SKY PEOPLE

by

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REGISTERED WGA

FADE IN:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY -- ESTABLISHING

An opaque grayness. The feeling is surreal, almost alien. Then a FOGHORN SOUNDS, and we realize we are FLYING through THICK FOG.

Ahead, poking up through the fog, are the twin towers of the Golden Gate Bridge. We pass between them and drop down over San Francisco Bay.

The fog becomes patchy as we continue past Alcatraz Island on the left, downtown San Francisco on the right.

As we fly over Treasure Island the sun breaks through. We drop down to skim the surface of the Bay.

Approaching the South Sailing Basin we rise over Berkeley Marina and continue straight towards a stone building on the campus of the University of California.

INT. LECTURE HALL -- DAY

A mid-term examination is in progress.

GRADUATE ASSISTANT

One minute.

TWO GRADUATE ASSISTANTS sit at a desk proctoring the exam.

Several dozen upper-division STUDENTS are spaced around the room, all typing intensely on their laptop computers. They are the brightest of the bright. Among them is a 12-year-old boy.

SKYE MATHIEU takes a breath and looks up. The eyes are his most striking feature - almost iridescent. He glances at his watch, then at the two Graduate Assistants as they watch a clock on the desk, then rise. One walks towards the left side of the hall. Skye resumes typing furiously on his laptop.

GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Time. Pass your exam disks to your left.

With a collective sigh of relief the Students eject the Virtual Bluebook floppy disk from their laptops and pass them over. Muscles are stretched, laptops are closed and packed, and they head out.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Skye as he stuffs his laptop into his backpack and heads up the aisle.

STUDENT (O.S.)

Hey, boy genius!

Skye turns, happy to be recognized. A STUDENT in his 20s strides up beside him.

STUDENT

So...how'd you do?

SKYE

Pretty good. Except for the essay on superconductors.

They make their way up the aisle.

STUDENT

Yeah, that was a real bitch. But don't feel bad...it stumped me, too.

SKYE

Oh, it didn't stump me. I just didn't have enough time to give much of an answer. I could have written a dissertation on it.

The Student knows he's way out of his league.

STUDENT

Figures. Look, if I need a tutor, I'm callin' you, okay?

SKYE

(grins)

Okay!

Unseen by Skye, the Student crosses quickly away.

SKYE

(jokes)

But remember, I've got an early bedtime.

Skye looks back for the reaction, finds himself alone. He looks around, feeling very lost and small and out of place.

SKYE

(aside)

Just after Sesame Street.

Skye checks his wristwatch, then passes through the doorway and into the crowded corridor.

INT. LECTURE HALL CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

As Skye makes his way around the taller students he passes a bulletin board where a young man stands reading the posted notices. JONAH WEISS is roughly the same age of the other students, but something tells us he is not one of them. As Skye hurries past he turns to look - with similar iridescent eyes - and starts to follow Skye.

Skye quickly darts around the other students.

It is obvious Jonah is chasing Skye, but is having a hard time cutting through the crowd. Jonah just manages a quick glimpse of the boy as he disappears into a stairwell.

INT. LECTURE HALL STAIRWELL -- CONTINUOUS

Skye hurries down the stairs.

Jonah arrives at the top of the stairs, tries to push his way past other students, knocking books out of hands.

STUDENTS

(ad lib)

Hey! Take it easy, man. Chill.

At the bottom of the stairs, Skye turns to look back up at the COMMOTION. His eyes meet Jonah's for an instant - and for both there is a strange feeling of kinship. Jonah hesitates, Skye turns and exits. Jonah quickly descends the stairs.

EXT. LECTURE HALL -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah hurries outside and looks around. He has lost Skye. He clenches a fist in anger.

EXT. BERKELEY CAMPUS -- MOMENTS LATER

Skye, his backpack on his back, helmet on his head and rollerblades on his feet, skates through Sather Gate and heads towards town.

CLASSICAL CHAMBER MUSIC PLAYS O.S.

INT. GOLDEN GATE PARK CONSERVATORY -- AT THE SAME TIME

A STRING QUINTET, three men and two women, PLAYS a concert for an audience of SCHOOLCHILDREN.

CAMERA ANGLES to the woman playing a viola. She is <u>MARIAH</u> <u>MATHIEU</u>, Skye's mother, a free spirit in her 30s.

EXT. BERKELEY -- CONTINUOUS

Skye rollerblades downhill into town. As he has mastered physics he has mastered the physics of inline skating and swerves smoothly in and out of the heavy traffic.

MUSIC CONTINUES O.S.

INT. GOLDEN GATE PARK CONSERVATORY -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah performs a SOLO SEGMENT, playing the viola with intense passion. One of the Men watches her adoringly.

EXT. BERKELEY -- CONTINUOUS

Skye rollerblades through the center of town. Stopped at a light he stares at YOUNG LOVERS embracing, yearning to grow up himself. Then he is off, turning up a side street.

MUSIC CONTINUES O.S.

INT. GOLDEN GATE PARK CONSERVATORY -- CONTINUOUS

The Quintet builds furiously to the zenith of the piece and concludes with a flourish.

Mariah smiles at the Schoolchildren as they CHEER.

INT. BERKELEY BOOK SHOP -- CONTINUOUS

Skye enter a tiny, dimly lit antiquarian book shop. A string of bells on the door JINGLES his presence. As he starts down an aisle a SMALL DOG darts in front of him.

PROPRIETOR (O.S.)

I'll be with you in a minute.

SKYE

It's only me, Mr. Bachofner.

PROPRIETOR (O.S.)

Skye?

SKYE

Yes sir.

PROPRIETOR (O.S.)

Take a look on my desk. I believe there is something there that will interest you.

Skye walks towards the rear of the shop.

PROPRIETOR (O.S.)

Have you seen Chaucer by any chance?

SKYE

He was just here.

(looks around)

I think he was heading for erotica.

PROPRIETOR (O.S.)

Naughty pup. He's much too young for that, I'm afraid.

(calls out)

Here Geoffrey.

The dog runs past Skye and disappears in a back room. Skye smiles and continues to a desk in a far corner. He quickly scans the jumble of papers and books, then pauses, sets his backpack down, staring at an ancient first edition. He opens it reverently and begins to read.

INT. BOOK SHOP -- LATER

Skye sits in the chair, reading the book with keen interest.

PROPRIETOR (O.S.)

So...what is your opinion?

Skye looks up as the elderly, nearly-blind PROPRIETOR steps in.

SKYE

Remarkable.

(shakes head slowly)

Genius.

PROPRIETOR

Yes...quite.

SKYE

These concepts! Did they actually understand what he was saying back then?

PROPRIETOR

Hardly. He was considered to be demented...insane. His theories were deemed heretical. His battles must have been legion.

Skye rises, allowing the Proprietor to sit.

SKYE

I bet.

PROPRIETOR

You are aware that he is now considered to be the first known child prodigy. You have a kinship with him.

Skye smiles, hands the book to the Proprietor.

SKYE

I would like to read this sometime.

PROPRIETOR

And so you shall.

The Proprietor pushes the book back into Skye's hands.

PROPRIETOR

Happy birthday, Skye.

SKYE

(wide-eyed)

Mr. Bachofner...thank you.

Skye hugs him. The Proprietor reaches up and gently touches the boy's face.

PROPRIETOR

Read and learn. You are a special child. The world will know of you.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK CONSERVATORY -- DAY

As the Schoolchildren file aboard their buses the quintet leaves the conservatory carrying their instruments.

MUSICIAN

Mariah!

Mariah turns as the Musician who watched her earlier hurries to catch up.

MUSICIAN

That was magnificent.

MARIAH

Thank you, Mr. Davilas.

MUSICIAN

Your fingers speak with such eloquence...and passion.

She knows where this is going.

MARIAH

Do they?

MUSICIAN

I have my car.

MARIAH

I can manage.

MUSICIAN

I was hoping we could...talk.

MARIAH

How nice. I do have to meet my son...

He slows to a stop.

MUSICIAN

Oh . . .

She turns back to him.

MUSICIAN

Perhaps...another time.

Mariah smiles at him knowingly.

MARIAH

Perhaps.

She turns away.

MARIAH

Say hello to Mrs. Davilas.

She walks on.

EXT. BERKELEY LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD -- DAY

As Skye rollerblades past he glances over at the field, then stops to watch the start of a game. He leans against a fence and enviously watches LITTLE LEAGUERS his own age play.

Behind him an unmarked police car pulls up to a stop. Berkeley Police Detective <u>SEAN KELLY</u>, pushing 40, hops out and walks to the bleachers. He is in shirtsleeves, his gun and shield visible on his belt, his police radio in his hand. He scans the players as he takes a seat among other PARENTS.

KELLY

Hey Pat!

On the field, Kelly's son <u>PATRICK</u>, 12, adjusts his helmet as he waits on deck and turns to the familiar voice. He grins and waves at his father.

Skye longingly watches the interaction between father and son, then turns and rollerblades away.

Always taking everything in, Kelly glances over at Skye's departure. A CHEER turns his head back to the game as the BATTER gets a hit.

As Patrick steps up to the plate Kelly tenses with nervous pride.

KELLY

(to himself)

Come on, Son.

He smiles as only a father can.

INT. BART TRAIN -- DAY

Alone with his thoughts, Skye sits beside a window staring out at the setting sun, as the train enters the Trans-Bay Tube.

EXT. 16TH STREET MISSION STATION -- DUSK

Mariah, carrying her viola case, and Skye with his backpack, walk home from the BART station.

MARIAH

So, kiddo...how'd your day go?

SKYE

Pretty good. Dr. Bott had his midterm today.

MARIAH

Which you aced, right?

SKYE

I can't help it. All the answers just come to me.

Mariah puts an arm around Skye's shoulder.

MARIAH

I'm so proud of you.

SKYE

I'm starving!

MARIAH

So am I! What'll it be... Chinese...Mexican...?

Skye eyes a nearby hamburger chain.

SKYE

Junk food!

MARIAH

And I thought you were somewhat intelligent.

SKYE

Mom, there comes a time when the body craves what is no good for it. And this is one of those times.

MARIAH

Okay, smartypants. I'll compromise. How about pizza?

SKYE

Funny you should ask.

Skye grins at her as they continue down the street.

EXT. VICTORIAN DUPLEX -- NIGHT

Mariah and Skye, carrying a large pizza box, climb up the porch steps to a stately old house, renovated into a duplex with love and care.

INT. DUPLEX ENTRANCE -- CONTINUOUS

As Mariah and Skye start up the stairway to their apartment one of their gay landlords, <u>RANDY</u>, comes out his door.

RANDY

There you two are. Verlin's making paella.

MARIAH

Oh Randy...Skye wanted pizza tonight.

Randy stares up at Skye, hands on hips.

SKYE

Sorry.

Mariah shrugs.

RANDY

Not to worry. They'll be leftovers for days.

(teases Skye)

Now he's planning a mocha cake for someone's birthday.

Skye grins.

SKYE

Thanks.

VERLIN O.S.

Randall...where did you hide the garbanzos?

RANDY

Damn, I thought he wouldn't notice. (calls out)

Coming!

He blows a kiss to Mariah and disappears back inside his apartment.

EXT. STREET -- AT THE SAME TIME

Across the street, watching the duplex from his 4-wheel-drive SUV, sits Jonah.

INT. MARIAH'S KITCHEN -- LATER

Skye pulls the first edition from his backpack as he and Mariah sit at the small table eating the pizza. Their CAT lays nearby.

SKYE

Mr. Bachofner gave me this today.

MARIAH

It's beautiful. I hope you thanked him.

SKYE

Of course I did.

Skye begins to flip through the pages.

SKYE

He said it was for my birthday. I wonder how he knew?

MARIAH

Speaking of which...

No, Mom. I'm too old for parties.

MARIAH

Honey, you're twelve years old.

SKYE

Correction...twelve years, eleven months and twenty-eight days.

Mariah shakes her head.

SKYE

And who am I going to invite? Everybody at college is...a college student. They don't even know I exist. And couldn't care less.

(aside)

It's no fun being a genius, you know.

MARIAH

Are you sorry you're...

SKYE

No.

He stares at her with a defensive look, then softens.

SKYE

It's just...I can't wait 'til I get older. That's all.

He averts his eyes back to the book, turns a page and finds an envelope.

MARIAH

You've always been so much ahead of everyone else. So much smarter. (pause)

I know it has to be hard.

Skye opens the envelope. It is a birthday card. He opens the card and reads the message.

MARIAH

What do you say we do something special to celebrate...just the two of us? We could go camping in Marin...or take that balloon ride over Napa ...or we could even rent a car and go down the coast. Your grandparents would love to see you.

Skye hasn't heard a word. He stares at the card.

CLOSE - BIRTHDAY CARD

Beneath the printed Happy Birthday is the signature "Father" and an 800 telephone number.

MARIAH (O.S.)

Randy and Verlin can watch Einstein.

How does that sound?

Skye continues to stare at the card.

SKYE

What?

MARIAH

Big Sur...for your birthday.

SKYE

Uh...sure, Mom. Sounds great.

MARIAH

A birthday card?

Skye looks up at her.

MARIAH

Who from?

Bewildered, Skye closes the card, places it in the book and closes the book.

SKYE

I...don't know. A friend... I guess.

MARIAH

See. There $\underline{\text{is}}$ someone who cares about

you. A secret admirer maybe?

SKYE

Yeah...maybe.

Skye remains utterly bewildered.

INT. JONAH'S SUV -- NIGHT

Later. Jonah eats take-out food as he watches the duplex.

INT. MARIAH'S LIVING ROOM -- AT THE SAME TIME

Sitting before a CRACKLING FIRE in the fireplace, Mariah PLAYS the viola, practicing, her concentration total. The cat lays at her feet.

INT. SKYE'S BEDROOM -- AT THE SAME TIME

Skye lies on his bed, staring at the birthday card. His room is a conglomeration of projects-in-progress. On the wall a poster of Stephen Hawking is beside one of Peter, Paul and Mary. A metal fire escape chain ladder lays on the floor beneath a window.

He looks down at the portable phone beside him on the bed. He looks back at the card, hesitates, then reaches for the phone. Again he hesitates, unsure.

He looks at his open door, rises and closes it, then returns to the bed, and punches in the numbers on the phone. It RINGS...and is answered by MODEM TONES.

Startled Skye hangs up, drops the phone on the bed. Still unsure, he looks over at his bookbag, hesitates, then pulls out his laptop. He sets it up on his desk, plugs in the phone line. He takes the birthday card and sits, accesses his modem connection, types in the 800 number, and clicks "OK".

The MODEM CONNECTS and the screen comes alive. Skye pulls up a chair and sits. He watches, intrigued as:

COMPUTER TYPES: skye?

SKYE TYPES: yes

COMPUTER TYPES: hello, skye. how are you?

SKYE TYPES: ok. who are you?

COMPUTER TYPES: father

Skye stares at the screen.

SKYE TYPES: my father?

COMPUTER TYPES: yes

Skye reacts - unsure...afraid...hopeful.

SKYE TYPES: prove it

Nothing is typed in return. Skye grows impatient.

SKYE TYPES: well?????

Still nothing. Skye shakes his head angrily.

SKYE

Some joke. Ha ha.

He points the mouse to disconnect when the COMPUTER BEGINS TYPING DATA.

But it is data in a STRANGE, ALMOST HIEROGLYPHIC LANGUAGE. Skye stares at it, at first curious, then with the realization that he is understanding what he is seeing.

As the screen is filled the data begins scrolling, line after line, page after page, in an endless progression.

Skye's eyes cannot leave the screen as the data begins to scroll faster.

INT. MARIAH'S LIVING ROOM -- LATER

The FIRE has dwindled to embers. Mariah finally tires and STOPS PLAYING. She sets the viola in its case, rises and goes around turning out the lights.

The cat follows her down the hall towards her bedroom. Seeing a light under Skye's closed bedroom door she stops and KNOCKS GENTLY beneath the hand-painted rainbow-colored sign lettered "SKYE'S ROOM".

MARIAH

(softly)

Honey, don't stay up too late, okay?

There is no response.

MARIAH

Skye?

INT. SKYE'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah slowly opens the door and looks in. She shakes her head and smiles to herself.

MARIAH

I know it's interesting but you need your rest. Whatever it is can wait.

Skye sits mesmerized, unblinking as the data SCROLLS AT ENORMOUS SPEED. The link between the host computer and his brain has been made and he has no control, no ability to stop.

MARIAH

(louder)

Skye.

Mariah crosses in behind Skye.

MARIAH

Come on...Mom's prerogative.

She gently touches Skye's shoulder. Again no response. She looks at the SCROLLING DATA, then steps around to look at Skye.

He appears almost catatonic. His hands grip the arms of his chair. His shirt is drenched in sweat.

MARIAH

Skye!

Mariah grasps Skye's shoulders and shakes him. But he cannot let go. His brain and the computer are one.

Frantic, Mariah punches keys on the keyboard, clicks the mouse. Nothing stops the scrolling data.

MARIAH

Damn this!

Finally she finds the switch and turns off the laptop. The screen goes black.

Mariah turns back to Skye.

MARIAH

Skye...can you hear me?

Skye responds slowly, looks up at Mariah, his iridescent eyes glazed.

SKYE

Mom?

Mariah puts her arms around him and holds him tight.

MARIAH

Honey...what happened?

SKYE

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

MARIAH

What were you doing?

Skye is silent, confused.

MARIAH

Were you online with someone?

Skye looks at the blank laptop screen.

I...can't remember...

Skye looks up at Mariah, unsure and afraid.

MARIAH

Let's call it quits for tonight, okay?

Skye nods. Mariah helps him to his bed. He sits.

MARIAH

You're soaked.

Mariah pulls off Skye's shirt and goes to get another from his dresser. The cat jumps up onto the bed.

MARIAH

Whatever you were doing, I've never seen you so intense.

SKYE

(still puzzled)

Yeah. I wish I could remember...

Mariah returns with a clean shirt and helps Skye into it.

MARIAH

You want me to stay for awhile?

SKYE

No...it's okay.

As Skye crawls beneath the covers the cat curls up beside him.

SKYE

Einstein will keep me company.

Mariah smiles, bends to kiss Skye.

MARIAH

Goodnight.

SKYE

'Night.

Mariah crosses to the door. Skye's eyes find the birthday card beside the laptop and he stares across at it.

SKYE

Mom?

Mariah turns back at the door.

I must have my father's eyes, right? I mean...I look like you, except for my eyes...so they've got to be like his, don't they?

Mariah reacts in silence.

SKYE

Whoever he is.

MARIAH

Do you want to talk about that?

Skye looks from the birthday card to Mariah.

SKYE

It was just rhetorical.

MARIAH

Maybe we should talk.

SKYE

It's okay, Mom. I'm tired.

Mariah turns off the light.

MARIAH

You know where I am if you need me.

She exits, closing the door.

Skye stares up at the ceiling - and wonders.

INT. DUPLEX ENTRANCE -- MORNING

Mariah stands at the top of the stairs with her viola case. Skye watches her from the doorway of their apartment.

SKYE

I'll head over in about an hour.

Mariah studies him closely.

MARIAH

Sure you're okay?

SKYE

I'm sure.

MARIAH

I love you.

Love you too.

Skye closes the door as Mariah starts down the stairs.

At the door she meets Randy, in dressing gown, retrieving the morning paper.

RANDY

Morning.

(looks for Skye)

The munchkin's sleeping in?

MARIAH

Good thing he has a late class this morning. That computer...

RANDY

I know. So many newsgroups...so little time.

Mariah shakes her head, smiling.

RANDY

Not to worry. I'll make sure Verlin feeds him some paella before he leaves.

(aside)

God knows we have plenty.

MARIAH

You guys...

EXT. VICTORIAN DUPLEX -- CONTINUOUS

Randy blows a kiss from the door as Mariah walks down the porch steps.

INT. JONAH'S SUV -- AT THE SAME TIME

In his SUV across the street Jonah watches Mariah walk down the street - then turns back and looks up at Skye's bedroom window.

INT. SKYE'S BEDROOM -- AT THE SAME TIME

Skye sits at the laptop screen. The cat lays beside it on his desk.

COMPUTER TYPES: skye?

SKYE TYPES: yes

COMPUTER TYPES: shall we continue?

SKYE TYPES: yes

Skye hesitates, a bit unsure, then hits the "enter" key.

Data again fills the screen and begins to SCROLL. Skye once more becomes transfixed, unable to avert his eyes.

EXT. VICTORIAN DUPLEX -- LATER

Randy carries his bicycle down the steps and pedals off.

Jonah watches from his SUV, then climbs out and crosses to the duplex.

INT. DUPLEX ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Jonah forces open the locked door, looks around, then starts quietly up the stairs.

VERLIN (O.S.)

May I help you?

Jonah stops and turns.

INT. SKYE'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Skye stares unmoving at the data scrolling on the screen.

The cat, sensing something, raises its head and looks to the open door.

INT. MARIAH'S APARTMENT -- AT THE SAME TIME

Jonah forces open the door and enters the apartment. He walks slowly down the hall towards Skye's bedroom.

INT. SKYE'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah steps into the open doorway and stands looking into the room.

Skye's chair is empty.

Jonah enters and walks to the laptop. He stares at the data scrolling on the screen, his iridescent eyes unblinking. Then he reaches to switch off the laptop.

A motion turns his eyes. The cat stands on the sill of the open window.

Jonah goes to the window. The cat jumps down and runs out the room. Jonah leans out the window and looks down. The chain fire escape ladder dangles to the ground. JONAH

No!

Jonah races out the room.

EXT. VICTORIAN DUPLEX -- MOMENTS LATER

Jonah runs out to the street, looks around, then climbs in his SUV and drives off.

EXT. STREETS -- CONTINUOUS

VARIOUS SHOTS as Jonah drives around the streets of the Mission District, turning corners in an ever-widening search. As he does we discover his license plates are from New Mexico.

Stopped at a signal, Jonah is surprised to see Skye, with backpack and wearing his helmet, rollerblading across the crosswalk in front of him. Jonah jerks the car into the crosswalk, trying to hit Skye, who stops just in time.

Skye stares at Jonah, sees his eyes, recognizing him from the lecture hall. Terrified, he skates away against the light, dodging traffic.

Jonah drives after him.

EXT. MARKET STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Skye rollerblades down busy Market Street, desperate to get away.

Jonah follows, swerving his SUV in and out of traffic, barely avoiding collisions.

As Skye skates on he checks his wristwatch, then puts on speed heading down Market Street.

THE CHASE CONTINUES

Jonah gains on Skye, who is tiring. He is about to move in for the kill when Skye abruptly turns and disappears into the Civic Center BART Station.

The SUV SCREECHES to a stop in a red zone and Jonah follows on foot.

INT. CIVIC CENTER STATION -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah races in. Seeing TRANSIT POLICE watching he quickly buys a ticket and heads for the platform.

He runs past COMMUTERS and TOURISTS, eyes searching for Skye.

A train pulls out just as Jonah arrives on the platform. He stops and looks around the platform. But Skye is gone.

Jonah watches the train speed away.

INT. BART TRAIN -- CONTINUOUS

Skye stares out the window, then settles back in his seat, holding his backpack in his lap.

INT. BERKELEY BOOK SHOP -- DAY

Some time later. The Proprietor sits at his desk, gently stroking the dog which lays curled on his lap.

The door bells JINGLE. The dog looks up.

PROPRIETOR

I've been expecting you.

Skye stands, breathless and afraid, across from him.

PROPRIETOR

There's someone here I would like to introduce you to.

Skye turns and looks up at an UNSEEN CHARACTER. His look of fear changes to one of uncertainty, and then understanding.

INT. KELLY'S CAR -- DAY

That afternoon. Kelly drives his unmarked car through the Berkeley streets.

Turning a corner he pulls up to a stop beside a BERKELEY POLICE CRUISER and a CORONER'S VAN parked outside the book shop.

INT. BERKELEY BOOK SHOP -- CONTINUOUS

As Kelly makes his way inside a POLICE OFFICER approaches.

POLICE OFFICER

In the back.

The Officer leads Kelly to the back of the book shop.

KELLY

Do we know who?

POLICE OFFICER

The owner. Been here for years.

Robbery?

POLICE OFFICER

What's there to steal?

Kelly looks at the stacks of books.

KELLY

Books?

A young CRIMINOLOGIST dusts the desk for fingerprints. Kelly stops, looks around, sees the dog WHIMPERING on the floor. He steps to the dog and kneels.

KELLY

Hey there...

He pets the dog, then sees the lifeless body of the Proprietor lying beyond. He rises and goes to stand over it.

KELLY

Frank.

A VETERAN MEDICAL EXAMINER, kneeling beside the Proprietor's head examining him, looks up.

MEDICAL EXAMINER

Check this out, Kelly.

Kelly kneels for a closer look.

MEDICAL EXAMINER

I've never seen anything like it.

Kelly gives him a curious glance.

EXT. 16TH STREET MISSION STATION -- DUSK

Mariah stands watching the PASSENGERS from a BART train. Not finding Skye she starts for home, carrying her viola case.

EXT. VICTORIAN DUPLEX -- DUSK

As Mariah approaches she sees several SAN FRANCISCO POLICE CARS parked outside. She hurries up the steps and through the open front door.

INT. DUPLEX ENTRANCE -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah goes to Randy's open apartment door and looks in.

INT. RANDY'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

A distraught Randy sits on the sofa of the exquisitely decorated apartment talking to several POLICE OFFICERS.

RANDY

And I came back and found him ...lying there.

At the door Mariah drops her viola case to the floor. Randy and the Officers look as she turns away.

INT. DUPLEX ENTRANCE -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah runs up the stairs.

MARIAH

Skye?

As she sees the wide-open door to her apartment she panics.

INT. MARIAH'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah races in, looks around frantically.

MARIAH

Skye!

She runs down the hall to his bedroom.

INT. SKYE'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah stops cold. Kelly stands in the middle of the room.

KELLY

Mariah Mathieu?

MARIAH

Where's my son?

Kelly looks at her, puzzled.

KELLY

Not with you?

Mariah shakes her head.

MARIAH

I thought he was here.

KELLY

Maybe he was.

Mariah stares at him, resents his tone.

MARIAH

Who are you?

Kelly shows her his shield.

KELLY

Detective Sean Kelly, Berkeley Police Department.

MARIAH

Berkeley?

KELLY

There was a murder there today.

MARIAH

(fearful)

Who?

KELLY

A book shop owner.

MARIAH

Not Mr. Bachofner?

Kelly reacts.

KELLY

That's right. Did you know him?

MARIAH

My son did. I...met him several times.

KELLY

How old is your son?

MARIAH

He'll be thirteen on Saturday.

(demands)

Is he all right?

KELLY

I don't know. Where did he go today?

MARIAH

Berkeley.

KELLY

Why?

Mariah is about to lose it.

MARIAH

Because he goes to school there!

And you live in the City?

MARIAH

At U.C.

KELLY

He's a college student? And he's thirteen?

MARIAH

Skye's a genius, Detective...

KELLY

Kelly.

Kelly steps to Skye's laptop, looks at it.

KELLY

He must be good at computers. Mine is trying to teach me. Kids know everything now.

Mariah's mind is reeling.

MARIAH

Why did you come here?

KELLY

We found your son's backpack at the book shop today.

Kelly indicates Skye's backpack on his bed. The cat is curled up beside it.

MARIAH

Oh God...

Mariah staggers to the bed and sits. She reaches out to touch the backpack. Mariah steels herself, turns to Kelly.

MARIAH

What happened downstairs?

KELLY

One of your landlords was murdered.

Mariah shakes her head.

MARIAH

Dear Verlin...

Now your son's missing. And there's one other connection.

Mariah looks up at Kelly.

KELLY

Both victims had the same injury. A surgical, almost bloodless incision...

(indicates)

...to the back of the neck.

Mariah feels squeamish. She rises and goes to the open window for air.

KELLY

There's an escape ladder hanging out there.

MARIAH

For fires.

(puzzled)

But it's always kept inside.

KELLY

It appears he climbed out.

MARIAH

Why?

KELLY

Your door was forced open. Maybe someone was after him.

Mariah turns to Kelly.

MARIAH

Who?!

Kelly studies her.

KELLY

Where is Skye's father?

Mariah is silent a long moment.

KELLY

Mrs. Mathieu?

MARIAH

(sharp)

Ms.

(pause)

He doesn't have one.

Deceased?

MARIAH

I don't know...who his father is.

She looks at Kelly with a hurt, plaintive look.

Kelly holds a moment, then takes something from his pocket.

KELLY

Someone does.

It is the birthday card. He hands it to her.

KELLY

This was in his backpack.

Mariah reads it.

KELLY

There's no record of that 800 phone number. It doesn't exist.

Mariah looks at Kelly at a total loss.

INT. DUPLEX ENTRANCE -- LATER

Kelly and Mariah stand in her doorway. He holds a photograph of Skye in his hand.

KELLY

Do you have anyone who can come over to stay with you?

MARIAH

I'll be all right.

Kelly studies her closely.

KELLY

You're sure?

Mariah nods.

KELLY

San Francisco Police will be handling things over here.

He hands her his business card.

KELLY

But you call me...if you need to.

She tries to keep her worst fears at bay.

MARIAH

Do you...think he's...still alive?

KELLY

They'll do whatever it takes to find him.

MARIAH

You didn't answer my question.

Kelly hesitates.

KELLY

I don't know.

Kelly turns and starts down the stairs.

MARIAH

Mr. Kelly...

Kelly turns back to her.

MARIAH

How old is your son?

Kelly glances down at the photograph, then back to Mariah, understanding all too well her devastation.

KELLY

Twelve.

Mariah reacts. Kelly holds a moment, feeling her pain, then turns and continues down the stairs.

INT. MARIAH'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah closes the door and turns back to her quiet apartment. She walks slowly down the hall.

INT. SKYE'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah stops in the doorway and looks around Skye's room. She steps to the bed and sits. The cat comes up beside her.

She lifts Skye's backpack, hugs it tightly, then breaks down, SOBBING.

EXT. BAY BRIDGE -- NIGHT

Traffic moves over the Bay Bridge towards the distant lights of the East Bay.

INT. KELLY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Kelly opens the door to his house and steps inside. NOISE FROM A TV in the living room draws his attention and he moves to towards it.

PATRICK

(sleepy)

Hi Dad.

He finds Patrick stretched out on the sofa. Their GERMAN SHEPHERD lays beside him, tail thumping.

KELLY

You should be in bed.

Kelly turns off the TV as Patrick sits up.

PATRICK

Where were you?

KELLY

Sorry.

Kelly helps Patrick to his feet and leads him upstairs.

PATRICK

Dinner got cold.

KELLY

What did you make?

PATRICK

Spaghetti.

The dog follows them up the stairs.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

The dog curls up on the bed as Kelly tucks Patrick in.

PATRICK

Big case?

KELLY

Yeah.

PATRICK

Don't worry, Dad. You'll solve it.

Patrick is asleep as soon as his head hits the pillow.

KELLY

I hope so.

Kelly kisses Patrick, rubs the dog's head.

KELLY

Take good care of him, Max.

The dog lays his head protectively over Patrick's legs as Kelly walks to the door. He turns and watches for a moment, his whole life in this room, then switches off the light.

INT. KELLY'S HOUSE -- LATER

Kelly sits on the sofa staring at an old movie on TV. But his mind is elsewhere.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY -- DAWN

The sun rises over the hills of Berkeley.

INT. SKYE'S BEDROOM -- DAWN

Mariah stands at the open window staring out.

INT. BERKELEY BOOK SHOP -- DAWN

Kelly stands inside the empty book shop. He tries to sense what happened here.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FORT POINT -- DAY

Mariah and Randy walk along the windswept edge of the Bay consoling one another.

RANDY

Everyone we knew was dropping from AIDS...but we stayed true and survived everything together. Even his cooking. (pause)

Just the two of us. Twenty-four wonderfully mad years... (chokes)

God damn that Verlin.

Mariah feels responsible.

MARIAH

I'm so sorry, Randy.

RANDY

How could anyone do that to him? (MORE)

RANDY (CONT'D)

He wouldn't even know how to defend himself. He was too gentle a soul.

Randy looks at her in anguish.

RANDY

Do they hate us so much?

MARIAH

Maybe he was trying to protect Skye.

RANDY

Who would want to hurt Skye?

MARIAH

I don't know. And I don't care.

(desperate)

I just want him back.

Mariah stops, begins to cry. Randy turns and hugs her. He cries himself.

RANDY

What's the world coming to?

They stand holding onto each other.

EXT. KELLY'S HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

Kelly plays catch with Patrick in their small backyard, throws him a grounder. The dog romps between them trying to snag the ball.

KELLY

Stay down...

Patrick fields the ball.

KELLY

... now burn it to first.

Patrick fires it back.

KELLY

And he's out!

Kelly tosses him another.

KELLY

That's the way. Never let the ball get past you.

They continue back and forth as:

PATRICK

Dad?

KELLY

Yeah?

PATRICK

That case you're working on... what's it about?

KELLY

Better keep your mind on baseball, Sport.

PATRICK

Come on, Dad, just tell me. Is it gory?

KELLY

(thinks) Actually no.

PATRICK

Why were you so late last night?

Kelly is hesitant. He stops and stares at Patrick.

KELLY

A boy's missing.

PATRICK

Who?

KELLY

You don't know him.

Kelly starts tossing the ball again. They play in silence for awhile, then:

PATRICK

I hope you find him.

KELLY

So do I.

INT. MARIAH'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

It is late. We move through the dimly lit apartment to the living room. There is no fire in the fireplace.

Mariah sits PLAYING HER VIOLA FURIOUSLY. All her loneliness and fear and anger is transferred to her music. She grips the instrument with clenched hands. Her face is contorted. She plays harder than she has ever played before.

Faster and harder and more furiously she plays. Until a STRING BREAKS and she stops, exhausted.

Then the tears come and she collapses - physically and emotionally drained.

INT. KELLY'S HOUSE -- AT THE SAME TIME

Kelly sits in his home office, staring at the photograph of Skye.

KELLY

Who's got you? Serial killer... pedophile...your father?

CAMERA MOVES CLOSE on the photograph.

KELLY

Where are you, Skye?

EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE -- DAY

Kelly's car crosses the bridge heading to Marin.

MARIAH (O.S.)

You think I'm hiding something?

INT. KELLY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly glances at Mariah.

KELLY

Are you?

Mariah turns to the window.

KELLY

I'm sorry. I'm hoping there will be some something you might remember...something you may have seen that morning.

MARIAH

Don't you think I've tried?

KELLY

This may help.

MARIAH

He can't just disappear.

KELLY

Yes, Ms. Mathieu...he can.

Mariah turns back to Kelly with a lost look.

EXT. SAUSALITO HOUSEBOAT -- DAY

The houseboat office/home of a psycho-hypnotic THERAPIST. Gulls fly overhead. WIND CHIMES vibrate as the houseboat bobs gently in the water.

THERAPIST (O.S.)

Focus on the lights, Mariah.

INT. HOUSEBOAT OFFICE -- AT THE SAME TIME

Mariah lies on a recliner in the darkened office. The THERAPIST, a middle-aged woman in flowing caftan, sits beside her.

THERAPIST

Follow their pattern.

Mariah is staring at a small box of LIGHTS BLINKING IN A PREDICTABLE ORDER.

THERAPIST

If the lights becomes too bright just close your eyes.

Mariah slowly closes her eyes. The Therapist turns up a CD PLAYING NEW-AGE MUSIC.

THERAPIST

That's it...just relax.

Mariah is lulled into a trance-like state by the MUSIC.

Across the room Kelly sits, watching. He tears the top page from a notepad he is holding and hands it to the Therapist who studies it. She nods to Kelly, then looks at Mariah.

THERAPIST

(softly)

Mariah?

MARIAH

Yes...

THERAPIST

I want you to look back at things that happened. Remember yesterday?

Mariah nods.

THERAPIST

Remember the day before?

MARIAH

Yes...

THERAPIST

Where did you last see Skye?

MARIAH

Home...

THERAPIST

What time of day was that?

MARIAH

Morning...

THERAPIST

When you left him?

MARIAH

Yes...

THERAPIST

Was anyone else there?

MARIAH

Randy...Verlin...

THERAPIST

Anyone else?

MARIAH

No...

The Therapist looks over at Kelly, who writes on his notepad and shows it to the Therapist.

THERAPIST

You walked down the street?

MARIAH

Yes...

THERAPIST

Did you see anyone on the street?

MARIAH

No...

THERAPIST

In cars parked on the street?

MARIAH

No...

THERAPIST

Look around the street, Mariah. Do you see anything strange?

MARIAH

No...

THERAPIST

Anything at all?

Mariah reacts with a twitch.

THERAPIST

What is it?

Mariah shakes her head. Her voice becomes agitated, questioning, afraid.

MARIAH

Daddy?

Kelly sits up.

THERAPIST

Mariah, who is it?

MARIAH

Mama?

KELLY

What?

THERAPIST

She's farther back.

(leans to Mariah)

Mariah, you're on the street. Who do you see? Anyone?

Mariah shakes her head.

MARIAH

No...

Kelly again writes on his notepad, shows it to the Therapist.

THERAPIST

Mariah...do you know where Skye's

father is?

Mariah is silent as the deepest recesses of her subconscious is probed.

THERAPIST

Where is Skye's father?

MARIAH

Sky...

THERAPIST

That's right...Skye's father. Where is he?

MARIAH

Sky...

The Therapist turns to Kelly, who shakes his head, thinking they have not succeeded.

EXT. SAUSALITO HOUSEBOAT -- LATER

Mariah and Kelly walk from the houseboat.

MARIAH

I didn't help, did I?

KELLY

You didn't see anything.

Mariah cannot hide her disappointment.

MARIAH

What now?

KELLY

I'm not sure.

Mariah stops.

MARIAH

Does that mean you're giving up?

Kelly turns to her with a determined look.

KELLY

I never give up.

MARIAH

Then what?

KELLY

I need to know everything.

Mariah looks at him, fragile, unsure and strangely afraid.

INT. SAUSALITO COFFEEHOUSE -- DAY

Kelly and Mariah sit at a table by the window in a Bohemian coffeehouse. Mariah watches a MUSICIAN in a corner play a lute.

MARIAH

My parents were the original flower children...from the Fifties. By the time the rest of the world discovered Haight-Ashbury they were on a commune in Oregon. That's where they had me.

KELLY

And they named you Mariah.

MARIAH

The wind...you know, from the song.

Mariah smiles at Kelly, then out the window as she remembers.

MARIAH

They had it all...the van, the beads...the drugs. They told me stories of living in that van, traveling around to love-ins and happenings and anti-war protests. They were at Woodstock and Selma. They marched with Cesar Chavez and Martin Luther King.

KELLY

Then you were born and they settled down.

MARIAH

Hardly. They took Woody Guthrie to heart. They couldn't pass up the opportunity to show me the America they knew. We'd travel all the back roads...staying here a month, there a year.

KELLY

Must have been hard.

MARIAH

We'd get by. Didn't need much.

KELLY

Weren't you lonely, growing up on the road?

Mariah turns back to him.

MARIAH

I loved it, always new places and new people. But I guess they thought so too, because when I was ten we (MORE)

MARIAH (CONT'D)

stopped at Big Sur...and stayed. They've been there ever since.

KELLY

And you?

MARIAH

That's my favorite place in all the world. I wanted the same for Skye...but when we discovered his gift, I knew he had to be where it could be nurtured.

KELLY

So Skye was born in Big Sur?

Mariah nods.

MARIAH

Out of the blue.

Kelly is puzzled.

MARIAH

I wasn't a saint. There was free love...and I had my share.

(pause)

But for the year before I had Skye I was with no one.

KELLY

Or...couldn't remember?

Mariah looks him in the eye.

MARIAH

I never did the drugs, Mr. Kelly.
 (firm)

No one.

KELLY

And your parents?

MARIAH

The best. Total acceptance. Daddy always called Skye the 'immaculate conception.'

Mariah studies Kelly's reaction of disbelief.

MARIAH

I know. I can't explain it. All I can tell you is all I know.

Mariah is silent for a long moment.

MARIAH

Maybe Skye was meant to leave as he came.

Kelly leans back, absolutely certain in Mariah's honesty, and more determined than ever.

INT. KELLY'S KITCHEN -- DUSK

Patrick chops vegetables for a salad as Kelly cooks dinner.

PATRICK

Mom called.

KELLY

Did she?

PATRICK

They're thinking of driving the Alaska Highway this summer.

KELLY

That should be an adventure.

PATRICK

I guess.

Patrick is quiet for a moment.

PATRICK

What do you do when I'm not here?

Kelly glances at him, then crosses over to give him a kiss on the top of his head.

KELLY

Miss you.

Patrick looks up at him.

INT. KELLY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Late that night. Kelly takes an armload of clothing from the dryer and carries it into the living room. An old movie plays on the TV, the sound turned low. He drops the clothing on the sofa and starts to fold it.

INT. MARIAH'S APARTMENT -- AT THE SAME TIME

The lights are on. We move through the apartment, past Skye's empty bedroom, to Mariah's. She is asleep in bed.

We move closer. She tosses in her sleep as a dream overtakes her.

MARIAH

Daddy...Mama...

Her voice is the voice of a child.

CAMERA MOVES TIGHT ON HER FACE.

IMAGES - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Images FLASH in Mariah's subconscious: A BLINDING WHITE LIGHT, MORPHED GRAYISH SILHOUETTES, REACHING GRAYISH HANDS.

MARIAH (O.S.)

Stop...NO!

The REACHING GRAYISH HANDS come CLOSER AND CLOSER.

Mariah SCREAMS O.S.

CLOSE - MARIAH

Mariah sits up, wide awake. She gasps for breath. She is numb, confused...and terrified. A memory, long repressed, has surfaced.

She looks around the room, sees an open window. Overpowered by fear she jumps up, hurries to the window, and shuts it tight.

She leans against the wall, trying to sort through the images. Whatever they were, they have left a visceral fear deep inside her.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO -- DAWN

Dawn brightens the skyscrapers.

INT. MARIAH'S APARTMENT -- DAWN

The cat enters Mariah's bedroom and pads across to Mariah, who sits on the floor in a corner, wrapped in a blanket, dozing.

As the cat brushes against her she awakens with a start.

MARIAH

Aaahhh...

The cat jumps back.

MARIAH

Einstein.

The cat sits a few feet away and stares at Mariah. Mariah looks at the cat, then stares at the cat's eyes.

CLOSE - CAT'S EYES

They appear other-worldly.

Mariah is mesmerized by the eyes. There is something about their color, their shape...

As Mariah jumps to her feet the cat scampers away. Dropping the blanket she hurries out the bedroom to a hall closet.

INT. MARIAH'S CLOSET -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah rummages through the shelves of the closet until she finds what she's looking for: a photo album.

INT. MARIAH'S KITCHEN - LATER

Mariah sits at the table staring down at a PHOTO in the album.

CLOSE - PHOTO

It is of 5-year-old Mariah with her parents beside their RAINBOW-PAINTED VAN, parked alongside a desert highway.

Mariah takes the photo from the album and stares at it curiously, trying to remember. She holds it closer.

CLOSER - PHOTO

She focuses on the highway sign just visible in the photo: $U.S.\ 54.$

CLOSER - MARIAH

Her eyes react.

IMAGES - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

FLASHES of the BLINDING WHITE LIGHT, MORPHED GRAYISH SILHOUETTES, REACHING GRAYISH HANDS.

YOUNG MARIAH

No! No!

INT. VAN -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As she lays in the back seat of the van, YOUNG MARIAH, 5, struggles, SCREAMING, against the REACHING GRAYISH HANDS.

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A dark and lonely stretch of U.S. 54 winding north through southern New Mexico.

REVERSE - YOUNG MARIAH

The little girl stands in the middle of the dark, empty highway...seemingly all alone. Nothing else is visible - only the terror in her young eyes.

INT. MARIAH'S APARTMENT -- LATER

Mariah is on the phone, Kelly's business card in her shaking hand.

MARIAH

I need you. Something happened ...a long time ago...I'm not sure what...

KELLY (O.S.)

(phone)

I'll be there.

Mariah collapses in a chair.

EXT. VICTORIAN DUPLEX -- DAY

Kelly's unmarked car speeds up the street and brakes sharply to a stop in front. He jumps out and runs up the steps.

INT. MARIAH'S APARTMENT -- MOMENTS LATER

Mariah looks up at Kelly with lost eyes. She holds the photo in her shaking hands. Kelly steps to her. She trembles with fear. He puts his arms around her.

KELLY

What is it, Mariah?

(pause) What did you find?

Mariah clings to Kelly as he holds her tight.

INT. MARIAH'S APARTMENT -- LATER

Kelly studies the photo. Mariah sits in a chair.

KELLY

How old were you here?

MARIAH

Five.

KELLY

Where are you?

Mariah shakes her head.

MARIAH

Somewhere...traveling...

KELLY

What happened?

MARIAH

I can't remember. But it has something to do with Skye.

KELLY

How can it? This must have been...

MARIAH

Almost thirty years ago.

She looks up at him.

MARIAH

I don't know how...I just know it does.

They are both at a loss.

INT. SAUSALITO HOUSEBOAT -- DAY

Mariah lies in a hypnotic state on the recliner. Kelly and the Therapist sit on either side of her.

THERAPIST

You're a little girl again, Mariah. You're five years old. You and your parents are on a trip somewhere. It's night. You're standing in the road. What do you see?

MARIAH

Nothing...dark...

CAMERA MOVES CLOSE on Mariah.

THERAPIST

Who is with you?

MARIAH

Nobody...all alone...

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Young Mariah stands alone in the middle of the road. There is a blank terror in her eyes.

THERAPIST (O.S.)

Turn around, Mariah.

Young Mariah hesitates.

MARIAH (O.S.)

I can't...

THERAPIST (O.S.)

Yes you can. Turn and look.

Young Mariah turns around slowly.

THERAPIST (O.S.)

What is there?

POV - VAN (FLASHBACK)

Behind her, stopped in the middle of the road, is her parent's rainbow-painted van. Both front doors are open wide.

MARIAH (O.S.)

Mama? Daddy?

THERAPIST (O.S.)

Do you see them?

MARIAH (O.S.)

No...

THERAPIST (O.S.)

Where are they?

MARIAH (O.S.)

Gone.

THERAPIST (O.S.)

Where did they go?

CLOSE - YOUNG MARIAH (FLASHBACK)

Young Mariah looks up at the dark sky above her.

MARIAH (O.S.)

Sky.

INT. SAUSALITO HOUSEBOAT -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly leans over to Mariah.

KELLY

What about Skye, Mariah?

Mariah shakes her head.

MARIAH

Gone...

KELLY

Where?

The Therapist motions to Kelly.

THERAPIST

Mariah, what happened on that road?

Maria trembles.

MARIAH

Shots...

THERAPIST

Was there a gun?

MARIAH

Doctors...

THERAPIST

Who was hurt?

MARIAH

(screams)

No! Stop!

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Young Mariah lies naked on a glistening steel table in a room bathed in BRIGHT, BLINDING LIGHTS. She is unable to move, but her eyes are wide open. They dart from side to side.

POV - LIGHTS

Blinded by the lights she can only make out the GRAYISH SILHOUETTES.

MARIAH (O.S.)

Please...

CLOSE - YOUNG MARIAH

She stares in absolute terror at:

POV - HANDS

GRAYISH HANDS reach in with long, metallic syringes.

MARIAH (O.S.)

(screams)

NO!

INT. SAUSALITO HOUSEBOAT -- LATER

The Therapist hands a shaken Mariah a mug of tea.

MARIAH

Thank you.

Mariah sips the tea as the Therapist joins Kelly sitting beside her.

THERAPIST

Are you feeling all right?

MARIAH

Yes.

KELLY

And you don't remember a hospital?

MARIAH

No.

KELLY

Injury...scars?

MARIAH

None.

KELLY

(ponders)

What happened on that road?

THERAPIST

Whatever it was is buried deep inside. It may take a long time for it to surface. And longer to resolve it.

KELLY

We may not have that long.

Mariah looks at Kelly concerned.

KELLY

Each day means Skye's trail gets colder. We have to know what happened that night.

Mariah snaps.

MARIAH

Don't you think I've tried?! I was all alone. I can't remember...

Kelly realizes.

KELLY

No...

Mariah recoils.

KELLY

...you weren't alone.

Mariah understands.

MARIAH

My parents.

KELLY

And they're both still alive?

MARIAH

Yes.

KELLY

You told them about Skye...

Mariah shakes her head.

MARIAH

They don't have a phone.

Kelly looks at her strangely.

EXT. OAKLAND HILLS HOUSE -- DAWN

Kelly's car pulls into the driveway of a house nestled among the trees.

INT. KELLY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Patrick sits in front. Their dog Max is in the back seat.

PATRICK

Only two days, right?

KELLY

Come on, you like it here.

PATRICK

At Christmas...and I do <u>that</u> to make Mom happy.

PATRICK'S MOM, Kelly's ex-wife, opens the door and stands watching. They both look at her.

KELLY

Well go make her happy now.

PATRICK

Dad...

Kelly turns back to Patrick.

KELLY

I promise. I'll be back on Monday.

Patrick nods, turns to open his door.

KELLY

Give me a kiss.

Patrick turns back and leans to kiss Kelly, who hugs him tightly, then lets him go.

EXT. KELLY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Patrick gets out and opens the back door.

PATRICK

Let's go, Max.

Max jumps out. Patrick lifts out his backpack, closes the door and leads Max to the front door.

KELLY

Stay safe.

At the door Patrick's Mom gives him a hug and pets Max, then turns and gives Kelly a friendly smile and wave.

Kelly waves back, but his smile is bittersweet.

Patrick's Mom ushers Patrick and Max inside and closes the door.

Kelly sits there for a long moment, thinking. Then he slowly backs out the driveway.

INT. SKYE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Kelly stands in the doorway to Skye's bedroom. Mariah sits on his bed beside his backpack.

KELLY

Ready?

She looks up at him.

MARIAH

Today is Skye's birthday.

Kelly reacts.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY -- DAY (AERIAL)

We fly above the spectacular coastline at Point Sur.

Below Kelly's car drives south on Highway 1.

MARIAH (O.S.)

There's something you need to know about my parents.

KELLY (O.S.)

What's that?

MARIAH (O.S.)

They're not exactly big on authority figures...they don't trust the government.

KELLY (O.S.)

I'm with them. Anything else?

MARIAH (O.S.)

They hate cops.

KELLY (O.S.)

Doesn't everyone?

EXT. BIG SUR DIRT ROAD -- AFTERNOON

Kelly and Mariah drive through a redwood grove on a rutted dirt road winding deep into Big Sur's scenic - and hidden - backcountry.

INT. KELLY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

As they bounce along the dirt road Kelly looks out at the thick overgrowth.

KELLY

Great place to grow drugs.

MARIAH

I'll pretend I didn't hear that.

Kelly glances over at her.

KELLY

I'll pretend I didn't say it.

Mariah glances back - and smiles.

EXT. END OF DIRT ROAD -- DAY

Kelly takes a look at the old, rainbow-painted van he has parked beside at the end of the dirt road. It is the one from the photo.

KELLY

What a classic.

MARIAH

Still runs.

Kelly examines the PSYCHEDELIC RAINBOWS, PEACE SYMBOLS, FACES OF HEROES painted on the sides of the van.

MARIAH

My mother's the artist.

Kelly looks closely at the bumper stickers: GREENPEACE, SIERRA CLUB, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, EUGENE McCARTHY FOR PRESIDENT.

KELLY

My guess is you're not conservatives.

MARIAH

You'd be right.

Mariah starts across a footbridge over a creek. Kelly follows to the bridge and stops, reading a hand-painted sign artistically lettered "RAINBOW'S END". He looks around.

He is struck by the beauty and serenity. The only SOUNDS are the birds singing in the trees and the water rushing beneath his feet. He smiles to himself.

MARIAH (O.S.)

Nice, isn't it?

He turns back to Mariah, who stands on the other side of the creek.

KELLY

Yes...it is.

He starts across the bridge.

INT. BIG SUR HOUSE -- DUSK

CAMERA PANS around the main room of the ecological-friendly, hand-built house. Collected treasures from the forest and seashore decorate the walls. A SMALL MENAGERIE OF CATS AND DOGS rest on the furniture, half hand-built and half recycled.

<u>BLYTHE MATHIEU</u>, late 50s, sits on the sofa beside Mariah, a sheltering arm around her daughter.

MARIAH

Do you know when that was, Daddy?

Nearby, Kelly sits watching $\underline{\text{WIN MATHIEU}}$ look closely at the photo through his glasses.

MTN

Of course. Nineteen Seventy-six.

KELLY

Where?

Win gives Kelly a look.

WIN

New Mexico. North of Alamogordo.

MARIAH

New Mexico?

BLYTHE

(proudly)

We celebrated the Bicentennial our own way...protesting against nuclear weapons.

Kelly looks at her.

BLYTHE

War is not healthy for children and other living things.

Blythe holds Mariah tight.

WIN

What better place than White Sands...Trinity Site...where those horrible weapons first saw the light of day?

KELLY

What happened there?

WIN

We were arrested, of course. Took us back to Alamogordo. But the ACLU got us right out...and we left.

KELLY

Where did you go?

Win is hesitant, defensive.

WIN

You're only with the Berkeley police?

MARIAH

Skye is missing, Daddy. Mr. Kelly's not interested in anything else.

Win looks back at the photo.

WIN

We headed north to Los Alamos. A group was planning a big sit-in. But we never made it.

Kelly sits up.

KELLY

Why not?

BLYTHE

We got there too late. They had been there and left.

MARIAH

Why were we late?

Win lowers the photo as he thinks back.

WIN

Strangest thing. That one day's drive took us three to make.

MARIAH

Something happened, didn't it?

Mariah looks from Win to Blythe, who stare at each other blankly.

WIN

I don't know.

KELLY

Did you break down?

WIN

The van? Never.

KELLY

An accident?

WIN

No.

MARIAH

Was I sick? Did I go to a hospital?

BLYTHE

You've never been to a hospital, Mariah.

Mariah looks at her.

BLYTHE

We would have remembered that.

MARIAH

Then what happened on that road?

Win can only shake his head.

INT. BIG SUR HOUSE -- NIGHT

Win rummages through a cardboard box full of old photos, political campaign buttons, memorabilia from the 1960s and 1970s. Kelly watches, fascinated.

KELLY

Got the Pentagon Papers in there?

Win shoots him a look.

KELLY

Just a joke.

Win turns back, finds what he's been looking for: an old map of the Southwest.

WIN

Here it is.

He unfolds it, studies the photo closely, then studies the map. Kelly looks on with keen interest.

WIN

There...Route 54.

He traces the route north. Then he stops, stares at the map as he thinks back.

WIN

Funny, I don't remember that road at all.

KELLY

Nothing?

WIN

I know we started out at night... soon as we could leave Alamogordo.

(thinks)

Next thing I remember we were in Los Alamos. Way up here.

Win points to Los Alamos. Kelly looks over at it.

KELLY

Three days later.

Win looks up at him. He can't explain, either.

EXT. BIG SUR HOUSE -- AT THE SAME TIME

Mariah and Blythe walk together outside as the FOG begins to roll in.

BLYTHE

I want you to take Skye's birthday gifts with you.

MARIAH

If I ever see him again...

BLYTHE

You will.

Mariah looks at her.

BLYTHE

I know you will.

MARIAH

I never should have left.

BLYTHE

You did it for your son.

MARIAH

And now look. I just don't understand why all this is happening.

BLYTHE

You'll find the answer.

MARIAH

(unsure)

And Skye?

BLYTHE

He's too special a child. Nothing will happen to him.

MARIAH

Something already has, Mama. (pause)

Kelly thinks it's his father.

BLYTHE

His father! But we've never known who...

MARIAH

I think it's something else.

Blythe looks at her.

MARIAH

I don't know what, but I think it happened to me, too...on that road in New Mexico.

(pause)

And I know it's something bad.

Mariah stands there helpless and afraid. Blythe holds her.

INT. BIG SUR HOUSE -- NIGHT (DREAM)

It is very late.

CAMERA IN POV moves through the house. On a sofa in the main room Kelly sleeps, covered by a handmade quilt.

CAMERA CONTINUES to look in the bedroom where Win and Blythe lie sleeping, then CONTINUES ON to Mariah's room.

INT. MARIAH'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS (DREAM)

CAMERA IN POV enters and MOVES CLOSE to Mariah, who sleeps fitfully.

A PAIR OF GRAYISH HANDS reach out to Mariah, whose eyes POP WIDE OPEN.

INT. BIG SUR HOUSE -- LATER

Kelly awakens with a start, looks around to find a light on. He rises to turn it off when he notices Mariah sitting by the window, staring out into the FOGGY night.

Kelly goes to her. Mariah looks up at him.

MARIAH

I've always been afraid of the dark.

Kelly crosses to get the quilt, then returns and sits beside her, wrapping the quilt around both of them.

EXT. BIG SUR HOUSE -- DAY

Win and Blythe perform their morning yoga exercises silently, the only noise coming from WIND CHIMES that hang from tree branches.

Kelly stands watching them, then walks around the house. He is struck again by the beauty. A GARDEN blossoms with fruit and vegetables. The dogs and cats cavort playfully on a grassy area. Kelly stops, relishing the idyllic harmony.

MARIAH (O.S.)

Now do you see why I love it here?

Kelly turns to find Mariah standing there.

KELLY

Yes...I do.

She walks over and kneels to inhale a flower's fragrance.

MARIAH

If we ever find Skye I'm moving back. No one can hurt us here.

KELLY

We're going to find him.

She looks up at Kelly.

KELLY

No matter what it takes.

He looks into her eyes.

EXT. OAKLAND HILLS HOUSE -- DAY

In the backyard Kelly stands trying to placate Patrick, who is upset and angry.

PATRICK

You promised!

KELLY

I know...and I'm sorry. But I have to do this.

PATRICK

No you don't. You've never gone anywhere on a case before.

KELLY

This is different.

PATRICK

Why?

KELLY

It's a boy...just like you.

PATRICK

Big deal.

KELLY

That's right, Son. It <u>is</u> a big deal.

PATRICK

To you, maybe.

KELLY

It should be to you, too.

PATRICK

Well it's not.

KELLY

I hope you don't mean that.

Patrick stares hotly at Kelly, jealousy rising inside him, tears brimming in his eyes.

PATRICK

Who do you love more?

KELLY

What?

PATRICK

Me...or that kid?!

Patrick turns and walks away.

KELLY

Patrick...

Patrick does not turn. He walks to the house and enters, SLAMMING the door.

Kelly's face reflects his heartache.

INT. SKYE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Mariah stands in the doorway, then walks in and sits on Skye's bed. She looks around the room, then at the pillows on his bed. She reaches for the pillow and hugs it, inhaling his scent. Finally she lays her head against the pillow.

MARIAH

I know you're alive, Skye. I can feel it.

She raises her head.

MARIAH

I'll find you. I won't stop until I do.

She sets the pillow back on the bed, stands and walks to the door. She stops and looks back. Something draws her attention to the laptop computer on Skye's desk. She stares at it, then turns to leave, but turns back and crosses slowly to the laptop. She hesitates, then switches it on.

The LAPTOP BOOTS. Mariah watches as the MODEM CONNECTS automatically to Skye's INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER. An E-MAIL MESSAGE appears on the screen.

Mariah reacts, unsure, then POSITIONS THE MOUSE AND CLICKS.

The E-MAIL MESSAGE appears:

hi mom

i'm ok

it's all right here but i miss you

i know ALL the answers now

love

skye

MARIAH

(screams)

Kelly!

Staring at the message she collapses in the chair and cries.

Kelly runs into the room and stares at the message.

EXT. INTERSTATE 5 -- DAY

Kelly's car speeds down I-5 through the San Joaquin Valley.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KELLY'S CAR -- NIGHT

Late at night. Kelly drives on I-10 through Phoenix. He looks over at Mariah, who is asleep in her seat.

EXT. NEW MEXICO REST AREA -- DAWN

CAMERA ANGLES from Kelly, asleep inside the car, to Mariah, who sits on a boulder watching the sun rise over the desert landscape of southern New Mexico.

EXT. ALAMOGORDO -- DAY

They drive north out of town, past the "<u>LEAVING ALAMOGORDO</u>" sign. Another sign indicates the divided highway is "<u>U.S.54</u>".

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- DAY

They are stopped on the side of the now two-lane Highway 54. The surrounding countryside is stark and empty. There is no traffic.

Kelly stands on the shoulder, comparing the landscape to the photo he holds in his hand.

Mariah walks to the middle of the highway and stands there. She closes her eyes.

On the shoulder, Kelly looks around, then turns as he HEARS A DISTANT SOUND. He sees a vehicle approaching in the distance. He looks at Mariah standing in the middle of the road.

KELLY

Mariah!

She opens her eyes, turns to Kelly.

KELLY

Car.

She looks back down the highway as she walks over to him.

INT. JONAH'S SUV -- AT THE SAME TIME

Jonah listens to COUNTRY MUSIC as he drives. Up ahead he sees a car stopped and two people beside the road. He starts to slow as he nears them.

On the shoulder, Kelly and Mariah look as the SUV approaches, appearing to be stopping.

Inside, as Jonah pulls near, he sees Mariah and panics. He quickly ACCELERATES PAST and SPEEDS AWAY.

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly and Mariah watch the SUV disappear down the highway.

KELLY

He was going to stop. Must've thought we needed help.

MARIAH

Why didn't he?

KELLY

Maybe he didn't like what he saw.

Kelly turns back to Mariah.

KELLY

Anything look familiar around here?

Mariah scans the horizon in all directions.

MARIAH

No...

She starts walking along the shoulder. As Kelly follows her, ANOTHER DISTANT SOUND turns Kelly to the highway.

KELLY

Guess he decided to come back.

They stop and look at the approaching SUV.

INT. JONAH'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah grips the wheel as he speeds towards them on the other side of the highway. He accelerates faster, his iridescent eyes burning. The COUNTRY MUSIC BLARES.

He steers the SUV across the double line, aiming directly at his targets.

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- CONTINUOUS

As the SUV bears down on them, Kelly reacts instinctively, shoving Mariah off the shoulder. He jumps out of the way at the last second.

The SUV swerves onto the shoulder, kicking up dirt and gravel, before skidding back onto the highway, braking sharply, and making a U-turn.

Kelly is quickly on his feet, draws his handgun and aims at the SUV.

KELLY

Stay down!

INT. JONAH'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah sits there on the highway. He sees Kelly off the shoulder in a military stance aiming his handgun at him.

KELLY

(shouts)
Police officer!

Jonah REVS THE ENGINE.

KELLY

Shut off the engine!

He REVS LOUDER. Then his eyes glance at a motion in his rearview mirror. ANOTHER CAR APPROACHES. Kelly steps onto the shoulder again, still aiming his handgun.

Jonah hesitates, then SPEEDS FORWARD and SWERVES at Kelly.

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly drops into a crouch and FIRES at the SUV, emptying his entire clip.

Bullets hit the SUV several times as it swerves back onto the highway and SPEEDS OFF.

Kelly quickly reloads another clip and CONTINUES FIRING at the departing SUV.

INT. CRUISER -- AT THE SAME TIME

New Mexico State Trooper <u>NELSON GEORGE</u>, a Native American, stares through his windshield at the rare sight of a shooter FIRING a semi-automatic handgun at a fleeing vehicle.

NELSON

The hell...?

Nelson switches on siren and lights and prepares to confront the shooter. As he accelerates he SCREAMS INTO HIS RADIO:

NELSON

Alamogordo Seven. Man with gun. Shots fired. U.S. fifty-four at milepost one-eleven. Officer needs help!

As Nelson STEPS ON THE BRAKES Kelly turns from the disappearing SUV to the cruiser. He sets the empty handgun down on the highway.

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- CONTINUOUS

The cruiser SCREECHES TO A STOP. Nelson opens his door and shields himself behind it as he aims his handgun at Kelly.

NELSON

Freeze!

Kelly holds both arms up, palms open.

KELLY

(softly to Mariah)

Don't move.

Mariah remains on the ground.

KELLY

(loud to Nelson)

I'm a police officer.

Nelson continues aiming his handgun at Kelly.

NELSON

Yeah? And I'm George Armstrong Custer.

A LONE SIREN approaches in the distance.

INT. STATE POLICE BARRACKS -- AFTERNOON

Nelson sets Kelly's holstered handgun and shield on the table of a holding room at the Alamogordo Barracks of the New Mexico State Police.

NELSON

Everything checks out.

Kelly and Mariah sit across the table. Nelson grins.

NELSON

Welcome to New Mexico.

Kelly attaches his holster and shield.

KELLY

At least that's a friendly one.

NELSON

Those are the kind you'll get around here.

MARIAH

Not on Highway 54.

NELSON

Why would some stranger try to run you down?

KELLY

You tell me.

NELSON

Sure he wasn't drunk? We get a lot of that.

KELLY

This guy stopped, turned around and tried to do it again.

NELSON

Maybe he didn't like folks from California.

KELLY

Yeah...maybe.

Nelson holds a moment, then:

NELSON

I'm hungry. You hungry?

INT. ALAMOGORDO CAFE -- LATE AFTERNOON

Kelly, Mariah and Nelson sit at a booth in a local cafe. Parked outside their window are Kelly's car and Nelson's cruiser.

NELSON

What makes you think this is where your boy is?

MARIAH

My parents and I took a trip here when I was a little girl.

NELSON

A lot of people do...what with White Sands and Carlsbad nearby.

KELLY

It wasn't exactly a sightseeing trip.

Mariah shoots Kelly a look.

MARIAH

I keep dreaming about something that happened on Highway 54.

Nelson understands.

NELSON

Something strange?

Mariah and Kelly exchange looks.

MARIAH

Yes...

Nelson studies them for a long moment.

NELSON

You need to visit Crazy Annie.

They look at him with questioning eyes.

EXT. DIRT ROAD -- DUSK

Kelly's car follows Nelson's cruiser out a dirt road into the middle of nowhere.

INT. KELLY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly and Mariah follow Nelson's cruiser.

MARIAH

You trust him?

KELLY

Professional courtesy.

Mariah looks at him.

KELLY

But just in case...there's another weapon in the glove box.

Mariah holds, then reaches to open the glove box. A holstered handgun lays inside.

KELLY

You might want to know it's there.

Mariah closes the glove box and they drive on.

EXT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- DUSK

Kelly and Mariah climb from Kelly's car and stand looking at an old trailer. Inside a DOG BARKS. An equally old Jeep is parked outside.

As Nelson walks from his cruiser he glances at the Jeep.

NELSON

She's home.

Kelly and Mariah follow Nelson to the trailer's door.

NELSON

(cautions)

Better stay back...just in case.

Kelly and Mariah look at each other warily.

Nelson steps to the door and KNOCKS. The dog BARKS LOUDER.

NELSON

Annie...

ANNIE (O.S.)

Who's out there?

NELSON

Nelson George.

ANNIE (O.S.)

You alone?

Nelson moves to the side of the door as he hears LOCKS OPENING inside.

NELSON

I brought some friends.

The door opens a crack and a shotgun is pointed out.

ANNIE (O.S.)

What kind of...'friends'?

Behind, Kelly reaches for his handgun but Nelson motions with his hand and shakes his head.

NELSON

Same as us. People lookin' for answers.

The door opens wider and 'CRAZY' ANNIE looks out, her finger on the trigger of her shotgun. She is one tough cookie, a nononsense Westerner, a survivor. Her small, feisty dog GROWLS beside her.

NELSON

They're all right, Annie.

Annie looks over at Kelly and Mariah.

ANNIE

I'll be the judge of that.

Mariah watches nervously.

INT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah and Kelly follow Nelson into the trailer. The dog runs in and jumps onto a sofa. Mariah and Kelly stop and stare at the walls and ceiling.

CLOSE - CLIPPINGS

Every square inch of the trailer seems to be covered by clippings of newspaper articles, pages torn from magazines and books, photos, stories...all depicting UFOs and alien encounters.

Annie sets her shotgun down and joins them.

ANNIE

So...they got you too, huh?

MARIAH

Who?

Annie indicates the clippings her walls.

Mariah looks in disbelief.

NELSON

Annie, this is Mariah Mathieu and Detective Sean Kelly. Mariah's thirteen-year-old son is missing.

Annie turns to Kelly.

ANNIE

Won't do you no good.

KELLY

What won't?

ANNIE

Bein' a cop. They don't respect no authority. They've been playin' games with Washington forever.

KELLY

Who is they?

Annie looks at him, turns to Nelson.

ANNIE

Why'd you bring them here if they don't know?

NELSON

So you could help them. Something happened to Mariah as a child out on Highway 54.

Annie grins at Mariah.

ANNIE

Got a scoop mark, do ya?

MARIAH

What's that?

ANNIE

A scar over your shinbone from an injury you can't remember.

Kelly reacts to this, looks puzzled.

MARIAH

No...

ANNIE

Then it may be somethin' more.

MARIAH

Something more than what?

ANNIE

A routine physical.

KELLY

What are we talking about here?

ANNIE

Abduction...examination...DNA removal...implantation.

KELLY

By who?

Annie indicates the clippings.

ANNIE

Our 'friends'.

Mariah and Kelly look around at the depictions of aliens on the walls.

INT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- LATER

Mariah, Kelly and Nelson sit opposite Annie and her dog.

ANNIE

They're out there all right... doin' things nobody knows about. Nelson here'll tell ya. He's seen 'em.

Kelly and Mariah turn to Nelson.

NELSON

Always been things happening around here. Strange lights at night, cattle disappearing...then turning up dead, blood drained dry.

(pause)

I grew up on the reservation. The elders would tell us stories of the old days...about the sky people.

Mariah reacts.

NELSON

People who came down from heaven and taught them things. And who took some of them away.

ANNIE

This stuff ain't nothin' new... been goin' on here a long time.

KELLY

What's being done?

NELSON

Officially? Nothing exists... period.

ANNIE

Roswell's a hundred miles away. Less as the spaceships fly. You know how they covered that up. But some of us know the truth.

MARIAH

Miss Annie...

ANNIE

Just call me Annie, dear. All my friends do.

MARIAH

What do you think happened to my son?

ANNIE

Maybe they wanted him.

Mariah looks at Kelly.

The dog raises it's head, sensing something outside, GROWLS, then goes to the door.

They all turn to look.

EXT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- MOMENTS LATER

Annie is outside with her shotgun, looking around. Mariah stands beside her.

Nelson and Kelly return from either side of the trailer.

NELSON

Nothing.

Annie looks down at her dog, who sits staring up at the BRIGHT STARS in the pitch-black sky overhead.

ANNIE

They were here.

Mariah crosses close to Kelly.

NELSON

You can follow me back to town.

MARIAH

(to Annie)

Thank you.

Mariah and Kelly starts to follow Nelson to the cars.

ANNIE

Come back tomorrow and I'll take you there.

They stop and turn back.

KELLY

Where?

ANNIE

Where they are.

As they stand there a SHOOTING STAR crosses the sky overhead.

INT. MARIAH'S MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Kelly comes through the doorway from his adjoining motel room into Mariah's. She is sitting on the bed.

KELLY

Everything's secure.

MARIAH

Think she's crazy?

KELLY

Probably.

Mariah looks up at him, lost, desperate.

KELLY

But she might know something. Just don't get your hopes up.

MARIAH

All I have is hope.

Kelly steps to the bed and sits beside Mariah, puts his arms around her and holds her.

INT. MARIAH'S MOTEL ROOM -- LATER

It is very late. A table lamp is lit. CAMERA MOVES CLOSE on Mariah as she sleeps fitfully.

MARIAH

No...stop...

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

CAMERA IN POV: the BRIGHT, BLINDING LIGHT...the GRAYISH SILHOUETTES...the GRAYISH HANDS reaching...

REVERSE POV - MARIAH

But it is not Young Mariah on the glistening steel table...it is 19-YEAR-OLD MARIAH, wide awake, paralyzed, and terrified.

INT. MARIAH'S MOTEL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah wakes up, GASPING for breath, her eyes wide with fear.

EXT. HILL -- DAY

Annie's Jeep bounces up a roadless hill.

Annie drives with her dog and shotgun beside her on the front seat. In back Kelly and Mariah hang on. Annie must SHOUT to be heard:

ANNIE

Everybody thinks they're all out there in Nevada, at that Area 51 place they call Dreamland. That's what they want you to think.

The Jeep crests the hill and comes to a stop.

ANNIE

But they're not. They're right here.

Kelly looks around. He holds an open map in his hands.

KELLY

Where?

ANNIE

Down there.

They look down on a large, desolate valley, seemingly deserted for miles in all directions.

MARIAH

I don't see anything.

ANNIE

Under the ground!

Mariah looks skeptically at Kelly.

ANNIE

Hang on!

Annie shifts into gear and they start down the other side of the hill into the valley.

EXT. FENCELINE -- DAY

Annie drives up to a fenceline stretching to the horizon, drives parallel to it, and stops beside a metal sign attached to the fence. Mariah and Kelly look at it.

POV - SIGN

The sign BANGS against the fence in the wind. It reads:

STOP!

U.S. Government

No Admittance

Deadly Force Authorized

Annie turns back to Mariah and Kelly.

ANNIE

See?

Kelly studies his map.

KELLY

White Sands Missile Range.

ANNIE

You got it.

Kelly turns to Mariah.

KELLY

Trinity Site.

Mariah reacts. She climbs out of the Jeep and walks to the fence. Slowly she looks around.

MARIAH

(shouts)

What did you do with my son?!

INT. COMPLEX ROOM -- AT THE SAME TIME

CAMERA IS CLOSE on a large FLAT SCREEN COMPUTER MONITOR. The HANDS of an unseen character type a code on a keyboard.

The view on the monitor is from a camera aboard an orbiting satellite, shooting straight down with amazing clarity. It BEGINS TO ZOOM DOWN TIGHT on Mariah at the fenceline.

INT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- DUSK

Mariah examines the clippings on the wall. Annie is cooking dinner on her small stove.

MARIAH

I have dreams.

ANNIE

I know.

Mariah looks over at her.

MARIAH

Why?

ANNIE

You're remembering.

Mariah looks back at the clippings.

MARIAH

Do they go...anywhere?

ANNIE

Anywhere they want to.

MARIAH

Then they would have known where I was.

ANNIE

Once they've had you, they can always find you. They put in an implant.

MARIAH

How can we be sure?

ANNIE

There's a doctor in town. If you have one he'll find it.

Mariah reacts, fearful.

MARIAH

I'm cold.

Annie takes a blanket to Mariah as she sits.

ANNIE

Here.

She wraps the blanket around Mariah's shoulders, then returns to her cooking.

MARIAH

Why do you stay out here...all alone?

ANNIE

I'm waiting.

MARIAH

What for?

Annie stops, hesitates.

ANNIE

They took my daughter Jaycee ...twenty years ago.

Mariah is stunned. Annie stares down with empty eyes.

ANNIE

They never gave her back.

EXT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- DUSK

The SUN SETS over the mountain ridges to the west.

Kelly stands, watching, thinking about many things.

INT. KELLY'S MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Kelly sits on his bed talking on the phone.

KELLY

(phone)

How's everything?

(listens)

That's good.

(listens)

No, I have to stay here longer.

(listens)

Patrick, please...

Mariah stands listening in the open connecting doorway.

KELLY

I know you do, but I have to be here.

(listens)

Yes I do.

(listens)

Because I need to.

Mariah feels for Kelly.

KELLY

Patrick, listen to me...

(listens)

Patrick...

The phone CLICKS into a DIAL TONE. He looks at the phone sadly, then hangs up. He sits there, unmoving.

Mariah hesitates, then walks in and sits beside him.

KELLY

My son. I miss him.

MARIAH

I know.

He looks at her, shakes his head.

KELLY

I can only imagine what you must be going through.

Mariah looks away sadly.

INT. KELLY'S MOTEL ROOM -- LATER

Mariah and Kelly sit on the floor talking into the night. A half-eaten pizza lies in its box between them.

KELLY

Then everything just fell apart. (thinks)

It was coming, though. I could see it. She didn't want that life. I can't blame her. Who would?

(shakes head)

I swore it would be different for Patrick...but here I am.

MARIAH

Why? Why are you doing this for me?

KELLY

If I don't, who will?

He looks at her.

KELLY

The truth? You need somebody. And I need somebody to need me.

MARIAH

Why did you become a cop?

KELLY

My father was on the force. And his father. It's in our Irish blood.

MARIAH

Is that what you want for Patrick?

KELLY

I want what Patrick wants. Right now his life is baseball.

Kelly grins at her.

KELLY

He's good at it, too. It's something we can do together.

(reflects)

I just want him to be happy.

MARIAH

I'm sure he knows that...and how much you love him.

KELLY

Right now he doesn't think so.

MARIAH

I'm sorry we've caused him this pain.

Kelly looks at her, reaches for her hand.

KELLY

I hope Patrick and Skye can meet one day.

They look into each others's sad and lonely eyes...

KELLY

I think they could be friends.

MARIAH

I think so, too.

...and move close.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KELLY'S MOTEL ROOM -- LATER

Kelly and Mariah are now lying on the bed, caressing one another. For both it has been a long time...too long.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KELLY'S MOTEL ROOM -- LATER

They are under a sheet. Kelly is atop Mariah. They begin to have intercourse.

CAMERA MOVES CLOSE to Mariah's face. As she responds to Kelly's thrusts her eyes stare blankly at the ceiling.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

19-year-old Mariah lays immobile on the steel table. Her eyes are wide with fear.

INT. KELLY'S MOTEL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah grips the side of the bed as Kelly's own desperation causes him to thrust harder. But her eyes are cold as she stares through him.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

19-year-old Mariah stares at the long, cylindrical probe being guided between her raised legs.

INT. KELLY'S MOTEL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah begins to cry as the now-vivid memory comes flooding back. She starts to resist Kelly's thrusts.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

19-year-old Mariah grimaces, tears streaming down her face. She wants to resist, but is unable to fight the violation.

INT. KELLY'S MOTEL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah finds her strength and pushes Kelly off her.

MARIAH

(screams)

NO!

Mariah turns to her side, curls up into a fetal position, holding herself in a protective ball, crying.

Kelly crawls to her.

KELLY

Mariah...

MARIAH

I can't.

Kelly reaches to her gently, but Mariah holds herself tighter.

KELLY

Why?

She looks away.

MARIAH

That's what they did to me!

Her body is wracked with sobs.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- DAY

CAMERA IS CLOSE on an X-RAY FILM of Mariah's face, clipped onto a light box. A pen points to a tiny object lodged high in the nasal cavity.

DOCTOR (O.S.)

There.

Mariah, Kelly and Annie stand with a local DOCTOR in his small office.

MARIAH

What is it?

ANNIE

Probably a tracking device.

MARIAH

(firm)

I want it out.

DOCTOR

All right.

Kelly holds a shaking Mariah.

INT. SURGICAL SUITE -- LATER

Mariah reclines in a chair, asleep under anesthesia. As a NURSE assists, the masked Doctor watches a VIDEO MONITOR as he positions an endoscope up into Mariah's nostril.

CHAMBER MUSIC PLAYS ON A CD

CLOSE - VIDEO MONITOR

Through the camera at the tip of the endoscope we see the nasal cavity. It continues in, then swivels around. It moves towards a tiny lump of scar tissue and stops. A miniature scalpel is extended and pierces the scar tissue. Blood begins to flow. The endoscope moves closer. A black, prism-like object is visible. A miniature forceps is extended and clamps around the object, tears it from its attachment to the surrounding tissue, and retracts with it.

INT. RECOVERY ROOM -- LATER

CAMERA IN POV as strange OUT-OF-FOCUS SILHOUETTES seem to hover overhead. CAMERA RACKS FOCUS. The silhouettes turn out to be Kelly, Annie and the Nurse.

KELLY

It's over.

CLOSE - MARIAH

A groggy Mariah looks up at them.

MARIAH

Did they...get it out?

Kelly nods as the Nurse brings over a bowl. Mariah sits up and looks into the bowl. The object is no larger than a pencil lead.

MARIAH

What is that?

KELLY

They don't know.

Mariah lays back down and stares up at Kelly.

INT. CRUISER -- DAY

As Nelson drives his cruiser along a dirt road with Kelly beside him.

KELLY

Anything on that guy in the truck?

NELSON

Nothing. It's as if he disappeared into thin air.

Kelly glances to the back seat. Nelson notices.

NELSON

You doing okay back there?

Mariah, sitting quietly in back, nods, then stares out the window as the cruiser drives through a remote part of the Mescalero Apache Reservation.

EXT. RESERVATION -- CONTINUOUS

Scattered tin-roofed shacks and abandoned cars attest to the abject poverty. Beside each home is a small, authentic sweat lodge.

Playing CHILDREN stop and wave as the cruiser passes. They run beside it and MAKE THE SOUND OF A SIREN.

Nelson smiles at them and SWITCHES ON THE SIREN. The Children CHEER as they chase the cruiser. Mariah stares sadly at them.

EXT. CANYON -- DAY

The empty cruiser is parked as far into a secluded canyon as it can go.

NELSON (O.S.)

We have been here a long time and have seen many things. The Ancient Ones kept a history.

EXT. FURTHER UP CANYON -- LATER

CAMERA IS CLOSE on a series of PETROGLYPHS etched into the sandstone walls of the canyon.

NELSON (O.S.)

We believe that The Giver of Life is the source of all power. Everything on earth and in the sky has a spirit...sun, moon, thunder, wind, lightning.

Nelson leads Mariah and Kelly along. The petroglyphs depict the legends in stylized drawings.

NELSON

Water People are responsible for the lakes and rains. Mountain People dwell high up in caves seeking eternal life.

Nelson stops, turns to them.

NELSON

Then there are the Sky People.

He turns back as Mariah and Kelly stare closely at the drawings. A chill runs through them.

CLOSE - PETROGLYPHS

The drawings are clearly depictions of UFOs and aliens, strikingly similar to those in Annie's clippings.

NELSON (O.S.)

These are a thousand years old.

MARIAH (O.S.)

My God...

Mariah reaches to trace the etchings.

MARIAH

They've been here forever.

Kelly turns to Nelson.

KELLY

And nobody knows?

NELSON

My people have a saying.

He is slow and deliberate.

NELSON

'In this world the unseen has power'.

Kelly's eyes are full of uncertainty.

INT. MARIAH'S MOTEL BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Mariah stares at her reflection in the bathroom mirror, looking at her nose, reacting to that violation of her body. She splashes water on her face, then walks from the bathroom and crosses to the adjoining doorway.

MARIAH

What is it?

INT. KELLY'S MOTEL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly, in boxer shorts, sits on the bed staring down at his right leg.

KELLY

I've had this since I was a kid.

Mariah crosses in and kneels to look.

CLOSE - KELLY'S LEG

Mariah touches the indentation on Kelly's shin. It is a SCOOP MARK.

Kelly looks down at her.

KELLY

And I don't remember getting it.

Mariah looks up at him.

INT. MARIAH'S MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Very late. CAMERA IN POV seems to float around the darkened room. It stops at Mariah's empty bed, then continues to the adjoining doorway.

INT. KELLY'S MOTEL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

CAMERA IN POV continues floating through the doorway and into the room. A table lamp is on. Mariah and Kelly are asleep in bed together.

CAMERA MOVES CLOSE on Mariah. She slowly opens her eyes. She HEARS WHAT SOUNDS LIKE CHILDREN LAUGHING. She smiles curiously, then looks across to the connecting doorway.

FLASHING LIGHTS appear to come from her room.

Still not fully awake, Mariah rises from the bed and steps towards the doorway.

INT. MARIAH'S MOTEL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah peers through the connecting doorway. The flashing lights are coming from the TV SCREEN, as is the CHILDREN'S LAUGHTER. Mariah steps into the room, towards the IMAGES on the TV SCREEN. She stops and stares at them.

CLOSE - TV SCREEN

It is a HIGH DEFINITION DIGITAL VIDEO of a GROUP OF CHILDREN playing in a large, brightly lit room with no windows. The children all wear similar one-piece jumpsuits. The VIDEO ZOOMS to the face of one of the children. It is Skye.

MARIAH (O.S.)

Kelly!

Mariah stares smiling at the TV as Kelly runs into the room, handgun in his hand.

MARIAH

Look...it's Skye.

Kelly looks at the TV screen. Mariah reaches to touch the screen, trying to touch Skye.

KELLY

How?

Suddenly the TV GOES OFF and they stand there in the dark. Kelly turns and looks around the room, then raises and aims his handgun.

KELLY

(orders)

Don't move!

CAMERA ANGLES to the far corner of the room. Standing there is a dark figure.

KELLY (O.S.)

Turn on the light.

Mariah steps to the wall switch by the door, turns on the light and GASPS.

The figure is illuminated now: a small, frail being with almost transparent skin in a pale hue. It is <u>THE ELDER</u> - an ancient alien-human hybrid, a thousand earth-years old. It's aged features are more alien than human - except for the eyes: familiar eyes... iridescent eyes...Skye's eyes.

THE ELDER

Do not be afraid.

Kelly's hand shakes as he keeps his handgun pointed at the strange being.

KELLY

Who are you?

THE ELDER

I have no name. (pause)

I am known as the Elder.

KELLY

What...are you?

THE ELDER

Half of what you are.

Mariah recovers.

MARIAH

Do you know where my son is?

THE ELDER

Yes.

MARIAH

Did you take him?

THE ELDER

No.

KELLY

Who did?

THE ELDER

Those who I have come to warn you about.

Mariah and Kelly stand there absolutely stunned.

THE ELDER

Please help me.

(pause)

I am the last of my kind...

The Elder, obviously weakened, collapses.

Kelly lowers his handgun. Mariah looks over at him.

MARIAH

He knows where Skye is.

She pleads with her eyes.

EXT. ALAMOGORDO MOTEL -- NIGHT

Mariah follows Kelly from the motel room as he carries the Elder, wrapped in a blanket, to his car and lays him on the backseat. They hurriedly climb in and drive off.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

The Elder lies on an examining table. Kelly and Mariah watch as the Doctor inserts an I-V needle into the transparent skin.

DOCTOR

This one appears very old.

KELLY

You've seen others?

DOCTOR

I know of those who have.

The Doctor begins to PUSH the I-V. The LIQUID VISIBLY COURSES through the veins and capillaries, quickly spreading throughout the Elder's body.

MARIAH

Is he...dying?

DOCTOR

Yes.

They stand back and watch as the Elder rests.

INT. KELLY'S CAR -- DAWN

As Kelly drives, Mariah looks out at the desolate countryside. In back sits the Elder, wearing sunglasses.

MARIAH

How can your...people be here and no one know?

THE ELDER

We have help.

KELLY

The government?

THE ELDER

They allow us to do what we do, in return for a bit of our technology.

Mariah turns to the Elder.

MARIAH

And what do you do...steal our children?

THE ELDER

It has come to that.

Mariah reacts, turns back to the window and stares out.

EXT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- DAY

Kelly's car is parked beside Annie's Jeep. Annie opens the door and pushes her BARKING dog outside.

ANNIE

Then stay out here!

She closes the door. The dog CONTINUES BARKING, scratching on the door in a frenzy.

INT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

The dog BARKS O.S. as Annie crosses back in.

ANNIE

(aside)

Can't say I blame him.

Seated on the sofa the Elder looks up at the UFO clippings overhead on the ceiling. Kelly and Mariah sit across from him.

KELLY

Why children?

THE ELDER

The species had to be studied in the purest form.

MARIAH

Molested.

The Elder looks at her.

THE ELDER

Only what you call DNA was taken.

KELLY

Why?

THE ELDER

To find the best matches.

KELLY

For what?

THE ELDER

Hybridization.

ANNIE

I knew it...they're breeding with us!

Kelly, deep in thought, slowly raises his right trouser leg, showing the scoop mark scar to the Elder.

KELLY

Was I?

The Elder looks down at Kelly's shin.

THE ELDER

Yes.

Kelly is visibly shaken.

THE ELDER

The chosen were implanted to monitor their location...for future use.

ANNIE

Haha! What did I tell you?

THE ELDER

And when it was time...

MARIAH

We were raped.

The Elder looks sadly at Mariah for a moment.

THE ELDER

Cross-fertilization worked, but the ideal was with human ovum. At first only the eggs were harvested and a surrogate was used. But as you can see that proved lacking.

They look at him questioningly.

THE ELDER

I am one of the early ones.

KELLY

You?!

ANNIE

A cross-breed!

THE ELDER

What began as a noble experiment to combine the best traits of both species has evolved into something else.

KELLY

What?

THE ELDER

The goal now is to create superhybrids.

KELLY

Why?

THE ELDER

To dominate you.

Mariah reacts.

MARIAH

And my son is one of them?

THE ELDER

Yes.

KELLY

You said you came to warn us. What can we do?

THE ELDER

Nothing.

KELLY

Then why...

THE ELDER

Because there may still be time to save the boy.

MARIAH

Will you help us?

THE ELDER

It is the least I can do...for my people.

Annie is subdued.

ANNIE

What about the children...taken years ago?

The Elder looks over at her sadly.

THE ELDER

They are...elsewhere.

Annie turns away. Mariah reaches out to comfort her.

EXT. HILL -- DUSK

Annie drives her Jeep down the hill as the sun sets behind the mountains on the horizon. The Elder sits in front. Behind sit Kelly and Mariah, with Annie's dog between them.

INT. COMPLEX ROOM -- NIGHT

CAMERA IS CLOSE on the LARGE FLAT SCREEN MONITOR. Annie's Jeep, speeding along the fenceline, is watched from the orbiting satellite using NIGHT-VISION VIDEO RESOLUTION.

CAMERA PULLS BACK from the monitor and reveals Jonah seated at the console of a large computer array, watching.

He sits back, thinks, then smiles to himself. He types a code on a keyboard and the VIDEO PICTURE BECOMES SCRAMBLED.

INT. COMPLEX CORRIDORS -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah hurries from the room, the door closing automatically, and starts down a brightly lit corridor in a large underground complex.

Everything here is more than state-of-the-art, higher than our highest tech. The complex was built using the advanced technology of another culture - from another world.

Jonah runs down the MAZE OF CORRIDORS. He passes no one, it is as if he is alone.

At the end of the last corridor he stops at a door. He stands still as a security laser BEAMS through his retina, probing the impulses from his brainwaves to identify him. The door opens and Jonah passes through.

INT. COMPLEX VIEWING PLATFORM -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah enters a darkened, soundproof room in which sits a large circle of glass, illuminated from below. Jonah steps towards the circle. He stops and looks down through the glass into a brightly lit room visible beneath.

JONAH'S POV - ACTIVITY ROOM

The group of Children in one-piece jumpsuits are running around, playing. NO NOISE IS HEARD due to the soundproofing.

Jonah focuses on one child in particular...Skye.

INT. COMPLEX ACTIVITY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Skye and the other Children run around the room, LAUGHING AND SCREAMING, in a game of keep-away. LOUD MUSIC bolsters the tempo of the game and their boundless energy.

Skye appears to be having the most fun. He LAUGHS as he runs around, enjoying the contact, exactly what he always dreamed of. And then...

THE MUSIC STOPS

Skye comes to a stop, looks around at the other Children, who stop and look back at him.

SKYE

No...

Skye looks around the room, his eyes pleading.

SKYE

Please...

Skye looks back at the Children, who raise their hands and wave goodbye at him.

SKYE

Don't go...

IN AN INSTANT the Children are gone, the VIRTUAL REALITY HOLOGRAMS that they are vanishing back to the computer from which they came.

Skye looks around the empty room sadly, then turns as the access to the room, part of a wall, opens and in walks a large figure with grayish skin. This is a pure <u>ALIEN</u>.

Skye looks up as the Alien steps towards him. Their eyes meet ... Skye's iridescent ones, the Alien's dark, menacing ones. Communication is achieved TELEPATHICALLY.

Skye listens to the Alien, tries to plead his case, but is rebuffed. He sighs and NODS compliantly. The Alien turns and starts out. Skye obediently follows.

INT. COMPLEX VIEWING PLATFORM -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah watches Skye follow the Alien from the activity room. He reacts, knowing it is too late, then turns and hurries to the door.

INT. COMPLEX ELEVATOR -- NIGHT

Skye and the Alien stand in an elevator as it descends. The Alien looks straight ahead, but TELEPATHS thoughts to Skye, who looks at the Alien, again NODS.

The elevator stops and the doors open to a dimly-lit chamber.

INT. COMPLEX INNER CHAMBER -- CONTINUOUS

Skye follows the Alien into the chamber. A reclining chair sits in the center, opposite an enclosed glass tank almost half the size of the chamber. Inside the tank a PLASMA FORM undulates in a clear liquid medium, its shape and color everchanging.

Skye stares fascinated at the plasma form as he takes a seat in the chair, which automatically conforms itself to his body, holding him in a tight cocoon.

The plasma form FLASHES a brilliant white.

Skye JOLTS as their brains become one.

The plasma form undulates, but now its ever-changing colors become MORE INTENSE.

Skye's iridescent eyes stare unblinking as the transfer of data from one brain to another proceeds.

The Alien, assured that all is well, walks back into the elevator and the doors close.

Skye and the plasma form continue their silent interaction.

EXT. RESTRICTED AREA -- NIGHT

Annie stands beside her Jeep, looking around the dark and lonely desert. In the front seat her dog sits up, looks at the sky, and WHINES nervously. Annie looks up.

A FAINT SOUND BECOMES LOUDER, then:

INTENSE WHITE LIGHT illuminates the Jeep from above. STRONG GUSTS OF WIND blow dust. Annie squints into the light.

ANNIE

Howdy, fellas.

She grins, holds her arms out wide as the dog BARKS.

ANNIE

What kept you?

ANNIE'S POV - LIGHTS

Behind the intense lights shining down is the outline of a MILITARY HELICOPTER HOVERING overhead.

INT. COMPLEX HANGAR -- NIGHT

The louvered cover of an immense air intake is pushed open and Kelly, Mariah and the Elder emerge from a dark tunnel, buffeted by the rush of air. Kelly and Mariah look around.

It is a huge underground hangar. Several large, stealth-like spacecraft are parked inside...similar to the "flying saucers" in Annie's UFO clippings.

Kelly and Mariah stand staring in awe.

KELLY

They are real...

The Elder closes the intake cover and steps to them.

THE ELDER

Yes.

MARIAH

I remember...

Mariah takes a step forward, staring at the spacecraft, remembering.

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

5-year-old Mariah stands in the middle of the highway, staring at her parent's van, the doors wide open. Then she stares up at the sky overhead.

POV - ALIEN SPACECRAFT (FLASHBACK)

The dark outline of the spacecraft HOVERS SILENTLY overhead.

CLOSE - YOUNG MARIAH (FLASHBACK)

The little girl stares with wide, terror-filled eyes.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. COMPLEX HANGAR -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah stares with the same wide, terror-filled eyes.

KELLY

Mariah?

Mariah turns to Kelly, who steps to her. She shakes her head.

THE ELDER

We must hurry.

They turn to the Elder.

THE ELDER

This way.

They follow as the Elder leads the way, along the shadows of the hangar wall, into the complex.

EXT. RESTRICTED AREA -- NIGHT

Annie watches as SEVERAL DELTA FORCE SOLDIERS quickly change one of her tires. Their helicopter has landed nearby, the rotors still spinning. The dog BARKS on the seat.

ANNIE

Ain't that the damndest thing ...just bought that tire, too. New.

A Soldier watches the others work, then steps to her.

SOLDIER

Almost done, Ma'am. You'll have to leave. This is a restricted area.

ANNIE

I thought I made a wrong turn back a ways. Thanks for not shootin' me.

SOLDIER

Our pleasure, Ma'am.

Annie looks at him with a glint in her eyes.

ANNIE

You boys haven't seen any little gray men by any chance?

The Soldiers all stop and look at her.

SOLDIERS

(in unison)

No Ma'am!

The dog GROWLS.

INT. COMPLEX CORRIDORS -- AT THE SAME TIME

The Elder leads Mariah and Kelly deeper into the complex.

KELLY

No...guards?

THE ELDER

None are necessary inside. Your government protects our perimeter ...and even they have no access.

Mariah looks around.

MARIAH

No one has ever seen this?

THE ELDER

Only a chosen few.

They proceed on.

INT. COMPLEX ROOM -- AT THE SAME TIME

Jonah sits watching the FLAT SCREEN MONITOR.

The SCREEN in filled with the camera views of a dozen corridors of the complex.

CAMERA MOVES CLOSER on the screen as the progress of Kelly, Mariah and the Elder is tracked. At the end of a corridor they stop. Elevator doors open and they enter.

INT. COMPLEX ELEVATOR -- CONTINUOUS

As they descend in the elevator Kelly grips the handgun in his holster.

THE ELDER

That will do you no good here.

Kelly looks at the Elder.

KELLY

What will?

THE ELDER

Nothing.

Kelly releases his grip on the handgun. Mariah looks at him. He looks back. The elevator stops and the doors open. They turn to look.

MARIAH

Skye!

INT. COMPLEX INNER CHAMBER -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah runs towards Skye, still held in the chair, his eyes open but unseeing as the transfer continues.

THE ELDER

Don't.

Mariah stops, desperately wanting to touch her son.

Kelly and the Elder walk from the elevator. The doors close.

THE ELDER

Not yet.

Kelly stares at the undulating plasma form.

KELLY

What's happening?

THE ELDER

He is being educated.

MARIAH

By what?

THE ELDER

Father.

Mariah reacts, stares at the plasma form.

MARIAH

That?

THE ELDER

Yes.

CAMERA MOVES CLOSE on Mariah as she stares at it.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

5-year-old Mariah lays on the table terrified as the GRAYISH HANDS probe her with the metallic syringes.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

19-year-old Mariah lays on the table terrified as the GRAYISH HANDS impregnate her with the cylindrical probe.

INT. COMPLEX INNER CHAMBER -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah stares with angry eyes at the plasma form.

MARIAH

Why me?

THE ELDER

You were one of many.

Kelly reacts, looks down at his right leg, thinks, then looks back at the plasma form.

The plasma form begins to undulate more rapidly, the colors becoming far more intense.

THE ELDER

It knows what you are thinking.

KELLY

It'll be the last thing it knows.

Kelly pulls his handgun from the holster and aims it at the glass tank.

THE ELDER

Wait...

KELLY

This has to stop.

THE ELDER

If you harm it now, you harm the boy.

Mariah turns to Skye, then to Kelly.

Kelly grips the handgun with both hands, trying to hold steady, trying not to think about Mariah's son...and his own.

MARIAH

Is there another way?

The Elder reacts with a quiet, fatalistic demeanor.

THE ELDER

(softly)

Yes...

Kelly's eyes dart to the Elder as he pauses at a critical moment.

THE ELDER

...there is.

Suddenly the elevator doors open and the Alien stands there.

Kelly spins to aim the handgun at the Alien, who stares back, but is FROZEN in a paralytic state halfway through the turn.

The Alien now stares at Mariah, who reaches out to Skye and is also PARALYZED. She can see and hear and think...but cannot move.

The Alien approaches the Elder, who stands his ground staring back. But the hybrid Elder's mind force is no match for the pure Alien's, which brings the Elder to his knees, SCREAMING.

INT. COMPLEX HOLDING ROOM -- LATER

Kelly POUNDS HIS FIST against the sealed door of a secure room deep inside the complex.

KELLY

(yells)

Hey...HEY!

He knows it is futile.

MARIAH

Kelly...

Kelly turns to Mariah, sitting on the floor beside the outstretched Elder, who tries to sit up.

MARIAH

Stay down.

Kelly crosses to them and kneels. The Elder looks up at him.

THE ELDER

I am sorry.

KELLY

You tried.

Kelly gives him a smile.

MARIAH

What will they do now?

THE ELDER

We will be ... eliminated.

MARIAH

And Skye?

The Elder looks up at her.

THE ELDER

He has been chosen.

Mariah slumps. Kelly tries to give her strength.

A SOUND turns their attention to the door. It opens and Jonah enters.

Kelly stares, recognizes him. He lunges at Jonah, pinning him against the wall.

THE ELDER

Jonah?

MARIAH

Who is he?

THE ELDER

One of us.

Kelly keeps an arm pressed against Jonah's throat.

KELLY

One of who?

THE ELDER

A hybrid...same as the boy. They use him for...errands outside.

KELLY

Like trying to kill us.

Kelly glares at Jonah.

JONAH

I...had to. They were watching.

KELLY

Why?

JONAH

They wanted the boy.

Kelly stares into Jonah's frightened eyes.

THE ELDER

You should not have come here, Jonah.

JONAH

I know what you were going to do.

They all look at him.

JONAH

I want to help.

Kelly studies him closely. Jonah pleads with his eyes. Kelly finally releases his hold on him.

INT. COMPLEX ACTIVITY ROOM -- AT THE SAME TIME

Skye enters the activity room, mentally drained after his session with the plasma form.

THE VIRTUAL REALITY CHILDREN MATERIALIZE, surrounding Skye.

GIRL

Skye...you're back. Want to play?

SKYE

No.

GIRL

Why not?

SKYE

I just don't.

The Children look at Skye sadly as they DE-MATERIALIZE. The room is quiet and empty. Skye walks to the center of the room and sits on the floor.

He looks pensively down at a headset laying on the floor in front of him. He reaches for it and places it over his head.

CAMERA MOVES CLOSE to Skye's eyes as he enters a VIRTUAL REALITY world of his own making.

O.S. SOUND OF SKATES

SKYE'S POV - SLOW MOTION VIRTUAL REALITY FX

Skye is rollerblading down the Berkeley streets.

CLOSE - SKYE

He finds escape in his memories.

SKYE'S POV - SLOW MOTION VIRTUAL REALITY FX

The Berkeley street SUDDENLY MORPHS INTO San Francisco's Market Street and Skye finds himself desperately trying to escape Jonah's SUV.

INT. COMPLEX CORRIDORS -- AT THE SAME TIME

Jonah leads the way through the corridors. Kelly and Mariah help the weakening Elder as they follow.

KELLY

Where's he leading us?

THE ELDER

To the boy.

Mariah looks at Kelly, brightens. The Elder notices, reaches to touch Mariah.

THE ELDER

(cautions)

He may not be the same as you knew him.

MARIAH

He's still my son.

THE ELDER

He's part their's, too.

Mariah reacts.

INT. COMPLEX ACTIVITY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Skye's breathing is labored, his eyes staring with intensity as he continues in VIRTUAL REALITY.

O.S. SOUND OF JINGLING DOOR BELLS

SKYE'S POV - SLOW MOTION VIRTUAL REALITY FX

Skye runs to the back of the book shop, sees the Proprietor sitting at his desk, gently stroking the dog. He indicates the unseen character. Skye turns and looks up.

Wearing an overcoat, hat and sunglasses, stands the Alien.

INT. COMPLEX CORRIDORS -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly and Mariah support the Elder as another retinal scanner reads his identity. The door does not open.

THE ELDER

They are preventing my access.

Jonah looks at the Elder. Their eyes meet. The Elder turns to Kelly and Mariah.

THE ELDER

Stand clear.

Kelly and Mariah move away and the Elder sends an ENERGY PULSE into the lock. He staggers, weakened further, but the lock short circuits and the door opens. They enter.

INT. COMPLEX ACTIVITY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Skye's eyes glaze over. Sweat beads on his forehead.

O.S. SOUND OF VIOLA MUSIC

SKYE'S POV - SLOW MOTION VIRTUAL REALITY FX

Skye runs up the stairs to his San Francisco apartment, through the open front door to the living room, to the source of the MUSIC.

A distraught Mariah PLAYS HER VIOLA FURIOUSLY. She looks up, sees Skye, and stops playing.

INT. COMPLEX INNER CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

The Elder leads the way.

Jonah looks around, remembering his own childhood within these walls.

INT. COMPLEX ACTIVITY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Skye's eyes fill with tears.

SKYE'S POV - SLOW MOTION VIRTUAL REALITY FX

Mariah drops her viola as Skye runs to her.

MARIAH

Where have you been?

SKYE

I...I...

Mariah holds him tight.

MARIAH

Oh Skye...

He clings to her.

CLOSE - SKYE

He starts to cry.

MARIAH

Skye...

SKYE

Mom...

MARIAH (O.S.)

Skye?

Crying harder, he pulls the headset off his head and buries his face in his hands.

MARIAH (O.S.)

(softly)

Skye?

Skye reacts, opens his eyes, and turns to look at Mariah smiling at him through her tears. He jumps to his feet and runs to her. Then he stops.

SKYE

Mom?

He reaches out to touch her, to see if she's real. She is, and they hug.

Jonah watches, his eyes cold and calculating.

Skye pulls back from Mariah's hug, tentative.

SKYE

I'm one of them, Mom.

He looks up at her for a reaction.

SKYE

Half of me is...I'm a hybrid.

MARIAH

I know.

Mariah hugs him again.

Across the room Kelly stands watching them, thinking of his own son. Then he turns to the Elder.

KELLY

How do we get out?

JONAH

I'll get you out.

Kelly and the Elder look at him.

EXT. HILL -- NIGHT

Annie sits in her Jeep parked atop the hill, keeping watch with a pair of binoculars. Her dog looks around nervously, WHIMPERS. Annie lowers the binoculars and looks at it.

ANNIE

I know how you feel. But look at the bright side...

The dog looks at Annie.

ANNIE

We just might get us some aliens tonight.

Annie grins to herself. The dog PANTS excitedly.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL -- AT THE SAME TIME

Jonah's SUV races through a large tunnel, ILLUMINATED BY THE HEADLIGHTS.

INT. JONAH'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah and the Elder sit in front.

THE ELDER

They will be coming after us.

JONAH

I know.

In back, Skye sits between Mariah and Kelly.

SKYE

(whispers)

He's the one who was following me, Mom.

Mariah looks at Jonah.

SKYE

(whispers)

I guess he was really trying to help me.

Mariah looks over at Kelly, who also has heard Skye.

JONAH

Hold on!

They all turn to Jonah, who SWITCHES OFF THE HEADLIGHTS and grips the wheel tightly.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL -- CONTINUOUS

The SUV reaches the end of the tunnel and SMASHES up through a camouflaged entrance, CATCHING AIR.

EXT. TUNNEL -- CONTINUOUS

The SUV lands on the desert floor, SPARKS FLYING as the chassis bounces over jutting rocks.

EXT. HILL -- AT THE SAME TIME

CAMERA IN POV THROUGH BINOCULARS as the SUV races away into the darkness.

ANNIE (O.S.)

Hot damn!

The dog sits up excited as Annie watches with the binoculars.

ANNIE

That'll get somebody's attention...

Annie turns her binoculars skyward. The dog GROWLS.

EXT. RESTRICTED AREA -- NIGHT

The SUV races on, WITHOUT HEADLIGHTS, into the night.

INT. JONAH'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly looks around at the others.

KELLY

Everyone all right?

Mariah checks Skye.

MARIAH

Yes.

They are shaken but unhurt.

JONAH

We've got to make it across the restricted area.

KELLY

Do it!

They are bounced around in their seats as Jonah accelerates faster.

EXT. RESTRICTED AREA -- CONTINUOUS

CAMERA IN AERIAL POV approaches the SUV from above and behind, almost overtakes it, then abruptly veers away.

The SUV races on across the roadless terrain.

INT. JONAH'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah drives with intensity. The Elder looks over at him, studying his obsessive determination.

Suddenly BRIGHT LIGHTS appear straight ahead through the windshield, blinding them.

EXT. RESTRICTED AREA -- CONTINUOUS

The military helicopter HOVERS a few feet off the ground directly in front of the SUV.

The SUV makes an abrupt turn and continues on. The helicopter follows in pursuit.

The helicopter's LIGHTS illuminate the SUV as the CHASE BEGINS.

The helicopter OVERTAKES the SUV and SWINGS AROUND. It HOVERS and FIRES ITS CANNON ahead into the ground as a warning.

INT. JONAH'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Mariah SCREAMS and protects Skye with her body as the WARNING SHOTS chew up the ground in front of them. Jonah jerks the wheel, turning sharply.

EXT. RESTRICTED AREA -- CONTINUOUS

The SUV skids around and races on. The helicopter pursues.

The helicopter flies low, trying to force the SUV to stop, but Jonah counters by changing direction.

Finally the helicopter flies alongside and FIRES ITS CANNON at the SUV's tires on one side. The SUV almost loses control but continues on. The helicopter moves to the other side and FIRES at the remaining tires.

The SUV continues limping on its wheel rims, SPARKS FLYING.

INT. JONAH'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah finds he has no control over the SUV as it slows in the rocky dirt.

JONAH

We have to get out!

In back, Mariah and Skye look desperately at Kelly.

KELLY

Stay close!

Kelly unbuckles their seat belts.

EXT. RESTRICTED AREA -- CONTINUOUS

The SUV comes to a stop and the doors open. Jonah and the Elder exit first, followed by Kelly, Mariah and Skye.

The helicopter HOVERS overhead, trying to keep them all illuminated by its LIGHT. As it does it INCREASES ROTOR SPEED, kicking up clouds of dirt.

On the ground, Mariah and Skye are blinded and choked by the dirt. Kelly tries to protect them as they fall to their knees.

PILOT'S VOICE

(amplified)

Halt! Remain where you are.

Kelly squints up at the helicopter through the blinding light and swirling dirt.

The helicopter REDUCES POWER and prepares to land.

The Elder steps out of the dirt cloud and approaches the landing helicopter.

The helicopter stops and HOVERS only feet away from the Elder.

The Elder sends ENERGY PULSES to the helicopter.

Through the helicopter's windshield the PILOT fights for control.

The Elder depletes his remaining energy force against the helicopter.

The Pilot loses control. The helicopter YAWS WILDLY. Its rotor hits the ground and the helicopter CARTWHEELS into the ground, EXPLODING IN FLAMES.

Kelly shields Mariah and Skye as the helicopter EXPLODES.

Jonah runs to them. Kelly looks up at him.

KELLY

Where's the Elder?

JONAH

I don't know. Come on!

KELLY

No!

They stand and begin to search the area, illuminated by the BURNING WRECKAGE.

MARIAH

Here!

They all converge around Mariah, who kneels beside the fallen Elder.

SKYE

Is he...dead?

Kelly checks the Elder.

KELLY

He's still breathing.

JONAH

Leave him. We have to go.

They look at Jonah, who scans the dark skies.

JONAH

Now!

SUDDENLY they are illuminated by HEADLIGHTS. They stand and look, anticipating the worst.

Annie drives up in her Jeep.

ANNIE

Looks like you've been busy!

Kelly grins, relieved, as he and Jonah hurry to lift the Elder into the Jeep. Annie's dog BARKS at Jonah.

ANNIE

(indicates Jonah)

Who's he?

KELLY

A friend.

Annie eyes Jonah, then turns to look at Skye and Mariah.

ANNIE

Got him back.

MARIAH

Thank God.

ANNIE

Don't thank Him yet.

Annie gives her a knowing look as she shifts into gear and they are off.

Annie's Jeep drives away into the night, leaving Jonah's disabled SUV and the BURNING helicopter.

INT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- LATER

Annie opens a storage space in the floor of her trailer. Inside is an arsenal of rifles, handguns and ammunition.

ANNIE

I'll be OK. You best get goin'.

Kelly and Jonah watch Annie take out a large caliber rifle and start to load it.

MARIAH

No.

They turn to Mariah, who looks down at the Elder laying on the sofa.

MARIAH

He can't leave.

ANNIE

It's not him they'll be after.

Mariah looks at her, then over at Skye who stares at the UFO clippings.

JONAH

She's right. We have to take the boy and go.

Kelly turns to Jonah, who holds one of Annie's handguns.

KELLY

Where?

JONAH

Where they can never find us.

Mariah looks at Kelly.

Annie's dog sit up, GROWLS, then runs to the door BARKING.

ABRUPTLY THE LIGHTS GO OUT and the trailer is thrown into TOTAL DARKNESS.

JONAH

Too late.

SKYE

Mom?

They stand still, looking at the door. There is total silence - so quiet it is eerie.

SUDDENLY the trailer begins to VIBRATE, growing in intensity. Then it is bathed in the BRIGHTEST WHITE LIGHT shining down on it from above.

KELLY

They're back.

ANNIE

No...this time it's <u>really</u> them.

As Mariah stares at the light her face reflects the terror of her childhood encounter.

Annie's dog BARKS WILDLY.

The vibration increases until the trailer is SHAKING VIOLENTLY. Objects and furniture fall to the floor. Windows shatter.

MARIAH

Skye?

Kelly grabs Skye and carries him to a corner.

SKYE

Mom?

KELLY

Over here.

Mariah crawls to them. Across the trailer Jonah curls up protectively.

Annie's dog runs WHINING to Annie and they find refuge together.

The trailer CONTINUES SHAKING VIOLENTLY, then ABRUPTLY STOPS.

A LOW, HARMONIC RUMBLING SOUND O.S.

The trailer takes on an IONIZED GLOW.

CLOSE - CLIPPINGS

The UFO clippings begin peeling off the walls and ceiling.

CLOSE - THE ELDER

On the sofa the Elder's eyes open.

The LIGHT coming in the broken windows dance as the GRAYISH SILHOUETTES APPROACH outside.

Mariah's eyes are full of terror as she holds Skye tight.

Kelly crawls to the storage space and grabs a rifle and box of ammunition. He tosses them to Jonah.

KELLY

Here!

Jonah looks at Kelly, then down at the rifle, then over at Mariah and Skye.

Annie crawls to Kelly and grabs several boxes of ammunition.

ANNIE

Always wanted to get me an alien.

KELLY

Now's your chance.

Kelly crawls to a broken window and peers out, squinting against the INTENSE LIGHT.

POV - SILHOUETTES

The GRAYISH SILHOUETTES converge on the trailer.

Kelly, Jonah and Annie take aim at the GRAYISH SILHOUETTES.

KELLY

Now!

Kelly and Jonah start SHOOTING.

ANNIE

This is for Jaycee, you sons of bitches!

Annie starts SHOOTING.

Mariah tries to protect Skye as she cringes at the NOISE and shuts her eyes.

The FUSILLADE IS INTENSE. They reload and continue SHOOTING.

Mariah's eyes still shut, she hears Annie's dog BARKING WILDLY. She opens her eyes and looks over at:

POV - DOOR

The door is open, light streaming in. A figure stands in it, looking out. It is the Elder. He looks back at Mariah - a look of sorrow and sacrifice - a look of goodbye. He holds up a hand of peace...and then he is gone.

Mariah's reaction is poignant. She knows. She holds Skye closer.

Kelly, Jonah and Anna continue SHOOTING FURIOUSLY, until:

KELLY

Stop!

They stop shooting. Kelly looks back at the empty sofa, then at Mariah.

MARIAH

It's the Elder.

Kelly turns back to the window and watches.

POV - SILHOUETTES

The GRAYISH SILHOUETTES stop advancing as the Elder walks out towards them.

Mariah and Skye crawl up beside Kelly and watch.

POV - SILHOUETTES

The Elder stops as the GRAYISH SILHOUETTES surround him. He looks back at the trailer, then turns and extends his arms outward, as if in supplication.

SLOW MOTION FX:

A BRILLIANT FLASH as a MASSIVE ENERGY PULSE emanates from the Elder and a SHOCK WAVE rolls outward in all directions.

Inside the trailer there is no time to react as the SHOCK WAVE hits the trailer, ripping it off its foundations. Everyone is flung backwards, losing consciousness immediately.

The shock wave passes. There is no movement. No more bright lights. Nothing.

CROSS FADE TO:

EXT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- DAWN

Nelson drives up in his cruiser and parks. He gets out and stares at the sight:

The trailer is upright but swung around off its foundation. Annie's Jeep is rolled on its side. Kelly's car is still on all four wheels.

The ground in all directions is bare, devoid of any plants.

Nelson looks at the trailer.

NELSON

Annie?

He goes to the trailer and pushes open the door.

NELSON

Annie?

SUDDENLY Jonah lunges out of the trailer, impaling the back of his neck with an alien, KNIFE-LIKE WEAPON. Nelson grabs his neck and staggers backwards, falls to the ground, dead. He lays there, eyes wide open.

INT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah moves through the shambles of the trailer. Annie is still unconscious, her dog awaken in her lap, licking her face. Kelly begins to stir.

Jonah goes to Skye, picks up the unconscious boy.

MARIAH

Skye...

Jonah turns and sees Mariah, still dazed, look up at him. He stares at her with his cold, iridescent eyes...and in that moment Mariah realizes the truth.

MARIAH

No...

Jonah carries Skye out of the trailer. Mariah crawls over to Kelly.

MARIAH

Kelly...

EXT. ANNIE'S TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly and Mariah stagger out just as Jonah drives away in Nelson's cruiser.

Mariah GASPS as she sees Nelson's body. Kelly goes to it, finds the holster empty. He turns Nelson's head and looks at the bloodless incision.

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- DAY

The cruiser drives fast up the highway.

INT. CRUISER -- CONTINUOUS

Skye awakens, finds himself seated next to Jonah in the front seat of the cruiser. He looks around.

SKYE

Where's my Mom?

Jonah gives him a silent glance. Skye looks out the window.

SKYE

Are you taking me back?

JONAH

No.

Skye stares at Jonah.

SKYE

You're just like me, aren't you?

Jonah is silent. Skye studies him, thinks to himself.

SKYE

But you weren't trying to help me.

JONAH

Yes...I was.

Skye notices Nelson's handgun and the knife-like weapon in Jonah's lap, becomes afraid.

SKYE

Where are we going?

JONAH

Somewhere.

Jonah stares straight ahead.

ANGLE - REARVIEW MIRROR

Kelly's car comes up behind the cruiser.

Jonah sees Kelly's car and accelerates. Skye looks at him, then turns and sees Kelly and Mariah.

SKYE

Mom!

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly's car pursues the cruiser.

INT. KELLY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

A rifle lays on the seat between Kelly and Mariah.

MARIAH

I know why he wants Skye. I saw it in his eyes...he's going to kill him.

KELLY

No he's not.

Mariah looks over at Kelly, who gives her a determined look.

KELLY

I won't let that happen.

Mariah takes courage as Kelly accelerates after the cruiser.

EXT. HIGHWAY 54 -- CONTINUOUS

The CHASE is on up the two-lane highway, passing SLOWER VEHICLES.

INTERCUT:

Jonah's desperate bid to get away.

Kelly's determination not to let that happen.

Kelly tries to overtake the cruiser, but instead narrowly avoids a head-on collision with an oncoming TRACTOR-TRAILER.

Jonah races on, then slows and turns off the highway onto a dirt road.

EXT. DIRT ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

Jonah speeds up the dirt road, SKIDDING around turns.

INT. KELLY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly follows up the dirt road. As he rounds a bend he sees the cruiser stuck in a dry wash and skids to a stop.

Kelly turns to Mariah as he grabs the rifle.

KELLY

Stay here.

MARIAH

Kelly...

Mariah looks at him with desperate eyes.

KELLY

I'll get him back.

They hold a moment, then Kelly looks around cautiously and opens his door.

A SHOT RINGS OUT, missing Kelly but SHATTERING THE WINDOW.

Kelly ducks down behind his open door.

KELLY

Get down!

Mariah lays on the floor.

EXT. DRY WASH -- CONTINUOUS

Kelly scans the dry wash for a long time, then starts to move.

ANOTHER SHOT HITS THE CAR.

Kelly turns and aims the rifle behind him.

Across the dry wash Jonah stands holding a struggling Skye. He drops Nelson's handgun and holds the knife-like weapon to the back of Skye's neck.

Kelly keeps the rifle aimed at Jonah.

KELLY

Okay, Jonah...take it easy.

Jonah just stares at Kelly.

KELLY

It's all over.

JONAH

No...it's not.

Mariah watches from inside the car.

KELLY

We can help you now. Both of you.

JONAH

No...

KELLY

We'll get you away from here.

JONAH

You don't understand. There's nowhere to go. If they want us they'll find us. And they want us.

KELLY

Why?

JONAH

For what we are.

KELLY

What are you, Jonah?

Jonah looks at Skye, who continues to struggle.

JONAH

We're not human.

Mariah reacts inside the car.

JONAH

They created a master race. That's why we must be destroyed.

Jonah presses the knife-like weapon against Skye's neck.

KELLY

Jonah!

As he speaks Jonah becomes more and more emotional.

JONAH

Please go away. Let me end it here.

KELLY

I can't do that.

JONAH

You have to!

(softly)

You have to...

Kelly starts to piece the puzzle together.

KELLY

You went after Skye to kill him, didn't you?

JONAH

If I had it would be all over now.

KELLY

Why did you kill the others?

JONAH

The trooper got in my way. So did the fag.

Mariah reacts sadly.

KELLY

And the old man?

SKYE

That wasn't him. <u>They</u> came for me. <u>They</u> killed Mr. Bachofner.

JONAH

Don't you get it? That's what they do...what they've been doing.

KELLY

We'll stop them.

JONAH

You can't...no one can.

Jonah looks down at Skye.

JONAH

You can only stop us.

Skye, terrified, looks up as Jonah pushes the knife-like weapon harder against his neck.

KELLY

Don't do it, Jonah!

JONAH

I have to!

Mariah is frantic. She looks around the car, tries to think, then remembers.

JONAH

I know what will happen!

Jonah becomes more agitated, his intensity building.

JONAH

I'm just like Skye...but I was raised as a Jew. The Nazis tried to eliminate my parents' race.

(pause)

They're going to try to eliminate yours!

Kelly reacts.

JONAH

The only way to stop it is by stopping us!

(pause)

Kill us.

Kelly shakes his head as he stares at Skye's terrified face.

KELLY

No...

JONAH

You must!

(screams)

Kill us!

SEVERAL SHOTS RING OUT.

Jonah crumples to the ground with Skye.

Kelly stares at them, turns to look.

Mariah walks from the car, the glove box open. She holds Kelly's extra handgun.

Kelly comes up beside her as she stands staring down at Jonah, mortally wounded with a bullet in his neck.

Jonah looks up at them, his iridescent eyes glazing over, GASPING for breath.

JONAH

Kill...him...too...

Jonah dies.

Shaken, Mariah stares at Jonah for a long moment, her mind reeling. Then she looks over at Skye, who lies unhurt on the ground.

He smiles at her.

She stares closely at him.

His iridescent eyes stare back.

MARIAH

If what he said is true...maybe it would be better.

She points the handgun at Skye.

Skye's eyes grow wide.

SKYE

Mom?

Tears fill Mariah's eyes.

KELLY

(softly)

Mariah...

Mariah aims the handgun at Skye's head with a shaking hand.

KELLY

Let's go home.

MARIAH

They'll just come and take him again.

KELLY

We won't let them.

MARIAH

How can we stop them?

KELLY

We'll find a way.

Mariah stares at Skye and shakes her head.

MARIAH

My son's...not human.

Skye reacts with a hurt, innocent look.

KELLY

He's still your son...still half you. That half will win out.

Mariah isn't sure of anything.

MARIAH

Will it?

As she stares at Skye she wants to believe - has to believe. But does she?

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. RESERVATION -- DAY

CAMERA IS CLOSE on Mariah as she walks with Kelly and Annie from Nelson's family's home on the reservation.

ANNIE

Nelson was a good man.

MARIAH

They all were.

Annie stops and looks at them as OTHER MOURNERS come and go from the wake.

ANNIE

I'll miss him...and I'll miss you, too.

MARIAH

Come with us. You'd like Big Sur.

Annie shakes her head.

ANNIE

I have to stay. Maybe the Elder was wrong...maybe one day my Jaycee will come home.

KELLY

I hope so.

Annie turns to look at the horizon...

ANNIE

She's out there...somewhere.

...then up to the sky.

ANNIE

But so are they.

She looks back at Mariah.

ANNIE

Be careful.

Mariah holds, reacts, then turns and looks over at:

Skye stands among a group of NATIVE AMERICAN CHILDREN watching an ELDERLY NATIVE AMERICAN sitting on the ground creating a sandpainting in the dirt.

CLOSE - SANDPAINTING

The sandpainting depicts Nelson's body rising to the heavens - and the waiting Sky People.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BIG SUR GLEN -- DAY

Some time later. On a grassy glen in Big Sur Kelly's dog Max chases a baseball.

PATRICK

Get the ball, Max.

The dog retrieves it and brings it back to Patrick, who stands with his baseball glove.

PATRICK

Good boy.

He turns and tosses the ball to Skye, who catches it tentatively in his baseball glove.

PATRICK

(encouraging)

Nice catch!

SKYE

Thanks.

Skye grins and throws the ball to Patrick.

Nearby, Kelly lays on a blanket on the grass, staring up at the trees.

KELLY

Let's stay here forever.

He looks over at Mariah, who sits beside him watching the boys. She has a pensive look on her face. Kelly watches her.

KELLY

What?

She doesn't turn. He reaches to touch her hand. Mariah turns to him with a coy smile. Still she doesn't speak.

KELLY

Tell me.

Mariah leans in to give him a gentle kiss. He sits up.

MARIAH

I'm pregnant.

Kelly reacts with mild surprise, then breaks into a smile. They kiss deeply and hold each other tight.

NELSON'S VOICE

There is another saying of my people.

CLOSE - PETROGLYPHS

CAMERA MOVES CLOSE to an ancient depiction of figures lying on the ground. The only figure standing is that of an alien.

NELSON'S VOICE

'It is senseless to fight...when you cannot hope to win'.

CLOSE - SKYE

CAMERA MOVES CLOSE on his face...and his iridescent eyes.

The FRAME FREEZES and we...

FADE OUT

THE END