

Production Company:
Dead Zone Production Corp.

THE DEAD ZONE

"VANGUARD"

Production #11-4006

Written by

Juan Carlos Coto

Directed by

James Head

Production Draft - White	Apr 14/05
Full Blue - Repaginated	Apr 15/05
Full Pink	Apr 18/05
Full Yellow	Apr 19/05
Green Pgs: i,24-25,32,42,47-47A	Apr 20/05
Gold Pgs: 16,31,57-58	Apr 20/05 *

Copyright © 2005 Lions Gate Television. All rights reserved. No portion of this script may be performed, published, sold or distributed by any means, or quoted or published in any medium, including on any web site, without prior written consent. Disposal of this script copy does not alter any of the restrictions set forth above.

THE DEAD ZONE

"VANGUARD"

CAST

JOHNNY SMITH	DR. ALEX CONNERS
BRUCE LEWIS	TREY WALTERS
SARAH BANNERMAN	MRS. JUDITH PECK
REVEREND PURDY	RICK WICKLIN
GREG STILLSON	MALCOLM JANUS
WALT BANNERMAN	AIR FORCE GENERAL
J.J. BANNERMAN	STUDENT #1
	PURDY'S ASSISTANT
	DARK-SUITED MAN
	SENATOR HARLAN ELLIS
	MIRANDA ELLIS
	ALEX'S FATHER

NON-SPEAKING

FORMER STUDENTS/PARTY-GOERS

TECH GUY

SIDEKICK (IN DARK SUIT)

SENATOR TYPES AND LOW-LEVEL AIR FORCE STAFFERS (AT PRESENTATION)

STABLE WORKER

PORTLAND CHEMICAL SECURITY GUARDS

ND PURDY AIDE

ALEX'S MOTHER AND FUNERAL-GOERS

*

THE DEAD ZONE

"VANGUARD"

SETS

INTERIORS

FAITH HERITAGE
PURDY'S OFFICE
CORRIDOR NEAR OFFICE

JOHNNY'S HOUSE
BASEMENT/ARMAGEDDON WALL
KITCHEN

PORTLAND CHEMICAL
RESEARCH LAB/CLEAN ROOM
CORRIDOR OUTSIDE RESEARCH
LAB
CHEMICAL LAB #348
CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CHEMICAL
LAB #348

BANNERMAN HOME

ALEX'S APARTMENT

VEHICLES

BRUCE'S MURANO

JANUS' SUV

STILLSON'S LIMO

ALEX' MOTORCYCLE

BLACK SEDAN

EXTERIORS

MAINE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE & NATURE

WASHINGTON MONUMENT/ARMAGEDDON

PORTLAND CHEMICAL
PARKING LOT

STABLE
PARKING LOT/DRIVEWAY

CEMETERY

"THE DEAD ZONE"

"VANGUARD"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. JOHNNY'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT 1

BRUCE enters first. Oddly, he takes a quick glance around the place. JOHNNY enters behind him.

JOHNNY

Just how I like to spend my Sunday.
Driving up and down the coast,
haggling over antiques.

BRUCE

I told you, they aren't for me.

JOHNNY

Oh, yeah. Your dear old aunt.
Here's a notion -- next time take
her. I'll stay here and watch
some paint dry, stick some bamboo
under my fingernails--

Johnny notices a knocked-over knick-knack on a table and rights it -- *WHOOOOSH!*

2 *VISION* 2

RICK WICKLIN, 30, a wannabe rock star with piercings, tattoos, dreadlocks and a scruffy beard, stands at the nearby window, looking out. Intensely.

RICK WICKLIN

It's 'bout time.

He calls to unseen people behind him:

RICK WICKLIN

The psychic has landed!

Rick rushes off -- but knocks over the knick-knack and...

3 BACK ON JOHNNY 3

As he finishes righting it. Bruce is about to step further into the house -- but Johnny stops him.

JOHNNY

Something's not right.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

BRUCE

What?

Johnny MOVES past Bruce....

BRUCE

Hang on, man--

Johnny enters the main area of the house, and...

4 REVERSE ON A PARTY -- A DOZEN OR SO PEOPLE

4

With SARAH standing in front. Everyone yells "SURPRISE!"

JOHNNY

It's not my birthday.

SARAH

That's the surprise.

She motions to a banner going up -- "SCIENCE CLUB REUNION" and "CLEAVES MILLS HIGH." The crowd is twentysomethings from science-related careers. Doctors in short sleeve dress shirts and ties, corduroy-wearing geologists, computer game designers, engineers in shorts and sandals.

JOHNNY

(to Sarah)

Your idea?

SARAH

Group effort. Something about winning the State Science Decathlon ten years ago.

Johnny is approached by the piercing-laden Rick Wicklin.

JOHNNY

Richard Wicklin?

RICK WICKLIN

Wicked.

JOHNNY

Excuse me?

(CONTINUED)

RICK WICKLIN

Ricky Wicked. That's my stage name, Mr. Smith.

JOHNNY

You're an actor?

RICK WICKLIN

Rock 'n' roll band. We call ourselves 'Isosceles Squared'.

JOHNNY

I thought you got your Ph.D in laser optics.

RICK WICKLIN

It's a fall-back position, in case the music thing doesn't fly.

JOHNNY

Good thinking.

STUDENT #1

Speech!

The OTHERS AD-LIB for Johnny to say a few words.

JOHNNY

(to group)

Uh, well, I have to say this is completely unexpected. I've thought a lot about you guys over the years. Glad to see you're all doing so well.

(points)

Henderson's face finally cleared up.

Henderson raises his hand, empty cups playfully tossed at him, ad-lib CHATTER and LAUGHTER. In that instant, it's a classroom in here. A fleeting moment for Johnny. A memory of another life. Sarah notices Johnny's reaction.

JOHNNY

(quieting them down)

Seriously, guys. This means more than you'll ever --

ALEX (O.S.)

If you ask me this is a complete waste of time!

All eyes shift to... ALEX CONNERS, 28, a top-flight researcher (with a top-flight ego) who hasn't forgotten his inner geek.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Haven't you geeks heard? Mr. Smith isn't about science anymore. We lost him to the mystical world of soothsaying and prestidigitation. I'll prove just how far he's strayed by using the...

(makes finger quotes)

'Scientific method.' You remember that one, don't you, Teach?

JOHNNY

Vaguely.

Alex builds anticipation by reaching into a jacket pocket.

ALEX

(milks it)

Ladies and germs, I, Dr. Alex Connors, have in my possession an object, borrowed from Mr. Smith's desk some short ten years ago. If you believe the tabloids and the gossip rags, the Wizard of Cleaves Mills should be able tell us what I have and why I took it.

Johnny considers the challenge.

ALEX

Just one touch, right?

(off Johnny's pause)

You aren't gonna punk out on me, are ya?

JOHNNY

Don't even have to touch you.

An "Ooooooo" from the crowd... The gauntlet is down. Johnny playfully touches his temple...

ALEX

So what's the frequency, Kenneth?

JOHNNY

Nineteen-thirty-eight Indian head nickel. It was a good luck charm my father left to me.

The look on Alex's face tells everyone that Johnny nailed it. Alex lifts it out of his pocket and holds it high above his head. APPLAUSE.

ALEX

I surrender, oh mystic one!

JOHNNY

Still disrupting class.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (3)

4

ALEX

Sorry, Mr. Smith, but you drilled it into us on that senior trip to the science museum -- question the status quo. Push the edge of reason and -- what was it?

(everyone joins)

"Be the vanguard!"

Alex and Johnny hesitate, then grab each other in a heartfelt hug, but when they come out of it--

5 WHOOSH! (RESEARCH LAB - VISION)

5

Alex BEGINS to burn alive. His skin BLISTERS and CRACKLES!

He is consumed by SUPER-HOT BLUE FIRE. Vision Johnny pulls back and they're suddenly standing...

6 EXT. WASHINGTON MONUMENT - DAY (GREEN SCREEN)

6

Everything is CONSUMED BY BLOOD-ORANGE NUCLEAR FIRE.

It's Armageddon, just as Johnny as seen before...

Only this is a new angle on a familiar old terror. The FIRE comes at him in a WAVE, RUSHING OVER HIM, and taking Alex with it. Johnny raises his arms to shield from the ALL-CONSUMING FIRE, only to FLASH....

7 BACK TO JOHNNY

7

He gets his bearings. Alex raises a cup of beer.

ALEX

A toast. To Mr. Smith! For giving each of us the key to the brightest future we could ever imagine!

As the group APPLAUDS and CHEERS, Johnny forces a smile.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

8 INT. JOHNNY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 8

Surprise party in full swing. Alex finishes his beer. Johnny is across from him.

JOHNNY

What are you up to these days?
Besides busting on your old
teachers.

Alex puts down the cup. Johnny casually "moves" it --
but he's really fishing for another vision.

ALEX

Plastics.

JOHNNY

Plastics?

ALEX

Polymers. I'm a research chemist
at Portland Chemical.

JOHNNY

That's a good place to be.

ALEX

Got my own lab. Assistant. Whole
she-bang.

JOHNNY

That's great, Alex. I'm happy
for you.

BRUCE (O.S.)

Who is he?

9 BRUCE AND SARAH - OTHER SIDE OF THE PARTY 9

Bruce watches Alex. Sarah munches on something.

SARAH

Alex Conners. One of Johnny's
greatest achievements.

BRUCE

I'm afraid to ask.

SARAH

Alex came from a working class
family. Johnny took him under
his wing, helped him get a
scholarship to M.I.T.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

SARAH (CONT'D)

Spent more time with that kid
than he did with me.

BRUCE

So our boy was into rescuing before
he got knocked on the head.

SARAH

Alex was a prodigy. Johnny was
the first one to recognize his
talent.

BRUCE

(eyes Alex)
Seems like a nice guy.

Sarah notices Bruce's uneasy look.

SARAH

What is it?

BRUCE

Nothing.

10 BUT WE SEE WHAT BRUCE IS CONCERNED ABOUT:

10

As Alex is leaving, he leaves behind a paper plate. Johnny
nonchalantly touches it, fishing for another vision.
Bruce knows the drill nearly as well as Johnny.

Alex puts on a leather jacket and gathers his motorcycle
helmet.

BACK WITH JOHNNY AND ALEX

JOHNNY

Sure you can't stick around?

ALEX

Big day tomorrow. I'm about to
crack something huge.

JOHNNY

Love to see you in action. Any
chance I might get a tour?

ALEX

I'll talk to the boss. She's
kind of a hard-ass, but hey, if
it wasn't for you I wouldn't even
be there. Oh, almost forgot.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: 10

Alex pulls Johnny's good-luck INDIAN HEAD NICKEL from his coat pocket and returns it.

ALEX

All these years, you knew I had it?

JOHNNY

Where else would it be?

ALEX

(hands it back)

I took it the day before the Science Decathlon. For luck. Didn't know it was your Dad's, man. Sorry. Real dickweed thing to do.

JOHNNY

No problem. You are a dickweed.

Traded smiles, then Alex heads out, Johnny watches, concerned... he turns as his eyes land on Bruce. Johnny knows he knows something is up.

11 INT. JOHNNY'S HOUSE - DAY - ON THE ARMAGEDDON WALL 11

Johnny's collection of clippings, photos and facts about Greg Stillson, Armageddon, etc. Johnny studies it closely, connecting the dots in his mind. Bruce looks on.

BRUCE

You sure that's what you saw?

JOHNNY

It was Armageddon, Bruce.

BRUCE

But you said it was different.

JOHNNY

Yeah. Alex was there.

BRUCE

Alex? The only time you ever see Armageddon is when you touch Stillson.

Johnny is standing in front of an image of Stillson.

JOHNNY

That's why this doesn't add up.

The PHONE BEGINS TO RING, but Johnny doesn't move from the board.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

BRUCE

Maybe Portland Chemical is
connected to a defense contractor
that's going to work on a bomb.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Or maybe somebody on the inside
is dirty.

RING. Bruce glances at the phone, wondering if Johnny's
going to pick it up. He just stares at the board.

BRUCE

I mean, how else could your former
student be involved with the end
of the world?

RING. Another glance.

BRUCE

Are you gonna grab that?

Johnny looks back, snapping out of his focus on the board.

JOHNNY

What?

The MACHINE PICKS UP and we HEAR Alex Connors' voice...

ALEX'S VOICE

Hey, Mister Smith, it's Alex.
Good news. Got the thumbs up on
you spending the day in my lab.
You should pop by in the morning.
It'll be like old times.

BRUCE

Old times -- or End Times?

CUT TO:

12 A NUCLEAR MUSHROOM CLOUD (RESEARCH LAB)

12

Actually, it's digitized -- part of a game being played
on a PC.

REVEAL TREY WALTERS, 21, prodigy, aspiring scientist but
he dresses like a skateboarder. Doesn't look a day over
17. Trey isn't angry at the world, just annoyed with it.

TREY

(low, incensed)
Ignominious bastard!

JOHNNY (O.S.)

I've had warmer welcomes.

(CONTINUED)

DEAD ZONE: "Vanguard" - ACT ONE - 4/19/05 - YELLOW 10.

12 CONTINUED: 12

Trey TURNS...

REVEALING Johnny, a Portland Chemical "VISITOR" BADGE pinned on his jacket. We realize we're in...

13 INT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - RESEARCH LAB - DAY 13

The place is advanced, but not sleek or science-fictiony. It's real-world, industrial, workmanlike. Beakers, burners, spin plates and mass spectrometers. There are also pressurized tanks of fuel and other materials. In one corner, a glass-enclosed TESTING ROOM.

Trey goes back to playing his game.

TREY

You must be the legendary teacher-turned-coma-patient-turned-celebrated-but-slightly-notorious-parlor-trick.

JOHNNY

'Johnny' works.

Trey glances up. He likes this guy in spite of himself. Alex slides a piece of paper across to Johnny.

TREY

If you wanna hang, our boss says you gotta sign this. Non-disclosure.

JOHNNY

You guys deal in top secret stuff?

TREY

Worse. Profit-making stuff. The suits guard it like pit bulls. Dr. Conners is upstairs right now with Mrs. Peck.

Johnny finishes signing, steps toward the lab center.

JOHNNY

Mrs. Peck. She the boss?

TREY

Yeah, and I'm pretty sure she's got acid for blood.

Johnny checks out some of the work stations, poking around like a true science geek.

JOHNNY

This is a private company, right?

(CONTINUED)

TREY

Part of a monster conglomerate.

JOHNNY

Chemicals their only business?

TREY

Dude, the check gets direct-deposited every week. Beyond that, I'm clueless.

Johnny arrives at a table with POLYMER SAMPLES on it. Advanced plastics. Some are cubes, others are flat and can be stretched. Various colors. Johnny touches a few -- the way Johnny touches things. And then, on a dark black polymer, he feels a WHOOSH.

JOHNNY

This one's gonna end up in snow tires.

Trey looks up, then is quickly on his feet...

TREY

Whoa! Careful with that one.

Johnny examines a SAMPLE POLYMER that resembles a thin silver-gray SHEATH, stretched across a metal device like a drum head.

JOHNNY

This looks interesting.

To Trey's shock, Johnny sticks his hand into it.

TREY

Hey!

It immediately GLOMS to the shape of his hand. He can move his fingers freely.

TREY

You are gonna get me so fired.

Johnny is about to remove his hand, when.

ALEX (O.S.)

Don't move!

Enter Alex, moving down the steps behind them.

ALEX

Let it process the data. You can monitor on the flat screen.

Alex motions to a nearby LCD screen.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

It lights up, showing BODY TEMPERATURE and HEART RATE.

JOHNNY
(removes hand)
Okay, now I'm officially impressed.

ALEX
It's not perfected yet, but it's close.

Alex motions to the polymer. It has not sprung back.

ALEX
It's adaptive, but the micro-structure doesn't allow for reactive formation of the macro-molecules.

JOHNNY
(instantly lost)
And the former science teacher would be who?

TREY (O.S.)
Yes!

Trey just won on his PSP.

ALEX
D'you finally break a level, Big Guy?

TREY
Be nice to me, I just vaporized Cleveland.

As Johnny considers the moment...

14 INT. PURDY'S OFFICE - DAY

14

GREG STILLSON is led in by PURDY.

PURDY
What brings you home to Maine, Congressman?

STILLSON
The House is in recess. It's a good time to catch up with old friends.

PURDY
You're always welcome at Faith Heritage.

(CONTINUED)

STILLSON

Am I, Reverend? Wasn't sure, considering the way you've been ignoring me.

PURDY

I don't understand.

STILLSON

You've made some amazing strides in recent months. You've got, what, three new transponders? That makes you a very powerful man. Dangerous, too.

PURDY

My work is spreading God's message. That is a powerful calling. The only 'danger' is in failing to reach all those in need of salvation.

STILLSON

Salvation can mean different things to different people. Exodus sixteen, verse fifteen.

PURDY

"And the children of Israel said to one another, It is manna."

STILLSON

"And Moses said -- this is the bread the Lord has given you to eat."

PURDY

By feeding his children, God delivered them to the promised land.

STILLSON

Headed that way myself, Gene. Wouldn't want to leave you behind.

PURDY

(gets it)
You're concerned about funding. As always, you'll have my support, Congressman.

STILLSON

May not be enough.

PURDY

I'm already at the ceiling for soft money contributions.

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

STILLSON

Then you'll have to reach for the sky, Reverend. Into the Heavens, if necessary.

A moment. Purdy considers his options.

PURDY

I can't.

Stillson is taken aback. But he just stares him down.

PURDY

I have an obligation to my ministry.

Stillson wants to rip Purdy's head off, but stays remarkably calm.

STILLSON

I see.

PURDY

I will gladly fund you at current levels -- and sing your praises over the airwaves -- but I cannot divert one more penny from foundation coffers.

A moment. Then...

STILLSON

Fair enough.

(shakes his hand)

God bless you, Gene. And God Bless all those who depend on you for insight and guidance.

Purdy holds Stillson's icy stare, as...

15 INT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - CHEMICAL LAB #348 - DAY

15

Alex and Johnny work on a clear DRY ERASE BOARD covered in formulas -- intricate "chains" of chemical bonds used to map and create polymers. They jot as they talk, already mid-way through an impromptu work session.

ALEX

I'll never get the polymer to reshape without the right series of bonds.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

JOHNNY
Covalent bonds.

ALEX
Very good. So what am I missing?

JOHNNY
Flubber?

Alex laughs. Science is hard.

JOHNNY
Why don't we cook up a new batch,
see what happens. Like the old
days.

ALEX
Sounds good.
(to Trey)
Let's do this!

Alex hits a BOOM BOX with his favorite MUSIC. As they
move off, Johnny can't truly enjoy this reunion knowing
what he knows.

16 MONTAGE - RESEARCH LAB CLEAN ROOM - DOING THE SCIENCE

16

Alex's MUSIC CONTINUES under some of this. This is the
"clean room," where the precision stuff gets done. There
is also one computer and monitor in here. Alex and Johnny
are now in goggles, gloves masks and protective clothing
(But again, nothing far-fetched).

They mix SUPERHEATED liquids (monomers) in various beakers.
The liquids are extracted from PRESSURIZED TANKS in the
testing room. Each has a different chemical symbol and
various industrial WARNING STICKERS. Toxic, flammable.

We get a sense of Alex and Johnny working well together.
Clicking. They pour SUPERHEATED liquid plastic into an
advanced metal FILTER DEVICE.

ALEX
The idea is to capture what forms
underneath --

JOHNNY
The precipitate.

ALEX
You're getting the hang of this.

Alex collects it, then spreads it over the wafer-thin
palette. It begins to cool. As they work, Johnny catches
an image "floating" on the computer -- Alex's screensaver.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

It is a PHOTO OF ALEX and his FATHER. On a boat against the water. Holding up LOBSTERS. (NOTE: If we have the extra playing the Mom, we should snap several combinations of the family, just to get some randomizing on the screen.)

JOHNNY

How's the family?

ALEX

Pop refuses to dock the boat.
That man is gonna be lobsterin'
'til he croaks. Mom is... mom.

JOHNNY

They gotta be proud of you.

ALEX

I guess.

Johnny's fishing now.

JOHNNY

I mean, Portland Chemical's right
up your alley. I remember you
passed on that R.O.T.C. scholarship
because you didn't want to end up
working for the Defense Department.

*
*
*
*
*

ALEX

I'm morally opposed to the science
of making weapons.
(then)
Same way I'm opposed to lite jazz.

*
*
*
*

Hearing a part of a song he really digs, Alex CRANKS his
BOOMBOX and...

*
*

17 INT. RESEARCH LAB - LATER

17

The new POLYMER is stretched and wired to the LCD screen.
Alex puts his hand through it. The LCD screen lights up.

ALEX

Faster readout than before. We
managed to improve the density --

SNAP! Alex's hand goes right through the POLYMER.

TREY

Uh-oh.

ALEX

Damnit!

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: 17

He kicks a stool out of the way.

JOHNNY

It's just a little set-back.

ALEX

(flares)

I don't do set-backs!

(calming beat)

I gotta... chill for a sec.

After Alex exits, Johnny touches the sample.

18 WHOOOOSH! (RESEARCH LAB - VISION) 18

Greg Stillson is standing in the room! In a tuxedo. He LAUGHS, as if someone just told him a joke. Vision Johnny observes.

And then Alex is there... (NOTE: Not aged, wearing what he'll have on in Act IV explosion.)

And there are FLASHBULBS going off.

It's all very Fellini -- until Alex begins to SCREAM, his SKIN BURNING and CRACKLING like before. BLUE FIRE begins to envelope him, rounded out when...

The WASHINGTON MONUMENT suddenly appears outside the DOOR!

And the entire BUILDING BLOWS UP AROUND JOHNNY, caught in a tsunami of NUCLEAR CONFLAGRATION, a FIRE WAVE that just doesn't quit until all of OBLITERATED D.C. is exposed --

19 JOHNNY'S BACK TO REALITY. (RESEARCH LAB) 19

Trey eyes him as Johnny's clearly shaken by the vision.

JOHNNY

(covering)

Forgot how intense this could be.

Off Trey's watchful eye, we...

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

20 BY THE DRY ERASE BOARD - CHEMICAL LAB #348 - SHORT TIME LATER 20

Alex steps back in to where the board is. Johnny comes up, gathering his coat.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

JOHNNY

I should be going. If you need a hand tomorrow...

ALEX

Maybe this isn't such a hot idea.

JOHNNY

Alex.

ALEX

It was great seeing you, Teach.

Johnny can take a hint.

JOHNNY

Likewise.

Johnny's about to go, but--

JOHNNY

Alex. I don't need psychic powers to know you're letting this get under your skin.

(then)

You're doing great stuff here. Remember that.

Johnny reaches the door:

ALEX

Mister Smith?

Johnny TURNS...

ALEX

How's 10 a.m. tomorrow? You bring the donuts.

JOHNNY

Jelly, chocolate sprinkles.

Alex nods, as Johnny leaves.

21 INT. JOHNNY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

21

Johnny takes apart the morning paper. Bruce is here.

BRUCE

Stillson, in a tuxedo. Then, nuclear hellfire.

JOHNNY

And flashbulbs.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

BRUCE

This is why I'll never buy a ticket to the theater of your mind.

JOHNNY

These advanced polymers Alex is working on, they seem harmless. Some of them could be used as artificial skin grafts. If anything, they're gonna save lives.

BRUCE

But when you touch him...
(makes explosion sound)
KABOOM!

JOHNNY

Something strange about that, too. Before D.C. explodes, Alex gets consumed by fire.

BRUCE

Maybe he's not the cause of the blast.

JOHNNY

Maybe he's the flashpoint.

BRUCE

My money's on the original Dark Prince.

Bruce shows Johnny something he's found in the paper: A PHOTO of Greg Stillson waving through a group of reporters. Off Johnny as he studies the photo...

22 INT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - RESEARCH LAB - DAY

22

Start on a brand new POLYMER, GUNMETAL GRAY, sleek. Stretched over a device. Alex is at work -- and he clearly hasn't slept all night. He's telling Johnny all about it, as Johnny sets down a box of donuts:

ALEX

I kept running it through my mind, then at about three this morning, it hit me.

JOHNNY

You pulled an all-nighter?

ALEX

Yeah, and this is what I got to show for it.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

Alex touches it. It BENDS, but it doesn't quite give.
Not very pliable.

JOHNNY

Doesn't seem right.

ALEX

I need to soften it.

(hates this part)

In about two hours, it'll turn to
this.

He shows a BRITTLE SAMPLE of the polymer.

ALEX

It's cool, though -- the micro-
structure has significant molecular
extension and alignment.

Trey sees that Johnny is lost.

TREY

It's really strong. I mean, we
hit it with everything. Extreme
heat, high-tensile stress tests.
Even that.

He gestures towards a PRESSURIZED TANK. A NUCLEAR SYMBOL.
Johnny reacts.

ALEX

(stretches sample)

It's a neutron absorber.

JOHNNY

(not good news)

It's radiation-proof.

ALEX

You have any idea what this means?

Johnny touches the POLYMER --

23 WHOOSH! (RESEARCH LAB - VISION)

23

*Suddenly, there's an AIR FORCE GENERAL standing next to
Johnny -- and Alex is there, too (in Act IV wardrobe).*

*The Air Force General looks off camera, not directly
interacting with Alex.*

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

AIR FORCE GENERAL

*We are making significant strides
in the defense of our nation.
And we've got Portland Chemical's
amazing work to thank for it.*

*During this, FLASHBULBS GO OFF again, recalling the
previous VISION.*

24 BACK ON JOHNNY (RESEARCH LAB)

24

His worst nightmare appears to be coming true.

JOHNNY

Sounds important.

ALEX

Important? How about earth
shattering!

[NOTE: Possible Act I break here, OFF Johnny's reaction
to the above line. Come back as Alex continues:]

ALEX

You could shield organs around
cancer cells -- people won't get
their healthy tissue fried during
radiation treatment.

JOHNNY

It's incredible, Alex.

JUDITH PECK (O.S.)

And a major find for Portland
Chemical...

Enter JUDITH PECK, 45, a corporate taskmaster whose drive
is only surpassed by her ego.

TREY

Goes real nice with profit
participation, right?

She regards Trey as a bug, barely looking at him.

JUDITH PECK

Get me some coffee.

TREY

Black, two sugars.

Trey shoots Johnny a shrug and scampers away.

JUDITH PECK

Bendable plastic with the shielding
properties of lead. This is a
home run, Alex. Congratulations.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

ALEX
(re: Johnny)
Don't thank me. John suggested
some things that helped break it
wide open.
(introducing)
Johnny Smith, Judith Peck.

JUDITH PECK
I've heard about you.

JOHNNY
All good, I hope.

Johnny shakes her hand--

25 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CHEMICAL LAB #348 - VISION - DAY

25

Mrs. Peck shakes hands with GREG STILLSON. Vision Johnny observes.

JUDITH PECK
*Portland Chemical could not have
expanded if you hadn't squeezed
those subsidies out of House
Appropriations.*

STILLSON
*If the Governator can bring stem
cell research to California, I
sure as hell can open a spigot
for my people.*

*She likes him. Maybe she's taken by him. Maybe she wants
to ride him like a wild monkey.*

JUDITH PECK
*Congressman, I'm not naive. I
know why you're sending funding
my way. You want my hard cash to
become your soft money.*

STILLSON
(plays innocent)
Did I say that?

JUDITH PECK
*I just want you to know -- our
agendas are not mutually exclusive.*

STILLSON
*Never thought they were, Ms. Peck.
Not for one second.*

(CONTINUED)

DEAD ZONE: "Vanguard" - ACT ONE - 4/19/05 - YELLOW 23.

25 CONTINUED: 25

He's workin' it. As Stillson leaves, we settle on Mrs. Peck (and Vision Johnny). Yeah, she's taken by him alright.

26 BACK TO SCENE (RESEARCH LAB) 26

Johnny flashes out of the handshake. Peck sets her hand on Alex's shoulder.

JUDITH PECK

This young man is going to change
the world as we know it.

ON Johnny, as he considers what he knows...

FADE OUT.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

27 INT. JOHNNY'S BASEMENT - DAY - ON THE ARMAGEDDON WALL 27

REVERSE to reveal Bruce with Johnny, who searches stuffed FILE BOXES for something.

BRUCE

You said Alex's work could save lives.

JOHNNY

Until the military gets a hold of it, makes it part of a W.M.D. Probably a next-generation nuke.
(then)
I can't let him perfect the process.

BRUCE

Johnny. Nothing's happened yet. What if Alex does save some lives.

JOHNNY

I gotta believe stopping him will save more.

BRUCE

Listen to yourself. You're talking about sabotaging his work.

As Johnny studies the images on his board.

JOHNNY

Whatever's gotta be done, right? It's the Apocalypse. The Four Horseman are on their way.

Johnny finds a thin HARDBOUND BOOK in one of the boxes. He flips through it.

BRUCE

Why don't you just lay it down for him. Like you did with me. Tell him everything.

JOHNNY

He's a scientist, Bruce. Besides, these polymers, they're like his babies.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

He's not gonna give them up.

BRUCE

Alright, so what're you gonna do?

Johnny finds the page he's looking for.

JOHNNY

Alex trusts his teacher.

BRUCE

(gets the idea)

So you get close and you switch something in the formula. He'll think it's a design flaw and they'll eventually bury the project.

That's it.

BRUCE

I wish there was another way to do this.

JOHNNY

You're not the only one.

Johnny TEARS OUT THE PAGE from the unseen book. He TACKS it to the Armageddon wall, circles something then exits. Bruce looks at what Johnny just added to the wall:

A PAGE FROM THE CLEAVES MILLS HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK

A PHOTO of the SCIENCE CLUB. In the back: Johnny, the teacher. There's a rambunctious kid off to the side, behind a lit bunsen burner: Alex, his face circled in red ink.

28 INT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - CHEMICAL LAB #348 - DAY

28

Johnny contemplates the DRY ERASE BOARD, as if to steel himself for what he has to do.

TREY (O.S.)

Hey. You mind?

Trey, behind him, is working the keyboard on a desktop.

TREY

Gotta make sure we get this right.

He hits some keys and there's a FLASH of light, like a photo flash, from the dry erase board.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

Johnny looks at TREY'S SCREEN. A perfect image of the board has been preserved on the computer.

JOHNNY

That's where all the formulas get stored?

TREY

Right onto 'Seven-of-Nine.'

Trey shows a REMOVABLE HARD-DRIVE connected to the system.

TREY

Seven terabytes. The magic lives here.

We see the wheels spinning in Johnny's head, as Alex appears behind them.

ALEX

How 'bout we make some?

Boom box. More tunes. Johnny hates himself for what he's about to do.

29 RESEARCH LAB TESTING ROOM - A SERIES OF SHOTS - MAKING A NEW SAMPLE 29

Johnny and Alex wear protective gear as before. A new sample is mixed. Alex comes by, checks some digital readouts. Adjusts settings.

After he passes, Johnny changes the setting.

Johnny is already hating himself.

PURDY (V.O.)

Brothers in Christ, let us see ourselves in the mirror....

30 INT. FAITH HERITAGE - DAY - ON A MONITOR 30

Purdy, in the midst of a televised sermon. MOVE ACROSS...

FOUR MONITORS

As Purdy talks, we hear TRANSLATED DUBS of his sermon being broadcast in SPANISH, PORTUGUESE and RUSSIAN.

PURDY

...Can we truly say that we are doing God's work?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

PURDY (CONT'D)

Can we say that we are making the world a better place, each and every day? Jesus said to his disciples that the greatest commandment was to love your God. But equally important was a new commandment: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Matthew writes that on these two commandments hang the law and the prophets.

A SCREEN goes to STATIC. Then ANOTHER.

A TECH GUY at the bank of monitors notices. And then a third feed goes STATIC. He picks up a phone and we're...

31 INT. FAITH HERITAGE - CORRIDOR NEAR PURDY'S OFFICE - DAY 31

Purdy walks, an ASSISTANT (Male, mid-20s, clean-cut) talks.

ASSISTANT

We just lost Eastern Europe, Micronesia, Central and South America.

PURDY

(knowing, almost to himself)
The new transponders.

ASSITANT

There could be something wrong with the uplinks.

Purdy looks down the hall. Through his partially opened door, Purdy sees... MALCOLM JANUS fiddling with a paperweight.

PURDY

(sending Assistant off)
Tell the tech department to stand down. I have a feeling the problem will fix itself.

Off the confused assistant...

32 PURDY'S OFFICE - SECONDS LATER

32

The knick-knack Janus holds is a FAITH HERITAGE paper weight, an acrylic ball with a GLOBE in the center. "Faith Heritage - THE WORD, THE WORLD," it says.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

Janus studies it as Purdy enters.

PURDY

Mister Janus. Good afternoon.

JANUS

Do you enjoy dog shows, Reverend?

(CONTINUED)

PURDY

I'm sorry...

JANUS

Dog shows. Fussy contestants,
posing and preening. Over-sized
women holding leashes.

Purdy is at a complete loss.

PURDY

I'm not sure...

JANUS

Myself, I'm addicted to it.
Trouble is, I have a tree branch
blocking the dish on the roof of
my house. Just like that I'm
left sitting in the dark. All
alone.

Purdy now understands the subject of their conversation.

PURDY

I did not reject Greg Stillson's
request. I simply refused --

JANUS

Thing about those satellite
companies. Once you buy the
equipment, they make you sign
your life away. Do I make myself
understood?

Janus spins the paperweight on the desk and looks up at
Purdy:

PURDY

Tell the Congressman to consider
me a loyal subscriber.

JANUS

I already have.

Janus walks out as Purdy watches him go, then hastily
catches the heavy paper weight just as it spins off the
edge of the desk. He considers it as the world rests in
the palms of his hands.

Stillson shakes hands with Judith Peck, as we watch the
end of the VISION seen in Act I, now happening for real:

33 CONTINUED:

33

JUDITH PECK

I just want you to know -- our
agendas are not mutually exclusive.

STILLSON

Never thought they were, Ms. Peck.
Not for one second.

34 EXT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - PARKING LOT - DAY

34

Stillson, on his cell phone, walks to a waiting LIMO. He
is pissed about something.

STILLSON

You spoke with him? And?

INTERCUT:

35 EXT. A STABLE - ELLIS' RESIDENCE - DAY

35

A STABLE WORKER walks a HORSE past an incongruous black
SUV, where DARK-SUITED MAN and SIDEKICK stand watch.
Malcolm Janus is on his cell phone.

JANUS

I reminded the Reverend that there
is a higher power than God as it
relates to his newfound celebrity.

STILLSON

The main thing is he's going to
keep an open pipeline to the Faith
Heritage cash register. Where
are you?

JANUS

Setting up the next leg of the
Greg Stillson march to the White
House.

STILLSON

Nice. I'm at Portland Chemical.
They've been talking up one of
their researchers. Prodigy I'm
told.

JANUS

Alex Conners.

STILLSON

(caught off guard)
You know him?

JANUS

I know his work.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

STILLSON

The CEO says young Alex is onto something big. They could announce something within the month. That means the stock price could skyrocket. There's just one problem.

JANUS

What's that?

STILLSON

Conners' old science teacher's been visiting the lab. Johnny Smith.

Janus darkens.

STILLSON

Did you hear me?

JANUS

Let me get into it.

Janus closes his cell phone, considers his next move...

36 INT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - RESEARCH LAB - DAY

36

Alex, with goggles and gloved hands, tests a new sample of the SILVER POLYMER. Johnny is next to him. It gives. It stretches.

JOHNNY

How's it look?

ALEX

Good. Very...

But then, SNAP! It's toast. And Alex is pissed.

Johnny knows it's his doing, but has to play against it.

ALEX

I don't understand. I went over the numbers three times...

JOHNNY

A fully pliable neutron absorber... maybe it's not possible.

ALEX

Whatever happened to pushing the edge? Be the 'vanguard.'

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: 36

JOHNNY

You gotta know when you're beat.

And as Johnny despises himself even more, we HEAR the SOUNDS of CHAOS and EXPLOSIONS, putting us KNEE-DEEP in...

37 INT. BANNERMAN HOME - NIGHT 37

...an X-Box game, MechAssault 2, a first-person shooter. REVEAL Johnny and J.J. thrashin' each other. Sarah's in the b.g. watching. Johnny isn't that focused, so J.J. takes him out. *

J.J.

Come on -- you're lettin' me cream you!

JOHNNY

I need a breather. Wreak some havoc on your own.

Johnny heads into the kitchen, rubbing his eyes from a tension (and X-Box) headache. He finds some TYLENOL GEL CAPS and pops them open. Sarah gets him a glass of water.

SARAH

He's right. You were barely paying attention.

Johnny cops to nothing. Sarah knows something's up.

SARAH

That reunion was something else, huh? All those guys could talk about was senior year at the Museum of Science.

JOHNNY

Sometimes I wish the biggest thing in my life was planning a lousy twelfth grade field trip.

SARAH

The world changed, Johnny. Doesn't mean you have to.

A NOISE, and a dust-covered Walt lumbers through the basement door, carrying ripped-out wood and 2x4's.

WALT

I'm gonna have to rent a bin for all this stuff.

JOHNNY

What are you doin' down there?

(CONTINUED)

WALT

Converting the basement. We might need the extra room.

As Walt moves out, he fires a look at Sarah, who shoots a smile back. Johnny catches it.

JOHNNY

Sarah. You aren't...

Johnny makes a "pregnant belly" motion with his hand.

SARAH

No. Not yet anyway.

The idea at first crushes Johnny, then he shakes off those old feelings and gives her a smile.

JOHNNY

That's great. That's really great.

SARAH

We don't want J.J. to be an only child. And besides, Walt and I would love to have a child of our own.

(awkward beat)

That came out wrong.

JOHNNY

It's alright. I understand.

The awkwardness continues. Johnny cuts it with:

JOHNNY

(joking)

Hey, I could help you out if you want -- tell you if it's a boy or a girl.

Johnny playfully reaches for her, but her reaction catches him by surprise:

SARAH

No!

She jumps back, surprising even herself.

SARAH

I just don't want to find out that way.

Johnny feels like a total freak -- instead of handing her back the cup of water, he knows to just set it down.

JOHNNY

I should get going. Tell J.J. I had to run.

Johnny heads to the door and looks back...

JOHNNY

I'm really happy for you, Sarah.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (2) 37

He leaves. Sarah ponders the moment, as...

38 INT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - RESEARCH LAB - DAY 38

SNAP! Another POLYMER SAMPLE fails in Alex's hands. Johnny looks on. We can tell he's just completed more sabotage -- and no, he's still not proud of it.

Alex trades another look with Trey.

ALEX
(to Trey)
We get the same result?

TREY
Yeah.

JOHNNY
What's the problem?

ALEX
We've run five samples today.
And every one -- every single one --
tanked because something was off
on your end.

JOHNNY
My end?

ALEX
What is it? Are you jealous?
Can't stand to see one of your
students pass you by?

JOHNNY
You know that isn't true.

ALEX
(to Trey)
Those who can't do, teach. Those
who can't teach -- sabotage.

Alex, frustrated, tosses a busted piece of the FAILED POLYMER at him. Johnny catches it, and--

39 MATCH, MOVE, MORPH AROUND THEM (CHEMICAL LAB #348-VISION) 39

And Alex, holding his own piece of the POLYMER, approaches the dry-erase board with Trey. Vision Johnny observes.

ALEX

That's it. The H-three bonds on
the last cycle are off.

Vision Johnny reacts. Alex has his Eureka moment.

TREY

Dude. You are officially on the
map.

They share a high-five. Alex goes to the board and circles
something. When he circles it, he presses too hard and
the BOARD slips, knocking some plastic beakers over.
Alex laughs at himself, rights the board.

JUDITH PECK (O.S.)

The joyous sounds of progress, I
hope.

Alex spins around. Enter Judith Peck.

JUDITH PECK

Dr. Conners, I have someone I
want you to meet.

Enter Stillson. The politician's smile on full.

JUDITH PECK

Congressman Greg Stillson. Alex
Conners.

ALEX

Wow.
(a joke)
Shoulda worn a clean shirt.

Stillson laughs, shakes his hand.

STILLSON

And an honor -- for me. I
understand you're a true Maine
success story.

ALEX

Guess I am today, although it's
been a pretty rough week.

JUDITH PECK

Congressman Stillson was concerned
when I told him Johnny Smith has
been monitoring your work.

ALEX

Really? You know Mister Smith?

STILLSON

We've crossed paths. He's not
around now, is he?

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

ALEX

(darkens)

No. We're finished.

Stillson likes the sound of that.

STILLSON

Good decision.

40 BACK ON JOHNNY (RESEARCH LAB)

40

He flashes out of the vision...

ALEX

What's the matter? Seeing things?
Maybe you can tell security about
it.

JOHNNY

Your work's gonna be used in other
ways, Alex. Ways you won't be so
proud of.

ALEX

I don't believe you.

JOHNNY

Then believe this.

(re: dry board)

You're gonna knock those beakers
over -- right after you have the
breakthrough.

Two Portland Chemical SECURITY GUARDS arrive and "escort"
Johnny out. But he gets one more thing in:

JOHNNY

And after that -- that's when
you're gonna meet him, Alex.
You'll know him when you meet
him! The man we have to stop!
The man at the top!

They take him away, and for a moment, it's easy to
understand why some people see Johnny Smith as a madman.

TREY

He still your hero?

ALEX

I hope he gets some help, that's
all.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

41 INT. JOHNNY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 41

Johnny and Bruce.

BRUCE

Why didn't you just tell him?

JOHNNY

They were dragging me out. Only thing they forgot was the straightjacket.

BRUCE

Maybe you should grow a beard and get a cardboard sign that says 'The end is near.'

Not funny.

BRUCE

Look, if you saw Alex laughin' it up with the Dark Prince, then that's your answer. The future connection with Stillson is giving you the Armageddon vision.

JOHNNY

But Alex is in the vision too. He's the first one to die.

42 *FLASH MEMORY (REUSE)* 42

The VISION. Alex, consumed by BLUE FLAME, then the ARMAGEDDON WAVE takes them.

43 BACK TO SCENE 43

As we reveal Johnny is holding the INDIAN HEAD NICKEL -- the one Alex returned to him earlier. Johnny is lost in thought, circling an emotional black hole about the kid.

Bruce, also at a loss, searches for a way to help.

BRUCE

This is crazy, man. You cannot keep living like this.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

JOHNNY

You think I want this? You think I like the fact that I can't shake somebody's hand without seeing crazy things?

BRUCE

That's not what I mean.

JOHNNY

(his blood is up)
What do you mean?

BRUCE

Maybe there's nothing we can do to stop the end of the world. Maybe the prophets got it right, you know? It's just... supposed to happen.

JOHNNY

You're not asking me to give up.

BRUCE

I learned to stop doing that a long time ago, John.

JOHNNY

Good.

Johnny exits. Bruce is increasingly concerned about him.

44 INT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - CHEMICAL LAB #348 - DAY

44

Alex shares a high-five with Trey. Just like Johnny's previous VISION. Alex makes a circle on the board. It CLANKS and knocks over the plastic beakers.

Now, things are NOT QUITE like the previous VISION. The realization is hitting Alex...

45 MEMORY FLASH (REUSE) - ALEX RECALLS WHAT JOHNNY TOLD HIM

45

JOHNNY

You're gonna knock those beakers over -- right after you have the breakthrough.

Security guards take him away.

JOHNNY

That's when you're gonna meet him, Alex.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: 45

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
The man we have to stop! The man
at the top!

46 BACK TO SCENE (CHEMICAL LAB #348) 46

Alex takes in what just happened. He tries to right the board, it makes another NOISE, then FALLS BACK.

JUDITH PECK (O.S.)
The sounds of progress, I hope.

Alex spins around. Enter Judith Peck.

JUDITH PECK
Dr. Connors. I have someone I
want you to meet.

Enter Stillson. The politician's smile on full.

JUDITH PECK
Congressman Greg Stillson. Alex
Connors.

Alex tries to get his mind what has just happened. The ongoing realization that Johnny was right. Unlike before:

ALEX
Wow... this is a surprise.

Stillson shakes his hand.

STILLSON
And an honor -- for me. I
understand you're a true Maine
success story.

ALEX
I guess so.

JUDITH PECK
Congressman Stillson was concerned
when I told him Johnny Smith had
been monitoring your work.

ALEX
Really? You know Mister Smith?

STILLSON
Our paths have crossed. He's not
around, is he?

ALEX
No. We're, uh, finished.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: 46

STILLSON

Good decision.

But Stillson, somehow, is not convinced...

47 EXT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL PARKING LOT - LATER 47

Stillson gets in his limo. Janus is here.

STILLSON

I want Smith kept away from here.

JANUS

My sources tell me he was thrown out yesterday.

STILLSON

If Smith derails that kid's work, he derails the money train.

JANUS

I've got it under control.

STILLSON

Do you? That freak is up to something. What if Smith's meeting this kid outside the lab? Follow Connors and find out.

JANUS

(unfazed)

It's under control.

48 EXT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT 48

Johnny and Bruce pull up alongside a wall in Bruce's Murano. They get out and move alongside the building.

BRUCE

You sure this is a good idea? They're just gonna toss you again.

JOHNNY

If I'm right, my vision came true and he's already met Stillson.

BRUCE

So now what?

Johnny motions to Alex's motorcycle. Parked near the door.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

JOHNNY

I'm gonna wait for Alex. Find a way to convince him that what he's doing is going to be very bad for everyone.

BRUCE

How you plan to do that?

JOHNNY

I don't know. Maybe you're right, maybe I just need to lay it all out.

Johnny stops at the motorcycle, touches it.

49 *WHOOOSH!*

49

Alex is there. Leaving work.

Vision Johnny observes. Alex walks past him...

And Alex DOES NOT see the Dark-suited Man near the side of the building. Just... watching. Alex gets on his bike and leaves. Dark-suited Man goes to a car, gets in. He and his accomplice (Sidekick) follow.

When Alex pulls out, the sedan cuts him off. Alex innocently wonders who these guys are. But when they get out, they move toward him, menacingly...

50 BACK ON JOHNNY AND BRUCE

50

Johnny flashes out of the vision.

BRUCE

What'd you see?

JOHNNY

They're coming for Alex.

51 EXT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

51

Alex walks to his motorcycle.

(CONTINUED)

DEAD ZONE: "Vanguard" - ACT THREE - 4/19/05 - YELLOW 41.

51 CONTINUED: 51

We notice a BLACK SEDAN in the corner of the parking lot. Sitting there. Dark-suited Man watches.

Alex rides off. He does not notice the CAR follow him.

52 EXT. PARKING LOT ENTRANCE - SECONDS LATER 52

Alex stops, where Bruce's Murano is near the exit. Bruce drives, Johnny rides shotgun.

Johnny rolls down the window, calls to Alex, who still has his helmet on.

ALEX

Mr. Smith?

JOHNNY

You're being followed. Don't look back! Just keep going.

ALEX

Where?

JOHNNY

'Field trip.' Twelfth grade.

Alex gives a slight nod, takes off. Johnny sits back in the passenger seat, hiding from the car behind them.

BRUCE

Hold on!

When the BLACK SEDAN goes to follow, Bruce pulls into the middle of the street, cutting it off -- as if he were trying to make a wide right. The Men HONK at Bruce.

BRUCE

(plays innocent)

Sorry! My fault! Just learned to drive a stick!

The diversion is enough to let Alex get away to...

53 EXT. MAINE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE & NATURE - NIGHT 53

Johnny and Bruce pull up and get out in front of the striking structure. A sign reads: "Maine Museum of Science & Nature." There's no one around.

BRUCE

Maybe he misunderstood you.

JOHNNY

Or maybe he just didn't trust me.

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly, Alex steps out from the darkness.

ALEX

(to Johnny)

It happened. I had the
breakthrough, the beakers fell.
Then Peck came in with that
Stillson guy. Just like you said.

BRUCE

Funny how that works, ain't it?

ALEX

I'm a man of science, but I can't
find a rational explanation for
it.

BRUCE

There's no explanation. It's...
cosmic.

ALEX

You wanna tell me what my local
Congressman's got to do with it?

JOHNNY

Greg Stillson can't be allowed to
exploit your work.

ALEX

It's going to be converted, isn't
it? Used in some kind of weapon.
A W.M.D.

BRUCE

Guess there's a reason you're the
star pupil.

JOHNNY

(you knew)

You knew?

Alex pulls a POLYMER SAMPLE from his pocket (the one he
tossed at Johnny earlier).

ALEX

It's always been in the back of
my mind. I knew my research could
exploited. But there's more,
isn't there?

Johnny hesitates, but his eyes give him away.

ALEX

When you touch me, what do you
see?

Johnny hesitates...

BRUCE

Tell him, John.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (2)

53

JOHNNY

I see fire. I see the end of the world.

Alex tries to take it all in, but how?

ALEX

What do you want me to do?

BRUCE

That'a boy.

JOHNNY

(to Alex)

It's too dangerous.

ALEX

(re: the polymer)

I created this. My mind, my hands brought it to life. Somebody's gotta be the vanguard against these bastards, right? Might as well be us, Teach.

The mentor finds surprising inspiration from his student. Johnny takes the sample from Alex, and-- WHOOSH!

54 INT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - RESEARCH LAB - VISION - DAY

54

Remember that AIR FORCE GENERAL? He's still here, buried in the flashbulbs. Alex is here, too. WE PICK UP THE PREVIOUS VISION. As before, the General looks offscreen.

AIR FORCE GENERAL

And we've got Portland Chemical's amazing work to thank for it...

(new from here)

Their advanced, next-generation polymers have allowed us to contain the core of a tactical nuclear weapon.

We arrive at a spherical WEAPON CORE -- constructed entirely of Alex's silver polymer. The General holds it up for an O.S. audience.

VISION Johnny watches, nearby.

AIR FORCE GENERAL

Don't worry, people -- it's not a live one.

FLASHBULBS (not on Johnny). And laughter, coming from... a coterie of SENATOR TYPES and low-level AIR FORCE STAFFERS (with digital cameras). Among them is Judith Peck. This is not a press conference, but a private showing of next-gen technology.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

AIR FORCE GENERAL
Pick your delivery system, folks.

The General places the weapon core inside a next-gen artillery shell. He sets the artillery shell next to a handheld rocket launcher.

AIR FORCE GENERAL
Another reason for our enemies to fear us.

The General motions toward a door.

AIR FORCE GENERAL
Now, I'd like to introduce the man who helped spearhead these and other achievements in our nation's security. We had to pull him out of a fancy banquet, but he insisted on coming by. Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States!

Enter President Greg Stillson -- directly crossing Johnny. In a tux. Just like the previous vision. FLASHBULBS.

55 BACK AT THE MUSEUM

55

Johnny can hardly believe what he's just seen.

BRUCE
Talk to me, John.

JOHNNY
I saw Stillson. He was different.

BRUCE
Different?

JOHNNY
He was the President of the United States.

Off this moment of DEAD ZONE terror, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

56 EXT. MAINE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE & NATURE - MORNING

56

Bruce sleeps near the wooden buildings on the side. There's a fire in embers. Johnny, looking tired, stares out past the building, Alex joins him.

ALEX

I've been thinking about it and it seems to me, we need to trash the hard drive and burn the samples.

JOHNNY

I know. But I should go.

ALEX

You? After the other day, you won't get anywhere near that lab.

Johnny knows he's right.

JOHNNY

I can't let you destroy your life's work.

ALEX

First of all, I'm only 27. Second, you aren't my teacher anymore. You aren't 'letting' me do anything. We have to stop this.

Johnny understands his former student's determination.

JOHNNY

(thinking it through)
Go back to the lab. Keep doing what you're doing. Tell them it's just not working. That'll buy me some time.

ALEX

To do what?

JOHNNY

Make a deal.

57 EXT. STABLE - DAY 57

Where we saw Janus setting up a Stillson event earlier.
A black limo has just pulled up near a sign reading:
"UNITED MAINE CHARITIES, ANNUAL SHOWJUMPING EVENT."

58 INT. THE LIMO - DAY 58

START on Janus' distinctive ring, as he holds his cell phone.

JANUS

Dr. Connors is in possession of
Portland Chemical's intellectual
property. I want it returned.

Janus hangs up the cell phone, and we REVEAL he's in the
back seat with Stillson.

STILLSON

Smith won't quit that easy.

JANUS

Stay focused on the prize. There's
someone I want you to meet.

STILLSON

Another cash cow?

JANUS

Just make sure you see Gene Purdy.

STILLSON

The Reverend's here?

JANUS

He's going to introduce you.

59 EXT. STABLE - DAY 59

Stillson moves through the stable with Purdy.

PURDY

I'm heartened by the fact that we
could work out our differences.

STILLSON

Never doubted your enthusiasm for
the cause.

PURDY

(sees someone O.S.)
Ah, here he is now.

Purdy leads Stillson to senior SENATOR HARLAN ELLIS.

(CONTINUED)

PURDY

Congressman Stillson, I'd like
you to meet--

STILLSON

Senator Harlan Ellis. Sir, it is
an honor. You're a legend in
Maine politics.

SEN. ELLIS

Christ almighty, am I that old?
(then)
Sorry, Reverend.

PURDY

You're absolved, Senator.

An ND PURDY AIDE comes up, whispers in his ear. He peels
off as we linger on Stillson and Ellis.

STILLSON

I've been wanting to meet you for
years, sir.

SEN. ELLIS

We share the same constituents,
son. It's a good thing for us to
meet outside the beltway, get
back to our people -- touch the
natives as it were.

As Ellis goes on, Stillson spots a CAPTIVATING YOUNG WOMAN
dismount from a beautiful horse. She wears riding
(showjumping) attire.

Sen. Ellis catches Stillson watching the YOUNG WOMAN.

STILLSON

Now that's a constituent worth
wooing.

SEN. ELLIS

(with a smile)
That's my daughter, Miranda.

STILLSON

Senator--

SEN. ELLIS

(laughs)
It's alright. I was young once.
(to Young Woman)
Miranda! Come here darling, I'd
like you to meet a friend of the
family.

59 CONTINUED: (2)

59

She removes her riding hat.

MIRANDA

Daddy.

She kisses his cheek.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (3)

59

SEN. ELLIS

This is Greg Stillson. Greg is a Congressman. A young man with a very bright future.

STILLSON

My pleasure.

They shake hands. Stillson is clearly taken by her.

STILLSON

You look like you were born in the saddle.

MIRANDA ELLIS

Are you a rider?

STILLSON

No, but I'm a lethally quick study.

Oh, yeah. He likes her.

60 EXT. LIMO - LATER THAT DAY

60

Stillson is led to his limo door by the Driver. Before he gets in, he tosses one last look toward the house.

Miranda, headed inside, glances back. A traded smile. Greg gets in the limo, brimming with bravado, only to find...

61 INT. LIMO - DAY

61

Johnny waits inside. Stillson is caught by surprise.

STILLSON

Smith.

JOHNNY

You need to work on your security.

STILLSON

You're like a wad of chewing gum I can't scrape off the bottom of my shoe.

JOHNNY

Maybe we're connected by destiny.

STILLSON

Scary thought. What do you want?

JOHNNY

I want Alex Connors left alone.

(CONTINUED)

STILLSON

Do you now.

JOHNNY

I want your people to back off
and let him walk away.

STILLSON

What's so important about Conners?

JOHNNY

It doesn't matter, I just want
your word he'll be safe.

STILLSON

I'm a politician. My 'word' is
gonna cost you.

JOHNNY

You want a check -- like Reverend
Purdy? Portland Chemical?

STILLSON

You may find this shocking, but
unless there's some campaign
finance reform bill I don't know
about, I'm not doing anything
illegal.

JOHNNY

Of course not. But you live in
the loop holes, don't you?

STILLSON

From what I understand, Conners'
work is going to save lives.

JOHNNY

The research is flawed. It's
useless. I don't want a public
failure to ruin his career.

STILLSON

And you are offering...

JOHNNY

Myself. Stay away from Alex
Conners, I'll stay away from you.

Stillson considers this.

STILLSON

You really think you should play
that card so early in the game?

61 CONTINUED: (2) 61

Johnny holds out his hand. Stillson considers it again, then... Stillson shakes Johnny's hand.

62 BRIEF VISION - A TASTE OF ARMAGEDDON 62

We see FIRE in Johnny's EYES... then, we HOLD on STILLSON and only see the GLOW of fire and RAGING EXPLOSIONS, flashing instead BACK TO....

63 JOHNNY 63

As Stillson watches him have a VISION. Stillson is taken aback by it.

STILLSON

My God, you're a man possessed,
aren't you?

JOHNNY

Do we have a deal?

Stillson nods. Johnny rushes out of there. Stillson pulls his phone, hits a SPEED DIAL.

STILLSON

Did you find him yet? Good, take
him in.

64 EXT. MAINE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE & NATURE - DAY 64

Bruce's Murano pulls up, Johnny gets out. But as he approaches, he sees no one.

JOHNNY

Alex?

He sees Alex's tipped over motorcycle and helmet. Then he spots Bruce. Beaten bloody.

JOHNNY

Bruce!

BRUCE

I'm sorry, John...

Johnny finds Alex's HELMET, picks it up and--

65 VISION - MOMENTS BEFORE 65

Alex puts the HELMET on and gets on his bike. Headed back to the lab. He waves so long to Bruce -- who is suddenly accosted by Dark-suited Man! Bruce puts up a fight. It takes the two of them to knock him out.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

Alex runs toward his motorcycle. He gets on. Races away -- but the second Man (Sidekick) is still in the car.

He pulls it forward and cuts Alex off.

Alex SPINS the bike around -- rooster-tailing sand and gravel behind him -- as he races the other way --

But by then, the first Dark-Suited Man KNOCKS HIM OFF THE BIKE! It slides to where Johnny just found it.

Dark-suited Man reaches into his jacket...

Alex, on the ground, has nowhere to run. Ready to die.

But the Man only removes a MANILA ENVELOPE and tosses it at Alex. Alex opens it. Looks at something inside.

ALEX

What do you want?

DARK-SUITED MAN

You.

Alex drops the envelope.

Filled with resignation, Alex goes with the two Men. Willingly. Gets in the car. Drives away. We FIND the manila envelope on the ground and FLASH BACK TO...

66 JOHNNY IN THE PRESENT

66

Bruce, conscious now, follows him, as they search the area. Johnny finds the manila envelope half-buried in sand. He flips it over to REVEAL...

A PHOTO -- the picture of Alex and his FATHER (seen on the screensaver).

BRUCE

What is it?

Johnny's heart sinks as he hands the envelope to Bruce.

BRUCE

They threatened his family.

JOHNNY

Stillson lied.

BRUCE

There's a shocker for ya.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 66

JOHNNY

I have to make sure Alex is okay.

67 EXT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL PARKING LOT - DAY 67

Johnny and Bruce pull up. When Johnny gets to the door--
WHOOOOSH! We WHIP down the hall, directly into...

68 INT. PORTLAND - CHEMICAL LAB #348 - VISION - DAY 68

Alex and Judith Peck.

JUDITH PECK

I'm glad your back with us.

ALEX

Never left, Mrs. Peck. Honestly,
I don't know what all the fuss is
about.

JUDITH PECK

Good to hear.

Mrs. Peck exits.

And Vision Johnny watches her go. As Vision Johnny turns
back to Alex, he realizes his former student has made a
decision...

Alex bolts the door from the inside and heads straight
for the REMOVABLE HARD DRIVE. Tears it out. He sets it
in the center of The PRESSURIZED TANKS near the testing
room. He also wipes the DRY ERASE BOARD CLEAN and exits
the lab.

69 SERIES OF QUICK CUTS (RESEARCH LAB CLEAN ROOM AND 69
ADJACENT CORRIDOR - VISION)

Alex rigs a gas burner with a HOT BLUE FLAME to FIRE UP
near a tubing beside the pressurized tanks. The tubing,
wrapped in metal, begins to heat up. Vision Johnny
watches.

ALEX

(to himself)

Consider this my letter of
resignation.

Alex makes a quick escape for the door.

But as soon as he gets to the corridor -- there's Sidekick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alex moves back to another corner.

Vision Johnny looks back -- THE BURNER begins to burn through the TUBING.

Alex bolts around a corner -- and Dark-suited Man stops him.

DARK-SUITED MAN
I'll take that hard-drive now.

ALEX
This is private property. You shouldn't be in here.

DARK-SUITED MAN
Call the Sheriff.

Dark-suited Man shows him a gun and pushes Alex back into the lab -- right past Vision Johnny. And into the ENCLOSED TESTING ROOM.

VISION JOHNNY
Alex, don't!

Alex SLAMS the door on him, as the Dark-suited Man and Sidekick appear in the window at each door. Alex, caught in a moment of rage and desperation, yells at them through the glass:

ALEX
My work is not gonna be used to kill people. You got that, assholes! You hearin' me?! I'd rather...

The BURNER eats through the tubing and it CATCHES FIRE, moving like a fuse to the tanks and --

We don't see the explosion, just yet, all we see is--

JOHNNY'S POV - ALEX

His skin and face bubble. BLUE FLAMES surround him and he is consumed by the fire. FLASH BACK TO:

EXT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL PARKING LOT - DAY

Johnny releases the door.

JOHNNY
(realizes)
He wasn't killed during Armageddon.
He was never there...

DEAD ZONE: "Vanguard" - ACT FOUR - 4/20/05 - GOLD 53A.

70A FLASH MEMORY OF VISION (PARTIAL REUSE) - DAY 70A

Johnny sees our three-shot of Stillson and the Air Force General, with Alex between them... But Alex FADES AWAY like a ghost.

70B RESUME 70B

(CONTINUED)

70B CONTINUED:

70B

FOLLOW Johnny as he RACES down the hall. But by the time he gets in there...

71 INT. PORTLAND CHEMICAL - RESEARCH LAB - DAY

71

The Dark-Suited Man has already driven Alex back into the Testing Room.

JOHNNY

Alex! No!

And there's a HUGE EXPLOSION.

All the chemicals go up, creating a MASSIVE WALL of SUPER-HOT BLUE FIRE.

And we understand, this was the death of Alex Johnny was seeing all along.

Johnny is KNOCKED OFF HIS FEET, as the blast wave rocks the entire area.

Johnny scrambles to his feet and hurries towards the lab. He climbs through the shattered door and over some smoldering debris, until he locates Alex Connors' badly injured body. Johnny lifts some debris off of him and cradles his bloody body in his arms. Bruce appears in the shattered doorway.

JOHNNY

We need an ambulance! Now!

Bruce rushes off. Alex comes to...

ALEX

Did they get it? They get my work?

JOHNNY

They didn't get it, Alex.

Alex struggles to sit up, but realizes he can't. Johnny realizes Alex is fading.

JOHNNY

Hang on...

71 CONTINUED:

71

ALEX

Shoulda kept your old man's nickel.

Alex dies in Johnny's arms. Off this powerful moment of courage and sacrifice, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

72 EXT. A CEMETERY - DAY

72

MUSIC RISES as we are OVER Alex's coffin. Among the mourners: ALEX'S PARENTS, working class, middle-aged. Then Trey, and Bruce, and Sarah and Walt...

And finally Johnny. The ceremony wraps up as everyone begins to disperse.

But Johnny stays behind. He approaches the coffin.

Behind Johnny, ALEX'S FATHER catches sight of him.

ALEX'S FATHER

Mr. Smith.

JOHNNY

Mr. Conners... I'm... I'm sorry about Alex.

ALEX'S FATHER

From what I understand, you did everything you could to protect my son.

JOHNNY

I'm not sure that's true.

ALEX'S FATHER

Alex and I used to talk about you. He said you were the one who inspired him to be great.

JOHNNY

He was the brightest student I ever had. But I like to think we were friends, too.

ALEX'S FATHER

I know that's how he felt about you.

Alex's Father shakes Johnny's hand. He and his wife go.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

Johnny's about to go, when he reaches into his pocket and places something on the coffin.

TILT DOWN to the coffin and REVEAL...

His lucky INDIAN-HEAD NICKEL. And...

DISSOLVE TO:

73 INT. JOHNNY'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - ARMAGEDDON WALL - DAY

73

Johnny sits in front of the board, still dressed in his funeral suit. He holds a piece of paper in his hand, but we can't see what it is. Bruce is here too.

BRUCE

T.V. says the explosion was an accident. No mention of Stillson.

But Johnny is elsewhere.

JOHNNY

I was so sure Alex was connected to Armageddon.

BRUCE

He was. You saw Alex die in that fire. From the very beginning. But it was his future connection to Stillson that made you see Armageddon.

JOHNNY

If I hadn't said anything, he'd still be alive.

BRUCE

You don't know that. Maybe Alex was destined to die the way he did. Only God knows what might have happened if he hadn't.

JOHNNY

So what do I do now?

Bruce puts his hand on Johnny's shoulder.

BRUCE

You rest. And you mourn your friend. There's still time to figure it out.

(re: Johnny's paper)

He's not going anywhere.

Bruce squeezes Johnny's shoulder, exits.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 73

Johnny considers the paper in his hand, then RISES and pins it on the board. As he walks away as the CAMERA REVEALS a photograph of Greg Stillson. The SHOT PUSHES SLOWLY TIGHT on his face and...

74 INT. JANUS' SUV - NIGHT 74

SOMEONE holds a REMOVABLE HARD DRIVE, as we PAN UP to REVEAL MISTER JANUS...

JANUS
You copied all of Connors' files? *

REVEAL lab assistant Trey Walters, in his funeral attire. *

TREY
It's all there.

But then Trey gulps. *

TREY
Um, except... *
(forced smile) *
Dude. I, uh, hadn't totally backed *
up the last day's work. *
(off Janus' look) *
But, hey, you guys can find some *
genius to figure it out, right? *

JANUS
Sounds doable. *

TREY
This won't affect my fee, will *
it? *

Janus considers Trey, then nods to Sidekick, who hands the kid a fat envelope. *

TREY
Do I need to count it?

Janus doesn't think so. But Trey is pushing it: *

TREY
This wouldn't be happening if *
they'd treated me with a little *
respect.

JANUS
Respect is earned, Mr. Walters.

Trey feels the chill. He OPENS the door to leave, then...

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: 74

TREY *

I don't ever want to see you people
again.

He gets out and shuts the door, as the Limo drives away
leaving the kid rich and alone. It's chilling to consider
what might happen next...

FADE TO BLACK.

75 OMITTED 75

END OF SHOW