

PORTAL

Ep. 101- "Pilot"

by  
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TEASER

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK, NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

A MAN WAKES WITH A START, GASPING FOR AIR. Disoriented, clawing at the grass around him, clinging to life.

This is our hero. VALAN. He's dressed in old, raggedy clothes made of brown leather and furs.

He rises to a sitting position, groans and rubs his head.

It's awfully dark out, almost impossible for him to see his own hands. A WS reveals New York City to be in the midst of a total blackout. Only a sliver of moonlight, peeking out from behind clouds, illuminates the park. Sirens and yells can be heard off in the distance.

Valan touches the back of his head and winces- there's BLOOD on his fingers. He looks around at his surroundings- he's in the middle of a small, grassy copse.

He pats his jacket- there's something in his inside pocket. He takes out a strangely-shaped POCKETKNIFE. He flicks the blade open- it's curved and has symbols inscribed on it.

Valan gets up, and with a worried expression, heads towards the street.

EXT. WSP PATHWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Valan, wanders along, confused and disoriented.

ANGLE ON:

Two POLICE OFFICERS, on the other side of the path, walking towards him, their FLASHLIGHTS out.

Valan bumps into a trash can, knocking it over with a loud CRASH. He falls to his knees.

The police officers spot him, nod to each other and approach.

Valan rises to his feet, continues to stumble along.

OFFICER #1

Excuse me sir, the park's closed.  
There's been a blackout, you need  
to return home.

VALAN  
 (mumbling)  
 Leave me alone.

OFFICER #2  
 You been drinking, sir?

VALAN  
 Screw you.

OFFICER #1  
 Alright, pal, let's go-

He grabs Valan's shoulder. Valan grabs his arm, twists it, then slams his palm into the officer's face. Officer #1 collapses to the ground, unconscious.

Officer #2 draws his GUN quickly, trains it on Valan.

OFFICER #2  
 Hold it-

Valan is too fast. He grabs Officer #2's gun hand, wrenches the weapon out of his grasp while performing a KARATE KICK into the man's sternum.

Officer #2 falls to the ground, looks up- a second later Valan KICKS HIM IN THE FACE, knocking him out.

He looks at his vanquished foes for a moment, then backs away, as the horror of what he's done begins to sink in.

He looks at the GUN in his hand, then quickly stuffs it in the back of his pants and runs off.

EXT. MACDOUGAL STREET - LATER

RACHEL (24), a pretty girl carrying two BAGS of groceries, approaches the door to one of the fancy townhouses that line the block. She looks over her shoulder, visibly nervous.

She puts one of her BAGS down, takes her KEYS out, prepares to open her door.

A hand clamps down over her mouth as someone grabs her from behind. She screams, but the sound is muffled.

It's Valan, who pushes his GUN against her neck.

VALAN  
 I'm not going to hurt you. Open the door and be quiet. Got it?

Rachel nods, and shoves the KEY into her door.

INT. RACHEL'S AUNT'S HOUSE- FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Rachel enters the house, followed by Valan, GUN still out, who closes the door.

RACHEL  
Look, you can take whatever you want, alright? Just please don't hurt me.

Valan looks out the window nervously.

VALAN  
I told you I'm not going to hurt you.

RACHEL  
Then what's with the gun?

Valan looks at his GUN.

VALAN  
I'm not a thief.

RACHEL  
So what, you just break into people's homes at gunpoint for fun?

VALAN  
I don't know.

RACHEL  
Look, who are you?

Valan looks at her, fear in his eyes.

VALAN  
I don't know.

RACHEL  
What?

VALAN  
I- I can't remember my name. I can't remember anything.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - CONTINUOUS

WS of the field Valan awoke upon. CRACKLING BLUE ENERGY suddenly appears, sending out streaks of light like lightning. It builds to a peak- a bright, white flash that fills the screen.

As the white light fades away, two figures can be seen standing where the energy orb was just moments ago. They're two EVIL MEN, dressed in black trench coats, boots, and strange gloves.

Evil Man #2 cracks his neck. Evil Man #1 spots a patch of Valan's BLOOD on the grass. He squats down, scoops up a little with his finger and sucks it off, then rises to his feet.

EVIL MAN #1

It's him. Do you have a signal?

Evil Man #2 is consulting an electronic SCANNER, like a mini-radar or GPS. The screen's readout has strange symbols all over it and a blinking red dot.

Evil Man #2 points towards the street.

EVIL MAN #2

That way.

EXT. WSP PATHWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The evil men approach the two unconscious police officers. Officer #1 is coming to.

Evil Man #1 takes out a BADGE and flashes it.

EVIL MAN #1

Anthony Grossman, FBI. What happened here?

He nods at his partner, who goes over to check Officer #2.

OFFICER #1

I don't know, man, some goddamn hobo went nuts and attacked us. Must have been a damned Meth addict or something. Oh god, my head...

Evil Man #1 squats next to him, touches his forehead gingerly.

EVIL MAN #1

Did you get a good look at him?

OFFICER #1

Yeah, I got a good look at him. He went that way.

He points towards the street.

OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)  
Hey, what's your name again?

EVIL MAN #1  
Grossman. You hit your head when  
you fell on the pavement. Let me  
take a look.

Officer #1 tilts his head so Evil Man #1 can look at the side  
and back.

Evil Man #1 takes out a small CASE from his jacket pocket and  
opens it. There's a CHIRPING sound. He takes something out-  
it's a hideous, two-inch long, black, WORM-LIKE CREATURE with  
horrible, pointy feelers.

Evil Man #1 dips the worm into Officer #1's ear. Once the  
creature has a grip it scurries and shoves its way inside the  
ear cavity.

Officer #1 SCREAMS.

OFFICER #1  
Oh god, what is that?! WHAT IS  
THAT?!! OH MY GOD IT HURTS!!!

He collapses to the ground, clutching his head and writhing  
in pain.

He looks over to see Evil Man #2 dipping a worm into his  
partner's ear.

CU on his terrified eyes as they begin to CRY BLOOD.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. MICHAEL'S LAB, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY - EVENING

TEXT: THIRTY MINUTES AGO

A large basement. Taking up most of the space is a large PORTAL DEVICE. It's made up of two primary components- a large ELECTROMAGNETIC GENERATOR, which looks more or less like a glorified jet engine, connected by countless tubes and wiring to a plastic oval, the actual PORTAL RING itself.

MICHAEL LENNOX (39), charming yet reserved, leans over a workbench in front of the device, consulting a binder stuffed with documents, and chatting with one of his three assistants, CHARLIE, a pretty 27 year-old woman. Both are dressed in white lab coats.

MICHAEL

Now you're sure the LINAC generator feed is properly attached to the Synchrotron Booster, right?

CHARLIE

Professor Lennox, I've checked it like, a *million* times.

MICHAEL

For Christ's sake Charlie, call me Michael. How long have you been on this project?

CHARLIE

Two years.

MICHAEL

Look, we just have to be extra careful, okay? You let too much energy into that portal ring, god knows what could happen.

Near the entrance to the lab, TOMMY (24), another assistant types away at a computer. He looks up as the third assistant, ANGELA (26) enters with DEAN HOROWITZ (57), a stout man in a fancy suit.

ANGELA

Uh, Dr. Lennox? Dean Horowitz is here to see you.

Michael turns around.

MICHAEL

Sam?

HOROWTIZ

(smiles)

So this is where all those grants  
have been getting wasted, mm?

He walks around the room, examining the device.

MICHAEL

Very funny. You know, now's not  
really a good time, Sam, we're  
about to conduct the experiment-

HOROWTIZ

And the dean of the university  
isn't allowed to watch? My my, what  
*is* this school coming too?

Michael walks around the room while he talks to Horowitz,  
scribbling in his NOTEPAD, checking gauges and computer  
screens. Charlie follows him like an obedient dog.

MICHAEL

Jeez, when you'd get so sarcastic?

HOROWTIZ

When you became so obsessed with  
this... thing. You know I support  
you, Michael, but I think you need  
to be realistic. I overheard Eugene  
speaking with some of the other  
professors yesterday and they said  
even if it *were* possible to harness  
the energy needed to open a  
dimensional gateway, you'd need a  
generator the size of Rhode Island-

MICHAEL

If you wanted to open a wormhole  
yes. But in order to do that you'd  
need dark matter, and yes,  
something large enough to house it  
safely. You see, we've replaced the  
dark matter with electromagnetism.  
We use just the right amount, and a  
tear will open, just for a moment-  
just a little glimpse to the other  
side.

Horowitz motions to the portal ring.

HOROWTIZ

That looks big enough for a man to  
pass through.

Michael grins.

MICHAEL  
One can only hope.

He leans over Tommy's shoulder.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Enter the startup code. We're go in  
one minute.

TOMMY  
Got it.

Michael starts for his workbench, but Horowitz stops him,  
pulls him aside.

HOROWTIZ  
(hushed)  
Look, Mike- I don't mean to put any  
pressure on you, but well... if  
this one doesn't pan out, I don't  
know if I can convince the Board-

MICHAEL  
It's okay, Sam, really. I know how  
much you've supported me. Now-  
ready to see scientific history in  
the making?  
(turns to Tommy)  
Time?

TOMMY  
Thrity seconds.

Michael turns to Angela, now seated at another computer  
station.

MICHAEL  
Start up the magnets.

CU on Angela's keyboard as she hits ENTER.

A low HUM begins to fill the soundtrack, and slowly rises in  
volume.

TOMMY  
0.54 Tesla... 1.39 Tesla... 2.5  
Tesla and rising...

MICHAEL  
How are the helium levels?

ANGELA

Good.

The HUM is getting louder... and louder...

TOMMY

Alright. We're at 8.3 Tesla.

Michael turns to Horowitz, anxious. Horowitz squeezes his shoulder and smiles.

Faint BLUE LIGHT begins to glow from behind the grills on the front of the generator. The HUM continues to increase in volume.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Um, Dr. Lennox?

MICHAEL

Michael, Tommy. *Michael.*

TOMMY

The magnetic energy is um... still rising...

MICHAEL

What?

TOMMY

Nine tesla... 10.2 Tesla...

MICHAEL

Charlie...

CHARLIE

I'm on it.

She rushes over to a electronic panel attached to the particle tube ring, and starts typing away.

TOMMY

12.9 Tesla...

MICHAEL

Charlie...

The BLUE GLOW is getting BRIGHTER, the HUM LOUDER...

CHARLIE

I don't understand... these energy readings are off the charts. The protons are moving way over 26 GeV.

HOROWTIZ

Michael- is this normal?

MICHAEL

No, of course this isn't normal!  
Tommy abort! Shut it down!

Tommy types furiously.

TOMMY

Um... the uh- system isn't  
responding.

The BLUE GLOW is very bright now, the HUM almost DEAFENING.  
Bolts of BLUE LIGHTNING begin to crackle off the face of the  
generator, showering sparks down on the ground.

Angela shrieks, jumps back from her station and dashes over  
to Michael.

Blue lightning begins to crackle around the portal ring as  
well, swirling together to form a BLUE ORB THAT FLOATS  
EERILY IN THE CENTER.

Michael spots it.

MICHAEL

Everyone, get down!

Angela, Tommy and Horowitz hit the deck, Charlie continues to  
type away at the control panel.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Charlie-

CHARLIE

Just a minute, I can fix this!

Michael runs over, grabs her by the arm and wrenches her away  
from the panel.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I said just a second-

MICHAEL

GET DOWN!!

They drop to the floor as the hum and lightning start to  
BUILD TO A PEAK. Michael looks over his shoulder to see:

The blue orb at the center of the portal ring, which has  
grown considerably in size, is starting to PEEL OPEN,  
revealing a small porthole into-

A SNOWY FOREST.

Michael squints, he can't believe his eyes-

A MAN- it looks almost like VALAN- stumbles by, disoriented.

It's the faintest glimpse- the next second the porthole seals, and the blue orb VANISHES. For a brief moment there is calm and silence in the lab, before A GIANT BLUE ENERGY WAVE SHOOTS OUT OF THE ELECTROMAGNETIC GENERATOR. Part of its casing is BLOWN OFF, and shrapnel and sparks shower down, OBLITERATING the portal ring as well.

Michael covers his face as the BLUE ENERGY WAVE passes over him. As it does, the lights go out, pitching the lab into TOTAL DARKNESS.

The sparking remains of the ruined generator intermittently illuminates the room, a creepy final image before we CUT TO:

INT. RACHEL'S AUNT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rachel sits at the kitchen table, looking nervously at Valan, who stands over her, still brandishing Officer #2's GUN. CANDLES illuminate the room.

RACHEL

What do you mean you don't remember your name?

VALAN

I told you, I- I have absolutely no memories- I- oh my god, oh my god, what do I do? What am I supposed to do?

RACHEL

Look, just calm down. Maybe I can help you. Maybe if you put the gun away-

VALAN

No, I can't do that! Someone's after me.

RACHEL

What? What makes you think that?

VALAN

I don't know- I just have this feeling. And the authorities were waiting for me when I woke up- tried to arrest me for no reason.

RACHEL

That where you got the gun?

(off his look)

Well I guess at least the police  
are after you.

(a beat)

That was a joke, a joke. Don't know  
why I'm joking with my armed  
captor...

Valan starts to pace.

VALAN

What's your name?

RACHEL

Rachel.

VALAN

Where am I?

RACHEL

New York City.

VALAN

A city. Where is this city?

RACHEL

Uh, America?

VALAN

God, none of these names are  
familiar...

RACHEL

Look, I know you're scared, but if  
you go find a doctor or the police,  
they'll help you, I promise.

VALAN

No! No authorities. There's just  
something in the back of my head  
telling me that's a bad idea.

RACHEL

So you're relying on instinct?

VALAN

Well what do you suggest? I have no  
memories!!

Rachel shuts up, frightened by his raised tone.

VALAN (CONT'D)  
 Sorry... I didn't mean to scare  
 you... I'm not a bad person... I'll-  
 I'll put the gun away.

He stuffs the GUN in the back of his pants and continues to  
 pace.

EXT. RACHEL'S AUNT'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

The two Evil Men emerge from the shadows and approach the  
 back entrance to the house. #2 still consults his SCANNER.

EVIL MAN #2  
 He's in here.

Evil Man #1 walks up to the back door and takes out a  
 metallic CYLINDER from inside his jacket. He presses a button  
 on its side, which opens the lid. Gently, he pours the  
contents of the CYLINDER- some kind of GREEN GOOP- onto the  
doorknob. The doorknob crumples and melts, and finally falls  
off.

Evil Man #2 puts away his SCANNER as #1 pushes the door open  
 quietly.

INT. RACHEL'S AUNT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Valan continues to pace while biting his nails.

VALAN  
 Rachel, right?

Rachel nods.

VALAN (CONT'D)  
 This your house?

RACHEL  
 (chortles)  
 Are you kidding? Do you have any  
 idea how much this costs?

Valan glares at her.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
 Oh. Right. No, it's my aunt's  
 house. She's on vacation in Maui,  
 so she let me stay here for a month  
 while she's gone. I just moved to  
 the city.

VALAN  
 Houses of this size are expensive?

Rachel looks at him quizzically. She's clearly intrigued by him.

RACHEL  
 You really don't have any memories  
 at all, do you?  
 (a beat)  
 I mean, I thought amnesiacs just  
 forgot their names and where  
 they're from. You like, don't know  
 anything about anything.

Valan perks up, looks down the hall to the backyard.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
 What? Did you hear-

Valan puts a finger to his lips, silencing her.

Rachel rolls her eyes, gets to her feet.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
 Look, this is ridiculous, you have  
 to stop being so paranoid-

THUNK!! AN ELECTROSTATIC NEEDLE SLAMS INTO THE ANTIQUE  
 CABINET BEHIND HER! Blue energy crackles across its surface.

Rachel looks at Valan, wide-eyed.

He starts to dash towards her.

VALAN  
 GET DOWN!!

He TACKLES her just as two more needles puncture the cabinet  
 and wall.

Evil Man #1 appears out of the shadows at the entrance to the  
 kitchen, raising a strange, remote-shaped GUN at Valan.

Valan FIRES TWO ROUNDS at the Evil Man- they MISS,  
 splintering the brick wall. Evil Man #1 ducks back behind  
 cover. Rachel SCREAMS.

Valan rips her to her feet, and runs for the front door.

EXT. RACHEL'S AUNT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Valan and Rachel burst out of the front door, and make a run  
 for it down the sidewalk.

Evil Man #1 leans out from the doorway- Valan turns around and FIRES ANOTHER TWO SHOTS AT HIM- they go wide, shattering the doorway light and one of the house's front windows. Evil Man #1 hides back in cover.

A passing SQUAD CAR immediately turns on its SIREN and pulls over.

Valan and Rachel run to the end of the block and make a hard left down the corner.

Evil Man #1 runs out from his hiding spot and chases after them.

Two POLICE OFFICERS emerge from the squad car, already drawing their weapons.

OFFICER #3  
FREEZE!!

Evil Man #1 ignores them, keeps running.

Evil Man #2 emerges from within Rachel's aunt's house, spots the police, and FIRES SEVERAL BURSTS OF YELLOW ENERGY AT THEM.

One of the squad car's windows SHATTERS.

Officers #3 and 4 hunker down.

OFFICER #4  
PUT THE WEAPON DOWN NOW!!!

Evil Man #2 raises his weapon to fire again-

OFFICER #3 TAKES A SHOT-

It SLAMS into Evil Man #2's shoulder, knocking him onto the ground.

Officer #3 runs up to him, keeping his GUN trained on the perp's head.

OFFICER #3  
STAY DOWN!! STAY DOWN!!

Officer #4 is already on the police RADIO.

OFFICER #4  
I've got a suspect down on  
Macdougall, another three heading  
east on Houston Street. Need an 11-  
41 ASAP.

Officer #3 HANDCUFFS Evil Man #2, then rolls him over. CLOSE ON the man's angry, fiery eyes.

INT. MICHAEL'S LAB - CONTINUOUS

DARKNESS. As sparks from fried wires and destroyed circuitry flash across the room, we get brief glimpses of Michael's eyes, as they flicker open.

There's a low HUM, before the back-up generator kicks in and lights turn back on in the lab.

Michael sits up, spots Charlie sprawled next to him. He shakes her.

MICHAEL  
Charlie. Charlie!

Charlie stirs awake, looks up at Michael. She's got a cut on her forehead, but is otherwise unharmed.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Jesus, you scared the crap out of me.

CHARLIE  
(groggy)  
What happened?

MICHAEL  
I don't know, some kind of energy build-up. Must have been a malfunction with one of the vents. Is everyone else okay?

Tommy and Angela have already regained consciousness, and are tending to their wounds.

Horowitz shoves a chunk of crumbled drywall off of his head and looks at Michael angrily.

HOROWTIZ  
What the *hell* was that?!

Michael and Charlie rise to their feet. Michael surveys the damage to his portal device- it's been completely OBLITERATED. Metal shards scatter the floor, and sparking wires dance about along the electromagnetic generator's shredded grills.

MICHAEL  
I don't know. Tommy give me a status update, pronto.

Tommy runs over to his computer station and starts typing away. Angela and Horowitz get up as well.

ANGELA  
These are the emergency lights.

MICHAEL  
I know.

ANGELA  
Does that mean-

Michael nods.

HOROWTIZ  
What?

CHARLIE  
City-wide blackout.

HOROWTIZ  
(scoffs)  
You- you must be joking. A  
blackout? The entire city?

MICHAEL  
Maybe just Manhattan, maybe just  
the upper west side.

TOMMY  
Yup, there was a blackout. Looks  
like it's... Jesus, all five  
boroughs...

HOROWTIZ  
All five boroughs?! Do you have  
any idea how much this is going to  
cost me?!

MICHAEL  
Please, Sam, not now.  
(to Tommy)  
Did it work?

TOMMY  
What?

MICHAEL  
The portal, Tommy! Did it open?!

TOMMY  
No.

Michael curses under his breath, looks crushed. Charlie feels his pain.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

But there must have been *some* kind of particle collision or something, because the entire system short-circuited. Wait a minute...

MICHAEL

What?

TOMMY

I'm getting some readings. Looks like- there's, uh- there's been some kind of... massive electromagnetic pulse. That's what caused the blackout. But it didn't originate from here.

CHARLIE

Where did it come from, then?

TOMMY

Washington Square Park.

Michael immediately snaps into action.

MICHAEL

I'm gonna go check it out. Charlie, you're coming with me.

He walks over to a work bench and grabs two FLASH LIGHTS. He tosses one over to Charlie, then grabs his JACKET off a bench.

HOROWTIZ

You can't leave now! What about this- this mess?!!

MICHAEL

This is important, Sam. I'll deal with that tomorrow.

HOROWTIZ

You stop right now, Michael! If you think you're going to get away with this you've got another thing coming! This is the last project you'll ever have funded!!

Michael turns around just before exiting the lab.

MICHAEL

You have my lawyer's number, Sam.

Michael and Charlie exit.

EXT. OUTSIDE WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - NIGHT

A huge crowd has assembled around the park, which has been cordoned off with metal fences and police tape. The area is filled with police and their various vehicles. Floodlights shine on the park, where men in HAZMAT SUITS walk around with various monitors and equipment.

The news media has also assembled. The camera PUSHES in on one, a female anchor from CNN.

CNN ANCHOR

We haven't been able to get a solid answer from the police, but what we do know is that the park has been cordoned off. There are uh, men in Hazmat suits inspecting the site. Many of the New Yorkers here think this is where the blackout started, and it's looking more and more likely that a terrorist attack has in fact occurred.

Michael and Charlie walk by the anchor and push their way into the crowd.

The crowd is thick and loud- people are agitated, giving the police a hard time.

Michael turns to a fat, BLUE COLLAR MAN.

MICHAEL

What's going on here?!

BLUE COLLAR MAN

It's another Al Qaeda attack man.  
Police ain't tellin' us nuthin'.

Michael frowns, continues to push his way through the crowd.

Charlie's getting stuck behind; Michael's getting ahead of her.

MICHAEL

Excuse me.

CHARLIE

Dr. Lennox! Dr. Lennox!!

Michael doesn't hear her and keeps going. Finally, he makes it to the front of the crowd.

Two police officers stand behind the fence.

MICHAEL

Excuse me, what's going on here?

OFFICER #5 motions for Michael to step back.

OFFICER #5

I'm sorry sir, I have no information at this time. I'm gonna have to ask you to step back, this area's off limits.

Charlie finally makes it through the crowd, and pushes up next to Michael.

OFFICER #5 (CONT'D)

And yes, we're working on restoring power. Please just go home.

MICHAEL

Let me speak to your superior.

OFFICER #5

Look, sir-

MICHAEL

I have information about what's going on here and I need to speak to your superior!

CHARLIE

C'mon, Michael, maybe we should just go-

One of the men in Hazmat suits checks a reading on a RADIATION DETECTOR, then motions for a group of men in black suits and trench coats to enter the cordoned area.

OFFICER #5

Sir, I don't want to ask you to step back again-

Michael spots the group of suits as they approach the area where Valan first awoke.

MICHAEL

Excuse me! Excuse me, are you in charge here?!

One of the men, AGENT TIMOTHY POWELL (52), a tall, striking, and balding man, looks at Michael and approaches him.

POWELL

I'm Agent Timothy Powell with  
Homeland Security. I'm in charge of  
the operation here.

He extends his hand for a handshake. Surprised, Michael takes it.

MICHAEL

Michael Lennox, professor of  
theoretical physics at Columbia.

POWELL

What can I do for you, Mr. Lennox?

Camera PUSHES in for a CU of Michael as he tries to think of the best way to say what he knows he has to say.

A beat.

MICHAEL

I think I might know what happened  
here. I- I think I might have  
started the blackout.

Powell's eyes narrow.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Camera is framed on the entrance to a dark, trash-filled alleyway. Valan and Rachel run past the entrance, but Valan stops, spots it, and pulls Rachel down it.

RACHEL  
(frantic)  
Who the hell were those guys?!

VALAN  
Keep quiet!!

They reach the end of the alleyway, and duck behind a pair of dumpsters. Valan signals for Rachel to be quiet.

A moment later Evil Man #1 runs past. He pauses at the entrance, looks down it, decides his quarry did not hide there, and runs off.

Rachel sighs heavily. She looks down and notices the GUN Valan is still carrying. Her brow furrows and she gets up.

RACHEL  
Alright, you know what? This amnesiac crap has gone far enough! Either you tell me what the hell is going on, or I'm out of here!

VALAN  
*I told you*, I have no idea what's going on. I don't know why those men were after me-

RACHEL  
This is crazy! Can't believe this is happening to me. It- it was nice meeting you, hope you don't get killed. See you around.

She heads for the entrance to the alleyway.

VALAN  
Wait, please- I need your help. I- can't be alone, I-

RACHEL  
Look, you're kind of cute and all, but I've got too much going on in my life right now to deal with something like this.

(MORE)

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
I saw a homeless shelter two blocks  
that way. I'm sure they can help  
you.

CLICK. Rachel stops dead in her tracks.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
Are you serious?

Valan's cocked his GUN, and is aiming it at the back of her  
head. She turns around slowly.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
So you're going to take a hostage  
now?

VALAN  
I promise I won't hurt you if you  
just help me for a little longer.  
I'm lost here. I don't know anyone  
or anything. If you leave me now  
I'm dead. So *please*. I'm begging  
you: help me.

A beat.

RACHEL  
Do I have a choice?

Valan grabs her arm roughly and pulls her out of the  
alleyway.

VALAN  
No.

EXT. ELIZABETH STREET - CONTINUOUS

Valan looks up and down the block.

VALAN'S POV:

He's scanning all the cars, studying them.

VALAN  
Which one of these vehicles is the  
oldest?

Rachel looks at the cars, points at one.

RACHEL  
That one probably. Jeez, looks like  
a 1992 Honda Accord-

Valan tugs her along as he strides towards the car.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
 Hey, can you let go of my arm,  
 please? You're hurt-

Valan looks up and down the street- not another soul on the block. He grips his GUN by the muzzle and smashes the Accord window in with the butt.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
 (shocked)  
 Jesus, what the hell are you  
 doing?!!

Valan reaches in through the obliterated window and unlocks the driver's door, then the passenger's.

VALAN  
 Get in the car.

RACHEL  
 Look-

VALAN  
 GET IN THE CAR!!

Rachel throws her hands up in exasperation and rushes over to the passenger door.

RACHEL  
 Alright, alright!!

She gets in. Valan jumps in after her.

INT. ACCORD - CONTINUOUS

Valan pushes the driver's seat back so he can get under the steering wheel. He rips a plastic panel off, exposing the car's wiring, and immediately starts to fiddle with the connections.

RACHEL  
 H-how do you know how to do that?

VALAN  
 I don't know, I just do. Keep watch  
 for police.

After a moment he finds the two wires he's looking for, and pushes their exposed metal coils together. There's a spark and a grumble and suddenly the car's engine comes to life.

Valan sits up, puts the car in gear and looks behind him as he pulls out of the parking space.

RACHEL

Where are we going?

Valan finishes pulling out of the parking spot, and puts the car in drive.

VALAN

Anywhere but this city.

CU on Rachel's fearful face.

The Accord drives off down the street.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING- INTERROGATION CHAMBER - NIGHT

A stark white room with a desk, two chairs, and a sheet of mirrored glass on the wall. Emergency lights illuminate the space. Michael sits glumly on the chair, Powell standing over him, arms crossed.

TEXT: FEDERAL BUILDING

MICHAEL

Look, I've told you everything I know.

Powell takes a seat across from him.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

If my experiment caused the pulse it was an accident. We had safety procedures set up and everything, so I don't know why-

POWELL

I'm afraid that what occurred tonight is a little more than just an "accident," Dr. Lennox. You do realize your device emitted an electromagnetic pulse of such immense magnitude, that every single electronic device in a five mile radius has gone completely dead. It took us two hours to just get our backup generator working, and every vehicle and piece of equipment we're using had to be brought in from out of state. You've cost the city of New York and the greater metropolitan area millions of dollars. You're just lucky there weren't any planes flying over Manhattan when your little pet project went haywire.

(MORE)

POWELL (CONT'D)

Only one passenger plane down, over the Hudson River. Amazing pilot, put the bird down in the water safe and sound, not even a scratch on any of the passengers. Damn miracle. But, there were also those three helicopter crashes. No survivors there.

He pauses, gives a second for this information to sink in for Michael. Michael indeed, does not look happy.

MICHAEL

Do I get my phone call now?

POWELL

I'm afraid not. You see, when destruction and death comes from a singular event, like your experiment, I'm always entitled to believe it's a terrorist attack.

MICHAEL

Of course. You're with Homeland Security. You're not interested in the truth, just what people want to hear.

Powell smiles.

POWELL

The truth is, Dr. Lennox, not every component of your portal device was purchased legally.

Michael pales.

POWELL (CONT'D)

And I've got the invoices to prove it.

He pulls a series of ORDER FORMS from one of his many FOLDERS.

POWELL (CONT'D)

The illegal smuggling of plutonium...

(smiles)

Well... I don't think I need to tell you how grave the charges would be.

MICHAEL

You've been spying on me?

POWELL

The US government has shown interest in your experiments. We understood the... legal transparency... but decided your work was too important to impede. And that's why I'm going to give you a chance to make up for what you've done.

He gets up.

POWELL (CONT'D)

Come with me.

He opens the door.

Michael follows.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2- VIEWING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

An FBI Agent, FORDHAM (34) looks through the one-way mirror at Evil Man #2, who sits in a room identical to Michael's, his arm wound treated and bound.

Powell and Michael enter.

POWELL

Agent Fordham, this is Dr. Michael Lennox. He'll be assisting us with the investigation.

Fordham reluctantly shakes Michael's hand.

FORDHAM

How do you do.

POWELL

Did he say anything?

FORDHAM

Not a word. Hasn't asked for a phone call or a lawyer, not even a glass of water. Hasn't even asked to piss.

MICHAEL

Who is that?

POWELL

I was hoping you could tell us, Dr. Lennox.

(MORE)

POWELL (CONT'D)

A little under an hour after the blackout, a patrolman discovered two officers dead in Washington Square Park. The autopsies are pending. Shortly thereafter, this man was picked up by officers in Greenwich Village after being wounded in a shootout with two other as of yet unidentified suspects. The officers said he had an accomplice, who escaped.

Evil Man #2 switches his glance to the one-way mirror, making eye contact with Michael, who looks away, unnerved.

POWELL (CONT'D)

His only ID was a fake FBI badge with an alias that didn't pop up on any of our databases. Neither did his fingerprints. He was carrying some kind of weapon and a device we haven't been able to identify. I can show you them later, but you should know, both objects were made with technology not even a scientist of your caliber would have any prior knowledge on.

MICHAEL

So, you think this guy has something to do with the blackout?

POWELL

Maybe you'll be so kind as to find that out for us.

A beat.

MICHAEL

What? You want me to go in there? Why?

POWELL

Because that man asked for you by name.

Startled, Michael looks back at Evil Man #2, who's still staring at him.

POWELL (CONT'D)

He's been shot in the arm, Dr. Lennox. He's harmless.

(MORE)

POWELL (CONT'D)

And Agent Fordham and I will be right here, watching. There's an agent just outside the door as well.

MICHAEL

I go in there on one condition.

POWELL

Yes?

MICHAEL

You release Charlie immediately. She hasn't done anything wrong and the blackout is my responsibility, and mine alone.

POWELL

Fair enough.

Michael nods. Turns around. Looks at Evil Man #2. Evil Man #2 stares at him.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - MOMENTS LATER

The door opens and an FBI agent lets Michael into the room. Michael takes a seat across from Evil Man #2 nervously and outstretches his hand.

MICHAEL

Hi, my name's Doctor M-

EVIL MAN #2

I know who you are, Dr. Lennox.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2- VIEWING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Powell and Fordham watch.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL

So I've been told. Have we met?

A beat.

EVIL MAN #2

Doctor Michael Edward Lennox. Born June 20th, 1970 in Cleveland, Ohio. One brother, two sisters. Father died of cancer when you were thirteen.

(MORE)

EVIL MAN #2 (CONT'D)

You followed his footsteps, showing an interest in science, particularly physics, in high school. Got your bachelor's degree and master's at Yale, and your doctorate at Columbia where you immediately started teaching, while pursuing experiments in neutrinos, dark matter, and of course, what you've dubbed as "Portal Theory."

A beat.

MICHAEL

Who the hell are you?

EVIL MAN #2

(smiles)

*Who* I am is irrelevant. *Where* I'm from and *what* I want are what should concern you.

MICHAEL

And *where* are you from?

A beat.

EVIL MAN #2

Being a theoretical physicist, you must know that *where* and *when* are relative terms. Let's just say I'm a... tourist.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2- VIEWING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Powell and Fordham continue to watch.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Alright. So what do you want?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - CONTINUOUS

EVIL MAN #2

You humans... always so- *direct*. You don't understand the beauty of elusiveness do you? The importance of subtlety?

MICHAEL

So you're saying you're not human?

EVIL MAN #2

I suppose you could argue that I am. Our physiologies are the same.

(MORE)

EVIL MAN #2 (CONT'D)

We were like you once... a long time ago. But things have changed... We've evolved...

MICHAEL

You're referring to your advanced technology?

EVIL MAN #2

Technology is nothing more than a tool. When you become dependent on it, like your people have... complications arise. We've learned to distance ourselves from it as much as possible.

MICHAEL

You seem very eager to avoid my questions.

EVIL MAN #2

Just making conversation. I have waited a long time to speak with you.

MICHAEL

Is that so?

EVIL MAN #2

That's why I'm here. For you.

Michael's eyes narrow.

MICHAEL

What are you talking about?

EVIL MAN #2

You asked what I want. That's it. To take you home.

Michael shakes his head, sees this is leading nowhere.

MICHAEL

Look, I need you to tell me who gave you my name and what they want with me-

EVIL MAN #2

We're everywhere.

A beat.

EVIL MAN #2 (CONT'D)

The man who serves you your sustenance, the police officer keeping you safe, your lover, your friends. Any one of them could be one of our people. There could even be a spy in this building as we speak. We're watching. We've always been watching. And your time is coming to an end.

MICHAEL

What the hell's that supposed to mean?

Evil Man #2 just smiles. Then BLOOD starts to dribble from his nose.

Michael motions.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Y-your nose.

Evil Man #2 touches the blood, looks at it, grows frightened and pale.

EVIL MAN #2

No...

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2- VIEWING AREA - CONTINUOUS

FORDHAM

Something's wrong...

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - CONTINUOUS

Evil Man #2 jumps to his feet, now CRYING BLOOD.

EVIL MAN #2

NO! No, I haven't been compromised, please! I did not tell them who we are!! I- I can still escape- PLEASE!!

He grabs his head, screams and begins to thrash about.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2- VIEWING AREA - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Hey! Hey I need some help in here!

Fordham and Powell run out of the viewing area.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - CONTINUOUS

Evil Man #2 COUGHS UP BLOOD and collapses onto the desk. Michael tries to hold him down, but his convulsions are violent.

MICHAEL  
Help! Somebody help!

Powell, Fordham and the other FBI agent burst into the room. Powell turns to the unnamed agent.

POWELL  
Get a medic!!

The agent nods and runs out of the room.

Evil Man #2 screams and THROWS Michael off of him, onto the floor.

Powell runs to his side, Fordham heads for Evil Man #2.

Evil Man #2 SMACKS FORDHAM IN THE FACE, throwing him onto the ground.

He staggers back, screaming shrilly, and throws himself against the one-way mirror.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2- VIEWING AREA - CONTINUOUS

There's a squishy POP before BLOOD SPLATTERS ONTO THE GLASS.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - CONTINUOUS

Blood splatters on Fordham, Powell and Michael's faces.

CLOSE ON Michael's shocked expression.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT

Valan's stolen Accord races down the dark, abandoned street.

INT. ACCORD - CONTINUOUS

RACHEL  
Hey, can you slow down, please?  
There's no streetlights!

VALAN  
This is the way to the nearest  
bridge yes? It'll take us to the  
mainland?

RACHEL

Yes, but that guy's not chasing us anymore! You can slow down! This is really dangerous!

VALAN

I don't feel safe.

RACHEL

Oh really? That's funny. I feel super.

(a beat)

Does it even matter to you that I have a life? That this is my home? That I have friends and family who care about me?

Valan ignores her.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

This is just my luck, you know? I have the worst luck. Jesus. Just when I found a job, which, let me tell you, was no easy feat. Everything was going just the way I wanted and then BAM- some weirdo kidnaps me.

VALAN

You would do the same to me.

RACHEL

(scoffs)

Um, no I wouldn't. I'm not a gun-waving maniac.

VALAN

People are all the same. They pretend that they believe in things like morals and codes, but in the end all that matters is survival.

RACHEL

Great. Philosophy lessons from *the guy who can't even remember his own name!* God! If you're going to kidnap me, don't you at least want to know something about me? Where I work, go to school that kind of thing-

As Rachel is finishing her sentence the Accord enters an intersection. As it does we can see A PAIR OF HIGH BEAMS TURN ON BEHIND HER AS A CAR RUSHES TOWARDS THE PASSENGER SIDE.

BAM!! IT SLAMS INTO THE ACCORD, SHATTERING RACHEL'S WINDOW.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

A large pickup truck SMASHES into the side of the Accord, crumpling it and sending the car spinning.

The Accord crashes into a parked van, demolishing its hood.

There's an eerie quiet after the crash, just the faint hissing of the Accord's engine as smoke rises out of it.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING- HALLWAY - NIGHT

Michael sits on a bench in an emergency-lit hallway, sipping COFFEE. Police officers and various agents walk past, all very busy. Charlie sits next to him, squeezes his shoulder.

MICHAEL

Really, Charlie, I'm alright.

CHARLIE

Dr. Lennox... *Michael*- you're shaking.

Michael looks at his quivering hand.

He puts the COFFEE down.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

One of the agents told me what happened... if you want to talk about it-

MICHAEL

There's nothing to talk about. The guy's head blew up. End of story.

CHARLIE

Sorry. I was just trying to help.

A beat.

MICHAEL

(sighs)

Thanks, Charlie. It means a lot.

He smiles at her. Charlie smiles back.

Powell walks up.

POWELL

Dr. Lennox, would you mind coming with me? I'd like to let you take a look at our perp's possessions.

MICHAEL

Sure.

(to Charlie)

Charlie, why don't you go home? It's late. I'll give you a call tomorrow, hopefully the power will be back by then.

He gets up.

POWELL

I'll have one of my men drive you,  
Miss Weathers.

CHARLIE

Yeah, thanks. I'll see you later,  
Michael. Take care of yourself.

Michael and Powell start to walk off.

MICHAEL

You too.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING- LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Michael and Powell enter a small room where science TECHS in lab coats and agents intermingle, comparing data and typing on computers.

Powell leads Michael over to a workbench where Fordham and a TECH examine Evil Man #2's strange GUN and SCANNER.

POWELL

Fordham.  
(to Michael)  
He was carrying this weapon.

TECH

Never seen anything quite like  
it... uh, the casing is made from  
some kind of metallic alloy not  
found anywhere on Earth. Similar to  
titanium, but hardier. We've been  
too nervous to open it up yet; we  
figure that would disable it-

MICHAEL

Can I see it fire?

The tech glances nervously at Powell, who nods slightly.

The tech nods and motions for them to follow him. He walks over to a small firing range- a mannequin has been set up at the other end of the room.

TECH

The weapon seems to have multiple  
firing modes. We've only figured  
out two so far. This appears to be  
the stun mode.

He aims the weapon and fires. Another electrostatic needle flies out and imbeds itself in the mannequin.

TECH (CONT'D)

And this...

He aims and fires again. A BOLT OF RED ENERGY SHOOTS OUT OF THE GUN AND SLICES THE MANNEQUIN IN TWO. The remains BURST INTO FLAMES, which are quickly put out by two other techs with FIRE EXTINGUISHERS.

MICHAEL

What about the other device?

They walk back over to the workbench. The tech picks up the SCANNER and shows it to Michael.

TECH

We think it's some kind of scanner, but we haven't been able to figure out for what.

Michael snatches it from the tech. He looks it over, which makes the tech increasingly nervous.

Michael notices a large red button on the front of the SCANNER.

MICHAEL

Have you tried pressing the big red button?

TECH

Yes, that, um-

Michael pushes the button.

With a series of BEEPS and a mechanical WHIR the SCANNER comes to life.

TECH (CONT'D)

-turns it on.

The SCANNER'S LCD screen flickers on- just a series of concentric circles with strange symbols written beside them, and a large, blinking red dot.

MICHAEL

This- this is just a radar... A tracking device, look, look at this dot.

TECH

Yes, we considered that, but even if it is there's no way to tell how far away it is. These symbols- we haven't been able to decipher them yet.

MICHAEL

What difference does it make? We know what direction the thing is in, and it's probably somewhere in the city. All we have to do is traverse one of these circles to figure out what the unit of measurement is, and then we can calculate the rest.

FORDHAM

(to Powell)

Bet you our other guy is after the same thing.

Powell nods.

POWELL

Assemble a team and get us some transport. We're on the move in ten minutes.

FORDHAM

Yes, sir.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT

WS of the smoldering Honda Accord wreck.

A pick-up truck emerges out of the darkness and comes to a stop a couple meters behind it.

The door opens and Evil Man #1 steps out. He walks briskly towards the wreck.

INT. ACCORD - CONTINUOUS

Rachel's eyes flicker open and she comes to. Blood is dripping down her forehead. She moans, touches it, looks around- Valan is passed out beside her, his face smothered in the airbag. Rachel looks at where hers should be- it didn't deploy.

She notices the lights shining in the rearview mirror, and grimacing, looks over her shoulder to see:

Evil Man #1 just a few feet away now.

Rachel begins to panic. She tries to unbuckle her seatbelt but it's stuck. She shoves Valan but he does not wake.

RACHEL

Hey! Hey, wake up!! Wake up!!

It's no use, the Evil Man is there. He reaches through the shattered passenger window and unlocks the door. Rachel looks up, petrified.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Hey-

The Evil Man throws open the door and takes out his GUN.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Hey, wait-

Evil Man #1 presses a button on his GUN and a blade pops out of its bottom.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Wait!

Evil Man #1 uses the blade to slice through Rachel's seatbelt. He then grabs her, rips her out of the car and throws her to the ground.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Wait, please- please don't! I didn't do anything!

Evil Man #1 raises his GUN, aims it at Rachel's face.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Please! PLEASE!!!

CRUNCH! Valan comes out of nowhere and TACKLES Evil Man #1 to the ground!

The villain's GUN goes skidding across the ground.

Rachel screams.

Evil Man #1 and Valan roll on the ground until Valan is on top. He punches the Evil Man in the face, then takes out his PISTOL and aims.

Evil Man #1 grabs Valan's GUN hand and punches him, then throws him off.

Valan sprawls onto the ground- his PISTOL skids away as well- just out of arm's reach.

Evil Man #1 is already on top of him. Valan tries to resist but the Evil Man strikes him fiercely in the face.

Rachel shrieks and jumps on the Evil Man's back, punching the back of his head. Evil Man #1 gives her a backhanded slap and sends her flying.

He returns to the disoriented Valan, straddling him. He reaches into his jacket and pulls out a leather SACHEL. The bag quivers- we hear an insect-like CHIRP.

VALAN  
(disoriented)  
What is that?

The Evil Man smiles, reaches into the SACHEL and retrieves a SKULL BUG. It looks kind of like the facehugger from *Alien*, only without a tail- it has four octopus-like tentacles- and a mouth big enough to fit around a human head and lined with small, pointy teeth.

Valan's eyes widen.

VALAN (CONT'D)  
WHAT IS THAT?!

Evil Man #1 brings the creature closer to Valan's head- it squeals and shakes with excitement.

EVIL MAN #1  
Something to make you more  
obedient, Pariah.

Rachel looks up, sees what's happening.

VALAN  
GET THAT THING AWAY FROM ME!! GET  
IT AWAY FROM ME!!!

Just as Evil Man #1 is about to put the skull bug on Valan's head, A BOLT OF YELLOW ENERGY SLAMS INTO THE BEAST- with a SHRIEK and a SPRAY OF YELLOW BLOOD it is blown out of Evil Man #1's hands!

Rachel holds the Evil Man's smoking GUN, which she has now trained on him.

RACHEL  
Get back.

Evil Man #1 raises his arms in defense and gets off Valan.

Valan growls and jumps to his feet.

EXT. SIXTH AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

A black SUV tears around a sharp corner and races up the street.

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Fordham is behind the wheel, Michael beside him, navigating via Evil Man #2's SCANNER. Powell sits in the back.

MICHAEL  
(nervously)  
What's the rush?

FORDHAM  
The sooner we get this crap all sorted out, the sooner I can get home to my wife. How much further?

MICHAEL  
Less than a mile. You should probably make a left here-

Fordham spins the steering wheel. Michael holds on for dear life.

EXT. SIXTH AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

The SUV makes a hard left.

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Valan SLAMS Evil Man #1 against a chain-link fence, aims his PISTOL at his forehead and COCKS it.

VALAN  
Start talking.

EVIL MAN #1  
(smiles)  
I have nothing to say.

Valan grits his teeth- he's real pissed- and points the PISTOL at Evil Man's mouth.

VALAN  
You're about to have no teeth, either. Who are you?

EVIL MAN #1  
(sighs heavily)  
My name is Ce'liath.

VALAN

What do you want with me?

Evil Man #1 looks deeply into Valan's eyes, studying them. His own eyes widen when he realizes Valan really isn't lying.

EVIL MAN #1

You- you really can't remember anything, can you?

VALAN

Do I look like I'm pretending? Who am I?!

EVIL MAN #1

You don't even understand how important you are, do you, Valan?

VALAN

Valan? Valan, is that my name? Where do you come from?! Why are you after me?!

A beat.

EVIL MAN #1

I am from a parallel dimension. Your homeworld.

VALAN

What? What are you talking about?

EVIL MAN #1

I appreciate that you are a new man, Valan. And perhaps your naivete will help to make what I'm about to say all the more poignant: we will never stop hunting you. No matter what you do, where you go. We will find you. So, if you're smart, you'll just come with me right now-

VALAN

Not a chance.

A beat. Evil Man #1 smiles.

EVIL MAN #1

So be it.

HE KNEES VALAN IN THE BALLS.

Valan doubles over and drops his PISTOL.

Evil Man #1 KICKS HIM IN THE FACE and sends him sprawling.

Rachel aims the Evil Man's weapon at him, but he's too quick- he KNOCKS it out of her hands and GRABS HER THROAT!

He SLAMS her against the opposite wall.

EVIL MAN #1 (CONT'D)

And now for you.

Valan TACKLES him again, and lands on top. This time he's got him- he's pinned his arms with his knees and has his hands around the Evil Man's throat.

Rachel collapses, coughing to the ground, and watches in horror as Valan STRANGLES Evil Man #1.

Evil Man #1 feebly tries to resist, but he's growing blue- his eyes popping out. They glaze over and he grows still... then slips away.

Panting, Valan releases his grip on the dead man's neck.

After a beat he throws open the man's jacket and starts searching his pockets.

RACHEL

(crying)

What are you doing?!

VALAN

Looking for clues.

RACHEL

(crying)

Wh-why did you kill him?!

Valan takes out Evil Man #1's fake FBI BADGE, looks at it, then tosses it aside.

VALAN

He would have done the same to me.

In another pocket he finds two items- Evil Man #1's SCANNER and a PHOTO OF A GRIZZLED OLD MAN. He flips it over to find a name and address:

PROFESSOR RONALD TALVO, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA.

He pockets the PHOTO and turns to the SCANNER as he rises to his feet. He presses the big red button and turns it on. The red light is blinking fast and BEEPING loudly.

Rachel wipes her eyes.

RACHEL  
What's that?

VALAN  
I don't know...

He moves the SCANNER around to see if the BEEPING or rate of flashing will change, but it doesn't.

He raises it to the sky- the BEEPING intensifies. Confused, he points it as his own head- the BEEPING gets SHRILL.

Realization setting in, he touches the wound on the back of his head.

It's no longer bloody- a ECU shows it to be a nasty scab now.

Valan takes another look at the SCANNER, then throws it on the pavement, obliterating it.

RACHEL  
What are you doing?!

Valan reaches into his jacket, takes out his strange POCKETKNIFE.

VALAN  
That's how they're tracking me. The signal's coming from inside me.

RACHEL  
What are you talking about?

Valan pops out the KNIFE'S blade.

Rachel gets up quickly.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

Valan takes a deep breath and tilts his head down. He raises the KNIFE...

VALAN  
It's the only way...

RACHEL  
Stop it- no, wait-

Valan digs into his scalp with the KNIFE, winces.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
Don't! Stop doing that!

Valan cuts deeper and CRIES OUT. A high-pitched WHINE suddenly fills the soundtrack.

Valan grips his head and screams silently at the sky. Rachel screams as well.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Four black SUVs pull up beside the Honda Accord wreck and the abandoned pick-up.

The doors open and Michael, Powell, Fordham, and several other agents disembark, FLASHLIGHTS out. They approach the wreck.

POWELL  
Call the NYPD.

Fordham nods, takes out his CELL PHONE and walks off.

Powell looks around the area.

POWELL (CONT'D)  
This feels like a trap...

MICHAEL  
The scanner says the item is just a couple hundred feet away.

FORDHAM  
Hello, this is Agent Fordham with the FBI. I'd like to request two squad cars and a tow truck, we've got a car wreck at Twenty-Third Street, between Seventh and Eighth...

Powell turns to his men.

POWELL (CONT'D)  
Fan out, check the area, knock on some doors. If you see anything, call it in. Lennox, I want you to stay put.

MICHAEL  
But-

POWELL  
Which way is the item?

Michael points down the block.

Powell nods, takes out a pair of CAR KEYS from his pocket and hands them to Michael.

POWELL (CONT'D)  
In case you get cold.

He starts walking and motions for his men to follow.

POWELL (CONT'D)

Let's go.

Michael watches them fade away into the darkness. We hear a KNOCK on a door, the beginning of a conversation.

Michael paces, shakes his head, frustrated.

A manly GRUNT emanates from somewhere nearby.

Michael perks up, looks towards the source of the sound. He shines his FLASHLIGHT- It's an alley. He looks over his shoulder. No one- no FBI, nothing.

He heads towards the alley- the SCANNER's BEEPING begins to increase. Michael walks faster, and enters the alley.

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

The BEEPING increases in speed and volume as Michael makes his way down the alley.

He spots something: a small, black, metallic ORB, covered in BLOOD. Small LIGHTS blink across its surface.

Michael tilts his FLASHLIGHT up, following a TRAIL OF BLOOD that leads to:

Valan, passed out in a pile on the ground. Lying a couple feet away from him is Evil Man #1's corpse.

Michael GASPS.

CLICK! A gun cocks and Rachel emerges from the shadows, aiming it at him.

RACHEL

Stop what you're doing.

MICHAEL

Wait-

RACHEL

Turn the flashlight off and drop the scanner.

Michael obeys.

Rachel stomps on the SCANNER, crushing it.

MICHAEL  
Listen, my name's Michael Lennox,  
I'm a professor at Columbia  
University-

RACHEL  
You're not with them?

MICHAEL  
Who?

RACHEL  
Where'd you get the scanner?

MICHAEL  
Off a dead guy... I-I'm working  
with the FBI, we followed the  
signal here, I- *please*... put the  
gun down.

RACHEL  
You have a car?

MICHAEL  
Yes, the keys are in my right  
pocket.

RACHEL  
Take them out. *Slowly*.

MICHAEL  
Okay, okay.

Michael dips his hand into his jacket pocket and pulls out  
Powell's KEYS. Rachel snatches them.

RACHEL  
Take me to the car.

MICHAEL  
Okay. It's just out back.

Rachel looks at Valan. Compassion fills her eyes.

RACHEL  
And carry him.

MICHAEL  
What?

RACHEL  
Carry him. And don't make a sound,  
you got it?

Michael stoops down to pick up Valan.

MICHAEL  
Yeah, alright, alright.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Rachel and Michael emerge from the alley, Valan's arm slung over Michael's shoulders, who drags him along weakly.

There's an FBI Agent across the street, talking to an OLD LADY in her doorway.

FBI AGENT  
Sorry to bother you at this hour  
m'am, but have you noticed anything  
strange?

OLD LADY  
What, besides this car crash?

Rachel puts her finger to her lips and motions with the GUN for Michael to move. Michael nods and heads for the SUVs.

FBI AGENT  
Yes, what can you tell me about  
that? Around what time did it  
occur?

OLD LADY  
Less than an hour ago! Are you  
telling me you're the first cops to  
show up?

FBI AGENT  
Actually, I'm with the FBI.

The trio has reached the SUVs. Rachel opens the driver and rear passenger doors.

OLD LADY  
All I know is what I heard. There  
was a huge crash, me and some of my  
neighbors came running out here and  
this was all there was. No people,  
nothing. Now are you honestly going  
to tell me it takes you guys this  
long to respond to a car crash?

FBI AGENT  
Sorry m'am, it's been a busy  
night... what with the blackout and  
all...

Powell and Fordham emerge from the shadows just in time to see Michael loading Valan into the back of the SUV.

Powell and Fordham start to run towards the cars.

POWELL

HEY!!

The agent talking to the old lady looks behind him, sees what's happening, runs down the stairs.

Rachel spots the incoming agents, PUSHES Michael out of the way, jumps into the car and SLAMS the door.

Powell and Fordham have drawn their GUNS, they're running at top speed...

POWELL (CONT'D)

FEDERAL AGENTS, STOP!!

Rachel starts the car and backs up at forty mph, before punching it into first and performing a 180 degree turn. She accelerates, and speeds off down the street. She makes the first right and disappears.

At that moment, two squad cars and a tow truck appear at the other end of the street, and head towards the wreck.

Powell and Michael stare blankly at where the SUV just was. Fordham is already on his WALKIE. The other agents appear out of the darkness and rejoin the group.

FORDHAM

This is Fordham, I have a stolen federal vehicle heading north on Eighth Avenue, license plate number 1-0-2-5-D.

Powell turns to Michael.

POWELL

Who the hell was that?!!

Michael is dumbfounded.

MICHAEL

I have no idea.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING- LOUNGE - THE NEXT DAY

Michael, looking tired and haggard, sits on a couch watching a wall-mounted TV as FBI agents bustle about behind him.

The TV is set to the news station, NY1. Scenes from the previous night's blackout, including the crowd at Washington Square Park and the men in Hazmat suits, plays as an anchor talks.

NY1 ANCHOR (V.O.)

Power is up and running across all of New York's five boroughs, but authorities have still been unable to determine the cause. Questions still linger as to why there was such a large police presence at Washington Square Park- the FBI and NYPD had no comment at this time. There was no rioting or looting, although at least twelve people died from a number of helicopter crashes. The causes of the crashes have yet to be determined as well, but authorities are investigating and have recovered all of the vehicle's flight recorders.

Powell approaches Michael.

POWELL

Dr. Lennox, sorry to keep you waiting. Step into my office.

NY1 ANCHOR (V.O.)

Scientists at the Buffalo Center for Electromagnetic research report detecting a huge electromagnetic surge from somewhere in New York City, which they believe caused both the blackout and the crashes...

Michael gets up and follows Powell off down the hall.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING- POWELL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Michael follows Powell into his sterile office.

POWELL

Take a seat.

They both sit.

POWELL (CONT'D)

Thank you for coming to meet me here at such an early hour. I know it was a late night last night-

MICHAEL

Look- am I under arrest or what?

POWELL

I thought we covered that yesterday.

MICHAEL

You were a little vague.

POWELL

We're not interested in incarcerating the man who may turn out to be this generation's Einstein. Your experiment- as violent and flawed as it was- may have opened countless doors for science.

MICHAEL

I'm not sure they're doors we want to go down.

POWELL

Well, it's too late now.

(a beat)

Listen- I've just gotten word from Washington. They want me to assemble a small task force- only the best agents and scientists- to study last night's phenomena. I'd like you to be a part of that team.

MICHAEL

(laughs)

You're offering me a job?

POWELL

Yes. And I'd recommend you don't refuse it.

MICHAEL

I already have a job at the university. I'm not sure if I'll be able to-

POWELL

I'm sure we can accommodate you. Look- this really isn't an opportunity you want to miss out on.

MICHAEL

Why's that?

Powell leans back, takes a deep breath.

POWELL

I haven't exactly been as forthcoming with you as I could have been.

MICHAEL

What do you mean?

Powell opens his file cabinet and takes out a FILE, which he slides over to Michael. "TOP SECRET" is stamped across its surface.

POWELL

When I said I had no idea who our visitors were, I wasn't being entirely truthful. The truth is, the United States government has known about these individuals for over ten years now. Who they are we don't know, but we believe that they originate from a universe parallel to our own, and use some kind of advanced technology to open wormholes that they use to journey between the two dimensions. You can see now why we were keeping close watch on your experiments. We have no idea what their intentions are, but we are fairly certain they are hostile. These are dangerous men and women, Dr. Lennox. Capturing them is our top priority right now.

He gives Michael a moment for this to all sink in. Michael is of course, shocked.

MICHAEL

And- you didn't see the need to tell me any of this last night?

POWELL

We were in a bit of a time crunch.  
I felt it was better to wait until  
the morning.

MICHAEL

Look, if you want me to work for  
you, you're going to have start  
trusting me-

POWELL

The file. It's yours.

Michael shuts up, tries to think of a rebuttal- can't. He  
grabs the FILE.

MICHAEL

Alright. But if you want to find  
out what these people want, I  
suggest you find the man and woman  
from last night, ASAP. Whoever they  
were, they were the source of the  
signal, and our visitors were  
clearly intent on catching them. I  
mean, two of them died trying.

POWELL

Agreed. I'll call you tomorrow with  
more details. Right now though, I  
think you need some well-deserved  
rest.

Michael gets up.

MICHAEL

Can't. I have a meeting with the  
dean of Columbia. He's probably  
itching to find out why his million  
dollar grant exploded last night.

POWELL

(chuckles)  
Well, good luck.

MICHAEL

Thanks.

He exits.

HOROWTIZ (V.O.)

I got a call from the Department of  
Homeland Security this morning.

## INT. HOROWITZ'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Michael sits across from Horowitz, who is behind a large, oak desk and seated in a fancy chair. Horowitz's office is rather lavish- the furniture's old, there's portraits of previous deans on the walls as well as diplomas and bookshelves and everything one would expect to find in the dean of Columbia's office.

HOROWITZ

They told me they knew about our experiment. That the city would not be filing charges and that we would be compensated for all repairs and expenses. Care to explain?

MICHAEL

I got another job.

HOROWITZ

Oh yes? Doing what?

MICHAEL

I'm... not exactly at liberty to say. Government work.

HOROWITZ

Of course. Well now that you have a new job I'm sure you won't mind losing this one.

MICHAEL

What?

HOROWITZ

You have till the end of the day to clear out your office. Professor Adams will take over your classes for the rest of the semester.

MICHAEL

Sam, come on-

HOROWITZ

You may have gotten away with this one but I know you. What you're studying- it's pseudo-science, and I'm sick of it. None of your experiments ever work and I've put up with them for ten years. No more. If the government is interested in it, then so be it. But I'm done.

MICHAEL  
Sam, we're friends-

HOROWTIZ  
Which is why this hurts me so much-

MICHAEL  
Don't- don't you see? What happened  
last night- the blackout, the pulse-  
it's proof! It's proof that the  
experiment worked, that what we've  
been studying is real!

HOROWTIZ  
The proof is in the results, Mike.  
And I don't see how a destructive  
blackout is a result. You can go  
now.

Michael sighs. Takes a second. Shakes his head. Finally gets up, heads for the door, still shaking his head. He opens the door- turns around.

MICHAEL  
You know- I always knew you were a  
sourpuss, but this is really taking  
it to the next level. I... I hope  
you're happy.

He exits. Horowitz sighs.

INT. MICHAEL'S LAB - LATER

Michael kicks a piece of metallic shrapnel and watches it skid across the floor. He's just entered the destroyed lab, and spots Charlie on the other end of the room, gathering up all the fallen papers and binders from the previous night. He smiles weakly and walks over to her.

MICHAEL  
Hey, Charlie.

Charlie looks up, surprised.

CHARLIE  
Oh, hey, Dr. Lennox.

MICHAEL  
(smiles broadly)  
Michael.

CHARLIE  
Right, right. Michael.

MICHAEL

Mike's good too. Makes me feel younger.

They chuckle.

A beat.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What are you doing here Charlie? I thought I told you guys to take the day off.

CHARLIE

Yeah, but... I just couldn't relax knowing this place was in such shambles. I figured I'd just clean up a little.

Michael takes the PAPERS from her and puts them down on a workbench.

MICHAEL

Well you're wasting your time. Horowitz just fired me.

CHARLIE

What?!

MICHAEL

Yup. The project's canned. I think he blew a fuse or something after last night's fireworks.

CHARLIE

God, Michael... I'm *SO* sorry.

MICHAEL

It's okay. I should've known it wouldn't work. Nothing I do ever does.

CHARLIE

That's not true.

Michael grows serious.

MICHAEL

Charlie- did you see it?

CHARLIE

See what?

MICHAEL

Last night- right before the device exploded. I saw... something in the portal ring. Did you see it?

CHARLIE

No... I- it all happened so fast. I wasn't really paying attention.

MICHAEL

Eh, probably nothing. Anyway, guess what: that Homeland Security guy, uh, Powell- he gave me a job.

CHARLIE

Really? Doing what?

MICHAEL

He didn't exactly say- physics-related- but... well, I was thinking maybe you'd like to be my assistant.

CHARLIE

(gasps)

Wow, I- I'd love to, but... do you think they'll let you?

MICHAEL

Eh, I'm sure I can pull some strings.

CHARLIE

What about Tommy and Angela?

MICHAEL

They're good assistants, and I'm sure they'll find work with another professor. But I don't trust them like I trust you.

Charlie blushes.

CHARLIE

Thanks. That, uh- that means a lot.

MICHAEL

No problem. I just hope you don't regret saying yes.

CHARLIE

And why would I do that?

MICHAEL

Things... might get a little weird.

INT. HIGHWAY MOTEL - DAY

CU of a pair of eyes as they flicker open. A MS reveals they are Valan's.

He's lying on a motel bed, his head bound with bandages. The TV's playing quietly- more news footage of the blackout, and the aircraft crashes it caused.

Valan groans and sits up.

The door opens and Rachel enters, carrying several PLASTIC BAGS.

RACHEL

You're finally up.

VALAN

Hey.

Rachel puts the BAGS down on the bed and grabs a BACKPACK off a chair.

VALAN (CONT'D)

Where are we?

RACHEL

Pennsylvania. I took Route 80.

VALAN

What?

Rachel moves various FOOD items (CHIPS, CANNED GOODS, BOTTLES OF WATER) from one of the PLASTIC BAGS to her BACKPACK.

RACHEL

Oh, right. It's another state, next to the one we were in last night. You know what a state is?

Valan rubs the back of his head gingerly.

VALAN

Yes.

RACHEL

This is what we call a motel. You pay money, you get a room. It's on a highway- a big road that's going to take us where we want to go.

VALAN

Arizona.

RACHEL

I figured you'd want to go check out that Professor Talvo guy. Maybe he can help you get your memories back.

(a beat)

By the way- have you... remembered anything?

Valan shakes his head.

Rachel takes a pile of CLOTHES out of the other PLASTIC BAG and gives them to Valan.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

I got you some clothes. I had to guess the sizes.

Valan walks over to her .

VALAN

Thank you. Thank you for helping me.

Rachel nods awkwardly.

RACHEL

Valan- is that really your name?

Valan takes off his SHIRT. Rachel glances briefly at his muscular and scar-covered body. Valan takes one of his new SHIRTS and puts it on.

VALAN

Guess so. You can call me that from now on if you'd like.

Rachel turns him around so she can look him in the eyes.

RACHEL

Listen- I wasn't planning on coming with you. I was going to leave after I got you the car.

VALAN

Car?

RACHEL

Yeah, I traded that Explorer in for something a little less conspicuous.

(MORE)

RACHEL (CONT'D)

I was just going to give it to you and give you some directions, but... after everything I've seen... you won't last one day without me.

A beat.

VALAN

I... I'm sorry I kidnapped you. Put you through all this trouble. I was afraid. I didn't know what else to do.

RACHEL

It's okay.

A beat.

VALAN

I understand if you don't want to come with me.

RACHEL

I think- I think I want to go.

Valan looks at her, puzzled. Rachel slumps down in the chair.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

When... when I was like six or seven years old... I was really into retro science fiction. My dad had this collection of old comics from the fifties and sixties. Stories about alien abductions, and mad scientists and... other dimensions. Even when I was little I knew none of it was real. But sometimes, I would pray in the back of my head that maybe one day it would be. That maybe one day my fantasies would become reality, you know? And now... now it's real. It's all real. And I could go home, abandon you here and go back to my job and just pretend like none of this ever happened. But I know now- I know that I can never go back to the way things used to be. And if I don't go with you, it's going to eat away at me and I'm going to regret it for the rest of my life.

A long beat.

VALAN

I didn't mean to kill that man. It was just... instinct. Something kicked in in my head and I just- I couldn't stop. Does that make me a bad person?

A beat.

RACHEL

I don't know.

VALAN

I promise I'll protect you. I won't let anything happen to you if you come with me.

Rachel gets up.

RACHEL

We had better get going. They're all looking for us now.

EXT. HIGHWAY MOTEL - LATER

Rachel and Valan, both wearing sunglasses, head from the motel's entrance to a Chevy Impala parked outside. Rachel presses the car's REMOTE and pops the trunk. Valan throws their BAGS in and closes it.

INT. IMPALA - MOMENTS LATER

Rachel slams the driver's door shut. She looks over at Valan. They look at each other for a few seconds, share a moment. Rachel starts up the car.

EXT. HIGHWAY MOTEL - LATER

The Impala pulls out of the parking lot and heads off down Route 80. Camera TRACKS it and PULLS back via a CRANE for one last, awesome, super-wide shot.

END OF ACT FOUR