

DORMANCY

Written by

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The following 7+ pages make up the first scene to a completed screenplay that was submitted as my senior's thesis at Claremont McKenna College.

A SERIES OF IMAGES - POV the image is blurry around the edges and slows down and speeds up periodically. All audio rings with a slight echo.

A little boy with a stethoscope and white coat sneaks into an empty building through the basement window with a little girl - the girl lifts her skirt - she blushes - it's the boys turn - the girl giggles - the boy runs off - the same boy, a bit older, looks in a bush outside a window - he sees a spider with an orange body and green legs - time passes - the spider's eggs hatch and the babies eat the mother - a man looks left and right in a lab and sees a series of cadavers - a needle injects inside a man - the man dies - a man in a chamber begins to break out with white pustules - they become larger and become brown - the man screams so loud the person watching covers his ears - ECU on a man's mouth slipping into a smirk

The image blurs and shakes - the sound of glass snapping - and rock crumbling.

BLACKOUT

A MAN'S STRUGGLED BREATHING permeates slowly through a monotone alarm.

FADE IN

INT. TRANSFER ROOM

A DUTCH ANGLE reveals the profile of **THE MAN** from the chest upwards entombed in a cracked plexi-glass apparatus. He looks to be 30 years old, well-built, and has a clean shaven head. Attached to his mouth is a clear breathing mask and stuck to his chest are a number of adhesive electrode pads. The background is out of focus but casts a blue haze.

PAN AROUND to the front shows his eyes closed. ZOOM IN to an ECU on his eyes. THE MAN's eyes open with the innocence of a child. His head wobbles and he moves around in the apparatus.

THE DOOR HISSES open and he falls forward nude on his hands and knees onto a floor covered in broken glass. He winces and looks at his hand and sees blood oozing out. He pulls out the shard and stands up. He begins to walk away but is caught by the medical mask. He pulls it off in a confused manner.

A WIDE SHOT SWAYS as he walks forward unsure of his steps. The background is revealed to be an all-glass room.

The apparatus THE MAN walked out of resembles an Egyptian sarcophagus in that it conforms to the curves of a man's body. Attached to the main body of the apparatus is a series of tubes of various sizes attached to it. Podium-esque keyboards line the walls and the remaining glass walls are the monitors. Little still can be seen but a portion of the anatomy of a man's body, a few nondescript progress bars and cardiograms, and the letters "SAM" are seen cut off from the rest of the word.

As THE MAN STUMBLES out of the room he leans against one of the glass podiums and he smears the surface with his bloody fingertips. An ECU on section right next to the smear is a red touchscreen button with the word "TERMINATE" printed on it. The room has a soft blur in the background and from what can be seen there a mirror image of the room on the left except for the apparatus on the other side has its door closed.

INT. MOUNTAIN HALLWAY

THE MAN LOOKS outside the room both ways. The left extends only further into darkness and the left has a single light piercing through the darkness.

HE TURNS TOWARD the darkness.

VOICE (V.O.)
(a whisper)
Wrong way.

THE MAN hears the soft voice echo through the hall - or was it in his head?

THE MAN TURNS AROUND and HEADS TOWARDS the light. The section is more of a tunnel than a hallway. The linoleum ground is uneven and broken. Sparks of broken electrical wires crackle and snap through the dangling fluorescent fixtures. A few broken pipes fizz a gaseous cloud into the tunnel that settle on the floor.

THE MAN continues to sway into the walls and leave trails of blood. The trails start off thick but become thinner and then stop altogether. A few doors are seen but one stands out with a thick metal exterior with rivets lining the border and engraved into the center is a Biohazard symbol.

THE MAN reaches the end of the hallway and sees a small hole through a pile of books. HE CRAWLS out.

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Moonlight from massive windows on the right floods the room. They are elongated stretches of glass extending 50 feet to the ceiling and curve over onto the roof. They are interrupted by frames and leave lines across the mess of the room.

Piles of books are scattered and the faint light distorts them into little mountains with their shadows drawing across the room.

THE MAN looks out at the moon and then picks up a book, *Frankenstein*, and examines it oddly. It opens up for him when he holds it upwards by the spine and the book opens to a random page. He looks at the text and a FLASH across the text occurs as if it has been imprinted on his mind.

THE MAN drops the book and keeps walking. By now his steps are more sure and he is walking upright. He manages to get to the far side of the room and sees a large number of framed pictures on the floor scattered.

He sees a broken shadow box with the corner of a golden medal being covered by a weathered newspaper clipping reading "Babell Receives Nobel Prize for Medicine." A picture beneath shows an older man receiving the medal in front of a crowd of people.

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A POV shot of a man having a medal put over his neck from one of the men in the photo. PAN OVER to a crowd of people in formal attire giving a standing ovation.

BACK TO SCENE

THE MAN grabs his head and walks out of the room.

EXT. BABELL MANSION - NIGHT

THE CAMERA PULLS OUT of the library to the exterior of the building as THE MAN leaves the library. The camera pans around the structure of an enormous building four stories high and combining elements of Victorian architecture with modern elements. Large cracks creep down the sides of the building and make it appear as if it is barely being held together.

The camera now centers on the front of the building and shows an extravagant lawn and orchards leading up to the entrance. What stands out from the scene is the remnants of a semi-cylindrical shape. The flare of the moon catches the broken glass of a massive window enclosing a blown-glass 3D DNA staircase. It has orbs of every color connected with metal poles and stands out as the symbol of the mansion. The staircase itself seems to be cracked to some degree about a third of the way up and is leaning away from the building.

THE CAMERA moves in through a broken section of the window and focuses on THE MAN standing on the structure and examining it from about three floors up.

INT. DOUBLE HELIX STAIRCASE - NIGHT

As THE MAN looks over the edge out into the forest a tremor over the building occurs, the aftershock of an earthquake. THE MAN grabs hold of the handrail but the DNA model sways and the staircase rips away from the mansion and breaks through the glass. THE MAN is thrown from the staircase.

EXT. MANSION LAWN - NIGHT

THE MAN falls onto the ground outside face first. HE SCREAMS and grabs at his arm before he flips over.

THE STAIRCASE BEGINS TO FALL TOWARDS THE MAN and he scrambles to his feet and begins to run away from the falling debris.

THE MAN barely escapes the falling wreckage and runs off into the night of the forest as the dust settles.

EXT. BEARTOOTH MOUNTAIN FORREST - BREAK OF DAWN

A FLASH OF IMAGES SHOWS THE MAN RUN for quite some time before stopping in a clearing.

In the brisk air he holds his arms to his body and shivers a little. An ECU on his head shows his hair grow to a half inch. PAN OUT shows that he now has arm, leg, and chest hair as well.

There THE MAN sees a herd of five deer eating shrubs. They look at THE MAN hesitantly for a bit but something about him stops them from running away.

A FAWN runs up to THE MAN and smells him. It rubs itself into THE MAN's leg and walks back towards its mother. THE MAN follows it and leans down to pet the fawn.

THE DOE LOOKS at THE MAN but ignores him. She continues to eat a tuft of dry grass. THE MAN watches how she eats it and then takes a knee and takes a nibble himself.

HE SPITS IT OUT.

THE MAN lays down on his back and smells the forest air. The faintest sound of rustling can be heard and THE MAN sits up.

VOICE (V.O.)
You better move.

A STAG perks up its head and its ears.

A SHOT RINGS OUT and hits the mother in front of THE MAN.

THE DOE LURCHES FORWARD.

ANOTHER SHOT HITS THE MAN in the abdomen. THE MAN falls back from the shock of the shot and then looks down to blood gushing.

VOICE (V.O.)
Told you.

BRANCHES SNAP and the sound of rustling become progressively louder until two hunters come into view.

HUNTER 1
Jesus Christ. You were right. It
was a man.

HUNTER 2 walks beside THE MAN and kneels down beside him. HUNTER 1 is gazing off from where they came from talking to himself and running his hand through his hair.

HUNTER 2
Hey, you're going to be all right.

HUNTER 1
Where did he come from?

HUNTER 2
Can you walk, buddy?

THE MAN
(coughing up blood)
I... I...

HUNTER 1
Was he just laying there with them?
He must've been but why would they
have let him get so close?

HUNTER 2
Paul, get the rig.

HUNTER 1
No one is with him...

HUNTER 2
Did you hear me? ... What did you say?

HUNTER 1
What are we supposed to do with him? He's alone, and no one knows we're out here.

HUNTER 2
Paul, you shot the man. We're not leaving him here to die.

HUNTER 1 looks at the hardened HUNTER 2, who turns back to THE MAN and begins to help him up.

HUNTER 2 (CONT'D)
Go to the rig and bring it as close to here as possible. I'm going to start walking him that way.

HUNTER 1
I don't think we should move him.

HUNTER 2
Do you see a road around here? No. Go get it.

HUNTER 2 takes off his jacket and pulls off his white undershirt. He holds it tight against the skin.

HUNTER 2 (CONT'D)
All right. Come along.

CUT TO:

INT. HUNTER'S CAR - EARLY MORNING

Inside the car HUNTER 1 drives the car while the other in the back puts pressure on the wound. HUNTER 2 pulls out a phone and makes a call.

VET'S ASSISTANT (O.S.)
(groggy)
Who is it?

HUNTER 2
Steve, it's Greg.

VET'S ASSISTANT (O.S.)
Why can't I see you?

HUNTER 2
I'm driving so I'm not wearing my specs.

VET'S ASSISTANT (O.S.)
Greg, its 7:00 am on a Sunday.

HUNTER 2
I know. Paul and I need your help.

VET'S ASSISTANT (O.S.)
Can't it wait?

HUNTER 2
No.

VET'S ASSISTANT (O.S.)
What sort of emergency is this?

HUNTER 2
We have someone with a gunshot wound.

VET'S ASSISTANT (O.S.)
Then I would suggest the hospital.

HUNTER 2
That's not an option. We were hunting.

VET'S ASSISTANT (O.S.)
Look, I flunked out my second year of Med school. I'm no doctor. I'm not even a veterinarian. I'm an assistant to one, at a zoo.

HUNTER 2
That's better than me or Paul... He's dying.

VET'S ASSISTANT (O.S.)
Fine. But don't bring him here. Take him the back entrance of the zoo and I'll let you in.

As they hang up the camera shifts outside of the rig we see that the anatomy of the vehicle looks much like a modern truck with hover-pads instead of wheels.

WE PAN UP from the road to a rising futuristic city not far off in the distance. The sky is a haze of smoke.

TITLE SEQUENCE: DORMANCY -- on orange dissipating into biological cells. Credits roll through a maze of winding DNA.