

Jericho

"Pilot: The First 17 Hours"

by
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TEASER

1 EXT. KANSAS - MORNING 1

An Amtrak train snakes through the countryside. The January morning is so cold, it's clean. Welcome to Kansas.

2 EXT. AMTRAK TRAIN - MORNING 2

The wheels of the train chug along. We watch this image long enough to wonder why we're watching it for so long.

3 INT. AMTRAK BAR CAR - MORNING 3

The intercom announces, "Next Stop, Topeka!" as we move down the aisle, past businessmen and tourists, reading their papers. Each paper has a different photo and a differently worded headline. But all of them tell us one thing... The President's State of the Union Address is tonight.

We move past two little girls pointing out the window, "Dad, lookit!" and finally land on... JAKE GREEN, 27, the charming prodigal son. Jake is old movie handsome. A rogue. Troubled. As he sips his whiskey, he looks sad and deep in thought. Jake stares through the window as billboards advertising the Golden Eagle Casino and Trading Post roll by.

JOVIAL MAN (O.S.)

Tough day?

Jake turns to find a chubby JOVIAL MAN, 47, smiling.

JOVIAL MAN (CONT'D)

Just curious why you're drinking so
early in the morning? Break-up?
Lay off? Titans fan?

JAKE

(finds himself smiling)

No. I'm going back home for the
day. Going to visit my grandfather.

JOVIAL MAN

Is that bad?

JAKE

No. The bad part is seeing my
father and brother.

(gestures like a boxer)

Dad will hit me with the 'you're a
disappointment' right, and Peter
will come in with the 'family
values' left. Good times.

JOVIAL MAN

(smiles)

Let me guess. You're grandpa's favorite?

JAKE

I don't know. But he was my favorite.

They smile. Jake points to the man's empty beers...

JAKE (CONT'D)

What about you? Why are you drinking so early in the morning?

JOVIAL MAN

Because I'm a drunk.

4 INT. AMTRAK STATION - TOPEKA, KANSAS - MORNING 4

Jake's laughter becomes the squeal of the train's brakes. Jake exits the train and passes baggage handlers, pushing luggage carts. If we look closely, we see one of them load a *silver suitcase* on the train.

5 EXT. PARKING GARAGE - TOPEKA, KANSAS - MORNING 5

Jake's taxi moves through the city streets, then enters a 12 story parking garage with a sign... Monthly Rates Available.

6 INT. PARKING GARAGE - 8TH FLOOR - MORNING 6

The taxi moves around a cement pillar to reveal... a vintage Ford Mustang Convertible. Jake turns to the taxi driver.

JAKE

You got jumper cables?

7 INT. PARKING GARAGE - GROUND FLOOR - MORNING 7

Jake, now sitting in the Mustang, hands his ticket to the TICKET TAKER, an African American woman, about 31. She looks at the ticket. All yellow and faded. She's confused.

8 INT. PARKING GARAGE OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 8

The ticket taker enters the messy office and approaches her BOSS, a gruff man. She holds up Jake's ticket.

TICKET TAKER

I don't know what to do with this.

BOSS

What do you mean? Take his money.

TICKET TAKER

You don't understand. This man's
had his car here for... 5 years.

9 EXT. KANSAS INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 77 - LATE MORNING 9

We see a MOTORCYCLE GANG making life hell for a student driver, then move over to Jake's Mustang as it pulls off the crowded highway. A sign reads... Jericho 87 miles.

10 INT. JAKE'S MUSTANG - LATE MORNING 10

Jake flips through the radio dial. Bill O'Reilly blurts, "*Larry. Pensicola, Florida. Go.*" Larry, "*Hey, Bill. So, the State of the Union tonight...*" Jake changes the channel. Rush Limbaugh groans, "*It makes me ill that the President's speech is going to acknowledge this liberal--*" Click. Al Franken says, "*The arrogance of this administration--*" Click. "*... it'll be cold tonight. Low in the mid 20's.*"

Jake finally finds some music. Bad Company's anthem, "Bad Company." Our new title song. Ahh. Much better.

11 EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - LATE MORNING 11

The image goes high as the Mustang cuts through the countryside. Jake passes rivers, streams, bridges, farms. Jericho may be isolated, but nobody can say that the ride to it isn't gorgeous. No traffic. Blues skies. Peace.

12 EXT. POTAWATOMI NATION INDIAN CAVES - LATER 12

As Jake pulls up to a stop sign, he looks to his right to see... a JERICHO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUS. The CHUBBY BUS DRIVER stands in front of the bus's smoking engine. He shakes his head in frustration and pulls out his cell phone. Jake shifts his glance to the PRETTY TEACHER as she guides a group of excited 2ND GRADE KIDS into the visitor's center.

PRETTY TEACHER

Come on, kids. Single file now.
(a fat girl trips)
Oh, dear. Are you okay, Hilda?

13 EXT. PETERSON FAMILY FARM - ROADSIDE STAND - AFTERNOON 13

As customers browse the farm's roadside stand, BONNIE PETERSON, 17 and cheer-leader juicy, sits behind the cash register. She text messages her boyfriend. "I miss you so much. Can you come back this weekend?"

STANLEY PETERSON

BONNIE!

Startled, Bonnie turns to her big brother, STANLEY PETERSON, 27, an avid car lover who has no luck with women.

STANLEY PETERSON (CONT'D)

Mom and dad didn't keep you out of school today so you could text message your boyfriend.

(off Bonnie's groan)

I know. "He moved away. My life is over. Blah blah." Put down the phone, Bonnie!

Bonnie grumbles. Stanley turns and sees Jake climb out of his Mustang. At first, Stanley can't believe his eyes. Then, a smile creeps over his face. Jake approaches. The two old friends smile. And then, Stanley starts hugging him.

STANLEY PETERSON (CONT'D)

I can't believe it. Jake Green! My God. When you get back to town?

JAKE

Just now.

STANLEY PETERSON

You seen Emily yet? The family?

JAKE

I just got back now, Stanley.

STANLEY PETERSON

Oh, right. Right. Sorry. Wait. Where the hell have you been?

JAKE

Around.

STANLEY PETERSON

No one is "around" for 5 years.

JAKE

Believe it or not... the Army.

Just then, a woman emerges from the farm house. MIMI CLARK is 30, sexy, stylish, Jewish, urbanite, and couldn't look more out of place. Stanley's good humor instantly vanishes.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Who's that?

STANLEY PETERSON
That? That's the government.

JAKE
Sexy government.

Mimi Clark runs frightened from a chicken. "Ewww!"

STANLEY PETERSON
Don't let the style fool you, Jake.
Miss "shiver me timbers" is from
the I.R.S.

JAKE
IRS? Audit?... Not going well?

STANLEY PETERSON
Forget it. How about you and me
get together tonight? Catch up?

JAKE
I'd love to, but I'm only in to see
my grandpa, then I gotta get back.
So, if I can get my mother's
favorite Peterson Apple Pie...

Stanley nods, slaps Jake's shoulder, and turns to find...

STANLEY PETERSON
BONNIE!

Bonnie drops the phone and scrambles to get Jake's order.

STANLEY PETERSON (CONT'D)
Welcome back to Jericho, Jake.

14 EXT. JERICO - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - AFTERNOON

14

We see it all through Jake's eyes. Unlike most of flat, dusty Kansas, Jericho is nestled in the foothills. It's a town that embraces its Old West roots and Frontier Spirit. A statue reads... *Welcome to Jericho: We Stand Strong*. ELECTION POSTERS hang on every storefront and telephone pole. ELECT GRAY ANDERSON. RE-ELECT MAYOR GREEN. All to the lovely sounds of Sean Hannity raving on the radio...

SEAN HANNITY (V.O.)
... we got an advanced copy, and
let me tell you, friends, this
speech is going down in history.
Bold agenda. Bold. Okay, who do
we have? Tiffany in Homestead,
Pennsylvania. Hi, Tiffany.

As Tiffany tells Sean he's a great American, Jake turns off the radio and keeps driving. To his right, Jake sees a moving truck. ROD HAWKINS, 39, serious, African American tips the movers as his wife and kids play in the yard. Suddenly, POLICE LIGHTS FLASH behind Jake. Jake pulls over. He looks in the side view mirror as two ominous pairs of policeman's legs approach. Jake sighs until...

JIMMY

I thought I recognized this car.

Jake looks at JIMMY, 42, and BILL, 42, two best friends and the laughing stock of the police force. They smile at Jake.

JAKE

Hey Jimmy, Bill. Still buying those lottery tickets?

JIMMY

Man, if we ever win the lottery, our wives are going to become world travelers.

BILL

Yeah, they're going to go everywhere looking for us.

Jimmy and Bill laugh. Jake smiles. Same old joke.

BILL (CONT'D)

So, where you been hiding, Jake?

JAKE

Believe it or not... the rodeo.

15

INT. GRACIE LEIGH'S SUPERMARKET - AFTERNOON

15

A poster endorsing Mayor Green hangs in the window of this medium-sized supermarket and trading post. STEPHANIE LANCASTER, 16, a teenage princess of the highest order, samples lipstick. She complains to the cute tech nerd, ALVIE CLEMONS, 15, who worships her like a beaten dog. They've been friends since they were 3 years old.

STEPHANIE

I'll never forgive my parents for not taking me on their trip to New York. I could be shopping on 5th Avenue right now instead of...

(referring to lipsticks)

Look at this sad collection. This color was out of style before it was invented.

ALVIE

I think it looks nice on you.

STEPHANIE

That's because you're staring at my chest, Alvie.

ALVIE

Yes, I am. But, we really should get back to--

STEPHANIE

Would you forget about studying for the SAT's and live a little?

ALVIE

You're right, Stephanie. Forget M.I.T. and my dreams of a happy life. Let's ponder your chest.

We move to the counter, where Jake indulges the never-ending gossip of good-natured GRACIE LEIGH, 45. Gracie almost scans his bouquet of flowers and Swiss Army Knife... several times.

GRACIE LEIGH

... his name is Rod Hawkins. That new man. I think his wife is lovely, but him... I don't know. Mrs. Olson made me promise not to tell anyone, but she heard he bought that nice house in cash. Cash. Promise not to tell anyone.

JAKE

Scout's honor, Mrs. Leigh.

GRACIE LEIGH

So, how about you, Jake? Where you been keeping yourself all this time?

JAKE

Promise not to tell Mrs. Olson.
(off her crossed heart)
Believe it or not... I've been playing minor league baseball.

GRACIE LEIGH

That a fact?

JAKE

Scout's honor.

16

EXT. GRACIE LEIGH'S SUPERMARKET - MOMENTS LATER

16

As Jake leaves the store, he sees a woman coming out of her car. EMILY SPENSER, 26, is young, pretty, and idealistic. Jake's heart skips a beat. She flirts into her cell phone.

EMILY

No, it's a surprise. No, Roger.
You'll find out tonight. Now, when
do you get in from Chicago?

Emily looks up to see Jake. Her heart skips a beat. Emily is immediately distracted as she talks into her cell phone.

EMILY (CONT'D)

11 o'clock. I'll see you tonight.
(locking eyes with Jake)
I love you, too.

She hangs up. Jake and Emily look at each other. It hangs in the air for a long, charged moment.

JAKE

Hi, Emily.

EMILY

Jake. My God. What--

A complete loss for words.

JAKE

Yeah. I just came in for the day.
See my grandfather. The family.

EMILY

Sure. I just... I didn't hear.

JAKE

Well, I would have called, but... I
have to get back to Santa Fe.
(off her look)
Long boring story. How have you
been? Mom tells me you're teaching
at the high school now.

EMILY

I know. Weird, huh? But it's
good. Other than teaching the kids
I used to baby-sit. But I love it.
Just got a house in the Pines.

JAKE

East Side? On a teacher's salary?

EMILY

Well... my... fiancé is in banking.

Just the word. Fiancé. Jake does his best to keep it light.

JAKE

That helps. Do I know him?

EMILY

No, I was at a conference. We met in Chicago.

(off his look)

I know. A city boy, right? But Roger loves small town life.

Jake nods. He never did. Finally...

JAKE

Well, I'm happy for you, Emily. I mean, you know, other than...

(turns on charm)

... the part of me that's dying.

Emily laughs. It breaks the ice. All kidding now.

EMILY

How about you? You have somebody?

JAKE

No.

EMILY

I'm sorry.

JAKE

No, you're not. You love it.

Emily laughs. Jake keeps smiling and riffing.

JAKE (CONT'D)

You won the reunion. You know it. Look at you.

EMILY

(huge smile)

Where have you been all these years?

JAKE

Believe it or not... the navy.

Emily gives him a look. Jake smiles. Guilty boy grin.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Right. You always know when I'm lying. One of your less attractive qualities.

EMILY

Seriously, Jake. Where you been?

The laughs are over. Jake looks at the ground. Decides.

JAKE

Can you keep a secret?

17 INT. GRACIE LEIGH'S SUPERMARKET - AFTERNOON

17

We see Jake and Emily through the large storefront window. The stock boy, DALE TURNER, 16, is the trailer park kid everybody picks on. Dale watches Jake lean in to whisper in Emily's ear. Dale's jealous. Stephanie Lancaster smirks.

STEPHANIE

Well, here's to you, Mrs. Robinson. Dale, do you really think you have a chance with Miss Spenser or any girl in her right mind?

Dale looks away, embarrassed, and goes back to sweeping.

ALVIE

Leave him alone, Stephanie. He's got enough problems.

Dale takes one more look as Emily and Jake hug and say good-bye. The door rings as Emily enters the store. She's very sad. Whatever Jake told her, it's not good.

18 EXT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - AFTERNOON

18

Ding dong. Jake waits at the door, nervously. We hear footsteps. Then, the door opens, revealing Jake's mother. GAIL GREEN, 56, is a brilliant politician's wife and a cooler lady. Strong. Savvy. Jake presents the apple pie. They both break out in smiles. Then, they both break out in hugs.

19 INT. MAYOR GREEN'S DEN - MOMENTS LATER

19

MAYOR JOHNSTON GREEN, 58, small town charming, and PETER GREEN, the 33 year old star of the family, hold an informal meeting with Jericho's answer to a labor crisis. On the side of labor is union boss, SHEP CALE, 45, a blue collar Joe. The Mayor hangs back, waiting for his moment to intervene.

PETER

We're all in agreement about that.

SHEP

No, we're not in agreement, Peter.
My men have been promised safety
equipment, a cost of living increa--

On the side of management is NORMAN PERRY, 42, a high strung
workaholic. He groans.

NORMAN

You were not promised, Mr. Cale.

SHEP

I'm not talking to you, Mr. Perry.

MAYOR GREEN

"Mr. Perry? Mr. Cale?" For God's
sake, you two used to get drunk in
high school together. Remember?
Look, that factory keeps this town
alive. So, I don't want to hear
anything about strikes or lock
outs. I want you two to sit down
like gentlemen and talk this thing
through. That's what we do in
Jericho. We don't feud.

Shep and Norman look off screen. Then...

SHEP

We don't feud, huh?

The Mayor looks confused until he turns to the doorway to
find... Jake. The Mayor turns instantly chilly.

MAYOR GREEN

You're early.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

20 INT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - LATER

20

The door opens to reveal Peter's wife, ANN GREEN, 33, Jericho's answer to Hillary Clinton when she moved to Arkansas. Normally, the Green family would stop to say hello, but right now, they are too busy with...

MAYOR GREEN (O.S.)

... don't you know I'm fighting for my political life?

JAKE (O.S.)

Dad, I am not here to interfere with your campaign. All I want is your signature, then I'll visit grandpa, then--

PETER

After 5 years? That's all you have to say to dad?

JAKE

Peter, it's none of your business.

MAYOR GREEN

It is his business. It's all our business. What you have put this family through--

GAIL

Johnston, please.

MAYOR GREEN

No, Gail. He could have been a--

JAKE

Dad, we could spend a week talking about what I could have been. I have apologized. I have made amends. This is me now. I have a plan. But I need my money to--

MAYOR GREEN

It isn't your money. It's your grandfather's money.

JAKE

I know it's his, dad. I didn't ask for it. But he gave it to me for a reason.

MAYOR GREEN

And he gave me authority over it for a reason. So, when you convince me you're leading a more productive life--

JAKE

That's why he gave me the mone--

MAYOR GREEN

You start the new life. Then, you get the money. It doesn't work the other way around.

PETER

That's right, Jake.

JAKE

Peter, we were both born on 3rd base. Stop pretending you hit a triple.

Peter is silent. Jake turns back to his father.

MAYOR GREEN

You always look for the easy road, Jake. And I can't let you this time. I can't give you something and watch you squander it again. It's like that time I gave you my swiss army knife from the war, and--

Jake produces the new swiss army knife he bought at Gracie's store from his pocket and hands it to his father.

JAKE

I know the next 50 things you're going to say, dad. I wish I could give you back the real one, but I can't. I am not here to fight. I just want to make grandpa proud. So, just sign the papers, so we can all get on with our lives.

The Mayor looks at the knife, then hands it back to Jake.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Dad, when are you going to realize that I'm 27 years old?

MAYOR GREEN

When you do.

With that, the Mayor goes into his den and closes the door.

JAKE

Peter, you know this is unfair.

Peter, the loyal daddy's boy, says nothing. He leaves the house with Ann, who shrugs. "Sorry, Jake." Gail approaches.

GAIL

Let's visit your grandfather.

21

EXT. BAPTIST CEMETERY - LATE AFTERNOON

21

The tombstone reads... "Peter Jake Green: Beloved Father. Grandfather. Mayor." Jake takes the bouquet of flowers he bought at Gracie's store, then kneels down. He places the flowers on his grandfather's grave. It's a painful moment for him. Gail is a rock for him.

JAKE

Mom, I'm sorry I couldn't come to the funeral.

GAIL

It's okay. I understand. And don't worry about dad. I'll work on him. In the meantime...

Gail holds out a handful of bills. Jake shakes his head, no.

JAKE

Thanks, but I didn't come here for charity.

GAIL

Are you sure you can't stay?

JAKE

I have to get back by tomorrow. You know that.

They move to his Mustang. They hug for a long time. Gail quietly slips the wad of bills into Jake's coat pocket.

GAIL

When will I see you again?

JAKE

Whenever you can visit Santa Fe.
(off her look)
Mom, I can't start a new life in the old one. This is the last day I'll ever spend in Jericho.

One kiss. Jake climbs into his car. Gail smiles, sadly.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Oh, mom. One more thing...

Gail walks up to the driver's side window. Jake puts the bills back in her hand. And smiles.

JAKE (CONT'D)
You have clumsy hands.

She smiles. Jake pulls away. Gail watches her boy go down the foothills and to the horizon as the sun begins to set.

22 INT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - DUSK 22

Gail walks into the house to find a very angry Mayor Green.

GAIL
Johnston, when you give birth, you can tell me about taking sides.

The law is laid down. The two sit down in front of the TV as the State of the Union Address begins. The page shouts, "*Ladies and gentleman. The President of the United States!*"

23 INT. PETER AND ANN GREEN'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER 23

Applause. The President takes the podium as Peter puts his arm around his wife, Ann, holding their 6 MONTH OLD BABY.

PETER
(hurt)
Jake's going to tell me about things being unfair.

24 INT. PETERSON FARM HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER 24

The President drinks in the applause as Stanley Peterson approaches his parents in the living room. MR. and MRS. PETERSON, 54, both salt of the earth, shake their heads. They hand the final IRS bill to Stanley. \$131,852.

Stanley looks over at Bonnie, who is text messaging her boyfriend. "We're going to lose the farm."

25 INT. JIMMY'S LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 25

The President holds up his hands and the applause slowly dies down. Jimmy, Bill, and their respective kids watch the TV. Jimmy's son, WOODY, 9, looks up at Jimmy.

WOODY

Do we have to watch this?

Jimmy and Bill look into the kitchen at their two ball-breaking wives, both named MARGARET, giving them the eye.

JIMMY

Sorry, kid. Mom wants us to improve ourselves.

26 INT. GRACIE LEIGH'S STORE - MOMENTS LATER

26

The President begins, "*Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, members of Congress, my fellow Americans...*"

Dale Turner gets ready to leave for the night as Gracie Leigh gossips into the phone.

GRACIE LEIGH

... You heard me. Minor league baseball. He and Emily were talking right outside here.
(to Dale Turner)
Thanks, Dale. See you tomorrow.

Dale Turner waves, then leaves the store. Back to the phone.

GRACIE LEIGH (CONT'D)

Everyone thought they were going to get married back in the day...

27 INT. EMILY SPENSER'S NEW HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

27

"... by law and custom, we meet here once a year in this sacred chamber to discuss the state of our union..."

Emily looks at an old YEARBOOK picture of Jake. The inscription reads. "Emily, I'll love you until the day I die." She shakes herself out of her nostalgia, turns up her iPod, and goes back to the champagne, flowers, and candles to make her fiancé's arrival perfect. The post-it note reads... Roger's flight. Kansas City Airport. 11:00pm.

28 INT. JAKE'S MUSTANG - MOMENTS LATER

28

"Tonight, with a growing economy, with..."

Jake switches off the radio and continues to move down the rural road. He sighs.

29 INT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - MOMENTS LATER

29

We scan the old-fashioned saloon. Mimi Clark from the IRS looks sad as she drowns the unfortunate aspect of her job down with a little wine. The SEXY BARMAID turns up the volume on the TV. We move in on the TV as his voice booms.

PRESIDENT

... democracy in the Middle East,
the former Soviet Satellite nations
stabilized, and threats from Iran
and North Korea contained... the
state of our union is... strong.

Just then, the TV turns to snow. The patrons grumble.

PATRONS

(ad-lib)

Damn. The cable's out!

30 INT. JIMMY'S HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS

30

Woody and the kids cheer!

WOODY

Yay! The cable's out!

31 INT. STEPHANIE LANCASTER'S MANSION - MOMENTS LATER

31

Stephanie Lancaster turns off the snowy television and goes right back to fighting with her mother on the phone.

STEPHANIE

I didn't do anything to the TV,
mom. Well, if you had brought me
to New York, then maybe-- What?
Oh, I wish you'd just die.

Silence. Stephanie is furious.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Mom. Did you hang up on me?!

32 INT. PETERSON FARM HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

32

As Stanley shakes his head at the satellite TV, Bonnie looks at the cell phone on the table flash green. A picture message. Bonnie hits a button and the image begins to load.

33 INT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - EVENING

33

Mimi Clark, IRS employee, checks the ATM machine. The sign reads... "Technical difficulties. Please, try again later."

34 INT. SCHOOL BUS - MOMENTS LATER

34

The pretty school teacher, HEATHER LISINSKI, 26, rides in the front seat of the school bus. She talks on her cell phone.

HEATHER

We finally found a garage that could fix it. Had to take a detour. We're heading back now.

Heather strains to see the road signs through the windows.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

We're on... Cedar Run Road. We'll be back in an hour, Mr. Mcvey. Mr. Mcvey? Hello?

Heather shrugs, folds her phone, and turns to the chubby bus driver, who smiles.

BUS DRIVER

(thick Southern drawl)
You wanna use my Blackberry?

35 EXT. JIMMY'S HOUSE - LATER

35

Good old hide and seek outside of this isolated house on the west side of town. Woody, his hands over his eyes, counts it down. His breath is foggy from the cold.

WOODY

3-2-1... ready or not, here I come!

Woody looks around. No one under the porch. No one in the tool shed. He finally creeps around to the bushes on the West Side of the house. And...

WOODY (CONT'D)

Gotcha!

Woody grabs his little sister, SALLY, who giggles until she sees Woody has a horrified expression on his face. She turns around, and the image moves with her. It's then that we see it. In the distance, what used to be Denver is now...

A mushroom cloud.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

36 INT. JAKE'S MUSTANG - DUSK 36

The mushroom cloud bellows in the distance of this isolated highway. Jake holds his hands in front of his face to shield his eyes from the blinding light coming from the rear view mirror. We stay inside this white light for a beat.

The light subsides. Jake blinks to find his visual bearing. And once his eyes focus, he sees it. A station wagon going the other direction has just veered into his lane. Jake's eyes go wide and just before the moment of impact...

37 INT. STEPHANIE LANCASTER'S MANSION - DUSK 37

CRASH! Stephanie Lancaster has just dropped a plate of food on the living room floor. She moves to the massive bay windows of her family's mansion on the hill. The mushroom cloud bellows in the distance. Stephanie is speechless.

38 EXT. PETERSON FARM - DUSK 38

They are speechless. Stanley, Bonnie, and the rest of the Peterson family rush out of the house to get a better view of the horizon. Bonnie drops her open cell phone to the ground.

39 EXT. RURAL ROAD - DUSK 39

CRASH! Jake holds his left arm up to brace his impact, but it's too powerful. His head hits the steering wheel. The car buckles, then careens into a ditch. Jake passes out on the steering wheel. His head makes the horn BEEEEEEEEEEEE. We move away from him into the freezing night on this isolated road. His car looks small.

40 INT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - BATHROOM - EARLY EVENING 40

The faucet runs. Unaware of events, Mayor Green opens up his bottle of prescription pills. He coughs twice, then downs the pills with a little water. He sighs. Thinking about Jake. When he turns off the faucet, he hears something... *the sound of crying.*

41 INT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - EARLY EVENING 41

The Mayor walks down the stairs to find Gail kneeling with Jimmy and Bill standing in front of her. Both look sad. Gail rises to reveal Jimmy's son WOODY, horrified.

MAYOR GREEN

Gail? What's going on?

Gail turns around. Her own expression... horrified.

42 EXT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - EARLY EVENING 42

Peter parks his Oldsmobile with a skid. Doors open.

43 INT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - SECONDS LATER 43

Peter and Ann, carrying their baby, rush into the house, now buzzing with activity. The Mayor holds up his hand for silence as he moves to the other side of the room.

PETER

Dad! Dad!

MAYOR GREEN

We heard, Peter. Everyone, please. The explosion came from the West. There are military bases in Colorado. It could have been a test. An accident. Let's not get ahead of ourselves. I'll call the governor. Find out. In the meantime, let's not forget who we are.

The Mayor's confidence settles the group down. They watch as he turns his back to them as he picks up the phone. We see the Mayor's face. The line is dead. He is now spooked. But he can't show it to the others. He takes a breath. Turns.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

Anyone's cell phone working?

They all shakes their heads. No. Scared.

PETER

Are we under attack, dad?

Silence. The Mayor thinks. Looks at their frightened faces.

MAYOR GREEN

I don't know. Jimmy, Bill? Get on the radio. I want everyone at the Sheriff's office in 20 minutes. Tell them to assess any damage along the way. I need to know if our town is still standing. Peter, we need to get the city's emergency plan. Let's move.

They begin to scurry. Woody trails after Jimmy.

WOODY

Dad, don't leave! Dad, I want to go with you!

Jimmy kneels. Wipes the tears out of his son's eyes. They've said these words 1,000 times. No sentiment.

JIMMY
Who's my hero?

WOODY
Me.

JIMMY
Who's the best?

WOODY
Me.

JIMMY
Who's going to take care of these nice ladies?

WOODY
Me.

Woody hugs his dad. Peter kisses Ann and the baby and leaves. Ann watches him go. Gail and the Mayor lock eyes with a look that only comes with 35 years of marriage.

GAIL
Jake.

MAYOR GREEN
We'll find him.

44 EXT. JERICHO STREET - EVENING 44

A police car flies down the street, followed by a Fire Truck. But Stephanie Lancaster doesn't notice them. Stephanie Lancaster is in another world.

45 EXT. TRAILER PARK - DUSK 45

Dale Turner sees the police car racing down the street. He moves to his trailer past a few frightened and crying folks.

TRAILER PARK FOLKS
"Oh, my God" "Are we under
attack?" "Oh, those poor people."

46 INT. DALE'S TRAILER - DUSK 46

Dale opens the trailer door. He sees old beer cans, pizza boxes, and an answering machine flashing ONE MESSAGE.

47 INT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

47

The juke box blasts as the people in the tavern enjoy their last blissful moment of ignorance. Mimi Clark, IRS employee, leaves the ATM machine and approaches the SEXY BARMAID.

MIMI CLARK

Excuse me, miss. I'm going back to DC tomorrow, and I need money for the cab. Where can I find an ATM?

48 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

48

Mayor Green and Peter burst through the door where the EMT, Fire, and Police Crews have gathered. The Mayor points to the flashing lights on the cars through the window.

MAYOR GREEN

Could we turn off the Christmas Tree out there before the whole world starts asking questions?

The SHERIFF, 57, all business, nods to one of his younger deputies. The deputy charges outside.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

Sheriff. Chief.

The FIRE CHIEF, 48, a real cowboy, nods to the Mayor. The Mayor lays his emergency plan on the sheriff's desk.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

Any damage? Fires? Buildings?

SHERIFF

Nothing, Mr. Mayor. Town's fine.

MAYOR GREEN

Let's hope you're right.

SHERIFF

What do you mean?

MAYOR GREEN

Do we have any Geiger counters?

49 EXT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - MOMENTS LATER

49

As Mimi Clark exits the tavern, she sees it. Something's strange. People are gathering outside. Some are crying.

MIMI CLARK

Excuse me, sir. What's going on?

FRIGHTENED PASSERBY
Nuclear explosion. Near Denver, I
think.

MIMI CLARK
But... what... did they get D.C.?

50 INT. ALVIE CLEMONS' BEDROOM - EVENING 50

Alvie is too focused on his SAT book and blasting stereo to hear the knock. His mother, TERESA CLEMONS, 45, shouts up.

TERESA CLEMONS (O.S.)
Alvie, your friend Stephanie's here!

Alvie bounds up, checks his hopeless hair, and leaves.

51 INT. ALVIE CLEMONS' HOUSE - EVENING 51

Alvie walks down the stairs to find Stephanie Lancaster, who is in a complete daze.

STEPHANIE
I can't get my mom on the phone.

52 EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT 52

We see a cell phone that reads... Call Was Lost. We move up to the shattered face of Mimi Clark.

MIMI CLARK
Mom, please pick up the phone.

She tries again. No service. Panicked, she begins to run, past a poster of the smiling face of GRAY ANDERSON.

53 EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - EVENING 53

GRAY ANDERSON, 44, is slick, savvy, and politically astute. He passes a lady cop, speaking into her radio.

LADY COP
Bill? What's the ETA on those
Geiger counters?

54 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - EVENING 54

Gray Anderson enters the room as the impact of the news spreads across the group's faces. The leaders are holding their composure. The younger cops and firemen are shaky. Some cry. Most are silent. Men. Women. Black. White. It's the one human moment before...

MAYOR GREEN

I know. We're all scared. We're all thinking of our families. But in about 2 minutes, people are going to pour through those doors, looking for answers. So, we better get some quick. If we're calm, they're calm. Understood?

They all nod. The sheriff gestures to the emergency plan.

SHERIFF

What does the emergency plan say?

PETER GREEN

Contact the governor. National Guard. State troopers.

They all look at the RADIO OPERATOR in the corner. Static. He turns to them. Shakes his head. Nothing.

SHERIFF

Anything else?

MAYOR GREEN

A whole lot about tornadoes.

The group sighs. One young cop panics.

PANICKED COP

Are we under attack? We're under--

MAYOR GREEN

Son. Until we hear otherwise, I don't want to hear that word again. One explosion is not an attack.

Gray Anderson makes his way into the center near the Mayor, Peter, the Sheriff, and Fire Chief. The Mayor and Peter politely nod to him although we can feel the chill.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

I'm glad you're here, Gray. We could use the help.

GRAY ANDERSON

Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Peter. Anything I can do.

BILL

Mayor Green! Sheriff!

They turn to see Bill set down a box of Geiger counters.

55 INT. STANLEY PETERSON'S PICK-UP TRUCK - EVENING

55

The pick-up truck flies down the road. Bonnie is shell-shocked. Stanley puts a hand on her shoulder.

STANLEY

Hang in there, Bonnie. We need to make sure the Mayor knows.

56 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - EVENING

56

The Mayor holds the Geiger counter. He looks at the assembled group. Silence. Prayers. The Mayor switches the power on. Pins and needles as they wait. Nothing. Until the Mayor lowers the Geiger counter and it starts CLIK-CLIK-CLIK'ing. People gasp. Cry. Terrified until...

MAYOR GREEN

Wait a minute.

The Mayor lifts the Geiger counter up. The CLIK-CLIK goes away. Puts it back down. CLIK-CLIK. The Sheriff gives the Mayor a quizzical look until...

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

I didn't turn off my cell phone.

The group sighs in relief. Almost laughing. A YOUNG COUPLE enters the Sheriff's office. Shaken.

YOUNG HUSBAND

Mr. Mayor?

MAYOR GREEN

Folks, no need to panic. So far, it looks like there's no radiation fallout. We'll keep checking around town, but in the meantime--

YOUNG WIFE

Actually, sir. We... uh... we spoke to Principal McVey. The school bus isn't back from the field trip... with our son.

57 INT. ALVIE CLEMONS' HOUSE - NIGHT

57

Alvie is speechless. His mother now has tears running down her face. We might think she's reacting to the news, but...

TERESA CLEMONS

Alvie, call Principal McVey to find out where your little sister is.

58 INT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - EVENING

58

Gail is now surrounded by a group of concerned parents. Some are worried. Some are crying. Some are irate.

CONCERNED PARENTS

"It should have been back an hour ago." "Where is your husband!?"

GAIL

Everyone, please calm down. I'm sure my husband and the sheriff are doing everything they can to find the school bus.

IRATE MOTHER

That's easy for you to say. You don't have a child out there!

This hits Gail. Ann puts her hand on Gail's shoulder. Gail kills herself not to cry. One tough lady.

59 EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

59

Beeeeee. In the freezing January night, we see Jake's Mustang, crumpled in the ditch. After a beat, Jake opens his eyes. He blinks a couple of times and slowly moves his head off the steering wheel. The beeeeeeeee is replaced by the sound of silence. He touches his forehead. Blood. He looks at his leg. More blood. He moves his pants back.

A surface cut runs down his leg.

Jake tries to start the car, but the engine block seems cracked. Vrrrr. Vrrrr. Nothing. Jake reaches over with his left hand to open the car door. The second he pushes on the door, he screams out in pain. His left arm is severely sprained. Jake opens the door with his right arm. Then, he limps toward the station wagon he collided with.

He peers into the wagon and sees... AN OLD COUPLE. Not moving. Jake grimaces. He opens the door. Feels the lady's pulse through her neck. Dead. He reaches over and feels the old man's pulse through his wrist. Same. He stands, and in a reflex from childhood, he crosses himself. Then, the shivers take over his body. It's freezing.

60 EXT. RURAL ROAD - SECONDS LATER

60

Jake opens the station wagon's back. Looks for anything that can help him. Mixed in with all the junk, souvenirs, and luggage, he sees a golf bag, a belt, and an overcoat. He wraps the belt around his leg to try and stop the bleeding.

Then, he grabs a golf club. Finally, he grabs the overcoat. When he picks it up, something goes *clunk* on his hand. He reaches into the coat and pulls out... a flask.

61 EXT. RURAL ROAD - SECONDS LATER 61

Jake, using the 5 wood as a makeshift crutch, begins to walk down the road toward a hill. A small body in a massive sea of black. He's in the middle of nowhere.

62 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT 62

We see the Mayor in silence for a breath. His face registers a flash of resigned sadness and worry about Jake. He looks over at the crowded room. Townspeople asking questions, panicked, some just wanting to help. Then, the volume comes back up, and it's right back to business. The Mayor points to the map of the surrounding counties.

MAYOR GREEN

Okay. The school bus was here at the caves. Who can tell me where they might have gone for repairs?

FIRE CHIEF

There's Wilson's garage off 183.

EMT CREW CHIEF

Or maybe Cedar Run Road. They said they took a detour before the phone cut off. What do you think, Sheriff?

The crowd is getting louder. "What about fallout?" "Are we under attack?" "Can we help?" Peter steps up and shouts.

PETER GREEN

FOLKS! WE CAN'T HEAR OURSELVES
THINK OVER HERE!

MAYOR GREEN

Peter, enough.

SHERIFF

I figure two teams. There are only so many places it could be.

The Mayor nods. Good work, sheriff. And then, Gray Anderson throws in his two cents. Just loud enough for the crowd.

GRAY ANDERSON

What about the parents?

Parts of the crowd react. "Yeah." "We want to help." Mayor Green looks at the Sheriff. Sotto voice.

SHERIFF

It's your call, but we don't know what's out there. Could be fallout. Could be the Chinese army for all we know.

The Mayor thinks. Makes the tough call.

MAYOR GREEN

Folks, I'm sorry, but I want the police out there finding your kids. Not you.

(off their outrage)

You're safe here. And God forbid you go out there, get stranded, and your child comes back an orphan. We'll get your kids. I promise.

The parents are furious. Peter stares daggers at Gray Anderson. The Mayor pulls the sheriff aside. Whispers.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

I know the school bus has to come first, but Jake...

SHERIFF

We'll get your son, Mr. Mayor.

The sheriff pats his shoulder and moves. Gray approaches.

GRAY ANDERSON

What can I do, sir?

MAYOR GREEN

Peter and I will find a way to call the governor. I need you to coordinate with the fire department to make sure no citizens leave town. It could be a death trap out there. No one's dying on my watch.

GRAY ANDERSON

Anything I can do, Mr. Mayor.

Gray leaves. The Mayor watches him. The look on his face gives new meaning to the word mistrust.

63

INT. EMILY SPENSER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

63

In stark contrast to the chaos we've seen, Emily Spenser is still in her own world. Her iPod is still playing romantic music. She's still smiling at the champagne, the candles, the "Welcome Home, Roger" sign. And suddenly...

EMILY

Oh, God!

We might think she just reacted to the tragedy. But no. The clock on the wall reads: 9:30pm. She takes off her iPod, rushes over to the table, and grabs her keys, revealing...

The Post-It note. Roger's flight. Kansas City Airport. 11:00pm. In a dash, Emily is out the door.

64 INT. EMILY'S VW JETTA - NIGHT

64

Emily turns the key. The radio plays static. But she has a CD in there before it even registers to her that something is wrong. The romantic music continues.

65 EXT. THE PINES - NIGHT

65

Emily drives through the Pines - Jericho's community on the East Side of Town. Quite ritzy. Quite isolated. Behind trees. In the dark of night.

She turns right and takes the East Road out of town. Her Jetta gets smaller and smaller in the distance until it disappears. And then, finally, the Fire Truck arrives to block the East road out of town.

66 EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

66

Jake turns around. Did he hear something? He looks at the woods. The breeze rustles the leaves. He turns around and keeps walking. Three steps. He stops. He hears feet running at him. His imagination gets the better of him. The feet are getting closer. Jake holds up the 5 wood, ready to defend himself. And just when he - *and we* - were sure he was going to be attacked... two little kids run up to him. One boy. One girl. Terrified.

GIRL

Mister, please.

JAKE

What is it, kids? What's wrong?

BOY

I think they're dying.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

67 EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - NIGHT 67

The kids drag a limping Jake onto an isolated rural road.

GIRL

Please, mister. Hurry.

68 EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT 68

The police gear up to go on the search and rescue mission. Guns. Ammunition. Extra batteries. The Sheriff looks at a jittery YOUNG COP, who's obviously terrified.

SHERIFF

Don't worry, son. There's nothing out there we can't handle.

ROD HAWKINS, the new man in town, passes some townspeople, asking questions. "Folks, it could have been an accident. A test. Please." Rod approaches one of the younger cops, an African American guy, about 25.

ROD HAWKINS

Excuse me, son? Who's in charge?

The cop points at the Sheriff, who is busy barking orders.

SHERIFF

... Jimmy, get on the bullhorn and calm the folks down.

Jimmy clicks on the bullhorn. As he tries to quiet the crowd... Rod approaches the sheriff.

ROD HAWKINS

You the sheriff? Rod Hawkins.

SHERIFF

Good to meet you, Mr. Hawkins, but I'm afraid we got our hands full right now... *Damn fools!*

Just then, the Sheriff sees 2 pick-up trucks enter the parking lot. Inside the trucks are the FATHERS of the missing school kids with rifles.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Gray, will you tell the weekend warriors the drill, please?

Gray Anderson nods and approaches the trucks.

ROD HAWKINS
 Could you use an extra man?

SHERIFF
 No civilians. Mayor's orders.

ROD HAWKINS
 I used to be a cop. St. Louis.

SHERIFF
 You know those roads out there?

ROD HAWKINS
 No. Just moved to town.

SHERIFF
 Then, I'm afraid you'd only slow us
 down. Sorry.

The Sheriff pats his shoulder, then turns. The only thing
 Rod hates more than machismo is a mistake.

ROD HAWKINS
 Sheriff. You might want to get
 some black spray paint.

The Sheriff is confused. Rod points at the big Jericho
 emblem on the sides of the police car.

ROD HAWKINS (CONT'D)
 To cover that. Look, I know you're
 telling people it was an accident.
 And I hope it was. But if it was
 an attack, and there is chaos out
 there... you might not want the
 wrong people to know that Jericho
 is still here.

Rod starts to leave.

SHERIFF
 Mr. Hawkins... The fire department
 could use an extra man. Next time,
 you're with us.

Rod nods at the sheriff. Respect. As Rod leaves, Stephanie,
 Alvie, and his mother, Teresa Clemons, approach.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
 Mrs. Clemons. I already told you.

TERESA CLEMONS
 But my daughter, Stacy--

SHERIFF

You want to help your daughter? Go
rustle up some black spray paint.

She nods, eager to contribute in any way she can. They start
running the other way, passing... Gray Anderson as he talks
to the FATHERS in the pick-ups.

IRATE FATHER

But my son is out there!

GRAY ANDERSON

If it were up to me, I'd let you.
But those are the Mayor's orders.

69 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

69

Mayor Green and Peter sit with the radio operator, trying
channel after channel. Static. Static.

RADIO OPERATOR

We have our frequencies, sir. But
outside. It's like no one's there.

MAYOR GREEN

Is the problem digital?

RADIO OPERATOR

Maybe. We could switch to CB but
it only has a radius of 15 miles.
That doesn't get us to the highway.

MAYOR GREEN

What about analog? A ham radio?

RADIO OPERATOR

That's better, but we sold those
off when we switched to digital.

MAYOR GREEN

I know where we can get one. Come
on, Peter.

PETER

Dad, stay. We'll send somebody.

MAYOR GREEN

No. He won't talk to anybody else.
(to radio operator)
Try the CB. We'll be back.

70 INT. GRACIE LEIGH'S SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

70

GRACIE LEIGH, her gossip long forgotten, throws black spray paint in a bag. Alvie's mother digs in her purse for money.

GRACIE LEIGH

Mrs. Clemons, put your money away.
We're in this together, right?

She nods. Grateful. Gracie turns to Stephanie, staring absently at the cosmetics section. Thinking of her mother.

GRACIE LEIGH (CONT'D)

Stephanie, remember what the Mayor said. One explosion isn't an attack. Right now, your mom could be calling you, worried.

Stephanie nods. Somewhat comforted.

71 INT. DALE TURNER'S TRAILER - NIGHT

71

The ramshackle trailer is cold and messy. One photograph of Dale Turner and his mother at a little league game. Even in the picture, his mother is holding a beer. Dale Turner sits motionless in front of the answering machine. We hear his mother's voice on tape...

DALE'S MOTHER (V.O.)

(drunk)
*... sorry I didn't call sooner,
Dale, but we decided to stay a
couple extra days in Boulder.*

BOYFRIEND (V.O.)

(drunker)
Put down the phone and come to bed.

DALE'S MOTHER (V.O.)

(laughs)
*Stop that. It's my kid. Honey?
Honey, what are you starin' at...*

A low rumble. Glass shattering. And then... silence. Dale hits rewind. Then, he presses play. From the look on his face, we get the feeling he's been doing this for an hour.

DALE'S MOTHER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(drunk)
*... sorry I didn't call sooner,
Dale, but we decided to stay--*

Mercifully for Dale, the power blows.

72 EXT. JERICHO - SKY ANGLE - NIGHT 72

We see the power grid begin to cut off across town from above, and then we move to specific locations...

73 EXT. JERICHO - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT 73

Quick shots like a ricochet...

- The street lights turn off like a kick line.

- The radio operator's static turns to... silence.

- The FIRE CHIEF shouting into a bullhorn "Folks, there is no fallout. We think it was an acci--" The streetlights turn dark. People scream. "We're under attack."

- The Shell gas station. Packed with cars. Some townspeople get what gas they can in the panic. The numbers click off. Gallons. Dollars. Cents. And then... complete darkness. The pumps stop. No more gas.

- Mimi Clark in her hotel room. Trying the landline phone for the 100th time. Losing it. Darkness.

- Road Out of Jericho. Jimmy and Bill spray paint the sides of the cars. Darkness. The EMT Crew Chief turns to the Sheriff. "Don't worry. We'll handle the town. Move."

- The Mayor and Peter in the Oldsmobile as the traffic lights go black. "Hurry, Peter."

- Stanley in his pick-up truck with Bonnie driving into the dark town. "I guess they already know."

- Gracie Leigh alone in her store. Darkness. The broom in the corner now looks like an attacker. "Who is that?"

And then...

74 EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT 74

Jake's eyes go wide. Near a cluster of trees, he sees... the Jericho elementary SCHOOL BUS. A flat tire on the rear axle. The hood smashed from the tree the bus hit.

75 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT 75

Jake enters the bus and looks around. We don't see it, but his face tells us the whole picture...

JAKE

Jesus.

76 EXT. ROAD OUT OF JERICHO - NIGHT 76

Two police cars head out into the night. Lights flashing. Passing the tall water tower that reads: Jericho. The police cars each split in a different direction.

77 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT 77

The image darts around with Jake as he takes in the sights of the bus. The BUS DRIVER is passed out on the driver's seat with a severe concussion. Jake checks his pulse. Alive.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

What's happening?

Jake turns to his left. The pretty teacher, HEATHER LISINSKI, 26, slammed into the metal partition when the bus collided with the tree. She's breathing shallow. Bleeding from the forehead. But still conscious. Frightened.

JAKE

I don't know. Are you okay?

HEATHER

I can't move.

JAKE

Can you feel your toes?

HEATHER

Yes. But I think... my insides.
Are we under attack?

JAKE

It was one explosion. That's not
an attack yet.

Jake takes off his coat. Puts it on her to keep her warm.

HEATHER

Don't worry about me. Worry about
them.

Jake turns his attention to the school bus. The children are terrified. Some cry. With a never-ending chorus of...

DIFFERENT KIDS

"Mister, I want to go home." "I
want my mommy." "I'm hungry."
"Please, Mister." "I'm scared."
"They're coming to kill us."

And through the din, one little boy shouts at Jake.

LITTLE BOY

Mister, she's sick. Mister, she
can't breathe.

Jake finally focuses on the little boy.

JAKE

What?

The little boy gestures to a little BLONDE GIRL, shaking with
terror, her hands holding her neck. Jake rushes over.

JAKE (CONT'D)

What's wrong? What's wrong with
her?

LITTLE BOY

When the bus stopped, Stacy was
like this...

The little boy puts his chin on the seat in front of him.
Jake moves his gaze to the frightened Blonde Girl. In a
flash, Jake's mind puts the pieces together. The little
Blonde Girl took the whole impact on her throat.

JAKE

Are you okay? Let me see.

The little Blonde Girl removes her hands. Her throat is
severely swollen. Jake does his best to stay calm.

JAKE (CONT'D)

(to Heather)

Do you have an ice pack? We have
to stop the swelling now.

Heather weakly points to the first aid kit. The little Blond
Girl starts panting. Jake turns back to her.

JAKE (CONT'D)

It's okay, Stacy. Calm down.

A little boy brings the first aid kit over. The little
Blonde Girl looks at it. Panicked. Breathing faster.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Just breathe normally. You're
going to be okay.

The girl nods. Terrified. Her breathing faster.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Oh, God. Calm down. You're making
 it worse.

Jake fumbles for the emergency ice pack. Punches it to break the seal. Shakes it up. The girl's eyes start to flutter.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Stay with me. Come on.

The girl gives Jake a look of sheer horror, then she collapses in his arms. The children scream.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Wake up. Wake up.

He lays the girl on the floor and puts the ice pack on her throat. He frantically searches his pockets. He rushes over to the coat and pulls out the flask. He puts the metal of it near her nose. No breath.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Dammit!

78 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

78

Alvie's mother, Alvie, and Stephanie surround the Fire Chief along with a crowd, shouting questions. "Did they blow up the power station?" "We're under attack!" And then... ROD HAWKINS approaches.

ROD HAWKINS
 Folks, I doubt anyone blew up the
 power station. It was probably a
 drain on the system from Denver.

FIRE CHIEF
 Are you the science teacher?

79 EXT. OLD SHACK HOUSE - NIGHT

79

Knock. Knock. Peter stands with Mayor Green, who coughs.

PETER
 Dad, did you take your pills?

MAYOR GREEN
 I'm fine. Don't worry about me.

Suddenly, the door flies open and a shotgun is leveled at the Mayor's chest. Chik-chik. After a beat, OLD MAN OLIVER, 68, a bonafide kook, puts down the gun.

OLD MAN OLIVER
 Sorry, Mr. Mayor. Thought you were
 aliens. We're under attack by
 aliens, don't you know?

MAYOR GREEN
 Oliver, do you have your ham radio?

OLD MAN OLIVER
 Yeah, but I ain't got power to run
 it.

PETER
 I know someone with a generator.

OLD MAN OLIVER
 Okay, then. 50 cents.

PETER
 OLIVER!

OLD MAN OLIVER
 I need my 50 cents.

The Mayor pulls out a dollar.

OLD MAN OLIVER (CONT'D)
 Okay, let me get your change.

80 EXT. SHERIFF'S CAR - NIGHT

80

The Sheriff drives through the darkness.

SHERIFF
 Jimmy, what's your 20?

JIMMY (V.O.)
Willow Creek, Sheriff. Nothing.

SHERIFF
 We're almost to Cedar Run.

The nervous YOUNG COP stares at the Geiger counter, waiting
 for it to *CLIK-CLIK*. You can almost hear his heartbeat.

81 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT

81

The school kids are beside themselves with panic. They're
 shouting. Crying. Jake rummages through the first aid kit.
 Band-aids. Gauze. Not what he needs.

JAKE
 Kids, calm down. I need to focus.
 Please. I need quie-- DAMMIT!
 WOULD YOU SHUT THE HELL UP!?

His shouting only made it worse. And then, out of nowhere...

HEATHER
 THE FIRST PERSON WHO STOPS TALKING
 DOESN'T HAVE TO GO TO SCHOOL
 TOMORROW!

Immediate silence. Jake looks at Heather, who nods at him.
 "Go ahead." As he rummages through the bus driver's pockets,
 Jake turns to the kids.

JAKE
 Kids. I need everyone right now to
 help me. Who has a pen? Anyone
 have a pen?

LITTLE BOY
 (hopeful)
 We have pencils.

JAKE
 No. A tube. Something hollow. A
 straw.

GIRL (O.S.)
 I have a straw.

JAKE
 Who said that?

A girl raises her hand. Jake rushes over to her.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Let me see it. Let me see it.

She hands him her... juice box. Jake pulls out the straw.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 It's too thin. Does anyone else
 have a juice box?

30 hands go up.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Get them out. Now. What's your
 name?

Jake points to the first little girl who raised her hand.

JULIE

Julie.

JAKE

Give your straws to Julie. Quick.

Jake moves back to the first aid kit. Grabs two band-aids. The kids all hand the straws to Julie.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Kids, put the straws in a circle.

The kids do it literally.

JAKE (CONT'D)

(barks)

No. No. No. Not a circle circle.

The kids don't understand. Heather gestures with her hand...

HEATHER

Like your moms when they measure spaghetti. Or pick up sticks before you drop them.

The kids get it. They start putting the juice box straws in a tight bunch, making the equivalent of a wide straw. Jake hands 2 band aids to Julie.

JAKE

Make it tight.

Jake fumbles through his pockets as Heather guides the kids.

HEATHER

(calm)

Nice and tight on the bottom. Good Julie. Now, the top. Nice, Roy.

Jake pulls out his father's... SWISS ARMY KNIFE. He opens the knife and flask. Then, he douses the blade with alcohol.

82

INT. SHERIFF'S CAR - NIGHT

82

The Young Cop keeps looking at the Geiger counter. Paranoid.

JIMMY (V.O.)

Sheriff. Anything? Over.

SHERIFF

No. We don't-- wait. I see something. This could be it.

83 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT

83

Jake bends over the Blonde girl. The kids lean, staring.

HEATHER

Give him some room, kids.

The kids back away. Jake grips the knife in his right hand. He looks at the soft skin in the divit below her neck. He puts his sprained left arm on the girl's chest. Winces.

JAKE

Who's the strongest kid?

17 hands go up. 8 boys. 7 girls. "Me." "Me." "Me."

HEATHER

Danny. You.

Danny, wide-eyed, approaches.

JAKE

Danny. I hurt my left arm. I need you to hold down her shoulders in case she wakes up. And don't look.

Danny is frightened, but does as he's told. Jake bends over, his left arm now on her forehead. He brings the blade to her neck. Danny shuts his eyes. We don't see it. But Jake starts making the incision. Danny slowly peaks open his left eye. Curiosity killed the cat. We see Danny's reaction to the blood. And Jake's focus.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Grab the gauze. Stay with me, son.

84 INT. JIMMY'S POLICE CAR - NIGHT

84

Jimmy drives. Bill's in the passenger seat.

SHERIFF (V.O.)

Jimmy. We see the bus.

JIMMY

Thank God. What's your 20?

SHERIFF (V.O.)

About 6 miles west of 183.

JIMMY

You want us?

SHERIFF (V.O.)
Keep looking for Jake.

JIMMY
 10-4.

Jimmy holsters the radio. After all the intense focus of the last few hours, the relief breaks him. He starts crying.

BILL
 Better not let the sheriff catch
 you do that.

Jimmy smiles. Bill pats his back.

85 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT

85

Jake finishes the incision and lifts up his arm. He wipes his forearm on his forehead. Blood. He nods to Danny, who gives him the gauze. Jake mops up the small pool of blood on the girl's neck.

JAKE
 Julie. Where are my straws?

Julie hands him the juice box straws all wrapped tight. He brings the contraption to the incision. Danny watches as Jake inserts the juice box straws into the incision. His mouth hangs open. "Wow." Jake bends down, revealing the CPR sign behind him. He moves his mouth to the straws. He blows. The girl's chest doesn't move.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Come on, Stacy.

86 INT. SHERIFF'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

86

Through the windshield, we see a bus. The men in the sheriff's car are ecstatic.

SHERIFF
 Let's not start cheering. Stay
 focused. They may need help.

The car stops. The Sheriff and his men move toward the bus.

87 INT. SCHOOL BUS - CONTINUOUS

87

Danny hands Jake 2 band-aids. Jake quickly tapes them around the juice box straws to make the seal around the air hole tighter. He moves to it again. Blows into the tube. The girl's chest moves up and down. Jake blows again.

JAKE
Come on, kid.

He blows again. Again. Finally, the little girl takes a breath on her own. The kids are awestruck. Jake exhales. He looks at the blood on his shaking hands.

HEATHER
How did you know how to do that?

Jake turns to the pretty teacher.

JAKE
Military school. My father sent me.

HEATHER
Were you a soldier?

JAKE
No. A screw up.

88 EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

88

The flashlight rises, lighting the Sheriff's face. He looks shocked. A reverse angle reveals that he's not looking at Jake, Heather, the kids, or the School Bus Driver, but a...

PRISON GUARD

Shot through the forehead. He moves the light to the bus. A State Trooper is dead. The rest of the bus is empty.

The Sheriff's men shine their flashlights on the outside of the bus. We see the words...

KANSAS STATE MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

- 89 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT 89
- Rod Hawkins climbs quickly up the telephone pole. He looks out over the town. People roam the streets. Frightened.
- ROD HAWKINS
Chief! You need to get some lights on. Folks are starting to lose it.
- 90 EXT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT 90
- Stanley Peterson's pick-up truck comes to a skid. He opens the door and rushes to the house. Bonnie follows.
- 91 EXT. SHELL GAS STATION - NIGHT 91
- The station is still crowded as the crowds of cars try to untangle themselves in the darkness. Cars honk.
- 92 INT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT 92
- Gail and Ann open the door to reveal... Stanley and Bonnie Peterson. Stanley is sad. Bonnie is shell-shocked.
- STANLEY
Mrs. Green, we uh... we saw something. It's horrible. You should get Jake and your husband.
- 93 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT 93
- Stephanie Lancaster starts crying. Alvie holds her.
- STEPHANIE
I told my mom I wish she'd die.
- 94 EXT. JERICHO STREET - NIGHT 94
- People rush down the streets. In the middle of this storm of activity, we see a lone figure, walking. The trailer park kid, Dale Turner. With a blank expression on his face.
- 95 INT. GRACIE LEIGH'S SUPERMARKET - NIGHT 95
- Gracie walks through the darkness. Every corner has something that looks like an attacker. A broom. A globe. Finally, a KNOCK makes her scream. She shines the flashlight through the glass door. Standing there is Dale Turner.

96 INT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT 96

The cell phone casts a glow on Stanley Peterson, Bonnie, Ann, and finally Gail, who holds the cell phone to her face and looks at the picture on it.

GAIL
Oh, dear God.

97 EXT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT 97

The freezing night. Quickly. We move from the jack, hoisting up the bus, to the rear of the bus where Jake grabs the spare tire. He throws the spare on the ground. Thud. He connects the lug wrench with the first lug nut on the flat tire. He kneels down, his leg throbbing. Grimaces. Fights through it. He leans in and pushes with all the strength in his right arm against the lug wrench. Nothing.

He tries again, GROANING this time. Nothing. He's gotta use his legs. He stands, steadies the lug wrench, brings his bad leg up. And just as he brings it down as hard as he can...

98 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT 98

Heather and the children watch Jake as his foot slips off the tire iron and his bad leg buckles. Shrieking with pain.

JAKE (O.S.)
WHERE'S THE GOD DAMN RESCUE PARTY!?

99 INT. JIMMY'S POLICE CAR - NIGHT 99

Jimmy and Bill look at the highway.

BILL
It's like a ghost town.

JIMMY
Bill, let's face it. He didn't come this way.

100 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT 100

Jake rushes into the bus.

JAKE
Kids. I need you. Now, dammit.

JULIE
Mister, you swear a lot.

Jake and Heather exchange a brief smile and then... he looks her over. She is getting more and more pale.

JAKE
How you holding up?

HEATHER
(not fine)
Fine. How about your leg?

Jake's eyes say it all. He's losing blood fast.

HEATHER (CONT'D)
Hurry.

101 INT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT

101

Silence like a heartbeat. Gail's eyes scan Bonnie's cell phone again. We see her boyfriend's smiling face. Then, the image pans to reveal... *the fire ball 5 miles behind him.*

Gail turns to Stanley, sad, and Bonnie, who is on Mars with shock. Gail struggles to keep her own composure.

GAIL
Where was this?

STANLEY
Atlanta, Mrs. Green.

GAIL
We'll notify the Mayor. Thank you, Stanley. Bonnie. God bless you.

STANLEY PETERSON
Ma'am... I'm sure Jake will be okay.

Gail nods. Thank you. Stanley nods back. Truth is, neither of them are sure. Especially when...

BONNIE PETERSON
No, he's not. He's not okay.
Nobody is okay.

STANLEY PETERSON
Bonnie--

BONNIE PETERSON
Jake's dead. Don't you get that?
Why don't you get that? He's dead.

102 EXT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT

102

The kids are in a line on the side of the bus. Jake bends down on his knee. Pain. He puts the lug wrench onto the flat tire's lug nut. Holds it in place.

JAKE

Go.

The first kid in the line runs at the tire iron and jumps. He lands on it. Doesn't budge.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Out of the way. Next!

The second kid runs at the tire iron. Jumps. Nothing. Jake bows his head. His body shivers in the freezing cold.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Please, help us God.

103 EXT. SHELL GAS STATION - NIGHT

103

Cars honk in the darkness. With no power, the pumps will not work. NORMAN PERRY, whose labor dispute with Shep Cale feels like an ancient memory, kneels by his SUV, screwing the cap on his extra 2 gallon gas can. A BURLY MAN approaches.

BURLY MAN

Hey. You get extra there?

NORMAN

Sorry.

BURLY MAN

What do you mean sorry?

NORMAN

First come. First serve.

BURLY MAN

You already filled your car. What?
You gonna mow your lawn?

NORMAN

Sorry. My family--

BURLY MAN

We all have families. Come on.

The Burly Man reaches for the can. Tug of war.

104 INT. SHELL GAS STATION - CONVENIENCE MART - NIGHT 104

An ANGRY CROWD stares down the convenience store CLERK.

ANGRY MAN

But what if ours is contaminated?!

CLERK

Folks, I can't let you have the water without paying for it.

ANGRY WOMAN

It's not my fault your credit card machine's down!

105 EXT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT 105

Mayor Green helps Peter unload the ham radio from the trunk. The Mayor has to stop. He begins coughing. Pale and sick.

PETER

Dad, you don't look well. Let me take you home.

MAYOR GREEN

I'm fine. Let's get it inside.

106 INT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT 106

The tavern is now half full. The people with no families to go home to are riding this out together. The doors burst open and the Mayor shouts at the SEXY BARMAID, known to her friends and neighbors as MARY BAILEY, 32.

MAYOR GREEN (O.S.)

Mary! We need your generator!

107 INT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT 107

Gail hands a sealed envelope to the EMT Crew Chief.

GAIL

Get this letter to my husband immediately.

108 EXT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT 108

We see a pair of little feet run toward the lug wrench. The feet jump. The feet land. Click. The lug nut budes. The image tracks up to a little fat girl. Jake smiles.

JAKE

What's your name?

HILDA

Hilda.

Jake smiles at her. Hilda smiles back. A long beat.

JAKE

(funny)

I DIDN'T TELL YOU TO STOP JUMPING.
COME ON!

Hilda goes back to starting position. Jake shakes his head.

JAKE (CONT'D)

God, is there anything worse than
handling kids?

109 EXT. SHELL GAS STATION - NIGHT 109

The answer is yes. Handling adults. The gas can is dropped as the Burly Man throws the first punch.

110 INT. SHELL GAS STATION - CONVENIENCE MART - NIGHT 110

Over the shouting protests of the Clerk, the angry crowd begins taking the convenience store's water supply.

CLERK

Where are you going!? You can't
just take it!

111 INT. GRACIE LEIGH'S SUPERMARKET - NIGHT 111

Dale Turner leaves the store through the back, his arms loaded with frozen foods. Gracie is confused and frightened.

GRACIE LEIGH

Dale, what are you doing, honey?
Please, don't steal from me!

112 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT 112

The Fire Chief, Rod Hawkins, and the Firemen are surrounded on all sides. Gray Anderson watches them confer.

FIRE CHIEF

Lights. Lights. Well, we got a
couple portable generators. And
some flashlights. Not enough to
cover the streets, though.

FIRE MAN (V.O.)

Chief, we got real problems down
here at the Shell Station.

Gray Anderson hears the news about the Shell Station. He considers. Then, he leaves the scene.

113 EXT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

113

Peter stands with Mary Bailey, the sexy barmaid, out in the alley. He's on his knee, trying to start the generator.

MARY BAILEY

Peter, what are we going to do?

PETER

I don't know.

MARY BAILEY

I'm scared. Peter...

Peter turns around. She looks at him. One look and we suddenly realize... they are not talking about the bomb.

PETER

I can't... we can't... not anymore.

MARY BAILEY

But... Peter, I need you.

PETER

I'm sorry. I have to be there for my family.

114 INT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

114

The lights come on. The frightened crowd surrounds the Mayor as he turns on the ham radio.

MAYOR GREEN

This is Mayor Johnston Green of Jericho, Kansas... we are trying to contact the governor, the national guard, and the Crawford Power plant. Is anyone there?

115 EXT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT

115

The 4 lug nuts are on the ground. Jake slaps himself a couple of times to stay awake, but the blood loss is making it difficult. Hilda huffs and puffs.

HILDA

Are you okay, mister?

JAKE

Just don't let me fall asleep,
Hilda. Come on, guys.

Jake directs two boys pull the flat tire off of the bus. They pick up the spare tire. Jake helps them guide it into the right spot. Click. Jake grabs the lug wrench, puts the lug nut in place, and starts turning.

116 EXT. JERICHO STREET - NIGHT 116

Gray Anderson continues walking, past terrified townspeople.

117 INT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT 117

Mayor Green keeps trying channels. Static. Static. Mary Bailey looks at Peter. Peter looks away. The EMT CREW CHIEF enters with the sealed envelope.

EMT CREW CHIEF

Sir... a letter from your wife.

118 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT 118

The Fire Chief listens to the radio.

RADIO (V.O.)

*We're 2 minutes from the Shell
station, chief.*

The Fire Chief puts his radio away. He looks at the portable generators, flashlights, and lanterns on the streets. Sighs.

FIRE CHIEF

We're just not going to have enough
light.

FIRE MAN

Maybe torches? I don't know.

VOICE (O.S.)

Turn on your headlights.

The Fire Chief looks around in the crowd. They find the face of... Rod Hawkins.

ROD HAWKINS

Have everyone turn on their head-
lights and point them at the street.

The Fire Chief looks at Rod Hawkins.

FIRE CHIEF

Are you sure you're not the science teacher?

119 EXT. GRACIE LEIGH'S SUPERMARKET - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT 119

Dale Turner exits the store, his arms loaded with frozen dinners. And just when we thought he was indeed looting, Gracie Leigh follows, her own arms loaded with frozen foods. The image follows Gracie as she lays the dinners on...

... and enormous stack of frozen foods. Dale has turned the freezing alley into a makeshift freezer. It looks like Dale and she put the whole store in the back alley.

DALE

The food won't go rotten as long as the weather stays below freezing. But we need to get a tarp up to keep the sun off of it tomorrow morning. Hopefully, they'll fix the power before then.

GRACIE LEIGH

Thank you for this, Dale. But I can take it from here. You should get on back to your mother.

Dale is silent. Then, he begins crying. It finally dawns on Gracie that Dale is all alone in this world. She holds him.

120 INT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT 120

The crowd watches as Mayor Green reads the letter. We see a few words. "*Bonnie Peterson...*" "*Atlanta...*" At the bottom of the letter... "*Honey, how many pills do you have left?*"

PETER

What does the letter say, dad?

121 EXT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT 121

Jake tightens that last lug nut. Starts to lower the jack.

122 INT. SCHOOL BUS - CONTINUOUS 122

Julie sits with Heather, who looks ghastly now.

HILDA

Miss?

HEATHER

Yes, Julie?

JULIE

Are we going to have school
anymore?

Heather is about to say, "Of course" when she stops. She realizes she has no idea what tomorrow will bring.

HEATHER

We'll figure it out, honey.

JULIE

I vote no.

Heather smiles, weakly. Just then, Hilda and the two boys rush into the bus, followed by Jake. He moves to the school bus driver, grabs him with his right arm, and struggles to drag him out of the seat.

123 INT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

123

Mayor Green looks at the frightened crowd. Somberly. He folds the letter.

MAYOR GREEN

Bonnie Peterson's boyfriend was
killed outside of Atlanta by...
another explosion. We can rule out
accidents now. We're under attack.

124 EXT. SHELL GAS STATION - NIGHT

124

The fight has spread. People are beginning to loot more than the water at the convenience mart. The Fire Men scream.

FIRE MEN

"For God's sake!" "Stop it!"
"We're all in this together!"

125 INT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

125

The Mayor turns back to the ham radio. He struggles to keep his composure in front of the distraught crowd as he leans into the ham radio microphone.

MAYOR GREEN

This is Mayor Johnston Green of
Jericho, Kansas. Is there anyone
out there who might have seen...
(voice breaks)
... my son?

126 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT 126

Jake gets in the driver's seat. He starts the engine. He blinks twice. Feeling faint. His leg bleeding. He fights it. But he can't. He collapses. His head hits the steering wheel with a...

127 INT. BAILEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT 127

GONG! The church bell is ringing. The Mayor, Peter, Mary Bailey, and the others look at each other.

128 EXT. GREEN FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT 128

GONG! Gail and Ann leave the house to see what's going on. Ann carries the baby. Gail holds Woody's hand.

129 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT 129

Hilda, crying, pounds on Jake's shoulders.

HILDA
Mister, wake up! Please, wake up!

130 EXT. SHELL GAS STATION - NIGHT 130

GONG! The noise quiets down the crowd.

131 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT 131

GONG! Alvie, his mother, Stephanie, Rod Hawkins, and the Fire Chief all begin walking toward the sound of the bell.

132 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT 132

Hilda pounds on him. Jake opens his eyes. Shakes out the cobwebs. Hilda keeps punching.

JAKE
Thanks, Hilda. You can stop hitting me now.

133 EXT. JIMMY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 133

GONG! The two Margarets leave the house with the children.

134 INT. STANLEY'S PICK-UP TRUCK - NIGHT 134

GONG! Stanley Peterson puts a comforting hand on Bonnie's shoulder. She begins to cry.

135 EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT 135

The bus inches away from the tree it struck. Jake backs up the bus. Gets it onto the road.

136 EXT. MAYFLOWER HOTEL - NIGHT 136

GONG! Mimi Clark leaves the hotel to follow the sound.

137 EXT. GRACIE LEIGH'S SUPERMARKET - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT 137

GONG! Gracie heads toward the sound. Dale doesn't.

GRACIE LEIGH

Dale, honey... aren't you coming?

DALE

Someone has to guard your food.

GRACIE LEIGH

This is Jericho. We don't lock our doors. No one's going to steal it.

DALE

Not everyone is as nice as you, Mrs. Leigh. And there are animals. It's okay. I'll be fine.

GRACIE LEIGH

Thank you, Dale. You might have just saved the town, you know?

DALE

Anything for you, ma'am. I won't let anything ever happen to you.

Gracie walks away, but not before looking back to see Dale, stomping his feet and blowing on his hands to keep warm. Having gone from the age of 17 to 40 in the space of 5 hours.

138 EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT 138

GONG! The throngs of people descend upon the church. We see quick reunions as Woody runs over to Jimmy's Margaret.

WOODY

Mom, I took care of the nice ladies!

Peter rushes to Ann, much to Mary Bailey's dismay. And finally, Mayor Green joins Gail with a hug.

On the last GONG, the headlights and lanterns go on, illuminating... GRAY ANDERSON. He stands in front of the church on the top of the hill, welcoming his town.

139 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT

139

Jake looks at the odometer. The gas gauge is hovering on empty. He turns to Heather, who fights to stay awake.

JAKE

Don't you quit on me.

Heather nods, weakly. Jake turns back to the road, looks to his left, and his eyes open WIDE.

140 EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

140

The school bus passes the PRISON BUS and keeps moving down the road. The image follows it, then moves to the other side of the prison bus. The Sheriff and all of his men are dead on the ground. Their uniforms stripped off. Their car gone. The image moves to the Sheriff's hand where his radio starts making a crackling sound.

JIMMY (V.O.)

Sheriff? Sheriff? It's Jimmy. Is that your car behind us? Why aren't you with the kids? Sheriff? Slow down. Sheriff. You're going to hit us. Sheriff?! Stop!!!!

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

141 INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT

141

The gas gauge is now below the red. Jake glares at it. Woozy, he blinks a couple of times. Pale. He turns and sees Heather, who smiles at him weakly. Until...

JAKE

Does this bus have a gas can?

She shakes her head, no. Jake looks at the gas gauge again. Looks at the rearview mirror at the children.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Kids... do you know what road we're on?

(off their "no")

This is Cedar Run. If you go straight ahead for a long way, you'll come to a stop light. Then, if you make a left...

JULIE

Which way is left?

Jake looks at Heather, who nods, sadly. She understands that the children might have to make it back on their own.

HEATHER

(gestures with her hand)

If you hold up your hand and stick out your thumb, it makes an "L", see? That's left.

Jake smiles at Heather.

JAKE

They don't pay you enough.

(to kids)

So, kids, turn in the direction of the "L" and walk straight ahead for a long way. That's where town is.

The kids all nod to each other. "Oh." And then...

JULIE

Why are you telling us this?

Jake looks at Heather.

JAKE

You want to take this one?

142 INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

142

The crowd is noisy. Torches, flashlights, and lanterns illuminate faces, casting shadows. Gray Anderson stands at the pulpit as Mayor Green moves to the front of the room.

GRAY ANDERSON

With all due respect, Mr. Mayor, this isn't a debate about road signs and taxes. We have a missing bus. No police. Fireman doing policemen's jobs. No plan.

PETER

Gray, how dare you politicize--

MAYOR GREEN

(under his breath)

Dammit, Peter.

Big reaction. The crowd split down the middle. Some shouting, "Yes!" Some shouting, "No!" Gail sighs.

GRAY ANDERSON

Politicize? Peter, I'm not talking to my opponent. I'm talking to my Mayor. There was almost a riot at the Shell station, and I haven't seen him in hours. What? You think I planned that just to get a few votes?

Peter is silenced. He sits down.

GRAY ANDERSON (CONT'D)

I don't care about the election. I care about survival. We might be on our own here, and I need to know what my Mayor intends to do.

The Mayor takes the stage. Scans the crowd. He collects himself and gives a heartfelt address. He means every word.

MAYOR GREEN

Folks, I know we've been through a lot tonight, but I want to tell you something. I have been to big cities. I have been to foreign countries. And I would take the good people...

Shep, the union boss, nods. He's not being cruel, but...

SHEP

... good people of Jericho over any city. We know, Mr. Mayor. We've heard the speech. We need to know what you're going to do now.

The Mayor is taken aback. If he weren't such a proud man, you might have seen his heart break a little bit. Gail watches, concerned. Not for the Mayor. For her husband.

MAYOR GREEN

Well, uh... Shep, I hope you don't think I've been asleep at the switch here. I have spent tonight trying to contact the governor to coordin--

SHEP

But what if the governor is dead, Mr. Mayor?

That starts the seed. People we've come to know begin asking the real questions. Some helpful. Some frightened. Louder and louder. The Mayor does his best to keep up.

MAYOR GREEN

Now, hold on. There have been no reports of anything happening to Topek--

IRATE WOMAN

How are there going to be reports with no phones?

NORMAN PERRY

Or no televisions.

MAYOR GREEN

Ma'am please.

STEPHANIE

Did they hit New York?

MAYOR GREEN

(answering irate woman)
We'll get the phones working ag--
(to Stephanie)
We'll find out about New York.

MIMI CLARK

My mother is in DC!

GRACIE LEIGH

How are we going to get the power back on, Mr. Mayor?

WOMAN'S VOICE
What about firewood? I'm

MAN'S VOICE
Is the drinking water okay?

MAYOR GREEN
Folks, one at a time.

BURLY MAN
What happens when we run out

JIMMY'S MARGARET
Let the Mayor speak!

Gray Anderson slowly steps back into the shadows and watches as the town swallows the Mayor with questions he can't possibly answer. Peter bangs the pulpit for order. People shout at him angrily. Teasing.

SHEP
Oh, Peter, put your gavel away.

MAYOR GREEN
Please, folks. Calm down.

IRATE FATHER
Calm down? My boy is still out there, and you--

MAYOR GREEN
The sheriff is looking for your boy and my boy right now.

IRATE MOTHER
And why weren't there more police in the budget?!

IRATE WOMAN
Why didn't we have more emergency workers?

MAYOR GREEN
The school needed books.

Gail joins the fray.

GAIL
People, please. This shouting isn't helping anything.

She is swallowed. Voices shouting. Gray Anderson watches the chaos with a measured eye. A faint, pleased look. He takes the stage, raises his arms to give the town the leadership it needs, and just as he opens his mouth...

HONK. HONK. HONK.

143 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT 143

The school bus limps into town, through the rows of headlights and lanterns, its horn honking. It stops in front of the proud statue.

144 INT. SCHOOL BUS - CONTINUOUS 144

Jake, relieved almost to the point of tears, puts the bus in park. And turns off the engine with a shaking hand.

145 EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT 145

The people rush out of the church, down the hill, to the school bus, as Jake staggers out. He looks like a ghost.

JAKE

Help them.

146 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT 146

Illuminated by the town's headlights and Mr. Henderson's lanterns, we see the best of Jericho at work.

The Fire Chief guides the EMT vans to the bus. The EMT Crew Chief pushes little Stacy. Alvie and his mom follow with Stephanie.

TERESA CLEMONS

Oh, Stacy.

EMT CREW CHIEF

Don't worry, ma'am. We got her.

Little Danny is scooped up by the Young Couple who first told the Mayor about the school bus. The second the Irate Father sees his little girl, Hilda, he bursts into tears of relief. The Irate Mother hugs her precious Julie.

Gail, Mayor Green, Peter, and Ann move to the bus. The crowd parts and they see Jake, being loaded on a stretcher.

GAIL

Oh, Jake!

Gail rushes up to him. Grabs his left hand. Winces. "Ow!"

GAIL (CONT'D)

(cries laughs)

Sorry. Sorry.

The crowd whispers, "Is that Jake Green?" Seconds later... Peter, Mayor Green, and Ann approach Jake.

EMT MAN

Mrs. Green, we have to move him.

Gail backs away. Mayor Green and Jake look at each other. A mixture of every emotion. Mayor Green touches Jake's good shoulder. Peter watches with a trace of jealousy.

JAKE

Dad, there's an empty prison bus out there.

MAYOR GREEN

I'll take care of it.

Mayor Green backs away, but not before...

JAKE

Oh, Dad. One more thing.

Mayor Green approaches and Jake puts something in his hand. The EMT Crew carts Jake away and loads him on the ambulance with Heather Lisinski. The doors close.

147 INT. AMBULANCE - MOMENTS LATER

147

Heather and Jake ride in the back of the Ambulance. Jake turns to Heather. They smile. A lifetime in one night.

JAKE

What's your name?

HEATHER

Heather.

JAKE

Jake.

HEATHER

It's nice to meet you, Jake.

JAKE

You, too.

They both finally close their eyes for sleep.

148 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

148

As the ambulances pull away, Mayor Green looks at the SWISS ARMY KNIFE in his hand. He turns to his town. Mayor Green is now a man who has seen the dark side of his town and will never be the same. He speaks from the heart.

MAYOR GREEN

You said you've heard the speech before, Shep. But you ever wonder why I say it? Because I happen to trust you people. Because I love my town so much that I never thought you could riot.

The crowd stares back at him. He doesn't blink.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

You want to blame me for that? Well, you go right ahead if you're fresh out of mirrors. Have someone treat you like children. Have a dictator if you want. But it's never going to be me.

The crowd looks down.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

Something happened in Denver. Something happened in Atlanta. And there's a chance we could wake up and find out that's where it stopped. So, until we know, are we going to use our imaginations to solve problems or cause them?

The Burly Man and Norman Perry look at the ground.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

We can get the power on. We can find out how big this thing is. We can feed ourselves. Protect ourselves. Fight if we have to.

Mimi Clark looks over at Stanley and Bonnie Peterson.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

But the only way that's going to happen is if we work together. I know where I stand. How about you?

Gray Anderson watches the crowd. Silent. Digesting.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

My son said there is an empty prison bus out there, so until the police return, I need guards on every entrance and exit out of town. Volunteers?

The Fire Chief, Rod Hawkins, and the Burly Man raise their hands along with some of the other men in town.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

Thank you. Everyone else, go home.
We'll meet at the town hall in the morning. And folks... don't you dare break my heart again.

As the crowd disperses, the Mayor turns to his family.

MAYOR GREEN (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's go to Jake.

Some people shake hands. Like the EMT Crew Chief and the Fire Chief. Other people are more suspicious. Like Shep and Norman Perry - union and management. Still others reach out to each other. Like the two Margarets with the kids.

BILL'S MARGARET

Don't worry. Jimmy and Bill will be home soon.

Just before the Mayor gets into Peter's Oldsmobile, he looks over at Gray Anderson. The men lock eyes. Both smart, both tough, both savvy. It's going to be a dogfight.

As the volunteers team up to stand watch, the Fire Chief approaches Rod Hawkins, looking out into the night. The world outside of Jericho.

FIRE CHIEF

What are you thinking, Mr. Hawkins?

ROD HAWKINS

I was just wondering what it was all going to look like in the morning.

The two men stand silently, watching. The image pushes past them into the darkness. Into the world outside of Jericho.

149 INT. EMILY SPENSER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

149

We see the champagne. The ice is now melted. We see the "Welcome Home, Roger" sign. We see the candles, still waiting to be lit. We end on the Post-It Note: Roger's flight. Kansas City Airport. 11:00pm.

END OF EPISODE