

NOISE POLLUTION

written by

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INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

PROFESSOR DAVID, an energetic, wiry-haired codger, settles a stack of paper in front of a blank whiteboard.

The packets are distributed to semi-formal teen STUDENTS surrounded by antique books on worn deco-plank walls, stark postmodern paintings, and lush green plants. The sun's soft golden rays slip through the wooden blinds that obscure a thriving garden outside.

PROF. DAVID

Students of the species! A quiz
pops! 19th century philosophy...
now, I'd rather hear *practical*
theses than argumentative ones...
and *please* don't disappoint me by
answering with names and dates...

The room hums with lead pencils scraping across paper as ADRIA HORVATH flips her raven-black hair; having written her name in cursive at the top of the page, she TAPS her pencil next to the instructions:

PHILOSOPHY EXAMINATION IV

PART A. SHORT ANSWER (ANSWER FIVE OF THE
FOLLOWING SEVEN QUESTIONS IN NO LESS THAN
ONE PARAGRAPH, NO MORE THAN TWO)

1. In *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche departs from his previous writing style by condensing his thoughts into aphorisms. What motivated his reluctance to construct systemic philosophies?
2. "By reading aloud you will gain the strongest impression that you have only yourself to consider, not me, who, after all, am 'without authority', nor others, which would be a distraction." Who was this written by, in what volume was it published, and to what do they refer?

Desperation saps the beauty from Adria's tanned face as she rests her head on her hand.

TAP. TAP. TAP.

She SIGHS. No room for bullshit. Adria remains still as the blare of an ALARM BELL signals her time is at an end.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Adria staggers out of the classroom in an impotent fury, searching a raucous CROWD of students for a familiar face before manufacturing a smile and stalking down the hall.

JASMINE LASOME, a curvy, porcelain-skinned redhead, peeks past her locker door as Adria leans in.

ADRIA

You like that little pop quiz?

JASMINE

We jibed...

(catching on)

...not your finest hour?

ADRIA

...pretty sure I died a little.

JASMINE

...and you wanna live through the next one?

Adria smolders in contempt.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Alright... I'll have my parents drop me off after school.

ADRIA

...need the address, or do you already know that too?

Adria SLAMS her locker shut, presses a sticky note into the door, and writes furiously as Jasmine recovers.

JASMINE

You make this seem so... quaint.

ADRIA

Yeah, well... in the real world, I'd just text you...

Adria sticks the note on Jasmine's forehead and walks off. Jasmine turns, taking in a rush of students without a single cell phone, laptop, or tablet in sight.

OPENING TITLE: NOISE POLLUTION

EXT. ENTRY ROAD - AFTERNOON

A green hybrid sedan vibrates to a stop behind a blue van, joining a row of cars frozen on a clean two-lane road sandwiched by a beautifully sparse forest.

At the front of the line, the bumper of a white WIRELESS SERVICE VAN stops just short of a retracting metal gate. Two polished boots march toward the passenger door.

The DRIVER rubs his eyes as the owner of the boots, the burly, grey-haired OFC. ANDREW, arrives at the window.

OFC. ANDREW

Afternoon.

DRIVER

...gettin' longer by the minute.

As Andrew scowls, the driver presses a worn button on the console to produce a TINY DONGLE and hands it over.

Andrew fakes a smile as he snatches it, tromps toward a large sandstone building, and steps through the first of two doors labeled 'Customs' and 'Visitors'...

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - AFTERNOON

...into a tiny office. A seated OFC. GEORGE stares at a news clip on his tablet with a dumb look on his face:

VOXI POPULARITY SPIKES AMID SAFETY CONCERNS

A VIDEO of an attractive MODEL chatting away loops below, the focus centered on a GREEN TRIANGLE flashing on her ear.

Andrew slips the dongle in a computer terminal, producing an ILLUMINATED STATUS BAR. He opens a cabinet, pulling out a small black baton that hums with electricity as he turns it on. There is a sign on the wall behind him:

- I. No home-based digital media allowed.*
- II. Banished technology must be registered.*
- III. No firearms permitted.*

The list goes on.

OFC. ANDREW

Get up, George.

Andrew fiddles with the baton, briefly arresting George's attention. George shifts uncomfortably.

OFC. GEORGE
What's that, Andy?

OFC. ANDREW
It's the 7G guys again...

Andrew balks at George's apathy as the computer terminal status bar LIGHTS UP and DINGS. Andrew points the baton at George: his tablet SHUTS OFF.

OFC. GEORGE
I *hate* when you do that...

MARK (O.S.)
This shouldn't take long...

As George lazes to his feet, the skinny, skittish, smartly dressed MARK appears in the reception window, turning back to face an impatient middle-aged couple.

MARK (Cont'd)
Well, just another a minute or two... uh... while we're waiting, did you have any questions...?

The husband, MIGUEL, glares at the wife, PERCI.

PERCI
Is, uh... *this* where it started...?

MARK
(galvanized)
...yeah! Paradise was the first site for the National Library Preservation Project, but we never anticipated this many people would want to... *unplug* from netizen culture. So, quite accidentally, the Imperial movement sprang out of that...

MIGUEL
...yeah, we know.

MARK
...ah, we got funding for the education initiative so we could...

MIGUEL
(interrupting)
...foster an independent society
without social media. We *know*.

Mark returns his attention to the reception window, looking for anything to stifle his irritation.

MARK
Uh huh...
(loudly)
We're *ready* here...

PERCI
So... you have to take our phones?

MARK
It's not like that...

Andrew returns to the reception window and swipes Mark's ID card, opening a set of glass doors so he can lead them to another set that lead outside.

MARK (Cont'd)
...think about it like summer camp...
parents don't make the sacrifices
or suffer the consequences.

Mark swipes his ID card across a black panel, opening the door to Imperial Gardens...

EXT. IMPERIAL GARDENS: PARADISE - AFTERNOON

...a veritable suburban Eden: quaint, perfect houses sit in geometric rows, each home sporting solar roofs soaring above lush, carefully maintained lawns with a few sparsely scattered hybrid and electric cars in the clean streets.

PERCI
Do you have any openings?

Mark is distracted by the white WIRELESS VAN as Perci and Miguel exit behind him.

MARK
We *just* filled one, but there's
always turnover... some people just
can't unplug...

Mark crosses the street, leading the couple into town as a SILVER HYBRID SUV passes...

INT. HYBRID SUV - AFTERNOON

...driven by ENRIC LASOME, a chiseled, darkly handsome middle-aged man. Beside him, CAROL, a vibrant, voluptuous redhead, bastes in the acidity of a domestic dispute.

ENRIC

Jazzy tell you why we're taking her to Adria's?

Carol glares out the window, unwilling to oblige him.

ENRIC (Cont'd)

...think *I'd* want to know... leaving my daughter with an ex-netizen...

CAROL

Why don't you ask her?

ENRIC

That's no way to get the truth out of a teenager.

CAROL

And you wonder why you have to find out everything about our daughter from *me*.

ENRIC

Well, if I believed everything she said, I'd be a lousy parent.

Carol shoots her daggers at Enric as he turns the wheel...

EXT. STREET CORNER - AFTERNOON

...accelerating toward a mass of TEENAGERS exiting a large grey SCHOOL whose imposing arches would be better suited to a postmodern castle.

The van passes a quaint DRUGSTORE situated on the corner. A line of STUDENTS wait patiently inside...

INT. DRUGSTORE - AFTERNOON

...behind mousy SANAZ GILANI, who leans into the marble counter, smiling at the CLERK with easy charm.

SANAZ

Do you accept returns for condoms?

CLERK

If they're unused...

The male CLERK scans the box, opens the register, and counts out a set of strange bills with QR codes.

CLERK (Cont'd)

That's... \$145.99.

Sanaz smiles, taking the "money" as she starts toward the door. GHAZAL DECARLO, a short, freckled redhead, takes her place at the front of the line.

MARESE PURYEAR, an eccentric, heavysset loner holding a box of 'Cortenza', gets Sanaz's attention before she walks out.

MARESE

'Unused', Nazzy? Did Dolly take a vow?

SANAZ

It's a long story, but it's not mine to tell.

They exchange polite nods as Sanaz exits the store...

EXT. STREET CORNER - AFTERNOON

...spotting the bronze-skinned, soft-featured REMY KUHN leaning against an ornate façade. Sanaz smiles as Remy pulls a cigarette out of a small metal case with their lips.

SANAZ

Thought you *quit*?

REMY

Well, I...

They SPUTTER abruptly, JAMMING the cigarette back in the case as their eyes level on a silver hybrid SUV with JASMINE in the back seat...

INT. HYBRID SUV - AFTERNOON

...and Enric behind the wheel. Jasmine finally peels the sticky note off her head and looks at it, sighing hard enough to alert Carol before she hands it off.

Carol takes it in, doing her best to stay calm.

CAROL

Oh... uhm... are you sure you don't want to stop home first?

JASMINE

...nah, let's just go.

Jasmine absently looks out the window, spotting Remy WAVING excitedly. She returns the gesture with minimal enthusiasm.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

A group of CHILDREN play roller hockey as MORE KIDS run past in the throes of a tag game. The hockey players clear the street as the silver SUV slows to a stop.

INT. HYBRID SUV - AFTERNOON

With the car in park, Enric turns back to his daughter.

ENRIC

When should we pick you up?

JASMINE

...based on her grades... next year?

CAROL

(snickering)

Well... if you need to spend the night, that's okay with us...

Jasmine smiles as she reaches for the door, but Carol stops Jasmine by placing a hand on her leg.

CAROL (Cont'd)

Jazzy... you haven't spent much time with someone who's had to... *unplug*... it's... a *process*...

Jasmine glances out the window, spotting Adria WAVING SARCASTICALLY from the second-floor window.

JASMINE

...okay?

CAROL

Well, it's just... y'know, after what happened with Victor...

JASMINE

(wincing)

That's... *not* the same thing...

CAROL

I know, I know... still...

The stillborn silence is broken when Enric digs in his pocket, handing off a CELL PHONE to his daughter.

ENRIC

Why don't you... take *this*... and
give us a call when you're done?

Jasmine stares as though Enric is holding a loaded gun.

ENRIC (Cont'd)

Our secret.

CAROL

...call it an act of faith. You've
earned it.

Jasmine reluctantly takes the phone, then shakes her head and hands it back.

JASMINE

...that's okay... after all, Imperial
Gardens is a way of life.

Enric nods victoriously and turns the phone off, but as Jasmine gets out, he slips it in her coat pocket.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

Jasmine shuts the car door, her approach awaited by EDVIN and MEGAN HORVATH, two tanned, impossibly cool hipster parents whose matching clothes and styling make them look more like clones than partners.

MEGAN

Thanks for coming, Jazzy...

JASMINE

Mrs. Horvath.

INT. ADRIA'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Adria lies face down on her messy bed. Clothes, school papers, and open books are strewn across the floor. There is no TV, laptop, tablet, or cell phone to be found.

After a moment, Adria props her head on her hands to stare at Jasmine, who is curled up in a decorative chair with her coat draped over the back, poring over a book. Jasmine barely glances at Adria, pretending not to notice her.

ADRIA

...are you for real?

JASMINE

Are you engaging me on the nature of truth?

ADRIA

Oh my *god*... can you just be, like, a *normal* girl? For *five* minutes?

JASMINE

Not if you want to survive Prof. David's next test...

A smile infects Adria's face, her irritation boiling up until she JOLTS and LEAPS OFF the bed.

ADRIA

You *can't*! You can't do it! It's like a *disease* with you people...

Jasmine closes the book, keeping her place with a finger.

JASMINE

Addi, I'm not here to chat... I'm here because your grasp of philosophy is... inadequate?

ADRIA

Bitch. Jaz... it's *me*. You're, like, a walking dictionary... could you try speaking *my* language?

Jasmine nods carefully.

JASMINE

If you're willing to find common ground... I'll meet you halfway.

Adria moves her arms like a robot.

ADRIA

Any more analysis, Mr. Spock?

Jasmine's droll glare pierces Adria as she THROWS herself back on the bed.

ADRIA (Cont'd)

I heard you and Dalton were an item... but don't you like *girls*?

Jasmine stares back silently, her brow furrowing as Adria waits for more. Jasmine won't give an inch.

JASMINE

You're *just* like my parents...
sorry, I don't fold under
questioning.

ADRIA

Well, thank *god* you're not like
my parents... I hear them fucking,
like, *all* the time...

JASMINE

...and?

ADRIA

Seriously? I am *fragile*. That
shit's gonna scar me for life.

JASMINE

Could be worse... you never had to
suffer through Dolly...

Adria's eyes go wide at her small victory, but she manages to wait patiently for more.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

You hear him in school... all sound
and fury signifying nothing.
Suffice it to say his... prowess?
Is *not* worthy of discussion.

ADRIA

So can I borrow him?

JASMINE

Who am I to stop you from
destroying your libido?

Adria BURSTS into hysterical laughter.

ADRIA

That's more like it!

JASMINE

You're abiding a misapprehension.
We're not puritans. We value
honesty. *And* good sex.

ADRIA

So you told him he's a bad lay?

JASMINE

Yes.

ADRIA

Harsh!

Jasmine gives a playful shrug, peeling the book open and SHIVERING as she resumes reading. Finally disarmed, Adria smiles at Jasmine.

ADRIA (Cont'd)

...alright. You gonna tell me what's in that stupid book?

JASMINE

(smiling)

"Wherever progress is to ensue, deviating natures are of greatest importance. Every progress of the whole must be preceded by a partial weakening... there is rarely a degeneration... without an advantage somewhere else."

Jasmine pauses thoughtfully, looking toward Adria.

ADRIA

Don't even think about asking me what that means.

JASMINE

I was going to ask what it made you *think*?

ADRIA

...maybe don't ask me anything.

JASMINE

...I'm not sure I can help if you don't have an opinion.

ADRIA

I don't *care*! *That's* my opinion.

JASMINE

Alright... let's use Imperial Gardens as an example...

ADRIA
(sarcastically)
You mean "Paradise"?

JASMINE
...they have to call it *something*...

ADRIA
Alright, so we *agree* it's a
stupid name. Go on.

Jasmine glares at Adria; this is not fun for her.

JASMINE
...we reject tech to promote
emotional intelligence, right?
You see this as abnormal...

ADRIA
More like pointless. And stupid.
You've got yourselves walled up...

JASMINE
(interrupting)
...nothing's *keeping* us in here...

ADRIA
It's what you're keeping out...

JASMINE
(snapping)
When peer-reviewed studies
establish a link between Voxi
implants and psychosis?

Adria pushes herself off the bed, walking toward an empty
desk as she paws at the scarred tragus on her ear.

ADRIA
So what?

JASMINE
So *what*? People are *surgically*
installing something that can
drive them crazy... is it *really*
worth risking your sanity?

ADRIA
You don't know anything about it.

Adria turns to the wall in defiance, crossing her arms.

Jasmine sighs with another SHIVER.

JASMINE

Addi... I'm just trying to help.

Adria can barely look at her.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

You're right. I *don't* know
anything about it. I'd rather
understand you than feel
understood.

Adria finally turns to face Jasmine with a coy smile.

ADRIA

Well played... all right...

Jasmine patiently waits for more.

ADRIA (Cont'd)

...what are you getting at with
this philosophy crap?

JASMINE

Sometimes... our strengths... are
perceived as weaknesses.

ADRIA

Okay, but... just so we're clear...
you don't wonder what it's like
to grow up like a *normal* person?

Jasmine shakes her head. Adria shrugs violently.

JASMINE

...maybe what you saw in social
media... *I* see in people.

ADRIA

Except Dolly.

JASMINE

...he's just a boy... the Gardens are
an *idea*. There's no shortage of
people who believe in what we do.

ADRIA

What about Victor?

The mention of that name annihilates Jasmine.

ADRIA (Cont'd)

This was *his* house? His stunt got him kicked all the way out to the city... he tell you why he did it?

JASMINE

I know... he believed in this place... just not everything about it.

Downstairs, a CELL PHONE RINGS. When both girls turn to the door, Adria looks back at Jasmine. Jasmine smiles wistfully and subtly shakes her head.

ADRIA

What if it's Dolly?

JASMINE

Doubtful, but if so, I hope you enjoy him more than I did.

ADRIA

Well, if I do, I'd better prevent the *side effects* of enjoying him...

Adria goes into her purse to retrieve her birth control pills as Jasmine's wounded eyes drill through her.

ADRIA (Cont'd)

I need water, you want anything?

Jasmine numbly shakes her head as Adria walks out. Jasmine SHIVERS once more, sliding her arms into her coat. After a moment, Jasmine squints and pulls out her father's phone.

A PIERCING SCREAM shakes the house from downstairs.

Jasmine shoves it back in her pocket as she SHOOTs out of the chair, RUSHES through the door...

INT. STAIRWELL - AFTERNOON

...and THUNDERS down the steps, guided by Adria's hysterical SOBBING at the bottom.

JASMINE

Addi? Addi, are you okay?

INT. ADRIA'S HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Jasmine turns the corner and SCREAMS IMMEDIATELY when she sees BLOOD seeping into the carpet.

Adria's parents lie DEAD ON THE FLOOR with Adria hunched between them, her face contorted in terror as her teary eyes bulge like glass baubles.

Edvin is still clutching a cell phone; another is laying next to Megan. Thin streaks of blood and pulp have SPRAYED the walls and continue leaking from their ears.

JASMINE

Wh-what... what happened!?

ADRIA

(sobbing hard)

I don't know, I don't know!

JASMINE

Call 911!

Adria hyperventilates as she fumbles to pick up her mom's cell. She dials and holds the phone to her ear.

In an instant, Adria lets out a quick YELP as a viscous red mass BLASTS out of her ear. She falls limply to the ground as Jasmine SCREAMS, ducking into a corner as she shields her face with her arms.

Shaking with fear, Jasmine slowly pulls her hands away to look at the bodies; blood leisurely flows from Adria's ear as a chunk of her brain slides down the wall.

Jasmine's deep, labored breaths echo in the hallway. She looks back again at Edvin and Megan's ruptured skulls, reaching into her pocket to retrieve her father's phone.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Oh god...

Jasmine frantically slides along the hallway, her eyes glazing over as she RUNS out the door.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

Jasmine looks out at the street, seeing the corpse of an ADULT MAN with a YOUNG GIRL crying next to him. Jasmine JOGS toward them before a SCREAM stops her.

Jasmine turns to see sporadic clusters of PANICKED PEOPLE rushing out of their houses and into their cars. One MAN is dragging a lifeless WOMAN as blood POURS out of her ear.

Suddenly, a MAN comes out of his house with a phone,

running past Jasmine as he blithers unintelligibly. Jasmine tries to HOLD HIM BACK, but he SHOVES HER to the ground.

JASMINE

NO! NOT THE PHONE!

The man rushes over to the little girl, making eye contact with Jasmine as blood JETS out of his ear. Jasmine SCREAMS as he topples over, then the YOUNG GIRL picks up the phone.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

STOP! PUT IT DOWN!

As Jasmine crawls to her feet, the young girl presses the phone to her ear, and Jasmine is SPRAYED with red mist. After scowling at her wet hands, Jasmine WIPES HERSELF OFF.

Jasmine takes off down the street, smearing the blood into her clothes. She looks up as a CAR with a RED MESS splashed in the windows SPEEDS OFF the road, TEARING UP the perfect lawn of one home before it RIPS through the wall, prompting more SCREAMS.

Jasmine sprints toward the crash, doubling over as a distraught WOMAN BURSTS through the front door, bringing a phone to her ear as she surveys the wreckage.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Don't...

Before she can finish, the woman crumples with an EXPLOSION OF BLOOD from the side of her head. Jasmine swallows hard, fighting to keep moving as she huffs down the street.

INT. LASOME LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

The rattling of keys echoes throughout the empty living room, accompanied by Jasmine's shallow breath. The door opens and Jasmine HITS THE FLOOR. She staggers to her feet, barely able to crawl through her living room.

CAROL (O.S.)

...Jazzy?

A WET POP from the next room is followed by a HEAVY THUD.

JASMINE

NO!

Jasmine stumbles through the room, struggling to catch her breath as she slogs across the carpet to the hallway.

INT. LASOME BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Jasmine pushes the door open to find Carol half naked beneath the sheets, a pool of blood seeping into her pillow as Enric LEAPS to his feet.

ENRIC

Where's my phone!?

Jasmine bats at him, but Enric fiercely rifles through her pockets before PUSHING her aside. Jasmine clings to his leg, wheezing breathlessly as she tries to hold him back.

JASMINE

Dad... stop...

Enric lifts the phone, dragging Jasmine behind him as she desperately claws her way up his leg. Just as Enric opens his mouth, BLOOD and BRAINS BLAST through his ear, painting the wallpaper a chunky red before he hits the floor.

Still clutching her father's lifeless corpse, Jasmine goes limp, her glassy eyes losing focus as she passes out.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. LASOME KITCHEN - EVENING

The numb echo of a muffled voice pierces through the darkness of Jasmine's unconscious daze.

DALTON (O.S.)

Jasmine? Come on, Jaz.

Jasmine squints at the light, her eyes tired and bloodshot. When she sees the SILHOUETTE perched over her, she SHOTS up and slams her back into the refrigerator, blinking as though every corner of the room might attack her.

DALTON (O.S.)(Cont'd)

Take it easy, take it easy!

Jasmine looks up to see the blond, trim, clean cut DALTON REEVES with his hands on her shoulders.

JASMINE

Dolly!?

DALTON

...I need to get you out of here...

She struggles toward the bedroom as Dalton holds her

ruefully, each subsequent attack weakening until Jasmine sees Enric's body. Overcome with futility, she subsides into Dalton's arms in a fit of UNCONTROLLABLE SOBS.

Dalton glances at a newspaper article on the refrigerator with VICTOR REICHMAN's name and picture, his ghoulish smirk perfectly matching the headline above:

IMPERIAL GARDENS HACKER CAUGHT, EXPELLED

Anxious and preoccupied, Dalton peels his eyes away, forcing himself to look toward Enric.

DALTON (Cont'd)

Jaz, you can't stay. Come on.

INT. CLASSROOM - DUSK

CHILDREN and TEENS are huddled in corners, seated at desks, pacing nervously, and speaking in hushed voices amid the gloom and misery of a makeshift disaster recovery center.

A small group is crowded around Ghazal, who sits at the room's only computer. Dalton stands behind the podium, overseeing his disorganized congregation as Jasmine sits quietly against a bookshelf a few feet from Remy.

Dalton stares into the podium, waiting for the right moment. When it doesn't come, he plows ahead:

DALTON

All right... everyone... I think...
this is all of us...

When that sentiment sinks in, the air leaves the room.

DALTON (Cont'd)

Uh... first off... uh... Ghazal?

Ghazal is leveling a thousand-yard stare out the window. A small reddish-brown SMEAR is encrusted on her shirt lapel.

DALTON (Cont'd)

Ghazal?

GHAZAL

...what?

DALTON

Are you getting anything?

Sanaz stands up behind the podium, ambling toward Ghazal.

GHAZAL

Uh... it's restricted access...

Dalton clearly doesn't see this as an excuse.

GHAZAL (Cont'd)

Don't look at *me*! Comp-sci is for seniors... *you're* a senior...

Dalton throws up his hands as Marese joins Ghazal at the computer, quietly offering advice as the scrawny, dark-skinned, bespectacled SOREN HOLM steps up behind them.

SANAZ

Can we get a hold of Luzerne?

SOREN

(looking back)

Why?

SANAZ

They're the next closest campus...
I have their number...

GHAZAL

(snapping back)

And you want to *call* them?

Dalton stares at Ghazal as the tired masses mumble their opposition. Ghazal returns to work as the room settles.

DALTON

We've got to figure out what happened...

REMY

...oh yeah?

Dalton looks toward the back wall as though he didn't hear Remy. He calmly walks around a long desk adjacent to the podium, stopping to lean on it.

DALTON

How we deal with this depends on *why* it happened. Was it an accident? An attack? Was it just us? Will there be *more*? Don't you think that *matters*?

Remy seems afraid to open their mouth. They glance at Jasmine, who has yet to lift her gaze from the floor.

REMY

Staying alive is all that
matters... if we can't *call* for
 help, and there's no way to know
 if it'll come... it's only a matter
 of time before there's no food or
 water... *that* is our first concern.

JASMINE

(quietly)

So we have to leave.

DALTON

That's *not* what they're saying.

GHAZAL

That's it...

Dalton's eyes linger on Remy before he turns to join the commotion surrounding the computer. After a moment, Ghazal vigorously shakes her head and deflates with a sigh.

GHAZAL (Cont'd)

...I'm not *getting* anything...

DALTON

(his voice rising)

How is that *possible*?

GHAZAL

We're locked out of social media!
That's how the majority of the
 planet gets their news...

DALTON

There's *nothing* on AP?

GHAZAL

Want me to... learn Morse code and
 hook up a telegraph!?

DALTON

I want you to stop making excuses
 and find me something *useful*...

Jasmine finally looks up, soaking in the faces of SCARED CHILDREN and TEENS struggling to hold it together; EVERYONE

not at the front of the room watches the hostility boil over in a tense, collective silence.

SANAZ

So we have *no* idea what's
happening *anywhere* else?

DALTON

...Ghazal?

Ghazal shrugs testily. Dalton scoffs, looking out the window.

SANAZ

No? So there's no *decision*... we
leave... the sooner the better...

DALTON

Leaving won't do us any good if
everyone else is *dead*!

The crowd at the computer ERUPTS into a shouting match; Marese and Ghazal go toe-to-toe, stabbing their fingers toward each other as Sanaz claps in Dalton's face.

Soren watches in horror as a TEARFUL ADOLESCENT reaches his breaking point and SCREAMS for them to stop. Remy looks to Jasmine again as she stares into the middle distance.

MARESE

(overlapping)

You wanna wait for a food
truck to show up? What
happens when it *doesn't*?
Really, how much? Tell me!

GHAZAL

(overlapping)

I am not leaving here! We
have plenty of food and we
don't know what the fuck is
out there!

Jasmine finally looks over at Remy, who clearly has no intention of getting involved.

SANAZ

(overlapping)

...because when you *say* shit
like that to kids you only
make things worse! *Hey!*

DALTON

(overlapping)

...they've *seen* worse than
anything I could've *said*
anyway... ah, *fuck* that...

Jasmine stands, calmly walking toward the quarrel. She folds her arms as she arrives at the lectern, shutting Dalton up. Sanaz follows suit, glaring at Dalton. Ghazal and Marese are the last voices in the room.

GHAZAL

Well what *if* whoever did this is
trying to get rid of us!?

MARESE

That's insane! We're the
regressives. We're the ones who
go jihadist when the "civilized"
world threatens our way of life...

Ghazal is already looking at Jasmine when Marese trails off
and turns to do the same. The room is finally silent.

JASMINE

I'm going.

DALTON

...where!? You *heard* what he just
said, the rest of the world
thinks we're nuts!

Jasmine's eyes do the work of a dozen sarcastic comebacks.

DALTON (Cont'd)

Oh *what*, you're gonna impress me
with some brilliant *plan*?

JASMINE

Victor.

Someone behind Dalton scoffs, emboldening him.

DALTON

...Victor.

JASMINE

I'll have plenty of opportunities
to find help on the way to the
city... failing that, I'm going to
find the *one* person we know...

DALTON

Who was *kicked* out...

JASMINE

(undeterred)

...who *believed* in this place... he
may have been kicked out, but
Victor was the *last* person who
wanted to be plugged back in...

DALTON

Really? For all we know, *he's* the
reason this happened...

Dalton steps closer to Jasmine, his voice growing softer.
Her disgust for him is palpable.

DALTON (Cont'd)

...defending your old sparring
buddy, eh? You want to bring him
back here, see if he can't find a
way to make things worse?

JASMINE

Are you through?

DALTON

What's your rush?

JASMINE

I want to live through this.

Jasmine stares at Dalton until he backs down, resting
against the wall behind the podium. Jasmine sighs, finally
looking away to find the room in rapt attention.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

We're only alive because of where
we are... how our *parents* raised
us... but if we stay put, we'll end
up just like them.

Jasmine walks back to the bookshelf, collapsing next to
Remy as a soothing murmur of hushed voices recommences.

REMY

I'm going with you.

Jasmine smiles painfully.

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

The light of a COMPUTER SCREEN pierces the darkness. Bathed
in the white glow, Ghazal clicks around with the restless
dispassion of a social media junkie as sleeping people
twitch and rustle in the background. Dalton sneaks up
behind Ghazal, but she's too tired to be startled.

GHAZAL

(quietly)

Hello Dolly...

DALTON
Don't call me that.

GHAZAL
...we're no closer to...

DALTON
(interrupting)
Any word from Luzerne?

GHAZAL
...no... I was just gonna say we...

DALTON
(interrupting)
Have you tried Envoyeur?

GHAZAL
Shut. Up. Everyone on the planet
shares everything with their
fucking phone... *guess* what happens
when you take that away?

Dalton nods, kneeling beside Ghazal as if to apologize.

GHAZAL (Cont'd)
...you may know how to use
Envoyeur, but *I* don't.

DALTON
...sorry... what do you suggest?

Ghazal eyes Jasmine, who lies sleeping against a bookshelf.

DALTON (Cont'd)
Oh, *fuck* that... no one's *leaving*.
We're stronger together. Let the
rest of the world figure this out
on their own.

(smirking)
You remember her 8th grade thesis?

GHAZAL
...don't tell me you do?

DALTON
She kept going on about... the
generosity of the human spirit...

GHAZAL
That was *middle school*...

DALTON

Ask yourself where she wants to go and *why*... and try to convince me she's grown up since then. You want to pin your hopes on Victor? I'd rather starve. If she leaves, she won't make it back...

GHAZAL

She could beat both of us up...

DALTON

Being *strong* enough... was *never* her problem.

Across the room, next to Remy, Jasmine gazes sleepily out the window, staring up into the majestic swatch of luminous stars giving life to the night sky.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAWN

The sun bleeding through the Venetian blinds bakes Remy's eyes open; they look down to see they're hugging Jasmine.

REMY

Jasmine. Jaz...

She wakes slowly, her effortless escape from Remy's embrace rousing Dalton, who lifts his head off Sanaz' shoulder, chasing Jasmine and Remy as Sanaz watches.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAWN

Jasmine leads Remy down a long hallway with banks of windows on either side. Condensation sticks to the glass, turning the sun's rays into thin, misty pillars of light.

Dalton staggers into the hall behind them, clumsily picking at his eye as he pushes the classroom door shut.

Jasmine grinds to a halt, taking a moment to compose herself before turning to Remy.

JASMINE

We're going to need food... can I meet you in the cafeteria?

Remy nods, barely able to glance at Dalton as they skulk past Jasmine, who awaits Dalton's first volley. He yawns before sauntering toward her.

DALTON

So we wait here while your
unrequited fetches snacks from
the lunchroom?

JASMINE

I'm not waiting. I'm only
standing here because *you're*
slowing me down.

DALTON

C'mon, Jaz...

JASMINE

(interrupting)

How did you think this would go?
I leave, you talk me into coming
back, then what? It's almost as
though... we've done this before?

DALTON

Mmm, *petty*.

JASMINE

Couldn't agree more... I'd rather
clean a toilet with my tongue
than listen to your bullshit.

She turns down the hall. Dalton can't let it go.

DALTON

So you think your datemate will
lead you to salvation?

JASMINE

It's *my* lead Remy's following.

DALTON

...then they're in their element...

She finally turns back, slowly advancing toward him.

JASMINE

So are you. Still *talking*...

DALTON

And you're *leaving*. I guess we're
all just creatures of habit.

Jasmine nods, searching her arsenal for the next jab.

JASMINE

Did you tell Nazzy why I left?

A nascent smile melts off Dalton's face.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Lucky for us, there are a few mistakes a woman *can* undo.

DALTON

Shut up!

JASMINE

It is *something*... to see your words fail you... you have a *lot* to learn about accountability, Dolly. Forgive me if I don't wait for the next lesson.

Dalton can't bring himself to look at Jasmine. When she finally leaves, the classroom doors BURST OPEN behind him; Marese exits first, followed by Sanaz, who pierces Dalton with a daggered glare as she rushes past.

MARESE

Pissing match between exes?

DALTON

Nazzy, wait!

SANAZ

Fuck off, Dolly.

The two of them follow Jasmine down the hall. Dalton sighs, folds his arms, grits his teeth, and KICKS the wall.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

Jasmine, Remy, Sanaz and Marese walk along a serene suburban street, each of them carrying a bulging backpack.

Sanaz glances at the picturesque houses on the left before she's distracted by bird songs emerging from the forest to her right. A brief survey has Sanaz smiling once she spots a CARDINAL tending a nest.

SANAZ

Like it never happened...

When Marese looks back, Sanaz points toward the nested branch for emphasis. Marese shakes his head.

MARESE

Nothing *happened* to the bird...

Sanaz' indignant silence draws Marese's attention.

MARESE (Cont'd)

...alright... what's the cardinal doing?

SANAZ

Building a nest.

MARESE

Is it minding *our* business?

SANAZ

Of course not...

MARESE

No. A bird doesn't concern itself with the business of men anymore than an insect does the business of god. Why would a cardinal give a shit whether civilization is on the brink of collapse, when all it needs is another twig?

SANAZ

For a bird, one twig in a nest could be the difference between life and death.

MARESE

What's your point?

SANAZ

Our nest is bigger... much harder to fix when it falls apart. Nature tends toward equilibrium. And right now, that cardinal's doing just fine.

Jasmine looks back at them like a mother content to let her children bicker as the hum of car engines fills the air. The Imperial Gardens gate is just ahead.

Jasmine comes to a stop as Remy walks past her to shake it. They look back to see Marese staring blankly; each car in the long line has dead occupants, and Ofc. Andrew lies motionless on the ground beside them.

Jasmine walks over to the only door and gives it a tug, but it's locked. Remy, Marese, and Sanaz all pull on the gate. As they back off, Marese nods assertively.

MARESE

We can make it over this...

To their shock, Jasmine KICKS and SHATTERS the glass of the visitor entrance. Once she notices them staring at her, Jasmine points through the empty door frame: *this* way.

EXT. ENTRY ROAD - MORNING

Sanaz opens the 'Customs' door, her eyes drawn toward the ground before she rushes out, kneeling next to the corpse of Ofc. Andrew, who has a streak of dried blood caked to his ear. Sanaz checks his belt, absently pulling at the empty GUN HOLSTER as Marese and Remy walk past her.

SANAZ

That's disturbing...

Marese and Remy hesitantly peer at the parade of carnage amid several cars as Jasmine inspects the gate: the bumper of a jeep has twisted a massive bulge into the bars, its warped metal rungs wrapped around the grill.

JASMINE

We aren't getting *this* open...

Jasmine looks back as Sanaz finishes glancing in the passenger side window of a van, grimacing as she shakes her head. Marese and Remy have made it further down the line; many of the cars are pressed together unharmed, but the condensation on the windshields fails to mask the SPLATTERS OF BLOOD on the inner glass.

Jasmine peers through the driver's side window on the jeep, watching BLOOD DRIP DOWN the steering wheel.

SANAZ (O.S.)

All self-driving...

Jasmine JUMPS at her interjection.

SANAZ (Cont'd)

After what happened? I would *not* risk getting behind the wheel.

Jasmine nods ruefully, taking a deep breath as she begins the hike past the procession of ruined vehicles.

Remy watches Marese and Sanaz trudge toward the orange haze of a rising sun; Jasmine stops to watch, her jaw tightening before she follows.

EXT. JUNCTION 799 - DAY

Marese steps beyond the shadow of a dense forest swallowing the tiny road, passing a massive marble slab bolted with a bronze plate: 'IMPERIAL GARDENS - PARADISE'. Remy longingly peers back at the paved path leading home.

Marese stops at the onramp for Route 799; a thousand feet of tall, thick, sun-dappled grass separates them from a dull gray highway stretching endlessly in either direction. The air is deathly quiet, and not a single car is visible.

REMY

So, ah... where to?

SANAZ

Victor's in the city...

Sanaz points off to the right.

SANAZ (Cont'd)

...but... it's the same distance to
the capital...

Sanaz nods to the left. The group glances back and forth indecisively before reaching the same unspoken conclusion. Marese sighs, placing his hands on Jasmine's shoulders.

MARESE

I've always wanted to see the
capital.

Jasmine purses her lips at his weak attempt at humor, wrapping him up in a big hug.

JASMINE

You'll be alright...

After she releases him, Jasmine hugs and kisses Sanaz. She lets go with an apprehensive nod and heads toward grass.

SANAZ

We'll come back when we find
something... I mean... *assuming* we
find something...

JASMINE

Be careful.

Marese joins Sanaz, the meadow swallowing them up as they trudge toward the highway.

As Jasmine turns to the exit ramp, Remy watches Sanaz and Marese disappear into the grass a moment before it is swept by a sinister wind. Unsettled, Remy runs after Jasmine.

EXT. HIGHWAY - EVENING

Jasmine and Remy walk between the highway k-rails, surveying the wasteland of twisted metal that used to be HUNDREDS OF CARS as a storm gust whips at the trees.

As Jasmine pushes forward undeterred, Remy sporadically slows down to peer in the window of the occasional car.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Tungsten bulbs fixed atop the twenty-foot-high dividers illuminate a mist of rain falling on ribbons of shredded tire and splintered glass glittering on the pavement.

Jasmine breathes a sigh of relief as she and Remy come upon a CARGO TRUCK. Remy works the cabin latch, revealing a load of furniture, including two large couches.

INT. CARGO TRUCK - NIGHT

Lit by an electric lantern, Jasmine slowly eases herself onto a couch, pulling a blanket out of her backpack and rolling herself up.

Remy pulls the hatch down, stealing a long look at Jasmine before they take to the other couch. When Jasmine doesn't take heed, Remy turns off the lantern.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

A tiny crowbar wedges under the cargo latch before the door SCREAMS OPEN. Jasmine and Remy squint down the highway at the embers of a rising, muted sun.

Jasmine sticks the crowbar in her backpack and leaps down. Remy rushes past her to try the driver's side door at the front, but it's locked. When Jasmine passes them, they rush to catch up.

EXT. HIGHWAY - EVENING

Their face wet and stubbly, Remy looks up at a sign: 'City - 210 Kilometers'.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Remy's stubble has sprouted into a beard.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

As Jasmine trudges up an on-ramp to a moonlit rest stop, Remy races ahead to a red sedan, opening the door and pulling out the necrotic driver with obvious disgust.

Finding the keys dangling under the wheel, Remy grabs them and TURNS, only to hear the pained CLICK of failed ignition. They slam their fist on the dashboard.

INT. GAS STATION MINI-MART BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jasmine VIGOROUSLY washes her face in the sink of a large, dingy public bathroom. A NOISE from elsewhere in the room startles her enough to perk up and look around.

INT. GAS STATION MINI-MART - NIGHT

Remy aimlessly peruses racks of snack food before walking to the front door and peering outside. The lamps in the parking lot flicker to life in defiance of the night.

Jasmine swings the bathroom door open.

JASMINE

Did you hear something?

Remy listens before subtly wagging their head.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...did you see anything...?

Remy shakes their head again as Jasmine lets go of the door and ambles toward the register.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...find a map?

REMY

No, but... we don't even use paper maps at home.

JASMINE

Well, Victor's address won't do
us much good without one...

Remy nods, removing their backpack.

REMY

I know... hungry?

JASMINE

Starved...

Remy pulls out a bag of trail mix and a bottle of water.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Ugh... if I have much more of that
I'm gonna throw up...

REMY

...huh?

JASMINE

...just sick of eating it...

Remy flashes a pained smile before closing the backpack,
watching in silence as Jasmine grabs the nearest bag of
junk food and fleeces it open.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

The outline of several SKYSCRAPERS sprouting enormous WIND
TURBINES can be seen on the horizon through a brown band of
smog. Half of the turbines are still spinning.

Jasmine and Remy stagger to the edge of an overpass, their
clothes dirty and their faces lean with malnutrition.

REMY

Hello!?

The wind blows a plastic bag across the barren street.
After a moment, Remy rushes to catch up with Jasmine.

EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

Jasmine and Remy eye a TWENTY-CAR PILEUP ahead as they walk
down an off-ramp labeled 'Chemical Road Exit'.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX - EVENING

Jasmine and Remy emerge on a thin road sparsely littered
with broken glass and rusted metal.

The uniformly sterile buildings boxing them seem like pillars in a massive concrete mold, and the dark gray sky doesn't offer much reprieve from the urban banality. As Jasmine stares into the distance, Remy leans down to look at one of the bodies.

A low DRONING SOUND fills the air; it may be mechanized equipment, the turbines, or the rolling ambiance of the atmosphere, but for a city, the streets are eerily quiet.

REMY

Jaz...

Her attention arrested, Jasmine stalks over and kneels down. The body, a pale YOUNG MAN dressed in black, has what looks like a triangle-shaped black piercing embedded on his right tragus and a crater of BLOOD caked around his ear.

REMY (Cont'd)

That's a Voxi...

JASMINE

I know...

REMY

I've just... never seen one in the flesh before.

JASMINE

...I'm sure this is an important moment for you...

REMY

(interrupting)

...it means Ghazal was wrong...

Jasmine's face goes blank.

REMY (Cont'd)

It wasn't just us... and it wasn't just phones...

Jasmine contemplates the body as Remy stands and takes in their surroundings, spotting a pharmacy with OPEN DOORS.

INT. PHARMACY - EVENING

Remy and Jasmine appear in the doorway, both pinching their noses as they look at the floor in horror: a line of CORPSES lie folded over each other near the registers. Jasmine finally notices that Remy is pointing up front.

Jasmine follows Remy's aim behind the counter, seeing stacks of dusty blank CDs next to a pile of paper MAPS.

Jasmine steps over and around the bodies, preserving the store's crypt-like silence as she arrives at the counter and STRETCHES to reach them.

Suddenly, CELL PHONES start RINGING and VIBRATING. Jasmine fumbles the maps, hugging them in panic as she JOLTS back to her feet and looks down.

A dozen Voxi implants in the ears of corpses BLINK RED like morbid Christmas tree lights. Remy nudges a body with their foot, rolling it over to reveal a CELL PHONE with an apple sticker on the case. They bend over to pick it up.

JASMINE

Don't *touch* it!

Remy examines the faceplate before showing it to Jasmine.

REMY

'Mom'.

Remy answers, presses it against the counter, and then holds it up to a display case: nothing happens. Remy turns to Jasmine as the ringing stops, carelessly pressing the phone into some hand sanitizer that BUBBLES and EXPANDS.

REMY (Cont'd)

...it's not...

The bottle concussively EXPLODES; Remy DROPS the phone and DUCKS, wiping off their jacket.

REMY (Cont'd)

FUCK!

Jasmine takes a moment to uncoil; still clutching the maps, she swallows hard and glances at the phone, then Remy.

JASMINE

I think that's... sonication...

Remy turns to her in a mix of confusion and terror.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Concentrated sound waves create...
cavitation bubbles in liquid... use
it on something wet at a high
enough frequency? Boom.

REMY

...uh huh...?

Jasmine shoots Remy a withering glare.

JASMINE

...doesn't happen by accident.

Remy grabs the phone and hangs up, swiping at the screen until they catch Jasmine's contemptuous scorn.

REMY

Sorry... there's *gotta* be a way to
navigate with this thing...

The low rumbling of thunder echoes outside the building.

JASMINE

...you wanna start by getting us
the fuck out of here?

Remy nods assertively and marches through the door.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX - EVENING

Jasmine and Remy step outside as a distant FLASH chases them down the street to escape the approaching rain.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DUSK

Remy sits beneath a bank of huge, filthy windows in the empty expanse of an unfinished room, endlessly toying with the phone from the pharmacy.

On the floor in front of Remy, Jasmine pores over a map.

JASMINE

Okay... we came in on Chemical
Road, *here*... the Industrial Park...
and... *here's* the elevated train
line we can follow out to Luzerne
if we have to... and... Victor should
be... *here*... right?

Jasmine points to the map, looking back at Remy, who is obviously distracted by the phone. They glance up: one look at Jasmine's face is sufficient to bring them to the floor.

REMY

Uh, yeah, that's it... so, uh...
what's with this *line*?

Remy points to a solid green bar that extends across the width of the map. The area above it is shaded beige while the space beneath it is light blue. Jasmine shrugs.

JASMINE

So... what's the plan?

REMY

Can we walk it?

JASMINE

I don't see why not...

Remy glances back as the darkened windows are peppered with heavy rain.

REMY

Probably better to wait it out...
get some sleep...

Jasmine nods, still looking over the map as Remy scoots back toward the wall. Once satisfied, Jasmine stands up, but something outside catches her eye.

It's a VIDEO BILLBOARD across the street; a warm GREEN LIGHT emanates from the triangular Voxi piercings on two people's ears:

PERSON ONE: You thinking what I'm thinking?

PERSON TWO: You read my mind.

Telepathy, or VOXI Text@? Get Innovated.

Jasmine sighs, watching Remy play with the phone as she walks past to get to their backpack.

REMY (Cont'd)

...there's some kind of map... thing...
on this... not sure how to use it...

Ignoring them, Jasmine rummages around, producing only a bag of trail mix. She shoves it back inside, taking a long swig of Remy's water as she sits against the wall quietly, her arms resting on her knees.

REMY (Cont'd)

...what happens when we find Vic?

Jasmine stays perfectly still, her eyes narrowing.

JASMINE

...what do you think?

REMY

...I'm following your lead, Jaz...

Jasmine nods, sighing through her nose.

JASMINE

I'm gonna get some sleep.

Using her backpack as a pillow, Jasmine lies down on her side. After a moment, her face scrunches as she sits up to swipe away the dust on the floor around her head.

Still holding the phone, Remy watches her affectionately.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

As Jasmine lies sleeping, the rain hammers the windows behind her. Her eyes open with a tiny inhale as she scratches her nose and looks down: Remy's arm is around her waist. Jasmine torques her hips to slide it off.

Remy SHIFTS and Jasmine's eyes POP OPEN. After a moment, Remy rests their forearm on her hip. Jasmine grits her teeth, gently seizing and removing Remy's wrist.

A few seconds pass before Remy gently touches Jasmine's shoulder with their fingertips.

JASMINE

Stop.

Defeated, Remy rolls over on their back. Jasmine waits as long as she can before closing her eyes; the instant Remy takes in a deep breath, they POP OPEN.

REMY

Jazzy...

JASMINE

Don't...

REMY

...this isn't about us...

Jasmine's frustration shivers through her entire body until she FLIPS OVER, propping herself up to face Remy.

JASMINE

Then why are you here?

Remy stares back silently, clearly heartbroken. Jasmine swivels around, showing Remy her back as they sit up.

REMY

...if going out with me was gonna
be a problem... I just... wish I knew
up front. What changed?

JASMINE

I got to know you.

Remy wilts, rubbing their damp eyes as they push off the floor and saunter toward the painfully intense fluorescent light of the grimy stairwell. Jasmine watches repentantly.

Remy stops in the doorway, lifting a slim metal container to their lips and pulling out a cigarette.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...I thought you quit?

Remy's look says it all. Jasmine gives up, lying back down as Remy's muffled footsteps echo down the stairwell.

The flash of CAR HEADLIGHTS flares up in the windows behind her. A vehicle quietly whines to a stop and a door quickly opens and SHUTS. Jasmine remains undisturbed.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING

Jasmine takes in a DEEP, PANICKED BREATH as she wakes up and rolls over on her back, peering nervously across the floor of the empty warehouse.

She stands, looking out the window at the murky sky, then turns back, her eyes darting around frantically.

JASMINE

Remy!?

The vacant, filthy room remains ominously silent.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

(quietly)

Shit!

Jasmine gathers everything she can find into her backpack and rushes toward the stairs.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX - MORNING

Jasmine BLOWS THROUGH the front door, looking back and forth down the barren street.

JASMINE

REMY!?

Jasmine's voice ping-pongs between the buildings as a FLOCK OF CROWS EXPLODES from behind a dumpster to her left; she turns slowly and advances, her face souring as she sees a LEG jutting out from the far side.

Her eyes crest the edge of the steel bin, wincing as she beholds a BODY slumped over a pile of garbage. She uses her foot to turn it over; Jasmine covers her mouth to halt a terrified SOB.

The apple-stickered phone is next to the body, caked with jellied brain. Jasmine turns away in shock.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

I'm sorry... I'm sorry...

She glances back at Remy's corpse.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Oh god, I'm so sorry...

Jasmine cries harder, crumpling into the nearest wall before pushing herself away from Remy. Halfway down the street, she collapses into tears.

EXT. CHEMICAL ROAD - DAY

Surrounded by factories, Jasmine staggers down the silent urban street, her swollen, glassy eyes probing the road.

She looks up for a moment and stops, eyeing up a 15-foot steel and concrete barrier seemingly built through the middle of an intersection a few blocks away.

Perplexed, she turns left, immediately coming to a stop: just ahead, SEVERAL DOZEN CORPSES appear to have fallen toward the left avenue of an intersection.

Jasmine continues cautiously, following what would seem to be a TRAIL OF BODIES until she can peer around the corner.

EXT. CENTRAL STREET - AFTERNOON

Hundreds upon hundreds of CORPSES are strewn up and down Central Street. CAR SMASHUPS pepper the sidewalks, roads, and buildings, having grinded up gruesome carnage in their wake. Horrified, she looks behind her to see that this waking nightmare stretches in both directions.

Jasmine shields her nose from the awful stench as she tries to avoid stepping on the bodies. She advances slowly until a wet TEARING SOUND emerges from just up the street.

Jasmine stops. She holds her breath. The sound ceases.

A GERMAN SHEPHERD steps out from behind a car several hundred feet away, licking BLOOD off its lips as it glances innocently in Jasmine's direction. Then it GROWLS.

JASMINE

Oh... *god*, no...

Jasmine backs away. When the Shepherd BARKS, she trips over a corpse and SLAMS to the pavement.

Jasmine scrambles to her feet and RUNS as the barks rise in pitch until the Shepherd TAKES OFF after her. It gains on her quickly; the sound of the hunt echoes down the street, alerting a HUSKY to leap out of an alley and join in.

The dogs seem to glide through the maze of bodies as Jasmine STUMBLES across chests, legs, and arms. Breathless, she FLINGS herself into a dark back alley.

EXT. CENTRAL STREET ALLEY - AFTERNOON

Jasmine looks back as she keeps running, then SLAMS into a wall. It's a DEAD END. Frantic, she looks at the ground for something to defend herself, but the Shepherd is already SPEEDING down the alley after her.

She SLINGS the backpack off her shoulders and SWINGS it just as the Shepherd LUNGES, SLAMMING both of them into opposing brick walls. When the Shepherd recovers, Jasmine KICKS it in the neck; the animal YELPS and collapses.

The Husky turns into the alley as Jasmine gets to her knees, grabbing her backpack again and THROWING IT; the Husky catches it and WRENCHES IT AROUND as Jasmine runs up and KICKS it in the jaw, KNOCKING IT OUT.

Wheezing out a series of terrified breaths, Jasmine notices that each dog is still breathing. She falls to her knees, slides back against the wall, and GAGS.

In the distance, another DOG howls. Jasmine LUNGES and grabs her backpack, clawing her way back toward the street.

EXT. CENTRAL STREET - AFTERNOON

Jasmine stumbles through the bodies. With each step, a heavy CRUNCH is produced under her feet; she's treading on dozens of CARCASS AND HIDE BEETLES.

Jasmine RUNS, but she next stumbles upon another PILE OF BODIES, provoking a flock of BIRDS to flutter up in her face. Yelping in fear, she runs up the steps of the nearest building, a depressingly barren concrete tower.

INT. COLLEGE BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Jasmine limps down a hallway, her entire body going slack when she spots a cheap dormitory couch perched against a wall. She drops her bag and COLLAPSES on it.

INT. COLLEGE BUILDING - EVENING

Jasmine lies SNORING on the couch as a FACE briefly peeks through a doorway at the far end of the naked corridor.

Once again, JOHN HALL pokes his wiry, pale, stony frame through the door, his analytical brown eyes narrowing as he stares at Jasmine from a distance.

John pulls out a tablet, his focus locked in as he swipes away at the screen. When he finishes, he stuffs the tablet in his dark trench coat and takes out a CELL PHONE.

Keeping the phone pointed in front of him, John slinks down the hall, creeping up until he's looming over Jasmine. He lowers the phone, holding it mere inches from her ear as he speaks in a soft monotone.

JOHN

Are you alone?

Jasmine JOLTS, coiling up for a two-footed KICK at John's arm, sending the phone SKITTERING across the floor.

John spins away, turning to find Jasmine in a kickboxing stance, her panicked breaths echoing down the corridor.

JASMINE

...what?

John winces stoically, favoring his arm and glaring at her.

JOHN

...it's just you?

JASMINE

...just *me*?

JOHN

In the building.

John glances down the corridor dismissively, and Jasmine does not take it lightly.

JASMINE

...*what*!?

JOHN

...are you *alone*?

JASMINE

Yes, I'm fucking alone...

John finally stands, but his eyes remain pointed down the empty hall like a disdainful adolescent. Jasmine leans toward him, failing to get him to look her in the eye.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...*hi*. I'm Jasmine.

JOHN

...and there's no one else?

JASMINE

...how many times are you going to ask me that?

JOHN

Don't answer my question with a question.

JASMINE

...well excuse the *shit* out of me...

As John sheepishly recoils, Jasmine takes a moment to soak in his cagey awkwardness and finally relaxes.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Hey... sorry... you just... can't sneak up on someone like that. Let's say we start over...

Before she can finish, John turns and WALKS AWAY.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...are you fucking *kidding* me?

Jasmine chases him down and GRABS his arm, SPINNING him toward her; they end up awkwardly close together, backing away as though they just screwed up their first kiss.

They share a magnetic gaze until Jasmine releases him, her eyes falling to the floor. John's cold glare remains fixed on hers, his face as unyielding as a marble statue.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Look... I need *help*... you're a netizen... right?

JOHN

...making you...?

JASMINE

...imperial.

John looks to the wall, searching for guidance he won't receive, his facial expression still etched in stone.

JOHN

We can't stay here.

Jasmine watches indecisively as John shuffles off down the hall, unable to justify her willingness to follow this jerk even as she marches in his wake.

INT. SMART CLASSROOM - EVENING

CLOSE ON A CELL PHONE SCREEN

The image shakes so VIOLENTLY that almost nothing can be seen. Hollow SCREAMING pierces the havoc before the screen settles on a MAN lying in a frantic, crowded city sidewalk, his jaw twitching as BLOOD pools under his head.

In THE STREETS, people's heads SNAP with aerosol gusts of BLOOD as though they're being picked off by snipers, falling limp on every surface like rag dolls. A CAR HORN bleeds in like the awful screech of an alarm clock.

The horn BLARES as a CAR splattered with blood RACES toward the camera, SMASHING into it with a sickening CRUNCH.

Jasmine DROPS THE PHONE, pushing it away with disgust. She's sitting against the wall of an oversized lecture hall filled with empty desks. John leans back on an adjacent wall, staring off into space.

JASMINE

How can you *watch* that...?

JOHN

...how can you *not*?

JASMINE

So you're going to answer *my* question with a question?

She's got him there. John manages a glance her way.

JOHN

You asked what happened... *there* it is... you get a call... your mom, your dad, your best friend... if you answer, you die. Or... you try calling someone... and you die.

JASMINE

So... all at once... every phone just started killing people.

JOHN

...except for landlines.

JASMINE

...who did this?

JOHN

How else I can say it? I *don't* know, and it *doesn't* matter.

JASMINE

You think you're gonna live through this if you don't know how it happened?

Jasmine grabs the phone, **FLINGING** it at John with an impact that **ECHOES** in the barren room. His **PHONE** suddenly **VIBRATES**, and Jasmine reacts as though she's been shot.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

What the fuck!?

JOHN

...it comes in waves.

John calmly retrieves his phone and silences it. Jasmine plops back against the wall, taking a deep breath to calm herself. She's clearly had enough.

JASMINE

I'm looking for someone... Victor Reichman, you know him?

JOHN

Two *million* people live in this city... you *really* think I know the *one* you're looking for?

JASMINE

...you think you can meet me halfway here?

Jasmine sighs as John stays quietly busy with his phone.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...will you fucking look at me?

John glances up as he puts the phone away.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

You braced me with your bad faith... but here we are. So the way I see it, you've got two choices: cut me loose, or take me with you.

John rests his head on the wall, looking up.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Oh. You don't know.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

Jasmine and John jog down the sidewalk through light rain, turning down a few steps toward a brightly lit glass vestibule. John goes through first and Jasmine follows.

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

The door unlocks and John pushes it in.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

John drops his keys and phone on a metal rack beneath a massive TV and turns on the lights: a single fluorescent fixture flickers on above the white tile floors, black concrete walls, and single twin bed fit for a prison.

JASMINE

Yours?

JOHN

No. I'm not gonna stay anywhere I
can't afford to leave behind.

John impatiently wields his tablet and sits on the bed, the screen illuminating his face as Jasmine silently watches. After a moment, she tosses her backpack on the floor.

JASMINE

(unimpressed)

...okay...

Jasmine turns her attention to his TV, running her hand along the flat, smooth screen. John turns it on and tosses her the remote. She barely catches it, flipping through channels of static and emergency broadcast signals.

She starts pressing random buttons bringing up various apps and functions, quickly becoming overwhelmed until she throws the remote at the bed.

Suddenly, HEAVY STATIC pipes in over a set of unseen speakers. Jasmine looks accusingly at John.

JOHN

Delta waves... white noise. Helps
me sleep.

With John focused on the tablet, Jasmine clutches her head, shakes it, and lies down on the bed, her shirt sliding up to expose her stomach. John glances down at her abs.

JASMINE

So... where do *I* sleep?

John motions to the floor. Jasmine promptly sits up, fixing her shirt with self-conscious irritation.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

That's it? The *floor*...?

JOHN

Do you expect me to offer you my
bed because you're a woman?

JASMINE

No... I'd *hoped* you'd be kinder to
a *guest*.

JOHN

Did you bring anything?

Jasmine opens her backpack, freeing her mangled blanket so she can peer at John through a massive hole.

JASMINE

Dogs got to it.

John's nod is understanding, but not precisely sympathetic. He reluctantly removes his trench coat and hands it over.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...better than nothing... thanks.

John's gaze is already fixed on the tablet again.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Look, I'm *really* tired... but I don't think I can go another night without a shower... you mind?

John silently nods at the bathroom door. After waiting for more, Jasmine digs into her backpack for fresh clothes.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

(to herself)

No, I don't mind Jasmine. Oh, thank you, can I get a towel? Nah, I'd rather let you drip dry...

Jasmine looks back at John, shaking her head when she sees he's absorbed in whatever's happening on his tablet.

INT. JOHN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Steam billows over the glass stall as Jasmine yanks her shirt off. After looking herself over in the mirror, she opens it to reveal shelves packed with prescription pills. After glancing at a label, she grabs a razor and shuts it.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jasmine peeks into the bedroom to see John in bed, his face bathed in the cold light of his tablet as television static coats the room in a dim blanket of perpetual haze.

Jasmine turns off the bathroom light and saunters into the bedroom, her head still wrapped in a towel while she lays out her mangled blanket as a crude mattress. Jasmine briefly dries her hair before squaring up the towel into a pillow, finally lifting John's trench coat off the floor.

JASMINE

...I never got your name.

John stays quiet as the oscillating delta waves bounce around the walls in concert with the hypnotizing TV static.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

(mimicking him)

...your *name*?

JOHN

John Hall.

Jasmine smiles as she wraps herself in his trench coat.

JASMINE

Jasmine Lasome.

John finally shuts off the tablet and reclines.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

So, *John*... if you try anything...

I'll beat the shit out of you.

John nods complacently as Jasmine closes her eyes, stuffing her bicep under the towel as she settles into the buzz and hum of the room.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Jasmine lies peacefully asleep in the faint glow of a muted morning. Her eyes crest before she sucks in a DEEP GASP: JOHN is staring down at her from the edge of his bed.

JASMINE

You *scared* me...

Jasmine trails off as she yawns, tightening the trench coat around her shoulder as she stretches her legs.

John pushes himself off the bed and heads into the kitchen as Jasmine resumes her painful morning routine.

JOHN (O.S.)

Breakfast?

Jasmine excitedly kicks away the trench coat and pushes herself off the floor, standing up...

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - MORNING

...and walking into the kitchen, where she finds John

enveloped by a steamy haze in front of the stove.

JASMINE

Wow... didn't strike me as a cook.

JOHN

...how else would I eat?

JASMINE

You just seem like a... cereal guy.

John turns and slides two eggs onto a waiting plate next to a set of flatware at the miniscule dining table, then resumes tending the stove.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Over easy, huh?

JOHN

So you can eat around the yolk...
or the glair.

Jasmine takes a seat, impressed. She looks at the eggs; they stare back like a set of glassy, emotionless eyes.

JASMINE

John... what were you doing when
you found me?

John glances back at her, quickly exacerbating her mood.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

What did you *plan* to do next,
what *happens* next? Who are you?

JOHN

...that's a lot of questions.

JASMINE

With no answers.

As John calmly turns off the stove, Jasmine clutches her steak knife, eyeing him up before he turns to face her.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

I came here with someone else...

Jasmine tightens her grip on the knife as her eyes go misty. A momentary pity crosses John's face as he studies Jasmine, finally taking a seat across from her.

JOHN

...they didn't make it?

Jasmine stares him down, her grief quickly turning to rage.

JOHN (Cont'd)

What happened?

JASMINE

You don't *know*?

JOHN

...I'm afraid I have some bad news...
just because you *don't* know
something... doesn't mean *I* do.

John casually takes a bite of his egg as Jasmine considers his point, quietly pulling herself together.

JOHN (Cont'd)

Yesterday, someone followed me
here. She spent the night, ate my
food... and threatened me with a
steak knife.

Neatly embarrassed, Jasmine absently slides the knife across the table as John resumes eating.

JOHN (Cont'd)

So you find this... Victor... and
leave the city. Then what?

JASMINE

I told you... Paradise... or Luzerne...

JOHN

...to do *what*? With *who*?

JASMINE

...too many questions.

JOHN

With no answers. And even *if* you
get them... you'll need a *reason* to
keep going.

John stays silent. Jasmine can't stare at his vacant face for more than a few seconds. She relents with a sigh.

JASMINE

I *can't* go home empty handed...

JOHN

Why not?

Jasmine pokes at her eggs, heartbroken and irascible.

JASMINE

John... stop... what do you do next?

JOHN

Not *what*... *where*. The hospital...
and the conference center. After
that, I'll help you find Victor.

She looks back at him uneasily.

JASMINE

...how can I trust you?

JOHN

Don't. You don't know me. But If
we find your friend... you'll be
someone else's problem.

John continues eating with the subtlest of smirks. Jasmine
finally manages a pained smile.

JASMINE

Well... if you try anything, I *will*
beat the shit out of you.

JOHN

I'll assume that going forward.

Jasmine nods passively as she digs into her eggs.

EXT. EXETER STREET - MIDDAY

Choked by the chalky sky, the sun casts a gray haze over
the street. John slinks around a glass and steel building
as Jasmine follows, eyeing up a DEAD BODY.

JASMINE

...*where* are we going...?

JOHN

The hospital.

John is immersed in his tablet.

JASMINE

...uh huh?

Jasmine stops as John marches on, watching the wind carry a plastic bag across the street.

JASMINE (Cont'd)
...and what happens at the
conference center?

When he doesn't stop, she continues walking.

JASMINE (Cont'd)
...are we... trying to find someone
else to ignore while we play with
our tablet?

John reacts to this provocation, but doesn't respond.

JASMINE (Cont'd)
...good talk.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MID-DAY

John and Jasmine approach a large, serene, dark hospital. John waves his hands at the door sensor, but it won't open. He tries to PRY THEM OPEN with his fingers to no avail.

He steps back, trying a SIDEKICK that fails miserably; John clutches his knee as he rolls to the ground grimacing. Jasmine glances at him before she steps up to the door, rapping her knuckles on the glass.

JASMINE
Laminated. I think you had the
right idea the first time...

She yanks the tiny crowbar out of her backpack and PRIES the heavy doors. Once cracked, Jasmine pushes them open easily. When John recovers, Jasmine motions for him to limp through.

INT. HOSPITAL - MID-DAY

The sun only penetrates a dozen feet into the empty, black hallway. An 'exit' sign glows ominously in the dark void. Jasmine comes in behind John as he stops.

JASMINE
Why is it dark... hello?

John continues slowly, his face intermittently lit by a soft, red light as Jasmine wanders toward the wall, feeling her way along in dismay.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...can't find any switches... HELLO?
John... what are you *doing*?

He stops. Jasmine can only see John's dim silhouette as a RED LIGHT blinks in front of him. He turns back.

Jasmine rushes up next to him. He's staring at a translucent panel labeled with the hospital blueprints. On the third level, room 319 is BLINKING.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - MID-DAY

The elevator door opens to reveal John and Jasmine.

The dark hallway is lit by a single open door that illuminates the dust in the air. The bloody, long-dead BODIES of TWO NURSES have been shoved against the walls.

Jasmine SNEEZES. Taken aback, John glares at her.

JASMINE

...*what*?

John quietly sidesteps to the open door: Room 319.

INT. ROOM 319 - MID-DAY

Jasmine peeks through first to find an empty patient bed with ruffled sheets. Jasmine quickly checks behind the door and finds a PATIENT CHART as John walks past her to survey the room. Jasmine's eyes furrow as she absorbs the chart.

JASMINE

...oh god... sounds like this guy's
Voxi was malfunctioning...

She looks up long enough to see that John is gone before turning her attention back to the chart.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...John?

Jasmine looks up again as John appears in the hallway door, pointing toward the bodies in the dark corridor.

JOHN

They were stabbed to death.

Jasmine freezes. They both TURN to the door as though reacting to a dog whistle. Jasmine tosses the chart on the bed, grabbing John and steering him into the hall.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - MID-DAY

Jasmine keeps John moving toward the elevator.

A SHADOW moves behind them, producing an alarmed YELP from Jasmine. The backlit silhouette of a MALE FIGURE comes to a stop a few dozen feet away, his fingers twitching. Jasmine and John might as well be deer in headlights.

The figure steps forward until he's bathed in the doorway light: he's gangly with sunken features and sparse hair, dressed in a green gown. BLOOD is sparingly caked on his arms up to his elbows, and a SCALPEL glints in his hand.

JASMINE

(quietly)

We can just... go...

PATIENT

Hahhh... mmm... no...

His neck twitches, jerking his head back before he sighs with a smile, STABBING his thigh with the scalpel. He kneels gracefully, scraping his hand through a blood puddle on the floor so he can LICK HIS FINGERS.

The patient cracks his neck, whispering something inaudible incredibly fast before snickering to himself.

JOHN

...okay... we'll be leaving...

He smears a bloody palm into his eye socket and twists the scalpel in the air, sighing with transcendent glee as he drills a finger into his ear.

PATIENT

Okay.

As John backs Jasmine away, the patient starts HUFFING. They turn and RUN for the elevator as he bears down, taking a wild SWIPE at John, who leans back and nearly falls. Jasmine DUCKS and PIVOTS to get on the patient's other side as John stands.

John and Jasmine, now on opposing sides of him, back him into a wall. He looks at them eagerly, LUNGING for Jasmine; she KICKS the scalpel out of his hand with a LOUD KIAI.

John LEAPS IN to restrain the patient, but he's easily overpowered and WRANGLLED to the floor. John tries and fails

to push away the sweaty, filthy psychopath whose teeth are now forcefully GNASHING at his nose.

Jasmine wields the scalpel against the patient's neck, but he GRABS her arm, LODGING the blade in the tile floor. John fumbles for his phone and holds it to the patient's head.

The patient GASPS; a stream of blood SPRAYS from his ear as he finally goes limp. Jasmine staggers back toward the wall, catching her breath as John SHOVES the body away.

JOHN

...thank you.

JASMINE

...sure...

John nods softly, reaching back to press the button for the elevator, which opens INSTANTLY. Neither of them can take their eyes off the patient's corpse as they back in.

INT. ELEVATOR - MID-DAY

John stoically presses the button for the first floor and steps back as Jasmine looks him over sympathetically; both of them have been misted with blood.

JOHN

...I've never killed anyone before...

JASMINE

...me either...

JOHN

...yeah... me either.

Jasmine's face flattens as she processes this response. After a moment, she EXPLODES into laughter.

JASMINE

Oh, we should be *dead*...

JOHN

Death doesn't scare me.

JASMINE

Oh good... me either.

EXT. EXETER STREET - EVENING

John walks toward the receding sun on the avenue, casting a long shadow as Jasmine struggles to keep up behind him.

JASMINE

So *why* did we go to the hospital?

John furiously swipes at his tablet, not acknowledging her.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Oh. That's what I thought...

John looks up as a faint HIGH-PITCHED WHIR bounces ominously through the maze of buildings.

JOHN

Move...

John trots toward an alley as Jasmine drags behind.

EXT. EXETER STREET ALLEY - EVENING

John SLAMS against a brick wall in a filthy, narrow alley as Jasmine plops down across from him. She wants to speak, but John holds his hand out as he favors the intersection with a desperate glare.

A DRONE with a spotlight pointed at the road passes by. As the sound fades, John lets out a terrified sigh.

JASMINE

What was *that*?

JOHN

Drone... I haven't seen one this far north...

JASMINE

Christ... I thought it was a *dog*... a few days ago I was chased into an alley just like this...

A long silence lingers while Jasmine catches her breath, taking in John's sullen face as illuminated by his tablet.

JOHN

Feral. Dogs are just wolves with social skills. When things go south... they know we're easy pickings...

JASMINE

...I might know some *people* like that.

JOHN
People can't be feral.

JASMINE
...yes they can.

Jasmine watches as John ignores this challenge.

JASMINE (Cont'd)
Take away clothes and phones...

John continues to ignore Jasmine, his attention fixed on his tablet as he looks up 'feral people'.

JASMINE (Cont'd)
...you don't have many *friends*... do
you?
(pause)
Have you ever... *been* with someone?

Jasmine restrains her disbelief as John stays quiet.

JASMINE (Cont'd)
So... no boyfriend, no girlfriend,
no *friends*... no Voxi...?

JOHN
Of course not.

JASMINE
...of course not!

JOHN
You saw that man in the hospital.
I don't take risks like that.

Vaguely impressed, Jasmine finally smiles.

JASMINE
...of course not.

She rests her head against the wall, looking up toward the patchy clouds. There's barely a star in sight. She sighs.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

John's in bed, Jasmine's on the floor, and the delta waves bounce around their concrete tomb as television static glitters on the walls. Restless, Jasmine cracks her neck.

JASMINE
I can't sleep.

JOHN

Me either.

John quickly pushes himself out of bed, stepping over Jasmine to get to the bathroom. The light is BLINDING.

JASMINE

And you don't want to play with
your tablet?

Behind the door, John rattles through pill bottles in his medicine cabinet.

He opens it, his black silhouette tossing a RED PILL on top of the dark trench coat covering Jasmine. She picks it up and glares at John as he turns off the light.

Jasmine looks like she wants to say something, but John goes immediately into the kitchen. She silently curses as the faucet hisses in the next room.

John reenters the bedroom, clinking a glass of water next to Jasmine before returning to bed.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Thanks.

As John turns his back to her, Jasmine finally gives in.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

So... could you *explain* the tablet
thing to me?

John lies flat on the bed, slowly turning to Jasmine. They stare at each other, both clearly expecting an apology. When John relents and grabs the tablet, Jasmine nudges closer until her face is bathed in its pale blue light.

JOHN

You know Envoyeur?

JASMINE

...does it watch people travel?

JOHN

You *have* heard of it...?

JASMINE

No... the etymology... envoy, voyeur...

JOHN

(interrupting)

It's a GPS-based social network
we're using to scour the city...
find supplies, look for answers...

JASMINE

...we?

JOHN

The other users.

JASMINE

Other... survivors? Out there?

Jasmine looks over the screen to see an interactive vector map of the city. John swipes his finger over it, moving toward a bright green checkmark above the hospital.

JOHN

This was a question mark... thanks
to us, it's *checked*... we call it
'clearing the tag'.

Jasmine smirks as John scrolls over to find a question mark icon. When he does, a thin horizontal POPUP bounces into the top of the screen:

Envoyeur wants to know your location.

JASMINE

...is that how you tell people
where we are...?

John pulls the tablet away.

JOHN

You don't want to do that.

JASMINE

...why not?

JOHN

That's called 'sending up a
flag'... and you can. But you don't
get to choose who *finds* you.

JASMINE

...is that how you found *me*?

JOHN
(nodding)
Someone must've spotted you going
into that building..

JASMINE
And you cleared the tag.. nothing
ventured, nothing gained..

John doesn't know how to react to that.

JASMINE (Cont'd)
Seems like you took a risk. I
hope I was worth it.

Jasmine smiles as she lies back down, then John SIGHS for
the first time. Jasmine SITS UP as though heeding a cry for
help, but John barely glances at her attentive face.

JOHN
Do you remember what you asked me
at breakfast this morning?

JASMINE
...*that's* an obtuse question...

JOHN
If you could trust me.
(beat)
...how can you trust anyone?

JASMINE
An act of faith.

Jasmine lifts the red pill, pops it in her mouth, drinks,
and lies down with a smile. John vacantly follows suit.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Jasmine drools on her blanket in a hopeless state of
unconsciousness. She takes a DEEP BREATH as she wakes,
looking around the empty room.

John pokes his head in from the kitchen.

JOHN
Hungry?

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Jasmine painfully rubs her eyes as she winces at the
phosphorescent light crowning his head.

JOHN

Sleep okay?

JASMINE

Much better...

John seems uncharacteristically pleased as he brings over two steaming coffee cups followed by two bowls of cereal.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Your parents ever make you
breakfast?

(beat)

Mine did. I had to tell 'em about
my day every morning. More of a...
forecast than a quiz. Reflective
learning.

JOHN

Reflective learning?

JASMINE

It challenged my assumptions...
helped me keep an open mind...

Jasmine wipes a tear away, trying to hold herself together.

JOHN

I don't have any sentimental
anecdotes... and I see no point in
hearing yours.

Jasmine takes a moment to process, then LAUGHS HEARTILY.

JASMINE

Alright... you're not much of a
talker. But trust goes both ways,
Mr. Hall... sooner or later, you're
gonna have to tell me *something*.

JOHN

Like what?

JASMINE

At this point, *anything* would do...

John stares hard into Jasmine, finally taking out his tablet and resting it on the table before spinning it to face her. When Jasmine glares at John, he points to the screen with his eyes. Jasmine picks it up.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...what am I looking at?

JOHN

There's someone on the highway.

JASMINE

...what?

JOHN

A person... on the highway, near
Chemical Road... calling for help...

JASMINE

...and?

JOHN

You want to?

JASMINE

Well, first... this is *not* what I
meant when I said you should tell
me something... second... why is this
worth the risk?

John gives a nearly imperceptible shrug.

JOHN

Seems like this one's more of a
talker.

Jasmine lets loose a wry smile.

EXT. CHEMICAL ROAD - MORNING

From a distance, John and Jasmine's movement through the
desolate cityscape might be misconstrued as a mirage;
nothing stirs but them.

John's face remains as lifeless as the landscape while his
eyes drill into the faded blacktop. Behind him, Jasmine
glares suspiciously at her surroundings until the all-
pervading deadness sees her sigh in resignation.

In the distance, a soft MALE VOICE calls out two barely
audible syllables. Jasmine immediately perks up.

JASMINE

...what?

The feeble wind carries the voice once more as John and
Jasmine listen. Suddenly, Jasmine's eyes widen.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

Jasmine runs past a scattered muddle of crashed cars and human corpses as the echoing voice ricochets between the dull acoustics of the highway's massive concrete dividers.

DALTON (O.S.)

NAZZY!? JASMINE!?

JASMINE

Hello? HELLO!?

DALTON (O.S.)

JAZ!?

When Jasmine reaches the top of the onramp, a dirty, ragged, exhausted body staggers past a car: It's DALTON. Her eyes fill with tears as she RUSHES him. Dalton dissolves into manic sobs as they fall to the ground.

JASMINE

...it's just you?

After a moment, Jasmine pulls away to see Dalton's swollen glare cast down. He nods, courting reveries of unthinkable despair as more tears stream down his face.

Finally, he looks up at Jasmine.

DALTON

It's just you...

Jasmine nods as Dalton strokes the back of her neck affectionately, unable to hide the terror in his eyes.

JASMINE

...what happened?

The answer is too big for Dalton to put into words.

JOHN (O.S.)

We can't stay here...

Dalton rubs his eyes when he sees John glaring at them.

DALTON

...where's Nazy? Remy?

Jasmine pushes off the asphalt, watched by the vacant windows of an abandoned building peeking over the highway guard rail; for a moment, she sounds like John.

JASMINE

Nazzy and Marese went west.
Remy's body is down the ramp by a
dumpster, if you need to see...

John turns, staring pensively at Jasmine. She peeks back at him with a knowing glance.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...he's *right*... we have to go.

Delirious with exhaustion, Dalton nods. Jasmine lifts him to her shoulder, leading them back to the overpass. Dalton smears his eyes again, feebly extending his hand to John.

DALTON

Dalton.

Glaring anxiously at their surroundings, John looks right through him, turning to lead the way down the onramp. Dalton looks to Jasmine in shock. She shakes her head: you get used to it.

EXT. CHEMICAL ROAD - MORNING

Guided by his tablet, John stops next to the dumpster and stares at the ground. As John kneels, Jasmine helps Dalton descend the onramp a hundred feet behind him.

DALTON

What's he doing?

JASMINE

I don't know, something with
Envoyeur... John?

Dalton alertly turns to Jasmine as she watches John stand, giving her a subtle wave as he marches toward them. When Jasmine isn't looking, John stuffs SOMETHING in his pocket.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Dalton, now showered and shaved, lies prone on John's bed, trapped in a paralyzing sleep as a distant faucet runs continually.

JASMINE (O.S.)

...are you sure there isn't
something you want to tell me?

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - EVENING

John intently scrubs a stainless-steel pot in his sink, glancing back at Jasmine as she stares at him from the table.

JASMINE

...more of a *doer* than a *talker*?

John thinks for a moment... then nods. Jasmine chuckles.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...not wasting any water either.

John points to a closet across from the sink. Bemused, Jasmine gets up and opens it. It's stocked, floor to ceiling, with 5-gallon WATER JUGS.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Jesus...

JOHN

There's more across the hall.

He turns off the sink and hangs the pot on a drying rack.

JASMINE

Well... you know what you're doing.

Once he finishes drying his hands, he starts toward the bedroom. Jasmine intercepts him in the doorway.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Let him sleep...

John peels away, hesitating before taking a seat at the table. Seemingly pleased, Jasmine sits across from John, favoring him with a look of subtle affection as she waits for him to speak.

JOHN

You realize... we don't find him
without Envoyeur? And I don't
find you?

Jasmine nods. John takes a moment before continuing.

JOHN (Cont'd)

If... we find your friend... there
are a few ways forward... you *still*
want to go back?

A smile dissolves from Jasmine's face as her gaze wanders. John glances behind her; Jasmine turns to see Dalton rubbing his eyes in the doorway.

JASMINE

Feeling better?

DALTON

...how long was I out?

JASMINE

...five hours?

Dalton groans, crossing the room to open the freezer; it's stuffed completely with frozen meals. Stunned, Dalton pulls out a vegetable sauté.

John gets up to help, but Dalton stares into him until he returns to his seat. An instant later, Dalton acts as though the exchange never occurred. The pain of Jasmine's next question is written all over her face.

JASMINE

So, Dalton...

DALTON

(interrupting)

So John... we didn't have a chance to get acquainted... you may have me at a disadvantage, as I'm sure you've heard plenty about *me*...

Jasmine watches Dalton prepare his food in silence, awaiting his next words with an inscrutable scowl.

JOHN

No.

Dalton casually glances over his shoulder to flash them a self-satisfied grin.

DALTON

...well... me and Jaz slept together...

Jasmine looks at Dalton, more confused than angry.

DALTON (Cont'd)

...not exclusively... but I was the only guy... that meant a lot to me... it's nice to know you're the only plow in the valley.

JASMINE

Dolly...?

Dalton discreetly waves her off. He's up to something.

JOHN

I haven't done much... farming.

Dalton turns to face John, leaning back on the counter.

DALTON

Oh... so... you never...

John stares into him. Dalton loves this.

DALTON (Cont'd)

...ever? Do you *think* about it?

JOHN

No.

DALTON

What if you want kids?

JOHN

...I'll find myself a valley.

Dalton looks to Jasmine with playful disgust. Unable to endure any more of this, she **SHOVES** herself up. Dalton continues cooking as John watches her walk out.

INT. 4TH FLOOR APARTMENT HALLWAY - EVENING

Jasmine sits beneath a fire cabinet with an axe and a hose. A door opens just down the corridor; when Dalton walks out with his food, Jasmine is too furious to look at him.

DALTON

Jazzy... I'm sorry...

Dalton stops a few feet shy of Jasmine to collect himself.

JASMINE

...it don't care when you talk
about our sex life, *until* you
treat me like a fucking conquest...

DALTON

Can I explain?

Jasmine glares at him as he slouches on the opposite wall, taking a bite of his sauté.

DALTON (Cont'd)

I wanted him *raw*... I wanted rage,
humiliation... envy... heartache...

JASMINE

And you got *nothing*.

DALTON

Exactly. If he's a puzzle, I want
to see the *pieces*... Jaz... there are
none. I was looking for fire, but
isn't even smoke.

JASMINE

...stop mangling idioms and *cut* the
shit. What the *fuck* are you
talking about?

DALTON

Jazzy, you came out here looking
for Victor, right? And Remy
followed you, *obviously*...

Jasmine shoots him a withering, infuriated glare.

DALTON (Cont'd)

You wanted help. Remy wanted *you*.
I wanted to *find* you... but what do
we need?

JASMINE

I'm not playing word games.

DALTON

To survive.

Jasmine shakes her head as though it'll drown him out.

DALTON (Cont'd)

Right? Once we find food and
shelter... why keep going? What's
the point?

JASMINE

Dolly... a few hours ago, you were
a walking corpse. I had to *help*
you back here... for what? *Another*
pissing match?

Dalton's eyes probe the floor as a silence festers.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

What's. Your fucking. Point.

DALTON

We don't know what John *wants*... or what he *needs* to get it.

JASMINE

Yet somehow, we're *alive* because of him. I know what you're *doing*, Dolly... it's *embarrassing* when you play your hand this bad.

Dalton grins. The jig is up.

DALTON

You always could see right through me...

JASMINE

Because you're fucking transparent.

DALTON

Oh, I don't think so... you can only hear an act so many times before memorizing it. You've got me chapter and verse. Still... it warms my heart, going through the motions... since I met you, I never *wanted* to fight with anyone else...

Jasmine can't stifle a chuckle, sighing as she seems to find a sort of peace in that notion.

DALTON (Cont'd)

...and in spite of everything... I'm glad we still have each other.

JASMINE

...and John.

Dalton nods, his brisk hum rankling Jasmine.

DALTON

...are we the only people in the city...?

JASMINE

...we're being cautious...

DALTON
We? You're defending him.

JASMINE
I am *not*...

DALTON
...now you're denying it.

Jasmine quietly seethes.

DALTON (Cont'd)
You remember what I said before
you left?

JASMINE
You never shut up, so you're
giving me a *lot* to choose from...

DALTON
...I said we didn't need any help.
I was *wrong*...

Stunned by this admission, Jasmine drinks in the silence.

DALTON (Cont'd)
We moralized on the risks of
technology... *Victor* got it... for
all his faults, he was ahead of
the curve. I should've listened
to you. So now... I want what you
want... what does *he* want?
(passively)
Y'know... don't listen to me...

Dalton grunts in pain as he stands, ambling back to the
apartment while spooning more sauté in his mouth.

DALTON (Cont'd)
I *obviously* don't know what's
going on here. Just... let me know
when *you* do.

Dalton gives her a weak smile as he continues down the
hall. Jasmine sighs the moment he closes the door.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jasmine and Dalton lay on the floor, undisturbed by the
infrequent CLICKS rising above the shimmering white noise.

The only light in the room comes from the APPLE PHONE John recovered earlier, its soft blue glow illuminating his face as he lowers the volume.

On the floor adjacent, Jasmine is awake, her eyes open and anxious despite her obvious exhaustion.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAWN

John's building reflects the muted cityscape like an obsidian mirror amid a deathly silent graveyard.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOF - DAWN

A door WRENCHES OPEN with a metallic yawn. John props it open to let Jasmine out ahead of him while Dalton lingers behind, wrapped in a blanket.

Nursing a steaming cup of coffee, Jasmine rushes toward a concrete balcony to behold the golden haze of dawn dancing through an abandoned metropolis.

John smears his back into the staircase enclosure as Dalton deserts him to hobble after Jasmine.

DALTON (O.S.)

I forgot you'd never seen the city before... there's the Liberty skyscraper... and the conference center... I spent the night there before my college interview... as much as I enjoyed it...

JASMINE

(overlapping)

...you preferred Paradise.

DALTON

(overlapping)

...I preferred Paradise.

Dalton nods as a blustery wind rattles everything loose on John, who remains a stone relief on the wall behind them. Jasmine regards Dalton piteously and sighs.

JASMINE

Dalton...

He turns away, agonizingly aware of where this is going.

DALTON

It was the food... there just... wasn't enough. No one... *believed* it could go so bad so fast... then it got worse...

The pain of homicidal guilt registers on Dalton's face as tears dissolve the last vestiges of his composure.

JASMINE

...we can't go back?

As Dalton grimaces, Jasmine sighs. She gazes off the side of the building, losing herself as flickers of the rising sun splash across a nearby skyscraper's windows.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...maybe you're right...

Something catches Jasmine's eye before she can continue.

DALTON (O.S.)

Even if we *could*, I couldn't...
face... whoever was left...

He's lost her; she walks toward the other end of the roof as if possessed.

DALTON (O.S.)(Cont'd)

...Jazzy? Jaz...?

Dalton hobbles away from the ledge to join her. Jasmine shakes her head in disbelief as she stops, her eyes following a four-lane street until they reach a 15-foot-high steel and concrete barrier that stretches for miles throughout the city, holding back THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

The waves crest at the base of the darkened skyscrapers beyond the barrier, extending into a bay where the sporadic tombstones of drowned buildings gasp above an invasive sea. Jasmine subtly shakes her head.

JOHN (O.S.)

Levees... to stop the melt...

DALTON (O.S.)

...they didn't start until it was too late... like the turbines... the airflow change made the streets hotter, so the propellers mostly generated power to cool them down... one of a half-dozen sad examples of regression rife in this and every other city...

Dalton prattles on behind Jasmine, who is hypnotized by the

delicate rays of the auburn sun sparkling across the black wave tips of a radiant, menacing sea.

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Jasmine is perched on the counter, peering out the window as Dalton continues to drone, seated at the table across from John with the tablet between them.

DALTON

...demassification was inevitable.
No system this pervasive could
truly sustain itself. Progress is
impossible without weakness...
technology has you in chains... and
we were the weak link...

Dalton turns to Jasmine, desperately seeking a cheerleader, but she is unmoved.

DALTON (Cont'd)

That's why the Gardens thrived...
break the chains... affect the
change.

JOHN

Is it disappointing... that they
broke without you?

Dalton smiles dismissively. Jasmine remains transfixed.

DALTON

So John... what change would you
have us affect today?

JOHN

After the conference center... I'm
open to suggestions.

DALTON

...why would we go there?

JOHN

So I can clear the tag.

Dalton glares at him. After a moment, he looks at Jasmine.

DALTON

Count *me* in. Is there enough food
to pack lunch?

John barely nods as he stands, walking to the front door and crossing to the adjacent apartment. Once he's out of sight, Dalton grabs the tablet and starts fiddling with it.

DALTON (Cont'd)
Clear the tag? Is that opaque
enough for you...?

Jasmine unleashes the subtlest of sighs.

DALTON (Cont'd)
You have the *slightest* idea what
he's talking about?

She's not listening. He finally turns to look at her.

JASMINE
(quietly)
They knew it was coming...

DALTON
...what?

JASMINE
They didn't build the levees
until it was too late.

A deep, cynical fear creeps in at the corners of Dalton's eyes as he studies Jasmine's face.

DALTON
Uh-huh...

Jasmine sighs again, shaking her head. Dalton calmly puts the tablet back on the table.

DALTON (Cont'd)
Jaz... this is a *bad* time to go
goofy on me...

JASMINE
Fuck off. Paradise was an island...
we're in the ocean now.

John reenters from the hallway, slowing when he sees the tension between Jasmine and Dalton. Dalton glances at the tablet, turning to John with an exaggerated smile.

DALTON
...ready?

INT. 4TH FLOOR APARTMENT HALLWAY - EVENING

John steps out of his apartment, holding the door for Dalton and Jasmine. He closes and locks it behind them, leaving a key atop the frame. Jasmine follows John.

DALTON

Jaz...

Dalton seizes Jasmine's arm, holding her back until John reaches the stairwell. She WRENCHES free of his grasp.

DALTON (Cont'd)

Look, stay behind me... I've got a...

JASMINE

(interrupting)

Behind you? You have no idea what you're doing. Fuck. Off.

Dalton lets go, watching Jasmine follow John into the stairwell as his face stirs in a mix of shock and anger.

EXT. CONFERENCE CENTER - MORNING

An immaculate courtyard of concrete and steel surrounds a deactivated fountain in front of the conference center's imposing arches. John leads the way down a set of steps with Jasmine and Dalton behind him.

DALTON

So... what happened to Remy?

Jasmine pretends to ignore him, glancing up at the dense blanket of clouds muddying the sky.

JASMINE

...I don't want to talk about it.

Ahead of them, John fiddles with the tablet.

DALTON (O.S.)

...*that* bad?

JASMINE (O.S.)

I don't know what you want me to say... we're a dying breed. It doesn't end well for us.

In the distance, the echo of a THUMPING ENGINE ricochets between the indifferent buildings. John stops, glaring back at the urban maze before his eyes pierce the tablet.

CLOSE ON TABLET SCREEN

An icon in the upper left corner of the interface indicates that the TABLET'S GPS LOCATOR FUNCTION is ON.

John slides it open and turns it off as quickly as he can, SNAPPING back toward Jasmine, his face drenched in terror.

A brilliant, gleaming FLASH reflects off the windows of a distant intersection; a CAR is driving toward them.

JOHN

...run!

DALTON

Are you kidding!? Look!

Jasmine watches Dalton wave frantically at the car as John flails toward the reflective glass of the conference center. She chases after John as Dalton's jubilant cries echo along the desolate concrete.

INT. CONFERENCE CENTER LOBBY - MORNING

John BURSTS through the doors, falling to his knees as Jasmine lands behind him.

She looks back at the glass walls separating them from a cold, barren courtyard as John yanks out his tablet and SHOVES IT in her face.

JOHN

You turned it on?

JASMINE

...turned *what* on...?

John FLINGS the APPLE PHONE to the floor in front of her.

JOHN

...recognize *that*?

She does.

JOHN (Cont'd)

Your *friend* was using Envoyeur... everybody could see them... and you send up a flag on *my* tablet? What did I *tell* you!?

JASMINE

Dalton...

JOHN	JASMINE (Cont'd)
(overlapping)	(overlapping)
Oh come on...! Maybe this	Well <i>I</i> didn't do it! No,
seems like a game to you...	it's not... John... JOHN!

John struggles to his feet, trudging away before he shoots Jasmine a stoic, wounded frown. She steps toward him, the weight of her unspoken remorse shoving him back further.

JASMINE (Cont'd)
Hey... *he's* out there... *I'm* in here...

John hesitates, struggling against her words before taking her by the bicep to pull her away from the windows. Jasmine quickly SWATS him away.

JASMINE (Cont'd)
...the fuck *off* me!

She follows as he trots down a lane of elevators, pressing an entire bank of buttons until he makes it to a stairwell door. Jasmine chases him inside.

INT. CONFERENCE CENTER STAIRWELL - MORNING

John and Jasmine ascend a wide shaft of marble steps that spiral toward the infinite darkness above. John doesn't break stride or look back as he continues up.

JOHN
They probably saw where we came
from, so we can't go back... and we
can't leave here until dark...

The BANG of a metallic door rattles from the bottom to the top of the empty stairwell. Jasmine and John duck.

DALTON (O.S.)
Jaz?

Jasmine can't restrain herself from peeking over the partition, watching DALTON step through a doorway and look back at SOMEONE behind him on the ground floor.

DALTON (Cont'd)
No, we came from across town... I
don't know exactly... hold on...

VICTOR (O.S.)
Well, caution is a virtue...

Jasmine recoils, looking at John. He shakes his head.

DALTON (O.S.)

Jaz?

Jasmine watches John crawl up the steps behind her before she peers over the partition again; VICTOR REICHMAN, a short, sallow, tired-eyed milquetoast steps out behind Dalton, looking up and locking eyes with her. He smiles.

VICTOR

There she is...

JASMINE

Victor!?

VICTOR

Hiya!

JASMINE

Oh my god... it's *fine*... John, it's...

Jasmine looks back, but John has disappeared. She shakes her head, popping up and BOUNDING down the steps to the first floor so she can EMBRACE Victor in a tearful hug.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

I can't *believe* it's you...

VICTOR

Well, believe it motherfucker...

Jasmine lets out a HEARTY LAUGH as she wipes her eyes.

DALTON

He wanted to surprise you...

Jasmine isn't sure how to take that, but she's quickly distracted as a YOUNG WOMAN enters the stairwell.

VICTOR

Ah, where are my manners...

Jasmine, this is Nora...

NORA VANDERKA, a pale, shapely, smoky-eyed sphinx, comes to a stop just behind Dalton sporting an alluring grin.

JASMINE

Victor... is this your girlfriend...?

NORA

He wishes... *you're* more my type.

Jasmine lets a coy smile escape as Victor looks past Nora.

VICTOR

...and, uh... Kamran...

KAMRAN ISADO, possessing menacingly vacant yellow-brown eyes and an austere, off-putting gaunt banality, stays in the doorway, his hands hidden behind his back. Jasmine nods at him before looking at Victor, who couldn't be happier.

VICTOR (Cont'd)

...so, you've met *my* friends...
where's yours?

JASMINE

I don't know... he's... paranoid...

Jasmine trails off as she spots a VOXI in Victor's ear.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...you got a Voxi...?

Victor absently touches the black triangle on his tragus.

VICTOR

You noticed... so... what got your
paranoid friend on Envoyeur...?

Jasmine snaps out of her trance to glare at Dalton.

DALTON

Actually... that was my call.

As Victor glances at Dalton, a surprised grin infects his face. Jasmine looks at both of them nonplussed.

VICTOR

How serendipitous... huh...

JASMINE

Tell me about it... we only came to
the city to find you...

VICTOR

He told me... but not *why*...?

JASMINE

You got plugged back in... I
thought you could help us, but... I
don't know... it's a lot *weirder*
out here than I thought...

The Voxi in Victor's ear BLINKS GREEN.

VICTOR

Well, there's some truth to that...

On cue, Kamran reveals a sinewy RIFLE he's kept hidden, pointing and firing a DART into Jasmine's neck. Dalton looks on in horror as Nora wraps him in a HEADLOCK.

Jasmine YANKS the dart out and SLUGS Victor, taking him with her as she drops to the ground. Nora laughs hysterically as Victor cradles his jaw.

VICTOR (Cont'd)

...you should've stayed home...

Victor wobbles to his feet as Jasmine subsides to the floor, drooling and pawing at her throat as Kamran steps forward and PUMPS a dart into Dalton's neck.

Jasmine fights to stay conscious with every fiber of her being, losing every step of the way.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Darkness. A muffled, nonsensical struggle precedes Dalton's face being pressed against John's kitchen floor. Panic rockets through him as he struggles, wrenching at his WRIST BINDINGS and blinking furiously at the unforgiving light.

DALTON

What the fuck...

Dalton pushes his shoulder off the ground to stand, but a HAND holds him down. When his struggle to focus finally resolves, Dalton is faced with KAMRAN's soulless eyes.

DALTON (Cont'd)

...what the *fuck*!? Jazzy!? VICTOR!?

Victor sticks his head through the bedroom opening in a state of piteous exhaustion. A chorus of strained groans boils up from the bedroom behind him; JASMINE wails in protest as Victor smiles at his horrible victory.

VICTOR

Dolly... just in time. I was trying to figure out... was it you who called me a degenerate?

DALTON

What? N-no... Vic... I... it's not...

VICTOR

Don't apologize... you put it best...

Victor saunters into the kitchen, pulling up a chair in front of Dalton as Kamran records them with his tablet.

VICTOR (Cont'd)

...do you have *any* idea... how much
easier that is now?

Dalton doesn't know how to process that, and it seems to please Victor immensely. Dalton finally shakes his head.

DALTON

...you did this?

Victor grins broadly, lowering his head in disappointment before bringing it back up and wielding a SCALPEL.

VICTOR

Theirs not to reason why, theirs
but to do and die. It's *chaos*.
And with it comes opportunities.
There's nothing to stop us... from
doing what we want...

Victor lifts the blade to Dalton's face, and Dalton GOES BERSERK, slamming his eyes shut, grimacing, and jerking his head around violently. The scalpel moves steadily closer to Dalton's face as he thrashes in terror.

Dalton's head swings forward, SKEWERING his eye on the blade, followed by a horrified SCREAM.

VICTOR (Cont'd)

...did it to yourself... quiet now...

With serene curiosity, Victor FLICKS the blade at Dalton's cheek; Dalton's head cocks back and his mouth snaps shut. When he opens his lips again, Dalton's cheek PEELS APART with a rush of blood.

Red tears trickle down Dalton's nose, dripping off his chin as he twitches in raw, nerve-shredding agony. He finally opens his right eye to find Victor at peace.

DALTON

What are you *doing*... what are you...

VICTOR

All these questions... nag, nag-
nag, nag-nag... y'know, you're
pretty *fucking* annoying.

Dalton sputters, drooling blood as Victor shields his face.
NORA appears in the bedroom door behind them, wiping her
mouth. Dalton squirms as Victor strokes his hair.

VICTOR (Cont'd)

Oh Dolly... you *do* realize... it only
gets worse from here...?

Pleased with Dalton's distress, Victor lifts the scalpel.
Dalton VIBRATES with fear and furiously wrenches away.

DALTON

...this how you killed Remy?

Victor withdraws. Dalton loosens up as Victor studies his
face; for once, Victor seems genuinely remorseful.

VICTOR

...they didn't make it? I'd never
hurt Remy... let's be honest...
everyone liked them more than
you... especially Jaz...

Dalton SPITS a wad of blood in Victor's face. He wipes it
away as Dalton snickers to himself in sublime panic.

DALTON

Keep this up and soon you won't
have anyone to play with... *then*
what'll you do?

A loud whine of exertion from Jasmine distracts Nora, who
steps back into the bedroom, cooing as if to an infant.

A phone VIBRATES. Victor pulls the blood-caked device that
felled Remy out of his pocket, feigning shock.

VICTOR

Oh! Dolly! It's for you...

Victor presses the phone to Dalton's ear, BLASTING chunks
of his BRAIN against the wall. Dalton's limp body SLAMS to
the floor; as Victor THROWS the phone at his corpse, Nora
returns. Kamran hasn't stopped recording.

VICTOR (Cont'd)

Their friend is still out there...
if he comes back, *I'd* like to
greet him...

Nora disappears into the bedroom, bringing Jasmine's wails to a fever pitch. Victor nods at Kamran as he walks into the hall, leaving the door open. Kamran leans forward, stoking Dalton's leaky eye socket with a grubby finger.

In the background, the door across the hall OPENS SLOWLY. Kamran stops recording and sits back, swiping the screen feebly as a SHADOW crests the wall behind him.

A KNIFE SLAMS into Kamran's throat, GUTTING his trachea as a gloved hand SMOTHERS him, shoving his chin down to his chest. Kamran shakes, grasping feebly at his attacker until blood EXPLODES out of his nostrils.

Kamran finally goes limp, and JOHN removes his hand, quietly placing Kamran's body on the ground before slinking toward the bedroom. As the life drains from Kamran's eyes, the Voxi on his ear BLINKS GREEN.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Jasmine is tied to John's bed, gagged, and stripped down to her underwear as Nora bites at her breast. When Jasmine whimpers, Nora sighs in satisfaction, wielding a scalpel to SLICE the strap on Jasmine's knickers and TEAR them free.

NORA

You never forget your first time...

Jasmine stares at her defiantly. Nora seems to read her expression with astonishing precision.

NORA (Cont'd)

Oh. Well... you'll never forget me...

Nora drops the scalpel as she BURIES HER FACE between Jasmine's thighs. Jasmine grimaces, shutting her eyes. A gloved hand WRENCHES Nora's hair, YANKING her back as a phone presses into her ear and BLOWS HER BRAINS OUT.

John THROWS Nora's corpse to the ground as Jasmine weeps in relief. A STUMBLING RATTLE erupts from the kitchen, and John rushes toward the doorway...

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - EVENING

...where Victor KICKS HIS FACE. John grabs Victor's leg, dragging him through Kamran's blood as they hit the floor.

Victor KICKS John again, knocking him back as he reaches for the KNIFE in the kitchen. John grabs at Victor's jeans, but when he gets free, John throws himself back toward the bedroom to grab Nora's scalpel.

John turns back and Victor SWIPES at his neck, GASHING a wound on John's left arm; John YELPS as Victor KICKS the scalpel out of his hand and LUNGES.

John SWATS his injured forearm defensively as Victor PUNCHES back, his eyes alight with furious insanity.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Jasmine fights to free herself, SCREAMING as blood trickles around the bindings at her wrists and ankles.

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Dazed, John grabs the apple phone, but Victor SWATS it away, SLICING at John's throat as John BLOCKS him, nabs his collar, and HEAD BUTTS him. When Victor drops the knife, John tries to smear his fingers through the blood to grab it. Victor SWINGS his fist and John dodges him.

Victor's next PUNCH hits John's forehead; Victor instantly recoils in pain, and John grabs Victor's hand, SNAPPING his pinky with a WINCING CRACK.

Victor wrenches free in agony, DRIVING John's head onto the blood and STEPPING on him as he runs for the door. COVERED WITH BLOOD, John drags himself into the hallway...

INT. 4TH FLOOR APARTMENT HALLWAY - EVENING

...watching as Victor disappears into the stairwell. John's head hits the carpet in exhaustion. He blinks lazily, his tired eyes peering back into the apartment.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Jasmine pants in fear as the door shuts; tears of relief stream down her face as JOHN rises up in the doorway arch, bending down to grab the scalpel and cut her bindings. She leaps off the bed and grabs her clothes as John COLLAPSES.

Now dressed, Jasmine runs into the kitchen...

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - EVENING

...BURSTING through the doorway to see Dalton sprawled across the floor. Her face deadens.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Jasmine sits on the bed, defeated. Looking at her from the floor, John pushes himself up and sits next to her. She barely notices as John rests a hand on her shoulder.

When Jasmine doesn't move, John lets go, squeezing his knees. Once she's stared at the floor in terror long enough, Jasmine rests her head on John's shoulder.

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

With Dalton and Kamran's bodies now gone, John studiously mops up the massive BLOOD PUDDLE coating his kitchen floor.

To his left, WATER CRATES are stacked against the door.

INT. JOHN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jasmine stands under the vaporous haze of a boiling shower, her blank, wounded stare blanched in post-traumatic shock.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

John lies in his bed bruised, bandaged, exhausted, and unable to sleep. Jasmine is on the floor, her face awash with the dull, naked pain of catatonic trauma.

JOHN

I thought you knew him.

JASMINE

I *did*...

John stares at Jasmine patiently, and it melts her down.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

He hacked our parent's phones, recorded everything, sent the worst of it to the right people. Simple... but for us, it was chaos. I thought he did it because they were hypocrites... denying us tech while using it themselves... but I guess he just likes to watch people squirm.

Jasmine winces, gently shaking her head.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Now... there's no way back. The
hard path... is the only one left.

JOHN

At least you're not walking
alone.

After nodding, Jasmine pulls herself off the floor and lands on John's bed, wrapping an arm around his waist. She closes her eyes as John glances at their entwined bodies.

EXT. CITY - MORNING

The rising sun is choked between an oppressive gray sky and a placid ocean, shimmering across the windows of a dozen skyscrapers and their enormous wind turbines.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Rain caresses the window as thunder rumbles softly in the distance. Suddenly, an EXPLOSION shakes the building; John is up like a shot, shoving Jasmine's arm away as an ominous KLAXON blares from the street below.

JOHN

Get up.

Jasmine's face scrunches as her eyes blink open.

JASMINE

...what?

John dons his trench coat as Jasmine struggles out of bed, peeling back his curtains to peer down at the street as a THREE-FOOT WAVE crests around the side of a building, pushing a brackish phalanx of corpses along with it.

JOHN

The levee broke... put some clothes
in a plastic bag... we have to go...

JASMINE

What the *fuck*...?

INT. 4TH FLOOR APARTMENT HALLWAY - EVENING

John peers around the doorway; flickering strobe lights penetrate the darkness of the corridor, flashing against his desperate, unblinking face.

He pulls Jasmine through the door, rushing down the hall until he spots the fire cabinet. John SHATTERS the glass with his elbow and YANKS the AXE free.

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWELL - MORNING

John BLOWS through the door, dragging Jasmine behind him as he points the axe down the steps. Their footsteps echo down the narrow concrete vault until John's feet SPLASH through a river of murky water on the first floor.

JASMINE

What the...

John throttles himself into the door, inviting a harsh SPRAY of salty water that SHOVES him back as he fights toward the hallway.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Oh *JESUS*!

JOHN

COME ON!

A filthy, foamy, garbage-laced sea crests at John's waist as he drags Jasmine into the hallway.

INT. 1ST FLOOR APARTMENT HALLWAY - MORNING

John slogs toward the glass vestibule that holds back a murky OCEAN spraying through every conceivable crack.

JOHN

...just hold on to me.

Jasmine nods. John PUSHES the door open as a plume of water CASCADES through along with a tumbling procession of TRASH.

EXT. MAIN STREET - MORNING

John stands strong, holding Jasmine as the water forces them back. Finally, the flow abates, and John drags them both into the bedlam on the streets.

Dozens of PEOPLE push through corpses floating in the onrushing, repulsive, hip-deep brine. A MAN gets SUCKED DOWN by the undertow, POPPING UP an instant later VOMITING.

Jasmine spots a MAN with a crowbar tugging his young SON behind him. John makes a hard left around a corner, pointing his axe toward an elevated train platform.

JOHN

There!

As John slogs through the onrushing sea, several fleeing people follow in his wake.

SON (O.S.)

HELP! HELP!

Jasmine turns back to see the SON being dragged under by the currents near a van, his father's struggle to save him sending up a frothy plume of breaking water.

The van opens and VICTOR leans out, DARTING the father in the neck. Victor snatches the crowbar as both father and son disappear into the surf.

JASMINE

JOHN!

A DART skips off the water near Jasmine's hip. John wraps his arms around her and DIVES beneath the surface. A cloud of tiny bubbles embraces John and Jasmine as another DART slows once it impacts the dark green sea.

John BURSTS out of the waves, carried by the current as a third DART clangs off a street sign. Behind them, their erstwhile followers scatter for safety.

Victor pulls the trigger, but he's EMPTY. He chucks the gun into the foam and leaps out of the van, clenching the crowbar despite a BLOODY, BANDAGED NUB where his pinkie used to be, quickly gaining on John and Jasmine.

Jasmine peels away from John, standing up to send a KICK into Victor's midsection; he swings the crowbar down, but her move was a feint, leaving Victor open to a KICK from Jasmine's other leg.

Victor GRABS HER ANKLE, but Jasmine hooks her foot into his ribcage, WRENCHING herself toward him as she pulls them both under. John gives chase, but the undertow YANKS HIM BELOW.

Victor EXPLODES through the surf, followed by Jasmine. He lifts the crowbar again, taking two WILD swipes that she evades; Jasmine SPINS into the second dodge and SWEEPS her leg, but Victor swings the crowbar as he falls, his half-hearted parry SMACKING her forearm.

John regains his footing before Victor does, stepping into him with a swing of the axe that Victor BLOCKS with the crowbar, sending a ROUNDHOUSE KICK into John's temple. Jasmine tries a sidekick to Victor's chest, but he swings the crowbar down, STRIKING her ankle; she SHRIEKS in pain.

Victor attempts another swing as Jasmine cradles her wound, but it GLANCES off John's axe. Victor swings again, and John DEFLECTS it, clearly losing steam. Victor KNEES John in the groin and knocks him back, lifting the crowbar dramatically and SWINGING DOWN for the killing stroke.

John BLOCKS it. He and Victor both look up: The crowbar is hooked around the axe shaft. John YANKS it back, wresting the crowbar away and pulling Victor in for a head-butt.

They GRAPPLE frantically as they SUBMERGE. Jasmine searches the frothy surf, recovering only the AXE.

She freezes, watching the unbroken water rushing between the buildings. Suddenly, a limp BODY surfaces.

JASMINE

JOHN!

She trudges through the surf and flips JOHN over; his skin is pale and his mouth hangs open, a motionless pond of water keeping the air from his lungs.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

No, John!

Jasmine rushes down the sidewalk dragging him in her wake, her breath quickening as she nears the elevated platform.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM STEPS - MORNING

Jasmine drags John out of the water and starts CHEST COMPRESSIONS. Terror blankets her face as she realizes she has no idea what she's doing.

Jasmine breathes frantically into John's lips, shoving her hands into his sternum, his eyes vacant as foamy black liquid trickles out of his mouth. Barely visible, VICTOR emerges from the surf behind them.

Jasmine turns John's head as more fluid leaks out, then breathes in his mouth again. John's mouth pops open like a goldfish, letting out an abortive gag before water SQUIRTS through his nose as Victor closes in.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

COME ON, JOHN!

When he twitches, Jasmine turns him on his side; the water slides painfully, laboriously out of his quivering lips.

Jasmine SHRIEKS in pain as the crowbar SLAMS into her back. She rolls over to see Victor lifting the weapon over his head and swiftly KICKS HIM in the sternum.

Victor falls back into the water gasping as John COUGHS, his limp body starting to recover. Jasmine grabs the axe and claws her way up the steps with a few wheezing breaths, stumbling to her feet as Victor gets his bearings.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

Come on, *come on!*

Victor STOMPS on John's chest, sending out a deluge of BLACK VOMIT as he bounds up the stairs.

Victor swings the crowbar at Jasmine, but it CLANGS and SPARKS on the railing as she jumps out of the way. She swings the axe, but Victor's crowbar meets it, dragging Jasmine toward him for a HEAD BUTT.

Below them, John COUGHS desperately, still trying to find his strength as the water SURGES out of his lungs.

Stunned, Jasmine drops the axe, backing up as Victor swings at her AGAIN and AGAIN, saved only by her fleet footwork.

On the third swing the crowbar CLANGS against a stair and Jasmine STEPS ON IT. Victor looks up as Jasmine sends a SHATTERING KICK into his jaw, THROWING HIM BACK to the landing. Jasmine SLAMS on top of him and seizes his neck.

Jasmine digs her nails in, SQUEEZING with everything she has as Victor ineffectually swats at her, his glassy eyes bulging as his tongue flails.

Unsatisfied by Victor's gurgling gasps, Jasmine releases him, PUNCHING his mouth REPEATEDLY until several LOOSE TEETH gurgle up in a pool of blood.

VICTOR

Stop, stop...

As the teeth dribble out, Jasmine takes a moment to catch her breath. Victor feebly waves as she looks down.

VICTOR (Cont'd)

...we don't have to do this...

Still gathering her breath, Jasmine braces an arm on her knee to push up, hoisting the AXE as she rises.

Jasmine SWINGS it over her shoulder and BURIES it in Victor's skull with a wet THUD, the gleaming tip cleaving his left eyeball. Victor groans, sluggishly pawing at the blade lodged in his cranium as his strength fails.

Jasmine WRENCHES the axe free, staggering down the stairway toward John. Beneath the steps and along the streets, the GURGLING OCEAN flows like a whitewater rapid, effortlessly pushing cars, bodies, and dumpsters in a surging current.

John turns to Jasmine, barely able to open his eyes.

JASMINE

...let's get the fuck out of here.

Jasmine yanks John to his feet, cradling his shoulder as she pulls him to the top of the handrail, and finally steadying his dizzy stagger to lead them out of the city.

EXT. CITYSCAPE - MORNING

Water shimmers across the city streets as far as the eye can see. John and Jasmine are barely visible as they continue on the tracks.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY

Bruised, beaten, dirty, and tired, Jasmine and John walk separately along the platform. In the streets below, the water has settled ten feet above the sidewalk, the surface a muddy, unbroken patchwork of junk and corpses.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DUSK

The cold brown rails of the worn tracks rise above an infinite graveyard of pale gray rocks, sandwiched by the vibrant greens of trees and bushes.

John shuffles beneath a train station as Jasmine lazily glances up at the insects SWARMING around the buzzing tungsten bulb over their heads.

EXT. FIRST TRAIN PLATFORM - NIGHT

John and Jasmine lie limp at the naked, ugly station, each of them desperately unconscious.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - MORNING

John and Jasmine leave a pile of empty food cans in their wake as the trek continues.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - AFTERNOON

John takes a swig from a water bottle, handing it off to Jasmine as they bake under the midday sun. She accepts it gratefully, then hands it back with a tired smile.

JOHN

So, what happens in Luzerne?

JASMINE

...Luzerne?

JOHN

...I've been trying to get in touch
with them for days...

Jasmine stops dead in her tracks. After a considerable silence, she turns back to favor John with an amiable gaze.

JOHN (Cont'd)

I know how to get there... can't
promise what we'll find.

Jasmine's smile broadens as she continues leading the way.

EXT. SECOND TRAIN PLATFORM - AFTERNOON

Jasmine and John sit side by side, their legs dangling above the rail lines as insects sing in the distance.

Jasmine waits out the silence by following John's fingers as they dance across his tablet screen.

JASMINE

Still nothing?

He shakes his head. Jasmine considers saying more, then, unbidden, he points to a decrepit PHONE BOOTH at the platform edge.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

...are you serious?

JOHN

That thing's older than a fax
machine... it'll work... as long as
it still works...

Jasmine gives him a short-lived smile, her gaze wandering until she looks up at the muddy sky. John takes notice.

JASMINE

I wish you could've seen the stars over Paradise... you could see the Milky Way, even on a cloudy night...

JOHN

That's just light pollution... give it a few months... you'll see those stars from anywhere.

John favors her with a neutral glare.

JASMINE

We spent ten thousand years falling asleep under the same stars... light pollution cost us quite a view.

John nods quietly, his attention fixed on his tablet.

JOHN

...ten thousand years of vaccines, space travel, the internet... when you move forward, you leave something behind... if you ask me, losing the view was worth it.

JASMINE

Well, no accounting for taste... what did it get us? You're *still* looking at your tablet...

John points the tablet toward her.

JOHN

I found us a hotel. You wanna sleep in a bed tonight?

JASMINE

...they still take reservations?

JOHN

First come, first serve.

JASMINE

...do they have a hot tub?

EXT. HOTEL - EVENING

John leads Jasmine off the road toward a slightly unkempt chain hotel conspicuously mired in a barren, grassy field as the sun drains from a reddish-brown sky.

INT. HOTEL POOL - EVENING

The reverberating hum of churning water echoes off the dark, dank, steamy tiles of the hotel's cloistered public pool. Jasmine leans against a hot tub jet, her orgiastic groan attracting John's attention.

Jasmine gives John a lazy smile and dives beneath the bubbles, emerging moments later before slinking out of the boiling surf. John watches the water streaming down her pale, curvaceous frame as she emerges from the tub in damp underwear. He looks away, but Jasmine catches him.

JASMINE

Better get that looked at.

John glances down as Jasmine nods at the gash on his arm.

INT. HOTEL ROOM BATHROOM - EVENING

The slice on John's arm glistens with antibiotic ointment beneath two butterfly bandages before he wraps it with gauze. The pitiless light above the mirror blares against an angry bruise across the left side of his sweaty face.

Freshly showered, Jasmine steps into the doorway in her underwear as she pulls a clean shirt over her head.

JASMINE

Thank *god* you told me to pack...

John turns his attention to his wound as Jasmine leans into the door.

JASMINE (Cont'd)

I can't tell you how tense I am...

Jasmine lifts her leg, stretching it out until she plants her heel in the top corner. John looks her up and down, finally meeting her welcoming gaze; he instantly looks away. Jasmine nods to herself as she relaxes.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - EVENING

John and Jasmine lie side by side in parallel double beds, each of them WIDE AWAKE and staring up at the ceiling.

JASMINE

Fuck it.

Jasmine slides out of bed, deftly crawling in with John; before he can utter a word, her hand slides between his thighs under the sheets. John unleashes a contented sigh as he looks into Jasmine's luminous eyes. He gives himself over, kissing her with the passion of an unrequited lover seized by his fantasies becoming a reality.

Each awkward, excruciating drive is met with moans of ecstasy as Jasmine holds him down and extracts every ounce of pleasure she can from a savagely emotional THRUST.

John can't control the SCREAM that rips out of him as he clutches her lower back. TEARS of shock, confusion, and elation stream down his face as he LETS GO.

Jasmine falls on top of John, and when his tears caress her face, Jasmine wraps her arms around him, clutching his shivering body as she gazes into his vulnerable eyes; for the first time, they wander in a sublime daze.

John purses his lips as Jasmine dismounts, tenderly kissing his cheek before making her way to the bathroom. As the light clicks on and the faucet runs, John closes his eyes, his face aching with profound joy.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jasmine lays flat on her back, reluctantly playing big spoon to John's little spoon, his desperate body entwined in hers. He sighs and tightens his grip around her waist.

JASMINE

Something on your mind?

John's eyes pop open as he nuzzles against her breast.

JOHN

Where I'd be without you...

Jasmine smirks as she strokes his hair.

JOHN (Cont'd)

In that apartment... watching the
water climb the stairs.

Jasmine studies the ceiling, her eyes dancing as she puzzles this over.

JASMINE

I *made* you leave?

JOHN

You kept me going.

Jasmine looks down at his pensive frame, tightening her arm around him with a calm, confident sentimentality.

Jasmine plants a kiss on John's cheek, hugging him tightly as they both slowly, blissfully drift away.

FADE OUT

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - MORNING

Jasmine lies prone on the bed, fast asleep and drooling as a CLOSING DOOR lifts her out of an overdue dream.

She struggles to roll over, spotting John as he makes his way into the room bearing a tray with two steamy Styrofoam cups and a pair of cereal bowls. Jasmine pushes herself up with a groggy smile.

JOHN

Hungry?

EXT. HOTEL - MORNING

John and Jasmine stagger away from the hotel side by side beneath a browning sky. In spite of his pain, John manages a smile, dutifully lifting the tablet as Jasmine hugs his shoulder, snuggling in as she lugs the axe behind her.

JOHN

Well... we're out of the city...

Several small icons that look like digitized PEOPLE mingle amid the usual textures of the vector map, which also includes a handful of green checkmarks and red x's.

JASMINE

Are those *people*?

JOHN

Not sure if that's good or bad out here... we're closer to your territory than mine...

JASMINE

Eh... closer to meeting halfway...

JOHN

Then your guess is as good as mine...

JASMINE

I think we can handle it.

JOHN

Famous last words...

EXT. SECOND TRAIN PLATFORM - AFTERNOON

As Jasmine nurses a pain in her side, John smirks and points at the PHONE BOOTH, wiggling his tablet in the air.

JOHN

We'll try Luzerne, then I'm done...

JASMINE

Keep it... they could stand to learn a thing or two...

John shrugs indifferently, stuffing the tablet back in his trench coat.

EXT. PLATFORM PHONE BOOTH - MORNING

John pulls the booth's folding door open and wedges himself inside. He lifts the handset, instantly producing an audible DIAL TONE.

He hesitantly brings the earpiece to his ear, finally pressing his head against the handset. John looks back at Jasmine before he turns to dial.

John once again points the handset away as a generic call tone echoes inside the booth. When the ringing stops, he pins the handset to his right shoulder as he looks back at Jasmine.

JOHN

Anything I can say so they know it's you...?

POP!

BLOOD SPRAYS out of John's left ear as he instantly goes limp. Jasmine GASPS in shock, covering her mouth with both hands as John crumples and she watches a greasy sliver of his brain slide down the glass.

EXT. SECOND TRAIN PLATFORM - AFTERNOON

Jasmine falls back on her butt, her eyes wide as she shivers with each resigned breath.

She glances at the motionless body wrapped in a trench coat as the handset wags in the booth, occasionally SMACKING against the glass.

Jasmine looks at the ground in desperation, starting to catch her breath. She massages her hands against her face, looking at John, then back at the ground before she PUSHES HERSELF UP.

EXT. PLATFORM PHONE BOOTH - MORNING

With utter despondence heavying her face, Jasmine ruffles John's trench coat, searching his pockets until she produces the TABLET. She sighs, setting it down on the concrete behind her.

Jasmine leans into the enclosure, wrapping John in a hug and squeezing him gently as her eyes pinch shut.

JASMINE
(barely audible)
I'm gonna keep going.

As she stands, she GRABS THE TABLET off the concrete.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - MORNING

Jasmine LEAPS off the platform, jumping down to the tracks with the axe in one hand and the tablet in the other as her long shadow stretches across the worn planks that forge a misty path toward an uncertain fate.

The tracks remain silent until a few BIRDS sing to herald the rising sun as Jasmine disappears into the morning fog.

THE END