

MOUNTAIN FALLS

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. CAR - MOVING - DAY

JAMES DURANT(27), average looking, working man, drives down a mountain road while his wife NINA DURANT(26), short and cute, classic features, beams at him from the passenger seat.

NINA  
Are you excited?

JAMES  
Of course I'm excited. You need to take it easy though. We can't seem too excited in front of the realtor.

NINA  
(teasingly)  
Okay, Mr. Serious.

Nina pokes James.

JAMES  
(chuckles)  
Stop it. I am serious. These people can spot a sucker from a mile away. Play hard to get.  
(beat)  
You know... like you did with me.

They both laugh.

NINA  
Oh please. You chased me for what, like a day and a half?

JAMES  
Well, that's a long time for a young, sex crazy, devilishly handsome young man.

NINA  
I'll give you sex crazy.

Nina tries to tickle James but he beats her to the punch. They laugh.

OUTSIDE THE CAR

Their car speeds by a huge welcome sign, which reads:  
"Welcome To Mountain Falls"

EXT. HOUSE - PORCH - LATER

DEBBIE(43), the realtor, looks her age, too much makeup, stands in the doorway and waves.

The Durants' car pulls up to a stunning two-story home, with warm yellow siding, an expansive covered porch, and cozy white shutter-framed windows.

James and Nina hop out of the car and go up to greet Debbie.

DEBBIE

Hello. My name is Debbie.

Debbie extends her hand.

JAMES

Nice to meet you, Debbie. I'm James.

(Re: Nina)

This is my wife Nina.

NINA

Hi there.

The three shake hands.

DEBBIE

I hope the place wasn't too hard to find.

JAMES

Not at all.

DEBBIE

Good. Well, lets go and take a look at the house, shall we. There is a covered porch on the front and back, and the whole house has a fresh coat of paint.

Nina already looks way too excited. James shakes his head.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The three of them step inside.

The living room is huge. Floor-to-ceiling windows. Hardwood floors. And a fireplace with detailed rock work.

DEBBIE

All of the floors are the original hardwood.

(MORE)

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

The house was built over fifty years ago, so they are in really good shape, considering.

NINA

I love the floors.

JAMES

They're quite beautiful. And I like the tall windows.

DEBBIE

Yes. They provide a ton of natural light. And the fireplace has beautiful custom rock work.

JAMES

I see. Very nice.

Nina teasingly smiles at James.

DEBBIE

Good. Well, do you want to see more?

They continue on with the tour.

BEDROOM #1 - MOMENTS LATER

The bedroom is cute. Light yellow paint. Average size.

James, Nina and Debbie enter from the hall.

DEBBIE

The wood floors continue throughout almost the entire house with the exception of the bedrooms, each of which have all new carpet.

NINA

Awe, this would make a perfect nursery.

DEBBIE

You have children?

JAMES

Not yet...

NINA

But we're trying.

DEBBIE

Well, you will have plenty of room to raise a family here. There are four bedrooms, one downstairs that was used for an office, and three upstairs, including the master.

NINA

Oh! Lets go see the master bedroom!

DEBBIE

Okay. The rest of the bedrooms are pretty much the same anyway.

James shoots Nina a look.

MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The master bedroom is gorgeous. Tope paint. High ceilings. A little window seat. And the whole room seems to funnel into a showcase master bathroom.

NINA

Oh my gosh, baby! Look at this window seat, how cute.

DEBBIE

Beautiful isn't it?

After a brief moment with the view from the window seat, Nina is immediately drawn to the bathroom.

MASTER BATHROOM

Centered tub between two custom made vanities. Custom tile. Walk in shower.

Nina enters like a kid in a candy store.

NINA

Look at this bathroom. A walk-in shower! James look at this! And look at this bathtub.

(strokes the tub's edge)

Very nice.

Debbie and James follow behind.

DEBBIE

There are his and her's walk-in closets at the end there too.

Debbie points to the end of the bathroom at the two doors.  
James inspects like he's a professional.

DEBBIE  
So what do you think?

NINA  
I love it!

JAMES  
Yes. It's quite beautiful. But it's  
a little out of our price range.

Nina gives James a look.

James sends her a look right back and she sticks her tongue  
out at him.

DEBBIE  
Why don't we go and check out the  
kitchen.

Debbie leads the way.

KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

The three enter the kitchen through a wood-trimmed archway.  
Custom cabinets. Updated stainless-steel appliances.

JAMES  
Now this... is nice. Hickory  
cabinets. Granite counter-tops. And  
look at this wine-rack.  
(rubs the wine cabinet)  
Beautiful.

DEBBIE  
So you like it then?

NINA  
James is a cabinet maker.

DEBBIE  
Oh, how nice.

They move on to the dining room.

DINING ROOM

Deep red paint. Crystal chandelier. And one massive floor-to-  
ceiling window.

Outside the window is a grand mountain.

James and Nina are immediately drawn to the view outside. They pause for a moment, in awe of the giant rock formation, and admire the mountain for it's true magnitude.

NINA  
It's awesome.

JAMES  
Yeah it is.

James and Nina slowly turn and face Debbie.

NINA/JAMES  
We'll take it.

Debbie smiles.

James and Nina turn in a trance to stare out at the mountain.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - HALF WAY UP - DAY

James and Nina are suspended by climbing ropes and pulley rigs. James is anchored above Nina, he waits for her to catch up.

JAMES  
(yells down)  
Come on, slowpoke. You're like turtles.

NINA  
(yells back)  
Shut up, you big jerk. You're going to make me fall.

JAMES  
You big wuss.

Nina gives James a look and playfully sighs.

MOUNTAIN PLATEAU - LATER

James and Nina reach a plateau about three quarters up the mountain. James helps Nina up onto the ledge.

They embrace each other as they take in the amazing view. The whole town is visible from their high vantage point.

NINA  
(points down)  
Look! You can see our house.

James looks down to see what now looks like a toy Lego house from their high vantage point.

JAMES  
(sarcastically)  
So that's all a couple hundred thousand can get you, huh?

Nina playfully nudges him.

After they enjoy the scenery for a beat they sit down for some back-packed lunch.

NINA  
It's so beautiful up here.

JAMES  
It is.

NINA  
You want to just live up here?

JAMES  
Sure. I think we forgot the tent though.

NINA  
Oh well. We'll just keep each other warm.

They smile at each other.

NINA  
Maybe we can renew our vows here.

JAMES  
Oh, yeah. I can see your dad now, climbing this bad boy just to give you away to me, again. I don't think he wanted to give you up the first time.

(beat)  
Oh, and I'm sure the pastor wouldn't mind the climb.

They laugh.

NINA  
Nah, he wouldn't mind. And my dad loves you. You always say that.

JAMES

Well?

NINA

Well nothing. He does. Now stop it.

Silence for a moment.

NINA

Maybe we can renew our own vows.

JAMES

What?

NINA

Right now, ourselves.

JAMES

Oh come on, I'm tired.

NINA

What? I think it's been long enough.

JAMES

It's been like three months. Do we have to?

Nina stands up.

NINA

Come on, you big baby. Get up.

Nina pulls James to his feet.

JAMES

Alright, alright.

NINA

Okay, lets see... umm...

JAMES

You got nothing, huh?

NINA

Shut up! I have something. Lets see...

JAMES

You said that already.

Nina hits James in the arm.

NINA

Stop it.

JAMES

Okay, I'll stop. Go ahead.

They laugh a little then Nina composes herself.

NINA

I, Nina, promise to love you,  
cherish you, uh... snuggle you,  
and... punch you in the belly when  
you get out of line.

They both laugh.

NINA

(laughing)

Okay, it's your turn.

JAMES

That's it? That's all you got?

NINA

Lets see you do better.

JAMES

Okay, lets see. I, James, promise  
to love you more than the day we  
first met, and more and more there  
after.

(beat)

I promise to never bring a single  
tear of sadness to your eyes. And  
promise to never leave your side no  
matter what hardships may come our  
way.

(beat)

And if we are ever separated, even  
by the gates of hell, I will find  
my way back to you, and stand by  
you... forever.

NINA

Mmmm. I love you.

JAMES

I love you too.

They kiss long and soft.

They stop kissing and James looks deep into Nina's eyes.

CUT TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK:

The sound of HEAVY RAIN and rumbles of THUNDER.

FADE IN:

INT. DURANTS' HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT

The RAIN and the occasional rumble of THUNDER can be heard outside. Lighting flashes every few seconds, illuminating the dark hallway.

SUPER: "2 YEARS LATER"

The VOICES of Nina and James can be heard down the hall in the kitchen. They laugh and speak inaudibly.

We observe an assortment of framed memories on the wall as we approach the kitchen. Pictures of years past: birthdays; anniversaries; time spent with relatives; some hand-sketched portraits of Nina; and finally, a frame with a three-photo montage of two well composed maternity photos of Nina, and an ultrasound picture in the middle, with the title: "It's a GIRL!!"

Nina's voice can now be heard.

NINA (O.S.)  
Come on, silly! We're missing the  
lighting!

EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Lightning strikes and heavy rain pours all around.

James and now pregnant wife Nina can be seen through the sliding glass door to the porch.

They excitedly grab some popcorn and a blanket, exit the house, then take seats on two sling chairs at the end of the porch.

The couple snuggles in under the blanket. They laugh and kiss each other tenderly. It's a peaceful moment amongst the chaos of the storm.

They enjoy their snack and nature's light show when...

CRASH!!

A bolt of lightning strikes the earth right in front of them. It shatters the porch lattice and launches them both backwards.

James hits a stud of the porch and is knocked out cold.

Nina smashes through the lattice on the other side of the porch and lands hard in the mud.

Lightning flashes periodically, illuminating the scene. The storm-watchers lie still, seemingly lifeless.

INT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

James lies in a coma in a dimly lit room. Silence, except for the heart monitor and respirator.

The heart monitor starts to beep faster. James begins to sweat and breathe heavily.

INSERT: QUICK FLASH OF THE LIGHTNING STRIKE.

BACK TO SCENE

James opens his eyes and gasps. He looks around then begins to panic.

JAMES

Hello?...

(beat)

Is anyone there?...

(beat)

*SOMEBODY HELP ME!!*

INT. HOSPITAL EXAM ROOM - LATER

Bright white-on-white room. James sits in a wheelchair. He stares at the floor. Dr. Slate sits opposite of James asking questions.

DR. SLATE (O.S.)

Mr. Durant, my name is Dr. Slate. I have been caring for you and your wife for the past two weeks. You've been in a coma due to the shock you received from the accident.

James stares and says nothing.

DR. SLATE (O.S.)  
Mr. Durant, can you recall what  
happened?

James still says nothing.

DR. SLATE (O.S.)  
Mr. Durant, can you hear...

JAMES  
How long have I been here?

James looks up for the first time to see the doctor. DR.  
SLATE(53) is balding and quite large in stature.

DR. SLATE  
Two weeks, as I said before.

JAMES  
Where is here?

DR. SLATE  
My apologies. You are at Mountain  
Falls hospital in Crystal Springs,  
Washington.

James looks down again, he searches his mind.

JAMES  
What day is it?

DR. SLATE  
Today is Saturday, June fifteenth,  
two thousand and twelve.

JAMES  
How did I get here?

DR. SLATE  
You and your wife were flown in by  
helicopter. Your neighbors saw what  
happened and called nine-one-one.

James looks up, a look of concern on his face.

JAMES  
Is Nina alright?

DR. SLATE  
She's stable. She is still in a  
coma, but we are hopeful that she  
will wake up any time now, just as  
you did.

James tears up.

JAMES

And the baby?

DR. SLATE

The baby is fine. We had to do an emergency C-section the night you and your wife were flown in.

(beat)

I've never had to announce this kind of news under such circumstances before, but, you are now the father of a nine pound, four ounce baby girl.

(beat)

Congratulations.

James' lip quivers as he fights back some tears.

JAMES

And she's okay?

DR. SLATE

Yes. A healthy baby girl.

James smiles and the tears come flowing.

JAMES

Can I see her?

INT. HOSPITAL - NURSERY VIEWING WINDOW - MOMENTS LATER

James admires his new BABY GIRL(2 weeks), a full head of dirty blonde hair, through the viewing window of the nursery.

Dr. Slate approaches and rests a hand on James' shoulder.

DR. SLATE

She's quite beautiful.

JAMES

Yeah, she is.

DR. SLATE

What are you going to name her?

JAMES

(ponders for a moment)  
Gwendalynn.

DR. SLATE

That's a beautiful name.

They both take in the sight of new life for a moment. Dr. Slate breaks the silence.

DR. SLATE (CONT'D)  
 (softly)  
 Would you like to see your wife  
 now?

James touches the glass then looks at Dr. Slate and nods his head.

INT. HOSPITAL - NINA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Nina lies in a coma in a similar, dimly lit room. Her heart monitor beeps. Her respirator hisses.

James enters, the open door fills the room with light from the hallway. He slowly wheels his chair to her bedside and takes her hand in his.

JAMES  
 Hi, baby...  
 (beat)  
 It's me.

James starts to sob but fights it back.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
 The doc says you should wake up any  
 day now. I hope he's right.

James lowers his head and kisses her hand.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
 Guess what?  
 (beat)  
 You're a mommy.  
 (chokes up)  
 I named her Gwendalynn. I know it's  
 not one of the names we talked  
 about, but, she really looks like a  
 Gwen.  
 (smiles)  
 She's so pretty.

James wipes his eyes.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
 The doctor says I'll be here for a  
 few months while I go through  
 physical therapy. I'll visit you  
 often.  
 (beat)  
 (MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

Well I better go and look after our little girl now. I'll bring her in to see you later.

(beat)

I love you, Nina.

James kisses Nina on the cheek and leaves the room.

MONTAGE - JAMES TAKES CARE OF NINA AND GWENDALYNN

-- James taking care of Nina and Gwendalynn in the hospital.

-- James going through rehabilitation sessions.

-- Some of James' FAMILY visiting.

-- James getting to know Gwendalynn, playing with her on Nina's bed.

-- James sitting by Nina's side pleading with her to wake up.

-- James staring blankly out a hospital window.

END MONTAGE.

INT. HOSPITAL - NINA'S ROOM - DAY

James sits at Nina's side, he pleads for her to wake up.

JAMES

Please, baby. You have to wake up. I don't know if I can do this alone.

(beat)

I need you.

Dr. Slate enters from behind.

DR. SLATE

James?

JAMES

Yeah? Oh, hey doc.

DR. SLATE

James, you can't keep doing this to yourself. I know you want to be with her. But you must go on with your life.

(beat)

(MORE)

DR. SLATE (CONT'D)  
I think Nina would want it that way.

JAMES  
I know. It's just hard.

DR. SLATE  
I know it is. But you must go on, James. You have a baby girl now.

JAMES  
What if she wakes up?

DR. SLATE  
Then you will be the first to know. I promise. But you must understand, James. She could be in a coma for years, or possibly... forever.

JAMES  
(getting frustrated)  
You said five months ago she could wake up any day now.  
(beat)  
Do you remember saying that to me, doc?  
(beat)  
What happened to any day now?!?

DR. SLATE  
(remains calm)  
I'm sorry, James. We were hoping since you woke up...

JAMES  
You were hoping?!?

DR. SLATE  
Yes, James, just as you were. There are no treatments for Nina's condition. We have no choice but to just wait... and hope.

James takes one last look at Nina lying there silent and unresponsive.

INT. HOSPITAL - NINA'S ROOM - NEXT DAY

James just finishes packing up some clothes. He grabs Gwendalynn and sits by Nina.

Gwendalynn is able to sit up quite well on her own now.

JAMES

Well, baby, I have to go now. I know you'll come back to us soon. I'll try and visit twice a week, and I'll bring the baby always.

(to Gwen)

Say bye-bye to mommy, Gwendalynn.

(to Nina)

I love you, baby.

James kisses Nina on the cheek then gets up to leave. He just reaches the door when he hears Nina's voice.

NINA (O.S.)

(weakly)

James.

James is startled. He turns to see that Nina still lies there motionless. He walks over to her bed.

JAMES

Nina?

No response. James leans in closer.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Baby?

James is inches from her face when her eyes pop open. Pure white. She screams a horrible, unearthly scream.

INT. DURANT'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

James wakes up in a cold sweat. He gasps to catch his breath.

Gwendalynn coos and fusses on the baby monitor.

James calms down, wipes the sweat from his brow, then drags himself out of bed and goes to check on his baby girl.

BABY'S ROOM

A cute little room. The light yellow has been replaced with Pink-on-pink paint and decor. Typical baby girl's room for first time parents.

He finds Gwendalynn sitting up in her crib. She smiles up at daddy. He scoops her up and takes her to the changing table and changes her diaper and clothes.

James then grabs a blanket from the crib and they head for the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Gwen is in her high chair with some Gerber Graduates dissolving dry cereal pieces and a bottle of formula.

James finishes up some pancakes for himself and takes a seat next to Gwendalynn at the table.

JAMES  
How's the cereal?

Gwendalynn smiles and coos.

JAMES  
That good huh? You want some  
pancakes?

She laughs and coos. She points at James' plate.

JAMES  
(chuckles)  
That's what I thought. Here you go,  
sweetie.

James cuts a small piece of the pancake, soggy with syrup, and places it in the baby's mouth. Gwendalynn gums the food down.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
You like that way better than dry  
cereal, huh?  
(beat)  
Me too. Your mommy likes banana  
pancakes. When she wakes up you and  
I will make some for her. Okay?

Gwendalynn laughs excitedly and points to James' plate again.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
(chuckles)  
Alright, chunky bottoms, here you  
go.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

James groggily watches TV while Gwendalynn sits on the floor with various toys in front of her.

INSERT - NEWSCAST ON TV:

NEWSCASTER

(from TV)

Three more wildfires sprung up due to last night's thunderstorms that rolled through town. So far no homes are in danger as the fires remain east of us in the mountains. We will keep you posted with future updates, as we are expected to have more showers and thunderstorms later in the week.

BACK TO SCENE

James, half asleep, looks down at his baby girl, happy and content with her toys. A look comes over his face and he leans in closer with strained eyes.

Just behind Gwendalynn's left ear is a dark spot, kind of a brownish-red color. It seems to have spider-vein arms around it that creep outward.

Gwendalynn just laughs and coos as James gets ever closer, clearly disturbed by what he sees when...

The telephone rings. James snaps out of it and looks over at the phone, then back to the baby -- the spot is gone. James answers the phone. It's Chuck, James' best friend.

JAMES

Hello?

CHUCK (O.S.)

(from phone)

Hello? Jim?

JAMES

Yeah. Hey, Chuck.

CHUCK (O.S.)

(from phone)

What's up, man? How are you?

JAMES

I'm doing alright. Good enough to leave the hospital.

CHUCK (O.S.)

(from phone)

Good. That's good man. How's Nina doing?

JAMES

Still in the hospital. I'm hoping she'll wake up soon though.

CHUCK (O.S.)

(from phone)

That's good man. She will.

Uncomfortable pause.

CHUCK (O.S.)

(from phone)

How's the baby girl?

JAMES

She's awesome. She looks just like Nina.

CHUCK (O.S.)

(from phone)

Really? How big was she again?

JAMES

Nine pounds four ounces when she was born.

CHUCK (O.S.)

(from phone)

Holy baby!

JAMES

I know. You should see her now, she's growing like a weed.

CHUCK (O.S.)

(from phone)

I bet. Gwendalynn, right?

JAMES

Yeah.

CHUCK (O.S.)

(from phone)

Nice. I like that name.

(beat)

Anyway, I wish I could have visited you guys in the hospital. I should have been there.

JAMES

I know, man. Don't worry about it. How was New York?

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
It was good, really good. I just  
got back a few days ago.

JAMES  
That's cool... Did you get to meet  
the Naked Cowboy?

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Yeah I did!  
(chuckles)  
That guy is nuts. He was standing  
out there in the freezing balls  
snow in his damn skibbies. I got  
some hilarious pictures.

JAMES  
Oh yeah?

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Oh yeah. You're never going to  
believe this. I got down to my  
flipping underwear with him and had  
one of the tourists take a photo  
for me.

James chuckles. Gwendalynn looks at him and laughs herself.

JAMES  
No way? I wish I could have been  
there.

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Me too, man. Me too.

Laughing dies down.

JAMES  
So what's going on?

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Not much. I just thought since I'm  
back in town you might want to get  
a drink or something later.

JAMES  
Yeah, for sure. I could use a drink  
after work. You want to go to  
Sully's?

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Where else? What are you doing  
right now?

JAMES  
I have to go drop Gwendalynn off  
with my mom then head to work.

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Alright then. Call me later tonight  
when you get off.

JAMES  
Alright, I'll talk to you later.

James hangs the phone up then looks at Gwendalynn.

JAMES  
You ready to go see grandma?

She just smiles and moves her arms and legs with excitement.

INT. JAMES' CAR - MOVING - MORNING

Bright and sunny. Some ominous looking clouds threaten to  
roll in on the horizon.

James drives silently. Gwendalynn coos in the back seat.

INT. PARENTS' HOUSE - MORNING

James' mom, MARY(49), reddish-blond hair, aging well, sits  
on her couch reading a book.

James and the baby enter the door behind her.

JAMES  
Hey, mom.

MARY  
Hi, sweetie. Awe, let me see that  
baby girl!

Mom takes Gwendalynn and snuggles her close.

MARY  
Did she eat yet?

JAMES

She just did, and she has a clean diaper. Everything you need is in the diaper bag. She eats...

MARY

Alright, Jimmy. I raised two kids of my own. I'm sure I can handle this little one.

JAMES

(playfully)  
Okay, sorry.

MARY

How is Nina doing?

JAMES

She's fine, I guess. Same as last time you saw her.

MARY

She'll wake up soon, baby. You just have to put it in God's hands now. Pray every day. And we'll keep praying too.

JAMES

Thanks, mom. I will. You should go and visit her more often.

MARY

We will, baby.

James kisses Gwendalynn and his mom.

JAMES

I'll be back later tonight. If that's okay?

MARY

Yeah, sure. Where you going?

JAMES

I'm going to have a drink with Chuck after work.

MARY

Oh! How is Chucky?

JAMES

He's good. He just got back into town.

MARY  
Well, tell him I said hello.

JAMES  
Will do. Love you, mom.

MARY  
Love you too, baby.

James kisses his mom on the cheek.

INT. CABINET SHOP - DAY

James is hard at work finish-sanding some cabinet doors.

He works along side ERIC(23), short, kind of goofy looking, who dusts the doors off and slops dark stain on them.

James has a distant look on his face as he sands on. Sawdust billows up.

Their work is suddenly broken up by a deafening CRASH from outside. Both men duck defensively.

ERIC  
What the heck was that?

They look to the door.

JAMES  
I have no idea.

They drop what they're doing and head for the door. Eric wipes his hands of the stain as he goes.

EXT. CABINET SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

James walks outside to a shocking scene. His car, which was backed up in front of the shop, has been totaled. The entire front end is smashed in, beyond recognition.

JAMES  
What the hell?!?

The two men look around but there is no other car in sight.

ERIC  
Where's the other car?

James doesn't even acknowledge Eric's question. He just stands there with his hands on his head in total disbelief while his car smokes and spews fluids onto the ground.

INT. SULLY'S PUB - NIGHT

Dark. Smoky. A few drunks litter the scene.

James and CHUCK(28), dark hair, handsome and tall, sit in a booth near the back. Their WAITRESS(25), sweet and sexy, just brought more drinks.

WAITRESS  
Can I get you boys anything else?

CHUCK  
(with flirting smile)  
I think we're good.

WAITRESS  
Alright. Just holler if you need anything.

She takes their empty glasses.

CHUCK  
(winks)  
Thank you.

Chuck watches the waitress walk away with a perverted smile on his face.

CHUCK  
Nice, huh?

James shoots him a look and smirks.

CHUCK  
What?  
(beat)  
So what are you going to do?

JAMES  
The only thing I can do. Wait and see if she wakes up. The doc says that's it. There's no cure for the common coma.

James takes a swig from his drink.

CHUCK  
I meant about your car.

JAMES  
Oh.

The two share a muted chuckle.

CHUCK

Look, I'm sure she'll wake up soon.  
You came out of your coma from the  
same accident just two weeks later.

JAMES

What if she doesn't? They say she  
could be in a coma for months, or  
years, or...

CHUCK

She will, bro. Just give it some  
time.

(beat)

In the meantime, I'll drive your  
happy ass around town till you get  
your car fixed.

JAMES

Thanks.

The two go silent for a beat. The whole bar is eerily silent  
for a moment.

The jukebox suddenly turns on. "Angel Baby" fades up.

James looks over in the direction of the music. He's fixated  
on the jukebox.

Chuck blurts out and breaks his stare.

CHUCK

So what's it like to get struck by  
lighting?

James shoots him a look.

CHUCK

(throws hands back)

What? I'm sorry. It's not every day  
I get to chat with someone who was  
touched by a bolt of divine  
electricity.

JAMES

Your insensitivity truly knows no  
bounds.

Chuck laughs.

James shrugs and shakes his head with a smirk while he takes  
a swig.

Chuck slowly stops laughing.

JAMES  
(finishing his drink)  
I think I'm done for the night,  
man.

CHUCK  
Oh, come on, don't be like that. I  
won't mention it again.

JAMES  
No, it's not that. Just not feeling  
it right now.

CHUCK  
You sure?

JAMES  
Yeah. We're good. I'm gonna get a  
cab.

James offers a hand shake and a half hug.

CHUCK  
Alright then. Call me tomorrow or  
something.

JAMES  
Yeah, okay.

James gets up and makes his exit. Thunder rumbles outside as  
he walks out the door.

INT. PARENTS' HOUSE - LATER

Mary sits with Gwendalynn in her arms. The TV flickers and  
lights the room in a strange glow.

James enters behind her. He removes his coat, shakes off some  
rain, and hangs it on the rack on the wall. Rain sprinkles  
lightly outside.

JAMES  
Hi, mom.

James sits next to his mom and kisses her on the cheek.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
How's my baby girl? She hasn't been  
any trouble has she?

MARY  
No, no, she was fine. It was my  
pleasure.

Mary kisses Gwendalynn and hands her to James. He kisses her and brings her in close for a snuggle.

JAMES

(to baby)

Come here.

(to mom)

Hey mom, is pops here?

MARY

Yes. He's in the office with your brother smoking that *crap*.

JAMES

Can you watch Gwendalynn for a minute? I want to go say hello.

MARY

I guess.

James hands Gwendalynn back to Mary.

OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

James' father, POPS(51), brown curly fro, and his brother JASON(20), kind if chubby, are in the middle of a bowl of weed.

James enters. He is blasted with a wall of smoke.

JAMES

Holy hell! That stuff stinks.

POPS

Hey, son. How are you?

Pops gets up and gives James a hug. His brother gets up and gives him a hand shake and a half hug.

JAMES

I'm good. When are you guys gonna stop smoking this nonsense?

James sits.

POPS

Is that what you came here for, to nag us?

JAMES

Oh stop it. I'm just messing with you.

(beat)

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

You see the fires up on the mountain? Getting kind of close.

JASON

Tell me about it. This town is gonna go up in flames.

JAMES

I hope not. Maybe the rain will help us out.

Jason chokes and coughs.

JASON

(still choking)

Hey, how's Chuck doing? I heard he was back in town.

JAMES

He's good. I just left him at Sully's.

JASON

I can't believe you guys still go to that dump.

JAMES

You mean, as opposed to staying home all day, playing online poker and smoking dope?

JASON

(holding a hit in)

Whatever.

JAMES

Hey Pops, You go out to the flying field today?

POPS

Yeah, I went out there. Wasn't very busy. The rain came in and ran us out.

JAMES

Was Sam out there?

POPS

Yeah. He had a new plane too! It was a nice one!

JAMES

I bet. He has more money than he knows what to do with.

Uncomfortable pause.

JAMES

Well, I'm going to get Gwendalynn home. You might want to cover up that wood you have outside, Pops, it's already sprinkling out.

POPS

Okay son.

They all exchange hugs and James leaves the room.

INT. JAMES' CAR/MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

James and Gwendalynn have left his parents and are heading home. The rain now pours down quite heavily. James comes to a stop at the end of the street.

A car approaches from the right.

As the car passes James catches a glimpse of the driver through the heavy rain and windshield wipers.

It's a woman, but she seems to have no face. Just a blank-white nothingness. a GHOST of some sort, caught momentarily in James' headlights.

James squints. He struggles to get a good look through the soggy window. The ghostly woman takes her time as she passes.

The car finally passes and James shakes it off. He makes his turn and continues home. He checks his rear-view mirror as he goes.

INT. CAFE - MORNING

Quaint little cafe. Light earth-tones are the decor. Large windows line the wall where the entrance is, which would provide some nice light if it wasn't for the gloomy day outside. Golden Oldies lightly play overhead.

Soft oldies play from speakers in the ceiling.

James sits and waits for someone.

A WAITRESS approaches.

WAITRESS

Can I get you something to drink?

JAMES  
Two coffees, please.

WAITRESS  
I'll be right back with those.

JAMES  
Thank you.

MARCY(26), hourglass figure, full lips and big beautiful eyes, enters the cafe. She scans the area and James waves her over.

MARCY  
Hey, you.

James stands and greets her with a hug.

JAMES  
Hi, Marcy. How are you?

They sit.

MARCY  
I'm good. How about yourself?

JAMES  
I'm doing okay.

MARCY  
Any news on Nina's condition?

JAMES  
Doc says we just have to wait and see.

MARCY  
Yeah. She's going to wake up, James.

She touches his hand for comfort.

He offers a meek smile.

MARCY  
Did you order yet?

JAMES  
No. Just coffees.

MARCY  
Well lets eat. I'm starving.

LATER

The Waitress just dropped of their breakfast. James and Marcy laugh about something that was just said.

JAMES

Hey, no one asked you to come to our rescue.

MARCY

Well, someone had to save your butts.

The laughing dies down.

JAMES

Yeah. We had some good times, you Nina and I.

A song ends and "Angel Baby" suddenly fades up through the speakers.

James pauses and looks at the speaker in the ceiling above them, fixated on it.

MARCY (O.S.)

Hey.

Marcy grabs his hand and snaps him out of it.

MARCY (CONT'D)

You okay?

James shakes it off.

JAMES

Yeah.  
(beat)  
Yeah, I'm fine.

Uncomfortable silence. Marcy breaks it.

MARCY

You still keeping up on your artwork?

JAMES

(smirks)  
A few sketches here and there.

James takes a bite of his breakfast and makes a face.

JAMES

Huh.

MARCY

What?

James takes another bite. He spits it out in his napkin.

JAMES

Tastes like...

He takes a sip of coffee.

MARCY

What is it?

JAMES

It all tastes like... nothing.

Marcy looks questioningly at James.

INT. HOSPITAL - EXAM ROOM - DAY

James sits on the exam table. Gwendalynn sits on his lap.

Dr. Slate enters.

DR. SLATE

Alright, James...

Gwendalynn gets very excited when she sees the doctor.

DR. SLATE (CONT'D)

Oh, and how is this little one doing?

Dr. Slate squeezes Gwendalynn's cheek.

JAMES

She's doing good, doc.

DR. SLATE

She's quite beautiful, James. You're a lucky man.

JAMES

Thanks, doc.

Gwendalynn smiles and coos at the doctor.

DR. SLATE

Awe, she likes me. Yes you do. Yes...

JAMES  
(a little irritated)  
So what's the news, doc?

Slate composes himself.

DR. SLATE  
(clears his throat)  
Well James, I don't see anything  
wrong with your test results. In  
fact, you're as healthy as can be.

JAMES  
What about the taste? I can't taste  
anything. It all tastes like  
cardboard.

DR. SLATE  
Well, I suppose it could be from  
your accident. I mean, you're lucky  
to be alive at all. It's not  
unlikely to think that some of your  
taste buds, or even some more major  
bodily functions might be...  
temporarily altered.

JAMES  
It's been six months though, doc.  
Why now?

DR. SLATE  
Nature is a mad scientist, James.  
I'm not sure why it's happening  
now. I'll get back to you on that.  
(beat)  
How is everything else with you?  
How are you sleeping?

JAMES  
That's funny you should ask, doc. I  
haven't been sleeping too well  
lately.

DR. SLATE  
How so?

JAMES  
Well, I've been having some strange  
dreams lately.

DR. SLATE  
Dreams?

JAMES

Yeah. I have these really weird dreams ever since I left the hospital, about Nina.

DR. SLATE

Why didn't you tell me this before?

JAMES

I don't know. They were only dreams, doc.

DR. SLATE

Were?

JAMES

Well, yeah. Lately, they have been getting much more... real.

Slate ponders for a moment. He taps his pen on James' chart.

DR. SLATE

James, I'm going to refer you to a friend of mine. He should be able to help you work through these... tough times.

Dr. Slate hands James a business card.

JAMES

(Re: card)

A shrink?

DR. SLATE

Try not to think of it like that. You need someone to talk to. You're going through a lot right now. As for the taste, I think you'll be fine, just keep me posted on it.

JAMES

(getting frustrated)

But I was able to taste for like six months.

DR. SLATE

It's like I said, James. The body is strange sometimes. You have more important things to focus on right now. Just keep an eye on it, and if it gets worse or doesn't pass in a couple of weeks, we'll bring you back in for more tests.

(MORE)

DR. SLATE (CONT'D)

In the meantime, just go and see  
this doctor.

James stares at the business card for a beat.

INT. HOSPITAL - NINA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Nina lies still in her room. James and Gwendalynn enter.

JAMES

Hi, Nina. Look who I've got.

He lays the baby on Nina's chest. Gwendalynn snuggles her  
mommy and dozes off.

JAMES

She's been waiting to see you for  
days. She cries for you every  
morning.

(beat)

She doesn't want that stupid rubber  
nipple. She wants some mommy boobs.

James laughs, then stops abruptly, as he realizes that a  
NURSE has entered the room and overheard what he said. She  
shoots him a look.

JAMES

(to nurse)

Sorry.

(to Nina and Gwen)

Whoops.

James chuckles then gently kisses Nina's cheek. When he pulls  
his head away he notices something just behind her ear. It's  
a similar mark like he saw behind Gwendalynn's ear the other  
day. He stares hard, and the spider-veins seem to be growing  
as he watches them.

NURSE (O.S.)

Are you okay, sir.

James snaps out of it and looks at the nurse, then back to  
Nina. The spot is gone, just as with Gwendalynn. James looks  
disturbed.

FADE TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK:

All is silent for a moment. A female voice fades up.

VOICE (O.S.)

James...

A distant light appears.

James is now visible in the dark. He stands in a tunnel. A dark silhouette stands at the other end at the source of light -- It's Nina.

NINA

James, help me.

James doesn't move. He looks as though he wants to, but cannot. He sweats profusely.

NINA

James, please.

James struggles but it's no use. He's frozen.

Suddenly, the blank-faced Ghost from the other night appears in front of him. She speaks despite her having no lips.

GHOST (O.S.)

(mocking and distorted)

*Help me, James.*

INT. PARENTS' HOUSE - NIGHT

James wakes in a cold sweat on his parents' love seat. Gwendalynn is asleep in his arms.

His brother Jason sits on the other couch. He plays video games, some kind of first-person shooter game.

JASON

You alright, man? You must be having some crazy dreams over there.

James takes a moment to wake up. He doesn't look over at Jason.

JAMES

(sleepily)

Yeah... What time is it?

JASON

It's eight o'clock. You should go home and get some rest. You look exhausted.

JAMES  
(lays his head back)  
How long have I been here?

JASON  
What, you don't remember? You came  
here a few...

Jason doesn't finish his sentence. He sounds like he's choking.

James quickly looks over at his brother.

The Ghost from his dream sits on top of Jason, attacking him. Horrible CRUNCHES and SURPS can be heard.

INT. PARENTS' HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

James wakes again, in a cold sweat, on his parents' couch. Gwendalynn is asleep in his arms, just as before. The room is empty and dark this time.

James hears VOICES coming from the office.

OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Pops and Jason watch model plane videos on their PC.

James enters.

His dad and brother speak to him in a drone-like tone, without even turning around, as they continue to watch the computer screen.

JASON  
Evening, sunshine.

JAMES  
(sleepily)  
I think it's "morning sunshine."

JASON  
Yeah, well.

JAMES  
How long have I been sleeping?

POPS  
Just a few hours.

JAMES

Oh, man.

(yawns)

I think I'm going to take off.

POPS

Alright, son. Drive safe.

JASON

Later, man.

James stares at the back of their heads quizzically.

JAMES

Alright then.

Pops finally turns around, but still speaks in monotone.

POPS

You okay, son?

JAMES

Yeah, pops. I'm fine. I'll see you guys tomorrow.

James leaves and Pops turns back to the screen.

INT. SHRINK'S OFFICE - RECEPTION - DAY

James goes to see the shrink that Dr. Slate recommended. He looks exhausted as he walks into a dark but sophisticated looking office.

A RED HEAD(33), very pretty, full-figured, sits at a desk at the far end of the room and takes calls.

RED HEAD

(into phone)

Yes sir, five o'clock.

(beat)

Okay. We'll see you tomorrow.

She hangs up and James approaches the desk.

RED HEAD

Can I help you, sir?

James takes the business card from his pocket.

JAMES

Umm... yes. I'm here to see...

James looks at the card.

JAMES

Dr. Nekawa.

RED HEAD

Do you have an appointment?

JAMES

Yes...

James hands her the card.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Dr. Slate referred me. He should have set it up.

She looks through her appointment book.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I'm a little early.

RED HEAD

(looks up)

Mr. Durant?

JAMES

That's me.

RED HEAD

The doctor is currently in with a patient. He'll still be another twenty minutes.

JAMES

Thank you, I'll wait.

RED HEAD

(points)

Alright, just have a seat over there.

James takes a seat in the reception area and checks the clock on the wall, it reads: "12:42." He notices a newscast on a flat-screen TV on the wall.

INSERT - A QUICK NEWS FLASH ON TV:

NEWSCASTER

Flood watches for the next few days as the rain just keeps coming, which we are happy to report gives us some relief from the wildfires.

(MORE)

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

We are expected to have heavy showers, lightning, and thunder straight through the weekend and into next week. So keep your raincoats and umbrellas handy.

BACK TO SCENE

James glances over at the one window in the office. It is soggy with rain.

JAMES

(to himself)

At least the fires are out...

RED HEAD (O.S.)

Mr. Durant.

James turns around quickly.

RED HEAD

Dr. Nekawa will see you now.

James checks the clock on the wall, it reads: "1:02." He gets up with a questioned look.

INT. DR. NEKAWA'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

James sits on the shrink's classic, red-leather, diamond-tucked sofa.

DR. NEKAWA(39), Asian descent, male, distinguished looking, asks James questions, with no Asian accent.

DR. NEKAWA

So tell me, why you are here, James?

JAMES

Uh... I don't know. I was hoping you could tell me.

DR. NEKAWA

(flips up some papers)

It says here in the report from Dr. Slate that you were struck by lightning.

(beat)

What was that like?

JAMES

It hurt like hell!

Dr. Nekawa does not react to James' quick wit, but remains neutral.

JAMES

(chuckles)

Sorry.

(beat)

I really don't know. I was put into a coma by the shock almost instantly. I woke up about six months ago, and I'm just trying to move on. Dr. Slate says I should talk to you, says it will help me out.

DR. NEKAWA

How did you feel after you woke up?

JAMES

Uh... confused I guess. A little scared. I couldn't really remember what had happened. And my wife is still in a coma.

DR. NEKAWA

Your wife...

(flips some more papers)

Nina?

JAMES

Yes.

DR. NEKAWA

She was struck too?

JAMES

Yes. As I said she hasn't woken up yet, and now I have a baby to raise on my own.

DR. NEKAWA

How does that make you feel?

JAMES

Alone, I guess. Scared at times.

DR. NEKAWA

Scared how?

JAMES

Just normal fears I guess. Fear that I won't be a good father. It's my first child.

DR. NEKAWA

I understand. I have children of my own.

(long beat)

Do you go and see Nina often?

JAMES

Yeah. As much as I can.

Nekawa jots down some notes in his chart. He doesn't say anything for a long time. James just starts to speak again.

JAMES (CONT'D)

When I was at the hospital, even though she's in a coma, I still felt like Nina was there for me. Helping me raise Gwendalynn.

Nekawa looks up.

DR. NEKAWA

How do you feel now that you're back at home?

JAMES

You mean mentally? Physically?

DR. NEKAWA

Both?

JAMES

Well physically I feel fine. In fact, Dr. Slate says I'm "as healthy as a horse".

DR. NEKAWA

And mentally?

JAMES

I don't know. Things have been a little... weird, lately.

DR. NEKAWA

How so, James?

JAMES

I just feel strange. I feel like my days are going by really fast. I loose track of time.

(beat)

Nothing looks right or tastes right to me.

(beat)

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

And I keep having these crazy dreams. That's why doc referred me to you in the first place.

DR. NEKAWA

Because of your dreams?

JAMES

Yes... *strange* dreams.

DR. NEKAWA

When did you first start having these *strange* dreams.

JAMES

Just before I left the hospital.

DR. NEKAWA

Can you tell me about them?

JAMES

Okay...

(beat)

I am in a dark tunnel. And uh... a woman, who I believe to be my wife, is at the other end of the tunnel calling for me...

(beat)

She wants me to come to her. But I can't move. I can't speak. I can't do anything.

DR. NEKAWA

Why not?

JAMES

I don't know. I just can't. It's like something is holding me back.

James spaces out for a moment.

INSERT: QUICK FLASH OF THE GHOST IN JAMES'S DREAM.

BACK TO SCENE

DR. NEKAWA

What is holding you back?

JAMES

(snaps to)

I'm sorry?

DR. NEKAWA  
You said something is holding  
you...  
(beat)  
What do you suppose it is?

JAMES  
I don't know.

James seems hesitant to mention the ghost to the shrink.

DR. NEKAWA  
What else happens, James?

JAMES  
Nothing... I wake up.  
(long beat)  
What do you think it means?

DR. NEKAWA  
What do you think it means?

JAMES  
(getting frustrated)  
I don't know.

Nekawa's tone changes.

DR. NEKAWA  
Look, James. Dreams are often  
reflections of our everyday lives.  
(beat)  
How we feel. What we saw. Something  
we overheard and didn't even know  
it.  
(beat)  
It's a little early for me to say,  
but I think you are just feeling a  
little guilty because you are here  
and your wife is somewhere else.  
You feel like you can't do anything  
for her. Like you cannot reach her.  
You feel helpless.  
(beat)  
But you can do something for her,  
James.

JAMES  
What can I do for her?

DR. NEKAWA  
Go to her, James. Talk to her. Try  
to reach her.

JAMES  
Can she hear me?

DR. NEKAWA  
I think she can.

They are both silent for a moment.

DR. NEKAWA (CONT'D)  
I'll tell you what, James. I have an exercise for you. The next time you have this dream of yours, I want you to walk towards Nina.

JAMES  
But I can't.

DR. NEKAWA  
I know, James. I just want you to try. I want you to visualize yourself moving towards her.  
(beat)  
Try with everything you have to just take one step. I want you to think about this before you go to bed at night. Make it your last thought before you close your eyes.  
(beat)  
Just do that for the next week, until our next visit, and we will discuss it more then.  
(beat)  
In the meantime just try to get some rest and get focused.

James is silent for a moment.

INT. CABINET SHOP - DAY

James, wearing protective eye-wear and a dust mask, saws down a piece of hardwood. It is ear piercingly loud. He numbly saws the wood through. He looks increasingly exhausted, heavy bags weigh under his eyes now.

He doesn't seem to be paying any attention to what he's doing. A nasty BONE-CRUNCHING sound, and a slight spray of blood to his face, suddenly snaps him out of his daze.

James quickly raises his right hand to see that it has been severed by the saw. He screams...

MOMENTS LATER

Eric grabs James's shoulder and snaps him out of a daydream. Eric quickly turns the table saw off.

ERIC  
You okay, man?

James numbly looks at Eric then quickly checks his right hand -- it's still there. His wrist has a faint, red, veiny ring around it. He rubs it protectively.

With the saw off heavy RAIN can now be heard outside, amplified by the tin roof above.

James' phone RINGS. He picks it up.

JAMES  
(dazed)  
Hello?

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Hey man. What's up?

JAMES  
Nothing.  
(beat)  
Working.

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
When you getting off?

JAMES  
About an hour.

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Cool. Hey, you want to go to a BBQ  
at the park tomorrow?

JAMES  
What's the occasion?

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
It's Allen's birthday.

JAMES  
I don't know.

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Oh stop it. You need to get out.

JAMES  
It's been pouring rain all week.

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Yeah but it's supposed to stop for  
a few days. This is Washington,  
man, we have to take it when we get  
it. Won't take no for an answer.

James rolls his eyes.

JAMES  
Alright.

CHUCK (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
Sweet. I'll pick you up tomorrow  
after work.

JAMES  
Alright.

James hangs the phone up and looks around to see that he is alone in the shop. He turns around in time to see Eric leaving and shutting the lights off. He throws his hands up and yells.

JAMES  
I'm still in here.

He shakes his head, confused, then tosses off his protective goggles and heads out.

INT. CHUCK'S CAR - DAY

Chuck and James are heading for the BBQ. It's bright and sunny, just as predicted.

CHUCK  
So you're seeing a shrink now, huh?

JAMES  
Yeah.

CHUCK  
(teasingly)  
What's that like?

JAMES

It's like an interrogation. All he does is ask questions.

CHUCK

Like what?

JAMES

About nothing. "How does this make you feel?" "How does that make you feel?"

Chuck gets off point for a moment.

CHUCK

Where's the baby today anyway?

JAMES

Marcy's watching her. She's supposed to meet us at the park.

CHUCK

Oh. Cool.

Pause.

JAMES

You know what he did tell me to do though?

CHUCK

What's that?

JAMES

He wants me to try and control my dreams.

CHUCK

Why?

JAMES

Says it's an exercise that will help me. I've been having this dream lately, about Nina.

(beat)

Can someone even control a dream? Seems crazy to me.

CHUCK

No! No, it's not. I did it myself once.

JAMES

Bullshit.

CHUCK

Swear to God. I had this dream a while back, like every night for a week. You know how I'm afraid of heights?

JAMES

Yeah.

CHUCK

Yeah, well, I had this dream where I was a passenger in this car, and the driver always took this horrible pass over these steep cliffs. Now, whenever we would head down he would take the worst possible route. We're talking a road five feet wide with drop-offs on either side. I hated it.

JAMES

So?

CHUCK

So, one day I was home from work and I saw this talk show having a special on dream control. They said that you can control them through hypnotic suggestion. Think about what you want to do before you go to sleep, that kind of thing...

JAMES

That's what the doc said.

CHUCK

Yeah. So I tried it. I had the same dream again of course. Except this time, when we approached the scary descent that I hated, I merely asked the driver not to take it, and told him that there was a much gentler road to take down.

JAMES

And that worked?

CHUCK

It didn't just work. When we passed the scary route, there was a giant drain pipe running down the whole thing blocking the way, like it was never a road. I never had the dream again after that.

JAMES

Huh.

CHUCK

Yeah.

A possible look of hope shines briefly through James's tired eyes.

EXT. PARK - DAY

A large crowd dances in the grass to a soulful beat. A few groups of people stand around, drinking and talking. Kids run around having water-gun fights.

James and a few of his friends sit at a picnic table.

Gwendalynn sits in her stroller next to James.

ALLEN(28), kind of portly, red hair, mans the grill and argues with ALEX(24), Spanish kid.

ALLEN

You're a damn liar, Alex!

ALEX

Screw you, Allen! You weren't there!

ALLEN

I didn't have to be, Angela was. That's the only person that needed to be there. Then the whole town knew within a few hours.

They laugh. ANGELA(25), dark haired beauty, doesn't think it's funny.

ANGELA

Screw you guys!

They laugh harder.

CHUCK

It's true!

ANGELA

Screw you too, Chuck.

ALEX

Yeah! Blow me, Chuck!

They laugh even harder.

Marcy notices that James is not laughing. He looks troubled. She motions to go for a walk. They get up together.

OVER BY SOME TREES

Marcy pushes Gwendalynn's stroller. James walks beside them.

JAMES

I can't believe the rain finally stopped.

MARCY

I know. The news says it might be back tomorrow.

James lowers his head in disappointment.

JAMES

Yeah.

MARCY

How are you holding up?

JAMES

Okay, I guess.

They stop and take a seat on a park bench.

MARCY

I went to visit Nina the other day.

JAMES

Oh, yeah. That's great that you do that. She needs to hear our voices.

Marcy waits patiently to listen if James has something more to say.

JAMES

I don't know what's happening to me, Marcy.

(beat)

I feel like I'm losing my mind.

MARCY

Tell me, James. What's troubling you?

JAMES

I... I can't sleep...

(beat)

I feel like... like...

James cannot find the words.

Marcy gently raises his chin to look at her.

MARCY

Everything's going to be fine. You  
and Nina will be back together  
again soon. You'll see. You just  
need to focus.

JAMES

(shock looked)  
What did you...

James is suddenly pelted in the face with a water balloon by one of the children. He looks angry at first, then he and Marcy laugh together.

The laughter dies down after a moment and James seems to have forgotten what Marcy said last.

JAMES

I think I needed that.

James wipes his face. Then, as he lowers his hands, his face drops. He looks out into the crowd with a stone cold expression.

MARCY

James? Are you okay?

James says nothing. He holds his stare on the crowd.

Out in the crowd is the faceless Ghost from his nightmares. She wears a hospital nightgown and stands in the middle of the dancing crowd, mocking him. The crowd is oblivious to the sight.

MARCY (O.S.)

James?

Her voice fades out. James stands and slowly advances towards the crowd, in a trance.

Marcy looks to Chuck with concern in her eyes. He notices James too now.

CHUCK

James? Hey, Jim! You okay?

James hears nothing. He continues walking. The Ghost just stands there, coaxing him closer. He enters the crowd and she disappears.

James looks around frantically. Everywhere he looks the Ghost pops up then disappears. She teases him, screeching and screaming with each appearance.

The crowd dances all around.

Suddenly, the Ghost rushes James with lightning speed. James turns to run when...

POP!!

He is hit square in the nose by one of the dancer's elbows. He falls to the ground, bloodied, and cups his face.

MOMENTS LATER

The Ghost is on top of him. She attacks and screams at him, her mouth appearing from stretched white flesh on her face. James struggles to escape her grasp.

MOMENTS LATER

Chuck is on top of James. He tries to calm him.

CHUCK

It's okay! It's okay! It's Chuck!  
It's just me!

James thrashes about violently.

The crowd looks on, concerned.

James sees nothing but the Ghost on top of him, close to his face, her stretched, fleshy mouth now drips with black drool. She screeches loudly.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Chuck sits next to Marcy and plays with Gwendalynn while they wait for James to finish up.

INT. HOSPITAL - EXAM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Slate just finishes with James' nose.

DR. SLATE

Well, it's not broken, luckily.  
(beat)  
James, you really have to take  
better care of yourself.

JAMES  
Yeah thanks, doc.

James' expression and tone is that of little emotion. He takes a moment before he speaks.

JAMES  
Hey, doc?

DR. SLATE  
Yes?

JAMES  
Have you ever heard of people...  
seeing things, after an accident?

DR. SLATE  
Like what?

JAMES  
I don't know. Strange things.  
Things you are not supposed to see.

DR. SLATE  
Have you seen something?

JAMES  
Yes.  
(beat)  
I don't know.

DR. SLATE  
You can tell me, James.

JAMES  
I think I have.

DR. SLATE  
Huh. Well, yes. It is possible to  
see things after an accident. It's  
called P. T. S. D.

JAMES  
What's that?

James snaps to a little.

DR. SLATE  
"Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder."  
It's when the mind can't accept, or  
has trouble dealing, with what  
happened to the physical body. Or  
even just something you saw.  
(MORE)

DR. SLATE (CONT'D)  
Whether it be a war, a car  
accident...

JAMES  
A lightning strike?

DR. SLATE  
Well, yes. I suppose so.  
(beat)  
James, have you mentioned any of  
this to Dr. Nekawa?

JAMES  
No.

DR. SLATE  
I think you should. He can help you  
with this better than I can.

JAMES  
Yeah. Maybe I should.

James looks dazed.

DR. SLATE  
What's this?

Slate notices James's wrist. He reaches for it but James  
recoils.

JAMES  
Oh... I... Uh... I'm not sure  
really.

The red ring around his wrist seems to have progressed. He  
pulls his sweater sleeve over it.

DR. SLATE  
Well it looks like some kind of  
reaction. Let me get you something  
for that.

Dr. Slate walks off and James rubs his wrist.

INT. CHUCK'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Chuck drives James and Gwendalynn home. James just stares out  
the window.

CHUCK  
Everything okay?

JAMES

Yeah. I was just thinking. Have you ever heard of P.T.S.D?

CHUCK

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder?  
Sure. Why?

JAMES

I've just been having some strange things happen to me lately. I think it may be from stress. From the accident.

CHUCK

Okay. Like what?

JAMES

Just some dreams. And possibly... some visions.

CHUCK

Like at the park.

(beat)

I mean, what the hell happened out there?

JAMES

You don't want to know.

Beat.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Can you do me a favor?

CHUCK

Name it.

JAMES

I need you to look up P.T.S.D. On your computer for me. See if you can find some cases that might help shed some light on what's going on with me.

CHUCK

What exactly is going on with you?

James gets frustrated.

JAMES

I got juiced by a big bolt of electricity, and now I'm seeing shit. Can you just do this for me please?

CHUCK

Yeah, alright. I'll look into it.

Silence.

James stares out his window into the soggy evening.

OVER BLACK:

Light fades in on a tunnel. Nina's silhouette and voice fade in just as before.

NINA

James.

James just stands there again. Sweating. He struggles to move.

NINA

James... Please help me.

James struggles to break this hold on him.

Suddenly, the Ghost appears in front of him. He sees her blank white face. Her mouth stretches open again. She screams horribly.

Black veins start to form from under James's neck. They creep up to his face. He can't breathe.

INT. DURANT'S HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING

James springs up in his bed with a gasp. He wipes sweat from his eyes. Gwendalynn cries in the baby monitor.

INT. HOSPITAL - NINA'S ROOM - DAY

James sits by Nina's side once more. He looks sunken and thin. He confesses his fears to Nina.

JAMES

I'm scared, Nina...

(beat)

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

I don't know what's happening to me. I don't know how to help you. Tell me how.

James' head lowers, as does his voice.

JAMES

(gravely)

I think I've seen something... or... someone. She's haunting me. I think she is trying to stop me from reaching you.

(chuckles crazily)

I know it sounds crazy...

(beat)

Maybe I am crazy.

James sobs.

JAMES

I know you can hear me. Please say something...

(beat)

Talk to me...

(beat)

*CAN YOU HEAR ME DAMN IT!!*

INT. SHRINK'S OFFICE - LATER

James sits on Dr. Nekawa's red leather sofa. He stares off into space with a defeated look and speaks in a monotone voice.

DR. NEKAWA

So you had the dream again?

JAMES

Yes. And I tried to do what you said. I tried to control my dream.

DR. NEKAWA

Was Nina there?

JAMES

Yes.

DR. NEKAWA

And you tried to move towards her?

JAMES

(snaps)

Yes, damn it! I just said that!

DR. NEKAWA  
Calm down, James.

James takes a second to compose himself.

JAMES  
Yes, doc. I tried to move, alright.  
Something is trying to stop me.

DR. NEKAWA  
What is trying to stop you?

JAMES  
*I don't know, doc!!*

DR. NEKAWA  
Alright. Just relax, James. You can  
tell me.

James is silent for a moment.

DR. NEKAWA (CONT'D)  
Don't worry James. You will reach  
her. But you must want to. Only you  
can fix your situation.

JAMES  
It's just a dream, doc. What does  
it matter anyway?

DR. NEKAWA  
I can't tell you that, James. Only  
you can figure that out. I can only  
tell you my opinion.

Silence for a moment. James wipes his eyes and sighs.

DR. NEKAWA (CONT'D)  
James, with your permission, I  
would like to discuss your case  
with a friend of mine, an old  
colleague that I went to school  
with. He has been using an  
experimental new drug with some of  
his patients.

JAMES  
Drug?

DR. NEKAWA  
Yes. I think it might help you with  
your situation.

JAMES  
What exactly is my situation?

DR. NEKAWA  
You're stuck, James.

James numbly listens. Nekawa's words sound distant.

DR. NEKAWA (CONT'D)  
You feel as though you need to move forward but you do not know how. You feel as though your world is slipping through your fingers and you do not know why. I think this drug will help you. Help you to... *focus*. Help you to *see*.

James says nothing.

DR. NEKAWA (CONT'D)  
Just allow me to discuss your case with my friend at least, yes?

JAMES  
(long beat)  
Fine.

James closes his eyes.

INT. DURANT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

James sits at his kitchen table. He frantically sketches something on an artist's pad.

Gwendalynn plays with toys in her highchair.

The phone rings. It's Chuck.

JAMES  
Hello?

CHUCK  
Hey man. I found some stuff on P.T.S.D. I think you should come over.

JAMES  
I'll be right there. Let me just drop Gwendalynn off at my mom's.

James gets up from his drawing. It's a sketch of the mountain behind their house, the same one that he and Nina climbed together. Another sketch peeks out from under that one, half of a familiar ghostly face is visible.

INT. CHUCK'S APARTMENT - LATER

Chuck plays video games on his couch. He's looking a little haggard now too.

A knock at the door causes him to hit pause and answer the door.

FRONT DOOR

Chuck opens the door to a rain-soaked James.

They greet each other with a hand shake and a half hug.

James steps in and takes his wet coat off and hangs it by the door.

CHUCK

What's up, broseph.

JAMES

So what did you find?

COUCH

They enter and sit on the couch. Chuck resumes play while he relays his findings.

CHUCK

I did find a few things on the net. Mostly stuff from war vets and whatnot. But there was one case that I found that sounded a lot like yours.

JAMES

Oh yeah?

CHUCK

Yeah. Get this. A few years back there was this guy named Mickey Tanner. He was zapped by electricity when he crashed into a telephone pole, and then tried to exit his car.

JAMES  
I was hit by lightning.

CHUCK  
Electricity's electricity, man.  
(beat)  
Anyway, after his accident he claimed that he could receive messages from the "other side." He got into trouble with the cops for harassing people, claiming he was trying to help them. He said the visions told him to.

JAMES  
(to himself)  
That's it.

CHUCK  
What's it?

JAMES  
I think Nina is trying to tell me something.

Chuck puts the game on pause.

CHUCK  
What?

JAMES  
Nina. I've been having these dreams. I think she wants to tell me something.

CHUCK  
Bro, you're sounding a little crazy right now.

JAMES  
I'm not crazy! I'm serious. Look. I know it sounds nuts, but I've been seeing shit lately. I think most of the time it's Nina trying to reach me.

CHUCK  
From her coma?

JAMES  
Yes.

CHUCK  
Okay. What does she want?

JAMES  
I think she wants to warn me.

CHUCK  
Warn you of what?

James hesitates.

JAMES  
I don't know.  
(beat)  
Well, I've seen... more than just  
Nina.

CHUCK  
Oh yeah?

JAMES  
Yeah... I saw this figure. A ghost,  
I think.

Chuck is suddenly serious.

CHUCK  
A ghost? What kind of ghost?

JAMES  
You'll just think I'm crazy.

CHUCK  
Just tell me.

JAMES  
Well, she has nasty, matted black  
hair. She wears a hospital gown...

Chuck hangs on James' every word.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
And her face...

CHUCK  
(coldly)  
What about her face?

JAMES  
She has no face.  
(beat)  
Just a leathery, pale-white flesh  
with no features. But when she  
looks at me... even with no eyes...  
I can feel her stare. It's so cold.  
And she has the...

CHUCK/JAMES  
most horrible scream.

James looks over, shocked.

JAMES  
What?

Chuck looks dead serious. His voice is slow and cold.

CHUCK  
I've seen her.

JAMES  
What the hell are you talking  
about?!? Where?!?

CHUCK  
In my dreams.

JAMES  
That not funny!

Chuck looks at James.

CHUCK  
I'm not kidding, man. I saw her.  
And when I see her, she...

JAMES  
What?  
(beat)  
She what?!?

Chuck takes a moment to answer.

CHUCK  
I can feel her sucking the life  
right out of me.

James takes a moment. Disbelief and shock are clear on his  
face.

JAMES  
Why didn't you tell me this before?

CHUCK  
Tell you what? That I had a  
nightmare or two. It was just a  
couple of dreams. How could I have  
known you were having the same one?

JAMES

I don't know! You could of said something!

CHUCK

Say what?!? What the hell...

JAMES

Alright! Alright! You're right. There's no way you could have known.

They both stare for a moment.

JAMES

Alright, look. I have seen her while I was awake...

CHUCK

What?!?

JAMES

Just listen! I have seen her with my eyes open.

CHUCK

At the park?

JAMES

Yes. And more. I think she is trying to stop me...

CHUCK

Stop you from what?

JAMES

I don't know!

(thinks for a moment)

Look, just call me if you have this dream again. As soon as you wake up. I don't care what time it is.

James gets up to leave. He grabs his coat.

CHUCK

Why?

JAMES

(putting coat on)

Just do it!

CHUCK

Okay, I'll call you.

James exits into the rain and a CRACK of thunder and lighting.

INT. DURANT'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

James awakens to the sound of thunder. Rain pours down as usual. James gets up and goes to the baby room.

BABY ROOM

Gwendalynn is sound asleep. James moves on to the kitchen.

KITCHEN

It's dark and blue.

James opens the fridge and pulls out a snack. He takes a bite and chews with a disgusted look on his face. He drops the food and sighs.

A bolt of lightning STRIKES close and lights up the kitchen.

James walks to the window and peers out. Rain floods the yard.

Three more bolts of lightning STRIKE right outside, rattling the windows, and lighting up the yard.

There in the yard, no more than ten feet from the strikes, is the Ghost, her gown soaked. In her arms is Gwendalynn, who screams and cries.

James instantly rushes out to the yard.

EXT. BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

James runs out of the house, off the porch, and into the pouring rain. He looks around frantically. No one's there.

James suddenly hears Gwendalynn's cries from inside. He dashes up the porch and into house.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

James rushes in, sopping wet, and back to the baby's room.

## BABY ROOM

James finds the Ghost, standing with her back to him at the baby's crib, sopping wet.

JAMES

*WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM US?!?!?*

The ghostly woman slowly turns to face James. Gwendalynn cries in her arms. The Ghost releases an ear-popping scream, her mouth stretches the flesh apart on her face and black drool seeps from the hole.

James falls to his knees, cups his ears, and screams in pain.

## INT. DURANT'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

James wakes up in his bed again. He immediately jumps up to check on Gwendalynn.

## BABY ROOM

James enters.

Gwendalynn sleeps peacefully. James scoops her up and takes her into his room.

## MASTER BEDROOM

They lay down. James snuggles Gwendalynn close in his protective arms.

## INT. SHRINK'S OFFICE - DAY

James sits on the red leather couch again. He looks even more frail and worn down than before. He is jittery and shaky.

Nekawa remains calm as always.

JAMES

She's after the baby, doc!

DR. NEKAWA

Who is, James?

James doesn't answer.

DR. NEKAWA

If you don't talk to me I can't help you, James.

James bites at his nails some, then speaks.

JAMES

Well... there is something that I haven't told you at our last couple of meetings.

DR. NEKAWA

Go on.

JAMES

Something... or someone... is tormenting me... haunting me. She's in my dreams. Not just my dreams...

James starts to sob.

DR. NEKAWA

It's alright, James. Take your time.

James pulls it together as best he can.

JAMES

It all started with my dream. It's in the tunnel with me, between Nina and I. And... I've seen her in other places too, doc.

DR. NEKAWA

You mean you have seen this, apparition, in the real world. While you were awake?

James lowers and nods his head.

JAMES

(through sobs and tears)  
Yes. She won't leave me alone, doc. And I think she's after the baby now.

DR. NEKAWA

What does this being look like?

JAMES

She's dark. She has black hair. Matted, knotted, black hair. She is wearing a hospital gown. And...

James pauses. He has a look of fear on his face.

DR. NEKAWA  
It's alright, James. You are safe  
here.

JAMES  
(gravely)  
She has no face.

DR. NEKAWA  
No face?

JAMES  
Yes. Just a blank, pale...  
nothingness.  
(beat)  
And yet, when she looks at me, I  
can feel her looking right into me.  
And when she does... I can feel her  
taking something from me.

DR. NEKAWA  
Taking what, James?

JAMES  
(long beat)  
*Everything.*

James sobs again. Dr. Nekawa gives him a second before asking  
his next question.

DR. NEKAWA  
Why do you think she wants the  
baby, James?

JAMES  
Because. I had a dream last night.  
At least I think it was a dream.  
And in the dream she came for her.  
She was holding my baby!

DR. NEKAWA  
How come you have not told me of  
this until now?

JAMES  
Cause I didn't want to look like a  
nut job! And I was scared! It was  
just a stupid dream!

DR. NEKAWA  
But she's not a dream, James. You  
said it yourself. You've seen her  
in this world.

James tries to calm himself, tears of stress silently fall from his eyes.

Nekawa changes the tone.

DR. NEKAWA (CONT'D)

If she is just a dream, then she cannot get your baby, James. She can't hurt you.

JAMES

Yeah well, she seems more real than not, doc. Besides, it's hard to even tell whether I am awake or asleep anymore. My mind is slipping away, doc.

(beat)

You have to help me.

DR. NEKAWA

I can help you James, but you must listen to me. You created this being. You brought her to life. She is your negative thoughts, trying to keep you from accomplishing your goal.

JAMES

My goal?

DR. NEKAWA

Nina, you must reach Nina. This creature, your negativity, does not want you to do that. And now your paranoia is turning to the baby. Your mind has actually brought this, ghost, into your reality. She is real now, James, and she will do everything she can to try and keep you in this darkness that is your present world.

James hardly acknowledges what Nekawa is saying. He jumps off subject.

JAMES

I looked up some articles at the library the other day and found some interesting stuff about people hearing and seeing things after something traumatic has happened to them.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

And there were even some cases of people that said they received messages from beyond, like the ones I am getting from Nina.

DR. NEKAWA

Is that what you believe?

JAMES

I don't know! Maybe.

Dr. Nekawa neither denies nor confirms what James is saying.

JAMES

Am I crazy, doc? What's wrong with me?

Dr. Nekawa changes the subject.

DR. NEKAWA

You're going to be fine, James. I discussed your case with my colleague and we believe this will help you.

The doctor writes James a prescription and hands it over.

JAMES

What is it?

DR. NEKAWA

It will help you to *focus*, James. It will help you make sense of all this. I believe that you can change what is happening to you. You just need, a little help to see it.

James stares desperately at the prescription.

INT. DURANT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Gwendalynn sits in her high chair and plays with some rattle toys.

James sits at the table and draws a picture of the mountain behind their house. Multiple sketches of the mountain are all over the table. The ring around James' wrist has worsened and gotten bigger.

Gwendalynn coos at him.

JAMES

(snaps to)

Hey, silly. No, daddy's fine. I just need to figure something out that's all.

James leans in close and puts his chin on the table.

Gwendalynn reaches out and grabs his nose.

James laughs what little laughter he has left.

JAMES

Thank you for that. I don't know what I would do if I didn't have you...

(beat)

Guess who's coming over.

Gwendalynn flaps her hands wildly and laughs.

JAMES

That's right. Marcy. You remember her, huh? Marcy is your mother's best friend. They grew up together. Since they were both little babies just like you.

A knock at the door.

James scoops up his drawings and heads for the living room. He pulls down his long sleeves over his wrist.

LIVING ROOM - FRONT DOOR

Marcy stands outside shaking the rain off her umbrella.

He invites her in and greets her at the door with a hug.

MARCY

What are you drawing?

James closes the door behind Marcy.

She notices and playfully snatches the stack of pictures out of his hands.

JAMES

Nothing. I just can't... I don't know.

MARCY

They're good. This is the mountain you and Nina climbed together?

JAMES

Yeah. As good as I can portray it anyway. It's been on my mind a lot lately.

MARCY

They're really good.

Marcy flips through sketch after obsessive sketch of the mountain, until she is about to flip to what looks like a female with ratted hair.

James snatches the pictures back and sets them to the side.

JAMES

Can I get you something to drink?

MARCY

Just some water is fine.

They move to the kitchen.

KITCHEN

James fills a glass with water from the tap and hands it to Marcy.

MARCY

Thank you.

Marcy takes a drink then turns her attention to the baby. She takes a seat next to Gwendalynn.

MARCY

Hi, baby girl. You are even more cute than the last time I saw you.  
(playfully)  
Yes you are.

Gwendalynn is timid at first, but warms up to Marcy very quickly and reaches for her.

MARCY

You want to come to me?

JAMES

She really likes you.

MARCY

Duh. Of course she does.

Marcy picks Gwendalynn up and brings her in close. She looks around. The house looks like a 12-year-old boy's bedroom before mommy tells him to clean it up.

James notices her face.

JAMES

What?

MARCY

What? Look at this place.

JAMES

This is how we like it.

MARCY

Oh yeah? Is this how you like it  
Gwen?

With perfect timing, Gwendalynn shakes her head no and smiles. James and Marcy laugh.

JAMES

Well, I've been kind of preoccupied  
lately.

MARCY

Well this will never do. And you  
looks just as bad as the house  
does.

(chuckles)

Go take a shower and I'll tidy up.

James smiles and does as he's told.

MARCY

And don't think I'm not going to  
tell Nina about this.

James shakes his head as he walks for the bathroom.

BATHROOM

James enters and walks to the sink. He rinses his face with some water then grabs a towel off the rack.

James pats his face dry then drops the towel and jumps back against the wall with horror pasted on his face.

James's REFLECTION faces away from him.

He can't look away.

Suddenly, his reflection turns only it's head around. The sound of bones CRUNCH as it twists, a sinister grin on his reflection's face.

JAMES'S REFLECTION

You're too late.

JAMES

Too late for what?!? What the hell are you talking about?!?

JAMES'S REFLECTION

She's coming for all of them. You will live in darkness... forever.

The reflection turns it's arms now, bones CRUNCHING, and flips James off with both hands, laughing maniacally.

JAMES

FUCK YOU!! FUCK YOU!!

James curses and screams at the reflection.

Marcy rushes into the bathroom to see what's the matter.

MARCY

James?!?

Marcy sees the reflection too. She screams in terror at the sight, falls to the ground, cups her ears and shakes her head.

INT. DURANT'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James awakens in a cold sweat on his couch, Gwendalynn is asleep in his arms.

All the lights are out. Marcy has gone. The house is all clean.

James looks around frantically then lies back with terror in his eyes.

INT. CHUCK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Chuck plays his video games while getting high.

The phone rings.

After he lets the phone ring about nine times, he finally answers.

CHUCK  
(slurs)  
Hello?

There is no answer.

CHUCK  
(clears his throat)  
Hello?

Still nothing.

CHUCK  
Look you little bastards...

A distorted voice comes through the line.

GHOST (O.S.)  
(from phone)  
*Hello.*

Chuck quickly hangs up the phone and tosses it to the side.

He just stares at it for a moment then looks at the joint in his other hand, still smoking. He laughs and blows it off.

Chuck sets the joint in the ash tray and leaves the game on pause to go and take a shower.

#### BATHROOM

Chuck enters and turns the light on. He catches his reflection in the mirror and scares himself.

CHUCK  
(to himself)  
What the flip, Chuck?

He leans in close to the mirror, his eyes badly bloodshot. He just smiles a dopey smile at himself and shakes his head.

CHUCK  
(to himself)  
Trippin'.

Chuck turns the water on in the shower. He adjusts the temperature then hops in.

INSERT - LIVING ROOM

All is quiet and dark, only the light from the TV shines.

INSERT - KITCHEN

All is quiet and dark.

INSERT - BEDROOM DOORWAY

All is quiet and dark.

BACK TO SCENE

BATHROOM

Chuck showers on.

A shadow sweeps across the shower curtain. Chuck pops his shampooed, soapy head out to inspect.

                  CHUCK  
                  (looks and listens)  
                  Hello?

Nothing. Chuck slowly closes the curtain.

INSIDE SHOWER

Chuck rinses his hair till all the soap is gone. When he opens his eyes the curtain is wide open and the Ghost stands before him.

The Ghost screams. Her mouth stretches open on her white fleshy face.

Chuck gasps for air and reaches a hand towards her, pleading for mercy. She sucks the life right out of him. His arms and face start to turn dark with black creeping veins.

INT. CHUCK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Chuck wakes up in a cold sweat, still on his couch in front of the TV. He frantically looks around and gasps big gulps of air. He quickly grabs the phone and calls James.

INT. DURANTS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

James springs up from the couch to answer the phone.

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

JAMES

Hello?

The Ghost approaches behind Chuck. Creeps closer.

CHUCK

Holy shit, man! She was here!

JAMES

What? Who?

The Ghost is right behind Chuck now. She reaches her hand towards him.

CHUCK

Who do you think?!? My dream man!  
She almost got me!

JAMES

Alright man! Take it easy! You're  
awake now! You're alright.

James pauses. No response from Chuck.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Hello?

Chuck can't speak. He CHOKES and GASPS for air through the phone.

CHUCK'S APARTMENT

The Ghost has reached Chuck now. Her hand rests on his head.

Chuck shakes and gasps for air. His eyes bleed. His skin turns dark and veiny, just as in his dream.

James yells through the phone.

JAMES (O.S.)

(from phone)

CHUCK!!

INT. CHUCK'S APARTMENT - LATER

Dark and silent.

James busts through the door and looks around frantically.

The phone lies on the couch and sounds a BUSY SIGNAL. A joint still burns in the ashtray.

JAMES

Chuck, you here?!?

James searches the apartment. He grabs the phone and pushes flash, then calls 9-1-1.

JAMES

Hello?!?

(beat)

I need help! Please, my friend just called and said someone was going to hurt him! And I came over to help him, but his apartment was empty!

(beat)

MAYBE HE WENT OUT?!? I JUST TOLD YOU HE SAID SOMEONE WAS TRYING TO HURT HIM!!

(calms down a little)

So I want you to do your job and send someone over here right now!!

(beat)

Okay. Thanks.

James throws the phone on the couch. After he drops the phone he hears a voice over in Chuck's bedroom.

VOICE (O.S.)

(whisper)

James.

James spins around. No one is there. He cautiously makes his way to the bedroom.

CHUCK'S BEDROOM

James enters and flips the light on to find what looks to be a disturbing obsession. Sketches are scattered all over the room.

James inspects the pictures a little closer to see that they are all crude drawings of the Ghost.

A sudden knock at the door causes James to jump. A voice sounds through the door.

OFFICER (O.S.)  
(muffled, through door)  
Police! Open up!

James glances at the door in confusion, then back at the sketches in his hand.

An OFFICER(35), large male in blue, busts the door down and pulls his gun on James.

OFFICER  
Get down on the ground!

James drops the papers and raises his hands.

JAMES  
Take it easy! I'm the one that called you!

OFFICER  
Get down! Put your face in the floor! And put your hands behind your head! NOW!!

James does as ordered.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

James sits in a dark interrogation room at an empty table. A single lamp hangs above.

The arresting officer asks questions opposite of him.

OFFICER  
So tell me again, why you were at that apartment?

JAMES  
I already told you guys ten times why I was there. I'm the one that called you guys.

OFFICER  
We received a call from someone.

JAMES  
Yeah, me! I called you guys.

OFFICER  
Maybe.

JAMES

You think I'm making this up? You guys received a call from that apartment saying I came over to help my friend. Can't you check the calls or something? You record everything don't you?

OFFICER

Your friend is, Mr. Charles Miles, correct?

JAMES

(frustrated)

Yes.

OFFICER

And where is he now?

JAMES

I don't know. That's why I called the cops.

OFFICER

When is the last time you saw Mr. Miles?

JAMES

A couple days ago, I think. He just called me tonight though.

OFFICER

From his place?

JAMES

Yes!

OFFICER

Where we picked you up?

JAMES

Yes! Why? Am I missing something?

A DETECTIVE(30), male, walks into the room and whispers something to the interrogating officer, then slips out.

JAMES

What? What was that about?

OFFICER

Well my friend, we just did what you suggested, and reviewed the call.

JAMES

And?

OFFICER

And we never received a call from that apartment. We did receive a call from the landlord of those apartments.

JAMES

I don't understand.

OFFICER

He said that someone had broken into Mr. Miles apartment and that they were still in there. He also said that Charles left about two weeks ago, and never came back.

James looks confused.

JAMES

He's a liar! That's bull-shit! I just spoke with him over the phone, and, and, and... when I got there the phone was still off the hook... The TV was still on!

OFFICER

Calm down, please.

JAMES

Well I don't understand...

The officer's tone suddenly changes to a more calm one.

OFFICER

Look sir. I don't know what happened over there tonight, but we're going to release you. I think you should go home, and get some sleep.

The officer lets him off quite easily.

JAMES

Get some sleep? What about my friend? I didn't just imagine this.

OFFICER

I never said that. We'll look into it. Just go home and get yourself focused.

James snaps to at the officer's last words.

The officer up and leaves the room.

James is left there alone and confused.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

James exits the police station and pulls out his phone, he stands under an awning to avoid the downpour. He dials Marcy but only receives her voice-mail greeting.

MARCY'S GREETING (O.S.)

(from phone)

Hi. You've reached Marcy. Just leave a message, and I'll get back to you. -BEEP.

JAMES

Marcy. Hey, I just had a crazy night. Chuck is gone. Have you been experiencing anything strange lately? Please, just call me back as soon as you get this.

He flips the phone shut. His mom pulls up and James hops in.

INT. MARY'S CAR - NIGHT

Mary pulls up to James's house. Light rain pats the outside of the car.

James sits in the passenger seat, exhausted and lost. Gwendalynn sits in her car-seat in the back.

JAMES

Hey, mom?

MOM

Yes, Jimmy?

JAMES

Has Chuck called you guys in the last week or so?

MOM

Who?

He shoots his mom a look.

JAMES

Chuck.

MOM  
Is that one of your friends?

JAMES  
What? Yes, mom!

MOM  
I'm sorry, James. I don't know any  
Chuck.

JAMES  
Mom, you know Chuck.  
(beat)  
Chucky...  
(beat)  
He's been my friend for the last  
twenty years. He used to live with  
us at one point!

Mary dimly smiles, oblivious to James's concern.

MOM  
I'm sorry, sweetheart. You have a  
lot of friends you know.

JAMES  
Not that many.

James shakes his head.

MOM  
I'm really sorry, James.

JAMES  
Just forget it.

James's mom just smiles.

MOM  
I love you, baby.

James just looks at her then gets Gwendalynn out of the back.

MOM  
Bye-bye, sweetie.

While James unbuckles Gwendalynn, Mary starts to hum a tune --  
it's "Angel Baby."

James recognizes it but just looks at the back of his mom's  
head as she sways to her little tune. He slowly closes the  
door and walks away.

INT. SHRINK'S OFFICE - DAY

James sits on the red leather couch again. He looks like absolute hell. Bloodshot eyes. Skinny. Tired.

DR. NEKAWA (O.S.)

James?

James quickly looks up.

JAMES

Yeah.

DR. NEKAWA

Are you alright?

James just laughs crazily.

JAMES

No, doc. I am not alright. I'm losing my damn mind due to lack of sleep! And when I do sleep, the same stupid nightmare wakes me up!

(beat)

I can't eat cause everything tastes like SHIT! Oh, and my friend was taken by some faceless freak, and everyone has forgotten that he even existed! Not to mention I am trying to take care of a baby by myself!

James huffs and puffs heavily.

DR. NEKAWA

Why do you suppose no one remembers him?

JAMES

What?

DR. NEKAWA

Your friend, James. Why do you suppose no one remembers him?

James tries his best to compose himself.

JAMES

I don't know! It's like he never existed. I asked my mom if she's heard from him, and she said she never met him.

DR. NEKAWA

Has she?

JAMES

Yes, she's met him!!

Nekawa just waits patiently for James to calm down.

James takes a few breaths.

DR. NEKAWA

Have you taken the medication that  
I gave you yet?

James reveals the medication bottle and rattles them like a  
crazy person.

JAMES

Got 'em right here!  
(beat)  
I don't feel like I need  
medication, doc.

DR. NEKAWA

So you haven't taken any yet?

JAMES

No, doc, I haven't. I told you I  
don't need meds! I just need  
someone to listen to me.

DR. NEKAWA

I listen to you.

JAMES

All you do is ask questions.

DR. NEKAWA

I am trying to help you. You must  
focus. Only you can fix this...

JAMES

Quit telling me that! Everyone says  
that to me lately! Is this the damn  
word of the month! I can't "*focus.*"

DR. NEKAWA

James, please. I am trying to help  
you realize...

JAMES

Realize what?!? I thought I knew  
what was going on! I just don't  
know what to do about it.

DR. NEKAWA

Maybe you are not ready yet.

JAMES  
This's bull-shit!

James storms out of the room and leaves the door open.

DR. NEKAWA  
(yelling)  
You're running out of time, James.  
You have the power to end all of  
this. You must realize the truth!  
YOU MUST SEE!!

James ignores Nekawa's pleas.

INT. HOSPITAL - NINA'S ROOM - DAY

James sits next to Nina. His head on her stomach.

JAMES  
Nina, please wake up. I need you.  
Tell me how to help you. I know you  
are trying to reach me.

James closes his eyes for a moment. A soft VOICE speaks.

VOICE  
(whisper)  
See.

James springs up.

Nina's eyes begin to bleed and a dark figure comes into focus behind James. He seems to sense her presence, as he turns to face the Ghost.

JAMES  
*WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?!?*

James rushes the being and strangles her as she screeches and screams, her mouth stretches apart. James chokes violently.

A MALE NURSE rushes in. He grasps at James's arms and screams for him to stop.

James looks at the nurse then back at the Ghost in his clutches. He now sees that his hands are tight around a young FEMALE NURSE'S throat. James quickly releases her, a crazy rage still in his eyes.

The female nurse runs from the room in tears. The male nurse follows her out while he holds a disgusted look on James.

James looks over at Nina. There is no blood. He rushes out.

INT. TAXI - MOVING - EVENING

James rides home in a taxi. The rain beats down on the windshield. He calls his mom.

JAMES

Mom.

(beat)

Can you keep just Gwendalynn for a couple of days?

(beat)

Please, mom?!? I just have to be alone for a little while and figure some things out.

(beat)

Thank you. I'll call you.

James hangs the phone up. It rings. It's Marcy.

JAMES

Marcy!

MARCY (O.S.)

(from phone)

James. Hey. I've been trying to reach you for days. I got your message. I don't know what you're talking about...

James just listens.

MARCY (O.S.)(CONT'D)

Who is Chuck?

His face drops. A sudden familiar screech comes through the phone and James drops it to the floor.

INT. DURANT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

James sits at the table and obsesses over his drawings of the mountain. The house is littered with pictures, just like Chuck's apartment before he disappeared.

James looks to be at the end of his rope. He glances up at the prescription from Dr. Nekawa.

James suddenly snaps and throws the bottle and papers everywhere.

The TV suddenly turns on by itself and interrupts his rage. James stares numbly from the kitchen. It's the end of an advertisement for the Mountain Falls community.

INSERT - TV ADVERTISEMENT:

COMMERCIAL NARRATOR (O.S.)  
 Come. Stay a while. And enjoy all  
 that Mountain Falls has to offer.

The commercial ends with a wide shot of the mountain behind their home.

BACK TO SCENE

The commercial almost seems to cause a slight recognition in James's face when phone rings. James checks the caller ID -- It's chuck.

JAMES  
 Hello?!?

CHUCK(O.S.)  
 (from phone, weakly)  
 Help me...

JAMES  
 Chuck?

CHUCK (O.S.)  
 (from phone, weakly)  
 Help me, man.

JAMES  
 Chuck?!? Can you hear me?!?

The line goes dead. James rushes out.

EXT. CHUCK'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

James arrives by taxi and rushes up to the door. He slows his pace and reaches for the doorknob. It's unlocked.

INT. CHUCK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

James quietly slips into the house. It is dark except for some light that shines under the swinging kitchen door.

JAMES  
 (whisper)  
 Chuck? You here?

Nothing.

VOICES sound from the kitchen.

James creeps closer.

KITCHEN

A family of three, MOTHER(32), FATHER(33), and DAUGHTER(7), are having dinner.

James bursts into the room yelling.

JAMES

What is this?!? Who are you  
people?!? WHERE'S CHUCK?!?

The family is terrified. They Huddle together, the father holds his place between them and James.

JAMES

ANSWER ME! I SAID WHERE IS CHUCK?!?

FATHER

We don't know anyone by that  
name...  
(shaken)  
Please.

The father is obviously scared for his family.

JAMES

(slightly calmer)  
This is Chuck's place! I just got a  
call from him! Now where is he?!?

FATHER

Please, sir? We don't know. We've  
been living here for the last three  
months.

James looks confused at this last remark.

The family shivers. The daughter cries in fear.

James, scared, leaves in a hurry.

INT. TAXI - MOVING - EVENING

James urges the taxi driver to speed through town. The radio turns on -- "Angel Baby." James glances down.

JAMES

Can you turn that off, please?

They both stare at the radio as the driver does as he is asked.

When James looks back up he sees Nina in the middle of the road in a rain-soaked hospital gown.

JAMES  
LOOK OUT!!

The taxi driver looks up, swerves with a screech of the tires, and crashes into a fire hydrant on the side walk.

James is knocked unconscious.

Water gushes from beneath the car.

FLASHBACK - NINA'S SONG

INT. DURANT'S HOUSE - OFFICE - AFTERNOON

James sits and writes on his computer. He can hear Nina a few rooms down, she hums a tune. James goes to look in on her.

HALLWAY

The closer James gets to the room the more he can make out the tune. Nina hums and sings the song "Angel Baby".

BABY ROOM

Nina stands in the middle of the room, cradling a blanket in her arms.

James enters behind her.

JAMES  
What are you doing?

NINA  
Nothing. Just thinking.

JAMES  
About what?

NINA  
Oh shut up. You know what about. I want a baby.

JAMES  
Well, what do you have there?

Nina slowly turns. In her arms she holds a baby that looks like the faceless Ghost.

A car suddenly smashes through the wall of the room and takes out Nina and the ghost baby.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. JAMES' CAR - CRASHED - NIGHT

James snaps to in the back seat of the taxi.

He hears Nina's voice.

NINA (V.O.)

Hurry.

James shakes the dizziness from his head. His cell phone rings.

The call is coming from his parents' house. When he answers all he hears is the horrible screech from the ghost.

James breaks the door off it's hinges and stumbles out onto the street. The heavy rain instantly soaks him to the bone. He gains his footing and runs off.

EXT. PARENTS' HOUSE - LATER

James rushes into the yard and up to the door.

INT. PARENTS' HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

James breaks the door down. He's sopping wet.

He finds his mom, dad, and brother dead on the furniture and floor. Blood ran down their eyes. Their skin dark and veiny.

Gwendalynn cries from the master bedroom.

MASTER BEDROOM

James opens the door to find the Ghost staring at him. Gwendalynn cries in her arms. The Ghost screams.

## LIVING ROOM

James is knocked back by the force of the other-worldly screech. Papers and books fly out of the room and pelt him in the face until he is knocked out cold.

FADE TO WHITE.

FADE IN:

INT. PARENTS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

James comes to. The house is clean. His dead family gone. The clock reads 12:00 p.m.

EXT. PARENTS' HOUSE - AFTERNOON

James steps outside. The rain stopped. The neighborhood is empty.

James notices his PARENT'S CAR is still in the driveway, right next to a "HOUSE FOR SALE" sign that flaps in the breeze.

INT. PARENTS' CAR - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

James makes his way through town. The red mark around his wrist has crept over his whole hand in a veiny spiderweb. His eyes are sunken into his skull behind dark bags.

INT. SHRINK'S OFFICE - LATER

James comes in and yells hysterically at the red head at the front desk.

JAMES

Where's the doctor?!?

RED HEAD

I'm sorry, sir...

JAMES

WHERE THE HELL IS HE?!?

RED HEAD

The doctor is not in right now!

(beat)

But he left this for you.

She hands him a letter. James opens it and reads it right there.

INSERT - LETTER, which reads:

DR. NEKAWA (V.O.)

James, I can help you no more. I have given you what you need. The rest is up to you now. You can end all of this. You must focus, you must see the truth that is before you. If you do not, all you know will be lost, and you will be stuck in this dark world... forever.

BACK TO SCENE

James looks up from the letter. The office is vacant and dark, like no one was ever there. He leaves in a hurry.

INT. PARENTS' CAR - MOVING - EVENING

James speeds through town. Still no rain.

INT. HOSPITAL - NINA'S ROOM - LATER

James bursts in, he pants heavily. Nina is gone, her bed empty. James panics. He runs out of her room yelling.

HALLWAY

James enters the hall. He starts to yell for help.

JAMES

Where is my...

But the hall is empty and dark, just like the shrink's office.

JAMES

*SOMEBODY HELP ME!!*

His words echo through the halls.

James runs through the halls in search of someone -- anyone. He is stopped by the sound of a soft familiar voice.

NINA (V.O.)

James.

James turns to see Nina's silhouetted figure. She stands at the end of the hallway, just like in his dreams.

NINA

James... go.

He does not listen. Instead, he runs towards her.

The Ghost suddenly creeps her way out of a room right between them and stops James in his tracks, he slides and falls on the slick floor.

James lies there, too scared to move. The Ghost slowly makes her way towards him, she reaches for him with crooked fingers.

NINA

JAMES, GO!!

The Ghost releases an ear-popping scream.

James gets to his feet and runs as fast as he can through the halls and out of the hospital.

INT. PARENTS' CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

James drives at top speed. The city is abandoned and dark. A dead quiet fills the streets.

The radio comes on. It's a weather report.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

(from radio)

More rain later tonight. Probably  
the biggest storm we've seen yet!

Static interrupts the broadcast, followed by a familiar scream. James beats the radio till it shuts off.

INT. DURANT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

James runs into the house and begins to search through the scattered drawings for some kind of clue. They are all drawings of the Ghost. The pictures of the mountain are all gone.

He throws the pictures and runs to the back of the house.

## BATHROOM

James rushes in and throws up in the toilet. He finishes and stands up to the sink to rinses his face with some cold water.

He stares at himself in the mirror, his face drips with water and sweat.

James notices the bottle of pills, in the reflection, out of the corner of his eye. It sits on the end of the vanity. The words read backwards in the mirror.

INSERT - REFLECTION OF PRESCRIPTION LABEL, which reads:

## LABEL

(Next to prescriber,  
Nekawa's name reads  
backwards)

**AWAKEN**

## BACK TO SCENE

A moment of pure realization is painted on James' face. He snatches the pills and heads for the dining room.

## DINING ROOM

He stops and stares out the window at the mountain for a long beat. Distant lighting flashes and illuminates the massive rock formation.

James goes back into the kitchen.

## KITCHEN

He fills a glass with water, pops the top off the pills, throws as many as he can into his mouth, and washes them down with the water.

James throws the glass into the sink. It shatters.

## INT. DURANT'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

James sits on the couch now. Silent. He waits for the storm to come. He looks determined.

Lightning strikes, thunder RUMBLES, and the power goes out. The house is pitch dark, except for the occasional illumination from the lighting. The sound of HEAVY RAIN starts to pound on the roof.

James walks to the window, pulls the curtain back, and peers out. It's pitch black.

Lightning strikes.

Outside, floating at eye level, is the Ghost. James is stone-faced. She screams but James is not afraid, he holds his ground.

INT. PARENTS' CAR - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

James roars down a muddy road towards the base of the mountain. The storm grows more and more violent as he approaches.

The Ghost appears everywhere along the side of the road. She tries in vain to deter him.

Wildfires suddenly spring up in the distance at the base of the mountain, in direct contradiction to the heavy rains.

James pushes on. The Ghost and her tricks have no effect on him.

Suddenly, the driver's window smashes and the Ghost reaches in. She claws wildly at James from the top of the car. James swerves erratically.

He turns his attention back to the road but it is too late. He slides off the road and into a tree.

The Ghost has disappeared. James shakes off the wreck and continues on foot.

EXT. MOUNTAIN BASE - LATER

James is almost there. The mud beneath his feet is thick, black and heavy. The rain is cold as ice. James' breath puffs out in big clouds of mist.

He finally reaches the base and looks up at the rock-face before him. Lightning flashes. THUNDER crashes.

James makes his way up the mountain bare handed. The storm grows increasingly violent. Fire burns all around.

## HALF WAY UP

James stops to look up. The Ghost stands straight out from the mountainside. She looks down at him. The rock face crumbles all around. Fires burn far below him.

James pushes on and the Ghost disappears.

## PLATEAU

James drags his weak, quivering body up over the ledge and makes it to his feet. His back turned to the ledge.

James yells for Nina, his voice breaks through the thunderous crashes of LIGHTNING and howling WINDS.

JAMES

NINA!!

Nothing.

James gasps for air. He yells again.

JAMES

NINA!!

Still nothing.

James drops to his knees and begins to weep. As James weeps the storm slowly calms down to a sprinkle and a soft breeze.

A light fades up behind him and illuminates the ledge in a beautiful, angelic-blue glow. James notices the light, stands, and turns.

A ghostly-angelic looking Nina stands at the edge, Gwendalynn in her arms. They both glow a soft blue, a comforting smile on both their faces.

James and Nina stare at each other. Eyes locked.

After a moment, Nina speaks in a soft whisper.

NINA

Come with us.

Suddenly, Nina jumps backwards off the cliff. James hesitates, for only a second, then runs and jumps off after them.

All is quiet as the three of them free-fall through the air towards the burning ground below. Nina maintains her comforting smile.

Lightning flashes with low RUMBLES of thunder.

Nina and Gwendalynn reach the base and disappear into the ground. As James reaches the base...

CUT TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK:

A woman's voice, distant and soft.

VOICE (V.O.)  
James? James?  
(to someone else)  
I think it's working.

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

James lies in a hospital bed. He slowly comes to. He opens his eyes to blurred vision. Nina stands over him.

A DOCTOR(47), male, stands on the other side. He flashes a light in James' eyes.

NINA  
James? Come on baby!  
(to doctor)  
It's working!

Nina laughs and cries with joy.

DOCTOR  
Can you hear me, James?

The doctor snaps his fingers.

James is finally able to focus. He is weak and can barely hold his eyes open.

JAMES  
(weakly)  
Nina?

Nina weeps with joy.

NINA  
Oh, James! I knew you would come  
back to us. I knew it.

Nina holds James and weeps.

MONTAGE #2 - JAMES' REHABILITATION

-- Nina helps James learn to walk again.

-- James meets his daughter GWENDALYNN(2), blonde curly hair, for the first time.

-- James' parents and brother come to visit. Everyone laughs.

-- Nina and James celebrate Gwendalynn's second birthday in the hospital.

-- James improves. He walks better. He performs simple tasks by himself.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - MORNING

SUPER: "6 MONTHS LATER"

James, Nina, and Gwendalynn exit the hospital. Nina pushes James in a wheelchair while Gwendalynn sits on his lap. All smiles on their faces.

INT. DURANT'S CAR - MOVING - LATER

The reunited family is on their way home. James and Nina discuss all that has happened.

JAMES

So how long was I actually out for?

NINA

Too long.

JAMES

I'm serious. How long?

NINA

1 year, 11 months, 21 days, 14 hours, and 37 minutes.

James chuckles.

JAMES

Wow. So you kept track then?

NINA  
Shut up. I missed you.

JAMES  
I know.

Shared moment of reverence.

NINA  
After the accident, you went into a coma, and I went into labor. Luckily, someone saw the whole thing and called an ambulance. I was in labor for nine hours.

JAMES  
Holy hell.

NINA  
I know. Little stinker.

They look back at Gwendalynn in the back seat. She smiles and shrugs.

NINA  
I didn't see you until the next day. The doctors told me you may not wake up, or that you could wake up in a couple of weeks. There's just no way to tell, they said.

Nina fights back some tears. James brushes her cheek with his hand.

JAMES  
You don't have to.

NINA  
No. I want to.

Nina composes herself.

NINA  
Okay.  
(beat)  
After about a year of waiting, they were telling me that I might have to make the decision to pull the plug, and let you go. I couldn't accept that. I wouldn't.

(beat)  
Then, there was this doctor, and he approached me with an idea.

(MORE)

NINA (CONT'D)

He said that there was an experimental new drug that may help you wake up from your coma. I was reluctant and scared at first... But the alternative was something that I just couldn't bare to do.

JAMES

What does this *drug* do?

NINA

He said that it would help you to wake up from your own mind. Said that when you're in a coma your mind cannot realize it, and the drug will help you to see it. He told me it would make your mind confront itself and that you would eventually come back on your own.

James looks amazed by the similarities to his nightmares in the coma. He involuntarily scratches at his right wrist.

JAMES

Huh.

NINA

What?

JAMES

Nothing. Please, continue.

NINA

Well after about nine months of giving you the drug and taking you to weekly hypnotherapy sessions.

JAMES

Hypnotherapy?

NINA

Yeah. He said that the sessions would work with the drug to help you realize where you were. Hypnotic suggestions he called it.

(beat)

But despite all this, nothing was happening. I was ready to give up. But the doctor told me that the drug needed time to work. He said it had an accumulative effect.

(beat)

So I waited some more...

(MORE)

NINA (CONT'D)  
and hoped... and now here you are.  
You've come back to us.

They smile at each other. James looks back at Gwendalynn.

JAMES  
(suspiciously)  
How did you come up with our  
daughter's name?

NINA  
Gwendalynn? I don't know. She just  
looked like a Gwen.

Gwendalynn smiles at her daddy and waves.

GWENDALYNN  
Hi, daddy.

James smiles back at her.

JAMES  
(to Gwendalynn)  
Hi, baby.  
(to Nina)  
She really does look like a Gwen.

James turns around. All quiet for a moment.

JAMES  
So how did everyone else deal with  
it?

NINA  
Well, your mom had a hard time. I  
think your father and brother did  
too, but they tried to stay strong  
for your mom. You should of heard  
them on the phone when I told them  
you were awake.

JAMES  
Are you kidding me? Did you see my  
mom almost choke me to death when  
they came to visit?

They laugh.

NINA  
Can you blame her? She missed you.  
They all want me to bring you over  
right away.

JAMES

Maybe. I think I just want to go home first.

NINA

What ever you want, baby. I didn't even tell her we were coming home today. She said she wants to throw you a welcome home party right away.

JAMES

That's why I love you.

James itches at his right wrist again, he still doesn't look at it.

NINA

I love you too.

GWENDALYNN

I love you too, daddy!

JAMES

Awe. And I love you too, baby girl.

Beat.

JAMES

So how's Chuck?

NINA

Who?

James quickly looks over at Nina with a look of fear on his face.

JAMES

What?!?

NINA

What?

JAMES

Chuck, how is he?!?

NINA

I... don't know who you're talking about.

JAMES

What do you mean you don't know?!?  
CHUCK! He was my best man at our wedding!

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

I've grown up with him since grade school! He has been my best friend for the last twenty years! How could you not remember Chuck?!?

James scratches erratically at his wrist now, he still doesn't look at it.

NINA

What? Jason was your best man, your brother...

JAMES

*THAT'S BULL-SHIT!!*

Gwendalynn starts to cry.

NINA

You need to calm down! Please, James?

JAMES

*DON'T TELL ME TO CALM DOWN!!*

James scratches violently at his wrist.

NINA

You're scaring Gwendalynn!

JAMES

*YOU'RE SCARING ME!! JUST TELL ME YOU KNOW CHUCK!!*

NINA

James, please?!?

Nina looks frightened. Gwendalynn cries louder.

NINA

Dr. Nekawa said there could be side effects!

James' face drops at the mention of Dr. Nekawa.

JAMES

What did you say?!?

NINA

Dr. Nekawa. He is the doctor that helped us.

JAMES

No... It can't be.

James looks shocked. Panic and madness beam from his eyes. He looks down to see what he has been scratching, his wrist is covered with the red, veiny ring.

Suddenly, the radio turns on. "Angel Baby" blares through static. James tries to turn it off but it's no use.

The world outside the car starts to fall apart. It turns dark, gray, wilted. The plant life shrivels and dies. The road turns old and cracks up.

The sky clouds over. The approaching winds blow the dead leaves from the trees. LIGHTNING and THUNDER crashes all around.

James looks to Nina. Her skin withers. Her hair turns dark gray. The same with Gwendalynn in the back. Nina and Gwendalynn screech and scream and their mouths and eyes become dark, sunken holes of blackness.

James looks away and cups his ears tight.

UP AHEAD ON THE ROAD

James looks up to see that the faceless Ghost stands planted in their path. She reaches out for James, her mouth stretches open wider than ever.

James pulls at the steering wheel. Nina roars a ghostly scream. The car smashes into a tree.

CUT TO WHITE.

FADE IN:

I/E. DURANT'S CAR - CRASHED - MOMENTS LATER

James comes to from the crash. He is alone in the car. The car, like the world around him, is aged, weathered and dark.

OUTSIDE THE CAR

James stumbles out. The door falls to the ground. It's hinges turn to dust and blow away.

James looks at the empty, gray landscape before him. The rain starts to pour. It instantly soaks him to his core.

James falls to his knees, curls into a ball, and weeps and screams with pain and frustration.

The ghost walks up and stands above James, forever by his side.

We back up and away from the dreary scene.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

We fade back from an extreme close-up of James in a coma. Nina sits by his side and weeps.

DR. PAXTON(47), male, kind looking man, enters the room.

DR. PAXTON

Nina?

NINA

Yeah. Oh, hello, Dr. Paxton.

DR. PAXTON

How are you holding up?

NINA

Not good. I don't know if I can let him go.

DR. PAXTON

I know. But it's been four years since the car accident. James has shown no signs of improvement since the start of the treatment.

Nina holds tight on to James's right wrist, his hand has long been amputated and healed over.

NINA

(desperate)

You said it takes time for the medication to take effect.

DR. PAXTON

Yes, Nina. But we started the treatments over two years ago. The medications. The hypnotherapy. None of it seems to be working.

Nina sounds frustrated.

NINA

How do you know that? You said yourself that his brain showed some activity when we first started the treatments.

DR. PAXTON

And it did. There was an initial spark when we first gave him the drug, and his brain showed a lot of activity for the first month of treatment. But how much since then?

(beat)

We've seen nothing for almost two years now.

Nina lowers her head.

DR. PAXTON (CONT'D)

The treatment was experimental. We both knew it might not work.

He comforts her.

DR. PAXTON (CONT'D)

Nina, you must go on with your life. You have to let James go.

Nina weeps and reluctantly nods her head. Dr. Paxton Gives her a moment.

DR. PAXTON (CONT'D)

Come. We'll go over the paper work.

Nina raises her head.

NINA

Can you ask my daughter to come in here first.

Dr. Paxton opens the door. GWENDALYNN(4), blonde curly hair, enters the room and runs to Nina.

NINA

Gwendalynn. I need you to be strong for me, sweetheart. Can you do that for mommy?

Gwendalynn nods with a quivering lip and tears in her eyes.

NINA

Good, baby. I love you so much.

GWENDALYNN

(through alligator tears)  
I love you too, mommy.

NINA

(through tears as well)  
Okay.

(MORE)

NINA (CONT'D)

Now I need you to tell your daddy  
goodbye, and tell him you love him.

Gwendalynn walks over to her comatose father's bedside. She gently kisses his cheek, then throws herself onto him and cries.

GWENDALYNN

(through heavy sobs)  
I love you, daddy.

As his daughter sobs over him, a single tear rolls down the side of James' face and is absorbed by his pillow. The tear goes unnoticed by all.

NINA

Come on, sweetie.

Gwendalynn turns and holds her mommy tight. Nina, Gwendalynn, and Dr. Paxton exit the room. The door closes the door.

JAMES (V.O.)

(distant scream)  
*NINA!!*

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END