

THE DEAD ZONE

"VALLEY OF THE SHADOW"

Production #2002

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THE DEAD ZONE

"VALLEY OF THE SHADOW"

RECAP

We establish the introduction of Greg Stillson, the sexual liaison between Johnny and Sarah, Purdy's recruitment of Johnny and of course, ending with Armageddon.

FADE TO:

TEASER

BLACK SCREEN

FAN MAN (V.O.)

There's no doubt in my mind that
Johnny Smith is the real thing...

FADE IN:

1 CLOSE-UP - FAN MAN

1

the nerdy Johnny expert from "Unreasonable Doubt" shot with melodramatic lighting a la a quickie segment on a sci fi 'reality' magazine show...

FAN MAN (V.O.)

...perhaps even the next link in
the chain of human evolution.

Dark and suspenseful music emphasizes the statement and leads us into the transition as we cut to:

2 LOW BUDGET DOCUMENTARY STYLE FOOTAGE

2

Cleaves Mills establishing shot in sepia... push into a yearbook to see a school shot of Johnny Smith... close-ups of a lone pair of ice skates on the ice... the narrator is a familiar voice (i.e. Jonathan Frakes or Peter Graves)...

NARRATOR (TV)

Cleaves Mills, Maine. The young son of Vera and Herbert Smith was an 'A' student... popular... and a heckuva ice skater. But it was a skating accident on the neighborhood ice pond that led to the first chapter in the saga of Johnny Smith...

3 CLOSE-UP ON A 40ISH FAT GUY 3

The image slightly pixilated as we begin a slow PULL BACK.

FAT GUY

He was out cold on the ice. I heard him say "Just leave it there." I didn't know what it meant. I had to go over to pick up my hockey stick when I fell through the ice.

(laughs, shakes his head)

I should have left it there... like Johnny said, you know?

We now understand that this is on television... and as we continue the show, we see it being watched in a quick montage of locations --

-- A GYM

exercisers on machines with headphones on watching...

-- A BOWLING ALLEY

on a set over by the snack bar...

-- AN ELECTRONICS STORE

on multiple sets... customers studying the set...

On the TV screen: more photos of Johnny, (now Michael Hall) growing up (Breakfast Club age and beyond)... the school he went to... newspaper clippings about hockey heroics, science fair awards...

NARRATOR (TV)

Johnny overcame some adolescent problems at school to become a leader among his fellow students. And in his junior year at Cleaves Mills High, he won the Penobscot County science fair with his incredible fiddler crab farm exhibit...

4 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT 4

Finding another TV set on... and DANA BRIGHT sitting on a desk watching, a reporter's notebook in her hand. A scruffy BIKER TYPE, handcuffed to a nearby chair, watches as well. A couple of deputies move about in the b.g. Dana looks at the TV set evenly, with some hurt in her eyes... she talks aloud to herself...

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

DANA

The fiddler crab farm... he never told me about the fiddler crab farm... how could he keep that from me?

BIKER

You know the guy?

Dana turns to him, having briefly forgotten he was there. Here she is, a Friday night, having a conversation with a manacled dirtbag. She smiles to herself, turns back to the set.

DANA

I used to.

Used to? What's that all about?

NARRATOR (TV)

And all through high school, there was a girl... a pretty dark haired girl named Sarah...

Dana's eyes narrow...

5 INT. BANNERMAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

5

Close on Johnny Junior...

JOHNNY JR.

Hey, Mom. It's you!

Finding him in front of a TV set... in the background, we see the trappings of a campaign for Walt's re-election, banners, buttons, signs... Sarah moves to the set and it's one of those horrible moments when there is no right thing to do - she can't turn off the set, that would be too weird, and too suspicious... but her son is watching this stuff too... and she doesn't know what he might be thinking. She settles on standing and watching next to JJ, an uncomfortable smile on her face, biting her lower lip... arms folded around her middle in protective body language...

The documentary now shows Johnny and Sarah through the ages together... as kids, her yearbook picture in high school, dressed for the prom, eighties clothes at a disco party...

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

NARRATOR (TV)

Sarah Bracknell was literally the girl next door... the class musician who organized the school talent shows... friends say they were inseparable... except for a brief time in ninth grade after Johnny reportedly got fresh with her at a local movie theater as they watched "Return of the Jedi"...

SARAH

(uncomfortable, re:
pictures)

Where did they get all this...
stuff...?

Finding Walt's arm moving around her shoulder to see he's walked over to join his family... his touch cuts like a knife... she glances at him and smiles, embarrassed for them all... their eyes turn back to the TV set...

6 INT. BRUCE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

6

The TV set is on here now too.

NARRATOR (TV) (CONT'D)

But the fight didn't last long and the young couple soon were seen holding hands together again... it would take a tragic turn of events to rip those hands apart...

The picture shows stock footage of lightning and rain and a subjective view through windshield wipers... grim music presages what's going to happen...

BRUCE'S DATE (O.S.)

What's he really like?

Moving back to see Bruce's apartment for the first time, modest, comfortable with eastern cultural touches... finding Bruce on the couch with a very affectionate girl snuggling up against him... in fact, we may be surprised to see that it's the same volunteer girl KATIE we saw screwing Greg Stillson... and we might wonder if she's here as a true date or as some kind of spy...

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

BRUCE
(shakes his head at
all this)
I'll tell you what he's not.
He's not the next link in the
evolutionary chain. He's... just
a guy. Just Johnny Smith.

He watches the TV set with disdain, worried about Johnny...

KATIE
I'd like to meet him sometime.
You think he might, you know...

BRUCE
(teasing)
Touch you? What man wouldn't?

KATIE
(smiles)
I'm serious.

BRUCE
(beat, grim)
Johnny isn't telling fortunes
these days.

'Not telling fortunes these days'? What the hell that is
all about...

NARRATOR (TV)
June 5, 1995... Route 6... Johnny
Smith leaves Sarah and is on his
way to the video store in the
near-by township of Lagrange. A
truck driver named Gus Bell is on
Route 6 that night as well... he
has been driving all day...

The set pushes in on a family snapshot of the truck
driver...

NARRATOR (TV)
...and is having trouble staying
awake...

7 INT. STILLSON'S CAMPAIGN BUS - THE TV

7

is on there too... now showing news footage of the
aftermath of the accident... the car being towed back up
in the road as we saw in Destiny... Purdy's interview
starts voice over and then cuts to on camera...

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

PURDY (TV)

I was the one who had to tell his mother... I rushed Vera to the hospital... Sarah, Johnny's fiancée, was there... Vera and Sarah cried in each other's arms...

(beat, a tear forms)

And then of course, the doctor came out and told us the news... that... that Johnny was in a coma...

Finding GREG STILLSON AND SONNY ELLIMAN watching as they work on a campaign speech...

STILLSON

That is one odd couple: Gene Purdy and his freak of nature...

SONNY

That freak of nature is going around asking questions about you.

Stillson reacts...

STILLSON

Questions. What kind of questions?

SONNY

The wrong kind.

As Stillson wonders why Johnny Smith would be investigating him...

NARRATOR (TV)

The doctors said he would never regain consciousness... and Johnny Smith's long night's journey lasted six years...

8 OMITTED

8

9 INT. SMITH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

9

Another TV is on, but this time the couch is empty. No one's watching.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

NARRATOR (TV)

Meanwhile the world kept spinning... his mother would pass away... Sarah would marry the county sheriff Walter T. Bannerman and have a child... and then the impossible happened...

ELAINE (TV)

I was about to give him his sponge bath like I did every morning... except this time, he suddenly grabbed my arm and yelled 'Something's wrong!'...

Photos of the house on fire and the rescue of the little girl appear on the documentary... Camera scopes the unfinished CHESS GAME on Johnny's coffee table, next to an UNFINISHED MEAL, then moves on, finding a DOOR we've never seen before, a stairway leading down.

ELAINE TV (TV, O.S.)

He said my house was on fire... and my little girl...

(emotional beat)

I owe her life to him... I thank God for Johnny Smith...

NARRATOR (TV, O.S.)

But that was only the beginning...

The sound fades as we descend into --

10 INT. SMITH HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

10

Old furniture and clutter dating back fifty years has been augmented by several new computer boxes. A DSL cable snakes to a flatscreen monitor, on which JOHNNY is studying an old newspaper story about Stillson with the headline, "Improprieties Alleged in Shady Pines Deal."

The story spits out of a printer, and Johnny takes it to a BIG BULLETIN BOARD. About a third is covered with material on Stillson; less on Purdy.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: 10

Alone in the center: an aerial shot of the Washington Monument.

Johnny eyes the board for a beat as he sifts through a BOX of brightly colored PLASTIC PUSH PINS. He chooses a red one, then tacks the printout to the board as the SOUND of the TV show FADES UP, taking us to our final stop:

11 INT. A SMALL DARK ROOM - CLOSE ON A PORTABLE B&W TV/VCR 11

Plugged into an AC jack. On the screen, reporters chase after Johnny in the aftermath of the "Quality of Life" episode...

NARRATOR (TV)

As he performed one amazing feat after another, his reputation grew... and so did the number of his detractors...

The TV sits on a workbench beside a mess of electronic components. A man is putting items in a backpack. At first, we don't see his face, just his gloved hands and the items: GLASS CUTTERS, a roll of DUCT TAPE, a STUN GUN. But as he checks the charge on this last item before zipping the bag... we can see his face is covered with a sheer stocking type mask...

On the TV, real-life psychic debunker, JAMES RANDI, appears...

JAMES RANDI (TV)

Johnny Smith is no different than any of the other charlatans who hoodwink and take advantage of people. I've publicly challenged him to prove his powers and haven't heard back. I'm not surprised.

NARRATOR (TV)

Coming up: Johnny Smith predicts a deadly fire at a high school graduation party... and some pay the price for not believing...

A title card with a dramatic picture of Johnny holds the frame for a beat... the man's gloved fingertip brushes Johnny's face, then turns off the set. We hear a metal door open and close, as the room rocks slightly, and we realize this little workshop is in the back of a van. Then all is quiet.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

12 INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - DAY - AN ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD 12

Displays "Meet the Candidates Day" as balloons float by. TILT DOWN to find a familiar small-town event underway: part campaign rally, part Fourth of July picnic.

Camera sketches the scene: giggling LITTLE GIRLS painting flags on each other's cheeks... a TRIO of wizened WWII VETS, in full VFW regalia, parlaying with TWO VIETNAM VETS in faded fatigue jackets... a high school guy flirting with a pretty volunteer... a HEFTY MAN toting a plate loaded with fried chicken. Over which, we hear:

STILLSON (LOUD SPEAKER)

Washington has become a town of shell games and spin doctors who shoot off fireworks but don't ever get anything done. We need action. We need more jobs. We need better education. We need a system of justice that will not fail the people. We need God back in the pledge of allegiance.

A huge cheer erupts... finding Greg Stillson at a podium...

STILLSON

We've got to put the country back in the hands of the people. In plain Maine speaking, it's time to take out the trash.

Sarah is standing near the stage holding a CLIPBOARD, a "Bannerman for Sheriff" button on her blouse... she watches Stillson, carefully listening... and she reacts to the overwhelming enthusiasm of the crowd... turns and notices --

ANGLE - FAVORING HER POV OF JOHNNY

in his dark coat, standing at the back of the crowd, studying the candidate... his eyes meet hers briefly... but Sarah deliberately breaks eye contact without acknowledgement, there's a definite chill between them, and she turns back to the speech...

STILLSON

I love this country. I trust the God-fearing people of this country.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

STILLSON (CONT'D)

We know the principles on which this country was founded and we're sick and tired of those principles being violated by the guys with the hundred dollar haircuts in Washington... who don't fear God... who don't fear anyone...

More cheers... and finding Bruce moving up behind Johnny...

STILLSON (CONT'D)

Well, they better fear Greg Stillson because the day of reckoning is near... Greg Stillson is coming to Washington.

As Stillson continues...

BRUCE

How did I know I was gonna find you here?

Johnny looks around...

JOHNNY

Hey, Bruce.

STILLSON

You and me, we own this country. It belongs to us. It's time to take it back! My name is Greg Stillson and I hope you'll send me to Congress.

The cheers swell and Stillson waves and takes it in for a moment... he does not see Johnny.

BRUCE

You understand you're turning into a regular stalker?

Johnny just watches Stillson taking his bows...

BRUCE

You're giving up your life for this thing.

JOHNNY

This 'thing' has a fairly high priority, don't you think?

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

BRUCE

I just don't like what it's doing
to you.

JOHNNY

(quietly)
I'm fine.

BOY

Johnny... catch!

Johnny turns to see a boy about thirteen passing him a
basketball... he catches it in mid-turn...

BOY

Our team's playing Brewer tomorrow.
Can you tell who's gonna win?

Johnny grins at the kid, rubs the basketball like a crystal
ball... takes a beat...

JOHNNY

No. And I wouldn't tell you if I
could.

Then passes it back...

JOHNNY

Good luck.

BOY

(smiles)
Thanks, Johnny.

Johnny smiles... but Bruce studies him seriously... Johnny
looks at him, holds a poker face to hide whatever it is
he's feeling...

BRUCE

(pointed)
Yeah. You're fine.

ANGLE ON STILLSON

moving off the stage... shaking some hands of his
entourage... including Katie, the volunteer girl we saw
with Bruce... they're telling him what a great speech it
was, they love you, Greg, great going. Stillson has heard
all that before from these people so he naturally turns
to someone he hasn't heard it from before - the attractive
young woman with the Bannerman button...

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (3)

12

STILLSON

What'd you think?

SARAH

(smiles)

Great response from the crowd.

STILLSON

(smiles)

That's not what I asked; come on,
let's hear it...

Easily and straightforward... she holds his eyes without
fear... this is a straight-talking Maine woman, friendly
but clear:

SARAH

I think this routine plays well
for maybe a month or two and then
you're in trouble if you don't
come up with some real issues to
hang your hat on. I know these
people, they're my neighbors...
they'll cheer for apple pie and
the American flag in your
speeches... but they won't vote
for you come election day unless
you really have something to say...
and so far you don't.

Stillson is a good enough politician to maintain his
smile...

STILLSON

Ouch.

Stillson's entourage is offended, try to move their
candidate out of this embarrassing situation...

SONNY

Come on, Greg...

But he shrugs them off...

STILLSON

Bannerman?

SARAH

Sheriff Walt. Want a button?

STILLSON

You bet. He must be some
candidate.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (4)

12

SARAH

Yeah. He is. And he's my husband.

Got it, Stillson says to himself.

STILLSON

See you on the campaign trail.

Now he lets them move him away... he looks very seriously at Sonny on the move...

STILLSON

Find out more about her.

SONNY

Greg, she's the sheriff's wife...
this is one broad you don't give
your hotel key to...

STILLSON

Find out more about her.

As Greg shakes a few hands, then a new hand grasps his and Stillson looks up to see it belongs to Johnny...

STILLSON

(reacts)
We meet again.
(looks at their hands
connected)
How's my future look these days?

JOHNNY

Not always so easy to tell.

Stillson breaks the handshake...

STILLSON

(blowing him off)
Well, you just keep looking and
be sure to tell me if you see
anything interesting.

Pats him patronizingly on his shoulder... moves away...
and we may begin to realize that we haven't seen any
visions from Johnny... Johnny glances at the hand that
just shook hands with Stillson, then casually flexes it
once...

ANGLE

The volunteer girl Katie looks over and sees Bruce moving
over to Johnny and smiles at him... Bruce waves...

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (5) 12

ANGLE WITH SARAH

Walt joining her... nervous...

WALT

God, I wish I had the gift of gab
like that guy, Stillson, huh...?

SARAH

You just go up there and be Walt
Bannerman - they know you, they
respect you... some...

(leaning in to give
him a quick kiss)

...even love you. Remember the
civilian hotline, expanded drug
counseling... and eye contact,
remember to make eye...

Walt's cell phone rings... he answers it...

WALT

Bannerman.

(reacts)

What?! When...

Sarah reacts with concern...

WALT

Tell them I'll be there in twenty
minutes. Better get the FBI in
on this...

(hangs up)

SARAH

FBI?

WALT

Somebody broke into the Markoff
estate last night and took their
little boy. I've got to go.

As he leaves, off Sarah's reaction...

CUT TO:

13 INT. PURDY'S OFFICE - DAY 13

He's on his phone as an AIDE stands by.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

PURDY

Yes, Governor, I know the family well... I'm taking the helicopter up there now, they live up in the north county away from just about everything... we can only pray that the boy is all right...

(beat)

Of course. ...I'm going to do everything I can to help. I'll call you as soon as I know anything...

He hangs up. Turns to the aide. Grim...

PURDY

Find Johnny Smith.

14 INT. SMITH HOUSE - DAY

14

As Bruce and Johnny enter...

BRUCE

A double date - it's something new. Two guys, two girls, you eat food sometimes, maybe see a movie... that's short for moving pictures...

(Johnny just shakes his head, deep in thought)

Come on, as a favor to me... Katie wants to meet you... and I know a redheaded reporter who's wondering why she hasn't heard from you for awhile...

JOHNNY

Not right now...

BRUCE

Not right now... there is no 'right now' for you, man... you're always wrapped up in this Chicken Little thing...

JOHNNY

Chicken Little.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

BRUCE

'The sky is falling?' And we all know what happened to Chicken Little.

JOHNNY

What happened to Chicken Little?

The phone rings. Johnny moves toward it.

BRUCE

I don't exactly remember but I think he met a Colonel... whatever it was, it wasn't good.

Johnny picks up the phone.

JOHNNY

Hello.

PURDY (PHONE)

Johnny... I need you...

Off Johnny's reaction...

SMASH CUT TO:

15 A HELICOPTER DESCENDING - DAY - EXT. MARKOFF ESTATE

15

and as it comes down, we reveal the incredible estate - a small group of reporters and photographers have started to arrive at the scene... there are several police officers and cars visible as well...

Purdy is the first one out of the chopper, ducking down below the rotors, followed by Johnny... and this almost feels like newsreel-style footage...

Purdy shakes hands with a couple of PUBLIC RELATIONS persons who work for the Markoffs... Purdy intros Johnny in a scene we cannot hear due to the rotor blades noise... Johnny looks tight somehow, some uncertainty in his eyes...

They move toward the house....

Finding Walt observing as Johnny approaches...

WALT

I'm glad you're here.

Johnny just nods and follows the lead of the family reps toward the house... as he passes the reporters waiting outside, start snapping his picture, turning video cameras

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 15

in his direction and calling his name, Johnny, Johnny,
over here... as he glances over, he sees --

ANGLE - DANA

among them... she throws him a half-grin of hello which
he returns... and we can sense he's uncomfortable...

16 INT. MARKOFF HOUSE - LIBRARY - DAY 16

One man's tasteful shrine to himself, and to capital.
There's a goodly number of books, but what catches the
eye are some celebrity photos -- Arthur Markoff posing
with President Reagan, with Ted Turner (or Alan Greenspan,
or one or both Bushes) -- and a framed Fortune magazine
cover photo of Markoff with the title: "The Lion of Wall
Street." There may be other icons of capitalism: an
antique stock ticker, for example.

On a desk, a slick management philosophy book with another
picture of Markoff on the cover sits next to a framed
picture of Markoff posing with his family: his wife and
young CHRISTOPHER, six...

PURDY (O.S.)

He's been called the 'CEO of the
New Millenium.' One of the few,
I might add, who managed to survive
the recent Wall Street scandals
relatively unscathed.

Finding Purdy admiring one of the displays...

PURDY

Most people have no idea what a
philanthropist Arthur is... and
that's the way he wants it.
He's always been an extremely
private man. That's why he moved
his family up here.

Purdy sighs and tries to maintain his composure... the
door opens... and Arthur enters... moving to him --

PURDY

Arthur...!

ARTHUR

I'm sorry to keep you waiting...
I was with my wife...

Purdy embraces him, holds him... Arthur (40s) is tall and
slender.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

He's normally a brusque man, used to getting his way and *unused* to personal suffering. Right now he's almost numb...

PURDY

How is Connie holding up?

And no one really knows what to say in a moment like this, even Purdy... it's surreal... a child has been taken, how

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

can we be here talking...? Arthur looks over Purdy's shoulder at Johnny... who nods to him...

ARTHUR

They have her sedated.
(moving to Johnny)
I'm Arthur Markoff.

JOHNNY

John Smith, sir.

Markoff shakes his hand... looks at him evenly... a hint of skepticism in his eyes...

PURDY

This is the young man I spoke to you about.

MARKOFF

Yes. My wife will be pleased when I tell her you've come. She believes in some... things... that I don't necessarily agree with her about. But at a time like this...

PURDY

Of course...

MARKOFF

She saw something about you on television last night... she says you've helped the police before...

JOHNNY

I've tried, sir. I can't say it always...

PURDY

I've seen Johnny do some remarkable things, Arthur. I truly believe he's doing God's work.

MARKOFF

(evenly, to Purdy)
What kind of God allows a child to be taken from his family?

That effectively ends the conversation...

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (3) 16

MARKOFF
(after a beat)
I'll show you where he broke into
the house.

17 INT. HALLWAY/STAIRS AS NEEDED 17

Markoff leading the way past police officials... including Walt who is talking to a black woman in a business suit with an FBI ID clipped to her breast pocket: This is Special Agent GODDARD, a veteran with wary eyes and a deadpan manner.

MARKOFF
The police say the alarm system
was disabled... obviously whoever
did this knew what they were
doing... we haven't received a
ransom note or any other form of
communication from the kidnapers
yet...

As they move out the back door...

GODDARD
A little early in the process to
be bringing in the lunatic fringe,
isn't it...

WALT
Watch and learn.

The FBI agent cocks an eyebrow and follows Walt outside...

18 EXT. MARKOFF HOUSE - DAY 18

And the following sequence is done without dialogue...

Johnny crouches by a cracked circle of glass that was cut out of a nearby sliding glass door. There's an expectant hush broken only by the clicking of camera shutters.

INTERCUTTING:

ANGLES FROM LONG LENS CAMERAS SNAPPING

...and...

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

NEWS CHOPPERS OVERHEAD SHOOTING VIDEO (VIDEO CAMERA ANGLES APPEAR AS 'LIVE' VIDEO)...

Here he is again, the one and only Johnny Smith, front and center, and the whole world is watching...

EXTREME CLOSE-UP OF JOHNNY'S EYES

and there's something in there we haven't seen before... you might almost call it *fear*... but fear of what?

WIDER

Johnny hesitates a beat, then touches the glass. More furious clicks.

EYES - VARIOUS

watching... Walt, Goddard, Dana, Purdy, Markoff... all watching --

JOHNNY

who moves to the door itself, the edges of the cut-out bearing the remnants of fingerprint dust. He touches that, then the door handle.

And we may expect to ramp in, see a flash, anything, this is the Dead Zone after all, isn't it...

But we don't... instead we begin a slow pull back... and dissolve to wider angle... and dissolve to a wider angle still as Johnny gets smaller and smaller in our frame... as Johnny moves to examine the soft ground and reaches out to touch it...

And our pull back is so wide now that we can barely even see Johnny Smith any more...

19 EXT. SMITH HOUSE - NIGHT

19

The Purdy limo pulls into Johnny's driveway... and Johnny gets out...

CLOSER ANGLE - LOOKING INTO THE BACKSEAT

From inside the limo -

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2) 19

PURDY

You tried - that's all anyone can ask of you. We'll write a release reminding everyone that your gift doesn't always work. It will be a footnote to the coverage. Nothing to be worried about.

But Purdy's words can't mask a basic disappointment and a touch of personal embarrassment...

PURDY

We'll talk tomorrow.

He signals the driver to leave... and Johnny closes the door... stands there a beat as the car exits...

20 INT. SMITH HOUSE - NIGHT 20

The phone is ringing as he enters the dark house... he doesn't stop to turn on the lights...

NEW ANGLE - THE RINGING PHONE

Johnny picks up the phone...

JOHNNY

Hello?

INTERCUTTING:

21 INT. INDUSTRIAL SPACE - NIGHT 21

ECU on a phone and a man's mouth... the voice is warm and compassionate, even friendly, reaching out for a personal connection... an intimacy....

KIDNAPPER

Johnny?

JOHNNY

Yes?

KIDNAPPER

Are you all right? What happened out there?

JOHNNY

Who is this?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

KIDNAPPER

You looked... lost... it was on all the TV stations... it must have been terribly humiliating. I hope I haven't been wrong about you, Johnny... because if I'm wrong there really isn't any hope for the boy.

Johnny's eyes narrow... a beat...

JOHNNY

Is he all right?

KIDNAPPER

For now. But his fate is entirely in your hands, Johnny.

JOHNNY

I'm not sure what you mean...

KIDNAPPER

You don't seem to be sure of anything today.

(sighs)

Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, whoops, Johnny, whoops, Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, Johnny... truth is I've been worried about you lately...

JOHNNY

About me...

KIDNAPPER

(beat)

This Purdy character you've recently hooked up with. A televangelist, Johnny. Please.

JOHNNY

He's just handling my mail.

KIDNAPPER

Ha! Public relations. Fair enough -- the demands on your time must be overwhelming. And here I am making even more demands. But I believe in you, Johnny and there is so little left to believe in. We've become numb to the corruption that surrounds us.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

KIDNAPPER (CONT'D)

The wicked prosper as they flaunt their Versace suits, leverage their buyouts, augment their breasts and drink plain water that sells for two dollars a bottle. I mean, really, if you can't believe in Martha Stewart, what's left?

(beat)

We have turned our backs on God, Johnny. And every now and then, God throws his hands up and decides it's time to remind everyone what's important. "Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers..."

And that sounds like he's about to murder the child...

JOHNNY

If you'll just tell me what you want...

KIDNAPPER

I want you to be you, Johnny.

(beat)

I left you a message at the house... a message you should have been able to find...

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (3)

21

JOHNNY

A message...?

KIDNAPPER

That will help you to find Christopher.

JOHNNY

You want me to find him.

KIDNAPPER

I'm praying you will, Johnny.

JOHNNY

Can I talk to him?

KIDNAPPER

He's not here.

JOHNNY

I need to know that he's still alive.

KIDNAPPER

(suddenly angry)

You should know that. Why don't you know that?

Johnny doesn't speak...

KIDNAPPER

This has been a disappointing first meeting, Johnny. 'You have been weighed in the balances and found wanting.'

There's a click as the kidnapper hangs up and as Johnny reacts...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

22 INT. BANNERMAN HOUSE - NIGHT 22

Sarah opens the door to find Johnny standing there... wet from the drizzling rain... there is a tension that always underlines their scenes together now...

SARAH

Johnny.

JOHNNY

I'm sorry to bother you, Sarah.
They told me Walt stopped home
for supper...

Leading him in...

SARAH

We just sat down.

23 INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 23

as Sarah and Johnny enter... campaign stuff scattered around, Walt and little Johnny are at the table eating... she sits and begins to eat... and perhaps it's just a bit odd that Sarah doesn't invite Johnny to join them...

WALT

(mouth full)

Hey.

JOHNNY

Hi. Hey, Johnny.

The kid looks up at him, not at all pleased to see this man, who once 'held hands with his mother', in his house. Doesn't reply to Johnny's greeting.

SARAH

(to little Johnny)

Stop playing with your pasta and
put some in your mouth.

And we can feel as Johnny stands and they sit at the family table, how separated he is.

WALT

(still chewing)

You want something to eat?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: 23

JOHNNY

Thanks. No. I... need to go
back out to the Markoff place. I
heard from the guy.

Walt reacts, rises without hesitation. As Sarah's eyes
narrow...

24 INT. WALT'S PATROL CAR - NIGHT 24

Windshield wipers flapping. Walt driving.

WALT

Message. What kind of message.

JOHNNY

I don't know. He said I should
have been able to find it. As if
this were all some kind of test...
for me...

(beat)

And if I don't pass it...

WALT

You'll pass it.

JOHNNY

Walt, I haven't had a vision in
weeks.

Walt reacts...

WALT

What happened? You hit your head
again or...?

JOHNNY

They just stopped... after one
last vision...

WALT

Maybe it just means, you know,
you're recovering, getting back
to normal...

JOHNNY

Yeah. Normal. Whatever that is.

WALT

It could be a good thing. In any
other circumstances.

Johnny stares at the windshield wipers and says a little

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: 24

prayer...

JOHNNY

I never asked for this. I never wanted this. And if it never comes again, I won't miss it.

(beat)

But I need it tonight. One last time. If that's all it is. Or that boy is going to die. Because of me.

25 EXT. MARKOFF HOUSE - NIGHT 25

Thunder rumbles as the rain comes down harder... several police cars remain parked in front of the estate... reporters huddle in media vehicles to stay warm... it now has all the markings of a major crime scene...

26 INT. MARKOFF HOUSE - NIGHT 26

The storm building outside. Moving with Arthur Markoff, Agent Goddard and Walt and Johnny... Johnny is doing his thing, touching things randomly, trying to get some reading... Markoff, who didn't believe much in Johnny to start with, now is beginning to be extremely dubious about him... this may be one "ER" type steadicam shot... that starts in Christopher's bedroom and then moves into halls and other rooms...

MARKOFF

He didn't ask for money?... I don't understand... kidnappers want money...

WALT

Apparently not this one.

MARKOFF

This... this doesn't make any sense to me. Why did he call you?

JOHNNY

I wish I knew the answer to that, sir.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

Their eyes meet for a moment before Johnny, failing to get any visions, takes one last look at the room...

JOHNNY

I'm sorry; I just don't sense anything here.

Thunder rumbles outside. Johnny moves out of the bedroom into the hall... and this is just insanity to Markoff...

MARKOFF

(to Goddard)

May I... I speak to you?

Johnny is moving down the hall in the background as we hang back with Goddard, Walt and Markoff...

MARKOFF

(sotto, but seething)

I want this man out of my house...

WALT

Mr. Markoff...

MARKOFF

Did you believe him?

WALT

Why would he make up something like...

(this implied)

MARKOFF

...I can think of several reasons... the least of which is self-promotion... the worst of which is that he's involved in the kidnapping himself...

GODDARD

We're covering that possibility, Mr. Markoff...

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

Walt gives her a look... you've got to be kidding...

MARKOFF

Kidnappers demand ransom money.
That's how it works. The idea
that someone would use my son
to... to... get some so-called
psychic's attention...

WALT

I can vouch for Johnny Smith.

MARKOFF

I think he's dangerous. And I
don't want him here.

In the background, Johnny has been touching walls and
pictures... not getting anything... has moved into a den
now... as we continue our shot as we follow Walt who leads
Markoff and Goddard take us into this room...

This is Mrs. Markoff's private study... although we don't
need to know this explicitly, she's an editor of books,
some spiritual and new age in nature... and although it
is handsomely decorated and neat, there are some
manuscripts on a desk... and what's more important is the
decor - artwork, knick-knacks and such - reflects her
interests including... a large painting - or perhaps a
huge avante garde poster of a Madonna art exhibition at a
museum - the key is the Mother and Child context... for
the moment, we only notice it in the background...

Johnny is already exploring the room when the others come
in... Markoff getting more agitated...

MARKOFF

(impatient, to Johnny)
This is my wife's study... there
is no evidence the kidnappers
came anywhere near this part of
the house...

WALT

John... maybe we should call it
a...

Walt puts his hand on Johnny's shoulder, everything
FREEZES... it's Walt's touch that breaks through the ice...
and as Johnny feels the jolt...

*We begin a 360 move around them... moving quite fast,
this doesn't last long... maybe even going around twice
in a dizzying effect... and somehow Sarah and Little Johnny*

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (3) 26

are there for an instant as we pan by them ('Mother and Child') during our 360 spin... and come to rest on...

JOHNNY FRAMED BY THE HUGE MADONNA AND CHILD POSTER...

Thunder crashes outside. Our score is a collision of voices... perhaps recalling the monolith sound of 2001...

JOHNNY

studies the painting... moves slowly closer to it... the voices growing louder as he approaches...

REACTIONS

as Walt, Goddard and Markoff sense he is experiencing something powerful...

JOHNNY FRAMED BY THE HUGE PAINTING

as he reaches out to touch it. And as he makes contact...

ANGLE - THE PAINTING

the face of a masked man, his mouth opening in a silent scream, PUSHES OUT of the canvas, like Hans Solo's tortured features jutting out of the carbonite...

27 PULLING BACK NOW TO FIND JOHNNY 27

pulling a gloved hand away from the painting, until we reveal him standing there as the kidnapper with a stocking mask over his face in a split reality -- Walt et al incongruously watching this with modest curiosity... and the voices are almost deafening now as we ramp to Johnny's face... as Johnny's mouth opens under the mask in a silent scream...

INTERCUTTING:

28 FLASH: NIGHT - GLOVED HANDS DISABLE AN ALARM SYSTEM 28

29 PUSH TO JOHNNY AS KIDNAPPER 29

30 *FLASH: NIGHT - THE SAME HANDS USE A GLASS CUTTER TO CUT THROUGH THE SLIDING DOORS* 30

31 *CONTINUE PUSH TO JOHNNY AS KIDNAPPER* 31
... and he drops to his knees almost as though he is praying...

32 *FLASH: FOOTSTEPS IN THE DARK HOUSE* 32

33 *CONTINUE PUSH TO JOHNNY AS KIDNAPPER TO ECU* 33
as he tilts his head back and looks to God to help him...

34 *FLASH: POV SHOT - A CHILD SLEEPING* 34
This is Christopher. His eyes suddenly open and look at us with alarm. And with that, the vision and voices abruptly end as we find...

35 JOHNNY 35
in his own clothes kneeling in front of the Madonna and Child... the others look at him with wonder... but Markoff's patience has ended...

MARKOFF

No more. This is over.

He's prepared to throw Johnny out himself if he has to... and he moves toward Johnny... but as he does, Johnny rises and grabs the poster and lifts it off the wall...

Behind it, taped to the wall is a white piece of paper...

A classic "cut-out-letter" ransom note... only this one's apparently been scanned and then turned into a COLOR PRINT-OUT. It consists of a single sentence:

CLOSE-UP

Yea though I walk...through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

35 CONTINUED: 35
REACTIONS

36 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT - CLOSE ON THE SAME NOTE 36

Night activity at the station house. This is the headquarters for the investigation so there's a lot going on in the background. Phones ringing, mug shots on computers and so forth.

We're seeing the same paper under a UV LIGHT held by a pair of latex-gloved hands. An FBI technician is working with meticulous care. A fingerprint shows up. {CRIMETECH}

GODDARD (O.S.)

Gotcha. We'll send this down to Clarksburg and run it through the national data base... {CRIMETECH}

Moving back to find Goddard, Johnny and Walt observing...

JOHNNY

May I?
(touch it)

GODDARD

What?

JOHNNY

If I could just touch it...

GODDARD

This is FBI procedure now, Mr. Smith... we don't touch evidence... if he's in the system, we'll have an i-d in two hours.

JOHNNY

Walt...

WALT

Let him touch it. If he's in Johnny's system, we could have an i-d in two seconds. Don't forget we have a kid at risk out there.

Goddard looks at them both and frowns, capitulates, to Johnny...

GODDARD

Left edge, that's it.

Johnny reaches out and touches the edge... we might get a

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: 36

brief glow from the letter a la the bible in "Enigma"...

JOHNNY

The fingerprints aren't his. He never touched the page.

GODDARD

He had to touch the page.

Johnny just shakes his head.

JOHNNY

He knew it would be too easy for me. He even scanned the original note, then e-mailed the file to a copy store and had them print it up. That way he wouldn't have physical contact with it during the printing process.

GODDARD

He had to touch the page because he had to stick it on the goddamned wall.

Deputy ROSCOE calls over from a desk.

ROSCOE

Bruce Lewis on four for Mr. Smith. He says it's important.

Walt presses the button to get the right extension for Johnny and hands him the phone but the moment he touches it, Johnny reacts. Covers the mouth piece.

JOHNNY

It's not Bruce.

Walt reacts and moves into action to trace the call...

JOHNNY

Hello.

INTERCUTTING:

37 INT. INDUSTRIAL SPACE - NIGHT 37

Close on the kidnapper's mouth, perhaps a little looser than the last time.

KIDNAPPER

So, Johnny you seem to be back on your game.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

KIDNAPPER (CONT'D)
Have you figured out how I put
the paper on the wall without
touching it?

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (2)

37

JOHNNY

You had Christopher do it.

KIDNAPPER

You are back on your game. Congratulations. He was really quite brave last night, under the most difficult of circumstances. But he's starting to get a little worried. Now that the air is running out.

JOHNNY

If you want me to find him, then you need to give more information...

KIDNAPPER

You have everything you need to find him, Johnny. You're just not seeing it yet but you will. Say hello to Walt, I assume he's tracing the call... but since I'm forwarding this through a phone bank, I imagine we have some time to talk. I think it's swell that you and Walt and Sarah can all be friends... and they even named their boy after you... it is their boy, isn't it, Johnny because I've wondered about that... I've looked at the dates and they don't exactly work out...

Johnny and Walt exchange a serious glance...

JOHNNY

Listen to me, carefully. I promise you if you go anywhere near Johnny Bannerman...

KIDNAPPER

Johnny Bannerman. The sound of it. How do you live with that?

JOHNNY

(repeating)

If you go anywhere near him...

KIDNAPPER

Don't you think I could have done that? It would have been so easy.

(beat)

But I would never do that to you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (3)

37

KIDNAPPER (CONT'D)

I just want you to know that I know. And that I care. You don't have to live with that secret alone. You can share it with me now.

(beat)

Hurry, Johnny. I was serious when I said that Chrissy's air is running out.

There's a click and he's gone. Off Johnny's reaction...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

38 EXT. CLEAVES MILLS - MORNING - ESTABLISHING 38

39 EXT. SMITH HOUSE - DAY - JOHNNY 39

is picking up his morning paper as Walt drives up in the patrol car...

WALT

Come on... we've got a lead from the copy shop...

Johnny gets in the patrol car...

40 INT. PATROL CAR - CONTINUOUS - MOVING 40

WALT

You were right. As usual. The message was e-mailed to the shop with instructions to mail to a post office box. E-mail and P.O. box both belong to a Mr. Nebuchadnezzar... that's from the bible, right?

JOHNNY

(acknowledges, mind working)
Babylonian King. Sent Daniel into the Lions Den...

WALT

And his three pals into the fiery furnace where the angel protected them, am I right? What were their names?

Johnny's mind is working, trying to piece these clues together... he just shakes his head at Walt's question, not remembering...

WALT

Anyway, Mr. Nebuchadnezzar paid for the transaction with a stolen credit card... we know who it was stolen from...

41 EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY - ESTABLISHING 41

A one-story home that's being remodeled.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: 41

Walt's patrol car and an FBI sedan are parked outside.

42 INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY 42

MRS. CAHILL, 35, a wife and mother... leads Johnny, Goddard and Walt inside... walls have been stripped of paint to show original brick and plaster. The furniture's covered with sheets, giving everything a ghostly appearance... this is still a house that people are living in, however, so the remodeling should be limited...

MRS. CAHILL

I'm sorry for the mess... this has been going on for months now...

WALT

Mrs. Cahill, do you have any idea where you might have been when your credit card was stolen...

MRS. CAHILL

I thought I'd left it at a restaurant... but they couldn't find it when I called...

As the interview continues... we move in on Johnny... and the house itself is giving him a feeling... we may focus on his feet for a moment if we really need to establish a physical connection... and we may reprise the cascading voices we heard when Johnny looked at the Madonna painting...

GODDARD

What was the name of that restaurant?

Johnny moves away from the others... almost as though drawn by the voices...

MRS. CAHILL (O.S.)

The Italian Kitchen. Out on Route Fifteen.

GODDARD (O.S.)

We'll run a check on all the employees...

MRS. CAHILL (O.S.)

You really believe someone there might have been involved in this terrible kidnapping...?

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: 42

WALT (O.S.)
All we know is that your credit
card is involved...

MRS. CAHILL (O.S.)
How awful...

The sound of the conversation has faded as Johnny has
moved further away... and the cascading voices increase...
Johnny comes to a door that's closed... reaches out and
touches it...

43 *A JOHNNY FLASH - A BELT BEING RAISED* 43

KIDNAPPER'S MOM (O.S.)
O God we most heartily thank
Thee...

44 RESUME JOHNNY 44

reacts, turning the handle...

45 *ANOTHER FLASH - A 13-YEAR-OLD BOY'S HAND* 45

chained to a bedpost...

KIDNAPPER'S MOM (O.S.)
...and ask for thy forgiveness
for the sins of this child...

46 RESUME JOHNNY 46

opening the door... to reveal

HIS POV - A NEAT AND NORMAL CHILDREN'S BEDROOM

The voices stop.

JOHNNY

reacts.

47 ANGLE WITH WALT AND THE OTHERS 47

as Johnny returns... the phone is ringing...

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

MRS. CAHILL
...probably about ten o'clock
when we left.
(re: phone)
Excuse me.

She moves a short distance away to get the phone.

JOHNNY
He used to live here. In this
house.

Goddard and Walt react.

MRS. CAHILL
(to phone)
Hello, yes?

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
When he was a child. With his
mother.

MRS. CAHILL
(to phone)
Yes. Yes. He's here.

Walt looks to her expecting the call to be for him but
she turns to Johnny with a curious look on her face...

MRS. CAHILL
It's for you.

Johnny exchanges a look with Walt... takes the phone...

JOHNNY
This is John Smith.

INTERCUTTING:

48 INT. INDUSTRIAL SPACE - KIDNAPPER

48

Just a little wider each time.

KIDNAPPER
You'll always be Johnny to me.
So what do you think, of the house
I mean.

JOHNNY
I know it used to be yours.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

KIDNAPPER

Can you believe what those people
are doing to my house... I think
they want to live in an old Pottery
Barn catalogue full of
plaids, ducks and pineapples...

*

JOHNNY

I've seen what happened to you
when you were child here...

KIDNAPPER

Well, of course, that's why I've
brought you there, Johnny. I
want you to know. I want you to
know me.

JOHNNY

Then meet me somewhere. Let's
talk.

KIDNAPPER

Soon, Johnny. You're very close
now. Just a hop, skip, jump away.
Unless you stumble.

(beat)

Dear God, I hate that house.

Click; he hangs up. End Intercut. Johnny's gaze moves
around the house looking for some clue...

JOHNNY

He's been here. And not long
ago.

MRS. CAHILL

In my house?

JOHNNY

He's seen the renovations.

WALT

Maybe that's when he took the
credit card -- when he was here.

And now through the partly knocked-down wall, Johnny sees
something odd: a WALL in the adjoining room that's been
freshly painted white, beckoning like a blank canvas.
Johnny approaches, and finds a can of paint, the sides
spattered bright red, on the floor beside it.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (2) 48

A red-encrusted brush lies on the can. He picks it up and we turn 180 degrees as he becomes...

49 A WORKMAN IN COVERALLS - VISION 49

His face obscured by a dust mask. In a split reality, Walt, Goddard and the woman observe. Johnny/Kidnapper raises a roller brush...

NEW ANGLE - PAST JOHNNY/KIDNAPPER

as he moves in REVERSE MOTION using a power roller brush to UNPAINT the wall, (Walt, Goddard and the woman are not in shot). And as the white comes off, three strange NAMES painted in RED are revealed beneath it: SHADRACH... MESHACH... ABEDNEGO. The vision ends but as we cut back to...

50 JOHNNY - REAL TIME 50

He's staring at the blank wall, still holding the brush...

JOHNNY
Shadrach, Mesach, Abednego...

WALT
(recalling the early
conversation)
Right. The fiery furnace.

But why the hell are you bringing that up now, his eyes ask. Johnny turns to Walt, Goddard and the woman - and sees the trio of them waiting for him to explain... a frightening realization dawning...

JOHNNY
Is anyone else in the house?

MRS. CAHILL
(baffled)
No...

JOHNNY
(calm but urgent)
We have to leave. We have to
leave now.

They're confused but he urges them to move... and they do just as...

51 NEW ANGLE - SLOW MOTION - AS THREE INCENDIARY DEVICES 51
DETONATE

in rapid succession... all around them... and indeed,
they are in the fiery furnace... as they run for their
lives outside...

52 EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS - SLOW MOTION 52

They run out, helping the poor woman who is losing her
home... moving safely away from the house just as it erupts
in flames and explodes in a million pieces...

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

53 EXT. MARKOFF ESTATE - DAY - A NEWS CONFERENCE 53

An outdoor, quickly organized conference... the reporters
and photographers stand pretty much where they were
standing when we first saw them at the top of the show,
though there are more of them now... there's a news
coverage quality to this footage... as though we're one
of the stations covering this story... Purdy, Arthur
Markoff and Agent Goddard stand behind Johnny at a
podium... looking like a man unused to being on
television...

JOHNNY

I'm not really comfortable with
all this... I've never spoken in
a public forum like this before...
but today, I have no choice.
Because I need to make an appeal
to the kidnapper of Christopher
Markoff...

54 INT. INDUSTRIAL SPACE - DAY 54

TV tuned to the press conference...

JOHNNY

(beat, to the camera)
...an appeal that it's time to
let the boy go. There has been
enough pain and suffering for
everyone involved in this including
you...

Unhappy, the kidnapper rises, crosses the room (so we can
see it clearly) and turns off the set. He paces...

55 RESUME NEWS CONFERENCE

55

JOHNNY

I don't believe you really want to hurt Christopher. Not after what you went through yourself when you were his age. I'm willing to meet you anywhere you wish... whenever you say... to arrange for the boy's release.

That's the end of his statement... the reporters hands fly up with questions... Johnny... Johnny... are you sure the boy is still alive... can you describe the kidnapper's voice to us? And finally...

REPORTER

Do you feel responsible for this, Johnny?

PURDY

(interceding)

Johnny didn't kidnap this boy. But he is trying to get him back, and at considerable risk to his own safety.

Moving to pull an uncomfortable Johnny away from the podium but the reporter won't drop it...

REPORTER

This guy is obviously obsessed with you... maybe he took the boy because he wanted to get your attention...

Johnny has wondered about this already of course but it wounds anyway and it's painful being up here in front of all these reporters to start with...

REPORTER

Do you blame Johnny Smith, Mr. Markoff?

Markoff just ignores the question, turns toward the house. The reporters pile on Johnny... with questions like "How does that make you feel?" "Why can't you see where the boy is right now?" "Why do you think the kidnapper is so interested in you?" "Can you explain how your powers work?"

The camera moves to the back of the pack to see Dana watching with sad eyes as the wolves attack... Bruce moves up beside her... concerned...

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

BRUCE

A month ago, he was their hero.
Now they can't wait to tear him
down.

DANA

He's still their hero. You should
see how they treat their enemies.

(beat, considering
his arrival)

What brings you to the wars?

BRUCE

(shrugs, the question
is also the answer)

The wars.

He watches Johnny being escorted by Purdy toward the house,
reporters still yelling...

BRUCE

You know someday they really are
gonna try to destroy him.

DANA

And you want to be there. To
fight the good fight.

BRUCE

My daddy taught me it's all we
can do in this life.

DANA

Call me if you ever need
reinforcements.

Bruce looks at Dana and they smile, understanding they
both care about Johnny a great deal...

BRUCE

I will.

56 INT. MARKOFF HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

56

As Purdy and Johnny enter... the phone is ringing... FBI
and local officers are present... but Walt and Goddard
are not there.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: 56

Markoff glances at Johnny, answers the phone.

MARKOFF

Hello.

His face is grim as he nods to Johnny, it's him...

MARKOFF

Yes. He's right here.

...and hands off the phone. Johnny takes a beat and considers what his role in the scenario is because, although we don't know it yet, that's what this... a plan that is going exactly as they expected it to...

JOHNNY

Hello?

INTERCUTTING:

57 CLOSEUP ON THE KIDNAPPER 57

Close enough so we can't see the background of the room he's in.

KIDNAPPER

You talk to me on television? On television? You've... you've turned this into another reality show... *Big Brother Forty-Seven*...

JOHNNY

You made it clear his air was running out and...

KIDNAPPER

This was Purdy's idea, wasn't it...

JOHNNY

No, it was mine...

KIDNAPPER

Well, it was a bad one. I am offended. And disappointed in you. All those reporters -- locusts... with the "hair of women and the teeth of lions." That Dana Bright is using you... just like the others... to advance her career...

And if we wonder why Johnny is just silently listening to this, now we see why...

INTERCUTTING:

DEAD ZONE: VALLEY OF THE SHADOW - ACT THREE - 10/7/02 YEL 45.

58 EXT. URBAN AREA - DAY 58

Walt and Goddard leading the way for an FBI SWAT team... they're approaching a commercial building in an urban area... {SWAT TECH}...

59 RESUME JOHNNY/KIDNAPPER INTERCUT 59

KIDNAPPER
This was between you and me, Johnny. I was lending you a helping hand every step of the way... every clue that you'd need to find me....

60 EXT. URBAN AREA - DAY - CONTINUOUS 60

The SWAT team rushes into the commercial building...

61 RESUME JOHNNY/KIDNAPPER INTERCUT 61

KIDNAPPER
By now, I expected you and Walt to have traced the real estate records from the house... found out my name... figured out where you might find me...

61A INT. KIDNAPPER'S BUILDING 61A

A quick cut of the SWAT team heading up a stairwell, moving into a hallway, Walt moving with them...

KIDNAPPER
(beat)
You might have even tried something unexpected and totally out-of-character to divert my attention while a SWAT team moved into position outside...

62 OMITTED 62

62A INT. KIDNAPPER'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS 62A

On Walt's signal, two SWAT cops use a small BATTERING RAM to bust down a door...

63 RESUME JOHNNY/KIDNAPPER INTERCUT 63

KIDNAPPER

(smiles)

Now, that would have been very
very clever of you.

64 INT. KIDNAPPER'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS 64

as the SWAT team charges in... and finds it abandoned.
Goddard shakes her head.

65 RESUME KIDNAPPER 65

KIDNAPPER

Hope to see you soon, Johnny.

We stay with him to hang up the phone to reveal that he's been talking to Johnny from an isolated phone booth in a locale tbd. As he hangs up and walks away...

66 JOHNNY 66

reacts as we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

67 EXT. KIDNAPPER'S BUILDING - DAY 67

As Johnny walks toward the structure, police search teams are searching the surrounding area for a body or a place where the boy might be hidden... they have dogs sniffing the ground, dumpsters... Johnny moves:

68 INT. KIDNAPPER'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS 68

Johnny enters as now we see more of this commercial space, filled with partly assembled computers and other techno-gear common to start-up companies, as well as a mattress, hot plate, and scattered clothes. The room's being worked by the CSI:Bangor division... Goddard and detectives dusting for fingerprints and taking pictures {CRIMESCENE TECH}... Walt turns and sees Johnny...

WALT

We don't think the kid has been here...

Johnny's eyes move across the room... They come to a photograph of the kidnapper with an elderly woman, his mother... she smiles sweetly, he's more even-faced... it's the first time, Johnny has seen his face...

WALT

Francis Ritter... Single, no criminal record, college graduate, goes to church every Sunday. Ran a start-up technology company out of this building for a couple of years... went Chapter Eleven a few months ago. He was forced to sell off all his assets to one of his potential rivals, a company with a celebrated C-E-O named guess who?

JOHNNY

Arthur Markoff.

Walt nods. Johnny's attention is drawn to a wall lined with cork and covered with photos and clippings. Johnny reacts as he comes face to face with another man's obsession. An obsession with Johnny Smith. And then something innocuous that's even more disturbing: a box of brightly colored PUSH PINS, the same kind he uses on his own basement 'Armageddon Board.' Johnny picks out a red one, holds it up for a long troubled beat...

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

GODDARD

(glancing over)

I'd say you've definitely got a friend.

WALT

He's been stalking you for a while.

JOHNNY

But why me? What does he want from me?

WALT

Maybe he's had visions of his own. Crazy ones. God talking to him, you know? Look at this -- I think it's another message meant for you...

He points to another letter with the same cut-out letters as the one at the Markoff house. Only this one's an original, no computer printout. It reads:

And the fourth looks like a son of the gods

As we reprise the colliding voices in our score, the sound slowly rising...

WALT

I called Purdy. It's a quote from the Book of Daniel. After the fiery furnace, Nebchanezzer says:

(reading notes,
standard police drone)

"Look. I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."

Johnny reaches out and touches the edge of the page as he did before... and as he does... RAMP TO HIS FACE AND...

69 A JOHNNY FLASH

69

A CHIPPED STONE FRIEZE depicts pawing lions.

70 JOHNNY

70

reacts...

	DEAD ZONE: VALLEY OF THE SHADOW - ACT FOUR - 10/7/02 YEL	49.
71	ANOTHER FLASH - SWAT TEAM GUNS - SLO MO <i>moving like an army across the screen...</i>	71
72	THE LETTER EXTREME CLOSE-UP And the fourth	72
73	ANOTHER FLASH - DOORS TO AN OLD BANK BURSTING IN - AS SWAT OFFICERS CHARGE THROUGH - SLOW MOTION	73
74	THE LETTER EXTREME CLOSE-UP looks like	74
75	ANOTHER FLASH - PUSH IN TO AN UNCONSCIOUS CHRISTOPHER LYING IN A DARK BANK VAULT <i>And now the Kidnapper, his back to us, drags him out...</i>	75
76	THE LETTER EXTREME CLOSE-UP a son	76
77	ANOTHER FLASH - THE KIDNAPPER FIRING AN ASSAULT WEAPON FROM THE VAULT TOWARD THE SWAT TEAM <i>...and the semi-conscious boy sits slumped against the vault door, exposed to danger...</i>	77
78	JOHNNY - ECU	78
78A	ANOTHER FLASH - EXTREME SLOW MOTION AS A HAIL OF BULLETS <i>fills the bank in all directions... smoke, fire, hellish... death... and as the smoke clears the Kidnapper and the boy are both lying on the floor, apparently dead...</i>	78A
79	THE LETTER EXTREME CLOSE UP of the gods The cascading voices rise.... and then end abruptly as the sequence ends...	79

80 RESUME JOHNNY, WALT AND CSI TEAM 80

going about their business... Walt studies Johnny...

WALT

Anything?

Johnny knows if he tells about his vision, it will lead to the devastating events he just witnessed.

JOHNNY

Nothing. I can't see anything.
The visions... just aren't working
like they used to anymore.

He seems defeated.

WALT

Still on the fritz, huh. Hey,
why don't you take a break. Get
some rest. We'll do some old
fashioned police work here, maybe
something will turn up... if it
does, we'll let you know, okay?

JOHNNY

Yeah... okay.

He exits...

81 EXT. ABANDONED BANK BUILDING - CRUMBLING FRIEZE WITH THE RAMPANT LIONS - DAY 81

In a neighborhood going through Urban Renewal. As we tilt down to find Johnny arriving in his jeep...

CLOSER - JOHNNY

Looks up at the lions. He crosses to the entrance -- where we can see a street number, 77 -- and tries the front doors. They open with a squeak...

82 INT. ABANDONED BANK - DAY - WIDE 82

As Johnny enters. Thin shafts of sunlight pierce the gloom from tall draped windows, highlighting worn carpet. The teller windows look like a ghost town facade.

ON JOHNNY

trying to get accustomed to the darkness... he seems to be alone but we cut away to:

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED: 82

POV ANGLE - WATCHING JOHNNY

as he tentatively moves into the room, past some abandoned office chairs, an old BANK CALENDAR for 1995 on a wall next to a "Teller of the Month" photo. He approaches a stairwell, starts down...

DOWNSTAIRS - BANK

Johnny peers into two empty open vaults, before coming to a third, the door locked. It's the vault he glimpsed in his vision. He tries the handle... locked... Johnny touches the combination lock, and has a vision.

83 THE VAULT DOOR - PAST - VISION 83

A bespectacled BANK MANAGER spins the combination lock as a Security Guard waits... and Johnny watches.

BANK MANAGER

That damn "game" has ruined more weekends than I can count, Homer. You ever see me pick up a golf club again, I want you to take it from me and use it to beat me senseless. Understood?

CLOSE-UP ON THE LOCK

as the bank manager goes through the combination, Johnny peering over his shoulder...

INTERCUTTING:

84 RESUME - JOHNNY 84

matching the numbers on the same --

LOCK

JOHNNY

(muttering)

Twenty-nine, Thirty-six, Twelve...

He dials the combination, turns the handle and pulls. The heavy door opens with a HISS of inrushing air.

85 INT. VAULT 85

A dark, narrow space. Johnny digs a small FLASHLIGHT out of his pocket, moves inside...

86 ANGLE FAVORING JOHNNY'S POV - HIS FLASHLIGHT BEAM FINDS THE BOY 86

Still and pale as he saw in his vision.

87 JOHNNY 87

quickly crouches by him, checks his pulse with his fingers,

87 CONTINUED:

87

then presses an ear to his chest... lays him flat on his back and urgently starts CPR... opening the boy's mouth, pinching his nose closed, and leaning down to give him two quick mouth-to-mouth breaths. Checks him again, and then a third breath.

The boy gasps and starts to breath shallowly. A little color returns to his cheeks but he remains unconscious.

KIDNAPPER (O.S.)

"... And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."

Johnny turns to see the Kidnapper standing in the doorway, an AUTOMATIC PISTOL held loosely in one hand, an ASSAULT RIFLE slung over his shoulder. We know his name now, so we'll use it. A tear of happiness rolls down his cheek...

JOHNNY

We've got to get him to a hospital.

FRANCIS

The police will be here soon. They'll take him.

JOHNNY

I didn't tell the police where to come.

FRANCIS

I know. I did. I left a subtle clue behind -- Walt'll figure it out before too long. I just wanted to have some time together. Just you and me. Before we all go our separate ways.

That sounds chilling. Johnny studies him.

JOHNNY

Why'd you do this, Francis?

FRANCIS

My mother always called me Francis... after 'Francis Albert' ...Sinatra, you know? Can't tell you how many black eyes it got me as a kid.

Trying to force him to engage him in a negotiation...

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: (2)

87

JOHNNY

Why are we here, Francis?

Francis studies Johnny with awe... damn, he's here... this couldn't be more perfect...

FRANCIS

We put our trust in false gods,
bowed down before new golden idols.
We have broken our contract with
God just like the people did in
ancient Judah...

JOHNNY

And when they did, God sent
Nebuchadnezzar to punish them.

FRANCIS

But God also sent Daniel, Johnny.
He also sent the prophet.

There, he's put it right on the table. It couldn't be clearer. He smiles to Johnny: you can see it now, can't you?

JOHNNY

I can't speak for you but I'm no
Daniel...

FRANCIS

Sure, you are. You proved it...

JOHNNY

No.

FRANCIS

You did... the fiery furnace,
you're here... "and the
knowledgeable will be radiant
like the bright expanse of sky...
and those who lead the many to
righteousness will be like the
stars forever and ever..."

JOHNNY

(overlapping)
I'm not a prophet, Francis.

Francis studies him unhappily a beat then... laughs...

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: (3)

87

FRANCIS

I can't believe you don't see it!
Even now!

JOHNNY

I'm just a man who recovered from
a coma.

FRANCIS

The fire at Cathy's Steakhouse.

JOHNNY

I had a psychic vision. That's
all.

Francis considers Johnny incredulously: why doesn't he
get it? Then shrugs, whatever...

FRANCIS

That's okay, I'm sure enough for
both of us.

(beat)

It's refreshing to encounter a
modest messenger from God for a
change. They always seem to talk
in declarative sentences in the
scriptures. With exclamation
points. A very wise man once
told me never to use exclamation
points. They oversell your point.

JOHNNY

(re: the boy)

Francis, his pulse is weak...

FRANCIS

(nods)

And you have to save him. See
you're making my point for me.
Without exclamation points.

(beat)

We all want to be saved, Johnny.
Sometimes, it's from ourselves.

He looks at Johnny with nothing short of worship...

FRANCIS

"Thy rod and thy staff, they
comfort me."

(beat)

As Nebuchanezzar did to Daniel, Francis falls prostrate
before him to pay him honor... literally praying to him:

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: (4)

87

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

They comfort me, Johnny.

He rises

FRANCIS

(beat)

You were a teacher once...?

JOHNNY

Yes.

FRANCIS

Be a teacher again. As Daniel was. Teach them...and maybe they'll save themselves.

(beat, with love)

Bear your responsibilities lightly, Johnny, and your shoulders will not be bowed.

And ironically this is exactly the message Johnny's been needing to hear, only it hasn't come from Bruce, or Purdy, but from this strange and tortured man.

An amplified voice breaks the moment.

WALT (LOUD SPEAKER)

Francis Ritter. This is Sheriff Bannerman. If you have any weapons, put them down and come outside. You won't be harmed.

Francis barely reacts... and then he stuffs the pistol into his belt and unslings the assault rifle. Is he about to kill them?

JOHNNY

(pleading)

Francis...

FRANCIS

Did you know that at the end of his days, Nebuchadnezzar rejected God and went mad... was driven from other men and lived like an animal. All as Daniel prophesied.

JOHNNY

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: (5)

87

FRANCIS

But he also prophesied that
Nebuchadnezzar need only lift his
eyes to heaven again to be
delivered into the light.

(beat)

Try to understand, Johnny. The
Lord works in mysterious ways.

He then suddenly ejects the magazine from his rifle, along
with the chambered round, and walks out, still holding
the rifle, before Johnny can even think to stop him.

88 WIDE OVERHEAD SHOT - IN THE BANK 88

As he walks up the stairs, then toward the front...

FRANCIS

"And I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up
mine eyes unto heaven, and mine
understanding returned to me, and
I blessed the Most High, and I
praised and honored him that liveth
for ever.

(opens the door letting
a flood of light in)

And the glory of my kingdom, mine
honor and *brightness* returned to
me."

He exits, leaving the door open, pointing the gun... we
hear the firing begin...

89 ON JOHNNY IN THE VAULT 89

As the firing continues... and then stops... and Johnny
knows it is over... In the ensuing silence, Johnny gathers
up Christopher in his arms, and heads outside...

90 INT. BANK - WIDE 90

Johnny moves slowly, carrying the boy in his arms... as
we hear future news coverage, overlapping...

TV REPORTER (V.O.)

Another remarkable chapter in the
saga of the man from Cleaves
Mills...

TV REPORTER#2 (V.O.)

...the boy was reunited with his
parents after a local psychic
named John Smith...

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

"...an encore presentation tonight
at eight on the Sci Fi Channel:
the remarkable story of Johnny
Smith who..."

Johnny stands a beat at the Spielbergian light flooding
through the open front door, smoke from the gunfire bathing
him... sirens, etc. outside... and he looks every bit
like he's standing in a cloud... as we --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END