

PAVLOV'S DOGS

By Drew McWeeny and Scott Swan

FADE IN:

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

It's three o'clock in the morning. A single building stands alone, surrounded only by dense forest. This is the ASRSA Research Complex, a gray fortress-like structure of steel and stone. The building is dark and the only sounds are soft wind in the trees, crickets.

SUPERIMPOSE: ASRSA COMPLEX - Somewhere In Upstate New York

We PUSH IN SLOWLY ON a particular door, a simple steel square. We hold for a moment as we hear a sound... the low groan of metal under pressure. The sound gets louder, the groan becoming a scream, and the eight-inch-thick metal simply shreds and curls back as a hole opens.

Two men in their thirties step out. RUSSELL is tall, out of shape, with short, dark hair. KEVEN is shorter, sturdy, almost square, with a full beard and mustache. Both men are dressed in nondescript jumpsuits, a dull khaki.

INT. MONITOR ROOM - SAME TIME

Both Russell and Keven can be seen on a full-color high definition video screen. PULL BACK TO REVEAL that we're in a large, high-tech monitor room. DR. ADAM STRICKLAND sits beside DAN DENNINGS, both of them watching the screen.

Strickland's in his fifties, round but not unhealthy, with short, gray hair. He wears glasses that make his piercing blue eyes look even bigger. Dennings is thirty, with a wide predatory grin and an oily, used-car-salesman demeanor.

Strickland reaches out, throws a few switches, then leans in close to a microphone, speaking in a firm voice with the slightest hint of a Russian accent.

STRICKLAND

Good evening, gentlemen.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

Floodlights snap on, making the entire area bright as day. Keven and Russell look around, frightened and disoriented, as Strickland's voice booms from hidden speakers.

STRICKLAND

Do yourselves a favor. Give up now.

KEVEN

NO!!

As Keven screams, all the floodlights simultaneously explode, shattering, raining glass everywhere. Keven and Russell immediately snap into action, running for the cover of the woods.

INT. MONITOR ROOM - SAME TIME

Strickland throws switches as alarms wail. The video screen shows only darkness, static.

DENNINGS

Looks like they're getting away, doc...

Strickland shakes his head; no, they're not.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Keven and Russell run blindly through the woods. Branches slash at them, cause them to stumble. Russell, who is in the lead, closes his eyes, not decreasing his speed a bit.

RUSSELL

Follow me exactly.

He begins to dodge, jump, duck... whatever it takes. He makes no mistakes, doesn't stumble once. Keven follows closely.

A smile, slight but hopeful, steals across Keven's face. The two men head up an incline, and finally come out of the thick trees and stop short.

They are standing on the edge of a sheer cliff that is almost one hundred feet high.

KEVEN

Now what?

RUSSELL

We look for a way down.

There is a sound that grows in volume, a motor sound. They look around for the source, and are astonished by the sight of a high-tech Apache helicopter that seems to emerge from the trees behind them.

The two men look around for an escape route, just as the Apache opens fire, two lines of bullets strafing the ground, heading for them. Russell grabs Keven's arm and pulls him back, as they both jump off the edge of the cliff, vanishing from view.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

The PILOT of the helicopter gasps. We can hear Strickland over an earpiece the Pilot is wearing.

STRICKLAND

What? What happened?

PILOT

They jumped...

EXT. CLIFF FACE - NIGHT

The helicopter circles around so it is facing the cliff. As it moves into view, we see that the two men are standing on a small outcropping of rock, maybe nine feet down from the cliff's edge.

Russell raises one hand and points at the helicopter. The look on his face is pure defiance. The helicopter comes out of its controlled hover and begins to wobble, tilt, spin dangerously.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

The Pilot struggles with the controls of the 'copter, fighting them. He curses as he tries to hold the thing in check.

EXT. CLIFF FACE - NIGHT

Russell strains, as if from exertion, still pointing at the craft that is now in a definite spiral, heading down. The helicopter opens fire, the bullets hitting everywhere. One of the shots is lucky, catches Russell in the forehead. There is a moment where Russell doesn't react at all. Then, just as suddenly, he pitches forward and plummets to the rocks below.

The helicopter continues to spin out of control, now heading for Keven and the ledge where he stands. He screams, realizing that he has nowhere to go now. At the last moment, as the helicopter is about to hit, he closes his eyes and braces for the impact.

The 'copter slams into the cliff wall no more than ten feet from where Keven stands. There is a terrific explosion when it hits, and the fuselage is driven into the rock face.

The force of the blast knocks Keven from his position, and he just barely manages to catch the ledge with his fingers, straining to hold on. He uses every bit of his strength to pull himself up.

EXT. ASRSA BUILDING - NIGHT

The door with the hole in it flies open and a dozen PSI-GUARDS pour out. The Psi-Guards are all dressed in identical black armour, head to toe, and are armed with long, sleek, black poles, like cattle prods. The armor is emblazoned with the ASRSA logo across the chestplate. They are a chilling sight. The full group heads off into the woods together.

EXT. CLIFF FACE - NIGHT

The wreckage of the helicopter is still burning. Keven finally manages to get back up onto the rock ledge. He looks up at the cliff's edge above him. Too far to jump. He looks over at the helicopter and gets an idea.

He closes his eyes and makes a slight gesture towards the flaming wreck. The flames seem to burn brighter for just a moment, then go out completely. Keven opens his eyes again, looks pleased with himself. He jumps and lands on the wreckage.

There is a creaking sound, metal under stress, and Keven freezes for a moment. The creaking stops and the helicopter holds. He begins to move very cautiously, climbing up the tail of the craft towards the cliff's edge. He reaches the uppermost point of the wreck and reaches up. He can almost but not quite reach the edge.

Keven stretches, trying desperately to bridge those last few inches. As he does, the creaking sound begins again. Panic flashes across his face, and he makes a quick decision. He uses all of his strength to push off and jumps up, grabbing the edge. His action causes the helicopter to release its tentative grip on the cliff face, and the entire thing falls, smashing to bits when it hits ground.

Keven pulls himself up quickly. He immediately starts moving again, plunging back into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

The Psi-Guards move as one, running through the woods like a crack military team.

Keven, on the other hand, flails madly as he runs, making too much noise, badly out of breath, terrified.

POV - MAUGHAM

Swooping along, as if we are several feet off the ground and not bound by gravity in any way, we follow Keven, maybe ten feet behind him.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Keven stops, tries to determine which way to go. He can hear the Psi-Guards approaching, hear the foliage giving way for them. He can see lights approaching, and he turns and flees blindly.

POV - MAUGHAM

We continue to follow Keven, rapidly gaining on him. As he reaches another small hill and begins to scramble up it, the camera actually passes Keven and crests the hill first.

There is a jeep parked there on a service road, and there is a well-built, square-framed guy in his late thirties seated in the lotus position on the hood. This is CHARLES MAUGHAM. His eyes are closed.

The camera races right up to Maugham and seems to slam into him in a FLASH of white.

EXT. SERVICE ROAD - NIGHT

Keven crests the hill and stops short at the sight of the jeep. There is no one in sight. Keven looks around, not sure what he should do. Finally, he walks forward slowly, nervous, a little hesitant. When no one jumps out at him, he starts to relax.

He looks inside the jeep. The keys are in the ignition. He climbs into the driver's seat, turns the car's lights on. As he does, he practically screams.

Maugham stands maybe ten yards away in the headlights, arms by his sides. He smiles at Keven. There is something truly fucking scary about this guy.

Keven cranks the engine and, slamming the jeep into gear, punches the gas. The jeep lurches to life, heading straight for Maugham. At the last possible moment, Maugham leaps straight up...

... and lands on the hood. He reaches over the windscreen and, with one hand, grabs Keven by the shirt front. He pulls him up, close, so they are face to face.

MAUGHAM

Where were you going to go?

KEVEN

Please... let me go...

MAUGHAM

We can't do that. You belong to us now.

Maugham jerks Keven sideways, pulling him out of his seat. The car starts to weave out of control, but Maugham nimbly drops into the driver's seat himself and gets control of the car with little effort.

He brings it to a stop. Instantly, Keven jumps out.

MAUGHAM

S T O P !

It is like the voice of doom, and it stops Keven cold. He turns around, and we see the tears on his cheeks for the first time.

MAUGHAM

Remember... you brought this on yourself.

Maugham makes a casual gesture towards Keven, and bolts of blue electricity seem to leap from his fingers, slamming into Keven, surrounding him, dropping him to his knees. He begins to scream, a hideous sound.

EXT. SERVICE ROAD - NIGHT

Dennings and Strickland sit side by side in a jeep, Dennings driving.

DENNINGS

It's a mistake, using Maugham on a thing like this. He's a loony. I think he enjoys this shit.

They round a corner and see Maugham's jeep parked ahead. They slow to a stop, just as the Psi-Guards come charging out of the woods.

Strickland and Dennings jump out and walk over to where Maugham is standing. There is something, presumably the remains of Keven, on fire on the road. As they walk up, Maugham lights a cigar off the flames, stands and turns to face them.

STRICKLAND

Where is he, Charles?

MAUGHAM

Sorry, doc. Things got kinda rough, and...

(shrugs)

I had to fry his ass.

STRICKLAND

You were supposed to stop him.

MAUGHAM

(glances at body)

He's stopped.

Strickland turns to the Psi-Guards.

STRICKLAND

You can head back to the complex. We'll be along in a moment.

The Psi-Guards head back the way they came. Strickland, Dennings and Maugham look down at the burning thing in the road.

DENNINGS

Clean up your mess, Chuck.

Strickland and Dennings head for their jeep, leaving Maugham to savor his cigar as he stares at his handiwork.

STRICKLAND

That's the last of the group. What are we supposed to do now?

DENNINGS

Guess it's time to get us a few more volunteers.

fade to black: 1st titles up

EXT. STREET - EVENING

A typical suburban street, quiet and calm. All the street lights come on.

SUPERIMPOSE: Baltimore

A long, sleek sedan pulls into one particular driveway and stops. Two men in expensive suits and sunglasses climb out, AGENT 1 and AGENT 2. They walk up to the front door of an average white house.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The only light in this room comes from a TV screen, where a Bugs Bunny cartoon is playing. Slouched in a easy chair in the middle of the room is DAVY MITCHELL, nineteen years old, unkempt, badly dressed. He stares blankly at the screen.

The living room door opens and Davy's parents, LOUIS and DONNA MITCHELL, step in.

LOUIS

Davy? Can we talk to you for a minute?

The living room door slams closed, hard. Both Louis and Donna jump. The TV set shuts off, plunging the room into darkness.

LOUIS

There's some people here, Davy, who would like to meet you. Would you like that?

After a moment, the TV comes back on. Irritated, Louis tries the door. It's locked.

LOUIS

Open the door, Davy...

He pulls harder on it, twists the knob, with no luck.

LOUIS

David Mitchell... open this door now...

The volume of the TV increases suddenly, jarringly. Louis' face twists in anger.

LOUIS

DAVY, OPEN THE GODDAMN DOOR!

The door opens a half inch. Louis' anger dissolves quickly.

LOUIS

Thank you...

(quiet)

... son.

Louis opens the door the rest of the way and the two Agents walk in.

AGENT 1

You two should wait in the other room...

Louis steps out of the room, but Donna hesitates. She can't take her eyes off Davy.

DONNA

It's not right...

LOUIS

We got no choice. Come on...

He takes her hand, leads her out, and Agent 2 pushes the door closed.

Both Agents walk over to Davy. Agent 1 stops between Davy and the TV.

AGENT 1

Hi, there. My name's Doug. My partner's name is Michael.

AGENT 2

We'd like you to go for a ride with us. We'd like to be your friends.

Davy shifts in his chair, trying to see around Agent 1. He stops, and the TV itself moves, sliding six feet across the room so Davy can see the screen.

Agent 2's jaw drops in astonishment. Agent 1 doesn't look remotely surprised.

AGENT 1

Right... get his arm.

Agent 1 steps forward, grabs one of Davy's arms. Davy glares up at him and there is a FLASH! of light. Agent 1 cries out as he is thrown across the room. SLAM! He slides down the wall to the ground.

Agent 2 goes for his gun, and Davy turns to watch. As Agent 2 lifts the gun to point it at Davy, the air around the gun seems to bulge...

... and the gun shatters like glass in Agent 2's hand. Agent 2 freezes, not sure what to expect. Davy watches him for a moment, then loses interest, turns back to the TV.

Silently, Agent 1 gets to his feet, approaches Davy from behind. He motions at Agent 2 to say something.

AGENT 2

Davy?

Davy turns to him.

AGENT 2

You like TV? Huh? There's a TV in our car. Would you like to see that?

Davy seems to consider it. Agent 1 leaps forward and slams the butt of his gun to Davy's head... once... twice. Davy slumps unconscious in his chair.

AGENT 2

What the hell was that?

AGENT 1

Just remember, man... when you're dealing with a psychic, always go for the head.

The two men lift Davy, head for the door.

EXT. DRIVEWAY EVENING

The sedan backs out of the driveway, rounds a corner and is gone.

PAN OVER TO the front door, where Louis and Donna stand silhouetted. She begins to cry and buries her face in his shoulder. It's not until we MOVE IN CLOSE that we see the expression on his face.

Relief, pure and simple.

FADE TO BLACK: 2ND TITLES UP

EXT. AIRPORT - EVENING

The sun is just starting to sink behind this large, busy airport.

SUPERIMPOSE: Boston

INT. TICKET AREA - EVENING

DUNCAN LYNCH stands at the ticket counter, buying a ticket. He's a tall, gawky guy in his late 20's, nervous, a little hyper. He's got a large duffel bag with him and wears a blue seamen's cap and a black wool overcoat.

Duncan looks around the lobby, searching for someone. He sees a man leaning against a post, newspaper up, his eyes hidden by sunglasses. Duncan looks away, notices two men together, dressed in similar suits. One of them gestures toward Duncan.

Duncan finishes his transaction in a hurry and, ticket in hand, starts to walk away.

INT. TERMINAL - EVENING

Duncan comes strolling in, trying hard not to glance back the way he came. He stops by the entrance to a gate, lifts his ticket. He only glances at the ticket before looking back down the terminal.

The man with the NEWSPAPER is leaned up against a pay phone.

Duncan's hand begins to shake. He looks around, sees a sign marked "RESTROOMS" pointing down a hallway. A tall man dressed in a CAPTAIN's uniform steps up behind Duncan.

CAPTAIN

Mr. Lynch?

Duncan spins, shocked. He starts to back away.

CAPTAIN

Come on... don't make this difficult.

The Captain opens his jacket, reveals a gun. Duncan turns to run, sees Newspaper moving towards them, his paper folded around something.

Duncan makes a decision, ducks around the Captain, and hops up onto a row of chairs. He begins to run along, armrest to armrest. He leaps over a railing, hits the ground still running, and vanishes down the hallway.

Newspaper comes running up, and he and the Captain head after Duncan, guns drawn.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Duncan runs full out, bounces off one wall and crashes into the door of the women's room.

INT. RESTROOM - EVENING

Duncan spills in through the door and hits the floor, hard. He scrambles to his feet and ducks into one of the stalls.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Newspaper and the Captain burst into the hallway. One runs to the right, one runs to the left.

INT. STALL - EVENING

Duncan sits perched on top of a toilet so his feet don't show. He struggles to remain quiet.

The bathroom door can be heard opening. Duncan practically jumps out of his skin. His ticket is clenched tight in one hand.

We hear a few footsteps, then BLAM! The sound of one of the stall doors being kicked open. BLAM! Another one flies open, rattling the walls of Duncan's stall. He is sweating heavily now, his breathing shallow, his eyes wild.

We see the shadow of someone who pauses on the other side of the stall door. Duncan stops breathing.

C R A S H ! With one kick, the Captain knocks the stall door open. Duncan screams, and his ticket bursts into flames. Shocked, Duncan drops the ticket. He turns his hand over. A small flame dances on the palm.

The Captain stares at the flame for a moment before he regains his composure, snaps his gun up, hammer back.

CAPTAIN

Get up, you bastard...

There is a faint crackling sound and WHOOSH! The Captain goes up in flames himself.

INT. RESTROOM - EVENING

The Captain backs away from the stall, screaming, and collapses. Duncan steps out of the stall. His right arm is engulfed in fire, but not burning.

The restroom door flies open and four AGENTS, led by Newspaper, pour into the room, guns up.

DUNCAN

It w-w-w... w-wasn't my f-fault...

A fifth AGENT runs in, fire extinguisher up. He quickly puts the Captain out. Duncan doesn't even see him turn the extinguisher toward him. Duncan is knocked off his feet. He smacks his head on a sink and is out like a light.

FADE TO BLACK: 3RD TITLES UP

EXT. SKYLINE - EVENING

All across the immediately recognizable San Francisco skyline, lights are coming on as the last daylight slips away.

SUPERIMPOSE: San Francisco

INT. OFFICE - EVENING

Two walls of this large, ultramodern office are glass, and the view is spectacular. PHIL CRANSTON stands at the bar, drink in hand, his eyes on the city. He's a few years past forty, balding, his body starting to go soft from the good life. This is the main office for a magazine called AMERICAN VIEW, covers of which adorn the walls.

Phil tosses his whole drink back with one gulp, turns to the bar to fix himself another drink. He happens to glance at the mirror behind the bar and gasps, spinning around to face...

... AGENT 3 and AGENT 4, who stand just inside the office door.

AGENT 3

Mr. Cranston?

PHIL

Who the hell are you?

AGENT 3

We'd like to have a few words with you.

AGENT 4

Your wife sent us.

Agent 3 and Agent 4 begin to move closer.

PHIL

Oh, shit... is this about a divorce?

AGENT 3

(laughs)

A divorce? No... it's nothing that traumatic. We just have some questions for you.

PHIL

Who are you guys with? I'd like to know who's asking...

Agent 3 and Agent 4 exchange subtle nods and they both leap forward. Phil has no time to react. Agent 3 presses the barrel of the gun to Phil's eye.

AGENT 3

You try anything... you're dead.

Agent 4 brings out a syringe, begins to prep it. Phil sees the needle and panics. He looks up, makes eye contact with Agent 3. All sound seems to drop away except for a heartbeat. After a moment, the heartbeat slows, just a bit, then stops.

PHIL

I'm dead?

Agent 3's eyes go wide and he seems to pale. He fumbles with the gun, pulls back the hammer.

Agent 4 realizes what's happening and slams the syringe into Phil's chest, expertly shooting its contents into Phil's heart. Phil's whole body goes rigid and, as he gasps for air, the sound of the heartbeat starts again, ragged at first, then stronger...

All the sound returns as Phil passes out. Agent 3 collapses, hands to his chest, and begins to sob.

FADE TO BLACK: 4TH TITLES UP

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Palm trees line one side of the street, Art Deco-styled businesses line the other.

SUPERIMPOSE: Miami

JOHN HARRISON, mid-thirties, walks along the sidewalk, out of place amidst the well-dressed, obviously wealthy tourists. John's clothes are worn and dirty. His hair and his beard are matted, filthy, and shaving is obviously a foreign concept to him. He seems oblivious to the open stares from everyone who he passes.

He slows down as he approaches the patio of an outdoor restaurant. A YOUNG COUPLE stands up and leaves. There is food left on both their plates. John picks up his pace, grabs the food off the plates as he passes, then bursts into a full run. He turns down an alley and is gone.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

John runs midway down the alley and ducks behind a dumpster. He starts to ram the food down his throat. A half-cheeseburger gone in two bites. Most of an order of chicken parmesan. He is licking tomato sauce off of his hand when AGENT 5 steps around the edge of the dumpster. He opens his wallet and holds it up. There's an official-looking badge and an ID.

AGENT 5

Federal Agent. Can we talk, Mr. Harrison?

At the sound of his name, John jumps to his feet. He touches the dumpster and, in one move, the dumpster slides forward and pins Agent 5 to the wall.

John turns and sees that the end of the alley is blocked off by police cars. He looks towards the other end off the alley. Same thing. Men in riot gear approach from both ends, shields up. John gestures at one group.

Everyone of their plexi-glass shield melt and run to the ground. The men all stop. There is a loud POP! and a can of tear gas comes spiraling in, red smoke billowing behind it. John looks up and the can slows, then stops in mid-air.

Agent 5 slips out from behind the dumpster. As he starts to walk towards John, John spots him. He glances back at the tear gas can and it shoots forward. It hits Agent 5 full in the face, taking him off his feet. Blood erupts from his nose.

Before it can hit the ground, the canister changes direction and bullets straight into the line of men. All hell breaks loose, and the men charge John. He vanishes under a mountain of them, all punching and kicking, clubs swinging.

The last glimpse we get of John's face, he almost looks like he's smiling.

FADE TO BLACK: MAIN TITLE UP

We hear a single sound, a low electric buzzing.

FADE IN ON:

INT. WARD - DAY

This is a long, sterile white room with ten beds, five on each side of the room. Long tables bisect the room. Windows take up most of three walls. Five of the beds are occupied at the moment. Duncan, Phil, John, and Davy each have a bed, as does RICHARD DREISELL, a guy in his late twenties with dark features, wild hair. All five men are asleep, and they are all dressed in the same khaki jumpsuits we saw Russell and Keven in earlier.

Overhead, the buzzing comes from the flickering florescent lights. Phil is the first to stir, opening one eye and looking up at the lights. At first, he's too confused, too overwhelmed to react at all. Finally, he sits up.

He looks around, panic rising. He looks the other men over. On one side of him, John lies on his back, his face a testament to the savagery of the beating he withstood. Both eyes are black, and several cuts have been stitched up. On the plus side, he is clean-shaven now, and we can see his face. If not for the recent beating, he'd be a good-looking guy.

On the other side of Phil, Duncan is in a little better shape... but just a little.

PHIL

Where the fuck am I?

Phil throws his sheet back, climbs out of bed. He crosses to the nearest window, which is crisscrossed with bars as well as wire mesh.

POV - PHIL

Outside are rolling green hills leading to dense forest. There is no sign of civilization.

INT. WARD - DAY

Phil grabs the bars and cries out. At the far end of the ward, the door opens and Strickland enters, followed closely by four of the Psi-Guards.

STRICKLAND

Mr. Cranston?

Phil turns to Strickland, tears in his eyes.

PHIL

Who are you? Tell me how you know my name...

STRICKLAND

I'll have to insist that you return to your bed.

PHIL

Answer my questions first... tell me where I am.

STRICKLAND

All of your questions will be answered in time... but first you have to do me a favor... get back in your bed.

Phil considers them for a moment, then charges them, hysterical with panic. The Psi-Guards don't react till the last possible moment, when they surround Phil in a box, stopping him. He tries to shove past them, but one of them brings out his staff, one of the instruments we saw earlier. He hits a switch on the side and we see a hypodermic needle slide out of the end.

Phil sees it, too.

PHIL

No! What do you think you're doing?!

Two of the other Psi-Guards grab Phil, hold him as the first one stabs him in the thigh. Phil begins to flail and shriek, out of his mind with fear. As the Psi-Guards surround Phil, he redoubles his efforts. We lose sight of him, and all we can hear are his screams as we

SHOCK CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

There are six video screens set into the walls of this room. Like the room itself, the large table that takes up the center of the room is round.

John, Duncan, Davy, Phil, and Richard sit around the table. All six of the men look like they are slightly doped up, like they've just woken from profound sleeps. Psi-Guards stand by both of the doors of the room. No one says a word.

The door slides open, and Strickland enters with Dennings. As soon as Dennings sees the six men, he smiles. He hangs back as Strickland steps up to the table.

STRICKLAND

Gentlemen... I'm sorry that we haven't had the chance to introduce ourselves before this. My name is Dr. Adam Strickland. The five of you will be working closely with me for the next few months. If everything goes according to schedule, you will be home by the new year.

DREISELL

Where the hell are we?

STRICKLAND

You're safe. This is a private research facility.

JOHN

Where?

STRICKLAND

That's not important.

JOHN

I think it's plenty goddamn important. Who runs this place?

STRICKLAND

We're called the American Society for the Research of Specialized Abilities.

DREISELL

Government funded?

STRICKLAND

Again... that's not something you need to worry about.

PHIL

Of course they are.

JOHN

I've never heard of the ASRSA...

STRICKLAND

And you never will after this, either. We deal with the type of research here that tends to cause... debate. Lycanthropy, precognition, telekinesis, pyrokinesis...

PHIL

That's crazy. None of that stuff exists.

STRICKLAND

You see? Your attitude is a perfect example of why we keep our existence private. I'm not interested in arguing about the validity of what we do here. I know what results I've seen, and that's what's important to me. I am surprised at your attitude, though, Mr. Cranston. Being what you are, I thought you might have an open mind...

PHIL

What do you mean, what I am?

STRICKLAND

Come now... no time for games. You all know exactly why you're here. You are not just normal men, average, faceless no ones... you are all touched with something extraordinary. You have no secrets now.

PHIL

What are you talking about?

STRICKLAND

You want me to spell it out? You want me to show you proof? Fine.

Strickland points a remote at the wall, and all the video screens come to life. They all play the same image, a diagram of the human body, rendered in stunning 3-D animation.

STRICKLAND

Evolution is defined as the process of change from one species to another by genetic mutation. I am a homo sapiens, as is my colleague, Mr. Dennings, as are the men inside those uniforms. The five of you, though, are not. You are something more. You are what I have named homo superior. The reason for this is a small gland, here...

Onscreen, we see the brainstem. At the very tip of the spine, there is a small gland that is hooked into every lobe of the brain.

STRICKLAND

This gland produces a powerful electroconductive chemical which seems to have different reactions in each of you. This chemical is what causes your psychic abilities.

DREISELL

What did you say?

STRICKLAND

Stop playing coy, Mr. Dreisell. It's boring. You know exactly what I mean.

Strickland hits a button on the remote, and all the screens start to play what appears to be a surveillance tape from a convenience store.

ONSCREEN

We see a CLERK, standing at a counter, reading JUGGS while he eats a cupcake. He looks up, startled, when the front door flies open and Dreisell comes racing in, dressed in casual clothes that are stained with mud, his hair wild.

DREISELL

Where's the back door?

CLERK

I don't...

DREISELL

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO FUCK AROUND!! WHERE'S THE BACK DOOR?!

The front door opens again, and four AGENTS spill in, guns up. Dreisell turns to face them.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

All of the men watch the footage onscreen, attention riveted. Strickland watches all of them as they watch.

Onscreen, Dreisell raises his arms and cries out. All around him, things begin exploding off of the shelves. One of the Agents charges him, and all the others follow. Quickly, they overpower him, and the screen goes black.

STRICKLAND

Absolutely remarkable... very impressive.

Dreisell looks around. All the other men are staring at him.

DREISELL

What are you staring at? He said the rest of you are freaks, too.

(pause)

STOP LOOKING AT ME!

Two of the video screens blow out. Strickland doesn't even look back at them.

STRICKLAND

If you do that again, Mr. Dreisell, I'll put you back to sleep. For good.

DREISELL

(finally)

I'm sorry.

STRICKLAND

Mr. Lynch, your pyrokinetic temper tantrums cost a good soldier in the Gulf War his life...

DENNINGS

Kinda redefines "friendly fire," doesn't it?

STRICKLAND

How many people have you hurt in your lifetime because you couldn't control yourself? Ten? Fifty? More?

DUNCAN

Th-they were all a-a-accidents.

STRICKLAND

Of course they were. The point is, you know so little about yourself that you can't keep those accidents from happening. I'd like to teach you how. All of you men are the same. You all possess psychic abilities to some degree.

PHIL

That's bullshit.

STRICKLAND

Really? Maybe you could explain something for me, then, Mr. Cranston. You are the publisher of AMERICAN VIEW magazine, aren't you?

PHIL

Yes...

STRICKLAND

You had a partner on that magazine when you started... a Jason Randall, I believe.

PHIL

So?

STRICKLAND

You and Mr. Randall were entangled in a sticky legal battle over ownership of the magazine last year, but that conflict ended abruptly when Mr. Randall, at the surprisingly young age of thirty-seven, dropped dead of a brain hemorrhage. Now, our research indicates that you have mastered a certain level of control over the voluntary and involuntary biological functions of others.

PHIL

If you're saying what I think you're saying, you're going to be sorry...

STRICKLAND

Oh, really? Why? Are you going to give me a brain hemorrhage as well?

PHIL

He died. It was just something that happened. That doesn't mean it was me.

STRICKLAND

No. Of course not.

The door opens and several Psi-Guards walk in, each carrying one of the black rods, Needleguns in future references.

STRICKLAND

Until we can trust you gentlemen to keep your powers under control, I'm afraid we'll have you on a series of drugs we call inhibitors. We will cut your intake when we want to work with you, but otherwise, you will be required to stay on a strict dosage schedule. I'd advise you not to fight it, or try and make trouble. The electric fields generated by the body armor these men wear keeps them from being influenced by you. They are prepared to use force on you, but only if you make it necessary. Now... are there any questions?

(pause)

No? Then we'll begin tomorrow morning. Until then...

With a quick nod, Strickland exits. Dennings follows him out, strolling casually. The Psi-Guard closest to John hits a button on his Needlegun, and the hypo slides out. The Psi-Guard begins to approach John.

INT. MAUGHAM'S SUITE - DAY

This is the large main room of a suite of living quarters. The walls are decorated with posters of Jim Morrison, Jimi Hendrix, Bruce Lee, APOCALYPSE NOW, Robert De Niro in TAXI DRIVER. Loud guitar rock blares from a hidden speaker.

In the center of the room, Maugham stands stripped to the waist, running through exercises based on what appears to be tae kwon do or some other martial art. His body is in astonishingly good shape, every muscle defined, taut.

As he exercises, he keeps his eyes closed tight. His back is to the door. The door opens silently and Strickland steps in. So fast that we almost miss it, Maugham draws a knife from his belt, spins and throws it. The knife pins Strickland to the door by his shirt collar.

Maugham opens his eyes.

MAUGHAM

Hi.

Maugham raises his hand. The knife pulls free of the door and flies straight to his hand. He tucks it back in his belt.

MAUGHAM

You really should remember to knock.

STRICKLAND

I'm sorry, Charles.

MAUGHAM

Lucky for you, my aim is good. Quarter inch different, you'd be dead.

Strickland reaches up and feels his torn collar.

STRICKLAND

I just wanted to stop by and tell you that the new men are awake now.

MAUGHAM

I know.

Maugham closes his eyes, goes back to his exercises.

MAUGHAM

Anything else?

STRICKLAND

Any luck with the search?

MAUGHAM

Don't hassle me about it. I'll let you know.

STRICKLAND

I'm just asking...

MAUGHAM

You've got your answer. Drop it.

Strickland watches Maugham for a moment, wanting to say something else.

MAUGHAM

Do you mind?

Finally, Strickland leaves.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - MORNING

The sun is just rising over the horizon, casting a red-orange glow over everything.

INT. WARD - MORNING

The door to the ward opens and several Psi-Guards follow Strickland in. The men all start to wake up.

STRICKLAND

You gentlemen have one hour from right now to shower and to eat. At that time, you will accompany these guards for your first round of testing. Do not be late.

Strickland is gone before anyone can say a word. Resigned, the men all start to get up.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

The Psi-Guards lead the men to a row of doors, bring them a stop. The men are dressed, showered. Each of the men is led to a different door. The doors slide open and, one by one, the men step through. The doors slide closed behind them with a depressingly final sound.

INT. HOLDING ROOM - MORNING

This small cubicle of a room is lit only by a dim red bulb overhead. John turns away from the door, towards a second door on the opposite wall. He searches the walls with his fingertips for a switch, a button, anything.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

Maugham sits behind Strickland and Dennings, all of them facing a wall sized window that looks down onto a large empty room made of steel.

DENNINGS

I love this part...

STRICKLAND

Calm down, Dennings. This is science, not entertainment.

DENNINGS

Speak for yourself. I'm highly entertained.

DOCTOR 1 turns from the controls, looks back at the men.

DOCTOR 1

I think everything's ready.

DENNINGS

Great... showtime.

INT. HOLDING ROOM - MORNING

Duncan nervously rocks from foot to foot. The dim red light overhead goes out, plunging him into total darkness.

DUNCAN

H-H-HEY! TURN THE L-L-LIGHTS BACK ON!

Duncan begins to pound on the door. The second door slides open.

INT. TESTING ROOM - DAY

Duncan takes a few tentative steps out into the testing room. The door slides closed behind him. The testing room is divided between pools of light and shadow.

There is a loud pop! and a hard, black rubber ball is shot from a hidden tube. It smacks Duncan in the head with incredible force. He is knocked off his feet.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

Dennings bursts out laughing. Strickland glares at him, annoyed.

STRICKLAND

Give me a live mic, please.

INT. TESTING ROOM - MORNING

Somewhat dazed, Duncan sits up.

STRICKLAND

(over mic)

Defend yourself, Mr. Lynch. This is a test.

There is another pop! and a second ball appears, headed straight for Duncan. He rolls out of the way. Pop! Duncan turns towards the sound. Before it can reach him, the ball bursts into flames. He moves quickly out of the way, ready now.

Behind Duncan, a door slides open. There is a low, guttural growl from in the shadows. Slowly, Duncan turns. He freezes when he sees a huge, muscular Rottweiler lope forward out of the shadows, eyes on Duncan. He starts to move away, but the dog's focus is on only him; he's not going anywhere.

When Duncan turns to run, the dog breaks into a trot, barking loudly. Duncan screams and, at the last possible moment, turns back. The dog leaps at him, its full weight hitting him in the chest. Duncan has to use all his strength to hold the dog's snapping jaws back, away from his face.

DUNCAN

S-S-STOP IT!

Duncan jams his thumb into the dog's eye. The dog jerks back, yelping, and Duncan takes the opportunity to scramble to his feet. The dog regains its footing, begins to growl again. It turns to face Duncan, who looks positively sick.

DUNCAN

P-p-please... stop...

The dog starts to charge Duncan, who steps back and screams. There's a distortion in the air between him and the dog, and there is a sharp crackling sound. The dog bursts into flames. It stops, snapping at the air and whining in pain.

Duncan drops into a sitting position, trying to catch his breath.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

Everybody's trying to talk at once. Strickland and Dennings watch as two Psi-Guards help Duncan to his feet, lead him away.

DENNINGS

That's incredible. If he can be conditioned...

STRICKLAND

... could feel it in here, like some sort of electricity in the air... can you smell it? Like someone lit a match...

MAUGHAM

That was good. Not great... but good.

INT. HOLDING ROOM - MORNING

The red light overhead goes out. John doesn't make a sound. After a moment, the door slides open.

John doesn't move. Ten seconds go by. Twenty. Suddenly, the floor of the room begins to heat up, glow red. John cries out and jumps out of the room.

INT. TESTING ROOM - MORNING

The holding room door slides closed. John looks around, hyper aware. He sees the burnt dog, has no reaction. He notices the window, a sheet of black glass from this side.

JOHN

What do you really want from us... huh?

(pause)

Is this just a show for you? Does it get you off?

We hear a door slide open. John turns, scans the shadows. A Rottweiler comes padding into the room. As soon as it sees John, it goes nuts, barking and snapping.

JOHN

(to self)

... give you a show...

John raises one hand and the dog freezes in mid-bark. John makes a small gesture with his wrist and the dog collapses to the ground. It shakes and twitches as the skin along its back splits and begin to peel back.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

Strickland turns his eyes away, unable to watch. Dennings looks like it's Christmas morning.

INT. TESTING ROOM - MORNING

The dog's skin drops to the floor like discarded clothing.

STRICKLAND

(over mic)

You've made your point, Mr. Harrison.

JOHN

Like hell I have...

The skinless corpse rises a foot off the ground.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

The corpse rockets up and slams into the Plexiglas window. Everyone jumps, startled by the sound. As the corpse drops to the floor, it leaves a bloody smear on the window.

Strickland turns to Maugham.

STRICKLAND

Handle this for me, please.

Maugham gets up, exits.

INT. TESTING ROOM - MORNING

Another door slides open and Maugham enters followed by several Psi-Guards. Maugham walks right up to John, face to face. The Psi-Guards form a close circle around them.

JOHN

Who the hell are you?

MAUGHAM

You think you're hot shit, don't you? You don't exist anymore, pal. You vanished, and no one in the world cares. You belong to us now... and I will kill you without hesitation, if you continue to fuck with us. That's who the hell I am.

JOHN

I bet I could take you out before anyone could get to me...

MAUGHAM

Maybe. After you're gone, though, there'll be plenty of time to put the heat on Davy or Duncan. They'll suffer because of your actions. So, come on... give me your best shot.

JOHN

(pause)

No.

One Psi-Guard approaches John from behind. John notices.

JOHN

Are you gonna shoot me up with something again?

MAUGHAM

No.

SMACK! The Psi-Guard knocks John out cold with a mini-club.

SHOCK CUT TO

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

Dennings and Strickland look down on the now-empty testing room. A door opens and Phil enters. He walks out without hesitation, anger on his face.

INT. TESTING ROOM - MORNING

A steel ball comes swinging down from the ceiling on a chain and Phil narrowly dodges out of the way. The ball disappears into the shadows.

PHIL

What the hell is that supposed to prove?

There is no response from the booth.

PHIL

Let me outa here...

He storms over, kicks the door he entered through.

PHIL

I mean it. This is bullshit...

Behind Phil, another dog emerges from the shadows. Phil turns and sees the dog approaching him. He glances up at the window, then back at the dog.

PHIL

Alright... fine...

The dog begins to tense up to leap, then stops, begins to whine as if slapped. It starts to back away, then drops over onto its side. It coughs twice, spattering blood everywhere. The dog barks once, then simply dies.

Phil looks back up at the window, no emotion visible. The door behind him opens. Wordlessly, he walks out.

INT. HOLDING ROOM - MORNING

Davy is seated now, folded into an uncomfortable position. The light goes out, and a moment later, the door in front of him opens. Davy's response is to fold himself into an even more of a ball and begin rocking, humming to himself tunelessly.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

Strickland looks annoyed.

STRICKLAND

Get him out of there...

INT. HOLDING ROOM - MORNING

The floor of the room begins to heat up, glow red. Davy still doesn't move, but his humming quickly gives way to screaming. After thirty seconds, the floor stops glowing. The other door to the holding room opens and a Psi-Guard enters. He grabs Davy by an arm and drags him out.

INT. TESTING ROOM - MORNING

The Psi-Guard pulls Davy out to the center of the room, leaves him in a heap.

STRICKLAND

(over mic)

Davy... you have to stand up.

(pause)

This is your last warning, Davy...

Pop! A ball is fired and bounces off Davy with a painful sound. Pop! Another one is fired from a different angle, rocketing off of his head. He doesn't move, doesn't react at all.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

DENNINGS

Go ahead and release the dog...

STRICKLAND

No... wait. He's not responding at all... he'll get hurt.

DENNINGS

That's his fault. If he's this out of it, then he's no good to us anyway. I say, let him prove himself or let him die.

(pause)

Release the dog.

Maugham moves up to the window for a better view.

INT. TESTING ROOM - MORNING

A dog, another Rottweiler, enters, barking and growling. As it bounds towards Davy, he rolls over and looks at the dog. It begins to slow its stride, until it reaches a walk. It approaches Davy cautiously.

He puts his hand out. It sniffs his hand, then begins to wag its tail. Davy begins to pet the dog, staring blankly past it.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

Maugham turns to look at Strickland, a slight smile on his face.

MAUGHAM

Him. Give me him.

INT. STRICKLAND'S OFFICE - DAY

Strickland is watching a tape of John's test in slow-motion. He is fascinated as he sees the dog's skin start to split and peel back.

There is a knock on the door. Strickland hits pause.

STRICKLAND

Come in.

Dennings enters, visibly elated.

DENNINGS

Adam, I just got off the phone with Col. Stanford. He's very excited about today.

STRICKLAND

How about you, Dan? What do you think?

Dennings glances at the TV, at the frozen image.

DENNINGS

I think we need some more dogs.

STRICKLAND

I mean about the program.

DENNINGS

I say we proceed as far as we can. This is the most talented group we've ever had. The Colonel was hoping for some sort of timetable.

STRICKLAND

Give me a week and let me run some physical tests, I'll be able to tell. It should move quickly, though.

DENNINGS

Good. I feel better telling you this, now that things are finally going well here. We were getting ready to pull your funding.

STRICKLAND

What?

DENNINGS

Can you blame us? Four years, Adam, with no results.

STRICKLAND

We've had results. Look at Maugham. When I came here from Moscow, you had no idea what to do with him. You kept him locked in a cell under two miles of concrete. I was the one who managed to draw him out. I was the one who organized this program. I knew it would pay off...

DENNINGS

Calm down. I told you, we're very excited now. We're not going anywhere. You just do your best to make this one pay off, and you've got nothing to worry about.

INT. CAFETERIA - EVENING

Everyone except Phil sits at one table. Except for the Psi-Guards, they're alone.

DREISELL

... that dog was so fast, it was right on top of me before I could do anything. Then everything got real far away and there was this heat. When I came back, the dog was dead. It's head was, like... imploded...

PHIL

Do you mind? I'm trying to eat.

DREISELL

This whole thing smacks of bad science... like something out of the Auschwitz labs...

JOHN

These people don't even think of us as human. To them, we're lab animals, just like those dogs. It's probably a good thing they think of us that way. Animals wouldn't try and escape. Maybe they won't expect it if we do.

PHIL

You're not going anywhere.

JOHN

Says who?

PHIL

Common sense. Any escape route you come up with, they've already thought about. They can't afford to let you escape. You're a threat to national security now.

JOHN

You think that way if you want. I can't. I can't just give up. We should stick together on this and try to find a way out. It's our only hope for survival.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Strickland and Dennings sit at a table, making notes, as they watch Maugham on a video monitor. Maugham's in his room, seated on his bed.

INT. MAUGHAM'S ROOM - DAY

All electronic noise is gone. Maugham is perfectly still, with his eyes closed. For a long moment, nothing happens. We PUSH IN ON Maugham, and everything around him seems to drop away, leaving him suspended in darkness and silence.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

On the monitor, we see that Maugham is still physically in his room.

STRICKLAND

This could take a while. You should go get Davy now.

Dennings exits.

MAUGHAM'S EYES

fill the frame, begin an erratic dance under the eyelids.

POV - MAUGHAM

There are only abstract forms at first, unrecognizable as anything real. The forms twist and churn, finally crystallizing into what appears to be the skyline of a city. His POV races overhead at a dizzying speed, then dips down, into what we discover is Los Angeles. There is an overwhelming noise of motion.

INT. MAUGHAM'S ROOM - DAY

The only sound is that of a light breeze from an open window that ruffles Maugham's hair.

POV - MAUGHAM

Maugham's moving with such speed that everything appears slightly blurred. He glides by buildings and moving cars, checking in every window.

His POV launches in another direction, towards a large shopping mall and enters. Inside, we weave through the crowd, inches from people's faces, checking everyone. He goes from store to store in seconds. He begins to slow down and, finally, comes to a complete stop by a group of children in a toy store.

INT. MAUGHAM'S ROOM - DAY

Maugham looks strained, pale and sweaty.

POV - MAUGHAM

Maugham's POV begins to pull backwards, slowly at first, through the mall, gradually picking up speed again, then leaving the building.

Once back in the sky, he is moving full-speed.

He comes down again, this time above green countryside, and we race up on the ASRSA complex. Maugham's POV angles down and swoops in an open window. His.

INT. MAUGHAM'S ROOM - DAY

The door opens and Dennings practically pushes Davy into the room. Maugham, still seated, looks up at him.

DENNINGS

Here you go, Maugham. Be gentle with him.

Dennings is gone before the door slides closed. Davy stands motionless in the middle of the room, staring at the floor.

MAUGHAM

Sit down, kid.

Nothing. No response at all.

MAUGHAM

I know you can hear me, Davy. You're not stupid. You're in there somewhere.

Maugham stands, walks over to Davy. He grabs Davy's chin, tilts his head up so they are looking each other in the eye.

MAUGHAM

What happened to you that made you hide like this? Huh? Why are you so afraid to be yourself? Did someone call you crazy? Did they tell you that you were retarded? Don't think about that. They didn't know anything. They used to call me crazy, too. I knew the truth, though. They called me names because they were scared of me... because they feared what I could do. It's a remarkable feeling, Davy, knowing that you're the most powerful person in the room. You don't have to worry about what they think, or what they say, or anything. They have to worry. You're set free.

(pause)

I can set you free, Davy. I can teach you to do what I do. You have to ask me to do it, though. You have to let me in, give me some sign that this is what you want. Say the words, Davy...

He releases Davy's chin. Davy holds the eye contact, not looking away.

DAVY

(finally)

Okay.

MAUGHAM

(smiles)

Okay.

INT. WARD - AFTERNOON

John sits next to Duncan, whispering almost.

JOHN

So what'd you find out?

DUNCAN

Th-the air shafts... all l-lead t-to the outside.

JOHN

Can we fit through them?

DUNCAN

I think s-so...

Phil, who is lying on his bed, rolls over to face them.

PHIL

You're all crazy.

DUNCAN

I th-think the shafts c-c-could work.

PHIL

I'm sure you've had plenty of experience with shafts in the service, eh, Lynch? Big male shafts?

JOHN

Shut your mouth, Cranston.

PHIL

Why? So you can get his hopes up? So you can go on fooling yourself? This is it. This is your life.

JOHN

No. I don't accept that.

PHIL

Doesn't change the facts.

JOHN

(stands)

Are you afraid to try? Is that it? Are you that weak?

PHIL

(stands)

I'll show you who's weak, Harrison...

JOHN

This is what they want. Divided, we're no threat.

PHIL

Wrong. This is what I want.

SMASH! Phil slams one meaty fist into John's face, sending him sprawling. John's up again immediately, though.

Everyone crowds around as John and Phil circle each other. John lashes out, catches Phil in the mouth, splitting his lip.

JOHN

Now, come on... let's call it quits...

Phil swings again, but John moves out of the way. John strikes with an elbow in Phil's face, and Phil goes down. John is on him immediately, raining punches on him. He beats Phil severely, pulping his face.

Duncan finally steps in, pulls John off. Richard helps Phil sit up. He coughs, tries to wipe the blood off his face.

JOHN

Don't you get it, Phil? You're human, just like me... just like all of us.

John holds up his bloody knuckles.

JOHN

That's human blood coming out of you. None of that changes because Duncan can start fires by thinking about them, or because Dreisell does what he does, or because of your abilities. You and I... we're both human beings, Phil. Please, quit trying to be different from us. We need each other to survive. We're going to have to trust each other if we plan on making it out of here. Together... we are alone.

John holds out his hand to help Phil up. After a long moment, Phil accepts it.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - MORNING

Another picture postcard beautiful morning.

INT. ANIMAL LAB - MORNING

Maugham stands in front of a row of cages that hold chimpanzees, teasing one of them, a slight smile on his face. This is a huge room with all sorts of animals in it.

The door opens and two Psi-Guards escort Phil in. They exit, and Maugham waves him over.

MAUGHAM

Good to see you, Mr. Cranston. Can I call you Phil?

Phil starts toward him cautiously.

PHIL

I guess so. Who the hell are you?

MAUGHAM

Call me Charles. I'm a psychic, like you. I've been with the program for two years now.

PHIL

Sounds a little maso to me...

MAUGHAM

During that time, I've learned some concentration techniques that might help you. Dr. Strickland asked me to pass these techniques along to you.

PHIL

Yeah? What if I don't want to learn them?

MAUGHAM

If I offer to teach you something, I'd advise you to learn it.

PHIL

Is there an implied "or else" in there?

MAUGHAM

No threats, Phil. I'm just telling you how it is.

PHIL

(long pause)

Okay. Where do we start?

INT. WARD - MORNING

Everyone except Phil is here. Davy sits by the window, staring out at the open country all around them. He closes his eyes.

BLACK

For a long moment, all we see is black. Slowly, though, we start to see hints of color. A streak of green, a flash of blue. Shapes start to push up out of the darkness, and abruptly, there is a flash and we see

POV - DAVY

The same view from the window, but from just outside the window, with no bars to obstruct our view.

INT. WARD - MORNING

Davy opens his eyes, surprised.

INT. ANIMAL LAB - MORNING

Maugham gestures at the chimp's cage.

MAUGHAM

I wanna see your powers in use. I need to have an idea what you can do.

PHIL

Okay...

MAUGHAM

Use the chimp. Do exactly what I ask you to do.

PHIL

I'm warning you up front... sometimes I can't manage more than a general effect.

MAUGHAM

Just do what you can. Focus on him...

Phil directs his full attention to the chimp, making eye contact with it. Almost immediately, the chimp stops moving around, just looks at Phil, as if waiting for something.

MAUGHAM

Make him cough.

The chimp makes a slight growling sound, then another, then is gripped by a sudden coughing fit.

MAUGHAM

Good... very good. Raise his left arm.

The chimp's coughing stops as it lifts its left arm over its head.

INT. WARD - MORNING

Davy closes his eyes again, starts to concentrate.

POV - DAVY

There is a moment where we're not sure what we're looking at, but things quickly come into focus and we realize that we are moving through the halls of the ASRSA, gliding along. We pass several Psi-Guards.

INT. ANIMAL LAB - MORNING

Maugham moves around so he can see Phil's face. Phil is totally engrossed in the task at hand.

MAUGHAM

Okay... let's get a little more specific. Grab the cage bars. Both hands.

The chimp grabs the bars with both hands, gripping them tightly.

MAUGHAM

I want you to do something that would normally be against the chimp's nature... something that proves you can control it. I want you to slam its head against the bars, full force.

Startled, Phil looks over, breaking contact. The chimp backs away from the bars.

PHIL

Are you nuts?

MAUGHAM

Don't question me. Do it.

PHIL

I can't...

Maugham raises his hand. A thin blue bolt flies from his fingertips and zaps Phil in the ear. Phil staggers back and collapses to the floor, eyes wide.

MAUGHAM

Now... as I was saying...

PHIL

What the fuck?!

MAUGHAM

You have work to do, Phil... get up.

Rubbing the side of his head, Phil climbs to his feet. He swallows nervously as he steps back up to the cage.

MAUGHAM

Focus...

Phil trains his attention on the chimp, which is screaming at them both, trying to stay as far away as possible. Its screaming stops almost immediately, though. Struggling, fighting not to, the chimp walks back to the front of the cage.

POV - DAVY

We continue to push forward through the building. When we come up to a door, we seem to pass right through it, and we find ourselves in the animal lab. Spotting Phil and Maugham, we head over towards them.

INT. WARD - MORNING

John nudges Duncan, points at Davy.

JOHN

What's going on with him?

Duncan looks over. Davy is still seated at the window, eyes closed. He is swaying slightly, his eyes moving rapidly under the lids.

DUNCAN

D-D-Davy?

They both walk over to him.

INT. ANIMAL LAB - MORNING

The chimp grabs the bars. Phil looks to be straining.

PHIL

He's fighting me...

MAUGHAM

He's a monkey. You're going to let a monkey get the best of you? Come on, Phil... show me what you've got. Show me...

POV - DAVY

Davy's POV stops where it can see what's going on, looking over Maugham's shoulder. Sounds are muffled, as if from a distance.

MAUGHAM

Come on! Do it!

PHIL

I don't want to hurt him... it's wrong.

MAUGHAM

Don't preach right or wrong at me. I saw your initial test... you killed that dog without thinking twice.

PHIL

I had no choice. That dog would have ripped my throat out...

(points at chimp)

That's not going to hurt me.

MAUGHAM

That's not the point. The point is control. Now, do it!

INT. WARD - MORNING

Davy starts to shake his head as he mumbles something over and over. John leans in close to him.

DUNCAN

Wh-what's he saying?

JOHN

Something about Phil...

INT. ANIMAL LAB - MORNING

Maugham grabs Phil by the back of the neck.

MAUGHAM

I won't tell you again...

Phil looks sick to his stomach. He closes his eyes. Everything seems to slow down as the chimp pulls itself forward and, with a sound like a watermelon on cement, slams its head into the bar, splashing both Maugham and Phil with gore.

INT. WARD - MORNING

Davy's whole body goes rigid. Both Duncan and John jump back.

DAVY

NOPHILDON'TDOITPHIL!

POV - DAVY

The chimp continues to bash its head against the bars, only stopping when it dies and drops to the floor of the cage.

INT. ANIMAL LAB - MORNING

As if he heard something or felt something, Maugham turns slowly and looks behind him. Nothing there. Still, Maugham senses someone... and smiles.

POV - DAVY

We PULL BACK with incredible speed, back the way we came, away from the lab.

INT. WARD - MORNING

Davy suddenly opens his eyes and jumps up, making both Duncan and John jump as well. He looks at them, eyes wild, trying to find the words.

JOHN

Davy... you okay?

His only response is a low moan as he pitches forward, hitting the floor hard, curling into a ball. They rush to his side.

INT. ANIMAL LAB - MORNING

Phil opens his eyes again, looks at Maugham. There is real hate there now.

PHIL

Are you happy? Is that what you wanted?

MAUGHAM

Yeah. Exactly. Thanks for coming by.

INT. WARD - MORNING

Davy is on his bed now, shivering, eyes open, not seeing anything. John and Duncan sit on the next bed over, watching him. The door opens, and they look up as Phil enters.

PHIL

We leave tonight.

Phil crosses to his bed, drops onto it.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

This is an exact echo of the first shot of the film. All is quiet.

INT. WARD - NIGHT

The men are all getting ready for bed. The doors open and three Psi-Guards walk in. One of them draws his Needlegun, readies it. John shoots Phil a glance, then walks over to the Psi-Guard.

JOHN

I'll go first.

John rolls up his sleeve, holds his arm out. The Psi-Guard stabs him in the arm, hits a button. There is a hissing sound, and John winces. The Psi-Guard pulls the needle free, then resets the device. As he does, John looks back over at Phil, who has his full attention on John's arm.

John glances down at his arm, at the hole the Needlegun made. After a moment, an amber fluid bubbles up out of the hole, runs down John's arm. He holds it so the Psi-Guard can't see. The flow slows to a trickle, then stops. John makes eye contact with Phil, smiles slightly.

The Psi-Guards go around the room, shooting up each of the men with the inhibitors. After each one, Phil directs his attention on them, pushing the inhibitors back out. Finally, the Psi-Guards step up to him. He rolls up his sleeve.

PHIL

Go ahead... do what you gotta do. I'm done for the day, anyhow.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Strickland and Dennings sit together. Strickland watches the monitors closely. The screen showing the ward reveals the men, all lying in bed, lights out.

INT. WARD - NIGHT

The only light here comes from the moon outside. All of the men are motionless, as if asleep.

John rolls over, faces Phil.

JOHN

You ready?

PHIL

Absolutely.

John sits up, throws his covers back.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Strickland shakes Dennings, who is dozing with his head down. Dennings sits up.

STRICKLAND

This is it.

DENNINGS

Okay... I'm up...

STRICKLAND

I can't believe they'd try and escape without the benefit of their powers. I actually doubled the dosage of the inhibitors tonight.

DENNINGS

I don't know...

INT. WARD - NIGHT

Everyone is out of bed now, ready to go. John looks up at the air vent on the wall. The metal grating shakes a little, then comes off and seems to float down to John's outstretched hand.

JOHN

Duncan, you wanna take care of the door?

DUNCAN

G-g-got it...

He crosses to the ward door, sets his hand against it. The area around Duncan's hand starts to glow, turning white-hot. It starts to melt into the frame, welding closed. Duncan removes his hand, and the door cools down, sealed shut now.

JOHN

Okay. Duncan... you know the way, so you go first. Let's get out of here.

Duncan walks over and looks up at the vent.

JOHN

Just relax... let me do the work.

Slowly, Duncan rises off the ground, up to the vent. He looks very nervous.

DUNCAN

Th-this feels weird...

JOHN

Enjoy it. Most people wish they could fly.

Duncan grabs the vent, pulls himself up into the vent.

JOHN

Okay, Davy... you next.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Several Psi-Guards work on getting the door to the ward open, using a thin laser from the Needleguns to try and cut through.

INT. AIR VENT - NIGHT

In order, Duncan, Davy, John, Phil, and Richard crawl through this narrow air shaft. They reach an intersection.

DUNCAN

L-l-left, everyone.

Duncan turns, starts to crawl off to the left. Everyone follows.

PHIL

Hey, Duncan... how much farther is it?

DUNCAN

Wh-why?

PHIL

Well... I'm kinda claustrophobic.

JOHN

You should have said something.

PHIL

I didn't know. It's getting pretty bad, though...

JOHN

You can do this, Phil. Don't freak out on us now.

PHIL

Easier said than done...

They crawl past a blinking red light. Dreisell, the last guy in line, sees the light and stops.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Strickland sees something on one of the monitor screens.

STRICKLAND

Shit... they're in the vents. Tell the Psi-Guards to forget the door. I've got a bearing on them...

INT. AIR VENT - NIGHT

Phil turns and glances back at Dreisell. He stops crawling.

PHIL

Richard... come on...

DREISELL

Um... I'm coming. I have a, uh, a leg cramp...

Phil glances at the other guys, who are almost twenty yards ahead now.

PHIL

Well, hurry up. We don't wanna get...

S L A M! A Plexiglas sheet drops and cuts Phil and Dreisell off from the others. Another sheet drops in front of Duncan, boxing the men in.

JOHN

Oh, no...

One section of the bottom of the shaft simply drops away, and John, Duncan, and Davy go with it.

PHIL

OH, SHIT! THEY KNOW!

Panicked, Phil spots a nearby vent cover and kicks it out.

PHIL

Richard, jump. We'll try and get out through the building...

DREISELL

I don't...

PHIL

No time to argue! GO!

Dreisell climbs out the opening.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Dreisell drops from the vent to the floor. Phil follows, landing roughly.

PHIL

Listen... I diffused the inhibitors in all you guys, but I couldn't do it in myself. I need you to handle any problems...

DREISELL

Sure. I got you covered.

INT. AIR SHAFT - NIGHT

John, Davy, and Duncan slide, turning end over end as they go. Suddenly, they notice light at the end of the shaft, approaching quickly.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Dreisell follows Phil through the halls. They round a corner and come face to face with a group of Psi-Guards. Phil turns to run and sees another group coming up on them quickly.

PHIL

Do something...

Dreisell is stumped. He does his best to look like he's trying something, raising one hand and gesturing at the Psi-Guards. It doesn't slow them down a bit, of course, and they mob the two men easily, overpowering them in seconds.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

This is a plain concrete room with five chairs in a row against one wall. Each of the chairs is fitted with wrist and ankle straps as well as a metal headband. There are just two bare florescent tubes lighting the room, casting a sickly pallor over everyone.

A hatch in the ceiling opens and Duncan, Davy, and John drop out and hit the floor, hard. The hatch closes. In a heartbeat, John is on his feet and at the door. He holds one hand up to it, closes his eyes, concentrates. The door seems to bubble, then simply peel back. Duncan and Davy push through, and John follows them out.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Duncan and Davy try every door in this long hallway. Quite a few of them are unlocked, and they look into each room. John walks up to where Duncan is.

JOHN

I think we're underground now... it felt like we headed straight down...

DUNCAN

There's g-gotta be a way out.

Duncan opens another door, peeks in.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - NIGHT

This room is mostly dark, with minimal overhead safety lighting on. It's a good-sized soundstage, with a single set constructed in the middle of the room. Duncan takes a quick glance at it, then is gone, on to the next door.

John happens to glance in and is about to leave when something stops him. Something familiar about the room. He walks in, forgetting where he is for a moment. He walks around the edge of the set, but it's still too dark to see. John points up at the lights overhead, and they come to life, flooding the room with light.

It's apparent immediately what the set is: the convenience store that Dreisell was "caught" in. John gasps at the sight.

DUNCAN (O.S.)

John! I c-c-can hear them coming!

That spurs John into motion. As he runs out, the lights fade back down to off.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

As John steps back out into the hallway, the door swings closed behind him with a solid click! We hear every door in the hallway do the same thing, as all the locks slam into place.

JOHN

I'd say they found us...

John heads for the door at the end of the hall. As he does, all the florescent lighting goes out, leaving only the red emergency lights on. There is a low hissing noise.

DUNCAN

W-what is that?

John stops in front of the door, raises his hand.

JOHN

I don't know...

The door begins to bubble, bend...

JOHN

... smells like...

(coughs)

... gas...

Indeed it is. Before John can finish, the gas takes effect, and they are out cold.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

John, Duncan, and Davy have been strapped into the chairs. All of them have the metal headbands on. They are all awake now. Two WORKMEN are busy replacing the door.

Three Psi-Guards drag Phil and Dreisell in, stepping around the Workmen to do so. The two men struggle to no avail as the Psi-Guards strap them down. No one looks surprised to see Strickland and Dennings stroll in behind the guards.

JOHN

You knew.

STRICKLAND

Of course we did. I warned you. We own you now. You want to push it, try and escape. You want proof.

DENNINGS

Fine. We've got your proof for you. I think most of you have met him...

Maugham enters.

JOHN

You listen to these bastards? Huh? You do whatever they tell you to?

MAUGHAM

No. We have an arrangement.

JOHN

What do they give you? You do this for money?

MAUGHAM

Sometimes. With you, though, I have the feeling I might enjoy it.

Maugham crosses to John, stands right in front of him.

MAUGHAM

You shouldn't fight it anymore. You and I... we're the same.

JOHN

You're not the same as me. I still have my soul, and I'm not selling it to anyone.

MAUGHAM

You're so dramatic... you really should lighten up. I've got just the thing to help you, too. It's a radical little therapy that I created called neurotic bombardment. It's as tasty as it sounds... trust me.

JOHN

You do anything to me... to any of us... I'll kill you myself.

MAUGHAM

(cracks up)

Big words from a guy who's tied to a chair. Listen up... while you guys were out, we took a reading of your alpha wave patterns. In just a few minutes, once we've got readings on Cranston and Dreisell, we'll send a couple thousand volts back into you at those exact frequencies. Once I throw my own little jolt of juice into the mix, all of you are going on twelve hour nightmare cruises. I guarantee that when you're done, you'll have a much better attitude about our research.

JOHN

How do you know our abilities won't just vanish with our personalities?

MAUGHAM

I don't. That's a chance we're gonna have to take.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Strickland and Dennings enter. Several Doctors are working already. Strickland is beyond angry now.

STRICKLAND

Do it.

One of the doctors throws a bank of switches.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

John's whole body goes rigid and he howls in pain. There's a sizzling sound. The others look on, terrified. As the sizzling stops, Maugham leans in close, putting his lips right next to John's ear.

MAUGHAM

Later...

He brings his hand up and a blue bolt leaps from Maugham's fingers, vanishing into John's ear. His screaming stops as he slumps down in his chair.

DARKNESS

In the midst of total darkness, there is a flash of red light and John is belched forth, hurtling end over end towards the camera, naked and screaming.

EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

The sun is just going down, and the sky overhead is filled with wild, rolling clouds that race by at impossible speed. John, looking younger than we've seen, stands at the base of a driveway, looking up at this three story house. There is a moment where he looks confused, but it passes quickly, and his eyes grow wide with a combination of recognition and fear.

JOHN

Oh, god... no...

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

The other men watch in horror as John bucks and strains against his straps, small screams escaping him. Maugham approaches Duncan.

DUNCAN

F-f-f-fuck you...

Maugham looses another bolt, this one slamming into Duncan with a sizzling sound. He turns to face Phil.

DARKNESS

Duncan hurtles by at a high speed. There is another flash and Phil shoots forth, curled into a fetal position.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Duncan sits on the edge of a bluff overlooking a dead, rocky landscape. The sky is red, filled with thick, black clouds. Duncan tosses pebbles off the bluff, watches them fall.

Behind him, an Army jeep pulls up and stops. A square, sour-faced bulldog of a man, SGT. ROTH, sits at the wheel. He turns off the engine. Duncan doesn't turn.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Maugham stops in front of Davy, who is twitching and shaking as the electricity courses through him.

MAUGHAM

Sorry about this, kid. You should pick your friends a little better. These guys are just gonna get you in trouble.

He reaches up and sends a bolt into Davy, who simply goes slack in his chair.

DARKNESS

Davy is thrown free from another burst of red. He moves as if unconscious or even dead.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

This is the Mitchell's living room from the opening. Davy, still in his ASRSA jumpsuit, sits slumped in his chair. In front of him, the TV is on, jumping from channel to channel. All the footage that we see on TV is violence, chaos, atrocity after atrocity. Davy has no reaction to any of it.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Maugham steps up to Dreisell, smiles down at him.

MAUGHAM

Boo.

He reaches down and unstraps Dreisell.

DREISELL

It stinks in here... smells like burning hair.

MAUGHAM

Just be glad it's not you.

DREISELL

(looks at the others)

Believe me... I am.

EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

John starts up the driveway towards the house. When he reaches the front door, he runs his fingers over the name on the mailbox by the door, "HARRISON." He reaches out, puts his trembling hand on the doorknob. He hesitates, too scared to move. From somewhere in the house, there is a sudden scream, a woman in pain, and John jumps back from the door, looks up at the house.

JOHN

Not again... not again...

John reaches out and yanks the door open, charges into the house.

INT. HOUSE - EVENING

We follow John as he rushes from room to room. In the kitchen, a single chair lies knocked over by the table. There is a woman's shoe on the stairs. There is another scream from upstairs, this one much weaker. John picks up the pace, taking the steps three at a time.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

John stops at the top of the stairs, looks around. There is a bloody handprint on the wall in front of him, and a streak of blood that leads down the hall into a bedroom, the door of which is closed. There is another bedroom just to the right of John, the door partly open. John reaches out, pushes the door open.

POV - JOHN

All we can see is blood, all over this child's bedroom.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

John backs away, aghast, tears welling up in his eyes. Behind John, from the closed bedroom door, there is a muffled sound. John heads for the door, and as he gets closer, he can hear the sounds of a struggle from inside. He reaches the door and pulls it open.

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

John stops in the doorway, aghast at the sight in front of him. John's wife, WENDY, lies face down on the carpet, her forearms and her head spattered with her own blood. She is motionless. A large man, an INTRUDER in black clothing, stands over her with a tire iron in one hand. He has on a ski mask, and when he turns to look at John, only his eyes are visible.

The sight is too much for John. He lets loose a primal scream, a sound of anger and pain, and he charges the Intruder. The two men grapple for a moment, and in the scuffle, the mask gets pulled off, revealing the Intruder as Maugham.

When John sees his face, he is so shocked that he releases Maugham for a moment. Maugham uses the advantage to head for the door. John snaps back fairly quickly, though, and extends both hands, releasing a stream of energy that is so noisy we can't even hear John's screams of anger.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Maugham, Dreisell and Dennings look over as John, still under the influence of the hallucination, screams out loud. His thrashing intensifies, and his chair actually rises off the ground, slamming back and forth, shaking wildly. None of the men seems sure what to do.

The door opens and several Psi-Guards pour in. One of them hoists his Needlegun and, like kids around a piñata, the Psi-Guards crowd in on John. The Psi-Guard looks for an opening, then sticks the Needlegun

into John's chest and depresses the plunger, shooting John up with inhibitors. The effect is immediate. The chair drops to the ground, landing on its side. John is motionless, quiet again.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Roth is out of the jeep. He walks slowly towards Duncan.

ROTH

Come back with me. I'll make sure they give you a fair trial.

DUNCAN

N-n-no way...

ROTH

What are you gonna do? Keep running? There's nowhere left for you to go.

DUNCAN

If I j-just go away, th-then n-n-no one can get h-hurt...

ROTH

People been hurt already. Time for you to pay up.

Duncan finally looks up at Roth.

DUNCAN

L-leave me alone, or I'll...

ROTH

You'll what? You'll burn me, like you did the others? You wanna set my hair on fire... fry my skin? You want me to die?

(pause)

Is that what you are, Lynch? A killer?

DUNCAN

I d-d-don't want to...

ROTH

Do yourself a favor. Shut up. You're pathetic when you talk.

Duncan looks away, ashamed.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The television screen seems to be slowly expanding, growing in size. The channel changes faster and faster, the footage getting wilder and wilder. Davy can't look away. He tries to find his voice, cry out, but no sound comes. There are a few flashes of light.

INT. TELEVISION - NIGHT

Davy is in a black, square room. One wall of the room is the screen, but the back of it. Davy jumps up and begins to beat on the screen.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Louis, Davy's father, walks into the room and sees the television is on. He picks up the remote from the chair where Davy was sitting and points it at the screen. Click!

INT. TELEVISION - NIGHT

The screen goes black. Davy begins to howl as he beats on the glass. The glass starts to spiderweb a little, crack here and there. Davy continues to beat on the glass and wail. Suddenly, the entire screen gives way and shatters, cutting Davy in numerous places as the shards all rain down around him. Outside, the living room is gone. All that we can see is pitch darkness. Davy is truly alone now. He drops to the floor, sobbing.

INT. SURGICAL PREP AREA - NIGHT

Phil, dressed in hospital greens, is being readied for surgery. A woman in nurse's clothing, NAN RANDALL, helps him put surgical gloves on. Phil keeps checking her face: he knows her.

PHIL

Nan? What's going on here?

NAN

We have to hurry. Your patient is dying.

PHIL

My patient? What are you talking about? I'm not a doctor...

INT. OPERATING THEATER - NIGHT

Phil is led into this huge theater by Nan. A single white spotlight illuminates the patient in the middle of the room, still covered by a white sheet.

The upper area of the theater is crowded with figures, all of them grotesque parodies of people, gibbering, hooting, laughing, tossing things down at Phil.

He walks out slowly, scared silly. He reaches the center of the room and stops. He looks down at the figure under the sheet. Nan suddenly wheels up a tray next to Phil, laden with bizarre operating instruments, things with awful cutting edges and strange shapes, odd writing engraved on the blades.

NAN

If you're ready, doctor...

PHIL

Nan, cut it out. Tell me what's going on.

NAN

It's my husband. Your partner, remember? He needs your help.

She pulls back the sheet with a flourish, revealing JASON RANDALL, a man about Phil's age. His head has been shaved for surgery, and there are marker patterns on his head to guide Phil. Phil starts to back away, shaking his head. Nan stops him with a hand on his arm. Phil looks up into her eyes.

NAN

You did this to him, Phil. You have to help him.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Roth stands behind Duncan, still waiting. Without looking up, Duncan begins to talk, almost to himself.

DUNCAN

Wh-when I was little, I used to throw t-tantrums, and m-m-my mother, she would hide until I w-was done. I didn't know...

(pause)

When I was twelve, I had a b-birthday party, and I invited all th-the kids in my school. I wanted them t-to like me so much... one of the k-kids was named J-J-J... Jeff Steagel. He was always th-the one who started it, who m-made fun of me f-first, and he did it to make me m-mad because he knew m-my stutter would g-g-get worse. Then... when I would s-start to stutter, he'd make fun of me even m-more. And everyone would laugh.

(pause)

At my party... while I w-was opening my presents... I t-tried to say "Thank you," but my lips just froze, and my th-throat closed up. Wh-while I stood there and tried to force the sounds out of m-me, J-Jeff started laughing. And everyone started laughing with him. And I couldn't h-help it.

ROTH

You burned him.

DUNCAN

H-he was in the hospital f-f-for six months. When he w-was finally released, he had to go t-to a special school. He was n-nothing but scar tissue. And it was my f-fault.

(pause)

B-but he never laughed again.

INT. OPERATING THEATER - NIGHT

The assembled crowd roars as Phil sorts through the tools on the tray. He is sweating heavily, nervous, unsure what to do. He can't make heads or tails of any of the objects.

Finally, Phil pushes the tray aside. He looks down at Jason, sets his hands on Jason's bare chest. Phil closes his eyes, begins to concentrate intently. He seems to strain at something for a moment. The effort is tremendous, and tears of frustration escape him. Finally, he stops, collapsing to the floor, breaking down in sobs.

PHIL

Jason, I'm sorry. I can't... I can't do it.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Roth unholsters his gun, keeps it by his side.

ROTH

Let's go.

DUNCAN

I said n-no.

Roth pulls back the hammer of the gun, raises it.

ROTH

That's not a request. It's an order. Get up.

Duncan looks up at Roth, something like sadness on his face.

DUNCAN

I said NO!

The hand holding the gun goes up in flames. Within seconds, the flames spread out over Roth's whole body. Roth, consumed by pain, backs up and drops out of sight over the edge of the cliff. Duncan watches him twist and turn all the way down.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

John eyes flutter, open just a bit.

POV - JOHN

Sounds are muffled, faraway, and images seem to streak and trail. Maugham, Dreisell and Dennings stand together, calmly talking. Someone laughs.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

The effort is too much for John, and he slips back into unconsciousness with a groan.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

This long private drive bisects a large field of dry scrub brush and stops in front of a large, rundown, three story farmhouse. The field is framed by a dusty two lane highway. That's it for as far as the eye can see.

SUPERIMPOSE: Cadilla, Texas

A beat-up station wagon pulls off the highway, starts up the drive. There's a U-Haul attached to the back of the car, which pulls to a stop in front of the house, its engine kicking up a thick cloud of black fumes.

CAROLINE DANIELS climbs out of the driver's seat, a woman in her early forties, attractive, lean, unconcerned with glamour in any way. There's an earthy, unpolished appeal about her. She puts her sunglasses on, looks around.

The passenger's side door opens, and REUBEN DANIELS climbs out. He's six years old, small, with a surprisingly serious nature. He's a great looking kid, with an open, intelligent face and large, dark eyes.

CAROLINE

Well, kiddo, this is it.

REUBEN

This is a farm?

CAROLINE

It was. Once.

REUBEN

Are we gonna have cows?

CAROLINE

I... doubt it. Not right now, anyway.

REUBEN

How 'bout chickens?

CAROLINE

You want chickens?

REUBEN

I don't know. Never had 'em.

(thinks it over)

Can we have vegetables?

CAROLINE

Sure.

Reuben thinks about it a little more.

REUBEN

I think I'd rather have chickens.

INT. FOYER - DAY

The front door opens. Caroline and Reuben stand silhouetted against the sun for a moment, looking around at their new house. There is dust everywhere, and the entire house looks like it's on the verge of falling apart. Caroline looks like she's not sure if she's going to laugh or cry. Reuben looks it over, then just accepts it. He walks in.

REUBEN

Where's my room?

This gets a small laugh out of Caroline, breaks the tension for her.

CAROLINE

We'll go upstairs after I bring some things in. You can look around down here.

Caroline goes back out to the car.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Reuben wanders in, taking in everything as he goes. The huge fireplace with the scorched brick, the three large front windows, the peeling yellow wallpaper. He steps up to the windows, looks outside.

Caroline unloads boxes, carrying them to the front porch, stacking them there.

Reuben puts one of his hands up to the front window. A faint white halo stands out around his hand for a moment, then expands till the whole window glows white. He takes his hand away, moves to the next window.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Caroline enters, three boxes stacked in her arms, and heads up the stairs. Reuben wanders in from the back of the house, sees her vanish into the upper hallway, then heads out the front door.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

He looks around. There's not a car in sight. There are still quite a few boxes stacked by the back of the U-Haul, and several on the ground beside the car. Reuben looks at them for a moment. He doesn't strain in the slightest as all the remaining boxes lift off the ground and start to float over towards the porch. The first few arrive and begin to set down in neat stacks.

Behind Reuben, Caroline steps out onto the porch. She sees what's going on immediately.

CAROLINE

Reuben, stop it!

Startled, Reuben drops the boxes. We hear things break inside some of them. He spins to face her. She takes him by the hand, quickly leads him inside.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Caroline slams the door, kneels in front of Reuben.

CAROLINE

You know the rules, Reuben... you know better than that.

REUBEN

I'm sorry. It looked like so much work.

CAROLINE

It is, but that doesn't matter. You cannot use your... you can't do things like that outside the house. If people saw, then...

REUBEN

... they might not could understand, an' they might call me names and stuff, right?

CAROLINE

That's right. Thank you for wanting to help me, but I worry... I worry that they might find us, baby. I already lost your father. I couldn't stand to lose you, too.

She embraces him, and he returns the hug full-force.

INT. WARD - DAY

The men are all awake, but they barely look like they're alive. Most of them still look like it hurts to do anything more than blink, and even that's an effort.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Strickland sits watching the men on the monitors. He looks delighted. He throws a switch.

INT. WARD - DAY

Strickland's voice booms from the overhead speakers, accompanied by an initial burst of feedback. All the men cover their ears.

STRICKLAND

Good morning, gentlemen. Or should I say good afternoon? It's been a few days since we've had the pleasure of your company, and, to tell you the truth, I've missed you. Now, here's hoping we understand

(MORE)

STRICKLAND (CONT'D)

each other a little better and can make these next few weeks go smoothly. We'll see you in the testing rooms in forty-five minutes. That is all.

There is a click! as the PA shuts off. Without a sound, without any communication, the men rise and begin to get ready.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

The men are dressed now, and they shuffle along in silence. John and Phil are the last in line, and John falls into step beside Phil.

JOHN

(whispers)

Phil... are you okay?

PHIL

(whispers)

My head feels like someone tried to play football with it...

JOHN

Other than that.

PHIL

Yeah. I think so.

JOHN

I figured something out... it's about Dreisell.

PHIL

He's a fake.

JOHN

(out loud)

How'd you...

(whispers)

Yeah. How'd you know?

PHIL

I didn't, but I was thinking the same thing. When we got separated, I was with him, and we were cornered. I told him to handle it, since I had those drugs in me... he couldn't do a goddamn thing. He just made Bruce Lee poses like a moron...

JOHN

When we were trying to escape, I walked into a room, looked like a TV studio or something. They had a set in there, a convenience store. It was the same one we saw on that videotape, where they said they caught him.

PHIL

That mother...

JOHN

Relax. Don't let him know that we suspect anything. From now on, we don't talk anywhere they might have mics on us, and we don't talk in front of that sonofabitch. It's you, me, Duncan, and Davy. That's it.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE

Duncan and Maugham stand in the center of the Testing Room. There are mannequins set up all around the room, as well as things that swing past Duncan on ropes. Maugham points at specific objects, at random, and each thing he points at, Duncan looks at, causing the things to burst into flame.

John runs from one end of the room to the other, avoiding obstacles, causing things to ricochet away from him. A motion-sensor equipped machine gun opens fire on him as he sprints past, and all the bullets either explode or simply stop in mid-air, then drop to the ground.

Maugham and Phil stand on a hillside. There is a hawk in the air high above them. Phil looks up at it and the bird suddenly freezes up, then goes into a tailspin, headed straight for the ground. At the last possible moment, Phil looks away, and the bird pulls out of its dive, heads back up.

A Psi-Guard turns on Duncan in the testing room and trains a flame-thrower on him. The Psi-Guard hits a switch, and a stream of flame envelops Duncan as he drops into a crouch. The Psi-Guard holds the stream on him for a moment, then shuts it off. Duncan looks up, untouched even though the floor around him is scorched black. We TILT UP TO the window of the Observation Room.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Strickland looks on, something still nagging at him.

INT. CORRIDOR - EVENING

John is alone, walking back from a shower, his hair still wet, towel over his shoulder, wearing only boxer shorts and a t-shirt. Strickland comes around a corner behind him.

STRICKLAND

Mr. Harrison? John..?

John glances back, slows a little.

STRICKLAND

I, uh... I wanted to talk to you for a few minutes...

JOHN

Let me check my calendar...

STRICKLAND

Please... in my office.

INT. STRICKLAND'S OFFICE - EVENING

Strickland leads John in, sits behind his desk. He gestures at a chair.

STRICKLAND

Take a seat...

JOHN

No. I'm okay.

STRICKLAND

I've noticed that the other men... well, they seem to look to you as a sort of a leader...

JOHN

No, they don't.

STRICKLAND

... and I thought that talking to you might help clear up some things between us. I mean, I'm sure you men are still upset over Maugham's treatment...

JOHN

You mean torture?

STRICKLAND

I'll be the first to admit that the measures he took were... extreme. But you backed us into a corner. It was like you didn't believe us. One thing I want you to know... I have no reason to lie to you. Of course you couldn't know that. You basically don't know anything about me. You think of me as a monster. I'm not. I'm just a scientist. I started my work when I was very young... about Davy's age, actually. I was apprenticed to one of the leading researchers on paranormal phenomena in the Soviet Union. Unlike your country, we always maintained a very open minded approach to such things. When everything started to change, though, we lost our funding. There's no money for research when a country is falling apart. I had to leave... I went to England first, then came here. Your government was only willing to help me set up another research facility if I could promise tangible results... something they could use. For me, though... this is just an opportunity. I want to know everything I can about you and your friends. I want to know how you work and why. If that's going to happen, I'll need your help. We can't keep working at odds with one another. If you can help

(MORE)

STRICKLAND (CONT'D)

me with the other men... maybe make it easier to get the research done... then I can make this place very liveable for you. I know what kind of life you had before this. You were on the street, eating out of trash cans, sleeping in alleys... and I bet you can't remember the last time you had a woman. I could arrange anything you want, John. I'd like to be your friend... if you'll let me.

JOHN

(pause)

That's a real interesting offer, Doc. Fuck you.

John turns and walks out. It takes a moment for Strickland to realize that he fucked up, but he does.

INT. MAUGHAM'S ROOM - DAY

Maugham sits across from Davy on the floor in the center of the room. Davy won't look at Maugham.

MAUGHAM

Davy... you have to pay attention now. This is the most important thing you're going to be learning. This is the thing that I'm only going to share with you. I know you have the ability to leave your body. You were in the animal room that day I was working with Phil and the monkey, weren't you?

Finally, Davy nods.

MAUGHAM

That was good. You can go farther than that, though. You can go anywhere in the world. All you have to do is pick your destination... close your eyes... and go there. I want to teach you to use that talent to search for someone for me. There's another boy out there... a boy like you, who doesn't have anyone to help him learn how to handle the abilities he's been given, and I want to find him so I can help him out. Like I'm helping you.

Davy looks up at Maugham, and the look in his eyes says it all: he may be quiet, but he's not stupid.

MAUGHAM

You're still mad about what I did in that room, aren't you? I couldn't help it. You were very bad, trying to sneak out of here. You tried to leave me without saying goodbye. That's not a very friendly thing to do. I got mad, because I was hurt. I'm sorry.

Still, Davy isn't buying this.

MAUGHAM

Fine. You wanna hold it against me? You do that. You are going to do this, though. I chose you, and you are not going to let me down.

Maugham brings out a photo, gives it to Davy. It's of Caroline, Reuben, and a man who must be Mr. Daniels. In fact, it's Keven, from the opening scene, although he looks much happier and healthier in the photo.

MAUGHAM

You'll know him when you see him. He's one of a kind. The last I saw of him, he was in Los Angeles. That's where we picked his dad up. I can't find him anywhere near there, though, so I'm sure he's gone. I know his mother came from Texas, so that's the next place we should look. That's where you're going to start. Close your eyes.

Davy looks at the photo, especially at Reuben, for a moment, then closes his eyes.

MAUGHAM

Now, just picture a map, or a globe, or anything that'll help you. Let yourself go...

BLACK

Even though the screen is dark, we get the sensation of moving. There is a light, no more than a pinpoint ahead of us. As we get closer, the light expands until we see that it's bright daylight, the wide open space that is recognizable as middle America. We race up on it...

POV - DAVY

... and are suddenly surrounded by sound, by wind racing by. The landscape races by beneath us. It's the wide open center of the United States, undeveloped for the most part, still unspoiled. As we pass over field after field, the ground becomes a huge multi-colored blur.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

It's still early evening, but it's full dark outside now.

INT. MAUGHAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maugham and Strickland stand side by side, looking down at Davy, who is seated in exactly the same position.

STRICKLAND

You mean to tell me he's been like this since this afternoon?

MAUGHAM

I don't know how he's doing it. Forty-five minutes of this, and I'm wiped for the day.

STRICKLAND

Is this a problem, Charles?

MAUGHAM

No.

STRICKLAND

You keep me posted on what happens. The minute there's a change...

MAUGHAM

Of course.

POV - DAVY

We are over a city now. It doesn't look a thing like Texas, though. In fact, it looks a lot like Baltimore. We dip down towards the city, then move out towards the suburbs. Things start to look familiar as we move in on one particular house. Coming at it from this angle, it takes us a moment to recognize it as Davy's house from the opening.

We PUSH IN ON the front window of the house and slow to a stop, looking in.

INT. MITCHELL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Louis and Donna sit in the front room, distance between them, not speaking. Louis is reading. Donna stares blankly past the television, not seeing it. Slowly, though, she stirs a bit, looks around, as if sensing something.

POV - DAVY

Donna looks directly at the window we are peering in. For a moment, it's as if she can see Davy outside. The moment passes, though, and she continues to look around.

INT. MITCHELL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Donna looks like she's on the verge of an emotional collapse.

DONNA

(low)

Davy..?

Louis looks over at her, notices how she seems to be looking for something, sees how close to tears she is. He sets aside his book, crosses to her. When he touches her shoulder, it seems to shock her back to reality.

DONNA

Louis... it was like he was here... just now...

LOUIS

I've felt like that a few times, too. He's not, though. You know that...

DONNA

It was so strange...

A few tears escape her, and Louis embraces her, pulls her close.

POV - DAVY

Davy can't see anymore. Abruptly, the POV pulls back, up into the sky, and we are on the move immediately, heading south.

INT. MAUGHAM'S ROOM - DAWN

Maugham sits by his window, looking out at the first few fingers of sunlight creeping over the horizon. He glances at his clock. 5:58. He looks over at Davy, who hasn't moved at all.

POV - DAVY

It's morning now, the sun full up. We are still moving, cruising along. We are over Texas, over Dallas, then out over the middle of the state, and there is something ahead that looks like a column of light. As Davy races up on it, we slow down.

EXT. PORCH - MORNING

Reuben sits on the front porch. There is a faint sound, no more than a buzzing on the wind. Reuben looks up at the sky, curious. The sound seems to be getting closer.

POV - DAVY

As we approach the column of pure white light, we see that it seems to surround Reuben's house and rise from it. We move in close to the glow, then plunge through it. There's a moment of blindness, then we are on the ground.

EXT. PORCH - MORNING

Reuben smiles up at Davy, who seems to stand before him. Davy is insubstantial, as if not altogether there. This doesn't seem at all unusual to Reuben.

REUBEN

Hi. I'm Reuben. What's your name?

Davy looks around to see if there's someone else that Reuben is talking to, causing Reuben to giggle.

REUBEN

No... you. What's your name?

DAVY

Davy...

REUBEN

Did you see my light, Davy?

DAVY

Yes.

REUBEN

I put that up for my dad. Only he's supposed to be able to see it. I made it so the other man couldn't see it or see through it or nothing. If you found it, though... maybe you know my dad.

Reuben holds out his hand. Davy looks at it, blank.

REUBEN

C'mere.

Davy walks over and, hesitantly, reaches out and touches Reuben's hand.

FLASH

We see Keven, laughing, hugging Reuben, a happy time.

EXT. PORCH - MORNING

Davy steps back, a little startled. He shakes his head.

DAVY

I don't know...

REUBEN

That's okay. I didn't guess you did. I was just kinda hoping. If you don't know him, then you probably don't know the other guy... the one who took him.

Reuben reaches out, makes the connection again.

FLASH

The middle of great violence. Maugham laughing, tossing Keven around. This is a quick, very disturbing glimpse.

EXT. PORCH - MORNING

Davy looks down, ashamed.

DAVY

Maugham...

REUBEN

Maugham? That's his name, isn't it?

DAVY

Yes.

REUBEN

If you know him, then you're near my dad. That's the guy who took him. You have to look around there. You have to find him for me. And, Davy... please don't tell Maugham where I am. Please.

Davy considers Reuben for a moment, finally nods once.

DAVY

I won't.

REUBEN

You can come back, though... I want you to. If you can really come here, that would be even better. It's really boring here. My mom says that's just Texas. If that's true, then I don't think I like Texas very much. There's no one else to play with.

DAVY

Where is this? Where in Texas?

This is a very good question. Reuben takes a moment to think it over.

REUBEN

I think it's called... um... Cadilla? My mom said it to me the other day...

DAVY

Cadilla...

REUBEN

Yeah. So, are you gonna come and see me?

DAVY

I'd like that.

POV - DAVY

We begin to PULL BACK SLOWLY. Reuben waves until he is out of sight. As soon as he is gone, we pick up speed and begin to really move. We move faster and faster until we

SHOCK CUT TO:

INT. MAUGHAM'S ROOM - MORNING

S M A C K ! Maugham knocks Davy across the room, then goes after him.

MAUGHAM

Talk to me, goddamn you...

He grabs Davy, pulls him to his feet and begins to shake him.

MAUGHAM

You were gone sixteen hours... you saw something out there. I know you found that little bastard. Tell me where he is!

Holding Davy by the shirtfront so he can't fall, Maugham punches him several times, hard, really working the kid.

MAUGHAM

I'm getting tired of this mime routine of yours, Davy. I know you can talk. TALK TO ME! TELL ME WHAT YOU SAW!

As he throws Davy again, this time into a wall, the door opens and Strickland enters, followed by three Psi-Guards.

STRICKLAND

Don't touch him again.

Maugham looks up, startled by the intrusion.

MAUGHAM

He found the boy.

STRICKLAND

He told you that?

MAUGHAM

No. That's the problem. He won't tell me anything. I can smell that little kid all over him. I know he found him. I just need to know where.

STRICKLAND

And you think this is how you get information out of David? He's exhausted. He's probably ready to collapse.

Maugham looks down at Davy, who he is holding by the shirtfront. He's basically down for the count. His face is swelling from the punches already, both eyes are rolled back, and there is a steady stream of blood from his nose.

STRICKLAND

Put him down, Charles. Gently.

Maugham sets Davy down. Immediately, two of the Psi-Guards move in, gather Davy up, and leave with him. Strickland and the other Psi-Guard stay behind.

STRICKLAND

You disappoint me sometimes, Charles. I keep thinking that you've grown up, that you're not still that same cruel boy that spent all his time in and out of institutions because of the horrible ways you used

(MORE)

STRICKLAND (CONT'D)

to lash out... I thought you were through with hurting people just to hurt them. I see now that I was wrong. You will always be petty and cruel, Charles. You will always be just a little boy.

MAUGHAM

I was just trying to...

STRICKLAND

Stop. I'm not interested in your explanations. You have let me down. I have gone the extra mile for you... I got you your window without bars, didn't I? How long did you wish for that? Hmm? I made that happen. And this is how you repay me.

Maugham has no response to this. He just looks away.

STRICKLAND

You're off the project. Now.

Strickland turns and walks out, followed by the Psi-Guard.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

We hear the sound before we get a glimpse of the three approaching helicopters. One moment, it's just this gradually swelling noise, then all three of them appear together over the nearest hill. These are the most modern, heavily armored military helicopters in use. So high-tech they're like science fiction, sleek, polished black.

INT. WARD - NIGHT

John lies in his bed, awake, looking over at the window. The helicopters are visible approaching the Complex.

EXT. ASRSA ROOF - NIGHT

There are Psi-Guards lining the entire landing site, a heliopad that dominates the roof of the building, all at attention, all waiting. Strickland and Dennings are also waiting. The helicopters touch down, and the doors slide open. We see high ranking military officers, several men in expensive dark suits, and amidst all the others, three of the hardest motherfuckers we've ever seen.

They're huge, made of muscle and nothing but, with cold, dark eyes, shaved heads. These men move like killers. All of them are dressed simply. The men all carry duffel bags and look at no one as they walk into the building. The three S.E.A.L.S vanish into the building without saying a word.

Strickland and Dennings move in to greet everyone else.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ASRSA ROOF - MORNING

This is the same angle, the following morning, just after sunup. There are a few military guards watching the helicopters. Everyone else from the night before is gone.

INT. CORRIDOR - MORNING

Strickland and Dennings lead what almost feels like a parade of military and intelligence officers through the building.

DENNINGS

... state of the art observation center. You'll be able to see everything that goes on today from that one location. Dr. Strickland and I will join you later, during the actual test itself. Until then, we have work to do, prepping the subjects.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

There are already several technicians here, getting everything ready for viewing. Strickland and Dennings enter, followed by the "tourists". None of the technicians even look up as everyone finds a seat. Strickland and Dennings are off again immediately.

INT. WARD - MORNING

All the men are still asleep when Dennings enters, followed by Strickland and several of the Psi-Guards.

DENNINGS

Everyone... get up. Wake up now...

The men start to come to, kind of groggy.

STRICKLAND

We are going to be doing some testing today, so you will not be given your inhibitor dosage. Don't abuse the situation, gentlemen. That would disappoint me.

John groans, rolls over, covers his ears.

STRICKLAND

Most of you will be participating. Lynch... you're in. Harrison, Cranston... you, too, Dreisell. Mitchell stays here.

JOHN

What kind of tests are we talking about?

Strickland and Dennings are already on the move as they answer.

STRICKLAND

The difficult kind, so eat up at breakfast this morning. You'll need it. I'd appreciate it if you would all hurry. I'll see you at nine.

That's it. They're gone, leaving the men all struggling to wake up, confused more than anything by the announcement.

INT. CAFETERIA - MORNING

John, Duncan, Phil, and Dreisell sit around a table, huddled close together to talk.

JOHN

They are not testing us. You guys know that, right? It's not testing... it's training. We're being conditioned to do certain things on command... like kill. They want us to do these things without question, without any hesitation... like Pavlov's dogs, just doing it at the sound of a bell. They want us to be weapons.

PHIL

I'm not killing any more animals, man...

JOHN

I don't think it's animals they want us to kill.

PHIL

What are you talking about?

JOHN

Last night, I was awake at around two in the morning, just lying in bed, and I saw some helicopters arrive. Three of them. Military transports. You can carry a lot of men in three helicopters that size.

Phil takes a moment, tries to wrap his brain around this.

PHIL

Men..?

DUNCAN

Th-they wouldn't...

JOHN

Of course they would, Duncan. What does one human life mean to these people? Or ten? Or one hundred? If they want to see us kill someone, they would not have a problem finding volunteers. People mean about as much to them as the dogs they used in that first test. We're not much more valuable, no matter what we can do. There are more people out there like us. There have been others here already and it's going to go on as long as we let it. If we let them turn us into Pavlov's dogs, then it's our own fault...

The cafeteria doors open and Strickland and Dennings enter with several other Psi-Guards.

INT. ASRSA COMPLEX - DAY

Strickland and Dennings lead all the men except Davy through the building rapidly.

STRICKLAND

Gentlemen, this is the most important day since you've been here. If it were school, this would be your graduation day. Last night, three Navy S.E.A.L.S arrived on the grounds... these men have been trained as perfect killing machines. They have already been released onto the property. Your task is to find these men and neutralize them before they can do the same to you.

John shoots Phil an "I-told-you-so" look as they reach a door and stop.

PHIL

What if we say no?

DENNINGS

Then you die. Your choice.

The door slides open, revealing the outside.

STRICKLAND

I have faith in your abilities, men. Don't let me down.

John considers both Strickland and Dennings for a moment, then steps out the door. The others follow.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - DAY

As Dreisell, the last one out, steps through the doorway, the door slides closed behind him. They all look around. There is no one in sight.

JOHN

First thing we need to do is get out of the open.

The men head for the protective cover of the nearby woods.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

The assembled military brass watch the screens. On one of them, we see the psychics push their way through the thick underbrush. On another, we see SEAL 1, assembling a sniper's rifle.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The men emerge into a small clearing.

PHIL

Now what? Wait for them to pick us off?

JOHN

No. Split up. As a group, we're an easy target.

DREISELL

I don't think that's such a good idea. We should stay close.

JOHN

(pointedly)

I'm sure you'll be fine, Dick.

DUNCAN

I d-d-don't want to do th-this alone, John...

JOHN

You can do it, Duncan. I know you can. Trust me.

Something in John's voice convinces Duncan he can.

DUNCAN

(nods)

Okay.

As the men split up and head in different directions, we TILT UP TO REVEAL a camera in the tree above them, looking down at them.

EXT. WOODS - LATER

We START IN CLOSE ON another camera in a tree. We TILT DOWN TO REVEAL that we are in another section of woods now. Phil walks into view, doing his best to move quietly.

INT. WARD - SAME TIME

Davy lies in bed, seemingly unconscious. We slowly PUSH IN ON him.

POV - DAVY

We are moving through the woods, weaving in and out of the thick clusters of trees, moving fast. We come around one particular tree and catch sight of Phil, just ahead of us, trying to be aware of everything around him at once. As we get closer to Phil, there is a slight sound, no more than a creak, the sound of wood groaning under someone's weight.

We begin to MOVE UP the tree, past the camera that we saw earlier, picking up speed as we rise. The noise comes again, louder this time. We slow to a stop, and at first, we can't tell why. All we see is the tree's trunk. It's not until a section of the trunk seems to shift that we realize we are looking directly at SEAL 2, camouflaged, gun by his side. He raises the gun, starts to train it on Phil. When he moves, we hear the sound again, the creaking of the branch he stands on.

EXT. WOODS - SAME TIME

The only thing Phil can hear is his own breathing, a slight breeze, his footsteps on the dirt. He scans the surrounding foliage for any sign of the SEALS.

Davy's voice suddenly comes up, almost as if Davy were standing right behind him.

DAVY

He's above you, Phil, over your right shoulder. Move.

Without thinking, Phil dives off the path, into a bush, just as Seal 2 opens fire, riddling the ground with bullets.

Phil looks up at the tree that the shots came from. He can't see anyone at first, but movement draws his attention. The SEAL is climbing down the tree, moving quickly, efficiently, silently.

PHIL

... shoot at me, will you...

He concentrates on the SEAL.

SEAL 2 stops climbing. His face goes slack. After a moment, he simply releases the tree and falls backwards. It's a hell of a tumble, the thirty feet feeling more like sixty, as he hits every branch on the way down, getting tossed around like a doll. When he hits the ground, it is with a sickening thud. He lands in a broken, awkward position.

Phil emerges from his hiding place, hurries over to SEAL 2, looks down at him. SEAL 2 is in bad shape. He looks like he's been worked over with a bat. All of his limbs lie at unnatural angles. He is fighting for

each dry gasp of air. He stares up at Phil with his one open eye. With one of his broken arms, he reaches for his gun, but he's unable to grab it or lift it.

Phil reaches down, touches SEAL 2's chest. The man dies instantly, quietly. Phil takes the gun and, still looking at the SEAL's body, walks away.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

The military brass are all drinking, a few of them are smoking, and Strickland and Dennings sit with them, watching Phil walk away from the body.

STRICKLAND

The thing that these men have demonstrated to us is that the most subtle methods tend to be the most effective ones. There were a million things Cranston could have done to him... more painful things...

DENNINGS

Looked pretty goddamn painful to me.

Several of the military guys laugh. Strickland looks annoyed, but forces himself to smile.

STRICKLAND

Yes... well... glad you're enjoying the show.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

It's late afternoon now, and the sun is low in the sky. John stands on the edge of the cliff that we saw in the opening sequence, looking down. There are still scorch marks on the cliff face from the 'copter crash. He's lost in thought. Finally, he turns, heads back into the woods.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Phil emerges from the woods, stops short at the sight of what appears to be a small stone building, with no windows, a chimney, and only one heavy iron door. He heads towards it, puzzled. He stops at the door, tries it. It's not locked. Phil pushes the door open, looks in.

Although we can't see what's inside, we can see the horror on Phil's face. He stumbles back a few steps, unable to speak at all.

EXT. WOODS - EARLY EVENING

The sun isn't down yet, but it's already starting to get dark here, where the trees are particularly dense. John is moving slowly, taking his time. He is paying special attention to a spot about twenty yards off to his right. John stops for a moment, watching the spot. He's so focused on it that he almost doesn't notice SEAL 3, no more than fifteen feet from the spot John is staring at.

SEAL 3 slowly moves into view, watching John intently. He brings out a concussion grenade, pulls the pin, tosses it.

It's the toss that catches John's eye. He turns to look, just as SEAL 3 ducks out of view. The grenade comes down a few feet in front of John. He looks down at it, takes a moment to realize what he's looking at. As soon as he does, the grenade starts to go off.

JOHN

NO!

As John screams, the grenade just... freezes. The flash of the blast can be seen between the fragments of the grenade's shell, but it's all somehow held together, just put on pause. As John looks at the grenade, it rises off the ground so he can see it better. Duly impressed, John backs away from the thing, leaving it.

SEAL 3, still crouched behind his tree, looks confused by the lack of an explosion. He can't contain his curiosity, and he peeks around the edge of the tree. John is nowhere in sight. Totally stumped now, the SEAL stands and heads over to where John was.

The SEAL sees the grenade, and his eyes grow wide with shock. He can't believe what he's seeing, and he gets closer so he can see better. As he looks at it, he circles it completely. Finally, he stops, amazed, and looks around.

John is maybe twenty feet away, peering out from behind a huge tree. SEAL 3 sees him and starts to raise his gun. As he does, John points at the grenade and, with his mind, lets it go.

The explosion picks up right where it left off, and the upper half of SEAL 3 is vaporized in the blast. John takes cover behind the tree. As soon as the explosion's finished, he's on the move again.

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

No way around it now, it's dark. There's some moonlight, some light from the Complex itself, but for the most part, the woods are nothing but shadows. Duncan is walking, not even trying to be particularly stealthy, when he catches sight of someone ahead, seated. Duncan stops, really looks at them. The person moves, and we see that it's SEAL 1, his rifle cradled in his lap.

Duncan realizes he has the advantage here, but he looks torn. Should he kill the guy like this? He raises his hand, focuses on the guy, but he still hesitates. While he's wrestling with the idea, SEAL 1 happens to glance over and see Duncan standing in plain view.

Without hesitation, SEAL 1 raises his gun and fires. The shot hits a tree just inches to the right of Duncan's head, snapping him back from his internal debate and settling the issue all at once. Duncan lets loose with a funnel of flame that envelops SEAL 1, burning him to a crisp in seconds. SEAL 1 makes the most horrifying sound, a wailing, as he burns, his outline barely visible amidst the wall of flame.

EXT. WOODS - SAME TIME

John sees the fire in the distance. It's hard to miss, it's so bright. He immediately starts towards it.

EXT. WOODS - SAME TIME

Phil, who sits with his back against a tree, is close enough to hear the sound of SEAL 1's screams. He is up and running instantly.

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

Duncan has stopped now, and he is sprawled, seated at the edge of a large circle of seared earth, staring at it. His shoulder has almost stopped bleeding now.

Almost at the same time, but from different directions, John and Phil converge on the spot.

JOHN

You're okay...

DUNCAN

If you s-s-say so...

PHIL

Did you both have to..?

JOHN

Yeah. How about you?

PHIL

Yeah.

JOHN

That's all of them, then, isn't it? We're pretty goddamn efficient...

Dreisell emerges from the foliage.

DREISELL

God... I saw the fire... is everyone okay?

PHIL

We're fine.

(to John)

I found something out here, John. I think you should see it.

JOHN

What?

PHIL

You have to see it. We should all see it.

INT. CREMATORIUM - NIGHT

At first, we are in pitch darkness. The huge iron door is wrenched open, though, and moonlight spills in, enough for us to see this place and recognize its purpose. It's a crematorium, designed to handle a single body at a time. By the condition of the equipment, it's obvious it's seen a lot of use.

John, Duncan, and Dreisell stand in the doorway looking in. The sight knocks the wind out of John and Duncan. Dreisell looks more uncomfortable than anything.

JOHN

Bastards...

He walks in, touches the "oven" door, tears in his eyes.

JOHN

Oh, my God... I can't believe...

PHIL

Believe.

John turns on Dreisell, and he shrinks back from what he sees in John's eyes. Cold rage. Murder.

JOHN

Alright... bullshit's over.

Phil reaches out, grabs Dreisell by the back of the neck.

PHIL

Move.

Dreisell walks into the room. Duncan and Phil crowd in, and Duncan pulls the door closed.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - SAME TIME

All we can see on the monitors is the outside of the crematorium, the door closed.

DENNINGS

What do you think? Should we send some Psi-Guards in?

STRICKLAND

No. Not yet...

INT. CREMATORIUM - NIGHT

There is a moment of darkness, then a warm glow fills the room. It's Duncan's hand, seemingly wrapped in flame. John throws a switch to turn the gas on, and Duncan ignites the pilot light.

JOHN

Here's how this is going to go. You're going to tell us the truth for the first time and, if we're satisfied that you're being honest with us, then maybe you live.

DREISELL

What are you talking about? I'm one of you...

JOHN

Yeah? Prove it. Fight us.

Phil releases Dreisell.

PHIL

You got some kind of ability, let's see it. Right now.

DREISELL

I don't have the kind of control that you guys have... so what? That doesn't mean anything...

With a lurching motion, Dreisell starts to walk towards the oven.

DREISELL

Wait... stop.

PHIL

Make me.

Dreisell seems to lunge forward and slam into the closed oven door. His arm comes up, despite his best efforts to stop it, and grabs the handle to the door.

DREISELL

Listen to me... you're making a mistake. I'm one of you. I'm a dog, like you were saying earlier, y'know? Pavlov's dogs, remember?

He pulls open the door so we can see the blackened inside, the fine layer of ash.

DREISELL

GODDAMMIT, YOU CAN'T KILL ME! YOU CAN'T!

He begins to climb into the oven, and he gets hysterical, actually breaking down into sobs.

JOHN

You lied to us. You made us think you were our friend. How many of the people they killed here did you lie to before us? HOW MANY?

All the way in now, Dreisell begins to pull the door closed on himself.

DREISELL

NO! PLEASE! NO! I'M SORRY!

PHIL

Yes you are, you son of a bitch.

The door closes with a slam. Dreisell shrieks.

JOHN

You're as responsible for all this death as Strickland is... you get people to trust you just so you can betray them. We should burn you. That would be justice, right?

DREISELL

Please... I'm nobody. I'm not worth it... I just did what I was paid for. It was just a job. Please... show a little fucking compassion here... show some humanity...

JOHN

Humanity? Didn't you hear? We're not human. We're monsters. We're killers. That's all we know how to do now.

(to Duncan)

Burn him.

Duncan points at the oven.

INT. OVEN - NIGHT

Dreisell screams as the entire oven is suddenly filled with flame. He continues to scream and thrash for a moment, not even noticing that the flames totally surround him, but somehow do not burn him, like there is a bubble of some sort protecting him.

When he finally does open his eyes and realize this, he looks out the grated front of the oven at the men.

INT. CREMATORIUM - NIGHT

Dreisell's sobs finally stop.

DREISELL

You didn't kill me.

JOHN

That's right. Do you know why?

DREISELL

No...

JOHN

You never knew us. You never understood us. You reported back on the words you heard, but it didn't mean anything to you. If you figure out why you're alive tomorrow... then you'll know us.

Duncan gestures again, and the flames vanish. The men turn and leave. Once he is alone, Dreisell breaks down crying again.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Onscreen, we see Duncan, Phil, and John emerge from the crematorium. The men vanish into the thick forest. No sign of Dreisell, though.

DENNINGS

Oh, man... do you think they killed him?

STRICKLAND

Only one way to find out. Send some Psi-Guards out there. I think these tests are over now.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

START IN CLOSE ON John, Duncan, and Phil, peering out through the thick foliage.

PHIL

What do you think?

JOHN

I can do it. At least, I can move it over here. As far as flying it out of here... that might be tough.

DUNCAN

I c-c-can do it.

As the men talk, we slowly ROTATE around to get a look at what they're talking about. They are looking down at the ASRSA building, specifically at the heliopad on the roof.

JOHN

You can fly one of those?

PHIL

How?

DUNCAN

Th-that's what I was training for when I w-was... when I left th-the service.

PHIL

When you say training, do you mean you were still learning, or were you pretty much finished?

JOHN

This is our one shot, Duncan. If you're sure you can do it...

DUNCAN

I c-c-can do it...

Good enough for John. He turns his attention back to the roof.

EXT. HELIOPAD - NIGHT

There are still several Psi-Guards on duty. One of them looks over as one of the helicopters rises, no more than an inch off the roof, then comes back down. The Psi-Guard starts to walk over to check the 'copter out. As he reaches it, it rises again, several feet this time. He looks up at the rotors which are not turning, freezes. As the helicopter continues to rise, he raises his Needlegun, thinking maybe he can do something. The helicopter rotates until he is looking down the barrel of an anti-artillery gun. Before he can react, it roars to life. As he is riddled with bullets, the other Psi-Guards duck for cover. One even jumps off the roof to avoid the gunfire.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

It's chaos in here almost immediately. Alarms start to go off. Strickland immediately forgets about his "audience" and starts barking orders.

STRICKLAND

Get Maugham down here, now, and get every available Psi-Guard to the rear yard.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

The helicopter begins to move away from the building, over towards the woods. From the way it moves, we can see why the men need someone to actually pilot the thing... it looks heavy as hell. The helicopter comes down a few feet from the dense brush.

Just as John, Duncan, and Phil emerge from their hiding places and head for the helicopter, the back doors open, and Psi-Guards start to spill out, more than we've seen at one time before, and these guys are heavily armed.

The men run up to the side door. Duncan starts to wrestle with it, trying to work the latch.

PHIL

Y'know, if you can't even work the door...

DUNCAN

SH-SHUT UP!

Duncan yanks the door open, and the men dive into the 'copter, slamming the door on the approaching hordes of Psi-Guards.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Duncan settles into the pilot's seat, checks over the incredibly high-tech control panel.

JOHN

You're sure about this..?

DUNCAN

Y-yeah... watch this.

Duncan reaches over, flips a whole row of switches. Nothing happens, and outside, we see the Psi-Guards take aim on the front window of the craft.

DUNCAN

W-wait... hold on...

He flips a few more switches, and is rewarded with the whine of the engine coming to life, warming up. Duncan beams at the other two men.

DUNCAN

S-s-see?

Thirty Needleguns open fire on the front window, and it immediately begins to crack and spiderweb under the strain, bulletproof or not. Duncan sets a few more things, grabs the stick, and eases it back.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

The helicopter lifts off, just as the Psi-Guards really swarm the thing.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Duncan scans his weapons controls.

DUNCAN

Th-the ones we were training on didn't h-have any weapons... I'm not s-sure what all this does...

He chooses a button, tries it.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

One of the missiles on the side of the 'copter is fired almost straight down into the crowd of Psi-Guards at insanely close range, incinerating almost all of the Psi-Guards instantly and sending a fireball up into the air, almost clipping the 'copter itself.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

The craft rocks hard to one side and Duncan struggles to maintain control of it. Once back in control, Duncan moves them away from the fire.

DUNCAN

W-w-well... we know what th-that does.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Maugham enters, immediately aware of the military presence, the intense activity, the panicked atmosphere. He loves it. Dennings and Strickland stand together, talking. Strickland spots him, motions for him.

MAUGHAM

(crosses to join them)

What the hell is all this?

STRICKLAND

(to Dennings)

Take these people down into the bunker. I'll join you in a moment.

(as Dennings leaves)

Charles... I want to offer you a return to my good graces.

MAUGHAM

(smiles)

Just tell me who to kill.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

The men's helicopter circles around so that it is looking down on the roof. There are still two other helicopters on the landing pad. The few remaining Psi-Guards flee, just as another missile is fired, directly at one of the other helicopters.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The whole building rocks with the force of the explosion. Maugham has to catch himself on the wall. A few of the Psi-Guards who are with him stumble, fall, and the lights flicker, go out, come back on. Before they can recover, there is a second blast, just as large as the first. This time, the power is out for good, with just a red emergency light for illumination.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

Both of the helicopters lie in pieces, consumed in flames. The men's helicopter circles the building, heading for the ward.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Maugham races through the corridor, dodging debris and small fires, leading the small group of Psi-Guards. There's a look of anticipation on his face. They round a corner and Maugham stops, throws open the doors to the ward.

INT. WARD - NIGHT

As Maugham and the Psi-Guards enter, the helicopter appears outside the ward windows. Maugham and the others hurry back out the door, out of view, as Davy sits up in his bed.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

From inside the cockpit, Davy is quite visible.

JOHN

Dammit, Davy... stay down...

INT. WARD - NIGHT

As if he actually heard John, Davy turns to look out the window. Maugham leans around the corner, peeks inside. He sees Davy sitting up and starts into the room.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

They watch helplessly as Maugham strolls towards Davy, smiling at them the entire time.

JOHN

Goddammit, Davy... move...

Davy does just that. He rolls off of his bed, then crawls under it. Maugham looks just as surprised as John. Duncan opens fire with the anti-artillery gun, spraying the ward.

INT. WARD - NIGHT

Maugham takes several hits before he can get out of the way. He collapses behind one of the beds. Except for the sound of the helicopter, everything is quiet.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

John pulls open the door.

JOHN

I'm going in. Cover me.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - NIGHT

John jumps a few feet to the ground and runs to a window. The bars hang askew and he easily pulls them out of the way, then climbs in.

INT. WARD - NIGHT

John pauses for a moment, calls out:

JOHN

Davy!

Davy peeks out from under his bed, unscathed. Davy starts to worm his way out from under the bed, Maugham appears, using the bed to pull himself up. His smile has given way to an intense grimace. He makes little barking sounds of pain as he stands.

MAUGHAM

You should have left him for dead. He is dead. And so are you.

Maugham seems to push a bolt of blue across the room at John, and it hits him like a ton of bricks. He is practically put through the wall behind him, and he slumps to the floor, only partially conscious.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Duncan and Phil watch, horrified, as Maugham walks over and looks down at Davy, who has stopped moving.

INT. WARD - NIGHT

Davy stares mutely up at Maugham, who has a look that is somewhere between heartbreak and hysteria on his face.

MAUGHAM

I really tried with you... I made the effort, y'know? This is twice you've hurt me now. No more. Now it's my turn.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Duncan wants to open fire, but he's afraid of hitting Davy or John. This is too much for him.

DUNCAN

LEAVE THEM ALONE!

As he screams, there is an incredible blast of energy, a visible shimmer in the air between Duncan and Maugham. The front windshield of the helicopter explodes with sudden concussive force...

INT. WARD - NIGHT

... just as Maugham lights up like a candle, his whole upper body enveloped in flame. Maugham begins to wail, spins, and tries to run. He is a blind man, slamming blindly into two walls before plunging through the doorway and pinballing out of view.

John fights to shake off the effects of the blast, manages to find his feet. Davy gets up, and the two of them use each other for support as they head back for the helicopter.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Phil helps John and Davy up into the helicopter, then closes the door behind them.

JOHN

Okay... let's get out of here.

DUNCAN

Wh-where?

JOHN

Back towards the trees. I saw something earlier...

EXT. CLIFF - NIGHT

Over the tops of the nearby trees, we can see the red glow of the burning building. We hear the sound of the helicopter approaching, and it suddenly rises into view. We FOLLOW the helicopter as it drops into the valley at the base of the cliff, then races off, out of frame.

EXT. PASTURE - EARLY MORNING

The helicopter sits in the middle of a pasture, abandoned. We PAN OVER to the men, who are scaling a fence, walking towards a highway that's visible in the distance.

EXT. HIGHWAY 81 - MORNING

A tractor trailer truck pulls to a stop on the shoulder of the highway, directly across from a roadside diner. John, Duncan, Davy, and Phil jump down from the cab of the truck.

JOHN

Thanks, man...

He closes the door, and the truck pulls away.

PHIL

We can make some calls here...

JOHN

Jesus... I'm hungry. Let's get something to eat.

PHIL

With what? I'm gonna make these calls collect. I don't have a cent on me. I don't even have my wallet.

JOHN

You gonna let something like money stop you?

John walks in, and reluctantly, Phil follows.

INT. DINER - MORNING

The men have taken over one corner of the restaurant. The table the men sit at is loaded down with food. Hamburgers, fries, a steak for Phil, coffee, a milkshake for Davy. They seem to have actually shrugged off the fatigue, the fear, and they are enjoying themselves. They look alive for the first time as a group. Other than them, there are no customers in the place.

JOHN

I've been thinking...

PHIL

When have you had time to think?

JOHN

... this thing isn't over. Not by a long shot...

PHIL

Damn straight it's not. I'm going to use my magazine, and I'm going to cut these bastards' hearts out in front of everyone. I'm gonna expose them...

JOHN

You really think they're going to let you? That's a great idea, but it's completely impossible.

PHIL

Keeping us locked up is one thing, but controlling us once we're free is gonna be a hell of a lot tougher...

JOHN

We're not free. These guys are probably marshaling their forces right now to come and crush us like bugs. How hard is it going to be to find that helicopter?

PHIL

Let 'em come. After what we did last night...

JOHN

Yeah. I've been thinking about that, too. I want to propose something. I think it's important...

(pause)

A lot of people died because of us while we were in there. We did what we had to do to survive. Fine... but that has to stay back there. We can't kill anyone again. If we do, then we're just what they want us to be. Strickland wins.

Phil considers this, as a WAITRESS walks over, starts refilling everyone's drinks.

WAITRESS

Can I get anybody anything else?

JOHN

Yeah... a big ass plate of onion rings, please.

She laughs in spite of herself and, shaking her head, she walks off to place the order. Phil finally looks up.

PHIL

All my life, I've been a stubborn, opinionated, loud obnoxious, unpleasant, angry, bigmouthed, uncooperative sonuvabitch. I've stabbed people in the back for jobs. I've hurt everyone who's ever been close to me.

(pause)

Until the other day, when you beat the shit out of me, I've never had a reason to change. You went out of

(MORE)

PHIL (CONT'D)

your way to try and make me your friend, even while I was going out of my way to be a bastard. I'm your friend, John. If you say no more killing...

(nods)

No more.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

Phil stands at a pay phone by the restrooms. He dials a number, waits.

PHIL

Yeah... collect call for Eileen.

(pause)

Phil.

INT. CRANSTON'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

EILEEN CRANSTON lies asleep in bed, a handsome woman in her mid- forties. The phone on the bedside table rings once, twice, finally rousing her from her slumber. She reaches over, fumbles the receiver off the hook.

EILEEN

Yes?

(pause; instantly awake)

Yes... I'll accept the charges.

(pause)

Hello, Phil.

INT. RESTAURANT - MORNING

Phil seems ready to collapse from relief.

PHIL

Eileen... before I start, let me say I'm sorry. I would have called before now, but I haven't had a chance. Something terrible has happened...

EILEEN

(over phone)

You don't have to...

PHIL

... but it's over now, baby, and I'm on my way home today. I'm gonna need you to wire me some money.

EILEEN

Phil...

PHIL

You can send it to a Western Union in Syracuse... that's where I'm heading in just a few minutes. I'll hop a plane there, I'll be home by sunset.

EILEEN

Phil, listen to me.

INT. CRANSTON'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Eileen looks tired, but from more than lack of sleep.

EILEEN

You can't come back here.

PHIL

(over phone)

If you're mad about me being gone for so long, I'll make it up to you. I had no choice.

EILEEN

I know.

PHIL

What do you mean you know?

EILEEN

I mean I know. I know where you've been. How do you think those men got your name to begin with?

INT. RESTAURANT - MORNING

Phil is beyond confused.

PHIL

What the fuck are you talking about?

EILEEN

(over phone)

How long was I supposed to let you go on treating me like I was your personal punching bag, Phil?

PHIL

I never touched you.

EILEEN

Not with your hands, anyway...

That hits close to home. Phil knows she's right. He shuts his eyes, like maybe that will make this all go away.

PHIL

You turned me in?

EILEEN

You didn't give me any choice. I did what I had to do...

PHIL

But... you're my wife.

EILEEN

Not anymore. You don't even exist now. Hang up the phone, Phil. Forget about me.

(pause)

Besides... they're tracing this call.

Phil slams the phone down. The noise causes a few people to look over, including John. Phil walks back over to the table, walking like he's had the wind knocked out of him.

JOHN

So... what's the word?

PHIL

We have to go. Now.

EXT. HIGHWAY 81 - MORNING

The diner door opens, and the four men all walk out, moving quickly.

DUNCAN

Th-th-the w-waitress saw us leave...

JOHN

Don't look back. Just keep walking.

A beefy, red-faced guy in a stained apron, the COOK, walks out. He carries a large knife.

COOK

Hey!

JOHN

(low)

Don't look at him...

COOK

Hey! Where do you think you're going? You guys stiffed us on the bill...

Up ahead, approaching the diner from the north along Highway 81, two cars appear. Both of the cars are full of men dressed like the Agents from the beginning of the film. John notices the cars.

JOHN

Oh, shit...

COOK

Which one of you friggin' diaper bags is gonna pay me?

Still ignoring the Cook, John looks around, trying to see what options he has. He sees an approaching truck, a big eighteen wheeler.

JOHN

Phil... get that truck to stop. Dunc, help me.

The Cook reaches out, grabs Davy's arm. He gestures at him with the knife.

COOK

You guys think I'm kidding around here?

John and Duncan turn to face the approaching cars. John puts out his hand, and the cars rise slightly off the road, just enough for the tires to lose their grip. The two drivers try to work the cars, hit the gas, but to no avail. They simply stop moving, hang in mid-air.

Phil focuses on the approaching truck.

INT. CAB - MORNING

The DRIVER of the truck reaches over, begins to downshift and brake, much to his own apparent surprise.

EXT. HIGHWAY 81 - MORNING

Davy looks down at the blade of the Cook's knife. Without warning, it shatters, leaving just the handle in the Cook's hand. Startled, the Cook releases Davy, stumbles back a step.

A few of the Agents climb out of the cars and start to move towards the diner on foot. Duncan focuses on them and a ring of fire suddenly erupts, surrounding the cars and the Agents, cutting them off completely.

COOK

Hey, it's, uh... it's on the house. It's cool.

He runs for the cover of the restaurant as the truck pulls into the parking lot. The Driver opens his door and climbs out, fighting his own body with each step.

In the midst of the circle of flame, the Agents go back to their cars.

AGENT 6

(yelling to be heard over the fire)

We have to radio for back up...

John is halfway to the truck when he hears this. He turns back to the flames for a moment.

INT. CAR - MORNING

Agent 6 climbs in and reaches for his car's radio, just as the radio seemingly implodes, folding in on itself until it's just a wad of wrinkled metal and plastic.

EXT. HIGHWAY 81 - MORNING

Duncan and Davy climb into the truck. John follows as Phil stops by the Driver for a moment.

DRIVER

(genuinely petrified)

What the hell is going on, man? What is wrong with me?

PHIL

You're okay. Your truck is gonna be fine. We just need to use it for a little while. Relax...

He does just that, relaxing to the point that, in a few seconds, he is asleep. Phil catches him before he can collapse, lowers him to the ground. Phil runs over, hops up into the driver's seat, pulls the door closed.

They turn the truck around, head off down Highway 81, due south, as fast as they can.

INT. TRUCK - A LITTLE LATER

John, Duncan, Davy, and Phil sit crammed into the cab of the truck.

PHIL

Okay... where are we going now? Truck like this isn't gonna be too hard to spot.

JOHN

I was thinking maybe...

DAVY

Texas.

Everyone looks at Davy, surprised.

JOHN

Why Texas, Davy? Is that where you're from?

Davy shakes his head. He thinks for a moment, trying to find an easy way to say this. Finally, he gives up, just points at the windshield.

An image of the United States, a stylized map basically, appears as if projected onto the glass, completely obscuring Phil's view of the road.

PHIL

Oh, shit...

He jerks the wheel hard to the right, pulls the truck over to the side of the highway.

PHIL

What are you doing?

As the men watch, we seem to move in on Texas, almost like the searching sequences, pushing in until we are looking down at Reuben's house, surrounded by that white glow. We move around to the front of the house, and Reuben himself is sitting on the front steps. We move in until his face fills the windshield. The image holds for a moment, then fades from view, leaving the windshield clear again.

JOHN

Who was that, Davy?

DAVY

Reuben.

JOHN

Reuben... uh-huh. I, uh... I don't know who Reuben is. Help me out here.

DAVY

A friend.

(pause)

Like us.

DUNCAN

Wh-what do you m-m-mean? A psychic?

DAVY

(nods)

He can help us.

JOHN

Well... it's as good a place to be headed as any, I guess. What part of Texas is it, Davy?

DAVY

Cadilla.

PHIL

Alright. Cadilla, Texas. Next stop... and, Davy, do me a favor. Don't do that windshield thing again, 'kay?

Phil puts the truck back in gear, starts it moving again.

EXT. HIGHWAY 81 - MORNING

As the truck gets moving, it picks up speed quickly, then is gone around a curve in the road.

EXT. ASRSA COMPLEX - DAY

In the light of day, the damage to the building and the grounds looks staggering. Parts of it are still smoldering, and most of it is either caved in or scorched. Most of the side lawn is occupied by a cluster of tents and vehicles, a makeshift command center.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS TENT - DAY

Things are pitched at a manic pace here. Everyone is doing something. Radio calls are being handled by dozens of RADIO OPERATORS. Dennings breezes in with several of the Agents in tow.

DENNINGS

... organize several mobile strike teams on a regional level, ready to move in at a moment's notice.

RADIO OPERATOR 1

Excuse me, sir...

Dennings stops.

RADIO OPERATOR 1

We have an updated sighting on them... just outside Tennessee.

DENNINGS

What are they driving?

RADIO OPERATOR 1

The car they stole in Pennsylvania.

DENNINGS

(to Agents)

Get on it immediately. Try to anticipate their next move and get ahead of them. I want them stopped by tonight at the latest.

As Dennings is talking we PAN OVER to one corner of the tent and see that Strickland is in the tent, seated, watching all this. He looks terrible, like he hasn't slept once since the escape. He musters his energy, stands, crosses to Dennings.

STRICKLAND

Dan...

DENNINGS

(surprised)

What are you doing in here?

STRICKLAND

I'm just staying apprised of things... I heard what you said, and I thought you...

DENNINGS

You're not supposed to be in here. You have to leave.

STRICKLAND

I just want to offer what advice I can.

DENNINGS

Well, that's nice... but do me a favor, Doc... shut up. Seriously. You were in charge of this, and you screwed it up. Keep your opinion to yourself.

Dennings turns back to the Agents.

STRICKLAND

I know where they're going, goddammit.

DENNINGS

I don't care what you know.

STRICKLAND

Do you care about solving this thing the right way or just about playing soldier? If you wait and just let them get wherever it is they're headed now, you will not only find them, you will also find the boy we've been looking for.

That gets Dennings. He stops, gives Strickland his full attention.

DENNINGS

Why would he be with them?

STRICKLAND

That's where they're going. Davy was working on the search with Maugham. Charles thinks that Davy found him... that could be where they're going now.

Dennings thinks about this for a moment.

STRICKLAND

You can save yourself a lot of trouble... and maybe even a few lives. Hang back and let them go.

DENNINGS

(finally)

It's too risky. They could give us the slip, and we'd lose them all. We move in now.

(to Agent 7)

Would you please escort the doctor out? We have work to do.

Agent 7 takes Strickland by the arm, steer him towards the door. Strickland watches Dennings as he leaves.

STRICKLAND

(to self)

Fool.

EXT. HOLIDAY INN - NIGHT

Everything is quiet in this two-story motel. We're just outside Nashville, just off an interstate onramp, and the lights of the city can be seen in the distance.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

All the men are crammed into one room, with Davy in one bed, John in the other, and both Duncan and Phil on the floor with blankets and pillows. The men are asleep, fully dressed, and the clock on the nightstand reads 3:17.

Davy stirs, sits up. He throws his covers back and, walking carefully to avoid his sleeping friends, crosses to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Davy walks in, closes the door. When he turns the light on, we see Maugham standing behind him, motionless, his features twisted into a scowl by profound burns over one entire side of his body. He is puckered here and there by bullet holes that are still healing. He watches Davy, silent, still.

Davy senses something, stops. He turns around slowly. No one is there. Where Maugham was standing, there is only a towel rack. Davy turns back around, disturbed by something.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

There are several large trucks parked together, and several police officers dressed for a full scale riot all mill about, talking quietly.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Maugham, looking just as horrible as he did in the bathroom, sits next to Dennings in the front seat of one of the trucks. He opens his eyes, looks over at Dennings.

MAUGHAM

They're in there. Room 218.

DENNINGS

Beautiful. Let's do this.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The bathroom door opens and Davy steps out. He turns on the overhead light, waking everyone up.

JOHN

What? What's going on?

DAVY

Maugham.

That's all it takes. Everyone's up immediately. John shuts the lights back off.

JOHN

Davy, I want you to look outside for us... see how we can get out of here.

Davy takes a seat, closes his eyes.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Maugham leads three Psi-Guards in full armor through the corridor. They pass an extremely surprised guy at the ice machine, don't even glance at him. Maugham fights a growing smile as they near the room.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Two of the trucks pull into position outside the hotel room, and several armed police officers in riot gear take aim on the windows.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Davy opens his eyes, looks at John, simply shakes his head.

PHIL

John... I know it's important to you about not killing anyone...

JOHN

We can do this. We can get out of this... I don't know how... but we will.

Duncan turns to face the wall to the next room. He raises one hand and blasts a smoking hole in the wall, about five feet in circumference. We can see a COUPLE huddled close together, startled and scared. John, Davy, Duncan and Phil hurry through the hole.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Maugham and the Psi-Guards stop outside Room 218. Maugham motions for the Psi-Guards to move aside. When they do, he gestures at the door, and it simply blows off the hinges, flying into the room. The Psi-Guards charge through the open door.

Maugham is about to step into the room, when the door to the next room opens and John steps out. When he and Maugham make eye contact, there is a moment where neither of them reacts. Finally, it is Maugham who smiles.

MAUGHAM

Perfect...

Phil pushes past John, hand up, and grabs Maugham by the shirt front. Phil seems to be exerting great energy, and Maugham lets out a little yell, then stops, paralyzed, having some sort of seizure.

PHIL

Run, John... you and the others get out of here.

No time to argue. The other three men emerge from the room and run. Maugham tries to reach up, tries to free himself, but Phil holds on. We hear Maugham's heartbeat suddenly on the soundtrack, and it begins to slow. Maugham realizes what's happening and his eyes go wide with panic.

MAUGHAM

No... you... don't...

Blue bolts of energy erupt from Maugham, from everywhere, slamming into Phil. Phil begins to scream, but he doesn't let go. By now, the Psi-Guards are out in the hallway, but they have to duck and dodge to avoid being fried themselves. The bolts coming off of the two entangled men destroy everything they touch. At the same time, we hear Maugham's heartbeat continue to slow.

The two men wrestle, slamming one another into walls. Maugham manages to get a good hold on Phil, begins to choke him as he holds him stationary.

MAUGHAM

Don't you know... you can't win?

PHIL

We already have...

The blue bolts refocus and begin to pour directly into Phil.

MAUGHAM

NOW! GET HIM NOW!

The Psi-Guards see the opening, raise their Needleguns and open fire. They unload round after round into Phil, turning him into a pincushion. He drops to the floor, releasing Maugham in both the physical and the psychic sense.

Maugham takes a moment, still catching his breath in ragged gasps. He glares down at Phil.

MAUGHAM

That was very, very stupid...

Maugham unleashes bolts of blue energy from both hands, bombarding Phil, incinerating him.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

People are stepping out of their rooms to see what all the commotion is as John, Duncan, and Davy run at top speed through the halls. We can hear Phil's screams from here.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

As the three men emerge from the front door of the motel, they come face to face with four officers in full riot gear, lined up behind their truck. One of the officers opens fire, and the first bullet hits John in the thigh, knocking him off his feet. John rolls over to face the cops and stops the rest of the gunfire as it approaches.

JOHN

Go! I'll catch up!

Duncan throws up a wall of flame around the officers and their truck, and he and Davy take off in one direction, towards the interstate.

John tries to stand and follow the others, but has a good deal of trouble doing so. He instead crawls over to a nearby car, a Maxima, and sets his hand against the lock. The door unlocks itself, and John pulls the door open.

EXT. INTERSTATE - NIGHT

Duncan and Davy pause for a moment on the side of the busy interstate, then head across, dodging traffic.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Maugham walks out the front door, stands for a moment looking at the wall of flame, then looks around for any sign of the men. At the far end of the parking lot, the Maxima is just pulling out of the parking lot and speeding away.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

John tries to hold his gunshot to slow the flow of blood as he drives, quickly accelerating.

EXT. RAILWAY TRESTLE - NIGHT

As Duncan and Davy head away from the interstate, they cross a railway trestle, stopping in the middle. On the track below, there is an approaching train. Davy turns and looks back the way they came.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Maugham walks towards the interstate, eyes closed.

POV - MAUGHAM

We race up towards the interstate, over it, then towards the trestle, where Duncan and Davy are visible.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Maugham opens his eyes, suddenly energized again, and turns back to the officers surrounded by the flame. He raises his hand, and the flames die down, then vanish completely. The officers look terrified, slightly singed.

MAUGHAM

Follow me.

EXT. RAILROAD TRESTLE - NIGHT

Davy's eyes go wide with fear.

DAVY

MAUGHAM! MAUGHAM!

Duncan makes the only decision he can. Despite the fact that the train is moving pretty fast, he grabs Davy and jumps. The two of them land on top of a freight car, hard, and just lie there for a moment, trying to get their bearings.

Within just a few moments, the train is out of sight. Maugham and the officers come running out onto the trestle just a moment after that. When Maugham sees that they are gone, he lets loose with a sound of raw frustration and, arms straight up in the air, unleashes two streams of blue energy that simply dissipate thirty or forty feet up.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

John, on the freeway, sees the twin pillars of energy in his rear view mirror, inspiring him to floor the accelerator.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Dennings stands arguing with the MOTEL MANAGER as Maugham and the Psi-Guards walk up.

MAUGHAM

Time to go.

MANAGER

Now, just wait a minute...

Maugham reaches out, grabs the Manager by his face. He looks him dead in the eye.

MAUGHAM

Time to go.

He shoves the Manager down and everyone climbs in their cars.

EXT. INTERSTATE - NIGHT

The trucks all pull out onto the interstate, in a small caravan.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Dennings drives, while Maugham closes his eyes.

POV - MAUGHAM

Maugham's POV erupts through the front windshield of the truck, lifting up over the interstate, then heading for the train tracks.

INT. FREIGHT CAR - NIGHT

Duncan and Davy climb into this empty freight car, Duncan helping Davy along. Duncan starts to look around, take inventory, and Davy shuts his eyes.

POV - DAVY

We race along over the top of the train, then head back along the tracks the way the train came.

POV - MAUGHAM

We race towards the train, along the tracks, moving very fast.

INT. FREIGHT CAR - NIGHT

Duncan notices that Davy is projecting, his body slumped lifelessly against the wall.

DUNCAN

D-D-Davy?

POV - DAVY

As we race along, we see something, no more than a slight shimmer of light, racing towards us, along the tracks. The shimmer gets closer, closer, and as we reach it, there is a tremendous flash of white light.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Maugham lets loose a bloodcurdling scream as his eyes open suddenly and a fountain of blood erupts from his nose and his mouth. Dennings freaks out at the sight.

INT. FREIGHT CAR - NIGHT

Davy's whole body goes rigid, and he makes a small, mewling sound. After a moment, he passes out. Duncan has no idea what to do.

DUNCAN

D-D-Davy?

As he bends down beside him, checks his pulse, we start to PULL BACK.

EXT. FREIGHT CAR - NIGHT

We continue to PULL BACK as the train passes underneath us and heads away, into the night.

FADE TO BLACK

BLACK

We hear someone knocking.

STANFORD (V.O.)

Enter.

INT. OFFICE - MORNING

Outside, through a window, we can see the early morning sun over the Virginia countryside. COL. THOMAS STANFORD, a barrel chested military man in his late fifties sits at his desk, in full uniform. He's impeccable in his appearance, balding, intense. The office door opens and Dennings enters.

STANFORD

I heard about last night.

DENNINGS

I don't know what happened, sir. One minute Maugham was fine, the next...

STANFORD

Is he down for good?

DENNINGS

Too early to tell.

(pause)

Probably.

STANFORD

Good. I think we've been entirely too reliant on Mr. Maugham's skills in this pursuit. I took this project away from Dr. Strickland because I have no faith in these psychics... it's science fiction as far as I'm concerned. It's time for us to handle this with real force. I will give you one last chance to get this right, Dan.

DENNINGS

That's all I'll need, sir. You have my word.

STANFORD

I don't want your word. I want those men.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Caroline's battered station wagon is parked out front. The Maxima pulls off the main road and starts to head up the driveway.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Caroline stands at the sink, making sandwiches. She can see Reuben out the window, playing in the back yard.

EXT. BACK YARD - DAY

Reuben sits on the ground, surrounded by a circle of action figures. He is staring down at two of the figures which are standing and moving on their own, smiling as he watches. The sound of the approaching car becomes gradually audible, and Reuben looks up, towards the house.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Caroline hears it, too. She runs to the back door, yanks it open.

CAROLINE

Reuben... come inside, right now.

She sees Reuben stand up, but he starts toward the front yard instead of her.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

John's car pulls to a stop in front of the house. He starts to climb out of the car, hesitates a moment. He sees Reuben standing at the corner of the house, peeking around at him, curious.

JOHN

Hi... are you Reuben?

Before Reuben can answer, the front door opens and Caroline steps out with a shotgun leveled at John's head.

CAROLINE

Get back in your car, buddy, and get the hell out of here while you still can.

JOHN

Please... I've come a long way...

CAROLINE

So have I, and I'm not going anywhere else. Move.

Reuben walks over to John.

CAROLINE

Reuben, honey, come inside...

REUBEN

It's okay, mama...

CAROLINE

Don't argue with me, baby. I know what I'm doing.

Reuben stops right in front of John, looks up at him for a moment. He reaches out and takes John's hand. John shudders, tries to pull his hand free, but Reuben holds on, his eyes never leaving John's face. Finally, he releases John's hand and turns to his mother.

REUBEN

It's okay. He's a friend.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

John sits at the kitchen table, with Reuben in the chair next to him. One of his pant legs has been cut off and his bullet wound has been wrapped in bandages. John is inspecting the dressing.

REUBEN

So why didn't Davy come with you?

JOHN

Um... he was with me, but we got separated. I'm sure he's on his way here now.

REUBEN

I like Davy. He's really neat.

JOHN

Yeah... he sure is...

Caroline walks in with a bundle of clothing which she sets on the table next to John.

JOHN

This is a hell of a job you did on my leg. Thanks.

CAROLINE

I don't understand how you drove from Tennessee with your leg like that.

JOHN

I didn't really have a choice, did I? This was the only place that I knew I could go that the others all knew about.

CAROLINE

I'm not sure how I feel about that... you using us as a point of reference. I worked hard to find a place where no one would think to look for us. Now I find out that everyone knows about it.

JOHN

Not everyone. Just the four of us.

REUBEN

Not Maugham?

JOHN

How do you know that name?

REUBEN

Davy told me. That's the bad man's name...

JOHN

Damn straight it is. What do you know about him?

REUBEN

He's the one who took my daddy away.

John shoots Caroline a quizzical look: what's he talking about?

CAROLINE

My husband was like you... a psychic. We were living in Los Angeles, and a group of men came to our door one night. One of them was this Maugham, evidently, and he was the one who... overpowered Keven... took him away from us. At the time, I guess they didn't know about Reuben. They figured it out soon enough, though, and they sent men back for him. We've been on the move ever since, until we got here. This used to belong to a great uncle of mine, and no one in the family wants the place. I thought we'd be safe here...

JOHN

You will be. I'll do whatever it takes to ensure that.

CAROLINE

John... I have to know. Did you see my husband in there? Did you meet anyone named Keven?

John sees the anxiety in both their faces as he considers whether or not to lie to them. Finally, he just shakes his head.

JOHN

We were the only ones. I don't know anything about your husband.

It's not the answer Caroline was looking for, but it'll have to do. She gets up and exits. John reaches over and picks up the bundle of clothes.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Caroline sits on the couch, looking up at a photo on the mantel. It's the one we saw earlier, the whole family together in a happier time. John walks in, stops behind her, dressed in Keven's clothes. He has washed up as well, and despite his bruises and bumps, John almost looks good.

Caroline seems to sense him standing there and turns.

CAROLINE

They fit you well.

JOHN

Yeah. Thanks.

CAROLINE

It's strange... my son says you're okay, so I let you in, I dress your wound, I give you my husband's clothes to wear. He's just a little boy, but I know that he's so much more aware of things than I am, or ever could be. I used to think that Keven and Reuben were the only ones...

JOHN

I used to think I was the only one.

CAROLINE

When your friends get here... what are you going to do?

JOHN

I don't know. I'm tired of running. I don't think I can do it anymore.

CAROLINE

Well... I'll offer you a deal. If you'll help me with this place, fixing it up and all, then I'll let you stay here.
There's plenty of room.

JOHN

I couldn't...

CAROLINE

Why not? You have someplace better to go?

JOHN

No...

CAROLINE

Then stay. I need the help.

JOHN

(finally)

Okay.

EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

The sun has just gone down, and the sky is still kissed by pink and orange.

INT. REUBEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Caroline is tucking Reuben in for bed. John stands in the doorway. With the light behind him, it's hard to see his face. Reuben looks over at him, smiles.

REUBEN

You look like Daddy.

CAROLINE

You go to sleep, baby.

REUBEN

Is Davy going to be here tomorrow?

JOHN

I don't know. I hope so.

REUBEN

Me, too.

Caroline kisses Reuben, then stands and exits, leading John out of the room. They close Reuben's bedroom door. Reuben rolls over and looks at his bedroom window.

REUBEN

(quiet)

Davy, where are you?

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Duncan and Davy hike across this open hayfield towards a small barn. Duncan practically has to drag Davy, who seems only semi-conscious.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

The door opens slightly, and Duncan and Davy enter the barn.

DUNCAN

Th-this isn't too b-b-bad...

Duncan pushes the door closed again as Davy staggers over and collapses into a pile of hay. He looks exhausted, pale, sweaty. Duncan can't help but notice.

DUNCAN

D-Davy... what's wrong?

Davy shakes his head. He doesn't want to talk. He rolls over on his side, his back to Duncan. Angry, Duncan grabs Davy's shoulder, rolls him back over.

DUNCAN

I know it's n-not easy for y-y-you to talk. Goddammit, if anyone knows, I d-do. But I c-can't help you if you don't t-tell me what's wrong.

Davy looks up at Duncan, tears forming in his eyes. As he talks, he struggles with each word.

DAVY

I'm hurt. I think there's something wrong with me. When I went after Maugham, there was a... like an accident. I hit him hard, and I felt something inside me give. I think my powers are going away. That's all I have, Duncan. If they go, then I'm nothing. If I'm nothing... I'll die.

He rolls away again to hide his tears. This time, Duncan lets him be.

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

John is at the edge of the property, working on the fence. He is stripped to the waist, soaked in sweat, and looks genuinely happy. He pounds a post into the ground.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Caroline is still in bed, asleep. She hears the hammering and opens one eye, looks over at the clock. It's not even nine o'clock yet.

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

John starts to run fencing from one post to the one he just put in. Caroline emerges from the house, still half-asleep, wrapped in a housecoat. She walks slowly out to where John is.

CAROLINE

What are you doing?

JOHN

What does it look like?

CAROLINE

John, I said I needed some help. You don't have to do this by yourself, though.

JOHN

If you knew how much I'm enjoying this, you wouldn't believe it. It's quite a feeling, working with my hands again, feeling the muscles in my back, the sun on my shoulders. This is what it feels like to be free, and I'd forgotten it.

CAROLINE

Well, at least let me cook you some breakfast...

JOHN

Okay. Call me when it's ready.

Caroline heads for the house. On the porch, she turns and looks back. John is totally into the job, the look on his face one of real happiness. She smiles slightly, the first smile we've seen from her. It makes her look ten years younger, a lovely sight.

MONTAGE

John and Caroline work on the house, painting, putting up storm windows, fixing rotting boards in the barn, cleaning out weeds. As they work, any tension between the two seems to fade away, and we see a developing intimacy between the two.

EXT. HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Reuben sits on the back steps of the house, eyes closed. John steps out the back door, a glass of lemonade in his hand. He sits down next to Reuben.

JOHN

Hey. Whatcha doin'?

REUBEN

(eyes still closed)

I'm looking for Davy.

JOHN

Yeah? Any luck?

REUBEN

No. I can't feel him out there at all. I hope he's okay.

JOHN

You and me both, buddy.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

(pause)

Reuben... what kind of things have you learned to do?

REUBEN

(opens his eyes)

You mean my powers?

JOHN

Yes.

REUBEN

I don't know. Lots of stuff. I can move things around. I can go out of my body and fly around and stuff. My daddy always called me his little battery.

JOHN

What?

REUBEN

He said that whenever he was around me, he felt stronger, like he could do anything. Do I make you feel like that?

John takes a moment to think about it. He realizes that he feels better than he can remember feeling in a long time, and a grin breaks out on his face.

JOHN

Well... I guess so. I hadn't really thought about it, but I feel incredible. I mean, after what I've been through, and after all the work today, you'd think I would be ready for a coffin... but I actually feel good.

Reuben takes John's hand. John's eyes grow wide.

REUBEN

How about now?

JOHN

I can feel a current... running up my arm. It's like electricity...

REUBEN

It doesn't hurt, does it?

JOHN

No. Not at all.

John looks at Reuben with new respect.

JOHN

You're quite a kid, Reuben. Anyone ever tell you that?

REUBEN

My mom. All the time.

EXT. INTERSTATE 27 - LATE AFTERNOON

At the crest of a hill, two SOLDIERS stand beside a sign that reads "Welcome to Cadilla," one of them smoking a cigarette. Dennings appears over the crest of the hill.

DENNINGS

Put that out, soldier. This isn't a goddamn coffee break.

As Dennings turns and vanishes over the hill, we follow him, PUSHING FORWARD TO REVEAL that there is a major military operation set up on both sides of this interstate. The SHERIFF of Cadilla stands with a group of military men, looking out over the ridiculously large assembled force. Dennings walks down to where they stand.

DENNINGS

Okay, gentlemen... I think we're about ready. This interstate is officially closed as of right now. I want someone to coordinate with the team on the south side of town, make sure we're all in sync.

(to Sheriff)

You the law around here?

SHERIFF

Yessir.

DENNINGS

Great. Do me a favor and stay out of our way. You and your men take a vacation. We've got this situation under control.

Dennings starts to walk away, but the Sheriff follows.

SHERIFF

Um... what is the situation, exactly?

DENNINGS

That's none of your concern.

SHERIFF

I think it is...

Denning stops, turns on the man, his face a mask.

DENNING

Oh, you do? Fine. You remember that bunch of religious nuts in Waco?

SHERIFF

(nervous)

Yeah...

DENNING

They were amateurs compared to the group we're dealing with. These guys have already attacked a military compound in New York state, they blew the hell out of a Holiday Inn, and they are holding a woman and her child hostage in their own home right now. We are prepared to strike quickly and quietly to put this right, but if you insist on getting involved, then I'm sure I can arrange some network news coverage. That would really put Cadilla on the map, wouldn't it? The new Psycho capital of the world...

SHERIFF

Um, maybe you're right. I mean, you guys have experience and all this manpower and all... I'll be at my office if you need me.

The Sheriff backs off in a hurry, leaving Dennings by himself amidst all the preparation and commotion. A Soldier walks up with a portable phone.

SOLDIER

Mr. Dennings, sir? Phone's for you...

Dennings takes it from him.

DENNINGS

Yeah?

(pause)

Where are they?

EXT. STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

We're in the dusty heart of Cadilla here, and two men in dark suits sit in a car that's parked on the side of the street. Davy and Duncan are walking along the sidewalk, unaware that they're being watched. Davy's in bad shape, barely able to stand, and Duncan is trying to keep him upright.

The MAN in the passenger's seat talks on a small portable phone.

MAN

They're on Crockett Avenue. We're looking at them right now.

DENNINGS

(over phone)

Don't make any attempt to stop them. Don't even let them know you're there. Let them reach the house, and we'll pick them all up together.

EXT. FRONT YARD - EVENING

John sits alone on the front porch, cleaned up from the day's effort. He sips beer from a bottle, slowly swings back and forth in the large porch swing. The only sound is the crickets coming out. He looks as if he is truly at peace.

The front door opens and Caroline steps out, also carrying a beer. She watches John for a moment.

CAROLINE

You look really comfortable.

He turns, startled.

JOHN

I didn't hear you come out.

CAROLINE

Mind if I join you?

He shakes his head, and she walks over, sits next to him. They're surprisingly close because of the size of the swing. For a long moment, neither of them speaks. The night is too nice.

CAROLINE

Reuben really seems to like you.

JOHN

He's a good kid. I like him.

CAROLINE

It's remarkable. Since we lost Keven, he's been completely shut off to new people. Now, all I hear is your name and Davy's... he's already accepted you, no questions asked.

JOHN

How about you? Do you have any questions?

CAROLINE

A few...

(pause)

Where were you before all this began? Before the ASRSA..?

JOHN

God... it's like there was no before. That feels so long ago now.

CAROLINE

Do you have a family somewhere?

Bingo. She's hit a nerve. It takes John a moment to gather his thoughts.

JOHN

Did. A wife and son... I lost them a few years ago.

CAROLINE

I'm sorry.

JOHN

So am I. They were my whole life.

CAROLINE

What happened to them? If you don't mind my asking...

JOHN

I let them down. I was having some problems with my wife... just the stupid shit that every couple goes through, nothing major... and I started spending more and more time away from the house, trying to avoid the arguments. One night, a buddy of mine invited me out to a bar, and I went. We got pretty tanked, and I didn't head home until just after eleven. When I pulled up, I figured they'd both be asleep. I was fumbling with my keys, trying to remember how to work the front door, when I heard...

(long pause)

I heard a woman scream. My wife.

(almost breaks down)

Wendy... she was screaming upstairs. I was so goddamn drunk that I couldn't figure out how to respond. Then, just as suddenly as it started, the screaming stopped. I was so scared... I've never felt anything like it. All those phrases that you read in horror novels that you think are just in books... the hair standing up on the back of your neck, your blood running cold... those things all happened and more. I felt sick deep inside. Finally, it was too much. I managed to get the door open, and I went upstairs. Both she and Brian were...

(pause)

Someone had broken in, I guess to steal stuff, and Wendy had surprised him in our room. While I was standing downstairs, deciding what to do, the sonofabitch killed my family in cold blood and simply slipped out the back. They never caught him. They never had a clue. And I could have done something about it. I mean, what good is this power of mine if I couldn't even use it to save the two most important people in the world to me?

CAROLINE

He might have killed you, too.

JOHN

But at least I would have tried.

(long pause)

I have to give Strickland and his program credit for one thing. I have learned what it means to have people trust me again. Davy, Duncan, Phil... these men are my family now. I had all these missing pieces for so long after I lost Wendy and Brian... and I'm starting to feel whole again. You... Reuben... you've shown me real kindness. Thank you.

CAROLINE

I know what it is to lose someone, John. I know what it's like to feel those missing pieces. You just have to pick up and go on.

The door opens and Reuben bursts onto the porch, breathless as if he's just been running.

REUBEN

They're here! They're here!

CAROLINE

Who?

REUBEN

Davy... I can feel him. He's really close.

JOHN

(stands)

Can you figure out where?

REUBEN

They're coming here... on the road.

John and Caroline head out towards the front gate (almost finished now), watching the road in both directions. Reuben follows along, skipping, happy.

JOHN

You guys don't get any traffic out here, do you?

CAROLINE

We get a lot of trucks and the locals, but that's it.

JOHN

I haven't seen or heard a car in the past hour. Not one.

CAROLINE

That's a small town for you, I guess.

JOHN

No... that's not right.

REUBEN

I see them...

John and Caroline look where Reuben is pointing. In the distance, we can see two figures, one of them carrying the other. They are moving slowly, each step an effort.

JOHN

Caroline, take Reuben inside and get the bathroom ready. These guys may be hurt.

CAROLINE

Right.

She takes Reuben by the hand, leads him inside. John opens the front gate and starts to jog towards the figures.

EXT. ROAD - EVENING

As John gets closer, he can see that it is indeed Davy and Duncan. He picks up his speed, practically sprinting towards them. Duncan, who is half-carrying/half-dragging Davy, is so wrapped up in his own little world of pain that he doesn't even notice until John is right there, helping him, taking Davy from him. Duncan looks at John, a little dazed.

DUNCAN

D-d-did we make it?

JOHN

You made it, buddy.

Duncan registers this, then collapses, exhausted. John looks around, sees that they are alone, then concentrates on both Duncan and Davy. They both rise off the ground and, one on either side of John, they all start towards the house.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Caroline and Reuben walk down the hall. She opens the bathroom door.

CAROLINE

Do me a favor, honey, and run a bath.

Reuben walks into the bathroom as Caroline continues down the hall. She opens the door to her room and steps in.

INT. CAROLINE'S ROOM - EVENING

Caroline reaches over and tries to find the light switch on the wall. As she finds it and goes to turn it on, a hand reaches out of the shadows and grabs her by the arm. Maugham steps out of the shadows and clamps his other hand over her mouth.

MAUGHAM

Where's the boy?

EXT. FRONT YARD - EVENING

As John approaches the house, moving quickly, he hears voices, loud, arguing. As soon as he is close enough to recognize the voices as Caroline's and Maugham's, he sets the two guys down and runs for the house.

He leaps up onto the front porch and is about to open the front door when Caroline screams. There is the slightest hesitation from John, and he rips the door open and runs in.

INT. FOYER - EVENING

John takes the stairs three at a time.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

The door to Caroline's room is slightly ajar, and we can see movement within. John races down the hall and bursts through the door.

INT. CAROLINE'S ROOM - EVENING

Maugham holds Caroline up by her shirt front. He looks even worse than we remember, like he's been chewed up and spit out. When John enters, Maugham pulls Caroline close, positions her as a shield.

MAUGHAM

Back off. I'm just here for the boy.

JOHN

You're not walking out of here with anyone. And if you hurt her... you're not walking out of here at all.

MAUGHAM

(laughs)

Who do you think you are, hot shot? You're giving me an ultimatum? You are a dead man. Your friends... they're dead, too. You had your chance, and you threw it away. All I'm here for is the boy.

JOHN

You can't have him. This is our home. I'll give you five seconds to let her go...

MAUGHAM

Or what? You're gonna kill me? What good will that do? The entire U.S. Army is outside, man, and they can't wait to come in here and turn each and every one of you into a goddamn stain.

JOHN

Let her go.

Reuben appears in the doorway. Caroline screams when she sees him.

CAROLINE

Run, baby! Get out of here!

Reuben, totally unafraid, steps forward and reaches up, takes John's hand. Maugham pulls Caroline closer, his hand around her throat, as John gasps, eyes wide. He gains control over the feeling rushing through him, smiles at Maugham.

JOHN

If I were you... I'd let her go.

Maugham squeezes her throat, and she makes a pitiful, strangled sound. John raises his free hand to point at Maugham. All the fingers on the hand Maugham is strangling her with simply crumble away like ash. Maugham begins to scream as he releases Caroline, who runs across the room. She tries to pry Reuben away from John, but he just smiles up at her.

REUBEN

It's okay, mama. He can't hurt us now.

Eyes on Maugham, she backs out of the room. Maugham steadies himself, tears pouring down his cheeks.

MAUGHAM

YOU'RE ALL DEAD! I KILLED PHIL, AND I'LL KILL YOU!

JOHN

What did you say?

MAUGHAM

That's right... I fried your friend. What are you going to do about it?

JOHN

Nothing. I don't kill people. All we want is to be left alone.

MAUGHAM

It's never going to happen. You are never going to be free. You are never going to live in peace. They'll keep coming. Don't you get that yet? There is no place we will ever be safe again.

Maugham raises his hand, and John and Reuben close their eyes. As Maugham unleashes a steady stream of blue electricity, it simply bounces off of John and Reuben, not touching them at all, but destroying the room around them. Maugham increases his energy, really cutting loose. It's like The Apocalypse in here. All the energy begins to turn back, burn Maugham, but he can't stop. The sound coming out of him is purest anguish. Finally, he is completely enveloped by the electricity, and it simply blows out one of the walls of the house, taking Maugham with it.

All is quiet. John and Reuben open their eyes again, look around at their scorched surroundings. They walk over to the gaping hole in the wall, look down. On the ground outside, Maugham lies still. There's no mistake this time. He's dead. John pulls Reuben close so he doesn't have to look.

JOHN

It's over...

There's a faint sound, an engine noise. It takes John a moment to register what it is, but he finally recognizes it. Helicopters.

JOHN

... almost.

INT. FOYER - EVENING

John and Reuben come bounding down the stairs, just as Caroline drags Davy in and sets him next to the semi-conscious Duncan. The helicopters sound much closer now.

CAROLINE

Someone's coming...

JOHN

I know.

Reuben walks over and looks down at Davy. He bends down and touches Davy's chest. After a moment, Davy opens his eyes and sits up. Reuben backs off.

REUBEN

I'm glad you're here.

EXT. FARM - EVENING

The Army is moving in. Cars, Jeeps, and trucks line the road outside. Helicopters fly in swooping criss-cross patterns above the farm. Several platoons of footsoldiers move in close, right up to the fence, armed to the teeth. There is not a bit of horizon in any direction that is not taken up by the military.

A Jeep with Dennings and Col. Stanford aboard pulls up to the fence. Stanford sits back as Dennings hops out, in full Patton mode, barking orders at everyone.

INT. FOYER - EVENING

From the sounds outside, it's obvious what's going on. Reuben stands by a window, looking out at all of it.

CAROLINE

My god... what are we supposed to do?

JOHN

We're supposed to give up, but that's not an option any more. We have to stand up to them. We have to show them that this is our place. Caroline... we need Reuben with us.

CAROLINE

No. If you go out there, you will be killed.

JOHN

Not if he's with us.

She can't take it anymore. The tears start.

CAROLINE

Please... he's all I have...

JOHN

Listen to me. I have made mistakes in the past, but I am not about to let anything happen to you or to him or to any of us. This is what it's going to take. As long as they can come in here and do whatever they want, they will. We have got to take control over our lives once and for all. Let him come with us. We'll all come back. I swear.

Reuben walks over and hugs his mother, which only makes her cry harder. She hugs him as if she's never going to let him go, then finally releases him.

JOHN

Dunc... you up for this?

DUNCAN

Wh-whatever it takes.

JOHN

Davy?

Davy nods, serious. The men all stand. John takes Reuben's hand.

JOHN

I'll never get used to that feeling...

Davy takes Reuben's other hand, and Duncan takes Davy's hand. For a moment, all of them adjust to the extreme power they feel running through them. Caroline stands and opens the front door.

CAROLINE

Be careful.

EXT. FARM - EVENING

The sun is almost completely gone. The men step out onto the porch and start to walk out towards the waiting military. A hush falls over the assembled ranks.

Dennings looks startled to see them. He watches them walk out to the middle of the yard and stop, then runs over to his Jeep, where Stanford looks just as amazed. Dennings grabs a bullhorn out of the back seat.

DENNINGS

I guess they want to surrender.

STANFORD

I don't think so.

Dennings walks over to the fence, raises the bullhorn.

DENNINGS

Are you prepared to surrender, Harrison?

The men look around them at all the assembled force, all the weapons, all the men.

JOHN

Who are you to ask me that? What right do you have to come into our homes and steal us away? What claim do you have over our lives? We didn't ask for any of this. All we want is to be left alone.

DENNINGS

The time for that is past. You have to come with us now. This is your only chance. If you do not, then we will have no choice but to destroy you. All of you.

JOHN

You'd kill this little boy in cold blood? What did he do? Or his mother? Or me, for that matter? What is our crime?

DENNINGS

Enough talk, Harrison. You know what this is about. You have ten seconds to make up your mind.

Dennings lowers his bullhorn, heads back to the Jeep, behind the wall of armed soldiers, every one of which has his gun up, pointed at the men. The helicopters hover over the scene. The seconds tick by, and the men don't move. Seven... eight... nine...

JOHN

This is our home.

DENNINGS

TEN! FIRE!

Every one of the soldiers opens fire on the men, unloading their weapons, and all we see at first is dust being kicked up. After a good solid ten seconds of shooting, the gunfire trails off. As the dust clears, we see the men still standing.

Not a single bullet has reached its mark. All of the bullets hang motionless in the air, thousands of them.

JOHN

I could kill you all right now. You shot at us... self defense, right?

All the bullets drop harmlessly to the ground. At the same time, every single gun seems to crack, then fall to pieces in the soldiers' hands.

JOHN

Now, leave us alone.

Several tanks roll forward, and the line of soldiers parts to give the tanks a place at the fence.

JOHN

Didn't you hear me? I said, LEAVE US ALONE!

A wall of flame erupts between the men and the soldiers. It rapidly grows until it's fifty feet high, maybe fifty yards long. Several of the soldiers break rank and run. More of them simply freeze, stunned into inaction by the view. John, no longer visible, sounds like the voice of doom from behind the curtain of flame.

JOHN

HAVEN'T WE GIVEN YOU ENOUGH? HAVEN'T WE HURT ENOUGH? YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT PAIN IS... BUT WE DO.

The fire begins to twist, and images play out in the flames, almost like a giant screen. We see Reuben's father fighting Maugham. We see John being abducted in the alley. We see the Rottweiler attacking Duncan. We see the men strapped to the chairs for the neurotic bombardment. Image after image flashes by. The soldiers all watch, hypnotized. It's a breathtaking display.

JOHN

THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO US! THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE TAKEN FROM US! YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT PAIN?! WE'LL SHOW YOU PAIN...

The last image, Phil in the Holiday Inn facing Maugham, fades, and the wall of flame surges forward. The soldiers don't even have time to scream before the wall drops onto them, covering everything and everyone.

The sound of all the men screaming, wailing in fear, is overwhelming. Flame consumes everything. All the men are lit up like candles. For one long, horrible moment, it is truly Hell on earth, a nightmare image.

Then, just as abruptly, it is gone. There is no sign that the fire was ever there. No one is hurt at all. That's it, though, for the soldiers. They all drop their weapons and split. The helicopters take off and are gone in a matter of moments.

John releases Reuben and heads for the abandoned vehicles. He walks over to Dennings' Jeep. Stanford and Dennings both are huddled in the Jeep, crying, practically catatonic with fear. John looks down at them for a long moment, hate ingrained on his face.

JOHN

All we want is to live our lives for ourselves. Go away. Leave us alone.

The men look up and realize that they are still alive. Neither one looks like they believe it.

STANFORD

What the hell was that?

JOHN

Just a sample. We don't want anymore death... but if you push us... if you force us to... we can and will crush you. It's that simple. You don't understand anything except force. Well... that's what we've got. You think you can take us, then get your men together and come back. If not...

STANFORD

I don't know you. I don't know where you went. I don't care. You're no one to me now.

JOHN

That's all we ask.

Stanford starts the Jeep. Dennings is still too hysterical to say a word as Stanford backs the Jeep up, turns around, and speeds away. John watches them go, then heads back for the house, for his waiting friends, for the rest of his life, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FARM - DAY

It's a gorgeous day out. There's no sign of the night with the military at all. The house has been fully repaired, the fence is finished, everything has been painted. It's looking like a real home now. There's a sign up over the entrance to the property, letters burned into wood, that reads "HAVEN."

Caroline's station wagon pulls in from the main road, stops in front of the house. Caroline, John and Reuben climb out. Duncan, who is up on a ladder, is putting storm windows on the second story windows. He looks down at John.

DUNCAN

D-d-did you get everything?

JOHN

Yeah. You wanna help us carry it in?

DUNCAN

S-sure... I'll be down in a minute.

Caroline takes two bags out of the back of the station wagon. John walks over, gives her a familiar kiss.

JOHN

I'll get the rest of it if you want to start putting it away.

CAROLINE

Okay.

Reuben at her heels, she heads into the house. John is lifting two more bags when he notices a guy, DOUG, in his mid-twenties, walking through the gate. He's tall, lanky, in worn clothes, with a bag over his

shoulder. He looks like he's been on the road for a while. John sets his bags down as Doug walks up to him.

JOHN

Yeah... can I help you with something?

DOUG

I hope you don't mind... I asked some of the people in town where you guys lived...

JOHN

Why?

DOUG

(obviously uncomfortable)

I, uh... I figured maybe you guys might need some help around here or something, y'know? I mean, I saw some stuff about you on TV...

Wrong thing to say. John turns away mid-sentence and starts gathering the groceries again.

JOHN

Sorry, friend. Can't help you. We've got all the hands we need around here.

DOUG

Please... I don't have anywhere else to go...

Duncan starts down the ladder, trying to balance two shutters as he climbs.

DOUG

I'll sleep in the barn if I have to.

JOHN

I told you, we've already got enough people living here. If you...

Duncan misses one of the rungs and starts to fall. He releases the shutters and lets out a short scream as he plummets. At the last moment, though, he slows to a stop in mid-air, inches from the ground.

John looks over at Doug, who has his hand up. John is, to say the least, surprised. Doug makes a gesture, turning Duncan right side up and setting him on his feet.

JOHN

Well, um... what'd you say your name was?

DOUG

I didn't... but it's Doug.

JOHN

Have you had lunch, Doug?

DOUG

No. I'm pretty hungry...

JOHN

I know how it is, being on the road. Why don't you come on inside... we'll talk.

(smiles)

Maybe we do have something for you after all.

Duncan and John accompany Doug into the house, already relaxed and talking casually with him, as we slowly PULL BACK to show the house and the unbroken Texas landscape that surrounds it. We continue to PULL BACK until we're up, over the property, and we can see that the entire place is surrounded by and infused with the same brilliant white glow we saw earlier, a sign that this is a safe place. Finally, we

FADE TO BLACK