EXT. FRONT PORCH - EVENING

A front porch on a residential street in the ol’ U.S. of A. Mid-December. A wreath hangs on the door, lights draped round the frame. A layer of snow covers the street.

A group of CAROL SINGERS stands in front of the door. Two men and women at the back, two boys and girls at the front. One of the women - MRS. CARTER, 40s - gently pushes one of the girls - MARY-ELLEN, 8 - forward.

    MRS. CARTER
    Go on Mary-Ellen, ring the bell.

Mary-Ellen smiles, reaches up and presses the button. She scampers back into position. Her breath hangs in front of her happy, red-cheeked face.

The group begins to sing a classic Christmas carol in perfect harmony, filling the porch with sweet singing.

The door is opened by STAN, 40s, friendly-looking. He smiles at the sight, listens to them for a few seconds, then reaches into his pocket and digs out his wallet.

He pulls out a TWENTY-DOLLAR BILL and holds it out for Mary-Ellen, who takes it with an angelic smile.

    MARY-ELLEN
    Thank you, mister!

    STAN
    You’re welcome, sweetie. Merry Christmas, you guys.

    GROUP
    Merry Christmas!

He shuts the door. Chattering happily amongst themselves, the group files off the porch out onto the street.

    MARY-ELLEN
    Let’s try the next one!

EXT. EDDIE’S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

This porch has no wreath, no Christmas lights - no decorations of any kind. A sign displayed in the window says: ‘NO SOLICITORS’.

The same routine. The group lines up into two rows, Mary-Ellen shuffles forward and presses the doorbell.
The group starts to sing a different song, as beautifully as before.

The door opens.

The group continues to sing, the children’s angelic faces smiling up. Mary-Ellen sings loudest and smiles widest.

A JET OF WATER hits her in the face. The singing falters, stops. The jet passes across the front row, soaking the children. Their smiles are gone.

Mary-Ellen starts to sob gently.

The door SLAMS SHUT.

INT. EDDIE’S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

EDDIE, late 60s, leans against the door, water pistol in hand.

EDDIE
Stupid kids.

He puts the water pistol in an umbrella stand by the door, walks away down the hallway.

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A dark, cluttered living room, filled with ornaments and yellowing newspapers. The furniture looks old, worn.

Eddie enters, eases himself down into an armchair with a grunt. He reaches for the remote, switches the TV on.

A CHRISTMAS COMMERCIAL appears onscreen, showing a happy family seated round a table laden with food. Eddie gives a disapproving grunt, changes the channel.

Another Christmas commercial.

He tries again – this time, it’s a news report coming from inside a department store stocked with Christmas goods.

EDDIE
Oh, for God’s sake! Can I not have a moment’s peace?

He STABS at the TV with the remote, switching it off, then hauls himself out of his chair.
KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

A simple kitchen with old appliances. Dirty dishes are stacked in the kitchen sink.

Eddie reaches up to a cupboard, pulls out a tin of cocoa and a mug. He sets the mug down on the counter, takes the top off the tin, and looks down into it.

He turns it upside down over the mug. A few sorry grains of powder trickle out. He sets it down with a sigh.

EDDIE

Perfect.

BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is as cluttered as the rest of the house. A small, single bed sits against the back wall.

Eddie goes to the bedside table, opens the drawer and pulls out his wallet.

Just as he is about to leave he stops and looks down at something standing on the table - a framed PHOTO of a smiling young woman and a laughing baby.

He looks at it for a few seconds, then turns and leaves.

EXT. EDDIE’S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MINUTES LATER

Eddie shuts the front door behind him. He straightens the collar of his jacket, finishes pulling on his gloves.

STAN (O.S.)

Evening, Eddie.

Eddie looks up. Stan is out on his porch, unraveling a pack of fairy lights.

EDDIE

Stan.

STAN

Merry Christmas!

EDDIE

Christmas is seven days away, Stan. One whole week.

He notices what Stan is doing.
EDDIE (CONTD.)
You really sure you need more lights? I reckon your porch is garish enough as it is.

STAN
Oh, these are going on the roof. The girls want to be absolutely certain Santa’s not going to miss our house. Isn’t that sweet?

EDDIE
(dripping sarcasm)
Adorable.

He starts down the steps onto the street.

STAN
You not putting up any decorations this year, Eddie?

EDDIE
Nope, don’t think so.

STAN
You sure? Kinda letting the street down a bit on the festive front, don’t ya think?

EDDIE
It’s just another month of the year, Stan. Just another month of the year.

He walks away, crunching through the snow. Stan sighs.

STAN
Grumpy old -

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - EVENING

Eddie walks down the aisle past shelves of cat food, toilet paper, cereal, until he finds the cocoa. He takes a tin off the shelf, heads for the counter.

The owner, AMIR - Arabic, 40s - stands waiting. He opens his arms wide as Eddie approaches. A nodding plastic Santa sits on the counter next to the till.

AMIR
Hey, it’s my favourite customer!
Merry Christmas, Mister Neezer.
EDDIE
Ah Jeez, Amir, not you too.

He bangs his tin down on the counter, fishes change out of his wallet. Amir scans the item.

AMIR
Six-fifty please, Mister Neezer.

Eddie hands him the money.

EDDIE
Aren’t you Hindu, anyway? I thought you didn’t celebrate Christmas.

Amir hands him his change, mock-outrage on his face.

AMIR
What? Who doesn’t celebrate Christmas? It is the greatest time of the year! And besides, Mister Neezer, I am Muslim.

EDDIE
Same difference. See ya.

He picks up his tin and leaves, opening the door and stepping out into the street.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Eddie walks away from the store. A CHARITY COLLECTOR, a woman in her 20s, comes up. She holds out a collection tin.

COLLECTOR
Evening, sir. Got any change to spare for some poor, adorable, abandoned puppies?

Eddie pats his pockets, sighs apologetically.

EDDIE
Darn it, I seem to have left my wallet at home. Old age, you know, starting to forget stuff...

COLLECTOR
Don’t you worry about it, sir. You have a nice evening, now.
EDDIE
Thanks.
He smiles, walks away. He glances back over his shoulder, cackles to himself.
EDDIE
Sucker.

EXT. STREET - EVENING
Eddie walks up the street towards his house.
A SNOWBALL FIGHT rages in the road. A GROUP OF KIDS run around, shrieking with laughter, throwing snowballs and ducking for cover.
Eddie sees them, sighs.
EDDIE
Ah, great.
As Eddie passes Stan’s now-empty porch, a stray snowball WHACKS into the side of his head.
Eddie freezes. The kids’ laughter instantly stops.
Slowly, Eddie turns to face them. He speaks in a quiet voice as cold as the snow.
EDDIE
Who threw that?
He glares at the group. One little boy hides behind his bigger brother. They all look down at the ground.
A little GIRL slowly raises her hand.
EDDIE
You?
Terrified, she nods, still looking at her feet. She mumbles something incomprehensible.
EDDIE (CONT'D.)
What did you say?
GIRL
(still quiet)
I’m sorry.
EDDIE
Sorry? SORRY?!

Eddie advances. The kids all step backwards away from him.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
What the hell do you think you’re all doing? Standing here in the middle of the road throwing snow at each other? You goddamn reprobates. Don’t you punks have homes to go to? Parents to annoy? Or have they realised just how pointless and irritating you all actually are?! God I hate the snow, and I hate this time of year!

STAN (O.S.)
You okay, Eddie?

Eddie spins round. Stan stands on the porch, a concerned look on his face. He steps down into the street.

EDDIE
No, Stan, I’m not. I’m not okay. I’m not okay with the fact that as soon as Thanksgiving ends, it’s suddenly Christmas! For four long weeks every year all I ever hear is ‘Jingle Bells’ this and ‘Jingle Bells’ that. Wherever you go, wherever you look, all you ever see, hear, get is Christmas! Well guess what? I don’t want it! I don’t want any of it. I don’t want the carols, or the presents, or the cold, or the lame-ass movies, or the turkey, or the lights --

He pushes past Stan, grabs some of the fairy lights and RIPS them down.

STAN
Hey!

EDDIE
-- I don’t want the stockings, or the trees, or the commercials, or the cards, I don’t want the crackers with their god-awful jokes, or the candy canes, or the festive cheer...and I especially don’t want the merry fat man in his fluffy red clothes.
He steps back past Stan, points a menacing finger at the kids.

    EDDIE
    In fact you know what, kids? You
    know my 'Christmas wish' this year?
    I wish jolly old Saint Nick would
    just drop down -

He stops.

Frowns.

Then his EYES WIDEN.

He straightens up, suddenly unable to breathe. He CLAPS a hand to his chest, above his heart. He staggers backwards, arms FLAILING wildly.

    STAN
    Eddie?

Eddie TRIPS over the curb and falls flat on his back. He stares up into the sky, open mouthed, straining for breath. Stan falls to his knees beside him.

    STAN (CONTD.)
    Oh my God, Eddie! Someone call 911!
    It’s gonna be okay, Eddie, it’s
    gonna be okay...

The sound of the surroundings fade as Eddie lays on his back, looking up at the sky. His short breaths come out in a CLOUD OF VAPOUR.

As he stares up with wide, unblinking eyes, the world around him FADES TO WHITE.

A few seconds of nothing.

Just peace and quiet.

Then, slowly, the world FADES BACK IN.

INT. EDDIE’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - TIME UNKNOWN

Eddie is asleep in bed, all tucked up with only his head showing. He stirs.

Slowly, he opens his eyes. He stretches, pushing his arms out in front of him, but stops when he notices they are in jacket sleeves.
He lifts up the duvet, then throws it off. He is wearing the SAME CLOTHES as he was on the street, even the boots.

EDDIE
Huh?

With a grunt he pushes himself up, sits on the edge of the bed. He looks around the room, then climbs to his feet and crosses the room. He yawns, stretching as he walks.

His yawn continues as he turns the handle, opens the door, and steps out into a --

INT. STRANGE CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

-- with white walls, white ceiling, white floor. Eddie freezes, his mouth still open, then slowly moves forward, looking around him with wide eyes.

Definitely not his house.

EDDIE
What the hell?

He turns back towards his room, but the door has somehow DISAPPEARED, replaced by just plain white wall.

Eddie touches the smooth surface, runs his hands across it, then puts his ear against it and knocks in various places, listening intently to the sound.

Every knock has the same result: the sound of thick, solid wall. Eddie straightens up, scratching his head.

EDDIE
Somethin' fishy going on here...

He turns around again, and narrows his eyes in suspicion.

A SIGN has appeared on the wall opposite him.

It shows an arrow pointing right, down the corridor, with the words 'TO THE TERMINAL' written above.

Eddie looks around him, eyes still narrowed. He calls out into the emptiness --

EDDIE
Hey, is this some kinda joke? One of those 'hidden camera' things? If it is, you can come out now! You got me.
His words just echo off the walls. Eddie waits for a few seconds, then sighs, looking once again at the sign.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
This is nuts.

He looks the way the arrow is pointing and trudges off in that direction.

AT THE END OF THE CORRIDOR is a door. Attached to the door is a sign saying 'THE TERMINAL.'

Eddie puts a hand on the door-knob, twists it and pushes the door open. BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT AND NOISE pour into the corridor, causing him throw an arm up to cover his eyes. He steps forward, through the doorway, into --

INT. THE TERMINAL - MAIN DEPARTURE LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS
-- The Terminal.

It looks for all the world like an airport departure lounge, only on a colossal scale. The ceiling is high up like a cathedral’s, the walls far-off horizons.

On the floor: rows and rows of bench-seats, the ones you see in any airport departure lounge anywhere in the world. Only here, they stretch far out into the distance, endlessly.

On the chairs sit BILLIONS OF PEOPLE.

Tens of billions.

Of all ages, all races. Wearing different clothes from across history, Romans sitting next to cavemen sitting next to sharp-suited Wall Street-types. Many of them have the same vacant look: mouths slightly open, eyes half-closed.

Plenty are alert, however. They wander between the rows, some drifting aimlessly, others walking with purpose.

Moving among them are PEOPLE IN WHITE SUITS, smiling at everyone they pass.

They have WINGS folded behind their backs.

Eddie moves forward, trying to take it all in. An ATTENDANT wanders close by, smiling at Eddie as she passes.

ATTENDANT 1
Welcome to The Terminal!

Eddie is unable to reply. He just nods as she continues off.
Ahead of him is a DEPARTURE BOARD. He walks towards it, staring up. It has two columns: ‘DESTINATION’ and ‘STATUS’. Every entry under the former reads ‘HEAVEN’. Every entry under the latter reads ‘DELAYED’.

Eddie turns away.

    EDDIE
    It’s a dream. It’s...it’s gotta be a dream.

He rolls up his jacket sleeve a bit, pinches his arm.

    EDDIE (CONTD.)
    Ow!

He rubs the pinch-marks, then rolls his sleeve back down.

Eddie walks over to the chairs where a MAN sits in full 19th-century British army uniform, complete with redcoat and musket. He stares straight ahead, eyes vacant.

    EDDIE
    Hey, I’m Eddie. What the hell is this place?

No response. The solider continues to stare, unblinkingly.

Eddie snaps his fingers in front of the guy’s face. He doesn’t react.

    EDDIE

He gently pushes the soldier’s hat. His head flops backwards, before coming back to rest in exactly the same position. Eddie straightens up, frowning.

    EDDIE (CONTD.)
    That’s weird.

He spots another ATTENDANT passing by and walks towards him, throwing a hand up.

    EDDIE
    Hey, you! The guy in the suit!

The attendant stops, smiles, comes over.

    ATTENDANT 2
    Can I help you, sir?
EDDIE
Yeah. Where the hell am I?

ATTENDANT 2
You’re in The Terminal, sir.

EDDIE
I gathered that. What I mean is -

ATTENDANT 2
Sir, we have a helpline with operators standing by to answer all your questions. The phones are right over there.

He points into the distance towards a ROW OF PAYPHONES. Eddie narrows his eyes, peers at them.

EDDIE
Huh.

He looks back at the attendant, notices his wings for the first time. Eddie steps back, eyes widening.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
What’s with the wings?

ATTENDANT 2
Why, all angels have them, sir. You have a good day now.

He walks off. Eddie watches him go.

EDDIE
Angels, right...

He turns back towards the phones.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
I gotta get out of here.

He marches off in their direction.

ELSEWHERE IN THE MAIN DEPARTURE LOUNGE

Eddie arrives at the payphones. Most of the phones are in use, people shouting different languages into the handsets.

Above each payphone is a sticker that reads ‘GOT A QUESTION? NEED ADVICE? DIAL 1-800-P-R-A-Y-E-R FOR OUR HELPLINE’.

Eddie reads at the number, lifts the handset and dials. He raises the phone to his ear as it rings.
A RECORDED VOICE, bright and cheerful, cuts in.

RECORDED VOICE (O.S.)
Hello, and thank you for calling
The Terminal helpline. You are
currently in a queue. Please hold
until an operator becomes available
to take your call.

The voice stops, replaced by CLASSICAL MUSIC. Eddie rolls
his eyes, waits. A few seconds later, the voice returns.

RECORDED VOICE (O.S., CONT'D.)
Thank you for your patience. You
are still in a queue. There are
1-9-2-3-3-5 people ahead of you.
Please continue to hold until an
operator becomes available. Your
soul is important to us, and we
will get to you as soon as we can.

The voice stops once more, and the music cuts back in. Eddie
hangs up with a growl.

Eddie wanders over and sits in a nearby chair. He sighs,
stares up at the ceiling. He looks back down, then turns his
head to one side.

Sitting next to him is a NAKED MAN, his hands covering his
lap. He looks embarrassed. And cold.

NAKED MAN
Bonjour.
(awkward pause)
Ca va?

Eddie raises an eyebrow, turns to face forward.

EDDIE
That’s it.

He marches up to the nearest assistant - who wears a
name-badge saying ‘PHANUEL’ - and blocks his path.

EDDIE
Okay, buster, I’ve had enough. I
dunno where am I or what I’m doing
here...

PHANUEL
You’re in The Ter-
EDDIE
I know I’m in the goddamn ‘Terminal’! Jeez, is that all you people can say? I wanna see the manager.

The attendant glances up towards the ceiling.

PHANUEL
I really don’t think that’s gonna happen, sir.

EDDIE
What do you mean, not ‘gonna happen’?! I wanna see the manager!

A small crowd has begun to form, people drawn by the noise. The attendant glances round, embarrassed.

PHANUEL
Sir, if you could just lower your voice -

EDDIE
You’re telling me what to do? What are you, security?

PHANUEL
No, sir, you’re just causing a bit of a scene...

EDDIE
Well, then I want to see a supervisor. Take me to someone who’ll actually give me some answers, goddamn it!

INT. THE TERMINAL - OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Another attendant sits behind a desk. He seems young, friendly. His name is GABRIEL.

The door opens, and Eddie is led in by Phanuel, who leaves and shuts the door. Gabriel looks up, smiles.

GABRIEL
Hi, I’m Gabriel.

Eddie stops, frowns.
EDDIE
'The' angel Gabriel?

GABRIEL
No no, just 'an' angel Gabriel.

EDDIE
Oh. Right.
(under his breath)
Real original...

Gabriel just smiles, gestures towards a chair in front of the desk.

GABRIEL
If you’d just like to take a seat, Mister Neezer.

Eddie does so, looks suspiciously round the office.

GABRIEL (CONTD.)
Great. Now, let me tell you a little something about what I do. I’m an Afterlife Acclimatisation Assistant, which means I’m here to help the recently-deceased during their time with us in The Terminal. You’ve been assigned to me, so any questions or issues, any concerns, just come and ask. I’m here for you. Okay?

EDDIE
Uh...

GABRIEL
Super. Now, Eddie - do you mind if I call you Eddie? Great. Well, Eddie, I understand you’re having some trouble adjusting to your new situation?

Eddie scoffs.

EDDIE
Huh! You could say that.

GABRIEL
Well, that’s what I’m here for. I appreciate this must all be pretty hard for you to process. Got any questions for me? Anything that’ll make this easier to understand?
Eddie thinks for a second.

EDDIE
Where am I?
(quickly)
I mean, I know it’s called ‘The Terminal’, but what actually is this place?

GABRIEL
That’s an easy one. You, my friend, are in Limbo.

EDDIE
Limbo?

GABRIEL
Limbo. A state of afterlife between Heaven and Hell, where those not righteous enough for paradise but not wicked enough for damnation wait to be judged.

EDDIE
Oh. Why, exactly, does Limbo look like an airport departure lounge?

GABRIEL
We change the appearance to keep up to date with contemporary tastes on Earth. To start with, it was just a cave. A thousand years ago, it was the Great Hall of a castle. Right now, it’s an airport. We find it makes the transition easier for our new arrivals if they can relate to their surroundings. Did you ever fly, Eddie?

EDDIE
No.

GABRIEL
That’s a shame. I hear airplanes are pretty cool. Not the same as flying without one, but still.

Eddie thinks for a second, before asking his next question.

EDDIE
I got another one. How come there so many people here? I mean, God’s supposed to be all-powerful, right?

(MORE)
EDDIE (cont’d)
So why doesn’t he just wave everyone through?

Gabriel nods understandingly.

GABRIEL
Design flaw.

EDDIE
Design flaw?

GABRIEL
Uh-huh. There’s only one gate to Heaven, you see. And one person manning it. Poor old Peter has to process everyone here one person at a time, and you can see how that might take a while.

EDDIE
Wow. Sucks to be him.

GABRIEL
Yes, it does.

EDDIE
And that’s the only way out of here?

GABRIEL
Well, there is another way...

Eddie’s eyes light up.

EDDIE
What? Where? How do I take it? Do I have to wait for that, too?

GABRIEL
Oh no, you can just walk right on through that way. You just follow the stairs down.

Eddie frowns.

EDDIE
Down?

GABRIEL
Yep. Just keep following them all the way down, and you’ll be outta here in a jiffy. I gotta warn you,
GABRIEL (cont’d)
though – it’s not somewhere you’d really want to go.

EDDIE
Oh. I see. Maybe not.

Eddie still seems uncomfortable. Gabriel tilts his head, speaks coaxingly.

GABRIEL (CONTD.)
What is it, Eddie? I can tell something else is bothering you. Come on, open up to me.

Eddie shifts in his chair.

EDDIE
Well, it’s just...
(pause)
What am I doing here? Sure, I wasn’t perfect, but I wasn’t too bad a guy. I mean, it’s not like I ever killed anyone!

GABRIEL
Hmm. I see. Well, let’s have a flick through your file.

He opens a drawer in the desk, and pulls out a bulky box-file with the name ‘EDDIE NEEZER’ on it. He opens the lid, sifts through the contents.

He pulls file after file of varying size out of it, examining them and then discarding them into a pile on the desk. There seems to be an impossible amount in there – he continues to pull them out, Mary-Poppins-carpet-bag-style.

He eventually pulls out the one he’s looking for, a slim file marked ‘PRELIMINARY LIFE ASSESSMENT’.

GABRIEL
There we go. Now let’s have a look.

He opens it up and thumbs through the pages, scanning them.

GABRIEL (CONTD.)
Uuhh. Uuhh. Oh right, I see...

EDDIE
Just tell me, goddamn it!

He puts the file down on the desk, looks at Eddie.
GABRIEL (CONTD.)
Well, it’s pretty simple, Eddie. Your main problem is you were just too...mean.

Eddie sits stunned for a moment.

EDDIE
Mean?

GABRIEL
Way too mean.

EDDIE
I’m not allowed into Heaven because I was mean?

GABRIEL
Pretty much, yeah.

EDDIE
But that’s...ridiculous! That’s not a reason!

GABRIEL
It is, actually.

EDDIE
Well, it’s a stupid one. And I wasn’t that mean, anyway!

Gabriel taps the folder.

GABRIEL
Eddie, this whole file is full of examples of you being mean to people throughout your life. It’s all in here. I’m afraid it’s pretty open-and-shut.

EDDIE
Oh yeah? Prove it. I swear wasn’t as mean as you say I was!

GABRIEL
Fine. I will.

Gabriel stands, picks up the file, and walks to ANOTHER DOOR set in the wall behind his desk. He puts a hand on the handle, turns back towards Eddie.
GABRIEL (CONTD.)
You coming?

Eddie frowns at him, disbelievingly.

Then he rolls his eyes, stands and crosses to the door. Gabriel opens it, and the two step through into a flash of BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT. The door swings shut behind them.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A living room in 1930s America. Two WOMEN sit at on the sofa, drinking coffee and chatting away.

A YOUNG BOY plays with some building blocks. He carefully stacks one on top of the rest, building a little tower.

Eddie and Gabriel appear in a FLASH OF WHITE. Eddie blinks rapidly, rubs his eyes.

EDDIE
Whoa. That was weird.

He looks around him.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Hey, wait a minute...

A smile slowly grows. He turns back to Gabriel, excited.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
I know this house! This is my old home, right? That’s incredible!

He notices the little boy, squints at him.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Isn’t that...?

GABRIEL
Yep, that’s Jimmy, your childhood friend. You two used to play together all the time, remember?

A TODDLER crawls past Eddie and Gabriel, heading for Jimmy. Gabriel looks down, points at him.

GABRIEL (CONTD.)
And that’s you.

Eddie stares, shakes his head with a low whistle.
EDDIE
Wow. That’s pretty crazy.

Baby Eddie crawls over to Jimmy, stops next to the blocks and hauls himself into an upright position. He stares at the blocks as Jimmy carefully balances yet another one on top.

Suddenly, with a happy cry, Baby Eddie swipes at the tower, SMASHING it to pieces. Jimmy stares at the pile in shock. Slowly, he starts to cry.

The two women on the sofa stop and look over. Jimmy’s mom stands up, crosses over and scoops up her child. She carries him away, cradling him and speaking in a soothing voice.

JIMMY’S MOM
Aww, poor baby. Was Eddie mean to you? Shh, it’s okay...

She sits down on the sofa, rocking her dismayed son back and forth. Baby Eddie still giggles happily.

Eddie and Gabriel watch from the other side of the room.

GABRIEL
You see?

EDDIE
Ah come on, I was two years old! All kids are jerks at that age. You can’t hold something that happened seventy years ago against me!

GABRIEL
Maybe not, but you didn’t grow out of being mean, did you? Let me show you something else.

The two FADE AWAY, eventually disappearing into thin air.

EXT. DINER - EVENING

THREE TEENAGE BOYS stand in front of an American diner in the ’50s, peering in through the window. Their attention is on a GIRL in a green dress, who sits with her back to them.

Eddie and Gabriel appear in another FLASH.

EDDIE
Hey, Lou’s Cafe! I used to hang out here all the time. Jeez, I haven’t thought about this place in years!
He looks at the boys.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
And that’s me!

JIMMY, now 17, turns to face another of the boys - a 17 YEAR-OLD EDDIE.

JIMMY
Oh boy, this was a great idea, Eddie. She looks so miserable!

The teenage Eddie just smiles, keeps staring through the window. The other boy - PAULIE - looks troubled.

PAULIE
I feel kinda bad for her...oughtn’t one of us say something?

Teenage Eddie turns to face him.

TEENAGE EDDIE
No, Paulie, we ‘oughtn’t’. Are you Jimmy’s buddy, or what? Huh?

PAULIE
Yeah, I’m Jimmy’s buddy. It’s just...this feels a bit mean.

TEENAGE EDDIE
Hell, she’ll live. C’mon, let’s get out of here. She has to know nobody’s coming by now.

The three boys wander off down the street. Eddie stares after his teenage self.

EDDIE
Was my hair always that bad?

GABRIEL
Do you remember this, Eddie?

EDDIE
I gotta admit, I don’t.

The two of them move forward, peer in through the window.
INT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

The girl in the green dress is LINDA - 17, blonde, pretty. She sits in a booth, sadly drinking a milkshake through a straw. She is the only customer.

BETTY, a waitress in her 30s, comes over. She stands next to the table, speaks down in a gentle voice.

BETTY
We’re shutting up soon, hon.

LINDA
Okay.

She doesn’t look up from her milkshake. Betty looks down at her with sympathy.

BETTY
But you take as long as you want with your milkshake, you hear? And don’t you worry about paying for it – that one’s on the house.

LINDA
Thanks.

She manages a half-smile. Betty moves away to wipe a nearby table. Gabriel looks at Eddie.

GABRIEL
Asking the girl out on a date and then never turning up? That’s not nice, Eddie.

EDDIE
Wait a minute, I do remember this. That’s Linda Newton, right? Ah heck, that girl deserved it.

GABRIEL
How do you figure that?

EDDIE
The week before this one of my buddies had asked her out and she did exactly the same thing to them. We reckoned she could do with a little payback.

GABRIEL
That still doesn’t make it okay. Haven’t you heard the saying, ‘Two wrongs don’t make a right?’
EDDIE
And haven’t you heard the saying, ‘An eye for an eye?’ You should have, it comes from the same book as you do. Nah, you’d better pick another example, buster. I don’t feel guilty about this one at all.

Gabriel sighs.

GABRIEL
Fair enough. Let’s try something more recent.

They disappear, leaving Linda all alone.

EXT. EDDIE’S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - EVENING
Eddie’s porch, the night he died.

The carol singers sing, sweetly. The door opens, revealing Eddie standing there, water-pistol in hand. He soaks the row of children, a smile on his face.

The children start to cry. Eddie slams the door shut. The children turn and cling to their shocked parents.

Eddie and Gabriel stand on the street, just down from the porch. Gabriel looks disapproving, but Eddie chuckles to himself. He notices Gabriel’s expression.

EDDIE
Oh, lighten up! Where’s your sense of humor?

GABRIEL
It’s not funny, Eddie. It’s exactly the kind of thing I’m talking about.

EDDIE
Oh, baloney. Those guys deserve what they get. Turning up on folks’ doorsteps, demanding money...I was carrying out a public service!

The carol singers retreat from Eddie’s doorstep, parents comforting their children. They pass right in front of Eddie and Gabriel.
GABRIEL
They don’t seem very appreciative.

Mary-Ellen passes by, crying into her mother’s coat.

MARY-ELLEN
Why did he do that, Mommy? I only wanted to sing for him!

MRS. CARTER
I don’t know, honey. I don’t know.

She turns to another parent, shaking her head.

MRS. CARTER
That guy’s such an asshole. What kind of person does that?

Eddie looks indignant.

EDDIE
Hey! I’m right here, you know!

The carol singers move off down the street. Eddie turns to Gabriel.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Does that not count as being mean? Or is it only not okay if I do it?

GABRIEL
Come on, Eddie! You just sprayed her daughter in the face with a water-pistol.

EDDIE
She’s over-reacting. And so are you. It was just a bit of harmless fun! It’s not like it hurt anybody.

GABRIEL
Oh, really?

The two of them FADE AWAY.

INT. MARY-ELLEN’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Mary-Ellen lies in bed, propped up in pillows. She is pale, and coughs feebly.

Her mother sits in a chair by her bed. She pours cough medicine into a small, plastic pot. She holds the dose out.
MRS. CARTER
There we go. This’ll make you better.

Mary-Ellen’s face crumples.

MARY-ELLEN
I don’t want it, Mommy. It tastes horrible!

MRS. CARTER
I know, sweetie. But the sooner you drink it, the sooner you’ll shake off your nasty cold...

She leans in, cough mixture in hand.

Eddie and Gabriel stand by the door, watching.

GABRIEL
You see? Actions have consequences, Eddie. What you do can hurt people.

Eddie frowns at Mary-Ellen – suddenly it’s not so funny.

EDDIE
She’ll be okay, right?

GABRIEL
Yes, she’ll be fine. But that’s not the point. Throughout your life, you made people feel this way, without even caring. Of course, all of this is nothing compared to what happened to your wife...

Eddie visibly bristles. He turns, real anger suddenly on his face, and points a threatening finger at Gabriel.

EDDIE
Hey. Don’t you dare talk about her. She’s off-limits, you got that? You might find it funny, stepping in and out of my life like flicking through a photo album, but enough’s enough. Do not show me her, okay?

The two begin to fade away, Eddie still shouting --

EDDIE (CONTD.)

Okay?!

They disappear.
INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT


A woman - ISOBEL, 30s, nicely dressed - sits alone at a table against the back wall, absently stirring her coffee with a spoon. A magazine is open in front of her.

Eddie and Gabriel appear in exactly the same position as they were before - Eddie angry, a finger pointed at Gabriel.

Eddie looks around him.

EDDIE
Are you not listening to me? What happened between us forty years ago is none of your goddamn business, you hear?

GABRIEL
It’s all my business, Eddie. But don’t worry, she’s not here.

EDDIE
Oh. Right.
(beat)
Then what are we doing here?

Isobel shifts in her seat, idly flicking through her magazine without taking it in.

A MAN comes up, places his hands on the back of the empty chair opposite her.

MAN
Excuse me - is this seat taken?

Isobel looks up at him, then at the seat. She sighs.

ISOBEL
Of course not. Why would it be?

MAN
Err...sorry?

ISOBEL
Oh, nothing. Just being melodramatic. It’s all yours.

He smiles at her, takes the seat and carries it away.

Gabriel nods in Isobel’s direction.
GABRIEL
Do you recognise that woman, Eddie?

Eddie looks at her, squints.

EDDIE
Nope. Never seen her before.

GABRIEL
You sure?

He looks again.

EDDIE
Yeah, I’m sure. Why? Should I recognise her? Who is she?

GABRIEL
Oh, no-one. My mistake.

Eddie looks at him suspiciously.

EDDIE
Mistake. Right...

GABRIEL
I think that’s enough. Come on, let’s go back to my office.

He holds out his arm. Eddie looks down at it, eyebrow raised, then looks back up at Gabriel.

GABRIEL (CONTD.)
We’re heading back to Limbo now, Eddie. You have to take my arm. That’s how it works.

With a sigh, Eddie lays a hand on Gabriel’s forearm. They stand there for a moment, not moving.

EDDIE
So what happens n --

In a FLASH OF WHITE, the two DISAPPEAR.

THE VOID - CONTINUOUS

Eddie tumbles head over heels as all kinds of OBJECTS AND SHAPES fly by. Snatches from his past, shining galaxies, sweeping clock hands - all of them rush by as Eddie tumbles through oblivion...
INT. GABRIEL’S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

...until he suddenly LANDS in his chair with a bump. Eddie catches his breath, looks around the room.

EDDIE
Whoa, let’s not do that again.

Gabriel sits at his desk, completely composed. He still wears a serious expression.

GABRIEL
Now do you see what I was talking about, Eddie? You were mean. You hurt people either because you thought it was funny, or because of your own selfishness, without stopping to consider the effect it might have on them.

Eddie sighs, holds his hands up.

EDDIE
Okay, okay. You got me. Maybe I was a little...inconsiderate. Once in a while. I’ve learned my lesson, okay? I swear. So what happens now?

GABRIEL
Now? Why, you get in line.

Eddie blinks at him.

EDDIE
Excuse me?

GABRIEL
You get in line, and wait to be processed like everyone else. What else did you expect?

EDDIE
What?! But there are billions of people out there.

GABRIEL
It’s a long line. Don’t worry, we’ll get to you eventually.

EDDIE
No. I wanna go now!
GABRIEL
I thought you said you’d learned your lesson about being selfish?

EDDIE
I lied, okay? I don’t wanna join some ‘line’! I don’t wanna wait with everyone else!

GABRIEL
You don’t really have a choice, Eddie...

EDDIE
No! I refuse, goddammit! You can’t show me what I’ve done wrong and not give me a chance to make amends. There’s gotta be something I can do, right? Please!

He stands up, clasps his hands together.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
I’m sorry, okay? I’m sorry I was mean. I truly, truly am, from the bottom of my heart. I don’t wanna be stuck here for ever. What can I do to make it right? I’ll do anything. Anything!

He falls to his knees, head bowed, hands thrust out. Gabriel looks down at him from his chair. He narrows his eyes, thinks for a few seconds.

Then he sighs.

GABRIEL
Well, there is one way.

Eddie looks up, fresh hope in his eyes.

EDDIE
Way? Way to what?

GABRIEL
A way to skip the queue. A way to get straight to Heaven without waiting. It only gets offered to those who ask for it, which hardly anyone does. And not everyone is eligible – but I think your record is clean enough that you’d probably be sent upstairs eventually anyway.

(MORE)
GABRIEL (cont’d)
I mean, I don’t like that you just
lied to me, but based on what’s in
your file...

He reaches for Eddie’s file, flicks to the front and reads
the first page. Eddie clambers back into his chair.

GABRIEL (CONTD.)
(reading)
Yeah. I think it could work.

He puts the folder down, leans forward, looks seriously at
Eddie.

GABRIEL (CONTD.)
What I’m about to offer you is a
chance that hardly anyone gets,
Eddie. If you succeed, then you get
to go straight to Heaven. If you
fail, you end up right back here,
at the back of the line, and you’ll
have to wait your turn.

Eddie frowns.

EDDIE
Wait – ’right back here’? Whaddaya
mean by that? Do I get a trial
period in Heaven, or something?

GABRIEL
No, nothing like that.

EDDIE
Then what do I have to do?

GABRIEL
It’s called the ’Personal Penance
Program.’ You get sent back to
Earth to commit a good deed,
specifically one that you wouldn’t
have committed during your
lifetime. If you manage to do it,
then you earn your ticket out of
here. It’s that simple.

Eddie leans back, thinking.

EDDIE
’Good deed’? What kind of good
deed? Saving a drowning kitten?
Helping someone cross the street?
GABRIEL
I can’t tell you until you actually
start the program. I’ll explain
everything once you commit to
taking part.

Still Eddie considers.

EDDIE
Do I get to pick my own good deed?

Gabriel smiles.

GABRIEL
No. Actually, I do. And I’ve got
the perfect one in mind for you.
Like I say, I’ll tell you what it
is as soon as you commit to taking
part. So are you in?

He holds out a hand. Eddie looks at it, then sighs and
shrugs. He reaches out to shake.

EDDIE
I guess. What have I got to lose?

They shake. Gabriel stands up, picks up the file.

GABRIEL
Excellent. Let’s get started, then.

MAIN DEPARTURE LOUNGE - MINUTES LATER

Gabriel strides along the edge of the hall, the ‘Preliminary
Life Assessment’ file in his hand. Eddie has to jog to stay
next to him.

EDDIE
Slow down, will ya? Where are we
even going?

GABRIEL
You’ll see. The sooner we get
there, the sooner we get started.

The pair pass a big CHRISTMAS TREE, covered in fancy
decorations. Eddie looks at it with disgust.

EDDIE
Ah, Jeez. You got Christmas up
here, too?
GABRIEL
Like I said, we try to make it as smooth a transition as possible. If it’s Christmas on Earth, it’s Christmas in The Terminal. And anyway, who doesn’t like Christmas?

Eddie says nothing, just keeps walking.

Ahead is a MAN AND WOMAN dressed in dirty peasant clothes. The man stands completely still, arms hanging by his side, the vacant expression on his face. The woman plucks at his shirt and shakes him, desperately trying to get a response.

When she sees Gabriel she rushes towards him, gesturing towards the man imploringly.

RUSSIAN WOMAN
(in Russian)
Please, help me, he won’t answer. We’ve been waiting such a long time...please, won’t you help us?

GABRIEL
(also in Russian)
I’m sorry, there’s nothing I can do. You must wait. I’m sorry.

He walks straight past the man. Eddie stares at the man as he passes by him. He hurries to catch up with Gabriel.

EDDIE
What was wrong with that guy? Why do some of the people here just act like they’re brain-dead?

GABRIEL
Because they pretty much are. It happens to some people when they’ve been waiting here a long time. We don’t know why it affects some people more quickly than others, but what we do know is that they stay that way even when they finally get upstairs. They don’t change back – they’re stuck like that forever. It’s a real shame.

Eddie glances back over his shoulder at the man. The woman has fallen to her knees and tugs at his sleeve, crying.
EDDIE
I don’t think I like it here...

Gabriel suddenly comes to a halt.

GABRIEL
Here we are. This is it.

Eddie stops and looks. The pair stand outside a door marked ‘PERSONAL PENANCE PROGRAM - PENANCES AND DEPARTURE POINT’. Gabriel opens the door, gestures for Eddie to go inside.

GABRIEL (CONT'D.)
Come on. Can’t back out now.

Eddie stares at the doorway. He looks back towards the Russian couple, then turns back towards the door.

He steps through the doorway. Gabriel shuts the door behind them.

INT. THE TERMINAL - PPP OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

One wall is completely covered in FILING CABINETS, almost stretching up to the high ceiling. A sign saying ‘GOOD DEEDS’ hangs above them. The opposite wall is blank except for an ELEVATOR DOOR, with a panel with one DOWN BUTTON.

Another attendant, MICHAEL, stands in front of a filing cabinet, sorting through files. He turns when he hears the door, then smiles.

MICHAEL
Gabriel! How are you? What brings you to my humble office?

GABRIEL
Hey, Michael. Got someone signed up to the PPP.

He gestures towards Eddie. Michael claps his hands.

MICHAEL
Excellent! You got his file?

Gabriel holds out the file. Michael takes it and opens it. He walks away, studying the first page.

MICHAEL
(reading)
Hmm...interesting.

He looks up towards Gabriel.
MICHAEL
You got a deed in mind, or do you want me to pick something?

GABRIEL
No, I think I’ve a good one, actually.

He steps up towards Michael, and whispers into his ear. Michael laughs in delight.

MICHAEL
Oh yes! That is great. Let the punishment fit the crime, eh? I’m sure we can find someone suitable.

He hands the file to Gabriel and then crosses back to the filing cabinets. He leans a ladder against one, climbs up and opens a drawer near the top. He starts rifling through the files.

Eddie edges towards Gabriel.

EDDIE
Why is he so happy? What the hell are you gonna do to me?

GABRIEL
It’s not what we’re going to do to you. It’s what you’re going to do for someone else.

EDDIE
And that is?

Before Gabriel can respond, Michael shouts out, holding a folder aloft. He wears a look of triumph on his face.

MICHAEL
This is it! This is the one.

He climbs down, walks over and hands it to Gabriel. Gabriel opens it and flicks through the pages, a smile growing.

GABRIEL
Oh yes, this is...perfect. Perfect. Good job, Mike.

He closes the file, looks up at Eddie.

GABRIEL (CONTD.)
Your whole life, you were mean, Eddie. You were selfish, solitary, (MORE)
Gabriel (cont’d)
and mean. You never did anything
for anyone else, even when people
did things for you. You didn’t
spread any happiness in the world
all the years you were alive, and
so that’s gonna be your penance.
You’re gonna make one person happy.
This person, to be exact.

He taps the folder.

Gabriel (cont’d)
If you can make this one person
happy, if you can bring some joy
into their world, then you get your
ticket to Paradise. Do you
understand?

Eddie frowns.

Eddie
How do I know you’re not kidding
around with me? That I’m gonna do
this ‘good deed’ and just end up
right back here?

Gabriel
We’re angels, Eddie. We don’t lie.
I promise you, this is for real. So
are you in?

Eddie
But what exactly do I have to do?
How do I make this person ‘happy’?

Gabriel
I’ll get into the specifics when we
arrive. All I need is for you to
say the word ‘yes’, and then we’re
on our way. So – Are. You. In?

Eddie thinks for a few seconds. Then he sighs, throws his
hands up.

Eddie
Ah, what the hell. I’m in.

Michael appears from nowhere, thrusting a clipboard, form
and pen under his nose. He points to two places on the form.
MICHAEL
Sign here and here, and print your name here, please.

Eddie stares at him, then takes the pen and does as he’s told. Michael hovers next to him, and takes the form and pen off him the second he finishes.

MICHAEL
Thank you.

He walks off, slipping the form into Eddie’s folder.

GABRIEL
Follow me.

He walks over to the ELEVATOR DOORS. Eddie follows him.

Gabriel presses the button on the pad. After a few seconds, the elevator arrives with a ’BING!’ . The doors slide smoothly open.

Gabriel and Eddie step inside what looks like a normal elevator. The pad inside has just one button: ’THE WORLD’. Gabriel presses it, the words lighting up.

The elevator doors close. As they shut, Michael waves and calls out --

MICHAEL
Good luck, Mister Neezer!

The doors shut, obscuring him from view. Gabriel turns, gives Eddie a half-salute.

GABRIEL
See you down there.

Eddie looks at him, just blinks.

EDDIE
Huh?

And then the floor DROPS AWAY.

Eddie FALLS, hands grabbing at empty air. Just like before, all kinds of COLOURS, SHAPES AND IMAGES rush by as he plummets down, yelling all the way.

He carries on falling, seemingly into infinity...
EXT. TIM’S HOUSE - EVENING

A semi-detached house in a quiet suburb in England. Christmas lights wind their way around the structure.

INT. TIM’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TIM, 9, somehow small-looking, sits curled up in an armchair - arms around his legs, knees up to his chest. His eyes are on a Christmas cooking show on the TV, but his attention is elsewhere.

The door to the living room is closed, but the sounds of the ARGUMENT raging outside in the hallway are still audible.

A WOMAN’S SHRIEK cuts clearly through --

    WOMAN’S SHRIEK
    Here’s what I think of your stupid vase, you bastard!

-- followed by the SMASH of breaking china. The shouting increases in volume. A BABY starts wailing somewhere.

Tim glances towards the door. He picks up the remote and TURNS UP the volume on the TV, trying to drown out the shouting. He puts the remote down, hugs his legs tighter.

The view THROUGH THE WINDOW is of the front lawn. Unseen and unheard to Tim, a faint CRY slowly becomes audible, growing LOUDER AND LOUDER. It seems to be coming from nowhere --

-- until A SHAPE drops out of the sky and LANDS on the lawn. The yell instantly stops.

Tim carries on watching TV, oblivious.

EXT. TIM’S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

EDDIE lies flat on his back on the grass, motionless. He opens his eyes and slowly sits up with a groan. He looks up into the clear, black, starry sky.

    EDDIE
    So what, they just dropped me from the sky? Real nice.

He rubs his forehead, groans.
EDDIE (CONTD.)
Oh, my head...what are they tryin’
to do, kill me all over again?

GABRIEL (O.S.)
What would be the point of that?

Eddie jumps at the sound of Gabriel’s voice. He looks up. Gabriel stands near the living room window, watching him.

With difficulty, Eddie clambers to his feet.

EDDIE
Huh! You tell me. I really don’t
get you people at all.

He dusts himself down, looks around again.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
So where exactly are we?

Gabriel raises a finger to his lips, beckons him over.

GABRIEL
Ssh! Come over here.

He turns to look through the window. Eddie rolls his eyes, but staggers over to join him.

Tim still sits in the armchair, eyes on the TV screen.

EDDIE
Who’s the runt?

GABRIEL
That ‘runt’, Eddie, is the person
you’re going to make happy. His
name is Tim.

INT. TIM’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door opens slightly and JULIE, 40s, pokes her head into the room.

JULIE
Hi, love. Mind if I come in?

Tim doesn’t acknowledge her presence.

Julie slips into the room, pulling the door to behind her. She crosses over to the chair and perches on the arm.
JULIE (CONTD.)
What you watching?

Tim shrugs slightly, making a sound to match. He picks up the remote and begins flicking through the channels, still not looking at her.

JULIE (CONTD.)
We’re not arguing about you, you know. I don’t want you to think that.

She reaches out, touches his shoulder.

JULIE (CONTD.)
Talk to me, Timbo. What’s up?

He mumbles into his knees.

TIM
You and Pete don’t want me here anymore.

JULIE
What?

He finally looks away from the TV, up at her.

TIM
You don’t want me. That’s it, isn’t it? That’s why you’re arguing.

JULIE
No! That’s not it at all. Grown-ups fight sometimes, you know that. Pete and I are so happy that you’re here with us. This is your home, okay?

Tim’s eyes return to the screen. He stares at it for a few seconds, then unwinds himself.

TIM
I’m going to bed.

He slips out of the chair and hurries out of the room. Julie calls after him --

JULIE
Tim!

-- but the only response is the sound of FOOTSTEPS running up the stairs. She slides down off the arm and into the chair with a sigh.
INT. TIM’S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tim barges into the room and throws himself down on the bed. He lies face down on the duvet, not moving.

Eddie and Gabriel watch from the corner. Eddie’s lip is curled, his eyebrow raised.

EDDIE
Seriously? This kid?

GABRIEL
What’s so bad about this kid?

EDDIE
Look at him! He’s so miserable! He’s pathetic! And he’s British! Could you not do better than a miserable, pathetic, British kid?

GABRIEL
You’re really not grasping this ‘not being mean’ thing, are you? Why don’t you try saying something nice for a change?

EDDIE
Alright, alright...

He looks around the room for inspiration.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
...umm, I like his lava lamp.

GABRIEL
That’s a start. Right, now let me explain the rules. This is Tim. As you can see, he’s not happy. Your task is to make him happy.

EDDIE
And how will I know if he’s getting happier?

GABRIEL
By using this.

Gabriel reaches into his left-hand pocket and pulls out a GLASS TUBE that looks like a thermometer. It is filled with a shimmering, shining gold liquid.

He holds it up for Eddie to see.
GABRIEL (CONTD.)
This device is a happiometer. It works just like a standard thermometer - the higher the liquid, the happier the person.

The skeptical look on Eddie’s face grows more pronounced.

EDDIE
Seriously? A ‘happiometer’? What do you measure happiness in, puppies?

GABRIEL
No, ‘glows’.

EDDIE
Of course.

He hands the happiometer to Eddie, who turns it in his hands, studying it.

GABRIEL
The scale goes up to one hundred glows. At the moment it’s reading around ten to fifteen. You’ve gotta get that up to at least ninety in order to complete the program.

Eddie looks at the happiometer again. The liquid’s current level and the ‘90’ line seem very far apart.

EDDIE
Ninety? Isn’t that a bit high?

GABRIEL
You’re earning a ticket to Paradise, Eddie, not a free dessert. Ninety is perfectly reasonable. The other thing to note is that this thing doesn’t measure superficial happiness. For example, if you tickle him --

EDDIE
Which I won’t be doing.

GABRIEL (CONTD.)
(ignoring him)
-- it’s not gonna affect his glow reading. You’ve gotta make him truly, fundamentally happy in order to boost it up. That means finding out what he really wants, and

(MORE)
making it happen. Which brings me on to point number two.

He reaches into his other pocket, pulls out a little hourglass. It is filled with SILVER POWDER. The top is completely full, the bottom completely empty.

GABRIEL (CONTD.)
This little thing is your 'angelic energy gauge'.

EDDIE
My say-what gauge?

GABRIEL
Angelic energy. We angels produce infinite amounts of angelic energy. It’s what allows us to jump through time and space, pass through solid objects, catch people who’ve jumped from tall buildings... it can even be used to impregnate adolescents, if the occasion calls for it. With this stuff, you can pretty much do anything. You, however, are not a fully-fledged angel... at least not yet. So you only get a finite amount of it to help you make Tim happy. Anything you do will drain your supply of this energy, okay? Anything. And once it’s all gone, you don’t get any more. So be careful with it.

He hands it to Eddie, who takes it carefully and peers at it with wonder.

EDDIE
What kind of things can I do?

GABRIEL
Almost anything you can imagine. Well, as long as it doesn’t hurt anybody. You can teleport anywhere in the world, but you can’t jump through time - you’re not allowed to do that. You’re invisible to everyone except Tim, but if you want to make him temporarily invisible or become visible to other people, you can do that too. You can control or affect pretty (MORE)
GABRIEL (cont’d)
much any inanimate object. But remember, the bigger the act, the more energy it’ll use. Don’t waste it fooling around.

EDDIE
And how do I use these powers? Is there like a magic word, or something?

GABRIEL
No, it’s really just about faith. Picture in your head what you want to do, believe you can do it, and it’ll happen. Try switching on that light for practice.

He points at a light on the desk.

Eddie follows his gaze, stares at the lamp. He narrows his eyes, scrunches up his forehead. He breathes in, deeper and deeper, staring at the light, his hands clenching into fists. His face slowly turns red.

Nothing happens.

Eddie gives up, exhales in one big breath.

EDDIE
I can’t do it.

GABRIEL
You can. Just relax. Visualise.

Eddie breathes in deeply, breathes out. He narrows his eyes again, stretches out a hand in front of him.

EDDIE
Let there be light.

And – BING! – the light turns on. Eddie’s eyes widen. He turns to Gabriel, smiling.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Hey, I did it!

GABRIEL
And look at your energy gauge.

Eddie holds it up, looks at it. A few grains of powder have fallen through into the bottom of the hourglass.
GABRIEL (CONTD.)
See? The more you do, the less energy you have left. So be sensible. That’s about it, I think. Any questions?

EDDIE
Yeah. Can I tell the kid the reason I’m here?

GABRIEL
You can tell him you’re here to make him happy, but not why. Not that it would help - you can’t pressurise someone into happiness.

EDDIE
Right. Uh...can I return to Limbo at some point? If it’s urgent?

GABRIEL
Yeah, if you want to. But that’ll use up a good chunk of your energy, so try to keep those trips to a minimum.

EDDIE
Okay. Oh! And one more thing. Do I have some kind of deadline?

Gabriel claps a hand to his forehead.

GABRIEL
Of course! I completely forgot. You have three days to make Tim happy. Today is four days after you died, which makes it December twenty-second, which means that --

EDDIE
-- the deadline is Christmas Day.

GABRIEL
Right.

EDDIE
There’s just one problem, buster. I hate Christmas.

GABRIEL
I know. That’s why I picked it. This is a penance Eddie, not a vacation. This time you’re gonna (MORE)
GABRIEL (cont’d)
enjoy Christmas, and you’re gonna
make sure he does, too. Got that?
From the second I disappear, you’ll
be visible to him, so you better
catch started. Good luck!

With a wave, Gabriel FADES AWAY.

EDDIE
Wait!

But Gabriel is gone. Eddie sighs, turns to look at Tim who
is still lying face-down on the bed.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Perfect.

Tim remains motionless. Eddie puts the happiometer and
angelic energy gauge in his pockets, and then looks back up
at him.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Well, here goes nothing.

He shuffles up to the bed, reaches out and gently shakes
Tim’s shoulder.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Hey. Hey, kid.

Tim looks up. He peers at Eddie in confusion for a moment.
Then his EYES WIDEN. He rolls over, away from Eddie, stares
at him in terror, and then opens his mouth and YELLS.

TIM
AAH! Julie! Pete! HELP!

He scrambles across the bed and off the other side, using it
as a barrier. Eddie holds his hands up pleadingly.

EDDIE
Hey! It’s okay! Seriously, kid,
stop screaming!

TIM
Help! Help!

The sound of FOOTSTEPS running up the stairs. A muffled
voice comes from the other side of the door.
JULIE (O.S.)
Tim? I’m coming!

Eddie whips round, stares at the door.

EDDIE
Ah, nuts.

He looks around the room for somewhere to hide. He spots the door of a closet, and runs straight towards it.

But instead of opening the door, he PASSES STRAIGHT THROUGH IT, out of sight.

Tim instantly stops yelling. He stares at the door, awed.

At that moment Julie BURSTS into the room.

JULIE
Timmy! What is it? What’s wrong?

Tim cannot find the words. He just stares at where Eddie disappeared, open-mouthed. Julie hurries over to him, pulls him into a hug.

JULIE
What’s the matter, huh? You were screaming loud enough to wake the dead! It’s okay...

PETE, 40s, tough-looking, walks into the room.

PETE
What does he want now? More attention, I suppose.

JULIE
Knock it off, Pete. Leave us alone.

PETE
Don’t you talk to me like that --

JULIE
Just GET OUT!

Pete scowls, but leaves, SLAMMING the door behind him.

JULIE (CONTD.)
It’s okay, Tim. What’s wrong, hey?

Tim still stares at the door.
TIM
I had a nightmare.

JULIE
A nightmare?

TIM
That’s all. I’m okay now. Honest.

JULIE
You sure? You want me to stay with you while you go back to sleep?

TIM
No, I’m really fine. I’m sorry I yelled. I’ll go back to bed now.

He wriggles out of her arms, sits down on the edge of the bed. Julie looks down at him, concerned, but moves towards the door. She opens it, pauses in the doorway.

JULIE
You just shout if you need anything, okay? Night, love.

She shuts the door.

Tim waits for a second, then stands up. He tentatively creeps towards the door, reaches out for the door handle --

-- but EDDIE’S HEAD suddenly pops through the door, making Tim jump back in fright.

The two stare at each other.

EDDIE
You done yelling?

Tim nods, eyes wide.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Good.

Ne steps out through the door into the room. Every time he steps forward, Tim steps back.

Eddie pulls out the angelic energy gauge and studies it. A few more grains of powder lie at the bottom.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Ah, great. That’s your fault, kid. This stuff ain’t easy to come by!

Tim sits down on the bed, speaks in a shaky voice.
TIM
Are you a ghost?

EDDIE
No, I’m not a ghost. I’m...well, I guess you could say I’m your guardian angel. At least, for the next few days. Name’s Eddie.

He holds out a hand. Tim just stares at it.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Don’t wanna shake? Fair enough.

He drops his hand, wanders off across the room. He examines a collection of rocks on a shelf. Tim watches him.

TIM
Err, excuse me...

EDDIE
Eddie.

TIM
Right. Excuse me, Eddie, but what are you doing in my room?

EDDIE
I was sent here. As your temporary guardian angel, it’s my job to make sure you have a happy Christmas.

TIM
Oh, okay. And how, exactly, are you going to do that?

EDDIE
Well, that’s what you and me are going to work out. With our combined brain-power and my superpowers --

Tim brightens up.

TIM
Superpowers? Like Spiderman?

EDDIE
Well no, not exactly. Maybe ‘superpowers’ is the wrong word, but they’re definitely ‘powers’...
TIM
Like what? What can you do?

EDDIE
All kinds of stuff.

TIM
Show me.

EDDIE
I don’t know if that’s --

TIM
Please!

Eddie sighs.

EDDIE
I’m kinda on a tight budget here, but okay.

He closes his eyes, extends out a hand towards the rocks. After a moment, all of them RISE INTO THE AIR, hovering a foot above the shelf.

TIM
Oh my -- that’s amazing!

Eddie relaxes, opens his eyes. The rocks CLATTER back down.

EDDIE
Convinced?

Tim nods.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Great. So, as I was saying, combined brainpower and my powers should mean we can’t fail. Right?

TIM
Right.

Tim doesn’t sound too sure.

EDDIE
Hey, I just had a great idea! Why don’t you write a list of stuff you’d like to do? Stuff that would make you happy.
TIM
Like what?

EDDIE
Heck, I don’t know—places you’d like to go, things you’d like to try. Just whatever comes to mind! Then we can go through them, make you feel all warm’n’fuzzy inside and hey presto! Success.

TIM
Okay! I’ll write a list. Julie always writes lists whenever we go shopping.

EDDIE
’Julie’...how long have you called your parents by their first name?

TIM
They’re not my parents. They’re my foster parents.

EDDIE
Oh, okay. Where are your real folks?

Tim’s face crumples slightly. Eddie quickly steers the conversation away from that.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Never mind! None of my business anyway. Nothing to do with me. I’m here for you, and you alone. Tell you what, you get going with your list. I’ll be back in a minute, okay?

TIM
Err, okay. What are you going to do, go downstairs?

EDDIE
Oh no, much better. Watch this.

Eddie disappears in a FLASH.

TIM
Cool.

He goes over to a bookshelf, gets a pad of paper and a pen and then goes back to his bed.
He picks up the pad, pulls the lid off his pen, sticks the other end in his mouth and adopts a thoughtful expression, head slightly to one side.

    TIM
    Now, what do I want to do...

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE EDDIE’S HOUSE - EVENING
The street is still covered in snow. Eddie appears in the middle of the road in a FLASH. He looks around with a smile.

    EDDIE
    Home sweet home.

He looks at Stan’s porch - the lights Eddie ripped down have been put back up.

Eddie turns his head, looks at his own porch. It looks bare and uninviting.

    EDDIE
    Maybe I should have decorated.

MONTAGE:
- In the HALLWAY, Eddie picks up his water pistol. He can’t help a smile.

- Eddie looks around his LIVING ROOM, which is exactly how he left it. He wanders through to the KITCHEN, where the dirty dishes still sit in the sink.

- In his BEDROOM, Eddie reaches down and picks up the framed photo of a woman and a baby. He touches their faces with the tips of his fingers.

- OUTSIDE once more, Eddie walks down the steps from his porch. He turns to face his home, sighs.

    EDDIE
    So long, house.

He gives a small wave, and then DISAPPEARS.
INT. TIM’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eddie appears in Tim’s bedroom, which is completely dark.

EDDIE
(whispering)
Tim?

He shuffles forward, bangs into something in the blackness.

EDDIE
Ow! Where’s the goddamn light switch...

He flicks the lights on. Tim stirs in bed.

TIM
Whossat?

EDDIE
Hey, it’s Eddie. You fell asleep already? I was only gone a few minutes!

Rubbing his eyes, Tim peers at a clock on his bedside table.

TIM
You were gone for six hours.

Eddie blinks in surprise.

EDDIE
What? No way. You must be wrong.

TIM
Nope. It was six o’clock when you left, and now it’s twelve o’clock. Six hours.

Eddie frowns at the clock’s digital display.

EDDIE
Huh. That’s weird.

He shrugs.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Anyway, you got your list?

TIM
Yes!

He opens the drawer in his bedside table, pulls it out and hands it to Eddie, who sits on the bed and studies it.
EDDIE
(reading aloud)
"Ice skating at 'Somerset House'."
Where’s that?

TIM
It’s up in London. Julie and Pete took me there once a couple of years ago.

EDDIE
Okay, that should be pretty straightforward. You get dressed in winter clothes, and then I’ll get us there when you’re done.

TIM
Okay!

Tim leaps out of bed and dashes for his wardrobe.

EXT. SOMERSET HOUSE ICE RINK - NIGHT


A tall fir tree stands in front of them and, beyond that, an ICE RINK stands, quiet and deserted.

Eddie looks around.

He points a finger towards the ice rink, and instantly, the whole thing RUMBLES INTO LIFE. Eddie turns to Tim, grinning.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Well, would you look at that!

Tim stares at the rink, mouth open.

TIM
How did you do that?

EDDIE
How do you think? Magic, kid. Now come on, we’re here 'cause of you – so are we skating, or what?

He approaches the rink.

TIM
Hey, wait for me!

Tim hurries after him.
MONTAGE:

- Eddie staggers his way uneasily across the ice on skates. Tim watches from by the wall, holding the wall for support. Eddie tries to straighten up, still moving forward.

      EDDIE
      Hey, I’m getting the hang of this!

And that’s when he slips over. Tim laughs.

- Eddie comes over to Tim, offers a hand. Tim takes it and gingerly steps away from the wall.

- Eddie tries to chase Tim across the ice, who yells in mock fear as he tries to escape.

END MONTAGE

EXT. TRAFALGAR SQUARE - NIGHT

Tim and Eddie walk through Trafalgar Square, which is almost deserted on this cold winter night.

They walk up the massive CHRISTMAS TREE which stands in the centre of the square, covered in lights and decorations.

      TIM
      Amazing, isn’t it?

      EDDIE
      Sure, if that’s the kind of stuff you’re into.

Tim looks at Eddie.

      TIM
      Do you not like Christmas, Eddie?

      EDDIE
      Nope.

      TIM
      Why not? Everyone loves Christmas.

      EDDIE
      Well, I don’t. I can’t even remember the last time I enjoyed one. I never receive any presents, and I never send anybody any. I don’t mind being alone - in fact I prefer it. But Christmas is the one (MORE)
EDDIE (cont’d)
time year where not being with someone seems to matter.

By the end he is speaking more to himself than Tim, who looks up towards the top of the tree.

TIM
I like the star.

Eddie reaches into his pocket, digs out Tim’s list.

EDDIE
(reading aloud)
‘Snowball fight’. Really? Just that? Any wish you wanted, and that’s what you came up with? Couldn’t you do that anyway?

TIM
Maybe, but it’s not snowing here, is it?

Eddie frowns, then smiles suddenly.

EDDIE
I’ve got an idea. Take my hand.

Tim does. They disappear in a FLASH.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT
The two appear in a forest of PINE TREES.
Tim looks around, teeth chattering.

TIM
Where are we?

EDDIE
Lapland, inside the Arctic Circle. You wanted a snowball fight – why not have one here?

Tim looks at him, and smiles.
MONTAGE:

- The two dart between the pine trees, throwing snowballs and reaching for new ammunition.

- Eddie sneaks round a tree, but is ambushed by Tim, who smacks him in the face with a snowball.

END MONTAGE

Eddie and Tim are in the midst of a close-range exchange of snowballs when suddenly --

EDDIE

Ssh!

Tim freezes. Eddie scans between the trees, then points.

EDDIE (CONTD.)

Look.

Tim looks. A HERD OF REINDEER picks its way through the trees, moving through the night. The two watch them pass in silence.

Eddie comes over to Tim, who is really shivering.

EDDIE (CONTD.)

Ready to go home?

Tim nods. Eddie puts a hand on his shoulder, and the two of them DISAPPEAR.

INT. TIM’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tim and Eddie two appear in the middle of the room. Tim, rubbing his arms to get warm, goes to sit down on his bed.

TIM

That was so much fun.

Eddie looks down at the happiometer in his hand. The level is still only around the ‘40’ line.

EDDIE

Damn it. Not even close! I’d kinda hoped a couple of trips would do the trick.

He sighs, sits down on the bed next to Tim.
EDDIE (CONTD.)
Help me out here, kid. I want you to be happy. I’m trying to make that happen. But all I seem to be able to do is make you happy — what was that word? ‘Superficially.’ Yeah, that was it.

TIM
Sorry.

EDDIE
What are apologising for? You haven’t done anything wrong...it’s obviously harder to make a kid happier than I thought, that’s all.

TIM
Did you have kids, Eddie?

Eddie winces slightly at the question. He sighs.

EDDIE
I did, yeah. I had a girl. Haven’t seen her in a long time.

TIM
Why not?

EDDIE
Jeez, enough with the questions! What are you, a cop?

He stands up and walks away, irritated. Tim speaks in a small voice.

TIM
Sorry.

Eddie sighs, turns round.

EDDIE
No, that’s okay. Sorry I snapped at you. It’s just...it’s painful talking about it, you know? Even after so long.

TIM
Julie always says a problem shared is a problem halved.

He pats the duvet next to him, gesturing for Eddie to sit.
EDDIE
(smiling)
Oh, she does, does she?

He crosses back to the bed, sits down next to Tim. He pauses, then speaks.

EDDIE
I had a little girl. She was the cutest thing in the whole wide world. Big brown eyes, curly chestnut hair – the prettiest little kid you ever saw. I loved her so much. But back then...

His voice falters. He looks up at Tim.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
You gotta understand, Timbo, I wasn’t a bad person. I never stole nor hurt anyone. But there’s stuff I’d change about my life, if I had the chance. That’s the same for everyone though I guess, right? Everyone would do it different, if they got another go around.

He stops again.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
When I was younger, I used to drink. I drank to make myself feel better, and then I’d feel guilty about drinking so I drank to feel better about that...I couldn’t break the cycle. I didn’t hit my wife – nothing like that. But I wasn’t much of a husband. She tried to help me, stayed longer than she really wanted to, I think, for my sake, but eventually she left me, and she took our little girl with her. By the time I pulled myself together, I couldn’t find any trace of where they went. My little girl could be anywhere. Hell, she could be dead for all I know. Still, it’s my own damn fault.

The two sit in silence. Eddie laughs gently.
EDDIE (CONT'D.)
Sorry, kid. I know that’s a bit intense for you to listen to.

TIM
That’s okay. Grown-ups do silly things all the time. At least you’re sorry about it, that’s important. I bet your daughter would forgive you if you met.

EDDIE
I don’t know about that.

TIM
Oh, I bet she would. Even if they’re horrible people, your mum is still your mum and your dad is still dad. I’d love to meet my real mum. I bet she’s amazing.

Something strange happens to the happiometer. The level of fluid LEAPS up the scale for a moment, to around ’55’, before it drops back down again.

Eddie’s eyebrows twitch.

EDDIE
Hey, talk about her again.

TIM
What? Who?

EDDIE
Your mom! Talk about your mom!

Again, the happiometer goes haywire. Eddie begins to smile.

EDDIE
That’s it! Oh baby, that’s it!
Hallelujah! Yee-ha!

He breaks into a little jig, shuffling round the room. Tim watches from the bed.

TIM
What? What’s it?

EDDIE
That’s what’s gonna fill this baby up and get me on the next plane to Paradise! I am going to reunite you with your mom.
A moment’s silence while Tim processes.

TIM
   (daring to hope)
Really?

EDDIE
Sure, how hard can it be? I track her down, put the two of you together, you get happy and boom! Mission accomplished.

TIM
Oh, wait - Eddie...

Eddie ignores him, keeps shuffling round the room.

EDDIE
It’ll be perfect. The two of you, together again after all these years – we could even do it at some special location....

TIM
Eddie...

EDDIE
Hey, I know! How about that giant tree in that square in London? Yeah, that’d be great.

TIM
EDDIE!

Eddie stops dancing.

EDDIE
What?

TIM
There’s just one problem.

EDDIE
‘Problem’? No no, no problems...

TIM
I have no idea where she is. Nobody does. I asked Julie about it, and she said there was some big mystery about exactly where I came from. So how are you going to track her down, if there’s no record of her?
EDDIE
Huh. That is a problem.

He paces the room, stroking his chin in thought.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Got it!

He puts up a triumphant finger, spins round.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
I’ll go back up to The Terminal! They’ve got files on everything up there, every little bit of every person’s life. There’s nothing they don’t know! They’re bound to have a file on your mom. I’ll give it a read, find where she is, and boom. We’re in business.

He walks to the centre of the room.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Sit tight, okay? I’ll go back up, grab the file and come straight back down. Then we’ll head for London, and it’ll be reunion time.

He turns his face up to the ceiling.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Okay, here we go.

He closes his eyes, spreads his arms wide.

Nothing happens.

TIM
Can’t you do it?

Eddie looks down at him, annoyed.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Yes, I can do it. I’ve just never done this journey before, that’s all. Gimme a minute.

He looks back towards the ceiling, closes his eyes.

EDDIE
Hey, I feel something. I think it’s working...
Eddie disappears in a BLINDING FLASH that grows until it fills the entire room with white light. When it fades, Eddie is gone.

THE VOID - CONTINUOUS

Once again, Eddie tumbles through time and space, past all sorts of strange, indistinguishable things.

His mouth is stretched wide open as he yells all the way...

INT. THE TERMINAL - PPP OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL stands on the ladder, putting a file into a high-up drawer. He whistles tunelessly to himself.

A ‘BING!’ from the elevator. The doors slide smoothly open, revealing the perfectly-ordinary looking interior. Michael looks in its direction, curious.

In another FLASH OF WHITE, Eddie appears from the back wall of the lift, still yelling. He flies out headfirst through the doors, landing HARD on the office floor.

EDDIE
Oh boy, that hurt...

As he lies groaning, the elevator doors shut behind him. Michael hops down from his ladder and hurries over.

MICHAEL
Mr. Neezer! What are you doing here? You haven’t completed your penance yet!

EDDIE
Yeah, I know, I know. Help me up, would ya?

With Michael’s assistance, Eddie clambers up onto his feet.

He fishes the angelic energy meter out of his pocket and studies it. The top of the hourglass is NOTICEABLY EMPTIER than it was before, now more empty than full.

Eddie gives a low whistle, shakes his head.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Boy, Gabriel wasn’t kidding. That journey sure does suck the juice.

He slips it back in his pocket, pats himself down.
EDDIE (CONTD.)
He around, by the way? Gabriel? I need to speak to him.

MICHAEL
You can’t see him, Mr. Neezer.

Eddie stops, looks up at Michael.

EDDIE
Whadaya mean, 'I can’t see him’?

MICHAEL
That’s how it works. Someone taking part in the PPP can’t communicate with the person who gave them their penance until the deadline. They’re the rules.

EDDIE
Jeez, you guys and your ‘rules’! Can’t you bend them, just once?

MICHAEL
No.

EDDIE
Please!

MICHAEL
No. I didn’t do it for Elvis, and I’m not gonna do it for you.

EDDIE
But --
(stops)
-- wait, Elvis? Elvis did a penance?

MICHAEL
Yep.

EDDIE
Can I ask what it was?

MICHAEL
Yep.

EDDIE
Would you tell me?
MICHAEL

Nope.

EDDIE

Huh. Fair enough.

(beat)

Did he pass?

MICHAEL

Yes, he passed.

Eddie nods in satisfaction.

EDDIE

Darn right he did.

He pauses, looks at Michael with a frown.

EDDIE (CONTD.)

Why did I come up here again?

MICHAEL

Something about wanting to see Gabriel...

EDDIE

Oh yeah! Please, Mike, you gotta let me see him. I’m gonna fail my penance if you don’t!

MICHAEL

It’s not gonna happen, Eddie.

EDDIE

But --

MICHAEL

Eddie! Read my lips. It’s. Not. Happening. Rules are rules. That’s just the way it is, okay?

Eddie sighs, throws up his hands resignedly.

EDDIE

Okay, I got it.

Michael sighs.

MICHAEL

What did you want from Gabriel, anyway?
EDDIE
Oh, just a bit of information on Tim’s past. I wanna find his real mother.

MICHAEL
Well, I could give you that.

Eddie turns to face him with an expression of renewed hope.

EDDIE
You could?

MICHAEL
Sure. It’ll be in his file.

Michael goes to one of the filing cabinets and pulls out a file. The cover page reads ‘TIM LITTLE’. He flicks through the file, eventually pulling out one single sheet of paper. He hands it to Eddie.

EDDIE
You, Michael, are a saint. Saint Michael! If I see you in Heaven, I’m buying you a drink.

MICHAEL
I’ll hold you to that.

Eddie scans the piece of paper.

EDDIE
(reading aloud)
Kennington, South London. Gotcha.

MICHAEL
I’d go straight down now, Mister Neezer. Finish the job.

EDDIE
There’s no rush. I still have a couple of days.

Michael checks the watch on his wrist.

MICHAEL
Not according to this, you don’t. It’s Christmas Eve already.

Eddie looks up from the file.
EDDIE
What?

MICHAEL
Yep. It’s the evening of Christmas Eve in the UK. Your deadline is about three hours away.

EDDIE
But that’s not possible! It wasn’t Christmas Eve when I left, and I’ve only been up here a few minutes. How can that much time have passed?

MICHAEL
When you jump around between locations, you lose your grip on time, too. If you’re not careful, hours, days, even weeks can go by. It’s even worse when you travel between Earth and The Terminal. Sometimes it doesn’t happen, but if you don’t concentrate in every jump, you can never be sure. Did Gabriel not explain that to you?

EDDIE
(gritted teeth)
I guess it slipped his mind.

MICHAEL
Ah.

Eddie hurries over to the elevator doors, presses the button, enters.

EDDIE
Wish me luck, Michael.

MICHAEL
Good luck, Mister Neezer. Nearly there now!

Before Eddie can reply, he starts to DROP.

THE VOID - CONTINUOUS

Eddie tumbles once more through the Void, only this time he is more in control. He straightens himself out, flying like an arrow instead of a crumpled heap like before.
INT. TIM’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Eddie appears in a WHITE FLASH, but this time manages to land on his feet.

EDDIE
Hey! I’m getting better at that.

The bedroom is dark and quiet. Eddie goes over and flicks the light switch.

The bed is made and empty. Eddie looks round.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Tim?

Eddie scratches his head in confusion. He glances towards the window, and double-takes.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
What the...?

He nudges the curtain to one side and looks out.

A NEWS STATION VAN is parked opposite the house. A REPORTER delivers a report from the pavement. TWO POLICE CARS are parked nearby, and a small crowd is gathered round, watched by FOUR POLICEMEN. Eddie surveys the scene with wide eyes.

He spins back round, looking more urgently round the room.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Tim!

INT. TIM’S HOUSE – LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Julie sits on the sofa, dabbing at her eyes with a tissue. Pete sits next to her, a comforting arm round her shoulders.

A POLICEMAN stands nearby.

POLICEMAN
I promise you we’re doing everything we can, Mrs. Peters.

JULIE
Oh, my poor little darling...

POLICEMAN
It’s only been thirty-six hours. There’s no reason to believe he’s come to any harm.
JULIE
It’s just not right - a boy his age
wandering the streets all alone on
Christmas Eve. Anything could
happen to him, poor little mite!

Pete rubs her arm, pulls her into a hug.

PETE
It’s going to be okay, love. He’s
going to be okay.

Eddie turns away from the scene, screws his eyes shut and
clenches his hands into fists.

EDDIE
(to himself)
I’ll find ya, kiddo. I’m coming...

He disappears in a FLASH.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT
Eddie appears in a deserted park. A full moon and stars
provide the only light. The place is eerily silent.
He looks both ways down the path -- no-one in sight.

EDDIE
Tim?

No response from anywhere. Eddie takes a few steps one way,
then a few steps another way, peering into the gloom.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
(louder)
Tim?

A COUGH comes from his left. Eddie spins to face that way.

He spots a huddled shape at the bottom of one of the trees
and creeps towards it, tentatively.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Tim? That you, buddy?

The shape stirs slightly. A voice drifts weakly out of the
darkness.

TIM
Eddie?
EDDIE

Yeah, it’s me.

He hurries over and crouches down next to Tim, who is shivering from the cold. Eddie pulls off his coat and wraps it around the boy.

EDDIE (CONTD.)

Well, found ya. It’s your turn to seek now.

Tim springs at Eddie and buries his head in his chest. Eddie looks surprised for a moment, before, giving him a hug.

EDDIE (CONTD.)

Hey, hey, it’s okay.

He pulls Tim away, holds him at arm’s-length.

EDDIE (CONTD.)

What were you thinking running off, huh? Your foster mom was worried about you!

TIM

I waited for you all night, but you didn’t come back. I thought you’d forgotten about me, so I tried to get to Trafalgar Square by myself.

EDDIE

Forgotten about you? Nah, I wouldn’t do that. You’re my buddy. C’mon, let’s get you home.

He starts to stand up. Tim grabs his sleeve.

TIM

No! Please. Can we still go to Trafalgar Square? I really want to see my mum. Did you manage to find her?

Eddie pulls the folded piece of paper out of his pocket.

EDDIE

You bet I did. Come on then, take my hand.

He holds out his hand. Tim grabs it, pulls himself upright. He stands next to Eddie.
EDDIE (CONTD.)
You ready? Hold on tight, now.

EXT. TRAFALGAR SQUARE - NIGHT
The two APPEAR in Trafalgar Square, next to the big tree. Eddie puts his hands on Tim’s shoulders.

EDDIE
You wait here, okay? I’ll be back with your mom before you know it.

TIM
Promise you won’t take so long this time?

EDDIE
I promise. See you soon.

He stands up, takes a step back, and DISAPPEARS.

INT. ISOBEL’S FLAT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
Isobel - the woman from the coffee shop earlier on - sits in an armchair reading a book, curled up in the same way as Tim. Her living room is tidy and largely impersonal.

Eddie appears in a FLASH. A BEEPING comes from his pocket. He pulls out the angelic energy meter and checks the levels - only a few grains of powder remain at the top of the hourglass.

EDDIE
Damn. Nearly out.

He puts the angelic energy meter back in his pocket, then looks up at Isobel.

EDDIE
Can she see me? Or hear me?

He shouts at her, as loudly as he can.

EDDIE
Hey! Lady! Over here!

No response.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Huh. Apparently not.
Isobel stands and crosses the room, slipping out through a doorway. Eddie stands where he is, thinking.

**EDDIE (CONTD.)**
How can I do this without her seeing me? I can’t. Hey, you!

He jumps up and down, waving his arms about. She walks straight past him back to the chair, completely oblivious to his presence. Eddie waves his hands in front of her face, but she makes no reaction.

Eddie paces back and forward, hand on his chin.

**EDDIE (CONTD.)**
Think, Eddie, think. She can’t see or hear you when you’re fighting to be seen. So try something else. Try the opposite.

He stops, breathes in and exhales slowly. He stretches his arms out either side, palms facing down. He shuts his eyes.

**EDDIE (CONTD.)**
Just relax. Let your guard down, and just maybe...

And as Isobel glances up from her book, Eddie suddenly FADES IN, now visible to her. Her mouth drops open.

Eddie smiles sheepishly at her.

**EDDIE**
From the look on your face I’m guessing you can see me now, huh?

Isobel looks away from him, down at the wine glass in her hand. She sets it down on the coffee table.

**ISOBEL**
I must have had too much wine.

**EDDIE**
Oh no, you’re not drunk. You’re not imagining me - I’m really here.

Isobel still doesn’t look at him.

**ISOBEL**
I can hear him. The hallucination I can understand - too much wine, or maybe the fish was off - but hearing him? I should call Dr. Jones...
She stands up, walks towards the door. Eddie gently steps into her path, blocking her escape. She pulls up a metre short of him.

ISOBEL (CONTD.)
And now he’s stopping me from leaving. Is that normal? Are your hallucinations supposed to stop you from leaving rooms? Maybe I should just call an ambulance...

EDDIE
Look, I’m not a hallucination, okay? I’m real. There’s no time for you to freak out.

ISOBEL
Okay, he’s talking to me. This definitely isn’t normal. I should definitely call an ambulance.

She steps forward. Eddie throws up a hand to stop her. The instant Eddie’s fingers touch her she leaps back with a SCREAM.

She stares at him, wild-eyed.

ISOBEL (CONTD.)
Wh-what are you?

EDDIE
I’m here to help you, okay?

ISOBEL
Help me, right...

She sinks back down into the chair.

ISOBEL (CONTD.)
I’ve gone mad.

EDDIE
No, you haven’t gone mad. Look, I need your help too.

They talk over each other, Isobel completely ignoring Eddie.
ISOBEL
They’re going to come and lock me away in a mental hospital. It’ll be just like that one in One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest, with a horrible nurse that’ll pick on everybody and make it her mission to break me and I’ll eventually have me lobotomized...

EDDIE
I promise you, you’re not mad. I’m really here, look! Please, I don’t have time for this, I’m on a very tight schedule and we’ve gotta head out, right now, if we’re gonna make it on time. Please, listen to me. Will you please just – (louder) – I know where your son is!

That gets Isobel’s attention. Slowly, she looks up at Eddie, and speaks in barely a whisper.

ISOBEL
My son?

EDDIE
Yeah, your son. The one you abandoned on a church doorstep when you were twenty-three. The one who you haven’t seen in almost twelve years despite your efforts to track him down and the one who is, right this minute, just three miles away.

Isobel stares at him.

ISOBEL
Who are you? How do you know so much about me...and how the hell do you know I had a son?

EDDIE
It’d take too long to explain. Just believe me when I tell you all I want in the world right now is to see the two of you reunited. So are you coming, or --

Eddie stops mid-sentence. His eyes WIDEN.

He crosses to a shelf and picks up a framed photo. He stares at it, mouth hanging open. Slowly, he turns towards Isobel.

EDDIE
Where did you get this photo?

He holds it up for her to see. It is a black-and-white shot of a mother holding her baby – EXACTLY THE SAME PHOTO that Eddie had by his bed.
ISOBEL
What?

EDDIE
This photo. Where did you get it?

ISOBEL
My mum gave it to me. It’s a picture of us. What’s it to you?

But Eddie has turned away, no longer listening. fishes the piece of paper out of his pocket, unfolds it. He reads it.

EDDIE
It…it can’t be.

ISOBEL
Are you alright? What is it?

He looks up at her, speaks with wonder in his voice.

EDDIE
I think you’re my daughter.

He staggers backwards, lands in an armchair.

ISOBEL
Daughter? What are you on about?

EDDIE
What’s your name? Is it --

He mouths it as she says it.

ISOBEL
Isobel.

EDDIE
Isobel. My God.

He looks up at a clock hanging on the wall. It reads 11:13.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Oh Jeez! I’m almost out of time! Quick, we gotta leave now!

He leaps to his feet.

ISOBEL
Wait a minute – you can’t just claim you’re my father and then change the subject!
EDDIE
I’ll explain everything on the way, I swear. Please just trust me when I tell you that you and Tim have to be reunited within the next forty-five minutes.

Isobel looks at him, really studying his face. She sizes him up, and then makes her decision. She nods.

ISOBEL
Okay. It all sounds completely crazy, but who can tell what and what isn’t mad anymore? I’m in.

EDDIE
Thank you. Thank you so much.

He pulls the angelic energy meter out of his pocket, holds it up to look at it.

The top is completely empty.

EDDIE
Oh no.

ISOBEL
What’s wrong?

EDDIE
It’s all gone. I can’t teleport without this stuff. What do we do?

ISOBEL
Wait, ’teleport’? What are you, a superhero?

EDDIE
That’s just what Tim said...no, I’m not a superhero. I’m a temporary angel that can’t teleport once I’ve run out of angelic energy. So what the hell do we do?

ISOBEL
Do? We do what normal people do. We call a taxi.

She heads out of the room. Eddie looks up at clock on the wall - the time is 11:15.
EXT. STREET OUTSIDE ISOBEL’S FLAT - MINUTES LATER

Eddie and Isobel climb into a black cab. Isobel shuts the door and shouts out to the driver --

   ISOBEL
   Trafalgar Square, please, as fast as you can!

The taxi accelerates away.

INT./EXT. TAXI - NIGHT

The taxi hurries through the street of London.

INSIDE, Isobel and Eddie sit opposite each other. Isobel stares at Eddie with a mixture of fear, awe, and anger.

   ISOBEL
   You left my son all alone in a busy square in London on a freezing winter night?

   EDDIE
   Hey, he’s fine. I wanted the reunion to be a special occasion. Besides, you left him on a church doorstep – which is worse?

Isobel just scowls at him.

   EDDIE (CONTD.)
   That wasn’t fair. I’m sorry. I know all about what happened, why you had to give him up. The father wanted an abortion – he’d never have let you keep him.

A second of silence. Isobel looks out the window, then back again to ask a question.

   ISOBEL
   You weren’t serious before, were you? About the teleporting thing?

   EDDIE
   Yeah, I was.

   ISOBEL
   But teleportation’s impossible. Everyone knows that.
EDDIE
Impossible for people, yeah. But not for angels.

ISOBEL
(disbelieving)
And you’re an angel, are you?

EDDIE
No, not yet. But if everything goes well, then I could become one within the next few minutes.

ISOBEL
You’re mad.

They lapse into silence.

ISOBEL
So what did you mean when you said I was your daughter?

EDDIE
I meant what I said.

ISOBEL
But it’s impossible. I mean, I’ve never even met you before. You just appeared in my living room, literally out of thin air.

EDDIE
Your mom’s name was Delilah, right? Delilah Knight?

ISOBEL
Yes...

EDDIE
She was my wife.

Isobel can only blink at him.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
We were married straight out of high school and stayed married for nearly ten years, until I managed to drive her away. You look just like her, you know?

Isobel instinctively reacts with a coy smile, brushing a strand of hair behind her ear.
EDDIE (CONTD.)
I loved her, and I drove her away. Obviously she came over to England and built a new life here. Did she ever talk about me?

ISOBEL
Yes.
(paue)
She never forgave you, you know.
(paue)
I don’t know if I ever could, either.

Another moment of silence.

EDDIE
Izzie --

ISOBEL
We’re here.

Eddie turns to look out the window, and sure enough he sees Trafalgar Square, with the tall Christmas tree at the centre.

ISOBEL (CONTD.)
Here! Stop here!

She hands Eddie some money.

ISOBEL (CONTD.)
You pay him. I want to find my son.

EXT. TRAFALGAR SQUARE - NIGHT

The taxi comes to a halt at the edge of Trafalgar Square. A door flies open and Isobel clambers out. Eddie follows, stops at the window and presses money into the driver’s hand.

EDDIE
Keep the change, buddy!

The taxi drives off. Isobel stands, scanning the area.

ISOBEL
Where is he? I don’t see him. Is he here?
EDDIE
Yeah, he’s here. Tim!

A few of the people standing around glance at Eddie as he staggers forward, calling Tim’s name. Isobel follows.

ISOBEL
Tim!

EDDIE
Tim! Where are you, kid?

The two of them stop and look all around. Isobel raises a hand to her forehead.

ISOBEL
I can’t see him!

But Eddie has stopped. A smile grows on his face. He raises a hand, points directly in front of him.

EDDIE
There he is.

He points towards the tall Christmas tree that stands in the centre of Trafalgar Square. At the bottom, sitting on the ground, is Tim.

Eddie waves. Slowly, Tim stands up. He waves back.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
This way.

He walks towards Tim, Isobel alongside him.

They stop about three metres apart, mother and son staring at each other. Eddie smiles.

EDDIE
Tim, this is your mom.

ISOBEL
Hello.

A moment of utter awkwardness.

Then, Tim breaks into a wide smile and rushes towards his mother, who sweeps him up in an embrace.

TIM
Mum!
The two spin round and round, clinging to each other. Eddie stands back, watching the two. There is a smile on his face, but tears in his eyes.

In the background, BIG BEN begins to strike twelve.

Eddie pulls the happiometer out of his pocket. The entire tube SHINES, full of shimmering gold liquid. Eddie smiles, his face lit up by the glow.

    EDDIE
    Hey, would you look at that.

He looks up towards Tim and Isobel, when from behind him --

    GABRIEL (O.S.)
    Eddie.

Eddie turns round.

GABRIEL stands there, a gentle smile on face.

    GABRIEL (CONTD.)
    It's time.

Eddie looks at him, then back at Tim and Isobel.

    EDDIE
    You knew? You knew all along he was my grandson?

    GABRIEL
    Yes.

    EDDIE
    But why, why --

    GABRIEL
    Why didn't I tell you? Because I wanted you to be able to find out on your own. To help Tim for unselfish reasons. You've changed that little boy's life, Eddie, and you did it without knowing who he was. You succeeded.

    EDDIE
    You mean...?

Gabriel nods.
GABRIEL
Go and say goodbye to your family.
It’s time to go.

Eddie looks at him with wide eyes. Then, suddenly, he launches himself at Gabriel, sweeping him up into a hug. Gabriel seems shocked, but smiles he hugs him back.

EDDIE
Thank you. Thank you.

He breaks, and walks over to Tim and Isobel. Eddie taps Tim on the shoulder.

EDDIE
Hey, Timbo.

Tim pulls away from Isobel, looks at Eddie.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
It’s time for me to head off, kid.

TIM
Really? You have to leave now?
Can’t you stay?

EDDIE
’Fraid not, buddy. I’ve done what I came back to do. My time’s up.

Tim launches himself at Eddie, clinging onto his waist.

TIM
But you can’t leave! We just met! What am I going do without you?

EDDIE
Hey, you’ve got your mom now. And there’s Julie, Pete... plenty of folks care about you, Tim. You’re a good kid. You’re gonna be alright.

Tim just hugs him tighter.

TIM
I’ll miss you.

Eddie winces, bites his lip to stop tears leaking out.

EDDIE
I’ll miss you too. But you’re not gonna forget me, right?

Tim shakes his head vigorously.
EDDIE (CONTD.)
And I’m not gonna forget you. I’ll be watching over you, okay?

TIM
Okay.

Eddie looks up from the top of Tim’s head. Isobel stands where she is, staring up at him.

EDDIE
I’m sorry for everything, Izzie. But you do better, you hear? You look after this one. Family’s the most important thing in the world. Ain’t nothing that matters more than looking after the ones you love. And that’s the truth.

She nods. Eddie gently prises Tim off him, holds him at arm’s length.

EDDIE
Look after your mom for me, okay?

Tim nods. Eddie pulls him in for one last hug, a quick one, then turns and walks away.

Gabriel stands waiting. He smiles, holds out his arm.

GABRIEL
You ready?

Eddie breathes in, takes it.

EDDIE
I’m ready.

He calls out --

EDDIE
Hey, Tim.

Tim looks up. Eddie smiles, not quite believing what he is about to say.

EDDIE (CONTD.)
Merry Christmas.

And with that, the two of them disappear, FADING INTO DUST.
The dust swirls, then streaks up, a GOLDEN RIBBON against the black sky. It streaks into the STAR at the top of the Christmas tree, which glows brighter for a moment.

And then --

-- they are gone.

Tim looks up at the star, his eyes bright.

TIM
Merry Christmas, Eddie.

The snow drifts gently down, and the sweet sound of carols fills the air. The majestic tree shines out into the crisp night and somehow, at least right here, right now, in this one moment, all feels good and right with the world.

FADE OUT