

THE FLASH

Story By

Greg Berlanti & Michael Green & Marc Guggenheim

Screenplay By

Michael Green & Marc Guggenheim

WE RACE...

Across a dusty field of Midwestern grass. A storm cloud curtain overhead. A BOY OF 14 RUNS. Like his life depends on it. Barefoot. Breathless. Terrified. KRAK!

A BOLT OF LIGHTNING BISECTS THE SKY. Carrying us to --

ANOTHER NIGHT. YEARS LATER.

BARRY (V.O.)
Discharge of 45,000 amps travels
the upper atmosphere --

The lightning unfurls at 1/400TH SPEED, revealing the subtle spiderweb intricacies of its form.

BARRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
-- a distance of 7.6 miles in .32
seconds.

Too quick to be appreciated by any human... EXCEPT ONE.
Seen in SILHOUETTE. Watching.

BARRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I move faster. Ahead of the
thunder.

TIME RESUMES, the stroke of the lightning EXPLODES out at
NORMAL SPEED -- KRAKOOM! *Illuminating the night...*

EXT. CENTRAL SQUARE - NIGHT

The flashing-light heart of Central City. A city fighting for its soul. Streets tagged, pocked. Packed with PEOPLE. A NOISY crush of cars and cabs. A JUMBOTRON short a few broken pixels.

The packed, bustling impersonality of a metropolis FROZEN IN TIME. Urban hum at a STANDSTILL. Time creeps in ketchup increments. An impossibly intricate tableau.

BARRY (V.O.)
Every one of them consumed by the
noise and bustle -- they don't
know how beautiful the city is
when it stops.

CRASH INTO REAL TIME, city life entropy taking over as...

A RUSH OF WIND blows down the street, carrying litter with it. *Something MOVING*. Faster than thought.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
60 by 40 blocks, each 2/5ths a
mile. At any given moment there's
a thousand places I'm needed.

WE SPIN UP -- twisting, craning -- to a God's eye view of
the city -- the gridded pattern of city blocks. A BLUR
OF SPEED navigates the city in a spiral.

BARRY (V.O.)
I start at the center and work
outward in concentric circles.
Thorough. Only way to be sure I
don't miss anything.

A building under construction. A GIRDER hanging in mid-
air. A dangerous object in freefall. *Remember it.*

BARRY
28th floor, 300 feet. Rate of
descent 32 feet per second
squared. 5.82 seconds to impact.
Time I'm needed elsewhere.

The CITY CLOCK TOWER'S second hand agonizes forth... 1...

A SERIES OF POPS -- TIME SHIFTING GEARS, FAST TO FROZEN --

-- A GUY steps off a curb on his cell, oblivious to THE
CAB racing at him. A BLAST OF WIND sets him back onto
the curb in time -- cab ROCKETING past --

-- A WOMAN RUNS from an ASSAILANT, he's gaining on her...
A BLUR, a HINT of AN ARM in motion... an unseen FORCE
BODY CHECKING the guy into a wall, HARD.

-- A DRUG DEALER takes cash from a BUYER, opens a heavy
bag -- a FLASH -- rapid FOOTFALLS -- the bag's now EMPTY.

-- *The CLOCK TOWER TICKS again... 2... THE GIRDER FALLS
further, and...*

BARRY (V.O.)
Making a failed city safe. And no
one even knows I exist.

-- A MAN hands a MUGGER his watch. The Mugger PULLS the
TRIGGER on his gun anyway -- the HAMMER dropping... A
FINGER CLICKS it back. TIME RAMPS BACK UP and the MUGGER
IS CUFFED, gun in an EVIDENCE BAG just out of reach.

-- A CIGARETTE ripped from a young KID'S lips --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BARRY (V.O.)
Living between the ticks of
seconds...

-- A CAR CHASE IN PROGRESS. TWO GANGBANGERS in an
Escalade FIRE Tec-9's at the COPS behind them. Their
guns DISAPPEAR -- Escalade pulled over -- FLIPPED over --
the 'bangers handcuffed -- cops wondering how --

BARRY (V.O.)
That's me.

BACK TO CENTRAL SQUARE. FROZEN IN TIME. The girder in
suspended animation freefall -- ABOUT TO HIT -- PEOPLE
staring, scared -- SHIFT BACK TO REAL TIME as --

A CYCLONE coils beneath it -- countering gravity's force --
catching it -- laying it to rest safely on the ground.

BARRY (V.O.)
I'm an eyeblink... A sunburst...

LIGHTNING CRACKS ABOVE. Slow. Majestic.

BARRY (V.O.)
A flash.

*Only now do we see THE MAN in the center of it all, lit
by the LIGHTNING: BARRY ALLEN. 28. Eyes alive with an
earnestness and determination only grown in the American
Midwest. The only one MOVING FREELY amid the FROZEN.*

*No classic costume yet. Street clothes. Specialized
BOOTS, treaded thick for traction and abuse.*

BARRY (V.O.)
Central City's famous phase
lightning. An anomaly that floors
the tourists. Ignored by the
locals. Except me.

*
*
*
*

Then -- something catches Barry's eye. A BLUE GLOW
lights the city sky. *More trouble.*

BARRY (V.O.)
I see the explosion before I hear
it. Blue fire. Methane.

BOOM. *The EXPLOSION Barry saw. The SOUND finally
arriving. But Barry's gone... he's...*

EXT. BURNING BUILDING - 0.23 SECONDS LATER

Barry looks up, firelight reflecting in his face. A derelict building burns. Consumed floor by floor.

BARRY (V.O.)
 Condemned. But in Central City
 condemned doesn't mean empty.

Barry shoots inside... INTO A MAZE OF FLAMES. An obstacle course of hellfire. He dodges them all -- diving, running, scanning every hall and room --

A SCREAM. Calls for help. The fire rages, the building coming down with him in it. But he follows the cries -- into an apartment, bursts past a crumbling door to find --

A DIGITAL PLAYER. SPEAKERS. THE ROOM IS EMPTY. A TRAP.

BARRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Someone set this up. Set me up.

The thought shattered by A WAVE OF FIRE. Through it: A glimmer. A FACE. Watching. Waiting, as --

THE FLOOR COLLAPSES UNDER BARRY -- feet lacking traction, he FALLS -- into the all-consuming flames, and we --

SMASH TO BLACK

TWO WEEKS EARLIER

Barry runs. Normal, human speed. Not yet the Flash. Not even close. RAIN pelts him as he huffs for breath, winded. A Redweld file for an umbrella. He's tired. Weight of the world on thin shoulders. He reaches the front step of --

*
*
*

EXT. LOWER MIDDLE CLASS HOME - NIGHT

He shakes the rain off. Clips a CSI BADGE to his off-the-rack jacket. An anxious attempt at looking presentable.

BARRY
 Norma Ayres?

MRS. AYRES, 50s, face aged by grief, lasers in on Barry's badge. She pales.

BARRY
 I'm sorry I didn't call first --

MRS. AYRES
 -- Can I help you, Detective?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY

Actually, I'm not a detective.
Forensic scientist. Y'know, a
CSI? Like the guys on TV...

Barry offers up a smile he hopes is charming, as we...

INT. MRS. AYRES' HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

MRS. AYRES

If this is about Michael... that
was seven years ago.

Barry nods his understanding, laying out the file's
contents -- crime scene photos, coroner's report, etc.

BARRY

The police couldn't identify the
bomber who killed your son because
they couldn't reconstruct the
bomb.

(enthusiasm showing)

See, a bomb is like a fingerprint.
In Michael's case, the only useful
evidence from the crime scene was
fragments of ceramic. But there
are hundreds of thousands of kinds
in the U.S. alone.

MRS. AYRES

Then, I really don't see what --

BARRY

I identified them. They're
industrial grade. Manufactured by
a biotech company named Biolex.
They use it in hip prosthetics.

MRS. AYRES

You found it... out of thousands?

BARRY

Just have to spend the time.

(now the hard part)

Next step is to subpoena Biolex's
sales records. But to do that, we
need to first exhume Michael's
body and remove the ceramic
fragments... I need the consent
of a family member.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. AYRES

Seven years of nothing and now you come here and all you can tell me is you-- you want to dig up my boy? Get out of my house.

BARRY

I'll leave the form with you. In case you change your mind.

He offers his card. She doesn't take it. Silence.

SMASH TO:

FOOMP. The folder lands next to a dozen just like it. More of his theories. He SLAMS the TRUNK shut on them.

INT. BARRY'S CAR - NIGHT

Barry gets in his shitty '98 Camry. He checks the PHONE he left in the car -- startled as it RINGS INSTANTLY.

CHYRE (ON PHONE)

You think because you don't answer I don't know what you're doing?

The voice belongs to FRED CHYRE. Barry's boss. He'd be a happier man if he retired.

CHYRE (ON PHONE)

Ten-fifty-five at the River.

Shit. Barry starts his car. It hums to life... then SPUTTERS OUT. Barry tries again. Nothing. Shit.

SMASH TO:

BARRY RUNNING. Rain-soaked and hauling ass as best he can. His shoes SLAM the pavement, SMASHING us back to --

*
*

The YOUNG BOY. Running in the field. YOUNG BARRY. Bare feet kick up dirt. Tears streak his face, panic grips his breath. LIGHTNING FLASHES again, and we are --

EXT. TWIN CITIES RIVERBANKS - CRIME SCENE - NIGHT

A wide stretch on the bank of the river that cuts Central City off from its sister city... KEYSTONE. Both skylines dominated by a massive, futuristic TOWER. Barry runs up.

CHYRE

You're late. Again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY

Sorry.

CHYRE

We're on a clock here. One of
those freak storm's is coming.
Gonna wash out all the evidence.

He looks skyward. The City's "phase lightning" setting
the sky on fire. Chyre points ahead --

CHYRE

Jane Doe. Slice-n-Dice figures
she's been in the water three
weeks. Washed up from Keystone.
(off Barry's look)
The back of her shirt had a dry
cleaning tag. Keystone Cleaners.

Barry joins the coroner, DAISUKE SATO ("Slice-n-Dice" to
his friends), there with DETECTIVE JARED MORILLO (African-
American, planning to make Captain).

They examine a WOMAN'S CORPSE. Bloated. *Her face is
DEFORMED.* Strange even for a floating body.

SATO

Tissue degradation of some kind.
Never seen anything like it. Even
rubbed out the prints... No dental
work either.

BARRY

I might be able to do a facial
approximation.

MORILLO

If you switch precincts, sure.
Floater's from Keystone, remember?

BARRY

In October, the tide goes towards
Keystone. She was killed there,
no way she'd end up in Central.
Not for two months, minimum.

Morillo turns to Chyre. *Is he kidding?*

CHYRE

You just memorized tide tables?
(off Barry's look)
You're exhausting, you know that.

INT. *CENTRAL CITIZEN* - BULLPEN - NIGHT

Bullpen of the Twin Cities' venerable newspaper. IRIS WEST answers her cell. If you just fell in love with her at first sight... you're not the only one. INTERCUT:

IRIS

Not the best time, Barry.

BARRY

You need something to get people to read an actual paper these days. I can give you an hour's jump on the local affiliates.

IRIS

Yeah that's not really a concern --

WIDEN TO REVEAL... *the bullpen is nearly EMPTY.* The few people that are there are PACKING UP THEIR DESKS.

INT. INFANTINO'S DINER - NIGHT

Basic late night crowd. Iris is on her second coffee. The whirlwind inverse of considered, laconic Barry.

IRIS

A newspaper going under. In this golden age of print journalism. I tried to warn them. Polite emails. "Maybe we should work on the online content, polish up the site..." "No, the *Citizen* is a newspaper, this is how we've been doing things for 80 years." What was I thinking? Trying to be a reporter today, it's like saying you want to be a milkman, or fix record players --

BARRY

Iris, slow down --

Not likely. Her CELL CHIRPS. A TEXT.

IRIS

Sports section's holding a wake at Broome's, they're buying shots --
(texts back)

No... thank... you...

(to Barry, resuming
the dropped thought)

-- And I was starting to get assignment work, crime reporting.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRIS (CONT'D)

The good stuff. Remember helping me pad my résumé? We sat right over there, that booth.

BARRY

Do you know what you--

IRIS

-- The news is like 30 minutes old, so no, I don't know what I'm going to do --

IRIS (CONT'D)

And don't say "It's just a job, you can find another." *There aren't any jobs.* Half the stories we ran were about how there aren't any jobs.

(a beat, smiles)

Thanks for coming out. Talking me off the ledge.

He smiles, he barely said a word.

EXT. INFANTINO'S DINER - LATER

Iris buttons up. At least the rain's died down.

IRIS

Maybe I shouldn't think of it as unemployed. Maybe it's more like a chance to go to the gym. I have to wear a dress for my party, I could have those skinny bitch clavicles --

(it hits her)

Ugh. My party. I have to be unemployed in front of all those people.

(off his look)

My party. This Saturday...

BARRY

I remember. I wouldn't miss it. I don't get invited to a lot of parties.

(then)

You're gonna be all right, Iris. You always are.

IRIS

Somehow when you say it, makes it feel true.

Deep layers of history here. And feelings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRIS

Screw it. I'm going to Broome's.
Come with me.

BARRY

Gotta get back to the lab.

IRIS

And you wonder why you don't get
invited to parties.

And she turns off, down the damp street. Barry watches.
Loses her in the crowd. Story of his life.

EXT. CENTRAL CITY POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Barry carries two cups of coffee. Hands one to the
homeless man sleeping over a heating vent outside.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Barry now wears a LAB COAT. Jane Doe nude on a metal
grated table. Grim sight. Barry's all too used to it.

BARRY

Okay, "Jane." Who are you? And
how did you die? Here we go...

(clicks a recorder)

Victim is Caucasian female,
approximately 28 years of age.

QUICK SHOTS -- as Barry sets to work. Examining the
corpse down to its DNA. Thorough. Proficient.

BARRY

No sign of blunt force trauma.
No bullet wounds. No antemortem
or postmortem contusions.

INT. CSI BULLPEN - LATER

Ancient metal desks. Only one is organized. Guess who.
Barry leans back, digital recorder in one hand, bouncing
a TENNIS BALL off the wall with the other -- WHACK --

BARRY

Bloodwork. Negative.

(WHACK)

Toxicology. Negative.

WHACK! He throws the ball again. As it bounces --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORA (PRELAP)
What did I tell you about that?

INT. ALLEN HOUSE - BARRY'S ROOM - AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

NORA ALLEN. 40. Warm. BARRY, 10, ON HIS BED, absorbed in his MATH TEXTBOOK. Deep in thought, throwing a tennis ball against the wall. Old habit.

NORA
You're gonna bust a hole in that wall one day.

YOUNG BARRY
*Not enough mass. I'd need to throw it 500 miles an hour.
 (off her look)
 Sorry. I'm stuck on a problem.*

Nora smiles at her son. Places a COMIC over his book.

NORA
Most kids like comic books more than textbooks.

BARRY
*(handing it back)
 Read it twice, Jay Garrick beats the Changeling, a guy who can turn into different animals.*

NORA
Then how about ice cream? Let's take a break.

BARRY
After I figure this out.

NORA
Sometimes you have to step away from a problem to see it more clearly. Let's go.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Barry pulls a carton of ICE CREAM from a freezer.

EXT. CENTRAL CITY STREET - NIGHT

Barry heads down. In the distance, a looming SPIRE, decades ahead of its time. The Tower we glimpsed earlier. THE STAR LABS ACCELERATOR.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORA (PRELAP)
Dr. Thawne's tower's coming along.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

Parked on THAT SAME STREET. Back when Central City was smaller, more personal. Nora and Young Barry eat ice cream cones, problems forgotten.

Out the window is a clear view of the ACCELERATOR TOWER, then just a FRAME in the early stages of construction.

YOUNG BARRY
It's not a tower, it's a particle accelerator. It's going to shoot a proton faster than light.

NORA
Never know what Dr. Thawne will dream up next.

YOUNG BARRY
He's never even been interviewed. They say it's because he works like Edison, never even sleeping --

NORA
You could miss a whole life like that... never having friends, never talking to anyone... never asking someone like Iris to the fall dance.

YOUNG BARRY
-- Mom...

NORA
*I'm just saying. Everybody needs time out of the tower. Even smart people. Epecially smart people.
 (looks in his eyes)
*Don't just think, Barry. Do. Feel. That's life lived.**

She rubs his head. Barry takes that in. Sees the time.

YOUNG BARRY
We should get back. He'll be home soon.

Worry in Barry's voice. Tries to hide it, but can't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORA

*Finish your ice cream. Then we
can go.*

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Modest. No plants. Just BOOKS. And a pet fish -- but a DIGITAL one on a computer. A framed photograph of Nora with BARRY'S FATHER.

A BOOKSHELF stacked with FILES. The thickest is also the oldest. Dog-eared and rubber-banded. A faded handwritten label: "ALLEN, H."

BARRY (V.O.)

Full postmortem survey complete.
Every known drug, pathogen and
weapon -- common or exotic --
considered, tested, eliminated...

EXT. BALCONY - BARRY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Barry's halfway through his ice cream, summarizing his analysis into the recorder. Exhausted, frustrated.

BARRY

...Cause of death appears to be...
no cause of death. Someone should
let her know she's alive.

His eyes get heavy. As he drifts to sleep, *somewhere*, a POLICE SIREN SCREAMS, AND SUDDENLY IT'S --

Dawn. The city is up. Barry JOLTS awake, the remainder of his ice cream MELTED on his shirt. *Shit*. Barry wipes the puddle off. Then -- *stops*. An epiphany.

CLOSE ON THE "MURDER BOARD"

Closed cases in black, open in red. More red than black. Barry writes a new name under the suspect column: "COLD"

BARRY

She was frozen at extreme low
temperatures, and when she
melted... her cell walls
collapsed. Like blueberries
defrosting, leaking all over.

WIDEN to REVEAL, we're --

INT. CSI BULLPEN - DAY

Barry turns to see Chyre walking off. Disinterested.

BARRY

Last night's Jane Doe. The cause of death. Extreme hypothermia.

CHYRE

The river's freezing this time of year. Did you even sleep?

BARRY

Not this cold. There's more -- I went back through the unsolveds -- there's an open case where the victim showed signs of extreme hypothermia. Two murders, same M.O., that's the definition of --

Chyre pulls Barry aside. Hushed:

CHYRE

You do not say the words "serial murder." Unless you want to make an already scared city terrified.

BARRY

Get me two hours with a mass spectrometer. If I knew the temperature she was frozen at, I'd be able to regenerate her image, which'd give us an ID --

CHYRE

The only thing I understood there is "mass spectrometer," which we don't have --

BARRY

-- let me requisition it.
A serial murder would --

CHYRE

-- I am not letting you share this crazy theory with anyone other than me.

CHYRE

Your rep's bad enough as it is -- all your crusades -- Like Michael Ayres? Yeah, you think his mother didn't call to complain about you?

BARRY

I'm just trying to close his case--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHYRE

*You can close a million cases, and
she'll still be dead.*

Barry looks down at his files. Just can't give it up.

CHYRE

You need to get some sleep, and
you need to get laid. Do those
two things, I'll buy you a mass
spectrometer myself. Go home.

Barry relents, appreciating that in his own way, this is
Chyre still giving a shit.

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Barry walks in. Chucks his keys. Out of gas from an
already shitty day. He looks at the unmade bed, calling
to him to pass out. Instead --

TIME CUT: A light SNAPS ON in Barry's walk-in closet.
He grabs an OLD BINDER from a tower of DOZENS of them.

BARRY (V.O.)

Old police trick. Hit a roadblock
on your active case, go back to
your bottom drawer one.

TIME CUT: A TV on and ignored in the background. Barry
at his desk, going through the binders. A THOUSAND PAGES
thick. The "Allen, H." file open next to him. Yellowed
newspaper clippings: "LOCAL HOMICIDE, HUSBAND CHARGED".

BARRY (V.O.)

Homicide. Partial print on the
murder weapon. Unidentified.

A PHOTO of a KNIFE. The murder weapon. A PARTIAL
FINGERPRINT BLOWN UP. OFF THE IMAGE OF THE KNIFE --

FLASH CUT: *THE KNIFE.* FLASH: *A POOL OF BLOOD.* FLASH:
A HAND. LIFELESS. A FINAL FLASH: *A BODY ON THE FLOOR.*
BARRY'S MOTHER. DEAD.

Now we see what the binders are for. Each labeled
"TCFIS." Twin Cities Fingerprint Index System.

BARRY (V.O.)

Computers couldn't make a match.

He pages through the binders. Comparing the prints there
with an official fingerprint record "ten-card."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY (V.O.) *
So they need to be eyeballed... *

Nope. Next. Another 10 card. No match. Next. Next. *

BARRY (V.O.) *
Over 20,000 fingerprints on record *
per county, 3141 counties in the *
U.S., 45 seconds to scan each *
one... equals 89.6 years. Grain *
of sand on a beach. *
(beat) *
But I made a promise to someone. *

He turns a page, focused, the TV playing behind him. *

BARRY (V.O.) *
So I clear my head. And try to *
focus on... *

Something catches Barry's attention. ON THE TV: A NEWS *
DEBATE. CHYRON: "STAR Accelerator: Boon or Boondoggle?" *

TALKING HEAD (ON TV) *
...why should the Accelerator pose *
any greater danger than the tens *
of billions of dollars worth of *
equipment they operate without *
incident every day? *

BARRY (V.O.) *
(a grin) *
...What's right in front of me. *

EXT. STAR LABS - DAY *

Barry walks past PROTESTERS marching outside carrying *
signs: "GOD NOT SCIENCE" "ACCELERATOR = DOOM" "BEWARE"

SOOTHING VOICE (PRELAP) *
*Welcome to STAR Labs. The future *
of the future.*

INT. STAR LABS RECEPTION - DAY

Carrara marble trading off with steel. PROMOTIONAL *
VIDEOS play. The images PUSH OUT in living 3D.

We're in the P.O.V. of -- A SCHOOL KID ON TOUR with his *
CLASS. All wearing sleek 3D glasses. Enthralled by the *
videos, trying to "touch" the floating figures.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOOTHING VOICE

*The Scientific and Technological
Advanced Research Laboratories is
the brainchild of Dr. Eobard
Thawne, who dreamed of a research
laboratory unconnected to
government interests.*

The SCHOOL KIDS walk past... Barry. At a reception desk.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

Lieutenant Allen?

Barry turns towards the turret-shaped reception desk.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, but Dr. Perez says it's
against policy to loan out South
Wing equipment to law enforcement.

Barry steps away, then sees... THE TOUR GROUP. An idea.

INT. STAR LABS - HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Barry, 3D glasses on, walks with the tour. The wholesome
TOUR GUIDE walks them past a series of HOLOGRAMS --

TOUR GUIDE

If you've ever used the internet,
you've used the web-mesh
telegraphy Dr. Thawne invented...

One of the holograms: A kindly MAN IN A WHEELCHAIR.
Warm eyes brimming with intelligence. EOBARD THAWNE.
Then... a hologram of the ACCELERATOR.

TOUR GUIDE

Albert Einstein said no object can
move faster than light. But Dr.
Thawne is a smart man, too. And
his hope is to prove Dr. Einstein
was wrong. That's why he built
the STAR Labs Accelerator... to
send a particle faster than the
speed of light. After 15 years
it's only weeks from being ready
to experiment.

A GRAPHIC shows a PROTON spinning around and around the
Accelerator until... *it disappears into LIGHT.*

CHUNKY KID

Will we get to see the mass
spectrometer?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOUR GUIDE

I'm sorry, no. We won't be
visiting the third floor.

Barry smiles. Slips Chunky a twenty as he backs away...

INT. STAR LABS - SOUTH WING, 3RD FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Barry at the locked door to the MASS SPECTROMETER LAB.
Talking on a SECURITY PHONE --

BARRY

Dr. Perez was supposed to get me
some time on the mass-spec, but
must've gotten sidetracked.

(adding)

Dr. Thawne wants to see the
results immediately, so --

BZZZ. A metallic SHUNK. The door CLICKS open.

INT. STAR LABS - MASS SPECTROMETER LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Barry working a computer while lasers of the mass
spectrometer scan that tissue sample.

VOICE (O.S.)

Decided not to wait on a subpoena?

Barry turns to see an ATTRACTIVE FEMALE EMPLOYEE enter.

BARRY

Dr. Perez?

VALERIE

Detective.

VALERIE

STAR Labs does not participate in
police investigations. We
certainly don't let police break
into our lab to use the equipment.

BARRY

I'm a CSI. We found a body with a
level of deformity that could only
come from exposure to extreme
cold. I need to know exactly how
cold to reconstruct the victim --

VALERIE

It costs 25,000 just to
turn this machine on...

BARRY

I'm almost done --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VALERIE (CONT'D)

Not "almost." Now get out before
I call your police friends.

He shoots her a look. Part disappointment, part apology.

BARRY

This city has the highest unsolved
homicide rate in the country, but
why should you care about that?
Why should anybody?

He leaves. She watches him go. Can't help but feel bad.

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Barry enters, tired. Sees his virtual "fish" is
FLOATING. Dead. He can't even keep a digital one alive.

Then notices a post-it. "IRIS' PARTY!" His eyes shoot
open. Realizing he forgot. Shit.

INT. BARRY'S CAMRY - MINUTES LATER

RAIN pours as Barry climbs in. Turns the key... nothing.
Not even a whine. He'll be late. Again. The RAIN
redoubles. Lightning. Of course.

EXT. STREET CORNER - SECONDS LATER

Barry's running again. Through the rain. Footsteps and
LIGHTNING FLASHING US TO:

*That field. Young Barry runs. Crying, fearful. Wishing
he was faster. Up ahead... a HOUSE. Familiar. His.*

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The party's already in full swing by the time Barry shows
up late. He cuts through the better-dressed crowd.

THE BAR

A BARTENDER pours. Barry spies IRIS across the room.
Elemental beauty in a cocktail dress. On the arm of a
NATHAN NEWBURY, 30s, polished, charming and charmed.

Iris greets GUESTS, hand extended, *wrist at 90 degrees in
the "Look at my ring" pose.* A 2.6 carat princess cut
sparkles. And it hits us: *This is an ENGAGEMENT PARTY.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KID'S VOICE (O.S.)

It's not cool to stare.

Barry looks down at a 10-YEAR-OLD BOY forced to dress up.

10-YEAR-OLD BOY

She's getting married. You don't
drool on other guys' girls.

Barry is joined/rescued by MARY, the boy's mom and Iris' caring, maternal OLDER SISTER.

MARY

I let you stay up late for Aunt
Iris' party if you behaved...

10-YEAR-OLD BOY

I'm behaving --

MARY

Is he?

BARRY

No.

The kid storms off, hating Barry. Mary chastises --

MARY

Wally West! No running --

They look across to Iris. With Nathan.

MARY

Funny how it all works out. We
always thought it'd be you up
there with my sister.

BARRY

Ring would be a lot smaller.
Police Department doesn't pay as
much as Newbury Financial.

MARY

All those years you lived with my
family after... You and Iris were
inseparable. She waited for you,
that whole time. She waited while
you were at school, the Academy,
then always in your lab... You
never stepped up, and finally, she
moved on.

(she faces him)

She waited for you. And if you
don't know it, it's your own
fault.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLINKCLINK! A GLASS IS TAPPED. All eyes turn to --
NATHAN. He speaks with a clipped cadence commensurate
with Iris. Someone who can keep up with her. His toast:

NATHAN

I just wanted to take this moment
to say... how lucky I am. Lucky
that this gorgeous girl happens to
go to the Twin Cities Museum the
one day a year Newbury Financial
holds its fundraiser... Lucky
she's staring at Degas' *Little
Dancer* as I walk by, the one
sculpture I can remember a damn
thing about from college...

ON BARRY. Heart aching. Glad for her. But aching.

EXT. FANCY RESTAURANT - A LITTLE LATER

Barry's leaving, shaking off an elephant dose of regret.

IRIS (O.S.)

Barry --

He stops. Sees Iris. She came after him.

IRIS

Unbelievable. My monthly dinner
parties, you can't bother to come
for a single one, but tonight you
actually show --

BARRY

It's your engagement party.

IRIS

-- and bail twenty minutes in.
Lemme guess... running off to
work.

BARRY

Didn't want to interrupt your
night. You look great.

IRIS

Thanks for coming. It means a
lot. None of this would count if
you weren't here.

She kisses him on the cheek. Appreciative. But it just
plain kills Barry. It's easier to get no kiss at all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY
 (as she heads in)
 Iris... Congratulations.

A flicker of... disappointment. As if she hoped he'd say something else. Then she finds a smile. Off Barry...

INT. PRECINCT - CSI LAB - NIGHT

The window RATTLES. Wind. Lightning. Barry enters.

He brings up a RENDERING of Jane Doe. Her deformed face. Unrecognizable. Types: SIMULATE ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITION. The computer prompts him for data, including a TEMPERATURE. He types: 0 DEGREES KELVIN.

The computer buzzes in protest. INCORRECT PARAMETER. Barry shakes his head. Types: .001 degrees. Nothing. .002... .003... Then, something catches his eye. An ENVELOPE. A STAR Labs logo. A NOTE:

Next time, say please.
 -- Valerie Perez

He opens the file. Charts, graphs. CIRCLED AT BOTTOM:

"22.204 KELVIN." *The answer he needs.* Dr. Perez just saved him months. At last Barry smiles. Feeds in the number, the computer starting a SLOW RENDER --

BARRY
 C'mon, Jane, let's see that face.

-- painstakingly reconstructing the woman's face from the reformed bones up, as -- *WHAM!* The rattling window FLIES OPEN. The wind.

Barry moves to close the window. Sees the city SKYLINE, lit up with MASSIVE LIGHTNING. The storm coming ALIVE. *Our anticipation rises.* Anyone who's ever read a comic knows what's coming... *An icon is about to be born.*

Barry reaches to close the window... The storm RISING -- until -- *SHUNK.* Barry slices his hand on the latch.

BARRY (CONT'D)
 DAMMIT --

So much for the icon. Barry rinses the cut, wraps it. He goes back to his computer where... THE BEGINNINGS OF A FACE. It's working! Charged, grabs his recorder --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY (CONT'D)

Victim appears to have been frozen
at 22.204 Kelvin. Computer's able
to generate a reverse simulation
of the cellular degradation --

THWAM -- a gust of wind smacks the window -- still open --
against the wall. He sets the recorder down, moves back
to the window -- *SLAMS* it shut once and for all when --

KRAKOOOOOOM! *A MASSIVE BLAST OF LIGHTNING FIRES! RIGHT*
INTO THE LAB! STRIKING BARRY!

IN AN INSTANT -- the world goes to retina-burning WHITE.
PAINFUL. Then -- MOVING -- becoming --

STREAKS OF LIGHT. Like stars passing on an interstellar
voyage. Or a trip to heaven if God exists... Rotating
around us... becoming a tunnel of whirling LIGHT...

MOMENTS from Barry's life -- past, future and ELSEWHERE:
Barry running alongside a dragster... Barry holding a
dying man's handcuffed hand... Barry making love to a
dark-haired WOMAN... Barry talking to his MOM, OLDER,
baking a CAKE in a kitchen...

The moments play out in shattered FRAGMENTARY GLIMPSES.
Time ramping, slowing, jump cutting, adding a fever dream
layer to the whirlwind.

We call this experience of time... THE SPEED FORCE.

FLASH: BARRY, AGE 14, FACING IRIS --

14-YEAR-OLD IRIS

Come on, Barry, kiss me.

He leans in... lips pursed... but she's already run off.

14-YEAR-OLD IRIS (CONT'D)

Not fast enough!

FLASH: NORA, WIPING BACK TEARS, COMFORTS BARRY (AGE 8) --

NORA

Your dad's a good man. It's hard
to lose a job.

FLASH: BARRY SPEAKING TO EOBARD THAWNE --

BARRY

You really think I can? Run at
the speed of light.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THAWNE

No. I think you can run faster.

We fall DEEPER into a timethread, so deep it's AS IF HAPPENING NOW -- BARRY'S MOST VIVID MEMORY, REPLAYED:

INT. ALLEN HOME - BARRY'S ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Young Barry does his homework. Trying to tune out the din: His parents FIGHTING again. His father SHOUTING. The fight grows louder, joined by... A RATTLING.

Barry looks over: His bedroom window is open, banging in the WIND (just like in his lab). Lightning FLASHES. He moves to the window. Outside: A LIGHTNING STORM.

KRAKKK! Barry recoils -- willing a hand forward -- to shut the window, when... BARRY IS PULLED FORWARD -- THROUGH THE WINDOW --

Suddenly everything is a BLUR -- a gale wind -- sweeping Barry up -- ROARING in his ears -- ALMOST SOUNDING LIKE:

A VOICE

RUN FLASH.

Young Barry's eyes widen -- did he hear that? Confused, he looks around, realizing he's suddenly...

IN A FIELD

Yes, that field. The one from our OPENING IMAGE. Two hundred yards from his house. No idea how he got here. He scrambles to his bare feet. Confused. He looks back to his house -- hears a SCREAM. His mother. Fear rises.

So he RUNS. Just like we saw. Primal alarms ringing... A silent prayer. To run FASTER. CRASH CUTTING INTO --

THE HOUSE -- Barry SLAMMING in -- SHOOTING into -- THE LIVING ROOM -- to find --

HIS MOTHER DEAD ON THE FLOOR -- blood pooled around her. Lying next to the now-familiar KNIFE. Young Barry looks up to see...

HIS FATHER. HENRY ALLEN. Standing over the body. Tears in his disbelieving eyes. In shock.

HENRY ALLEN

Barry... I didn't...

Barry just stares. He casts wet eyes back to his mother, as we -- SMASH BACK INTO:

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Doors BURST OPEN on the cut. Worried Iris and Chyre dog after a harried ER DOCTOR, moving fast --

ER DOCTOR
-- He's in critical condition --
we're still trying to get him
stabilized.

IRIS
He was struck by lightning --?

ER DOCTOR
His body's gone into some kind of
shock -- like the lightning jolted
his heart into an extreme
arrhythmia, we can't get him back
into normal sinus rhythm --

CHYRE
Then get some drugs in him.

ER DOCTOR
We pushed as much Atavan as we can
-- we stopped when we thought it'd
give him another heart attack.

IRIS
He had a heart attack?

ER DOCTOR
He's had six.

INT. HOSPITAL - MONITORING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

There are a few VIDEO MONITORS here. Through the window: Barry. Lying on a gurney. Shaking. *Seizing*. A SECOND DOCTOR over him, readying DEFIBRILLATOR PADDLES...

ER DOCTOR
We had to bring him to isolation.
Does he have a history of drug
use?

CHYRE
Drugs?

Doctor 2 applies the paddles... *and is JOLTED BACK!* Sent FLYING THROUGH THE WINDOW. Glass flies everywhere.

ER DOCTOR
You don't get that from lightning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Iris surges to the broken window, towards Barry. Barry turns. Seeing Iris and CHYRE. And we FLASH --

EXT. ALLEN HOUSE - FRONT STEPS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Young Barry with a police blanket over his shoulders. A YOUNG OFFICER CHYRE stands beside him, sympathetic.

YOUNG BARRY

It wasn't my Dad, he didn't do it.

Chyre leaves it alone. Just tries to help --

CHYRE

Look, you can't stay here. This can't be your home anymore.

(lets it penetrate)

You have any other family? Someplace you can go?

VOICE (O.S.)

Yes.

Barry looks. Sees YOUNG IRIS there, flanked by her MOTHER. Iris feels his pain, dying for him.

YOUNG IRIS

He's coming home with us.

INT. HOSPITAL - BARRY'S ROOM - DAY (PRESENT)

Iris watches as Barry is seizing, he seems to BLUR at the edges, as if out of focus. Iris fights panic.

IRIS

What's happening to him? Why aren't you helping? --

ER DOCTOR

We're doing everything we can --

*Barry sees Iris... but MOVING SLOWLY... as if underwater. She's speaking, but her voice is SLOW, *What is happening?**

He sees his IV, A DROP FROZEN in freefall. He gently TAPS the IV glass. His slightest touch causes it to SHATTER -- GLASS and LIQUID EXPLODING OUT -- THEN SUDDENLY, HANGING IN THE AIR -- STOPPED! Frozen around him like snowflakes.

*Barry is stunned by the SHARDS AND SALINE DROPS falling IN EXTREME SLO-MO. Then suddenly AT BREAKNECK SPEED AS TIME RAMPS UP AGAIN. *Something is very, very wrong.**

EXT. HOSPITAL, ROOFTOP HELIPAD - NIGHT

A HELICOPTER LANDS. It's barely touched down when -- three more helicopters follow, whisper-quiet.

A RAMP folds out of the lead helicopter, like a flower opening, for... A SET OF WHEELS that roll down it...

BACK IN THE MONITORING ROOM --

The doctors react, befuddled by what they've just seen --

DOCTOR 3

We have to get him to keep still --

ER DOCTOR

How? We can't even calm him down enough to talk to him --

VOICE (O.S.)

Then speed us up.

Everyone turns towards the author of this suggestion:

EOBARD THAWNE. 40's. Philosophical. Brilliant. The wheels we saw earlier belong to his WHEELCHAIR. He's flanked by a silent TRIO OF MEN IN SUITS.

THAWNE

The problem with doctors is they only process information within the very narrow range of their own perception.

He reaches out A HAND towards the MONITOR CONTROLS. His HAND SHAKES, PALSY-LIKE. With effort he grasps a dial --

THAWNE (CONT'D)

What a wonderful world where your own point of view is the only one there is.

Thawne adjusts THE VIEWING MONITOR... *to SLOW the IMAGE of Barry. Barry comes into focus.* Thawne as he leans into the INTERCOM --

THAWNE

Mr. Allen?

The words "*Mr. Allen*" play again, SPED UP. Then again, faster. Until his greeting comes out like a CHIRP.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THAWNE

I'm Dr. Eobard Thawne, Executive Director of STAR Labs. I can help you, but I need to move you to our facility. Nod if you consent.

(beat, Barry does)

Good. Because the IV you broke was feeding your new metabolism. You'll be passing out any moment.

Foomp. He just did. Iris spins around on Thawne.

ER DOCTOR

Wait. Mr. Allen's a patient of this hospital. You can't just --

THAWNE

You're not equipped to deal with his condition.

ER DOCTOR

We haven't even determined his condition yet --

THAWNE

And you're not likely to. What's happened to Mr. Allen isn't medical, it's scientific.

ER DOCTOR

-- A laboratory isn't qualified to treat patients.

THAWNE

Your hospital's not qualified to treat this patient. Unless, that is, you have a phase-wavelength MRI on hand? A Boron immersion chamber?...

(off his blank stare)

No, I'd thought not. We'll be taking Mr. Allen now.

Iris steps in front of him.

IRIS

What are you going to do with him?

THAWNE

I'm going to keep your friend alive. If you'll allow me.

CHYRE

Iris...

She calms. Revealing just how scared she is for Barry.

NATHAN (PRELAP)

He'll be alright.

INT. IRIS AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Iris needs the glass of wine Nathan hands her. She paces their gorgeous duplex, city views behind her.

IRIS

I let a trillionaire take him out of a hospital to work him over in some lab? I'm the worst Emergency Contact ever.

NATHAN

Those doctors were helpless. Besides, Doctor Thawne is the smartest man on this hemisphere.

IRIS

You have to believe that. Your firm's leveraged up to its eyeballs for STAR Labs.

NATHAN

He'll be okay. You know it or you wouldn't have let him go.

He holds her. Reassuring. Loving.

NATHAN

Barry is lucky to have a friend like you. He always was.

And they kiss. Iris feeling pretty lucky to have Nathan.

INT. STAR LABS - TANK - ANOTHER DAY

Barry awakens SUBMERGED in a cylinder of thick, viscous LIQUID. A cannula in his nose allows him to breathe. A FULL BEARD on his face. *Thawne stares at him through the glass.* Indicating Barry to EARPHONES:

THAWNE

Breathe. If you can remember your breath, the body follows. I do know something about having a body that refuses to behave.

(re: the liquid)

The solution is absorbing the charge.

He points to a KEYPAD submerged. For him to TYPE his response. Barry types. WORDS appear: "HOW LONG?"

THAWNE

Approximately nine hours.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Barry's hand reaches for his face. Feels the full beard.

THAWNE

Your metabolism is functioning at a highly accelerated rate. We're going to help you with that.

Barry types again. "WHY HELP ME?"

THAWNE

The ER hacks think you were struck by lightning. Does it feel like you were struck by lightning?

INT. BATHROOM - STAR LABS - DAY

Barry shaves his new beard. Eyes himself in the mirror.

THAWNE (V.O.)

Bartholomew H. Allen. Grew up in Keystone. 148 Maple Drive, until the unfortunate age of 14. With the southerly view from your home, you no doubt spent many nights watching clouds explode.

INT. STAR LABS - MOMENTS LATER

A long, white corridor. Barry wheels an IV bag. Pained steps as Thawne wheels beside.

THAWNE

The famed phase lightning of Twin Cities. To most it's only nature's light show.

Thawne TAPS the wall. Which COMES ALIVE. Playing hi-res FOOTAGE of the STRANGE LIGHTNING we've seen.

THAWNE

I believe some of those bolts, like the one that nearly killed you, discharge a supersymmetric boson which I've designated the "Kanigher Particle."

The wall shifts display: An intricate 3D SUBATOMIC BALLET. ONE LIT IN A BRIGHT CRIMSON.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THAWNE

An elementary particle with a massive negative charge and next to no mass, which makes them a prime candidate for --

BARRY

For regulation of space-time. Finding a single one would --

THAWNE

Rewrite all of known physics. Those storms are the reason I built the Accelerator here. I've spent 15 years and as many billions to study what your body's now swimming in.

INT. STAR LABS - PARTICLE ANALYSIS LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Barry follows Thawne into an equipment-filled lab. DOCTOR MURRAY TAKAMOTO (bioengineering god, weekend pot-smoker) emerges from under a computer array.

TAKAMOTO

Particle system's up. I set up the sequencers, ATLAS and O-sats.

He flicks on a CAMERA SCANNER, which offers a SPECTRAL PARTICLE view of his own hand when he waves it over.

THAWNE

Full test. Every metric. Barry, meet your research team. Think of Doctor Takamoto here as your personal physician. Doctor McGee, my chief particle physicist.

He points to JERRY MCGEE. McGee made up for getting picked on as a kid by getting buff as hell.

BARRY

It's nice to meet you.

McGee doesn't agree.

VALERIE (O.S.)

Wait. This is who we're testing?

Barry turns. A THIRD SCIENTIST emerges. VALERIE PEREZ.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY

Doctor Perez.
 (to Thawne)
 We met. It didn't go well.

The cream of the STAR Labs genius crop. Rock star swagger. MythBusters chic. Barry shifts, uncomfortable.

BARRY

Usually I'm the one using a lab rat. Never actually been one.

SMASH INTO:

A SERIES OF CUTS: Barry is poked, prodded. Skin scraped. Thawne watches from an OBSERVATION BOOTH above.

Barry on a TREADMILL, wired. Runs.

VALERIE

Eight minute mile... for 10 miles.

MCGEE

(unimpressed)
 Chicago Marathon in 2:40.

Tak SLIDES THE SPEED UP. 10 MPH... 12... 15... Barry keeps pace. Interesting. Even McGee takes note.

MCGEE

Any luck, he'll have a coronary and we can get back to work.

BARRY

Let me guess: Not a lot of dates in high school.

Curious, Tak SLIDES UP the speed. 20 MPH... 26.

VALERIE

Don't kill him -- slow him down --

TAKAMOTO

Hey Barry, we're just gonna take it down a bit.

But Barry's running too fast now.

BARRY

Guys -- !!

TAKAMOTO

I already shut it off -- Barry, you need to slow down --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

But he's going too fast. *His legs almost a blur.*

BARRY

I can't -- !!

The treadmill CREAKS -- it can't take much more of this --

VALERIE

Barry -- stop --

BARRY

-- I don't know how --

The treadmill -- BREAKS! Pieces go FLYING -- the tread SHREDED. Barry FLIES OFF -- HITTING the wall. Crumples to the floor. The Team rushes over.

BARRY

How fast... *how fast was I going?*

TAKAMOTO

Not to get too technical, but...
really fucking fast.

Off Thawne, watching from above. Impassive.

INT. PRECINCT - CSI LAB - DAY

The place just as Barry left it. His coat on the floor. Chyre picks it up, hangs it on a chair. He sits, faces the computer. Next to it, Barry's recorder. *Play.*

BARRY'S VOICE, followed by the recorded sound of the window slamming. Chyre looks to the computer, gives the trackpad a ginger nudge.

ON SCREEN: Jane Doe's FACE comes up. The rendering complete. What Barry never saw... Off it, MATCH CUT TO:

A PHOTOGRAPH OF SAME. Chyre showing it to the OWNER of:

EXT. KEYSTONE DRY CLEANERS - DAY

With an evidence bag containing A DRY CLEANING TICKET.

CHYRE

She had a ticket from your shop.

DRY CLEANER

We stopped using those three years ago. Whole new system now.

INT. PRECINCT - MISSING PERSONS DEPARTMENT - DAY

Chyre feeds information to a computer. The computer filters back through time, then... "Jane Doe" pops up.

CHYRE

Always gotta be right, don't you,
Barry.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CAMERAS FLASH. News cameras jockey for position. Chyre is in front of a PRESS CORPS, mid-briefing:

CHYRE

...Four victims now identified.
Right now we see no pattern to the
killings. We have male and female
victims, ages ranging 24 to 57.
Varied race and background... The
only commonality is all appear to
have been killed by exposure to
extremely low temperatures --

Hands shoot up. A million questions at once --

REPORTER

But with that kind of consistent
cause of death, Detective... are
you saying this is the work of
some kind of... serial killer?

CHYRE

Yeah. I am.

The REPORTERS EXPLODE in response -- everyone shouting --

REPORTERS

*How does he kill them? / Are there
more victims? / Any suspects --*

INT. PERFECTLY NORMAL SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

A television on a kitchen counter. The coverage of Chyre's press conference.

CHYRE (ON TV)

No. Until then, everyone should
take precautions. Don't travel
alone, keep to well-lit streets...

A MAN WITH A SANDWICH watches. Long afternoon SHADOWS hide his face and features. Walks into... THE HALL.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Where the MAN takes A PAIR OF GOGGLES off a hook. Fits them on. He opens A METAL DOOR. A LATCH HANDLE. The DOOR OPENS with a HISS. A PUFF OF MIST.

Dark. A single flickering fluorescent. EMPTY except for a LOCKED CASE, and... A FREEZING MAN. Wrapped in a coat and blankets. SHIVERING. HANDS TIED.

FREEZING MAN

Please... I'm freezing... let me go... please...

GOGGLES' GLOVED fingers touch a down of FROST developed on the man's cheek. The victim sees his own REFLECTION in the GOGGLES. The last thing he'll ever see.

BARRY (PRELAP)

He's dangerous.

INT. STAR LABS - PARTICLE ANALYSIS LAB - DAY

Barry walks Chyre through the massive facility. A tour.

BARRY

You sure it's a good idea calling this guy out publicly? Far as he knows, you're the face of the department.

CHYRE

You're worried about me. Five minutes out of the hospital. That's cute.

BARRY

I'm serious. With me stuck here, you don't have anyone to--

CHYRE

Believe it or not, the Twin Cities haven't descended into anarchy without Lieutenant Barry Allen to protect everybody. Including me.

Chyre looks around. Impressed.

CHYRE

So all this is for you... This Thawne guy's shelling out pretty big to get you better. You take a second to ask yourself why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY
 (not revealing)
 Maybe I'm fascinating... Thanks
 for coming. Nice to know you can
 still worry when you have to.

Chyre offers up what, for him, serves as a smile.

CHYRE
 Just don't let Thawne do any crazy
 experiments on you.

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. SALT FLATS - DAY (HANDHELD VIDEO FOOTAGE)

Hot, flat, white sand a hundred miles in every direction.
 Tak operates the HD camera, scanning the horizon.

TAKAMOTO (O.S.)
 Okay, we're out in the middle
 of... nowhere. It's about 200
 degrees. Barry's rocking shorts
 for Speed Trials, Phase 2.

CAMERA FINDS Barry. In gym clothes, feeling like a putz.

BARRY
 Do I really have to do this?

Tak turns the camera as -- A DRAGSTER RACES PAST. A
 NASCAR-level pace car emblazoned with the STAR Labs logo.

INSIDE THE DRAGSTER -- McGee drives, loving it. The Team
 communicates through EARPIECES.

MCGEE
 446 horses and no cops for miles.
 I love working at STAR Labs!

BACK WITH BARRY AND TAK --

TAKAMOTO
 Come on. Go get him. Fetch.

BARRY
 I'm not a dog.

He hands Barry an EARPIECE. Barry considers. Puts it
 in. Then starts jogging out. Regular gym pace.

EXT. DEEP DESERT

Three miles away, Valerie waits with a SPEED GUN.

VALERIE

Tell them to hurry up, I'm frying
out here.

She sees McGee speeding right for her and... BLAZES BY.
Her speed gun READS 190.

WITH BARRY -- He kicks it up, pushing harder now... the
run becoming a SPRINT... his breathing steady, the ground
passing beneath him faster... the momentum taking over...

IN THE DRAGSTER --

MCGEE

All right. I've lost all sight of
him. Let's pack this up.
(looks back)
Wait a sec...

A DUST CLOUD NEARS. A comet tail of debris behind it --

*BARRY IS GAINING ON HIM. THEN REACHES HIM! THERE'S
BARRY -- RUNNING ALONGSIDE THE DRAGSTER. Loving it.*

Amazed, McGee DROPS into 6th... BLOWS ahead! But...
BARRY KEEPS UP! Breath steady. A smile on his face.
This is the most free he's ever felt in his life.

*FIRES AHEAD. A bullet. No longer merely running... BUT
MOVING, LIVING, EXISTING AT AN ACCELERATED RATE.*

*THE REAL WORLD OF GRAVITY AND SPEECH AND SMALL MOVEMENTS
SIMPLY STOPS ALL AROUND HIM, as he RACES BY...*

A JACKRABBIT mid-leap -- A DRAGONFLY mid-flight --
VALERIE mid-drink, *Barry's first taste of FLASHTIME.*

VALERIE (ON RADIO)

You should be about 12 miles from
Dover Canyon --

The world is a wash of dust and muted color. He looks
ahead -- sees he's coming up on -- A WIDE CANYON. He's
headed right for it! Fuck.

BARRY

Closer than that -- !!

He tries to stop -- SKIDDING -- spraying dirt and rock.
Slaloming. *But he's moving too fast. Like a beginning
skier down a black diamond.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INTERCUT BETWEEN BARRY AND THE TEAM AS --

VALERIE

He's about to paste himself all over the Canyon.

TAKAMOTO

Find another gear. What do you weigh?

BARRY

What? 170!!

MCGEE

(quick math)

He's right. .65 miles

across, he'll have to hit -- -- 300 miles per hour.

VALERIE

(beats him to it)

ON BARRY, he digs deep and... PUSHES HARDER... blazing ahead... every step takes him 50 feet!

TAKAMOTO (ON RADIO)

You have to jump within 50 feet from the edge -- and you better catch a cross breeze --

BARRY

Not helping!!!

Barry reaches the edge and -- JUMPS! SOARING OVER THE DEEP AND GORGEOUS CANYON -- an EAGLE flies BELOW him --

BARRY

WOO HOO!

His arc crests and... HE MAKES IT! AND TUMBLES -- WIPES OUT IN A BALL OF DUST AND FLAILING LIMBS. His clothes are SINGED, his shoes SHREDDED. But he made it.

CLOSE ON: AN IV BAG, squeezed to wring it out. We're:

INT. STAR LABS - DAY

Barry, hooked to the IV, looks on as the Team SHOUTS over each other, replaying FOOTAGE on their displays. We can see his CLOTHES fraying off as his speed increases.

TAKAMOTO

His heart rate -- how did he not have a coronary?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCGEE

Or explode. That much unstable energy, he should've popped like a hydrogen bomb.

Tak changes out the IV bag, keeps Barry from getting up.

BARRY

That's the third one. How many of those are you gonna pump in me?

TAKAMOTO

You just expended 17,000 calories. Unless you want to drink thirty milkshakes, sit still and let your body stabilize.

McGee plays back the SUPER SLO-MO.

MCGEE

The air around him is compressing, protecting him. He's a nose cone on a jet -- God, have you ever seen anything like this?

TAKAMOTO

Only in comic books. The Flash. Jay Garrick, running around with a colander on his head -- didn't you read him as a kid?

BARRY

Yeah. Used to love him.

MCGEE

Well, you can outrun him.

BARRY

Shoes would be nice.

Barry looks down at his FEET, raw and bloody from the abuses of speed.

MCGEE

Fullerene-embedded polymer, heat resistant -- better traction.

THAWNE (O.S.)

He's worth your time after all, Dr. McGee?

They see behind them... THAWNE has entered.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THAWNE

All your conjecture is simply
towards improving his speed.
Broaden the applications.

He's testing them. The Team stews.

MCGEE

Deceleration. He can use his
speed to draw velocity from other
objects...

INT. STAR LABS - PHYSICS LAB - DAY

McGee snaps a FOOTBALL, which SPIRALS through the air --
Barry sprints after it, wearing the new BOOTS --

VALERIE (V.O.)

Reversing spin on a projectile.
He can absorb its velocity, drop
it mid-flight -- like a football --

The football FREEZES in the air. Barry runs CIRCLES
around it, the wind resistance building until the ball
loses its spiral and... BOUNCES TO THE GROUND.

TAKAMOTO (V.O.)

Or a bullet.

TAK cocks a 10mm Glock -- aims it at McGee's computer.

TAKAMOTO (V.O.)

Run fast enough and you could stop
one. Generate enough air current,
an equal but opposite force...

BLAM! The bullet explodes from the barrel in SUPER SLO-
MO. Barry runs after it -- *catching up to it* -- then,
runs rings around it, WHIRLING, until --

PLINK! The bullet drops to the floor. Barry picks it up
in disbelief.

BARRY

I'm keeping this.

WHIP TO THAWNE. Enjoying Barry's excitement.

THAWNE

Now, what's bigger than a bullet?

MCGEE

A shotgun? --

TAKAMOTO

-- Please tell me we have a
bazooka --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Barry is the only object moving at normal speed. We HEAR him working the problem -- a scientist as superhero.

BARRY (V.O.)
Hug the boundary layer, generate
enough opposite force.

Barry moves toward the cyclone -- BUT IS BLOWN BACK -- and we are OUT OF FLASHTIME, the world and storm RUSHING BACK IN as Barry is overwhelmed by the intense winds -- LIFTED -- a leaf in the wind -- thrashed about --

HE SLAMS TO THE GROUND. Painful. *

BARRY *
Too big. Too much force. No way *
I can -- *

But then he sees the tornado headed to... A FAMILY *
trapped in their car... They'll be killed! He rises, NO *
THOUGHT FOR HIMSELF. *

BARRY (V.O.) *
There's people in there. Can't *
let it get to them. *

He RUNS for them -- *towards the tornado* -- *

BARRY (V.O.) *
Have to get closer to its source *
if I'm going to absorb its *
velocity --

He looks right up at the tornado -- *he needs to stop this*
fucking thing. HE RUNS!

BARRY (V.O.)
Start wide. Tighten the circle.

This time, he ARCS AROUND THE TORNADO -- counter to its rotation -- SPINNING AROUND IT -- SPEED BUILDING -- until he's DOUBLING the tornado's own speed!

He fights harder against the insane tempest, which nears THE TRAPPED FAMILY. He pushes, giving everything.

FROM ABOVE: A GOD'S EYE VIEW OF THE TORNADO, looking down into it, as BARRY'S INCREDIBLE SPEED BEGINS TO AFFECT THE WIND -- *DECELERATING IT* -- *UNWINDING IT!*

The tornado is slowing down! Barry's speed taking the boost -- pushing the wind back even further until...

THE TORNADO BEGINS TO DISSIPATE! HE'S UNRAVELLING IT!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SATO

We got another one. Male. Same
M.O., down to the ice crystals.
This one he dumped in the metro.

Chyre hangs up. Frustrated. Another victim.

CHYRE

Another vic. Let's move.

INT. PRECINCT - UNDERGROUND GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Chyre enters a dinged-up Ford. *CHINK*. A sound, like something dropping. Whatever. *He then realizes he can see his breath. He shivers. His key won't go in the ignition. The lock is frozen over. Suddenly very cold.*

His eyes search. On the floor, a sleek, metal *DEVICE*. Something Jonathan Ive might design. EJECTING MIST.

He reaches for the door -- the handle won't turn. FROZEN OVER. The glass window starts to FROST -- FRACTURING.

SNAP TO BLACK.

A sharp INTAKE OF BREATH JOLTS US into:

INT. WALK-IN FREEZER

Chyre violently regains consciousness to find himself cuffed to a CHAIR. In the dark. And very COLD.

Chyre tries to keep calm. A pair of... GOGGLES pierces the darkness. Cobalt blue. *Worn by GOGGLES -- our killer, LEONARD SNART.*

SNART

You never stop. Bees in a hive...
Racing... living three lives in
one, never feeling any of them. I
was like you. You only stop when
you're dead.

(beat)

But I have an answer now. Cold.
Everything slows in the cold.

CHYRE

Let me go.

Snart steps into the half-light. Gaunt. Pale. Mad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SNART

He's coming. He'll bring the cold end... and show you all such beauty. Perfect. Stillness.

He reaches out a hand. Holding a SYRINGE of blue liquid.

CHYRE

Alright. You can explain that. A judge'll understand...

Chyre struggles. The syringe poised above his CHEST.

SNART

Everyone will understand. I'm showing them right now. They're all there...

EXT. CENTRAL SQUARE - THAT MOMENT

Where Chyre's face is BROADCAST LIVE -- ON THE JUMBOTRON. The usual hum of daily activity has CEASED. Pedestrians, cars, cabs. The entire city STOPPED to watch in horror.

SNART (O.S.)

Stopped for the first time in their busy day. Only now appreciating their lives. They'll go home and kiss their wives.

The needle goes in. A SOUND LIKE TINFOIL CRINKLING. Chyre CONVULSES. FLASH FREEZING. From the inside out.

SNART (V.O.)

They'll hug their children.

PEOPLE SCREAM OUT. ON SCREEN: CHYRE. Face frozen in a grotesque mask of terror. Solid ice. Snart whispers:

SNART

(to the CAMERA)

In the next five days I will destroy a Twin Cities landmark. *Along with anyone near it.* If you want to live, you only need to do one thing: Stay home. Be with the family you've forgotten... A snow day for everyone. You'll thank me when winter comes --

INT. NEWBURY FINANCIAL - NIGHT

A deeply monied finance firm. 48th floor view of Twin Cities. Nathan walks like he owns the place. Which he does. He reaches his OFFICE, where --

Iris is at his desk. On his computer.

IRIS

I'm not spying on you, I'm sending out résumés. Again.

NATHAN

You could always come work here.

IRIS

I don't even know what investment bankers do. Not sure anyone does.

NATHAN

You're trained to dig out facts and draw conclusions. And it might be fun to work together. Long lunches...

Over his shoulder she notices THE NEWS FEED. ON SCREEN: COVERAGE OF CHYRE'S GRUESOME PUBLIC DEATH. Horrifying. Coverage of the city's reaction. *Fear*.

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)

...unclear how the video feed was tapped into. Hundreds viewed the disturbing images of Detective Chyre's murder live...

NATHAN

Unbelievable, right? The crime in this city...

Grabbing her keys, Iris is already halfway out the door --

INT. STAR LABS - OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

A SPREADER CRACKS open a CAST. Tak holds Barry's arm steady as he takes it off. *His arm healed*.

TAKAMOTO

You sure about this? Eight hours ago he had two compound fractures.

VALERIE

The X-ray shows them clean.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCGEE

His metabolism's accelerated
across every metric. He's even
healing fast.

VALERIE

You just keep getting more and
more interesting.

Yes, that was a flirt. Barry smiles.

MCGEE

Hey. Barry's got a visitor.

VALERIE

Tell them to wait, I need to run
scans on those breaks. He's mine.

MCGEE

Says her name is Iris West.

A POP of air in the space where Barry just was.

INT. STAR LABS RECEPTION - 0.38 SECONDS LATER

A BOOM RUMBLES out the window -- Iris' hair blows back.
She turns to see... Barry waiting for her.

BARRY

Iris. What is it?

Iris just looks at him. Trying to find the words.
PRELAP: RAIN.

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

A sea of blue rings an open grave. Police dress
uniforms. Barry among them, Iris at his side. MATCH TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

*ANOTHER FUNERAL. Young Barry -- Iris at his side even
then -- watches his MOTHER'S COFFIN lower.*

*Barry turns. Looking at... HIS FATHER. In a suit. And
HANDCUFFS. POLICE on either side of him. Crying.*

BACK TO PRESENT

Barry turns from the grave. A decision forming...

INT. STAR LABS - OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

The Team stands opposite Barry, still in his dress blues.

BARRY

You said you'd help me get better.
I'm better than I've ever been.
But the city's in a panic. I have
to get back to work.

Barry follows Tak's eyes, turning around, to see Thawne.

THAWNE

Before you go, I'd like to show
you something.

INT. STAR LABS - SUB-BASEMENT - NIGHT

The bowels of the facility. The place not on the tour.

THAWNE

We've much in common, you and I.
Both of our lives shattered at
fourteen. Multiple sclerosis. I
wasn't supposed to live more than
six years. Faced with a death
sentence, I began working. I
wanted to accomplish as much as I
could before my time ran out...

BARRY

Then you understand why I have to
go back.

THAWNE

Of course. You've lost another
person. This time it was
Detective Chyre. Before that your
mother to a savage murder-- your
father died in prison for a crime
you believe he was innocent of.

He knows. It catches Barry off-guard.

BARRY

My father was a drunk, not a
murderer. Something happened that
night. Right before she died...
Something carried me away from the
house.

FLASH: *Young Barry, trying to close his bedroom window.
Falling. Being CARRIED. That VOICE whispering.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY

I know what I saw. What I heard.

FLASH: *Young Barry in the field. Far from his house.*

THE VOICE

RUN FLASH.

Hearing the SCREAM. Starting to run...

BARRY

The case is still open. There was a print on the weapon that wasn't my father's.

THAWNE

I believe you. The more time I spend in quantum physics... the more I learn anything is possible. Just see for yourself...

They approach a huge metal door the size of a bank vault.

INT. STAR LABS - HIGH SECURITY CONTAINMENT - CONTINUOUS

Featureless and metal. Empty except for a column of cylindrical CONTAINERS rising out of the room's center.

THAWNE

This room contains artifacts recovered from lightning storms with significant Kanigher particle discharges over the years.

Thawne reaches for a cylinder, which opens with a hermetic hiss of air. Hands its contents to Barry.

THAWNE

This dollar bill was found in Central City Park in 1954. After one such storm. Ordinary enough. Washington... a pyramid. Look closer. Examine.

Barry considers. Inspects. Flips the bill over.

BARRY

There's no "In God we trust."

Thawne grins. Opens another canister. Pulls out two METALLIC OBJECTS. Gunmetal grey. Curved on one side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THAWNE

Spectro-analysis reveals the atoms of this metal contain an antiparticle that can't even be synthesized without instantly annihilating itself.

(then)

You told me when you were struck by that bolt, you saw things... What if I told you what you saw was real? Glimpses into our past, our future, other times as well... another dimension...

BARRY

A parallel universe?

THAWNE

I believe these storms are where the wall between our reality and others is weakest. And that through them, here... we can cross over.

BARRY

(gets it)

Your Accelerator.

THAWNE

I meant to fire a single proton fast enough to cross through that wall and into another universe. Now, with you, instead of sending a proton... I can send a man.

Thawne fixes a stare. You. Barry is speechless.

THAWNE

You're the fastest man alive. You have the *time* to do anything. Stay with the department-- but stay here, too. If you apply your focus to this, you could go places no man ever dreamed possible.

(finally)

Barry... *What if there's a world where your mother is still alive?*

Barry cradles the strange metal. Holding the impossible.

EXT. SHOTS OF THE CITY - MORNING

A scared population reels from Snart's threat. A MOTHER rushes her KIDS off the street to the safety of home... CARS are backed up on the BRIDGE leading out of town...

INT. CENTRAL STATION - MORNING

Central City's TRAIN STATION (think Grand Central). A vaulted glass and wrought iron ceiling. PEOPLE line up to get their tickets out of the city.

POLICE do their best to keep watch on every corner.

EXT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Barry comes down to his shitbox car, his old morning routine. Grabs the handle, looks out at the thick, HONKING TRAFFIC just waiting for him to slog through...

Barry smiles. Flips the keys to a TEENAGER on a bike.

BARRY

She's all yours.

EXT. STREETS - MORNING

Barry SUPER SPEEDS to work, *a free bird through an obstacle course of miserable people stuck in traffic.*

Like a bike messenger with a jet pack, angling between cars and trucks and cabs -- springboarding off a bumper to run... OVER the traffic! On hoods and roofs! Yee ha!

INSIDE A bus -- a PASSENGER hears a BANG on the roof -- looks out... only to see a newspaper, eddying in the contrail of a long gone Barry Allen.

INT. DONUT SHOP - MORNING

A LINE OF PEOPLE waits to be served. The door POPS open with a gust of wind. A row of donuts disappears, a ten left on the counter.

INT. PRECINCT - MOMENTS LATER

Barry enters, holding a box of donuts, to find... A madhouse. Every COP in the city is at work. SERGEANTS bark orders in front of city MAPS, trying to coordinate the impossible effort of covering every inch of the city.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORILLO

All major landmarks -- ESU teams at Central Square, Central Stadium, the Twin Cities Museum, the Accelerator Tower, Millar Tower. Put everyone on the streets --

No one even notices Barry enter. Except --

IRIS (O.S.)

It's good to have you back.

He turns. Iris hands him a small BOX.

IRIS

Welcome back gift. Maybe now you won't be so late for everything. Although today isn't a great indication of that.

BARRY

(as he opens)

I was getting donuts. There was a line.

He opens it to find... a WATCH.

BARRY

Thanks. And for coming by today to check on me.

IRIS

You? I've been living here since the "Cold" story broke.

BARRY

"Cold"?

She walks the precinct. Barry, as ever, can't keep up.

INT. CSI BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

IRIS

Son of Sam, Hillside Strangler -- you're gonna write about a serial killer who shuts down half the city, you need a name.

BARRY

When did you get a new job?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRIS

Three minutes after I realized I still had a laptop and a wireless connection.

BARRY

You're a... blogger now?

IRIS

If the *Citizen* was still around, it'd be running a dozen stories about the monster who murdered Chyre...

BARRY

You're a blogger now?

IRIS

He was my friend, too. This is the only thing I can do for him.

Iris moves to sit, grabbing a chair with a broken wheel.

IRIS

So I started digging --

FWOOSH -- Barry swaps the broken chair for another -- a BLUR that gusts Iris' hair into her face.

BARRY

I had CSU dump the recording of the killer's video to my computer--

IRIS

There's nothing there, I already scrubbed it. And his hack into the jumbotron was clean. This guy does not want to be found.

BARRY

He has to come from somewhere. Where does he get his tech? His chemicals? And what the hell does he want?

IRIS

That one's easy.

EXT. CENTRAL CITY STREETS - THAT MOMENT

Cars HONK. TRAFFIC COPS direct the gridlock. But still plenty of BUSTLE on the streets. People going about their day. Going to work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRIS (V.O.)
He wants us scared.

INT. CENTRAL STATION - THAT MOMENT

FROM THE MEZZANINE a clear view of the station, PACKED. The morning COMMUTERS rush. Headed into work.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL -- WE ARE IN SNART'S POV. Watching all those busy bees. HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE. *Lives*.

SNART
(to himself)
You wouldn't listen.

He reaches into his pocket. Pulls out: A series of BLUE AMPULES. He takes one. ROLLS it under his fingers on the balustrade then... lets go. Letting it roll over...

Down over the Mezzanine -- TO SMASH ON THE MARBLE FLOOR BELOW. In the middle of the commuter crush.

BARRY (PRELAP)
There's got to be a pattern...

INT. CSI BULLPEN - DAY

BARRY
A consistency to the victimology. And if we can't trace his signal, what about his equipment? You'd need hardware to freeze a body that fast, but nothing's been recovered from the crime scenes.

INT. CENTRAL STATION - THAT MOMENT

A COMMUTER ON HIS CELL PHONE SLIPS. Looks at the floor. COATED IN DARK ICE. Odd. Someone next to him stops. CHILLED. Sees her BREATH in the air.

THREE MORE AMPULES DROP FROM ABOVE -- SHATTERING ON THE FLOOR! Nothing but MIST spreading out where they land.

They rush to get out of there. Cell phone guy getting to the exit first -- to see THE EXIT DOORS START TO FREEZE SHUT -- trapping them in!

CELL PHONE GUY
Help! The doors are --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THUNK! A HYPODERMIC NEEDLE LANDS IN HIS CHEST -- FIRED FROM A GUN. THE SYRINGE DEPLOYS in the man's chest -- spreading a FREEZING WAVE through him. PEOPLE SCREAM!

TWO COPS RUN for the iced exit, reaching for their guns. One on his WALKIE --

COP
Central Station. We have an 11-99
at Central Sta --

THUNK! A hypo fires into his chest, silencing him. He falls to the ground -- SHATTERING!

Through the building MAYHEM... SMART STEPS FORWARD. Firing a semi-automatic, HYPOS FILLED WITH BLUE LIQUID, at anyone in his way... as he THROWS THE AMPULES --

A FREEZING WAVE OF BLACK ICE SPREADS -- UP THE WALLS, CRACKING THEM -- REACHING TOWARDS THE DELICATE CEILING --

INT. PRECINCT - SECONDS LATER

Morillo smashes down the phone -- shouting --

MORILLO
He's at the train station! All
units rolling Code 3 to Central
Station! Go!

TIME FREEZES for Barry. A few seconds, stretched for him into a long, soul-searching moment. *Hearing the call.*

IRIS
Barry. Did you hear -- he's --

Only Barry's not in his chair anymore -- already GONE --

EXT. CENTRAL CITY STREETS - .09 SECONDS LATER

Barry BLURS through traffic -- slaloming through people running away -- *FOOM.*

BARRY (V.O.)
Okay, Barry. Just go. Take a
look... And do what exactly?

A wind tunnel stretches down the main drag of the city. Passing POLICE CARS heading right for -- CENTRAL STATION.

INT. CENTRAL STATION

The CROWD SCREAMS -- seeing the BLACK ICY WAVE spread up the crumbling walls reaching the delicate glass ceiling.

THE FIRST GLASS PANE SHATTERS -- EXPLODING DOWN -- MORE FOLLOW -- HUGE KILLER CHUNKS OF GLASS AND IRON RAINING DOWN ON THE HUNDREDS OF TERRIFIED PEOPLE BELOW WHEN --

TIME SNAPS STILL.

The station is a RAINSTORM of BROKEN GLASS showering from above -- like a million KNIVES, HANGING IN THE AIR. ABOUT TO KILL EVERYONE.

WHIP PAN -- Barry entering the station -- the only thing in motion -- moving faster than anyone can see --

BARRY (V.O.)

Dozens of panes, roughly 2200 pounds each. Rate of descent 200 feet per second. I have time.

He runs under, tries to move a falling piece of jagged glass. SLICES his hand.

BARRY (V.O.)

Glass moves slow, but it's still razor sharp. Gotta be careful.

He skids to a stop. The glass shrapnel closer to the civilians now.

BARRY (V.O.)

Think. Too many shards. Can't move the panes...

Eyes widen. An epiphany.

BARRY (V.O.)

Move the people.

And he's gone! Tearing through the station -- MOVING EVERYONE TO A CORNER PROTECTED BY THE MEZZANINE OVERHANG.

The last person dropped to safety, Barry looks across the ocean of falling glass, the pieces of vaulted ceiling millimeters from SMASHING, to see A MAN WITH A SEMI --

SNART. Stopped in time. Making an escape down one of the train platform tunnels.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY (V.O.)
It's him. Headed underground.
 (realizes)
 For the trains.

Barry begins MOVING THROUGH the falling pieces of glass as they EXPLODE IN SLO-MO ALL AROUND HIM! SPRAYING OUT -- DEADLY GLASS DUST SLICING HIS SKIN -- too much --

Barry huddles for safety as -- TIME RESUMES -- THE REST OF THE CEILING GLASS BASHES TO THE FLOOR. Barry covers his mouth -- looks -- Snart is GONE.

INT. TRAIN PLATFORM - 0.02 SECONDS LATER

Snart moves fast, heading for a train getting ready to depart, opposite an empty platform. Not fast enough --

He's WHISKED UP -- turns, BARRY'S GOT HIM. Snart SMILES a steely grin. Knowing what Barry doesn't yet.

SNART
 You're fast. Not fast enough.

HE JUST THREW ONE OF HIS AMPULES. BARRY SEES IT HITTING THE METAL AND... EXPLODING OPEN! THE TRACKS INSTANTLY CRACKLE AS A FIELD OF ICE SPREADS WIDE AND DEEP --

A TRAIN WHISTLE signals a train coming.

SNART
 You can't save them all.

The hell he can't. Barry makes a decision to LET SNART GO. A BURST OF SPEED and Barry is off -- DOWN THE TUNNEL -- HEADED FOR THE COMING TRAIN!

BARRY (V.O.)
 Moving train. Moving train. How
 do you stop a moving train?
 (then)
 You don't. Same trick. Only
faster.

INT. TRAIN CAR - .02 SECONDS LATER

COMMUTERS on the train. No clue what's coming. One of them feels a CHILL. Then -- THE TRAIN JERKS. LURCHES, SWERVING -- THEN SKIDDING -- COMING OFF THE TRACKS!

A 20,000 TON MISSILE -- OUT OF CONTROL AND HEADED RIGHT FOR THE CONCRETE WALL!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INSIDE THE CAR -- PEOPLE THROWN AT ODD ANGLES -- holding on for dear life -- which would be very short but for --

BARRY -- TEARING THROUGH, TAKING PASSENGERS OFF TO THE SIDE OF THE TRACKS -- person by person -- dropping them off safely -- too fast for anyone to know what happened.

The train HITS -- the front end SMASHING -- an accordion wave of violent inertia spreading down the entire length of the train to destroy EVERYTHING on it.

Then Barry sees -- ONE LAST WOMAN, still on the train -- on a back car. Her life about to be crushed out of her as the train crushes down further and further...

BARRY GOES IN AFTER HER -- GRABBING HER AS THE CAR CRUMPLES AROUND THEM AND --

MAKING IT OUT THE INSTANT THE ENTIRE THING DISINTEGRATES BEHIND HIM IN A VIOLENT CRASH! SPEWING CHUNKS OF METAL AND GLASS -- SHRAPNEL BURYING INTO BARRY'S SHOULDER!

ON THE PLATFORM

Barry gasps for air, ignores the pain. He still holds the LAST WOMAN tightly -- who looks up at him, shaken.

LAST WOMAN

Something blew right through --

BARRY

Yeah. Freak storm. Must've been.

Barry's chest swells, exhausted, woozy... but feeling good. He scans the crowd for Snart -- but SNART IS GONE.

LAST WOMAN

(noticing Barry)

God. You're bleeding.

Barry feels BLOOD dripping from HIS BACK. *HE'S WOUNDED.*

EXT. CENTRAL STATION - MOMENTS LATER

POLICE CARS scream up, MORILLO'S CAR SKIDDING to a halt. Too late to do a thing. A GUST of wind blows past -- then a THUD, like something just SLAMMED into the car.

Morillo looks, sees a BLOOD SMEAR. *What the fuck?*

INT. VALERIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Val hears a KNOCK. Answers it to find... BARRY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VALERIE

Dropping by, no invitation.
That's bold.

Barry collapses. Not what she expected.

INT. VALERIE'S APARTMENT - LATER

A towel hits Barry in the face, waking him. Not happy.

VALERIE

Did you get shot?

BARRY

Just a piece of... train.

VALERIE

Train...? That was you.

She looks at the TV. Local news doing post-game commentary on the train station disaster.

VALERIE

People are freaking out. They're saying a tornado actually blew people out of the train cars...
You're the tornado.

BARRY

People needed help, I helped.

VALERIE

And almost got yourself killed.

BARRY

You have to take it out. Whatever it is, it's in there pretty bad.

VALERIE

I can't do surgery on you!

BARRY

I thought you were Dr. Perez.

VALERIE

Yeah. PhDs. Physics and Computer Science. You want Tak, he's the doctor-doctor.

BARRY

It's already healing over, if you don't pull it out it'll stay in there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She takes out a first aid kit. Barry pulls off his shirt carefully, pained. She's over him, sterilizing tongs.

VALERIE

Hold still. I'm pretty sure I'm gonna make this hurt.

She digs it in. Barry winces through pain. A lot of it.

VALERIE

You think that's bad? You should see what Thawne'd do to you if he found out his precious specimen was first responder to a train derailment.

She digs. Bone CRUNCHES. Barry lets out an *Ow!*

VALERIE

It's just a lag bolt four inches into your trapezius.

PLINK. A METAL BOLT drops into a coffee mug on the table. She begins putting a bandage over the wound. Somehow this bit of surgery is very intimate.

BARRY

Thank you. You gonna tell him?

VALERIE

Thawne? That depends. You gonna do anything this dumb again?

BARRY

(shrugs, honest)
Helping people, it's... who I am.

*
*

She smiles. He sees he's gotten to her. A beat, then... *WOOSH*, Barry's gone. *WHOOSH*, he's back. With FLOWERS.

VALERIE

I'm allerg--

WOOSH, he's gone. *WHOOSH*, back. Holding chocolates now.

VALERIE

You're cute.

Beat. Barry feels dizzy.

BARRY

I think I need to eat those.

WHISH -- empty box. Val swoons a little.

INT. CENTRAL STATION - DAY

The station is a crime scene. DOZENS of COPS comb through, dodging the broken glass.

Iris interviews the train crash survivors. That LAST WOMAN Barry saved is trying to find the words.

LAST WOMAN

It all happened so fast. We were about to hit, then it was like... wind rushing all around, carrying me. Next thing I knew I was on the platform, watching the crash.

Iris takes her notes, incredulous. Then, an idea...

INT. STATION SECURITY - LATER

Iris with one of the Station's rent-a-cops. He works a bank of monitors. MULTIPLE ANGLE SHOTS of the Station.

STATION COP

Police already went over every second. Don't know what you're expecting to find...

IRIS

Just show it to me. The recording of the event.

STATION COP

We've been calling it an accident.

Iris' eyes widen as the events we just witnessed replay in SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE. Surreal. Like watching the world shatter -- and a WHIRLWIND scatter the pieces.

IRIS

(seeing something)
Wait. Stop. Go back...

STATION COP

That's just a blur.

IRIS

No. It's not.

Iris traces the blur's contour. It's in the shape of something... A FOOT.

INT. STAR LABS - ACCELERATOR LOOP - DAY

INSIDE Thawne's MASSIVE ACCELERATOR. A TUNNEL, spanning a 30-mile underground loop. The entire length runs with SUPERCOOLED MAGNET COILS, breathing frost.

McGee oversees A CONSTRUCTION CREW building a RUNNING TRACK through the entire thing. No small task.

BARRY

You're rebuilding this. For me.

THAWNE

Enhancing it. A man has similar needs to a proton, only different dimensions.

Thawne CLICKS a keyboard, calling up a HOLOGRAPHIC COMPUTER SIMULATION: *The Accelerator. A MAN moving IMPOSSIBLY FAST around it, space fracturing and... OPENING UP... LETTING HIM THROUGH.*

THAWNE

To cross over you'll have to exceed the speed of light, over 670 million miles per hour. The Accelerator will accelerate you.

BARRY

You really think I can run at the speed of light?

THAWNE

No. I think you can run faster.

MCGEE

These'll help.

McGee sets down a PAIR OF BOOTS. Slick. Every detail thought through. (We recognize them from our Opening.)

EXT. IRIS AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Those same boots, casually tucked under slacks, walk up, past the DOORMAN.

INT. IRIS AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A dinner party in progress. Iris and Nathan hosting his tonier FRIENDS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUEST

I keep asking Nathan when he's going to move back to London. He seems committed to Central City.

NATHAN

I'm committed to Iris, and she's committed here.

GUEST

She needs a new job. Just buy her a paper in London.

Laughter. Conversation stops at... a KNOCK. Barry at the door. Holding wine. Iris is surprised to see him.

IRIS

Barry? You're here.

BARRY

You always complain I never come to your monthly dinner parties.

IRIS

Because you don't.

BARRY

Guess I... made the time.

Iris lets him in, shocked to hear those words come out of his mouth.

LATER

Mid-meal, everyone seated, drinking. Barry eyes Nathan's arm gently rubbing Iris' back. Drinks some more.

GUEST

I was in a cab when it happened, I just as easily could have been on that train.

NATHAN

I hope you guys catch him before anyone else gets hurt, Barry.

BARRY

We're working on it.

IRIS

People have no idea how bad it could have been, if --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NATHAN

Here she goes again. Iris has a theory.

Barry straightens. Not liking this.

NATHAN

She thinks someone saved those people. Her guardian angel.

IRIS

I have proof --

NATHAN

And here I thought we might have a meal without your laptop.

No chance. She already has it out and opened to THE STILL IMAGE. THE BLURRED FOOT.

GUEST

I see it. Is that... a foot?

IRIS

Exactly. A foot.

BARRY

That's proof? Of an invisible man who saves people's lives --

IRIS

Any crazier than a freak tornado?

NATHAN

Come on, honey. You know it's a little out there.

IRIS

(to Nathan)
You said earlier you believed me.

NATHAN

Because I'm crazy about you. I'll believe anything you say.

Barry's eyes flick to Nathan's hand, around Iris' waist.

BARRY

Let's play this theory out. For one man --

(sets a salt shaker)

To cover the entire station -- And save all those people --

(the silverware)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BARRY (CONT'D)

He'd need to trace 100 meters, times 300, reducing at a steady rate as the train closes to impact, all in a space of 10 seconds... putting him at a footspeed in excess of... 400 miles per hour. Is that scientifically precedented?... Yes, actually. Every year at Christmas, when Santa Claus gets presents to every kid in the world by morning. You should definitely write about this *on your blog*.

Iris goes quiet, made to feel stupid.

IRIS

It was just a theory.

Everyone clocks the tension. Especially Nathan.

INT. FRONT DOOR - LATER

Barry puts on his coat. Nathan seeing him out.

NATHAN

Thanks for coming.

BARRY

She's not gonna say good night. Long history of driving each other nuts. Tell her I'm sorry.

Nathan nods, lets Barry out.

INT. IRIS AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Iris cleans up like an angry person. Nathan enters.

NATHAN

It's been years. Why do you still try with him?

IRIS

I remember him before his mom died. He was the smartest kid in the world, excited about everything. Then life took all that away. I guess... I just feel sorry for him.

NATHAN

Are you sure that's all it is?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Iris reads him.

IRIS

What do you mean?

NATHAN

You're the only one who can make me that upset-- and it's because I love you.

IRIS

(moves to him)

I promise to get pissed at you more often... Nathan, he's just an old friend. That's it.

Nathan kisses her, heads off to bed. Iris goes back to her dishes, her own smile fading.

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Barry comes home straight to... his fingerprint binders. Needing the comfort of the task.

He flips a page. Another. Another. Faster. Building speed. *Flipflipflipflip*. Pages turning like propeller blades. The binder DROPS -- another appears --

Flipped through in an instant. Working through his *ENTIRE STACK OF BINDERS in seconds -- and --*

INT. RECORDS ROOM - GOVERNMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

-- The door BLASTS open. Barry faces a GREAT LIBRARY, THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS of those same THICK BINDERS filling the shelves -- and TEARS THROUGH THEM in a blur --

Just as suddenly -- he STOPS. Holding a binder. THE LAST BINDER. Only Barry doesn't look happy, or relieved. Just stands. Staring. *Then THROWS it in anger.*

INT. STAR LABS - PARTICLE ANALYSIS LAB - MORNING

McGee double-checks equipment as Barry enters.

MCGEE

Tak's going to play with your electrolyte balance, see if upping the potassium has any effect on top speed and endurance. Hook up to the IV --

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCGEE (CONT'D)

(off Barry's look)

What's with you? *

BARRY

There's a print I've been trying
to ID -- for my mother's killer...
There's no match for it.
Anywhere. *

MCGEE

There have to be millions of
fingerprints in the databases.
It'd take years to --
(off Barry's look)
Right. *

BARRY

It was my only lead. *

MCGEE

You'll find another. You're
nothing if not persistent. When
you find it, you'll make it right. *

BARRY

What do I do till that happens? *

MCGEE

You're a cop, aren't you? Go make
things right for someone else. *

As his words land on Barry, PRELAP: A BOUNCE. ANOTHER.
Something building.

INT. IRIS AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Iris on her bed, laptop open on CITIZENWEST.COM. (Think
early NIKKI FINKE.) She stops, suddenly self-conscious.

IRIS

Oh God. I have a blog.

She starts typing. CLICKS merging with that BOUNCING.

IRIS (V.O.)

*I'd say you heard it here first...
but that assumes anyone out
there's listening. Well here
goes: My message in a bottle.*

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Barry BOUNCES a tennis ball against the wall over and over in frustration, just like when he was a kid.

IRIS (V.O.)
Yesterday's catastrophe in Central Station has been linked to the serial killer known as "Cold"...

The ball arcs faster, harder. BOUNCEBOUNCE.

IRIS (V.O.)
But footage suggests there might have been another person. Someone who kept catastrophe from turning into holocaust. Is it possible we have some kind of silent guardian?

BOOM! THE TENNIS BALL GOES STRAIGHT THROUGH THE WALL!

He's put a HOLE clear into his CLOSET. Barry spots an OLD BOX knocked over on the floor. He takes it out, dusts it off. Revealed inside, like the answer to the question burning inside him, is:

AN OLD COMIC COLLECTION. A GOLDEN AGE FLASH COMIC.

IRIS (V.O.)
I'm hoping we do... Because in Central City, the innocence has been gone a long time...

JAY GARRICK. His childhood hero, complete with lightning bolt on his chest and Mercury helmet on his head.

IRIS (V.O.)
We could use a hero.

EXT. CENTRAL CITY - STREETS - NIGHT

Just as in our Prologue, Barry combs the City, helping those in need, without ever letting on he's there.

BARRY (V.O.)
I'm an eyeblink... a sunburst...

QUICK POPS, replaying the moments: Stopping a mugging... Halting a drug deal... Ending a car chase... Dropping the girder safely in a cyclone in Central Square...

BARRY (V.O.)
...a flash.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, racing towards a BURNING BUILDING... *Scanning for injured. Hears VOICES. Sees the SPEAKERS.*

BARRY (V.O.)

Someone set this up. Set me up.

THE FLOOR FALLS OUT FROM UNDER HIM. BARRY DROPS --

AND IS PINNED UNDER BURNING DEBRIS. He can't move. Can't breathe through the smoke. He looks up. Sees --

MORE FACES IN SILHOUETTE ABOVE HIM. As if his enemies have come to gloat over his death. *The world goes black.*

VOICE (O.S.)

...needs a suit. Has to be flame retardant --

Barry's eyes find focus. Realizes he's in --

INT. STAR LABS - TECH AREA - NIGHT

The VOICES belong to HIS STAR LABS TEAM. Tak, Val, McGee. Arguing over him.

TAKAMOTO

-- Micro nano silicate could deflect high impact projectiles, won't burn and can cut drag -- or an amine-treated organoclay --

BARRY

(getting up)
You... set that up? The building?
You could've killed somebody --

TAKAMOTO

No one was anywhere near it.

BARRY

I meant me!

VALERIE

You're going to get yourself killed playing supercop. You're not equipped. You're not focused.

BARRY

So you're gonna bust me.

VALERIE

(beat, grins)
No, dumbass. We want in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Barry reads the commitment on their faces.

MCGEE

It'd be nice to do something a little less... academic.

BARRY

Thawne wants you all working round the clock on the Accelerator. If he finds out...

VALERIE

He's gonna be pissed...

She says it like it'll be fun. MUSIC UP, rising in time with everyone's excitement -- *it's time to build an ICON:*

QUICK CUTS AS: A detailed 3D model of Barry comes up on a COMPUTER... Barry runs in a WIND TUNNEL, colored SMOKE blowing over him, highlighting the aerodynamics... The information plays out on the computer model to form...

A SUIT. SEEN ROTATING IN 3D LIGHT PROJECTION. ON BARRY: Now wearing THE GREY BODYSUIT. Like a speed skater's.

BARRY

Doesn't leave much to the imagination.

VALERIE

You got nothing to be worried about, champ.

BARRY RACES THROUGH THE CITY. On patrol. *But no longer wearing civilian clothes. IN THE SPEED SUIT.*

IRIS (V.O.)

There are still some people who don't believe he even exists. But he does. And he's been busy.

VARIOUS LOCATIONS. QUICK CUTS as Barry patrols. Crimes foiled in eyeblinks. A CRIMINAL zip-cuffed and left for police. ANOTHER stuffed in the back of a squad car.

IRIS (V.O.)

Cold remains at large, but quiet. Could he be scared of our silent guardian?

POLICE PRECINCT. A JAIL CELL with a few drunks drying out. *WHOOSH.* The cell's population just QUADRUPLED.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

IRIS (V.O.)

*The last two weeks have seen
double-digit drops in crime... and
a triple-digit rise in arrests.*

BARRY'S APARTMENT. *WHOOSH*. The place is cleaned,
organized, the digital fish replaced with a LIVE ONE.
Letting some life in. *FOOOOM*.

IRIS (V.O.)

*You want to know what it's like to
see a city change?*

AN APARTMENT HOUSE ROW. Kids dart through the streets,
joyful -- running past... BARRY. Headed for an ICE CREAM
TRUCK. The kind of thing Barry's mom would've loved.

IRIS (V.O.)

Look out a window...

INFANTINO'S DINER. Iris walks to her booth, passing a
ROW OF PEOPLE ON LAPTOPS, all checking CITIZENWEST.COM,
her BLOG. People are taking notice. It feels good.

She crosses to where she's meeting Nathan. He greets her
with a kiss.

IRIS (V.O.)

*This silent guardian gave a city
back its childhood.*

PAN to a nearby booth. The waitress asking a PATRON in a
baseball cap. Seen only from behind.

WAITRESS

Tea. You want that hot or cold?

REVEAL the booth's patron is... SNART. Watching them.
He grins at the waitress. *His answer all too obvious.*

RESUME STAR LABS. Barry sees McGee running an AIRBRUSH
over the grey suit. PAINTING IT CRIMSON. Getting it.

BARRY

When I move, the red wavelengths
coming off it... they'll expand...
into infrared.

MCGEE

The faster you go... the less they
can see you.

McGee works an aerodynamics simulation -- Tak enters --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TAKAMOTO

You're still hitting 4% drag -- we need a front foil to cut it.

He affixes a SHAPE straight over Barry's chest. It's not just an airfoil... BUT A LIGHTNING BOLT.

TAKAMOTO

Hello, Flash.

ON THE FLASH. RUNNING, FULLY SUITED. *A legend is born. UNLEASHED. He rips past camera, wiping us to...*

INT. STAR LABS - ACCELERATOR - DAY

Barry runs the Accelerator TRACK. Reality CRACKING at the seams. LIGHT spills. THE SPEED FORCE -- windows into possibility:

FLASH: *A PRISON INFIRMARY. BARRY, AT 22, HOLDS HIS FATHER'S HAND. HE TRIES TO TOUCH BARRY'S FACE, HANDCUFFS PREVENT IT. DEVASTATED BY REGRET AS MUCH AS CANCER --*

BARRY

Just rest, Dad.

HENRY ALLEN

You're the only one... the only one who never gave up on me.

FLASH: *NORA ALLEN, BARRY'S MOTHER. OLDER AND ALIVE AND STILL IN HER KITCHEN. BAKING. A BIRTHDAY CAKE.*

NORA

The kids'll be so disappointed if you go now...

LIGHT BUILDS AND BLAZES. Overlapping memories and futures and possibilities. Relentless. Too much, and --

BARRY (PRELAP)

When I push my speed, it's like... time breaks open.

INT. STAR LABS - ACCELERATOR - LATER

Barry on a bench. Spent. Trying to explain to Thawne --

BARRY

Like when I was struck by the bolt. I see things that happened, years ago...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY (CONT'D)

but also things that never happened, never could. My mother. Older. Alive.

THAWNE

I call it the Speed Force. All worlds, all pasts and futures collide there. What I would give for just a glimpse...

BARRY

So I'm getting faster.

THAWNE

Not fast enough. The Accelerator is almost completed. It's firing at 80%. When it hits its full potential, I need you at yours.

FIND Val by the HEAT SHIELD array, checking the readings.

VALERIE

Unbelievable. He's giving off four times the Kanigher level. The containment unit's almost full.

MCGEE

The particle guys'd kill for this stuff. I'll stay and swap it out.

Val shrugs. *Suit yourself.* Val and Tak cross to Barry, slumped on a bench, boots kicked off.

VALERIE

Shoes back on. We're getting a drink. You're allowed to have a life, you know.

Said with just enough flirt to make a "no" unlikely.

INT. IRIS AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nathan walks into the bedroom, dressed for a night out. Iris is hovered over her laptop. Not close to ready.

NATHAN

You know we're supposed to be at dinner downtown in 20 minutes.

Nathan moves to their closet, pulls a tie. Iris follows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRIS

People are posting leads on the site. Listen to this one -- Cold's third victim made a stock purchase right before he was killed. Eight hundred shares of UniTech, brokered through Newbury Financial.

NATHAN

My company. So?

IRIS

If there's one connection between your company and one of the victims, there might be more. If I could go through your records --

NATHAN

-- I'd be arrested by the SEC. Which might spoil the honeymoon.
(turns to her)
Iris, the transaction you're talking about is barely large enough to be handled by a junior trader.

Iris gives her best doe eyes.

NATHAN

My god, you're pouting to get your way...
(off her look)
And it's working. Fine, I'll do some digging. If you get dressed.

INT. BROOME'S - NIGHT

Barry, Tak and Val at the bar. SHOTS CLINK. Knock back. Barry drinks his. Val hands him hers. *Drink up.*

BARRY

You're... aggressive.

VALERIE

I know your type. Wait for you to make a move, could be decades before I get you home.

Just then, Iris comes in with Nathan. Here for dinner. She sees Barry out laughing with friends. With a woman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRIS

Barry? Haven't seen you out in a bar since... ever.

BARRY

Just out with some friends.

Val edges in close to Barry. *Hands off.*

TAKAMOTO

Iris West, right? Love your site.

VALERIE

And your mystery guardian. He sounds like just the guy we all need.

BARRY

You should stick to writing more about him and less about Cold. Provoking him... it's dangerous.

IRIS

I know what I'm doing --
I'm a crime reporter --

BARRY

-- Chasing a killer who
doesn't want to be found,
who killed Chyre --

IRIS

And people want to see him caught.
Tonight I had a poster tip me on
one of the victims. Bought shares
of UniTech before he was killed.

BARRY

Sounds like you cracked it wide
open.

IRIS

At least it's something. Enjoy
your night off.

And she heads inside towards the restaurant, Nathan in tow with an apologetic wave. He takes Iris' hand.

NATHAN

Still just feel sorry for him?

No. In fact, if anything, Iris looks a little jealous.

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Val follows Barry into his apartment. Looks around.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VALERIE

Wow. You live like shit.

A BLUR combs the place. Cleaning, organizing. Making it a home. The photo of his parents finally framed.

VALERIE

I have a hard time finding anything wrong with you. Who could blame your friend for being jealous?

BARRY

Who? Iris? She's just... Iris.

VALERIE

Let me guess... College. Friends all freshman year, she went boyfriend to boyfriend while you pined prettily from afar...

BARRY

High school. I was living with her family after my mom died and my dad went to jail. Lost our virginity when we were 17. She wanted to stay together. But... I couldn't.

VALERIE

Why?

BARRY

There were things more important to me than having a life.

Val had no idea he ever had it that rough.

VALERIE

Maybe that's what's been holding you back from running faster. You're thinking about it too much. Running isn't a head thing. You have to feel it.

BARRY

Not my strong suit.

VALERIE

Let's work on that.

She kisses him. For once in his life, Barry doesn't run.

INT. PRECINCT - MORNING

Barry enters. Slight spring in his step. Iris still seems bothered. Needling --

IRIS

Barry Allen showing up to parties,
going to bars, hanging with new
girls. What else did that
lightning do to you?

He doesn't take the bait.

BARRY

I've been here since six. You're
on to something with that lead.

He exits off, she follows --

INT. CSI BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

-- to Where Barry's constructed an elaborate board with
photographs of Snart's victims, red string connecting
various data points. Old school. But thorough.

BARRY

Turns out all of Cold's victims
spent large sums in the six months
before their deaths.

He taps pieces of evidence pinned up to the board.

BARRY

Victim One put a down payment on a
house. Victim Two, a new car --
Mercedes. Victim Four got himself
out of 90,000 in credit card debt.

IRIS

Okay. But what's it mean?

BARRY

At first, I couldn't figure it
out. Serial killers generally
don't select their victims because
of money.

(beat)

But hitmen do.

INT. IRIS AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

THE SHOWER RUNS as we TRACK THROUGH the apartment. A VOYEUR'S POV, scanning the room. Touching intimates. Wedding invitations stacked on the table.

BARRY (V.O.)
Cold didn't kill those people
because he enjoys it.

RACK FOCUS BACK TO THE FRONT DOOR -- which we now see is OPEN. LOCK FROZEN OVER. BROKEN. *Snart is here*.

BARRY (V.O.)
He did it because he was hired.
That's why there's no serial
pattern to the victims.

IN THE BATHROOM. Someone inside. Stepping out of the shower. NATHAN. He shivers. Cold. The steam from the shower... *ices over*. Like snow.

BARRY (V.O.)
They weren't victims... they were
targets.

Nathan FALLS to the tile. In the mirror, already freezing over, we glimpse a REFLECTION. *Snart*.

INT. CSI BULLPEN - RESUME

MORILLO
Allen. Suit up. Missing vic,
frozen apartment. Let's go. I've
got squad cars establishing a
perimeter. 1700 Broadway.

Morillo speeds away, but Barry's frozen. Turning back to Iris. *She looks sick*. He knows why:

IRIS
I live at 1700 Broadway.
(it hits her)
Nathan --

BARRY
Lieutenant! Iris was the
target. The victim's her
fiancé. Keep her here
under watch --

IRIS
-- Barry --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY

-- Iris, for once in your life you
listen to me. I need you safe.
You stay here.

*Her hair blows back. She looks up -- eyes wet -- to
find... Barry is GONE. SMASH TO:*

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - 0.35 SECONDS LATER

Iris' building. A GUST OF WIND blows newspapers past the
two UNIFORMS standing watch outside --

INT. IRIS AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT - 0.11 SECONDS LATER

Barry scours through. ICE AND FROST cover everything.
He finds, embedded in a frozen carpet... SNART'S COLD
DEVICE. *This one didn't explode* -- Barry PUNCHES it free
from the ice, and --

INT. STAR LABS - MASS SPECTROMETER LAB - DAY

One by one, the Team members are SLAMMED into chairs
around a TABLE. Each stunned from being plucked from
wherever they were .3 seconds ago at Mach 2 to face --

MCGEE

Barry -- Jesus --

TAKAMOTO

-- I think I'm gonna hurl.

BARRY

Later. I need to know where this
came from and how I can trace it
or someone dies.

He sets Snart's DEVICE down. DISASSEMBLING it in a
blink. The Team inspects. Brains ignited. RAPID FIRE:

MCGEE

Dispersal unit. Titanium
casing. A spent capsule?

TAKAMOTO

-- Aerosolized freezing
compound. Alphatics? --

VALERIE

Same coolants we use to cool the
semiconductors in the cyclotron --

MCGEE

You couldn't compress that much
into this. It's impossible.

THAWNE

You're holding one, so clearly it
isn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The rapid fire halts. THAWNE is here. A busted beat.

THAWNE

Yes, I'm well aware you've been fighting crime in your spare time. With my team's help. The Nobels in my office aren't for show.

Thawne picks it up. Eyes and mind absorb it quickly.

THAWNE

Lead paint. Encasement... He overcame the compression problem with a micro radiation field -- likely iridium. Smart.

VALERIE

Painting over it to mask a signal.

THAWNE

Which should still be detectable at close range. Radionuclide identifier --

Barry knows what's coming. BLURS into his SUIT --

TAKAMOTO

(to Barry)

Get going, we'll talk you through.

EXT. CENTRAL CITY STREETS - DAY

THE FLASH RACES, the suit streaks a FROZEN WORLD crimson.

TAKAMOTO (VIA BLUETOOTH)

Abandoned cannery at Parker --

The Flash is already there, place cased -- moved on --

THE FLASH

Empty. Next.

INT. SNART'S BASEMENT FREEZER - THAT MOMENT

Nathan comes to -- to find SNART STARING at him. His nightmare face. Close. Waiting. Nathan SHIVERS.

NATHAN

You -- You're angry. Because she wrote about you... Just let me go. She'll stop. I promise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Snart rises, silent, opens his case. Inside are more of the same freezing DEVICES. *And a SYRINGE.*

EXT. CENTRAL CITY STREETS - THAT MOMENT

QUICK CUTS: The Flash covering the city. Whipping up stairs, through cellars, vacant buildings, over rooftops.

TAKAMOTO (VIA BLUETOOTH)	THE FLASH
Wolfman Foundry, it's	-- And clean. Next.
abandon--	

INT. WAREHOUSE - THAT MOMENT

Flash enters, directed by Tak. But finds... nothing. *Dammit.* Then looks through a window, sees... *A FENCED IN HOUSE NEARBY. Within range.*

INT. SNART'S BASEMENT FREEZER - THAT MOMENT

Snart raises the needle over Nathan's HEART. Then pauses. Lowering the syringe... *into Nathan's WRIST.*

SNART
Tell me... Tell me what you feel.

The syringe shoots blue into Nathan's bloodstream. *Nathan's hand goes BLUE. Freezing up towards the arm.*

THEN -- TIME STOPS. THE FLASH RIPS THROUGH THE DOOR. IN HIS FROZEN TIME POV: SNART STANDS OVER TERRIFIED NATHAN.

THE FLASH (V.O.)
Freezing compound. Entered the
bloodstream.

TIME RESUMES -- the syringe disappears from Snart's hand and -- HE IS SLAMMED INTO THE WALL. CUFFED to a pipe.

Flash stoops to Nathan. Even in FLASHTIME, the blue wave of frozen tissue SPREADS.

THE FLASH (V.O.)
Compound's still in his system.
Two heartbeats it'll pass to lungs
and brain. Two beats.

A SONIC BOOM BLAST ACROSS THE CITY. WINDOWS SHATTER.

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - .21 SECONDS LATER

The Flash BLOWS in. IN IMPOSSIBLY QUICK SUCCESSION:

Nathan is set on a gurney, topped with blankets -- the MEDICAL LIBRARY door tears open, BOOKS fly off shelves -- boxes fly from THE PHARMACY -- an IV goes in Nathan's arm -- FOUR DOCTORS find themselves abruptly placed around him -- a NOTE with INSTRUCTIONS set on his chest.

INT. SNART'S BASEMENT FREEZER - 1.76 SECONDS LATER

Flash bullets back in to find... *Snart is GONE.* The cuffs are SHATTERED. Frozen. *Shit.*

EXT. WAREHOUSE - 0.15 SECONDS LATER

Flash uses his momentum to run *up the building's side.* From the roof, he can see... *Snart.* Running flat out for THE BRIDGE separating Central from Keystone.

THE FLASH (V.O.)

Van Buren Bridge. He's looking for a distraction.

INT. PRECINCT - THAT MOMENT

Iris waits, impatient, scared. Morillo comes, *relieved.*

MORILLO

They found your fiancé at St. Francis. He's critical, but stable. Just showed up in the ER, nobody knows how.

Iris does. Her silent guardian.

EXT. VAN BUREN BRIDGE - THAT MOMENT

Snart runs against traffic. Cars swerve, CRASHING.

A CAR -- MID-COLLISION INTO A TRUCK -- SENDS ITS DRIVER OUT OF HER SEAT -- *ABOUT TO SMASH THROUGH HER WINDSHIELD!*

FLASHTIME: Flash VIBRATES THE GLASS until it SHATTERS, CATCHES the driver! Time resumes as he TUMBLES BACKWARDS. The woman set down, saved.

Snart THROWS a series of AMPULES -- *instantly freezing and CRACKING everything they touch.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A *DEEP GROAN ECHOES. LIKE AN ELEPHANT DYING. Everything around them suddenly LURCHES, SLIDING.* A 9.0 earthquake tension WAVE roils through, SNAPPING cars and people up.

THE FLASH (V.O.)

21 cars. 35 Civilians.

We move in and out of FLASHTIME, as *THE FLASH RACES BACK AND FORTH ACROSS THE BRIDGE -- sweeping in and out of mid-air vehicles,* depositing people safely on the other side of the bridge.

EXT. POLICE CAR - MOVING

Morillo drives Iris past the bridge. She sees the chaos. A CRIMSON BLUR -- like a tornado. Iris' eyes shoot wide.

IRIS

Stop the car! It's him.

The cruiser SKIDS. Iris slams out, pounding on foot -- through the POLICE CORDON at the edge of THE BRIDGE -- *past it* -- Her CELL PHONE following the crimson blur -- SNAPPING PICTURES, as --

Snart climbs into an SUV. Speeds off the bridge. THE CROWD his only obstacle to freedom. *He barrels at them.*

Flash's eyes lock onto...

IRIS! *Caught in the crowd.* Snart is driving away from him -- right for her!

Flash races after the car -- gaining -- *surging -- seemingly running THROUGH the car. Flash is taking it apart, the SUV DISASSEMBLING before our eyes.* PIECES CLANG one by one to the ground until --

A SINGLE HUBCAP SPINS to a stop right at Iris' feet. She looks up to see her first glimpse at... THE FLASH.

IRIS

You're real.

THE FLASH

Yep.

For just a blink. And then he's... GONE...

Leaving behind... The SUV. REASSEMBLED INTO A MAKESHIFT CAGE. Snart unconscious inside. *Trapped. Caught.*

INT. PRECINCT - CSI LAB - DAY

Barry and Sato.

SATO

Guy just materializes in our drunk tank, can you believe it? All that was missing was the ribbon.

BARRY

They ID him yet?

SATO

That's the thing...

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Snart poses for his mugshot. Turns to profile.

SATO (V.O.)

He doesn't have an ID...

JUMP CUT: An OFFICER rolls Snart's fingers over a ten-card, getting back nothing but black smudges.

SATO (V.O.)

No prints. His fingertips were frozen off down to the stratum.

Snart turns to the officer. A sick, smug grin.

SATO (V.O.)

His DNA's not in CODIS. They tried everything, drew a total blank. He was a complete ghost.

BARRY (V.O.)

Was?

Snart WHISPERS:

SNART

Snart. S-N-A-R-T. Leonard.

SATO (V.O.)

Asshole just came right out with it. Like he was playing with us.

RESUME BARRY AND SATO. Barry can't hide his surprise.

SATO

The guy fell off the grid over ten years ago. Not a trace of him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY

And before that?

SATO

Research assistant at a Biolex
medical subsidiary in Tulsa.

FLASH: *A very different Leonard Snart, kind faced yet a
little harried, burning the midnight oil in a LAB.*

SATO (V.O.)

Hard charger. The 24/7 kind.
Missing birthdays, anniversaries.

FLASH: *Snart in his cubicle. Working late again. A
framed PHOTOGRAPH -- ignored -- on his desk.*

SATO (V.O.)

Had a wife and two kids. Twins.
Both five years old when it
happened.

FLASH: *Snart -- exhausted -- drives up to his house. We
see it reflected in his car's windshield first: FLAMES.*

SATO (V.O.)

House fire. The wife died in her
sleep. The kids weren't so lucky.

FLASH: *Snart explodes out of his car, racing towards...
the inferno that was once his family's house.*

RESUME BARRY AND SATO.

SATO

If he was home at three in the
morning like a normal person, he'd
have put it out. Or died with
them... Either way, you can't
blame him for losing it.

BARRY

So he had a breakdown?

SATO

(nods)

Institutionalized. Had his own
padded room for six months then...
one day, middle of a snowstorm, he
escapes.

BARRY

All that trouble to hide his
identity... Why tell us now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SATO

Thinks he's safe. Keeps talking
about some protector.

EXT. PRECINCT LOADING DOCK - DAY

Morillo watches a cuffed Snart step into a POLICE VAN.
Snart locks eyes with him. Knowing.

SNART

You can't keep me. He'll come for
me before it's over. He promised.

MORILLO

(to the DRIVER)
Iron Heights. Don't even tap on
the brake till you get there.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Nathan wakes. Weak but stable. Arm in a warming sleeve.
He sees Iris at the bedside. Relieved exhaustion.

IRIS

This was my fault. He was looking
for me... I was so stupid, risking
our lives for a blog.

A beat. Nathan looks uneasy.

NATHAN

None of this is your fault... You
were right, y'know. Your silent
guardian. He is very real. Even
left a note for the doctor so
they'd know how to treat me.

He takes it from the night stand. A scrap of paper. The
Flash's note, handwritten. Iris studies it. Close.

NATHAN

I owe him my life.

INT. STAR LABS - PARTICLE ANALYSIS LAB - DAY

Thawne turns a component of SNART'S DEVICE in his hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THAWNE

Exquisite design. Doctor McGee -- your division was working on systems coolants for the semiconductors in the cyclotron. Did you ever come across this?

All look to McGee. Suddenly, he doesn't seem sure.

MCGEE

We worked on a lot of things... I don't really remember.

Val clocks McGee's answer, *suspicion brewing*.

THAWNE

I do. We gave it up for the same reason, the compression problem.

(to Val)

Comb the records. Look for inquiries into design specs over the last two years from anyone outside the company... And within.

The Team moves. Barry rises to join them. But --

THAWNE

I wouldn't mind a word alone.

A sympathetic look from Val and Tak as they go. On their way, Val approaches McGee.

VALERIE

Jerry... I spoke to the particle team, they said they never got the Kanigher containment unit. I thought you were handling it.

MCGEE

I did. I swapped out the unit and walked it over myself.

VALERIE

Then where is it?

MCGEE

(reads her suspicion)

I suppose with the coolant you think I stole. I shouldn't have to take a polygraph to prove I did my job. Certainly not to you.

McGee moves off. Val's eyes following him. Distrusting.

INT. THAWNE'S OFFICE - DAY

Curtainwall glass offers a perfect view of the Accelerator Tower. A constant reminder.

THAWNE

Within days I'll have the Accelerator finished, with that wind at your back... you'll be staring right into God's eye. That's more important than risking your life for some... failed city.

BARRY

I don't think it's failed.

THAWNE

It failed your mother. Your father. But you have the power to change your fate.

(imploring)

Travel fast enough and you can leave this world -- for another -- where they're both still alive.

Barry considers that for a beat.

BARRY

This case doesn't end with Cold. I think he's just the front man for something worse. I can't leave this alone. I'm sorry.

INT. FINANCIAL DATA PROCESSING CENTER - NIGHT

A server farm of daisy-chained MASS STORAGE DEVICES. Barry TYPES, 10,000 words a minute. Gathering data. His cell RINGS. INTERCUT IRIS. On her cell --

IRIS

Hey, where are you?

BARRY

Um... home.

IRIS

Then why aren't you answering your door?

REVEAL Iris is standing outside --

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door opens. There's Barry. Not even winded.

BARRY

Sorry. Had headphones on.

She comes in. He points to the data he collected.

BARRY

The police had a tip Cold had a connection to STAR. So I checked the victims. Turns out they all did freelance work for sub-contractors... all with ties back to STAR Labs.

Iris doesn't answer. She hands Barry a book. An old and well-thumbed copy of "Slaughterhouse-Five."

IRIS

My 15th birthday. You gave me this. You were all into sci-fi and said this was a good gateway for girls.

She opens to the inscription. Reads without looking:

IRIS

"You're the only place I don't feel unstuck in time. Barry."

(then)

I read that a thousand times trying to figure out what you meant -- if that was your idiot way of telling me you liked me. I did the same with everything you ever sent me when you left. Every birthday card, every note... I know your handwriting better than you do.

She holds up... NATHAN'S HOSPITAL NOTE:

IRIS

"Treat for severe hypothermia. ACT through peritoneal dialysis. Push bretyllium (5 mg)."

(then)

You saved Nathan's life. You saved my life. You're the silent guardian. You... you're him.

Beat. No denying it anymore. He nods. Iris reels.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRIS

It was the lightning, wasn't it?
It changed you.

BARRY

A lot's happened I can't come
close to explaining...

IRIS

Is that why you didn't tell me?
You used to come to me with
everything.

BARRY

You moved on, Iris. You were
right to.

At that moment, they're suddenly very conscious of how
close they're standing to one another.

BARRY

You should go. Nathan's still in
the hospital. He's a good man.
You should be with him.

He steps back.

IRIS

Always have to do the right thing.

Iris moves for the door. Pauses --

IRIS

I can't believe it. The guy I've
loved forever is our Guardian
Angel.

BARRY

I kind of like "The Flash."

And Barry watches her walk away. Story of his life. He
looks back to the papers on his wall... no answers there.

He opens his CLOSET. The FLASH SUIT hangs. *He grabs it.*

EXT. IRON HEIGHTS PENITENTIARY - NIGHT

A Medieval fortress in modern times. An unrelentingly
grey edifice.

INT. MAXIMUM SECURITY WING - ISOLATION CELL - NIGHT

Snart on the edge of his cot. *FOOOM.* Smiles knowingly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Flash moves corner to corner. Vibrating so fast he can't be seen, only sensed, like a hummingbird's wings.

SNART

No need to hide. I know you're there. I know who you are.

SLAM! Snart is shoved hard against a wall. Now he sees him: THE FLASH.

THE FLASH

Who do you work for?

SNART

So fast. You should slow down. Experience life.

BAM. Snart's face SMASHES against the bars of his cell.

THE FLASH

Everyone you killed, someone paid them off -- why? Who? Who are you protecting?

SNART

You try so hard to keep the city safe. No one is ever safe.

EXT. IRON HEIGHTS PENITENTIARY - NIGHT

TWO GUARDS patrol. One pours soup from a thermos, sips when -- WHOOSH --

SNART (V.O.)

The world won't allow it, it spins on chaos. Only when it stops spinning can there be peace.

Something passes. Like a bullet. The thermos cup-lid DROPS. The Guard FALLS TO THE FLOOR. THROAT SLIT. His Partner opens his mouth to scream --

A SLICING SOUND. And his body collapses to the floor. Away from his head. Something else is in the prison.

INT. ISOLATION CELL - RESUMING

SNART

That's his gift to you... to everyone. It all ends.

INT. GENERAL POPULATION HALLS - .23 SECONDS LATER

CELL DOORS FLY OPEN. Convicts spill out. Familiar faces. Criminals Barry put away in montage. They see the open doors. Locks sliced clean through. Freedom.

INT. ISOLATION CELL - THAT MOMENT

Flash turns as -- A KLAXON WAILS. SIRENS. Flash doesn't understand. Snart smiles. Ecstasy.

SNART

He's come for me.

Flash opens his mouth to ask *Who* -- but before he can -- *the cell door SWINGS OPEN.* From his right -- a force -- a wind -- like an angry ghost -- PUNCHES FLASH -- JAW-SHATTERING FORCE -- sending him flying -- into the bars.

Flash picks himself up -- not understanding -- looking around -- then, from his left now --

WHAM! Another PUNCH, harder, crueller -- dropping him out of the cell -- off the tier of cells -- CRASHING down to the concrete floor far below.

INT. GENERAL POPULATION - CONTINUOUS

Flash -- pain, injury beyond anything in his life -- looks around. His assailant unseen. Gone. FAST.

Bedlam. Prisoners run from open cells. Flash's eyes widen. Horror. Then resolve, calculating how to round all these convicts up when --

He sees him. Barely a glimpse, a blur. *But Flash sees who just laid him out:*

A MAN. *Running the way he does. Fast as the Flash. Impossible.* Tall, muscular. IN A BLACK SPEED SUIT, like his. Mask hiding his features.

A DARK SPEEDSTER.

The Speedster TAKES OFF -- GONE. The Flash looks at the prison -- sees SNART making his escape -- walking out with a wave, unfettered and free... and makes his choice.

He goes after the Dark Speedster!

EXT. WOODS - OUTSIDE PRISON - NIGHT

The Speedster turns back around as he runs. Sees the Flash after him. A hint of a smile. *Okay, then.*

Trailing twin sonic booms. Air exploding behind them. Trees WHIP past. A blink. They're in --

EXT. A SMALLVILLE CORNFIELD - NIGHT

The farm recedes as they rip through and past it -- both moving so fast now, locations shift at adrenaline speed.

CHICAGO. GOTHAM. METROPOLIS. They blow past in a speed search tour of the country. AS THEY RUN --

The chase becomes a FIGHT. The two speedsters trade blows. *This is SPEED FIGHTING.*

Like NASCAR drivers trading paint at Mach-level speeds. Dark Speedster does things Barry never thought to do with his speed -- martial arts at 500 MPH -- PUNCHES that snap the sound barrier.

SLICE -- Flash is CUT across his CHEST. SLICE -- another CUT -- over his THIGH -- like a sword blade CARVING him. But not a sword. Dark Speedster's HAND!

The Dark Speedster PULLS AHEAD, momentum carrying him over the ocean. *So fast he's literally running on water.*

Water comet-tails behind. Flash runs in his opponent's wake, struggling to keep up, losing steam -- he marshals his reserves and...

JUMPS! All he has left channeled into a flying tackle -- into the Dark Speedster! They land -- crashing -- into --

EXT. NORMANDY BEACH - FRANCE - DAWN

They CRATER onto the beach. Dark Speedster never stopping. A backhand sends Flash flying -- to the ground. Beaten and disoriented.

The Dark Speedster stands over him. Vibrating so fast his VOICE comes with a warm honeycomb buzz under it.

DARK SPEEDSTER
How does it feel? How does it
feel to know... you're not
alone...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He GRABS Flash at the throat -- JACKHAMMERING HIM DEEPER INTO THE GROUND.

DARK SPEEDSTER

Someone's always faster.

Flash sees Dark Speedster's MASK, standing over him. A silhouette from his NIGHTMARES. His mind races. Realizing -- REMEMBERING -- he's seen him before --

THE FLASH

It was you. That night...

A FLASH OF MEMORY: *Barry at his window, looking out, frightened at the storm... then FALLING... CARRIED away.*

THE FLASH

The night my mother died. You
killed her.

FLASH: *A GLIMPSE OF A FACE -- DARK SPEEDSTER'S MASK -- before finding himself in the FIELD.*

Barry's anger FLASHES -- he surges -- instinctive -- Dark Speedster BACKHANDING him away. *Stay down.*

THE FLASH

Why?

DARK SPEEDSTER

You're Barry Allen. I've hated
you since we both drew breath.

Barry stares back. Confusion. His mind a jumble. Dark Speedster taking him apart, pounding him, *WHAM!*, as --

DARK SPEEDSTER

I wanted to make you suffer.

(WHAM!)

Take everything you loved.

(WHAM!)

I'd have killed Iris if I didn't
need something for me to still
take. But I will --

Barry RAGES. An animal growl. Flying towards his enemy with impossible speed -- but the Dark Speedster sidesteps the attack. Coming at him. Ruthless.

DARK SPEEDSTER

(a flurry of punches)

Unless. You. Stop. Running.

Ribs POP. Jaw broken. LEG SHATTERED. The Flash falls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARK SPEEDSTER (CONT'D)

Stay down, Flash. Your race is over.

And the Dark Speedster disappears. Leaving nothing but collapsing air. And Barry. His blood wetting the sand.

INT. STAR LABS - TECH LAB - NIGHT

Barry slumps. Beaten. The Team feeling his pain, shock.

TAKAMOTO

Someone else, with your speed?
How's that even possible?

Barry shakes his head. No idea.

VALERIE

And why engineer a prison break?
Why go after you? He could've
killed you, why didn't he--?

BARRY

It doesn't matter. It's over.

VALERIE

Because another guy can run fast?
Cold was a hell of a lot tougher
and we --

BARRY

We? It's just me out there. It's
just me. And I'm saying I'm done.

Val looks to the guys -- *A little help?* Tak shrugs.
McGee stands -- done here too.

MCGEE

You want to stop now. Fine. I
have better things to do.

And he's gone. A beat -- and Tak follows suit. Leaving
Barry and Val alone.

VALERIE

I thought you never gave up. The
whole point of you is you never
give up --

BARRY

It's not that simple. I can't
keep doing this, Val.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VALERIE

Why? Why this guy? We trained you, outfitted you, helped you -- we risked everything, and we did it -- I did it -- because I believe in what you're doing --

BARRY

He killed my mother, if I don't stop, he'll kill --

For the briefest moment, Val thinks he might mean her.

VALERIE

Iris. He'll kill Iris.

Yes.

VALERIE

You'd let this city die, just to save her. You must really love her.

He does.

VALERIE

Well that's good. It's good to care about someone like that.

And Val leaves, done with Barry. Barry watches her go, passing... THAWNE. An understanding look.

THAWNE

It was inevitable. People with gifts like you... like me... there's no peace for us anywhere except in their expression. This is what I've been trying to show you.

(then)

You spent your life running away from the past. It's time you found something to run towards... *and it's right here.*

PRELAP: ELECTRICAL SPARKS -- MINIATURE LIGHTNING --

INT. ACCELERATOR - DAY

Coming off BARRY as he RUNS. Shedding lightning. Shredding around the track. Thawne watches from the platform as Barry PUSHES. The world falling away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Reality FRAYS at the seams in front of him, giving way to... *THE SPEED FORCE*.

FLASH: *THE SAME IMAGE OF NORA ALLEN, IN HER KITCHEN, BAKING. SHE'S OLDER. BUT HAPPY. A FACE UNTOUCHED BY LIFE'S BRUTALITY.*

Barry reaches out to her -- THEN SLAMS BACK TO normal time, running out his inertia on the track. Exhausted.

BARRY
(disappointed)
I didn't hit lightspeed--

THAWNE
No. You didn't. But close.

He sees Barry's disappointment.

THAWNE
The Accelerator will push you the rest of the way, propel you even faster. Faster than light.
(then)
Relax. Go home. Sleep. You've earned it.

He claps Barry on the back, seeing him off. STAY WITH Thawne, focusing on A CONTAINMENT UNIT.

Filled to capacity. WITH ENERGY. ALIVE WITH IT.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - DAY

Nathan walks with Iris' help. Weak but getting there.

IRIS
You're pushing it.

NATHAN
I've spent enough time in a hospital bed. I need practice if I'm going to make it down the aisle in a month.

IRIS
You're amazing. You were almost killed because I didn't want to be unemployed, and you still want to marry me...

NATHAN
Iris, please. You don't have anything to be sorry about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But Nathan can see Iris' guilt pains her. He stops.

NATHAN

I need to tell you something. And I'm not sure you'll still want to marry me when I'm done.

(beat)

The killer wasn't there for you. He was there for me.

Iris stops -- shaken --

IRIS

But the only connection between any of them was...

(realizing)

Money.

NATHAN

The Accelerator is the biggest engineering project in the history of the state. A lot of moving parts. Some fully transparent and others... less. They needed a black budget. A fund to pay people to make changes to the Accelerator. All work done in secret.

IRIS

What kind of changes?

NATHAN

I don't know. But the names and amounts came directly from STAR Labs.

IRIS

You laundered money to pay people to do something with the Accelerator -- and they all ended up dead.

She damns him with a look. He bows his head.

NATHAN

I was the only person who'd seen the list and could make the connection. That's why Cold came after me. I'm sorry. If I'd told anyone sooner... some of those people might still be alive.

He sees the look on her face, as if he was a stranger.

INT. STAR LABS - PARTICLE ANALYSIS LAB - NIGHT

Val, still stung, stops at her workstation. SNART'S DEVICE in pieces on it. Her eyes lock on a component. She turns it in her fingers. Making a connection.

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Iris just reoriented Barry's world. Barry takes it in.

BARRY

It doesn't make sense. I thought Nathan was just a financier.

IRIS

Turns out sometimes people in finance aren't entirely honest. Who knew?

BARRY

But it doesn't add up. You hire people to modify the Accelerator in secret... then kill them? Why?

IRIS

There's only one reason I can think of...

INT. ACCELERATOR - NIGHT

Val walks the enormous Accelerator tunnel. A glassed cavern spanning miles, nearly complete. She examines the track... the SHIELDING.

IRIS (V.O.)

The Accelerator's been modified to do something it's not supposed to.

INSIDE: An intricate PARTICLE ARRAY. MAGNETS holding a CHARGE IN PLASMA SUSPENSION.

IRIS (V.O.)

Something someone didn't want found out.

Val continues, as if finishing Iris' thought:

VALERIE (PRELAP)

It was very well hidden...

INT. THAWNE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

ON VAL, explaining nervously. She holds the swirling light containment unit full of Kanigher plasma.

VALERIE

I found it looking for a link between Cold and the Accelerator. You said the tech Cold used is based on the same semiconductor systems array coolant we designed for the Accelerator, only in miniature.

REVEAL she is speaking to Thawne. Thawne is physically upset by this. His hands begin to TREMBLE with the news.

VALERIE

Which means there's a connection between our work here... and all those murders.

THAWNE

A design similarity isn't enough to --

VALERIE

I followed the radiation shielding -- it's all been retrofitted to siphon Kanigher particles. Someone -- with a connection to Cold -- modified the Accelerator.

THAWNE

(beat, seeing it)
But who -- who would do that?

Val sees his tremor. Pours him a glass of water, fits it into his hand to help him drink. A sad beat.

VALERIE

Jerry. He's the Accelerator's design lead. He built the cooling system. He altered the system to store the Kanigher particles generated during Barry's run. It makes the Accelerator ten times more powerful, but it wasn't designed to contain that much energy. If let it reach full capacity, it could initiate a complete gravitational collapse. A singularity. A universe killer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The horrific thought settles. Without warning, Thawne unsnaps his chair's arm restraints -- rubbing his wrists.

VALERIE

Are you all right? I'll get help.

Val turns -- but stops suddenly -- eyes wide at seeing... THAWNE STANDING IN FRONT OF HER. Vibrating impossibly fast. Everything about him darkens.

THAWNE

Shame. Right in every detail.

Without warning, a GASH opens on Val's face.

THAWNE

Except it wasn't Dr. McGee.

Thawne standing BESIDE her now. She gasps. Blood seeps. *Another SWIPE.* Another GASH.

THAWNE

I was stealing Barry's speed. I was in particular need of it.

Two more SLASHES, just like he killed the prison guards.

VALERIE

I don't understand.

Blood spills from her abdomen. Val drops to her knees.

THAWNE

Simple, dear. I want to go home.

Another SLASH -- as we SMASH BACK TO:

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Barry considers. Not sure anymore.

IRIS

Barry... something is very wrong with STAR Labs. You need to stop it -- the Flash needs to stop it.

BARRY

I can't. I can't be the Flash anymore.

He looks away. Ashamed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY

There's another man. He's faster than me. And he'll hurt you if I run again.

Iris fixes a look. Thousands of emotions in her eyes.

IRIS

Screw that. Central City needs the Flash. The world does. I'm not putting myself before the world.

(touches his face)

Barry Allen taught me that.

She looks at him. *With love.* He feels her touch on his cheek, loving it. Just then -- Barry's PHONE RINGS. He answers. Iris watches as Barry goes white.

IRIS

What is it?

INT. STAR LABS - TECH LAB - LATER

Barry's training grounds, a place of laughs and discovery... now A CRIME SCENE. VAL LIES DEAD.

Tak is held back by POLICE, as Barry leans down to Val. Touches her face. Another person he cared for, now dead.

SATO

Some kind of altercation. We're thinking she confronted him, they argued...

BARRY

Who?

Sato offers a sympathetic look, as we SMASH TO:

EXT. STAR LABS - NIGHT

MCGEE is in CUFFS. Morillo lowers him into an awaiting squad car. Barry joins the STAR employees watching in astonishment. Tak among them. McGee's eyes find Barry's.

MCGEE

I didn't do this. I didn't --
Barry, tell them --

Barry stares, words eluding him. Shades of his father.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCGEE

You have to believe me...

Barry does. *Barry knows the sound of an innocent man.*
Charged, Barry moves to Morillo.

BARRY

McGee didn't do this. You've got the wrong guy.

MORILLO

Her blood's all over him and I've got a motive. She was accusing him of tampering with the Accelerator project. Dr. Thawne gave a statement himself --

Barry hears that. Putting it together. Finally seeing the connection. The only possible explanation.

BARRY

It was Thawne. He's the only one who could have done this.

MORILLO

Right. The guy in the wheelchair. How'd I miss the obvious suspect --

But then -- a *BRIGHT EXPLOSION* shatters the horizon. A few blocks away --

The MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY BURNS.

Barry fears. Morillo pales. Instantly out of his league. His RADIO SQUAWKS. OVERLAPPING REPORTS:

VARIOUS REPORTS (OVER RADIO)

-- Battalion 1 to Central,
explosion at Museum of Natural
History --

EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

Nighttime traffic parts, swerves, as a DUCATI MOTORCYCLE zigzags between cars. A several mile-long TRAIL of clear LIQUID behind.

VARIOUS REPORTS (OVER RADIO)

-- Transmit a second alarm.
Relocate to fire down Broadway.
Some kind of high-accelerant --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Ducati's rider, one of Snart's ESCAPED CONS, takes his time lighting A ZIPPO... tosses it. FIRE ROLLS OUT like a red carpet down the street.

EXT. BATES SAVINGS & LOAN - NIGHT

A WARZONE. Police in a shoot-out against SEVERAL OTHER EX-CONS waving M4 CARBINE ASSAULT RIFLES.

VARIOUS REPORTS (OVER RADIO)

-- Third alarm, ESU, all available units. Gunfire at Bates S-and-L. Multiple automatic weapons --

EXT. CENTRAL SQUARE - NIGHT

The BOMBER Barry'd put away -- call him AXEL -- walks casually past TOURISTS. Talking on his cell. Too calm.

VARIOUS REPORTS (OVER RADIO)

-- Multiple bomb threats coming in. Reroute to 311 --

RESUME BARRY AND MORILLO.

Morillo is impotent with fear. Bush on 9/11.

MORILLO

God, we're being attacked.

Barry -- but Barry's GONE. Not at super-speed. Walking back towards Tak -- *who offers up a CRIMSON PACKAGE*. A SMILE. *Go get 'em*.

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Iris is watching a BREAKING NEWS report while checking her laptop for the latest updates. Concern on her face. For more than just the city.

She exhales. *Seeing her breath*. Instantly realizing the implication. SNART.

INT. ACCELERATOR - THAT MOMENT

Thawne stands at a panel. *Wearing the DARK SPEEDSTER suit*. He presses two PIECES OF METAL to his chest, affixing them. We've seen them before:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The two strange objects Thawne showed Barry. From another world. Now we see: The negative space between their jagged edges forms an object. A LIGHTNING BOLT.

EXT. BROADWAY - 0.45 SECONDS LATER

THE FLASH tears down the street, racing flame.

THE FLASH (V.O.)

Everyone I put away. Attacking at once.

He redoubles his speed. ZOOMING past the fire, pinballing through the city. Checkers becomes chess.

THE FLASH (V.O.)

So I have to be everywhere at once.

And suddenly... he is. Moving so fast, it's as if he's a team of Flashes. Saving lives, fighting disasters.

EVERYTHING HAPPENS AT ONCE, INSTANTANEOUS SCREEN TIME as:

INT. BATES SAVINGS & LOAN - THAT MOMENT

Two ex-cons wield powerful assault weapons, unleashing hell at 800 rounds a minute. *Blink.* Suddenly --

-- on a ROOFTOP. Still firing. Arms pointed SKYWARD.

EXT. ACCELERATOR TOWER - THAT MOMENT

The colossal spire SPARKS TO LIFE. LIGHTNING leaping out into the night sky.

EXT. ROOFTOP - THAT MOMENT

Now we see it: *The ex-cons are firing their weapons at A WATER TOWER. Which RUPTURES. Flash's plan.*

EXT. MILLAR TOWER - THAT MOMENT

"Ducati" slaloms through traffic, throwing MOLOTOV COCKTAILS at the oncoming cars. *Blink.* "Ducati" is SUSPENDED from a TRAFFIC LIGHT, tied up by hoses and wires from a stripped and disassembled bike beneath him.

EXT. CENTRAL SQUARE - THAT MOMENT

The Flash completes an arc, finding Axel, the bomber.

EXT. BROADWAY - THAT MOMENT

The water tower EXPLODES, WATER raining down on Broadway. Dousing flames. The criminals struggling to find their bearings just as -- *blink* -- they're --

INT. IRON HEIGHTS - .08 SECONDS LATER

Dropped into a CELL. The door SLAMS.

EXT. CENTRAL SQUARE - THAT MOMENT

The JUMBOTRON. Axel finds himself suddenly dangling from it. *Held upside down off the roof by the Flash.*

THE FLASH

The bombs. Where? How many?

AXEL

Enough and all over. He hired us to keep you busy so he could pull some scam. Whatever's left of the city, we get to keep.

THE FLASH

Where are they?

No answer. Axel just smiles. Flash DROPS HIM -- Axel FALLS, SCREAMS as he PLUMMETS!

-- *Blink*. He LANDS in Flash's grip. *20 stories down. Flash holds him out an open window. Axel is terrified.*

THE FLASH

There's eighty more stories to go.

AXEL

Six bombs left, set to go off at midnight. You can't get 'em all in time. *Not even you're fast enough.*

Flash looks to the CLOCK TOWER, which just strikes 11:59. Midnight fast approaching. He lets Axel slip a little.

THE FLASH

Where are they?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Flash lets him go -- twenty more stories -- Axel SCREAMS, opens his eyes to see he's dangling --

AXEL

City Hall, Central Stadium, TCU,
San Canine Cathedral, Morrison
Department Store, Seaport -- the
big one at the 31st Precinct --

ON THE CLOCK TOWER: 11:59 and 8 seconds.

FOOMP. Axel hits the ground with a thud. Hands and feet CUFFED together as COPS descend. Nothing but swirling dirt where Flash stood, as we SMASH TO:

EXT. CENTRAL CITY - 11:59:09 PM

Flash runs, circling the blocks. THE CLOCK TOWER TICKS.

THE FLASH (V.O.)

Six bombs. Each a city apart. 18
seconds. Plot the course:
Cathedral to precinct to-- No.
It's too far.

Body racing. Mind racing. PANIC starting to set in.

THE FLASH (V.O.)

I can't do it --

Heart pounding. Eyes wide. It's all too much.

THE FLASH (V.O.)

I won't make it --

In the greatest time crunch of his life, BARRY STOPS.

In front of the CATHEDRAL. *Standing still... He takes a moment... To breathe... To listen... To REMEMBER:*

FLASH: *THE MEMORY OF NORA... HER SMILE.*

NORA

Don't think. Do. Live. Feel.

ON THE FLASH. Hearing her voice through time. Finally understanding. He grins, knowing he will. THE CLOCK TOWER TICKS AGAIN... And...

SONIC BOOMS trail as Flash explodes -- a rocket! Not thinking. Doesn't have to.

NORA (V.O.)

That's life lived.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPACETIME RIPPLES behind, like pulling a zipper across creation. *Warping space itself. Reality undone.*

This is LIGHTSPEED.

The threshold Barry's been working towards. Barry's precious city opens itself up to him.

FLASH. A GLIMPSE of a STADIUM. FLASH. A BOMB in the nosebleeds. FLASH. The UNIVERSITY. The bomb in the LIBRARY.

FLASH -- FLASH -- FLASH. A symphony of speed. One... two... three.. four... five bombs located and disarmed...

THE CLOCK TOWER TICKS. Two seconds left. One bomb.

INT. PRECINCT - 11:59:58 PM

A tornado tears through. Desks overturned -- asbestos peeled away, exposing pipes and -- the BOMB. *He got it.*

THE TOWER TICKS TO MIDNIGHT. THE BOMB SWITCH ENGAGES.

FLASHTIME: The Flash races -- *holding the bomb* -- a linebacker -- fighting for thousands of lives, LIGHTNING LITERALLY CRACKLING OFF HIS SKIN -- as...

THE BOMB EXPLODES IN HIS HANDS! *FLAME BURSTS in his palm* -- *spreading in a slow motion blossom* -- bigger -- as...

The Flash SPEEDS towards The Twin Cities River -- *RUNNING ON THE WATER* -- away from the city --

BOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Sending the Flash flying back -- a kite in a hurricane. Exhausted. Hurt. *But alive.* Then --

CHOOOOOOOOOOOOM. Another explosion? No. A STORM in the sky. LIGHTNING FIRING UP INTO THE HEAVENS. Issuing from... STAR LABS.

THE ACCELERATOR TOWER. Erupts out of the skyline, stirring the plasma storm. Activated.

INT. STAR LABS - ACCELERATOR - 0.04 SECONDS LATER

Delicate equipment shakes and rattles. The Flash arriving. ANGRY. His suit burnt, torn. He searches.

THE FLASH

Thawne!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FWOOSH. The Dark Speedster appears. *Thawne.* Standing in front of the Accelerator controls. The great machine whirls, alive. 76%. Sparking energy into the sky.

THAWNE

Hello, Barry.

Flash blazes towards Thawne, gripping him by the neck --

THAWNE

You've gotten faster.

THE FLASH

You were the one. You killed them. My mother -- Chyre -- Val --

THAWNE

You're an understanding fellow. I'm only trying to get home again. After you trapped me here.

THE FLASH

I've never even met you.

THAWNE

Oh, we have quite the history, you and I. Old friends. In another draft of reality, I siphoned your speed, just as I did here. I wasn't like you, I wasn't *picked*.

EXT. ROCKY MOUNTAIN FOOTHILLS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Another world. Another universe. A YOUNGER THAWNE (with his metal insignia) trades speed-punches with THE FLASH. But not our Flash. His crimson suit brighter, metallic.

THAWNE (V.O.)

...I had to take it. From you. I worked miracles, I had everything. You tried to stop me...

An epic fight. And chase. So fast reality begins to unravel around them. Energy rippling off of this Flash like air around a nosecone.

UNTIL THEY ENTER THE SPEED FORCE -- TOGETHER!

THAWNE (V.O.)

...You were always so damn fast -- you ripped the wall open and ran right into the Speed Force... with me drafting in your wake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Flash is too fast. Thawne can't keep up -- and FALLS -- TUMBLING OUT OF THE SPEED FORCE.

INT. ACCELERATOR - RESUMING

THAWNE

I fell out of the stream and ended up here. My speed draining, bleeding away. Stranding me in a world where you were still a boy and hadn't yet inherited speed for me to steal. So I had to wait... prepare. I built this Accelerator so I could make my way home...

INT. CELL - PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The long shadow of Thawne stretches from the door of Snart's padded cell. Snart huddled in the corner. A lost soul.

THAWNE (V.O.)

I found someone to cover my tracks. A damaged soul looking for guidance --

INT. ACCELERATOR - RESUMING

THAWNE

Something I'm good at, getting people to realize their potential. Like you. I needed you to run... so I could steal your speed.

The Accelerator hits 80%... 85%... Thawne moves towards the Track, Flash grabs him -- THROWS him back.

THAWNE

That's why I never killed you, Barry. I needed you alive. I needed you to keep running. So that I could.

Thawne strikes -- Flash ducks it -- *faster*. A better match this time as they SPEED FIGHT.

BARRY

The Accelerator -- it'll rip open a black hole -- it'll destroy everything -- You'd destroy this world just to get home?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THAWNE

No. This universe.

Thawne looks -- in the center of the Accelerator... *SNART HAS IRIS*. His HYPO GUN pointed at her neck.

THE FLASH

If he hurts her...

THAWNE

What's it going to be? *Save your Iris... or save your world.*

The Accelerator reaches 95%! Nearly there.

IRIS

Forget about me! Stop him. We're all dead if you don't.

THAWNE

You won't stand to watch her die.
I know you too well, Flash.
That's why I kept her alive.

Flash chooses Iris -- racing toward her -- *JUST AS SNART PULLS THE TRIGGER!*

Flash races to beat the HYPO NEEDLE -- BACKHANDS the hypo away from Iris -- INTO SNART'S CHEST!

Snart feels it in his heart -- sees the COLD SPREAD OUT. Working up his neck to his face... *Just enough time to register surprise... then... ECSTASY.*

SNART

So... warm.

The killer falls, frozen, dead. Flash looks --

Thawne is running the track, shedding lightning.

Flash frees Iris from her restraints as -- *Thawne's run turns the Accelerator Track into a VORTEX of energy. It CLIMBS, rising, reaching... THE APEX OF THE TOWER.*

A SWIRLING VORTEX forming MILES ABOVE the Track. Reality BENDING towards its heart. Incredible. Horrifying.

EXT. CENTRAL CITY - THAT MOMENT

The energy off the Tower is so bright, night turns to day. A WIND builds... blowing TOWARDS THE VORTEX. First leaves... newspaper...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then... a CAR shifts towards it.

INT. ACCELERATOR - THAT MOMENT

The entire structure trembles with earthquake intensity. The Vortex revolves high above -- *RIPPING A HOLE OPEN IN SPACE!*

The eye of a hurricane IGNITES! REPLACED WITH THE EVENT HORIZON OF... THE BEGINNINGS OF A BLACK HOLE.

Carrying Iris, Flash fights the Vortex's insane pull -- RACING them towards the center of the Accelerator TRACK -- the safer eye of the storm.

Even here the Vortex's pull is fierce -- Iris' feet shoot out from under her -- sucked up, feet first. Flash YANKS open an maintenance shaft access panel in the track.

THE FLASH

It's shielded -- stay here --

He lowers her in. About to refasten the hatch, when --

IRIS

What about you?

THE FLASH

I have to stop it --

IRIS

How? How do you unwind a black hole?

THE FLASH

Same way you unwind a tornado.

She reaches up, pulls his mask off. Wanting to look into his eyes for the last time.

THE FLASH

There are a million universes, you know. I've loved you in every single one of them.

Barry looks to the expanding black hole whirling high above... Makes a decision. *He puts his mask back on.*

He takes off! Speeding around the Track, up the WALLS -- Until he's racing at the top of the Tower, against the black hole's spiral... *just like he unwound the tornado.*

EXT. CENTRAL CITY

Atoms tear off people -- cars -- buildings -- PULLED towards the Tower -- nuclear blast force.

INT/EXT. ACCELERATOR TOWER - THAT MOMENT

WITH THE FLASH -- RUNNING -- *straining -- pushing himself to the limits of possibility.*

LIGHTNING flies in his wake -- earth-shattering. Pieces of his suit -- his flesh -- disintegrate off like dust.

He's being pulled, bit by bit, into the black hole -- even as he runs. GLOWING. BRIGHTER with each stride.

THE BLACK HOLE BEGINS TO DISSIPATE.

He's doing it! Moving so fast, the laws of relativity take over -- breaking down his body -- stretching him thin. But still running. Fans of the comic know:

The Flash doesn't survive moments like these.

He pours it on. Anything to save the world. To save Iris. Everything in his life distilled down to just what's in front of him -- until --

THE BLACK HOLE EXPLODES WITH RAW ENERGY -- leaving the world safe again -- PITCHING Flash back --

INTO THE SPEED FORCE --

Disoriented but intact -- in the whirl of light and speed -- WINDOWS to other worlds blurring by. Then, up ahead --

Thawne. Running toward an opening -- a window to a FAMILIAR WORLD -- thinking himself home free...

Glances back, seeing Flash.

THAWNE

No!

It's on now! A footrace through spacetime! A chase without roads or even terrain. Two bolts of lightning racing through infinity.

Flash catches Thawne -- TACKLING HIM! They tumble -- SPEED FIGHTING -- Flash more than his equal this time --

Thawne spends all his remaining strength on a single BURST OF BLISTERING SPEED, firing himself at Flash -- a 500 MILLION MPH bullet!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE FLASH

You're done running.

FLASH BENDS -- FASTER THAN THAWNE, FASTER THAN THOUGHT -- using Thawne's inertia to send him flying past -- *FALLING INTO THE SPEED FORCE!*

Thawne fights against it. Torn apart molecule by molecule. *Consumed by the Speed Force...*

Until there's nothing left of Eobard Thawne. Not even hate. With his final SCREAM... THAWNE EXPLODES OUT IN WHITE LIGHT! The wave of energy BLASTS towards Flash...

Flash turns to escape. He can't. Caught in the Speed Force's wake! Powerless against its numinous magnitude.

Flash's world turns WHITE. UNTIL HE'S LOST IN THE LIGHT. He opens his eyes. To find he's in...

A KITCHEN

Humble. Familiar. Barry's childhood home.

Nora Allen stands at the counter. Pulling a CAKE out of the oven, in that familiar image. But she's OLDER here. The moment he witnessed before. *Only now he's inside it.*

BARRY

Mom?

Nora turns. Sees Barry, in his suit.

NORA

Barry? In your costume? Oh no, you can't leave now. The fastest man alive can wait to save the world until after cake.

Barry sees the cake she's been making: *HAPPY BIRTHDAY DADDY!* Sounds of a PARTY beyond.

NORA

The kids'll be so disappointed if you go now.

The kids? She nods to a WINDOW, Barry sees them outside:

IRIS. PLAYING WITH TWINS. A BOY AND A GIRL. HER CHILDREN. THEIR CHILDREN. This world's version of Barry comes up behind her. Hugs her. The happy man Barry's never been. There beside him is...

BARRY'S FATHER. A long, lucky life etched on his face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Nora sees our Barry's look. Senses something wrong.

NORA

What is it? I've never seen you
look so sad.

BARRY

I just... really missed you, Mom.

NORA

I'm right here.

(comes to him)

My boy... Everything you've done.
And you're only just beginning.
I'm so proud of you. I always
will be. Happy birthday, Barry.

Words Barry never got to hear. She moves to touch his face. He reaches for her. Wanting nothing more than to hold her again. But just as her hand is about to cup his face...

The world goes white. The Speed Force encircles Barry.

PULLING HIM AWAY. He swirls within it -- lost -- floating -- in a formless world of energy. Nothing solid to run on or hold onto... until...

IRIS' VOICE (O.S.)

Barry --

Barry turns. Orienting towards IRIS'S VOICE -- calling to him like a beacon --

IRIS' VOICE (O.S.)

Come back to me, Barry.

SMASH BACK TO:

INT. ACCELERATOR

A BURST OF LIGHTNING -- rips overhead like a rift in space -- spilling Barry out. He falls. Ragdoll limp.

Iris cradles his head on her lap. No movement. No breath. No life. Iris' heart breaks.

IRIS' VOICE

You have to come back to me...
Please... I can't lose you.
Barry.

A forever beat. And then --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Barry comes to. Iris exhales a breath she doesn't remember holding.

IRIS

Barry. I thought you were gone...

BARRY

I was... but then... I heard *you*.

IRIS

I think you saved the world.

BARRY

Universe.

She bends down. Her lips finding his. Fourteen years of longing in one kiss. They may never stop.

EXT. TWIN CITIES - SUNRISE

A new day dawns in incandescent crimson. Painting the city like the Flash's shadow.

EXT. CITY STREETS - SUNRISE

Daylight reveals the patchwork of destruction caused by Thawne's plan. Streets cracked, buildings crumbled.

It's a quiet morning. A city still asleep. Then...
MOVEMENT. SOMETHING WHIPS BY UP with a sudden puff of wind. THE FLASH.

IRIS (V.O.)

The city's a mess. But it's still our city.

INT. INFANTINO'S DINER - DAY

Iris at a booth by the window, updating her blog:

IRIS (V.O.)

More so now than ever, it belongs to us. Because of him. The Flash. Saving our lives in the blink of an eye.

EXT. CENTRAL SQUARE - DAY

The Flash runs through the bustling heart of the city, too fast to see. But PEOPLE sense him now. Looking after the wind, with a smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE FLASH (V.O.)
*The blink of an eye. A third of a
 second...*

EXT. MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY - DAY

Reduced to ash and cinder. A wash of crimson moves over it... and a WALL comes together. Flash is rebuilding.

THE FLASH (V.O.)
A heart could beat just once...

IRIS (V.O.)
 It might take him a few days to
 get to everything...

INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT

Iris in bed, just waking. Barry is already up. Smiling beside her. She touches his cheek. In his sleep he's grown a week's worth of scruff.

IRIS (V.O.)
 But even the Flash needs a break
 now and then.

He kisses her. Then is GONE. Breakfast left for her.

THE FLASH (V.O.)
*For me, the blink of an eye is a
 lifetime. To live... To love...*

EXT. STREET - DAY

A WHIRLWIND winds through a damaged and dirty street -- CLEANING it -- REPAIRING it. KIDS watch, CHEERING.

THE FLASH (V.O.)
*To repair a damaged world, brick
 by brick...*

A FIRE HYDRANT opens to spray the kids. Cherry on top.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

A JUDGE sets down a FILE. The name "HENRY ALLEN". Opens it. A LEGAL BRIEF inside: "Motion for Acquittal Based on Newly Discovered Fingerprint Evidence."

THE FLASH (V.O.)
To get justice for the wronged.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We see the old ten-card in the file. The partial print. MATCHING ONE LABELED "E. THAWNE".

JUDGE

-- the comparison print belonging to Dr. Thawne, in light of recent events... warrants the reversal of Mr. Allen's conviction...

The JUDGE STAMPS BARRY'S FATHER'S FILE: "ACQUITTED POSTHUMOUSLY". Slides it over to... BARRY. The world a little less heavy on his shoulders.

THE FLASH (V.O.)

No matter how long it takes.

EXT. CENTRAL CITY STREETS - DAY

POV VIEW FROM ABOVE, looking down, watching, as The Flash BLURS through the grid, *the shredded asphalt repaired anew in his wake.*

IRIS (V.O.)

I hope he knows what he means to this city.

INT. INFANTINO'S DINER - DAY

Iris, pauses, staring dreamily out the window.

Out her window THE FLASH flies by. Then STOPS. To give her a wave. Their old connection aflame now with something new.

IRIS (V.O.)

How much he is loved.

She makes a face at him, asking -- *Pleeeeeeeze?* Flash just shrugs -- *Fine.* No winning with her.

IRIS (V.O.)

Even though we know what to call him now, the Flash is still our silent guardian. Always there. Not asking for anything in return except that we don't call attention to his endless effort.

She clicks her keyboard. Uploading a PICTURE. It loads:

A SHOT OF THE FLASH. In motion. An introduction to the world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALL AROUND THE CITY

PEOPLE see his image on computer screens, on phones. The hero who saved their lives.

ON THE FLASH

RUNNING. RIGHT AT US.

SPACE FRAYING IN HIS WAKE. THE SOFT FLORESCENCE OF THE SPEED FORCE BREAKING ALL AROUND HIM LIKE A NEW DAWN. THE DOORWAY TO ENDLESS WORLDS AHEAD OF HIM.

THE FLASH (V.O.)
*In the blink of an eye... I can
see forever...*

A BOLT OF LIGHTNING CRASHES AND WE...

SMASH TO CREDITS.

AFTER CREDITS ROLL...

EXT. CITY STREETS

The Flash runs -- sees something ahead -- skids into a hockey stop, sending asphalt SPRAYING.

But the spray STOPS IN THE AIR -- landing on a GREEN SURFACE. BRILLIANT LIGHT. GIVEN SOLID FORM.

The light drops. The dust settles.

GREEN LANTERN floats over the ground, arms folded.

HAL / GREEN LANTERN
Lightspeed. Not bad.

THE END.