

LIMINAL DEVIL

written by

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"What we believe, determines what we take to be true."

-Gary Zukav

EXT. DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER (OR BIG CITY) - SIDEWALK - DAY

LANCE, (Black, Late 40's, Australian), rolls on a SKATEBOARD with the carefree swagger of a bearded surfer dude refusing to grow up.

His long, brown hair - a combo of wavy locks mixed with dreads - falls beneath a BACKWARDS BASEBALL CAP and frames AVIATOR SUNGLASSES.

A LOOSE-FITTING HAWAIIAN SHIRT AND KHAKI PANTS round out the getup.

INT. BISTRO PEGEAT - DAY

GEE GEE, (20's) is ethnically hard to distinguish. Mixed? Mediterranean? Black Asian? RACIALLY AMBIGUOUS.

She sits alone at a table wearing a WHITE TANK and WHITE YOGA PANTS.

Lance strides in.

Gee Gee glances at a WALL CLOCK.

2:59 pm.

GEE GEE

Thought you were a no show, Lance.

He slips in across from her.

LANCE

(heavy Australian accent)

And miss all the fun and games? I don't think so.

A distinguished-looking man sits pondering at the table next to theirs. MR. TALBOTT, (Caucasian, 50's) speaks into a CELL PHONE.

TALBOTT

Hey, it's dad. We need to talk. I want to apologize...but not over the phone. I'm going to make it right, okay. I know I haven't told you in a while, but I love you, son.

A WAITRESS stops at Talbott's table.

WAITRESS
Refill?

TALBOTT
Just the check.

AT GEE GEE'S TABLE.

LANCE
You got the list?

Gee Gee slides a PIECE OF PAPER across.

GEE GEE
You know the rules?

LANCE
We've been over this, Gee Gee.

GEE GEE
Humor me.

AT TALBOT'S TABLE.

The Waitress scribbles the total and tears THE CHECK off.

WAITRESS
I only charged you for one coffee.

KA-BOOOOOMM!!!!

A THUNDEROUS (UNSEEN) EXTERIOR EXPLOSION SHATTERS WINDOWS and
RATTLES FURNITURE!

Everyone SCREAMS IN AN UPROAR!

Talbott and several RESTAURANT GUESTS run out of the bistro.

Lance stands.

GEE GEE
I'm watching you.

LANCE
Gee Gee, I'm asking you nicely.
Don't interfere, it's a bit of a
bother. And none of your tricky
stuff!

EXT. THE L HOTEL - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

INSERT: 15 Minutes Ago

THE L HOTEL punctures the Vancouver sky.

PEDESTRIANS stream through the ground floor doors.

A UNIFORMED DOORMAN greets AFFLUENT PATRONS.

A LESBIAN COUPLE zooms up in a CONVERTIBLE SPORTS CAR.

NORA, (Latina, mid 20's), is a quick-wit, lipstick lesbian with a defiant face.

She leans over to her girlfriend, LOU (Caucasian, 40's, rich) in the driver's seat. They kiss long and deep.

Lou pulls away breathless.

LOU

Marry me.

NORA

Why do you have to ruin perfect PDA?

LOU

Because you're killing me with this vag-teasing limbo.

NORA

Limbo? I thought this was the heavenliest sex you ever had.

DOORMAN (O.S.)

You can't park here.

The Doorman stands by the passenger side.

LOU

I was just leaving. See you inside.

Nora kisses her and climbs out.

NORA

Edible or peel-off panties?

The Doorman perks up.

LOU

He definitely wants to know.

Lou shifts into gear and skids into traffic.

INT. THE L HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Upscale.

COUPLES. FAMILIES. LUGGAGE.

ABE HEISKOPF, (Caucasian, 30 - 40 age range) a domineering, androgynous, [female-assigned] NON-BINARY Jew, is at the check-in counter berating TAMMIE, (Asian, 30's).

A line of IMPATIENT PEOPLE extends behind Abe.

ABE

You and me have a problem.

TAMMIE

Ma'am, I've explained to you...

ABE

I'm a They.

TAMMIE

Mr...Mrs...?

ABE

Move on.

TAMMIE

There are no available rooms on the top floor.

ABE

It's my little sister's birthday.
She loved the view from up there,
so you need to get me a TOP. FLOOR.
ROOM. NOW!

BY THE SEATING AREA.

MADDIE STALLWORTH, (40, Irish) is eight months pregnant. A living portrait of nurturing pride.

She sits with her husband, MANY, (Mid 40's, Irish) in a LOUNGE CHAIR playfully bantering with HEAVY IRISH ACCENTS.

MADDIE

You're so sure of yourself, are you?

MANY

I'm not the one who's gonna be out of five quid when a strapping young lad comes kicking his way out in a pair of footy boots.

MADDIE

You mean a little princess in a pair of ballet slippers.

Maddie grows pensive.

MANY

What is it?

MADDIE

Nothing.

MANY

Stop thinking about them.

MADDIE

I can't help it.

MANY

We're not going through this again.

He stands.

MADDIE

Wait, Many, don't run-off.

MANY

I'm just gonna pop out for a fag.

BY THE ELEVATOR.

DING!

The ARROW ABOVE THE DOORS ILLUMINATES, pointing up.

The DOORS open. PEOPLE pile on and off.

A BELL HOP pushes a cart full of bags.

He passes a seated man whose face is concealed by a NEWSPAPER.

The man folds the paper, revealing his face.

He places it on the table next to him.

MOHAMED HENOSIS (40-yrs-old) is a FRENCH CANADIAN MUSLIM with steady, calm eyes.

He taps an index finger idly beneath the headline.

INSERT:

On Newspaper - "TERRORIST THREAT FOR YOM KIPPUR"

ON MOHAMED.

His eyes methodically scan the lobby.

They finally come to rest on Maddie.

He observes her sitting in a BUTTON-DOWN MATERNITY DRESS and A WRAP-AROUND SHAWL, lovingly rubbing her mountainous tummy.

EXT. THE L HOTEL - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

Many steps outside and lights a cigarette. He exhales and loosens his shoulders.

KA-BOOOOM!!!

The (**UNSEEN**) EXPLOSION from inside the lobby rips through the first floor facade.

Many is thrown into a car that rammed into the back of another.

He lands hard but unharmed. Dazed, he pushes himself up, staring in shock at the chaos unfolding around him.

He runs into hotel lobby.

Lance exits the bistro adjacent the hotel entrance carrying his skateboard.

He stops to survey the mayhem.

Pandemonium!

PANICKED PEOPLE rush about chaotically!

The HORN of a CRASHED CAR BLARES unceasingly.

A MUSLIM WOMAN screams at her BLEEDING UNCONSCIOUS HUSBAND.

Lance is amused by it all.

LANCE
I love this game.

INT. THE L HOTEL - INSIDE THE ELEVATOR - DAY

BOOOOM!!!

A nearby (UNSEEN) EXTERIOR EXPLOSION ROCKS the cabin.

The FIVE PASSENGERS, Abe, Nora, Mohamed, and Maddie included, stumble around inside.

They bounce off the walls and the double doors.

Abe faces the doors by the BUTTON PANEL on the right side of the Elevator.

GRATING ELEVATOR MUSIC loops softly in the background adding to the tension.

ABE
That was another one.

NORA
What was it?

ABE
Sounded like a bomb.

MADDIE
Felt like one.

ABE
I knew I should have taken the stairs.

MADDIE
We're not moving anymore.

Mohamed is front left across from Abe.

MOHAMED
It's probably a safety precaution activated in an emergency.

ABE
I don't like this.

Abe presses buttons.

NORA
The lights on the buttons are out.

Abe jabs the EMERGENCY.

ABE
Shit!

MOHAMED

Hello!

Mohamed pounds the doors.

MOHAMED (CONT'D)

Anybody out there?

ABE

Step aside, slick. I got this.

Abe tries to pull the doors apart.

Nothing happens.

Grunts and more effort. Nope.

A SMACK of frustration.

Maddie groans and doubles over.

Nora is immediately at her side.

NORA

Are you okay?

ABE

You gotta be kidding me.

MADDIE

(recovering)

Don't worry. I'm not due for another month.

Abe moves closer.

ABE

So what was that then?

MADDIE

Probably just stress.

NORA

Do you mind? Giving us a little air?

Abe backs off.

A teenager cowers behind Abe.

CHAD, (African American, 16-yrs-old), is soft-spoken and aloof. He wears a schoolbook backpack.

CHAD
Are we going to die?

ABE
Hey, easy kid!

CHAD
What about the air? We could run out.

MOHAMED
I don't think so. These doors are not airtight. Even if they were, someone would come find us before we suffocated.

ABE
I'm not waiting around for that.

MADDIE
What are you going to do?

ABE
Find a way out of here.

NORA
I thought all elevators had a phone.

MADDIE
Apparently not this one.

MOHAMED
This building was probably built in the '80s.

NORA
And they haven't updated the elevator?

Nora removes a PHONE from a LITTLE PURSE and presses some buttons.

ABE
Has everybody tried their cell?

MADDIE
I don't have a signal.

CHAD
Me neither.

ABE
You?

MOHAMED

No.

ABE

Any ideas?

MADDIE

Why don't we just all breathe.

ABE

I don't like this!

Abe jabs the Emergency button again.

Suddenly the elevator DROPS a few feet and STOPS with a jarring jolt.

Everybody screams!

NORA

What did you do?!

ABE

I pressed the emergency button.

NORA

It didn't work the first time!

ABE

I was just trying something!

MOHAMED

Perhaps it's better if we just wait until someone comes for us.

ABE

Waiting for others can get you hurt.

MADDIE

Panicking is not going to help us.

Abe looks up.

ABE

What about the ceiling?

NORA

What about it?

It has a 2-BY-2 SQUARE FOOT PANEL in the middle.

ABE

I think I can get that panel off.

MADDIE
It's too high.

NORA
And it's bolted down.

ABE
Maybe the blast knocked it loose.
Guys, give me a hand.

MOHAMED
What do you want us to do?

ABE
I'll sit on your shoulders.

NORA
Seriously?

MOHAMED
Is there a plan b?

Abe and Mohamed are about the same size.

ABE
Maybe you're right. Okay, why don't
you each grab a thigh and hoist me
up.

NORA
You're wasting your time.

ABE
At least I'm doing something
besides blowing hot air.

NORA
I don't blow.

MOHAMED
I suppose it's worth a try.

Abe faces front.

With their backs to the doors, Chad and Mohamed squat down
and wrap their arms around one thigh each and hoist Abe up.

It's a wobbly and unbalanced effort.

ABE
Whoa, steady! Get me a little
higher.

They double their effort.

Abe claws at the the panel.

ABE (CONT'D)
It's not moving.

NORA
I told you.

They list on Chad's side.

ABE
I need more from you, Junior!

CHAD
I'm trying.

ABE
Move back a bit.

They back up towards the doors.

Abe yanks the panel, trying to pull it loose.

MOHAMED
Is it working?

ABE
Can't tell yet.

CHAD
You're getting heavy.

ABE
Hang on kid!

Pound! Yank!

CHAD
I can't anymore!

ABE
Hang on!

Chad lets go under the struggle.

Abe comes crashing down and falls on top of Nora.

They land on the floor with Abe between Nora's legs.

Their faces are close together. They stare into each others eyes.

The elevator song LOOPS RELENTLESSLY.

Abe sniffs.

ABE (CONT'D)
What's that you're wearing?

NORA
Get off me!

Nora shoves Abe to the side and stands up.

Abe pulls-up laughing.

ABE
That was worth the effort.

Nora goes and stands at the back of the elevator.

MADDIE
What do we do now?

ABE
I'm running out of ideas.

Mohamed pounds the doors again.

MOHAMED
Hello! There are people stuck here!
Can anybody hear us? Hello?

Chad backs into his corner behind Abe.

Maddie rubs her tummy in the corner opposite Chad.

ABE
Guess we're stuck here 'til
somebody comes for us.
(to Nora)
So. Where you from babe?

NORA
No. My name is not babe. It's Nora.
And where I'm from is not your
business.

ABE
Just makin' conversation.

NORA
Why don't you make like a ghost and
disappear.

ABE
Alright. That's cool. That's cool.
(to Mohamed)

ABE (CONT'D)
How 'bout you, slick? What'll they
call you?

MOHAMED
My name is Mohamed Henosis.

Abe assumes an aggressive tone.

ABE
Oh really? Well my name is Abe.
Like biblical Abraham Abe. Abe
HEISKOPF.

Mohamed extends a hand.

MOHAMED
Pleased to meet you, Abe.

Abe ignores it.

ABE
Let me tell you something Mo-Ham-
Head.

MOHAMED
Mohamed. My name is Mohamed.

ABE
Whatever! There's like fourteen
different spellings.

NORA
Don't be a penis.

ABE
I'm having a really shitty day.

MADDIE
We all are.

ABE
This elevator just got smaller.

NORA
We get it, you're Jewish.

ABE
Do me a favor. That's your side of
the elevator. This is mine. Stay on
your side and you and I will get
along just kosher.

MADDIE

I'm Catholic. What side should I stand on?

NORA

This is a cozy coincidence. A Jew, a Muslim, a Catholic, and an Atheist get stuck on an elevator. Sounds like the beginning of a sick joke.

MOHAMED

You think this is a coincidence?

NORA

What else would it be?

ABE

What's your story, Junior? What, are you a Hare Krishna?

He looks cornered.

CHAD

I'm just Chad.

ABE

Chad?

CHAD

Yeah, that's my name.

ABE

That's a white name. Who gave you that?

CHAD

My dad.

ABE

Well he's obviously very mixed up.

NORA

Were you born a dick or did you grow into one?

MOHAMED

This is not a coincidence. Perhaps Allah is trying to tell us something.

ABE

That's the problem with you people.
Always with the "Allah Allah Allahu
Akbar!"

Mocking a terrorist.

NORA

Born that way.

MOHAMED

In spite of preconceived notions
you may have about me, I'm not your
enemy. We are brothers in the eyes
of Allah.

ABE

(rising anger)
You are not my brother.

MOHAMED

In the eyes of Allah, I am.

ABE

My little sister lost an arm and
half her face because one of your
BROTHERS had a bomb.

NORA

Can we dial it down, please?

MOHAMED

I am not the person responsible for
injury delivered upon your family.

ABE

You smell like him.

MOHAMED

Like who?

ABE

A stinking terrorist!

NORA

Alright, that's it. Stop it right
there. You don't even know each
other. Nobody's bombed villages or
severed limbs in this elevator.
Okay? And Abe, you should know what
it's like to be hated just for
breathing.

ABE

That's just it. I've taken shit my whole life, so I have no qualms with shitting back.

NORA

I'm sorry, but these quarters are too cramped for anybody to take a shit. Besides, what's the point of all this religious crap? God? Is a lie.

ABE

You mean to say you have no affiliation whatsoever?

NORA

A lesbian Latina in the church? Pigs will fly first.

MOHAMED

Are you not concerned with the afterlife?

NORA

I'm more concerned with this elevator music.

ABE

Answer the question.

NORA

You're born. You die. You're done.

MADDIE

And where do you go after?

NORA

Nowhere.

MADDIE

You mean like limbo?

NORA

If that means nowhere. You probably just sit in a chair somewhere and do nothing. Forever.

ABE

Somebody lied to you sister.

NORA

And I guess you know the truth?

ABE

At least I believe in something.

NORA

I'll tell you what I believe in.
I'll tell you what the truth is.

ABE

Oh, this is going to be
interesting.

NORA

The truth is personal. Whatever you
believe to be true, that's the
truth.

Beat.

ABE

Said the TikTok guru with the perky
nips.

NORA

Screw you!

ABE

We already tried that.

MOHAMED

Before this is over, you might
regret you ever felt that way.

NORA

I'll take my chances. It's all
worked out so far.

ABE

Yeah, and look where it got you.

NORA

We're all on the same barge.

CHAD

I thought we were in an elevator.

They all look at Chad. Ooops.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Sorry. Just trying to...

ABE

Why don't you crawl back to your
corner, Junior. Leave the
discussion to the adults.

RINGA-LINGA-LING!

An ALARM on Mohamed's WRIST WATCH goes off.

MOHAMED
Excuse me please.

ABE
Going somewhere?

Mohamed prepares himself as well as he can under the circumstances.

ABE (CONT'D)
How do you know which way is east?

Mohamed begins to sing an ISLAMIC RITUAL PRAYER.

It sounds odd and out of tune with the elevator song looping round and round.

Everyone just kind of looks at him, not sure how to react.

CHAD
This is embarrassing.

MADDIE
Aahhh!

Maddie has another contraction. Nora places a hand on her back.

NORA
Are you sure you're okay?

MADDIE
I think so.

ABE
Hey, home-ed! I don't wanna hear that.

NORA
Is this normal?

MADDIE
That's a loaded question.

Abe grabs Mohamed by the collar.

ABE
I said I don't wanna hear that crap!

Mohamed looks Abe squarely in the face.

MOHAMED
(HEBREW with subtitles)
You're on my side.

Abe shoves him and backs off.

ABE
So you know some Hebrew. That still
doesn't make you my brother.

CHAD
Guys.

The elevator doors have just begun to open.

THE MUSIC STOPS PLAYING.

Everyone stares at the BRICK WALL the open doors reveal.

ABE
Great! The doors finally open and
we're in the middle of nowhere.

Abe starts pressing and knocking on the bricks.

NORA
You looking for a secret opening?

ABE
Hello?

MOHAMED
Is there anybody out there?

They continue calling for help.

The SLOW DRAINING SOUND OF WATER DRIPPING onto the floor.

Nora looks down between Maddie's feet.

A tiny PINK POOL OF LIQUID has formed there.

Maddie has an apologetic, helpless look on her face.

NORA
Oh no.

REEEUUUMM!!!

The elevator PLUMMETS AT BREAKNECK SPEED! The brick wall
races past the front.

Abe hollers and clings to the walls in terror!

Chad stumbles back to his corner.

Mohamed drops to his knees and prays fervently in Arabic.

Maddie is GIVING BIRTH!

Her face contorts with moans and agony.

Nora screams at her to breathe and push!

PLUMMETING!

PRAYER!

HOLLERING!

LABOR MOANS!

NORA (CONT'D)

Push! It's coming!

Suddenly the elevator is engulfed in TOTAL DARKNESS and comes to a THUNDEROUS halt!

At first, there is just silence in the darkness.

Then the SOUND of SOMETHING DENSE AND WET PLOPS onto the floor.

Maddie SCREAMS! A blood-curdling, skin-pricking SCREAM!

The LIGHTS FLICKER ON sluggishly with a sickening LOW DRONE.

The doors are closed again.

The elevator music gradually seeps back into a loop.

MOHAMED'S P.O.V. - His view is blocked by Nora standing over Maddie, who sits on the floor SCREAMING down at the thing between her legs.

He crawls over to them and immediately recoils in horror!

Abe and Chad stare down at Maddie, dumbfounded.

Chad turns away as Maddie's screams die down to convulsions and sobbing.

Nora helps Maddie out of her shawl and wraps it around the STILLBORN BABY.

Maddie rocks her dead infant.

The relentless loop is an agonizing lullaby.

Abe finally finds something to say.

ABE

The doors are closed again.

MOHAMED

How far did we fall?

ABE

How should I know?

NORA

We should have hit bottom. We're lucky we're not dead.

CHAD

Maybe we are. And we just don't know it.

ABE

Hey! What's the matter with you? Saying stupid shit like that!

CHAD

But this hotel only has...

ABE

What if I smacked you upside the head? Then you'd know if you were dead or not.

NORA

Leave him alone.

MOHAMED

We should remain calm.

Maddie moans softly.

ABE

How can I be calm with all this? I don't wanna die on this elevator.

Abe starts to throw a tantrum.

NORA

Pull it together, Abe!

ABE

This is madness. There's a dead baby on board!

Maddie moans louder.

NORA
You're upsetting her!

ABE
I'm upset!

MOHAMED
Abe please.

He tries to touch.

ABE
Get your hands off me man! Did I
say you could touch me?

Maddie cries out loud.

MOHAMED
You should...

NORA
Hey! Hey! That's enough. That's...

BANG!

Everybody jumps and looks up at the ceiling.

BANG! BAM!...BANG!

THE MUSIC HAS STOPPED.

Maddie stands up with her baby.

BANG!

ABE
What the hell is going on up there?

BANG!

The panel knocks loose.

BAM!

MOHAMED
Look out!

It comes CRASHING to the floor!

Everyone stares up at the opening. Breathless.

Suddenly a head pokes into the hole.

It's a FIREMAN (Late 40's, Black), wearing a HELMET and dirt on his face.

FIREMAN
Hello ladies and gentlemen. I've
come to get you.

Everyone sighs with relief.

ABE
It's about time.

The Fireman drops his AX through the hole.

Abe picks it up and moves the panel to the side as the
Fireman jumps through feet first.

MOHAMED
What took so long?

Abe hands him the ax.

FIREMAN
Had to climb through the elevator
shaft.

NORA
Hear that?

CHAD
What?

NORA
Exactly! The music is gone.

FIREMAN
That was me. I cut a few wires.

NORA
I could almost hug you.

The general mood is up. Until...

FIREMAN
Oh! Who do we have here?

Maddie responds softly.

MADDIE
This is Sheila.

FIREMAN
That happened in the elevator?

MADDIE

Yes.

FIREMAN

Sorry I wasn't here sooner.

MOHAMED

Praise be to Allah that you're here now.

The Fireman looks around.

FIREMAN

There's five of you.

MADDIE

Six.

FIREMAN

Of course, she counts, too.

NORA

What happened down there?

FIREMAN

There was a bomb blast. We're pretty sure it was a terrorist attack.

ABE

I knew it! I said that, didn't I?

MOHAMED

But there were two of them.

FIREMAN

The other one was reactionary. Probably a stove or something electrical. We don't know yet.

ABE

(to Mohamed)

Probably one of your people.

MOHAMED

What do you mean, your people?

ABE

Middle East rag head virgin knockers.

MOHAMED

I'm from Canada.

ABE
That's close enough.

FIREMAN
What have I jumped into?

NORA
You don't want to know.

CHAD
Are you gonna take us down?

FIREMAN
I'm certainly going to try.

MADDIE
Can you call for help?

The Fireman taps the WALKY TALKY attached to the front of his jacket.

FIREMAN
Won't work inside of the elevator.

A WIRE EXTENDS FROM IT and leads around to a BATTERY PACK on the back of his UTILITY BELT.

MOHAMED
What's the plan then?

FIREMAN
This elevator has a trip switch behind that casing.

He points to a small 6-BY-6 INCH METAL CASING next to the button panel.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
Flick it and the elevator defaults to the ground floor.

MADDIE
Sounds so easy.

ABE
Why would they put it behind a locked casing?

NORA
Isn't that obvious?

ABE
I didn't ask you.

BANG! BANG!

The Fireman chops the casing and knocks the LITTLE DOOR off.

FIREMAN
Forgot the keys.

He looks inside.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
The switch is broken.

MOHAMED
Let me look at it. I'm an engineer.

ABE
Of course, you're an engineer.
What's your specialty? Bomb-making?

MOHAMED
Mr. and Mrs. Heiskopf, your insults
are completely inappropriate!

FIREMAN
I see the problem. The switch was
knocked back a bit. I think I can
reach it. Hold this.

He hands his ax to Chad standing behind him.

Chad's P.O.V. - The three crowd around the casing.

ABE
Is that it?

Chad looks at their backs while he holds the ax.

MOHAMED
Are you sure you should be touching
that?

He seems to be aroused by the weight of the ax in his hands.

ABE (O.S.)
There's a lot of wires around it.

Chad looks at the ax. Then at the others.

MOHAMED (O.S.)
What if they're live?

Maddie watches Chad watching them.

FIREMAN (O.S.)
It'll be alright.

Maddie looks concerned.

MOHAMED (O.S.)
That looks very dangerous.

Chad looks at Maddie. Something churns in his eyes.

FIREMAN (O.S.)
Need to take my gloves off to reach
it.

The Fireman removes his GLOVES.

Chad looks back at the three. He's about to make a move when
DDZZZZZZZZZZZZTTT!!!!!!

The Fireman's bare hand is stuck inside the casing. He JERKS
VIOLENTLY FROM ELECTROCUTION!

Everyone screams in panic!

Abe bats him with a forearm and knocks him into the corner.

Chad dodges the Fireman as he falls back into a sitting slump
up against the back wall.

He doesn't move.

Everyone is shocked into a frozen silence.

Mohamed finally pounces down and puts his ear next to the
Fireman's mouth.

He looks up in horror!

MOHAMED
Does anyone know CPR?

Abe and Nora are side by side.

ABE/NORA
(together)
I do.

They look at each other.

ABE (CONT'D)
You do it.

NORA
Give me some room.

She jumps down and replaces Mohamed.

Just as she starts to lay him down, the Fireman opens his eyes and grabs Nora by the throat.

Nora clutches at his wrists and gags as he stands her up, choking the breath out of her.

The panic is back!

Maddie screams!

Abe and Mohamed attack the Fireman, shouting and trying to get him off of Nora.

The Fireman seems to be in a trance.

Chad watches with fascination.

The others finally pry him loose.

Nora slumps to the ground coughing and hacking.

ABE

Jesus man! What the hell has gotten into you?

The Fireman snaps out of it.

FIREMAN

Sorry.

ABE

You nearly choked her to death!

FIREMAN

I got disoriented. Thought she was my ex wife.

ABE

For God's sake!

The Fireman tries to help Nora up.

FIREMAN

Sorry about that, Ma'am.

Nora straight arms him and helps her self up.

MOHAMED

Are you okay?

She coughs affirmative.

FIREMAN
I'll take that.

He grabs the ax from Chad.

A relative calm starts to settle over the group.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
Whew. Gotta admit, that was kind of
exciting.

Nora attacks him.

Maddie dodges the commotion slamming into her corner!

The others fight to get Nora off of him.

Maddie shouts!

MADDIE
The doors!

Everyone stops.

THE DOORS ARE WIDE OPEN.

Beyond them there is blackness.

Except for a few pieces of TURNED OVER FURNITURE AND DEBRIS,
the floor is empty and deserted.

No one moves.

CHAD
That's weird.

MOHAMED
What floor are we on?

CHAD
Doesn't look like any floor in this
Hotel.

MADDIE
Why would you say that?

CHAD
My dad owns the building.

They all look at him.

CHAD (CONT'D)
I practically grew up here.

MOHAMED

Why didn't you mention that before?

CHAD

There are things that happened up here I don't like to talk about.

Abe starts frantically pressing buttons.

NORA

What are you doing?

ABE

I'm not going out there.

FIREMAN

What are you scared of?

ABE

These doors haven't worked right all night. Now all of a sudden they just open up to God knows where! Sorry, but this is FREAKING ME OUT!

FIREMAN

Alright everybody calm down! We're never gonna get out of here so long as we stand here bickering! I recognize this floor.

MADDIE

How's that? Chad's never seen it.

FIREMAN

Don't argue with me lady! Somebody's got to be in charge and that's me. Now we are getting off this elevator and I'm leading us to a safe way out of the building. Anybody got a problem with that?

ABE

You're the one holding the ax.

The Fireman looks down at his ax and then up at Abe.

They have a momentary macho stare down. Finally.

FIREMAN

Let's go.

ABE

You first.

They peer out into the darkness, looking in all directions.
They start to cross the threshold.

FIREMAN

Wait.

They stop.

The Fireman looks at Maddie.

MADDIE

What?

FIREMAN

Sheila stays.

MADDIE

No.

FIREMAN

Your baby's dead.

MADDIE

I'm not leaving her.

FIREMAN

Listen to me.

MADDIE

No! I am not leaving without my
baby!

She backs into her corner, holding the child protectively.

FIREMAN

Listen! There's potential danger
out there. I need everyone fully
mobile. I can't have you
compromising the rest of us because
you're carrying dead weight.

Abe pushes him hard.

ABE

Hey! What's wrong with you? Did you
skip the sensitivity section in
your fire boy training?!

FIREMAN

Put your paws on me again...

They launch into an intense shoving match.

Nora screams and tries to pull them apart.

NORA
Stop it! Stop it! That's enough you
two!

They finally separate.

NORA (CONT'D)
You're acting like a couple a catty
bitches! We're in a life and death
situation here and I need you to
start acting like adults!

ABE
I got your number.

FIREMAN
No buddy, I got yours.

NORA
I said that's enough! Both of you,
clap your TWATS SHUT!

They both chill a bit.

Maddie crouches in a corner, rocking her dead baby and crying
softly.

Nora stoops down close to her.

NORA (CONT'D)
What's your name?

MADDIE
Maddie.

NORA
Listen, Maddie, I know that you're
hurting. I can't even begin to
imagine the pain you must be going
through, but he's right.

MADDIE
No.

NORA
Come here.

Nora holds Maddie and her baby and rocks them.

NORA (CONT'D)

I know it's hard. But you have to let her go. You have to let Sheila go.

MADDIE

She's not the first. They all went this way. This was my last chance.

Maddie sobs.

NORA

Can I hold her?

Maddie reluctantly hands her over.

Nora looks down lovingly at the baby in her arms. Sheila is a purple dead lump, but...

NORA (CONT'D)

She's beautiful.

NOPE.

MADDIE

She looks like her father.

NORA

It's better if she stays. You understand that?

Maddie nods through tears.

MADDIE

Yes.

MOHAMED

There's a problem.

They all look at Mohamed.

MOHAMED (CONT'D)

The umbilical cord. It has to be cut.

The umbilical cord extends from beneath Maddie's maternity dress.

They all look to the Fireman.

Then down at his ax.

FIREMAN

I'll do it.

ABE

Oh my God.

Everybody stirs with uneasiness.

FIREMAN

Well somebody has to.

The Fireman steps forward.

NORA

Let me hang on to her.

ABE

I don't believe I'm SEEING this!

The Fireman moves the ax back and forth.

FIREMAN

Do I cut it closer to Sheila or
closer to Maddie?

MADDIE

No!

FIREMAN

What?

MADDIE

(to Nora)

I'd prefer it if you did it.

FIREMAN

It's my ax!

NORA

Hold her.

She hands it to Chad.

NORA (CONT'D)

Give me that.

She snatches the ax.

NORA (CONT'D)

Don't look.

WHACK!

Cut the cord.

Maddie screams!

Abe hollers!

Mohamed blurts.

Chad and the baby.

The Fireman STOMPS.

FIREMAN
I hate kids.

Nora gives him the ax but pulls it back.

NORA
What did you say?

FIREMAN
I said I hate kids.

Maddie takes Sheila.

MADDIE
How can you say that?

FIREMAN
You know how many kids start fires
for fun? It's usually because of
one of them, that one of us dies!
While trying to save one of them.

ABE
You're in the wrong business, pal.

FIREMAN
I'm your only ticket out of here.

MOHAMED
That's not reassuring.

FIREMAN
You want to stay on the elevator?

MOHAMED
I'd like to go home to my wife and
children.

FIREMAN
Then spare me the lip.

ABE
Didn't know you had a family.

MOHAMED
You never asked.

FIREMAN

Can I have my ax back?

Nora thrusts it at him.

Maddie lays her baby on the floor and arranges the shawl around her like she's putting her to bed. She hums an Irish lullaby.

Mohamed takes off his SUIT JACKET and covers the baby completely.

Nora helps Maddie stand.

The two women follow the others out of the elevator.

Maddie looks over her shoulder.

INT. UPPER HOTEL FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Nora leads Maddie away from the elevator.

NORA

You're doing the best thing. You know that, right? You okay?

Maddie nods and tries to look forward.

NORA (CONT'D)

Okay. I'm here for you. I'll be right back.

Nora moves front of the pack where the Fireman leads the others down a dark corridor.

NORA (CONT'D)

Listen! I don't know who you are or where you came from, but as soon as I get down from here, I am going to report you. Your conduct is unacceptable!

FIREMAN

Lady, IF, you get down from here, you can do whatever the hell you please.

NORA

That woman back there has been through enough...

She turns to point at Maddie.

NORA (CONT'D)

Maddie...

She's on the elevator.

NORA (CONT'D)

Maddie! Get off the elevator!

They all turn to see her standing inside holding Sheila.

The doors begin to close.

Everyone runs towards the elevator screaming.

They arrive just as the doors touch center.

Nora, Abe, and Mohamed bang on the doors, calling to Maddie.

Abe tries to pry the doors open.

No chance.

Abe smacks a door, breathing, thinking...suddenly!

Abe snatches the ax from the Fireman and starts hacking on the doors.

NORA (CONT'D)

(screaming)

Stop it! What are you doing?

ABE

(maniacal)

These doors have got to die!

Bang! Bang!

MOHAMED

Abe, calm down!

A tiny little piece chips off.

The doors slide apart and stop about eight inches wide.

That temporarily halts the madness.

They all freeze and wait... That's it.

Abe drops the ax and shoves an arm and shoulder through the opening.

That's all that fits.

Abe tries pushing the doors apart more but can't.

The others appeal to Maddie.

NORA
Maddie come out! You can't stay in
there!

MOHAMED
It's not safe.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Maddie stares at the faces beseeching her through the crack.
Abe's arm extends inside, wildly waving her forward.

ABE
Take my hand.

NORA
Maddie, Please!

Maddie holds Sheila and says nothing.

Suddenly Abe's eyes grow wide.

The ELEVATOR DOORS ARE STARTING TO COMPRESS!

EXT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Abe is Terrified!

ABE
The doors are closing!

Nora and Mohamed try to pull the doors apart in a panic!

The doors squeeze tighter.

Abe hollers!

Mohamed grabs the ax.

MOHAMED
Get back!

He starts revving up the courage to hack Abe's arm off!

He looks at the Fireman.

The Fireman casually nods approval.

Mohamed raises the ax to chop.

NORA
Mohamed, no!

Abe realizes and screams!

Change of plans.

Mohamed shoves the ax head into the doors at the bottom and tries to pry them open!

Nora pulls on Abe's free arm.

She pushes a foot against the door for leverage.

Abe screams from all the squeeze and pull!

The Fireman stands by calmly watching it all.

FIREMAN
Honestly, this is ridiculous.

Chad is poised and ready to move, but doesn't.

The doors finally open about an inch, just enough for Nora to pull Abe out.

They crash land on the floor.

The doors close on Maddie Stalworth's RESOLUTE FACE.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
Thank you.

The Fireman takes the ax from Mohamed.

Abe and Nora stand up.

Abe clutches Their shoulder and moans.

They all stand around catching their breath.

Just as the heavy breathing starts to subside...

OLD MAN (O.S.)
Hello.

ABE
Aaaahh!!!

Abe SCREAMS and they all JUMP!

AN OLD MAN, (Caucasian, 70's) with a withered face and piercing eyes stands near them. He wears the workman's clothes of a bygone era.

FIREMAN

What are you doing up here, old man?

OLD MAN

I live here.

ABE

Don't know if you know this but the building blew up.

OLD MAN

I'm still in one piece.

FIREMAN

Lucky you. Alright then, join the clan.

OLD MAN

You know I'm not going anywhere.

The Fireman squint-eyes him like he's a bit coo-coo. Then shrugs.

FIREMAN

Suit yourself.

The Fireman turns and leaves.

The others follow, albeit confused by the Old Man's reluctance to join them.

OLD MAN

There's only one way out.

They all turn back.

ABE

Where's that?

The Old Man stares at them.

Mohamed and Abe look at each other.

They turn to leave again.

FIREMAN

Last chance.

The Old Man smiles an eerie smile and waves at them as they walk away.

ABE

Creepy codger.

They move into the dark and turn down a corridor.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

They pass NUMBERED ROOMS and a MAID'S CART containing AN ASSORTMENT OF CLEANING ITEMS haphazardly arranged.

ABE

Looks like she took the day off.

They emerge into a...

INT. MIDDLE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's windowless. Dimly lit.

A SHADOWY FIGURE hurries past.

NORA

I saw something!

FIREMAN

What?

The shadow again. Another spot.

NORA

There it goes again!

They all jump, looking around.

ABE

Where?

Nora runs to where she saw it.

They follow. Cautiously.

ABE (CONT'D)

Don't start with this, Nora! I'm already spooked enough!

NORA

I'm telling you I saw something.

CHAD

Maybe you saw a ghost.

MOHAMED

What did it look like?

NORA
A little kid.

FIREMAN
I hate kids.

CHAD
There are ghost in this building.

ABE
Are you serious? Because if you're
joking Junior, I'm gonna bop you
one!

CHAD
I had a ghost friend when I was
small.

MOHAMED
You sure you didn't imagine it?

CHAD
No.

NORA
What I saw was not a ghost. It was
a child.

MOHAMED
Sometimes stress plays tricks on
us.

NORA
I work with challenged children
every day and right now I feel like
I'm on the job! That child is
probably scared which makes it
susceptible to injury. Now who's
coming to help me find him?

ABE
Count me out.

NORA
If your Rabbi could see you now.

ABE
You don't believe in God so you
don't get to play that card.

She looks at the Fireman.

FIREMAN
I didn't see nothing.

She looks at Chad. He just shrugs.

At Mohamed.

MOHAMED

Nora listen...

NORA

No! I thought of all people, you would at least show a little concern! The Prophet must be turning over in his grave right now! If there ever was one!

MOHAMED

Please don't speak of the Prophet - Peace be upon him - in that manner.

NORA

Oh! You're more worried about a dead holy man than a child in danger?

MOHAMED

I'm worried that if we separate we could lose each other. We need to stay together.

NORA

Then stay together and pray together! I'll find him myself.

She walks away into the dark.

MOHAMED

Nora, don't do this.

ABE

Nora! Get back here! Nora!

MOHAMED

She's right. We should probably pray.

ABE

Mohamed, I swear, if you start with that praying crap, I will smack the shit out of you, so help me God!

MOHAMED

I should have chopped your arm off when I had the chance.

ABE

Then I'd use the other hand. I'm non-binary which means I'm ambidextrous.

FIREMAN

Alright, alright! Settle down, you three.

CHAD

I'm kinda like a kid. Are you going to leave me?

The Fireman glares at him suspiciously.

FIREMAN

How old are you?

CHAD

Sixteen.

FIREMAN

That's the cut off. You just made it.

CHAD

I was adopted. Does that bother you?

FIREMAN

No, that's fine.

INT. A DARK CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The group walks past numbered hotel room doors.

ABE

Were you really going to chop my arm off?

MOHAMED

Yes...Just kidding. I thought about it, but I could never have actually gone through with it.

ABE

Thank God for second thoughts.

MOHAMED

How does it feel?

ABE

Fine. Doesn't hurt at all.

MOHAMED

That's strange. You should be in a lot of pain.

ABE

I can't even imagine what it's like.

MOHAMED

What do you mean?

ABE

To have your arm blown off. One minutes it's hanging by your side, the next minute it's lying on the floor somewhere across the room.

MOHAMED

It must be difficult to see a loved one suffer like that.

ABE

What goes through your mind? Do you even realize what just happened to you? Who would do that to a child?

CHAD

My dad said when he was a little boy his neighbor had a dog named Umtoto. It was a German shepherd. Every night the man would beat the dog before he went to bed. My dad said he could hear the dog whining and crying through an opened window. One day, the dog stopped crying, even though the man kept beating him every night. The man's wife got pregnant and had a baby. A little boy named...I don't remember. When the baby boy was about 3-months-old, the man got up in the middle of the night to check on his son and found that Umtoto had bitten the baby's face several times until it died. The child was faceless. The man shot the dog and killed it. But the question is, who killed the baby? The dog or the dad?

They've all stopped, captivated.

MOHAMED

It's a tragic fact. Violent behavior is a function of conditioning. But as far as who's to blame, clearly, the fault falls on...

BOY (O.S.)

Chad...

A GHOSTLY WHISPER!

They all freeze. They're FREAKED!

ABE

I heard that!

MOHAMED

Me too.

They look at the Fireman.

FIREMAN

Yep.

Chad looks wide-eyed petrified!

They all creep forward cautiously and turn a corner.

Suddenly, A LITTLE BOY, (Racially Ambiguous, 10-12 yrs) wearing WHITE PAJAMAS is right in front of them.

The Fireman swings!

Abe catches the ax handle just inches before the blade gashes the Boy's cranium.

The Boy doesn't flinch. He stares at Chad.

The Fireman snatches his ax back.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

Where the hell did he come from?

MOHAMED

Good question.

ABE

You just nearly axed a kid!

FIREMAN

It was a reflex.

MOHAMED

What's your name son? Are you okay?

The Boy remains focused on Chad.

MOHAMED (CONT'D)

Where's your mommy and daddy?

The Boy finally looks at Mohamed.

BOY

I don't have a mommy and daddy.

MOHAMED

This must be the child Nora went to look for.

ABE

Well, we found him.

FIREMAN

Fine, you can keep it, but I want nothing to do with him.

The Fireman walks off.

Abe runs up beside him and looks him over.

ABE

Are you a real fireman?

The Fireman stops and looks at Abe.

FIREMAN

Of course I am. What kind of question is that?

Mohamed offers his hand.

MOHAMED

Come on son. You're safe now.

The Boy takes Mohamed's hand. For a brief instance, AN ORB OF WHITE LIGHT envelops their clasped hands and then disappears.

Mohamed leads the Boy towards the others.

Chad stops them.

CHAD

Mohamed, let me look after him.

MOHAMED

You sure?

CHAD

Yeah.

MOHAMED

Okay.

Mohamed catches up with the others while Chad and the Boy hang back and follow behind.

CHAD

That was you just now?

BOY

Your father loves you, Chad.

CHAD

You know him?

BOY

I know what he did to you. I know what you became because of it.

CHAD

I only did what I thought would make it stop.

BOY

Still. There are consequences.

Chad stops suddenly.

He stands in front of a door to a UTILITY CLOSET.

He looks at the door and starts to tremble.

CHAD

Please...no...don't touch me there.

He raises his hands as if to block someone.

Mohamed stops Abe and the Fireman.

MOHAMED

Guys? You better keep up.

Something has come over Chad. His VOICE MODULATES BETWEEN CHILD-LIKE AND DEMONIC.

CHAD

I'm sorry daddy. I didn't mean to...he hurt me.

The Boy backs away from him slowly.

ABE
What's wrong with Junior?

Mohamed sniffs.

MOHAMED
You smell that?

MISTED SMOKE rises and floats around Chad's feet.
The door behind him creeps open slightly.

CHAD
My soul is burning.

YANK!

UNSEEN HANDS SNATCH CHAD INTO THE CLOSET AT LIGHTING SPEED!

The door SLAMS shut.

Muffled SCREAMS and BANGING from inside.

The Fireman runs and CHOPS the door.

Three swings make a hole.

He yanks it open.

Chad SHOOTS OUT and grabs his face, SCREAMING!

SOMETHING UNSEEN pulls Chad back.

The Fireman fights and pulls to prevent him from being
snatched back inside.

Suddenly, Something Unseen pulls Chad through THE CLOSET
FLOOR WHICH IS NOW A BLACK VOID.

Chad drags the Fireman down with him but the Fireman stops
short, his chest hanging over the edge.

Chad clings to the Fireman's ax.

The lower part of his body is buried in The Void.

He SCREAMS in terror!

FIREMAN
Don't look down!

The Boy walks towards the closet.

A HUMAN BRAID has formed.

Mohamed lays on the back of the Fireman's legs.

Abe sits behind Mohamed, holding him by the ankles.

MOHAMED

You got me?

ABE

I got you!

DISTORTED SOUNDS OF TORTURED DEMONS scream up from The Void!

FIREMAN

Pull yourself to me!

Abe and Mohamed drag them back a bit but then The Void swallows Chad even more, up to his neck.

Abe's grip is slipping.

ABE

I'm losing you!

MOHAMED

Get away from there! Don't go near the closet!

The Boy stands at the opening looking down at Chad and the Fireman.

The ax blade cuts into Chad's hands.

FIREMAN

You should know something, kid.

Chad screams with effort!

The Fireman grins.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

We got a couple things in common. I *SEE* you.

CHAD

Don't let them take me!

FIREMAN

I appreciate the help getting things started, but you never had a chance.

He jerks the ax and hacks Chad in the face with it.

FLAMES suddenly envelop Chad and suck him into The Void.

The Boy witnesses it all.

Mohamed pulls the Fireman from over the edge.

The Fireman slams the closet door shut.

Mohamed scolds the Boy.

MOHAMED

Why did you do that? You could have
been killed!

The Boy stares up at the Fireman.

Abe is hysterical!

ABE

What the hell was that?

MOHAMED

Fires from the blast must have made
the floors weak.

ABE

That does NOT explain what just
happened!

FIREMAN

You got another theory?

ABE

Yeah! There's some weird shit going
on and we're all gonna die!

MOHAMED

Calm down, Abe.

ABE

We're never going to make it out of
here alive. Oh my GOD! We're all
dead!

The Fireman grabs Abe and shoves Them up against a wall.

He presses the ax blade against Their throat.

FIREMAN

Look around you! You see God
anywhere? Right now, I'm God! I'm
the only thing standing between you
and hell.

ABE
Might I remind you, we just saved
your life.

FIREMAN
Remind me to say thanks.

He shoves Abe away and turns around.

Mohamed and the Boy have been watching.

The Fireman and the Boy exchange a long look.

Finally, the Fireman walks away.

INT. A DIFFERENT CORRIDOR - NIGHT

They pass the SAME MAID'S CART FROM BEFORE but they're in a
DIFFERENT CORRIDOR.

ABE
I could almost swear we saw that
cart before.

FIREMAN
They made more than one.

MOHAMED
I think we did pass this way.

A perpendicular Hallway a few feet ahead.

ZAA-ROOOOomm !!!

Someone dashes by in a flash!

ABE
That was Nora!

Abe takes off in a run and turns down the hall in pursuit.

After hesitating, Mohamed takes off too. The Fireman grabs
him but his grip immediately recoils.

The two men are shocked by the inexplicable friction. The
Fireman quickly recovers.

FIREMAN
Let Them do it.

INT. HALLWAY(S)/MIDDLE ROOM - NIGHT

Abe races after Nora.

She's up ahead at the end of the hall, wildly sprinting!

She turns right, disappearing around a corner.

ABE
Nora wait!

Abe runs to the end and turns too.

There she goes again!

She turns another corner.

ABE (CONT'D)
Nora! Stop running!

Abe turns the corner she turned and stops dead.

They're in a small "middle foyer" that interrupts the long Hallway.

Nora is about thirty feet away, crouched with her back to Abe.

She pants heavily.

ABE (CONT'D)
Nora...what's going on with you?

She doesn't answer or look back.

Abe approaches her slowly.

ABE (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

The room is dark and creepy.

ABE (CONT'D)
We found the kid. He's cute.

Abe goes in and out of shadows on the approach.

ABE (CONT'D)
Come back and join the group.

Almost upon her.

Abe extends an arm, reaching for Nora's half-lit torso.

Her panting suddenly stops.

Breathless.

Silence.

ABE (CONT'D)

Nora?

SCRAAAIIKK!!!

She SPINS and SCREAMS WITH SUDDEN CHOPPED SPEED!

HALF HER FACE and ARM ARE GONE.

It's HORRIFIC! Like a bomb blew them off!

It's not Nora. It's A YOUNG GIRL (Caucasian, 12 yrs).

Abe hollers and backs away in terror!

They bump into something behind Them.

Abe turns and hollers again! But it's just the Old Man from before.

When Abe realizes, They throw a wild, frustrated tizzy fit.

It's ridiculous and over the top.

It finally erupts into...

ABE (CONT'D)

Who the hell are you?

OLD MAN

A resident.

ABE

Why do you insist on scaring the
shit out me?

OLD MAN

Nora is beyond reach. Mohamed needs
you now...Abe.

Abe backs away from the Old Man. Really spooked now!

ABE

How do you know my name?

The Old Man stares with creepy eyes.

Abe looks down.

The Young Girl is gone.

They look up just in time to see Nora dash around a corner.

Abe hauls ass after her.

ABE (CONT'D)

Nora!

Abe turns the corner she turned...

INT. LARGE UPPER LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

...and runs straight into the Fireman.

The Fireman grabs Abe.

FIREMAN

Whoa, slow down!

Abe is hysterical!

ABE

Where is she?

FIREMAN

Where's who?

ABE

Nora! She just ran into this room!

FIREMAN

Take it easy.

ABE

Didn't you see her?

FIREMAN

No Nora.

ABE

I was chasing her and she turned into this...

MOHAMED

Abe! Abe!

ABE

What?

MOHAMED

(soothing)

Nora's not here.

ABE

But she was right in front of me.

They all just stare.

Abe looks embarrassed.

ABE (CONT'D)

Sorry. I'm stressed.

MOHAMED

That's fine.

ABE

I have to get to her before
something bad happens.

Silence.

ABE (CONT'D)

She's waiting for me. I always pick
her up after school. The call comes
in from work. Pick up an extra
package. It's only five minutes out
of the way. What's five minutes,
right? It only takes a second to
detonate a bomb.

MOHAMED

Ah, yes! Abigail Heiskopf. Abe. I
didn't recognize you. Your hair is
different. You were very outspoken
in the press.

ABE

Somebody had to be.

MOHAMED

My wife is an ER surgeon. She
worked on your sister immediately
following the attack.

ABE

She didn't do a very good job.

MOHAMED

She and her team saved your
sister's life.

ABE

Dr. Rapha, right? I just assumed
she was Jewish.

MOHAMED

She is.

Abe looks at Mohamed with a softened scowl.

They're seeing HIM for the first time, instead of a MUSLIM.

ABE

Well, tell your wife I said thank you, but my little sister is dead now. She jumped from the top floor of this building.

The Fireman YAWNS.

FIREMAN

We gonna stand here swapping stories all night? I can make us a campfire. What happened to Nora? A minute ago you were looking for her.

ABE

I hate you.

MOHAMED

I'm getting there.

BOY

Nora is looking for me. But she won't find me because she doesn't believe.

The Fireman is annoyed.

FIREMAN

And just what is that supposed to mean?

BOY

You know what I mean.

FIREMAN

No-I-Do-NOT.

He moves toward the Boy aggressively.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

And frankly, I'm starting to get a bit peeved with the spooky little orphan act.

Mohamed comes between them.

MOHAMED

Excuse me! What are you going to do, assault a minor?

FIREMAN

I'm thinking about it.

INT. DARK CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Nora walks down a long dark corridor.

Up ahead, light seeps from a hotel room with the door ajar.

She pushes it open.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door OPENS INTO A HOSPITAL ROOM.

Nora enters.

A sick older woman, NORA'S MOTHER (Latina, late 50s) lies in bed hooked-up to several medical apparatus.

Personal RELIGIOUS ARTIFACTS litter the room.

A FRAMED PICTURE OF JESUS sits on a table.

Nora is sorrowful.

NORA

Mama...

NORA'S MOTHER

It's okay, Nora.

She pats the bed gently.

NORA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Siéntate.

Nora sits and leans over her mother's face.

She's on the verge of tears.

NORA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

I know how it looks. But Jesus will pull me through this. I promise.

Nora lays her head on her mother's bosom and closes her eyes.

She strokes her mom's arm and lets her hand slide downward.

Nora's eyes open with curiosity.

FEAR FLOODS THEM!

She looks at her mother's hand.

It's WITHERED and GROTESQUE!

She springs from the bed!

Her Mom has morphed into a DECOMPOSING CORPSE.

Nora screams and backs away as she frantically slaps away SLITHERING WORMS that cling to her!

She grabs the picture of Jesus and slams it on the ground face-up, shattering the glass frame.

INT. LARGE UPPER LOBBY - NIGHT

Abe, Mohamed, the Fireman, and the Boy emerge from a corridor into The Large Upper Lobby.

ABE

We're going around in circles.

FIREMAN

We're making progress.

ABE

No we're not, we've been here before.

FIREMAN

You got a real problem with authority.

ABE

You got a problem with directions.

MOHAMED

Why don't you try your walky-talky?

FIREMAN

Good idea.

The Fireman detaches the device.

It's connected to a cable that leads around to the back of his belt.

He presses a button a couple times.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
The signal's weak. Let me move
around a bit.

Abe watches the Fireman trot off to get a better signal.

The Boy tugs on Mohamed's shirtsleeve.

BOY
He made him fall.

MOHAMED
What do you mean?

BOY
Chad. He could have saved him but
he didn't.

Abe observes the Fireman talking on his walky-talky out of
their earshot.

MOHAMED
That's not true.

BOY
I saw him.

MOHAMED
He's here to help us. He's a
fireman.

The Fireman moves back towards them.

FIREMAN
Good news. Calvary is on the way.
Every thing's gonna be fine now.

ABE
He's lying.

The Fireman stops.

He's about thirty feet from them.

FIREMAN
Abe, come on. Do I look like the
kind of guy that would lie?

ABE
Yes.

FIREMAN

Oh I get it, you're still poked about that whole "God" thing by the closet. Listen, I apologize. I admit, I got a little bit out of control.

ABE

It's not that.

FIREMAN

What is it then?

ABE

Something's off. Ever since you showed up, we all just keep dropping away one by one.

FIREMAN

You think it's my fault Maddie stayed on the elevator? Or that your little girlfriend decided to go chasing after a ghost? You saw what happened to that other kid. I'm busting my ass here! I could do without the attitude. Where's the love?

ABE

So the Calvary is on the way, huh?

FIREMAN

Yes! I just said that.

ABE

You spoke to them just now?

FIREMAN

Am I stuttering?

ABE

So how do you explain the disconnected cable on your walky-talky?

FIREMAN

What?

The Fireman feels around the lower part of the back of his jacket and grasps the cable that is CONNECTED TO NOTHING.

He brings it around front and looks at it.

He looks back at the others and grins.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

Oops!

ABE

You're not a real fireman.

FIREMAN

Oh, yes I am. Nobody knows fire
like I do.

MOHAMED

What do you want from us?

FIREMAN

I'm having a barbecue. You're all
invited. Especially the kid.

ABE

You're INSANE.

The Fireman starts to laugh.

It's evil!

MOHAMED

Who are you?

FIREMAN

You don't know by now?

ABE

We gotta get the hell out of here.

FIREMAN

I know a short cut.

He fixes them with a stare.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

Follow me.

ABE

Run!

They turn and DASH!

Mohamed holds the Boy's hand as they scam.

The Fireman HURLS HIS AX!

It SPINS THROUGH THE AIR, gaining on them!

Just before it reaches their heads, the two split.

The ax CUTS into a wall and catches.

Abe and Mohamed run in opposite directions down a large dark corridor.

Mohamed tugs the Boy along with him.

The Fireman's hand removes the ax from the wall.

INT. LARGE DARK CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The Fireman is gleefully manic.

FIREMAN
Here kitty kitty!
(sing song)
Mohamed? Come out and PRAY with me.
Come on guys. Don't be pissed about
the ax throwing. My hand slipped.

The Fireman checks a few of the HOTEL ROOM DOORS. They're locked.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
Okay, okay, okay. I'm leaving now.
Goodbye! Bye-bye.

He backs away down another dimly-lit corridor until his face disappears into the darkness.

After a moment, a DOORKNOB turns.

The door creaks open.

Mohamed and the Boy emerge with caution.

They creep on tip-toe further down the hall.

A NOISE!

They turn in that direction.

Nothing.

A HAND from the shadows grabs Mohamed by the shoulder!

He jumps and spins!

Abe throws up a palm to keep him from crying out.

ABE
Shhhhhh...

MOHAMED
(under his breath)
What's going on here?

ABE
He wants to kill us.

MOHAMED
Why?

ABE
I don't know.

MOHAMED
What does he want with the boy?

ABE
No idea.

They look down at the Boy.

He has a fearless innocence about him.

ABE (CONT'D)
Take the stairs and go down to the
lobby.

MOHAMED
I haven't seen any since we got off
the elevator.

ABE
Follow this hall and turn left at
the end of it.

MOHAMED
What about you?

ABE
I got this.

MOHAMED
He's got an ax. And he's crazy!

ABE
Somebody has to stop him.

MOHAMED
You can't do that alone. Something
sinister is happening. Haven't you
noticed? Somebody dies or
disappears when they hold back or
separate. We need to stay together.

ABE

Take the boy and go. Go!

Mohamed does as advised.

Abe disappears into the shadows the other way.

INT. A CORRIDOR HALL - NIGHT

Nora saunters.

She's been crying.

She rubs her moist eyes.

Makeup on her fingers.

This annoys her.

She stops and pulls a COMPACT out of her little purse.

IN THE MIRROR - her face is a mess.

NORA

Gracias, mama.

She wipes away running mascara and wiggles her colorless lips.

Clap.

She closes the compact and digs around in her purse.

LIPSTICK falls out onto the floor, rolls a bit and stops.

Nora stoops to pick it up.

A NOISE!

She SNAPS her head towards the sound.

A long, dark, empty corridor.

Nothing.

Crouched down with her hand on the lipstick, she cranes her head and looks the other way.

Long, dark, empty.

Relieved, she stands.

Click.

She pops open the compact again.

QUIET.

Slowly. Calmly, she applies lipstick first to her top, then to her bottom lip.

She puckers and taps.

NORA (CONT'D)
Much better.

SWISH!

Her HEAD DISAPPEARS.

Her hand still holds the compact REVEALING A REFLECTION OF THE FIREMAN'S FACE just above Nora's headless neck.

Lick, lick, grin.

He checks his teeth just before the compact FALLS OUT OF THE FRAME.

Nora's headless body collapses at the Fireman's feet.

His half-silhouetted stance is framed by the long dark corridor.

Black blood drips from his ax onto Nora's severed head.

INT. ENCLOSED STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Mohamed and the Boy race down steps passing ENTRY DOORS that lead to other floors.

They HEAR A DOOR OPEN a few floors above them.

They stop and back up against the wall, out of sight of anyone looking down.

The Fireman casually takes a deliberate step at a time, descending towards them, ax over his shoulder, whistling a tune.

He's really relaxed.

Mohamed reaches for a doorknob and turns it.

CREEEk...

The Fireman stops and listens.

Mohamed freezes. Door half-open.

Everybody's listening.

Mohamed and the Boy hold their breath.

Finally, the Fireman continues whistling and his casual descent.

Very quietly Mohamed and the Boy slip behind the door.

INT. A LARGE SEMI-DARK FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Mohamed closes the door softly.

He and the Boy creep forward.

It's pitch dark.

They can't see more than a few feet in front of them.

A NOISE from above startles them.

They look up.

A LARGE GLASS CHANDELIER flickers on with a BUZZ and then fades.

They continue on.

They pass a DARK CORRIDOR in the sickening quiet.

The Boy puts a cautionary hand on Mohamed's arm. For an instant, the Orb Of White Light reappears at the point of his touch.

They stop and search the darkness.

The Boy's eyes survey.

Mohamed's eyes dart, panic rising in them.

The Boy looks up at Mohamed and meets his fearful stare.

BOY

Duck.

WREE-UUUNNN!!!

THE AX BLADE SLASHES THROUGH THE AIR towards Mohamed's head!

Mohamed ducks just in time!

The Fireman's FACE APPEARS FROM THE DARKNESS.

FIREMAN
Hello, boys!

They turn and sprint for the door they just came through.

Mohamed desperately tries to yank it open but it's stuck.

They turn around, trapped!

The only other way out is the dark corridor they passed but the Fireman stands by the entrance to it.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
There's nowhere to run.

MOHAMED
Why are you doing this?

FIREMAN
That's complicated. But I'll make you a deal. I'm kinda famous for that. Give me the boy and I'll let you walk.

MOHAMED
What do you want with him?

FIREMAN
I hate...how many times we gotta go over this?

MOHAMED
You're evil!

FIREMAN
That's fair.

RINGA-LINGA-LING!

Mohamed's watch alarm goes off again.

He hits the stop button and immediately starts to pray in Arabic.

The Fireman looks down at his NAILS THAT ARE NOW LONG, BLACK, AND POINTY.

He files one with his ax blade causing a nauseating squeak.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
That's not going to help you now.

Suddenly the SOUND OF WHEELS TURNING and the accelerating pitch of A LOUD SCREAM!

Abe comes RUSHING from the corridor, pushing the Maid's Cart (they passed before) with a war cry!

BAMM!!

Abe slams the cart into the Fireman and violently rolls it over him!

The ax is knocked from the Fireman's hand.

Mohamed stops praying. He and the Boy are startled by Abe's violent act of courage.

Abe gets down on hands and knees and peers beneath the cart.

The Fireman's eyes are closed. Face slack.

MOHAMED (O.S.)
Is he dead?

The Fireman's eyes SPRING OPEN!

ABE
Shit!

Abe quickly back-crawls and goes to retrieve the ax.

Just as Abe gets to it, the ax suddenly SLIDES ON ITS OWN and RACES towards the open hand of the Fireman extending from beneath the cart.

BLA-BLAAAAAAMM!!!!

The Maid's Cart flies into the air when the Fireman throws it off of him, scattering the contents in every direction!

Abe dives out of the way of flying cleaning containers.

The Fireman RISES STIFF AND UN-NATURAL like someone tipped the feet of a plastic toy soldier and stood him up.

FIREMAN
Fooled dja!

The cart blocks the corridor. Mohamed and the Boy scramble over and around it.

Abe is right behind them.

The Fireman lashes out and gets a gash on Abe's lower legs as They climb over the cart.

Abe screams and limps down the corridor behind the others.

The Fireman whacks the cart out of the way with his ax in a MADDENING FURY!

INT. A CORRIDOR HALL - CONTINUOUS

Abe, Mohamed, and the Boy race down the corridor hall.

It dead-ends with the door to a CONFERENCE ROOM.

The Fireman walks after them, slowly, menace in his stride, teasing damnation in his tone.

FIREMAN

You wanna know the real reason why
I hate kids?

Abe tries the conference room door. It's locked!

Slams a shoulder against it.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

Because I can't compete for them.

Mohamed runs to A WINDOW. Blackness beyond it.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

They're too young to be responsible
for their souls.

Mohamed bangs on the window, yelling for help!

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

Unless they have an old one. And he
definitely does.

Abe slams into the door continuously.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

A stinking, rotten soul. I can
smell it!

Abe kicks the door with the good leg.

It finally gives and bangs open.

The Fireman takes off into a run, ax raised, eyes glaring!

The three hunted rush into the conference room and slam the door shut just as the Fireman closes in on the last few feet.

The Fireman swings but suddenly stops short of contact.

He drops the ax down to his side and leans his ear to the door.

Tap Tap Tap.

He knocks gently.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
Guys? Guys, can you hear me there?

Tap Tap.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
Would you mind opening the door?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Abe, Mohamed and the Boy block the door with a table and back away from it.

Tap. Tap.

FIREMAN (O.S.)
Don't make me use my ax.

They look around.

No other way out.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Hard knocks!

FIREMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(muffled demonic scream)
Open the door or I'll hack it down
and cut your throats out!

They look-up.

More DIMMED CHANDELIERS.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

FIREMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(screaming!)
Open the door! Open the door! Open
the door!

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

FIREMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You know what your problem is? You
still don't recognize. The normal
rules don't apply.

Silence.

They watch the door in CHOKING SUSPENSE.

Nothing happens.

Utter quite...

ABE
He's gone.

BLAAAAMMM !!!

The door EXPLODES IN A BLAZE OF FLAMES!

Abe and Mohamed are knocked to the floor!

The Boy is unmoved.

The Fireman walks through the fire in SLOW MOTION.

The flames roll off him like cookie crumbs.

Mohamed stumbles to his feet and grabs the Boy protectively.

The three of them back up against the far wall.

The Fireman advances on them slowly.

Mohamed begins to pray intensely in Arabic.

The Fireman screams over his praying.

FIREMAN
Last chance! The boy or you burn!

Suddenly the walls around him IGNITE!

The flames erupt above and behind him, framing him.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
Give me that snot-nose brat!

Mohamed drops to his knees praying with passion!

Abe starts to pray in Hebrew. It's bumbling at first, but
gradually comes.

The Boy takes a defiant step forward as Abe starts to rock back and forth.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
Lecky lecky lecky! Gibberish! And
just a weeeeeee bit late.

Their prayers intensify into DISSONANT SHRIEKS! Aimed at the Fireman.

The Fireman looks down at his hands.

The AX HANDLE is glowing red-hot and searing his palms!

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
Impossible.

Their prayers rise to a FEVERISH PITCH!

FIREMAN (CONT'D)
Deals off!

The Fireman raises the ax above his head and runs at them with murderous RED EYES!

HIS ADVANCE IS A VERTIGO VORTEX - Like he's running and retreating at the same time.

The flames follow him forward.

The Boy suddenly GLANCES UPWARD.

A LARGE CHANDELIERS with A BLINDING WHITE LIGHT comes BARRELING DOWN from the ceiling with TREMENDOUS FORCE!

It CRASH-LANDS ON TOP OF THE FIREMAN just before he and the flames reach the three.

INSTANTLY! - THE FIRE RETRACTS FROM THE ROOM AS IF A GIGANTIC VACUUM SUCKED IT OUT.

There is no lingering smoke.

No smoldering embers.

A sudden quiet grips the room.

The Fireman lays still beneath BROKEN GLASS and TWISTED METAL.

The Muslim and the Jew stare down at their fallen enemy.

MOHAMED

That's the worst fireman I've ever
seen.

The three of them turn and walk away.

After a few steps, the Boy stops as the adults walk on.

The Fireman rises SLOWLY AND SOUNDLESSLY.

A DIS-PROPORTIONALLY LARGE AND MANGLED SILHOUETTE OF HIM
HOLDING HIS AX looms behind the Boy.

He creeps toward them.

BOY

(With a WOMAN'S VOICE !!!)
That's enough, Lance.

The Boy turns around to face him.

The Fireman, (back to normal size) squints.

FIREMAN

Gee Gee? Is that you?

THE FIREMAN IS SUDDENLY SPEAKING WITH AN AUSTRALIAN ACCENT!!!

Gee Gee (THE WOMAN IN THE BISTRO AT THE BEGINNING) now stands
where the Boy just stood.

WHITE PAJAMAS have become A WHITE TANK and WHITE YOGA PANTS.

SHE IS THE GROWN-UP FEMALE VERSION OF THE BOY.

GEE GEE

I told you I was watching.

FIREMAN

And I asked you nicely not to
interfere.

ABE

Where did she come from?

The two have turned around.

FIREMAN

Your timing stinks, Gee Gee.

GEE GEE

Your time is up, Lance.

She turns to Abe and Mohamed.

GEE GEE (CONT'D)

Follow me.

The look on Mohamed's face says he comprehends.

The look on Abe's face is...OOH KAAAY.

Gee Gee walks away.

Abe and Mohamed follow.

The Fireman shouts after them.

FIREMAN

Wait a minute! I just need a little
more time!

She doesn't look back.

GEE GEE

You knew the rules. Game over.

FIREMAN

To hell with your rules!

He takes-off after them.

Gee Gee turns and points a finger with an outstretched arm.

The Fireman stops flat like he hit a brick wall!

Gee Gee raises her hand slightly.

The Fireman begins to LEVITATE.

GEE GEE

I said that's enough.

She flicks her hand.

The Fireman FLIES SIDEWAYS WITH TERRIFIC SPEED.

He SLAMS against the wall and STICKS.

GEE GEE (CONT'D)

They called on me. You lose.

She turns and walks away, leaving him stuck.

FIREMAN

Gee Gee, can we talk about this?
Gee Gee! Wait! I had them. They're
mine! They're miiinnne!...

His SCREAMS ECHO into a FADING SUSTAINED ROAR.

EXT. THE L HOTEL - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

READER ALERT!!!

TIME-FLIP.

THIS IS THE SAME EXACT SCENE AS THE ONE IN THE BEGINNING,
TRUNCATED WITH ONE ADDED REVEAL.

Nora kisses her girlfriend Lou and climbs out of the car.

NORA
Edible or peel-off panties?

The Doorman perks up.

LOU
He definitely wants to know.

Lou shifts into gear and skids into traffic.

Nora turns and walks into the hotel.

Chad (FROM THE ELEVATOR), looking distressed, approaches the entrance.

The Doorman runs to a side door and holds it open.

DOORMAN
Good afternoon, Chad.

Chad ignores him and goes inside.

INT. BISTRO PEGEAT - DAY

TIME-FLIP.

THIS IS THE SAME EXACT SCENE AS THE ONE IN THE BEGINNING,
TRUNCATED...

Lance (THE BLACK AUSTRALIAN SKATEBOARD DUDE) and Gee Gee sit at a table.

Gee Gee slides a PIECE OF PAPER across.

GEE GEE
You know the rules?

LANCE
We've been over this, Gee Gee.

GEE GEE

Humor me.

LANCE

(annoyed)

As long as they're divided, the game continues. If they come together, game over.

KA-BOOOOOM!!!!

A THUNDEROUS (UNSEEN) EXTERIOR EXPLOSION SHATTERS WINDOWS and RATTLES FURNITURE, sending everyone into a SCREAMING UPROAR!

The WALL CLOCK reads 3:00 pm.

INT. THE L HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

GROUND ZERO.

The damage and carnage are horrific!

SURVIVORS scamper around dazed and screaming!

A FITFUL MAN engulfed in flames is whacked repeatedly by a BURLY WOMAN swinging a THROW RUG.

A WAILING TODDLER sits near his charred, DEAD PARENTS.

An ELDERLY MAN ambles aimlessly in shock carrying the SEVERED ARM of someone else.

Lance strolls into the joint.

He trips over something.

LANCE

Whoa!

The OBJECT rolls a few feet and lands on its side facing Lance.

LANCE (CONT'D)

Hey, Nora.

Nora's SEVERED HEAD doesn't greet back.

There is another explosion but it's not directly in the lobby.

DEBRIS FALLS from the ceiling.

People are thrown off balance, causing more panic!

Not Lance.

He pulls out the paper Gee Gee gave him.

It has a LIST OF NAMES on it.

The first name reads: MADDIE STALLWORTH.

Maddie (FROM THE ELEVATOR) lays on the floor.

Dead.

Her Husband, Many, holds and rocks her, intensely sobbing.

An umbilical cord extends from under her dress and leads to A SMALL CLUMP on the floor that is covered with A MAN'S BLOOD-SOAKED SUIT JACKET.

Lance reads the next name aloud.

LANCE (CONT'D)
Abe Heiskopf.

His eyes find Abe (FROM THE ELEVATOR) in the rubble.

Abe lays still and twisted near the elevator doors. A cut on Their lower leg bleeds onto the floor.

The next name reads: NORA **LIMBORIA**.

Talbott, (MAN IN BISTRO) helps an INJURED WOMAN (African American, 40's).

TALBOTT
Did you see what happened?

INJURED WOMAN
That young man over there, what's left of him, walked into the building with a backpack and blew himself up.

Tammie, (THE CHECK-IN LADY FROM THE BEGINNING) is bruised and shaken. She rushes over to them.

TAMMIE
Mr. Talbott, it was your son. Chad.

Talbott wants to say something but he's speechless.

INT. BISTRO PEGEAT - DAY

FLASHBACK.

Talbott holds a cell phone to his ear.

TALBOTT
Hey, it's dad. We need to talk. I
want to apologize...

INT. THE L HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Talbott's face is a portrait of grief.

Mohamed (FROM THE ELEVATOR) is sprawled out on the floor.

He looks dead.

Suddenly he stirs for a second and then goes under again.

Tammie pounces on him and administers CPR.

Lance watches it all.

LANCE
I almost had you.

Mohamed coughs and comes to.

He looks confused at first but then he suddenly turns his head towards the elevator.

The elevator doors seem to SUCK US SLOWLY TOWARDS THEM.

Abe rises and stumbles to stand off balance and disoriented until, finally, They lock eyes with Mohamed.

Abe limps towards Mohamed as Tammie helps him up.

The Jew and the Muslim stand before each other, battered but breathing.

They exchange a long stare. Finally, Abe extends a hand.

ABE
(ARABIC with subtitles)
As salaam 'alaykum...Brother.
(Peace be upon you,
Brother.)

Mohamed takes Abe's hand.

MOHAMED
(HEBREW with subtitles)
G'mar Hatima Tova...Slick.
(May you be sealed in the
book of life...Slick.)

A mutual smile radiates between them.

The former enemies shake hands like friends.

HIGH ON A WALL:

The minute hand on A CLOCK CLICKS TO 3:01 PM.

BLACK.

End One.

ROLL CREDITS

ROLL CREDITS

ROLL CREDITS

FADE UP:

End Two.

INT. LARGE SEMI-DARK UPPER FLOOR - NIGHT

The Fireman glowers at the elevator doors.

His AUSTRALIAN ACCENT is thick as marmalade.

FIREMAN
She tricked me.

Suddenly the Old Man is standing nearby.

The Fireman removes his helmet and tosses it.

His long, brownish-blond wavy dreadlocks fall down around his shoulders.

OLD MAN
You should know better than to
compete with her.

FIREMAN
It's my job to at least try.

The Fireman removes his Jacket and drops it on the floor.

He wears a Hawaiian shirt underneath.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

And that little kiddie routine. How many times am I going to fall for that?

OLD MAN

The little orphan in the PJ's trick.

FIREMAN

Gets me every time.

He drops his fireman pants down around his ankles, revealing khaki pants.

FIREMAN (CONT'D)

I hate kids. But I love the game.

He steps out of the fireman's pants.

The removal of the Fireman's attire confirms he was Lance all along.

The Old Man turns and walks into darkness.

Lance, free of his Fireman gear, (and wearing his skateboarder gear) strolls to the elevator.

He flips an empty hand.

At the end of the flip, HE HOLDS HIS BASEBALL CAP.

He puts it on backward.

He takes out a PACK OF CIGARETTES and removes one.

He flicks the tip of it with his middle finger.

It instantly lights up.

The elevator doors open.

Lance steps inside and turns around front.

HIS BEARD IS BACK.

He takes out his Sunglasses and puts them on.

(HIS TRANSFORMATION FROM THE FIREMAN BACK TO LANCE IS NOW COMPLETE.)

Lance takes a long drag from his cigarette and blows a PUFF OF SMOKE.

It floats out into the room.

The doors close slowly.

The smoke hovers in front of them.

DING!

A RED ARROW illuminates over the elevator doors.

It points down.

The SOUND of the elevator descends into the abyss.

Eerie silence enfolds the floor.

Approaching FOOTSTEPS...

From the fogged darkness, Nora emerges.

She moves to a SINGLE CHAIR in the middle of the room.

Nora sits.

Gradually, everything around her fades into blackness.

All that is left is a single light shining on Nora sitting in a chair.

Somewhere.

Doing nothing.

Forever.

BLACK.

"What we believe, determines what we take to be true."

THE END