

FROM THE BLACK WE HEAR -

NORTH (V.O.)

Conscious. Unconscious. Those are really just shorthand terms. I like to think of them as characteristics of the human mind.

FADE IN:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Simple and dark.

NORTH MAXFIELD is a proper looking man. Pressed and primed. Wearing his best oxford button down. His tonic is half-full. At first, we can't tell who he's actually talking to.

KELLY, North's date, sits across the table from him. She's beautiful. Fiddling with her wine glass. Her eyes start to wander. She'd rather not be here and her patience is wearing thin.

NORTH

The conscious mind is the *place* where we live. Think of it as being "you."

(points to the drink menu)

If there's a little voice reading those words out loud in your head, that's your conscious mind talking.

KELLY

And the unconscious?

NORTH

Is everything else. The unconscious controls it all. It's basically in charge.

KELLY

In charge of what?

NORTH

Heart rate, tissue growth, cell regeneration, the immune system... it controls your emotions. Our habits... even our responses with the world around us.

KELLY

Habits?

NORTH

Habits are like problems. Problems are an attempt at a solution.

KELLY

I don't follow...

NORTH

Smokers. Most of them start as teenagers, right? Through sheer repetition, the unconscious mind becomes convinced that smoking is somehow normal. The mind tricks you into thinking that smoking is serving some sort of vital purpose.

KELLY

So your mind tricks you into thinking smoking is "good for you?"

NORTH

More or less.

KELLY

That I understand, my father smoked his whole life -

But, before she can make any progress -

NORTH

Did you know the unconscious mind processes about two million bits of sensory information every second -

KELLY

- I had no idea -

NORTH

- The conscious mind only deals
with about seven.

KELLY

Seven...?

NORTH

Seven bits of sensory information.

(off her confusion)

Meaning the reality you're actually
aware of, us sitting here right
now, has actually been created by
your unconscious.

KELLY

I'm sorry, you lost me there -

NORTH

The Reader's Digest version is that
your conscious chooses a mere seven
bits, which it thinks is important
enough to shape the reality around
us, out of the millions it's just
processed. The unconscious is the
key. It's the mind's worker bee.
It's the creator of the five
senses.

Kelly drains her wine. She's mentally exhausted from the
conversation.

KELLY

So, then - what?

NORTH

The fun part is the control.

KELLY

You're talking about hypnosis?

NORTH

It's more than that.

KELLY

It is?

NORTH

It's shaping your perception of reality by dealing directly with the unconscious mind.

KELLY

How would someone do that?

NORTH

By controlling it.

KELLY

Sounds ominous.

NORTH

The unconscious mind controls our autonomic bodily processes, right?

KELLY

If you say so -

NORTH

- so we focus in the physical change through hypnosis.

KELLY

Jesus...

It's almost as if North is talking with himself, debating both sides alone in the bar.

NORTH

Pain tolerance. Something we all deal with, right?

(off her silence)

The mind alters the awareness of pain all the time.

(ah-ha!)

Personal chefs! They burn themselves constantly, but they rarely notice it unless it's particularly severe.

KELLY

So?

NORTH

So, you'll have to experience it for yourself. Look, have you ever gotten a bruise? A cut or a scrape, and then wondered where the hell it came from? Physical events are still occurring, but your unconscious mind is regulating them to one million, nine-hundred ninety-nine thousand, nine-hundred and ninety-three bits of sensory information you're not aware of every single second.

(beat)

Hypnosis simplifies that same response. It adjusts the variables and applies that same rational to a specific situation. Like controlling a headache.

KELLY

You can get rid of a headache under hypnosis?

NORTH

Of course.

KELLY

So why don't they use hypnosis to cure the common cold? Convince you that you're not sick?

NORTH

Because hypnosis is different for each person. Presenting it in the context through which they can relate allows the best expectation. Like curing a headache.

KELLY

Speaking of headaches...

Kelly stands and gathers her purse. North looks up at her. Taken back.

NORTH

Is it something I said?

Kelly stares at him.

KELLY

It's everything you've said.

NORTH

You asked me what I like to do -

KELLY

I asked you what you do for fun,
like a hobby. I didn't ask about
shaping perceptions of reality, the
unconscious mind or whatever other
bullshit you just forced me to sit
through.

NORTH

Stay?

KELLY

Good-bye.

NORTH

We'll talk about something else.

KELLY

No, we won't.

NORTH

Just - stay?

KELLY

According to you, the world might
not disappear when you close your
eyes, but I do.

With that stinger, Kelly walks out of the bar. Push in on North as he sits alone. Uncomfortable, as if the whole room is watching him.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

Nice sunlight. Potted plants and bookshelves. There's a glass of water, without ice, resting on the coffee table.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

You may experience a sensation of lightness. You may feel as if you are floating.

The DOCTOR, sweater vest and khakis, sits in his chair. He is stoic. Waiting, as -

North settles himself down on the couch - he takes a deep breathe, then closes his eyes.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

You will still know where you are. You will still be aware of the clothing that you are wearing. You will hear my voice when I speak.

North's mouth hangs open a bit. The Doctor places his right hand a foot away from North's face. He holds it there.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Open your eyes. Hear the calmness in my voice.

North's eyes open. He stares at the Doctor's open hand.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

I want you to concentrate on, and only on, my middle finger.

The Doctor begins to slowly bring the palm of his hand closer to North's face - he's entranced. Closer now.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Watch as the other fingers begin to fall away. Breathe.

The Doctor's hand lands softly across North's face - his eyes close.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

I'm going to count down from five.
Five... four... three... two...
one.

(beat)

You will still hear the cars in the
street, but none of that will
matter as you focus on the sound of
my voice.

The Doctor removes his hand from North's face. North lays
silent. The Doctor shuts the window blinds, then sits.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Find your own internal voice and
follow it. Where is it taking you
today? Detach yourself from the
world that surrounds you. Where are
you going today...?

INT. TENEMENT HALLWAY - DAY

Elevator doors mechanically grind open. North steps out of
the carriage, he stares down the long cinder block corridor.

He starts down.

There are dozens of apartment doors. No numbers. North stares
as each one, until - he reaches the door at the far end of
the hall.

He places his hand on the knob and slowly turns - transported
to:

EXT. TENEMENT PARK - DAY

Bright, unimaginable sun. North shields his eyes from it. His
feet move out onto the gray pebble stones.

A FIGURE appears before him. Dressed in a stark white robe.
Unequaled beauty. She wears an ambiguous grin - angelic. She
extends her hand.

North sees the outline of her face - he reaches out and grabs her open hand - the sunlight instantly leaves them and North can see clearly once again. The Figure relinquishes his hand.

THE MESSENGER

Element?

NORTH

Youth.

The Figure nods - understood.

She closes her eyes. North considers his options - brace himself or stand still. He reconsiders - stands, as...

EXT. WATERFALL - DAY

The TUMBLING of water SPILLING against the rocky coast. A pair of BOYS run barefoot across the sand.

North watches from a high point, the Messenger stands beside him in utter silence.

They Boys run through the water - the view is so powerful, continuous, so intense...

They LAUGH. Their careless jejunity regenerate across North's now gratified face.

NORTH (V.O.)

Again...

The Messenger folds her hands. The Boys again race under the frenzied waters. They splash.

North smiles wide. Then -

INT. TENEMENT HALLWAY - DAY

North stands alone in the hallway once more. He catches his breath - turns to the elevator bank. Confusion.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

Can you hear the sound of my voice?

North looks up - a sharp SNAPPING sound. The roof begins to CRACK.

North begins to rush for the elevators, just as the roof begins to CRUMBLE and COLLAPSE around him. He's nearly there, as -

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

The Doctor SNAPS his fingers. Again. Now, North's eyes begin to flutter open.

North sits up gradually and the Doctor offers him the glass of water. North nods - thank you. He drinks.

NORTH
How long was I out?

DOCTOR
Just over sixteen minutes.

North takes another sip of water. He's reaching for his suit jacket - he's not lingering.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

North lies staring up at the ceiling. Wide awake. He is tangled among a disarray of sheets.

North sits up and reaches for a waste basket that rests beside the bed. He VOMITS inside it. The MURMUR of dry HEAVES and GASPS.

There's a bloody tissue on the night stand...

INT. OFFICE BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

North's ID card SWIPES the scanner. He walks to the elevator bank. He makes it as the doors close.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

The busy floor. North steps out of the elevator and drops a punchline smile. Heading towards his office as we begin to hear -

NORTH (V.O./PHONE)

What can I say? Your guys were down four points in an up market.

VOICE (V.O./PHONE)

Somebody is adding to their short.
(continuing as -)

INT. NORTH'S OFFICE - DAY

Thirty stories up. The city looming in the through the floor to ceiling windows. Flashy and sharp. Walls covered with accolades and awards. Photos of famous handshakes. North paces, wandering as -

NORTH (PHONE)

Short or no short, Winn is a buy.
You got me?

VOICE (PHONE)

You're sure? I'm not hearing this from anyone else.

NORTH (PHONE)

Since when have you ever been concerned about anyone else?

VOICE (PHONE)

I dunno...

NORTH (PHONE)

I'll give you a week, then, I put the option back out on the wire.
Good?

TIME CUT.

LATER. North paces again. A new call...

SECOND VOICE (PHONE)
What's the number?

NORTH (PHONE)
Not the number... what's your
number?

SECOND VOICE (PHONE)
Huh?

NORTH (PHONE)
You know what I mean. You're
number? The number that convinces
you to walk away.

SECOND VOICE (PHONE)
You want me to walk away?

NORTH (PHONE)
I want everyone to walk away. What
I mean is, I want you to be smart.
There's only one play here.

SECOND VOICE (PHONE)
What's that?

NORTH (PHONE)
Raise your family. Live a good
life. It won't cost as much as you
think...
(silence)
Is that a yes?

TIME CUT.

LATER. New call. North at the window now. Looking like he
wants to jump.

THIRD VOICE (PHONE)
I know. I know you've been waiting
around because you don't think
you'll never have enough.

NORTH (PHONE)
I'm being patient.

THIRD VOICE (PHONE)
You're postponing.

NORTH (PHONE)
Postponing what?

THIRD VOICE (PHONE)
Life. You keep waiting around and
you'll miss out everything you need
to actually live it.

NORTH (PHONE)
I've got that.
(the silence)
A money-runner. You'll see.

THIRD VOICE (PHONE)
And you think that matters? That
same old stock you've been holding
is trading just a bit over fifteen
one dollars a share, down almost
twenty four percent on the session.

NORTH (PHONE)
(enough of this)
So, are you in or are you out?

THIRD VOICE (PHONE)
I'm sorry...

NORTH (PHONE)
So, you're out?

THIRD VOICE (PHONE)
I'm out.

North nods - you fucker. He hangs up the phone - glances out
the window for a moment. He's absorbing the shrapnel.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

North stands naked in the shower. The steam rises and coats the glass door. He uses his finger to etch stock tickers through the vapor.

INT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

North rides, his eyes casually tracing over the faces in the crowded train. A BUSINESS MAN sits, further along the car, power tie and slicked hair.

Besides him is an empty seat. Then -

A PRETTY SUBWAY GIRL. She meets eyes with North - then, she looks away.

The train comes to a STOP. North stands and makes his way over to the Girl. He finds her eyes once more - smiles.

NORTH

Hello.

She nods - offers a polite grin. Says nothing. North searches for his next move, but her PHONE RINGS. We're moving once again -

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

North sits alone near the bar. A vodka keeps him company. A WAITER places the wine list in front of him and hands him a menu.

North smiles gratefully.

NORTH (V.O.)

How long was I out?

DOCTOR (V.O.)

Just over thirty-three minutes...

The GLIDE of a napkin across North's lap, the WAITER hovers, on the edge of irritating.

NORTH
The veal, please.

The Waiter smiles and leaves. North sits looking over the patrons.

His eyes tracing over - A WOMAN's fingers playing with the edge of her menu.

The length of her eyelashes.

Her shoulders ghosting through her dress. A ring wrapped around her HUSBAND's wedding finger.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
I can't make you feel anything you don't want to feel. You don't lose your free will.

The sight of a happy couple affects North. He stares longingly - it's borderline intrusive, but they don't seem to notice him there.

DOCTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You are always awake. Always aware.
Always in control.

NORTH (V.O.)
Paradox?

North drains his drink. He tosses a twenty dollar bill on the table and heads for the door.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A moment later. North is on the move. He treks down the dirty street, brightened by the glow of old street lamps.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
By letting yourself go, you enter a state of focus. You start to gain more control.

North bails into the subway tunnel. Shock on his face - there's something wrong. Very wrong.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - NIGHT

North blends into the masses of commuters awaiting the train. He checks his watch - like a junky needing a fix. He TAPS his toe.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

While the world is vastly
different... you can find the
resources within yourself to
produce the change you desire.

A SUDDEN breeze, the subway train oncoming arrives. North boards as the doors GLIDE SHUT.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

North stares down upon the busy office canyon. The wind blows hard through his hair.

Abundant sunlight comes streaming in from behind him - he turns to greet it - shields his eyes.

The Messenger appears. Same warm tone to her skin. The light dies.

THE MESSENGER

Element?

NORTH

Love.

The Messenger closes her eyes and raises her hands up at her sides. She then turns as North takes a step towards her.

The other side of the rooftop has transformed into -

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A BEAUTIFUL FACE stares at us. Perfect lips. Soft blue eyes. She doesn't speak - she simply keeps a gentle gaze.

North's hand reaches out and finds itself entwined with hers.

They share a smile.

TIME CUT.

North and the GIRL sit up in bed. She reads an old wilted book - North with some papers.

He turns to her. She doesn't stop reading. North gets close enough to kiss. They embrace.

TIME CUT.

North and the Girl make love - the light flooding into the room is dim.

TIME CUT.

North and the Girl ARGUE with one another, yet we do not hear their words. She paces the bedroom - North SLAMS an open palm on the wall - heated. Unresolved.

After a moment, the ROOM begins to SHAKE violently - almost as if an Earthquake is growling below.

North glances around as the furniture in the room as it begins to fall. He knows...

North turns back to this love with sorrowed, yearning eyes. This is good-bye. Then -

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - NIGHT

North lies dormant on the sofa. His eyes burst open as the Doctor stands above him. CLAPPING his hand.

DOCTOR

You're coming back to us now.

North sits ups slowly. His body rocked by that last memory. The Doctor hands him a glass of water.

North takes it and drinks.

NORTH

How long was I out?

DOCTOR
Fifty-seven minutes.

NORTH
She felt so real.

DOCTOR
Have you ever heard of dehypnosis?

NORTH
No.

DOCTOR
Sometimes, a subject enters hypnosis after dealing with a traumatic event. I call them hyper-suggestible. It's as if they come in already in a state of hypnosis.

NORTH
Are you suggesting, that I'm -

DOCTOR
(ominous)
It's important to remember that we can do anything in hypnosis that we would be able to do in full conscious awareness.

North nods - understood. He grabs his coat and walks to the door.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

North hurries into the office area, unbuckling his coat as he does so. CARL MACKY, his senior boss, phone pressed to his ear, throws him a gesture to come on in.

North continues into the office and tosses up his hands, as if to say - I told you so.

Carl hangs up his call.

CARL
You're late.

NORTH
Winn is up thirty-five points.

CARL
What?

NORTH
Winn Enterprises. It's turned. Just
like I said it would.

CARL
Since when?

NORTH
This morning. Take a look -

North points to the stock ticker streaming across the bottom
of the flat screen above Carl's back wall. Carl glances over -
but there's other business on hand.

CARL
We need to talk about your future
with the company.

NORTH
What about it?

CARL
Your stocks are getting beat before
the bell. They're all down nine
percent in pre-market trading.

NORTH
Winn is up.

CARL
I understand that.

NORTH
Thirty-three percent overnight.

Patience running thin -

CARL
This really isn't a discussion.

NORTH

You see it for yourself. Winn is on the upswing.

CARL

And if it takes another haircut?
(off his look)
We're letting you go. I'm sorry. I like you, but this is business.

North stands, rocked by the news.

NORTH

Business?

CARL

(nods)
If you want to wait in here until things die down this morning, I don't mind.

North shakes his head in anger and frustration...

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING PARKING LOT - DAY

North carries a banker's box of his belongings. No expression on his face. He knifes his way through the rows of cars.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

North, moving on - his head down wanting to get away.

A rush of COMMUTERS and COUPLES spilling out of a subway terminal.

North walking, disorientated, even jaywalking through the traffic.

The SCREECH of cabs horns.

North ignores them, he crosses streets, traffic, darting off the sidewalk and into another high-rise office building.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE LOBBY - NIGHT

Just outside the office doors. North sits on the ground with his back against the wood. His hand on his head - recoiling from the day's events.

The elevator DIGS - opens.

The Doctor steps out. Holding his briefcase and a curious look on his face. North stands to greet him.

DOCTOR

This is unexpected.

NORTH

I know. I'm sorry to bother you.

They exchange a look of concern - North from his needs and the Doctor torn ethically.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - NIGHT

A minute later. North is taking off his jacket. The Doctor is dimming the lights.

NORTH

There's something I should tell you.

(off his look)

I lost my job today. I'll have to pay you in cash.

The Doctor nods - understood. He pours North a glass of water and rests it in the usual spot. Sits.

North lays down on the couch. Closes his eyes.

DOCTOR

Hear the sound of my voice. I want you to open your eyes on one-hundred and close your eyes on ninety-nine...

(beat)

One-hundred.

North's eyes open wide.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Ninety-nine.

North closes his eyes.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Open your eyes on ninety-eight.
Close your eyes on ninety-seven.
(beat)
Ninety-eight.

North's eyes open slower.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
And... ninety-seven.

North's eyes close.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Good. Again...
(beat)
Ninety-six.

North's eyes open even slower now.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Ninety-five...

North's eyes close. They stay closed this time. The confusion has tired him to point of a trance.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Relax your breathing. Feel the weight of your body leave you. Your conscious mind is now asleep. Your subconscious mind is now open.

And, then -

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

North is asleep in an empty platform. He eyes snap open. Though it is dark, the low MURMUR of subway cars can be heard in the distance.

North's brow is sheen of sweat.

He steps to the yellow line - gazes down into the empty train tunnel. There, in the distance - the familiar strobe of light. He looks down.

The Messenger approaches. Her image so bright it can burn itself into your retina.

She stands a foot from North's face. He reaches out and touches her arm - instantly allowing him to see her face more clearly.

THE MESSENGER

Element?

NORTH

Where did you come from?

At first the Messenger does not answer. She stares at him with stark eyes.

NORTH (CONT'D)

You can answer me. I know you can.

Silence.

THE MESSENGER

Element?

North looks away in frustration, then finds the words -

NORTH

Revenge...

The Messenger shows no bias to his decision. She turns and reaches out her hand. The tunnel reverberates, as we -

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Some sheik housing complex in the nice part of town. North emerges out of the darkness - the Messenger a step behind. She stops. She can follow him no further.

North glances over his shoulder - notices her stance, then moves forward into the building.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING LOBBY - NIGHT

North at the directory. His fingers scanning the letters. A, B, C - this is taking too long.

North takes a chunk of the pages and turns them over, he's starting from the middle of the book. L, M -

MACKY, CARL.

North TAPS his finger on the name. I got you. He's moving towards the stairwell.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

North on a relentless pace. He passes floor after floor without stopping. It's as if there is no thought of rest. He reaches the 29th floor.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

Steel plated doors that look as if they've seen better days. One of the doors blisters in the glow of some sort of orange afterburn.

North stops before reaching for the handle. Am I sure about this?

He reaches into his pocket - pulls out a key. He inserts it into the keyhole and turns. The lock POPS open.

North places the key back in his pocket. Searches his others, finds -

A PISTOL.

North stares at it with intent eyes. Serious anxiety at the sight of it - it's almost unnatural in his hand.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

North stands in the darkness of the empty galley. A set of keys strewn out on the table near the door. The pistol firmly planted in his hand.

He moves forward.

A seemingly endless hallway with doors. Perhaps bedrooms, but there's a light at the end of the hall and North is headed that way.

Very utilitarian. Dim, blue-ish light. North uses his free hand to open the door.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carl lay asleep in his bed. Linen sheets and a laptop from when he fell asleep while working the night before.

North takes a step inside - SHUTS the door behind him. He walks to the side of the bed closest to Carl - sits there, staring at his former boss' sleeping face.

NORTH

Stay asleep. I don't want to hear
you beg.

Carl doesn't move an muscle.

North points the pistol at his head. FLASH BURST as North pulls back on the trigger - but there is no sound, no blood.

North stands and looks down - stares, satisfied, at Carl's body on the bed in front of him.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

North comes barreling out of the building. The Messenger waits. Something secret exchanged in their glance.

She reaches out her hand. Before North takes it -

NORTH

Wait.

She cocks her head out of curiosity.

NORTH (CONT'D)

There's more...

THE MESSENGER

Element?

NORTH

The future.

The Messenger takes a step back. Her expression has changed. She's no longer gentle. She begins to look as if something - a rule - has been broken or disrupted.

She fades further and further into the darkened street. North follows but loses her.

He looks back in frustration. The apartment building now begins to CRUMBLE to it's foundation... North SCREAMS out loud, and we -

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - NIGHT

The Doctor CLOSES the hard cover of a book repeatedly. Then, North's eyes come to life once more. There's a ring of sweat around the collar of his shirt.

He sits up - shaken to the core. The Doctor hands him his glass of water. North hesitates, then accepts. Drains the entire glass.

NORTH

How long?

DOCTOR
(his watch)
Seventy-two minutes...

North looks up to him. Concern. The Doctor walks to far wall and flips the lights on.

North's eyes fail to adjust and he squints through the pain of the bright lights.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Where did you go?

NORTH
Unfinished business.

DOCTOR
(his watch)
It's late.

North grabs his jacket and hands the Doctor an envelope of cash.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
(feels the weight)
This is too much.

NORTH
When can I come back?

DOCTOR
Whenever you'd like.

North wrestles with a thought, then pauses before -

NORTH
Could I - could I remember doing
something that isn't real?

DOCTOR
Such as?

NORTH
Anything.

DOCTOR

It's possible. But, If something is being done and the mind somehow represses that memory, it's for good reason.

North nods - understood. He rests his jacket over his arm and heads for the door.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Later.

North sits alone at the bar with a beer in front of him. He takes a long SWIG, then hangs his head in exhaustion. Orders another round.

An ATTRACTIVE YOUNG LADY joins him. She's dressed to impress. Long legs. Red lips.

North gives her a look as she orders a cocktail. She glances back over.

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG LADY

Hi.

NORTH

Hey.

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG LADY

Drinking alone?

NORTH

Yeah.

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG LADY

That's bad luck.

Her martini arrives. She sucks the olives and takes a sip. North watches.

NORTH

I'm sorry, do I know you? Have we met before?

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG LADY
I don't think so.

NORTH
Are you sure?

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG LADY
I'm pretty sure.

She turns to him now and smiles.

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG LADY (CONT'D)
I'm ANNA.

NORTH
Anna?

ANNA
And you are?

NORTH
(shit -)
North.

ANNA
North?

NORTH
Yeah, after the town I was born in.
Creative parents.

ANNA
I like it.

They drink.

NORTH
You live around here?

ANNA
No. I'm visiting.

NORTH
Friends?

ANNA

Work

North's second beer arrives. He holds it up -

NORTH

Cheers...

They CLANG their glasses together and drink. North looks away, he's way out of his league here.

ANNA

You have any family in the city?

NORTH

Me? No. I grew up out west.

ANNA

Cowboy?

NORTH

Sorta.

ANNA

Big family?

NORTH

Three brothers and a younger sister. I'm in the middle.

ANNA

Are you nervous?

NORTH

Why would I be nervous?

She holds her look.

ANNA

Because you look nervous.

NORTH

I'm not.

They smile. He's full of shit and she knows it.

ANNA

What do you do for work?

NORTH

I'm an investor - was an investor.
I lost my job today.

ANNA

I'm sorry.

NORTH

It's okay. It's fine. I'll be fine.

North looks at Anna, they giggle.

NORTH (CONT'D)

I am nervous.

ANNA

Why?

NORTH

You're very beautiful.

ANNA

Thank you.

North hesitates, on the edge but-

NORTH

What about you? What do you do?

ANNA

I'm a therapist.

North sneaks a side glance, Anna smiles. She drinks.

NORTH

Wow...

ANNA

Oh, now you're interested?

NORTH

I was interested before.

ANNA

Were you?

North nods - they share an awkward smile. She grabs a coaster and plays with it.

NORTH

What kind of therapist?

ANNA

Why? You need someone to talk to?

NORTH

Maybe...

(off her grin)

I'm interested is all.

ANNA

Have you ever heard of Ericksonian technique?

NORTH

Milton Hyland Erickson?

ANNA

(holy shit)

Yeah...

NORTH

I've heard of him.

ANNA

Well - he believed that -

NORTH

- that the unconscious mind was always listening, and that, whether or not the patient was in trance, suggestions could be made which would have a hypnotic influence, as long as those suggestions found some resonance at the unconscious level.

Anna sits back - who is this guy? She's impressed. North goes back to his beer, trying to play it cool.

ANNA

How did you know that?

NORTH

I just know it.

ANNA

He pioneered some indirect techniques.

NORTH

He was also listed in reports of cases in which he acted in a manner some people felt might be construed as sexually inappropriate.

ANNA

Such as?

NORTH

Such as telling a patient he needed to know how she would undress and go to bed in the presence of a man. So, he had her undress, slowly, in an almost automatic fashion. He had her show him her right breast, her left breast, her right nipple, her left nipple. Her belly button. Her genital area. Her knees. He asked her to point where she would like to have her husband kiss her. He had her turn around and dress again slowly. Then, he dismissed her.

Anna takes the coaster she'd been thumbing around and finds a pen. She writes her name and phone number.

ANNA

I have a conference in the morning.
(the coaster)
Call me after?

NORTH

Sure.

He takes the coaster and slides it under his beer. Anna stands and gives him one last curious look.

ANNA

Don't forget.

NORTH

I won't.

Anna leaves him. North watches her go. He drains his beer and pays the tab, then stuffs the coaster in his jacket pocket.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

The Doctor and North experiment through hypnotic handshake induction.

NORTH

I want to be able to speak to her.

DOCTOR

That would be impossible.

NORTH

Why?

DOCTOR

There are a number of things that you don't want me to know about, that you don't want to tell me. There are a lot of things about yourself that you don't want to discuss, therefore let's discuss those that you are willing to discuss.

They shake hands - then, the Doctor interrupts the flow of the handshake by switching directions from left to right.

He grabs North's wrist.

The handshake continues to develop in a way which is out-of-keeping with expectations. North watches intently.

He begins to waver. The Doctor holds a fierce gaze on him, until his legs begin to give out.

The Doctor holds a firm grip. Then, begins a gentle touch of the thumb, a lingering drawing away of the little finger, a faint brushing of the subject's hand with the middle finger, just enough vague sensation to attract North's attention.

As North's attention focuses on the touch of his thumb, the Doctor shifts to a touch of his little finger. As North's attention follows that, he shifts to a touch of his middle finger and then again to the thumb.

It's almost erotic to watch.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

A simple handshake is an action learned as a single "chunk" of behavior, tying shoelaces is another example.

North has slipped into a trance like state.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

If the behavior is diverted, the mind responds by suspending itself in trance.

The Doctor and North stand facing one another in silence, just as we -

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Something posh and upscale. Hyper-nouveau with tones of string harp music.

North stands in the foyer as if he's just walked in. He has.

There's no Maitre D'.

The chairs have been flipped on top of each table as if they've yet to open the doors for the day.

North takes a step towards the center of the dining room. Confused. Until -

The Messenger reaches from behind him and touches him on the shoulder - North spins around to find her.

THE MESSENGER

Element?

North doesn't answer her. This causes confusion.

THE MESSENGER (CONT'D)

Element?

Again - silence. North gently touches her on the side of her face. He's reasoning with her compassion.

NORTH

I created you with my mind. You're
as much a part of me as I am.

The Messenger stares in silence.

NORTH (CONT'D)

Please don't make me do this.
Please show me what I've come here
to know.

The Messenger goes to turn away, she can't speak back to him - she won't speak back to him.

North, sensing her rebellion, grabs her by the arm and refuses to let her walk away.

The Messenger refuses to abide -

THE MESSENGER

(through tears)

Element?

NORTH

Speak to me!

THE MESSENGER

(through tears)

Element...?

North lets her go. There's no use and he knows it. The Messenger stands pat - she's awaiting his command, his desire. It's almost as if she cannot defy her one and only purpose.

NORTH

Success.

The Messenger drops one last tear - it glides down from her eyelid, past her cheek bone and floats off her skin. The tear falls to the floor in a puddle, which leads us to -

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

A modern, glass high rise resting in the center of what would normally be a busy city block.

But, tonight - North stands under the fluorescent lights alone. The Messenger waiting in the distance.

The words, " WINN ENTERPRISES " arched over the glass entry way like a banner. North takes a long look back to the Messenger, then makes his way inside the building.

INT. ACCOUNTING OFFICE - NIGHT

Dark. North, under a small desk lamp, examines a file. Unmarked. Numbers - line and lines of them. Most of them would make no sense to the untrained eye.

He finds a set of numbers with particular meaning. Searches for a pen...

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

That exact moment, back in the conscious world, the Doctor and North still attached at the palm of their hands.

NORTH

(in trance, eyes closed)

Pen. Something to write with...

The Doctor hands him a pen from his pocket. North takes it and begins to write a series of numbers across the flesh of his forearm.

INT. ACCOUNTING OFFICE - NIGHT

That moment completes writing the numbers down across a piece of paper - folds it - again - stuffs it into his pocket. He's leaving.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

North spills back out onto the street. A satisfied look upon his face. The Messenger standing in her spot from earlier. North walks to her.

NORTH

There's more.

THE MESSENGER

Element?

NORTH

The future...

The Messenger stands back once more. The words strike some sort of chord within her being. She refuses to oblige. Shakes her head ever so slightly.

THE MESSENGER

Element?

NORTH

Why won't you take me to see my future? Why does this place start falling apart whenever I ask you that? Huh?

Right on cue - the pavement below their feet begins to crack and spread. North's body falls through one of the valleys, just as -

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

The Doctor drips beads of sweat from his forehead. He urgently releases North's hand. North falls backwards and onto the couch.

They stare at one another. Intense.

NORTH

How long was I out?

DOCTOR

Nearly ninety minutes...

North searches for a glass of water - finds it, drains it as fast as he can. He looks up and notices the numbers he had written on his arm

NORTH

What are they?

DOCTOR

Only you know.

NORTH

It was different this time.

DOCTOR

There's something you should know.
About hypnosis.

(off North's look)

You can't force the mind to travel
somewhere it doesn't want to go.

NORTH

Why?

DOCTOR

It's called a polarity response.

NORTH

Is that why she won't speak to me?

DOCTOR

It motivates the subject to consider the polar opposite of any given suggestion.

NORTH

I don't understand...

DOCTOR

The conscious mind recognizes negation in speech. "Don't do X" for example.

(off North's silence)

There are simply places your mind isn't strong enough to handle.

NORTH

Like the future.

DOCTOR

I don't know about can't, but it won't...

North grabs his coat - still running his fingers across the numbers inked across his forearm.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Some campy place far off the main streets of downtown. North and Anna sit across from one another. From the number of wine glasses and bottles of sparkling water - they've been talking for quite some time.

ANNA

If I send someone out of the room - for example, the mother and child. I carefully move the father from his chair and put him into mother's chair. Or if I send the child out, I might put the mother in the child's chair, only for a moment.

NORTH

Why?

ANNA

Sometimes I comment on this by saying, "As you sit where your son was sitting, you can think more clearly about him." Or, "If you sit where your husband sat, maybe it will give you somewhat of his view about me". Over a series of interviews with an entire family, I shuffle them around, so that what was originally the mother's chair is now where the father is sitting. The family grouping remains, and yet that family grouping is being rearranged, which is what you are after when changing a family.

NORTH

Like Empty Chair?

ANNA

Not exactly. That's more for imagined interactions, where the patient is invited to occupy someone else's chair and take on the role of the person imagined to be sitting there.

North pours them each another glass of wine. He drinks, he's suddenly gone quiet.

ANNA (CONT'D)

What?

NORTH

Nothing. It's just - fascinating.

ANNA

It's not for everyone.

NORTH

I didn't mean your work. I meant you.

Anna smiles wide. Her fingers creep across the table, closer and closer to North's.

ANNA

I'm happy you think so.

NORTH

Where are you staying...?

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna, eyes closed, has her head on North's chest. He is shirtless, lying on top of the covers.

NORTH

There's a difference between someone telling me to relax my arms and telling me that my arms are relaxed. Physically I can't turn my brain off, and it seems that unlike an issue with relaxing my body, my brain can't relax beyond a certain point; no matter what. It's not like the obedience that comes naturally. That's what I would expect.

Anna's eyes are open.

NORTH (CONT'D)

And I wonder, how well do you remember your dreams? No one ever remembers their dreams. Except for nightmares, of course, but those become incredibly rare after puberty. It's like trying to take a piss when there's another person nearby. It can't be done. The muscles won't work, and there is no order that can be sent to make them do so. Except with the brain, it's like there's always another person around.

North bends his head around to see if Anna is awake. She closes her eyes, North quietly slides out from under her and moves out of the bedroom.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Anna and North sit near the window. They watch the other people pass by as they sip in hot coffee. Anna has her suitcase at her feet.

NORTH
You're really leaving?

ANNA
I'll be back.

NORTH
When?

ANNA
Soon.

NORTH
Can I ask you something?
(off her nod)
Last night. Did I - did you hear me
rambling?

ANNA
Yes.

NORTH
I'm sorry.

ANNA
No. It's fine. I did want to ask
you something though.

NORTH
What?

ANNA
How many times have you gone under?

NORTH
(thinks)
Hundreds.

ANNA
Hundreds?

The question makes North uneasy.

NORTH

Yes, why?

ANNA

I'm not judging you.

NORTH

But?

ANNA

Your mind is adaptable to change
and your subconscious will listen
to anything you tell it without
your critical conscious mind
getting in the way.

NORTH

That's why I do it.

ANNA

To escape. I get it. But, it
doesn't solve the problem of not
wanting to deal with the real
world.

North doesn't like that statement. He looks away. Anna
touches his hand sweetly.

ANNA (CONT'D)

There are six and a half billion
people on the planet. There are
those of us that like themselves,
and those of us who don't.

NORTH

I know what you're saying.

ANNA

Do you?

They stare at one another for a long beat. Anna checks her
watch - she's late. She stands and extends the handle of her
roller board.

North doesn't bare to watch her leave.

ANNA (CONT'D)

See you in a few weeks?

NORTH

See you in a few weeks.

Anna leans in and kisses North on the cheek. He closes his eyes as her lips press up against his skin.

Anna grabs her coffee and leaves. North, a sickened look upon his face, he watches her outline disappear into the morning commuter crowd.

INT. HOME OFFICE - DAY

North sits behind his computer screen. Stock tickers - pie charts, analytics beyond belief. Winn Enterprises logo draped all over everything.

The PRINTER goes. Several pages. North gathers the pages and STAPLES them together.

INT. OFFICE BOARDROOM - DAY

Carl, sits in a packed meeting room, a pitch just audible. The faint THUD of dry erase marker punishing the white board.

Carl becomes distracted, facing the fish bowl glass doors. Something is stirring just beyond:

North is ARGUING with a PRETTY ASSISTANT. A manila envelope in his right hand. He yields it like a club.

North turns from her - he steals a look at Carl. They lock eyes for a brief moment.

INT. CARL'S MACKY'S OFFICE - DAY

As Carl stares out the window. North glances over at the painting hanging above his desk. Unimpressed.

CARL

You shouldn't be here. Unannounced
at that.

NORTH

I have the Winn Enterprises stock
sale prices for the next six
months.

CARL

We've been through all that.

NORTH

Not like this.

CARL

What is this, nostalgia?

NORTH

(the envelope)

Do you want these or not?

CARL

(taken back)

How?

NORTH

Doesn't matter.

CARL

And you have proof of this?

North holds up the manila envelope. -

NORTH

Leverage.

Carl skeptically regards North.

CARL

Why are you offering this?

NORTH

Because of what I want in return.

CARL
Your old job? The office upstairs?

NORTH
No.
(biting his lip in
thought)
Something more quantified.

CARL
How much?

NORTH
My number. Three million.

Carl slowly nods, considering - taking all this in.

CARL
How do I know you won't take your
cut and take this to another bank?

North goes in for the kill -

NORTH
You gave me my start here.

CARL
You expect me to buy that bullshit
loyalty line?

NORTH
Think about it, Carl. You're losing
credit. You're getting margin
calls. So, in order to stay in this
game, you need fresh meat.

CARL
We've got that.

NORTH
They'll just de-leverage and you
know it.

Carl nods.

NORTH (CONT'D)

I want the funds wired to a bank
account of my choosing.

And Carl, strongly holding North's glare... simply replies...

CARL

Give me twenty-four hours.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

North has showered. He's drinking coffee, pacing around on a
cell phone -- wiping remnants of blood off his left nostril.
Crimson on the towel...

NORTH (PHONE)

...No, I know that, I was just
holding for her.

(impatient pause)

Yeah, what I'm wondering, is there
some sort of pager? Can you page
her or something?

(pause)

North Maxfield, she knows who I am -
we met last week in the city...

North listening and it's not the answer he's hoping for. And
he's pacing around.

North hangs up. Numb. Trying to shake it off.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

North sitting fully dressed on the toilet. He is hiding
there, trying to fight off a brutal panic attack using a
breathing exercise -

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - NIGHT

North, eyes closed, lies flat on the couch. The Doctor seated
across from him. By the looks of it - North is nearly out.

DOCTOR

Tell yourself that you are going to descend a flight of stairs, counting each step down, starting at ten. Picture each number in your mind. Imagine that each number you count is further down and one step closer to the bottom.

North's eye lids squeeze a bit tighter...

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

As you take each step, imagine the feel of the step under your feet. Once you are at the fifth step, imagine and truly feel the refreshing coolness of the water and tell yourself that you are stepping into an oasis of purity and cleanliness.

North's mouth cracks open a bit - a sign that he's been successfully put into trance.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

You should now start to feel somewhat numb. Your heart will start to race a bit, but embrace it and let any qualms about your situation just drift away into the water...

As, we -

EXT. CITY BASEMENT CASINO - NIGHT

North staring at the metal frame door. A Chinese letter hanging from the header. The Messenger stands behind him.

THE MESSENGER

Element?

NORTH

You already know, don't you?

The Messenger nods - slightly. She gestures for North to step inside.

INT. CITY BASEMENT CASINO - NIGHT

North now sits glancing at his four hole cards. Four up cards in the middle of the table.

NORTH

Check.

The DEALER turns to the SECOND PLAYER.

SECOND PLAYER

Sure.

The THIRD PLAYER wears his sunglasses at the table. He's all business tonight.

THIRD PLAYER

Five hundred.

(peels off hundreds)

Double the pot.

The FOURTH PLAYER looks down at the pot - then his cards - garbage hand - he's folding...

DEALER

(to North)

And you, sir?

North glances down at his cards. Folds. The Dealer shuffles the pot back to the Third Player - his winnings.

THIRD PLAYER

You don't know who I am, huh?

(stacking his money)

No clue? Is it the glasses? You can't see my eyes...

NORTH

I don't know you.

THIRD PLAYER

Oh, that's right. You don't. I forgot.

NORTH

Should I?

THIRD PLAYER

Maybe. Maybe not.

North posts his blind. Confused by the Third Player's tone of voice.

THIRD PLAYER (CONT'D)

You want me to take them off?

NORTH

If you think that will help?

He takes off his sunglasses. North stares into his eyes - he's searching for his face, but can't find it.

THIRD PLAYER

How about now?

SECOND PLAYER

We gonna play cards or chit chat all night?

THIRD PLAYER

Fuck off.

The Second Player vanishes into thin air. North sits back - amazed.

THIRD PLAYER (CONT'D)

Think that's cool? Watch this...

He SNAPS his fingers - Second and Fourth Players vanish as quickly as the other. The Dealer stands and leaves the room.

North and the Third Player sit alone. Silence, before -

THIRD PLAYER (CONT'D)

You really don't get it, do you?

NORTH

Who are you?

THIRD PLAYER

(ignores him)

She's my wife. Nothing you do will change that.

NORTH

Who?

THIRD PLAYER

The babe in the woods routine? I already know you fucked her.

A serious beat.

NORTH

I don't know what you're -

THIRD PLAYER

- talking about? I'm talking about Anna. My wife. The woman you met in the bar. Ring any bells?

North, freaked out of his mind, stand up to leave - but the Third Player grabs his wrists and holds him down on the table.

NORTH

What the fuck!?

THIRD PLAYER

Leave her alone, you understand?

(off his struggle)

I mean it. If you contact her again, I'll kill you...

He lets North's wrists go free. North runs his fingers over them. They're red.

Suddenly, as the Third Player sits back down - the door is BLOWN open. The Messenger steps inside, tears running down the sides of her face. Her mouth opens - an inaudible SCREAM.

Just then, North covers his ears, and -

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - NIGHT

North's eyes open and he's just paralyzed. He's standing now. He blinks. Freezes.

The Doctor on the floor - wrists red, almost an Indian burn. He stares up at North - reeling, he can hardly breathe.

North, then, snaps out of it - he dry heaves and leans against the coffee table - drains his water and finally sees the Doctor there on the floor, frozen in fear.

NORTH

What happened?

DOCTOR

You should leave...

NORTH

Did something happen? Why are you on the floor?

DOCTOR

Just go!

North hesitates. Sees the Doctor is serious. He should leave.

NORTH

Who did that to you?

DOCTOR

I'll call the police -

NORTH

How were there other people there?
How was I able to speak to them?

DOCTOR

- I won't ask you again -

NORTH

- she knew. She already knew what I wanted to see. How is that possible?

The Doctor scrambles to his desk and snatches his cell phone out of the drawer. He holds it up like a club.

North quiets himself.

He can't make sense - swamped - lost in fear...

DOCTOR

You have three seconds.

North slowly walks to the door. He exchanges one last glance with the Doctor - still wheeling in terror.

North walks out, leaving chaos in his wake. SHUTS the door behind him.

The Doctor crouched there on the floor in shock like some sort of accident victim.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

North is at his desk. It's clear that he has not slept yet. He's still bustling with confusion over what happened with the Doctor. He types excitedly on his lap top.

We see only clips and phrases -

"Appear tuned-out... decrease in involuntary eye movement ... Precuneus... Consciousness of self... visuospatial aspects of the brain..."

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT

North sits at the edge of his bed, hands grasping his hair. He stands and begins moving like a dervish through his dark apartment.

Pacing - his fingers dancing along the white on the walls. He's moving in and out of rooms - unable to sit still, like a shelter dog. He bleeds from his nose.

Then, finally, somewhere alone in the hallway... he collapses HARD. We hold on his limp body for a long beat.

INT. BANK - DAY

North stands on the customer side of bullet proof glass. A band-aid across the skin just above his left temple. He's taring off into -

The eyes of a PRETTY TELLER.

North smiles at her - she smiles back, but he knows she's looking at his busted forehead.

NORTH
Work accident...

PRETTY TELLER
What kind of work are you in?

NORTH
I'm a welder.

She nods - okay. She continues typing into her computer, then bites her lip in an offer of consolation.

PRETTY TELLER
I'm sorry, Mr. Maxfield, there haven't been any money transfers made into your account within the last twenty-four hours...

North's face falls a bit.

NORTH
Are you sure?

PRETTY TELLER
I'm positive. There are no credits to the account.

North takes a harrowing step backwards - he's gone sick to his stomach. Without another word, he turns and leaves the bank.

EXT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

North stands under the awning - staring into the shop's window. His phone at his ear. Something curious in his eyes.

NORTH (PHONE)

I understand that.

(pause)

I'm a patient of his... he knows who I am. Why won't he come to the phone?

(listens)

Emergency? Yes, this is an emergency...

(impatiently waits)

Fine - just have him call me back please? Thank you.

(hangs up)

North looks to his left, then to his right - he enters the shop.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

North sits on the floor of his dusky apartment. Sad and somber. His shoes are off and his knees are bent. His cell phone is on the floor beside him - some WHIRLING sound...

A Pistol - similar to the one North used to kill Carl Mackey - rests in North's weary hands. He SPINS the gun casing. A box of bullets lies between his legs.

Over this we hear -

TELEVISION REPORT (O.S.)

"Winn Enterprises is back in the news with a major announcement, the global developer has now become a contender, fast approaching the remaining vanguards of advanced housing projects. This morning, Winn released its much-anticipated quarterly numbers, closing the market at a record high \$78.00 per share..."

North closes his eyes in sheer exhaustion. He doesn't want to hear anymore and it's been so long since he's slept.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

A busy lunch crowd funneling in and out of the building. Carl Macky, dapper, and a MALE COLLEAGUE file out of the elevator bank and walk towards the front entrance.

North, emerging from the faceless crowd, follows them out.

INT. DINER - DAY

A busy spot for business folks. Carl and his Male Colleague sit across from one another while eating a business lunch. Sparkling water and open faced sandwiches. They LAUGH - some stupid political joke.

North is seated at the bar top. He glances at them through the corner of his eye. His slice of PIE arrives. He stares down at it. It's been so long since he's eaten.

He lifts his fork and begins to devour the pie. Huge bites - one after another - almost gruesome to watch, until the pie is completely gone.

He stands. Struts his way over to Carl's table.

Carl and his Colleague are in mid-conversation when North arrives - he hovers over them.

MALE COLLEAGUE

Can we help you?

NORTH

You can't.

(to Carl)

But he can.

MALE COLLEAGUE

We're in the middle of a meeting.

NORTH
(looks around)
Is that right?

CARL
It's okay. He's a former employee.

North shoots Carl a look of death. He clenches his fists as if he's about to take a swing.

NORTH
We had a deal...

CARL
I told you to give me twenty-four hours.

NORTH
I did. That was forty-eight hours ago.

MALE COLLEAGUE
What's this about?

NORTH
Stay out of it.
(to Carl)
Did I slip your mind?

CARL
No.

NORTH
(louder)
You think you can just get rich off the information that I give you and think I won't do anything about it?

The other PATRONS begin to notice the argument before them. Carl looks around - uneasy.

CARL
I took a second look at the Winn numbers and I decided to go in another direction...

NORTH
(angry)
A different direction?

MALE COLLEAGUE
Winn Enterprises?

CARL
(to North)
I'm sorry. I've made up my mind.

NORTH
You're sorry?

CARL
I am.

North nods out of frustration. Runs his fingers through his hair, and somehow starts to walk away.

Carl looks at his Colleague - crisis averted, and the Partons seemingly go back to their busy lunches.

North is nearly to the front entrance, when he stops. Frozen. Fuck this.

He marches right back to where Carl is seated - without saying a word - GRABS Carl by the back of his collar and SLAMS him face first into the table top - Bread flies onto the floor - blood on his sandwich now.

It all happens so fast.

NORTH
I want my fucking money, you hear me?

Carl cannot answer - he searches for air. Blood really flowing now.

The Colleague is frozen in shock. Carl grabs his broken nose - North SHOVES him backwards in his seat.

That's enough. North now stepping back. Flushed. Paranoia rising.

EXT. PRECINCT STATION HOUSE - NIGHT

COPS coming and going, as we hear:

DET. HAROLD (V.O.)
... he's not pressing more charges
against you. Personally, I'm
surprised. But, I know how you
investment types are...

INT. PRECINCT STATION SQUADROOM - NIGHT

DETECTIVE HAROLD at his desk. Sympathetic. North sitting
there. Seriously shaken.

DET. HAROLD
...one guy has got something on the
other guy - it leads to something
like this. I've seen it more times
than you'd think.

NORTH
So I'm not going to jail?

DET. HAROLD
Not tonight.

NORTH
So I can go?

DET. HAROLD
Not yet.
(piece of paper)
This is a restraining order. You
need to sign at the bottom.

NORTH
For what?

DET. HAROLD
He's filed against you. You can
read it if you want.

North takes the piece of paper in his hands. Reads it. Takes
a pen out of the holder - signs.

NORTH
Anything else?

DET. HAROLD
Yeah. Don't ever try anything like
that again.

NORTH
I appreciate it.

North nods. Stand. End of story.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE WAITING AREA - DAY

North waits outside the wooden doors. He paces a bit - chews
on a fingernail.

DING!

The elevator doors open. North checks his watch. Then, -

The Doctor comes walking down the hallway, looking down, he
doesn't see North, and then - he does.

He stops dead in tracks. North can see a protective brace
around the Doctor's wrist.

DOCTOR
What are you doing here?

NORTH
Please, Doctor...

DOCTOR
I don't have you down for an
appointment.

NORTH
I'm desperate.

DOCTOR
That's why I won't see you any
longer.

The Doctor moves past him - opens his office door - North follows him inside.

NORTH

What's that supposed to mean?

DOCTOR

You've become dependant.

NORTH

I'll pay you - whatever you need.
Whatever you want.

DOCTOR

I'm sorry, no.

NORTH

No?

The Doctor stares into North's eyes - he's serious.

NORTH (CONT'D)

So, what is this? Some kind of self-righteous high? Telling me no?

DOCTOR

I'm afraid not.

NORTH

You can't refuse me care.

DOCTOR

Care? What did you expect from coming here?

NORTH

I came here to feel normal.

DOCTOR

Do you? Feel normal?

NORTH

Not in a long time.

DOCTOR

I'm truly sorry. Please find
another physician.

North is taken back. He SLAMS the chair next to him.

NORTH

I have headaches. Thoughts of
suicide. You never said anything
about that. My nose bleeds? They're
getting worse. I puke in my garbage
can every time I wake up from being
asleep.

DOCTOR

Side effects.

NORTH

From what?

DOCTOR

You're an addict. A junky.

NORTH

Addicted to hypnosis?
(off the harsh silence)
Fuck you. You know that? Fuck you!

The Doctor stands back, guilty, astonished...

DOCTOR

You can leave.

NORTH

You won't help me? Fine.

North leaves, SLAMS the door behind him. The Doctor starts
after him. Fuck.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

A minute later. North is on the elevator - pushes the "doors
close" button several times - he's a ticking time bomb and
just wants to get out of the building.

The doors begin to close, as -

The Doctor uses the palm of his hand to keep them open. North stares in on him.

DOCTOR

I won't put you back under. But if you're in distress, I will help you.

NORTH

How?

The Doctor hands North a book - SELF HYPNOSIS. North takes it.

DOCTOR

(fixes him with a stare)
Good luck.
(turns to leave)

NORTH

Wait.

The Doctor turns back to him -

NORTH (CONT'D)

Who were they? The others?

DOCTOR

Projections of your inner mind.

NORTH

(the Doctor's wrist)
They did that to you?

DOCTOR

No. You did...

North stands holding the book. By the time he looks up - the Doctor is gone. The elevator doors close.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

North sits on his couch. He closes his eyes - then begins to breathe in deep. Several deep counts.

NORTH (V.O.)

Find somewhere comfortable and quiet, and sit down. Now, relax your body. A good way of doing this is to close your eyes and imagine waves of relaxation running down your body from your scalp downwards, washing out stress.

The SELF-HYPNOSIS book rests on the coffee table - there are bookmarks and tabs partitioning certain pages.

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

I am feeling relaxed and comfortable with myself. With every breath, I am becoming more relaxed and more comfortable.

A stopwatch lies on the end table next to the couch. It's RUNNING... time begins to move slower, as -

North fall into trance. His body falls back, and -

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

It is well after mid-night, and the train carries the usual night crawler crowd.

North is seated near the back of the car. Alone. Eyes shifting nervously.

The METAL CLANG of the doors OPENING. The Messenger steps inside - her light blinds everyone seated inside the train car - some of them fall to their knees as if an angel was present.

North looks away as she approaches. She touches the top of his head with her hand. The light dissipates.

North looks to her -

THE MESSENGER

Element?

North takes a moment, then -

NORTH

Take me somewhere high.

The Messenger gestures for North to climb to his feet - he does, then follows her to the back exit. They walk through, and -

INT. MOUNTAIN TOP - DUSK

North stands alone on the tip of an impossibly high finger of rock. The rooftop of the world. All around him, as far his eyes can see, lie tiny lights. Pink in the sunset light.

North looks into the sunset. Heavy thoughts weigh on his mind. A hand appears on her shoulder.

It's the Messenger.

NORTH

It isn't real. We aren't really standing here.

She smiles.

NORTH (CONT'D)

I can step out.

With one last glance back to the Messenger, North steadies himself and stares straight down. The ground too far to see. Breathless, he steps out into the air.

He FALLS.

And endless weightless step. The Messenger watches as North's body flails head over heels - faster, until he's nearly reached the ground. But, before he does -

EXT. GREEN LAWN - DUSK

North sits Indian-style on the blades of perfectly cut grass. He stands. Looks around.

There are two MEN walking towards him. Scowls on their faces as they approach. The Messenger fades behind a large oak tree.

NORTH (V.O.)
They're not real...

The Men are on him now. North stands completely still - each man places a hand on his unsuspecting shoulder. North tries to step back - another MAN pushes him from behind - he's trapped.

North's face is wide with fear and shock.

His eyes search the distance for the Messenger - she's hidden herself like a small child after doing something wrong.

The Men come in even closer now.

NORTH (CONT'D)
You're not real!
(tried to break free)
Get your hands off me!

The Men restrain him - take him to the ground. Two of them place their knees on his wrists. North is helpless. The third man stands over him.

Raises his boot above his face and holds it there momentarily.

NORTH (CONT'D)
No! Fuck you! You aren't real!
You're not real!

The Man SLAMS his boot down onto North's face, but before we can see the damage...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Back in North's apartment. SCREAMING, North bolts upright. CHOKING on fear. There's no water - his fingers search for some, but he falls to the carpet.

After the panic subsides, North realizes that he is home.

His bridge of his nose is cut and blood drips down slowly. North feels it, WINCES in pain, he hands move down. His mouth is normal. His stomach looks fine. He starts to take a deep, everything-is-okay breath, when -

The PHONE RINGS. It almost sends him through the roof. At first, North ignored it, but It CONTINUES RINGING.

There's some ominous, building pressure in the room, forcing him to his feet. North finds his cell phone. He answers it, but says nothing.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Anna sits near the back of the dining area. She nervously twirls her cup as she waits - looking up to see North knifing through the crowded lobby.

North sits across from her.

The mood is bleak. There's no embrace. North now has a band-aid laid across the bridge of his nose - his face is black and blue.

Anna can't help but stare at him - almost unrecognizable. She takes an awkward second, then -

ANNA

What happened to your face?

NORTH

If I told you, you wouldn't believe me.

ANNA

Who did this to you?

NORTH

I think...

(as crazy as it sounds)

I did.

ANNA

What does that mean?

North reaches across the table for Anna's hand, but she moves it away at the last second. North notices.

NORTH

I called.

ANNA

I know.

NORTH

You didn't answer.

(off her silence)

I kept calling.

ANNA

I know.

North takes an uncomfortable breath, then settles into the back of the seat.

NORTH

I need to tell you something.

(she's gone quiet)

I went back to see my therapist and he refused to put me under.

ANNA

Why?

NORTH

I dunno. I think I did something to hurt him.

ANNA

While you were in trance?

North nods - yes., then takes a look around the room. He's grown paranoid of people. Anna notices. There's pain in her eyes now.

NORTH

How is that possible?

ANNA

I don't know.

NORTH

There were people there. They spoke to me. They could touch me.

ANNA

Jesus...

NORTH

Tell me, how is that even possible?

ANNA

There have been cases where people have interacted with their own subconscious. You'd have to be in a very deep trance to even consider it.

(off North's troubled eyes)

Is that how this -

(his nose)

Is that how this happened?

NORTH

Yes.

ANNA

Oh my God. Who put you under?

NORTH

I did.

ANNA

When?

NORTH

Yesterday.

(off her curious look)

I read a book.

Anna sits back now - she's somewhat appalled with that she's hearing.

NORTH (CONT'D)

The... projections? They're violent. Like they want to hurt me.

And here is the hard truth -

ANNA

(her teeth)

Because they want you to stop messing with your own mind.

North can see the desperation in her eyes. He can hear the concern in her voice. They stare at one another.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Look at your face...

NORTH

What do I do?

ANNA

Stop.

NORTH

I can't stop.

ANNA

You have to -

NORTH

(through his teeth)

I can't stop!

North slams his hands on the table. Anna grows quiet. Her eyes offer him pity. North is reeling.

ANNA

Your emotions and feelings can create fears that feed your anxiety.

NORTH

That's all inside my head...

ANNA

Yes, but your mind can do things - construct things that you wouldn't normally do. Things that you can't forget no matter how hard you try.

NORTH

I can erase them.

ANNA

You can't.

(beat)

By waking up certain things inside your mind, things that can harm you, you won't be able to simply delete them.

North begins to choke back. He's lost. He's not even able to look her in the eye.

NORTH

Where are you staying?

ANNA

Hotel by the park.

North nods - he knows why she can't be too specific with him.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I want to help you.

Now, finally, Anna reaches over and touches North's hand. He notices - offers her a thin smile.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The blinds are drawn. North lies flat across the bed. His shoes are off. His eyes are open. Anna stands next to his body.

She begins by taking her pointer and middle fingers and touching the top of his big toe - she slowly moves them across the face of his foot in a "walking" fashion.

ANNA

I want you to relax. Clear your mind of any thought, and imagine my fingers are tiny weights.

(beat)

Can you feel them?

North closes his eyes - nods.

NORTH

Yes.

ANNA

Good.

(fingers up his shin)

Feel the tiny weights as they move across your skin. Gently. They're releasing the pressure. Feel them move up your leg...

Anna's fingers walk up North's thigh and onto his stomach. North lies completely still.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Now, feel the weight rest against your chest - your neck. Can you feel them? Can you feel the pressure leaving your body?

(off his silence)

You are special. You are unique.

Anna takes her fingers and opens each of North's eyelids. His eyes move rapidly from side to side - as if he's watching something - following it with his eyes.

Anna sits on the edge of the bed...

ANNA (CONT'D)

You are a great work. You are beautiful...

And, we -

INT. TENEMENT HALLWAY - DAY

Elevator doors mechanically grind open. North steps out of the carriage, he stares down the long cinder block corridor.

He starts down. We've been here before.

There are dozens of apartment doors. No numbers. North stares at each one, until - he reaches the door at the far end of the hall.

He places his hand on the knob and slowly turns - transported to:

EXT. TENEMENT PARK - DAY

North stands in the sunlight. He sees a FAMILY playing together on the playground. He's on edge - expecting the worst.

ANNA (O.S.)

You do great work... you do your absolute best...

North looks up - as if it's a voice from heaven. The Messenger approaches from behind. Only, this time there's no unimaginably bright light around her.

She has grown dim. Almost old.

North turns to her. A look of surprise in his eyes. They stare at one another.

NORTH

I did this to you?

THE MESSENGER

Element?

ANNA (O.S.)

You do belong here... your
contribution is important...

NORTH

I want you to take me to see the
future.

The Messenger does nothing.

NORTH (CONT'D)

The future. You understand?

The Messenger's mouth opens. She wants to deny him, but it's
as is she cannot articulate any other words.

NORTH (CONT'D)

What the fuck is wrong with you?!
Do as I ask!

The Messenger steps back. Wrong. Before she can take another
step -

North reaches out and grabs the Messenger by the throat - her
eyes grow wide in fear. She lifts her fingers and wraps them
around North's own hands. They struggle, before -

Her eyes close...

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Some ambiguous building. North stands on the ledge. He looks
down over the city.

The Messenger stands on the opposite end. She keeps her
distance.

ANNA (O.S.)

You are strong... you have undying
gratitude...

North covers his ears with his hands.

NORTH
(to the sky)
Shut up!

He turns - Anna stands before him. She is bruised and scratched. North looks at her - confused.

ANNA
Please...

NORTH
Anna?

The Doctor beside her now, along with Detective Harold. Concerned looks on their faces - Harold with his gun drawn.

North finds the Messenger's eyes -

NORTH (CONT'D)
What is this place?

She says nothing.

NORTH (CONT'D)
Why did you bring me here?

North approaches her - as he passes the others, they vanish into thin air. North and the Messenger stand alone.

He places his hands on her shoulders. Shakes her a bit.

NORTH (CONT'D)
Look at me. What is this place? Is
this the future?

Silence.

NORTH (CONT'D)
Is this my future? Does something
bad happen here? Answer me!

The Messenger begins to CRY. This only infuriates North. He shoves her back.

North begins to pace - really losing it now. He runs his fingers through his hair and then, he's right back -

Standing over the Messenger now.

NORTH (CONT'D)

You freak...

(beat)

You can't speak to me because you're nothing. You're not even real - I created you in some sick part of my fucking mind, you worthless piece of shit!

North reaches down and forces her to stand. He grabs her by the back of her neck and walks her to the ledge.

NORTH (CONT'D)

See that? If I throw you off this building do you know what happens? Huh? Tell me!

The Messenger cowers in fear.

NORTH (CONT'D)

You wanna find out? Do you! Do you!

North is about to launch the Messenger over the side of the ledge, when something comes up and BITES him on the neck - the STING of a BEE.

He releases her and clutches to his neck with both hands - falls to his knees in pain - looks back up to the Messenger. She's gone...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

North's body SPRINGS up to life. Gasping for air. His eyes refuse to cooperate and he falls clean out of the bed. They finally adjust.

North notices that the sun has gone down. He'd been under for a long time.

Anna is long gone. There's a note on the night stand. North goes to reach for it - but his neck forces him to wrench back in sharp pain. His fingers feel over - a bee sting.

North fights to the night stand and grabs the hand written note. He reads it to himself -

"I'm sorry. I can no longer see you. I'm sorry I couldn't help bring you back... A"

North reaches into the night stand drawer - removes the PISTOL.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY _ NIGHT

North, bandaged, coming through. It's empty this early, but --

INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR - NIGHT

North in the rising elevator. Imploding.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Anna at the desk. Red hand marks around her arms - she's shaken. Pouring herself a vodka. As -

There's a KNOCKING at her DOOR - Anna simply ignores it.

More KNOCKING. Anna glances up at the door...

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

North at her door. His pointer finger in the keyhole - he waits silently.

North KNOCKING again.

His hand on the door handle, prepped and -

ANNA (O.S.)

Who is it?

NORTH

Hotel maintenance...

ANNA (O.S.)
Is something wrong?

NORTH
Open the door please.

The CLICK of the door opening - just as..

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

North BURSTS through the hotel room door. Anna backtracks and falls back onto one of the queen beds.

North at his threshold, calmly pointing the PISTOL -- at Anna.

NORTH
Don't scream.

Anna nods - reluctantly obeys. North locks the door behind him.

ANNA
Please...

NORTH
Too late for that.

ANNA
What do you want?

NORTH
Are you married?
(off her confusion)
Answer me!

She chokes back her fear, tries to stay strong in the moment.

ANNA
I don't know what to say. I'm
sorry.

North is reeling from the body blow -

NORTH

You're sorry? You think that's what
I want to hear?

ANNA

What do you want me to say?

NORTH

"Why" would be enough for me!

ANNA

It was just a fling. Something to
take the edge off... to keep things
on an even keel.

North boils over, then cracks. He drops his arm, falls back
to lean against the wall in anguish. Then, he touches Anna's
face. Snaps back -

NORTH

YOU LIED TO ME!

ANNA

(through tears)

You've lost your way, can't you see
that?

North SLAMS his fist into the hotel room wall - dents the
drywall inward.

NORTH

Fuck!

He raises the PISTOL right at ANNA. She presses her lips
together, closes her eyes.

North can't bring himself to do it. He's falling to pieces
now. A sudden RUSH OF PAIN to his head - sends him back - his
hands gripping his temples. A FLASH of blinding light.

Anna opens her eyes.

ANNA

What is it?

NORTH

Oh, now you want to help me?!

She gets brave. Stands closer to him - reaches her hand out. North brushes it back in anger.

A change in North as he studies her, measures her. Some moment of truth is here. Anna braces, unsure.

ANNA

You don't want to do this. You don't want to hurt me.

She really looks at him now. Fear overwhelmed by curiosity.

NORTH

(wary)

Maybe I do...

Touchy, but she has his attention. She wipes a tear. A step closer.

ANNA

Give me the gun.

NORTH

It doesn't matter. You're a liar.

ANNA

You know I'm not.

NORTH

YOU ARE A LIAR!

There they are. Two people standing in a room. Squared off.

And now Anna starts crying. Really crying. North gathering his wits again.

ANNA

You can't see it now, but if you hurt me, there are consequences. You don't just wake up from this.

NORTH

I should kill you.

(beat)

I'm awake. I have control of my
mind. You don't get to give orders!

ANNA

Please, don't -

Too late. She hesitates. Stunned. North grabs her by the arm,
they're leaving. Through her struggle, he's opening the door.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

North and Anna file inside just as the door closes. He lunges
the gun into her side.

The elevator climbs rapidly - the BLINKING floor numbers
indicate floors they WHIZ past.

EXT. ROOFTOP - SUNRISE

The utility door opens and the struggling pair emerge and
move towards the center of the blacktop. North shoves Anna
there.

NORTH

(eyes wander)

I know this place...

Anna looks at him like he's crazy.

ANNA

You only think you know it.

NORTH

I know!

(recklessly loud)

I know I've been here before. This
is where she took me - when you put
me under.

As Anna tries to process this.

North still pacing. Anna watches as she sees the memory is driving him nuts.

ANNA

You aren't able to distinguish
between the two anymore.

NORTH

I haven't lost my mind.

North looks at her. Am I crazy? What?

ANNA

(her arms)

Look. You did this to me.

North looks down at the bruises on her arms. He gently runs his fingers over the marks.

NORTH

That's impossible.

ANNA

Because you don't remember?

North wavers - is he supposed to answer? He shrugs. Sinking.

NORTH

I know what's real and what's not -

ANNA

- like her? Like the woman that you
see in your head? The woman in all
white?

North takes her down to her knees. Anna is really scared now.

NORTH

How do you know about her?
(when she doesn't answer
instantly -)
The woman? How do you know about
her!?

ANNA

You told me! You told me about her!
(trying not to break down)

Suddenly, North grabs Anna by the arms and rips her to her feet. He forces her to the ledge - jerks her along.

NORTH

Why would I tell you about her? Why
would I do something like that?

ANNA

Because you were under. You didn't
even know you had told me about her
until just now.

(desperate)

YOU DON'T REMEMBER!

NORTH

When? Last night? In my apartment?

ANNA

Yes.

NORTH

That's a lie!

ANNA

(emphatic)

Right before I left you the note.

North raises the pistol - eyes gone dead - shit - focus...

ANNA (CONT'D)

Please...

NORTH

I was here!

ANNA

She took you here... you argued
about wanting to see the future...
And this was where she took you...
remember? You grabbed her... she
was afraid of you!...

NORTH

Why would she be afraid?

ANNA

Because you want to see something
your mind won't allow!

North is so ready to kill her. Anna starting to cry -- hands
over her face - covering up - steadies herself for the bullet
she knows is coming -

North - about to pull the trigger -

SUDDENLY...

DOCTOR (O.S.)

North, please stop.

NORTH (V.O.)

Don't turn around...

North turns to find -

The Doctor. Standing there on the roof. Full of compassion.
Staring into North's gloomy eyes.

North stares into the Doctor's eyes, then LAUGHS, almost
maniacally.

NORTH (CONT'D)

(to Anna)

You brought him here?

DOCTOR

She called me after your session
last night. She was concerned.

NORTH

This is even below you, Doc.

DOCTOR

I'm here to help you.

NORTH

How? Everyone suddenly wants to
help me - is that right?

DOCTOR
You're delusional. The nose bleeds?
They're a symptom -

NORTH
A symptom of what?

DOCTOR
Your mind is broken, North.

NORTH
Yeah? And I suppose you had nothing
to do with that?

DOCTOR
You are the one who broke it.
You're an addict.

NORTH
And that would make you what? My
supplier? You're sick -

DOCTOR
No. I'm desperate.

North lifts the gun and points it at the Doctor now. His hand
twitches a bit.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Your hand. The tremors. Panic
attacks.

NORTH
(affably)
Another symptom?

DOCTOR
I'm afraid so.

NORTH
So kind of you to diagnose me,
Doctor.

DOCTOR

When I first met you, you were a good man with moderate to severe anxiety disorder.

NORTH

I am a good man.

DOCTOR

That is who you were. What you are now is far worse.

A FLASH of LIGHT burns through North's skull. He steps back. Anna frozen in anticipation.

NORTH

I'm in control.

DOCTOR

You're violent. You're irrational. Obsessed over the future you will never see, and a married woman you will never have.

North doesn't like that statement one bit. He's gritting his teeth now.

NORTH

You're working together. The two of you.

The Doctor steps forward. Unafraid and exasperated.

DOCTOR

You are in control right now.

NORTH

I know I am!

Anna looks at the Doctor, INTENT, determined.

DOCTOR

There's a team of police investigators waiting for me on the first floor of this building.

NORTH

You called the cops?

DOCTOR

You're holding a gun. What choice did I have?

The tremors coming quickly now - North's eyes blink - he can barely stay focused, starts RAMBLING -

NORTH

I'm supposed to be here...

DOCTOR

They have a file. They've decided that if you aren't willing to surrender your weapon and voluntarily turn yourself in -

NORTH

She showed me this place. She - she brought me here for a reason...

DOCTOR

- they're shoot you, North. Do you understand?

The Doctor looks as if he's the one in pain, the words are breaking his heart.

ANNA

He's telling you the truth.

NORTH

Nice. So you're in on this now too?

North shakes his head impatiently. What the fuck is going on?

DOCTOR

We're running out of time. If I can't convince you to come back...

NORTH

Come back? You expect me to believe everything you've just said?

DOCTOR
I'm hopeful.

North leans back. The Doctor walks over to him, closer.
Desperate.

NORTH
Don't -

DOCTOR
This is the last resort.

North can see the pain in the Doctor's eyes. Could it be true?

NORTH
If I'm -
(quiets himself)
Can it be undone?

DOCTOR
No.

NORTH
Then, what?

DOCTOR
The balance of power lies in
pharmaceuticals. You'll rely on
medications to bring you back to
reality.

NORTH
Medications?

DOCTOR
You'll be admitted to a facility.

NORTH
I'm not crazy...

DOCTOR
No?

North says nothing. Anna lost in her gaze. The Doctor right on him now.

As fast as lightening, North takes the pistol and holds it up to his right temple -

ANNA

Wait -

North wavers the gun back and forth between the two of them.

NORTH

This is the balance of power.

DOCTOR

You're not thinking clearly.

NORTH

You're wrong. I see exactly what you're doing.

DOCTOR

Then blast away. Because that's the only other hope you have of getting off this rooftop.

North's hand is shaking now. Sweat running off his brow. Breaking down -

NORTH

I'll do it.

DOCTOR

No, you won't.

NORTH

YES I WILL!

DOCTOR

(gently)

Please stop.

North begins to stutter. His hand contorts. He body grows tired of the tension. He drops the pistol to the floor. Intervention.

NORTH

(horrified)

I can't - I can't remember -

He looks up - THE MESSENGER is standing behind the Doctor now. She smiles at him - beautiful and calm.

The Doctor follows North's eyes behind him - there's nothing there. Anna and the Doctor lock eyes.

DOCTOR

Is she here now?

North keeps his trance fixed on the Messenger. She's right in front of him now. He offers her a sharp grin.

THE MESSENGER

Element?

NORTH

(softly)

Save me.

FLASH TO WHITE, and -

EXT - SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

North stands just beyond the lip of the front yard. The trees are a deep green, vibrant colors. Painfully real.

North glances around him, a familiar look in his eye - the Messenger is nowhere to be found.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

North walks inside. His face - bone-tired. He touches the antique furniture as he makes his way into the -

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

A FAMILY at the table. A half-eaten meal before them. A carton of milk near the center. The FATHER is dreadfully missing from the scene.

A MOTHER SOBS over her plate.

TWO BOYS - the ones from the waterfall earlier, sit with distracted frowns upon their faces.

North, obviously affected by the memory, cautiously walks to them. They don't see him. He stands behind the Mother.

NORTH
(an odd look)
I missed you. That's why I came
back home.

North places his hand on her shoulder. She closes her tearful eyes - almost as if she can feel his presence.

He pulls his hand back. Turns to the bedroom door down the hall.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

Light illuminates and then fades back to normal as North walks in. He's somehow now staring at -

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Two headstones. One larger than the other - weathered and washed out by decades of rain and wind.

The Epitaph reads : WEYLAND MAXFIELD.

North kneels - places his palm against the cold, stone face. There's some sort of healing in this gesture. In this moment, before he -

Turns to the headstone beside it. Newer. Easier to read:

NORTH MAXFIELD.

North's eyes grow wide. He stands now. Paralyzed by fear - there's nowhere to turn - this is the horrible truth he'd been searching for?

Just as North begins to SCREAM, we -

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Back where we started. North and the Messenger stare into each other's eyes. She smiles wide. Somehow knowing this is good-bye. North fights the tears...

DOCTOR (O.S.)

North?

North snaps out of the trance. The Messenger is once again, gone.

North, shaking, looks up and realizes Anna is now standing beside the Doctor.

NORTH

(stricken)

She's gone.

ANNA

North, please...

DOCTOR

Come back to us.

NORTH

I am back.

DOCTOR

We need to take you downstairs.

It's as if the words are being torn out of him -

NORTH

Knowing is too much. I can't live
with that...

North offers a look. His face streaked with tears, but beneath all that, a kind of fresh amazement. A moment of realization.

NORTH (CONT'D)

I want to live a real life again.

DOCTOR

You can. It may not be the life
you'd planned, but it *is* a life.

North takes a deep breath, as if it's his very first.
Cherishes the air. Then, begins backing to the ledge.

The Doctor and Anna approach him -

NORTH

Thank you...

North begins to run... he arrives at the ledge, looking down
at the sheer distance - stopping only to admire the view.

North hurtles to the ground. The casual glance of a stranger.
A smile upon his face.

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

No one can create in your reality
but yourself. It's never fearing,
never dependant upon another
person, place or thing... it's all
mirrors. Potential gifts. Because
at any given moment, we are either
giving love... or asking for it.

The ground approaches...

BLACK. And, then -

THE MESSENGER (V.O.)

Element?

THE END