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by  
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FADE IN:

SUPER ON BLACK:

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INT. ROOM

MAN lies down in the centre of the room. He's huddled onto himself in the fetal position. The room is a simple four-wall rectangular encasement. It's not a brand new room, evident by the cracks and attrition visible throughout the walls. Several items are lined up in the room, forming an arc that surrounds him. The items, from one end of the arc to the other, are: A computer screen, a TV, a stack of VHS tapes, a Laptop with a webcam placed behind it, a stereo, a water-cooler with many plastic cups scattered around it, a fridge, a small fan that hangs on one of the walls and a stack of books arranged neatly in a corner.

He turns to sleep on his other side. He opens his eyes, as if sensing something is wrong. He sits up straight and looks around the room. He stands up and turns a full circle where he stands, examining his surroundings. His head is tilted upwards as he searches. He looks down at all the appliances and gadgets on the ground. He scratches his head, confused.

He walks over and gently places his hands on the wall behind him. He pushes now with more force. He pushes harder. Nothing happens. He slaps his hand along the wall, perhaps in desperation of a reaction from the cold bricks. Again, nothing. Now, he seems worried.

He looks around him in fear. He runs over to another wall and feels it around. He repeats the process with the other two walls in the room. Defeated, he leans his head onto the wall and punches it with a clinched fist. His punches get weaker and weaker until eventually they pack no punch at all. He puts his arms on the wall and rests his head across. No way out.

INT. ROOM

Man now sits dejected on the ground. His back supported by a wall and his legs extended on the floor. His head rests on the wall as he stares hopelessly into nothingness. He bumps the back of his head into the wall, slowly and repetitively in rhythmic despair.

He stops and looks to his left. In one end of the arc sits a computer screen. He gets up and heads over.

The screen is a small, typical screen from a desktop computer. The screen is blank but appears to be covered in dirt. He blows air into the glass of the screen and a storm of dust flies into his face. He coughs and wipes the dirty screen with his hand. It's still a black screen underneath all that dirt. With his hand, he traces the cable that extends from behind the screen until he reaches the end of the wire. There's no plug at the end. It's been ripped out, leaving the interior colored wires sticking out in the air.

Disappointed he leaves the computer screen and inspects the next item in line, the TV. There's no dirt on this one, it's almost spotless. He presses the buttons in front but nothing happens. He pulls the cable from behind and again he finds the plug has been removed.

Next, he finds the stack of VHS tapes. It's a neat stack. He picks up one of the tapes and looks around the room, perhaps in the hope of finding a VCR. No such luck. The tape doesn't have a label, just blackness all over. He pulls another tape and it has the same black result. All the tapes are unlabeled.

He reaches the laptop. It's closed. He opens it. A giant picture of a battery appears. The battery indicator appears to be at the bottom and the whole image is colored red. Not a lot of power left. He checks the laptop and finds no cables or wires available for charging. He closes the laptop and sees the webcam behind it. He picks up the camera and inspects it. It appears to be fine.

The stereo now. He presses the play button. An UNINTELLIGIBLE SOUND comes out. He presses the eject button and a cassette presents itself. He pulls out the cassette. There is a label but whatever is written on it is scratched to a point beyond recognition. He sets the tape beside the stereo and moves on to the water-cooler.

There's no water in the water-cooler's container. He presses the blue button for cold water. Nothing comes out. He presses the red one and also nothing. He looks down. By his feet are a bunch of plastic cups, thrown about. He picks up one of the cups. Nothing useful. Just an empty cup. He places the cup on top of the container.

He opens the fridge's door. The fridge is barren of food but there's a pan inside. He takes it out and finds a spoon and a fork inside. He places them all on the floor. He closes the fridge's door and opens the freezer's door. Inside, frozen ice covers all sides. The only thing in the freezer is an onion that sits lonely in the centre. He takes the onion and brings it closer to his face.

He squeezes his eyes shut, protecting them from the usual tear-inducing effects of onions. He puts the onion back in the freezer and shuts the door. He wipes his eyes with his hands, blocking all hopes of a tear drop. He pulls the cable from behind the fridge and finds that yet again, somebody has cut out the plug. He smacks the cable down onto the hard floor in frustration.

He turns to the fan that hangs on his right side. He eyes the fan with incredulity, as if he knows what to expect. He pulls one of the operational strings that hang below. Nothing. As predicted, the fan doesn't work. He nods his hand, understood.

In the corner, he spots the books. They're only a few books, aligned diagonally next to each other.

He picks up one of the books and sifts through the pages. Nothing of interest to him. He puts it back down. He takes his time as he walks back to the spot where he was sitting, at the bottom centre of one of the walls. He sits back down, sliding his back against the wall along the way. He lowers his head. He's surely trapped now.

INT. ROOM

Man now sits with his head lowered in between his folded arms and knees. A portrait of hopelessness.

He lifts his head up. His forehead now covered in sweat. He looks up at the non-operating fan to his right. His lips are dry. He caresses his throat and swallows the dryness. He's thirsty. He goes back to grouping his knees and folds his arms, burying his head in between. He cries.

A tear drop falls down to the floor, by his feet. Followed by another drop. The silence of the room makes each tear drop AUDIBLE. He hears it. He looks down to see a small puddle of his tears has formed by his feet. He stares down at the tiny puddle for a while. With his index finger, he takes a swab of the tears and tastes it, experimentally rubbing it against his tongue. He doesn't react badly to it. It must be alright.

He looks at the fridge and quickly gets up, heading over. He opens the freezer and takes out the onion. He picks up a plastic cup and walks back to where he used to sit.

He places the cup strategically between his legs, directly below his face. He hesitantly looks at the onion in his hand, still stretched out a little way from him. He squeezes his eyes shut and quickly draws the onion to his eyes. He painfully opens his eyes. It's working. His eyes are welled with tears.

The tears start to fall into the plastic cup. One by one, they pile up inside. Even if he wanted, he can't stop them now. They're streaming down his face. His breath is heavy but he soldiers on, determined to get something out of this.

By now the cup is a quarter full. Through his inflamed red eyes, he looks at the cup and then at the onion. He decides he's had enough as he throws the onion away and picks up the cup, gulping it down to the last tear drop. He reacts with disgust at first at the taste of salt but then gives a refreshing sigh. He rests his head back on the wall. His thirst has been quenched.

INT. ROOM

Man still sits in his usual spot. His head is tilted sideways, supported by the closed knuckles of his hand. Nothing to do. He lets out a bored sigh.

He looks in the direction of the scattered paper cups. A sideways smirk forms on his face. He sits up, a bit eagerly, and crawls towards the cups.

He takes all the cups on the ground, swooping them into his arms and carries them over to his spot. There, he flips one of the cups upside down so the open end faces the floor, and places it firmly in front of him. He does the same with other cups, placing them next to each other, until there's a row of at least 10 cups lined up. He starts placing another row of cups on top of the bottom one. He's building a pyramid.

FADE TO:

INT. ROOM

Now the pyramid is quite big, reaching a proud height of four rows. He sits on his knees, getting leverage to place the few remaining cups on the top. The triangular shape of the pyramid now dictates that two more cups must be positioned and then the final one as the cherry on top. He places a cup to the left and then one to the right. He reaches down, trying to catch another cup but all he catches is air. No more cups are left. He looks at the semi-pyramid with a sense of small disappointment. It's not really a pyramid without the cherry on top.

He scratches his arm, perhaps more an act of boredom than of a biological reaction. He looks around the room for more treats. His eyes land on the stereo.

He plays the cassette inside the stereo one more time. The UNINTELLIGIBLE NOISE returns. He places his ears to the speakers in an attempt to decipher the weird sound. He presses the forward button and the tape speeds up. After a few seconds of forwarding, he plays it. Still the same result. He stops the tape and places the stereo back in its line of the arc. He looks at the pan, spoon and fork by the foot of the fridge and decides to slither over there.

He takes the spoon and inspects it. Just an ordinary spoon. He throws it down and it accidentally hits the pan, making a CLANGING SOUND. Intrigued, he takes the spoon again and this time gently taps it along the side of the pan. A SMALLER CLANG this time. He taps again and again, finding a sort of rhythm in the SERIES OF CLANGS. He looks admiringly at the spoon.

INT. ROOM

Man sits at what now seems to be his preferred spot. His legs bent on each side, almost similar to a Yoga position. The pan sits squarely in front of him. The spoon and fork laid out, each on a side of the pan. He rubs his hands together, looking forward to this. He picks up the spoon and fork, holding them as if he's holding a pair of drum sticks.

He starts to tap the pan with the spoon in a slow pattern, formulating a very basic back beat. With the fork, he generates another beat, a feistier one. This beat completes the piece. He beats on the pan with his new instruments in wonderful precision. The CLANGING has now transformed into a clearly audible piece of music. He closes his eyes, delighted with the sounds he's producing.

MUSIC plays in the room, accompanying and perfecting the CLANGS. Actual GUITARS, DRUMS, PIANO music and other instruments can be heard now, synchronized with his own rudimentary music. They fill the room with their uplifting melodies but he seems oblivious to any and all of it as he continues to wield those utensils like a world-class drummer. Perhaps the music is in his head.

The music reaches a very powerful DRUM SOLO and surely he wastes no time in beating the pulp out of that pan. He pounds it violently with no sign of stopping soon. With his eyes squeezed shut, his tongue finds its way out of his mouth. He's reveling in this delight.

In the heat of his bravado performance, the spoon FLIES out of his hand and smacks the stack of books in the corner. He opens his eyes, finding the spoon has vanished.

The MUSIC STOPS abruptly. Both his utensil-inspired one and the actual music. He looks to where the spoon now sits.

He jumps over to collect it and glances at the books. He puts the spoon back down and carries the books with him to his spot.

He opens one of the books and instead of sifting through, this time he reads in patience. Whatever is in those pages must have captured his attention because he sits down without as much as blinking an eye, the book still held at view. He puts it on the ground and turns the page.

FADE TO:

INT. ROOM

Now he's on his stomach, still engrossed in an open book. There are a couple of books stacked on top of each other by his side. He must have finished reading them.

He turns the page and looks up towards the fan. It's still not functional. He grabs his T-shirt and starts pulling it to and fro, trying to generate a little air flow beneath his sweaty clothes.

Suddenly, he stops pulling the shirt. His eyes are frozen on the fan. Something must be on his mind. He looks down at the finished books beside him and then up to the fan again.

He sits up straight in excitement and picks up one of the closed books, opens it and starts turning the pages rapidly. He keeps flipping page after page, trying to reach a destination. He stops at a page at which he plants his index finger. His finger caresses the page from left to right and from top to bottom as he reads silently. His eyes jitter along with the finger. He gets up, the book still in his possession and walks over to the fan.

He takes one more glance at the open page and then puts the book down. He examines the power supply cable. Another severed plug. He examines the blue and red wires protruding from where the plug would have been. He twists the two exposed coils, wrapping and joining them together. He takes a step back.

Slowly, the fan starts to turn. He closes his eyes and enjoys the oncoming wind. The fan now turns at regular speed. The refreshing air whooshes through his hair. A great smile reflects his joy as he opens his arms to the sky in a welcoming gesture.

After a few seconds, the fan slows down. The flow leaves his hair, which settles back to its state of rest. The fan finally comes to a stop.

He slaps the fan a couple of times, trying to smack it back to life. He grabs the joined coils and tightens their grip around each other. Still no juice left in the fan.

With his hands on his hips, he turns back, facing the rest of the items. He bites his lips. A contemplative look in his eyes.

He lines up the books next to each other on the ground and opens the first one in line. He opens them all, on the first page. Then he walks over to the computer screen and brings it near the books. He does the same with the TV, VHS tapes, laptop and stereo, forming a big pile in the middle of the room. He sits down between the piled items and the books and proceeds to examine the computer screen while reading the pages.

FADE TO:

INT. ROOM

The computer screen now sits bare, its internal organs exposed to the outside. The casing has been removed and placed at one side. The actual glass screen has also been separated, it sits next to him. What used to be a complete desktop monitor is now a contraption of green electronic chips and other intricate devices.

He is engrossed in his reading. He rolls a pair of unidentified objects in his hand, undoubtedly they were pulled from the belly of the monitor. He scrutinizes them with curiosity.

FADE TO:

INT. ROOM

By now, the TV and the stereo have suffered the same fate as the monitor. Everything is inside-out and fragmented all over the floor. He has dissected nearly every bit of every piece of every item. Nothing appears to be broken, just removed and placed separately. All the open books are now scattered here and there around the items. The mess seems to be growing.

He lies down on his stomach with his neck extended into one of the books. He turns to peek into a dissected vestige of an item.

With a cautious hand, he pulls some kind of wire out of the thing, protruding it further outside. With his gentle grip still on the wires, his neck goes back to the pages.

FADE TO:

INT. ROOM

There are so many differently shaped bits and parts spread across the floor that nothing can be distinguished anymore. What belongs to the TV and what belongs to the stereo, no-one can tell. Everything has been jumbled about in a slightly conjoined mess. Some items flung onto the others and some touching at the corners. It's taken quite a chunk out of the empty space on the floor.

He's gotten to the point where he's lying down on his back with his leg across his knee, reading a book that he holds in the air, a small distance away from his face. He appears very comfortable now. It's clear he's spent quite a while reading that book.

FADE TO:

INT. ROOM

Something has changed now. A small number of the parts that were extracted from the original items have disappeared. They've all been combined together and somehow changed into a singular new thing. It's not clear what it is. It's components are quite peculiar. A couple of the green electronic parts - motherboards, etc. - form the very base of this thing. They're lined up contiguously, linked to one another by some colored wires that stick out from one board and into another. Some boxes, probably sealing dangerous electric currents, are placed here and there on top of the green base.

One of the VHS tapes has been busted open. He pulls out the long roll of tape that was contained inside it like he's pulling intestines from an opened abdomen. He proceeds to wrap the roll of tape around one of the electric boxes fitted onto the base of his contraption.

FADE TO:

INT. ROOM

The weird thing has now grown larger. The green base with the taped boxes form only the lower level of the modified version of this seemingly complex device.

The glass screens from the TV and monitor are now fitted to the two sides of this weird thing, tilted sideways. Although, their presence seems trivial compared to the unbelievable convolution of things between them. Red wires, green wires, yellow wires, blue wires, coil, unidentified plastic parts, all held together by an immense length of tape that stretches for the whole height and width of this thing and enters in and out of every single opening that can be seen. The elaborateness is astounding. The rolls of tape he managed to extract out of the VHS cases seem to be the glue that holds all the parts together. It's intertwined with everything else. The shape it's taking appears to be triangular, although, just like the plastic cups pyramid, there is no crowning tip.

He stands up and gives himself some space to view the whole thing. He wipes his forehead with the back of his arm and stares at his creation in silence. The way he looks at it almost implies that he doesn't know what it is either.

He scratches his head as he circumambulates this odd piece of design, examining it with thoroughness. He inspects it from every conceivable angle. His eyes trail along its height from the bottom to the top and down again. He finally stops turning, having seen all that can be seen.

He looks at the top, which is just a void where the crowning piece - whatever it is - would go. He looks at the laptop. Apart from the big fridge and the water-cooler, it's the last remaining item that hasn't been dissected.

He picks up the laptop, along with the webcam, and places them squarely in the void. THE MACHINE is complete. Now, its triangular shape is more evident, although it's still not a perfect pyramid.

He stands behind this machine, like a pilot sits behind the controls, and unfolds the laptop. He raises his index finger, which is pointing downwards, about to plummet into the laptop's keyboard. He holds it in the air for a few seconds as he summons up the courage to make the final decision.. His finger dives down and he hits the button.

Suddenly, an incredible array of lights fills the room. Different colors flash alternately in blinding fashion. He shields his eyes with his arm, protecting himself from the immensely bright colors.

He tries to take a sneak peek over his arm.

The lights finally appear to be stopping, dwindling from one color to the other until it's eventually a single light that fills the room: a bright white light.

The white light slowly dims until it's barely noticeable. The room has gone back to its original contrast.

He lowers his arm and looks at the laptop.

An image of THE ALIEN appears on the laptop's screen. The Alien has no facial features, at least none that can be seen. All that can be seen of him is his head, which resembles a motorcyclist's helmet. Although no eyes stare from that screen, it's somehow obvious that he's looking at Man.

Man stares into the screen, too shocked to offer any kind of other reaction.

The Alien raises his open palm. A greeting.

Man reciprocates, raising his hand in front of the screen.

The Alien points to the corner of the screen.

This is lost on Man.

The image of the Alien changes into an image of a webcam.

Man adjusts his webcam, pointing the lens in his direction and waves hello.

The Alien's image returns. He nods in approval. His image disappears again, this time replaced by a picture of a planet. It's not a known planet. It's mostly white, with a few blue terrain here and there. It has the same composition as the earth, except the green parts that represent land have been replaced with blue and the blue parts representing water have been replaced with white. Against the darkness of space, the whiteness of this planet is staggering.

Man squints at its image. His expression tells he's never seen such a thing before.

The image of the planet changes back to the Alien's image, pointing at himself. It's his planet. He points at Man.

Man types on the keys.

An image of planet Earth appears.

Man nods yes.

The Alien returns. His finger points at Man in small successive jabs, as if asking him to confirm if he really is from planet Earth.

Man nods again.

The Alien's finger slowly retracts, almost as if he's come to a horrible realization. Suddenly, his hand jumps at the screen, growing giant as it covers the whole screen and turns the image into nothing but pitch black.

The Alien's impending hands causes Man to react, pushing himself back a little.

The screen goes black.. Followed by the laptop.

Man starts pushing the keys frantically. It's useless. It's dead. He doesn't know what to make of this, staring at the screen with glazed eyes. He scratches his head, perplexed.

He leaves the whole machine and goes back to his spot, squatting down. He buries his head between his crossed arms and joined knees. Back to hopelessness.

SUPER ON BLACK:

" - "

INT. ROOM

Man still hasn't changed his position. He's huddled onto himself in despair. A few silent seconds go by..

Suddenly, the laptop's lights re-ignite. The SOUND it produces makes him lift his head up and look. He hurries back to his machine.

The Alien's head has returned. Again staring at him through the screen.

Man looks at him with expectancy. He decides to type something.

The Alien doesn't appear to be responding.

He types some more. He waves at the camera.

The Alien waves back, with less enthusiasm this time. He points his finger directly towards Man and then shows two open palms to the screen, indicating "10" with his fingers.

Man is confused. He's about to type something but a STRANGE SOUND emanates from the laptop and he lifts his head back to the screen to watch..

The Alien is gone. All that appears on the screen now are TEN BLACK BARS AGAINST A WHITE BACKGROUND.

He presses the keys. Nothing happens. The screen appears to be frozen on the image of those ten bars. He presses the keys again in anger and frustration. Still nothing. The Alien might be gone for good this time.

MAN

Tut.

Annoyed, he stands over his invention, eyeing it with discontent. His STOMACH RUMBLES. He holds his belly. He's starving.

He looks around him, perhaps in the hope of finding some food. He notices the onion on the floor and walks over.

He picks up the onion and takes a small bite. The tiny piece doesn't stay long in his mouth as he spits it out almost immediately. He throws the onion back on the floor and wipes his mouth, trying to wipe out its horrible taste as well.

He looks around the room one more time. Nothing is edible here. He walks across the room, passing by the machine. He stop and looks at the laptop. Something has caught his attention. His shoulders slump forward, squinting at the screen..

There are now NINE BARS on the screen. One bar has vanished.

He's lost now. Not expecting much to happen, he presses a key. He was right.

He covers his face and steps back until his back bumps into the wall. His back slides down and he extends his two legs on the floor, his face hiding behind his hands.

From behind the masking hands, he lets out a HEAVY MUFFLED SIGH.

From behind the fridge, something MOVES EXTREMELY FAST, dashing from the back of the fridge to the back of the water-cooler in less than a second. It made a NOISE while it moved.

He lowers his two hands, peeking over them at the fridge. He stares for a few seconds..

THE RAT moves from behind the water-cooler back to the bottom of the fridge. This time Man noticed him. He gets up and carefully approaches the fridge.

He glues his ears to the fridge's door, trying to listen to any activity. Nothing. He takes a step back and holds an elevated foot in the air, contemplating a kick.. He kicks the fridge and jumps back. Nothing happened.

He kicks it harder and the Rat rockets towards the water-cooler.

Man jumps back and treads lightly on his two feet in alteration, as if he just stepped on some lava. Now his attention is focused on the water-cooler. His arms are spread out in anticipation. His hands are shaped like claws, about to swoop in on the rat as soon as he shows himself.

He places his hands on the water-cooler, getting a good grip around the edges and pushes it forward.

The rat is just about to zip from his hiding place but the moving water-cooler weights down on his tail. His tiny feet scurry on the floor, but he can't move because of his captured tail.

Man bends down at the side of the water-cooler, getting a closer look at his captive.

The rat's feet still scurry about in desperation. He's not going anywhere.

Man rubs his chin.

The rat's feet stop struggling.

Man watches on..

They begin moving rapidly again. He's not given up yet.

Man sits down next to the water-cooler. He places his palms behind him, leveraging his upper body on the floor, and extends his legs. He continues watching as the rat struggles for his freedom.

FADE TO:

INT. ROOM

Man is still on the floor, next to the water-cooler. By now he's on his side. The partly bitten onion is being playfully rolled under his finger. He seems bored more than anything else.

The rat's tail is still held down by the water-cooler. He doesn't seem to want to scurry anymore.

Man rolls the onion to and fro with the tip of his index finger, sliding it forward and backward on the floor. He does this in a repetitious manner, skillfully keeping the onion within his finger's reach.

He does it again and again and again, gaining speed. Then suddenly, the onion shoots forward and stops right in front of the rat's nose.

The rat lunges at the onion and his nose bumps into it, sending it sliding back towards Man.

Man sits up straight. He looks at the trapped rat and then the onion. He does the same smirk he did when he made music with the utensils.

He positions himself, lying on his stomach and placing his right hand behind the onion.

He makes an "ok" symbol with his hand, linking his thumb and his index finger to form a circle with the other three fingers pointing at the air. He places the curling index finger and thumb directly behind the onion and closes one eye, sizing up a good angle. He flicks the onion with his finger and it slides a short distance towards the rat.

Again, the rat spears it with his nose and it slides back to Man.

Man immediately counters with another fling and the rat responds with another lunge. The onion goes back and forth from one to the other like a ball on a ping-pong table. They have themselves a little game going now. Man appears to have more fun with every flick of the finger. His smile growing larger with each one of his turns.

Finally, when it reaches him again, he captures the onion with his hand. He puts the onion away and stands up.

He lifts the water-cooler up, allowing the rat to escape.

The rat dashes to a corner in the room. He's totally exposed.

Man kicks the onion towards him. The rat appears hesitant.

With his hands on his knees, Man watches on in anticipation. A goofy smile on his face.

The rat nibbles on the onion but leaves it soon afterwards. He doesn't like it.

Man's smile fades away. He was expecting this game to continue.

The rat doesn't appear to want anything to do with the onion anymore.

Man approaches the onion and the rat immediately zips along the floor until he disappears behind the pyramid of plastic cups.

Man walks towards the pyramid and the rat rockets towards the machine, hiding behind it.

Man's goofy smile returns. He heads towards the machine, now his steps are a little faster, with AUDIBLE STOMPS.

The rat predictably leaves the machine and scurries over to the gap behind the stack of books, now back to being diagonally aligned, leaning on the wall.

Man, now having the time of his life, runs towards the books.

The rat darts out as usual and goes back to where he originally came from, behind the fridge. Man runs after him again and he speeds to the water-cooler. The rat runs from one hiding place to another while Man chases it around. They both go in loops around the room. The rat doesn't stop anymore, simply passing through these hiding places non-stop. He enters through one opening and exits through the other like a sports car going through a tunnel at full speed. Man keeps up the chase, running as fast as he can. He doesn't seem to mind, though. He's having a blast.

These running circles go on for quite some time. After a while, Man's pace slows down. The rat still functions at his relentless speed but Man gives in to fatigue. He stops in the centre of the room as the rat disappears into the back of the water-cooler. This time he doesn't go out the other end. Man holds grab of his knees as he pants in exhaustion.

The rat scurries to the exposed corner. Man can see him but he can barely breathe. He throws himself down on the floor.

He puts his two arms behind his head, relaxing. The ridiculous grin still on his face. He raises his head a bit, peeking over.

The rat watches him from a distance. He's not as anxious as he used to be.

Man is too tired to do anything about it anyway. He rests his head back on the floor. He pants less and less as his breathing is restored.

The rat approaches him, timidly. He gets very near, but man doesn't notice him as he stares at the ceiling. The rat stops a short distance away, within his arm's reach. He glances at the rat, who just sits there.

Man puts an elbow on the floor and places his head in his open palm, staring at the rat in a relaxed manner. They're both very comfortable around each other at this point.

The rat stands up.

Man LAUGHS but it's a quiet laugh, through the nose.

The rat sits down and scurries over to the fridge as Man trails his movement.

The rat disappears behind the fridge and a SCRATCHING NOISE is heard.

Man gets up and walks to the fridge. He takes a peek through the gap behind the fridge. The rat is clawing at something on the wall.

He pulls the heavy fridge to the front, making more space between it and the wall.

He looks again. The rat claws at a small square of wallpaper that covers a portion of the lower part of the wall. The rat's claws only scratch it but don't tear into it. Man crawls down to get a better look. His face is now directly opposite the wallpaper.

From behind the wallpaper, nothing but a white background. A finger RIPS THROUGH IT and with a circular motion, creates a gaping hole in its centre. Man's face appears, staring curiously from the other side. His eyes widen. His face pulls back out of view.. And this time, his whole hand breaks into the small space, grabbing at something. With a pulling sweep, he drags something he caught towards him.

Back on the other side, Man drags a handful of something towards him. It's FOOD. A mixture of cylinder-shaped orange chips and small green peas. He immediately digs in, eating one small thing at a time. He places one thing after the other between his lips in a hurried pace, as if there's a clock to beat. He looks back towards the opened wallpaper and sticks his hand in again.

This time, he drags out a metal bowl filled with water. He gulps it all down at once and EXHALES IN RELIEF. He was thirsty for way too long. He goes back to eating the food until he glances to his left.

The rat simply stares at him. It stands up on its two hind feet again.

Man throws a small green pea towards the rat, who eats it in a second and goes back to staring.

Man stares back at the rat. He probably knows what he wants. He looks at the small portion of food to his right. He opens a flat palm, like someone about to deliver a karate chop, and carefully lands the bottom edge of the hand onto the food. He splits it with accuracy down the middle and spreads the two halves apart. He takes one of the halves and moves it to his left side. The rat scurries past his feet until he reaches the half that's on Man's right. This half is closer to the wallpaper. The rat starts to eat the food. He only seems to eat the green peas. Man smiles and eats the food from his half.

The two now are too engaged in their little feasts to pay attention to one another.

Man's eyes start to flutter. He can't fight the urge to sleep. He looks at a green pea that he's holding in his hand, about to eat it, and decides to put it back in the food pile. He places the green pea squarely on top of the pile. With his last view being on that pea, he finally gives in and lets his eyelids roll down. He rests his head on the wall. He dozes off.

INT. ROOM

Man's eyes are firmly closed. Suddenly, they open and he gasps for air. He squeezes his eyes with his hands, trying to push away the sleepiness. He looks to his right.

The rat is sound asleep. The small pile of food still next to him.

He looks to his right to see his own ration is also there. He rests his head back on the wall. He continues to stare at, half-asleep. Suddenly, his eyes open wide. He leans closer down and squints at it.

There's something different about it. The green pea that sat at the top is missing.

Man stares with crossed brows. The pea has simply vanished. He looks to his left again.

The rat's food ration is still there, except all the green peas are missing. The only thing left are the chips. The rat has eaten all the green peas.

Man delves into his own silent thoughts. He frowns at the rat. He knows he took it. His frown is unforgiving. His eyes are filled with hate. The rat is oblivious to all this in his undisturbed slumber.

The frown on Man's face starts to change into something else. His lips quiver. His crossed eyebrows unfurl. He looks as if he's about to cry. Man is in a world of his own.

SERIES OF FLASHBACKS (B&W):

- Man and the rat by the water-cooler, pushing the onion to and fro between them.
- Man chases the rat around the room.
- the rat runs as fast as he can.
- Man runs after the rat, a stupidly happy smile on his face.
- The rat stands up on its hind legs.
- Man flicks the onion towards the rat.
- The rat claws at the wallpaper.
- The rat, with his tail trapped beneath the water-cooler, lunges at the onion, driving it forward.
- Man chases the rat around the room.
- Man throws himself down on the floor and puts his two arms behind his head. He smiles.
- The rat eats the green pea.

END OF FLASHBACKS

Man holds back the tears. He wipes his eyes and takes a long deep breath, exhaling through his nose. His frown returns, now meaner than ever. He gets up.

He kicks the empty metal bowl in the direction of the sleeping rat. The bowl misses the rat but the LOUD CLANG manages to snap him out of his sleep. The rat hurries further away to the corner and turns around to face Man.

Man's face has turned dark. His frown is no longer of mere disapproval. He has something much more sinister in mind. He steps forward. His steps are decisive. They're thunderous even though they make little sound.

The rat in the corner fidgets, ready to run.

As soon as Man bends over, about to grab him with both hands, the rat shoots in between his legs. Man looks behind him.

Now the rat is in the other corner.

This time, Man runs towards him.

The rat runs as fast as he can, reaching another corner. Man follows him around the room. The rat zips along the floor, from one spot to the other while Man is on the chase.

Every time Man lunges down, attempting to snatch the quick rodent, he slips away. Man misses every single chance he gets to catch him. The rat disappears behind the water-cooler and Man kicks it, forcing him to go outside. He goes behind the fridge and again Man forces him outside, this time by shaking the fridge about. The rat scurries to the gap behind the leaning stack of books and Man savagely kicks the books away, exposing the rat, who runs towards the machine. The way the machine is built doesn't give him sufficient cover. He's still visible beneath that mess of wires.

Man runs after him and the rat immediately leaves the machine, jumping right into the small piece of wallpaper and out of view. Man sits down by the wallpaper and sticks his arm inside. He REACTS and pulls his arm back outside. He looks at his hand.

A visible bite mark is imprinted in the soft piece of skin between his thumb and his finger.

He caresses his pained hand and looks at the separating piece of wallpaper with disgust.

He sits down with his back to the wall and stares down at his hand. He looks at the wallpaper and then looks at the room around him. He watches the machine. His anger builds up. His breath gets heavier. His brows furl together. He's about to explode.

Man's face bursts with fury.

MATCH-CUT TO:

INT. ROOM

Man's deranged face. His eyes are wide-open and there's a stupid grin where his mouth used to be. His teeth are clinched together. His features sit extremely still, as if they're frozen.

He wears the pan on his head like a helmet. There are several plastic parts spread equally along his shoulders, like a General's stars. They're held together by the same tape he used from the VHS tapes. More plastic parts hang on his chest. Round, square and of other shapes.

He wears them like medals. His whole appearance is strikingly similar to a military officer.

The machine has been dismantled. Its fragments are spread around him. They're juxtaposed very tightly to his front, left and right side, forming a protective fort. He sits on the floor, in its centre. All the wires that were part of the machine are now scattered over the floor, mixed with some pieces of tape. Everything else that used to be in the machine now fortifies him, except the laptop which sits right in the centre of the room.

This new arrangement is placed directly opposite the small piece of wallpaper that hides the rat. Man stares at that small square piece with anticipation.

He raises his two hands. The right and left hand each hold the spoon and the fork, respectively. He starts to hammer the spoon and fork down on the items in front of him, like a hungry prison inmate demanding to be fed. Each time the metal and the items meet, a LOUD, RHYTHMIC NOISE is produced. He gets up, still making the sound.

He carries the spoon and fork as well as the RHYTHMIC CLANGS with him as he leaves the fort and heads towards the wall that contains the wallpaper. He hits the spoon and fork on the ground along the way.

He reaches the wall and starts hitting it with his two utensils repeatedly, creating EXTREMELY LOUD NOISES but not in the same rhythmic manner that he used to. This time, he beats the life out of the spoon and fork, making the fastest, loudest noise he can possibly make. He stops and looks at the wallpaper below him in anticipation.. Nothing. He gets down on one knee and stares at it. He tries to get a closer look. His head gets closer and closer..

Suddenly, the rat jumps out from behind it, dashing right in the direction of Man's face but Man manages to swiftly turn his head to the side and the rat lands on the floor. Man wastes no time as he drives the fork down at the little creature but the rat is too quick for him. The fork hits the hard floor instead.

He chases him around the room, stabbing the fork into the floor, expecting the sharp edges to catch the rat but all he catches is air and the hard floor instead. He continues to jab it unsuccessfully over a dozen times. The rat reaches a wall and he quickly dives with the fork but misses yet again. The rat escapes from between his legs. Man turns around to see the rat has vanished.

Man throws the fork away in anger. He grabs onto the pan on his head like it's about to be blown away by stormy wind, clasping onto it with his bare fingers. An INTERNAL, INCENSED NOISE bellows from his throat. He's gone completely berserk. He picks up a motherboard behind him and looks around the room with rage. He will wreak havoc on the rat the second he sees him. He spins in circles, trying to catch a glimpse of his enemy.

He chucks the board in the direction of the fridge and it lands on the ground near it, making a LOUD THUD. The rat scurries out from beneath the fridge.

He grabs another piece of electronics and throws it at the running rat. The piece BREAKS IN HALF but the rat is unharmed. Immediately, Man grabs another motherboard and lobs it, rather aimlessly, at a spot in the ground where the rat used to be but is no longer there. Man throws one piece after the other, one dismantled item after the next. He uses everything he can get his hands on. Even the plastic bits on his shirt. He flings everything at the elusive rat but nothing hits the target.

Man turns around to see the rat moving alongside the walls behind him. A computer screen comes flying towards the rat. It CRASHES into the wall and shards of glass explode in the air. Some of them land on the rat, who is directly under the collision area, but they simply fall off of his body as he continues moving towards a corner.

Man bends over and picks up the other screen with his two hands, lifting it with effort. He holds it high above his head and drives it with all his might down to the floor. The impact SMASHES it into a million little bits. There's glass everywhere around him now, threatening to injure his bare feet. He sees the rat scurrying along the wall, keeping clear of the glass shards near him.

Man picks up another dismantled piece from the machine and with very little regard to his own safety, runs towards the rat, stepping on the glass along the way. The pain doesn't deter him from flinging the piece at the moving rat. As usual, he misses but this time he doesn't get a chance to rue his luck as he holds his foot and falls to the floor.

The bottom of his foot bleeds profusely as he writhes in pain on the floor. He turns to his side, still holding his foot in his hand, and WHIMPERS. His face is turned the other way but it sounds as if he's CRYING.

The rat appears from between the fridge and the water-cooler. He stares at the sobbing Man on the floor.

He approaches him, each time taking a few quick steps and stopping to look in curiosity. Man is completely oblivious to his near presence.

The rat gets very close to him and the pan comes flying down faster than anyone could have foreseen. The rat is trapped inside the pan.

Man holds the pan with the tightest of grips as he stares at his successful trap, breathing heavily. He lets go of his bloody foot and presses down on the pan with his hand. The only part of the rat that's visible is his tail, protruding from beneath the pan. He starts to shake about, shaking the pan along with him. Man tightens his grip, ensuring he can't escape. He looks around him for something. The items that used to comprise the machine have all been either destroyed, broken in half or flung about in several directions. He notices the books, a few feet away.

He places a firm foot on top of the pan and with as much agility as he can summon, extends a full arm towards the books without moving from his spot. The rat starts to shake more violently under the pan but his foot doesn't budge, locking him inside. Now the books are only inches away from his grasp. The pan shakes ferociously. It starts to lift up. The rat is about to break free. Man gathers the stack of books in his two hands and lifts them high above his head, about to strike his final blow..

The pan flips upside down, revealing the rat who is about to run. THUD. The stack of books fall on his poor body like a hammer on an anvil. He's squashed beneath those books. He doesn't run anymore. The rat is dead. Blood starts to seep through from beneath him.

Man sits back and BREATHES HEAVILY. He INHALES AND EXHALES THREE TIMES then closes his eyes.

A STRANGE SOUND is heard and the room suddenly goes pitch black.

Suddenly, an incredible array of lights fills the room. Different colors flash alternately in blinding fashion. Man shields his face with his arms, protecting them from the sharpness of the lights. The colors start to alternate faster. They gain speed until it seems all colors are blinking at the same time. Finally, it stops. Man lowers his arm to check. A bright white light fills the room.

He looks behind him. An outline of a figure appears. He squints his eyes.

It's The Alien. He stands majestically with his hands on his hips. His entire outfit is white and his helmet is still on.

The brightness of the light that fills the room dies down. Now the room is lit but the light is gentle on the eyes.

Man, still down on the floor, looks up at the Alien with wide-open eyes.

The Alien brings out some kind of device. It's a WATCH. It has the same image that appeared on the laptop. A white background with black bars. Except, this watch has only ONE BLACK BAR left.

Man looks at his laptop. He crawls over to it and turns it around, now the screen is facing his direction. He looks at it.

The screen still has the same white background but only ONE BLACK BAR is left. The bar soon disappears and the whole laptop dies.

He crawls back to face the Alien. The black bar in the watch disappears as well.

He looks up at the Alien in fear. The Alien assumes a superior pose, folding his arms together. He turns his head to the mess of wires and tape that used to be the machine. He looks at Man and shakes his head no, disappointed in what he sees.

Man lowers his head in shame. He has no reply.

The Alien walks over to the partly-bitten onion and picks it up. He shows it to Man, as if demanding an explanation.

Man softly massages his throat and swallows, indicating thirst.

The Alien again nods his head no and throws the onion away. He walks over to the fridge and places his hand on the freezer door's handle. He pulls it open..

Water FLOODS down from inside the freezer and SPLASHES all over the floor, drenching Man's legs and his bloody foot as well.

Man is shocked. He looks down at all the water he never knew existed. He looks up at the Alien, his eyes begging for answers.

The Alien pulls out a small icicle. It's half-melted and water drips down from beneath it. He gestures to the freezer with an open palm. All the ice inside the freezer has melted.

Man, still not believing his eyes, runs his hands through the wet floor. He looks up at the Alien and holds his stomach, the same way he did when his hungry stomach rumbled.

The Alien holds his finger up. He walks over to the stack of books and looks down at the bloody mess squashed beneath it. He turns to look at Man, who rubs his arm, embarrassed. The Alien nods no again, very dissatisfied with what he sees. He takes one of the books and shakes it vigorously. After a few seconds, something small falls out of the books and makes a CLANG as it lands on the floor. It's a key.

The Alien picks up the key and walks over to a wall. The same wall that Man used to rest his head on. He inserts the key into what seems like just another part of the worn-out wall. The key penetrates it, revealing that a tiny piece of wallpaper used to cover the keyhole. He turns the key and a door opens.

The Alien opens the door.

Natural sunlight enters the room. Man is in awe.

Behind the door, a rectangular area contains various fruits of various colors. The fruits complement the greenery of the leaves that grows in between them. Sunlight seeps through from the side, a clear passageway. It's a beautiful sight.

Man rises up. He's mesmerized. He takes a step forward but the Alien blocks his path. It seems unlikely that he will budge. He peers over Man's shoulder, looking at something behind him.

Man turns around to see the mess that used to be the Rat, still lying in a pool of his own blood and buried beneath the books.

He turns back to face the Alien. A look of remorse.

He falls down to his hands and knees. He covers his face with his hands. Everything he did was wrong.

The Alien, his arms still folded, doesn't seem too sympathetic. He stares at Man, who can't bear to show his face anymore.

He looks around the room. He sees the laptop, the fridge with the small piece of wallpaper behind it, the water-cooler, the mess of glass shards, wires, plastic bits, busted electronic devices and tape. Finally, to his far right, he notices the pyramid of plastic cups. The crowning top still missing. The pyramid stands contrasted to everything else in the room, which lies in ruins. The pyramid survived the chaos.

He looks back at Man, who lowers his hands, revealing a very sad face. His eyes are edged with tears.

The Alien brings out the watch again. He throws it away and extends an open hand.

Man looks up at the Alien. He smiles and takes his hand.

With their hands together, Man rises up until he's level with the Alien.

The Alien leads him inside towards the door. They now stand next to each other.

Before he enters the new room, Man stops and turns around, looking at us. He smiles and sticks his tongue out.

FADE TO BLACK.