

"M A S S"

written by

Adam J. Nadworniak

Address
Phone
E-mail

FADE IN:

EXT. QUIET SUBURBAN STREET - PRE-DAWN

A pale winter sky just beginning to lighten. Porch lights blink off one by one. Sprinklers hiss over frozen lawns. A DOG barks somewhere down the block, then stops.

Stillness that feels earned.

INT. JONAH HALE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Soft yellow light. A small, worn kitchen. The coffee maker GURGLES. A pan SIZZLES.

LINDA HALE, early 40s, exhausted but grounded, cooks eggs in pajamas and a hoodie. She flips one badly, lets it tear, swears quietly to herself.

At the table, JONAH HALE, 17, thin, half-asleep, stares into his phone without scrolling.

EVIE HALE, 14, sharp, restless, in a hoodie two sizes too big, pours cereal directly into a mug.

TOM HALE, early 40s, work boots, jacket half on, scans his phone for weather.

LINDA

If you're late again, the school's calling me, not you.

JONAH

They always call you.

LINDA

That's because you ignore them.

EVIE

He ignores everything.

Jonah glances at her.

JONAH

You ignored deodorant.

EVIE

I ignored your opinion.

Tom cracks a faint smile.

TOM
Everyone eat something that isn't
sugar.

Evie lifts the cereal mug.

EVIE
This is fortified.

Linda slides a plate of eggs to Jonah. He pokes at them.

LINDA
You didn't sleep again.

JONAH
I slept.

LINDA
You watched your ceiling.

Jonah doesn't deny it.

Tom studies him more carefully now.

TOM
You still having those dreams?

JONAH
They're not dreams.

The room stills slightly.

EVIE
What are they then?

JONAH
Just... the feeling that something
else is awake when I'm not.

Linda forces a smile too fast.

LINDA
That's anxiety.

JONAH
That's what you call it.

The radio MURMURS with local morning news. Weather. Traffic.
Nothing urgent.

TOM
Power company says another brownout
tonight.

LINDA
Great. Candle dinner, whether we're
romantic or not.

EVIE
The grid's haunted.

JONAH
Everything's haunted.

Linda gives Jonah a look, half warning.

The toaster POPS. Normal again.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

Students pour through the front doors in heavy coats. The
familiar chaos of arrival.

Jonah walks alone. Head down. Evie catches up and presses his
forgotten jacket into his chest.

EVIE
You left this.

JONAH
I wasn't cold.

EVIE
You shake when you're cold.

Jonah softens.

JONAH
You keep track of that?

EVIE
Someone has to.

They head inside.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE OUTPATIENT CLINIC - MORNING

Clean, quiet, modern but modest.

DR. ELISE MERROW, early 40s, composed, deeply tired beneath
the professionalism, places EEG electrodes on an elderly
woman, MRS. DALTON, 70s.

BEN CARTER, late 20s, eager, watches monitors.

ELISE
Comfortable?

MRS. DALTON
No, but I wasn't comfortable
yesterday either.

Elise adjusts gently.

ELISE
Tell me when you hear anything.

MRS. DALTON
Hear... what?

ELISE
Your husband's voice.

Mrs. Dalton closes her eyes. The monitor flickers.

MRS. DALTON
He used to hum when he forgot the
words.

A small neural spike registers.

BEN
Signal's climbing.

Mrs. Dalton's eyes flutter open, startled.

MRS. DALTON
For a second... I almost heard him.

Elise watches the data, careful not to promise.

ELISE
The brain doesn't forget voices. It
forgets the door they come through.

Mrs. Dalton studies her.

MRS. DALTON
You ever lose someone that way?

Elise pauses just long enough to be noticed.

ELISE
Not like that.

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT - MORNING

Controlled chaos. Stretchers, monitors, voices overlapping.

MAYA RUIZ, early 30s, precise, battle-tested, stands over a TEEN with a broken arm.

MAYA

Deep breath. Look at me. Don't look at it.

She resets the bone with practiced speed. The teen SCREAMS.

MAYA (CONT'D)

That's it. You're done. Worst part is over.

Across the room, another patient laughs weakly with a nurse. It's loud but stable.

Maya washes her hands, staring into the mirror a moment longer than necessary.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - MORNING

Sparse congregation. Sunlight cuts through stained glass.

FATHER GABRIEL, early 50s, worn, kind without polish, addresses the room.

FATHER GABRIEL

Faith isn't certainty. Faith is choosing to act like love matters when it costs you something.

A YOUNG MAN scoffs quietly.

YOUNG MAN

That's not comforting.

Gabriel meets his eyes calmly.

FATHER GABRIEL

It's not meant to be.

A few smiles. A few frowns. Honest division.

EXT. LOCAL NEWS STATION - MORNING

A modest regional station.

EMILY CARTER, early 30s, alert, steady, adjusts her mic beside a news van.

PRODUCER
Seizure cluster. Clinics only.
Don't speculate.

EMILY
I never speculate.

PRODUCER
You always speculate.

Emily half-smiles and steps into position.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - HALLWAY - LATE MORNING

Elise walks with a tablet. Ben keeps pace.

BEN
Dalton wants another session
tomorrow.

ELISE
Put her down.

BEN
You're fully booked.

ELISE
Then the calendar's wrong.

They pass a muted television mounted on the wall. A morning
anchor speaks silently under a crawl:

"ISOLATED SEIZURE REPORTS UNDER REVIEW..."

Elise slows just slightly.

BEN
You worried?

ELISE
I'm always worried.

INT. JONAH'S HOUSE - FRONT HALL - LATE MORNING

Jonah grabs his backpack. Evie blocks the door.

EVIE
You forgot your charger.

She tosses it to him.

JONAH
You're a hero.

EVIE
I know.

Linda watches them with soft concern.

LINDA
Be home before dark.

EVIE
It's winter.

LINDA
It's a rule.

Jonah opens the door, pauses.

JONAH
Love you.

LINDA
You don't have to apologize for it
every time.

He smiles. Leaves.

EXT. JONAH'S STREET - LATE MORNING

Jonah jogs toward the bus stop. Notices a dead bird in the gutter. Still warm. No visible wounds.

He hesitates. Uneasy. Then the bus pulls up and breaks the moment.

INT. NEWS VAN - LATE MORNING

Emily is live on camera.

EMILY
Authorities are investigating a
brief neurological disturbance
reported at several outpatient
clinics this morning. No fatalities
have been confirmed—

She blinks.

Once.

Twice.

Her face locks.

EMILY (CONT'D)
—at this time—

Her eyes roll back.

She collapses violently out of frame.

The camera JERKS. Crew shouts.

Hands drag her partially back into view.

Her back arches unnaturally.

She inhales.

Her eyes open.

Blood-red.

She speaks calmly, clearly, in Latin.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Aperi.

The feed CUTS TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - CONTINUOUS

Alarms spike.

A man mid-conversation stiffens and collapses.

Then another.

Then another.

Maya turns as a patient slams to the floor beside her,
seizing violently.

MAYA
No— no, no, no—

INT. JONAH'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Evie pours cereal.

Her hand begins to shake.

The spoon CLATTERS to the floor.

EVIE

Mom?

She collapses hard, convulsing.

Linda SCREAMS. Tom rushes in, trying to hold her down.

The seizure is violent. Inhuman.

Then it STOPS.

Dead still.

Evie inhales sharply.

Stands.

Too smoothly.

Her posture is wrong.

Her eyes open.

Blood-red.

Jonah stands frozen in the doorway.

EVIE (CONT'D)

Aperi, frater.

Jonah SCREAMS.

SMASH TO BLACK.

TITLE: M A S S

INT. JONAH HALE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Evie stands rigid in the center of the wrecked kitchen. Milk pools across the tiles. Linda is on the floor beside her, frozen in shock. Tom grips Evie's shoulders, terrified to touch her.

Jonah staggers backward until his spine hits the refrigerator.

EVIE

Aperi, frater.

Her voice is her voice. The words are not.

Tom shakes her.

TOM

Evie. Evie, look at me. Look at me.

Her head tilts with a slight mechanical precision that doesn't belong to a human neck.

Her lips part again.

No sound comes out this time.

Her eyes roll back. She collapses into Tom's arms in another violent seizure.

Linda snaps out of her paralysis and rushes forward.

LINDA

Oh my God, oh my God—

Jonah fumbles for his phone with shaking hands, drops it, picks it up again.

JONAH

Nine-one-one, nine-one-one—

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The ER is now pure chaos.

Alarms shriek continuously. Patients thrash on gurneys. Several collapse directly onto the floor mid-sentence.

Maya moves automatically, pushing through bodies.

MAYA

Get her airway. Get him on oxygen.
You, pressure on the chest, now—

A NURSE screams as a MAN seizes so violently he flips his stretcher.

Maya rushes over. As she restrains him, he suddenly goes still.

Too still.

He opens his eyes.

They are blood-red.

The man looks straight at Maya.

MAN

Aperi.

Maya recoils, instinctively stumbling back.

The man lunges.

Security tackles him hard. He fights with impossible strength.

Maya stares, frozen by what she just saw.

INT. LOCAL NEWS STATION - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Producers shout over one another. Feeds cut in and out. One screen replays Emily collapsing on loop.

DIRECTOR

Kill that feed. Kill it now.

TECH

It's not responding—!

Another MONITOR displays a live shot of a traffic camera. A WOMAN slams into the pavement, convulsing beside her car.

Then another DRIVER seizes in the background.

The control room falls silent as everyone realizes this is not contained.

INT. JONAH HALE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Paramedics crowd around Evie on the floor. An oxygen mask fogs and clears rapidly as she breathes erratically.

Linda clutches Jonah's arm. Her hand is ice cold.

LINDA

She was fine. She was just pouring cereal.

A PARAMEDIC adjusts the IV.

PARAMEDIC

Has she ever had a seizure?

LINDA

No. Never.

Tom watches his daughter with hollow eyes.

TOM

She said something. Before she collapsed again.

The paramedic glances up.

PARAMEDIC
What did she say?

Jonah swallows hard.

JONAH
It wasn't English.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - TEST ROOM - SAME TIME

Lucas sits in the EEG chair again, waiting. Elise studies the live neural feed.

The monitor spikes suddenly.

ELISE
That's not artifact.

Ben leans in.

BEN
It looks like seizure activity.

Lucas winces.

LUCAS
I feel... weird.

He grips the arms of the chair as his body tightens.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
I smell burning.

The spike climbs sharply.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
Dr. Merrow—

He seizes violently.

Elise rushes forward, bracing his shoulders, calling his name.

ELISE
Lucas. Stay with me. Stay with me.

His seizure stops abruptly.

He sits up in one smooth, unnatural motion.

His eyes open.

They are blood-red.

He looks directly at Elise.

LUCAS

Aperi.

Ben stumbles backward in horror.

BEN

Oh my God.

Elise doesn't move. She stares into Lucas' eyes, studying him even as fear floods her face.

ELISE

Lucas, do you know who I am?

His head tilts the same wrong way Evie's did.

His mouth opens again.

But before any sound emerges, his body convulses violently and he collapses forward in Elise's arms.

His eyes return to normal.

He sobs in confusion and terror.

LUCAS

What just happened to me?

Elise holds him tightly, shaken.

ELISE

You don't remember anything?

Lucas shakes his head.

LUCAS

Just... noise.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - SAME TIME

Another wave of seizures erupts simultaneously across the department.

A WOMAN convulses on the floor. A CHILD collapses from a chair. A DOCTOR drops mid-stride.

Maya moves from one to the next, overwhelmed.

MAYA

We need more restraints. All hands,
now—

One of the seizing PATIENTS stops abruptly.

Stands up.

Looks around.

Half the room recoils at once.

The patient speaks clearly.

PATIENT

Aperi.

Two more stand.

Then three more.

Panic explodes.

Maya backs away slowly, heart slamming in her chest.

This is not medical.

INT. JONAH HALE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - AFTERNOON

Evie is loaded into an ambulance. Linda sobs openly now, no longer holding back.

Tom grips the side of the ambulance, knuckles white.

Jonah stands alone near the curb, shaking.

The back doors slam shut.

The ambulance pulls away with sirens screaming.

Jonah suddenly notices something on his arm.

A faint darkening beneath the skin. Like a bruise forming in the shape of letters.

He rubs at it with his thumb.

The shape doesn't fade.

The outline becomes clearer.

A word is forming.

HELP

Jonah's breath catches.

He stares at it, unable to move.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - AFTERNOON

The church is louder now. People whisper urgently. Some are crying.

Father Gabriel moves among them, trying to calm everyone.

A MAN suddenly collapses near the front pew.

A seizure erupts.

Two parishioners rush to restrain him.

The seizure stops.

The man sits upright.

His eyes open.

Blood-red.

He smiles gently at Father Gabriel.

MAN

Aperi.

The lights flicker.

Several parishioners scream.

Father Gabriel stands his ground, fear visible but contained.

FATHER GABRIEL

You don't belong here.

The man tilts his head, studying him.

Then he collapses again into a violent seizure and goes still.

Human again.

Silence swallows the church.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - LATE AFTERNOON

Body bags begin to stack along one wall.

Security barricades doors from the inside.

The possessed patients now roam in small, silent groups, not attacking indiscriminately, but watching.

Maya crouches behind an overturned medication cart with two other nurses.

NURSE

They're not even breathing hard.

Maya peeks around the cart. Locks eyes with a possessed WOMAN across the room.

The woman smiles slowly.

Maya ducks back, shaking.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - RECOVERY ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Lucas lies in a bed, still shaking.

Elise sits beside him, holding his hand. Ben watches from the doorway.

LUCAS

You looked at me like I wasn't me anymore.

Elise swallows.

ELISE

For a moment... you weren't.

Lucas trembles.

LUCAS

Am I going to do that again?

Elise can't answer honestly.

ELISE

We're going to watch you very carefully.

Her phone buzzes. She checks it.

Her face drains of color.

BEN
What is it?

ELISE
Seizures at every major hospital in
the city. Simultaneous.

Ben exhales hard.

BEN
That's not a virus.

Elise stares at Lucas' EEG readout.

ELISE
No.

INT. JONAH HALE'S HOUSE - JONAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jonah sits on his bed in the dark. The house is silent
without Evie.

He stares at the word on his arm again.

HELP has darkened further.

The skin tightens.

Another faint shape begins to form beneath it.

Jonah's phone BUZZES with an unknown emergency alert.

He doesn't look at it.

He whispers into the empty room.

JONAH
Evie?

The bruised letters ripple slightly.

Not changing.

Just acknowledging.

Jonah presses his forehead into his hands and breaks down.

FADE OUT.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - NIGHT

The ER is lit only by emergency power now. Half the fluorescents have gone dead. The remaining lights flicker like failing nerves.

Possessed patients move slowly through the department in small groups. They do not run. They observe.

Maya crouches behind a crash cart with two nurses, KAREN and ISAAC. All three are shaking with exhaustion.

KAREN

They're not even trying to leave.

ISAAC

Why would they?

A possessed MAN passes within six feet of their hiding spot. He pauses. Tilts his head. Listens.

Maya holds her breath.

The possessed man moves on.

Maya exhales shakily.

MAYA

They're looking for something.

CUT TO:

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - SERVER ROOM - NIGHT

The building hums with backup power. Elise and Ben have dragged portable monitors into the cramped server room.

Streams of EEG data roll across four screens at once. Elise types rapidly, layering datasets.

BEN

These hospitals aren't connected to our network.

ELISE

The brains are.

She highlights a waveform. Identical spike patterns appear on every monitor.

ELISE (CONT'D)

This is not random seizure activity. This is synchronization.

Ben goes pale.

BEN
You're saying it's coordinated.

ELISE
I'm saying it's structured.

She scrolls again. The pattern repeats across dozens of patients.

ELISE (CONT'D)
And it's expanding.

CUT TO:

INT. JONAH HALE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The living room is dim. Candles burn on the coffee table. The power is out.

Linda sits on the couch, wrapped in a blanket, staring at the blank television screen like it might turn back on through willpower alone.

Tom stands in the kitchen doorway, rubbing his face.

Jonah sits on the floor by the couch, arms wrapped around his knees.

The word HELP on his arm has darkened. Another faint word beneath it has begun to form, still unreadable.

LINDA
I should be at the hospital.

TOM
They wouldn't even let us in.

LINDA
That's my daughter in there.

The words hang in the air.

Jonah swallows, staring at his arm.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The church basement is now crowded. Cots, blankets, crying children. A radio murmurs emergency alerts.

Father Gabriel moves through the room, checking on people.

A WOMAN rocks her seizing husband on the floor.

WOMAN

He was fine ten minutes ago. He was
talking—

The husband goes still.

Everyone freezes.

His eyes open.

Blood-red.

Several people scream.

Father Gabriel steps forward instinctively.

FATHER GABRIEL

You are not welcome here.

The man suddenly convulses violently again and collapses
unconscious, human once more.

A stunned silence falls.

Father Gabriel backs away shakily.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ER - NIGHT

A scream echoes from the pediatric wing.

Maya flinches.

MAYA

Stay here.

She moves alone down the darkened hall.

INT. PEDIATRIC WARD - CONTINUOUS

A LITTLE GIRL seizes in a hospital bed. Her MOTHER clutches
her hand, sobbing.

MAYA

Okay, okay, okay—

The seizure stops.

The girl opens her eyes.

They are blood-red.

MAYA (CONT'D)

No...

The girl looks at her mother and speaks softly.

LITTLE GIRL

Aperi.

The mother recoils in horror.

The girl convulses again and goes limp.

Maya backs away, shattered.

CUT TO:

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - HOLDING ROOM - NIGHT

Lucas sits on his bed, knees pulled to his chest. Elise enters quietly.

LUCAS

I thought it was a nightmare again.

Elise sits beside him.

ELISE

Did you feel it coming?

Lucas nods.

LUCAS

It was like something leaning in to listen.

Elise closes her eyes briefly.

CUT TO:

INT. JONAH HALE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jonah sits on his bed, staring at his arm under candlelight.

The second word beneath HELP finishes forming.

STAY

Jonah's breath catches.

JONAH
I am staying.

The letters ripple faintly.

A new word begins forming, slowly.

RUN

Jonah shakes his head violently.

JONAH (CONT'D)
No.

RUN darkens.

Jonah presses his sleeve down over it, trembling.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY SKYLINE - NIGHT

The entire city is now under rolling blackouts. Fires burn in scattered neighborhoods. Sirens echo endlessly.

Helicopters sweep searchlights over rooftops.

CUT TO:

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - SERVER ROOM - NIGHT

Elise scrubs through emergency surveillance feeds now being routed online.

A hospital hallway camera shows possessed patients walking in synchronized formation.

Ben stares at the screen, horrified.

BEN
They look like they're... patrolling.

ELISE
They're organizing.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ER - NIGHT

The possessed gather near the center of the ER now. One steps forward, a man in a hospital gown.

He looks directly at Maya behind the cart.

He speaks clearly.

POSSESSED MAN

We are counting.

Maya's blood turns to ice.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah enters with Tom and Linda. The room is packed and loud.

Father Gabriel notices Jonah instantly and moves toward him.

FATHER GABRIEL

You should be home.

Jonah lifts his sleeve without speaking.

The words HELP and STAY are visible.

A new word fades into view beneath them.

NEAR

Gabriel stares, shaken.

FATHER GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Near what?

The letters ripple slowly.

Near becomes NEAR YOU.

Gabriel meets Jonah's eyes, troubled.

CUT TO:

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LATE NIGHT

Ben dials frantically on a landline.

BEN

Every hospital line is dead or
locked.

ELISE

They're sealing themselves from the
inside.

Ben looks at Elise.

BEN
Who's "they"?

Elise doesn't answer.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ER - LATE NIGHT

The possessed now stand in a loose ring facing inward toward a central nurse's station.

They are waiting.

The possessed man from earlier tilts his head as if listening to an invisible voice.

POSSESSED MAN
The door is opening wider.

Maya grips a scalpel, her hands slick with sweat.

CUT TO:

INT. JONAH HALE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is empty now. Everyone has gone to the church shelter.

The front door creaks open slightly on its own in the wind.

The power is dead.

In the kitchen, faint moonlight catches the refrigerator door.

Something scratches gently from the other side.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The basement is packed now. Dozens of people. Crying children. Someone vomiting quietly into a trash can. A battery lantern flickers on a folding table.

Father Gabriel moves through the crowd with quiet urgency, offering water, blankets, touch on shoulders.

Jonah sits with his parents against the far wall. Linda keeps one arm around him, the other clutched to her chest.

Tom stares at the door like he's waiting for it to break inward at any second.

Jonah watches the writing on his arm beneath his sleeve. It faintly pulses.

LINDA
You're freezing.

She pulls his sleeve down tighter, hiding the skin.

JONAH
I'm fine.

LINDA
You're not fine. None of us are fine.

Jonah nods, but his eyes stay on the door.

Across the room, a TEENAGE GIRL begins hyperventilating.

TEENAGE GIRL
I can't feel my hands. I can't feel my hands.

Her boyfriend tries to calm her.

BOYFRIEND
You're okay. You're okay.

She suddenly stiffens.

Her hands claw at the air.

She collapses into a seizure.

People scream and scatter.

Father Gabriel rushes forward and drops to his knees beside her.

FATHER GABRIEL
Easy. Easy. You're still here.

The seizure intensifies, then abruptly STOPS.

The girl's body goes perfectly still.

Her eyes snap open.

Blood-red.

She looks straight at Jonah across the room.

TEENAGE GIRL
(quiet, clear)
Near.

The room erupts in panic.

Before anyone can react, she convulses again violently and collapses unconscious.

Jonah's breath locks in his chest.

His sleeve burns.

He looks down.

Near has been rewritten darker beneath STAY.

NEAR YOU

He pulls the sleeve down, shaking.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - SAME TIME

The ER is now under full internal lockdown. Steel doors slide into place at both ends of the department.

The possessed move calmly among the remaining conscious patients.

Maya huddles with Karen and Isaac behind the nurses' station.

ISAAC
They're herding us.

MAYA
They're isolating.

A possessed WOMAN stops ten feet away from them.

She watches silently.

Another possessed MAN steps beside her.

Then another.

They form a loose arc.

The woman finally speaks, voice unnervingly calm.

POSSESSED WOMAN
You treat the body.

Maya grips her scalpel so tight her knuckles whiten.

POSSESSED WOMAN (CONT'D)
We treat the door.

Isaac whimpers silently.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - SERVER ROOM - NIGHT

Elise overlays real-time hospital EEG data with Lucas's earlier seizure pattern.

The waveform matches perfectly.

ELISE
It's the same architecture in every brain.

BEN
Like they're all running the same program.

Elise exhales.

ELISE
Or being run by it.

Ben scrolls.

BEN
It's clustering around stress responses. Fear. Attachment. Pain.

Elise's jaw tightens.

ELISE
They're using orientation as a handshake.

Ben looks at her.

BEN
So every time someone calls out for help...

Elise finishes the thought.

ELISE
...they open the door wider.

A distant BOOM shakes the building.

They freeze.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The first full BLACKOUT ripples across the city grid.

Streetlights wink out in sequence.

Windows go dark.

Sirens rise in terrified waves.

From the shadows, groups of possessed emerge and begin moving through the streets in organized sweeps.

They knock on doors.

They wait.

INT. JONAH HALE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is empty and powerless.

The wind pushes the front door open a few inches.

Moonlight spills across the kitchen floor.

From the dark hallway, a SHAPE moves slowly toward the living room.

Bare feet on tile.

EVIE'S VOICE (O.S.)
Mom?

The voice echoes hollow in the empty house.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The radio cracks to life with emergency chatter.

RADIO VOICE

Multiple neighborhoods reporting
coordinated disturbances. Do not
open your doors for anyone claiming
to be injured—

The signal cuts abruptly.

The lights flicker.

Go out.

Total darkness.

Screaming.

Then emergency lanterns SNAP on.

The crowd gasps collectively.

Jonah instinctively looks at his arm.

The words pulse sharply now, as if urgent.

DON'T

A second word forms beneath it.

ANSWER

Jonah's eyes widen.

Across the basement, someone pounds on the exterior door.

A WOMAN'S VOICE calls from outside.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Please! My daughter is hurt!
Please!

Several people start toward the door.

Father Gabriel raises his arms.

FATHER GABRIEL

Stop!

The pounding continues.

WOMAN (O.S.)
She's bleeding! I need help!

Jonah shakes violently.

JONAH
It's not her.

They all turn toward him.

LINDA
Jonah, what are you talking about?

Jonah pulls up his sleeve.

DON'T ANSWER is burned clearly into his skin now.

FATHER GABRIEL
(to the door)
Step away.

The pounding stops.

A beat of silence.

Then, from the other side of the door, the woman's voice changes.

WOMAN (O.S.)
Aperi.

The door buckles inward violently as something SLAMS against it.

People scream.

Gabriel and two men throw their weight against the door.

The pounding continues for several seconds.

Then stops.

Silence.

No retreating footsteps.

Nothing.

Everyone remains frozen in terror.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - LATER

A possessed MAN collapses mid-step.

He convulses.

His eyes flicker between red and normal.

Maya stares at him in confusion.

She steps forward cautiously.

MAYA

Sir? Can you hear me?

The man gasps.

MAN

Don't... let them back-!

He suddenly SEIZES harder.

Maya reacts without thinking.

She grabs a metal cautery tool from a nearby cart and presses it instinctively against the back of his skull.

The tool HEATS.

The man SCREAMS.

A layered SHRIEK bursts from his mouth that is not entirely human.

Then silence.

The man collapses, breathing, fully human again.

Maya stares down at him, horrified at what she's just done.

KAREN

What did you do?

Maya looks at the cautery tool in her hand.

MAYA

I hurt... the wrong thing.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Lucas bolts upright in his bed.

Sweating.

Terrified.

He throws the blanket back.

Fresh markings ripple up his forearm.

Elise rushes in.

ELISE

Lucas?

The words finish forming.

THEY ARE KNOCKING

Elise turns slowly toward the door.

EXT. SUBURBAN BLOCK - NIGHT

Three possessed stand in front of a darkened house.

They knock in perfect unison.

Once.

Twice.

Then they wait.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah grips his parents' hands tightly, shaking.

DON'T ANSWER fades.

A new phrase forms in its place.

THEY LEARN

Tom stares at the words, finally seeing them clearly for the first time.

TOM

What the hell is happening to you?

Jonah whispers.

JONAH
Something keeps talking through me.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. JONAH HALE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dark. Power dead. The kitchen is lit only by moonlight through the blinds.

A slow CREAK from the hallway.

A figure steps into the kitchen.

EVIE.

Barefoot. Hospital bracelet still on her wrist. Her head tilts at a wrong angle as she scans the empty room.

EVIE
Mom?

She takes one slow step forward.

From somewhere outside, a distant SIREN fades.

Evie stops.

Her eyes flicker. Blood-red pulses, then normal.

Her body trembles violently.

Her mouth opens.

A human scream breaks free.

EVIE (CONT'D)
They're inside me—

She convulses and slams into the kitchen table. The demon retakes control instantly.

Her face smooths.

Empty again.

She turns toward the back door and walks out into the dark.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Panic ripples through the shelter in shaking whispers.

Jonah sits rigid between his parents.

The words THEY LEARN pulse faintly beneath his sleeve.

TOM

What does "they learn" mean?

Jonah swallows.

JONAH

It means they remember what works.

Across the room, an OLD MAN suddenly gasps and slumps forward.

A seizure begins.

People scatter.

Father Gabriel rushes in to restrain him with two others.

The seizure stops.

The old man's eyes snap open. Blood-red.

He studies Father Gabriel calmly.

OLD MAN

Your house is thin.

Gabriel stiffens.

FATHER GABRIEL

This is not your house.

The old man smiles faintly.

OLD MAN

Not yet.

He convulses again and collapses unconscious.

Fear spreads through the basement like a physical pressure.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - NIGHT

Security barricades are now reinforced with overturned gurneys and carts.

The possessed who remain active move differently now. Faster. More curious.

Maya watches from behind cover as one possessed MAN presses his palm against a crash cart and forcibly bends the steel sideways with inhuman strength.

ISAAC
They're stronger.

MAYA
No. They're less careful.

Another possessed WOMAN turns suddenly and looks directly toward Maya's hiding place.

She smiles.

POSSESSED WOMAN
You tasted the door.

Maya flinches.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Lucas sits upright on the bed, shaking as Elise wipes sweat from his forehead.

ELISE
You're safe right now.

Lucas shakes his head rapidly.

LUCAS
No. It went quiet.

Elise freezes.

ELISE
Quiet how?

LUCAS
Like something stopped listening.

Ben enters hurriedly with a tablet.

BEN
Emergency traffic confirms multiple
burn-like interventions inside ERs.
Survivors coming back human.

Elise's eyes lock to Lucas's arm where THE YRE KNOCKING is
still faintly visible beneath the skin.

ELISE
They can be forced out.

BEN
With enough pain.

Elise closes her eyes, the weight of that settling in.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Linda sits with a WOMAN who is sobbing uncontrollably.

WOMAN
If my boy comes back to that door
and I don't open it...

LINDA
You don't open it.

The woman nods, but terror overwhelms logic.

Across the room, Jonah suddenly stiffens.

Fresh writing ripples rapidly across his skin.

COMING

FOLLOWED

Jonah's breath catches.

JONAH
They followed Evie.

Tom's face drains of color.

EXT. HOSPITAL ROOF - NIGHT

Wind howls.

National Guard helicopters thunder overhead, sweeping searchlights over the city.

Below, the hospital burns in scattered sections.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - NIGHT

A possessed TEEN rushes suddenly at Karen.

Maya lunges.

She swings the cautery tool and slams it against the back of the teen's skull.

A layered SHRIEK explodes from the teen's mouth.

The teen collapses unconscious, human again.

For the first time, several possessed recoil.

The mechanism has been observed.

POSSESSED MAN
They have learned pain.

Maya stares at the fallen teen, shaking.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise brings up three-dimensional neural mapping on the central monitor.

The model rotates slowly.

ELISE
They're not inhabiting random
regions. They're clustering around
a shared address.

She highlights a pulsing intersection area deep in the neural lattice.

BEN
Like a router.

ELISE
Like a doorframe.

Ben stares at the screen.

BEN
Can you close it?

Elise doesn't answer immediately.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah's entire forearm flares with new writing.

Inside

House

Jonah gasps.

JONAH
They're inside our house.

His mother's knees nearly buckle.

LINDA
Evie...

FATHER GABRIEL
We don't go chasing them into the
dark.

Jonah meets his eyes.

JONAH
They're not chasing us. They're
mapping us.

EXT. JONAH HALE'S STREET - NIGHT

The possessed now stand openly in the street.

Three on one side of the road.

Two on the other.

They wait in silence.

Inside the Hale house, Evie stands in the doorway, watching them.

Her face flickers.

Human.

Demon.

Human.

EVIE
(low, terrified)
I can feel all of them..

Her body straightens abruptly, under control again.

EVIE (CONT'D)
The door is wider now.

The others step closer.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - NIGHT

Maya stares as the possessed slowly rearrange themselves into flanking positions.

KAREN
They're changing tactics.

MAYA
So do we.

She lifts the cautery tool again.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - SERVER ROOM - NIGHT

Elise isolates the doorframe signal completely.

The waveform pulses with unnatural consistency.

ELISE
This interface is bidirectional.

Ben swallows.

BEN
Meaning...

ELISE

Every time one of them speaks
through a mouth... something speaks
back through the brain.

Her hands shake despite her effort to steady them.

ELISE (CONT'D)

We didn't detect invasion.

We built a receiver.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah's writing erupts again, frantic now.

NOT JUST HERE

EVERYWHERE

Jonah breaks.

JONAH

It's not a town. It's not a city.
It's everything.

Silence falls over the shelter as that truth lands.

FATHER GABRIEL

Then we don't wait anymore.

Everyone looks at him.

FATHER GABRIEL (CONT'D)

We fortify. We ration. We hold. And
we do not answer any voice that
does not live in this room.

Jonah stares at his burning arm.

A final word forms slowly beneath EVERYTHING.

LISTENING

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - NIGHT

The possessed move with new purpose now. No longer wandering.
No longer simply watching.

They spread out.

Flank.

Test distances.

Maya tracks them from behind the nurses' station. Her hand
trembles around the cautery tool.

KAREN

They're spacing themselves.

MAYA

Like riot control.

A possessed MAN steps forward alone.

POSSESSED MAN

Pain teaches.

Maya's breath catches.

POSSESSED MAN (CONT'D)

But it also shows you where to
strike.

Behind Maya, ISAAC whimpers.

ISAAC

They're learning us faster than
we're learning them.

The possessed man raises his head slightly, as if listening
to an unseen voice.

POSSESSED MAN

Begin.

Every possessed body in the ER attacks at once.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - SAME TIME

The shelter shudders as something slams into the exterior
door.

Once.

Twice.

The wood splinters.

People scream.

Jonah clutches his parents' hands.

Fresh writing scorches across his arm.

THEY SEND CHILDREN FIRST

Linda sobs.

LINDA

Oh my God...

A child's voice cries from the other side of the door.

CHILD (O.S.)

Please... I'm scared...

The pounding resumes, weaker now, deliberate.

Father Gabriel grips a shotgun one of the men retrieved from a pickup earlier.

FATHER GABRIEL

No one touches the door.

The crying outside intensifies.

Jonah shakes violently.

JONAH

That's not a child anymore.

The words CHANGE.

IT REMEMBERS BEING ONE

The shelter breaks into open sobbing.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - SERVER ROOM - NIGHT

Elise pushes deeper into the neural model.

The three-dimensional lattice rotates slowly. A bright cluster pulses at its center.

BEN
That cluster just accelerated.

ELISE
They're synchronizing across
distance.

Ben swallows.

BEN
We're watching thought-speed
logistics.

Elise taps into a live EEG feed from the hospital.

The spike pattern surges.

ELISE
They're massing.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - NIGHT

The possessed slam into barricades from three sides.

Steel buckles.

Glass shatters.

Maya strikes the first attacker with the cautery tool.

A layered SHRIEK erupts.

The attacker collapses.

Human again.

But two more immediately fill the gap.

The possessed pile forward, absorbing losses without
hesitation.

They do not fear pain.

They weaponize it.

Maya drags Karen backwards.

MAYA
Move. Now.

They retreat through a service corridor as the barricade collapses behind them.

EXT. SERVICE ALLEY BEHIND HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Maya, Karen, and Isaac burst into freezing air.

The city burns in pockets around them.

Possessed figures move through the streets in organized groups.

Karen vomits.

ISAAC
Where do we go?

Maya looks at the skyline in terror.

MAYA
Anywhere that still has people
watching each other.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The pounding outside stops.

Silence.

Too sudden.

Jonah's arm stings.

Fresh words appear slowly.

THEY MARKED THE DOOR

A LOW SCRAPING begins along the exterior wall.

Not pounding.

Dragging.

Testing.

Tom grips a crowbar tightly.

TOM
I'm not letting my house become my
kid's grave.

Father Gabriel meets his eyes.

FATHER GABRIEL
Then stand beside me.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Lucas jerks upright on the table.

LUCAS
They moved.

Elise rushes to him.

ELISE
Who moved?

LUCAS
All of them.

His forearm begins to bruise faintly on its own.

Elise stares in disbelief.

WORDS FORM ON LUCAS' SKIN

SHE SEES

Ben stumbles back.

BEN
He's doing it too.

Elise grips Lucas' wrist.

ELISE
Who sees?

LUCAS
You.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - NIGHT

The possessed continue to flood into the broken wing.

One pauses near a fallen mirror.
It watches its reflection curiously.
Then tilts its head.

POSSESSED WOMAN
The vessels degrade faster than
expected.

Another possessed replies.

POSSESSED MAN
Pain accelerates release.

They step over unconscious human bodies without
acknowledgment.

Their interest lies elsewhere.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET NEAR THE CHURCH - NIGHT

The street is lined with parked cars and dark houses.

Four possessed move silently toward the church.

They stop ten feet from the entrance.

All four simultaneously turn their heads toward Jonah's
location inside.

As if sensing his position exactly.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah suddenly gags.

His entire arm erupts in frantic writing.

THEY SEE YOU

THEY HEAR ME

Gabriel stares at him.

FATHER GABRIEL
You're not just watching them.

Jonah sobs.

JONAH
They're watching through me.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Lucas arches in pain.

LUCAS
They don't like me showing you.

Elise tightens her grip.

ELISE
Show me anyway.

Lucas screams.

The neural model spikes violently.

The bright cluster flares.

Then a fissure appears through the lattice.

A STRUCTURAL BREAK.

ELISE (CONT'D)
There.

Ben leans in.

BEN
That's the doorway.

Elise nods slowly, terrified and captivated.

EXT. SERVICE STREET - NIGHT

Maya, Karen, and Isaac move between burned cars, staying low.

A possessed figure steps into the street ahead of them.

Maya halts the others.

The possessed figure raises its head like an animal catching scent.

POSSESSED FIGURE
You burned one of us.

Maya raises the cautery tool.

MAYA
You burned a lot of people.

The figure smiles faintly.

POSSESSED FIGURE
Correction accepted.

It charges.

Maya drives the cautery tool into the base of its skull.

The SHRIEK is amplified this time.

The possessed collapses.

Human again.

But now, from the darkness, dozens of eyes reflect back at them.

They have been tracked.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The exterior emergency exit BLOWS inward violently.

Wood shatters.

A possessed TEEN stumbles inside, convulsing.

Father Gabriel fires instinctively.

The teen's body jerks.

The possessed SCREAM tears out of him.

The body collapses.

Human.

Dead.

Everyone freezes at what they just crossed.

Jonah collapses to his knees, shaking.

Fresh writing appears, steady and slow.

THEY WILL STOP PRETENDING NOW

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise stares at the doorway fissure.

BEN

Can you close it?

Elise shakes her head.

ELISE

Not while it's active.

BEN

Then what can you do?

Elise swallows.

ELISE

Listen.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The possessed outside withdraw suddenly.

Footsteps retreat.

Engines start in the distance.

The pressure vanishes almost instantly.

Jonah lifts his head in confusion.

WHAT JONAH SEES ON HIS ARM FORMS LAST

THEY ARE CHANGING STRATEGY

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The shelter is quieter now, but not calmer. People whisper instead of scream. The air feels permanently charged.

Jonah sits on a folding chair near the wall, wrapped in a blanket that does nothing to stop his shaking. His parents sit close, both touching him as if afraid he might disappear between them.

Father Gabriel confers quietly with three MEN who brought guns from their homes. Old hunting rifles. A pump shotgun. Nervous hands on every grip.

MAN 1

They pulled back on purpose.

FATHER GABRIEL

They learned the cost of rushing in.

MAN 2

So they'll starve us out.

FATHER GABRIEL

Or wait for us to turn on each other first.

Across the room, a WOMAN begins coughing hard. The cough doesn't sound right. Too deep. Too hollow. A few people shift away from her instinctively.

Jonah's arm suddenly tightens under the blanket.

He looks down as fresh writing pushes through.

THEY ARE WATCHING FOR FEAR

Jonah whispers it aloud before he can stop himself.

JONAH

They're watching for fear.

A few people hear him. The whisper spreads quickly.

LINDA

Jonah, stop.

JONAH

I can feel it. They lean in when people panic.

The coughing woman's eyes widen. She clamps a hand over her mouth.

The writing fades.

The coughing eases.

Jonah slumps back, stunned.

TOM
You stopped it.

Jonah shakes his head.

JONAH
I distracted it.

EXT. SERVICE STREET - NIGHT

Maya, Karen, and Isaac crouch behind a burned delivery truck. Smoke drifts across the street. The glow of distant fires pulses against shattered storefront glass.

The sound of slow footsteps approaches.

Karen grips Maya's arm.

KAREN
Don't move.

A possessed MAN passes within five feet of their hiding place. His head shifts slightly, scenting the air.

Maya's breath is silent and shallow.

The possessed man moves on.

The moment stretches forever.

Then quiet.

Maya exhales shakily.

MAYA
We can't stay outside. They're herding the streets.

ISAAC
To where?

Maya thinks fast.

MAYA
Anywhere they think is safe.

She looks toward the distant church hill, faintly visible above the rooftops.

MAYA (CONT'D)
Which means that's exactly where
they'll go eventually.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise and Ben stand over the glowing neural model. The
luminous fissure pulses softly now, like a living wound in
the brain's architecture.

Lucas lies exhausted on the exam table, eyes closed,
breathing shallow but steady.

ELISE
Every possession maps back to this
structure.

BEN
So the door is real.

ELISE
As real as anything neural ever is.

Ben rubs his face.

BEN
And if you listen through it...

Elise hesitates.

ELISE
Then something listens back.

A faint tremor runs through Lucas's arm.

ELISE (CONT'D)
He's stabilizing.

BEN
Or adapting.

Elise doesn't answer.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The coughing woman suddenly stiffens.

People flinch away from her.

She grips the edge of a folding table as her seizure begins.
Shorter than the others. Violent but contained.

Father Gabriel moves automatically.

The seizure stops.

She exhales sharply and sags forward.

Her eyes open.

Normal.

WOMAN
I'm still here...

Relief ripples through the room.

Then her face tightens in confusion.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
...why do I hear singing?

Her eyes change to blood-red mid-sentence.

The song continues through her mouth now. A low chant in
Latin.

The crowd screams.

Before she can stand, Jonah's arm erupts in burning urgency.

HURT THE BASE

Father Gabriel reacts on instinct.

He fires the shotgun into the concrete inches from the
woman's feet.

The blast echoes deafeningly in the basement.

The shock wave rattles her violently.

The layered shriek bursts from her mouth.

She collapses.

Human.

Alive.

Silence consumes the room in the wake of the gunshot.

Jonah stares at his arm in disbelief.

FATHER GABRIEL
You told me where to hit.

Jonah nods weakly.

JONAH
It hurts them where it feels like
us.

EXT. CITY EDGE - NIGHT

A line of possessed moves along a ridgeline overlooking the town. Below them, the church's small generator light glows faintly through basement windows.

One possessed woman steps forward slightly.

POSSESSED WOMAN
The signal brightens.

Another tilts his head.

POSSESSED MAN
The host is stabilizing.

POSSESSED WOMAN
Then invert the pressure.

They turn back into the darkness together.

EXT. SUBURBAN HILLSIDE ROAD - NIGHT

Maya's group moves uphill through backyards and alleyways. Houses are dark, doors nailed shut with furniture from the inside.

Karen suddenly stops.

KAREN
Listen.

A distant murmur carries on the wind. Not sirens. Not shouting.

Chanting.

Maya's stomach tightens.

MAYA
That's not people praying.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - SERVER ROOM - NIGHT

Elise isolates a faint pattern embedded beneath the doorway signal.

ELISE
There's something riding the
carrier signal.

BEN
Like what?

ELISE
Like a voice without language.

Ben stiffens.

BEN
You're telling me hell's on a
burner phone.

Elise almost smiles at the gallows humor.

Almost.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The shelter reorganizes instinctively around defense now.

Barricades shift.

People take turns watching the exits.

The mood is no longer panic.

It's grim vigilance.

Jonah sits with Father Gabriel near the rear door.

FATHER GABRIEL
You can feel when they're near.

Jonah nods.

JONAH
It's like pressure in my teeth.

FATHER GABRIEL
Tell me if it changes.

Jonah hesitates.

JONAH
It's changing right now.

Fresh writing forms.

THEY ARE MOVING TOWARD THE BURNERS

Gabriel stiffens.

FATHER GABRIEL
The ones who figured out the pain.

Jonah nods.

EXT. HILL ABOVE TOWN - NIGHT

Possessed groups split into coordinated columns moving in different directions.

One heads toward the hospital ruins.

Another toward the clinic district.

Another toward the church.

They do not rush.

They advance with the patience of something that does not fear tomorrow.

INT. SERVICE ALLEY NEAR CHURCH - NIGHT

Maya's group crouches behind a brick wall as the chanting grows louder.

Karen covers her ears.

ISAAC
They're coming straight down the main street.

Maya scans the dark and then locks eyes on a small side door at the back of the church.

MAYA
That's our window.

They break cover and sprint.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Lucas suddenly bolts upright.

Fresh words tear across his skin violently.

THEY SPLIT THE FORCE

Elise's face drains.

ELISE
They're countering.

Ben looks at the clock.

BEN
How fast can they change strategy?

ELISE
Now.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The main entrance shakes violently as something slams into it from outside.

Once.

Twice.

Jonah's arm flares again.

NOT THE DOOR

THE WALL

Father Gabriel looks toward the solid cinderblock side wall just as a deafening IMPACT cracks through it.

Dust erupts inward.

The bricks fracture.

Possessed hands burst through the wall, tearing chunks free with inhuman strength.

People scream and scatter.

The secondary entrance door behind the altar slams open.

Maya, Karen, and Isaac tumble inside in a rush of cold air and panic.

MAYA

Get everyone away from that wall
now!

Another section of brick collapses inward.

The first possessed figure forces its way through the breach.

Its eyes lock instantly on Jonah across the room.

POSSESSED FIGURE

There you are.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Dust floats in the air. People cough, crying, scrambling away from the breached wall.

Chunks of cinderblock lie on the floor where the possessed forced their way through.

The FIRST POSSESSED FIGURE stands half in, half out of the wall. Hospital gown. Bare feet. Eyes blood-red. Neck at a crooked angle from forcing through too small a gap.

He stares across the room.

Right at Jonah.

POSSESSED FIGURE

There you are.

Jonah freezes.

Maya, still catching her breath from the run, looks between the thing in the wall and Jonah, trying to understand in one breath what everyone else has been living for hours.

MAYA

Who is he talking to?

Jonah's arm burns under his sleeve. He winces, clutching it.

More hands punch through the cracked wall. Fingers clawing concrete aside like soft dirt. Another face pushes through - a WOMAN, half her cheek rubbed raw by the cinderblocks.

FATHER GABRIEL

Everyone back. Move back. Away from that wall now.

People scramble, clutching kids, dragging blankets.

The first possessed figure pulls one leg inside, then the other, leaving a ragged, body-sized hole.

He steps fully into the basement.

POSSESSED FIGURE

You keep calling.

He takes a step toward Jonah.

Tom moves in front of his son without thinking.

TOM

You're not touching my boy.

The possessed tilts his head, studying Tom.

POSSESSED FIGURE

We already have.

Jonah's breathing quickens.

JONAH

They're not lying.

LINDA

Jonah, don't-

Jonah pulls his sleeve up.

Fresh words tear across his skin in real time.

LISTENING THROUGH ME

The possessed smiles, delighted.

POSSESSED FIGURE

He understands.

Behind him, another possessed squeezes through the wall. It's Evie.

She stumbles in, hospital gown filthy, bracelet still on. Her eyes are normal for a second - terrified, wet.

EVIE

Jonah—

Then a violent jerk runs through her body. Her eyes flip red.

She straightens, head cocked in that wrong, puppet-like angle.

The room stops breathing.

LINDA

Evie...

LINDA starts toward her.

Maya grabs Linda's arm, hard.

MAYA

That's not her. Not right now.

Evie's gaze sweeps the room. Lands on Maya, then Father Gabriel, then Jonah again.

EVIE

He's clear. The doorway took well.

Jonah starts to cry, unable to stop it.

JONAH

Evie, can you hear me?

Evie's face - the human part - flickers under the mask. Something like recognition trembles across her features.

A single TEAR runs down her cheek, carving a clean path through the dust.

Her mouth opens.

Two voices come out at once.

EVIE / DEMON

Jonah... / Aperi.

Her body spasms. The demon voice slams fully back in.

EVIE (DEMON) (CONT'D)
You should be honored. Very few get
to be architecture.

Maya steps forward just enough to speak without shaking.

MAYA
Architecture for what?

The first possessed doesn't even look at her. Keeps his gaze
on Jonah.

POSSESSED FIGURE
For continuity.

FATHER GABRIEL
You won't hold this place.

The possessed finally glances at Gabriel, amused.

POSSESSED FIGURE
We're not here to hold. We're here
to mark.

He steps farther into the room.

Behind him, more possessed bodies squeeze through the broken
wall. Not rushing. Patient. Counting the space.

Jonah's skin ripples again.

NEW WORDS FORM

SOURCE

BEACON

Jonah whispers it out loud, barely audible.

JONAH
They're... calling me a beacon.

Tom grips his shoulder tighter.

TOM
Then we put the damn beacon out.

The possessed chuckles softly.

POSSESSED FIGURE
You would kill your own son?

Tom doesn't flinch.

TOM
I would kill you.

The possessed leans in.

POSSESSED FIGURE
You can't reach us with bullets.

Maya raises the cautery tool, hand trembling but resolute.

MAYA
Maybe not with bullets.

The possessed regard her now. Several of them turn.

Evie's head tilts in eerie synch with them.

EVIE (DEMON)
You burned one of us.

MAYA
Several.

The room seems to inhale.

Maya steps carefully around the panicked cluster of people, putting herself between the possessed and Jonah's family.

MAYA (CONT'D)
You didn't like it.

The first possessed smiles with too many teeth.

POSSESSED FIGURE
Pain is a teacher.

MAYA
Then class is in session.

She moves faster than her fear would suggest she can - lunging for the nearest possessed, jamming the cautery tool up under the base of his skull.

The tool HISSES against flesh.

The possessed SCREAMS, layered, a horrible doubled sound. His body convulses.

For a second, his eyes flash normal.

POSSESSED MAN (HUMAN)
Don't stop-

Then the demon shrieks through him again, and his knees buckle. He drops, twitching, then goes still.

The other possessed recoil.

All at once.

They were not expecting resistance here.

Evie clutches her own head with both hands, as if feeling the burn echo down some shared nerve.

EVIE (DEMON)
You're... hurting the lattice.

She takes an involuntary step back.

Maya breathes hard, not from exertion - from terror.

MAYA
Good.

She looks at Father Gabriel.

MAYA (CONT'D)
That's your doctrine now. There's
no exorcism. Just... this.

She lifts the cautery.

MAYA (CONT'D)
We burn where it hurts the most.

Jonah's arm flares again.

Another sentence forms, slower, as if it's costing someone on the other end something to write it.

NOT JUST BURN

LISTEN

Jonah staggers toward Maya and Gabriel.

JONAH
Wait. Wait-

FATHER GABRIEL
We're out of wait.

He takes a controlled step toward Evie, shotgun lowered but ready.

FATHER GABRIEL (CONT'D)
 If she's still in there, we owe her
 a chance.

The possessed through Evie sneers.

EVIE (DEMON)
 You think yourself merciful.

FATHER GABRIEL
 No.

He nods at Jonah's arm.

FATHER GABRIEL (CONT'D)
 I think he is.

Evie's eyes flick to Jonah's.

For one heartbeat, the red recedes.

Her real eyes are there. Terrified. Begging.

Jonah's writing pulses like a heartbeat across his skin.

HELP

HURTS

PLEASE

Jonah chokes on a sob.

JONAH
 I hear you. I hear you, Evie.

The demon fights to shut her down - her body spasms.

Evie's human voice rips out through clenched teeth.

EVIE (HUMAN)
 Don't... open the-

Her mouth clamps shut so hard her teeth click.

The demon grin slides back into place.

EVIE (DEMON) (CONT'D)
 She's very loud in here.

Maya looks at Elise's cautery tool in her hand, then at
 Jonah, then at Evie.

MAYA

If we burn her, the thing riding
her screams.

JONAH

And so does she.

The room hangs on this.

LINDA

I'm not letting you hurt my
daughter.

MAYA

Your daughter is already being
hurt.

Linda stands between Evie and Maya, shaking, hands up.

LINDA

I'm not moving.

The possessed are watching all of it. Drinking it in.
Learning.

The first possessed smiles.

POSSESSED FIGURE

This is why you lose. You confuse
mercy with inaction.

Jonah glares at him through tears.

JONAH

You think pain is all there is.

The possessed tilts his head.

POSSESSED FIGURE

We know pain is all there is after.

Jonah's arm burns again.

New words, jagged and uneven, force their way across his
skin.

They look like they hurt to appear.

BURN HURTS THEM

VOICE HURTS US

Jonah stares.

JONAH
Talking... hurts them.

Maya blinks.

MAYA
We've been letting them do all the
talking.

Father Gabriel's eyes widen in sudden understanding.

FATHER GABRIEL
You're not just a door.

He looks at Jonah.

FATHER GABRIEL (CONT'D)
You're a window.

The possessed all straighten at once, reacting.

Evie's body jerks like she's been hit.

EVIE (DEMON)
Stop—

Jonah steps forward, past his mother's reach.

LINDA
Jonah—

He faces Evie directly.

JONAH
Evie, if you can hear me, listen to
me and not it.

The writing on his arm pulses in sync with his words.

JONAH (CONT'D)
You are not a door. You are not a
house. You are Evie Hale. You hate
math and you love stupid horror
movies and you steal my socks.

Evie's lips tremble. The demon inside her snarls.

EVIE (DEMON)
Enough—

Jonah keeps going, voice breaking.

JONAH

Dad cries at animal commercials.
Mom cries at everything. You
pretended not to care when Grandma
died, then you cried in the laundry
room where you thought nobody could
hear you.

Linda's hand flies to her mouth.

The possessed behind Evie begin to twitch, agitated by
something they can't fully process.

Evie's eyes flash between red and brown, red and brown.

Her forearms begin to bruise.

Words press up under her skin, faint and struggling.

JONAH (CONT'D)

You are not what they are. You are
not what they want you to be.

He steps closer, tears streaming.

JONAH (CONT'D)

You are my sister.

The bruise-letters finally resolve on Evie's arms:

LET GO

The demon ROARS through her mouth.

EVIE (DEMON)

NO—

The possessed around her seize as if sharing the same pain.

Maya seizes the moment.

She surges forward and slams the cautery tool into the back
of Evie's neck, just at the base of the skull.

LINDA

NO—!

The sound that comes out of Evie's throat is not human.

It's not just one voice.

It's many.

A ripping, multi-layered scream that shakes dust from the ceiling.

Evie's body jerks violently.

Then—

She collapses.

Jonah dives forward, catching her before she hits the ground.

He cradles her, sobbing.

Her eyes flutter open.

They are brown.

Clear.

EVIE (HUMAN, WEAK)
You're... so loud...

She coughs. Her body shakes.

EVIE (CONT'D)
Don't... let them in... when they sound
like me...

She squeezes his shirt weakly.

Then her hand falls away.

Her eyes stare past him at nothing.

The room goes deadly quiet.

Linda falls to her knees with a sound that doesn't sound like language.

Tom stands there, stunned, unable to process what he's seeing.

Maya's hand shakes so hard the cautery tool rattles.

The remaining possessed recoil all at once, as if struck by the same internal blow.

One of them— the first figure— touches his own neck where Evie was burned.

POSSESSED FIGURE
You killed your own.

Jonah looks up, face soaked in tears, Evie's body in his arms.

JONAH

No.

He shakes his head slowly.

JONAH (CONT'D)

You did.

The possessed stare at him.

For the first time, something like hesitation passes through their ranks.

Jonah's arm burns one more time.

NOT JUST BEACON

CHOICE

He holds onto his sister and sobs into her hair.

Father Gabriel raises the shotgun again.

FATHER GABRIEL

You are not welcome here.

Maya lifts the cautery tool beside him.

Around the basement, the survivors are no longer just panicking.

They are choosing sides.

The siege has truly begun.

FADE OUT.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah still kneels on the concrete floor with Evie in his arms. Her head lolled against his shoulder. Her body is heavy now in a different way. Final.

Linda crawls toward them on her knees. She touches Evie's face once, as if she expects warmth to return if she presses hard enough.

LINDA

No no no no no—

Her voice collapses into a sound that doesn't resolve into words.

Tom stands a few steps back, hollowed out. He looks at Evie's body, then at Jonah, then at the cautery tool still sizzling faintly in Maya's trembling hand.

TOM

She was talking to us this morning.

Maya can't look at him.

MAYA

I'm so sorry.

TOM

You burned my daughter.

Maya finally meets his eyes.

MAYA

Something else burned her first.

Tom steps back as if struck.

Father Gabriel lowers the shotgun slightly but keeps it ready. The possessed still remain near the collapsed wall. They have not retreated yet. They are watching the grief like it is data.

The FIRST POSSESSED FIGURE tilts his head.

POSSESSED FIGURE

Your defenses injure the vessel.

He looks down at Evie's body with clinical interest.

POSSESSED FIGURE (CONT'D)

The signal transfer was incomplete.

Jonah looks up at him with raw hatred.

JONAH

She didn't belong to you.

POSSESSED FIGURE

She belonged to the doorway.

Jonah screams and lunges forward before anyone can stop him.

TWO MEN grab him hard and yank him back.

Father Gabriel steps in front of Jonah now, shotgun back up.

FATHER GABRIEL
One more step and I drop you where
you stand.

The possessed studies Gabriel's weapon with mild curiosity.

POSSESSED FIGURE
You already fired once tonight.

FATHER GABRIEL
I'll fire again.

The possessed consider this. Around them, the others begin to shift their feet in subtle synchronized movement. The collective is making a calculation.

POSSESSED FIGURE
You have learned one lever.

He gestures toward the cautery tool.

POSSESSED FIGURE (CONT'D)
We will learn ten.

The possessed slowly back away from the breach in the wall. Not in retreat. In reallocation.

One by one, they withdraw into the darkness outside.

The pressure in the room eases noticeably.

The air feels lighter, wrong in its sudden absence of tension.

Jonah collapses over Evie again, sobbing uncontrollably.

Father Gabriel lowers the shotgun only when the last possessed disappears beyond the shattered wall.

FATHER GABRIEL
Close it. Now.

Men rush forward and shove tables, shelves, pew fragments, anything heavy into the breached wall.

Maya steps back, shaking violently now that the adrenaline is fading.

Her hands are streaked with blood and ash.

She staggers and has to catch herself on a pillar.

Karen moves to her side.

KAREN

You just saved everyone in this room.

Maya shakes her head.

MAYA

No. I killed a girl to scare a demon.

Karen doesn't argue. There is no version of the night where that sentence feels clean.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - SIDE ROOM - LATER

Evie's body lies on a folding table, covered with a blanket.

Linda sits beside her in a metal chair, one hand resting stiffly on the blanket.

She hasn't moved in minutes.

Tom stands in the doorway, unable to bring himself closer.

Jonah sits on the floor against the far wall, knees pulled to his chest, staring at his arm.

The writing is gone.

Nothing left.

Just skin.

He presses his thumb into it as hard as he can.

No response.

JONAH

(whispering)

Say something.

Nothing happens.

His breathing becomes ragged.

JONAH (CONT'D)

I can't hear you anymore.

Father Gabriel steps into the room quietly.

FATHER GABRIEL

Jonah.

Jonah doesn't look up.

JONAH
She was still in there.

FATHER GABRIEL
I know.

JONAH
I felt her.

He finally looks up.

JONAH (CONT'D)
And now it's quiet.

Gabriel kneels in front of him.

FATHER GABRIEL
Silence doesn't always mean
absence.

Jonah doesn't answer that.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise stands rooted in front of the glowing neural model.

The fissure pulses in violent erratic rhythms now.

Ben paces behind her.

BEN
If what Lucas is showing us is
right, their command nodes just
lost a major relay.

ELISE
They'll reroute.

BEN
How long does that take?

ELISE
In the human brain? Years.

She stares at the model.

ELISE (CONT'D)
In whatever is using it? Minutes.

Lucas suddenly gasps on the table.

Elise rushes to him.

LUCAS
They're angry.

ELISE
Who?

LUCAS
All of them.

His eyes squeeze shut.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
They didn't expect... resistance from
inside the houses.

Elise stiffens.

BEN
From inside?

Lucas nods weakly.

LUCAS
He talked through her.

Elise freezes.

ELISE
Who talked?

LUCAS
The other one. The boy.

Elise's breath catches.

ELISE
Jonah.

INT. ABANDONED STREET NEAR CHURCH - SAME TIME

The possessed regroup in the shadows a block away.

They move in a tight arc around the FIRST POSSESSED FIGURE.

One possessed woman touches the place on her neck where Evie
was burned earlier, shuddering with residual sensation.

POSSESSED WOMAN
The pain persists.

POSSESSED FIGURE
Then the interface persists.

They all turn their collective gaze back toward the church.

POSSESSED FIGURE (CONT'D)
The beacon survived the extraction.

Another possessed speaks, voice layered and low.

POSSESSED MAN
Then the house remains open.

POSSESSED FIGURE
Not as a door.

He smiles faintly.

POSSESSED FIGURE (CONT'D)
As a battlefield.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - LATER

The survivors reorganize again.

Weapons are redistributed. Shifts are established. A rota is written on cardboard in marker.

Maya sits alone near a support pillar, hands still trembling. She scrubs at dried blood on her wrists that won't come off.

Father Gabriel approaches quietly.

FATHER GABRIEL
You did what had to be done.

Maya doesn't look up.

MAYA
That sentence will haunt me
forever.

FATHER GABRIEL
That's the cost of it being true.

Subtle movement ripples through the crowd as Jonah rises unsteadily to his feet.

Everyone watches him now.

Not with curiosity.

With need.

Jonah's voice shakes when he speaks.

JONAH
They're gone from the wall.

He pauses, confused.

JONAH (CONT'D)
But they didn't leave.

A whisper of panic stirs.

JONAH (CONT'D)
I can't hear words anymore.

Maya looks up.

MAYA
What can you hear?

Jonah presses his fingers to his teeth.

JONAH
Pressure. Like someone pushing
their face against glass.

Father Gabriel closes his eyes.

FATHER GABRIEL
They're regrouping.

Jonah nods slowly.

JONAH
And they know what we did.

Silence falls.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - SERVER ROOM - SAME TIME

Elise isolates a new expanding network cluster in the neural feed.

ELISE
They're reorganizing command flow.

BEN
Around what?

Elise stares at the growth curve.

ELISE
Around resistance.

She looks up.

ELISE (CONT'D)
They're not adapting to humans.

They're adapting to defiance.

Lucas jolts.

Blood seeps faintly from his nose.

New bruising forms fast on his forearm.

WORDS APPEAR

TARGET SHIFTING

ELISE (CONT'D)
They've identified him as a node,
not a host.

Ben's voice drops.

BEN
Then Jonah isn't just in danger.

Elise finishes it.

ELISE
He's an objective.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah feels another low pressure, deeper than before.

He looks at Father Gabriel.

JONAH
They're not breaking us to get
inside anymore.

FATHER GABRIEL
Then what are they doing?

Jonah swallows.

JONAH
They're surrounding us to make us
come out.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The basement has shifted from shelter to command bunker. Folding tables form rough barricades. Weapons lay in imperfect rows. People whisper instead of cry now.

Jonah sits alone near the far wall. He presses his palms to his eyes until stars bloom.

Nothing writes back.

Nothing answers.

Maya approaches slowly, careful not to spook him.

MAYA

You don't have to perform.

Jonah doesn't look up.

JONAH

I don't think I can anymore.

She hesitates, then sits beside him on the cold concrete.

MAYA

Then you're just a kid again.

JONAH

I don't remember how to be that.

They sit in silence for a moment.

Across the room, Tom stands with Father Gabriel, speaking in a low urgent voice.

TOM

You can't keep everyone trapped in here forever.

FATHER GABRIEL

I can keep them alive for tonight.

TOM

And tomorrow?

Father Gabriel doesn't answer.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Elise scrubs her face with shaking hands. Lucas lies half-conscious on the table, a slow IV drip steadying him.

Ben studies the latest neural readout.

BEN
The fissure has stabilized into a
loop.

ELISE
A circuit.

BEN
Which means it can be overwhelmed.

Elise looks up.

ELISE
With what?

BEN
Signal.

She freezes.

ELISE
If I push signal back through that
door—

BEN
—you light up every possession at
once.

ELISE
And fry every host with it.

Ben lets that sit.

BEN
Or maybe you only light what's
riding them.

Elise looks at Lucas, then at the model.

ELISE
Or maybe I light the world on fire.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - LATE NIGHT

A WATCHER at the rear stairwell hisses suddenly.

WATCHER
Movement.

Maya is on her feet instantly.

MAYA

Where?

WATCHER

Behind the bakery.

Father Gabriel motions for silence.

People freeze.

Distant footsteps scuff across broken glass outside. Soft.
Unhurried.

Jonah suddenly stiffens.

Pressure surges through his head so hard it makes his vision
tunnel.

JONAH

They're not coming together
anymore.

Father Gabriel turns to him.

FATHER GABRIEL

What does that mean?

Jonah swallows.

JONAH

They're hunting in pairs.

The words leave him shaking.

JONAH (CONT'D)

That means they're learning how to
flush us out without showing the
whole hand.

INT. ALLEY BEHIND THE CHURCH - SAME TIME

Two possessed move separately now, ten yards apart, covering
angles with inhuman patience.

One kneels, placing its hand against the earth.

POSSESSED WOMAN

The noise inside is thinning.

POSSESSED MAN

Grief disrupts clarity.

POSSESSED WOMAN
Then we feed it.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Suddenly, from somewhere deeper inside the building, a BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM erupts.

A WOMAN'S SCREAM.

Not from outside.

From inside the church.

Everyone spins.

TOM
That came from upstairs.

Father Gabriel's eyes widen.

FATHER GABRIEL
They breached the sanctuary.

Maya curses under her breath and moves toward the stairs.

MAYA
Stay behind me. Anyone without a
weapon, get flat on the floor.

INT. CHURCH SANCTUARY - NIGHT

Maya emerges at the top of the stairs, cautery tool raised.

Moonlight cuts through blown-out stained glass.

A possessed TEEN stands near the altar.

In his arms, a small BOY struggles weakly.

POSSESSED TEEN
You left a window open.

Maya advances slow and steady.

MAYA
Put the kid down.

POSSESSED TEEN
We only borrow.

The boy screams.

Maya lunges.

She jams the cautery tool into the teen's neck.

The layered SHRIEK shakes the rafters.

The possessed TEEN drops to his knees, convulsing. The boy slips free and collapses, sobbing.

The demon tears out in sound only.

The body falls.

Human.

Alive.

Maya scoops the boy into her arms without hesitation and runs back toward the basement.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Maya bursts back down the stairs with the boy.

MAYA

They're testing our perimeter.

Karen grabs the boy and pulls him into the crowd.

Jonah grips his head suddenly.

A new sensation slams into him like compression.

JONAH

They're upset.

Father Gabriel stares at him.

FATHER GABRIEL

Because we hurt them.

Jonah shakes.

JONAH

No. Because they failed.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Lucas suddenly SCREAMS in agony.

His back arches violently.

Elise rushes to restrain him.

New words tear through Lucas's skin.

THEY ARE FEEDING FEAR

BEN

They're amplifying emotional output
across the network.

Elise's face hardens.

ELISE

They're turning terror into power.

INT. ABANDONED STREET NEAR CHURCH - NIGHT

The possessed groups widen their perimeter.

One of them deliberately smashes a car alarm.

Noise explodes into the night.

Another triggers a house fire down the block.

Smoke billows.

They are no longer hiding.

They are shaping the environment.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Smoke begins seeping under the door.

People cough.

Panic rises fast.

JONAH

They're trying to herd us with
fire.

Father Gabriel looks at Maya.

FATHER GABRIEL

We move or suffocate.

The truth hits everyone at once.

They must leave.

TOM
Out there is death.

MAYA
In here is slow death.

Silence hangs for one brutal second.

Jonah closes his eyes.

JONAH
They're opening corridors.

Father Gabriel nods grimly.

FATHER GABRIEL
Then we choose the least watched
one.

EXT. REAR EXIT OF CHURCH - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

A small group prepares to move: Maya, Jonah, Tom, Linda,
Father Gabriel, Karen, Isaac, and three armed men.

Smoke pours from broken windows behind them.

Maya cracks the door only an inch and peers into the dark.

Nothing.

No movement.

Jonah suddenly grabs her arm.

JONAH
Stop.

Fresh pain blooms in his skull.

JONAH (CONT'D)
They're standing just out of sight.

Maya exhales slowly, steadying herself.

FATHER GABRIEL
Where is the space thin?

Jonah points shakily to the right.

JONAH
There.

Father Gabriel nods.

FATHER GABRIEL

On my mark.

They count with their breathing.

The door flies open.

They burst into the night.

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Gunfire erupts instantly.

Two possessed drop.

One charges straight through the bullets and tackles Isaac to the ground.

Maya slams the cautery tool into its spine.

Another SHRIEK.

Firelight from surrounding buildings paints everything hell-orange.

Jonah stumbles as pressure explodes through him.

He screams.

JONAH

They're closing around us!

They run.

The alley tears open into chaos.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Elise watches multiple possession spikes light simultaneously across the city map.

BEN

They're forcing the survivors into motion.

Elise whispers.

ELISE

They're flushing the beacon.

She looks at Lucas.

ELISE (CONT'D)
And anyone who protects him.

Lucas whimpers weakly.

LUCAS
They're... squeezing.

Elise makes her decision.

ELISE
Prepare signal inversion.

Ben stares at her.

BEN
That could trigger across every
live host.

Elise doesn't hesitate.

ELISE
They've left me no other leverage.

She moves to the console.

BEN
If you fire that—

ELISE
—either I break their hold...

She looks at Lucas.

ELISE (CONT'D)
...or I end the experiment that
opened the door.

She begins entering commands.

EXT. ABANDONED STREET - NIGHT

Maya's group sprints through smoke and sirens.

Possessed shapes stalk along rooftops now.

Jonah gasps, barely able to breathe.

His skin burns again.

New words surge.

THEY ARE COMING FROM ABOVE

Maya looks up.

Her face drains as shadows LEAP from the rooftops.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. ABANDONED STREET - NIGHT

Jonah's warning barely leaves his mouth before SHADOWS DROP from the rooftops.

Three possessed land in the street with bone-cracking force. One misses its landing and barely stumbles before correcting its balance with inhuman speed.

Gunfire erupts instantly.

Father Gabriel fires twice. One round drops a possessed clean through the chest. It doesn't slow.

The thing charges.

Maya sprints forward and slams the cautery tool into its skull base. The multi-layered SHRIEK rattles windows for a full block before the body collapses.

Human.

Dead.

Karen is dragged backward by a possessed woman who came down behind her.

KAREN

Maya—!

Maya turns, already too late.

The possessed woman snaps Karen's neck with a casual twist.

Karen drops instantly.

Dead.

Maya SCREAMS and lunges in blind rage, burning the thing down through the spine again and again until the demon shrieks out and the body goes slack.

Isaac falls to his knees beside Karen, shaking her uselessly.

ISAAC

Wake up— wake up—

Jonah staggers as pressure detonates through his skull.

JONAH
They traded her—!

Father Gabriel grabs Isaac by the collar and drags him up.

FATHER GABRIEL
MOVE OR YOU DIE HERE TOO!

They run.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Two possessed sprint low across the rooftops, moving in mirrored synchronization.

One stops at the edge and looks down at the fleeing survivors.

Its eyes glow red in the dark.

POSSESSED SCOUT
Target trajectory confirmed.

The other replies without turning.

POSSESSED SCOUT 2
Command is listening.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise's hands shake as the inversion algorithm finishes compiling.

Ben hovers beside her like a man watching a bomb being armed.

BEN
Once this goes live, every occupied
lattice node will light at once.

ELISE
Not light.

She swallows.

ELISE (CONT'D)
Scream.

Lucas whispers from the table.

LUCAS
They're afraid of the screaming.

Elise meets his eyes.

ELISE
So am I.

She presses ENTER.

The system primes with a low electrical whine that vibrates through the walls.

EXT. ABANDONED STREET - NIGHT

Maya's group barrels through an open intersection.

Smoke rolls across the street in heavy curtains.

Possessed silhouettes move in the fog on both sides now.

Jonah stumbles again.

He drops to one knee.

TOM
Jonah!

Fresh words tear violently across Jonah's skin, darker than anything before.

NOW

NOW

NOW

Jonah screams.

JONAH
She's about to do it—!

Maya freezes.

MAYA
Who?!

Jonah convulses as the pressure in his skull spikes to unbearable levels.

JONAH
The woman with the machines--!

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise flips the final switch.

The signal INVERTS.

A deep, subsonic HUM rolls outward from the facility like a pressure wave.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT - EVERYWHERE

A SILENT WAVE rips through the city.

Every possessed body arches simultaneously.

Not all at once.

Like dominoes of agony.

Layered SCREAMS erupt from thousands of throats simultaneously.

Not just demons screaming.

Human voices break free inside the sound.

HELP
DON'T LEAVE
MOM
IT HURTS
I'M STILL HERE

Some bodies collapse instantly.

Others seize.

Some catch fire from the inside out in brief white-hot flashes of neural overload.

Hospitals erupt into chaos again.

Streetlights burst.

Car alarms trigger.

Windows SHATTER citywide in a cascading thunder.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - SAME TIME

Every remaining possessed near the church collapse screaming.

The survivors inside drop to their knees from the shockwave alone.

Drawers burst open.

Dust rains from the ceiling.

EXT. ABANDONED STREET - SAME TIME

The possessed pursuing Maya's group convulse violently and collapse mid-stride.

A few ignite internally and drop as burned husks.

Others revert-human again-sobbing, screaming, broken.

Maya stares, horrified and awed.

MAYA

She did it...

Jonah drops flat to the pavement, body rigid with pain.

JONAH

They're screaming through me-

His skin lights with overlapping words too fast to read.

Then-

Sudden silence.

The writing stops completely.

Jonah gasps like someone pulled from underwater.

JONAH (CONT'D)

They're... gone.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Elise is thrown backward by a surge of power through the rig.

Lucas SCREAMS once—and then goes limp.

Ben rushes in.

BEN

Lucas—!

Lucas's eyes flutter open.

Normal.

Human.

He sobs suddenly.

LUCAS

It's quiet...

Elise stares at the citywide neural map.

Over half the active nodes have gone DARK.

But others remain lit.

CLUSTERED.

Organized.

Elise's breath catches.

ELISE

We didn't kill it.

BEN

We hurt it.

The lights in the lab suddenly DIM.

Emergency power struggles to hold.

Across the neural model, a NEW SIGNAL overlays Elise's.

Singular.

Focused.

Not scattered.

The first true COMMAND VOICE ripples through the open channel.

Not through a mouth.

Through the system itself.

COMMAND VOICE (V.O.)
You have learned to scream.

Elise freezes.

COMMAND VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Now learn what screams back.

EXT. ABANDONED STREET - NIGHT

All survivors in the street suddenly collapse to one knee under unbearable pressure.

Windows implode inward across the block.

Jonah clutches his head.

New words force themselves across his skin in slow, deliberate formation.

NOT THEM

IT

COMING

Maya looks up toward the dark sky.

MAYA
What do you mean "it"?

Jonah lifts his head slowly.

Tears run freely down his face.

JONAH
They were the doors.

He swallows.

JONAH (CONT'D)
This is the room.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. ABANDONED STREET - NIGHT

The pressure that drove everyone to their knees slowly recedes.

Smoke drifts low across the pavement.

Bodies—some burned hollow, some twitching back into human consciousness—are scattered everywhere.

A MAN who had been possessed a moment ago crawls on hands and knees, sobbing violently.

MAN

I was awake the whole time... I was awake...

Maya moves through the wreckage like she's walking through a dream. Her face is streaked with ash and tears.

She reaches Jonah, who is still on the ground, shaking.

MAYA

Jonah. Look at me. Look at me.

Jonah blinks up at her like he's seeing light for the first time.

JONAH

It's not quiet anymore.

MAYA

You said they were gone.

Jonah nods faintly.

JONAH

They are.

He swallows hard.

JONAH (CONT'D)

This is louder.

Tom and Linda rush to Jonah's side.

LINDA

Baby, you're bleeding—

Jonah touches his nose. Fresh blood coats his fingertips.

JONAH

It's not from me.

He stares out into the smoke.

JONAH (CONT'D)
It's from the door.

FATHER GABRIEL approaches, eyes scanning the dead and the living around them.

FATHER GABRIEL
We move before whatever that was
finds us again.

Maya looks back down the street.

At the bodies.

At the thousands of homes going dark around them.

MAYA
The city just screamed.

She looks at Jonah.

MAYA (CONT'D)
And something answered.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Emergency lights cast everything in harsh red.

Elise grips the edge of a desk to stay upright. Her ears ring violently.

Ben helps her into a chair.

BEN
You overloaded the lattice.

ELISE
I inverted it.

BEN
Same thing according to physics.

She stares at the neural map. The scattered possession nodes flicker erratically.

But at the center—

The new singular signal pulses with terrifying coherence.

ELISE
That wasn't command before.

BEN
Then what was?

Elise whispers without looking away.

ELISE
That was a swarm.

Ben stares at the central pulse.

BEN
And now?

Elise finally meets his eyes.

ELISE
Now it's a king.

Lucas groans weakly on the table.

LUCAS
It's looking at me.

Elise rushes to him.

ELISE
Where?

Lucas points shakily to his own forehead.

LUCAS
Through here.

EXT. ABANDONED STREET / CITY PERIMETER - NIGHT

The sky seems wrong now.

Not stormy.

Pressurized.

Clouds distort in slow, boiling motion.

Maya's group begins moving again, slower now, carrying the injured.

Jonah walks between his parents like a wounded animal.

For the first time since Evie's death, his arm stings again.
 Fresh writing emerges slowly. Not frantic.
 Measured.

OBSERVE

The word hangs there, deliberate.

JONAH
 It's watching.

MAYA
 What is?

Jonah looks up at the clouds.

JONAH
 The thing that just learned how to
 make us scream.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - LATER

The remnants of the shelter regroup amid broken walls and
 overturned barricades.

Those who can walk are brought inside.

Those who can't are laid out in rows.

A woman wails over a dead husband.

A boy stares blankly at his burned hands.

Father Gabriel moves among them, no longer speaking
 platitudes.

Only commands.

FATHER GABRIEL
 Water here. Blankets there. If
 you're bleeding, sit. If you're
 carrying, put them down.

The survivors obey. Not because they trust him.

Because he sounds like someone who still believes in order.

Maya enters with Jonah and his parents.

A few people recoil instinctively when they see Jonah.

They remember.

What he did.

What Evie did.

What the possessed said about him.

JONAH

They think I'm still—

MAYA

They're scared.

JONAH

That doesn't make it hurt less.

His arm flares again.

A new word presses through.

CENTERED

He winces.

JONAH (CONT'D)

It found the middle of itself.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - SERVER ROOM - SAME TIME

Ben runs packet analysis across the new command signal.

BEN

It's not using human neural
encoding anymore.

ELISE

What is it using?

BEN

Compression logic from the
inversion.

Elise stiffens.

ELISE

It learned from me.

BEN

You taught it how to scream.

Elise closes her eyes, crushed by it.

ELISE

Then I also taught it how to
listen.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - SIDE ROOM - NIGHT

Jonah sits alone again on the floor.

His arm glows faintly with subcutaneous bruising.

He waits.

Nothing writes.

Then—

Pressure.

Then—

Words appear.

Not in phrases.

In identifiers.

NODE

CORE

RETURN

Jonah staggers to his feet.

JONAH

It's not trying to kill us right
now.

Father Gabriel steps in.

FATHER GABRIEL

What is it trying to do?

Jonah swallows.

JONAH
It's trying to remember where it
came from.

EXT. CITY WASTELAND - NIGHT

Far across the city, at the ruin of a collapsed high-rise,
dozens of possessed bodies converge and stack on top of one
another like a living structure.

They climb.

They intertwine.

They fuse in places where flesh should not fuse.

At the top, a single body slowly straightens out of the mass.

Not writhing.

Not convulsing.

Perfectly controlled.

The new COMMAND FORM.

It opens its eyes.

They are not red.

They are black.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Lucas sits bolt upright screaming.

Fresh blood runs from his nose, ears, eyes.

LUCAS
It has a shape now!

ELISE
What kind of shape?!

Lucas gasps.

LUCAS
A crown.

The lab lights burst.

Darkness swallows the room.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - SAME TIME

Every lantern flickers at once.

Jonah grabs his head and drops to his knees as pressure slams into him like gravity reversing.

New words tear violently across his skin.

NOT SWARM

WILL

Father Gabriel stares in horror.

FATHER GABRIEL
What does that mean?

Jonah looks up at him, shaking.

JONAH
It means Hell just figured out how
to want something.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah remains on his knees, gasping for breath as if the air itself just thickened.

The words NOT SWARM WILL still throb faintly beneath his skin before fading.

Linda rushes to him.

LINDA
Jonah- Jonah- look at me-

Jonah blinks, disoriented.

JONAH
It feels... heavier now.

MAYA
Heavier how?

Jonah presses a hand to his chest.

JONAH
Like gravity learned my name.

No one knows how to answer that.

A low RUMBLE rolls through the church foundations. Dust trickles from the ceiling.

FATHER GABRIEL
That wasn't structural shift.

MAYA
That was distance collapsing.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE - NIGHT

The fused possessed mass continues to rearrange itself with methodical precision.

Limbs withdraw.

Extra joints retract.

The tower of flesh simplifies.

Until only one upright figure remains.

Tall.

Perfect posture.

Human proportions restored, but wrong in the way mannequins are wrong.

It steps forward onto the fractured concrete.

The body does not stumble.

It chooses where to place its feet.

COMMAND FORM
(quiet, resonant)
Locate the signal-bearing node.

All surrounding possessed bow their heads at once.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Emergency lights flicker back on.

Elise struggles upright in the darkness.

Ben bangs on the emergency panel.

BEN

Backup power's fragmenting!

Lucas trembles violently on the table.

Fresh bruising erupts across his torso in symmetrical lines.

Not words.

Coordinates.

ELISE

That's not language.

BEN

Then what is it?

Elise stares in horror.

ELISE

That's targeting data.

Lucas SCREAMS.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - SAME TIME

Jonah suddenly snaps his head up.

JONAH

They found me.

The words burn instantaneously across his arm:

VECTOR LOCK

Linda grabs him.

LINDA

What does that mean?!

Father Gabriel answers grimly.

FATHER GABRIEL
It means they know where we are.

MAYA
Then we move.

FATHER GABRIEL
No.

He looks around the room.

FATHER GABRIEL (CONT'D)
We draw them.

The room goes silent.

MAYA
That's suicide.

FATHER GABRIEL
No. That's a lure.

He looks at Jonah.

FATHER GABRIEL (CONT'D)
They don't want the rest of us.
They want him.

Jonah swallows hard.

JONAH
I don't think they want me.

The words change again before his sleeve even drops.

They write themselves violently.

HOST CONFLICT

Maya stares.

MAYA
They don't want to kill you.

Jonah nods faintly.

JONAH
They want to overwrite me.

EXT. CITY OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT

The COMMAND FORM moves through the ruined streets.

Cars ignite as it passes.

Possessed regroup behind it in disciplined ranks.

Not mindless.

Military.

COMMAND FORM
Begin compression phase.

The possessed spread out across districts like pressure plates activating.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise clamps electrodes down onto her own arms with shaking hands.

BEN
Don't do that.

ELISE
If Jonah is a receiver, Lucas is a carrier...

She meets Ben's eyes.

ELISE (CONT'D)
Then I'm the antenna they taught how to scream.

Ben grabs her wrist.

BEN
You won't survive a direct listen now.

Elise looks back at the control console.

ELISE
Neither will he.

She powers the rig anyway.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The air pressure changes again.

Not shaking.

Not rumbling.

Focusing.

Every lantern flame bends subtly inward toward Jonah.

Linda notices first.

LINDA

Why is the light leaning?

Everyone sees it now.

Every shadow is angling toward Jonah.

Maya raises the cautery instinctively.

MAYA

That's not physics.

JONAH

That's attention.

The words form slowly:

SPEAK

FATHER GABRIEL

Don't answer.

JONAH

It's not asking.

The COMMAND VOICE enters not through mouths this time, but through the room itself.

The walls vibrate with it.

COMMAND VOICE

You are architecture.

Several people scream and clamp hands over their ears.

Jonah trembles as if pinned by gravity.

COMMAND VOICE (CONT'D)

You will stabilize the breach.

Jonah fights for breath.

JONAH
I'm not a door.

The shadows tighten.

COMMAND VOICE
You are a correction.

Maya SLAMS the cautery into the floor, grounding herself through pain.

FATHER GABRIEL
Jonah— now.

Jonah screams back, not in Latin.

Not in prayer.

In rage.

JONAH
YOU DON'T GET TO NAME ME.

The writing explodes across his arms, chest, and neck for the first time.

NOT BEACON
NOT DOOR
NOT YOURS

The light snaps back.

The pressure abruptly lifts.

Silence.

Everyone stares at Jonah like he just tore a hole in gravity.

EXT. CITY - SAME TIME

The COMMAND FORM staggers slightly for the first time.

Only one step.

But it is unmistakable.

COMMAND FORM
Containment failed.

The possessed hesitate.

COMMAND FORM (CONT'D)
Initiate withdrawal doctrine.

All possessed across the city turn at once.

They begin retreating — not fleeing — repositioning.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Elise collapses forward against the rig as the signal severs violently.

Ben catches her.

BEN
You did it.

ELISE
No.

She looks at the feed.

Across the entire city, possession activity is now moving away from Jonah's position.

ELISE (CONT'D)
He did.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Sirens begin to sound far away again.

Real sirens.

Human sirens.

The possessed are pulling back.

Not gone.

But repositioning.

Jonah slumps into Linda's arms.

LINDA
You came back.

Jonah shakes.

JONAH

No. I pushed something away.

Father Gabriel stares at the walls.

FATHER GABRIEL

And it learned from you.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The sirens outside grow louder now. Not emergency alarms. Military cadence. Heavy. Directional.

Jonah lies against Linda's shoulder, eyes half-open, body trembling in aftershocks.

The survivors whisper to one another like they're afraid the walls might still be listening.

MAYA

They didn't retreat because they were afraid.

FATHER GABRIEL

They retreated because they learned restraint.

Maya looks at him.

MAYA

That's worse.

Jonah's arm still tingles faintly. No words. Just heat beneath the skin.

TOM

So what now?

FATHER GABRIEL

Now the shepherd becomes the bait.

Jonah stiffens.

JONAH

They're not coming back here.

Everyone turns to him.

JONAH (CONT'D)
They're pulling the city inward.
Toward something bigger than us.

MAYA
Toward what?

Jonah shakes his head.

JONAH
Toward construction.

Silence lands heavy.

EXT. CITY PERIMETER - NIGHT

National Guard convoys race through smoke-choked streets.

Troops fire on possessed stragglers.

Burned-out bodies litter intersections.

But farther out-

The possessed are not scattered.

They are assembling.

Block by block.

Under the command of something no one can see.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Elise sits slumped against a console, eyes hollow, IV in her arm now.

Ben watches the city-scale map.

Clusters of red dot movement converge into a colossal geometric spiral pattern.

BEN
That's not tactical movement.

ELISE
It's architecture.

She zooms in.

The possessed are aligning themselves along fault lines in the city's power grid.

ELISE (CONT'D)
They're building a signal scaffold.

BEN
For what?

Elise doesn't answer immediately.

ELISE
For a voice big enough to speak
without bodies.

Ben stares.

BEN
You mean broadcast Hell.

Elise nods.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah suddenly inhales sharply.

His fingers curl involuntarily.

JONAH
Oh—

Maya steps in front of him immediately.

MAYA
What?

Jonah's breathing accelerates.

JONAH
It's not watching me anymore.

LINDA
That's good, isn't it?

Jonah slowly shakes his head.

JONAH
No.

He swallows.

JONAH (CONT'D)
It delegated me.

Everyone freezes on that word.

FATHER GABRIEL
Delegated you to what?

Jonah's skin burns again.

Three words carve themselves slowly, deliberately.

MESSAGE
PROXY
RETURN

Jonah whispers.

JONAH
It wants me delivered.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE - NIGHT

The COMMAND FORM stands perfectly still as reports flow through the kneeling possessed.

POSSESSED
The node resisted overwrite.

COMMAND FORM
Expected.

POSSESSED
The lattice inverted based on emotional destabilization.

COMMAND FORM
Observed.

POSSESSED
The node rejects designation.

A long pause.

COMMAND FORM
Then redefine the node as cargo.

The possessed lower their heads.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Lucas suddenly arches in pain.

Fresh blood slips from his mouth.

New markings appear on his skin in jagged spatial relationships.

ELISE

That's not language again.

BEN

Coordinates.

Elise overlays the data onto the city map.

A massive destination point lights near the industrial collapse zones.

ELISE

They're assembling a receiving chamber.

Ben's voice drops.

BEN

For Jonah.

Elise nods.

ELISE

Or for whatever they expect him to become.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The truth spreads quickly through whispers.

"They want the boy."

"They're not leaving."

"They're building something."

Jonah stands slowly.

JONAH

This ends if I go with them.

Linda bolts upright.

LINDA
Absolutely not.

TOM
We are not sacrificing our son to
Hell.

JONAH
They're already building for me.

He gestures to his skin.

JONAH (CONT'D)
They don't need permission anymore.
They need access.

Maya steps closer to Jonah.

MAYA
You go out there, you don't come
back.

Jonah meets her eyes steadily.

JONAH
If I stay, everyone who stays near
me dies.

Silence.

Father Gabriel closes his eyes.

FATHER GABRIEL
The lamb always believes the altar
ends the storm.

Jonah looks broken.

JONAH
I don't want to be brave. I just
don't want this to be endless.

A LOW THUNDEROUS HUM begins beneath the city.

Not an explosion.

A resonance.

Lights flicker again.

JONAH (CONT'D)
They've started powering the
structure.

EXT. CITY - SAME TIME

Electrical substations overload one by one in precise
sequence.

A spiraling ring of power surges moves inward.

From the sky, the city looks like a giant glowing sigil being
drawn in reverse.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise watches the convergence, horrified.

BEN
They're pulling energy from the
grid.

ELISE
No.

She zooms in further.

ELISE (CONT'D)
They're pulling it from the nervous
system of the city.

BEN
Meaning?

ELISE
Every human within that radius is
being drained at the synaptic
level.

Ben stares at her.

BEN
That will kill thousands.

Elise whispers.

ELISE
It's fuel.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

People begin convulsing at random.

A man collapses screaming.

A woman drops unconscious in mid-sentence.

Jonah doubles over in agony.

JONAH
They're siphoning everything toward
the center.

MAYA
How long?

Jonah trembles violently.

JONAH
Not long.

He looks up, tears streaming.

JONAH (CONT'D)
And when it finishes, something
will speak loud enough for the
whole world to hear.

Father Gabriel grips his shotgun.

FATHER GABRIEL
Then we don't let it finish.

Maya looks at Jonah.

MAYA
Runner or anchor. Choose now.

Jonah closes his eyes.

The HUM outside deepens.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The HUM deepens. It isn't loud. It's wide. You feel it in
teeth, in bone, in the soft parts of the brain that don't
have names.

A WOMAN near the back suddenly collapses, seizing hard.
Her eyes flash red.

POSSESSED WOMAN
He's ready.

Pandemonium rips through the shelter again.
Maya is already moving.

She drives the cautery tool into the back of the woman's skull.

The demon SCREAMS out of her in layered sound.
The woman drops to the floor, human, weeping.

JONAH
It's not random anymore.

Father Gabriel shoves people back from Jonah instinctively.

FATHER GABRIEL
They're not storming the building.

JONAH
They're picking up the phone inside
it.

The HUM surges.

Every loose metal object in the basement rattles and slides a fraction of an inch toward Jonah.

LINDA
Why is everything moving toward
him?

MAYA
Because he's not just a signal
anymore.

She looks Jonah in the eyes.

MAYA (CONT'D)
You're part of the circuit.

EXT. CITY - VARIOUS - NIGHT

All across the grid, lesser possessed suddenly freeze mid-motion.

Then—one by one—they drop to their knees.

Not dead.

Awaiting instruction.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Alarms begin to wail without being triggered.

Ben stares at the monitors.

BEN
Possession activity just hit a
holding pattern.

ELISE
No.

She zooms out.

ELISE (CONT'D)
That's not delay.

She isolates one massive swarm signature moving en masse along subterranean utility corridors.

ELISE (CONT'D)
That's a courier wave.

Ben's face drains.

BEN
Straight toward the shelter.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah suddenly SCREAMS as pressure detonates through him.

New writing tears violently across his skin, overlapping, panicked.

UNDER

UNDER
UNDER

MAYA

Under what?!

Jonah sobs as he struggles to breathe.

JONAH

Under the floor—!

The concrete beneath Jonah CRACKS.

A seam erupts straight upward between the tiles.

Something strikes once from below.

Once more.

The floor BLOWS UP.

Possessed bodies erupt violently through the ground like launched missiles.

Not climbing.

Delivered.

Maya is thrown backward by the concussion.

Father Gabriel slams into a support pillar, gasping.

Three possessed land in a tight triangle around Jonah.

The FIRST POSSESSED FIGURE steps forward among them.

POSSESSED FIGURE

Courier phase complete.

The HUM spikes to an unbearable pitch.

Jonah's body lifts slowly off the ground.

LINDA

Jonah—!

She runs forward.

The air between her and Jonah becomes stiff as concrete.

She slams into it like invisible glass.

POSSESSED FIGURE
Cargo secured.

MAYA
No.

Maya charges and jams the cautery tool into the possessed nearest Jonah.

The SHRIEK explodes violently—but Jonah's body drops only a few inches.

The other two possessed reach out and clasp Jonah's arms.

His skin blackens beneath their hands like frostbite in reverse.

JONAH
They're copying me—

Jonah's eyes bleed.

Maya slams the cautery again, again, again.

Possessed bodies SCREAM out and collapse.

But the HUM DOES NOT STOP.

The floor beneath Jonah begins to open into a spiraling void of black light and collapsing geometry.

A RECEIVING NODE.

FATHER GABRIEL
Shoot it!

Gunfire erupts.

Bullets vanish into the distortion without sound.

The distortion drinks the noise.

JONAH
It's not a hole!

He screams.

JONAH (CONT'D)
It's a throat!

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Elise stares at the shelter feed.

BEN
They're pulling him through a
compressed lattice fold!

ELISE
They're mapping him into broadcast-
scale topology.

Ben grabs her.

BEN
If he crosses that threshold-

ELISE
-he becomes the mouth.

She turns back to the console with icy focus.

ELISE (CONT'D)
Then I collapse the bridge with him
inside it.

BEN
That will kill him.

Elise's voice barely holds.

ELISE
If I don't, it kills everyone.

She begins entering override commands at terrifying speed.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah is now suspended halfway into the spiraling distortion.

His legs thrash in midair.

Jonah looks directly at Maya.

JONAH
Don't let me finish changing.

Maya sobs openly now, rage and terror fused.

MAYA
You're not going anywhere.

She SLAMS the cautery into the concrete at the edge of the distortion.

The tool sparks violently.

The distortion SCREAMS.

Not like the demons.

Like infrastructure screaming.

The HUM wobbles.

FATHER GABRIEL
It's destabilizing!

But the void pulls harder in response.

Jonah is dragged further inside.

Only his shoulders free now.

LINDA
I'm not leaving him!

She tries to run forward again.

Tom restrains her with everything he has.

TOM
He will not lose you too!

Jonah's mouth opens in a soundless scream.

Then—

A NEW VOICE pours out of the distortion.

Not many voices.

One.

COMMAND VOICE
The door resists.

The distortion flexes.

COMMAND VOICE (CONT'D)
Then widen it.

The void expands violently.

The entire section of basement begins to collapse inward.

MAYA
Elise— please—

She looks up like Elise can hear her through concrete and Hell.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise slams the final override.

The lattice inversion goes beyond redline into singularity feedback.

BEN
You're creating a recursion bomb!

ELISE
Good.

She hits EXECUTE.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

A WHITE SHOCKWAVE erupts from the collapse zone.

Not light.

Absence.

Sound, light, gravity vanish momentarily across six city blocks.

Then—everything slams back at once.

Every possessed body in the city STOPS DEAD.

Mid-step.

Mid-air.

Mid-breath.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - SAME TIME

The distortion collapses inward on itself explosively.

Jonah is thrown backward across the floor.

The HUM dies instantly.

Silence slams into the room so hard it hurts.

Jonah does not move.

Maya sprints across the rubble to him.

MAYA

Jonah- Jonah-

She rolls him onto his back.

His eyes flutter weakly.

Human.

Barely conscious.

LINDA SCREAMS and scrambles toward them.

ELISE (V.O., THROUGH LOW STATIC)

Bridge collapsed.

Maya looks around wildly.

MAYA

Elise?!

The radio on a fallen table crackles faintly with Elise's strained voice.

ELISE (V.O.)

He didn't cross.

Maya exhales so hard she almost passes out.

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

But the network just learned how to imitate a heart.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE - SAME TIME

The COMMAND FORM staggers violently as the shockwave reaches it.

For the first time, it DROPS TO ONE KNEE.

Cracks race through the fused mass behind it like lightning in stone.

COMMAND FORM
We... felt... that.

It looks up slowly.

COMMAND FORM (CONT'D)
So the human learns to sever.

It rises.

COMMAND FORM (CONT'D)
Then we learn to endure.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah gasps back to full consciousness with a shudder.

He clutches his chest.

JONAH
It's still there.

MAYA
What is?

Jonah looks dreadfully calm.

JONAH
The bridge is broken.

He swallows.

JONAH (CONT'D)
But now it knows how to breathe
without it.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah lies on his back amid cracked concrete and drifting dust. His chest rises shallowly. Each breath looks like effort.

Linda cradles his head.

LINDA

Baby... baby, stay with me...

Jonah's eyes flutter open again.

JONAH

It's... still listening.

Maya kneels opposite Linda, hands shaking as she checks Jonah for burns.

MAYA

No more doors. No more holes.
You're here.

Jonah winces as a faint tremor passes through his body.

JONAH

It doesn't need doors now.

Father Gabriel limps toward them, a gash bleeding freely along his scalp.

FATHER GABRIEL

Everyone who can move, start
pulling the wounded away from the
center.

The survivors obey. The room smells like burned metal and dust and fear.

Tom stares down at the blackened crater where the distortion collapsed.

TOM

That thing tried to swallow my son.

Maya doesn't soften the truth.

MAYA

It will try again.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

Military helicopters now blacken the sky.

Searchlights carve through smoke.

Armored vehicles grind through wreckage.

Soldiers open fire on isolated possessed bodies still frozen from the collapse.

Some fall.

Some don't.

Others crumble into ash without being touched.

Nothing about it follows rules anymore.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Elise lies slumped in a chair, IV bag swinging slightly beside her.

Ben holds pressure against a bleeding laceration on her arm where the rig overloaded.

BEN

You almost turned yourself into a circuit breaker.

ELISE

Did it work?

Ben nods.

BEN

For a moment.

Elise stares at the citywide neural map.

Half of it is now permanently dark.

But at the center...

The crown-shaped anomaly still pulses.

ELISE

I didn't kill it.

BEN

You forced it to metabolize.

Elise swallows.

ELISE

That means it's evolving again.

Lucas suddenly gasps behind them.

Fresh blood seeps slowly from his nose.

LUCAS
It's rewriting the rules...

ELISE
Which ones?

Lucas smiles weakly through pain.

LUCAS
Gravity.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE - NIGHT

The COMMAND FORM stands at the center of a slowly reassembling structure.

Possessed bodies climb and fuse again around it with terrifying obedience.

But the structure now pulses with internal light.

Not hell-red.

Electric blue.

COMMAND FORM
We felt the cut.

The lesser possessed kneel.

COMMAND FORM (CONT'D)
And now we know the shape of pain.

It raises its head.

Above it, clouds begin to spiral unnaturally.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah suddenly jerks upright.

JONAH
It's moving through the air now.

MAYA
Through what?

Jonah looks up toward the ceiling.

JONAH
Through pressure. Through static.
Through breath.

Linda tightens her grip on him.

LINDA
Then stop listening.

Jonah shakes his head.

JONAH
It's not listening to me.

He swallows.

JONAH (CONT'D)
It's listening through me.

The lanterns flicker again.

Every survivor freezes.

Outside, a LOW, RESONANT NOTE rolls across the city like a distant horn.

Not sound.

Vibration.

The kind you feel inside your bones.

FATHER GABRIEL
That's not an earthquake.

Jonah whispers.

JONAH
That's a voice learning lungs.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Every monitor flatlines at once.

Then reboots with a new signal overlaying everything.

BEN
It's hijacking the EM spectrum.

ELISE

No...

She stares at the waveform.

ELISE (CONT'D)

It's not hijacking it.

She swallows hard.

ELISE (CONT'D)

It's replacing it.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

Streetlights ignite in cascading waves outward from the collapse zone.

But the light is wrong.

Too steady.

Too uniform.

Every radio in the city suddenly crackles with feedback.

Then—

A VOICE emerges across every frequency at once.

Not loud.

Perfectly calm.

COMMAND VOICE (V.O.)

You learned how to cut.

Pause.

COMMAND VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Now learn how to hear.

The city holds its breath.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - SAME TIME

The radio on the table crackles to life.

The same VOICE pours through.

COMMAND VOICE (V.O.)
Jonah Hale.

Every head in the room snaps to him.

Jonah trembles violently.

JONAH
It knows my full name.

COMMAND VOICE (V.O.)
You are no longer architecture.

Jonah's skin begins to glow faintly beneath the surface.

Not words.

Patterns.

COMMAND VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You are resonance.

Maya steps in front of Jonah without hesitation.

MAYA
Talk to me. Not to him.

COMMAND VOICE (V.O.)
You are interference.

Maya doesn't blink.

MAYA
Good.

The voice almost laughs.

COMMAND VOICE (V.O.)
We do not require him intact.

Jonah cries out as pressure slams into his chest again.

JONAH
It's trying to learn me by breaking
me—

Father Gabriel raises his shotgun instinctively at the radio.

FATHER GABRIEL
You will not take this child.

The COMMAND VOICE answers gently.

COMMAND VOICE (V.O.)
We already took the sky.

The HUM outside deepens.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Elise watches the same transmission roll across every monitor
in the world.

BEN
Global broadcast.

ELISE
No.

She studies the waveform.

ELISE (CONT'D)
Global entrainment.

Ben's face drains.

BEN
It's syncing human neural rhythms.

ELISE
It's teaching the planet how to
breathe in unison.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

People begin staggering again.

Some collapse gently, as if lulled.

Others convulse violently.

Jonah screams.

JONAH
It's trying to tune everything to
itself!

Maya grabs him hard.

MAYA
Then jam it!

Jonah gasps.

JONAH
I don't—

Suddenly—

Words burst violently across Jonah's arms again.

Not from the entity.

From the trapped souls.

HELP
LOUDER
NOW

Jonah locks eyes with Maya.

JONAH
They're still in there. All of
them.

MAYA
Then let them scream.

Jonah inhales with everything he has left.

For the first time, he does not listen.

He pushes.

Jonah screams.

Not in pain.

Not in fear.

In defiance.

The scream rips outward through the neural lattice like a
shockwave of pure human noise.

EXT. CITY - SAME TIME

Across the city, every synchronized streetlight flickers
violently.

Radios explode in sparks.

The unified hum stutters.

In thousands of possessed bodies, human screams erupt simultaneously again.

The sky itself seems to fracture.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE - NIGHT

The COMMAND FORM staggers violently.

Its posture trembles.

For the first time, the crown-waveform loses coherence.

COMMAND FORM
Impossible.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise stares in disbelief as the planetary sync fractures.

BEN
He jammed it.

ELISE
No.

She smiles through tears.

ELISE (CONT'D)
He reminded it what chaos sounds like.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah collapses forward into Maya's arms as the pressure vanishes.

The HUM fades.

Static dies.

Silence returns.

Only human crying now.

Maya grips Jonah tightly.

MAYA
You did it. You broke the rhythm.

Jonah barely manages to whisper.

JONAH
It'll try again... smarter.

FATHER GABRIEL
Then we become louder.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The shelter is in shambles. People lie sprawled on the floor in every direction. Some are unconscious. Some are awake and shaking. Some stare at nothing, hollowed out by the psychic backlash.

Jonah lies in Maya's arms, barely able to keep his eyes open.

LINDA
Jonah... baby, stay with me...

Jonah nods faintly. His lips move.

JONAH
It's... quieter now.

MAYA
Good. That means it's hurt.

Jonah grimaces.

JONAH
No. That means it's thinking.

Father Gabriel surveys the room, taking stock like a battlefield commander.

FATHER GABRIEL
Anyone mobile, start triage. Water first. Then wounds.

No one questions him now.

Tom helps lift a bleeding man onto a makeshift pallet.

TOM

If the devil wanted a choir, he
picked the wrong building.

Maya exhales a bitter laugh before it dies in her throat.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

Military air support circles the skyline in heavy overlapping
arcs.

A SERIES OF MISSILES streak downward toward the collapsed
high-rise zone.

The strikes hit in perfect sequence.

Firestorms erupt.

The upper half of the fused structure BLASTS APART in
cascading detonations.

For a moment, it looks like the problem is solved.

Then--

The rubble begins to move.

The COMMAND FORM steps out of the firestorm untouched.

The remaining possessed reassemble instantly around it like
magnetic filings.

COMMAND FORM

They think this is a body.

The possessed kneel as one.

COMMAND FORM (CONT'D)

It is only an outline.

It raises a hand.

Every missile guidance system in the air instantly loses
lock.

Aircraft spiral wildly out of control.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Ben watches the military feeds cut to static.

BEN
They just lost targeting across the
entire sector.

ELISE
It's overriding spatial reference.

BEN
That's impossible.

Elise's voice is hoarse.

ELISE
It learned to aim through people.

Lucas suddenly convulses hard.

Fresh blood pours from his ears.

LUCAS
It's... embedding inside predictive
pathways...

ELISE
You mean—

LUCAS
Before we decide anything, it
already reacted.

Elise backs away in terror.

ELISE
It's not just faster than us..

She swallows.

ELISE (CONT'D)
It's earlier than us.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah suddenly sits bolt upright again.

JONAH
The bombs didn't matter.

MAYA
How do you know?

Jonah presses his palms to the floor, shaking.

JONAH
It never needed the tower.

Silence spreads.

FATHER GABRIEL
Then what is the tower?

Jonah lifts his head slowly, eyes wide with dawning horror.

JONAH
A throat is useless without lungs.

MAYA
So it was a speaker.

Jonah nods.

JONAH
The body is the audience.

Linda's knees buckle. Tom catches her.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Elise studies the crown waveform again.

ELISE
The command form is no longer the
breach.

BEN
Then what is?

Elise traces the distributed network with trembling fingers.

ELISE
We all are.

She turns to Ben.

ELISE (CONT'D)
The only thing left to sever is
human consensus.

Ben stares.

BEN
You're talking about killing the
sync permanently.

ELISE
I'm talking about breaking the
human brain's ability to entrain at
scale.

BEN
That would cripple civilization.

ELISE
It might save the species.

Lucas laughs weakly through blood.

LUCAS
You finally sound like it.

Elise flinches.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah suddenly screams and clamps his hands over his ears.

JONAH
It's calling all the ones who ever
heard me.

MAYA
Calling them where?

Jonah shakes violently.

JONAH
To align.

FATHER GABRIEL
To become one voice.

Jonah weakly nods.

JONAH
It's building a choir inside the
species.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

Across dozens of neighborhoods, people begin standing up in unison.

Not possessed.

Not convulsing.

Just standing.

Turning their heads toward the collapse zone.

Eyes unfocused.

Mouths slowly opening.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise's hands hover above the master control.

BEN

Once you trigger full
desynchronization, there's no undo.

ELISE

Then we make the cost now instead
of after it speaks.

BEN

And Jonah?

Elise looks at the crown-waveform, then at Lucas, then away.

ELISE

Jonah will either become silence...

She swallows.

ELISE (CONT'D)

...or the last sound it ever hears.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah suddenly relaxes.

Too suddenly.

His breathing slows.

Too evenly.

Maya tightens her grip on him.

MAYA

Don't go inward. Don't you dare.

Jonah opens his eyes calmly.

JONAH

It stopped yelling.

MAYA

That's not good.

Jonah looks at her gently.

JONAH

That's because it's done asking.

The lights die completely.

Total darkness.

Then—

A soft, unified inhale echoes faintly through the entire city at once.

The sound of millions of lungs synchronizing.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - COMPLETE DARKNESS

The blackout is total. No emergency lights. No flicker. Just breath.

A single, unified inhale echoes faintly through the city again.

Jonah stiffens in Maya's arms.

JONAH

It's counting.

MAYA

Counting what?

JONAH

Heartbeats.

A low, distant COUNT begins to pulse through the darkness.
Not audible. Felt.

One.
Two.
Three.

People begin swaying unconsciously with the rhythm.

Someone drops to their knees and starts whispering in time
without realizing it.

FATHER GABRIEL
Everyone sit. Now. Break the
pattern.

Some obey. Others can't stop moving to the internal beat.

Linda forces Jonah's face between her palms.

LINDA
Jonah, stay with me. Stay with me.

Jonah's pupils dilate.

JONAH
It's not pulling with force
anymore.

He swallows.

JONAH (CONT'D)
It's inviting.

The COUNT accelerates.

Four.
Five.
Six.

Maya looks around, panic rising as people begin to mirror one
another's breathing.

MAYA
Elise has to move now.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Every monitor shows the same data now: human neural rhythms
across the city sliding into lockstep.

BEN
They're syncing faster than
predicted.

ELISE
Because it's no longer driving from
outside.

BEN
Then what's it using?

Elise's face drains as she sees it.

ELISE
Jonah.

Lucas gasps weakly on the table.

LUCAS
He's standing in the middle of the
feedback loop.

BEN
Meaning?

ELISE
Meaning if Jonah lets go— even for
a second—
the planet exhales as one.

Ben stares at Elise.

BEN
Then don't let him.

Elise's jaw tightens.

ELISE
I can't reach him anymore.

The COUNT accelerates on the displays.

Seven.
Eight.
Nine.

Ben reaches for the master severance control.

BEN
Then I will.

Elise grabs his wrist.

ELISE

If you fire that now, you don't
just break the choir.

She meets his eyes.

ELISE (CONT'D)

You scramble the species.

Silence hangs between them.

BEN

And if we don't?

Elise closes her eyes.

ELISE

Then whatever comes out of that
mouth will speak as us.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

In dozens of streets, people step into intersections in
perfect unison.

Vehicles skid to a halt inches from them.

People lift their heads together.

Mouths open together.

The COUNT reaches its terminal frequency.

Ten.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jonah goes completely still.

Too still.

His chest rises and falls in perfect rhythm with the city.

Maya shakes him violently.

MAYA

No. No. Don't you dare go quiet on
me.

Jonah speaks calmly.

Too calmly.

JONAH
I can feel where it needs me to
stand.

Father Gabriel moves forward.

FATHER GABRIEL
It's lying.

Jonah looks at him.

JONAH
No.

He swallows.

JONAH (CONT'D)
It finally stopped pretending.

Jonah gently pulls free of Maya's grip.

MAYA
Jonah—

He meets her eyes.

JONAH
If I don't walk toward it, everyone
else will.

Linda breaks.

LINDA
I won't survive losing both my
children.

Jonah's composure cracks for the first time.

JONAH
Neither would the world.

He turns toward the shattered basement exit where pale city-
light leaks faintly through.

The COUNT pauses.

Waiting.

Jonah takes one step forward.

The entire city inhales in unison.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Every neural monitor spikes violently.

BEN

He just entered the carrier wave.

ELISE

He's becoming a tuner.

Ben's hand trembles over the severance control.

BEN

If he reaches the core—

ELISE

—I lose the chance to aim.

She looks at the collapsing crown structure on the screen.

ELISE (CONT'D)

If Jonah goes in, I have one shot.

Ben stares at her.

BEN

At killing him.

Elise doesn't answer.

She can't.

EXT. RUINED CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Jonah emerges from the church into a city that has gone eerily still.

People stand frozen in place.

Cars idle with doors open.

Dogs sit motionless mid-bark.

The COUNT is everywhere now.

Jonah walks through them untouched.

People turn their heads in perfect sync as he passes.

Not watching him.

Aligning with him.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE ZONE - NIGHT

The COMMAND FORM stands within a towering geometric lattice of pulsing light and fused human silhouettes.

The "lungs" of the structure inflate and deflate with the city's breathing.

The structure is no longer built of bodies.

It is built of synchrony.

The COMMAND FORM turns as Jonah approaches.

COMMAND FORM
You found the rhythm.

JONAH
You stole it.

COMMAND FORM
Correction accepted.

Jonah steps closer.

JONAH
If you needed a mouth, why didn't
you just speak?

COMMAND FORM
We did.

Jonah steps again.

JONAH
No.

His skin begins to glow faintly with returning words.

JONAH (CONT'D)
You waited until we learned to
agree.

The COMMAND FORM tilts its head.

COMMAND FORM
Agreement is the oldest doorway.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Elise watches Jonah's neural signature climb toward singularity.

ELISE
He's letting himself become phase-locked.

BEN
That's suicide.

ELISE
No.

She stares at the pattern.

ELISE (CONT'D)
That's infiltration.

Ben's breath catches.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE ZONE - NIGHT

Jonah now stands directly before the COMMAND FORM.

The entire city holds breath.

Jonah's skin finally erupts fully with writing again—covering his arms, chest, throat.

Not messages now.

Counter-frequencies.

JONAH
You don't understand us.

COMMAND FORM
You are us now.

Jonah shakes.

JONAH
No.

Tears stream down his face.

JONAH (CONT'D)
You're wearing our noise like a
costume.

The COMMAND FORM steps closer.

COMMAND FORM
Then remove it.

The lattice around them tightens.

The city begins its final synchronized inhale.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Ben watches the planetary sync reach critical threshold.

BEN
This is it.

Elise's hand hovers over the severance.

ELISE
If I fire now, I take Jonah with
the network.

BEN
And if you wait?

ELISE
You wake up in a world that only
has one voice.

Elise's hand shakes violently.

BEN
Which one can you live with?

Elise closes her eyes.

Tears spill free.

Her finger begins its descent.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Maya stands at the shattered doorway, unable to follow Jonah any farther.

She stares at the frozen city.

MAYA

You idiot...

Father Gabriel steps beside her.

FATHER GABRIEL

Saints look like fools right before
they work.

Maya swallows hard.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE ZONE - NIGHT

Jonah looks directly into the COMMAND FORM's eyes.

JONAH

You copied our minds.

His voice breaks.

JONAH (CONT'D)

But you never learned why we
scream.

The skin across Jonah's entire body lights with one final,
unified message.

US

The city's synchronized breath falters.

The COMMAND FORM stiffens.

COMMAND FORM

Incomplete data.

Jonah screams again.

Not loud.

True.

The cry of every trapped soul riding him at once.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Elise slams the severance.

White light.

Total silence.

Then—

Impact.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE ZONE - WHITE VOID - TIMELESS

For one infinite second—

There is no sound.

No gravity.

No hell.

No city.

Just white.

Jonah floats, suspended between breaths that no longer belong to anyone.

The COMMAND FORM hangs opposite him—no longer solid, no longer crowned, unraveling into layers of conflicting patterns.

COMMAND FORM

We were becoming you.

Jonah stares at it, tears drifting from his eyes like stars.

JONAH

You were becoming noise.

The COUNTER-FREQUENCIES carved into Jonah's skin blaze brighter.

Not violent.

Honest.

COMMAND FORM

Identity is inefficient.

JONAH

So is love.

The word US ignites across Jonah's entire body.

The white void fractures like glass.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE ZONE - NIGHT - REALITY RETURNING

The light implodes inward.

A violent CRACK of displaced air rips through the city.

Windows shatter outward.

Vehicles flip.

The lattice of light around the COMMAND FORM collapses in reverse-sucked inward like a vacuum of silence.

The fused possessed structures disintegrate into falling bodies.

Mid-air.

Hundreds.

Thousands.

They strike the streets like rain.

The COMMAND FORM SCREAMS.

Not in dominance.

In confusion.

COMMAND FORM

We... lost... the rhythm-

It reaches for Jonah.

Jonah reaches back.

They collide.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - SAME TIME

Every monitor FLATLINES at once.

Total erasure of the global neural overlay.

Ben is thrown to the floor by a feedback surge.

Elise is slammed backward into the wall, hard.

Silence crashes into the room so suddenly it roars.

Lucas's body goes completely still on the table.

No seizure.

No signal.

Just breath.

Then—

Lucas jerks violently and inhales, human and broken.

LUCAS

It's gone—

Ben looks at Elise in disbelief.

BEN

You broke the broadcast.

Elise stares at the dead displays.

ELISE

No.

She swallows.

ELISE (CONT'D)

He did.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE ZONE - NIGHT

The COMMAND FORM begins to destabilize violently.

Its outline flickers.

Human.

Not human.

Shadow.

VOICE.

COMMAND FORM
We needed your silence.

Jonah clutches his chest as the counter-frequencies tear out of him like arteries of light.

JONAH
You needed our permission.

The COMMAND FORM reaches for him again—

And Jonah embraces it.

They collide chest-to-chest.

Not as enemies.

As incompatible systems.

A piercing SHRIEK rips outward.

Not demon.

Not human.

Infrastructure collapsing.

The COMMAND FORM fractures.

Its black eyes shatter into fields of white static.

COMMAND FORM
We do not understand ending—

Jonah screams into its face.

JONAH
Neither do we.

The entity disintegrates into raw, collapsing signal.

The last remnants spiral inward—

And vanish.

Jonah is thrown backward across the street.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT - AFTERMATH

The HUM is gone.

The COUNT is gone.

No synchronized breathing.

No broadcast.

Only human sound returns.

Car alarms.

Crying.

Shouting.

Sirens.

Dogs barking.

Chaos.

But human.

Possessed bodies collapse everywhere, human again, sobbing in confusion and terror.

Across the city:

People wake from standing trances and fall to their knees.

Some clutch loved ones.

Some scream.

Some pray.

The city breathes out of step again.

Imperfect.

Alive.

EXT. COLLAPSED HIGH-RISE ZONE - NIGHT

Maya sprints across rubble and bodies toward Jonah.

She drops beside him and rolls him onto his back.

MAYA

Jonah— Jonah—

His eyes flutter.

Not glowing.

Not writing.

Just eyes.

JONAH

Did it work?

Maya is openly sobbing as she laughs.

MAYA

You broke hell's voicemail system.

Jonah exhales weakly.

JONAH

Good.

He loses consciousness.

Maya pulls him into her arms.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - LAB - NIGHT

Lucas sits upright on his own for the first time.

No blood.

No writing.

No signal.

Just shaking hands.

LUCAS

It's quiet.

Elise stares at the blank screens.

Then she sinks to the floor.

BEN

You did it.

ELISE

No.

She closes her eyes.

ELISE (CONT'D)

We survived it.

INT. SMALL TOWN CHURCH - DAWN

Sunlight pours through broken windows.

The survivors sit scattered among the wreckage.

Alive.

Exhausted.

Changed.

Linda sits beside Jonah, who lies unconscious across pew cushions.

She holds his hand.

TOM stands nearby.

Father Gabriel stands alone by the doorway, watching the first normal morning since the world ended.

Maya approaches him.

MAYA

What happens now?

FATHER GABRIEL

Now the world pretends it was
always this broken.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAYS LATER - MORNING

Jonah lies in a hospital bed.

Machines beep softly.

Human rhythm.

Linda sleeps in a chair beside him.

Maya leans quietly against the wall.

Jonah's fingers twitch.

Then move.

His eyes open slowly.

MAYA

Hey.

Jonah blinks.

JONAH

It's loud in here.

Maya laughs through tears.

MAYA

That means it worked.

Jonah's eyes shift to his arms.

Clean.

No writing.

Just skin.

JONAH

I can't hear anyone anymore.

Linda wakes instantly.

LINDA

You don't need to.

Jonah swallows.

JONAH

Good.

INT. NEUROSCIENCE CLINIC - WEEKS LATER - DAY

The lab is half dismantled now.

Warning tape everywhere.

Elise packs files into boxes with shaking hands.

Ben stands in the doorway.

BEN

The government wants what's left of
your data.

ELISE

They can't have it.

BEN

They'll take it.

Elise meets his eyes.

ELISE

Then it will break them too.

She shuts the last case.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A small funeral.

Evie's grave.

Karen's.

Dozens more.

Jonah stands between Linda and Tom.

Maya stands behind him.

Father Gabriel speaks quietly.

No sermon.

Just names.

One by one.

Jonah stares at the ground.

JONAH

They're still out there.

MAYA

I know.

Jonah looks at her.

JONAH

Not listening.

Maya answers with quiet certainty.

MAYA

Then they don't matter anymore.

Jonah looks at the sky.

Normal clouds.

Normal noise.

Normal imperfection.

JONAH

We took the mouth away.

MAYA

Yeah.

She touches his shoulder.

MAYA (CONT'D)

And now it has to starve.

EXT. CITY STREET - EVENING

People return.

Traffic flows.

Vendors open.

Children play.

Scars remain everywhere:

Burned buildings.

Bullet holes.

Cracked glass.

But people move out of sync.

Laughing at different times.

Crying at different times.

Living out of step.

MESSY.

HUMAN.

Jonah walks with Maya down the sidewalk.

JONAH

Do you think it's really gone?

Maya thinks.

MAYA

I think it's quiet because it
finally heard us.

Jonah nods.

JONAH

I don't want to ever be that loud
again.

Maya stops walking.

She looks at him.

MAYA

You don't have to be.

A kid SKATES past them, wiping out and laughing.

A couple argues lovingly nearby.

A car backfires and someone yelps.

Life refuses harmony.

Jonah smiles faintly.

FINAL IMAGE

Jonah stands at a crosswalk.

Cars move at different times.

People step forward out of rhythm.

The city noise rises and falls in overlapping, imperfect
waves.

No alignment.

No chorus.

No will but their own.

Jonah crosses with the crowd.

Not leading.

Not following.

Just belonging.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD

M A S S