

A Blast of Thunder

written by  
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September, 2021

FADE IN:

**EXT. FLETCHER BAY, WASHINGTON - OPEN WATER - NIGHT**

The reflection of argent moonlight dances across a current of calmly bobbing ocean waves.

OFFSCREEN - the rhythmic echo of wood against sloshing water until an oar slaps INTO FRAME. The mirrored moon ripples as a ten-foot wooden rowing skiff is thrust forward.

GEORGE MORLEY (36) - blue-collar handsome, wool overcoat and Duncker cap - navigates toward a dock on the shoreline of an island town dotted with evergreen trees and modest homes.

He gazes upward. Storm clouds encroach the blackening sky.

George glances over his shoulder at the island horizon and continues tugging his oars as the skiff approaches the dock.

MALE RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Fellow Americans, do your part.  
Help our armed forces beat back  
the enemy - and protect your own  
life - by putting dimes into  
Defense Stamps and dollars into  
Bonds...

SUPER: BAINBRIDGE ISLAND - OFF THE COAST OF SEATTLE  
DECEMBER, 1941

**EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - VILLAGE MARKETPLACE - NIGHT**

The Announcer's voice spouts from a radio in a parked Cadillac Eight. A cigar-gnawing MAN behind the wheel listens.

MALE RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
...Buy now. Buy every payday. Buy  
as often as you can...

Work lunchpail in hand, George walks along a main thoroughfare of the otherwise sleepy island town. The complex contains a market, gas pumps, and coffee shop. A pre-storm wind kicks up.

MALE RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Buy as if your life depends on it.  
It does!

TOWNSFOLK mingle outside the business fronts. A TOWNSMAN makes eye contact with George and nods.

TOWNSMAN  
'Evening, George.

GEORGE  
 (nods)  
 'Evening.

George ambles past windows festooned subtly with Christmas accessories, past billowing newspaper stacks with a headline - ISLAND DEFENSE WORKERS WATCH FOR AIR RAIDS.

As George walks past the coffee shop entrance, PATRONS exit. A 2ND MALE ANNOUNCER continues over a radio inside. SHIPYARD WORKERS dressed similarly to George nurse mugs at a counter. MRS. KITTLE approaches them to offer refills.

MRS. KITTLE  
 (calls from inside)  
 Good Evening, George.

GEORGE  
 'Evening, Mrs. Kittle.

MALE RADIO ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)  
 A reminder, good citizens, of your pledge of silence on Army or Navy news, as valuable information could be of aid or comfort to the enemy...

George continues past the market complex and down a dark, tree-lined dirt road that leads to the outskirts of town.

MALE RADIO ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)  
 The nation's leaders, in whom we must place trust, implore every patriotic American to cooperate with all branches of our Armed Forces in any wartime censorship that is requested or ordered...

#### **EXT. MORLEY HOUSE / KANEMURA FARMHOUSE - NIGHT**

George arrives at the white picket fence property line of a humble arts and crafts bungalow with a facade of creek stone. A walkway leads past a twisty elm tree and toward a cozy porch area furnished with a rocking chair near the front door.

MALE RADIO ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)  
 In other words, folks...mum's the word!...

George pauses at the gate. His look shifts toward the adjacent property - a sloping-gable farmhouse settled in the distance amidst plowed strawberry fields awaiting the spring season.

## ON THE KANEMURA FARMHOUSE PORCH

RAY KANEMURA (50) - a sturdy Japanese-American in denim overalls - stands under a hipped roof. He adjusts the straw fedora on his head just as his look meets George's.

A tinge of hesitation - perhaps gauging - between the two before Ray tips his brim and nods.

George returns the nod.

PRE-LAP - "ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH", SUNG BY A YOUNG GIRL

KATHERINE

Come to Bethlehem and see...

**INT. MORLEY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

A warm, sweet, simple space with meager decorations of the season. KATHERINE (7) - angel-faced - stands alongside RICHIE (10) - ruddy - as they perform.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

Him Whose birth the angels sing...

RICHIE

Come, adore on bended knee, Christ  
the Lord the newborn King...

KATHERINE / RICHIE

Gloria, In Excelsis Deo.  
Gloria, In Excelsis Deo.

George - in an indigo denim shirt and jeans, sits on a puffy sofa next to his wife JANET MORLEY (36) - dainty beauty in a Kitty Foyle dress. They applaud lightly.

VIRGIL WICKMAN (36) - sleek hair, spear point collared shirt and loosened tie - claps from a snug armchair.

VIRGIL

Wonderful, kids, just wonderful.

JANET

And they were every bit as  
precious when they sang at the  
school holiday show.

GEORGE

Janet's right, Virgil. Wish you  
could have seen the entire  
performance.

VIRGIL

Well, lucky me, I get a front row seat for the encore.

GEORGE

Alright, critters, time to take a bow and say goodnight. It's just about bedtime.

RICHIE

Aww. Now, Pa?

Janet rises, walks to Richie and Katherine to round them up.

JANET

Yes, "now", Richie. Both of you, say goodnight to Virgil.

KATHERINE

Goodnight.

RICHIE

Goodnight.

VIRGIL

'Night, kids. Stop growing' up so fast, will ya?

The kids smile. Janet leads them toward a hallway. Katherine turns back and walks over to George.

KATHERINE

Daddy? Were we really as good tonight as Mommy said we were at the holiday show?

George smiles. His hand gently strokes Katherine's cheek.

GEORGE

You were better than good, angel. You were perfect.

Katherine twinkles. They hug.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Goodnight, sweetheart.

KATHERINE

Goodnight.

Katherine wears a happy grin. She follows Janet and Richie down the hallway.

Virgil looks at George, watches as George smiles lovingly at his family.

VIRGIL  
 Sure is something', ain't it,  
 George?

GEORGE  
 Sure is.

**INT. MORLEY HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

George and Virgil sit across from one another at a dining table. Coffee steams from mugs in front of them, smoke billows from both men's cigarettes.

VIRGIL  
 I can't get over how quick them kids are sproutin' up. Next thing ya know, Ol' Richie's gonna be a doll-dizzy teenager. Then you'll really have problems.

GEORGE  
 Ain't that the truth.

VIRGIL  
 And little Katherine sure is an angel.

Virgil takes a drag, reaches into his pants pocket.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)  
 Speakin' of angels...

He pulls out a small, square cardboard gift box, offers it across the table to George as he lifts the lid to reveal a silver pot metal brooch - a winged herald angel, wispy and in flight, blowing a horn.

GEORGE  
 (smiles)  
 Hey, you brought it.

VIRGIL  
 'Course I brought it, I told you I would. But trust me, it ain't easy gettin' your hands on one of those. Good thing you're pals with the best jewelry salesman in the business.

GEORGE  
 Thanks, Virgil. Katherine's gonna be tickled.

(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)

She never liked that her birthday's so close to Christmas. I wanted to do something special for her this year. Thanks for helping me make it happen.

VIRGIL

Don't mention it, pal.

George beams, closes the box, tucks it in his pants pocket.

GEORGE

(exhales, rubs his eyes)  
Boy, I'll tell ya, these long hours at the shipyard got me off-kilter.

VIRGIL

Long hours are what we need, 'we want this war to end right quick. You hear the news? Some anchor clanker's broad rustled up a mob in downtown Seattle; smashed out lights and store signs so the Japs can't see us from the air.

GEORGE

Well, she'd-a done good to mind her own business, let Uncle Sam handle those sort of affairs.

VIRGIL

Maybe, maybe not, but it's good to know somebody out there's got our backs.

OFFSCREEN - three knocks on the front door. Both men turn their attention toward the sound. George's brow furls as he looks to Virgil.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

You expecting more dinner guests?

George shakes his head. Janet emerges from an adjacent hallway, shoots George a quizzical look as she walks into--

THE LIVING ROOM

and opens the front door. Ray Kanemura stands before her. Storm wind kicks up around him. He cradles a metal cake plate.

JANET

Mr. Kanemura...

RAY  
 (removes his straw hat)  
 Good Evening, Mrs. Morley. Pardon  
 me if I'm calling on you folks at  
 a late hour.

Janet shifts her look toward George as he halts at the kitchen  
 entryway. She looks back to Ray.

JANET  
 It's no bother at all. Please,  
 come in.

RAY  
 Thank you kindly.

Ray walks into the living room, halts between Janet and George.

RAY (CONT'D)  
 Hello again, George.

GEORGE  
 Ray...

RAY  
 (to Janet)  
 I hadn't seen George in quite a  
 spell, so when I caught a glimpse  
 of him out front tonight, I  
 thought it was a good opportunity  
 to bring over a raw apple cake;  
 compliments of the Missus, of  
 course.

JANET  
 (accepts the plate)  
 That's very lovely of both of you.

RAY  
 It's our pleasure.

George nods a thank you. Janet looks to George, then to Ray as  
 she searches for a segue.

JANET  
 (to George)  
 I'll cut servings for you  
 gentlemen, and...I'll leave you  
 alone to talk.

Ray nods. Janet bows lightly, makes her way past George and  
 into the kitchen. George looks over his shoulder at Virgil.

GEORGE

Uh, Ray, I believe you've met my friend Virgil Wickman from Seattle.

RAY

Yes, of course. Hello again, Mr. Wickman.

FROM HIS SEAT IN THE KITCHEN

Virgil gives a languid nod.

BACK IN THE LIVING ROOM

George takes stock of Ray, gestures to his work attire.

GEORGE

Another long workday on the farm?

RAY

Oh, no, just tucking the strawberry crop in before the winter frost. Hoping a good spring harvest will aid in the war effort.

A sense of palpable discomfort at the mention of the war.

GEORGE

I'm sure it will.

RAY

Well, uh...I didn't mean to call on you during a visit with company.

GEORGE

Aw, it's quite all right. There's fresh coffee...and now apple cake.

Ray offers a polite, uncomfortable chuckle. His eyes meet Virgil's again. He notes Virgil's concentrated observation.

RAY

That's awfully kind of you. I'd best be headed home to batten down. Looks like a storm is rolling in.

Ray walks toward the front door. George accompanies.

GEORGE

Nice to see you, Ray.

(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
 (opens front door)  
 Please thank Nobuko for the cake.

RAY  
 I'll do that.  
 (to Virgil in the kitchen)  
 Pleasure seeing you again, Mr.  
 Wickman.

Virgil eyes Ray, blows out a mouthful of cigarette smoke.

RAY (CONT'D)  
 (calling to the kitchen)  
 Good Night, Mrs. Morley.

Janet appears in the entryway, toting plates with cake slices.

JANET  
 Good Night, Mr. Kanemura.

RAY  
 (to George)  
 You folks have a nice evening.

George nods. Ray walks toward a curled wind in the darkness.  
 George closes the front door.

George makes his way--

BACK INTO THE KITCHEN

Janet sets the two plates on the table.

VIRGIL  
 Thank You, Janet.

JANET  
 Goodnight, Virgil.

Janet exits past George as he sits in front of a plate. Virgil  
 takes a drag from his cigarette, studies George.

GEORGE  
 I thought Janet was aces in the  
 kitchen. Wait'll you try what  
 Ray's old lady whipped up.

Virgil pays no mind to the plate in front of him.

VIRGIL  
 This farmer neighbor of yours...  
 You say he plants strawberries?

GEORGE  
As long as I've known him.

VIRGIL  
Works hard, does he?

GEORGE  
(considers)  
Yeah, I'd say so.

VIRGIL  
Mm-hm...a bit off the cob, that  
late night visit, don't you think?

GEORGE  
Why do you say that?

VIRGIL  
He oughta be careful prancin'  
around in the dark hours, lookin'  
like he does.

GEORGE  
Like how, exactly?

Virgil raises a captious eyebrow at George.

VIRGIL  
In case you ain't aware of it,  
George, there's a war goin' on.  
Men the likes of you and me are  
under attack...from men the likes  
of Mister - what is it? -  
Kanemura?

GEORGE  
Just what are you sayin', Virgil?

VIRGIL  
You know darn well what I'm  
sayin'. Two thousand American  
soldiers were killed not two weeks  
ago by slant planes and bombs, so  
when their kind comes knockin' on  
doors with smiles and desserts,  
I'm sayin' "what's the grift?"  
I'm sayin' "what do you really  
know about this Kanemura?"

GEORGE  
I tell ya he's a neighbor and a  
farmer and a family man.

VIRGIL

That's certainly what you see.  
But what do you not see, George,  
while you're rowin' back and forth  
every day from the shipyard in  
Bremerton...while you're cozy  
asleep with your wife and  
children...What's goin' on behind  
them farmhouse doors?

GEORGE

I s'pose the same thing that's  
goin' on here...he's minding his  
own business just like any of us.

VIRGIL

Don't be such a saphead, George.  
His kind ain't us, and can't never  
be. A snake's still a snake, don't  
matter where the eggs are hatched.  
These Japs got family back in  
their country. Who do you think  
they're gonna be loyal to?

George's jaw tenses.

GEORGE

You know so much, do you?

VIRGIL

Look, I'm just a wisecracker  
sellin' swanky jewelry to sugar  
daddies on 4th and Pike, but that  
don't mean I got blinders on. The  
Feds 'been all over the big city  
since Pearl Harbor, swoopin' up  
any Jap workin' with the enemy.  
Five dozen of 'em are  
in the immigration jail right now.

Time's gonna come they'll do the  
same here on the island...

(points thumb next door)  
and to Ol' Tojo's farm.

George rises out of his chair, waves a dismissive hand, paces  
as he grows impatient with Virgil's censure.

GEORGE

Aw, go on.

VIRGIL

Oh "no"?

GEORGE

I'm tellin' you Ray's as decent an American as any civic-minded islander from Crystal Springs to Rolling Bay. 'Same goes for the lot of the Japanese folks on Bainbridge. Why, their boys are fighting in our army, they do their share with the Red Cross, they're buyin' defense bonds-

VIRGIL

They're bein' arrested for possession of contraband; two-way radios, binoculars, firearms... Your strawberry farmer...I'm sure he knows his way around a rifle.

GEORGE

I'm sure he does. He hunts pheasants. So do I, so do you.

VIRGIL

'Sure he's got a stash of dynamite on the farm.

GEORGE

To clear the land before plowing and seeding. Most farmers do. What of it?

VIRGIL

The "what of it" is the Feds have their eye on these Jap farmers now. There's talk of how they plant strawberry crops in a certain pattern that points toward Bremerton.

(leans closer toward George  
for emphasis)

Toward the shipyard.

A puzzled look on George's face. He does not grasp the point.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

They're leading bomber planes straight to their targets. The shipyard is one of their targets, George.

George considers for a moment, takes his seat again.

GEORGE

(incertitude in his voice)  
C'mon, you've gone way off the  
beam.

VIRGIL

Five dozen enemy aliens they  
rounded up. Five dozen in Seattle  
alone. The Feds go pokin' around  
the rest of the country, how many  
more they gonna find?

George locks on Virgil. Could he be making sense?

VIRGL (CONT'D)

Something's gotta be done, George.  
Round 'em all up. Get 'em away  
from the shipyards, the radio  
tower. Send 'em off to the lower  
states, somewhere to the interior.  
Ain't gotta be a nice somewhere,  
neither.

GEORGE

Do you really hear yourself,  
Virgil?

VIRGIL

I hear, but I don't think you do.  
Or maybe you do, but you're not  
listening. 'You ever think maybe a  
roundup is the best thing for them  
folks? They'll be protected,  
probably have plenty to eat, while  
we'll be sittin' ducks here on  
this little island - living on  
rations, just waiting to get hit  
by bombers and mustard gas.

Virgil notes a slack in George's posture. As George ruminates,  
a swell of inclement weather rumbles in the distance.

Closer, the wind whistles, a kitchen window rattles subtly  
behind a blackout curtain.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

That's right, George. Sure, your  
Jap farmer's got a family,  
(taps the table)  
But this is your family; your  
home. You gotta protect it. The  
enemy's at your front door,  
(gestures to plates)  
and you invite him right on in...

George eyes the plates of cake.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

...where Janet sleeps...and  
Richie, and Katherine. Now I ask  
ya - when that boom you hear isn't  
just thunder, and them air raid  
warning sirens sound, church bells  
and whistles ring all around the  
island...

(gestures to wall phone)  
you wanna save lives, you walk  
over to that phone, you're gonna  
call somebody, George...who's it  
gonna be? The county defense  
coordinator? Deputy sheriff? The  
Feds? Or your enemy alien Jap  
neighbor, the one from the country  
at war with yours? We know where  
his loyalty lies. How 'bout  
yours?

George continues to look away, says nothing.

Satisfied he made his point, Virgil takes a last drag, snuffs  
his cigarette as he exhales and glares at the untouched cake on  
the plate, rises from his seat.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

I got a ferry to catch before this  
storm hulls me up here for the  
night. But you think long and  
hard about that question if you  
have to.

Virgil walks across the kitchen, past the entryway where he  
disappears into the living room area momentarily.

OFFSCREEN - the rustle of a coat being pulled off of a rack.

George sits stoic, stares at the plates.

Virgil returns from the living room, pauses in the entry way,  
adjusts his overcoat and fedora hat.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

You think about it, George - all  
night.

(quick glance down the hall  
toward the bedrooms)  
But somethin' tells me you ain't  
gotta look very far before you  
figure out the answer.

Virgil exits toward the living room.

George ruminates.

OFFSCREEN - The brewing storm wind kicks up as Virgil walks out the front door.

George lifts a smoldering cigarette toward his mouth, but his hand drifts back to the ashtray to snuff it. A flutter of rugged weather comes from a distance.

ANGLE - A WOOD CASE CLOCK HANGING ON THE KITCHEN WALL

Its hands show the time - 9:10

DISSOLVE TO:

ANGLE - A WOOD CASE CLOCK HANGING ON THE KITCHEN WALL

Its hands show the time - 11:25

GEORGE

hasn't moved from his seat at the kitchen table. Gears continue to turn.

**EXT. MORLEY HOUSE - NIGHT**

Under a black sky, the impending storm still stews, looms over the quiet bungalow.

**INT. MORLEY HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Very dark and quiet except for the blustery rumble outside.

George - in a white t-shirt - lies in bed on his back wide awake, next to a sleeping Janet. Arms folded behind his head, he stares at the ceiling, replays the exchange with Virgil.

He inhales slowly and deeply, then closes closes his eyes, exhales as he tries to decompress.

Suddenly, a blaring siren echoes in the distance from outside. Its far-reaching whine startles George. He jolts upright. Janet jounces out of a deep sleep.

A tense pause as the two try to register the moment. Is this really happening? The siren is relentless.

JANET

George...

The bedroom door swings open. Richie and Katherine patter toward the bed.

KATHERINE  
Daddy, Mommy.

RICHIE  
Pa, what's happening?

George wants to stifle their panic, but his bewilderment freezes him.

Out of nowhere, a booming, ear-splitting blast rocks the room. The walls tremble. The siren continues to wail.

The kids shriek and whimper. Katherine ducks under Richie's arm. Richie swaddles her. The kids scutter over to Janet as she tosses the bed covers aside and takes them into her arms.

RICHIE  
(through tears)  
Are we being attacked, Pa?

George pauses to listen before he can truthfully answer. Janet springs from the bed, tugs the kids along with her to the closet. She yanks a house coat from a hanger, throws it on.

JANET  
Everyone to the shelter area, like  
we planned. Right away.  
Come, George.

Janet leads the kids out of the bedroom. George's mind still processes as he rises from the bed and follows.

**INT. MORLEY HOUSE - HALLWAY ADJACENT TO KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Janet anchors the walk through the darkened corridor, with Katherine in tow gripping her hand, and Richie gripping Katherine's. George follows behind. The siren throbs.

Without warning, a second crashing blast rattles the hallway walls, startles the group. Teary-eyed squeals from the kids.

Janet recovers. With sure-handedness, she yanks the kids forward toward the entryway into--

**THE KITCHEN**

where she halts at the edge of the dining table.

JANET  
Come now, children. Stay calm and  
remember the plan.  
(points)  
Under the table, right away.

Jittery and whimpering, the children slink under the table. Janet scoops up both cake plates and extends them to George.

JANET (CONT'D)

George...

George eyes the plates. After a pause, he takes them from Janet and sets them on a countertop. The discussion with Virgil weighs heavily in his expression.

One-by-one, Janet upends the dining table chairs, places three of them on their side in between the table legs as an extra makeshift debris shield. Steady sheets of rain now shroud the house, prickle the windows. The siren belches.

RICHIE

(under the table, teary)

Is it bombs, Pa?

George looks toward the blacked-out window, considers. He looks to Janet.

GEORGE

That's the siren from the marine railway and shipyard in Winslow. The church bells should ring if it's a raid. The Defense Coordinator would call.

JANET

Maybe we should call the air raid warden.

Bullets of rain batter the bungalow. Squeals from the kids.

KATHERINE

Momma...

Janet ducks under the table to comfort the kids.

JANET

Shhh. Hush now.

George's look is drawn toward the blacked-out kitchen window. Incessant raindrops pelt the glass.

He takes a cautious step toward the window, extends his hand toward the blackout curtain, slowly pulls back a tiny portion of its corner. His eye pressed up against the foggy glass, he peers outside and sees--

IN THE SIDE YARD - FROM GEORGE'S POV

Amidst the bleary gloom of the storm, under the harsh groan of the siren, a dark, silhouetted mass stands out.

GEORGE

Squints, but cannot determine what it is. He blinks for better focus, trains his eyes once again on--

THE SILHOUETTE IN THE SIDE YARD - FROM GEORGE'S POV

A bright flash of lightning strikes and illuminates the figure - Ray Kanemura. He stands stock-still, grips a handful of dynamite sticks, casts a threatening glare at George.

GEORGE

His eyes widen, an eyebrow raises. He blinks hard, shakes his head, opens his eyes to look out again at--

THE SILHOUETTE IN THE SIDE YARD - FROM GEORGE'S POV

A lightning flash illuminates nothing more than a bristlecone pine tree. Its branches and needles bat about in the angry torrent. The house walls grumble.

GEORGE

exhales. A mystified look as he backs away from the window.

OFFSCREEN - three knocks on the front door; same as when Ray Kanemura came calling earlier in the night, but now the knocks are slower, more emphatic, foreboding. George's look whips in the direction of the knocks.

The children whimper and turtle under the table. Janet's look shifts from the direction of the knocks back to George.

JANET

George...no.

George ponders his next move, eyes trained on the entryway toward the living room.

OFFSCREEN - three slow, foreboding knocks on the front door.

Faint whimpers from the children. George takes heedful steps toward the entryway. His focus does not veer from the door. The house walls creak from a surge of storm wind. He walks a measured path into--

THE LIVING ROOM

where blacked-out windows cloak him in darkness, under the ominous spew of the siren. George steps closer toward the door. Closer. His eyes fix on the knob. The storm wind churns, the walls clatter.

George's jaw clenches. His gentle reach extends toward the doorknob. He grips it, gives it a guarded turn.

He pulls the door open.

ON THE FRONT PORCH

The siren resonates. Storm wind and rain thrust toward George. The force knocks the displaced rocking chair into the door frame - slow, emphatic; the source of the mysterious sound.

George exhales, grabs the chair by its back, sets it in its proper place on the porch.

His eyes pan across the darkness in front of the house. He looks up at the turbulent blanket of black sky; toward Ray's farm. He ducks back inside the house, closes the front door.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN

George drips remnants of the storm onto the linoleum as he crosses the entryway threshold. He sees his family under the dining table. Richie and Katherine quaver next to Janet.

JANET

What is it, George?

RICHIE

Pa, whadda we do?

George holds on their faces, struggles for an answer. The siren's shrill carries over to--

**INT. WINSLOW MARINE RAILWAY & SHIPYARD - OFFICE - NIGHT**

The siren's piercing warning is now in proximity, practically right outside the door.

FRANK (45) - a rough-hewn foreman - paces behind a wooden desk; phone receiver pressed against his ear. Over his shoulder, a window frames the unyielding rainstorm near the shoreline, where the hull of a minesweeping trawler is under construction.

FRANK

(into phone receiver)

We're checking on that right now,  
Mr. Higgins.

OFFSCREEN - the office door opens. Frank's look shifts toward the bluster as CHARLIE (30) - wiry, drenched denim overalls, carries a flashlight - steps inside. He wipes the storm off his face, catches his breath.

CHARLIE

Frank...

FRANK

(hand covers receiver)  
Good Grief, Charlie, what the devil's happenin' out there? I got the defense coordinator on the line.

CHARLIE

It's a transformer fuse. She blew out just before them thunderblasts hit. 'Loudest ones I ever heard. We're workin' on it.

FRANK

Well, shake a leg, will ya? 'Coordinator wants to give the all-clear before the entire island's in a panic.

CHARLIE

Right. I got it.

Charlie dips back into the downpour.

Frank exhales, gazes out the window before he pulls his hand away from the receiver to relay the information from Charlie.

**INT. MORLEY HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

The bellowing siren is again distant. George stands still, raindrops cascade down his face. His eyes veer toward the blacked-out window, toward Ray Kanemura's farm. His look drifts, becomes transfixed amidst the grumble of the storm.

Janet and the children nestle under the table. Their looks fix on George, anxious for an answer.

JANET

What do we do, George?

George shakes off his contemplative trance. He looks to his family under the table. He locks on the wall-mounted rotary telephone, deliberates, walks toward it.

He pauses in front of the phone. His eyes catch the plates of cake on the counter, then shift back to the wall phone. George lifts the receiver, guides it to his ear. He reaches out with his index finger to dial.

FADE TO BLACK



