David sidesteps. Another miss. Another swing. Another whiff.

**DAVID'S REFLEXES HAVE GOTTEN FASTER.**

And with The Trucker's FINAL punch -

DAVID GRABS THE TRUCKER'S ARM AND -

SNAPS IT IN HALF.

The Trucker HOWLS in pain. The jagged bone pokes through. He retreats to the safety of his cab. Shock on his face.

David stares at his hands... *There's blood on them.*

He tries to shake this horrible feeling in the pit of his stomach. But it grows and grows. What the Hell did he do?

He looks up. Startled to see -

Not just The Young Woman, but EVERYONE. Onlookers that spilled out of their rooms to see the commotion.

They're as stunned as he is. And they're all looking at him.

His eyes move to the second floor balcony...

Alexis AND LIAM - they saw the whole thing!

CUT TO:

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

It's like a tornado is RAVAGING the motel room. Suitcases zipped. Clothes thrown on. They need to get out NOW.

ALEXIS  
What were you thinking making a  
scene like that?

David isn't sure how to answer. *What was he thinking?*

LIAM  
 I thought it was cool...  
 (mimics snapping the  
 Trucker's arm)  
 CRACK! *Bad guy goes down!*

Ignoring his son's interjection, David shakes his head -

DAVID  
 He was hurting her, Lexi. I just  
 reacted and--

ALEXIS  
 --What even made you go out there  
 in the first place?

And David stops.

DAVID  
 She woke me up. I... I heard her.

And this gives Alexis pause too -

ALEXIS  
 You *heard* her? From in here?

DAVID  
 My hearing it's... *better*. If I  
 concentrate, I can hear things that  
 are quiet. Or far away...

And Liam's eyes light up like a slot machine win -

LIAM  
 You got a new power!

Alexis wonders...

ALEXIS  
 When did this start?

DAVID  
 Last night... At Bobby's.

ALEXIS  
 And you heard... *everything*?

A stare-off between them. The answer is obvious...

DAVID  
 We have to go.

Alexis points to the night stand -

ALEXIS  
 Don't forget your glasses.

And that's when David realizes - *he's not wearing them.*

He grabs them off the night stand. Puts them on -

THE WORLD GOES BLURRY.

He takes them off - everything's clear again.

DAVID  
What the Hell?

ALEXIS  
What's the matter?

DAVID  
I wasn't wearing them. Before. I  
didn't think to put them on and...

A smile plasters across Liam's face as he realizes -

LIAM  
You don't need them anymore!?

David's face says it all - his son is right.

LIAM (CONT'D)  
Holy shit.

DAVID  
Hey - watch your mouth.

Alexis just shakes her head... The strength. The hearing. The vision. *How is this happening!?*

Liam turns to his mother -

LIAM  
Mom - I want powers too. Can I stop  
taking the Red Pill?

And both parents respond with a resounding -

DAVID & ALEXIS  
(in unison)  
NO.

Off Liam's disappointed reaction we...

CUT TO:

THE SUN PEEKS OVER A MOUNTAIN RANGE ILLUMINATING A...

EXT. MCDONALD'S PARKING LOT - MORNING

Alexis carries out a bag of the only reason to go to McDonald's ever - *breakfast*.

Behind the restaurant, she stops to see -

DAVID AND LIAM. They're testing David's powers. Liam WHIPS a rock toward David and he CATCHES IT. Liam's impressed!

She sits on a picnic table. Watches her boys. Playing in the distance. Laughing. Smiling. The sullen teen excited by life.

*David sure doesn't look like he's dying...*

THE BURNER PHONE RINGS. Time for Bobby's "check-in".

Alexis answers -

ALEXIS

Bobby?

No answer. She checks the phone's service. Four bars...

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

Hello?

Again no answer, but she hears muffled voices. A man and a woman. With some rustling - things get CLEARER.

BOBBY (O.S.)

I told you, I barely know them!

And we recognize the woman's voice - DOCTOR HAYLEY PARKER!

HAYLEY PARKER (O.S.)

Doctor Cohen, please don't make my job any harder. David MacReady escaped under my watch and it's up to me to get him back. *I think* you know them very well. In fact, I think they trust you implicitly.

BOBBY (O.S.)

No. This is a big misunderstanding.

HAYLEY PARKER (O.S.)

Misunderstanding? We have your building's key-card log. You just *happened* to be working at the exact same time the MacReadys were on campus?

Alexis looks back to David to tell him to come over, but -

He's stopped playing. HE CAN HEAR THE CALL FROM WHERE HE IS.

HAYLEY PARKER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Was it a misunderstanding when you -  
*just for the hell of it* - rented a  
 car? A Prius that just so happens  
 to NOT be in your driveway?

A tense, silent beat. Then -

In the background of the call, CHEWIE BARKS. Someone quickly stifles it to a whimper...

HAYLEY PARKER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 And you're watching their dog? I  
 have a feeling there's a lot more  
 you're not telling me.

The family leans in as Hayley tries to coax it out of him -

HAYLEY PARKER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Doctor Cohen, do I need to remind  
 you about the sensitive nature of  
 this case? You know how high up  
 this goes, don't you?

Silence over the line... Then -

BOBBY (O.S.)  
 He's not a threat. I promise. I ran  
 the tests myself.

HAYLEY PARKER (O.S.)  
 Threat or not, the longer this  
 drags on, the harder it will be to  
 convince my superiors that we need  
 to bring him in alive.

Alexis and David's eyes meet. How much danger are they in?

And Bobby acquiesces -

BOBBY (O.S.)  
 I swear, I don't know where he is.

HAYLEY PARKER (O.S.)  
 But we do. The G.P.S. in YOUR  
 rental told us everything. My team  
 is on their way right now.

BOBBY (O.S.)  
 Then what do you want?

HAYLEY PARKER (O.S.)  
 To test your loyalty. And you  
 failed. You're under arrest for  
 aiding and abetting the escape of a  
 quarantined C.D.C. patient.

BOBBY (O.S.)

*What?*

HAYLEY PARKER (O.S.)

David MacReady is a danger to himself, his family and the public-at-large. You have no idea how many people you've endangered. I'm sorry, Doctor Cohen, but you're coming with us.

The phone crackles from rustling. *A struggle.*

BOBBY (O.S.)

Hey, get your hands off me--

--THE CALL CLICKS OFF. David and Alexis share a look - *what the Hell do they do now!?*

CUT TO:

IN FRONT OF MCDONALD'S

As brisk a pace as one can walk without attracting attention, David heads toward The Prius. Alexis and Liam are not far behind. The parents whisper-argue as they hurry along -

ALEXIS

Where are we going?

DAVID

As far away from here as possible.

ALEXIS

What about the G.P.S.! They can track us.

David stops cold. She's right. He forgot. *Fuck.*

DAVID

Well, what do you want to do? We can't go to Pasadena now!

ALEXIS

What?! Why?

DAVID

Did you hear that call? *YOUR FRIEND* knows a Hell of a lot more than he let on -

(using air quotes)

He knows "how high up this goes."

Alexis shakes her head. Doesn't want to believe that.

ALEXIS

He didn't say that. She did.

DAVID

Even if he didn't, you really think he won't give us up? They *arrested* him, Lexi! Who knows what they'll do to get him to talk. He's the only person who knows where we're headed. We could walk into a trap!

She thinks it over.

ALEXIS

He wouldn't do that to us. To me.

David tries to read Alexis' eyes. Can see she means that.

DAVID

Alexis - you heard them - it's getting harder for them to bring me in alive. Are you sure?

Alexis looks at her husband - resolute.

ALEXIS

I trust him.

David's on the fence...

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

*Trust me.*

He wants to.

DAVID

Okay.

David takes a step back. Looks around the parking lot.

DAVID (CONT'D)

So how do we get to Pasadena?

Alexis crosses her arms. Tries to think of *something*.

ALEXIS

I don't know...

Liam fiddles around with the burner phone's touch screen.

A MINI-VAN'S ENGINE **ROARS** TO LIFE ON ITS OWN.

David and Alexis stare at the vehicle. Their idling ticket to safety... Liam walks in front of the mini-van, controlling it with the phone. David points -

DAVID

Did... Did you just do that?

Their son shrugs.

LIAM

Eric made an app that hacks remote starting cars. We use it to prank people at Safeway. I downloaded it off our drop box.

Alexis shakes her head in disbelief.

DAVID

You and I are going to have a very real discussion about this when we get home. And then I'm talking to Eric's parents. In the meantime -

He turns back to Alexis.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Let's get our stuff.

CUT TO:

EXT. I-10 FREEWAY - DAY

It's David's second act of Grand Theft Auto in as many days. THE MINI-VAN speeds past the Palm Springs Windmill Farm - and their endless rows of Wind turbine generators - up into the rolling California hills.

Through the windshield, we see David conked out in the passenger seat - exhausted. Alexis drives. She reaches out and rubs David's shoulder. He smiles in his sleep.

He may be comforted, but her face is etched with concern. There's so much on her mind.

Following the traffic, the vehicle rounds a bend toward...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE LANGHAM HUNTINGTON HOTEL - NIGHT

A lavish resort set against stunning mountains. Lush gardens lead up to the door of The Langham Huntington. Professionally-decorated Christmas lights illuminate the exterior.

David - *now looking the healthiest we've seen him yet* - and Alexis hurry across the lawn. She grabs David's arm -

ALEXIS

Wait.

David spins. She PULLS THE TAG off David's new suit jacket.

DAVID  
Good catch.

David admires his wife's little black dress. They're as put together as they can be given their... *situation*.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
You look great.

ALEXIS  
(smiles)  
Thanks. You do too.  
(looks around)  
Think Liam will be okay in the car?

DAVID  
He'll be fine. It's Pasadena.

ALEXIS  
Okay... do you really think we can *actually* talk our way in?

DAVID  
Lexi - I was Maricopa County's  
"Residential Top Gun Award Winner" -  
twice - I can close this deal.

ALEXIS  
You haven't closed The DeWinter  
house.

And now it's David's turn to shoot Alexis "The Look".

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry! I'm just nervous! We  
don't do things like this. It's not  
exactly what the therapist meant  
when she said "try new things."

And the mention of therapy brings them back to reality...  
They turn to the task at hand and head up the hotel steps.

DAVID  
Look, I crashed plenty of parties  
in college - it's easy to get in.  
*Staying there's* the hard part.

They approach HOTEL DOORMEN. David turns on the charm -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Hi! We're here for the gala!

CUT TO:

INT. THE LANGHAM HUNTINGTON HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Chandeliers, oriental rugs and carefully Fung Shui-ed furniture. The MacReadys move through the hotel's opulent lobby toward the ballroom past an elegant Christmas Tree.

ALEXIS  
That was easy.

DAVID  
Yeah, well.  
(points ahead)  
That's the real test -

A CHECK-IN TABLE. Above it - a banner - "J.T.M. Investments honors The Cal-Tech Scientific Mind of the Year". A picture of DOCTOR TIMOTHY SIMON smack in the middle of it.

David tugs on Alexis. Looks deep in her eyes -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
You sure Bobby didn't tell them  
where we were going?

Alexis holds his gaze.

ALEXIS  
Yes. I'm sure.

David nods. Trusts her. They're in this hell or high water...  
At the check-in table a BUBBLY BLONDE smiles from ear-to-ear.

BUBBLY BLONDE  
Names please?

David clears his throat -

DAVID  
Doctor Robert Cohen. Plus one.

As the Bubbly Blonde scrolls down the list on her tablet, Alexis shoots David a "*What the fuck?*" look.

BUBBLY BLONDE  
I don't see anyone by that name.

DAVID  
Try Bobby Cohen? With an "H"? From  
Arizona State University?

She double checks.

BUBBLY BLONDE  
No, I'm sorry.  
(she looks David over)  
But you do look familiar...

And the color drains from David's face. Does she recognize David as the escaped C.D.C. patient!?

She mulls it over long enough to make the couple sweat...  
Luckily Alexis intervenes -

ALEXIS  
I've always said he has one of  
those faces.

The Bubbly blonde nods. Agrees.

BUBBLY BLONDE  
That must be it.

With the pressure off, David recovers -

DAVID  
Listen, we've come a long way...  
Can we just pop our heads in and  
talk to Tim - I mean Doctor Simon -  
and get this straightened out?

The Bubbly Blonde looks David and Alexis over again - they  
*seem* nice enough. Against her better judgement we...

CUT TO:

INT. THE LANGHAM BALLROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Domed ceilings give the ballroom a bigger feel than it  
actually has. ACADEMICS - dressed to the nines - mill about.

David and Alexis check the fancy program with Tim Simon's mug  
on the front against the sea of socialites. No sign of him -

*It's like trying to find a needle in a snooty haystack.*

Alexis points.

ALEXIS  
Over there.

And they dodge SERVERS with Hors D'oeuvres and champagne  
flutes to get a look at what has these yuppies' attention -

DOCTOR TIM SIMON.

Glasses, thinning hair, and a face that screams people-  
pleaser. Tim Simon was the nerd that always wanted attention,  
and now *EVERYONE* wants to give it to him.

TIM SIMON

You have to admit that the C.D.C.  
has done a remarkable job  
distributing the pill to low-income  
individuals and the homeless.

An ACADEMIC is dying to counter -

ACADEMIC

But a ninety-three percent success  
rate isn't a *hundred percent*  
success rate.

TIM SIMON

It's not. But we're talking about  
monitoring three hundred million  
people in this country alone - it's  
statistically impossible for  
everyone to take the required dose.  
Dispensing the Red Pill isn't the  
safest thing in a crackhouse. And  
then there are the off-the-grid  
conspiracy theorists. I've been in  
the field, and seen the system  
working, and it's getting more  
efficient every single day.

Right as ANOTHER ACADEMIC is about to kiss Tim's ass, David  
sees his window. Interrupting -

DAVID

Doctor Simon?

This *stranger* now has Tim's attention. David pulls up the  
data read-outs from Bobby on the burner phone.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Could you take a look at this?

Everyone seems taken aback by David's insistent behavior.  
Murmurs spread through the crowd. Tim doesn't reach for it...

DAVID (CONT'D)

Please.

Tim hesitantly takes the phone. Reads the screen.

Puzzled, his smile goes away. He looks to David and Alexis.  
Much to the crowd's surprise -

TIM SIMON

Maybe we should step outside.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LANGHAM HUNTINGTON HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

In the hallway, Tim reviews the data. Still stunned.

TIM SIMON  
Where did you get this?

Alexis jumps in -

ALEXIS  
Doctor Bobby Cohen. He's a Macro-  
Biologist at Arizona State.

TIM SIMON  
Why would anyone doing research  
like this be at Arizona State?

Alexis and David share a look. Tim moves on as if his slight  
was nothing out of the ordinary...

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
Where's the body? Have the remains  
been turned over to the C.D.C. yet?  
(looks up from the data)  
I'd be interested in taking a look.

DAVID  
Uh, no, Doctor Simon... You're  
looking at him.

Tim puzzles over David's comment, but he's a smart guy. He  
looks between the phone and David -

TIM SIMON  
Impossible. *You should be dead!*

DAVID  
That's what everyone keeps telling  
me. But I'm not. And I have  
these... *Abilities*.

Alexis jumps in to help -

ALEXIS  
His strength. His hearing. He - he  
doesn't need his glasses. And he's  
not getting anyone else sick--

Tim seems overwhelmed. David decides to get to the point -

DAVID  
We're hoping you can help us  
understand what's happening to me.  
We heard that, after Samuel Landau,  
you're the best.

Tim chews this over. Alexis adds one final plea...

ALEXIS

We just want to get back to normal.

Tim sympathizes. Then - raises a finger. An idea forming.

TIM SIMON

There's nothing normal about this.  
It's... extraordinary. But I think  
I can help.

(gestures to the gala)

But not tonight. Tomorrow. Meet me  
on-campus. The Kerckhoff building.  
Nine A.M. I'll clear my schedule.

David nods.

DAVID

Okay.

Tim looks at the data one last time. Smiles -

TIM SIMON

This could change everything.

David and Alexis smile. They're going to get some answers.

CUT TO:

CASH. Money. A good amount of it. Grubby hands drag the bills  
across a grubby counter. We're in...

INT. GRUBBY EAST HOLLYWOOD HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

And a SLEAZY DESK CLERK slides an old, dirty key David's way.

SLEAZY DESK CLERK

Sheets are twenty-dollars extra.

As David pulls out cash, he glances around the dingy lobby -

Their half-assed attempt at decorating for Christmas doesn't  
hide the fact this is a cash-only, pay-by-the-hour motel. Do  
they really have to spend the night here?

Through missing teeth -

SLEAZY DESK CLERK (CONT'D)

Enjoy your stay.

CUT TO:

INT. GRUBBY EAST HOLLYWOOD HOTEL ROOM - LATER

A dying halogen light BUZZES to life, revealing a room that meets the bare-minimum requirements for a hotel.

LIAM  
This place sucks.

Alexis quickly notices the room's most striking detail -

ALEXIS  
Only one bed. Great.

She looks to the ceiling.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
And a mirror. Classy.

Setting their bags down -

DAVID  
We can't use Bobby's credit card.  
They'd be all over us. Look - I'll  
take the floor. Let's try to get  
some sleep. Tomorrow's a big day.

CUT TO:

LATER

With a pillow and blanket on the dirty carpet, it should come as no surprise that DAVID IS WIDE AWAKE. It doesn't help that he can hear people fucking the night away in the next room.

Frustrated with the lack of sleep, he gets up. Looks to his family. Alexis and Liam are passed out. Off his sigh we...

CUT TO:

EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD - NIGHT

David walks along the eclectic "East Side" stretch of Sunset Boulevard. An ARCADE BAR catches his eye.

CUT TO:

INT. BUTTON MASH - MOMENTS LATER

Music blasts through speakers barely masking the cacophony of noise from old-school arcade and pinball machines.

David watches the Hollywood hipsters suffering from insomnia. They laugh. Hold hands. Vape. Drink beer... *There's an idea.*

David approaches A BARTENDER with a pencil mustache. Shouts -

DAVID  
Do you have any I.P.A.'s?

And The Bartender slides a DRINK MENU over.

BARTENDER  
Take your pick!

As David's eyes move down the seemingly endless list, he smiles. Even if nothing else has gone right this week, he's finally going to get that craft beer.

He doesn't notice a HIPSTER GIRL slide up next to him. She waves for The Bartender, but something distracts her...

DAVID. Her gaze palpable. David feels her staring through her ironically trendy, thick-rimmed glasses -

HIPSTER GIRL  
Can I buy you a drink?

DAVID  
Me?!

She nods, seductively. David takes her in - the soft glow of the bar's Christmas lights makes her even more sumptuous, *but she must be nearly half his age!*

DAVID (CONT'D)  
I'm good. Thank you.

She reaches out, touches his arm.

HIPSTER GIRL  
What's that scent you're wearing?

DAVID  
Scent?

HIPSTER GIRL  
Yeah. Cologne? It's *incredible*.

DAVID  
Thanks? It's, uh, just me.

The Hipster Girl smiles devilishly.

HIPSTER GIRL  
I never do this, but... You wanna get outta here?

David's face has the sheer look of panic of someone that's never had a one night stand - or worse yet - *an affair*.

DAVID  
I - uh - I'm... *married*.

She laughs. Stares at David almost hypnotically -

HIPSTER GIRL  
So? My boyfriend's over there.  
(she points)  
I bet he'd like you too.

David's gone from horrified temptation to just horrified -

DAVID  
I appreciate the offer - I do - but  
I've got to get back...

She reaches down and GRABS DAVID'S CROTCH.

HIPSTER GIRL  
But I want you.

David scrambles to his feet right as the Bartender returns.

BARTENDER  
You figure out what beer you want?

David tosses out twenty dollars -

DAVID  
I'm good. Keep it.

He hustles away from the bar - looks over his shoulder. The Hipster Girl is following. W.T.F.!? David darts out the door.

EXT. BUTTON MASH

Hipster Girl looks up and down the sidewalk. No David.

She breathes in deeply. Frustrated. The fresh air seems to wake her from her sexually-aggressive trance.

HIPSTER GIRL  
What the Hell am I doing out here?

And she heads back inside, as if none of this had happened...

CUT TO:

DAVID ASLEEP. Then - we hear curtains open. Bright light  
**SMACKS** him in the face.

ALEXIS (O.S.)  
David - wake up.

We're back in...

INT. GRUBBY EAST HOLLYWOOD HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

David's eyes slowly open. As light hits them -  
He's BLINDED. It's PAINFUL. HE SQUEEZES HIS EYES SHUT.

DAVID  
SHUT THE BLINDS!

Worried, Alexis does. The room darker now, she runs to David -

ALEXIS  
*What - What is it?*

She watches as David cautiously opens his eyes again. Even though he squints, she gets a good look at them -

THEY'RE BRIGHT RED.

Liam walks out of the bathroom. Sees David. Freezes -

LIAM  
Whoa. Your eyes.

David's frustrated. *Will someone tell him what's going on?*

DAVID  
What!?

ALEXIS  
They're completely bloodshot.

LIAM  
Do you have pink-eye?

David tries to shake off the pain.

DAVID  
I don't know. I couldn't sleep...  
Maybe that's why?

Alexis is hesitant to agree. *That seems too easy...*

ALEXIS  
Either way. You've gotta get going.  
Tell Doctor Simon about it.

David walks over to the curtains. Fingers them. Light peeks through and again - HE TURNS AWAY IN PAIN.

DAVID

Shit!

He slowly opens his eyes. Looks to his family in the darkened room. Their faces filled with worry -

DAVID (CONT'D)

Can I borrow your sunglasses?

CUT TO:

EXT. CAL TECH - THE KERCKHOFF BUILDING - DAY

While the architecture may be similar to A.S.U., Cal Tech is noticeably GREENER. At the Kerckhoff Building, an anxious Tim Simon waits under an archway.

He checks his watch. Five past nine. STILL NO SIGN OF DAVID.

Right when he's about to give up...

DAVID (O.S.)

Doctor Simon?

Tim cocks his head, sees David *sporting women's sunglasses*.

TIM SIMON

That's an interesting look...

DAVID

They're my wife's. Long story.

TIM SIMON

Where is she?

DAVID

Back at the hotel with my son.

Tim chews on that.

TIM SIMON

No problem. Let's get you inside before anyone recognizes you.

He opens the door for David and they step inside.

INT. CAL TECH - THE KERCKHOFF BUILDING

Moving briskly, Tim leads David toward his lab.

DAVID  
 Sorry I was late. They aren't  
 kidding about L.A. traffic, huh?

TIM SIMON  
 You get used to it.

Clearly, Tim isn't in the mood for small talk.

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
 I reviewed the data you sent. Your  
 case is quite exceptional.

DAVID  
 It is?

TIM SIMON  
 Going academic was frustrating. I  
 thought we'd be pioneering new  
 discoveries, but that couldn't be  
 further from the truth.

DAVID  
 Do you think you can cure me?

TIM SIMON  
 Let's put it this way... I've been  
 waiting a long time for a  
 breakthrough like you.

David smiles.

DAVID  
 Thank you for doing this.

Tim stops. They've arrived. With a frown -

TIM SIMON  
 Don't thank me yet...

And he opens the lab door to reveal--

INT. CAL TECH - THE KERCKHOFF BUILDING - LAB

**--HAZMATS.**

THE C.D.C. waits inside. And they sport CATTLE PRODS. Like  
 the ones from the opening mall scene. They SIZZLE and SPARK.

And right in the center of the lab - **DOCTOR HAYLEY PARKER.**

HAYLEY PARKER  
 Hello, David.

David turns to Tim - *betrayed*. After they made it so far...

TIM SIMON

I'm sorry.

Behind them, TWO MORE HAZMATS appear. They shut the door and David is trapped.

His eyes search for some HOPE of escape. *It doesn't look good.* He can't stop staring at those CRACKLING prods...

HAYLEY PARKER

Don't apologize, Doctor Simon. You did your civic duty by helping us apprehend a contaminated fugitive who put the entire country at risk.

And her eyes move to David's -

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)

As promised, you're approved for Level 5 Clearance. You'll get as much time as you want studying David--

(eyes the university lab)  
--in a *proper* facility.

David shakes his head. *This can't be happening.*

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)

(to David)

WHAT a specimen you've become... I want you to know, this isn't personal, David. But we both knew it would end like this.

The C.D.C.'s high-tech handcuffs OPEN. Ready for David.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)

David MacReady - you're under arrest for violating the U.S. C.D.C. Civilian Medical Order Eleven Thirty Eight.

The HANDCUFF HAZMAT approaches David.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)

In doing so, you have relinquished all rights and privileges as a United States citizen.

When the cold, metal is upon him - David makes up his mind.

Like lightning, he GRABS HOLD of Handcuff Hazmat and -

**THROWS HIM ACROSS THE ROOM.**

The Hazmat SLAMS into tables and chairs - breaking them.

David and Hayley's eyes lock - His face says it all.

*HE'S NOT GOING DOWN WITHOUT A FIGHT.*

And as the CATTLE PROD HAZMATS move - so does he.

They jab their prods, but David's FAST now. He side-steps. Blocks. Counters. Moves.

A Hazmat overextends. David grabs him and -

WHIPS HIM AROUND INTO THREE MORE HAZMATS. The impact sends them all CRASHING to the ground. Hard.

Hayley watches her men taken down one-by-one.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)

Oh my God -

David is surrounded again. There's way too many of them.

As David grapples with one Hazmat, another comes from behind -

AND TAZES HIM. The electric current RIPS through his body. Flesh burns through his shirt.

He screams in pain, *yet somehow*, KEEPS FIGHTING.

He PUNCHES THROUGH the Hazmat's visor and TEARS the mask off.

Exposed, the Hazmat panics. Drops his prod and scurries away.

David's quick to act. He scoops up the cattle prod and -

GRABS A TERRIFIED TIM SIMON.

Pulls him close. Moves the electrified prod even closer. An electric shock blasts across the end. Tim RECOILS.

DAVID

Nobody move!

Hayley signals The Hazmats to FREEZE.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I'm leaving. And he's coming. If you follow - I'll HURT him. BADLY.

David locks eyes with Hayley.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I don't know what's happening to me, but if you haven't figured it out yet, *I'm. Not. Dying.*

He yanks Tim Simon -

DAVID (CONT'D)

Let's go!

David cautiously backs them out of the room, his eyes never leaving Hayley and her team...

CUT TO:

EXT. CAL TECH - THE KERCKHOFF BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

With the prod to Tim's back and his wife's sunglasses on, David hurries them to the mini-van.

TIM SIMON

Where are you taking me?!

DAVID

Get in.

TIM SIMON

And if I don't?

David looks so fucking mad that he doesn't have to answer. Tim smartly decides to listen.

CUT TO:

INT. MINI-VAN

It's a long, awkward silence. Shitty Christmas music fills the void. Neither man knows what to say.

They come to a stoplight. They stare at each other. Mercifully, Tim breaks the spell -

TIM SIMON

Look - I'm sorry, but--

--Before he can finish -

DAVID SLAPS HIM ACROSS THE FACE. THEN he smacks Tim's head. His chest. Releasing ALL his frustration.

David STOPS when he sees BLOOD spill from Tim's nose.

He's frozen as it flows down the scientist's face.

David's stomach DROPS as he realizes what he's done.

And then David PUNCHES the steering wheel - forcing himself out of this trance. Tim flinches.

The light turns GREEN and David returns to driving.

DAVID  
You almost cost me *everything*. My  
family. My life.

Another silence. Tim tries again -

TIM SIMON  
I'm so sorry.

Tim looks and sees they're getting further away from campus.

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
David, you don't need me anymore.  
You can drop me off anywhere.  
(pulls out his phone)  
I'll just grab an Uber--

--David sees the phone and SNATCHES IT from Tim. He rolls the window down. Tosses it out the side.

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
What the fuck!?

DAVID  
They'll track us. Already made that  
mistake once.

He turns to Tim.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
And you're wrong, Doctor Simon. I  
DO need you. I need you to figure  
out what's happening to me. And  
then you're going to fix it. They  
won't stop hunting me until you do.

Tim rubs his temples. *How did he get into this nightmare?*

TIM SIMON  
I can't... At least, not alone.

DAVID  
I'm not going to any hospitals. And  
I'm NOT going back to the C.D.C.

TIM SIMON  
I know. But there IS someone who  
can help.

CUT TO:

INT. GRUBBY EAST HOLLYWOOD HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Liam keeps a vigilant watch. And can you blame him? The parking lot is stop-and-go-traffic for prostitutes.

And then he sees the mini-van pull in.

LIAM  
Mom! Dad's back!

And that gets Alexis to walk over to the window -

LIAM (CONT'D)  
He's got someone with him.

And even with gauze in his nose, Alexis recognizes Tim Simon.

CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER

ALEXIS  
*Kidnapping!?* And you beat him up!?

Alexis stares at David - stunned. David goes through a C.V.S. bag. Pulls out new, darker sunglasses and gauze.

DAVID  
He didn't leave me a choice.

Tim just sits in a chair, head down - *ashamed*.

ALEXIS  
But taking him hostage!? That was  
the *best* you could come up with?

DAVID  
It's not like I had time to make  
one of your "pros and cons" lists.

David takes his shirt off. The skin around his rib cage is a gnarled mess of blood and seared skin from the Hazmat's Prod.

LIAM  
That doesn't look good, Dad.

David tries to wrap the gauze. Alexis jumps in to help.

ALEXIS  
He's right. It doesn't.

DAVID  
We don't have time to deal with it.  
We have to get to Carmel.

ALEXIS  
*Carmel?* What's in Carmel?

David looks to Tim. He wants the scientist to answer.

TIM SIMON  
Samuel Landau.

Alexis and Liam are shocked.

LIAM  
But he's--

TIM SIMON  
--Dead? Not exactly...

Tim takes in Alexis and Liam's reaction. David's was the same when he heard the creator of the Red Pill was alive too...

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
There are some things you should know about The Red Pill... The government hasn't been entirely honest with you. Hell, they haven't been entirely honest with me.

David urges Tim to go on.

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
The truth is - we don't know WHAT  
The Red Pill is fighting.

That bombshell is met with the appropriate amount of surprise and confusion...

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
We call it The Scourge, but only a handful of people *actually* understand it. After the politicians, insurance companies and big pharma came together - everything changed. The government divided up the people who dedicated their lives to fighting The Scourge. I specialize in nano-tech delivery. Your friend at the C.D.C., Doctor Parker, focuses on optimizing virus suppression.

Tim turns to David -

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
When I saw your data, I couldn't comprehend it. But I knew if I reported you, I'd get a higher security clearance. I might find the answers I've been looking for. But I've come to realize that the government only gives academics the scraps they WANT us to have...

Alexis shakes her head -

ALEXIS  
What's this got to do with Samuel Landau?

TIM SIMON  
Landau's the only person that knows the truth. He wanted to do more research, but the powers-that-be didn't. That's why they forced him into hiding. So to the public, the genius who discovered The Red Pill died of old age, peacefully in his sleep. In reality, he's spending his remaining days living the way he always wanted - in a cottage by the sea surrounded by his books.

DAVID  
Tim says he's one of three people that knows Landau's location.

The men exchange a knowing look -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
And now it's four.

TIM SIMON  
But if I bring you to him, I'll break his trust. We mostly drink local wine and play chess. We NEVER talk about The Red Pill.

David pulls his luggage out. Throws it on the bed.

DAVID  
Well, that's about to change.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRUBBY EAST HOLLYWOOD HOTEL - DAY

Carrying the last of the luggage, David steps out of their hotel room. Alexis waits for him. They walk and talk -

ALEXIS  
We need to talk.

DAVID  
What's wrong?

ALEXIS  
Besides the fact we've broken a dozen laws in the last 48 hours?

DAVID  
But we're close. I can feel it.  
Everything leads to Landau. He'll  
know how to fix me.

Alexis slows...

ALEXIS  
And what if he can't?

David stops.

DAVID  
Don't say that.

The couple stares one another down. Then -

ALEXIS  
We can't keep stealing cars and  
kidnapping scientists. This has  
gone too far!

She grabs David's hand.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
What if we take Doctor Simon back  
to the C.D.C. and try to explain  
what's happening to you?

David laughs. He can't believe the suggestion.

DAVID  
Lexi - these people don't care  
about us. They want to cut me up  
like a Guinea pig. You heard Doctor  
Simon. Landau's our *last* chance for  
things to go back to normal!

Alexis shakes her head.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
What?

ALEXIS  
I'm afraid! Can't I just be afraid?

David sees how upset Alexis is. His hard edge softens. He  
takes his wife in his arms. She hugs him tight. He groans.

Now it's her turn to ask -

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
What?

DAVID  
My ribs. Not so hard.

She loosens her grip. Laughs through teary eyes. Sniffs.

ALEXIS

Sorry.

She looks up at her husband. David wipes her tears away.

DAVID

C'mon. Let's go.

CUT TO:

EXT. I-5 FREEWAY - AFTERNOON

It's a postcard of endless mountains turning into desert plains and farm country as the mini-van speeds north.

CUT TO:

EXT. IN-N-OUT BURGER - EVENING

We're off the freeway in the middle of what could generously be called a small town, but that doesn't stop the traffic jam at the Clovis In-N-Out drive-thru. All Californians love it.

As far from the restaurant as they can get, David and Liam sit, as usual, in awkward silence. Finally, Liam speaks -

LIAM

I know the last few months I've been kind of a jerk.

This totally catches David by surprise.

LIAM (CONT'D)

It's not that I don't like you or Mom. I do. School's just kind of shitty...

(off David's stare)

I mean, crappy.

You can tell by the look in his eye, Liam really means this -

LIAM (CONT'D)

The only time I'm really happy is when I'm home. With you guys.

He turns away. Embarrassed.

LIAM (CONT'D)

I sound so dumb. But the last few days - on the road - I know it sucks what's happening...

He looks his father in the eye -

LIAM (CONT'D)  
But what if things weren't meant to  
go back to normal?

DAVID  
What do you mean?

LIAM  
What if you were *supposed* to get  
these powers? You *saved* that lady.  
Nobody else could've done that.

David takes this in. Considers.

LIAM (CONT'D)  
Maybe - all this - is a good thing.

David's tries to muster a response. Wants to. But -

ALEXIS (O.S.)  
Dinnertime!

Alexis and Tim approach with holiday-themed bags of burgers.

TIM SIMON  
I know our circumstances don't call  
for this, but thank you for dinner.

ALEXIS  
Well, we always try to go the extra  
mile when we're kidnapping.

As they dive in, Alexis notices David not eating -

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
You okay?

David eyes the burger again. Picks it up. Mulls it over.

DAVID  
Yeah. Just not hungry, I guess.

Tim notes this exchange curiously...

TIM SIMON  
When was the last time you ate?

David pauses to think.

DAVID  
I - I don't know.

TIM SIMON  
Interesting...

As Tim chews on this, Liam - done with his cheeseburger - eye's David's sandwich. David slides it over and Liam smiles.

Alexis reaches into her purse. Pulls out David's gauze.

ALEXIS  
We should re-wrap you before we go.

CUT TO:

LATER

By the mini-van, Alexis helps David undress the gauze.

When she sees the wound, she DROPS the dressing. David notices her face. Her look of bewilderment...

DAVID  
What?

Alexis touches David's torso - **THE WOUND IS NEARLY HEALED.**

ALEXIS  
Doctor Simon - can you come here?

David sees it now too. So does Liam. *This IS unbelievable!*

DAVID  
How is this possible...?

Tim shakes his head in equal disbelief.

TIM SIMON  
I have no idea.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANOTHER CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The tour of America's worst hotels continues as the family, *plus Tim*, crowd into this cramped lodging. Luckily, they have something to distract them from their surroundings...

David holds out his hand. Tim takes it and BRINGS THE BLADE OF A SWISS-ARMY KNIFE close.

DAVID  
You sure this is a good idea?

Liam watches in wonder -

LIAM  
I think it's an *awesome* idea.

David and Alexis shoot their son "The Look".

LIAM (CONT'D)  
What!?

TIM SIMON  
If your friend Doctor Cohen's  
findings are correct, David's not  
contagious.

Looks to Alexis and Liam.

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
But you both took your Red Pill  
today? Just in case?

They nod and Tim proceeds -

He slides the knife along David's finger. He winces. The cut  
is just deep enough that blood trickles out of the wound.

They can't believe it when - IT HEALS IN FRONT OF THEIR EYES.

The skin intricately reconnects fiber-by-fiber. The adults  
are stunned. Liam just has a big old grin on his face.

LIAM  
That is so cool.

Tim looks to David.

TIM SIMON  
Wait until Samuel sees this...

CUT TO:

LATER

Once again, David can't sleep.

He throws the covers off him. Grabs his jacket. Looks to  
everyone - Alexis, Liam, Tim - all dreaming away. Shakes his  
head. If The Scourge doesn't kill him, the insomnia will.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANOTHER CHEAP MOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

David walks out of the near-empty parking lot, along the  
small town's main drag.

Unlike the last two nights, there's nowhere for David to get  
into trouble. A couple parked cars. A few stores. Restaurants  
- all closed by ten. There is literally *nothing* to do here.

David looks to his hand - long since healed from Tim's incision - totally in awe of this incredible ability.

He takes in the quiet. It's serene. Peaceful. It couldn't be more different than his life right now. He drinks it in. *He doesn't know how many moments like these he has left...*

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. ANOTHER CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - LATER

Back at the motel, David - still wide awake - climbs the steps to their room, but something catches his eye...

A WHITE VAN. *Was that there before?*

He eyes it suspiciously. Nothing else seems out of place...

He listens intently, trying to use his abilities to hear *something* - But there's only quiet.

He lets it go. Moves to fumble with the room lock. The door swings open and instead of his family he sees -

### HAZMATS.

They're inside! Two Hazmats rush David - who steps back, reeling from the shock. *How did they find them!?*

Another Hazmat has his hands wrapped around Alexis' mouth to quiet her. She fights her way free long enough to yell -

ALEXIS  
DAVID. RUN!

David snaps out of his trance. Does as he's told. Outside -

MORE HAZMATS spill out of the white van. DOCTOR HAYLEY PARKER right behind them.

The Hazmats move up either staircase, surrounding David.

No cattle prods this time. **They're ARMED. M16A4s.** They're not fucking around. Boxing David in, his only option - TO JUMP.

With a leap of faith, he launches himself over the breezeway railing and CRASHES onto a truck bed below.

Of all the abilities David has developed - invulnerability isn't one of them. He GROANS in pain.

Unfortunately, there's NO TIME to stall. He scrambles to his feet. Limpes away from the hotel. Away from his aggressors.

HAYLEY PARKER  
David, stop! Don't make us fire!

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK. All The Hazmats take aim.

Hayley cocks her own gun -

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
Hands in the air and knees on the  
ground. I won't ask twice.

This is it. David either turns himself in or it's curtains...

Then - from out of nowhere -

TIM SIMON STEPS OUT IN FRONT OF DAVID.

He puts his hands in the air. Acting as a human shield.

TIM SIMON  
No. Wait. Please! Don't shoot!

Hayley can't believe what she's seeing... The man that turned David in hours before is now *protecting* him?

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
You can't kill him. I've never seen  
anything like him. We can learn so  
*much*. There's more happening here  
than you know!

HAYLEY PARKER  
*Clearly*, Doctor Simon. Now move.

And Tim opens his balled up fist and DROPS THE MINI-VAN KEYS.

TIM SIMON  
David. GO. Finish this.

The keys JINGLE as they hit the ground -

CAUSING A NERVOUS HAZMAT'S FINGER TO SLIP -

And that's when the shooting starts.

David makes a dive for the keys as Alexis and Liam watch from the second-floor rail in horror -

Bullets ERUPT across the parking lot. Unfortunately for Tim, he's in the middle of a firing squad -

AND TAKES A BULLET TO THE BELLY.

David catches the scientist. Using his strength, David quickly carries Tim to the safety of a nearby parked car.

David looks over the wound - it's bad. Probably fatal.

DAVID  
What can I do?

As the Hazmats move in, David puts pressure on Tim's stomach. Tim just shakes his head. Between strained breaths -

TIM SIMON  
Don't worry about me. You're the  
key to changing *everything*.

The two men stare each other down. If Tim dies, clearly he doesn't want it to be in vain.

TIM SIMON (CONT'D)  
Go to Landau. NOW.

David nods. As he removes his hands from Tim, he notices -  
BLOOD. They're covered in it. Soaked.

He looks at them in horror. Then back to the fading Tim.

David's breathing shortens. Adrenaline pumps. Heart thumping.

AND SOMETHING COMES OVER HIM.

A man possessed, David leaps from his cover. Hazmats stand between the mini-van. They raise their weapons, but -

DAVID PLOWS INTO THEM. Too fast to react -

He RIPS one Hazmat's helmet off and SLAMS it into the visor of another - turning THAT Hazmat's face into a bloody pulp.

Alexis and Liam watch in disbelief. They never knew David was capable of such violence.

As the first Hazmat tries to counter, David WHIPS the helmet back. The impact is HARD. Knocks the Hazmat out cold.

Before the Hazmat hits the ground, David scoops up the body.

He's got a shield now. And a machine gun.

Having never used a firearm before, David discharges WILDLY.

The Hazmats DUCK for cover. Hayley pushes a stunned Alexis and Liam inside as stray bullets PEPPER the second floor.

This gives David enough time to get to the mini-van.

As regrouped Hazmats approach, David uses his strength and THROWS the Shield Hazmat at them. The Hazmat COLLIDES with the others, scattering them like bowling pins.

David climbs in, turns the engine over. He looks up to their hotel room - NO SIGN OF ALEXIS OR LIAM.

Bullets CLANK-CLANK-CLANK-CLANK into the side of the vehicle. SMASH. David ducks as the passenger window gets BLOWN OUT.

David HAS to go. He JAMS it in reverse as the back window SHATTERS.

The more distance between him and the motel, the less effective The Hazmats' shots are.

David gets his breathing under control. Adrenaline subsiding.

In the rearview mirror, he watches the motel get smaller and smaller. His family getting further and further away. And he comes to the realization that -

**HE'S ON HIS OWN.**

CUT TO:

THE BURNER PHONE. It slides across a metal table. We're in...

INT. CALIFORNIA C.D.C. FACILITY - DAY

A large room. Shiny, chrome everything.

It's a meeting space designed for Scourge patients to visit guests, but, as we know, it's almost never used. That's why it's the perfect place for Hayley Parker to have a talk with Alexis... Liam sits nearby *just* out of earshot.

HAYLEY PARKER

Doctor Cohen's phone records. Once we got a hold of them and couldn't match the number... It was only a matter of time before we found you.

Alexis stares at the phone. Says nothing.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)

But I never could have predicted these... enhanced abilities.

Hayley does her best to get Alexis to look at her -

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)

You saw what he did to my men. They have wives. Sons. Daughters. What if he had killed them?

This weighs heavy on Alexis...

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)

And Tim Simon - one of the greatest minds of our generation - is dead. What do I tell *his* family?

Alexis looks over to Liam. Puts herself in Tim Simon's shoes.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
Please tell me where he's going.

More silence. Hayley knows Alexis won't give up her husband.

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
*Fine.* If you won't talk to me. Then  
maybe you'll talk to him...

They hear a door open. Footsteps. Alexis turns to see -

BOBBY. And he's got the family dog with him.

LIAM  
Chewie!!!!

Liam lights up like a Christmas tree when he sees his dog. He runs over to the retriever. They embrace.

Bobby's quick to let the boy take the animal. He and Alexis can't take their eyes off each other. *So much has happened since they last spoke...* Her last semblance of *normal*.

Alexis' eyes fill with tears. Hayley watches - it's clear she will break very soon...

CUT TO:

Crashing waves. The Pacific Ocean glistening in the moonlight. The tide consumes the pristine sands of...

EXT. CARMEL BEACH - NIGHT

David looks out over the water. A newly-stolen pick-up truck parked on a narrow, cliff-side road. He turns to...

A small cottage overlooking the ocean. It's a warm and inviting home. A Christmas tree visible in the window.

It's the residence of Samuel Landau. The creator of The Red Pill. David has reached the farthest point of his journey. His manifest destiny...

CUT TO:

INT. SAMUEL LANDAU'S HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

DING-DONG. We hear a doorbell. Footsteps.

Rounding a corner, we meet SAMUEL LANDAU - a man of European descent. White hair, but he's still quite spry for his age.

He answers the door and comes face-to-face with DAVID.

The two men stare at each other. David doesn't know what to say. Luckily, he doesn't have to -

SAMUEL LANDAU  
I've been expecting you, David.

Off David's (and our) surprise, we...

CUT TO:

INT. SAMUEL LANDAU'S HOME - LIVING ROOM

A fire crackles. A grandfather clock *tick-tock-tick-tocks* at the far side of the room.

Landau sits across from David. Sips a cup of tea.

SAMUEL LANDAU  
I'd offer you a cup, but I know you  
haven't had much of an appetite.

David's surprised Landau knows that, but he shouldn't be.

DAVID  
How did you know who I am?

Landau smiles - *that's an easy one.*

SAMUEL LANDAU  
The news of course! You're the most  
wanted men in America. Plus, I  
monitor the C.D.C. channels. It's  
about all they let me do these  
days...

Landau shifts, clearly still uncomfortable with that fact.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
But, I must say, I was expecting  
Tim Simon to join you. Where is he?

DAVID  
He didn't make it... He...  
He died helping me get here.

The scientist processes this.

SAMUEL LANDAU  
A brilliant man and a loyal friend -  
but a *terrible* chess player.

The scientist leans in.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
David, I know you didn't come all  
this way to ask how I recognized  
you. You want to know why you're  
changing.

David starts to speak, but--

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
--Hold on. Let me guess.  
(studies David)  
Your complexion is good. You  
stopped taking your pill.

David nods. Confirms this.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
You must be - a week into your  
metamorphosis. Am I right?

DAVID  
Metamorphosis?

Landau smiles.

SAMUEL LANDAU  
Well, of course! You don't think  
you're still human... do you?

David isn't sure how to respond to that...

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
Every minute, more of your cells  
are being replaced by a dormant  
agitator. Does a human have your  
strength? Your agility? No, my boy,  
you're becoming something MORE.  
Something the world's governments  
deemed too *dangerous* to exist.

David's had enough of this dance -

DAVID  
Doctor Landau - what does The Red  
Pill do?

Landau laughs at the question.

SAMUEL LANDAU  
The Red Pill? That's the wrong  
question. It's not preventative.  
It's a suppressant. It doesn't stop  
a disease from getting in - it  
stops one from getting out.

And he lights up devilishly -

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
The right question is *what does it*  
*suppress*.

And he waits for David to ask...

DAVID  
What... does it suppress?

Landau climbs to his feet. He doesn't answer right away. All we can hear is the clock's *tick-tock-tick-tock-tick-tock...*

SAMUEL LANDAU  
I was born in Romania. Did you know that?

David shakes his head. *Why should he?*

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
Science has trouble penetrating that part of the world. There are stories. Passed down from generation-to-generation. *Legends*.

Landau grabs a fire poker. Stokes the flames.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
I grew up with these legends, Mr. MacReady. When I became a man of science, I wanted nothing more than to debunk this *nonsense*. Ghosts, goblins, werewolves... Stories told to send a chill down the spine. To make children behave. I made my reputation debunking all of them.

He turns back to David to emphasize this next point -

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
*All except one.*

He moves back over to the chair, fire-poker still in-hand.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
Legends have to start somewhere. In Romania, one myth has persisted more than any other. People give names to things they can't understand. Things their rational minds can't *believe*. That *their* science cannot *explain*.

He twirls the fire-poker, lost in thought...

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
Strength beyond imagination...

**FLASH** - *David's muscles STRAIN and metal CRUNCHES as The C.D.C. Mobile Unit CRASHES onto its back.*

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
Speed that shouldn't be natural...

**FLASH** - *David sidesteps effortlessly as The Trucker swings his massive fists at the air between them.*

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
Pheromones that give the power of persuasion.

**FLASH** - *A finger traces the rim of a glass. Eyes stare intensely. The Hipster Girl chews her lip. Wanting David.*

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
The ability to hear things one could never possibly have heard.

**FLASH** - *Whispers flood David's ears as he hears Alexis and Bobby talking in the kitchen.*

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
Sensitivity to light that forces them to live in darkness.

**FLASH** - *Hotel curtains open BLINDING David.*

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
Does this sound familiar?

David nods. *It does...*

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
These were traits held by seemingly mortal men. But how could that be? How do you explain the unexplainable? These individuals were not *monsters* or *devils*. But people *wanted* them to be.  
(smiles)  
And so they gave them a name. Do you know what that name is?

David shakes his head.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
**Nosferatu.**

David sits back. He recognizes the word...

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
You know it better as *vampirism*.

*Tick-tock-tick-tock-tick-tock...*

Landau watches David processing. Finally -

DAVID  
But... vampires aren't real.

Landau waves the fire-poker for emphasis.

SAMUEL LANDAU  
Of course they're not. At least not in the sense that YOU know them to be. But there IS a flaw within our D.N.A. at the molecular level. One that's susceptible to a bacterial infection. When our cells encounter this infection, strange physiological changes take place.

He points the poker at David.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
The same changes happening to YOU.

Landau paces -

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
We traced the bacteria to its source. Caves near Transylvania. The Well of Souls... That's what the locals called it. After years of campaigning, I received funding from the United States. The C.D.C. and I began researching the caves.

Landau leans on the fireplace mantle. Reflective -

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
That was twenty-two years ago...

DAVID  
The year of The Scourge outbreak.

Landau's eyes hit the floor. Ashamed.

SAMUEL LANDAU  
We had to give it a name. And we couldn't very well tell people that they were turning into... *vampires*.

DAVID  
You let it out.

SAMUEL LANDAU

We didn't mean to. Luckily the technology was there to mass-produce The Red Pill or we wouldn't have been able to contain the outbreak. But the event united us. The world's governments united to release the first free-and-universal drug, but for it to work all known cases had to be eliminated.

DAVID

So people were killed... because they were *changing*?

SAMUEL LANDAU

No. Because they were *dangerous*. I tried to get them to let me work on a cure. I warned them that the infection would mutate. But the cost of mass-producing The Red Pill cut into research and development. It was decided by bean counters that it would be cheaper to study these evolutions *after* they occurred and release an update.

Landau shakes his head, reflects -

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)

The more I pushed, the more I felt they didn't want me to find a cure.

DAVID

Why?

SAMUEL LANDAU

Because it gives them money. Power. Political dissidents can disappear at anytime - and it's written off as another Scourge victim. The media lives off of the Red Pill marketing. So no one questions anything. If some billionaire wants to buy an island, the price for The Red Pill goes up and our tax dollars pay for it. We're living in a world where we're under complete control, and The Red Pill administers that control.

Landau moves back to David, as if looking for forgiveness.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)

When I threatened to go public, I found myself out here. Exiled.

David shakes his head. *This is wrong.* He rises to his feet.

DAVID  
Then let's try again!

Landau raises an eyebrow.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
People need to know their loved ones don't have to be carted away by the C.D.C. They need to know they're not dangerous. That these powers could help. That they could be used for good! That there isn't anything to be afraid of!!

SAMUEL LANDAU  
But there IS something to be afraid of. By now, this bacterial infection has spread across the globe. Without The Red Pill everyone is a carrier.

David tries to process this...

DAVID  
Are you saying... the reason it's not contagious is because--

SAMUEL LANDAU  
--Everyone is already infected.

And there it is. David's mind is blown.

DAVID  
You said yourself you wanted to go public... We still can! We'll show the government they're wrong. That things can change for the better!

SAMUEL LANDAU  
Not every decision governments make are bad for their people, David. The news will ignite panic. Encourage some to stop taking the drug. When that happens, many will die - and at the hands of their fellow man. Death will come as a result to so, so many... Trust me, it's better they DON'T know.

David shakes his head.

DAVID  
No. You're wrong. I'm different.

SAMUEL LANDAU

Why? Because scientists with low-level clearance said you were? Because the C.D.C. wasn't prepared for how quickly you evolved? They don't know what you are because the people at the top don't allow it.

He looks David in the eye -

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)

You're NOT special, David, but the virus inside you is. For now. Until its next mutation. And the one after that. And the one after that.

Landau GRIPS the fire-poker tight.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)

The danger is you thinking you're the exception. But you're not.

And Landau's expression darkens -

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)

And that's why I can't let you leave here alive.

Before David can muster a response -

LANDAU CHARGES AT HIM. The fire-poker raised like a SPEAR.

He ROARS - the knife-edge PIERCING David's heart. Landau DRIVES David into the wall. The wood SPLINTERS behind him.

As Landau catches his breath, David looks at the fire-poker lodged in his chest. He's pinned to the wall. Tries to speak.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)

There's a reason your appetite has changed, David.

Landau walks to the far side of the room.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)

In time, I came to realize that parts of the legend are true. At some point, you WILL encounter blood. And when that happens, you won't be able to control yourself.

**FLASH** - David's stomach falls at the sight of The Trucker's bloody, broken arm.

**FLASH** - David is entranced as he watches blood flows from Tim Simon's nose.

**FLASH** - David stares at his blood-drenched hands. Tim Simon dead at his feet. He erupts, running to battle the Hazmats.

David watches as Landau UNSHEATHES a HUNTING BLADE.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
The Scourge eats away at the Red  
Blood Cells. The only way to  
survive is to replenish them. You  
will take the life of another for  
it. They must die so you can live.  
You must consume to survive.

Landau approaches with the weapon.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
We both know you can heal.  
(gestures to the wound)  
Even as we speak, your body is  
repairing itself. Like the legend  
goes, a stake to the heart will  
STUN a vampire, but to kill one--

--Landau GRABS David. Brings the blade up to his throat.

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)  
You must remove the head.

In a last ditch effort, David musters his strength and BLOCKS Landau. He's come too far. Put his family through too much.

**It. Can't. End. Now.**

Straining with all his might, David rallies and slowly pushes the knife away from his neck and TOWARD LANDAU.

The scientist's eyes go WIDE as the blade moves closer and closer...

Landau SCREAMS as the tip of the knife PIERCES his shoulder. Deeper and deeper it sinks into his flesh.

The older man STUMBLES backward, his hands reflexively moving to the blade. He touches the wound. Sees the blood...

BUT HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE. And we get a look at David's face -

That same possessed look from the night before with the Hazmats. In the light of the room, it's even more *menacing*.

He moves toward Landau - sliding along the length of the fire poker. His blood drip-drip-drips from the metal as he goes.

As David frees himself, Landau instinctively retreats. He TRIPS over a nearby ottoman, falling backwards. The landing knocks the wind out of the older man.

He tries to crawl back, but David stalks him. David can't take his eyes off the scientist's BLOOD.

But Landau can only go so far. He backs into a wall. Trapped.

David hasn't eaten in days... And he's *hungry*. In the light from the fireplace David almost looks **demonic**.

Landau closes his eyes. Knows what's coming...

SAMUEL LANDAU (CONT'D)

I'm ready.

It's almost poetic that the thing Landau unleashed unto the world will be what takes him from it.

David's jaw UNHINGES. Open wide now, he LUNGES at his prey and we...

CUT TO:

EXT. SAMUEL LANDAU'S HOME - LATER

From outside the home, you'd never imagine the carnage that just took place inside. That's why, when the front-door finally OPENS, we can't believe the sight...

DAVID.

Clothes SOAKED in Landau's blood. Smeared on his face. Bits of human ligaments plastered on his finger nails. Stuck to the corners of his mouth.

His face still that ghoulish mask. Nearly unrecognizable.

He stares past us. We see what has his attention...

HEADLIGHTS. Slicing through the darkness. Spotlighting David.

As the vehicles take shape in the night we recognize them instantly - **THE C.D.C.** They SPEED along the cliff's edge.

With David backed up against Landau's home, he watches the militarized mobile units get closer and closer.

*They're coming for him.*

All the lies. All the hate. All the anger. It boils. Overflowing into -

A CHARGE.

David's in full sprint now. Running harder than he's ever run before.

He's going for the mobile units HEAD ON.

### **THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD**

Hayley Parker peers over the HAZMAT DRIVER and sees David.

The distance between them closes. Their game of chicken will leave her specimen *decimated*.

HAYLEY PARKER

STOP!!

And just like that - all three vehicles SLAM their brakes.

Gears GRIND as the Mobile Units halt but -

### **OUTSIDE**

That doesn't stop David. He has too much momentum.

WITH A ROAR HE COLLIDES WITH THE FIRST MOBILE UNIT.

He drives his shoulder into it. The force knocks it onto its side like a domino.

### **INSIDE THE FALLEN UNIT**

HAZMATs are thrown like rag dolls by the impact.

### **IN THE MIDDLE UNIT**

Hayley barks orders -

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)

Get out there now!

But before they can, we're...

### **BACK ON DAVID**

As he builds momentum for yet ANOTHER collision. **IMPACT.**

Flesh SLAMS into metal. David uses the momentum to his advantage -

PINNING EACH MOBILE UNIT AGAINST THE NEXT!

### **BACK IN THE MIDDLE UNIT**

Hayley and company are THROWN back, SLAMMING into the high tech computers that line the vehicle.

A Hazmat quickly states the obvious -

HAZMAT SUIT #1

We can't get out!

They all look to Hayley for answers. She doesn't have any.

It's quiet for a moment. Maybe *too long* a moment... THEN -

The Mobile Unit RUMBLES. A horrible groan beneath their feet. Hayley figures out what's happening -

HAYLEY PARKER  
We're moving!

#### **BACK ON DAVID**

Every muscle in his back is TAUT as he PUSHES ALL THREE MOBILE UNITS FORWARD.

One foot after the other. Inching the vehicles toward his intended destination - THE OCEAN CLIFF.

*He's going to stop Hayley Parker once and for all!*

#### **BACK ON HAYLEY**

She scrambles to the front of the vehicle. Looks out the windshield. Picks up on David's plan -

*They don't have much time.* She hits the vehicle's com-link -

HAYLEY PARKER (CONT'D)  
(to all Mobile Units)  
Break the windshields!

Hazmats run to either side of Hayley and desperately RAM the butt of their rifles into the vehicle's THICK glass.

Hayley can't take her eyes off the approaching cliff.

#### **BACK ON DAVID**

His body strains. Hurting. But right as the first of the Mobile Units is about to go over the edge...

HE HEARS A VOICE. It's one he'd recognize anywhere -

ALEXIS  
DAVID! STOP!

And the whole world seems to turn off as David realizes -

ALEXIS IS IN THE REMAINING MOBILE UNIT.

David stop pushing and races to the last Mobile Unit as it teeters dangerously on the cliff.

DAVID  
ALEXIS!

**INSIDE THE FINAL UNIT**

Gravity takes hold as the vehicle begins its descent.

Alexis - in her own Hazmat suit - tries to hold on to something. Anything.

And then everyone inside is JOLTED by an abrupt STOP.

**BACK ON DAVID**

His arms look like they'll explode as David struggles to hang on to the massive Mobile Unit.

With the momentum of the fall slowed, David takes one step back. Then another. And another.

With each movement he carefully pulls Alexis' vehicle up and over the side of the cliff.

Through their respective windshields both Alexis and Hayley can't believe the inhuman strength they're witnessing.

Finally, David drops the mobile unit safely to the ground.

Hydraulics HISS as doors open. Alexis is the first Hazmat outside, followed closely by BOBBY.

And they can't believe their eyes.

Alexis takes an involuntary step forward. Scared for her, Bobby grabs her arm. Protectively holds her back.

ALEXIS

Let me go.

She shakes free and moves toward David. Toward what's left of her husband. She hears his heavy, labored breathing...

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

David?

His red eyes move to hers. They match his crimson mask perfectly.

DAVID

Stay away.

Alexis takes a step forward -

ALEXIS

It's okay. I made a deal with them.

But David moves back. Away from her.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
David, please. If you come with us,  
things can go back to normal.

DAVID  
No. They can't. Look at me.

But Alexis doesn't lose hope -

ALEXIS  
Doctor Parker said she can save  
you. That they can stop this!

DAVID  
You can't trust them.

ALEXIS  
David, we need you. Liam needs you.  
I - I need you.

She extends her hand, but she realizes David isn't looking at  
her anymore. He's looking at -

HAZMATS. Armed to the teeth. Alexis sees them too. Every gun  
trained on the man she loves. *They're surrounded.*

Alexis turns. Pleads -

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
No. You said you wouldn't hurt him!

From behind the frontline -

HAYLEY PARKER  
Get back, Mrs. MacReady. You've  
done your job.

Alexis' stomach drops when she hears this.

ALEXIS  
What?

HAYLEY PARKER  
We'll take it from here.

ALEXIS  
You promised!

David takes his wife's hand -

DAVID  
Listen to her.

ALEXIS  
David, no.

She doesn't want to admit it, but they both know -

*It's the end of the line.*

As Bobby steps in and pulls Alexis away to safety she calls out -

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
I love you.

David watches her go. Maybe for the last time.

DAVID  
I love you too.

THEN - David turns his attention to what stands in the way of his freedom - **The Hazmats.**

David clenches both his hands into tight fists.

He exchanges an icy stare with Hayley Parker.

This is it.

She smiles, because -

**He doesn't stand a chance.**

There's nowhere for him to go as - THEY FIRE.

A hailstorm of bullets. His body pummelled with lead.

It's not long before -

David falls.

Alexis turns into Bobby. *She can't look.*

Hazmats move in to confirm the kill.

They make room for Hayley. She looks down upon David's lifeless body - or what's left of it.

A part of her respects him. He fought long and hard, but now - *It's over.*

HAYLEY PARKER  
Quarantine the area. Prep the body  
for transport.

She turns away from David. Her job done.

BACK ON ALEXIS

She can't take her eyes off the aftermath. The grim reality hitting her.

She hangs on to Bobby tight. Unsure what her future holds.

It's quiet now. The Pacific waves crash off the rock-face.  
And we...

CUT TO:

A MILITARIZED C.D.C. MOBILE UNIT CARRIES DAVID'S REMAINS  
THROUGH THE DARKNESS. It's headed toward...

INT. C.D.C. FACILITY - NIGHT

We hear the truck BEEP-BEEP-BEEP as it backs its way into the  
C.D.C. Facility's loading zone. Two TRANSP0-HAZMATS approach,  
unlocking the vehicle's cargo hold. Inside -

A COFFIN-LIKE HERMETICALLY SEALED CHAMBER. Hazard symbols  
plastered all over it.

Together the Transpo-Hazmats pull the chamber from the cargo  
hold. When they do -

Transpo-Hazmat #1 FREEZES. #2 notices the strange behavior -

TRANSP0-HAZMAT #2

What?

Transpo-Hazmat #1 steps back. Points. His face ghost white.

Transpo-Hazmat #2 walks around. It doesn't take him long to  
figure out what has his partner spooked -

THE CHAMBER'S LOCKS ARE BROKEN. They share an "*oh fuck*" look.

With a shaky hand, Transpo-Hazmat #1 reaches out. The chamber  
opens... Smoke spills out.

They both stare. It's not what's inside that scares them.  
It's what isn't... **DAVID IS GONE.**

Landau was right. They were supposed to remove the head.

CUT TO:

SUPER: *ONE YEAR LATER*

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS. Underneath a glowing tree. We're in...

INT./EXT. THE MACREADY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In the midst of all the gift-boxes, one thing stands out more  
than any other -

A LETTER. Addressed to Alexis and Liam.

A hand grabs it. It's Alexis. She opens it.

As Bobby and Liam play video-games on the other side of the room, Alexis reads the letter.

In her head, we hear a familiar voice. And we pull back...

Away from Alexis, away from the living room, away from the house...

DAVID (V.O.)

Alexis and Liam. I'm sorry it took so long to write, but I can't come for you. Not when I'm like... this. Know how much I love you - how much I miss you. Liam - you were right. Good still can come from this. The world will soon learn the truth. It will be our wake-up call. I discovered *something* that could change everything. That might help me control *this*... There are others like me. I'm going to find them. I will find them. But I want you to know - I am not alone.

And we move up...

Up into the night sky...

Into an unknown future...

One where we may no longer need The Red Pill.

SMASH TO BLACK.