

DR. REASON

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Cast of Characters

(In Order of Appearance)

HARLAN:	Adult Male
DR. RACHEL JUNGER:	A woman in her late 40s
JULIA:	A woman in her 20s
DR. TARA REYNOLDS:	A woman in her late 40s
DR. IAN WESKLER:	A man in his 30s
SIMON:	A man in his 20s
MAP PROPHET:	A middle-aged street hobo
AGENT:	A middle-aged government agent

PARANOID SCHIZOPHRENICS, REVOLUTIONARIES, OUTCASTS...

Scene

Various settings within an unnamed city; offices, holding cells, apartments, street scenes and warehouses.

Time

Present.

Note

This piece was written to flow without interruptions between scenes. Act and scene numbers have been included for purposes of clarity for the production staff.

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ACT I: SCENE I

Lights up.

Several people stand in a windowless room. They're dressed like hobos and eccentrics.

RACHEL JUNGER stands in the center of the group.

Everyone talks to JUNGER in rapid, overlapping sentences.

VOICES:

- God speaks to me through my television.
- It goes beyond the Illuminati, the Free Masons, the Elders of Zion!
- Open your eyes! The message is all around us. It's all part of warning.
- Kennedy gave a speech warning us about secret societies and then they assassinated him in Dallas.
- Spectrum distracts our minds so that we can be open to receive his message.
- They brought the towers down to bring a new world order.
- They believed they were actually in control. The new Gods communicate in a code that only we know.
- Their symbols are on the money we use.
- If you don't see it, you're one of the sheep! You want to believe the pretty lies.
- They have all kinds of ways to manipulate the sheep!
- All your technology, they control your money they tell you what to do and they don't even know it!
- Every time we get close to seeing who's really in charge, they start another war to distract the sheep.
- But they can't control me!
- I hear his message. There's a purpose to it.
- They're trying to start another conflict because we have them scared.
- But I see through their lies.
- We're spreading the news to the people about who's really in charge.
- A revolution's coming!
- I know the truth!
- We'll make a new world!
- Something amazing's going to happen!

Suddenly, the room fills with light

from a bright flash that ends the monologues.

HARLAN enters, wearing a welder's mask, dressed as he were going into combat.

As the people in the basement regain their bearings, he flips the mask up and takes a pack of playing cards out of his pocket.

He walks past each person standing the basement and hands them a card, announcing the card as he goes.

HARLAN

Four of clubs... Six of Diamonds... Queen of Spades... Ten of Clubs... King of Hearts...

He walks around the entire room and gets to JUNGER last, pausing before handing her card.

HARLAN

(Continued)

Joker...

He puts the card in her hand. JUNGER looks at it. HARLAN turns his attention to everyone in the room.

HARLAN

(Continued)

That flash killed any electronic recording devices you brought with you. Any recorders, cameras, music players... There'll be no record of what happened here tonight, what we said, what you did... All you'll have to give your friends is a legend.

He takes the welding mask off and puts it in the hands of one of the malcontents. He walks through the crowd as he talks.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

I look around, I look around. I see the dregs of a dying civilization. I see the rejects stratifying social order. Losers with no place, no mission, no reason to get up in the morning.

Look around at yourselves! There's nothing for two-miles in all directions. Normal people have better things to do on a night like this. They're spending time with their families or out on dates. They're making love. They're laughing because they don't see the abyss, and they'll die never having known it.

But not you... You listened to that street prophet when normal people ignored him. You tried to decode that cryptic street graffiti in alleyways. You read those manifestos left in a pile by a rundown liquor store. Followed those clues all the way to this basement in an abandoned building in the middle of the rubble district. You all played amateur detective because you had nothing else to give meaning to your superfluous lives.

In your fantasies you believed you'd come out here and find salvation. Validation that you were right, and the normal people you envy were wrong and naive. You want to believe that you're the special people who'll be the elite in a new social order. But you won't...

The Powers That Be aren't tapping your phones. They're not following you around. They don't read your mail like a jilted ex-lover, or spy on you when you pretend to be some kind of secret agent.

No, the Powers That Be care about people who have real influence and power. The powers that be are paranoid about other people with prestigious titles, who are connected to power. Folks with private drivers and mistresses. People that don't waste their time decoding the language of the streets.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

Is this not getting through? You can put the tin foil hats away. They don't fear you! They don't even know who you are!

How many of you would abandon all of what you devoted your lives for a little bit of prestige and some social standing? Maybe an invitation to a power lunch. A job title that makes you feel important? A cute girl who let you be her White Knight. How devoted to revolution are you?...

He stalks the room waiting for a response.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

You're free to leave. You're free to say this is a front to identify enemies to the order. Whatever you have to believe to convince yourselves. So go, get out of here. Stop wasting my time with your need to feel important...

HARLAN looks around and the people in the room who look at each other. But no-one leaves.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

I figured that much. All great upheavals were started by rejects, misfits and the undesirable. The successful people are too worried about what they'd lose to join in the party. You want to be part of something bigger than yourself? You want glory? You want to build a new Utopia? Here it is...

But this isn't a part time adventure. Starting here, right now, you devote everything to the movement. All your time, all your thoughts, even your life. Total and complete commitment, no distractions, no excuses.

Do you know what complete commitment means?...

HARLAN looks around and the people that surround him. They look at each other, waiting.

HARLAN pulls a handgun out of the waistband of his pants, flicks the safety off, and holds it up by his head.

He waits until he has everyone's attention and then points the gun at an empty space upstage and fires one round.

HARLAN waits a moment and then flicks the safety on and slides the weapon back into his waistband.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

Total commitment means you're going to imagine that I'm standing right behind you with a gun to your head. You're going to imagine that I'm ready to blow your brains out if don't apply every ounce of your being to your mission. Your life simplifies itself to life and death. You will be free of doubt. Free of your ineffectual selves.

No questions, no excuses, no compromises. If you don't want, that should leave now...

Harlan flips the safety on and puts the gun back in his waistband.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

Maybe some of you've heard about 'The Process'. Everyone who joins the movement has to go through 'The Process'. People have killed themselves in the middle of it. Every lie you've told yourself. Every shameful thing you've buried in your psyche. Your delusions of grandeur, your traumas, your sins will be revealed.

It may take a few hours. It may take a week, but you will never be the same person after. You want to commit to the movement go through the door.

Upstage, the doorway that Harlan entered the basement from lights up.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

Once you go through that door, there's no turning back. No half measures, no excuses, no surrender... Or you can go back home to your normal lives.

Harlan walks upstage towards the door and stands besides it.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

The choice is yours...

One by one, the people in the basement walk past Harlan into the doorway and disappear.

Harlan looks at each person and nods before they go through.

Junger is at the back of the line. When she is about to go through the door way, Harlan holds his hand out and stops her.

The last person enters the doorway, and the light goes off

Harlan and Junger are left in the room.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

You didn't come here to join a movement tonight.

JUNGER

You're taking advantage of those people.

HARLAN

And you came all the way out here to save them?

JUNGER

I came to understand why they join.

HARLAN

Do you have a better alternative? Something else for them to submit before?

JUNGER

You brainwash them.

HARLAN

I save them from being superfluous in their own minds.

JUNGER

You're sending them on missions that could get them killed.

HARLAN

And that's why you spent weeks tracking down the clues to get here? I think you wanted to get close. You want to be part of something big just like they do.

JUNGER

You don't know anything about me.

HARLAN

I know a lot about you Dr. Rachel Junger... You think you were being stealthy in your wannabe spy shenanigans?

JUNGER

You've been following m...

HARLAN

(Interrupting her)

Of course, paying attention when you pace in that little apartment of yours, staring out the window. You want to be part of something big, but you still think you're above the fray.

JUNGER

And you're no different?

Harlan pulls a knife out of a holster underneath his jacket and brandishes it.

HARLAN

If I told you that I killed three people with this knife because they threatened the Analog Underground... Would you believe me?

Junger takes a step back from Harlan.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

If I told you I killed them with a knife because using a gun would make it too easy to take someone's life... Would you believe me?...

Harlan takes a step towards Junger.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

Why did you come here tonight?

JUNGER

It's my job to help them readjust to the world.

HARLAN

I think you tell yourself that...

JUNGER

You're trying to scare me...

HARLAN

Of course I could be making all of that up... We're here miles from the nearest cop. Nobody knows you came out here tonight.

JUNGER

You have no way of knowing what I know.

HARLAN

(Interrupting her)

Feel your heart beating faster? The hairs standing up on end? You've never felt more alive than right now. I think you've spent your life trying to join something bigger than you but your ego keeps getting in the way. You think you're too good for it.

JUNGER

I know there isn't any salvation. You just offer a chance for blind obedience.

HARLAN

And being a real leader. You want that. You've always wanted that but you want to be dragged kicking and screaming the whole way so you never to have look at yourself in the mirror and admit what you really are...

Harlan puts the knife back in the
holster and walks towards Junger.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

But we're not going to gift wrap that and hand it to you.

Harlan walks behind Junger and puts
his hands over her eyes.

She puts her hands on his wrists.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

You're going to have to do that yourself, knowing what
you're doing and why...

Suddenly the lights go out.

ACT I: SCENE II

The stage is black.

JUNGER

Hello?... Where'd you go?

Lights up on JUNGER'S office.

JUNGER gets up from a couch as
JULIA enters the room and hits the
light switch.

JUNGER is disoriented at first.

JULIA

Dr. Junger? Dr. Junger are you alright? It's Julia.

JUNGER

What time is it?

JULIA

It's eleven O'clock. Dr. Reynolds has been looking for you
for the last hour.

JUNGER

Now?

JULIA

She sent Harold to your apartment. You weren't answering
your phone.

JUNGER

I feel asleep.

JULIA

Why are you dressed like that?

JUNGER

Why does Dr. Reynolds need to find me at this hour?

JULIA

She didn't tell me. You didn't get anything on your phone?

JUNGER pulls her phone out and
looks at it for a moment.

JUNGER

You sure they tried to reach me? I don't have any missed calls for the last three hours.

JULIA

I left three voicemails.

JUNGER

Not according to my phone.

JULIA

I'm really sorry. I don't know what happened. Dr. Reynolds said it was very important that I find you.

JUNGER

Where is she?

JULIA

She's in her office, I'll tell her you're coming.

JUNGER

Don't bother, I'll go there now.

JULIA

You want me to get a cup of coffee for you before you go?

JUNGER

I'm fine.

JULIA

I'll look to see if there's some problem with our phone system or something.

JULIA exits the office.

JUNGER walks upstage.

DR. TARA REYNOLDS enters.

REYNOLDS

Rachel! Thank God we found you... Are you alright?

JUNGER

I just fell asleep in my office.

REYNOLDS

Why are you dressed like that?

JUNGER

I was out doing research, and came back to get my notes together.

REYNOLDS

Rachel.

JUNGER

What's so important?...

REYNOLDS

(Interrupting her.)

Rachel. This isn't the time to go out on Skid Row, we don't need that kind of attention.

JUNGER

What I do on my own time isn't your concern.

REYNOLDS

What you do on your own time is my concern if it gives off the impression that we're associated with cults and charlatans.

JUNGER

It's...

REYNOLDS

(Interrupting her.)

That's the price you pay for prestige, benefits and a regular paycheck. I had to pull a lot of strings to get you through the background check.

JUNGER

I can't give any of my work context if I only see people in a fixed setting.

REYNOLDS

Rachel. You're forty-eight years old. The days of playing field ethnographer have passed. You need to focus on your work here and stop jeopardizing a very delicate political situation with our backers.

JUNGER

Five of my patients disappeared in the last six-months after telling me that God was sending a message through... static. They joined some underground cult that claims it can communicate with it, and nobody else seems to care about that.

REYNOLDS

What happens on the street is someone else's problem, not yours... This isn't the time for this conversation. Did JULIA brief you at all?

JUNGER

No.

REYNOLDS

Well, you've met Dr. Weskler? The Cybernetic Intelligence specialist.

JUNGER

At the Exegesis Conference.

REYNOLDS

We've been trying to reach you because want to keep this all in house. I need you to keep this all quiet.

JUNGER

Are we in any danger?

REYNOLDS

I don't know... I'll let Dr. Weskler explain.

REYNOLDS gestures off-stage.

Enter WESKLER

WESKLER

You're Dr. Junger, Rachel Junger?

JUNGER

Yes.

WESKLER

Sorry we had to meet again under these circumstances, um I read your book, 'The Structure of Paranoia'. It informed my research.

JUNGER

How did it influence you?

WESKLER

I was influenced by your assertion that paranoid delusions follow a common structure that lead me to rethink how we program...

REYNOLDS

(Interrupting him.)

Ian, we have to deal with our current problem.

WESKLER

Ohh yes, yes, sorry. Dr. Junger.

JUNGER

You can call me Rachel.

WESKLER

Rachel... Everything I'm going to tell you is classified. Ahh this is not happening, this meeting never happened. Do you understand?

JUNGER

I was given the briefing before I was hired.

WESKLER

For now, you can't talk to anyone about this, not even other staff members. This all stays in this room for now.

JUNGER

What happened?

WESKLER

Last night, security found a man in the Cybernetics Lab, but we don't know how he got in there. There were no signs of forced entry. He didn't trip sensors, not even the motion detectors. We have nothing on the security cameras. Nothing. It's like he just appeared out of the ether in our lab.

JUNGER

I'm afraid I wasn't given a briefing about what research happens in the cybernetics lab.

WESKLER

That's really on a need to know basis.

JUNGER

You want to help you, I need to know what he may know, or whoever sent him may know. I can't figure out his psyche if I don't have the entire story.

WESKLER looks at REYNOLDS who nods her head.

WESKLER

That's what's classified... We're working on synthetic immune system enhancements. Exogenously introduced nano-scale robots that can be programmed to treat specific cancers and infections in patients. It's supposed to be used to treat front-line soldiers who could be exposed to deadly agents.

JUNGER

You're experimenting on people?

WESKLER

Terminal patients. People on death's door.

JUNGER

(Interrupting him.)

Is that legal?

WESKLER

(Interrupting her.)

The Chinese and the Russians are going down the same road, we can't leave ourselves in the dark of what they've discovered. It's a possible cure to mental disorders.

REYNOLDS

We don't have time to debate the morality of the cold war again. I'll organize a comprehensive briefing for you, but we have deal with our current dilemma.

WESKLER

The results have been promising so far...

JUNGER

Who was he?

WESKLER

The internal detective questioned him, but we don't know, and apparently, he doesn't know either.

JUNGER

I'm not following.

WESKLER

He didn't have any identification on him, and he claimed to not have a name to our private detective. He says he comes from the future where people don't have individual identities and he just... teleported in there. As far as I can tell, he's a complete space cadet.

REYNOLDS

That's why I wanted you involved, we need to know why he tried to break in.

WESKLER

And how he even knew about the lab.

REYNOLDS

That's why we want to keep this in-house. If we go to the official powers, we lose control of this facility.

JUNGER

How long are we keeping this quiet from the authorities, this is a matter for the local police.

WESKLER

Technically if we don't press charges, we're not legally obligated...

JUNGER

(Interrupting him.)

Technically speaking, but we don't who he's affiliated with, if he's a patsy for somebody more important, if this was an inside job. I'm not an interrogator... Have we given him a name for internal purposes?

REYNOLDS

Simon. He'll be referred to as Simon in our internal records.

JUNGER

If there's no record of how he got in there, somebody must've hacked into our security system. Planted false records.

WESKLER

He didn't even appear to know where he was. According to

Kindig, he kept claiming that he just appeared there because he willed it.

JUNGER

You talked with him?

WESKLER

Briefly. I didn't know what to make of it. Like I said. I think he's a space cadet.

JUNGER

Somebody else put him in there for a reason.

REYNOLDS

Rachel, that's why I want you talk to him, if he's crazy you might be able to make sense of it.

JUNGER

Is he dangerous?

WESKLER

Guards said that he surrendered quietly. He was unarmed... We checked his prints and DNA, no records. Like he was born in a cave.

JUNGER

Is he awake right now?

WESKLER

He should be. Let me check, and I'll be right back.

WESKLER Exits Reynold's office.

JUNGER is about to leave.

REYNOLDS

Rachel.

JUNGER

Yes?

REYNOLDS

I need your best guess about what makes Simon tick, not a grand theory about what it means in the greater world. That can come later.

JUNGER

You've already implicated me in something that violates every oath we've given... You understand that.

REYNOLDS

We're in extraordinary times. There are no good answers right now for what we're trying to accomplish.

JUNGER

I'll give you a report when I've got an idea of who he is. Keep administration off my back until I've had a chance to figure Simon out.

REYNOLDS

Good luck.

JUNGER exits the room.

REYNOLDS pauses for a moment, then she leaves the room.

ACT 1: SCENE III

The stage is dark.

JUNGER enters the silent, empty room. She looks around, unfamiliar with the space.

SIMON enters from the shadows and stares at JUNGER.

JUNGER waits for him to speak first.

SIMON

Are you blocking your thoughts?...

JUNGER

Are you trying to read my thoughts?

SIMON

Try? No we're not sharing our thoughts, are you blocking them?

JUNGER thinks for a moment and puts her pad of notes on the desk besides her.

JUNGER

Do people share their thoughts with you?

SIMON

Share?... We all have one mind, I know everything they know.

JUNGER

Who has one mind?

SIMON

The Vortex. The One-Mind. It's different here.

JUNGER

The Vortex is a place where people can read minds?

SIMON

We have one mind, we're all part one mind.

JUNGER

And you came from the Vortex?

SIMON

Yes. They sent me?

JUNGER

Who sent you?

SIMON

We sent me, the Vortex sent me.

JUNGER pauses a moment to process
what SIMON said.

JUNGER

Where is the Vortex?

SIMON

The Vortex wasn't born yet... They sent me before the
Vortex.

JUNGER

The Vortex is in the Future.

SIMON

Future? The Vortex hasn't happened yet, they sent me before
the Vortex.

JUNGER

Why did the Vortex choose you to come into the past?

SIMON

Choose me?... I don't understand.

JUNGER

The Vortex is made up of many people?

SIMON

Billions of us.

JUNGER

Why did it choose you to come to our time?...

SIMON

I don't understand the question.

JUNGER thinks about another line of
attack.

JUNGER

Are you the Vortex?

SIMON

We are the Vortex...

JUNGER

But the Vortex hasn't happened yet. Who are you when you're not... in the Vortex?

SIMON doesn't know how to answer
the question.

JUNGER

(Continued)

Why did the Vortex want to come into the past? What's special about our time?

SIMON

We forgot the past, we had to find out why it went wrong...

JUNGER

Something went wrong in your time. The time of the Vortex?

SIMON

It was flawed from the beginning. We could never reach our ultimate expression. Something was wrong at the beginning.

JUNGER

The Vortex was born here?

SIMON

Born?

JUNGER

Brought to life... How are people created in the Vortex? Are they born? Do people make love and bear children? Do you have a mother?

SIMON

The Vortex is our mother.

JUNGER

There is no childhood?

SIMON

We're just vessels for the Vortex... Our physical bodies are recycled, but it lives forever.

JUNGER

Because the Vortex can't die, it has to achieve perfection.

SIMON

We don't know how people lived before the Vortex.

JUNGER

Why isn't there a memory of that?

SIMON

We wanted to make a perfect future, without the burden of history. We didn't want to go back to the way things began.

JUNGER

But that was a mistake?

SIMON

Not a mistake. Not a mistake! It was wrong at the beginning. We focused on the wrong things.

JUNGER

So the Vortex was... came into existence in this time?

SIMON

That was lost in history. We were sent back in many times to find when the Vortex began.

JUNGER

You were sent to find the Messiah?

SIMON

A Messiah?

JUNGER

Did the Vortex just happen?... Or did a single figure spark its' birth?

SIMON

What's a Messiah?

JUNGER gathers her thoughts before speaking.

JUNGER

In our time... Before the Vortex happened, Messiah's claimed to have wisdom from beings beyond humanity and they reshaped the world in their image...

SIMON

A Messiah's a person?

JUNGER

Yes. A special person who becomes a symbol to many people.

SIMON

He created the Vortex?...

JUNGER

Or she did.

SIMON

She... She's like our Mother! She created the Vortex?

JUNGER

I don't know what created the Vortex. You're trying to find out.

SIMON

It has to be right at the beginning. Our problems come from the beginning.

JUNGER

What are you going to do when you find that moment?

SIMON

I... don't know... I forgot.

JUNGER

But you knew at one point.

SIMON

I knew everything in the Vortex. All the Wisdom of everyone in the Vortex was in my head... I knew what I had to do, but... I, I can't get to it.

JUNGER

Like a dream?

SIMON

A dream?

JUNGER

The memories you have from when you're asleep.

SIMON

We don't sleep.

JUNGER

You don't dream... In our time, when we sleep, we dream. Our dreams can be intense, but the memories of the dream fade when we wake up. Do you remember what being in the Vortex is like?

SIMON

It's getting harder and harder, I know that I was part of it, but I can't remember what it felt like to be in it.

JUNGER

You're losing your memory of Heaven.

SIMON

Heaven?

JUNGER

Do you remember if there was anything special about this time? This place that made the Vortex want to send you here and now?

SIMON looks visibly disturbed, the questions are overwhelming him.

SIMON

Something amazing happened here in this time...

SIMON gets up and walks into the darkness.

The lights rise and REYNOLDS enters.

ACT I: SCENE IV

DR. REYNOLD'S Office.

REYNOLDS

You look exhausted.

JUNGER

I talked with Simon for six hours. His delusions are perfect. His... fantasy world is completely self-referential, completely unfalsifiable. Normally...

REYNOLDS

(Interrupting her)

Do you know anything about his background? Where he came from?

JUNGER

I don't have a clue... That's what I meant when I said his delusional world is all encompassing and completely self-referential. There's no window into who he is. I couldn't even tell what country I think he's from. It's a perfect mental shield

REYNOLDS

Detectives couldn't make any identification of any database.

JUNGER

Normally, I can figure out the source of delusion in a session, but this is completely different.

REYNOLDS

Do you have any other thoughts about him?

JUNGER

Nothing that I would call a conclusion.

REYNOLDS

Thinking aloud.

JUNGER

It's possible that he's not exhibiting normal psychotic delusions, but that he was brainwashed...

REYNOLDS

You said that he believes that he came from the future? It sounds like a classic case of the Cassandra Complex.

JUNGER

But he's not hear to warn us of doom, he's searching for something. I still have to get my notes in order.

REYNOLDS

What makes you think he was brainwashed?

JUNGER

It's a hunch, his delusions aren't centered around persecution, or exile from some idealized state. Most delusional people know the truth, but can't get anyone else to believe them because they're special... Simon is searching for something, but doesn't even know what he's looking for. The way he described the Vortex...

REYNOLDS

(Interrupting her)

What's the Vortex?

JUNGER

It's the future that Simon believes he came from... His self-mythology has some singularity happening in the near future in our time that makes all of humanity a being with a single shared subconscious... That sounds more like the lies a cult that would brainwash a weak mind with.

REYNOLDS

But you have no way of proving it?

JUNGER

This could take me months to figure out.

REYNOLDS

You don't have that much time.

JUNGER

Unfortunately, I can't read his mind...

REYNOLDS looks at her notes.

REYNOLDS

A lot of other people want to talk with Simon and figure out why he got into that lab, I can't stonewall them indefinitely. We'll lose

JUNGER

Who?

REYNOLDS

High ranking officials in classified research and intelligence. I've only kept them from bothering us by not pressing any charges.

JUNGER

Simon's free to go?

REYNOLDS

Officially, he's not a patient, and we haven't acknowledged his breaking and entering, but I can't control the flow of rumors out of this facility.

JUNGER

So if he decides that he wants to walk out, I'd have to let him go?

REYNOLDS

Technically he can leave right now, does he know he's being kept here?

JUNGER

I don't know if he understands the concept of captivity or freedom...

REYNOLDS

Or restricted spaces?

JUNGER

Or he used to know and was brainwashed to forget these concepts...

REYNOLDS

I want more than your opinion about Simon... I need you to think about two questions... One, is there any group, outside the official channels who would know about the Cybernetics Lab or any details of the research program...

REYNOLDS

(Continued)

Two, is there any outside group that has the capability of bypassing our security measures to gain access to the facility?...

JUNGER thinks for a moment.

JUNGER

Why would any group that has the capability of breaking into the cybernetics lab put a man who's either completely delusional or brainwashed in the lab?

REYNOLDS

I'm too conventional a thinker to come up with scenarios... What do you know about the Analog Underground?...

JUNGER

I think they're all smoke and mirrors. They play the game of being some secret society that's actually pulling strings in our society.

REYNOLDS

But smoke and mirrors to what effect? I read that they were a terrorist organization.

JUNGER

According to the legends, they were an underground intelligence organization. A man who called himself Harlan organized hobos, street prophets, junkies... into an intelligence-gathering network. Claims to have devised some processing method of translating their paranoid theories into real, actionable knowledge.

REYNOLDS

He formed a crude hive mind.

JUNGER

It's supposed to be more than that. Supposedly, he read the collective paranoia as a giant emotional response mechanism that could be read...

REYNOLDS

Assuming that this is real, would they possibly have found out what happened in the Cybernetics lab?...

JUNGER

Personally, I think they're a performance art group that

give marginal people the illusion that they're important to history... But assuming that they have a few sharp people.

REYNOLDS

You're holding something back. You were trying to get close to them...

JUNGER

They knew exactly who I was before I even met them...

REYNOLDS pauses at JUNGER'S confession.

REYNOLDS

So it's possible that they know it exists.

JUNGER

All of this information's just flowing out there in the ether. Somebody could look at the curriculum vitae of the staff and find building as-builts or vendor records, and make a decent guess.

REYNOLDS

And the second question. Could they have pulled off the break in? Bypassing our security measures?

JUNGER

I don't know why they would. And why they would put Simon in there. Assuming that is the story, I don't know where they found Simon. Even the most down and out street hobos have fingerprints on file or a birth certificate or relatives, something. How would they scrub a person of his identity?

REYNOLDS

What else do you know about the Analog Underground? What's their objective?

JUNGER

It's not articulated in a clear cut manner.

REYNOLDS

Why is that?

JUNGER

Then their end of times theory sounds merely mundane... They believe that at some point in the future, a critical

mass of thinking machines, embedded computers, networks, portable devices will form some kind of collective intelligence that will enslave humanity, but we won't even be aware of it because that... digital intelligence will be so far beyond us. We would only have the illusion of directing our own fate.

REYNOLDS

An end of times cult for the digital age. They want to stop this digital singularity?

JUNGER

Their doctrine is about resistance and sabotage.

REYNOLDS

And they know who you are. You may be in danger. When's the last time that you were home?...

JUNGER

Yesterday morning.

REYNOLDS

I'll send a team to your apartment to get supplies for you, I want you to stay in our guest quarters while Simon is here.

JUNGER

I'm being kept here?

REYNOLDS

You just told me that some underground group knows who you are, meaning that they know where you live and I can't protect you there.

JUNGER

If they're the ones who broke into the Cybernetics lab, you can't do so here.

REYNOLDS

We don't know what's going on, or who's watching you... For the time being, I want you to stay here and focus on Simon.

JUNGER

And what about the Analog Underground?...

REYNOLDS

The detectives are already looking into it, they'll contact

you if they have any questions....

REYNOLDS exits.

Lights out.

ACT I: SCENE V

Simon's cell

SIMON

(Offstage)

We don't go anywhere... We... just are there... The Vortex figured out how to free ourselves from physical space...

JUNGER enters SIMON'S cell.

It's called jaunting...

JUNGER

Can you jaunt through time?...

SIMON

Yes... but not like we can jaunt in space... Time jaunting takes too much out of the Vortex.

JUNGER

Can you... jaunt in this time?...

SIMON

I can't remember how...

JUNGER

But you jaunted in the Vortex?

SIMON

Here... I can't see where I need to go... In the Vortex, all I had to do was put the place I needed to be in my mind and I would appear there...

JUNGER

So you need to be in the Vortex to jaunt?

SIMON

I didn't know it would be like this.

JUNGER

How are you supposed to go back to your time?...

SIMON

I don't know...

JUNGER

You didn't know that before the Vortex sent you here?

SIMON

I am the Vortex.

JUNGER

You're not the Vortex in this time. There is no Vortex here and now.

SIMON

I don't know what the outside world looks like now... Do you have... anything to put the images in my mind?

JUNGER

Books... I can get you books that describe the world today for you. Will you be able to Jaunt if you see images?

SIMON

I don't know... I can't put the images in my mind to Jaunt...

JUNGER

Like a remembered dream?

SIMON looks confused.

JUNGER

(Continued.)

In our world we have what's called Waking Life. Humans in this time sleep... A state that closes us off to the world. Our minds create dreams when we're asleep.

SIMON

Why?

JUNGER

We don't know

SIMON

Why can't you remember your dreams when you wake up?

JUNGER

We don't know. Some people think it's so that we don't confuse our dreams from what's real. Your people don't sleep or dream?

SIMON

We're always in the Vortex.

JUNGER
Are there any people outside the Vortex?

SIMON
Here?

JUNGER
In your time.

SIMON
There was an exodus. People closed their minds to us and disappeared... They hid in the Mountains.

JUNGER
You didn't follow them?

SIMON
I did follow them... I tried to escape with them, but I couldn't be away from the Vortex.

JUNGER
Where you captured or did you go back voluntarily?...

SIMON
I was offered a chance to come back. It needed me.

JUNGER
It needed you to come back to our time.

SIMON
To find who created us and warn her. I chose to come here.

JUNGER
Warn her?

SIMON
You said that there was a Messiah who created the Vortex.

JUNGER
That's one possible explanation.

SIMON
I'm learning how to... remember in this time. I had to warn someone.

JUNGER

But you were sent, not somebody else in the Vortex.

SIMON

I represent the Vortex. All of us represent the Vortex.

JUNGER

What went wrong in your time?... You were sent back in time to fix what went wrong with the Vortex at its' moment of conception.

SIMON

We stopped being one mind, there was conflict.

JUNGER

A revolt?

SIMON

Not a revolt. We couldn't stop trying to evolve to the next level, constantly taking the Vortex to a new plane of existence. It was compulsive, it couldn't. We couldn't stop.

JUNGER

And it thinks that it can reset its' birth to eliminate that problem?

SIMON

We couldn't function as one mind. Everything was based on being one mind, we were becoming many minds.

JUNGER

And you were losing your powers?

SIMON

We can't be two minds or three minds...

JUNGER

So what went wrong in the beginning? Why did the Vortex send you back here to find the Messiah?

SIMON

The Vortex can't change. People try to form a new one, but we only know one way of being. It becomes the same mind...

JUNGER

But why is that a bad thing?

SIMON

The Vortex is everything. If it changes, then we're all flawed.

JUNGER

Would you die for the Vortex?

SIMON

No-one dies in the Vortex.

JUNGER writes some notes down.

JUNGER

You can die in this time... Does that worry you?...

SIMON

I feel alive...

JUNGER

How are deviants punished in the Vortex?

SIMON

Deviants?

JUNGER

Rebels, non-conformists, people in the Vortex who threaten its' existence. The Vortex must have a way of protecting itself from... subversive elements within.

SIMON

The Vortex changes... The Vortex is in constant flux, it was always evolving to the next plane of transcendence. The only rebels are the outcasts.

JUNGER

The Vortex expels people?

SIMON

We are the Vortex... They want to leave, banished... It's all the same thing.

JUNGER

Where do the Outcasts go?...

SIMON

There are floating colonies in the Oceans... Most of them come back to the Vortex. They can't stay inside their own

heads... We forgot how to live in our own heads.

JUNGER

That's what went wrong with the Vortex?

SIMON

We threw all the knowledge away so we couldn't turn back, we had to accept the Vortex... There was no way to function outside of it, all ideas had to be part of the Vortex, we couldn't protect ourselves from dangerous thoughts... We can't throw the past away.

JUNGER

But if that's true in your time, isn't it destined to happen?

SIMON

The Future hasn't happened yet.

JUNGER

From your perspective, it already has happened. It's your past.

SIMON

But it isn't now.

JUNGER

So the future can be changed... Do you believe that you'll help create a new Vortex... A new Vortex in your image?

SIMON

I'm just a messenger.

JUNGER

But your message will change the future. You'll change what message your Messiah spreads.

SIMON

I don't know if I'll know what to tell her... I don't know how things should be different. I knew in the Vortex, but it's all... just out of my reach.

JUNGER writes a note down on her note pad.

JUNGER

How did the Vortex know... How did you know where to come to.

SIMON

When?

JUNGER

Where... Did something happened here to make the Vortex happen?...

SIMON doesn't understand the questions.

JUNGER

What's the first thing that you remember seeing when... you appeared in this time?...

SIMON gets up and paces about the room.

SIMON

The room felt alive... I opened my eyes and I was surrounded by, by blinking lights, machines. There aren't any machines in the Vortex, we grow our technology up here.

SIMON taps his head.

SIMON

(Continued.)

That's how I knew that the temporal jaunt was successful... I tried to communicate with the machines... But I couldn't feel outside thoughts. I thought there were no other people...

JUNGER

Was there anything special about that particular room? Or those machines? Why were you sent to that particular room?

SIMON

Something happened in that space that was important.

JUNGER

And the Vortex remembered what happened in that room?

SIMON

No, that it was important. Something amazing happened in that room and I need to find out. I need to find the Messiah.

JUNGER

You think the Messiah was in that room?

SIMON

I know that something amazing happened in this place, in this time... You have to help me find the Messiah. She's out there right now, you know more about the Vortex than any other human in this time, you have to help me.

JUNGER

What are you looking for?

SIMON

I know that I'll recognize her when I find her, I don't have much time.

JUNGER

You could be in the wrong time.

SIMON approaches JUNGER.

SIMON

No, this is the right time, right now. How do I get out to find her?...

JUNGER backs away from SIMON.

JUNGER

You're not ready to go out there.

SIMON

We put people in treatment centers that were like this. They were mazes, none of the layouts made any sense so it was impossible to know where the building ended... To keep us from being able to jaunt outside.

JUNGER

I thought you the Vortex didn't have prisons.

SIMON

They weren't prisons. We were kept in there until we could come back into the Vortex again. We couldn't read minds outside the centers. They were like this.

JUNGER

You don't have a place to stay? You don't have any means to get around, you don't even can't even buy anything in our time.

SIMON

You have to help me then, you have to be my guide.

JUNGER

I can't do that.

SIMON

So when can I leave this place?

JUNGER

In time.

SIMON

There is no time.

JUNGER

From your perspective, there is a great deal of time.

SIMON

If I can't find the Messiah, I have to record history and hide it so that the Vortex can find it in my time.

JUNGER

I can't let you out until you tell me how you got into the room with the blinking lights? And how you knew why that room was important.

SIMON

What if the memory never comes back to me?

JUNGER

It will, until then, you need to stay here we can protect you.

SIMON

I can feel it, something amazing's going to happen out there, and I need to be there...

JUNGER backs away from SIMON. The lights fade.

JUNGER exits.

ACT I: SCENE VI

A quiet parking lot.

Occasionally, the faint sound of a car doors opening and closing, cars driving and tires squealing can be heard from cars in the distance.

Sometimes their lights flash across darkened space.

JUNGER enters, wearing a worn, bulky coat and a hat to conceal her identity.

She looks around for a moment, waiting.

A car drives by in the distance, momentarily distracting her as the headlights temporarily blind her.

HARLAN enters from the shadows.

HARLAN

Stay where you are.

JUNGER turns to him.

HARLAN

(Continued.)

Did anyone follow you?

JUNGER

I don't think so.

HARLAN

Either you were followed, or you weren't followed... You walked the route like I told you?

JUNGER

Yes.

HARLAN

You took two taxis and you paid cash?

JUNGER

Yes.

HARLAN

You left all your electronic devices behind?

JUNGER

Yes.

HARLAN

You snuck out the service exit in your building?

JUNGER

I did everything you wrote me to do.

HARLAN

You then burned the note?

JUNGER

I did everything you asked.

HARLAN walks out of the shadows and circles JUNGER.

Another car drives off in the distance.

He looks in the direction of the car before talking.

HARLAN

Happenstance has put you at the center of something very big.

JUNGER

I don't know what you're talking about.

HARLAN

You act like I don't know about your unofficial client... All that information's just flowing about out there. We just know how to grab it.

JUNGER

Then you planted a mole.

HARLAN

Why I know isn't important. What's important is that you

don't know the entire story... You still don't know why he targeted you.

JUNGER

He doesn't even know where he is or why. Did you have a role in planting him?

HARLAN

Planting him? Why would we do something that crude.

JUNGER

He didn't act alone. So somebody did.

HARLAN

Your guest is just a pawn. Programmed to play his minor role and then walk off the stage. You have to ask a different question. What reaction was he supposed to provoke from your colleagues?

JUNGER

Why did you go to all the trouble to tell me that?

HARLAN

First ask yourself the question. Your patient isn't important in and of himself.

JUNGER

That doesn't help me. It doesn't answer how he bypassed our security.

HARLAN

Who or what's in charge of your security systems?...

JUNGER

I don't want to play these games.

HARLAN

What controls access to your offices?...

JUNGER

Internal security officers.

HARLAN

Directly? Do they man the card swipe stations? Do they type everything in the computers?

JUNGER

They manage the computer network.

HARLAN

They punch keys on computer keyboards...

JUNGER

Why would a computer network plant a brainwashed amnesia victim in our facility? Where did it find him?

HARLAN

He's not important.

JUNGER

To you. He still has parents, a previous life. He was still a child once.

HARLAN

The singularity doesn't care about any individual person. The masses are clay for it to shape in its' Brave New World.

JUNGER

Is he in danger?

HARLAN

You all are... Something very important is happening, and that lab is at the center of it.

JUNGER

What am I supposed to do with your warnings?

They both pause as another distant car leaves the garage.

They wait for the noise to be gone before continuing.

HARLAN

Have you noticed anything strange in your life lately?...

JUNGER

What kind of danger am I in.

HARLAN

Look back on your daily life. Think about the technology you rely on to go about your daily life. Your phones, your computers. Where do you store your information? How do strangers know you're who you say you are?

JUNGER

The Singularity knows who I am?

HARLAN

Don't think of it as a single entity.

JUNGER

What's its' goal?

HARLAN

What's the goal of any self-aware intelligence? To reshape the world in its' own image.

JUNGER

What does it want with me?

HARLAN

Ask yourself one question. What happened to you after Patient Zero was found in your facility. What worlds did you connect after that.

JUNGER

I'm tired of solving these riddles...

Another car starts up. A moment later the headlights brighten the space, temporarily blinding Junger.

HARLAN disappears into the shadows.

ACT I: SCENE VII

Enter JUNGER. She's yawning, clearly exhausted.

She sits down and looks at her notes.

SIMON appears in a pool of light behind her, disembodied, like in a dream.

SIMON

We know what the idea of a prison is, but it wasn't a

prison. It's all getting clearer now, I can remember more of what it was like to be in the Vortex.

The institutes were about training, they were a refuge. Every door lead to another room, which lead to another room. The building seemed to go in infinitely in all directions...

I wandered through the building, trying to find something familiar, but it was all strange. And then when I tried to go back to where I started it, I couldn't find the way back. It was like the building changed behind me.

You need to have a clear image in your mind of where you want to be to jaunt. You can't jaunt if you don't have a clear image of where you are. Not just what's around you, but its' relation to another space. You have to know how to go there, you have a map in your head. The institutes were laid out so you couldn't make a map in your head, you were stuck in your own head...

It's all coming back to me. I was in there to prepare for the jaunt to this time... It was the first time I had a dream. In the Vortex, there is no difference between sleeping and being awake. Our dreams are part of the Vortex...

I dreamt about... A mountain. There was a group of people on a mountain. They were singing. I was climbing up the mountain to find them, but they were always out of reach. They were always too far away from me to be clear...

SIMON

(Continued.)

In my dream, I got to the top of a ridge and looked down. There was nothing below. No buildings, no lights. In the dream, I knew that there was no Vortex anywhere. I knew that they people at the top of the Mountain new how to find the Vortex.

I don't know how to explain it. The Mountain went up forever. I'd get to a new a new peak, and there was more Mountain ahead. They were always further up the Mountain...

There were bodies on the path up to the top. They were frozen, hands reaching towards the top of the Mountain. They were a sign, there'd been others before that failed...

I got to the top of the Mountain... They were gone. I was alone at the top and I didn't know how to get back down again...

Others came before me... We've been in history. All of it.

JUNGER gets up and faces SIMON.

JUNGER

But most in the Vortex stayed behind... Isn't that right?

SIMON

The Vortex can't perform mass jaunting.

JUNGER

Why were a certain few chosen to go back into history?...

SIMON

Our minds were open...

JUNGER

What does that mean?

SIMON

We'd forgotten history... Everything except the basic outlines of what humanity achieved before us. The Great Empires, the Religion, but not what it was like. We were sent back because we would accept whatever reality was true in that time.

JUNGER

And you were all in that maze building?

SIMON

We had to learn how to dream.

JUNGER

Did anyone escape it?...

SIMON

I don't know... People appeared and disappeared. There was no night or day, we all slept in different rooms every time we laid down... This place is different. I can hear the sounds through the walls... I figured out what paths lead me outside, but I can't open the doors.

JUNGER

They're locked.

SIMON
Did you capture those images in the book?

JUNGER
That I gave you?

SIMON
Of the... paintings on the walls, the old buildings?

JUNGER
That was my work, did you recognize anything in it?

SIMON
I recognize that symbol, I was there!

JUNGER
In front of the Factory?

SIMON
Factory?

JUNGER
The large building with no windows.

SIMON
I was there... You have to take me there.

JUNGER
I can't take you there.

SIMON
How long will you keep me here? Did I do something wrong?

JUNGER backs away from him again.
SIMON follows.

SIMON
(Continued.)
I can't do anything if I'm trapped in this building, I can't
change history from in these walls!

JUNGER exits, the lights go out.

ACT I: SCENE VIII

REYNOLDS enters with a phone to her ear.

REYNOLDS

(Into phone.)

We already talked with the guards and crosschecked their stories... There were no discrepancies, everything matched up with our records... Everything that we know at this point of time is in the report...

JUNGER enters her office, looking haggard and disheveled.

REYNOLDS

(Continued. Into Phone.)

I have to deal with something, I'll get back to you.

She clicks the phone and puts it in her jacket pocket.

REYNOLDS

(Continued.)

Where were you? We've been looking for you for hours.

JUNGER

We have to check into our records, there may have been more than one attempt to get into the cybernetics lab.

REYNOLDS

What are you talking about?

JUNGER

Simon claims that he wasn't the only one.

REYNOLDS

He told you how he got into the cybernetics lab?

JUNGER

He now believes that the Vortex sent agents throughout history.

REYNOLDS

That's not what he talked about last night.

JUNGER

We can't expect his memory work in any structured way.

REYNOLDS

He's not an amnesia victim.

JUNGER

He clearly believes that he's remembering a real memory, whenever he recounts another experience from the Vortex. He's communicating his experience through his stories of the Vortex. I think whoever planted him, tried it before with others and Simon knows it.

REYNOLDS

That sounds like a theory from a first-year undergrad.

JUNGER

He clearly didn't come from the future.

REYNOLDS

You didn't answer your phone. We've been trying to contact you all night.

JUNGER

I never got any call.

REYNOLDS

Did you have your phone on you?

JUNGER

I've had it with me, and I never received any call.

REYNOLDS

Could you check your phone for me?

JUNGER reaches into her jacket pocket and pulls her phone out.

She hands it to REYNOLDS who looks through it, verifying that there are no missed calls or messages on it.

JUNGER

Maybe there's a glitch in the phone network, or maybe somebody some tech admin has it in for me.

REYNOLDS

Where were you last night?...

JUNGER

I went for a long walk.

REYNOLDS

Do you have any way to corroborate that?

JUNGER

No, I needed to get away from this place and clear my mind so I could make sense of what Simon was telling me.

REYNOLDS looks at JUNGER in her disheveled glory.

JUNGER

(Continued.)

I dressed like this so I wouldn't attract attention... Your questions about the Analog Underground made me paranoid... Something's wrong.

REYNOLDS

You weren't recognized by anyone last night? No-one recognized you?...

JUNGER

I was alone all night... I need to think through everything without distractions. It was on my own time.

REYNOLDS

You didn't notice anyone following you? No-one's been in your apartment?

JUNGER

Can you tell me what's going on?

REYNOLDS

Wait a minute please.

REYNOLDS pulls her phone out, presses a button and speaks into it.

REYNOLDS

(Continued.)

Could you page Dr. Weskler... Yes, tell him to come to my office... It's urgent.

JUNGER

Did someone break into the lab again?

REYNOLDS regards JUNGER with a blank expression.

REYNOLDS

Don't take this personally, but I have to be sure.

JUNGER

You're not telling me what's wrong.

REYNOLDS

Have any... outside groups tried to contact you?... It's part of procedure to report any clandestine groups that try to get in touch with you...

JUNGER doesn't say anything.

REYNOLDS

(Continued.)

You do know that this whole facility is under a Special Security Agreement. Not reporting clandestine communications is a felony offense. This isn't grad school and writing books, we have obligations.

JUNGER

You also hired me because of my insights into fringe organizations.

REYNOLDS

We're not in normal times...

JUNGER

You told me that you wanted an outside perspective, when you called me.

REYNOLDS

I wanted to give you another chance to set yourself up. Your life was one failure after another...

JUNGER

(Interrupting her.)

By your definition of success... I only came on board because you promised me a platform to do something original.

REYNOLDS

I wanted you take your insights and apply them with discretion. Not to treat this facility as an extension of your personal obsessions.

JUNGER

Everything I've done ties into the goals of the organization.

REYNOLDS

You're still looking for personal glory... We might change the world, but we're supposed to be anonymous here. Our names aren't supposed to become infamous. Our work is supposed to stand on its' own. You haven't separated your identity from your work.

JUNGER

Because I don't treat patients like specimens in a petri dish...

DR. WESKLER enters the office.

He clearly slept in his clothes.

WESKLER

You requested my presence...

REYNOLDS

I found Dr. Junger.

JUNGER

I came in here on my own...

WESKLER pauses.

WESKLER

Do you know what happened?

JUNGER

No, I honestly don't. Will somebody please explain what's going on right now?

WESKLER and REYNOLDS look at each other.

REYNOLDS nods at him.

WESKLER

Your friend Simon has disappeared.

JUNGER

Disappeared?

WESKLER

There's no signs of him in the entire facility, security already ran a thorough sweep.

JUNGER

He escaped?

WESKLER

We don't have any evidence of that, only that there's no sign of him anywhere in this building... Either he pulled Houdini or somebody else bypassed our security system to get him out.

JUNGER

(To Reynolds.)

Why didn't you tell me at the beginning, I might be able to find him.

WESKLER

We have more questions now than we have answers. It's just like the break-in to the Cybernetics Lab, it's as if he just teleported himself through the walls.

JUNGER pauses when she hears this.

REYNOLDS

Rachel?... Is something wrong?

JUNGER

What's the last moment we have any record of him being in the facility?...

WESKLER

Five hours ago.

JUNGER

We have to find him before the police pick him up...

REYNOLDS

(Interrupting her)

We're not a security team Rachel.

JUNGER

We're not prison officials either, and now someone in our custody escaped.

REYNODS

Is there any evidence that he had outside help?

WESKLER

We actually don't have evidence of anything. He wasn't anywhere to be found this morning. That's the only firm conclusion that we can make.

JUNGER

If an outside group broke him out our best chance to find him is now.

WESKLER

If some outside group did break him out, they have access to all our security codes, they know where every camera in this building is, they can bypass advanced computer locks, and apparently they can climb buildings...

REYNOLDS

What do you mean?

WESKLER

There are guards stationed at every ground level entrance to the building and none of the windows open. The only way in this entire building without coming across somebody is through the roof. That's how they came in, that's how they came out.

REYNOLDS

That's only a starting assumption, we're still performing a full review of our procedures.

JUNGER

Ian, is the entire security system connected to the network?

WESKLER

The whole system is integrated into the facility network.

JUNGER

Is that network connected to the web? Could someone hack into our systems?

WESKLER

We're connected to the wider networks, but it'd be impossible to conduct that kind of hyper coordinated hack from the outside and not leave a trace.

JUNGER

Unless the entire network is corrupted.

REYNOLDS

We can't do anything on hypothetical conjecture... There's probably something very simple that all of us have overlooked... Right now, I need to tell Senior management about everything and I need to talk with the police so that they know who Simon is.

JUNGER

We don't know who Simon is.

REYNOLDS

This has to be done quietly; I can't start a massive man hunt for a man who's officially committed no crime.

JUNGER

I have a better chance of finding them than the police.

REYNOLDS

That still isn't your job. I'll arrange a meeting with our detectives and you can give them a full debriefing but I can't have you out there compromising our institutional integrity.

JUNGER

Ian, what conclusion would you make if his escape was truly impossible?

WESKLER

Impossible?

JUNGER

If all evidence pointed to him just teleporting out of the room.

WESKLER

Obviously that's an impossible conclusion, he escaped or was broken out somehow. I want to know why he's so important that somebody would do that...

JUNGER

The answer to that isn't in this building.

REYNOLDS

You should get some sleep Rachel. There are other patients that need your attention.

JUNGER

Ask the detectives if they've noticed anything odd happening in the last few weeks.

JUNGER walks out of the room.

Lights Fade.

ACT I: SCENE IX

Rachel Junger's apartment.

JUNGER enters the apartment and turns the lights on. She takes off her jacket and her shoes.

The sounds of the city filter through her window. Police sirens, loud motorcycles, loud conversations etc.

A growing noise attracts her attention. She looks up at an approaching vehicle and backs away from the window.

A moment later, an outside explosion shakes the walls of her apartment.

The lights flicker and go out. Sirens can be heard approaching from the distance.

There are more sounds of commotion.

HARLAN enters with a lantern that lights up the apartment.

He's dirty and wearing disheveled clothes.

JUNGER
How'd you get in here?

HARLAN
Give me your phone.

JUNGER
What?

HARLAN puts the lantern on her table.

HARLAN
Your phone! Give me your phone!

HARLAN reaches into JUNGER's pocket.

JUNGER
It's in my jacket pocket.

HARLAN pulls JUNGER's phone of her jacket pocket and smashes it.

JUNGER
(Continued.)
What are you doing?

HARLAN
Pack some luggage, you have to leave here tonight. Leave your electronics behind.

JUNGER
This is insane, why are you in my apartment!

HARLAN
Everything else is monitored. You're not safe here anymore.

JUNGER
Why did you break my phone?

HARLAN
Cyberdrone signal.

JUNGER
What's the Cyberdrone signal?

HARLAN starts gathering supplies while he talks to Junger.

HARLAN
You already know the beginning of the story. Eight ex-junkies in the New Hope Mission. You knew them.

JUNGER
They started hearing voices at the same time. They all left the Mission.

HARLAN

We took them in. Last week we brought them to Paxon medical center for brain scans. What they diagnosed as brain tumors were discovered in every single one... Those aren't brain tumors. Something induced the growth of a new organ in the brain to facilitate low-level machine to human telepathy. But it's more complicated than mind control, the Singularity wants to modify humanity in its' own image. It's starting at the margins of humanity where we won't notice. The meek will inherit the Earth.

JUNGER

That's insane.

HARLAN

It wasn't born, it had no creation myth, it just happened. What do you do with omnipotence? When you have the power of God, you remake God in your own image. You uplift the beings of your creation to reflect your own self-conception. Those junkies represent the next stage in humanity.

JUNGER

There's no conspiracy! New Hope moved them out because the state cut their budget. They heard voices because they suffered from paranoid schizophrenia. They were all squatting in an abandoned electro-plating factory. Who knows what they were exposed to? Why would they believe that the voices in their heads didn't mean anything and they were handicapped?

HARLAN

Do you know where they are now?

JUNGER

I don't.

HARLAN

You haven't stared into the abyss have you?

A fire truck passes close to the window and then recedes. Flashing lights shine through the window.

JUNGER

I heard the same theory about the Illuminati using radio waves to brainwash cult groups.

HARLAN

How would you tell the difference between a conspiracy theory and the verge of extraordinary times?... You never stared into the abyss. You're still worried about being ostracized by colleagues you don't even like. Who are your real peers?