

VANISHING ON SEVENTH STREET

by

Anthony Jaswinski

Vanishing Film LLC
2000 Town Center Suite 100
Southfield MI 48075

BLUE REV. 9/22

This is the way the world ends.

This is the way the world ends.

Not with a bang, but a whimper.

T.S. Eliot, "The Hollow Men"

*

TITLES OVER BLACK:

SUNDAY, 8:14 PM

*

Strobe light flicker of film through a projector...

1 INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

1

CLOSE on a MOVIE PROJECTOR. Light beam blazing through a viewing window.

PAUL, the projectionist. 40's. Quiet. Bookish. Sits beside his projector, reading with the aid of a goofy HEADLAMP.

The book: Don Lincoln's Quantum Frontier. Heavy duty shit.

ANGLE ON chapter on about Hadron particle accelerator. Matter and anti-matter...

Paul's lips move quietly. He eats this stuff up.

Audience LAUGHTER interrupts. He stretches. Checks his watch.

2 INT. THEATER - NEXT MOMENT

2

Paul slips out of the BOOTH into the seating area. Glimpse a FULL HOUSE. Faces illuminated by the silver screen.

*

3 INT. LOBBY - SAME

3

Paul weaves through the busy lobby to the CONCESSION COUNTER. Sexy CONCESSION GIRL smiles as Paul approaches. She motions to his head. He realizes he's still wearing his HEADLAMP. Sheepishly slips it off as he steps up.

*

CONCESSION GIRL

Gonna miss your changeover on the Adam Sandler.

*

*

PAUL

Bet you a Super Size Pepsi I won't.

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

CONTINUED:

She grins, pours Paul a Pepsi. He sneaks a look at her. She throws him a sly smile.

*
*

CONCESSION GIRL
When do I get my private screening?

*

Beat. Paul stammers. Flirting isn't his strong suit.

*

PAUL
Those comedies only work with a big audience. You wouldn't like it.

*
*
*

CONCESSION GIRL
What would I like?

*
*

The way she says it. It's a come on. Paul blanks.

*

PAUL
Uh. I --

*
*

She smiles gently.

*

CONCESSION GIRL
Paul.

*
*

He looks at her, nods. She leans in, whispering.

*

CONCESSION GIRL
Don't keep me waiting.

*

And hands him his drink. Paul takes it. Smiles. Starts back to theater. Throws a look back at her. She's smiling at him.

*
*

Paul turns, can't hide the grin on his face.

FOLLOWING Paul back into the THEATER. Gales of laughter from the audience. Starts to hustle, time for the reel change...

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - SAME

Headlamp back on Paul expertly threads the other projector. Takes a sip of Pepsi, glancing through the projection window.

Waits for it. Reaching for the reel change lever -

Sound warbles out. Film crawls to a stop.

THE BOOTH GOES DARK. BLACKOUT.

PAUL
Shoot.

4 CONTINUED:

4

Illuminated by his HEADLAMP Paul steps to FUSE BOX. Checks it. All switches are ON...

He picks up the HOUSE PHONE. It's dead. He glances at the VIEWING WINDOW. No groans from the audience. Odd.

Only silence. And darkness...

5 INT. THEATER - NEXT MOMENT

5

Paul carefully descends BOOTH steps led by the pool of light from his headlamp.

PAUL
Folks, we got a little hiccup with
the power --

5

CONTINUED:

5

Turns the corner into GENERAL SEATING.

PAUL

Gonna have this moving again
shortly --

Stops, staring wide eyed.

EVERY SEAT IS EMPTY. EVERYONE HAS VANISHED.

Soft drinks drain from cups fallen on the floor.

And on each seat: a pile of clothes, watches, glasses, belts.

Below each seat - a pair of shoes.

6

INT. LOBBY - NEXT MOMENT

6

Paul comes out of the theater. The beam of his lamp
penetrates the dim lobby.

Deserted. Silent. Small clumps of clothes litter floor. The
CONCESSION COUNTER abandoned. Money and drinks on the glass.

PAUL

June?

VOOMP! A sudden strike of power. Paul jumps. Lights kick back
on. Video games Beep to life. Popcorn machine starts popping.

Paul just absorbs it. Glances at the concession counter.

On the wall behind where JUNE stood he spots them: parallel
scrapes in the paint:

FINGERNAIL SCRATCHES.

CUT TO:

7

INT. THEATER/MALL - NIGHT

7

Paul passes through the theater LOBBY into the

MALL ATRIUM

Dim. Shops devoid of people. Strollers abandoned. Shopping
bags crumpled on floor. More mounds of clothes.

*

OVERHEAD lights flicker. Paul glances at them concerned...

VOICE (O.S.)

We're on auxiliary.

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

Paul turns, shining light on a young SECURITY GUARD. Heading over with his own flashlight.

GUARD
Main power's out everywhere.
(beat)
Got anybody in the theaters?

PAUL
Not a soul.

GUARD
Same down in the food court.

PAUL
What just happened? *

GUARD
Hell if I know. I'm heading up to corporate to find out. *

INT. MALL WALKWAY - NEXT MOMENT

FOLLOWING them through the eerie half-light. FLASHLIGHTS illuminating darkened shop windows. Counters strewn with money and goods. Transactions unfinished.

Paul tries his cell. Nothing.

A SCREAM from deep in the bowels of the place. The GUARD laughs, nervously. *

GUARD
We're being punk'd, right?

PAUL
Yeah, where's Alan Funt.

GUARD
Who?

The HISS of whispering VOICES. The Guard spins, shoots his light into a dark FASHION BOUTIQUE. *

Paul and Guard squint into the murk. *

THEIR POV - Mannequins frozen in creepy poses. Then, in the periphery, a shadowy movement. *

GUARD
Wait here. *

CONTINUED:

Guard heads into the store. WE STAY ON PAUL. His HEADLAMP suddenly dims. He slides it off, shakes it, annoyed.

*

PAUL

C'mon.

*

Clunk! What was that? Paul tilts his light back down the hallway. Guard's spent flashlight spins on the ground.

THE GUARD IS GONE.

ON PAUL. More than confused now. Scared.

Auxiliary lights flicker. Brown out. Another MOVEMENT in the dark store. Loud WHISPERS. *Someone approaching?*

*

*

PAUL (CONT'D)

That you?

He shines his dimming LIGHT down there. NOTHING.

Suddenly the auxiliary lights tap out.

In the pitch dark Paul hears a SCREAM. From deep in the mall. Then another SCREAM. Pure terror. Closer.

SMASH TO:

*

8A

EXT. CITY MALL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

8A

Paul marches urgently from the mall entrance to his car.

*

9

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

9

Paul keys the ignition. It squeals. Barely gets it. HEADLIGHTS pop on, slice through the dark parking lot.

*

A motorcycle on its side. Abandoned shopping carts.

*

Paul scans his radio. Static. Looks back out his windshield. Sees the long SHADOWS his lights cast onto the pavement.

Somehow they are wrong...

The shadows seem to be moving independently of the light --

BANG! SOMETHING SLAMS ONTO HIS WINDOW

Paul jolts. A crazed MAN bashes his fists on the glass.

CRAZED MAN

Donde estan los ninos!? Donde estan los ninos!?

He breaks away. Bolts out of the headlights into darkness

*

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

PAUL

WAIT!

Paul throws open the door, leaps up. Watches as the man disappears into the shadows - *

Then his SCREAM, cut short.

And silence.

Paul slams his door. Locks it. Guts the stick into drive. *

10 **EXT. CITY MALL PARKING LOT - SAME** 10

Paul's car tears out of the parking lot. *

Behind it, for the first time, we see the blacked out city
scape, dark skyscrapers jagged like teeth against the night
sky... *

11 **INT. CAR - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER** 11

Paul grips the wheel, scanning the dark city streets: *

HIS POV --

An empty car folded into the side of a building, sagging air
bags, horn BLARING. *

A large POODLE sauntering by, trailing a leash. *

An ICE CREAM TRUCK standing idle on the curb, headlights
dimming, electronic jingle WARBLING in the stillness.

12 **EXT. CITY STREET - SAME** 12

Paul slows in front of the ICE CREAM TRUCK.

In front of the take-out window, on the ground. Small
sneakers. Ice cream cones, overturned, melting into puddles. *

13 **INT. CAR - SAME** 13

Spooked, Paul hits the gas.

Up ahead, in the dead black, he spots a BLINKING red and blue
NEON SIGN: "Sonny's Happy Hour" *

A BAR. Lit from within. An eerie oasis of light in the
darkness.

Paul guns the engine.

The car's electrical dies. The engine cuts. Headlights dim.

14 **EXT. STREET - SAME** 14

The car rolls to a stop in the middle of the road.

15 **INT. CAR** 15

Paul tries the ignition. No go. Absorbs the silence for a moment. Finally opens the door and climbs out.

16 **EXT. STREET** 16

Clicks on his HEADLAMP. Starts toward the BAR, leaving the cone of the dimming headlights.

FOLLOWING PAUL down the dark street.

HIS POV - the pool of light skittering across the pavement...

Suddenly the light dims. Goes out.

Paul stops, taps the HEADLAMP. It's dead.

ANGLE ON Paul's frozen form sillouetted against the dim headlights of his car.

Then the HEADLIGHTS flare out too.

Darkness consumes Paul. He takes a small breath. Terrified. He glances at the neon sign of the distant bar...

A DARK FIGURE seems to grow from the darkness behind him.

Paul senses something. He whips around.

PAUL

Hey -

SMASH TO:

17 **INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT** 17

FOLLOWING MAYA. 30s. Nurse's uniform. Small crucifix dangles from her neck. Her FACE. Pretty, but worn from a hard life. Scared now. No, terrified. *

Small KEYCHAIN FLASHLIGHT in hand. Moving urgently down a long dark corridor. Her light bobbing in the darkness. *

MAYA

Hello! Anyone!?

Get Well BALLOONS drift lazily on the ceiling. *

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

17

CONTINUED:

17

A motorized wheelchair. Caught in a corner. Bumps up against the tile wall. Decatheter tube trailing liquid behind it.

Maya rounds a corner passing the NURSERY. She pauses. Shines light through an OBSERVATION WINDOW.

*

Rows of incubators. All empty.

Maya GROANS in dread. She starts running.

*

NEXT MOMENT -

She runs around a CORNER. Stops. At the far end, LIGHT leaks from under a pair of heavy swinging doors. The SOUND of humming machinery...

She moves quickly to the light.

18

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NEXT MOMENT

18

Maya cautiously pushes through the heavy doors into the brightly lit room. The beeping and hiss of life support -

*

MAYA
Someone here...?

*

And stops.

On a stainless steel OPERATING TABLE, glowing under bright surgery lamps, is a PATIENT. Suction tubes sputter in the pooling blood of the gaping hole in his chest.

*

He's alone. The surgery team, doctors, nurses - gone.

Maya presses a hand over her mouth. Falls against wall.

*

Patient's breathing quickens. Monitor alarms blare. Eyelids flutter under tape. Anesthesia wearing off. Opens his mouth.

PATIENT
...hurts.... hurts...

Aghast, Maya inches towards him. How to help?

*

Suddenly, everything goes black.

Maya SCREAMS, drops flashlight. It rolls on the floor into a pool of blood. She forces herself to lean over, slide it out. Presses against the wall again. Trembling, aims flashlight at the OPERATING TABLE.

*

On the table now - a pool of blood and a tangle of tubes.

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

CONTINUED:

PATIENT VANISHED

A wall of darkness looms around Maya. She moans in fear. *

New sound startles her. Scraping? She whips around, throwing light on the WALL. FINGERNAIL scratches in the plaster.

Maya absorbs the inexplicable horror. Backs away. *

MAYA
(breathless)
Man -- Manny...

*

Starts running hard. Smashes through the DOORS.

CUT TO:

SUNLIGHT PLAYING ACROSS SOMEONE'S SLEEPING EYES

INT. DOWNTOWN LOFT - BEDROOM - DAWN

LUKE. 30ish. Handsome in a rakish way. Still in bed. Winces as the sun rouses him.

Opens one eye. Fumbles for the Sony ALARM CLOCK. It's dead. He squints at his watch. Feels his head. Shit.

Turns to the other side of the bed. Empty. On the table: an empty bottle of malbec. Two glasses. Only one used. A cluster of still glowing aroma CANDLES. Unused massage oils. A rose.

Promises of a romantic evening that never was.

LUKE
Paige.

Luke rises, yawns, pads naked to the BATHROOM. Almost trips on his unopened SUITCASE. *

Passes a CLOSET full of women's suits.

A framed PUBLICITY SHOT of A TV NEWS TEAM. Settle on the WEATHER GIRL: a pretty blonde pushing 40. This is Paige.

BATHROOM -

It's dark. Luke flicks the light switch. No power.

Annoyed he enters the

KITCHEN -

Slips on the linoleum. A puddle of water under the fridge. He opens the freezer. A dozen tubs of Ben and Jerrys. Melted.

LUKE

Fuck me.

He absently lifts a half empty beer off counter. Downs it, swishes it in his cheeks. Glances at the counter top: his BlackBerry next to his KEYS, a diecast MONOPOLY CAR clipped to the chain. There's also a POST IT NOTE.

Luke grabs the BlackBerry. Punches a number. No signal.

LUKE

And fuck me again.

He sweeps up the KEYS and exits. We SETTLE ON the POST IT:

Welcome back Cowboy! Be back 10ish. Wine in fridge. Don't fall asleep on me! XO - P

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

Dressed in a white shirt and tie Luke pushes through the STAIRWELL door, breathless, aggravated, muttering

*
*

LUKE

Twenty three goddamn flights...

*
*

He passes the elevator banks, one half open, dark. He stops at the deserted CONCIERGE DESK, looks around the empty lobby.

*
*

LUKE

Yo, Jose? JOSE!

*

Silence. Shaking his head in disgust, he snatches a newspaper from the desk, exits the building.

*
*

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Luke steps onto the sidewalk, distracted, flipping through the paper. Then realizes:

*
*

LUKE

This is yesterday's --

*
*

CRUNCH

*

He looks down. He's stepped on someone's EYEGLASSES. He looks around. The sidewalk is littered with shoes, clothes, bags...

*
*

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

The street is an eerie, deathly quiet still-life of jumbled cars, trucks, city buses.

*
*

And absolutely no people.

Luke standing amid it all. Stunned. Behind him, unnoticed, a 747, fuel spent, plummets soundlessly past tall buildings -

*
*

LUKE
What is this?

*
*

A BLACK CLOUD blossoms behind the buildings. Then -

*

B00000M

*

Luke spins, cowers before the huge explosion. Freaked.

*

21 CONTINUED: (2) 21
 OFF LUKE'S horror we *

SLAM TO BLACK *

TITLES: 72 hours later *

CLOSE ON empty Manola Blaniks. Next to them: toddler's Crocs.

22 EXT. DOWNTOWN - NIGHT 22

The sidewalk, covered in EMPTY SHOES. Lives snuffed out.

Streets. Drowned in shadows. Trash drifts listlessly.

Then.

A GLOWING FIGURE. Emerging from the distance. Solitary,
 becoming more defined. Running towards us.

FOLLOWING THE FIGURE

Face hidden under a black-knit HOOD. Backpack on. A string of
 FLASHLIGHTS around his neck creating the weird halo glow.

FOLLOWING HOOD

Moving from vehicle to vehicle. Climbing in. Rummaging.
 Turning ignitions. Dry CLICKS. Checking for power.

All of them dead.

HOOD climbs out of a mint, but powerless, JAGUAR. Frustrated.
 Turns. And sees:

DIMLY-LIT HEADLIGHTS STARING HIM DOWN A BLOCK AWAY. *

Hood starts quickly towards the headlights.

CUT TO:

- 22 CONTINUED: 22
- MYSTERY POV - watching HOOD race away.
- REVEAL A GIRL, 10, orange scarf, Dora Explorer backpack. In her hand, a sturdy FLASHLIGHT. Green eyes watching as -
- 23 **EXT. NEW STREET -** 23
- Hood rushes across the surreal landscape, heading for a CHEVY CHEYENNE PICKUP
- Rust red, circa 1981. Abandoned, mid-street.
- Headlights, weak. But working.
- Hood slows to a jog. Cautiously approaches truck. Bed weighed down with heavy wooden CRATES. *
- Opens driver's door. Sweeps out jeans and shirt. Climbs in.
- 24 **INT. CHEYENNE - SAME** 24
- HOOD keys the ignition. Engine coughs. Won't catch, but there's a charge.
- HOOD rummages through glove compartment. Finds a flashlight. Tests it. It works. He pockets it. Rummages some more. *
- Finds a Colt .38 revolver. Checks the gun's chambers. Full. *
- HOOD pockets the gun and starts climbing out. Stops. Reaches back in. Grabs keys. And shuts off HEADLIGHTS. *
- As he leaves, we settle on dashboard. A K-Mart thumbnail BABY PHOTO taped there.
- 25 **EXT. ANOTHER STREET - LATER** 25
- HOOD climbs out of another dead car. About to head off. Stops. He hears something, faint but audible:
- PEGGY LEE
*Is that all there is?
 If that's all there is my friends,
 Then let's keep dancing
 Let's break out the booze and have a ball.*
- Peggy Lee's Is That All There Is? Haunting in this grim desolation. Hood moves quickly toward the music, rounding a bend and seeing:
- A FAMILIAR BAR ON THE FAR CORNER

25 CONTINUED: 25

The one Paul spotted. Windows glowing. Neon sign blinking.
Music coming from within.

He hesitates. Looks across the way. Finally commits, taking
off for the distant bar.

PANNING AWAY: TO THE STREET SIGN ON THE CORNER

Barely revealed amid the shadows. 7th St.

26 **EXT. BAR - NEXT MOMENT** 26

Peggy Lee's haunting torch song audible from inside. *

Hood peers in window. Nothing moves. Tries door. Locked.
Kicks it.

27 **INT. BAR - SAME** 27

Another kick sends the door slamming open. Hood stands ready
in the doorway, gun in hand.

HIS POV: THE BAR

An abandoned ghost ship. Rustic decor. Wooden booths.

Overhead lights dim, but working. Beer signs blinking.
There's power here.

He clicks off his flashlights. Rips off his hood. *

It's LUKE. Dramatically different than when we last saw him. *
Beard stubble. Haunted eyes. *

Luke cautiously moves in. *

Pints of warm lager still haunt the bar top. Two stools
pulled out. The tables and booths empty. Everything empty.

28 **INT. BILLIARDS ROOM - NEXT MOMENT** 28

Hood enters, studies the POOL TABLE. Cues on floor. Balls
unmoved on felt. A game never finished.

Hood drifts over to a JUKE BOX. Spinning rainbow CD. Origin
of the Peggy Lee. A machine left on autoplay.

CUT TO: *

A CASH REGISTER SLAMMING OPEN *

29 **INT. BAR - NEXT MOMENT**

29

Luke rummages through the till.

*

Surprises us by throwing the cash to the floor. Money means nothing to him. Not now. *

Finds a LIGHT PEN. Clicks it on to make sure it's working.

NEXT MOMENT

Goes through battery-operated devices. Calculator. TV remote. Throws the booty into his BACKPACK. We SEE it's filled with batteries. Flashlights. Survival supplies. *

Luke turns around to check the liquor shelves. What the hell. Pulls a bottle of Jack and pours himself a shot.

NEXT MOMENT - *

Luke letting the liquor do its thing. Fumbles something small from out his pocket. Stares at the OBJECT in his palm.

We don't see what it is but it clearly moves him.

Luke's eyes, lost in its significance.

PEGGY LEE

*Then one day he went away and I
thought I'd die, but I didn't,
and when I didn't I said to myself,
"is that all there is to love?"*

Luke re-pockets the object. Pours himself another shot. Eyes roam the bar.

Weak light slants up through an OPEN DOOR. A low RUMBLE coming from behind it...

Luke descends steps into a large cellar. Rumbling louder.

Shelves stacked with jugs of water. Dry food. Gas masks. Geiger counter. Dozens of red GAS CANS.

Survival supplies.

A GAS-POWERED GENERATOR mounted into the wall. Source of the rumble. And the power. It feeds into a big FUSE BOX. *

Luke fingers the cables, clicks a dial. He turns. Sees a THICK METAL DOOR. *

Luke approaches the door

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

CLICK. The sound of a rifle cocking. Snaps Luke around.

A KID (13), steps from shadows. T-shirt, jeans. He holds a Winchester .30 rifle in trembling hands.

KID
Don't you move.

Luke stares down that barrel. Smartly complies.

They stare at one another. Waiting to make the first move.

LUKE
Okay. What now?

KID
Put your gun on the floor.

LUKE
Put or drop?

KID
Put the fucking gun on the ground.

Luke slowly complies, lowering the COLT to the floor. Lets the loop fall out of his finger.

Slowly, calmly, Luke makes his way through the billiards room, hands on his head. The Kid follows with the rifle, Luke's COLT stuffed in his back pocket.

LUKE
Why don't you just lower that barrel a little, we'll talk this shit out. How does that sound?

Kid ignores him. Pushes him toward the empty bar. Luke gingerly takes a seat on a bar stool. Kid takes a step back.

Luke folds his hands together. Stares at the kid in the Budweiser mirror.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Can I at least have my drink? Is that permitted?

Kid looks at the shot of whiskey. Leans himself against the fake-wood panelling.

Fuck it. Luke reaches for his drink --

BANG! Wooden bar splinters. Luke crashes to the ground.
The Kid, scared, hands shaking. Quickly re-cocks the rifle.
Luke, enraged, looks up at the Kid from the floor.

LUKE (CONT'D)
C'MON. WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR?

The Kid, rifle aimed. Doesn't know what to do. Luke throws a stool to the ground, gets to his feet.

LUKE (CONT'D)
SHOOT ME, GODDAMN IT. GO'HEAD.

Kid freezes, uncertain now. Luke punches his heart.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Right here. You're four feet away,
gotta be fucking retarded to miss!

The Kid, paralyzed with fear. Luke sees it clear as day.
Softens.

LUKE (CONT'D)
You're afraid to.

KID
Am not.

LUKE
You shoot me, there's nobody left.
Right?

Terror in the Kid's face. Luke absorbs the reaction.

LUKE (CONT'D)
What's your name?

Kid tightens his grip. Keeps his finger on the trigger.

LUKE (CONT'D)
What's your name?

Beat.

KID
James.

LUKE
Like Jessie James. Gun and all.

CONTINUED: (2)

James likes it.

JAMES
That's right.

Luke swallows a breath, gestures to himself.

LUKE
I'm Luke.

James says nothing. More uncertain about this than ever.

JAMES
I seen your face.

*

LUKE
Yeah?

JAMES
TV.

*

Luke shows a genuine grin.

LUKE
That's right. News 7. I'm their new
field reporter.

*

JAMES
You always yelling at people with a
microphone.

LUKE
(tight smile)
They're called exposes. It's how we
get at the truth of -- of --

*

*

Luke stalls on the absurdity of the conversation. Takes a
small breath.

*

LUKE
Look, James. I am here, man. I
don't want to be alone. And I know
you don't want to be either.

*

JAMES
You don't know nothin' about me.

Luke considers this. Realizes the kid has a chip on his
shoulder. Trying to be cool, tough.

31 CONTINUED: (3)

31

LUKE
 You're right. I don't. To tell
 you the truth, I'm just happy to
 see another face.

James looks at him. For the first time, lowers the gun. Luke
 puts his hands out like a fighter calling for a truce.

LUKE
 We both have guns. We both win.
 How 'bout we just save our
 firepower and have ourselves a
 drink? Like real men?

James, debating. Looks hard into Luke's eyes.

32 INT. BILLIARDS ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

32

James sits crossed-legged in the center of the pool table,
 sips on a can of Coke. The COLT on the felt now. Luke leans
 on the table's edge, inspecting the Winchester's bolt.

LUKE
 Where'd you find this?

JAMES
 Didn't find shit. It's my Mom's.
 Keeps it under the bar.

LUKE
 Your Mom owns this place?

JAMES
 Nah. Bartender.

LUKE
 She around?

JAMES
 Up the street. The church. Went to
 check the light in the church. *

LUKE
 (skeptical)
 Light? *

James nods. *

JAMES
 Yeah. A guy came by. Said he saw
 light in that church. *

LUKE

A "guy"? How long ago?

*

*

James shrugs. Stares at his feet, haunted.

*

JAMES

He's gone now.

*

*

Luke considers this. Checks the rifle's safety.

*

LUKE

You got a nice generator down there. How much gas you got left?

JAMES

Don't know. Ma told me to keep feeding it every few hours.

*

*

*

Luke nods, thinking this over. Then he lifts the bottle. Pours a little Jack in James' glass.

*

*

LUKE

You a strong kid, Jesse James?

JAMES

Strong enough.

Luke pours himself a shot. Gulps it down, fortifying himself.

*

LUKE

Drink it up. You're gonna need it.

*

*

JAMES

Why?

*

*

LUKE

You're gonna help me get us both out of here.

*

Luke stands. Grabs the handgun. Tosses James a flashlight. Clicks on his own. He starts for the door.

*

*

LUKE

Let's go.

James stays on the pool table.

*

JAMES

I'm not goin' nowhere. Gotta wait for my ma. She went up the street to that church. Told me to stay here.

*

Luke sighs.

JAMES

She told me to stay right here. Then we're movin' out when she comes back. With some people.

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

Luke looks sincerely at James.

LUKE

We need to leave this city, you understand?

JAMES

My mom told me to wait here. Can't go nowhere.

Luke takes a deep breath. Back at James.

LUKE

Have you taken a look outside?

(in his face)

It's eleven in the morning and it's fucking pitch-black.

(beat)

I've been out there the last three days and every night it's worse. Less daylight. More people gone. You understand what I'm saying? I don't think your mom's coming back.

JAMES

(fighting the tears)

Yeah, she is.

LUKE

No, she's not. Now I don't know what in Christ is going on here, but I'm not hanging around in this dump to find out. You wanna wait 'til the gas is up in that genny, you knock yourself out. Staying here is fucking suicide, man. I'm out of here.

*
*
*
*

Luke grabs the rifle. Drops the Colt back on the table.

*

LUKE

Fair exchange. Good luck.

He marches towards the door. James watches, flushed, scared.

Luke gets to door. Opens it. Stops. Curses himself under his breath. Turns back to James.

LUKE

I'm serious. I'm gone.

James just stares at him. Tears starting.

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

LUKE
I'm going --

JAMES
Then go! Mother fucker! Go!

Luke blinks. Opens his mouth to say something. Just shakes his head, laughs.

He turns to the doorway to leave -

MAYA stands there.

Still dressed in scrubs. Distraught, emotionally drained. Eyes red from crying.

She scans the dismal bar. Tosses her large BAG to the floor.

MAYA
Where is he?

Erratic, terrified, Maya marches past a startled Luke, oblivious to the rifle in his hand.

MAYA
Where is he? What'd he do with my
Manny?

LUKE
Lady, I don't know what --

MAYA
Where's Manny? Where's my baby?

She rambles into the billards room.

MAYA
RANDY, WHERE YOU AT?

Hysterical, she throws pool cues to the floor. Tosses a chair out of her way. James leaps from the table, scared.

MAYA
RANDY.

Luke follows her as she marches around the bar.

LUKE
Lady, there's nobody else here.

She grabs the Colt off the table. Swings it around the room. Luke ducks.

MAYA

He's in this hole every night. I
know he's here, I know he took my
baby.

*

*

LUKE

Hey. Just take it easy-

BANG! She FIRES off a shot. Luke and James hit the ground.

MAYA

Where is he?

*

Fires another SHOT. An overhead light EXPLODES

MAYA

WHERE'S MY BABY?

*

Pulls the trigger again. The chamber's spent. She dry-clicks
until her finger's sore.

Luke and James, crouched on the ground. Watching the poor
woman finally break. Dropping the gun.

She catches a glimpse of herself in the mirror. Sees how far
she's gone. In utter destitution, finding the ground. Begins
to weep.

INT. BAR - LATER

Maya, sitting in a chair now, staring at the floor. Luke pops
a can of club soda. Hands it to her. She gulps it down.

*

Luke studies her carefully. The crucifix around her neck...

Maya finishes the drink. Her eyes stray. Land on James, who
watches her quietly from the darts wall.

*

Luke, impatient, steps in front of her.

LUKE

So. How'd you get this far without
a light? You didn't have one when --

MAYA

*

How.

(swallows a breath)

How old are you?

She's looking at James.

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

JAMES
Twelve and a half.

She smiles. Eyes reflect memory and loss.

MAYA
Manny's one years old today. It's
his birthday.

*

JAMES
That's your boy?

*

MAYA
(a whisper)
Yes.

*

Click. Luke absently cocks the rifle. James turn to him.
Glares. Luke shrugs. Just wants to get out of Dodge.

JAMES
I'm James. That's Luke.

MAYA
Maya.

*

*

JAMES
You a doctor?

But Maya is someplace else now. Cups her hand over her
mouth. Locks eyes with James, terrified. Remembering...

*

34 **INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

34

Maya moves down busy, brightly lit hall past Nursery and
OBSERVATION WINDOW.

*

Smiles at NURSES holding up NEWBORNS to proud PARENTS.

35 **EXT. AMBULANCE UNLOADING AREA - MOMENTS LATER**

35

Maya stands apart in shadows. Pulls out her CIGARETTES and
LIGHTER.

*

She idly watches two PARAMEDICS pull a PATIENT off of an
AMBULANCE. Flicks her lighter.

Just as the flame erupts --

CRASH! THE LIGHTS GO DARK. BLACKOUT.

Maya's face aglow in the tiny flame. Squints in the darkness.
Drops the lighter. Aghast.

*

35 CONTINUED: 35

The gurney lies on the ground. Patient, Paramedics - gone.

SMASH TO:

36 EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT - (FLASHBACK) 36

Maya races down a dark street past crashed cars, an empty CITY BUS smashed into a light post. *

MAYA *

Manny. Manny. Oh, please Lord

A figure steps out from behind the bus. Maya shrieks. *

It's the BUS DRIVER. Blood streaming from a head wound. She grabs Maya, delirious, terrified. *

BUS DRIVER *

Help me. Everyone on my bus - where'd they go? *

MAYA *

Let me go!

Maya pulls loose. Rushes away. *

BUS DRIVER

Help me. You're a nurse! HELP ME!

37 EXT. TENEMENTS - DAWN - (FLASHBACK) 37

The sun struggles to rise as Maya, breathless, stumbles through a labyrinth of drab tenement apartments. Desolate. No movement. *

MAYA *

(muttering)

...please sweet Jesus, please...

She barrels up some steps into her apartment -

38 INT. APARTMENT - (FLASHBACK) 38

Maya bursts into the dark interior. *

MAYA *

Jenna! Jenna!?

HER POV: Baby toys. Changing table. MOBILE spinning in a sudden draft. *

JENNA

MAYA

*

38 CONTINUED: (2)

38

In the KITCHEN, baby formula burns on a gas stove. On the floor beneath it: women's shoes; a small pile of clothes.

Silence.

Maya turns to a small crib.

*

MAYA (CONT'D)
(breathless, terrified)
Manny. Oh Lord. Oh Jesus.

*

*

Approaches Crib. Pure dread. Peers inside...

39 EXT. APARTMENTS - DAWN - (FLASHBACK)

39

Maya's SCREAM echoes through the emptiness.

*

JAMES (V.O.)
You a doctor?

40 INT. BAR - NIGHT (PRESENT)

40

Maya snaps out of memory. Blinks, reorienting herself.

*

MAYA
Phys - physical therapist.

*

She takes a big breath. Getting it together.

MAYA
My ex-husband. He comes here to
drink. I thought he took our baby.
I thought...

*

*

She stifles a cry. James puts a comforting hand on her shoulder. Big gesture for a small kid. Luke registers this.

JAMES
It's okay. You're okay now.

*

Maya calms herself. Wipes small tears from her eyes. Turns to Luke now.

*

MAYA
I do have light. Alot of lights.

*

She nods at her BAG. James peers inside. Pulls out novelty GLO-NECKLACES - the kind you crack that glow green.

*

We notice now she has a few spent ones around her neck.

MAYA
Batteries kept dying on my
flashlight.
(she cracks one)
These last.

*
*
*
*
*

She hands the glowing necklace to James. He smiles. First time. An honest kid's smile.

*

Maya regards the dingy surroundings.

*

MAYA
The power. Why does it work here?

*

LUKE
Basement generator.
(beat)
Won't last.

*

Maya pauses. Looks at Luke very closely.

*

MAYA
You're the first people I've seen
in two days.
(beat)
Why?

*

LUKE
Why what?

Maya can barely utter the thought.

*

MAYA
Why us? Why're we the ones left
behind?

*

Before Luke can even try to answer:

A SCREAM. Loud, unsettling.

Bar door opens. The three stare out upon the dark street strewn with cars. Then, echoing down the block:

*
*

VOICE
Help me... I'm here... Someone...

*
*

MAYA
Sounds like he may be hurt.

*
*

LUKE *
Bad luck for him. *

Luke turns, starts back inside. Maya stares at him. *

MAYA *
We can't just leave him -- *

LUKE *
Go get him then. *

He tosses her a flashlight. She gives him a withering look. *
More screaming. *

JAMES (O.S.) *
I'll go. *

James' struggles to put on a brave face. Maya kneels in front *
of him. Touches his hair tenderly. *

MAYA *
You stay here. *

She clicks on the flashlight, start to rise -- *

LUKE (O.S.) *
Move. *

Luke pushes past, grabbing the light. Turns to them. *

LUKE *
Lock the door. Until you hear me *
coming. Then open it. I'll be right *
back.

He steps out. James steps closer to Maya. She takes his hand. *

42 **EXT. STREET - NEXT MOMENT** 42

Glowing in his ring of FLASHLIGHTS, Luke rounds a corner, following the SCREAMS.

Drawing him down a LONG ALLEY towards a SMALL PARK.

43 **INT. BAR - SAME** 43

James at the door, alone, listening. He cringes with each SCREAM. Unnerved. Losing it. *

All at once, he starts unlocking the door. Trying to get out *

MAYA (O.S.) *

James.

Maya rushes from behind. Grabs him. *

JAMES

Let go'a me!

She wrestles him away from the door. *

MAYA *

You can't go out there!

JAMES

Gotta find my ma.

MAYA *

You can't, you can't, Sweetie! *

JAMES

She's just up the street. At the church. *

Maya cradles his face. Maternal and caring. *

MAYA *

We need to stay here. There's light here. *

JAMES

She's waiting for me. Gotta go! *

Maya pulls James into her. He resists. Then melts in her embrace. Sobbing. Digs, digs his fingers into her side. *

JAMES *

He ain't coming back, is he? *

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

43	CONTINUED:	43
	OFF MAYA, uncertain.	*
44	EXT. SMALL PARK -	44
	A single STREET LAMP casts a light pool onto a sidewalk lined	*
	with benches. In the light, curled in a fetal ball:	*

CONTINUED:

PAUL

Luke approaches.

Paul's body convulses. Lets go another SCREAM.

PAUL
I'm here! Help!

*
*

Luke sees the bloody gash on his head.

*

LUKE
Okay. I got ya -

Grunts as he lifts a dazed, delirious Paul to his feet.

*

Luke struggling to carry/walk Paul from the park. They leave the street light. Enter the dark. Beeline to the bar.

Luke's FLASHLIGHTS flicker ominously.

Whisper of VOICES in the shadows. Chilling.

PAUL
Here. They're here.

*

Luke's FLASHLIGHTS inexplicably dimming. He taps them.

*

He picks up pace. Breathing hard. Paul GROANING with dread.

Grainy SHAPES roiling in darkness. Growing.

44A

EXT. SEVENTH STREET - NIGHT

44A

They file past some cars. See the light of the BAR ahead.

*

LUKE AND PAUL

In an awkward run now. Stumbling. Crashing to street.

Luke YELPS in pain, grabs his ankle. Paul writhing.

The BAR, only fifty yards away.

Luke SCREAMS in pain, heaves Paul up, drags him forward.

FLASHLIGHTS nearly spent.

SHADOWS slithering across the pavement.

LUKE AND PAUL

44A

CONTINUED:

44A

Gasping, limping. Roaring VOICES in pursuit.

LUKE

Hey! HEY!

Bar door opens. A swath of light. Maya and James, silhouetted, reaching out to them --

*

SMASH TO:

A LIGHTBULB

40 Watts. Hovering. Then Maya's lovely face appears.

*

45

INT. BILLIARDS ROOM - LATER

45

Paul lies flat on the pool table, coming to. Gazes up at Maya as she gently wipes caked-on blood from his head.

*

PAUL

Am I in heaven?

LUKE (O.S.)

Better. A bar.

Luke sits on a chair, grim, holding his ankle. James returns from the bar. Passes Luke an ice pack. And Maya a can of club soda. She carefully brings the can to Paul's lips.

*

He swallows a sip. Squints at the pain in his head.

MAYA

Just lie still. Take it easy.

*

She cuts a small portion of bar towel away creating a makeshift bandage.

MAYA

What's your name?

*

He has to ponder that for a second.

PAUL

Paul. Paul... My name is Paul...

He starts to fade a bit.

MAYA

You have a concussion Paul, so we're gonna keep talking. Okay?

*

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

PAUL

Don't worry about me. Last thing I
want to do is fall asleep. Don't
want to go there again. Never.
Never again.

They absorb his eerie words. Luke rolls the ice pack on his
swollen ankle. Looks hard at Paul.

LUKE

That light. How'd you get there?

Paul stares into the bar. Chilled by the memory.

PAUL

I was at Fairlane Center. Whole
mall went dark. People gone. Drove
down Cass. Spotted the neon. Car
gave out so I had to walk it.

*

*

Paul gazes into 40 watts above him.

PAUL

I was nearly here and -
(beat)
My light went out.

*

EXT. STREET - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Paul's HEADLAMP taps out.

PAUL (V.O.)

Batteries were fresh, but....

*

*

CLOSE ON PAUL, in the dark.

*

Shadow grows behind him. Paul whips around.

SOMETHING slams him to the ground -

INT. BILLIARDS ROOM (PRESENT)

PAUL

I was taken somewhere.

LUKE

Taken?

PAUL

I don't know where. There were
these voices, whispers. I couldn't
understand.

(CONTINUED)

WHTTF 9/16/09

Chilled, Maya clutches the crucifix around her neck.

*

PAUL

It was a sea of voices. All
together and suffocating. No
bodies. No faces. Only shadows.
And I was drowning in them.

MAYA

(whispers)

Souls.

*

Luke shoots her a look. She is pale with dread.

PAUL

I couldn't find a way out. I
screamed. But there wasn't sound.

James inches closer to Maya. Afraid to be alone.

*

PAUL

It's like I was fighting for air,
even though I could breathe.

(beat)

It's like I was fighting to exist.

CUT TO BLACK

CLOSE ON a small light bulb glowing back to life

EXT. STREET - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Paul's HEADLAMP glows dimly. Illuminating Paul who lies
beside it. Blood drips from the GASH on his head.

PAUL (V.O.)

Then my light was back on. Just
like that. And they were gone.

*

*

Paul struggles to sit up.

EXT. SMALL PARK - (FLASHBACK)

Paul stumbles across grass. Spots that single STREET LAMP.
Collapses under it's light.

*

PAUL (V.O.)

I walked. Saw that light. Needed to
rest. Felt safe under that light.
Don't know how long I was there.

*

50

INT. BILLIARDS ROOM (PRESENT)

50

Paul stares at the frail bulb overhead. Shuts his eyes.

PAUL
I kept screaming. Just to know I
was alive. That's when you came.

Paul swallows. Looks at them all.

PAUL
(quiet, sincere)
My saviors.

Small tear falls from Maya's eye. She takes Paul's hand.
Gentle. Kind.

*

Luke regards this coolly.

LUKE (V.O.)
Sounds to me like some kind of
fever dream.

*

*

51

INT. BAR - NIGHT

51

Later. Maya, James and Paul sit at a booth. Luke sits apart,
wrapping his ankle with tape. Paul shakes his head.

*

PAUL
Dreams are broken apart, obscure.
This happened in real time. I could
have counted the hours.

*

LUKE
Did you get a look at the person
who assaulted you -- ?

*

PAUL
I told you. It *wasn't* a person.

A chill ripples through the group. Paul notices. He looks to
each of them, nodding.

PAUL
You know. You've seen them, too.

Luke looks away, uncomfortable. But Maya and James stare at
Paul. He shuts his eyes, touches the bandage on his head.

*

PAUL

Look. When I was lying there, under
the street lamp, I had time, right?
So I went down the list.

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

He counts down on his fingers.

PAUL

Particle physics experiment gone
bad. Nanotech running amok. Flesh
eating viruses. Anti-matter
implosions. Neutron bombs.
Singularities. Blackholes.
Wormholes --

(beat)

Thing is, none of the math adds up.

LUKE

What are you, a rocket scientist?

PAUL

Movie projectionist.

Luke scoffs. Paul frowns, hurt.

PAUL

What?

LUKE

Doesn't make you much of an expert
does it. What's next, Alien
abduction? We're all living in the
Matrix?

PAUL

(going with it)

Abduction's unlikely. It's too
widespread. But the Matrix, like
we're all computer simulations that
someone, *something*, is gradually
shutting down? Yeah. Could be. But,
the problem is, according to
Moore's Law --

MAYA

Stop it!

Maya is glaring at them.

MAYA

My boy's missing. *His* mother. This
is no accident.

(beat)

There's a reason.

Luke mumbles to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

51 CONTINUED: (3)

51

LUKE
You gonna lay your Catholic guilt
on us now?

She turns sharply.

MAYA
Why are *you* here Luke. Do you know?

*

LUKE

Fuck no. And I don't care.

MAYA

You should.

(beat)

Me? I know I've... I've done things
in my life. Awful things. Made
mistakes. We all have --

LUKE

So this is punishment? For *what*?

MAYA

That's between you and --

LUKE

And my Maker? Is that it? God!?
Between me and God? Look out there.
God's closed up shop just like
everyone else!

MAYA

(a whisper)

Don't say that.

LUKE

I am saying it!

Luke grabs James, anger, frustration spilling over.

LUKE

You wanna tell me *he* deserves this
shit?

MAYA

Let him go.

LUKE

We don't need some fucking left
behind sermon! WE NEED A WAY OUT OF
HERE.

MAYA

I SAID LET HIM GO.

BOOM. ZAP. Lights in BAR brown out. Then die completely.

For a horrible moment everyone is lost in UTTER DARKNESS.

A cold, dead silence.

Then. Whimpering.

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

51 CONTINUED: (5)

51

MAYA (O.S.)
Oh. Oh lord. Oh Lord help us --

*

51

CONTINUED: (6)

51

ZAP. Bar lights FLARE on again.

Our group, frozen like statues.

But now lights are STROBING madly. Genny struggling below.

PAUL

Gotta lessen the load -

LUKE

Wha - ?

PAUL

The power load. On that genny!

*

Luke gets it.

LUKE

The lights! Turn off any lights we
don't need. Those signs. The Juke
Box! GO! GO! GO!

*

Maya, James, Luke tear off, start switching off lights. The
bar bathed in intermittent shadow.

*

STAY ON PAUL, wincing, as lights start to stabilize.

SMASH TO:

52

INT. BAR CELLAR - LATER

52

Paul leans on Maya as he inspects the old GAS-POWERED
GENERATOR, impressed. The others crowd around him, watching
expectantly.

*

PAUL

Big enough sonofabitch. Guess
someone didn't wanna live on the
grid.

He taps the gas gauge. It's full. He pulls off a cover.
Tinkers with the alternator.

Maya looks around the cellar. The survival supplies.

*

MAYA

At least there's plenty of gas.

*

PAUL

Hate to say this but it doesn't
matter. The electrical charge is
weakening. Just like -

*

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

LUKE
Like the batteries.

PAUL
And the cars. And everything else.

MAYA
(to Paul)
But the street lamp, the one you
were under -- ?

*

LUKE
Solar powered. It's experimental. A
one off. City's thinking of going
green downtown. Did a piece on it
last month.

*

MAYA
Okay. So solar's working --

*

LUKE
Yeah. Too bad the sun's not.

Luke eyes the THICK METAL DOOR he saw before. Something
behind it.

LUKE
Where's that go?

JAMES
Sonny says it's where we go when
the "shit hits the fan."

*

Luke lets go a small bitter laugh.

LUKE
Sonny had a point.
(to Paul)
So, Rocket Scientist. How long?

*

Paul's hand are deep in the guts of the genny, fiddling.

PAUL
How would I know? There are no
known laws of physics operating
here. Could be a few hours.
Could be a few minutes.
(beat)
Everything's just winding down.
Lights, cars... people.

LUKE

We're still here. As long as we're
still here, there's gotta be a way
out of this.

*
*

He throws a challenging look at Maya. She looks away.

*

Sweat on Paul's brow as he struggles with some wires.

PAUL

Any of you history buffs?

*
*

LUKE

I'm guessing you are.

*
*

PAUL

There's an island off the
Carolina's called Roanoke. 1587 the
English settle there. First English
colony.

*

(beat)

One day a ship arrives from London
with supplies. Except there ain't
no one left to supply. The entire
colony: gone. Vanished. Without a
trace. Left behind their clothes,
food, livestock. Everything. No
rhyme. No reason. A search party
looks for days. Nothing. All they
find is a word, one word, scratched
on a fence post:

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

(beat)

Croatoan.

JAMES

Cro - ?

PAUL

Croatoan.

MAYA

(breathless)

What does it mean?

*

Paul, hunched over the genny, breathless, head throbbing.

PAUL

No one knows. Big mystery. But -
(beat)

But this is my point. Maybe that
was the battery test.

*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

CONTINUED: (3)

PAUL (cont'd)
Small little tremor for the Big One
that finally came. Universal
trigger switch to reset all of
goddamn creation.

He finally turns to them, face sweating, pale as a ghost.

PAUL
Whole... universe... tapping out.

And collapses to the ground.

MAYA
Paul!

*

SMASH TO:

53 INT. BILLIARDS ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 53

Paul is gently placed on the pool table. Maya tucks a bar towel under his head. He finds her hand. Takes it tenderly. *

PAUL
Feel like a semi just smashed into
my skull. Head-on.

MAYA *

You know why? You think too much.
Big brain of yours needs a rest.

They smile at each other. She turns to James.

MAYA *

James. Wet this towel with some warm water, okay Sweetie?

(to Luke, curt)

Get me some ice.

54 INT. BAR - 54

Luke steps behind the bar. Opens the ice chest. Starts shoveling ice into a small bucket.

Stops.

GO IN ON HIS EYES

For first time, real, abject fear there. He stifles a small cry. Tries to keep it together. Doesn't want others to see.

After a moment, he reaches in his pocket removes that object again. Gives him solace. As he looks at it in his hand we -

CUT TO:

55 INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - TV NEWS STUDIO - DAY ONE (FLASHBACK) 55

Luke, as we saw him before. White shirt and tie. Moves urgently down the dim hallway past logo for CHANNEL 7 NEWS.

56 INT. OFFICE AREA - DAY 56

Luke passes generic OFFICES. Throwing looks in each. Dodges small piles of clothes on the carpet.

LUKE
Paige! Paige!

57 **INT. CORNER OFFICE - NEXT MOMENT** 57

James pokes his head in an open door. It's dark. Lifeless.

After a moment James leaves.

We SETTLE on the desk top and a FAMILY PHOTO there:

PAIGE stands with her husband and daughter in front of their sprawling COUNTRY HOME.

58 **INT. NEWS ROOM - NEXT MOMENT** 58

Cubicle maze. Deserted. Daylight spills in through windows. Remnants of work procedures cut short.

AT LUKE'S CUBICLE -

Luke is rifling through his desk drawers. We see details. Press Badge. Photos of him and PAIGE at party. Mickey Mouse watch. A FLASHLIGHT.

Finally finds what he came for: a spare CELL. It works. But no signal. Disappointment. Luke tosses it back

Stops.

Pulls something else from drawer. A small envelope. He opens it. Something slides out into his hand. *

His WEDDING BAND. *

HARD ON LUKE

Contemplates. Pockets the ring. Heads out.

ANGLE ON the FLASHLIGHT, forgotten.

59 **INT. STUDIO FLOOR - NEXT MOMENT** 59

Luke pushes through ON-AIR DOORS. Regards the studio around him: dark, vacant and silent.

Unmanned cameras stare at NEWS DESK. Big green screen for the weather -

ZAP! POWER KICKS ON

Luke starts as overhead lights FLICKER ON. Glow steady.

MECHANICAL SOUNDS of equipment rebooting across studio -

60

INT. OPERATIONS BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

60

Empty chairs. Coffee cups. Glowing MONITORS

Sitting in DIRECTOR'S CHAIR, Luke turns PLAYBACK KNOB on the CONTROL BOARD.

ON CONTROL MONITOR - RECORDED TIMECODE SCROLLS IN REVERSE

Luke stops. Hits PLAY.

ON CONTROL MONITOR -

THE 8 O'CLOCK EVENING NEWS. ANCHORS josh with each other at desk. There's no audio.

*
*

Then PAIGE steps before a super of WEATHER MAP.

*

LUKE fixates on her face. Tormented.

Smiling, PAIGE pushes the weather east over Michigan. The super fritzes. Studio lights brown out.

*

Paige turns to the camera confused, frozen smile -

ZAP. The MONITOR image goes black.

CLOSE ON LUKE, stunned.

He glances out at the STUDIO FLOOR.

*

Under the big green screen: a small pile of clothes.

*

THEN A VOICE. Coming from a far room. Luke is up, hopeful, hurrying towards the voice.

LUKE
Someone there?

He turns into a room lined with MONITORS. Mostly static. But on one, an exhausted NEWS REPORTER addresses the camera.

NEWS REPORTER
*--- will try and broadcast as long
as we still have power. It comes
and goes here in Chicago.*

The MONITOR is labelled LIVE SAT FEED. This is happening now.

Luke watches, glued, breathless.

NEWS REPORTER

*There aren't many of us left. And
there's no way for us to know the
extent of this disaster.*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

CONTINUED: (2)

NEWS REPORTER (cont'd)
*But if anyone is receiving this
broadcast, and your phone service
still works, please call this
number 555 - 21--*

ZAP. The monitor blinks out.

ALL LIGHTS GO DARK

An aftershock.

Without lights, the room Luke is in is pitch dark.

Luke stands dumbly in the room.

Suddenly HEARS something. Movement. Quick and shifty. Coming from the open STUDIO.

LUKE
Who's there?

INT. STUDIO - NEXT MOMENT

Luke stumbles through the residual glow of dying monitors.
Wishes he had that FLASHLIGHT now.

He stops. Hears whispered VOICES.

Luke squints in darkness. Doesn't realize the danger he's in.

LUKE
Who IS that?

VOICES LOUDER. Malevolent.

A SHADOW FIGURE shifts in the grainy dark.

Luke is instantly alert

Knows this is wrong. Starts backing up.

FIGURE closing in now. Stalking.

Luke turns. Runs. Blindly through darkness.

Sees pale light ahead.

Windows. Daylight.

Rushes toward the bright CUBICAL AREA.

61

CONTINUED:

61

SHADOWS rear up behind him. Converging. About to engulf

He's not going to make it -

LUKE

Detours into a pitch black EDIT BAY. *What's he doing?*

Menacing VOICES just behind.

He lunges for a wall. Tears off a BLACKOUT SHADE.

Daylight spills through the window into the small room.

Shadows vanish.

Luke blinks in the light. Gasping for breath. Looks around.

There is nothing.

OFF LUKE, terrified, hunted -

SMASH TO:

62

INT. BAR - NIGHT (PRESENT)

62

James takes a breath. Coming out of the memory. Ghostly pale. Looks at his hand. What he's holding there:

His WEDDING BAND.

He pockets it again. Looks over at the others in the BILLIARDS ROOM.

63

INT. BILLIARDS ROOM - NEXT MOMENT

63

Luke limps over to the pool table. Drops the ice bucket noisily on the felt. They turn to him.

LUKE

We have to get out of here. Now.

MAYA

He's not going anywhere until --

*

Luke cuts her off. Pissed.

LUKE

Don't you get it! Why we're here?
At this exact place? All of us?

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

Paul, Maya, James turn to him. Spooked by his tone.

*

LUKE
I'll tell you why. The *light*.

MAYA
The light's protecting us --

*

*

LUKE
Ever see moths fly into a *flame*?

Beat. Paul rises a little. Putting it together.

PAUL
So, what? What are you saying? This
is a trap?
(chuckles)
See, now *you* sound like a B-movie --

*

*

*

LUKE
A trap! A dead end. Point is it's
false comfort. When that genny dies
we die. Or disappear. Or go where
you were taken, but don't come
back.

*

*

They all ponder this. The cold brutal truth. Then, slowly,
Maya shakes her head.

*

MAYA
I need to find my son-

*

Luke wants to shout at her stubbornness. But checks himself.
Turns to Paul, reasonable.

*

LUKE
There's a truck, I don't know,
maybe five, eight blocks away. Butt-
ugly, piece-of-shit Chevy Cheyenne.
The power's drained, but it's not
dead. If we can start it, we all
have a shot of getting out of here.
Maybe get you to a hospital.

*

*

PAUL
Hospital? Where?

LUKE
Chicago.

They stare at him. His odd conviction.

LUKE (CONT'D)
The morning it happened, just
after, I caught a satellite feed.
(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

(beat)

There are survivors out there.
Like us.

Paul looks doubtful.

PAUL

Where are the rescue parties. It's
been three days -

LUKE

Then stay here! Take your chances.
All I know is I'm gonna roll that
truck to this genny. I'm gonna
string some jumper cables together
from that genny to the truck's
battery. And I'm gonna start that
truck and get outta Dodge. With or
without any of you!

*

*

Beat.

PAUL

Roll it? You can barely walk.

*

Long beat. Luke turns to Maya.

*

LUKE

Then I'll need help.

She gets his drift. But is hesitant. Luke turns to James.

LUKE

We have a vehicle, James. We can
cover more ground. Look for your
mom.

(to Maya)

Your son.

*

The offer hangs in the air. Maya, torn.

*

MAYA

We can wait 'til morning --

*

LUKE

Yeah? You sure there's one coming?

He glances at James. Sorry he said it. The boy is terrified.
Maya holds him close. Luke takes a breath.

*

LUKE

Look. The first couple days, I saw
a face or two.

*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

LUKE (cont'd)
 Then nothing at all. I keep asking
 myself why I'm still here. Why me?
 When I was alone I'd talk to
 myself. Running from place to
 place. Shouting my name like an
 idiot. Luke, Luke, Luke. Anything
 to remind me that I exist.

*
 *
 *

(steels himself)
I'm here because I will myself to
exist. Once I doubt that or have no
 control over it, I'm vulnerable. In
 the open. And that's a place none
 of us want to be.

Paul begins to nod. Starting to come around.

GO IN ON LUKE, strong, passionate.

LUKE (CONT'D)
 Right now, I don't want to hear
 about God's plan, about science
 experiments gone bad. There's no
 explanation. Okay? None! There's
 just me. And you.

*

(beat)
We're here. Right now. In this
 light. And as long as we can hold
 onto that maybe we get to see
 another day.

*
 *
 *
 *
 *

Luke looks at MAYA. Off his hard stare...

*

CUT TO:

BATTERIES being dumped into a BACKPACK

James collects batteries. Helping Luke prepare for the task
 at hand. Luke checks rounds in the rifle. Turns to James.

LUKE
 Those rations downstairs. Put as
 many as you can into garbage bags.
 We'll need to bring them. And keep
 your eyes on that generator. It
 goes black, you grab a light and
 get the hell out of this place.

JAMES
 What about Paul? I'm supposed to
 watch him --

LUKE
Hey. You heard what I said?

James nods, stoic. Luke grabs up the backpack of batteries. Comes face to face with James. Sees the fear in the young boy's face. Pulls something from his pocket.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Here. Take this. It's good luck.

Luke pulls that MONOPOLY CAR from his keychain. Puts it in James' palm. James feels it in his hand, slightly comforted.

LUKE (CONT'D)

I'll bring us back a real one.

Paul lies on the table watching Maya put Glo -Necklaces into a backpack. *

She takes a moment. Pulls a drag off a cigarette.

PAUL

Lana Turner.

MAYA

Hmm? *

PAUL

Lana Turner. *Latin Lovers*. 1953. You got that thing going on with the cigarette. *

Maya blushes. Puts it out. *

MAYA

I'm sorry, the smoke must be bothering you- *

Paul makes a frame motion with his hand. *

PAUL

Put some soft focus on that face. Dolly in. Born for the movies... *

She laughs small.

MAYA

I think you missed your calling. *

Paul closes his eyes for a moment. Smiles sadly.

PAUL
 Story of my life. Missed
 opportunities.
 (beat)
 Never missed a reel change though.
 Never once --

He looks back at her. Takes her in.

PAUL
 God. You're a beautiful.

MAYA
 Paul -

PAUL
 As a woman. A beautiful woman. What
 d'you think? Would I ever... have a
 chance? Hypothetically. I mean. Not
 with you. Just in general. Do you
 think I'm -- ?

Maya looks away, embarrassed. Paul sighs.

PAUL
 Man, listen to me. Going on and on.
 People tell me I'm shy. Something
 must've got jumbled around upstairs
 when I got jumped. Wires crossed or
 something. I mean --

Maya puts a finger on his lips. Stops him.

She slowly leans down. Kisses Paul gently on the mouth. It's
 silent and sacred.

She finishes the quiet kiss, leans back.

Paul, eyes still closed, savoring it.

PAUL
 (a whisper)
 Come back.

MAYA
 We will.

A small, silent zap of electricity. Genny winding down.

LUKE (O.S.)

Let's go.

ON LUKE

Standing at the door's threshold. Rifle in hand. Flashlights strung around his neck. Maya looks upon Paul a moment more. *

PAUL

Hey.

(off their attention)

Find out who won the game. I got an open spread on the Lions. *

Luke grows a small smile. Regards him a final moment. Heads off as Maya kneels in front of James, whispers. *

MAYA

Don't let him fall asleep, okay? *

James stares back in a silent understanding. *

MAYA

Be brave. *

She kisses him on the cheek. Grabs up her backpack and heads out with Luke. *

CLOSE ON PAUL

Watching them leave.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SEVENTH STREET- NIGHT

The eerie glowing forms of Luke and Maya, moving through the darkness. *

EXT. SMALL PARK - MOMENTS LATER

Luke limping, favoring his bum ankle, they move quickly past where he found Paul. Luke glances up at the solar powered STREET LAMP.

It's dead now.

Dead as a shark's eye.

CUT TO:

68 **EXT. STORE PARKING LOT - LATER**

68

Luke pops the trunk of an SUV as Maya drops spent batteries
from her FLASHLIGHT.

*

MAYA
(worried)
I just put 'em in four minutes ago.

*

She snaps in fresh ones. Luke pulls a yellow JUMPER CABLE from trunk. Throws it over his shoulder with a few others.

LUKE
Couple more, we're good. Let's go --

But Maya is fixated on something in back of SUV -

*

A BABY CAR SEAT. In it: a crumpled onesie, a pacifier -

Maya trembling. Luke gently grips her arm.

*

LUKE
Let's keep moving, c'mon.

CUT TO:

THE RUSTY CHEVY CHEYENNE PICK UP

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - NIGHT

LUKE AND MAYA approach the truck. Watching all angles.

*

Luke opens the driver's door. Pulls on the headlights.

THEY POWER ON. Dim but working. Luke, impressed.

LUKE
I must've checked five hundreds cars since it happened.

*

He clicks off LIGHTS. Sticks keys in ignition. Throws a dozen salvaged JUMPER CABLES on front seat.

LUKE
Goddamn, if this isn't the only one with a battery still working.

Maya, frozen in the moment. Sweating and scared.

*

MAYA
Why's this one work? And all the other's don't?

*

LUKE
It's a Chevy.

Luke laughs. Thinks it's funny. But Maya struggles with some larger question. Luke registers her anguish. *

LUKE (CONT'D)

There *is* no reason. Okay? It's no one's *fault*. Whatever's happening, it's random. Toss of a coin. Why I'm still here and the sucker who was driving this boat isn't, I don't know. But I'm not wasting time wondering why it was him and not me when I still got a chance to live through this. If we can power this ride up.

Maya stares into the darkness. Wanting, needing to believe. Luke steps closer, consoling - *

LUKE (CONT'D)

Maya - *

MAYA *

(snaps)

Just tell me what I have to do.

Luke looks at her. The wedge still between them.

EXT. TRUCK - NEXT MOMENT

The small flicker of flashlight as Luke and Maya take their positions on the side of truck. *

Maya in front, one hand on the wheel. Luke in the rear. The heavy pusher. *

LUKE

Go head. Put it in neutral.

Maya complies. Hits the shifter down. *

MAYA *

Ready.

Luke steels himself. Gets a firm grip on the rear door.

LUKE

On three. One, two, three.

He gives a hard push. Winces in pain. Maya heaves. *

The TRUCK. Heavy with WOODEN CRATES. Starts creeping forward.

71	INT. BAR - SAME	71
	James is packing rations at the bar.	
	PAUL (O.S.) James. James!	*
72	INT. BILLIARDS ROOM - SAME	72
	Paul, lying on the table, getting worse. James comes over, looking scared. Uncertain. He holds a can to Paul's parched lips so he can drink.	* * *
	Paul struggles to talk through the pain. Trying to keep from going out like a light.	* *
	PAUL You - you got a girl?	* *
	JAMES A wha - ?	* *
	PAUL "A what?" A girl. You heard of 'em, right? A main squeeze. A --	* * *
	James says nothing.	*
	PAUL It don't matter. You're just a kid.	* *
	JAMES I got my mama.	* *
	Despite his agony Paul lets go a small laugh.	*
	PAUL Yeah, your mama. We all got our mama's, right? We all - we --	* * *
	Suddenly his eyes open, like he's had a revelation	*
	PAUL <i>Umbrellas of Cherbourg</i> - 1964 Catherine Deneuve. That's it! That's the one. (beat) It's French. Subtitles. The colors... music... She'd love that. That's the one I'll screen. For us... oh... aahhhh.	* * * * * * * *

He winces in pain, writhes on the table. Then goes limp.

*

JAMES

*

Paul!

*

Is he out? James shakes his arm, panicking.

*

JAMES

*

Paul!

*

Paul's eyes open. He takes deep breath. Recovers a little.
James relaxes.

*

*

PAUL

*

Put on a song.

*

James turns to the juke box.

JAMES

Luke says we need to conserve-

PAUL

I know what Luke said. Just one
song.

(breathless)

One more song...

Like a dying man's last wish. James registers this. Moves to
the juke box. Plugs it back in. It BUZZES to life.

PAUL

See if they got "Baby, I'm For
Real". The Originals.

*

*

JAMES

They got it.

PAUL

Play it.

The soulful strains of "Baby I'm For Real" suddenly fill the
air. Paul smiles small. Closes his eyes. Mumbles the lyrics -

*

PAUL

(singing along)

Baby, baby

*

You don't understand

*

How much I love you baby

*

*And how much I wanna be your only
man, oh baby*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

JAMES, stares at his reflection in the juke box. The spinning CD.

CONTINUED: (3)

Rainbow light playing dreamlike on his face...

He turns. Looks across the bar. At the FRONT DOOR.

Beat.

Cautiously he begins moving towards it. Music growing more distant, more surreal:

PAUL (O.S.)
Baby, baby, baby
You don't have to go
Stay a little while longer baby

*
 *
 *

FOLLOWING JAMES now, SLO MO, through the room.

As we glimpse PEOPLE in the booths. Hanging on the bar. Jovial. Drinking beer, laughing.

ALL IN SILENCE save for the yearning, soulful ballad.

WE'RE BACK IN JAMES' LIVING, BREATHING MEMORY

FOLLOWING as he moves to the FRONT DOOR. Less fearful now. In his comfort zone.

A HAPPY DRUNK pats him on the back. James smiles small, detours around a DANCING COUPLE.

Finally makes his way up to a woman. Standing at the front door, empty pint glasses in hand.

His MOTHER.

She lovingly rubs his hair. Her HAND lingers on his small shoulder.

James smiles, feeling protected. Peers through door glass.

Mother's HAND gently removes itself from his shoulder.

James' smile slowly dissolves as we

PAN the bar behind him.

Empty again. Dark. Lonely, unsettling reality. Nothing more.

James. Eyes welling. Touches his shoulder. Then -

PAUL (O.S.)
 Oh god... Ahh...

72 CONTINUED: (4) 72

Paul. Mumbling in pain. Delirious. James, turns from the door, hurries back to help.

ANGLE ON JAMES' POV OUT DOOR. What he was looking at:

The dark, dead street. *

73 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 73

FOLLOWING the flashlight-splintered forms of Luke and Maya as they move the truck through the dark night. *

Luke, pushing through exhausted breaths. Shooting wary looks into the shadows.

LUKE
How're your lights?

Maya, in front. Guiding the wheel. *

MAYA *

Good for now.

Ghostly flashlight beams shining up on her face.

74 INT. BAR BATHROOM - NIGHT 74

Running faucet. James is cleaning Paul's bandage in the sink.

THE BATHROOM LIGHT dims, flickers ominously.

James glance at it, worried.

Clutching Paul's bandage, he reaches across sink to turn off the faucet -

75 INT. BILLIARDS ROOM - SAME 75

Paul concentrates on the flickering bulb above his head.

CLOSE ON THE LIGHT BULB

Dimming. Something small, changing in its ghostly hue. Suddenly coughs a tiny ZAP.

AND DIES

ALL THE LIGHT IN THE BAR DIES

IN THE PITCH DARK, a small GASP -

PAUL (O.S.)

No...

THEN LIGHTS FLAME BACK ON

Flickering but stable.

Paul swallows hard. Glances across at the BATHROOM DOOR.
Slightly ajar.

PAUL

James?

No response. He struggles to pull himself up, hanging over
the side of the pool table. Grabs his head. In pain. Listens.

Just the sound of running water.

PAUL

James!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Maya, pushing the TRUCK. Behind her, Luke, winded. Grimacing
in pain. Struggling. *

LUKE

Gotta hold up.

MAYA

Just a few more blocks -- *

LUKE

My ankle. Gotta stop for a minute.
One minute.

WIDE - THE TRUCK

Stopping in a body of surreal darkness. A dark Magritte
painting left unfinished.

LUKE

Collapses against the side of the truck. Spent. Glances up at
Maya looking less winded. *

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

76

CONTINUED:

76

LUKE (CONT'D)
I thought you smoked?

MAYA
I do. In between the PT with
morbidly-obese patients.

*
*

Luke breathes a small laugh.

LUKE
Builds up your stamina.

*

MAYA
I guess so.

*

Now it's Maya's turn to smile.

*

77

INT. BAR BATHROOM - NIGHT

77

Paul pushes through the door.

PAUL
James?

Bathroom is empty. Faucet still running. Water overflowing
onto floor. Paul sees -

His bandage, a soggy clump on the floor.

Paul gauges this. A controlled panic sets in.

PAUL
No. James

*

78

INT. BILLIARDS ROOM - NEXT MOMENT

78

Paul stumbles back into the room. Scans the empty bar.

A sharp CREAK.

Paul whips around. The CELLAR DOOR creaks open...

And drifting up from below - a barely-audible VOICE.

79

EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

79

Luke, recovering, snapping fresh batteries in a flashlight.
He studies Maya, pensive, nervously working her crucifix.

*

ON LUKE, sharing her anxiety. His hard eyes softening.

LUKE

Your son. Does he talk yet?

She looks across at him, skeptical. But he offers a warm smile. Encouraging

LUKE

Manny, right? Does he talk?

Allowing her self to open a crack.

MAYA

He makes funny sounds. He can almost say mamma. I think he knows how to say cookie, too.

*

LUKE

All the important stuff.

MAYA

Sometimes he'll point to a light and say lyy! Lyy! It's almost light, but not really.

*

Smiles in memory. It's beautiful to Luke.

MAYA (CONT'D)

He's got very tiny toes. They think it's because of an early birth. I think they're very cute because you can hardly see them.

*

LUKE

Tiny toes.

MAYA

They call it Antrophony.

*

LUKE

I like tiny toes better.

She laughs. Rubs a small tear from her eye. Looks at Luke.

MAYA

What's in Chicago?

*

Luke glances at her. A wry smile at her deduction. After a moment.

(CONTINUED)

WHTTF 9/16/09

LUKE
 Anna. My wife.
 (beat)
 We're separated.

*

Maya nods. Watches Luke's face. The frailty.

*

LUKE
 I came here for my career. She
 stayed there for hers.

*

*

*

MAYA
 She's still there, Luke.

*

Luke struggles to hide his emotion. Maya watches him.

*

MAYA
 You'll see her again.

*

*

Luke laughs softly. Clicks on the new FLASHLIGHT.

LUKE
 Funny thing is, I'm not sure she'd
 want to see me. Even now.
 (beat)
 After all the shit I pulled...the
 mistakes...

*

*

*

*

Maya sees Luke's struggling with some inner torment.

*

MAYA
 (hollow whisper)
 You'll see her again.

*

He stares across at her. Her eyes, haunting and beautiful.
 The quiet strength of her conviction. He smiles.

Luke's FLASHLIGHT suddenly dims. He taps it -

LUKE
 (astonished)
 I just put them in --

All at once, Maya's FLASHLIGHT dims too. She shakes it. Aims
 it into the darkness...

*

SHINING ON A PAIR OF EYES

It's the GIRL with the Orange scarf. Standing across the
 street from them. Clutching a small flashlight.

LUKE

Jesus.

She stands motionless. Scared. Maya steps out from the truck. *
Calls to her.

MAYA

It's okay.

*

She stares back, wayward, hollow green eyes. Then backs away, as though sensing a presence, something terrible.

MAYA (CONT'D)

No, honey. Just stay there.

*

Girl, trembling. Shakes her head. Takes off, into the darkness.

MAYA (CONT'D)

NO. WAIT.

*

Luke is up and chasing, rushing forward into the darkness --

SOMETHING BLACK slashes across his path -

Drops him hard to the pavement in front of the truck.

Terrified, Maya shrinks against the door. Looks across the dark streets.

*

Shadowy FORMS multiply. Animating the darkness itself.

Luke groaning in pain, coming to. Sees his danger -

LUKE

A flashlight!

Maya, mortified. Just stands there.

*

LUKE (CONT'D)

MAYA!

*

She snaps back. Fumbles for a flashlight.

SHADOW FORMS WAVER AND REGROUP AROUND LUKE

Maya tries the switch. Click. Nothing. Dead.

*

LUKE

THE HEADLIGHTS.

She darts into the cab. Hits the HEADLIGHTS.

THEY CRASH ON, BATHING LUKE IN THEIR GLOW

Maya, breathing hard. Relieved.

*

A beat.

(CONTINUED)

WHITTE 9/16/09

79

CONTINUED: (5)

79

Then, the FLASHLIGHTS around her neck go dark. She freezes, petrified.

Vulnerable.

LUKE (O.S.)
HERE! IT'S SAFE HERE!

She leaps around the front of the truck, falls to the pavement with Luke.

The two of them, breathless, marooned in the CONE OF LIGHT.

Luke desperately testing light after light, aghast.

LUKE
They're all dead. Every single one!

OFF MAYA'S terrified eyes...

*

80

INT. BAR CELLAR - NEXT MOMENT

80

Paul limps down the last step. Scans the forlorn setting. GENERATOR chugging away. A hoarse, pathetic sound.

One lone BULB dangles listlessly on a small cord.

Then that VOICE again.

Coming from behind those big METAL DOORS.

PAUL
James -- ?

Cautiously, he pushes through the doors into -

81

INT. BUNKER TUNNEL - SAME

81

FLICKERING BULBS light the way down an eerie TUNNEL. It angles down, penetrating the earth...

Paul. Looking ahead. Glimpses a shadowy MOVEMENT.

Slipping away, deeper into tunnel.

PAUL
James.

Paul follows as LIGHTS FLICKER. His figure diminishing.

82 INT. TUNNEL CORNER - SECONDS LATER 82

Paul turns a corner. Stops. Listens. Cold drone of draft. Rumble of the generator almost gone. Then -

The VOICE. Louder now. Clearer. Just ahead.

Paul pursues it.

83 INT. DEEPER TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER 83

INDUSTRIAL BULBS hang like gallows rope along the tunnel ceiling. This tunnel seems impossibly long...

Paul, breathless, stalls. Listening through the cold draft.

VOICE
Don't... me...

PAUL
Who is that?

Looks down the long row of bulbs to a CLOSED IRON DOOR at the *
end. Metal, rusted. Old FALLOUT shelter sign attached to it.

VOICE
Don't keep me waiting.

Paul reacts. Hurries to the door. *

Undoes a huge latch. Tugs at door. Won't budge. Pulling. Struggling to open it. Rusty hinges SQUEAL -

Door swings open revealing: *

A CONCRETE WALL *

Paul blinks, confused. The light shifts behind him. He slowly turns around:

THE TUNNEL HE CAME DOWN IS NOW A BLACK VOID *

Something shifts in the dark. Paul steps closer, squinting. *

PAUL	*
Who's there?	*

A DARK FIGURE, barely a shadow, steps closer. *

Spooked, Paul steps back... and falls on his ass. *

The few bulbs near him begin to dim. *

THE DARKNESS CREEPS CLOSER *

Paul scrambles backwards, trying to get away. *

But the darkness is faster. *

It reaches his feet - *

Clunk *

His shoes detach from his pants. *

PAUL *

Stay away from me! *

The shadow edge climbs up his body. His pants legs collapse. *

He shimmies back, darkness consuming him. His belt uncoiling. *

Shirt deflating. *

Scrambling back, leaving his empty pants behind. *

PAUL *

Stay away *

Paul, a shrinking torso with arms, pushing himself away. *

Last bulb dieing. Shadow sliding up his torso. Over his arms - *

Clink *

His wrist watch dropping on the floor. *

Shirt sleeves sagging. *

Paul stops. Immobilized. *

A head projecting pathetically from sagging clothes. *

PAUL *

No. *

He peers into the darkness towering above him. In that *

darkness: the SHADOW FIGURE, looming closer *

PAUL *

I exist... *

*

*

Darkness moving up his neck as we CLOSE IN on his eye:

*

PAUL

*

I exist I exist I exist I --

*

That last word clipped. Cut off for good. Only numb silence.

*

CLOSE ON PAUL'S SINGLE EYE, DARTING BACK AND FORTH

*

BLACK PUPIL dilating, growing as we

*

MOVE INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE PUPIL

*

Reflected there: the last LIGHT BULB

*

It flickers -

*

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

83 CONTINUED: (3)

83

*

MATCH CUT TO:

THE BULB ABOVE THE POOL TABLE

Flickering. And then -

*

GOING BLACK

CUT TO:

84 INT. BAR BATHROOM - SAME

84

James, clutching Paul's bandage, reaching across sink to turn off the faucet -

The BATHROOM LIGHTS go black.

A suffocating moment of darkness. And silence.

Then the lights stagger back on. Strobing. But alive.

James, frozen.

Still there.

An awful wave of dread ripples through him.

He rushes for the door -

85 INT. BILLIARDS ROOM - SECONDS LATER

85

James rushes out of the bathroom. Stops. Face goes flush with horror:

THE EMPTY POOL TABLE

Paul is gone. His sagging clothes, spread on the felt.

James chokes back his fear. Something else on the table. James peers closer:

FINGER NAIL SCRATCHES TEARING THROUGH THE FELT

85

CONTINUED:

85

James groans in horror. The BAR LIGHTS STROBING MADLY.

SMASH TO:

86

EXT. TRUCK - SAME

86

Squatting in the headlights, Maya sees -

*

MAYA
They're dying!

*

*

- the truck HEADLIGHTS are dimming...

*

LUKE

Looking around them. Panicking. *What to do?*

Suddenly he stands. Pulls off his shirt. Rips it in two.

Maya watches, perplexed.

*

Luke yanks the truck's old ANTENNA off the hood. Ties the ripped shirt to one end.

He glances at her.

LUKE
STAY IN THE LIGHT.

Staying in the headlight glow, he limps ten yards away to a crashed HONDA SEDAN, metal side reflecting the truck's light.

Luke opens gas cap. He slides the weighted strip into the tank. Pulls it out. It's soaked with fuel.

He rushes back to Maya.

*

She's picking up on his idea. She reaches across the truck's hood. Rips off a heavy duty WINDSHIELD WIPER.

MAYA
Give it to me.

*

Luke passes her the fuel-soaked shirt. She coils it tightly around the WIPER.

Passes the homemade TORCH back to Luke. He grins at her ingenuity.

LUKE
Okay. Gimme your lighter.

Maya hesitates.

LUKE (CONT'D)
MAYA.

MAYA
It's back in the bar.

Luke absorbs this. Fuck. Looks around.

HI ANGLE - MAYA AND LUKE

Crouched in the dying HEADLIGHTS. Sinister VOICES growing in the looming darkness.

Doomed.

MAYA

Big, wide eyes. Suddenly. Looking up the street to an INTERSECTION they just passed.

An idea forming.

She snatches the wet TORCH and a last remaining GLO - NECKLACE from her back pack. Cracks it. It emits a WEAK GLOW.

MAYA (CONT'D)
Follow me.

LUKE
What?

MAYA
C'MON.

She rushes to the truck CAB. Luke on her heels.

LUKE
That's not enough --

MAYA
(lit from the light)
Stay close.

86 CONTINUED: (2)

86

She kills the headlights. The world goes black.

CUT TO:

87 EXT. NEARBY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

87

Maya and Luke run, hand in hand, barely lit by the GREEN GLOW. Luke, YELLING in pain with each footfall.

*

Maya pulls him toward a BUILDING across the desolate thoroughfare.

*

88 EXT. METH CLINIC - NEXT MOMENT

88

Maya slams into the front door. Tries the knob. Locked.

*

LUKE
Back away.

Maya does as Luke draws the rifle.

*

89 INT. METH CLINIC

89

BANG! Door's thrust open.

NEXT MOMENT -

TREMBLING HANDS DESPERATELY SEARCHING DRAWERS

Maya, searching. Tossing drawers, cabinets.

*

MAYA
They have to be here.

*

Luke, hovering over her in the dull green glow. Weakening.

Luke peers around at the DARK SHADOWS. Movement among them?

MAYA
HERE.

*

Luke whips LIGHT back toward Maya.

*

Revealing a BOX OF MATCHES in her hand.

She strikes one. It FLAMES. She touches the torch. Ignites it. HUGE FLAMES. Illuminate in BRIGHT ORANGE GLOW the room:

Plastic chairs. Dispensing window. Posters about addiction. We're in a -

METHADONE CLINIC

Luke and Maya stand at the NURSES' STATION. Shadows on the wall. Eerie but organic.

*

LUKE
How'd you know about the matches?

MAYA
Used to bum cigarettes from the
duty nurse.

*

LUKE
You worked here?

MAYA
No.

*

Beat. Luke turns to her. She takes a deep, hard breath.
Looks around her.

MAYA
Funny. End of the world and I'm
right back where I nearly lost it
all.

*

Beat.

MAYA
He was what turned me around. A one
year-old with funny toes. He saved
me, Luke. Made me want to live.
(sad, longing)
I can't... can't give up on him.

*

Luke, understanding. Moved by her conviction. Touches her
face...

Moment broken by torch flame flickering dangerously. They
both stare at it's fading light. *It can't possibly last...*

LUKE
If we don't go right now --

MAYA
A storage room in the back.

*

LUKE
What - ?

MAYA
(remembering)
They had rubbing alcohol there. For
needles.

*

Luke stares. Doesn't get it. She spells it out.

MAYA
Rubbing alcohol. Fuel. For the
torch.

*

Luke impressed, liking this woman more and more.

LUKE
Show me.

Luke starts to rise, wincing in pain from his ankle.

MAYA
No. Rest it. I'll get it. Be one
second.

*

She grabs the Glo- Necklace and rushes to the back. Luke
holding the torch, collapses back to the floor.

INT. BAR CELLAR - NIGHT

THE BASEMENT GENERATOR FILLING FRAME

A black FUEL NEEDLE in the red. One tick from zero.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Lights strobing. Browning in and out.

James, trembling, crying. Utterly alone.

Power surge. The JUKE BOX resets. Suddenly blasts on.

The Tokens' The Lion Sleeps Tonight.

TOKENS
In the jungle, the mighty jungle
The lion sleeps tonight

Old time melodic lullaby. Never sounded more sinister.

James, terrified. Scrambles for the cellar...

92 **INT. METH CLINIC - STORAGE CLOSET - SAME** 92

Maya stands on a chair. Grabs an armful of PLASTIC BOTTLES from a top shelf. Rubbing Alcohol. *

She jumps to the floor.

Suddenly, from everywhere and nowhere: A BABY CRYING.

Maya snaps around. *

She swallows a breath. Listens. There it is again. Coming from outside the CLOSED REAR EXIT.

Maya moves towards the *

REAR DOOR

Undoes a latch. Pulls a bolt.

93 **EXT. METH CLINIC - REAR LOT - SAME** 93

Small green glow as Maya peeks out the crack of door. *

EYES widen in disbelief.

HER POV - BRIGHT STREET LAMP shines at the high end of a STREET. Once dark and dead. Now implausibly alive.

A BABY STROLLER is parked under the light.

94 **INT. METH CLINIC - WAITING ROOM - SAME** 94

Luke waits. Staring at WEDDING BAND he's removed from his pocket. It glows in the dying torch light.

Something shifts in Luke. He slips the ring on his finger.

Just then the torch wavers in a draft. Luke looks behind him.

JAMES
(shouts)
Maya. C'mon. *

95 **EXT. METH CLINIC - REAR LOT - SAME** 95

HARD ON MAYA *

Staring at the stroller.

MORE BABY CRIES. COMING FROM THE STROLLER

95 CONTINUED: 95
 Maya gasps. Drops the Glo-Necklace. The bottles of rubbing alcohol. Steps from the door. *

MAYA *

Manny.

96 INT. BAR CELLAR - NIGHT 96
 THE GENNY
 James grabbing gas cans, futilely pouring gas into the tank.
 But the genny futzing out, choking down.
 Dying.

97 INT. METH CLINIC - WAITING ROOM - SAME 97
 LUKE
 Maya! *

Luke rises. Staggers towards the back.

SMASH TO:

98 EXT. STREET - SAME 98
 FOLLOWING MAYA *

Rushing toward the high end of the street. BABY CRIES roar over the wind.

MAYA *

Manny.
 (shouting)
 Manny, my baby!

Her DARK SILHOUETTE against the dazzling street light.

99 INT. METH CLINIC - BACK ROOM 99
 Luke sees the open REAR DOOR. The Glo -Necklace on the floor.

LUKE
 No.

100 EXT. STREET - SAME 100
 Maya steps into the circle of street light - *

Peers down at the stroller.

100 CONTINUED: 100
 ON MAYA *

Expectant, hopeful eyes.

101 **EXT. METH CLINIC - SAME** 101
 LUKE
 Barrels outside --

LUKE
 MAYA. *

-- SEES Maya's CLOTHES drop to the pavement. Like a person
 plunged through trap door. That simple and terrifying. *

Maya. The stroller. The street light. *

Gone.

LUKE'S EYES

Chilling realization. A horrible, numbing beat.

He stumbles back, shaking. Suddenly hears.

Voices, WHISPERS, sharp like razor blades.

Coming from everywhere and nowhere.

CUT TO:

102 **EXT. METH CLINIC - FRONT ENTRANCE - NEXT MOMENT** 102
 LUKE. Making a fast break for the TRUCK.
 Hunched. Limping. Torch in hand. Monklike.
 The 12th century. All over again.

103 **EXT. TRUCK -** 103
 Luke stabs TORCH into window crack. Rolls it up. Pinning it.
 Splashes TORCH with rubbing alcohol. It flames alive.
 Luke grasps door frame.
 Pushes. Heaves. Using all his strength.
 Truck doesn't budge.

103 CONTINUED: 103

LUKE SCREAMS. In agony. In desperation.

The TRUCK creaks forward.

FOLLOWING LUKE

Starting to roll the heavy truck down the street.

Torch threatening to burn out with each yard gained.

104 INT. BAR CELLAR - NIGHT 104

James, frantic, thrashing around the last cans of gasoline.

Lights strobing.

With each strobe, SHADOWS appear to spread.

In the on-and-off of light, VAGUE SHAPES take form.

Only to vanish when power lives another moment.

105 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 105

HARD ON LUKE

Sweat pouring off face. Every muscle screaming.

Stumbles for a beat. Nearly loses his footing.

The TORCH. Growing weaker.

Luke, struggling to phase it out. Concentrate on the last stretch.

HIS POV -

The BAR, a block away, barely illuminated in the dying neon.

106 INT. BAR CELLAR - NIGHT 106

James, crouched into a corner. Nowhere left to go.

Generator making a new sound. A horrible sound. Crank conductor finally winding down.

MOVEMENT around James. Things closing in.

THE DARKNESS

Like some predatory creature. Encapsulating him. Then.

A FIGURE

Feminine. Featureless. Emerges.

JAMES

Staring at it. Seeing perhaps what he wants to see.

JAMES
(whisper)
M... mom -- ?

THE FIGURE

Standing motionless in darkness.

Arms suddenly extend, stretch. Disproportionate. Horrifying.

James SCREAMS.

DOOR IS THROWN OPEN.

Luke standing there with flickering torch, JUMPER CABLES
strung over his shoulders.

LUKE
JAMES.

Luke stands at top of stairs with barely flickering torch,
multiple JUMPER CABLES strung over his shoulders.

James, staggering. Looks back to shadows. FIGURE gone.

Crackling electric light hovering around them. Maybe a
minute or two left of power.

Luke ram-rods down the steps, stabbing the torch into a small
puddle of gasoline. New light, albeit fleeting.

LUKE
Where's Paul?

JAMES
Gone. Maya...?

*

Luke shakes his head. James' face contorts. Luke grabs his
shoulder. Hard. No time for tears.

LUKE
Look at me! We're gonna make it.
But you have to help me!

106

CONTINUED: (2)

106

OFF JAMES, uncertain -

CUT TO:

BANDS OF JUMPER CABLES STRUNG TOGETHER

Winding up the CELLAR STAIRS, across the rear of bar, to -

107

EXT. BAR - REAR DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

107

James holds the torch as Luke rips open the hood of the TRUCK. Snaps last cable to battery posts. Flash of sparks.

LUKE

Listen. I have to go down and prime that thing. You're gonna have to turn the ignition on your own.

JAMES

(tears in his eyes)
I can't be alone -

LUKE

You aren't alone -

JAMES

Maya. Paul. You're gonna leave too -

*

LUKE

I won't leave you!

Luke clutches him. Their faces silhouetted in torch light.

LUKE

I promise. It's you and me now!
Okay? We're gonna see morning.

James finally nods. Scared. But steeling himself. Luke jams the torch into the side window, illuminating the cab.

LUKE

Don't go out of the light. You
exist in that light.

Luke lifts him, slides him into cab. James, dwarfed by the wheel. Feet barely reach pedals. Luke runs a hand down the boy's hair.

LUKE

(breathless)
Okay

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

107 CONTINUED: 107
And turns and runs down to cellar.

108 INT. BAR CELLAR 108
Luke cranks the generator up. It ROARS.
IN BAR, lights stop strobing, flare bright with surging power.
Luke glances at GAS GAUGE. Pin on EMPTY.

LUKE
(shouting over rumble)
WHEN I SAY NOW, YOU TURN THE KEY.

109 INT. TRUCK - 109
James, trembling hand clutching KEYS.

JAMES
OKAY.

110 INT. BAR CELLAR 110
Luke, twists the power dial to MAX. Genny screams. Luke shuts his eyes, whispers something to himself. We never know what.

LUKE
NOW.

As Luke flips a switch, rerouting the power to jumper cables-

111 INT. TRUCK 111
James turns the ignition. The engine WHEEZES.

112 EXT. SEVENTH STREET 112
BAR lights browning out, strobing, as truck fights to take its charge.

113 INT. BAR CELLAR 113
LUKE
AGAIN.

114 INT. TRUCK 114
James turns, ignition SQUEALS. Engine not catching...

115 **INT. BAR** 115
 Lights strobe. Jukebox BLASTS on. And off. Cacophony of intermittent songs.

116 **INT. BAR CELLAR** 116
 One lone BULB flickering above Luke. Ready to run like hell.
 LUKE
 AGAIN.

117 **INT. TRUCK** 117
 James SCREAMS at the top of his lungs, jams the ignition. The engine WOOFs, COUGHS and comes alive.

118 **EXT. SEVENTH STREET** 118
 BAR lights zap out. Instantly plunged into blackness.
 SMASH TO:
 FOLLOWING LUKE SPRINTING UP CELLAR STAIRS
 SCREAMING in the cold darkness. Feeling that horrible pull.
 SMASHING THROUGH DOOR...
 INTO THE REAR OF BAR HALL.
 TRUCK HEADLIGHTS illuminating a path
 FOLLOWING HIM INTO THE HEAVY HIGHBEAMS
 Roar and rattle of truck engine -

119 **EXT. BAR - BACK** 119
 Luke, silhouetted in the headlight. Throws himself into the open driver's side of the --

120 **INT. TRUCK** 120
 -- pushes down the peddle. Engine screams. Jams stick into reverse.

121 **EXT. BAR** 121
 Truck lurches backwards. Jumper cables snap off. Sparks fly.

122 **INT. TRUCK** 122

Luke looking over his shoulder, steers his way backwards.

 LUKE
 Hold on!

123 **EXT. STREET** 123

Truck goes hard reverse out of rear lot. Skids onto a parallel street.

124 **INT. TRUCK** 124

Luke, yanks wheel. James grips door. Luke slams the breaks.

125 **EXT. INTERSECTION** 125

Truck slams to a stop. CRATES fly out back. Smash to ground -
HUNDREDS OF ORANGES fan out across the street.

A burst of garish color in the grim shadowscape.

126 **INT. TRUCK - SECONDS LATER** 126

Luke, James sit in stifled silence. Recompose. Then -

 LUKE
 I have to shut the hood. Keep your
 foot on the peddle. Don't take it
 off or we'll lose power. Yeah?

 JAMES
 Yeah.

*

Luke nods. Puts a hand on James' shoulder.

 LUKE
 You did good. Back there.

 JAMES
 So did you.

Luke smiles at this. Takes a beat. Puts the stick into park.

 LUKE
 Ready?

 JAMES
 Yeah.

126 CONTINUED: 126

Luke pushes open the door. Looks into the grim darkness.

LUKE

Go.

He rushes out. James slides into his place, slamming the peddle. A slight, scary hiccup, but the engine stays alive.

127 EXT. STREET 127

Luke moves quickly for the hood.

128 INT. TRUCK 128

JAMES' POV - RAISED HOOD. Slams closed. Revealing Luke in the headlights.

And behind him, at the end of the street: a big stone BUILDING. Cold concrete steps leading up to open DOORS.

JAMES

Staring it down. The CHURCH.

129 EXT. STREET 129

Luke sees the longing in James' face. Turns around to stare upon the church. Something glowing within.

130 INT. TRUCK 130

James' eyes sharpen. Staring into the church's open doors. That glow. Beckoning him, a moth to light.

JAMES

Mama.

James suddenly abandons the gas peddle. Drops from the truck.

131 EXT. STREET 131

The engine RATTLES. Luke reacts to the sound. Turns around.

LUKE

JAMES, THE GAS.

He rushes into the:

132 INT. TRUCK 132

Clamps down on the peddle, fighting to revive it.

132 CONTINUED: 132
In the HEADLIGHTS, SEES James heading towards the church.

LUKE
JAMES. GODDAMN IT, GET BACK HERE.

133 EXT. STREET 133
James, rimmed in the headlight glow, moving fast for the open doors of the church.

134 INT. TRUCK 134
Luke finally gets the transmission back. Bangs on the horn.

LUKE
JAMES.
Glances into the rearview. A highway entrance ramp. Chicago somewhere beyond that. His chance to break clean from this. Leave it all behind.
Looks back at James. Moving up the church steps.
Luke contemplates the choice.

LUKE
Fuck it.
And throws the truck into a vicious reverse --

135 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 135
Luke turns the TRUCK on a dime. Roars away.
In the other direction.

136 INT. CHURCH - SAME 136
JAMES. Moving through the open doors. The EERIE GLOW ahead. He moves through the darkened pews towards it...

SMASH TO:
BIG HEADLIGHTS OF THE CHEVY TRUCK
Weaving through maze of abandoned vehicles.

137 INT. TRUCK - SAME 137
Luke, intense. Committed. Careless.

CONTINUED:

Fuck it.

Begins to relax. Takes a breath. He's made up his mind.

Escape.

He clutches the wheel tight, satisfied.

He turns a sharp corner.

FOOT suddenly slams on brakes.

Truck skids to a stop.

LUKE'S EYES

SEEING something. Terrifying and profound.

CUT TO:

JAMES' EYES

Equally terrified. As he walks between the pews.

CUT TO:

LUKE

Lips tight. Eyes unblinking. As we SEE what he sees.

The brick wall of a nondescript building. Covered in graffiti

ONE WORD, incongruous, scrawled in paint, illuminated in headlights:

C R O A T O A N

Luke frozen. Terrified. As if staring into the abyss itself

GO IN ON LUKE

As something then shifts. His fear gives way. To regret.

Glances at his wedding band. He takes a huge breath...

Beat.

Luke slams the truck in reverse, spins the wheel.

138 **EXT. TRUCK -** 138

Tearing back towards the church.

139 **INT. CHURCH** 139

MOVING WITH JAMES

Down the long stretch of aisle. A growing GLOW on his face.

JAMES' POV -

A RING OF BURNING CANDLES behind the alter. Like an enclosure. A refuge.

ON JAMES

Hope in those eyes. Stepping closer -- moving through a cold patch of darkness.

Suddenly spots a FIGURE. Hidden in the shadows of the flickering light. Human in scale.

JAMES

Mama -- ?

THE FIGURE

Murky. Barely broken off from the darkness itself. Takes a chilling step back into it. Disappearing.

ON JAMES

JAMES

Mama. It's me...

Suddenly, JUST BEHIND JAMES. THE SAME FIGURE

Coming out the black. Stretching grotesquely.

ITS POV -

Moving behind James. About to engulf --

CRASH!

The TRUCK smashes through the CHURCH DOORS. Splinters fly.

Headlights blasting into the place. Shadows retreat.

James spins, squinting in the light. Luke sticks his head out the window. Over the engine roar:

LUKE
GET IN THE FUCKING TRUCK.

JAMES
MY MOM. I SAW MY MOM.

LUKE
GODDAMN IT, THERE'S NO ONE THERE.

James turns, hurries deeper into the church, the darkness.

LUKE
JAMES. NO.

Luke darts out of the truck. Truck engine RATTLES

JAMES

Approaching the alter. The candles.

LUKE

Racing between the pews.

JAMES

Charging up the alter. Stops. Stares.

REVEAL the circle of candles. Encompassing food wrappers, debris. And a pile of clothing.

Something under the clothes. A *body*?

JAMES
Mom.

James reaches down, to pull back clothes --

LUKE

Spins as he hears the dying rattle of truck. Headlights dimming. Wall of darkness stenciled around it.

JAMES

Pulls back clothes. And sees:

Nothing. There's nothing there. James confused now. Scared.

CONTINUED: (2)

LUKE

Engine putters a moment more...

LUKE
(a whisper)
No.

... and dies. Headlights cut out. Darkness consumes Luke. He opens his mouth.

LUKE
Anna --

JAMES

Spins to the sound. Luke's stifled SCREAM. Echoes into Silence.

JAMES
Luke?

ANGLE - Luke's wedding band spinning on the floor.

It stops.

*

James, alone now, cloaked only in light of candles. Darkness moving in, closing in.

He swallows a hollow breath.

Then.

WHISPERING VOICES. Growing louder, more powerful than ever.

James glances every angle. Sees -

THE FIGURE IN THE BLACK. LOOMING. ALL MENACE.

A candle flame winks out.

FIGURE lurches closer.

James stares it down. Whispers through his fear:

JAMES
My name is... James Leary.

VOICES louder. Shadows converge, encompass.

JAMES

CONTINUED: (4)

Standing frozen, mortified.

JAMES

I'm James. James Leary! I exist!

Another candle winks out, threatening...

On edge of light, SHADOW FIGURE reaching out towards

JAMES

Standing there. Shouting now:

JAMES

I'M JAMES. I EXIST. I EXIST.

INCOMPREHENSIBLE VOICES everywhere.

James' SCREAM, barely audible over the inhuman ROAR.

Another candle winks out -

One left. A small throw of quivering flame. A draft blows it.

Will it go out too...?

We hold on that suspense. And the ROAR --

SUDDENLY CUT SHORT

Everything, dead-silent now.

And dark as space.

CUT TO BLACK

Silence.

Then... like slow death...

The sound of breathing.

UP FROM BLACK:

A tiny FLAME, a wick, floating in a melted puddle of wax.

The flame dies. Pillar of smoke rises into the air of the:

INT. CHURCH - DAWN

CLOSE ON JAMES' FACE

(CONTINUED)

WHITE 9/16/09

Rainbow light plays across his closed eyes.

Hard breaths. Restless dreamstate. James opens his eyes.

Groggy. Blurred focus clears. Light shafts play through colorful STAINED GLASS.

CHRIST THE REDEEMER holding aloft a blazing mosaic sun. Words etched in the glass:

Go Ye Into All the World

James sits up in the bed of trash, surrounded by spent candles.

He looks into the palm of his hand. Swollen and red, still clutching Luke's MONOPOLY CAR.

James, frozen in the moment. Glances up at the bleary dawn. Luke's promise of another morning.

Suddenly, the echo of FOOTSTEPS. Moving down the aisle.

James steels himself. Turns around...

A small FIGURE approaches. One small step after the other...

COLORFUL SAINTS, frozen images in glass, watching with James. As the figure stops.

It's the GIRL.

Tattered clothing, orange scarf. New groceries fill her Dora Explorer backpack. A Teddy Bear tied to her side. In her hand, the sturdy FLASHLIGHT.

Beat.

GIRL
That's my bed.

James reacts. Stares at the nest of trash and clothes. Back at GIRL. Starts to crawl away.

GIRL
You don't have to go.

James pauses. Then...

GIRL
(quietly)
Don't go.

She approaches, sits beside him. They sit in silence for a moment, side by side in the cavernous space.

GIRL

I'm Briana.

JAMES

I'm James.

James regards her flashlight.

JAMES

It works.

Briana nods. Shows him the small solar panels.

BRIANA

It won't go out. As long as
there's day. It won't go out.

James nods. Briana looks at the MONOPOLY CAR he's holding.

BRIANA

What's that?

James looks at it. Last vestige of Luke.

OFF JAMES, remembering Luke's promise...

CUT TO:

James and Briana walk together under a pale sky. Dark
buildings loom overhead. Candles and other gear stick out
from the pockets and backpacks.

*
*
*

They round a bend. And stop at the sight of it:

A HORSE

Saddled. Munching on some grass.

*

A MOUNTED POLICE uniform drags from its saddle.

*

James takes a gentle stop forward.

The horse lifts its head.

142 **EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY - LATER** 142

Hoofs slowly CLOP CLOP over asphalt. *

JAMES, straddling the horse. Briana, clutching his waist. *

Idle cars, trucks dot the highway. *

Ahead, an interstate sign: *Chicago, 280 miles.* *

CLOSE ON THEIR FACES

Scared but determined. Knowing they have each other. Maybe no one else.

The ride into the daylight ebbing. Another day soon gone. *

And after that...?

They make their way down the deserted highway.

Off the SOUND of clomping hooves...

CUT TO:

143 **A SERIES OF STILL LIFES - DUSK** 143

Shopping cars abandoned in a SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT.

Cars left in the street.

Small clumps of clothes. Shoes. Eye glasses.

An urban moratorium.

144 **EXT. SEVENTH STREET - DUSK** 144

A dead street light. The sign haunting the corner: 7th St.

CUT TO BLACK