SNOWFALL

by

Brooks Elms & Glenn Sanders

REPRESENTED BY:

United Talent Agency
Max Michael
Charlie Ferraro

One Entertainment
Greg Weiss
12 W. 57th St. Penthouse
New York, NY 10019
212.974.3900 phone

June 19, 2013

"And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth."

Revelations 9:3

EXT. DOWNTOWN MADRID - NIGHT

Umbrellas bob along the sidewalk in a downpour.

A loud CRACK OF THUNDER rolls across the city.

Umbrellas keep bobbing.

Just another rainstorm.

EXT. TEHRAN MARKETPLACE - NIGHT

Intense sandstorm barrels through a narrow old world alley.

The only person still out, a Shopkeeper, fights to cover his produce from the barrage of sand.

The Shopkeeper’s head turns to something in the howling wind.

A small crackle grows to a VERY LOUD BOOM OF THUNDER.

So powerful it knocks fruit off his cart.

He looks up at the sky, worried.

The thunder RIPPLES, and slowly fades.

EXT. SINGAPORE - DAWN

A typhoon pummels this tropical city.

A Delivery Man on a bike battles the wind.

An EAR-SPLITTING THUNDER CRACK RIPS the heavens.

Windows shatter in the buildings around him.

He looks up.

A SHEET OF GLASS FALLS...

...AND THE BIKE FALLS OVER, RIDERLESS.

Electricity cuts out, section by section.

The whole city plunges into darkness.

Thousands of car alarms ECHO in the rain.

EXT. CHICAGO - LATE AFTERNOON

Darkness.

Heavy footsteps ECHO through a concrete chamber.

Emerging from the black throat of a massive drainpipe: AARON.

He’s mid-30s. Fragile eyes betray a rugged build. Wields a sledgehammer over his shoulder.

Outside the drainpipe, a banner hangs across the construction zone: “CRONAN CONSTRUCTION”

Ominous snow clouds loom over downtown on this bitterly cold winter afternoon. No sun, no warmth.

The kind of day you decide to move somewhere else.

Aaron steps to a half-demolished wall. Two OTHER WORKERS swing with their hammers, chipping away.

Aaron hoists his hammer high... WHAM!

Brick crumbles.

He swings again. And again. Faster, with fierce intention.

He’s hitting a lot more than that concrete wall.

WHAM. WHAM. WHAM.

The other guys exchange a look about Aaron.

LATER

Aaron leaves the site. Head buried in his phone.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER 1
Hey. Sledgehammer.

Aaron turns. The two Workers lean against a pile of lumber.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER 1
We’re all heading to McGreevy's.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER 2
Last chance for a beer before the blizzard.

Aaron considers it.

AARON
Thanks. Next time.

The guys glance at each other. No surprise.

BAROOOOMMMM! Thunder crackles. Loud, unnerving.

All three peer into the sky.

Snow falls.

SHOOM!

El Train ROARS overhead...

EXT. SIDEWALK UNDER THE EL - NIGHT

Aaron walks with purpose. Snow flurries around him.

AARON
(into phone)
Nina, we gotta talk. You can't keep ignoring my calls. I've been thinking about everything you said--

He pulls the phone away. An incoming call from "Dad."

Annoyed, Aaron hits IGNORE.

AARON
I'm heading to your El stop. Maybe I can catch you after rehearsal.

Taps END CALL. Heads upstairs to the El station. Sign overhead reads: "TO UNION STATION."

EXT. EL STATION

Aaron waits, bracing against the cold. His frozen breath swirls in the wind, through the heavy snow.

He scans the platform intently.

He spots: NINA, 25, jet black hair spiking out the bottom of a wool hat, framing ski goggles.

AARON
Nina!

She looks up. Sees Aaron. Pulls off her goggles. Angry.

NINA
Aaron, don't.

AARON
You weren't answering my calls.

NINA
For a reason!

AARON
You're right. I was holding back. But no more bullshit. Whatever you want to know about me--

NINA
(considers it, but)
NO. Every time a guy asks for another chance, I get my hopes up. But it never works out, so...

AARON
I'm not those other guys.

His eyes sparkle, playful.

Nina locks on to them, tempted, but...

The train roars into the station. Brakes squeal. Nina's resolve returns.

NINA
(shouts over train)
You dodged every personal question I asked for two months. You wouldn't even introduce me to your father. I can't do this anymore.

Train doors open. Nina turns away. Crosses the platform to get on. Aaron follows. Grabs her arm.

AARON
Nina, I messed up. But I'm here now. Let's get a cup of coffee and--

She turns to look at him. Intently.

NINA
Are you still in love with your ex-wife?

Aaron takes a deep breath.

Nina doesn't like that pause. She slips into the train, the fourth of five cars.

INT. TRAIN CAR #4

Aaron follows her into the nearly empty train. Only a handful of people brace for the big storm.

Windows completely frosted over.

AARON
Can we just talk--

NINA
No. Please, just leave me alone.

The doors SHUT. Aaron smirks.

AARON
Where am I supposed to go now?

NINA
Anywhere but here.

The ice in her eyes chills Aaron.

She turns away. Sits without looking at him.

Though the bench beside her is empty, he knows he has to be careful. Instead, he sits three seats away.

He watches Nina hopefully. But she won't make eye contact.

Standing next to Aaron is CHI, a dapper Vietnamese man, 55, crowned with a stylish top hat.

Chi reads Aaron. Gently. No judgment.

CHI
(thick Vietnamese accent)
Big thunder, big storm.

AARON
Yeah. Last thing this city needs.

CHI
No, it is good! Blizzard bring people together. Strangers. Family. Rich and poor. Even angry lovers.

Chi nods toward Nina. Aaron smiles, shakes his head.

CHI
My bad. I mind my own business now.

Chi pulls out a tablet. Flips through photos.

Aaron taps “VOICEMAIL” on his phone. Holds it to his ear. The message garbled from bad reception.

AARON’S DAD
(voicemail)
Aaron-- an emergency-- need to get--
Union Sta-- as soon as you--

The voicemail ends. Aaron sighs, annoyed. Deletes it.

Aaron taps out a quick text to Nina: “Coffee?”

A split second later, she gets it. Stifles a smile. Inadvertently looks at Aaron. Then looks away.

Train stops. Doors open.

Chilly wind rips through.

With the frigid air, comes human icicle RUTH, 55.

Her Manolo Blahnik boots shine, pristine condition.

She struggles with laptop bag, purse, and small suitcase, all stuffed to the gills. Also clutches a Saks Fifth Avenue bag jammed full of La Mer moisturizer.

Ruth spots a nearby seat but a lanky TATTOO GUY, 22, stands in the way, oblivious.

Ruth hovers near him. Glares. Waits for him to move.

He stares straight ahead, pretends he doesn’t notice her. Adjusts his gnarly lip-to-ear piercing chain.

From a few seats down:

NINA
Hey buddy, move over.

With a deep sigh, like she asked to borrow a kidney, Tattoo Guy moves just enough for Ruth to slide past.

She bumps him with her bags. He shakes his head, annoyed.

RUTH
Excuse you.

Before Ruth can sit, doors close. People grab railings, but she’s disoriented.

The train takes off and she stumbles. Nina steadies her.

NINA
Gotta hold on.

Ruth nods. Takes the seat. Nina points to her suitcase.

NINA
You know they stopped train service from Union Station to O'Hare because of the storm.

RUTH
I'm aware of that.

Ruth leans forward. Fidgety. Glares at Tattooed Guy.

Nina sits next to Aaron.

NINA
I'll think about coffee. But not tonight. MAYBE tomorrow after rehearsal.

AARON
Okay.

Nina smiles.

NINA
MAYBE.

Aaron's phone slides off his knee. Clatters to the floor.

A hand snatches it.

Meet BILL, 30. Black guy with intense eyes but an easy smile.

Bill hands Aaron his phone.

AARON
Oh. Thanks!

BILL
Gotta look out for each other. Cause you know the powers that be sure won't.
(scans Aaron's face)
Hey, you look familiar.

AARON
I get that a lot.

BILL
I don't know. I never forget a face. I bet we've met.

AARON
I don’t think so.

BILL
Alright...

Bill unzips his coat a few inches, revealing HOSPITAL SCRUBS.

Grabs his phone. Taps away. Shakes his head in disbelief.

BILL
Twenty degree drop in the last hour. New record.

Shows the screen to the guy standing next to him: MIKE, 45. Meat and potatoes man with an old school mustache to make Chicago proud.

MIKE
Yeah, the only thing that rises in winter is the frickin’ gas prices.

Bill shows Aaron and Nina an animated weather map with sprawling clouds moving across the Midwest.

BILL
It’s a bunch of storms all smashed together. Like a superstorm.

A blast of wind rocks the train. Surprised, people YELP!

MIKE
Come on, people, it’s just a little wind. Not like it’s the end of--

ZA-ZAP!

From beneath the train, a crackle of electricity.

Then a loud POP! The sound of a transformer blowing.

SHOUTS of surprise.

Lights flicker.

THE TRAIN JOLTS TO A STOP.

WALLACE (O.S.)
Oh!

WALLACE, 83, newsboy cap and bomber jacket, slips off his seat to his knees. Struggles to get up.

Aaron springs to help.

WALLACE
Why these things don't have seat belts is beyond me.

RUTH
What just happened? Why aren't we moving?

MIKE
We lost power to the track.

RUTH
Will it come back on?

MIKE
Yeah, yeah, always does.

RUTH
How soon?

MIKE
Ask the conductor.

CRACK-CRACK BOOM!

Thunder rips the heavens.

In the distance, car alarms go off.

NINA
I've never heard thunder in the winter.

STANISLAW (65), grim-faced Polish immigrant with a thick accent, chimes in.

STANISLAW
It happens. Very rare. Conditions must be perfect.

MIKE
Thunder's not bad. Snow's not bad. But Thundersnow? That's bad.

RUTH
How long before we get moving?

STANISLAW
Is possible CTA suspend service early. Maybe they don't realize we're still on board.

WALLACE
We could freeze to death in here. Somebody should call 911.

AARON
It’s a little premature for 911.

Aaron scrapes away frost from the window.

POV OUT OF TRAIN, SIDE OF A BUILDING

Aaron looks out at the blizzard in full force. Intense wind. Thick snow. Street lamps 20 yards away barely visible.

BACK IN TRAIN CAR #4

Aaron turns away from the window. It quickly re-frosts.

MIKE
I feel it. We’ll get moving any second now.
(pause)
Any second.... NOW!
(pause)
Or maybe.... NOW!

Nina chuckles.

Bill stares at his phone. So does Nina. Her eyes grow wide.

BILL
Woah, anyone see what’s happening in Japan?

NINA
My God.

BILL
Some kind of terrorist attack. Bunch of bombs went off in Osaka and Tokyo. Lots of people killed.

MIKE
Jesus, that’s awful.

NINA
Wait, this says it’s a shooting spree in London.

Aaron glances at Nina’s phone.

AARON
(to Bill)
Let me see.

Bill flips his phone for Aaron.

AARON
So is it England or Japan?

NINA
Both.

VIDEO CLIP ON BILL'S PHONE: Grainy handheld shots. Carnage. Blood and body parts.

MIKE
Like they got hit with bazookas.

RUTH
What do the authorities say?

BILL
I'm on Twitter. It's happening now.
(reads)
"Bombs everywhere. People running. Total chaos." Here's another. "Osaka bloodbath. Who is doing this to us?" Jesus. "Just saw mother and baby blown up. Bad weather, bad day."

NINA
This is from London. "People getting shot all around. Everybody screaming. Chaos"

AARON
My God.

RUTH
Do you have to share all this?

BILL
I wanna hear.

CHI
Not good for heart.

AARON
We need to know.

BILL
(looking at phone)
Finally, mainstream news picks it
(MORE)

BILL (CONT'D)
up. Cronan Media’s reporting a bomb attack in Times Square too. Dozens of people killed. Jesus.

A gust of wind shakes them all.

AARON
THREE different cities?

NINA
What is going on?

CHI
Bad weather. Bad day.

MIKE
Pal, that does not help.

CRACK-CRACK-BOOOOM!

The loudest thunderclap yet rocks the train.

People GASP and SHOUT.

A sharp CLATTERING sound echoes across the roof of the car.

Everyone looks up. The sound stops.

Aaron scrapes frost from a window. Squints out.

AARON
The sound shattered the glass.

MIKE
That’s fricking loud.

BILL
Why didn’t it break OUR windows?

STANISLAW
Plexiglas. Stronger than glass. It bend instead of shatter.

BILL
My connection dropped. Can’t even send a text.

Aaron checks his phone.

AARON
Mine’s down.

Nina pulls out her phone.

NINA
Nothing.

AARON
(to the crowd)
Can anyone get online? Make a call?

People check their phones and shake their heads, “no.”

A college couple, TYLER and TESS hold each other tight.

TESS
I’m gonna lose my shit.

TYLER
Yeah. This is fucked. Something BIG is going down.

AARON
So NOBODY’S getting a signal?

STANISLAW
Cell phone tower is fragile. Could be storm. Cold. Damage to tower. Something worse.

MIKE
Worse? Like terrorists?

STANISLAW
Could be coordinated attack.

BILL
Remember how confused everyone was on 9/11? First it was just a plane crash. Then all hell broke loose. Could be some SERIOUSLY crazy shit.

AARON
We don’t know anything yet, so ease up on the speculation.

Tyler JUMPS up past Aaron. Looks out a window.

AARON
Let’s all just stay calm--

TYLER
I am calm!

AARON
Hey, buddy, we’re in this together.

TYLER
I’m not your buddy.

Tyler sits. Tess rubs his head. Chi smiles at Aaron.

NINA
What if Chicago’s next?

AARON
I don’t think it’s terrorists. It wouldn’t make sense for them to attack in the middle of a storm when there’s hardly any people outside. We’ll be fine.

STANISLAW
Or freeze to death.

MIKE
Thank you, Dr. Doom.

Mike leans over. Wipes the window to get a look outside.

MIKE
There’s power on the street. And the lights are on in here. I say ten minutes tops before we move.

NINA
The CTA must know the train is stopped, right?

STANISLAW
Power could be down for all trains. If there is accident, people hurt, we are low priority.

TYLER
I’m finding out what’s up.

Tyler marches toward the front of the car.

AARON
Hold on. Before we open the door and let in that storm--

TYLER
Don’t tell me what to do. We need to know what the hell’s going on.

AARON
If we’re stuck for hours, we can’t afford to lose heat. Maybe there’s an emergency call box.

Tyler stops. A TALL WOMAN points behind Mike.

TALL WOMAN
There's instructions.

Mike turns. A panel displays instructions and pictograms.

MIKE
(reads)
"In case of emergency, listen for instructions. Remain on train. Do not open side doors. Move to another car if your immediate safety is threatened." So basically do nothing. Lotta help that was.

AARON
Anything about a call box?

MIKE
Nope.

Lights flicker a few more times.

Commuters GROAN.

NINA
That's not good.

A few more flickers then....

DARKNESS.

Passengers GASP.

RUTH
God damn it!

Traces of street lights filter through the heavy snow and past the frosted windows.

A few people fire up cell phones, if only for the light.

WALLACE
Could someone please call 911?!

AARON
At this point, I'm not sure we can.

WALLACE
I hate to say "I told ya so" but...

AARON
Anybody got a signal yet?

People check.

PASSENGERS
No. / No luck. / Not me. etc..

STANISLAW
We need satellite phone.

Bill notices Ruth nervously slip a phone from her pocket. It's bulkier than everyone else's, with a fat antenna.

She punches a text. The phone makes a "BLING" sound.

BILL
You got a text through?

RUTH
No. Nothing.

She quickly slips the phone back into the pocket.

He eyes her, not sure if she's lying.

AARON
There must be a call box.

MIKE
What's behind those instructions?

Aaron steps across the train to the metal panel.

He tries to pull it open. Doesn't move. Touches the lock.

AARON
Does anyone have something--

Mike hands Aaron a thick multi-tool from his pocket.

MIKE
Never leave home without it.

TYLER
Yeah, like this is better than just finding the conductor.

Aaron slides a small screwdriver into the lock... CLICK.

Panel swings open to reveal a tangle of wires.

AARON
Anyone familiar with fuse boxes? I'm in construction but I don't know electrical.

MIKE
Only in a bitchin' Camaro.

BILL
No clue.

Stanislaw steps over.

STANISLAW
(points)
Doors. Lights. Speakers.

MIKE
Finally some good news from this guy. Can you get the lights on?

STANISLAW
No.

MIKE
And Dr. Doom Returns.

But Stanislaw attacks the wires and fuses.

He clicks a switch up, then down. Up, then down.

Nothing.

Then swaps out a few wires. Flips the switch up....

BZZZZZIP!

The lights flicker and pop on.

The car responds with a little cheer.

STANISLAW
I wire lights to emergency power. But we're stuck until main power comes back on.

AARON
Thank you.

Ruth stands. Marches across the train with her stuffed bags.

RUTH
I can't take this.

MIKE
Where you going, lady?

RUTH
Finding a way off this train.

Aaron steps in front of her.

AARON
Ma'am, don't open the door.

She pushes past Aaron. Aaron softly touches her shoulder.

RUTH
HANDS OFF!

Aaron pulls his hand back. She continues to the door.

TYLER
Get off her! She has a right to go.

AARON
(to Ruth)
We don't know how long we'll be stuck. We have to keep the heat in.

STANISLAW
We had blizzard in Warsaw when I was child. People who go outside, not found til spring.

RUTH
I'll remember that next time I'm in Warsaw.

MIKE
Let her go. I see her type in my shop all the time. Complain and complain, demand special treatment. Life's too short.

She ignores him. Yanks open the door.

Wind and snow blast her. She pauses, catching her breath.

SLAM!

Door closes. Ruth is gone.

TYLER
(to Tess)
We're going too, Baby.

TESS
We're staying here.

TYLER
(pause)
Fine.

He slumps back.

NINA
How long could we be stuck here?

STANISLAW
In Snowmageddon, I was trapped in car on Lake Shore Drive for seven and half hours.

AARON
Or it could be five minutes. We don't know. In the meantime, anybody gets a cell signal, call it out. We're gonna be okay.

Nina takes a little breath, allows Aaron to calm her.

Aaron leans over to the window. Wipes off the frost. Cups his hands around his eyes as blinders....

POV OUT OF TRAIN, TOWARD BUILDING

Blizzard rages. Aaron sees even less than before of the street lights. Just an orange glow.

He looks upward when...

...a flash of distant yellow lightning snaps downward. Briefly frames the shape of the building.

BA-BA-BOOOOOM!

BACK IN TRAIN CAR #4

The whole train shudders from the bone-jarring sound.

TYLER
What the hell.

Aaron and Nina glance around at panic on passengers' faces.

A low rolling rumble of distant thunder rises in volume...

...until it crests like a giant wave of noise...

BA-BA-CRACK-BOOOOOM!

...like the sky ripping open.

People jam hands against ears as the train vibrates.

MIKE
Holy FUCK!

WALLACE
Why isn’t anyone coming?!

STANISLAW
We are on our own.

CHI
We are together.

CLANG!

Everyone jumps in surprise. Glances up at the roof.

CLANG! CLANG!

Aaron looks around.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

Bill scrapes frost off the window.

BILL
It’s hailing!

MIKE
Shit on a stick!

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

The sound is painful, random, deeply unnerving.

Nina instinctively grabs Aaron’s arm.

Wallace flushes white.

Tyler stands on the seat to look. Reaches up to a small horizontal window near the ceiling.

TESS
Baby, be careful.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

Tyler unlatches the window.

MIKE
Kid, if one of those hits you in the head and you die, FUCK you.

Tyler opens it anyway.

AARON
Close the window. NOW!

Tyler flips him the bird without looking back.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

A hailstone SMACKS the window edge. It showers Tyler with harmless ice and tumbles away.

MIKE
Close the damn window!

Another, much larger hailstone bounces off the window frame and into the car. Tyler ducks and it skids across the floor.

It’s a chunk of ice bigger than his fist.

Aaron leaps up. Slams the window shut. Latches it.

Turns to see Tall Woman inspecting the icy globe.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! Hail continues on the roof.

Bill leans over the ice chunk. Stanislaw does too.

It’s giant. Size of a grapefruit.

They study it.

Seems very, very odd...

...because there’s something inside...

And it VIBRATES!

Tall Woman drops it.

Ice cracks and begins to melt, as if the core radiates heat.

Stanislaw crouches to look closely.

People gather around behind him.

MIKE
WHAT. ON EARTH. IS THAT?

As if it heard him, the thing CHATTERS in pops and squeaks.

CLICK-CLICK-CRAAAACK.

Whatever they’re looking at FLOATS UPWARD.

Passengers GASP!

Aaron stands in front of Nina, nudging both of them back.

AARON
Get away from it.
(loud)
Everyone, GET BACK!

Fear fills the eyes of the commuters.

They back away, down the aisle, between seats.

A shrill high-pitched noise RISES IN VOLUME. Organic and electronic, like a parrot squawk mixed with dialup modems.

It builds to a deeply unnerving SCREEEEEEAAAK...

Tall Woman stumbles, staring at it, when...

BRAP!

A blast of UNEARTHLY SOUND belts her...

EXPLODING HER INTO A SPRAY OF BLOOD!

Chunks of flesh, clothes and hair scatter through the air.

SLOWMO: shock hits Aaron and Nina...

SCREAMS fill the train.

MIKE
JESUS FUCKING CHRIST!

All hell breaks loose.

Aaron grabs Nina by the wrist and bolts toward the next car.

They jam into a bottleneck of people.

Passengers HOWL in terror.

PASSENGERS
NO! / Oh my god! / GET OUT OF HERE!

People claw at each other.

Chi loses his balance. Gets sucked under the human tide.

Snow boots pound all around him, sure to be trampled...

A hand reaches down. Aaron yanks Chi to his feet. Chi grabs his top hat.

AARON
MOVE!

Two at a time, Aaron pushes passengers through the door.

Tyler pulls Tess. Tries to force them through the door ahead of others. Aaron SHOVES him back.

AARON
They go first, THEN you!

The other people slip through, then Tyler and Tess.

Aaron peeks back to see the thing aiming at Tattooed Guy.

SCREEEAAK-BRAP!

Chunks of flesh and the LIP-TO-EAR PIERCING CHAIN flings by, hitting Stanislav.

EXT. BETWEEN TRAIN CARS #4 AND #3

Aaron shoves the last person out of Car #4 and joins them.

Only to spot an ELDERLY WOMAN still in there!

Aaron reaches back inside Train Car #4 for the Elderly Woman.

She slips in all the blood.

Aaron grabs her frail arm.

He looks up, spots the thing about to attack!

Aaron ducks behind the door...

SCREEEAAK-BRAP!

He hears the woman SHRIEK in terror then...

SILENCE.

Aaron still holds her arm...

...now DETACHED from her body!

He drops the limb, shocked.

Slams shut the door to Train Car #4. Crouches down.

He looks back through the frost-covered window into the car. Sees movement.

A shadowy round shape flings itself at the Plexiglas!

WHAP! Aaron ducks.

And again... WHAP!

But it can’t get out.

Aaron watches closely through the window.

It flies away, then back again: WHAP!

This time Aaron doesn’t flinch.

The tiny devil is trapped.

Aaron dives into...

TRAIN CAR #3

...and slams the door behind him.

Most of the passengers on this car RUN FORWARD IN FEAR to get away from whatever happened.

The characters we’ve already met SCREAM, CRY, and wipe blood off their jackets.

A strapping OFF-DUTY FIREFIGHTER storms over.

FIREFIGHTER
Chicago Fire Department! What’s going on?!

MIKE
This fucking thing attacked us!

FIREFIGHTER
Somebody said there’s a bomb on the train?

AARON
No no, I saw it. It’s some kind of a drone, size of a tennis ball. It was INSIDE a hailstone. Then started flying around killing people. But I think it’s still trapped in the other car.

FIREFIGHTER
Slow down! You’re not making sense.

BILL
(loud, to the car)
Is anyone hurt? I'm a paramedic!

Tess SOBS in hysterics.

TESS
Those people... they just exploded into thin air!

TYLER
It's okay now, Baby. It's okay.

FIREFIGHTER
(to Aaron)
What do you mean exploded?

STANISLAW
Like military drone. Use blast of sound. Turn people into... nothing.

MIKE
So fucking awful!

FIREFIGHTER
Everybody CALM DOWN. I sent a text to the guys at the station before I lost my signal. They'll be here ASAP. Til then, show me what's up.

Aaron leads him to window. Firefighter beholds the carnage.

FIREFIGHTER
Jesus.

Firefighter grabs the door handle.

AARON
Don't go out there!

FIREFIGHTER
Hail's stopped.

AARON
We don't know what happened. There could be more of those things!

FIREFIGHTER
That's why I'm going out. Gonna climb up on the roof. Assess the situation. Make an escape plan.

AARON
What if it comes after you? You're--

FIREFIGHTER
(loud)
SIT DOWN and let me do my job.

Aaron stays standing. But knows better than to stop him.

Firefighter exits. Door slams shut.

Tyler nods to Aaron.

TYLER
You don't like it either, do ya chief?

AARON
Let's hope he knows what he's doing.

THUMPING sounds hit as he scales the ladder up to the roof.

NINA
(to Aaron)
Aaron, what the hell is going on?

AARON
No idea. Just stay close to me. No matter what.

Everyone listens to the Firefighter STOMP on the roof.

Aaron steps toward the door facing car #4.

He wipes the window to smear away frost.

Presses his face against it...

POV BACK INTO CAR #4

Barely visible through the two sets of doors, the car looks like a slaughterhouse.

TRAIN CAR #3

NINA
What's it doing?

AARON
Can't see. But it was small. Could be anywhere.

MIKE
It better be in that other car or we're royally fucked!

AARON
I don't think it can get through the window.

Aaron cups his eyes to look through the window again.

Only inches away, just on the outside of the frosted glass...

...a TINY SHADOW FLINGS AT THE WINDOW!

Aaron recoils.

WHAP!

It bounces off the Plexiglas.

Passengers SCREAM.

AARON
It got out!

It shoots forward again...

WHAP!

Aaron stares at it.

AARON
It can't break the glass!

TYLER
It blows people into pink dust, but it can't break a window?!

STANISLAW
Not yet.

Above the car, Firefighter stomps around.

The tiny shadow pauses in mid-air. As if it heard the footsteps.

CLICK-CLICK-CRAAAACK. It zips upward!

AARON
Oh no.

Aaron leaps to the top of the nearest seat.

POUNDS the ceiling.

AARON
(to firefighter)
IT GOT OUT!

He pounds harder.

AARON
IT'S COMING! LOOK OUT!

Others join, SCREAMING and slamming the ceiling and walls.

They hear the Firefighter CLOMP across the top of the train.

AARON
RUN!

CLUMP-CLOMP. CLUMP-CLOMP. CLUMP-CLOMP.

He makes it to the middle.

CLUMP-CLOMP. CLUMP-CLOMP.

NINA
FASTER!

CLUMP-CLOMP.

He's almost to the other end of the train when another sound echoes from above...

SCREEEAAK-BRAP!

Everyone goes SILENT.

Aaron looks around, breathless.

Blood OOZES down both sides of the train windows.

The red liquid quickly freezes into blood-cicles.

The crowd GROANS in terror.

Aaron addresses the frightened passengers.

AARON
Everyone listen up, please! We HAVE to work together. First rule, NOBODY goes outside. Second--

TYLER
You can't just tell us what to do.

MIKE
YOU opened the window, Einstein. If it wasn't for HIM, we'd all be dead. So shut your trap.

TYLER
It's NOT my fault!

WHAP!

The tiny dark shadow SMACKS the window near Tyler's head.

He scrambles to his feet.

Aaron speaks with calm authority.

AARON
If it got OUT of the other car, it can get INTO this one.

NINA
How?

WHAP!

The thing BANGS the Plexiglas behind Nina. She jumps.

AARON
(thinks)
I closed the window. And the door.
(realization hits)
There's another way into the train. Look around for any cracks or holes! Everyone. NOW!

WHAP!

It BASHES the window near Aaron. His eyes narrow.

The others scour the car.

But Aaron stalks down the aisle, gears churning.

Every few feet, Aaron RAPS on the window. And in response:

WHAP! It SMACKS the exact spot he just hit.

As Aaron moves past, Mike checks a window lock, to make sure it's sealed.

Stanislaw rattles the whole window frame. Startles Mike.

MIKE
Whoa! Easy, pal!

STANISLAW
Sorry.

Aaron continues. But DOESN'T tap the window. And yet:

WHAP! It BASHES the spot closest to him.

Like it's tracking him. Sizing him up.

WHAP!

Aaron passes Nina balancing on a bench. She checks the upper panels behind the train banner ads.

WHAP! It keeps trying to get at Aaron.

He reaches Bill, who looks under the seats.

Bill, on his belly, sees a cone-shaped vent cover.

Bill reaches, sticks his fingers in.

Aaron moves to the window. Wipes away frost.

POV OUT OF TRAIN

Floating a foot away from the window, A DARK SPHERE.

It holds there a second.

BILL (O.S.)
Found something!

On Bill's voice, the thing DROPS FROM VIEW.

BACK IN TRAIN CAR #3

Aaron tracks its trajectory down to:

Bill, still on the floor, raises himself onto his knees.

BILL
It's a vent. Not big enough for that thing to get through.

AARON
(voice rising)
Guys, get ready to RUN.

From behind Bill, floating upward... THE THING!

It's **A BIZARRE ORB.** The size of a tennis ball. Like a round barnacle with a tiny mouth.

Orb's surface is dark, wrinkled, like an old man's skin.

It's REALLY fucking weird.

The crowd SCREAMS!

Bill turns. Sees the Orb. Scrambles to his feet in horror.

AARON
GET TO THE NEXT CAR!

Bill pushes into the crowd.

Orb swivels to an easier target: a slow Heavy-set Man.

Passengers plow toward the front of the car, jamming together like terrified cattle.

SCREEEAAK-BRAP!

Heavy-set Man EXPLODES in a fountain of gore!

His PACEMAKER clatters to the seat.

The crowd claws to get out of the car.

Aaron grabs Nina's hand. Boosts her to the top of a seat.

With unusually strong balance, Nina leaps across seat tops.

Aaron bolts to the front. Pushes people through roughly. Shoves others back, so it's faster for everyone.

AARON
TWO AT A TIME!

LINDA, 40s, weathered blonde, sees Nina on the seats.

Linda tries to follow by climbing up a bench. But Nina made it look easy.

The Orb locks on to Linda and swoops in.

Linda wobbles.

The Orb's mouth opens to strike...

Linda falls between the seats.

SCREEEAAK-BRAP!

The bench vibrates, but it’s totally intact.

Linda looks around. Confused.

Nina reaches down. Pulls her up and forward.

The Orb swoops in for another strike when...

BAM!

Aaron bashes it with a briefcase.

It sends the Orb rebounding off the wall.

The crowd presses on, a mosh pit cramming through the door.

Orb regains its bearings. Mouth chatters open and shut.

Orb spins toward the crowd. Back to business.

Aaron gets almost everybody out.

He swings the briefcase again at the Orb.

This time it easily dodges Aaron’s attack.

He dives out of the car.

Slams the door to Train Car #3, trapping the Orb.

For now.

TRAIN CAR #2

Aaron slides the door shut against the storm.

AARON
Find the vents and PLUG THEM!

Everybody scrambles.

The only one in this car who didn’t run forward to the next car is Ruth, she of the expensive boots.

She stares in horror at the blood-splattered passengers.

RUTH
What happened in there?

Sandwiched under a row of seats: Stanislaw.

STANISLAW (O.S.)
One here! Both sides.

MIKE
Two down here as well.

AARON
Any more? Keep looking!

Passengers scour the space under their seats.

AARON
Check your things! We need stuff to plug those vents! FAST!

Women dig through purses. Guys look in pockets.

BILL
No vents down here!

STANISLAW
Total is four.

WHAP!

The Orb, now outside, smacks against a window.

NINA
That thing is relentless!

Mike unfurls his scarf. Rolls it up. About to get down when--

AARON
Wait! It's been destroying flesh and clothes.

TAP!

STANISLAW
(to the crowd)
Yes! Use only plastic, metal or rubber! Cloth, no good!

NINA
My travel mug!

Nina pulls a travel mug from her backpack.

She dives to the floor. Crams it in. Doesn't quite fit.

Yanks it out. Twists off the lid. Coffee sloshes.

Nina reaches back under, stuffs just the lid in the hole.

She stomps it in with her heel.

NINA
Got it!

AARON
One down, three to go!

WHAP!

Tyler tries his computer mouse. Too small.

He gets up, angry. Smashes the mouse on the floor.

TAP!

Right up against the window behind him!

Someone touches Aaron's shoulder. He startles. It's Ruth holding a make-up mirror.

RUTH
How about this?

MIKE
Toss it here.

Aaron throws it to Mike who stuffs it in a vent hole.

TAP! TAP!

Orb picks up the pace.

AARON
What else do we have? FASTER!

Tess digs frantically in her bag. Pulls out a BOTTLED WATER.

TESS
Here!

She flings it to Tyler. He jams it into the vent.

It fits, just barely.

AARON
ONE MORE! QUICKLY!

TAP! TAP! TAP!

Wallace the old timer holds up a small brown grocery bag.

WALLACE
How 'bout a can of soup?

Aaron takes the can, throws it to Stanislaw.

Who dives under the seat. Tries to jam it in. Won't go.

He looks at the hole. The metal cover is bent.

STANISLAW
Anybody have tool? Hammer, screwdriver? Anything.

TAP! TAP! TAP!

Unnerving SILENCE...

AARON
FAST!

Mike scrambles to pull out his multi-tool.

Slides it across the floor to Stanislaw.

UNDER NINA'S SEAT: CLANKING and CHATTERING!

She looks down at the Orb trying to batter its way past the travel mug lid.

NINA
Is it gonna work?!

BILL
Guess we'll find out.

CLANK! CLANK! CLANK!

The lid shakes, but holds.

NINA
Thank God.

ACROSS THE TRAIN: Stanislaw pries off the entire vent cover.

He grabs the can. Angles the bottom to fit the hole.

CLANK! CLICKETY-CLANK! The Orb bangs along the base of the train, searching, closing in on Stan's vent!

Aaron dives to help.

AARON
It's coming!

People rise in panic.

They edge to the forward door, ready to stampede again.

SCREEEAAAA...

Aaron and Stanislaw get the can in there, just in time to hear a muffled...

BRUP.

But no damage done.

Aaron pounds the can in deep with his boot.

SILENCE.

STANISLAW
This is good.

A collective sigh hits the train car.

WALLACE
Got three more if you need ‘em.

AARON
Could have used those a minute ago. But thanks.

WALLACE
Bought ‘em clearance. Why would you discount soup? Soup never goes bad.

MIKE
If this goes on much longer, we might need ‘em to eat.

LINDA
I have a son. If I’m not home-- We don’t have anyone else.

AARON
Before we make another move, we need to think this through.

Linda leaps to her feet in raw panic.

LINDA
I have to get to my son!

Linda rushes for the front door.

Aaron chases her.

AARON
Don’t open that door.

LINDA
I CAN’T JUST SIT HERE!

She grabs the handle. Everyone recoils, terrified.

MIKE
Don’t open it!

Aaron grabs her. Yanks her away. Door slams shut.

LINDA
GET OFF ME!

She YELLS.

WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! The Orb outside smashes at the windows, searching for a way in.

Aaron covers her mouth.

AARON
(harsh whisper)
It can HEAR us. It’s listening RIGHT NOW. Calm down. Please.

Terrified, Linda slowly settles down.

AARON
(whispers to Linda)
We’ll make a plan. And all of us will get home. Okay?

She nods. Wipes away tears.

SILENCE. Blizzard winds HOWL.

Aaron looks out several windows for the Orb.

It’s mysteriously GONE.

AARON
(to himself RE: Orb)
Where did you go?

MIKE
So what IS the plan, chief?

Everyone looks to Aaron, who keeps checking windows to scan the surrounding area.

POV OUT OF TRAIN

Blizzard rages. Streetlights pierce the darkness with an orange glow.

Snow blankets the ground. Car headlights shine from drifts.

In the snow: strange circular POCKMARKS. Dozens, as far as he can see.

AARON
There’s holes in the snow.

BACK IN TRAIN CAR #2

NINA
What from?

STANISLAW
Heat. Or salt. Maybe.

AARON
Or more of those things. We don’t know where it went, or when it’s coming back but the most important thing is sticking together. Nobody panics. Nobody makes a solo run for it. We’re a team. Agreed?

He looks around. Nods. Murmurs. They all do.

AARON
(to Tyler)
Even you, Banksy?

TYLER
(half-smiles)
Yeah.

AARON
Good. Now, we need information. Anyone get a signal yet?

Passengers turn to their phones.

NINA
Nothing.

BILL
No bars.

Wallace holds up a handheld radio.

WALLACE
I’ve got a signal. Good old-fashioned 20th century technology.

He turns up the volume.

EMERGENCY BROADCAST (O.S.)
...system. This is only a test. Had this been an actual emergency, this message would have been followed by information, news or instructions.
(harsh BLEEP)
This is a test of the Emergency Broadcast System. This is only...

Wallace dials several stations. Each one plays test message.

WALLACE
Whole world's gone cockeyed.

The message continues in the background. They all look at each other, rattled.

Linda rocks quietly, beside herself with anxiety.

TYLER
The entire grid's down. Wouldn't take much. My buddy could crash it with a laptop in a Starbucks.

STANISLAW
This is unlikely. If grid is down, it is something VERY BAD.

AARON
What about the conductor? Where's all the people from the front of the train?

Bill scrapes away frost on the front door window.

BILL
Can't see anyone.

TESS
What HAPPENED to them?

Slowly, passengers look toward the front car, and back to each other.

NINA
But we didn't hear screaming.

STANISLAW
Because we were already screaming.

Thick silence.

Their own horror sinks in even deeper.

Aaron clears his throat.

AARON
Alrgiht, let’s keep our heads.

Beneath a seat, from INSIDE the train, a THUMP.

Then a CLANG.

Passengers scramble away from the seat.

Aaron moves cautiously toward the sound.

Everybody else watches, wide-eyed.

The seat rests on a steel mesh support box. Clips secure the box to the plastic seat.

Aaron bends down. Listens. Hears BREATHING.

Aaron looks through the mesh...

...an EYE opens!

Aaron recoils.

Looks again.

Unclips the front panel. Flings it open.

Inside, a BOY, 6, whimpers in terror. Covered in blood. Clutching a ROBOT TOY.

Aaron scoops up the boy. Nina and Linda dash in to help.

The others settle back into seats.

NINA
What’s your name?

The Boy doesn’t answer.

LINDA
He’s traumatized.
(to the Boy)
Look at me. I know you’re scared, but you’re safe now. Are you hurt?

The Boy shakes his head no.

LINDA
Good. I’m Linda.

NINA
My name is Nina. Were you with your Mommy and Daddy?

The Boy nods his head “yes.”

LINDA
And they got hurt by that thing?

“Yes.”

LINDA
I’m a Mommy too. I have a boy a little older than you. So you and I will keep an eye on each other, OK?

“Yes.”

Holding his robot with an iron grip, he reaches for a hug.

Linda pulls him in. They clutch each other tightly.

She turns away to keep the Boy from seeing her cry.

Aaron waves people to gather around. Speaks quietly.

AARON
We’re sitting ducks here. If nobody’s coming to help, we have to help ourselves. So what’s our best guess at what that thing is?

STANISLAW
Is sonic weapon. Drone. Like what America use in Middle East, but more advanced.

AARON
Yeah but who’s controlling it?

STANISLAW
Nobody.

MIKE
Someone’s pulling the strings.

TYLER
A.I.

STANISLAW
Artificial intelligence. It watches, it listens, it learns.

AARON
But who programmed it?

MIKE
Al Qaeda. It's 9/11 all over again, only this time they went high tech.

STANISLAW
Al Qaeda? Please. Maybe China.

CHI
China is bad, but not this bad.

BILL
I wanna know where it went. Where is it NOW?

TYLER (O.S.)
Check this shit out.

Tyler, at the window, waves them over.

POV OUT OF TRAIN

Blizzard rages. Streetlights pierce the darkness with an orange glow.

TYLER
Look down.

Snow blankets the ground. Car headlights shine from drifts.

But in the snow, there's strange circular POCKMARKS. Dozens, as far as they can see.

TYLER
See those holes in the snow?

NINA
What's that from?

STANISLAW
Heat. Or salt. Or...

Mike gasps, seeing vague movement in the storm.

MIKE
Wait, holy crap!

The surface of the snow CAVES INWARD.

ORBS FLOAT UP, leaving behind more pockmarks.

A bunch of Orbs corkscrew up to train level, in a small swarm.

They pack together, CHATTERING.

BACK IN TRAIN CAR #2

AARON
(still looking out)
Everyone get down!

The whole group hits the floor. Aaron throws himself over Linda and the Boy.

From outside, a strange echoing SCREEEAK-BRAP!

THE WHOLE CAR SHUDDERS FROM THE BLAST.

They look up.

The Plexiglas window remains intact.

CHI
They are working together.

STANISLAW
Window can only hold for so long.

AARON
How much time you think we have?

STANISLAW
Impossible to say. Depend on how often they--

TAP TAP WHAP!

All around the train car, the Orbs SMACK AGAINST IT.

BILL
The fuck is that about?

STANISLAW
(thinks)
Testing for weakness. Maybe they blast: BOOM. Then test: POP-POP. Until they find way in.

As if to answer:

WHAP CLANG TAP! From every angle.

TYLER
What if it's American? Top secret Area 51 shit?

MIKE
The US doesn't kill its own people.

TYLER
It happened before. 9/11 all over again. Your words.

MIKE
BULL. SHIT.

TYLER
THINK, old man! Our military's got weapons none of us can imagine. Prepping for a population war.

BILL
The one percenters taking out the trash?

TYLER
Lotta real estate gonna open up.

TAP TAP CLANG CLANG!

AARON
Guys, enough! Here's what we do: run to the front car. Plug the vents. Get the train moving.

STANISLAW
Is possible. Maybe.

TYLER
Get it moving where?

AARON
Next platform. We take the stairs to the street. Then get to Union Station.

Ruth looks up.

RUTH
Why there?

AARON
Before the phones died, I got a voicemail from my Dad. I thought he just wanted to meet me there, but
(MORE)

AARON (CONT'D)
now I'm thinking it might be a safe haven for everybody.

MIKE
Fuck Union Station. I'm going home!

AARON
When we get to the next station, you can do whatever you want.

TYLER
One of us should just run to the front car.

AARON
No, we stay together. We gotta plug the vents as a team.

TYLER
If all of us move between cars at once, we'll get blasted!

AARON
They can't blast through plastic or we wouldn't be having this little chat. I'm thinking we could pull up the seats to use as shields. Anyone got a screwdriver?

Mike pulls out his trusty multi-tool.

MIKE
On it, chief.

From outside, a strange echoing SCREEEAK-BRAP!

THE WHOLE CAR SHUDDERS FROM THE BLAST.

WHAP CLANG TAP! They swarm apart again, methodically checking the train from every angle.

TYLER
Dude, they're too smart and fast. They'll fly around the shield and zap us!

AARON
They rev up before striking. Could be enough time to raise a shield.

BILL
Or bash it. Or delay it. Only need a few seconds to get through.

MIKE
Fuck yeah. I ain't going nowhere without SOME protection.

Aaron turns to Tyler.

AARON
So please, give us a hand. Now!

Tyler searches his backpack. Tess puts a reassuring hand on his arm. He finds a BEER BOTTLE OPENER. Might work.

Mike uses his multi-tool. Stanislaw, a cell phone toolkit. Bill tries a mailbox key.

Ruth remains seated, tapping her foot nervously.

Nina pulls out a NAIL FILE. Shows it to Aaron.

NINA
What do you think?

AARON
Worth a shot.

He takes it. Kneels down. Works a screw.

She sits next to him.

TAP TAP CLANG CLANG!

NINA
This is seriously fucked up.

AARON
Seriously.

He sucks in a breath. Intense. Something on his mind.

AARON
Nina, ask me anything. Right now.

NINA
Uh. Where did you grow up?

AARON
Lincoln Park. I'm a Cubs fan, born and bred.

NINA
No way! I pegged a working-class guy like you for a Sox fan.

AARON
Only thing I had in common with my dad was the Cubs. Otherwise, we kinda hated each other. That's why I didn't introduce you to him. So what, you a Sox fan?

NINA
Bulls. Baseball's too slow.

AARON
My wife was into the Bulls.

Aaron's eyes drop...

NINA
Messy divorce?

AARON
Nina, I never got divorced.

NINA
You're still married?

AARON
(takes a breath)
She died. Car crash.

Nina goes white. Stops working.

AARON
I was driving.

Aaron avoids eye contact.

NINA
Oh my God. I'm so sorry.

AARON
I should have told you. It's just...

NINA
No. I get it.

He finally looks directly at her.

AARON
I was in rough shape after the accident. I had to start over. So I went into construction. Something totally new. I was still getting back on my feet and then... I met you. Definitely not the plan.

They both smile.

NINA
(half-joking)
So I was a detour.

AARON
No. More like a--

From outside, a shrill chorus of many Orbs:

SCREEEAK...

AARON
Get down, EVERYONE!

The passengers DROP TO THE FLOOR.

...BRAP!

The car RATTLES. Passengers SCREAM.

The window SHIVERS. But holds.

AARON
We're good.

The others get back up.

CLACK-CLANG-WHAP!

Orbs test for weaknesses again.

Stanislaw looks over the window that's been attacked.

The frame buckled. Cracks spiderweb across the Plexiglas.

STANISLAW
Next attack, big trouble.

AARON
Anyone close to getting a seat up?

MIKE
Hell yeah!

Mike triumphantly pulls an entire bench off the floor. Screws, bolts and a steel hand rail CLATTER everywhere.

STANISLAW
Good job.

MIKE
Was that... a compliment?

STANISLAW
No.

MIKE
Sounded like a compliment.

STANISLAW
Don’t get big head.

MIKE
Too late. Got the head of a bison.

AARON
Give me a hand please.

He and Bill lift it up. Heavier than it looks.

AARON
We shore up the window for the next hit. Everyone else, keep working on more seats.

They press it against the damaged window.

It barely covers the Plexiglas.

TYLER
Where did they go?

Everybody stops to listen. They only hear THE WIND.

STANISLAW
They’ll be back.

Stanislaw grabs steel bars that used to be handholds. Props them against the makeshift barricade.

BILL
I can’t stop wondering... What if these goddamn things aren’t from... here?

MIKE
(works on new seat)
Don’t say aliens. Please.

BILL
They don’t look like anything I’ve ever seen. What if they’re alien drones sent to exterminate us, like ants? They wouldn’t have to put one slimy tentacle on the ground til they wipe us all out.

MIKE
If aliens came, we'd nuke the shit out of them.

AARON
Nuke what? They're the size of a tennis ball.

NINA
I had a thought. I'm not into the whole religion thing, but my Mom was. Dragged me to church all the time. Couldn't stand it, except for Revelations. Coolest part of the Bible. Lighting and thunder. Hail and darkness. The sky opens up, and a plague of LOCUSTS descends upon the Earth with a sound of TRUMPETS. Ring a bell?

A deeply unnerving silence.

MIKE
So lemme get this straight. We're being attacked by ETs from Jesus? Sounds like a big pile of crazy.

Everyone looks around, uneasy.

Soft CHATTERING sounds rise from outside.

CLICK-CLICK-CRAAAACK.

The chattering gets louder. Closer.

Aaron uses his free hand to wipe away frost from the slice of window not covered by his seat barricade.

AARON
They're back.

The chattering hits from BOTH SIDES. CLICK-CLICK-CRAAAACK.

TYLER
Oh God. Over here too!

Tyler wipes the window on the other side of the train.

TYLER
They got reinforcements.

Aaron, on the barricade, turns to Bill.

AARON
Hold on with everything you've got!

Bill nods, scared but resolved.

AARON
Everyone else, get down!

The entire group drops to the floor.

Orbs chatter outside, louder.

The Boy shivers in Linda's arms.

But no attack.

Everybody looks around, wondering what happened.

TYLER
Maybe they're not gonna--

SCREEEAK...

Echoing through the small space from BOTH sides.

BRAP!

THE CAR SHUDDERS HARD!

Bill loses his balance. Falls to the floor.

Aaron fights to keep the barricade in place by himself.

The blast BURNED A SMALL HOLE through the upper corner of the Plexiglas. Right near Aaron's head.

The opposite window instantly TURNS WHITE from spider-cracks.

BAM!

The Orbs on both sides SLAM into the windows simultaneously.

WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! WHAP!

Bill pops back up to help with the barricade, but bumps it, making it SLIDE a few inches.

ONE ORB SQUEEZES THROUGH!

The group SCREAMS!

Aaron ducks under the Orb, still holding the seat barricade.

The Orb BARRAGE suddenly **STOPS.**

The infiltrating Orb hovers toward the group, herding them.

Its mouth opens and closes. Emits CLICKS and POPS.

It swoops toward Chi. He stares defiantly.

Aaron spots a loose steel bar from the seat. Still holding the barricade, he scoops up the bar.

The Orb locks on Chi.

SCREEEAA...

From Ruth's pocket: BLING BLING BLING!

THE ORB STOPS, SWIVELS TO RUTH!

Bill NOTICES. His head tilts.

The Orb ZIPS to Ruth.

She takes a deep breath. Closes her eyes.

It chatters. Opens its mouth to attack.

SCREAAAAAA...

AARON SMASHES IT WITH THE STEEL BAR!

The Orb BOUNCES off a wall. Falls to the ground.

It vibrates, trying to get up.

Mike STOMPS the Orb.

MIKE
LITTLE FUCK!

It shudders. Lays still.

Mike huffs, shaken.

TESS
Is it dead?

MIKE
Who knows?

AARON
Listen.
(pause)
They stopped.

MIKE
Maybe we scared off the others?

STANISLAW
Doubtful.

AARON
Let’s get two more seats up NOW.

CHI
I am almost done with a seat.

STANISLAW
I have idea.

The others step back as Stanislaw picks up the Orb.

STANISLAW
We take apart. Like cell phone.
Maybe help us fight them.

NINA
Tinkering with that thing is a
fantastically bad idea.

STANISLAW
It is disabled.
(pause)
I think.

AARON
Set up shop in the BACK.

MIKE
Count me in. I’m Mike, by the way.

STANISLAW
Stanislaw.

MIKE
Great to meet you, Stan.

STANISLAW
Not Stan. Stanislaw.

MIKE
It’s a nickname, asshole.

BILL
Hey, can someone take over for me?
My lower back is cramping up.

Nina steps forward.

NINA
I'll do it.

BILL
You sure?

AARON
She's in better shape than anyone on this train.

NINA
He's seen my workout schedule.

AARON
She's a ballet dancer. Could hold this up on her own for eight hours and not break a sweat.

BILL
If you say so, chief.

Nina takes Bill's place.

A little smile crackles between Nina and Aaron.

Chi looks at Aaron and Nina with a knowing smirk.

CHI
See? Storm bring everybody together.
(to Aaron)
I take over for you now.

AARON
I'm good.

CHI
No. You need break. Finish my seat.

Aaron nods. Trades places with Chi.

Aaron checks the seat. Instead of kneeling to unscrew it, he rocks it back and forth. RIPS it off its foundation.

AARON
We only need one more.

MIDDLE OF TRAIN CAR #2

Bill stretches his back. Takes a deep breath.

And then, fire in his eyes, moves in on Ruth.

BILL
Who the fuck are you?

Ruth steps back, intimidated.

BILL
What's with the suitcase? How come out of EVERYBODY on this train, the only one who gets a call is YOU?

Bill snatches the phone from her pocket. Shows Stanislaw.

STANISLAW
Is satellite phone.

Bill presses a button. The screen reads: ENTER PASSCODE

RUTH
My back-up phone. I forgot about it. Barely ever use it!

Bill grabs her coat with both hands. Shoves her into a seat.

BILL
BULLSHIT! I KNEW you sent a text earlier. Who called you on the Bat Phone? Why'd you hide it from us?

She tries to stand. Bill pushes her back down.

NINA
Take it easy!

Aaron steps forward.

AARON
Enough! You're wasting time. We've got to this train moving.

BILL
And then what? We need to know what she's hiding before we go anywhere.

LINDA
My son is out there! I deserve to know!

TYLER
Make her talk.

AARON
(gently, to Ruth)
If you have anything to share, do it now. Please.

Ruth avoids eye contact.

BILL
See! She's hiding something! Who's got a scarf?

Tess throws hers to Bill.

Bill ties up Ruth's hands to the bar in front of her seat.

BILL
First thing you learn in the ER is how to restrain a psycho patient.

He yanks the knot tight.

Bill digs into his pocket.

BILL
And the first thing you learn on the street is how to get answers.

Pops out his fist. Keys jut between his fingers like daggers.

RUTH
Do not lay a finger on me!

Bill leans forward, cocking his key-loaded fist.

Aaron puts a hand on Bill's shoulder. Calm. But strong.

AARON
Hurting her isn't the solution.

BILL
Then maybe we should buy the bitch a cup of coffee!

Aaron leans over to Ruth's ear.

AARON
If you know anything, tell us now.

RUTH
Fuck. You.

Bill pushes the key blades against her cheek.

AARON
HEY!

Aaron grabs Bill's wrist. HARD.

As he pulls Bill's arm back...

RUTH
You break the skin, I swear I will die before I tell you anything.

AARON
Ease the fuck up, man.

Bill glares at Aaron. Then relaxes his arm. Lets the keys slide out from between his fingers into his hand.

BILL
I'm cool.

Aaron lets go of Bill's wrist.

BACK OF TRAIN CAR #2

Stanlislaw sets the Orb on the seat bench.

STANISLAW
You have nickname for me, I have nickname for you. *Pierozki*. Potato dumpling.

MIKE
Not bad.

Tyler heads over to peek in on the Orb dissection.

Even "dead," the Orb seems strange and ominous. The wrinkles on its skin look like intricate fractal patterns.

The mouth turns out to be hundreds of tiny filaments locked together around a central hole.

Stanislaw slides Mike's multi-tool blade into the Orb.

STANISLAW
You know, *Pierozki,* our friend may be right about alien theory.

Thick blue goo oozes out onto the bench. Inside the Orb, hundreds of tiny translucent tubes.

MIKE
That ain't no Chevy.

TYLER
It IS alien. Jesus.

STANISLAW
17 billion planets in galaxy. Was only matter of time.

Stanislaw examines its innards.

STANISLAW
You see. Sound emits here. Is part creature, part machine.

MIKE
You know a lot about scary shit.

STANISLAW
I have Ph.D. in scary shit. Here...

Stanislaw pokes a slimy, semi-translucent ball the size of a large marble. Something inside it pulses.

STANISLAW
The brain.

Mouth opens and closes.

MIKE
Don't point that at me!

STANISLAW
Easy, *Pierozki*. It's off.

MIDDLE OF TRAIN CAR #2

Bill glares at Ruth. Her hands still tied. Her eyes blaze.

RUTH
You think I'm intimidated? By YOU? I've stared down billionaires with a fortune on the line. But I'll tell you what I know if it'll get you off my balls. Untie me first.

BILL
No way.

RUTH
Then no deal.

She turns away. Steels herself for whatever comes next.

BILL
You talk, I'll untie.

Ruth thinks. Others gather to listen.

RUTH
One. Nine. Seven. Zero. The year I got married.

Bill taps the number into her phone.

BILL
You're married?

RUTH
Was.

The screen reveals a list of text messages. Bill taps it.

BILL
Union Station.

Nina turns to Aaron.

NINA
That's where your Dad said to go.

AARON
Maybe they're using it for shelter, or putting survivors on trains to get out of the city.

BILL
Who's on the other end of this thing? How'd you get a sat-phone?

RUTH
It's just an insurance policy.

Aaron watches her closely.

AARON
What kind of insurance policy?

BILL
For aliens?

RUTH
Aliens? Please! It's a safety net for ANY global catastrophe. Now UNTIE ME before my hands go numb!

Reluctantly, Bill unties the scarf. She rubs her wrists.

BILL
So you knew this was gonna happen? And you never told anybody?

RUTH
I had no idea THIS would happen! The list of covered events was four pages long: climate change, nuclear war, pandemics. I get access to
(MORE)

RUTH (CONT'D)
priority travel, food, vaccines. And a sat-phone.

BILL
So how do we kill those things?

RUTH
I don’t know ANYTHING about them! I got an emergency message saying get to Union Station. That’s it!

BILL
I KNEW it! The “haves” have a sat-phone and the “have-nots” don’t have shit! I guess we’ll be joining you in Union Station.

RUTH
The annual premium cost more than my parents made their entire lives. They won’t let in stragglers.

BILL
STRAGGLERS?!

Bill grabs her coat, savagely. Screams into her face.

BILL
FUCK YOU AND FUCK YOUR LIST!

Aaron pulls Bill off her.

AARON
Easy! Easy.

Ruth crosses to another section of the train.

Bill scans the other messages on the phone. All the old ones, on the first of every month, reads: “SYSTEM TEST.”

He flips back to the most recent text.

BILL
Track 15.

Bill closes in on Ruth. Pulls out his keys. Ruth tenses.

But he turns to the base of the seat she’s on. Uses the mailbox key to pry it loose.

BILL
So how do they know you’re on the list? You got a tattoo somewhere?

RUTH
Doesn't matter. They won't let you in. These people are not fucking around. They're trying to ensure the survival of our species. I'll be lucky if they still let ME in.

Bill leans over her.

BILL
You'll be lucky to get off this fucking train if you don't tell me how they know you're on the list!

She holds up a hand. Palm facing away from Bill.

RUTH
Read between the lines.

He looks at her hand. Realizes she's flipping him the bird without showing her middle finger.

BILL
Real funny.

RUTH
Look closely.

His eyes narrow.

A small scar marks the flesh between thumb and forefinger. Barely visible if you weren't looking.

BILL
Microchip. That's our ticket in.

RUTH
NOTHING will save you.

Outside the Orbs CHATTER. At first, it sounds like random CLICKS and POPS.

But these resolve into a repeating pattern of weird sounds. All the Orbs in perfect sync.

CLICK-POP-CREEEEAK. CLICK-POP-CREEEEAK.

Aaron dashes to the window...

POV OUT OF TRAIN

A swarm of Orbs appears from out of the storm.

FRONT OF TRAIN CAR #2

Aaron turns, face pales, calling to everybody...

AARON
We're OUT of time. Get that last seat UP!

BACK OF TRAIN CAR #2

Stanislaw quickly runs his fingers over the Brain Ball. Mike plucks through the tubes with curiosity. Tyler looks on.

CLICK-POP-CREEEEAK. CLICK-POP-CREEEEAK.

In sync with the outside Orbs, the Brain Ball glows. Dim flickers at first, then a bit brighter.

But the guys don't notice...

TYLER
Maybe we can hack it. Send a signal to the other ones to fuck off.

STANISLAW
Do you think aliens have USB? No.

MIKE
What if we use it like a gun? Blast anything that comes at us?

STANISLAW
Now THIS is possible! *Pierozki*, there is hope for you yet.
(pointing to Tyler)
Boy. Hand me tool.

Tyler crouches down. Reaches for the tool under a bench.

STANISLAW
Trick will be to separate brain from weapon system--

CLICK-POP-CREEEEAK. CLICK-POP-CREEEEAK.

The Brain Ball glows bright blue. Stanislaw ducks--

BRAP!

The sound blasts Mike's ENTIRE RIGHT SIDE.

His right arm and ear: gone, exposing ribcage and skull.

Mike falls to the floor. Eyes wide. Can’t even make a sound.

But the others SCREAM!

Stanislaw stumbles backwards in shock. Drops into a seat.

STANISLAW
No no no...

Tyler stands. Untouched, but drenched in Mike’s gore. HOWLS uncontrollably, lost his mind.

Tess holds Tyler, shaking.

Linda buries the Boy’s face in her shoulder so he can’t see.

Nina and Chi stay with the barricade. Aaron rushes to Mike.

AARON
Hang in there! Breathe!

Mike gasps for air. Bill darts over.

BILL
Gimme something to stop the blood!

Aaron yanks off his coat. Hands it to Bill. Who presses it against the raw flesh of Mike’s open wounds.

But blood PUMPS OUT AROUND THE COAT.

BILL
Shit!

Mike GRABS AARON with his left arm. The last few breaths bursting through his mouth.

Aaron can only stare back, helpless.

AARON
It’s okay. It’s okay.

The light dims from Mike’s eyes.

He lets go of Aaron.

And dies.

Bill slumps back. Exhausted and sad.

Aaron falls into the seat next, distraught. Furious.

Stanislaw, stricken with shock, holds a hand over his mouth.

SCREEEAAAK...

They turn to see the Orb that just killed Mike, still disabled on the bench, revving up to attack again.

THUNK!

Tyler STABS THE BRAIN BALL with one of Stanislaw's tools.

The blue glow fades.

The Orb DARKENS. Whatever its power source, drained.

Bill picks up Aaron's blood-soaked coat. Throws it over Mike's head and upper torso.

Aaron looks up with new resolve.

AARON
We're getting out of here. What's taking so long on the last seat?

Tess, still holding shocked Tyler, speaks up.

TESS
Over here.

Aaron crosses toward them when:

A DEEP RUMBLING SOUND rolls at them. Like an earthquake in the distance. The whole train rattles.

Nina and Aaron make eye contact. Scared.

NINA
What the hell was THAT?

AARON
Sounded far.

BILL
It sounded BIG. I'm--

SCREEEAAK...

From ALL AROUND THE TRAIN, the sound of synchronized Orbs.

BRAP!

The blast SHAKES the whole train car.

All the windows SPIDERWEB with cracks.

AARON
We gotta move!

WHAM!

The Orb swarm SMASHES the window covered by the seat barricade.

Chi and Nina struggle to hold on to the seat barricade.

It drops a couple inches. They quickly close the gap.

CLACK! CLACK! TAP! TAP! TAP! TAP!

The Orbs fight like piranhas to push through.

Aaron reaches for the seat that Tyler and Tess worked on.

He jiggles it. It’s loose except...

TESS
Couldn’t get the last two screws!

AARON
Demolition trick.

He STOMPS the base of the seat. WHAM!

Again and again with fierce intention. WHAM! WHAM!

The screws RIP OUT from the floor. The seat comes free.

The Orbs scour for weaknesses. CLACK! WHAP! CLANG!

AARON
Listen up! We cover the gap between cars with the seats. Get inside. The minute you’re in, plug the vents. We can do this. But we have to work together.

Everyone looks at each other, unsure.

The Orbs tap and clatter all around. It’s like the hailstorm all over again.

AARON
On three--

WALLACE
(to Aaron)
Hey, buster!

Aaron turns to Wallace, sitting there with his radio.

WALLACE
If you get to the next platform, it's still four blocks to Union Station. Take the tunnels.

AARON
What tunnels?

WALLACE
The old freight tunnels. I helped seal 'em up back in '59.

AARON
But if they're sealed...

WALLACE
You can still get in. Used to sneak ladies down there for kicks.

AARON
Tell me more when we get to the next car.

WALLACE
No sir. I'm 83. Got a bum knee and a titanium hip. I'll slow you down.

AARON
I'm not leaving you.

WALLACE
Yeah, ya are. I know what's coming. Maybe I'll see my wife again. You done good, kiddo. Take this.

Wallace slides off his jacket. Hands it to Aaron.

AARON
I can't.

WALLACE
Take the damn thing!

Aaron slides on the old school bomber jacket. Fur collar. Looks kinda awesome on Aaron.

WALLACE
Under the tracks by every station, there's a picture of a train wheel. Look down, you'll find the manhole.

AARON
Got it. Thank you.

Wallace smiles.

CLACK! CLACK! TAP! TAP! TAP! TAP!

Aaron holds up the barricade next to Chi and Nina.

AARON
On three, you (Tyler) open the door. These two (Bill & Stanislaw) pick up that bench and cover the right. Nina and you (Chi) take the other bench and block the left. I've got the rear. Ready?

Linda stands, holding the Boy on her back. Tyler and Tess move to the front of the car. Ruth positions herself behind.

Bill and Stanislaw pick up the seat bench. Aaron takes over on the barricade. Nina and Chi lift the third bench.

Aaron struggles to hold the seat barricade on his own.

AARON
One.

Suddenly, the Orbs STOP BATTERING THE TRAIN.

AARON
Two.

SCREEAAAK...

AARON
THREE!

SLOW-MO: Tyler OPENS THE DOOR.

The group RUNS. Aaron pulls the barricade from the window.

The Orbs ATTACK!

BRAP!

The window frame EXPLODES around Aaron. Shards of Plexiglas whip their skin.

They RUN.

BETWEEN TRAIN CARS #2 AND #1

Nina and Chi burst outside. Jam their bench between the cars on the left.

Bill and Stanislaw follow wedging their bench on the right.

TRAIN CAR #2

The Orbs CHATTER as they slip through cracked windows into the car. It’s fucking terrifying.

Linda and the Boy charge out the front. Ruth follows. Tyler pushes Tess forward, holds the door for Aaron.

Aaron mans the rear, seat raised. A steel rod held in his other hand. Like a medieval knight.

The Orbs swoop in, searching.

A couple of them ZERO IN ON WALLACE. He stares them down.

SCREEEAAK...

BETWEEN TRAIN CARS #2 AND #1

Aaron slides through the door last. Tyler slams it shut.

BRAP!

A spray of Wallace’s blood coats the window.

The Orbs CLATTER against the Plexiglas.

Aaron’s the last one in.

TRAIN CAR #1 - THE ENGINE

Aaron turns to see a slaughterhouse. Frozen bloody goo covers seats, walls, the floor...

But the windows remain intact.

AARON
Plug the vents!

Tess pulls an eyeglass case out of the stringy gore. Stuffs it into a vent.

Nina goes through a backpack of supplies. Pulls Wallace’s soup cans. One and two.

She and Chi jam them into vents.

AARON
Where’s the other can?

Nina searches the bag.

NINA
There’s only two! He SAID three!

AARON
Find a way to plug the last vent!

Everyone frantically looks for anything to plug the hole.

Bill spots a snow boot standing upright. Sticking out, the bottom half of a bloody leg.

That DEEP RUMBLING SOUND rolls at them again. This time a little louder, more jarring. It knocks over the boot.

Bill tries to stuff the boot in the vent but it’s too big.

LINDA (O.S.)
Aaron.

Aaron turns to see Linda holding the Boy. The Boy reaches out his hand, offering his PLASTIC ROBOT TOY.

AARON
I think it’s too skinny.

The Boy’s fingers fly, transforming the robot into a CAR.

AARON
THAT might work.

Linda throws it to Stanislaw who stuffs it in the last vent.

Orbs clatter at the windows but can’t get in. Yet.

TAP-TAP-CLACK-TAP!

Aaron and Bill move cautiously to the conductor’s cabin.

Door slightly ajar.

Aaron swings open the door.

A PILE OF MEAT SPILLS OUT! The remains of the Conductor.

His detached hand still clutches the CB radio.

Aaron uses his steel bar to push the hand off the radio.

It splats to the floor.

Bill clicks the grimy radio. CLACKETY CLACK.

BILL
(into radio)
Hello? Anyone out there? Can anyone hear me?

Static.

SCREEEAAK-BRAP! The Orbs attack from the front.

Cracks spiderweb across the front windows.

Aaron reaches in. Clutches the train throttle.

AARON
Everybody hold on.

People grab railings to secure themselves.

Aaron pushes it forward. GEARS GRIND. The motor turns, a promising WHIRRR. The whole train SHUDDERS.

But it doesn't budge.

AARON
FUCK!

NINA
What now?!

STANISLAW
Not enough power.

AARON
What if I decouple the rest of the train?

STANISLAW
Maybe it work. Maybe not.

TYLER
Do you WANT to die? You won't last a minute out there!

TESS
Tyler!

AARON
You guys make some noise up front and distract them.

Aaron zips up the bomber jacket.

Nina grabs his face tenderly.

NINA
Be careful.

Aaron heads to the back door. Looks to the others, crowded in the front of the train.

He nods.

BOOM! CLANG! Everyone raps on the walls and seats with hands, steel bars, anything. Screaming and shouting.

WHAP-BANG-CLACK! The Orbs swoop to the front, battering the outside of the train.

Aaron flies out.

BETWEEN TRAIN CARS #1 & #2

The blizzard wind whips around the benches wedged between the two cars.

Aaron spots METAL CHAINS connecting the cars down the sides.

In the gap under his feet, a heavy-duty COUPLING ARM.

Aaron unlatches the chains. Behind him, he hears...

SCREEEAAK-BRAP!

The train SHAKES.

TRAIN CAR #1

The group recoils from Orbs blasting the windows.

Tyler reaches out to touch the Plexiglas. Already it’s starting to WARP INWARD.

TYLER
FUCK YOU!

Everybody SCREAMS LOUDER.

BETWEEN TRAIN CARS #1 & #2

Chains now loose, Aaron drops to his knees.

The coupling arm below him is attached by three hoses and a single grease-covered LOCKING PIN.

He reaches down, his legs on Car #1, his other hand pressed firmly on the metal edge of Car #2.

Rips off a hose. It HISSES. Gets the second. And the third!

Despite the bracing wind, Aaron almost smiles.

He lays flat on the ledge to reach the locking pin.

Aaron stretches. Groans. Holds with one hand.

Aaron gets a glimpse between the open tracks, seeing THE STREET BELOW.

It’s a LONG drop.

Finally, he grabs the locking pin and YANKS IT.

TRAIN CAR #1

The entire car SHUDDERS, unlocked at last!

TYLER
He did it!

BETWEEN TRAIN CARS #1 & #2

Aaron’s relief is short-lived. As Car #1 slowly rolls away from the rest of the train.

The benches TUMBLE to the ground below, exposing him.

But even worse...

HIS PALM HAS FROZEN to the metal of Car #2! Aaron’s getting pulled in two directions.

TRAIN CAR #1

CLACK-TAP-WHAP! The Orbs bash against the window.

NINA
Where is he?

BILL
I’ll check. Keep making noise!

SCREEEAAK-BRAP! Another blast. Bill stumbles as he runs for the back door.

BETWEEN TRAIN CARS #1 & #2

Bill sees Aaron. Legs on this train car, hand stuck to that one. The gap widens inch by inch.

AARON
My hand froze to the metal!

BILL
Breathe on it!

Bill grabs hold of Aaron’s torso.

Aaron leans to his hand. He BREATHES HARD on it. Steam pours from his mouth.

Skin begins to separate from metal. It’s working.

Except: SCREEEEE...

Bill looks up to see SEVERAL ORBS floating in front of him.

They rev up to blast him when:

BOOOOOOM!

THE ENTIRE TRAIN SHAKES from that DEEP RUMBLING SOUND.

Now MUCH closer.

The Orbs immediately STOP!

AND ZIP AWAY.

Bill and Aaron turn to see:

POV OF CITYSCAPE

The edges of a building CRUMBLE in the distance.

BILL
Why’d they leave?!

BETWEEN TRAIN CARS #1 & #2

Aaron RIPS his hand free.

AARON
FUCK!

Bill pulls him up and through the door.

TRAIN CAR #1

Bill and Aaron fall inside. Aaron looks at his hand.

A layer of skin GONE. Nothing too serious, but painful.

Everyone else stops making noise. Silence quickly descends.

BILL
The things flew off.

LINDA
Does that mean we're safe?

AARON
Not even close.
(yells)
Hit the throttle! GO!

Tyler, in the conductor's box, pushes the train's throttle.

Ever so slowly, THE TRAIN EDGES FORWARD.

A few passengers celebrate. Aaron raises a fist in triumph.

Bill looks out the rear window, watching the rest of the train recede into the distance.

STANISLAW
It worked!

POV OUT THE BACK DOOR

A few lingering Orbs flit and weave around each other, communicating.

They FOLLOW THE TRAIN for a bit then STOP, and ZIP AWAY.

TRAIN CAR #1

BILL
Faster!

TYLER
This is as fast as it'll go.

NINA
At least we'll get there.

AARON
When we get down to the street, we find the tunnels and get to Union Station.

Ruth peers out the front window, looking ahead nervously, as the train chugs along at a fast walking pace.

Distant RUMBLINGS.

BROOOP... BA-BOOOOOOM!

A massive blast of sound, followed instantly by the ROAR OF A FALLING BUILDING.

IT RATTLES THE TRAIN LIKE A TOY.

The emergency lights FLICKER.

Ruth slips. Aaron helps her up. Checks the window.

POV OF CITYSCAPE

The edges of a building CRUMBLE in the distance.

Silhouetted against the sky, a MASSIVE ORB, the size of a Mack truck, floats between buildings.

It emits a thundering blast of sound, like a WHALE CRY.

BROOOOP!

Another building COLLAPSES.

AARON
THAT'S why they flew off. The big ones are leveling the city!

RUTH (O.S.)
Stop the train. STOP, DAMN IT!

BACK IN TRAIN CAR #1

The others crowd behind Ruth to look out the front window.

POV OUT THE FRONT WINDOW

Barely visible through the blasting wind and snow:

THE TRACKS AHEAD ARE GONE! Destroyed by a collapsed building.

TRAIN CAR #1

AARON
Stop the fucking train!

Tyler YANKS THE BRAKE as hard as he can.

The BRAKES ENGAGE. A SQUEAL of metal on metal.

But the train keeps sliding.

TYLER
What the hell!

STANISLAW
Ice on track!

NINA
We’re gonna crash.

AARON
Grab something! Brace yourself!

Linda wraps herself around the Boy. Everybody grabs hand holds and steel bars to brace themselves.

POV OUT THE FRONT DOOR

The train slides inevitably toward the rift. At the edge, the tracks break off into nothing.

TRAIN CAR #1

AARON
HANG ON!

The train car BOUNCES VIOLENTLY over the twisted ends of the tracks. TIPS INTO THE VOID.

The passengers CRY OUT in terror.

Emergency lights cut. Darkness.

THUNDEROUS NOISE.

SCREAMS.

THE SQUEAL OF METAL RIPPING.

QUICK FLASHES OF LIGHT.

BODIES FREE FALL.

TERRIFIED FACES.

BLACKNESS.

EXT. WEST ADAMS STREET - NIGHT

The blizzard rages around the FALLEN TRAIN, cracked in half across the street. Wind strafes the wreckage with snow.

Streetlights flicker. Half-buried car headlights cast strange shadows. Dust floats from downed buildings.

Visibility is 25 yards at best.

Aaron emerges from a snowdrift. Who knows how long it's been.

He looks around. No Orbs.

Yet.

Out of the smashed open train car, Aaron sees Bill sit up.

Chi rises from a pile of debris. Holds his hand in pain.

CHI
I cannot move hand. But I am okay.

Incredibly, Chi plucks his top hat from the snow.

Stanislaw stumbles out of the wreckage.

STANISLAW
We must find cover. Fast.

AARON
We gotta stay quiet and find everybody first.

TESS
Ah! Shit!

AARON
Shhhh!

Tyler pulls himself to his feet, but Tess can't stand. A HUGE GASH in her leg pours blood all over the white snow.

Bill stuffs snow into the cut. Tess SCREAMS into Tyler's jacket.

Bill yanks off Tess' scarf. Wraps the leg.

Aaron finds Nina. Scoops her in a hug.

AARON
You okay?

NINA
Yeah. Where's the boy?

They spot movement in the snow.

It's the Boy. Linda's arms wrapped around him. But LINDA'S DEAD. Eyes open. Fresh blood all over her head.

Nina pulls the terrified Boy from her arms. He clutches Nina.

NINA
It's okay. We're gonna make it.

Aaron signals that he'll carry the Boy, but the little guy clings to Nina's neck.

AARON
(whisper shouts)
Look for a sign with a train wheel on one of the pillars.

RUTH (O.S.)
Help... me...

They turn to see Ruth, face down. Head turned unnaturally. Wreckage covers most of her body.

RUTH
I can't feel my legs...

AARON
We'll get you out.

Aaron rips debris away. The others help.

But a huge chunk of steel pins her down. No way she's getting out, and everybody knows it.

RUTH
(barely audible)
Take the chip.

Aaron leans down.

AARON
What?

RUTH
From my hand... Take the chip.

AARON
No. We'll find a way to--

RUTH
I'm already dead. Use it!

Ruth moans, losing strength.

Aaron looks at the others, unsure.

CHI
It is okay. She give us gift.

BILL
I'll do it. You find the tunnels.

Aaron nods.

AARON
Everybody else, look for the sign.

Bill pulls out MIKE'S MULTI-TOOL.

Kneels beside her. Takes her hand.

Glances at her body, twisted and trapped.

He swallows. Looks in her eyes.

BILL
You sure?

She nods, unable to speak.

BILL
Thank you. Seriously. I want you to know that I'm--

RUTH
(last ounce of strength)
DO IT.

Bill takes off a glove.

BILL
Bite this.

Puts it in her mouth. As Bill begins to cut and Ruth MOANS--

STANISLAW
Found it!

Aaron rushes to him. Sees a half-destroyed iron pillar with a rusting sign bolted to it.

Stanislaw kicks away the snow on the ground to reveal a manhole lid - with a symbol of a FISH.

Aaron looks at the sign on the pillar - also a FISH.

AARON
It has to look like a train wheel.

STANISLAW
Sorry. Not thinking clearly.

Stanislaw looks overwhelmed. Hasn't been the same since Mike got blasted. Aaron puts a hand on his shoulder.

NINA (O.S.)
Over here!

Across the tracks, Nina found the sign with the TRAIN WHEEL.

AARON
This is it.

They sweep away snow to find the manhole cover and the MATCHING SYMBOL.

Aaron jams a metal bar in the notch to flip the lid.

But it won't budge.

Chi, with his good hand, leans on it to help.

They pry with all their might. Decades of asphalt rip away.

Slowly, the manhole cover jiggles, then FLIPS UP.

THUMP! It lands in the snow, heavily.

Aaron sticks his cell phone light down there: dark tunnel.

He climbs down. Looks around. Waves for the rest to follow.

INT. FREIGHT TUNNEL

One by one, they climb down, the injured taking it slowly.

AARON
Where's Bill?

WEST ADAMS STREET

Bill wipes the blade of the multi-tool on the snow.

Inches away, Ruth watches, half-conscious.

He flicks the knife closed. Stands--

RUTH
(barely audible)
KILL ME.

Bill looks closely at her. Hoping he didn't hear that.

RUTH
YOU do it. Not those things.

BILL
I can't just--

RUTH
DO it.

Bill nods. Solemn. Spooked.

He maneuvers behind her.

Slowly, hands shaking, opens the knife again.

BILL
You see that streetlight?

Ruth nods.

Bill grits his teeth, scared. But determined.

BILL
Focus on that. Imagine it's a nice warm fire in your living room...

OFF-SCREEN, Bill's hands go to work.

Ruth GARGLES and GASPS, unable to scream.

Bill tries to keep it together.

BILL
You got a glass of wine. Your husband's there.

A final raspy GROAN from below him.

Bill eases up. She's dead.

BILL
(quietly)
It's perfect.

INT. FREIGHT TUNNEL

Bill climbs in quickly.

As he lowers, Aaron spots an ORB coming right at him.

They GRAB THE MANHOLE COVER.

Slide it to them.

The Orb locks in, chatters.

Aaron and Bill cover the manhole.

WHAP! CLANG! The Orb tries to get in, but can't.

They jump down.

Bill opens his bloody hand. Aaron points his phone to illuminate: a silver MICROCHIP, the size of a grain of rice.

BILL
She did the right thing.

Aaron nods. Sweeps the dim light of his phone across the small crew of BEATEN-UP SURVIVORS.

They look like they've been through hell. And they have.

Everyone uses their phones to look around. Some grip metal bars from the wreckage.

Nina carries the Boy on her back. Bill and Tyler help Tess.

Tunnel's only seven feet tall, five feet wide. Narrow-gauge tracks line the floor. Water drips from pipes on the walls.

AARON
Union Station's this way.

DOWN THE TUNNEL

They pick their way between puddles and debris.

BILL
Gotta be 20 degrees warmer.

TESS
Thank God.

NINA
Wonder how long it's been since anyone was down here.

TYLER
Didn't the old guy say he used to take dates down here?

AARON
SHH!

They stop.

A strange CHATTERING NOISE echoes. Comes closer.

Aaron raises his steel bar.

A RAT runs into view.

Sees the terrified group. Darts away.

Everyone laughs grimly.

CHI
Wait. Where is Stanislaw?

BACK DOWN THE TUNNEL, AT A CROSSROADS

Stanislaw, tying his boot, looks up, alone.

STANISLAW
(whisper shouting)
Guys?

Aims his cell phone down both directions, empty.

STANISLAW
GUYS!

The dim phone light flickers.

He looks at the screen. The battery icon NEARLY EMPTY.

Shakes it to see if that helps.

It SLIPS FROM HIS HANDS. Clatters to the ground.

PITCH BLACK.

STANISLAW
(in Polish)
Gówno!

Heavy breathing echoes as he scrambles to find his phone.

STANISLAW
(loud)
GUYS! HELP!

Finally, he spots the glowing keypad. Picks up the phone.

Hits a key for the light.

Turns to see AN ORB FLOATING RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM!

UNION STATION TUNNEL

The others walk cautiously back down the tunnel.

BILL
(loud whisper)
Stanislaw! Hey, Stanislaw!

From a distance, faintly:

STANISLAW (O.S.)
PIERDOL SIE!

SCREEEAAK-BRAP!

The sound ripples and echoes endlessly through the tunnels.

Aaron turns.

AARON
Go go go!

They run.

BILL
How the fuck did that thing get down there?

TYLER
They’re doing a sweep of the city.

AARON
Quiet. Stay focused.

Orb attack still echoes, covering their footsteps.

As it dies:

AARON
(whisper)
Stop!

They halt. Aaron shines his light on his face. Puts a finger to his mouth in the “SHH” sign.

AARON
(mouths)
Let’s go.

Bill holds up a hand, points forward.

Shakes his head, “No.”

They shine their phones at A BRICK WALL. It ends the tunnel.

TYLER
(whisper)
We are fucked!

The Boy taps Nina’s head. Points up. She shines her cell phone at the ceiling:

A LADDER RISES UP A VERTICAL TUNNEL.

Aaron climbs. Gets to the manhole at the top.

Waves for Bill to follow.

The rest of the group head up, as a high as they can on the ladder, only Tyler is left on foot.

Tyler looks down the tunnel.

Hears the Orb CHATTERING IN THE DARKNESS.

TYLER
(whisper-shouts)
Hurry the hell up!

At the top of the ladder, Bill and Aaron, faces squeezed together, press their shoulders against the manhole cover.

BILL
Don’t be getting any ideas.

Aaron chuckles.

TYLER (O.S.)
It’s coming!

They push HARD. The manhole cover SHIFTS UP.

Snow pours down on them.

EXT. WEST ADAMS STREET

Back into the maelstrom.

Aaron helps Bill out. Then the others.

Tess then Tyler, the last ones, climb as fast as possible. Her with one leg, Tyler pushing from below.

Aaron stares down past them into BLACKNESS.

CHATTERING approaches from the dark.

TYLER
Faster!

TESS
I'm trying!

Aaron and Bill pull Tess up and out.

Tyler looks down. The light from outside illuminates THE ORB!

It revs up.

SCREEEAA...

Aaron YANKS TYLER OUT.

He kicks the manhole cover over the hole.

...BRAP!

The manhole cover SHUDDERS FROM THE BLAST.

The group huddles together, sheltered from the wind by abandoned cars.

Everyone is freezing, exhausted, terrified.

Tess shivers like crazy. Pale. Not doing well.

Aaron peeks out from their hiding space.

AARON
There it is.

Down the street, one very long final block away, streetlights flicker to reveal the distinctive columns:

UNION STATION.

Only a few vehicles on the street, under mountains of snow.

The scene is pristine, beautiful, almost peaceful.

Tyler sees it too.

TYLER
Let’s go!

Aaron GRABS HIM. Points to the far side of the plaza.

A SWARM OF ORBS, DOZENS OF THEM.

Chattering. Communicating. Grouping and ungrouping.

Aaron surveys the distance. Thinks a moment.

AARON
Our only chance is slow and silent.
No talking. If one gets close,
FREEZE and don’t move a muscle.

Aaron leads the survivors. Step by careful step.

Steel bar in hand.

Nina, with the Boy on her back, follows Aaron’s footprints.

Bill comes next. Tyler helps Tess, struggling.

Chi moves slowly at the rear. He breathes deeply. Seems relaxed, at peace.

The survivors slowly snake between half-buried vehicles.

Aaron STOPS. Holds perfectly still. The others follow suit.

Two Orbs float toward the silent group...

...slowly...

...Nina shuts her eyes...

...The Boy holds his breath.

...Orbs float by.

Aaron watches them disappear into the night.

As they move forward again, Tess slips. Lands on her bad leg.

She stifles a GRUNT of pain.

But it’s just loud enough.

CHATTERING SOUNDS from all around echo in the open space.

AARON
RUN!

Aaron leads them in a flat-out sprint for Union Station.

He helps Nina with the Boy on her back.

Tyler and Chi support Tess, wincing with every step.

From behind, Bill pushes them forward. But Tess FALLS.

TYLER
Come on!

Tyler LIFTS HER over his shoulder. Delirious from blood loss.

He stumbles on in the knee-deep snow.

The group scatters.

Bill sprints to the lead. Aaron, Nina and the Boy behind him. Then Chi. And finally, Tyler carrying Tess.

Aaron looks back.

A DOZEN ORBS SWOOP AT THEM from all sides.

Chi sees Tyler struggling with Tess.

Chi turns. SCREAMS AT THE TOP OF HIS LUNGS.

He runs toward the Orbs, then cuts away from the group in a different direction.

Strangely, he grins. Sings an OLD SONG in Vietnamese.

But it works. The Orbs arrow towards Chi.

Unfortunately, it attracts more Orbs in their place.

Tyler stumbles. Drops Tess into the snow.

TESS
Don’t leave me!

TYLER
NEVER!

With a scream, he lifts her up again.

The noise draws the Orbs.

The Orbs dive at Tyler and Tess.

Aaron steps back to help--

BILL CATCHES AARON'S ARM. Stops him cold.

BILL
Too late!

Tyler and Tess look up in terror. Grab each other.

Aaron struggles. Bill holds tight...

SCREEEAK-BRAP! SCREEEAAAK-BRAP!

Aaron grits his teeth in rage. Spins away.

Aaron, Bill and Nina charge to the doors.

In the darkness behind them, Chi's song echoes until:

SCREEEAAAK-BRAP!

His voice cuts off.

Aaron winces.

Bill reaches the door.

BUT IT'S LOCKED.

He yanks on it, screaming.

BILL
Open the fuck up!

NINA
They're coming back!

AARON
I'll cover!

Aaron brandishes his steel bar.

Orbs re-group and circle back, a swarm of flying death.

AARON
Bring it, motherfuckers!

Bill grabs a door. Doesn't budge.

Nina pulls the handle on another door. IT SWINGS OPENS.

Bill shoves Nina and the Boy inside.

Aaron backs in from the swarming Orbs, slashing at them with the steel bar.

A chorus of Orb voices rev up in unison:

SCREEEEEAAAAAAA...

Aaron throws the bar at them.

They split to avoid it, giving Aaron the split second he needs to slip inside.

Bill slams the door behind him.

INT. UNION STATION ENTRANCE

The Orbs CLATTER against the window. But they can't get in.

The four survivors slide to the floor in exhaustion.

BILL
Never thought I'd be happy to be stuck in a train station in the middle of the night.

NINA
Just us. Out of ALL those people...

AARON
I thought I could save them.

NINA
You saved US.

Nina comforts the trembling Boy.

NINA
You wanna tell me your name now?

BOY
(shaky voice)
No.

She hugs him tightly.

NINA
We're safe, honey. We're safe.

Aaron turns to Bill.

AARON
Give him the chip. If any of us gets in, it should be him.

Bill opens his palm. Aaron grabs it.

Aaron holds out the tiny metallic chip.

AARON
This will save your life.

The Boy takes it. Stuffs it deep into a pocket.

Suddenly, Bill snaps his fingers. Points at Aaron.

BILL
Northwestern Memorial ER! I covered there for a month. THAT'S where I saw you!

AARON
Wow. Good memory.

BILL
You were in bad shape.

NINA
What happened?

BILL
Uh... Patient confidentiality.

NINA
(laughs)
Really? After all this?

Aaron turns to Nina.

AARON
Attempted suicide. Told you things got bad.

NINA
Aaron, I'm so sorry.

BILL
I remember about a dozen reporters trying to get to you. What was that all about?

AARON
Ancient history. I'd just as soon--

Aaron stands. Freezes.

The Boy MOANS IN TERROR.

Bill and Nina turn to look.

Emerging into view from the darkness outside...

A WALL OF ORBS FLOAT IN PERFECT FORMATION.

Aaron and company back away, scared.

Nina helps the Boy climb on her back.

The Orb row floats forward.

AARON
RUN!

They scramble from the entrance as:

SCREEEEEAAAAAK-BRAPPP!

THE ORBS EMIT A PIERCING BLAST! Amplified by numbers.

THE GLASS SHATTERS!

A hundred Orbs FLY INTO THE STATION.

UNION STATION MAIN HALL

Aaron, Bill and Nina sprint, the Boy clutching her neck.

They charge into the cavernous space with ragged breath.

The Orbs follow close, swooping like a swarm of locusts.

Aaron spots a sign across the hall that reads:

“TO ALL TRAINS”

AARON
Track 15!

They angle towards the archway.

BILL
We’re not gonna make it!

The Orbs close in. The Boy screams!

Suddenly, from behind a set of columns in the shadows, TWO SENTRIES APPEAR.

They’re dressed in private military gear. High tech body armor. Plexiglas riot shields and helmets.

They roll out a STRANGE DEVICE. Looks like it was made in the garage of a home-schooled engineer: wires, circuit boards, and a big parabolic speaker.

AARON
Get down!

Aaron throws the group between passenger benches.

One of the Sentries PRESSES A TRIGGER.

A flash of light. A crackling sound. Then a blast of HIGH-PITCHED NOISE bursts from the parabolic speaker.

Everyone grabs their ears. It’s LOUD!

THE ORBS SHUT DOWN, MID-AIR.

They clatter to the ground everywhere, like hailstones. Dead.

One lands next to Aaron’s face. He flicks it away.

SENTRY #1
CLEAR!

Aaron and the others stand up slowly.

BILL
About goddamn time we got help!

Sentry #1 raises a rifle.

All around them from every shadowy corner, MORE SENTRIES APPEAR holding rifles.

AARON
(to Nina and Bill)
Let me talk.

Aaron raises his arms. The others follow suit.

AARON
We’re here for Track 15.

SENTRY #1
How do you know about Track 15?

BILL
What I wanna know is, why didn’t you guys use that thing out there? Coulda saved so many lives!

AARON
(to Bill)
Go easy.

SENTRY #1
How do you know about Track 15?

BILL
We got a chip.

AARON
(to Bill)
Seriously, SHUT up.

The Sentries draw closer.

Sentry #2 raises a handheld RFID SCANNER. Points it at Bill.

Bill pushes it away, aggressively.

BILL
Point that shit somewhere else.

SENTRY #1
You ALL have chips?

AARON
Yes. They're expecting us.

Sentry #2 points the scanner at Bill again. It BUZZES and flashes RED. Sentries share a glance.

BILL
I told you, don't point that at me!

He SMACKS it out of Sentry #2's hands.

AARON
WAIT! DON'T--

POP! Another Sentry SHOOTS BILL IN THE HEAD.

Bill drops, DEAD.

AARON
NO!

NINA
OH MY GOD!

Nina clutches the screaming Boy in her arms.

AARON
You ASSHOLES!

Aaron steps forward. Rage in his eyes and a sense of authority we haven't seen before.

AARON
GODDAMN YOU! My name is Aaron Cronan. My father is ALREADY HERE. He's EXPECTING US!

Nina turns to Aaron, SHOCKED.

Sentry #1, rattled, scans Aaron: BLEEP. GREEN.

NINA
Your father's Steven Cronan? The billionaire?

Aaron nods. Nina watches in confusion and outrage.

The Sentries look at each other, unsure.

AARON
Take us to him immediately. You already made one mistake that cost a man's life. You DO NOT want to piss off my father.

Sentry #2 nods to his counterpart.

They lower the scanner and guns.

SENTRY #1
(into earpiece)
Let Command know Aaron Cronan's here. We'll escort him down.

A THIRD SENTRY appears, rifle ready.

SENTRY #3
Come with me, please.

He leads the three survivors out of the main hall.

As they pass Bill's body, Aaron quickly digs in Bill's coat pocket for the multi-tool.

Then gently CLOSES BILL'S EYES.

TRAIN TERMINAL

The group, led by the Sentry, hurries past a series of entrances to train platforms.

NINA
You said your name was Aaron CHARLES!

AARON
Middle name.

Nina stares at him, incredulous.

NINA
Lying about your wife, I kinda understand. But this is FUCKED UP.

They turn and enter the doorway marked TRACK 15.

TRAIN PLATFORM

The Sentry leads them down the long platform toward the far end of the trains. Their footsteps echo.

NINA
You said you worked for Cronan Construction. You didn't say you OWNED it!

AARON
You don't understand how people judge me for my last name.

NINA
Maybe I would if you told me.

AARON
I should have. I wanted to be a regular person for once. Things just happened so fast between us.

NINA
And today. You knew about all this?

AARON
I swear I didn't know. It was only when Ruth spoke up that I pieced things together. Then it was too late to say anything. They'd have turned on me too. Keeping my mouth shut was the best chance we all had of getting here.

NINA
But you knew about the insurance plan. You had to. There's a microchip in your hand!

AARON
When I was a kid, my Dad made a big deal about some expensive insurance policy, and we all got chipped. I thought it was in case we were kidnapped.

The Sentry leads them to the end of the platform down a short stairway to the track level.

ALONG THE TRACKS

The Sentry moves quickly. Aaron and Nina can barely keep up.

NINA
But you knew you'd survive because of YOUR family, and we'd all die because of OURS.

AARON
It's not like that.

NINA
What IS it like, Aaron? Or whatever your name is?

The Sentry STOPS.

In between the tracks, a METAL DOOR set into the ground.

They pull the door open.

A steep, narrow staircase leads down.

SENTRY #3
Go ahead.

Nina sets the Boy down. She climbs into the hole, turns and takes his hand. They descend.

Aaron follows.

He looks back up. The Sentry SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT OVER THEM.

The three climb down the stairs, clanging with each step.

NINA
So THIS is what it takes for me to meet your father.

They reach the bottom. A rusting door. Nina pushes it open.

BUNKER ENTRANCE

A raw, unfinished space, lit by emergency lights. Rounded like a tunnel. Leads to a HUGE CIRCULAR BLAST DOOR.

A surveillance camera swivels to them.

AARON
(to the camera)
I am Aaron Charles Cronan.

NINA
What if they don't let me in?

AARON
My plan was to get everyone here and convince my Dad to help. A whole group would have been a big ask, but one survivor, no problem.

CLANG! BAM!

The blast door opens inward. It's gotta be a foot thick.

They step through, blinding white light hits them from:

A MASSIVE GARAGE

Pristine white. Curved ceiling.

Parked in rows, dozens of luxury tour buses plated in armor and fitted with snowplow wedges.

Among them, Humvees and armored vehicles.

Workers swarm the space, prepping the vehicles.

Nina, Aaron and the Boy stare, amazed.

MR. CRONAN (O.S.)
Aaron!

They turn to an imposing man in his early 70s. Aaron's father, MR. STEVEN CRONAN.

He's flanked by ARMED GUARDS. One has a RFID scanner.

The elder Cronan wears an expensive suit, spotless.

Aaron, Nina and the Boy stand before him in tatters, covered in blood and grime.

Aaron gives his father a formal hug. Backs away.

There's fire and ice between them. The unspoken rage of a complex past.

MR. CRONAN
Thank God you made it.
(notices Nina and the Boy)
Who are they?

AARON
I was on a train packed with people. We're the only ones left. What happened today?

MR. CRONAN
We've been invaded by a superior military force. Not from this planet.

Nina and Aaron exchange a glance.

AARON
Did you know it was coming?

MR. CRONAN
Me? No. I heard bits and pieces. Rumors. Seems over the last century they sent probes to test us. We knew they'd attack eventually, and we tried to be ready. But how do you fight an enemy you don't know? At least we had the foresight to prepare. There's bunkers like this all over the world.

AARON
"We" meaning anyone rich enough to buy a ticket in.

Mr. Cronan bridles from the disdain of an old argument.

MR. CRONAN
How else could we have saved ANYONE? Lottery? Damn good way to spark riots. And who'd pay for this if not people with means?

AARON
Dad, this is my girlfriend, Nina. She lost her family today. They didn't have the means, but she's joining us.

MR. CRONAN
No one gets in without a chip. I don't make the rules.

AARON
The kid's got a chip. We only need one for her. Open the wallet, Dad.

MR. CRONAN
The banks are GONE, son. I don't run this thing. I'm a mouth to feed now. And NO ONE without a chip gets in. I'm sorry. I truly am.

Nina, panicked, tries to hold back tears.

GUARD
Sir, we need to scan them.

MR. CRONAN
I understand.

The Guard SCANS the Boy: BLEEP. Flashes GREEN.

Guard steps up to SCAN Nina. Aaron shields her.

AARON
Wait.

Mr. Cronan looks at Aaron, eyes narrow.

Aaron pulls Mike's blood-caked multi-tool from his pocket.

HE JAMS THE KNIFE into his hand.

GRUNTS in pain.

MR. CRONAN
Aaron! No!

NINA
What are you doing?

AARON
Plan B.

Blood pours from the wound. He digs out the microchip.

Aaron holds up the chip for Nina. She's shocked.

Guards watch confused. Definitely not protocol.

Mr. Cronan stands horrified and yet impressed.

AARON
Nina, take it.

She pushes his hand away. But holds his gaze.

NINA
I can’t.

AARON
It’s yours now.

MR. CRONAN
Don’t do it, Aaron.

AARON
I already made my choice.

Nina looks down, tears flow as she trembles.

NINA
Aaron...

AARON
TAKE IT!

Aaron GRABS her hand. Pulls her fingers open. Sets the bloody chip on her palm.

He closes her fist.

HER HAND SHAKES.

AARON
Scan her.

Guard waves the wand...

BLEEP! GREEN.

NINA
This isn’t right. We’ll figure something out.

MR. CRONAN
(to the Guard)
A lot of my people didn’t make it. Let me talk to Command about this.

GUARD
Nothing I can do, sir.

Guard raises his rifle.

The Boy hides his face. Aaron raises his arms.

GUARD
Sir, anyone without a chip who knows this location is a threat.

Mr. Cronan steps between them.

MR. CRONAN
I will NOT let you gun down my son in front of me. He's NOT a threat. And we are not barbarians! If you don't let him go, I swear I will use every last ounce of power I have to make you SUFFER.

The guard pauses.

Brings down the rifle.

GUARD
You got 30 seconds.

Mr. Cronan turns to his son.

He clears his throat.

He knows this may be the last time he ever sees Aaron, and it takes all his strength to holds down the WELL of emotion...

MR. CRONAN
The Lake Geneva house. Get there, and you should be okay. It's off the beaten path and stocked up. I'll try to send help.

Aaron nods. They hug for real this time.

MR. CRONAN
Thanks, Dad.

Aaron turns to Nina.

NINA
We're coming with you!

AARON
NO. You're safe here. Look after the boy. He needs you.

GUARD
Ten seconds.

Nina throws herself into Aaron's arms one last time.

She kisses his filthy face.

NINA
Stay alive.

She backs away. Wraps her arm around the Boy. Mr. Cronan stands beside them. They all look stricken.

AARON
Take care of each other.

Guard raises his rifle again.

Aaron slips out the blast door. It shuts behind him. CLANG.

EXT. UNION STATION - TUNNELS - DAYBREAK

Aaron emerges from the train tunnels into the cold sunrise.

His face reveals a strange calm.

Yesterday's troubles dissolved, replaced with fortitude.

Aaron marches through deep snow into...

EXT. CHICAGO - PREDAWN

The sun rises over a devastated city. Clouds loom. Massive alien ships float across the sky.

Giant Orbs surround Willis Tower. They BLAST sound waves. The air ripples.

Willis Tower collapses into a heap of rubble.

CUT TO BLACK