

TAKING TIGER MOUNTAIN

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OVER BLACK:

"...the very people behind the conspiracy convinced anyone with the authority to investigate them, that no conspiracy existed...while simultaneously unleashing dark and dangerous forces on an unsuspecting populace."

-Valerie Ferris, excerpt from closed door testimony to the Senate Intelligence Committee.

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - OLYMPIC PENINSULA FOREST - DAY

Deep in the Pacific Northwest rainforest. Majestic pines and huge ferns tower all around. The huge ferns only allow shards of sunlight to reach the forest floor and river that flows through it.

Two FLY FISHERMEN in waders, stand mid-stream, casting their lines. Once the lures have sunk beneath the surface of the river, they pass a lit blunt between them.

The first FISHERMAN, MCBRIDE, late 20s, unshaven, hair that could stand to be washed, takes a long hit, exhales, then passes the healthy sized blunt to the other FISHERMAN, CRUZ, also unkempt, late 20s.

After taking a long hit from the blunt, CRUZ looks down at the water where a school of sockeye salmon swim past his legs.

CRUZ

...like what are fish aware of? Do they know what we are?

A beat, as MCBRIDE considers the question:

MCBRIDE

How could they?

CRUZ has been holding the blunt during the exchange. MCBRIDE glances at it:

MCBRIDE (CONT'D)

Hey man, puff, puff, give.

CRUZ, realizes he's violated stoner etiquette, passes the blunt back. MCBRIDE takes a long hit. He exhales:

MCBRIDE (CONT'D)

Their entire universe is water, other fish, and the occasional dark shape they don't understand...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He points to the area around them:

MCBRIDE (CONT'D)  
...their brains aren't capable of  
comprehending any of this.

CRUZ  
And if there were any fish scientists,  
who suggested there might be something  
outside of the river, they'd be laughed  
at.

MCBRIDE  
Right, to any normal fish, some world  
beyond the river would be crazy talk.

CRUZ passes the joint back to MCBRIDE.

CRUZ  
If I picked one up, what would it think I  
was? And once I put it back in the water,  
how would it explain me to other fish?

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

A small clearing, surrounded by tall pines. Wading boots,  
fishing poles and gear stashed in their tents -- CRUZ and  
MCBRIDE sit on opposite sides of a campfire, cooking the  
day's catch and continuing their earlier conversation:

MCBRIDE  
...like I said, none of this would make  
any sense to them. They don't have the  
brains to understand it, or vocabulary to  
express it.

CRUZ  
Exactly, and that raises an interesting  
point.

MCBRIDE passes the blunt back. CRUZ takes a deep hit before  
exhaling, passing it back to MCBRIDE, and continuing:

CRUZ (CONT'D)  
Are we fish? Like are people from other  
dimensions visiting us, and we don't  
recognize them, because we just don't  
have the brainpower to recognize them?

CRUZ reaches out for the blunt, but MCBRIDE withholds it,  
laughing:

MCBRIDE  
That's it dude, I'm cutting you off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There is a NOISE coming from the forest. CRUZ grabs a flashlight and pans the beam in an arc to their left. It illuminates nothing but rain-soaked underbrush.

MCBRIDE strains to hear in the darkness. Nothing but the sound of wind whistling through the trees - then a SNAP like a branch breaking, o.s.

MCBRIDE (CONT'D)

Hello?

There's another SNAP just beyond the campsite.

A long tense beat.

A dark FIGURE emerges from the forest...

MCBRIDE fumbles for his flashlight and shines it at the FIGURE to reveal: JAMES HUTNER, Caucasian, 40s, crew cut, stocky, combat fatigues -- the area between his nose and upper lip are smeared with a purplish blue fluid.

HUTNER

Didn't mean to startle you.

He greets them, it's supposed to sound cordial, but there's something namelessly 'off' about him.

CRUZ

Hey man, we don't want any trouble.

HUTNER

(malevolence creeping into his voice)

What do you know about trouble?

(beat)

I bet you wouldn't know it if you saw it.

MCBRIDE and CRUZ hear the subtle change in tone.

HUTNER (CONT'D)

That's the problem, you don't see, none of you mindless fucks, actually see.

(beat)

You wouldn't know trouble unless it walked right up to you, and got real close.

(beat)

Eventually you'd see it...but by then it'd be too late.

A long beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

That's when they notice: The long hunting knife in HUTNER'S hand.

HUTNER sees them notice the knife and his face transforms.

His stained lips twist into a deeply unsettling, predatory grin.

The normal sounds of the forest at night go silent as...

VARIOUS ANGLES - QUICK CUTS:

CRUZ casting about for a weapon.

HUTNER racing toward them, closing the distance in the blink of an eye.

MCBRIDE'S eyes widening in horror as he looks at:

HUTNER'S hunting knife slicing through the air.

CRUZ'S mouth frozen in a silent scream.

His shirt stained with liberal smears of MCBRIDE'S blood, HUTNER turns his attention to CRUZ...

...who's already turning to run.

Before he can even leave the campsite, HUTNER has leapt onto his back.

One arm chokes him, the other savagely stabs him, until CRUZ crumples to the ground in a bloody heap.

As MCBRIDE, tries to crawl away into the brush.

MCBRIDE'S CRIES are warped and distorted by the slo-mo.

HUTNER plants his foot in the middle of MCBRIDE'S prostrate form, then uses one hand to flip him on his back like a turtle.

HUTNER sits on his chest, once he's certain MCBRIDE can't move, he points the knife at his face.

The knife tip moves toward his right eye.

HUTNER stabs.

Normal SOUND and MOTION resume as:

MCBRIDE watches helplessly as his death streaks towards him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He SCREAMS. Just before the blade sinks into his eye, we:

SMASH CUT:

TITLE CARD: **TAKING TIGER MOUNTAIN**

FADE IN:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

A crowd of professionals trying to get a caffeine fix before work. At a table near the back is SUSAN PASKAL - late-30s, smart, professional in glasses, suit, dark hair tied in a chignon; the effect is diminished by eyes ringed with dark circles from prolonged lack of sleep.

She sits at a table with an untouched coffee and Danish as she reads the Washington Post on her laptop:

CLOSE: A headline reads "DECORATED COLONEL TAKEN INTO CUSTODY". Beside the text is a black and white photo of COL. HUTNER in dress uniform.

SUSAN is bravely attempting to read WaPo, while clearly fighting off sleep. Her eyelids become heavy, close, and her head tips forward indicating she's actually fallen asleep:

BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE:

EXT. WOODS - OLYMPIC PENINSULA FOREST - NIGHT

The forest at night. Stillness. The steady patter of raindrops is the only sound. But what catches our attention are two human forms, floating just above the river.

SUSAN, floats vertically, five feet above the water, directly facing the 'MAN'. A FRACTAL pattern plays across his 'skin' - the effect is hypnotic.

WEXLER (O.S.)

Hey, hey...

END DREAM SEQUENCE.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

SUSAN opens her eyes, for a moment unsure where she is. She looks around to get her bearings, then up to find PAM WEXLER - mid-40s, frazzled academic - standing over her. She looks at the coffee cup, then at SUSAN:

WEXLER

See that? I've heard if you drink it,  
it'll help wake you up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN  
(smiling at the joke)  
Yeah. Good idea.

WEXLER takes a seat, then points to the news article.

WEXLER  
Five years ago, you'd be investigating  
that, wouldn't you?

SUSAN  
Probably.

WEXLER  
Do you miss it?

SUSAN  
Those days are long gone.

Her friend is reluctant to broach the subject.

WEXLER  
I know about Earhardt...

SUSAN cuts her friend off, as delicately as she can.

SUSAN  
Like I said, those days are long gone.

WEXLER takes the hint. She looks at her watch and changes the subject:

WEXLER  
I'm late for my Physics Lab. The best  
part? These Trust Fund Ken and Barbies  
don't care if they pass, they know  
they'll just keep failing up the rest of  
their lives anyway.

SUSAN  
On that happy note...Gym, six, don't  
flake.

WEXLER sighs.

EXT. WHITE GRAVENOR HALL - GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

It's a typical wet autumn day in Washington. A sprawling  
stone gray and white building, with a large crucifix on top  
of the roof.

INT. LECTURE HALL - GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY - SAME

The large room is filled with bored-looking students. SUSAN stands at the front, finishing her lecture and looking less than excited herself.

SUSAN

Okay, that's it for today.

There's a collective GRUMBLE from the class.

INT. DEPARTMENTAL OFFICE - GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY - LATER

SUSAN stands at her mail cubby collecting her mail. CATHY, her assistant and a bit of a busybody, walks over to her with a stack of phone message slips.

CATHY

These are all for you. Someone named Mike Armitage, very insistent.

SUSAN

Thanks, Cathy.

SUSAN takes the stack, eyeing it suspiciously.

INT. GYM - LATER

SUSAN and WEXLER - both dressed in workout clothes and are on adjacent treadmills; SUSAN is lean and athletic, WEXLER - much less so. SUSAN is running at a steady jog, WEXLER a brisk walk.

WEXLER

I hear Mike's been trying to get in touch with you.

SUSAN

(smiling)

Wow, Cathy's got a big mouth...

WEXLER

(difficulty talking and  
'running')

So...you going to call him?

SUSAN

Haven't decided.

WEXLER

(beat while she catches her  
breath)

You told me you two were a great team.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WEXLER smiles, then abruptly hits the 'Pause' button on her treadmill and takes a long drink of water.

SUSAN

You've only been running for ten minutes.

WEXLER

Which is a long time when you're old and out of shape.

They laugh. SUSAN keeps running - without breaking stride.

EXT. TOWNHOUSE - GEORGETOWN STREET - NIGHT

A two-story brownstone building on a narrow, rain-soaked street. BMW's and Lexus's are lined up beneath the elms.

INT. LIVING ROOM - TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

SUSAN, still in her workout gear, enters wearily and flicks on the light to reveal a small room that has the air of a place that someone has never quite moved into.

SUSAN checks her voicemail, hits the 'speaker' button, then places the phone on the counter, while she opens the refrigerator: Half full take-out containers, none of which look too appetizing.

She turns to nearby cabinet and removes a bottle of Merlot. As she opens it, there's a BEEP from her phone, followed by a MIKE'S VOICE, energetic, noticeable Brooklyn accent.

MIKE

(on speaker)

Neal Callahan is missing.

SUSAN looks quizzically at her phone for a beat, before stabbing at the 'delete' button.

INT. DEN - TOWNHOUSE - LATER

Bookcases crammed with criminology, forensic, and military texts line the walls. A thin patina of dust rests on the surfaces.

SUSAN, now dressed in a Hoyas t-shirt and jeans, glass of wine in hand, stands before a mantle lined with various medals, commendations and framed photographs of her in uniform.

SUSAN feels around on the mantle piece, behind the framed photos, till she finds an old photograph.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN takes the photograph down and studies it gravely for a moment: A younger-looking SUSAN stands beside a handsome MAN. They're smiling... carefree and obviously very happy.

Her mind suddenly fills with a woman's SCREAMS, o.s.

SUSAN screws her eyes up tight in pain until the SCREAMS, o.s., slowly fade away. She places the photograph back on the mantle then, after a moment's thought, places it face down before turning the light off.

INT. BEDROOM - TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Moonlight filters through the musty air of Susan's bedroom, illuminating piles of dirty laundry. SUSAN tosses uneasily in her bed, unable to sleep. The DOORBELL BUZZES, o.s. SUSAN glances at the clock: it's 11:47pm

SUSAN  
What in the...

INT. LIVING ROOM - TOWNHOUSE - SAME

The BUZZ continues. SUSAN hurries down the stairs and across the small living room, past the kitchen, looks out the window and sees:

MIKE ARMITAGE, who we recognize as the MAN from the photograph: 30s, in black head-to-toe, more musician than military personnel; focused, crackling with energy.

Reluctantly, SUSAN opens the door and MIKE gently pushes past her:

SUSAN  
Of course, come in.

MIKE  
I've been calling for days. Why haven't  
you called me back?

She turns and follows him into the:

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

SUSAN opens the refrigerator, then remembers she doesn't have any food.

SUSAN  
You sound like my mother.

MIKE  
How is your Mom by the way? Still in  
Providence? Tell her I said hello.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN smiles ever so slightly.

SUSAN

You two are weirdly close. I'm surprised you aren't Facebook friends.

MIKE

Facebook? Are you kidding me? Have them tracking my every move, every conversation, selling my info to the C.I.A., N.S.A. or God knows who. No thanks.

SUSAN

How do you pass the annual psych-eval?

MIKE

I need your help. I wouldn't ask if it wasn't important.

She starts to make coffee.

SUSAN

Okay. I'm listening. Want some?

MIKE

No I'm trying to cut down on sugar and caffeine. Do you have any Chamomile?

She looks at him as if he's just grown a second head.

MIKE (CONT'D)

And should you be drinking coffee this late?

SUSAN shoots him a withering glance.

SUSAN

I have one mother I can barely deal with, don't need another one.

Hearing the impatience in her voice.

MIKE

Neal's a journalist and an old friend.

He takes out his phone, opens the browser, types in a URL and shows it to her.

MIKE (CONT'D)

That's his site, "Plausible Deniability".

As she studies it:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIKE (CONT'D)

The word 'genius' is over used, but  
Neal's case, it's pretty accurate...sees  
things...in a way unlike anybody I've  
ever known...

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. OFFICE - PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY - DAY

A small online news operation. A few RESEARCHERS and  
REPORTERS crammed together, in a tight space. "Can't Get You  
Out of My Head" plays on a monitor in the b.g.

NEAL CALLAHAN -- late 30s, brilliant, amiable, beer gut --  
takes an occasional sip of coffee from a Syd Barrett mug,  
while he and MIKE converse:

MIKE (V.O.)

Coupla weeks ago, I mentioned that Roland  
Smith, State Senator in Pennsylvania,  
murdered his wife and son. Neal's  
antennae go up, he finds out some high-  
profile people were trying to cover up  
the murder. Maybe even people in C.I.D.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - GEORGETOWN - NIGHT

Narrow confines between two old brick buildings. The alley  
walls lined with dumpsters.

NEAL is standing near the back entrance of a Chinese  
restaurant, his eyes are wide with adrenalin and fear.

One hand holding a phone close to his face, the other  
hovering above his mouth.

MIKE (V.O.)

Two nights ago he calls, says someone's  
following him.

NEAL looks at the end of the alleyway, where a car has come  
to a stop, blocking the entrance. The bright headlights,  
momentarily blinding him.

MIKE (V.O.)

...and if something happens to him, I  
need to look into Colonel James Hutner.

END FLASHBACK.

SUSAN

(now clearly intrigued)  
The C.O. from Fort Griffin?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Suspect in that double homicide? Why?  
How's that connected to Roland Smith?

MIKE

I don't know.

SUSAN

(stifling a laugh)

This reminds me of that time you told me  
about a huge conspiracy with Cheney, the  
Carlyle group and the Bilderbergs.

MIKE

The documentation is solid. I stand by  
that.

SUSAN

Please tell me you don't have a cork-  
board with lots of red string in your  
house.

MIKE

I don't...

(a beat - under his breath)

...it's at Neal's office.

SUSAN

Wow. You two are not a good influence on  
each other. Why drag me into this?

MIKE

Two reasons. First, me and Neal go back,  
to Brooklyn. No one's talked to him in  
days and I'm worried.

(beat)

Even though we're not a 'thing' anymore,  
if you disappeared, I'd do the same for  
you.

He can see her resistance diminishing - that's when MIKE  
plays his ace:

MIKE (CONT'D)

Second, you might deny it, but you never  
completely recovered from what Earhardt  
did to you, you help me find the people  
that grabbed Neal, and bring those  
fuckers to justice, maybe it'll help put  
that behind you once and for all.

A long beat. The mention of the name once again brings some  
painful memories near the surface.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SUSAN

Isn't there someone in your unit...

MIKE

Neal specifically said I couldn't go through C.I.D.

SUSAN

Why not? What exactly is going on?

(beat)

And don't tell me the Carlyle Group or Dick Cheney are mixed up in this...

MIKE

Of course Cheney is involved.

INT. CAR - EARLY MORNING

The Virginia countryside rolls by outside the windows. MIKE is driving. SUSAN sips coffee, and examines photographs of the Hutner crime scene: The mutilated bodies of CRUZ and MCBRIDE, each of them are missing their eyes, the empty sockets rimmed with dried blood.

SUSAN

Motive?

MIKE

Beats the hell out of me.

INT. TACOMA COUNTY AIRPORT - LATE MORNING

SUSAN and MIKE are walking through the terminal, from the arrival gate toward the banks of rental car agents.

INT. AVIS RENTAL COUNTER - SAME

MIKE is signing the rental forms at the counter.

RENTAL AGENT

Here you are Mr. Armitage...Number three-four-seven.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The rental car makes its way along a narrow highway, the Olympic mountain range rising to their right beneath a drizzling sky.

INT. RENTAL CAR - LATER

MIKE sits behind the wheel. Beside him, SUSAN studies the files. The radio is tuned to a classic rock station.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pink Floyd's "Set The Controls For The Heart of The Sun" plays in the background

SUSAN

So, what do we know about Hutner?

MIKE

West Point grad. Rises through the ranks. Sees action in the Gulf then is promoted to Colonel. Serves in Iraq. His tour is almost over, but wants to stay in, so the Pentagon gives him his brass ring, Fort Griffin.

SUSAN

Did he serve with Smith?

MIKE

I don't think so. Smith was in a different unit fighting further south, then he was honorably discharged.

SUSAN

After the war?

MIKE

Smith went straight into public life and Hutner stayed in uniform.

SUSAN

(from the file)

Then something made both of them snap.

EXT. FORT GRIFFIN - DAY

The rental car pulls up toward a large, security gate.

INT. RENTAL CAR - SAME

SUSAN eyes the security somewhat apprehensively.

SUSAN

If you can't go through channels, how do we get in to see him?

MIKE

You're a distinguished professor of Criminal Psychology at Georgetown doing research and I'm your military liaison.

SUSAN looks at him skeptically.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Unless you've got a better idea.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - FORT GRIFFIN - DAY

Gleaming white. Sterile. SUSAN and DR. ELLEN THAYER, late 30s, African-American, highly competent, yet clearly nervous (for someone in the military) -- are walking down the corridor, MIKE is walking behind trying to look uninvolved while carefully listening to the exchange.

DR. THAYER

I'm not sure how much help he'll be with your research...

They arrive at a door guarded by two MARINES standing stiffly with M-16 assault rifles. DR. THAYER stops at the door, she lightly grabs SUSAN'S arm - pulls her aside, and sounds as if she's preparing her for battle.

DR. THAYER (CONT'D)

I just administered a dose of Sodium Amytal...he should be communicative...

(beat)

...just be careful...the Colonel is a very disturbed man.

MIKE

You think we can't handle talking to a disturbed guy? Ever ride the "A" train?

SUSAN

(ignoring MIKE)

I've interviewed disturbed patients before.

DR. THAYER, intense, barely above a whisper:

DR. THAYER

Not like him.

THAYER motions to a guard, who opens the door and indicates to SUSAN and MIKE that they can enter. SUSAN steps across the threshold.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - FORT GRIFFIN - DAY

SUSAN scans the room, watching MIKE, the GUARD and THAYER disappear.

She finds herself alone in the interrogation room. The FRACTAL MAN, from her daydream in the coffee shop, appears in the middle of the room - facing her, only meters away:

A FRACTAL pattern plays across its' 'skin'. A swirling whirlpool pattern, that keeps spiraling downward toward some unknown location.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The effect is mesmerizing.

The FRACTAL MAN points, and HUTNER appears, as if conjured. He's wearing combat fatigues splattered with viscera, his hands look like they've been dipped in blood.

The FRACTAL MAN waves his hand forcing HUTNER to split in two, like a cell undergoing mitosis.

The two HUTNERS sit side-by-side. One bloodied and smiling. The other terrified:

SMASH CUT:

SUSAN, snaps out of her reverie; everything's returned to normal - but clearly a few minutes have passed.

She finds herself next to MIKE - they're both seated across from a single handcuffed and shackled JAMES HUTNER, dressed in orange coveralls.

She looks around, careful to disguise her disorientation.

MIKE

I'm Mike Armitage, C.I.D. This is Susan Paskal from Georgetown University. We've got some questions we'd like to ask you.

(beat)

Do you remember anything from two days ago?

HUTNER

(confused and grieving)

I...I don't know. I don't really remember anything. But you have to believe me, I wouldn't hurt those boys!

SUSAN shifts in her seat. The next question makes her visibly uncomfortable.

SUSAN

Have you had blackouts before?

HUTNER

No, never.

MIKE

Do you know Roland Smith?

HUTNER looks at him in surprise, then quickly looks down.

HUTNER

I don't remember anyone by that name...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HUTNER seems nervous and insincere.

MIKE

Okay. Why don't we talk about what you did to McBride and Cruz.

Now genuinely confused:

HUTNER

What I did? I didn't do anything.

SUSAN

You cut out their eyes. Why?

HUTNER recoils.

HUTNER

Their eyes?

MIKE presses.

MIKE

You cut them out with a hunting knife.

HUTNER grabs at his face, covering it with his hands, before wiping something away. He drops his hands and they are smeared with thick indigo blue liquid.

MIKE and SUSAN exchange a glance at this, before they can ask the obvious question:

HUTNER

What do you two fucks want?!

His face looks the same, but his personality has changed dramatically. The transformation is startling. The mild mannered HUTNER has been replaced by a hostile, volatile presence. MIKE is taken aback but quickly recovers.

MIKE

We just want to ask you about the incident.

HUTNER

(smiling, genuinely pleased)  
You mean the little party I had?

SUSAN

You killed two unarmed men.

HUTNER

Yeah, well fuck them! And fuck you, too!  
(grows calm)  
I need a fucking cigarette.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MIKE

We're in a hospital. No smoking.

HUTNER

Fucking typical.

MIKE

Why did you cut their eyes out?

HUTNER

It's our mark.

SUSAN

Whose mark?

MIKE

Did Roland Smith know why?

HUTNER

Sure, he knew why.

MIKE

So you did know Smith.

HUTNER

Yeah, I knew Smith, fuckin' coward. How do you know about Smith?

MIKE

A friend was investigating...

HUTNER

(cuts him off)  
Callahan.

HUTNER stares at him.

MIKE

You know him?

HUTNER

Talked to him last month.

MIKE

Last month? How is that possible? You were in Iraq.

HUTNER

Hutner was in Iraq. I was with Martin Edwards in Kansas City.

MIKE isn't following and it shows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HUTNER (CONT'D)

Did you take the short bus here? Didn't  
your buddy Neal tell you about me, Leon?

The doors swing open and DR. THAYER enters, looking unnerved.

THAYER

Sorry to do this, but I've just had  
orders to terminate this interview.

MIKE

Orders? Orders from who?

THAYER

(uncomfortable)

I'm sorry, I'm not at liberty to say.

HUTNER stands.

HUTNER

Well, then, looks like this is it. Sorry  
we couldn't chat more...

The GUARDS begin to lead him away. MIKE calls out.

MIKE

What didn't Neal tell me?

HUTNER just keeps walking.

EXT. BASE PARKING LOT - DAY

The rain has stopped. MIKE and SUSAN walk towards their  
rental car.

MIKE

I don't understand. Why would Hutner lie  
about meeting with Neal?

SUSAN

Come on, Mike. He was ranting.

MIKE

But there must have been a reason Neal  
wanted me to talk to him. There's got to  
be a connection.

SUSAN

If there is, I doubt you're going to  
learn it from Hutner. Based on what I saw  
in there, he's suffering from D.I.D.

(on MIKE'S bewildered look)

Dissociative Identity Disorder.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Did you notice how his whole demeanor changed half way through the interview? Even called himself by a different name, Leon. Textbook.

(beat)

Sometimes after an extremely traumatic event, the brain will create an entirely separate personality to deal with the trauma. That's D.I.D. The mind is capable of incredibly complex coping mechanisms...

Her voice trails off. She's dwelling on that last sentence. MIKE doesn't notice and continues:

MIKE

Yeah. Ok. But I can't help thinking that there must be more than just that. Maybe we should look into Edwards.

EXT. EVERGREEN DINER - LATER

A small, rustic but brightly-painted diner in a nearby town nestled among the Olympic evergreens.

INT. EVERGREEN DINER - SAME

SUSAN and MIKE sit at an open laptop. SUSAN takes a pen out of her jacket pocket, and ties her hair into a bun. Hair secured, she begins tapping away at the screen.

MIKE

All the caffeine is the reason you're not sleeping. There's a great study from Johns Hopkins about caffeine's affect on REM sleep I could send you.

SUSAN

Believe me, caffeine is the least of my problems.

MIKE examines her, but she doesn't meet his gaze, choosing instead to maintain her focus on the laptop screen.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(off the screen)

Here we go. Martin Edwards, Iraq war vet, Boy Scout leader, arrested in the brutal slaying of three Eagle Scouts on a camping trip.

MIKE

Holy shit. Any more details? Pictures? A bio?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She types in a series of commands, and the computer hums. SUSAN, despite herself, seems excited. MIKE notices.

SUSAN

No, just a couple of newspaper accounts, pretty thoroughly sanitized by the look of them. Hold on. We caught a break, the F.B.I.'s investigating.

(on his look)

Pam's undergrad roommate is in the St. Louis Bureau.

INT. WEXLER'S OFFICE - GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY - DAY

Messy. A Georgetown pennant decorates the wall. WEXLER'S at her desk, a half-eaten Popeye's fish sandwich in front of her, the Scientific American site open on her computer.

The phone rings. WEXLER looks at the display, then careful not to get grease on the phone, picks up.

WEXLER

Susan where are you? Cathy's convinced you've run off with some guy.

EXT. EVERGREEN DINER - SAME

SUSAN paces near the entrance:

SUSAN

Tell her she's half right. I'm helping Mike on a case.

(beat)

And before you get too excited, this is a one time thing. Anyhow, I need your help...

INT. EVERGREEN DINER - LATER

MIKE absently stirs a cup of tea as SUSAN re-enters the diner and sits down, stowing her cell phone in her pocket as she does.

SUSAN

Pam gave me the rundown. Edwards led his Scout troop out on a hiking trip. Everybody's woken up in the middle of the night by the sound of screaming. They find Edwards in one of the tents, just as he's killing the third boy.

MIKE

Jesus...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

At first Edwards claimed he didn't remember doing it. Later, he bragged about it. Then, after a week in the lockup he committed suicide.

MIKE

Shit. Did you ask about Hutner and Smith?

SUSAN

Yeah. No luck. Names never came up in the interviews.

MIKE

And Neal?

SUSAN

Visited Edwards once, almost exactly two months ago. Unfortunately, nobody knows what they talked about.

MIKE

But Hutner knew about the visit. That must mean he and Edwards communicated.

(beat)

There's definitely a connection.

SUSAN

Yeah. And that's not the only thing...

SUSAN works the keyboard again.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Pam said that there were some details about the crime scene that never made the papers. She uploaded the photos.

SUSAN finishes typing, then turns the laptop around toward MIKE:

CLOSE - MONITOR: The three victims, lying in a blood-soaked tent, each of them missing their eyes.

EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

SUSAN and MIKE are headed out of the cafe.

MIKE

This can't be a coincidence.

(a beat)

As a matter of fact, I'll bet the photos from Smith's crime scene will show us the same thing. We should try to...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

Pam's already working on it. The question is, what do we do now?

EXT. FORT GRIFFIN - LATE AFTERNOON

The rental car pulls up to the base hospital to find a frenzy of activity - M.P. Jeeps, ambulances. MIKE and SUSAN step out.

MIKE

Shit, what's this all about?

They spot THAYER speaking with an M.P. They hurry over to her.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Doctor Thayer, I'm sure you remember us.

THAYER looks a little shell-shocked.

THAYER

What are you doing here?

SUSAN

We need to interview Colonel Hutner again. We've got some new information.

THAYER

You can't.

MIKE

I don't care who's pulling strings to keep him on lockdown, we need to see him.

THAYER

No, I mean you can't. He's dead.

SUSAN

What?!

THAYER

About twenty minutes after you left. He was trying to escape. He broke a guard's neck and attacked an orderly. The M.P.s shot him, six times, before he went down.

MIKE

Shit.

THAYER

I'm sorry. Now, if you'll excuse me...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She walks away with the M.P., leaving SUSAN and MIKE standing alone.

A well-dressed STRANGER with a military haircut and an intense expression, watches them converse and scowls.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

Their rental car is heading towards Tacoma County Airport.

INT. RENTAL CAR - LATER

MIKE drives, one hand on the wheel, the other scanning the radio station. He finds 'Astronomy Domine' by Pink Floyd. He smiles and turns up the volume a bit - while SUSAN finishes up a phone call.

She stuffs the phone back into her jacket and turns to MIKE, a worried look on his face.

MIKE

Well?

SUSAN

Two things. Inverse order of importance.

(re: radio)

First, Pink Floyd...again? Really? You know they've made more pop music since the '70s right?

MIKE

Floyd isn't 'pop', it's a sonic guide for the uninitiated to navigate the realms of the unconscious, and it's timeless. Second?

SUSAN can't help but roll her eyes before continuing:

SUSAN

Just as we suspected, Smith removed his victims' eyes.

MIKE

Three killers, same M.O. No way that's a coincidence.

SUSAN

That's not all. Smith committed suicide two days after Neal talked to him. We're three for three.

MIKE

So we can't talk to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

Not if we want to get an answer.

MIKE pounds his fist against the wheel in frustration.

MIKE

Shit!

(collects himself)

None of this makes any sense.

INT. HALLWAY - HOSPITAL - FORT GRIFFIN - EVENING

A darkened, deserted basement corridor. Half the overhead lights are out; the remainder flicker unsteadily.

At the far end the doors to the service elevator slide open and two ORDERLIES wheel out a shroud-covered body on a gurney. They begin to push it down the hall, continuing their conversation as they go.

ORDERLY #1

....I can't believe this guy, though. I mean, he had it all going for him. You know, his old man used to run this place.

ORDERLY #2

Yeah, I heard that. So, what made him flip?

ORDERLY #1

Beats the shit outta me. These psychos never look like they're crazy at the time...

They stop for a moment, ORDERLY #1 leans over and pulls the sheet down a bit to reveal HUTNER'S face. The eyes are wide open.

ORDERLY #2

Aw shit, I hate it when they do that.

ORDERLY #1 gently closes HUTNER'S eyes. A second later, they pop open again.

ORDERLY #2 (CONT'D)

You're going to need to tape them.

But ORDERLY #1 isn't listening. He's noticed something....

The surface of HUTNER'S face seems to be moving. His mouth and nose start to twist, as if he was about to have epileptic seizure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ORDERLY #1  
What the hell is...

Before he can finish the thought, HUTNER'S body starts to SHAKE: first small tremors, then massive thrashing till the cart is clattering against the tile floor. The ORDERLIES jump back from the flailing body.

ORDERLY #2  
What the fuck's happening, man?!

ORDERLY #2 cracks a joke to diffuse the animalistic fear growing inside of him:

ORDERLY #1  
(pretending to leaf through a  
book)  
Oh, hold on, let me just consult the  
chapter on reanimated corpses!

The RATTling builds to a peak, then abruptly subsides. The corridor is silent. After a moment, the ORDERLIES step forward, tentatively venturing a look.

HUTNER'S eyes are closed.

The ORDERLIES are leaned in close, when HUTNER suddenly SPASMS once more.

HUTNER'S mouth SNAPS open and...

...a geyser of viscous, indigo fluid erupts from HUTNER'S mouth. The geyser shoots five feet into the air.

Once it's in the air, it hovers just below the ceiling.

The ORDERLIES fall over each other, trying to put as much space as possible between themselves, the corpse and floating pool of purple-blue fluid.

The pool, undulates, moving as if it's a living thing, before finally exploding all over the room, covering the ORDERLIES in a dark shower of the blue fluid.

The ORDERLIES, their uniforms now flecked with blue droplets, stare at each other in utter disbelief. Only ORDERLY #2 can manage to spit out:

ORDERLY #2  
What. The. Fuck.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - SAME

Santa Rosa, California. A quiet residential street of two story homes, straight out of a Norman Rockwell painting. The only jarring elements are the California palms lining the road.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - SAME

DOTTIE TRENT - 50s, expensive dress - is struggling with the clasp on a string of pearls. Just behind her, door closed, is the master bath from which the sounds of RUNNING WATER and WHISTLING can just be heard.

DOTTIE

Honey? Can you help me with these? My fingers are too clumsy.

The RUNNING WATER continues, but the WHISTLING has stopped.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Honey, did you hear me?

There's a muffled SHRIEK and a CRASH from the bathroom. DOTTIE turns in alarm.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Bill? Are you alright?

She's answered by a low MOAN that slowly builds in intensity as she walks toward the door in growing alarm.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Bill, what's going on? Are you okay?

She reaches for the door and begins to open it, but the door is violently slammed shut. Frantic, she turns the handle. The door begins to BANG open and shut as the MOANS build into a piercing CRY of pain and horror.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Bill!!

Then, just as suddenly as it started, the noise stops. The door opens and her husband, WILLIAM TRENT - tall, handsome, distinguished - steps out, toweling off his face, calm as you please.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

My God! What was happening in there? Are you alright.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TRENT  
(smiles a little too broadly)  
Fine. I'm fine. In fact, I've never been  
better...

The television plays footage of GENERAL GARY COCHRANE, a distinguished man in his fifties, waving off reporters questions. A NEWS ANCHOR narrates:

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)  
...Beltway insiders claim General  
Cochrane is a shoe-in for Secretary of  
Defense. A decorated Army officer, he  
also has ties to the intelligence  
community...

INT. TACOMA COUNTY AIRPORT - EVENING

SUSAN sits in the waiting area, half watching the same story. After a moment, MIKE walks up carrying a cup of coffee. He hands one to her.

MIKE  
One cream, no sugar...

SUSAN  
(smiles despite herself)  
What about my caffeine intake, Johns  
Hopkins?

MIKE  
I still think you should cut down, but  
this time, I'll let it slide.

He sits down beside SUSAN. Her guard is down, her tone more intimate.

SUSAN  
Last night you said you and Neal go back?

MIKE  
Yeah, we both went to Bronx Science. He  
was a year ahead of me, looked out for  
me, gave me advice...  
(beat)  
... this is going to be hard to believe,  
but I was kind of a weird, awkward  
teenager... even for Bronx Science.

She considers this, smiles:

SUSAN  
Wow, that's saying something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They both laugh. There's a moment of chemistry, which makes them both a bit uncomfortable. MIKE breaks the silence:

MIKE

I figure looking out for him now, is the least I can do.

(beat)

So, what's our next step?

SUSAN

Well, since all three were vets, we could try the Hall of Records, see if we can figure out if they were ever connected that way. Or...

(half-joking)

Or we could just wait for another multiple homicide.

EXT. RAMADA INN - SANTA ROSA - NIGHT

A typical suburban RAMADA INN on the highway at the outskirts of town.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

The back corner of the busy room is taken up by a party of middle-aged couples gathered around three large tables, finishing a meal of grilled salmon. A store-bought streamer proclaims "HAPPY BIRTHDAY".

WILLIAM TRENT, DOTTIE, brother STEVE and colleagues sit together at the head table. STEVE rises and clinks his glass to get everyone's attention.

STEVE

All right now. Settle down folks.

The guests turn their attention to him.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Since my brother is paying for this shindig, I thought we might let him say a few words.

There is enthusiastic cheering and clapping as TRENT, almost reluctantly, rises.

TRENT'S getting a nosebleed, but the 'blood' is blue, not red.

He absentmindedly wipes his nose. It's uncouth. The others in the audience squirm a bit in their seats, uncomfortable at the sight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TRENT

Thanks Steve. I want to give you all something...

(lights a cigarette)

Let me see...

(searches his pockets)

...bear with me for a moment here...

TRENT removes a .45 from his jacket. GASPS from the crowd.

TRENT (CONT'D)

...here it is...I'd just like to say thanks to all of you...Thanks to YOU...

TRENT aims the gun at a horrified GUEST in the front row and squeezes off a shot from almost point blank range. The blow rips the GUEST's chest apart and sends his chair flying.

TRENT (CONT'D)

...and YOU'VE been really great...

TRENT fires again and another GUEST goes down in a bloody heap. Pandemonium erupts. Terrified guests are scattering, turning over tables in their haste. A brave GUEST rushes at him, but, with lightning speed, TRENT spins and squeezes off a few rounds. Blood sprays.

As the GUEST crumples, TRENT grabs the terrified DOTTIE by her hair and jabs the gun to her head.

TRENT (CONT'D)

Well, Dottie...I guess it's time to dot my "I's", get it? Dot my "I's"?

TRENT shoves the gun into DOTTIE's left eye and pulls the trigger. Her body slumps out of the frame, leaving the damage to the imagination.

STEVE turns to flee, but TRENT is too quick and tackles him - sending him CRASHING through a table of champagne glasses. He struggles to rise, but TRENT grabs him by what's left of his hair.

TRENT (CONT'D)

Where you goin', Stevie boy? This party's just getting started.

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

Passengers are still finding their seats and stowing their luggage as SUSAN and MIKE are belting up.

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT comes up and leans in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Excuse me, Susan Paskal? Michael  
Armitage?

(beat)

You've got a phone call. Sounds urgent.

INT. COURTESY LOUNGE - TACOMA COUNTY AIRPORT - NIGHT

MIKE is finishing up the call while SUSAN looks on nervously.  
He hangs up, looking quite bewildered.

MIKE

Do you know anyone named William Trent?

SUSAN

No.

MIKE

Neither do I, but about an hour ago, at a  
dinner in Santa Rosa California, he  
pulled out a gun and started killing the  
guests. He's holed up there with  
hostages.

SUSAN

What does this have to do with us?

MIKE

Apparently, he's been asking for us...by  
name.

EXT. PARKING LOT - RAMADA INN - LATE EVENING

The parking lot is a hub of activity. Santa Rosa P.D. squad  
cars, their lights still flashing, surround the main  
building. On the other side of the police cordon, rescue  
vehicles, news vans, and anxious spectators are lined up.

Amidst the bustle, a patrol car pulls up, its siren WAILING.  
The passenger doors open and out step MIKE and SUSAN. They  
are greeted by CAPT. NICOLE FORD, early 40's, outdoorsy,  
tense, no filter:

FORD

Captain Nicole Ford, Santa Rosa P.D. I'm  
in charge of this nightmare.

(beat)

And that's Nicole, not Nikki with two  
k's, just because people sometimes call  
me Nicky and we're in California doesn't  
mean I'm some kind of low-key porn  
star...people think this whole state is  
one big orgy, twenty-four, seven.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN and MIKE listen to her strange explanation, exchange a glance. FORD'S thrown MIKE for a loop, but he tries to just power through:

MIKE  
Uh we didn't think that you... or...  
er... nevermind.

He collects himself, flashes his ID. FORD sees the C.I.D. logo.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Mike Armitage. Criminal Investigation  
Division.  
(re: SUSAN)  
And my colleague, Susan Paskal.

FORD  
What can you tell me about the gunman?

MIKE  
I'm sorry. We don't know anything.

FORD  
Psychological profile, past record?

MIKE  
No, I mean we don't know this guy at all.  
Never heard of him until your people  
called.

This stuns FORD.

FORD  
Then why the hell is he asking for you  
two?

SUSAN  
We have no idea.

MIKE  
Is there any way we can get inside to  
talk to him?

FORD  
Absolutely not. I'll tell him you're  
here, you can talk to on the phone.

MIKE  
We're trained to handle ourselves in  
these types of situations.

FORD bristles at the suggestion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FORD

Look, to you I'm just a small town cop,  
but this is my small town and we do  
things my way. Understood?

SUSAN

Listen we're not here to lock horns with  
you on jurisdiction. But like my partner  
said, we can handle ourselves in there.  
If you want to waste time in a pissing  
contest, we can make one phone call, and  
then you won't be in command here.

FORD notices MIKE is still holding his ID, sees the iron  
beneath SUSAN'S pleasant, smiling demeanor, and backs down.

FORD

Alright...you win. But I don't like it.

FORD turns to an OFFICER and begins to give him instructions.  
Two PATROLMEN begin fitting MIKE and SUSAN with kevlar vests.

As they finish strapping on their vests, CAPT. FORD rejoins  
them.

FORD (CONT'D)

You're good to go. I've got men on every  
entrance. If something goes down, we can  
move in an instant.

MIKE

Okay, then... Let's get going.

As MIKE and SUSAN walk away:

MIKE (CONT'D)

You don't have the authority to make that  
call.

With a hint of mischief:

SUSAN

She doesn't know that.

EXT. LOADING DOCK - RAMADA INN - NIGHT

MIKE and SUSAN move past lines of armed SWAT TEAM OFFICERS  
towards the service bay entrance. As they draw nearer, SUSAN  
pauses for a moment.

SMASH CUT:

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY -- NIGHT

She's alone in the darkened hallway. It is eerily quiet.

The FRACTAL MAN materializes out of thin air. Again, SUSAN is momentarily hypnotized by the swirling pattern.

He waves his hands:

Two HUTNERS appear, then two TRENTS. The same dichotomy, one bloodied, one frightened.

Just as mysteriously as it appeared, the FRACTAL MAN vanishes for a second time.

MIKE (V.O.)

You okay?

SMASH CUT:

EXT. SIDE ENTRANCE - RAMADA INN - NIGHT

SUSAN breaks free of the spell, shakes her head to clear it, and nods. They set off into:

INT. SERVICE BAY - RAMADA INN - CONTINUOUS

SUSAN and MIKE move quickly but quietly past pallets of baked goods and shelves of table settings. At the end of the room, a door opens and the SWAT LEADER beckons them forward into:

INT. HALLWAY - RAMADA INN - CONTINUOUS

A broad, hallway; its elegance is marred only by the presence of four SWAT OFFICERS armed with rifles. The LEADER escorts them forward toward one of the large wood double-doors.

SWAT LEADER

He's in the dining room, near the back.  
As soon as you can get the hostages out,  
we'll move in behind you.

MIKE

Good. Let's try to take him alive, if we  
can.

The SWAT TEAM moves into position and MIKE calls out.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Mr. Trent....We're outside! It's Mike  
Armitage and Susan Paskal. We're unarmed!

They are greeted with silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE (CONT'D)  
We're coming in!

MIKE motions to SUSAN to go first.

INT. DINING ROOM - RAMADA INN - CONTINUOUS

Dark. The only illumination comes from the flickering emergency exit lights, giving the room a reddish glow. Shapes swim out of the darkness: tables and chairs lie scattered; the floor is littered with food and broken glass.

MIKE and SUSAN carefully work their way through the carnage.

MIKE  
Hello?

No answer.

They continue until they come across a body lying face down on the floor. SUSAN turns it over to check for vitals. To her horror: The face is destroyed and the eyes are bloody cavities.

SUSAN lets the body fall back.

SUSAN  
Fuck...

A gurgling COUGH, o.s., sounds from their left. They look over to see: Huddled in one corner, the HOSTAGES, some bloodied, cower in fear.

MIKE and SUSAN step towards them. MIKE whispers:

MIKE  
Where is he?

But the HOSTAGES sit frozen in fear.

There's the flash of a lighter flame nearby. It illuminates TRENT, his face lined with fearsome shadows. He lights his cigarette and takes a long drag before smiling cruelly.

TRENT  
Well, well...you made it.

SUSAN  
Mister Trent?

TRENT  
No, it's Leon...

MIKE and SUSAN exchange frightened glances.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Leon...we've kept our end of the bargain,  
now let the hostages go.

TRENT motions for the HOSTAGES to go. They hesitate at first,  
then hurry out, one of them limping badly.

TRENT

It took you two long enough to get here.  
Thought I was going to run out of  
hostages...

MIKE

You killed a lot of innocent people just  
to talk to us.

TRENT

Innocent? There's no such thing as  
innocent, sweetcheeks.

SUSAN

(motioning to the bodies)  
Then what were they guilty of?

TRENT

Them? Same as the rest of you: Blindness.  
Everyone's deaf, dumb and blind, 'cept  
they don't know it.

MIKE spots motion behind TRENT. A S.W.A.T. SNIPER is moving  
just outside the doorway to the hall. His gun muzzle sticks  
out from the crack between the door and the doorjamb.

MIKE stalls for time:

MIKE

And you're not...

TRENT

Me? No, but I should be.  
(waxing nostalgic)  
I've seen things that would cook your  
eyeballs. Literally.

MIKE

Why did you call for us?

TRENT

I thought we might continue our little  
chat from this morning...

SUSAN

From this morning?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TRENT

Man, you two are pretty slow on the uptake aren't you?

A pair of SHOTS ring out and TRENT is struck in the arm and the stomach. The force sends him backwards and he sprawls at MIKE'S feet. He leans down to grab him.

TRENT (CONT'D)

Who are you? What's going on?

S.W.A.T. OFFICERS STORM into the room surround TRENT, illuminating him with their helmet-mounted flashlights.

MIKE

Tell me about Neal, Leon.

TRENT looks confused. In the dim light we can see that he's a changed man. The snarling presence is gone.

TRENT

(confused)

Leon?...

(fear passes across his face)

Oh, sweet Jesus....not Leon...

MIKE moves closer.

MIKE

What's going on?!

TRENT

He's come back for me...for what we did...sweet Jesus...Oh Lord help me...

TRENT is fading fast. MIKE leans in even closer.

MIKE

Hold on! What did you do?

TRENT

(weakly)

Mosul.....

MIKE

What?! What happened in Mosul?

While MIKE is still gripping the collar, there's a steady trickle of blue fluid from TRENT'S mouth, nose and eyes. MIKE watches in disgust and fascination as TRENT loses consciousness.

EXT. RAMADA INN - LATER

SUSAN and MIKE are just coming out the side entrance.

MIKE

He rants like a maniac, he's got blue fluid coming out of his nose, then he passes out.

SUSAN is at once exhilarated and horrified.

SUSAN

It's so obvious, and yet it's completely impossible.

MIKE is wiping his hand with a Kleenex.

MIKE

Please let me in on what the hell was going on back there.

SUSAN

Remember how I said that Hutner was suffering from D.I.D.? Trent's the exact same way, going by the same name: Leon.  
(beat - as she thinks out loud)  
And it explains the one thing I can't explain otherwise.

MIKE

What's that?

SUSAN

How Trent knew to ask for us.  
(beat)  
Trent's Leon and Hutner's Leon are one and the same.

MIKE

That's not exactly straight out of the D.S.M.

SUSAN

No, but I think we left the D.S.M. behind a couple days ago.

They look over to see CAPT. FORD approaching. She looks seriously pissed.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

What do we tell her?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE  
Well, not that, obviously.  
(beat)  
The less said, the better. The important  
thing is we need another chance to talk  
to Trent.

FORD steps up to them.

FORD  
Okay, you two...why don't you tell me  
what the hell is going on here?

SUSAN  
We don't know.

FORD  
Bullshit. You said you didn't know Trent.

MIKE  
We don't.

FORD  
I may have been born at night, but it  
wasn't last night.  
(beat)  
Sounded like you know each other pretty  
damn well.

SUSAN  
He's suffering from D.I.D. One of his  
personalities was raving.

FORD  
No shit he was raving. But he didn't pull  
your names out of thin air. I want to  
know why he did this, and why he wanted  
you to see it.

MIKE  
If we knew, we'd tell you. I swear.

FORD stares daggers.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
We'll make a deal.

MIKE musters as much charm as he has available.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
You let us talk to Trent again, we'll  
tell you everything we know.

His 'charm offensive' is only somewhat effective.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FORD

That's a bullshit deal. How about this one? You know something, you tell me or my deputies drive you straight to the airport.

Again opting for 'diplomacy' MIKE adds:

MIKE

He's asked for us. He's a lot more likely to open up to us than to you.

FORD realizes her predicament but she's not happy about it.

FORD

Alright, you can talk to Trent as soon as he's out of I.C.U. But then, you tell me everything you know. Got it?

MIKE

Got it.

FORD heads off.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Okay, I bought us another crack at Trent, but we'd better have something to ask him.

SUSAN

He said something about Mosul. Let's start there.

EXT. HALL OF RECORDS - WASHINGTON, DC - DAY

A large, official-looking building identified by a sign out front. In the distance, the Washington Monument peers out above the surrounding buildings.

INT. READING ROOM - HALL OF RECORDS - DAY

MIKE and SUSAN sit at a table, stacked high with various maps and records. SUSAN, hair tied up in an impromptu bun, pores over a large scale map of Iraq, while MIKE'S attention has wandered:

MIKE

Yeah, what was all that about lots of porn stars, and one big naked freak fest? What the hell's going on in Santa Clara?

(beat, as he muses)

After we find Neal, maybe that should be our next case.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Before he can continue the joke, the RECORD KEEPER, 20s, introverted, who clearly doesn't interact with many women approaches SUSAN, with a thin folder:

RECORD KEEPER

I, uh found the file on Mosul that matched your criteria, but uh it's not going to do you much good.

He opens the folder to reveal a report that has been completely blacked out except for the title: "Incident Report: JZ74 - Eyes Only, Project: Taking Tiger Mountain"

RECORD KEEPER (CONT'D)

Typical, everything's a big secret.

SUSAN

Thanks all the same.

The RECORD KEEPER leaves the table still swooning, while SUSAN peruses the file:

SUSAN (CONT'D)

'Project: Taking Tiger Mountain'...

(beat)

...where do they come up with these code names?

MIKE

And it doesn't tell us a damn thing about what they were up to in Mosul.

SUSAN shakes her head in frustration:

SUSAN

I'm so stupid.

MIKE

(teasing)

Yeah, I've known for years.

She mock laughs before continuing:

SUSAN

I forgot to ask the obvious question.

SUSAN stands, and walks over to the counter, where the RECORD KEEPER is busy shuffling papers behind the counter. He hears SUSAN's footsteps, looks up and again has difficulty speaking:

RECORDS KEEPER

A-A-Anything I can do for you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SUSAN  
Who classified the file you gave me?

RECORDS KEEPER  
I'll check.

The RECORD KEEPER walks away, glances back over his shoulder.  
A moment later he returns with the folder.

RECORD KEEPER  
According to the jacket, it was  
classified by Colonel Gary Cochrane.  
(beat)  
Now General Cochrane.

SUSAN  
Thanks...

SUSAN winks, making it one of the most memorable days of the  
RECORD KEEPER'S life.

She returns to MIKE at the reading table. Before she can tell  
him what she's found, MIKE begins:

MIKE  
Guess what, remember how Hutner was given  
the Medal of Honor? Well, he wasn't the  
only one, all of them were granted leave  
at the same time and all were given  
medals shortly thereafter. And here's the  
good part, all of this was coordinated  
by...

SUSAN  
(stealing his thunder)  
Gary Cochrane.

MIKE  
How'd you know?

SUSAN  
Cochrane was the one who had the Mosul  
incident report classified. He's got to  
know what happened there.

MIKE  
(dismayed)  
Cochrane's up for a Cabinet post.

SUSAN  
Which means we won't get anywhere near  
him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MIKE  
Got to try, he's the only person who can  
tell us what's going on...the only one  
who can lead us to Neal...

Before MIKE can continue, his cell phone BUZZES.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
Armitage...Okay, that's great...We'll be  
there first thing.

He pockets his phone and turns to SUSAN.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Trent's out of I.C.U.

SUSAN  
We're back on the red-eye.

MIKE  
Crying babies and no sleep. Yay.

EXT. HALL OF RECORDS - DAY

MIKE and SUSAN hurry from the building. There's a CLICK,  
o.s., and the image freezes.

EXT. TARMAC - ARMY BASE - DAY

A STRANGER, late 40s, crew cut, dark suit, stands at  
attention - talking to another dark-suited MAN who's face we  
cannot see. Behind them, the airfield is filled with frenzied  
activity.

STRANGER  
They're headed back to California to talk  
to Trent.

MAN  
Do they know anything yet?

STRANGER  
I'm not sure.

MAN  
Well, find out. This would be the  
absolute worst time for all this to come  
out. If they get too close, you are  
authorized to take extreme measures.

EXT. SFO AIRPORT - EARLY MORNING

A 747 descends, the dawn sun lighting it from behind.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - MORNING

A rental car makes its way across the bridge, heading north.

EXT. SANTA ROSA COUNTY HOSPITAL - MORNING

A sign identifies the large, modern-looking hospital. The rental car pulls into a parking spot.

INT. HALLWAY - SANTA ROSA COUNTY HOSPITAL - SAME

SUSAN and MIKE walk down the hallway with CAPT. FORD, who looks haggard and marginally more pleased to see them.

SUSAN  
What can you tell us?

FORD  
Nothing. Trent's refusing to speak to anyone. Won't even talk to a lawyer.

They arrive at a door flanked by two PATROL OFFICERS. FORD motions to the OFFICERS. The OFFICERS nod and move to open the door.

FORD (CONT'D)  
(to MIKE and SUSAN)  
Remember our deal.

They nod and step into...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SANTA ROSA COUNTY HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

The windowless room is dark. All extraneous furnishings have been removed for security reasons, leaving only the bed and a pair of monitoring devices. TRENT lies strapped to the bed by leather restraints.

TRENT  
Well, well, if it isn't Mikey and Susan.  
I'd offer you chairs, but they don't seem to trust me with freedom of movement...

SUSAN and MIKE move forward. MIKE is stiffly polite:

MIKE  
Hello Leon. I am speaking to Leon, aren't I?

TRENT  
(riled by his politeness)  
What do you fuckin' think?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

You said yesterday you wanted to continue our conversation.

TRENT

Yeah, I did. Until you fucking let them shoot me. That wasn't very nice, you know.

SUSAN

We're sorry about that.

TRENT

Not that it matters, in the long run. But it did fucking hurt.

MIKE

You said you knew Neal Callahan.

TRENT

I said I met him once. It's not like we were engaged.

MIKE

Do you know what happened to him?

TRENT

How the hell should I know? Maybe they scared him off. Maybe they did something worse.

SUSAN

Who are "they"?

They are getting nowhere with him. MIKE tries a new tactic.

MIKE

Okay. Can we speak to Trent for a few minutes?

TRENT

Mr. Trent doesn't really have anything interesting to say, as a matter of fact, there's really not much left of Trent, he's just a little blip on life's big radar screen.

SUSAN

Did you know James Hutner or Martin Edwards?

TRENT

(disgusted)  
Whadda you think, Sherlock?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SUSAN

What about Roland Smith?

TRENT

You already fuckin' asked me about Smith, don't you two have any new questions?

(on their silence)

Shit, you guys are hopeless. Alright, I knew those humps, real well; you might even say "intimately".

MIKE

What's the connection? How did you know them?

SUSAN

Does it have to do with Mosul?

TRENT

(to MIKE, mocking)

Oooh, she's sooo smart, got it all figured out.

(to SUSAN, very serious)

What do you know about the war, Professor? I thought I knew something when I started out...but I didn't know shit then...You want to learn about human behavior, you should spend some time surrounded by people trying to kill you, snipers, I.E.D.'s, suicide bombers, that's when things get real simple, and suddenly questions like good and evil don't seem so important...

MIKE and SUSAN don't know what to make of this.

TRENT (CONT'D)

Ya know...you fuckin' college types kill me, you go on about how you gotta figure out what makes people like me tick, what makes us so different. Let me tell you, ladies: Ain't nobody that different from nobody else. It's kill or be killed, only we're usually too polite to talk about it. War has a nice way of making that clear.

TRENT suddenly looks weary. He slumps back in the bed.

TRENT (CONT'D)

I've said all I'm gonna say to you fucks.

(calls out)

Hey, fellas, you can take these two humps away now...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MIKE

Wait, Leon. You've gotta give us something more to go on.

(beat)

What is 'Taking Tiger Mountain'?

TRENT smiles, then gets a faraway look as if recalling an old memory. The OFFICERS enter and begin to escort MIKE and SUSAN out. As they do, TRENT begins to sing:

TRENT

(to the tune of "Dr. Robert")

If you're down, he'll pick you up, Doc  
Gazarek...take a drink from his special  
cup, Doc Gazarek...

MIKE turns back and TRENT winks.

EXT. COUNTY HOSPITAL - LATER

SUSAN and MIKE are walking across the parking lot to their rental car.

MIKE

I don't remember any references to Dr.  
Gazarek in any of the files.

SUSAN

Well we've got to find a way to track him  
down...and fast.

They reach the rental car to discover that FORD is leaning against the front hood. She looks intent.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

Oh shit.

FORD

I was afraid you might forget to come  
looking for me.

MIKE

I'm sorry. We were in a bit of a hurry.

FORD

Whatever, I kept my end of the deal; now  
it's time for you two to start talking.  
What's going on here?

SUSAN

We don't know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD

Again. Bullshit. You've got something and I want to know what it is. Remember, this is my town. This is where all this happened. I knew some of those people and, damnit, I want to know why they died! So, tell me what you know...

SUSAN

You're not going to believe us.

MIKE

Three words: Vice President Cheney.

(a beat)

If he hadn't gotten us into the war, none of this would have happened. All roads lead to Cheney.

SUSAN rolls her eyes again, then wanting to lessen the tension, this time she plays peacemaker and turns to FORD:

SUSAN

Ignore him. Here's what we know so far...

INT. OFFICE - SANTA ROSA POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

MIKE and SUSAN sit uncomfortably in the closed office. It looks like they've been there for a while and are not happy about it.

The door opens and FORD steps in. She looks unhappy, but less angry than before.

FORD

Okay, your story about Hutner and Trent checks out. I don't buy your explanation, but at least you're square on the facts.

MIKE

A deal's a deal.

FORD

And it's ongoing. I want to be in on anything you find, no matter how crazy it sounds.

MIKE

Don't worry. We promise.

SUSAN and MIKE rise and head for the door.

FORD

Just one more thing...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They stop and turn.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Just so there's no hard feelings...

MIKE  
What is it?

FORD  
While I was verifying the rest of your  
crazy story, I tracked down Dr.  
Gazarek...and emailed you his info.  
(on their surprised looks)  
Like I said, we get shit done here, this  
ain't a twenty-four seven orgy.

INT. RENTAL CAR - LATER

MIKE is driving while SUSAN scans the laptop.

SUSAN  
Sounds like the guy, Dr. Stanley Gazarek,  
Ph.D....good catch, I wouldn't have  
thought of that angle...biochemist;  
contractor for the D.O.D.  
(a beat - surprised)  
Now resides at the Breton Woods  
Psychiatric Hospital in Massachusetts...  
(beat)  
...as a patient.

EXT. GROUNDS - BRETON DOWNS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - EVENING

Several rundown buildings surrounded by an ill-kept lawn.  
White smocked INMATES shuffle about the grounds aimlessly.  
SUSAN and MIKE make their way past them to the main ward.

INT. MAIN WARD BUILDING - SAME

The grand old building has been slowly worn down by the  
years. SUSAN and MIKE make their way through the large, airy  
wardroom, led by ZEKE, a large Samoan orderly.

ZEKE  
You're a little more respectable than  
Doc's usual guests.

MIKE  
Oh? Does he get a lot of visitors?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ZEKE

Not too many. Just a couple of his old hippie friends from time to time...guys who look like they may have left their brains back in the Sixties, if you know what I mean. What do you folks want to talk to him about anyhow?

SUSAN

He did some research for the Marines that we're curious about.

ZEKE

Well, you're in luck. He's on his meds, he's having a pretty good day...

They draw up to a table. DR. STANLEY GAZAREK - early 70s, with an unruly shock of gray hair and a deeply lined face - is seated there, a half-completed jigsaw puzzle spread out before him.

ZEKE (CONT'D)

Here you are...Doctor Gazarek.

(to GAZAREK)

Doc, a coupla nice visitors to see you.

GAZAREK doesn't look up. He's feverishly hunting for a piece.

GAZAREK

Goddamn piece...must be missing...

Bateson probably ate it... the goddamned looney...

ZEKE

(to SUSAN and MIKE, dripping  
with sarcasm)

Have a nice chat...

ZEKE walks away, leaving them standing awkwardly before GAZAREK, whose attention is still firmly focused on the puzzle.

MIKE

Excuse us...Dr. Gazarek... we'd like to ask you a couple of questions, if you don't mind.

GAZAREK

(without looking up)

ID.

MIKE

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GAZAREK

(still not looking up)

I'll need to see some ID, I can't just go talking to anyone, not with what I know. Now that would be crazy.

MIKE fishes out his badge and holds it out for him. GAZAREK glances up quickly, then turns back to the puzzle.

GAZAREK (CONT'D)

C.I.D, interesting. I haven't talked to the military in years. Ah ha!

In a flash, his hand streaks out and grabs a puzzle piece, then jams it into place. He looks up triumphantly.

GAZAREK (CONT'D)

Now, what can I do for you?

MIKE

We'd like to ask you some questions about the work you did for the Defense Department.

GAZAREK

(interrupts)

Are you carrying?

MIKE

What? Uh, no, we left our sidearms at the office.

GAZAREK

I don't mean that, I mean carrying. You know sticky-icky, shrooms, acid... some real medicine. The crap they give me here makes my head fuzzy and kills the old sex drive.

He winks at SUSAN.

SUSAN

No. I'm sorry... we're...

But GAZAREK is already talking again, eager to discuss his work:

GAZAREK

I was a biochemist... bleeding edge stuff. Ever heard of Edward Witten?

MIKE and SUSAN exchange confused looks. Before they can respond, GAZAREK continues:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GAZAREK (CONT'D)

(smiling - genuinely surprised)  
Physicists and mathematicians came up  
with superstring theory. Speculated that  
'higher dimensions', existed, ten of them  
to be exact. Then in the mid-nineties  
Witten comes along and speculates that  
there are actually eleven dimensions, ten  
dimensions of space, and one of time and  
voila...the birth of 'M-theory'.

(doing a bad Monty Python  
impression)  
"And there was much rejoicing..."

SUSAN

I'm not sure how...

GAZAREK

Hold on, I'm getting there. I was  
developing mind-altering drugs... and  
Witten got me thinking, what if I could  
design a psychotropic that allowed you to  
not only perceive... but wait for it...  
enter these higher dimensions. It was for  
Psy-Ops.

MIKE leans in close, his voice barely above a whisper.

MIKE

Do you know about 'Taking Tiger  
Mountain'?

GAZAREK

OK, time for the bonus round. Heard of MK-  
Ultra?

(without waiting for a  
response)  
An off the books program The Agency  
developed back in the 60s, testing  
hallucinogens on combat troops, good-ol'  
Psy-Ops again. Well they dusted it off  
and brought it back for Afghanistan and  
Iraq.

MIKE

Cheney gave the order to re-start the  
program? Didn't he?

GAZAREK

Not that I know of.

MIKE tries to conceal his disappointment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

GAZAREK (CONT'D)

Anyway. This time they wanted to try something with a little more...kick. So I developed P.V. three-four-seven... shitty name though, right?

(beat)

One night I whipped up this Ketamine, Psilocybin cocktail... started watching this crazy Chinese opera...

MIKE

As one does.

Not catching the snark:

GAZAREK

... called... 'Taking Tiger Mountain'... and Boom! I've got a new project name.

SUSAN

It was a drug?

GAZAREK

(interrupting again)

The psychotropic from heaven... or hell, depending on how you looked at it. It didn't just unlock the doors of perception...

(laughing)

..it smashed them open and threw away the goddamned keys!

MIKE

Why would the Marines be interested in...

GAZAREK

I told you. Psy-Ops. They wanted to use it on our soldiers, give them heightened mental abilities, but there was a problem...

SUSAN

Which was?

GAZAREK

The side effects were a bitch.

GAZAREK looks around the ward suspiciously, then stands and leans in close. Unconsciously, SUSAN and MIKE each take a step back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

GAZAREK (CONT'D)

Once you open the doors of perception,  
there's no telling what might go out...  
or what might get in.

MIKE

What do you...

GAZAREK

Do you believe in the afterlife? That  
when you die, your consciousness is  
released from your body?

SUSAN

For the sake of argument, let's say we  
do.

GAZAREK leans in even closer, a mischievous smile on his  
grizzled face.

GAZAREK

Let's just say that sometimes when you  
took 'The Mountain', you didn't need to  
die to have that experience.

EXT. GROUNDS - BRETON DOWNS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - EVENING

MIKE and SUSAN make their way back across the grounds towards  
the parking lot.

SUSAN

I never thought I'd ever say this, but if  
he'd said it was a conspiracy and Cheney  
was in the middle of it, it would've been  
a relief.

(beat)

I can't even begin to get my head around  
what he was talking about.

MIKE

It all makes sense though.

SUSAN

Nothing that came out of his mouth made  
sense.

MIKE

Let's say that 'The Mountain' really did  
open you up like that.

SUSAN

That's a real stretch, but for the sake  
of argument, okay, it really could do  
that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

You were ready to believe Hutner and Trent shared a consciousness... but this is a bridge too far?

SUSAN concedes the point.

MIKE (CONT'D)

So let's say that the Marines decided to test it on Edwards, Smith, Hutner and Trent... all four of them have their minds opened or whatever and in slips this Leon character. He's not a created personality, he's actually another consciousness.

SUSAN

I can't believe I'm about to say this, but I think you might be on to something.

(beat)

Leon slips in, works the bodies like a deranged puppet-master, commits the murders, then moves on.

MIKE

Exactly. Now we just have to figure out why and who's next...

But SUSAN is already way ahead of him.

SUSAN

We've got a more immediate problem. What's the one thing that always happens before Leon moves on?

EXT. SANTA ROSA COUNTY HOSPITAL - SAME

Most of the windows are dark. It appears peaceful.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

Three POLICE OFFICERS - CATHERINE DELANEY and orderlies MIKE FERRER and JIM WHITE - sit in a large hospital room, their attention divided between "The Masked Singer" and an apparently sleeping WILLIAM TRENT.

CATHERINE stands and heads toward the bathroom.

CATHERINE

Tell me what I missed, would ya?

She disappears under the arch of a darkened doorway to the:

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

CATHERINE is washing her hands, when she feels the hairs on the back of her neck stand on end. She turns around, but there is no one there. She chalks it up to paranoia.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

CLOSE - TRENT'S HANDS: Slowly fraying the leather restraints against the jagged edge of the bed frame...

JIM and MIKE are glued to the TV. They don't see or hear TRENT SNAP his leather restraints.

They turn around in time to see TRENT, blue fluid leaking from his orifices, lunging at them.

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

In the room outside, we can hear the CRASH of glass SHATTERING. CATHERINE runs back into the:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

The room is dark, lit only by the pale blue glow of the television. In the flickering light, CATHERINE can make out broken glass and, to her horror, two bodies.

Drawing her gun, she makes her way carefully toward them.

CATHERINE

Ferrer?

His face is a pale death mask. CATHERINE shudders and stifles a gasp. Then, recovering her wits, she stands perfectly still, listening closely. Barely audible is a soft SCRAPE, o.s.

She turns toward the noise slowly: Across the entrance, the empty room, dividing curtains flapping in the breeze, then stopping on WILLIAM TRENT, pressed deep into the cubbyhole between two cabinets. CATHERINE slowly raises her weapon:

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Alright, Trent... come out slowly...

TRENT makes no move to do so. He stares at her with pleading eyes and speaks softly, imploringly...

TRENT

Please... Help me....

Something in his voice makes her waver. He drops his head in a gesture of infinite sadness. CATHERINE moves towards him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TRENT (CONT'D)  
(sobs)  
It's too late...

CATHERINE drops her guard, moves closer, less than a foot away...

CATHERINE  
Too late for what?

TRENT looks up, his face alive with a snarling intensity.

TRENT  
Too late for you, sweetcheeks!

TRENT brings his other hand around - it's clutching a scalpel. His arm swings up, burying the scalpel in CATHERINE'S neck.

A jet of blood erupts from a severed carotid artery - her hands go to her neck in an attempt to staunch the bleeding. TRENT LAUGHS maniacally.

EXT. ROAD - NEAR HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A line of four police black and whites and one large police van comes screaming past heading towards the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - SAME

The small lobby is abuzz with activity - UNIFORMED OFFICERS are strapping on heavy kevlar vests, others are interviewing worried-looking nurses. In the foreground, a very agitated CAPT. FORD is grilling DAVIS, the head guard.

FORD  
This guy's killed eight people... that we know of... is generally nuttier than squirrel shit and now nobody knows where the hell he is?

DAVIS  
(stammering)  
No, not exactly, but there's no way he could have gotten out without passing us. He's still in there.

FORD  
(almost to herself)  
God, what a fuck up.

OFFICER BENTLY, in kevlar and riot gear, walks up to FORD and reports.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BENTLY  
We're all set.

FORD  
Good. He's somewhere in E-Wing. Conduct a room to room hard target search. Suspect is armed and extremely dangerous. Is that clear?

BENTLY  
Yes, ma'am.  
(to his team)  
Okay, let's move!

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - SAME

The S.W.A.T. team moves down the dimly lit hall, probing the rooms with their flashlights as they advance. Ahead of them, the light from the TV flickers through the door to Trent's room.

BENTLY, at the point, motions to two of his OFFICERS to move forward and take up positions at either side of the door. They do so. The SOUND of a drawer closing can be heard from the room. The SWAT team, like a single man, presses itself against the hallway wall.

BENTLY  
(into his collar radio)  
This is team leader. The suspect is still in his room. Over.

FORD  
(over radio)  
Acknowledged. Hold your position; we're going to pull the plug on him.

FORD in the lobby. She gestures to the TECHNICIAN working at the fuse panel behind the counter. He nods acknowledgment and sets to work.

SWAT team in the hallway, holding position.

The CAMERA PANS the group - they're mostly young and nervous - but trying to mask their collective fear. The light cuts out in Trent's room.

BENTLY  
Go!

The team swarms into the room, guns drawn and flashlights stabbing the darkness.

INT. TRENT'S ROOM - SAME

There's shouting and confusion. Flashlight beams play over a scene of carnage, the floor is slick with blood. The team members probe all the dark corners. TRENT is nowhere to be seen. BENTLY holds up his hand and shouts for quiet.

BENTLY  
Hold up! Quiet!

The room becomes eerily quiet.

SERIES OF CLOSE SHOTS ON TEAM MEMBERS LOOKING AROUND THE ROOM.

Suddenly, there is a muffled CRY coming from behind them. They turn and train their beams on:

TRENT, next to the door, holding a TEAM MEMBER, hand clamped tight over the poor officer's mouth, a gun pressed against his temple.

TRENT  
Looking for someone?

BENTLY  
Don't do it, Trent!! Nobody needs to get hurt here.

TRENT  
(surveying the carnage)  
I'd say it's a little too late for that, wouldn't you?  
(to his captive)  
You feel like dying, kid?... It's not so bad, once you get used to it.

BENTLY  
You pull that trigger, and you're as good as dead.

TRENT  
That suits me just fine.

TRENT presses the gun against his own head and fires.

BENTLY and his team rush forward and shine their lights.

TRENT, lies in a pool of his own, blood. BENTLY moves in for a closer look when...TRENT'S body begins to twist, then spasm and jerk until it's dancing like a frog on hot asphalt. Startled, BENTLY jumps back at least a foot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON THE TEAM: Their mouths begin to drop in horror. As they watch the strange scene:

TRENT's thrown backward, as if pushed by some unseen force - back against the wall - still clawing at his face.

Still facing them, TRENT scurries backward up the wall. The room filled with the sound of his screams.

TRENT (CONT'D)  
Nooooo!!!!!!

The S.W.A.T. Team watches this bizarre spectacle from below - uncertain how to react.

TRENT drops to the ground. His mouth snaps open. He vomits explosively...

Spraying the room with generous amounts of the viscous indigo fluid.

The TEAM LEADER shines his light on the baffled faces (speckled with purple-blue fluid) of his comrades.

TEAM LEADER  
(incredulously)  
Would somebody like to tell me WHAT in the holy hell just happened?!

EXT. HIGHWAY - EARLY MORNING

The sun is still just a rumor on the horizon. MIKE'S car speeds down the otherwise deserted two-lane highway. As it passes the CAMERA a cell phone RINGS, o.s.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - SAME

MIKE is at the wheel. SUSAN sits in the passenger seat, removing her phone from her ear and tucking it away.

SUSAN  
That was Ford. We're too late.  
(beat)  
And she had...questions.

MIKE  
Edwards to Smith. Months went by. But then only weeks before Leon moved from Smith to Hutner. Then a few days from Hutner to Trent. He's picking up the pace, accelerating things, which he'd only do...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

...if he was on some kind of timetable.  
So where is he now?

MIKE

I don't know, but we'd better figure out soon. But at this rate, we only have a day or two at the most.

INT. KITCHEN - SUSAN'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

SUSAN and MIKE stand over a kitchen cabinet with a half empty bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon, and two wine glasses.

MIKE

I just can't stand the thought of doing nothing while Neal's still out there.

SUSAN

What do you suggest, storming Cochrane's office? You're talking court-martial. And, at the very least, I'd lose my job.

MIKE

Would that be so bad? You belong out in the field, chasing leads, closing cases. I know you feel responsible, for her death...but the board cleared you...

SUSAN

We've never talked about this...  
(she pauses, reluctant to discuss this)  
...but something happened to me in the hallway.

MIKE

Earhardt, he got to you, you're still suffering, I get that; but what we're doing, closing this case, is the best way to put all of it behind you.

SUSAN

It wasn't just the attack itself.

MIKE

(confused)  
I don't understand.

SUSAN

Afterward. I started to 'see' things. Visual, auditory hallucinations.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. IMAGING ROOM - MEDSTAR HOSPITAL - DAY

SUSAN is moved inside of an MRI device.

SUSAN (V.O.)

Checked myself back into Medstar. At first they thought it might have been encephalitis, they ran a lot of tests. Everything was normal. There was nothing physically wrong with me. Once they ruled that out, it was another round of psychologists. They came to the conclusion that I wasn't mentally ill - but...

END FLASHBACK.

INT. KITCHEN - TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

SUSAN

(beat)

...but Mike I haven't been...the same... since the attack.

(beat)

I didn't want to burden you with what I was going through. I didn't want to put you through that, so I kept my distance.

MIKE

Sometimes you're a real pain in the ass, but you could never be a burden to me. Never.

She smiles in appreciation of the sentiment before continuing:

SUSAN

And I still 'see' things, I lose time. Sometimes it's just seconds or minutes, sometimes it's longer.

MIKE

I noticed that a couple times before we went to see Trent you seemed to check out for a couple minutes.

SUSAN

Since we've been working this case, the episodes have become more frequent. We're going to see this through.

(a beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Once it's over though, I need to get to the bottom of what's really going on in my head.

MIKE

This has been going on since the attack?

SUSAN

That's why I quit C.I.D., took the job at Georgetown.

MIKE reaches out and takes her hands in his.

MIKE

Suze, I had no idea you were going through all that.

SUSAN

Well I didn't exactly pour my heart out back then.

MIKE

I wish you had. I really do. Maybe then we'd still...

SUSAN

Yeah, maybe.

They lock gazes and electricity passes between them.

MIKE

Maybe it's not too late.

As if drawn, they begin to lean forward to kiss.

INT. BEDROOM - TOWNHOUSE - LATER

They lie intertwined underneath the sheets. SUSAN tosses and turns in her sleep.

BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE:

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

A freight train of death is rushing towards her, in the form of: CHESTER EARHARDT, early 40s, broad, shaved head, goatee, hard face, radiating violence.

He lowers a shoulder into her midsection. The impact lifts her off her feet. She crashes to the ground and EARHARDT is on top of her. She struggles to reach her weapon, which lies just out of reach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She finds the pistol grip. She tries to twist the gun around. SUSAN thinks she's got a shot. She squeezes the trigger. She misses high. EARHARDT moves ever so slightly in surprise.

He produces a knife.

SLOW MOTION: The knife comes down into SUSAN'S abdomen, there's a CRASH, o.s....

END DREAM SEQUENCE.

INT. TOWNHOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

SUSAN jerks awake, only to find: The FRACTAL MAN floating at the foot of the bed. It gestures, revealing: A SHADOWY FIGURE moving through the room. The SHADOWY FIGURE fades, then the FRACTAL MAN follows suit.

Once the FRACTAL MAN has disappeared she realizes she's in the bedroom alone.

SUSAN

Mike?

No answer.

INT. HALLWAY - TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

SUSAN, now clad in shorts and a T-shirt, makes her way down the hall. It's dark. She looks down the hall, her eyes slowly adjusting to the dark.

SUSAN

Mike?

Still no answer. She hears something moving in the bathroom at the end of the hall. She visibly tenses and rushes toward the:

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

MIKE lies on the tile floor, his eyes closed. SUSAN kneels down beside him and shakes him.

SUSAN

Mike, Mike...Oh, god, Mike...

When he doesn't respond, she shakes him harder in desperation. A thought comes to her. She stops shaking him, leans in close and very calmly says:

SUSAN (CONT'D)

President. Liz. Cheney.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE'S eyes pop open, he SCREAMS, his arms flail, like he's just been shot with adrenalin.

MIKE

No! No!

SUSAN

What happened?

He looks around to orient himself.

MIKE

Someone attacked me. You've got to get him...

SUSAN glances out the shattered bathroom window: The STRANGER is sprinting down the street.

She takes another quick look at MIKE then sprints into:

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

SUSAN quickly grabs her gun from a lockbox in her closet.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

She heads out onto the sidewalk, looking about. She spots the stranger's car pulling away from the curb in a hurry.

SUSAN

Stop!!

The car doesn't slow. SUSAN runs into the street, gun raised, facing down the oncoming car.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Stop or I'll shoot!!

The car continues to accelerate straight towards her.

SUSAN squeezes off two shots. Both rounds SMASH into the car. One shatters the windshield; but the car keeps coming.

With half a ton of hard steel hurtling towards her, SUSAN THROWS herself to the left and ROLLS just out of the way of the oncoming wheels.

In a flash, she springs to her knees and aims at the departing car. She FIRES twice more, shattering the rear windshield and blowing out a tire.

The car swerves, then tries to straighten but can't. It smashes into a line of parked cars and EXPLODES into flame. SUSAN hurries towards the wreckage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Black smoke obscures her view, but when it clears she sees:  
The twisted car is empty.

SUSAN looks around desperately, finally spotting the STRANGER running down the sidewalk at the far end of the block. SUSAN gives chase, trying to make up ground.

She rounds the corner and halts. Her breaths coming in whooping gasps, she looks around. The STRANGER is nowhere to be seen. SUSAN is about to give up when he spots the familiar lights of the METRO.

INT. DUPONT CIRCLE METRO STATION - SAME

SUSAN flies down the steep escalator - but the STRANGER is still ahead of her. She climbs onto the median strip and sprints/slides down the slippery metal slope to the station below.

When she reaches the bottom, she scans the largely empty station. There's no sign of the STRANGER. She pushes her way through to the edge of the top walkway and looks down.

Below her, on the lower level, the STRANGER is making his way along the edge of the opposite track. SUSAN calls after him.

SUSAN

Stop!!

The STRANGER turns, spots SUSAN, then brings up his gun and fires. The shot whistles by SUSAN and strikes a COMMUTER in the forehead. The STRANGER turns and starts to run.

SUSAN tries to follow his progress from above but quickly runs into a dead end immediately over the tracks where the two trains are just pulling out.

With no choice, she takes a deep breath and hurls herself over the side of the walkway and plummets towards the trains.

She lands heavily on the first train just as it's picking up speed. She has to scramble to stay on; her hands slapping against the smooth metal surface. She gains purchase and quickly stands.

Looking over the top of the neighboring train, she spots the STRANGER, on the far platform, making his way towards another exit.

SUSAN looks forward...her train is really moving now, and the car is about to slide into the tunnel.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Oh shit!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As the wall above the opening hurtles towards her, she leaps from the first train onto the train moving in the opposite direction.

The difference in momentum is too much, and her body glances off the top and begins to slide down between the two trains...

...but her hands manage to grab hold of some piping running along the top edge of the car and her slide is arrested till she dangles between the moving trains.

The swaying of the cars brings her dangerously close to the opposite car. It looks like she'll be crushed when...the space behind her clears as the train moves past her.

Her relief is short-lived, however. She glances forwards to see another train barreling down the line towards her.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Give me a break!

With all her might, she pulls herself onto the top of the train and, as the far side of the station speeds towards her, gains her feet to leap unsteadily onto the far platform.

She lands heavily, rolling over and over until she finally comes to rest...at the feet of two very unhappy-looking STATION GUARDS. They draw their guns as SUSAN struggles to her feet.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Let me go... I'm in pursuit...  
(on their refusal to move)  
...C.I.D.... Military police!

FIRST GUARD

(not believing for a second)  
Sure... let's see some ID then.

SUSAN pats her shorts for her ID, till it dawns on her...

SUSAN

Uh... would you believe I'm retired?

INT. METRO STATION - LATER

MIKE, black & blue from his recent encounter, paces the platform. SUSAN is nursing her own wounds and outrage.

SUSAN

I would've had him if it hadn't been for  
the damn transit cops...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

With those trigger happy idiots, I'm just glad you didn't get shot...

SUSAN smiles despite herself, then turns serious again.

SUSAN

Do you think it was Leon?

MIKE

No. It didn't sound like him.

SUSAN

Then I'll bet you he was military.

MIKE

Yeah. I think we've got our answer about Cochrane. Someone sure as hell doesn't want us to see him... so, we going to take the hint?

She smiles.

SUSAN

Not on your life.

MIKE

I thought you were worried about our careers?

SUSAN

I was. Now I'm just pissed off.

EXT. GATE - PENTAGON - MORNING

An overcast Autumn day. As official-looking cars roll up to the guard station, SUSAN and MIKE stand, trying to look inconspicuous, as they scan the cars.

Finally, a large black chauffeured sedan bearing GENERAL COCHRANE pulls up to the gate. As the DRIVER flashes the proper paperwork for the GUARDS, SUSAN and MIKE hurry up to the car and knock on Cochrane's window.

MIKE

(loud enough to be heard  
through the glass)

General Cochrane, we need to talk to you.

A GUARD steps from the booth.

GUARD

Hey!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE flashes his ID badge and turns back to COCHRANE.

MIKE  
I'm looking for Neal Callahan.

COCHRANE slides down the window.

COCHRANE  
I'm sorry, I don't know that name.

SUSAN  
How about these, then, James Hutner,  
Martin Edwards, Roland Smith and William  
Trent...

COCHRANE  
I don't think I know them either.

SUSAN  
I think you do. You awarded each of them  
the Congressional Medal of Honor.

COCHRANE shrugs.

COCHRANE  
I've given that award hundreds of times.

The window starts to slide back up.

MIKE  
We know about Mosul... and 'Taking Tiger  
Mountain'.

The window stops.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Answers... or we go public.

COCHRANE studies them for a moment, then sighs.

COCHRANE  
Not here...

INT. COCHRANE'S OFFICE - SAME

A large, expensively, but tastefully decorated office. The office seems designed to convey a sense of power and prestige. COCHRANE stands behind his desk while MIKE and SUSAN look on expectantly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COCHRANE

In Iraq I ran a small covert operation. The objective was to reach areas we suspected to be sympathetic to insurgents and "sanitize" them. Our methods were a bit..let's say "extreme" for the public mood at the time. So we kept the whole thing under wraps... We pulled soldiers under the cover of giving them R & R. You see, they were never an official unit.

MIKE

(putting it together)

And as a way of striking fear into the enemy, they carved out the eyes of their victims. That was their "calling card"...

COCHRANE

Yes. We didn't approve, of course, but...

SUSAN

And Leon?

COCHRANE

Leon Scales. He was the platoon leader.

SUSAN

What about 'T.T.M.'?

COCHRANE

An experimental drug that gave you heightened mental abilities...connected you to other people who had also used the drug.

MIKE

So Leon and his men...you gave all of them this drug.

COCHRANE

They were linked mentally. You see, they thought as one. Out on a mission, there was no hesitation... no confusion. They were linked and knew instantly what each needed to do. It made them practically unstoppable.

MIKE

Until...

COCHRANE

Until Mosul.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIKE

What happened?

COCHRANE

I received intelligence that a number of former Baathists were planning insurgent activity in Mosul; I sent Scales and his men to investigate.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. IRAQI VILLAGE - DAY

The village is in shambles. In the b.g., small buildings are burning. In the f.g., two Marines, recognizable as younger versions of HUTNER and TRENT, are going from house to house, dragging out MEN, WOMEN and CHILDREN.

A second pair follows them, tossing grenades into the houses. The houses BURST into flame in quick succession.

COCHRANE (V.O.)

They didn't find anything incriminating, but Scales wasn't satisfied. So he rounded up everyone in the village, lined them up in the square...

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

The VILLAGERS stand stiffly in the center of the square. Behind them, their village burns - hell on earth. The heavily armed MARINES stand guard, a little uneasily, as LEON interrogates a village ELDER.

COCHRANE (V.O.)

He started questioning the village elders. When they denied supporting the insurgents, he went crazy... started shooting up the place... women, children, everyone.

The ELDER is shaking his head adamantly. LEON strikes him roughly with the butt of his gun, and then turns around and opens fire on the VILLAGERS with his machine gun.

The spray catches MEN and WOMEN indiscriminately, tattooing their bodies with spurting wounds as they crumble.

COCHRANE (V.O.)

The rest of the men pleaded with him to stop. When he didn't, they shot him.

TRENT and HUTNER look at each other meaningfully. Over a moment, they turn their assault rifles on LEON and FIRE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON turns around to find TRENT and HUTNER'S smoking weapons aimed at him.

He tries to raise his weapon, but TRENT and HUTNER FIRE again till Leon's body is stitched with ragged wounds.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. COCHRANE'S OFFICE - SAME

As MIKE processes what he's just heard. Thinking out loud:

MIKE

But there was no formal investigation.  
You covered it all up, even gave everyone  
medals to keep them quiet.

COCHRANE

Yes, I had to protect the project.

MIKE

(fighting his anger)  
They massacred civilians and all you  
cared about was covering your ass?

MIKE is starting to follow the logic and he's finding the anger more difficult to control.

MIKE (CONT'D)

That's what Neal figured out. So you had  
to silence him. What did you do? Kill  
him? Sick one of your goons on him like  
you did me?

COCHRANE

No. We didn't kill him. And we didn't try  
to kill you, we just wanted to scare you  
off.

MIKE

So, where is he?

COCHRANE starts to grow cagey.

COCHRANE

Not so fast. You need to do something for  
me first.

MIKE boils over. He draws his weapon.

MIKE

I don't think so, General. Not after what  
we've been through. You're going to tell  
me where he is, or...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN grows alarmed, realizing the mistake he's about to make.

SUSAN

Mike, stop. Think about it, you'll never find Neal without his help. We've got no choice.

MIKE realizes she's right and slowly lowers his weapon.

MIKE

Alright. What's the deal?

COCHRANE

Tell me, how did you know about Leon?

SUSAN

We've spoken to him.

MIKE

Three times, first in Hutner, then Trent. He's moving from body to body, and each move is happening faster than the one before. There's someone he's trying to reach, by a specific date.

COCHRANE

So it's true. Leon really has survived, his consciousness, at least.

MIKE

You don't seem surprised.

COCHRANE

We worried that might be a side-effect. Besides, if there's anyone who could come back from the dead to get his revenge, it's Leon. Which is why I need you to stop him.

SUSAN

We're running out of time. Where's he going next, General? Who's left?

COCHRANE

Fred Hightower, he's the last surviving member of that platoon. But you've got to keep this all quiet. Otherwise the deal's off.

MIKE

Where can we find him?

EXT. FORT CLARK MILITARY BASE - DAY

The front gate of a heavily fortified Marine base. The air is filled with an almost deafening ROAR from a C-130 transport, taking off from a nearby runway.

COCHRANE (V.O.)

Fort Clark, New Jersey... he's the C.O.

INT. OFFICE - SAME

COLONEL FRED HIGHTOWER, early 50's, career military man consummate professional; he's very average in appearance. He's a decorated war hero, but you'd never know it to look at him.

He sits behind his desk, shuffling large stacks of papers in front of him. His secretary GRACE enters the room, and hands him another large sheaf of papers.

GRACE

Here are the forms you asked for.

HIGHTOWER

Thanks.

GRACE leaves the room. HIGHTOWER is alone at his desk, making notations on the papers GRACE has just delivered.

INT. ELEVATOR - PENTAGON - SAME

MIKE and SUSAN stare impatiently as the floor numbers crawl past.

MIKE

We've got to get to Hightower and put him somewhere where he can't hurt himself... at least till we figure out how to get rid of Leon.

SUSAN

How? We can't just have him arrested. He hasn't done anything.

MIKE

What if we call him and explain what's happening? Maybe he'd agree to being held voluntarily.

SUSAN

No, it's too risky. If Leon's already in control it would just force him to act that much sooner. We'll have to go up there and confront him in person.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The doors open. They step out into:

INT. LOBBY - PENTAGON - CONTINUOUS

Buzzing with activity. MIKE and SUSAN cut through it, oblivious to all but the task at hand.

MIKE

And do what?

SUSAN

I don't know. But there's one person who might.

GAZAREK (PRE-LAP)

There's nothing you can do...

EXT. GROUNDS - BRETON DOWNS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY

DR. GAZAREK, dressed against the chill air in a drab gray prison coat, paces nervously before SUSAN and MIKE while ZEKE stands nearby keeping an eye on them.

MIKE

How can you be sure?

GAZAREK

How can I be sure? Because it's my drug we're talking about. Remember? You think I can just whip up an antidote?

(more to himself)

I can't believe they did that. I can't believe they did that man! That shit was way too dangerous...

SUSAN

So there's nothing...

GAZAREK

(cuts him off impatiently)

...this is 'Taking Tiger Mountain', not Magic Mountain. Once you've opened the doors of perception you can't just close them and say "thanks that was fun". You ever try putting the egg yolk back in the shell? Can't be done...

MIKE

So, how do we...

GAZAREK

(cuts him off)

Who took it? Who's at risk?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Most of them are dead now. We think it's just Col. Hightower.

GAZAREK

Wrong! Wrong! Wrong!

He watches SUSAN and MIKE exchange confused glances.

GAZAREK (CONT'D)

I took it. Me! You think I didn't try it? A drug like that, with that potential?

SUSAN

So, who else...

GAZAREK

They're all dead. All except one, and he went so far round the bend they had to cart him off in a straightjacket...

MIKE

So Leon might be able to...

GAZAREK

(suddenly horrified)  
Leon? Leon Scales?!

SUSAN

Yes, how did...

GAZAREK

That's who went nuts? They couldn't possibly have used him. He failed all the psych tests...he was a nightmare in the trials...no..no..no...this is not good...

His agitation builds. He grabs SUSAN by the arm, imploringly.

GAZAREK (CONT'D)

You gotta do something for me...

ZEKE starts towards GAZAREK, but SUSAN shakes her head and ZEKE backs off.

GAZAREK (CONT'D)

(to SUSAN)

You have to induce a coma or let me off myself...

(to SUSAN)

...you can get your hands on the right pills to do the trick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SUSAN

Why should...

GAZAREK

A deep coma, basically no brain function or death. Those are the only two options. I can't let him in my head again. He's too strong. I can't face him.

MIKE

What if we trap Hightower and keep him from killing himself? That way he can't move on. It will give you time to figure out...

GAZAREK

What do you mean he can't move on? Thanks to 'The Mountain', you can slip in and out whenever you want. Oh man, he could be here any minute!

GAZAREK is growing terrified.

GAZAREK (CONT'D)

God, please! You've got to help me. You've got to give me something, something strong enough to put me in a coma.

SUSAN

There has to be an alternative to...

GAZAREK

You don't understand!! I've had Leon in my head before, in the trials. I can't go through that again!

INT. HIGHTOWER'S OFFICE - SAME (INTERCUT W/ GAZAREK)

HIGHTOWER is still at work on his papers.

GAZAREK (V.O.)

Leon's insane. I don't mean insane like tin foil hat, talking to pigeons or thinking he's a fire hydrant...

HIGHTOWER looks up quickly, like someone has just walked across his grave. He sees: The smiling, menacing figure of LEON suddenly appears - ghostly, shimmering, not quite there.

He advances on HIGHTOWER. When he is mere inches away, his hands shoot up to side of HIGHTOWER'S head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAZAREK (V.O.)  
...having him in your head...

LEON places his thumbs against HIGHTOWER'S eyes. At first the gesture seems harmless enough, until LEON applies more pressure and his fingertips slowly sink into HIGHTOWER'S head.

HIGHTOWER'S body starts to SHAKE: first small tremors, starting with his hands, then spreading to the rest of his body. In HIGHTOWER'S MIND we see:

INT. BLUE ROOM - SAME (HIGHTOWER'S CONSCIOUSNESS)

HIGHTOWER stands in a windowless, doorless, blue-purple room; light from an unseen source PULSES rhythmically.

In the middle of the room is a floating ladder.

The ladder doesn't seem to lead anywhere. It just levitates mid-air.

HIGHTOWER stands next to the ladder, frozen, almost as if in a trance.

LEON, in combat fatigues, appears before him, like an apparition.

GAZAREK (V.O.)  
...you can't imagine what it's like...

LEON grins menacingly, mounts the ladder and climbs up, disappearing into the ceiling.

A bluish viscous fluid begins to seep through tiny fissures in the walls.

The trickle of fluid, becomes a torrent - running down the walls and floor, flooding the room.

GAZAREK (V.O.)  
...it's like... swimming in darkness and pain...

HIGHTOWER looks at the indigo colored liquid filling the room. As it rises above his waist, he climbs the ladder -- attempting to follow LEON, as he desperately fights to keep his head above the surface.

GAZAREK (V.O.)  
No glimmer of light or hope, no shred of decency or kindness...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The thick blue fluid keeps rising. Now it is almost to the ceiling. HIGHTOWER tires and slips off the ladder, and beneath the surface as the fluid reaches the ceiling.

GAZAREK (V.O.)

Just rage, man...evil, malevolent rage...

Blue fills the screen and becomes: A solid blue pupil.

INT. HIGHTOWER'S OFFICE - DAY

HIGHTOWER, though his face is sheened with sweat, and there are trails of blue-indigo fluid down his cheeks, he is finally calm. He is no longer HIGHTOWER.

He happens to look down at the papers on his desk, also spotted with blue-indigo fluid and smiles broadly.

EXT. PARKING LOT - BRETON DOWNS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - LATER

MIKE and SUSAN, looking very anxious, walk quickly to their car.

MIKE

We've gotta hurry.

They arrive at the car and pull the doors open. SUSAN pauses, a dark look on her face.

SUSAN

Do you think we did the right thing?

MIKE

It's what he wanted...

They step in and pull away.

INT. CELL - BRETON DOWNS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - EVENING

GAZAREK sits on his cot and waits till the sounds of the guard's FOOTSTEPS fade away, o.s. He fishes in his sock and removes a packet of pills.

He swallows the pills, the effect is almost instantaneous: his eyes roll back in his head and he falls back onto his cot unconscious.

EXT. MASS. PIKE - NIGHT

The hour is late and traffic is light as the Susan's car makes its way southward.

INT. CAR - SAME

SUSAN and MIKE sit absorbed in their own thoughts.

MIKE

Do you think Gazarek was right? That Leon can move on whenever he wants?

SUSAN

I guess it makes sense, as much as any of this makes sense. But at least now he's stuck with Hightower, the other's are all gone.

MIKE

If we can kill Hightower, it's all over for Leon.

SUSAN

Let's just hope that he can't do too much damage before then...

INT. HALLWAY - FORT CLARK MISSILE BASE - DAY

HIGHTOWER strides down the corridor. He stops in front of a door marked "Security" and keys his ID code into the numeric pad. With a CLICK, the door unlatches; he steps into:

INT. SECURITY CENTER - SAME

Startled by his appearance, the M.P.'s and CONSOLE JOCKEYS snap to attention. CAPT. PICKENS, an able looking man, steps forward to salute.

PICKENS

Sir. We weren't expecting you.

HIGHTOWER

Just checking up on my men, Captain.

HIGHTOWER turns to the rest of the room.

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

Look lively, boys. You never know when something might happen.

With that, he turns and heads out.

INT. CAR - SAME

SUSAN is having some problem with her map app. MIKE drives, eyes intent on the road ahead. He quickly looks at the clock on the dash.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

If he's inhabiting bodies faster, then he's moving on to Hightower today, any time now.

SUSAN

Google maps man. If this thing is right, it's at least two hours from here.

MIKE

Yeah, if we drive the speed limit.

He depresses the accelerator and the car speeds forward.

INT. HALLWAY - FORT CLARK - SAME

HIGHTOWER follows the corridor until it ends in a heavy steel door flanked by a metal detector and a GUARD. HIGHTOWER slips a card into a console at the side of the door. A red light turns green and the door opens.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - SAME

The nerve center of the drone base. The walls are lined with electronic equipment. Two OPERATORS sit at a large console, their eyes glued to the monitors. Two M.P.'S snap to attention as HIGHTOWER enters.

HIGHTOWER

(holding up his hand)

Carry on.

The M.P.s relax slightly and HIGHTOWER turns to watch the OPERATORS check their readings. After a moment, HIGHTOWER pulls out a cigarette. One of the M.P.S notices.

M.P.

Sir, I'm sorry, regulations prohibit smoking.

HIGHTOWER

(giving him a cold stare)

Do they, Corporal?

The M.P. swallows hard. HIGHTOWER walks over to him.

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

Give me your sidearm, Corporal.

Somewhat hesitantly, the M.P. reaches down, unholsters his gun, and hands it to HIGHTOWER.

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

Firing pin in good order?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The M.P. nods. Then, to his surprise, watches as HIGHTOWER clicks off the safety. The other M.P. stiffens in alarm.

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

Hmmm. Let's see.

Without warning, HIGHTOWER wheels and squeezes off two shots at the other M.P. The slugs catch him in the chest and he goes down in a hurry. The OPERATORS spin around in horror.

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

Yes, very good, your gun's your friend; remember that. When you're surrounded by crazy towelheads and this baby jams, well, you might as well be carrying a dildo.

The M.P. is too shocked to respond. HIGHTOWER stuffs the cigarette back into his mouth and pulls out a lighter.

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

I think I'll have that cigarette now, if you don't mind.

Terrified, the M.P. shakes his head "No." As HIGHTOWER lights it, he catches sight of one of the OPERATORS reaching out for the fallen M.P.'S gun. HIGHTOWER, however, is faster.

He fires, almost without looking, striking the OPERATOR in the head. He goes down in a spray of blood and brain.

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

Fuckin' college boys. You think he'da been smarter than trying that.  
(to the remaining OPERATOR)  
How 'bout you, Poindexter? You wanna try me?

The OPERATOR shakes his head frantically "no."

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

You do?

The OPERATOR's face screws up in terror. HIGHTOWER fires again and a bullet hole blossoms the OPERATOR's forehead before he crumples in his chair. HIGHTOWER turns back to the M.P. and jams the gun beneath his chin.

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

And then there was one.

EXT. GATE - FORT CLARK - LATER

SUSAN's car rolls up to the sentry box and MIKE leans his head out as the GUARD steps forward.

MIKE  
Lieutenant Mike Armitage, C.I.D. We need  
to speak to Colonel Hightower.

The GUARD looks unsure of how to respond.

GUARD  
I'm sorry sir, the Colonel isn't  
available right now.

MIKE  
Has something happened?

The GUARD says nothing, his silence telling.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Look here, corporal, I want you to get on  
the phone and call whoever's in charge.  
Tell them we've got important information  
regarding Hightower, got it?

Almost relieved at being ordered, the GUARD nods and heads  
for the sentry box. SUSAN anxiously looks at her watch.

SUSAN  
I hope we're not too late.

INT. HALLWAY - COMMAND BUILDING - LATER

SUSAN and MIKE walk the hallway with a very agitated PICKENS.

MIKE  
What's he doing now?

PICKENS  
See for yourself.

They turn into the:

INT. SECURITY CENTER - SAME

On the video monitors, HIGHTOWER sits, his gun trained on the  
remaining M.P. With his free hand, he toys with a metal memo  
spindle on the desk.

PICKENS  
He's been like that for almost twenty  
minutes. God knows what he's up to.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE  
He's waiting  
(beat)  
Can we speak with him from here?

PICKENS nods and indicates the microphone.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
(into microphone)  
Colonel Hightower...Leon...

On the video monitor, HIGHTOWER looks up and smiles.

HIGHTOWER  
(through speaker)  
Susan, you're a little late.

MIKE  
We're here now. Let's talk, alright?

HIGHTOWER  
(through the speaker)  
Like this? Why don't you and the  
Professor just come on down?

MIKE  
If we do, will you let your hostage go?

HIGHTOWER  
(through the speaker)  
Maybe, but you're going to have to come  
in, to find out.

EXT. HALLWAY - SAME

MIKE and SUSAN, both wearing kevlar vests, stand in front of the security door. Arrayed behind them stand four M.P.'S..armed and ready for action. At the console, PICKENS slips his card into the machine. With a gentle WHOOSH, the door slides open.

SMASH CUT:

SUSAN is again alone in a darkened hallway. No sign of MIKE or the M.P.'S.

The FRACTAL MAN appears.

SUSAN is surrounded by a crowd of HUTNER, TRENT, HIGHTOWER, and their Doppelgängers: SCREAMING and blood-splattered.

The FRACTAL MAN disappears.

SMASH CUT:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN'S momentarily frozen in place.

MIKE

Was that, did you just have, an episode?

SUSAN

Yes, but I'm good.

They step across the threshold into:

INT. COMMAND CENTER - SAME

HIGHTOWER stands, smiling as they enter. He trains his gun on them.

HIGHTOWER

Such brave little soldiers.

SUSAN

(indicating the hostage)

Alright, we're here, let him go.

HIGHTOWER

Very well.

He nods to the frightened M.P., who quickly stands and moves to the door. He keys the console and the door slides open. As he leaves, the four M.P.'S spill into the room, their guns leveled at HIGHTOWER.

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

Oh, good, fresh meat.

MIKE

(to the M.P.s)

Be careful.

They stop, but keep their guns raised.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(to HIGHTOWER)

Leon, let's talk.

HIGHTOWER

Not in the mood.

MIKE

You don't have to do this!!

HIGHTOWER

You think you've got this all figured out don't you? Well, you don't know shit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

What don't I know? It's over man, you've had your revenge - you've won.

HIGHTOWER

(glancing down at the dead)  
Yeah. I guess I fuckin' have, haven't I?!

MIKE

Then throw down your gun.

HIGHTOWER

(becoming strangely compliant)  
Sure... Why not...

With a sudden movement, he tosses his gun at the nearest M.P., who, surprised, fumbles for it and nearly misses.

HIGHTOWER (CONT'D)

Fucking pathetic! You catch like a girl!

SUSAN

(to the M.P.)  
Cuff him.

The M.P. hands his and HIGHTOWER'S guns to one of his comrades and turns to HIGHTOWER. He's not happy about being made fun of. He pulls out his cuffs and walks towards HIGHTOWER, who stands, almost mocking, with his hands on his hips.

HIGHTOWER

C'mon, big boy, cuff me.

More angered, the M.P. moves in a little too recklessly.

When the M.P. is only a step away, HIGHTOWER springs into action. In a flash, his hands have left his hips. One grabs the M.P. by the hair, and the other stabs him through the neck with the memo spindle. The metal tip erupts from the back of the M.P.'S neck in a spray of blood.

The remaining M.P.S react instinctively, leveling their weapons and FIRING.

A fusillade of bullets SLAM into HIGHTOWER'S body, throwing it backwards like a rag doll trailing red streamers.

SUSAN and MIKE rush forward.

HIGHTOWER'S body is in its death throes, but shaking all out of proportion - like an epileptic in the midst of a grand mal seizure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIKE

Something's seriously wrong here.

He backs away, pulling SUSAN with him. The others follow suit as, they back out of the command center into a nearby:

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM

They cross the threshold just in time, as the dark blue fluid SPLATTERS against the observation room with a loud THUD, like a bird crashing into a window.

Suddenly, it's over. The only noise is the soft hum of the computers.

The faces of SUSAN, MIKE and the M.P.s all register complete surprise and shock.

EXT. PARKING LOT - FORT CLARK - MORNING

The sun is just peeking above Fort Clark. Police cars and military vehicles crowd the parking lot. SUSAN and MIKE, exhausted, leave the commotion, headed back to Susan's car.

MIKE

Well, it wasn't pretty, but we did it.

SUSAN

Yeah. Now let's hope that Cochrane keeps his end of the deal.

His cell phone rings. He answers.

MIKE

(into phone)

Armitage.

He covers the phone and turns to SUSAN.

MIKE (CONT'D)

It's Cochrane.

(back into phone)

Yeah. He's definitely dead. Now how about our bargain? I want Callahan.

He listens for a moment.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(into phone)

That suits me fine, General.

He disconnects.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE (CONT'D)

He's got Neal. He wants us to meet him at the rail yard down near Union Station. He'll hand over Neal if we sign N.D.A.s

SUSAN

Alright. Let's do it.

INT. SUSAN'S CAR - MORNING

MIKE is driving about ten miles outside of D.C. SUSAN is gazing at the scenery whipping by outside the window, lost in thought.

SUSAN

There's something I just don't get...why did Leon do that?

MIKE

Do what?

SUSAN

He taunted the M.P.s into killing him.

MIKE

He wanted to off Hightower, finish getting his revenge.

SUSAN

Yeah, but now he has nowhere to go. Hightower was the last survivor...

(with sudden horror)

...unless there was someone else...the man who sent Leon to Mosul in the first place and then turned around and rewarded the men who killed him?

MIKE

Cochrane. Shit. But how would Leon get in? Cochrane wasn't part of the platoon.

SUSAN

Maybe he was part of the trials, part of the testing.

MIKE

Fuck. So how do we play this?

SUSAN

We can't make a move until we get Neal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Yeah, but if Leon's already got to Cochrane then Neal's in more danger than ever.

SUSAN

We'll have to split up. You meet Cochrane, see if you can figure out what's going down. I'll hang back. If Leon's already taken over, then I'll have to shoot him and you'll grab Neal.

MIKE

What if Leon hasn't taken him over?

SUSAN

We take Neal, and then kill Cochrane.

EXT. RAIL YARD - DAY

MIKE'S car pulls off the road and passes through a gate in the chain link fence surrounding the disused rail yard.

Old freight and passenger cars in various states of decay litter the tracks. The familiar D.C. skyline looms in the background.

INT. CAR - SAME

SUSAN studies the lay of the land as MIKE navigates the yard.

SUSAN

Here, pull over.

MIKE turns the wheel and rolls to a stop.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

The rendezvous is over in the far corner, the old supply depot. I'll drive the rest of the way and you follow on foot.

MIKE

You got it. But be careful.

She gives him a quick kiss.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You too. I'd hate to lose you now that I feel I finally have you back.

They kiss again, this time with more feeling, then MIKE hops out and SUSAN slides over to take the wheel.

EXT. RAIL YARD - SAME

The car continues on its way as MIKE, gun drawn, begins to pick his path across the yard, staying out of sight.

EXT. SUPPLY DEPOT - SAME

A dilapidated two story building with boarded-up windows. The car pulls up beside a black, official-looking sedan and MIKE steps out. She looks around but sees nobody.

SUSAN  
General Cochrane?

No answer. MIKE starts to walk around the building, looking for a way in. At length, he finds a doorway where the plywood has been wrenched back. He draws his gun and squeezes through the opening into:

INT. STORE ROOM - SUPPLY DEPOT - SAME

A small, dusty room, empty save for some old, broken crates. It's dim.

MIKE  
General?

He crosses to a door at the far side of the room and steps through it into:

INT. CORRIDOR - SUPPLY DEPOT - CONTINUOUS

Even dimmer than the store room. He starts down it. Ahead of him, flickering light shines beneath a door at the end of the hall.

INT. OFFICE - SUPPLY DEPOT - CONTINUOUS

A nearly empty office, a desk and two chairs the only furnishings that remain.

He opens the door and steps into the small office to find COCHRANE standing in the center. An old oil lamp, a pair of pens and two N.D.A.s sit on the desk.

COCHRANE  
Ah, Lieutenant Armitage, thanks for meeting me. You kept this under wraps I trust?

MIKE  
Don't worry, General.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COCHRANE

Good, very good.

COCHRANE looks behind MIKE and realizes they are alone.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

(concerned)

Where is Professor Paskal?

MIKE

She had something to take care of.  
She'll be along in just a minute.

COCHRANE

I see. You realize, I need her signature  
as well. Can you call her? I don't have  
much time; I'm due at the White House.

MIKE

She's not somewhere I can reach by phone.  
I'm afraid I'm the only one available at  
the moment.

MIKE and COCHRANE size each other up, each wary.

COCHRANE

So, I trust that it all ended with  
Hightower.

MIKE

I don't know, I have the feeling that  
Leon's not finished yet.

COCHRANE

(evenly)

Oh? Hightower was the last one in the  
unit. What's left for him to do?

MIKE tries a different tactic:

MIKE

Why'd you recruit Leon Scales, General?  
You must have known he was unstable.

COCHRANE

Was he? I guess that depends on your  
definition. I believe that Leon was a  
good man. He certainly got the job done  
in Iraq.

MIKE

If he was such a good man, why did his  
men frag him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

COCHRANE  
(fighting to remain calm)  
I don't know, you'd have to ask them,  
wouldn't you?

MIKE  
They're all dead now.

COCHRANE  
Yes, they are, they're all dead.

MIKE  
I've kept my end of the deal, now it's  
time for you to keep yours. I want Neal  
released.

COCHRANE smiles.

COCHRANE  
Of course you do.

He walks to a small closet door and opens it to reveal NEAL  
CALLAHAN. He's gagged and bound hands and feet to a  
wheelchair. All traces of the amiable journalist are gone,  
he's scared and traumatized.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)  
As promised. I'm a man of my word.

He steps aside as MIKE hurries over to NEAL. He removes the  
gag and begins to untie his hands.

MIKE  
Sorry about this man...

COCHRANE  
(snarling)  
Well, isn't this fucking sweet.

MIKE turns back around to find COCHRANE training a .45 at  
them.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)  
(snarling)  
We're missing your girlfriend. So, you  
call her now, or I'll blow your fucking  
head off!

SUSAN is working her way down the hall, gun drawn. MIKE spots  
her out of the corner of his eye.

MIKE  
(playing for time)  
There's one thing I don't get, Leon.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MIKE (CONT'D)

There's no audience. Nobody knows we're here.

COCHRANE

Oh, I'm not worried about an audience, not this time.

MIKE takes a quick glance towards the doorway: SUSAN stands, pressed against the corridor wall, her gun aimed.

COCHRANE'S back is to him. SUSAN has a clear shot. MIKE mouths:

MIKE

Do it.

COCHRANE notices this. With lightning speed, COCHRANE grabs MIKE and buries the muzzle of the gun into his ear and calls out to SUSAN.

COCHRANE

This is the big surprise? Pathetic.

MIKE

SUSAN!

COCHRANE drags him closer to the door. He turns to SUSAN:

COCHRANE

You disappoint me. If youda pulled the trigger steada pissin' your pants, I'd be dead instead of holding your boyfriend hostage.

SUSAN raises her gun, leveling it at COCHRANE'S head.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

(sarcastic)

Oooh...so brave in the face of danger, aren't we?

COCHRANE cocks back the hammer and presses the gun harder into MIKE'S ear for emphasis.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

You wanna try 'n' shoot me? Go 'head. Chances are, you'll hit your partner here, he's a pretty big guy.

SUSAN'S expression suggests she doesn't like where this is going.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

But let's just say you get real lucky 'n'  
kill me instead. So what? I've been  
killed plenty already, and, yet I just  
seem to come back again like the fuckin'  
Energizer Bunny.

SUSAN's aim begins to waver.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

So, what's it gonna be?

MIKE

Do it, Susan!

COCHRANE tightens his grip on MIKE and smiles.

SUSAN's face falls. It's happening all over again.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EARHARDT in the hallway.

SUSAN firing.

The WOMAN crumpling, blood erupting from her neck.

SUSAN's cry of anguish.

EARHARDT running towards her, overpowering her, stabbing her.

END FLASHBACK.

SUSAN sighs, beaten. She lowers her weapon.

COCHRANE

Just like I thought.

(re the gun)

Throw it on the table.

SUSAN complies. COCHRANE lets MIKE go then motions for he and  
SUSAN to move over next to NEAL. Reluctantly they do.

MIKE

Well, you've got us all here now, Leon.  
What do you want from us?

COCHRANE

You'll see. There's just one more thing.

From outside, the RUMBLE of an arriving car can be heard.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

Ah, here he is now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The SLAM of a car door is heard, o.s., followed by FOOTSTEPS announcing the arrival of THE STRANGER carrying a large stainless-steel briefcase. He hands it to COCHRANE and salutes.

STRANGER

Here you are, sir.

COCHRANE returns the salute and takes the case from him.

COCHRANE

Thank you, Major.

THE STRANGER takes in the scene for the first time, noticing, with a bit of alarm, the three hostages.

STRANGER

Sir?

COCHRANE

Ah, yes. I'll need your help with them.  
Would you mind watching them. I need my  
hands free.

THE STRANGER unholsters his weapon and levels it at the three hostages.

COCHRANE smiles, then reaches down and flips open the briefcase to reveal several ampules of a thick blue liquid and a small collection of syringes.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

'Taking Tiger Mountain'.

MIKE

How did you?

COCHRANE

Oh, you'd be surprised how easy it was.  
You see, these guys like to hold onto all  
their old toys. Never know when one might  
come in handy again.

SUSAN

What are you planning on doing?

COCHRANE

The three of you know too much. I could  
just kill you, but too many people know  
what you've been up to. Worst of all,  
they know you've been talking to me. If  
you should suddenly show up dead, it  
could complicate my confirmation. So how  
do I buy your silence?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He picks up a syringe and ampule.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)  
Simple really, blackmail.

He slides the tip of the syringe into the ampule and draws off the liquid. He holds it up to the light and smiles. Then he turns to MIKE.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)  
Here's how it works: You two keep your fucking mouths shut about what you know, and I don't pump him full of this shit.

He steps over to NEAL and holds the syringe poised.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)  
Let's just call it an insurance policy.

He moves to jab the needle in NEAL's arm, but NEAL flashes out his arm and sends the syringe flying. It skitters across the floor and comes to rest underneath the desk. COCHRANE'S face screws up in anger. He punches NEAL in the face.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)  
Now that was un-fucking-called for.

Calming himself, he turns to THE STRANGER.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)  
He tries that again, put a bullet in Armitage's fucking head.

NEAL slumps in defeat. COCHRANE moves back to the table and pulls out a second ampule and syringe. He fills the syringe and moves back. This time, NEAL gives him no resistance. COCHRANE raises the syringe again.

MIKE  
Wait! Don't do it, Leon. You've already won. You've got your revenge.

COCHRANE turns on him.

COCHRANE  
You think this is just about getting back at those fucks who fragged me? You're thinking too fucking small. I mean, sure I kill a few guys, make the papers, embarrass those assholes, but, shit, they were just humps, after all. They were just following orders.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

I wanted to show everybody, what it's like when armed soldiers show up and start poppin' civilians. Folks are happy to look the other way when it's towelheads half a world away, but they sit up and take notice when it's right here in the good ol' U.S. of A.

THE STRANGER looks at COCHRANE in confusion.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

But what's really to blame?

(no one answers)

Give up? The system... the fucking system...

He laughs.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

Who woulda guessed those candy-ass, long-haired hippie freaks had it right? It's the fucking system. And how do we make the system pay? You know what they say, to beat 'em, you gotta join 'em.

SUSAN

So you're going to use Cochrane to get back at the military.

COCHRANE

'Get back' at the military? Still thinking too small. I am going to destroy the whole military-industrial complex!! I'm going to bring the whole goddamn thing crashing down!!

THE STRANGER now looks at COCHRANE with growing alarm.

STRANGER

General? What are you talking about?!

COCHRANE

I'm going to play the hits baby! Long-term conflict in the Middle East! But this time I'm switching out Iraq and Afghanistan with Iran and Pakistan!

(beat)

Cencom models predict a cost of six trillion taxpayer dollars, three million U.S. troops...and it'll result in more than a million casualties. A million!

(almost SQUEALING with glee)

It'll decimate the Armed Forces, once and for all.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

(a beat)

And the best part is, even knowing the costs and the casualties, there are plenty of nut jobs in the Pentagon and State happy, no eager, to help me get the ball rollin'!

COCHRANE can't help but burst into gales of laughter.

With THE STRANGER's attention elsewhere, SUSAN makes her move. She grabs his discarded gun from the table and FIRES twice at the STRANGER, striking him in the chest. As the STRANGER falls, SUSAN spins and aims the gun at COCHRANE.

SUSAN

Alright, Leon, the game's up!

COCHRANE

Finally found your ladyballs, I see. Too bad it's too fucking late.

He holds up the syringe. It's empty.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

So, go ahead and shoot if you want.

SUSAN's resolve wavers in light of this new information.

SUSAN

Don't! There's got to be another way!!!

COCHRANE

Sure, there's another way. Stow your new-found balls and let me walk outta here. That way, nobody gets hurt...at least not right away...

MIKE

Listen to him, Susan. What choice do we have? He's won...

Defeated, SUSAN lowers her gun. COCHRANE smiles.

COCHRANE

That's more like it.

He surveys the room.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)

Well, as much as I'd like to hang around and chat with you all, I'm expected at the White House.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

He walks to the desk and closes the briefcase, then levels his gaze at each in turn.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)  
Just remember, the first fucking peep  
outta any one of ya, and I'll make ol'  
Neal here wish he were dead. Got it?

The others remain silent, but they understand.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)  
Good...

He starts to walk out of the room when he glances at the STRANGER'S fallen body.

COCHRANE (CONT'D)  
By the way, you might want to take care  
of him. Remember, it's your prints on  
your gun. Don't worry, though. I'll make  
sure he's not missed at work...

With a wink, COCHRANE walks from the room, leaving the three of them staring at one another.

EXT. SUPPLY DEPOT - DAY

COCHRANE steps back out through the narrow doorway and walks around the building to his car.

INT. STORE ROOM - SUPPLY DEPOT - SAME

While SUSAN paces back and forth in agitation, MIKE works to free NEAL from the wheelchair.

MIKE  
I thought you were dead.

NEAL  
Thanks for coming after me man.

MIKE  
I always got your back, you know that.

NEAL  
What was that maniac talking about?

MIKE  
Later.

Once freed from the chair, NEAL rises and they share a hearty handshake, then a hug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEAL  
One thing.

MIKE  
Sure buddy anything.

NEAL  
Next time you want to talk about a weird  
case you're working on?

MIKE  
Yeah?

NEAL  
Remind me to tell you to fuck off.

INT. GOVERNMENT CAR - SAME

COCHRANE slides behind the wheel and starts the car. Gunning  
the engine, he pats his pockets to no avail.

COCHRANE  
Shit! Figures he wouldn't smoke.

He pulls away from the depot.

INT. STORE ROOM - SUPPLY DEPOT - SAME

The three of them stand in the center of the room, looking  
thoroughly defeated.

MIKE  
So what's our next move? Leon's holding  
all the cards.

SUSAN  
Maybe not.

He's noticed something. As the others look on, SUSAN kneels  
down and fishes below the desk. When she rises, she's holding  
the other syringe filled with 'T.T.M.'.

SUSAN (CONT'D)  
Look what we've got.

MIKE  
What good does that do us?

SUSAN  
Gazarek said that with 'T.T.M.' you could  
leave your body without having to die.

MIKE  
Yeah, so? He said a lot of crazy things.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

Yeah, but what if what he meant that you could move around, like Leon does?

NEAL holds up his hands to interrupt.

NEAL

Wait, who's Gazarek? How does Leon move? What are you two talking about?

The implication of her words starts to dawn on MIKE, but he doesn't like it.

MIKE

(to SUSAN)

No way, you're not thinking...

SUSAN

It's our only chance. If I can move into Cochrane's body, maybe I can get to Leon, kill his consciousness. That would put an end to all this without putting anyone else in danger.

MIKE

Yeah, but you'd be in danger.

SUSAN

I don't really want to go into this now, but out of the three of us, I think I'm the only one who has a shot at pulling this off.

MIKE

What? That doesn't make any sense.

SUSAN

Remember I told you about the hallucinations?

(without waiting for a response)

The things I've been seeing have been like 'warnings', 'guidance'... I don't know if it's my subconscious...

(a beat)

...or something else.

MIKE

Now you sound like Gazarek.

Her tone becomes simultaneously more tender, but firm:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SUSAN

I've got to do this, put Earhardt behind me once and for all. And I'm only one wired for this.

(beat)

It has to be me.

MIKE starts to ask her a question, then thinks better of it. SUSAN finds a chair, sits down, and begins her ritual: She removes a pen from her jacket, and ties her hair into a bun -- ready for battle.

MIKE

But if Leon kills you, that's it.

SUSAN prepares the syringe. MIKE moves to her side, still trying to talk her out of it. She smiles:

SUSAN

Then I'll just make sure that doesn't happen...

Before MIKE can object any further, SUSAN plunges the syringe of dark blue viscous fluid into her arm...

SMASH CUT:

CLOSE - EYE: A black pupil, surrounded by a green iris. The black pupil dilates rapidly, in the dark reflected surface we see bright white light.

INT. GOVERNMENT CAR - SAME

Outside the window, Washington D.C. is hurtling by as COCHRANE speeds along, a broad smile on his face.

His expression changes. The dark blue fluid begins to drip from his nose. COCHRANE turns the wheel hard.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The car skids and smashes against a parked car, metal scraping against metal before coming to a stop.

INT. GOVERNMENT CAR - CONTINUOUS

COCHRANE frantically wipes the fluid from his nose and mouth.

COCHRANE

No, no... not now...

COCHRANE closes his eyes and we...

SMASH CUT:

INT. BLUE ROOM - SAME (COCHRANE'S CONSCIOUSNESS)

SUSAN stands in the blue-purple room, next to the floating ladder, bathed in the strange PULSING glow.

She takes in her bizarre surroundings, before spotting COCHRANE in one corner - naked, curled in a ball, whimpering.

LEON (O.S.)  
Wasn't sure if you'd follow me in.

SUSAN looks around but can't see LEON.

SUSAN  
This is where it all ends, Leon.

LEON (O.S.)  
I don't think so.

SUSAN moves over to COCHRANE and tries to rouse him.

SUSAN  
Come on, you've got to help me fight him.

LEON (O.S.)  
Don't bother. He can't help you.

SUSAN looks around in vain.

SUSAN  
Show yourself, Leon!

LEON (O.S.)  
Oh, I'll do more than that.

SUDDENLY, LEON appears on the ladder.

This time his wraith-like form climbs down, disappearing into the floor.

SUSAN follows. She passes through the floor as well, but instead of emerging in another room, she finds herself in...

EXT. DESERT CITY - SAME (LEON'S CONSCIOUSNESS)

...a nightmarish tableau. A red sky looming over a bombed-out desert city, as imagined by Hieronymus Bosch.

SUSAN takes in her surroundings with horror: a tall featureless tower in the center of war-torn landscape, burned-out buildings, smoke rising from the hollow shells.

Ash falls like rain on streets lined with mutilated corpses.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In midst of the ruins, the FRACTAL MAN appears in the middle of the street.

This time SUSAN isn't surprised. She accepts his arrival calmly, almost as if she almost expected it.

The FRACTAL MAN turns and 'floats' through the air, disappearing around the corner.

SUSAN follows him down the street, her steps echoing on the pavement.

SUSAN follows cautiously, careful not to trip over the rubble and corpses that litter the street. SUSAN turns the corner onto:

EXT. ALTERNATE STREET - DESERT CITY - CONTINUOUS

The FRACTAL MAN is at the end of the street, at the base of a windowless, Brutalist-style tower.

Pale bodies and smoldering chunks of metal stand between them.

SUSAN picks her way through the debris towards the tower, keeping her eyes fixed on the FRACTAL MAN.

She casts around for a weapon, she finds a knife in the hands of a charred corpse. She wrenches it from the corpse's bony hands and hefts it.

She keeps walking.

Just as she's reached the tower, the FRACTAL MAN rises into the air, passes through the walls of the tower and disappears.

SUSAN examines the tower, it's then that she notices: There are no doors.

Despite the lack of an entrance, she walks toward the tower; and instead of SLAMMING into the bricks, she steps through the wall into a:

INT. GROUND FLOOR ROOM - TOWER - CONTINUOUS

Derelict. The air is thick with ash, despite the fact there are no openings to the outside. SUSAN makes her way carefully through scattered debris towards a lighted room at the far corner.

LEON (O.S.)  
That's it...keep coming...almost there...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He reaches the open door and steps into:

INT. SIDE ROOM - TOWER - CONTINUOUS

A nightmare.

The room is lit by bare bulbs dangling from the ceiling which illuminate a grisly scene:

A series of corpses on tables. We recognize some of them as HUTNER, HIGHTOWER and TRENT.

The side room is surprisingly sparse. A cot sits off to one side, a sink and toilet to the other. It's the room's other piece of "furniture" that freezes SUSAN in her tracks. A metal chair, shrouded by a black plastic tarp, sits; only its scuffed legs are visible.

SUSAN gives the room a quick scan to assure herself that LEON isn't lurking in the shadows, then moves in to examine the chair.

Lifting the tarp carefully with a gloved hand, she pulls it aside to reveal that the chair has been crudely but effectively modified with two sturdy arm restraints.

SUSAN leans in closer. Spots of blood congeal on the metal and the leather straps.

SUSAN turns to see LEON standing in the doorway. When he speaks, LEON'S voice is strangely confessional.

LEON

I brought the others here, to talk...

SUSAN

(still taking it in)

Oh my god...

When she's turn back, LEON is gone.

LEON (O.S.)

Don't pretend to be so shocked. You're here in my head...

(beat)

...but I've also been looking around yours. No wonder you don't want to talk to Armitage about what's really going on with you...

SUSAN steps into a:

INT. STAIRWELL - TOWER - CONTINUOUS

That rises vertiginously upward. SUSAN starts her climb. From somewhere in the darkness above her:

LEON (O.S.)  
...lady you have got some seriously weird  
things going on in your head...

SUSAN searches the shadows for LEON. SUSAN finds him standing at a landing.

LEON (CONT'D)  
...dude made out of lights and  
patterns...ring a bell?

Upon seeing SUSAN, LEON opens a door:

LEON (CONT'D)  
While you were in that hospital  
recovering, your mind, the way you  
connect to the world changed. That's why  
you were the only one who could come  
after me. You can direct your  
consciousness, just like I can, but you  
didn't need to take a drug, just a near  
death experience.

SUSAN mounts the stairs faster, to confront him, and stop him from revealing painful truths.

LEON (CONT'D)  
Part of the reason 'lights man' is here.  
(beat)  
But what's really going to blow your mind  
is when you finally figure out what that  
thing really is...where it's from.  
(o.s. - laughing)  
Lady, are you in for a surprise...

SUSAN accelerates her climb, and reaches the landing. She steps through the door into:

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - TOWER - CONTINUOUS

SUSAN makes her way down the narrow space. Light bulbs spaced about thirty yards apart cast small pools of yellow light and leave the intervening space in total darkness.

SUSAN strains hard to see her quarry, but advances while vainly to keep LEON'S retreating figure in view. For a moment she loses sight of him altogether.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She scans the hallway, desperate to locate him, but LEON is nowhere to be seen. She has about given up hope when she finally spots him at the far end of the corridor, stepping into another room.

LEON (O.S.)  
...Speaking of which...

SUSAN follows into:

INT. SECOND ROOM - TOWER - CONTINUOUS

As she enters, her foot catches something in the dark and she starts to fall. At the last second, she manages to grab hold of a pipe in the wall.

LEON (O.S.)  
...surprises that is...

SUSAN continues onward till, unaware that LEON has just appeared, ghostlike, in a pool of light - directly behind her.

LEON (CONT'D)  
Surprise.

His hands reach out in a flash, grabbing SUSAN'S head.

LEON (CONT'D)  
I won't tell Armitage and since you're not getting out of here, I guess you won't be telling him either.

SUSAN elbows LEON in the stomach, doubling him over. She hits him, knocking him back on his heels.

SUSAN  
No, it's not going to be that easy.

Just as he rights himself, SUSAN lunges forward, sinking the knife into LEON'S abdomen. LEON stumbles back, touches his shirt, it's slick with a blue, oil-like substance.

LEON  
I knew you had it in you.

SUSAN lunges again, but LEON slips into the darkness.

INT. THIRD ROOM - TOWER - CONTINUOUS

An incandescent bulb, flickering, just about to go out.

LEON stands beneath the flickering light, looking at the far end of the corridor, expecting SUSAN to appear at any moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It is dark. A split second later, when the light comes back on SUSAN is behind him. She catches LEON completely by surprise.

She plunges the blade deep into LEON'S back. The blade sinks in, to the hilt.

LEON SCREAMS in pain, SUSAN withdraws the blade, it's covered in the indigo-colored fluid. LEON falls. SUSAN stands over him. LEON looks up. The purple-blue fluid oozes from lips, he manages a cruel smile.

SUSAN

This is it Leon, once and for all.

SUSAN drops down - straddling his chest. She raises the blade high above her head.

She brings the blade down, stabbing him with incredible ferocity. A splash of purple-blue fluid splashes across her face and LEON SCREAMS.

LEON

NOOOOO!!!!!!!

Her heart starts BEATING rapidly: THUMP THUMP THUMP. The sound of her heart POUNDING in her ears drowns out LEON'S SCREAMS.

She brings the blade down again and again. Finally she stabs him in each eye. Thick tendrils of indigo fluid erupt from the sockets.

SUSAN rises, blade in hand, covered in the blue viscous fluid. Her heart is beating loudly. She's breathing heavily - her breaths coming in big whooping gasps.

She looks down at her handiwork: LEON'S eyeless corpse. His face and clothes soaked with indigo-colored fluid.

Her expression a mix of relief and pleasure (?).

INT. STORE ROOM - SUPPLY DEPOT - DAY

MIKE and NEAL watch SUSAN, her body slumped in the chair - her hair, face and clothes now soaked with sweat; traces of the familiar indigo fluid start leaking from her eyes, nose and corners of her mouth.

NEAL

What the...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Before he can finish the thought, SUSAN GASPS loudly and her eyes SNAP open. She looks about frantically till her eyes rest on MIKE, this calms her a bit.

MIKE

It's me. You're good. Did you get him?

SUSAN

(firm)

Leon's not coming back.

EXT. HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

MIKE dressed in full military uniform, SUSAN in a suit, step through the front doors to find reporters from every major media outlet waiting for them on the steps.

One REPORTER manages to push his way through the throng and stick a microphone in front of SUSAN, MIKE and NEAL.

REPORTER

Steve Dutton... from the Post... what can you tell us about your testimony to the Senate Intelligence Committee? Is it related to General Cochrane?

MIKE, shaken by recent events, is no longer brimming with confidence. He's nervous, distracted, vibrating on an entirely different frequency now:

MIKE

I'm sorry, we're not at liberty to go into detail, most of the information is classified.

(beat)

I can tell you that it involved a Defense Department program, that has since been shuttered...

(beat)

...but that's all I'm at liberty to say, so you'll have to excuse us.

With that they push through the crowd, toward the street, where a car pulls up to the curb. SUSAN and MIKE get in the backseat:

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

With NEAL behind the wheel, WEXLER in the front - SUSAN and MIKE in the backseat. As NEAL pulls into traffic, SUSAN turns to WEXLER:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

I'm going to take a sabbatical, think about what's next.

WEXLER slaps the head-rest in excitement.

WEXLER

I knew it! You want to get back into investigative work. I'm glad you're going to take my advice.

SUSAN

Whoa, pump the brakes a little. I'm not sure what's next, I just know I need some time off...

WEXLER glances in the backseat and sees MIKE'S hand rests familiarly on SUSAN's knee.

WEXLER

(her smile widening)  
...and that's not the only advice of mine you've followed...

They exchange a smile. MIKE'S phone BUZZES. He looks at the screen, a troubled expression crosses his face.

EXT. STREET - SAME

The car glides down the street. In the background sits the Capital dome, beneath an angry, dark cloud.

MIKE (V.O.)

We need to make a stop...

WEXLER (V.O.)

That stop wouldn't happen be a Popeye's by any chance?

INT. CAFE MILANO - LATER

Very upscale. Closed early. No staff. FOUR large SECURITY GUARDS flank the door, bulges under their jackets fail to disguise the automatic weapons within.

Sitting in the center of the dining room are SUSAN, MIKE, NEAL and WEXLER. A thermos of coffee, cups and water in front of them.

Their attention focused on at the head of the table: VALERIE FERRIS, mid 40s, the outward appearance of a typical Washington bureaucrat - but worn as camouflage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FERRIS

Valerie Ferris. I'm a 'liaison'.  
(lets her vague job title hang  
in the air)  
I've been in touch with some of the  
senators on the committee, few other  
interested parties...

SUSAN is about to pour herself a cup of coffee, when MIKE  
taps his watch to note the hour. SUSAN rolls her eyes at him;  
he smiles sweetly and she finally sets the coffee down.

FERRIS (CONT'D)

...we think it might not be a bad idea to  
set up an inter-agency investigative unit  
to look into some of these off-book  
projects.

NEAL

Are you worried about public safety or  
covering your asses?

FERRIS can't help but smile at his candor.

FERRIS

Everyone I've spoken to has their own  
motives, but I assure you they want to  
get to the bottom of this.

WEXLER

Do you really think there's going to be  
more of this stuff to look into?

NEAL

These maniacs have virtually unlimited  
resources and no oversight...

(beat)

...I don't think 'Taking Tiger Mountain'  
was all they were up to, not by a long  
shot..

FERRIS smiles, but is it the smile of someone playing with a  
puppy or watching an insect burn under a magnifying glass?  
Hard to tell.

FERRIS

That seems to be the consensus.

(beat)

You're great investigators, you're good  
under pressure, and you can handle the  
press, so we'd like you four to form the  
core of this investigative unit, we can  
arrange top level security clearances,  
and resources.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SUSAN  
Just like that?

FERRIS  
The logistics, the infrastructure, that's  
easy, but make no mistake, this is  
dangerous.  
(a beat)  
If you end up exposing or shutting down  
some of these other... rogue projects...  
you risk making enemies of some very  
powerful people... with long memories...  
(beat)  
...but the job is yours if you want it.

MIKE  
We were almost killed, a few times,  
trying to investigate... something so  
strange it almost defies description, and  
you're asking us to investigate more  
cases like that?

NEAL  
We survived Leon. Next time we might not  
be so lucky.

FERRIS can see their apprehension, then she deploys her  
secret weapon:

FERRIS  
You'd be doing your country a great  
service.

MIKE'S made his feelings clear. NEAL'S expression suggests he  
shares MIKE'S reluctance. WEXLER turn toward SUSAN. Despite  
MIKE and NEAL'S reticence, SUSAN nods enthusiastically:

SUSAN  
We want it.

FERRIS signals for one of the BODYGUARDS. He sets a short  
stack of files marked 'Classified' on the table next to her.

FERRIS  
A contact at D.A.R.P.A. brought this to  
my attention.  
(a beat)  
Your first official, 'unofficial' case...

FERRIS slides the stack toward SUSAN, wordlessly  
acknowledging her as the team's de facto leader. SUSAN  
distributes the files to the others.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

They open them, as they study the contents, their expressions reflect their collective bafflement. Almost as if reading their thoughts:

FERRIS (CONT'D)  
It's called the 'Schwarzgerät'.

On MIKE, SUSAN and PAM'S confused glances:

NEAL  
(ominous)  
It means 'black device'...

SUSAN keeps reading. She looks up from the file, the color drained from her face. She looks first at the others, then directly at FERRIS, gauging her reaction:

SUSAN  
This thing. It's real?

FERRIS' lips twist into her strange, inscrutable smile.

FERRIS  
It would appear so.

SUSAN and FERRIS lock eyes, as we...

FADE OUT.

The End