

THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

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Based On The book
The Mothman Prophecies
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INITIAL REWRITE

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ON-SCREEN TEXT: *The following story is based on true events.*

FADE IN TO:

1 CREDIT SEQUENCE - BLACK VOID/NOCTURNAL CITY 1

We glide through a black void illuminated by searing, ELECTRIC FLASHES in brilliant phosphorescent colors. The blackness begins to rip and tear, granting us glimpses of a nocturnal city.

WITH THE SOUND OF A WING FLAP, we sail through a gaping hole, out of the electromagnetic dimension into an...

2 EXT. AERIAL VIEW OF WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT 2

We continue to fly until we pick out one particular jewel of this nightscape: a stately office building. We descend effortlessly...

3 EXT. WASHINGTON POST (EFX) 3

...passing down through the roof and six empty floors.

4 INT. WASHINGTON POST NEWSROOM - NIGHT 4

On the seventh floor we hover near the ceiling, gazing down on an office Christmas party. None of the celebrating workers sense our presence as we snake through the labyrinth of cubicles and glass cells, until:

5 POV DIVES INTO A PHONE LINE 5

traveling fast along the inside of the wires, erupting out of the EAR-PIECE with a shrieking squall of feedback.

6 INT. WASHINGTON POST NEWSROOM - NIGHT 6

A MAN yanks the phone from his ear, wincing.

MAN

(off feedback)

What the hell was that?

The man is JOHN KLEIN, an up-and-coming reporter for the Washington Post; intelligent, with East Coast good-looks.

JOHN

(into phone)

You still there? Okay, I missed that spelling. With a 'Y.' Got it.

(correcting a name in his story)

No. You're on the record. You can't

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (cont'd)
scrape your career off your shoe anyway.
At least do some damage on your way out,
see your name in the paper one more
time...Okay.

He clicks off the line, speed proofs his story, sends it on its way. He's done, and done for the day. He pushes back his chair and stands up, kneads his back.

ED FLEISCHMAN, (29), rolls out of the next cubicle:

ED
John! "The Balkans Peace Council is
comprised of ten members" or "is composed
of ten members"?

JOHN
Twelve members.

ED
Oh. Right. Thanks.

Ed rolls out of sight.

John grabs his coat and heads past Ed's cubicle.

JOHN
"Composed."

As John walks passed, Ed rolls back out:

ED
What?

John disappears through glass doors into:

7 INT. NATIONAL DESK - CONTINUOUS 7

Editor CYRUS BILLS, (65), a scarecrow with a cigarette, scrolls through John's piece on the computer. His eyes never leave the screen.

CYRUS
This will make them sweat, it's good,
I'll lead with it...

JOHN
Great, I'll see you Monday.

CYRUS
What?

JOHN
I've got to go.

(CONTINUED)

CYRUS

You can't - how does that look, my rising star not showing up at the Christmas party?

John smiles. This is the closest thing to a warm moment he and Cyrus have ever had.

JOHN

Mary's waiting for me.

Cyrus inhales deeply on his cigarette, watching John through the glass doors weave his way out of the party.

8 EXT. COLONIAL-STYLE HOUSE - MCLEAN, VIRGINIA - NIGHT 8

A nice, well-kept house in an upscale neighborhood.

9 INT. COLONIAL-STYLE HOUSE - MCLEAN, VIRGINIA - NIGHT 9

John and MARY KLEIN hang back in an empty kitchen listening to the REAL ESTATE LADY.

Mary Klein, (31), a beautiful redhead with a quick smile and an irrepressible joie de vivre.

REAL ESTATE LADY

...It's a steal at this price. We can get it, but we'd have to make an offer today. The owner's moving fast.

Mary is ready to jump. John looks uncertain.

REAL ESTATE LADY (cont'd)

Think it over, I'll make some calls.

John and Mary wander up the

STAIRS

MARY

Oh, my God...I think I love it.

JOHN

(smiles)

I think you love it too.

She hits him; he laughs.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I don't know if we can swing it.

(CONTINUED)

MARY
Come on, let's live dangerously.

They enter the...

10 MASTER BEDROOM.

10

John clicks a light switch up and down. A light blinks on and off behind a door.

JOHN
What's this?

They open the door.

A DARK CLOSET

Mary grabs John, suddenly excited. She kisses him. He kisses her. Passionately. She pulls him into the closet, laughing.

John closes the door.

JOHN
Come on, let's go, right here.

He slides his hands under her blouse. She shrieks with laughter. They fall against the wall.

CUT TO:

11 IN THE HALLWAY

11

CAMERA tracks towards the bedroom.

CUT TO:

12 INT CLOSET

12

Things are getting steamy inside.

CUT TO:

13 IN THE BEDROOM

13

CAMERA tracks quickly towards the closet door.

CUT TO:

14 IN THE CLOSET

14

A naked light bulb switches on. John and Mary jump. A MOTH bats the bulb with its wings, casting large flickering shadows.

15 IN THE BEDROOM

15

John and Mary tumble out of the closet.

REAL ESTATE LADY
(blushing)
Oh, here you are.

John straightens his tie. Mary smooths her hair.

JOHN
Just making sure there's ample closet
space.

REAL ESTATE LADY
Good, good. Well I've got good news. The
house is yours if you want it.

John looks at his wife.

JOHN
(smiling)
We want it.

CUT TO:

16 INT. UPSCALE FRENCH RESTAURANT - NIGHT

16

Through the window, John and Mary clink champagne glasses.

DISSOLVE TO:

17 EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - LATER

17

Long graceful tracking shot as John and Mary walk from the restaurant to the Valet station. It's a moment of pure happiness, ease, everything between them is right.

John hands the VALET his ticket. They bring the car. The Valet hands the keys to John.

John tosses Mary THE KEYS and flops into the passenger seat. He's drunk. Mary climbs behind the wheel. They drive off.

18 EXT. STREET IN GEORGETOWN - NIGHT

18

Their car travels through night time Georgetown. They pass a ROAD CONSTRUCTION SITE that looks like a brightly lit theater set, a CLOCK TOWER that reads 1:30, and A BIRD SANCTUARY.

They turn onto a road overhung with trees. The street is quiet and empty.

19 INT. CAR - NIGHT

19

IN THE SILENCE OF THE CAR, Mary turns to John...

MARY

You know what I kept thinking when we were looking at the house today?

JOHN

It's better than your sister's?

MARY

(laughing)

No...

JOHN

We should put a mattress in that closet?

MARY

Yeah! No, I kept thinking it felt like a dream come true.

Mary stops at a light. John looks at her, the red light reflecting off her eyes. She's serious.

JOHN

C'mere.

She leans toward him, he kisses her hard.

MARY

Can we make it home first?

JOHN

Depends how fast you drive.

THE LIGHT changes.

MARY gooses the accelerator past the intersection, suddenly...

A large SHAPE moves into the headlights. A BLUR, too fast to see.

MARY sucks in a cry, hits the brakes, cranks the wheel. The car slews sideways. Her head slams against the side window, which spiderwebs.

JOHN flies forward. The seatbelt jerks him back. He flings out an arm to protect his wife. The car jolts to a stop. He sees Mary slumped forward against her seatbelt. She's unconscious.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (CONT'D)
-- Mary --

He touches her gently. No response, although she's breathing.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Mary...come on...Christ...

He's afraid to move her. He pulls out his cell phone, dials 911, hand shaking.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(into the phone)
There's been an accident...

He climbs out of the car into...

20 THE STREET

20

He goes to the front of the car, dreading what he might find. But nothing's there. He checks under the car. Nothing.

He stands in the street, looking left, right, forward. It's strangely empty.

In the background, a LOW HANGING BRANCH ten feet behind the car rustles in the breeze.

The faint WAIL of a SIREN bleeds in.

21 INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

21

John watches Mary behind a glass partition. She has been readied for a scan. She's fully conscious now, her eyes wide and scared.

CAT-SCAN SCREEN

DR. DEBORAH McELHONE looks at the IMAGE OF MARY'S BRAIN. John looks on, worried.

DR. McELHONE
We're doing the CAT-SCAN to make sure
there's no swelling or bleeding...

DISSOLVE TO:

22 INT. HOSPITAL CUBICLE - NIGHT

22

Mary is groggy, bandages on her nose. John holds her hand...

JOHN
You okay?

(CONTINUED)

MARY
Yeah, I'm okay...

But she's not. She stares off, pre-occupied, remote. Finally, she looks at him:

MARY (CONT'D)
You didn't see it, did you.

JOHN
See what?

Mary holds his gaze for a beat, then looks away.

MARY
Nothing.

John's hand tightens on hers.

JOHN
What did you see?

Mary doesn't answer.

JOHN (CONT'D)
An animal?

She shakes her head.

JOHN (cont'd)
What?

Silence.

JOHN (cont'd)
There was nothing, I looked.

Mary turns away, her eyes tense and worried.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Honey...

MARY
John...there's something wrong with me.

23 INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - LATER

23

John dozes in a chair. Dr. McElhone places a hand on his shoulder; he snaps awake.

DR. MCELHONE
Mr. Klein? We need to talk...

24 EXT. HOSPITAL/DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT 24

THROUGH THE OUTSIDE WINDOW INTO DR. MCELHONE'S OFFICE ...

We see John and Mary sitting at Dr. McElhone's desk, as she talks to them. After a long moment John slowly puts his arm around his wife.

25 INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT 25

John sees Mary's parents, WOODROW and RUTH DUNNING, rush in carrying overnight bags.

RUTH

Where is she?

JOHN

She just went in for radiation treatment.

WOODROW

Radiation? Already?

John's voice is shaky, everything is happening too fast.

JOHN

They have to shrink it down as much as possible before the surgery tomorrow --

RUTH

-- Tomorrow? My God --

WOODROW

-- Okay. So they're doing surgery. So it's operable, right?

JOHN

Yeah. It is.

WOODROW

Good. That's good...

JOHN

-- They're bringing in a neurosurgeon from Johns Hopkins, he's one of the best.

Suddenly, tears roll down John's face. Woodrow awkwardly puts an arm around John.

WOODROW

It's going to be fine... She's going to be fine...

26 EXT. HOSPITAL - MORNING 26

In the cold blue morning light, snowflakes fall on the bare trees outside the hospital.

27 INT. RECOVERY ROOM - SEVERAL DAYS LATER - MORNING 27

Mary's hair is gone and her head is bandaged from surgery, but she's more awake and alert than the last time we saw her. John sits with her, a yellow pad in his hand.

JOHN

(reciting a list)

...and a snow suit for little Gary - I'll call Jane and Doug to check the size.

(beat)

I think that's everybody.

MARY

Are you sure you can do all this? Have the stores wrap everything for you, okay?

JOHN

Would you stop? It's fine. I can handle this.

There's a long silence. Then:

MARY

John... I'm sorry.

JOHN

About what?

MARY

About all this. I feel like I ruined everything.

John looks at her; she's talking about a lot more than just Christmas. He takes her hand and smiles.

JOHN

You haven't ruined a damn thing.

28 INT/EXT. CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT 28

John drives home lost in thought, retracing the exact route they drove on the night of the accident. He passes the CONSTRUCTION SITE, the CLOCK TOWER, the BIRD SANCTUARY.

He drives slowly, peering out the windshield, looking for *something*, a reflection, a tricky shadow - whatever it was Mary saw that made her hit the brakes.

(CONTINUED)

As he rolls toward the exact spot, he sees the LOW HANGING TREE BRANCH, stops the car, gets out.

29 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

29

THICK BLACK SKID MARKS scar the street underneath the branch.

John tries an experiment. He gets in the car, backs up forty yards, guns the accelerator. Suddenly, he slams the brakes, cranks the wheel. The car slews sideways - he is pulled up short by the seatbelt. His face never even gets near the window.

He sits back. Tugs on the shoulder harness. It locks up. So why didn't it lock up for Mary?

He climbs out of the car, searching the street - *searching for an answer, a reason. What did she see?*

John stands behind the BRANCH and squints his eyes: the branch BLURS and TWO DISTANT RED CONSTRUCTION LIGHTS shine like EYES, forming the impression of a large looming figure - *was that it?*

John walks to the front of the car. That's when he notices something on the front bumper. Something he missed completely the night of the accident...

The center of the bumper is scorched black.

30 INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - NIGHT

30

CAMERA tracks along a chrome counter top, past stacks of plates, cups of coffee...

JOHN (O.S.)

It's called a Glioblastoma Multiforma.
Temporal lobe tumor. Very aggressive.

ED (O.S.)

Jesus Christ...

JOHN (O.S.)

According to Dr. McElhone it's very rare.
Strikes one in 600,000. You've got a
better chance of catching the plague.

CAMERA comes to rest behind John and Ed sitting at the counter. Now we can see their faces in A LARGE MIRROR behind the pie rack. John is gray with lack of sleep. He forces out the next words:

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (cont'd)

The doctor says with a tumor like this, most people never make full recoveries.

ED

Is there anything else they can do?

JOHN

They did surgery, but couldn't get it all. They'll keep giving her chemo as long as she's strong enough. So far it's working, she's looking a lot better, her spirits are high.

ED

Did they say it's a result of the accident?

JOHN

No, turns out...it's been there a while.

ED

John, if there's anything I can do.

John just shakes his head. Ed looks at his friend. For the first time, John looks fragile, truly lost.

John stares into the middle-distance.

JOHN

Three days ago we were house-hunting. Last week I was up all night worried that I'd bounced the cable check. It's like one day, you're driving in your car and the universe just points at you and says, "Ah, there you are. The happy couple. I've been looking for you."

CUT TO:

31 NEW ANGLE

31

Facing John and Ed at the counter. The camera slowly pulls back, through the pies, back through the mirror itself. John and Ed darken as we pull back, further and further into this impossible vantage point until ... they disappear.

DISSOLVE TO:

32 EXT. JOHN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

32

A SQUARE OF WARM YELLOW LIGHT glows in the night - it's the window to the dining room. Christmas Eve. From outside, we

(CONTINUED)

watch John, Ruth and Woodrow finish last minute preparations and sit down for a meal.

33 INT. JOHN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

33

ANGLE from atop the Christmas tree. They all join hands around the table.

RUTH

(praying)

...We are grateful for this meal, and so grateful that Mary will be home with us tomorrow, for Christmas dinner.

EVERYONE

Amen.

ANGLE FROM TABLE. Ruth looks at John. He does his best to smile. The look of hope on Ruth's face is too much.

RUTH

What time are we picking her up?

JOHN

They said sometime late morning, after her chemo. But Ruth, you know it's just for a few hours, if she's strong enough.

RUTH

I know...

They start to eat in silence. Suddenly, the PHONE RINGS...

They all look at each other, motionless. John moves into the KITCHEN.

JOHN (cont'd)

Hello?

John has his back to Ruth and Woodrow. We watch his face.

DR. MCELHONE (O.S.)

John? It's Dr. McElhone.

(beat)

Mary had a seizure. We're trying to relieve the pressure...

34 INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

34

We track behind John as he runs frantically down long corridors. Suddenly he stops: Dr. McElhone is standing with her head bowed, the answer is written on her face.

And he knows...

35 INT. HOSPITAL - MARY'S ROOM - NIGHT

35

John slowly enters then pulls back a curtain, his face full of fear .

Mary lies motionless on a bed.

John moves slowly towards her, his entire self somehow diminished.

He sits at her side and grips Mary's hand like he'll never let her go. His shoulders tremble with sharp inconsolable sobs. He leans in close and presses his lips to her white lifeless face; a kiss that will have to last him a lifetime.

36 EXT. HOSPITAL - LATER

36

Snow falls. A SQUARE OF WARM YELLOW LIGHT glows in the night - it's the window to the waiting area. From outside, WE SEE:

Ruth, who can barely stand, holding onto John. She lets out a silent wail of grief; Woodrow watches them, unable to comprehend what has happened.

Their images blur as we RACK FOCUS from the window, moving back through layers of FALLING SNOWFLAKES.

DISSOLVE TO:

37 INT. MARY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

37

The bed is empty. John slowly packs Mary's belongings into a RED OVERNIGHT CASE. He doesn't know how to do this. What about the toothbrush? The lipstick? He picks up her dress, smells it. His eyes close.

ORDERLY (O.S.)

She knew.

John opens his eyes, puzzled. A middle-aged ORDERLY stands in the doorway. The man smiles shyly at him.

ORDERLY (CONT'D)

She was drawing angels.

John says nothing. The man moves away. But now John sees the NOTEPAD next to the phone. He reaches for it.

John's face darkens. It's not an angel.

THE NOTEPAD: a mad scribble of a figure, its bulging eyes colored red with Mary's lipstick. What is it? John flips the page. There it is again, and again, page after page of Mary's

(CONTINUED)

obsessive drawings: A man-like shape with insect eyes and giant wings growing from its back.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. BENCH - LAFAYETTE PARK - DAY

38

The trees are leafless and the ground muddy. Mittened joggers, dog walkers pass in front of a partial view of the White House. John is sitting on a bench with his back to us. He looks as though he's been there a long time, as though he may sit there forever.

The CAMERA begins to CLOSE IN on his back. John senses something. He whips around and glares straight at us. The CAMERA STOPS SHORT. John sees nothing, his face relaxes.

He turns forward again. The CAMERA starts EASING toward him again. And very faintly now comes the hint of a RUSTLE. Wings. Louder.

John strains to hear. He slowly scans left, right. Nothing. The CAMERA is right behind him now. He can't hear anything. Not even the sudden WHOOSH, the single FLAP as the CAMERA LIFTS OFF behind him, rising, leaving John down below, smaller, smaller, until he's just another unremarkable human dot in the park.

FADE TO BLACK.

39 TITLE SUPER: ELEVEN MONTHS LATER - FADE IN TO:

39

40 EXT. ELECTRONICS STORE - NIGHT

40

We are watching a BANK OF TV MONITORS through the window of an electronics store. Christmas decorations light the foreground.

On it, John Klein addresses Tim Russert on "Meet the Press". Under JOHN there is a super-title: John Klein Washington Post.

WE MOVE IN through the windows towards the monitors and hear John talking:

JOHN

...I think what we saw this year was an apathetic electorate. Interest in the campaign was low and voter turn-out was the worst in forty years.

(CONTINUED)

TIM RUSSERT

Couldn't that just be a sign of voter satisfaction? People didn't feel the need for big changes.

JOHN

I don't think so, Tim. I think people are -- very unsatisfied with their situation. And what made them so complacent is that they didn't see any viable options for improvement. Rather than endorse the status quo, they decided they'd rather just stay home and be left alone.

As the monitors play John's interview, MOVE INTO crackling electric pixels and we:

DISSOLVE TO:

41 INT. WASHINGTON POST NEWSROOM - DAY

41

PULL BACK FROM TV SCREEN TO SEE: John's face - he's watching himself on TV. Ed and other staff members look over his shoulder.

TIM RUSSERT

Is there anybody out there you think could fill out the bottom of the ticket?

JOHN

I've been hearing a lot of talk about Russ McCallum.

TIM RUSSERT

The Governor of Virginia.

JOHN

Right. He's got the environmental record they need. If he's going to throw his hat in the ring, look for him to announce by next week...

As the segment ends, the staffers applaud. John laughs and takes a bow. Now we get a good look at John. He's healthy, fit - but older. That confident sparkle is gone from his eyes. He wears the past year like it was ten.

ED

Hey -- I told her to watch.

JOHN

Who?

(CONTINUED)

ED

Peter's friend, Gwen. She's gonna be there tonight.

JOHN

Oh, hey, look, I don't think I'm gonna be able to make it.

ED

Are you kidding me? She's gorgeous. Believe me, this will take, like, no effort.

John moans.

ED (cont'd)

Come on, you can't keep blowing this off.

JOHN

I'm not blowing it off, I'm interviewing the Governor, I've gotta be in Richmond at eight.

Ed pulls a pink message slip from his shirt pocket, hands it to John:

ED

Almost forgot. Garrett Knox called. The interview got bumped to tomorrow night.

John eyes the message slip, stuck.

JOHN

Ed, I don't know...

ED

Look: she's not Mary, not by a mile. But you know what? No one ever will be. You can't hold that against them.

JOHN

I can't?

Ed looks at John; he's only half-joking.

42 INT. MARRAKESH RESTAURANT - NIGHT

42

Turkish dining. Pillows on the floor and belly dancers. Kitsch heaven to Ed, John's idea of hell.

With them: Ed's partner PETER, (39), and GWEN, (33), pretty, friendly, sophisticated.

(CONTINUED)

They all eat hot, marinated chicken with their hands:

JOHN

I gotta tell you, Ed, I spent three weeks in Turkey - it was not like this.

ED

Well, it should've been.

PETER

Wait 'til he starts dancing.

GWEN

(to John)

When were you there?

JOHN

'88. Covering the earthquake.

GWEN

I just missed you. I was there in '89. Peace Corps.

John looks at her, intrigued.

A belly dancer rotates toward them, beckons Ed to join her. Ed downs his Ouzo and struggles to his feet:

ED

My whole life has been leading to this moment.

Ed pulls Peter with him onto the dance floor. John smiles at Gwen.

JOHN

So you were in Istanbul?

GWEN

No, it was this tiny village - you can't even believe there are still places on earth like it. These families raise mountain goats - well, the men do - and then the woman use the hair to make the most beautiful blankets...

John smiles.

JOHN

Ambarat.

GWEN

Yes! Have you been there?

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
It's one of my three secret places.

Gwen smiles at him, charmed.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Places I know I could go and be happy the
rest of my life if I ever had to leave
Washington for good...

His voice trails off. A woman with RED HAIR steps out onto
the patio.

John's eyes take on a DISTANT LOOK - *Mary is always with him.*

Gwen watches John, waiting for him to continue.

GWEN
So - where are the other two?

JOHN
Other what?

GWEN
Places you could be happy.

JOHN
They're secret! I'll tell you this: the
second one is very cold and you have to
speak Portuguese.

GWEN
And the third?

JOHN
I haven't found it yet.

43 EXT. MARRAKESH RESTAURANT - NIGHT

43

John and Gwen walk from the restaurant to the Valet station.
A long graceful tracking shot reminds us of John's last happy
evening with Mary. But tonight he's with Gwen. They hand
their tickets to the valet.

JOHN
Well. It was nice meeting you.

GWEN
Tierra del Fuego.

JOHN
What?

(CONTINUED)

GWEN

Your second place. Am I right?

John looks at her: dark hair and eyes, smooth white skin, warm smile. Beautiful, smart, charming, funny...

GWEN (CONT'D)

If you can stand another cup of coffee...
I'm just a few blocks away.

...Available. This woman is flawless. So why does John feel absolutely nothing?

JOHN

That sounds great. But...

John's voice trails off.

An awkward silence. The Valet arrives with Gwen's car. She looks at him expectantly:

JOHN (CONT'D)

Look, I've got an early morning, so...

GWEN

Okay. Anyway, I really liked talking to you. Call me, okay?

John nods absently. Gwen looks at him, his thoughts are miles away. She gets into her car and drives off.

Ed and Peter come outside and find John alone, staring intently down the street:

ED

Where'd she go?

John mutters.

JOHN

I don't know.

44 INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM CLOSET - NIGHT

44

A moth eats through a sweater in the dark. The closet door swings open. John's hand reaches in, pulls a chain. A naked bulb burns white. John looks restless, irritated. He yanks an empty suitcase from the top shelf, sending clothes and books cascading to the floor. As he gathers them up, he's pulled up short by the sight of Mary's RED OVERNIGHT CASE. It sits in the corner where he left it almost a year ago.

(CONTINUED)

He bends to his knees, moves his hand to the lock, hesitates, afraid to unlock the past.

Finally, he lifts the lid. And there, staring up at him is a reminder of all that he has lost. His hand touches her scarf, lipstick, a brush still twined with her red hair...

John closes the case, slides it back into the corner. He grabs his suitcase, throws it on the bed, jamming in clothes.

45 EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREETS - NIGHT 45

John drives quickly through empty streets, crosses the fourteenth street bridge.

46 INT. JOHN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 46

John is driving through the outskirts of Northern Virginia.

JOHN
(into cell phone)
Hey, Ed. You were right. Gwen was very nice. If you talk to her, tell her, uh... I don't know. Anyway, it's about one o'clock. I'm kind of wired, so I'm heading down to Richmond tonight, talk to you later.

47 EXT. JOHN'S CAR - HIGHWAY - NIGHT 47

John is speeding down the interstate. Traffic is thin. He passes under

THE LIGHTED SIGN FOR RICHMOND.

His car drives on into the night.

48 INT. JOHN'S CAR - LATER 48

John squints, trying to stay focused on the road as he drops down a crest into a FOG BANK. He flexes his brakes. Suddenly...

BLINK: Red lights flash across the dashboard. The car stalls.

49 EXT. JOHN'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER 49

The car drifts out of the fog onto the shoulder and comes to a stop.

50 INT/EXT. JOHN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 50

John tries to restart the engine.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

Come on, come on, come on...

He looks around. A dark, empty road. It doesn't feel right. He glances in his mirror.

HIS POV: Nothing behind him. Not another pair of headlights. Not even the interstate.

John turns the key again. Silence. Not so much as the whine of the starter. He switches on the headlights. Nothing. He punches up the radio: dead. So is the car phone. John smacks his palms on the wheel. He takes out his cell phone. It beeps, shuts down. Drained.

He looks at his watch: 2:20 AM.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

Distant lightning flickers hypnotically. It seems to be moving from the ground up to the sky.

JOHN, mystified, gets out of his car.

51 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

51

It's a cold night, and he tucks his hands under his arms. He should put on his coat.

THE LIGHTNING flickers violently, a few miles away. But where is the thunder? It's silent, eerily silent, so quiet John can hear his heart beating.

Abruptly the lightning is extinguished. No stars. No moon. No light at all.

JOHN feels a surge of anxiety. He's alone at night in the middle of nowhere.

JOHN

(low whisper)

...Okay. Okay.

John shrugs on his overcoat and locks the car. He looks up and down the road. Nothing. He walks in darkness.

Now he hears a strange low rumble. What the hell is that? The sound vibrates the road below his feet.

Finally, he catches sight of a porch light on a distant farmhouse. Turning up his collar and plunging his hands in his pockets, John heads toward it at a fast clip.

52 EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

52

John bounds onto the porch. The house is dark, except for a single bulb. No use putting it off: He knocks on the door. Waits. Waits.

A MAN opens the door. John smiles:

JOHN

Hi. My car broke down just up the road.
May I use your phone?

The Man stares at him, transfixed.

MAN

It's him.

This response makes no sense to John. A WOMAN steps into view from the shadows behind the door; she peers nervously at John as the Man raises a gun:

MAN (CONT'D)

I've been waiting for you, you son of a
bitch.

The Man grabs John by his lapels and hauls him inside. The door shuts hard.

53 INT. GORDON SMALLWOOD'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

53

The Man, GORDON SMALLWOOD, (43), holds his gun on...

JOHN, who stands dressed in his overcoat in the Smallwood's mildewy, pink shower stall. Gordon is sitting on the tank of the toilet, his feet on the closed lid. He keeps the gun steady with his elbows on his knees.

JOHN

Look, I don't -

GORDON

Shut up.

John shuts up. The two men watch each other, hearing the tread of approaching footsteps.

The Woman - Gordon's wife DENISE SMALLWOOD, (28) enters.

DENISE

Honey, Connie's here.

John straightens slightly as

(CONTINUED)

A WOMAN enters, wearing a sheriff's deputy uniform under her unzipped parka.

She is SGT. CONNIE PARKER, (32) - blond, with keen blue eyes and an honest face. She calmly assesses the scene:

John is enormously relieved.

CONNIE

Okay Gordy, why don't you put away the gun and tell me what's going on.

Gordon keeps the gun trained on John. Connie places her hand on the barrel and points it to the floor.

GORDON

This is the third night in a row he's come around, this sonofabitch is stalking us -

JOHN

- Look, my car broke down up the road, my name is John Klein and I -

CONNIE

- Let's let Gordy finish, Mr. Klein.

Gordon speaks with a disturbing edge of fear in his voice:

GORDON

Two nights ago, at 2:30, there's this bang on the door. I get up, and here's this guy, says he wants to use the phone. But there's something creepy about him, right? So I tell him to get lost. No big deal. But last night, at 2:30 on the dot, guess who's back?

CONNIE

You're sure it was Mr. Klein here?

Gordon stares straight into John's eyes:

GORDON

Absolutely positive.

JOHN

(under his breath)
This is crazy.

Gordon has good ears.

(CONTINUED)

GORDON
(sternly)
I am not crazy.

JOHN
I didn't say -

Connie holds up a hand:

CONNIE
(to Gordon)
So then what?

GORDON
So last night I warned him off my
property. I used the word "trespass,"
Connie. And he still came back.
(to John)
I had the right to shoot you on my porch.
You're lucky I'm a Christian.

CONNIE
He'd have actually had to be inside the
house, Gordon.

GORDON
Fine. So tonight I figured maybe the dumb
fuck --

CONNIE
(sternly)
Gordon.

GORDON
-- might come back again, and sure
enough, here he is!

John turns to Sgt. Parker, taking pains to demonstrate that
he is the sanest person in the room.

JOHN
Officer, there must be some mistake. I've
never been here before in my life, I've
never seen these people, I live in D.C.
Check my wallet.

Connie calmly reaches into John's pocket. She pulls out his
wallet, flips it open, spots his press pass. Her eyes jump to
his face.

CONNIE
The Washington Post.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

Do I have to keep standing in the shower?

54 INT/EXT. GORDON'S FRONT DOOR - LATER

54

John follows Connie to the door, not sure whether to be relieved or worried.

CONNIE

You can wait for me outside, Mr. Klein.

John heads through the door without a word. Nothing makes any sense to him.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

(to Gordon)

We'll run a check on him. Anyone else comes by, forget the gun, okay? Just call me.

GORDON

Find out what he wants.

Connie squeezes Gordon's shoulder. He goes to the doorway and watches JOHN standing beside Parker's Patrol car.

Connie turns to Denise. She pantomimes tipping a bottle to her lips: *has Gordon been drinking?*

Denise shakes her head no.

CONNIE

So you didn't actually see the guy yourself, did you? Before tonight?

DENISE

No. But I heard the knocks, three nights in a row.

55 EXT. GORDON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

55

John sees them all step onto the porch. Then, in spite of the odd circumstances, he watches as Connie, Gordon and Denise do a distinctly small-town thing: They all say a friendly good night to each other. Hug.

Then, as Connie walks towards John, Gordon shouts:

GORDON

You don't scare me!

56 INT. PATROL CAR - NIGHT

56

John sits next to Connie in the front seat. Connie pulls out onto the empty road.

CONNIE

I'm giving you a ride to town. Unless you want to sleep in your car. I can call a tow for the morning.

They pull up behind John's car.

CONNIE

You probably want to get your bag?

JOHN

What?

CONNIE

You probably brought a bag.

JOHN

Oh -

He steps out of the cruiser.

57 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

57

John crosses the road, opens his trunk, takes out his weekender. He sees Connie on the two-way. He passes through her headlights, climbs back in the Prowler.

58 INT. PROWLER - NIGHT

58

He's inside the car in time to HEAR the DISPATCHER over the two-way.

DISPATCHER'S VOICE

-- man's clean as Clorox, if you believe the computer.

CONNIE

Copy. Thanks, Avis.

She clicks off, gives John a little shrug, shifts into drive.

Connie puts it as plainly as she can:

CONNIE (CONT'D)

You're a long way from D.C. What are you doing here?

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
Driving through.

CONNIE
We're not on the way anyplace, Mr. Klein.

John is silent - he can't explain how he got here. He stares out the window. They're passing through dark, quiet little Point Pleasant. Population 6,000.

CONNIE (cont'd)
Relax. I recognize you.
(smiles)
"Meet the Press."

JOHN
You saw that?

CONNIE
We're not all bumpkins.

Connie steers into the parking lot of a chain motel.

JOHN
So I'm not under arrest?

CONNIE
Well, you didn't steal anything, you didn't hurt anyone, there's no breaking and entering...

JOHN
You had trouble with them before?

CONNIE
Gordy and Denise? Naw. They're good people, but...

She hesitates, she knows she shouldn't say this:

CONNIE (cont'd)
Things have been a little strange around here lately.

She leans across him to open the door, but mostly to smell his breath.

JOHN
I guarantee I'm sober.

He climbs out.

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

You still haven't told me what you're doing here. In the middle of the night.

John hefts his bag.

JOHN

When I find out, I'll let you know.

(beat)

Where am I, anyway?

Connie points to a sign: WELCOME TO POINT PLEASANT.

She watches him walk into the motel.

59 INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

59

The sleepy, cranky NIGHT MANAGER runs John's charge. John concentrates on the road map stretched out under the glass of the check-in counter.

His finger traces Washington to Richmond, a straight shot of interstate, not more than 120 miles.

THE NIGHT MANAGER returns with John's credit card.

JOHN

You think you could show me where we are on the map?

NIGHT MANAGER

We're right on the state line.

John traces to the Virginia/West Virginia border. The night manager snorts with disgust. Tourists. Spare him.

NIGHT MANAGER

With Ohio.

He stabs a spot 400 miles away from John's finger. Point Pleasant is on the Ohio River.

John's finger hesitantly tracks the tiny spidery lines from Richmond to Point Pleasant. There's not even a primary road between them. The room key clinks down on the glass.

JOHN keeps staring at the map. It's not possible.

60 EXT. MOTEL - LATER

60

As John walks from the office to his room, we spot the Prowler parked across the street: Connie is making notes under the interior light.

61 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 61

The room is dark. John jerks awake, disoriented. He was asleep in his clothes on top of the bedspread, which he has cocooned around himself. He doesn't know where he is for a moment. Then he HEARS it. Faint BREATHING, someone BREATHING, something BREATHING.

He reaches for the bedside lamp and switches it on. The breathing stops. Silent now. Just a dull, empty, standard issue motel room. John swings his legs off the bed and leans forward on his knees. Bad dreams. He stands up. His cell phone is recharging on the chair. He heads for the bathroom for a glass of water.

62 INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 62

John turns on the tap, splashes water on his face, looks up, studies his reflection.

ANGLE FROM BEHIND THE MIRROR. WE PULL BACK: John's image is framed by the mirror. The sound of the running tap fades as his image recedes, then disappears.

FADE TO BLACK:

63 EXT. OTTO'S CAR REPAIR - POINT PLEASANT - AFTERNOON 63

John is on his cell phone. In the background, OTTO'S head is buried under the hood of John's car.

JOHN

(into phone)

...Look - even if I was doing eighty the whole way it would have taken six hours to get here...

64 INTERCUT WITH ED FLEISCHMAN AT HOME: 64

ED

What time did you leave D.C?

JOHN

One o'clock. Besides, my gas tank doesn't even get four hundred miles. It's one thing to zone out while you're driving, but to stop for gas too?

ED

John, I'm sure there's a logical explanation for all this. Don't worry about your pal the Governor, I'll cover you.

(CONTINUED)

John sees Otto slam the hood on his car.

JOHN
Thanks, Ed. Uh, listen, I got to go.

OTTO
She's running fine, Mr. Klein, I can't find a damn thing wrong with her.

JOHN
How much do I owe you?

OTTO
Nothing. I said I couldn't find anything wrong.

This town just keeps getting weirder and weirder...

John spots Gordon Smallwood and ANOTHER MAN loading produce onto a truck across the street.

John tosses his weekender into the back seat and walks quickly towards Gordon.

Gordon eyes John warily, arms folded across his chest.

JOHN
(smoothly)
Mr. Smallwood, will you accept my apology? I'm afraid I might have been a little rude last night.

Gordon nods stoically.

JOHN (cont'd)
Listen, you're sure it was me who came by those last two nights, huh?

GORDON
Look, mister, Connie called me this morning, says you check out, and that's good enough for me. I'm perfectly willing to let it go. But I don't drink anymore and I don't lie and as far as I know, I'm not crazy, so if you're accusing me -

John pulls Gordon aside.

JOHN
-- No, no, not at all.
(confidentially)
Here's the thing: I don't know how I ended up here last night. I didn't even
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (cont'd)

know I was in West Virginia. Somehow, between one and two-thirty last night I travelled four hundred miles, ended up on that road, and I have no memory of it whatsoever.

GORDON

You shittin' me?

JOHN

No, I wish I was.

Long awkward silence. John shakes Gordon's hand goodbye and walks back to his car.

65 INT. JOHN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 65

John pulls onto the road. As he circles past Gordon, their EYES LOCK for a moment.

66 EXT. JOHN'S CAR - HIGHWAY - DUSK 66

John leaves town the way he came in. He passes a sign reading: "Point Pleasant City Limits"

67 EXT. GORDON SMALLWOOD'S HOUSE - NIGHT 67

The distant farmhouse is dark except for a single bulb lighting the porch. No one is visible inside.

A MAN'S ARM RISES INTO THE FRAME

His watch reads 2:15 a.m.

WE PULL BACK AND SEE: John's face reflected in his car's rear view mirror. He's staking out Gordon's farmhouse from the woods across the road.

68 EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS 68

The high grass bends as SOMETHING moves menacingly towards the back of John's car.

69 INT/EXT. JOHN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 69

John cocks his ear. A rustling sound. Something is coming towards him, slowly, steadily. He scans around, it's dark, too dark to see.

An SUV rolls quietly up beside him, headlights off.

CONNIE

I was afraid I'd see you here.

(CONTINUED)

60
55

COMBATTED:
CONTINUED:

Beat.

JOHN
Then we're both here for the same reason.

Connie smiles.

JOHN (cont'd)
If someone is impersonating me, I want to know.
If someone is impersonating me, I want to know.

CONNIE
I would too. Come on over. I've got warm coffee and a better view.
I would too. Come on over. I've got warm coffee and a better view.

TMT/EYM
LMT/LAT. CONNIE'S PROBLEMS - LATEX
CONNIE'S PROBLEMS - LATEX

View of Gordon's porch from inside Connie's SUV.
View of Gordon's porch from inside Connie's SUV.

The Dashboard clock reads 2:30
The Dashboard clock reads 2:30

Gordon and Connie wait in silence.
Gordon and Connie wait in silence.

The clock clicks to 2:31. Nothing happens.
The clock clicks to 2:31. Nothing happens.

Gordon steps out onto his front porch with a gun.
Gordon steps out onto his front porch with a gun.
He peers into the darkness.
He peers into the darkness.
He carries back inside.

CONNIE

Just your odd reports, folks seeing things they can't explain. So they all come to me.

JOHN

I've had a few odd moments of my own since last night. If there's other people in town feeling as confused as I am right now, I'd sure like to know.

There's something in his voice or his face or maybe both...

CONNIE

Okay. In the last few months people have come up to me and reported seeing strange things... And I'm not talking about the town speed-freak, I'm talking about honest, hard-working, church-going folks. I've known these people their whole lives, and they seem downright embarrassed to be bringing it up.

JOHN

Bringing what up?

CONNIE

It's hard to explain.

JOHN

Try me.

SMASHCUT TO:

71 INT./EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

71

Rows of florescent lights pop on, one after another. Connie locks the glass front doors behind her and John.

CUT TO:

72 A STACK OF REPORTS (LATER)

72

spread across a desk. Photos, eyewitness reports, maps, phone records...

CONNIE

Weird lights, strange phone calls, ghosts, you. You name it.

John flips through the reports.

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE (cont'd)

Seeing a UFO is one thing. It's almost a status symbol nowadays. But what do you do when someone walks in and tells you this showed up in their backyard?

She tosses a sketch across the desk. John picks it up.

And almost passes out. It's a drawing of a man, with huge bug-eyes and giant wings in his back.

FLASHCUT TO:

73 JOHN'S MEMORY:

73

A yellow pad with Mary's identical sketch.

FLASHCUT TO:

74 ACCIDENT SITE IN D.C.

74

THE LOW HANGING BRANCH with red lights for EYES flies rapidly towards us.

Mary's drawing and the branch superimpose, and for a split second, John sees it: Mothman.

75 BACK AT THE POLICE STATION:

75

John's face is white.

JOHN

Who saw this?

CONNIE

A couple of people.

JOHN

I want to meet them. I need to talk to them. Can you help me?

Connie looks into his eyes. He's dead serious.

76 EXT. LUCY GRIFFIN'S HOUSE - DAY

76

John waits in the patrol car while...

ON THE PORCH: Connie talks to LUCY GRIFFIN, (53), a tough, chubby woman with bright red cheeks. After a moment, Connie looks back at John and nods.

77 INT. LUCY GRIFFIN'S KITCHEN - LATER

77

John and Connie drink coffee at the kitchen table with Lucy and her son NAT GRIFFIN, (24), a slacker living at home with his mom.

NAT

It's been going on about a month, every Wednesday night at the poison plant.

John looks a question at Connie: "Poison plant?"

CONNIE

The hills around the Alanco chemical factory. It's a make-out spot.

NAT

(smiles)

Used to be. Now we just watch the lights.

JOHN

What lights?

NAT

I don't know, man, just these weird lights zipping around in the sky.

JOHN

What do you think they are? How would you describe them?

NAT

Nobody knows, dude, the sky's just totally freaking out.

JOHN

Only Wednesdays?

NAT

That's when they seem to show up.

Lucy refills their coffee cups. Connie takes out the bird-man sketch:

CONNIE

Lucy, would you mind telling Mr. Klein about the time you saw this?

78 EXT. BACKYARD

78

They all stand near a blue pine tree that towers over the yard and house:

(CONTINUED)

LUCY

It was right here. There was only a foot or so between its head and that branch so that makes it, what, eight feet tall? I was doing dishes and I just happened to look out the kitchen window.

79 EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT - FLASHBACK - MOTHMAN'S POV

79

We descend into the back yard, landing under the blue pine tree. We watch Lucy through the kitchen window. She stares back at us, mesmerized.

LUCY (V.O.)

At first, all I could see were these two red eyes. I kept on looking at it, I couldn't stop. I've never had that feeling before, like I couldn't move. The only way I can explain is that the whole thing just wasn't right. I know that may not make sense, but that's the only way I can put it into words.

80 BACK TO SCENE (PRESENT TIME - LUCY'S BACKYARD)

80

CAMERA rises, peering down at Lucy, John, Connie and Nat:

LUCY (cont'd)

Then, I guess it saw me too, 'cause all of a sudden these giant wings just flared out and it took off.

JOHN

(to Nat)

Did you see it too?...

Nat shakes his head no.

John's eyes fix on something. He walks over to the tree, reaches out his hand, touches it. He runs his fingers along the tree bark - a large section is scorched black.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Mrs. Griffin, I don't mean to pry, but...Have you had any headaches or blackouts or anything like that recently?

LUCY

(smiles)

You think maybe I have a brain tumor?

John's jaw almost hits the ground. Connie explains:

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

Lucy's a radiologist out at St. Joseph's Hospital.

LUCY

No symptoms yet, Mr. Klein. But it was sweet of you to ask.

81 INT. FIRE STATION 51 - LATE AFTERNOON

81

FIRE CHIEF JOSH JESSUP, (55), a stout bulldog of a man sits with John and Connie in the fire station while, in the background, his men scrub the fire truck.

JOSH

I guess they started about two months ago, the strange phone calls. All hours. The first one was just a loud beeping noise. Now it's mostly creaking, howling sounds - and once, it was a man talking really fast in some foreign language. Maybe Swedish or something like that.

JOHN

Have you had the line checked?

JOSH

(nods)

I even had our number changed. But before I got a chance to give it out to anyone the calls started again.

John glances at Connie: is she buying this?

82 INT. PATROL CAR - DUSK

82

John sits beside Connie, reading through her reports.

JOHN

So - do you think Lucy and Josh really experienced anything?

CONNIE

(shrugs)

Like I said, they're honest people.

John stares out the window: low blue hills roll out in all directions, lit by brilliant winter light.

JOHN

How long have you lived here?

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

My whole life. Grew up just over those hills.

JOHN

A farm?

CONNIE

Shucks no. A real live house. Indoor plumbing and everything.

JOHN

Sorry.

CONNIE

We even had shoes for church and schoolin' and such.

JOHN

(laughs)

Alright, alright.

Connie glances over: this is the first time he's smiled since they met. He looks five years younger - a whole different person.

83 EXT. BACK ROAD - NIGHT

83

The Prowler's headlights illuminate a rusted chain with a sign: "ROAD CLOSED - NO TRESPASSING"

Connie climbs out, pulls the chain aside, drives through.

84 EXT. DESERTED DIRT ROAD - LATER

84

Connie points a flashlight as John and two teenagers, C.J. (17) and HOLLY (14), walk up the crest of a small hill. One of C.J.'s eyes is slightly puffy with a blotch of red.

C.J.

We were parked up here and sort of making out in the back seat...

85 FLASHBACK - EXT. DESERTED DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

85

It's a starlit, moonless night. C.J. and Holly are naked from head to toe, humping wildly in the back seat of his white Chevy Impala.

From beneath their heavy panting, a low electronic hum rumbles. Flesh gropes. The rumble slowly rises. Suddenly,

A SEARING RED LIGHT

(CONTINUED)

from fifty yards away floods the back seat.

C.J.'s head pops up to look through the rear window. The light blinds him, he covers his eyes.

C.J. (cont'd)
Oh, shit, it's the cops!

But it's not a police car, it's a massive WALL OF SCORCHING RED LIGHT hovering over the back window.

CJ and Holly stare up, terrified.

Holly tries to shield her face with her HANDS and BLOUSE. That's when she sees the Mothman: her hands form trembling wings, red light pours through button holes forming two demonic eyes.

HOLLY
Oh my god! Oh my god!

Holly lets out a blood curdling scream.

Suddenly, A LOUD WHOOSH. The light ascends into the night sky.

86 BACK TO SCENE (EXT. DESERTED DIRT ROAD - NIGHT)

86

Holly is shaking. C.J. holds her close.

C.J.
- The next thing we know, it's gone. Just like that. We got the hell out of there. Next day, both my eyes nearly swelled shut.

JOHN
What did the doctor say?

C.J.
He couldn't explain it.
(pointing at his eye)
This one never healed.

JOHN
How long ago was this?

HOLLY
About two months.

They stand in the circle of Connie's flashlight. All we hear is the sound of four people breathing. Connie leans in close to Holly.

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE
(gently)
Holly, I want you to show Mr. Klein what
you showed me.

Holly turns to C.J. He looks away. Blushing, she starts to unbutton her blouse. She turns around as she slips it off her shoulder. Connie brings up her flashlight. On Holly's back, a PAINFULLY SCORCHED PATCH OF BURNED RED SKIN.

John steps closer to see it.

Connie looks at John - *do you have enough proof now?*

87 EXT. JOHN'S MOTEL - NIGHT 87

Neon lights, dead tree branches, phone wires. We hear John's voice...

88 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS 88

John's laptop is open as he talks to a clipping service:

JOHN
(into phone)
...I'm going to need everything you can
find concerning unexplained events in
West Virginia ...weird lights, sightings,
yeah, yeah, that kind of research. Go
back about ten years, make it twenty. You
have my e-mail -- Okay? Thanks.

John hangs up and the cell phone immediately rings.

JOHN (cont'd)
Hello?

89 INTERCUT WITH ED AT THE WASHINGTON POST: 89

ED
Where the hell are you?

JOHN
I'm still here.

ED
West Virginia?

JOHN
Yeah, well, something's come up.

John opens his day-runner and removes...A WEATHERED OLD POLAROID: John and Mary on the beach in Hawaii. Their

(CONTINUED)

honeymoon. Both young, both smiling; blessedly ignorant of the future and happy for all time in that one split-second of life.

ED
You're kidding, something of national interest in West Virginia?

JOHN
No... scientific. I'll tell you about it later..

ED
Cy is beginning to look rabid.

JOHN
Well, keep him at bay.

ED
By the way, I aced your buddy, the Governor -- but don't worry, he still loves you.

JOHN
(preoccupied)
Thanks.

ED
You okay? You sound stressed.

JOHN
I'm fine, Ed. I'll call you.

John hangs up, places the picture in the mirror frame over the desk where he can always see it.

90 EXT. CONNIE PARKER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

90

John stands on the front porch in the light of a single bulb. He rings the doorbell.

A YOUNG BOY opens the door. It's KEVIN PARKER, (7), Connie's son. He looks straight into John's eyes like he's known him forever.

KEVIN
You're John Klein.

For a moment, John is speechless. Kevin then turns and shouts into the house:

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Mom, it's that guy.

(CONTINUED)

92 EXT. HILLTOP PATH - NIGHT

92

A cold, clear night. John and Connie follow Kevin up a wooded path. Connie's camcorder hangs from John's neck.

CONNIE

...he lives up near Pittsburgh, does some contracting. Kevin sees him a couple times a year.

JOHN

Kevin must miss him.

CONNIE

Yeah, he does.

Kevin leads the way, just a few steps ahead of them. Connie does her best to make this next sound nonchalant:

CONNIE (CONT'D)

And you? Probably dating some pretty young congressional aide?

JOHN

Not exactly.
(a deep breath, then:)
I was married...and uh...

John searches for the right words. Kevin turns and stops.

JOHN (cont'd)

...My wife died about a year ago.

CONNIE

I'm sorry.

KEVIN

(solemn)
How did she die?

JOHN

She got really sick, Kevin. It was pretty unexpected.

Kevin nods, understanding.

CONNIE

I'm sorry.

Kevin turns his head towards the hilltop, points his flashlight. People are gathered there.

93 EXT. HILLTOP CLEARING -- NIGHT

93

John and Connie follow Kevin to the summit that overlooks the vast acreage of the Alanco Chemical plant.

ABOUT TWENTY PEOPLE: Kids, parents, teenagers, a few senior citizens mill about amiably. Somewhere, a car radio plays. There are no fires and no lights. John, Connie and Kevin wander among them.

John sees Gordon Smallwood sitting alone on the hood of his truck. They nod hello.

VOICE (O.S.)
Hey, look who's here...

John turns. In the dark, it takes him a minute to recognize Nat Griffin and his mother, Lucy.

LUCY
(shivering excitedly)
Getting cold, here, want some coffee?

She hands John and Connie Styrofoam cups.

NAT
In a week or so we'll have to watch from our cars.

JOHN
Is it like this every Wednesday?

NAT
Naw, this is the most people so far.

CONNIE
Where'd Kevin go?

LUCY
He's over there.

John and Connie wander off to the edge, looking out over the chemical plant. They watch Kevin playing nearby.

CONNIE
Do you feel like talking about what happened to your wife?

JOHN
Mary died last year on Christmas Eve. She had a brain tumor. We didn't know, but there was a car accident one night and they gave her an x-ray and found it. The
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (cont'd)
night we had the accident she saw something, and she drew a picture of it. It was a giant bird-man with wings and red eyes.

CONNIE
Oh my God.

John turns to her and looks into her eyes:

JOHN
I'd pretty much forgotten that part of things until you showed me that sketch...

DISSOLVE TO:

94 THE HILLTOP - AN HOUR LATER

94

The group has dwindled to to about ten people. John and Connie sit on a blanket. Kevin is asleep at her side.

Nat Griffin points his VIDEO CAMERA to the sky, just above the horizon:

NAT
Look, there they are!

Suddenly, excitement ripples through the remaining spectators. John and Connie stand up. The camcorder lies forgotten at John's feet.

RED AND BLUE PINPOINTS OF LIGHT hover in the sky. Big deal. It could be an airplane....

THE LIGHTS collapse in on each other and plummet straight down into the river, disappearing at the horizon where the water meets the sky.

More pairs of lights appear. Now some of them spin around each other, and the after image looks like a DNA spiral falling to the earth.

John watches spellbound as the flickering lights spin and fall. The effect is hypnotic, eerie, dizzying, disorienting...

JOHN
My God.

WIDE SHOT: John and Connie face the camera. In the background, several other spectators look on.

(CONTINUED)

SPECTATOR #1

I don't see it, I don't see it, where is it?

SPECTATOR #2

Right there, gold and purple lights.

John squints.

JOHN

(whispering to Connie)

Do you see it?

CONNIE

Yeah, I see something.

JOHN

What do you see?

CONNIE

I see spinning...

John unconsciously takes her hand...

JOHN

Me too. What colors?

CONNIE

Blue and red.

JOHN

How many lights?

CONNIE

Thirty, maybe more.

John and Connie stare up at the lights like kids at a magic show. Then John realizes that he's holding her hand. They glance at each other and John lets go, embarrassed. John's eyes shift down to...

.. the red and blue lights reflecting off the water. But for a moment, it almost seems as if the lights are coming from the water -- and shining into the sky.

John steals a glance back at Connie -- she's still looking at him. And smiling.

95 INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

95

John steps up to the checkout counter. In his hands, a book: "THINGS UNSEEN: A Rationale for Unexplained Phenomena" by Albert Leek.

96 EXT. ELECTRONICS STORE - DAY 96

Through a window decorated with Christmas lights, we see a bank of TV MONITORS -- similar to the storefront we saw earlier when John was on CNN.

97 INSIDE THE STORE: 97

John is shopping for an answering machine.

Suddenly, a hand lands on John's shoulder. It's Gordon Smallwood -- and he looks scared:

GORDON

Mr. Klein -- I gotta talk to you...

John backs up, wary of the fear in Gordon's face.

GORDON (CONT'D)

(Confidential)

Last night I woke up with the worst headache I've ever had in my life...So I go to the bathroom to get some aspirin, and I happen to look in the mirror -- and I swear to God, I see something I can't describe -- but sure as hell know it's not my reflection.

John looks worried.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Then it goes away. I can't explain it, but I just keep staring, telling this thing...to show up again. But all I see is me.

Gordon looks around nervously, making sure no one else can hear this.

GORDON (cont'd)

And then I hear this sound, like a weird howl coming out of the sink. Then it's a voice...and it's saying: "Do not be afraid. Ninety-nine will die. Denver Nine." I even wrote it down...

Gordon pulls a wrinkled piece of paper from his shirt pocket and fiddles with it.

GORDON (CONT'D)

It keeps saying the same thing, over and over, for an hour. Then it stops.

(CONTINUED)

Gordon peers at John, feeling sure John must think he's lost his mind -- but John encourages him to go on.

GORDON (CONT'D)

And when I look in the mirror, I can't see anything. Not even my own reflection.

(pauses)

Then this morning when I woke up, I looked at the paper where I wrote down the words, and this was on it.

He hands John the crumpled piece of paper. Beneath the words, "Do not be afraid. Ninety-nine will die. Denver Nine" is a sketch. It's crude, but unmistakable: A man with huge eyes and wings.

JOHN

(pointing at sketch)

You don't remember seeing this thing?

GORDON

No, and it scares the shit out of me.

John stares at the page, puzzled:

JOHN

Denver nine...Denver nine...Any idea what that means?

Gordon shakes his head no. As they head out of the store, John's eyes narrow.

JOHN (cont'd)

Gordon...

John puts his hand on Gordon's shoulder.

JOHN (cont'd)

Gordon, your ear's bleeding.

GORDON

What?

Gordon brings his hand to his ear. Blood is trickling along his jaw from inside his ear. Gordon gazes down at his hand. His stricken eyes dart to John.

98 EXT. ESTAB. SHOT - ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL - DAY

98

A professional-looking hospital, in a town clearly bigger than Point Pleasant.

99 INT. CAT-SCAN LAB - ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL - DAY

99

DR. WILLIAMS sits with John, Gordon and Denise. Gordon is pitched forward, a bundle of nerves, fearful. The doctor points at:

A LUMINOUS CAT SCAN of a human brain.

DR. WILLIAMS

The CAT'S SCAN's clean, Gordon, no sign of any physical problem.

DENISE

Thank God.

GORDON

You're sure? Because this man's wife, she had a brain tumor...

DENISE

(softly)

Gordon, please...

DR. WILLIAMS

What you had is a first class migraine. I can write you a prescription.

DENISE

Thank you doctor, that would be very kind of you --

JOHN

-- Dr. Williams, there are other symptoms. He heard voices. There were visual hallucinations. Those symptoms are both associated with Glioblastoma Multiforma.

DR. WILLIAMS

They are also associated with migraines. There is nothing here to suggest something as exotic as Glioblastoma Multiforma.

(to Gordon)

If you'd like, I can refer you to another neurologist for a second opinion, but --

Gordon shakes his head, confused and dismayed. He grabs Denise and they all leave.

GORDON

(muttering)

I don't feel right. Something's wrong...

100 EXT. SILVER BRIDGE - DUSK 100

FROM HIGH ABOVE: Gordon's pick-up truck streaks across the 700 FOOT STEEL BRIDGE, an antique engineering marvel from the 1920s that spans the Ohio River.

101 INT/EXT. GORDON'S TRUCK/SILVER BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS 101

John watches Gordon and Denise: Gordon looks straight ahead, one hand on the wheel, the other clutching Denise's hand on the seat between them. She's putting up a good front, hiding her concern. John lets his eyes drift down to the Ohio River rushing beneath the bridge.

102 INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT 102

Gordon, Denise and John sit together at a booth. Gordon looks frightened.

DENISE

Hey -- it was good news, right? You're not sick. That's good.

GORDON

I wish I was sick, then I would know why this is happening to me.

DENISE

Don't say things like that, Gordon.

GORDON

I'm losing it. I'm hallucinating, hearing voices, my ear's bleeding.

(to John)

Was your wife hearing voices before her tumor?

John doesn't answer. His attention is riveted ACROSS THE ROOM. John stands. He moves deliberately across the diner.

All the SOUND drains out of the room.

John crosses the COUNTER and slowly raises his hand in the air. The blue glow of the TV tints his fingertips as he TURNS UP THE VOLUME.

103 TV MONITOR - A NEWS UPDATE GRAPHIC 103

NEWSMAN

...Again, our top story of the hour:
Airwest flight number 9 out of Denver has
crashed...

104 BACK TO SCENE

104

John turns and looks at the booth. Denise covers her mouth in horror. Gordon STANDS UP. His EYES LOCK with John's.

NEWSMAN (O.S) (CONT'D)

There is no confirmation, but all ninety-nine passengers and crew members are believed dead.

JOHN's face freezes, SHOCKED - *this can't be true!* One look at Gordon tells him that it is.

105 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - EVENING

105

A phone cord stretches across a rumpled bedspread, shopping bags, books, notes, photos and other research items.

JOHN

(into phone)

May I speak to Albert Leek, please?

The voice that comes on the line is scratchy and distant.

LEEK (O.S.)

This is Leek.

JOHN

My name is John Klein and I'm working on a pretty strange story, and I thought you might be able to help me.

Silence on the line. John's hand rests on LEEK'S BOOK: "THINGS UNSEEN".

JOHN (CONT'D)

I've been reading your book, and I'm especially interested in your theories about prophecies --

LEEK(O.S.)

-- Anything you want to know is in the book.

John presses on:

JOHN

Yeah, but this chapter on the entities you call...

(flips through book)

(CONTINUED)

LEEK (O.S.)

-- Were you contacted, or are you pretending to have a professional interest?

JOHN

Yeah, no, I'm a reporter for the Washington Post.

LEEK (O.S.)

Well, I'm sorry Mr. Klein I don't work in those areas anymore.

JOHN

I don't understand...

LEEK (O.S.)

The research didn't prove viable.

JOHN

What do you mean?

Click. Dial tone.

106 EXT. ALANCO CHEMICAL PLANT - AFTERNOON 106

Gordon hurries to his car in the plant's parking lot, looking awful. A FOREMAN stands in the background, looking at his watch and narrowing his eyes.

107 INT. GORDON SMALLWOOD'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DUSK 107

Denise sits at the table, her face distraught. The sound of a clock echoes through the quiet house.

JOHN (V.O)

Denise seems pretty worried about him.
You hear a voice, that's one thing...

108 INT. CONNIE PARKER'S KITCHEN - NIGHT 108

Connie watches John pacing back and forth, holding Leek's book.

JOHN (CONT'D)

...But this wasn't just a message, it was a prediction that came true.

CONNIE

Are these things Gordon's having hallucinations or dreams?

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

The way he describes them, they sound like dreams, but...I don't know. He believes they're real.

CONNIE

I had a dream last night. It felt real to me.

JOHN

Oh yeah?

Connie's face darkens; just thinking about it scares her.

He can see she wants to tell him. He waits.

CONNIE

...It was nighttime, and I was in the middle of the ocean, I was trying to swim. But I was too cold. I looked for something I could hold onto. There were Christmas presents floating all around me, wrapped up and tied with bows. I tried to grab them but they kept popping away. Like corks.

John listens intently as we...

SMASHCUT TO:

109 THE NIGHTMARE - LIQUID SURFACE - HER POV

109

Brightly wrapped gifts bob at eye-level against a steel gray sky...

Below, the water is glowing, pinpoints of light shine from the depths.

CONNIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And somehow I knew I was dying...

110 BACK TO SCENE:

110

Connie continues...

CONNIE (CONT'D)

Then I heard this loud voice - like someone shouting in my ear: "Wake up, Number 37!" And I woke up.

(shivers)

What do you think that means?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE (cont'd)

(beat)
"Number 37"?

JOHN

(pondering)
Honestly, I have absolutely no idea.

She snorts out a weak laugh. John smiles. John barely notices Kevin standing at his knee.

KEVIN

(quietly)
You wanna play?

John looks at Connie: did Kevin hear all that? She shrugs, then:

John follows Kevin into the den.

WE STAY ON CONNIE: She watches them getting along like John's been around forever. A lot of strange things have turned up in Point Pleasant recently. On Connie's face, we can see that not all of them are bad...

111 EXT. POINT PLEASANT CHURCH - NEXT DAY

111

The service is letting out, and CHURCHGOERS head down the front steps. Among them are Connie -- and John. He looks like he hasn't been in a church in years. As they move away from the others, they notice DENISE standing nervously at the bottom of the steps.

CONNIE

Denise?

DENISE

I don't mean to bother you, Connie, but it's Gordon.

As she steps closer to Connie, she can see that Denise has been crying.

CONNIE

Are you okay?

Denise avoids her eyes, carefully phrasing her next remark:

DENISE

I don't understand what's happening to him. If word gets out that Gordon's, you know, "hearing voices"...I need someone to go talk to him.

112 EXT. GORDON SMALLWOOD'S FARM - NIGHT 112

GORDON AND JOHN walk slowly around the farm. Gordon has a newspaper tucked under his arm.

GORDON

I met him. The guy who told me about the plane crash.

JOHN

You met him?

John is stunned -- but completely hooked:

GORDON

Yeah. Last night, just about midnight. I was driving past the scrap yard by the unfinished highway...

FLASHCUT TO:

113 INT. GORDON'S TRUCK - UNFINISHED HWY (GORDON'S STORY) 113

Gordon drives his pick-up truck along the narrow two-lane highway.

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

I'm driving along when all of a sudden this bright flash of lightning...

A HORIZONTAL SPIRAL OF LIGHTNING crosses in front of his truck.

Gordon pulls off the road.

114 EXT. UNFINISHED HWY - GORDON'S TRUCK - STOPPED 114

Gordon peers out through the passenger window, facing the CAMERA.

BEHIND GORDON, we see AN OMINOUS VAGUE FIGURE approach the driver side window from across the road. It has the general characteristics of a MAN.

THE FIGURE taps on the glass.

GORDON spins around, gasps.

THE MAN stares at Gordon. We can barely see the outline of a face.

(CONTINUED)

GORDON (V.O.) (cont'd)
He looked human, but there was just something wrong about him.

115 BACK TO SCENE: (GORDON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT)

GORDON (cont'd)
You know when someone has a glass eye, and your looking at them and something doesn't quite fit, but you can't put your finger on it?

JOHN
What part didn't fit?

GORDON
All of them. It's like the pieces were right, but they just didn't go together...

116 EXT. UNFINISHED HWY/SCRAPYARD (GORDON'S STORY)

FLASHCUT TO:

Gordon stares at the face, terrified.

GORDON (V.O.) (cont'd)
That's when I heard the voice. The same one I heard two nights ago. Kind of flat and high-pitched. He said --

As the man's mouth moves, it's Gordon's VOICE we hear:

GORDON (V.O.) (cont'd)
"Do not be afraid, My name is Indrid Cold."

Gordon's not afraid. He slowly ROLLS DOWN THE WINDOW, and as he does

INDBID COLD'S FACE DISAPPEARS, like a reflection.

GORDON (V.O.) (cont'd)
He was gone, but his voice was still there: "In a place this size called Ecuador, 300 will die in an earthquake"
(beat)

117 BACK TO SCENE: (GORDON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT) 117

John searches Gordon's face for a sign -- could this possibly be for real?

JOHN

Gordon, do you really believe this? You realize how all this sounds?

Gordon gives him a "be patient" gesture, then smiles triumphantly and holds up the morning newspaper: EARTHQUAKE IN ECUADOR. 320 PEOPLE KILLED.

Gordon seems possessed of complete self-assurance. And this scares John most of all.

118 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - TWO NIGHTS LATER 118

Since we last saw it, the tiny motel room has been transformed into...

JOHN'S INVESTIGATION HEADQUARTERS: A computer and fax machine crowd the small desk. Newspapers, books and faxes are stacked everywhere.

Maps cover the walls, studded with colored tacks: Red ones for odd light events, blue ones for giant bird-creature sightings, etc. In the middle of the chaos:

JOHN AND CONNIE sit on the bed, sharing a pizza and a bottle of Merlot, watching:

119 NAT'S VIDEO (HILLTOP CLEARING - NIGHT) - INTERCUT 119

A weak, grainy, image of the sky over the river and the chemical plant.

They study the TV. John draws his finger across the screen. No trace of the lights.

JOHN

The lights should be right over here...

CONNIE

It's probably just too dark to record.

JOHN

I wonder.

(beat)

You ready for Josh's latest phone call?

John lifts a cassette player and hits "play." On the tape we hear Josh's VOICE as he answers his phone:

(CONTINUED)

JOSH (V.O.)
(on tape)
Hello?..

On the other end of the line we hear an ungodly racket: a creaking inhuman moan followed by a mechanical shriek.

Connie shakes her head in wonder:

CONNIE
This is definitely the weirdest date I've ever been on.

JOHN
Is this a date?

CONNIE
Cut me some slack. It's after eleven on a weeknight and I'm in a motel room with a single man. I'm calling it a date.

John gives her a curious smile, slightly lowering the volume on the shrieking wail.

JOHN
I think it actually sounds sort of beautiful, if you play it low. Kind of like a mating call.

CONNIE
Yeah, I see what you mean, maybe this could be our song?

John smiles. An awkward silence. He leans in and gently kisses her. She kisses him back.

They pull back, both a little surprised at what's just happened. John's face makes it clear -- *this is the first woman he's kissed since Mary died.*

Connie breaks the awkward silence:

CONNIE (cont'd)
Look, if this is too soon, we could --

But before she can even finish,

THE PHONE RINGS. John is relieved to answer. It's Gordon, and he sounds stressed:

GORDON (O.S.)
John, thank God you're there.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

Gordon?

GORDON (O.S.)

(talking fast)

Look, I know I sounded a little bit crazy today, but things have been getting weird out here.

JOHN

Gordon, slow down --

GORDON (O.S.)

-- He's here.

JOHN

Who is?

GORDON (O.S.)

Mr. Cold. He's here. Right now. He's standing right next to me.

John turns away from Connie and sits on the edge of the bed. The mood in the room has completely shifted:

JOHN

Let me talk to him.

GORDON (O.S.)

Sure. Hang on.

Then he turns to Connie and covers the mouthpiece:

JOHN

Get over to Gordon's quick, he says
Indrid Cold is there.

Connie doesn't ask questions, she just grabs her things and heads for the door.

A thin, monotone VOICE -- supposedly that of Indrid Cold -- comes on the line:

VOICE (O.S.)

Hello John Klein.

John tries to collect his thoughts.

JOHN

Who is this?

VOICE (O.S.)

My name is Indrid Cold.

(CONTINUED)

John quickly attaches his tape recorder -- an expensive digital device -- to his phone.

JOHN

Unless, of course, you're Gordon Smallwood.

INDRID COLD (O.S.)

Your father was born in Racine, Wisconsin. You lived in a green house on Monroe street. You can't remember how your mother looked.

John realizes he's sweating, his breathing has quickened. He makes himself breathe normally.

JOHN

Okay, you've got my attention. What color shirt am I wearing?

INDRID COLD(O.S.)

Red shirt, three buttons.

Correct. Hmm. John looks around the room. The curtains are open. He pulls them shut. He looks down and sees his watch in his shoe.

JOHN

Where's my watch?

INDRID COLD(O.S.)

Shoe under bed.

He looks around the room: Hidden cameras? An elaborate trick? He shuts off all the lights. Then plunges his hand into his overnight bag.

JOHN

What am I holding in my hand?

INDRID COLD(O.S.)

Cream stick.

John pulls his hand from his bag: he holds a small tube of Chapstick. Suddenly, an explanation occurs.

JOHN

(smiling)

Indrid Cold -- are you reading my mind?

INDRID COLD(O.S.)

I have no need to.

(CONTINUED)

Okay...John grabs a paperback from the stack near his bed, but doesn't open it. The real test:

JOHN

What's the third line on page...fifty-one?

INDRID COLD(O.S.)

(instantly)

"-- Face unadorned held a naked promise that her figure did --"

John flips on the lamp, opens the book, finds the page, scans the line, takes a sharp breath. Correct.

INDRID COLD(O.S.)

(cont'd)

Still more proof John Klein?

120 EXT. BACK ROAD - NIGHT 120

Connie's speeding Prowler hugs the curves of a winding back road, blue and red gumballs flashing.

121 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 121

John is still on the phone with Indrid Cold. His mood has shifted from skepticism to anxious fascination:

JOHN

What do you look like?

INDRID COLD(O.S.)

Variable.

JOHN

I want to meet you.

INDRID COLD(O.S.)

We already have. You frighten easily. You're afraid right now.

JOHN

You seem to know a lot. Can you tell me something...What happened to my wife?

A long silence. The silence makes John nervous.

INDRID COLD(O.S.)

Why ask me what you already know?

John takes a breath and closes his eyes:

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

Where is Mary Klein right now?

John grips the phone, his hand slick with sweat, waiting.

INDRID COLD(O.S.)

The one who was Mary Klein cannot be found by looking.

(beat)

Contact is possible. See you in time.

The line ERUPTS IN A HIGH PITCHED WHINE, a metallic WHISTLE, piercing John's ear. He flings the phone away. The receiver keeps SCREECHING on the floor. John stares at the phone. The SCREECH becomes a terrible CREAK, replaced by STATIC, then nothing, finally a dial tone. John forces himself to retrieve the receiver and place it back on the cradle. Sweat beads roll down into his eyes.

122 EXT. GORDON SMALLWOOD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

122

Connie's hand pounds on the door. Nothing. She pounds again. Nothing. Finally, a light goes on inside and...

GORDON SMALLWOOD opens the door slowly. He's in boxer shorts, hair-mussed, fresh from bed. He squints out at Connie:

GORDON

What's up, Connie? Everything okay?

CONNIE

(urgently)

-- Did you just call John?

GORDON

(shakes his head)

I've been asleep since nine.

123 EXT. BELL SOUND LABS - CHARLESTON - DAY

123

Establish a high-tech looking facility - clearly the non-nonsense domain of science.

124 INT. BELL SOUND LABS - CHARLESTON - DAY

124

John sits in the SOUND LAB surrounded by some of the most sophisticated sound analysis equipment in America. He listens to a tape of last night's phone call along with:

SONNY BERGER, (45) a sound engineer -- good-natured, bearded and at least 300 pounds.

(CONTINUED)

As Indrid Cold's VOICE comes on, Sonny points to the Voice Frequency Gauge:

SONNY

See? It's sticking up here around 1950 cycles per second. The lowest it gets is maybe, 1930 or so...

Then John's VOICE comes on the tape.

SONNY (cont'd)

Yours is way down here in normal vocal range: anywhere from 1000 to 1200 cycles per second.

JOHN

So this guy's vocal range is higher than mine?

SONNY

(laughs)

You're bullshitting me, right? How'd you do it?

JOHN

Do what?

SONNY

Create the voice. It's a good mimic, but comes on, 1900 cycles per second? Groundhogs don't go that high.

JOHN

So what the hell is it?

As the tape plays, Sonny isolates Indrid Cold's voice and does a computer search for matches...Nothing.

SONNY

As near as I can figure, it's some sort of electrical impulse. But whatever it is, it isn't coming out of human vocal cords.

125 INT. JOHN KLEIN'S CAR - DUSK

125

John drives back from Charleston, cell phone to his ear, leaving a message:

JOHN

(frayed)

Cyrus, it's John, it's Wednesday night,
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (cont'd)
I'm still stuck down here in West
Virginia.

126 EXT. HIGHWAY - TOLL BOOTH - DUSK

126

John's car passes through a tollbooth, exiting the main highway. There's something eerie about it, but John is wrapped up in his call and doesn't notice.

JOHN
(continuous)
I'm going to need a few more days to wrap things up...I'll call you in a couple of days.

DISSOLVE TO:

127 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

127

A cold wind howls outside. John lies in bed, tossing and turning in the dark...

128 LATER

128

Now the lights are on. He sits on the edge of the bed, CHANNEL SURFING.

He clicks off the TV and throws down the remote...

129 MOMENTS LATER

129

Now he's dressed. He grabs his keys and he's out the door.

130 EXT. GORDON SMALLWOOD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

130

John stands on the porch talking to Denise. She shakes her head, points towards town.

131 INT/EXT. JOHN'S CAR - PARKING AREA/HILLTOP CLEARING - NIGHT 131

John's car rolls to a stop at the hilltop near the Alanco Chemical Plant. No other cars parked, no sign of Gordon.

132 EXT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

132

John drives past - it's closed for the night.

133 EXT. IRON HORSE TAVERN - NIGHT

133

John drives by -- also closed. He drives on.

134 EXT. THE SILVER BRIDGE - NIGHT

134

John spots Gordon mid-span, leaning over the railing, staring down at the rushing water. He's not wearing a coat.

John jumps out:

JOHN

Gordon!

Gordon doesn't seem to hear him.

JOHN (cont'd)

Gordon!

John reaches Gordon's side, places his hand on his shoulder. Gordon stares out at nothing in particular.

GORDON

(calmly)

I used to walk up here when I was a little kid. We're right between West Virginia and Ohio. So technically, I figure we're not in either one...

JOHN

Come on Gordon it's freezing out here, you want to warm up in my car?

Gordon slowly shakes his head.

GORDON

Can't. I'm waiting for him.

John nods, waits for him to continue:

GORDON (CONT'D)

John, everybody in this town is looking at me like I'm insane...You know why?

John goes to answer, but Gordon continues:

GORDON (CONT'D)

It's because I'm telling the truth...Denise, all the others, they don't know, John. I do.

JOHN

What do you know, Gordon?

GORDON

I been lying awake at night -- feel like I'm sleeping, but I'm awake. That's when
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GORDON (cont'd)

I hear him...When I hear his voice lately, I swear to God -- I feel better.

John stares at Gordon, incredulous: Gordon looks as sure of himself and resolute as when they first met. John takes a moment to gather his thoughts.

JOHN

I have an idea, but before I tell you what it is, I want you to know I don't think you're crazy. Okay?

GORDON

(calmly)

I'm not crazy.

JOHN

I've heard about a program at the University. They work with people who've had strange experiences, and try to figure out if these events are occurring...outwardly or inwardly. You see what I mean?

GORDON

You think I'm imagining all this?

JOHN

I don't know, Gordon.

135 EXT. ROAD/UNFINISHED HIGHWAY - NIGHT

135

John drives past the scrap yard next to the UNFINISHED HIGHWAY where Gordon claims to have met Indrid Cold. As JOHN drives under the elevated RAMP TO NOWHERE...

136 INT - CAR - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

136

...his face suddenly contorts with fear.

He looks around terrified: *what's happening to him?*

Sweat beads on his forehead, he tries to move his arms, his hands, his legs -- he's paralyzed with fear.

The car continues to roll forward, increasing speed. Ten Feet...Twenty...Thirty! His fear escalates into panic. Every yard an eternity of unbearable terror. At fifty feet, he crosses an invisible border: his fear leaves as suddenly as it came.

John stops the car. He catches his breath, gathering his nerve to investigate further.

137 EXT. UNFINISHED HIGHWAY/SCRAP YARD - CONTINUOUS

137

John climbs out of his car, plants his feet on the asphalt, looks around.

Nothing out of the ordinary. No sign of Indrid Cold or any other explanation -- *what did he just pass through?*

He walks back towards the area, slowly, cautiously, trying to stay calm.

Then he takes one step too many.

He's back inside the zone. The air becomes perfectly still as ALL AUDIBLE SOUNDS -- animals, birds, even insects -- are sucked into silence. The night becomes darker, too dark.

John's breathing becomes shallow and fast. He falls to the ground, engulfed in fear.

JOHN (V.O.)

I couldn't move. I don't know what it was, I was more afraid than I've ever been in my whole life. I was just a few feet from where I came in, but it felt like I'd never make it back...

138 INT. CONNIE'S PROWL CAR - DAY

138

Connie listens intently to John as she drives towards the unfinished highway.

JOHN (V.O.)

...I'm on my knees, and I'm hyperventilating. I couldn't stand up. It took me a half hour to crawl the five feet out of there.

John looks at Connie. She doesn't know what to say.

JOHN (CONT'D)

This is it, up ahead.

139 EXT. UNFINISHED HIGHWAY - DAY

139

Connie slows the Prowler to a crawl, then brakes. They get out.

CONNIE

It began here?

JOHN

Right over here, I think.

(CONTINUED)

John and Connie walk slowly. John tries to get his bearings.

JOHN (cont'd)

I remember the ramp was here...so this must be it.

He starts to walk. Connie joins him and they step over an imaginary line together. They look at each other. She shakes her head. Nothing.

JOHN (cont'd)

Let's keep going.

They walk further. Nothing. John stops, perplexed, shakes his head.

JOHN (cont'd)

(quietly)

I swear, it was right here.

Connie looks at him. She doesn't feel it. But last night, John did. Connie looks into his eyes, sees a man shaken from an experience he can't explain. She takes his hand in hers.

HIGH ANGLE

They walk back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. Birds chirp, the winter sun is shining brightly, and we pull back on two people searching for an imaginary circle.

140 INT. INTERVIEW CUBICLES - UNIVERSITY - DAY

140

We INTERCUT between John and Gordon -- as each is interviewed by DR. LEE OKSTER, (37), friendly, and way too good looking to be in a lab coat:

OKSTER

As a child, were you prone to seizures?

JOHN

No.

OKSTER

Were you often left at home alone?

GORDON

No.

OKSTER

Did you have a guardian angel or secret friend?

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

No.

OKSTER

Do you sometimes have trouble discerning
dreams from actual memories?...

Gordon stares into the middle distance; he slowly nods.

OKSTER(cont'd)

Mr. Smallwood?

Gordon looks up, as if waking from a dream, as we go...

141 INT. ELECTROENCEPHALOGRAPH LAB - LATER 141

INTERCUT again between John and Gordon with small electric
patches taped to their faces and skulls. EEG printouts scroll
out beside them.

142 INT. LABORATORY RESEARCH CENTER - LATER 142

Dr. Okster shows John and Gordon their EEG printouts.

OKSTER

Alright, this line here? It measures
activity in the temporal lobe, the visual
and perceptual center of the brain.
Disorders in this area have been linked
to both alien encounters and near-death
experiences.

JOHN

Disorders like a brain tumor?

OKSTER

Maybe. But neither you nor Mr. Smallwood
seem to have any temporal lobe
abnormalities.

JOHN

So what does that leave?

OKSTER

You might have been exposed to an
electromagnetic field. Certain people are
more sensitive than others to these EM
waves, and it stimulates their temporal
lobes causing vivid hallucinations.

Gordon squints skeptically:

(CONTINUED)

OKSTER (cont'd)
Bright lights, voices, feelings of
terror, distortions of time and even
sightings of humanoid creatures.

Gordon looks freaked, John doesn't know what to think.

143 INT. JOHN KLEIN' MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

143

CLOSE ON A BOOK PAGE -- A 15TH CENTURY DRAWING OF A GIANT MAN
WITH INSECT EYES AND WINGS. It looks like something from the
Ars Moriendi -- "The Art of Dying" -- Medieval Christian
texts on death.

CONNIE (O.S.)
"The Nocturnal Butterfly. Also called
Mothman. In ancient cultures, the moth
represents a form of the psyche, or the
soul immortally trapped in the hellish
death realms..."

Connie sits on the edge of a bed, wearing her uniform. She
reads from a MYTHOLOGY BOOK.

John's weekender lies open on the other bed: he's packing.
It's late. A cold wind howls outside.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
(reading)
..."Mothman is one of the most obscure
and frightening mythological creatures of
the underworld..."

Connie closes the book. She's read enough for tonight. She
tosses it on the floor. John stops packing and looks at her.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
(softly)
What time's your flight?

JOHN
Eight AM.

Connie looks away, missing him already.

144 EXT. NEW YORK STREET - DAY

144

ON WEST 83RD STREET: John stands in a doorway across from the
brownstone Criterion Apartments. He sees...

A MAN emerges from the apartment building: stocky, red face
and crew-cut hair. Looks like a retired drill sergeant.

(CONTINUED)

John glances at the author photo on the book he holds, "Things Unseen". Sure enough, it's the same guy: ALBERT LEEK. John dodges across the street and stops him.

JOHN

Mr. Leek...

Leek stops in his tracks, alarmed. John holds up one of the Bird-Man sketches:

JOHN (cont'd)

Do you know what this is?

Leek's eyes flick from the sketch to John's face:

LEEK

Who the hell are you?

JOHN

John Klein. I called you. I need to know about this.

Leek stares at him, considers -- then pushes quickly past:

LEEK

I'm sorry but I'm already late.

John follows after him down the crowded street.

JOHN

Have you ever seen this thing?

Leek keeps walking, trying to ignore the man following him.

JOHN (cont'd)

(shouting over street noise)

I need your help, Mr. Leek?

Leek finally stops and turns -- John almost runs into him.

LEEK

Where are they seeing him?

JOHN

(out of breath)

Point Pleasant, West Virginia...

He stares at John, making up his mind: should he bother?

Leek grabs the sketch from John and gazes at it. He looks like he's staring at his own obituary.

(CONTINUED)

LEEK
(quiet, to himself)
Mothman.

John's eyes go wide.

JOHN
(a statement)
You can help me, can't you?

Leek nods.

LEEK
Follow me.

145 INT. METROPOLIS BOOK SHOP - DAY

145

John follows Leek into the giant, dusty old bookstore. Shelves tower overhead; stacks of books line the floor; aisles roll out in all directions, disappearing into murky darkness.

ANGLE ON AISLE: John watches Leek scan the titles, his head tilted to the side. He plucks a book off the shelves:

LEEK
Ah, here we are...

Leek flips through a book and stops on A PAINTING OF A GIANT MAN WITH WINGS. It looks like something out of Greek mythology. John shudders.

JOHN
Mothman?

LEEK
That's what the Ukrainians called him. Rough translation, of course. There were a hundred sightings in Chernobyl the year the nuclear plant went down.

JOHN
Jesus.

Leek turns to A GRAINY PHOTOGRAPH, the kind we've all seen: blurry, poorly framed -- but instead of a UFO, a Moth-like figure hovers in the sky.

LEEK
Galveston, 1969, just before the hurricane. They saw it. But seeing isn't always believing. There's never been a single shred of evidence that any of
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEEK (cont'd)

these things exist materially; not for more than a short time, anyway. No one's ever seen any Bigfoot bodies or crashed UFO's.

JOHN

What about Roswell?

LEEK

Come on. You work in Washington. Is that braintrust capable of keeping that kind of secret?

John rubs his eyes, confused:

JOHN

So you're saying these things don't exist?

LEEK

Sure they exist. There's all kinds of things that exist all around us that we never see, right? Electricity, microwaves, infra-red waves. You know, they've been around forever, they show up in cave paintings. They're a normal condition of the planet, they're just not part of our consensus of what constitutes physical reality.

JOHN

(frustrated)

But what are they?

LEEK

Look, you're asking for an explanation for something that can't be explained rationally.

JOHN

But why do they show-up before all these disasters?

Leek re-shelves the book, turns to John:

LEEK

You know all that build-up of energy before something happens? The way your hair stands up before lightning strikes? That's when they cross over --

JOHN

-- What do you mean, before something happens? Do they cause disasters?

(CONTINUED)

LEEK
Why would they need to? No, my theory is they foreshadow death and disaster.

John lets that sink in, then:

JOHN
What do they want?

LEEK
I have no idea. What you really want to know is why you.

JOHN
Okay. Yeah.

LEEK
You think you're special. Trust me, you're not. You just got in their way.

JOHN
Got in their way?

LEEK
You noticed them. And they noticed that you noticed them. Most people aren't sensitive enough to see them without some sort of trauma.

John winces. Leek studies him, leans in.

LEEK (cont'd)
Are you fixated on death, Mr. Klein?

John is silent. Leek nods knowingly, then walks down the aisle and out the door. John follows.

146 EXT. NEW YORK STREET - DUSK

146

Loud, crowded, and cold. John and Leek walk into the wind:

JOHN
Last week my friend got a strange phone call from a spirit or entity or whatever. It seemed to know... *everything*. Like God.

LEEK
(continuing for him)
And 't made predictions, and they came true...

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(nods, excited)
Yeah. He called himself Indrid Cold.

John searches Leek's face for a sign of recognition; Leek just shrugs. The name means nothing to him.

LEEK
If your "friend" thinks he's talking to God, he's off by more than a few degrees.

JOHN
But how could he know all this stuff?

Leek stops walking. He looks around, trying to figure out a way to explain.

LEEK
Look up there...

John looks where Leek is pointing...

A SKYSCRAPER: Ten stories up, a window-washer squeegees the side of a glass building.

LEEK (CONT'D)
If there was a car crash on Eighty Fourth and Riverside that window washer up there could probably see it. Doesn't mean he's God -- or even any smarter than we are. But from where he's sitting, he can see a little further down the road.

JOHN
But they've gotta be more advanced than us. Why don't they just come right out and say what's on their minds?

Leek nods.

LEEK
You're more advanced than a cockroach -- ever try explaining yourself to one?

They continue down the street, each lost in their own thoughts. John breaks the silence:

JOHN
So, what about Point Pleasant?

LEEK
How many people have seen it?

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

I don't know, ten, maybe twenty?

Leek stops dead in his tracks, looks John in the eyes.

LEEK

Don't go back there,
Mr. Klein.

JOHN

What?

LEEK

Listen to me, something terrible is going
to happen in Point Pleasant.John is struck by the sudden fear that has clouded Leek's
face.

LEEK (cont'd)

Nothing you do can stop it. Don't go
back, stay away, and stay away from
me...I can't talk about this any more.Leek starts to walk away, but John's desperation demands an
answer. He pulls Leek violently by the arm.

JOHN

Look, Mr. Leek, there's got to be a
reason I ended up in Point Pleasant...
something brought me there.

Leek pulls away.

LEEK

If it brought you there, it brought you
there to die.

LEEK disappears down a dark staircase to the subway.

147 EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - NIGHT

147

John has put off his flight and spends hours walking circles
around Times Square, wrestling with unanswered questions.

148 EXT. NEW YORK STREET - MORNING

148

ON WEST 83RD STREET: John waits outside the entrance to
Leek's brownstone. When someone leaves, he rushes to the door
before it locks, slips in the building.

149 INT. LEEK'S APT BUILDING - HALLWAY - MORNING

149

John knocks. Leek cracks the door open, displeased.

JOHN

Please, I need to talk to you.

Leek stares coldly.

JOHN (cont'd)

I need to know what happened to you.

Leek's face darkens, clouded by a bad memory. He lets the door swing open.

149A INT. LEEK'S APARTMENT - MORNING

149A

John follows him down a long hallway into the KITCHEN.

LEEK

You didn't sleep last night did you?

JOHN

No.

LEEK

Once they get to you, it's hard to sleep, isn't it?

John nods.

LEEK (cont'd)

You cross a line between what's real and what's not real...

Leek pours himself a cup of tea and sits down at a table across from John.

LEEK (cont'd)

I was a physics professor at Cornell, tenured, you can look me up. One day I started hearing voices. The voices became messages. Before long, I was fully convinced that I was receiving predictions of disaster from "outside intelligences."

JOHN

But you were, weren't you?

LEEK

John, I had tapes of their voices! But so what? Nobody cared. I knew a building was

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEEK (cont'd)
going to blow up, I tried to prevent it,
but no one listened...

JOHN
What happened?

Leek has turned fragile, shaking his head slowly, as if reliving the past.

LEEK
People died.

Leek finishes his tea and goes into the LIVING ROOM, John follows.

LEEK (cont'd)
I was investigated and almost arrested.
My wife divorced me and my kids stopped
speaking to me. I spent four horrific
years in a psychiatric facility. I lost
everything.

JOHN
Oh my god.

Leek has moved over to a mantle in front of a fireplace. Pictures of his past life loom behind him.

LEEK
Being right is worse than being wrong. If
you're wrong, you're just a fool, if
you're right, you're a suspect.
Basically, it's a lose lose situation.

Leek walks towards John, stands very close to him. John looks lost and exhausted.

LEEK (cont'd)
They fuck with guys like us, Mr. Klein.
You'll never understand their messages.
You'll misinterpret them...I did. It
almost destroyed me...
You know what? In the end it all came
down to one simple question: which was
more important -- having proof? Or having
a life?

John tries hard to pull himself together.

JOHN
I'm scared.

(CONTINUED)

LEEK

Good, when you stop being scared -- then it's time to worry. Trust me. I turned away years ago when I pitched all my notes into that fireplace and I've never looked back.

JOHN

But didn't you want to know?

LEEK

Know what?

JOHN

The answers.

Leek shakes his head, recognizing the persistence of the truth seeker in front of him. Leek extends his hand.

LEEK

Good luck, John.

150 INT. AIRPORT - COFFEE SHOP - DAY

150

John and Ed sip coffee. Typical airport chaos surges all around them.

Ed shakes his head, can't believe what he's hearing.

ED

This doesn't sound like you, John. This is the kind of stuff we used to rip on when it came over the wire.

JOHN

I know. It's different when it happens to you.

Beat.

ED

You met someone, didn't you?

JOHN

(frowning)

No, no, nothing like that.

Ed takes a long, assessing look at his friend. He knows not to push it.

ED

Do me a favor. Talk to Cyrus. Today. Tell him you've got the flu -- make up any

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ED (cont'd)
excuse you want -- I'll back you up. I
just want to be sure you still have a job
up here, once you're done doing, whatever
it is you're doing down there. Deal?

JOHN
(smiles)
Deal.

151 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

151

About a hundred townsfolk have gathered for the annual Christmas tree lighting. John searches for Connie. He winds his way through the crowd, past Nat and Lucy, C.J. and Holly, Josh and the cranky Night Manager. Everyone seems a bit anxious: there's trouble getting the tree lit.

He spots Connie and Denise standing in a storefront, sharing a cigarette. They both look upset. John hugs Connie, but she doesn't hug him back. John is hurt. Denise smooths the awkward moment:

DENISE
(joking, to John)
You're just in time, they're about to
light the tree -- have been for the last
two hours.

JOHN
Really?
(surveying the crowd)
Where's Gordon? Didn't he come?

Denise points. Gordon is standing off by himself. He looks broken, preoccupied, tense.

John notices that Connie has wandered off. He catches up with her, gently takes her arm.

JOHN (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

CONNIE
(shortly)
Nothing.

JOHN
Are you okay?

Connie looks too upset to talk.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Did you bring Kevin?

(CONTINUED)

She points to Kevin, who stands about ten feet away watching elves set up the lights. Kevin has his back to them.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You look upset. What's going on?

CONNIE
(irritated)
Well, Gordon got himself fired from the chemical plant.

JOHN
That's terrible.

CONNIE
Just kept talking about Indrid Cold, wouldn't shut up. Fifteen more people reported seeing the "The Mothman" today. Fifteen.
(she raises her voice)
And three of them were cops. I hate this, John. I absolutely goddamn hate this.

Kevin wanders up to them, tugs at his Mom's coat. John looks down: One of Kevin's eyes is swollen shut -- just like C.J.

John masks his frightened reaction.

JOHN
Hi Kevin.

KEVIN
(somberly)
Hi John. Mom, can I go closer to the elves?

CONNIE
Stay where I can see you.

Kevin shuffles away.

JOHN
What happened to him?

Connie looks away, choking back her anger. She won't answer.

JOHN (cont'd)
What's wrong with his eye?

She shakes her head.

JOHN (cont'd)
Did he see something?

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

(explodes)

I don't know, John. He hasn't eaten, he won't go anywhere near his room. He won't talk to me.

Beat.

JOHN

Let me try.

John walks over to Kevin for a private talk. Kevin seems more subdued than usual.

JOHN (CONT'D)

How are you doing, pal?

KEVIN

(shrugs)

Okay, I guess.

JOHN

What happened to your eye?

Kevin won't answer. John reaches for Kevin's hands: he's trembling. John warms them in his, rubbing them together. Kevin stares at John.

KEVIN

Is my mom going to die?

John is taken aback, but he recovers:

JOHN

Of course not. Why?

John looks tenderly at Kevin, but the conviction in his voice is undeniable:

JOHN (CONT'D)

Nothing is going to happen to your mom, okay?

Kevin looks at him; he wants to believe it, but...

JOHN (cont'd)

I mean it Kevin. I promise...I'm going to make sure of it.

Good enough. Kevin hugs John with the complete reassurance that only a seven year-old can truly feel.

(CONTINUED)

A row of lights goes on, sparks, and immediately goes off. The crowd lets out a disappointed "hfff". Kevin moves ahead to see what's going on.

John looks at Connie and nods -- it's okay. They circle the still dark tree in silence for a while, tracking Kevin. Then:

JOHN (cont'd)

Connie, whatever is happening here -- it has something to do with me. I was brought here. For a reason...

Connie stops, looks him in the eyes.

JOHN (cont'd)

These things are real. Indrid Cold is real. He's trying to show me something, tell me something...I don't know what.

John waits for her to react. All he sees on her face is concern. Whatever she's thinking, she doesn't want to say it.

Fifty feet above them, the grand old pine tree lights. They stare, speechless. It's beautiful, but at the same time, maybe because of the events of the last months, a pall hangs over the town...

152 EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

152

A neon sign buzzes, electrical wires hum, WE MOVE along a phone line towards John's dark room.

153 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

153

John turns over in bed, then wakes with a start. There's a rustling sound outside. Somebody is at the window.

John climbs out of bed. The phone starts ringing. He ignores it. He goes to the window and draws back the curtains...

154 A BRIGHT ORANGE MOON (INTERCUT)

154

glows on the horizon. Silhouetted against it: a leafless tree, bending in the wind.

The tree turns toward John. Glowing red eyes shine at him. How could he have missed it? It's not a tree at all.

It's Mothman. SNAP! -- a giant wing flares from the creature's back and -- CRACKS THE WINDOW.

SMASHCUT TO:

155 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

155

THE PHONE IS STILL RINGING: John bolts up in bed, covered in sweat, gasping from the nightmare.

John catches his breath and looks at the clock: 4:00 a.m. exactly. He picks up the phone:

JOHN

Hello?

GORDON (O.S.)

John? It's Gordon.

Gordon's VOICE is distant and staticky.

JOHN

Gordon? Where are you, I can barely hear -

GORDON (O.S.)

(excited)

-- Jeez, I can't believe I got through...Listen, John: he was right. Mr.Cold was right about everything.

John strains to hear; he shouts into the bad connection:

JOHN

Right about what?

GORDON (O.S.)

It's beautiful, John. I want you to know that. It truly is. You've got nothing to worry about.

JOHN

What's beautiful, Gordon? What are you talking about?

Gordon's VOICE grows fainter.

GORDON (O.S.)S

I gotta go. Goodbye, John. Thanks for everything. I'll see you in time.

A huge flare of static and then silence. No dial tone, no click...Just silence.

156 EXT. GORDON SMALLWOOD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

156

John slams into Gordon Smallwood's driveway just behind Connie's cruiser and a paramedic van.

(CONTINUED)

John RUSHES toward the barn as Connie emerges with Denise, who's crying hysterically.

John is stopped short: Denise glares at him with hatred in her eyes:

DENISE
(under her breath)
It's your fault...you encouraged him...

Denise climbs the porch and disappears into the house. Connie takes John's arm as they walk back towards the barn.

CONNIE
You know she doesn't mean it.

John nods.

JOHN
Did she see it?

CONNIE
No, she was asleep when she heard the shot. Gordon wasn't in bed. She came out here and found him in back with his shotgun.

JOHN
Jesus...Do you know what time it happened?

Connie wipes her eyes and checks her notebook:

CONNIE
Around 4 A.M.

John flinches, like he's just been struck.

CONNIE (cont'd)
I can't stand this, John. I feel like everyone in town is losing their mind.

John knows exactly what she means.

157 INT. IRON HORSE TAVERN - LATE AFTERNOON

157

John is wearing a black suit, hunched over a glass of scotch. A couple people dressed in mourning clothes are gathered at the other end of the bar. A hand gently squeezes John's shoulder, he turns to find Fire Chief Josh Jessup:

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

It didn't seem right to bring this up at the funeral -- but as far as I know, there's never been any accidents at the chemical plant.

JOHN

What are you talking about?

JOSH

I got your message yesterday, I meant to call you back, but it slipped my mind.

John gives him a blank look.

JOSH (cont'd)

Don't you remember leaving me that message?

JOHN

I wasn't here yesterday, I was in New York.

158 INT. BELL SOUND LABS - CHARLESTON - DAY

158

Once again, John sits with Sonny Berger.

A PHONE MESSAGE CASSETTE spins in a high tech deck. It sounds exactly like JOHN'S VOICE.

ANSWERING MACHINE VOICE (V.O.)

Hi Josh, this is John Klein. Have there ever been any accidents at the chemical plant? Thank you in advance.

Sonny hits "stop."

JOHN

I never made that call. It sounds like me, but come on, "Thank you in advance"? I don't talk like that. No one does.

SONNY

Well, it sure sounds like you.

John looks at the Voice Frequency Gauge: It's well within human range -- about 1100 cycles per minute.

JOHN

There's no way this could be an electrical impulse like the last one?

(CONTINUED)

SONNY
Doubtful. Watch...

Sonny isolates John's VOICE on the previous tape and on Josh's tape. He runs them on adjacent monitors: the gauges respond identically.

SONNY (CONT'D)
This is what we call a voiceprint. The best computer mimic in the world can't get more than a 75% match. These two are at 99.7% If I had to, I'd swear in a court of law that both of these voices are yours.

159 EXT. STREET - POINT PLEASANT - DUSK 159

It's just getting dark as John pulls into town, parks in front of the POLICE STATION.

John bounds up the station steps, his mind still reeling from the events at the sound lab. He stops abruptly and walks back down the steps, turns left.

A WOMAN WITH RED HAIR climbs the steps from the right. John just misses seeing her, but we do: she's a dead-ringer for Mary.

We follow John to a -

160 EXT. STREET/CORNER SHOP - POINT PLEASANT - DAY 160

where he buys coffee.

161 EXT. POLICE STATION - LATER 161

John climbs the steps. As he passes through the glass front doors, THE WOMAN WALKS RIGHT PAST HIM.

Once again, John misses seeing her. Is that Mary? Now we're not sure. Something looks different.

162 INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT 162

John approaches Connie at her desk. But before he can say a word, she jumps up:

CONNIE
Do you know that woman?

JOHN
What woman?

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

The one that just walked past you as you came in...

He and Connie go to the glass doors; they look around the street, but no one is anywhere to be seen.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

That is so odd. She had long red-hair and green eyes. Real pretty. And she was asking about you...

John whips his head around to look at Connie as we...

FLASHCUT TO:

163 EXT. BEACH - DAY

163

JOHN'S MEMORY POV: The beach. Hawaii. Mary laughs, her red hair and green eyes shining in the sun...

FLASHCUT BACK TO:

164 EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

164

as John dashes outside, searching the street for the Woman. Connie follows him...

OUTSIDE THE POLICE STATION: John heads across the street to the town square, turning around as he walks, his eyes everywhere, scanning in all directions:

JOHN

What did she say?

Connie struggles to keep up with him:

CONNIE

All these strange questions: What are you writing about? Do you believe in Prophecy? What would your reaction be if I asked you to stop investigating Indrid Cold -- if I said it was for your own good?

JOHN

What did you say?

CONNIE

I asked for some I.D. -- will you slow down please?

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
Did she give you any?

CONNIE
No. She just said, "Tell John I'm sorry
for ruining everything." And then she got
up and walked out.

John stops in his tracks and whips around, staring at Connie.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

For a moment John can't speak. Then he claws his wallet out
of his coat, flips it open and thrusts it at Connie:

JOHN
Was it her?

Connie focuses on a wallet-size snapshot of Mary Klein -- and
her eyes go wide in shock: *This is the woman.*

JOHN (CONT'D)
Was it her?

CONNIE
(barely audible)
That's your wife?

JOHN
(on fire)
It was her.

Connie slowly shakes her head. *This is impossible...*

And just that fast, doubt forms in her eyes.

CONNIE
I'm not sure.

JOHN
What?

CONNIE
I mean -- the hair is different, and...

John stares at her in disbelief: she's convincing herself
that it wasn't Mary she saw.

JOHN
Oh, *come on.*

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE
(defensive)
What?

JOHN
You saw her! *This is the woman you saw!*

The crazed look on John's face scares the hell out of her. There's no way she's buying into all this.

CONNIE
No it isn't, John. I agree, there is a...a similarity, maybe, but --

JOHN
Bullshit!

This hits Connie like a slap in the face. She struggles to maintain her calm.

CONNIE
John -- tell me you're okay.

JOHN
I'm not okay. You saw her. You know you did.
(pleading)
Don't do this to me. *Not you.*

CONNIE
Please John -- tell me you're okay.

John shakes his head; he's never felt more alone in his life.

JOHN
I gotta go.

John storms off, leaving Connie standing in the middle of the town square.

165 INT. MOTEL - FRONT DESK - NIGHT

165

John approaches the Clerk:

JOHN
Any calls to room 124 today?

The clerk checks the electronic switchboard:

CLERK
No sir.

166 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

166

John enters. The PHONE RINGS. He looks at the answering machine: the number '9' flashes insistently.

John slowly approaches the phone and picks it up...

AN EAR-SHATTERING BEEP -- he slams the receiver down.

John hits the "playback" on his answering machine. It rewinds and plays: More BEEPING...Odd electronic MUSIC...A strange, high-pitched rhythmic MURMUR...

What the hell does all this mean?

The PHONE RINGS. He hesitates, then picks it up. It's a high-pitched CHORUS OF VOICES.

VOICES (V.O.)
Are you John Klein?

JOHN
Yes.

VOICES (V.O.)
Mr. Klein...

And now the VOICES slow down and deepen:

VOICE (V.O.)
Sorry...I...ruined... everything...

John slams down the phone. He's shaking now, in a full sweat. But now he has an idea...

He removes the tape from the answering machine and inserts it into his PORTABLE MINI-RECORDER.

He cues the tape to the HIGH-PITCHED RHYTHMIC MURMUR message, then plays it through three or four times, listening closely for words, voices -- anything.

Nothing. Just the odd murmuring noise.

The PHONE RINGS. John lets it ring, waiting for the machine to pick up -- then realizes he's removed the tape. Damn. He really doesn't want to answer the phone...

But he has to.

He reaches for it, his hand literally shaking. He picks it up.

(CONTINUED)

It's the high pitched CHORUS OF VOICES again:

VOICE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Sorry I ruined everything...Sorry I
ruined everything...Sorry I ruined
everything...

He slams down the phone. It immediately rings again. He backs away.

167 INT. MOTEL - FRONT DESK - NIGHT 167

John staggers to the desk, his body rigid with fear.

JOHN
I have to leave for awhile. I'm not sure
when I'll be back, but until I am could
you please make sure no one goes into my
room? Not the maid -- not anyone.

The clerk looks at John and doesn't like what he sees.

CLERK
Are you okay, Mr. Klein?

JOHN
(nods)
I just need to get away from here.

And with that, John leaves.

168 INT. JOHN'S CAR - NIGHT 168

John drives like a bat out of hell, gripping the wheel tightly. He passes a sign: "Welcome to Kentucky."

169 INT. JOHN'S CAR - LATER 169

Still forging ahead aimlessly into the night. John fights exhaustion and paranoia. Another sign whizzes past: "You are leaving Kentucky -- Welcome to Indiana."

170 EXT. TRAVEL LODGE - CLARION, INDIANA - NIGHT 170

Three hours and 269 miles away from Point Pleasant. John pulls into the motel driveway and parks.

He climbs out of his car, stiff and sore, unable to drive another foot. He wanders exhausted into...

171 INT. TRAVEL LODGE LOBBY - SAME 171

John approaches the YOUNG WOMAN at the counter.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

I just need...whatever you've got.

WOMAN

No problem.

He hands her his credit card. The woman runs his card, then freezes. She looks up at him:

WOMAN (cont'd)

You're John Klein?

John's eyes snap open. The woman laughs, incredulous:

WOMAN (cont'd)

Oh my god...

She pulls out a thick stack of pink message slips.

WOMAN (cont'd)

We've been getting these for the past two days.

This can't be happening. John takes the stack of messages, hands trembling...

They all say the same thing: "Call me. Urgent. Mary Klein."

172 EXT. PHONE BOOTH - TRAVEL LODGE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

172

John grips the receiver, hovering on the edge of panic. He fumbles Albert Leek's business card out of his pocket and dials the number:

LEEK (O.S.)

(exasperated)

What!

JOHN

(taken aback)

Mr. Leek? It's John, I --

LEEK (O.S.)

For God sake, stop calling me! I told you --

JOHN

-- What? --

LEEK (O.S.)

(shouting)

-- I told you I don't know Indrid Cold --

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

Oh my God...

LEEK

And I don't want to!

JOHN

I never called you.

Silence on the line. They both know who's been calling.

LEEK

I told you, I got outta this shit years ago, and I don't want to go back.

Leek hangs up.

173 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - POINT PLEASANT - NIGHT

173

It's still dark out. John enters like he's walking into a snake pit. He quickly knocks the phone off the hook before it has a chance to ring. He looks around the room...

JOHN'S POV: Mothman drawings, photos, maps, charts, books -- it looks like a lunatic's office.

John comes to a decision: there's only one thing to do.

John opens a box of 40-gallon trash bags. He shakes one open and slowly begins stuffing it.

He starts with the photos, next go the note cards. Then the maps and charts. He begins moving faster and faster.

He furiously jams faxes and articles into the bag. Finally, he rips THE MOTHMAN DRAWINGS off the wall and tears them up.

174 EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

174

John throws a huge armload of trash in a dumpster behind the motel.

175 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM -NIGHT

175

Riding the momentum, picking up steam, John storms through the room, dismantling the headquarters with glee.

Suddenly, a POLAROID PICTURE falls from the wall onto the desk in front of him. He freezes -- then relaxes: it's the one of him and Mary in Hawaii. He smiles.

Finally, it seems like it might be okay. He stares at this island of normalcy in a room packed with madness.

(CONTINUED)

Then his smile dies and his eyes fill with growing dread. AS WE MOVE AROUND BEHIND HIM we see why:

JOHN'S OV - THE POLAROID: In the upper corner, above John's shoulder, we see something in the sky that has never been in the picture before...

A tiny, bird-like figure with two red, glowing eyes.

John sinks to the floor, gripping the picture. Even here -- in his memories -- he isn't safe.

JOHN
(whispering)
No, no, no...

176 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

176

FADE UP on the same shot. Later.

John sits in the dark room clutching his portable mini-recorder and playing the HIGH-PITCHED MURMUR over and over...

177 INT. JOHN'S MOTEL ROOM - MORNING

177

John hasn't moved. Dawn is breaking. John sits, half-asleep, the recorder still playing in his hands. But the batteries are dying and the tape plays slowly, the hi-pitched murmur now sounding like...a voice?

THE PHONE RINGS.

Startled, John jolts awake and grabs the receiver:

JOHN
What?

It's Cyrus Bills, John's editor from the Post:

CYRUS (O.S.)
It's me, Cyrus...

John tries to clear his head -- what is that weird noise? He realizes his mini-recorder is still playing...

CYRUS (O.S.) (cont'd)
John? Is that you?

JOHN
(distracted)
Yeah, yeah, it's me...

(CONTINUED)

CYRUS (O.S.)

Look, John, I didn't mean to call so early, but it's the only way I knew I'd catch you...John! You there?

JOHN

Yeah, yeah, what?

CYRUS (O.S.)

This is important. Governor McCallum is touring the Alanco Chemical Plant today, right there where you are. I need you there. Are you listening?

JOHN

McCallum, at the chemical plant. Got it.

But John's attention is now riveted to his tape player: as the batteries continue to run down, the sound of a VOICE becomes even clearer...

John holds the recorder to his free ear, straining to hear.

CYRUS (O.S.)

I need to know you're going to be there...

John pays no attention, the VOICE becomes clearer every second...

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

John?...

John sets the receiver down on the ground, forgetting about it completely, and turns the volume of the mini-recorder all the way up to "10".

The VOICE on the tape -- now a low-pitched drone -- is perfectly clear and very familiar: It is Indrid Cold.

INDRID COLD (V.O.)

(on tape)

Great tragedy on River-Ohio. Great tragedy on River-Ohio. Great tragedy on River-Ohio...

We hear Cyrus shouting to John through the discarded phone receiver, but John listens to the tape, transfixed.

178 INT. CONNIE PARKER'S HOUSE - MORNING

178

John follows Connie around as she gets ready for work.

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

John, I can't just call in sick because you have a bad feeling about today.

JOHN

Think about it: the weird lights in the sky show up over the chemical plant. Josh got a call from me -- which wasn't from me -- where I talked about something bad happening at the chemical plant. Then I got a call from Indrid Cold talking about a tragedy on the Ohio River, and guess what's on the Ohio River?

CONNIE

The chemical plant.

JOHN

And today Governor McCallum is going to be there. I was on my way to interview him last week when I ended up here in the first place. All the pieces fit -- it explains everything!

Connie stops getting ready and turns to him:

CONNIE

What about Josh's phone calls? Or Holly's burns? How does all that fit in?

JOHN

I don't know exactly. It must all be part of the warning.

CONNIE

(incredulous)

What?

JOHN

How many sightings of Mothman have you logged down at the station?

CONNIE

(distracted)

I don't know...thirty, forty...

JOHN

God-damnit! Come on -- something terrible's going to happen -- we have to leave town. Now.

Connie turns to him, angry and scared:

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

No! John... I can't live my life that way. I can't make decisions based on messages from Indrid Cold. He's real to you. He's not real to me.

JOHN

(pleading)

Then at least get yourself re-assigned off the security detail. I don't want you anywhere near that place today.

Connie sees the intensity on John's face; it's terrifying.

CONNIE

What if nothing happens?

John looks at her strangely -- this never occurred to him.

JOHN

What?

CONNIE

What if there's no "great tragedy" today? What will you do?

JOHN

I... don't know, I haven't thought that far, that's not the point --

CONNIE

Yeah, I think it is the point. Gordon believed what he heard too --

John grabs her, enraged:

JOHN

Fuck Gordon! I'm not Gordon!! That wasn't my fault. I tried to help him, but he wouldn't listen to me! I'm not going to let the same thing happen to you!

Connie stares at him. The look on her face makes John take his hands off her.

Connie turns, grabs her gun and purse, doesn't even look at John:

CONNIE

You need to leave. If you want to talk about this later, my shift ends at six.

179 INT. CHARLESTON AIRPORT - DAY (MOVING TO EXTERIOR)

179

A crush of reporters, photographers, and camera operators traipse along with Virginia Governor Rob McCallum, his aides, his official West Virginia greeters.

John falls in smoothly, steers through the aides with the magic words, "Washington Post", and moves up alongside the Governor.

JOHN

Good afternoon, Governor.

ROB MCCALLUM

Hi, John. I missed you in Richmond.

JOHN

I need to speak with you, it's urgent.

John's intensity registers. McCallum's smile wrinkles into concern. He lowers his voice.

ROB MCCALLUM

What's this about, John?

JOHN

It's the tour. You can't do it, you can't go. The plant's at risk.

An AIDE is close enough to overhear.

AIDE

(in a murmur)
-- ah, shit.

McCallum's pace falters.

JOHN

You need to get the place shut down for a safety inspection.

AIDE

They've done two checks already, Governor.

McCallum nods at the aide. John fights down his desperation.

JOHN

The plant's going to blow up while you're there.

McCallum has enough sense to keep his voice low.

(CONTINUED)

ROB MCCALLUM

There's a bomb?? -- How do you know --
are you sure??

The aide whips out a cell phone, and fishes his cheat sheet
of phone numbers from his jacket. John glances over at him.

AIDE

(just heard, B.G.)
State Police? --

JOHN

People are going to die if you don't
listen to me, Rob.

AIDE

(faintly, B.G.)
-- this is Governor McCallum's chief
aide, we're at the airport --

McCallum's gaze jerks around the airport.

ROB MCCALLUM

Where are the cops? What are they doing?

John sucks in a breath.

JOHN

They don't know yet.

ROB MCCALLUM

(startled)
What?

AIDE

(B.G.)
-- have you received a bomb threat?

JOHN

I never said it was a bomb -- it's
something...You have to believe me.

And right that minute, with his messy hair and his circled
eyes, he's no longer believable. McCallum's gaze settles on
him. The aide's voice is stronger.

AIDE

No?...Nothing?...Just a last minute
security check. We're ready to roll,
thanks.

He flips the phone shut, shakes his head at the governor.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(to McCallum)
Hundreds of people could die -- and
you're one of them.
(to the aide)
So are you --

McCallum blows out a sad breath.

ROB MCCALLUM
You're messing up here, John.

JOHN
I have information.

ROB MCCALLUM
You didn't call the police.

JOHN
...My source is psychic.

The aide is so relieved he sniggers.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Look, I know how this sounds -- but many
of this person's predictions have come
true; the plane crash in Denver last
week, the earthquake in Ecuador.

McCallum and the Aide exchange concerned glances.

MCCALLUM
I appreciate your concern --

John stands and makes a final dramatic plea:

JOHN
That's not good enough. Cancel the tour.
Insist that the plant be shut down
immediately. You'll be a hero.
(beat)
Please Governor. Something terrible is
going to happen. I know it.

180 EXT. CHARLESTON AIRPORT - DAY

180

They have reached the Governor's limo. McCallum squeezes his eyes shut, drops his chin to his chest for an instant, looks up at John again.

ROB MCCALLUM
Here's what I'm going to do.

(CONTINUED)

John's shoulders relax; he's convinced him.

ROB MCCALLUM (CONT'D)

I'm going to go meet Governor Harris at the State House...I'm going to drink lukewarm coffee from a good china cup and not spill the crumbs from the cookies they've baked...and then we're going to ride in a limousine out to the chemical plant and shake hands with every willing man and woman there...because I don't intend to end up as a front page joke!

We follow McCallum into his

LIMOUSINE

MCCALLUM

(into car phone)

Get Cyrus Bills on the phone for me.

As the limo speeds away, John disappears through the back window.

181 INT. LOBBY BAR - CHARLESTON HYATT - 12:30 P.M.

181

John enters and sits at the bar. A BASKETBALL GAME plays on the TV, and stock quotes scroll across an LED SCREEN underneath.

JOHN

(to Bartender)

Scotch, no ice. You mind turning on the news?

The Bartender looks up at the game then back to John. He reluctantly turns the channel.

182 LOBBY BAR - LATER

182

And a few scotches down. ON TV, the LOCAL NEWSCAST features a report on car adoptions.

BARTENDER

Hey, can I at least check the score?

John pushes his empty glass at the bartender.

JOHN

No. And do me again.

183 LOBBY BAR - 5:00 P.M.

183

It's dark now. The bar is empty. John is drunk. He stares at the TV as the EVENING NEWS comes on.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(to the Bartender)
Turn it up...

The Bartender glares at John. John smiles politely and hands him twenty:

JOHN (cont'd)
You've been very kind. I plan to write a glowing letter to Mr. Hyatt as soon as I'm sober. Now would you please turn up the goddamn volume.

The Bartender takes the twenty and turns up the volume.

184 CLOSE ON TV (INTERCUT)

184

NEWS ANCHOR
(on TV)
Our top story tonight takes us to Point Pleasant where Virginia Governor Robert McCallum joined Governor Harris and representatives from the state's Environmental Regulatory Panel to tour the Alanco Petrochemical Plant. Tory Pherris is on location in Point Pleasant. Tory?

185 EXT. ALANCO CHEMICAL PLANT - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

185

The NEWS BROADCAST goes live to Tory Pherris:

TORY
(on TV)
In what he's called a "successful review of Alanco's recent emissions reduction overhaul," Governor McCallum gave high marks to the petrochemical plant, and he is expected to call for similar renovations at several Virginia plants. His tour began today at...

186 RESUME SCENE

186

JOHN has already stopped listening. His attention is riveted to the visual of the CHEMICAL PLANT ON TV in the background: No sign of explosion, mayhem or death.

(CONTINUED)

Time to face facts: He was wrong. Nothing happened. He doesn't know whether to be relieved or disappointed.

JOHN
Son of a bitch.

John stares down at his scotch. RED LETTERS reflect off the surface of his drink. He slowly looks up at the LED SCREEN. It's flashing: SHE WILL CALL - SHE WILL CALL.

John turns to the Bartender who has been standing nearby.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Did you see that?

The Bartender glares at him and shakes his head.

A BELLHOP appears at John's side.

BELLHOP
Excuse me, Mr. Klein?

JOHN
Yeah?

BELLHOP
You have a message.

The Bellhop hands John a folded slip of paper. John opens it, reads:

GEORGETOWN. FRIDAY. NOON.

John looks up. The Bellhop is gone.

187 INT. JOHN'S ROOM - HYATT HOTEL - NIGHT

187

John's luggage is on the bed; as he packs the last of his things there's a knock at the door. He opens it.

It's Connie. She walks in, sees the bags:

CONNIE
You're leaving. Back to Washington?

JOHN
Yup.

CONNIE
You don't have to go, John.

JOHN
Yeah. I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

If it's about today --

JOHN

-- No, no, I just got a message...

John holds up THE NOTE.

JOHN (cont'd)

I have to get back to my apartment in
Georgetown.Connie notices something odd about John: he doesn't seem
upset at all. In fact, he looks more confident than ever.

JOHN (cont'd)

Indrid Cold says I'll be contacted on
Friday at noon.Connie can't believe what she's hearing. She watches as John
moves about the room with robot-like intensity.

CONNIE

Do you have any idea what's happened to
you, John? What you've allowed to happen?

JOHN

I didn't allow anything.

He tries to hand her the NOTE; she pushes it away, won't even
look at it. CAMERA slowly moves in on the note...we see that
nothing is written on it.

CONNIE

(desperate)

Don't leave. For God's sake, stop
following his orders!

JOHN

I know you won't be able to understand
this, but I can't.Connie stands in front of him, talking as slow and deliberate
as a hostage negotiator.

CONNIE

Please John. Don't do this.

John doesn't even look at her as he steps around her, grabs
his bags and leaves.

(CONTINUED)

On the SOUND of a CHOIR singing "SILENT NIGHT", we...

FADE TO:

- 188 INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT 188
John staggers in and drops his bags. He flops onto his bed fully dressed, not even removing his overcoat...
- 189 EXT. POINT PLEASANT TOWN SQUARE - DAY 189
Snow falls on the glowing Christmas Tree...
- 190 INT. POINT PLEASANT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAY 190
We now SEE the SINGING CHOIR -- a group of SCHOOL CHILDREN on stage. Right in front, Kevin Parker.
IN THE AUDIENCE: Connie listens, smiling and crying...
- 191 EXT. FIRE STATION 51 - POINT PLEASANT - DAY 191
Josh Jessup and the other fireman use the truck ladders to place Christmas lights along the station house roof...
- 192 EXT. LUCY GRIFFIN'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - SUNSET 192
Lucy and Nat Griffin build a giant snowman with GIANT WINGS AND INSECT EYES beneath the blue pine tree where Mothman appeared just weeks ago...
- 193 INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 193
John -- still in his clothes and overcoat from yesterday -- sits in complete darkness, staring at his phone...
- 194 INT. CONNIE PARKER'S HOUSE - NIGHT 194
Connie and Kevin decorate their Christmas tree. Connie stops to gaze out the window; a gentle snow is falling...
- 195 INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT 195
John stares out the window of his apartment. Snow falls here, too; but it falls hard and wet and gray...
- 196 INT. POINT PLEASANT CHURCH - NIGHT 196
Denise Smallwood sits alone in a the cavernous space; candlelight flickers against the walls. She bows her head in prayer, tears streaming down her cheeks...

197 EXT. ALANCO CHEMICAL PLANT/HILLS - NIGHT 197

Just a few cars are parked here on this cold, crystal-clear night. Connie Parker sits in her cruiser staring out at the horizon over the chemical plant.

The CHOIR (O.S.) brings their song to its final, poignant notes...

198 INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 198

John is curled asleep on the cold dark living room floor...

FADE OUT.

199 INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - NEXT MORNING - DAY 199

John looks like hell: he hasn't shaved or changed clothes in three days. He gazes at the clock -- it's almost noon.

He clutches the Polaroid -- Mothman still clearly visible in the sky -- and waits. As John stares at the Polaroid, the Mothman's eyes seem to stare back at him.

IMPOSSIBLE ANGLE on John's face from the Mothman's POV in the photo.

THE PHONE RINGS. John pounces:

JOHN

Hello?

200 CONNIE - AT HOME (INTERCUT CONVERSATION) 200

CONNIE

Hi. It's me.

JOHN

Connie?

CONNIE

Yeah. Just thought we could chat for, say, ten or fifteen minutes...

(beat)

You're not laughing.

JOHN

I'm sorry, Connie. Can I call you back?

CONNIE

No, you can't. I booked you a flight.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

What?

CONNIE

It leaves Dulles for Columbus, Ohio at one-forty five. I tried to get one to Charleston, but they're booked solid. If you leave right now, you'll just make it...

Despite everything, John is actually touched.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

It's Christmas Eve, John. I miss you. Kevin does, too.

JOHN

I can't.

CONNIE

The hell you can't.

John's voice is choked with emotion:

JOHN

Connie...When Mary got sick...I kept wishing there was something I could do to stop it. Anything. But there wasn't. It was like there was this train coming straight for me and I could see it but no matter what I did I couldn't get out of its way...I couldn't stop it.

CONNIE

No one can stop it John. Look, planes are going to crash. Earthquakes are going to happen. People you know and love are going to die, and no matter what that fucking alien tells you, there's nothing you can do about it. You can't save the world, John. All you can do is try to survive it.

Tears run down John's face. He forces out the words:

JOHN

It's one year to the day. He told me she was going to call. He said Mary was going to call with the message.

A long beat of silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

(gently)

He's lying, John. Whoever calls might sound like her, but it's not going to be her. I don't know what happens after we die, but I'll bet wherever Mary is now, she's nowhere near Indrid Cold.

John cries openly now, emotion and fear shaking him.

JOHN

But what if it is her?

(almost a whisper)

I never even got to say goodbye.

CONNIE

(gently)

She's dead, John.

A long silence as this reality finally sinks in for John -- maybe for the first time ever.

CONNIE (cont'd)

(cont'd)

The only question now is how you want to remember her.

John looks at the crumpled Polaroid. Just the three of them: John, Mary -- and Mothman.

JOHN

I miss her so much...

CONNIE

I know you do. You can miss her here just as easily as there. Maybe more easily, cause you're all alone there, and that's no way to be.

Another silence. Then:

JOHN

I miss you, too.

CONNIE

(kindly)

Do whatever you have to do. I'll understand. But down here, we have dinner at six and do presents at eight. We'll be waiting for you.

And with that, Connie hangs up. John slowly sets down the phone. It's 11:59 AM.

(CONTINUED)

He looks at his bags, still packed, lying in the entry hall where he dumped them three days ago.

John looks back at the phone. The future...Or the past? The living...Or the dead? He moves for the phone -- then reaches past it and grabs...

THE WALL CORD. He holds it, gathers his courage...And though it might be the most painful thing he's ever done, he takes a deep breath, stands up...

And yanks the phone cord out of the wall!

Done. He pants a bit from the emotional effort. Maybe it wasn't so hard after all.

He opens the blinds. Light fills his apartment. He looks around. For the first time in days -- maybe for the first time in over a year -- John Klein feels truly free.

His eyes land on the bags in the entry hall. John goes to them, grabs them up and heads for the door.

THE PHONE RINGS.

John freezes. He turns and looks at the phone. The frayed wall cord lies coiled like a snake on the floor.

THE PHONE RINGS.

He looks at the clock. It's 12:00 exactly.

THE PHONE RINGS.

John turns away. He grips the door knob, turns it and opens the door.

THE PHONE RINGS.

John steps out into the hall. And closes the door behind him on the empty apartment -- and the past -- as...

THE PHONE RINGS, AND RINGS, AND RINGS...

200A CLOSE ON POLAROID

200A

Mary and John smile on the beach. As the CAMERA PULLS BACK, the Mothman evaporates from the upper right hand corner, leaving only clear blue sky. The Mothman is gone.

201 EXT. JOHN'S APARTMENT/SKY - DAY 201

CAMERA CONTINUES TO PULL BACK until it moves up through the ceiling and into the sky above the apartment, above Georgetown, into the clouds...

202 EXT. SKY - DAY 202

We rise out of the clouds, following a 737 flying west.

203 INT. 737 - DAY 203

John glances around the cabin as passengers read their books and newspapers, talk, listen to music.

John closes his eyes, he sits back, relieved, smiling; he's no longer the hunted, the nightmare is over. But as he looks out the window...

204 OUT WINDOW - SKY 204

... a storm is brewing over West Virginia.

205 INT. RED FORD ESCORT - HIGHWAY 35 - DAY 205

John peers past the icy, dry snow blasting across the windshield. He fights to keep the car on the road, inching along at 45 M.P.H. The radio report is grim:

RADIO NEWSMAN (V.O.)
(on radio)
...national weather service is calling
for increased snow through tonight and...

206 EXT. HIGHWAY - TOLL BOOTH - DAY 206

John's car exits the highway, passing through the same eerie toll booth as several days earlier.

RADIO NEWSMAN (V.O.)
(continuous)
...national weather service is calling
for increased snow through tonight and...
...into tomorrow along the Ohio River
Valley. Ten to twelve inches is expected
before...

John sees a MILEAGE SIGN loom up out of the snowy haze:
"Point Pleasant, W.Va. - 71 miles." He checks the clock: 4:20
p.m. John eases the car up to 50 M.P.H....

207 EXT. HIGHWAY - COMING INTO POINT PLEASANT - LATER 207

Snow falls in gray flurries as John's car makes its way across the final mile of Gallipolis, Ohio and approaches the Ohio River and the 700 foot span of...

THE SILVER BRIDGE leading into Point Pleasant.

John's car pulls up behind a line of cars stopped on the hill leading down to the red light before the bridge.

208 INT. FORD ESCORT 208

John looks at the clock: 5:55 p.m. He may be late for dinner, but not by much...

He happily drums on the steering wheel. "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas" floats from the radio.

John waits...

209 EXT. SILVER BRIDGE - DUSK 209

Traffic is backed-up in both directions. Cars are loaded with people -- on their way home, on their way to parties, on their way to the mall for some last minute shopping.

210 INT. POLICE CRUISER 210

Connie sits in her cruiser, mid-span. She impatiently drums her fingers on the steering wheel. People in other cars stare at her - after all, she is a cop.

This is getting ridiculous...she turns on her flashers and gets out of her car.

211 ON THE BRIDGE 211

Connie stands on tip-toes, looking down the long line of cars to see what the hold up is. Far ahead, down at the Point Pleasant end of the bridge, she sees...

A SIGNAL LIGHT: It's red -- and shows no sign of changing. Connie turns and gazes back down at...

THE OHIO END OF THE BRIDGE: Another red light. Connie barely registers the Ford Escort waiting there, on the road leading to the bridge.

212 INT. FORD ESCORT 212

John is getting antsy. What's with the light? A burst of static fogs the radio. He shuts it off, annoyed.

(CONTINUED)

And in the sudden silence, he hears it. A SOUND. A faint sound. A familiar sound...

Connie stands in the cold wind -- and hears the sound, too. A low MOAN that rises to an eerie SHRIEK.

She looks around -- where the hell is that sound coming from?

The bizarre sound echoes...

Lucy Griffin and her son Nat hear it.

Denise Smallwood hears it.

And a dozen other people we recognize from town -- they all hear the ominous sounds...

John climbs out of his car and heads down the the bridge. Twenty yards ahead, A MAN is standing beside his car.

JOHN

What's going on up there?

MAN

Some problem with the traffic lights.

John walks away. The CAMERA begins to CLOSE IN on his back. John stops, sensing something. The CAMERA stops.

John whips around, looks directly at us. The CAMERA retreats, but the SOUND is unmistakable now, and getting louder. Moaning, howling, shrieking...That's when John realizes:

It's the sound from Josh Jessup's phone calls.

And it seems to be coming from the bridge itself.

JOHN

Oh my God...

John stumbles backwards.

JOHN (cont'd)

(under his breath)

Great tragedy on River Ohio...

115.
215

215 CONTINUED:

And in one blindingly clear instant, all the pieces of the puzzle fall into place.

John looks up, drawn by the oddly familiar sight of...

216 EXT. SKY - NIGHT 216

...RED AND BLUE LIGHTS dancing on the low hanging clouds.

217 HILL LEADING DOWN TO THE BRIDGE 217

John's heads snaps back down at -

218 ON THE BRIDGE 218

A Police Car - red and blue dome lights spinning. On the bridge. Connie.

219 ROAD LEADING TO THE BRIDGE 219

JOHN dashes across the intersection and runs...

220 ON THE BRIDGE 220

John pounds on the hoods of the cars stacked up behind the red light.

JOHN
Go! Go! Get off the bridge!

IN THE CARS: People are scared and confused. First the weird noises, now this crazy man telling them to run the red light? What the hell is going on?

Most don't bother sticking around to find out.

221 ROAD LEADING ONTO THE BRIDGE 221

Slowly but surely the cars begin moving off the bridge...

222 ON THE BRIDGE 222

As the cold wind blows and snow blasts all around him, John moves along the row of cars ordering people off the bridge until he reaches...

223 IN C.J.'S IMPALA 223

Remember him? He and Holly told John about their backseat encounter just one week ago...

- 224 ON THE BRIDGE 224
 John pounds on C.J.'s window:
- JOHN
 Hurry up! Go!
- 225 IN C.J.'S IMPALA 225
 But C.J. ignores John -- he's got bigger problems...He stares up at the wires and cables above the bridge.
- 226 BRIDGE SUPERSTRUCTURE OVERHEAD 226
 C.J.'S POV: Shrouded in mist and snow, C.J. thinks he sees something perched on a support tower. It looks kind of like a giant bird...
- 227 ON THE BRIDGE 227
 John looks back -- C.J. is blocking all the other cars. Screw it -- he yanks the car door open.
- C.J.
 (screaming)
 What the hell is that thing?!
- John follows his terrified gaze up to...
- 228 BRIDGE SUPERSTRUCTURE 228
 THE SUPPORT TOWER: Nothing is there.
- 229 ON THE BRIDGE 229
 JOHN
 What thing? What are you --
- He glances back at C.J. and falls silent: C.J.'s face is a picture of abject horror...
- 230 BRIDGE SUPERSTRUCTURE 230
 C.J.'S POV: In the swirling snow he sees something. Something alive -- with wings and two glowing red eyes...
- Is it Mothman? Just when the image seems to firm up, a blast of snow obscures it. The shadowy figure seems to tilt it's head back and we hear a HOWLING SHRIEK...

231 ON THE BRIDGE 231

John hears the SNAP. He looks up at the exact spot where C.J. sees the creature. And this time he does see something...

232 BRIDGE SUPERSTRUCTURE 232

A FORMLESS GRAY MASS streaking toward him from the fog.

It coalesces before John's eyes, revealing itself as...

A SEVERED CABLE: The thick wire whip-saws like a bolt of lightning just inches in front of John's face and smashes through...

233 INSIDE C.J.'S IMPALA 233

C.J.'S WINDSHIELD, instantly killing him.

234 ON THE BRIDGE 234

John backs away from the car in breathless horror. A giant gust of wind blows. The ground sways sickly below his feet...

The bridge is about to collapse.

235 CONNIE'S END OF THE BRIDGE 235

The swaying is worse. Connie is thrown to the pavement -- and right before her eyes she can see the asphalt cracking beneath her...

She scrambles to her feet and runs from car to car:

CONNIE

Move! Move! Get off the bridge!

235A WIDER SHOT 235A

People are desperate to comply. Problem is, they're in the middle of the traffic jam and couldn't go anywhere even if they wanted to.

236 JOHN'S END OF THE BRIDGE 236

John can see Connie a hundred yards away at the top of the bridge:

JOHN

CONNIE!

But his voice is lost in the freezing wind...

- 237 BRIDGE SUPERSTRUCTURE 237
 At the top of the bridge: MORE CABLES SNAP!
- 238 ON THE BRIDGE 238
 The severed cables slither and twist around the cars like giant metal eels, pulverizing everything in their path!
- 239 THE BRIDGE - WIDER SHOT 239
 THE PAVEMENT DROPS TEN FEET -- and JARS to a stop. This bridge ain't gonna make it.
- 240 ON THE BRIDGE 240
 IN THE CARS: People panic. They ram into the cars ahead of them in a frantic effort to get the hell off the bridge.
- 241 CONNIE'S END OF THE BRIDGE 241
 Cars finally begins to move. As the logjam breaks, Connie jumps...
- 242 INT. CONNIE'S CRUISER 242
 INTO HER CRUISER: She grabs up the radio to call help, looking up just as...
- 243 BRIDGE SUPERSTRUCTURE 243
 A CABLE SNAKES STRAIGHT AT HER!
- 244 ON THE BRIDGE 244
 Connie hurls herself to the floor of the cruiser as the cable SHATTERS the windshield!
- 245 INT. CONNIE'S CRUISER 245
 On the floor, Connie shakes off broken glass, screaming into the radio:
- CONNIE
 All units! Unit 64 at the Silver Bridge
 Immediate assistance required!
- 246 JOHN'S END OF THE BRIDGE 246
 John frantically directs traffic around C.J.'s stopped car. More and more cars make their way off the bridge...

(CONTINUED)

But as John looks back, he realizes it's futile -- there's just too many cars, too many people, and not enough time. He looks to

247 CONNIE'S END OF THE BRIDGE 247

In the middle of it all -- Connie -- too far away to stand a chance.

248 JOHN'S END OF THE BRIDGE 248

It's happening. The great tragedy is happening. And for the second time in John's life there's not a goddamn thing he can do to stop it...

But he has to try. While everyone is moving off the bridge, John starts running further on, heading straight for Connie!

249 THE CENTER OF THE BRIDGE 249

The pavement buckles. John stumbles. The distance between them seems to stretch, and the harder John runs the slower he goes...

A final agonized SHRIEK rises into the sky!

John skids to a stop as inches in front of his feet...

250 BRIDGE - WIDER SHOT 250

THE SILVER BRIDGE COLLAPSES!

Nine hundred tons of steel and concrete plunge into the river!

It's an awesome, terrifying sight.

251 THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CRUMBLING BRIDGE 251

And in the middle of it all...

CONNIE'S CRUISER tumbles through space, the RED AND BLUE LIGHTS unmistakably mimicking the bizarre sky lights seen over the chemical factory.

252 BROKEN END OF BRIDGE 252

John watches in wordless terror as...

The Mothman Prophecies come true.

BELOW JOHN'S FEET: The shattered asphalt crumbles. John slips, falls -- then grabs a piece of broken railing. He clings to it desperately, looking down just as...

253 RIVER BELOW 253

Connie's Cruiser SLAMS into the surface of the water.

254 BROKEN END OF BRIDGE 254

John looks back. Safety is just inches away...

255 RIVER BELOW 255

But forty feet below him Connie is sinking to the bottom of the river. What should he do?

256 BROKEN END OF BRIDGE 256

John lets go and drops through the silent, cold, black space...

257 RIVER SURFACE 257

...and SPLASHES into the freezing river!

258 UNDERWATER 258

Connie's car sinks through the murky water...

259 INT. CONNIE'S CRUISER - UNDERWATER 259

Connie lies unconscious on the floor of the car as it fills with water...

260 UNDERWATER 260

John frantically swims down into the dark water, searching for Connie. He sees...

261 RIVER BOTTOM - UNDERWATER 261

LUCY GRIFFIN'S CAR glide silently to the river bottom...

262 INT. LUCY GRIFFIN'S CAR - UNDERWATER 262

Lucy sees Nat belted into his seat, unconscious. She reaches over, unbelts him, then grabs his head and forces her last breath of air into his lungs.

Nat coughs, begins to awaken.

(CONTINUED)

262 CONTINUED:

121.
262

Lucy, working on pure adrenaline, leans past him, shoves open his door and pushes him out of the car.

263 UNDERWATER 263

Nat thrashes in the water, when out of the darkness --

HANDS GRAB HIM: John's hands. He grips Nat and heads for the surface.

264 INT. LUCY GRIFFIN'S CAR - UNDERWATER 264

Her son safe, Lucy moves to follow. But she glances up to see a DARK SHAPE descend from above...

265 RIVER BOTTOM - UNDERWATER 265

A GIANT METAL SUPPORT BEAM slices through the water. It crushes Lucy's car -- and everything inside.

266 RIVER SURFACE 266

John and Nat break through, gasping. It takes a moment before John notices the surreal scene around them...

BRIGHTLY WRAPPED CHRISTMAS PRESENTS: They bob in the water at eye-level against a steel gray sky...

Connie's VOICE echoes in his mind:

CONNIE (V.O.)
And somehow I knew I was dying.

John's mind reels with terror:

JOHN
(to Nat)
Can you make it to shore?

Nat nods weakly and swims off as John ducks back down...

267 UNDERWATER 267

John opens his eyes, scans the murky water for any sign of Connie. Then he sees it...

268 RIVER BOTTOM - UNDERWATER 268

FAR BELOW: The distant glare of RED AND BLUE LIGHTS.

269 UNDERWATER 269

John darts down through the water to...

270 INT. CONNIE'S CRUISER - UNDERWATER 270

John slithers in through the broken windshield. But Connie isn't there. Then he sees her on the floor, her body still.

He grabs her, wraps his arms around her, then maneuvers them both out through the windshield.

271 UNDERWATER 271

John scissors his legs, clawing at the water, hanging onto Connie, swimming straight up, desperately moving toward...

272 RIVER SURFACE 272

John and Connie burst into the cold air. John holds Connie's head up above the water and we...

273 RIVER AND COLLAPSED BRIDGE - OVERHEAD 273

PULL BACK ABOVE THEM TO SEE: PIN-POINTS OF LIGHT surrounding them in the river. Just like Connie's dream. But now it is clear that the lights are headlights shining up from the bottom of the river...

FADE TO:

274 EXT. RIVERBANK - NEARBY - LATER 274

Dozens of firemen and rescue workers tend to the injured as CARS and BODIES are pulled from the river.

ON THE RIVER BANKS: The Coroner's Men tend to the dead, lining them up in body bags along the river's edge...

FURTHER DOWN: Denise Smallwood holds a sobbing Nat Griffin...

AND STILL FURTHER DOWN: John Klein waits while paramedics finish wrapping Connie's fractured arm in a temporary cast and dressing several cuts and wounds.

Finally, one nods at him: he can talk to her now.

John rushes to her side, holds her.

CONNIE

You're here.

JOHN

I left D.C. just after you called.

He looks into her eyes. She seems confused.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (CONT'D)

You did call me today, didn't you?

Connie smiles up at him.

CONNIE

I sure did.

A SQUAD CAR pulls up; Kevin leaps out and runs to Connie.

KEVIN

Mom!

He crashes into her, hugs her fiercely.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I... I was afraid that...

He bursts into tears. Connie holds him, calms him.

John watches mother and son hold each other, overwhelmed with relief that the incredibly fine line between miracle and disaster in their lives didn't get crossed.

Connie looks out across the devastated landscape; they are surrounded by close to a hundred survivors, wrapped in blankets, some already bandaged, others being tended to.

We recognize many who escaped tragedy thanks to John's warnings.

She reaches out a hand. John takes it. Then he puts an arm around both her and Kevin.

JOHN

Connie, remember when I said I was brought here for a reason?

Connie looks into his eyes.

John leans in close, pressing his lips to hers. They kiss, both knowing the answer.

Fire Chief Josh Jessup threads his way through the impromptu field hospital. He trudges up to John, looking exhausted.

JOHN (CONT'D)

How bad is it?

JOSH

Bad. Though I suppose it could have been a lot worse. You saved a lot of lives today, John.

(CONTINUED)

Josh gestures to the people standing around them.

JOHN
Are they done searching?

JOSH
Yeah. They just pulled out the last body.
That makes thirty-six.

JOHN
Jesus...

Connie's face goes white -- but for a very different reason.
John sees this:

JOHN (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

CONNIE
(almost to herself)
Wake up Number 37...

A chill of recognition runs through John...

He holds Connie and Kevin close to him, knowing that all answers will come, eventually...

But for now, the only answers that count are sitting with him -- alive -- on the banks of the Ohio River, just outside Point Pleasant, West Virginia.

275 EXT. OHIO RIVER - (HELICOPTER SHOT)

275

AS WE PULL BACK HIGH ABOVE THEM...

The drowned headlights and emergency flashers look just like distant stars...

The dark sky begins to rip and tear, ELECTRIC FLASHES sear our eyes with brilliant phosphorescent colors.

WITH THE SOUND OF A WING FLAP, we're swallowed up into a black void. The Mothman has left our world.

276 BEGIN ON-SCREEN TITLES:

276

Thirty six people died in the collapse of the Silver Bridge. The final cause was blamed on overdue maintenance and metal fatigue. A contributing factor was the malfunction of the stoplights at either end, the cause of which was never determined.

(CONTINUED)

Mothman was never seen in Point Pleasant again. However, sightings of giant bird-like creatures continue to be reported throughout the world. The most recent include Rome, Mexico City, Baghdad and Los Angeles.

"To reach the end of knowing, is to reach the start of living."

-- The Tibetan Book of the Dead

FADE TO END CRAWL: