

In Vain

**Written by
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INT. STAGE THEATER - EARLY MORNING

A red curtain rises to reveal a massive pig propped up and latched to the stage. Helpless.

THE ARTIST, 44, an alluring performer in a white suit, sashays in from stage right. He radiates charisma.

THE ARTIST
Good morning everyone! Do apologize
for the strange hour.

An ACTRESS in the crowd of fifty rolls her eyes.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
My work thrives when all is quiet...
and all is dark.

A MILITARY GENERAL glares over his spectacles with arms crossed.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
I acquired this amazing creature from
the slaughterhouse. I call him Adam.

The Artist crouches down and pats the pig on the head.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
He is going to serve a higher purpose
than becoming a meal for the
ungrateful. He won't feel a thing.
Promise.

The Artist rises and approaches the front of the stage, tipping his chin up looking down on the crowd.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
Do not be afraid dear audience. You
will be safe behind this glass...

He taps on a thick pane of glass separating him from his audience.

A SMUG C.E.O. looks up from his phone and squints in concern at the preamble.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
I call this performance, "Evolution."

The lights go out.

A spotlight flickers on Adam, alone.

The Artist drags a screeching metal case onto the stage.

He unlatches it and pulls out a crude wooden club. He raises it with pride. Cellos play to accentuate his actions.

The Artist dances around the stage twirling the club with elation on his face.

He presents a coconut to the audience before smashing it.

Coconut milk spills on his functioning X-ray tie. It reveals a live window to his rib cage.

The Artist attempts to gulp down the innards of the coconut.

Suddenly, he spits out the milk and glares at Adam.

He aims the club at the pig and circles him.

Cellos erupt in sync with the Artist's motions as he bashes the pig several times in the body.

The Artist, now out of breath, looks to the bewildered crowd as if to ask for help to slay the resilient beast.

He raises an ancient gladiator sword from the case.

The sharpened blade easily peels a carrot before the Artist takes a bite.

He spits out the moist chunk of carrot against the glass barrier with a loud BONG. The Actress in the front row shrieks and shields her face.

Slash! He cuts Adam's torso flesh several times.

The Artist screams and leaps into the air plunging the blade into the back of the pig. The hog's breathing quickens.

The crowd gasps, screams and rustles, but remains seated.

A polished silver revolver glimmers in the spotlight before the Artist holsters it.

He struts to the front of the stage, Adam at his back. Hands float at his side like an expert dualist.

His empty white eyes lock on the entranced Military General.

With a quick turn, he fires three rounds from the hip and hits Adam in the leg, belly and ear.

Blood pools below Adam and he strains to breath.

An energy assault pistol rises up in display, humming with potential energy. "Peacekeeper" is engraved on the barrel.

The Artist stands in front of the struggling pig and the cellos cease to play. The theater fills with silence.

The glass barrier rises and disappears into the ceiling. The exposed crowd's eyes follow the glass as it is removed.

With a grin, he takes aim and fires a blue flash into the brain of Adam. It explodes like a watermelon. Spatters of red cover his made-up white face and white suit.

The audience, now baptized with a mist of Adam's blood, gawk at what they have witnessed.

The Artist turns to them and bows as blood fills the stage.

The audience finally erupts from their seats. Not with outrage but with thunderous applause.

A silent hovering drone captures the performance from above.

INT. ABANDONED OFFICE BUILDING - BREAK ROOM - DAY

The Artist rises from his bow on a paper-thin TV taped to a cracked wall. The spacious room is nearly empty yet reeks of neglect. A kitchenette and couch furnish the drab space.

SHANE, 35, the perfect weapon but overused and damaged, reaches for an egg. It explodes in his hand.

SHANE

Shit.

He snatches another and gently cracks the egg into a bowl.

Shane moves about the kitchenette retrieving pans, potatoes and utensils for his meal.

A jet black membrane covers his entire body from the neck down. Dim blue veins of energy illuminate in sync with the muscles he's activating.

SHANE (cont'd)

Next.

The TV changes from the recording of the Artist to a new channel with two men seated in an interview.

Shane pauses in his cooking prep and takes a pull from a glass whiskey bottle and watches the TV. Several empties already occupy the counter.

On the screen EDWARD DONNIGAN, a self aggrandizing tech behemoth, is interviewed by edgy talk show host, THE ROOT.

EDWARD DONNIGAN (TV)
 I planned on it being quickly
 adapted. It was inevitable.
 Developing countries will even have
 access this year.

THE ROOT (TV)
 Wait, poorer countries can't afford
 this tech. It cost you eighty billion
 cryptus as you stated.

Shane turns from the TV and whisks eggs in a blur.

EDWARD DONNIGAN (TV)
 Correction. It cost me eighty billion
 cryptus to invent the technology.
 There is a big difference here.

THE ROOT (TV)
 Can you try one more time to explain
 to me how you did it?

EDWARD DONNIGAN (TV)
 (laughing)
 OK even simpler this time... I
 created a fusion reaction. And used
 it to hyper charge beta particles
 into a möbius strip.
 (beat)
 With this reactor, I can create
 nearly lossless self-renewing energy
 cells at any size for any need.
 Nearly free energy will spread across
 the globe.

Shane grabs three potatoes and chops them into wedges.

THE ROOT (TV)
 Like a virus?

EDWARD DONNIGAN glares back at THE ROOT for the slight.

THE ROOT (TV) (cont'd)
 Everyone will need to tap into your
 massive teraplant in New Mexico to
 create their own Donnigan Power Cell
 Plants, correct?

EDWARD DONNIGAN (TV)
 (looks to audience)
 More like a vaccine young man...
 (back to the Root)
 ... curing us of our energy crisis.
 And to answer your question... yes.

Edward stands up in a fuss and walks off stage leaving the Root confused with open hands.

TV

Coming up on the History Channel's "The Life and Death of Edward Donnigan," his mysterious and brutal assassination.

Screen flashes to photos of Edward Donnigan lying dead in a pool of his own blood. His face cut and battered.

Shane takes another swig of whiskey and starts two burners.

Cables running from the stove, fridge and TV feed into a small box the size of a deck of cards. The words "Donnigan Power Cell" embossed on the box.

SHANE

Next.

TV

Try new energy enhanced vitamin injected meal cubes!

SHANE

Next.

He takes another drink then tosses the potatoes and eggs into separate pans.

TV

Breaking news. A political blood gulch has erupted today in downtown Boston...

Shane turns towards the TV at the mention of Boston.

TV (cont'd)

... as gunfire and mayhem fills the streets. Extremist political factions have occupied the block to settle their disagreements with brutal violence.

He turns back to the eggs. They sizzle as he listens.

TV (cont'd)

Peacekeepers have yet to make headway due to what appears to be a new black market shield tech. Oh my God! They just shot a police helicopter out of the sky.

SHANE

Off.

The screen goes transparent revealing the cracked wall.

Shane moves from the kitchen and grabs a denim jacket off a folding chair.

He puts it on and draws two piano key white pistols from his sleeves, checks them over and returns them to their caves.

Shane picks up what appears to be a sword hilt with a metal scaled ball on top, resembling a rolled up armadillo.

He flicks his wrist and the metal ball unravels and folds vertically into an electric blue blade.

Shane withdraws the blade back into a ball and holsters it.

He opens a window three stories up letting in the noise from outside and steps onto the window sill. The skyline of Boston and lines of aerial commuter traffic fill his view.

An early fall breeze blows into the musty room.

SHANE

Is this enough, Claire? Is this the reason?

CLAIRE (O.S.)

No Shane. She'll find you.

CLAIRE, 32, gorgeous, approaches Shane from behind in a sun dress and flawless makeup. A silver cross necklace lined with transparent emerald blue stones rests on her chest.

SHANE

It's only a matter of time.

CLAIRE

You said we need to stay hidden...
Revealing yourself would end in death.

SHANE

Death is what's coming.

CLAIRE

Let's focus on the good? Do you remember what we did today in 2072?

Claire motions to the screen and the lights dim. The video is of JASMINE, 5. Her yellow dress with blue ducks ripples with the wind as she pedals a bike.

The child's laughter causes Shane to step away from the window sill and enter the kitchen.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
We went to the lake. Jasmine was
trying out her new bike.

Shane walks back to the eggs and potatoes and scoops them onto two plates.

He sets one of the plates on the scuffed tile floor then takes a bite of egg from his plate.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
Our Pix album received 34 cheers from
viewers. We had a lot of fun.

Shane sets his food on the counter, grabs the whiskey bottle and approaches Claire's side.

SHANE
Remember what I said to you that day?

CLAIRE
Hmmm.

Claire puts her hand to her cheek and looks up.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
No, I have no memory of our
conversation. Tell me.

SHANE
Told you I wanted to have another
kid.

Claire looks at Shane with a smile.

SHANE (cont'd)
You were so happy to hear it. Been
begging me for so long. Hugged the
breath out of me.

CLAIRE
Amazing!

SHANE
You said you wanted a boy and his
name would be Max.

Shane's eyes begin to glaze as he stares at the screen, not at Claire.

SHANE (cont'd)
You felt so guilty. Had to make sure
I knew you would still love her if it
were a girl.

Shane looks down at the whiskey bottle in his hand.

SHANE (cont'd)
As if that needed to be said.

CLAIRE
Now I remember. Thank you.

Shane takes a long pull from the whiskey bottle and heaves
it at a glass sphere mounted to the ceiling. It shatters
into pieces along with the bottle.

Claire's 3D projected image flickers and disappears further
darkening the room.

A large piece of glass slides over to an empty box with the
text "Remember Me: Never Forget Your Loved Ones."

Shane collapses to the ground, back against the wall. Tears
flow from glowing blue eyes along the path of scars. His
body heaves with pain.

SHANE
I can't...

He draws his pistol from his sleeve and stares at it. His
grip tightens and blue veins in his jet black wrist glow
brighter like growing vines.

TED, a pudgy bulldog, licks Shane's cheek and pants with a
big smile.

Shane cracks the smallest of smiles and withdraws the weapon
to pet the pooch.

SHANE (cont'd)
We're still here aren't we, Ted.
Saved me again didn't you...

Shane pulls Ted onto his lap and sits for several moments.

Suddenly, a loud BANG rumbles the whole building.

Shane sighs, sets Ted down and stands up. He faces a door
at the end of the large room labeled "Stairs."

STAIRWELL

A SWAT team of six creeps up a dark stairwell. The only daylight comes from their forced entry point at the base of the stairs.

Their advanced Peacekeeper weapons hum and glow, waiting to be unleashed.

SWAT TEAM LEADER signals to the doorway at the top to **BATTERING RAM SWAT MEMBER**.

He flips a switch to charge the powerful breach device and moves into position in front of the door.

A video camera watches from above the stairwell.

Swat Team Leader begins a silent signal countdown. 3... 2...

BREAK ROOM

The video feed from the stairwell plays in the corner of Shane's glowing blue contact lens. He walks towards the stairwell door and opens it.

The shocked Battering Ram Swat Member stumbles into the room having made no contact on his mighty swing. His battering ram misfires a sonic blast, cratering the ceiling.

Shane grabs him by the vest and carries his momentum forward, tossing him through a window across the room.

TRIGGER HAPPY SWAT MEMBER unloads a barrage of fire at Shane. He misses and further destroys the room.

In a flash, Shane gets close, redirects the gun, and throws him through a side wall to a conference room.

SWAT TEAM LEADER moves in and fires on Shane from behind.

Shane blocks the blasts in a blue flash with a jet black open palm. Then grabs the barrel and jabs him in the face smashing his helmet visor.

BLADE SWAT MEMBER draws a knife and lunges at Shane before being front kicked through the wall back into the stairwell.

The remaining 3 SWAT members line up and aim their rifles. Shane summons his pistols in a blur and blasts their arms redirecting their fire.

Shane leaps across the room to get close to the firing squad. In a lightning blue blur of perfectly timed attacks, he dismantles the rest of the SWAT team.

Ted waddles out from behind the kitchen counter.

SHANE

You good?

The unharmed dog only pants.

SHANE (cont'd)

We gotta go...

Shane picks up Ted and disappears out the window. He lands on the pavement with gun in one hand and dog in the other, scanning for more police but finds none.

He tugs on a dusty tarp in a pile of rubble against the building to reveal a hidden black classic car.

INT. HOTEL - BATHROOM - DAY

MIKAELA, 27, an attractive maverick looking up at rock bottom as a fond memory, shudders on the back of a toilet rolling a cigarette in her fingers.

She lights the cigarette and takes a drag. Her makeup is smudged from crying but she is out of tears.

DARRELL (O.S.)

Hurry up, honey. Have places to be.
You smoking those cancer stick relics
again?

She continues to tap her foot for a moment and inhales.

DARRELL, 40, a narcissist drug peddler with a dark lust for power, pounds on the door several times.

DARRELL (O.S.) (cont'd)

Now Woman!

Mikaela jumps up and rips the door open.

Darrell enters the doorway and rests an arm against the frame while looking her up and down.

She stares down as smoke moves from the bathroom into the candle lit bedroom. Takes a drag, igniting the cinder.

DARRELL

There she is. Your brother was right
after all. Let's get you naked—AAAHH!

Darrell screams as Mikaela grabs his dangling long hair and jams the scorching cigarette into his eye with her thumb.

HOTEL BEDROOM

Mikaela sprints across the room towards the exit away from Darrell's screams.

The door opens before she gets there and DARRELL'S BODYGUARD blocks the way. She grabs a lit candlestick and clocks him across the head.

HOTEL HALLWAY

Mikaela desperately sprints barefoot down the hall.

Darrell blindly fires off several rounds through the swinging door, narrowly missing.

DARRELL

(to phone)

Bitch is running. Grab her before she escapes.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Mikaela busts through the emergency exit onto a busy Boston sidewalk.

Several of DARRELL'S LACKEYS are already moving in on her. She takes off slapping the cement straight towards a single BIG THUG.

The BIG THUG smiles and gets into a lineman stance to catch her when she tries to dodge him.

Mikaela doesn't try to dodge him. She torpedoes head first into his nose causing them both to fall down.

The Big Thug cries out in pain as his broken nose gushes.

Mikaela stumbles to her feet in a daze as blood starts to trickle down her forehead.

She doesn't get far before FAST THUG tackles her to the ground.

FAST THUG
Oh you're done now bitch.

Another thug comes to his side and they lift her up.

FAST THUG (cont'd)
Darrell is done being nice to you.
Can't wait for my turn.

Mikaela writhes helplessly until her energy depletes and head bleeding leads to drifting consciousness.

EXT./INT. - SHANE'S CAR - DAY - SAME

Shane navigates his way out of Boston scanning for threats with his augmented eyes.

Ted sits in the back seat. Just hanging out.

His black classic car doesn't rumble like it once did but instead quietly hums like any other car on the road.

A switch labeled "combustion simulator" is turned off.

Mikaela sprints down the sidewalk to his right. She catches his eye. He sees her go head first into the Big Thug.

SHANE
What in the...

She stumbles to her feet and continues running as Shane gets closer. He witnesses Fast Thug tackle her. Another joins to pick her up and drag her away.

SHANE (cont'd)
Damn it... What do you think Ted?

Ted barks and pants with a smile looking out the window. Shane sighs and clinches his jaw like a bear trap.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Shane pulls over with a SCREECH, opens the door and marches towards the thugs carrying Mikaela.

FAST THUG
Easy pal.

Shane gives a gentle smile but doesn't stop moving forward. In a flash he jabs them both in the face knocking them to the ground releasing Mikaela.

Mikaela opens her eyes to find herself floating. Carried by a glowing blue eyed being with white hair. Shane.

She passes out.

INT. GENERAL'S OFFICE - DAY

A grandfather clock ticks in a mahogany lined room. A menagerie of stuffed wild game fill every corner.

A bear and a lion are crammed in corners while a tiny baby deer is framed with a bow at the center above a fireplace.

GENERAL CRAWFORD, 59, face of marble, just like her massive desk, squeezes a jet black ball in and out, observing holographic screens.

The screens display thousands of humanoid drones in formation.

The hologram's glow highlights her minimal organized desk.

Stapler, mug, gun, pen. Everything with a cold purpose other than a small photo of her and a child -- each holding a bow and arrow.

A knock comes to the door. The lion head door knob turns.

TIMID ASSISTANT slips into the lion's den. He is unnecessarily handsome.

TIMID ASSISTANT

Ma'am the Dunamis Prototype is on the move as you predicted. Leaving Boston as we speak.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

The SWAT team?

TIMID ASSISTANT

Alive but badly hurt. Didn't stand a chance. Over in seconds, they say.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

The tracking device?

TIMID ASSISTANT

Primary objective was completed. I sent the info over.

Crawford makes a hand gesture to retrieve the data.

EXT. SATELLITE DISH - SPACE

Thrusters fire to move a satellite's position. A lens focuses.

INT. GENERAL'S OFFICE - DAY

A feed of Shane's car cruising across the highway flashes on Crawford's screen.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Didn't check the car? Sloppy.
Prep the others. Time they had some
experience. I want him alive.

The Timid Assistant nods and leaves the office.

Crawford presses a small button on the jet black ball and a structure of glowing blue lines appears throughout the ball as it hardens.

She slams the ball on her marble desk with a thud, chipping the stone.

Crawford's eyes fixate on the black car cutting through the cityscape.

INT/EXT. SHANE'S CAR - DUSK

Shane drives along the highway outside of Boston.

Mikaela slowly opens her eyes in the back seat. She winces in pain and feels a raised mark on the top of her head.

SHANE

That's med gel on your wound. The
pills are for the pain.

She lets the denim jacket fall from her lap as she hoists herself up to look around. Ted sits next to her, panting.

SHANE (cont'd)

Managed to lose whoever was after
you. Wasn't easy.

Mikaela holds her head and squints trying to figure out what happened.

MIKAELA

Thought you were the angel of death.
Come to take me away.

SHANE

Maybe I am.

She looks at him through the rear view mirror.

A familiar silver cross with transparent blue gems dangles from the mirror. Right, left and bottom gems tinted pink.

MIKAELA

Nah... eyes are too kind. You saved my life right?.

SHANE

What's your name?

MIKAELA

Mikaela.

She smiles and pets Ted on the side of his face.

SHANE

Mikaela. Need to drop you somewhere safe. Any suggestions?

MIKAELA

No.

SHANE

Listen I don't have any drugs or money. You're not safe with me.

MIKAELA

I'm not a drug addict, dick.

Mikaela takes out a cigarette and lights it.

SHANE

Fine. Where can I drop you?

MIKAELA

Where you going?

SHANE

Nowhere. Seriously. You need to give me something.

Another glare from Mikaela.

MIKAELA

Just keep heading west.

Shane sighs and shakes his head.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
 Hey, you decided to save me. Now I'm
 your problem.

Their eyes meet through the mirror.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
 Look I can't go back there. Just keep
 going to wherever you were heading...
 Come heeere...
 (reaches for Ted)

SHANE
 -- Ted.

MIKAELA
 Come here Ted.

Ted and Mikaela snuggle up. She pours a few pills into her
 mouth and shuts her eyes.

Shane drives on. The swinging silver cross reflects the last
 light of day as they approach the dark road ahead.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Shane opens the door and tosses a weathered and beaten
 military green backpack on one of the beds.

SHANE
 Hope you don't mind sharing a room.
 Little short on funds.

MIKAELA
 Story of my life. Don't mind.

She looks at Shane with a nervous smile.

He nods and moves into the bathroom and starts the shower.

Mikaela immediately jumps to Shane's bag and looks it over.
 She feels an out of place strip of yellow fabric with blue
 ducks tied to the shoulder strap.

The shine of a dog tag catches her eye. It reads "Braddock."

MIKAELA (cont'd)
 Search Braddock news.

She aims her voice at the TV screen.

The screen flashes on with search results. A headline on the top search reads: "Military Veteran Family Murdered in North Carolina Home."

Mikaela startles when she sees Shane standing in the bathroom doorway looking at the screen.

She points to the screen. A hint of fear on her face.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
What happened?

SHANE
Angel of death. Like you said.

She stands up and approaches him cautiously. Shane looks at her bewildered.

MIKAELA
Please?

SHANE
I don't know you.

MIKAELA
I don't know you either. But, you saved me. Must be a reason. At least tell me why you're not dead.

He motions to his now shirtless upper body, revealing the jet black membrane armor covering him from the neck down.

SHANE
I'm an experiment gone wrong. Off the books. That's all you need to know.

She takes his hand and runs her fingers along his forearm.

Shane makes a tight fist and glowing blue vines of energy ignite throughout his forearm. Mikaela feels the change in density and looks up in surprise.

She stares into his on guard eyes trying to read him, any fear fading. Her fingers study the armor up his arm to his neck where his flesh begins. She leans in close.

MIKAELA
(whispers)
Thank you for saving me...

She enters the bathroom and closes the door.

Shane lets out a breath he'd been holding.

LATER

Shane and Mikaela sit on opposite beds watching the news.

NEWS ANCHOR (TV)

And this new generation of junkies?
They're not going to do the work to
get this economy moving. Chaos fills
the streets and you sit back and talk
about stocks.

Shane reaches across the gap to hand her a bottle of
whiskey. She takes a pull herself and passes it back.

MIKAELA

Can we watch something else?

SHANE

Like what?

MIKAELA

Something mindless. Cartoons or
documentaries.

SHANE

Cartoons it is. Documentaries?

On the screen, a heroic egg consults with a wizard made of
bacon. He gifts the egg a red garnish sword.

MIKAELA

My brother and I used to watch them
religiously.

SHANE

A brother? So you do have someone.

MIKAELA

Ah. Quite the opposite. He sold me
out to those assholes.

SHANE

Must have pissed him off.

Shane passes her the whiskey again. She ignores the comment
but hesitates a second before taking a pull.

MIKAELA

We were close once. Now he just rots
away in the cube towers living off
basic income. Stuck in a simulator
prison.

SHANE
Can't blame them. No pain or
suffering to deal with.

MIKAELA
That's not living.

On the screen, the egg faces off against a spatula dragon
with a chef on its back.

SHANE
I thought that way too... once.

MIKAELA
Can't avoid pain. Life is risk. You
had a family... Would you take that
back even after whatever happened?

She passes the whiskey back to him. He hesitates before
taking the bottle. His gaze softens. Takes a slow drink.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
Only those who will risk going too
far can possibly find out how far one
can go.

Shane scoffs and looks away.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
All I'm saying is in spite of how you
feel now, I'm sure you've experienced
a taste of the good life has to
offer...

SHANE
Done for tonight.

MIKAELA
Sorry. My bad... Love is worth the
risk though.

SHANE
Starting to sound like her.
"Everything happens for a reason..."
What a crock of shit.

MIKAELA
Her?

SHANE
Claire. My wife. She's dead.

MIKAELA

You couldn't save her... But what happened... led to saving me.

SHANE

You're not enough.

MIKAELA

... true.

On the screen, the egg beheads the spatula and drives the plastic sword into the chef's stomach, transforming him into cooked bacon.

Mikaela chuckles at the screen starting to dose. Ted perks up at the end credits tune.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

Didn't see that coming. A little dark for a kids show.

SHANE

A whole generation coveting eggs and attacking chefs.

Mikaela raises an eyebrow in amusement and briefly looks towards Shane.

MIKAELA

Think bacon comes from people.

SHANE

Cannibals everywhere. Society will crumble.

Mikaela giggles and Shane cracks a smile.

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

Shane and Mikaela leave the remote motel, return to the car and head west again. The sun rises behind them.

INT/EXT. SHANE'S CAR/WIND TURBINE FIELD - DAY

The classic car cruises across an endless field of motionless, out of commission, wind turbines.

A fallen propeller in the ground sticks straight up like King Arthur's sword in the stone.

Mikaela sits in the front seat tinkering with the radio.

RADIO

Another shooting took place at the Oklahoma City Courthouse where State Congressman Russel White was assassinated. The gunman was apprehended at the scene. The assailant wore a shirt that read "E-Day is Coming" painted in pig's blood. A known calling card of those who follow the terrorist known as the Artist...

Shane looks in the review mirror at the rising sun. A cluster of flying vehicles comes over the horizon.

He stares at the convoy of modified cyber trucks and jet powered super cars as they close the distance between them.

SHANE

Why were those men after you?

MIKAELA

Long story.

SHANE

Would they come after you?

She looks out the back window.

MIKAELA

Oh shit! That's Darrell's truck -- more of a tank actually.

SHANE

Who's Darrell?

MIKAELA

Drug lord of Boston. I put a cigarette out in his eye.

Shane floors it.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

Can we lose them?

SHANE

Not out here.

EXT. ARMORED TRUCK/WIND TURBINE FIELD - DAY

Darrell stands in the truck bed with his sleeveless snakeskin duster flapping in the wind. A lust for revenge in his one real eye. The convoy follows in his wake.

He looks down at a radar screen pinging at the top. He signals to his CYBERPUNK GANGSTERS in the adjacent soaring war vehicles.

DARRELL
That's them! Open fire!

INT/EXT. SHANE'S CAR/WIND TURBINE FIELD - DAY

Shane sees rapid flashes from the convoy. Energy Charges strike the road and the roof of the car.

SHANE
Mother F...

Shane swerves erratically as more gun fire rains down. He draws his right sleeve pistol and hands it to Mikaela.

SHANE (cont'd)
You know how to use this.

She nods, wide eyed but present, and takes the gun.

SHANE (cont'd)
Take the wheel.

Mikaela grabs on and shifts to the drivers seat as Shane climbs out the window to the roof.

The flying vehicles spread out and descend on them. One super car lands on the road with a bounce and jets forward.

Balancing on the roof, Shane draws his armadillo blade.

Cyberpunk gangsters open fire with advanced tech assault rifles from all angles. A fireworks display of flashes.

Shane's blade sizzles as it cuts through the air to deflect energy blasts. Gunfire that hits Shane merely ricochets off.

He draws his energy pistol and returns fire. A car quickly explodes as his precise blast finds its target.

The vehicles scatter to the sides, weaving in between the frozen turbines.

Shane takes out the DRIVER of a truck. He smashes into a turbine in another big explosion.

On the opposite side, the grounded super car accelerates to get alongside them. Shane fires on the roof but doesn't have an angle.

Mikaela ducks fire and swerves as windows shatter. Ted rolls around in the back seat with a whimper.

Shane grips into the metal roof to keep from falling.

Mikaela takes aim herself and blasts the super car's windshield several times. Blood paints the glass as she finds her target.

It goes into a barrel roll into the ditch.

Shane shifts focus to Darrell's armored truck, opening fire on its front with no results.

Two more super cars hang back firing from a distance.

Darrell loads a donny-propelled rocket launcher. His duster flaps in the wind. The grin of a madman.

He aims with a cybernetic new eye over the cab of the truck.

Shane sees and withdraws his pistol and holsters his sword.

Darrell fires. The rocket soars through the air closing the gap in a millisecond but it doesn't explode. Shane catches it and is propelled out front of the speeding car.

His feet hit the pavement and skid as he battles the force of the rocket getting further in front of the others.

With a STOMP, Shane digs his heel into the road. It breaks away for a few moments before coming to a stop.

He wrestles the rocket in his hands, battling the thruster, yelling with the effort.

Mikaela, with no time to react, swerves to avoid slamming right into Shane. Ted rolls back to his original position.

Glowing blue veins of energy cover Shane's entire body as he turns the rocket up and releases just in time for Darrell's flying truck to be right above him.

BOOM! The explosion eats the other super cars in a massive fireball. The debris soars over Shane's head like a meteor shower and peppers the road with vehicle and body parts.

INT. GENERAL'S OFFICE - DAY

General Crawford watches Shane walk towards the flaming debris from the satellite view on her screen, directly into the red crosshair of a combat interface.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
Disengage weapons.

The screen changes to a green interface. The crosshair disappears. She smirks and leans back in her chair.

INT/EXT. SHANE'S CAR/WIND TURBINE FIELD - DAY

Shane reaches the flaming debris as Mikaela slows the car to a crawl to pick him up. He gets back in the car and they speed away.

MIKAELA
Did you just... catch a rocket?

Shane just nods.

He looks out the back window. Flames disappearing in the distance.

SHANE
Pull over.

MIKAELA
What if more come.

SHANE
Just do it.

She pulls the car over.

SHANE (cont'd)
Get out.

MIKAELA
No, please, don't leave me out here.
They'll find me.

Shane gets out of the car, comes around to Mikaela's side and opens the door.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
Shit. Fine.

She gets out.

SHANE
Did they inject you with anything recently?

MIKAELA
They gave me some birth control. Shot in the arm.

SHANE

This arm?

He grabs her left arm and starts feeling it and scanning with his blue eyes.

Shane sees with vision that highlights a device in her arm.

He draws his armadillo blade but only the length of a knife.

MIKAELA

What the hell you doing?

SHANE

You've been tagged. Tracker.

MIKAELA

Fuck that!

SHANE

Then you're staying here.

She can tell he's serious. He doesn't break eye contact.

MIKAELA

Gah. Ok fine. Get it over with.

Shane cuts into her arm and pries out a small metal device. Mikaela winces but holds still.

SHANE

There's the little bastard.

He drops it on the pavement and steps on it with a crunch.

SHANE (cont'd)

You have until sun down to pick a place. Our road trip ends today.

He coldly walks past her and gets in the driver's seat.

INT./EXT. SHANE'S CAR - DAY

Hours since the altercation with Darrell, the sun begins to descend in front of them to the west.

A piece of cloth wrapped around Mikaela's shoulder flaps in the undeterred wind. Glass on the seats has since been brushed out. Ted in the back. Just hanging out.

SHANE

What got you into this shit.

Mikaela sits back and takes out a cigarette. Considering. Lights it.

MIKAELA

My mom had lung cancer... Know what you're thinkin. Of course she did, cigarettes cause lung cancer.

She ashes her cigarette out the window.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

Well, I didn't smoke before and neither did she. Just genetically lucky enough to get it for no damn reason. Can't even blame pollution thanks to Edwardo Donnigan.

SHANE

And that pushed you to drugs?

MIKAELA

Are you deaf? I told you I'm not an addict. I'm not done, ass.

Shane raises his hands on the wheel in apology.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

We didn't have health insurance, like most. Found out Darrell Bennett sold a new cancer-fighting drug called Nostrum. Ran out of money real quick.

She ashes her cigarette out the window.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

(inhaling)

"I owe you's" only go so far.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

(exhaling)

Then she died anyway.

SHANE

The drug didn't work?

MIKAELA

Not enough. My brother and I were left with a massive debt.

SHANE

Shit.

Shane's jaw tightens putting it together. Eyes on the road.

MIKAELA

Darlin, brother offered me up to Darrell and any of his generals for a month. Debt paid.

She dispenses her ashes again.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

What a saint.

SHANE

I'm guessing you almost went through with it.

MIKAELA

Almost.

Shane stares out at the empty road ahead in thought.

SHANE

Glad you made it out.

Mikaela sneaks a glance at him.

MIKAELA

Thanks.

She takes another long drag from the cigarette. The warm tinder nearing her fingertips.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

I smoke because it's coming for me anyway. Might as well embrace it. Squeeze out what pleasure I can. While I can.

SHANE

Seems like an excuse.

MIKAELA

Maybe. Don't worry. I'm not suicidal.

SHANE

Scorching Darrell's eye is far from a retirement plan.

MIKAELA

Touche. Did feel good though.

SHANE

What would your mom think? Smoking.

MIKAELA

She wouldn't approve.

(MORE)

MIKAELA (cont'd)
 (chuckling)
 I'd give anything just to get an
 earful from her.

They share a moment of silence as the car cordially parts a
 sea of trees.

SHANE
 How do you handle the pain?

She thinks for a moment in the hum of the road.

MIKAELA
 I let it out. I cry. It's like
 exhaling a big breath that you've
 been holding in. Then, when I'm
 ready...

She flicks the cigarette out the window.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
 I'll inhale again... In hopes of
 breathing in some happiness. That's
 all life is. Breathing.

Shane absorbs her words. The car slices through the lush
 landscape.

She turns up the radio to a melodic song with a haunting
 sadness to it. The harmony fills the car.

Mikaela closes her eyes and sings along.

MIKAELA (SINGING)
 The watchmaker cleaned my clock
 ... I said I'm looking for the time
 please, instead she took out a rock
 ... Strayed a bit deeper in the
 lion's den. It's gonna be a short
 while until I tell time again.

Mikaela opens her eyes and observes the outside. Shane is
 taken by her graceful voice.

MIKAELA
 Stop here.

SHANE
 Where?

MIKAELA
 Here. Lets explore a little.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Shane pulls the car to the side of the road.

Mikaela hops out with Ted and takes out a pair of clear framed eyeglasses.

MIKAELA

Record.

She wanders away from the car into a meadow of tall grass past a creek over to a hill that overlooks the road.

Shane reluctantly steps out of the car and follows her path.

He reaches the top of the hill. Mikaela lays in the grass looking up at him shading her eyes from the sun.

SHANE

What are we doing?

MIKAELA

Breathing in some happiness. Admiring the view. OK with you boss?

SHANE

There's nothing to see.

She sits up and pats the ground next to her. Shane sits down and looks out at the landscape in front of them.

SHANE (cont'd)

The air up here does feel nice.

MIKAELA

That's the spirit. Question for you.

SHANE

Great.

MIKAELA

Have any friends?

SHANE

What do you think?

MIKAELA

You have Ted and I. Must be others.

SHANE

We're friends now?

MIKAELA

Come on. We're getting on so well. We just took down a gang... Who else?

SHANE

Only other person I would consider a friend is the one who put me in this suit. The one who made me into this.

MIKAELA

What's his name?

SHANE

Delroy.

MIKAELA

Mentor? Talked you into doing it?

SHANE

No. He invented this... Dunamis matter... That's what it's called.

He wiggles his jet black fingers in front of Mikaela's face.

MIKAELA

Can't you just take it off?

SHANE

No. It's fused to my body. Wired to my brain. Lets me control it like I would any other muscle.

MIKAELA

Damn. And you're friends with him?

SHANE

He just invented it and helped me learn to control it. Like learning to walk all over again. He's a good man.

MIKAELA

Not many volunteers I bet? How do you... ya know?

SHANE

No filter on you is there...

MIKAELA

Lost it years ago.

SHANE

... I'm able to just focus and a gap opens up. Like I said, wired to my brain.

MIKAELA

Billion dollar question. Why are you on the run? What happened?

SHANE

Not sure you want to know.

MIKAELA

No turning back now.

A gust of wind blows Mikaela's long curly hair as she looks intently at Shane. Her beauty emphasized by the orange glow of the sun.

SHANE

The suit does more than just harden. The combination of the Dunamis matter and the energy controlling it makes me stronger and faster than anyone on earth. An advanced reaction system can feel changes in air pressure and harden when needed to stop energy charges or bullets.

MIKAELA

You're bulletproof?

SHANE

Yes. Except my face. That wasn't always the case though. I was quite the monster...

Shane's expression becomes entranced.

EXT. BEACH OF NORMANDY - DAY

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

Shane dons a menacing smooth black mask with glowing eye slits. Contrasting the high tech mask, he also wears the US Military helmet and uniform of 1944.

He rides a small landing boat surrounded by thirty other SOLDIERS in matching uniforms. Waves crash against the boat.

SHANE (V.O.)

Delroy set up an elaborate virtual simulation to show off the suit's capabilities to a General Crawford. It was a demonstration of what someone like me could do on D-day.

The landing boat crashes the beach. The hatch drops. German machine gun turret fire tears into the squad.

Shane draws his pistols and sprints forward, undeterred, as bullets ricochet off him with blinks of blue.

He pushes up the beach shooting any threats including mid-air grenades. Soldiers follow in his wake of destruction.

Shane reaches a mounted German turret, tears it off the tripod and aims it to the sky. He trades fire with an incoming Nazi plane. It crashes and explodes at his feet.

Shane penetrates the Nazi stronghold and draws his sword.

In a blur of muzzle flashes, blue slashes, and severed body parts, he clears the bunker.

With the beach secured, Shane emerges from a subterranean hatch leading to the mainland.

A Nazi Panzer tank waits amidst the smoky field, taking aim at Shane.

An artillery shell erupts out of the barrel. Shane bursts forward like a bolt of lightning and punches the shell.

An explosive blue shockwave and a whirlwind of sand.

Shane stands knee deep in a crater, his entire right arm glowing blue. He swings his sword to clear the smog.

With a graceful spin, he dodges a second blast, then effortlessly slices the cannon barrel in half.

Shane carves the top hatch open and drops inside to dispense with the crew.

SHANE (V.O.) (cont'd)

It was a bloodbath. I had a lot of aggression to channel in those days.

Shane raises the American flag completing his mission.

Shane's uniform and all surroundings disappear to reveal him suspended in an advanced magnetic field V.R. simulator sphere.

PRESENT

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

MIKAELA

It was all fake though? No one got hurt?

SHANE

No. It was just a V.R. demonstration. A very accurate one though calibrated to the capabilities and physics of the suite.

MIKAELA

Then what?

SHANE

General Crawford was sold. She immediately fired Delroy from the project.

MIKAELA

What? Why fire the brains of the operation??

SHANE

She had her own plans. Delroy wasn't part of it. He got a promotion and was reassigned... But he was devastated. I was his life's work.

MIKAELA

Poor guy.

SHANE

Crawford put me in the field on a secret mission in China.

BACK TO FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

EXT. JUNGLE COMPOUND - NIGHT

Shane descends in a wing suit through the night sky. He draws a small parachute above the trees and lands quietly.

SHANE (V.O.)

I was tasked with taking down a counter intelligence terrorist group working against the Chinese government.

Shane covertly takes out GUARDS throughout the facility.

He hacks into a computer terminal and begins to delete the directed files.

SHANE (V.O.) (cont'd)
I was supposed to just guard the computer while the virus deleted any trace of the data. But... I couldn't unsee what I saw.

Shane stares at documentation that outlines "Operation Unity."

SHANE (V.O.) (cont'd)
I saw proof that the U.S. and China plan a coordinated global assault using an army of A.I. controlled drones. Their goal... end all war and civil disorder and install a global surveillance state to maintain control... Operation Unity.

Shane gapes at the discovery in the dark computer room and lets his guard down.

SHANE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Then while I was distracted...

A BRAVE GUARD sneaks up behind Shane and strikes him with a baton in the back of the head.

SHANE (V.O.) (cont'd)
He hit me exactly where the suit and mask fuse to my brain. Caused a malfunction.

Shane writhes in pain as electricity jumps throughout his skull back and forth. A flailing arm knocks the Brave Guard across the room.

SHANE (V.O.) (cont'd)
I had to get the mask off.

Shane extends his armadillo blade the length of a dagger and jams it into his cheek and presses with all his strength.

Electricity leaks out as he punctures the membrane.

He wedges his fingers in the charred bloody hole and tears the Dunamis matter off.

He heaves in air as the electricity finally stops torturing him. Smoke emits from his fried white hair.

The Brave Guard returns to finish the job. Shane catches the baton and looks at him with bloodshot fury.

SHANE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Not proud of what I did to that guard... He was real.

END FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

SHANE
I fled the compound and went into hiding. Eventually I tracked Delroy down and he wired the targeting system from the mask into these contact lenses. It lets me see the trajectory of donny-powered weapons among other things. Helps with reaction time.

Shane looks to Mikaela who stares wide eyed back.

SHANE (cont'd)
What?

MIKAELA
Are you serious right now?

SHANE
What?

She removes her recording glasses.

MIKAELA
We're about to be in the midst of world war three and you wait until now to tell me.

SHANE
Well we have a little time. Crawford won't have enough infantry drones for at least a few weeks.

MIKAELA
A few weeks?

She stands up and runs down the field.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
We need to hide. I know where we can go... Move your ass, Braddock.

Shane sits in silence for a moment watching her run down the field with Ted chasing at her heels. He smirks and takes in the beautiful landscape in front of him.

SERIES OF SHOTS - ROAD TRIP

-- The car winds through the mountains.

-- Mikaela laughs at something Shane says.

-- They stop to let Ted pee. Mikaela smokes a cigarette and Shane stretches his back.

-- They drive into a lush forest. No signs of civilization.

EXT. RAMSHACKLE CABIN - DAY

Shane looks at the cabin in front of him with concern. Mikaela unloads some supplies from the trunk.

MIKAELA

Home sweet home.

SHANE

This is a shit hole.

MIKAELA

It's a bit of a fixer upper. Give you that. But no one will find us here.

SHANE

Hm.

Shane turns to help retrieve supplies.

SHANE (cont'd)

How do you know about this place?

They approach the drooping front patio entrance.

MIKAELA

My dad found it years ago, abandoned. We used to come out here for vacation.

SHANE

Vacation?

MIKAELA

Yeah... my parents took pride in "donny-free" excursions.

(MORE)

MIKAELA (cont'd)
I hated it at first. Cold, no games
or TV but we grew to look forward to
getting away.

Shane notices a fire pit on their way to the front door that
has been used relatively recently.

SHANE
Uh, Mikaela. Someone was here.

INT. RAMSHACKLE CABIN - DAY

Mikaela shoulders the door open and drops some canned goods
in a corner that already has cartons of cigarettes.

Shane walks in and observes the lived in interior from the
threshold.

SHANE
Wait, you were here recently?

MIKAELA
Busted.

SHANE
You lived here... by yourself?

MIKAELA
For a couple weeks.

SHANE
How?

MIKAELA
Plenty of land to live off. My dad
showed us before he left. How to fish
and hunt. How to survive.

Mikaela busily organizes the room.

SHANE
Why were you here?

MIKAELA
Same reason we're here now.

SHANE
You were hiding?

MIKAELA
Yup.

Mikaela, now distressed, leaves out the front door and walks down to the nearby pond.

EXT. WATER'S EDGE - DAY

Shane follows behind at a distance. Concerned. Mikaela looks out at the clouds over the water. Shane joins at her side.

MIKAELA

Cy and I used to play ice hockey out here. Way before it was totally frozen.

(chuckling)

Our mom really laid into us... Cy was so different back then.

Her features turn somber. She kneels down to gather twigs.

SHANE

Everyone changes.

MIKAELA

I ran here. Abandoned him... Like a coward. No wonder he ratted me out.

SHANE

He knew you'd be here?

MIKAELA

He said they were going to kill him if I didn't come back. I can still hear my mom's voice: "Don't give up on Cy."

SHANE

What does that mean for him now?

MIKAELA

With Darrell gone, I'm sure he'll be fine...

SHANE

Yeah... Hopefully nothing happened to him before the convoy left.

Mikaela winces at the sound of her fear being said aloud.

MIKAELA

Cy can talk his way out of anything. He'll be OK.

Mikaela forces a wink from a teary eye and walks back towards the cabin.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
Mind chopping the rest of these logs.
Should be no sweat for you.

Shane looks to see a stack of thick logs next to a chopping block with a splitting ax embedded in it. A pile of already chopped wood sits next to it.

EXT. RAMSHACKLE CABIN - NIGHT

They sit around a fire eating beans and a meal cube.

MIKAELA
I'll catch us some fish tomorrow. You
haven't lived until you have some
fresh caught sunnys.

Shane nods and smiles shoveling another scoop of beans.

He looks up at the starry night sky in thought. The sounds of nature and crackling fire appear to relax even him.

He slowly reaches into his pocket and hands Mikaela a photo of Claire and Jasmine.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
What's this? Oh it's them. Beautiful
family.

SHANE
Yeah they were.

MIKAELA
So sorry, Shane.

She hands the photo back. He gives a strained smile.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
Have you been able to talk to anyone?

SHANE
I have Ted.

Mikaela pets the bulldog on top of his warmed head.

MIKAELA
Ted is definitely better than people.
I'll give you that...

SHANE
Found them just after it happened.

Mikaela looks at Shane. His eyes fixed on the fire. She puts together what he's referring.

SHANE (cont'd)
Murdered. In cold blood.

MIKAELA
I'm... so sorry.

SHANE
Jasmine stayed home from school.
Planned a backyard fire. Like this.

Mikaela can't find any words but shows she's listening.

MIKAELA
I can't im --

SHANE
There's nothing to say. Just helps to
tell someone.

He looks at her with vulnerable eyes for a moment.

MIKAELA
Totally get that... Did they catch
who did it?

SHANE
I did... got to them both at the
scene.

MIKAELA
Does it help knowing they're avenged?

SHANE
No... Yes. I don't know... Miss them
all the same.

Beat

MIKAELA
... Perhaps you'll see them again.

Shane gazes at the fire in silence. The moments pass.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
(clears throat)
Have you tried telling anyone about
Operation Unity? Warn the world and
whatnot?

SHANE

It's already out there. All of it.
Nobody believes it. So many
conspiracy theories out there. It
becomes noise.

MIKAELA

Shit.

SHANE

Delroy believed me. But he's too
afraid of getting killed talking to
the wrong person.

MIKAELA

God, what a mess. Can we ride it out
here? Crawford will probably just
forget about you eventually.

SHANE

Doubtful. Good a plan as any though.

MIKAELA

Why would she keep looking for you
once the invasion begins?

SHANE

... I'm a threat.

INT. RAMSHACKLE CABIN - NIGHT

A fireplace illuminates the weathered cabin interior. Shane
and Mikaela lay on opposite sides of the room.

Mikaela looks at images of her and her brother, CY, on her
phone as kids. Shane sleeps.

She sighs and stares at the ceiling.

Her screen changes to her messaging conversation with Cy.

She writes: "Are you OK? You know where I am. Come as soon
as possible. Darrell's dead. I found protection. Please."

She turns her phone off and looks over at Shane. She stands
up and walks over to him and lifts his arm and snuggles in
under his blanket.

Shane wakes with a light startle and lifts his arm.

MIKAELA

I'm cold.

She grabs his arm and pulls it down onto her. He pauses a moment then lays his head back down.

Fade to black.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Shane quietly lurks through the vibrant early fall woods with bow in hand.

His sights are on a massive buck a vast distance away. Augmented blue eyes zoom on the target.

He takes a deep breath, draws the bow string and aims at a slight arc.

The buck chews on a tuft of grass, oblivious to its super powered predator in the distance.

Shane holds for a few seconds.

He withdraws the arrow and lets the bow down.

SHANE

Nah, not today, my friend.

He turns to head back towards the cabin.

Suddenly, his arm ignites to catch a dart destined for his exposed upper neck.

Shane quickly draws the bow again and fires through the shedding trees at the unknown attacker.

With arrow in hand, POE, a hulking Russian, walks towards Shane. He dons the same black Dunamis armor but with a plated mask, unlike Shane's original seamless prototype.

POE

I was hoping it wouldn't be that easy. Would have been a waste of getting all dressed up.

SHANE

Shit. She couldn't resist could she.

Poe draws an armadillo blade matching Shane's. Energy sizzles from the folded edge.

Shane draws his own and they face off in a ready stance as the wind picks up and directs the falling leaves.

Poe charges at a calm Shane.

Their blades clash with blue sparks and shock waves peppering the quiet forest.

A deflection of Poe's attack chops a tree in half. It falls to the ground as Poe continues a barrage of swings.

Shane deflects and blocks with ease.

Going on the attack Shane bats away Poe's blade to the ground and slashes at his face and chest. The armor erupts blue to protect him.

Shane kicks a dazed Poe hard against a huge tree. Its bark explodes and the tree trunk buckles.

Shane grabs him by the ankle and swings him over his head into a boulder, splitting it. With ankle still in hand, Shane twirls him around and chucks him towards the cabin.

Poe gets to his feet and shakes it off. He loses track of Shane and puts his hand to his ear.

POE

Stay back! I still got this.

Poe draws a retracting rifle and scans the woods with no sign of Shane.

Shane comes down from above with his blade and stabs hard at the top of his head with a shockwave.

A small gap on top of Poe's plated mask sparks.

Shane destroys Poe's rifle and continues to overwhelm him with attacks. The Dunamis armor yet protects him.

Suddenly Shane is blindsided and kicked hard from the side.

A second Dunamis armored man, MITSUO, a wiry Japanese soldier, stands next to a battered Poe.

MITSUO

You can't beat us both. It's over.

Shane returns to his feet, blade sizzling.

SHANE

Cheap shot. Should have made it count.

MITSUO

We would have slit your throat in your sleep or blown up the cabin if we wanted you dead. Enough of this.

Shane smiles, crouches and charges them both.

Mitsuo draws his blade and Poe puts up his fists.

In a blur of power and precision, they trade attacks.

A blade slashes Shane's armor and a hard punch from Poe to the face sends him stumbling with blood spewing.

EXT. WATER'S EDGE - DAY

The battle brings them to the pond near the cabin and wood chopping block. Shane is bloodied and has taken damage.

Mitsuo knocks Shane's blade to the ground but leaves himself open for a grapple.

Shane throws him to the ground hard with a THUD, then lifts him back up and tosses him into the murky pond.

A deadly haymaker from Poe misses through Shane's flowing hair. Shane strikes Poe in the back, knocking him to the ground on top of the splitting log.

Shane steps on Poe's back pinning him down and wields the splitting ax.

With a YELL, he comes down with all his might right on the sparking split panel on Poe's mask.

The wood ax handle bursts on the explosive impact but the metal axehead firmly finds its mark, between the panels, deep in Poe's head.

Mitsuo emerges from the shore.

A blood shot, berserk Shane picks up his sword and looks at Mitsuo as he approaches.

SHANE

Come on!

Mitsuo stops in his tracks in fear.

DRAKE

Hold it Shane.

DRAKE, a British Dunamis armored soldier with a thick accent, stands next to the cabin with Mikaela. Hand around her throat.

SHANE

Let her go!

DRAKE
Enough bloodshed.

His plated mask systematically collapses into his neck to reveal a collected face with kind eyes.

DRAKE (cont'd)
This can go one of two ways. She dies right now, and me and my friend here most likely kill you trying to restrain you... Or you can take this tranquilizer in the neck and we have a chat with our mutual superior.

SHANE
Or I kill you both, like your other friend here.

DRAKE
That is possible... Have it your way. Let's find out.

Drake begins to squeeze Mikaela by the neck. Veins in his arm illuminating from his strengthening grip.

Mikaela winces in pain and gasps for air.

SHANE
Wait! OK. Get it over with.

Shane sighs deeply and lets his guard down.

DRAKE
Good boy.

Drake aims the dart gun but before he fires, Mitsuo clocks Shane hard in the back of the head knocking him out.

Fade to black.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Shane wakes alone in a windowless room opposite a reinforced door with a table in front of him.

He moves his neck and head but his body remains frozen like a statue. His breathing is short and strained.

The hefty door creaks open and General Crawford struts in holding a briefcase.

Their eyes meet and she shakes her head.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
You're so damn lucky.

SHANE
Hi mom.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
What a disappointment.

SHANE
Where's Mikaela?

GENERAL CRAWFORD
She's fine... dog too.

Crawford sets the suitcase down on a small table and takes out a screen that shows Mikaela curled up in the corner of a small cell. Ted sleeps on the modest cot.

Shane sighs in relief.

GENERAL CRAWFORD (cont'd)
See. I even kept them together. More than you deserve.

SHANE
Why can't I move?

GENERAL CRAWFORD
I removed the main donny-super-cell that powers your armor. The Dunamis matter is stuck in a weak but solid form and you're not strong enough to move it. I imagine... it's quite claustrophobic not fitting in your own skin.

SHANE
Yes... will you please plug it back in.

General Crawford smirks and takes out the long glowing blue specialized Donnigan Power Cell. She lays it on the table for Shane to see.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
God, to think of all the sacrifices I made to make you the perfect soldier. And you just throw it all away.

Crawford sets her beret on the table and draws her humming sidearm. She begins to take it apart piece by piece.

GENERAL CRAWFORD (cont'd)
Should have just done Delroy's
experiment myself.

SHANE
Why didn't you tell me about
Operation Unity? Seemed relevant to
my mission.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
At the time, it was way above your
clearance level... Need to know
basis.

SHANE
Could have told me... I'm your son.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
You're also too fucking soft. I knew
you would have some existential
crisis over this. Look at it from the
wrong angle, like young people always
do.

SHANE
A camera in every home calculating
threat levels? An A.I. to be judge,
jury and executioner? Looks like
tyranny to me.

She holds up a small Donnigan Power Cell from her
deconstructed pistol. It glows blue.

Crawford sighs deeply and stares arrows at Shane.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
They tell me there is another power
cell in your armor, about this size,
that keeps a retained connection
between you and the armor. It won't
run out of juice but if it's removed,
your brain shorts and you die. Did
Delroy tell you about that?

SHANE
He did. Thought keeping it secret was
the best defense.

Crawford sets the small power cell down on the table.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
Listen, son. There was a time when I
was proud of you. You fought for
freedom. But the balance has shifted.

She takes a rag from the suitcase and begins to polish the metal parts of her sidearm.

GENERAL CRAWFORD (cont'd)

The world is a savage place to live now... it's chaos. The Unity A.I. is fair. More fair than the world has become. Giving up a little bit of freedom for a lot more security is the necessary sacrifice.

SHANE

Not if it's without choice... It's going to be a bloodbath. Do you think the rest of the world is going to look at Unity as a peacekeeping mission? You'll create more enemies than you suppress. Death and destruction is all you're going to unleash.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

God, you're naive. You don't think most of the world's governments are on our side? Did you notice the accents of your competition? It's necessary Shane.

SHANE

Governments want control. What do you think the people will do? They won't roll over and bow to a faceless global emperor.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Well, that's where you can still find some redemption. Killing the Russian created a job opening. We'll use you as the spearhead against any resistance. A couple strong statements that there is no chance they can stop someone like you and they'll submit... You can save countless lives.

SHANE

I won't do it. I'm done being your weapon.

Crawford laughs.

Like a machine made for this sole purpose, she puts her pistol back together and holsters it.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Don't think you understand. You're going to do it. You just haven't thought it through yet. The alternative is imprisonment, along with your new friend... for the foreseeable future. Unity is happening with or without you so find whatever justification you need to live with yourself and let's move on.

SHANE

Screw you.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Yeah, screw me... You're only alive because of me... I'll let you stew for a bit. All the power I've given you just out of reach.

Shane's eyes dart to the glowing super cell on the table.

SHANE

Mom, wait. I can barely breath. Please.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Good.

Crawford approaches the exit but stops when the entire building around them tremors.

SHANE

What was that?

Distant gunfire. Shouting from behind the heavy metal door.

Crawford puts a radio to her mouth.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Commander?

COMMANDER (FILTERED)

We're being overrun!

The radio turns to static and another explosion shakes the building.

SHANE

Plug me in!

Crawford draws her pistol and aims at the door as she listens to the gunfire coming closer.

SHANE (cont'd)
You can't hold them!

GENERAL CRAWFORD
We'll find out.

SHANE
Don't be a fool!

GENERAL CRAWFORD
Damn it.

She sets her weapon on the table and grabs the power cell.

The door explodes off its hinges and dust fills the room.

A blast from the cloud hits Crawford at the elbow. The power cell falls to the ground along with her arm.

She winces in pain and scoots to the wall.

The Artist steps into the room. He holds a smoking modified .44 magnum. Blood peppers his white suit. White makeup with an orange vertical stripe smear over his face.

THE ARTIST
Hello there, Shane Braddock. I'm a long-time admirer.

Shane's face turns from fear to confusion.

SHANE
What do you want?

THE ARTIST
I did this for you!

The Artist dances further into the room. Crawford makes a tourniquet for her severed arm with her belt pulling it tight with her teeth.

SHANE
Why?

THE ARTIST
I need you Shane. I really do. And I think... that you need me too. See I know that you have defied the masters that you once served and they don't care for you too much -- Your eyes really are a striking blue. And your white hair and scars, what a look. I must paint you.

The Artist rubs Shane's hair in his fingertips. Shane can only gawk into the white eyes of the madman whom he's at the mercy of.

SHANE

You're insane.

The Artist chuckles.

THE ARTIST

I'm really not. Just theatrical.

SHANE

Get on with it. What do you want?

THE ARTIST

Jeesh, lighten up. But OK! Down to brass tacks. I like it. The pitch is simple: I want you to help me stop Operation Unity.

SHANE

How?

THE ARTIST

I'm only asking for you to come with me and hear my proposal. I'm going to plug you back in with good faith that you won't immediately rip out my heart. Agreed?

Shane hesitates and looks to Crawford who shakes her head at him as she struggles to remain conscious. He looks back at the Artist.

SHANE

We have to find Mikaela and my dog.

The Artist grins from ear to ear. He bends down and picks up the long glowing power cell from Crawford's severed arm.

THE ARTIST

Already on the case my friend.

He walks behind Shane and lines up the power cell with his spine. It forms to the curvature of his back and disappears into the rest of the black armor.

Shane breaths deeply as blue webs pulse from his spine throughout the rest of his body.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Vundabar!

Shane takes a few steps around the room and stretches.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
Now the first step to stopping Unity
is killing this bitch right here.

He aims the revolver at Crawford's head and fires.

A hole in the wall inches from Crawford's face sizzles.

Shane grips the Artist's forearm having redirected the shot.

The Artist challenges Shane with his haunting eyes.

SHANE
She lives.

The Artist looks like he might snap back and try again for a moment but instead cracks a smile.

THE ARTIST
Of course.

The Artist lowers his weapon and winks at the general.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
Another time perhaps.

He straightens his x-ray tie and holsters his weapon.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
Shall we?

Crawford looks up at Shane, dazed.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
(mutters)
He's a terrorist, Shane.

Shane crouches down to meet his mother's eyes.

SHANE
You're only alive because of me.

The Artist and Shane leave together.

INT. CHATEAU - CORRIDOR - DAY

Shane follows the Artist down the grand hall of the anarchist king. Tall ceilings with classical pillars and gold molding. Walls lined with historical and modern art.

A band of the ARTIST'S ACOLYTES, heavily armed, follow behind. Mikaela and Ted among the horde.

A sect breaks off from the group, herding Mikaela and Ted down a hallway.

Mikaela and Shane's eyes meet. He pleads for her trust with a look. She returns his gaze with an assuring nod.

THE ARTIST

You'll join them in time. We have much to discuss.

INT. CHATEAU - THE ARTIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Shane fixates on a horrific painting hanging on the wall behind the Artist's leather throne.

The Artist puts his feet up on the desk and looks back at the painting himself.

THE ARTIST

Do you know this painting?

SHANE

No.

THE ARTIST

It's called "Saturn Devouring His Son." It depicts Saturn eating his own son for fear of being overthrown by him. Notice the deep desperation in his eyes.

SHANE

What kind of man hangs this in his office?

The Artist looks at him with an intrigued smirk.

THE ARTIST

Sure, it's a little disturbing. But the artist, Goya, himself had this in his home. So I suppose the answer to your inquiry would be an artist who sees past guttural reactions. Instead, we seek deeper meaning.

SHANE

Which is?

THE ARTIST

Well it tells a story, Shane. The same story we're in right now.

Shane answers only with a look of confusion.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Saturn eats his own son because he's afraid he's going to lose his power to him.

Shane shakes his head.

SHANE

So you've said...

THE ARTIST

Oh come on! This should be easy to get. Those in power are about to try and eat us... Operation Unity.

SHANE

Hm. So what happens to Saturn.

THE ARTIST

That's the fun part. His other son overthrows him anyway.

SHANE

Who is his other son?

THE ARTIST

Jupiter, also known as Zeus, the most powerful of the gods.

The Artist stands up and walks around in front of the desk to Shane.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

And that brings us to why you're here. You and I, can embody the power of Zeus and put a stop to this desperate monster that threatens all of humanity.

SHANE

So why don't you have a picture of Zeus on your wall?

The Artist belly laughs and shakes his head.

THE ARTIST

Oh to think so... unadorned. Because this painting motivates me my friend.

SHANE

Motivates you to what end? What is your plan?

The Artist slaps his hands together in front of Shane's face and holds them there.

THE ARTIST

That is the question isn't it? Here it is.

He opens his hands to reveal a glowing donny-cell just like that found in Crawford's pistol.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

I'm going to remove the Donnigan Power Cell from the earth.

He closes his hands around it again.

SHANE

What?

THE ARTIST

It's the only way... We weren't meant to possess the power that the donny yields. It has derailed our evolution and humans need to be reset.

Disappointed, Shane stands up and walks towards the door. The Artist blasts out of his chair to cut him off.

SHANE

Get out of my way.

Shane grabs the door handle and opens it.

THE ARTIST

An Electromagnetic Pulse.

Shane stops at the threshold.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

The biggest one ever created. It will shut them all down at once, even the massive power plant in New Mexico. This thing will reach the moon. And, most importantly, it will shut down Operation Unity with the push of a button.

Shane pauses a moment in thought and then closes the door. He returns to his seat and reluctantly gestures to the Artist to continue.

SHANE

An E.M.P.

THE ARTIST

The donny has given itself its own silver bullet with the power it provides. We've already built it. Lays dormant in this very building. Just waiting to liberate us.

Shane rubs his sand paper chin in thought. Silent.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Give me something here my man. I'm not much of a poker player.

SHANE

What about all the people that would die from this? Planes will fall from the sky, cars will crash, life support systems will be shut down.

THE ARTIST

I have considered that with a heavy heart... But consider all the people that will be killed when Operation Unity is executed? The world isn't just going to roll over and beg for forgiveness. There will be a terrible war with no winner. The death toll in the billions.

Shane stands up and walks over to an antique globe and spins the earth with his finger.

SHANE

What a mess.

THE ARTIST

This is the only way we can stop it. You know I'm right Shane. What makes us human... must survive.

SHANE

What's stopping you from setting it off right now?

THE ARTIST

Well... you see, an E.M.P. with this much power takes quite a long time to charge, about 60 minutes. It gives off a distinct energy signature.

(MORE)

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

People have tried setting off smaller E.M.P.s to shut down cities, but the government's response teams have been very efficient in stopping them. Usually within ten minutes of detection they begin issuing satellite missile strikes. I've got those and ground assaults covered...

SHANE

-- You need me to keep the Dunamis soldiers from shutting it down.

The Artist smiles and nods.

THE ARTIST

That was quicker than expected. Precisely. I can't stop someone like... you.

Shane takes a deep breath.

SHANE

This is a lot. I need to think.

THE ARTIST

Of course. Kick your feet back and enjoy yourself tonight. However... I have an assignment for you tomorrow morning that I think will help you with your decision.

SHANE

Assignment? I haven't agreed to help.

THE ARTIST

Just need you to retrieve a painting for me. It should be a breeze.

Shane turns to face the Artist with a challenging glare.

SHANE

I'm not your errand boy. Get it yourself.

THE ARTIST

I would but I need my eyes reworked before I can leave here without retinal detection. I came out of hiding to rescue you.

SHANE

Send someone else. Or better yet, leave it be. It's just a painting.

The Artist sighs.

THE ARTIST

It's not just any painting. It's "The Scream" by Edward Munch. Look, we've established that we value art differently. Think of it as payment for services rendered. If you choose to walk away from our little deal... No hard feelings.

The Artist presents his hand for a handshake.

INT. CHATEAU - SHANE'S ROOM - DAY

Shane gapes at the extravagance of their room. Ted pees on a bedpost commissioned for a king.

Mikaela opens the bathroom door wearing only a towel. Their eyes meet. Tension fills the room.

She surprises him with a hug, gripping the back of his neck.

Shane allows it for a second but then pulls away slowly.

SHANE

Sorry for dragging you into this. You OK?

MIKAELA

Yes, I'm fine. More than fine actually...

She looks around the room and back to Shane with a smile.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

Looks like we've been upgraded.

SHANE

Yeah, I'd say so. Listen, as nice as this is, it's not safe here. If you want to leave I --

MIKAELA

I'm staying. I'm staying with you.

Shane smiles in relief.

SHANE

OK.

MIKAELA

So what the hell is going on?

Shane looks up and takes a deep breath.

LATER

Lobster, steak, fine wine and whiskey fill the dinner table.

Mikaela has fresh makeup and dons a flattering silk dress accentuating her figure. Shane is also cleaned up and looking uncomfortable in a suit.

He takes a huge bite of a buttery lobster and his eyes close in ecstasy.

MIKAELA

A painting?

SHANE

Don't get it either. He's an odd one but there seems to be some logic to his plan.

MIKAELA

You could say that about anyone. Doesn't mean they're right... I don't trust him. He's done some messed up shit. Have you seen the pig execution that made him famous?

SHANE

Yeah, pretty gross tactic but isn't the message right? We are doomed to destroy ourselves?

MIKAELA

Looking that way. Total decimation of all technology or sacrificing all freedoms to the whims of an A.I. Yeah doomed is probably the word.

SHANE

Should I help him? Unity has to be stopped, right?

MIKAELA

I cannot be part of that decision. Either choice will destroy the world as we know it.

SHANE

Please. I need your opinion at least?

Mikaela cocks her head and gives him a disapproving look.

MIKAELA

I honestly don't know. It's hard for me to be on the Artist's side, as much as I agree with some of what he preaches. Who doesn't like freedom? But is it freedom or anarchy? Why should he decide?

SHANE

This place is full of people who believe in him. Soak up every word he says as gospel. Willing to die for him. Doesn't that say something about the actions he's taking?

MIKAELA

It could mean that he's the voice of the people... Or it could mean he's a cult leader. It seems the buck stops with you.

She tips her wine glass to him and raises her eyebrows before taking a drink while maintaining eye contact.

SHANE

You had to say that.

MIKAELA

Didn't have to say anything...

Tension between them builds in a silent moment as they look at each other from across the table.

SHANE

Wish we had more time. I guess if everything goes to hell, this isn't a bad way to spend our last days.

MIKAELA

Cheers to that.

Mikaela finishes her wine and stands up -- looking beautiful and Shane notices.

She walks over to the light switch and dims the lights. She returns to the table and takes Shane's hand.

He hesitates but stands.

She leads him to the king-sized bed and lays him down before crawling on top of him.

Shane wavers while she kisses him. Then he puts his arms around her and returns her embrace.

They make love and fall asleep together in bliss.

Fade to black.

INT. CHATEAU - CORRIDOR - DAY

Shane follows behind two of the Artist's acolytes -- a PUNK
ROCKER and a STOIC GANGSTER.

SHANE

Where are we headed?

PUNK ROCKER

It's not far. Just follow us.

They approach a golden door at the end of the massive hall.

SHANE

No black bag this time?

PUNK ROCKER

He trusts you. Just put a face mask
on to avoid facial recognition. Your
eyes are untraceable? You'll have to
get me the hookup on that bro.

Shane does as instructed. They open the heavy golden door
into the back hall of a doughnut shop.

INT. DOUGHNUT SHOP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The opposite side of the golden door reads "Closet" as they
shut it behind them.

Rounding the hall corner, they enter a humble store front
and seating area. A CUSTOMER at a booth sinks her teeth into
a gooey danish.

They exit out the glass store front of "Hinny's Holes" into
the streets of New York City.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Shane gapes as he looks around, realizing that the Artist's
Chateau is hiding in plain sight.

They strut down the sidewalk, passing by a socially distant
CROWD of New Yorkers -- walking alone and staring at their
projected screens or the ground.

Air traffic from augmented reality car lanes stack up into the clear blue sky above them.

They come to an alley. Shane notices a mugging in progress.

A heavily modified CYBER THUG is pummeling a COWERING BUSINESSMAN in the face.

Shane takes a step into the alley but the Stoic Gangster grabs his arm. Shane meets his reflective shades and he shakes his head.

PUNK ROCKER

Can't risk the mission my bro. We got our orders. Just a few more blocks.

Shane reluctantly continues as directed.

A weathered peacekeeper drone hovers over their heads and scans them as it passes. It turns to look down the alley where the mugging is occurring.

DRONE

Citizen. Halt your assault or be prosecuted.

Shane looks back to see energy blasts from the alley turn the outdated drone into scrap. No one walking along the sidewalk seems to notice or care.

They continue for a few more blocks down the bustling street before stopping in front of the Museum of Modern Art.

PUNK ROCKER

This is the spot.

SHANE

I'm robbing a museum?

PUNK ROCKER

You got it bro. It's closed today. All you have to do is go to the back of that adjacent building
(pointing)
and climb the fire escape. Then it's an easy leap for you to the roof of the museum itself. Just take the stairs down from there.

SHANE

What about alarms?

PUNK ROCKER

Taken care of bro. Just be quick and
don't get spotted by the guards.
(smiles and winks)

Shane nods and the acolytes leave him to his mission.

INT. CHATEAU - SHANE'S ROOM - DAY - SAME

Mikaela lays in bed snuggling Ted and reading the book "The Invisible Man." Ted snores.

Popping out of bed, she opens the door to the rest of the Chateau. Two GUARDS stand on either side.

Mikaela attempts to walk out but one of the guards puts an arm out. She appears to have gotten in the way of a Jackson Pollock painting, covered head to toe in paint splatters.

POLLOCK GUARD

Sorry. You're confined to quarters
for now. Anything I can get you?

MIKAELA

What? I thought we were all on the
same team.
(jazz hands)
Freedom for all?

POLLOCK GUARD

We are miss. You're in a probationary
period though. Everyone in and out of
this building has gone through
vigorous screenings and trials to be
here. You should be honored...
Especially with these accommodations.

MIKAELA

Right.

Mikaela closes the door and locks it behind her.

She moves to a framed screen displaying a collage of nature videos. She looks at it curiously and takes a guess.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

Screen off. Reveal window.

The screen turns off to become a normal window. It unveils a view of New York City from fifty stories up. Flying cars and blue sky fill the lanes between skyscrapers.

She takes in the view in surprise, then runs her hands along the window finding a latch.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
Room, play heavy metal music on max.

The room obeys and blasts tunes. She grabs what appears to be a high tech military knife hilt from Shane's green bag along with her recording glasses.

She opens the window and steps out on the edge. She looks down the side of the building. Cars zoom past and the wind whips.

Mikaela psyches herself up, clings to the stone detailing and shimmyes across the ledge to the next window.

She takes the military knife hilt and presses it to the center of the glass.

Holding the knife with both hands, she puts her weight into it and presses a button releasing the donny-powered switchblade.

The glass shatters and she falls into the unknown room.

INT. CHATEAU - STRANGER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mikaela stands up and brushes off the glass from her clothes. The room is empty. She bolts to the bathroom to hide in case anyone heard. No one comes.

She looks herself over to see only some minor cuts.

Inside a wardrobe she finds a retro 1980's influenced teal disguise that covers her entirely. Massive reflective orange ski goggles really sell it.

She opens the door to the hall and moves towards the elevators.

HALLWAY

The two guards in front of her room door see her exit but pay no mind and continue their conversation.

INT. CHATEAU - CORRIDOR - DAY

Mikaela, now in the clear, exits the elevators on the first floor and starts wandering around the Artist's Chateau.

The place is bustling with acolytes of the Artist, each with their own unique attire, as if trying to compete for most magnificent and eye catching. Many cross into the obtuse.

She enters a gallery with the words "Fall of Man" above the entrance.

GALLERY

Filled with pieces by the Artist himself, each work of art has a violent savage nature to it. The familiar piece titled "Evolution" plays on a large screen in the back.

Nearly every work has an acolyte standing in front of it, seemingly paying homage to its wisdom.

Mikaela notices a PREGNANT WOMAN wearing a V.R. headset sobbing on her knees while gazing up at a painting of a burning farmhouse.

Keeping stoic composure, Mikaela exits the disturbing gallery having seen enough.

CORRIDOR

She comes to a hallway with tall ceilings lined with portraits of past U.S. Presidents hanging at knee height.

Cautiously, she approaches a black door at the end of the hall. Above it hangs a portrait of the Artist scornfully mimicking a presidential pose.

She hears the Artist talking from behind the door but can't make out what he's saying. She tries the handle. Locked.

Undeterred, she enters a restroom near the mysterious room.

RESTROOM

Mikaela removes her cumbersome disguise and climbs on top of a toilet. She unscrews an air vent grate with the knife and crawls in.

She shimmies her way down the narrow vent to where she can see a meeting in progress.

MIKAELA

Record.

WAR ROOM

The Artist speaks in front of a PRESTIGIOUS GROUP of thirty. They don't fit the mold of his typical acolytes. A blend of top tier drug cartel leaders, celebrities, and seasoned politicians instead fill the veiled chamber.

He stands in front of a massive map of the world. Mikaela squints to read some of the location labels as "depot," "bunker," "production facility," "barracks," and "nuclear."

THE ARTIST

Days away people. And we still have a shortage of pre-donny era weapons at the ready.

He speaks to the full audience but directs this line to CEDRIC, 52, as he sips on a sweaty beer, mindful of his emerald tie.

Cedric, the arms dealer, is a heavy set man with a droopy face but eyes that say he'd come after your family for inconveniencing him.

CEDRIC

We will make our deadline.
I'm more concerned about you having enough manpower to handle the arsenal.

He takes a big gulp from his glass stein.

THE ARTIST

Is he being serious?

He looks around the room with a hand out at the rest of his guests.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Half of the planet is on our side.
The other half will see the light soon enough.

CEDRIC

A popularity poll is a far cry from asking someone to put their life on the line.

The Artist silently glares at him with his hollow eyes until participants of the meeting begin shifting around in discomfort. He smiles ear to ear.

THE ARTIST

Are you here because you're good with people?

CEDRIC

No.

He gazes back flatly and takes another sip of his beer.

THE ARTIST

Why are you here then? What are you good with?

CEDRIC

(clears throat)

Guns.

The Artist draws his modified revolver and empties the charges from all but one chamber.

THE ARTIST

So let's talk about guns.

In one smooth motion, he violently spins the cylinder of the donny-enhanced .44 magnum and aims it directly at Cedric's face. Cedric takes a drink, calling his bluff.

The well-oiled cylinder continues spinning with a crisp metallic whir for several seconds before losing speed.

Click, click... click... click. The Artist pulls the trigger. Click.

Still aiming the gun, the Artist starts to chuckle. Then Cedric cracks too.

CEDRIC

(laughing)

You're quite the showman. You almost had me going th --

The Artist pulls the trigger again, a glowing charge soars by the right side of Cedric's head burning his cheek and disintegrating his ear.

Cedric is flung off his chair, spilling his beer. He Screams and writhes in agony as blood drips down his face and onto his emerald tie.

THE ARTIST

Quiet!

The Artist's demand is primal and disturbing. Mikaela's eyes widen and she quivers at the unfamiliar sound.

Cedric obeys and is silent. He puts his hands up pleading for mercy.

The Artist pulls out a handkerchief from his pocket, polishes his gun and tosses it to Cedric.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
Notice that not a single person in
this room gave a word of protest?

He walks away from Cedric to the other side of the room.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
I assure you that we'll have people
lining up to receive one of your
weapons, ready to join the fight. Of
course, it won't be much of a fight
post E.M.P. Can I get a status update
on the nukes?

The NUKE ACOLYTE from France stands up from the back.

NUKE ACOLYTE
Warheads are ready, sir. Flight paths
programmed in analog systems to
target U.S. and Chinese military
bases. We're set to launch once the
E.M.P. takes down the defense grid.

THE ARTIST
Marvelous. These analog systems are
prepped to survive the E.M.P. yes?

The Nuke Acolyte nods. The Artist steps towards Cedric.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
Get a new ear before we shut
everything down. Don't think cosmetic
surgery will have much of a place in
our new world.

Cedric nods holding the handkerchief against his wound.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
Enough business. Now for the main
event!

His tone shifts to light hearted performer as the dim lights go completely out.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
I call this piece "Next in Line"

The screen changes to a hand painting of the progression from primates to modern homo sapiens as seen in old biology curriculum. Shane walks in front of the modern human.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

This is Shane. You've all heard about him... He is the future.

(gesturing to screen)

We are barreling in the direction of becoming completely alien to our planet. Shane doesn't even look human anymore. Some would argue he isn't. Some would argue he is a monster.

Images of Shane flash on the screen, accentuating his scars, pale skin, blue eyes, and white hair.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Of course, his harrowing appearance is not what's wrong with Shane. No. It's what's rotting on the inside. Allow me to show you.

The screen changes over to a live feed of security cameras inside the Museum of Modern Art. Shane walks through the exhibit. Spotlights on various paintings light his way.

INT. MUSEUM OF MODERN ART - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Shane's hovering blue eyes move from one painting to another in the eerie deserted museum corridor.

He stops at a painting by someone named Gerhard Richter. It's a profile view of a woman in a black top with her blonde hair up in a short ponytail as she reads a magazine.

He stares into the photo-real painting as if trying to recognize the woman.

An image of Claire in a pool of blood flashes in and out.

Shane flinches and steps away.

Shaking off the flashback, he walks with more intent as he continues through the museum in search of "The Scream."

Suddenly a SHRIEK is heard from somewhere ahead in the museum. Shane sprints forward towards the disturbance.

INT. CHATEAU - WAR ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Security cameras continue to pan and cut between angles in order to keep Shane in frame as he moves quicker through the winding maze-like hallways of the shadowy museum.

The esteemed acolytes look on in suspense along with Mikaela.

INT. MUSEUM OF MODERN ART - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Shane dashes like a puma, changing direction instantly at each corner leaving compressions in the stone floor.

He rounds a final corner. An INNOCENT WOMAN is held at knife point by a STRUNG OUT MAN. He uses her as a perfect human shield. He aims a gun at Shane.

Filled with terror and pain, the woman unleashes a guttural SCREAM that causes even the war-torn Shane to shudder.

STRUNG OUT MAN

Drop it!

Full of adrenaline and emotion, Shane's instincts and years of combat training take over. In a flash, he draws his white pistol from his sleeve and fires.

The charge passes through the woman just below her collarbone and into the man's chest. He stumbles backwards against a wall with a wet splat.

The woman falls to the ground, bleeding from the seared hole. She is alive. Shane begins to move to her aid.

Abruptly, the walls around him lift. Surrounding Shane is a RAVENOUS MOB armed with clubs, bats and crude blunt objects.

The pale horde is covered in scabs and tremors from withdrawals.

Like a dam breaking, they flood in, screaming and clawing for blood, trampling over the Innocent Woman.

SHANE

(reaching out)

No!

Shane fires a round into the air with no effect. They're on him, beating and clawing. Some go for his head. He narrowly dodges and tries to retreat.

An attacker lunges for Shane's head revealing her rotted teeth and bloodshot eyes.

SHANE (cont'd)

Get Back!

He is tackled from behind and brought to the ground by the horde. He pushes them off and struggles to his knees as they continue to press.

INT. CHATEAU - WAR ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Mikaela watches in horror from the ventilation duct as the crazed, zombie-like mob engulfs Shane. She puts her hand to her mouth to silence her involuntary gasps.

INT. MUSEUM OF MODERN ART - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

A club in the back of the head. An aluminum flashlight straight to the nose. Shane is battered.

Blood begins to pour from lacerations on his face as another blindsided blow strikes him from behind.

Shane loses control.

He unravels his armadillo blade with a glowing blue arc through the darkness and chops two of the nearest attackers completely in half.

Surging waves of manic raiders leap to tackle him. He indiscriminately cuts them down and desperately begins towards the exit.

Shane's bloodshot glowing eyes bug out of his throbbing head. We hear the same ringing in our ears that Shane does.

He cuts, kicks and shoots his way through the disorienting dark hallways but the flood of freaks in pursuit are unhindered.

Bodies and body parts collect on the floor in his wake as he navigates towards the emergency stairwell door.

STAIRWELL

Shane quickly ascends up the stairs with his berserk assailants still sprinting after him.

He finally reaches the roof bursting through the door.

ROOF

Shane falls out the door to the ground, drenched in blood.

The nearest aggressor leaps on top of him, but Shane catches him with a foot to his chest and launches him back. The body smashes into the oncoming mob like bowling pins.

Shane quickly drags his searing hot blade on the metal of the door welding it to the frame and locking it shut.

He falls to his knees, wipes the gore from his face and looks up to the sky.

SHANE

What the fuck!

INT. CHATEAU - WAR ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The security camera feed changes back to the Artist's diagram of human evolution.

It animates Shane turning around and stabbing the modern human in the chest. The screen turns to red.

In a total state of shock, tears stream down Mikaela's face as the rest of the members of the committee applaud the horror show art exhibit.

THE ARTIST

As fate would have it, Shane is the first of his kind and has rejected the very force that wishes to control him. But that isn't enough. We need more than rejection. We need transcendence.

Mikaela has endured enough. She removes her hand from her mouth and slowly crawls backwards away from the vent.

Fade to black.

INT. CHATEAU - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The golden door of the Chateau entrance erupts open as Shane charges through like a rhino. A crowd of acolytes splits down the middle to form a pathway for Shane to walk through.

Shane's frantic state strikes fear in their faces but the crowd applauds him nonetheless.

PUNK ROCKER
He's waiting for you.

The crowd follows Shane as he moves through the passage.
Those behind him aim their weapons at his head.

THE ARTIST'S OFFICE

The door is open and Shane stomps in without losing a beat.
The Artist presents open palms.

THE ARTIST
Welcome home.

Shane grabs him by the neck and tosses him against the far
wall bookcase. As books fall to the floor, Shane lifts him
by the throat.

A squad aims at Shane and prepare to take fire to save their
dear leader but the Artist outstretches his hand to stop
them. With a look, he says, "don't you dare."

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
I... needed to show you... what you
are.

A screen flickers on behind the desk with a looped replay of
Shane shooting through the Innocent Woman.

It transitions to footage of him slicing his way through the
museum.

Shane absorbs the footage as the Artist struggles to
breathe.

A familiar face in the room catches his eye in the
peripheral. Mikaela stands with her orange goggles on top of
her head and hands over her face.

His grip loosens.

The intense glowing blue veins that line his arm diminish to
a softer hue as Shane drops him to the ground.

The Artist coughs and gasped for air.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
It's OK... What you are... It's not
your fault.

The Artist puts his hands on his knees still trying to catch
his breath.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
 Shane... You have the opportunity to
 transcend what they made you.

Shane is a caged animal. Short breaths and eyes darting
 every direction.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
 Do you really think that your family
 being murdered was a random house
 burglary... a spontaneous act of
 fate?

His eyes freeze on the Artist's and time stops.

The Artist points to the screen. A slideshow plays of
 surveillance photos of Claire, Jasmine and Shane.

It flashes to files detailing Shane's background and
 qualities for selection into Project Dunamis.

INSERT - DOCUMENT ON SCREEN, which reads:
 "Advanced combat training and
 experience.
 Few close relatives; Expendable.
 Psychiatric profile fits criteria
 described by experts (See notes from
 Delroy)
 Physical condition ideal."

At the bottom of this document is the signature of General
 Crawford herself.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
 That mother of yours... Really wanted
 her son to be Captain America.

Shane gazes at the screen trembling.

SHANE
 This can't be.

THE ARTIST
 You know it is.

SHANE
 Why are you doing this?

THE ARTIST
 I need you to match my passion. I
 need a partner. Not just a weapon. It
 killed me to do this to you. It
 really did. But I had to show you
 what you are --

SHANE

I know what I am!

He raises his smoldering blade to the Artist's throat. A moment of endless stillness fills the room. The Artist's hands are up, submissively.

THE ARTIST

More than ever now, don't you?

Shane's drops the blade to his side.

SHANE

How could you let all those people die? You knew what would happen.

THE ARTIST

Those people? Most of them would already be dead if not for us. We saved them for a higher purpose.

SHANE

What purpose! To be slaughtered?

THE ARTIST

To show you who the butcher really is. Whoever has power. You had a choice to not draw your sword but you did.

SHANE

(softly)

They would have killed me.

THE ARTIST

With what? Sticks? Highly doubt it. And what about your decision to shoot through the woman?

SHANE

(whispers)

She would have lived.

THE ARTIST

He said, 'drop it.' You could have dropped your weapon and saved the woman another way... You must understand, I don't blame you for this. She made you this way.

The Artist grabs Shane by both shoulders like a vice grip. Shane falls to his knees and the Artist goes down with him.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

This is the most important moment in your life, perhaps anyone's life... Look at me!

Shane looks up in defeat with his sunken bloodshot eyes.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

You can choose to put a stop to it all. This is where our evolution takes a turn. You must go against what has been seethed into your mind and turn it on those who want to control us. Are you with me? I mean truly with me? To the end?

Meeting the Artist's eyes, he nods.

Tears follow the path of Shane's scars. The Artist embraces Shane's head in his chest.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Yes. Breathe my friend.

The Artist stands up and turns to the crowd.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

You are witnessing history for humankind folks. Transcendence!

He walks around his office brimming with joyous energy.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Woo! Alright.

He puts his hands on his hips.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Everyone out. There's work to do.

Mikaela goes to Shane and takes his arm. He looks up at her in sorrow.

MIKAELA

Come with me.

INT. CHATEAU - SHANE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Steam fills the bathroom. Mirrors drip with sweat.

Shane sits on the floor of the walk-in shower with his back against the wall. Blood long washed away other than the constant trickle of open head wounds.

His gaze is unfocused and distant.

Mikaela opens the door and enters the shower fully clothed. She sits next to him and hugs his arm.

MIKAELA

You're not what he says you are.

SHANE

I am what my mother made me.

MIKAELA

You could have told me.

SHANE

She killed them... Almost killed you. I am a monster born of a monster.

MIKAELA

No, you're our savior. You saved me.

SHANE

I saw your face today. I was going to kill him. You didn't see a savior.

MIKAELA

I saw a savior suffering. And he isn't who you think he is.

SHANE

He is a revolutionary. Exactly what this world needs.

MIKAELA

His motives are not what they seem. I'll tell you more tomorrow... For now, come with me.

Mikaela stands up, turns the shower off and pulls him up by the hand. She grabs a towel and presses it to his chest.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

Dry off.

Mikaela slinks out of the bathroom and closes the door behind her.

Shane dries off and wipes the condensation off the mirror revealing his gaunt face. He gazes with disgust.

He leaves the bathroom and stops in his tracks when he sees Mikaela in lingerie at the edge of the bed. Her every curve emphasized by the flickering of candlelight.

She stands up and walks over to Shane taking his hands in hers then guides them to her hips. She begins kissing his neck and his face.

She raises her head to look into his softly glowing eyes.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

(whispers)

Let's forget today and go back to yesterday.

She kisses him softly on the lips.

SHANE

I can't.

Mikaela looks at him with a playful smile.

MIKAELA

I think you can.

She continues to kiss him and move his hands on her body.

He softly but abruptly pushes her away.

SHANE

Mikaela, Stop. You don't owe me anything. Certainly not this.

MIKAELA

(confused)

That's not why I'm here... I... Don't you get that I'm with you --

SHANE

Look at me!

He tenses his whole body with blue eyes bugging out of his head and an electric glow blazing throughout every muscle.

MIKAELA

You're not a monster, no matter what they've done to you.

SHANE

What am I then, huh?

MIKAELA

You are what you choose to be, Shane. Nothing else.

Mikaela bites her lip to retain her composure as her shaking hands struggle to tie a knot in a robe.

SHANE

So I've chosen to become a monster then? And lucky me... I just so happened to save a girl who gets off on monsters.

Mikaela pounces forward and slaps him.

MIKAELA

I've only seen a good man until this moment... You need to start thinking for yourself if you expect to make decisions you can live with.

SHANE

The Artist has shown me all I need to know to make things right.

MIKAELA

Or he's just manipulating you like everyone else.

SHANE

Like you?

Mikaela rolls her eyes and storms away to begin gathering her belongings.

She puts on the very same miniskirt and orange tank-top she was wearing the day Shane rescued her.

MIKAELA

I'm leaving. Maybe I'll be back the day you open your eyes.

SHANE

Wait... Take Ted... He'll be safer with you.

She grabs Ted's leash and hooks it to his collar. Making eye contact with Shane, she shakes her head, and opens the door.

MIKAELA

Good-bye Shane.

The small bulldog looks back at him for a moment, stumpy tail nervously wagging in anticipation for Shane to follow.

The door closes and they're gone.

Shane closes his glossy eyes.

Fade to black.

INT. UNION STATION - NIGHT

THE ARTIST
Hello Kansas City!

The Artist speaks from a platform in Union Station. The massive open building bursts at the seams with his FOLLOWERS, ready to soak up his message.

A lone spotlight shines on the Artist. A giant vertical American flag acts as his backdrop.

He wears a large bib covered in blood and barbecue sauce, melding with his chin and mouth.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
I do not apologize for my appearance folks. The barbecue in this city is a statement of what freedom can achieve!

The crowd erupts. Shane looks on from the shadows. He leans against a wall, stage right, sipping from a flask.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
This evening I devoured the most delicious, precisely crafted, perfectly cooked ribs I've ever had. And that's really why we're all here, isn't it?... Ensuring that we can perfect our meats... our freedoms, our passions, our selves!

He bangs on his sopping chest splattering red sauce on the front row.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
But they want to take our freedoms, don't they? They want to replace them with comforts, security and forced compliance.

The crowd boos and the giant train station rumbles.

Shane soaks up every word as one of the crowd.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
I must quote an inspiration of mine who had the perfect response to this moment. Aldoux Huxley said...

The crowd roars at the mention of Huxley. The Artist smiles looking up at his followers, pleased.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Huxley said... 'But I don't want comfort. I want God, I want poetry, I want real danger, I want freedom, I want goodness. I want sin.'

The crowd reaches another decibel.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Huxley believed freedom was an absolute. It cannot be taken. But my friends... they are coming for it. They are going to try to silence that which makes us human. I implore you all to let out your most inner desires and expressions. In other words... do whatever the hell you want.

The possessed sea of people scream with unhinged passion. Pulsing veins and bloodshot eyes.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

I'm calling on each and every one of you to embark towards a cause we can all believe in. E-day. It's a mere five days away. Let's act like it!

He drops the microphone, tosses the bloody bib into the roaring crowd, and walks off the stage towards Shane.

SHANE

I think you have their support...

The Artist humbly smirks in return and gestures for him to follow.

THE ARTIST

To the V.I.P. lounge my friend.

Double doors swing open to a rave with laser lights and acolytes dancing to experimental music. The Artist, with Shane in tow, disappears into the writhing wall of bodies.

Fade to black.

EXT. SUBURB - BUS STOP - DAY

Mikaela's heavy boots thud on warm black pavement as she steps off an air bus with a pack over her shoulder. Ted's paws click as he hops off the last step.

Her oversized antique military jacket flaps in the wind as the bus ascends to rejoin the congested airway.

Mikaela flips open a lighter and ignites a cigarette. She takes in the once pristine housing development -- now covered with graffiti, garbage and vandalism.

Bars, boarded windows, and security cameras are a staple for each home.

Blue sky, sunshine and thriving trees contrast the otherwise drab neighborhood.

She walks up to a tall wooden fence riddled with graffiti. Not the artistic kind.

Her first cigarette quickly shrinks as she continues along the tapestry of angry symbols and slurs.

She stops when a particular symbol catches her attention. An orange vertical stripe with a white dot about two thirds up and a matching white dot to its right.

She recognizes it as a logo representing the Artist's signature face paint. Disgust fills her features.

She puts her cigarette out on what portrays the Artist's right eye, just like she did to Darrell.

A TEENAGE GANG sees the desecration of their icon from across the street and walks towards her.

Mikaela notices her tail and moves along at a brisk pace.

She looks down at her hand, which reads "3341 Bishop BLVD." The house to her left reads "3312."

MIKAELA

Come on Ted.

She lightly tugs on the leash and starts a brisk walk.

ANGRY TEENAGER

Where you goin' slut?

ANGRY TEENAGER picks up a piece of loose pavement and hurls it towards Mikaela. It strikes a tree and Ted jerks away into Mikaela making her stumble.

She quickens her pace to a run. They giggle and cat call in pursuit.

MIKAELA

3314... 3320... 3332

She cuts across the street as another piece of pavement embeds in the windshield of a parked van.

Arriving at 3341, she tries to open the front door. Locked. She bangs on the door a few times before turning around.

The teenage gang approaches the front stoop like a pack of ravenous wolves.

She takes a deep breath and calmly hooks Ted's leash around the door nob.

Mikaela walks directly at the Angry Teenager. He smiles maliciously and flips out a knife.

She launches her pack at his face. He catches it obscuring his vision. A hard kick to the groin.

A gasp leaves his lips as he doubles forward. She grabs the back of his head and crushes her knee into his head, knocking him out cold.

LUMBERING TEENAGER

You bitch!

LUMBERING TEENAGER tries to tackle her but she ducks under his arms tripping him to the ground.

Before Lumbering Teenager can get back to his feet, Mikaela draws pepper spray from her jacket and blasts him. He's back on the ground rolling.

Mikaela turns her gaze to TIMID TEENAGER and two others behind him. They stand wide-eyed, frozen and scared.

MIKAELA

Get the hell out of here!

They grab their fallen allies and scamper away.

DELROY, 37, a scientific genius with autism, holds Ted on his front stoop. He appears disheveled and confused. Like he just woke up from a nap on his keyboard, which he did.

Mikaela sees him and sheepishly lights up.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

Uh... Delroy?

Ted looks up in suspense and licks his face.

INT. CHATEAU - E.M.P. ROOM - DAY

A blindfold lifts from Shane's face. His eyes squint as they adjust to a drastic change in brightness.

THE ARTIST

Here it is.

Blinding white light. Details come together to reveal a wiry dome covered in glossy white plastic three stories tall. Spherical joints make up the atom-like structure.

A metal sphere the size of a beach ball suspends in the center.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

I call it the eye-bomb.

SHANE

How does it work?

THE ARTIST

Oh, I have no idea. But Winston explained to me that it could only have been created with donny-power. Ironic, isn't it?

Two feet of glass separates them from the dome. A simple control panel on their side stands in front of them.

Shane looks down at the three controls. A switch labeled "charge." A light bulb labeled "ready." And a red button labeled "fire."

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

I didn't want to get confused on the big day. I had Dr. Winston keep it simple. Less is more right?

Shane's attention shifts to the side of the massive stark white tile room where a dead man is pinned to the wall ten feet off the ground.

SHANE

Is that Dr. Winston?

The doctor had thick metal stakes through his ankles, wrists and neck, anchoring his body against the wall. Limbs spread out resembling the "Vitruvian Man" by Leonardo da Vinci.

Vertical streaks of blood have dried to dark red pools on the floor.

The Artist turns around and looks with his hands on his hips.

THE ARTIST

Yeah... That's Winston alright. He became a threat to our salvation, so I decided to make some art with him. This room was far too drab.

SHANE

What did he do?

THE ARTIST

All of a sudden felt guilty about his own creation and tried to destroy it. Couldn't stomach the responsibility.

Shane approaches Dr. Winston looking up at his corpse.

SHANE

(under his breath)

"I am become Death, the Destroyer of Worlds."

SHANE (cont'd)

How did you get him up so high?

THE ARTIST

Managed that feat with a machine the good doctor helped me create. Even more irony. You'll see soon enough. I'll be fighting beside you.

Shane lifts his eyebrows and turns to the Artist.

SHANE

You're going to fight?

THE ARTIST

(smiling)

Have a little faith. Like I said my friend. Partners.

SHANE

Speaking of. Have an idea to run by you. Might save some lives.

INT. TEENAGER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Angry Teenager and Lumbering Teenager sit on a couch that looks like rats have made their home. Light from the TV flickers on them in the anarchy poster filled room.

ANGRY TEENAGER

I'm gonna get my brother's gats and kill that bitch and her dog... Blow up that house.

An ice pack rests on the Angry Teenager's sore groin. Lumbering Teenager removes a damp rag from his swollen pink eyes and looks to his friend.

LUMBERING TEENAGER

Shut the hell up. No, you're not.

ANGRY TEENAGER

I will. I mean it.

The TV starts blaring an emergency alert tone. The Artist's logo, orange stripe with two dots, appears on the screen.

ANGRY TEENAGER (cont'd)

What the hell is this?

LUMBERING TEENAGER

It's him! Shut up!

The symbol fades to reveal the painted face of the Artist himself. The two boys' gape.

THE ARTIST (TV)

Good evening citizens of the free world. Those of you who don't know me, do not be frightened. I come to you as a representative of all people, the embodiment of free will, and the resistance of oppression. Your governments have lost control of you, and they are scared. They are scared of your ideas, your desires, your will, and your needs as a product of the ever-evolving mind. Through threats of death and destruction they will attempt to weaponize fear against us just to veil their own fears of losing control.

Images of Operation Unity drone armies in formation and invasion plan documents briefly flash on the screen.

THE ARTIST (TV) (cont'd)

How you ask? After a catastrophic war, society will be trapped with a camera in every home. A gun trained on every citizen. Constantly under the foot of those in power...

(MORE)

THE ARTIST (TV) (cont'd)
 But look at the position we have put
 them in. Since the dawn of the
 Donnigan Power Cell, we have been
 spiraling out of their control.

Images of riots, advanced weapons, human modifications and
 explosions occupy the screen.

THE ARTIST (TV) (cont'd)
 It is apparent that this power cannot
 be sustained in the politician's
 world, so we must take it away before
 they use it against us.

Screen shifts back to the Artist.

THE ARTIST (TV) (cont'd)
 I come to you with good news. We are
 going to stop them. I'm ridding the
 world of the hell the donny-cell has
 brought to our doorstep, and bringing
 us back to a simpler time. My people,
 E-day is in three days. Do not be in
 the air, do not be at sea, do not be
 on the road if you value your life.
 The next stage of humanity is here.
 Will you be part of it?

The TV changes back to the crude show the teenagers were
 watching.

LUMBERING TEENAGER
 It's really happening.

EXT. BEACH - DUSK

BEGIN SHANE'S DREAM

Shane walks along an ocean shoreline during a saturated
 sunset. Waves crash behind gusts of wind.

He stops and looks out at the sun behind the clouds, taking
 in the brilliant view.

A shadowy figure out on the water catches his attention.
 Backlit by the sun, this silhouette is walking on water.

Shane walks towards the figure. Water crashes against his
 ankles, then his waist as he wades in. He gets deep enough
 that he needs to swim.

A smooth stone emerges out of the water in front of him. He
 grabs it, realizes it is sturdy, and climbs on top.

Other large stones rise from beneath the water to form a path straight to the silhouette and the setting sun.

Shane jumps from stone to stone until he is face to face with the Artist. He stands on no stone. The dwindling orange sun lights half of both figures.

THE ARTIST

Shall we?

The Artist waves Shane along as he begins to walk along the horizon. Water ripples under his effortless steps.

New black stones emerge along the path.

Shane frantically jumps from one stone to the next to keep up with the Artist, but they become farther apart and smaller in size.

The Artist begins to run and the sun set quickens until Shane is left alone in total darkness, balancing on a stone.

SHANE

Wait!

An oversized full moon rises from behind the reflective ocean. A deep horn ripples the water in unison.

Shane stares in wonder as the moon's elevation rapidly increases.

The bellowing of the horn morphs into a quiet and beautiful soprano voice singing an angelic melody.

He turns to look forward again. Claire and Jasmine now stand on the water in front of him, just out of arm's reach.

The moon continues to rise up into the sky until it's directly above them. A spotlight on where they stand.

Shane finds his balance and becomes calm looking at his family. He smiles in bliss at the sight of them.

JASMINE

Open your eyes.

General Crawford suddenly emerges behind them from the darkness. She forcefully covers both Jasmine and Claire's mouths with her hands.

All three disappear into the dark water below, leaving only a small ripple of water where they stood.

SHANE

No!

Shane dives off the stone into the water in pursuit. He swims towards a dim light underwater.

The light fades and he is wrapped in darkness.

JASMINE (O.S.)

Open your eyes...

He runs out of air. Water fills his lungs. He seizes and struggles until his body goes still and eyes turn lifeless.

END SHANE'S REAL DREAM

EXT. MEADOW - DAY - CONTINUOUS

BEGIN SHANE'S PERCEIVED DREAM CONTINUATION

Shane opens his eyes. Mikaela's hand, not his own, pats the ground on top of a familiar grassy hill. He watches himself sit down and looks out at the landscape in front of them.

SHANE

The air up here does feel nice.

MIKAELA

That's the spirit. Question for you.

SHANE

Great.

MIKAELA

Have any friends?

SHANE

What do you think?

MIKAELA

You have Ted and I. Must be others.

SHANE

We're friends now?

MIKAELA

Come on. We're getting on so well. We just took down a gang... Who else?

SHANE

Only other person I would consider a friend is the one who put me in this suit. The one who made me into this.

MIKAELA

What's his name?

SHANE

Delroy.

INT. CHATEAU - WAR ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Shane's view flashes to a dark vent.

Mikaela's labored breathing can be heard as she peers through a grate at the Artist speaking in front of a crowd.

THE ARTIST

Days away people. And we still have a shortage of pre-donny weapons at the ready.

END SHANE'S PERCEIVED DREAM CONTINUATION

INT. CHATEAU - SHANE'S ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Shane feels around and grabs his bedsheets as the video feed continues to play over his contact lenses.

He puts his hand in front of his face but can't see anything other than the footage Mikaela recorded with her glasses.

He sits up breathing heavily unavoidably watching the Artist outline his secret plan. World map with bases shown clearly. The video shows the Artist shoot the ear off of Cedric.

The feed cuts and Shane's blue eyes are revealed once again. He looks around the room taking in his actual surroundings.

SHANE

Mikaela.

INT. DELROY'S HOUSE - DAY

DELROY

And that should do it.

Delroy double taps his keyboard cutting the feed before Shane's harrowing slog through the museum.

MIKAELA

How do you know it worked?

DELROY

I know he was conscious because of the particular movements of this indicator.

Delroy points to a wave pattern on one of his many monitors. Mikaela stares blankly at the screen.

DELROY (cont'd)

It measures the activity of Shane's eyes which tells me if he is awake or asleep. I sent the data as soon as it switched to conscious patterns. Most likely time that he would be alone.

MIKAELA

I see. You are one smart frickin' guy, Delroy.

DELROY

Now what do we do?

She ignores him, absorbed in the sophisticated tech, various screens and science fiction knickknacks on his desk.

An out of place set of antique car keys sitting in a wooden bowl catches her attention.

DELROY (cont'd)

Mikaela?

MIKAELA

(laughing)

You're asking me?

DELROY

Yeah... I mean, this entire scheme was your proposition.

MIKAELA

This is about as far as my plan goes. It's up to Shane now. I trust him.

DELROY

Trust him to do what?

MIKAELA

The right thing.

DELROY

And what would that be?

MIKAELA

Hell if I know. The world is going to burn one way or another. I trust Shane to choose the how and the why.

Delroy becomes distraught in disbelief.

DELROY

We have to do something. The government has to know.

MIKAELA

The Artist has people everywhere. Even if you knew someone trustworthy, you would be all but guaranteeing Operation Unity goes off without a hitch. Is that any easier to live with? Your eleventh-hour confession would probably just get us both killed.

Delroy sighs and covers his face with his hands.

DELROY

Cannot be responsible for this. I have to tell someone.

He reaches for his phone and Mikaela grabs it.

MIKAELA

No! Wait. There is no harm in waiting to see what Shane does. If he kills the Artist and exposes him, we'll know and we can go from there.

DELROY

If he doesn't?

MIKAELA

Then we trust his judgment.

DELROY

You just told me the Artist has influence over him. What if this isn't enough evidence of his animus?

He silently paces around his office for several moments with his hands either on his hips or masking his face. Mikaela watches him rack his brain.

Delroy suddenly snaps his fingers.

DELROY (cont'd)
I have the inception of a plan to stop him from getting his pre-donny weapons. The criteria is to make sure it won't get us killed or affect Shane's decision right?

MIKAELA
I can live with that. How?

DELROY
Where to begin. Let's just skip to "I'm a smart frickin'" guy.

MIKAELA
It's like that, huh?

DELROY
It is like that.

Delroy manages a smile. Mikaela grants him an amused smirk.

MIKAELA
Alright doc. I've done my part.

She begins to gather her things into her pack yet again and puts on her oversized army jacket that intentionally covers her outfit.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
Time for me to ride into the sunset.

DELROY
You know you can stay.

MIKAELA
I appreciate it, but I have a spot. It's safe and remote. Hoping to find my brother waiting for me.

She bends down, pets Ted and kisses him on the head.

MIKAELA (cont'd)
Good-bye handsome boy. Make sure Delroy doesn't do anything stupid.

She looks up at Delroy with a friendly yet threatening look. He returns a nervous smile scratching his arm.

Mikaela hikes up her pack then opens the front door and steps outside. Delroy follows behind.

FRONT YARD

DELROY

Listen, Mikaela, there is one more thing you need to know.

She reaches the sidewalk and looks back.

DELROY (cont'd)

If this E.M.P. works... it will kill Shane.

Mikaela gazes back at him then looks down. Pain on her face.

MIKAELA

He knows this?

DELROY

He does.

MIKAELA

Hm...

She turns her back to Delroy completely for a moment.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

Damn it Delroy... Why would you design it that way?

DELROY

Only way it would work. Sorry.

Mikaela doesn't look at Delroy again. Eyes well. She bites her lip.

MIKAELA

Doesn't change a thing. He'll do what is right and find a way to protect himself. I know he will.

She starts walking down the sidewalk.

MIKAELA (cont'd)

Good-bye, Delroy.

DELROY

Bye...

A somber Delroy watches Mikaela walk away.

He returns to his home and bends down to pet Ted. The door swings closed and locks automatically.

From the street, a car with tinted windows lights up and begins down the road in Mikaela's direction. A familiar Stoic Gangster in reflective sunglasses at the wheel.

INT. CHATEAU - DINING ROOM - DAY

Classical MUSICIANS gracefully play in the Artist's lavishly prepared hall. The setting sun beams in.

Elite acolytes eat and drink with delight. Many familiar faces present since the beginning, having been baptized in pig's blood. Adam's blood.

Cedric, now with a brand new ear, sits at the right hand of the Artist at the head of the table. He bites into a juicy turkey leg and sips a glistening golden ale.

The Artist sets his fork down by a spinach salad and watches the large man indulge with a smile.

He rises from his seat with his wine glass and clinks it for attention.

THE ARTIST

Thank you all for joining me on this quest to preserve our freedom.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The setting sun glistens on a field of skyscrapers.

THE ARTIST (O.S.)

They thought they could just crack the whip and no one would be quick enough to catch it.

Among the buildings, an unassuming rooftop opens up like a camera aperture and a slew of turrets rise into position.

A garrison of soldiers move about the roof to their posts.

THE ARTIST (O.S.)

But I am going to take that whip and bring them to their knees in one thunderous crack. E-Day is here.

INT. DOUGHNUT SHOP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The unsuspecting door labeled "Closet" in the back of "Hinny's Holes" swings open. A squad of acolyte soldiers flood into the empty shop.

They pull down metal barricades from the ceiling over the glass storefront. Shield walls are activated and barricades setup in several rows where riflemen mount heavy artillery.

THE ARTIST (O.S.)

We will pave the way as founding members in this new era. We will awaken in our beds tomorrow morning as god-kings and queens.

INT/EXT. LONDON WAREHOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A GNARLED SERGEANT hands a pre-donny AK-47 and 9mm pistol to a SCRUFFY CIVILIAN in tattered clothes. He smiles and nods.

A line of MILITIAMEN behind the Scruffy Civilian winds through the massive warehouse to the outside where London's Palace of Westminster waits in the distance.

THE ARTIST (O.S.)

Tomorrow, our armies will rise from the ashes of this world to take control of every major city without a shred of resistance.

INT/EXT. MISSILE SILO - DAY - CONTINUOUS

From inside a silo, a YOUNG TECHNICIAN with thick glasses tinkers with an old analog interface on a nuclear missile.

We leave the inside of one silo to the outside where a field of identical silos lay dormant.

THE ARTIST (O.S.)

U.S. and Chinese military targets will be destroyed by our warheads without them knowing what hit them.

INT. CHATEAU - DINING ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

THE ARTIST

And none of this would be possible without each and every one of you at this table. Truly powerful you all are... To you!

He raises his glass and takes a drink. The table follows.

A wall of reinforced glass lowers from the ceiling to separate the Artist from his dinner guests.

CEDRIC

Another performance before our victory?

THE ARTIST

Oh yes. It's all a performance. Let's call this piece "Adam's Revenge."

The musicians stop playing and exit through a side door.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Unfortunately... it seems none of you powerful people have learned a thing from all my hard work.

Heavy metal shutters cover the windows blotting out the sun. The table of leaders stir in their seats and look at one another in panic.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

You didn't really think I was going to hand power back to a litter of corrupt politicians and greedy criminals, did you?

Cedric rises from his chair and bangs on the glass.

CEDRIC

What is this?

The Artist's eyes meet the arms dealer's.

THE ARTIST

All I really need now is your people, who answer to me now. Remember, I'm a people person.

Suddenly, a wide false wall rotates open and unleashes a monstrous horde of wild boars. They squeal as they charge.

The stampede shakes the great hall as the crowd of elitists scream and try to run away from the table.

The boars are on top of the guests in an instant, ripping them to pieces with their tusks and teeth.

Cedric repeatedly tries to break through the glass with a hefty knife. The Artist looks on in the path of the blade.

He gives Cedric a wave as a boar sinks its tusks into Cedric's calf and pulls him into the frenzy.

The boars continue to feast as the Artist exits the dining hall stage right.

INT. CHATEAU - SHANE'S ROOM - DAY

Metal shutters descend on Shane's view of the setting sun as the building prepares for war.

He moves an unfamiliar phone from his ear to a case on his belt next to his armadillo blade.

He takes a swig of whiskey from a tumbler and puts on his denim jacket.

A knock comes to his door. Shane opens it.

THE ARTIST

Let's go be heroes.

INT. CHATEAU - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Shane and the Artist walk down a narrow hallway lined with the Artist's most dangerous cyberpunk acolytes. A security door awaits them at the end of the hall.

The Artist gives enthusiastic high-fives and shakes hands like a celebrity walking the red carpet.

Shane remains stoic. Punk Rocker pats him on the shoulder as he passes with no response.

They reach the reinforced door to the E.M.P. room at the end of the hall. The Artist turns to his groupies.

THE ARTIST

Watch the door will you?

The soldiers roar like Spartans ready to fight the Persians at the Hot Gates.

The duo disappears behind the heavy door. It locks.

INT. CHATEAU - E.M.P. ROOM - NIGHT

SHANE

They are all going to die.

THE ARTIST

What an exciting way to go out. We should all be so lucky.

The E.M.P. room is an empty canvas besides the painting "The Scream," which now hangs on the opposite wall to the rotting Vitruvian Dr. Winston.

The Artist strolls over to the simple control panel in front of the webbed dome E.M.P.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Here we go.

He flips the switch labeled "Charge." The bulb turns orange.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Time to put on my armor.

He takes out a small tablet from his inside jacket pocket and presses a button.

On the wall where Dr. Winston rots, a panel wall opens to reveal the Artist's mechanical monster.

The black and crimson armor-plated machine stands ten feet tall with the proportions of a great ape.

He presses another button on his tablet and the chest opens to a cockpit. He climbs into it with a boyish grin.

A red combat interface displays everything in front of the Artist's wide eyes.

He maneuvers the beast with precision into the center of the room next to Shane who only gives a nod.

SHANE

It'll do.

The building rumbles. Shane looks up.

THE ARTIST

I've waited so long to hear this melody.

EXT. CHATEAU - NIGHT

Explosions riddle the sky as rooftop auto-turrets intercept precision missile strikes.

Blue and red sirens light the streets on the ground level as local Peacekeepers flood the fortified store front of "Hinny's Holes."

Turret fire from windows of the Chateau rains down on the outgunned police force. Three cars explode in a symphony of fireballs.

Chaos surrounds the Chateau. The Artist's forces hold.

EXT. NEW YORK SKY - NIGHT

High up in the clouds, a stealth drone cuts through the air beyond the speed of sound.

Three shadows eject from the belly of the drone, descending on New York City.

The three figures release wing suits and steer towards the beacon of fireworks at the Chateau.

EXT. CHATEAU - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The Dunamis armored soldiers soar above the street approaching the Chateau head on.

Turret fire ricochets off their armor. They blast a hole in the side of the building and deploy parachutes. With forward momentum, they enter the gap and roll to a stop.

The three powerhouses immediately shred a squad of acolytes.

Drake scans the building and identifies where the E.M.P. room is. He signals Mitsuo and a new COMMANDO, a wiry woman with one robotic arm covered in Dunamis matter.

DRAKE

This way.

INT. CHATEAU - E.M.P. ROOM - NIGHT

A ceiling tile falls to the ground with a crash as the building quakes.

Shane and the Artist stand at the ready in the middle of the spacious white room staring at the heavy metal door.

They listen as the sound of gunfire, screams and thuds from behind the door moves closer.

Shane draws one of his white pistols in his left and unravels his armadillo blade in his right.

The Artist raises his massive ape arm and aims at the door. A bright light buzzes from the center of its palm.

The sounds of havoc behind the door fades. One last scream. Thud.

Silence.

The door explodes off its hinges and the masked trio enters through the smoke.

The Artist fires a powerful energy cannon from his palm into Mitsuo. His assault rifle shatters and he's sent back into the hall of acolyte corpses.

Shane pounces on Drake with pistol fire. The Commando rushes at the source of the blast -- the great ape.

Drake is overwhelmed by Shane's sword and gun combo onslaught. Blue shock waves ping from each impact.

Shane manages to damage Drake's plated mask before Mitsuo enters the fray with his own blade. The three engage in a choreographed dance of super human martial arts.

The Commando blasts the heavily armored ape with an energy shotgun. The charges do minimal damage. The Artist counters the Commando with a palm blast but misses as she rolls.

Shane lands several powerful slashes to Drake's helmet knocking several plates clean off in an electrical spark.

In a masterful series of moves, Shane kicks Mitsuo across the room, tears the remaining plates off Drake's mask with his hand and spins around with his blade to sever his head.

Meanwhile, the Artist connects with a cannon blast launching the Commando against the reinforced glass.

He tries to ground pound her to dust but she dodges and draws two energy knives. She lodges them into the mechanical elbow joint and twists to sever the robotic forearm.

Mitsuo assists with a powerful jump kick to the chest denting the armor and sending the beast to the ground.

The Commando goes to stab the wounded ape in the heart with her searing blade but Shane catches her wrist. He lands a haymaker sending her to the other side of the room.

Mitsuo helps the Commando to her feet. Her plated mask disjoints from the powerful punch.

Shane stands ready, sword and gun in hand, between them and the Artist.

He rushes.

The Commando stands calmly and retracts her mask revealing her bloodied face. The face of his mother, General Crawford.

Shane's eyes widen in shock. His attack is interrupted as Mitsuo lands a powerful punch to his exposed face. Blood and teeth eject as he stumbles hard to the ground.

Crawford extends a hand and stops Mitsuo from continuing his assault.

Shane struggles to his feet in a daze.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Good. I was worried you wouldn't survive a single punch.

Shane shakes off the hit. Fury fills his face.

SHANE

What the hell are you doing here?

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Saving you from yourself. You can still walk out of here. It's not too late.

SHANE

You killed them.

Crawford's eyes widen and her features soften.

Shane yells with rage this time and charges again.

Crawford returns her mask and draws her energy blades.

This time, Shane's focus isn't interrupted as the three dance in a flurry of blue impacts and lightning fast dodges.

Shane holds his own but is eventually overwhelmed and takes another blow to the face from Mitsuo. Broken jaw, eye swollen, he battles on.

The Artist charges into the fray and tackles Mitsuo against the wall. He drags him across the cracking tile and tosses him to the other side of the arena in chase.

Shane and Crawford, out of breath, face one another. Alone.

SHANE (cont'd)

Your own grand daughter.

The General's mask withdraws again to reveal a hint of remorse in her stoic features.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

She wasn't supposed to be there.

Shane scoffs.

SHANE

... And you thought coming yourself would give you the advantage. The master tactician...

GENERAL CRAWFORD

I am sorry Shane. I would take it back if I could... But look at you! You're a god thanks to me.

SHANE

No! I'm a monster, just like you.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Enough! Just stop. Can't you see he will ruin this world.

Shane takes a ready stance with his blade.

GENERAL CRAWFORD (cont'd)

Shane don't. I can't hold back anymore.

Her mask returns to position.

SHANE

Good. I can't either.

Shane charges her with his blade and meets her two crossed daggers in the air with a flash.

The Artist rampages in his sparking mech at Mitsuo, who skillfully dodges and retreats.

In an endless string of attacks and counters, Crawford and Shane engage in a deadly mother son dance.

Finally, Shane bats one of her blades away and lands a powerful swing to her mask, jarring the plates.

She stumbles back and Shane takes full advantage landing more devastating blows and knocking her second blade away.

He grabs her by the throat and slams her against the tile wall. He tears the plates away to reveal her bloodied, fear filled face.

Shane continues to choke her for several seconds as she kicks and struggles. He fights with only himself.

He drops her to the ground. She coughs blood and sucks air.

SHANE (cont'd)
Witness your creation.

He turns and runs towards Mitsuo and the Artist, scooping up one of Crawford's blades to pair with his sword.

Mitsuo has gained the upper hand and is on top of the great ape pounding at the hull. The Artist shields his face from sparks and metal indents closing in.

Shane kicks Mitsuo off the Artist and begins a flurry of slashing attacks that Mitsuo struggles to defend.

Shane backs him against the wall with nowhere to go.

He goes for the killing blow with Crawford's blade. Mitsuo catches it as the tip nears his eye.

They both YELL as the blade cracks the glass of the mask and presses into Mitsuo's eye. He goes limp and drops to the ground with Crawford's blade still in his head.

The chest of the great ape suit busts open with a CLANK as the Artist kicks it. He rises from the wreckage.

He looks at Shane with a grin who returns a nod.

The Artist scans the room to find Crawford still crawling in the corner.

THE ARTIST
Just one last threat.

He marches towards her position drawing his modified revolver. Aims for her head.

A blue blur flashes in front of the Artist as Shane throws his sword like a tomahawk cutting the Artist's hand clean off just before the shot is fired.

The Artist wails in pain and falls backwards to the ground.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
Ah! What have you done!

He pulls a metal disc-shaped device from his jacket pocket and places it over his bleeding stump. It instantly seals around his wound like leftovers wrapped in foil.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
How can you defend her after all she's done?

SHANE

She won't die by your hand.

THE ARTIST

You've made that clear... I thought we were partners.

SHANE

Yeah me too... I know what you're planning. You want war, just like her, and you used me, just like she did. You became the very thing you claim to be fighting against.

THE ARTIST

Spare me! What freedom would be lacking with me in charge? I would only be in power to ensure no more politicians rose up again.

SHANE

You're so full of shit.

Moments pass with no response from the Artist. The orange light on the E.M.P. interface changes to green reflecting off Shane as he stands between the Artist and his prize.

The Artist drags himself to his feet, panting from exhaustion and blood loss. He attempts to straighten his tie with his one hand, then smirks at Shane.

THE ARTIST

I have conjured a new cap for power, haven't I? I'll share it with you Shane... You, the white knight, will balance out my worst inclinations... Just press the button.

SHANE

No. I won't allow it.

THE ARTIST

Then why fight? What are you doing here?

Shane unbuttons the holster for the phone on his belt, makes a call and puts it to his ear.

SHANE

(to phone)

Is it done?

A voice on the line speaks and Shane smirks at the Artist.

THE ARTIST

What is this?

SHANE

(to phone)

Good. You still want to find me when this is finished?

Another quiet response on the other end.

SHANE (TO PHONE)

You know where I'll be. Good-bye my friend.

Shane hangs up the phone and returns it to his belt.

SHANE

You've lost. Your nukes. Your bases across the globe. All destroyed.

THE ARTIST

Impossible.

SHANE

That was Delroy. He has the locations of every one of your bases. And he notified the C.I.A. and they've bombed them all to hell.

THE ARTIST

(scoffs)

You lie!

SHANE

Mikaela crashed your party the other day. Recorded the map. Gave it to Delroy.

Crawford squeezes out a laugh from the ground.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

It's true... He would know exactly who to tell.

The Artist boils for a moment but closes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

A menacing smile crawls back onto his face.

THE ARTIST

I really should thank you, Shane. Even now, you've saved me from myself. You've helped me transcend my weaknesses as I once did for you.

(MORE)

THE ARTIST (cont'd)
(turns to Crawford)
And ultimately I still win, general.
Your boy is still going to push that
button.

Crawford looks to Shane for a response.

SHANE
Unity has to be stopped. I'm sorry.

The Artist cackles.

THE ARTIST
This change of plans is almost worth
it to see the look on her face.

Shane diverts his eyes from Crawford and takes a step
towards the button.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
You're going to let him live?

SHANE
He's no longer a threat.

Another step.

GENERAL CRAWFORD
Wait! Son wait... I can put a stop to
Unity.

Shane turns to get a read on Crawford's claim.

THE ARTIST
No! She's lying. Push the button.
Finish it!

GENERAL CRAWFORD
I'm not. It's as you said. He's no
longer a threat. His influence will
end. I'll have enough sway to stop
Unity... You did it son. We can all
walk out of here.

Shane looks towards the button in thought. A moment of
silence allows muted noise in from the war outside.

THE ARTIST
Do you hear all the lives being
sacrificed for this moment? We can't
let it pass.

SHANE

Stopping Unity is the ultimate goal right? I want to hear her out.

THE ARTIST

Don't make me do this...

SHANE

Do what?

The Artist reaches into his jacket.

Shane draws his left pistol and fires a charge into his shoulder. The Artist winces but manages a smile.

THE ARTIST

Not fast enough I'm afraid.

"Open" reads on the tablet screen as it hits the floor.

THE ARTIST (cont'd)

Don't worry... It's not a remote detonator, but it might as well be.

His smile vanishes as pain takes hold from the wound.

Another large panel in the wall opens, revealing a nightmare to Shane.

Mikaela is restrained in a robotic torture device that grips her arms, legs, and neck.

MIKAELA

(whispers)

Shane.

Shane's devastated facial expression reassures the Artist. He rushes to her and examines the device.

SHANE

I'll get you out of there.

THE ARTIST

Ope, be careful! It'll activate if you tamper with it... I call it Saturn. It will devour her in three minutes if you don't push that button and will release her if you do push it... Tick tock.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

We can get her out of that, Shane. Don't let him control you.

Shane's face turns from frantic to calm looking into Mikaela's broken eyes.

MIKAELA

Not for me.

Shane puts his hand to her wet cheek and smiles.

SHANE

You're enough.

He kisses her on the forehead and walks towards Crawford. He stares daggers at the Artist and raises a finger to him, signaling he just needs a moment.

SHANE (cont'd)

(to the Artist)

You win.

The Artist grins through his pain. Shane reaches Crawford's position.

SHANE (cont'd)

I'm sorry, mom. There is no stopping what's coming.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

We'll both die. You know that.

SHANE

I do.

Shane turns his back to her holding his pistol in his hands.

SHANE (cont'd)

You said you would take it back if you could. Did you mean it?

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Of course.

SHANE

I'm going to give you a choice in our final moments. The choice of a soldier, the gift of revenge and an honorable death... Or the choice of a monster, and death nonetheless.

He turns around to face her. The Artist's eyes widen in fear.

SHANE (cont'd)

Are you ready?

He looks down at the pistol and back to her. She understands what he's going to do.

THE ARTIST

What are you doing?

Shane tosses the pistol towards her. It hangs in the air.

She catches it. Holds for a moment.

Aims at Mikaela's head.

Click.

Click. Click. Click.

Shane holds up the donny-cell for the gun. Sadness in his eyes.

GENERAL CRAWFORD

Wait!

Shane draws his other pistol from his right sleeve. BLAST!
He puts a hole in her head.

He holds the aim on his mother's corpse for several seconds.
Then it swings back to his side like a heavy pendulum.

The Artist lights up in delight.

THE ARTIST

Bravo!

BLAST! Another round fires into the Artist's face. He flops
to the ground.

Even the war outside seems to quiet for a moment.

Shane walks back over to Mikaela.

SHANE

Delroy will be here soon. Take him
with you.

MIKAELA

Don't! Shane please just wait.

SHANE

You will have a fresh start. Don't
make the same mistakes.

MIKAELA

No! I won't let you.

Mikaela writhes desperately to get out of her restraints. Tears flow as her muscles battle the metal to no avail.

Shane holds her face in his hands.

SHANE

Hey! Hey... It's OK. Just breathe...
Thank you for opening my eyes.

She is stricken by a transformation in Shane. A genuine smile on his battered face... This calms her enough to muster only a nod. He kisses her once more on the forehead.

Shane rises and steps towards the E.M.P. Mikaela trembles as she watches him walk away, praying for a miracle.

He reaches the button and looks down at it in contemplation.

Two little hands grab his right arm and hug him tight. He looks down to see Jasmine grinning up at him with her sparkling brown eyes.

Tears stream down his pummeled face and he smiles. Claire kisses him on the cheek and puts her arms around his waist.

He closes his eyes and takes a slow, deep breath.

Then, with burning blue eyes wide open, he presses the button with a soft click.

There is no explosion or even a bang. Shane's eyes burn out to a peaceful brown as the lights go out.

Cut to black.

EXT. RAMSHACKLE CABIN - DAY

A bonfire crackles at dusk outside the familiar cabin.

Mikaela looks down at a modest wooden cross amidst some fresh dirt some distance from the fire.

Claire's silver cross and Jasmine's yellow dress fabric hang from the center post.

Mikaela is once again out of tears.

Ted sits at her side, as if also remembering their friend fondly.

Closer to the cabin, Delroy tinkers with the engine of a 1945 Chevy truck. He steps over to the fire to warm his hands after working with the cold metal.

Further away, Cy, a skinny bald man as pale as a corpse, feebly attempts to skip stones across the pond.

He lights up when he manages a single skip sending ripples across the still water.

Mikaela takes a deep breath and pops a cigarette into her mouth. She flicks on her lighter but stops before lighting her vice. Eyes locked on Shane's wooden grave marker.

Ted barks and gives chase after a squirrel.

Mikaela watches the dog run towards Delroy and her brother.

She takes the cigarette out of her mouth and smiles.

A breeze picks up and fall leaves drift across the yard.

Mikaela steps forward towards her new found family with a look of hope, tossing the cigarettes in the fire as she passes by.

She approaches her brother at the water's edge.

THE END