

Untitled World Trade Center Project

by  
Andrea Belfoff

# DETROIT

a true story

November 9, 2004

FADE IN:

EXT. JOHN'S PARADISE - DAY

Fade in on JOHN M'CLOUGHLIN's face. His blue eyes stare determinedly into the camera.

Ever so slightly more of his face is revealed until we get a good look at him. Fifty years of a life are written across his mug: a balding head, a bushy mustache, a brow lined with experience.

He sits on a bench. Although there is a swath of blue sky and a weeping willow behind his head, it is impossible to determine his exact location. Could it be his backyard? A park? Heaven?

He breathes heavily, trying to summon the courage to speak. This is clearly difficult for him. Finally:

JOHN

It's not just our story.

His working-class New York accent is unmistakable.

JOHN (cont'd)

These families, their kids. They need to know what happened.

He pauses, carefully choosing the next words.

JOHN (cont'd)

The world saw evil that day. But I saw something else. And that's what their families need to know. The story.

Suddenly, John is interrupted.

A VOICE

Sarge, we got to get the fuck out of here!

He looks to his right, but it is not clear if this is a memory playing in his mind, or if someone is off screen yelling to him. He closes his eyes and inhales.

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING

His eyes open. John now stands under the warm stream of his embracing shower. Slowly he lathers soap over his taut muscles.

As he bathes, a title appears:

SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

INT. JOHN'S BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

John stares in the mirror as he buttons the top button of his blue, Port Authority Police uniform.

He turns the light out in the bathroom, and quietly opens the door.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

He swiftly moves past his bed without pausing to glance at his sleeping WIFE. A red 8:00 am glows from the digital clock on the night stand.

INT. JOHN'S CAR - MINUTES LATER

John cruises down the New York State Thruway. He listens to 1010 WINS news radio at a low volume. A sign overhead reads: TO NEW YORK CITY.

To his right, the orange glow of sunrise creeps across the horizon.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONG ISLAND RAILROAD TRAIN - SIMULTANEOUSLY

From the quiet of John's car to the scream of the train as it clangs over a bridge along the Long Island Sound.

INT. A LONG ISLAND RAILROAD TRAIN - SAME

A CONDUCTOR works his way down a car, tearing tickets and making change. As he passes a certain seat, he nods at ANTONIO RODRIGUES, 35. Antonio, slouched down with his knees pushing into the seat in front of him, smiles back.

With tawny skin and a head as clean and smooth as a light bulb, Antonio is also dressed in a Port Authority Police Department (PAPD) uniform. He has a sketch pad in his lap. As the ugliness of the modern world whizzes past, a cartoon comes to life underneath his ink-stained fingers.

EXT. LONG ISLAND RAILROAD TRAIN - SAME

The train's nose pushes toward the Manhattan skyline.

CUT TO:

INT. BURKE AVENUE SUBWAY STATION - THE BRONX - SIMULTANEOUSLY

A #2 subway train blasts into the stuffy, crowded station. A THRONG surges as one living, breathing entity toward the doors.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - SAME

On the train, there are PEOPLE of all shapes and colors pressed up against one another. It's the sort of rush hour subway that drives home the need for a public service campaign on the benefits of deodorant.

In the midst of this mess is another PAPD Officer, DOMINICK PEZZULO, 36, a former hippendale dancer. As the doors close with the familiar DING DONG, Dom manages to pull his copy of the NY Daily News toward his face. The sports section, obviously.

In an instant, a PORTLY PASSENGER is in his ear.

PORTLY PASSENGER

Did you see that Johnson kid's homer on Sunday? Kid's got an arm.

DOMINICK

I was there with my son.

PORTLY PASSENGER

That's a good one to a been at.

DOMINICK

Yeah. It was.

The subway zips into a dark tunnel, heading toward Manhattan.

CUT TO:

## EXT. STATEN ISLAND FERRY TERMINAL - SIMULTANEOUSLY

Yet another PA Officer, CHRISTOPHER AMOROSO, 29, a classic Italian meathead, heaves himself out of the passenger side of an idling, old Jeep Cherokee. He blows two kisses into the car, then shuts the door. As the car starts to pull away, his daughter, SOPHIA, 2, waves at him from the backseat. He waves back.

## EXT. OLYMPIA STREET IN CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - SIMULTANEOUSLY

On this street of tidy, identical row houses, the front door of #46 opens. Out bounds WILL JIMENO, 33, a burly Latino Port Authority Officer. He dashes down the stairs, his arms full with a sack lunch, a duffle bag, and other crap for the day ahead.

## INT. WILL'S CAR - MINUTES LATER

Will drives south on the Garden State Parkway in his 1991 Oldsmobile Bravada. He wrestles with the window, which refuses to go down. He does not notice the Manhattan skyline out his passenger side. He sings along to the radio, which plays "How Do You Like Me Now" by Toby Keith.

Will:  
How do you like me now that I'm on  
my way? You still think I'm crazy?

## EXT. THE STATEN ISLAND FERRY - CONTINUOUS

Christopher breathes deeply on the deck of the ferry as he stares out at the looming skyline of Manhattan. It is a glorious, clear-skied day.

## INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL LOCKER ROOM - 30 MINUTES LATER

Will, Antonio and Dominick put their belongings in their lockers.

DOMINICK

(to Will)

Would you leave the goddam deer  
alone.

WILL

But they're out there calling for me.

DOMINICK

Douche.

ANTONIO

(Portuguese accent)

Hey.

They look at him.

ANTONIO (cont'd)

What do you think of this?

He hands them the cartoon he drew on the train. They take the paper and examine it.

ANTONIO (cont'd)

For Sara's soccer team, I promised to draw a mascot for the t-shirts.

Dominick looks up from the drawing.

DOMINICK

The soccer ball's got an afro.

WILL

No. It's what is-it. It's like a top hat or something.

He hands the cartoon back. Antonio is annoyed. He throws the cartoon in his locker. One by one, as they slam their doors, we see their nameplates.

Rodrigues.

Slam.

Pezzulo.

Slam.

Jimeno.

Slam.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL POLICE DESK - CONTINUOUS

The front room of the police precinct is dominated by an enormous, room-sized desk.

It is called, by one and all in police precincts throughout the country, The Police Desk, in classic police-precinct style, is on an elevated platform. Thus, whoever occupies the desk hovers god-like over the peons below. Today, John McLoughlin is playing the role of god: He sits behind the desk, rapidly referring to a ROSTER of officer's names. The three guys, Pezzulo, Jimeno and Rodrigues, stand below him.

JOHN

Pezzulo, you got post 5. Jimeno - 3-5. And Rodrigues, you're at 9.

Antonio's face crumples.

ANTONIO

Come on, Sarge.

DOMINICK

Hope your girlfriend's out there today.

ANTONIO

Seriously.

John raises his eyebrows, questioning.

WILL

There's a tannie out there that keeps lifting her skirt and showing him what a real man is.

ANTONIO

(to John)

These two guys pick at themselves while watching commuters and I got to deal with the shit of the world.

WILL

Hey. I took care of some real business yesterday.

DOMINICK

Oh. Here we go.

WILL

What?

John watches this banter without saying a word.

ANTONIO

You knew it was coming.

WILL

It was some serious shit.

DOMINICK

A pot bust.

WILL

I got drugs off the streets.

DOMINICK

A kid with a joint. You take him down. And now you're super cop.

WILL

(earnest)

I made a real difference out there.

ANTONIO

Jesus Christ.

JOHN

Gentlemen.

They look up at him and realize it's time to get to work. They disband, heading out into the bus terminal. As they go:

WILL

It took some quiet thinking...

John dryly observes Will's bravado, then returns to his papers.

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL - CONTINUOUS

Amongst a sea of morning commuters arriving from New Jersey, Will and Dominick exit through the glass doors of the bus terminal onto busy 8th Avenue. Straight ahead of them is the Jackie Gleason statue. This is where Dominick takes his post. He and Will bang knuckles and Will keeps walking a block north until he reaches the southwest corner of 8th Avenue and 42nd Street.

At the corner, Will turns around so that he is now face to face with the onslaught of busy, rushing people who pour out of the bus terminal. But immediately, in the midst of this zoo of humanity, Will spies something suspicious.

A cagey-looking ADDICT is checking out the pocketbooks of WOMEN as they walk past him. Just then, he catches Will's stare and scurries away. Will moves to follow the guy the guy. Like a hawk, from a block away Dominick zooms in on Will's movement.

But he's interrupted by a TOURIST.

TOURIST  
Excuse me, officer-

The Tourist, in turn, is interrupted. Something - it's not clear what exactly - eclipses the sun. Just for a second. Like a passing promise of night. A momentary shadow that crosses over the faces of all who stand below. Dominick and the Tourist look up. But there is nothing there. The clear blue sky stares unblinkingly back.

Dominick looks to his right and he realizes he wasn't dreaming. There, up the street, stands Will. He has stopped chasing the Addict. Instead, he now stares up at the sky.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER -  
SIMULTANEOUSLY

In the basement of the World Trade Center complex is another Port Authority police precinct.

Christopher Amoroso, the Staten Island ferry-rider, stands at the water cooler, filling a paper cup. A CO-WORKER waits his turn at the cooler.

CO-WORKER  
What post you got today?

CHRISTOPHER  
Down by the loading docks. All  
those fumes. I gotta-

BOOM.

It's not as loud as we, in retrospect, would imagine it to be. It's muffled, somewhat removed from these two cops, but it's unmistakable.

An explosion. And then...silence.

Christopher and his co-worker share a thousand words with their eyes.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)  
What the?

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL - 9TH AVENUE - ONE MINUTE  
LATER

Antonio stands under the overpass on 9th Avenue. He cannot see the sky and so thus has missed the passing shadow.

Across the street from the terminal is a TRANVESTITE BOOKER. She stares unflinchingly at Antonio. Antonio stares back, silently daring her.

Just then, the radio on Antonio's chest crackles with static.

DISPATCH

All officers, report to the police desk. All officers report back.

Antonio looks down at his radio. This is odd.

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL - SAME

From overhead, we see the entire perimeter of the bus station. From every corner of the exterior, the PATROL COPS head indoors.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL - SAME

Dominick and Will walk together through the bus station. COMMUTERS still rush to and fro, evidently oblivious.

They pass the Hudson Newsstand.

WILL  
They don't just call us back in during morning rush.

They pass Zaro's breadbasket.

DOMINICK  
Did you see that shadow?

WILL  
What was that?

They pass Au Bon Pan.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL - POLICE DESK - ONE MINUTE LATER

Dominick and Will walk right past John McLoughlin who still sits at the police desk. He is slouched once again over the roster. With the list of officers' names before him, John carefully considers. He then goes down the list and places check marks next to several of the names.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL - RESERVE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will and Dominick keep walking until they enter the Reserve room. The Reserve room is a lounge tricked out with orange chairs and a television. There is also a large conference table along one wall.

As Will and Dom enter the room, they join Antonio, who is already there.

The television broadcasts NBC 4. We hear Katie Couric and Matt Lauer discussing the gaping wound in Tower One of the World Trade Center. However, we cannot fully see the image they are broadcasting because there are too many OFFICERS already crowded around the tv, blocking our view.

Will quietly turns to the two guys.

WILL

Remember what Jimmy Kazman said at the academy?

They look at him.

WILL (cont'd)

Port Authority facilities. The bridges, tunnels, the trade center. We're the targets.

OFFICER MARADINO overhears this.

MARADINO

It's just some jerk off got confused about which lever to push in his twin engine.

DOMINICK

(quietly)

That's no Cessna.

Just then, INSPECTOR FIELDS, the white-haired boss at the terminal, sweeps in. John is closely behind him.

INSPECTOR FIELDS

Listen up.

The clamor in the room comes to a halt. Fields glances at the television.

INSPECTOR FIELDS (cont'd)

They are telling us it's a commuter plane.

(MORE)

INSPECTOR FIELDS (cont'd)  
 But Tower One is being evacuated as  
 a precaution. They've asked us to  
 send down a team to assist.

JOHN  
 I got a list of names here.  
 (he refers to the list)  
 Robles, Murphy, Jimeno,

We focus in on Will.

JOHN (cont'd)  
 Feeley, Rodrigues,

Focus on Antonio.

JOHN (cont'd)  
 Delmer, Kazmatis, Ross, Pezzulo

Focus on Dominick.

JOHN (cont'd)  
 McDurney, Sanchez, DiMatteo

The names are reflective of the teleoscopic composition of  
 the Port Authority, or rather... of the City of New York.

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL - 8TH AVENUE - MOMENTS LATER

A New York City MTA bus idles by the sidewalk. The group of  
 officers that John selected file on. Parked in front of the  
 bus is a Suburban painted with the blue and white logo of the  
 Port Authority.

INT. SUBURBAN - SAME

John sits in the driver's seat, concern written all over his  
 face. He looks in the rearview mirror and watches the  
 officers step onto the bus.

INT./EXT. NYC BUS - SAME

LIEUTENANT KAZMATIS, 45, with a strong nose and graying hair,  
 is the last officer to step on the bus. He is speaking loudly  
 into his cell phone in Greek.

INT. SUBURBAN - SAME

The passenger door opens and Inspector Fields gets into the  
 Suburban.

INSPECTOR FIELDS

All set.  
 (he motions back to the  
 bus)  
 They're gonna follow us.

John turns the key and starts the car.

INT. NYC BUS - SAME

The bus has long benches down the sides, forcing the passengers to face each other. The officers find seats and the DRIVER closes the door. Just then:

LIEUTENANT KAZMATIS

Holy shit!  
 (announcing)  
 A plane just hit the Pentagon.

The murmur of conversation ceases.

DOMINICK

Told you it was n' f'uckin' messna.

And the bus starts to move.

INT. SUBURBAN - SAME

John pilots the Suburban through traffic with a furious single-mindedness. Fields watches him.

A cab pulls in front of John. He slams on the brakes and honks. But says nothing. He swerves to the left and stomps on the gas.

INT. NYC BUS - SAME

The bus makes the same swerve around the cab and the same acceleration. Problem is...

Have you ever been on a New York City bus? They were never built for this kind of maneuvering. As they bounce off their seats, the officers all reach to steady themselves on the metal poles.

DOMINICK

Jesus.

And the bus swerves again, this time to avoid a delivery truck that's double parked.

The officers all tumble in the other direction. Antonio is knocked to the floor. He looks up and shares a worried look with Will.

Dominick reaches into his pocket and pulls out his cell phone and turns it on. Will moves to do the same. He feels his pockets, but comes up empty. He does not have his phone.

INT. SUBURBAN - SAME

John is silently working something out in his mind.

INSPECTOR FIELDS

This is bad...?

John says nothing.

INSPECTOR FIELDS (cont'd)

McLoughlin?

JOHN

(agreeing)

Yeah.

John only speaks when it's absolutely necessary, and he considers this enough said.

He notices a MOTHER pushing her BABY on the sidewalk. The mother is sprinting, panic on her face.

INT. NYC BUS - SAME

Dominick presses buttons on his cell phone.

WILL

Yo, Dom. Let me use your phone.

The bus swerves. The men brace themselves.

WILL (cont'd)

Let me see your phone a sec.

The bus brakes hard. The men tumble forward.

WILL (cont'd)

Dom-

DOMINICK

It's not fucking working!

The two men stare at each other, tension playing with their thoughts.

DOMINICK (cont'd)  
 (softer, apologizing)  
 I can't get a fucking line.  
 Nothing's going through.

INT. SUBURBAN - SAME

Fields grips the overhead strap with all his might as John once again jams the Suburban against gravity.

INSPECTOR FIELDS  
 What's the protocol here? The plan?

John shakes his head.

INSPECTOR FIELDS (cont'd)  
 What?

JOHN  
 We prepared for everything. Car  
 bombs. Biological. Chemical. But  
 not from the top. We didn't prepare  
 for an attack from the top.

INSPECTOR FIELDS  
 So now--

JOHN  
 There are no plans. We didn't make  
 'em.

He looks at Fields. There's nothing more to say.

INT. NYC BUS - SAME

Antonio cranes his neck to look out the window.

ANTONIO  
 Where are we?

Dominick looks around.

DOMINICK  
 Fourteenth street.

WILL  
 Anyone know what we're gonna do  
 down there?

DOMINICK  
 Evacuate people.

WILL

Yeah, but what-

LIEUTENANT KAZMATIS

Relax.

WILL

I'm just asking-

LIEUTENANT KAZMATIS

They're not bringing you down to  
sit there and scratch your ass.  
McLoughlin'll tell you what to do.

Will is annoyed. Decides is best to keep his mouth shut.

ANTONIO

Why McLoughlin, why not Inspector-

LIEUTENANT KAZMATIS

-McLoughlin was Emergency Services  
at the trade center. He's one of  
the guys put together the emergency  
plan after '93. Anyone knows how to  
deal with shit down there, it's  
him.

INT. SUBURBAN - SAME

Suddenly, the road in front of John opens up. There is no  
traffic. No pedestrians. No sign of humanity. An electric  
silence. And then...

A fog descends. It's like a whisper at first, so soft it's  
hardly noticeable. But as the Suburban slices through the  
hushed street, it's as if they've slipped into a cloud.

INT. NYC BUS - SAME

The bus and its occupants are now utterly silent as it glides  
unimpeded down West Broadway.

As the fog develops, the men's expressions grow more somber.  
Antonio grabs Will's arm and points. Will turns to look.

On the sidewalk, a TEAM OF PARAMEDICS work over the prone  
BODY OF A BUSINESSMAN.

The man is dead.

EXT. NYC BUS - SAME

From the sidewalk, hovering approximately over where the body is, we see the bus glide by. Antonio and Will's disturbed faces stare back at us.

INT. SUBURBAN - SAME

John inches the car to a halt at the corner of Church and Vesey Streets. He looks to his left, at Saint Paul's Chapel. Then he forces himself to look to his right.

Fields already looks out to the right, to the scene that is unfolding before a horror-stricken world.

For a moment, both John and Fields are paralyzed by the vivid clarity of this hell-on-earth.

From their vantage of the silent, insulated car, they see CIVILIANS - MEN and WOMEN - inconspicuously dressed in their business attire, covered in white ash. Some cry, others don't. But they are all running, running, running to get away from whatever it was they just experienced. Amongst the swarming crowd, certain faces stick out at John:

The AFRICAN-AMERICAN SECRETARY with tears streaking through her whitened cheeks.

The PUDGY BUSINESSMAN struggling for breath as he runs for the first time in years.

The HASIDIC MAN who helps a DISABLED CO-WORKER hobble down the street.

JOHN

You got any orders?

Fields shakes his head.

INSPECTOR FIELDS

We gotta get that building evacuated.

JOHN

I'm gonna get a team and go up.

And John gets out of the Suburban.

EXT. NYC BUS - SAME

The bus is parked at the corner of Barclay and West Broadway, about one block north of the WTC.

Dominick, Will, Antonio and the other officers file off.

LIEUTENANT KAZMATIS

You all wait here.

And he runs off.

The Officers huddle alongside the bus and get their bearings. Along with the ash, the air is thickly filled with paper fluttering every which way like a grotesque ticker tape parade.

Dominick looks down again at his cell phone. Still no service.

DELMAR (O.C.)

Look!

The crowd turns to the red-headed OFFICER DELMAR. He is pointing up in the sky.

DELMAR (cont'd)

They're jumping.

With terrible speed, they follow his arching finger up 110 nauseating stories.

Will takes a quick glance, then looks back at Delmar. Tears stream down his freckled cheeks.

Officer Maradino turns his head away.

MARADINO

Nothing's gonna help them.

ANTONIO

We'll get up there. See what we can do.

MARADINO

You can't save people that high up.  
It's impossible.

This terrible thought hangs in the air, turning their tension into anger.

ANTONIO  
 (quietly spitting)  
 We at least got to try.

Antonio stares hard at Maradino. Before this can escalate, they are interrupted by a STOCKBROKER.

STOCKBROKER  
 Officers! The kids!

The Stockbroker grabs Will's arm.

STOCKBROKER (cont'd)  
 There's a day care.

Now is when, breathless, John reaches the group.

WILL  
 (blurting)  
 Sarge. The day care-

JOHN  
 They got 'em out. I already asked.

The Stockbroker nods his head and moves on. Will looks respectfully at John.

JOHN (cont'd)  
 I need volunteers who know how to use the spot airpak.

ELMAR  
 For what?

JOHN  
 (simply)  
 We're going to go in and try to assist these people out of that tower.

The group of fourteen officers stands there, staring at John and, unknowingly, at their futures. They stand there as the detritus of an American institution cascades around them. And they stand there as they are faced with a question that will haunt them forever:

JOHN (cont'd)  
 Who's coming?

The majority of the men take a moment to think. It is that moment of hesitation that will define them. In contrast, Dominick looks immediately to Will and Antonio. They nod. They are in agreement. Simultaneously, they step forward.

John looks at them.

JOHN (cont'd)  
The rookies.  
(beat)  
Anyone else?

But it's all moving too fast. Who has time to think? No one gets a response out. John turns back around.

JOHN (cont'd)  
(to the threesome)  
Let's go.

They turn to move, when a MAINTENANCE WOMAN runs right up to John. The contrast between her hysteria and his focus is unnerving.

MAINTENANCE WOMAN  
Do something!

JOHN  
Okay.

MAINTENANCE WOMAN  
Help them!

JOHN  
Ma'am-

But there's nothing he can say. John looks to the officers who did not volunteer. Gently, Maradino peels her away from John.

JOHN (cont'd)  
(to the guys)  
Follow me.

Maradino watches the group of four walk away. He looks briefly down at the now empty sidewalk where they had just been standing.

EXT. WORLD TRADE CENTER COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

John leads the charge through the chaos. He looks back over his shoulder at the guys.

JOHN  
We got to get suited-

He stops walking. Takes a good look at the men. They are laden down with police accessories.

JOHN (cont'd)  
 Jimeno. Take everyone's  
 nightsticks, notebooks, hats.  
 They're useless here. Put 'em in  
 the Suburban. It's parked over on  
 Church and Vesey. Meet us in the E  
 Room in Building 5. Got it?

WILL  
 No. Which one's five?

John points toward the buildings as Dominick and Antonio hand  
 Will their belongings.

JOHN  
 Two towers. Building one. Building  
 two.

He points out all the smaller buildings.

JOHN (cont'd)  
 Three, four, five, six. Rooms  
 in the basement of 5. We'll suit up  
 there then head up into one.

Will scurries off. John turns back around and SLAM. ALL  
 EXTERNAL NOISES FADE AWAY. We're in John's head,  
 experiencing the situation from his POV. We hear him breathe,  
 short quick gasps of effort and nerves. The ash cascades in  
 sheets now, creating blizzard-like conditions. And so John  
 can't get a clear look at anything. It's a hazy disorienting  
 situation.

He starts running toward building 5. He looks back over his  
 shoulder to make sure Dominick and Antonio are with him. They  
 are. As he turns, he sees a huge wheel that couldn't have  
 belonged to anything but a passenger jet.

And yet we see that this does not register with him. He's so  
 focused on his mission that nothing penetrates his shroud of  
 concentration. Not the chunks of glass, of steel, of concrete  
 that tumble around him. Not the Munch-like screams escaping  
 from PEOPLE confronting an apocalypse. Not the BLOODY WOMAN  
 who rushes past him.

John is there to do a job.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN - SIMULTANEOUSLY

Will runs, sweat pouring down his cheeks, his arms filled with the police junk. And he stops short.

We see his shocked reaction before we see what he's reacting to...

A piano-sized chunk of concrete has smashed onto the roof of the Suburban, flattening the passenger side - precisely where Inspector Fields had been sitting just moments before.

Will considers the situation. All of the windows have exploded. He tosses the goods on the driver's seat. He runs back toward the buildings.

INT. WTC - BUILDING 5 - E ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Will enters. Stuffed with storage lockers that are normally filled with emergency equipment, it is clear that the room has already been well-picked-over by earlier teams of rescuers.

Antonio, John and Dom are decked out in yellow jackets and helmets.

JOHN  
 Jimen. Grab some gear - we gotta find more airpaks.

ANTONIO  
 We already got four here.

JOHN  
 We're gonna need two each. Hundred and ten floors. Fire. With fuel. We're gonna be chewing up oxygen. Plus we need more for whoever we find up there. Come on.

INT. WTC - BUILDING 5 - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Will slips the jacket on as they enter the hallway. The arms do not fit over his meaty biceps. He struggles as they walk.

JOHN  
 Should be more tanks down at the police desk.

John looks back at Will as he lags behind, still trying to make the jacket fit.

JOHN (cont'd)  
Leave it. Forget it.

Will, slightly embarrassed, dumps the yellow jacket on the ground.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

John walks up to the DISPATCH OFFICER sitting at the police desk.

JOHN  
We're looking for airpaks.

Dominick focuses in on a curved piece of plastic debris which rests on the desk.

DOMINICK  
(quietly to the cops)  
That an airplane window?

Antonio and Will look, but before they can answer, a loud voice booms behind them:

CHRISTOPHER (O.C.)  
Look at these clowns.

They turn around and smile, embracing Chris Amoroso in a round of hugs.

WILL  
What the fuck with your eye?

He gestures. Chris's left eye is badly cut and bleeding.

CHRISTOPHER  
(dismissing)  
I was carrying a woman out and something whacked me in the head.

DOMINICK  
You wanna get that looked at?

CHRISTOPHER  
No.  
(serious)  
There's a lot more people up there.

ANTONIO  
We're going up.

CHRISTOPHER  
I'll come with.  
(asking)  
Sarge, I'll go up with you?

John shakes Christopher's hand.

JOHN  
Alright, Amoroso. We need airpaks.  
Evacuation's in tower one. Lockers  
there are gonna be empty. Let's hit  
the lockers in tower two.

CHRISTOPHER  
They're not evacuating two?

JOHN  
No. Two is fine.

CHRISTOPHER  
I heard two was hit by a second  
plane.

JOHN  
(gesturing back to the  
police desk)  
Just got the word. One plane. Tower  
one. Let's go.

They start to walk away. The team is now five men - Antonio,  
Dominick, Will, John and Christopher.

DOMINICK  
Nice timing on that transfer to the  
trade center.

CHRISTOPHER  
No shit, huh?

JOHN  
We're going down to the concourse.  
Runs under all the buildings.

The guys exit the police precinct.

INT. WTC - BUILDING 5 - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Just outside the police precinct is the public plaza level of  
building 5. EVACUATING CIVILIANS rush every which way.

Discarded brief cases and paper litter the ground. Out through the windows to the right is the iconic statue of the golden globe.

As they enter this space, there are intermittent THUDS that ring out every two seconds or so.

DOMINICK  
You feel that heat?

THUD.

ANTONIO  
If it's that bad down here...

THUD. The rest goes unspoken. THUD.

WILL  
What is that noise?

John looks to the right and sees exactly what it is.

JOHN  
Debris. Don't look.

THUD. They meet each other's eyes. Will understands. Will forces himself not to look to the right. But Antonio can't help himself. He is instantly angry.

ANTONIO  
Sarge, we gotta get up there.

JOHN  
If you can't breathe, you aren't rescuing nobody.

THUD. And they step onto an elevator.

INT. WTC - CONCOURSE - CONTINUOUS

The elevator doors open. The men emerge onto the concourse. The concourse is the underground mall. It runs underneath all of the buildings, connecting them through a maze of retail opportunity.

Things are clearly bad even this far down. The overhead fire sprinklers work overtime; puddles cover the floor, forcing the men to slish their way off the elevator. Lights flicker as they short out from the water.

As soon as they get off the elevator, John spies an empty canvas mail cart.

JOHN

Dump all the gear in here.

The men remove the air tanks from their backs and dump them into the cart.

WILL

I got it.

Will takes a position behind the cart and pushes it.

It's heavy.

JOHN

This way.

They follow John through the mall. Dominic notices the abandoned Victoria's Secret. A huge poster of a scantily clad anorexic sags and drips as the sprinklers soak it.

They walk by a GROUP OF EMTs who work furiously on an UNCONSCIOUS SECURITY GUARD.

When they reach the Ben and Jerry's:

JOHN (cont'd)

Jimeno, you stay with the cart.  
Everyone else, come with me down  
one level.

The other men depart. Will stands alone with the cart. He breathes deeply as he watches the chaos around him.

From his location, he can see a large swath of the concourse. He can also see through a wall of revolving glass doors into the lobby of tower two. He watches the panicked people flee through the lobby onto Liberty Street.

He stands there, completely still. For the first time, a note of fear creeps across his face.

REYNOLDS, an older, African-American Port Authority Sergeant approaches.

REYNOLDS

Hey kid. You alright?

WILL

Yeah. I'm good.

REYNOLDS

It'll be alright. We'll get this cleaned up.

WILL  
 (pointing to the lobby)  
 They're evacuating out of tower 2  
 also?

REYNOLDS  
 Guess so. You going up to help?

WILL  
 Yeah.

REYNOLDS  
 You remember how to fire off that  
 airpak?

WILL  
 Sure. Yeah. Of course.

REYNOLDS  
 Alrighty. You hang tight.

Reynolds pats him on his shoulder and departs. Will looks at the airpaks in the cart, and grows worried. He takes one out and slips it over his arms onto his back. He practices lighting it.

Just then, the group returns, their arms laden with equipment. They all dump it into the cart.

JOHN  
 This is good. Let's go. Tower one's  
 this way.

The cart is now even heavier. Will continues to push it. They turn to their left and begin walking down a long corridor in the mall. There is a Citibank and a Banana Republic in this hallway.

To be clear: this underground stretch connects towers one and two.

To their backs, now, is the lobby of tower two that Will had just been looking at. They are walking away from it, headed for tower one.

Will is sweating terribly. Antonio notices.

ANTONIO  
 Will. Let me push the cart.

Will smiles, thankful for the reprieve. He switches places with Antonio. They continue walking. John's radio squawks to life.



As the ceiling falls on top of his helmet, the pitter patters of plaster reverberate in his skull. But then the chunks grow in size and he has to grab his helmet to keep it from being knocked off. In a millimeter of a second, he assesses the situation.

JOHN  
Run! Toward the elevator!

He points to a small corridor about thirty feet away. He sees Will and Dominick ahead of him. As per John's instructions, they turn and run toward the elevator.

John takes a step.

BOOM!

Another step.

BOOM!

Another. He sees Dom make the turn into the corridor.

John dodges a huge chunk of the ceiling as it crashes down next to him.

BOOOM! The explosions are right on his heels.

He sees Will make the turn. John is right behind him. He too turns. The now enormous chunks are falling so fast that it takes everything in John's power not to be knocked off his feet.

This small hallway they've turned into leads to a freight elevator vestibule. John sees the elevator doors about ten feet ahead.

And then a terrible hurricane-like wind whips up from nowhere and changes everything.

He loses sight of the other guys as metal beams tumble around him. He crouches to protect his head and torso from the cascade. Something knocks into his back and he falls to the floor in the fetal position on his right side.

Floors, walls, everything moves every which way. In a little ball, John holds on to his helmet and waits for death to take him.

With a final, furious burst, ash and pulverized concrete explode so intensely that the screen fades to white.

And then the noise stops. Utter silence.

For a full five seconds there is nothing but silence and white. Then, the white clears - just a little - and we see John.

His eyes are open.

From his POV we see that he hears nothing. Sees nothing. Feels nothing.

John is sure he is dead.

He is perfectly still, getting used to this feeling of being dead.

OFF-SCREEN VOICE  
AAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!

Through the gauze, John hears this wail. It slowly dawns on him that he is still alive.

OFF-SCREEN VOICE (cont'd)  
My legs!!!

The white that enveloped John clears a bit. He assesses his situation: He's terribly stuck. Not injured, but stuck. There's a large chunk of cement - maybe five feet wide - that hovers half an inch over him, covering his left hip down past his toes. His right arm is pinned underneath his body. And his helmet has wedged into a position so that John can't move his head. All in all, the only body part he can move is his left arm.

The rest of his senses begin to return. He hears plaster crumbling and metal creaking around him. He coughs deeply (and ineffectively) to rid his lungs of whatever the air is now filled with. When he stops choking:

JOHN  
Sound off!

WILL (O.S.)  
Jimeno!

DOMINICK (O.S.)  
Pezzulo!

Silence.

We move from John through the grotesque labyrinth in which he is now trapped, up and over to Will and Dominick. Somehow, even though they started off in the same elevator vestibule, Will and Dom are now fifteen feet above John. They cannot see John, nor he them.



JOHN  
Okay. Alright. What's everyone's situation?

WILL  
I'm pinned bad. I can't move. My legs.

DOMINICK  
I'm okay. But I'm buried.

John again checks out his own body. He struggles in vain to move his head. It's useless. He strains his eyeballs, but all he can really see is his own left arm.

JOHN  
Can anyone see the sky?

WILL  
I've got light here. No sky, but I can see the light.

JOHN  
Okay.

John is able to grab at the radio pinned to his chest. He moves the radio near his mouth and flips it on. He hears nothing but static. He tries another channel. Static. And the third channel. Static.

JOHN (cont'd)  
(into the radio)  
PAPD Officers Jimeno, Pezzulo and McLoughlin are down. 8-13. We are trapped in the concourse directly underneath towers one and two. We are in the vestibule of the freight elevator.

John listens for a response. He gets nothing but static.

DOMINICK  
I got some movement here.

Somehow, Dominick has managed to wiggle an arm loose. He summons every muscle he has to pull himself out from under his concrete trap. In a few moments he is free. He is completely covered in white powder, but he is free.

Will looks to him with anguish.

WILL  
You gotta help me. Get this shit  
offa my legs.

Dominick crouches over Will. Instantly, he sees how bad the situation is. Along with the concrete, somehow, rebar has actually wrapped itself around Will's ankle.

DOMINICK  
Sarge. I could use your help here.

JOHN  
I'm stuck. You get Jimeno out then  
the two of you come get me.

Dom tugs on the rebar. He pulls and pulls and pulls. He tries it from a different angle. He braces himself and tries again. Nothing. This rebar is not moving.

The exertion along with the dense SMOKE in the air makes Dom choke. Gasping for breath, he sits back.

When he has caught his breath, Dominick looks around their little cave. The wall of the vestibule that collapsed on Will created a tiny triangular shaped pocket in which Dom and Will now find themselves.

Frustrated, Dom stands up and tries to see where the light is coming from.

DOMINICK  
Looks like there's light. Maybe  
air. About twenty feet up.

He assesses the light again. There is no obvious way to reach it.

DOMINICK (cont'd)  
(yelling)  
Hey! 8-13! 8-13! Officers down!

No response. Dominick pulls out his gun and fires a shot up at the sky. The noise rings through the hole, zapping their ears.

DOMINICK (cont'd)  
(yelling)  
Hey!

JOHN  
What the hell are you doing?

DOMINICK

Trying to get someone's attention.

Dom looks back at Will.

DOMINICK (cont'd)

I can't move this shit off him by myself, Sarge. Maybe I should go up and get help and come back.

Will gets hysterical.

WILL

Don't leave me, man. Keep trying.

JOHN

Try again.

Dominick looks up again, then turns away from the hole, the escape, back to his fellow officers.

He crouches down again. Although the quantity of cement that is covering Will was never meant to be moved by a single man, Dominick still gives it his all as he works:

WILL

Sarge, what the fuck happened?

It takes John only a moment to consider:

JOHN

Car bomb. Looked like it exploded out on Liberty Street. Pushed everything in here.

DOMINICK

Why'd you have us run in here?

JOHN

Elevator shaft's strongest part of the building.

Dom pulls on the rebar. It snaps back. Pulls. Snaps back.

DOMINICK

(frustrated)

ARGH!

Will looks up at him, terrified.

DOMINICK (cont'd)

(quietly, intensely)

I can't get you out.

WILL

Please don't give up. Keep trying.

Dom nods. Smiles.

DOMINICK

K.

Then,

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMM!

Oh God. How can it be happening again?

Dominick and Will look at each other as another sinister noise explodes somewhere over them. And again, as before, the terrifying rumbling begins.

Will crosses his arms over his chest (in the sign language position that says "I love you") and he stares right into Dom's eyes. Everything starts shaking. We flash to the men's faces. John. Will. Dom. We see them bracing, waiting accepting.

The debris starts coming through the hole - small chunks at first, then bigger, bigger, bigger with more smoke and gunk and godknowswhat until it seems impossible that any of them will survive this second explosion.

OFF-SCREEN VOICE  
 AAAA-AHHHHH!!! Oh God!!!!!!

Through the haze John's confusing, disorienting - but we track around until we come to John and realize it is he who is screaming. The cement wall that was hovering just half an inch over the lower half of his body has been compacted by the falling debris. It has pushed down on top of him: He's now being squeezed between the cement floor and thousands of pounds of cement debris.

He is in agony.

And then we realize the other two men are silent.

We track back through the hole until we get to Will and Dom. Will stares with horror at his friend. Dom sits on the ground with a chunk of cement the size of a piano across his lap. His breaths are labored.

WILL  
 Dom. You okay? Dom!

DOMINICK  
I'm hurt bad.

His head bobs.

WILL  
Dom. Keep awake!

Dom looks around. He knows what's happening.

DOMINICK  
Hey Sarge. Can I get a 3-8?

JOHN  
Yeah. You take a break.

Dominick looks at Will. There is almost a calmness in his eyes.

DOMINICK  
I'm dying.

WILL  
Don't.

DOMINICK  
You tell Jeannette-

WILL  
-Stop

DOMINICK  
-I love her.

WILL  
-Don't.

DOMINICK  
-And my kids...

WILL  
Hold on. Stop it.

Dom tries to breathe, but there is blood in his mouth.

DOMINICK  
I love you, Willy.

WILL  
I love you, too.

DOMINICK

Don't forget. I died trying to save  
you guys.

WILL

I won't.

Dominick looks around. With his last ounce of energy, he lifts his arm and fires his gun up at the hole. And with the light from above streaming onto his face, Dominick passes.

Will stares in disbelief. He opens his mouth to scream, to cry, but he chokes on the dust.

WILL (cont'd)

Sarge. Dominick's gone.

JOHN

I know.

And for a moment, they are silent as the plaster crumbles around them. John is in serious physical trouble. He fights to stay in control.

JOHN (cont'd)

Can you still see the light?

WILL

Yes.

Will turns his head away from Dominick and closes his eyes.

INT./EXT. THE HOLE AND MANHATTAN - CONTINUOUS

Like a cold breath, we glide up twenty feet through the twisted refuse, up and up, until we emerge into the hellish, fiery, landscape above. The smoke is so intense, it's possible to not realize that the buildings are gone.

Now we travel with the clouds, up with the swirling plumes and over the city of New York. Up into the white-choked atmosphere. Up into the sky like an ascending spirit.

EXT. SPACE - SAME

A wide shot of the earth. It is so still from up here.

A satellite tumbles through the inky quiet.

INT. SWISS STOCK EXCHANGE - ZURICH - SAME

A roomful of SWISS STOCKBROKERS stand absolutely still as they stare at a huge overhead television. One WOMAN covers her mouth with her hand. A MAN grasps the arm of a nearby STRANGER to steady himself. Paper continues to shoot out of machines all around them. No one seems to notice.

INT. A LIVING ROOM IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH - SAME

A BANGLADESHI FAMILY sits in their living room, smoking cigarettes. The MOTHER cries silently as her HUSBAND leans in closer to the tv.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - CHONJU, SOUTH KOREA - SAME

Surrounded by walls of flat screen televisions for sale, several KOREANS whisper nervously into their cell phones.

INT. DINER IN SHEBOYGAN, WISCONSIN - SAME

A portly SHORT-ORDER COOK stands over the grill in his diner. The eggs overcook beneath him as he and his 5 CUSTOMERS - WISCONSIN COPS - stare at the tv. The cook drops his spatula. This startles WISCONSIN COP #1. He stands up.

INT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE - NEW JERSEY - SAME

A small GROUP OF WORKERS stares in disbelief at a television. We focus in on ALLISON, a thirty-three-year-old, Italian-American spitfire of a woman. She is seven months pregnant and she trembles visibly.

Her co-worker, LAUREN, notices.

LAUREN

Al, you okay?

Allison can't even speak. She just shakes her head no.

LAUREN (cont'd)

Sit down. Here.

Lauren helps Allison to sit back down at her desk. Allison looks at the framed photo on her desk:

It's Allison and Will. A dark-haired little girl sits between them.

ALLISON  
He's there.

LAUREN  
He's at the bus station.

The phone on Allison's desk rings. She jumps on it.

JERRY (O.S.)  
(through phone)  
Allison?

INT. JERRY'S OFFICE - SAME

JERRY, Allison's put-upon older brother, stands staring out the window of his wood-paneled office.

JERRY  
I'm looking at the tunnel. There's  
no one there.

Through his window, Jerry has a clear view of the entrance to the New Jersey side of the Lincoln tunnel.

JERRY (cont'd)  
(exasperated, explaining  
further)  
None of the Port Authority guys are  
there.  
(Beat. He listens.)  
I don't... I guess they got called  
in.

They both consider the implications of this thought.

JERRY (cont'd)  
Can you get home? Should I come get  
you?

Beat. Allison is speechless.

JERRY (cont'd)  
I'll see you there in half an hour.

INT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE - NEW JERSEY - SAME

Allison hangs up the phone.

LAUREN  
I'm driving you.

Struggling to her feet, Allison nods in agreement.

ALLISON  
We got to pick up Bianca.

INT. JUDY JONAS' HOME, GOSHEN, NEW YORK - SAME

In a lovely colonial home in the suburbs north of NYC, three middle-aged white women stare at their tv in disbelief. They are DONNA, John's wife, and her friends JUDY and LYNNE. Judy stands up and paces.

JUDY  
Jay's got to be there. They must've called every engine in the city.

DONNA  
John, too, probably. He knows those buildings so well.

Judy sits back down.

JUDY  
Oh my God.

DONNA  
They evacuated those buildings. I'm sure everyone was fine.

Lynne and Judy turn to her. It is now that we get a good look at Donna. At her sensible haircut and warm smile. Her mother's hands that have soothed many aches.

DONNA (cont'd)  
In '93 John said they got everyone out real quick.

The women look back at the tv. Lynne stands.

LYNNE  
I'm gonna call everyone and cancel. A den mother's meeting seems a little dumb right now. Right?

No response, and so she exits. Donna squeezes Judy's hand.

DONNA  
They're fine.

INT. THE HOLE - CONTINUOUS

John and Will are both in terrible pain. They struggle not to let the other know how bad it is.

WILL

So the bombs exploded out on the street?

JOHN

Airplane was probably a diversion. They blew up a car or truck or whatever out on the street. Blew out the lobby. The concourse collapsed.

WILL

The whole goddam concourse?

JOHN

I dunno. Probably just this area.

WILL

You think-

JOHN

(through gritted teeth)  
-We got to figure this out. Where is the light?

WILL

Up. Coming from about five feet to the right and up.

JOHN

How far up?

WILL

I dunno. I can see maybe twenty feet up there's still shit in the way. There's also fires way down below. Something's burning.

JOHN

What else can you see?

WILL

(tension rising)  
Beams. Plaster. Nothing.

Beat as John swallows another wave of pain.

JOHN  
(staying calm)  
Physically. What do you got?

WILL  
My legs down, I'm useless. I got  
concrete all over me.

JOHN  
And there's no way you can move it?

WILL  
No. No way.

JOHN  
But you got your arms. You got a  
tool there you could use? Help you  
get it off?

Will looks around the still ash-thickened space. There's  
nothing within reach. Then he feels his body. He gets down to  
his waist. He locates his handcuffs.

WILL  
I got my cuffs.

JOHN  
Use 'em.

Will works to get the cuffs unclipped from his belt.  
Meanwhile, John once gain talks into his radio.

JOHN (cont'd)  
(into radio)  
PAPD McLoughlin and Jimeno. We're  
trapped in the freight elevator  
vestibule in the concourse between  
towers two and one.

He tunes the radio and listens. Crackly static comes back at  
him once again.

WILL  
You just getting static?

JOHN  
Yes.

WILL  
(quickly)  
Maybe they can read us. Maybe we're  
just not getting them but they can  
hear us.

JOHN

Maybe.

But the look on his face reads otherwise.

Will pulls the handcuffs free. He considers how to use them. Then, he opens them up and starts to chip away at the concrete. A fingernail sized piece chips off. He continues to work at it.

Suddenly, a VOICE calls down into the hole:

OFF-SCREEN VOICE

Charlie!

This voice is a mess. It belongs to someone who's disoriented or in pain or something.

WILL

No! Thank God. We're Sergeant McLoughlin and Officer Jimeno. Port Authority police. We're trapped here!

Will listens for a response.

WILL (cont'd)

Hey!

Silence.

WILL (cont'd)

HELLLP!

Nothing.

WILL (cont'd)

What the hell?!?!

Yeah. The guy is gone.

WILL (cont'd)

(borderline hysterical)

This is bullshit! Who the fuck asks for Charlie-

JOHN

(interrupting, short)

-Jimeno.

(beat as Will shuts up)

He was dazed or whatever. Or he coulda just died.

Will is quiet... and incredibly frustrated. John grimaces against another wave of pain.

WILL

You know, I don't even know your first name. What is it?

JOHN

John.

Since he doesn't ask, Will answers anyway:

WILL

I'm Will.

They are silent, continuing to assess the situation. All they can hear are the crackling embers around them.

INT. JUDY JONAS' HOME, GOSHEN, NEW YORK - ONE HOUR LATER

Donna and Lynne halfheartedly peck at cookies. Judy points at the tv.

JUDY

(frustrated)

They keep showing the same thing. The buildings going down over and over and over.

LYNNE

There's nothing else to show.

DONNA

I'm sure they evacuated everyone. In '93-

JUDY

In '93 the buildings didn't fall down!

The tension in the room is terrible.

DONNA

You're right.

JUDY

I'm sorry.

The women smile weakly at each other.

JUDY (cont'd)

I always...

(she stops herself)

I'm gonna make some tea. Herbal or something.

Judy exits into the kitchen. Donna and Lynne return to the tv.

DONNA

I keep looking for John. There are so many policemen running around. Maybe I'll see him.

Lynne grabs Donna's wrist and points out the window. Donna looks to where she's pointing and her face contorts ever so slightly.

Two cop cars, lights flashing, pull up into the driveway. They both know this can only mean one thing.

LYNNE

Judy!

Judy pokes her head out of the kitchen.

JUDY

I got mint. That's for the tooth-

She looks up at them.

JUDY (cont'd)

What?

Then she sees the flashing lights. The doorbell DING DONGS. No one moves. Judy stands stock still. After a moment, Lynne goes to her and Donna opens the door.

FOUR LOCAL COPS stand on the doorstep.

The FIRST COP addresses Donna.

FIRST COP

Mrs. Jonas?

Donna shakes her head. Judy steps forward, shaking yet somewhat - almost - defiant.

JUDY

I'm Mrs. Jonas.

FIRST COP

Jay-

JUDY

No.

FIRST COP

He's alive.

The women all turn to him.

FIRST COP (cont'd)  
But he's trapped. They know where  
he is. They're communicating with  
him.

JUDY  
He's alive.

FIRST COP  
He is.

JUDY  
Okay.

She thinks about this.

JUDY (cont'd)  
Okay.

INT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - NOON

Allison, Jerry, and KAREN, 10, Latina, sit around a dining  
room table.

In the next room, BENCA, a little imp of a four-year-old,  
watches Blues Clues with an incredible intensity. She is  
immediately recognizable from the picture on Allison's desk.

The three adults slowly chew on turkey sandwiches. Allison  
can't bring herself to swallow. She puts the sandwich down.  
Jerry helps himself to more potato chips from the bag.

The phone rings. Allison springs up. With her bulging belly,  
she knocks her chair over.

ALLISON  
Hello?

She leans back against the wall. There is disappointment all  
over her face.

ALLISON (cont'd)  
No. No. I got my brother and Will's  
sister here. No. His shift's not  
over until three so...

She looks at the clock on the wall. It is noon.

ALLISON (cont'd)  
 I'm sure he's busy. There's a lot  
 going on.  
 (she tries a smile)  
 I'm not going to worry now. I'll  
 worry at three.

INT. THE HOLE - AROUND 1PM

John breathes deeply, trying to get a handle on the pain. He  
 closes his eyes. As soon as his eyes close, he hears:

DONNA (V.O.)  
 John?

SLAM TO:

INT. THE HOLE - CONTINUOUS

WILL  
 Sarge!

John's eyes spring open.

JOHN  
 Yeah.

WILL  
 You weren't sleep--

JOHN  
 No.

Will continues to work on the cinderblocks with his  
 handcuffs. He has chipped away maybe three inches worth of  
 material.

WILL  
 This is working. With the cuffs.  
 I'm getting through it.

Suddenly, there is a small POP. Will turns his head and  
 watches an ember float down past his face into the  
 nothingness beneath him.

POP.

Another ember floats past. This time it's a lot bigger.

CRRRAAAACK!

Okay. What the--- this time it's a freakin' fireball the size of a watermelon. It falls within six inches of Will, singeing the hair on his arm.

WILL (cont'd)  
I got fireballs here.

And another ball falls. And another. They fall furiously through Will's space, passing into the void below.

John can't see any of this. Will panics.

WILL (cont'd)  
Sarge!

JOHN  
There's nothing I can do here.

Will tries to tuck himself away from the flames, but he can't move.

WILL  
I'm gonna burn!

It falls faster and faster, until there is a waterfall of flame passing within inches of Will. Smoke fills up the hole and he chokes as he tries to shield his face.

And just when it seems like the entire space is aflame, a strong breeze comes up from below. Like a calming breath, this draft extinguishes the flames.

Will looks down at his arm - it is red and burned.

WILL (cont'd)  
(measured)  
Where'd that fucking breeze come from?

JOHN  
I got a draft here, coming up from below.

WILL  
What the fuck was that? The fire just goes out?

John says nothing. Will waits for an answer, then gets frustrated when none comes.

WILL (cont'd)  
Why was that?!

JOHN  
I don't know.

PING!

JOHN (cont'd)  
What-

WILL  
I don't-

PING!

WILL (cont'd)  
HOLY SHIT.

JOHN  
What???

WILL  
Dom's gun. It's cooking off.

PING!

FOCUS IN on Dominick's gun. The fires have heated up the bullets and now the gun is going off of it's own volition. It is firing mere inches from Will. He covers his head one more time. Again, there is nowhere for him to go.

PING!

PING!

WHIZZZ!

One bullet flies within inches of Will's head, sparking as it ricochets off the pipes. It seems almost inconceivable how many bullets there are in the gun.

BANG. BANG. BANG.

WILL (cont'd)  
(defiant)  
AAAHHHHH!!!!!!!

BANG.

Silence. The FIRES above crackle. Will pants with fear.

JOHN  
That should be all. With the two  
bullets he fired, that's sixteen.

WILL  
You were laying there counting  
bullets?

Silence from John. He knows he should say something.

JOHN  
What'd you want me to do?

WILL  
I don't know.

Suddenly, Will looks around horrified.

WILL (cont'd)  
I dropped the cuffs.

He searches frantically.

WILL (cont'd)  
(agitated)  
I can't find them. They were  
here...

They are nowhere to be found.

WILL (cont'd)  
Sarge,

JOHN  
So find something else to work  
with.

WILL  
I had them. They were here.

Will pants with frustration. John hears how upset Will is,  
but says nothing to comfort him. What's there to say?

INT. DELOIT AND TOUCHE OFFICE - WILTON, CONNECTICUT - SAME

A group of MID-LEVEL ACCOUNTANTS crowd into a grey cubicle.  
They stare morosely at a tv. One of the accountants is DAVE  
KARNES, a very trim 45-year-old. There are beads of sweat on  
his agitated brow. He has seen enough of the tv. He turns and  
exits.

INT. DELOIT AND TOUCHE OFFICE - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Dave is alone in the elevator. He watches the floor numbers descend as he tries to catch his breath. He is pale. Shaky.

INT. FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH - CONNECTICUT - SAME

With industrial carpeting and wood-paneled walls, this sanctuary was built by Born Again Christians who evidently hold that glory should be paid to God through humble materials. An enormous gold cross hangs over the altar, illuminated by a spotlight.

FOUR CONGREGANTS pray fervently. One of them is Dave Karnes. A grey-haired REVEREND sits down next to Dave. They greet each other with grim smiles.

DAVE  
(whispering)  
I think I have to go now, there.

REVEREND  
(whispering)  
Where?

DAVE  
New York.

REVEREND  
You... can't. Only emergency  
responses are being allowed in.

Dave's emotions swirl about.

DAVE  
I spent so many years in the  
Marines. God gave me a gift. To be  
able to help people. To defend our  
country. I feel Him calling on me.

The Reverend hears this.

REVEREND  
Then find a way to listen.

Dave looks up at the cross as if it is speaking to him. A slow realization spreads through his body. He squeezes the Reverend's arm and runs out the door, loosening his tie as he goes.

INT. JUDY JONAS' HOME, GOSHEN, NEW YORK - 2PM

Donna, Lynne, Judy and the four cops sit in the living room. By this point, a FEW MORE NEIGHBORS have also gathered. Donna pours coffee to those who want it. Judy talks quietly to one of the cops.

JUDY

Thank God I kissed him this morning. You know? I kissed him goodbye. And so did the kids. Thank God.

Donna pauses ever so slightly with the coffee pot in her hand. A twinge of something - remorse? - crosses her face. How long has it been since John kissed her goodbye?

Lynne notices.

LYNNE

(quietly, to Donna)  
You're not worried?

Donna snaps out of it.

DONNA

(insistent)  
It took John sixteen hours to call me in '93. He's fine. He had no reason to go in the buildings. They would have needed him on the outside for his knowledge.

The phone rings. Judy runs to it.

JUDY

Hello?

She screams as she falls into the sofa.

JUDY (cont'd)

I love you I love you I love you I  
love you. Are you okay? I love you  
I love you I love you I love you.

Donna smiles and puts the coffee pot down. Everyone in the room exhales.

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

John looks down at his left hand. It is markedly swollen. He wiggles his fingers.

JOHN  
(quietly)  
Jimeno?

No response.

JOHN (cont'd)  
(louder)  
Jimeno?

Fear creeps into John's chest.

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

Will's eyes are closed. He is somewhere else. Somewhere warm and clean. He is in...

CUT TO:

INT. WILL AND ALLISON'S BEDROOM - EARLIER THAT MORNING

...his bedroom. The room is tiny. The queen-size bed takes up nearly the entire floor space. Will lies on his side, staring at Allison's bulging belly. He pets her stomach. She smiles at him. They speak in quiet, early-morning voices.

WILL  
You got to name Bianca.

ALLISON  
You loved the name Bianca.

WILL  
But you picked it.

ALLISON  
So?

WILL  
So I get to choose the name this time. Alyssa.

ALLISON  
Alyssa is the stupidest name ever.  
Think about it. Alyssa the Pissah.  
(MORE)

ALLISON (cont'd)  
You know what kids can do to a  
name.

(laughing, softening)  
I like Olivia.

WILL  
Olivia? Olivia sounds like Olive  
Oyle. Or olives.

ALLISON  
(exasperated, but  
giggling)  
Will...

They smile at each other, enjoying the banter. Then,  
Allison's expression changes to something much more serious.

ALLISON (cont'd)  
Jimeno!  
(beat)  
Jimeno!

SLAM TO:

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

JOHN  
Will!

Will's eyes spring open.

WILL  
Yeah. I'm here.

As Will wakes up, the intense pain hits him all over again.  
John closes his eyes with relief. Then, the anger comes.

JOHN  
Don't you. Goddam.

WILL  
What?

JOHN  
You keep awake. I can't hear shit  
down here. You gotta keep your ears  
open.

WILL  
Okay.

JOHN  
Don't you sleep on me!

WILL

Okay.

(beat)

My-

But he's interrupted by a tremendous EXPLOSION from above. It sounds different from the earlier ones. Sharper. They can tell it's not directly over their heads and so they do not crouch. But it certainly gets their attention. Not to mention what comes next...

MACHINE GUNS start firing. Lots of them. There's no mistaking their sound. Rat a tat tat tat. Rat a tat tat tat.

And then there are grenades. BOOM. BOOM. Rat a tat tat.

WILL (cont'd)

(bewildered)

What the fuck is that?

The men can do nothing but lie there BANG WHIZ. BOOM. Soon, the gunfire subsides.

WILL (cont'd)

(repeating)

What the fuck is that?

JOHN

Gun battles.

WILL

This can't be fucking happening.  
What the fuck is happening up  
there? Fucking hand to hand combat?  
This is. Fucked.

Beat.

WILL (cont'd)

You've. You've seen some shit,  
right? You were Emergency Services,  
right?

JOHN

Yeah.

WILL

So you seen shit. Was any of it  
this bad?

JOHN

No.

WILL  
So what kind of shit did you see?

JOHN  
Just. Shit.

WILL  
But like what?

JOHN  
I don't know...

Silence. Will feels like he's banging his head against the wall.

WILL  
You're not a big talker, are you?

JOHN  
No.

WILL  
But see. You gotta talk to me.  
'Cause if I'm gonna die...

JOHN  
Shut up.

Will closes his mouth. John tries to move. He grimaces from the pain.

JOHN (cont'd)  
Look. I'm not. I've been a cop for  
nineteen years. It's doing a job.  
It's not talking about shit. The  
guys who think they're  
Schwarzenegger, they're the guys  
who don't make it home. I keep my  
mouth shut and do my job. It's what  
I've always done.

Will listens to what John has just said. Considers it.

WILL  
(trying to defend himself)  
Still.

Will is about to cry, but he refuses to allow himself. He looks around, as if assessing for the first time how bad the situation is. Then, with tremendous effort and pain, he fishes a scrap of paper and a pen out of his breast pocket.

He uncaps the pen and tries to write on the paper, but the pen doesn't work; it's too gunked up from the grime of the hole.

Will is about to scream. Frustrated, he does the best he can: He presses the pen really hard into the paper and scratches out his simple message. "Allison I love you."

He examines his handiwork, then tucks the paper into his breast pocket.

INT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - SAME

Allison, Jerry and Karen still sit at the dining room table. Karen looks at the clock on the wall. It is 3:05.

KAREN

You gotta call the bus terminal.

Allison does not respond. She just stares at the table.

KAREN (cont'd)

Al--?

Allison looks up at her, fear in her eyes. Slowly, Allison stands and walks a death march to the phone. She picks it up. Dials.

ALLISON

This is Allison Jimeno. Will's wife. I'm wondering-- Okay.

(to Karen and Jerry)

He put me on hold.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL POLICE DESK - SAME

At the same police desk that John had sat at earlier in the day, SERGEANT BEVERLY KING, 40s, African-American, no nonsense, picks up the phone.

SGT. KING

Mrs. Jimeno, this is Beverly King.

BRIAN (O.S.)

Is that Allison Jimeno?

Sgt. King looks up. Standing below the desk is OFFICER BRIAN BOEL, 30s. He holds out his hand.

BRIAN (cont'd)

We grew up together. Let me talk to her?

Sgt. King hands the phone down to him.

BRIAN (cont'd)  
 (into phone)  
 Al, it's Brian. I just got in.  
 Yeah. Listen. They sent Will down  
 on a bus with a bunch of other  
 guys. We haven't heard anything  
 from them yet, but I'm on it.

INT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - SAME

Allison listens to the phone. She looks steadily at Jerry as she talks.

ALLISON  
 So he went down there?  
 (beat)  
 And did he go in the buildings?  
 (beat)  
 Someone has to know.  
 (beat, agitated)  
 Did he go in or not?  
 (beat, almost screaming)  
 It's very basic. Did he go in or  
 not?!

Allison realizes a moment too late that her yelling just scared her daughter, Bianca. Bianca crawls into Karen's lap.

ALLISON (cont'd)  
 Alright. Bye.

Allison hangs up. Her bottom lip quivers.

JERRY  
 I'm going to bring Bianca over to  
 my place. The kids should be home  
 with the sitter by now.

ALLISON  
 I want her here.

JERRY  
 She'll be three houses away.

Allison looks at her worried daughter and slowly nods in acquiescence.

INT. THE CONNECTI-CUT BARBER SHOP - 3:30

An ELDERLY BARBER watches a portable tv in his empty shop. Through the window, he sees a Porsche 911 pull up to the curb.

Dave Karnes, the Christian, enters the shop. He has traded in his suit and tie for an old set of Marine Corps camouflage utilities.

DAVE  
(to the barber)  
I'm looking for a military buzz.

INT. THE HOLE - 4PM

Will now uses the nub of the pen to work at the cinderblocks. John sticks out his tongue. It is coated with white soot. He tries to wipe it off along his lip. He gets frustrated and again turns to the radio.

JOHN  
PAPD 8-13, Officers Jimeno and  
McLoughlin. We are trapped in the  
freight elevator vestibule...

He stops talking. He tries every channel on the radio.

Nothing.

JOHN (cont'd)  
Dammit.

Will stops working with the pen. He looks down at the plastic nub and sees how utterly useless it is. He tries to shift, and a jolt of electric pain courses through him.

WILL  
You know that movie, GI Jane?

JOHN  
With ah whatshername? Demi?

WILL  
Yeah. Demi Moore.

JOHN  
Yeah.

WILL

You know that part where that drill sergeant says

(acting it out)

"Pain is good. Pain is your friend. If you're feeling pain, you're still alive."

JOHN

I didn't see the movie.

WILL

I keep thinking of that line. Pain is my friend.

JOHN

Is that so?

WILL

Means you're alive.

JOHN

(sarcastic)

Well with friends like me...

They actually share a chuckle. The moment passes.

WILL

You keep trying that radio.

JOHN

(sarcastic)

Yeah, how's that pen working out?

Touche.

WILL

You got any ideas?

John thinks. Chokes as he exhales. Then, he's quiet. Will waits.

WILL (cont'd)

Sar-?

JOHN

-No.

INT. JOHN AND DONNA'S LIVING ROOM - 4:30

Donna and her FOUR CHILDREN - STEVEN, 15, CAITLIN, 12, JJ, 10, AND ERIN, 4 - watch television.

Out of the corner of her eye, Donna notices a car slow down in front of their house and turn into the driveway. Immediately, her entire demeanor changes.

CAITLIN  
Is that Uncle Pat?

Shaking, Donna walks to the front door. She opens it and storms outside.

PAT, 51, John's brother, gets out of the car. Donna yells at him from the front stoop.

DONNA  
Are you here to tell me something?

Pat closes the car door.

DONNA (cont'd)  
Don't you come in here. I mean it.  
Don't you come in this house.

Pat walks toward her.

DONNA (cont'd)  
Stop. I mean it. Stop.

But he doesn't listen. He walks closer and closer and Donna breaks into tears.

PAT  
He's not... We don't know. But  
they've declared him as missing.  
He's just missing.

They embrace.

INT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - SAME

Allison is on the phone. Karen listens in on another extension. They're on hold. Allison paces.

SGT. KING  
(through phone)  
Mrs. Jimeno?

Allison jumps at the sound of her voice.

ALLISON  
Yes. Yes.

SGT. KING  
 (measured, careful)  
 Alright. Mrs. Jimeno. We received  
 confirmation here. Yes. Will went  
 in. But we have no location on him  
 and we have had no communication  
 with him.

Allison drops the phone.

ALLISON  
 NOOOO!!!!

The room spins. She can't breathe. She runs through the  
 kitchen and into the tiny powder room.

As she runs by the clock on the wall, we see that it is 5pm.

INT. ALLISON'S POWDER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Allison slams open the lid on the toilet and vomits into the  
 bowl. She vomits out the terror and poison and hate.

When she is done, she sits on the floor of the bathroom.  
 Waves of emotion wrack her body.

The door to the bathroom opens. PAUL, Allison's father, walks  
 in. She looks up at him.

ALLISON  
 Daddy

He joins her on the floor, enveloping her in a hug.

ALLISON (cont'd)  
 How am I going to tell Bianca her  
 father's dead?

INT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - SAME

Outside the bathroom, Karen and Jerry talk with PATRICIA and  
 JULIA, Allison's mother and grandmother. The front door that  
 they just walked through is still open.

JERRY  
 Missing means missing. It doesn't  
 mean dead.

KAREN  
 My parents are on their way here.

Paul emerges from the bathroom.

PAUL

We gotta call her obstetrician.  
She's gonna give birth right there  
in the bathroom. They got to give  
her something.

EXT. 14TH STREET - MANHATTAN - SAME

Dave Karnes stops his car just before a roadblock. A LEGION OF THE ANGUISHED presses against the barriers, their faces turned southward, hoping for miracles to emerge from the ashes.

Dave summons his courage and his determination. He marches up to a NATIONAL GUARDSMAN.

DAVE

U.S. Marine. I'm needed in there

The Guardsman allows Dave to slip around the barricade. Relieved, Dave quickly walks past. He looks up at the sky. A choking, white mass has bloated out the blue sky. Motivated, he marches on.

INT. JONH'S BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

Once again, John emerges from his bathroom after completing his morning routine. The scene is identical to the one from earlier in the morning.

The difference is...

John - the John of the Hole - now stands off to the side of the bed, watching himself, the John of the Morning, leave for work.

The John of the Morning emerges from the bathroom. He swiftly moves past his bed without pausing to glance at Donna, who is sleeping in the bed.

John of the Hole watches John of the Morning exit.

John of the Hole sits down on the edge of the bed and watches Donna sleep. He brushes a hair away from her cheek.

SLAM TO:

And then...

And then... Is it possible? The horrific rumbling begins all over again. Something is collapsing, shifting, tumbling.

John's eyes open to the noise.

WILL  
(whispering)  
Our father, who art in heaven,

The rumbling gets so loud that Will is no longer audible as his lips continue to move.

But this noise is different. It's a bit further away. A bit muffled. Nothing falls into the hole and soon the noise stops.

WILL (cont'd)  
You think that was another car  
bomb?

JOHN  
Had to be.

Beat.

WILL  
When are they gonna send rescue  
teams in?

John pauses, thinking about what to tell him.

JOHN  
They're not coming, not at least  
till morning. They got to secure  
the area before they come in here.  
There are bombs going off. No one's  
gonna come in this place in the  
dark.

There's a long, heavy pause as this sets in. We now get a good look at Will. His condition is worsening. He is swollen everywhere - his arms, his face. Every part of his body is blowing up.

His voice cracks slightly as he speaks.

WILL  
What's your wife's name?

JOHN  
Donna.

John's lower lip trembles as he says her name.

WILL

Mine's Allison. She's seven months pregnant. It's gonna be a girl. We already got one. She's four. Bianca.

JOHN

I got four kids.

WILL

That's a lot of kids.

JOHN

Yeah.

WILL

What are their names?

JOHN

Steven. He's the oldest. He's fifteen. Caitlin's twelve. Peanut - J.J. - he's ten. And we got a little girl Erin. She's four, too. We had her late. Donna says..

John has to catch his breath from the emotion.

JOHN (cont'd)

I don't know...

He looks for the word.

JOHN (cont'd)

Donna's...She's... I married the right one. You know?

WILL

I know.

JOHN

I guess I should tell her that more.

Something metallic creaks over their heads. The FIRES continue to burn below. In the midst of this mess, the guys hold on to the thoughts of their wives.

INT. JOHN AND DONNA'S LIVING ROOM - SAME

As the world turns gray with the coming dusk, Donna flits around her now full living room. She attends to her worried GUESTS, plying them with food and drink.

Her doorbell RINGS. She opens the door. Standing before her is Judy Jonas.

Judy opens her arms and wraps Donna in a hug. Donna accepts the moment, more for Judy's sake than for her own. Then she pulls out of the embrace and smiles.

JUDY

I can't believe both of us-

DONNA

(cutting her off)

He's just missing. He'll be fine.

(loudly, so the kids can hear)

If anyone is fine in the World Trade Center, it's John.

Judy looks at her, worried. Donna is annoyed by her concern.

DONNA (cont'd)

Jay was missing and he got out. John will too.

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

Will now uses his thumbnail on the cement. His right nail is already bloodied from the effort. So he works with his left. He is soaking wet with perspiration.

He hears John moan. What he does not see is that John's lips are blue.

John is failing.

WILL

(trembling)

I'll take the cart.

JOHN

What?

WILL

That's what he said to me. I'll take the cart. Antonio.

JOHN

Rodrigues?

WILL

Yeah. If he hadn't switched places with me...

Silence.

JOHN

You got to tell people that. What he did.

WILL

And about Dominick helping me instead of escaping.

JOHN

Yeah.

WILL

And Chris intending to go back up after he was cut so bad.

JOHN

You tell them.

Will understands the subtext of this statement.

WILL

(insistent)

You tell them. You.

Pause. Will waits for an answer.

WILL (cont'd)

Sarge?

John has tears in his eyes.

JOHN

I ordered them in-

WILL

-We chose to go in.

JOHN

-How can a Sergeant live while his guys-

WILL

-It was a choice.

JOHN

No-

WILL

Kazmatis said you were the best. You were the guy who knew everything down here.

(MORE)

WILL (cont'd)  
 Dom, Antonio, Chris too. Nothing  
 was gonna keep them from trying to  
 help. We figured. Might as well  
 follow the best guy in.

JOHN  
 The best...

WILL  
 They did what they needed to do.  
 Couldn't have lived with themselves  
 if they hadn't gone in. That's who  
 they were.

John looks down at his arm. He sniffs back the tears.

JOHN  
 Yeah. Okay.  
 (beat)  
 Thank you.

John tries as hard as he possibly can to reach the radio once  
 again. It nearly takes the life out of him. But he makes it.  
 Relief spreads across his face.

JOHN (cont'd)  
 McLoughlin and Jimeno. DAPD. Can  
 someone reach me?

Will looks up at the spot where the daylight had streamed in.  
 He sees that it must be getting dark out.

INT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - SAME

Allison's little house is now stuffed full of people. Along  
 with Jerry and Karen and Allison's parents and grandmother,  
 ERNESTO and JOSEFINA JIMENO, Will's Colombian immigrant  
 parents, have arrived.

Allison numbly stands in the middle of the noisy group.

ALLISON  
 I'm naming the baby Alyssa. It's  
 what Will wanted.

Conversation ceases. Everyone looks at her.

ALLISON (cont'd)  
 (re: their worried  
 expressions)  
 What?

JERRY  
I'm going to pick up the  
prescription.

ALLISON  
What prescription?

PAUL  
The doctor called in a prescription  
for you. Said we should have it on  
hand in case...

ALLISON  
In case what?

PAUL  
(gently)  
In case there's upsetting news.

Allison doesn't know what to do with this information. She  
sways slightly.

ALLISON  
I'll go pick it up.

EVERYONE  
No!

ALLISON  
I can't just sit here waiting to  
get a call that Will is dead!

A pin could drop.

JERRY  
I'll drive you.

KAREN  
I'm coming too.

INT. CVS - 7PM

Karen, Allison and Jerry walk through a nearly-empty CVS drug  
store. The fluorescent light enhances the shadows under  
Allison's eyes. As she waddles toward the back of the store,  
all of the familiar brands look foreign to her. She can't  
focus on anything. She's overwhelmed.

She stops to breathe. Jerry rushes to her.

JERRY  
Are you okay?

ALLISON

What am I doing here? Will could be never coming home and I'm walking around CVS like nothing's wrong.

JERRY

You wanted to get out of the house.

ALLISON

Did you bring your cell phone?

JERRY

No.

ALLISON

Karen!

Karen pokes her head around the corner.

ALLISON (cont'd)

Do you have a phone with you?

KAREN

No.

ALLISON

How could we have left the house with no phone?

Allison turns and starts running out of the store.

ALLISON (cont'd)

(over her shoulder)

We have to go back. Right now.

INT. KAREN'S CAR - MOMENT LATER

Karen drives. Allison is in the passenger seat. Jerry is in back. Allison nervously fiddles with her wedding band. They are silent.

They come to a red light. Karen stops. There is no one coming through the intersection and yet they wait. And wait. And wait.

Allison opens the car door and gets out. She starts walking.

JERRY

Where are you going?

Karen rolls down Allison's window.

ALLISON

I have to get home and the fucking light is taking fucking forever.

JERRY

Would you get back in the goddam car!

The light turns green. Karen scooches up a few feet and Allison gets back in the car. They drive away.

EXT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - MINUTES LATER

The car pulls up to the house. Before it is fully stopped, Allison has the door open. She dashes to the front door.

INT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - CONTINUOUS

She bursts in to find her family sitting around the dining room table eating donuts.

They look up at her.

ALLISON

Did he call? Anything?

They all shake their heads no. Allison looks like she's going to fall over.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL POLICE DESK

Sergeant King is on the phone. Brian and several other COPS mill about.

SGT. KING

I can't call out so you just go on and call me every half hour. Okay.

As she hangs up the phone, she looks up, through the glass door, at a nearby escalator.

One by one, the men who were on the bus with Will float to the top. They are covered in white dust, looking like specters of their former robust selves.

No one says anything as the broken men slip back toward the locker room. Inspector Fields is the last one off the escalator. He too walks past, saying nothing.

BRIAN  
 (quietly, to King)  
 There's a lot of guys not with them  
 that should be.

The phone rings. Sgt. King answers it with dread.

SGT. KING  
 King. Hi, Mrs. Pezzulo. No. We've  
 heard nothing.

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

John grimaces.

JOHN  
 Rrrrr. I can't piss.

WILL  
 Just piss in your pants. I been  
 doing it all day.

JOHN  
 I mean I physically can't. It won't  
 come out.

John moans again.

JOHN (cont'd)  
 The foddam pressure.

Will thinks about how to distract John.

WILL  
 Dominick was a schoolteacher.

JOHN  
 Yeah?

WILL  
 Yeah. He wanted to go back to it,  
 but it didn't pay enough. He was  
 hoping to go back to teaching this  
 year. The principal at his old  
 school was going to arrange for him  
 to be a football coach too, so he  
 could get some more money.

(beat)  
 He shoulda been a teacher. It's  
 what he loved.

JOHN

He was a good cop. He did a good job.

WILL

Yeah.

(beat)

He's got two kids.

Pause. John pants from the pain. Will presses on.

WILL (cont'd)

Adam 12. When I was a kid it was on tv, and - You remember the theme song?

JOHN

(grimacing)

No.

WILL

Do do do dooooo. Do do do dooooo-  
dooo. When that came on I would run  
around the house and arrest my  
sister.

John smiles a bit.

WILL (cont'd)

Only thing I ever wanted to do was  
be a cop.

JOHN

It's a good life you can make for  
yourself with the Port Authority.

WILL

I know it. But. You're right. What  
you said earlier. I talk too much  
shit about it.

JOHN

I wasn't-

WILL

You meant about this morning. When  
I talked about the pot arrest.

JOHN

I didn't mean for you-

WILL

No. I don't know shit. I've only been on the force nine months. I just. I love this job. I get excited, I guess.

(beat)

I'm gonna be better about it.

Will catches himself: Can he hope to think about the future?  
John closes his eyes.

JOHN

(very quietly, humming  
Adam 12)

Do do do doooo. Do do do dooo-dooo

WILL

I don't know if I can make it until morning.

JOHN

You shut up.

WILL

Sarge-

JOHN

If you die, I'm going to die. I can't be in here alone. If you die, I'm just gonna die.

WILL

Well then you can't die either.

JOHN

Deal.

Still, Will considers the reality.

WILL

You think you could do me a favor though?

JOHN

What's that?

WILL

Could you maybe put out over the radio. You tell them that I request that my daughter be named Olivia. Tell them to tell Allison I love her and that she should name our daughter Olivia.

John moves the radio toward his mouth. He has to swallow to push down the lump in his throat.

JOHN

Attention. This is Sergeant McLoughlin, PAPD. Officer William Jimeno requests that his daughter be named Olivia.

(pause, he swallows again)  
Furthermore Officer Jimeno would like his wife, Allison, to know that he loves her.

John winces against the tears.

JOHN (cont'd)

(more quietly)

In addition, please tell my family that I love them very much.

And John lets go. He can't help it. The tears slip out, leaving clean streaks through the dust on his face. And still he is quiet. Will has no idea he is crying.

EXT. VESEY STREET - SAME

Dave Karnes purposefully rounds the corner from Broadway onto Vesey Street. The sidewalk and street look like one in the same, with thick coatings of dust and dirt and debris. He takes a few steps further and...

...there before him is what is just beginning to be called Ground Zero. The impact of the scene before him makes him stop in his tracks. His jaw hardens as a fury rips through him.

From his location he can see nothing. Absolutely nothing. The SMOKE is still tremendous and it pours out of every inch of the desecrated site, obscuring how horrific it truly is.

In a few more steps, Dave reaches a staging area. There are HUNDREDS of NYPD, Paramedic and NYFD RESCUERS standing around. Dave approaches TWO BABY-FACED FIREMEN.

DAVE

What's going on?

BABY-FACED FIREMAN #1

Search has been called off.  
Building 7 just went down. They think the Marriott's gonna go, too.  
'Til it's more stable, we're out.

Dave considers this.

BABY-FACED FIREMAN #2  
(shakily)  
Fuckin' mess, huh? Can't see shit.

Dave looks at him - the reflective safety strip on his helmet glows brightly in the dark night.

DAVE  
It's like God made a curtain with  
the smoke. Shielding us from what  
we're not yet ready to see.

The guys watch Dave walk away.

BABY-FACED FIREMAN #2  
Fuckin' nut bag.

INT. JOHN AND DONNA'S LIVING ROOM - SAME

The television is on, but the sound has been muted. Pat and a host of NEIGHBORS mill about, unsure of what to do with themselves.

Donna and the kids sit wearily on the couches. Ten-year-old J.J. sleepily crawls into Donna's lap.

DONNA  
Do you want to go to sleep sweetie?

J.J.  
I want to wait up for Daddy.

Donna kisses the top of his head. Twelve-year-old Caitlin wrinkles her nose in disgust.

CAITLIN  
You're gonna wait forever.

DONNA  
(maybe a little too  
sharply)  
No he's not. Daddy's gonna be fine.

Caitlin stands up and leaves in a huff. Donna kisses J.J. once again.

EXT. CORTLAND STREET - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Dave Karnes watches THOMAS, another Marine, from afar. Thomas looks like he's mentally working over a problem. We see an idea dawn on Dave.

DAVE  
Hey. Private First Class.

Thomas turns around and checks out the bars on Dave's uniform. Thomas gives him a sharp salute.

THOMAS  
Aye, aye Staff Sergeant.

DAVE  
You figure something out?

THOMAS  
I just examined the perimeter. That  
there's our best way in. No  
barriers. No patrols.

He points toward a bit of the jagged mess.

DAVE  
Good. Once we cross this street,  
there's no going back. Anyone tells  
us to stop, we keep going. We don't  
hear them.

Thomas extends his hand.

THOMAS  
Thomas.

Dave shakes.

DAVE  
Karnes.

It's the first time we've heard his name.

The two men look around. In the midst of this national disaster, they are far from important. No one watches them. Carefully yet purposefully, they cross the street. Without looking back, they slip into the smoke and disappear.

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

John has taken a significant turn for the worse. He is now as swollen as Will. His breaths come with great difficulty.

He opens his eyes. Crouching near him are MALLOY and REED, two squeaky-clean 1960s cops.

JOHN

Hello.

MALLOY

(hardboiled, Ellroy-esque)  
How you doing, McLoughlin?

JOHN

My legs hurt.

REED

You gotta hang in there.

JOHN

Who are you?

REED

(as if this is obvious)  
I'm Reed.

John looks to Malloy.

MALLOY

I'm Malloy.

They can tell he doesn't recognize them.

REED

(eager)  
From Adam 12.

JOHN

(apologetic)  
I never saw the show.

REED

(incredulous)  
Never saw-

MALLOY

(interrupting)  
-Sure you did. Episode 42. Aired  
February 7, 1970.

(MORE)

MALLOY (cont'd)  
 We investigated a dirty  
 investigator. Turned out to be a  
 double scam flim flam.

JOHN  
 (explaining)  
 I was in college then...

In another part of the hole...

Will tries to clear his mouth. It is so terribly dry. He too has a tongue caked with rubble. He does not realize that John is asleep.

WILL  
 Remember that earthquake? Where was  
 it? Turkey? There's a little girl  
 there lived four days buried in  
 rubble.

Will closes his eyes. He's exhausted.

WILL (cont'd)  
 She was like three years old or  
 something. We can do that.

Will opens his eyes. He is in a beautiful field. Long, green grass sways in the breeze. Weeping willow trees undulate back and forth. There is a placid pond in the distance. Will smiles and relaxes as he exhales. It is an idyllic location.

In the distance Will sees a MAN dressed in white, flowing robes walking toward him. The man is tall and thin and he holds something in his arm. The man gets nearer and nearer and still Will cannot see his face. Will squints. Who is it?

Will takes a few steps closer to the looming figure and as he does, the face finally comes into focus. It is JESUS.

Jesus smiles beatifically at Will. Will smiles back.

In his hand, Jesus holds a bottle of water. He does not extend the water to Will, but it is there ready for the taking if Will wants it.

Will eyeballs the water. He licks his chalk-caked lips. He thinks about whether or not to take the water.

Meanwhile...

John still talks with Reed and Malloy.

REED  
 The whole world is waiting.

JOHN  
What does that mean?

MALLOY  
You're going to have to walk out of  
here and figure it out.

JOHN  
How do I get out?

MALLOY  
In episode one, I was about to quit  
the force when a buddy of mine got  
killed. But I realized I'd be  
letting Reed down.

Reed smiles.

MALLOY (cont'd)  
My partner needed me. And I  
stayed.

JOHN  
My partner.

REED  
She needs you.

JOHN  
She.

On the other side of the hole:

There is a sluggish RUSHING NOISE as Will's eyes burst open.

He gasps, terrified. He is surprised that he is alive.

WILL  
Sarge. Hey!

John's eyes open. He is confused.

WILL (cont'd)  
Sarge. The most amazing thing.  
Jesus came to me.

JOHN  
I just saw Reed and Malloy.

WILL  
Who are they?

JOHN  
From Adam 12.

WILL  
What?

JOHN  
I don't-

WILL  
(racing, invigorated)  
But Sarge. Listen. Jesus. He had a  
bottle of water for me. I could  
have gone with him and he would  
have taken care of me. He knows  
that I'm so fucking thirsty. But  
didn't go. And now...

Will looks around frantically.

WILL (cont'd)  
We got to get the fuck out of here.

JOHN  
Amen.

John tries to reach for his radio, but he's too swollen to  
move his arm.

JOHN (cont'd)  
I can't get at the radio no more.

With excruciating effort, Will manages to get his gun out of  
its holster. He fiddles with it until it is firmly in his  
palm. Then he tries to put his finger through the trigger.  
But he is now so swollen that his finger doesn't fit in the  
hole. He tries another finger. And another. They are all too  
big.

He gives up and releases the cartridge. The bullets scatter  
all around him. With the now empty gun, he tries to chip away  
at the concrete that pins him. With every ounce of his  
energy, he lifts his arm and slams the gun against the  
concrete. Heave. Slam. Heave. Slam.

INT./EXT. THE HOLE AND GROUND ZERO - SAME

We travel once again up through that hole. Night has made the  
scene above all the more frightening.

What does a building look like when it's in pieces? When steel is bent and twisted in a manner in which man never intended? And you know there are bodies and their parts tucked here and there? Don't forget that fires and smoke pour out of surprising nooks. And pieces of lethal girders that shift and settle and creek of their own will.

Karnes and Thomas are in the midst of answering these questions. They are two little beings against the backdrop of madness. The night is completely black. The only illumination is the flashlights they carry. And so we cannot get a good look at the overall picture of destruction.

This is an incredibly dangerous situation for them. With formidable effort, they climb their way through the pile. We see the scrapes and cuts they suffer from the jagged shards. And yet they press on.

The scene is sickeningly silent. It is punctuated occasionally by:

DAVE  
(announcing)  
United States Marine, can anyone  
hear me?

Nothing. Sweating, panting, aching, they continue forth.

INT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - 8PM

Allison walks out of the dining room into the living room. Her mother follows her.

PATRICIA  
Just a sandwich. Or something.  
Tuna.

ALLISON  
I'm not hungry.

PATRICIA  
How 'bout a waffle?

PAUL  
She's not hungry.

Allison can't stand this. She walks into the kitchen. There, in front of the stove, is MARIALENA, Will's round little mother. Marialena is on her knees with her eyes closed.

MARIALENA

Madre de la Iglesia y Madre Nuetra!  
 Tu eres el orgullo de nuestra  
 gente. Jesus tu Hijo, cambio el  
 agua en vino, porque tu se lo  
 pediste. Te imploramos, Madre  
 Misericordiosa, que obtengas para  
 nosotros todas las gracias que  
 necesitamos de tu Hijo.

This does not help Allison to calm down. She walks back into the kitchen where she runs into her mother once again

PATRICIA

I could cook up some macaroni.

Allison inhales. One things for certain: this little house is way, way too crowded.

ALLISON

I'm going to put Bianca to bed.

Enough said. Allison walks past the relatives to the front door.

EXT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - SAME

Outside on the quiet street, Allison breathes in the cool night air. She looks around and notices that the blue glow of television spills out of every window on the block. She walks, breathing, trying to calm herself.

After passing three houses, she turns to her left.

INT. JERRY'S LIVING ROOM - SAME

Jerry's living room is remarkably similar to Allison's...the floors, the walls, all the same. Only the furniture is different - slightly.

Bianca is there with her TWO COUSINS (Jerry's children) and their BABYSITTER. Through the glass-paned front door, Allison watches them.

EXT. JERRY'S LIVING ROOM - SAME

Allison is on the front porch watching through the window as Bianca and the other girls dance to a cartoon on tv. Bianca flings her arms with unbridled glee. Allison sadly smiles, then opens the door.

INT. JERRY'S LIVING ROOM - SAME

Upon seeing her mother, Bianca rushes into Allison's arms. Even with her bulging belly, Allison manages to scoop her up. Allison falls into the hug, inhaling her sweet little girl smell.

With Bianca in her arms, Allison turns and heads upstairs.

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

Will's lips are swollen and blue. He slams the gun one more time onto the concrete. He checks out his progress.

There is none.

WILL

RRRRR!

JOHN

(weakly)

What?

WILL

It's not fucking working.

JOHN

Keep trying.

Will looks around, trying to come up with another idea. He sees a pipe about three feet over his head. He puts the gun down on his chest, then reaches up for the pipe. He grasps the pipe firmly in both hands, then, with the intention of pulling his legs free, he tries to pull up on it. He groans with the effort as he pulls and pulls.

It's useless and only serves to cause him more pain. He lets go of the pipe and as he does, a PING! echoes through the hole.

JOHN (cont'd)

(excited)

What's that?

WILL

I got a pipe here.

JOHN

Keep doing that.

So once again Will musters his energy and he snaps the pipe.  
PING!

And again he tries. PING!

And once more. PING! This might kill him.

EXT. THE HOLE AND GROUND ZERO - SAME

Karnes and Thomas continue to grunt as they pull themselves over the rubble.

THOMAS  
We could circle back-

A faint PING!

DAVE  
Shh-shh-shh.

Dave listens. There's another noise. PING! Like a spoon tapping against a glass. He heard it.

He pauses, his senses heightened like a cat. Now, all he hears is the blood rushing in his ears.

He does not hear that noise again.

DAVE (cont'd)  
I thought... Never mind.

They continue to talk.

PING! Again, there it is. This time, Thomas heard it too. They both stop. Realization rushes into Dave's face.

He hones in on a certain depression about 30 feet away. It is the equivalent of a thumbprint against the enormity of this site.

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

One last time, Will pulls on the pipe with everything he has left.

PING!

And then...

Will hears something he never thought he'd hear again.

He hears a voice.

OFF-SCREEN VOICE  
Shh, shh, shh, shh.

WILL  
Sarge-?

OFF-SCREEN VOICE  
United States Marines!

WILL  
Hey! HEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEY!  
Here! 8-13. PAPD down!

As Will screams, we focus in on John.

OFF-SCREEN VOICE  
We hear you!

He inhales deeply, then:

JOHN  
(whispers)  
Thank you.

WILL  
Sarge! Sarge! We're found.

OFF-SCREEN VOICE  
Where are you?

WILL  
Here. We're here.

EXT. THE HOLE AND GROUND ZERO - SAME

Dave Karnes and Thomas are at the top of the hole. Dave shines his flashlight down into a seemingly bottomless pit. He sees nothing, other than the FIRES raging below. But he can hear Will's voice clearly.

DAVE  
Who's down there?

WILL  
(desperate)  
PAPD Sergeant McLoughlin and  
Officer Jimeno. Don't fucking leave  
us.

DAVE

We're not going to leave you buddy.

WILL

I got a daughter and one on the way. The Sarge has four kids.

DAVE

We're not going anywhere. I promise. Give me a second to call the cavalry.

Dave and Thomas look at each other. Slowly, they turn their attention outward. They look around at Ground Zero. There is not another soul in sight.

THOMAS

We leave this spot, we might never find it again in this mess

DAVE

That's what I'm thinking.

Dave pulls out his cell phone. He dials 911 and presses send. Doo, doo, doo. All circuits are busy.

The men look at each other.

THOMAS

Maybe it's just the circuits in New York that are down.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - PITTSBURGH, PA - SAME

A phone rests on a faux-colonial table. It rings. A blonde mom, NANCY, answers it.

NANCY

Hello?

Through the phone, we hear Dave Karnes speak:

DAVE

It's me. I'm at Ground Zero.

Nancy sits down.

NANCY

What are you doing? Get out of there.

DAVE  
I got two police officers trapped  
in the rubble. I have to get help  
to them. The circuits are down.

INT. PITTSBURGH POLICE PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

The phone at the police desk RINGS. An OFFICER answers it.

PITTSBURGH OFFICER  
Pittsburgh police.

He listens.

PITTSBURGH OFFICER (cont'd)  
(worried, charged)  
Two cops buried?

INT. COMMAND CENTER - NEW YORK CITY HALL - CONTINUOUS

The make-shift office is crammed with PEOPLE trying  
desperately to do some good. They are all exhausted and on  
edge.

Yet another phone rings. An OPERATOR wearily answers it.

OPERATOR  
Emergency Command.

She listens.

OPERATOR (cont'd)  
(excited, relieved)  
What is the exact location?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOLE AND GROUND ZERO - LATER

An aerial shot of the smoky 16 acres of Ground Zero. Slowly a  
CLUSTER OF MEN is revealed smack dab in the middle of the  
site. They look like nothing, like bugs, compared to the  
immensity of the destroyed territory.

We move closer and closer toward the men.

When finally we reach them, we see that A SMALL TEAM OF MEN  
now stands with Karnes and Thomas. They all crane to peer  
into the hole.

Whereas from the air these men appeared helpless, up close, they have a powerful energy. The energy of humanity.

Just then, SCOTT STRAUSS approaches. He is forty-ish, good-looking. He wears an NYPD Emergency Services uniform. He is a take charge kind of guy. And so that's what he does. Before he even reaches the hole:

SCOTT STRAUSS  
We got two men down there?

The group murmurs yes.

SCOTT STRAUSS (cont'd)  
Alright. No one make any sudden moves. This whole thing is a pile of pick up sticks. First thing. Someone go back and get the fire department to put some water on this area. We're all gonna get in this shit keeps up.

Scott peers down into the hole. Nothing. He pulls a flashlight out of his belt and shines it down. All he sees is a thicket of metal.

SCOTT STRAUSS (cont'd)  
Helloo?

WILL (O.S.)  
Yeah! Here!

SCOTT STRAUSS  
Where are you?

WILL (O.S.)  
Here! I'm waving my hand.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
I don't see you.

WILL (O.S.)  
Here! Here!

We see what Scott sees: no movement.

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

Will wildly waves his hand in the beam of light.

WILL  
You don't see my fucking hand?

SCOTT STRAUSS (O.C.)

No!

WILL

You gotta be fucking kidding me.

Will stops and looks at his hand. It is completely covered in ash and cement. The problem, he realizes: he is blending in with the building.

He summons his last shred of saliva and spits on his hand. He wipes a bit of the gunk off and a flash of skin pokes through.

Once again, he waves his hand in the light.

EXT. THE HOLE AND GROUND ZERO - SAME

Scott sees a flash of something way, way, down.

SCOTT STRAUSS

Got you.

WILL (S.)

Well get the fuck down here!

Scott turns around and faces the crowd of men.

SCOTT STRAUSS

They're probably twenty feet down there. Whole bunch of shit between us and them. Who here is a paramedic?

Silence. The men blink back at him. Finally, when no one else responds, CHUCK SERIEKA, thirty-three with a ravaged-looking face, steps up. He wears an old, ill-fitting, paramedic t-shirt.

CHUCK SEREIKA

I used to be.

SCOTT STRAUSS

Used to be. Jesus.

(announcing)

Any ESU? Paramedics here?

The group that stands before him - these are New Yorkers, blue collar guys, who have gathered because they want to help. Not because they necessarily have any expertise.

CHUCK SEREIKA  
 (quietly to Scott)  
 My license lapsed. Had a few bad  
 years. But I know what I'm doing.  
 I'm good.

Scott looks around. He has no other choice.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
 Alright. What's your name?

CHUCK SEREIKA  
 Chuck Sereika.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
 Scott Strauss. You ready? You know  
 this thing could collapse on our  
 heads.

CHUCK SEREIKA  
 Yup.

Scott hears himself say this and he pauses. He pulls out his  
 cell phone and dials. Of course there is no connection. He  
 flips the lid shut on the phone and puts it back in his  
 pocket. He turns to a nearby METALWORKER.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
 (quietly)  
 My wife is Patty Strauss. And I  
 love her. Okay.

The Metalworker nods heavily, then looks to Chuck. Chuck has  
 nothing to say.

CHUCK SEREIKA  
 (to Scott)  
 Let's go.

INT. JOHN AND DONNA'S KITCHEN - SAME

Donna stands at the sink slowly washing dishes. She runs her  
 fingers through the warm, soapy water.

The phone RINGS. Startled, she jumps and drops the plate on  
 the floor. It shatters.

Pat pounces on the phone. Donna bends down to gather the  
 pieces of broken plate. She can hear him speak from the other  
 room.

PAT (O.S.)  
Yes. Hello. Yes. Yes.

Beat. Donna holds her breath.

PAT (o.s.) (cont'd)  
Oh. Thank you. Thank you. Yeah. God  
Bless You. We're on our way.

She can tell that it is good news. She closes her eyes to  
squeeze back the tears and mouths:

DONNA  
(silently)  
Thank you.

Pat enters the kitchen.

PAT  
They got him. He's okay. He just  
walked right out onto Liberty  
Street. They want us to see him at  
the bus terminal.

Donna springs up. She leaves the broken shards where they  
are. Judy Jonas has overheard the whole thing.

JUDY  
Go. Go. I'll stay with the kids.

DONNA  
I'll call you all when we got him  
in the car and we're heading home.

She grabs her purse and she and Pat dash out of the house.

EXT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - SAME

On the quiet New Jersey street, Paul and Jerry tear out of  
Allison's house. They try to run down the street to Jerry's  
house - but it's not a pretty site with Paul's bum ankle and  
back.

INT. JERRY'S BEDROOM - SAME

Allison lies on the bed, curled up with Bianca. She watches  
the little girl sleep. Suddenly the door flies open. She  
bolts upright.

JERRY  
 (screaming)  
 He's alive! Will's alive!

Allison is out of bed, tears already pouring out of her startled eyes.

There is jumping. There is hugging. There is relief.

ALLISON  
 Who called?

PAUL  
 Brian called from the bus terminal.  
 They found Will and a Sergeant.  
 They're trapped but they're digging  
 them out right now.

EXT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - ONE SECOND LATER

The whole motley gang - Paul, the disabled senior citizen, Allison, the pregnant woman, Bianca, the 4-year-old, and Jerry - all hobble back down the street toward Allison's house.

INT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - CONTINUOUS

Allison bursts through the door. The mothers run to her. There is more crying and screaming and hugging. Allison pulls out of the embraces.

ALLISON  
 Where are we supposed to go pick  
 him up?

Silence.

ALLISON (cont'd)  
 No one asked?

Silence.

Clearly not.

EXT. THE HOLE AND GROUND ZERO - 10PM

At the top of the pile, an IRONWORKER with a blowtorch carefully slices a shovel in half. He pushes back his safety goggles, inspects his work, and hands the shovel off.

A look of pride crosses his face as the shovel just makes it through the hole.

Then, the Ironworker feels something. He looks at the bottom of his feet. His rubber soles have melted from the heat of the debris.

He turns and watches THREE MEN from the FDNY turn a large hose on the wreckage around them. But as they turn the hose on, only a trickle of water pours out. The firemen look around and try to figure out what the problem is.

FIREMAN #1  
Lookit! Mother of God---

His two cohorts look to where he's pointing: the fire hose is full of holes.

FIREMAN #1 (cont'd)  
Got cut up on all this shit

FIREMAN #2  
Plan b?

They other guys just look at him

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

A few bright work lights have been set up in the hole. Their glowing beams pierce the ash-filled air, creating an odd atmosphere of shadows and dust swirls.

With Scott wedged into the space near Will, we can better visualize how ridiculously tiny the cavern is... and how miraculous it is that anyone survived in it. It is impossible for Scott to sit upright, let alone stand. He lies on his belly, practically on top of Will.

Will already has an i.v. line going and Scott now works at the concrete on his legs.

We travel away from Scott and Will. A blanket has been placed over Dominick. Fifteen feet further down in the hole...

Chuck uses the newly sliced up shovel to dig away at the debris surrounding John. From this angle, it is shocking that John is alive somewhere in there. There is so much metal, cement, ceiling tiles, crap everywhere. John literally is wedged into a pocket the size of a coffin.

His one free hand sticks out of the mess. There is an iv line in it, dripping fluids into him.

Chuck shovels up the garbage and dumps it in the open elevator shaft nearby.

SCOTT STRAUSS (O.S.)  
Talk to me Chuck.

CHUCK SEREIKA  
Got an iv started in his wrist. Now I'm trying to get rid of some of this shit so I can see the rest of John here.

SCOTT STRAUSS (O.S.)  
Good. Hey John. What's your last name, buddy?

JOHN  
McLoughlin.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
Holy shit. John McLoughlin.

JOHN  
Yeah.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
I'm Scotty Strauss. I did that joint ESU training with you.

JOHN  
Yeah.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
How you doing down there, John?

JOHN  
My legs hurt.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
I know. We've gotta get your partner here out of the way before we could get any equipment down to you.

WILL  
(very quietly to Scott)  
Go help him.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
(quietly)  
I can't get anything down there to him. 'Till we clear you out.

JOHN  
 Could you get me some water?

SCOTT STRAUSS  
 Chuck. You think you could do that?

EXT. THE HOLE AND GROUND ZERO - CONTINUOUS

Chuck's head pops out of the hole. He blinks against the strong lights that shine in his eyes. Through the glare, he sees the FDNY guys putting the fires down with canister extinguishers.

CHUCK SEREIKA  
 I need a bottle of water. A bunch  
 of them!

There are now HUNDREDS OF RESCUERS on the scene. They have formed an assembly line of sorts: 500 MEN have lined up from the hole to Liberty Street. Here, in what was until that day the Mecca of Industry, the most efficient way to handle the rescue is to pass goods and information back and forth along this line.

And so, as Chuck says, "Water!" The 500 men, one after another, repeat "Water," like some perverted game of operator, all the way down the line.

At the street, a case of bottled water is placed into the waiting hands of a CO EDISON WORKER. He passes the case off, and so on...

INT. THE HOLE - MINUTES LATER

Chuck has inched further into the hole toward John. He is now able to stretch out and hold a bottle of water to John's lips.

John takes a sip, swishing the plaster out of his mouth. Then he takes another sip and lets the refreshing liquid pour down his throat.

JOHN  
 (with complete sincerity)  
 That's delicious.

He slurps some more down, exulting in the goodness of the water. And another exquisite sip. And...

He promptly throws it all up.

Up towards the top...

Will hears John throwing up. He looks at Scott, his rescuer, and sees the frustration in Scott's eyes. A variety of tools are scattered about. Scott assesses them, one at a time, recognizing how useless each and every one is. No one ever built a tool to do a job like this.

WILL

Go get the Sarge out.

SCOTT STRAUSS

I can't get any fucking equipment down to him until you're out of the way. There's no room.

Will listens to John retch some more. Then Scott coughs as a cloud of smoke passes through the space.

WILL

Cut my leg off.

SCOTT STRAUSS

No.

WILL

Juice me up with stuff and cut it off. You gotta help him.

SCOTT STRAUSS

Shut up and let me do my work.

WILL

Cut it.

Scott ignores him, selects a tool, and sets to work on the cinderblocks.

EXT. THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE - SAME

Donna and Pat approach a checkpoint on the New Jersey side of the sealed-off bridge. Through the windshield, Donna warily eyeballs a SOLDIER with an AK-47.

Pat rolls down the window. a NATIONAL GUARDSMAN approaches. Pat pulls out his wallet.

PAT

Pat McLoughlin, retired Port Authority officer.

The Guardsman looks at the badge. Just then, OFFICER GARRITY, a Port Authority cop, approaches.

OFFICER GARRITY  
Is that Paddy McLoughlin in there?

PAT  
Jimmy Garrity. You know my sister-in-law, Donna?

OFFICER GARRITY  
John's wife? We never met.

DONNA  
Hi. We're going in to pick up John.

PAT  
He was trapped down at the World Trade Center. But he got out and now we're meeting him at the bus terminal.

Officer Garrity turns around and addresses the Guardsmen.

OFFICER GARRITY  
Get these barricades out of here. They're going to pick up a cop who got trapped then got out.

PAT  
Thank a Jimmy.

OFFICER GARRITY  
Give John my best. Thank God he's okay.

Pat and Donna inch their way past the barricades and head over the bridge.

OFFICER GARRITY (cont'd)  
(to his co-workers)  
See. It's good. A lot of people are gonna get out. There's all those airpockets. And that mall. A lot more will get out.

EXT. THE HOLE AND GROUND ZERO - CONTINUOUS

The Con Edison man, the first man in the assembly line, accepts an object from a DOCTOR. He passes it off. Hand over hand, the object reaches the front of the line.

It is instantly passed into the hole.

INT. THE HOLE - CONTINUOUS

Scott reaches up and accepts the object as it is passed in.

WILL  
What's that?

SCOTT STRAUSS  
Jaws of life. A special small one.

Scott fiddles with the jaws of life and fits them in around the concrete around Will.

Bingo. SCOTT STRAUSS (cont'd)

It fits. Scott looks down at Will and thinks for a moment.

SCOTT STRAUSS (cont'd)  
Chuck. Come here.

It takes Chuck a few moments to get around the maze and up to Scott. When he does:

SCOTT STRAUSS (cont'd)  
You got McLaughlin stable for now?

HUCK SEREIKA  
He's not good. Blood pressure's dropping.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
But for right this second, he's stable?

Chuck nods yes.

SCOTT STRAUSS (cont'd)  
Good. Get out of here. Go up to the top.

Chuck just looks at him.

SCOTT STRAUSS (cont'd)  
I'm gonna use the jaws to get this wall off him. I don't know how everything's stacked. Whole damn thing could topple over on all of us.

(beat)

(MORE)

SCOTT STRAUSS (cont'd)  
I don't need your blood on my  
hands.

CHUCK SEREIKA  
You can't pry up the wall and pull  
him out by yourself.

They look at each other. Scott knows he's right.

CHUCK SEREIKA (cont'd)  
(quietly)  
I been in and out of rehab the last  
two years. Only thing I ever been  
good at is helping other people.  
(beat)  
My life isn't worth more than  
theirs. I made my peace. We're  
doing this together.

Scott nods.

SCOTT STRAUSS  
You ready, Will?

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL CONTINUOUS

Donna and Pat dash up the escalator and burst through the  
glass doors at the police desk. Sergeant King is still there.

SGT. KING  
I've been trying to call you. The  
phone.

DONNA  
Where's John?

SGT. KING  
He's alive. Don't worry. But, there  
was a mistake.

Donna feels for the wall at her back.

SGT. KING (cont'd)  
The person who called me. They  
thought John had walked out. But he  
didn't. He's still trapped. They're  
still working on him.

PAT  
Is he hurt bad?

SGT. KING

I don't know. They're working on it.

DONNA

I want to go down there.

SGT. KING

I'm sorry. It's too dangerous.

DONNA

Are you sure he's alive? This isn't another mistake?

SGT. KING

I promise you. He's alive.

EXT. THE HOLE AND GROUND ZERO - CONTINUOUS

Dozens of rescuers are gathered around the top of the hole. Their stress level is high. There's an incredible tension in the air as everyone waits to see what's about to happen.

Someone checks his watch. It's 11 a.m.

Another guy tries to take a sip of water. The bottle is empty.

A third guy twists his wedding band.

When it feels like we can't wait another instant, Will's head emerges from the top of the hole. It's as if he is being reborn. He is alive and in one piece.

A CHEER bursts out of the crowd.

From Will's P.O.V.: As the rest of his body is pushed out of the hole, he breathes and breathes and breathes the (relatively) fresh air. Then, he opens his eyes. He sees lots of smoke, and then, through the smoke, patches of inky night sky. And faces, helpful smiling faces looking down at him.

Will blinks.

WILL

Where are all the buildings?

Will can't see who responds, but the answer will echo in his mind forever:

OFF-SCREEN VOICE

They're all gone, kid.

WILL

What?

Will can't fully comprehend this. He starts to cry - it's the first time he's all day he's allowed himself to do so.

WILL (cont'd)

(upset)

Someone call my wife. So she knows it's really me: Tell her her name's Allison. Our daughter's Bianca...

INT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - SAME

Allison listens on the phone as a MAN speaks to her.

MAN THROUGH PHONE

He says you're seven months pregnant and that's you're going to name your daughter Olivia.

ALLISON

(crying)

Alyssa. Where are they taking him?

MAN THROUGH PHONE

Bellevue. Look like he broke his leg.

ALLISON

Thank you.

She hangs up the phone. She looks up at her family. Brian, the officer from the bus terminal, is also there.

ALLISON (cont'd)

He broke his leg. They're taking him to Bellevue.

BRIAN

Let's go.

KAREN

I'm coming.

We follow them out.

EXT. ALLISON'S HOUSE, CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY - CONTINUOUS

Waiting outside is Brian's Port Authority police car. Before Allison has fully waddled into the car:

ALLISON  
You get those sirens going. Now.

EXT. GROUND ZERO - SAME

Will is still slowly being passed down the line of men. He focuses in on the different patches that the men wear: FDNY, NYPD, PAPP, and patches from small towns in New Jersey, Connecticut, upstate New York. The whole world has turned out to help.

Suddenly, Will realizes something.

WILL  
Wait! I didn't tell Sarge to hang on. Someone tell him I said to hang on.

PUBLIC SERVENT  
(calling back behind Will)  
Hey. You got that?!

FIRE MARSHALL  
(yelling)  
Got it!

The Fire Marshall turns around to deliver the message back up the line. Then Will gets passed to ARNOLD, a Port Authority officer.

ARNOLD  
Hey Will, man.

WILL  
Who's that?

ARNOLD  
Arnold, BT Dog!

WILL  
Are there a lot of dead people?

Arnold pauses and Will is immediately passed on. The lack of an answer hangs in the air.

EXT. THE HOLE - SAME

Scott and Chuck emerge from the hole. They are drained, spent. Caked in soot. They pant with exhaustion.

As they stand up, Chuck wobbles and is forced to sit down. Someone hands him a bottle of water.

SCOTT STRAUSS

We're done. We're not gonna do McLoughlin any good like this. We need some other guys to go down and finish the job.

Without a second of thought ONE HUNDRED MEN step forward. They are all qualified. They all want to help. Scott looks at them and doesn't know what to say. Before he can speak, BUSHINGS and MCGEE, two Emergency Services officers step forward.

BUSHINGS

I gotta go down there. We'll go

MCGEE

A lot of our guys are missing. We need to - I don't know - do something right now.

Scott nods.

SCOTT STRAUSS

Chuck, fill 'em in on John's conditions.

They move toward Chuck. Scott is now alone. He takes a few steps away and pulls his cell phone out of his pocket. The bars are back. He has reception.

Before he can dial, he is approached by LIEUTENANT DONOVAN, a cop. He wraps an arm around Scott.

SCOTT STRAUSS (cont'd)

Hey Donny.

LIEUTENANT DONOVAN

Nice work.

SCOTT STRAUSS

Thanks.

LIEUTENANT DONOVAN

Think you can do it again?

Scott looks at him.

LIEUTENANT DONOVAN (cont'd)

(emotional)

We're missing 13.

The color drains from Scott's already tired face.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL RESERVE ROOM - SAME

Donna and Pat now sit in the same room where John and Will had watched the first televised reports earlier that morning.

They sit on uncomfortable, plastic orange chairs in front of the television. A few OFFICERS are also there. Antsy, frustrated, and worn out, she stands up.

DONNA

I'm sorry. Could I turn this off?

No one stops her. She walks to the tv and fiddles with the buttons.

DONNA (cont'd)

It's just... I can't watch this anymore.

Without the drone of the tv, silence descends on the room. It may be even more unnerving. Pat stands.

PAT

Do you want some coffee?

She rubs her eyes.

DONNA

I don't know.

Pat smiles.

PAT

Yes or no?

Donna looks up at him.

DONNA

I want John.

INT. THE HOLE - 2AM

McGee and Bushings work on John.

MCGEE

How about some morphine, John.

JOHN  
 (adamant)  
 No.

BUSHINGS  
 No reason to prove anything at this  
 point.

JOHN  
 (measuredly)  
 If you knock me out, I'm not coming  
 back.

McGee looks at Bushings. John sees something on their minds.

JOHN (cont'd)  
 I don't want to lose my legs.

MCGEE  
 We don't want you dying down here.

JOHN  
 My legs.

MCGEE  
 I hear you Irish eyes. Look. I  
 promise you on my mother: I'm going  
 to do everything in my power,  
 alright? But one way or the other,  
 we got to get you out of here  
 alive, right?

Tears gather in John's eyes.

JOHN  
 Right.  
 (beat)  
 What's my wife doing? Does she know  
 I'm okay?

BUSHINGS  
 I'm sure someone called her.

JOHN  
 Could you make sure?

McGee shakes his head at Bushings.

BUSHINGS  
 Right now we got to worry about  
 you.

EXT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - SAME

A police escort zooms into the emergency room entrance of the hospital. Behind the two police cars is an ambulance. It quickly comes to a halt.

DOCTORS are waiting at the ready. Before the PARAMEDICS can open the back door, a team has already descended. They pull Will out of the back.

Will looks at the Doctor standing over him.

WILL

Are you going to have room for me?

DOCTOR #1

Yes.

Will looks to his left. Waiting for him are DOZENS MORE DOCTORS AND NURSES.

WILL

Why are you all standing here? Go help the other people.

A kind NURSE looks down at him and answers:

NURSE

You're it.

And Will is wheeled into the hospital, terribly agitated.

INT. THE HOLE - SAME

McGee and Bushings continue to work on John. They move something an inch and John wails from the pain.

MCGEE

How many kids you got?

JOHN

Four.

MCGEE

Sounds real nice. Nice family.

JOHN

Last one was a surprise.

Once again, we travel into John's mind:

INT. JOHN AND DONNA'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Donna comes out of the bathroom wearing a robe. Her complexion is green.

DONNA  
(disbelieving)  
I think I'm pregnant.

JOHN  
No.

DONNA  
I am.

JOHN  
I thought-

DONNA  
I don't-

Beat. They consider

TOGETHER  
Hummm.

She sits down on the bed next to him. An enormous, joyous smile slowly overtakes his face.

SLAM BACK TO:

THE HOLE

John just wakes up as he hears:

BUSHINGS  
...he's not responding.

MCGEE  
John!

JOHN  
Yeah. Yeah.

Bushings exhales.

MCGEE  
Scared the fuck out of us.

JOHN  
Life's amazing.

The men look at each other, then get back to work.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - PRE-OP ROOM - LATER

A NURSE leads Allison through the large, bustling room. Allison runs the rest of the way when she sees which bed they are heading toward. Before she reaches him:

ALLISON

Will!

She gets to the foot of the bed and stops short. She sees his condition. He is swollen everywhere, smothered in plaster, and debris is caked in his ears and nose.

He looks like a corpse. Allison gasps.

WILL

Allison!

ALLISON

Will!

They both start crying. She can't fully get to his side because there are too many DOCTORS in the way working on him.

They both start crying.

WILL

Baby—

ALLISON

We're naming her Alyssa.

WILL

(strongly)

No. Olivia.

One of the Doctors interrupts.

DOCTOR #2

Mrs. Jimeno, we have to take him into surgery now.

ALLISON

I love you, baby.

WILL

I love you so much.

And their fingers graze as Will is wheeled away. He looks back at her.

WILL (cont'd)  
 (as he's wheeled away)  
 Olivia!

DOCTOR #2  
 (to Allison)  
 Mrs. Jimeno, let's sit down.

EXT. GROUND ZERO - SAME

Hundreds of haggard rescuers still stand in the line.

Wanting to help. Badly.

Around them, small teams of RESCUERS comb through the rubble. They shine flashlights into crevices and shove their bodies in dangerous places.

Two guys in line talk to each other:

GUY #1  
 What the fuck is taking so long?

GUY #2  
 He's gotta make it.

GUY #1  
 (angry)  
 He's gonna make it.

GUY #2  
 That's all I'm saying.

They reach to accept a package that's passed to them. Their mood grows instantly more somber.

As we follow the package down the line, each man who touches it withers a little in its presence.

Finally, when it reaches the front of the line, the object is passed to a man - a SURGEON - wearing scrubs. He looks down at the box and sees what it is: an amputation kit.

A PARAMEDIC approaches him.

PARAMEDIC  
 They don't need you quite yet. Just want you on alert if they do.

The surgeon nods.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - LOUNGE - SAME

Allison sits with the Doctor.

ALLISON

You're operating on his legs?

DOCTOR #2

Will was crushed from the pelvis down for twelve hours. He's going to suffer from something called Compartment Syndrome. This happens when there's intense compression. It leads to impaired blood flow and nerve damage. See, in his legs, the tissue-

Allison has a hard time focusing on him. His words are jumbled. The walls undulate. She cannot hear what he says next:

DOCTOR #2 (cont'd)

If this pressure is high enough, blood flow to the compartment will be blocked, which can lead to permanent injury to the muscle and nerves. If the pressure lasts long enough, the limb may die and need to be amputated.

Certain words do start to filter through:

DOCTOR #2 (cont'd)

Severe pain, decreased sensation, weakness. Renal failure. Respiratory failure. Many surgeries. Loss of muscle function. Lack of oxygen. Amputation.

And the following comes through as sharp as an icicle:

DOCTOR #2 (cont'd)

The long road is just beginning. Will is in a life-threatening situation.

Allison struggles to find her voice.

ALLISON

He's going to die from a broken leg?

EXT. GROUND ZERO - LATER

The sun is poking its first fat orange rays over New York.

In another part of the pile, Dave Karnes is frantically trying to scramble over a metal beam. He is exhausted, but still he pushes himself over and around the rubble. Finally he makes it to the crowd around the hole. A FIREMAN notices him.

FIREMAN #3

Find anyone else?

DAVE

(breathless)

No. But I just heard on the radio.  
Didn't want to miss seeing this.

And just then, out of the top of the hole, John is pushed skyward. He blinks against the light. He is alive. Barely.

The HUNDREDS of rescuers break into a tremendous round of applause. Whoops and Hollers. It's the moment they've been waiting for all night.

Dave smiles.

John is passed to the front of the assembly line. He looks at the first two men who took him.

JOHN

Thank you.

He is passed to the next two.

JOHN (cont'd)

Thank you.

And the next.

JOHN (cont'd)

Thank you.

It's the only thing that he can say.

EXT. LIBERTY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Chuck Sereika watches the ambulance pull away.

Meanwhile, overnight, it seems as if half the world has descended on Ground Zero to lend some assistance.

There are hundreds of volunteers giving out water and coffee and Gatorade and sandwiches and anything else you can think of.

People taking care of each other.

Chuck looks to his left. There, the FIVE COPS who we briefly met earlier at the diner in Wisconsin stand in front of a motor home. They've tacked up a crudely-drawn banner which reads: Wisconsin Cops love NY.

WISCONSIN COP #1 works a charcoal grill. He is cooking up something that smells delicious. Chuck wanders over.

WISCONSIN COP #1  
Care for a brat? Best ones in  
Sheboygan.

CHUCK SEREIKA  
You came from Wisconsin?

Wisconsin cop nods yes.

CHUCK SEREIKA (cont'd)  
That was nice of you.

WISCONSIN COP #1  
(quietly)  
Had to do something.

CHUCK SEREIKA  
Yeah

They share an understanding.

WISCONSIN COP #1  
What are you doing down here?

It takes just a moment for Chuck to pause before he says:

CHUCK SEREIKA  
I'm a paramedic.

Chuck takes his brat and walks away. He plops down on a curb. He takes a bite. It's the best thing he's ever tasted. He chews slowly as he watches the sun rise over Manhattan.

It is September 12.

He finishes the brat quickly. Gets up. Goes. There is still work to do.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - LOBBY - LATER

Donna stands waiting in the lobby. She is on pins and needles as she waits.

And waits.

And waits.

And waits.

And then the door pushes open and John is wheeled in.

She rushes to him and grabs his hand, smothering it with kisses. He looks awful, near death. And with every ounce of his last energy, he looks at his wife and says.

JOHN

I stayed alive for you.

Donna is too overwhelmed to speak. We stay in the lobby as, together, John and Donna are hustled away.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - ICU - LATER

Will is unconscious, hooked up to numerous beeping machines. He has a tube down his throat and black things are floating up through the tube and into a bag. Allison watches over him.

Karen and Brian enter with cups of coffee in their hands.

KAREN

Why don't you get some breakfast.

ALLISON

You see what's coming out of his lungs? Rocks. He was breathing in rocks.

Brian gently takes her arm.

BRIAN

Let's get some breakfast, Al.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Allison and Brian take a long walk down the yellow hospital corridor. They are silent, exhausted.

They walk past the operating waiting room. A nervous-looking woman and a man sit there.

Donna and Pat.

Allison and Brian walk right past them. They clearly have no idea who they are.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Allison and Brian enter the lobby of the hospital. Seemingly, in an instant, the room has filled up with posters. Every wall in the lobby is covered with smiling photos under the title MISSING.

Some read: Have you seen me?

Others say: Last seen in WTC 1

Allison looks around and around at the missing posters. The freckled-faced college girl. The African-American stockbroker. All smiling. Smiling. Memories from a world that no longer exists.

She turns to Brian.

ALLISON  
How do we live with this?

FADE TO:

As at the beginning, we see a pastiche of each of our characters. Some of them we started the day with. Others we did not.

EXT. GROUND ZERO - EARLY MORNING

Dave Karnes holds his cell phone to his ear as he continues to comb through the rubble.

DAVE  
(into phone)  
I won't be in today. I don't know  
when I'll be back to work.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - SAME

An empty pole with no one hanging on to it.

EXT. GROUND ZERO - SAME

Chuck Sereika peers into a POLICEMAN's red eye. Chuck is seemingly more invigorated than ever before.

INT. LONG ISLAND RAILROAD TRAIN - SAME

An empty seat.

EXT. GROUND ZERO - SAME

Scott sits down on a curb. He can hardly contain his emotions. Finally he gathers himself enough to hit #1 on the speed dial. He waits a moment. Before he can speak, a sob wracks his body. Then:

SCOTT STRAUSS

Patty?

EXT. THE STATEN ISLAND FERRY - SAME

An empty spot on the deck.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - ICU - SAME

John and Will are both unconscious. They lie side by side in the ICU.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE FOLLOWING APPEARS:

After the towers fell, only 20 people were pulled out alive.

Will and John were numbers 18 and 19.

Will was trapped in the wreckage of the World Trade Center for 14 hours.

John was trapped for 22 hours.

In the hospital, they both flatlined.

Twice.

FADE TO:

EXT. JOHN'S PARADISE - MORNING

As in scene one, we are on the park bench with John. He directly addresses the camera.

JOHN

This is our responsibility. To tell the story. Their kids have to know about Antonio and Chris and Dominick and everyone else. People have got to know what these men did. When I went out there, I knew what I was getting into. I had been doing this for a lot of years. I knew the danger we were in. I knew the horrors we were going to see if we got up into those towers. They didn't really know and they still volunteered. They had a lot of courage. They're the only ones that raised their hands and stepped out from the crowd and said, "let's go in," and continued to go in as it got worse and worse. And the guys who rescued us. They knew the extent of it. They knew what they were climbing over. They made a conscious decision to go in there and face death. That kind of bravery far exceeds whatever Will and I tried to do.

(beat)

See, our story was just a part of it.

John looks at Will, who sits to his right. Will smiles.

WILL

I let him tell it.

They share a very small, knowing smile. Will gets up and leaves John alone for the next bit.

JOHN

9/11 showed us what human beings are capable of. The evil, yeah. Sure. But it also brought out a goodness we forgot could exist in America. People taking care of each other. For no other reason than it was the right thing to do.

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)  
It's important for us to talk about that good. To remember it. 'Cause I saw a lot of good that day.

WILL (O.S.)  
Hey Sarge!

John looks again to his right.

JOHN  
You know... I could have been buried with a real shmo.

John smiles.

JOHN (cont'd)  
How did we survive the collapse of two buildings on top of us? How did a Marine somehow find us in a 16 acre field of debris? How did the rescuers dig us out without the whole thing falling on our heads?

He shakes his head. He has no answer.

JOHN (cont'd)  
I take it as a miracle.

WILL  
Sarge! Let's get out of here!

John looks at Will. We now see that he is not on a tropical isle or in heaven. He is in a park in Orange County, New York. To his right, joining Will are Allison and Donna. Behind them are their children. And behind them are hundreds of their friends, family and co-workers all partying under a big banner that reads: THANK YOU.

John walks - albeit with a limp - but he walks over to Will.

Nearby is a TWO-YEAR-OLD GIRL who lags behind. Will turns back around.

WILL (cont'd)  
Olivia. Let's go!

And together, the families join the party.

FADE OUT.