

LOUD

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OVER BLACK:

WE HEAR MANY SOUNDS

Hollow drips

Sand slipping through cracks and dirt and rocks falling

The electric crackle of energy

Distant explosions like kettle drums

Rambling voices like screams

Footsteps chattering into an underground cavern

The tinkling of glass, a thousand other things

It's like hell came alive and developed a singing voice.

(V.O.)

There is no sound in space...

A MAN'S VOICE CUTS THROUGH IT ALL...

INT. UNDEGROUND CAVERN - SNAP IN:

Filling this GIANT HOLE is some kind of MACHINE. Endless. A city of a machine.

This THING is made mostly of SPEAKERS. Trillions of them wired together to form a kind of Death Star.

(V.O.)

...There's no molecules to carry its vibrations, see? Just more emptiness...

TILT TO: A CRATER IN THE CEILING. A MEDIEVAL CHURCH through it. Cuts of COLORFUL LIGHT stream through stained glass.

(V.O.)

...Like the proverbial tree in the forest, sound doesn't exist until we hear it, not as noise anyway...

The CHAPEL above is laced with MORTAR HOLES. Smoking.

(V.O.)

...So in a very real way, sound is a construct of our minds...

The MACHINE BELOW starts HUMMING. LOUD. Our audience will have to cover their ears.

TILT BACK TO: A FIGURE in a HEAVY CLOAK lurching through the CAVERN... We never see his face... He moves towards a HUGE STEEL LEVER bolted to a TOGGLE in the ground...

(V.O.)

...Without intelligent life? This world would be a massive ball of crashing waves and howling wind and crackling fire, all of it SILENT with no one to receive its glory...

The FIGURE leans his weight into the LEVER. Trips it. The MACHINE goes into a frenzy of hysterical ramping.

(V.O.)

...This makes sound personal. It lives in us. It survives through us. It closes the space between us...

The MACHINE convulses creating an EARTHQUAKE all around.

As we see THE FIGURE... Staring up into the LIGHT...

EXT. THE ROSSLYN CHAPEL, SCOTLAND - THAT MOMENT

...Outside this 600 YEAR OLD CHURCH. Fire-scorched hills. Explosions. Drones policing the sky...

(V.O.)

...It's chaos in search of order... A thousand sperm... Wriggling towards the egg...

BOOOOOM! AN ATOMIC BOMB OF SOUND SHOOTS UP OUT OF THE GROUND.

IT BLOWS THE ROSSLYN INTO THE STRATOSPHERE -- SO LOUD -- HIGH PITCHED -- THUNDEROUS -- IT SENDS EVERY STONE SPRAYING INTO:

EXT. OUTER SPACE - CONTINUOUS

ON THE UK-- Where the SOUND PULSE plumes up and outward like a mushroom cloud... Covering the landmass below...

(V.O.)

So as we come to understand this...

...The STONES of the ROSSLYN whiz past us revealing STRANGE SYMBOLS carved into their faces...

(V.O.)
*...One might wonder... What if
 there was something SO LOUD...*

...RACK TO the WAVES OF SOUND encircling the globe below,
 echoing off our atmosphere, enveloping the ENTIRE WORLD
 FOREVER as--

(V.O.)
It could reach us all?

BLACK OUT.

INT. CADEN'S CAR - MORNING

SILENCE. NO SOUND WHATSOEVER. THIS IS A SILENT FILM NOW.

We're suddenly looking through the windows of a MOVING CAR at
 passing streets somewhere in the SAN FERNANDO VALLEY.

It's EMPTY and RAGGED out here. The FEW PEOPLE on the street
 are wearing strange HEADPHONES.

SUPER: LOS ANGELES - PRESENT DAY

Camera turns to **CADEN LAFORGE** driving in SILENCE.

He's wearing the PHONES too. Bulky. Little antennae on them.

His are more expensive than the others on the street. These
 are NOISE-CANCELLING devices, ubiquitous in our world.

Caden is around sixty years old.

Rumpled black suit, freshly shaven, but with wild hair and
 weary, sunken eyes behind expensive sunglasses, like a Jazz
 Player and Mad Scientist got their wires crossed.

There's a gentility, a kindness somewhere deep inside him.
 But it's been buried, held down with a tightness that feels
 exhausting. Caden has become suddenly old, a condition that
 doesn't suit him...

He pulls his car, in complete SILENCE, into a PARKING LOT.

He lights a cigarette with the WINDOWS UP.

SMASH TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE - SUDDENLY:

WE HEAR THE SOUND:

A MASSIVE, HIGH-PITCHED, UNDULATING NOISE THAT SHATTERS OUR EARDRUMS. IT'S EVERWHERE. ABSOLUTELY SCREAMING UP AND DOWN AND AROUND WITH CHAOTIC ARRANGEMENT THAT NEVER STOPS.

IT'S SO LOUD THE AUDIENCE CAN ONLY TAKE IT FOR A FEW SECONDS.

BACK TO:

INT. CADEN'S CAR - THAT MOMENT

COMPLETE SILENCE. M.O.S. NOTHING BUT IMAGES.

Caden smashes his smoke in the ashtray. We don't hear it.

He pulls and counts a roll of money. The BILLS make NO SOUND.

See Caden do a HEAVY SIGH when--

A RINGING IN HIS PHONES, LOUD!

Caden JUMPS. Recovers. Looks to his CELLPHONE on the seat.

It rumbles across the leather. The name "**VERA**" on-screen.

Caden grabs it and silences the ringer.

He stares at it until "VERA" disconnects.

EXT. CADEN'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

THE DOOR OPENS AND WE FOLLOW CADEN OUT, BUT IN HIS HEAD, INSIDE THE HEADPHONES THAT PROTECT HIM AND US FROM THE SOUND.

He moves through the world in oppressive SILENCE.

We don't hear the door SLAM, the SHUFFLING of his feet.

We don't know WHAT THE SOUND WAS but we're happy it's over.

Caden passes a HOMELESS MAN sitting outside the LIQUOR STORE wearing a SKATEBOARDING HELMET wrapped in pillows, foam, cardboard, duct tape, anything to block out the SOUND...

The HOMELESS MAN looks up at us with crazed eyes.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - WITH CADEN

As he slips inside, still completely SILENT. The store is near empty and ransacked. Caden doesn't notice.

He moves to the COUNTER where an ARMENIAN CLERK is wearing his own HEADPHONES:

CLERK
(through built-in radio)
Dr. LaForge. I am worried you will not come?

CADEN
(through radio)
Yeah. You still have them?

We recognize Caden's voice from our opening V.O.

Otherwise, the SOUND of their communication is like a RADIO SIGNAL between astronauts on the moon... The CLERK nods...

CLERK
(through radio)
In the back.

INT. STORE ROOM - CADEN & THE CLERK

Enter to find it mostly empty. Still in complete SILENCE.

The only time we hear SOUND is when our men SPEAK keying the CRACKLING SIGNAL between their PHONES:

CLERK
(radio)
We are good for fifteen hundred?

Caden moves past the Clerk and sees:

TWO BOXES OF RED WINE. The cheapest shit you can drink.

Caden nods, weary, and hands over the wad of CASH.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - ON CADEN

Angrily carrying the boxed-wine through the store. He sees pairs of CHEAP HEADPHONES hanging in boxes over the reg:

NOISE CANCELLING! TOP RATED! COOL COLORS! Decorating the boxes with a cynicism only Capitalism can produce.

Caden stops.

CADEN
(through radio)
I want'a pair of them too...

The Clerk gives him a look. Caden stares back, plain.

CADEN
(through radio)
*Don't be a prick Yuri... And gimme
something to write with...*

He snaps his fingers and points. It makes no sound.

EXT. YURI'S LIQUOR STORE - IN SILENCE

Caden approaches the HOMELESS MAN and sets down the WINE.

He hands the MAN the BOXED HEADPHONES.

The MAN looks up at him with TEARS in his eyes.

Caden swallows, then hands him a NOTE.

ECU ON THE NOTE: *Find somewhere quiet to put these on.*

INT. CADEN'S CAR - JUMP TO LATER, ON CADEN

Driving through the city. Light dancing. His CELL on the passenger seat. An APP plays MUSIC through his PHONES:

Philip Glass - 'METAMORPHOSIS'

The intensely beautiful piano arrangement carries us through:

EXT. CITY STREETS - CONTINUOUS

See the ebb and sway of palm trees. They're hit with something that bends them heavily. The FRONDS rain down.

INT. CADEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The FRONDS fall like dead doves all around. Caden's eyes move over the city as he maneuvers through them.

We examine the "PHONES" on his ears. Large and grey and bulky with their antennae and little blinking lights.

Then the whirring FANS through grated slats in their sides.

These create a magnetic field that pushes SOUND WAVES away.

It causes a kind of BLURRY STEAM to rise around people's heads as they move through the world in SILENCE.

EXT. CITY STREETS - CONTINUOUS

APARTMENT COMPLEXES in the VALLEY. Windows cemented over. MATTRESSES hammered to the roofs to protect from the SOUND.

We see STRAY DOGS HOWLING in silence on a street corner. Still trying to hear themselves. Still confused.

EXT. CITY STREETS - CONTINUOUS

Caden's PRISTINE MERCEDES TURBODEISEL from the 1980s turns off the main streets. METAMORPHOSIS IS STILL ALL WE HEAR.

An LAPD BARRICADE checks the CREDITS of NANNIES and CLEANING WOMEN lined up outside a METRO BUS at the base of the HILLS.

All wear some version of the PHONES. Many have painted theirs to liven-up the appearance. Caden is WAVES PAST them.

EXT. CADEN'S NEIGHBORHOOD - CONTINUOUS

A HOUSEWIFE and PERSONAL TRAINER jog past wearing the PHONES.

Caden's car WIPES PAST, turning up a FLORAL DRIVEWAY.

INT. CADEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Caden lets the wheel drift, rounding towards his SPANISH STYLE MANSION. Old Hollywood. Feels lived-in and storied.

But hard times have fallen. The garden is unkempt. The upper windows are cemented and spackled over. This house is dying.

Caden looks up at it, somber, but resigned. He's still coasting when his eyes move back to the road--

A LITTLE BOY IS STANDING THERE -- SLAM!

Caden jams the breaks, stopping just short of hitting the BOY. His back was to us. He didn't hear the car. He turns:

Black. Eight years old. Wild hair. And most importantly:

NOT WEARING THE HEADPHONES.

Caden and the Boy stare at each other. END METAMORPHOSIS.

EXT. CADEN'S CAR - CADEN

Jumps out in the SILENCE of his PHONES. The LITTLE BOY stares up at him with BIG EYES. Frozen.

Caden covers the Boy's ears instinctually, looking to:

A BEAT-UP HONDA CIVIC where a BLACK WOMAN in colorful NURSE SCRUBS is racing towards them:

LETI. 30s. Sinewy. Wearing the PHONES. Saying *sorry*. Grabbing her SON. Tapping her PHONES. Mouthing *they're broken*.

Caden just nods, composing himself, looking around.

INT. QUIET ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Caden, Leti & the Boy stand just inside the FRONT DOOR of this ENCLOSED ROOM. Caden places his BOXED WINE on the floor.

Leti shuts the DOOR and LOCKS IT. A DIGITAL PANEL on the wall processes from 0%-100%... THE LIGHT SHIFTS FROM RED TO GREEN:

CA-SHUNK! CADEN & LETI REMOVE THEIR PHONES. THE BLURRY AIR SETTLES FROM AROUND THEIR HEADS. SOUND FILLS THE ROOM:

It isn't what we expected. There's NO AMBIENT SOUND here.

Just the strident sounds of people. ASMR is the closest reference. *Shoes on the waxed floor. Their clothes rubbing*.

Caden & Leti hang their HEADPHONES on hooks. They have to WHISPER, their voices TOO INTENSE with no background noise:

LETI

Sorry Dr. LaForge--

CADEN

Leti where are his--?

LETI

*He don't need phones, he's--
(points to her ears)
Y'know. He got away from me.*

CADEN

Ok, it's alright...

LETI

*I shouldn'ta brought him but the
school put him out, they don't--*

CADEN
Ok, stop, you're giving me a headache.

Caden thinks.

LETI
He won't be a problem. I promise.

Caden looks at the BOY staring up at them. He can't hear any of this. He's trying to read their lips.

CADEN
What's his name?

Leti pauses as if not wanting to say. Then:

LETI
Milo.

Caden nods, staring down at Milo.

INT. FOYER, CADEN'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

ON SPEAKERS WIRED INTO THE WALLS.

AMBIENT SOUND POURS OUT OF THEM. *CITY NOISE. HONKING. A JACKHAMMER.* IT'S ODD BUT... *WE MISSED THESE SOUNDS...*

BOOM TO: The NIGHT NURSE, **MARIELLA**, sitting on a bench outside the QUIET ROOM. She's 50s, Latina, tired.

With the PIPED IN NOISE it almost feels normal, save for how dark it is, drapes pulled, lit with lamps as if at night.

See the QUIET ROOM from inside the FOYER: A PLYWOOD ADDITION added to the door covered with NOISE DAMPENING PANELS.

Mariella turns as the DOOR CREAKS OPEN:

Caden, Leti & Milo enter. Caden carries his boxed wine. He heads up the curving staircase without a word.

Mariella moves to Leti, nodding at Milo:

MARIELLA
Why ju bring him here?

LETI
They cut the programs, he don't sign good enough for the new schools--

MARIELLA
Anywhere's better than here?

LETI
What you want me to do Mari? He
don't hear, I can't just...

She trails off. Burnt. Mariella thinks.

MARIELLA
Just keep him away from Mr. Caden.
(nodding upstairs)
Ju know how he gets.

She does the "drinking" gesture, then shakes her head and enters the QUIET ROOM. CLICK. She's gone.

Leti *does* know. But she's stuck. She kneels to Milo:

LETI
You'll be ok, won't you baby?
(off silence)
You'll be ok...

INT. THE LIBRARY, CADEN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Leti pushes open the HEAVY WOODEN DOORS revealing a kind of make-shift HOSPICE in the first-floor library/guest room.

There's a WOMAN in a bed, Caden's age, nearly catatonic:

DORY LAFORGE

Caden's wife, a silver-haired, tough, creative, free-spirit saddled with early-onset Alzheimer's. It's nearing late-stage and Dory is mostly confused, unresponsive. She's sleeping as--

Leti drags a nervous Milo past to a table by the WINDOWS. They've been retrofitted with SOUND BUFFERING GLASS. THICK.

Leti pulls a pad and Ziploc filled with MARKERS, sets up a station for Milo to DRAW. She flips through his SKETCHBOOK:

COLORFUL DRAWINGS, not people, places or things, SWIRLING PATTERNS, LIKE INKBLOTS, scribbled in a child's hand.

OFF SCREEN: WE HEAR DORY WAKE. GROANING. Making noises.

It would be frightening if Milo could hear it. *But he can't.*

LETI
I'm coming Dory... You're ok...

Leti pulls a pad and pen from her SCRUBS and writes Milo a note, then hands it to him. He stares at the note:

DO NOT LEAVE THIS ROOM!

INT. CADEN'S ROOM, UPSTAIRS - SAME TIME

Caden SNAPS OPEN the SPIGOT on his boxed wine. He pours a glass, drinking to settle his shakes. He catches his breath.

Then pours another.

INT. HALLWAY, UPSTAIRS - ON CADEN

Moving through his home carrying the glass of wine.

WE SEE PLAQUES and AWARDS on the walls. Pictures of CADEN with musicians and celebrities. A CASE with an OSCAR.

Onto a PHOTOGRAPH of YOUNG CADEN (40s) on stage at RED ROCKS, a massive WALL OF SPEAKERS built behind him. We hold.

INT. MUSIC ROOM, UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Caden sits in the HUM of AMBIENT SOUND coming through the SPEAKERS. Sips more wine. Lights a cigarette.

See the room is overflowing with INSTRUMENTS from every era of human existence. They are forgotten. Unkempt.

CADEN
Stop upstairs ambient.

THE PIPED-IN SOUND CUTS. Intensely quiet now.

Caden rubs his eyes. Surrounded by COBWEBBED INSTRUMENTS. He takes a drink, ASMR GURGLING, SWALLOWING, tickling our ears.

PING! His CELLPHONE chimes on the table. Caden looks.

CLOSE ON A TEXT FROM "VERA": *Where are you???*

Caden doesn't consider responding. He takes another drink.

INT. THE KITCHEN, CADEN'S HOUSE - LATER

A television on the wall streams THE NEWS:

NEWS ANCHOR

...as Scientists work to pinpoint WHY these spikes in SOUND PRESSURE are triggering more frequent storms... And in other news...

*...The National Guard responded to protests in Downtown Los Angeles today, where Radical Group The Silent White clogged city streets in a ceremony leaders are calling a **Mass Deafening Event...***

IMAGES of the streets filled end-to-end with PEOPLE DRESSED IN WHITE. They remove their HEADPHONES in unison...

...In a wave, THEIR EARDRUMS BURST, blood rushing from their ears as the SOUND DEAFENS THEM...

NEWS ANCHOR

...Presidential Hopeful Senator Gavin McCabe was asked about the group while rallying support for the upcoming Debate...

IMAGE of a SHARP WHITE MAN, 50, pressed suit, wearing PHONES, **GAVIN MCCABE**, Presidential Challenger in the coming election.

MCCABE

(radio)

What's that? No... I don't endorse specific members of this "Silent White"... I don't endorse them... But I can't denounce them either. We both believe the Sound was sent by God... It's clearly a response to the moral decay you see all around you in this country, something I intend to remedy on November 2nd...

NEWS ANCHOR

Incumbent President Syreeta Chambers responded while campaigning in California...

SHOW CURRENT U.S. PRESIDENT **SYREETA CHAMBERS**, a BLACK WOMAN with steady eyes, speaking at a SoCal Rally, wearing PHONES:

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

(radio)

...I have my own beliefs. I believe God gave us tools, such as science, to investigate our environment here on Earth...

(MORE)

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS (CONT'D)
*That burying our heads in the sands
 of division will only leave us
 blind.*

SEE a **YOUNG WOMAN** standing near President Chambers in CUT FOOTAGE of her waving from the steps of AIR FORCE ONE...

SOMEONE WIPES PAST: Leti enters, tv chattering, she grabs a kettle and fills it, looks to Milo standing by the door.

His eyes are on something. Leti puts the kettle on.

LETI
 Hey.

Milo doesn't hear. Leti snaps. Waves. *Still not used to this.*

Milo turns, finally seeing her. He nods to something. Leti frowns. She comes towards him, turning to find:

CADEN PASSED OUT ON THE MARBLE TILE.

Leti quickly turns to Milo, taking his hand, leading him out and setting him against the wall. Her look stays *stay*.

SHE GOES BACK IN:

Kneels, hearing Caden's light snoring, confirming he's ALIVE.

Leti stares at him. Worried. But this behavior is squarely *not* her responsibility. She grapples with this moment...

...BUZZ BUZZ... A CELLPHONE VIBRATES...

Leti turns, seeing CADEN'S CELL on the edge of the kitchen island, about to VIBRATE OFF. She grabs it just before it falls... TURNING IT TOWARDS US... "VERA" ON-SCREEN...

A HOWLING SCREAM RINGS OUT! THE KETTLE REACHING BOIL...

INT. THE UNDEGROUNDA CAVERN - (A FLASH)

We're suddenly floating towards the HUGE STEEL LEVER in the dirt... DARKNESS... SHADOWS... THE HUM OF THE MACHINE...

Camera moves around the TOGGLE... REVEALING a LITTLE GIRL in a RED DRESS, brown eyes, curly brown hair... Standing in a shaft of light... SHE LOOKS UP AT US... LANDING IN CLOSE-UP:

LITTLE GIRL
 One... Two... Three!

INT. THE KITCHEN - MATCH TO:

A WOMAN'S FACE -- STARING RIGHT AT US:

She could be that LITTLE GIRL, but all grown up now. 30s. Beautiful in her kindness, her intelligence, the worry lines formed from a duty that consumes her adult life.

If we look closely, we might remember her from the NEWS, standing on the tarmac next to the President.

She's dressed in a smart suit with an AMERICAN FLAG PIN. Her wild hair is held tightly back. Her meticulousness the opposite of Caden's state in every way.

She is **VERA LAFORGE**.

VERA

Daddy get up...

REVEAL Vera kneeling over CADEN in the kitchen. Shaking him.

He wakes. Looking up at her. *Unsure of why he's on the floor?*

INT. DORY'S ROOM - LATER, ON VERA

Sitting beside her mother DORY, who is awake now, staring at the ceiling. Vera touches her hair. Searching her blank EYES.

DORY'S POV: SPEAKERS in the CEILING play a loop of WAVES CRASHING... THE SOUND SWELLS TOWARDS US...

Dory shuts her eyes. Letting it wash over her.

Vera squeezes her hand. The old woman has nothing to give, no comfort, no connection. Beyond her, MARIELLA enters and sits.

VERA

She's like this all the time now?

MARIELLA

(nodding)

But the waves seem to calm her...

Give her comfort...

Vera thinks, looking back to her mother.

VERA

We used to have a place in the canyon, overlooking the ocean, you could hear it, she...

(swallowing emotion)

Anyway...

(MORE)

VERA (CONT'D)
 The beaches are empty now, right?
 Can't swim in your *Phones*...

Mariella tries to smile. Nodding. A SOUND TURNS THEM:

Caden fills the doorway, showered, going for *presentable*.

Mariella and Vera share a tender look.

MARIELLA
 I can sit with her. I'm here.

INT. THE KITCHEN - VERA

Cracks an egg over a piece of toast with a hole dug out. IT SIZZLES. She watches it cook, then slips it onto a plate.

She slides it across to CADEN sitting at the island. He can't meet her eyes. He forks off a piece and takes a shaky bite.

Vera has to chew her lip, furious, worried, all of it.

VERA
 You're ducking my calls like a kid
 who failed midterms...
 (beat)
 ...Then I find out you're drinking
 like a *kid who failed midterms*, at
 least it's on brand...

Caden pushes the plate away. Swallowing.

VERA
 You covered your gear out back? You
 stopped trying to hear it?
 (off silence)
 That brought on the relapse?
 (more silence)
 Twenty-two years sober, you always
 pick up the second I call and then
 suddenly I can't get a hold of you--

CADEN
 You were in town with the
 President, seemed *important*--

VERA
 We have an election coming in the
 middle of a *global existential*
crisis. So yes. It's "important".

Caden nods, working this over.

CADEN
How are the *speeches* coming?

VERA
You say it like it's a dirty word?

CADEN
We always did want a *ventriloquist*
in the family.

This stings. Vera quickly turns it.

VERA
If you think being a *prick* will
make me leave you're mistaken,
we're *having* this conversation.

CADEN VERA
You can't control this Vera-- Don't gimme that AlAnon
bullshit!

She pushes off the island, pacing now.

VERA
I know you think none of this
matters but it matters, it matters
to me and to the world and to
everyone still in the fight.

CADEN
Which fight is that?

VERA
For life on Earth, let's say that.
We are standing on a precipice--

CADEN
You don't stand *on* a precipice
honey, you stand *on* its *edge*--

VERA
I'm pregnant, Daddy. I'm...

She turns, eyes shining with tears. Caden is stunned.

VERA
Your grandchild. We're leaving this
place to them and I... I can't...
(recovering)
(MORE)

VERA (CONT'D)

People are ready to tear each other apart. This is MADNESS.

CADEN

That's why they call it PEACE.

VERA

Well I believe we can HOLD IT TOGETHER. If we can WIN. But I don't have time for THIS.

She wipes her eyes. Composing herself. Caden nods.

CADEN

You'll be a good mother. That's a good thing. I'm happy for you.

VERA

Thanks... Thank you... But that's... Not even *why I'm here*.

She comes around the island, sitting close to him.

VERA

Remember when I was little? You used to tell me *all sound is communication, there is no noise...*

Caden swallows. Moved by this. Vera sees an opening.

VERA

Daddy, I know you're tired and you're beaten but giving up is bullshit and I know you know that too.

(searching his eyes)

All sound is communication, right?

(then)

Well I know some people who are trying to prove it. But they need your help.

Beat. As Caden tries to process this. He looks up.

CADEN

With *what*?

EXT. CADEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT, CADEN & VERA

EXIT IN SILENCE WEARING THEIR PHONES. Caden stops when he sees: A PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE WITH SECRET SERVICE DETAIL.

Vera turns back to him, nodding as if to say: *You coming?*

INT. THE LIMO - NIGHT, CADEN & VERA

Ride together. SOUNDPROOFED. They don't need their PHONES. Vera is on her laptop typing rapidly. IT'S LOUD.

SECRET SERVICE AGENTS sit at the other end. Both wear PHONES.

Is it for privacy? Or to be ready for anything?

Caden wonders. He turns to Vera. Typing LOUD. LOUDER.

CADEN

You gotta do that in here?

He rubs his head. She shoots him a look. Keeps typing.

VERA

Talking points for the fundraiser tomorrow. I'm already behind.

CADEN

Make sure she says *all sound is communication...* I like that...

Caden smiles. Vera gives no reaction. Caden accepts that she's busy, useful, unlike him.

His eyes move to the CRYSTAL DECANTERS JINGLING within their cubby. LIQUOR sloshes around within them. WE PUSH IN...

...Vera sees it and SLAPS shut her computer.

VERA

Think that'll help?

(off his look)

I need you to be present, put everything aside, your ego, all your bullshit--

CADEN

Take it easy--

VERA

I'm not fucking around--

*

CADEN

I don't even know what you're talking about??? I'm fine.

Caden sits on his SHAKY HAND. Hiding it. Vera frowns.

VERA

Just give them a chance. Tell me what you see. That's all I'm--

SUDDENLY one of the AGENTS touches his PHONES.

AGENT

There's something up ahead.

The limo slows. Caden and Vera turn.

AGENT

The Silent White. A big group. We have to hold until they pass.

The LIMO STOPS dead in the middle of the street. The AGENTS draw GUNS from their coats. COCK THEM. Agitated.

CADEN

Is that necessary?

VERA

TSW's been targeting political figures, sending threats.

CADEN

You might'a told me this before I got in the limo...

He pulls a cigarette.

VERA

You can't smoke in here...

CADEN

Right...

VERA

And I'm pregnant...

CADEN

Sorry...

Caden pockets the smoke... A HEAVY BEAT...

As through the GLASS... THEY SEE a RIVER OF PEOPLE without PHONES dressed ALL IN WHITE... Surrounding the car...

EXT. THE LIMO - SUDDENLY

HIGH ANGLE ON: THE MASSIVE CROWD OF SILENT WHITE flowing around the limo. Packing them in. THE SOUND PIERCES OUR EARS:

OOOO-EEEE-AHHH--OHHHHHH!

INT. THE LIMO - ON CADEN

As the CROWD TRAPS THEM within. He turns to Vera, seeing her HAND slip quietly over her womb. Beat.

Caden reaches out and takes her hand. She finds his eyes.

CADEN

So...

(tense beat)

The father's got a name?

Vera blurts a laugh, needing the distraction.

VERA

Raj... It happened *during* this...
It changed things... My plans...

BANG! A FIST HITS THE GLASS. VERA JUMPS.

The SILENT WHITE start drumming on the LIMO as they pass.
BUMP! BUMP! BUMP! BUMP! Vera looks to Caden for *something*.

CADEN

(a whisper)

It's okay... We're okay...

He squeezes her hand. Holding her eyes. For just a moment they are father and daughter again, thrust into the past...

The AGENT up front touches his PHONES.

AGENT

They're clearing up ahead... We're gonna punch it... Hold on... Hold!

The LIMO jumps, laying rubber, Caden and Vera are pushed back into their seats. The last of the SILENT WHITE fade...

...Soon the EMPTY STREETS rush past again. Everyone takes a breath. The AGENTS holster their weapons.

Vera looks at her hand, held by her father's. She gently pulls it away. Caden does too. Resigned to this.

EXT. VALLEY STREETS - NIGHT, (IN SILENCE)

The HOMELESS MAN from earlier is here, sitting in the alcove of a building. This part of the Valley was dying before...

...Now it's *post-apocalyptic*. A ghost town. Home to tumbleweeds of trash and nothing more...

We see the MAN is wearing the PHONES Caden gave him, but LIKE A CROWN. His EARS uncovered. He looks even more CRAZED now.

Notice the remnants of DRIED BLOOD around his ears. He's scratching something onto a NEWSPAPER with a nub of CHARCOAL.

SEE HIS DRAWING: A STRANGE SYMBOL, A LITTLE LIKE WHAT WE SAW IN MILO'S NOTEBOOK AND THE STONES OF THE ROSSLYN CHAPEL.

The MAN looks up as the LIMO swishes past. It turns into the mouth of a PARKING GARAGE. The gate opens.

As the limo descends, the MAN looks to the MASSIVE ABANDONED MALL rising above it. The moon glows at its crest.

INT. THE LIMO - ON CADEN

As they dip underground. The world falling away.

AGENT (O.S.)
You'll have to wear your Phones
until we get upstairs.

Caden sees Vera strap hers on. He does the same. Nervous.

INT. MALL PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Caden, Vera and the Agents exit the Limo in SILENCE. The BLURRY AIR rises off their PHONES like STEAM.

AGENT
(through radio)
This way please.

Caden follows, inspecting the SILENT WORLD around him:

Puffs of CONCRETE fall from the ceiling. Caden sees the PIPES there, RATTLING. The SOUND is even present *down here*. The compromised sprinklers drip water into DARK POOLS.

We hear none of this. Only images. Caden takes it all in.

CADEN
(radio)
Is it safe down here?

AGENT
(radio)
Does it look safe?

The AGENT brushes past him. Caden swallows.

INT. MALL GALLERIA - MOMENTS LATER

A FIRE DOOR OPENS IN SILENCE: Our little group exits the stairwell. They move into this cavernous, shut-down MALL.

The main power is cut. GENERATORS have been trucked in. They're everywhere. HEAVY CABLES rib the floor like snakes.

Caden navigates them, trying not to trip, eyes moving around.

In a strange way, it reminds us of our opening, the dream he seems to have, the cavern, the MACHINE OF SPEAKERS.

Caden looks up, a clearing ahead, the FOOD COURT held below a web of glass & steel skylights in the roof.

Climbing, reaching, extending towards it is a MASSIVE TUBE built and framed by exposed wood and steel infrastructure.

VERA
(through radio)
They're calling it The Silo.

Caden examines THE SILO with his eyes, impressed:

THIRTY FEET IN DIAMETER. WORK LIGHTS STAGED AROUND IT.

Cables and struts and heavy-gauge wire spools connected to pulleys on mechanized cranks.

Whatever this THING is it's a FEAT of engineering, manned by an ARMY OF ENGINEERS and SCIENTITSTS wearing PHONES, HI-VIS JUMPSUITS and HARDHATS.

At the base of everything, there's a SOUNDPROOF TRAILER erected atop a platform with steel-mesh steps leading up.

Our GROUP mounts the stairs. THE SILO seems to get bigger as they climb, looming up into the moonlight.

At the top, a SCIENTIST is waiting in street clothes, unlike the workers in the scrum. EAST-INDIAN. 40s. Handsome. Curly black hair matted beneath his PHONES.

He steps forward, a little nervous, extending his hand:

SCIENTIST
(through radio)
...Dr. LaForge. We are happy you could come. I'm a big fan of your work in Musique Concrete, and The Colossus Project, of course...

CADEN
(through radio, absent)
...Hmmm. Thank you.

Caden shakes, still looking up at THE SILO.

SCIENTIST

(radio)

I'm Dr. Raj Chopra. I'm an Acoustician from CalTech.

This catches Caden's attention. He turns to Raj. Then looks to Vera. Making the connection.

Raj smiles awkwardly, reaching for Vera's hand, she sort of brushes it away, they don't know how to be.

RAJ

(radio)

...You have my apologies for us meeting under these circumstances. It wasn't our intention.

Caden shrugs, getting the picture.

CADEN

(radio)

At least we'll have something to talk about, other than (the baby).

He nods to Vera. Raj stiffens.

RAJ

(radio)

Yes. Quite.

They size each other up. Vera touches his arm. *Keep moving.*

RAJ

(radio)

Right. Um. This way please.

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Raj leads Caden and Vera inside. Once the door is SHUT they remove their PHONES and hang them by the door. Caden turns:

The room is filled with monitors on a long table, SOUND PROOF WINDOWS beyond it, a view of THE SILO rising into the dark.

RAJ

I met Vera after a presentation we did on Auditory Cryptography for the White House. She was integral in helping us secure funding.

CADEN

I'm sure...

Caden's not really listening... He looks over the whiteboards scattered around with equations, schematics, outlining the arduous process of building this thing.

RAJ

We got the idea from latent radio signals Nasa has been picking up over the years. Pops. Fizzles. Decaying vibrations. We thought they were coming from *out there*.

CADEN

But there's no sound in space?

RAJ

So where do they come from?

Caden moves to the table of monitors. Images on the screens.

WIRE-FORM MODELS OF THE SILO'S INTERIOR:

A hollow tube with flaps and scrims and cables throughout its center, layered like feathers on a bird, able to fluctuate in ripples that move up and down the tube as if it were ALIVE.

RAJ

We know via readings from the International Space Station that the Sound is contained within our atmosphere. This created the hypothesis that it originated here... *On Earth...*

CADEN

You think it's some kind of attack?

RAJ

We think it's a message.

CADEN

From who?

RAJ

From us.

(then)

Somewhere in the future.

Caden holds on this. Looks to Vera. She nods.

CADEN

Sound decays. It dissipates. There's nothing *loud enough* to make that kind of trip?

RAJ

This is our perception of time
though, isn't it?

Raj moves to a white board and cracks open a marker.

RAJ

But consider the airplane...

Caden turns, intrigued, watching Raj draw a rudimentary PLANE in white space. Then a STICK FIGURE on the ground.

RAJ

...We hear a plane fly over us, we look up and see it. Are we hearing the plane as it passes or seconds after it's already passed? Sound travels at 343 meters a second, so the separation is imperceptible, but it's there, like starlight. We experience sound AFTER it's already occurred due to our perception of TIME...

Raj draws VIBRATION LINES from the plane to the stick figure.

RAJ

...We think we're hearing the plane pass above. But our eyes see it 1,000 times faster than our ears hear it. What we're HEARING has already occurred. But is the plane flying in the future, or the past? Is this sound moving backwards or forwards through time?

CADEN

Everything's happening at once.

RAJ

(nodding)

Yes. It's a matter of perspective. Time itself is more compressed than we perceive it, even occurring simultaneously in layers we can't physically experience.

Back to the board, he draws arrows, illustrating this.

RAJ

In terms of *past and present* we think small: Minutes, months, years, moving FORWARD.

(MORE)

RAJ (CONT'D)

But with something BIGGER, FASTER, like SOUND, something that ripples outward at 1,200 kilometers an hour, it's possible a sustained NOISE happening somewhere in the "future" could reach our "present" if contained within our atmosphere.

CADEN

But how could it be THIS loud?

RAJ

How loud is its source? How "far" into the future is it happening and for how long?

(re: the whiteboard)

By looking at mathematical degrees of decay it would have to be close, only a few decades. And it would last going FORWARD as long as it lasts going BACKWARDS through us. Creating a paradox.

CADEN

It won't stop until we reach the point where it started...

RAJ

...And at that point, we'd have to be desperate. It would be so LOUD--

CADEN

It would destroy all life on Earth.

RAJ

Like a thousand atomic bombs detonating at once...

(then)

...What we're talking about is a shift in the timeline...

Raj wipes the board clean, drawing a LINE. He moves to the far-right side and branches off a SECOND LINE.

RAJ

Instead of breaking off and moving forward into the *unknown*, it's broken somewhere in the future, sending the Sound rippling *backwards* to a point in our present, merging with us *here--*

He merges the lines.

RAJ

--23 months ago, when the first remnants of the Sound arrived.

(MORE)

RAJ (CONT'D)

It was only a few days before it started deafening people. Then ear coverings. Then chaos. Then we experienced the first *Storms*...

(Caden nods, stepping in)

It's getting LOUDER, you see? Slowly but exponentially, as we move closer and closer to its SOURCE. These STORMS will only increase in frequency, intensity, as we move towards--

He returns to the "break" in the future-line, taps it.

RAJ

The place where it all started. A place that no longer exists. Like we're hurtling towards--

CADEN

A precipice.

Caden's eyes move to Vera. Back to Raj.

RAJ

...Unless we change something *here* that changes our need or ability to create it in the future. Something that returns us to the original timeline...

Raj draws a short LOOP back to the first line, near the "present". He caps his pen.

RAJ

Hence our hypothesis that it's a warning. A siren. Something we're MEANT TO UNDERSTAND. If we can decode it, maybe we can CHANGE SOMETHING here, STOP the Sound from ever happening, resolve the timeline and *change our fate*...

(then)

...Scientifically speaking it's easier to start the experiment at its conceivable conclusion.

CADEN

Easier to believe in God if you think He's real.

Raj wavers at this. Looks to Vera. She steps forward.

VERA

Let's keep God out of this for now.
Show him The Silo.

RAJ

Right.

Raj skitters over to the screens and hits the keyboard.

The MODEL of THE SILO starts to FLUCTUATE as a portal at its crown OPENS, allowing VIBRATION LINES to enter the tube.

RAJ

When we open the chamber, the SOUND enters, automation here allows these acoustic panels to redirect it, cutting it, moving it towards a bundle of microphones at the base, along with scrims that pull across, filtering the decibel fluctuations.

Caden steps forward, seeing these digitally controlled scrims that slide in layers over the HOLE of The Silo, filtering the waves of sound as they rise and fall.

CADEN

All this, these elements, they're moving in there?

As the scrims enter and exit, the feather-like panels on the walls flutter, extending and protracting, guiding the vibrations, softening them, funneling them down.

RAJ

We believe there's a tonal pattern, maybe an alphabet to be extracted from the arrangement of NOTES, something that could lead to--

CADEN

Decoding it...

Caden is ahead of him, mind whirring. He points to the many SCRIMS and PANELS:

CADEN

...You've considered the acoustic disruptions of this? Its mechanics?

RAJ

The system can adjust for them.

CADEN

And the pressure against these
dampening scrims, the tiles, the
weight of it moving through, it's
been taken into account?

RAJ

We believe so.

CADEN

What if there's a Storm?

Raj holds, looks to Vera.

RAJ

We're hoping to be predictive. We
can close the portal if the levels
rise above--

CADEN

So the conditions need to be
perfect for it to work?

(off silence)

In a way that's sustained for an
extended period of time?

RAJ

Well yes. In theory.

Caden nods, eyes moving over all of this, maybe imagining how
much it cost, the time and effort burned to get here.

CADEN

It's interesting.

(looking around)

Thank you... Thanks for this...

Raj looks to Vera, an unspoken *WTF* between them.

RAJ

Like I said your work in acoustics,
experimental music, it's, we're all
fans, you're a pioneer sir--

CADEN

You're no slouch yourself... And
you've knocked-up my daughter, so,
I assume we'll be seeing more of
each other?

RAJ

I... I hope so... Yes...

Caden looks him over, nodding. He turns to Vera.

CADEN
It's very interesting.

VERA
You already said that-- CADEN
Did I?

Caden shrugs. More looking around. A pause.

CADEN
Well... I'm a little tired... I
think I'll go home now...

Another look between Vera and Raj. *I guess that's it.* Raj tries to smile through the disappointment he feels.

RAJ
Thank you for coming.

INT. THE LIMO - ON CADEN, EARLY MORNING

Staring out the window. Silent. Vera is next to him stewing. Finally, she grabs a DECANTER and pours herself a drink.

CADEN
Think that'll help?

Vera downs it. Swallows hard. Turns back to him.

VERA
Why won't it work?

CADEN
Y'know you did this when you were a
kid? You'd bring me something
broken and cry when I couldn't fix
it--

VERA
Why won't it work?

CADEN
It's just my opinion.

VERA
I value your opinion.

CADEN
Then why didn't you come to me
first? At the beginning of all this
Silo business?

VERA
This is because of Raj?

CADEN
Don't be silly--

VERA
I chose him over you?

CADEN
That's absurd--

VERA
THEN WHY WON'T IT WORK?

Caden thinks. Vera stares. Then. She clinks the bottle to the glass and pours a large drink. She holds it out to him.

Caden wants it. But not in front of her.

CADEN
The project is in good hands with
Dr. Raj.

He turns back to the window, leaving the glass hanging.

CADEN
I'd just ruin things.

Vera stares daggers at the back of his head... Then... She pours the drink back into the bottle, shoves it in the hold.

The liquor VIBRATES within... We watch it RIPPLE outward...

INT. THE LIMO - MORNING

The car pulls up outside Caden's door. Stops. Caden and Vera are silent. He moves to put on his PHONES...

...But Vera grabs his arm.

VERA
We have two months until the
debate. We've spent millions on
this. We have to have something to
show for it or she'll get crushed.
I need ANSWERS. Why won't it work?

Caden rubs his eyes. *He doesn't really know?*

CADEN
It makes sense. Maybe it's even
true. I hope they're right...
(thinking)
But they're trying to *cut it*, not
capture it honey. They're still not
trying to hear it.

VERA
I don't know what that means???

CADEN
Neither do I. That's the point.

Vera is so mad she's shaking. But she swallows it.

CADEN
I'm sorry.

He holds for a moment more, then snaps on his PHONES. Nods for her to do the same. Vera pulls hers on, begrudgingly.

SILENCE FALLS as Caden opens the door and exits.

INT. DORY'S ROOM - LATER THAT MORNING

Caden sits beside Dory's bed holding her hand. The WAVES CRASH from the speakers above... CRSSHHH... CRSHHH...

Mariella is organizing Dory's PILLS. Caden looks to her.

CADEN
I'll sit with her until Leti gets here Mari... You can go home...

MARIELLA
Ok Mr. Caden.

Mariella starts packing her bag. Caden watches her.

CADEN
Mariella...
(off her turn)
How is it where you live?

Mariella stops. Thinks. Rarely asked.

MARIELLA
It's very loud. But. This is God's plan. So I try for patience.

Caden thinks about this.

CADEN
Thank you. For everything.

MARIELLA
(a shrug)
It's my job.

Clearly, Mariella doesn't think much of Caden. He accepts this, as she slips her bag over her shoulder and exits.

Caden looks back to Dory. Catatonic. Staring at the SPEAKERS.

CADEN
Not the same, is it D?

Her EYES move to him. Unsure of who he is? But trying.

CADEN
Stop library ambient.

The SPEAKERS go quiet. Very still now.

CADEN
(whispering)
Here...

He moves to the nightstand. A PINK CONCH SHELL rests there beside FRAMED PHOTOS of the family:

Caden & Dory, many at the BEACH, some with VERA when she was a LITTLE GIRL. Caden is dressed in black, dark sunglasses, removed. Before the Sound and still, things weren't perfect.

He stares. Then picks up the CONCH.

He climbs into bed with Dory. Gentle. She watches him. A little fear in her eyes as Caden lies down next to her.

CADEN
(whispering)
It's alright...

He places the CONCH on the pillow by her ear. He moves his face close to hers and together, they LISTEN...

THE SOUND of the OCEAN seems to ECHO within the SHELL...

CADEN
(whispering)
...That's it, isn't it?
(then)
The real thing...

Dory smiles, some relief washing over her...

Caden watches her fall asleep... His eyes filling with tears... She's so close... But forever far away from him.

THE WAVES ROLL OVER THEM FROM ABOVE.

BLACK OUT.

INT. THE KITCHEN, CADEN'S HOUSE - MORNING

WHOOOOOT! THE KETTLE BLOWS! Leti pulls it from the burner.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)
*...Protestors clashed with Police
 over demands to bring relief to
 South Side Neighborhoods...*

Leti's eyes flick to the **SCREEN**: PROTESTORS BATTLE WITH POLICE. TEAR GAS FILLS THE AIR. PEOPLE CARRY SIGNS THAT READ:

QUIET = PEACE!

AN ACTIVIST IN PHONES IS INTERVIEWED IN THE SCRUM:

ACTIVIST
 (radio)
*...You seen it during Katrina, they
 let the waters rise and now they
 let us suffer without silence. We
 want Government Soundproofing and
 Storm Protection NOW...!*

LETI shakes her head, filling a cup with steaming water. She looks across the kitchen to Milo standing by the window.

LETI
 What you see baby?

She's almost talking to herself. She sets down the kettle and crosses to Milo, holding the heavy curtains aside.

WE SEE CADEN in his backyard. PHONES ON. Deep in thought.

He's moving within a field of OBJECTS, SHEETS draped over them like some kind of SCULPTURE GARDEN all covered up.

Milo looks at Leti with crinkled brow. She does the ASL sign for "crazy", the universal sign, finger circling her temple.

Milo smiles and nods at this. Yep.

EXT. THE BACKYARD - SAME (IN SILENCE)

MASSIVE OAK TREES sway and thrash above the property without a sound. Leaves twirl off them and scatter like snowflakes.

Caden stares up at this from the ground, frozen.

He shakes out of it and shifts into motion.

He starts snapping SHEETS off the OBJECTS, one-by-one, revealing a FOREST OF MICROPHONE STANDS...

Some have exposed MICS, others DIFFUSION BOXES, MESH ORBS, different things built over the MICS to filter the SOUND.

We see XLR CABLES threading back into the house, all this, his own EXPERIMENT, an attempt to hear it...

Caden heads back inside. Stops. Looks to the SWIMMING POOL: The WATER is THRASHING as if struck by a powerful wind. Caden holds on this physical manifestation of the Sound. THE WHITECAPS CRASH IN SILENCE.

INT. THE HOUSE - LATER

AMBIENT SOUND. Caden stops outside Dory's room and looks in: LETI has DORY out of bed, helping her eat breakfast. ONTO MILO in the corner, coloring in his sketchbook. Caden watches them a beat. It almost feels like a home.

INT. MUSIC ROOM, UPSTAIRS - CADEN

Snaps on the light and sits at a BIG AUDIO BOARD. Computer screens beyond it. THE DB METERS RISE, YELLOW, RED, CLIPPING.

He reaches out and UN-MUTES a track. SLIDES THE VOLUME UP:

WE HEAR THE SOUND OUTSIDE -- INSTANTLY RECOGNIZABLE:

OOOO--EEEEEE--AHHH--OOOOO-- Before it DECAYS into digital BLOW OUT. Too LOUD to clearly record. CRSSHHSHSHSHSHHHHH!!!

Caden hits MUTE. SILENCE. He tries another.

This one is almost immediately BLOWN-OUT. CRSSHHHHHH!!!

Caden drops the SLIDER. Sighs. Tries another.

This one SCREAMS for a moment before going DARK and losing connection altogether. The microphone wrecked by the Sound.

Caden turns off the board. Depression settling in.

INT. BEDROOM, UPSTAIRS - LATER

Caden stands with his glass over the dresser. See the last BOX OF WINE sitting atop it.

Caden reaches for the SPIGOT. Then stops. Debating. But the reasons don't come. He yanks the SPIGOT:

SPIOOOSSH! WINE HITS HIS GLASS LIKE NIAGRA FALLS.

INT. DORY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

WITH MILO, IN HIS HEAD, DEAF. HE'S FURIOUSLY DRAWING.

Murky pops and fizzles as if underwater. But no CLEAN SOUND.

His MARKER moves with purpose in circles and strikes.

Then Milo stops, seeing Leti push Dory into the BATHROOM in a wheelchair. They disappear. And now Milo is alone.

He turns, seeing the DOOR ajar. *Inviting.*

INT. HALLWAY - ON MILO (IN DEAF SILENCE)

As he slips through the door. A little mischief in his eyes.

The house is haunted and full of shadows. Milo looks around.

INT. CADEN'S HOUSE - WITH MILO (IN DEAF SILENCE)

Exploring as if lost in the Pyramids. Caden and Dory's art collection is impressive. Milo stops beneath a HUGE PAINTING:

"TRUMPET" BY JEAN-MICHELLE BASQUIAT.

A FIGURE BLOWS INTO A TRUMPET, *SOUND LINES* SHOOT OUT.

Milo stares up at it in AWED SILENCE.

INT. GRAND ROOM - (IN DEAF SILENCE)

Milo stands over a GRAND PIANO. He looks at the GRAMMYS on a table beside it. Back to the piano.

His finger reaches out and hits a KEY. IT MAKES NO SOUND.

He hits it over and over and over. Hears nothing.

He keeps punching the ivory when-- A HAND TURNS HIM:

IT'S CADEN, standing above, eyes watery, a bit drunk now.

He holds a finger to his lips. SHHHHHHHH.

MOMENTS LATER:

Caden sets a tufted stool beside the PIANO and helps Milo on.

We're still in the MURKY SILENCE of Milo's head, his world:

He stares into the STRINGS. Caden nods. Milo is excited.

He reaches out and drags his fingers across the wires, still dampened by the hammers, dull to his touch...

Caden moves to the KEYS and PLAYS, working the pedal...

Milo feels the VIBRATIONS roll over the STRINGS now...

WE PUSH ON THE THUDDING HAMMERS... THE SHIVERING WIRES... ALL SILENT TO US... BUT THE VISUAL OF SOUND BEING MADE...

Milo places his ear against the black lacquered side of the PIANO... Absorbing the VIBRATIONS... He shuts his EYES...

SUDDENLY: SOUND CRASHES BACK IN!

As Leti grabs Milo, pulling him away from the PIANO. Caden's playing abruptly stops as Leti takes Milo by the shoulders:

LETI
I said don't leave...
(pointing to her mouth)
...Don't leave. Don't leave.

Caden is slurry, drunk, pushing to his feet.

CADEN
It's ok... It's alright... He was
juss feeling the music...

LETI
And what if there's a storm?

Leti looks up. Fire in her eyes.

LETI
The piano could SLAM DOWN and break
his little hand, you covering the
co-pay? Huh?

Caden stares. She takes a breath.

LETI
Look... He's my son...

CADEN
I'm aware... We donn get many kids
here...

LETI
*Just stay away from him. Please. I
 don't want him around--*

CADEN
What?

She casts a WITHERING LOOK.

LETI
Don't make me say it. You know.

Leti tries to turn, but Caden steps in--

CADEN (O.S.)
Hey how'd it happen anyway?

Leti turns back. She can't believe he's pressing it. But she sees now, Caden is *belligerent*.

CADEN
*It's been almost two years since
 the Sound came. He still don't
 sign?*

A darkness falls over Leti. She swallows it.

LETI
*It didn't happen when the Sound
 came....*

EXT. ALLEY, SOUTH CENTRAL - (A FLASH)

ON MILO. IN SILENCE. Chaotic. He's wearing HEADPHONES here.

*REVEAL he's pinned to the cement. A GROUP OF OLDER BOYS are
 robbing him. He slaps and struggles but they're too strong.
 They go for his PHONES... RIP THEM OFF!!*

MILO SCREAMS AS HIS EARDRUMS BURST!

INT. THE GRAND ROOM - BACK TO (THE PRESENT)

Leti grips her son's hand. The room is very still.

CADEN
Oh...

Leti nods, refusing to let herself cry.

LETI
Yeah... Oh...

She turns and drags Milo out of the room. Caden is left standing there, swaying in the shadows, filled with guilt.

INT. MUSIC ROOM, UPSTAIRS - THAT NIGHT

Caden pulls the SPIGOT on his wine. Our focus is bleary and smudged now. His day decaying. Just a few dribbles come out.

He shakes the box. Empty. He throws it against the wall.

INT. FOYER - THAT MOMENT

Leti & Milo are getting ready to leave.

Leti looks up, hearing the FAINT ECHO of CADEN YELLING somewhere in the house. She pauses, then opens the door.

INT. QUIET ROOM - LETI

Pulls on her PHONES, fixing them in place. SILENCE. Milo stares at her. She toggles her cell and scrolls MUSIC:

Frank Ocean - 'MOON RIVER'

INT. LETI'S CIVIC - THAT NIGHT, JUMP TO:

Moon River playing over... Milo staring out the window.

The dark city slips past. Milo sees members of THE SILENT WHITE gathered on a street corner. They hold SIGNS:

PHONES ARE PRISONS! LET THE SOUND IN! EXPERIENCE PEACE!

Milo just stares. Confusion. Maybe fear in his eyes.

EXT. SOUND TOWN COMPLEX (BALDWIN VILLAGE) - NIGHT

Moon river carries as... Leti leads Milo through a sprawling Apartment Complex off Crenshaw. The world around them murky.

Then the INVISIBLE PRESSURE blows at them. The Sound is heavy in the air tonight. Fluctuating the way WAVES come in SETS.

Leti just squeezes Milo's hand and keeps fighting...

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Moon river rises as...

Leti leads Milo up stairs passing a WOMAN walking her DAUGHTER down. The Little Girl stares at Milo's exposed ears.

He tries to smile but she looks away. Milo accepts this.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Moon river carries over... BATH TIME. Milo in the tub. He squeezes a WASHCLOTH. The DROPS ripple outward in circles.

Milo's eyes move over these RIPPLES.

Leti enters in her pajamas. She sits on the floor and pulls ASL FLASHCARDS. Holds them up. Milo repeats her motions:

"THANK YOU" ... "SCHOOL" ... "FRIEND" ... "MOTHER"

The next SIGN makes Leti stop. She blinks. She lifts her OPEN HAND and HOLDS a THUMB to her FOREHEAD. Milo does the same.

They pause. Something heavy between them.

Leti sets the CARDS on the pink tile floor. She kisses Milo's head, cupping his face. We move to the CARD ON THE FLOOR...

... "FATHER" WRITTEN ON IT...

INT. LETI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT, LETI

Lies in bed wearing her Phones. Milo sleeps beside her in his Superman pajamas. The only light in the room is her CELL.

LETI SCROLLS SEARCH RESULTS FOR: **CADEN LAFORGE**

One says **"The Colossus Sound Project - A Documentary"**

Leti's eyes move over it. She taps the video.

'MOON RIVER' ENDS -- SHIFTING INTO:

DIGITAL VIDEO FOOTAGE playing on the YouTube Page, COMING THROUGH LETI'S PHONES:

The documentary follows YOUNG CADEN, 40s, through the bowels of the Red Rocks Amphitheater in Colorado.

He emerges onto stage. We see a MASSIVE WALL of SPEAKERS built here. Young Caden directs the TECHS working on it.

YOUNG CADEN (V.O.)
There is no sound in space...

CUT TO AN INTERVIEW SINGLE ON CADEN:

YOUNG CADEN
*...There's no molecules to carry
 its vibrations, see? It's just more
 emptiness...*

He smiles, bright, pompous...

THEN SHOTS OF:

*Caden conducting HIS SOUND PIECE on stage, coming through the
 WALL OF SPEAKERS behind him. IT'S INTENSELY BEAUTIFUL. Maybe
 Max Richter's SPRING 1, music that will become Caden's theme.*

YOUNG CADEN (V.O.)
*...Like the proverbial tree in the
 forest, sound doesn't exist until
 we hear it. Not as noise anyway...*

BACK TO CADEN SINGLE:

YOUNG CADEN
*...So in a very real way... Sound
 is a construct of our minds...*

*He looks into camera, right at us, eyes dancing, AS HIS MUSIC
 REACHES CRESCENDO--*

Leti hits PAUSE. WE FREEZE. Wondering... What happened?

CROSS FADE TO:

INT. CADEN'S CAR - THAT NIGHT, ON CADEN

*IN SILENCE. He's drunk. Wearing his Phones. Staring through
 the windshield at the NEON LIGHTS of YURI'S LIQUOR STORE.*

INT. YURI'S LIQUOR STORE - ON YURI

*Reading the paper: RIOTS BURN DETROIT AS ALL EYES TURN TO
 PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES. He looks up as Caden arrives:*

YURI
 (radio)
Dr. LaForge, you are back?

CADEN
 (radio)
Yeah I-- Hi-- Yuri--

Caden pulls another clump of money, fumbling it.

YURI
 (radio)
*I am sorry, it is months until I
 get more. The supply chain...*

CADEN
 (radio)
Come' on now, come, I got money.

Yuri looks him over. He's out of sorts.

YURI
 (radio)
*I'm sorry Dr. LaForge. Your friends
 on the hill buy up everything. They
 are hoarding it like gold.*

CADEN
 (radio)
*So whatdya have? You, you MUST HAVE
 something, yes?*

Yuri's eyes are uncertain. But business is business.

He reaches under the counter and comes up with a bottle marked HANNA BAY 100 PROOF. This shit is rubbing alcohol.

Yuri sets it on the counter with a SILENT CLUNK.

YURI
 (radio)
This is what I have...

INT. CADEN'S CAR - ON CADEN

SILENCE. He opens the BOTTLE and takes a long pull. Then ANOTHER. He starts COUGHING. LOUD. HACKING. WE CAN'T HEAR IT.

THE CHAOS OF THIS MOMENT GROWS UNTIL WE--

SLAM TO:

EXT. THE BEACH - (A FLASH)

SUDDEN PEACE. THE AMBIENT SOUNDS OF THE OCEAN. SERENITY.

WE FIND CADEN, walking on the sand, black clothes, shoes off, feet making prints behind him... There are ECHOES of the Music from the RED ROCKS VIDEO, far off as if inside us...

CADEN looks up, seeing the LITTLE GIRL IN RED running along the waves... She looks back at him and smiles...

JUMP TO

Caden and the LITTLE GIRL kneeling as the WAVES CRASH around them... The Girl bends to tide pools in the rocks...

The hem of her dress darkens in the water... She doesn't care... She sees LIFE, creatures moving, she counts them...

LITTLE GIRL
One... Two... Three!

Caden smiles. Nodding. Then he feels a RUMBLING and turns:

The ROSSLYN CHAPEL is there... Dropped onto the sand...

Caden just stares... As something shifts...

His MUSIC grows from within the CHURCH now... DISSONANT AND HOLLOW... The SAND starts DANCING all around him in strange PATTERNS...

THIS RUMBLING BUILDS BELOW THE ROSSLYN. BIGGER. LOUDER.

Caden's expression curdles into FEAR. He turns back to the LITTLE GIRL. She looks up at him with BIG EYES--

INT. CADEN'S CAR - NIGHT (BACK TO)

SILENCE. Caden is passed out in the front seat.

Somewhere else now. PHONES still covering his ears. POLICE LIGHTS flicker in the windows. A HAND knocks on the glass.

The COP outside draws a BATON. He shatters the window, glass flying, being cleared, all in PURE SILENCE.

EXT. CADEN'S CAR - ON CADEN

Being dragged to the POLICE CAR in the SILENCE of his PHONES. He comes-to, looking back over his shoulder where:

He sees his Mercedes ran off the road, stopped by a bent parking meter, still smoking there. Caden just blinks.

INT. DRUNK TANK - NIGHT

Caden sits in SILENCE. EYES bloodshot. A bandage on his forehead. Phones over his ears. Staring at his SHOES.

His LACES have been removed.

He looks up at the others. Some eating JELLY SANDWICHES.

His gaze moves to a PRISONER in WHITE with no Phones, smearing *his* GRAPE JELLY all over the CINDERBLOCK WALL.

This member of the SILENT WHITE uses his finger to DRAW in the purple smear... Forming THREE STRANGE PATTERNS...

Caden watches for a beat... Then dismisses him.

EXT. NORTH HOLLYWOOD DIVISION HOUSE - NEAR DAWN

SILENCE. Caden is released holding a summons. A defeated man walking out of jail. Filled with embarrassment and sorrow.

He looks up and finds VERA waiting by her car. They move to each other. Caden pulls her into a tight hug.

WE HEAR CADEN'S SOBS CRACKLING ELECTRIC IN HIS PHONES.

INT. RAJ'S HOUSE - LATER

Pasadena Craftsman. On the coffee table is a strange, hand-built SOUND MACHINE made of speakers and wires and lights.

Again, looks a little like the DEATH STAR from our opening. It fills the room with the ebb and flow of AMBIENT SOUND.

Suddenly we feel normal again, like we can breathe.

Caden sits in a deep leather chair, examining the machine. Otherwise he looks nervous, rock bottom.

Raj enters. He and Caden share a pure, uncomfortable moment.

Raj says nothing, goes to the kitchen, returns with ASPIRIN and a glass of water, setting them in front of Caden.

Caden stares. He opens the bottle and pops three. Drinks a gulp of water as Raj sits across from him.

CADEN
(quietly)
Thank you.

Raj just stares. No reaction. Beat.

CADEN
(nodding to the machine)
It's elegant... It fills the space
but it isn't... Y'know...

RAJ

I sourced the speakers from
different units, ferrofluid
tweeters from vintage Harbeth
monitors, a few Klipsch cabinets I
had in storage...

CADEN

It's lovely... Very good...

Caden sits in it for a beat.

CADEN

Where, uh, where's Vera?

RAJ

Upstairs. Lying down.

CADEN

I assume she told you about me?

RAJ

She has nothing but good things to
say about you. She *reveres* you.

Caden swallows this. Hiding his emotion. Something turns in
Raj, eyes filling with compassion.

RAJ

I understand what you're going
through though... I do...

CADEN

(looking up)

You?

RAJ

No. My father. He drove a cab in
Mumbai. He was a proud man. He died
of consumption at fifty-six.

(then)

Proud is proud.

Caden considers this. Nodding.

CADEN

...When Vera was born it gave me a
reason. My first reason. The best
reason. But still, I couldn't stay
in the rooms until she was a
teenager. *Too proud.*

(beat)

Finally when I got humble it healed
things for a while... But...

(MORE)

CADEN (CONT'D)

(distant)

*Everything fades... It decays...
Like sound... After a while you
start questioning the plan...*

RAJ

I do?

Caden almost laughs. Raj leans in:

RAJ

This wasn't His plan Caden. It was Ours. You can still be useful. You haven't lost that power...

(beat)

...So what are you afraid of?

CADEN

You.

Caden turns the glass in his hands. Raj is confused.

CADEN

...When I did *Colossus* I had people coming outta the woodwork offering their opinions. But what made it work was my vision. My singular vision. I had to block everyone out...

(then, looking up)

So why would you want my help?

Raj's eyes flicker.

RAJ

Perhaps you and I are not the same.
Had you considered this?

Caden had not considered it. But Raj already knew that.

RAJ

There is a door, and right now it's been left open for you.

Raj rises, picking the glass out of Caden's hand.

RAJ

That's as complicated as this gets.

He exits the room. Caden is left almost dazed. His eyes move to the MACHINE on the table...

...He watches it blink and pulse with SOUND. Then he sits back, shutting his eyes, letting it all wash over him.

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM, ABANDONED MALL - ANOTHER DAY

See THE SILO through the observation glass. It looks complete. Lights glowing. Intricate systems in motion.

WIDEN TO

Caden standing in the room now. Looking over everything.

CADEN
You mind if I smoke in here?

He turns and we **REVEAL:**

Raj and his TEAM ENGINEERS staring back. The answer is no.

CADEN
Sorry... I haven't been in a think
tank like this since '78...

RAJ

Caden clears his throat, nodding, unsure.

CADEN
It isn't my place to, well, y'know,
I wouldn't come in and tell you
your business...

SONDRA
How thoughtful of you.

One particularly annoyed ENGINEER, **SONDRA**, chimes in. Raj throws her a look. She fires one back.

CADEN
Okay... I get it... But...
(beat)
...By looking at what you've
created I see, well it's a complex
system right? So right off that
offers up some problems--

SONDRA
What problems?

RAJ
Sondra. Please.

SONDRA
What problems?

CADEN
Sustainability. For one.

Sondra crosses her arms, on the defensive.

SONDRA

Our system was built to predict fluctuations and adjust, both digitally and functionally within the--

CADEN

No I understand. But. The longer you record it, the more you try to coral the Sound, the more likely you'll run into complex dissonance, sound pollution, interference--

RAJ

What would your solution be?

CADEN

Short sections.

(off their looks)

Play to your strengths. Record bits and pieces and analyze these sections over a period of time for patterns--

RAJ

How short are you proposing?

CADEN

The most common structure in the history of music is the 4/4. So 4 beats a measure, 48 measures a minute. I'd start there--

SONDRA

One minute?

CADEN

That's right.

SONDRA

One minute of recorded time?

CADEN

You must be a mathematician.

Sondra scoffs. Looking around.

CADEN

Look, if the pattern repeats itself within sixty seconds you can start expanding your understanding of it in way that's predictive, right?

(off their looks)

(MORE)

CADEN (CONT'D)
 If this was made by US, it'll move
 the way we've always made music.
 Even if it's an encoded message
 based on note signatures sent by
 the *Mole People*, it doesn't matter,
 it's US, this came from US--

SONDRA
 We don't have TIME for this.
 (turning to Raj)
 The system was built to record an
 unbroken stream so we can decode it
 as it comes in, real time readings,
 that's the fastest--

CADEN
 I didn't know time was an issue?
 (looking around)
 How much do you have?

All the ENGINEERS look to Raj.

RAJ
 We've been asked to deliver
 something tangible to this
 administration before the coming
 debate... Their confidence in the
 project relies on this...

CADEN
 Ok, that's four, five weeks tops?
 (thinking)
 It's not enough.

RAJ
 It's what we have.

CADEN
 In my opinion it's not enough.
 But, again, I won't tell you your
 business.

SONDRA
 Then why are you here?

Caden turns to her, plain.

CADEN
 Probably because Dr. Raj is
 sleeping with my daughter.
 (off everyone's silence)
 That's what you're all thinking
 right?

Sondra swallows. Raj looks at the floor.

CADEN

Look, it's your rodeo people. I'm just telling you what I see...

Raj considers the faces of his people, then Caden's, finally:

RAJ

Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* runs exactly fifteen minutes. Three movements, written two hundred years ago and we know it the second we hear the first note.

(beat)

I believe we would use this kind of arrangement, something universally studied and replicated... So... We will start there...

CADEN

Fifteen minutes?

RAJ

Fifteen minutes. Signal me when you hear the *Presto Agitato*.

Caden rubs his beard, nodding, unsure, he shrugs.

CADEN

Rock n Roll.

INT. THE BATHROOM - ON CADEN

Vomiting into the toilet. He spits. Hold.

Caden moves to the mirror and stares at himself. A look of pure contempt. He releases a LONG SIGH.

EXT. THE MALL ROOF - AERIAL SHOT, NIGHT

PUSHING DOWN ON THE GLASS SKYLIGHT:

WE HEAR THE SOUND RAGING ALL AROUND US.

The TOP OF THE SILO has been fitted through the glass here.

There are HUGE STEEL DOORS at its mouth 30 FEET ACROSS. They start sliding open like jaws. Slow. Mechanical.

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - SAME TIME

Sondra and some of the others are seated at the computer controls. Raj is standing over them.

Caden stands back giving space, but wanting to be closer.

We see READINGS of pressure and vibration filling THE SILO on the screens. The DB METERS go nuts, clipping to obscurity.

SONDRA

The pressure is stable. The Sound is in. I'm keying the monitors.

She taps some KEYS and SPEAKERS in this room fill with STATIC. It's loud but we can take it. Raj steps in.

RAJ

Activate the suppression.

SONDRA

Activating STAGE ONE.

She clicks more keys.

Caden can't help himself, he moves in next to Raj.

We see the WALLS OF THE SILO start to RUFFLE like feathers on the SCREENS... It's organic, beautiful, mesmerizing...

The SOUND moves them in different patterns, fluctuating like a WHEAT FIELD swaying under pressure of HEAVY WIND...

...We start to hear SECTIONS of the SOUND break in, clear and without static, then breaking apart with decay...

Caden's eyes gleam as he hears it, like a PIECE OF MUSIC FOR THE FIRST TIME. He swallows. Nodding. Smiling.

Raj smiles too. They share a look. Something pure.

But there's more work to be done.

ENGINEER

...I have a reading, the pressure is rising, three clicks from our position. There's some movement.

RAJ

A storm?

ENGINEER

Could be, if it breaks wrong.

RAJ
Will it reach us?

ENGINEER
It might dissipate.

SONDRA
It will dissipate.

RAJ
Should we close the gates?

SONDRA
I'm activating the scrims.

CADEN
What's happening?

RAJ
(ignoring him)
Okay do it.

Caden checks his WATCH. The second hand SWEEPS FORWARD.

EXT. THE SILO - THAT MOMENT

Floating through its mighty CYLINDER:

The SCRIMS start sliding back and forth across the entire diameter, filtering the Sound in different combinations.

Off this beautiful dance, we pull out, arriving at the mouth of THE SILO. The air around it is BLURRY with VIBRATION.

Then DEBRIS rips past. A STORM whipping up around us.

The STEEL EDGES of the SILO'S MOUTH vibrate against this pressure, then pucker, bending just a little...

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - ON CADEN

Looking past the SCREENS to the SILO through the windows.

It rises into the dark as the SKYLIGHT around it seems to RATTLE and SHAKE with PRESSURE.

CADEN
(a whisper)
It's getting louder...

ENGINEER

...The Decibel Levels are rising.
We should close the gates...

SONDRA

...Not yet.

RAJ

Let's abort and circle back.

SONDRA

Hold on.

RAJ

Close it up Sondra.

ENGINEER

Rising still. It's gonna be a
storm. It's--

SONDRA

Just wait!

The CRACKLING, SCREAMING, PULSING MESH OF SOUND is still
streaming through the SPEAKERS as--

The SCRIMS fly and swoop and cross the mouth of the SILO,
dancing as if underwater, smooth, greased precision--

Sondra's fingers fly over the keys--

SONDRA

(quietly)

There you are...

The SCRIMS find their balance, the WALLS flutter and fix.

AND SOMETHING HAPPENS -- EVERYTHING FALLS INTO PLACE -- AND
IT'S CLEAR --

For the first time we hear a PALLATABLE VERSION OF THE SOUND.

AND IT'S BEAUTIFUL, IT REALLY IS, IT REALLY--

SUDDENLY-- A HEAVY FORCE HITS THE SILO, CRUMPLING THE CURVE
OF ITS MOUTH-- SIRENS FIRE-- SOMETHING IS WRONG--

SONDRA

There's damage to the--

RAJ

Close the gates. Close it!

CADEN
What's happening?

EXT. THE SILO - FROM ABOVE

BLURRY PULSES OF SOUND SUCK DOWN INTO THE MOUTH--
THE MASSIVE GATES START TRYING TO RATTLE SHUT--
BUT THE PRESSURE IS TOO MUCH-- ONE OF THEM IS PUNCHED DOWN,
BENT, IT CANNOT FULLY CLOSE--
IT JAMS AGAINST THE OTHER SIDE, HOWLING WITH PRESSURE.

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM

SIRENS KEEP GROWING. Everyone is troubleshooting.

ENGINEER
It's, it's a sound storm, a big
one, levels are rising to--

RAJ
Why didn't we predict this?

ENGINEER
We did, I just did!

SONDRA
I can get it closed--

ENGINEER
The portal is damaged--

RAJ
GET IT SHUT!

Sondra is trying to override the gates and open them again.
Caden watches it fall apart, light going out of his eyes.

CADEN
An act of God...

RAJ
What?

Raj spins and fires him a look. Caden shrugs.

EXT. THE SILO - FROM ABOVE

Surging towards the BENT GATES as they RATTLE and SCREAM.

They CLUNK and start RETRACTING OPEN again, pulling apart, as the damaged side with its claw-like teeth SHIVERS and CRACKS.

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - ON SONDRA

SONDRA

It's opening, I can, we can leave it open and retract the scrims until the storm passes, it should be able to withstand the--

EXT. THE SILO - FROM ABOVE

THE BROKEN GATE RAGES AGAINST THE PRESSURE, SUDDENLY--

WHIP! THE BENT LEFT HALF CRACKS OFF AND IS HAMMERED DOWN, LOOSE NOW, TUMBLING INTO THE SILO'S CENTRAL CYNLINDER--

LIKE OPENING THE DOORS ON AN AIRPLANE AT 30,000 FEET, THE DEBRIS RUSHES IN AT THE SPEED OF A FIRED BULLET--

INT. THE SILO - IN THE CYLINDER

AS THE MASSIVE, STEEL, BROKEN, SHARPENED GATE DEBRIS TUMBLES INTO THE COMPLEX APPARATUS IN THE SILO'S CENTER--

NOTE THIS PIECE OF GATE IS THE SIZE OF A CITY BUS AS--

IT STARTS RIPPING THROUGH THE SCRIMS AND HEAVY WIRE WITHIN, TEARING APART EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH--

IT PINBALLS OFF THE WALLS, CRASHING AND CUTTING LARGE GASHES IN THE STEEL AND WOOD FRAME--

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - ON CADEN

Bracing from behind the SOUNDPREOF GLASS--

He watches it unfold ON SCREEN, CAMERAS inside monitoring the destruction as-- He looks up at the WINDOWS. Everyone GASPS!

The WIRESPOOL MECHANICS start untethering and falling backwards away from the SILO'S EXTERIOR FACADE--

Loose WIRES rip outward into the MALL'S INTERIOR...

Thick as telephone poles, the WIRES writhe like tentacles as the SOUND PRESSURE bursts through the walls of the SILO--

ONE LARGE WIRE WHIPS RIGHT AT US-- CRACK!

It SPLINTERS the SOUNDPROOF GLASS of the CONTROL ROOM--

EVERYONE DIVES BACK AND HITS THE FLOOR INSTINCUTALLY.

Caden looks up, the world rumbling, seeing:

Raj still standing. Frozen. Unmoved. Tears in his eyes.

The HEAVY STATIC of the LOST SOUND fills the room now.

CADEN
(yelling over static)
RAJ!

He doesn't move. Caden looks around. People are running for the door, grabbing their Phones. Back to Raj. Going nowhere.

Caden rises and runs to him, grabbing his arm.

CADEN
Hey!

Raj is in shock. He can't move or hear or speak.

CADEN
We have to go!

Raj turns, searching Caden's eyes.

CADEN
Think about them.

EXT. THE CONTROL ROOM - THE TEAM AND CADEN (IN SILENCE)

Are lead out of the control room by the AGENTS stationed here on security detail. Everyone is wearing their PHONES.

They tuck-run down the stairs, waved forward by the Agents, chaos erupting all around them without a SOUND.

Cracks and fissures climb the walls of the MALL. It's like a full-blown HURRICANE unfolding outside.

Caden stops at the FIRE DOOR and looks back:

The once magnificent SILO is falling apart, being battered by the pressure of the BOOMING SOUND STORM.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE - EVERYONE

Is rushed towards a convoy of BLACK SUVs as CEMENT DUST and STREAMS OF WATER fall all around them in SILENCE.

INT. BLACK SUV - ON CADEN

Staring out the window as they RIP over the hump of the drive. The truck is INSTANTLY struck by the PRESSURE, pushed sideways, a CRACK rushes through its THICK WINDOWS.

Caden holds on tight as the AGENT regains control. Everyone bracing. Caden turns back to the window and sees:

THE HOMELESS MAN. Standing in the alcove across the street. The MAN lifts a hand, waving to them--

CADEN
(radio)
Stop the--!

The ALCOVE collapses. The MAN disappears from sight.

Caden's expression crumples in sorrow. He turns to Raj beside him, weeping in SILENCE. Caden watches him. Helpless.

INT. KITCHEN, CADEN'S HOUSE - THAT MORNING

Vera watches the news, reports of destruction coming in.
CHYRON: RISING SOUND PRESSURE STRIKES LOS ANGELES.

NEWS ANCHOR
...Strongest fluctuations on record, at times climbing above 200 Decibels...
(channel changes)
...hardest hit areas in South Los Angeles where felled power lines sparked fires across many residential communities...

Vera holds the remote, watching, checks her phone, nothing.

VERA
(a whisper)
Come on...

The SOUND of the QUIET ROOM clicking open turns her.

INT. HALLWAY, CADEN'S HOUSE - ON VERA

As she rushes into the hall to find:

Caden and Raj entering sans Phones.

Vera swallows her tears. She moves towards them. Passing Caden and diving into Raj's arms. They hold each other.

Caden has to stand back. Hurt by this. Processing.

He sees Raj reach for Vera's womb, touching their child.

Caden absorbs. He understands.

INT. THE LIBRARY / DORY'S ROOM - ON CADEN

As he enters to find MARIELLA sitting beside DORY by the windows. Caden presses towards them as Mariella stands.

MARIELLA

We are ok. It wasn't so bad here.

Caden kneels to Dory, taking her hand. She stares into his eyes like a child, unable to understand what's happening.

He wraps her into a hug. Dory accepts it.

Caden pulls back. Dory's eyes are BIG, BLANK, SEARCHING. But she reaches out, touching his face. Caden nods. Nods.

CADEN

I love you. I love you D.

Dory smiles the way someone accepts a compliment. Caden kisses her hand. Looks to Mariella:

CADEN

What about Leti and Milo?

MARIELLA

They never show up.

This strikes Caden in a way he didn't expect.

CADEN

Where... Where do they live?

Mariella turns, nodding to a TELEVISION on MUTE. The images of FIREFIGHTERS battling a blaze in SOUTH CENTRAL on-screen.

EXT. CADEN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER, ON CADEN

SILENCE. In his Phones. He strides onto the round-about. Stops. Seeing his MERCEDES with its SMASHED FRONT. *Right.*

VERA (O.S.)
(radio)
Daddy?

Caden turns to find Vera exiting the house. She rushes to him and they embrace. He holds her close, nodding:

CADEN
(radio, quietly)
It was working. It was working. You were right honey.

VERA
(radio, pulling back)
Where are you going?

CADEN
(radio)
I...
(thinking)
I need to borrow your car.

Caden is calm, firm, unblinking.

CADEN
(radio)
I can be useful.

INT. VERA'S CAR, SOUTH LOS ANGELES - DAY

Philip Glass "METAMORPHOSIS" plays again...

Maybe it isn't in Caden's phones now, just the soundtrack of a world on the verge of collapse. He's driving through SOUTH L.A. surveying the destruction here:

Buildings crumbling, people wandering, air filled with SMOKE.

Fires burn across the landscape as Caden LOOKS UP:

A MASSIVE GROUP OF SILENT WHITE BLOCK THE STREET.

Caden is forced to stop. He can't get past them.

EXT. VERA'S CAR, SOUTH LOS ANGELES - ON CADEN

He exits in his PHONES. METAMORPHOSIS CARRYING. He stares at the ARMY OF SILENT WHITE. Afraid. He looks back to the car.

But that isn't the way forward.

EXT. CITY STREETS - ON CADEN

In the middle of the CROWD OF SILENT WHITE.

He holds the PHONES over his ears, bumping and turning in the CROWD thick as Grand Central Station at rush hour, afraid someone will snatch the Phones right off his head...

But he's met with BLANK STARES, the CROWD peppered with dark soot falling from the sky, dirtying their WHITE CLOTHES...

Caden stops, losing his sense of direction, turning in the smoke, the disorienting sea of people, overcome...

SUDDENLY: THE SILENT WHITE ALL STOP.

They raise their hands to the sky.

Caden freezes. Eyes wide. *What's happening?*

Like a wave, THE SILENT WHITE FALL TO THEIR KNEES. They bow their heads to the cracked cement as if facing Mecca.

Caden is the LONE PERSON still standing. His black clothes appear punched out against the yellow smoke.

He turns, seeing the MOUTH OF SOUND TOWN, a street leading up the hill into the MESH OF APARTMENT COMPLEXES THERE.

EXT. SOUND TOWN (BALDWIN VILLAGE) - ON CADEN

Running into this labyrinth of APARTMENT STYLE HOUSING. Much of it on fire. Fallen. FIRE FIGHTERS rush into the blaze.

EXT. SOUND TOWN STREET, ANOTHER ANGLE - ON CADEN

Turning a different corner in SILENCE, seeing a SCHOOL:

RED CROSS TRUCKS and NATIONAL GUARDSMEN are staging relief tents in its sprawling parking lot. Caden presses on.

INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM, RELIEF AREA - CADEN

Moves through the scene in SILENCE. WE SEE PEOPLE CRYING, SCREAMING, RUSHING, TRIAGE, CHAOS--

Caden turns. Eyes darting. He feels lost. He doesn't know why he came here? The hope drains from his face as...

Someone tugs at his sleeve. Caden looks down at:

MILo standing beside him. He does a little wave.

MOMENTS LATER:

Milo leads Caden through the cots in this RELIEF AREA. They arrive at Leti being looked at by Medics on a cot.

CADEN
(radio)
Leti... You're ok...

She taps her Phones again, mouthing *they're broken*.

Caden turns to Milo. He holds a PAD OF PAPER and PEN.

Caden takes them, scribbles, holds it up.

ECU ON THE NOTE: COME WITH ME.

Leti looks up. Extremely dubious. Then to Milo. His sweet face enough to convince her.

INT. CADEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

SHUNK! THE LIGHTPANEL TURNS GREEN. THE DOOR OPENS.

Caden leads Leti & Milo inside. Ambient sound hums. Leti's eyes are filled with uncertainty.

Caden moves towards the stairs, stops, feeling them hanging back. He turns.

CADEN
It's just this way.

Leti stands in front of Milo. Frozen.

CADEN
We can agree there's nowhere else
to go, yes?
(she nods)
Then it's out of our hands.

INT. VERA'S CHILDHOOD ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Caden leads Milo & Leti in. It's as big as their apartment.

Ribbons and pictures and stuffed animals. SWIMMING TROPHIES and pictures of TEEN VERA on the beach holding a surfboard.

Milo moves through the space in awe of its appointment. Leti looks at it all, deeply uncomfortable.

CADEN

Sorry... It's kind of a mess...

LETI

It's fine. We won't be here long.

CADEN

Of course.

(looking her over)

You okay Leti?

LETI

We're fine.

Milo races to a TOY CAR big enough for him to drive. He moves to jump in, stops, looks back at his mother.

LETI

Baby don't--

CADEN

He can play with it--

LETI

That's, thank you but...

She throws Caden a glare, moves to Milo and leads him away from the CAR towards the bed. He doesn't argue or fuss.

Caden nods. Observing them.

CADEN

Anyway, I'm just down the hall.

Leti looks back. Says nothing.

Caden takes his cue. As he exits, Leti follows him to the door and turns the lock. SNAP. She stands there a beat.

INT. CADEN'S ROOM - NIGHT, ON CADEN

Lying awake in bed, restless, sleepless, then a MOAN cuts through the air... Echoing in the dark... Caden sits up...

INT. HALLWAY, CADEN'S HOUSE - ON CADEN

Arriving outside Vera's Room. The MOANING is coming from within. Sounds like Milo, a child wailing in the night.

Caden wavers. Unsure. But he KNOCKS.

The MOANING grows louder as Leti moves to the door. CLICK.

She opens it, peering out, Milo draped heavily on her.

CADEN

Sorry, I heard him--

The MOANING grows as if Milo is straining to hear his own voice. Terrified that he can't. Leti shifts him on her.

LETI

He does this sometimes. He's afraid, with what happened. But we're okay. He had nightmares even before, I used to sing to'm but...

Caden nods. Mind turning.

LETI

...If it's a problem?

CADEN

No. It's not that.
(thinking)
I might have something.

Caden turns and skitters down the hall. Leti frowns.

INT. THE MUSIC ROOM - CADEN

Rifles through his stuff.

Papers and arrangements and songs from his past. A tangle of disorganization. He opens a drawer, digging through sheet music, other things. His eyes flash. It grows. Then he stops.

TWO OBJECTS LIE FORGOTTEN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE DRAWER:

A BLUETOOTH SPEAKER -- AND A SILVER FLASK.

Caden's eyes shift. He reaches out, taking the FLASK into his hands. He shakes it, listening to the LIQUOR SLOSH WITHIN.

Caden blinks.

INT. VERA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER, CADEN

Enters with the SPEAKER. He hands it to Leti, on the bed with Milo, still MOANING loudly.

CADEN
Turn that all the way up.

Leti stares at the SPEAKER. Confused. But does what he says.

CADEN
Hold it to his ear. Or no. I don't--
His body. Just hold it close--

CADEN
He can feel it, Leti.

She shrugs. Might as well. Holds it to her shivering child.

Caden pulls his cell, scrolling MUSIC. Finding something.

CADEN
This is John Cage, Two5.

Deep Brass Instruments Blare. Pianos hit. Extended notes. Dissonant. At first Leti is horrified. It's LOUD. STRANGE.

LETI
You're serious?

CADEN
Just wait.

LETI
This is terrible.

CADEN
He isn't hearing the notes. He's experiencing their vibrations.

They watch Milo. Caden fixed on him. Almost praying.

CADEN
(quietly)
...How it grows... How it builds...
The rise and fall of it... It's how we feel it...

Slowly, Milo calms. His arms seem to curl around the speaker, clutching it to his chest and like that... He falls asleep.

Leti lays him down. Eyes filled with complex emotion.

CADEN
That's good. That worked.

A HORN HOLDS. Unbroken. Leti almost laughs.

LETI
How am I supposed to sleep?

Caden nods to her PHONES.

CADEN
Lucky you came with earplugs.

He turns for the door. Leti is still processing.

LETI
Dr. LaForge?
(Caden turns back)
Is this the type'a music 'paid for
all this? This house?

Caden thinks. It seems ridiculous. He nods.

CADEN
Sometimes.

LETI
The things people love.

CADEN
Depends how loud you play it.

He turns again but--

LETI
Dr. LaForge?

CADEN
(turning back)
It's Caden, call me Caden--

LETI
Okay. Caden.
(beat)
I appreciate what you done here,
what you're doing but...
(beat)
I'd still like it if you stayed
away from him while we're here. If
that's a problem we can--

CADEN
No. I understand. I promise.

Leti nods. Had to be said. She holds firm.

CADEN
Goodnight.

LETI
Night.

Caden nods tightly, then exits the room. CLICK.

INT. THE BATHROOM - LATER, ON CADEN

Sitting on the toilet holding the FLASK.

He was unable to let it go. His REFLECTION WOBLES in its STAINED SILVER. We see his INITIALS embossed on its side:

C L F

Caden considers these letters, their weight. He unscrews the top and smells the liquor within. It stings his nostrils.

His hands are almost shaking. It would be so easy.

But he screws it shut without taking a drink. He opens a drawer and stows the FLASK inside-- SLAM!

INT. DORY'S ROOM - MORNING, MATCH TO:

MILO'S PEN SCRIBBLING ACROSS PAPER: SCHRICHHH-SCHRICHHH!

A CIRCLE WITH WAVES AND DOTS IN IT. MILO'S EYES ARE FOCUSED. PURPOSEFUL. THIS ISN'T A MISTAKE. HE'S CAPTURING SOMETHING.

Leti folds laundry across the room as-- Caden knocks.

CADEN
Morning.

There's a slight tension, stilted. Leti ignores it.

Caden looks to Milo drawing in the corner. Back to Leti. She's not gonna start doing chit-chat now. He accepts it.

Dory is seated by the windows watching the pool. Caden moves to her and sits. She's holding the CONCH. She turns to him.

A sudden flash of recognition in her eyes.

DORY
Caden...

She smiles. Like no time passed. Hold. Caden is shocked.

CADEN
Dory...

LETI
(stepping forward)
She hasn't said anything in--

Caden nods: *it's okay, be calm.* Leti stands down.

Caden puts his hand on Dory's. The SHELL. She nods to it.

DORY
You can hear the ocean in there...

Caden is emotional. Nodding. He takes it.

CADEN
Yes... You can...

A thousand feelings rush through him. He holds the CONCH to his ear, embracing its SHUSHHHHHH... Then looks back to DORY:

The light in her eyes has FADED... She's searching his face, confused, forcing her to retreat into SILENCE.

Dory turns back to the window...

The disappointment shatters Caden's heart. But he has to swallow it. Be grateful for this moment. However small.

Leti feels it too, sadness, empathy for him filling her up, somehow changing the way she sees him...

Caden sits with Dory in this stillness, clutching the CONCH.

CADEN
(quietly)
You can hear it...

He looks down at the SHELL... Turning it... Then... Something comes over him... His eyes seem to widen... WE PUSH ON:

THE CONCH SHELL... CURVING INTO ITS SWIRLING CAVERN...

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM, ABANDONED MALL - DAY

The DOOR clanks open, Caden enters, hanging up his Phones.

Raj and the other Engineers are having a meeting. Through the windows beyond them THE SILO is crawling with workers trying to fix its tattered structure... Far from finished...

Caden moves towards the Engineers, slipping a satchel from his shoulder and digging around within it...

SONDRA RAJ
The pressure is the issue! I know that, who's arguing
that?

Caden pushes between them, setting something on the table:

THE CONCH. IT SITS THERE. STATIC.

CADEN
You've been trying to diffuse it,
not capture it. *That's* your issue.

Everyone looks up. Raj is perplexed.

RAJ
What's that?

CADEN

A Conch Shell.

ENGINEER

Right, that's--

RAJ
What's it doing on my table?

CADEN
We found it on a beach in Aruba.

RAJ
What's it doing on my table?

CADEN
Actually, we tell people we found
it on the beach but Dory bought it
in the gift shop--

RAJ
WHAT'S IT DOING HERE?

CADEN
Your issue is the concept, it's
inorganic, complicated--

SONDRA
Was he hit on the head?

CADEN
I been hit plenty but that's
immaterial to the Conch--

Caden whips around, moving to the WHITE BOARD:

CADEN
The mechanics of your design are
fighting the Sound. It's just more
complication. You need something
that doesn't cut it, that absorbs
it, allowing it to be what it is.
(then)
Take the shell--

He draws THE SILO, then a SPIRAL COIL that winnows down to a single point at its base.

CADEN
DaVinci discovered the Fibonacci
Sequence based on a naturally
occurring pattern. It grows in
perfect exponential order. It's in
nature, in the Conch--

SONDRA
Someone make him stop saying CONK.

Caden ignores her, drawing the FIBONACCI SPIRAL, expanding at an exponential rate, the perfect balanced structure.

RAJ
(measured)
Caden. We know what the Fibonacci
is--

CADEN
Then where else does it exist? The
spiral pattern? Down to a single
point?

(off silence)
The Cochlea. *Our inner ear.*
(drawing it)
Like a spiral shell, filled with
endolymphatic liquid that absorbs
vibrations and turns them into
neural messaging. It's at this
point--

(underlining it)
--The vibrations become what we
understand as SOUND.

(MORE)

CADEN (CONT'D)
 The Sound out there isn't real
 until we hear it. We're not trying
 to record NOISE, we're trying to
 capture its VIBRATIONS--

RAJ CADEN
Hydrophonics? There's your FUCKING SILO!
 THERE!

He SLAPS the board. Laughter. Some relief.

CADEN
 Place hydrophonic mics inside the
 chamber, here, at its base, at the
 point where these vibrations could
 be corralled within some kind of
 transductive liquid--

RAJ CADEN
 It could work-- It will work. It will work.

RAJ
 But we don't have the money or the
 manpower to execute it. Not in our
 timeline.

CADEN
 Ok... Ok... Well...

Caden looks around, the air going out of him.

CADEN
 Who controls that?

INT. THE LIMO - NIGHT, CADEN & VERA

Ride in the back, Secret Service sitting down the line.

VERA
 When I say ten minutes, it's a hard
 ten. She won't listen if you start
 rambling--

CADEN
 When do I ramble?

VERA
 Be prepared to answer questions. If
 she denies you, you walk away, this
 isn't the time to--

CADEN
Fight the President?

Vera's eyes sweep to the AGENTS, both in PHONES, oblivious.

VERA

Why don't you just scream *bomb* in
an airport?

(then)

And I'm not worried about *fighting*,
I'm worried about *being*
embarrassed. I'm thinking of me
here. Get it?

Caden absorbs this. She has a point.

CADEN

Fair enough.

EXT. THE WILSHIRE GRAND HOTEL - THE LIMO

Curls into the drive. Caden & Vera exit in SILENCE.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - CADEN

Moves behind Vera, THE AGENTS, a scrum of people, all wearing Phones, all in SILENCE... AS THE BODIES CLEAR:

We see a MASSIVE PLEXIGLASS WEST WING filling the BALLROOM:

Like an office command center built of ICE. SOUNDPROOFED and SEE-THROUGH. The scale of it makes Caden's hands SHAKE.

INT. SOUNDPROOF COMMAND CENTER, QUIET ROOM - ON CADEN

Waiting for the PAD to turn GREEN. It does. Everyone removes their PHONES and hangs them up. The INNER DOOR Hisses OPEN:

INT. SOUNDPROOF COMMAND CENTER - ON CADEN

Moving down a TRANSLUCENT HALLWAY.

There are SPEAKERS wired into every wall. Bundles of cable in the clear ceilings. BIRDS, THE WIND, ALL PLAYING IN AMBIENT.

Through this maze of BENDING GLASS Caden sees:

A CENTRAL OFFICE SET UP LIKE THE OVAL. People there. Flashing around the PRESIDENT. Entering. Exiting. A flurry of motion.

We're winding towards this room. Finally we arrive outside.

VERA
You ready?

She looks him over. Clearly he is not.

INT. THE SOUNDPROOF OVAL - CONTINUOUS

CHATTER HITS. LOUD. CHAOTIC.

Caden is forced to sidestep people rushing out. He sees **PRESIDENT SYREETA CHAMBERS** behind her desk on the phone.

She sees them too, holds up a finger. Vera stops, turns.

VERA
Wait here a sec.

CADEN
I know what 'one finger' means.

VERA
Don't get tight.

CADEN
I'm not tight-- VERA
You're tight--

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS (O.S.)
Vera--

They look up, President Chambers is hanging up, moving towards them, flipping through the pages of a DOSSIER.

VERA
Madame President. This is my father, Dr. Caden LaForge--

CADEN
Well, it's, it's an honorary degree actually--

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS
I have a couple of those myself.

CADEN
Yeah they're great. You don't even have to go to class.

The joke falls flat. An AIDE rushes up to Chambers:

AIDE
We need to run the numbers from Wisconsin.

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

Two minutes.

(back to Caden)

Dr. LaForge I reviewed everything you sent over. The Silo. This new idea. You understand we were promised real progress for a sizable chunk of our war chest?

CADEN

Yes and I--

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

And my challenger is trying to undermine every form of scientific practice we have to turn people in his favor?

CADEN

The man's a massive prick. Yes. I'm aware.

Vera closes her eyes. But Chambers smiles. Amused.

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

That may be, but, sometimes trying and failing, it's worse than *not trying at all*, Politically speaking-

CADEN

I get that but--

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

I don't think, as it stands, we have the time or the money to overcome this latest setback--

CADEN

All due respect, you don't have time to ignore it--

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

At this stage, I think we'll have to press pause on the project until after the election. Hopefully, at that point we can regroup and make real progress.

AIDE (O.S.)

I need your eyes on this now.

Chambers sees Caden's dejected look.

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

Your daughter's a brilliant writer Dr. LaForge. You should be proud. We can still win this. She'll be an integral part of it when we do.

CADEN
Thank you ma'am.

Chambers gives a stiff look, turns to her STAFF. Caden looks to Vera. She shrugs. But he isn't giving up. He turns back:

CADEN
Hey y'know I...
(stepping in)
...I worked with *Syreeta Wright*?

Chambers looks up. The name catching her.

CADEN
I assume that's where you take your name? The MoTown singer, right?

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS
That's right... Mama was a fan...

Something blooms in Chambers. A memory.

CADEN
Right... Well... We worked together in the eighties. Wrote a couple songs. She was a real talent.
(beat, thinking)
She was also a drunk, actually. We had that in common, Syreeta, not...
Your mother... Obviously...

Chambers' eyes shift. *Where is this going?* Her AIDES flash around her but she's focused on Caden now... He steps in:

CADEN
Madame President I'm a mess, that's the truth, I...
(beat)
...I just relapsed after twenty-two years sober. I just threw it away.
The Sound got to me... But...
(realizing something)
...Well that wasn't it at all...
(beat)
I was just *ready* to give up. *People* are ready to give up. I think it's a big problem for you, your campaign. But the Sound, it's personal, it's the most personal thing in the world--

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS
Quality of life--

CADEN
That's right. That's--

Caden takes another step, the words filling his throat.

CADEN

I believe we're on the *precipice* of massive change...

(eyes flick to Vera)

...Understanding the Sound, right now, right here, what it means, why it's interrupted us, I mean really listening... It could be our only way to control which way that change *breaks*... I'm talking about something *now* that might change everything in our future...

(beat)

I think this is your moment ma'am.

Caden looks to Vera again. She's inspired.

CADEN

We have to listen for these moments because they're rare.

(beat)

We have to listen.

He stops. Holding. The whole room QUIET now. Chambers is opaque. Processing. But listening. She starts to nod.

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

You sober folks...

(thinking)

You smoke cigarettes right?

Caden is confused. A balk.

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

It's been a while since I had one.

(then, nodding)

We have a little rose garden they brought in. Just through there.

Chambers looks to a door across the room. Back to Caden.

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

You holding Doctor?

Slowly, Caden nods.

INT. THE LIMO - LATER, CADEN & VERA

Ride home with their AGENT ESCORT. Vera is talking on the phone. Caden stares out the window. She's excited. Nodding.

She hangs up. Turns to him.

VERA
You did it.

Caden is ashen. Not pleased.

VERA
Did you not hear me?

CADEN
I heard you--

VERA
Because this is--

CADEN
I heard you.
(thinking)
I made promises in there Vera. But
they were lies. I have no idea if--

VERA
What are you talking about?

CADEN
I can't promise this will FIX
THINGS! I just LIED to the
fucking President!

He looks off. Vera isn't swayed. She takes his hand.

VERA
Look at me. Look.
(he finally does)
You always tried to see the future.
You worried about the past. You
tried to control things. You wanted
everything to be perfect, for me to
be *perfect*, but perfect is just a
plan... It isn't real...

She stops, grasping for something.

VERA
You held onto that when you got
sober, you have to remember it now:
We can *try* without knowing if it
will *fix things*.
(then)
That's what trying is. That's hope.

Caden absorbs this. Vera seems to have just found it.

A knot swells in Caden's chest. Something bubbling.

CADEN
Vera... Sometimes...
(beat)
It's hard to look at you...
(MORE)

CADEN (CONT'D)
 (off her look, confused)
 You remind me of her... So much...

The emotion of this crashes over Vera like a wave. She nods and nods. Trying to hold it inside.

VERA
 I know that... I know...

Tears roll down Vera's cheeks. She brushes them off.

Caden looks to the Agents at the other end:

CADEN
 How's the show guys? Good?

He gives them a thumbs up. They look at each other, confused. Vera pulls him back:

VERA
 Hey...
 (he turns)
 Raj and I... We have something in
 the morning... It's important...
 (beat)
 I want you to come with us.

Off Caden's look... Eyes clearing...

VERA
 Please.

MUSIC ENTERS: Max Richter's "SPRING 1"...

INT. VERA'S CAR - START MONTAGE, ON CADEN

Sunlight spilling in... He's riding in the back... Watching people on the streets working to rebuild the broken places.

In the smallest way possible, Caden smiles.

INT. THE SILO - MONTAGE (SPRING 1 CONT'D)

Looking up from the base of THE SILO: A spiral pattern of BEAMS is being laced upwards like a strand of DNA...

WORKERS walk on the beams as if constructing the Chrysler Building... WE CIRCLE UP THROUGH THEM... Sun winking down...

INT. ELEVATOR - MONTAGE (SPRING 1 CONT'D)

CADEN watches the NUMBERS ascend... Wearing his Phones... He turns to RAJ and VERA... Nervous... Excited...

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - MONTAGE (SPRING 1 CON'T)

Caden, Raj and the Engineers argue over a DIAGRAM of a HUGE MICROPHONE BUNDLE on the WHITE BOARD... THE TENSION RISES...

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE - ON CADEN (SPRING 1 CONT'D)

A LIGHT PLUMES IN THE DARK... FILLING HIS FACE... SEE HE'S STARING AT SOMETHING... AN ULTRASOUND...

INT. THE SILO - MONTAGE (SPRING 1 CONT'D)

Caden, Raj and the Engineers stand in a CIRCULAR TROUGH. The ORB OF MICROPHONES is lowered in by a CRANE. It settles.

Caden's eyes move over it. Pleased.

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE - MONTAGE (SPRING 1 CONT'D)

ON THE ULTRASOUND: VERA'S WOMB ALMOST MATCHES THE ORB WITHIN THE SILO. *THUP THUP*. A HEARTBEAT FILLS CADEN'S PHONES.

IT SEEMS TO SYNCHRONIZE WITH VIVALDI'S VIOLINS FROM **SPRING 1**.

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - MONTAGE (SPRING 1 CONT'D)

The CONCH SHELL rests quietly on the table. Beyond it, Caden and the Crew eat lunch. Sharing stories. TIME PASSING.

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE - MONTAGE (SPRING 1 CONT'D)

Caden looks to Raj and Vera... Caught between disbelief and understanding... Raj kisses her... They laugh... Smile...

INT. THE SILO - MONTAGE (SPRING 1 CONT'D)

THE NEW SILO IS COMPLETED. STRANGE LIQUID splashes into it in SLO-MO, cascading off the SPIRAL WALLS like an OCEAN crashing into our lens...

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE - MONTAGE (SPRING 1 CONT'D)

Vera turns to Caden... Handing him something through the dark... He holds it into the light: A PRINTED COPY OF THE ULTRASOUND... A BLURRY IMAGE... ALMOST LIKE A PATTERN...

CADEN'S EYES FILL WITH EMOTION AS HE STARES.

EXT. THE ROOF - END MONTAGE (SPRING 1 CONT'D)

WORKERS handle the HOSES sending the thick liquid into the MOUTH OF THE SILO. IT FILLS. FLUTTERING AGAINST THE LIGHT.

CAMERA PANS TO

THE SUN SETTING LIKE A MASSIVE BALL OF FIRE. '**SPRING 1'** REACHING ITS SWELLING CRESCENDO AS--

INT. BATHROOM, CADEN'S HOUSE - MORNING (WEEKS LATER)

THE SINK ROARS, SHOOTING WATER DOWN INTO THE DRAIN.

Caden splashes his face, looking up into the mirror.

His face is fuller, the bags under his eyes receded, it's possible he's HEALING. He absorbs his reflection, seeing it.

INT. THE KITCHEN - CADEN

Enters to find Leti watching TV. She nods to the SCREEN:

WE SEE A NEWS HELICOPTER CIRCLING THE MALL WHERE THEY BUILT THE SILO. **CYRON READS: SECRET PROJECT IN CALIFORNIA ATTEMPTS TO DECODE THE SOUND.**

Caden stares, his mind turning. *Shit.*

NEWS ANCHOR

...Here's a better angle... The abandonned mall in California where the facility is being constructed. Senator McCabe was asked about the project earlier today after its existence was confirmed by our source within the White House...

CUT TO A **GAVIN MCCABE** PACKAGE, THEN HIM EXITING A RALLY:

MCCABE

*...From what I hear it's Pseudo-
Science and it's wasteful political
theater. They're using YOUR MONEY
to build this Tower of Babel out in
California... But my position
remains: This is a divine test, one
we cannot cheat, cannot outthink or
out-maneuver using intellect...
This is about faith... And I'm
asking the American people to put
their faith in ME...*

Caden looks to Leti. She shakes her head.

LETI

What does it mean?

Caden's eyes move back to the HELICOPTER IMAGES ON-SCREEN.

INT. LIMO - ON CADEN

Looking out the window as they arrive outside the MALL:

THE STREETS ARE FILLED WITH SILENT WHITE, ALONG WITH THEM,
COUNTER-PROTESTORS & RIOT COPS TRYING TO KEEP THE 'PEACE'.

Caden looks to the AGENTS touching their PHONES. Then to THE
PEOPLE OUTSIDE drumming on the SOUNDPROOF GLASS. RAGE.

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - CADEN

Enters, hanging his Phones. He turns to find the space
packed. Anticipation colliding with nervous energy.

Through the bodies he sees: Vera talking to the Engineers.

Caden moves to her, pulling her away from the group.

CADEN

Hey? What are you doing here?

VERA

I wanted to hear it.

CADEN

You didn't see outside?

VERA

I'm not gonna miss this, this is
history. Plus, if it doesn't work
they want me to kill you...

Caden holds her eyes.

Caden

Ok. How will you do it?

VERA

Push you down the stairs. Clearly.

Vera smiles, seeing the nervousness in his eyes. She shakes her head and steps forward, pulling him into a hug.

VERA

(a whisper)

*It's going to work...***INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - LATER**

SUDDENLY VERY QUIET. SONDRA and the other ENGINEERS at the controls. Raj, the others, Caden and Vera, all close.

RAJ

(to Sondra)

How's the weather up there?

SONDRA

Stable.

Vera and Caden share a look. Raj takes a deep breath.

RAJ

Okay people. We are going to take a run at this. If there are ANY signs of dissonance, we abort immediately and circle back, is that clear?

He looks around. Everyone agrees. Raj nods, seeing Caden.

RAJ

Well then... *Rock n Roll...***EXT. THE SILO, ON THE ROOF - WE SEE**

The massive JAWS shift open as the Sound rages all around us.

We swoop down towards the Silo, filled with the TRANSLUCENT LIQUID now. We surge towards it. THEN DIVE INTO THE WATER.

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - ON SONDRA

SONDRA

Fifty Decibels.

A HOLLOW GURGLING STATIC FILLS THE SPEAKERS... Something you'd record at the bottom of the ocean...

RAJ
Go to sixty.

Sondra types. The GURGLING gets LOUDER. Still opaque.

IT HOLDS. On the SCREENS, the LIQUID in the Silo is swaying and swirling, rippling side-to-side, chaotic.

RAJ
Seventy Decibels.

SONDRA
No readings yet.

Raj nods. Starting to deflate. He looks to Caden. Both are holding their breath...

Then... Vera steps forward:

VERA
Look...

The LIQUID within the chamber starts to shift.

It comes together, sucking into a kind of WATER SPOUT that starts channeling down the CURVING WALLS of the Silo.

This SPOUT starts winnowing to a single point, a VORTEX, sucking towards the ORB OF MICROPHONES at its base.

SONDRA
I'm getting something here.

STATIC JUMPS IN THE SPEAKERS. The Sound breaking through.

The VORTEX shatters, breaking apart, coming back together, trying to find STABLE FORM as... CRSSSHHHH- CRSHHHHHH...

The STATIC continues rolling and rumbling... Then little SPOTS OF CLARITY break, before burying under WHITE NOISE...

The SPEED and SWIRL of the TORNADO keeps growing, trying for a tight spiral, finding its way around the stuttering static.

Caden looks at Vera, she's mesmerized, overcome... He watches her watch... As if learning something about her...

Raj has his hands on his head, pacing...

Sondra is working the controls... Furrowed brow...

RAJ
Where are we Sondra?

SONDRA
It's-- I don't know???

Suddenly the SWIRLING TORNADO seems to-- SNAP!

Its FORM holds in a perfect, unbroken SPOUT, the thrust of pressure within seeming to light up the LIQUID...

AND IT ALMOST GLOWS... SHIMMERING... LIKE THE CREST OF A WAVE... REFLECTIVE AS A MIRROR...

EVERYONE GOES SILENT, STEPPING FORWARD, ENTRANCED...

AS THE STATIC BREAKS... THE SOUND flows through the SPEAKERS, filling the ROOM in an unbroken stream...

EEEEHHHH--AHHHH---EEEEEE---OHHHHHH---AHHHH---OHHHHH-EEEEEE

Like some kind of strange, dissonant SONG, The Sound pours into the Control Room...

The VORTEX of VIBRATIONS holds, finding its final form.

SONDRA
We're stable... We have it...

Small CHEERS break, then rise, overcoming the room as everyone CRIES OUT, CLAPPING, hugging, the SUCCESS RIPPLES!

SONDRA
We have it!

A CELEBRATION EXPLODES IN THE CONTROL ROOM!

Raj turns to Vera, grinning. He wraps her in a hug. They pull apart as Raj looks back to his ENGINEERS:

RAJ
Record it for as long as it's stable. Notify the NSA we'll be sending them sections. We'll need Cryptanalysis standing-by...

Caden watches the SCREENS, the tornado of SOUND swirling to a single point, its STRANGE MELODY coming through the SPEAKERS.

He nods and nods. Overcome. Smiling. But--

INT. THE ROSSLYN CHAPEL - (A FLASH)

SUN MOVING OVER STAINED GLASS WINDOWS. IT SHIMMERS.

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - ON CADEN

He staggers, the vision breaking through his consciousness. He has to touch the table. Vera notices. Moves to him.

VERA

Daddy?

She grabs him, holding him up. Raj is there too.

CADEN

Sorry... I...

He looks to Raj. Regaining his balance.

CADEN

I need to sit down.

Vera nods, leading him to a chair by the door. Caden sits. The Sound RINGING OUT. She kneels to him.

VERA

What's going on? What happened?

CADEN

Nothing... I'm okay... We... We did it... We...

VERA

You did it... You did it...

She dives into a hug. They hold each other.

VERA

Lemme get you some water. Wait here. I'll be right back.

Caden nods as she moves off. He looks to the CELEBRATION. Then The SILO through the glass. READINGS on the screens.

The SOUND continues to SWELL--

EXT. THE BEACH - (A FLASH)

THE LITTLE GIRL RUNS ALONG THE BREAKERS IN SLOW-MOTION--

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - CADEN

Rubs his temples. Overwhelmed by this. Confused.

He looks up and sees his Phones hanging above. He reaches out and grabs them, pulling them over his ears--

SILENCE.

Suddenly everything is calm. The Sound blocked out. Caden releases a LONG BREATH. Closing his eyes. Opening them.

He looks across the room, noticing some ENGINEERS standing up at its far end... Caden's eyes THIN... Something off...

The ENGINEERS point to SOMETHING through the glass. Other people aren't paying attention. THE ENGINEERS START YELLING.

Caden watches IN SILENCE as other people turn.

Caden rises, peering through the COMMOTION:

THROUGH THE GLASS WE SEE THE SILO BUT--

THERE ARE PEOPLE RUSHING TOWARDS IT ACROSS THE MALL FLOOR.

Six, Eight, Ten, dressed ALL IN WHITE. They start scrambling up its facade. People on the ground are yelling STOP! STOP!

Caden swallows. Suddenly frozen. Looking around. SILENCE.

AGENTS rush past him now, bumping into him, yanking on their PHONES and DRAWING GUNS as they disappear through the door.

Back to THE SILENT WHITE scaling the Silo. Caden watches Raj and Sondra yell at each other. Everyone panicking.

Raj turns and finds Vera. Rushes to her. ALL IN SILENCE.

Caden looks back to the SILENT WHITE. ONE OF THEM IS FUMBLING WITH SOMETHING, HE SLAPS IT AGAINST HIS THIGH--

CADEN STEPS IN--

BOOM! WE SEE THE EXPLOSION, WE DO NOT HEAR IT. A BALL OF FIRE AND SMOKE PUFFS OFF THE GIANT SIDE OF THE SILO--

THEN THE OTHER SILENT WHITE MEMBERS START DETONATING--

BOOM BOOM BOOM! COMPROMISING THE SILO AS THEY DO. THE PRESSURE OF IT AGAIN CRACKS OUR OBSERVATION WINDOW AS--

Caden wavers. Shock. Like it isn't real, isn't happening.

A WAVE OF LIQUID BURSTS OUT OF THE SILO! IT RUSHES TOWARDS US, HAMMERING THE GLASS LIKE A MASSIVE WAVE!

Caden is still frozen. Staring. Mouth hanging.

As the LIQUID splashes and clears we see:

The SILO again, starting to QUIVER, LEAN, THEN, IN A SHRIEK OF METAL, IT STARTS FALLING RIGHT AT US--

Caden turns, looking across the CONTROL ROOM TO:

Vera. She's holding a water bottle. THEY CONNECT EYES.

VERA MOUTHS A SINGLE WORD IN SILENCE: "DADDY"...

AS THE CEILING COMES SMASHING DOWN ON HER.

BLACK OUT.

INT. THE ROSSLYN CHAPEL - (A FLASH)

SNAP IN ON THE CHURCH. Pristine. Quiet. Still.

We find Caden standing in a beam of light. HOLD.

He turns, almost confused to find himself here?

He moves to the MASSIVE FRONT DOORS and throws them open:

THE OCEAN IS THERE, EXTENDING TOWARDS A VANISHING HORIZON.

Waves lap at the steps, the water wets Caden's shoes.

IN THE DISTANCE:

The LITTLE GIRL skips across the water in her RED DRESS.

A cloud slips off the sun... Caden holds up a hand, blinded... The cloud returns... He lowers his hand:

THE LITTLE GIRL IS GONE.

Caden blinks. He starts SCREAMING. BUT NO SOUND COMES OUT.

Caden is RAGING NOW, TEARS POURING, BUT NOTHING, NOTHING.

He steps off the stairs INTO the water and WHOOSH!

INT. THE OCEAN - ON CADEN

Sinking down. Surrounded by a trillion bubbles. He's looking up at us as he disappears into the SWIRLING YELLOW DARK...

INT. VERA'S ROOM - NIGHT, ON CADEN

Sitting on Vera's childhood bed, surrounded by her things.

We see bandages. One arm in a sling. A HOSPITAL BRACELET on Caden's wrist. He's holding the FLASK:

C L F gleams in its silver face. Caden just stares.

(V.O.)
(through radio)
Caden? Would you like to share?

INT. 12 STEP MEETING - MATCH TO:

Caden sitting in a FADED CHURCH. Phones on. SILENCE.

The carpet is a DEEP CERULEAN. He stares at the impressions left behind by his shoes. He looks up at the others. Waiting.

CADEN
(radio)
Sorry... Caden... Alcoholic.

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM WRECKAGE - (A FLASH)

IN SILENCE. Caden is being loaded onto a gurney by FIRST RESPONDERS. He comes-to, craning his neck, seeing them pick through the RUBBLE across the destroyed ROOM:

Nothing moves. Just a heap of twisted metal and glass.

INT. 12 STEP MEETING - BACK TO CADEN

Looking at his hands. Clutched.

CADEN
(radio)
...I have, uh, 39 days sober. I'm
63 years old... My story is... Well
it's like yours I guess...
(then)
It's about growth and crescendo and
decay and then... I dunno... It's a
mystery...

INT. THE CONTROL ROOM - ON CADEN (A FLASH)

SILENCE. The RESPONDERS strap him down. He's fighting and kicking, still trying to get to VERA beneath the RUBBLE.

HE SCREAMS VERA, VERA! BUT WE HEAR NOTHING.

INT. 12 STEP MEETING - BACK TO CADEN

His eyes fill with the pain of these memories.

CADEN

(radio)

I told my, y'know, I was being a smartass, I told my daughter you don't stand ON a precipice, you stand on its edge but...

(beat)

It's all a precipice, isn't it?

(beat)

We're born on a steep hill... All sliding towards it... And I'm trying to stop the slide, like I refuse to accept gravity...

(beat)

And that refusal... It's pain.

INT. THE MORGUE - ON CADEN (A FLASH)

Standing over Vera's body. Cold. Dried blood caked on her. Half her torso CRUSHED. Caden stares. Tears running down.

CADEN (V.O.)

(radio)

But I don't know what it means?

FROM ABOVE: See VERA and RAJ resting side-by-side on the slab with many others covered in sheets. All killed in the attack.

INT. 12 STEP MEETING - TIGHT ON CADEN

Choking tears through his CRACKLING PHONES:

CADEN

(radio)

...There was a time when music stopped the slide...

INT. THE MORGUE - ON CADEN (A FLASH)

The MEDICAL EXAMINER hands him a plastic bag with Vera's things. Cellphone. Watch. The ULTRASOUND PICTURE.

CADEN (V.O.)
(radio)
To hear it, to hear is a fucking miracle, it's...

EXT. CITY STREET - ON CADEN (A FLASH)

He steps outside clutching the bag. He looks up at the sky: A flock of BIRDS pass in a strange X FORMATION.

CADEN (V.O.)
(radio)
...We hear a bird and we stop, right in our tracks and find it in the tree... And in this, we let the fabric of everything catch us...

Caden stares at the BIRDS. He cannot hear them.

INT. 12 STEP MEETING - BACK TO CADEN

CADEN
(radio)
...The universe has no agency. No morality. We hear things when they happen. We don't when they don't. We look for signs but they're so quiet, we ignore them. We ignore the world around us...

INT. DORY'S ROOM - ON MILO NOW

Standing by the window, staring into CADEN'S BACKYARD.

CADEN (V.O.)
(radio)
...I feel like I can't know anything that matters. You ever feel like that? We can know everything but the point...

MILO'S POV: The POOL is covered with FALLEN LEAVES.

CADEN (V.O.)
(radio)
...But I have to believe it fits.
(MORE)

CADEN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*I have to believe there's some kind
of purpose in the signs...*

The LEAVES SHIFT like they're moving with PURPOSE now.

CADEN (V.O.)
 (radio)
*...There's a reason we're born on
the precipice, headed towards the
place we're supposed to be. Like
some kind of plan...*

Milo turns. Leti is again pushing Dory into the bathroom.

EXT. THE BACKYARD - ON MILO

Walking across the gravel. He escaped again. Moving towards the POOL. He arrives. Finding it covered with LEAVES.

CADEN (V.O.)
 (radio)
...Everything has a purpose...

FROM ABOVE: Milo stares at the water, not as INTENSE, the Sound purring over it and as it does, the LEAVES SWIRL.

Milo's eyes widen as-- The LEAVES suddenly SPLIT-- Forming a PATTERN on the water--

CADEN (V.O.)
 (radio)
...I believe this world can heal...

We've seen this pattern BEFORE. IN MILO'S DRAWINGS.

INT. 12 STEP MEETING - BACK TO CADEN

CADEN
 (radio)
...I can heal. I just...
 (beat)
*I don't know how yet? I can't see
it.... But when I do...*
 (looking up, eyes red)
I'll be sure to let you know.

His radio cuts. The world returns to SILENCE. Caden looks around, seeing his fellows CLAPPING without a SOUND. Hold.

INT. THE FOYER, THE QUIET ROOM OPENS:

Caden enters. The house still. He is sorrow personified.

He shuts the door behind him with a HEAVY CLICK.

INT. DORY'S ROOM - ON CADEN

Entering. He hears WATER running in the bathroom. Looks to Milo's table, seeing the Boy isn't there.

He moves across the room, arriving above the SKETCHBOOK.

Caden looks down. Touching it. About to open it. But something catches his eye in the window:

Milo is outside standing over the pool. Caden balks.

CADEN

Milo...

Milo crouches, trying to TOUCH THE WATER.

Caden brings his fingers to his mouth, WHISTLES! WOOOT! IT MAKES NO IMPRESSION. Even if Milo could *hear*, the windows are sound-tight...

CADEN

(yelling)

HEY! HEY!

...But it's all instinct. Caden doesn't know what to do. He's panicking. He steps forward as--

Milo starts teetering on the edge, reaching too far, losing his balance and-- SPLASH!-- HE FALLS INTO THE POOL--

EXT. CADEN'S HOUSE - ON THE FRONT DOOR

IT BURSTS OPEN AS CADEN RUNS OUTSIDE IN THE SILENCE OF HIS PHONES. HE'S MOVING ALMOST IN SLOW MOTION AS HE RUSHES FOR--

EXT. THE BACKYARD - ON CADEN

IN SILENCE as he runs and runs and slides to his knees along the slate tile of the poolside. LEAVES COVER THE SURFACE.

Caden's eyes FLASH. Suddenly MILO'S HAND shoots out of the water. Thrashing. The SOUND vibrating. The HAND disappears.

Caden jumps forward and digs his arm into the water.

INT. THE POOL - UNDERWATER

Caden's arm searches for purchase, whipping around, then touching the TIPS OF MILO'S FINGERS REACHING FOR HIM.

EXT. POOLSIDE - ON CADEN

SILENCE. Searching, searching, he gets a GRIP of something and RIPS MILO OUT OF THE POOL--

Caden hauls him onto the tile. He's unconscious. Caden flips him, slapping his face, SCREAMING IN SILENCE. SUDDENLY:

LETI IS THERE, SHOVING HIM OUT OF THE WAY. She's on her son, compressing his chest, breathing into his mouth. SILENCE.

Caden shakes himself off, pushing to his knees, his eyes FILLED WITH TEARS. THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING.

Leti pounds Milo's chest. Keeps working. She can't stop.

The BOY is STILL on the tile. Caden takes the deepest breath of his life. He goes calm. And just looks up at the sky.

He closes his eyes and prays. Leti continues, continues.

Caden whispers to whatever might be out there.

His lips move with the speed of light.

The calmer he gets, the more power it seems to have.

HE OPENS HIS EYES. BOOM!

MILO STARTS COUGHING, WATER EVACUATING HIS LUNGS!

Leti pulls him close, rocking him, SILENT.

She and Caden CONNECT EYES. There are no words for this look.

INT. VERA'S ROOM, UPSTAIRS - THAT NIGHT

Milo sleeps in bed, the covers pulled around him. Leti turns to Caden sitting across the room. She crosses to him.

LETI

I keep wondering when's it's gonna end? But it just keeps stacking up.

He nods. *Yes it does.* Leti sits with him. A Beat.

CADEN
Where's his father Leti?

She sighs, looking off into nowhere.

LETI
You think what? Papa was rolling
stone?

CADEN
I didn't mean that... LETI
I know... Sorry...

Leti swallows. Working it over in her head.

LETI
Darren, his father, he was, he's an
H-VAC repairman. Square as they
come. A good man. We built somethin
to be proud of... We just...

She looks off, still unsure of what happened.

CADEN
Didn't account for this?

LETI
(nodding)
Yeah. Pressure can change people,
y'know?
(nodding to Milo)
...After they took his hearing,
Darren tried but, he felt like he
failed. He blamed himself. When
those thoughts start working on
people, you can see it in their
eyes, they go somewhere, somewhere
they can't climb out...

CADEN
But you couldn't just call him?
Even after the Storm?

LETI
I dunno where he is.
(beat)
He's out there. Lost. Maybe he took
off his Phones. Maybe he's walking
with the people in White.

(beat)
One person fall, the next one gotta
rise up. If that ever stops this
whole world stops.

(beat)
Milo smiles every day. He can draw.
(MORE)

LETI (CONT'D)

He sees the world just as we can,
better than we can. The way he
 draws, he sees the beauty in
 things.

Milo makes a SOUND. Restless.

Leti rises and moves back to him... Watching over him...

Caden sits there. Beat. He turns, seeing a stack of MILO'S DRAWINGS on the table...

He nudges them, something, his eyes flicker. He pushes the drawings apart, staring at their SYMBOLS... Hand-drawn...

SUDDENLY Caden is on his feet, he's spreading the drawings across the table. Almost frantic. Leti turns, noticing.

LETI

What?

Caden looks up at her -- like he's seen a GHOST.

INT. THE MUSIC ROOM - CADEN

EXPLODES IN with one of Milo's DRAWINGS.

He digs through his stuff coming up with a STEEL PLATE. He plugs it into a keyboard. Looks around.

CADEN

Salt.

INT. THE KITCHEN - CADEN

Flies around the cupboard, knocking things out onto the floor, finally finding a CONTAINER OF KOSHER SALT...

INT. HALLWAY - CADEN

Rushes up the stairs as MARIELLA arrives for work, wondering what's going on? She gives him a dubious look...

INT. THE MUSIC ROOM - CADEN

Dumps the salt onto the STEEL PLATE.

It pours down onto the floor but he doesn't care. He spreads it around, creating a THIN LAYER atop the FLAT SURFACE.

Caden whips around to the KEYBOARD and hits a KEY:
 A LOUD TONE starts to VIBRATE THE PLATE. BEAT. NOTHING.
 THE TONE GROWS LOUDER AS CADEN TURNS UP THE VOLUME.
 The VIBRATION grows... Building... Caden staring...
 SUDDENLY THE SALT JUMPS -- THEN -- IT SPLITS INTO A PATTERN.
 Caden tries another NOTE -- THE PATTERN SHIFTS --
 ANOTHER PATTERN FORMED OF SALT ATOP THIS PLATE --
 HE HITS A THIRD KEY -- WHOOSH!
 THE PATTERN RE-FORMS -- AN EXACT MATCH TO MILO'S DRAWING.
 Caden chokes a gasp. He has something. He has something.

INT. THE KITCHEN - THE NEXT MORNING

Milo & Leti come downstairs to find:

Caden waiting. Milo's drawings spread out across the island. Other print-outs and research. Caden's been up all night.

CADEN
 The Rosslyn Chapel...

Leti's brow furrows. Milo is staring.

CADEN
 Do you know what it is? *Does he?*

Caden pushes a COMPUTER PRINT-OUT across the island. Leti picks it up. IT'S A PICTURE OF THE CHURCH FROM HIS DREAM.

CADEN
 It's a church in Scotland. It was
 built during the Middle Ages.
 There's over two-hundred symbols
 carved into its stone arches. They
 look like...

Caden holds up one of Milo's drawings. Another. Another.

CADEN
 This and this, and this, all of
 them, they're are called Cymatics.

LETI
Cymatics?

CADEN

A kind of modal vibrational phenomena. The visual representation of Sound-waves. Researchers found them carved into the ceiling of the Rosslyn and decoded each symbol to compose a piece of music... Like a message from the past...
(off silence)
Lift him up. Easier if I show you.

He nods to the same STEEL PLATE set up on the island, SALT spread on it. Leti helps Milo onto a stool as Caden grabs:

A VIOLIN BOW.

CADEN

...At different pitches, different wavelengths, sound itself creates innate visual patterns... They discovered this in the 1600s... They thought it was magic, and in a way, it is...

Caden draws the BOW across the edge of the STEEL PLATE:

IT SINGS A HIGH-PITCHED NOTE.

Leti and Milo watch the SALT SNAP INTO A PATTERN, AS IF SUCKED INTO POSITION BY MAGNETS, A SUDDEN, DETAILED FORM.

Caden holds up one of the DRAWINGS: THE IDENTICAL PATTERN.

Milo looks at his mother, his expression is *whoa*.

CADEN

Yeah... Whoa...

Leti finds Caden's eyes. *Wondering where this is going?*

CADEN

I want to try something.

EXT. THE BACKYARD - CADEN, LETI & MILO

Stand on the gravel in SILENCE.

Caden has Milo's DRAWINGS in a circle around them. Each is held by rocks on its corners. It looks like a SUNDIAL.

Caden and Leti wear Phones. Milo doesn't. Caden kneels to Milo, pointing to his ears. He mouths *Can you hear it?*

Milo shakes his head. No.

Caden puts a hand on his HEART. Mouths *Can you feel it?*

Milo nods now, looking up at the TREES where the Sound presses against them. Milo touches his own heart.

Caden nods. Mouths *Can you see it?* Pointing to his EYE.

Leti is watching this, intense emotion bubbling in her.

Milo nods a little. He shuts his eyes.

SUDDENLY -- WE SEE WHAT HE SEES -- LIKE FIREWORKS WHEN YOU PRESS ON YOUR EYELIDS -- A CYMATIC PATTERN APPEARS LIKE FUZZY GOLD SPARKLES IN THE DARK -- AN INKBLOT SPREADING APART --

Milo opens his eyes. Turns. Pointing at ONE OF HIS DRAWINGS.

Caden looks to Leti. She's afraid. But Caden is smiling.

He twirls a FINGER at Milo as if to say, *Again...*

Milo nods, thinking, feeling...

The Sound moves through the OAKS in a different direction...

Milo shuts his eyes, opens them, moving to ANOTHER DRAWING. He points. Caden covers his mouth, holding a BLURT OF RELIEF.

CADEN
(radio)
He's the key...

Leti is confused, but somehow filled with relief too.

CADEN
(radio)
We need a programmer.

INT. HOSPITAL ICU - DAY

SONDRA THE ENGINEER lies in a hospital bed in traction.

Camera moves to CADEN beside her. Phones around his neck. Staring as Sondra comes-to, finding his eyes.

CADEN
Not the uh... The face you were
expecting... Huh...?

Sondra stares off. Despair.

CADEN

I know you don't wanna talk about
it, but I need your help...
(rubbing his eyes)
...Raj talked about the paradox...
He said if we change something
here, maybe the Sound never
happens, maybe none of it happens.

She turns back to him.

CADEN

Do you believe that?

Sondra blinks. A tear pinches down her cheek.

CADEN

We're all looking for something to
hold onto... So I'm pretty focused
on this right now... I have hope.
But I need help. I need a name.

He pulls a PAD and PEN, resting it on her chest.

CADEN

If all this is true, we might be
running out of time...

INT. FOYER, CADEN'S HOUSE - THE QUIET ROOM DOOR:

OPENS AND A YOUNG MAN ENTERS: **MAX THE PROGRAMMER.**

20s, hoody, jeans, pack over his shoulder. Looks like it's
the first day of school and he's late. But maybe he's about
to save the world. He lands on:

CADEN, LETI & MILO.

Max swallows. Eyes shifting.

MAX

This is weird.

CADEN

Yes. It is.

INT. THE KITCHEN - CADEN

Spreads out the DRAWINGS, handing Max a PRINT-OUT:

AN INDEX OF CYMATIC SYMBOLS. The visual representation of
every NOTE at different levels of PITCH. Max eyes it.

CADEN

I need them arranged... Maybe on a tablet... Something he can touch in real time... As he picks the order the algorithm should--

MAX

Cross reference characters to match each symbol forming a kind of written message...

Caden nods. The kid is ahead of him.

CADEN

...Right. Or. At least guess

between possible combinations...

(shaking out of it)

...Whatever it is, if this is the key, it should be straightforward. We're meant to decode it. This was the only way they knew how to send it.

MAX

"They" as in? Who? Aliens?

CADEN

We were thinking closer to home.

Max turns back to the CYMATICS. Considering them.

CADEN

Hey, if you can't handle it?

MAX

No I didn't say that, it's just--

CADEN

Crazy?

MAX

Simple. Seems too simple.

Caden nods. Eyes moving over the CYMATIC SYMBOLS.

CADEN

Whoever sent it knew their audience.

INT/EXT. MONTAGE, CADEN'S HOUSE:

--The TABLE from Dory's room is carried into the yard. Caden and Max set up a station with a TABLET. Wires running from it into the HOUSE.

--In the KITCHEN, Max sets up a COMPUTER COMMAND CENTER on the island.

--He starts to CODE, importing SCANS of the CYMATIC SYMBOLS and assigning each a value system to be cross-referenced.

--Caden waits by the TABLE in the yard as

--Leti leads Milo outside. She helps him onto his chair. He stares at the TABLET with the CYMATICS arranged on-screen.

--Caden kneels to Milo. Touches his own HEART, then a finger to his EYE. Milo nods. Understanding.

--Milo's HAND reaches out, wavers, then HITS A CYMATIC.

INT. CADEN'S HOUSE - LATER

WE SEE: THE COMPUTER SCREEN. Incoming ROWS of CYMATIC SYMBOLS form blocks and blocks of text.

The ALGO is translating them slowly. Some are becoming English Letters, some even words, like "THE" "AND"--

This quickly spreads into the Tetris of Text like a virus, translating it in waves...

Leti stands by the window watching Milo. Worried.

Max taps the screen.

MAX
Look here.

Caden steps in, eyes moving off Leti, feeling her pain.

MAX
THREE SYMBOLS end each stanza, they
frame it like some kinda signature.

CADEN
Maybe it's political? An acronym?
Could be the affiliation of whoever
wrote it?

MAX

Could be... It'll take time... The entire pattern hasn't repeated yet. When it does, we'll know where the message starts and stops--

LETI

How much longer?

Leti turns from the window. Frayed. Max shrugs.

MAX

I... I don't know?

She looks to Caden. Her eyes keyed. A mother's worry.

CADEN

You okay Leti?

She gives an almost imperceptible nod.

LETI

For a little longer.

(turning, quietly)

A little longer...

WE PUSH ON: THE CYMATIC SYMBOLS ON-SCREEN, SHIFTING.

CROSS FADE TO:

EXT. BACKYARD, CADEN'S HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

Milo's hand moves over the SCREEN:

He hits the CYMATICS like he's playing video poker.

BUT HIS EYES ARE RED. He's almost manic now. Overcome by the vibrations stacking up in his head... SUDDENLY:

LETI'S HAND ENTERS AND STOPS HIM. Milo turns to her. His chin quivers. Then he collapses into her. She hugs him tight:

LETI

(radio, a whisper)

You did good baby, you did good.

INT. FOYER, CADEN'S HOUSE - ON LETI

Exiting the QUIET ROOM sans Phones. Milo draped over her. She carries him upstairs as-- Caden watches from the shadows.

INT. KITCHEN - CADEN

Enters to find Max and his screens.

MAX

The system's compiling an alphabet,
it's simple, each Cymatic Symbol
was given a corresponding letter,
it won't be long...

CADEN

What about the *signature*?

SUDDENLY Caden wobbles, grabbing his head--

INT. THE UNDERGROUND CAVERN - (A FLASH)

SURGING TOWARDS THE MASSIVE SOUND MACHINE-- IT RUMBLES!

INT. THE KITCHEN - ON MAX

Looking up. Concerned.

MAX

Whoa... Easy... You ok?

Caden touches the island, staying on his feet, nodding.

CADEN

I'm fine... I... I just need to lie
down...

(then)

Wake me when it's finished.

He exits. Max turns back to the SCREENS.

INT. GRAND ROOM - LATER, ON CADEN

FAST ASLEEP. A HAND touches him awake. Caden rubs his eyes, sprawled across the couch. Max is a silhouette above.

MAX

(quietly)

It's finished...

Caden blinks, needing a moment, then HE SHOOTS UP.

INT. THE KITCHEN - CADEN & MAX

Explode in, rushing towards the SCREENS.

Caden touches the mouse. They LIGHT UP. His eyes shift over the blocks of text.

MAX
It's impossibly detailed. And look here, the signature...

Caden does. Seeing the CYMATICS shift into THREE LETTERS.

MAX
That mean anything to you?

Caden's eyes shift. Shift. Shift. He shuts them. Something dawning... He starts to nod...

CADEN
Yes... It means something...

EXT. THE TARMAC - SALT LAKE CITY, NEAR DAWN

IN SILENCE. People exit AIR FORCE ONE as throngs of REPORTERS are gathered to photograph President Chambers' arrival.

CHAMBERS pokes out of the plane. She's met by a hailstorm of flashes, PHONES over her ears, just the light in her eyes.

She descends, moving between her SECRET SERVICE DETAIL--

She feels her CELL VIBRATE in the thick pocket of her trench. Chambers pauses, digs it out, seeing the name on-screen:

VERA LAFORGE

Her brow knits. She ANSWERS. The call fills her PHONES.

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS
(radio)
Who is this?

A PAUSE. Chambers stops on the tarmac. Waiting.

CADEN (O.S.)
(through radio)
Caden LaForge. Vera's father.

Chambers' heart sinks. She nods.

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS
(radio)
I'm sorry for your loss.

INT. THE KITCHEN, CADEN'S HOUSE - ON CADEN

Lit by the glow of Max's SCREENS.

CADEN
(to phone)
Me too.

Max's fingers are flying over the keys, composing an email.

CADEN
(to phone)
But I have something you need to see.

EXT. THE TARMAC - ON CHAMBERS

Shaking her head, no time, but out of respect:

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS
(radio)
Dr. LaForge, I understand what you must be going through--

CADEN (O.S.)
(radio)
It doesn't matter anymore. I've cracked it.
(off silence)
The Sound. I have it.

Chambers' eyes shift.

CADEN (O.S.)
(radio)
An email will explain everything. Attached is a decoded version of the Sound. It's a message. Madame President it's...

INT. THE KITCHEN - ON CADEN

EYES FILLING WITH TEARS. HE SWALLows.

CADEN
(to phone)
Breathtaking...
(beat)
I think people need to hear it...
But I can't know... If it will change things... And for that...
(MORE)

CADEN (CONT'D)
 (swallowing)
 I'm sorry.

EXT. THE TARMAC - ON CHAMBERS

Confused. AGENTS hustling her. FLASHING STROBES!

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS
 (radio)
I'm not sure I understand?

CADEN (O.S.)
 (radio)
You will. We have hope now ma'am.
We should all have hope. I hope
when you read it you'll agree.

PRESIDENT CHAMBERS
 (radio)
Wait I don't--?

CLICK. Caden disconnects. We Hold on Chambers, thinking.

INT. THE KITCHEN - CADEN

Stares at the cell in his hand.

MAX (O.S.)
 You think she'll read it?

He turns to Max. Finger on the button.

CADEN
 Just send it.
 (thinking)
 Could be it's out of her hands.

INT. VERA'S CHILDHOOD ROOM - MOMENTS LATER, ON CADEN

Entering quietly to find Leti sitting beside the bed, Milo within, resting from this odd and unwieldy day.

Leti looks up at Caden, a little smile. He sits beside her. His stare is 1000 miles. His affect odd.

CADEN
 Was it better before Leti?
 (beat)
 Were you happy?

Caden rubs his eyes. Leti stares at him.

CADEN

I think there's something I can
do... To put things back... But I'm
worried if I do it... Maybe
something will be lost... Maybe the
lesson...

Leti tries to smile. Not sure she understands.

LETI

You should do what feels right.
(beat)
The rest is just noise.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMO - NIGHT

Chambers stares out the window. Deep in thought. The world rushing past. The chaos of it spilled into the streets.

BUZZ BUZZ. She's startled. Pulls her cell. ONE NEW EMAIL.

INT. DORY'S ROOM - ON CADEN

Moving to her bedside, holding something: THE CONCH.

He looks to Dory. Sleeping soundly. He turns to the NIGHTSTAND and places the Conch there.

Then he picks up the FRAMED PICTURES. One-by-one. He removes the PHOTOGRAPHS, slipping them into his pocket.

The family when they were Young, when the world was Young.

Caden is crying as he returns the EMPTY FRAMES to the nightstand. He leans in, kissing Dory's forehead softly.

INT. LIMO - SAME, PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

OPENS THE EMAIL. It maximizes on-screen.

Block paragraphs of TEXT. Chambers begins to read it. And as she does: HER EYES FILL WITH TEARS.

EXT. THE BACKYARD - NEAR DAWN, ON CADEN

Walking slowly towards the POOL. A hint of BLUE spills into the sky above the trees. Streaks of pink. Orange.

He's wearing his Phones... 'SPRING 1' grows within them... The VOILINS... Lilting and carrying as...

Caden moves with purpose. He arrives at the edge of the pool. The water ripples side-to-side, a peace to it, but too choppy for any symbols to form.

Caden stares. Something building.

CADEN'S VOICE
What If...

INT. THE UNDERGROUND CAVERN - (A FLASH)

Pushing towards the MACHINE and its SPEAKERS like Everest made of coils and crackling electric charge...

CADEN'S VOICE
There was something SO LOUD...

The FIGURE lurches into frame... Moving to the TOGGLE...

INT. DIGITAL VIDEO FOOTAGE - ON YOUNG CADEN

In his COLOSUS DOCUMENTARY. Passion twinkling in his eyes.

CADEN
It could reach us all?

EXT. BACKYARD - ON CADEN

Standing over his pool. Staring into the ripples. His eyes fill with understanding, a calm, a solution...

CADEN'S VOICE
I have to believe it fits.

INT. RAJ'S HOUSE - (A FLASH)

PUSHING ON RAJ'S SOUND MACHINE ON THE TABLE.

CADEN'S VOICE
There's a purpose in the signs.

INT. DORY'S ROOM - (A FLASH)

PUSHING ON THE CONCH BESIDE THE EMPTY PICTURE FRAMES.

CADEN'S VOICE
A reason we're born on the precipice.

INT. CADEN'S CAR - (A FLASH)

MILLO standing in the road. The CAR stops just short of hitting him. Caden's eyes spike with FEAR in the mirror.

CADEN'S VOICE
Like some kind of plan.

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE - (A FLASH)

PUSH ON THE ULTRASOUND. AN ORB OF SHIFTING LIFE WITHIN.

INT. UNDERGROUND CAVERN - (A FLASH)

WIDE ON THE MASSIVE MACHINE, THE FIGURE MOVING TOWARDS IT.

IN THIS TABLUEX IT LOOKS LIKE WOMB, EGG & SPERM.

INT. THE LIMO - ON VERA (A FLASH)

VERA
You can try without knowing if it will fix things.

EXT. THE POOL - ON CADEN

Turning back to the HOUSE, lights glowing within.

VERA'S VOICE
That's what trying is. THAT'S HOPE.

Caden sees himself in the windows, looking into the garden.

He sees himself turn and approach Max at the computers.

INT. THE KITCHEN - (A FLASH)

Caden arrives over Max, who points at the screen.

MAX
Three symbols... Like some kind of signature...

Caden's eyes shift. Filling with light.

INT. THE DRUNK TANK - (A FLASH)

The PRISONER IN WHITE carves THREE SYMBOLS into the jelly.

CADEN'S VOICE
I think this world can heal.

INT. THE KITCHEN - ON MAX (A FLASH)

Pointing to the SAME SYMBOLS from the DRUNK TANK WALL.

INT. THE UNDERGROUND CAVERN - (A FLASH)

The FIGURE slams his weight into the LEVER, TRIPS IT, sending the MACHINE into a frenzy of hysterical ramping.

CADEN'S VOICE
I just don't know how yet?

EXT. THE BACKYARD - ON CADEN

Dawn breaking. Sunlight fills his eyes.

CADEN'S VOICE
But when I do.

INT. THE BATHROOM - (A FLASH)

Caden turns the FLASK in his hands, light WINKS off the letters C L F in its tarnished silver... HIS INITIALS...

CADEN'S VOICE
I'll be sure to let you know.

INT. THE KITCHEN - ON CADEN (A FLASH)

HE'S STARING AT THE COMPUTER SCREEN, THE THREE SYMBOLS ARE CONVERTED TO LETTERS:

C L F

THE SIGNATURE BURRIED WITHIN THE SOUND.

EXT. MAIN STAGE, RED ROCKS - (A FLASH)

YOUNG CADEN directs the Engineers building his COLOSUS SOUND SYSTEM... It towers above him... He looks up with purpose...

CADEN'S VOICE
My singular vision.

INT. THE UNDERGROUND CAVERN - (A FLASH)

Tracking around the FIGURE... HE PUSHES BACK HIS HOOD...

CADEN'S VOICE
I had to block everyone out.

And finally we see it: THE FIGURE IS CADEN

Nearly ninety years old, almost thirty years in the future, standing in the SOUND MACHINE he built to end the world...

Or maybe to save it... HIS EYES FILL WITH PEACE...

SMASH TO:

EXT. THE POOL - ON CADEN (THE PRESENT)

HIS RED RIMMED EYES BRIM WITH TEARS. ALL OF THIS JUST FIT TOGETHER. EVERYTHING CLEAR. HE LOOKS UP TO FIND:

THE LITTLE GIRL STANDING ATOP THE WATER'S SURFACE.

Caden takes her in. Processing. Nodding.

CADEN
(radio, a whisper)
I'm sorry... It's my fault...

The Little Girl's face fills with empathy.

LITTLE GIRL
(in his radio)
It's ok... There's still time...

INT. THE KITCHEN - THAT MOMENT

Max watches the NEWS. Biting his nails.

A CHYRON READS: SPECIAL ADDRESS FROM THE PRESIDENT.

Chambers is behind the podium holding printed pages.

CHAMBERS
The timing of this, it's unusual, but I believe it's necessary...

FLASHBULBS BURST!

EXT. THE POOL - ON CADEN, SAME

STARING AT THE LITTLE GIRL. She holds out her hand.

LITTLE GIRL
(in his radio)
Just jump!

Caden is frozen, tears tumbling down his cheeks.

CADEN
(radio)
I don't know if it will fix things?

INT. THE KITCHEN - ON THE TELEVISION:

Chambers at the podium, she needs a minute, then:

CHAMBERS
(on tv)
In the coming weeks this message will be vetted by every authority known to man, but today, it comes to us in the form of a warning.
(more flashes)
This is a history of humanity, told forward, over the next twenty-eight years, outlining our demise, our mistakes, our failures, in a level detail that feels almost preternatural... And it's dated to begin on a very specific date and time... Today... This exact date, at this exact time...

QUESTIONS FLOOD. Chamber holds up that powerful finger:

CHAMBERS
(on tv)
Please... When I'm finished... You'll have your answers...

EXT. THE POOL - ON CADEN

Edging towards the water. Still not ready.

VERA (O.S.)
(radio)
You want me to count?

He looks up, seeing it's ADULT VERA NOW. She's floating in a BEAUTIFUL RED DRESS above the water.

Caden is filled with warmth. He smiles. Nodding.

CADEN
(radio)
Okay honey...

VERA smiles. She straightens. Almost theatrical.

VERA
(radio)
One.

The water starts to THRASH. THE SOUND fighting for its life.

INT. THE KITCHEN - ON THE TV

Chambers gives her speech. The RECEPTION starts CRACKLING. INTERFEARENCE scrambles the image. THE LIGHTS DIM.

VERA (V.O.)
(radio)
Two.

PULL OUT TO REVEAL MAX, HIS COMPUTERS, ALL NO LONGER HERE...

THE ROOM IS EMPTY... PRISTINE... REVERTED...

EXT. THE POOL - ON CADEN

HE SHUTS HIS EYES. PHONES STILL COVERING HIS EARS. THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD RUSHING OUT OF HIS BODY.

VERA SMILES -- NODDING HIM TOWARDS THE WATER:

VERA
(radio)
Three.

INT. THE POOL - SPLOOOOSH!

Caden explodes down into the water. Murky green & grey. He lets himself sink to the bottom, air evacuating his lungs.

He settles on the floor, seeing his PHONES, knocked off, floating down beside him. They rest with a hollow THUNK.

Caden stares at them.

He looks up at the SURFACE. LIGHT filters in. The water is raging, massive waves crashing and smashing above...

...This roiling tempest ramps to SLOW MOTION, until it becomes smooth and crisp and we can see just how it moves...

As down below... Caden makes some kind of choice...

HE OPENS HIS MOUTH... AND SUCKS THE WATER INTO HIS LUNGS.

BLACK OUT.

EXT. THE POOL - AT DAWN

SUDDENLY we're looking over the STILL WATER. SILENCE.

Hold on its glassy surface without a sound.

A long, painful beat, imagining Caden below.

Without warning, WE HEAR THE SOUND OF SPRINKLERS:

CA-SHUCK SHUCK SHUCK... CA-SHUCK SHUCK SHUCK...

...Camera turns to Caden's backyard, seeing the sprinklers throwing water around its lush foliage... HEARING THEM TOO.

...Then... WE HEAR the twinkle of a BIRD'S SONG...

...The RUSTLING of the WIND through trees...

...We turn all the way back to the pool where...

The water is still and silent and glassy...

BOOM! CADEN SHOOTS UP OUT OF THE WATER.

He HEAVES air into his lungs, eyes red, hair matted wet. He pulls himself out and falls onto the slate tile in a heap.

See he's wearing a black swimsuit now, not the clothes from when he jumped in...

Caden pushes to his feet and turns, A SWIRL OF SOUNDS, his eyes filled with confusion, wonder, he's overwhelmed...

But does he remember? We can't tell. He's like an alien just touched down on Earth...

...SUDDENLY he sees SOMETHING floating atop the surface of the pool... WE HOLD... Caden kneels... He reaches out...

IT COMES INTO FOCUS BETWEEN HIS FINGERS:

A PICTURE FROM DORY'S BEDSIDE.

Caden, Dory, Young Vera on the BEACH.

Waterlogged and bled-through. The water has almost changed this IMAGE. It's as if the FAMILY were GLOWING now...

CADEN STARES... HIS EYES GO WIDE... AND IT CLICKS.

INT. THE KITCHEN - CADEN

Pushes through the GLASS DOORS that had been cemented over before. He trails spots of water into the KITCHEN:

HEAR THE TELEVISION STREAMING THE MORNING NEWS:

TALKING HEAD

President Chambers and head speech writer Vera LaForge have crafted one of the great speeches in the history of the American Politic. The Next 28 Years will go down as a New Declaration, a Plan of Action that will bring not just America but our species into a Renaissance here on Earth...

TALKING HEAD

But how could they be so specific? The speech was so intricate in its predictions...

TALKING HEAD

I think the American People are looking for this kind of foresight-

WHOOOOOOOT! Caden wheels around to find-- The KETTLE boiling atop the burner. LETI STREAKS IN:

LETI

(cheery)

Morning Doc. How was your swim?

She grabs the kettle and the SOUND FADES. Caden is just staring, dripping, as LETI pours hot water into Dory's cup.

CADEN

Leti... Where... Where's Milo...?

Leti stops. Holding.

LETI

His father took him to school?

(beat, then)

Did I tell you about my boy?

Caden swallows. Starting to understand.

CADEN
I think, yes, you did.

LETI
I don't...
(processing)
...Y'know you don't look so good?
Maybe you should sit down...

CADEN
I'm fine...

LETI
(nodding to the tv)
Pretty amazing thing your daughter
did, I mean what she wrote. People
needed to hear it.

CADEN
(swallowing)
Vera...

LETI
...Hey I was thinking of taking
Dory to the beach house later,
maybe you should come? The ocean
air might do you good?

Caden is in a trance. Processing.

LETI
Anyway... I should...

She picks up the TEA. Nods to Dory's room.

LETI
Lemme know if you need anything.

Leti tries to read him, then shakes it off and--

CADEN
Leti.
(she turns)
Thank you.

Leti nods. A little weirded out. Then exits the room.

INT. HALLWAY, CADEN'S HOUSE - CADEN

Stops outside Dory's Room. He looks in, seeing Leti help Dory
with her tea, sitting by the window. This hasn't changed.

INT. MUSIC ROOM, UPSTAIRS - CADEN

Bursts in, flying around, looking for something: HIS CELLPHONE. He swipes it off the table and dials a number.

The call RINGS as Caden's eyes shift.

VOICEMAIL
*...Hi you've reached Vera LaForge,
 please leave a message... BEEP!*

Caden doesn't know what to say.

CADEN
 Honey... I... If you could call
 me... Please... I...
 (through tears)
 I love you.

He hangs up. Thinking.

EXT. CADEN'S HOUSE - CADEN

Exits, dressed now, striding past Leti's Civic, less beat up in this timeline, to find his MERCEDES TURBODEISEL.

It sits pristine in the morning light.

INT. CADEN'S CAR - CADEN

Drives through the city, fast, just gawking at the world. He listens to its sounds: *Honks. Busses. People. Everything.*

...Philip Glass 'METAMORPHOSIS' enters once more...

Somehow it feels different, the soundtrack of a world rebuilt, reformed, the way we know it today... Not perfect...

But life being lived in its messy imperfections.

EXT. CALTECH UNIVERSITY - CADEN'S CAR

Swoops into the sprawling Pasadena Campus.

INT. CADEN'S CAR - ON CADEN

Spinning the wheel. He pulls into a spot and stops as--
 HIS CELL VIBRATES ACROSS THE PASSENGER SEAT.

Caden stares... "VERA" glowing on-screen... This time Caden rushes to pick it up:

CADEN
Vera? Vera?? Hello???

He waits for what feels like eternity.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, STAFF CABIN - ON VERA

Staring out the window. Alive. CLOUDS swirling. Sun bouncing off her eyes. There is ENERGY and ELATION all around her.

VERA
Daddy hi... Did you see it?

INTERCUT CONVERSATION

Caden nods and nods, tears pinching out of his eyes.

CADEN
No... I mean... Yes... I saw...

VERA
You missed it, didn't you?

Vera is disappointed. She bites her lip.

CADEN
How, how did you do that, honey,
how did you--?

VERA
It just, *poured out of me*, it was
like I tapped into something from
somewhere else, I can't even
explain it.

Someone hands her a plastic cup of Champagne.

CADEN
Vera...

Caden swallows, unsure.

CADEN
What about the b...?

He looks up through the windshield seeing TWO PEOPLE crossing campus holding hands:

RAJ AND SONDRA. They stop and share a kiss, together, happy. Then break apart, moving off in two different directions.

Caden stares. Understanding. *Raj and Vera have never met.*

VERA (O.S.)
The *what?* Daddy are you *okay?*

Caden has to swallow his emotion. Nodding.

CADEN
I'm fine... I'm...

He watches Raj walk by. They connect eyes. Raj keeps moving.

CADEN
I'm sorry... If I... If I ever made
you feel...
(beat, searching)
...I want you to know I'm proud of
what you're doing, of who you are,
you're exactly where you're
supposed to be...
(choking up now)
You're the only thing I ever made
that *mattered*... And you're doing
it... *You're changing the world...*

Vera's eyes fill with tears. Nodding.

VERA
I appreciate that... But I can't
discuss this right now...

CADEN
I know... I know...

VERA
I'm coming to see you, both of you.
I'm coming home soon. We'll talk.

Caden nods. Filled with a thousand emotions.

CADEN
Ok. I'll see you soon.

Vera's eyes shift. She hangs up. Staring out the window,
quickly wiping a tear. She looks to the cup of Champagne.

VIBRATIONS GROW OUTWARD FROM ITS LIQUID CENTER.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

CADEN'S CAR creaks to a stop. Hold. Caden gets out, CLA-
CLUNK, the door slammed loudly behind him.

He heads towards a CHAIN LINK FENCE running down the street.

It's the SCHOOL where he came to rescue Leti and Milo. But different now. Vibrant. People moving up and down the street.

Nobody wearing PHONES. Sounds everywhere. Almost BUZZING.

Caden looks lost, out of place, but he doesn't care.

He moves to the fence. His fingers sink into it. He grips the chain, staring into the SCHOOL YARD:

IT'S EMPTY. Beat. Caden just stands there staring.

THEN: THE SCHOOL BELL RIIIIIIINGS!

THE DOORS EXPLODE OPEN: CHILDREN pouring out, coming at us like a wave of HAPPY SOUND, VOICES, LAUGHTER, YELPS, WHOOPS!

ON CADEN: Looking for someone... Finding MILO... Playing amongst his peers... Flashing within the crowd...

Caden Holds. Beat. There is emotion. But he has to be sure.

He lifts a hand, placing his fingers in his mouth... HE TAKES A DEEP BREATH...

JUMP TO

TRACKING BEHIND MILO... Running through the thick crowd as the children yell and play... A cacophony of SOUND...

BENEATH IT ALL WE HEAR... *WHOOOOT...* CADEN'S WHISTLE...

DISTANT... MILO IS STILL PLAYING, RUNNING, FLASHING...

WHOOOOT... AGAIN... IT'S DIM... BUT THERE...

THIS TIME MILO STOPS... HE COCKS HIS HEAD... THE OTHER KIDS RUSHING AROUND HIM NOW... EVEN KNOCKING INTO HIM...

WHOOOOT... THROUGH A TRILLION SOUNDS... IT'S THERE...

AS MILO TURNS... HIS CURIOUS FACE FILLING OUR FRAME...

SEARCHING FOR THE ORIGIN OF THE--

WHOOOOOOT!

SMASH TO BLACK