

MAN WITHOUT TIME

Written by:

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TEASER

INT. STUDY APARTMENT - DAY

BOB RENFRO (30) (medium height and soft - from too much eating and too little exercise) sits at his desk, typing on his computer keyboard. The man is as unkempt as his residence.

The room has clothes strewn on the furniture and floor, and empty beer cans and pizza boxes littering the place - on the table, counter tops, and even the floor. The place looks like a cross between a hoarder's residence and a pig's sty.

Bob types:

BOB (V.O.)

Well, according to my journal here, I should be about sixty days into my adventure here in this isolated apartment. . . Only fourteen more months to go. . . I really don't mind it. . . Actually, I sort of enjoy the freedom to do what I want to do; eat what I want to eat; sleep when I want to sleep; watch TV or play my games when I want; all without interruption or criticism. . . Who really cares what day it is or what time it is..? In the end, does it really matter. . ? I think not. . . .

END TEASER

INT. LIFEWAY INDUSTRIES CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

DR. JENSEN (Caucasian male, age 50) sits at a conference table with two of his younger associates, SHANDRA (African American female, age 25) and JOSE (Hispanic male, age 25). A few papers are strewn on the table. On the back wall a large sign, "Lifeway Industries", is prominently displayed.

DR. JENSEN

So you can see that our clients really aren't grasping. . . .

The door suddenly bursts open and a third associate, WILHELM (Caucasian male, age 28), enters proudly displaying a letter in his hand.

WILHELM

Sorry I'm late, but I stopped by the mail room and found this letter in our mail slot. . . It's from the Department of Education.

Wilhelm takes a seat and slides the letter across the table to Dr. Jensen, who scans the envelope then carefully opens it.

He pulls out a letter, unfolds it and silently reads it. As he's reading it, a smile grows on his face.

DR. JENSEN

Well, well. . . This is good. . .
Real good.

JOSE

What is it?

DR. JENSEN

It looks like our project has been approved for funding.

SHANDRA

We got the grant?

DR. JENSEN

Yep.

JOSE

For the full amount?

DR. JENSEN

Yep.

WILHELM

When do we start?

DR. JENSEN

As soon as possible.

(beat)

Jose, you get the marketing plan going. Shandra, why don't you work on getting the condo in place. Wilhelm, I want you to finalize the selection criteria. We've got the project plan developed, now let's get it implemented.

Everyone merely sits there just staring at Dr. Jensen.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)
What are you waiting for? Let's get
going.

Everyone quickly gathers up the papers on the table, along with their notepads, and scrambles out of the room, leaving Dr. Jensen sitting there re-reading the letter with a huge grin on his face.

MONTAGE (BOB'S POV):

- TONI ABBOTT (30) (tall and slender with long flowing hair, a stunning Vogue magazine model), dressed in a long summery white dress, sits on a long rope swing in a park, and giggles seductively while Bob, in business casual and grinning a huge grin, playfully pushes her.
- Toni walks hand-in-hand with Bob on an ocean-side boardwalk. Toni smiles and places her head on Bob's shoulder as they walk.
- Toni and Bob both laugh while enjoying a meal at a nice outdoor cafe.
- Toni sits with Bob on his sofa in his extremely neat and tidy apartment. She leans in towards Bob, getting ready to kiss. As their lips get close, Toni abruptly stops, backs away somewhat, smiles, and raps Bob on the forehead four times, sounding like someone KNOCKING on a door.

BOB
Ouch! Hey, what's that all about?

Toni looks at Bob in a seductive manner, then raps him on the forehead four more times, again sounding like someone KNOCKING on a door.

Toni speaks, but the voice is that of Bob's brother, GLEN.

TONI (GLEN V.O.)
Come on . . . Open up. I know
you're in there.

FADE TO:

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bob slowly opens his eyes, then rubs them, as the knocking turns into POUNDING on the door to his small extremely cluttered apartment. Bob gets up off of the sofa where he had been laying.

He is barefoot, hasn't shaved for a few days, has a bad case of bed hair, and his khaki shorts and t-shirt are a wrinkled mess as he walks to the door.

BOB
(shouts)
Alright, alright, I'm coming!
(mutters)
Geez, give me a break.

He unlocks and opens the door to find his brother, GLEN (35) (taller than Bob, physically fit, and attractive - a true GQ man), wearing business casual, impatiently standing there.

GLEN
What's the deal? It's after one in the afternoon and you're still not up?

Bob holds the door open while Glen just walks on in.

The apartment is as unkempt as Bob - with clothes and other items strewn all over the floor and furniture. Numerous editions of Sports Illustrated litter the room.

GLEN (CONT'D)
You have a wild date last night? And that's why you're late getting up? But looking at this pig's sty, I'd venture to say that you didn't.

BOB
What difference is it to you? It's none of your business.

Glen sees Bob's gaming station - multiple large computer monitors, joystick controllers, headphones, empty pizza box, beer cans, etc.

GLEN
You still gaming?

BOB
Yeah, some.

Glen, looking around some more.

GLEN
It's obvious that you haven't eaten yet today. Come on, get yourself cleaned up and dressed, and let's go get some lunch.

Bob enters his bedroom while Glen shoves some clothes off the sofa and onto the floor, and sits down on the sofa.

Glen picks up a Sports Illustrated off the coffee table and uncovers a DOCUMENT that had been concealed by the magazine. He picks up the document and examines it:

*30-DAY NOTICE TO VACATE FOR NON-
PAYMENT OF RENT*

Glen sets the notice and the magazine back down with a troubled look on his face. He shouts to Bob in the other room.

GLEN (CONT'D)
You want to go to Busters, Chet's,
or Marco's?

BOB (O.C.)
Six-seven...

GLEN
What?

BOB
I don't care.

GLEN
Well, you feel like a burger,
Italian, or Mexican?

Bob comes out of the bedroom, still unshaven, hair wetly combed, and buttoning his shirt as he walks barefoot.

BOB
Glen, I really don't care.

GLEN
Wow! What's with the attitude?

BOB
How'd you feel if you were abruptly
awakened from a great dream, then
ordered about while still trying to
clear the cobwebs out of your head?

GLEN
Well, if you don't want to go, just
say so.

Bob sits on the sofa, sifts through some clothing laying on the floor, and finds his shoes.

BOB
(more contrite)
No. It's okay. I'll be fine.

GLEN
Okay. Get your shoes on and let's go.

Bob slips on his loafers as Glen begins walking toward the door.

BOB
Alright... I'll be right there.

They exit the room and Bob closes the door behind them.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Bob and Glen sit at a small table, eating their lunch - Bob, a burger and fries; Glen a salad.

GLEN
So, how's the job search going?

BOB
(shrugs his shoulders)
Meh.

GLEN
What exactly is that supposed to mean?

BOB
I've not found anything that fits my qualifications and skill set.

GLEN
(bursting out with laughter)
What!? A lazy, reclusive sports addict and gamer, who doesn't like leaving his house?

BOB
(somewhat defensive)
Wait a minute. . . I know my sports, and I'm good at video games, and I'm intelligent . . . and creative. . . and . . .

GLEN
(interrupting)
Good looking. . . and let's not
forget, humble.

Bob can't help it and begins laughing along with Glen.

Glen reaches into his pocket and pulls out a folded piece of paper. He unfolds it as he hands it to Bob.

GLEN (CONT'D)
I found something that just might
interest you. . . and I think your
skill set would work quite well
with it.

Bob scans the colorful flyer.

BOB
You've got to be kidding me.

GLEN
No, Bob, I'm not.
(pause)
You're unemployed, not seriously
looking for any employment, and
about to be evicted from your
apartment.

BOB
(shocked expression)
How'd you. . . ?

GLEN
I saw the notice on your table.

BOB
You know it's not polite to read
other people's mail.

GLEN
Yeah, but maybe it's a good thing
that I saw it.
(beat)
Look, this might be a good deal for
you. . . If selected, you wouldn't
have to worry about housing. . . or
food. . . or anything else for that
matter. Everything would be
provided for you. And it's only
eighteen months long. Shoot, it
might be good for you.
And, you'd get paid a hundred grand
at the end of the eighteen months.

(MORE)

And tell me you don't need the money.

Bob ponders the idea.

BOB

Well, I could use the money.

GLEN

And you'd probably enjoy the time . . . being away from people. . . no one bothering you. . . doing your own thing. . . not a care in the world.

BOB

Yeah, maybe. But who's this Lifeway Industries anyway?

GLEN

It says on that flyer that they're some type of research corporation.

(beat)

I'm telling ya, Bob, you'd be a great lab rat for this study.

Glen bursts into laughter which causes Bob to chuckles somewhat.

BOB

Alright, I'll contact them.

GLEN

Swear to me that you will. . . that you'll contact them as soon as we get back to your apartment.

BOB

Okay. Okay. I swear.

GLEN

Good. I think this will really be a good opportunity for you.

BOB

Yeah, maybe. We'll see.

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT - LATER

Glen sits on the sofa as Bob nervously paces while holding the flyer in one hand and dialing a number on his cellphone with his other.

The phone rings on the other end of the call. Suddenly the phone is answered.

BOB
Hello, is this the number for the
study on sleep patterns?
(beat)
Ah, yes. . . circadian rhythm
patterns.
(beat)
Yes, I have one.
(beat)
Just a moment, let me get a pen.

Bob shuffles a bunch of papers and trash around on his gaming station until he finds a pen and paper.

BOB (CONT'D)
Okay, go ahead.

Bob writes something on the paper.

BOB (CONT'D)
Okay. Got it. Thanks.

Bob puts his phone into his pocket.

GLEN
Well, what'd they say?

BOB
I need to log into this web site. . .
(points to paper he just
wrote on)
And download some documents
explaining the project and some
type of application form, fill it
out, and return it to them.

GLEN
Then what?

BOB
I don't know. The guy said they'd
get back to me.

GLEN
Okay. So what are you waiting for?
Do it.

Bob takes a seat in his chair at his gaming station, taps his keyboard and his computer screen comes alive. He types on his keyboard and his computer screen shows:

*Lifeway Industries Circadian Rhythm
Study*

Bob clicks on one of the pull-down menus and a document appears on the screen. Bob taps on another button and the document begins printing on his nearby printer.

After the printer stops printing, Bob retrieves the printed pages. . . leafing through them and counting each page.

BOB

Geez. . . It's a more than a dozen pages.

GLEN

So. Big deal. I'll reimburse you for the paper. I'll leave so you can fill out this application. I'll call you tomorrow to check on your progress.

BOB

Yeah, yeah. I'll get it done.

GLEN

OK. I'm counting on it.

Glen gets up and heads towards the door, then turns back to look at Bob.

GLEN (CONT'D)

Tomorrow, Bob! I'm counting on you.

BOB

Yeah, yeah.

Glen leaves and closes the door.

Bob sets the stack of papers on his coffee table, grabs his pen, and begins working on them.

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bob is sleeping on his sofa when his phone RINGS and awakens him. He picks it up, rubs his eyes, and peers at the caller's number. It only says "Lifeway Industries".

Bob sits up and presses a button on his phone.

BOB

Hello?

(beat)

Yep, that's me.

(MORE)

(beat)
 Yeah, I did. . . scanned it and
 emailed it to you yesterday.
 (beat)
 Oh, okay.
 (beat)
 Yeah, I suppose so.
 (beat)
 Today!? I don't think that's gonna
 work for me.
 (beat)
 Tomorrow? Yeah, that might work.
 What time?
 (beat)
 And where?
 (beat)
 Uh, wait a moment while I find a
 pen.

Bob rustles through papers on his coffee table until he finds
 a pen. He also grabs a piece of paper - his eviction notice -
 and flips it over

BOB (CONT'D)
 Okay, I'm ready.

Bob hastily scribbles something on the paper.

BOB (CONT'D)
 Really!? That's quite a ways for
 me. . .
 (beat)
 Oh, really. Uber? Yeah, I think
 that'll work. You need my address?
 (beat)
 Oh, that's right, it was on the
 application.
 (beat)
 Say that again.
 (beat)
 Instructions emailed? You have any
 idea when?
 (beat)
 Okay. I'll watch for them.
 (beat)
 Yeah, bye. . . Oh wait! . . . Do I
 need to bring. . .

Bob glances at the screen of his phone, which is now blank.

BOB (CONT'D)
 Crap!

He puts down his phone and leans back on the sofa and stares at the ceiling.

INT. LIFEWAY INDUSTRIES FOYER - DAY

Bob, clad in wrinkled khaki pants and an Aloha shirt enters through the turn-style door. Once inside, he looks at the paper he's holding, then looks around. Looking lost, he walks up to the reception desk, manned by MARGO (30) (clueless female with pink hair who is obviously only there for the paycheck).

MARGO
May I help you?

BOB
Yeah, maybe. I'm looking for a Dr.
Jensen who's involved with. . .
wait a sec.

He pulls the flyer out of his pocket.

BOB (CONT'D)
With some type of circadian rhythm
study.

MARGO
Dr. Jensen, you said?

BOB
Yeah.

MARGO
And your name?

BOB
Bob.

Margo types something into her computer, then picks up her phone and punches in a five-digit number.

MARGO
Hi, Shandra. Margo from reception.
I've got an individual named Bob
down here with me, who says he's
looking for Dr. Jensen.
(beat)
Okay. Thanks.

Margo hangs up her phone.

MARGO (CONT'D)
Someone will be down to get you in
a moment. You can wait over there.

She points to a row of three chairs near a large planter box nearby.

Bob nods his head and walks over to the chairs and sits. He fidgets while he waits, not really knowing what to do with his hands.

After a few moments, a nearby elevator DINGS, door opens, and Shandra exits. She walks over to Bob and extends her hand.

SHANDRA
Bob?

Bob stands up and shakes her hand.

BOB
Yeah.

SHANDRA
I'm Shandra. We're glad you could
make it today. Follow me and I'll
take you to meet with Dr. Jensen.

Bob follows her to the elevator. Shandra presses the button, DING - the door opens and they step inside.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Shandra presses a button on the control panel, and the door closes.

SHANDRA
I know you've probably got lots of
questions, but I'm going to let Dr.
Jensen answer them. He's the person
in charge of this study.

BOB
Okay.

The elevator DINGS as it stops. The door opens and Shandra leads Bob to the conference room right across the hall from the elevator.

INT. LIFEWAY INDUSTRIES CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shandra opens the door and leads Bob into the room. She closes the door behind them and proceeds to introduce Bob to the team seated around the table.

SHANDRA
(points)
Bob, this is Dr. Jensen.

Dr. Jensen rises and offers his hand. Bob shakes it.

DR. JENSEN
Nice to meet you, Bob.

Bob nods his head.

SHANDRA
(points)
And this is Wilhelm and Jose. They,
along with me, are Dr. Jensen's
assistants.

Wilhelm and Jose nod and wave.

WILHELM
Bob.

JOSE
Hey, Bob.

Bob returns their nods.

Dr. Jensen points to the chair immediately across from his seat.

DR. JENSEN
Bob, why don't you take a seat
there and we'll get started. Would
you like anything to drink?

BOB
(nervous joking)
Maybe a whiskey sour?

No one laughs.

BOB (CONT'D)
How about some water.

Dr. Jensen nods to Shandra, who immediately stands, exits the room, and returns moments later with a bottle of water and a glass. She hands them to Bob then returns to her seat.

Bob places the glass on the table in front of him, opens the bottle, and fills the glass. As he is filling his glass, his hand is shaking.

As takes a drink, Bob glances around and notices that all eyes are observing his every action. He slowly and cautiously sets the glass down.

DR. JENSEN
Nervous, Bob?

BOB
Yeah, a little.

DR. JENSEN
Why?

BOB
Because I have no idea what's going on or what I might be getting myself into.

DR. JENSEN
That's understandable. Let me first explain what this study is all about.

Bob nods his head.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)
We're conducting some research on circadian rhythms.

He pauses briefly while he studies Bob's expressions.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)
You have any idea what circadian rhythms are?

BOB
Nope. No idea.

DR. JENSEN
Okay. Wilhelm, explain to Bob what circadian rhythms are.

WILHELM
Sure. A circadian rhythm is basically your body clock. . . when you're awake, when you sleep, when you eat, when you use the bathroom . . . Get the picture?

BOB
Yeah, sort of.

WILHELM
Normally, our circadian rhythm pattern is dictated by the sun. When the sun is out, we're normally awake, during night time, we sleep.

DR. JENSEN
Well, Bob, we're studying these rhythm patterns in humans, attempting to see if persons naturally run on a twenty-four hour cycle, or if it's more or less than a twenty-four hour cycle.
(beat)
Okay, you with me so far?

BOB
Yeah, I think so.

DR. JENSEN
Alright, well, in order to properly test our subjects, we need to deprive them of any and all external stimuli that relates to time. In other words, there cannot be any clocks, no windows to see if it's day or night, no phones, and very limited interaction with anyone from the outside world. And this has to be done over a relatively long period of time in order to get accurate results. . . Still with me?

Bob nods his head slightly.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)
Okay, so have you heard of or seen the TV show "Big Brother"?

BOB
Yeah, some.

DR. JENSEN
Good. Well, this study is sort of a "Big Brother" operation, where we'll be observing you via closed circuit TV. . . twenty-four hours every day. . . for eighteen months. Would you be comfortable with that?

Bob shrugs his shoulders.

BOB
Yeah, I guess.

JOSE
(to Dr. Jensen)
May I?

Dr. Jensen nods his head.

JOSE (CONT'D)
Every room will have cameras and microphones. . . all except the toilet closet. The bathroom will have a camera, but the shower will have frosted glass so there would be some privacy. But the separate toilet closet will not have any camera or microphone. We don't want to be crude in our observations.

DR. JENSEN
That's right, Bob. . . Still with us?

BOB
Yeah.

DR. JENSEN
Good. During this eighteen month period, you won't have any physical human contact. However, you will be able to converse with the controller on duty, although his or her voice will be altered - um, computerized - so you won't know who it is.

Dr. Jensen pauses briefly as he looks at his notes.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)
All supplies and materials will be delivered to you in a manner where there will be no physical interaction with anyone. . . via the elevator. And any supplies and materials you might request must be approved by one of us here. If approved, those supplies and materials will also be delivered by the elevator, where there will be no interaction with anyone. . . How's that sound? Would you be okay with that?

Bob shrugs again.

BOB

Yeah, I guess.

DR. JENSEN

Okay, good. If you are selected to participate, during your stay, we will be observing everything you say and do. Detailed notes and recordings will be taken and made on activities and functions such as sleep; fatigue; alertness and attentiveness; personal hygiene; digestive functions such as eating and eliminating waste; your attitude and demeanor - in other words: happiness, sadness, loneliness, anger, frustration; and your health and physical attributes - such as weight, blood pressure, blood sugar levels, and oxygen levels. Should you become ill, we would provide a doctor to examine you and provide necessary medical treatment. . . Okay so far?

Bob nods his head.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)

Shandra, tell Bob about the living conditions.

SHANDRA

Sure. . . You would be residing in an underground house, with an open floorplan concept, consisting of a small kitchen and a "great room", one bedroom, with a bed size of your choice, and one bathroom. There's only one way in or out. . . via the elevator.

DR. JENSEN

You'll be able to request just about anything you desire to make your life easier or better - for example, exercise equipment, music equipment, other hobby items, types of food, etcetera. However, there is no guarantee that the item or items requested will be provided.

(MORE)

Approval of requested items rests ultimately with me, the program manager. . . Do you have any questions at this time?

BOB

Yeah. What about a computer and internet access? Based on my application, you know I'm a gamer.

DR. JENSEN

Yeah, we're aware of that. You will be able to have a computer and limited access to the internet, but everything will be screened and filtered to eliminate any context of time or date. You will be able to play video games, but unfortunately, only solo. There won't be any online gaming with other players.

BOB

Why not?

DR. JENSEN

Because you could make correlations to time based on various factors. . . like, for instance, the number of players participating. Sorry, we can't allow any online interactions with others.

Bob scrunches his face in disappointment.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)

Is that a game breaker for you? No pun intended.

BOB

Naw, I don't think so. But I'll get to choose what video games I get?

DR. JENSEN

I think we can do that.

(beat)

So, what do you think? You in or out?

All eyes are once again focused intently on Bob as he takes another drink of water before responding.

BOB
I think I can do this, but when
would I start?

DR. JENSEN
Probably in a week or so. Will that
work for you?

Bob once again shrugs his shoulders.

BOB
Yeah, I guess.

Dr. Jensen glances at his notes.

DR. JENSEN
Oh, there's one more thing. . .
You'll have to undergo a physical
exam and a mental exam to ensure
that you're physically and mentally
capable of participating in this
type of study.

BOB
I guess that's okay with me. When
and where?

DR. JENSEN
We'll let you know within the next
couple days.

BOB
By email?

DR. JENSEN
Yeah, that'll work, as long as you
check your email frequently.

BOB
That I do.

DR. JENSEN
Okay. Sounds like a plan. Any other
questions?

Bob shrugs his shoulders and shakes his head.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)
Alright then, we'll be in touch.
Shandra will show you the way back
to the reception area and get you
an Uber.

Dr. Jensen stands and offers his hand.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)
Nice to meet you, Bob.

Bob shakes his hand.

BOB
Yeah, thanks.

Shandra stands and moves to the door, opening it for Bob. Bob rises and glances at Wilhelm and Jose. They both nod and give a slight wave.

Bob exits the room and Shandra leads him to the elevator. Shandra presses the button and the door opens with a DING.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Shandra presses a button on the control panel, and the door closes.

The silence is palpable as the elevator moves to the ground floor.

The door opens with a DING and Shandra and Bob exit.

INT. LIFEWAY INDUSTRIES FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Shandra uses her head to point Bob to the chairs where he was previously sitting, while she feverishly works her thumbs on her phone's keypad.

SHANDRA
Why don't you wait there while I
get you an Uber.
(beat)
Oh, good. There's one only a couple
minutes away. I'll wait here until
it arrives and you depart.

They move over by the chairs, but Bob doesn't sit. Neither does Shandra

BOB
Shandra, right?

SHANDRA
Yeah.

BOB
Tell me. . . in all honesty. . . If
you were in my shoes, would you
participate in this study?

SHANDRA

Yeah, I think I would.

BOB

Why?

SHANDRA

Well, it's a worthwhile study. What
ever information we collect can
better explain how people function
. . . Why some people are night
people, and some people aren't. . .
Why some people have a hard time
getting going in the mornings,
while some rise early with no
difficulty.

BOB

Okay.

SHANDRA

And. . . I think it would be a
great way for the participant. . .
I'm sorry. . . for me to find out
more about myself. . . my
strengths, my weaknesses, my likes
and dislikes. . . and give me a
glimpse into what motivates me. . .
Yeah, I think I would do it.

BOB

Okay. Great. Thanks.

SHANDRA

No problem.

Shandra glances at her phone, then toward the front window.

SHANDRA (CONT'D)

Oh, your Uber just pulled up.

BOB

Okay, thanks.

Bob turns and begins walking toward the front turnstyle door.

SHANDRA

(calling out to Bob)

Hey Bob.

Bob turns to look at her.

SHANDRA (CONT'D)

We'll be in touch, okay?

Bob nods his head, then turns and exits the building.

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bob, dressed in sweat pants and an old t-shirt, sits at his gaming desk, involved in an online war game.

A BANGING at his door is heard, but Bob, wearing his headphones, doesn't hear it.

The BANGING continues, but Bob is oblivious.

Bob's phone BUZZES - vibrating while sitting on the desk. He hesitantly picks it up and glances at it, then sets it back down. The phone stops buzzing.

The phone begins BUZZING again. Again, Bob picks it up and looks at the caller ID, but this time he one-handed answers it without missing a beat on the game.

BOB

What do you want, Glen? I'm sort of busy.

(beat)

No, I'm involved with my squad, defeating Hitler's entire army.

(beat)

Can't it wait?

(beat)

Oh alright. . . Give me a couple minutes.

Bob terminates the call and sets the phone down.

We watch then as Bob's on-line character gets blown up from an enemy's grenade and ends his immediate participation in that battle.

Bob removes his headphones, gets up, goes to the door, unlocks and opens it.

BOB (CONT'D)

Man, you just got me killed.

Glen stands on the other side of the door with three boxes of Chinese food and a six-pack of Coors Light.

He barges into the room, struggling to keep the contents in his hands and arms from finding the floor. He gets to the coffee table and manages to successfully set everything down.

GLEN
So, what's happening with that
study? You gonna do it?

BOB
I don't know. . . haven't decided
yet.

Glen motions with his hands for Bob to provide more
information.

BOB (CONT'D)
I did go to an interview with the
company yesterday.

Glen and Bob begin opening the boxes of food.

GLEN
And. . . ?

Glen begins shoveling his noodle dish into his mouth using
chop sticks.

BOB
And I guess it went okay. They want
me to take a physical exam.

GLEN
You got to take a physical? Whoa,
hope you can pass it.

Bob smells each of the boxes.

BOB
Yeah, me too. What's this stuff?

GLEN
Kung pao chicken. I got that one
for you. Try it, you'll like it. Is
that it then? Is that all you have
to do?

Bob sticks his chopsticks into the box, attempting to fish
out some of the contents.

BOB
No, I also have to be evaluated
psychologically.

Glen gags on his bite as he begins to laugh.

GLEN
Well, I know you won't pass that.

BOB
(sarcastically, while
taking a bite)
Screw you!

They both continue eating while conversing.

GLEN
But did the interview sound
promising?

BOB
Yeah, I guess.

GLEN
Just keep thinking of the hundred
grand you'd get at the end.

BOB
Yeah, that could be somewhat
persuasive.

GLEN
And the free room and board.

BOB
Yeah, that too.

GLEN
Then, what's stopping you?

BOB
I don't know. . . Maybe it's the
fact that I'll be watched twenty-
four seven via closed circuit TV. I
really won't have any privacy.

GLEN
And that bothers you?

BOB
Yeah, sort of.

GLEN
But you'll get used to that really
quick, and after a while you won't
even know that you're being
watched.

BOB
Maybe, but I don't know. . . .

GLEN
So, when's this physical?

BOB

Not sure. They're gonna email me
with appointment info.

GLEN

(chuckles)

You want me to go hold your hand?

BOB

Go pound sand!

GLEN

No, but seriously, though, I think
you should do this. What've you got
to lose?

BOB

Only a year and a half of my life.

GLEN

What!? Is that any different from
what you're doing right now. . .
living like a hermit while playing
your games? At least there you'd be
living the same type of life-style
and saving up some money. . . a
hundred grand! That's a lot of
money.

BOB

Yeah, maybe.

GLEN

Tell you what. . . after you get
that email, let me know when your
physical's supposed to be and I'll
drive you there.

BOB

Thanks, but no thanks. They get me
an Uber when I need to go anywhere.
So I can ride in something nice
instead of your rust bucket.

GLEN

Hey! . . That car's been good to
me. . . and you, when you've
borrowed it.

BOB

Yeah, but this Uber thing is really
nice.

Glen looks at his watch.

GLEN

Oh, hey, I gotta get goin'.

He quickly grabs a beer, gets up, and heads for the door. He stops just before reaching the door.

GLEN (CONT'D)

Really, Bob, you should do this.

He turns and exits the apartment, closing the door behind him.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

- Bob, dressed in jeans and a Grateful Dead t-shirt, sits in a chair while a NURSE (35) takes a blood sample from his arm.
- Bob, hands the nurse a sample cup, half-filled with urine.
- Bob, sits on an examination table and a DOCTOR (45) listens to his chest through a stethoscope.
- Bob, sits in a chair in front of the desk of a PSYCHOLOGIST (55) who holds up a series of Rorschach Test inkblots.
- Bob, sits there while the psychologist holds up one of pictures in the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) - a black-and-white picture of a woman holding a book in a country scene and watching a man working in a field in the background.

END MONTAGE:

INT. LIFEWAY INDUSTRIES CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Dr. Jensen, Wilhelm, Shandra, and Jose sit around the conference table, strewn with papers and files.

DR. JENSEN

(to Shandra)

How's the house coming?

SHANDRA

It's pretty much done. Only a couple more small things and it'll be complete.

DR. JENSEN

And when will that be?

SHANDRA

Um, maybe a couple more days.

DR. JENSEN
(to Jose)
How about the marketing plan?

JOSE
I think it was successful. We got
nearly a hundred candidates to
respond to it.

DR. JENSEN
Okay, that's pretty good
considering the short amount of
time we had.

JOSE
Yeah. But only thirty-three passed
the initial threshold of not being
on any medications.

DR. JENSEN
And what about those candidates?

WILHELM
Well, that's where the problems
begin.

DR. JENSEN
Problems?

WILHELM
Okay. . . so we got thirty-three
candidates, but none of them are a
perfect match for what we're
looking for.

DR. JENSEN
What do you mean?

WILHELM
Well, nearly all of them passed the
physical exam. But none of them
passed the psychological exam.

DR. JENSEN
None?

WILHELM
Yeah. Nearly everyone showed some
problems with isolation for an
extended period of time.

DR. JENSEN
You say, "nearly everyone". . .

Wilhelm shuffles through the many file folders on the table and pulls out one and opens it.

WILHELM

Yeah. There was one candidate who tested okay with isolation but had problems in another area.

DR. JENSEN

What area was that?

WILHELM

Motivation.

DR. JENSEN

Huh?

WILHELM

Yeah, that gamer guy. . . remember him?

DR. JENSEN

Wasn't he one of the first we interviewed?

Wilhelm looks at the name on the front of the file folder.

WILHELM

Yeah. . . the first. . . Bob Renfro.

DR. JENSEN

So, what's his problem?

Wilhelm flips through some pages in the file folder.

WILHELM

Well, although his isolation index reflected that he has no problems being alone, his motivation index reflected that he doesn't like to do too much of anything. . . Apparently, he likes to just sit around and play video games.

DR. JENSEN

And there's a problem with that?

WILHELM

Yeah, somewhat. The psychologist thought that if we can't provide sufficient challenge to him with the video games. . . you know. . .

(MORE)

providing a descent variety and increasing level of difficulty over the duration of the test. . . he might likely become extremely bored and wouldn't be a good test subject anymore.

DR. JENSEN

Was that the only problem with him?

WILHELM

Yeah.

DR. JENSEN

Well, I think we should go ahead with him and just see what might happen. He might be perfectly content with whatever games he is provided and there might not be an issue whatsoever.

SHANDRA

But then again, if Bob should be come bored. . . bored to the extent that he doesn't want to do anything at all. . . won't that ruin the entire data sample collected?

DR. JENSEN

It might. . . but if we get sufficient quantity and quality data over a long enough period of time, prior to boredom setting in, the test could still be a success.

JOSE

What if his boredom transfers into some other type of manifestation? Say. . . maybe. . . anger or rage or violence?

DR. JENSEN

Did his psychological profile reflect a tendency for any of these?

Wilhelm flips though more pages in Bob's file folder.

WILHELM

No.

DR. JENSEN

Then, I think it would be worth the risk to continue with him. Any objections?

Everyone shakes their head.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)

Okay. So when will everything be ready on this end?

SHANDRA

I would say. . . next week.

Jose and Wilhelm nod their concurrence.

DR. JENSEN

Okay, good. How about this coming Monday?

WILHELM

We'll have to check with him. . . Bob.

DR. JENSEN

Okay. Get that done, but gently press for next Monday morning.

They all nod their heads.

DR. JENSEN (CONT'D)

Good. Alright everyone. Good job. Let's make this happen.

Dr. Jensen gets up, grabs his notebook, and leaves the room. Shandra and Jose gather up the remaining thirty-two file folders strewn on the table.

SHANDRA

What do think we should do with these?

WILHELM

Let's keep them, just in case Bob backs out and doesn't participate.

Shandra nods her head.

Once they have all the file folders and papers off the table, they exit the room, turning off the light behind them.

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bob sits at his gaming station playing a first-person shooting game (like Doom). His character gets killed.

BOB

Damn it!

He types some keys and his email home page pops up. He opens deletes a few, opens a couple to quickly scan their messages, then stops when he sees one from Lifeway Industries.

He hesitates for a few seconds before finally opening the document.

After reading the document, he picks up his cellphone and dials a number.

We hear a faint RINGING as Bob is just holding the phone, staring blankly at the computer screen.

PHONE (V.O.)

Hello?

Bob quickly puts the phone up by his ear.

BOB

Hey, Glen.

(beat)

Yeah, okay, I guess.

(beat)

Hey, I just opened an email from the study people.

Bob looks more closely at the computer screen.

BOB (CONT'D)

Uh. . . it looks like about five hours ago.

(beat)

Well, it says that I was selected and they are extending an invitation for me to participate in the study.

(beat)

It says here. . . next Monday.

(beat)

Yeah, Monday.

(beat)

I know it's not much time. . . .

(beat)

When?

(beat)

Tomorrow?

(beat)

(MORE)

No, not really. I've got about everything I need that I'll take with me.

(beat)

Well, maybe. . . yeah.

(beat)

Okay. Tomorrow at ten.

(beat)

Yeah. . . Okay. . . see ya then.

Bob ends the phone call.

INT. WALMART - DAY

Bob pushes a shopping cart while he and Glen walk down an aisle with personal hygiene products and deodorants.

GLEN

Okay. How many shirts do you have?

BOB

What type? Dress shirts? T-shirts?

GLEN

Who are you going to be trying to impress? You won't need any dress shirts there. I'm talking about casual shirts. . . what you wear every day. . . t-shirts.

BOB

I don't know. . . maybe a dozen or so.

GLEN

Okay. We'll pick up a couple more.

(points at the deodorants)

What about razor blades, deodorant, stuff like that?

BOB

Like you just said. . . Who am I going to try to impress? No one. I'll take what I've got at home. And if I run out or don't use it, what difference will it make?

GLEN

What else did they ask for in that email?

BOB

Well, they wanted to know about my gaming station.

GLEN

So, what'd you do?

BOB

I sent them a photo of my station and a list of all the necessary equipment and the games I like to play.

GLEN

You think they'll do anything with that?

BOB

They said they would.

GLEN

Wow. Okay. What about food, drinks, and snack type stuff?

BOB

They said they'd provide all that.

GLEN

Okay. Cool!

They turn and begin walking down another aisle.

GLEN (CONT'D)

And what time are you supposed to be there on Monday?

BOB

They said they would like me to get there around nine.

GLEN

AM or PM?

BOB

AM.

GLEN

That's pretty early for you. . .
You gonna be able to do that?

BOB

Well, they said they'd have an Uber there to pick me up at eight thirty. So I guess I'll have to.

GLEN

Want me to call you before then to
make sure you're up?

BOB

Nah. . . I'm a big boy now and can
get myself up and ready.

GLEN

I'll believe it when I see it.
(beat)
You nervous? Excited? Or what?

BOB

Yeah. . . I guess a little of both.
A little nervous because I really
don't know exactly what's going to
happen and exactly what I'm getting
into. And a little excited because
I don't really know what's going to
happen, but it might be a cool
experience.

GLEN

Yeah.

INT. BOB'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bob wads up a couple t-shirts and stuffs them into a fairly
full old Army duffle-bag. He grabs a pair of Bermuda shorts
laying on his couch, wads them up and stuffs them into his
duffle-bag.

He walks over to his gaming station, wraps up his headphones
and ever-so-gently inserts them into the duffle.

He then picks up a video game case laying on his desk,
quickly scans the back of the case, opens the case to ensure
the disc is present, closes it, and gently places it into his
duffle. He repeats this with another game case.

Bob pulls out his phone from his pocket and dials a number.
We hear a faint RINGING as Bob is just holding the phone,
while studying his computer station.

PHONE (V.O.)

Hey, Bob.

Bob quickly puts the phone up by his ear.

BOB

Hey, Glen.
(beat)

(MORE)

Yeah, I got myself up.
(beat)
Well, a thought just occurred to me.
(beat)
Ha ha ha. . .
(beat)
No. . . But I was wondering. . .
(beat)
Yeah, I do that every once in a while. . .
(beat)
Anyway. . . Could you come by and pick up all my stuff in this apartment and store it somewhere while I'm gone?
(beat)
No. . . Basically my computers, TV and a few other things.
(beat)
Clothes? . . No. I'll buy some new clothes once I get the money at the end of the study.
(beat)
No. . . Your place would be fine.
Hey, thanks.
(beat)
Yeah, you to.

Bob terminates the call and slips the phone back into his pocket.

INT. LIFEWAY INDUSTRIES FOYER - DAY

Bob enters carrying a large duffle-bag. He's wearing a AC/DC t-shirt, blue jeans, and a light open denim jacket.

He once again approaches the reception desk.

MARGO
May I help you?

BOB
Yeah. I'm supposed to report here this morning for that study.

MARGO
Oh yeah. I heard that you'd be coming in today. Why don't you wait over there (points) and I'll call someone to get you.

Bob walks over to the three chairs and sets his bag on two of them. He begins pacing back and forth.

MARGO (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Hey, it's Margo at Reception. That
guy is here.
(beat)
OK. I'll tell him.

Margo looks in Bob's direction.

MARGO (CONT'D)
Hey, someone will be right down.

Bob nods his head in acknowledgement.

Moments later, a DING is heard and the elevator door opens. Jose exits the elevator and walks over to Bob and extends his hand.

JOSE
Hey, Bob.

Bob shakes Jose's hand.

BOB
Hey.

JOSE
Let me help you with that. We're
going to go upstairs to the
conference room before going to
your new residence.

BOB
Okay.

As Jose reaches for Bob's duffle bag, Bob defensively grabs it.

BOB (CONT'D)
That's okay. I got it.

Jose nods his head and points towards the elevator.

JOSE
Shall we?

They walk to the elevator and Jose presses the button. The door DINGS open and they enter.

INT. LIFEWAY INDUSTRIES CONFERENCE ROOM

The elevator door DINGS and opens. Jose and Bob (carrying his bag) exit and walk across the hall to the conference room.

Inside the room Wilhelm is standing waiting. He offers a welcoming hand to Bob as he enters the room.

WILHELM

Hey, Bob.

BOB

Hey.

WILHELM

Okay. What we need for you to do is empty your bag out onto this table. And when you've got that emptied, then we need for you to empty all your pockets and turn them inside out.

Bob gets rather defensive.

BOB

What the hell for?

WILHELM

We have to ensure that you're not bringing with you anything that would be prohibited.

Bob sets his bag down on one of the chairs and begins pulling the contents out and placing everything on the table - headphones, game cases, wadded up clothing. . . .

Jose and Wilhelm check each item, inspecting for contraband.

While Jose rummages through the clothing, Wilhelm picks up the headphones and gives Bob a questioning look.

BOB

What? . . They're comfortable.

Wilhelm opens each of the game cases, glances at the discs, then looks at Bob.

BOB (CONT'D)

What? . . Those are my favorites.

Wilhelm closes the cases and sets them back on the table.

Soon, the bag is empty.

WILHELM
And your pockets?

Bob pulls everything out of his pockets and places them on the table - cellphone, keys, wallet, small pocket knife. Then he pulls his pockets inside out.

WILHELM (CONT'D)
Great, thanks. You wear a watch?

BOB
Nope.

WILHELM
Can we see?

Bob pulls up his sleeves to show bare wrists.

WILHELM (CONT'D)
OK. Thanks.

Jose picks up Bob's phone from the table and shows Wilhelm.

WILHELM (CONT'D)
Bob, sorry, but we're going to have to keep this. You'll get a new one back at the end of the study. Anyways, you won't need this when you're in the new residence.

Wilhelm picks up the pocket knife and keys.

WILHELM (CONT'D)
You won't need any keys. And the knife. . . well. . . let's just say it could be a safety hazard. And you won't need it anyway. We'll store these away and return them to you at the end of the study.

Wilhelm waves his hand over the items on the table.

WILHELM (CONT'D)
Everything else here is okay. You can pack it all up now, then we'll have you sign a few papers and take you to your new home.

Bob stuffs his items back into his duffle bag.

WILHELM (CONT'D)
 (points to an open chair)
 Bob, why don't you sit there and
 I'll go over all these documents
 with you.

Wilhelm places six documents on the table in front of Bob.

BOB
 What are all of these?

WILHELM
 Oh, they're just documents our
 legal office is requiring. They
 basically state what's going to be
 happening. . . and that you consent
 to being monitored twenty-four-
 seven. . . and that you're doing
 this voluntarily. . . and that
 you're to be paid a hundred
 thousand dollars at the end of the
 study.
 (brief pause)
 So if you would sign each of these
 documents where indicated by the
 yellow tabs, we can get going and
 take you to your new home.

Bob gives a cursory glance at each document, and signs at
 each yellow tab.

INT. STUDY APARTMENT - LATER

The elevator DINGS and the door opens. Bob, carrying his
 duffle bag, steps out of the elevator, led by Wilhelm.

WILHELM
 Well, Bob, here's your new place.
 Let me give you the twenty-five
 cent tour.

Bob sets down his duffle bag and follows Wilhelm.

We see a living room area with sofa and plush recliner chair,
 a large screen TV above an electric fireplace.

WILHELM (CONT'D)
 This is the main room of the
 apartment.

On one side of the room is a small typical kitchen with an
 "island for two" with two bar stools and a small round wooden
 kitchen table with two wooden chairs.

WILHELM (CONT'D)
Back there is the kitchen. I think
you'll find it has all the
appliances you'll need.

BOB
Why two chairs if I'm going to be
all alone in this place?

WILHELM
Um. . . I guess it's just for
aesthetics. You want us to remove
them?

BOB
Naw. . . They're okay.

Bob opens the refrigerator and sees it filled with food,
including fruit, vegetables, and BOTTLES OF BEER.

BOB (CONT'D)
I see you've got the important
things here.

WILHELM
The brand okay for you?

BOB
Yeah. . . just about any beer is
good with me.

WILHELM
We've tried to think of everything
you might need for your first few
days.

BOB
(nervously joking)
I doubt that I'll be needing the
carrots and. . . Is that spinach?

WILHELM
Yeah, I think so.

BOB
Well, I definitely won't be needing
that.

WILHELM
Gotcha.

Bob opens the freezer door to reveal a few TV dinners and
frozen pizzas.

WILHELM (CONT'D)

I hope you like frozen pizza.

BOB

Who doesn't?

WILHELM

We got the more expensive ones for you.

BOB

That'll work.

Bob opens each cabinet door and drawer, making a mental note of the contents - dishware, pots and pans, boxes of cereal, a case of bottled water, and other supplies.

WILHELM

The bottled water is there just in case you find the tap water unsuitable.

BOB

Does the water and ice dispenser in the fridge work?

WILHELM

Yeah, they should.

Bob nods his head.

WILHELM (CONT'D)

Now, don't wait until you run out of something before asking for a resupply. Although we'll be watching you and will resupply when we notice a low inventory, we may miss something.

BOB

And how do I ask for a resupply. . . or anything, for that matter?

WILHELM

All you have to do is vocalize it. You should get your resupply within a short period of time.

BOB

How long is "short"?

WILHELM

Probably only a few hours for most things.

BOB
(jokingly)
But who's counting the time,
though. . . Right?

WILHELM
Yeah, right.

On another side of the room is a gaming station, very similar
in set up to what Bob had in his old apartment.

Bob walks over and examines the gaming station and equipment.

BOB
Sweet! You get everything I wrote
on my list?

WILHELM
Yes. I think so. Except, I believe
the actual computer unit is the
next generation system.

BOB
Ah, that's good. And the games?

WILHELM
On the desk there. We got the ones
you listed and threw in a couple
more that we thought of.

Bob walks over and quickly examines each game.

He nods his head with approval.

BOB
Yeah, I think these will work.

Wilhelm leads Bob to a doorway on another side of the great
room.

WILHELM
Here's your bedroom with the
bathroom just off it.

INT. BOB'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

They pass through the doorway to discover a queen-size bed
and a 6-drawer dresser.

BOB
No bedroom door?

WILHELM
No. . . What would its purpose be?

BOB
Yeah. . . Right.

WILHELM
Queen, extra firm, right?

BOB
Yup.

Wilhelm opens two partition doors to reveal a small closet area.

WILHELM
For your hang-up items.

BOB
(again jokingly)
As if I'll ever use that space.

Bob walks through another doorway inside the bedroom and into a small, but functional bathroom with a single basin sink and a walk-in shower.

WILHELM
Just as we told you before, the
shower door is frosted to give you
some privacy when showering.

Bob opens a door inside the bathroom.

WILHELM (CONT'D)
And that is your toilet closet.
That room has no camera or
microphone in order to offer you at
least a modicum of privacy.

BOB
That's awfully decent of you.

WILHELM
You're welcome.

BOB
Do me a favor?

WILHELM
Yeah?

BOB
(points to the toilet
closet)
(MORE)

Go in there, take a seat, and just say something. I want to see how sound-proof this door really is.

Wilhelm enters the toilet closet and closes the door as he is taking a seat on the toilet.

His voice is severely muffled.

BOB (CONT'D)
(nearly shouting)
A little louder, please.

Wilhelm's voice is louder, but still muffled and incomprehensible.

Bob opens the door.

WILHELM
(jokingly)
Hey, what about some privacy!?

BOB
(chuckling)
Yeah, sure.

WILHELM
And is it okay?

BOB
Yeah, I think it'll work.

WILHELM
Good.

INT. STUDY APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

They exit the bedroom and Bob moves over to the sofa, lying down on it.

BOB
Who knows if I'll ever use the bed.
I frequently just crash on the couch.

WILHELM
This one gonna work?

BOB
It's a little stiff, but I think it'll loosen up more as I break it in.

WILHELM

Good. Anything else?

Bob sits up and glances at the cameras in each corner of the room.

BOB

You really gonna be watchin' me
twenty-four seven?

WILHELM

Yeah.

BOB

Isn't that gonna get a little
boring for you all?

WILHELM

Yeah, maybe. But that's sorta what
this study is all about. You'll
probably get into a routine which
will be very boring for us, but it
is what it is. We're just observing
you and noting what you do.

BOB

That's it?

WILHELM

Yeah. Not much else to it.

Wilhelm turns to walk towards the elevator, but stops after only a couple steps. He turns back towards Bob.

WILHELM (CONT'D)

Oh, one more thing, Bob.

BOB

Yeah, what?

WILHELM

It would greatly assist us if you
would maintain a daily journal of
your experience here.

BOB

A daily journal? And what exactly
will I put into it? I mean, you'll
be watching me twenty-four-seven,
so you'll know everything I do.

WILHELM

Yeah, true. But we will only know
what you do. . .

(MORE)

not what you're thinking or how you feel. And we believe that will be very important for successful evaluation of this program.

BOB
(shaking his head)
I don't know. . . .

WILHELM
Tell you what. . . I'm willing to offer you an additional ten percent in pay, as a bonus at the end, if you do this for us.

BOB
Ten grand for just keeping a journal?

WILHELM
Yep. What do you think?

BOB
What will I have to write in it?

WILHELM
Anything you want. You can write what you did that day. . . but we're really interested in your thoughts and feelings. . . how you felt. It would be easiest if you wrote something in it every night before you go to bed. . . You know, to keep it consistent and easy to remember.

BOB
Every day? In a book type thing?

WILHELM
Yeah, every day. But we'll provide you with a template that you can use and you can type in onto your computer. . . Should be simple enough.

BOB
(suddenly angry)
What, is that some type of slam or something?

WILHELM
Huh?

BOB
"Simple enough". . . Are you
implying that I can't do things
that are difficult or complex?

WILHELM
(now defensive)
No. . . We're not saying that at
all. We just want to make it easy
for you. . .

Bob breaks out laughing.

BOB
I'm just messin' with you. Yeah,
I'll do it. I'd be a fool to pass
up ten grand for just writing a
little blurb each day. And anyways,
where am I gonna be going? And what
am I going to be doing? I don't
think my busy social calendar will
interfere with my schedule here.

WILHELM
(relieved)
Whew! You really had me going
there. We'll send you the template
later today so you can begin with
today's actions and feelings.

BOB
Okay.

WILHELM
Anything else?

BOB
Not that I can think of. . . at
least not right now. But what if I
do think of something later?

WILHELM
Just look at one of the cameras and
ask us. We'll respond.

BOB
Okay.

WILHELM
Alright then. You all set?

Bob shrugs his shoulders.

BOB

I guess.

WILHELM

Okay. Then good luck. . . and we'll
be seeing you. Ha ha. (*Bad attempt
at a joke.*)

BOB

Yeah, right.

Wilhelm shakes Bob's hand, then steps into the elevator.

As the elevator door closes, we see Bob standing there, just
staring at the doors with a "lost deer in the headlights"
look.

FADE TO BLACK.