

S SHAD UL WS II

SOULSHADOWS II:
FOR SENTIMENTAL REASONS

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Tanis By
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FADE IN:

A CANDLE

The flame dances, alive. A distant RUMBLE of thunder.

Pulling back reveals that the base of this candle rests in a pool of wax -- atop a human skull.

Pulling back further reveals the alcove, lit by a hundred candles of every conceivable shape and size.

INT. THE ALCOVE

Tanis stands with her back to us, facing her mahogany display cabinet, its doors swung wide open.

TANIS

Why you back here?

She reaches into the cabinet and retrieves an item -- holding it in a closed fist.

TANIS

Tanis be thinkin' you forget 'bout her. But Tanis be rememberin' you. Tanis don't forget nothin'.

As Tanis turns to face us, another THUNDERCLAP. This one louder, closer. She looks up toward the roof.

TANIS

Someone angry tonight.
(back to us)
Been a long time. You pick a dark night to return.

With a wave of her arm every candle is extinguished except one -- the skull candle at the center of her small table.

Tanis approaches this table -- she seems to glide across the stone floor in her black kaftan.

TANIS

Tanis been thinkin'... thinkin' she goin' to tell you how even somethin' happy bring you sorrow.

Tanis eases herself into the single chair at her table.

She waves us over. A final clap of THUNDER as she begins her tale.

AT THE TABLE

Tanis holds her hand above the candle, opens her fist, and lets the item fall.

A bronze keychain dangles from one finger -- an intricate souvenir from some happy time long past -- a miniature replica of a Ferris wheel.

TANIS

Fortune, she turn like a wheel...

She taps the small wheel with her finger and sets it to spinning.

TANIS

Sometimes you up, sometimes you down. Ain't no reason. And ain't no stoppin' her...

ON THE KEYCHAIN

The miniature Ferris wheel whirls before our eyes. The faint sounds of CARNIVAL MUSIC filter in -- so soft as to barely be heard.

TANIS (O.S.)

...you try, and she roll you down.
Crush you flat.

And an image begins to form -- it surrounds the spinning wheel -- and it darkens, taking shape to become...

THE EYE OF AN OLD MAN

Focused. Stern. Displeased with what it sees. The dim shadow of the Ferris wheel whirls in his iris.

TANIS (V.O.)

Some people spend they lives goin' in circles...goin' nowhere. But the man I be tellin' you 'bout, he be goin' somewhere alright. And his tale be called..."For Sentimental Reasons."

SUPER: FOR SENTIMENTAL REASONS

And pulling back from the eye reveals...

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

A small, modestly furnished bedroom, with a twin sized bed, dresser drawer, and a night stand, dimly lit by a small lamp.

On the bed is ALBERT AVERITT, an early 80's man with gray hair, and a gaunt faced adorned with gray stubble.

In a wooden chair next to him sits CHARLIE AVERITT, a mid 40's man with pattern baldness and a paunch in his belly. He looks at Albert with a mix of anticipation and worry.

Albert motions for him to come closer. He leans in.

ALBERT

There's a box in the top dresser drawer. Get it and bring it over here.

Charlie obliges, retrieves the small, wooden box from the drawer, and brings it back.

Charlie sits down, holds the box in his lap. After a moment, Albert becomes agitated.

ALBERT

Well... open it up.

Charlie opens the box. Inside is a bronze keychain, shaped like a Ferris Wheel. He takes it out, marvels at it.

ALBERT

I bought that for you.

Charlie turns his attention back to Albert.

CHARLIE

Really?

ALBERT

Yes, but you can't have it.

Charlie furrows his brow, confused.

ALBERT

You've failed, Charlie. You've failed to accomplish what you set out to do.

CHARLIE

How did I fail? I'm riding Navy Pier next week.

ALBERT

I won't be here next week.

CHARLIE

I'm still going to ride it. It's what I set out to do, and I'm going to do it.

ALBERT

And you still won't be done. There will always be others.

CHARLIE

And I'll ride those too.

ALBERT

How can I be sure? You've been nothing but a colossal fuck up. No wife, no children. Just you and those goddamn Ferris Wheels.

CHARLIE

If I recall correctly, you like Ferris Wheels too.

ALBERT

Except it didn't ruin my life. I had a wife, a child. As much as you'd qualify as one anyway. I stopped riding to take care of my responsibilities.

Charlie realizes something.

CHARLIE

Is that what this is about? That I'm going to do something that you didn't?

ALBERT

Don't be such a fool. I would never be jealous of you. You're pathetic.

Charlie opens his mouth to speak, but Albert cuts him off by reaching out his hand.

ALBERT

Hand it over.

CHARLIE

What?

ALBERT
The key chain. Hand it over.

Charlie clutches it in his hand.

CHARLIE
It's mine. I deserve it.

ALBERT
No. You don't.

Albert gives Charlie a stern look. Charlie caves, hands the key chain over.

ALBERT
It stays with me.

And with that, Albert closes his eyes and fades away with a death rattle. The key chain rests in his palm, flat on the bed.

Charlie moves closer.

CHARLIE
Dad? Dad?

He gives Albert a few nudges, but no luck.

Charlie's eyes move from Albert's, down to the key chain in his hand. He's totally focused on it.

EXT. NAVY PIER, CHICAGO - NIGHT

All is illuminated by bright, white lights, and the brightest of all are those from the Ferris Wheel, situated near the eastern end of the pier behind the large, indoor mall.

Standing at one hundred and fifty foot high, the Ferris Wheel offers wonderful, panoramic views from the top.

It's a warm, summer night. Numerous people wander about the pier. Some stop to buy food from vendors, others peruse items at the many kiosks.

EXT. NAVY PIER, FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

Charlie sits in a gondola, all alone.

He looks through the bars of the gondola at the vast landscape.

He takes advantage of the Ferris Wheel's brief stoppage, snaps a picture of a boat on Lake Michigan, decorated with lights in Venetian Night fashion.

The Ferris Wheel starts up again and moves Charlie's gondola, one more position near the bottom.

He turns his attention away from the lake to the city skyline, snaps a few more photos, tucks his camera into a small bag located on his hip, and takes out a set of keys.

A set of keys attached to the Ferris Wheel key chain.

With a smile, Charlie gives the wheel a small spin and tucks it away in his bag.

EXT. NAVY PIER, FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie has now reached the bottom, and an ATTENDANT opens the door to the gondola to allow his exit.

Charlie steps through the barricade, and is immediately greeted by a REPORTER.

REPORTER

Excuse me. Are you Charlie Averitt?

CHARLIE

Yeah, that's me.

REPORTER

Mister Averitt, I'm with the Sun Times. Is it alright if I ask you a few questions?

CHARLIE

Sure, but no need to call me Mister Averitt. Charlie will be fine.

REPORTER

Okay, Charlie.

CHARLIE

I gotta admit I'm pretty surprised to see you here.

REPORTER

Really? Aren't you the one who called?

CHARLIE

Yeah, but just on a lark. I figured this wouldn't really qualify as news.

REPORTER

It'll be a good little story, I'm sure. So, how does it feel to accomplish what you have here today?

CHARLIE

It feels pretty good, really. I've been able to see a lot of great places all over the world, but finishing it up here at home makes it that much more special.

REPORTER

How, exactly, did you get the idea to ride every Ferris Wheel in the world?

Charlie laughs.

CHARLIE

Well, not every Ferris Wheel. Just the famous ones. If I tried to ride all of them, I'd probably be chasing some carnies through Kentucky right now.

REPORTER

Right. Just the famous ones then.

Charlie thinks it over for a moment.

CHARLIE

I guess it's just my way of trying to accomplish something worthwhile.

REPORTER

Worthwhile?

CHARLIE

Well, I guess it's not the same as charity work, but it's something.

REPORTER

And have people been supportive of you in your quest?

CHARLIE

Well, I don't really talk to a whole lot of people about it, but my father was always very supportive of me. He gave me this.

Charlie reaches into his hip bag, grabs his keys and shows the Ferris Wheel key chain to the reporter.

REPORTER

That's very nice.

CHARLIE

Yeah, it's pretty special to me, and now I feel like I've really earned it.

The reporter searches the area.

REPORTER

Is he here with you today?

CHARLIE

No, I'm afraid he's recently passed on.

REPORTER

I'm sorry to hear that.

CHARLIE

It's alright. I'm sure he's up there right now, beaming with pride.

They sit in silence for a moment, until the reporter gets back on the clock.

REPORTER

Any plans going forward?

CHARLIE

No, not really. Just gonna sit back, take it easy, and keep an eye out for any new Ferris Wheels that go up.

REPORTER

Great. Well, I think that's about all I need.

CHARLIE

Will this be in tomorrow's newspaper?

REPORTER
You bet. Just look in the
Lifestyle section.

CHARLIE
Will do.

REPORTER
Take care, Charlie.

CHARLIE
Yep. You do the same.

The reporter shakes Charlie's hand and heads off into the crowd.

Charlie scans the area, takes note of a Dippin' Dots stand.

EXT. NAVY PIER, BENCH - NIGHT

Charlie sits on the bench, eats a cup of Dippin' Dots and watches the various people that pass by.

And old man, YURI, late 70's takes a seat on the bench next to Charlie, rests his hands on a hickory cane. He wears a large, wool coat, much too heavy for this climate, and looks at Charlie with an intense stare.

Although Charlie can sense it, he refuses to acknowledge it by looking at him.

Yuri nods his head toward Charlie, speaks in a thick Ukrainian accent.

YURI
You.

Charlie looks up from his Dippin' Dots.

CHARLIE
Excuse me?

YURI
You. You are the one who rides the
Ferris Wheels, no?

CHARLIE
Yeah, that's me.

YURI
And you have ridden every single
one?

CHARLIE

That's right. The London Eye,
Singapore Flyer, The Southern Star.
All of them, right back here to the
one at Navy Pier.

YURI

And what are your plans for the
Beijing wheel?

CHARLIE

Once it's built, I'll ride it.

Yuri raises a curious eyebrow.

YURI

As well as the one in Berlin?

Charlie smiles, impressed.

CHARLIE

You know your stuff.

Yuri shrugs, humble.

YURI

I too am a rider of Ferris Wheels.

Charlie tosses his Dippin' Dots into a nearby trash can,
looks to Yuri, intrigued.

CHARLIE

Really?

Yuri nods.

YURI

Since nineteen eighty. I have
ridden them all.

Yuri gestures toward the large Ferris Wheel behind them.

YURI

Well, now I have.

Yuri smiles. Charlie extends his hand.

CHARLIE

Welcome to the club.

Yuri doesn't shake his hand.

YURI

It is I who should be welcoming
you.

CHARLIE

Well, I suppose it doesn't really
matter, right? I mean, we've both
taken a ride on every Ferris Wheel
in the world.

Yuri shakes his head.

Charlie sits, confused.

YURI

You still have one more to go.

CHARLIE

How is that possible?

Yuri reaches into the inner pocket of his coat, removes a
picture, and hands it to Charlie.

Charlie looks at the picture in wonder. It's a Ferris Wheel,
and it sits in desolation.

CHARLIE

Which one is this?

YURI

It doesn't have a name. It's known
only as the Ferris Wheel.

CHARLIE

Where is it?

Yuri doesn't respond. Charlie asks again, more forceful this
time.

CHARLIE

Well?

YURI

It is in Prypiat. In Ukraine.

CHARLIE

Near Chernobyl?

Yuri nods.

YURI

That is correct.

CHARLIE

Are you fucking crazy? That place has been abandoned for over twenty years. It doesn't count.

YURI

As long as the Ferris Wheel still stands, it counts.

CHARLIE

Look at this thing. All rusted out and horrible looking. Probably doesn't even work.

YURI

It works. I know it does.

CHARLIE

Oh, really? And how's that?

YURI

Because I have been on it.

CHARLIE

When? In eighty five when it was still operational?

Yuri leans forward, a dead serious expression on his face.

YURI

Six weeks ago.

Charlie is taken aback. He looks back to the picture.

YURI

And if you want your claim in tomorrow's paper to be true and earn your key chain, you too must ride it.

CHARLIE

Wait. How do you know about...

Charlie looks up from the picture. Yuri is gone.

CHARLIE

...that?

Charlie searches for Yuri, but he's nowhere in sight.

He takes one last look at the picture before he deposits it in the garbage can and leaves.

INT. NAVY PIER, PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Charlie exits the elevator and walks through the crowded lot. As he moves along, he reaches into his hip bag, takes out his keys.

He freezes, something's wrong.

He looks at the keys to find that his Ferris Wheel key chain is gone.

A frantic search through the hip bag and a quick scan of the surrounding area confirm his fear. It's lost.

He stomps on the ground in anger, and heads toward his car.

As he gets closer, something on the driver's side window gets his interest.

He studies it, but is unable to make out what it is.

At the car, Charlie now sees what it is. An exact copy of the photo he deposited in the trash just moments ago, only this one has the words "RIDE IT", written on it in black marker.

Charlie looks around the garage. Nobody here.

He rips the picture off the window, throws it to the ground, and gets in the car.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

A sparse apartment, decorated with only the essentials. An empty wheelchair sits in the corner.

Charlie sits on the couch in a bath robe. A cup of coffee on the table in front of him.

He sifts through the morning paper until he finds the Lifestyle section.

He opens it up and searches for his article. When he finds it, his mouth drops in shock.

CHARLIE
What the hell?

He drops the paper on the table and exits the room. Upon closer review, the paper has clearly been tampered with.

The article is circled numerous times over with a red marker, and two arrows point to a short, yet succinct words...

LIAR.

THIEF.

Charlie re-enters the room, a telephone pressed to his ear.

CHARLIE

Yes, hello? Hi. My name is Charles Averitt. I'd like to report an intrusion... No, nobody's broken in, but someone is writing things in my newspaper and leaving stuff on my car... Yes, I do. It's an old guy. Ukrainian, I think... Russian, maybe. No, I don't know his name. Isn't an old, Ukrainian guy enough of a description for you to bring someone in to identify?

Charlie listens for a few moments longer this time.

CHARLIE

You're serious? You honestly don't know where to start? Here's a novel idea. How 'bout the Ukrainian Village?

Charlie hangs up the phone without waiting for a response, tosses it on the couch.

A shuffle near the door gets his attention, and he looks over just in time to see an envelope slide underneath it.

He rushes over and opens it up. Nobody there.

He pokes his head out.

CHARLIE

This isn't funny, old man! I know you stole my key chain and I want it back! I'm not kidding!

Charlie goes back inside, shuts the door, and picks up the envelope.

He looks at the front and back. There's nothing written on it. He opens it up, removes its articles. A letter, written on plain white paper, and a picture of his key chain.

CHARLIE
Son of a bitch.

He unfolds the letter, reads it.

YURI (V.O.)
Your key chain is on its way to the
site of your last ride. If you
deserve it as much as you say, and
if you are a man of honor, you will
make the trip to Prypiat and ride
the wheel.

Charlie shuts his eyes in anger, balls up the note and throws
it to the ground.

CHARLIE
Goddamnit.

He looks to the wheelchair, stares intently at its spokes.
Lost in its reflection, he visualizes it as his keychain.

It spins round and round, calls him. He calms.

CHARLIE
I do deserve it.

INT. BORYSPOL AIRPORT, UKRAINE - DAY

Charlie exits the gate and passes the ticket agent. He stops
when he sees VLAD, an early twenties man, who holds a sign
with his name on it.

Charlie walks to him.

CHARLIE
I'm Charlie Averitt.

Vlad lowers his sign, shakes Charlie's hand.

VLAD
We must go. We haven't much time.

CHARLIE
Who sent you here?

VLAD
We can discuss that in the car,
Mister Averitt.

CHARLIE

My father was Mister Averitt. Call me Charlie.

VLAD

Yes. My apologies. Charlie. I am Vlad. Now, if you'll just follow me, we can get you through Customs and be on our way.

Vlad steps aside, gestures toward the Customs area.

Charlie shrugs, proceeds toward Customs.

I/E. VLAD'S CAR - DAY

Vlad speeds along a winding road with cracker jack precision. Charlie sits in nervousness.

CHARLIE

Is it okay to be driving this fast?

VLAD

This is Ukraine driving. Is fun, no?

Vlad smiles. Charlie doesn't.

CHARLIE

Uh... yeah, if you're into dying in a fiery hell.

Vlad looks to Charlie, who cracks a small smile.

CHARLIE

Sorry. I make jokes when I'm nervous. Can you slow down a little please?

Vlad eases up on the gas, drives at a more acceptable pace. Charlie calms.

CHARLIE

So, who sent you to pick me up?

VLAD

An old man named Yuri.

CHARLIE

Is he here now?

VLAD

I don't know. I was only told to pick you up and take you to the Ferris Wheel in Prypiat.

CHARLIE

Do you know why?

VLAD

No. I can only think it's because you are crazy.

CHARLIE

What's so crazy about it?

VLAD

Anything to do with Prypiat is crazy. The entire city is in the zone of alienation.

CHARLIE

What's that?

VLAD

It means you should not go there.

CHARLIE

Well, yeah, I kinda figured that based on the alienation part, but why?

VLAD

The radiation is too high. At least in parts.

CHARLIE

Like the Ferris Wheel?

VLAD

Is that where you are going?

CHARLIE

Yes.

VLAD

Why?

CHARLIE

I have to ride it.

Angry, Vlad pulls the car to the side of the road.

VLAD

This is not a time for jokes,
Charlie. The Ferris Wheel hasn't
been functional since the disaster.

CHARLIE

I know that.

VLAD

Then why do you say you are going
to ride it?

CHARLIE

Because Yuri is making me.

VLAD

How? How could he make you get on
a plane, come here, and ride the
Ferris Wheel?

CHARLIE

Sentimental reasons. He has
something important of mine.

VLAD

Surely, it is not something that
cannot be replaced.

CHARLIE

It can't, and don't call me
Shirley.

Vlad is confused.

VLAD

Is that another joke?

CHARLIE

Must be an American thing. Anyway,
what he took to me is very
important. It's my most prized
possession, and he won't give it
back until I ride the wheel.

VLAD

The wheel that is not functional?

CHARLIE

He said he rode it six weeks ago.

VLAD

That is impossible.

CHARLIE

Trust me, I believe you, but that's what he said. Wouldn't somebody notice something like that?

VLAD

There are many mysteries surrounding Prypiat. The Ferris Wheel is the biggest of them all. There are legends that say it will start itself up at night, and those who died in the disaster will ride it for amusement.

CHARLIE

Do you believe that?

VLAD

No. I believe it is just a story used to scare children. The wheel only moves when the wind commands it to.

Charlie is frustrated.

CHARLIE

Then how the hell am I supposed to ride it?

VLAD

That has already been thought of. I will explain when we get to your destination.

CHARLIE

My destination? You're not coming with me?

Vlad drives off without a response.

EXT. ZONE OF ALIENATION, ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Vlad's car pulls up to a large fence, covered in barb wire. This is the only means of security, as there's not another soul in sight.

Vlad and Charlie exit the car.

Charlie sizes up the fence, Vlad goes to the trunk.

CHARLIE
Doesn't look too bad. You think
they'd be a little more on the ball
about keeping people out.

VLAD
It is not necessary.

CHARLIE
Why not?

VLAD
Because everybody knows that only a
fool would go past the fence.

Vlad pulls a bag from the trunk, strains a little. It's
heavy.

He carries it over to Charlie and sets it down at his feet.

CHARLIE
What's that?

VLAD
Your supplies.

Charlie bends down, opens the bag.

Inside are three items. A pair of small bolt cutters, a pair
of pliers, and a car battery.

Charlie looks up to Vlad.

VLAD
To power the wheel.

CHARLIE
How far do I need to carry this
thing?

Vlad thinks it over.

VLAD
About two kilometers.

CHARLIE
Shit.

VLAD
It is not too late to reconsider.

CHARLIE

Is there another way to get my key chain back?

Vlad's eyes go wide in surprise.

VLAD

A key chain? You're doing all of this for a stupid key chain?

CHARLIE

It's not stupid. It's mine.

VLAD

You do not understand. You--

CHARLIE

No, you don't understand! I earned that key chain, I want it back, and nobody's going to stop me. Not you, not my dad, and definitely not Yuri!

Charlie goes to the fence, cuts at the chain link with the bolt cutters.

When he's got a spot big enough for him to fit through, he tosses the cutters to the ground, looks back to Vlad.

Vlad offers a salute.

VLAD

Godspeed, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Yeah.

Vlad gets in the car, drives off.

Charlie watches the car until its lights fade into the darkness.

He picks up the bag and enters the zone of alienation through the fence.

EXT. PRYPIAT, CITY SQUARE - NIGHT

Charlie walks along, breathes heavily from the weight of the large battery he carries.

He scans the area. Nothing. A desolate ghost town, frozen in time. Large, brick buildings are strewn about, perfectly vacant, yet vastly different.

Through the windows, some of them appear to be untouched. Perfectly made beds. Small articles still rest on night tables. The land that time forgot.

Other buildings have been totally looted. The only sign of life is the large trees that have sprung up at their center, large branches stretched through windows and roofs.

Charlie takes in this surreal environment, shakes his head in awe. His eyes go wide. He vomits.

He crouches over, looks at the puddle of mess he's made on the pavement. Contrasted against the pale, gray buildings, it looks like a technicolor wonder show.

YURI (O.S.)

You have come.

Charlie looks up to see Yuri just a few yards away. He rights himself, adjusts the bag on his shoulder.

CHARLIE

Gimme the key chain.

YURI

I don't have it.

CHARLIE

Where is it?

YURI

At the site of your last ride, just as I stated in my letter.

Yuri gestures toward the vomit.

YURI

I see that it has begun.

CHARLIE

What's begun?

Yuri gestures for him to follow.

YURI

We must go. We do not have much time.

Yuri walks off. Charlie hurries to catch up with him.

CHARLIE

What do you mean? We don't have much time?

YURI

You're already showing the signs of radiation exposure. Nausea, vomiting. Do you have a headache?

CHARLIE

A little bit, yeah.

YURI

Then our time is short. You must get to the Ferris Wheel immediately.

Charlie puts his hand on Yuri's shoulder, stops him in his tracks.

CHARLIE

Our time is short? You telling me I'm gonna die?

YURI

It is quite possible.

CHARLIE

Then what am I doing here?

YURI

Because you want your key chain, and your claim of riding every great Ferris Wheel on Earth to be true.

CHARLIE

Every great functioning Ferris Wheel on Earth. There's a difference.

YURI

I have already told you. The wheel is functional.

Charlie gestures toward the bag.

CHARLIE

Oh yeah? Then what the hell am I doing with this thing?

Yuri smiles.

YURI

Although it is functional, it does
require a little bit of help.

Charlie removes his hand from Yuri's shoulder, and Yuri
proceeds onward.

CHARLIE

I'm throwing you off when we get to
the top.

Charlie walks onward.

EXT. PRYPIAT, FERRIS WHEEL

Charlie and Yuri stand at the base of the great Ferris Wheel,
which doesn't appear to be all that great, nor as functional
as Yuri claimed.

Some of the gondolas look downright dangerous, with missing
pieces that are strewn about the ground.

CHARLIE

There's no way this thing works.

Yuri waves a finger in the air in a circular motion, like the
spin of a Ferris Wheel.

YURI

Round, and round, and round it
goes.

Almost as if by Yuri's command, the wind suddenly picks up,
and the Ferris Wheel begins a slow spin.

Charlie looks between the Ferris Wheel and Yuri's finger in
amazement.

Yuri lowers his finger, the wind stops, and Charlie vomits.

Charlie wipes his mouth with his forearm.

CHARLIE

Who are you?

YURI

I am nobody.

CHARLIE

Bullshit. You never met me, yet you know everything about me, and you can wave your finger and cause the goddamn wind to move the Ferris Wheel.

They lock eyes. Charlie is apprehensive.

CHARLIE

Are you the devil?

A moment of silence as Charlie waits for an answer.

Yuri can only laugh.

CHARLIE

What's so funny?

Yuri continues his laugh.

CHARLIE

I said what's so funny, asshole!

Charlie grabs him by the lapels, shakes him with vigor.

The shakes do more damage to Charlie, as a clump of hair falls from his head, lands on the bridge of his nose.

Charlie releases his grip, blows the piece of hair from his face, then runs a hand through his head.

He looks at his palm. Bits of hair are wedged between his fingers.

Charlie, horrified, shows his hair covered hand to Yuri.

CHARLIE

What the hell is this?

YURI

It's one of the effects of radiation exposure. Hair loss occurs at three hundred rems.

CHARLIE

Rems?

YURI

Roentgen equivalent in man.

Charlie clutches his stomach in pain.

CHARLIE
What's happening?

YURI
In addition to hair loss, your
nerve cells, as well as the cells
that line your digestive tract are
now severely damaged. I suggest
you hurry.

Charlie, still with a firm grip on his stomach, makes his way
to the junction box of the Ferris Wheel.

He pries the cover loose, looks at a mess of wires, then back
to Yuri.

CHARLIE
How the hell am I supposed to
figure this out!

Yuri rolls his eyes.

YURI
Black to black. White to red.

Charlie looks back to the box and untwists the two sets of
red and black wires.

He pulls the battery from the bag, sets it on the ground, and
wastes no time in connecting the black wire to the black
terminal on the battery.

He grabs the white wire, and just as he's ready to connect it
to the red terminal, Yuri grabs his hand, startles him.

CHARLIE
What are you doing?

Yuri reaches into the bag, takes out a pair of pliers.

YURI
Use this. You don't want to fry
yourself.

Charlie takes the pliers and uses them to connect the white
wire.

When it's firmly in place, the Ferris Wheel whirs to life.

It's functional, but an outright mess, with only a handful of
the once ornate and illustrious bulbs still actually working.

Charlie gets up, walks to a lever near the wheel, and pulls back on it. The wheel stops.

CHARLIE

Turn it on when I get in.

Charlie takes a step toward the Ferris Wheel, but steps back when it starts moving.

He looks to Yuri, who mans the lever.

CHARLIE

You wanna wait until I get in?

YURI

You need to get in the right one.

Charlie turns back to the wheel, watches it spin around.

There's nothing different about any of the cars, other than those that are missing parts.

Charlie looks back to Yuri.

CHARLIE

What's the right one?

Yuri pulls back on the lever, stops the Ferris Wheel.

YURI

That one.

Charlie looks back to the wheel. The gondola in the seating area contains Charlie's prized key chain.

Charlie looks back to Yuri, who motions for him to get in the seat.

YURI

It is your destiny, Charlie
Averitt. You must ride the wheel.

Charlie clutches his stomach, stands in silence.

He looks up to Yuri.

CHARLIE

I'm never getting off of it, am I?

Yuri does not respond.

Charlie removes the hand from his stomach, stands up straight, brave. He accepts his fate.

He makes the walk to the gondola, takes a seat. He picks up the key chain, grips it tightly in his hand.

He pulls the safety bar across his waist, nods to Yuri. He's ready.

Yuri pulls the lever, and the wheel whirs to life as the sound of a police car can be heard in the distance.

As Charlie's gondola reaches the top, he can see the whole city of Prypiat below.

From this view, it doesn't look much better, but the skyline of Slavutych is much more enlightening, appearing to be everything that Prypiat once was.

Charlie catches a glimpse of the police car as it enters through the gates a couple kilometers away.

The Ferris Wheel makes its descent. Charlie watches the car until he can no longer see it.

CHARLIE

The cops are...

Charlie looks at the lever. It's vacant.

CHARLIE

...coming. What the hell?

Charlie stares at the unmanned lever as the Ferris Wheel begins its climb yet again.

Charlie covers his mouth with his hand, coughs. He pulls it away. There's blood on it.

His breathing is heavy, laboured. He shuts his eyes, tries to regain himself.

When he opens them, he's descending. The police are halfway to him now.

He brings the key chain to eye level, and like a kid with a new toy, spins it around.

He smiles, watches the little wheel spin on its tiny base.

As he does, his body slowly transforms into tiny dust particles. He fades into the night air, forever smiling.

The police arrive on the scene and exit the car, dressed in Haz-Mat suits.

OFFICER 1 shuts the Ferris Wheel down, while OFFICER 2 inspects it, seeking out intruders.

Officer 2 shines his light on the gondola, then sees it.

Charlie's little trinket lies on the seat. Its bronze finish reflecting the light's beam.

Officer 2 reaches out to grab it, but Officer 1 stops him with a firm hand on his wrist.

OFFICER 1
(in Ukrainian)
What? You want to take death home
with you? Leave the ghosts where
they lie.

Officer 1 releases his grip, they go back to their car, and waste no time in getting out of there.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. VAST, WHITE LANDSCAPE - UNKNOWN

A large area of nothing but bright, white light as far as the eye can see, until a small speck appears in the distance and gets rapidly larger and larger as we approach.

The speck, is a Ferris Wheel. Immaculate in its look and design, it contains two passengers.

Charlie, who still has the childish smile from Prypiat on his face, and Yuri, who laughs a hearty laugh, enjoying not only the ride, but someone to finally ride the wheel with.

Charlie has a revelation, looks at his hand. Empty.

He searches the seat. The key chain is nowhere to be found.

Yuri's laugh turns downright manic. Charlie looks up, and sheer terror overcomes him.

Yuri has been replaced by Albert, and the loud, maniacal laugh will taunt Charlie for all eternity.

WIDER

The Ferris wheel continues to whirl as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

THE KEYCHAIN

Still spinning -- still dangling from Tanis' finger.

TANIS (O.S.)
 Everybody be collectin' somethin'.
 Some people spend they lives
 collectin' mistakes...

She pokes the keychain with her finger, and it ceases to spin.

TANIS (O.S.)
 ...that called experience...

WIDER

Tanis closes her fist around the keychain.

TANIS
 ...but they's so many people
 collect nothin' but dust.

She opens her fist -- and the keychain has vanished -- her hand contains only fine, gray powder.

TANIS
 Them's the ones that sad when the
 ride is over. Them's the ones
 wantin' to go round just one more
 time.

Tanis lifts her hand above the candle, letting the dust trickle from her hand to the flame.

And WHOOSH -- the small flame roars to life -- it sputters and pops with a hot chaos of color and smoke.

TANIS
 That the thing 'bout the Ferris
 wheel. When the ride be over, you
 gettin' off if you like it or not.
 So you got to be takin' the
 view...while you can.

With the flame of the candle calmed once more, Tanis leans in towards it.

TANIS

Now you leave Tanis be.

She blows out the candle with a small puff, and all becomes dark.

TANIS (OVER BLACK)

Go see somethin'.

THE END