

ONCE MORE EDEN

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Winner, Best Unproduced Screenplay 2010 PEI Film Festival
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EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING (PRESENT DAY)

A MAN sits reading his newspaper at a bus stop in a quiet neighborhood. An ELDERLY LADY agonizingly walks towards the bench. The Man looks up - smiles - then back to his paper.

The Elderly Lady takes a seat next to him. Eye contact and a gentle smile. The newspaper's front page photo: Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at the UN. A headline: North Korea ends talks with South Korea. Another: Scientists debate detonating nuclear warhead to seal oil spill.

Elderly Lady POV: She looks up into the blue sky. Watches the clouds go by. She blinks and...

ARCHIVE B & W FOOTAGE OVER CREDITS

-- People climbing out of the Berlin rubble

-- Parades for Allies throughout Europe

-- a tidal wave caused by a missile hitting a German war ship which becomes...

EXT. BUFFALO, NY - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - MORNING (1945)

-- A serene shot of Niagara Falls

-- A Fairgrounds being set up with a sign: NEW YORK STATE FAIR - BUFFALO, NY - JULY 1 - AUG 31st, 1945

-- A PAPERBOY stops on his bike, rolls THE BUFFALO GAZETTE Date: May 9th, 1945: NAZIS SURRENDER - WILL JAPS BE NEXT? He hurls it tumbling through the air onto

EXT. DUNLEVY HOME - PORCH - MORNING

The porch of a wooden, quaint, middle class, all-American home. A 1945 FORD SEDAN in the driveway.

INT. DUNLEVY HOME - LIVING ROOM

A pan of the room. Framed photos of happy and smiling WILFRED & ANNIE DUNLEVY [spanning nearly 20 years].

INT. DUNLEVY HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING

Annie & Wilfred in bed (in their late 30s). Wilfred sits on the edge of the bed, his back to Annie. He's staring at one of the framed photos of them. Annie rolls over.

ANNIE
(groggily)
Wilf?

He replaces the frame on the night stand as she admires his lean torso, then frowns: a red patch over his ribs. She kisses it, sensuously caressing.

He shifts uncomfortably, and crosses to the bathroom.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
(through the open door)
What's wrong?

He stares at his shaving brush, memorizing every last detail --

WILFRED
Nothing.

-- then whips up some lather and closes the door.

Discouraged, she flops back to her pillow. A beat and the alarm clock RINGS.

INT. DUNLEVY HOME - KITCHEN - LATER

In her nurse uniform, Annie busily prepares a hearty breakfast. She pours herself a cup of percolated coffee. A sniff, a smile - it's good. She walks to the door - opens it for the paper.

EXT. DUNLEVY HOME - CONTINUOUS

Coming out of a separate basement apartment entrance of her home is SAM SCHAFFER (late 30s), a handsome "war-hero-type". He tips his hat, grabs his own newspaper (in front of his door).

A pleasant wave and she closes the door.

Wilfred enters the kitchen ready for a trip. He stuffs a worn leather diary with a brass key latch into his briefcase. Annie presents him with the newspaper and a plate: eggs, bacon, toast.

WILFRED
I'm not hungry.
(as an after thought)
Sorry.

They examine each other. A stalemate, interrupted by a KNOCK at the door.

WILFRED (CONT'D)
...Got to go.

Wilfred exits the kitchen. Still holding the plate she opens it to:

ANNIE
(pleasantly)
Good morning, Sam.

SAM
Annie. Beautiful as ever.

He steals a slice of bacon. She looks to her drab uniform.

ANNIE
You're such a liar.

A friendly grin.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
But I'll take the compliment.

He offers her a cigarette -- she politely refrains.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
You know I don't smoke.

Sam shrugs. Wilfred re-enters and hands his suitcase to Sam.

WILFRED
I'll be right there.

Sam tips his hat to Annie. She turns to Wilfred. Something weighs heavily on his face. He looks to his watch.

WILFRED (CONT'D)
I don't have much time.

ANNIE
(a bit alarmed)
Darling, one person can't possibly make that much difference in the world.

Wilfred's sad eyes dive deep into Annie's.

WILFRED

Suppose you could?

A peck on Annie's cheek and Annie watches him hurry toward the idling car.

ANNIE

(puzzled)

Suppose I could?

She stands at the doorway, perplexed. Sam's car pulls away - Wilfred looks over his shoulder - blows her a kiss and the car pulls out of sight.

Over the crest of the hill, another car pulls into view. Coasting. Dressed in nurses' whites, THELMA (THEL) CORELLI is behind the wheel of a stalled car being pushed by TWO NEIGHBORHOOD TEENS.

THEL

That's right, boys! Show me what you're made of!

Making their day, Thel hops out and gives each teen a smooch on the cheek.

THEL (CONT'D)

The thing's a lemon.

Annie walks towards the vehicle and pops the hood. After a brief moment:

ANNIE

Your pump arm is loose.

THEL

You know I love it when you talk like a tramp.

Indicating Thel's trunk.

ANNIE

(from under the hood)

Do you have a Phillips head?

Thel pops her trunk, opens a small tool box, looks at it like it's a foreign language. Annoyed, Annie grabs the correct tool. A brief moment and Thel's car STARTS UP in a cloud of smoke.

THEL

How'd you do that?

ANNIE

Magic.

Thel hops into the car, throws it into drive and starts down the street.

THEL

You're a lifesaver!

Thel thankfully kisses her friend, hops behind the wheel, throws the car into gear and makes it ten feet before it stalls again. She exits the car and walks towards Annie's car.

THEL (CONT'D)

(sniveling)

Stupid gas-run motors.

INT. HOSPITAL PSYCH WARD NURSES' STATION - EVENING

Annie quickly scrawls on various patient charts as NURSES, DOCTORS, and ORDERLIES crowd the busy hallway. FLOOR NURSE MCREAVY (50s), a stern woman, steps up.

MCREAVY

Your shift ended over an hour ago?

ANNIE

I thought I'd give the next shift a head start.

McReavy examines her. Annie barely acknowledges McReavy, which pisses the old crow off.

MCREAVY

(with unrivaled piousness)

Overtime requires my approval. I didn't approve this.

Annie shrugs.

ANNIE

It needed to be done.

MCREAVY

Well, your heroism won't reflected in next week's paycheck.

Answering with sarcasm:

ANNIE

Mrs. McReavy, the compassion for your staff knows no bounds...

McReavy's face puckers, ready to unleash, just as woman's frantic, high-pitched SCREAM interrupts.

INT. HOSPITAL PSYCH WARD - PATIENT'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A blind OLD WOMAN, out of bed, hurls objects at a cornered YOUNG NURSE. The Old Woman's glaucoma-hazed eyes warp her aim - barely. McReavy and Annie enter.

MCREAVY

Good Lord! Mrs. Stephenson, get back in to bed. You break a hip and we're all in trouble.

OLD WOMAN

Screw you! Where's that good for nothing, money-grubbing witch doctor of mine!

McReavy and Annie duck as a bedpan is hurled at their heads. It CLANGS against the doorway. McReavy snatches up a Bakelite rotary phone and hastily barks:

MCREAVY

(to phone)

Code Orange to room 224.

Annie tries to soothe the Old Woman.

ANNIE

I'm sure he'll see you soon.

MCREAVY

Step back and wait for security, Mrs. Dunlevy.

OLD WOMAN

(to Annie)

How? With the goddamn Dudley Telescope?

The Old Woman picks up a glass of water and hurls it at McReavy. It crashes on the wall. Water splashes around.

Two beefy ORDERLIES rush in to the room, tackling the Old Woman. A head shake of discontent and Annie rushes out of the room.

INT. HOSPITAL PSYCH WARD - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Annie rushes up to a door: "Doctor's Lounge - Doctors Only". Annie hesitates, steels herself and then pushes through the closed door.

INT. DOCTOR'S LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

A half-dozen MALE DOCTORS in various stages of dress freeze. Their CHATTER stops. A tense beat.

Annie rattles the lockers one by one. Finally - SUCCESS! She grabs a white coat and stethoscope from the locker. She looks up to see all eyes on her.

A glance: the name "Dr. Thomas" embroidered on the coat.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Dr. Thomas ordered me to have his lab coat cleaned, and shoes polished.

Satisfied HUFFS and GRUNTS. Rushing out of the lounge, she's interrupted --

DOCTOR
Nurse?

Annie freezes. Turns, red-faced and cornered.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
The shoes?

She's forgotten them. The Doctors chuckle at her error, as she returns to the locker and grabs the pair.

On her way out, she collides with a STERN MALE DOCTOR (full beard and wire-rimmed glasses).

ANNIE
Sorry.

INT. HOSPITAL PSYCH WARD - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Annie tosses the shoes in a laundry bin located outside the Doctor's Lounge and barrels down the hallway.

INT. HOSPITAL PSYCH WARD - PATIENT'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Annie bursts into the room in Dr. Thomas's lab coat, complete with stethoscope and wire-rimmed glasses.

She and her crew still wrestling with the Old Woman, McReavy's jaw drops wide enough to catch a softball. The Orderlies glance to McReavy.

MCREAVY
Just what?? --

Annie blows passed her and takes the Old Woman's hand. The Old Woman calms down. Stares at Annie. Trying to place her.

ANNIE
(mock officious)
Let me apologize - I'm Dr. Smith's partner. He's been occupied with personal matters.

McReavy glares bullets at Annie.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry it's taken me so long.

A dubious smile from the Old Woman, who whispers to Annie:

OLD WOMAN
It's ok.

Annie yanks the medication from McReavy's hands. The Old Woman takes it without protest and brushes Annie's cheek with her hand.

ANNIE
I promise, the doctor will be in tomorrow if I have to drag him here, myself.

Annie doesn't even look at McReavy as she exits.

INT. HOSPITAL PSYCH WARD - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Annie takes off her get-up, as Nurse McReavy authoritatively stomps toward her. People scatter, pretending not to watch - but they do.

MCREAVY
Are you aware of the number of official rules you just violated? I expect you to produce a very detailed report of this... this *incident*, and...

Annie pointedly dumps her garb in McReavy's hands.

ANNIE
I would, but someone's recently informed me it's over an hour past my shift.

She looks at her watch. In jest:

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Oh! Look at that! Almost two hours,
now.

Annie spins on her heels, and marches off toward a time clock on the wall. A CLICK and she's punched-out. Without looking back, she exits the floor.

As Young Nurse gaffs into her fist. McReavy glares at her, sputtering in impotent fury.

INT. HOSPITAL PSYCH WARD - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Annie waits for the elevator. DR. THOMAS, (the Stern Doctor she passed in the Lounge), simmers in sock feet, scanning the hallway. Annie studies her feet.

DR. THOMAS
(to Annie)
Nurse!

A slow turn... busted.

DR. THOMAS (CONT'D)
Have you seen a deranged nurse in my
stolen lab coat?

Feigning cluelessness, she quickly ducks in the elevator.

EXT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - NIGHT

Annie glances at her watch and impatiently taps her foot.

The TRAUMA ENTRANCE is quiet. She squints beyond the lights to the parking lot.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Thel's back is arched over Annie's car, kisses a handsome, YOUNG DOCTOR in a lab coat. His wedding ring is obvious.

Annie approaches. Clears her throat. The Young Doctor guiltily hurries back inside. Annie unlocks Thel's door, and moves to the driver's side.

ANNIE
He's married, you know?

Thel lights up a butt, offers one to Annie. She refuses.

THEL
Darling, it's called "an affair" and in
Paris, everyone's doing it.

Like a deep pain now suddenly remembered, she stiffens,
looking off...

ANNIE
Well, this is Buffalo.

...And she sharply yanks open the car door.

INT. ANNIE'S VEHICLE - NIGHT (MOVING)

Thel bops her head to the RADIO, singing along, while
Annie, stone-faced, stares ahead at the road.

THEL
Great song, huh?

Nothing. No answer. No response. They drive by a huge
billboard advertising the Annual State Fair.

THEL (CONT'D)
Think they'll have a Ferris Wheel!? I
love the Ferris Wheel.

Nothing. Like Annie's not even there.

THEL (CONT'D)
Hello?

Startled back to reality, Annie turns blankly to Thel.

ANNIE
Is everyone really doing it?

Thel needs a moment to recall the previous conversation.
She shakes her head and laughs.

THEL
You're a pip, Annie. A real pip.
(off Annie's look)
C'mon. Pour me a drink.

They drive on.

INT. DUNLEVY HOME - NIGHT

Thel sits at the kitchen table, drinking Coke, flipping
through a Life Magazine: VE DAY IN EUROPE on the cover.

She grabs a whiskey bottle and drains the rest into her glass and hands the empty bottle to Annie who enters with a pile of laundry. Annie comments on the bottle:

ANNIE

Dead soldier!

Mystified, Thel looks up from her magazine.

THEL

What the hell are you talking about?

Indicating the empty bottle, Annie recites:

ANNIE

"The poor bottle's given its life nobly
and, given the chance, would do it
again."

THEL

Sounds like crazy Army-talk to me.

Annie shrugs.

ANNIE

Wilf says it.

Thel notices a ring on Annie's hand.

THEL

Pretty!

ANNIE

This old thing? Picked it up in
Rochester the last time I was there.
Can't decide if I like it or not.

Thel examines it.

THEL

Like it!? I love it!

Annie takes it off.

ANNIE

Keep it.

THEL

I can't take it.

ANNIE

Sure you can.

Annie takes it off her finger - passes it to Thel's.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
 (re: Thel's uniform)
 Want me to wash that?

Annie helps her unzip Thel's uniform and she hustles out with the laundry.

INT. DUNLEVY HOME - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A closed door at the end of the Hallway. Arms full of dirty laundry, Annie knocks. No answer. She reaches for a set of keys hanging by the door and unlocks the latch, opening the door to a DARK STAIRWELL.

Thick darkness. She reaches the bottom of the stairs, entering

SAM'S BASEMENT APARTMENT

The place is ship-shape and orderly. She fumbles for the OVERHEAD LIGHT SWITCH, nearly tripping over a pile of SAM'S DIRTY LAUNDRY. Adding it to her pile, she enters

BASEMENT LAUNDRY ROOM

Annie dumps the clothes on the washing machine, casually turning out the pockets of Wilfred's pants.

An airline receipt and a small key on a neck chain fall into her hand. She curiously scans the airline receipt (we don't see it).

THEL (O.S.)
 Got any more ice?

She slips the KEY on her neck. A SQUEAKING from floorboards above.

THEL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 D'ya fall into a trench down there?

Washing machine running Annie enters into:

SAM'S BASEMENT APARTMENT

Annie meets Thel (who's dressed in a robe) at the bottom of the stairs.

THEL (CONT'D)
 What the hell took you so long?

ANNIE
 Nothing.

Thel is distracted by A B&W PHOTO on Sam's ultra-organized desk: SAM AND WILFRED POSING WITH A GROUP OF UNIFORMED OFFICERS. WILFRED'S ARM IS WRAPPED AROUND A PRETTY WOMAN IN A CAPTAIN'S UNIFORM.

THEL

Who's that?

Thel begins to take the photo out of the frame, alarming Annie.

ANNIE

What are you doing?

THEL

I always write names on the back of my photos.

ANNIE

Thel, this is Sam's --

Thel is preoccupied with the back of the photo.

THEL

To Lancelot. We'll always have
Manhattan... Savant.

(beat)

How romantic.

Annie grabs the photo from Thel in such a rush, she accidentally knocks over FILE FOLDERS from Sam's desk.

ANNIE

They look... close.

Annie returns the photo to the frame as Thel gathers the spilled files. She tries a joke:

THEL

Like I said - "Everyone's doing it".

Thel examines at the PAPERS stamped CLASSIFIED.

THEL (CONT'D)

Real-life classified papers? How
exciting! I feel just like Ingrid
Bergman in Casablanca.

Annie's fixated on Wilf's smile ... and the woman.

KEYS outside the EXTERIOR BASEMENT DOOR. The women freeze, then panic, straightening the desk in a hurry. Thel rushes up the stairs - Annie's hot on her heels.

INT. SAM'S BASEMENT APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The Exterior Basement Door opens and Sam walks in. Everything is as it was. Takes off his jacket. Grabs a suitcase from under his bed. Starts to pack.

He moves to the desk. He notices the FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH has been placed just beyond its original spot (leaving a dust-free spot of desk) & the Files have been moved. He precisely moves everything back.

He looks up to the ceiling - the FOOTSTEPS above - then continues packing.

INT. DUNLEVY HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Annie is flustered, pacing around the kitchen. Thel takes a swig of Whiskey, straight from the bottle.

ANNIE

Let's just pretend we didn't see any of that.

THEL

(sarcastically)

Right. Sure. We'll just pretend you don't have a spy living in your basement. No problem.

ANNIE

He's not a spy.

THEL

Uh-huh.

ANNIE

Thel, do you think Wilf's having an affair?

THEL

Absolutely not.

A HORN outside. Thel grabs her purse, kisses Annie on the head --

ANNIE

You're taking a cab in a robe?

THEL
 Wouldn't be the first time. Try to get
 some sleep, honey.

-- and she exits the house. Annie pulls the receipt from
 her pocket, and watches through the window as Thel enters
 a idling taxi.

A beat and the PHONE startles her. Receipt in hand, she
 musters courage to answer.

ANNIE
 Hello?

WILFRED (OVER PHONE)
 Darling, did I wake you?

ANNIE
 No. You sound... are you alright?

WILFRED (OVER PHONE)
 Tired.
 (a beat)
 Hey, I'm gonna be a few extra days in
 Detroit. Staffing for Ford jumped into
 high gear.

ANNIE
 Detroit. Sure.

Annie checks a wall calendar beside the phone. The word
 DETROIT is written across the days of (this week). Her
 eyes begin to mist.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
 Sam's here?

WILFRED (OVER PHONE)
 He doesn't head out til tomorrow. Makes
 me feel better he's there with you,
 anyway.
 (beat)
 This will all be over soon. I promise.

Off her silence.

WILFRED (CONT'D)
 Maybe once everything slows down, you and
 I can take a weekend... take the train
 down to Manhattan. Go see a show?

Her lip quivers. Her voice cracks:

ANNIE
Manhattan...
(she pulls it together)
That would be nice.

WILFRED
(a sigh)
Sorry about this morning. I've just been
so preoccupied --

ANNIE
It's ok.

WILFRED
I love you, Annie.

Annie's eyes well. She glances at the airline receipt in
her hand. She lets it flutter to the ground --

ANNIE
I love you, too.

-- and hangs up the phone. She leans against the wall
for support, bracing herself. She wipes her eyes, then
exits the kitchen, down the hall.

We see the airline receipt is dated for (this week) but
the destination is KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE - not Detroit.

INT. THE WHITE HOUSE OVAL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MAJOR GENERAL LESLIE GROVES (50s, a commanding presence)
fidgets. Huffing. Tapping his foot. A dish of wrapped
chocolates on the President's desk catches his attention.

A look to the office door - A MURMUR of voices outside -
then back to the dish. Debating. Obsession wins.

General Groves snatches a sweet just as the doorknob
turns. Fumbling it, the candy drops to the floor as...

PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN (60s) enters. General Groves
leaps up and salutes. Truman takes his seat. The General
discreetly covers the fallen chocolate with his foot.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN
How was your flight, General?

GENERAL GROVES
Uneventful, Mr. President.

Sweat on his upper lip, Groves slips his foot squarely
over the candy. Satisfied, looks up.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)
Have you read the plan, Sir?

Truman indicates the report on his desk.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN
I must say, it's quite disconcerting. A million people?

GENERAL GROVES
Yes, Sir. Accurate to 4-to-5 percent.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN
Crowded cities. Mostly civilians?

GENERAL GROVES
Dual targets, Mr. President. Factories and bases.

Truman sighs and drops the report.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)
Versus a million of our own boys, Sir.

A grim look from Truman who catches Groves eyeing the dish of candy. Trying to make this horrible discussion more humane:

PRESIDENT TRUMAN
A chocolate, General? I understand you're quite fond --

GENERAL GROVES
(brusquely)
-- No, thank you, Sir. I've made a promise to the wife to try to curb my impulses.

Truman returns the dish to his desk.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN
What is the status of the gadget?

The General smiles with pride and eagerness.

GENERAL GROVES
Oppenheimer and his men in Los Alamos assure me it is operational in a few weeks.

(beat)
Mr. President, have we received any response from our diplomatic team?

PRESIDENT TRUMAN
I'm disappointed to say "no", General.

GENERAL GROVES
And the list of possible drop sites?

PRESIDENT TRUMAN
Under consideration.

The General tries to hide his eager smile.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN (CONT'D)
May I remind you, General, we're
contemplating the instant vaporization of
over a million innocent souls?

General Groves is taken aback by the President's harsh
rebuke.

GENERAL GROVES
With all due respect, I would hardly call
the Japanese innocent. And as the report
states, the Russians are our next
immediate threat. This operation has much
wider implications. I think we both know
Stalin has much bigger plans.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN
I've been fully briefed, thank you.

Truman stares out the window.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN (CONT'D)
How's life, Leslie?

The informality startles the General.

GENERAL GROVES
Busy, Sir. I'm trying to win a war.

Still mesmerized by whatever's caught his attention
outside.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN
We all are, General. We all are.

The President turns to General Groves and smiles.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN (CONT'D)
Thank you for your time and your
diligence, General Groves.

GENERAL GROVES
Of course, Mr. President.

The General sharply salutes, spins on his heels then --

PRESIDENT TRUMAN

Oh, and General?

Groves stops abruptly.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN (CONT'D)

I suggest we consider the cleanliness of
our own house before focusing on our
allies.

A sly smile, he turns and bends to pick up the fallen
candy from the floor. Deliberately placing the chocolate
on the desk:

GENERAL GROVES

I couldn't agree more, Sir.

As Groves exits the Oval office, Truman stares at the
crushed candy.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY (MOVING)

As they window-shop, Annie wanders in her own world, as
Thel stares at the group photo Annie found.

ANNIE

Do you think it's me? Do you think maybe
Wilfred's just not attracted to me
anymore? Am I not pretty enough?

THEL

(confident)

Honey, find me a pretty lady and I'll
find you a man who's tired of screwing
her. I'm sure it's not that.

Thel hands the photo back to Annie.

ANNIE

We haven't... you know... We haven't...
in a long time.

THEL

You haven't what?

ANNIE

-- made love.

THEL

(a shocked look)

How long? A week? Two weeks?

ANNIE

Three months.

Off Thel's astonished look.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Do you think maybe I should dye my hair?

THEL

Baby, what a man wants has nothing to do with your hair.

Thel stares at a shop window. MANNEQUIN U.S SOLDIERS holding American flags have tied up MANNEQUIN JAPANESE KABUKI GIRLS.

THEL (CONT'D)

Those Asian girls, they know what their men want. For Christ sakes, they're trained from childhood.

ANNIE

(looks at mannequins)

It all looks like a lot of trouble.

Thel continues toward her car. The door's locked. She peers inside.

THEL

Shit. Hand me a bobbypin, wouldja?

Annie pulls one from her hair and hands it to Thel. She starts to pick at the car door's lock.

THEL (CONT'D)

It's not about make-up and styles. It's about tradition and obligation. They have these traditions, centuries old. They never break them. It's what makes them so hard to beat. It's why the Gerrys and the I-Ties surrendered, and the Japs won't. They'd rather die for their honor.

Annie shakes her head, not getting it.

THEL (CONT'D)

Don't you see? It's about fighting for what you believe in. Losing's not in their vocabulary, and it shouldn't be in yours.

A few twists of the bobbypin and the lock POPS. She reaches across and opens Annie's door.

THEL (CONT'D)

Spice it up! When he comes home, answer the door naked, with nothing but one of his ties around your neck.

(beat)

Now can we talk about your gorgeously creepy roommate?

Annie climbs inside the car.

ANNIE

It's none of our busine --

A CREEPY OLD BEGGAR with a BIBLE leaps in front of Thel's car.

CREEPY OLD BEGGAR

(to Thel)

The hand of God will smite thee, Sinner. In his wrath, He will rain down lightning and thunder!

THEL

I have an umbrella.

The Creepy Old Beggar glares at Annie. A beat, then smiles eerily.

CREEPY OLD BEGGAR

Armageddon! "I have spoken saith the Lord God. And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the Lord". By the fire, all God's creatures will be smote down.

She lays on the horn. He continues along the sidewalk, MURMURING Psalms.

THEL

Annie?

Something he's said has struck a nerve in Annie and she shivers. Thel pulls her car into gear and drives away.

INT. HOSPITAL PSYCH WARD - HALLWAY - LATER THAT DAY

Annie exits a patient's room, and meets Nurse McReavy. They walk side-by-side in silence, until:

MCREAVY

I think I should advise you to put some distance between you and your friend.

ANNIE

Excuse me?

MCREAVY

Oh, Mrs. Dunlevy. Don't be coy. I have no doubt that you know of Miss Corelli's
(searches for the word)
...indiscrete liaisons with a number of the married doctors. Of course, I don't blame them. Men are so easily seduced.

McReavy pauses before entering a room:

MCREAVY (CONT'D)

(smooths her uniform)
I'd hate to see you involved in something sordid.

Leaving Annie, agog, alone, in the middle of the hallway.

EXT. DUNLEVY HOME - NIGHT

Annie pulls into the driveway. Tired, drained. Thel's car still stalled.

INT. DUNLEVY HOME - WILFRED'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Annie enters the office, flips on the light. Files everywhere. Guiltily and nervously, she scans the room.

A piece of paper by the telephone on Wilf's desk.

A file folder labeled: OAKRIDGE STAFFING

She flips through it and pulls out a smaller folder with a picture of the woman from the group photo. It reads:

CAPTAIN FRANCINE ENGLES, AGE: 34

U.S. ARMY, CLINTON ENGINEER WORKS/RADIOACTIVE MEDICINE

She goes pale. The folder slips from her hands.

INT. DUNLEVY HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Annie stares blankly at herself in the mirror, fiddling with the small key around her neck. She dials.

THEL (V.O.)

Hello?

Her voice breaks:

ANNIE
Thel... can you come over?

THEL (V.O.)
Honey, what's wrong?

ANNIE
Her name is Francine Engles --

Thel doesn't wait for an answer.

THEL (V.O.)
I'm calling a cab.

And hangs up.

INT. DUNLEVY HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Annie looks defeated. She stares out her window at impenetrable black, a drained coffee cup at hand. She reaches for the whisky bottle and pours herself another cup of booze.

Eerie silence. The FILE FOLDER of Francine Engles' is opened, on the table-top.

Outside, a car door SLAMS. Annie doesn't move. In a trance. A KNOCK.

ANNIE
Come in, Thel.

Another KNOCK.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Honey, it's open...

She stands and moves toward the door just as two MEN IN TRENCH COATS burst through her front door.

Annie SCREAMS! Turns to run... but is cut off by TWO MORE MEN IN TRENCH COATS who've found their way inside. She sees: CAPTAIN FRANCINE ENGLES in her doorway.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
What do you want!?

Annie is overcome - she slides down the wall, cowering in the corner.

INT. VEHICLE - MOMENTS LATER

A 9-SEATER SEDAN. Gagged, Annie is shoved inside the car. It speeds off. She turns around to see Thel, eyes like a deer in headlights, cheeks wet from crying, also gagged. Annie looks out the passenger window, watching her neighborhood speed out of sight.

EXT. BUFFALO STREET - CONTINUOUS

As the BLACK SEDAN speeds down the road, [a glimpse of the bumper with the *Trinity triangle decal*]. A second black car pulls into the driveway. Four ARMED GUARDS enter the Dunlevy house. The neighborhood remains unaware.

EXT. OAK RIDGE ARMY BASE AIR STRIP - EARLY MORNING

In the distance, a plane lands on a muddy air strip in the middle of the remote, expansive, "blue mist" Tennessee foothills. A MILITARY PRESENCE is visible. They are herded onto a waiting JEEP. The Jeep spins tires in the mud and speeds down the road.

INT. TRUNK OF JEEP - CONTINUOUS

Annie and Thel are loaded into the back of the burlap-covered Military Jeep. Annie struggles to lift herself to an upright position. She scrambles to an open point of the burlap.

(POV ANNIE)

-- Trees rush by.

-- A clearing. A train, chugging along in an adjacent field.

-- The Jeep stops. Murmured talking.

-- The Jeep continues, driving past a checkpoint and through a desolate small town. An army base.

-- Signs on buildings: OAK RIDGE POST OFFICE, OAK RIDGE MESS HALL, OAK RIDGE HOSPITAL, GENERAL STORE.

-- A Billboard of cartoon U.S. troops stepping on a cartoon Hitler: EUROPE HAS FALLEN BUT THE WAR ISN'T OVER

-- Neighborhoods of Barracks & Buildings whiz by

The Jeep stops quickly, throwing Annie forward. She lands on her face with a THUD.

(END POV)

EXT. MEDICAL FACILITY - NIGHT

The jeep stops at a 1940s-modern HOSPITAL with an overbearing MILITARY PRESENCE.

A big sign illuminated in the dark. A cartoon head indicating a whisper: THINK, ARE YOU AUTHORIZED TO TELL IT?

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - MOMENTS LATER

Annie and Thel's gags are taken off. Thel stretches her jaw.

THEL

That was so unnecessary.

Engles is silent.

GUARD

Stand fast, please.

Standing in front of a white-washed wall, the women oblige, startled by blinding flashes of light. An ARMY PHOTOGRAPHER snaps pictures.

ANNIE

Where have you taken us?

CAPT. ENGLES

Happy Valley.

THEL

Irony's a bitch, ain't it?

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - HOLDING CELL - MOMENTS LATER

Annie and Thel are ushered by a huge, armed SOLDIER, to a HOLDING CELL.

THEL

What's going on?

The Soldier has no answer.

THEL (CONT'D)
So, we're criminals?
(to Annie with sarcasm)
Nice knowing you.

With perfect timing, Engles enters the Holding Cell and hands Annie and Thel badges indicating a large, red, Roman Numeral I.

CAPT. ENGLES
These are your Visitor ID badges.

THEL
Visitors, huh? I'd hate to see how you treat the uninvited.

Thel sees the photo caught her with her eyes closed.

THEL (CONT'D)
(oozing sarcasm)
What a keeper.
(upon closer examination)
I look dead.

CAPT. ENGLES
Your badge indicates your security clearance. It must always be visible. Someone will be in to speak with you shortly.

Thel points at Engles' badge. A red Roman Numeral V.

THEL
"V" for Victory, huh?

And Engles slams the door of the Holding Cell shut.

INT. HOLDING CELL - LATER

Thel's spread out on a bench. Annie's on the floor; she sits with her back against the wall. The door opens and the ladies scramble upright to see:

SAM SCHAFFER walk in.

THEL
Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Look who it is.

SAM
I'm sorry it had to be this way.

THEL

We know something's going on in
Manhattan, Lancelot, so start explaining.

SAM

Things are classified for a reason,
ladies.

He's hesitant. Seems nervous. Looks to the door again.
Lowers his voice:

SAM (CONT'D)

Oak Ridge is a classified army base in
Tennessee, essentially run by civilians
but operating under tight military
control. I work with the project. Like
Wilfred.

ANNIE

Wilfred works with Ford!? What project?

SAM

Every person on base - every scientist,
doctor, armed guard and even the chief
cook were hand-selected by your husband.
He was the head recruiter for --
(a beat, considering)
-- this. The Manhattan Project.

The women take it all in.

ANNIE

Wait... what do you mean, *was*? Where's
Wilf?

Sam remorsefully looks away.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, CRITICAL CARE - MOMENTS LATER

Annie's in a Hazmat Suit.

ANNIE'S SUIT POV: Through the suit visor, Annie sees many
PATIENTS suffering from various degrees of burns. The
suit's plastic face mask fogs with each breath. Sounds
are muffled but the MOANS and CRIES OF AGONY are still
audible.

Nurses dress oozing, painful-looking burn wounds of
horribly disfigured patients, each one incrementally more
"Monster" than Man.

Annie is led to a bed surrounded by a translucent oxygen
tent. Tubes snake in and out.

A strange device she doesn't recognize on the bedside table (a Geiger counter). She tentatively pulls back the tent flap.

It's Wilfred. Pale, rigid, eyes closed, on a ventilator. Chest wrapped in stained gauze. In shock, Annie rips her mask and gloves off. END POV.

The SUITED MEDICAL PERSONNEL panic, wide-eyed as Annie pulls off her mask and gloves.

MEDICAL PERSONNEL

Mrs. Dunlevy, please. For your own protection --

But, Annie ignores them, clutching Wilfred's hand.

ANNIE

You're so cold.

Overcome, she breaks down and bolts from the ICU.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Thel looks up to the opening double doors:

THEL

Annie?

Annie dashes passed her and down the corridor.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

Annie runs by many hospital rooms. She hyperventilates, confused, disoriented. She bursts through a door at the end of the hallway, out to

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, BACK ENTRANCE - NIGHT

An empty courtyard. It's surrounded by a high steel link fence with a sign that reads: DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE.

She buries her face in her hands and sobs convulsively. The metal door opens beside her. It's Thel.

THEL

(out of breath)

Baby?

Annie wipes her eyes. Thel lights a cigarette. Annie snatches it from her: drags deeply, coughs hard.

THEL (CONT'D)

That bad, huh?

Thel expects Annie to pass the butt. She doesn't, so she lights another. Annie COUGHS, then tosses the butt. Less than ten feet away, VAPOR seeps out of a REFRIGERATED TRUCK.

Thel puts her arm around Annie in support. They stare into the chain-link fence expanse...

Annie wipes her cheeks with the back of her hands. Thel reaches into her pocket and dabs Annie's cheeks with a personalized handkerchief: T.C., and places her hand on Annie's shoulder.

THEL (CONT'D)

We'll get you through this.

A beat. The door CRASHES open. Two MEN exit, pushing a gurney with a body bag on it to the truck. One of the Men opens the door of the REFRIGERATED TRUCK.

Thel and Annie inch over curiously until they see...

Inside, long metal shelves. Clouds of vapor roll out. Nonchalantly, the Men place the body bag inside the truck, close the door and the truck pulls away.

The Men return inside the hospital barely noticing the women. Before the door closes, Sam steps out. She breaks down in his arms.

SAM

Come inside.

Thel looks off to watch the truck head toward another large fenced-in concrete complex (the Y12 WEAPONS PLANT), beyond the hospital fence.

She pauses - in another world - staring. Sam holds the door open and Annie enters the building. To Thel:

SAM (CONT'D)

The damp air is bad for the patients.

She snaps out of it and follows behind Annie.

They enter inside, passing THE MORGUE. On the door, the same *RED DOT/LIGHTNING BOLT* symbol and *LEVELLED CLEARANCE REQUIRED*. Sam pauses a beat, glancing at the mysterious facility beyond the fence.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, HALLWAYS - LATER (MOVING)

Thel, Annie, and Sam walk side-by-side.

A crowd of PHYSICIANS and ARMED GUARDS walk in a group down the hallway, passing Thel, Annie, and Sam. Sam waits for them to pass, then opens a door to an empty HOSPITAL ROOM.

SAM
(lowered voice)
We can speak freely in here.

They enter. He closes the door behind him.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, EXAM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Annie and Thel take seats.

SAM
Due to the nature of the project, we must be careful.

He checks outside, then closes the door.

SAM (CONT'D)
Oak Ridge is a classified army base, run by civilians operating under tight military control. We're working on a project that will undoubtedly facilitate an end to the War. The building --

He points out the window at the large smokestacks.

SAM (CONT'D)
We call it "the Racetrack". Our primary development plant. This building is known as The Castle. Guarded more heavily than the Franco-German border.

Annie glances out the barred windows of the medical facility to see billowing smoke gush from the huge facility's tall pipes.

SAM (CONT'D)
Three months ago, we had an incident at that plant, which is integral to the assembly of a top secret gadget. Unfortunately, at that time, Wilfred was exposed to toxic materials.

ANNIE
(confused)
Three months!? And nobody told --

SAM
We weren't sure of the severity of his exposure. I'm sure he didn't want to alarm you.

Annie is processing - staring into space. She shakes her head in disbelief and takes a seat, in shock.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

Thel, Annie and Sam exit the room. Sam speaks as they walk.

ANNIE
When can I take him home?

SAM
You can't.
(catches himself)
And anyway, you officially know too much.

ANNIE
We don't know anything?

SAM
You know this exists. You two will remain here until the project's completion.

THEL
When the hell's that?

SAM
Soon.

Thel takes Annie's hand. A squeeze. Annie sighs and wipes her teary eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)
(to Annie)
You look exhausted, and you must be starving.

INT. HOSPITAL CANTEEN - LATER

Annie, Thel and Sam enter the large, sparse canteen.

AT A SECLUDED TABLE -- Capt. Engles, reading the Knoxville Journal: *Horrors of Auschwitz exposed*.

CAPT. ENGLES

(puts paper down)

Mrs. Dunlevy, we've arranged for you to stay in your husband's private cottage on the grounds. Miss Corelli, you can bunk at the women's civilian barracks in town.

ANNIE

Is there any way Thel can stay with me?

CAPT. ENGLES

I'm afraid not, Mrs. Dunlevy.

THEL

What sort of carny side-show are you running, here?

CAPT. ENGLES

Miss Corelli, the private cottages are behind a secure checkpoint. We can't have civilians running amok behind the lines.

THEL

Amok!?

Thel lunges at Engles who expertly hammerlocks her in one swift motion. Thel struggles futilely.

ANNIE

Thel!?

Engles waves off two ARMED GUARDS and releases a very pissed, hair-frazzled Thel. Engles coolly straightens her uniform and regains her composure.

CAPT. ENGLES

(to Sam)

You know what? I don't give a damn where she stays. This charade is becoming ridiculous.

And she storms off. Annie's gaze settles on Sam. His dire expression says it all.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, CRITICAL CARE - DAWN

WILFRED IN BED. The ventilator's off. Very dead. Annie sits beside him, crying.

SAM
I thought it best to keep up the pretence
and inform you ...more gently.

THEL
Well, that certainly backfired, didn't
it?

Thel clutches Annie close.

THEL (CONT'D)
This is despicable.

Capt. Engles fires a heated look at Thel. A solemn beat.
A look to Wilf and Thel wipes a remorseful tear from her
cheek.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - WAITING ROOM - LATER (MOVING)

Clutched in Thel's embrace, Annie sits completely
hollowed out as Sam and Engles look down on them.

ANNIE
How will I handle the arrangements to get
him back to --

SAM
They've been made.

Annie, still in shock, nods.

SAM (CONT'D)
Why don't I take you two back to your
husband's cottage where we can discuss
the details.

Sam hustles them out of the room, with a quick glance to
Capt. Engles.

EXT. OAKRIDGE COMPOUND - GUEST COTTAGES - DAWN

Sam drives a jeep as they pass a number of fenced in,
guarded cottages. They sit in silence.

The jeep turns a corner, greeted by:

EXT. GUEST COTTAGES, GATE - DAWN

Sam stops at a manned gate. An entrance to a
neighborhood of bungalows. Sam flashes his badge to an
ARMED GUARD.

ARMED GUARD

Good morning, Sir.

(he sizes up Annie and Thel)

Carry on.

The Patrolman opens the gate, allowing the Jeep to pass through. The Jeep moves forward a few feet and jarringly stops.

EXT. CHECKPOINT - CONTINUOUS

With a scowl, Sam steps out of the Jeep and approaches the Patrolman, who quickly salutes.

SAM

I can't figure out if you're ignorant or just plain stupid.

ARMED GUARD

(confused)

Sir?

Sam points to the women in the jeep (Thel and Annie are staring out the jeep's back window). He slaps their IDs in the Guard's hand.

ARMED GUARD (CONT'D)

But, Sir. They were with you...

SAM

(poking the Armed Guard)

I don't give a rat's ass if they were with President. You will check his, theirs, and every other ID. Nobody crosses this checkpoint - in, or out - without proper ID.

He points ferociously to a large sign: RESTRICTED ZONE. LEVELLED CLEARANCE REQUIRED. Annie notes this.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - DAWN

The door opens. Annie and Thel are led in by Sam. The place is a mess. Annie gives a heartfelt sigh.

SAM

We didn't have a chance to have it straightened up.

ANNIE

It's fine. It's very Wilfred.

Annie enters Wilfred's room. Through the doorway, they see her picking up articles of clothing from the floor, wiping away tears.

SAM
(taken aback)
If either of you need me, I'm just across the street.

Sam exits the cottage. Thel moves to the window watching him cross the street.

Thel knocks on the bedroom door. No answer. Annie is asleep, hugging Wilf's clothing. She covers her gently, then exits into

THE LIVING ROOM

Thel pokes around the cottage, searching anxiously for something. Stashed away under the sink, an open bottle of bourbon and a couple of clean glasses.

THEL
That a-boy, Wilf.

She pours herself a stiff one and walks to the bookshelf, examining the titles. She pulls one from the shelf. A snicker: TALL TALE AMERICA: A LEGENDARY HISTORY OF OUR HUMOROUS HEROES.

As she pulls the book from the shelf, a small paperback hidden behind the others falls to the floor. She picks it up: A WORLD SET FREE by H.G. Wells. There are many dog-eared, underlined passages.

She settles down at a reading chair with the glass of booze and begins to read the book.

INT. GENERAL GROVES' OFFICE - MORNING

General Groves' framed West Point diploma in a place of pride. He sits behind his desk, snacking on a piece of chocolate. Staring out the large picture window.

Looking exhausted, Engles sits across from him.

CAPT. ENGLS
Our team searched the house. Nothing. I suggest we send them back. Get them out of here.

GENERAL GROVES
Keep them here.

CAPT. ENGLER
Sir, do you think? --

GENERAL GROVES
Keep them occupied. Search the house in
Buffalo, again. Top to bottom. Rip it a
part if you have to.

He breaks off another piece of chocolate:

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)
She's got to know something.

CAPT. ENGLER
What if she doesn't?

Dismissive:

GENERAL GROVES
That will be all, Captain Engler.

Miffed but with respect, Engler stands, salutes, exits.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - EVENING

Annie stirs and wakes up with a start. Confused, she
recovers and sinks a bit. It's not a dream.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Thel sleeping in an uncomfortable position on the chair,
an empty bottle and glass next to her. The book on her
lap. Annie's ring on her finger.

THEL
Oh, Thel.

Annie gently covers Thel with a blanket. She sees the
open door to the bathroom.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE, BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Annie's in front of the mirror: a blank stare at her
drawn face. The room is strewn with Wilfred's shaving and
personal gear. Annie fondly examines each piece.

She runs the tub, undresses and rediscovers the KEY
around her neck. She takes it off and places it on the
counter.

LATER...

Annie's in the steamy tub, eyes closed, head back.

THEL (O.S.)
How you doing, kiddo?

Thel appears in the doorway - an ICE PACK on her head. With bloodshot eyes, Annie musters a brave smile, but there's no weight to it. Thel takes a seat on the floor next to the tub.

ANNIE
Why did he hide this from me?

Thel shrugs.

THEL
I'm sure he had his reasons, doll.

ANNIE
I feel like I don't know him.
(she scoffs)
Twenty years. And he's a stranger.

Contemplative quiet.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
What do I do, now?

Thel stares ahead.

THEL
I dunno.

She turns to Annie. A sigh, and Annie sinks deeper into the tub.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - LATER

Annie and Thel have straightened up the cottage. Thel rummages through the small overnight bag they brought when a KNOCK startles them.

ANNIE
Who's there?

As Thel reaches for the knob, keys JANGLE, unlock the door and Sam enters.

THEL
(taken aback)
C'mon in, why don't you?

SAM

Sorry. I took the liberty of speaking to the Brass. I'd like to take you both into town -- I have something I need to talk to you about.

Folding a pair of Wilfred's pants, Annie barely makes eye contact.

ANNIE

I'd prefer to just stay here - finish sorting through Wilf's belongings --

SAM

I thought we could stop by the General Store, maybe pick up some necessities you may not have brought? You're going to be here for a stretch --

ANNIE

I'm tired and overwhelmed and in no mood to be very social.

Thel puts her hand on Annie's shoulder, takes Wilf's pants and places them on the couch --

THEL

Come on. Fresh air might do us some good.

EXT. OAK RIDGE TOWN SQUARE - EVENING

It's a classic small town: a theatre, a general store, a library, a town center. Oddly, the streets are empty.

INT. SAM'S JEEP - EVENING

Sam drives. Annie rides shotgun, with Thel in the back.

THEL

Where is everyone?

SAM

Military curfew.

THEL

On a civilian town?

Sam ignores the question.

SAM

We keep a tight perimeter around the town and base because of the research we do. We operate under orders from Secretary of War Stimson... and the President, of course. There's a lot at stake, here.

INT. WOMAN'S CLOTHING STORE - EVENING

Sam sits beside Annie with a lap full of clothing. They watch Thel rifle through racks of clothes.

ANNIE

I'll have to write you a check for the clothes. I think I only have a few dollars and a handful of change.

SAM

It's on Uncle Sam's tab. *The* Uncle Sam, that is.

(a beat, and)

I was hoping, you know, you and Thel may be able to lend a hand at the hospital?

ANNIE

(taken aback)

Sam, we don't have the training or the credentials -- we shouldn't even be here.

SAM

After the... incident, we're dealing with a number of patients and our nurses are a bit short-staffed. There's nothing you couldn't learn. The project is at a very critical stage now. No time for setbacks. We could really use your help.

ANNIE

I just don't think --

Sam gently places his hand on Annie's.

SAM

-- this project meant so much to Wilfred.

ANNIE

Then why didn't he mention it to me?

SAM

He couldn't. For your safety. And his. But to have you working on the project, even in the interim, you'd be doing me, your country... a great service.

ANNIE
When can I see him?

SAM
You just did.

Silence.

ANNIE
Not like I wanted to.

SAM
He's in the Morgue, now, awaiting
transport. It's off-limits. I'm sorry.

A sigh. She wipes her eyes and snaps her head up to see
Thel.

THEL
You ready, Freddy?

She's holding a pile of clothing including a dress, a
rain hat and some heavy rubber boots...

ANNIE
Sam's asked us lend a hand at the
hospital.

Thel glares at Sam then to Annie.

THEL
This ain't Buffalo General. You saw those
boys in there -- like nothing I've ever
seen.

SAM
But a nurse is a nurse, and we'll take as
many as we can get.

Sam gestures for Annie and Thel to head towards the cash
register.

THEL
(to Sam)
As long I don't go home in a body bag.

A look of indignation from Sam.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, ADMINISTRATION OFFICE - DAY

Engles reluctantly hands OFFICIAL BASE PASSES (with RED
ROMAN NUMERAL IIs) to Annie and Thel, in crisp military
nursing uniforms.

CAPT. ENGLES

It's imperative that you follow the rules. I'll be keeping a close eye on you both.

(to Thel)

Especially you.

THEL

Aye-aye, Captain Butch.

Engles steps into Thel's face, grins menacingly then backs off. Annoyed, Annie drags Thel out.

EXT. MEDICAL FACILITY - ANOTHER HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

In the Hallway, shocked by Thel's scandalous gaffe:

ANNIE

What the hell what that about?

THEL

She's been eyeballing me since Buffalo.

ANNIE

You're imagining things.

THEL

Honey, when a gal ogles me like Christmas turkey, I know damn well she's not a fan of "sausage stuffing".

Annie shakes her head and continues down the hall.

A back woods JANITOR (in his 30s, good looking) winks as Thel and Annie walk by.

THEL (CONT'D)

What's your badge say?

ANNIE

ICU. Yours?

THEL

Admin?! Jesus, Mary and Joseph...

Thel stomps down the hall.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY ICU - DAY

Annie, shadowed by an ICU NURSE, dresses wounds on a MUTILATED MAN lying in the hospital bed. There are so many.

Annie exhales.

ICU NURSE
Are you ready for this?

Annie, paled, nods. She gently peels gauze from the wound, but it horribly tears at flesh from his face.

ICU NURSE (CONT'D)
Just yank it. Quickly.

The Nurse RIPS the gauze away. The man GROANS in pain.

ICU NURSE (CONT'D)
See?

Annie gags, covers her mouth to retch, and lurches off to another bed. The PATIENT MUMBLES something to her as she reads his chart. She pauses -

ANNIE
What was that?

She leans in close.

PATIENT
(whispering)
Please. Stop it.

Worried about her touch --

ANNIE
I'm sorry - here - let me give you...

She reaches for a syringe. Before she has the chance to stick him with it, his hand touches hers:

PATIENT
No. Trinity. Stop it.

She stares at him.

ANNIE
I don't understand...

The Nurse returns to her side.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
He said something --

NURSE
Talking crazy again, Private Thompson?

The Nurse fills a syringe with a clear liquid from an unmarked glass bottle from her pocket. Almost immediately, the Patient's passed out again.

NURSE (CONT'D)

God love 'em.

Annie hurries out of ICU into

THE HALLWAY

She pulls the suit mask from her face, turns the corner and...

Slams into Thel - a stack of Thel's files tumble to the ground. Thel sees it's Annie, as she gathers them:

THEL

Jesus Christ, Annie.

ANNIE

Sorry.

Annie, still shaken, bends on her knees to help Thel.

THEL

How goes it?

Annie's "deer in the headlights" face is pale, still in mild shock from the gauze event.

THEL (CONT'D)

At least you're dealing with people. I've got nothing but paper cuts the last three days, juggling charts nobody can read...

Thel shows Annie one of the files. Blacked out words and lines cover most of each page (security deletions).

THEL (CONT'D)

Look at this.

She flips through the stack to one in particular.

THEL (CONT'D)

File 001-4228. W.D. Buffalo.

She hands it to Annie. Hard to decipher. Mostly black lines.

THEL (CONT'D)

W.D. Buffalo? Hello!? It's gotta be Wilfred's.

Annie scans it. Can't make much out. Hands it back.

ANNIE
Could be anyone's.

Thel looks at her watch, then --

THEL
Let's grab a bite. I'm starving.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - CANTEEN - DAY

Annie picks at a salad. Thel trudges over.

THEL
That all you're having?

Ignoring her, Annie looks off to see the janitor (from before). She nods wordlessly to Thel in his direction.

Thel spins around. Her face goes slack. The back woods janitor grins and winks at her.

THEL (CONT'D)
Oh, Melanie, it's Rhett. He's come back.

The Janitor takes the look as an invitation and steps over to their table. This is VINCE WASHBURN (30s).

VINCE
(back woods accent)
The name's Vince. Vince Washburn. Howdy-do, ladies?

Without being invited, Vince takes a seat next to Thel.

VINCE (CONT'D)
I kinda had my eye on y'all. You gals is new, from up North, huh?

ANNIE
We're just temporary.

VINCE
(glance to Thel)
Oh, yeah? How temporary?

THEL
So temporary, pretend we're not even here.

ANNIE

The government considers us a possible threat to national security.

They don't look like threats.

VINCE

(dubious)
Really?

THEL

What'cha do around these parts, Vince?

VINCE

I'm Head of Maintenance.
(jangles keys)
I got the run of the whole place.

THEL

Be still, my heart.

VINCE

(undaunted)
When's the last time y'all had a taste?

Thel's eyes flash open.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Corn liquor.
(off her look)
Make it myself. If you're up for party, I got us a room all to ourselves.

Thel pulls the shit-kicker close. With mock interest, she whispers seductively:

THEL

Where in hell can we have a soiree, loverboy, in this tight-ass place?

VINCE

Ya'll leave that to me, Sweet Cheeks.
Meet me in the Screening Room tonight.
Say, 730?

With no patience for this, Annie stands with her tray and leaves.

INT. GENERAL GROVES' OFFICE - DAY

Engles and General Groves review a document.

GENERAL GROVES

Stimson, Oppenheimer, Fermi... good, good.

CAPT. ENGLES

Yes, Sir. Though the President has invited the scientists against your advice.

GENERAL GROVES

(frowns)

Well, I suppose it's his party.

CAPT. ENGLES

I think it's ill-advised, General.

GENERAL GROVES

As do I, Francine. Who the hell knows what trouble these eggheads will stir up. What about this grievance report?

General Groves waves a multi-page document with hundreds of SIGNATURES on it. It's titled THE FRANCK REPORT.

CAPT. ENGLES

It's an "anti-bomb" petition that's been moving around the bases. Started by the quack scientists at the Chicago lab, it has hit the Los Alamos, Washington State sites, and now us. My operatives have uncovered the local source of dissemination.

General Groves raises an eyebrow.

CAPT. ENGLES (CONT'D)

Wilfred Dunlevy.

GENERAL GROVES

Damn it. Pearl Harbor, for God's sake! What sort of pansy-ass American takes pity on the Japs?

(fiercely)

If he thought I...

(more controlled)

I won't have a dead incendiary interrupt my destiny to see this through to the end. Dunlevy had no idea what kind of hornet's nest he was kicking over. Bury this insurrection before the President arrives.

CAPT. ENGLES

Yes, Sir.

Engles stands, salutes and turns to leave.

GENERAL GROVES

We're not through, Captain.

(Engles turns)

What's the status on the investigation
and that damned notebook?

CAPT. ENGLES

We've searched the cabin and we've turned
their home in Buffalo upside down.
Nothing.

GENERAL GROVES

Damn it, Francine.

CAPT. ENGLES

We've found them positions on base,
hoping that we might be able to get some
sort of intel. But Sir, I suggest we
send Corelli home. She's someone who --

GENERAL GROVES

--with a mouth like hers? She's already
proven she's a snoop. I'm not letting
her out of my sight! They stay until the
drop. It's your duty to reclaim any
vital intelligence that weak-sister
husband of hers may have compromised.

(shakes his head)

I've been in the army 40 years - never
once has --

Groves is angry with himself.

CAPT. ENGLES

We still don't know how he planned to
undermine the project. He had us all
fooled, General.

He removes some chocolate pieces from his desk and offers
Engles a piece.

GENERAL GROVES

(pacified)

Civilians. They love us when we save the
day, and hate us for making the hard
decisions that keep us alive, our
families safe and our country great.

Engles says nothing... Silence.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)

I'm not the boogey-man, Francine.

Engles places a supportive hand on General Groves' shoulder.

CAPT. ENGLES

I know that, Sir.

A beat and Engles salutes, picks up her things and exits leaving General Groves to contemplate his conscience.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Thel bursts into the cottage. Annie already there, she's reading THE WORLD SET FREE by H.G. Wells. Her legs pulled close.

THEL

Crazy read, huh?

Thel disappears into THE BEDROOM. She rushes to the bag of clothing from the other day - the boots, the rain hat, the dress.

ANNIE

Where are you going?

THEL

The Screening Room?

ANNIE

You heard Captain Engles. You know the Brass won't tolerate a breach of regulations. And I don't want to find out what they'll do...

Thel ignores Annie's worries and holds up the dress in front of the mirror. She's sincere:

THEL

Honey, I love you, but can't hole myself up in this godforsaken cottage much longer. Anyway, how much trouble can I get in if you're there?

ANNIE

Absolutely not.

THEL

I'm not going to a party with the original Ozark Boy without you, babe. Guy like him is a good guy to know, if you ask me.

Annie knits her brow in frustration and a bit of anger.

ANNIE
 I'm not going to any party...
 (yanks dress from Thel)
 And neither are you.

Annie steps into the closet to hang the dress and - CREAK
 - a floorboard in the closet gives way. Annie YELPS,
 loses her balance, and tumbles to the floor.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
 Thel!?

The floor board has come loose. Tucked between the
 foundation and the panel is Wilfred's leather bound
NOTEBOOK (from before).

THEL
 What in Sam Hill?

Thel grabs the book.

ANNIE
 (stunned)
 It's Wilf's diary.
 (off Thel's look)
 He's kept one for years.

Thel tries the diary's catch. No dice. It's locked.

THEL
 I guess we could cut it open?

Annie reaches for and squeezes the key around her neck.
 She takes the necklace off, unlocks the catch, revealing
 many hand-written pages.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, AMPHITHEATER - SAME

Engles and several armed GUARDS scour a small theater.
 They check under the seats, the locks on the doors. On
 the stage, a large movie screen is rolled down.

CAPT. ENGLES
 (to a Guard)
 Lieutenant?

A tough-looking young Marine steps up.

CAPT. ENGLES (CONT'D)
 For tonight's briefing, I'll require an
 armed presence at every entrance.

The Lieutenant salutes crisply, then returns to his work. Engles returns to searching the theater. She hears a...

CRASH! Her eyes snap up to the PROJECTION BOOTH.

CAPT. ENGLES (CONT'D)
Identify yourself.

A beat and Vince pops his head out of the booth.

VINCE
Vince Washburn. Level III. Maintenance.
(frazzled)
I was told to get the place cleaned up.

CAPT. ENGLES
Double-time it, mister.

VINCE
Yes, Sir. I mean -- ma'am, uh - Captain.

Vince ducks quickly back inside the booth and Engles shakes her head in annoyance, continuing her room sweep.

INT. PROJECTION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Still shaken by Engles' "bark", Vince falls into a seat beside two large projectors (slide and film). He bends over and stealthily covers up two large glass mason JARS filled with clear liquid moonshine.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Thel listens intently as Annie reads Wilfred's Notebook in whispers:

ANNIE
(reading pages)
"... investigating the complaints by cleanroom workers about unusual rashes and boils. I discovered leaks in the lead shielding containing the purified Uranium samples. Several workers were exposed to large doses of radioactive material. I fear I may have been exposed as well."

Annie looks to Thel, her eyes well. Thel takes the Notebook and she flips ahead several pages.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Thel, Wilfred had a large rash on his back the morning he left.

THEL

(reading)

"I'm feeling quite weak these days. I haven't been able to hold down a meal for very long. No appetite for food... or sex. I believe Annie is becoming suspicious. They're allowing me to go home tomorrow to finalize my will. The exposed workers have begun to die off. Unending pain seems the norm.

(Thel looks up)

I just want to hold her one more time."

Annie openly sobs. Thel closes the book and instinctively hands Annie her personalized handkerchief (from her pocket).

ANNIE

Don't stop.

THEL

(reading)

"July Sixteenth - The Trinity test was successful. Several square miles of desert were vaporized instantly under a umbrella shaped cloud. It shook the Earth like God's own hammer."

(a beat of realization)

It's a bomb.

(off their terrified looks)

"I fear Wells was right. We have unleashed Lucifer's breath and no man will ever be safe again."

On a single page, handwritten and circled: STEVEN O'SHAE, NIAGARA FALLS, and a PHONE NUMBER.

Thel sets down the Notebook and rushes from the bedroom, returning with THE WORLD SET FREE by H.G. Wells. She hands the book to Annie, who opens up a marked passage.

ANNIE

(reads highlighted passage)

"and I, who has been no more than the stuffing inside a regal robe. I must play my part at the head of things and put an end to blood and fire and idiot disorder"... He wanted to warn them. He wanted to stop it.

Annie flips the page - Wilf's drawn RED DOT/LIGHTNING BOLT symbol and handwritten underneath: *I am death.* She sets down the Notebook. For several moments nothing is said as they contemplate Wilfred's final words.

THEL

Annie, we've got to get out of here.
Now.

Annie's focused - deciding upon Wilf's intentions:

ANNIE

He must have been trying to get some type
of proof to the Japanese.

THEL

Something that would force them back into
diplomatic talks.

ANNIE

Force them to surrender.

THEL

The Japs never surrender. What could he
have possibly done that would make them
buckle?

A beat. They consider their options. Annie's eyes well.

ANNIE

I just want to go home.

THEL

You know, who knows how this shit-kicker
can help us out. Believe me, he tells us
how to get to the station and we're on
the first train to Tupelo.

Thel pulls her into a hug and they settle down to scan
the Diary.

INT. PROJECTION ROOM - NIGHT

Vince whistles an upbeat tune as he sets up for the
party. A KNOCK and he throws open the door. His face
drops...

Thel and Annie.

VINCE

Thought is was just gonna be us two?

Thel pulls Annie inside.

THEL

You've heard the old saying, "two's
company but three..." Honey, three's a
real party.

VINCE

I thought three was a crowd?

Annie notices that one of the projectors has a small film loaded.

ANNIE

What's that?

VINCE

(glance to reel, a shrug)

They run it from downstairs.

Vince ushers the two women inside, then locks the door. He checks his watch. It reads, "7:22".

30 MINUTES LATER...

Thel is buzzed, with a jar of moonshine in her hand. Annie sits beside her patiently. Vince looks bored. He checks his watch: "7:50 pm"

VINCE (CONT'D)

(to Thel)

Maybe you and me - we head back to my place?

THEL

Keep dreaming, baby. I'm not that loaded.

Silence. Vince plays with his ID. Staring at it. Flicking it with his fingers.

ANNIE

Hey, Vince. What do you know about this place?

VINCE

Oak Ridge?

Annie nods.

VINCE (CONT'D)

I know who thinks they're in charge and who's really in charge. I know the paths to take to spring you from the place. I know who's sleeping with who and who isn't sleeping. I know more than I want to, unless someone's askin', and then I know nothin'. Keep your blinders on and your mouth shut, 'round these parts. Knowing too much will sink you faster than a torpedo-hit warship.

ANNIE

If you know a way off, then why do you stay?

VINCE

Cause in some way, even if it's sweeping shit off the floors, I know I'm helping my country.

(beat)

Your husband died here, huh?

A solemn nod.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Whatever they do here - whatever does that to them...

(beat)

My cousin? He puts the "holes in the donuts". And his wife? "Lights in the lightening bugs".

THEL

What does that mean?

VINCE

Who cares? He don't ask. He just does. Ask him, this place was sent from the Almighty to do good work. Before Oak Ridge, they didn't have nothin'. Now they got money, a job, food on the table, a community. Government ain't stupid. They pick the people that want to be here.

ANNIE

What about the ones that don't?

VINCE

Honey, you ain't getting anywhere without clearance from a higher-up, and ain't no higher-up about to give clearance to nobody.

He trails off as the sound of VOICES can be heard wafting up through the projection window from the theater below.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Shhhhh.

Vince peeks out the projection window. He's not happy.

THEL

(too loudly)

Who the hell is...?

Annie covers Thel's mouth. She whispers to Vince.

ANNIE
What's going on?

Vince pales.

VINCE'S POV: Through the projection window, Engles, General Groves, SCIENTISTS, and a dozen C-2 INTELLIGENCE AGENTS and ARMED GUARDS filter into the theater. END

VINCE
(whispers)
Leave it to the brass to be early.

Thel drunkenly rips Annie's hand from her mouth.

He leads them quietly to the door. The VOICES from downstairs in the theater get louder as more people seem to be arriving. Vince reaches for the door and...

A KNOCK startles them.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Lieutenant knocks on the "PROJECTION ROOM" door. He listens intently. Tries the doorknob. Locked.

INT. PROJECTION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Thel drunkenly reaches to open the door but Annie and Vince lunge at her, stopping her before she can. Thel frowns. Annie puts her finger to her mouth - "shh".

LIEUTENANT (O.S.)
Hello? Is anyone in there?

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Lieutenant presses his ear against the door. A tense beat and he strides off in satisfaction.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

They hear the Lieutenant's FOOTSTEPS depart.

VINCE
Sweet Jesus, that was close.

ANNIE
We need to leave.

VINCE
(considers)
They'll have armed guards stationed at
the doors. We have to wait it out.

Annie glances dubiously from Thel, to Vince, to the door.

VINCE (CONT'D)
Just keep her quiet.

She's clearly torn about this tactic, but nods OK as a
SLIDE PROJECTOR WHIRS to life, startling them.

GENERAL GROVES (O.S.)
I apologize for the length of time it has
taken me to get this footage to you.

Vince, Thel and Annie creep toward the open projection
window and look out to see:

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, AMPHITHEATER - SAME

The dark theater filled with high ranking MILITARY and
CIVILIAN PERSONNEL seated around General Groves and
Engles and two MEN (ROBERT OPPENHEIMER and SECRETARY OF
WAR STIMSON).

General Groves clicks a button in the arm rest of his
seat. A SLIDE SHOW begins. First photograph: a test site.

GENERAL GROVES
Jornada del Muerto. Home to the
Alamogordo Bombing Range in the south
central New Mexico desert.
(he looks to Oppenheimer)
Your playground, Dr. Oppenheimer.

In the glare of the slide, we see several grim
SCIENTISTS, MILITARY OFFICIALS, LEO SZILARD, ENRICO
FERMI, and PRESIDENT TRUMAN.

Another slide flashes up: TRINITY Bomb loaded on a tower.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)
Two weeks ago, on July 16th, 1945, at
5:29 Mountain War Time the atomic device -
code named "TRINITY" - was detonated 10
stories above the ground.

INSERT SHOT: Annie repeats in whisper "Trinity". END.

Another slide. Utter devastation. A huge crater.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)

The blast had a yield of 19 kilotons and left an impression in the earth 10 feet deep and 1,100 feet wide. The resulting mushroom cloud rose to an altitude of 7.5 miles. From 17 miles away, I, myself, saw the entire desert lit like daytime.

The visitors MUTTER in awe amongst themselves. General Groves presses another button on his arm rest. The slide show ends and...

INT. PROJECTOR ROOM - SAME

Now, the video projection wheel WHIRS to life:

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY, AMPHITHEATER - SAME

ON SCREEN: Choppy. Grainy. SOUNDLESS black & white footage rolls. The viewers WHISPER.

STOCK CLIPS: the tower where TRINITY hangs precariously.

STOCK CLIPS: indicate the distance the Scientists stand and protection they wear.

STOCK CLIPS: A makeshift town complete with MALE, FEMALE and CHILD mannequins, with happy-family painted grins.

And then... the BLAST. SILENT, blinding light. The camera shot rocks with the unheard concussion. Everything's leveled.

STOCK CLIPS: The mushroom shaped cloud.

The room is SILENT, glued to the devastation. General Groves CLICKS off the film. The lights come up. Everyone in the room is stunned speechless.

INSERT SHOT: The film reel ends. Vince, Thel, and Annie are shocked END.

GENERAL GROVES

Last week, an ultimatum was issued to the Japanese,. The ultimatum was rejected. Mr. President, our plan only waits for your "go".

The civilians are aghast, but the military, Groves, Oppenheimer and Fermi sit proudly. Szilard turns to Truman.

SZILARD

Mr. President, I'm sure that after seeing this terrible weapon in action, you won't condone this course of attack.

General Groves, Engles and the Military Personnel grouse.

SZILARD (CONT'D)

When we began the project, we believed that Hitler and his Nazi scientists were only months away from building one of their own. They failed.

(turns to others)

Mr. President, if the Japanese could see this film.

GENERAL GROVES

They'll never surrender!? "To die for the Emperor is to live forever". We can't compete with eternal salvation.

A torn and troubled Truman looks to both men. Szilard pulls a document from his coat pocket.

SZILARD

This weapon is a means for the ruthless annihilation of cities. Its power is great but our responsibility is greater.

Groves can't hold back a laugh:

GENERAL GROVES

Are you calling for the dismantling of a 5 year, \$3 Billion project?

Another scientist presents his own document.

SCIENTIST

Mr. President, James Franck's petition, signed by many leading scientists and medical personnel at this base, Chicago's, New Mexico's, and Washington State's. Over 200 names.

Groves shakes his head in disgust.

SCIENTIST (CONT'D)

First demonstrate this...

(searches for the word)

(MORE)

SCIENTIST (CONT'D)

...weapon of mass destruction to the UN,
on an uninhabited island, in the Pacific.

A contemplative beat.

GENERAL GROVES

A noble gesture Mr. President, Sir.

General Groves looks around for effect.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)

But suppose the bomb is a dud? Our
soldiers would look foolish. Our nation
would look foolish.

(a beat)

You, Sir, would look foolish.

Truman thinks long and hard.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN

(to Scientists and Szilard)

Can your people assure me that this
gadget will work as promised?

FERMI

(cuts them off)

No, Mr. President, they can't. Leo and I
developed the bomb. He knows just as
well as I how unstable the chemistry is.
At this juncture, can we afford to warn
the enemy of our intentions?

SZILARD

Targets the War Committee has picked,
they're all civilian areas. Millions will
be vaporized in the blink of an eye.

GENERAL GROVES

They're *dual targets*, Sir. Hiroshima's a
war-plant production city surrounded by
worker's homes.

SZILARD

It's a major Japanese City, General. Not
simply a war plant. There are women,
children...

GENERAL GROVES

It's a *military* target, Sir.

OPPENHEIMER

And what if we storm the Japanese
mainland and islands? How many of our
own boys are we willing to sacrifice?

(MORE)

OPPENHEIMER (CONT'D)

This tiresome war has gone on for long enough. Frankly, I say drop it on Kyoto or Tokyo and be done --

SZLILARD

As the leader of the world, we for the common welfare cannot drop that terrible a bomb on the old or the new capital. Imagine Washington or New York, obliterated in the blink of an eye?

STIMSON

All's fair in love and war, Leo. The bomb is our bargaining chip in U.S. - Soviet diplomacy.

SCIENTIST

What does this have to do with the Soviets?

GENERAL GROVES

Everything.

(a beat, to the President)

Sir, what will you tell the People when they find out you had a bomb that could have won the war, but you chose not to use it?

Truman is in silent consideration.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN

If I authorize this, Mr. Stimson, can I trust that only military objectives have been chosen as targets?

Stimson and Groves nod.

STIMSON

Sir, the American People will look past the Japanese fatalities. Their sons and husbands will be coming home. The war will be won. It will be the greatest celebration in American history.

Truman stares at Groves.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN

You have a "go" for the proposed military targets on August 8th, General.

General Groves and his people applaud like he's just won the lottery. The Scientists slump, defeated.

Truman officiously stands and leaves the Theatre, he passes by Sam, standing in the doorway, on the way out.

After shaking Stimson's hand, Groves pats Oppenheimer on the back.

GENERAL GROVES

The wisest thing I ever did was when I selected the director of Los Alamos.

OPPENHEIMER

It's the right thing to do. With this weapon, the war will be over.

(a contemplative beat)

It's a new age and we have become Death, Destroyer of Worlds.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - SAME

Annie stumbles back from the projection window. Thel is lying on a table, staring at her ID badge. She spins Annie's ring on her finger.

THEL

(still drunk)

They're gonna blow up the fucking world.

VINCE

Let's get out of here.

He hustles Thel towards the door. Thel's ID drops from her pocket. Annie follows the couple, but hesitates. As Vince helps Thel out he doesn't see...

Annie SNAPS the small reel of test site film from the projector, stuffing it under her jacket.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Vince walks ahead of Annie and Thel, like he doesn't know them - towards the same STEEL DOOR (from before). Vince pushes the door open. Allows it to close. Thel reaches it next. Goes outside. Annie reaches for the handle -- but pauses, seeing the Morgue.

She tries the door. Locked.

Vince pulls open the STEEL DOOR, seeing Annie at the door to the Morgue.

VINCE

Come on. Curfew's in 15.

ANNIE
Give me your key --

Vince looks at the door - the sign with the red
lightening bolts - shakes his head.

VINCE
Are you nuts? That place is as hot as a
greenhouse in July. I ain't goin' in
there. And neither should you.

He grabs her arm --

VINCE (CONT'D)
Come on.

INT. BUS - LATER

Vince, Annie and Thel sit on the near-empty bus. Thel's
got her head resting on Annie's shoulder. Annie's
clutching her coat closed (hiding the reel).

ANNIE
Vince --

Vince stares out the window of the bus. Considering.
Then, he looks at Annie and Thel.

VINCE
This place is a fortress. They've got
electrified fence around the entire
perimeter. Nobody in, nobody out. I
heard talk of a path through the woods on
the secure side.

THEL
The damn Nazi's fried millions of
innocent people. I won't help our country
do the same.

The bus pulls to a stop. Vince stands. Indicates it's
his stop.

VINCE
Hey, Annie?

Vince "zips" his lip. Annie nods, understanding, then
pulls her jacket tighter around her, cradling the reel.

INT. GENERAL GROVES' OFFICE - NIGHT

General Groves looks extremely furious.

GENERAL GROVES

On this base - *my base* - this does not happen!

In a fit of anger, he throws a pile of files across the room. Engles tenses up.

CAPT. ENGLES

My Security detail claims the booth was locked and empty prior to the showing, but --

(she pauses)

-- we found this in the projection room.

Engles slaps Thel's ID on General Groves' desk. He massages his temples, trying to find his "happy place".

CAPT. ENGLES (CONT'D)

I had my men search the Dunlevy cottage this morning after they left for work.

EXT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - (FLASHBACK TO THAT DAY)

Several armed guards block off Wilfred's cottage.

CAPT. ENGLES (V.O.)

We turned it upside down.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - (FLASHBACK TO THAT DAY)

More SOLDIERS rip through the interior, careful to return everything back to its original place.

CAPT. ENGLES (V.O.)

Nothing.

They enter the closet, but just miss the floor compartment.

INT. GENERAL GROVES' OFFICE - NIGHT (END FLASHBACK)

GENERAL GROVES

She was in the booth for God's sake. She took the film. Treason is a war crime. Punish her like any other spy.

He stares out the large picture window, looking over Happy Valley and the town of Oak Ridge.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)

Francine, I am tolerant of your odd - how should I say...social tastes, and I'm willing to overlook them because you're a loyal officer. But this sort of negligence cannot be tolerated, and the breach is completely unacceptable.

Engles shamefully looks to the floor.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)

I don't have to remind you that your kind are not heartily welcomed in the service.

CAPT. ENGLES

(stunned, a slap)

Yes, Sir. I understand, Sir.

General Groves sees the terror in Engles' face. He becomes remorseful and calms. He breaks off a piece of chocolate and chews.

GENERAL GROVES

I can't underestimate the severity of this situation. It has to be fixed. I think it's time for Sam to step in.

Engles' eyes narrow.

CAPT. ENGLES

(defensively)

Sir, I can handle this. Involving Sam is unnecessary.

GENERAL GROVES

Love-hate, Francine. Someone has to step up and be willing to make the hard, dirty decisions.

CAPT. ENGLES

I have it under control--

GENERAL GROVES

-- That's an order, Captain.

Engles can only stare at the General with shock.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Annie walks down the corridor, stopping at a closed door. A small window peeks inside a large room. Various nurses at work. Filing. It's ADMIN. Annie opens the door.

Walks in. Nobody pays attention. She's not out of place. A bustle of activity around her. People filing stuff, typing stuff. Annie pauses at a desk. Sees a NURSE block out the words "anti-trinity" in black marker. Looking up at Annie, the NURSE becomes protective - covers her page like a high-schooler writing an exam.

There's Thel. Busy. She looks up from her work. Approaches - pulls her into the hallway. They enter a supply closet.

THEL

So I was talking to one of the nurses --

ANNIE

(nervously)

Thel? Jesus!? What did you tell her?

THEL

Relax. Nothing. She was talking about the incident. Did you know that the magnetic field was so strong around this place, it was sucking nails right out of the wood? Out of the wood!

Annie throws her head back, staring up at the ceiling in angst.

THEL (CONT'D)

Says her sister works on a base in Washington State. Like this. How many of these do you think --

ANNIE

Ok, stop -- listen, we cannot get involved in --

The supply door opens suddenly - startling Annie and Thel. They immediately change the subject.

THEL

-- I see four bottles of saline.

She counts more on the shelf. Annie pretends to take inventory with her.

THEL (CONT'D)

I've got more bottles of Dopamine than I can count.

The Nurse pays them no mind, as she grabs a new pair of scrubs and exits. The door closes. The women release a sigh in unison.

THEL (CONT'D)

All I'm saying is they've got two of these bases - how many other secrets are they hiding?

ANNIE

I took the reel.

In shock, Thel drops the IV tubing she has in her hand.

THEL

What?

ANNIE

I know. I --

She trails off , unsure of her decision.

THEL

Oh, God, they're going to be gunning for us, now.

ANNIE

They won't find out. It's the missing piece. If the Japs see the destruction that thing can do - it'll end the war.

THEL

You don't know that.

Annie stares deep into Thel's eyes.

ANNIE

Wilfred did.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Annie and Thel exit the Supply Closet and walk down the hallway. Thel looks at her watch.

THEL

I'm off in five.

ANNIE

We'll talk later tonight.

THEL

You didn't happen to see my stupid ID, did you?

Annie shakes her head.

THEL (CONT'D)

Shit. I already got reamed out by my superior - Engles will have my flipping head.

Thel squeezes Annie's shoulder and the two part ways.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - DAY

Annie's at a table. Pushing her food around her plate. Not hungry. Engles takes a seat next to her.

CAPT. ENGLES

Mrs. Dunlevy.

Annie looks up, a forced smile.

CAPT. ENGLES (CONT'D)

Mind if I join you?

ANNIE

Ah -- sure, of course.

Engles takes a seat.

CAPT. ENGLES

Where were you last night?

The question shakes Annie.

ANNIE

Home.

A tense beat, then:

CAPT. ENGLES

You've been through a lot. How are you dealing with it all?

Annie's quiet.

ANNIE

I don't think I've really processed any of it, yet.

CAPT. ENGLES

I know how much you must miss him.

ANNIE

I don't think anyone does.

(a beat)

He was my best friend. My partner.

(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)
I'm not really sure how life goes forward
from this point --

A look of compassion from Engles - something we haven't
seen before.

CAPT. ENGLES
It's going to go forward - it's just
never going to be the same.
(beat)
Did he ever talk to you about any of
this?

Annie vehemently shakes her head.

ANNIE
That's what makes this so hard.

CAPT. ENGLES
You'll figure it out. Day by day.

Annie tears up. Forces a smile.

ANNIE
Excuse me.

And leaves Engles sitting at the table.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - ICU - DAY

Annie works quickly and quietly with the Patient (from
before). She tenderly changes his gauze. A squeeze of
his hand.

She walks to the Nurses' area, filling out charts. A
pretty nurse is focused on her paperwork.

PRETTY NURSE
I never know what to record and what not
to record.

Annie forces a smile. Looks at the clock on the wall.

ANNIE
I'm on break. Are you ok?

The Pretty Nurse barely looks up, waves her off. Annie
approaches the HEAD FLOOR NURSE. Her ID is clipped to
her pocket. Annie intentionally bumps into her.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry.

The nurse barely notices. Annie secretly slips the Head Floor Nurse's ID, with a red Roman Numeral V - in her pocket and crosses off.

INT. MORGUE HALLWAY - DAY

A MORGUE ATTENDANT sits by a desk, checking IDs.

AROUND THE CORNER

Annie sees the Morgue Attendant. She quickly pulls the Head Floor Nurse's ID from her pocket, and switches it with hers, careful to obscure the ID photograph.

She steps up to the Morgue Attendant.

MORGUE ATTENDANT
(not looking up)
ID number?

Annie stalls. Doesn't know it. She nervously tries to read the number without him catching on.

ANNIE
PST-68334. Level 5 Clearance.

The Morgue Attendant eyes her suspiciously, noting her uniform.

MORGUE ATTENDANT
Where are your scrubs?

ANNIE
Had to pull some time in the ICU.

Annie paints on a seductive smile.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
You know how it goes around these parts.

A wink. The guy smiles and nods OK.

INT. MORGUE - CONTINUOUS

An Anteroom leads to a GALVANIZED STEEL DOOR with the *RED LIGHTNING BOLT* symbol.

She pulls the handle opening to a MEDICAL UTILITY closet. She steps inside allowing the door to close behind her.

THE DOOR REOPENS, REVEALING

Annie's dressed in WHITE SCRUBS. The KEY ON A CHAIN hangs outside her scrub top. Now she fits in.

She pulls at the GALVANIZED STEEL DOOR which opens with the sucking-sound of a REFRIGERATOR door. Vapor billows out of the room.

INSIDE

Stacks and stacks of METAL DRAWERS, one atop the other. TWO MORE GALVANIZED STEEL DOORS. It's a REFRIGERATED MORGUE - and it's freezing. Annie allows the door to close behind her - sealed in.

INT. MORGUE - CONTINUOUS

Metal Drawers marked by Identification Numbers or Code Names. Annie scans:

Number, number, code name OBOE, number, number, code name STRIKER, number, number, code name SAVANT...

Annie pauses. Back to drawer labeled SAVANT:

ANNIE
(remembering)
"Dear Savant..."

She takes a deep breath, attempts to pull it open but -- IT'S LOCKED. She notices a small key hole.

One of the GALVANIZED STEEL DOORS opens. Annie freezes. Caught.

A NURSE dressed in a protective suit, enters - paying Annie no mind. Busy with a clipboard, she tosses her detachable head mask on the counter.

Annie slowly turns around to face her. The Nurse looks up and smiles. She's got a CHAIN around her neck - just like Annie's.

NURSE
Problem?

Without missing a beat -

ANNIE
My key won't work.

The Nurse looks dubiously at her.

NURSE
Really? Let me see...

Annie pulls the KEY ON A CHAIN from around her neck. The Nurse examines it, closely.

ANNIE
I'm new here -- and --

NURSE
Where in tarnation did you get this key?

She attempts to open a nearby drawer (not the Metal coolers) with Annie's key. It doesn't work.

NURSE (CONT'D)
You know you should really have your protective suit on. Dead or not, they're still radioactive.

She matches it up with the KEY from the CHAIN around her own neck.

NURSE (CONT'D)
It's not even close --

She takes the key hanging from a chain around her neck, unlocks a nearby drawer, presenting a set of keys to Annie.

NURSE (CONT'D)
Here. Just close the drawer when you're done. And tell the Yahoo outside you need a new key.

The Nurse finishes her chart work and exits the Refrigerated Morgue. Hands on her hips -

NURSE (CONT'D)
I get so damn tired of cleaning up after Doctors.

- she stuffs discarded scrubs into a laundry bin and exits the room.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Thel's cooking dinner at the stove. Drinking a glass of Wilf's liquor, she sings a campfire tune:

THEL

They say that in the Army, the food is
mighty fine//A pea rolled off the table,
and killed a friend of mine//Oh, I don't
want no more of Army Life! Gee Mom, I
wanna go, but they won't let me go, Gee
Mom I wanna go --

A KNOCK at the door and it opens - she sits up, finishing
the song non-vocal:

THEL (CONT'D)

Home.

Armed Guards barrel into the cottage, overwhelming Thel.
She goes to scream, but is gagged, cuffed, led out. The
pot still bubbling.

INT. MORGUE - MOMENTS LATER

Annie stands facing the Metal Cabinet marked SAVANT. She
tries a few keys on the key ring until one CLICKS.

She stiffens in preparation and pulls. She freezes at
the SQUEAL of the drawer's wheels. Listening: SILENCE.

Annie stares down at the body bag for several moments.
Through the translucent plastic: Wilfred.

She eases the zipper to below his jaw. His face is
tranquil and gray. She pulls the zipper down farther and
tenderly touches his burnt torso: grotesque tumors,
peeled flesh. She caresses his cold face.

ANNIE

(whispers)

What if I could?

A visibly shaken Annie kisses his blue lips and she zips
the bag closed, eases the metal draw back into the
cabinet and pads out.

INT. VINCE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Annie knocks and enters an office labeled: Head of
Maintenance. She's startled by an unknown male
MAINTENANCE WORKER behind Vince's desk.

MAINTENANCE WORKER

Can I help you, pretty lady?

ANNIE

Is Vince around?

MAINTENANCE WORKER

Nope. Gone. Went MIA, I guess. Believe me, I can use the pay upgrade.

(beat)

If he's smart, probably up in the lakes area, fishing and drinking 'shine.

ANNIE

How'd he get off the base?

MAINTENANCE WORKER

How does anybody? Probably just walked off...

Annie's stymied. She hesitates, perturbed. He checks her legs, obviously pleased at what he sees. Annie's stunned.

ANNIE

Thanks for your help.

MAINTENANCE WORKER

What's your name?

But Annie's already gone.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Annie enters: eerie silence. A sniff: gas. The pot has over-boiled. Worried, she turns off the burner.

ANNIE

Thel?

Nothing. She moves into the bedroom.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Thel?

The bathroom's empty, too.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Annie paces for several moments then enters THE BEDROOM. She moves the floorboard: the film reel and the diary. She grabs the book and flips to one of the last pages.

The Toronto phone number. Steven O'Shae. A moment of consideration. As she reaches to pick up the phone, it rings, startling her:

ANNIE
Hello?

INT. SAM'S COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

It's Sam.

SAM
Annie?

INTERCUT: Annie on the phone / Sam on the phone.

SAM (CONT'D)
Do you have a minute?

Annie tries to remain calm.

ANNIE
I'm sort of --

Sam can sense the tension.

SAM
Are you ok?

ANNIE
Yeah. Of... Of course. I'm fine. I
have to go.

Sam is dubious.

SAM
Ok.

END INTERCUT:

Annie replaces the diary inside the floor board, next to the film reel.

She enters THE KITCHEN. Annie grabs the bottle of booze on the counter and pours a drink, shooting it back. A KNOCK at the door startles her.

Annie shuffles to the door and throws it open. She turns blankly and leads him in. He hastily shuts the door behind him.

SAM (CONT'D)
Where's Thel?

ANNIE
Out. I guess.

She's not convincing.

SAM

Let me pour you a drink.

ANNIE

I just had one.

SAM

You need another.

He moves to the kitchen.

ANGLE ON SAM: Back to Annie, she can't see his face. Annie sees Thel's personalized handkerchief that she's left on the nearby side table. She picks it up. Traces Thel's initials.

ANNIE

Why are you here, Sam?

Sam freezes... waiting. Annie over his shoulder.

SAM

Shouldn't I be?

Sam hesitates.

SAM (CONT'D)

You think Thel flew the coop?

ANNIE

She wouldn't leave without me.

Annie places Thel's handkerchief into her bag as he stirs the coffee - back to her.

SAM

You know, we've got a missing Janitor, too. The hillbillies know all the back routes.

Annie narrows her eyes at him. Sam recovers with --

SAM (CONT'D)

As secure as this place is, nothing is foolproof.

Annie's face goes cold behind him. Unseen by Annie, Sam withdraws a pill bottle from inside his coat. It's labeled "CHLORAL HYDRATE - May cause vomiting". He drops two pills into Annie's glass.

SAM (CONT'D)
Some people turn out to surprise you.
They're not always what they seem.

Sam brings the drink to Annie and sits beside her. He clinks his glass with hers. Annie tentatively sips the drugged drink.

TIME LAPSE

Sam's still on the couch, staring into Annie's glazed eyes. She's slurring her words.

ANNIE
I just know something --

She pauses. Woozy.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
I don't feel very good.

With mock-concern, Sam helps her from the couch.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
I think I need to lie down.

Taking a few steps forward, Annie stumbles into the table. Sam jumps toward her -- she takes a few more steps into --

THE BEDROOM

She loses her balance - stumbles to the floor.
Disoriented.

P.O.V. ANNIE : She's on the floor. Everything's blurry. Sam enters, approaching her. She can barely see beyond his knees - can barely lift her head. Woozy. Her chain (with Wilf's diary key) is ripped from her neck. And then...

BLACKOUT.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE, BEDROOM - MORNING

Annie wakes in bed. Disoriented, she sits up, clutching her head - reaches for her neck - her neck chain/key is missing. Sam's voice heard outside.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE, BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

On her knees, Annie vomits profusely in the toilet, then falls back against the wall wiping spittle from her face. Devastated.

She turns on the shower. Hot. Steam fills the bathroom.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sam sits, casually drinking coffee. He pulls the CHLORAL HYDRATE pill bottle from his pocket and dials the phone.

SAM (ON PHONE)

General, it's me.

(listens a beat)

Yes, Sir. I was able to search the place. I turned it completely inside out.

(a beat)

Nothing.

(another beat)

If she does, I'll handle it.

Sam hides the pills in his pocket, hangs the phone. He washes the cup and dumps the rest of the coffee in the sink.

Annie peeks out from the crack in the bedroom door. The SHOWER IS RUNNING. She's heard it all.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE, BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Annie stumbles backwards. Frantic, she searches for her clothes. Grabs them. She rushes to the window and tries to raise it but...

SAM'S VOICE

Feel better?

She spins around.

ANNIE

Yeah - I - uh, I just needed some air.

She's terrified but bravely holds it together.

SAM

I've got to go. Maybe a movie, tonight?

Annie shakes her head, leaning as far away from him as she can.

ANNIE
I don't... I don't think so.

SAM
What about breakfast?

ANNIE
I've got to get to work.

SAM
Ok. See you later?

Annie forces a smile as Sam crosses out of the room.
Annie holds her breath. A BEAT and she hears the outside door SLAM.

ANNIE
(gasps for breath)
Son of a bitch.

A moment to pull herself together, and she dives for the floorboard - everything she's hidden is still there.

INT. CAPT. ENGL'S COTTAGE - DAY

Sam KNOCKS. Captain Engles opens the door - but just a crack. She's wearing a robe.

CAPT. ENGL'S
What do you want?

Sam pushes into Captain Engles' cottage. Sam holds up the key. A greasy, Cheshire Cat smile.

CAPT. ENGL'S (CONT'D)
What's that to?

Sam shrugs.

SAM
But it's somehow important to Dunlevy.
(a grin)
Don't you want to ask how I got it?

CAPT. ENGL'S
Spare me the lurid details. Still no diary or film?

SAM
It's only a matter of time.

CAPT. ENGL'S
You sound overly confident.

SAM
It's a guy thing, Francine. You wouldn't understand.

Engles pulls a cigarette. Sam tauntingly lights it for her. She inhales and exhales a cloud of smoke.

CAPT. ENGLES
Have you called General Groves?

SAM
The General trusts my judgement.

Paces nervously. Then takes a seat. A long drag from her cigarette.

CAPT. ENGLES
I'm loyal to the project. I'm loyal to my country. But, I not sure how long I can remain loyal to you.

With a snarky laugh and without looking back, Sam exits the cottage. Engles jams out her cigarette in annoyance.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - AFTERNOON

Overcast skies. A major storm is brewing. Annie looks off to see the refrigerated MORGUE TRUCK (from before).

INT. ENGLES' OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Engles stares at the framed group photo on the wall (the same one that Annie found in Sam's pocket). A BUZZ. She picks up the receiver.

CAPT. ENGLES
Fine. Send her in.

Annie storms into the small office.

ANNIE
Where is Thelma Corelli?

Engles glances up, annoyed.

CAPT. ENGLES
Miss Corelli's personal activities are not my concern.

ANNIE
(becoming heated)
Really?
(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)

It's your job to know everything that goes on at this base. You're saying you're unaware that she's gone missing?

CAPT. ENGLES

(hardly interested)

Missing? What makes you say that?

ANNIE

(stares at her)

Are you purposely being obtuse?

Annie's losing her patience.

CAPT. ENGLES

I honestly don't know what you're talking about.

Annie lunges forward against Engles' desk. Engles involuntarily eases back in her chair.

ANNIE

I want off this base.

CAPT. ENGLES

(now serious)

You're not going anywhere.

Without being dismissed Annie storms out.

EXT. WEAPONS PLANT - AFTERNOON

General Groves and Sam supervise a number of TECHNICIANS and SOLDIERS who load heavy concrete cylinders into the belly of a transport plane.

SAM

Last plutonium shipment?

GENERAL GROVES

En route to Los Alamos. Enough to blow those little buggers off the map.

(contemplative)

You know, I lost a number of good friends at Pearl Harbor.

SAM

We all did, Sir.

GENERAL GROVES

You reckon these two little door prizes will bring the Japs to their knees?

SAM

(watches the B52 loading)
After that film demonstration the other
night, I'd be surprised if the Japs have
any knees to bend once we deploy these.

GENERAL GROVES

Let's hope so.

A JEEP speeds up to them. Engles leaps from it.

CAPT. ENGLES

(to Sam)

What the hell did you do to Corelli?

She realizes she's completely disrespected the General
and she salutes.

CAPT. ENGLES (CONT'D)

I apologize, Sir. General. It's Dunlevy.

(off his stern look)

She stormed into my office today. She's
possessed.

General Groves fires a glance at Sam.

SAM

Captain Engles is overreacting, Sir. I
just spoke with Mrs. Dunlevy this
morning. She doesn't suspect a thing.

CAPT. ENGLES

(controlled)

What did you do to Thelma Corelli?

As equally controlled:

SAM

Don't worry about Corelli.

(beat)

I took care of a situation before it
became one.

For the first time, Engles really loses it.

CAPT. ENGLES

The Army has protocols. They are
practiced for a reason. I am a part of
this. You need to tell me what's going
on.

SAM

I don't need to tell you anything.

A stare-down between Sam and Engles. Out of nowhere:

GENERAL GROVES

Send the woman home.

Sam and Engles turn to the General, in shock.

SAM

General --

GENERAL GROVES

Captain Engles, you'll accompany Dunlevy by train. By the time it arrives in Buffalo, the drop will have been made.

Staring off into the distance, Groves face is emotionless.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)

And none of this will matter.

General Groves leaves Sam and Engles standing, absorbing. Sam glances over to the hospital, enclosed in the electrified fence (we saw before). He angrily crushes his cigarette and storms off. Engles looks spent.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - ICU - SAME

A sign reads: ISOLATION PRECAUTIONS ONLY.

Annie exits a patient's room in bloody isolation gear. A DOCTOR follows her out, whips off his soiled gear and disposes it in Annie's arms.

She angrily stuffs his and her own soiled gear into a large bin marked BIOHAZARD (with the *RED DOT/LIGHTNING BOLT symbol*). A Nurse beside her.

NURSE

God, what a day.

ANNIE

I'm going to go grab a smoke.

Annie opens the door to

THE CORRIDOR

She walks in great strides - increasing with each step, until she's nearly running. And then she is. A full-on sprint, down the hall.

INT. CORRIDORS - MOMENTS LATER

Annie's running. Huge strides. She descends the stairs. Through the HALLWAYS. Passed the exterior door to the back courtyard. Winding down more steps towards the same HOLDING CELL (from before). The door is closed.

She looks in: Thel.

Annie BANGS on the padlocked door. Startled, Thel looks up. Sees Annie through the tiny window.

ANNIE

Oh my God!

Thel rushes to the window - excited. Annie searches for a key - a way to open up the door. Impossible.

THEL

Sam --

ANNIE

I know.

Annie pulls at the padlocked door. No success. She looks around for something - anything. Then reaches for a bobbypin from her hair.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Walk me through it.

Thel nods.

THEL

Push the pin in as far as you can.

She does. Follows Thel's instructions as:

THEL (CONT'D)

Then pull it out slightly - you should feel a narrowed chamber. Twist the pin about three quarters of the way, slowly. It'll stick. At that point, jerk it the final quarter --

POP. The padlock opens. Annie pulls the door open and they hug. Thel's eyes go wide. Over Annie's shoulder, a GUARD.

THEL (CONT'D)

Run.

They do. The Guard notices - bolts after them - shouts something indistinguishable into his walkie-talkie.

INTO THE STAIRWELL

Annie and Thel rush up the stairs.

THEL (CONT'D)
Are you kidding me?

The Guard is just a floor beneath them. Annie sees the DOOR INTO THE HALL. She reaches for the handle - holds open the door for Thel.

IN THE STAIRWELL

Thel keeps ascending the stairs.

THEL (CONT'D)
Go!

ANNIE
What about --

THEL
I'll be fine!

The Guard's hot on Thel's heels. Thel bolts passed Annie to the next set of stairs. Unsure of her decision, Annie closes the door. She reaches the next level greeted by A GUARD.

He grabs her arm.

BACK TO THE DESK

The Head Floor Nurse calls a Nurse over as Sam and a LIEUTENANT step up to the desk.

SAM
(to Nurse)
Where's Dunlevy?

NURSE
She went for a smoke?

A look of panic and anger in Sam's face...

SAM
(to Head Floor Nurse)
Lock it down.

The Head Floor Nurse panics and hits a button. ALARM KLAXONS ring - and Sam and the Lieutenant are off like a bat out of hell.

INT./EXT. VARIOUS MEDICAL FACILITY LOCATIONS - NIGHT

ALARM KLAXONS sound. Doctors, Nurses, Patients are roughly thrown aside and searched by ARMED GUARDS.

THE DOCTOR'S LOUNGE HALLWAY

Pandemonium. SOLDIERS everywhere. Sam and the Lieutenant meet up at

THE DOCTORS LOUNGE DOOR

To a Lieutenant:

SAM

She's just a fucking woman, for Christ's sakes. Find her.

They race off. A beat and the Lounge Door opens.

A DOCTOR in full isolation gear (long gown, mask, gloves and paper hat) carrying an empty Biohazard Transport Case (briefcase sized, used to transport body parts/organs for examination with the *RED DOT/LIGHTNING BOLT symbol*). It's Annie, looking very androgynous. With a quick wipe of her cheeks (has she been crying!? Maybe!?), she clips the Head Nurse's Level V Clearance ID to her gown, hiding the photograph in the gown pocket. She slips on a pair of glasses to cover her eyes and strolls calmly down the hall.

EXT. MEDICAL FACILITY BACK ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Annie exits through the facility's back door. A look to the locked security gate and to the sky. A light rain falls.

The door opens: A SOLDIER - eyes wide! He's caught her! Panicked, Annie whacks the Soldier over the head - hard - with the biohazard case. He crumples to the ground, falling inside the Facility, unconscious. Imitating her line about the empty bottle (from before):

ANNIE

Dead soldier!

She bends over. Cups her hand over his nose, feeling for breath. A sigh of relief and:

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Unconscious solder.

She closes the heavy steel door on him.

EXT. MEDICAL FACILITY BACK ENTRANCE - LATER

Sam and his posse burst through the doors. It's raining. Annie is gone. Sam sees the "ice truck" pull out through the security gate as ARMED GUARDS, with dogs, swarm around it.

LIEUTENANT

Sir?

Sam looks down. He sees Annie's discarded isolation gear crumpled in the mud. He looks at the departing truck. Calmly cool:

SAM

Stop that truck.

EXT. ROADWAY - NIGHT

Sam, Engles and the guards throw the back doors of the refrigeration truck open. Inside are two body bags.

SAM

Annie. It's over now. Come out.

Sam steps inside the truck draws his gun:

SAM (CONT'D)

Annie. I'm not fucking around here.

(a beat)

You know, we were going to give you what you wanted. Send you home. Tonight.

A sly, sinister laugh.

SAM (CONT'D)

(cocks back hammer)

Have it your way.

Sam FIRES two shots. One each into each body bag. Engles leaps into the truck and unzips the body bags: Wilfred and Private Thompson (the burned Soldier, from before).

Inside the truck: Sam sees a Biohazard Bin (with the RED DOT/LIGHTNING BOLT symbol). It's large enough for Annie to hide in. Sam turns to the guards.

SAM (CONT'D)

Open it.

LIEUTENANT

Sir, it's Radioactive?

Sam grabs a glove off of a rubber Hazmat suit and shoots the lock off to reveal DISMEMBERED BODY ORGANS riddled with burns. Using a gloved hand, he digs through the gore.

SAM

Damn it.

Engles turns away to retch. Sam leaps from the truck and hurls his hat to the ground.

INT. WILFRED'S COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Annie bursts through the doors of the Cottage.

She rushes to the removable plank in the floor. HEART BEATING IN HER EARS. She grabs the diary and the film reel and stuffs it into the biohazard case.

A SOUND from the MAIN ROOM. Annie holds her breath. She peeks around the door. Seemingly nothing. Without taking a chance, she grabs Thel's rain-gear, opens her bedroom window and OUT SHE CLIMBS.

She heads for the treeline - the woods. Freezes. A FLASHLIGHT beam in the forest, searching.

EXT. ROADWAY - NIGHT

Sam paces.

SAM

(to Engles)

Where the hell could she have gone?

He slams the doors shut. The truck pulls away from puzzled Sam, the Lieutenant and the Armed Soldiers.

CAPT. ENGLES

(notes gate in distance)

She won't get far.

Shaken, Engles follows Sam and the others.

INT. MAIN GATE CHECK POINT - CONTINUOUS

The same Armed Gate Guard (from earlier) looks out the office window and sees a shadowy figure approaching wearing rubber boots and a rain hat (Thel's).

EXT. MAIN GATE CHECK POINT - NIGHT

The Armed Gate Guard tenses, hand on his pistol as Annie resolves out of the gloom. She's carrying the aluminum case marked BIOHAZARD. Mud stains up to her knees, clothing soaked.

ARMED GATE GUARD

ID, please?

Annie calmly hands her badge to the suspicious Guard.

ANNIE

(gestures to case)

I've a rendezvous with transport.

The Guard looks to his clipboard.

ARMED GATE GUARD

No such transport listed.

(off bland look)

I'll have to call H-Q.

She casually follows the Guard into his guard shack.

ANNIE

I know you're just doing your job...

(places case close to guard)

...but I'm transporting about four pounds of radioactive body organs for dissection.

The Guard leaps back in abject terror.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

And I'd just as soon get rid of these as quickly as possible.

(purses her lips)

Can't you help a gal out, Private?

Annie winks. He stares wide eyed at the case then nods quickly. He virtually shoves her out of the guard house. Outside, a storm is unleashed.

EXT. KNOXVILLE ROAD - LATER

Hiding under the cloak of the rainy night, a sopping wet Annie follows the treeline along the roadside ditch. She's only carrying her bag, now (somewhere she's abandoned the Biohazard Case).

A stalled car up ahead. A baby CRIES from inside the car. Annie rushes towards the vehicle.

She warily looks inside. A MOTHER cradles a 2 YEAR OLD. She looks to be crying, too. Annie taps on the window, startling the MOTHER. The Mother reaches across the passenger seat and rolls down the window.

ANNIE

Are you ok?

MOTHER

My car won't start.

Annie looks around - the road is empty. Pitch black.

ANNIE

Pop the hood.

The woman does. The baby continues to cry. After a minute:

ANNIE (CONT'D)

You wouldn't happen to have a tool kit?

The woman jumps out of the car - opens the trunk - presents a small tool kit. Annie grabs the tools she needs and presto! The car starts.

MOTHER

How'd you do that?

ANNIE

Magic.

MOTHER

You're a lifesaver.

Annie smiles - a familiar conversation.

INT. MOTHER'S CAR - LATER

They're driving. The baby's sound asleep. Annie's drenched.

MOTHER

I really can't thank you, enough. I wasn't sure what I was going to do.

ANNIE

Pretty desolate road for you to be traveling, alone.

MOTHER

I could say the same to you.

(beat)

I'm on my way to Pennsylvania.

ANNIE

What's in Pennsylvania?

MOTHER

Escape.

That struck a nerve.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

My husband died in Pearl. He was on the Arizona. A cook. Not even a soldier. All he wanted to do was open a restaurant on the beach... said we'd eat lobster rolls and sip from drinks with umbrellas for the rest of our lives - after the war. He was about to come home on leave - he was so excited to see her. I can't walk through the door now, without...

(she looks in the rearview

mirror to the sleeping baby)

They never found his body.

ANNIE

I'm sorry.

The mother doesn't answer.

MOTHER

I'm meeting my sister in Nashville - my parents live in Philadelphia, and we're on our way up there. City of brotherly love!

ANNIE

Always wanted to visit the Liberty Bell.

MOTHER

You better visit it soon. God damned Japs - this war doesn't end soon, it might lose all its meaning.

Annie looks at her bag. Clutches it tightly.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

ANNIE

You have every reason to be angry.

MOTHER

Damn straight, I do. How far are you going?

ANNIE

As far as you can take me.

EXT. KNOXVILLE ROAD - NIGHT

It's still raining. A crew of SOLDIERS walk along the road side, following the tree line. Sam's there, too. He pauses. Looks down: the Biohazard case. He crouches down. Picks it up. Looks down the dark road.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Annie hands over some coin for a cup of hot coffee.

ANNIE

(to Attendant)

Thanks.

She notices as a long haul TRUCKER steps out of the Men's Room and heads toward his idling truck.

Clutching her bag close, Annie appears from around the cab of his truck.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Excuse me, Sir?

Scares the shit out of the Trucker.

TRUCKER

Jesus H. --

ANNIE

-- my car broke down, and in this weather! You wouldn't be headed North?

TRUCKER

(licks lips)

How's Maryland for you?

Without asking, Annie leaps up into the Trucker's cab.

INT. TRUCK CAB - NIGHT (MOVING)

MUSIC plays on the radio. The Trucker lights a cigarette and offers one to Annie. She declines.

Annie sees a road sign, "US 1 NORTH".

ANNIE'S REARVIEW MIRROR POV: A contingent of ARMY JEEPS screech into the Gas Station. END POV

AT THE TRUCK STOP

Sam surrounds and detains every one of the startled truck stop civilians. A CRACK of thunder. One of his Armed Guards presents him with the discarded rain boots, hat, and Biohazard Case.

BACK IN THE TRUCK

Annie slides down the seat, ducking under the window.

The Trucker peeks into his rearview mirror, and seeing the flurry of activity, he eyes her suspiciously.

EXT. ROCKVILLE MARYLAND - GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

The Trucker pulls his Big Rig into the parking lot of a busy Greyhound Bus Station.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Annie makes to exit the truck but the Trucker stops her.

TRUCKER

You know, I've got a comfy room at the motel just a ways up the road.

ANNIE

I don't think so.

TRUCKER

(examines her name tag)
One good turn deserves another. I wouldn't mind a little company in my motel room tonight, and seeing as you're running from Uncle Sam, I...

He lunges at her. Annie SLAMS him upside the head with her purse, blasting spittle out of his mouth and exits the truck cab, covering the case with her coat.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Inside the crowded station PEOPLE are everywhere. Signs reading "Welcome Home". She can easily blend in.

Annie walks to a long bank of pay phones, digs through her purse and pulls out Wilf's Diary.

Behind her, out of her sight, the Trucker hovers at the end of the phone bank. He dials a number, as well.

Annie, frustrated, can't find any change in her purse, she walks to a stone-faced TICKET TAKER at the counter.

TRUCKER
(whispers to phone)
Gimme the Police.

He watches Annie at

THE TICKET COUNTER

ANNIE
When is your next bus to Buffalo?

TICKET TAKER
Bus 1152, two hours. You'll have to connect through New York City. Gate four.

ANNIE
What's the next bus to depart?

TICKET TAKER
It's not headed to Buffalo.

ANNIE
Is it headed North?

TICKET TAKER
(suspicious look)
Scranton, PA. Leaves in twenty minutes.
(off Annie's nod)
Four dollars.

Annie digs in her wallet. Not enough.

ANNIE
Could you break this for some silver? I have to make an important phone call.

The Ticket taker huffs and recounts the change in silver.

AT THE PAY PHONES

Annie comes back with a hand full of change. She puts a nickle in the phone slot and dials "0" for the OPERATOR.

ANNIE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)
Hello, long distance operator? Yes I'd like to make place a call to...

A fleeting view of the Trucker departing the station. She pulls her purse close to her chest and hangs up the phone. The Trucker's phone dangles off the hook.

INT. MARYLAND GREYHOUND BUS STATION CAFE - CONTINUOUS

A WAITRESS offers Annie a warm smile as a PATRON at the end of the counter finishes his breakfast.

WAITRESS

What can I get you, my dear?

Annie pulls a handful of change from her bag.

ANNIE

How much is the coffee?

WAITRESS

A quarter.

ANNIE

I'll have a cup.

The Waitress pours Annie a steaming cup. Annie takes a soothing sip.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Where's the ladies room?

The Waitress points to a door by the end of the counter. Annie passes the Patron as the Waitress slips him his check.

INT. CAFE BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Annie stares at herself in the mirror. Haggard, exhausted. She takes a barrette from her hair and lets her hair down, splashing her face with water.

EXT. ARMY AIR FIELD - DAY

General Groves oversees a large group of SOLDIERS dressed in Hazmat gear as they gingerly load unmarked CRATES on a large C-54 Transport plane. A vehicle pulls up beside him and Engles practically leaps out.

CAPT. ENGLES

Local police in Rockville, Maryland reported a sighting of the Dunlevy woman. We've detained a truck driver who says he dropped her off. Sam's en route.

GENERAL GROVES

Good.

(beat)

Francine?

Engles pauses.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)

Destroy all evidence of the Dunlevys ever
being a part of this project.

Engles salutes, turns to leave, then:

CAPT. ENGLES

Sir?

Groves barely looks at her.

CAPT. ENGLES (CONT'D)

In safeguarding the project, I'm afraid I
somehow haven't served the people I'm
trying protect.

GENERAL GROVES

There's always colleterial damage in war.
Have you ever read any Thomas Ward?

Engles shakes her head.

GENERAL GROVES (CONT'D)

"Where to elect there is but one, / 'Tis
Hobson's choice - take that, or none."

And Groves leaves Engles standing alone in the rain.

INT. MARYLAND GREYHOUND BUS STATION: CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

Annie exits the bathroom. The PATRON has left, but his
change is on the counter. Annie grabs the money and
hurries out of the cafe.

INT. MARYLAND GREYHOUND BUS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Cautiously, scanning the crowd, Annie hurries toward the
TICKET COUNTER. A slow line has formed in front of her.

The TICKET TAKER looks unimpressed to see her again.
Annie counts exact change and places it on the counter.

ANNIE

One ticket to Scranton, please.

She looks over her shoulder: the Waitress in the cafe searches the crowd, then spots her.

The CROWD OF PEOPLE swarm a nearby gate as a bus pulls into the lot. Excitement in the air.

The Ticket Taker is having trouble with a machine. Annie stares at the ground. Looks over her shoulder - the Waitress closes in.

WAITRESS

Hey! Hey, you!

A POLICE OFFICER looks at the Waitress - then scans the crowd, looking for the person in question.

Suddenly the bus gate door opens and dozens of UNIFORMED SOLDIERS returning home, burst through the gates, welcomed by FAMILY MEMBERS. The CROWD consumes Annie.

Annie pushes her way through the gate as the Police Officer is hot on her heels.

Celebrating SOLDIERS are everywhere. Annie slips out through the Arrival Gate and into the bus garage.

The Police Officer is blocked by the crowd. He looks up to see the destination sign which reads SCRANTON, PA.

INT. MARYLAND GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

Sam and ARMED GUARDS burst through the doors of the Bus Station. It's nearly empty, now. He approaches the Police Officer and the Waitress. They speak MOS. The Waitress points to the Ticket Taker.

AT THE TICKET COUNTER...

SAM

Where was her ticket for?

The Ticket Taker hands Sam a piece of paper.

TICKET TAKER

Scranton. She wanted to go to Buffalo.
Didn't want to wait.

Sam turns to his ARMED GUARDS.

SAM

Radio Engles, and have her dispatch a team to the Scranton Bus Station.

WAITRESS

The bitch stole my tip!

Sam takes some money from his pocket and throws it at the Waitress.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - LATER

Annie is at the back of the bus. Alone. It's practically empty. Staring out the window - watching trees blur by. Her purse tucked beside her, she's holding Wilf's diary. The latch has been ripped open. Her cheeks stained by tears.

She stands, and taking the case, enters the

BUS BATHROOM STALL

She winds inside, barely able to close the folding door. The light pops on automatically. The case on the edge of the tiny sink, Annie digs through her bag for something. A beat.

She stares at Thel's initialed handkerchief. Takes it out. Smooths the wrinkles. Traces her embroidered initials. Overcome, Annie takes a seat on the toilet, squeezes the handkerchief and completely breaks down. Spent, she's barely able to hold herself up through her muted, heaving sobs.

EXT. SCRANTON PA - OPEN SKIES - DAY (HOURS LATER)

The C-54 Transport Plane flies overhead, surrounded by fighter jets. Annie's bus stops at

EXT. SCRANTON PA BUS STATION - DAY

The scene of a peaceful anti-war demonstration by American Federation of Labor employees.

Scranton Police manage the crowd as they walk along with war protest signs which read: RIGHTS FOR RETURNING VETERANS; WE WON'T BUILD FOR WAR ANYMORE!; FACTORIES SHOULDN'T FUND DEATH.

Purse held tight, Annie exits the bus and slips into the crowd.

IN THE CROWD

She catches up to a family with children - an airplane flies overhead.

A frumpy, middle-aged WIFE, walks hand-in-hand with her SON. Her HUSBAND, a scruffy farmer-type carries his young DAUGHTER on his shoulders. The child points upward.

CHILD

Daddy, look! A plane!

HUSBAND

(looks up at plane)

It's a C-54.

Annie glances skyward with trepidation.

WIFE

What part of the factory do you work in?

ANNIE

Oh, I don't work at the factory.

HUSBAND

Rare to find a supporter like yourself.
Now we've won the war in Europe,
everyone's forgotten about our boys in
Japan.

WIFE

You look tired, Dearie.

Annie musters a smile and shrug.

HUSBAND

Where are you from?

ANNIE

Up North.

WIFE

What brings you here?

Annie gently takes one of the war protest signs that reads, ENOUGH DEATH AND PAIN and hoists it overhead. The couple smiles and march beside her.

INT. GENERAL GROVES' OFFICE - DAY

General Groves sits at his desk, staring off. A KNOCK.

GENERAL GROVES

Yes?

Engles enters.

CAPT. ENGLES
You requested to see me, Sir?

General Groves nods. He indicates a seat for her.

GENERAL GROVES
Any word from Sam?

CAPT. ENGLES
She's headed back to Buffalo.

GENERAL GROVES
(nods grimly)
I want a security detail dispatched to Buffalo immediately. Have them secure the major crossing points, the river and any other means of escape.

CAPT. ENGLES
It's already in motion, Sir.

The phone on his desk RINGS. He waves Engles off. She salutes and turns to leave.

GENERAL GROVES (TO PHONE)
General Stimson, I'm afraid we've had a small breach in security.
(beat)
No, nothing we can't handle, but I believe it's in the project's best interest to move up the drop date just a few days, perhaps to the 6th? They're assembling it on Tinian as we speak. We can't afford to have anything go wrong. Also, if you've been following the weather - there's a storm forecasted...
(a beat, listening)
You know as well as I do, he's a puppet on a string; I don't think it's something we have to bother the President with.

Turning from the door, Engles gives General Groves a raised eyebrow.

EXT. SCRANTON PA BUS STATION - DAY

Annie and the Family still march with fellow protestors. The group has gotten significantly larger in size.

A number of POLICE CARS whiz by the assembling PROTESTORS. A group of ROWDY PROTESTORS run by the group, throwing things at buildings (and the Police).

WIFE

This doesn't look good.

HUSBAND

These boys are gonna get all our heads cracked.

WIFE

We'd better get the kids and get out of here before it turns ugly.

(to Annie)

Why don't you join us for dinner?

Annie returns a sad, but grateful smile. They drop their signs and go, as group of PROTESTORS clash with POLICE.

As Annie and the Family hurry away, she accidentally collides with a BURLY COP bearing a Scranton PD badge. He gives her an admiring once over and winks.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Annie sits around the table with the wife, husband and their children. Their plates are empty. A framed photo of a handsome YOUNG MAN in an Army Uniform displayed on a cabinet.

ANNIE

Your son?

(off their nod)

You must be happy to have him finally coming home.

The Husband and Wife exchange grim looks.

HUSBAND

(to Kids)

Go wash up for bed.

With them gone, he turns to Annie.

HUSBAND (CONT'D)

Our boy's a Japanese P.O.W.

Annie is stunned.

ANNIE

I'm so sorry.

(looks toward door)

(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)

You've been so kind. And it seems I've just overstayed my welcome. If I could use your telephone...

The Wife grasps Annie's arm, gently.

WIFE

Please, stay the night. We'd be proud to tell you his story.

The Wife's eyes are sad. Annie can't refuse.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

The Husband pours some brandy for Annie and his Wife.

HUSBAND

We raised our boy to be honorable, to follow the Bible and do his best to stand up for folks who couldn't stand up for themselves.

WIFE

When the war started, he insisted on signing up. I tried to reason with him. I told him that no matter how much good was in his heart, one more soldier couldn't really make a difference to end this horrible war.

Annie's taken aback: Wilfred's last words echo in her ears.

The Husband covers his moist eyes. His Wife reaches for his hand but overcome, he pulls away gently and exits the room.

WIFE (CONT'D)

(to Annie)

Our son proved us to be wrong.

(off Annie's look)

That protest today? All those people, marching to end the killing - friends, neighbors and even strangers... they came together to protest in his honor. He was right. Even one person can make a difference.

For several beats she processes their pain, and hers.

WIFE (CONT'D)

The telephone is in the hallway. Towels are in the closet, make yourself at home.

The Wife exits to follow her Husband upstairs. For a long time, Annie examines the picture of the Young Soldier.

INT. COUNTRY LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (MUCH LATER)

Freshly showered, Annie descends the stairs and crosses to the phone. She takes out Thel's address book, and flips through the pages.

A static filled DIAL TONE is heard, then the voice of a female OPERATOR.

OPERATOR (OVER PHONE)
Operator?

ANNIE (ON PHONE)
I have a Toronto number. Can you connect me with Steven O'Shea?

Annie peeks up the stairs. No one is there.

MAN'S VOICE(OVER PHONE)
Hello?

INT. HOME OF STEVEN O'SHEA - NIGHT

STEVEN O'SHEA, 40's, handsome, sits in front of the radio, nursing a brandy, as the phone rings.

INTERCUT: Annie and Steven

ANNIE
Mr. O'Shea? I'm Wilfred Dunlevy's wife Annie.

Silence.

STEVEN O'SHEA
What's happened?

Annie chokes down her pain.

ANNIE
I think I have something you need, and I'm afraid we don't have much time.

EXT. SCRANTON PA BUS STATION - NIGHT

Sam passes out flyers with Annie's photo to ARMED GUARDS and POLICE who form a semi-circle around patrol cars.

POLICE MAN

You want us to knock on every door?

Sam glares bullets at the police man, who shrinks away.

POLICE MAN (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Gonna be waking up a lot of God-damned
sleepy people.

Sam is approached by:

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Excuse me.

He spins around to see THE BURLY SCRANTON COP (from
before). He holds the flyer with Annie's picture on it.

BURLY COP

I saw this woman at the rally, late this
afternoon.

Sam pulls the Burly Cop by his lapels:

SAM

Where? Where did she go?

The Burly Cop reels back in surprise.

INT. COUNTRY LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Annie peeks through a window to see the first light of
dawn creep over the horizon. Fully dressed, holding her
purse close, she reaches for the door:

WIFE (O.S.)

Don't want breakfast? They say it's the
most important meal of the --

Annie spins, surprised by the wife in her nightgown.

ANNIE

-- I'm sorry. I'm in a rush and I didn't
want to wake you. I've called a cab.

The Wife notices Annie's bulging purse. She examines it
for several tense beats. Annie follows her gaze to the
case.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I have something I need to get up North.

HUSBAND (O.S.)
Must be a piece of hot property?

The Husband, in his bathrobe, stands beside his wife.

ANNIE
I'm afraid any longer and I'll have put
your family in danger.

The Husband eyes the purse Annie carries.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
It's something that will end the war
without anymore bloodshed. Your son can
come home. I just need to get it into
the right hands.

The Husband and Wife exchange concerned looks.

HUSBAND
Where you headed?

ANNIE
Niagara Falls.

HUSBAND
(to wife)
Dale.
(he rushes off)
I'll get dressed.

He hustles up the stairs.

WIFE
Dale's my brother. He's making a delivery
to the New York State Fair.

ANNIE
(startled)
New York State Fair? But that's in...

WIFE
Buffalo. Close enough for you?

Annie just stares back at the Wife. A beat and the
Husband returns, dressed, pulling on his coat.

HUSBAND
Take the kids to my mother's. Stay there
until I'm back.
(to Annie)
Let's get moving.

The Wife kisses her husband and he and Annie exit.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAWN

A caravan of ARMY JEEPS wail down a country road. The first jeep contains Sam and the Burly Cop. The Burly Cop points to an intersection turn-off.

They flash around the turn, just missing a FARM TRUCK at the corner.

INT. FARM TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

We see it's the Husband. He watches the Army caravan speed past, in the direction they just came from. A beat and Annie pops up from under the dashboard.

HUSBAND

That them?

A frightened nod from Annie. The Husband slams his truck into first gear and pounds the gas pedal.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The Truck tires spin gravel on the road and the truck takes off onto the main road.

INT. COUNTRY HOME - DAWN

The Wife's helping her kids with their coats. BANGING at the front door. They freeze.

WIFE

Yes?

SAM (O.S.)

United States Government. Open up.

The Wife pulls the door slightly ajar as Sam and a rush of SOLDIERS push in.

INT. HUSBAND'S VEHICLE - EARLY MORNING

The Husband and Annie sit silently as they drive the empty back roads.

HUSBAND

So what the big secret in there?

Annie pulls the reel out of her purse.

HUSBAND (CONT'D)

(laughs)

A picture reel?

Annie nods. Not laughing at all.

ANNIE

My husband was killed working at a government weapons project outside of Knoxville, Tennessee.

The Husband is intrigued.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

They've built a bomb. It will end the war. And kill a million people in the process.

HUSBAND

(eyebrow rises)

C'mon. That's science fiction.

Annie stares out the window and the passing scenery. She clutches the case tighter.

ANNIE

The proof is on this film reel. That's what I'm delivering.

HUSBAND

You're not serious? The U.S. Army plans to bomb Japan... and kill a million soldiers?

ANNIE

(turns to face him)

Soldiers. Civilians. Everyday people like you and me. But if the Japanese see this film, they'll surrender. It can still be over.

The Husband stares at her in disbelief and hope. He sees something out his front window.

HUSBAND

There he is.

A pick up truck pulling a livestock crate idles along the side of the road. DALE, a middle aged man in overalls waits by the truck. He waves at the Husband.

ANNIE

I really don't know how to thank you.

HUSBAND

Nothin' doin'. Stay safe.

Annie jumps out of the vehicle. The Husband watches as Annie greets Dale and the two get into Dale's vehicle.

HUSBAND (CONT'D)

(to himself)

And bring my son home.

INT. COUNTRY HOME - MORNING

As the Soldiers ransack the house, the Wife and her terrified Children watch in abject fear.

SAM

It doesn't have to be this way, Ma'am.
We're the "good guys" here.

She glances sullenly to the splintered furniture.

WIFE

Well, that's certainly clear.

Sam frowns, then notices the framed photo of her son.

SAM

Oh, look at the dapper fresh-faced boy.

The wife nods, warily and hesitant.

SAM (CONT'D)

If you cooperate, I can arrange it that
he be transferred home... immediately.

WIFE

I don't think *you* have the power.

SAM

You'd be surprised at how powerful I am.

WIFE

Really? He's in some Japanese POW camp.
You'd never find him.

Sam grins chillingly.

SAM

Maybe not. But I assure you, Ma'am, I can
guarantee nobody ever does.

She recoils with anger, about to slap Sam. He grabs her hard by the wrist.

SAM (CONT'D)
You don't want to do that.

EXT. BUFFALO NEW YORK STATE FAIRGROUNDS - EVENING

It's crowded. Lights and NOISE and energy. Annie wanders nervously. ROWDY TEENAGERS carelessly bump into her.

ROWDY TEEN
Sorry, lady!

She regains her composure and pushes through the crowd. Someone grabs her shoulder - she flips around, swinging -- it's Dale. He pulls Annie out of the crowd.

DALE
I have to go - are you going to be OK?

ANNIE
Go. I know this town like the back of my hand and I'll be meeting my contact soon.

Dale is deeply torn. She gives him a warm hug.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
I'll be fine. I promise.

Dale reluctantly shakes her hand and leaves. In a heartbeat, he's disappeared in the CROWD.

EXT. BUFFALO AIRPORT - SAME

An Army troop plane lands. A sign reads: BUFFALO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

EXT. BUFFALO AIRPORT, TARMAC - MINUTES LATER

Sam and the SOLDIERS exit the plane and jump into waiting jeeps. They speed off, SIRENS roaring.

EXT. PACIFIC ISLAND AIR STRIP - NIGHT

The Transport Plane is parked on the runway. ARMED SOLDIERS race to load the atomic bomb "FAT MAN".

ARMY OFFICER
He's all ready to go?

TECHNICIAN

The Good ol' Enola Gay will be lighting
up Japan by morning.

ARMY OFFICER

Just in time for breakfast.

They laugh it up and slap backs.

EXT. NEW YORK STATE FAIRGROUNDS ENTRANCE - DAY

Sam and the SOLDIERS arrive. He gestures to "split up".

EXT. NEW YORK STATE FAIRGROUNDS - RIVER'S EDGE - DAY

Annie weaves through the crowd toward the NIAGARA RIVER's edge. We can hear the ROAR of the nearby Falls. A shoulder-high fence guards people from falling into the raging water. It's a frightening, but awesome sight.

Annie sits beside two YOUNG LOVERS on a bench.

YOUNG GIRL

Isn't it beautiful?
(off Annie's weak smile)
We're here on our honeymoon.

ANNIE

(sadly)
You look very happy.

The Young Man stands, thrusts a camera into Annie's hand and rushes back to his new wife.

YOUNG GIRL

Would you mind?

ANNIE

Of course not, just let me...

ANNIE'S POV: Through the viewfinder on the camera, she spots Sam and an Armed Soldier in the B.G. END POV.

She quickly SNAPS the picture, tosses the camera back into their startled hands, holds her purse close and runs along the river toward

NIAGARA FALLS (its thundering mist in the distance)

The Young Lovers exchange puzzled looks.

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - US SIDE/PEACE BRIDGE - DAY

A view of the Peace Bridge and the Falls. Annie rushes up to the pedestrian walk on the US side.

ANNIE
(checks her watch)
Where the hell are you?

She anxiously cranes her neck to look across the bridge.

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - CANADIAN SIDE/PEACE BRIDGE - DAY

A rudimentary customs station with a few BORDER GUARDS.

INT. CUSTOMS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Steven O'Shea paces around the small room. He makes his co-workers nervous. A look to his watch. Then out the window.

Annie.

EXT. CUSTOMS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Steven O'Shea leaps out of the Customs Station, stopping abruptly in the middle of the span.

O'Shea shields his eyes from the mist and glare and spots Annie across the bridge, at the US side.

STEVEN O'SHEA
Annie Dunlevy!?

INTERCUT: ANNIE'S POSITION AND O'SHEA'S POSITION

-- She spots Steven O'Shea at the Border Line painted across the middle of the bridge dividing US and Canadian jurisdiction. He SHOUTS and waves but the Falls drown him out. The OTHER BORDER GUARDS warily eye O'Shea.

-- A wide grin breaks across Annie's face. Her pace quickens as the Fall's spray soaks her coat and hair. For the first time, she looks happy and serene.

-- STEVEN O'SHEA's POV: Beyond Annie, behind her, Sam and the Soldiers race to catch up with Annie END POV.

STEVEN O'SHEA (CONT'D)
Annie!? Behind you!

-- Annie's gait gets wider as she hurries to safety

-- Sam and the Soldiers close in

-- Annie, unaware of Sam, breaks into a jog. She pulls out the FILM CAN and shows it to Steven.

ANNIE

Mr. O'Shea!

The SOUND OF THE FALLS is deafening.

-- Annie hurries along the sidewalk guard rail. The raging FALLS just a foot over the rail beside her.

-- Sam and the Soldiers are yards from Annie. Other CANADIAN BORDER GUARDS become aware of the situation. Seeing Sam's gun and the guards, they draw their own.

They train their guns on Annie. O'Shea holds them back.

STEVEN O'SHEA

Stop! No.

BORDER GUARD

O'Shea, get the hell out of the way.

He whips around and points the gun at the other CANADIAN BORDER PATROL. They turn their guns on him.

STEVEN O'SHEA

Let her cross.

END INTERCUT:

ON ANNIE'S POSITION...

-- Annie stops. Commotion on the Canadian side. Guns drawn. She's puzzled and...

SAM'S VOICE

Gotcha.

Her face goes slack. Sam grabs her arm. The ARMED SOLDIERS surround her. Sam's got a gun, too.

SAM

I don't want to use this.

ANNIE

(clutching purse tightly)

What are you going to do, you son of a bitch? Murder me? Right here in front of all of these witnesses?

SAM

I don't want to kill anyone, Annie.

ANNIE

My husband died trying to save the
millions of people you want to vaporize.

SAM

Those millions are the enemy.

ANNIE

Isn't that what Hitler said?

Sam's blank expression chills Annie to the bone. Holding
her wrist tightly:

SAM

Annie, you can't stop this. Nobody can.

ANNIE

We can still win the war. Just show
them! Show them what you can do!

Annie clutches her purse close. She glances toward tense
O'Shea - guns drawn on him, too.

SAM

You're not a hero. You're nothing but a
traitor. Just like your husband.

She spits in his face, pulls herself free, turns and
bolts toward the Canadian border.

POV ANNIE: The dividing line is close! Behind it, a
frantic O'Shea shakes his head "no".

A GUN FIRES above the SOUND OF THE FALLS.

POV O'SHEA: Annie grimaces. Shot.

Annie falls across the International Dividing Line.
Lying on the ground, the Canadian Border Patrol Guards
rush to her side. O'Shea leans close, taking her hand.

ANNIE

I did it.

O'Shea smiles. A nod. She hands him the bag. He looks
up to Sam - his face pale. A look of terror. He looks
to his feet and then slowly turns and walks back toward
the U.S. Side of the falls.

Focus on the falls - its white mist blurs until...

FADE TO WHITE:

DREAM SEQUENCE - FADED COLOR

EXT. DUNLEVY HOME - MORNING

The Paperboy tosses a rolled up paper onto Annie's porch.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Annie busily makes coffee. One cup. A sniff, a smile, it's good. She's made herself a big breakfast. She looks somberly at the framed photo of she and Wilfred (from before), sitting on the kitchen windowsill. A small smile as she reaches for the newspaper:

HEADLINE

American Scientists Build Superbomb; Japan surrenders at threat of detonation.

EXT. BUILDING FLYING FLAGS OF U.N. (NOT NYC) - DAY

By the looks of cars & costume, it's still 1945.

INT. UNITED NATIONS BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

A large circular meeting room is packed. Reps from almost every country.

A sign: INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR ENERGY DE-ARMAMENT COUNCIL

Dressed in her Sunday-best, Annie's at the podium in the center of the room.

ANNIE

My husband is proof that one person can make a difference. Look around you. This room is filled with potential. With this discovery, we've entered a new age of endless possibilities, and with cooperation, we can define this era as one of brilliance, of peace and of prosperity.

(a beat)

I have a quote I'd like to read you.

She pulls out Wilf's dog-eared, well-worn book: H.G. WELLS': THE WORLD SET FREE. Expertly opens the book to the correct page.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
From H.G. Wells' novel *The World Set Free.*

A captive audience.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
In 1914, Mr. Wells saw the future. And he saw our world a better place.

She glances down to the book and begins:

ANNIE (CONT'D)
"And with this gift of Atomic Energy, I see the desert continents transformed to a green oasis. I see the poles no longer a wildernesses of ice and cold. I see the good of man reach out among the stars. I see the whole world... ONCE MORE EDEN."

She steps away from the platform and the applause begins. One or two CLAPS at first and then overwhelming. Like the ROAR FROM THE FALLS.

THE ROAR CONTINUES OVER:

She clutches Thelma's handkerchief. Dabs her eyes.

Focus on Annie's face. Close up gets tighter, tighter, tighter until it's just her EYES. Staring. A blink.

CUT TO:

BACK TO REALITY

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS CUSTOMS STATION - DAY

THE ROAR CONTINUES OVER:

Close up on Annie's eyes. A Blink.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW MEDIUM SHOT

Annie's lying on the ground. Shot. Her body's in an awkward position. She clutches her bag close. The reel's sticking out. Thel's personalized handkerchief peeks out of her pocket. She's not dead, yet.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW WIDER SHOT

She's still on the American side of the bridge. She didn't make it.

ANNIE'S P.O.V.

A crystal-blue sky. Slow clouds drift by. She blinks.

Nothing but the hiss of the Falls. And then, a giant exhale. Her last breath.

With a peaceful look, she blinks for the last time.

EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING (PRESENT DAY)

Elderly Lady POV: She looks up into the blue sky. Watches the clouds go by. She blinks. A remorseful sigh.

She looks down at her hands. Old, wrinkled: she wears Annie's ring on her finger.

EXPANDING FADE TO
WHITE.

THE END