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fear the walking dead

"pilot"

written by

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ACT ONE

UP ON:

1 INT. STASH HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY 1

IAN BENNETT (19) was handsome once. He's curled fetal on one of several foul mattresses in a derelict bedroom. Milky weak light penetrates threadbare curtains. The room looks like landfill. A shit bucket in the corner teems with FLIES.

Ian's in loose boxers, ribs pressed pale against blue-veined skin. He shakes with the morning chill, and his high's wane, BELT looped around his bicep above the INJECTION SITE. He looks dead, the room his hell.

There are other crates, other mattresses around him, but Ian is alone. Sole tenant. His WORKS are scattered on top of a nearby MILK CRATE -- needle, scorched spoon, Bic lighter.

There's a THUD downstairs. VOICES. Ian opens his eyes, red from broken vessels. We HOLD TIGHT on his bloody-blue orbs, pupils dilated -- until a SCREAM CURLS up from down low.

Ian sits bolt upright, breathless. Three distinct BOOMING VOICES come up through the floor. Rage. Panic. Horror. Furniture CRASHES. More SCREAMS, terrified SCREAMS.

Then GUNSHOTS. ONE... then ONE more. CRASHING bodies. One final, piercing SCREAM. Then silence. The silence worse.

Ian shakes his head, struggles to focus against the disorient as he listens for movement, footfalls ascending the steps. He brings his knees up under him, holds --

-- then tip-toes barefoot through drug den detritus. He grabs sweats, a wife-beater -- his, someone else's, doesn't matter. He dresses then --

2 INT. STASH HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR LANDING - CONTINUOUS 2

Ian pushes into the hallway, skylight overhead. He steps into the sunshine. He looks like an apocalyptic refugee -- wary, holding upstairs because he fears what lies beneath.

Soiled sleeping bags scattered about. Hollowed PROPANE TANK centers the room, thick with ash like it was used for heat.

People slept here, people lived here... and moved on.

Ian pads towards the stairs, light steps on worn floorboards. He kneels by an abandoned pack, finds a .22 SIX-CYLINDER. He lifts it... trembles. Holding the gun adds to his terror.

He DROPS the pistol like it's hot, braces himself, and --

3 INT. STASH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 3

Ian reaches the first floor -- as fucked up as the second. He holds there, holds his breath, tries to slow his pulse... and begins to hear something... SOFT, WET, repeating.

The front door beckons but Ian stalks down the hall toward that sucking sound. He slow-rounds a corner and --

4 INT. STASH HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 4

Bloodbath. A CORPSE, throat torn out, blood pulsing into a pool -- a young man, .357 MAGNUM by his hand. Past him, ANOTHER BODY... similar state. Ian is HORRIFIED. He brings a hand up to cover his mouth as his eyes settle on --

THE STICK WOMAN crouches over a THIRD VICTIM. She's scrawny in thread-bare sundress, dark hair pulled tight in a pony-tail. She kisses the neck of the corpse -- then sucks, stretches, pulls something taut.

She's the source of the sounds and, when she turns, Ian sees why. Her eyes pale as her skin, nearly translucent -- sharp contrast between her corpse-complexion and the BLACK-RED GORE painting her mouth, jaw, throat. It hits Ian --

She's been eating this man.

IAN
Oh God... Gloria ...

Ian steps back as Stick Woman stands -- he now sees GUNSHOT WOUNDS in her torso. Her dead gaze holds him. She never reaches, never snarls, just advances like a hunched ghost.

IAN (CONT'D)
What are you doing, what the hell --

She steps over corpses, bare feet leaving BLOODY PRINTS. Ian backs away, watches her come on, screams --

IAN (CONT'D)
-- help me, someone help me -- !

He BUMPS into the door frame. The impact jolts him from his stun. Ian bolts, leaves the Stick Woman behind, and --

5 INT. STASH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 5

Ian races through the house, trips barefoot over trash, overturned furniture. He falls flat on the floor, but hears the Stick Woman behind him, growling.

He forces himself standing, lurches forward, and --

6 EXT. STASH HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY 6

Ian runs into the yard. The steel SECURITY DOOR SLAMS shut behind him, RATTLES loose in the frame. Ian glances back to see if the Stick Woman is there, races through --

The front lawn is yellow, jungle-wild. Nearby houses gutted, tagged, abandoned. A BURNED OUT PICK-UP jacked on the curb. The neighborhood is forgotten, dead. Urban apocalypse.

Ian rockets up the street, breath RAKING his lungs. The soles of his feet start to split and bleed. At an intersection Ian banks right and --

7 EXT. INTERSECTION - VENICE - CONTINUOUS 7

CLOSE ON IAN as he runs, gasping, blood PULSING in his ears. He sprints until he feels something catch, break inside him. His lungs are raw, feet bleeding -- he's burned through the short-lived adrenaline rush. Crash.

He slows his pace, sucks air to stay his sobs. He finally turns, fearful the Stick Woman may be staggering after him -- if she truly exists. As Ian completes his one-eighty turn --

WE SEE IAN WIPED FROM VIEW as a CAR ROARS INTO FRAME, HORN BLARING, SLAMS into the boy. The IMPACT lifts him into the air, violent rag-doll toss, then crashes him down, and --

GOD'S POV. An URBAN SOUNDTRACK now hits us as hard as the vehicle hit Ian. TRAFFIC DIN. HELICOPTER in the distance. HOMELESS WOMAN haggling on a corner. A GULL cries.

The SOUNDS wash over Ian as he lies on the pavement, curled fetal, twisted in pain, as PEDESTRIANS, DRIVERS converge --

DRIVER
Call 911, someone call 911 -- he-he
came out of nowhere -- !

The DRIVER yells as a FLURRY OF LIFE fills the frame, as Ian writhes, as we realize the apocalypse has yet to arrive --

SMASH TO:

MAIN TITLES

8 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - IAN'S ROOM - DAY 8

Semi-private, cloth partition drawn along the ceiling rails between Ian and an ELDERLY PATIENT. His roommate's breathing sounds wet, tubercular. Ian's wrists are bound to either guardrail -- LAPD UNIS sandwich him. Ian, gravel-voiced --

IAN
I went for a walk.

LAPD UNI
You were running, Ian.

IAN
I went for a run.

He clings to calm with both hands, white-knuckling it, a bravado he can't hold. The cop presses --

LAPD UNI
Barefoot -- down needle alley?

IAN
Kenyans run barefoot.

LAPD UNI
Uh-huh.
(glances at his partner)
You remember saying someone went cannibal? You were raving about flesh and blood and viscera.

IAN
The endorphins start flowing... I talk crazy. Runner's high.
(then)
I don't know what *viscera* is.

LAPD UNI
Tell us where you scored. Lots of kids buying in that hood. We clean that place up, you come out a hero.

IAN
Ratzo Rizzo.

LAPD UNI
Ian, you could have died.

IAN
(takes that in)
Coulda, woulda, shoulda, coulda, woulda, shoulda, coulda...

He stares off, repeats the mantra under his breath, and --

9

INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

9

Storm front. MADISON BENNETT (40s) strides into frame. She's dressed like a banker but there's attitude there. Boyfriend TRAVIS POSADA (40s) drafts behind, handsome, eyes soft, rogue blue -- a free pass. A scrubbed ER DOC struggles to keep up --

ER DOC
He has two cracked ribs. Too many lacerations and contusions to count. But I'm more worried --

MADISON
About toxicology?

ER DOC
There's that, yes, but --

MADISON
What did he take?

Calm. Madison's done this before, many times. Her daughter, ALICIA (17) trails behind, pack to her chest, earbuds jammed into her brain. She's got her mother's looks, her edge.

ER DOC
He's over eighteen, ma'am. I can't tell you. Any more than I could tell the police.

That slows her. Madison stares down the doctor --

MADISON
They here? Now?

ER DOC
They have been, may still be --

MADISON
You should've lead with that.

ER DOC
I've requested a psych consult. Ian presented as delusional --

He's calling after her as Madison marches ahead, tunnel-visioned. The doc looks to Travis for help --

ER DOC (CONT'D)
-- we had to restrain him. She's not listening.

TRAVIS
Yeah, she is.

Travis nods at Alicia to catch up, follows Madison, as --

10 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - IAN'S ROOM - DAY 10

Madison enters the room, Travis a few paces behind. Alicia finds a spot in the hall, seen through the door. She slumps against the wall, cracks her LAPTOP, does not enter.

MADISON
Is my son under arrest?

The storm's arrived. The cops clock Madison, then --

LAPD UNI
No ma'am.

MADISON
Then get out. Thank you. Leave.

LAPD UNI
We could arrest him for disturbing the peace, for --

MADISON
Charge him when he's healed. For
now, go away.

She'll continue to fight if that's what they want. Defending
her son is her default. She's done it many times before.
The Uni looks to silent Travis --

LAPD UNI
She do all the talking?

MADISON
Get out.

TRAVIS
I'm not as eloquent.

He grins. The cop hands a BUSINESS CARD to Travis as they
exit. Ian should be thankful but he knows what's next --

MADISON
What tales you telling, Ian?

IAN
None.

MADISON
Why the restraints?

IAN
Ask the lab coat.

He can't handle her gaze, turns his face into the pillow,
trembling through withdrawal, overwhelm, shame. Then --

MADISON
You hurt yourself?

IAN
Does it matter?

MADISON
Yes.

IAN
Why?
(turns, venom)
You didn't give two shits when Dad
died, you'd care less if I died.

MADISON
That's not true --

IAN
(at Travis)
Replaced Dad, you'll replace me --

MADISON
I want to help you, I want --

IAN
 You can't, you can't help! Can't
 do shit, just, enough, you...
 (weaker)
 ... just cut me loose.

ALICIA
 (from the hall, dry)
 There's an idea.

TRAVIS
Alicia -- not cool.

ALICIA
Not your business, Travis.

She doesn't look up. Madison turns, ready to lay into Alicia,
 but Travis raises a calm hand --

TRAVIS
 Everyone take a breath.

Madison counts to ten. Travis glances at his phone as it
 BUZZES. He squeezes Madison's shoulder, moves into --

11 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - DAY 11

Travis steps over Alicia's outstretched legs as he takes the
 call, strides down the hallway --

TRAVIS
 Liza -- ?

LIZA (O.S.)
 How is he?

TRAVIS
 He's banged up but he'll be okay.

He lowers his voice, moves further from Alicia, as --

12 INT. LIZA AND CHRISTOPHER'S HOUSE - MT. BALDY - INTERCUT 12

LIZA CADY (40s) paces a rustic mountain home, view of the LA
 basin four thousand feet below, framed by a bay window. Their
 son CHRISTOPHER (16) waits in background, impatient.

LIZA
 Hard part comes now.

TRAVIS
 Madison has a place picked out.

LIZA
 If he'll go.

Liza's pretty, yoga lean, a somewhat wilted flower-child,
 struggling with single-parenthood.

LIZA (CONT'D)
 Wanted to talk before I took Chris
 to school, reception's crap going
 down the mountain --

TRAVIS
 Okay.

LIZA
 Wasn't sure if you could still take
 him tomorrow with all this --

CHRISTOPHER
 I don't want to go.

Loud enough for Travis to here. Christopher is handsome as
 hell like his father, smart as hell like his mother, and
 righteously pissed. Travis braces as --

LIZA
 Chris --

TRAVIS
 Let me talk to him --

LIZA
 It's Dad's weekend, he gets a say --

CHRISTOPHER
 I get a say and I don't want to go.

LIZA
 Well, maybe I don't want you here
 this weekend, Mr. Unpleasant --

TRAVIS
Liza, let me --

LIZA
 -- maybe I have plans --

CHRISTOPHER
 Whatever. I'll stay at Diego's -- I
 don't want to spend my whole weekend
 at a goddamn hospital --

LIZA
Christopher --

TRAVIS
Let me talk to him.

LIZA
 Talk to your father --

She surrenders, extends the phone. Chris glares at her for a
 long moment, takes the receiver --

CHRISTOPHER
 I don't want to come.

TRAVIS
It's my weekend.

CHRISTOPHER
Fine. Force me. Let's bond. What
you got planned, Dad...?

TRAVIS
(beat)
I'm doing the best I can.

CHRISTOPHER
Yeah, that doesn't help.

TRAVIS
We're making a family -- all of us.
Coming here to support Ian's not
the worst thing in the world.

CHRISTOPHER
It's up there. He's not my friend,
he's not my brother.

TRAVIS
He'd be there for you.

CHRISTOPHER
Bullshit. He would never have to
be there for me. Like that. No.

He hands the phone off to his mother, slings his backpack as
he heads for the door. Liza puts the phone to her ear --

LIZA
Well?

TRAVIS
Keep him.

Liza sighs a goodbye, kills the call. Travis hears the line
die. Heartscrape.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
Shit.

He finds Alicia watching, expression sympathetic. He works a
smile. She returns to her work as Madison steps out --

MADISON
That Liza?

TRAVIS
She sends her love.

MADISON
I know that's a lie.

TRAVIS
Something resembling love.

MADISON
I've got college counseling today.
Costa's gonna kill me.

TRAVIS
Go.

MADISON
I can't leave him.

TRAVIS
I'll stay.

She resists. Travis takes Madison in his arms, holds her --

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
It's easier for me. Tell them to
call in a sub. Let me do this for
you...
(kisses her cheek)
... let me.

If he can't help his own son, maybe he can help hers...

13

EXT./INT. LOS ANGELES/MADISON'S JETTA - DAY

13

RADIO ON. NPR reports a spate of violent incidents -- "The documented cases nationwide now stands at twenty-seven and counting. Officials say this is contained and not near 'outbreak' proportions." The news plays under --

MADISON
He's going to be okay.

Alicia doesn't respond, earbuds plugged in. Madison looks at her, checks the road, stares hard --

MADISON (CONT'D)
Would you take those off, please?

ALICIA
I can hear you.

MADISON
Would you take those off, please?

ALICIA
(pulls the buds)
"He's going to be okay."

MADISON
Thank you. Yes. He will be.

ALICIA
(looks away)
While he's restrained.

"... the CDC has failed to isolate cause. Is it an airborne toxin, a microbe in the water supply, a new viral strain..?" Madison kills the radio, stares at her daughter until --

ALICIA (CONT'D)
What?

MADISON
 You could carry some hope into the discussion.

ALICIA
 He's an adult now. You can't just send him away again. All you can do is what he said...

She turns the radio back on -- Madison stabs it silent. They crawl by a POCKET PARK, green space in a sprawl of strip malls and box stores.

MADISON
 I'm not cutting off your brother.

ALICIA
 I love him, too -- but he's worse, not better.

MADISON
 He just has to get the junk out of his system.

ALICIA
 (gently)
 They didn't tie him down because of the crank.

MADISON
 He hurt himself.

ALICIA
 Psych eval. He's seeing things.

KIDS pushed on swings by UNEMPLOYED PARENTS, NANNIES with strollers, clutch of slumbering HOMELESS on the fringe.

MADISON
 He was using. He hallucinated.

ALICIA
 Or he's using because he's seeing --

MADISON
 Don't go there.

ALICIA
 How can you not? I'm sorry but he's self-medicating. Ian dopes, Grampa drank, and we know what he did --

MADISON
 It's not the same.

But there's tension in her voice, the fear. Allie eyes the pocket park -- semblance of normal amidst urban decay.

ALICIA
Sometimes it skips a generation.

Madison says nothing, just hits the radio, NEWSCAST carries over, and --

14 EXT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL - INGLEWOOD - DAY 14

Kennedy high -- Bobby, not Jack. Wrong side of the 10, wrong side of the 405. The neighborhood surrounding the school is flat, sprawling, sunbleached. Pacific in background -- only a few miles away but it might as well be a million.

A 747 lifts off from LAX, banks over the Pacific, as another jet descends into the LA basin under a cloudless blue sky.

A SCHOOL BELL SOUNDS and --

15 INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS 15

METAL DETECTORS manned by SECURITY GUARDS. An LAPD OFFICER strolls with his K9 drug-sniffer, circulating through a mass of STUDENTS, predominately black and Latino.

Madison shakes off her morning as she enters, Alicia on her heels. Hard core hood, hard core school. Madison looks like the girl next door but there's something hard-core about her, too. Edge. She fits here.

Alicia bombs through the portal, finds her boyfriend on the other side. MATT SALE's varsity -- everything. Six foot. Man-size. Madison watches the jock kiss her daughter --

COSTA
Maddy.

The school's PRINCIPAL ART COSTA (50s) sidles over, oversees the morning, crossed arms perched on heavy gut --

MADISON
Artie.

COSTA
Lot of absentees this week.
(beat)
You find Ian?

MADISON
We did. Thanks for asking.

COSTA
Good. That's good news. He okay?

MADISON
Travis's with him. Crane's gonna sub.

COSTA
 Good, that's good...
 (then, slow)
 ... What are you gonna do?

Before Madison can answer, the metal detector SOUNDS. TOBIAS, an awkward, acne-scarred senior, grabs his bag, hustles away from the alarm. Costa launches --

COSTA (CONT'D)
 Hold up, son.

TOBIAS
 I'm okay.

COSTA
 Glad to hear. Empty your pockets.

The students watch -- they've got a distraction. Alicia and Matt clock the action as Madison beats Costa to the punch --

MADISON
 Stop running, Tobias -- turn out
 your pockets like Mr. Costa says.

She says it but, as she loops an arm around Tobias, Madison pulls a handful of change from her purse -- slight of hand worthy of a street con.

MADISON (CONT'D)
 ... seventy-seven cents. Keep it.

She offers the change like it's Tobias's -- and walks the boy down the hall. Madison protects her kids like they're hers.

16

INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL - MADISON'S OFFICE - DAY

16

Madison Bennett - Guidance Counselor stenciled over frosted glass. Madison holds the PARING KNIFE that was in Tobias's other pocket. The blade's only four inches -- but sharp, serious enough to do damage.

MADISON
 What's going on?

TOBIAS
 Nothing.

His eyes are on the floor and will stay there through most of the scene. Voice low but strained.

MADISON
 What's the blade for?

TOBIAS
 Whittling.

Madison sighs, sits back in her chair --

MADISON
That the story you're gonna spin?

TOBIAS
Not a story. Just is.

MADISON
...Someone bothering you? Dominic Fratto?

TOBIAS
He's been okay. I tutor him now. Algebra One. Remedial moron.

MADISON
Why the blade then?
(off his shrug)
I could expel you just for crossing the threshold with this thing.

TOBIAS
Please no. It's safer in numbers.

Looks up then away. When Madison sees his eyes she sees not just worry, peer pressure anxiety -- she sees fear.

MADISON
Safer from what?

TOBIAS
They say it's not connected. On the news, they say that... but I don't believe them. I'm smart enough not to believe them.

MADISON
College-bound boy.

TOBIAS
Yeah, no one's going to college... no one's doing any of the shit they think they are.

Said with such finality, such nihilism. Madison pauses --

MADISON
Why'd you bring the knife, Tobes?

TOBIAS
It is connected. It's spreading.

MADISON
(knows where this is going)
Tobes, come on --

TOBIAS
The Killers. The Flesheaters.

MADISON
 (shakes her head)
 I have no patience for this today,
 I swear to God. It's rumors on the
 web, sick fanboys --

TOBIAS
 I mapped it out on my phone --

MADISON
It's not true. If there was real
 danger, we'd hear about it -- the
 authorities would say something.

TOBIAS
 Yeah? Think about that, Miss B --
 what do you say, really, when the
 world's about to end?

What indeed. Tobias looks at her with something like pity.
 Madison considers the knife and --

17

INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - IAN'S ROOM - DAY

17

Ian sleeps uneasy. Pain meds don't subdue the demons. Travis
 sits on the windowsill, thumbs through a *Golf Digest*. This is
 not a man who golfs. On the other side of the curtain, weak
 GROANS rise as Ian's roommate tries to sleep. Travis peeks
 past the curtain at the frail SKELETON MAN, his back to us.

Ian goes quiet, settles, opens his eyes like he's afraid of
 what he might see. Travis returns to his bedside --

TRAVIS
 You were having a nightmare.

IAN
 ... No shit.

TRAVIS
 (beat)
 You think it was a nightmare, what
 you saw? Hallucination?

IAN
 I want to write it off like that...
 (eyes shake, scared)
 ... you think I'm crazy?

TRAVIS
 Psych eval will tell us. How nuts
 is Ian? Scale of one to ten.

He smiles, tries for levity, tries to ease Ian's mind, but --

IAN
 Untie me?

TRAVIS
 No. Sorry.

IAN
You think I'm dangerous.

TRAVIS
The doc's worried.

IAN
Are you?

TRAVIS
You ran into traffic, man.

IAN
I was running from, not to, running
away from what I saw...

TRAVIS
... what was it?

IAN
(debates, then)
A girl. Gloria. Glo. Glo-Stick.
(pained smiles)
She was my friend. I saw her and
she was, she was...

TRAVIS
It's okay...

IAN
... christ ...
(controls his breath)
Three guys work the house. You buy
there, crash there. She was with
me when I nodded, she was there...
(looks up)
... when I went down the guys were
all dead and Glo was, she was --

TRAVIS
Ian --

IAN
-- it was all over her face and her
eyes were just, and she came at me
but she wasn't seeing me...

TRAVIS
Ian, you saw what the drugs saw.

IAN
I don't know what I saw came from
the powder... but if it didn't, it
came from me, my mind, and if it
came out of me, I'm insane, Travis,
and I don't want to be fucking
insane, I don't...
(blows out a breath)
I don't want what I saw to be real,
I don't want it not to be.

He trails off. Travis studies Ian, this boy on the verge of a nervous breakdown. He wants to help, needs to help --

TRAVIS
Give the cops the address. I have their card. They'll check it out.

IAN
That would be bad for people.

TRAVIS
Addicts.

IAN
Them.

TRAVIS
Your dealer.

IAN
Him. Yeah. Especially.

Travis studies him for a long, mindful moment. Ian becoming his son, his flawed second chance. Then --

TRAVIS
I'll go.

IAN
Say what?

TRAVIS
Tell me where. I'll go for you.

Off Ian, debating whether Travis is for real or just another failed father-in-waiting --

18 EXT. STASH HOUSE - VENICE - NIGHT

18

Travis rolls up, kills the engine of his F150. This is not a place you go after dark. Shit, it's not a place you go in broad daylight. Ruined corner of the Los Angeles sprawl.

He notes the details Ian spoke of. GANG TAGS on the street, the drug den. Scorched truck fronting the yard. A lynched TEDDY BEAR swings from a phone line.

19 INT. STASH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

19

It's dead inside. Travis flips the lights but this house is off grid. He keys his FLASHLIGHT APP, follows the beam. The living room is derelict, scattered dumpster furniture. A RAT scratches along the baseboard.

Travis ignores the stairs to the second floor, enters, as --

20 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - IAN'S ROOM - NIGHT 20

Madison steps into Ian's room. End of a long fucking day. Ian asleep, snoring lightly. The Skeleton Man's CHEST-RATTLE behind the curtain. Polluted moonlight through the window. Her son looks younger in this light, fragile and innocent.

It breaks Madison's heart. Watching Ian, no one watching her, she melts, suppressed sadness overwhelms. She's hard -- but she's fragile, too. She crawls into bed, holds Ian, as --

21 INT. STASH HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 21

Blinds drawn across dirty windows. Travis kneels, casts the beam of light across the room. There are no bodies -- and it's hard to discern a struggle in the dark...

... but there is a large dark pool on the floor, shiny in the iPhone light. Travis shifts to follow the narrow trail of FOOTPRINTS and his boot catches on a rip in the linoleum --

TRAVIS
Shit --

His hand flies out to stop his fall and plants in the middle of the puddle...

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
Shit.

He peels his hand. Tacky, drying, but he knows he pressed it in a gory puddle of blood, tissue, viscera...

Travis stares revolted by the blood. Something horrific did happen here. Ian's not crazy but if Ian's not crazy, if he saw, if --

Something shifts behind Travis.

It's like a shoe SCRAPING over the floor, barely perceptible, but very present. Travis forgets to breathe.

He braces, holds his breath, as he pivots inch by inch. The FLASHLIGHT BEAM crawls over the surface of the kitchen, finally illuminates the door, and --

Nothing. Silence.

Travis kills the light, listens, panic rising, and --

22 INT. STASH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 22

He runs his hand along the wall. Moonlight greys the living room, SHAPES and FIGURES evolving in the shadows as his eyes adjust. Travis studies the space.

The door's ten feet away, seconds away, but there's a FIGURE between the door and Travis. A SHAPE.

It could be a blanket draped over a floor lamp... but it seems to shift, it seems to breathe. The wind picks up outside and --

Travis slowly lifts his phone, aims at the SHAPE, presses the switch, and --

The LIGHT hits a NARROW, PALE FACE. Hollow-eyed, horrific, the Face breaks in a SCREAM, and --

PALE FACE
Don't, don't kill, don't kill me --

The JUNKIE dives away, sprints into the recesses of the house. Travis remembers to breathe, moves out, and --

23 EXT. STASH HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

23

Travis reaches his truck, sucks air, steadies himself. He touches his face, remembers the blood -- shakes it off, scrapes his palm hard against the street, slows...

TRAVIS
Christ...

He looks at the stash house as the hot breeze kicks up. Santa Anas. The hung bear swings with the wind and we --

CUT TO BLACK:

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

UP ON:

24 INT. HOSPITAL - IAN'S ROOM - MORNING

24

Travis enters, DUFFLE under his arm, Alicia trailing behind. They find Madison curled up beside her son. Skeleton Man's labored breath behind the curtain.

TRAVIS
Baby...?

He leans over, kisses her brow. She stirs --

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
Sleep well?

MADISON
Asshole.

A weak smile. Ian wakes as she rolls off the bed, stretches her head side to side. Travis hands her the bag --

TRAVIS
You got an hour before first bell.

MADISON
I need coffee before anything.
Coming?

She tucks the bag under her arm, heads for the door. Ian looks to Travis, wants to know what he found, but --

ALICIA
You look less dead today.

Alicia to her brother as she interrupts, slumps into the visitor's chair, eyes them --

ALICIA (CONT'D)
For real.

IAN
It's not me...
(off the IV)
... it's the valium.

TRAVIS
I'll bring you something from the machine.

IAN
You coming back?

TRAVIS
(reassures)
I'll bring you something.

Ian nods as Travis exits, leaves the sibs alone for the first time. They look at each other, then away. Alicia --

ALICIA
That was sweet, you and the step.

IAN
Not our step yet. He's okay.

ALICIA
Mom likes him.

Jury's out. She sinks into the chair, iPhone held in both hands, thumbs flying. Ian studies her, then --

IAN
I know what you think.

ALICIA
What do I think?

IAN
You're perfect, I'm not. You're going to Berkeley, I got expelled from Citrus Community.

ALICIA
I don't compare myself with crazy.

The second she finishes the sentence she wishes she could take it back. Ian feels it, internalizes...

IAN
...I'm not.

ALICIA
Not your fault. It's genetic. It could happen to me, too.

IAN
(stronger)
I'm not insane.

Alicia looks at him, doesn't respond. She doesn't want to push this any further, doesn't want to upset, but --

ALICIA
Ian, it was either in the needle or in your head.

IAN
Or it was real... what I saw.

ALICIA
Grampa thought the things he saw were real, too.

Said gently but it confirms Ian's fear -- his greatest fear. It hits him hard. He whispers, breathless --

IAN
That's not me.

Alicia studies her hands. Ian stays frozen, stricken, and --

25 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - DAY 25

Walk and talk. Travis leads Madison a safe distance from the room as she looks in the duffle, considers the day's wardrobe. She frowns --

MADISON
These shoes don't go, babe...

TRAVIS
I went.

MADISON
And I appreciate it.

TRAVIS
No. Ian told me where the house was. I went. Last night.

MADISON
(slows)
Are you fucking kidding me?

TRAVIS
Something did happen there.

MADISON
Not the point -- you can't enable him like that, Travis, you --

TRAVIS
He didn't lie.

MADISON
Not the point --

TRAVIS
Maddy --

MADISON
He lied about everything up to this truth -- if that's what it is -- and, frankly, I don't give a shit if he is telling the truth. All I care about is getting him back in rehab.

TRAVIS
What he saw is what they're talking about on the news --

MADISON
And I'm sure that's why he saw it -- he heard it, he shot that poison in his arm, his mind did the rest.

TRAVIS
I think it was more than that.

MADISON
You think someone ate someone?

TRAVIS
...There was a lot of blood.

MADISON
You're psychotic -- "there was a lot of blood" -- it's a drug den. Bad shit goes down there -- shootings, stab-bings -- why are you doing this?

TRAVIS
I want to help him.

MADISON
I want to help him. You want to make up for Chris --

TRAVIS
I have to treat Ian like my own son -- he has to be that --

MADISON
Treat him like your son -- not a course correction.

TRAVIS
Jesus, Maddy.

MADISON
I'm sorry, I...
(touches his arm)
I understand what you want to do and I love you for it, I do -- I love you -- but not like this.

Travis nods, takes her hand in his, pulls Madison close. She melts into him, face to his chest. They hold on...

TRAVIS
... what the hell do I tell him?

He stares down the hall. Off the question, unanswered --

26

INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - IAN'S ROOM - DAY

26

Travis enters with smuggled food from the commissary. Peace offering. Alicia's gone. Ian sits up, anticipates --

TRAVIS
You need to put on a few pounds.

IAN
Did you see?

TRAVIS
Eat, Ian. Eat.

IAN
Did you? Was it like I said?

TRAVIS
Ian... I didn't see.

IAN
Nothing? You didn't see anything?

TRAVIS
I didn't go.

IAN
But...
(takes that in)
... you promised you would. You
said you would. For me.

Something childlike in his words, and the hurt they reveal.

TRAVIS
Think about it -- if what you saw
actually happened, don't you think
someone would've reported it.

IAN
That hood's a damn DMZ -- no one
says shit -- that's why the cops
wanted the address but I --

TRAVIS
Calm down --

IAN
I gave it to you, Travis. I gave
you the address. I trusted you.
Why didn't you go --

TRAVIS
I'm sorry.

IAN
-- why'd you lie to me?

TRAVIS
You need to forget.

IAN
I can't.

TRAVIS
It's not going to help you -- what
you saw, why you saw it, you gotta
let it go like a bad dream.

IAN
Get out.

TRAVIS
It was a nightmare.

IAN
Get out.

And Travis goes, defeated. Ian wrenches his arms against his restraints, violent, testing their give, and --

27 INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL - STAIRWELL - DAY

27

Alicia clinches with her boyfriend Matt, her arms disappearing inside his Lettermen's jacket. They hide in the stairwell, late for class, not caring. Alicia dreams as they kiss --

ALICIA
One more year, one more year, and
I'm gone...

MATT
What about me?

ALICIA
We're only a few hours away -- same
state, same time zone...
(kisses him)
... you won't have to miss me that
much.

MATT
I will miss you that much.

ALICIA
I just... need to not be here
anymore.

She tries to kiss Matt but he pulls back, studies her face, reads her, knows --

MATT
You saw your brother this morning.

ALICIA
Yeah.

MATT
How is he?

ALICIA
He's bad.

She presses her cheek to his, holds him to avoid eye contact, a lost expression on her face --

ALICIA (CONT'D)
I called him on it.

MATT
What did you say?

ALICIA
I said he was sick. Drug sick
cause he's head sick. I said what
our mother's too afraid to face.

MATT
And?

ALICIA
He denied.
(beat)
If crazy people knew they were
crazy...

MATT
... they wouldn't be.

She doesn't say yes or no but her eyes well. She won't lower
her defenses in front of family but with Matt --

ALICIA
One more year...

MATT
One more year...
(finds her eyes)
Meet me later. We'll grab some food
take it back to my house -- my folks
are out of town. You get free of
your family, I get you to myself.

ALICIA
We get each other.

Off that promise, they kiss again, as --

28 INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL - TRAVIS'S CLASSROOM - DAY 28

Travis marks out his lesson, chalk TAPPING out a rhythm as he
works the blackboard. He's dynamic, charismatic. There's so
much shit flying at Travis right now -- this is his escape.

TRAVIS
... this was Shakespeare's final
play so, as his Swan Song, the text
speaks of the fragility of man,
mortality, finality. It tracks the
Revelation of John -- the bard was
never more biblical...

He scratches THE TEMPEST out bold on the board. His Honors
English SENIORS are rapt, Travis on a tear, then he spots
Madison in the door, vague smile...

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
... take five minutes to look up
Revelations...

Shit's flying at her, too, but she likes how Travis inspires.
How he teaches. This is why she loves him.

MADISON
Hey, sorry...

Travis ducks into the hall, leaves the door ajar, hushed --

TRAVIS
You good?

MADISON
Managing. Did you talk to him?

TRAVIS
Yeah. I told him I didn't go.

MADISON
And?

TRAVIS
He's pissed. But you were right --
I was wrong to open that door.

MADISON
We'll make it up to him.

TRAVIS
He's safe now. All that matters.
And we'll keep him safe.

Madison holds his loving gaze, believes him, and --

29

INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - IAN'S ROOM - DAY

29

Ian stares at the ceiling, eyes about to pop out of his head he wants out so much. His roommate's RASPY BREATHING seems more labored, less natural. Ian stares at the curtain --

IAN
You okay...? Sir...?

No response -- just that death rattle draw of breath. Ian pulls at his RESTRAINTS as a NURSE enters with a cold metal BEDPAN --

NURSE
You making a break for it?

IAN
The old man's not doing well.

NURSE
I'll check on him.

She gestures with the bed-pan. Ian glances at the curtain, hesitates, then --

IAN
I don't have to.

NURSE
I take my dog out when I want to,
not the other way around.

IAN
I'm the dog?

NURSE
You are the dog. Scooch.

She nods for him to lift up his ass but Ian balks, spinning,
tries to work an angle --

IAN
Untie one hand. It will be easier.
(beat)
Less messy.

She studies him and Ian smiles -- an addict's con-man charm.
She loosens the cloth restraints on his right hand.

NURSE
Lift up.

He lifts up his behind, and she slides the bed pan under.
The cold hits his ass. He nods at the curtain --

IAN
He dying?

NURSE
(deflects)
His family never comes -- you're
lucky yours does.

She heads for the door when Skeleton Man's steady EKG rhythm
goes erratic. He gasps behind the curtain like his soul was
ripped out -- then FLATLINE. An ALARM SOUNDS.

NURSE (CONT'D)
Oh no...

And the shit hits the fan. The Nurse BELLOWS down the hall --

NURSE (CONT'D)
Code Blue, Code Blue, Room 313,
Code Blue --

She rips the curtain open, begins CPR, as the INTERCOM starts
hailing docs, repeating the CODE. A LAB COAT races in --

LAB COAT
When'd he go down?

Ian watches, silent, as the CRASH TEAM SLAMS into the room.
CHAOS and VOICES behind the curtain --

NURSE
Just now. Thirty seconds ago.

LAB COAT
We don't have a rhythm in sixty
seconds -- I want him downstairs with
the others.

NURSE
Doctor --

LAB COAT
The incubation varies too much to
risk exposure --

NURSE
Doctor.

Ian detects a warning glance behind the curtain, towards him,
like the doctor was about to say too much.

LAB COAT
Clear...

A moment passes then the ELECTRIC JOLT of a DEFIBRILLATOR.
The old man jostles on his bed.

NURSE
Nothing.

Just then an ORDERLY sprints by, hockey-stops, leans into
Ian's room --

ORDERLY
Dr. Barclay, we've got another Code
in 305.

LAB COAT
Time of Death?

ORDERLY
Not sure. Electrodes came off --
no alarm. Could be an hour --
(urgency)
-- could be a couple. A few.

LAB COAT
(shit)
We're there. This gentleman needs
to be downstairs. Now.

Hand off to the Orderly. The Doctor tears off latex gloves,
bombs out of the room, Crash Team following. The Orderly
wheels Ian's roommate out.

Bedpan Nurse eyes Ian as she exits on the fly --

NURSE
Stay put. I'll be back for you.

"I'll be back for you." For what? His bedpan? Or did she
mean something more. Ian waits for her footsteps to fade --

-- then unties his last restraint, rolls out of bed, lands on his bruised, scabbed feet. He cries out, drops to his knees. His roommate's bed is now empty, cabinet by it.

He scrambles to the cabinet, finds the dead man's clothes -- and a wallet with cash, credit cards.

All Ian needs to bail, to run, all he needs to score.

30 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 30

Ian limps down the hall, clothes loose. He looks into every room he passes -- notes a few PATIENTS, couple VISITORS, but the wing is strangely quiet...

He bypasses the elevator, takes the stairs down, and --

31 INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - DAY 31

Alicia at a booth by the window, sipping soda, waits on Matt. She glances outside to see if he's walking up, checks her iPhone. She looks towards the BAR --

-- where THREE SCREENS are mounted. BASEBALL GAMES on two -- a 24/7 news feed on the third. TALKING HEADS yelling at other TALKING HEADS. One calmer female voice --

CDC VIROLOGIST
I want to dispel a rumor that these
people are deceased... they are not.
The dead do not walk among us...

She smiles. CHYRON under the woman reads DR. CANDACE JENNER. Another GUEST jumps on her last line, interrupts, as Matt Kemp rockets a double off the wall at Chavez Ravine.

CDC VIROLOGIST (CONT'D)
... these people are very sick and
will be treated...

The bartender clicks up the VOLUME on the Dodger's game and Jenner's voice is drowned. Alicia checks the window, sees no one on the sidewalk, searches the street...

ALICIA
What the hell, Matt...?

She's on her phone, texting. "... where r u ..." "i'm gonna bail..." Alicia stares at the muted Candace Jenner, as the world tilts towards something terrible --

32 EXT. STASH HOUSE - VENICE - DAY 32

We look past the abandoned truck towards the drug den. Same as when Ian left it, same as when Travis visited. A car slow-rides past the house, just cruising.

Ian limps into frame, feet tender, ribs ACHING. He takes a step into the street, stops -- looks both ways before crossing. Not a mistake he'll repeat.

He glances over his shoulder, seeing if he's being watched, before he makes his way inside the stash house, and --

33 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - NURSES'S STATION - DAY 33

Madison and Travis exit the elevator, approach the Nurses's Station, corridor strangely quiet. A phone PURRS at the desk but there's no one to pick up --

No one seems to be working the floor. The rooms mostly vacant, staff missing. Travis and Madison share a look, pick up their pace towards Ian's room, as --

34 INT. STASH HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 34

Ian, breathless, enters the kitchen. He freezes in place like he's seeing Stick Woman but when we REVERSE we discover -- nothing. No bodies. No blood. Fucking sanitized.

Someone cleaned up -- or Ian imagined what he saw. And the latter option is almost worse. He turns his back on the room, shudders, and --

35 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL - IAN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 35

Madison enters first, finds Ian's bed empty. Travis lays a hand on her shoulder, peers over her, sees what she sees.

MADISON

He's gone. He's gone.

Bed empty, restraints dangling. Travis examines the Skeleton Man's cabinet, remaining clothes rifled --

TRAVIS

He borrowed some clothes.

He hits the nurse CALL BUTTON.

MADISON

How does he just leave?

TRAVIS

He's over eighteen --

MADISON

He's a danger to himself.

Madison digs out her cell, dials -- home number, Alicia's cell -- but rapid FOOTFALLS approach --

TRAVIS

Wait, wait --

Ian's nurse turns into the room --

MADISON
Where's my son?

The nurse takes in the semi-private room, hesitates, searches for an answer, goes for the truth --

NURSE
I don't know.

TRAVIS
What happened?

NURSE
His roommate coded. Then there was
a second death on the floor --
(beat)
-- it was chaotic.

Her version of "chaos" is different than Madison and Travis's -- but we have a better idea what she's talking about.

MADISON
Find him.

NURSE
He's gone. You need to call the
police. I'm sorry.

She exits. Travis turns to Madison --

TRAVIS
I know where to go.

Off Madison, wondering if she's seen Ian for the last time --

CUT TO BLACK:

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

UP ON:

36 EXT./INT. SISTERS OF MERCY HOSPITAL/TRAVIS'S F150 - DAY 36

The same drive Madison took with Alicia. They motor past the POCKET PARK. It's quieter. Fewer families, fewer kids. A LONE NANNY pushes a TODDLER on the swings.

MADISON
Where are we going?

We sense a great unwinding.

TRAVIS
Where this started.

MADISON
He's too afraid to go back.

TRAVIS
He wants to know what I couldn't say. He wants to know it's real.

The child swings. The chains CREAK. And they drive on as --

37 EXT. STASH HOUSE - VENICE - DAY 37

Not much better by day. Travis parks. Madison's out of the car before it rolls back. They approach, Travis trailing a few paces behind --

TRAVIS
Everything he described outside was accurate.

MADISON
Of course it was...
(studies the house)
... this is where he disappears.

Said with despair. She looks up at the house, then circles --

38 EXT. STASH HOUSE - BACKYARD - VENICE - CONTINUOUS 38

Nothing in the backyard improves on the front. Overgrown. Rotted trellis. Empty Wal-Mart wading pool. Madison toes through the weeds, eyes the back door.

You get the sense that she's buying time, afraid to walk into this hellhole, but then --

39 INT. STASH HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

39

The door swings in. Madison starts her search where Travis finished. She sees the wide, dark stain on the linoleum -- but the blood's been washed away. Travis frowns --

TRAVIS
Someone cleaned up...

He moves through the room, studies it more carefully in the rays of sunlight, kneels by a HOLE in one of the cabinets.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
... but that's a bullet-hole.

MADISON
There's another one in the floor.

Matter of fact. Without inflection. Like she's seen blood and bullets in kitchens since she was a child. She has. Travis sees the haunted look in her eyes --

TRAVIS
You okay?

MADISON
No.

She leaves the room, turns into --

40 INT. STASH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

40

The steps leading upstairs. Madison enters the living room. Piss and vomit-stained sofas. A broken recliner and torn carpet. She takes in the room, says softly --

MADISON
I never wanted children. Saw what my father was, what he did. Spent years waiting for it to come to me. When it didn't... I spent years watching Ian and Alicia...

TRAVIS
This isn't your fault.

MADISON
I passed it on. It's absolutely my fault.

TRAVIS
He saw what the drugs saw. Get him clean, we'll get him well.

MADISON
(not convinced)
Did you look upstairs?

She goes up. Each step protests her ascension.

41 INT. STASH HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

41

We end where we started. Room like a bomb went off. Putrid mattresses pressed side to side. Junkie Motel.

Travis watches Madison from the door. He never came this far -- he didn't think there was anything to see. But this is why Madison has come, this is the only reason she's come.

TRAVIS
Baby...? Let's go.

She studies each mattress. A couple MILK CARTONS serve as night stands. She tries to imagine her first born, the boy she cradled just a night before, in this place, on these fucking dirty mattresses...

MADISON
Oh... oh God...

She kneels by a mattress in the corner of the room, tosses a milk carton out of the way, trash and refuse beneath it... and a dog-eared book. *Winesburg, Ohio*.

TRAVIS
What is it?

She peels it open, pages yellowed, reads the inscription to herself. *For my Son, I love you, Dad.*

MADISON
His father gave him this. His
fucking father...

She twists the book in her hands and collapses. Completely and finally. Travis goes to her but --

MADISON (CONT'D)
Don't.

He hesitates, hands hovering by her shoulders, slowly settles there, slowly pulls her close, whispers --

TRAVIS
I love you, baby, I love you...
(to her ear)
... I'll take care of us.

42 EXT./INT. STASH HOUSE/TRAVIS'S F150 - DAY

42

They sit quietly. Travis turns the truck over, kills the RADIO. Madison collects herself.

TRAVIS
Is there anywhere else to look? He
wouldn't go back to his school.

MADISON
He was banned from the campus.

TRAVIS
Home?

MADISON
No. There's one place. Maybe.
(beat)
Drive. I'll tell you the way.

As Travis pulls away we HOLD ON the stash house, the ruin.

43 EXT./INT. LOS ANGELES/F150 - DAY

43

A HELICOPTER hovers in the distance. South. Another behind them. News CHOPPERS looking for the latest accident. Or is it something more? *From this point on there will always be HELICOPTERS in the sky, in background, near or far.*

TRAVIS
We can report him missing.

MADISON
He's permanently missing. You know how many times I've made that call.

TRAVIS
Yes.

MADISON
Then why suggest it.
(sharper than she wants)
Sorry.

TRAVIS
We have that cop's card. We have something they want. Now.

MADISON
The stash house.
(considers)
Tying Ian to that place is not something we want to do. No.
(then)
Left up here. Left.

He signals and --

44 EXT. THE JASPER HOUSE - INGLEWOOD - DAY

44

Street of tidy 1940's homes. Identical architecture. Simple square lots on perfect geometric blocks. Workers' homes from a boom time. Travis and Madison pull up to a house with a white, waving LAWN JOCKEY. The front door opens --

CALVIN
Mrs. Bennett?

MADISON
Cal...?

He steps out onto the porch and Madison smiles, almost with longing. CALVIN JASPER (19) is tall, confident. Madison sees in him who her son should be, who he could be still.

MADISON (CONT'D)
We're sorry to show up like this --

CALVIN
You're looking for Ian?

TRAVIS
We are.
(offers his hand)
I'm Travis. Maddy's fiancée.

CALVIN
Oh that's... congratulations.

MADISON
Have you seen him?

CALVIN
I'm sorry, no. Not in a while. Is he okay --
(stops himself)
-- you wouldn't be here if he was.

TRAVIS
Any place you can think to look?

CALVIN
He wouldn't... no, he wouldn't hang where we used to. He moved away from us, long time ago.

MADISON
He did.

CALVIN
You want... you want to come in. I can make some calls. Maybe someone's heard...

MADISON
(nods)
Thank you.

She enters. Travis holds, stares off at the San Bernardino Mountains -- his son up there. He pulls out his cell phone, waits on the RING, and --

CHRISTOPHER (V.O.)
Hello...

TRAVIS
Hey, man, it's me...

45 INT. LIZA AND CHRISTOPHER'S HOUSE - MT. BALDY - INTERCUT 45

Wood burning in a pot-bellied stove. It's warm but Chris goes cold when he hears his Dad's voice. He monotones --

CHRISTOPHER

Hey.

TRAVIS

Just checking you're okay.

CHRISTOPHER

Mom's putting supper on the table.

TRAVIS

Oh... I'll let you go.

CHRISTOPHER

Okay.

TRAVIS

(but)
I'm sorry this weekend didn't work.

CHRISTOPHER

I know.

TRAVIS

I'm worried about you, Chris.

CHRISTOPHER

Don't be.

TRAVIS

I miss you.

CHRISTOPHER

(Me too.)
I'll see you next weekend.

TRAVIS

Yeah, yeah...
(spins positive)
... we can drive down to Newport.
Just us. I'll dust off my board.

CHRISTOPHER

(weakens, but)
I gotta go.

He's going to hang up but Travis jumps, holds him --

TRAVIS

I'm sorry things are so crazy here.

CHRISTOPHER

What you do in the city doesn't affect us on the mountain.

TRAVIS
I can make this work. I can take
care of all of us.

CHRISTOPHER
You don't need to.

He glances out the window -- smog-shrouded city in the basin.
Chris knows his Dad's down there, looking back up --

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)
Gotta go.

TRAVIS
Okay, I --

Christopher kills the call on Travis's, "I love you."

46 EXT./INT. LA CIENEGA BLVD/TRAVIS'S F150 - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

GRIDLOCK. We look down a LONG line of cars, lights bouncing,
richocheting off various vehicles. About fifty yards between
Travis's truck and the FLASHING LIGHTS of an AMBULANCE and
LAPD CRUISER. An accident by the 10 on-ramp...

TRAVIS
I see the ambulance. They should
clear it out quick.

Travis and Madison sit in their car, completely locked in.

MADISON
Is that what that is?

A HELICOPTER hovers overhead. Madison cranes to look up --

MADISON (CONT'D)
They air lifting someone?

TRAVIS
No. That's KTLA. Might have been
a high-speed gone bad. Vultures.

They sit, listen to the helicopter cut the air above them.
Travis rolls stations, settles on CLASSIC ROCK when --

A SCREAM carries from the accident site. ONE MAN SCREAMING,
another SHOUTING. The words are impossible to make out --
but the screaming chills, stops hearts. Then --

SILENCE, save the HELICOPTER. Travis opens his door, climbs
out, tries to see ahead. OTHERS follow, rubbernecking for a
view. Madison gets out, looks over at him --

MADISON
Can you see anything?

He's up on the hood of his truck, sees the FLASHING LIGHTS,
ambulance and cop car, but nothing else, no movement UNTIL --

A SHADOW darts over one of the lights, a flash of movement before Travis can even register. He frowns, worried now --

TRAVIS
Maddy, get back in the truck...

A panicked BYSTANDER bolts past them, horrified expression on his face. Whatever he saw was so bad he abandoned his car.

MADISON
What happened? Is it safe?

She calls after the man -- but he's in no state to answer. They can't make it out but a LAPD UNI now YELLS.

TRAVIS
Back in the truck, Maddy --

Madison swings into the cab just as GUNSHOTS ECHO off the 10 OVERPASS -- FOUR POPS punctuate the night air.

MADISON
Get in, Trav, get it now --

He does just as more BYSTANDERS blast by, further GUNSHOTS chasing them away from the scene.

TRAVIS
We're getting the hell out of here --

He TURNS OVER the engine, CRANKS the wheel hard and GUNS IT, bucks over the median to escape what lies ahead --

CUT TO BLACK:

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

UP ON:

47 INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL - FACULTY ROOM - DAY 47

CLOSE ON MADISON exhausted, pale. HEAR VOICES but they're a distant, indistinct DRONE. Madison's lost in worry about her son, about her family, about --

COSTA
Madison... Maddy?

The drone dissipates. She glances up. Finds everyone in the room staring at her, Costa at the head of the table. Travis in the corner, arms crossed. Coffee in cups, cronuts.

MADISON
Sorry.

They circle an iPad. Footage from last night's "accident" -- View from the NEWS HELICOPTER hovering over the scene. LAPD CRUISER and AMBULANCE below, LIGHTS PULSING. PARAMEDICS working an OVERTURNED CAR.

COSTA
This is unreal, un-real...

The footage is wide and high and fragmented. PARAMEDICS lay a SPINE-BOARD next to the car, driver's side door ajar. They reach in, cut the seat belt to remove the crash VICTIM --

COSTA (CONT'D)
... now watch this, watch it...

-- as the Paramedics leans in, the Victim lunges. We can't see the BITE or hear the SCREAMS --

TRAVIS
... son of a bitch wasn't dead.

-- these are VISUALS to last night's haunting SOUNDTRACK.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
He was traumatized by the accident, he was on something -- millions of reasons for it.

As the Paramedics struggle with the victim, two LAPD UNIS move in, BATONS drawn. The beating they administer is RODNEY KING BRUTAL -- but nothing stops the Dead.

COSTA
Whatever the reason, whatever this is, it wasn't here yesterday, it's here today --
(points)
-- that is two exits up the 10.

TRAVIS
And we were only a half mile behind
it. We don't want to panic.

*Immune to the blows, the crash victim CLAWS at an LAPD Uni's
leg, teeth tearing into his calf, ripping flesh, sinew --*

COSTA
Did you see this, Travis, did you
see how they beat this guy...

*-- the cop staggers, regroups with his partner, as the Walker
finds its feet. They draw their SIDEARMS --*

COSTA (CONT'D)
... how they unloaded on him...

*-- the Unis SHOUT at the Walker as he comes then OPEN FIRE.
CENTER MASS. Pulverize. Shots spin the Dead around.*

COSTA (CONT'D)
... and how he kept coming...

*The Dead won't be deterred. The Unis FIRE another VOLLEY --
the Walker drops but doesn't die, drags Itself forward --*

COSTA (CONT'D)
We're shutting down. Half the
student body stayed home because of
this...
(a glance at Madison)
... most of the faculty's out to
lunch. We evacuate. Now.

A mass of BYSTANDERS race away from the scene as --

48 EXT. GAS STATION - VENICE BOULEVARD - DAY 48

Ian steps out of the convenience store, pounding a Gatorade,
new PRE-PAY to his ear. He's frustrated, sweat-soaked, he's
been walking for a while. He holds for a message then --

IAN
Man. Hit me back. I need to hook
up and I need to hook up now. I
gotta know what went down at the
house, man, please...

Ian cuts down an alley, stays off the busy thoroughfare, and --

49 INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL - ALICIA'S CALCULUS CLASS - DAY 49

A teacher scrawls a problem on the WHITEBOARD. In the back of
the room, Alicia huddles around an iPhone with TWO STUDENTS --

STUDENT ONE
(whispers)
Girl, your parents were there?

Her friends focus on the phone, Alicia rapid-fires TEXTS to Matt on hers -- "u seen this shit on line...?" She attaches a KTLA news link...

ALICIA
My Mom and her fiancee, yeah. Too far back to see though.

"... are you ok? why aren't you txting...?" What plays out on the screen is a variation on what we saw in the faculty room. The apocalypse has gone VIRAL. "... where r u?..."

TEACHER
Ladies, am I confiscating phones today...?

The end of the video -- *the Flesheater crawls forward. The BYSTANDER who ran by Travis's truck sprints to safety...*

ALICIA
This isn't real, it's not real...

STUDENT ONE
Bullshit, girl, keep watching...

... finally, the second LAPD Uni aims his GLOCK, and puts a ROUND through the back of the Walker's head.

STUDENT ONE (CONT'D)
... kill shot, bitch.

The teacher strides between desks, snatches the phone, as Alicia pockets hers. She glances at an EMPTY DESK --

ALICIA
Matt's not texting me.

TEACHER
And you're not texting him -- give it up, Alicia --

She extends her hand as INTERCOM STATIC interrupts, SPEAKER over the door --

COSTA (O.S.)
Good morning, students. We have decided that today will be a half day. When the bell rings, please gather your belongings and report to your busses. Thank you.

Before the announcement ends, Madison enters the room, asks the teacher --

MADISON
You mind?

The teacher nods her in. Madison and Alicia confab as the students gather their things, teacher giving homework assignments like it's any other day --

MADISON (CONT'D)
Travis and I are going to clear the school. I want you on the bus.

ALICIA
What's going on?

MADISON
People are worried about the shooting last night.

ALICIA
Wasn't it staged or something?

MADISON
There's an explanation -- but I want you home. Okay?

Alicia tries not to glance at the empty chair. If people are worried they're not worried about the shooting -- they're worried about the madman the police shot. Flesheater.

ALICIA
Okay.

And now Alicia's even more worried about Matt. She continues to text as she heads for the door, as --

50

EXT. SCHOOL - BUS YARD - DAY

50

Madison paces with her WALKIE, dozens of STUDENTS gathered outside. Some drive by in their own cars, kids running along side, begging rides -- anything better than the bus.

Madison sees a bus arriving. She keys the walkie --

MADISON
I've got 237. Send them out.
Over.

TRAVIS
Almost done.

Travis approaches --

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
We checked attendance against the absentee list -- classrooms are clear. We should be good.

MADISON
Did you see Alicia?

TRAVIS
She was on the first bus out.

MADISON
Good, good...
(shudders)
... this will be okay, right?

She spots another bus, LINE OF STUDENTS moving toward it. In that line, she spies TOBIAS. Madison nods at him, smiles...

TRAVIS
We'll find Ian today. Everything
will be fine.

...Tobias just stares back, grim, wise beyond his years. His look says, "I told you so," even as Travis reassures --

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
I promise.

Madison hears his words but watches Tobias climb on the bus, scrawny prophet of what's-to-come.

51 EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - DAY 51

Ian turns into the back lot. A FIGURE sitting on the trunk of a car. He hops down when Ian appears, REVEAL --

CALVIN
What the hell you thinking, bro?

Ian's dealer is Calvin Jasper. Model student. Former friend.

IAN
What are you talking about?

CALVIN
Sending your Mom to my folks'.

IAN
I didn't --

CALVIN
They were looking for you. They shouldn't be looking for me looking for you.

IAN
They don't know what you do, Cal.

CALVIN
Then why?

IAN
Because we were friends in school.

CALVIN
Messed up, man. Cannot happen.

IAN
Took that for you to meet me?

CALVIN
What do you want?

IAN
Tell me what you gave me.

CALVIN
Didn't give you nothing -- I sold,
you bought.

IAN
Was it laced, was it PCP?

CALVIN
Yeah, I want my customers paranoid,
pissed off and immune to pain.

IAN
Then what?

CALVIN
Don't know what you mean.

IAN
The stash house... your house.

CALVIN
I don't rest my head there, name's
not on the deed --

IAN
You were there or you've been back.

CALVIN
Gotta protect my investment.

IAN
Come on, Cal, it was a bloodbath,
it was like a goddamn horror movie
-- you saw that, right?

CALVIN
You're trippin'.

He's striding towards the driver's door, keys out, but Ian
grabs him, puts himself between Calvin and the car --

IAN
What-did-you-give-me -- ?!

CALVIN
Her-o-in.

Ian stares at him, tries to read the truth in his eyes --

CALVIN (CONT'D)
I'm leaving now, bro. Do not send
your Mommy back to my house.
(beat)
Move.

He insists. Ian obstructs, head cocked. Calvin finally
sighs, pulls a PLASTICINE BAGGY out of his pocket --

CALVIN (CONT'D)
You have your works?

He dangles the baggy, pure white powder. Ian sees it, wants it, but pleads --

IAN
Just tell the truth.

CALVIN
Truth's right here.

Ian SLAPS the bag from his hand. Smack spills on concrete.

CALVIN (CONT'D)
Oh you didn't just do that --

Ian cuts him off, THROWS Calvin against his car --

IAN
The truth!

CALVIN
I'll cut you off for good, forever --

IAN
What happened in the house, Cal --
there were dead bodies -- I gotta
know what happened --

CALVIN
-- get the fuck offa me -- !

He tries to push away but Ian's locked in, crazy-eyed.
Calvin sees it, sees the hysteria rising --

IAN
Please, man, tell the truth -- I saw
Gloria fucking eating someone.

CALVIN
That's crazy, man, you're crazy --

IAN
I'm not, I'm not, I'm not --

He's shaking Calvin, all semblance of control exhausted,
giving himself to the madness. Calvin BELLOWS --

CALVIN
We're not friends, Ian -- I'll kill
you, bro, I will kill you -- !

IAN
She was tearing into someone's guts
-- what was that, what was that -- ?

He HITS Calvin in the face. The dealer drops to a knee. Ian
advances but Calvin comes back up with a GLÖCK --

CALVIN
You want to be dead, do you want to
be dead -- !?

Ian's too close, too desperate to stop. He grabs at the gun with both hands, falls into Calvin as they wrestle, ROAR --

CALVIN (CONT'D)
YOU WANT TO BE DEAD -- !?

-- and as the gun goes off --

CUT TO BLACK:

END ACT FOUR

He kneels next to the still warm corpse. Ian continues to pace, continues to rant, frantic --

IAN
It was an accident, I didn't mean to. I went for his gun and it went off, it just went off...

MADISON
This is... this is just...

Travis sees panic rising on Madison's face. She doesn't know what to do. He puts his hands on her shoulders --

TRAVIS
We have to call the police.

MADISON
We should have called them before, you were right, you were, we should have called them...

Ian turns to his mother like he's about to protest, then stops short, resigned, lost...

IAN
Shoulda, woulda, coulda, shoulda, woulda, coulda... shit...

... he sinks to the floor, back to the wall. Travis guides Madison towards the door. He picks up the gun on his way.

Ian buries his head in his hands while, just beyond him, we see Calvin's fingers clench once, and --

53

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - LOT - CONTINUOUS

53

Madison stands, overwhelmed and inconsolable. Travis tucks the Glock into his waistband, tries to comfort Madison, holds her, moves with her as she kneels, hand on the concrete --

MADISON
Oh God, he killed that boy...

TRAVIS
He's not in his right mind, Maddy, that's not Ian, it's not him...

MADISON
He killed him just like my father, he's the same --

TRAVIS
He's not. This was self defense, right, self-defense, okay...?
(finds her eyes)
They'll understand that...

He takes out his cell. Madison knows the call must be made. The VOLUME on Travis's phone is loud enough to hear, the RINGING, then --

911 VOICE
All circuits are busy, please try
again later.

Travis and Madison exchange a look as --

54 INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 54

CLOSE ON Ian as he stands, back to the wall. He turns to the exit and, as he does, we see Calvin standing in background, small in the frame. Bloodless complexion, corpse pale.

55 EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 55

Travis kills the call, tries again --

911 VOICE
All circuits are --

And again. Madison looks up, concerned.

911 VOICE (CONT'D)
All circuits --

Travis hangs up, holds -- and from inside the warehouse, Ian screams --

56 INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 56

Travis sprints in, Madison a stride behind him -- finds Ian screaming at Calvin. He's pale, white-eyed, deep red blood trailing down his chest from the gunshot --

MADISON
Oh my God...

IAN
It was an accident, man! I didn't
mean to hurt you, I didn't mean it!

Calvin shouldn't be alive, he couldn't be alive. Ian looks to Madison and Travis, terrified --

IAN (CONT'D)
It's like I said, it's just like I
said -- !

Travis puts himself between Calvin and his surrogate son, hand up, reasoning --

TRAVIS
We're gonna call an ambulance, you
need help.

Calvin keeps coming, deliberate, dead-eyed, coming --

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
Please stop, Calvin, please --

He reaches back -- and pulls the Glock from his belt, aims at Calvin's chest --

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
Please stop.

Everything goes quiet. All we hear are Calvin's GROANS and the dreadful drag of his boots on the concrete...

MADISON
Travis...

A breath. Travis glances at Madison, relents, tosses the gun away, just as Calvin reaches him --

TRAVIS
Calvin, I want to help you, let me help you --

He grabs the Dead by the wrists, holds him off, as Calvin leans, lunges, gnashes his teeth--

MADISON
Ian, what did he take, what --

IAN
He doesn't use, Ma, don't you get it, don't you get it --
(in Madison's face)
-- he's dead, he's fucking dead!

Calvin pushes hard, backs Travis against the concrete wall -- inches from this thing, staring into its dead pale eyes, it finally registers. Ian is right --

TRAVIS
Take your Mom out of here, get the hell out of here -- now -- !

The realization staggers, weakens Travis as he tries to move away. He stumbles over a palette, falls --

MADISON
Travis -- !

The Flesheater falls with him, pressing chest to chest, teeth inches from Travis's face, desperate --

TRAVIS
Go, Maddy, go -- !

But she doesn't. Madison pushes Ian towards the door, dumps her purse out, digs, frantic -- finds the PARING KNIFE she confiscated from Tobias.

IAN
Mom -- ?

Travis struggles, grabs FISTFULS of Calvin's shirt, holding him as the dealer claws at his clothes, strains for a bite, as strong in death as he was in life --

MADISON
Call for help, Ian, call now --

She sprints to Travis's side, screams --

MADISON (CONT'D)
Get off him, Calvin, Calvin stop,
stop -- don't make me --

The sound of her voice distracts the Flesheater, loosens his hold on Travis as It turns toward Madison --

MADISON (CONT'D)
Jesus --

-- as she finally sees Its dead eyes. Staggered, she steps back, slashing the blade in front of her --

TRAVIS
Stab him, Maddy, stab him --

She braces then, as Calvin lunges, she pushes off her rear foot -- plunges the blade into Calvin's throat. It pierces his esophagus, rips out the other side of his neck.

Calvin DOESN'T NOTICE. He strains towards Madison, grabs her ankle, twists. She tears the knife out as she stumbles, wound gaping over Travis's face.

Madison kicks free and buries the knife deep in Calvin's side, between the ribs, where his heart should be pounding -- nothing, no response, no pain.

Travis works his legs under Calvin, KICKS as hard as he can.

Calvin stumbles back -- and Travis RUSHES. Neck torn, knife buried to the hilt, blood drenched, he looks inhuman, looks like a monster. Travis has reached his limit --

He's blind fury now. A father fighting for his family.

Travis hits Calvin like a wrecking ball, knocks him BACK and THROUGH a floor-to-ceiling WINDOW. The GLASS gives, SHATTERS and the Flesheater FALLS to the loading bay below.

Travis, looks down -- sees Calvin, twisted and broken, head at an unnatural ninety degree angle. Still. He sinks onto the broken glass, numb.

Ian rocks on the ground near him, knees to chest, Madison standing, stunned by what she's seen -- what she's done.

IAN
I told you, I told you...

They're lost in the overwhelm, trembling, shocked, unequipped to process this. No one would be. Madison steadies, kneels by her son, cradles him like a child, soothes --

MADISON
I know, baby, I know...

Ian's not insane but the world's skewing towards madness. The three of them in TABLEAU, backed by the shattered window the setting sun. A hot, hard WIND washes over them.

MADISON (CONT'D)
We need to find Alicia...

TRAVIS
And Liza, Chris...
(beat)
... we need to be together.

Then, outside, a choked GROWL. Ian freezes. Madison holds him. Travis rises into frame, edges forward, looks...

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
Jesus...

Calvin's neck snapped in the fall, spine severed. No signal from brain to body but his head's still alive...

Calvin's eyes stare, his jaws move, his teeth grind...

Off the surreal image, off our family's overwhelm, off the end of the world as we know it --

FADE TO BLACK

END OF PILOT

*