

Shadows over Earth

FADE IN:

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, TOP FLOOR COMPUTER ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

On a desktop littered in soda cans next to a computer is a metallic coaster in the shape of a UFO. A YOUNG MAN in his early twenties throws another empty can on top of the coaster as he feverishly types away at the keyboard.

He is a computer hacker named MARK CHASE, reclusive, paranoid, and plagued with an appetite for conspiracy.

Racing across the Internet, he pulls up a Government website and clicks back and forth to a series of articles from a newspaper archive.

When he gets to a login prompt on the government page, he inserts a disk and activates a decryption program. It cycles through its chore in the background as Mark scans the articles.

He pulls up the first article. "DISAPPEARANCES BAFFLE POLICE" is the headline with a subtitle "UNIDENTIFIED BLACK VEHICLE LAST SEEN AT LOCATION."

EXT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, PARKING LOT -- EARLY EVENING

A BLACK SEDAN pulls into the parking area without making a sound. The headlights go off as soon as it glides to a stop outside the library's main entrance.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, TOP FLOOR COMPUTER ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

Mark clicks back on the government website to check the decryption program. Its progress meter is at twenty percent. He flips over to the articles and sips at a new soda.

EXT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, PARKING LOT -- EARLY EVENING

The doors to the BLACK CAR close quietly as three GOVERNMENT AGENTS all dressed to match in black business suits emerge and silently make their way across the parking lot to the front door.

Their image is reflected in the glass just before they reach for the door.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, TOP FLOOR COMPUTER ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

Mark opens another article, which encircles a grainy picture of three ominous looking silhouettes reflected in a glass window.

"THREE MEN LAST SEEN AT CRIME SCENE" the headline reads. He opens another article. "CAUSE OF FATAL FIRE UNKNOWN."

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, BOTTOM FLOOR -- EARLY EVENING

The three agents march through the shadowed hallways. Their footsteps are barely whispers on the ground.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, TOP FLOOR COMPUTER ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

Mark checks the progress meter on his program again. Sixty-eight percent completed.

He starts thumbing back through articles, stopping when one catches his eye.

"FOUR MISSING, TWO IN COMA."

He opens the article.

"Four people have vanished and two are in a trance-like state after witnesses describe an encounter with three men who all appeared to be identical..." the first sentence reads.

Mark closes the article and flips a screen length directly to another one. "NO BODIES RECOVERED IN SEARCH" is the headline.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, THIRD FLOOR -- EARLY EVENING

A door opens and the agents file through, their faces void of expression. When they round a corner, a holstered pistol is briefly revealed under the jacket of one.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, TOP FLOOR COMPUTER ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

Mark is entranced in an article when the computer CHIMES and breaks his focus.

His decryption program has finished.

He races through the open directory and scans a series of file names. Finding the one he wants, Mark highlights the file icon and has it copied to his disk.

He clicks back to read one more article.

"FATAL ATTACK LEAVES NO EVIDENCE" the headline reads in bold.  
"VICTIM'S BODIES MISSING" the subtitle announces below it.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, TOP FLOOR LOBBY -- EARLY EVENING

The agents reach the top of a staircase and advance through the door. Their shadows grow across the floor as they walk.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, TOP FLOOR COMPUTER ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

Mark thumbs the computer mouse nervously as his disk finishes copying the file from the online database.

Suddenly, the reflection of a PERSON is seen in the monitor behind him. He notices it just as a hand comes down on his shoulder.

Mark jumps in his seat.

LIBRARIAN

Hey I just wanted to remind  
you we close in ten minutes.

MARK CHASE

[Nervously agitated]  
Yeah, thanks. I'm on my way  
out.

The librarian turns away and goes back to the front office.

Mark lets out a BREATH of tension and shoves his scattered debris into his backpack. He POPS the disk from the computer's drive and slides it into his pocket. Almost in a gallop, he hops from his chair and makes his way to the exit.

Across the room, another door opens and the government agents file in quietly. The librarian turns and notices the agents standing nearby.

The LEAD AGENT is staring at the computer Mark had just been at, the Government website login still on screen.

LIBRARIAN  
[Walking up]  
Sorry guys, we're closed. Is there something I can help you with?

The lead agent reaches out and seizes him by the throat.

The librarian chokes on his words as the SNAP of his neck echoes down the empty halls.

FADE TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL SECTOR, EMPTY PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

The shadow of a MAN in his late twenties slides across the cement as he makes his way across the parking lot. He is a very average looking man known as MR. CARTER, a former CIA agent with a strong curiosity in the paranormal.

Stopping under a streetlight, Carter studies the handwriting on the business card in his hand.

"East Parking Area. Ten O'clock" it reads.

As he returns the card into his jacket pocket he notices a black car in the parking area he didn't see before. A GOVERNMENT AGENT is standing beside the car, his arms by his side. It is

MR. WASHINGTON, an agent from the SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS division of the US Government.

He opens the rear car door and motions for Carter to get inside. Carter hesitates for a moment as he glances over Washington. He gets in and Washington closes the door behind him.

As the car starts moving, Carter glances out of each window. He is noticeably on edge.

CARTER  
[Sitting up]  
Where is this place we're going?

Washington says nothing.

CARTER  
Ok, how do I know I got in the right car then?

Washington still says nothing.

CARTER  
Right.

Carter leans back in his seat, unsatisfied.

CUT TO:

EXT. GOVERNMENT FACILITY -- LATE EVENING

The car comes to a stop and Carter opens his door.

Washington has already exited the vehicle and is walking up to a multistory office building. He raises his hand to a flat metal panel by the entrance and the doors slide open.

Washington turns back to Carter, expressionless. Carter shuts the car door behind him and enters the building, Washington in tow.

INT. GOVERNMENT FACILITY -- LATE EVENING

The hallways are a dull gray and the air is doctor's office sterile.

Washington stops at an unmarked door and motions inside. Carter enters to find a small table with a plastic bin. There is another door on the opposite side of the room.

CARTER

Do I need to put something--?

WASHINGTON

[Cutting him off]

Everything.

Carter produces the contents of his pockets. In the bin he throws a key ring, his wallet, and a black pistol. As soon as the last of his items hit the container, the door across the room opens.

Carter walks in and takes a seat at a metal table, the door closing behind him. The room is completely bare and uncomfortably cold.

Carter leans forward, lacing his fingers on the table. After a few moments the door opens and in walk three GOVERNMENT AGENTS. Carter straightens in his chair as the LEAD AGENT sits down across from him.

Wearing an unappealing smile is MR. MONROE, the director of SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS and a man with chilling charisma.

MONROE

Good evening, Mr. Carter.

CARTER

Mr. Monroe, glad to meet you.

MONROE

The pleasure is entirely ours.

CARTER

I am sure you've already been over my file?

MONROE

We already know everything we need to.

CARTER

So this is a welcome party, right?

Carter throws a sideways smile at one of the government agents over Monroe's shoulder. The agent remains stone faced.

MONROE

I've seen everything there is about you on paper, but what I want to know is why are you here?

Carter stares blankly at Monroe for a heartbeat, wondering if there is a wrong answer to the question.

CARTER

Well I guess it started when I got my first telescope. I used to sit outside and watch the meteors, believing for a moment that I had finally seen a flying saucer. I guess you could say I grew up wanting to catch one. I read every book I could. After a few paper-pushing jobs in nameless government agencies I decided to go back to college and got a degree in Quantum Mechanics and Paranormal Psychology. The CIA noticed me somewhere in

the mix and decided I would be good for them. It didn't take me long to find out I wasn't going to be hunting down UFO's as their desk jockey, so someone in charge turned me over to you.

[Leaning forward]

Now it's your turn. Tell me why I'm here.

MONROE

Indeed you are very gifted. But, qualifications aside, I'm wondering what kind of a man you are, Mr. Carter.

CARTER

[Beat]

I'm human. I think.

MONROE

Let me be straight forward with you. This agency isn't like any other. It requires a unique personality to belong. It demands everything from you. And it will push you places you never thought you'd go.

[Beat]

We aren't just chasing the unknown, Mr. Carter. We are guardians of the truth.

CARTER

Guardians?

MONROE

Yes. Understand our position. In this world, in this day and age, information

is power. Absolute power.  
The United States Government  
controls exactly who and what  
you know. And this is not  
evil either. It's for your  
protection. For all of us.  
The most valuable things in  
this country, like the gold  
in Fort Knox, are locked  
away. Imagine if that gold  
was free to the common man.

CARTER

It would be worthless.

MONROE

In no time at all. So you  
see, we are not dealing in  
conspiracy. We are  
protecting the peace. And we  
will unveil what we discover  
when the public is ready.

[Beat]

That's why I am wondering  
what kind of a man you are.

CARTER

You're wondering how far I  
will go to protect the  
public.

MONROE

You will accompany us on our  
next few inquiries, during  
which I will be evaluating  
you. I want to look inside  
you.

CARTER

Well I'm looking forward to  
surprising you, Mr. Monroe.

MONROE  
Welcome to Special  
Investigations, Mr. Carter

Carter rises and shakes Monroe's hand from across the table.

CARTER  
Thanks for your time.

He exits and takes his belongings from the plastic bin on his way out.

EXT. GOVERNMENT FACILITY -- LATE EVENING

Washington is waiting outside, holding open the car door. He stares hard at Carter who glances at him.

Carter picks up something in Washington's stare, but is unsure what the message might be. They say nothing to each other.

FADE TO:

INT. ARCHER'S CAFÉ -- MIDDAY

Occasionally glancing out the window of a small downtown café is CASEY HATCHER, a young news reporter who is smarter than her good looks account for. She is thumbing through a pocket notebook, writing down random ideas.

Carter approaches the table and motions to the seat across from Casey.

CARTER  
Is this seat taken, miss?

CASEY  
[Smiling]  
Yes, but I'd much rather talk  
to you.

CARTER  
[Sitting down]

What's new in your world,  
Casey?

CASEY  
It's been entirely too boring  
lately.

The WAITRESS (JANICE) arrives at the table to take their orders.

CARTER / CASEY  
Hi, Janice.

JANICE  
What can I getcha, Hon?

CASEY  
Pancakes with butter and  
toast. Water is fine.

CARTER  
Coffee. No cream. Heavy on  
the sugar.

Janice goes back to the kitchen. Carter folds his hands on the  
table.

CARTER  
I interviewed with a new  
agency last night.

CASEY  
Let me guess, something  
classified.

CARTER  
[Nods]  
Don't give up on me yet.  
It's investigations into the  
paranormal.

CASEY  
What kind of paranormal?

CARTER

Well, like UFO sightings.  
Crop circles. The people at  
the DMV.

CASEY

[Laughs]

Sounds like fun, but isn't it  
a far cry from Central  
Intelligence?

CARTER

You'd be surprised.

Casey's grin broadens.

Janice arrives with their drinks.

Carter sips his coffee then sets it down. Taking a sugar packet  
from the end of the table, he empties the contents into his cup.

CARTER

Well, anyways. I know you're  
always on the lookout for a  
story. Let me go on a few  
leads with these guys, find  
out how they work. When  
something breaks that I think  
you can use, I'll let you  
know.

CASEY

That's what I've grown to  
love about you, Carter.  
You're always looking out for  
me.

Carter smiles at her as he dumps another packet of sweetener  
into his cup.

FADE TO:

INT. DOWNTOWN, MARK CHASE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

The warm glow of a computer monitor trickles across the room. On the screen, a program is hard at work. Lying next to the computer case is the disk Mark used in the library the night before.

The front door SLAMS and several dead bolts slide into place as Mark Chase enters.

He walks past his computer, uninterested in the chore still unfinished within it. As he disappears into his kitchen, the light from the monitor suddenly stops flashing and a dull CHIME sounds out.

Mark barrels out of the other room and drops himself into his office chair. A few jabs at the keyboard and the display switches to the opening page of a large database program. The software stirs to life and unfolds the encrypted file stolen earlier.

The first line reads "Property US Government | Special Investigations Database | Information Level Classified". Mark steals a glance at the bottom of his screen. There in the corner is a small status line displaying "Page 1 of 12,467".

Mark runs his hand over his face in thought knowing he will be spending many hours sorting through each and every page of info.

He adjusts himself in his chair to a more comfortable position and opens a can of soda. It's going to be a long night.

CUT TO:

INT. DOWNTOWN, CARTER'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Carter is lying on his back in bed, staring blankly at his ceiling.

The alarm next to him BUZZES softly. Carter shuts it off and gets out of bed.

He goes to his bathroom and stands under the shower, as if in a thoughtful trance. Going through a usual routine, he brushes his teeth and shaves. As he finishes, he takes a minute to look his reflection over.

While gazing away, he notices something in the background. Just as he leans in slightly to study it, the shower curtain behind him moves and a VOICE speaks out in his mind.

VOICE

[Just above a whisper]  
Speak to me.

Carter instantly spins around ready to confront what may be there. He reaches out and pulls the shower curtain back.

The shower stall is empty. Confusion registers in his eyes.

He searches the shower until he is satisfied it is empty.

Carter turns back to his mirror. Suddenly, his reflection lunges out, taking him by the back of the head, and slams his face forward, SHATTERING the glass.

CUT TO:

Carter snaps awake and sits up in his bed. The phone next to him RINGS again. Carter answers, nearly at a loss for breath.

CARTER

Hello?

MONROE

Glad you're awake, Mr. Carter. We have an assignment for you. Go downstairs, Mr. Washington will be waiting outside.

Carter mumbles an affirmation and hangs up.

As he rises from his bed, he gathers his coat and proceeds down his hall. Taking a step back, he cautiously examines his bathroom.

The mirror is intact.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANIEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- NIGHT

Carter appears in his apartment building's entrance. In the street below, Washington waits with the car door open.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN CENTRAL PARK -- NIGHT

The car comes to rest inside the gates of the city's CENTRAL PARK.

Nearby are two other identical cars.

Carter exits the vehicle and notices Monroe talking to a MAN (ROBERT COLLEY) several feet away. He makes his way over to them.

MONROE

Mr. Carter, please meet  
Robert Colley.

CARTER

[Shaking Robert's hand]  
Hello, sir.

ROBERT

Hiya.

MONROE

Robert has just been examined  
by paramedics and I was  
waiting for you before we  
started our questioning.

CARTER

I see. Mr. Colley, let me begin by asking what you were doing just prior to the event.

ROBERT

Sure. Well, I normally take my jog through the park about this time. And when I get here I'm halfway done so I take a break at the water fountain. That's when I saw it.

CARTER

And what exactly did you see.

ROBERT

Floating just a hair's breath off the ground was a circular lookin' object about as big as a city bus. It wasn't making any noise. Just sittin' there spinnin' around. I had nary laid my eye on it when it shot off straight up through the trees.

CARTER

Can you indicate exactly where the object was hovering?

ROBERT

[Pointing]

It was right over there, right square between those trees.

Monroe signals to two GOVERNMENT AGENTS (ROOSEVELT and TRUMAN) standing nearby.

MONROE

Mr. Roosevelt. Mr. Truman.  
If you would.

Truman and Roosevelt make their way to the area specified and begin to examine the surroundings.

CARTER

Mr. Colley, would you be able  
to draw for me the object you  
saw?

ROBERT

Well, I guess. I suppose.

Monroe steps in, cutting off Carter before he can begin a new sentence.

MONROE

Thank you for the  
information, Mr. Colley. If  
you would go on ahead to the  
car, Mr. Carter, I will be  
right behind you.

Carter frowns and walks off.

Behind him, Monroe's eyes begin to glow with a silver glare. He takes hold of Robert by the small of his neck and immediately Robert's body stiffens hypnotically. Monroe speaks in a low voice directly into Robert's ear.

MONROE

You were jogging through the  
park. You saw a triangle-  
shaped object. There were  
yellow lights in the middle.  
You were frightened so you  
turned to run and didn't see

it leave. Next time you will  
bring a flashlight on your  
jog.

The silver dissolves from Monroe's eyes and he releases Robert.  
Slowly, Robert comes out of his trance.

MONROE

The park can be dangerous  
this late, Mr. Colley.

ROBERT

Oh yeah, I know. Next time  
I'm gonna bring my  
flashlight.

MONROE

Not a bad idea. Goodnight,  
Mr. Colley.

Monroe smiles to himself as he turns to leave. Roosevelt and  
Truman join him and they exit together.

INT. BACKSEAT OF CAR -- NIGHT

Carter gets in the car and Washington shuts the door behind him.

A few moments later, Monroe enters the backseat opposite Carter  
and Washington puts the vehicle in motion.

After a minute of silence, Carter speaks out.

CARTER

His story was too brief to  
provide anything useful.  
Don't you think there was  
more we could have asked him?

MONROE

You handled the situation  
appropriately, Mr. Carter.

This was only your first experience.

CARTER

Well, I guess I was expecting a little bit more.

MONROE

We completed what we came to do.

CARTER

Sure, maybe. We still will need to see the toxicology report to certify credibility.

Monroe stares Carter in the eye for a few seconds, then turns to look out the window.

CARTER

You said he was examined. I assumed that meant you had him tested for any substances?

Monroe does not respond at first.

He puts his hand on his chin as he turns back to Carter.

MONROE

No report is necessary, Mr. Carter. Remember that you are here to learn, and nothing more. Contain your curiosity.

CARTER

I was under the impression we were paid to be curious.

Monroe sits forward and laces his fingers together.

MONROE

Mr. Carter, there is a difference between indulging curiosity and searching for truth.

Carter puts a finger to his chin as his face tightens with thought. Monroe leans back in his seat.

FADE TO:

INT. ARCHER'S CAFÉ -- MIDDAY

Casey scans a still-folded newspaper while sipping at a glass of water. The steam rises off a dark cup of coffee across from her.

Carter enters the café and takes his seat. Neither of them speaks for a while.

Carter stirs more sugar into his cup as Casey reads on.

CASEY

[Reading]

Unbelievable. I want to know what university pays for this woman's research.

CARTER

[Lost in thought]

That crazy huh?

CASEY

Miss PHD in Psychology says her study reveals that the contents of a person's billfold or purse reveal personal secrets they are trying to hide from friends, family, or spouses.

CARTER

Yeah she must be a real nut I  
guess.

CASEY

[Beat]

Are you being sarcastic?

CARTER

You mean more than normal?

CASEY

I think you're upset because  
all your little secrets may  
get out next time you lose  
your wallet.

CARTER

[Slight smile]

I don't keep secrets.

CASEY

Yeah I believe that.

CARTER

Now you're stealing my  
sarcasm.

CASEY

Yeah? Prove me wrong, Mr.  
Former Intelligence Agent.

Carter produces his wallet from his back pocket.

He flips it open and first pulls out his money. The moment it  
touches the table, Casey teasingly grasps for it. Carter  
instantly shuffles it from her reach and continues to extract  
miscellaneous items, placing them in piles on the tabletop.

He empties the wallet and begins examining individual pieces.

CARTER

Membership card to library.  
Never gets used.

CASEY

You need a good book when you  
can't sleep.

CARTER

Bank card. Favorite food of  
ATMs.

CASEY

Everywhere you want to be.

CARTER

Unlimited calling phone card.  
Micro chipped.

CASEY

When you can't call the  
mother ship collect.

CARTER

Video King rental card.  
Forgot I had this.

CASEY

The late fees alone could  
feed the world's starving.

CARTER

Photo of me meeting the  
President. Our ties clash.

CASEY

The collective gasp of  
fashion experts is heard  
'round the planet.

Carter stops to stare at another photograph.

CARTER'S P.O.V: The snapshot shows mostly a bare cement road with a wild field of grass in the distance. On the leftmost side of the photo is the front portion of a car that is partially mangled.

CASEY

What is it?

CARTER

It's a picture of my accident several years ago.

CASEY

I don't remember you telling me that story.

CARTER

Well it wasn't a big deal, really. Someone ran into me head on. Shook the life out of me. All I know is, I stumbled out of the car and was bleeding in the road for a few minutes. Help found me and I made it to a hospital. They never did catch the guy who hit me either.

CASEY

Is that why you hang onto it?

CARTER

I hang onto it because it was a big event. It knocked me around, woke me up. Shortly after this I really pushed myself to pursue my real interests.

[Beat]

The unknown.

Janice approaches their table. Carter scoops his belongings back into his wallet.

JANICE

[To Carter]

Phone call for you, dear.

CARTER

Thanks, Janice.

CASEY

Who could that be?

CARTER

It's the agency more than likely.

CASEY

Well, how did they know to call here?

CARTER

They needed to know how to contact me at all hours so I gave them the numbers to places I go. Relax a little, ok? Be right back.

Carter disappears behind the corner.

CARTER

[Answering phone]

This is Carter.

MONROE

Your presence is requested. Go to the parking garage one block south. Washington will be waiting.

CARTER

On my way.

Carter hangs up and walks back to Casey's table.

CARTER

Duty calls.

CASEY

Have fun.

CARTER

I hope this trip is more  
exciting than the one last  
night. See you later.

Carter exits. Casey watches him leave then goes back to her paper.

CUT TO:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING PARKING LOT -- AFTERNOON

The black car rolls to a stop outside of an unmarked office complex. There are only a couple other cars in the parking lot.

Carter gets out and follows Washington into a multistory glass structure.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Washington jabs at the elevator buttons while Carter surveys the lobby.

All but a few lights are off. Sound seems to echo loudly in the dry air.

Carter turns his attention to the elevator buttons. None of them are lit.

Washington gives up on the elevator and makes his way to the stairwell door. Carter lets a SNORT of dismay as he follows.

They climb the stairs at an even pace, Washington half a floor ahead of Carter. The only NOISE is their shoes on the metal steps.

Carter suddenly shivers. He pauses briefly.

A dim CLATTER breaks into his concentration. Carter squints as he peers down the stairwell below. Dread fills his face as he spots a dark figure racing up the stairs. The figure stops and looks directly at him.

Carter sprints up the steps and the pursuer's FOOTSTEPS grow louder. He bursts through the door at the top of the staircase and finds himself on the rooftop.

Carter spins to face the rooftop door, expecting the figure chasing him to come through at any second. He backs up slowly, his eyes locked on the doorway.

He backs all the way to the edge of the roof and steals a glance down to the streets below. When he looks back up at the doorway, Monroe is standing next to him.

Carter does not seem uneasy by Monroe's sudden appearance, his concern is still centered on what may be waiting through the rooftop doorway.

MONROE

Are you still breathing?

Carter examines his own stomach.

He is wounded. Blood drips from the tears in his shirt.

Carter looks up. He is back inside the building. Monroe is looking him in the eye as Washington stands off to the side.

MONROE

I said, are you ready for round two?

Carter examines his stomach again.

The wounds are gone.

He looks back at Monroe, look of puzzlement across his face. Carter tries to blink away the effects of his vision. Monroe looks as if he is going to say something further. Carter speaks up to cut him off.

CARTER

Yeah, I'm ok. Just thought I was somewhere else for a minute.

MONROE

Well if you're alright we'll proceed with the investigation.

CARTER

Yes, ok. I'm fine.

They approach three OFFICE WORKERS, two males and a female. All of them look shaken.

MONROE

We are listening whenever you are ready.

MALE OFFICE WORKER

The three of us are here putting in overtime. No one else comes in on weekends. I was finishing my reports, about to print them out. Then this light floods the office. So bright I can't see at first. There is a...

[Beat]

A ship. Floating right outside. It was nothing from this world. The electricity goes off and on in the whole

building. I take a look at my monitor and every file in our system is flashing before my eyes.

FEMALE OFFICE WORKER

It was using our computers. Scanning through them. I wasn't really thinking at the time. I just reached out -- a reaction I guess -- and yanked the plug on my machine. That's when it started humming.

MALE OFFICE WORKER

Yeah, vibrating really hard. The sound just keeps getting higher. I swear my ears are gonna start bleeding when I can hear something else. There are -- voices -- in the humming. The most awful voices ever.

2<sup>ND</sup> MALE OFFICE WORKER

I had fallen asleep at my desk, just a little nap. But that humming woke me up. I have never heard anything more horrible than the noises in the humming. I called my brother real fast and put him on speakerphone. He's into strange stuff like this, and it really freaked him out too. Do any of you have an explanation for all this?

MONROE

Before we go any farther with this, I would like to see you

all more relaxed. We will  
contact you later.

The office workers all nod to Monroe. Carter looks like he wants to start asking questions but does not. He is still in confusion from his strange vision.

MONROE

Please give your name and  
numbers to Mr. Washington.  
Thank you.

Monroe signals to Carter to follow and they exit.

Washington hands the female office worker a pad and pencil. As the workers focus their attention on the paper, Washington makes his way behind them.

He draws a pistol from his coat and quickly attaches a silencer. One at a time he shoots them in the back.

Ripping the ID card off of MALE OFFICE WORKER #2, he scans the name quickly and finds the man's desk. Washington detours to an adjacent desk and places the phone's receiver to his ear. Systematically, he dials each number, studying the TONES.

Washington goes back to MALE OFFICE WORKER #2's desk and picks up the phone. He hits redial and listens closely. As it RINGS out the previous number, Washington scribbles the digits on a memo pad.

He takes the memo and flips a running lighter into a garbage can on his way out.

CUT TO:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING PARKING LOT -- AFTERNOON

Monroe waits by the car as Carter gets in. Shortly after, Washington walks out of the office building.

WASHINGTON

I pulled the number and  
called in a trace.  
[Holding up a slip of paper]  
Here is the address.

MONROE  
Excellent work, Mr.  
Washington.

Monroe joins Carter in the backseat and Washington takes the wheel. The car rolls out of the parking lot. Deep in thought, Carter watches through the window. Monroe does not take his eyes off Carter.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING ON CITY OUTSKIRTS -- LATE AFTERNOON

The car rolls to a stop outside a middle class apartment building. Monroe and Washington get out.

Monroe stops Carter before he can get out.

MONROE  
This will not require your  
presence, Mr. Carter.

Carter nods as another car arrives. Truman and Roosevelt join Washington and Monroe and they all file into the building.

Carter leans back in his seat and closes his eyes.

He relives a short flashback from Archer's Café when a scraggly old man was flirting with Janice, attempting to pinch her behind. Carter and Casey are watching from their table, GIGGLING like children.

In the backseat of the car, Carter smiles over the memory.

Suddenly, his eyes snap open. He opens the car door and leans half way out, eyes focused, ears scanning the air.

A faint SOUND registers in his mind and he strains to listen. Slowly, a VOICE becomes audible.

VOICE

Speak to me.

Carter's eyes widen and he leaps into action, dashing up the steps to the apartment entrance.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Bursting through the door, Carter skids to a stop and gazes up the master staircase.

The VOICE echoes through the halls.

VOICE

Speak to me.

Carter climbs the stairs, guided by the VOICE.

He spots a door slightly ajar and enters the room. Truman and Roosevelt are restraining a MAN (2<sup>nd</sup> MALE OFFICE WORKER'S BROTHER) to a chair in the corner.

Washington is striking the man repeatedly while Monroe questions him.

MONROE

...We already know he called  
you.

Washington punches the man.

MONROE

Now, there is a tape recorder  
by your phone...

Another punch.

MONROE

...but there is no tape. You recorded those sounds from your brother's office as quick as you could. Now tell me where the tape is.

A blow across the face spins the man's head sideways.

MONROE  
[Yelling]  
Where is it?

The man weakly lifts his head.

MAN  
I was expecting... you people.  
You'll get... nothing from me.  
I know what you are.

Carter edges forward, confused. Monroe eyes the man for a moment then backs up.

MONROE  
Withholding evidence in a government investigation is a federal offense. Read him his rights, Mr. Washington.

In an instant, Washington pulls a pistol from his coat and puts a bullet through the man's head. Carter GASPS in shock and stumbles backwards.

Monroe calmly turns around.

MONROE  
Get him under control.

The last thing Carter sees is Washington's fist as it eclipses his P.O.V.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK CHASE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Mark massages the bridge of his nose, trying to relieve tension. His eyes are bloodshot and blurred.

On the computer screen, Mark is cycling through endless reports filed by the government agents on crime scenes and photos of evidence recovered.

Something catches his eye and Mark backs up a screen length to a grainy photograph of confiscated computer equipment. There, at the bottom of the photo is a faint outline of a body. Mark's forehead creases in thought and he continues to scroll.

His eyes slowly widen and he leans forward. On the screen are dossier listings for government agents around the world. Mark scans through Russian, German, French, African, Chinese, and British agent profiles.

Finally he comes upon the American listing. There are records for Monroe, Washington, Truman, Roosevelt and others. Mark sits back in his chair.

MARK

[To himself]

Jackpot.

His TV across the room is running at a WHISPER. There on the screen is Casey Hatcher, apparently giving a news report about an office building fire.

FADE TO:

INT. CARTER'S APARTMENT -- MIDDAY

Gradually, the world comes into focus for Carter and he sits up in bed.

On the nearby nightstand is an open bottle of aspirin and a half empty glass of water.

Carter goes to his bathroom and slowly paces through his normal routine. In his shower, he stands with one hand braced to the wall, another on his chin.

The water numbingly laps at the back of his head.

CUT TO:

INT. ARCHER'S CAFÉ -- MIDDAY

Carter enters the café and takes his seat opposite Casey. There is a look of paranoia across his face.

After a moment of silence, Carter reaches for his waiting coffee. His fingers tremble as he lifts the cup.

CASEY

What happened to you, Carter?

CARTER

[Beat]

I've been waking up every day farther and farther from reality. I'll be out somewhere and just suddenly - - start dreaming these bizarre dreams. I don't mean sleeping dreams either, I mean like... visions during the day.

CASEY

What is it you see in your day-visions?

CARTER

Sometimes it's me, sometimes it another person. But I keep hearing the same words. The same questions. I'm afraid to close my eyes anymore.

CASEY

Sometimes stress can cause mild hallucination. Is there something happening in your new agency that might be effecting you?

CARTER

I can't even be sure what parts of the last few days were even real. But I fear some of the things I've seen are true... and I could be in extreme danger.

[Beat]

These are dangerous people, Casey.

CASEY

Have you considered contacting the authorities?

CARTER

They are the authorities. They exist beyond the law. And there is something--

CASEY

What?

CARTER

--strange about them.

Carter rakes his hands down his face.

Casey reaches out and gently takes one of his hands in hers.

CASEY

I don't know what you're going through, but I can see how it's getting to you.

We've known each other long enough that we can tell each other anything. Believe me when I say I have complete faith in you, Carter. There has never been anything you could not find a way out of. You will find your way. Just remember I'm here for you.

Carter's hand gradually wraps around Casey's. A small spark returns to his eyes.

Janice approaches the table. She says something to Carter and he leaves the table.

Around the corner, the phone is off its hook. Carter answers it.

CARTER

Yes?

MONROE

A new problem has developed, Mr. Carter. I will require you to meet with us tonight. Washington will be outside your residence at ten thirty.

CARTER

I understand.

There is a DIAL TONE as Monroe hangs up. Carter puts the receiver back and goes back to Casey's table.

CARTER

They are meeting tonight at ten thirty. Since I always get picked up you'll have to follow us.

CASEY

Are you sure about this?

CARTER

I want you to follow. I can't trust myself at this point. I need another pair of eyes. Another mind.

CASEY

What if you're in danger?

CARTER

I will find a way.

They both smile to conceal their uneasiness.

Carter gets up and exits. Casey watches him leave. She takes a cell phone from her jacket.

CASEY

Hey, Simon. Charge your camera batteries.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANIEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING ENTRANCE -- NIGHT

Washington brings the car up to the apartment building's entrance. Carter is already waiting in the entranceway.

Carter steals a glance down the road at Casey's car before getting in.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSEAT OF CAR -- NIGHT

Carter takes his seat across from Monroe.

CARTER

Who are we going to meet?

MONROE

A group of computer specialists that call themselves the Neo Cyberpunkz.

CARTER

Is this an investigation?

MONROE

No, we are meeting them to request their services. We have used them on rare occasions in the past.

CARTER

I see. And what exactly do they do for the agency?

MONROE

There are some people in the government who do not agree with the existence of our agency and we sometimes attract their unwanted attention. In order to protect our organization we employ the services of the Cyberpunkz. They have a unique proficiency in finding information. Information that certain Congressmen would rather not be available to the general public.

CARTER

In other words, you use these hackers to dig up dirt on Government officials in order to blackmail them and take their focus off of Special Investigations. Since they

aren't on the payroll there  
is no trace back to the  
agency.

MONROE

I'm glad you understand, Mr.  
Carter.

CARTER

So is that what tonight is  
about?

MONROE

No, we have a new problem  
entirely.

Carter tries to hide his uneasiness from Monroe. He puts his  
finger to his chin in thought and looks out the window.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL SECTOR, WAREHOUSE -- NIGHT

The car pulls up alongside two other identical automobiles  
outside of a dust-covered warehouse.

Carter, Monroe, and Washington make their way to a door on the  
side of the warehouse.

Across the street, another car with headlights turned off comes  
to a stop and two FIGURES (CASEY and SIMON PICCOLO) exit. SIMON  
is carrying a video camera. They cautiously sneak across the  
road and look for an alternate entrance to the warehouse.

INT. INDUSTRIAL WAREHOUSE -- NIGHT

Washington, Monroe, and Carter walk across the vast building  
through stacks of various construction materials.

They come upon a gathering of GOVERNMENT AGENTS.

Monroe takes a place between Truman and Roosevelt.

JACKSON and PIERCE cover the far corners.

Only thirty feet away, Casey and Simon find a place to hide. Simon quietly activates his camera.

Carter takes a place by Monroe's side.

Several cars arrive through the wide double doors at the front of the building. Eleven NEO CYBERPUNKZ exit the cars and spread out through the warehouse.

A short, bald MAN (8-BALL) walks through the middle of the group up to Monroe. He is the eccentric leader of the Cyberpunkz.

8-BALL

Tonight, I am a sexy demon.

Carter raises an eyebrow.

MONROE

Your unnecessary banter only prolongs our encounter. And you know these meetings disgust me.

8-BALL

Don't get your panties twisted. This party is just startin'.

MONROE

We recently discovered an intrusion into one of our most sensitive databases. Today we determined that an extremely important file is missing.

Eight-ball's expression changes.

8-BALL

Not the central mainframe?

MONROE (CONT'D)

Vital knowledge of our institution has been taken. Taken from a machine you and your associates were responsible to secure. That information must be recovered immediately.

8-BALL

[Defiantly]

No one is hotter than us.

MONROE

Don't ever question the validity of an assignment I give you.

8-BALL

[Beat]

We'll find the little hack. But this time it's different. He's got something that could do you some damage. And it's gonna cost you triple.

MONROE

Pressuring me is a mistake that could prove to be hazardous to your health.

8-BALL

Your threats are making me sick. Maybe this time -- we'll let you suffer.

A swell of anger washes over Monroe's face. Suddenly, his eyes appear to fill up with mercury until they are inhuman silver orbs.

Casey covers her mouth to restrain a GASP.

Carter is frozen in place.

MONROE

Wrong answer.

Eight-ball recoils while pulling a pistol from his coat. All the Cyberpunkz immediately draw their guns on the agents around them.

Washington and a cyberpunk in front of him aim revolvers at each other's head. Another cyberpunk pulls a gun from behind. Without looking, Washington draws a second pistol and levels it at the cyberpunk's throat.

Carter is the last to pull a gun, pointing his at Eight-ball.

8-BALL

When you get to hell...

CARTER

Don't move!

8-BALL (CONT'D)

..give the devil my regards.

Monroe's stare is penetrating. Eight-ball's eyes gradually glaze over.

The other Government Agent's eyes become completely silver as well and the Cyberpunkz around them tremble in fear.

MONROE

[To Carter]

I can see his thoughts.

CARTER

What's going on?

MONROE (CONT'D)

He's worried about you, Mr. Carter.

8-BALL

Don't listen to him, man!

MONROE (CONT'D)

You're the one with the gun.  
He's worried about you.

The other Cyberpunkz begin to forget about the agents around them.

As the Cyberpunkz look at each other they start to hallucinate. Their various P.O.V's show the cyberpunk opposite them growing hostile.

Within seconds, the Cyberpunkz completely ignore the agents and switch their aim to each other.

CARTER'S P.O.V darts back and forth from Monroe to Eight-ball.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Take him out, Mr. Carter.  
Shoot before he does.

8-BALL

Shut up! Don't listen, man.  
Look at him. Can't you see--

MONROE (CONT'D)

Shoot him, Mr. Carter.

8-BALL (CONT'D)

--he's not human.

MONROE

[Yelling]

SHOOT HIM!

Eight-ball raises his gun, the barrel aimed at Monroe's forehead.

FROM CARTER'S P.O.V: Eight-ball pivots and points his gun directly at Carter, his arm muscles moving to pull the trigger.

Carter reacts, BLASTING Eight-ball in the chest, sending him staggering to the ground.

All the other Cyberpunkz, consumed in hallucination, begin to fire at each other. Some are hit and killed instantly; the others are SHOT point-blank by the agents still standing next to them. Fine pink mists of blood speckle the air.

Washington blows away the cyberpunk to his right and, spinning around, empties his clips into the other cyberpunk still in a trance on his left.

Across the warehouse, Casey is petrified in horror. Simon backs up toward the exit. His camera bumps a box of machine parts, sending them CRASHING to the ground.

Casey's throat clenches shut. Simon seizes her with his free hand and pulls her through the doorway just as the government agents open fire on their location. Bullets EXPLODE from the wall behind them as they take off in a wild sprint.

Washington ejects the spent clips from his pistols and reloads. He leads Jackson and Pierce through the back exit in pursuit.

CUT TO:

EXT. INDUSTRIAL SECTOR -- CONTINUOUS

Casey and Simon dash through a maze of stacked crates and across an adjacent parking lot.

Not far behind, the agents are gaining on their trail.

Simon ducks beside at van and Casey stops. Pushing buttons on the back of his camera, Simon extracts the videotape.

He is about to stow it into his jacket pocket when he holds it up in better light and discovers a bullet hole through the reel.

SIMON  
That one got close.

CASEY

Let's go let's go.

SIMON

They're going to catch us if we stick together. You can make it over there.

[Pointing]

Go for that factory shed. I'll -- I'll try and hot wire one of these cars. They would expect us to be together if we were driving out of here, right?

CASEY

Too risky, Simon. They could catch you.

SIMON

It's ok, I've done this before.

Casey stammers for a moment. She throws a glance over to the factory shed at the end of the parking lot.

She looks at Simon one last time then takes off toward the shed.

Simon creeps to a nearby truck and carefully leans out enough to see Washington entering the parking area. Producing a slender lock pick from his jacket, Simon goes to work on the truck's door lock.

CUT TO:

INT. FACTORY SHED -- NIGHT

Casey throws herself behind the factory shed's door. Her nametag gets caught on a hook and is torn off. She braces herself to the door and scans the parking lot for Simon.

CUT TO:

EXT. INDUSTRIAL PARKING AREA -- NIGHT

Simon struggles with the lock as Washington draws closer.

Finally, the lock gives out and Simon quietly opens the door.

In the far rearview mirror he watches Washington approach the back of the truck. Biting his lip, Simon reaches in and grabs a metal pipe from the front seat. Washington disappears from the mirror around the truck's rear.

Silently, Simon slides toward the back of the vehicle, readying the pipe like a major league player at bat. He counts off the seconds it would take Washington to clear the truck.

Springing into action, Simon leaps out in a wild swing. Washington effortlessly catches him at the wrist and launches a front thrusting kick into Simon's midsection. The impact SLAMS Simon into the pavement.

Washington showers his body with bullets.

CUT TO:

INT. FACTORY SHED -- NIGHT

FROM CASEY'S P.O.V: We see the outline of Washington illuminated by the flashes from his gun.

Casey sobs hysterically as tears trickle down both cheeks.

In a small office above her, a FEMALE FACTORY MANAGER is doing paperwork. The manager hears the faint POPS of gunshots and goes downstairs to investigate.

Casey exits through the back.

The factory manager arrives after Casey leaves and peers out the open shed door, searching for the source of the noise. She spots Casey's nametag on the ground below and picks it up. As

she looks up, Washington, Jackson, and Pierce are standing at the doorway.

They raise their weapons in unison.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASSY LOT BEHIND FACTORY SHED -- NIGHT

Casey stumbles through the grassy field in a desperate sprint.

More GUNFIRE rings out behind her.

She shuffles down a hill and finds a large drainage pipe.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL SECTORY -- NIGHT

Emerging from the end of the drainpipe, Casey makes her way through an alley to the sidewalk. She checks both directions and makes a run for nearby building.

Concealing herself in the building's entrance, she stops to catch her breath.

Suddenly, a hand comes out from the shadow and covers her mouth. Casey tries to scream before passing out.

CUT TO:

INT. INDUSTRIAL WAREHOUSE -- NIGHT

Carter drops his arms by his side, his gun SKIDS across the cement floor. He takes a seat on a pile of boxes, head in his hands. Monroe stands facing him, the silver gone from his eyes.

The other agents are gathering the dead Cyberpunkz into a pile in the middle of the warehouse.

MONROE

What you have seen is  
creating a million questions,  
all exploding in your mind  
right now. Well I can  
satisfy one of them right  
now. I am not going to kill  
you. No, you're an important  
question that has yet to be  
answered.

CARTER

When will I find out -- what  
just happened? What is  
really going on here?

MONROE

When I can be sure the truth  
won't take your life.

Washington returns to the warehouse. Behind him, Jackson  
follows carrying Simon's news camera. Pierce is seen outside  
dragging two dead bodies.

Washington hands Monroe the nametags. Monroe reads them aloud  
then tosses them onto the body pile.

Despair begins to shadow Carter's face.

MONROE

Burn it.

The government agents set fire to the pile.

Truman enters the warehouse and approaches Monroe. Carter  
strains to hear their conversation but cannot make out the  
words. The news is obviously making Monroe angered. When  
Truman finishes, Monroe signals to the others and they scramble.  
As the agents file into the waiting vehicles, Monroe walks back  
over to Carter.

MONROE

Time to find out how ready  
you are for truth, Mr.  
Carter.

Monroe motions to the waiting car. Carter hesitates.

Rising slowly, Carter goes to the backseat and Monroe follows.

Gravel erupts from every tire as the cars peel out of the  
warehouse parking lot.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK CHASE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

The first thing Casey sees as she awakens is Mark applying an  
icepack to her forehead.

She shudders and sits up suddenly.

CASEY

Where am I? Who are you?

MARK

Relax, ok? Just relax. My  
name is Mark. Mark Chase.  
This is my apartment and I'm  
not gonna hurt you.

CASEY

Why did you knock me out?

MARK

You fainted. I was trying to  
keep you quiet. I'm sorry I  
followed you, but I saw you  
on the news and I need to  
tell you something.

CASEY

How did you know where to  
find me?

MARK

Well actually, I knew about the meeting at the warehouse. One of my friends is part of the Cyberpunkz. I saw what happened and I knew I had to get you out of there.

CASEY

Oh... no. Simon. They shot him. They shot all those guys. And Carter? Is he alive?

MARK

I don't think anyone survived.

CASEY

What are those men?

MARK

Here, let me get you something to drink. This is going to take awhile.

Mark goes to the kitchen.

Casey surveys his apartment. There are twelve different locks on the front door. Books spill from their shelves. Maps and charts of all types blanket the walls.

Mark returns and places a can of soda on the lamp stand next to Casey.

CASEY

I can't eat anything right now. I'd probably throw it up.

MARK

I would tell you to relax but it only gets worse. Not too long ago, I managed to break the security on a sophisticated government server and steal some files. Now, I have spent years learning about the evidence of extraterrestrial activity on Earth and about the government's involvement. I have amassed a library of information about it. But the files I stole blow all that away.

Mark turns around in his chair and clicks around on his computer. The screen flickers to life and Mark scrolls through multiple windows. Images of Monroe and the other government agents appear on the monitor.

MARK

We've known about these guys for a long time. But up until now, no one could put all the pieces together. The key is that power you saw them use. They call it "The Gift". And the aliens who gave it to them they call "The Visitors". It's a type of mind control that lets them read your thoughts and change 'em. It's kinda like a power of suggestion. With it, they confront people who have seen the Visitors and change their stories. You see, they don't kill most witnesses. Most of the time they just alter their experiences so that no two

are alike. No two will match. And therefore, no one who even believes in UFOs can put together the real information.

CASEY

Are you saying they are controlling the public? Keeping us from knowing what's happening around us?

MARK

Exactly. Exactly. Now, there is barely anything in here about the Visitors and no one has a clue what they're here for. But the fact remains that these men are completely in their control. Not a single soul on Earth can stop them. With some planning we may be able to come up with a way to eliminate them.

CASEY

Wait a minute, you said they can read minds.

MARK

Yes, mostly. But not everyone. I have a theory on how to resist their mind control based on what I've read. But I don't plan on ever getting that close. We need to take them out from a distance. All of them.

CASEY

I know someone in their group, though. He's not one of them. We need to warn him.

MARK

Listen to me, there is nothing that can be done about that. If he's with them then he's a lost cause.

CASEY

I won't give up on him.

CUT TO:

EXT. OPEN FIELD, OUTER LIMITS OF CITY -- NIGHT

The dark cars of the agents come to a stop in the middle of a field.

Carter gets out with the others and looks around. Before him looms a large impact crater. Flaming debris randomly litters the area.

CARTER

I can't believe it. All my life I've wanted to know and here it is. They are real.

MONROE

The air force base across the bay sometimes sends up fighters on exercises unannounced. They have come close many times before.

CARTER

You knew. The whole time, everything we've done, you knew. You're not here to

investigate. You're here to cover them up.

MONROE

For the protection of all mankind.

CARTER

What is going on here, Monroe? What are you really doing?

MONROE

I used to ask myself, "what makes us human?" Are we more than what we see in our memories? More than the sum of our emotions? Or the reflection of our fears?

[Beat]

It didn't take the agency long to discover that the Visitors were already among us. They showed us that the thirst for truth is as strong as the need for air. That's why you are here, Mr. Carter. Your mind believes it will die unless it can find the answers. We keep the population from poisoning themselves with questions because the antidote would drive them mad.

CARTER

I won't be a part of this.

Carter turns to run but is immediately struck by Washington. The force of the punch drops Carter to his knees.

MONROE

You don't have a choice, Mr. Carter. Do you think you were sent to us by chance?

[Beat]

We were each elected to receive the Gift. And you have been chosen.

CARTER

I don't care if it kills me, I won't let you put that power in me.

MONROE

I don't have to. You already have it.

Monroe signals the other agents who come over and help to restrain Carter.

MONROE

I will activate him.

Carter struggles as Monroe stretches out his arm, palm forward, toward Carter's forehead.

MONROE

Isn't there a secret in your mind?

Carter grits his teeth.

Images from previous visions begin to flash before his eyes.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Isn't there a memory deep inside?

Carter writhes in pain. The government agents release him.

His legs buckle at the knees.

MONROE (CONT'D)  
Isn't there a mystery buried...

Carter collapses. He slumps against the car's front bumper.

MONROE (CONT'D)  
...fighting, tearing...

The pain surges through his spine. More images flash through his eyes.

In his vision he sees himself driving a car at night, rounding a corner.

In reality, he reaches into his coat and pulls out the photograph of his accident.

MONROE (CONT'D)  
...rising through your soul.

Back in the vision, his headlights suddenly shine on a dark figure crossing the road. It does not look human. The car is a split second from impact.

In reality, Carter stares at the old photo. There is a person in the picture now. It is him, crumpled over in front of the car in the same position that he is now.

In his mind, Carter hears the sound of tires SCREECHING and the dull THUD of flesh on metal.

His eyes roll back as he completely lapses into a flashback.

FADE TO:

EXT. DESERTED INTERSTATE ROAD -- FLASHBACK

Carter sits up with a start. He is bent over his steering wheel and has apparently been unconscious for a moment.

Steam billows from under the car's hood. Carter stumbles out of his car and toward the dark FIGURE lying several feet away.

As he gets closer, the figure stirs.

CARTER

[Dazedly]

Hey. Are you ok?..

His words trail off as his throat clamps shut.

Lying in the middle of the road is a CREATURE. The very sight of it strikes horror in Carter's soul. It seems to be severely injured from the impact.

The bleeding creature rises suddenly and lashes out. Its talons rake across Carter's stomach and send him flying backwards.

The creature limps off into a wheat field by the roadside.

Carter CRIES out in agony and starts to pass out. Behind him, another car approaches and pulls over onto the shoulder.

Two MEN get out and jog up from the back of Carter's car.

MAN

Oh, Lord. Are you ok, son?  
Speak to me.

CUT TO:

EXT. OPEN FIELD, OUTER LIMITS OF CITY -- REALITY

The MAN'S words echo through Carter's brain. It is the VOICE that spoke to Carter in previous hallucinations.

The phrase repeats over and over through images from previous visions.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERTED INTERSTATE ROAD -- FLASHBACK

The MEN pull back Carter's jacket revealing the wounds across his midsection.

MAN

Get my camera off the dash.  
We want to prove we found him  
this way.

The other MAN goes back to their car.

Carter starts to come around.

CARTER

Am I... am I alive?

MAN

Well, I dunno. Are you still  
breathing?

CUT TO:

EXT. OPEN FIELD, OUTER LIMITS OF CITY -- REALITY

Again the MAN'S words send tremors of visions through Carter's mind.

The phrase repeats across images much faster than before.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERTED INTERSTATE ROAD -- FLASHBACK

The second MAN snaps pictures of Carter against the car's bumper. One of the Polaroids falls into the shadows.

It is the same photo Carter is holding in reality.

CARTER

Yeah. I'm breathing.

MAN

[Forcing a chuckle]

Then you're still alive! We  
are gonna help you to a  
hospital, ok?

Hidden in the wheat, we see from the creature's P.O.V that he  
has been watching the whole scene.

The second man stops taking pictures and goes over to help lift  
Carter from the ground.

FROM THE CREATURE'S P.O.V: It suddenly charges the men. A swing  
of its claw and a man's head disappears from his shoulders. The  
other man falls backward in shock. The creature's talons close  
around the man's face. There is a crunching SOUND.

Carter tries feebly to stand. The creature extends its palm  
out, hypnotizing Carter instantly. Its eyes turn to shimmering  
silver.

FROM THE CREATURE'S P.O.V: The creature's own silver eyes are  
reflected in Carter's eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. OPEN FIELD, OUTER LIMITS OF CITY -- REALITY

Carter is overcome. His head drops and he starts to slip into  
unconsciousness.

The voices of the government agents around him seem like  
WHISPERS.

MONROE

Get him in the car.  
Washington and Roosevelt will  
take him to the Hive while we  
clean this up..

The world fades to black.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK CHASE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Mark paces the floor while Casey stands by his computer, arms crossed.

MARK

No. No way. Forget it.

CASEY

We've got to try.

MARK

Have you been listening to anything I've said? You can't expect to play games with them.

CASEY

This isn't a game. My friend's life is at stake here.

MARK

And I'm telling you he's already gone! They will mess with his head. Slowly, little by little they'll chip away until he is completely detached from reality. And once the Gift is activated it'll destroy whatever is left in him that's human.

CASEY

You can't sit here and let it happen. He's still human. And he won't let go without a fight. I guarantee you that.

MARK

What you want is insane.

CASEY

I want you to help him!

MARK

What you want is suicide!

Casey and Mark stare at each other across the room.

CASEY

Fine, stay here. I'll go myself. But I will not give up on him.

A tear falls from Casey's cheek.

Mark looks into her eyes, searching. His expression softens.

MARK

The odds are a million to one. It's so impossible. I..

His words trail off as Casey breaks her stare and looks off in hopelessness.

MARK

Alright. This is so stupid.  
[Beat]  
But I'll help you help your friend.

Casey sniffles back her tears and tries to smile. Mark drops his gaze.

MARK

I've got to be crazy.

His computer speaks out in a sultry FEMALE VOICE.

VOICE

You've got mail, lover.

Mark takes a seat and quickly shuts off his speakers. The incoming email opens in a separate window on the side of his screen. It reads "LONG RANGE SATELLITE PICS. TWENTY MINUTES AGO. THANK ME LATER." Mark scrolls down. The images are those of the impact crater.

MARK

A Visitor ship crashed. This is serious.

CASEY

Well, doesn't that mean that's where they'll be? Isn't that where they would take Carter?

MARK

Something like a crash they would be at in minutes. All they have to do is incinerate the debris. That doesn't ever take them long so I don't think they'd still be there.

[Beat]

No, I think I know exactly where they are.

Mark clicks back to the windows of the different stolen files. He scrolls through pages of information at a frantic pace.

CASEY

What's your guess then?

MARK

Well, I know from their reports that they only communicate with the Visitors in person at a place they call the Hive. Now, there are no direct indications as to where the Hive is located,

but I did notice a pattern in these maps.

Mark clicks open an image browser and flips through several different maps of the city.

MARK

See, this one shows the police patrol zones in blue.

Another map flashes on screen.

MARK

Here are Fire Rescue routes.

Another map takes its place.

MARK

This one's the Department of Transportation maintenance schedule.

Mark clicks back and forth, extracting the highlighted or colored areas of each map and starts overlapping them.

MARK

Bear in mind that these are the official blueprints used by the city's difference utilities and although city commissioners drafted them, they were modified later by Special Investigations. Do you see what I'm seeing?

Multiple layers from each map slide together on the computer screen to form one vast mess of colors and twisting lines.

In the bottom right there is a small section of white remaining where none of the layers meet.

CASEY

[Pointing]  
That square. None of the  
zones or routes ever cross  
there.

MARK  
And where is the one place  
you don't want anyone to drop  
in uninvited?

CASEY  
The Hive.

MARK  
Give me a minute and I can  
figure out the nearest  
address.

CASEY  
Wait, I know this place.  
Well, I don't know the  
address, but I do know the  
area. This white section is  
smaller than a city block.

MARK  
I'll get my keys. I hope  
you're right about this guy  
Carter or we could be risking  
our necks for nothing.

Mark and Casey pull on their jackets and exit.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL BLOCK -- NIGHT

Washington brings the car into a loading zone at the rear of a  
factory complex.

The area is covered in stacks of oil-stained metal pipes. Steam  
escapes from vents at the back of the factory.

Roosevelt and Washington exit the vehicle. Going to the back, Roosevelt opens the door and pulls Carter from the backseat.

CARTER

Hey, Roosevelt.

Roosevelt does not respond.

CARTER

I can see Washington's thoughts. Get your gun out, quickly.

Washington stops walking and turns around.

CARTER

He's got a plan, Roosevelt.  
He's about to kill us both.  
Get your gun.

Roosevelt hesitates as Washington stares him in the eye.

WASHINGTON

He's lying.

CARTER

I can see everything he's thinking right now, Roosevelt, get your gun out!

Washington stands like a statue.

A look of uncertainty registers on Roosevelt's face.

CARTER

Listen, I can tell you what he's thinking. He doesn't care about Monroe or any of you. He knows how to increase his own power, multiply the Gift, so that

Monroe can't see his  
thoughts...

WASHINGTON  
Don't believe a word.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
But I can read him somehow.  
He's been waiting for a  
chance to take over and this  
is it. Ask him why we're not  
driving to the Hive. Ask  
him. I can see him  
remembering, you've never  
parked this far from the Hive  
before.

Roosevelt suddenly draws his gun and Washington instantly  
responds in kind.

ROOSEVELT  
He is right about that.

WASHINGTON  
Moron. Can't you see he's  
turning you against me?

CARTER  
He is going to shoot you.

ROOSEVELT  
This lot is just out of sight  
from the rendezvous. Why did  
we stop back here?

WASHINGTON  
Don't be a fool!

CARTER  
He won't let you out of here  
alive.

WASHINGTON

Shut up!

CARTER

Watch out!

Carter spins out of Roosevelt's grasp just as Washington fires.

Roosevelt's body slumps to the ground while Washington finishes emptying his clip. Carter has disappeared around the car and scurries through the aisles of pipes.

Washington drops his spent weapon and picks up Roosevelt's gun. His eyes completely dissipate into silver.

Carter struggles to maintain his breathing as pain resurges through his brain. Not far away, Washington is cautiously checking behind every pile of material.

He draws closer and closer to where Carter is hiding.

FROM CARTER'S P.O.V: He suddenly can see through Washington's eyes and realizes Washington has spotted his location.

Carter springs from his position and grabs the barrel of Washington's gun, which he rips in half with his bare hands. A backfist from Washington sends him to the ground.

Carter is back on his feet and throws a right cross that connects with Washington's face. Washington does not look fazed.

WASHINGTON

You just bought yourself a  
slow death.

He whips his knee into Carter's stomach and hammers him with a hook punch.

Carter begins to bleed.

Washington throws another hook at Carter's head. He ducks and instead the punch dents the thick metal pipe behind him.

WASHINGTON

Monroe was a fool to activate  
you so soon. A mistake--  
[Punches Carter]  
--that I will remedy.

CARTER

Don't kid yourself, you're  
still afraid of him.

WASHINGTON

[Blocks a jab]  
He wants to feel like he is  
in control. I could care  
less.  
[Uppercuts Carter]  
I know that real power is in  
the Gift. And I--  
[Another punch]  
-want--  
[Another punch]  
--more!

During the fight, Carter gains temporary surges of strength from the unbridled power in his mind. But even with his training from Central Intelligence, Washington is clearly in control of the battle.

Blow by blow, the fight takes its toll on Carter. He is brutally pounded by Washington who appears to grow stronger with every second.

When it doesn't seem that Carter can take any more, is struck again. And again. And again.

WASHINGTON

I don't know how you could  
read my thoughts, but it  
won't matter now.

Another hard punch to the midsection and Carter slumps in front of a wooden crate. Washington stands over him, deciding how to finish Carter.

Suddenly, Mark charges Washington from behind, swinging a fire axe down over his head. Washington dodges at the last second, the axe harmlessly impaled in a steel barrel.

A wave of dread shoots through Mark. Washington plants his foot against the axe head and pulls the handle free.

Mark summons his courage and vainly throws a punch. It misses and Washington seizes his outstretched wrist, thrusting the axe handle through the ribcage.

Mark collapses. His last breaths GURGLE in his throat.

Washington spots Casey watching him from her hiding place behind a nearby column of barrels. He heaves a metal strut into the columns. The barrels rain down on Casey who fails to escape being pinned.

Washington grabs her by the hair and yanks her free. She manages to get to her feet and feebly resists.

Washington backhands her across the face so forcefully she slams into the ground. Again he picks her up and knocks her down.

Carter's vision focuses long enough for him to recognize Casey.

CARTER

[Weakly]

Casey... no!

She is badly bruised. Blood drips from the corner of her mouth.

Washington unleashes a fury of punches that CRACK the bones in her torso. The look of fear on her face sends anger rippling through Carter's veins.

As the power in his mind blazes like wildfire, silver flares in his pupils.

FROM CARTER'S P.O.V: We see Carter reaching with his mind, probing Washington's thoughts while he is distracted.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE ROOM -- WASHINGTON'S MIND

Carter finds himself looking in on Washington who is standing in a solid white room.

A tall stand in the middle of the room is the only object around. At the top of the stand is a single candle in a candleholder floating in a metal bowl of dark liquid.

Washington does not seem to notice Carter's presence.

Carter watches as Washington reaches out and takes hold of the candle and lifts it from the holder. As he does, his body starts to twist in pain.

Growling through clenched teeth, Washington tips the candle until it touches the liquid. All at once the fluid ignites then slowly dies out.

Carter understands the meaning of the imagery.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL BLOCK -- NIGHT

Casey screams out in agony as Washington strikes her on the back near her kidney.

Her cries fuel the rage in Carter's soul. He grinds his teeth and closes his eyes to concentrate.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE ROOM -- CARTER'S MIND

Carter opens his eyes to find himself lying on the floor in the white room of his own mind.

He rises and goes to the candle stand.

In the metal basin, the dark liquid spins wildly, as if the room were rotating at a blinding speed. Taking the candle from the holder, Carter starts to lower the tip into the violently thrashing water.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL BLOCK -- NIGHT

Still crumpled against a crate, Carter GROANS in pain.

His head suddenly arches backwards and his eyes snap open. Mercury is filling into each eye from the corners.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE ROOM -- CARTER'S MIND

Yelling against the increasing anguish, Carter finally touches the flame to the liquid.

Fire EXPLODES from the basin and the entire room is set ablaze.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL BLOCK -- NIGHT

Washington lifts Casey from the ground by her throat and winds up another punch.

WASHINGTON

Let's open her up and see how  
much guts are left..

Washington's words fade from his lips as he glances over his shoulder.

Carter raises his head. His eyes are now completely silver and pulsing with energy.

Washington lets Casey drop, his attention centered on Carter.

WASHINGTON

You can't... no! I WON'T LET  
YOU!

Washington charges, his punch flying at Carter with the roaring fury of a freight train.

Carter is on his feet. He catches the punch in the palm of his hand, stopping it cold.

Washington throws another punch with his free hand, which Carter also catches. He applies tremendous pressure with his fingers, POPPING bones in Washington's fists.

Releasing Washington's hands, Carter throws a front kick that connects with Washington's chin, whipping his head backwards. Carter pivots his body and, leg still in the air, plants a side thrust kick into Washington's abdomen.

The force hurls Washington into a stack of barrels that CRASH down around him. Washington returns to his feet and launches another attack at Carter but is again deflected.

It is evident that Carter has become far more powerful than Washington and the fight is easily in his favor.

Washington HOWLS with rage, curls his body up, and charges in a last ditch attempt to impale Carter on a thin steel bar. Carter sidesteps the iron weapon and wraps his arm around Washington's neck. With a vertical heave, Washington's vertebrae shatter in a flurry of cracking NOISES. His spine arches grotesquely under his clothes and his body falls to the ground.

Carter staggers over to Casey who is WHIMPERING from her wounds.

CARTER

[Struggling to speak]  
Be still... I can heal.

Carter picks her up and lays her across the hood of the agent's car. He lightly presses his fingertips to her temples.

Her body convulses. A few moments pass.

She sits up suddenly, COUGHING and SPUTTERING. It appears he has succeeded in healing her internal injuries sufficiently to keep her from death. She runs her hands around her torso, unbelieving that her pain has subsided.

Carter seizes from the Gift still afire in his mind. He sprawls out on the hood next to Casey.

Carter GROANS in pain and the light flickers from his silver eyes.

CARTER

I... I can't... contain... tearing  
my brains...

CASEY

Carter! Don't give up now.  
Listen to me. Hear my voice.  
I'm still with you.

CARTER

It's... it's... ARGH... suffocating  
me!

CASEY

Listen. Don't fight with it.  
Let go of it. Just picture  
yourself standing still. I  
know it burns, it's burning  
all around you. The fire  
can't hurt you unless you  
fight it.

Casey takes his hand in hers and presses it to her chin.

Her voice grows softer.

CASEY

Forget the fire. Don't hold  
on with your mind. Hold on  
with your heart. Hold on.  
Don't let go. Hold on.

Tears trickle from the corners of Casey's eyes.

CASEY

I'm not letting go. I'm  
here. Hold on to me, Carter.  
[Nearly whispering]  
You will find your way.

She leans in and kisses Carter. His spasms begin to subside.

FROM CARTER'S P.O.V: He is flashing back to hundreds of random  
images from the past, present, and his previous day-visions.

His body stops moving for a moment. Suddenly, he flies forward  
off the hood of the car.

He lands on one knee, head bowed. As he rises, his eyes are a  
brighter, shimmering silver and it is obvious the Gift has  
stabilized.

CASEY

Carter?

CARTER

It's over.  
[Beat]  
I won.

Casey leaps from the hood and runs to his arms.

They embrace.

Carter holds her for a while, then gently pulls her away.

CARTER

The others will be here any minute. Get in the car and hide. I'll be fine.

She gazes into his eyes, stroking her fingers down his cheek. He softly takes her hand from his face and gives it a reassuring squeeze.

Casey climbs into the car and shuts the door just as more headlights flood the area. Carter stands motionless as the other cars arrive.

Just as the tires slide to a stop, the government agents get out. At the sight of Carter, everyone draws a gun but Monroe.

MONROE

Impossible.

The agents ready their weapons.

MONROE

[Calling out]  
Mr. Washington?

CARTER

Washington is dead.

MONROE

I don't believe it.

CARTER

I know, and you never will. The idea that you are not in control of everything doesn't exist to you. Well your control is a delusion. Washington knew how to manipulate the Gift and he kept it secret. He was going to kill you here tonight.

Monroe is speechless, his mind reeling. The other agents grow increasingly apprehensive.

Carter raises his hand and the shimmering from his eyes brightens. The agents steady their aim.

Monroe's eyes widen at the realization of what is about to happen. But it is too late.

MONROE

No!

The government agents move to fire on Carter.

Suddenly, they each turn and BLAST away at each other. Truman, Jackson, and Pierce all kill each other. Monroe is hit in his side and goes down.

The power HUMMING from Carter recedes and he walks over to Monroe.

MONROE

You still don't have... all the answers.

CARTER

No, but I'm not finished either. I'm going to hunt down every Visitor on this planet, starting with the ones in this city. I will find the truth.

MONROE

You don't have to... they are in the Hive... right now.

CARTER

Where is it?

MONROE (CONT'D)

You want the truth?

[Points]

The truth is in there, Mr.  
Carter.

Monroe points across the street at a deserted storage garage.  
Carter makes his way over to it.

The huge garage doors part for him as he arrives. White light  
spills from inside.

Carter takes a few steps and disappears into the building.

INT. THE HIVE -- NIGHT

The garage is filled with light, so bright Carter has to shield  
his eyes.

Slowly, dark shapes come into view, advancing on Carter. He  
adjusts somewhat to the lighting and finds himself staring face  
to face with a VISITOR.

The Visitors are hunched with small fangs bristling from their  
elongated jaws. Inky blotches of black dot their sickeningly  
pale skin. There are between ten and twenty Visitors circling  
Carter.

The one opposite Carter seems to be the group's LEADER.

The seconds tick by silently as they stare at each other.

Suddenly, the Leader grabs Carter with both hands around his  
jaw, thumbs pressing into his cheeks. Using the power of the  
Gift, the Leader inflicts pain directly into Carter's mind.

A WAR CRY bellows from Carter as he resists. Fighting against  
the Leader's power, Carter grasps the Leader around the jaw in  
the same position.

It is clear they are now battling neck and neck with their Gift.  
Images from the Leader's thoughts flash into Carter's mind. He

sees visions of distant planets. Visions of the Visitors bestowing the Gift on Monroe and the other government agents.

Suddenly, the Leader recoils in agony. He and the other Visitors collapse, holding their craniums. Black blood oozes from their mouths and eyes. Their bodies twitch in the throes of death.

Carter catches his breath as the last Visitor dies. Everything is still.

Carter has killed them all with his Gift.

EXT. ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL BLOCK -- NIGHT

Carter returns and helps Monroe sit up against the car.

CARTER

Monroe? Don't fight me, I am going to try and heal you.

MONROE

Your Gift has grown... limitless... did you find... your truth?

CARTER

My Gift is the same as yours. Power this great almost always turns a man to evil. But as the Gift took shape in me, I had a single hope to hold on to. Love saved me.

[Beat]

Now let me help you.

Carter hovers his palm over Monroe's wound. Monroe pushes his hand away.

MONROE

Everything we've done... I believed in...

CARTER

Monroe, I saw their thoughts. It's worse than you could imagine. They came here with a single purpose. They gave you the Gift to put their plan in action. You believe everything you've done has been to better shape the world, to ready the rest of us for their existence. But their real intention is deeper than that. You see, they have neighbors that they have tried to conquer and lost. Technology is not the issue. It all breaks down into numbers. They simply do not have enough people to meet their ends. When they discovered Earth and how close we are to making new homes in space, they went to work to prepare us.

MONROE

Prepare us for what?

CARTER

To be their killing machines. They've been shaping our cultures, shaping society, altering our way of thinking. Little by little. So that when the time comes, when mankind makes its first journey through the galaxy, we will be so hostile to anyone we find that we will wipe out the Visitor's enemies for them. They are

molding the human race into  
their biological weapon.

MONROE

I've been condemning... the  
entire planet.

Carter nods in agreement.

CARTER

That's why I need to save  
your life. I want you to  
help me stop them.

MONROE

I... don't want... to live...  
Carter.

CARTER

This is senseless. Don't do  
this.

Monroe's BREATHING grows weaker and weaker. He stares at Carter  
as the life ebbs from his body.

Carter looks as if he is going to protest further, but doesn't.

Monroe takes his last BREATH and dies.

Casey emerges from hiding in the car. She runs to Carter and  
they embrace.

CASEY

Tell me it's over.

CARTER

No.

[Beat]

It's just beginning.

FADE TO:

EXT. OPEN STRETCH OF ROAD -- NIGHT

OMINOUS P.O.V: The dividing white line in the center of the road hypnotically flashes by on a stretch of open road.

CARTER (V.O)

Now that the smoke is clearing, I can think a little better. Monroe was right. Man isn't ready to face the Visitors. Not yet.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARIS, FRANCE -- EARLY EVENING

A TOURIST is videotaping the Eiffel Tower when a UFO streaks by in the distance. His jaw drops as he watches it on his camera's view screen.

CARTER (V.O CONT'D)

Our best chance is to use the system against them.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARIS, FRANCE -- NIGHT

The Tourist is sprinting down an empty Paris street, his camera bag secured to his back.

As he hides behind a corner, a FRENCH GOVERNMENT AGENT comes down the street, hot on his trail.

CARTER (V.O CONT'D)

To prepare the Earth with the will to fight.

The agent stops and suddenly grabs his head, as if his brains were bursting inside. He shudders and collapses in the street. In a nearby alley there are two silver eyes looking out from the shadows.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN, HONG KONG -- NIGHT

Several CHINESE GOVERNMENT AGENTS are aiming their guns at a figure hidden in the shadows.

Sweat drips across their face. They seem to be struggling against an unseen force.

CARTER (V.O CONT'D)  
To give the human race the  
hope it needs to rise above  
the shadows in the dark.

Suddenly, they turn and open FIRE on each other.

CUT TO:

EXT. HAMBURG, GERMANY -- NIGHT

Five GERMAN GOVERNMENT AGENTS walk in formation down a deserted street.

Sensing something, The LEAD AGENT stops and turns.

Behind them, a PERSON in a trench coat is following. His head is down.

CARTER (V.O CONT'D)  
The world is still a scary  
place.

The lead agent MUMBLES something in German under his breath. The other agents draw their guns in unison and level them at the approaching figure.

CARTER (V.O CONT'D)  
They're still out there.

The agents start to twitch slightly.

The figure raises his head. It is Carter.

His eyes are silver and pulsing with energy.

CARTER (V.O CONT'D)  
But, so am I.

Carter raises his hand. Time seems to stand still.

He smiles.

The light from his eyes starts to fill the screen.

ZOOM IN QUICKLY: On his palm.

FADE TO BLACK

ROLL CREDITS