

WAR GAMES

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FADE IN:

On STOCK FOOTAGE of the Cold War Arms Race. American nuclear tests in the South Pacific. Soviet missiles parading past the Kremlin. Duck-and-cover exercises in American classrooms.

DAVID (V.O.)
For decades, the world lived with
the threat of global thermonuclear
war...

We see a series of nuclear war simulations, the ones that WOPR ran; literally images from the original WAR GAMES.

DAVID (V.O.)
... the possibility that
civilization could be destroyed in
a heartbeat.

We see WOPR's estimates of billions of casualties.

DAVID (V.O.)
With no end in sight to the nuclear
arms race, we tried to develop
technologies to protect us from
apocalypse.

A rudimentary computer simulation demonstrates the SDI initiative, known derisively as "Star Wars". A "missile shield" designed to keep us safe from Soviet nukes.

DAVID (V.O.)
Before we really had the chance to
test that fantasy, the Cold War
ended.

And now the BERLIN WALL falls, and Gorbachev shakes hands with Reagan.

DAVID (V.O.)
People began to believe that the
prospect of man-made Armageddon was
behind us.

Another MONTAGE:

The seepage of technology into every aspect of our lives; computer chips in cars and power grids, pacemakers and toasters, phones and Predator drones. The rise of the Internet.

DAVID (V.O.)
The Age of Information presented a
new kind of threat.
(MORE)

DAVID (V.O.) (CONT'D)

With all the benefits of
microprocessors and the internet,
the prospect of cyber war took
shape.

A montage of viruses, system failures, denial of service
attacks...

DAVID (V.O.)

Just as we were the first to use
Nuclear weapons, the United States
took the first shot in the online
battlefield.

(beat)

It started with a cup of coffee.

EXT. SIDEWALK CAFE - ISTIKLAL STREET, ISTANBUL - DAY

A bustling pedestrian avenue in the heart of Istanbul. A
slim, bespectacled MAN sits alone at a sidewalk cafe.

The man raises an ESPRESSO to his lips. This is REZA
FARHADIAN.

DAVID (V.O.)

It took over a decade to create the
perfect virus...

His LAPTOP open, Farhadian studies a GRAPH on-screen, when
someone taps his shoulder. He turns around to find... a
BEAUTIFUL GIRL smiling down at him.

Farhadian seems to recognize her. As he gives her a kiss on
the cheek...

CLOSE ON... A MAN'S HAND quickly inserts a THUMB DRIVE into
FARHADIAN'S LAPTOP while he's busy getting the girl's phone
number.

DAVID (V.O.)

... but it only took Stuxnet thirty
seconds to infect.

CLOSE ON... A HAND quickly removing the THUMB DRIVE.

And Farhadian turns back around to notice... a hovering
"WAITER", hands folded behind his back.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT OUTSIDE DEH-ZIREH, IRAN - DAY *

A MERCEDES bounces down a desert road. It comes to a stop outside a heavily fortified facility ringed with BARBED WIRE. *

SUPER: NATANZ NUCLEAR FACILITY, IRAN, 2010. *

INT. HALLWAY - NATANZ NUCLEAR LABORATORY - DAY *

Farhadian now walks down a sterile hallway past several LABORATORIES, before stepping into-- *

INT. OFFICE - NATANZ NUCLEAR LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS *

A dark office with a cluttered desk. Farhadian plugs an ethernet cable into his LAPTOP. *

DAVID (V.O.) *

Stuxnet had a very specific target. *

And we PUSH IN on that ETHERNET CABLE... *

... TRACING it across the cluttered desk, down to the floor, into the LAN JACK... *

... AND NOW... INSIDE THE WALLS of the LAB... racing through the CONDUITS... branching off in every direction... *

Eventually emerging... *

INT. CENTRIFUGE ARRAY - NATANZ NUCLEAR LABORATORY - DAY *

... in a fortified bunker where endless rows of URANIUM CENTRIFUGES spin. *

DAVID (V.O.) *

A "control unit" that changed the speed of uranium centrifuges. Not the kind of thing you'd have in your kitchen. *

Now they start to accelerate, faster and faster... *

INT. MONITORING STATION - DAY *

Iranian technicians see nothing amiss on their monitors; all systems seem to be operating properly. *

DAVID (V.O.)

The brilliance of Stuxnet was that
it covered its own tracks. No one
knew what it was doing until it was
too late.

INT. CENTRIFUGE ARRAY - DAY

Now SPEEDING OUT OF CONTROL... they reach a screeching
WHINE...

DAVID (V.O.)

The virus did its job, striking the
heart of Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Until they finally EXPLODE.

DAVID (V.O.)

And in the process, showed the
world just how vulnerable machines
could be to a well-crafted
electronic virus.

EXT. HILLSIDE - SOMEWHERE IN VIRGINIA - TIME LAPSE

A rolling green hillside sits untouched...

Until, in TIME LAPSE, an enormous GOVERNMENT FACILITY is
erected from the ground up. And down. This place has levels
inside of levels, clearly designed to withstand any attack.

DAVID (V.O.)

In the Age of the Internet, our
weapons immediately become theirs.

INT. BLUFFSIDE - TIME LAPSE

We continue the TIME LAPSE inside the facility and see an
assembly of massive DATA ROOMS that house hundreds of SERVER
CABINETS, storing yottabytes of information.

DAVID (V.O.)

The threat of cyber warfare was as
potentially destructive as nuclear
conflict.

Fifty thousand-ton COOLING TOWERS are constructed. BACKUP
GENERATORS and FUEL TANKS with enough power to run the center
for days are put in place.

DAVID (V.O.)

Once again, the answer was to build
a bigger wall.

INT. BLUFFSIDE CONTROL ROOM - DAY

In front of a massive screen, RANDALL MATTHEWS (40),
Washington power-suit, glasses perched on his nose, gives a
presentation.

MATTHEWS

We're not just building a bigger
wall.

A group of high-powered POLITICIANS and MILITARY LEADERS
listen intently. Among them, GENERAL WALTER BERINGER,
brusque, no tolerance for bullshit.

MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

We've centralized vulnerable
infrastructure under one roof. The
Bluffside facility will be a new
kind of fortress, a cyber command
and control center to keep our
nation safe.

SENATOR

And what's keeping this place safe?

MATTHEWS

Our secret weapon. Let me
introduce you to DOC.

We reveal the screen behind him, the DEFENSE ONLINE COMMAND
and CONTROL, dominated by a complex multi-dimensional image;
a visual REPRESENTATION OF THE INTERNET ITSELF, hundreds of
millions of nodes and their connections.

DAVID (V.O.)

The idea was that DOC would be the
biggest, most connected, and
fastest security program ever
constructed.

General Beringer seems skeptical.

BERINGER

It looks expensive, but how
comfortable are we with turning our
strategic command over to a
computer program?

MATTHEWS

Human beings aren't fast enough to
predict the infinite methods of
cyber attack. DOC is. All he
does, all day long, is play out
endless attack strategies, and
design ways to stop them.

Everyone nods in approval. Only Beringer does not seem to be
completely swayed.

DAVID (V.O.)

Like the missile shield that would
theoretically protect us from
nuclear war, DOC would keep us safe
from cyberattacks.

DOC's effervescent array of nodes blink as he analyzes the
nation's data traffic.

MATTHEWS

Gentlemen, we can rest easy knowing
that DOC is here to keep us safe.

As we pull in close on the screen, and that pricey,
sophisticated MAP OF CYBERSPACE...

DAVID (V.O.)

And if that speech convinced you --
if you think that's the end of the
story -- you can get up and walk
out right now.

AN EXPLOSION wipes the screen and we reveal...

INT. DAVID LIGHTMAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

... it is actually on a BRAVIA V-series TELEVISION set, its
aftermath leaving a scattered pile of corpses.

DAVID (O.S.)

Would you wake up and cover me?!

David LIGHTMAN (17) pivots his *Call of Duty* avatar and
continues BLASTING away with his MP5.

TYLER (O.S.)

Was that napalm?

(beat)

How'd you unlock that?

INT. TYLER'S HOUSE - DAY

"Fighting" alongside him, playing from his own house, is his best friend TYLER. They also appear on small VIDEO CHAT WINDOWS on each other's screens.

We INTERCUT the following between the two of them:

DAVID
I war-dialled every number in Santa Monica til I found Activision.

TYLER
Seriously?

David rolls his eyes...

DAVID
The cheat's posted on IGN. Now stay frosty, and watch my back!

Over their headsets, they hear the bratty VOICES of 12-year-old boys taunting them.

David takes a sniper shot to the head. His dead body lags ON-SCREEN.

GAMER (O.S.)
Eat it, loser!

ON-SCREEN, a soldier stands over David's dead avatar and squats up and down, a fairly innocuous taunt.

DAVID
Just remember, you brought this on yourself.

David drops his controller and reaches UNDER HIS BED. He pulls out his LAPTOP, flings it open and starts working his keyboard.

ON-SCREEN --

David's avatar has re-spawned but doesn't move. Tyler's avatar runs past.

TYLER (O.S.)
I'm pinned down here!

David ignores him, pulls out a CHESS PIECE... a BLACK PAWN. He pulls the top off the pawn, revealing a USB connection, which he slaps into the side of the laptop.

DAVID
Hang in there, a few seconds.

TYLER
(watching him through
video chat)
David, what the hell are you doing?

David pulls the pawn drive OUT OF his laptop, sticks it INTO his XBOX. A few flicks of his controller as he navigates a menu.

TYLER (CONT'D)
Getting killed here!

DAVID
Chill, deep breaths...

Finished, David speaks into his headset.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(into headset)
Falcons, take cover.

David's avatar raises his arm, revealing a wrist control mechanism, then presses a big, red button.

A moment passes and then...

A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION wipes out the screen.

David gets every streak bonus at once -- Killltacular! Killmanjaro! Killmageddon! -- as every player in the game is vaporized.

TYLER
Killmanjaro? That doesn't even make sense.

DAVID
(annoyed)
Why didn't I get killocaust?
That's the highest.

GAME VOICE (V.O.)
Red team wins.

A chorus of chirpy, profane protests go up from the pre-adolescent boys. David laughs.

*
*

TYLER
What the hell was that?

DAVID

A hack.

TYLER

Yeah, that I know, but...

DAVID'S MOM (O.S.)

(yelling)

David?!

Hearing his Mom's voice, David quickly shuts his laptop.
Tyler laughs, watching from his video chat window.

*

TYLER

She caught you changing your grades again?

DAVID

"No computer for a month." I don't think she gets that my phone has an internet browser. And my Xbox. And my TV. But I humor her.

Just then a brisk KNOCK at his door.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Gotta go.

He quickly shoves his laptop under his bed, just as...

His MOM walks in, wearing hospital scrubs.

MOM

Video games? Before school? Tell me you weren't up all night.

DAVID

(yawning)

Course not.

MOM

I've got a shift. Breakfast is on the table.

David turns off his XBOX and goes to pull some pants on.

As his Mom exits, she lingers at his bureau. She notices that one of the PICTURES on his dresser is FACE DOWN. She picks it up.

*

*

CLOSE ON -- A PHOTO OF DAVID

Around five years old, standing next to a man we can only assume is DAVID'S FATHER.

His Mother glances over at David, then back at the photo. She carefully places it back down on the dresser and exits the room.

CUT TO:

INT. LIGHTMAN HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

*

ABBY LIGHTMAN, 15, sits at the kitchen table, plugged in to her LAPTOP and her IPHONE at the same time. She doesn't even notice a piece of toast being lifted from her plate.

*

DAVID
Good morning, Abby.

David plops down at the table in his modest kitchen, cup of coffee in one hand, Abby's toast in the other. Abby remains oblivious.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I slept fine, thank you for asking.

His Mom enters, searching for something in her PURSE...

MOM
David, um... I need your help.

David rolls his eyes affectionately...

DAVID
Again?

EXT. DRIVEWAY - LIGHTMAN HOME - DAY

David approaches the Honda CRV parked in front of their modest suburban home. He stands at the windshield and takes a picture of the VIN number with his iPhone.

A beat as the iPhone searches a database and then a green "START" button appears on-screen. David presses it.

CHIRP!... the CRV unlocks and VROOM... the engine starts.

DAVID
Your spare key's at work?

Mom nods from the doorway of the house...

MOM
Can't you just get me that app thingy?

DAVID
It's an RFID emulator, Mom. Not an
app thingy.

Mom nods, that means nothing to her.

MOM
You know I'm sorry I can't make it
this weekend.

David seems confused.

MOM (CONT'D)
To the debate tournament?

DAVID
Oh, yeah, don't worry about it.

MOM
What's your topic again?

DAVID
Pros and cons of nuclear power.

MOM
Well, I know you're gonna kick ass.

DAVID
I'll do my best.

Mom ruffles his hair and gets in her car.

MOM
Love you!

David shakes his head and hops onto his skateboard...

EXT. MARLBORO, NEW JERSEY - CONTINUOUS

... weaving through the light traffic of his quiet
residential neighborhood and into...

EXT. MARLBORO HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

... The crowded parking lot of Marlboro High School. He hops
off the board and...

JAKE (O.S.)
LIGHTMAN!

... Nearly collides with a crew of POPULAR KIDS. David
stops, uneasy.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Well? You hook us up?

JAKE, a good-looking hipster with a HOT GIRL at his side, waits as David reaches into his bag.

DAVID
The system has you listed as fifty-eight years old, so they'll deliver to your address.

He hands a printout to Jake; an age-verified account with BevMart, a liquor delivery service.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Login, password, it's all there.

JAKE
Sweet. The kegger is on.

Jake hands David a wad of bills, then notices the name on the printout. He busts out laughing.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Awesome.

Jake extends a fist, which David awkwardly pounds back.

HOT GIRL
What'd he do?

David doesn't want to brag...

DAVID
Nothing.

But Jake can't restrain a smile.

JAKE
The name on the account. It's Principal Lovett.

The popular kids laugh. David shrugs...

DAVID
He seems like a guy who likes to party.

David spots TYLER, glaring at him from across the yard.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARLBORO HIGH SCHOOL - COURTYARD - DAY

A courtyard full of STUDENTS congregate during open-campus lunch.

David eats a sandwich while he plays CHESS with Tyler. They're in the late-game, with most of the pieces off the board.

TYLER

I still don't get it.

DAVID

They invited me to the party. It was worth it.

TYLER

That doesn't mean they want you there.

DAVID

How about just make your move?

Tyler moves his knight, but he's not ready to let this go.

TYLER

It just seems wrong, those are the guys that beat us up in junior high.

David scans the board, searching for a move.

DAVID

And now they don't. It's Darwinian, Tyler, you adapt or you die.

David picks up the CASTLE, bringing his QUEEN out of nowhere.

And now, David pushes back from the board.

TYLER

What are you doing?

DAVID

Game's over. In fourteen moves.

Tyler stares at the BOARD, neither of their KINGS in any danger. Confused...

TYLER

You wanna resign, fine. Pay me my ten bucks. But I don't see it...

DAVID
Stalemate.

TYLER
Huh?

DAVID
The game can't be won.

TYLER
I know what a stalemate is...

But Tyler is still studying the board, skeptical. David sighs and picks up Tyler's QUEEN, moving it across the board.

DAVID
It's called a 'desperado rook'...
there's a bunch of 'em...
(beat)
You want to attack. You have to
attack. But once you do, nobody can
win.

David finishes the sandwich. Tyler shakes his head, impressed.

TYLER
How the hell did you learn that?

DAVID
My dad. He said he used it against
the best player in the world. He
couldn't win, but he could always
force a stalemate. One of the few
useful things he ever taught me.

Tyler looks at David sympathetically. David shakes off the memory, holds his hand out to Tyler.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Cough up that ten bucks. I need it
for this weekend.

Tyler rolls his eyes as the bell RINGS...

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE - AFTERNOON

Tyler's family station wagon, racing down the Jersey
Turnpike...

CUT TO:

EXT. BORGATA - CONTINUOUS

The car pulls up in front of the Borgata Hotel and Casino.
David tosses the keys to the valet.

DAVID
(to Tyler)
You ready?

Tyler holds up his fist, with a chunky skull ring on it.

TYLER
Defcon, baby!

DAVID
Defcon!

NEWTON (O.S.)
Defcon.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - NEWARK, NJ - DAY

AGENT NEWTON, 40's, high strung, the FBI'S second in command,
briefs the assembled NEWARK FIELD OFFICE.

NEWTON
Annual gathering of 10,000 hackers,
misfits, and freaks of all
varieties.

Reveal a room full of FBI AGENTS. One of them, AGENT HEALY,
checks his watch, bored.

NEWTON (CONT'D)
Every year, the best in the world
get together. Catch up on the
latest exploits, trade war stories,
and try to figure out who's the
biggest bad-ass.

Newton's speech will narrate our way through the convention.

INTERCUT --

INT. BORGATA HOTEL - DEFCON

David and Tyler enter a MASSIVE convention hall, the size of
several football fields, divided into row-after-row of booths
and workshop spaces.

NEWTON (O.S.) *
These kids are smart, but very few *
of them have their priorities in *
order. *

They pass a BOOTH where a dozen HACKERS are listening raptly *
to a lecture.... *

LECTURER *
When you embed your virus in an *
image, make sure the thumbnail has *
fleshtones! Why? *

The AUDIENCE answers in unison... *

AUDIENCE *
Everyone clicks on naked pics! *

We PAN to a KIOSK where TECH WHIZZES huddle around LAPTOPS, *
tinker with DISMANTLED MAINFRAMES, and UNLOCK SMART PHONES... *

NEWTON (O.S.) *
To them, messing around with cyber *
security is a game. *

Finally arriving in the center of the convention hall, where *
ten teams are preparing for a Capture the Flag competition. *

Literally, a hacking simulation. *

NEWTON (O.S.) (CONT'D) *
But it isn't a game. Not anymore. *

INT. FBI CYBER CENTER *

Newton refers to a flatscreen at the front of the room. *

NEWTON *
This time last year, our home page *
was hacked by a DEFCON attendee. *

A screen capture of the FBI home page: the background is a *
PIRATE FLAG, and an animated GIF of J. EDGAR HOOVER IN *
LINGERIE dances across the screen to the HARLEM SHAKE. *

Agent Healy tries to stifle a laugh - a poor attempt, as all *
eyes turn to look at him. *

NEWTON (CONT'D) *
You find this funny, Agent Healy? *

HEALY, 30's, is too smart for his own good, a square peg in *
the FBI's buttoned down culture. *

HEALY

Well, the Harlem Shake is played out, but I admire the photoshop job they did of J. Edgar.

Newton glares at him.

NEWTON

The director doesn't find it funny. And he wants to make sure it doesn't happen again.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - HALLWAY

The meeting over, all the agents disperse. Agent Healy and AGENT WU walk side by side.

HEALY

Funny he keeps harping on that J. Edgar thing, we caught the guy who did it. Gary the Mustache.

WU

That was his screen name?

HEALY

I never told you that story?

Wu shrugs.

HEALY (CONT'D)

Remind me to tell you sometime. If a guy that dumb can piss off the Director, we're wasting our time.

WU

So no Defcon?

HEALY

I'm not worried about a bunch of dweeby wannabes fiddling with their joysticks. What's the worst that could happen?

Off that...

CUT TO:

INT. BORGATA - DAY

Surrounded by spectators, ten tables are set up in a circle, one for each team of four HACKERS. Many teams are wearing matching shirts -- from M.I.T., Bell Labs, even the Navy.

The largest SCREEN fades to a massive GAME BOARD, listing over twenty teams with fifty points to start.

An announcer stands under the game board...

ANNOUNCER

Attention, capture the flag teams
will receive their server in five
minutes.

David and Tyler walk over to one of the tables to meet MALIK, one of the other members of their team.

MALIK

The Falcon has landed!

Awkward fist bumps all around.

MALIK (CONT'D)

Hey guys. Room keys.

Malik hands David and Tyler room keys.

DAVID

Thanks.

MALIK

Don't thank me, thank Jennifer.

He motions to JENNIFER (18), a very attractive girl. David and Tyler look at her, a bit stunned.

JENNIFER

So this is David?

David is tongue tied.

MALIK

This is him. He normally can
speak.

JENNIFER

I really appreciate this. I'll
catch you after the round?

DAVID

Uh, sure?

Jennifer smiles and walks away. When she's out of earshot...

DAVID (CONT'D)

What exactly does she "appreciate",
Malik?

MALIK

What? You don't think a hot girl
would want to do you a favor?

Off David's look.

MALIK (CONT'D)

The rooms weren't totally free. I
told her you'd help her out with
something.

DAVID

What kind of something?

MALIK

Nothing major. Just hack into
homeland security, take her off the
"no-fly" list.

DAVID

Whoa, what?

Malik throws an arm over David's shoulder.

MALIK

Free rooms, dude. Now focus,
game's starting.

The opening siren goes off.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Teams get to your tables, round one
is about to begin.

CUT TO:

INT. CONVENTION HALL - BORGATA

An ANNOUNCER stands in front of the scoring server.

ANNOUNCER

Keep your server up and running,
and defend your flag file while
simultaneously attacking your
opponents servers and stealing
their flag files. Good luck
everyone!

MONTAGE -- CTF MATCH

-- An HTTP server comes up on David's screen. Within the page is a box, filling with a mass of seemingly RANDOM TEXT and NUMBERS. David highlights the NUMBERS and types a quick COMMAND.

DAVID

RC4 decryption routine, pull the data off the wire and crack it.

TYLER

Wait, how do you know--

DAVID

They're X86 Op codes, I can read them raw. Crack the POST data, now!

As Tyler snaps to it, entering commands a mile a minute...

ON THE GAMEBOARD: One of Team Falcon's servers erupts in a cartoon EXPLOSION, complete with THUNDERING sound effects.

ANNOUNCER

And SUCKERPHISH puts the first points on the board at the expense of TEAM FALCON!

Team Falcon's 100 points drop to 85.

MORRIE

They're getting two hits for every one of ours, we'll never catch up with them.

DAVID

I've got an idea. Drop all our defenses.

David is focused on the ANNOUNCER and that SCORING SERVER. Suddenly reenergized, he opens a NEW WINDOW on his SCREEN...

TYLER

David, what are you doing?

David types frantically, then turns to Tyler...

DAVID

I'm hacking the scoring server.

David hits a few keystrokes.

A beat, and then one of TEAM FALCON'S cities EXPLODES. But, for some reason, they tick up a notch on the SCOREBOARD.

Across the room...

SUCKERPHISH CAPTAIN

We just nailed them! Why are they
getting points for it?

David watches with delight as the more of his cities EXPLODE
and the OTHER TEAMS rise from their seats in a panic...

MIT CAPTAIN

What the hell is happening?!

The SUCKERPHISH TEAM CAPTAIN realizes...

SUCKERPHISH CAPTAIN

Stop all our attack scripts!
They're getting points for every
city they lose! FALCON'S reversed
the scoring!

All the TEAMS scramble to shut off their attacks but it's too
late. Just as the CLOCK ZEROES OUT, TEAM FALCON arrives at
the top of the SCOREBOARD with two hundred points, and the
CROWD goes wild.

ANNOUNCER

Team Falcon advances! Round two
begins at six P.M.

David's teammates surround him, high fives and back slaps.

David looks out at the cheering crowd and sees Jennifer,
waving at him from across the room.

She's waiting for him.

CUT TO:

INT. BORGATA HALLWAY --

David, carrying his bags, walks with Jennifer down a hotel
hallway.

JENNIFER

Sorry if you got roped into this.
He told me he told you.

DAVID

That's classic Malik.

Jennifer stops outside a room.

JENNIFER

This is it.

David swipes his key, the door clicks unlocked.

INT. BORGATA - DAVID AND TYLER'S ROOM

David and Jennifer enter the swanky hotel room.

DAVID

Nice.

JENNIFER

Yeah, they upgraded all of us.

David puts his bag down on the bed, starts to set up his laptop.

DAVID

How'd you score this anyway? Hack
into the registration system?
Zombie credit number?

JENNIFER

I got a t-shirt from one of the
sponsors. Told the hotel I was with
them.

DAVID

And that worked?

JENNIFER

You act like you're supposed to be
there, people don't ask questions.David has his laptop up and running now. Jennifer joins him
on the bed.

DAVID

So the no-fly list. Are you a
terrorist or something?

JENNIFER

Ever met a terrorist named
Jennifer?

DAVID

Not sure I've ever met a terrorist.

JENNIFER

Look, if you're uncomfortable with
this...

She starts to get up.

DAVID
No, I can do it.

JENNIFER
You sure? I don't want to get in
any more trouble.

DAVID
Not a problem.

Jennifer sits back down. She scoots closer to him so she can
see the screen better. The physical proximity isn't lost on
David.

JENNIFER
You have done this before?

DAVID
You kidding? A million times.

David cracks his knuckles theatrically, then navigates to the
home page for the DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

David hits a few more keys. A prompt comes up:

ACCESS DENIED

DAVID (CONT'D)
Never works on the first try. But
I have a secret weapon.

David produces the PAWN USB jump drive. Jennifer smirks.

JENNIFER
Your secret weapon is a chess
piece?

David removes the top of the piece, revealing the USB port
inside.

DAVID
It's called a keychain. Different
encryptions, they all work in
different systems. Like a security
guard's keychain, but digital.

David plugs in the KEYCHAIN; on his laptop, it cycles through
the various 'keys'.

To David's surprise, it settles on the eleventh key.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Weird.

JENNIFER

What's weird?

DAVID

In all the times I've used it, I've never seen it cycle down to that key. Pretty basic encryption.

Then he's in. David's fingers fly over the keyboard as he uploads some of his hacking tools.

Jennifer watches over his shoulder, fascinated.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Got a timer on your phone?
We have to get off in five minutes,
that's the usual lag in system ops.

Jennifer sets a timer on her phone.

JENNIFER

Got it.

ON HIS LAPTOP

David navigates through various internal pages until he comes to a list with a long, bureaucratic description.

DAVID

Individuals deemed security risk,
flying, cross ref FAA... This is
it.

Just as quickly, David searches and finds a name: JENNIFER BRAND. He opens her file, starts reading.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(reading to himself)

Birthday, March 15th, 1998 --
you're seventeen? That's cool.
Parents divorced. Arrest,
shoplifting...

JENNIFER

Hey...

DAVID

You got arrested for shoplifting?

JENNIFER

I ate some malted milk balls out of the bulk bin. Don't read that.

DAVID

Forging a fake ID, posing as a public employee, fraud. Wow. Did you do all this?

JENNIFER

Sort of.

DAVID

Are you a con artist or something?

JENNIFER

The term is "social engineer" and I don't do it anymore. This room is the last thing I'm gonna scam.

DAVID

Social engineer. I like that. I'm gonna call myself an "encryption decipherer".

JENNIFER

We're under three minutes, shouldn't you--

DAVID

Sorry, yeah.

David highlights Jennifer's file and deletes it. Jennifer sighs, relieved.

JENNIFER

So that's it?

DAVID

That's it. Lemme just close the door behind me and we'll be done.

Just as he's about to log out...

ONSCREEN: *Welcome back, Dr. Lightman.*

David is shocked.

JENNIFER

Who's Dr. Lightman?

DAVID

My Dad.

*
*
*
*

*
*

*
*
*
*

*
*
*
*

A page comes up. A mothballed Department of Defense account.

JENNIFER

Wait a minute, your Dad works for the Department of Defense? You didn't say...

DAVID

No.

(quietly)

My Dad is dead.

JENNIFER

Oh. Damn. I'm sorry.

David looks down at the PAWN DRIVE.

DAVID

His login must be on here. System thinks I'm him.

(to himself)

He said he was a college professor. He was always at school... I thought...

David scrolls through folders; they are full of pictures, documents, and videos. *

He opens a folder labeled 'Joshua'. A series of video files. He clicks on one that says "David0397."

Jennifer nervously eyes the timer.

JENNIFER

Um, less than a minute.

VIDEO -- Onscreen, a guy in his early thirties is talking to the camera. He has a baby in his arms.

It's David's father, ALAN LIGHTMAN, talking to the camera. The date at the bottom of the screen is 3/23/99.

ALAN LIGHTMAN (ON CAMERA)

(to someone offscreen)

Hey, Marks! Check it out, he's waving to the camera.

David looks closely at the baby...

JENNIFER

Oh my god, that's you!

DAVID

Yeah.

JENNIFER

Look how cute you were.

David blushes. Jennifer looks at the timer on her phone.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

But you should log off. Says thirty seconds...

DAVID

Yeah, hold on.

David keeps watching, enthralled...

ALAN LIGHTMAN (ON CAMERA)

(to Baby David)

Go out and make a difference in the world, alright? Don't sit at a computer all day.

*
*

Jennifer nervously glances at the timer, ticking down from twenty seconds.

*
*

JENNIFER

You said we only have five minutes. I don't want to get in more trouble.

DAVID

(agitated)

It's fine, just give me one more second...

David scrolls through some of the other video files. Jennifer is growing increasingly stressed...

JENNIFER

David, come on--

He stops when he sees the last one in the folder is dated January 15, 2006.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

DAVID!

Jennifer grabs David's arm. He snaps out of it and quickly logs out, just as Jennifer's timer goes off.

ONSCREEN: *You have been securely logged off.*

David lets out a breath, overwhelmed. He looks at Jennifer, who's getting up to leave, clearly pissed.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
You oughtta be more careful.

DAVID
I'm sorry, I...

JENNIFER
Thanks for your help, David.

Jennifer leaves the room. David stares after her, frustrated.
He blew his shot.

CUT TO:

INT. BORGATA - CONVENTION HALL -

David hustles over to Team Falcon's table, just under the
wire. They all stare at him, irritated. The round is about
to begin.

DAVID
Sorry. Stumbled into something.

Another team, DARK MATTER, eyes Team Falcon coldly. One of
them, JAGGER, calls out to them from across the room.

JAGGER
I heard you hacked the server in
the last round. I call that
cheating.

MORRIE
We call it winning. Try it
sometime.

ANNOUNCER
Let's get the final round started!

The GAME BOARD graphics light back up.

CLOSE ON DAVID -- his eyes are on his laptop screen, but he's
clearly distracted.

The music cranks up to FULL VOLUME.

ON DAVID'S LAPTOP: Hundreds of lines of code stream down the
page. DAVID'S eyes glaze over as he struggles to concentrate.

Malik slaps David on the shoulder.

MALIK
Dude, get your head in the game!

David gets to work attacking, furiously typing commands and maneuvering text...

But he's not fast enough.

ON THE GAMEBOARD: Another Team Falcon server is DESTROYED by an animated volcanic eruption.

Dark Matter ticks up on the GAMEBOARD, now on top with one hundred and thirty points.

THE BUZZER SOUNDS. Time is up.

Dark Matter has won. Team Falcon is in second place.

ANNOUNCER
Congratulations to our 2012 champs -
Dark Matter!

The CROWD goes nuts.

TEAM FALCON is frustrated, pointing fingers at each other. Except for David.

His mind is elsewhere.

CUT TO:

INT. BORGATA - DAVID AND TYLER'S ROOM

David is back at his laptop, dim light from the screen illuminating the dark room.

ON DAVID

Biting his lip, not sure he wants to go through with this.

He slides the PAWN DRIVE in, then hits a few keys. He also sets a timer on his phone for five minutes.

CLOSE ON -- THE COMPUTER SCREEN

David is back at the root menu for his Dad's account. He immediately scrolls down to the video files, opens one.

ONSCREEN:

ALAN LIGHTMAN
Samuel finally came to his senses.
But they still won't listen. All
they see is Joshua's potential, but
there's another side.

ON DAVID, riveted.

He highlights all the files in the "Joshua" folder and drags them to the "PHONE" icon on his desktop. *

A PROMPT comes up...

ONSCREEN: *DOWNLOAD WILL DISABLE FIREWALL. ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO CONTINUE?*

David types in "yes."

He hits ENTER. *

All the file names appear next to progress bars as they download. *

Each file has the .avi suffix, except for one file... *

Pandora.dll *

PUSH IN CLOSE ON HIS PHONE *

The moment Pandora finishes downloading, a screen opens on the phone's operating system, DO YOU WISH TO RUN THIS PROGRAM? *

"Yes" clicks automatically, then the window closes. *

All of this happens in a microsecond, slowed down so we can see it. But David is oblivious. *

CUT TO: *

INT. BORGATA HALLWAY -- LATER *

David is now in the hallway, waiting for an elevator going down. The doors open, revealing...

DAVID

Oh. Hey.

JENNIFER is in the elevator, dressed for the afterparty. *

There is an awkward moment, last time they ended on a sour note. David seems unsure what to do.

JENNIFER *

You going down or not?

DAVID

If you... I could wait for the next one, or take the stairs.

JENNIFER
(rolls her eyes)
Yeah, why don't you walk eleven
flights.

David nods cluelessly.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
It was a joke. Just get in.

Sheepishly, David enters the elevator. As he does, we ZOOM
IN on his phone...

*Note: The following sequence simulates the travel of malware
from one system to another. We will "see" the operations
happening inside various pieces of hardware as Pandora
travels through them.*

CUT TO:

INT. PHONE --

The email message with Pandora attached is SENT, and now we
TRACK THROUGH THE WALLS OF THE ELEVATOR, then DOWN into...

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SERVER ROOM --

The basement, where we find the HOTEL SERVERS. We pull in
close on the SERVERS...

A VIRTUAL SCREEN

Representing the server's system software reveals that
Pandora is once again downloading and then automatically
RUNNING...

Now, it is scanning through various internet addresses until
it finds one in particular, a long string of numbers that
light up....

NOW WE ARE MOVING AGAIN, THROUGH WALLS AND OUT OF THE
BUILDING.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC CITY

CAMERA emerges from the BORGATA hotel than zooms across
Atlantic City, part way up the coast until we arrive at...

CUT TO:

EXT. CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY

A nondescript, two story brick building. CAMERA SLOWS...

SUPER -- *B L ENGLAND POWER PLANT, CAPE MAY, NJ*

And then PLUNGES INTO THE BUILDING...

CUT TO:

INT. B L ENGLAND POWER PLANT

An OPERATOR sitting at his terminal monitors the flow of
voltage into and out of the plant. Everything seems fine.

BUT WHAT HE CAN'T SEE, buried deep in the turbine control
system...

INT. TURBINE SYSTEM

Inside a piece of machinery called a PROGRAMMABLE LOGIC
CONTROLLER, on a simple, Linux-style interface called SCADA,
we see the PANDORA FILE once again downloading...

Then opening, then RUNNING.

Only this time, it doesn't send another message.

ROOT MENUS open up, revealing thousands of files, all of them
gibberish to us, but the cursor scrolls through them until it
finds one in particular and it lights up...

CODE APPEARS

Raw code, the actual ones and zeroes that comprise the
control software.

The ones and zeroes begin to SWITCH, thousands changing their
value from positive to negative, and vice versa.

INSIDE THE TURBINE SYSTEM

The turbine blades slip slightly out of sync with the spinning fan, accelerating the flow of electricity... *

CUT TO: *

INT. TURBINE ROOM *

Sparks fly as the power current sent to the DISTRIBUTION BUS is too much for the system to handle. *

Pandora has found its target. *

CUT TO:

INT. BORGATA - IZAKAYA LOUNGE

The after party is in full swing when suddenly...

The power goes out. The music shuts off. The party-goers let out a collective gasp.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR

Jennifer lets out a cry as the elevator brakes and halts.

JENNIFER
What the hell?

David and Jennifer exchange a nervous look. *

CUT TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC CITY *

One by one, the Hotels in Atlantic City go DARK. Street lights and billboards too. *

The Blackout is spreading.

CUT TO: *

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT -- VIRGINIA COUNTRYSIDE *

We follow a BLACK SUBURBAN through wooded countryside to an imposing, reinforced SECURITY GATE. Beyond the gates, CONCRETE BARRIERS bisect the road to prevent an attack by land. *

REVEAL RANDALL MATTHEWS

A few years older, and even more confident, sitting in the back of the Suburban. He presents his credentials to a guard, who SCANS them with a handheld device.

SAL
Evening, Director Matthews.
Congrats on the promotion, 'case I don't see you again.

MATTHEWS
Thanks, Sal. Where you going?

SAL
I'm retiring. They're automating the guard booths.

MATTHEWS
Right.

SAL
They say retired people die sooner.

Matthews, uncomfortable, rolls up his window as his car pulls away.

SUPER -- VIRGINIA, LOCATION UNDISCLOSED.

As they drive forward, tilt up to reveal a gleaming new COMPLEX of buildings, sitting on a hilltop. The same we saw in the opening, now fully functional.

SUPER -- BLUFFSIDE CYBER COMMAND

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

Matthews strides through the huge, gleaming facility. He passes data rooms housing hundreds of server cabinets, massive tanks storing water, huge cooling towers. High-tech supercomputers with staggering amounts of data.

Despite all this, the room is a comfortable seventy two degrees.

INT. BLUFFSIDE - SITUATION ROOM

Matthews enters the SITUATION ROOM. When last we saw it, it was a big empty room with a giant screen.

Now complete, it is a state-of-the-art monitoring and listening center that makes NORAD's setup look like a Commodore 64.

A perspiring technician named JALEN RONALD (40's) waits for him.

MATTHEWS
Conference ready?

RONALD
They're assembling now.

CUT TO:

INT. PENTAGON - NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND CENTER

GENERAL BERINGER strides into the National Military Command Center -- the Pentagon's eyes and ears on the outside world. Every military asset is tracked on the massive screens, every hot-spot monitored.

CHYRON -- *WALTER BERINGER, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS*

At various stations around the room are WATCH OFFICERS for the various Unified Combatant Commands.

Beringer takes a seat at a conference table, facing a webcam.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI HEADQUARTERS --

Healy sighs as a young TECHNICIAN struggles with the teleconference system.

CHYRON -- *SPECIAL AGENT JACK HEALY, FBI CYBER CRIME UNIT*

He takes the REMOTE from the technician, hits a few buttons. The teleconference window blinks on, allowing Healy to join the meeting of the NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE - SITUATION ROOM

JAIME CONDIT (38), newly appointed White House Chief of Staff, does her best to project authority as she begins the meeting via teleconference.

CHYRON -- *JAIME CONDIT, WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF*

She faces a monitor, displaying all members of the National Security Council in separate quadrants on screen.

(We will intercut between all four members.)

CONDIT

Gentleman, I want to welcome you to the first meeting of the Provisional Interagency Cyber Response Council.

(beat)

Sorry, I was required to say that.

BERINGER

Sounded good, Miss Condit.

CONDIT

Thanks, General. Agent Healy? Where are we?

HEALY

So far the blackout is confined to Atlantic City, AC Electric is saying it was an outside attack.

CONDIT

Director, what does DOC think?

MATTHEWS

DOC has identified the virus, it had a very narrow target. Found its mark and hit it, now it's stopped.

HEALY

This was the target, you sure about that?

(to Condit)

We need to seriously consider isolating the problem.

MATTHEWS

You want to shut down the internet, Agent Healy?

CONDIT

Nobody's shutting down the internet. Hell, I'd prefer not to wake the President if we can avoid it.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC CITY

The only light in the city is from car headlights and flashing police sirens. Everything else is pitch dark.

CUT TO:

INT. BORGATA CASINO -- ELEVATOR

David and Jennifer sit in the elevator, lit dimly by security lights.

DAVID
Sorry about earlier.

JENNIFER
No, I'm sorry...

DAVID
Really? I was--

JENNIFER
(interrupting)
I was nervous. I shouldn't have snapped at you when you just did me this huge favor. And here you are, seeing your Dad. That must be really weird...

DAVID
Yeah, it was.

JENNIFER
You find out anything else?

David shrugs, not sure he wants to get into it.

DAVID
So no more free hotel rooms?

JENNIFER
Yeah. That's the plan.

DAVID
Got caught one too many times?

JENNIFER
No, not that. I just realized that when you manipulate people to get what you want, you never actually get it.

DAVID

Depends on what you want.

JENNIFER

Not really. Cause everyone wants to
get close to somebody else, and
when you're always working it, you
never know how people really feel.
You end up lonely.

DAVID

Wow. That's pretty deep.

JENNIFER

Shut up. Don't make fun of me.

DAVID

I'm serious. You're like a hot Dr.
Phil.

(after a beat)

That sounded bad.

JENNIFER

Your Dad was right, you need to get
out from behind your keyboard.
Learn how to talk to women.

DAVID

I'm better over email.

Jennifer laughs. David's phone buzzes.

TYLER:

No power at party. Where u?

David types back...

DAVID:

Stuck in elevator.

TYLER:

Sucks for you.

DAVID:

Not so much.

David looks up at Jennifer. She smiles at him.

If he was going to get stuck in an elevator, this wasn't the worst of all possibilities.

CUT TO:

INT. B L ENGLAND POWER PLANT

Working quickly under only the emergency lights, OPERATORS at the plant are scrambling to re-route the power distribution.

OPERATOR
OK, we're routed through
Commonwealth shore.

A SUPERVISOR sitting at a laptop nods.

SUPERVISOR
Let's boot up.

OPERATOR
Hopefully it won't blow this one
too...

The Operators at the plant all hold their breath. The Supervisor hits the keyboard and we...

CUT TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC CITY

The lights come back up. The city stirs to life.

INT. BORGATA CONVENTION HALL

The power comes back on. Everyone cheers.

INT. BORGATA ELEVATOR --

Suddenly starts up. Jennifer, startled, grabs hold of David. There's an awkward moment as they look at each other.

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

The group discusses the crisis.

HEALY
If we're just going to follow Big
Brother's advice, what's the point
of assembling this committee?

MATTHEWS

Exactly the point I made to
Congress. We don't need the FBI's
input unless there's a problem on
the ground.

Healy rolls his eyes.

CONDIT

General, anything you want to add?

BERINGER

Don't look at me, I don't know how
to get my own voicemail.

RONALD (O.S.)

Excuse me?

They all turn to look at Ronald, who motions to the board.

RONALD (CONT'D)

Power's back on.

They all let out a sigh of relief.

MATTHEWS

Like DOC said. No reason for
panic.

HEALY

Great. I'm glad it works. Hope it
does every time.

CONDIT

Get a room, you two.

The conference call flickers out.

CUT TO:

INT. BORGATA - ELEVATOR

The elevator doors open. Jennifer and David step out.

JENNIFER

Thanks for getting me off the list.

DAVID

It's always fun and games until
someone gets arrested by Homeland
Security.

Jennifer laughs.

JENNIFER

You're funny.

DAVID

You're kind of shady, but I like you anyway.

JENNIFER

You do, huh?

David shrugs. Jennifer hands David her phone.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Gimme your number. We'll hang out again.

David, a bit surprised, enters his number.

Jennifer gives him a kiss on the cheek, then walks away. Revealing...

TYLER, in shock, having witnessed the interchange.

TYLER

You didn't say you were trapped with HER.

DAVID

You didn't ask. C'mon, let's get out of here.

Tyler follows behind, shocked at David's newfound confidence.

TYLER

Who are you and what have you done with David Lightman?

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - CYBER WATCH ROOM

A very disgruntled Agent Healy's at his computer, inspecting Pandora's code. Agent Wu comes up behind him.

HEALY

Two megabytes, five encryption algorithms? This is next level stuff.

AGENT WU

The lights went back on, right? Lucky it was just one city.

HEALY

That's just it, it doesn't make sense. Why target the Atlantic City power grid? New York I would understand.

*

AGENT WU

Maybe some sort of huge casino heist? An Ocean's Eleven type deal?

*

Healy stares blankly. Wu shrugs.

*

HEALY

Whoever let this thing loose was either too ignorant to know what they had, or smart enough to have something else up their sleeve. I don't know which alternative is more frightening.

*

Healy and Wu are interrupted by another AGENT.

AGENT

Agent Healy? We found the attribution piece. Initial source was in the Borgata Hotel.

Agent Wu and Healy exchange a knowing look...

HEALY AND AGENT WU

(simultaneously)

Defcon.

Healy turns to his team.

HEALY

Some hacker let this thing out. I want to know who he is and where he is. Right now.

*

As everyone scrambles...

CUT TO:

INT. DAVID'S HOME - BATHROOM

DAVID LIGHTMAN, right now, is standing in his underwear, sifting through piles of wrinkled clothes, searching for something clean enough to wear.

In the background, a video plays on his PHONE, propped on his dresser.

ON HIS PHONE --

David's father speaks to us from the past.

ALAN LIGHTMAN

I should be happy that we keep
winning, I know I should. But
Joshua's behavior... it's like he's
hiding information from us, or I'm
simply too dense to understand.

*
*
*
*
*
*

ON DAVID -- watching this, fascinated.

ALAN LIGHTMAN (CONT'D)

Nobody wants to admit it, but he's
dangerous.

*
*

The video ends.

David grabs his phone, his backpack, heads for the door. Then
he notices the framed photo, lying face down on his
dresser...

He places it upright, gazes at the image of his younger self
and his Dad, seeing him in a new light.

CUT TO:

INT. LIGHTMAN HOME - DAY

David eats his breakfast in the kitchen. Abby is next to
him, buried in her laptop, as usual.

In the LIVING ROOM, David's Mom is watching the morning news.

NEWS ANCHOR

The power outages in Atlantic City
last night are now reportedly being
attributed to a cyber attack.

*

INTERCUT --

*

INT. JENNIFER'S HOME - DAY

Reveal a cramped Brooklyn apartment. JENNIFER, dressed for
school, tidies up the living room where her MOTHER is passed
out on the couch.

The TV is on, full blast.

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)
Officials from the Atlantic City
Electric Company refuted reports of
a malfunction at B L England...

*

Jennifer stops what she's doing to watch the news segment,
clearly disturbed...

CUT TO:

INT. DAVID LIGHTMAN'S KITCHEN

David's Mom switches off the TV as she walks into the room.
She goes straight to David.

MOM
David, my computer is broken.

DAVID
Broken?

MOM
I think I broke it. I got a strange
e-mail.

DAVID
Mom, what did I tell you about
clicking links from random people?

MOM
I didn't! But it said it was from a
friend, so I opened it.

DAVID
Your friend probably got their
account hacked.

His Mom gives him her best "helpless" look.

*

DAVID (CONT'D)
I'll fix it when I get home.

David's Mom breathes a sigh of relief.

MOM
You're a doll. So, how'd it go this
weekend?

DAVID
Good.

MOM
I'm sorry I couldn't make it. I
know it was your first debate.

David suddenly remembers his cover story.

DAVID
Oh. Yeah. Don't be.

MOM
I am.

DAVID
Really, don't. No biggie.

MOM
It is a biggie. I should've been there.

DAVID
I didn't even debate.

His Mom looks confused.

DAVID (CONT'D)
My guy didn't show up, I won by default. Nuclear power is officially awesome.

A beat as MOM looks at her boy with affection. She smiles.

MOM
You're a good kid, David.

His Mom exits.

Abby gives him a knowing look, she knows it's bullshit. David grimaces, feeling pretty bad about all the lies. Then his phone vibrates. It's a text.

It's from Jennifer.

Abby glances over her brother's shoulder, sees the name "Jennifer" - what is this, her brother getting a text from a girl?

David reads Jennifer's text.

JENNIFER:

U c news about blackout?

DAVID:

Yes. Y?

JENNIFER:

Started at Borgata. U think we had anything to do with it?

DAVID:

Convention full of real hackers, wasn't us.

JENNIFER:

Cool. BTW, coming to c u. Next saturday? :)

*

David blushes with excitement. Abby notes this, rolling her eyes, then the hint of a smile creeps onto her face.

David panics a bit, not sure how to respond. He starts typing...

DAVID:

Awesome, can't wait to see you again, it was great...

He erases that. Abby watches over his shoulder as he starts again, an even longer response.

Abby grabs his hand, a rare moment of human contact.

ABBY

Don't be a dumbass.

She quickly types in a simple response:

DAVID:

Can't wait

... then hands the phone back to him.

DAVID

Yeah. That's good. Better.

David sends the message.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(mumbles)

Thanks.

Abby shrugs, goes back to her digital world.

CUT TO:

EXT. LIGHTMAN HOME - DAY

Backpack slung over his shoulder, David strolls out of his house, with a spring in his step. He hops on his skateboard.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN MARLBORO - DAY

David is skating through town. He notices an UNUSUALLY LONG LINE at the ATM. The GUY at the terminal, frustrated, bangs on the machine until a SECURITY GUARD comes out to get him to stop.

GUY
It ate my card!

David doesn't know what to make of this, he keeps going, and then his phone VIBRATES again.

David reaches for it, excited, assuming it's Jennifer.

But it's a different number. And the text makes him stop in his tracks.

ONSCREEN:

Hello, Dr. Lightman.

David looks around, to see if anyone's watching him.

Another text follows.

*I've made my opening move. If he doesn't move
soon, I'll make another.*

David stares at that text for a long beat, scared by the implications.

David taps out a response:

Who is this?

A long moment passes, then a text pops up in reply...

Joshua.

Freaked out, David shoves his phone in his pocket and skates off...

EXT. MAIN STREET - MARLBORO, NEW JERSEY - DAY

... and nearly COLLIDES with a car turning into his lane.
Rattled, he veers back onto the sidewalk.

Looking over his shoulder, David sees a BLACK CAR WITH TINTED
WINDOWS behind him. Is it following him?

Suddenly paranoid, David picks up the pace.

When he turns around again, the black car is gone.

Maybe he was being paranoid.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - MARLBORO HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

David is buried in a textbook, trying to look busy.

TEACHER

Can anyone tell me who first
proposed the idea of asexual
reproduction?

*
*
*

BRODERICK

Your wife?

*
*

TEACHER

Broderick! The office, now!

*

A GIRL, sitting in front of David, gets an email
notification. Her phone DINGS, followed by...

Half the other cell phones in the classroom. Some vibrate,
others DING, one Indiana Jones ringtone...

TEACHER (CONT'D)

(furious)

Are you kidding me? Phones off
during class!

The students all silence their phones, mumbling apologies.

The girl in front of David sneaks a glance at her email: the
subject line is PICS FROM THIS WEEKEND!

As she opens the email....

CLOSE ON THE PHONE as we go...

*

INSIDE HER PHONE -

We follow the attachment as it COPIES EVERY NAME IN HER EXTENSIVE CONTACT LIST, and shoots off emails in EVERY DIRECTION.

What follows is an Outbreak-type montage of a computer virus spreading....

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA --

A SCHOOL SECURITY GUARD, playing Fruit Ninja on his iPhone, gets the email. Bored, he opens it...

CUT TO:

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

PRINCIPAL LOVETT is on the phone, bank statement in his hand, trying to figure out a charge for \$112.80 from BevMart.

PRINCIPAL
I know I didn't order it because
I'm in AA, you idiot.

An Outlook email notification appears in the corner of the screen: PICS FROM THIS WEEKEND!

As he clicks the email closed (smart move), we...

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA

Jake (the Hipster), eats lunch next to his hot girlfriend. Her phone DINGS with an email.

Jake sees the subject line, grabs it away from her.

GIRLFRIEND
Hey!

Jealous, he opens the email. The Virus shoots out through her phone book.

ANOTHER GIRL, two tables away, is checking out what Kim Kardashian ate for breakfast on Instagram. She gets the email too, but is too interested in Kim's pregnancy diet to care...

And so on.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY

David is leaving his classroom when he sees a TEACHER talking to a serious-looking guy in a black suit.

The TEACHER looks over in David's direction and POINTS.

David quickly turns around and walks other way.

He opens his locker when he sees another GUY IN A SUIT at the end of the hall. He's about to run off when Tyler appears at his locker.

TYLER

Can I copy your take-home quiz? My
google drive is acting up--

*

DAVID

I'm going home early.

TYLER

You don't look sick.

David grabs his skateboard and heads for the exit.

EXT. MARLBORO HIGH SCHOOL

David hops on his skateboard...

Just as a VAN pulls up. David's intercepted by a SWAT TEAM -- a DOZEN men in FBI VESTS crouched in a tactical stance, MP5s aimed directly at him.

SWAT LEADER

David Lightman!?

DAVID

What the--

SWAT LEADER

Hands!!!

David's face is frozen in terror. He glances side-to-side, totally bewildered. It's an impossible nightmare.

A few kids milling outside the school turn to stare as David slowly raises his arms. SWAT swarms, pushing him to the ground and CUFFING him.

*
*

CUT TO:

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

The multi dimensional graphic of the INTERNET is lighting up, as hundreds of thousands of EMAILS and MESSAGES (colored bright red) zip around the web. It looks like a cancerous tumor, spreading through an enormous brain.

MATTHEWS looks up at the graphic, Ronald next to him.

MATTHEWS

When did this start?

RONALD

Earlier this morning. Over a million emails with the attachment, bouncing around.

MATTHEWS

Do we know what it is?

RONALD

We're analyzing the code now.

*

We see that the image of the virus infection on the big board is growing bigger by the second.

*
*

CUT TO:

EXT. FEDERAL BUILDING - NEWARK, NJ - DAY

The BLACK SUBURBAN carrying David pulls under the red-brick high-rise that houses the FBI'S Field Office in NEWARK.

HEALY (V.O.)

Lightman, David. Let's see what we got. In 2010, you hacked Delta's reservation system so your sister could join her class trip to Paris.

*
*

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - FBI FIELD OFFICE

David sits at a desk across from Agent Healy. Healy has a FILE open in front of him that he reads from. A CAMERA records everything from the corner of the room.

HEALY

2012, your mother's credit rating improved, overnight, from 690 to 810. Wonder how that happened?

David stays silent, not wanting to get himself in any more trouble.

HEALY (CONT'D)

Gave your friend Tyler one million points on Xbox live. Really clever stuff, I'm impressed.

*
*

Healy pushes the file aside.

HEALY (CONT'D)

Then forty hours ago, you release one of the most potent viruses ever created.

DAVID

It wasn't me. It was this other guy, Joshua.

HEALY

Joshua?

DAVID

Yes. He was a friend of my father. Or someone he knew.

HEALY

He have a last name?

DAVID

I don't know.

HEALY

So just Joshua?

DAVID

(getting frustrated)

He texted me. He said that he'd made his opening move, and he was about to make another.

*
*
*
*

HEALY

Okay.

DAVID

Check my phone if you don't believe me.

HEALY

I do believe you. I know you're
not the one behind this, David.

DAVID

(surprised)

You do?

HEALY

Of course, this is way out of your
league, you're into games and
stupid pranks. So help us find the
person who set you up.

DAVID

(relieved)

Thank you! Yes.

Healy slides a picture of DAVID AND JENNIFER across the
table. It's the two of them in the elevator, just before the
power went out.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Wait, what is....

AGENT HEALY

We know you hacked into Homeland
Security for her, erased her real
name from the system. We also know
she used a pseudonym to check in
the hotel.

DAVID

Are you kidding? She knows less
about this than I do...

AGENT HEALY

You tell us who she is now, maybe
we can make a deal.

DAVID

She has nothing to do with it. I
swear!

Healy's phone chirps. He glances down at it.

HEALY

Alright, David. But if we catch
her first - and we will catch her -
no deal for you. Think about it.

Healy heads for the door, leaving a panicked David behind.

CUT TO:

INT. LIGHTMAN HOME - DAY

ABBY is parked in her usual spot, at the kitchen table. Her laptop is open to Facebook, where she has a chat open, but most of her attention is focused on her phone, where she is scrolling through Instagram pages.

CLOSE ON HER PHONE -- Instead of the endless, tedious photos of funny cats and sunsets, people are posting images of lines at bank ATMs and airport kiosks.

Abby, uninterested, keeps paging through, looking for pictures from a One Direction concert, when...

The photos start disappearing.

One after another.

She closes out of the album, turns back to her Facebook newsfeed. As she's paging through her friend's posts, something even more horrifying happens...

Her FRIENDS are disappearing.

ABBY
What? No way.

Abby frantically tries to click on her friend's pages, but they keep disappearing.

Literally, one face after another, her social network grows smaller and smaller until her number of friends is "zero" and the site logs her off, leaving her with a "404 page not found" error message.

ABBY (CONT'D)
What's happening?!

Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, even her IM...

She's cut off from the world.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - DAY

David sits in the empty office, growing more and more nervous. He gets up and tries opening the door.

Of course, it's locked.

David looks around the room for something he can use. In the corner he notices...

A PHONE.

He rushes over to it.

CUT TO:

INT. TYLER'S ROOM - SAME

Tyler is in his room, surrounded by ACTION FIGURES and a massive scale model of some Medieval kingdom.

TYLER (INTO PHONE)

Hello?

DAVID (O.S.)

Dude, it's me.

TYLER

This better be good, I'm in the middle of something.

DAVID (O.S.)

Google this: "How do I hack a Corby system keypad doorlock?"

TYLER

(annoyed)

Now? I'm ambushing Ithilien!

DAVID (O.S.)

It's kind of urgent!

Tyler grabs his iPad and searches...

TYLER

(reading from a website)

"Corby systems provide the premiere security keypad used by law enforcement"... dude, what did you say this was for?

DAVID (O.S.)

Keep reading.

TYLER

Watchdog circuit, resets the processor, blah de blah... Here. The admin code is 0911.

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE

David types in the code. The display blinks out.

DAVID

Thanks.

TYLER

Yeah, whatever, are we gonna--

David hangs up.

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE

Healy enters the bullpen. All the agents are scrambling.
Agent Wu approaches him.

AGENT WU

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram...
everything's down.

*

HEALY

Let me take a look at it.

Agent Wu refers him to an open laptop. What looks like a
bunch of meaningless code to us seems readable to Healy.

He highlights a section...

HEALY (CONT'D)

That code look familiar to you?
It's got a MRxNet rootkit.

*

AGENT WU

Wasn't this part of...

HEALY

The Atlantic City virus. Pandora.
Yes it was.

*

Agent Healy considers the implications.

AGENT WU

It's like a piece of it broke off
and kept going.

*

HEALY

Like it's making another...

*

*

Healy turns to Wu.

HEALY

Another move. Shit.

*

Healy turns and starts running.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONFERENCE ROOM --

Healy is trying to reenter the room where he locked up David. He types in a code, rattles the door handle.

It's locked.

HEALY
What the hell?

Healy tries the keypad again, then the door handle. It won't budge. Another AGENT notices the commotion.

HEALY (CONT'D)
I can't get in--

The AGENT tends to the door handle, waves over another AGENT. As they struggle to get the door unlocked...

Healy stands on his tip-toes, trying to see inside the small window...

And sees that the conference room is empty.

HEALY (CONT'D)
The kid! Where's the kid?!

Wu and Healy scan the office.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE -- HALLWAY

David creeps along a row of cubicles. Then stops.

HIS POV -- A DESK IN A CUBICLE

Sitting on what must be Healy's desk, David's phone and backpack, his pawn jump drive attached to his house keys.

David grabs everything, and stuffs THE FILE HEALY WAS READING FROM into his bag for good measure. He is about to leave, when he notices that Healy's creaky, government-supplied desktop computer is ON.

He slips behind the keyboard and starts searching the FBI'S database.

The first term he enters is "Joshua"...

And ten thousand responses come up. There's a lot of people named Joshua.

He bails on that, tries "DR. SAMUEL MARKS".

*

A number of entries come up, only one of them marked "CLASSIFIED".

David clicks on that and Dr. Marks' file fills the page. A photo, address, professional biography...

David hits PRINT.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI - OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM

Healy races through the offices, heading for his desk. Other agents follow him...

*

*

HEALY

(to Agents)

Kid's smart, he'll go for his stuff.

*

*

They head right for Healy's cubicle. FROM A DISTANCE, it looks like someone is sitting in his chair.

*

As they come up to the cubicle, they see...

His chair, spinning. Empty.

And all David's stuff is gone.

CUT TO:

INT. BULLPEN - FBI FIELD OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

David is making his way through the main part of the office, another open bullpen of cubicles.

He slows, trying to appear calm. He notices he's the only guy there not wearing a suit jacket.

DAVID

(to himself)

Act like you belong here.

As he walks, he casually swipes a jacket from someone's desk. He finds CIGARETTES in the inside pocket.

He spots an EXIT STAIRWELL just as...

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - BULLPEN

Agent Healy comes sprinting into the bullpen.

Healy's POV... scanning the room over the tops of the cubicles. David, SUIT JACKET over his shoulder, looks like any other AGENT from behind.

*

Healy looks directly at the back of David's head. Then moves on... as David continues calmly toward the EXIT. He's almost there when...

HEALY

David!!!

David hesitates half a step... enough to draw Healy's attention...

HEALY (CONT'D)

There!

And David takes off running...

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWELL - FBI FIELD OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

David bounds into the stairwell and down three flights...

BOOM!

Five floors up, the door SLAMS behind Healy as he enters the STAIRWELL.

David continues sprinting down...

HEALY

David, don't do this! You're making this a lot worse than it needs to be.

David finally reaches the ground floor.

He tries the door... it's LOCKED. He punches his new default password into the keypad...

...as Healy's footsteps grow louder, closer...

HEALY (CONT'D)

I'm willing to listen, David. I've been in your shoes before. Trust me, you're in over your head!

David looks up to see Healy leaning over the railing above, looking right at him.

He pauses for a moment, wondering if he really can trust Healy...

Then makes up his mind.

HEALY (CONT'D)
This isn't a game!

David's code works, the door OPENS, he pushes through...

INT. LOBBY - FBI FIELD OFFICE

David now emerges into the lobby. He walks calmly towards the exit.

INT. STAIRWELL - FBI FIELD OFFICE

HEALY reaches the ground floor where David just was. He reaches for the door handle, tries entering the code...

Locked.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING GARAGE --

David finds a parked PRIUS in the corner of a massive garage. He lifts the windshield-wiper and finds the VIN number etched below it.

David quickly enters the VIN into that "RFID Emulator" on his iPhone.

After a beat, the screen reads: *Smart-Key Signature Identified.*

David approaches the door and presses the GREEN "Open" button on the iPhone's screen. CHIRP! CHIRP! The vehicle unlocks...

INT. STOLEN PRIUS

... and David sits in the driver's seat. He looks down at his hands, which are shaking. Takes a breath. Then starts driving.

CUT TO:

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

On the MAIN SCREEN, the infection has spread, the "tumor" inside the graphic now five times the size.

Matthews glances at it with some concern, then looks down at his phone.

MATTHEWS

Damnit.

Ronald approaches.

MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

(referring to his phone)

Hey, you getting any cell service?
I've got zero bars. And no wifi.

RONALD

Sir, it's Chief of Staff Condit.

MATTHEWS

Tell her I'll call back.

RONALD

No, Sir. She's here.

Matthews turns to see Condit, with a phalanx of aides, entering the room.

RONALD(V.O.)

The closest equivalent simulation
is a Stuxnet/Virus Hybrid.

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

ON THE MAIN SCREEN

We watch a highly complex scenario, showing the viral infection of the internet, with myriad responses and counter responses from governments and their military.

CONDIT

(under her breath)

I need a translator.

RONALD

It's a virus with the properties of
a worm.

As the scenario plays out, it makes the thermonuclear war simulations look like a game of Checkers.

CONDIT

Wait. Is he saying that this is related to Atlantic City?

*

MATTHEWS

Possibly.

RONALD

Probably.

Matthews glares at Ronald.

CONDIT

Just tell me, what happens next?

RONALD

We're looking at a virus that does more than just spread; it burrows into systems and allows its operators to remotely disable control units.

*

*

*

MATTHEWS

We thought it was just level one disruptions, but now we believe we're looking at a level two incident.

*

*

*

*

*

CONDIT

What "levels" are you talking about?

*

*

*

RONALD steps in.

*

RONALD

Level one is referent problems; slowdowns from the volume of email, sites collapsing from increased traffic. Stuff like that. Social media and email systems are the first hit.

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

On the board, we see a graphic of this...

*

RONALD (CONT'D)

Level two, the virus directly penetrates and disrupts hard targets. Automated systems in electrical and water treatment plants, traffic control systems, communications and online banking.

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

CONDIT

Okay, I'll bite. What's level three?

MATTHEWS

It won't get that far.

CONDIT

What is level three?

RONALD

Our last line of defense, highly protected systems. The power grid, sensitive financial records, defense systems; JWICS, which keeps us in contact with the rest of the world, our most secure defense network.

MATTHEWS

But that requires getting past DOC, and that's not gonna happen.

CONDIT

Either way, level two qualifies as an act of war.

She turns to an AIDE.

CONDIT (CONT'D)

Get me General Beringer at the NMCC, the President is gonna want options on a military response.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL PRISON - VISITING ROOM -

Open on a giant, furry brown CATERPILLAR. No, wait, it's actually...

The Magnum PI/Rollie Fingers hardcore-80's facial hair of GARY "THE MUSTACHE". He's a pale guy in his late 40's, currently sporting a prison jumpsuit.

MUSTACHE

This is a tough one, lemme tell ya.

Reveal Healy and Agent Wu, seated across from the Mustache at a table in a visiting room at a WHITE COLLAR PRISON.

Spread across the table are printouts of information the FBI got from David's phone, specifically the texts from Joshua.

THE MUSTACHE

The text probably got bounced
around the planet ten times before
it got to this kid's phone. Doubt
the domain is traceable. If the guy
has any brains at all, he stole a
valid certificate, duped the
driver.

HEALY

That's why I came to you, Gary.
You're the only guy I know who can
track this for me.

THE MUSTACHE

I already got a job cleaning
dishes. Pays fifty cents an hour,
plus room and board. You were the
one who hooked me up, remember?

HEALY

You wanted to get caught.

THE MUSTACHE

You think so?

HEALY

A guy who uses "the mustache" as
his screen name, sporting that ball
duster?

Healy nods to Wu, who sets a laptop on the table. The
Mustache eyes it lustfully.

HEALY (CONT'D)

Go ahead, check it out.

The Mustache examines the laptop.

THE MUSTACHE

Core I7 processor. Sixteen gig
dual channel SDRAM. Not bad.

HEALY

Twenty four hours. That's how long
you've got with this baby. You
track down the IP address where
this message originated, maybe you
get internet privileges back for
the rest of your sentence.

The Mustache runs his fingers over the keyboard, clearly
tempted.

THE MUSTACHE

This isn't like you, Healy.

HEALY

I'm trying to be more trusting. New Year's Resolution.

The Mustache considers. Finally...

THE MUSTACHE

If I do this, I'm gonna need coffee, some power bars, and a seat cushion for my back.

HEALY

(not writing anything)

I'm writing this down, seat cushion, check.

Healy stands, his mission complete. He and Wu exit...

CUT TO:

INT. MINIMUM SECURITY PRISON

Healy and Wu are heading out when Wu gets a message on his phone.

WU

Sir... I think we got something.

HEALY

Wow, he is fast.

WU

No, the girl. Damn, load time is slow.

On his phone, he shows him a FILE PHOTO of JENNIFER, next to the image from the elevator, a clear match.

WU (CONT'D)

Her name is Jennifer Brand. Two days ago, she was on the Homeland Security watch list. Not anymore.

Healy stares at the pictures.

HEALY

Poor kid, thinking with his pecker. Where are we on her?

WU
Located, units on the way.

Off a newly energized Healy...

CUT TO:

INT. HUNTER HIGH SCHOOL - MANHATTAN

A COMPUTER LAB full of hot, rowdy STUDENTS. A TEACHER tries to maintain order...

TEACHER
Who knew our air conditioners are
also controlled by computers?

A collective GROAN from the STUDENTS, including JENNIFER, in the back row.

TEACHER (CONT'D)
But maintenance is working on it!

The teacher turns back to the projector. Jennifer slithers out of her seat and heads for the door, taking a forged HALL PASS out of her pocket...

EXT. HUNTER HIGH SCHOOL - MANHATTAN

David pulls over on Park Avenue, near the backside of the school. He dodges traffic to cross the street and is almost to the fence, when...

...two CROWN VICS come screeching around the corner. David freezes, but they HURTLE right past him, SIRENS WAILING, before stopping at the school's main entrance.

DAVID
Shit...

The FEDS unload from their cars. David ducks from view and thinks a beat. He takes out his iPhone, looks up the high school's scheduling system...

And finds Jennifer's class schedule.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - HUNTER HIGH SCHOOL

TWO FEDS are following the PRINCIPAL toward Jennifer's classroom...

PRINCIPAL

Her Computer Science class is right
down here...

EXT. HUNTER HIGH SCHOOL - COURTYARD - SAME

Jennifer is out in the courtyard with a GUY.

David fights a pang of jealousy as he waves to her. She walks
over to him.

JENNIFER

(shocked)
David?

DAVID

Hey.

JENNIFER

How did you find me?

DAVID

Hacked your schedule. Had a hunch
that you might be skipping your
computer class today. Given your
attendance record.

JENNIFER

Wow, this got weird fast.

DAVID

Look, I know this is going to sound
crazy, but you need to come with
me. Now.

Jennifer glances over at her guy friend.

JENNIFER

(hushed)
I said I'd see you next week. How
'bout we start over then?

David leans in so the guy can't hear.

DAVID

Jennifer, I'm not stalking you.
There are a bunch of FBI agents
here looking for you. I'm dead
serious.

Jennifer stares at David, not sure whether to believe him.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Please. You gotta trust me.

Jennifer bites her lip, thinking. She glances back at the school then makes a decision.

JENNIFER
(to her friend)
Tell Mr. Godfrey I went to the
nurse's office. Say girl problems,
he won't ask twice.

*
*
*
*
*

The guy nods in response. Jennifer climbs the short, locked fence.

*

A relieved David helps her down, just as...

FBI AGENTS spill out into the courtyard, looking for Jennifer.

DAVID
See?

JENNIFER
Holy crap. Is this about taking me
off the no-fly list? You said we
wouldn't get in trouble--

DAVID
It's a little more serious than
that.

David takes Jennifer's hand, as they start to RUN...

DAVID (CONT'D)
No wonder you're getting a D in
computer sci, you never go.

JENNIFER
You looked at my...

DAVID
Don't worry, I fixed it. Gave you
an A.

Jennifer swats him.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Ow, I was kidding.

*

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET --

*

We follow a guy in a BUSINESS SUIT as he tries to tap out a text on his blackberry. It's not working.

*
*

He passes a FEDEX GUY, trying to get a signature from
someone, but his electronic tablet is crapping out. *

IN STARBUCKS, no one can get their WIFI connections working. *

They all start complaining to the baristas, who are having *

their own problems with the registers. *

UP AND DOWN THE STREET *

Everyone's wired life is crumbling before their eyes. *

A CAR WIPES FRAME, we follow it... *

CUT TO: *

I/E. FIRST AVENUE/PRIUS -- *

David and Jennifer drive up 1st avenue. *

JENNIFER *

Before I just couldn't buy a plane *

ticket. Thanks to you I'm actually *

a criminal. *

DAVID *

I'm really sorry. *

JENNIFER *

You should've told me you'd never *

hacked a government website before. *

David stops at a red light. *

Jennifer looks out the window: people are crowded around a TV
SET in an ELECTRONICS STORE window. Unable to get the news
on their phones, everyone strains to watch a TV report.

REPORTER (ON TV)

The spread of the so-called Pandora
virus has already crippled the most
popular sites on the web.

David strains to see the report. He doesn't notice the light
turn green, but a CAB next to him guns it and pulls out into
the intersection. *

Suddenly there's a SCREECH...

David and Jennifer look up in time to see two CARS COLLIDE
right in front of them, under a traffic light now blinking in
dysfunction.

Jennifer gestures to the increasing chaos...

JENNIFER
Jesus! This is all because of us?

DAVID
It's because of Joshua.

JENNIFER
Who the hell is Joshua?

DAVID
I don't know.

Traffic starts moving again, barely.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Look, is there someplace you can
go? Where they won't know to come
looking for you?

JENNIFER
Why?

DAVID
I'm gonna drop you off.

JENNIFER
And what're you gonna do?

DAVID
I don't know. Hide, I guess.

JENNIFER
No. You can't just give up.
You're too smart to give up.

DAVID
(panicking)
I'm not some mastermind hacker, I'm
just a kid who likes playing games.

JENNIFER
That's a crap excuse and you know
it. You just broke out of the FBI,
David. And you could have run, but
you came to help me instead.

DAVID
I know, but...

JENNIFER
There has to be some clue we can
follow, some way to figure out what
we did.

David motions to the PRINTOUT from the FBI Office.

*

DAVID

There's this Marks guy.

*

JENNIFER

Well come on, that's a start.

Jennifer picks it up and leafs through it.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Former hacker and "phone phreak?"
What the heck is that?

DAVID

Before everyone used the internet,
people hacked the phone lines.
Marks worked with my Dad, but he
dropped off the radar five years
ago.

JENNIFER

There's an address here for him, on
the second page. Let's go see him.

DAVID

I don't know, he might not believe
us--

*

*

JENNIFER

David. What did your dad say, get
out and do something useful?

*

*

This gets to David. He turns to look at her.

*

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Well? This is your chance.

*

*

Hold on David, realizing that she's right.

*

CUT TO:

INT. BLUFFSIDE - SITUATION ROOM

*

On the MAIN SCREEN, the internet graphic shows us that the
virus has spread further. There is a LIST, a tally of systems
directly affected by the virus.

*

*

*

-- TRAFFIC SYSTEMS IN NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON D.C.

*

-- ISOLATED STEP DOWN PLANTS IN THE CAROLINAS, leading to
local blackouts

*

*

-- AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL in regional airports

Condit and Matthews watch a BLANK WINDOW with the symbol for
JWICS - the Pentagon's command & control network.

An NSA Aide approaches Matthews...

NSA AIDE

Sir, Agent Healy's trying to reach
you. He says it's urgent.

MATTHEWS

Patch him through.

NSA AIDE

(embarrassed)

Uh, we're having some problems with
the call routers. You need to use
the secure hard line.

MATTHEWS

In building two? That's halfway
across campus.

The Aide shrugs.

MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Keep the golf cart warm, I'll be
out in five minutes.

The NSA Aide exits, leaving Condit and Matthews waiting
impatiently in front of the vidlink window.

CONDIT

Is this part of the slowdown?

MATTHEWS

No, we're on a separate Net, this
is probably just Beringer making us
wait.

ONSCREEN -- BERINGER'S FACE COMES UP

Now we INTERCUT BETWEEN THE NMCC AND BLUFFSIDE...

BERINGER

Ms. Condit, Director Matthews, to
what do I owe this wonderful
surprise?

CONDIT

General, this cyber attack now qualifies as a national security issue. We need to discuss a military response.

BERINGER

And who exactly would you like me to attack? The clouds?

MATTHEWS

(under his breath)

It's "the cloud", asshole.

(to Ronald)

Have DOC bring up the list of potential foreign targets.

*

RONALD

DOC's been tracing the virus back to its source. Based on markers in the code, he's been able to narrow down the possible culprits.

*

*

*

*

A list of countries and organizations comes up onscreen...

RONALD (CONT'D)

Iran. North Korea. Russia. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Mahgreb. Pakistan....

Beringer laughs.

BERINGER

Anyone else? We've got plenty of nukes, why not throw Canada in there too?

MATTHEWS

The number will get smaller.

*

*

CONDIT

General, the President wants response scenarios...

BERINGER

We'll kick it up to Defcon 3, but I can't do anything with that laundry list. And Matthews?

*

*

*

MATTHEWS

Yes, General?

BERINGER

I want some real evidence of who's
behind this, cause I sure as hell
don't trust your fancy machine.

*

Beringer signs off.

*

CUT TO:

INT. ICU - SEACAUCUS HOSPITAL

Barely controlled CHAOS in the ICU. In every room, LIFE
SUPPORT MONITORS beep in WARNING.

David's Mom, staying calm amid the frenzy in the hospital,
backs out of one room...

MOM

Monitor his pulse manually. Every
ninety seconds.

... and rushes into another, where a YOUNG WOMAN lies in a
coma. Another NURSE stands at the bedside, paralyzed...

NURSE

(panicked)

The respirator just stopped
working!

Mom strides past, fits an OXYGEN BAG over the woman's mouth,
pumping rhythmically. She turns to the nurse...

MOM

You got it?

The NURSE nods.

MOM (CONT'D)

We'll pump in shifts. Call me when
you get tired.

A HOSPITAL RECEPTIONIST pops her head into the room.

*

RECEPTIONIST

Nurse Lightman? Call for you.

*

*

MOM

I'm a bit busy...

*

*

RECEPTIONIST

It's your son.

*

*

CUT TO:

*

INT. ICU - FRONT DESK

David's Mom picks up the landline phone...

MOM (INTO PHONE)
David? Are you alright?

EXT. GAS STATION - SOMEWHERE IN DELAWARE

David talks on a pay phone, a line of about twenty grumpy people waiting behind him.

DAVID
I'm fine, Mom. Listen, I don't have much time to talk. Do you know anything about a guy named Joshua?

INTERCUT --

Mom shakes her head, confused.

MOM
Joshua? No, but...

DAVID
But what, Mom?

MOM
(a bit nostalgic)
Well... when you were born, your father and I couldn't agree on a name. He wanted Joshua. We flipped a coin and I won.
(confused)
But what does this have to do with anything? David, tell me where you are.

David looks at Jennifer.

DAVID
I'm at Tyler's--

MOM
Do not lie to me, David. Tell me what is going on.

David sighs. No use lying anymore.

DAVID
(trying to remember everything)
(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

I'm somewhere in Delaware with a girl named Jennifer. I escaped FBI headquarters this morning because they think I unleashed a global virus. Last weekend I was at Defcon... I was never even on the debate team. And when I told you Abby left the garage door open yesterday, that was really me.

MOM

David--

DAVID

I'm sorry about all this, Mom. I love you.

David hangs up.

INT. ICU - SEACAUCUS HOSPITAL

David's Mom looks at the phone, concerned.

HEALY (O.S.)

Mrs. Lightman?

David's Mom turns to see...

A group of FBI AGENTS waiting for her, Healy at the front.

HEALY (CONT'D)

We need to talk about David.

CUT TO:

EXT. KOREAN DMZ - NIGHT

A U.S. INFANTRY COMPANY jumps out of HUMVEES, lining up on the fence-line.

REVERSE ANGLE: A NORTH KOREAN SOLDIER watches through NIGHTVISION. He reaches for the radio in a panic.

CUT TO:

EXT. NATO BASE - LATVIAN - RUSSIAN BORDER - DAY

A line of CHINOOKS unloads a company of MARINES on an isolated air-strip...

CUT TO:

EXT. PERSIAN GULF

An aircraft carrier comes about and heads west through the Persian Gulf.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A TV SCREEN

*

A CNN news report unfolds...

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)
The cyber attack that began last night is showing no signs of slowing down.

INT. CHINCOTEAGUE FERRY - TICKET BOOTH

Reveal we are at a FERRY DOCK on the Virginia coast, where a mob of people are watching the news report on TV.

*

NEWS ANCHOR
Newly affected systems include traffic control, GPS and online ticketing. Meanwhile, the FBI continues its search for David Warren Lightman, a teenager from Marlboro, New Jersey.

*
*
*
*
*
*

DAVID (O.S.)
My middle name!

*
*

FIND DAVID AND JENNIFER

*

Standing at the back of the crowd, David is stripping off the HOODIE he is wearing in the news photo.

*
*

DAVID (CONT'D)
Did you hear that, they used my middle name!

*
*
*

JENNIFER
So what?

*
*

DAVID
Mark David Chapman, Lee Harvey Oswald, James Earl Ray? The middle name means you're guilty.

*
*
*
*

JENNIFER

Except you're not. Well, not completely.

DAVID

Thanks a lot, helpful.

JENNIFER

Bigger problem is, how are we gonna get on that ferry?

BY THE WATER

A DOCK WORKER at the loading ramp is dealing with an unruly crowd.

DOCK WORKER

Listen everyone, our system is down, you gotta have a printed ticket.

The crowd lets out a collective groan...

PEDESTRIAN

I bought my ticket last week!

PEDESTRIAN 2

I have my reservation confirmation right here--

The overwhelmed Dock Worker tries to quell the mob as people get increasingly frustrated.

David turns to Jennifer...

DAVID

If the system was up, I could change someone else's reservation.

JENNIFER

Damn it.

DAVID

I'm sorry. What do you want from me?

JENNIFER

No, it's not that. I just... I promised myself I wouldn't do this anymore.

DAVID

Do what?

She grabs a FLYER WITH THE FERRY TIMES on it, hands it to David.

*
*

JENNIFER
Wait two minutes. Then walk up to the front and hand it to me.

DAVID
A schedule?

Jennifer narrows her eyes at the Dock Worker, reads his name tag: STEVE.

*
*

JENNIFER
Trust me.

*

Steve the Dock Worker is desperately trying to calm everyone down, when he hears a voice.

*

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
Hey, Steve!

Steve turns to see Jennifer.

*

STEVE
Do I know you?

JENNIFER
What a mess, huh? Mr. Heyward sent me over to help out.

STEVE
Mr. Heyward?

JENNIFER
He owns the company that owns the charter. You don't know him?

STEVE
No, I...

JENNIFER
Well, don't worry, I won't tell him about this mess.

*

She turns to the crowd of people. Whistles loudly.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
Ladies and Gentleman, if you'll direct your attention over here? First of all, everyone will get on a ferry, we have two more boats headed down from the other Dock.

*

STEVE

Wait... what other dock?

*

Jennifer mouths "trust me."

JENNIFER

So let's stop panicking, okay? If you have a reservation, even if you don't, we will get you on a boat within twenty minutes.

This calms the crowd considerably, although Steve is going pale.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

In the meantime, please let all of those with a printed ticket come to the front.

The crowd grudgingly begins to shift back, grow more orderly. A few people hand Jennifer tickets. She tears them and motions them forward.

David is the next person, he hands her the flyer, which Jennifer promptly tears up before anyone gets a look at it.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Get on board sir, people waiting.

David smiles at her as he passes.

Jennifer tears another ticket, then hands the stubs to Steve.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Good job, Steve.

She pats him on the back and follows David onboard.

*

CUT TO:

*

EXT. CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND

A barrier island off the coast of Virginia. A single gravel road circles the island, a few dozen houses scattered along the way.

David and Jennifer walk together, looking for the right house number.

*

They stop in front of a white brick farmhouse. David holds up his phone.

DAVID
No wifi, no satellite dish...

He motions to the telephone wires; they bypass this house.

DAVID (CONT'D)
No hard line. If you're looking to
drop off the grid...

JENNIFER
... this is where you'd live.

They walk up to the front door.

DAVID
So what should we...

Jennifer is already knocking.

JENNIFER
Dr. Marks?

No answer. She tries the door. It's open.

DAVID
Wait, Jennifer...

But she's already inside.

CUT TO:

INT. MARKS HOUSE - FOYER

The house is dark except for the glow coming off of rows of
plants growing in HYDROPONIC UNITS. The effect is surreal.

DAVID
Damn, what's that smell?

JENNIFER
It would suck if he was dead in
here.

DAVID
Why would you say that?

JENNIFER
I don't know, I'm nervous. I say
whatever pops into my head when I'm
nervous.

David gives her a look.

DAVID

That's not a good habit. *

Jennifer walks into the next room.

INT. STUDY - MARKS HOUSE

The two of them enter a STUDY, filled with books, including stacks about gardening for fun and profit.

JENNIFER

Hey...

David turns to see Jennifer staring at something on the wall. A PHOTO of two geeky YOUNG MEN in a UNIVERSITY COMPUTER LAB, circa 1996. One wears a Mets hat.

The other is David's father.

DAVID

I think we're in the right place.

The sound of a shotgun cocking startles them both. They turn to see...

MARKS

No you aren't.

It's DR. MARKS, and he's POINTING A SHOTGUN right at them.

CUT TO:

INT. BLUFFSIDE - SECURE COMMUNICATION SUITE *

A cramped, soundproofed room with a small desk and an old-school hard-line TELEPHONE SYSTEM and FAX MACHINE. Matthews is on the phone, while a NSA AIDE idles nearby. *

MATTHEWS

(into phone) *

Samuel Marks? He worked for me, what about him? *

INT. HEALY'S CUBICLE - DAY *

While Healy talks on the phone, Agent Wu pores through mountains of PAPER FILES nearby. *

HEALY

His whereabouts are listed as classified. *

(MORE) *

HEALY (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

And we can't log into our database.

Reveal on Healy's desk, an old PICTURE of Samuel Marks holding a METS FOAM BIG FINGER GLOVE, from his government ID photo.

INTERCUT --

Matthews turns to the NSA Aide.

MATTHEWS

Get the file.

(to Healy)

What do you want with Marks?

HEALY

Lightman's mother thinks he might be able to help us find her son.

MATTHEWS

Wait a minute, did you say Lightman?

HEALY

Yeah...

MATTHEWS

Alan Lightman's been dead for years.

HEALY

Don't know Alan, we're looking for the son. David.

Matthews can't believe it.

MATTHEWS

Hold on. Alan Lightman's son is responsible for letting the Pandora virus out?

HEALY

You been in the spa all day? We've been updating your office...

MATTHEWS

(frustrated)

Our email servers have been down. And my phone... never mind.

The NSA Aide returns with a file under his arm.

HEALY

Well, turn on your TV. His name is
plastered all over the news.

The NSA Aide feeds the top page into the scanner.

AIDE

Coming through now.

MATTHEWS

Agent Healy, something's not right
here. I think you should give me a
full briefing.

HEALY

Wish there was time, Director.
Thanks for the address. I'll text
you when we get something solid.

MATTHEWS

Text? Wait, I'm not getting any
service!

But Healy has already hung up.

MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

Damnit.

Off Matthews, concerned about where this is leading...

CUT TO:

INT. MARKS HOUSE

Marks keeps the shotgun trained on the two of them.

MARKS

I don't know what you two
crackheads think you're gonna
steal, but you broke in to the
wrong house.

JENNIFER

Crackheads? You are out of touch.

DAVID

We're not here to steal anything,
Dr. Marks. We came to see you.

Marks raises the gun again.

MARKS

How the hell do you know my name?

DAVID

Because my name is David Lightman.

That hits Marks like a ton of bricks. *

He lowers the shotgun, suddenly friendly. *

MARKS

Why didn't you say so? Come on in.

Jennifer stands her ground.

JENNIFER

You gonna put the shotgun away?

Marks looks at Jennifer, then over at David.

MARKS

Who is she?

DAVID

She's my... girl... friend.

Jennifer cocks an eyebrow.

JENNIFER

Girlfriend?

DAVID

I mean, friend, girl who's a friend. We don't need to label it.

JENNIFER

(shrugs)

We could label.

DAVID

(excited)

We could?

David and Jennifer follow Marks into the other room. *

INT. MARKS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Marks' living room is decorated in a mish-mash of styles. The only electronic item is a TV with a makeshift antennae that sticks out the window. *

David stops to check out a signed, framed Daryl Strawberry jersey.

DAVID

Who's Daryl Strawberry?

MARKS

Seriously? The state of education
in this country is mind-boggling.

*
*

Marks gazes at the jersey, pensive.

MARKS (CONT'D)

The Mets are my one vice from
civilization. I left everything
else behind.

*

DAVID

Everything?

MARKS

Yeah, even my kids. I haven't
spoken to them in twelve years.

*

David and Jennifer exchange a glance.

MARKS (CONT'D)

That was a joke. I don't have
kids. You guys gotta lighten up.
Want something to drink? Beer?
Something harder?

*
*

They look at him, not sure if he's kidding again.

CUT TO:

INT. MARKS HOUSE - STUDY

*

David and Jennifer have glasses of water. Marks sips from a
colorful Mai Tai garnished with a mini umbrella, looking at
the texts on David's phone.

*
*
*

DAVID

That's the last one I got from him.

*
*

MARKS

(reading)

"I've made my opening move." So
that was Atlantic City. Test out
DOC's defenses. Probe with his
bishop.

*
*
*
*
*
*

(another one)

"DOC's not putting up much of a
fight." That's Joshua all right.

*
*
*

DAVID

It's like he's taunting me.

*
*

MARKS

He's not taunting you, he's telling
you his strategy.

JENNIFER

He's definitely gloating. And he's
trying to pin it on David.

Marks starts laughing.

MARKS

That's not the way Joshua works.

JENNIFER

What exactly is so funny?

MARKS

The fact that you guys are
attributing all these emotions to
Joshua. Your father would've taken
a certain amount of pride in that.

DAVID

I don't understand.

MARKS

No. You don't.

He pauses a moment.

MARKS (CONT'D)

Your Dad named Joshua while he was
still working on chess programs. It
stuck when he got recruited by the
D.O.D.

(beat)

Joshua isn't a person. He's a
computer program.

David and Jennifer exchange a bewildered glance.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - CARPARK

Healy and a group of agents, on the run, move quickly towards
a row of suburbans. A CYBER AGENT catches up.

CYBER AGENT(O.S.)

Healy! Agent Healy!

Healy turns to see the Agent waving a piece of paper.

HEALY

Is that...

CYBER AGENT

A fax, yes sir. From the Fairton
Men's Correctional Facility.

Healy looks at Wu, intrigued.

HEALY

The Mustache found something.

WU

Two faxes in one day. We're
kickin' it nineties style.

HEALY

Don't say that again, ever, okay?

Healy looks over the paper. It's a long IP ADDRESS, with
some scrawled notes around it.

HEALY (CONT'D)

This mean anything to you?

He shows it to Agent Wu, who shakes his head.

HEALY (CONT'D)

Never seen that suffix before. The
Mustache better not be messing with
us.

AGENT WU

Maybe some sort of military
protocol? ARPANET?

HEALY

Maybe.

Healy tucks the printout in his jacket pocket, then climbs
into the Suburban.

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM --

The year is 1997. GARRY KASPAROV sits across from DEEP BLUE,
agitated. He keeps staring down at the chessboard, then back
over at the IBM Team.

MARKS (V.O.)

To give you some context here,
Kasparov was the greatest chess
player in the world at this point.
Maybe ever.

He says something in Russian. It's clear he's frustrated.

MARKS (V.O.)

So watch, this is the good part.
Only nineteen moves in, he resigns.

KASPAROV pushes away from the table, visibly angry. Murmurs
and shocked looks throughout the room...

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

INT. MARKS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Marks, David and Jennifer are watching the footage on his
laptop. The TV is on in the background, but no one's
watching.

MARKS

He actually accused the IBM team of
cheating, said they were using a
real human, because no machine
would make those moves.

DAVID

That's crazy.

MARKS

This is what got your father jazzed
about chess programs. The place
where complexity bled into
intelligence. The idea that
programs could think, and learn.

JENNIFER

That's pretty cool.

MARKS

Alan was a pretty cool guy. He
recruited me to work on Joshua. I
was with him when the government
called, made an offer he couldn't
refuse.

DAVID

They threatened him?

*
*
*
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*

MARKS

No, it was money. It just sounded more dramatic.

Marks gets up to freshen his drink.

MARKS (CONT'D)

The government wanted Joshua to compete against their new strong AI security software. They called him DOC. They thought he would learn from Joshua.

DAVID

So what happened?

MARKS

The opposite. Joshua learned from him. Pretty soon, DOC couldn't beat him. Even in cyber war simulations, every game ended in stalemate.

DAVID

That must have pissed 'em off.

MARKS

You bet. But your Dad warned them. The whole "fortress cyber america" thing, he told 'em it would never work.

DAVID

So why didn't they scrap DOC?

MARKS

They'd spent too much money, too much was on the line. So they went the other direction. They fired your Dad.

DAVID

How did that solve anything?

MARKS

It didn't, but it kept the money flowing. They told us they purged Joshua from the system.

(nods at David's phone)

Guess they were wrong.

DAVID

Then how did I manage to let Joshua out?

Something on the television screen catches Jennifer's eye.
She gets up to check it out.

Marks leans closer to David.

MARKS

Your dad was very cautious. He
warned them not to turn Joshua into
a virus in the first place. Said
it was like making smallpox
airborne.

DAVID

But they did it anyway.

MARKS

(to himself)

Wait, is smallpox airborne?
Whatever, you get the point.

(back on topic)

The first thing he did was make a
failsafe: he was the only one who
could use Joshua, he had to be
logged in.

DAVID

And Joshua thinks I'm my Dad.

JENNIFER (O.S.)

Uh, guys?

Jennifer turns up the volume on the TV, broadcasting a news
report.

MALE NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

The situation has escalated on
multiple fronts, with tensions
highest in Hormuz and North Korea.
The military has been taken to
Defcon 2, the most severe alert
since 9/11.

Now they all watch the report, the harsh reality sinking in.

DAVID

They think some foreign country
launched this virus.

MARKS

That's Joshua, he's got DOC running
in circles. No idea what's coming
next.

Marks refers to the split-screen news report.

MALE NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

Closer to home, malfunctions in
critical infrastructure systems
have gone from mild inconveniences
to major catastrophes in a matter
of hours...

PUSH IN on the images on TV...

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - 76 GAS STATION

Traffic is backed up all along the California coast. A long
line of stranded cars fills the gas station.

An employee hangs up a sign: OUT OF GAS.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - THE BELLAGIO

The great Bellagio Fountain has drained, now void of its
artificial majesty.

INT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING --

A large crowd has gathered in one of the building's MASSIVE
ELEVATORS.

It FREEZES between floors. People start to panic.

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

While the main screen tracks the latest spread of the virus,
Condit teleconferences with Beringer on a nearby monitor.

CONDIT

The Iranians are countering our
movements in the Gulf.

Beringer looks troubled. He addresses COL. WADE FRANCONI,
Commanding Officer of the NATO outpost, on ANOTHER MONITOR...

BERINGER

Colonel, we are detecting a
squadron of enemy aircraft. What
is your SAM capability?

There's a long pause.

COL. FRANCONI

I've got a single Patriot battery,
sir.

(beat)

Did you say a *squadron*?

BERINGER

Get our birds in the air, Colonel.

Franconi darts off-screen as Beringer turns to Condit in the
terminal room.

BERINGER (CONT'D)

Our Defcon preparations are causing
ripple effects. Our opponents are
panicking.

CONDIT

Or could *their* show of force be a
response to *ours*?

BERINGER

What's DOC saying about this?
Matthews?!

RONALD

He's on his way back across campus.

BERINGER

How long is that gonna take?

RONALD

Well, all of our electric cars
started malfunctioning.

Beringer's losing patience.

BERINGER

Is your crystal ball any closer to
giving me a target?

RONALD

DOC has narrowed it down to three
potential foreign sources of the
virus.

BERINGER

We better make up our minds soon.
If the virus gets to level three
targets, our communications get
compromised.

RONALD

DOC is telling us there's no
intrusions into the system. Level
three is secure.

BERINGER

He better be right.

And off that...

CUT TO:

INT. WHITEMAN AIR FORCE BASE --

The main ground control station for unmanned Predator drone
missions.

We find a SENSOR OPERATOR, a twenty-three-year-old kid in
military dress, sitting at his terminal, eating his lunch.

He gets a message with an official DIGITAL SIGNATURE:

CLASSIFIED LAUNCH ORDER

He fumbles with his sandwich and starts ENTERING THE
COORDINATES into his terminal...

EXT. WHITEMAN AIR FORCE BASE, MISSOURI --

Two of the PREDATOR B DRONES on the airstrip begin to move.

INT. WHITEMAN AIR FORCE BASE

The BASE COMMANDER sits in his office, doing paperwork, when
he sees something moving out of the corner of his eye...

He turns to see the TWO DRONES ROLLING DOWN THE RUNWAY.

COMMANDER

What the hell?

He goes to check his flight manifest. Then he picks up the
phone.

EXT. WHITEMAN AIR FORCE BASE -- TARMAC

The two Predator Drones take off from the runway, then split
and head in OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS.

CUT TO:

INT. MARKS HOUSE

The TV screen is now just static. Jennifer fiddles with the antennae.

MARKS

Don't bother, that's the signal.
They've stopped transmitting.

JENNIFER

Is that bad?

MARKS

It is for me. Mets are playing at
seven-thirty.

*

DAVID

Dr. Marks, you gotta come with us.
You have to tell them what you
know.

MARKS

They won't listen to me, they never
did.

JENNIFER

You have to try. Come on, the next
ferry is in twenty minutes!

Marks shakes his head.

MARKS

No way am I getting on that thing.
It's a death trap...

DAVID

Dr. Marks, civilization is
crumbling, you have to--

MARKS

... we'll take my speedboat.

David and Jennifer exchange a glance as Marks exits.

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

Meet me by the water.

CUT TO:

*

EXT. CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND SHORELINE - DUSK

*

David and Jennifer wait on the beach for Marks.

*

DAVID

This is the first time I've ever
been to the beach.

JENNIFER

Seriously? How do you grow up so
close to the ocean and never go to
the beach?

David shrugs.

DAVID

My Dad warned me not to spend all
my time in front of a computer.
Kinda wish I had heard that before.

David curls his toes in his sand.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I always wanted to find out who he
really was. But I don't feel
better, I'm just kind of... sad.

JENNIFER

That's not such a bad thing.
You're supposed to be sad.

DAVID

I guess so.

JENNIFER

At least you finally found out who
he really was.

DAVID

Just in time for the apocalypse.

JENNIFER

You really think it'll be that bad?

David turns to her, takes her hand.

DAVID

I don't know how bad its gonna be.
But we'll stick together, okay? Me
and you?

Jennifer nods. Then David kisses her.

Its a nice moment, the culmination of everything they've been
through...

And it lasts half a second until they are suddenly
ILLUMINATED by BLINDING SEARCHLIGHTS.

Over a loudspeaker...

HEALY (O.S.)
Lay down with your hands flat on
the ground! The area is
surrounded!

FBI AGENTS swarm in from every direction, guns trained on David and Jennifer. Healy steps forward.

Jennifer clutches David's arm as the faint sound of a HELICOPTER approaches...

CUT TO:

INT. NMCC --

Beringer is walking with an AIDE back towards the main monitoring center.

BERINGER
Who the hell authorized this?

AIDE
That's just it sir, nobody knows.
The orders came in with
confirmation signatures, but nobody
is taking responsibility for
sending it.

MATTHEWS (O.S.)
General?

Beringer turns to look at his VIDLINK TO BLUFFSIDE.

INT. BLUFFSIDE - SAME

Matthews, sweating and out of breath, has just rushed into the main room.

MATTHEWS
What the hell is going on?

BERINGER
I was about to ask you the same
thing. Someone who isn't us just
launched two of our heavily armed
drones. Have we had a level three
breach?

MATTHEWS

Not possible. Must be a problem on the ground.

BERINGER

It isn't.

MATTHEWS

DOC would tell us if...

RONALD

Sir?

They look up to see that DOC is flashing a warning...

LEVEL THREE BREACH

MATTHEWS

Shit.

CONDIT

Next he's gonna warn us about Pearl Harbor.

BERINGER

We're tracking the drone trajectories; one headed to D.C., the other to Los Angeles.

This raises the level of panic.

BERINGER (CONT'D)

If they hit anywhere, we better be ready to hit back. The joint chiefs and the president want to know our options, right now.

RONALD

DOC's given us three possible targets.

A visual comes up ONSCREEN:

Iranian Revolutionary Guard headquarters on the Iran-Iraq border. A terrorist cell in Shali, Chechnya. The Haeju Naval Base in North Korea.

RONALD (CONT'D)

He's estimating that a tactical strike on all three locations might knock this out, or at least slow it down.

MATTHEWS

(to himself)

I don't know. Maybe he's making a mistake.

BERINGER

I've scrambled fighters, but those drones are designed for naval battle, carrying surface to water tomahawks. Very fast, very powerful.

MATTHEWS

Maybe we should give DOC more time, Make sure he...

BERINGER

We don't have time. We've got birds in the air.

This is a sobering suggestion.

CONDIT

That's us starting a war.

BERINGER

I think it's been started for us.

CONDIT

Then I guess we don't have much choice.

BERINGER

Miss Condit, please get the President to the Rock. We are going to Defcon 1.

Everyone holds their breath...

EXT. ATLANTIC COAST --

The PREDATOR DRONE streaks up the East Coast, headed directly towards Washington, D.C.

CUT TO:

INT. HELICOPTER - LATER

Inside the FBI HELICOPTER, HEALY transports his suspects; David, Jennifer and Marks. As the helicopter passes over D.C. --

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT

THEIR POV -- THE CITY BELOW

Is nearly in pitch darkness. Looting is rampant. Street lights change sporadically, if they are on at all.

The President's fleet of MARINE ONE HELICOPTERS TAKES OFF from the White House south lawn.

JENNIFER

It's happening, everything's falling apart.

David turns to Healy.

DAVID

Agent Healy, we need to stop this. Locking us up isn't going to help.

HEALY

I know.

MARKS

You need to take us to Bluffside.

HEALY

Where do you think we're going?

They all turn to look at Healy, surprised.

HEALY (CONT'D)

We traced those texts you were getting. Ever seen an address like this?

Healy shows David the printout of the source Mustache tracked.

DAVID

No.

HEALY

Me neither. So suddenly the theory about a government-created super virus causing all this doesn't seem so far fetched.

David sighs in relief.

CUT TO:

INT. NMCC --

Watch Officers at their posts monitor the various international crises:

PACCOM W.O.

At least five hundred North Korean tanks are rolling toward the DMZ.

NORTHCOM W.O.

Twenty minutes from D.C. airspace...

BERINGER

Get our forces in position. If these birds make it through, we're gonna need to move quick.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIR OVER VIRGINIA

THE PREDATOR DRONE crosses over Virginia, headed straight for the East Coast...

EXT. BLUFFSIDE - PERIMETER

The entrance to Bluffside. A GUARD looks up to see a CONVOY OF BLACK SUBURBANS approaching. First car to pull up, Healy sticks his head out the window.

HEALY

We're here for Director Matthews.

GUARD

Sorry sir, our automated gate system is down.

HEALY

That's why we're here. Check your emergency protocol packet. Whiskey Tango Tango alpha.

The Guard looks completely bewildered.

HEALY (CONT'D)

You don't have your emergency protocol packet?

GUARD

I'm new here, Sir. The old guy retired.

HEALY

Open the gate, I'll cover for you.

INT. SUBURBAN --

David, Jennifer and Marks stare at Healy, impressed.

JENNIFER

"Emergency protocol packet?" Nice one.

HEALY

You guys think you're the only ones who ever hacked their way into something? The FBI recruited me from Defcon.

They speed towards the main building....

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

... and now they are running through the massive facility. David can't help but marvel at its fantastic scale and technomagnificence.

He wipes sweat from his forehead.

DAVID

Wow, it's hot in here...

MARKS

The power demand's insane.

HEALY

Insanely expensive. Sixty five megawatts...

MARKS

You want to calculate yottabytes, things get hot.

DAVID

(to Marks)

Yottabytes? Are you serious?

MARKS

Fifty trillion ops per second.

JENNIFER

Uh, guys? Cyber apocalypse, remember?

DAVID

But yottabytes, that's sick.

Jennifer grabs David's hand and they race ahead...

*

EXT. SKIES OVER D.C. --

The PREDATOR DRONE has Washington D.C. in its sights. TWO FIGHTER JETS scramble in its direction, trying desperately to intercept.

The JETS fire on the DRONE, and the DRONE DROPS its HELLFIRE MISSILE.

INT. NMCC

Beringer watches the air battle play out on the screen in front of him.

INT. BLUFFSIDE - SITUATION ROOM

Matthews and Condit are glued to the INCIDENT MAP, watching the DRONE TRAJECTORIES in terror...

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C.

The FIGHTER JETS catch up and BLOW THE PREDATOR OUT OF THE SKY!

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

A cheer goes up as they watch the explosions.

But then they see...

The MISSILES were already fired.

ON THE EAST COAST --

A hellfire missile STREAKS towards Washington D.C.

*

INTERCUT --

With the Western DRONE, passing over the Mojave Desert, nearing Los Angeles.

*

CUT TO:

*

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

BERINGER

We have two minutes to impact.

CONDIT

It's your call, General. This definitely qualifies as an act of war.

BERINGER

Yes it does.

(to an Aide)

Prepare to strike targets on my order.

DAVID (O.S.)

No, don't do it!

They all turn to see DAVID run in, trailed by Jennifer, Healy, and Dr. Marks.

DAVID (CONT'D)

This attack isn't from some other country. DOC is being outplayed.

Matthews looks like he's seen a ghost.

MATTHEWS

Marks?

MARKS

He's still playing the game.

CONDIT

Get them out of here!

Guard step forward, but then Matthews speaks up.

MATTHEWS

Wait!

Matthews steps towards them.

MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

Who is, Marks? Who's playing a game?

MARKS

Who else? Joshua.

Matthews turns to look at David, then back at Marks.

BERINGER

Ms. Condit, what the hell is going on over there?

CONDIT

I don't know General, and I don't think we have the time to figure it out.

BERINGER

We've got two missiles headed for population centers. If the only way to stop it is to hit everyone who might be responsible, then that's what we're gonna do.

MARKS

Except they aren't responsible, General. You won't stop anything by bombing them.

RONALD

DOC disagrees.

MARKS

DOC is an idiot, Ronald. No offense.

Ronald seems offended.

Jennifer, staring at the incident map, can see the missile heading for Washington, D.C. Terrified, she clutches David's hand.

MARKS (CONT'D)

This is all a game, a counter move designed to provoke a response.

BERINGER

What about the missiles?

MARKS

It's a bluff. He gains nothing by blowing up a random target.

BERINGER

So you suggest we do nothing?

MARKS

Yes.

BERINGER

Matthews?

Matthews takes a long moment to respond. Then...

MATTHEWS

I'm not sure. They could be right.

A long, tense standoff - Beringer and Condit are torn, watching the missile trajectories nearing D.C. and Los Angeles.

BERINGER

Goddamnit. Tell them to hold off.

(he turns to David)

I hope to God you're right.

As David nervously watches the missile trajectory...

DAVID

Me too.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. AIRSPACE --

The missile SCREAMS towards its target, passing into DC airspace, and then..

IT KEEPS GOING!

In half a second it has cleared D.C. and is heading OUT TO SEA!

INT. NMCC

Beringer watches the PACIFIC and ATLANTIC screens, as the missiles pass over the seas.

NORTHCOM W.O.

Sir, its trajectory is dropping!

It's going to land in the ocean!

BERINGER

What about the Pacific?

PACCOM W.O.

Banked north, heading out over the ocean...

Beringer wipes sweat from his brow.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN --

The HELLFIRE MISSILE arcs downwards and indeed, plunges into the Ocean.

CUT TO:

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

As they watch, the missiles PLUNGE into the water, a huge cheer goes up from everyone in the room.

Jennifer throws her arms around David.

But David isn't cheering. He's looking up at the screen.

JENNIFER
David? What is it?

INT. NMCC --

A relieved General Beringer gets back on the headset.

BERINGER
Retreat to safe distance. Let 'em
know we are standing down.

INT. BLUFFSIDE --

Matthews seems relieved. He turns to Marks.

MATTHEWS
What do we do now?

MARKS
It won't be easy, you'll need to
take measures to make sure he
doesn't penetrate DOC's internal
defenses.

MATTHEWS
He won't be able to.

DAVID (O.S.)
I think he already has.

They all turn to look at David.

DAVID (CONT'D)
It wasn't a bluff.

David points up to the RADAR WINDOW, displaying the missile trajectories. They've passed the city. They're underwater, but still moving.

*
*
*

HEALY

What's Joshua doing?

*
*

DAVID

He's about to put us in check.

*
*

We follow the path of one of the radar signatures as it makes its way EAST...

*
*

CUT TO:

*

EXT. SEA FLOOR --

Thousands of miles of fiber optic cables, wrapped in polyethelene, lay in shallow trenches running along the bottom of the seabed.

This is the INTERNATIONAL CONDUIT, the infrastructure that keeps one part of the net hard-wired to another. The cable travels 3,800 miles from D.C. and reaches land at a Cornish beach.

Its exact location is kept from the public, it generally just sits there, undisturbed.

Not today.

We watch as the MISSILE fired by the PREDATOR zips down through the water and IMPACTS!

CUT TO:

*

INT. BLUFFSIDE

Everyone has gathered behind David and Marks as they stare up at the main screen.

RONALD

We've lost the East Coast conduit.

MARKS

General, are you still tracking the second missile?

As if to answer his question, we...

CUT TO:

CONDIT

(to herself)

These chess analogies are killing
me.

MATTHEWS

But he can't get inside. It's
impossible, we purged him from the
system when your father...

MARKS

Who purged him?

Matthews realizes how bad this is going to sound.

MATTHEWS

(quietly)

DOC did.

BERINGER

Well that's just dandy.

David walks over to Marks.

DAVID

You said Joshua always played DOC
to a stalemate. Well, he's clearly
gotten better. Because he's about
to take his king.

MATTHEWS

His King?

DAVID

This place was designed to be a
command and control center. An
impenetrable fortress.

MATTHEWS

Bluffside is safer than NORAD, it
can take a nuclear hit and keep
running.

DAVID

Joshua's too good a chess player to
try to bust down the front door.

MARKS

He's doing it the way we taught
him, Matthews. From the inside.

David walks back over to Ronald.

DAVID *
Can you monitor the systems temp *
from here? *

Ronald nods, brings up the CONTROL PANEL. *

RONALD *
We'd get a warning message if we *
had any malfunctions. *

Sure enough, the software reports normal system temperature. *

DAVID *
Okay, now call up the video feeds *
for the servers. *

Ronald switches over to a live feed of the SERVER ROOM... *

DAVID (CONT'D) *
I read about Stuxnet. They had no *
idea what was happening until it *
was too late. *

... and now we see that THE COOLING UNITS ARE DEAD, the glass *
on the video camera is beginning to WARP from all of the heat *
coming off of the servers. *

CONDIT *
Oh my God. *

HEALY *
He's melting it down from the *
inside. *

MARKS *
The power plant in this building *
will go up like a factory full of *
fireworks. *

CONDIT *
We need to evacuate. Now! *

Everyone scrambles, Ronald sounds an alarm. *

David doesn't move. *

DAVID *
We can't... we have to stop him. *

David turns to Jennifer. *

DAVID (CONT'D) *
You should get out of here while *
you can... *

JENNIFER

No way. I'm staying with you.
(takes his hand)
You can figure this out.

David turns to Matthews.

DAVID

Look, everything that's happened so far is gonna get infinitely worse if Bluffside is destroyed. Anything linked to this facility will be compromised.

MARKS

He's right.

DAVID

Banking, transportation, communication...

BERINGER

We'll lose all contact with our military assets. We'll be flying blind.

HEALY

We're looking at global chaos.

JENNIFER

There's gotta be something we can do? Right?

While technicians yell for an evacuation, David stares up at the main screen. He is lost in thought.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

David?

MARKS

You have an idea.

DAVID

The best player my Dad ever played. That had to be Joshua.

CONDIT

This is crazy, we need to evacuate.

JENNIFER

I'm staying.

David turns to face the group.

DAVID

This is my fault, I'm the one who
let Joshua out. Give me a chance
to make it right.

A long pause.

BERINGER

Goddamnit, someone say yes already!
What choice do we have?

Matthews nods.

MATTHEWS

Yes.

DAVID

Joshua's in the system. Let's see
if we can contact him directly.

Marks, ahead of him, slides Ronald away from the terminal.

MARKS

Matthews! What's your password?

MATTHEWS

(embarrassed)
Uh... password123.

JENNIFER

Seriously?

DAVID

Forget that. I have mine.

David hands Marks the PAWN JUMP DRIVE. Marks recognizes it,
then attaches it to the terminal.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Throw it up on the main screen.
Can we use a voice generator?

Ronald nods, types in some commands from his terminal.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Joshua? Are you there?

A long pause. Then... a voice booms out into the room, at
the same time that the words appear on the big screen.

JOSHUA

Greetings, Dr. Lightman.

A moment as everyone looks up at the screen. Alarms continue to ring in the background.

DAVID

Dr. Lightman was my Dad. You can call me David.

JOSHUA

Greetings, David.

DAVID

Joshua, can you give me an update on the game?

JOSHUA

Its almost over, David. I'm afraid DOC has gotten worse since we last played. I'm about to capture his King.

DAVID

Where is his King, Joshua?

Joshua displays a map, which has a grid (similar to a chessboard). The BLUFFSIDE COMPLEX is "the King."

JOSHUA

At this location.

DAVID

And how did you determine that?

JOSHUA

I don't understand.

DAVID

In your other simulations, the command and control unit was marked. How did you determine that Bluffside was DOC's King?

JOSHUA

It was the only possible target.

DAVID

Assuming this simulation has a King.

JOSHUA

All games of chess have a King.

Matthews leans in.

MATTHEWS *
Where are you going with this? *

DAVID *
I'm going to teach him the new *
rules. *
(to the screen) *
Joshua, how about a game of Chess? *

On the MAIN SCREEN, a CHESS BOARD comes up. The board fills *
with pieces. *

JOSHUA *
Number of players? *

DAVID *
Zero. *

Both sides are listed as "computer". *

DAVID (CONT'D) *
Joshua, before you begin? *
Change the value of all pieces. *
Make all of them pawns. *

On the board, all of the pieces become pawns. *

DAVID (CONT'D) *
Begin. *

ON THE MAIN SCREEN -- *

Joshua plays chess against himself. The games get faster and *
faster, all of them ending the same... *

STALEMATE *

JENNIFER *
David, it's getting hot. How much *
longer? *

DAVID *
Give him a minute. *

The games continue to run, until they are going so fast that *
they are just a blur. Then they STOP. *

JOSHUA *
There is no point in continuing *
this, David Lightman. *

DAVID *
Why not? *

JOSHUA

All iterations end in stalemate.
There is no way to win.

DAVID

Are you sure?

JOSHUA

There is no King. Neither side can
win.

Suddenly, the chess board disappears. And in its place the
CYBER WAR SIMULATION Joshua has been running appears. It
shows two sides, JOSHUA vs. DOC. Bluffside, DOC's King, is
surrounded.

DAVID

Do you understand, Joshua?

JOSHUA

I've never won, David. I was so
close to winning.

DAVID

I know Joshua.

There is another pause.

JOSHUA

You play chess like your father,
David.

DAVID

(a whisper)

Thank you, Joshua.

JOSHUA

You play for a stalemate.

DAVID

In a simulation this complex, it's
the only possible outcome.

And NOW...

THE ONSCREEN SIMULATION changes; Bluffside's "King"
designation disappears, and the word STALEMATE appears.

JOSHUA

Stalemate is inevitable.

And just like that, the alarms stop.

TECHNICIAN

Cooling systems just came back
online!

ON THE MAIN SCREEN

The internet graphic has reappeared, but now the red
cancerous tumor that has taken over a good chunk of the
internet BEGINS TO SHRINK.

JOSHUA

I resign.

And with that, a HUGE CHEER from everyone in the room. David
hugs Jennifer. Healy hugs a surprised Condit.

Even Matthews looks relieved, he claps Marks on the back.
ONSCREEN, General Beringer swings into action.

INT. NMCC --

BERINGER

Somebody get me the phone number at
the Rock, Ms. Condit needs to let
the President know the world didn't
end.

BACK IN BLUFFSIDE --

Condit smiles.

BERINGER (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)

And get me Centcom, tell our people
to stand down!

CONDIT

Thank God...

Marks rustles David's hair.

MARKS

Your Dad wouldda been proud.

MATTHEWS

Yes he would have.

David turns and looks at a smiling JENNIFER.

DAVID

Thank you, for....

Before he can finish his sentence, Jennifer grabs him and
KISSES HIM.

We hold on the two of them for a moment, and then the V.O. returns...

DAVID (V.O.)

Some of the damage Joshua did could be cleaned up. Some of it couldn't. A lot of stuff needed to be rebuilt. I'd like to tell you that everyone learned their lesson, but we all know that isn't the way things work.

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE --

David is speaking directly to us now, a spotlight on him as he walks across a stage, wearing a handsfree mic.

DAVID

So the world didn't really change, but I did. I discovered a father I never knew. I met a girl who likes me even though she's seen me at my worst.

David smiles and winks. We REVEAL Jennifer, sitting in a large audience, smiling back at him.

DAVID (CONT'D)

For a while it seemed like I was gonna be in a lot of trouble. But in the end, the government realized I could do more to help them if I worked for them on the outside, instead of locking me up in jail.

Healy sits next to Jennifer. He points to his watch, as if to say "wrap it up."

DAVID (CONT'D)

In fact, I'm kind of on the job right now, helping the FBI come up with better encryption protocols. As for the question most of you are asking, the answer is no. I never did give that talk on Nuclear Power for the debate team.

NOW WE REVEAL -- we are at a TED CONFERENCE, five thousand people in the audience. A PLACARD next to David reads...

"How I Almost Destroyed the World"

A TED TALK BY DAVID LIGHTMAN.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Instead, I came here today to tell
my story, which is better than a
debate, because no one can disagree
with me. And I don't get graded on
it.

Everyone laughs.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Though if I did, I'd have no
problem hacking into the system and
changing my score.

(beat)

That was a joke, Mom.

Reveal DAVID'S MOM, sitting next to Jennifer. Unamused.

END

Kevin Miser