

The Black Sun

Episode 1 Season 1.

"The Man With The Machine"

Written by  
David Figueroa  
(Pilot)

Copyright (c) 2026

First Draft – January 16, 2026

David Figueroa-Los Angeles, California-  
magnetarfire@gmail.com

Official Selection – Los Angeles International Screenplay  
Awards – 2026

The Black Sun

Episode 1 - "The Man With The Machine"

FADE IN:

(NOTE: The following sequence is photographed in black-and-white, mono sound, Academy ratio 1.37:1, as if shot in the early 1940s. All subsequent scenes are in modern color and sound.)

EXT. RURAL VIRGINIA ROAD - NIGHT

SUPER: DECEMBER 17, 1941 - 11:30 P.M.

A convoy of ARMY TRUCKS crawls along a narrow two-lane road. Forest presses in on both sides, black and wet.

INT. CONVOY TRUCK - LEAD VEHICLE - SAME

CAPTAIN RICHARD HALE, late thirties, MP, rides shotgun.  
MASTER SERGEANT TOM CLAYTON, early forties, drives.

CLAYTON

Sir, this has to be the coldest night  
I've ever seen in Virginia.

HALE

You grew up in Kansas, Sergeant. This  
is nothing.

CLAYTON

In Kansas we did not have this kind  
of wet. This cold gets into my bones.

HALE

Think about something else.

CLAYTON

I tried that. I thought about  
baseball.

HALE

You and half the Army.

CLAYTON

I keep seeing DiMaggio's streak in my  
head. Fifty six games. I still do not  
understand how a man can hit like  
that.

HALE

He will not be hitting much if he gets drafted.

CLAYTON

Maybe command should put him on our team. Raise morale.

Hale allows himself a small smile.

HALE

I will make a note. "Request: one Yankee Clipper, for the good of the service."

They ride in silence for a moment.

CLAYTON

You ever think about women on a night like this, sir?

HALE

On a night like this I think about the men in my convoy not sliding off this road.

CLAYTON

I think about a warm bed and a woman who does not snore.

HALE

You are a dreamer, Sergeant.

Clayton grins, then leans forward, squinting through the glass.

Rain taps the windshield.

CLAYTON

Sir, do you see that—?

EXT. RURAL VIRGINIA ROAD — CONTINUOUS

Overhead, the low clouds flicker faintly.

INT. CONVOY TRUCK — LEAD VEHICLE — CONTINUOUS

Hale peers out.

HALE

Probably distant lightning. Keep your eyes on the road.

Suddenly—

EXT. RURAL VIRGINIA ROAD — CONTINUOUS

A BLINDING WHITE FLASH rips across the sky, silent, as if someone opened a door in the clouds. The world goes stark white, then dark again. Engines COUGH, SPUTTER.

INT. CONVOY TRUCK — LEAD VEHICLE — CONTINUOUS

Dashboard lights flicker. The radio BLASTS static and dies.

HALE

Ease her down. Do not jerk the wheel.

EXT. RURAL VIRGINIA ROAD — CONTINUOUS

One by one, the trucks roll to a stop. MPs shout, confused.

Hale jumps down, Clayton with him.

HALE

Sergeant Clayton, with me!

He bellows down the line.

HALE (cont'd)

Military Police, dismount! Rifles ready! Move!

MPs spill out with M1 rifles and .45s, fanning along the road.

Clayton points toward a roadside ditch: an unnatural WHITE GLOW seeps up from the grass.

CLAYTON

Sir. In the ditch.

Hale nods, jaw tight.

HALE

Stay low.

They advance, a dozen MPs behind them.

At the lip of the ditch, the glow sharpens: a METAL FLASHLIGHT on its side, beam burning cold blue white.

Beside it lies a BALD MAN in his fifties, soaked and lightly burned.

Wrong clothes for 1941: navy cotton polo, cotton slacks, black tennis shoes. On his wrist, a glowing DIGITAL WATCH with impossible numbers.

Hale stares.

HALE (cont'd)  
What in God's name is this.

He snaps into motion.

HALE (cont'd)  
Medic! Get a medic up here now!

Two MPs slide down. One grabs the flashlight, squinting.

MP #1  
Sir, this light is too bright. This  
is not like any flashlight I've seen.

Another MP opens a rugged BACKPACK and a sleek black CASE: a compact CAMCORDER, earbuds, coiled cables, unfamiliar BATTERIES, plastic cardholders, thick DOCUMENTS.

MP #2  
He has a passport, driver license,  
birth certificate — California. The  
dates don't make sense.

A third MP taps the glowing watch.

MP #3  
Captain, look at this. It shows the  
date. It's not our date.

Close on the watch: MARCH 17, 2025.

Hale looks from the watch to the unconscious face,  
unsettled.

HALE  
Get him on a stretcher. Tag and lock  
every item.

(beat)  
Whoever this man is, he did not walk  
in from any farm in Virginia.

A MEDIC pushes through.

MEDIC  
What do we have, Captain?

HALE

Unknown male, burned and unconscious.  
Breathing. Keep him alive. And do not  
lose that watch.

SMASH CUT:

TITLE CARD: THE MAN WITH THE MACHINE

INT. FIELD AID STATION — NIGHT

A crowded ARMY MEDICAL TENT in a muddy farm field. Lanterns  
swing; rain taps on canvas.

On a central stretcher lies DAVID, mid-fifties, bald, built  
like a weight lifter. Faint burns mark his skin.

MAJOR EDWARD WHITAKER, late thirties, Army Medical Corps,  
checks his pulse and the glowing DIGITAL WATCH.

WHITAKER

Pulse rapid but regular. Burns  
superficial. He's not dying tonight.

CAPTAIN JAMES HARRISON, early thirties, Army intelligence,  
stands nearby with a notebook. On a table: David's  
belongings laid out in rows — LED FLASHLIGHT, BLACK PHONE,  
LAPTOP, MED BOTTLES, IMMUNIZATION RECORDS.

HARRISON

He doesn't look like any farmer I've  
ever seen.

David murmurs in Spanish, half awake.

DAVID

Ma... perdóname lo que voy a hacer...

Subtitles: Mom, forgive me for what I am going to do.

Whitaker listens to the tone.

WHITAKER

I don't know the language, but he's  
not boasting. He's asking  
forgiveness.

He opens the IMMUNIZATION RECORDS, eyes widening.

WHITAKER (cont'd)

Influenza. Polio. Measles. Mumps.  
Rubella. Hepatitis. Shingles. Routine  
vaccinations, not experiments.

HARRISON

We don't have vaccines for most of those.

Whitaker lifts a MEDICATION INSERT, dense with diagrams.

WHITAKER

These drugs are mapped like engineering manuals. Side effects, cautions. This isn't folklore. It's measurement.

David's eyes open a crack.

DAVID

What year... is this?

Whitaker and Harrison freeze.

HARRISON

Major, did you hear that?

WHITAKER

He didn't ask where he is. He asked what year this is.

Rain beats harder as they look down at him, caught between curiosity and fear.

CUT TO:

INT. ARMY INTELLIGENCE OFFICE — DAY

COLONEL ROBERT KELLEY studies photos: David's face, the glowing watch, the flashlight beam blown out on film, the black phone, the closed laptop.

KELLEY

Unknown American male. Devices and medical records that don't belong to this year.

He flips to a BIRTH CERTIFICATE.

KELLEY (cont'd)

Born Los Angeles County, nineteen seventy-one. His parents' birth years make them children right now.

He picks up the phone.

KELLEY (cont'd)

Get me the War Department. Priority.

CUT TO:

INT. OVAL OFFICE — DAY

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT sits behind his desk. Present: GENERAL MARSHALL, ADMIRAL STARK, COLONEL DONOVAN, plus a few SCIENTISTS and DOCTORS with David's documents spread out.

Roosevelt studies a photo of David, then the watch.

ROOSEVELT

Ten days after Pearl Harbor, this man appears in a ditch in Virginia with a pocketful of miracles.

He gestures to the LED flashlight, the black phone, the laptop.

ROOSEVELT (cont'd)

A light that blinds the camera. A telephone with no cord. A typewriter that asks for a password. A watch with no hands and a date that reads March seventeenth, twenty twenty-five.

Doctor HAYES lifts a medication insert.

HAYES

This drug, Pradaxa, is described as preventing blood clots in veins and lungs. Others treat migraine, asthma, allergies. Each has detailed chemistry and side effects. We don't have this language yet.

Doctor MORRIS holds up the vaccination card.

MORRIS

His immunizations read like the history of epidemics turned into a checklist. Smallpox, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, multiple polio shots. Later — measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis, shingles. Most of these vaccines don't exist.

MARSHALL

If genuine, it's of immense military value. A healthy army fights longer.

STARK

And a healthy fleet stays at sea.

ROOSEVELT

Can we reproduce these medicines and vaccines quickly?

HAYES

No, sir. They give us clues, but we lack the factories and much of the chemistry. It would take years.

LANG, a Bell Labs engineer, taps the photo of the phone.

LANG

His devices use no vacuum tubes, no visible circuits. Whatever cipher protects them may be built into the hardware itself. Brute force in 1941 may never open them.

CARTER, senior cryptographer, bristles.

CARTER

With enough men and enough time, any code can be broken.

LANG

Not if the lock is a mathematics we haven't discovered yet.

Roosevelt lets that sit, then cuts it.

ROOSEVELT

If he truly knows our future, every answer we pull out of him might win this war and poison the next one.

ROOSEVELT (cont'd)

Major Carter, Mister Lang - try anyway. If you cannot break these machines, I want to know exactly why.

He looks to Donovan.

ROOSEVELT (cont'd)

Is this man a threat to the United States, or a gift we don't yet understand?

MARSHALL

Until we know, we treat him as a potential enemy agent. He cannot be released.

STARK

If the enemy had this knowledge, it  
would shift the balance of the war.

Roosevelt looks at Donovan.

ROOSEVELT

Bill?

DONOVAN

My office exists to deal with the  
unusual, Mr. President. Classify him  
as a prisoner of war in a secure  
facility, but designate him a  
potential strategic consultant.  
Question him aggressively. Test every  
statement. If he lies, we'll know. If  
he tells the truth, we'll have a  
resource no other nation has.

Roosevelt nods.

ROOSEVELT

Very well. When he wakes, interrogate  
him thoroughly. No beatings, no  
broken bones. We need his mind. Make  
it clear that if he is an enemy  
agent, he faces execution for  
espionage.

Marshall and Donovan nod.

ROOSEVELT (cont'd)

If his story holds and his knowledge  
proves real, we will not shoot him.  
We will put him to work.

And we will learn everything we can about the world that put  
this much protection into one man's blood.

CUT TO:

INT. COORDINATOR OF INFORMATION OFFICES — DAY

A smaller, secure office suite. Files, maps, coded messages  
everywhere.

SECOND LIEUTENANT SARAH ELLIS sits at a typewriter, pale  
skin and onyx hair catching the light, large dark eyes  
moving over the keys.

An AIDE drops a folder into her in-basket.

AIDE

From the White House. For Colonel  
Donovan. Eyes only.

Sarah's fingers still. She glances at the cover:

SUBJECT: FIGUEROA, DAVID — ANOMALOUS CIVILIAN DETAINED.  
SECRET.

A faint, otherworldly hum rises in her ears.

SARAH

Thank you. I'll log it and place it  
on the Colonel's desk.

The aide leaves. Sarah opens the folder just enough to see:

David Figueroa. Date of birth 1971. References to devices  
and medicines "not of this time."

Her eyes darken, almost voiding out for a heartbeat before  
she forces them back.

In her mind, Mama's old words echo:

MAMA (V.O.)

He will be a man not of our time. You  
will meet him. You will help the  
Architect.

Sarah closes the folder carefully, hands trembling.

SARAH (SOFTLY)

He is here.

She sets the folder on Donovan's desk, face composed, only  
her eyes betraying the storm inside.

She returns to her typewriter. Her fingers hover above the  
keys, as if already listening for the chain clink of a man  
she has not met yet.

INT. BRIG CELL — UNKNOWN TIME

A windowless, brightly lit Army brig cell. Bare walls. A  
metal cot. A small round table. In one corner: a metal  
toilet and a small sink with a bar of soap.

On the table:

- A neat row of PRADAXA BOTTLES, six months' supply.
- The opened bottle in front.

- A GLASS PITCHER of water and a stack of PAPER CUPS.
- A small ART DECO WESTCLOX WIND-UP CLOCK, ticking.
- A white 3x5 CARD with a typed message.

On the cot lies DAVID FIGUEROA, mid-fifties, bald, solidly built. He stirs, groans, slowly comes back to consciousness. He blinks, eyes unfocused without glasses. The light hurts.

DAVID  
(murmurs)  
Where am I...

He rubs his face, pushes himself up to sit. The world swims, then steadies. He looks down at himself.

He is dressed in BAGGY BLUE COTTON PRISON GARMENTS. On the back of his shirt, in large black letters: PW. Smaller PW stencils mark his pants.

DAVID (V.O.)  
They took my clothes. They put me in  
prison blues. I am a prisoner of war.

He swings his legs over the cot, stands carefully, pads to the table. The Westclox ticks: 9:30.

No way to tell if it is morning or night.

DAVID  
Nine thirty. But which one?

He picks up the open Pradaxa bottle, checks inside: pills neatly arranged, four tablets missing.

He notices the white 3x5 card under it and reads.

DAVID (V.O.)  
"We have taken four tablets of your  
Pradaxa medication for further  
analysis, six of your Tylenol  
tablets, two cetirizine gel caps, and  
one Rizatriptan blister. If you have  
any questions, please ask when the  
nurse comes to check on you. You will  
be fed three times a day and given a  
shower at the end of the day. YOU ARE  
NOT ALLOWED TO TELL YOUR REAL NAME TO  
ANYONE. Those who know who you are  
will address you as Mr. Figueroa from  
the start. You may speak freely with  
those personnel.

(MORE)

DAVID (V.O.) (cont'd)  
DO NOT TELL ANYONE WHERE YOU ARE  
FROM, WHO YOU ARE, OR WHAT YEAR YOU  
CAME FROM. You are in 1941 and are  
under the custody of U.S. Army  
Military Intelligence and the  
Coordinator of Information. YOU ARE A  
PRISONER OF WAR. IF YOU DO NOT FOLLOW  
THESE INSTRUCTIONS, YOU WILL BE  
EXECUTED."

He lowers the card.

DAVID  
Welcome to 1941. You are not a guest.

He looks around: no windows, bare bulbs, only the clock to  
mark time.

DAVID (V.O.)  
She said this would happen. None of  
this is a surprise. I signed up  
because if I do this right, fewer  
people die and this ends sooner.  
I chose this and now I have to live  
with it.

DAVID (V.O.) (cont'd)  
If the pills run out before they can  
copy them, I PE out in some Army  
hospital. No Metro ride home. No  
parole.

He pours water into a paper cup, shakes one tablet from the  
Pradaxa bottle.

DAVID  
Morning dose. Or night. It does not  
matter.

He swallows the pill, sets the bottle back. He picks up the  
Westclox, tests the key; it turns only a little.

DAVID (cont'd)  
At least someone remembered to wind  
you.

He sets the clock down and walks to the bars, peering down  
the corridor. Far away, an MP stands at parade rest,  
motionless.

DAVID (cont'd)  
Hey! Military Police officer! Can you  
please come here?

His voice echoes. The MP does not move.

DAVID (V.O.)

He heard me. He chose not to hear me.  
I have no leverage. Not yet.

David steps back, glances at the clock: 9:45. He fingers the PW stencils on his clothing.

DAVID (V.O.) (cont'd)

They want everyone to see what I am.  
Prisoner of war.

He takes off the shirt, studying the letters, then puts it back on. He looks at the empty floor space around the table.

DAVID (V.O.) (cont'd)

Friends who did time always said the same thing. If you are locked up alone, do not sit still. Walk.

He starts slow laps around the cell, counting.

DAVID

One. Two. Three.

As he walks, he mutters.

DAVID (cont'd)

You did not bring toothpaste. No floss. No razor. No deodorant.  
Fucking brilliant, David.

DAVID (V.O.)

The small things matter when you do not have them. I will have to adapt.

He keeps walking, the soft shuffle of his steps mixing with the tick of the clock and the faint hum of lights overhead.

FADE OUT:

INT. BRIG CELL — LATER

David finishes another slow lap around the cell. The Westclox reads 10:30. Bootsteps approach. Keys jangle.

An MP unlocks the door and steps in, baton at his belt. Behind him, a NURSE in her late twenties, Army khaki, efficient, guarded.

MP

Stand over there, sir.

He points David to the far corner, away from the table.  
David moves, hands visible.

The nurse enters with a small CANVAS MEDICAL BAG and a  
CLIPBOARD.

NURSE  
Please sit on the cot.

David sits. The MP stays between them and the door,  
watching.

The nurse takes out a stethoscope, blood pressure cuff,  
thermometer. Her tone is flat, professional.

NURSE (cont'd)  
I am going to take your vital signs.  
If you feel dizzy or short of breath,  
tell me.

She wraps the cuff around his arm, pumps it up.

DAVID  
Are you the one I ask about my  
medications?

NURSE  
Yes.

She checks the gauge, writes the numbers.

DAVID  
Ma'am, I would like to know what  
happened to my migraine medication,  
Rizatriptan. And my Tylenol, Flonase,  
cetirizine, my albuterol inhaler.  
They were not on the table when I  
woke up.  
(beat)  
Can I request kosher meals? I am  
allergic to pork products or anything  
made with pork.

And toiletries. Toothbrush and toothpaste.

NURSE  
For your meals, we can accommodate  
that. I will look into finding your  
missing medications. As for  
toiletries, you will get them tonight  
when we take you for your first  
shower. You will get clean clothes  
later tonight.

She exits. The MP gives David a brief, unreadable look, then follows her out and locks the door.

Silence. The clock ticks.

DAVID (V.O.)

She is not the enemy. She is not my friend either. She is part of the machine.

FADE OUT.

INT. BRIG CELL — DAY

SUPER: LUNCH — 12:30 P.M.

David walks slow laps around the cell when he hears the faint rattle of cart wheels in the distance. The sound grows closer with every turn.

He is famished. His last meal was in twenty twenty five.

The cart stops at a guard post down the corridor, murmured voices indistinct, then rolls toward his cell. It stops at his door.

The MP is the same one from earlier. The cart is stacked with metal meal trays — David understands he is not the only inmate here.

The second man is a KITCHEN PRIVATE, Latino, in white pants, black shoes, a white apron, and a small cook's skull cap.

The MP unlocks the door and swings it open. The kitchen private steps in, crosses to the table, and sets a tray down.

KITCHEN PRIVATE

Prisoner, here is your lunch. I will return in thirty minutes for the tray. Eat fast.

DAVID

Thank you.

The kitchen private gives him a small nod, then leaves. The MP swings the door shut with a hard clang. The lock snaps. Footsteps fade. David is alone again.

He lifts the metal cover and looks at his lunch: two small baked potatoes split open with a smear of butter, a square of cornbread, a baked half chicken breast, an eight ounce paper cup of apple juice, a small slice of apple pie.

He stares at the food. Then it hits him and he starts to cry.

DAVID (V.O.)

No more Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve dinners. In many parts of Latin America, Christmas dinner is on Christmas Eve. No more streaming Charlie Brown specials and the movies my brother and I watched every year.

(beat)

All of it has slipped into an uncertain future I am no longer in and no longer part of. I have lost everything. My former life and my family are gone.

(beat)

They are neither dead, nor do they exist yet. By the time twenty twenty five comes again, I will have been dead for decades. I chose this, and this is the price. I am truly alone, lost in time.

By the time the kitchen private returns, David has finished his lunch. He has eaten every bite.

David hands over the empty tray and utensils. The kitchen private leaves without a word. As with the nurse before, the MP swings the door shut, locks it, and walks back to his post.

INT. BRIG CELL — DAY

SUPER: AFTERNOON — DECEMBER 19, 1941

DAVID sits at the small table. The lunch tray he finished earlier sits pushed aside, empty. The Westclox reads 2:15.

Footsteps approach. Keys jangle. The MP from earlier unlocks the door. Behind him stand MAJOR SAMUEL COHN, late thirties, Army Intelligence, and AGENT MICHAEL PHILLIPS, early thirties, civilian suit with a military bearing.

The MP steps inside.

MP  
Prisoner, stand up please.

David stands. The MP moves to one side, keeping the doorway clear. Cohn enters first, followed by Phillips.

COHN  
Good afternoon, Mr. Figueroa.

DAVID  
Good afternoon.

COHN  
My name is Major Samuel Cohn, United States Army Military Intelligence.

He gestures beside him.

COHN (cont'd)  
This is Agent Michael Phillips, from the office of the Coordinator of Information.

PHILLIPS  
Mr. Figueroa.

DAVID  
Major Cohn. Agent Phillips.

Cohn studies David, taking in the PW stencils.

COHN  
I understand you have already received some instructions regarding your situation.

DAVID  
I read the card.

COHN  
Good. Then I will be direct.

He steps closer to the table. Phillips sets a SMALL CARDBOARD BOX on it, lid closed.

COHN (cont'd)  
Two nights ago, on the seventeenth of December nineteen forty one, at approximately eleven thirty at night, you appeared on a road in Virginia in front of one of our convoys.

David says nothing.

COHN (cont'd)

Your clothing, your equipment, your documents, your medications—none of it belongs to this time.

PHILLIPS

All of your personal effects were secured and transported to Washington for examination. Your telephone. Your portable typewriter with the screen.

David knows he means the laptop.

PHILLIPS (cont'd)

Your watch. Your identification. Your other devices.

COHN

Specialists are currently analyzing these items. They are trying to understand how they work and what they mean.

DAVID (V.O.)

I take "analyzed" to mean their cryptographers are trying to brute force my phone and laptop. They have no idea how impossible that is. Napoleon said, "Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake." Let them spin their wheels.

David keeps his face neutral.

COHN

Until that work is complete, you will remain in military custody as a prisoner of war.

DAVID

I am not a soldier.

PHILLIPS

You are in possession of information and equipment of potential military value. That is enough.

COHN

For now, Mr. Figueroa, you will follow the rules you have been given. You will not speak of your origin, your true name, or your year to anyone who is not authorized.

DAVID  
I understand.

Cohn nods.

COHN  
Tomorrow, Saturday, the twentieth of  
December nineteen forty one, you will  
be transported to Washington,  
District of Columbia.

PHILLIPS  
There, you will be questioned more  
formally.

DAVID  
Interrogated.

PHILLIPS  
Yes.

A small beat.

COHN  
If you are honest with us, Mr.  
Figueroa, your treatment will reflect  
that. If you are not, this will be  
much more difficult.

DAVID  
If I am telling the truth, it still  
will not be easy.

Cohn absorbs that, then gestures to the box.

COHN  
Some of your medications and personal  
items have been cleared for return.

Phillips opens the lid and turns the box toward David:  
RIZATRIPTAN, TYLENOL, FLONASE, CETIRIZINE, ALBUTEROL  
INHALER, a few other small personal effects, neatly  
arranged.

PHILLIPS  
These have been examined and  
cataloged. You will keep them here,  
under guard.

David looks into the box, then up.

DAVID  
Thank you.

COHN

If you require additional medical attention, speak to the nurse. Questions about your legal situation will wait until you are in Washington.

DAVID

Understood.

DAVID (V.O.)

When they take me to Washington, they'll try to break me. I've spent months getting ready for that.

Cohn studies him one last time, trying to read the thoughts behind David's eyes.

COHN

We will see you tomorrow, Mr. Figueroa.

COHN (cont'd)

Guard.

The MP steps forward to escort them out. Phillips closes the box lid and leaves it on the table in front of David.

Cohn and Phillips exit. The MP backs out, locks the door, and moves off down the corridor with them.

David stands alone in the cell with the box. He sits, lifts the lid again, looks down at his returned medication and belongings.

DAVID (V.O.)

Tomorrow, Washington.

He closes the lid.

FADE OUT.

INT. BRIG CELL — EVENING

SUPER: 5:30 P.M.

At five thirty in the evening, David's dinner is served—again free of pork, and he is relieved. Thirty minutes later, an MP collects the empty tray.

SUPER: 6:30 P.M.

Two MP GUARDS appear at his cell. One unlocks the door and steps inside.

MP GUARD #1

Prisoner, it is shower and hygiene time for you.

MP GUARD #2

We are taking you so you can shower, shave, and brush your teeth. Inmates usually get thirty minutes. You will get about one hour.

DAVID

I do not have any soap, razor, or even a toothbrush or toothpaste.

MP GUARD #2

We are taking you to the PX. You will get your personal hygiene supplies there.

MP GUARD #1

We will tell you where to walk and when to turn. Do not talk to anyone. Ignore everyone except us.

David nods. The guards position themselves on either side and escort him out.

They walk down the corridor to a heavy iron door. MP Guard #1 unlocks it and they enter a longer hallway. Rows of cells line both sides. Most are empty; some hold prisoners.

In the occupied cells, men step to the bars and shout.

PRISONER #1

Hey, new guy! What did they get you for?

PRISONER #2

You look lost, mister. You in the wrong war?

PRISONER #3

Trade you my cigarette for your dessert!

A few others whistle and laugh. David keeps his eyes forward, as ordered. They never go outdoors; every turn is another interior corridor.

They reach a small PX supply office and stop. A STAFF SERGEANT behind a counter lifts a medium cardboard box and hands it to David.

MP GUARD #1

Let's go.

David takes the box. The guards lead him on to the shower room: a large tiled space with rows of open shower heads, enough for dozens of men at once, echoing like a stripped-down locker room.

MP Guard #1 raises a hand.

MP GUARD #1 (cont'd)

Wait here.

He walks a slow circuit, checking corners and stalls, then returns.

MP GUARD #1 (cont'd)

Put your box on that table and open it.

David crosses to a simple wooden table, sets the box down, opens the lid.

Inside: a full change of clean prison clothing with PW stenciled front and back, several pairs of clean underwear. A small canvas shower bag holds bars of scentless soap, a Bakelite toothbrush, a tube of Colgate toothpaste. A metal safety razor with Gillette blades, a tin of shaving soap powder, a sturdy shaving brush. A bottle of witch hazel aftershave, a small packet of silk dental floss, a jar of Mum cream deodorant.

DAVID (V.O.)

I would have to get used to this primitive version of keeping myself clean.

He undresses, folding his soiled PW clothes neatly. He steps under a shower head, turns on the water, washes with the plain soap. He lathers the brush, works up foam in a metal cup, and shaves slowly with the safety razor, taking care not to cut his face or scalp.

DAVID (V.O.) (cont'd)

No Mach Three for my face. No Mach Five for my head. Just steel, soap, and patience.

Nearly an hour passes as he showers and shaves with deliberate care.

He turns off the water, dries, dresses in the clean PW uniform and underwear. He gathers his toiletries into the shower bag and closes the box.

DAVID  
May I brush my teeth in my cell?

The MPs glance at each other, then shrug.

MP GUARD #2  
That is fine with us.

MP GUARD #1  
Put your dirty clothes and underwear  
in the box. We will take them to the  
laundry.

David loads his soiled garments into the now-empty clothing box and keeps the box holding his hygiene supplies.

They leave the shower room and walk a short distance to a laundry room. Inside, a LAUNDRY MAN in white work clothes takes the box of dirty laundry.

LAUNDRY MAN  
We will get these cleaned.

David keeps the box with his toiletries. The guards escort him back through the corridors to his cell.

When they arrive, he sees a second, larger empty box waiting just inside on the floor.

DAVID (V.O.)  
I got it a day early. It was larger  
and empty. I knew tomorrow was my  
last day here.

He steps inside with his shower bag. The MPs close and lock the door behind him.

INT. BRIG CELL — DAY

SUPER: DECEMBER 20, 1941

The next day is much like the first, but shorter. David eats breakfast and lunch together, dinner around three, as Major Cohn told him. All of his belongings are packed into the larger box waiting in his cell.

At five thirty, MPs arrive to prepare him for transport. They chain his ankles with enough slack to walk, cinch a waist chain, and cuff his hands to it with just enough room to hold the box of personal supplies.

He is escorted out of the brig to a nearby United States Army Air Forces airfield.

EXT. AIRFIELD — EVENING

Twilight. A twin-engine C-39 transport waits on the tarmac, engines idling.

INT. C-39 — CONTINUOUS

At six thirty, David is brought up the ramp into the C-39. His box is placed at the rear. He is sat on a metal bench along the fuselage and chained directly to the hull. He cannot stand without being unlocked.

Up front, a FIRST LIEUTENANT PILOT and SECOND LIEUTENANT CO-PILOT handle the controls. David is under the "care" of two MPs: an MP CORPORAL and an MP PRIVATE FIRST CLASS, both white.

By six forty five, the transport is in the air, flying toward Washington, D.C. Engines roar. Metal skin vibrates. Inside, the C-39 is dimly lit.

The MP Corporal keeps glancing at David, then leans to his partner, snickering over the engine noise. David reads the tone.

Finally, the corporal raises his voice in a thick Louisiana accent.

MP CORPORAL

Hey, boy! What are you? Are you white?

David looks at him with open contempt. He knows where this is going but stays silent. The corporal repeats himself, louder.

MP CORPORAL (cont'd)

Hey, boy! Did you not hear me? What are you? Are you white?

DAVID

I am Latino.

He pronounces "Latino" the way he would in Spanish.

DAVID (cont'd)  
What is it to you?

MP CORPORAL  
Oh, look at this. We have an uppity  
beaner. An uppity fucking Mexican  
wetback.

David says nothing. His eyes lock on the corporal, tunnel vision narrowing everything else away.

The MP Corporal mutters something to his partner, then stands and crosses to David. Without warning, he punches David hard in the stomach, slamming him back against the hull. The blow knocks the wind out of him. He coughs, fighting the urge to throw up.

The corporal laughs and sits back down like nothing happened. David keeps staring at him and drops into his hood mindset. He does not speak.

DAVID (V.O.)  
I am coming after you, you son of a  
bitch. I am not letting you get away  
with this.

DAVID (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Hood and street law. You fear the  
ones who say nothing. The quiet ones  
are the serious and the most  
dangerous.

He forces himself to breathe, to recompose.

From the cockpit, the First Lieutenant Pilot shouts back.

1ST LIEUTENANT PILOT (O.S.)  
Hey! What is going on back there?

DAVID  
ABSOFUCKINGLUTELY nothing!

The MP Corporal nudges his partner with an elbow.

MP CORPORAL  
Look. That is the nice thing about  
beaners. They will let you kick their  
asses and then they will turn around  
and cover for you.

Both MPs laugh. David stares at the corporal, rage locked on him.

EXT. USAAF AIRPORT — WASHINGTON, D.C. — NIGHT

Eight o'clock. A United States Army Air Forces airfield in Washington, D.C. A light cover of snow dusts the tarmac as the C-39 comes in for landing.

EXT. USAAF AIRFIELD — WASHINGTON, D.C. — NIGHT

The C-39 rolls to a stop. Engines wind down.

INT. C-39 — CONTINUOUS

An MP unlocks the chain that secures David to the hull and unhooks his restraints from the bench. His wrists and ankles remain chained. The two MPs who flew with him step out first. A U.S. Army airfield private climbs in, grabs David's cardboard box, and carries it toward a waiting staff car.

David shuffles to the door and steps down onto the cold metal ramp.

EXT. USAAF AIRPORT — CONTINUOUS

On the tarmac, two BLACK MP SERGEANTS wait beside the staff car. They take custody of David calmly and professionally, each taking an arm. For a moment, they hold him just a little too loosely.

The white MP Corporal strides back toward David, grinning. He comes in very close, so close David can smell his breath, and pats him lightly on the cheek.

MP CORPORAL

Be a good little beaner boy. I really like—

Before he can finish, David snaps forward and drives his forehead straight into the corporal's nose. Bone crunches. The corporal drops, howling.

MP CORPORAL (cont'd)

My nose! My nose!

Blood pours from his face as he sneezes, coughs, and screams. His MP partner stands frozen, eyes wide. The Black MP sergeants instantly restrain David, pulling him back and holding him tight.

David strains against their grip and shouts in Spanish.

DAVID  
 HIJO DE CIEN PUTAS... NUNCA JAMÁS EN TU  
 PINCHE VIDA ME VUELVAS A TOCAR... LA  
 PRÓXIMA VEZ TE MATO... PINCHE RATA DE  
 PANTANO.

English subtitles: "Son of a hundred bitches... never again in your fucking life touch me... next time I will kill you... fucking swamp rat."

An Army MAJOR, David's military intelligence escort, rushes between them, shouting like a drill instructor.

MAJOR  
 Prisoner, stand down. At ease!

David looks at him calmly, voice dropping to a low, dry baritone.

DAVID  
 Major, as you wish.

The major studies him, realizing this is no ordinary prisoner. The speed with which David recomposes himself unsettles him. For a moment, the major wonders if this man might be insane.

The Black MPs keep their grip on David as the wounded corporal continues to wail on the snowy tarmac.

INT. MILITARY BRIG — TEMPORARY HOLDING CELL — NIGHT

SUPER: 10:30 P.M. — TWO AND A HALF HOURS AFTER THE  
 HEAD-BUTT — OUTSKIRTS OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

David sits on a bench in a temporary holding cell. His ankles are shackled, the chain threaded through a ring in the floor. His wrists are handcuffed in front, attached to a waist chain. A harness across his chest lets MPs clip a chain from his back directly to the wall.

A typed ORDER is posted outside the bars:

SUPER:  
 PRISONER SECURITY CLASSIFICATION:  
 EXTREME CAUTION. PRISONER MAY POSSESS  
 ADVANCED HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT SKILLS.  
 ALL ONE-TO-ONE CONTACT REQUIRES ARMED  
 MP ESCORT.

Outside, an MP PRIVATE stands at rigid attention with an M1911 on his hip and an M1 rifle at his side. The sound of heels in the corridor.

NURSE MARIA LOPEZ, early twenties, U.S. Army Medical Corps, Latina, appears at the door with a small med tray and an eight-ounce cup of water.

The MP unlocks and opens the door. They step inside. The MP moves to one corner, shoulders the rifle, aims it directly at David. Nurse Lopez tries not to stare at the gun. She looks at David, nervous and shy.

NURSE LOPEZ

Prisoner, open your mouth so you can take your medication.

David studies her, then speaks gently in Spanish.

DAVID

Señorita, no me tengas miedo. Te juro no te haré ningún daño.

English subtitles: "Miss, do not be afraid of me. I swear I will not hurt you."

MP PRIVATE

English only!

David glances at the MP, then back to the nurse.

DAVID

Fine. Ma'am, please do not be afraid of me. I mean you no harm. I promise I will not hurt you.

Nurse Lopez gives him a small, nervous smile. David opens his mouth. She places the Pradaxa tablet on his tongue and hands him the water. He drinks, swallows, then opens his mouth again so she can check. She nods, relieved.

Nurse Lopez backs toward the door. The MP lowers the rifle, follows her out, locks the cell, resumes his post.

INT. BRIG — TEMPORARY HOLDING CELL — LATER

Title over: 1:00 A.M., 12/21/1941 — CHANGE OF THE GUARD.

David drowzes sitting up, kept from falling by the chain at his back. Boots approach on concrete. Voices murmur.

The MP Private is relieved by MP STAFF SERGEANT ROBERT WALSH, mid-thirties, Irish-American, tough and watchful. The private hands Walsh a key ring and extra shackles, salutes, and hurries off.

Walsh stands in front of the cell for a quiet moment, just watching David. Then he unlocks the door and slips inside, crossing to David with steady, unhurried movements.

He produces a small paper business card, already folded in his hand. Walsh unlocks David's right wrist from the waist chain, just enough to move his hand. He presses the folded card into David's palm and closes David's fingers around it.

SGT. WALSH  
(low, Irish accent,  
into his ear)  
Architect, when all of this is over,  
call that number.

David meets his eyes, gives a single small nod. He does not speak.

Walsh locks David's wrist back to the chain, steps away, exits the cell, and resumes his post like nothing happened.

David slowly opens his hand and looks at the card: a simple business card with only a phone number typed on it. He folds it again and slips it into his right shirt pocket.

DAVID (V.O.)  
The Irish mob had just made contact.  
I had no idea why he called me  
"Architect."

INT. COORDINATOR OF INFORMATION OFFICES — DAY

SUPER: MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1941 — 9:00 A.M.

SECOND LIEUTENANT SARAH ELLIS sits at her desk, typing. An AIDE drops a folder into her in-basket.

AIDE  
Incident report from U.S. Army Field  
Intelligence Officer, Major Ralston,  
to Colonel Donovan. Eyes only.

SARAH  
Thank you. I will log it and place it  
on the Colonel's desk.

The aide moves off. Sarah glances at the folder tab:  
"SUBJECT: FIGUEROA, DAVID — INCIDENT REPORT REGARDING  
ANOMALOUS CIVILIAN. RESTRICTED." Her shoulders tense. Her  
breath shortens.

She slips the folder into a larger plain envelope and rises from her chair.

## INT. DONOVAN'S OUTER OFFICE / HALLWAY — CONTINUOUS

Sarah steps out with the envelope against her chest, walking calmly. She passes Donovan's door, continues down the corridor as if on routine business. She checks the hall. No one is watching.

She quietly tries a nearby hopper room door. It is unlocked.

## INT. HOPPER ROOM — CONTINUOUS

A small, windowless file room. Metal shelves. A single overhead light. Sarah steps inside and closes the door.

She turns the thumb latch and lays her fingertips against the lock. Frost creeps over the metal as it freezes solid. She turns on the light. With a small motion of her hand, she raises a faint shimmering barrier across the room. Hallway sound drops to nothing.

Sarah takes the report folder out of the envelope and opens it. She skims the first page: the C-39 tarmac incident. Her gaze drops to "ACTION TAKEN":

SUPER (ON PAGE):

NO ACTION TAKEN AGAINST THE ANOMALOUS CIVILIAN. OVERRIDING AUTHORITY: HQ COORDINATOR OF INFORMATION AND U.S. ARMY INTELLIGENCE SECTION.

She exhales a quick, shaky breath of relief. Two attachments are clipped behind. She turns to the first: the MP discharged for major nasal damage from a blow by a POW.

Sarah presses her lips together.

SARAH  
(under her breath)  
What are you doing?

She turns to the second attachment, from U.S. Army Military Police Command, signed by LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN HASTINGS. It orders an EXTREME CAUTION classification, armed escort, and authorizes MPs to open fire to kill if the prisoner makes any sudden move.

Sarah's hands shake. She swallows hard. She closes her eyes, trying to recall everything Mama ever told her about the Architect—symbols, warnings, hushed voices, nothing that said "violent."

Her eyes snap open, now solid black. She fights the urge to reach for Mama through the invisible channels between them. She forces her hands down.

SARAH (cont'd)  
(to herself, low)  
I can do this without them.

She stares at the report, jaw set.

SARAH (cont'd)  
(frustrated, low)  
I cannot let them kill the Architect.  
I have to find a way to protect him.  
I have to contact him.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
If they kill him, we lose our only  
chance to change the war.

Her breathing deepens. Rage rises under her calm exterior. She looks down at her gloved hands.

SARAH (WHISPERS)  
Fairy glamour.

She lets the report fall. It lands on the floor. Her posture loosens.

Her hair, pinned in a strict Gibson roll, slips free. Waist-length onyx strands uncoil and lift, as if an unseen wind rises inside the room. Her pale skin grows more translucent and glows with a cold bluish-white light.

On her arms, faint lines sharpen into ancient Celtic runes, burning blood-red. Similar symbols crawl up her legs beneath the skirt, inverted, as if seen in a mirror. Black, vein-like fractures spread across her face from eyes and mouth, like cracks in glass.

Sarah's feet leave the floor. She rises slowly, arms drifting out, legs pressed together. The overhead bulb flickers, then pops, plunging the room into darkness. The blood-red runes brighten, casting a hellish light. More inverted runes flare along the walls, circling the room.

Her body slowly rotates counterclockwise. A low, reptilian purr starts in her chest, becoming a harsh growl with every breath. When she speaks, her voice is a deep, demonic rasp in ancient Gaelic.

DEMONIC SARAH  
WILLIAM "WILD BILL" DONOVAN, YOU WILL  
DO AS I SAY. YOU WILL DO AS I PLEASE.  
BEND TO MY WILL OR I SHALL DESTROY  
YOU.

The tiny room shakes with a dull rumble. Dust sifts from the ceiling. Shelves rattle—then, just as suddenly, the sound drops away.

EXT. HALLWAY — OUTSIDE HOPPER ROOM — MOMENTS LATER

The corridor is quiet. The hopper room handle turns by itself. Ice cracks and releases. The door opens inward.

Sarah steps out. Hair neatly restored to regulation Gibson roll. Onyx eyes wide and doll-like. Uniform flawless. Her arms wrap tightly around the large envelope.

She turns left and walks down the hall with finishing-school grace, as if nothing has happened.

INT. COORDINATOR OF INFORMATION OFFICES — CONTINUOUS

Sarah returns to her desk. She sets the envelope down, sits, pulls the incident report back out, opens the bottom left drawer, places the report inside, and locks it. She slips the small key into her lower right blazer pocket.

She closes her eyes and breathes. After a few quiet moments, she opens them; they void out black again, calm and focused.

She stands, crosses to Donovan's office, and opens the door without knocking.

INT. DONOVAN'S OFFICE — CONTINUOUS

WILLIAM "WILD BILL" DONOVAN, Director of the Coordinator of Information, sits behind his desk reading. He looks up.

DONOVAN  
Sarah, good morning. How are—

He stops as Sarah lifts her right hand, fist closed, index finger extended. She draws it in a smooth line from left to right at eye level. Donovan's eyes go black. His face goes slack. He waits.

Sarah raises her left hand, makes a subtle twisting motion. A faint shimmer appears around the office. The air thickens. Outside sounds cut off.

A glance at the door; the lock clicks shut. A glance to his desk and a framed picture; hidden voice recorders there go dead.

When she speaks, her voice is again that altered rasp.

SARAH  
William "Wild Bill" Donovan.

DONOVAN  
(ethereal, obedient)  
Yes, my ben feasa.

SARAH  
You will authorize my presence at the Architect's interrogation next week. You will then write a new, permanent duty assignment for me. I will work directly with the Architect, David Figueroa. Do you understand?

DONOVAN  
Yes, my ben feasa. I understand.

SARAH  
Your voice recorders. You will later remember that you forgot to turn them on today. Do you understand?

DONOVAN  
Yes, my ben feasa. I understand.

SARAH  
When I leave this room and close the door, you will wake up refreshed and begin my authorization and my new duty assignment.

Donovan nods once. Sarah lowers her hands. The shimmer fades. Her voice returns to normal. She unlocks the door with a thought, turns, and walks out.

INT. COORDINATOR OF INFORMATION OFFICES — CONTINUOUS

Sarah returns to her desk and sits. She glances at her calendar:

INSERT — CALENDAR ENTRY:

"INTERROGATION — DAVID FIGUEROA — ROOM #6 — 12/30/1941 — 2:00 P.M."

She unlocks the drawer, takes out the incident report, slips it back into the envelope. She stands, walks to Donovan's office, and places the envelope neatly in his in-box.

FADE OUT.

INT. BRIG — DAVID'S CELL — DAY

SUPER: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1941 — 12:45 P.M.

David sits on the floor in the corner of his cell, LEFT LEG folded, RIGHT LEG straight. Barefoot in gray wool PRISON SOCKS, half-dozing.

A HEAVY METAL DOOR SLAMS down the wing. BOOTS echo, growing louder. David's eyes snap open. He looks down the corridor — a blur of figures. He reaches for his GLASSES, puts them on.

The blur resolves: FOUR MPS, one carrying RESTRAINT CHAINS.

DAVID  
(quiet, counting)  
One, two, three...  
(beat)  
...four.

He rises, pulls on his shoes, stays seated. As they come into focus, he clocks their faces: all barely out of their teens, terror in their eyes. The MP with the chains is visibly shaking.

ARMED MP #1  
(low, awed)  
Oh my God. That's him.

DAVID (V.O.)  
They sent kids to fetch me. That's not fair to these kids. That's a total shit move.

The key RATTLES. The MP fumbles, drops the keys.

ARMED MP #2  
Get it together. Unlock the door.

On the third try he gets it open. THREE MPS snap their M1s up, barrels trained on David, hands shaking. The fourth, with the chains, edges toward him.

David's scared too, but his voice is calm.

DAVID  
I know you're scared. I'm scared too.

The MP with the chains freezes. David nods toward the TABLE with the PITCHER OF WATER and paper cups.

DAVID (cont'd)  
Look. You see that table? You're welcome to sit and drink all you want.

The MP shakes his head. David raises his voice for all four.

DAVID (cont'd)  
Guys, I'm going to stand up and walk slowly to that table and get myself some water, to show it's safe. Is that okay?

They glance at each other, then nod. David stands slowly, walks to the table, pours a cup, drinks, turns the empty cup to show them, then sits on the cot again.

Now the MP with the chains hustles to the table, pours water with shaking hands, sits in the CHAIR, drops the chains.

DAVID (cont'd)  
My name's Dave. I'm glad you're here.  
(beat)  
I'm scared too. That's okay. It means you're normal.  
(off their faces)  
I'm not your enemy. I've got no intention of hurting any of you. I hope you can believe that.

The three with rifles are puzzled, still aiming, still shaking.

DAVID (cont'd)  
You can ask me anything you want. Just know some questions I can answer and some I can't, because they told me they'd shoot me. Is that fair?

They nod. A beat.

ARMED MP #3  
Did you really kill four MPs with your bare hands?

David almost laughs.

DAVID  
No. That's not true. I've never killed anyone.  
(MORE)

DAVID (cont'd)

(beat)

If I had, do you really think they'd  
send just you four?

One MP snorts despite himself.

ARMED MP #1

Then what are you in here for?

DAVID

I'm in here because I defended myself  
when someone attacked me. The Army  
was never interested in hearing my  
side.

He smiles, gentle.

DAVID (cont'd)

My name's Dave. You're welcome to  
call me Dave.

ARMED MP #2

Dave, why are you scared?

DAVID

Because you're scared. And I'd like  
to be alive at the end of the day.

(beat)

I'm not the monster the Army made me  
out to be. The bad guys are the Nazis  
and the Empire of Japan.

He studies their faces, then looks to the MP in the chair.

DAVID (cont'd)

Corporal, how old are you?

CORPORAL

Nineteen.

DAVID

You're too young to die because of a  
twitch.

The corporal laughs, tension bleeding out.

DAVID (cont'd)

Listen. I'm not going to try to  
escape. I'm not going to hurt you.

(beat)

The worst thing that can happen right  
now is one of you getting scared. You  
know why I'm scared.

(MORE)

DAVID (cont'd)  
 (gentle)  
 So you watch that safety, and I'll  
 walk wherever you tell me.

A beat. The rifles lower a few inches.

DAVID (cont'd)  
 So—what's everyone's name?

They trade glances. One by one:

ARMED MP #1  
 Tommy.

ARMED MP #2  
 Joe.

ARMED MP #3  
 Eddie.

CORPORAL  
 Franklin.

DAVID  
 Tommy. Joe. Eddie. Franklin. It's  
 good to meet you.

The three standing MPs slowly set their MIs aside and slide  
 down to sit on the floor near the cot. The corporal relaxes  
 in the chair, cup in hand.

DAVID (cont'd)  
 Very soon, you'll all be going  
 overseas. My hope is that you come  
 back home alive—to your homes, your  
 families, your friends.

(beat)  
 When you're over there, remember:  
 being scared is normal. Don't let  
 what you see turn you into a monster.  
 Hold on to your humanity.

They absorb this, solemn.

INT. BRIG — DAVID'S CELL — LATER

David glances at his ART DECO WESTCLOX CLOCK. 1:05 P.M.

DAVID  
 Time to get going.  
 (wry)  
 We should go before they start to  
 miss us.

The MPs chuckle.

DAVID (cont'd)  
One thing. When we go out there, you  
have to play-act.  
(beat)  
If they see you're not scared of me,  
you could end up in a place like  
this. You got that?

MPS  
(together)  
Yeah, Dave. We got it.

DAVID  
Good. Then let's get the chains on  
and go.

One by one, the MPs UNLOAD their M1s and M1911s—rounds into  
pockets, magazines out. In seconds, every weapon is dry.

ARMED MP #3  
(quiet)  
Trust has to start somewhere.

David smiles.

DAVID  
Thank you for trusting me. I trust  
every one of you.

They pick up the chains, move to him. The waist chain goes  
on. His ankles are shackled. His hands are cuffed to the  
front.

CORPORAL  
Dave, are they too tight?

DAVID  
No. They're good.  
(beat)  
One more thing.

He nods to the nearest MP.

DAVID (cont'd)  
Uncuff my right hand a second.

Puzzled, the MP unlocks his right cuff. David lifts his  
hand, makes a FIST.

DAVID (cont'd)  
Where I come from, we do this instead  
of shaking hands.

He bumps fists with the MP, then offers his fist to each of them. They all FIST BUMP, amused. The MP re-cuffs his right hand.

DAVID (cont'd)  
Okay, guys. Let's go.

ARMED MP #1  
Hey, Dave... that sign outside your cell, about advanced hand-to-hand combat... is it true?

David smiles.

DAVID  
Yeah.

The kids exchange impressed looks. The door opens wider. The four MPs, weapons unloaded but carried as if live, form up around David and escort him out, down the silent brig corridor—everybody playing their parts for whoever's watching.

FADE OUT.

INT. COI HQ — CORRIDOR — DAY

SUPER: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1941 — 1:50 P.M.

SECOND LIEUTENANT SARAH ELLIS and WILLIAM "WILD BILL" DONOVAN walk briskly toward the observation room.

DONOVAN  
Sarah, take good notes on Mr. Figueroa. I'm certain he's a liar, and I'm going to expose that fraud.

Sarah keeps pace, eyes ahead.

SARAH (V.O.)  
Mama has never been wrong. This is not going to go the way you want.

DONOVAN  
Sarah! Are you listening?

SARAH  
Yes, sir. Good notes.

DONOVAN  
Stop daydreaming about shopping and pay attention.  
(MORE)

DONOVAN (cont'd)  
(scoffs)  
Women.

Sarah's eyes go flat and cold as she looks at his back.

SARAH (V.O.)  
I should turn you into a frog.

They reach the observation room door.

FADE OUT.

INT. COI HQ — LOBBY — DAY

SUPER: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1941 — 2:05 P.M.

A BRINKS ARMORED CAR idles at the curb outside.

FOUR YOUNG ARMY MPs from earlier hand DAVID "THE ARCHITECT" FIGUEROA, in full restraints, over to SIX COI MPs with holstered M1911s, hands resting on the grips.

The COI MPs hustle David inside.

They move him through a maze of corridors, past busy offices and closed doors, to

INTERROGATION ROOM C.

An MP unlocks the door.

He steps in.

David: bald, clean-shaven, glasses, mid-fifties but built like a lifter. Prison blues. SLEEVES rolled tight on his biceps. Chains at waist and ankles.

Time seems to slow for Sarah. She unconsciously leans closer to the glass, eyes widening — not in fear, but recognition.

SARAH (V.O.)  
He's here. The Architect.

Her gaze tracks details: easy set of his SHOULDERS, thickness of his NECK, balanced, grounded gait. He moves like someone comfortable in his body.

SARAH (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Posture straight. Gait sure.  
Musculature developed. Skin tone  
healthier than any  
fifty-four-year-old I've ever seen.  
(MORE)

SARAH (V.O.) (cont'd)  
He doesn't look fifty-four.

The MPs guide him to the CHAIR. Even in chains, he sits without slouching, spine straight.

As they clip his restraints to the FLOOR RING and TABLE, Sarah's eyes catch his FOREARMS: veins and tendons shifting as he flexes and releases his hands.

Her breathing quickens. A faint flush rises in her cheeks. Arousal mixes with awe and the sense of a prophecy landing.

SARAH (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Observe. Record. Protect the mission.

Another, softer voice answers inside her:

SARAH (V.O.) (cont'd)  
You've known he was coming your whole life. Of course you feel something. He's yours for the taking.

The thought hits her like a slap. She flinches almost imperceptibly.

SARAH (V.O.) (cont'd)  
No. He's the Architect. Not yours.

For a heartbeat, the two impulses wrestle in her face — hunger and refusal.

Her control slips. Her ONYX EYES VOID OUT BLACK.

IN THE INTERROGATION ROOM — the OVERHEAD LIGHTS FLICKER once. David's eyes lift to the ceiling, a small frown. The lights steady.

BACK IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM

Sarah clamps down. She blinks hard. Her eyes return to normal.

SARAH (V.O.)  
Get it together. Watch. Listen. Do not lose him.

She tears her gaze from him, looks down to her notepad, forces her hands to steady as she uncaps a pen.

From the shadows, Donovan steps up beside her, watching through the glass, unaware of what just happened inches away.

Sarah lifts her eyes back to the glass, face composed — but something in her is now committed.

SARAH (V.O.) (cont'd)  
They'll try to break him. I won't let  
them. Whatever he is, I'm already on  
his side.

FADE OUT.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM — DAY — 2:25 P.M.

The door opens. THE INTERROGATOR, mid-thirties COI officer in a neat suit, enters with a thick MANILA FOLDER: a CALIFORNIA REAL ID DRIVER LICENSE paper-clipped on top; COMMUNITY COLLEGE and UNIVERSITY TRANSCRIPTS and a 1971 LOS ANGELES COUNTY BIRTH CERTIFICATE inside.

He sits across from David, lays the folder down. The Eyemo CAMERA WHIRS to life. In the observation room, the AUDIO TECH flips a switch; a SPEAKER CRACKLES with room sound.

INTERROGATOR  
Mr. Figueroa. I will be conducting  
your interview today. I hope you are  
feeling well.

DAVID  
(calm, precise)  
I am doing fine, and I am pleased to  
meet you.

INTERROGATOR  
You understand we are here to  
determine who you are, and that you  
are not a spy for the Axis powers.

DAVID  
I understand the nature and scope of  
this interview.

INTERROGATOR  
And that you must answer truthfully,  
without evasion.

DAVID  
Yes.

INTERROGATOR  
Good. Shall we begin?

DAVID  
Yes.

INTERROGATOR

I see you are community college and university educated.

DAVID

Yes.

The interrogator scans the transcripts.

INTERROGATOR

Your degrees?

DAVID

Associate in Arts in Liberal Arts.  
Bachelor's in Social Science with a  
teaching option in history. Master in  
Public Administration, public sector  
management and leadership.

The interrogator nods, then lets the mask slip.

INTERROGATOR

(dry)

Impressive, for someone from your  
race.

David's eyes tighten a fraction but his tone stays level. In the observation room, a few invitees chuckle; Sarah's jaw clenches.

INTERROGATOR (cont'd)

What is your name?

DAVID

David Figueroa.

INTERROGATOR

Where were you born?

DAVID

Los Angeles, California.

INTERROGATOR

What year?

DAVID

1971.

INTERROGATOR

What year did you come from?

DAVID

2025.

INTERROGATOR  
Your last day in 2025?

DAVID  
March seventeenth.

The interrogator unclips the driver license, turns it, holds it where David can see.

INTERROGATOR  
This driver license. Issued by the  
State of California. Real, or  
counterfeit?

DAVID  
It is real.  
(beat)  
It is not counterfeit.

The interrogator frowns.

INTERROGATOR  
Are you a spy for Nazi Germany or the  
Empire of Japan?

DAVID  
(calm, precise)  
I am not, and never have been, a spy.  
I am a patriotic American. I came  
here to help you win this war using  
technology from my 2025 timeline.

INTERROGATOR  
We have documentation that you are a  
spy, and have been for years.

DAVID  
I arrived here on the night of  
December seventeenth, nineteen  
forty-one.  
(beat)  
Before that date, I did not exist in  
this timeline. Your accusation does  
not make logical sense.

In the observation room, a few brows furrow. The  
interrogator's jaw tightens.

INTERROGATOR  
Can you return to 2025?

DAVID  
No.

INTERROGATOR

Why not?

DAVID

Because I will die.

(beat)

Coming here was a one-way trip. I cannot return.

A beat as the interrogator stares, trying to read him. David senses the shift.

DAVID (V.O.)

He does not believe a word. The turn is coming. I am ready.

INTERROGATOR

How did you get here?

DAVID

(quiet, reverent)

She brought me.

In the observation room, Sarah flushes, jealousy flaring.

SARAH (V.O.)

Who is this "she"? No. This is above fairies and banshees. Something that bends space-time.

INTERROGATOR

(sharper)

Who is "she"?

DAVID

The one who brought me here.

INTERROGATOR

Are you trying to be funny? Who is this "she" person?

DAVID

I answered your question. She is the one who brought me here.

The interrogator SLAMS his palm on the table. The sound echoes. David does not flinch.

INTERROGATOR

(shouting)

YOU ARE PLAYING GAMES WITH ME! YOU ARE A LIAR AND I AM PROVING IT NOW!

In the observation room, Sarah flinches. A few invitees nod, pleased with his aggression.

DAVID  
What fact do you have that says I am  
a liar?

The interrogator barrels on.

INTERROGATOR  
I WILL ASK AGAIN. WHO IS SHE?

DAVID  
(quiet, reverent)  
The one who brought me here.

In the observation room, a smug voice from the dark.

INVITEE (O.S.)  
This Mr. Figueroa is an idiot. I  
would bet all his degrees are  
forgeries.

Marshall's eyes narrow. He keeps watching David, not the interrogator.

David sits motionless, chains barely shifting, as the first cracks appear in the machine around him.

FADE OUT.

INT. COI HQ — OBSERVATION ROOM — DAY

SUPER: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1941 — 2:35 P.M.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM — DAY

The observation room is dark, interrogation audio loud on the SPEAKER. In the INTERROGATION ROOM, the INTERROGATOR is mid-rant, hand SLAMMING the TABLE.

INTERROGATOR (O.S.)  
YOU ARE PLAYING GAMES WITH ME!  
YOU ARE A LIAR—

David's voice comes through calm, almost too soft for the rage aimed at him.

DAVID (O.S.)  
What fact do you have that says I am  
a liar?

The contrast makes the room uneasy.

Marshall leans toward Knox, voice low.

MARSHALL

There is something not right about him. This is too easy. He is too calm.

Knox carries Pearl Harbor in his eyes.

KNOX

Agreed. I will not underestimate another unknown again.

They move toward the back, where Donovan sits. Marshall bends close.

MARSHALL

(quiet, firm)

Bill, end this for today. The questioning is becoming theater. We should talk to him privately.

KNOX

We are getting into territory that should not be aired in front of a room.

Donovan does not take his eyes off the glass.

DONOVAN

Gentlemen, with respect, I have this in hand. Let my man finish. We need witnesses.

MARSHALL

(a shade harder)

This is imprudent.

Donovan finally looks at him. That is the end of it. Marshall and Knox exchange a look; they have done their duty. Donovan has chosen spectacle.

Around them, a few in the room murmur approval as the shouts continue over the PA.

INVITEE #1 (O.S.)

He is tearing him down.

INVITEE #2 (O.S.)

He will be shot by tomorrow morning.

Near the glass, Sarah stands rigid, eyes bright with tears she cannot blink away, listening to the spiral in horror.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM — DAY

The interrogator is flushed, sweating, leaning across the table.

INTERROGATOR  
(slamming palm on  
table)  
I WILL ASK YOU AGAIN—WHO IS SHE?

DAVID  
(quiet, reverent)  
The one who brought me here.

The interrogator SNATCHES up the MANILA FOLDER, yanks out the contents.

INTERROGATOR (CONT'D)  
These—  
(shakes the  
transcripts)  
Your so-called university records—

He THROWS the TRANSCRIPTS at David's chest. Pages flutter into his lap, spill to the floor.

He grabs the BIRTH CERTIFICATE and DRIVER LICENSE.

INTERROGATOR (CONT'D)  
This license—this birth  
certificate—lies on top of lies—

He FLINGS them at David. They glance off his shoulder, skitter across the table.

Through it all, David's eyes never leave his face. He does not flinch, studying him the way a surgeon might a patient in crisis.

Sarah cannot stop a tear tracking down her cheek as David sits in chains while his life on paper is hurled back at him. His calm gaze stays fixed on the man who thinks he is in control.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM — COI HQ — DAY

SUPER: DECEMBER 30, 1941

David looks from the INTERROGATOR to the one-way mirror.

DAVID  
 (icy, HAL-cold)  
 I no longer find these questions  
 entertaining or interesting. They are  
 boring. You are boring.

The interrogator snaps.

INTERROGATOR  
 (erupts, losing it)  
 LOOK AT ME! THERE IS NO ONE THERE. I  
 AM ASKING THE QUESTIONS. LOOK AT ME!

CUT TO:

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Dark, crowded, tense. Faces pressed toward the glass.

Sarah, grief-stricken and enraged, fixes her gaze on the  
 interrogator, eyes hard.

SARAH  
 (soft, in Irish)  
 A fhear bheag olc thú. Ligfidh tú don  
 Ailtire labhairt. Beidh tú i do thost  
 agus ní labhróidh tú focal arís.

SUBTITLE: YOU EVIL LITTLE MAN. YOU WILL LET THE ARCHITECT  
 SPEAK. YOU WILL BE SILENT AND NEVER SPEAK ANOTHER WORD  
 AGAIN.

Her eyes glint. The air shivers almost imperceptibly.

She closes her eyes, reaches further.

SARAH (cont'd)  
 (telepathic, in Irish  
 Gaelic)  
 A mhamáí... Inis do dhaidí a chuid fear  
 a chur abhaile. Níl gá leo anseo a  
 thuilleadh. Tá an tAiltire ar tí iad  
 go léir a scriosadh.

SUBTITLE: MAMA. TELL PAPA TO SEND HIS MEN HOME. THEY ARE NO  
 LONGER NEEDED. THE ARCHITECT IS ABOUT TO TAKE THEM ALL DOWN.

FLASH CUT:

INT. ROWHOUSE — PHILADELPHIA — LIVING ROOM — DAY — JULY 1926

Seven-year-old SARAH sits on the floor between MAMA's knees. Mama, 26, braids Sarah's long onyx hair.

MAMA

(soft, Irish lilt)

My little fairy...You will know the Architect. You will protect him from the machine.

LITTLE SARAH looks back with huge, dark eyes and smiles.

LITTLE SARAH

Yes, Mama. I will.

Sarah is now the Architect's unseen soldier, loyal to him before the U.S. Army.

BACK TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM — CONTINUOUS

The CAMERAMAN lifts his head from the eyepiece, staring at David.

The TWO MPs freeze, rattled. The dynamic has flipped.

David has just erased COI's top interrogator.

He turns toward the glass, voice level.

DAVID

(to the observation room)

I usually prefer to lecture standing. I can do it sitting.

DAVID (cont'd)

There's a quote your academies should take seriously. Sun Tzu.

DAVID (cont'd)

(quoting)

"Let your plans be dark and impenetrable as night, and when you move, fall like a thunderbolt."

He lets it hang.

DAVID (cont'd)

That's what just happened. That's how I took apart your man on the floor... and all of you behind the glass. We're in a world war. If you want to win it, you live that quote. I am not your enemy. Ignore me at your own risk.

He leans back as far as the chains allow.

DAVID (cont'd)

You still doubt who I am and where I'm from. That's fine. Let me show you my credentials.

DAVID (cont'd)

On August 2nd, 1939, Albert Einstein and Leó Szilárd send a letter to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, warning him a new kind of bomb is possible, built on nuclear fission.

DAVID (cont'd)

Szilárd drafts it, Einstein signs it. They urge you to lock down uranium supplies, especially in the Belgian Congo, and put the work under direct U.S. control, because Germany has already cut off uranium exports from Czech mines.

DAVID (cont'd)

Right now, that letter is top secret to you.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM — CONTINUOUS

David's voice BOOMS through the PA.

Some invitees LAUGH it off.

INVITEE #1

(under his breath)

"Atomic weapons." He's mad.

But MARSHALL and DONOVAN go ashen. Marshall thinks, rattled: How the hell does he know about that letter?

Donovan looks like he might drop. His earlier boasts curdle: "He's our top interrogator." "I have this well in hand."

On the floor behind the glass, their top interrogator lies mute.

KNOX frowns, blindsided. He's never heard of this letter, and fury flashes that he wasn't in that circle.

The PSYCHOLOGIST, pen mid-scribble, glances from David's image to Marshall and Donovan's faces.

PSYCHOLOGIST (V.O.)  
I should not be hearing this.

In the back, MAJOR COHN remembers warning David not to lie... and David warning him the truth wouldn't be easy. He watches their panic.

COHN (V.O.)  
He's exposing something buried deep.  
We can't just lock him up. We have to  
protect him—and use him.

DAVID (O.S.)  
The letter tells you: seize the ore,  
fund the work, build the bomb faster  
than Berlin.

DONOVAN  
(explodes)

TURN OFF THE PA SYSTEM! TURN IT OFF NOW!

He SLAMS a PANIC BUTTON. Klaxons WAIL through COI headquarters.

The OBSERVATION ROOM LIGHTS SNAP ON. David can now see the gallery of faces and uniforms.

Two MPs burst in, guns drawn.

DONOVAN (cont'd)  
(to MPs)  
Everyone in this room goes to  
Conference Room A. Hold them there.

Chaos as people protest and are herded out.

When the dust settles, only five remain:

SARAH, the COI PSYCHOLOGIST, MARSHALL, KNOX, and the MAN IN BLACK.

Donovan storms out. Marshall and Knox trade a quick, alarmed look, then follow.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM — CONTINUOUS

David squints toward the glass as lights blaze on. Figures move, the room empties, muffled shouts bleed through.

He understands he's hit a nerve. Donovan is coming.

The door SLAMS open. DONOVAN, MARSHALL, KNOX, and TWO MPs burst in. The CAMERAMAN and the original two MPs stare, rattled. The mute INTERROGATOR sits cuffed in a corner, eyes dead.

DONOVAN  
(to room MPs)  
Guns. Now.

They instantly hand over their M1911s. Donovan strides to the CAMERA, yanks it open, and rips the film to shreds.

He drops both pistols on the chair, snatches one, and stalks toward David.

KNOX  
(shouts)  
BILL, DON'T DO SOMETHING STUPID! WE  
NEED HIM TO HELP US WIN THIS WAR!

MARSHALL  
(shouts)  
BILL! DON'T! HE'S NOT WORTH IT!

Through the glass, SARAH and the COI PSYCHOLOGIST watch the gun come up toward David's face, hearing every word. Sarah presses a hand to her chest, mind racing.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM — CONTINUOUS

Donovan stops inches from David, gun up.

For a terrifying moment, his finger tightens on the trigger—then clarity cuts through the rage. He exhales, lowers the gun, lets it fall. The .45 CLATTERS on the table.

MARSHALL and KNOX move fast, scooping up both pistols and stepping back.

David sits very still. On the surface, calm.

DAVID (V.O.)  
I survived five drive-bys in the  
hood, the '92 riots... and I almost get  
killed in 1941 America?

CUT TO:

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM — CONTINUOUS

Sarah nearly collapses against a chair. The PSYCHOLOGIST  
drops into a seat, lungs burning.

BACK TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM — CONTINUOUS

Donovan storms back to David, face inches away.

DONOVAN  
(roars)  
I CAN HAVE YOU SHOT!

David sees it now—the shattered ego, the panic underneath.  
His reply is pure Mr. Spock through HAL: calm, cold,  
precise.

DAVID  
You need me more than I need you.  
Shoot me. I dare you. Your classified  
information is my history.  
My history is your classified  
information.

The words land like a bomb in both rooms.

V.O. — NARRATION  
David's answer turns their deepest  
secrecy into his childhood  
curriculum. They understand, in one  
sentence, that the asymmetry is  
permanent. They cannot un-know that  
he already knows. Suddenly, every  
threat to kill him feels childish and  
empty.

Marshall and Knox, shaken, move to stand in front of David.

For a beat, he is the entire American atomic program in  
human form, talking back.

IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM, Sarah watches. In chess terms, the queen is lethal in all directions. She realizes the Architect is lethal in all directions too.

BACK TO DAVID

DAVID

I know you're wondering how much I know. Let's break the ice.

They say nothing.

DAVID (cont'd)

Let's start with the S-1 Committee. Your S-1 Uranium Committee, inside the Office of Scientific Research and Development. Its job is to push forward the early work on an atomic bomb.

Knox flinches at "S-1."

DAVID (cont'd)

Members: Lyman J. Briggs, Harold Urey, Ernest Lawrence, Arthur Compton, Eger Murphree, James Conant, Enrico Fermi, Leó Szilárd. I learned them in grade school.

DAVID (cont'd)

After the British MAUD Report confirms a bomb is feasible, you reorganize S-1 in late '41, after Pearl Harbor. While I was unconscious in a field hospital in Virginia, they held their first big meeting—December eighteenth, 1941.

Marshall and Donovan trade a glance. The date is dead on.

DAVID (cont'd)

Next year you spin it up: S-1 Executive Committee, then in August '42 the Manhattan Engineer District. A month later, the Military Policy Committee takes charge. By the end of that summer, S-1 becomes the Manhattan Project.

DAVID (cont'd)

You build the first bombs at Los Alamos, New Mexico. Your military head is General Leslie Groves. Your scientific director is J.

(MORE)

DAVID (cont'd)  
Robert Oppenheimer, right now just a  
physics professor at Berkeley and  
Caltech.

Marshall swallows. Donovan looks ill. Knox just stares.

V.O. — NARRATION  
Names, dates, committees—too precise  
to be guesswork. They recognize it as  
memory.

DAVID  
Let's jump ahead. August 1945.

DAVID (cont'd)  
You build three atomic bombs: Gadget,  
Little Boy, Fat Man. Two you drop on  
Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The blasts  
make light like a million suns. Eyes  
turned toward it melt. People at  
ground zero are vaporized, shadows  
burned into walls. The ground flashes  
to the temperature of the sun. Then  
radioactive black rain spreads  
fallout for miles.

In the observation room, people cover their mouths. Knox  
looks like he might be sick.

V.O. — NARRATION  
For Marshall and Donovan, their  
secret project comes back at them as  
horror, not glory. For Knox, never in  
the early circle, the shock is worse.

DAVID  
In 2025, those three are small.  
Tactical. Firecrackers.

He leans forward.

DAVID (cont'd)  
Let's talk about the majors. Hydrogen  
bombs. H-bombs.

Silence.

DAVID (cont'd)  
Please hand me that blank paper and  
the pencil.

Knox hesitates, then does.

DAVID (cont'd)  
One more favor. Have someone unlock these chains. You've locked down the building. I give you my word I won't harm anyone or try to escape. I need my hands to write.

Marshall weighs him, then crosses to the wall phone.

MARSHALL  
(into phone)  
Send an MP with keys to the interrogation room. Now.

INT. CORRIDOR / INTERROGATION ROOM — MINUTES LATER

An MP arrives with a key ring. Marshall meets him at the door.

MARSHALL  
(to MP)  
Unlock all of Mr. Figueroa's restraints.

The MP unlocks wrists, ankles, and table chain. Metal drops away. David flexes his hands.

The MP exits. The door shuts.

MARSHALL (cont'd)  
Mr. Figueroa, I won't point a gun at you. I'll trust you to keep your word.

DAVID  
You have my word.

He sits, takes the pencil, and starts to write.

FAST MONTAGE — DAVID'S HANDS

- Equations spill across the page.
- Cross-sections of bomb casings.
- Lenses, tamper materials, timing diagrams.
- "LITTLE BOY," "FAT MAN," "GADGET" in small block letters.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM — SAME

Sarah and the PSYCHOLOGIST watch through the glass, listening over the PA.

Sarah squints, catching bits of number theory and circuits from Notre Dame; most of it is far beyond her.

The PSYCHOLOGIST's pen races, notebook a chaos of arrows and underlines.

ON HIS NOTES — circled:

"Top interrogator defeated."

"Calm under extreme stress."

"Logic nearly perfect." "SUBJECT IQ ESTIMATE: 180+."

In the margin: "I need a vacation."

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM — LATER

A small stack of pages sits in front of David—dense equations and schematics.

DAVID

Despite how you've treated me... I feel generous today.

He grabs a few more blank sheets, sits, and sketches a new, more complex diagram. At the bottom he writes, large:

"TO BE CONTINUED :)"

Then signs: DAVID FIGUEROA.

He hands the last pages to Marshall.

DAVID (cont'd)

General Marshall. Take these to Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer at Berkeley. Ask him to check my work. Let me know if I've made any mistakes.

Marshall's hands shake as he skims, then passes them to Donovan and Knox. Their faces go pale.

## V.O. — NARRATION

In under an hour, David has given them a head start on the A-bomb... and a partial map to the H-bomb that will put the United States roughly a decade ahead in its development.

Donovan looks up, rattled.

## DONOVAN

Mr. Figueroa... why didn't you give us complete plans for the hydrogen bomb?

David smiles, winks.

## DAVID

I'm generous. Not suicidal.

Their faces go even paler. The room feels smaller.

David quiet and steady:

## DAVID (cont'd)

I'm here to change the war. Shorten it and save lives. In my 2025, World War II kills between seventy and eighty-five million people. Civilian and military, Allied and Axis.

A beat. The numbers hang, shocking and devastating.

Marshall blinks, the scale hitting harder than the math.

## KNOX

(low, disbelieving)

Seventy... million?

## DAVID

That's the price tag when you let this war run its course without help. I'm trying to pay some of that down.

## DAVID (cont'd)

Every day in my world I lived knowing how many people were buried because history arrived too late. If I can prevent even a fraction of that and refuse... then I deserve whatever happens to me.

He lets that settle, then adds, precise:

DAVID (cont'd)

The Nazis chase the atom too. They call it "Jewish physics" and throw it away. You don't. You get there first. That's how we keep that seventy to eighty-five million from going even higher.

In the observation room, Sarah blinks, stunned by the calculus: he has limited the horror while proving his value.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The PSYCHOLOGIST scribbles more furiously, flipping pages.

ON HIS NOTEBOOK - another line in red, underlined:

"STUDY SUBJECT DEFEATED COI TOP INTERROGATOR. FASCINATING."

He slumps back, exhausted.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

David leans on the table, looking at the three men.

DAVID

In my time, 2025, the United States has about three hundred and forty-eight million people and a little over five thousand nuclear warheads. Russia has even more; China, India, Pakistan, Israel all have their own arsenals. Almost everyone in the northern hemisphere lives less than an hour from total nuclear annihilation.

V.O. - DAVID

We build bunkers in mountains, track missiles from space, and live under acronyms and code names you don't have yet-NORAD, DEFCON, Broken Arrows. From 1950 to 1980 alone, there are dozens of accidents where you drop, crash, or even lose nuclear weapons.

V.O. — DAVID (cont'd)  
And this is just what I can say out  
loud. Most of what you really want is  
locked in my phone and that electric  
typewriter you seized. Your  
cryptographers will never open  
either—without me.

David leans on the table, watching the three men as they  
absorb what he's already shown them.

FADE OUT:

INT. COI CORRIDOR / SMALL OFFICE — EARLIER THAT AFTERNOON

TITLE: EARLIER THAT AFTERNOON — 12/30/1941

The MAN IN BLACK walks calmly down a hallway, away from the  
observation room. Outside, klaxons fade out.

He slips into a vacant office, closes the door behind him.

He listens — silence.

He crosses to the desk, picks up the black telephone, and  
dials.

VOICE (O.S.)  
(over phone, male)  
Report.

MAN IN BLACK  
(low, measured)  
The Singularity has proven himself.  
He is what we need to lead us. But  
there is an independent variable.

VOICE (O.S.)  
The independent variable is that  
junior WAC officer?

MAN IN BLACK  
Yes. She is not quite human.  
She is attached to the Singularity.  
But they have not met yet.

VOICE (O.S.)  
They must meet. We will make that  
possible. Once they do, they must  
never be separated.

MAN IN BLACK  
 Agreed. Both will lead us.  
 We will protect them.

VOICE (O.S.)  
 We do not keep files. We have  
 memory.

MAN IN BLACK  
 (repeats softly)  
 We do not keep files. We have  
 memory.

He hangs up, smooth and deliberate.

The CAMERA TRACKS him out of the office, down the hall, and  
 toward the building's main entrance. We never see his full  
 face.

EXT. COI HQ — FRONT ENTRANCE — CONTINUOUS

An MP steps in front of him.

MP  
 Sir, you can't leave the building.

The Man in Black reaches into an inner pocket, flashes an ID  
 we do not see.

The MP's attitude changes instantly.

MP (cont'd)  
 My apologies, sir. You may pass.

The Man in Black exits to an unmarked black sedan at the  
 curb.

The DRIVER, dressed identically, waits behind the wheel.  
 From this angle they are indistinguishable.

The Man in Black gets into the front passenger seat.

The sedan pulls away into traffic.

WIPE TO:

EXT. BRIG — OUTSKIRTS OF D.C. — NIGHT — 12/30/1941 — 8:00  
 P.M.

A BRINKS ARMORED CAR pulls up outside the military brig.

David steps out with a single MP. No chains. No leg irons.  
Just one guard.

They enter the building, walk down to the cell wing.

INT. BRIG — CELL WING — CONTINUOUS

INT. SECURE CONFERENCE ROOM — NIGHT

The MP unlocks the heavy door to the wing and gestures.

MP  
This is as far as I go.

David steps through. The door shuts behind him.

He turns, confused.

DAVID  
Who's going to let me into my cell?

Through the reinforced glass, the MP just points down the corridor.

David walks alone to his cell.

The door stands slightly open.

He pushes it wider and steps in.

INT. DAVID'S CELL — CONTINUOUS

The familiar setup: WESTCLOX clock, full water pitcher, medications, dinner tray.

New: a typed three-by-five card on the table and TWO CARDBOARD BOXES on the cot, one large, one small.

David picks up the card.

INSERT — 3X5 CARD  
(TYPED)

TOMORROW YOU WILL BE TAKEN TO A SAFE  
HOUSE IN RURAL WEST VIRGINIA. MORE  
INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED THERE.  
YOU ARE NO LONGER A PRISONER OF WAR.  
WE WILL ARRIVE TO PICK YOU UP AT  
11:00 A.M. — BE READY. THE BRIG  
SHOWER DOOR IS UNLOCKED FOR YOUR USE.  
DO NOT CLOSE YOUR CELL DOOR.

David exhales, absorbing it.

He opens the smaller box: his 1941-arrival clothes, laundered and neatly folded. On top, a slip of paper.

INSERT — SLIP OF PAPER (TYPED)

CLOTHES: 100% COTTON. UNREMARKABLE.

David chuckles.

DAVID  
Of course. I always wear one hundred percent cotton.

FADE TO:

INT. BRIG — MORNING — 12/31/1941 — NEW YEAR'S EVE — 10:00 A.M.

DAVID HAS ALREADY EATEN, SHOWERED, AND SHAVED. HE WEARS HIS STREET CLOTHES FROM HOME.

Two boxes wait by the door: one with his personal belongings, one with his prison blues.

He steps into the wing, then stops, remembering.

He goes back to the wall by his cell door: a posted SIGN warning that visitors require an armed escort and that the prisoner is trained in advanced hand-to-hand combat.

He rips the sign down and tucks it into the box with his things.

He allows himself a small smile.

FADE OUT.

INT. SECURE CONFERENCE ROOM — WASHINGTON — NIGHT

SUPER: DECEMBER 30, 1941

A small, windowless room. One door, one armed MP outside. GENERAL MARSHALL, FRANK KNOX, and DONOVAN sit at a table. The COI PSYCHOLOGIST enters, exhausted, notebook under his arm.

MARSHALL  
Doctor. Bottom line... is he sane?

PSYCHOLOGIST

Yes, General. No psychosis, no delusions. What you saw was not madness. It was strategy.

DONOVAN

He claims a woman "brought him here."  
Sounds like religious mania.

PSYCHOLOGIST

No, sir. He's spiritual, not fanatical. Whatever he believes, it doesn't control his thinking. He's sober and disciplined.

MARSHALL

Is he dangerous?

PSYCHOLOGIST

Ordinarily, no more than any strong, trained man.  
Strategically—profoundly. He dismantled your top interrogator, described committees that don't yet exist and weapons you haven't built. He understands your institutions and weaknesses better than most men in this city, and he plans on a longer timeline.

DONOVAN

These IQ numbers. "One-eighty plus"?  
Nobody is that smart.

PSYCHOLOGIST

The number's the least interesting part. We hit the ceiling of every test. He solved items meant to be unsolvable, reconstructed ciphers in his head, modeled political consequences decades ahead. Our instruments can't keep up with him.

(beat)

If he were merely "bright," you'd be running him. You're not. He's steering you.

Donovan looks away.

MARSHALL

Can we break him?

PSYCHOLOGIST

You can hurt or frighten him. You can't break him into usefulness. A man from 2025 knows every lever you can pull in 1941. If he decides to close his mouth, you have no reliable way to open it.

KNOX

Then how do we handle him?

PSYCHOLOGIST

Treat him as a colleague, not a prisoner. He's an American, viscerally hostile to the Axis. Every time he chose to speak today, it was to help you win this war. Keep treating him as a POW and you lose his cooperation. Treat him as a partner and you gain the future he carries in his head.

(beat)

He will not be broken. The only real question is whether he spends this war as your enemy's worst nightmare... or as your prisoner who chose silence.

FADE OUT

INT. COI ADMIN OFFICE — NIGHT

SUPER: DECEMBER 30, 1941

A small, tired WAR OFFICE. Desks, typewriters, filing cabinets. Most lights are off.

SARAH sits under a single lamp, typing the last lines of a memo for DONOVAN. She pulls the final page, clips it, slips the packet into an envelope:

TO: DIRECTOR WILLIAM J. DONOVAN

She checks the wall clock.

SARAH

(mutters)

Home. Finally.

She reaches for her purse and cap—

The DOOR OPENS. DONOVAN steps in, still in his coat, a FOLDER in hand, eyes bloodshot.

SARAH straightens.

SARAH (cont'd)  
Sir. I was just leaving. I put the  
draft—

DONOVAN  
(stops her)  
Stay a moment.

She masks a flicker of irritation.

SARAH  
Yes, sir.

He crosses, thrusts the folder at her.

She glances at the routing slip, sees her own name.

SARAH (cont'd)  
What is this?

DONOVAN  
Your new supervisor's psych  
evaluation. You're under Army  
Intelligence now. The two of you...  
deserve each other.

He turns away.

DONOVAN (cont'd)  
You report to the safe house in the  
morning. Details are in there.

He disappears into his office and SLAMS the door.

Silence.

Sarah looks at the door, then at the folder. She opens it.

INSERT — FIRST PAGE:

PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION — SUBJECT: DAVID FIGUEROA

BACK TO SCENE

A slow smile spreads across her face. Her pupils dilate; her  
eyes void black.

SARAH  
(soft, to herself)  
David... you are going to marry me.

She closes the folder, cradling it like something precious.

SMASH TO BLACK.

THE END.

Property of David Figueroa - WGA #2333477  
© 2026 David Figueroa. All Rights Reserved.