

ECHO

Written by

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A Bittersweet Love Story

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INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

HAMISH, a pest control agent, knocks on the door to a home. He is accompanied by two other pest control workers, DEMARCO and LANG. There is no answer. He knocks again. Nothing. He motions to DeMarco and takes a step back.

HAMISH

DeMarco.

DeMarco steps up and kicks the door open. Hamish strides in casually. A middle-aged man, POWELL, waits for them inside with a bat in hand.

POWELL

(angry, threatening)

Get out of my house!

Hamish continues forward. Powell raises his bat and swings, but Hamish stops it midway, seemingly effortlessly, his step unbroken. He disarms him while DeMarco wrestles him and seats him on the couch. Powell struggles, but DeMarco holds him. Hamish gently sets the bat aside and crouches in front of Powell. He speaks with absolute authority, yet calmly.

HAMISH

Mr. Powell, I presume?

POWELL

You can't be in here. I can have you arrested!

HAMISH

And had we unlawfully broken into your home I wouldn't object. I wouldn't dare intrude on you.

Hamish holds his hand out to Lang, who hands him a folded paper. Hamish shows it to Powell.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

We are, however, protected with this warrant.

Powell looks over the paper.

POWELL

(acidly)

What do you want?

HAMISH

I'd like for this to be painless, Mr. Powell.

(MORE)

HAMISH (CONT'D)

You can either cooperate and tell us where she is, or you can be stubborn and we'll find her anyway. One makes you into a good, if reluctant, citizen, and the other gets you fined.

Powell shakes his head.

POWELL

I'm not gonna. I'm not gonna.

HAMISH

(sincerely)

Please, Mr. Powell. We are not your enemies. It's time to let go.

Powell hesitates a moment longer, but his defiance breaks down into submission.

POWELL

(weakly)

In the living room.

HAMISH

Thank you, Mr. Powell.

The pest control men get up and walk toward the living room. There, in the center of the room, making vacuuming motions with no vacuum or sound, is a woman, middle-aged. She seems content. Hamish slows his pace and watches calmly. The woman hums. Hamish steps forward, slowly approaching the woman.

DEMARCO

What's she doing?

Hamish reaches out to her.

HAMISH

(a sort of intrigue)

Vacuuuming.

His fingers pass through her. She doesn't notice. Lang steps forward with a device in her hand. She approaches the woman, and the device beeps rapidly.

LANG

Confirmed. She's an echo.

HAMISH

Excellent deduction, Ms. Lang. Technology has saved the day yet again.

LANG  
 (defensive)  
 This is top of the line techn-

HAMISH  
 I know what it is. Very expensive  
 equipment. With all that money  
 poured into it, does it come with  
 the added courtesy of wiping your  
 ass?

DeMarco snorts. Hamish stares at him. DeMarco bows his head  
 apologetically. Hamish backs away from the woman.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
 Standard procedure, tune the  
 frequency.

Lang pulls out a device and begins scanning the woman.

DEMARCO  
 It's no fun if they aren't doing  
 anything.

HAMISH  
 Is this work fun to you, DeMarco?

DEMARCO  
 Not now, it isn't.

DeMarco steps up to the woman and runs his hands through her.

DEMARCO (CONT'D)  
 Bet she wasn't expecting her day to  
 end like this, huh?

HAMISH  
 DeMarco.

DEMARCO  
 Wonder how she died.

Powell enters the room.

POWELL  
 Aspirin.

They look to him.

POWELL (CONT'D)  
 She took too many aspirin.

DEMARCO  
 Aspirin?

DeMarco laughs.

DEMARCO (CONT'D)  
You have to be kidding me! Apirin!  
Who does that?

HAMISH  
DeMarco.

DeMarco turns to Hamish.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
This poor woman died of an  
unfortunate abuse of medicine. I  
would hope you would adhere to  
sensitivity and show some respect.

DEMARCO  
Yeah, but-

HAMISH  
And I should make this pointedly  
clear, DeMarco: you are  
replaceable. Do I make myself  
clear?

DeMarco shrugs away. Lang's device reaches a whine.

LANG  
Ninety-eight kilo-hertz, Hamish.

HAMISH  
Thank you.

Hamish pulls out a rod and sets it down near the woman. It extends into a pylon with a dial on it ranging in frequencies. He glances at Powell.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
(to DeMarco)  
Watch him.  
(to Powell)  
You might not want to be here for  
this.

Powell doesn't pay attention.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
Very well. Plugs in.

All put in ear plugs. DeMarco supplies Powell with a pair. Hamish sets the frequency to 98 kilo-hertz.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

White noise live in 3. 2. 1.

He presses a button on the pylon. A bulb at the tip of the pylon lights up brilliantly as a slow wind-up of sound begins increasing in frequency and intensity. As it climbs into the upper registers, Lang, DeMarco, and Powell start uncomfortably pick at their ears. Hamish is unaffected. The sound bottoms out and the echo begins to flicker. She screams and dissipates into nothing. She is gone, the light and sound fades as the pylon winds to a stop. A small lull follows.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

Clean up. Take the equipment back to the van.

Lang and DeMarco obey. Hamish turns to Powell, who has slid down the wall, blank. He kneels down to his level.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

An oasis in the desert, Mr. Powell. That's all she was. You never saw her. No, she was redemption to you. And when you dipped your hands into her, all that filled your palms were the sands of a mirage. And you drank anyway.

POWELL

(lost)

I don't know what to do.

HAMISH

Mourn for her. Mourn, remember. Then let her go. That's all you can do, Mr. Powell.

POWELL

Have you ever lost someone?

HAMISH

Let her go. Take the remnants and cast them out.

POWELL

I heard her.

HAMISH

You heard an echo. That's all. And that's all that was left. Leave the past in the dust, Mr. Powell, because that's where it all ends up.

POWELL  
But I'll miss her.

HAMISH  
I know. But don't worry. You'll  
make it through.

Hamish pats his shoulder and leaves the house.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
We all make it through.

OPENING CREDITS

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

The sky is clouded over, deep with false promise of rain. A congregation in mourning surrounds a grave. A pastor speaks for the deceased. JOHN WELLS is closest to the grave, looking down into the dug-out hole, at the coffin resting inside.

PASTOR  
... Yes, she left us too soon. She  
left us unfairly. Regardless, we  
must continue. Perseverance, for  
all its meaning, defines us now. We  
must endure. Ellie would want us  
to. We must endure.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY - LATER

The congregation has left, the last car pulls away. John stands alone at the grave, now filled. He doesn't cry, but he is possessed by a deep sadness. An agent approaches him.

EDWIN  
Mr. Wells?

John doesn't notice.

EDWIN (CONT'D)  
Mr. Wells.

John slowly looks up.

EDWIN (CONT'D)  
Mr. Wells, I'd like you to come  
with me.

John looks back down to the grave.

JOHN  
She really liked writing.

EDWIN  
We have some very important things  
to discuss regarding your wife's  
passing.

JOHN  
She was a poet-

EDWIN  
Mr. Wells, the sooner we get done  
with the necessary documentation,  
the sooner we can put it behind us.

John stares at the grave a moment longer.

INT. GOVERNMENT OFFICE - DAY

John sits across from the agent, stiffly, as he pulls out a small stack of papers. He hands them to John, who flips through them. The agent speaks as though he's done this a thousand times.

EDWIN  
With the recent passing of Mrs.  
Ellie Wells, there are a few things  
that we are required to tell you.  
As you know, it is not uncommon for  
those who have passed on to return  
as a sort of non-corporeal entity.

JOHN  
(quietly)  
I know.

EDWIN  
They're not inherently dangerous,  
but they tend to make everyday life  
complicated. Studies have revealed  
that each entity repeats their last  
day up to their respective deaths  
until they are exorcised.

JOHN  
I know.

EDWIN

As such, obsessions may arise in people who were close to said entities, resulting in certain unhealthy routines with their loops. We, in the best interests for the health of the people, must ensure that all are educated about these entities, and that upon death an agreement is made to report any occurrence to their local pest control company.

JOHN

(weakly)

I-

John sets down the packet and covers his face. The agent takes pity on him and continues more softly.

EDWIN

Mr. Wells, I have to make you understand that, in the event that she comes back, that you know: it is not your wife. It is not real. It is not alive. It is not here. But you are.

John wipes his eyes, breathing heavily.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Mr. Wells, I need you to sign.

He offers John a pen. John accepts and shakily signs the packet and hands both back.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

The echo, if she should occur, will do so in a week to a month's time. An inspector will visit your current residence in approximately thirty days for a check-up.

John leans forward in his chair, barely listening, his hands to his lips. The agent walks around the desk and alays a hand on his shoulder.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry for your loss.

He leaves the office. John shuts his eyes.

INT. WELLS HOME - NIGHT

John opens the door to his dark home. He turns on one dim light. He walks into his family room, which is lined with various photographs of him and his wife, ELLIE WELLS. He picks one up, looks over it sadly, and sets it back down.

INT. WELLS HOME - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

John stands outside of a closed door. He reaches to open it and grips the doorknob. He doesn't turn it, and instead heavily leans his forehead against the door, screwing his face in agony. He shudders his breaths. He releases the doorknob.

INT. WELLS HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

John gets into bed, staying on one side. He looks over at the vacant half of the bed. He strokes it, and his hand curls into a fist. He closes his eyes to sleep.

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

John rides the subway to work. He is very dazed and doesn't take any notice of his surroundings. He is dressed in a plain suit.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

John types away at a computer, mechanically working. From a distance, APRIL MAY watches him, worried. LUKE BARNUM walks up to her.

LUKE  
Hey, April.

APRIL  
Ho long's he been like that?

Luke follows her gaze to John.

LUKE  
All day. He hasn't said a word to anybody. He hasn't eaten, taken a break, he's just been staring at that computer, working.

APRIL  
That can't be healthy.

LUKE  
Oh, you think, Nancy Drew?

APRIL  
He's going to crash and burn like  
this.

Luke shrugs consideringly.

LUKE  
Maybe that's what he wants.

APRIL  
Don't talk like that, Luke.

LUKE  
Look, I'm just saying, we can't  
relate to how he's feeling, but it  
can't be very good.

APRIL  
Ignoring it won't make it any  
better!

LUKE  
I'm not saying we ignore-

BOSS WARREN walks up to them. He speaks in command, but isn't  
too harsh.

WARREN  
Hey. You two.

Luke and April silence and pay attention to him.

WARREN (CONT'D)  
Back to work.

Warren leaves. April leans toward Luke.

APRIL  
John would help us.

Luke ponders it a moment and relents.

LUKE  
Fine. Fine, yeah, I'll lend a  
shoulder.

APRIL  
(grateful)  
Thank you.

April goes back to work. John, typing furiously at his computer, abruptly stops working. He leans back in his chair, taking his hands away from the keyboard. He looks at a framed picture on his desk of him and Ellie, embraced on vacation somewhere. He looks at his computer clock, near four o'clock. He suddenly grabs his jacket and gets up from his cubicle. He approaches Luke.

LUKE

Hey, John, could you-

John brushes past him.

LUKE (CONT'D)

John, what're you-

John pushes past people leaving the elevator and gets in. The elevator doors close on him. The floor of the office stares in confusion, Boss Warren among them. Luke bites his lip and shakes hi head disapprovingly and incredulously.

INT. DINER- EVENING

John sits in a franchise diner, in a booth by the window, a cup of coffee cradled in his hands. A menu lays in front of him. He looks up at the clock. It reads 5:55. The waitress, CHARLOTTE, stops by him. She is fairly attractive, like a 7.5.

CHARLOTTE

You're going to have to pay for something eventually.

John sets his cup down.

JOHN

I know, I will. I'm still deciding.

Charlotte looks doubtfully at him.

CHARLOTTE

You haven't opened your menu yet.

John flips the menu open and vaguely gestures at the list.

JOHN

There's a lot of choices.

CHARLOTTE

Uh-huh.

She looks around the diner.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
You're in luck. We're pretty slow today, so I won't have to kick you out. Let me know if you need anything.

She walks away, but after a few steps stops and turns back.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
Before I say anything, I don't usually bother people about their personal affairs, but are you waiting on somebody?

JOHN  
Yeah. Yeah, I am. But I don't think she's coming.

CHARLOTTE  
(half-frowning)  
Sorry.

JOHN  
It's not your fault.

CHARLOTTE  
Well, I'm sorry that she ditched you.

JOHN  
Ditched is a little strong. Or not strong enough.

CHARLOTTE  
How so?

JOHN  
(shrugs)  
Perspective.

Charlotte thinks for a moment and takes a seat opposite him.

CHARLOTTE  
You look like you need somebody to talk at.

JOHN  
That's very considerate of you, but you're on the clock.

She looks over to the counter. No one seems to care about her sitting down.

CHARLOTTE

I'm due for a break anyway. So,  
um... You need a refill on that  
coffee?

INT. DINER - EVENING - LATER

An amount of time has passed. John and Charlotte sit with fresh-ish cups of coffee, cooling and mostly empty. They are smiling, Charlotte more warmly and John more relieved to be feeling something other than sadness.

JOHN

And so the rabbi stands up and says  
to the whole boyscout troupe, "That  
wasn't my wife, that was my  
yamaka!"

Charlotte bursts out laughing, and a few chuckles are drawn out of John.

CHARLOTTE

So that's why she...?

Charlotte makes snipping gestures.

JOHN

That's why she...

John reciprocates gestures.

CHARLOTTE

I'll admit, I've never heard that  
one before.

JOHN

Not a lot of people have. I learned  
it from a travelling band of  
Buddhist monks back when I hiked  
through the wilds of China.

CHARLOTTE

(intrigued)  
Really?

JOHN

No. My dad had a weird sense of  
humor.

CHARLOTTE

Dad humor. Classic.

JOHN  
He told me those kinds of jokes all  
the time.

CHARLOTTE  
(pointedly)  
Do you?

JOHN  
(unsure)  
Not... really. Not a huge market  
for them.

CHARLOTTE  
No kids, huh?

John's smile wipes off his face. He looks down at his coffee.

JOHN  
No.

CHARLOTTE  
So, are you married?

His eyes well up. He sniffs and wipes his face.

JOHN  
(hard to speak)  
I was.

Charlotte realizes she made a huge mistake.

CHARLOTTE  
Oh, God. I'm sorry, I'm so,  
so sorry, I didn't mean to-

She stands out of the booth.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
I'll just, I don't know, go now  
and... whatever, I'm sorry.

John motions her back down, successfully choking back tears.

JOHN  
Don't...

John clears his throat and exhales heavily.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, don't worry about it.

Charlotte hesitates, but sits back down.

CHARLOTTE  
I'm sorry. I didn't know.

JOHN  
Don't worry about it.

Charlotte tentatively lifts her cup.

CHARLOTTE  
Here's to hope that she doesn't  
echo?

John begins to lift his cup to clink, but doesn't raise it more than a few inches. He sets it back down. Charlotte waits expectantly.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
Well?

JOHN  
What would be so wrong if she did?

CHARLOTTE  
(flabergasted)  
You're kidding, right?

JOHN  
Let's say hypothetically I wasn't.

Charlotte studies John closely, slightly leaning.

CHARLOTTE  
You're weird.

Charlotte sets her coffee down.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
It's like I'm in school again. I remember learning about echoes, I did a project on them one year. Did you know that echoes are the fastest rising cause of automobile accidents?

JOHN  
I did not.

CHARLOTTE  
I mean, you're driving along, minding your own business, when this person starts waddling across the road, completely oblivious. What do you do? Rhetorical.  
(MORE)

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

You brake, swerve, whatever, and that's how you run into things.

JOHN

Obviously.

CHARLOTTE

It's extremely ironic, if you think about it. Happens a lot more than you think, too. They take up space. No one wants to be near them.

Charlotte looks over her shoulder at a man in a gray suit sitting at the counter. She points him out.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

You see that guy?

John looks.

JOHN

Gray suit at the counter? I do.

Charlotte looks back to John and shakes her head.

CHARLOTTE

Just came in today. Pretty much has the whole counter to himself.

JOHN

Why haven't you called pest control?

CHARLOTTE

Naw. It's slow, so we let him be. It's kind of nice having someone fill up the place, even if they aren't really there.

JOHN

Sounds lonely.

CHARLOTTE

I guess? I haven't thought about it that much.

JOHN

Then he'll just sit there now, everyday, ever and ever?

CHARLOTTE

Well, until we get rid of him. Just what you gotta do with any of them.

JOHN  
Why bother?

CHARLOTTE  
They make accidents. They occupy.  
But above all, they're a nuisance.  
It's as a-b-c as you can get.

JOHN  
Nuisance.

CHARLOTTE  
Pests, like termites. They're  
annoying, inconveniencing, and  
dangerous.

JOHN  
Yeah. Dangerous.

CHARLOTTE  
Hey. You wanted to know. I got an A  
for that project.

JOHN  
Haven't you ever thought that maybe  
they all aren't as bad as you make  
them out to be?

Charlotte snorts.

CHARLOTTE  
And not all ants are there to get  
into your food. It's like taking  
off a band-aid: the quicker you get  
rid of it, the quicker the pain  
goes away. We're better off without  
them.

John nods. He looks at the clock. It's 6:35. He gets up from  
his seat, wordlessly and dejected, and leaves the diner.  
Charlotte watches after him.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
Hey! Where you going? You forgot to  
pay!

INT. WELLS HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

John lies in bed, on one side. He strokes the empty other  
half of the bed. He retracts his legs into a fetus-like  
position.

JOHN  
 (quietly)  
 Come back. Please. For me.

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

John rides the subway to work.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

John makes himself some coffee. While it's being prepared,  
 Luke comes up and pats his back.

LUKE  
 Top of the morning, John!

John continues coffee-ing.

JOHN  
 Luke.

Luke fidgets, and leans over.

LUKE  
 (quietly)  
 You're supposed to grimace.

JOHN  
 Why?

LUKE  
 No one says 'top of the morning'.  
 It's a myth, like dogs fetching  
 newspapers and neon-colored houses.

JOHN  
 Sorry.

LUKE  
 Of course you are.  
 (to self.)  
 It's like we don't even know each  
 other anymore.  
 (to John)  
 Anyway, I've got something to tell  
 you.

John doesn't acknowledge him.

LUKE (CONT'D)  
 Hello?  
 (no response)  
 (MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

Great. So me and some of the guys were planning on hitting up the bar after work tonight. You up for it?

JOHN

No, thanks. I've got errands to run, then I'm off to home.

Luke taps the counter, grits his teeth.

LUKE

All right, I lied, we weren't planning on it, but that's not the point.

JOHN

I don't want to go drinking, Luke.

LUKE

It's not about the drinking, it's about us helping you.

JOHN

'Us'?

LUKE

April. Me. Your friends.

JOHN

Thanks, but I'm all right.

LUKE

No, John, there's nothing 'all right' about all this, and I'm not saying there should be.

JOHN

Well, that's great, isn't it?

LUKE

I'm not really that good at this heart-to-heart thing, but the way you've been distancing yourself lately and the bottling up and whatnot, well... We just wanted to let you know that, if you need someone to talk to, we're here.

JOHN

Talk about what?

LUKE

This isn't the time to play dumb, John.

JOHN

I don't need to talk to anybody.

LUKE

I can tell. You've kept up the lone soldier attitude for the past three weeks pretty well. It makes two certain employees here uneasy.

JOHN

It shouldn't. There's nothing wrong.

LUKE

Nothing wr- that's like telling the mouse there's no snake while it's being swallowed whole.

JOHN

I just want my coffee.

LUKE

April and I are worried sick about you. You shouldn't be holding out on us, friends are there to listen, and you need to talk.

JOHN

No, no, I really don't. I don't want to talk about anything, I just want to be left well enough alone.

LUKE

See, that, that right there, that's a problem. You're still in the first stage, I think by this time you're supposed to be angry. Break something, I don't know!

JOHN

You want me to have this catharsis moment, alright. Let's have it, you start.

Luke flusters.

LUKE

Uh... Okay. How's the weather today?

JOHN

Good talk.

LUKE  
Dammit, John, that's not fair.

JOHN  
I feel much better now. You can go back to work.

LUKE  
(exasperated)  
Don't do this. Don't get sucked into this... this... obsession.

John ignores him.

LUKE (CONT'D)  
We need to talk about Ellie.

John freezes, a nerve struck.

JOHN  
(containing himself)  
Not now.

LUKE  
You're digging yourself a deep hole, and soon enough we won't be able to pull you out.

JOHN  
(angered)  
Great, you can fill me in when I'm done.

LUKE  
(surprised)  
That's, uh, not what I meant. Are you feeling all right?

JOHN  
No! I'm ANGRY!

Pause.

LUKE  
Okay! Good! We've moved onto stage two, that's progress.

JOHN  
Screw progress! You want to help me? Do you really? You can start by kindly FUCKING OFF.

John pours himself coffee.

LUKE  
... Well, that's a start.

John yells and throws the coffee pot, mid-pour, to the ground, shattering it. There is a pause as everyone in the office stares. John looks around, then back to Luke. John leaves the mess where it is and exits the building. Boss Warren, who watched from a distance, huffs judgmentally. April walks up to Luke.

APRIL  
(wtf)  
What the hell happened?

Luke, shocked by John, breathes deep and looks directly at April.

LUKE  
This is why I don't like talking to people.

Luke goes back to his cubicle. April sighs.

INT. DINER - EVENING

John is back in the diner, waiting on someone. He is much calmer, and the outburst has drained him. The time is 6:34. Charlotte walks up to him.

CHARLOTTE  
She's not coming today, is she?

JOHN  
There's still time. She probably-

CHARLOTTE  
You have to stop coming here, man.  
It's pathetic. She's not coming.

Charlotte leaves. John checks the clock. It is 6:35. He heaves a sigh and gently puts his head, with too much control, down on the table. A moment passes.

ELLIE  
I am so glad we don't have a car.

John slowly looks up. Ellie settles into the seat opposite him.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
Have you seen the traffic? Probably construction again. They'll never stop fixing this place.

John is stunned ,just looking at her. A pause as Ellie seems to be listening to him.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Well, no, I'm not saying it isn't a good thing they're doing, it's just I don't see why they need to tear up the whole of Main Street to fill in a few pot holes.

John chuckles softly, a small smile.

JOHN

They could just use toothpaste to fill them in.

Ellie smiles and laughs.

ELLIE

It's not a house, you can't slap poor man's spackle over it and say done.

JOHN

You came back.

Ellie looks up, as if a waiter came over carrying their food.

ELLIE

Oh! I see someone already ordered. You better not have gotten mine wrong.

JOHN

I asked you, I begged you to come home.

Ellie inspects her invisible dish.

ELLIE

Perfect. You know me too well.

She begins to pantomime eating.

JOHN

That's not how it works, is it? You can't call Heaven and ask for a refund.

ELLIE

Hey, did you hear? No, wait, you haven't, sorry. Debbie got fired today.

JOHN

No, that's stupid, why'd I say that?

ELLIE

I know, right? Mother of four kids, and they throw her out for swiping toiler paper? It's a little extreme, don't you think?

JOHN

God damn it. God... you're really here.

ELLIE

If corporations had hearts, the world would be a better place. Probably.

JOHN

It's like, you always expect some cataclysmic change would mess with every aspect of the world around you. The way you look at art, history, science-

ELLIE

Oh, of course Africa would be a whole lot less hungry.

JOHN

- people. But not really. It just makes things look empty.

ELLIE

Oh, my GOD this food is so good.

Charlotte approaches them, looking a little embarrassed and wary.

CHARLOTTE

Uh... Hey there. I'm your waitress, Charlotte. Can I-

ELLIE

You know what would be great? Living in a world where all food was as good as this. You're welcome, Africa.

CHARLOTTE

(uncertainly)  
... get you anything?

ELLIE

Don't knock my ideas, my ideas are great.

Charlotte is weirded out slightly by Ellie, and focuses her attention on John.

CHARLOTTE

Food?

JOHN

No, thank you.

Charlotte nods and backs away.

CHARLOTTE

Sorry. About before.

She hurries off. Ellie snorts.

ELLIE

All right, whatever you say. So, how'd your day go?

John ponders Ellie, who patiently listens to him intently.

JOHN

You know, I thought I'd be happier if you did come back like this. Like it would fix whatever was missing. I'm not ashamed to admit I've cried myself to sleep nights praying for you to happen.

ELLIE

No kidding? Well, that's good isn't it?

JOHN

This is like a nightmare, Ellie. I don't know what else I was expecting, because it sure as hell isn't a-

ELLIE

Oh, she's out? Good for her, I heard the accident was rough.

JOHN

... blessing. It's just a mean joke.

ELLIE

She got lucky. I heard it was almost out of her coverage.

JOHN

Now you're just a recording of half a conversation. Just an echo.

They start speaking over each other, Ellie keeping a constant volume while John speaks in a crescendo.

ELLIE

It's all so silly, isn't it? No, stupid, not silly, very stupid. Silly is for clowns, balloon animals, and funny little kids. Stupid is grown-up. And you know what? I'd rather be silly over stupid any day of the week. Maybe not Monday, Mondays are stupid. Henceforth, Mondays are reserved for grown-up stupidity, and that's just the way it should be.

JOHN

I'm making myself look insane, but what else am I supposed to do? You left me with nothing! An empty house, and empty routine, it's like I'm Marius and the revolution has come and gone. Of course you had to come back and spew trivial jargon over everything, it's such bullshit! Bullshit! You aren't real! You don't exist! You aren't here!

As Ellie stops speaking, John stands up.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(yelling)

You are not my wife!

The diner falls silent save for Ellie, who giggles and smiles brightly.

ELLIE

(lovingly)

I love you.

John falls back into his seat, beaten. Ellie stretches out her hand and holds John's invisible hand. John sees it and, hesitantly, matches her hand. His fingers fade through the surface of her skin.

John gets choked up and takes his hand back. Ellie takes a last bite of her food and pushes her plate away.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Oof, I ate too much again. I've been getting hungrier lately. Well, they said it would happen, I suppose.

JOHN

They did.

ELLIE

I have to get going. Sorry, hon.

JOHN

Don't go, Ellie. You won't come back.

ELLIE

Quit your worrying, it's not a long walk. Come on, allons-y.

Ellie stands and exits the diner, John follows her. Charlotte watches them leave.

CHARLOTTE

(under breath)

Freak.

EXT. CITY STREET - EVENING

Ellie and John walk down the street, side by side. The sun is beginning to set, and Ellie stares up at the sky while John stares at Ellie, placid.

ELLIE

The sky's beautiful tonight.

JOHN

Yeah. It is.

ELLIE

Kind of wish we could see more stars, though. Remember when I told you about when I visited Madagascar?

BOTH

You could see the whole cosmos there.

ELLIE

It was something else. I'd like to go there again.

They come to an intersection and turn to each other.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

I need to go.

JOHN

(distressed)

I should have stopped you.

ELLIE

I'll be fine. Look, it's still light out, and I've even got my pepper spray. Baddies beware.

JOHN

I shouldn't have let you go.

ELLIE

I'll see you at home.

She kisses the air.

JOHN

No, you won't.

ELLIE

Love you.

Ellie walks off in her direction, John turns and walks off in his. He pauses, caught off guard by his cruise control, and follows Ellie at a short, manageable distance.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The sun has set, the only light comes from streetlamps and windows. John follows Ellie at a brisk pace. He watches as she is suddenly yanked to the side by an unknown force. John stops dead and observes. She struggles, then breaks free out into the street into the lights of an oncoming truck. She freezes, it honks, and then passes right through her. She is like a deer in the headlights. She covers her face moments before she is launched backwards and rolls. She come to a shot stop in a bloody mess. John can't help but look on as she gasps weakly on the ground. He is watching her die. Hamish, who has been pedestrian and spectator to the event, stands beside him.

HAMISH

It's odd. You see these things all the time, every day, yet it's such a rarity to see their actual perspiration.

(no response)

Was she yours?

JOHN

She was mine.

HAMISH

Sister? Wife? Daughter?

JOHN

Second one.

HAMISH

I imagine she would be a little old to be your daughter.

John coughs and shivers.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

Warm night.

JOHN

He didn't stop. That's what they told me. He ran her down and barreled on. What kind of person does that, do you think?

HAMISH

Oh, philosophy, I see. I'm sure there's more than one way to answer that.

JOHN

I wonder if he regrets it.

HAMISH

Were we Greek, I'd tell you there aren't enough hours in his day for him to. But let's be real here. Of course he does.

JOHN

I'm not so sure.

HAMISH

Don't be so quick to demonize them.  
Their actions may be a sin  
unforgivable, but who are we to say  
they weren't under the heat of  
crisis as well?

JOHN

Why are you defending him?

HAMISH

I'm broadening your perspective.

JOHN

As if it needs it.

HAMISH

Perhaps not. Perhaps yes.  
Nevertheless, it's what I offer.

JOHN

(sarcastic)  
That's very comforting.

HAMISH

(under breath)  
I didn't mean it in that way.  
(to John)  
Is this her first time around?

JOHN

Yes.

HAMISH

It only gets worse from here on.

Hamish checks his watch. Noticing the time he starts off walking, but doesn't make it more than a few steps before turning back to John.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

Do you mind if I ask your name?

JOHN

John.

HAMISH

John.

JOHN

Wells.

HAMISH

Wells. John Wells.

Hamish extends his hand.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
I'm Hamish.

They shake hands. Hamish pulls John in.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
Don't let her linger.

Hamish leaves. John looks down at his hand, a business card for pest control with Hamish's number on it.

Montage begins with John at diner, sitting with Ellie. As clips alternate, the passing of days is characterized with John wearing a different style of suit and tie combo.

BEGIN MONTAGE

John sitting at the diner with Ellie.

John rushing out of work.

Luke failing to stop him again, showing his disappointment.

John sitting at the diner with Ellie.

Charlotte looking very annoyed.

Luke attempting to talk to John again, and failing.

John sitting at the diner with Ellie.

END MONTAGE

INT. DINER - EVENING

As usual, John sits in the diner. However, he is alone now. He seems like he's waiting on Ellie. He glances at the clock. It ticks past 7:21. Charlotte comes over.

CHARLOTTE  
Looks like someone finally got to  
her, huh.

John doesn't answer. Charlotte refills his coffee and leaves.

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

John leans against the rails of a bridge, looking over. He considers the drop, the ground below. He turns away.

INT. WELLS HOME - NIGHT

John comes home to a dark house. He closes the door and stands in the dark for a moment. He turns on the lights, shrugging off his jacket. He lets it fall to the floor. Ellie enters the room.

ELLIE

Oh, John, don't just leave your jacket on the floor. Pick it up.

John obeys. He hangs his jacket and is suddenly struck by the notion that, not only is Ellie in their home when she isn't supposed to be, but purposefully noted him leaving his jacket on the floor. He whirls to her.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

And welcome home, by the way.

John runs out of the house and slams the door behind him. Ellie looks down at herself, confused.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

(confused)  
Okay.

EXT. WELLS HOME - NIGHT

John walks out onto their lawn and pulls at his hair, gasping and alarmed. He knocks his head and squeezes his eyes. He takes deep breaths to calm himself down.

JOHN

All right. What the hell?

He turns back to the house and raises a finger. He walks around the yard.

INT. WELLS HOME - NIGHT

John edges open the door, peeking inside. Ellie is nowhere to be seen. He tip-toes inside, quietly shutting the door. Ellie sneaks up behind him.

ELLIE

Boo!

John screams, jumps, and falls over. Ellie stands over him as he scrambles to his feet.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
Aren't you jumpy today? Like a  
bunny. Did something happen at  
work?

John points an accusing finger at her.

JOHN  
You're not real.

ELLIE  
Boy, you know how to make a girl  
feel special.

JOHN  
I don't know what you are, so that  
probably means I need to hire  
someone who will tell me. I need to  
clear my schedule.

ELLIE  
Ha ha. Funny. You're a real  
jokester.

JOHN  
Sh!

ELLIE  
Don't shush me! Rude.

John closes his eyes and concentrates.

JOHN  
You're not real. You're not real.  
You're not real. You're not real.

ELLIE  
Wow, you're getting into this.  
Here, I'll even prove I'm not some  
figment or whatever.

Ellie wipes her hand across a book lying on the table. It  
goes right through.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
See? The book is-

She stops, seeing that there is no book on the floor. She  
swipes at the book again. Nothing happens. She repeats.  
Nothing. She bends over and her hand goes through the table.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
John, I think there's something  
wrong with me.

John opens his eyes.

JOHN  
You're-

ELLIE  
I think I'm having a nightmare.

JOHN  
Oh my god, you're still an echo.

ELLIE  
What?

JOHN  
But you aren't supposed to... Say  
"What I wouldn't give for a drag!  
Just one drag!"

ELLIE  
Why?

JOHN  
Just say it.

ELLIE  
Uh, "What I wouldn't give for a  
drag! Just one drag!"

John giggles.

JOHN  
That was perfect.

ELLIE  
Was that from-

JOHN  
Ghost. That was from Ghost.

ELLIE  
(gasp)  
I love that movie.

JOHN  
Patrick Swayze!

ELLIE  
Yes!

A brief moment of jubilation is taken away as Ellie sombers with realization.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Am I... dead?

John also sombers. He coughs.

JOHN

Yeah.

ELLIE

How long?

JOHN

A month.

ELLIE

And I'm an echo?

JOHN

Apparently.

ELLIE

But... That doesn't make any sense.

JOHN

Who cares? You're home.

John goes to embrace her, but his arms go right through.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Most of you anyway.

ELLIE

I'm going to miss that.

JOHN

So will I.

John situates his arms to the appearance that he's hugging her.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Welcome home.

INT. MAIN PEST CONTROL BUILDING - DAY

Hamish walks through cubicle aisles, saying the occasional greeting to passerbys. He enters his office, seeing CONRAD has already taken a seat in front of his desk. He appears mildly disgruntled.

HAMISH  
Beating the host to his office,  
Conrad, is not the mark of a well-  
mannered guest.

CONRAD  
It used to be mine.

HAMISH  
In the Stone Age, perhaps.

CONRAD  
It's good to see you, Hamish.

Hamish goes to his desk.

HAMISH  
What brings you down from your  
perch?

CONRAD  
A guest.

HAMISH  
I see. How have you been, Eve?

EVELYN, who has been against, the corner wall, reveals  
herself.

EVELYN  
Evelyn, Hamish. Evelyn.

HAMISH  
(smile)  
My apologies. Evelyn. You look  
well.

EVELYN  
Can't say the same about you.

HAMISH  
Harsh, Evelyn. Tsk tsk. Much too  
harsh.

CONRAD  
Our good friend, Eve, here-

EVELYN  
(acidly)  
Evelyn.

CONRAD  
... Has some concerns about our,  
er, services.

HAMISH  
I'm sure she does.

EVELYN  
You'll have to start listening to us eventually. Our voices will be heard.

HAMISH  
Then shout. Shout. And keep shouting until no one hears you anymore.

EVELYN  
Then we'll shout louder! Louder and louder! You can't keep us on mute forever.

HAMISH  
I don't have to. You do that well enough yourselves.

CONRAD  
Why don't you take a seat?

EVELYN  
I will not! I will stand tall, and I will continue to stand tall until we-

Conrad and Hamish groan loudly.

CONRAD  
Just take the damn seat!

Evelyn haughtily takes the seat.

EVELYN  
Could we please-

Hamish raises a finger to pause her.

HAMISH  
Before we begin, there's something I'd like to know.  
(to Conrad)  
Why is she talking to me?

CONRAD  
I already told her no, but she's very insistent on speaking directly to you.

HAMISH  
Well then, Evelyn, what will we-

EVELYN  
Stop the extermination of human  
souls!

HAMISH  
The usual then.

Hamish walks to the door and opens it, gesturing for Evelyn to leave.

EVELYN  
But I only just got here.

HAMISH  
If you planned on a shouting match  
today, I'm afraid I can't oblige. I  
have work to do. You have signs to  
wave.

EVELYN  
Every time you do one of your  
little "exorcisms", you destroy  
another soul. A human soul! Does  
that mean nothing to you?

HAMISH  
There's no science to suggest they  
are.

EVELYN  
There isn't any to suggest they  
aren't!

HAMISH  
Then it's an impasse. What is  
clear, science or no, is that  
echoes are a detriment.

EVELYN  
We only need to understand them.

HAMISH  
And you are welcome to. Out there,  
wearing your voice out over a  
megaphone. But you will not prevent  
me from my civil duty.

Hamish gesture for her to leave again. With a huff, she  
exits.

EVELYN  
See you around, Hamish.

He shuts the door behind her.

CONRAD  
Well, isn't she pleasant?

HAMISH  
She's within her right.

Hamish opens a crack between the window blinds and peers out. Outside, a protest mob for F.O.E. Swarms around the building, separated by a perimeter of riot guards. They proclaim signs, chants, and marches against the exorcism of echoes.

CONRAD  
I don't see why we don't just get rid of them.

HAMISH  
They aren't violent.

CONRAD  
Never stopped us before.

HAMISH  
We're better than that.

CONRAD  
If you insist.  
(checks his watch)  
My work here's done.

HAMISH  
And that was?

CONRAD  
Keeping the peace between you two.

Conrad opens the door.

CONRAD (CONT'D)  
Take care of yourself, Hamish.

He closes the door. Hamish sits in his chair. He glances at his phone. He hits the voicemail.

VOICEMAIL  
(voice of Hulk Hogan)  
You have no new messages, brother!

HAMISH  
 (to himself)  
 This would have been easier if you  
 had just called me.

He picks up the phone and dials a number. It rings and the other end picks up.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
 Yes, this is Hamish. I would like  
 any information you have on the  
 recently deceased of a Mr. John  
 Wells.

INT. WELLS HOME - DAY

There's is a knock on John's front door. He opens it to Luke.

JOHN  
 Oh, hey Luke!

LUKE  
 You haven't been at work for two  
 days.

Luke notices that John is clean-shaven, bathed, and looks nice.

LUKE (CONT'D)  
 You're cheery. You don't look like  
 someone dragged you out of a  
 dumpster. She came back, didn't  
 she?

JOHN  
 (nervous chuckle)  
 I don't know what-

ELLIE (O.S.)  
 Is someone at the door?

LUKE  
 Is that...? I think your crazy's  
 wearing off on me.

Ellie looks around John to see Luke.

ELLIE  
 Hi, Luke!

Luke, shocked into silence, stares and points at her. John grabs his collar and yanks him inside.

INT. WELLS HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Luke keeps distance between himself and Ellie.

LUKE  
What is that?

JOHN  
That's Ellie. You know her.

LUKE  
That's not Ellie, Ellie died!

JOHN  
We know.

LUKE  
Then what is she?

JOHN  
I don't know. I don't, and I don't care.

LUKE  
Can't you get rid of her?

ELLIE  
Excuse me?

LUKE  
Pest control or something.

ELLIE  
I'm not something to get rid of!

JOHN  
She's not going anywhere.

LUKE  
You signed the papers, you knew she was a possibility.

JOHN  
The variables have changed, the contract doesn't cover this.

LUKE  
She's still an echo.

John comes in close to Luke, quieting his voice out of Ellie's earshot.

JOHN

I know you're scared of her. You have to trust me on this.

LUKE

You have some explaining to do.

John looks to Ellie.

JOHN

Can you give us a moment?

Ellie obliges, leaving the room. John gives Luke some space.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Aren't you supposed to be at work?

LUKE

Warren sent me. Thought you needed checking up on. God knows how you still have your job.

JOHN

He hasn't fired me?

LUKE

Well, don't sound so surprised. He's given you leave.

JOHN

Isn't that nice of him?

LUKE

And you've been giving April and I anxiety. Now with Casper in the corner and your chin squeaky-clean... you can't avoid us forever.

John considers.

JOHN

Ellie!

Ellie looks around the corner.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm going out. Don't leave the house.

ELLIE

Duh. Be back soon.

JOHN

I will.  
(to Luke)  
Lunch at Borgia's?

Luke checks his phone.

LUKE

April's on her break. She'll meet  
us there.

EXT. BORGIA'S - PATIO - DAY

April, Luke, and John have had their food delivered to them. They sit around a table on the patio to a restaurant. It's sunny outside.

APRIL

So I have this straight. She's an  
echo, but she's not.

JOHN

She's not an ordinary echo, no.

LUKE

It was reacting, April. Just like  
any normal person would.

JOHN

She. She's not an it.

LUKE

Sorry.

APRIL

When'd this happen?

JOHN

Two days ago.

APRIL

That's when she started echoing?

JOHN

Not... quite.

APRIL

You got stuck in a routine, didn't  
you?

JOHN

It's not like I meant it or-

APRIL  
You son of a bitch.

LUKE  
April!

APRIL  
What? This asshole's been blowing us off for the better part of a month.

LUKE  
With fairly good reason, I'd say.

APRIL  
You don't get better by canning up your saddies and your feel-bads, you open up to us.

LUKE  
I told him that.

APRIL  
(to John)  
Asshole.

JOHN  
Enough, alright? That's done, it's behind us.

John coughs heartily.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
We pushed it out the car on the freeway.

LUKE  
It's not why we're here anyway.

APRIL  
The bigger question here is: what do we do with her?

JOHN  
Whoa, whoa, whoa, we're not doing anything with her.

LUKE  
You have no idea what she can do.

APRIL  
Imagine the science!

JOHN  
No science. No keeping her at a ten-foot pole distance.

LUKE  
She's dangerous.

John slams the table and looks threateningly at Luke.

JOHN  
She is not dangerous. Not to me, not to you, not to anyo-

John coughs again. April reaches into her purse and retrieves a cough drop.

APRIL  
Here.

She hands it to John. He takes it and looks at it in disgust.

JOHN  
Ugh, I hate these things.

APRIL  
Take it, you dweeb.

John semi-reluctantly puts it in his mouth.

LUKE  
I'm just saying, she's an unknown. You should be careful around her.

John, serious, stares Luke down.

JOHN  
First, get married. Then have your better half get hit by a truck. Then you can tell me who to be careful around.

LUKE  
Look, I'm not saying-

John's phone rings. He picks it up.

JOHN  
Hello?

PIKE (O.S.)  
Mr. Wells?

JOHN  
Yes, who is this?

PIKE (O.S.)  
This is Inspector Pike. I'm on my way for your house inspection.

JOHN  
Inspection? I thought that wasn't for another-

PIKE (O.S.)  
Your appointment's been pushed up. I should be at your house soon.

John hangs up suddenly and rushes out of Borgia's.

EXT. WELLS HOME - LATER

John powerwalks hastily from the street to his house while Luke and April lag behind at their respective cars. PIKE is already at his door, waiting. He meets John halfway.

PIKE  
You're late, Mr. Wells.

JOHN  
Traffic caught me.

PIKE  
Understandable. Thank you for taking time out of your day for this, it makes the process smoother.

JOHN  
Ah, yeah, about that, is there any chance we could do this another day? Say, tomorrow?

PIKE  
Oh, I wouldn't. You've been pushed ahead, the allotted time's been filled.

JOHN  
Surely, you can make an exception.

PIKE  
One was already made. Don't wish for another.  
(chuckle)  
And don't call me Shirley. Come on, let's go.

He approaches the door. John bars his way.

JOHN  
You need a warrant.

Pike sighs, containing his strained patience.

PIKE  
Don't be a hindrance, Mr. Wells. It will be easier for both of us if you just cooperate.

Pike produces a folded letter that he hands to John.

PIKE (CONT'D)  
The only reason I didn't bash down your day is because I'm a respecting man. Now please open the door.

John hesitates, looking past him at Luke and April approaching. He relents, slowly unlocking and opening the door.

INT. WELLS HOME - DAY

Ellie sits on the couch. She looks up when the door is opened, smiling.

ELLIE  
You're back quick. How was lunch?

John enters grimly, and Pike behind him. Ellie's smile dies and she becomes extremely still, eyes on the newcomer. Pike glances around the room until he settles on Ellie. A tense beat passes before he nods cordially.

PIKE  
Ma'am.

She glances back and forth between him and John, and takes a stiff posture.

PIKE (CONT'D)  
Please, make yourselves comfortable. It'll only take me a few minutes.

Pike moves to the stairs and stares up them. He climbs a few steps and stops.

PIKE (CONT'D)  
Do you, by any chance, have anything to drink?

JOHN

Water.

PIKE

Could you get me a glass? I'm parched.

JOHN

Sure.

John doesn't move. Pike looks expectantly at him until he goes into the kitchen. Pike ascends the stairs.

INT. WELLS HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

John hurriedly fetches a glass and fills it with tap water.

INT. WELLS HOME - UPSTAIRS - DAY

Pike holds out a device that beeps intermittently. He stands outside the closed door. The device doesn't react. He moves on.

INT. WELLS HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

John carries the tap water into the living room and sets it quickly down on the table. He turns to Ellie.

JOHN

We need to get you out of here.

Luke and April enter.

LUKE

What's happening?

JOHN

We're leaving.

LUKE

Why?

JOHN

Are you an idiot?

INT. WELLS HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

Pike scans the bed. As it goes over Ellie's half of the bed the device reacts. He follows the trail out the door.

INT. WELLS HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

John confronts Luke, impatient.

JOHN  
We don't have time for this!

LUKE  
Play it cool! She'll be fine.

JOHN  
She will not! I won't risk it, not  
when I don't have to.

LUKE  
You're overreacting.

APRIL  
You did say it, John, she's not  
ordinary. What's to say his  
doohickey will even work on her?

JOHN  
What's to say it won't?

INT. WELLS HOME - UPSTAIRS - DAY

Pike follows the trail into the hallway toward the stairs.

INT. WELLS HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

JOHN  
I won't sit her and argue! She's  
leaving.

John crosses to Ellie.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Come on, baby, let's go.

He holds out his hand to her. Inches from touching, Pike suddenly slowly descends the stairs. He is intent on the hunt. Everyone else freezes and John slowly draws his hand back.

Pike sweeps his device. When it points toward Ellie the beeping intensifies. He follows it right to her, where the beeping becomes manic. He stands right in front of her, Ellie and John watching him fearfully. He suddenly shakes his head and smacks the device.

PIKE

My apologies. My equipment seems to be broken.

Pike puts the device away. The room relaxes.

PIKE (CONT'D)

Sorry about your wasted time, Mr. Wells.

Pike heads for the door.

LUKE

What, that's it?

Pike pauses. He turns back to the tap water resting on the table and downs it. He wipes his chin.

PIKE

Usually inconclusive inspections need a return trip. But there's been too much duress in this house. I think I can overlook it this once.

Pike nods to John.

PIKE (CONT'D)

Have a good day.

Pike exits the house. John and Ellie breath an immense sigh of relief.

ELLIE

Thank God that's over.

LUKE

You can't keep this up.

JOHN

I can and I will.

APRIL

What about us? What do we do?

JOHN

What I need you to do-

John approaches them.

JOHN (CONT'D)

- is keep a secret. You can't tell anyone about her.

LUKE  
John, I-

JOHN  
(pleading)  
Please, Luke. I'm calling in every  
favor I've got with you on this.

Luke looks uncertainly at April.

LUKE  
All right. Lips are zipped like a  
nun's jeans.

JOHN  
Thank you.

LUKE  
Just be safe.

April's phone beeps. She checks it.

APRIL  
Aaaaand we're late.

LUKE  
Shit. Back to work.

Luke exits. April waves goodbye and follows him. John closes the door behind them, exhales and smiles reassuringly at Ellie.

INT. OLD PEOPLE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

An old man and woman lie on their bed, embraced, apparently asleep. Hamish stands over them at the foot of their bed. He watches them, almost pitying and yet even in a fantastical way. Lang finishes scanning them.

LANG  
(quietly)  
One hundred and four kilo-Hertz

HAMISH  
Both?

LANG  
Both.

HAMISH  
Good.

DeMarco enters and leans against the door frame.

DEMARCO

No one else here. Looks like they lived alone.

HAMISH

I wouldn't say entirely alone.

Hamish admires the old couple.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

Look at that, DeMarco. Frozen in time, locked in an embrace. Isn't that how you'd like to go?

DEMARCO

A whorehouse, more like. All the lovin', none the payin'.

HAMISH

(contempt)

Leave. You're fouling the air.

DeMarco snorts and exits. Hamish puts in his ear plugs and activates the pylon, setting it.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

White noise in 3. 2. 1.

INT. OLD PEOPLE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Hamish exits the bedroom, removing his ear plugs.

HAMISH

Clean up.

DeMarco and Lang enter the room. Hamish's phone rings. He picks up.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

Hamish.

PIKE (O.S.)

Your suspicions were unfounded.

HAMISH

You checked his home?

PIKE (O.S.)

Checked. Nothing.

HAMISH

That's impossible.

PIKE (O.S.)  
Whatever you say.

HAMISH  
Who was there?

PIKE (O.S.)  
Your boy Wells, two of his friends,  
and his wife.

HAMISH  
His wife died, that's who you were  
looking for.

PIKE (O.S.)  
His girlfriend then.

HAMISH  
He's been in mourning for the past  
month. I doubt he's had time to  
romance anyone.

PIKE (O.S.)  
Then he found the time.

HAMISH  
How did you know?

PIKE (O.S.)  
They were awfully... friendly.

Hamish, a thought occurring, removes a piece of paper from  
his pocket and unfolds it.

HAMISH  
Describe her to me.

On the paper is the information of an obituary and a picture  
of Ellie.

INT. WELLS HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

John and Ellie sit side by side on the couch. Ellie observes  
John as he writes on a piece of paper.

ELLIE  
You wrote yourself into a corner  
there.

John pauses.

JOHN  
How?

ELLIE  
You ended the line with "orange".

JOHN  
Well, if you'd let me finish.

John writes again. Ellie snickers.

ELLIE  
No, that doesn't work.

JOHN  
What? It rhymes! Of course it does.

ELLIE  
'So please, darling, accept this  
orange/ Else I hang myself from the  
Mount of Blorengé'.

JOHN  
It's a real place.

ELLIE  
One: it's a love poem, not for the  
suicide watch. Two: it's just a big  
hill, not a mountain.

JOHN  
I think I'll hang it on the fridge  
later.

He sets the pen down.

ELLIE  
I think I could let it slide.

She smiles and goes in to kiss John. She's reminded of her lack of physical body and draws back, saddened. John pulls himself in closer to comfort.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
I'm going to be like this forever,  
aren't I?

John doesn't answer.

INT. WELLS HOME - LIVING ROOM - LATER

John rummages through his computer, pulling up his e-mail. In the background of the room the television plays. On screen is a protest mob for F.O.E. and Evelyn on a pulpit.

REPORTER

The F.O.E. protests have been escalating, and the mob increases in number with each passing day -

He notices a new message from an unknown address, simply labeled "Meeting". He opens it. A message pops up, reading "Mr. Wells, An important matter needs discussing between us. Coor's Park, tomorrow, 12:00. Come alone."

EXT. PARK - DAY

John sits on a bench in the park. The sun is out and the park is well populated. John waits for a few moments when Hamish wordlessly sits down next to him.

HAMISH

You've surprised me, Mr. Wells. I wasn't expecting you'd come.

JOHN

I know you.

HAMISH

We've met, yes.

JOHN

Hamish.

HAMISH

Another surprise. You have an excellent memory.

JOHN

It won me awards in elementary school.

HAMISH

Spelling bee?

JOHN

Some. Most were just for being a know-it-all ass.

Hamish chuckles.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You know, I hadn't planned on going to the park today. I'd like to know why I decided to come.

HAMISH  
There's nothing wrong with enjoying  
outside.

JOHN  
To the point, Hamish.

HAMISH  
There is no point.

John gets up to leave.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
But I found out something  
interesting the other day.

John stops.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
Wouldn't you like to know what it  
is?

John sits back down.

JOHN  
Is it important enough to drag me  
out to the park?

HAMISH  
That all hinges on you.  
(pause)  
Your inspector didn't find  
anything.

John pales slightly. He coughs.

JOHN  
Then I don't have any echoes.

HAMISH  
That's what's so interesting, isn't  
it? Considering the circumstances  
of our first meeting. Makes one  
wonder what happened to her.

JOHN  
I called someone else. Another pest  
control agent.

HAMISH  
If I hadn't been meticulous in my  
research, then our conversation  
would end here, then.  
(MORE)

HAMISH (CONT'D)

Yet nowhere did I look did I find any reports or documentation of any such exorcism.

JOHN

I don't know what to tell you. It must have fallen between the cracks.

HAMISH

You may be right. It's been known to happen.

Hamish stands up.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

Are you fond of coffee?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Hamish and John sit down at a table with cups of coffee.

HAMISH

Can you imagine how I felt, Mr. Wells, upon receiving a call and learning that your home was lacking of an echo?

JOHN

I wouldn't say.

HAMISH

It was a shock.

JOHN

I didn't realize it was that important to you.

HAMISH

Always. I was confident I would have to visit your abode sometime soon.

John coughs heartily.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

Alas, I was denied. But then the inspector told me something. Of a lover in your home.

JOHN

I don't have one.

HAMISH

And he described her like a certain  
someone you and I know.

Hamish removes the obituary and sets it on the table for  
John. John stares at the picture of Ellie.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

Someone I know to be dead.

Hamish leans in.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

I don't know what you're hiding,  
John. What kind of monster. But  
I'll tell you that it is extremely  
dangerous.

John tenses, almost lashing out at Hamish. He maintains his  
composure.

JOHN

You're wrong.

John gets up, leaving his coffee, and goes to leave.

HAMISH

You can't keep it under wraps  
forever.

John exits.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

You and your damn phenomenon.

INT. WELLS HOME - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

John stands in front of the closed door, staring. He's  
hesitant to go inside. Slowly, he turns the doorknob and  
opens it.

Inside, a child's bedroom is set up. Crib, mobile, bright  
animal wallpaper, everything. He looks in sadly. His eyes  
well up, and he fights back the tears.

Ellie walks up behind him, looking over his shoulder. Seeing  
the contents inside, she wraps her arms around him  
superficially.

ELLIE

I'm sorry.

John turns around. He strokes Ellie's belly.

JOHN  
Do you think he's in there?

INT. WELLS HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

John lies in his bed, Ellie beside him above the covers. John coughs. He stares up at the ceiling, contemplating, and Ellie watches.

JOHN  
I think we need to leave soon.

ELLIE  
What do you mean?

JOHN  
Someone knows about you.

Ellie sits up.

ELLIE  
How?

JOHN  
He saw you. Back when you were just an echo on your first loop. I don't know, but... We can't stay here.

Ellie shakes her head.

ELLIE  
No. You're not uprooting your life for my sake.

JOHN  
There's nothing to uproot. Imagine it, us getting on a train, going where it takes us. We could disappear.

ELLIE  
I'm not letting you do that.

JOHN  
Ellie-

ELLIE  
It's not worth it. Not for me.

John imitates stroking her cheek.

JOHN  
Yes, you are.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

John looks over Luke's cubicle in the office building, talking to him. Luke is more concentrated on his work.

JOHN

... So, now, I don't know what to do.

LUKE

I don't know why you're talking to me about it.

JOHN

You said friends talk to each other.

LUKE

Yeah, but I'm busy.

JOHN

Didn't stop you before.

LUKE

I don't know, go talk to April.

JOHN

Okay, but now I need some direction.

John looks over April's cubicle, now pestering her. April shrugs.

APRIL

Well, she's right, you can't just drop everything and abscond.

JOHN

But I can!

APRIL

And what about us?

JOHN

I have to think of Ellie first.

April concedes, disappointed.

JOHN (CONT'D)

What?

APRIL

If that's your way of thinking, then there's nothing else I can do.

John rests his chin on the top of her cubicle wall.

JOHN  
I just need somewhere where I know  
she'll be safe.

Boss Warren tries to catch John's attention from across the room.

WARREN  
Wells!

John look over. Boss Warren motions for him to visit his office before disappearing inside.

April leans in to John.

APRIL  
(quietly)  
Ask Boss Warren about it.

JOHN  
(quietly)  
What for?

APRIL  
(quietly)  
He knows some people. Ask him about  
F.O.E.

April nods him off and goes back to work.

INT. WARREN'S OFFICE - DAY

John enters Boss Warren's office.

WARREN  
John. Good to see you. Take a seat.

John sits in a chair in front of Boss Warren's desk. Boss Warren studies him for a moment, not saying anything.

WARREN (CONT'D)  
I like you, John. That's the only  
reason you still have a job.

JOHN  
Thank you, sir.

WARREN  
You're looking better.

JOHN  
You look the same, I'd say.

Boss Warren chuckles.

WARREN  
And you've got a sense of humor.  
More than I can say for the rest  
around here.

Boss Warren rises to stare out the window.

WARREN (CONT'D)  
You had me worried awhile there.

John coughs heartily. Warren looks worried.

JOHN  
You weren't the only one, sir.

WARREN  
That's a mean cough, John.

JOHN  
I think it's just the season.

WARREN  
Hm. When can I expect you back?

John begins to speak, pauses, and shakes his head uncertainly.

JOHN  
I can't say for sure.

WARREN  
I can't keep you off work forever.  
Don't take too long.

JOHN  
I won't.

WARREN  
If you need help, I'll do what I  
can.

JOHN  
There was something, actually.

Boss Warren perks in attention.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
What can you tell me about F.O.E.?

Boss Warren turns back to him.

WARREN

John... You can't seriously be considering running off and joining their ranks.

JOHN

No! No, I'm just curious.

Boss Warren sighs and moves back to his desk.

WARREN

Good. An association with them isn't the best tactic at the moment anyway. It's a movement built ground up out of radicals. You'd have to be.

JOHN

Why's that?

Boss Warren shoots him a strange glance.

WARREN

What rock have you been under?

JOHN

No rock. I just want your view on it.

WARREN

Same as everyone else. Echoes aren't human souls. Common knowledge. F.O.E. has held onto the belief that they are. And I think enough people want to convince themselves of the same.

JOHN

They sound harmless.

WARREN

A connection to them is playing with fire, don't be fooled. Why, my career has nearly gone under a few times thanks to them.

JOHN

I never heard about that.

WARREN

You wouldn't.

JOHN  
Who do you know?

WARREN  
A lovely girl named Eve. Spearhead  
of it all. I'm sure you've seen her  
on the news a few times.

JOHN  
How does someone come to know  
someone like her?

WARREN  
Friends. From an age long past.  
(pause)  
Why?

JOHN  
Just curious.

WARREN  
No. Too many questions, no.

Boss Warren, gravely, speaks very seriously.

WARREN (CONT'D)  
She's a friend of mine. But I won't  
lie and say she isn't trouble. Do  
you hear me?

JOHN  
Yes.

Warren looks him over.

WARREN  
Is this what you want?

John doesn't answer. Boss Warren sighs.

WARREN (CONT'D)  
She's in the encampment outside the  
pest control building. I sent you.

John nods. He stands.

JOHN  
Thank you.

WARREN  
Don't.

John opens the door.

WARREN (CONT'D)

I expect to see you inside of two weeks.

John closes the door.

INT. WELLS HOME - LATER

John stands in the dark, panting as though he's just run a long distance.

JOHN

Ellie?!

John fumbles for the light, turning it on. He searches the room briefly. Ellie stands behind him, arms crossed.

ELLIE

You forgot to leave the lights on.

John jumps, startled.

JOHN

Don't do that.

Ellie sticks her tongue out at him. John goes to take her hand.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Come on. We're going out.

His hand goes right through hers. He pulls on her, forgetting she's non-corporeal, and is confused when he doesn't feel the tug.

ELLIE

What do you mean "out"?

JOHN

There's someone who can help us.

ELLIE

But I can't-

JOHN

Trust me, Ellie.

Ellie considers a moment, and then agrees.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - LATER

A crowd bustles on the floor of the platform. A subway car has come and gone. John and Ellie look on, hesitant to continue.

JOHN  
Stay close to me.

They begin to weave through the crowd, toward the edge of the platform. John absently reaches back for Ellie, who responds by imitating taking his hand. They focus on making sure no one touches or bumps Ellie.

John constantly surveys the area, almost in a paranoia. The next subway bus is heard coming. There is a split in the crowd. Through the space, Hamish stands. He locks eyes with John.

There is a prolonged moment in time, where they stare each other down. Then, Hamish sees Ellie. His eyes widen in urgent discovery.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Run.

John and Ellie bolt for the subway car. Hamish fight through the crowd, trying to reach them.

John and Ellie make it onto the car. John turns back around, watching Hamish, ready to fight. Just as Hamish is about to board, the doors shut. Hamish and John are face to face, separated by glass. The subway departs.

John and Ellie sit down in the corner seats. John coughs heartily. Ellie looks concerned at him. He reassures her with a smile. They ride the subway.

INT. INNER CITY SUBWAY STATION - LATER

John and Ellie get off the subway car.

EXT. CITY STREET - LATER

John walks down the street, Ellie close in tow. He stops a passerby and asks them for directions. They point off down the street, motioning their path. John thanks them and follows the direction.

EXT. F.O.E. ENCAMPMENT - LATER

John and Ellie arrive at the protester's camp-out. A massive gathering stands mulls about in the shadow of the pest control building. Tents are pitched, music plays, people dance, converse, cook and eat food. On the perimeter, from the direction of the pest control building, riot guards stand at the ready.

John and Ellie enter the encampment, moving among the people. John stops by someone cooking bacon over a small fire.

JOHN

Do you know where I can find Eve?

The man scoffs.

MAN

You think it's that easy?

JOHN

I need to see her.

MAN

Don't we all. Get outta here.

He goes back to cooking his food. John moves on to someone else.

JOHN

Where I can find Eve?

They ignore him. He visits another, who also brushes him off. KAFKA comes up from behind.

KAFKA

A lot of people want to see her.  
What makes you special?

JOHN

I need her help.

KAFKA

You aren't alone. You've got a long  
line ahead of you.

John thinks, unsure whether Kafka would understand, but decides pulling the Warren card wouldn't hurt.

JOHN

Warren sent me.

Kafka raises both eyebrows.

KAFKA

Ah.

She motions for him to follow.

KAFKA (CONT'D)

I'll take you to her.

John looks back at Ellie, checking with her. They follow Kafka.

EXT. EVELYN'S TENT - LATER

Kafka has lead John and Ellie to Evelyn's tent, which is plain but larger than the rest. A bouncer-type fellow, PORTLAND, sits guard outside the entrance. He rises to greet Kafka.

PORTLAND

Kafka.

KAFKA

I've come bearing gifts.

PORTLAND

She's not letting anyone in.

KAFKA

These two have overriding privilege.

PORTLAND

She's not letting anyone-

KAFKA

Warren sent them.

PORTLAND

I don't care. The Pope wouldn't get through if he paid a visit.

KAFKA

Cut some slack, Port.

PORTLAND

She told me-

EVELYN (O.S.)

Let them in, Portland.

Portland pauses, concedes, and steps aside.

PORTLAND  
The queen calls on high.

INT. EVELYN'S TENT

Kafka leads them inside. Evelyn is sitting, her feet propped on the table. She is talking on the phone. She watches Ellie and John.

EVELYN  
We'll talk later, Willy.

She hangs up and lifts her feet off the table.

KAFKA  
These two wanted to see you.

Kafka turns to leave.

EVELYN  
Stick around, Kaf.

Kafka obeys. Evelyn eyes her guests.

JOHN  
I take it you're Eve?

Evelyn stops. She viciously slams the desk.

EVELYN  
(infuriated)  
Why does everyone insist on calling me Eve?!

She pushes herself up. She goes through various motions, taking deep breaths to calm herself.

EVELYN (CONT'D)  
(sternly)  
You will refer to me as Evelyn.

Fully calm, she gestures to two lawnchairs.

EVELYN (CONT'D)  
Help yourselves.

John and Ellie sit. Evelyn slowly takes her seat after them.

EVELYN (CONT'D)  
Now what about you made Warren send you all this way?

JOHN  
We need your help.

EVELYN  
Vague. Never start vague. I need specifics. What kind of help?

JOHN  
Sanctuary.

EVELYN  
For who? The both of you?

JOHN  
No, just-

ELLIE  
Me.

Evelyn turns her attention on Ellie.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
Just me.

John and Ellie look at each other. Evelyn sighs, conflicted.

EVELYN  
Look... I'd love to help you.  
You're welcome to stay, but I can't guarantee anything. If you did something illegal, I'm not sticking my neck out for you.

ELLIE  
No, nothing like that.

EVELYN  
Whatever you're involved in, we can't be the blankets you hide under.

JOHN  
You can't turn us away.

EVELYN  
You can stay in the encampment.

JOHN  
We need protection.

EVELYN  
Protection we can't offer.

Evelyn motions to Kafka.

EVELYN (CONT'D)  
Escort them out.

JOHN  
That's not enough!

Kafka grabs John's arm. When he struggles, she fluidly twists his arm and restrains his movements, hurting him. Evelyn busies herself with papers on her desk.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
No! Dammit, no!

Kafka grabs for Ellie's arm. She freezes when her hand passes right through. John calms down.

KAFKA  
Evelyn.

Evelyn looks up. She straightens slowly, eyes fixated and mouth agape in awe. She leans forward as close as she can.

EVELYN  
(whispers)  
My God...

Kafka lets go of John and back away. Ellie straightens her back and fixes her posture as an indicator of strength.

ELLIE  
I don't know what I am. I don't  
know why this has happened to me.  
But I know you need us.

Evelyn moves around the table and stands in front of Ellie. She is captivated with her. With body language she requests to touch her. Ellie allows it. Evelyn delicately trails her fingers through Ellie's skin with a child's fascination.

EVELYN  
Yes. You are exactly what I need.

BEGIN MONTAGE

John and Ellie walk through the F.O.E. encampment.

Conversing and eating with the people there.

Sleeping underneath the night stars.

END MONTAGE

EXT. F.O.E. ENCAMPMENT - DAY

John and Ellie are in a Skype call on a laptop with April and Luke, who are in the office building.

JOHN

Right now, we're staying in the F.O.E. encampment. And I don't see us moving.

LUKE

Yeah, but you can't stay there forever.

JOHN

We'll stay as long as we can. It's safe here.

APRIL

Safe how? You don't know anyone.

JOHN

They're good people. Safety in numbers.

LUKE

When will you be coming back?

JOHN

(shrugs)  
Maybe soon. Maybe not.

APRIL

I don't think you're making a great decision.

LUKE

We agree on something.

JOHN

I'll miss you guys.

John closes the laptop.

INT. EVELYN'S TENT - DAY

John and Ellie sit around the table, while Evelyn aimlessly wanders around them.

EVELYN

Here's our deal. I've given you sanctuary. Long as we're around, no one's touching you, Mrs. Wells.

ELLIE

Thank you. We appreciate it.

EVELYN

But in return, we need your image.

JOHN

What do you mean?

EVELYN

You are the first concrete evidence of a human soul manifested in an echo. You're the real deal. We need to use that.

ELLIE

What do you need me to do?

EVELYN

We're arranging a broadcast a few days from now. You don't get stage fright, do you?

ELLIE

I don't think so.

EVELYN

Good. You aren't well known now, but in a few days there won't be a man, woman, or child in America who doesn't.

ELLIE

I... I don't know.

EVELYN

Don't worry. It's nothing more than a simple demonstration and a line or two from you. Harmless.

ELLIE

And if I don't want to.

EVELYN

I don't want this to be threatening, and I don't mean it to be... but you can't say no.

JOHN

Ellie?

John and Ellie share a look. Ellie swallows.

ELLIE  
 You have yourselves a new poster  
 child.

EXT. F.O.E. ENCAMPMENT - DAY

John and Ellie wander through the encampment, greeting people  
 along the way.

EVELYN (V.O.)  
 Thank you, Mrs. Wells.

EXT. F.O.E. ENCAMPMENT - LATER

Ellie sits in a circle around a campfire, a group singing  
 songs. John watches, Kafka beside him. John smiles, eyes on  
 his smiling wife.

EVELYN (V.O.)  
 You're about to change the world.

INT. MAIN PEST CONTROL BUILDING - HAMISH'S OFFICE - DAY

Hamish is at his desk. His phone rings. He picks it up.

HAMISH  
 Hamish.

He listens. He leans forward attentively.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
 Where?

EXT. F.O.E. ENCAMPMENT - DAY

John and Ellie, walking together, are stopped by a hipster  
 with a Polaroid camera. He groups John and Ellie for a  
 picture. They smile genuinely. The photo is taken.

WHITE OUT.

INT. MAIN PEST CONTROL BUILDING - HAMISH'S OFFICE - DAY

Hamish stares out the window. Conrad stands in the middle of  
 the room.

CONRAD  
 (disbelieving)  
 Hunting?

HAMISH

The greatest phenomenon I've ever  
come across.

CONRAD

For God's sakes, Hamish, you don't  
hunt echoes, you ambush them.

HAMISH

Not this one. This one is  
different.

CONRAD

Different? How so?

HAMISH

Just different.

Conrad shakes his head disbelievingly.

CONRAD

You get too wrapped up in affairs  
of the dead.

HAMISH

It's a fascination.

CONRAD

An unhealthy one.

HAMISH

Humans have always had a morbid  
appreciation of death. I don't see  
why mine is any worse.

Conrad points to the window.

CONRAD

They still out there?

HAMISH

In numbers.

CONRAD

I'm sick of them.

HAMISH

I've found her. She's out there,  
among them. I need to find her.

Conrad sighs, sits down.

CONRAD

You may not be able to. Perhaps afterwards.

Hamish turns away from the window. He thinks for a moment, then it occurs to him.

HAMISH

No... No, Conrad, no.

CONRAD

I'm sorry, Hamish. Enough is enough. It's time we had that vermin off the lawn.

HAMISH

We're better than this.

CONRAD

No one is better than this. I suggest you man up, Hamish.

EXT. F.O.E. ENCAMPMENT - SAME TIME

John and Ellie are walking through the encampment, smiling and chuckling. A commotion from the edge of camp makes them stop. Like a wave, the camp is up and running, chaotic and unpredictable.

The riot guards have been commissioned to break the protesters up. They run through, clubs swinging, sending the camp into further uproar. John motions for Ellie and they run.

As they run for the street, John is knocked down, and a flood of protestors swarms around them. He gets up, but is separated from Ellie.

JOHN

(yells)  
Ellie!

No use. The crowd is too thick.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(yells)  
ELLIE!

John begins moving with the crowd, in an effort to not be trampled. He breaks free of the crowd, stumbling away.

A riot guard steps in front of him and brings his club down. John takes a blow to the head. Dazed, he pushes the guard away, doing his best to run.

He stumbles out into the street. His concentration returns in time for him to see a truck bearing down on him, horn blaring. He is stuck like a deer in the headlights. The truck's brakes screech, but it inevitably hits him.

BLACK OUT.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

John comes to in a hospital bed. He has been stripped and suited with a patient's garb. A bandage is wrapped around where the riot guard struck him.

He sidles up in his bed, winces, and looks around. A television is on with the news. He settles on Hamish, sitting at his bedside. John is startled and scoots away reflexively.

Hamish makes no aggressive movements.

HAMISH

You've kept me waiting.

John settles back down.

JOHN

(sardonically)

So sorry.

HAMISH

The doctor wouldn't tell me anything about your condition.

John tests his arms, his legs. They are both fine. He moves into a better sitting position and grasps at his chest, pained.

JOHN

I've never broken a rib, but I imagine this is what a few feel like.

HAMISH

You possess extraordinary luck.

John suddenly realizes Ellie isn't with him.

JOHN

(panicked)

Ellie.

John begins furiously removing his covers.

HAMISH  
(reassuringly)  
John.

JOHN  
I need to find her. God, I need to  
find her.

HAMISH  
She's safe, John.

John stops moving.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
Her exorcism hasn't gone through  
the channels.

John's blood runs cold. He slowly pulls the covers back up.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
Ellie Wells. Died approximately a  
month ago. Echo.

JOHN  
(sternly)  
You aren't touching her.

HAMISH  
I have to John.

JOHN  
No, you don't. You've never lost  
the only person you cared about.

Hamish pauses.

HAMISH  
You're right. I didn't lose the  
only person I cared about.  
(pause)  
I lost both.

John is suddenly very still, even a little confused. Hamish  
takes a moment to compose himself.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
Twelve years ago, I lost my wife  
and son in an accident. A week  
later they were back again. Ten  
days I kept them before my neighbor  
sent in the call.  
(MORE)

HAMISH (CONT'D)

When they came, I opened the door  
and sat on the couch. I didn't  
watch. And when they left, I  
followed. I had nowhere else to go.

The room is still. John is unsure of what to say.

JOHN

And now we're here.

Hamish nods. John coughs painfully in his hand. When he takes  
it away, it is spattered with blood.

HAMISH

I need to know where your wife is.

John looks up at the television.

REPORTER

... And now, soon, outside  
Broadwick Concert Hall, the leader  
of Friends of the Echoes, Evelyn  
Haywood, has announced that she  
will be revealing the greatest  
discovery humankind has ever  
seen...

JOHN

You'll know.

Hamish looks to the television. He watches.

HAMISH

Eve, you damn fool.

JOHN

It doesn't matter now. You aren't  
going to touch her.

HAMISH

It's not me you're worried about.

Hamish turns back to John.

HAMISH (CONT'D)

What did she give you for this?

JOHN

Sanctuary.

HAMISH

And in return, you sold your wife  
out.

JOHN  
(defensively)  
No, I-

HAMISH  
How do you think they'll react?  
Some, perhaps, will be intrigued.  
But many more will be terrified by  
her, John.

JOHN  
No, they won't.

HAMISH  
Humans are scared of the unknown.  
And Ellie is as unknown as anyone  
will ever see.

JOHN  
You don't know that.

HAMISH  
If if it happened to her, what's to  
stop it from happening to anyone  
else? Not everyone will see it as a  
blessing. No... too many won't. You  
wanted to give her sanctuary, and  
instead you made her the biggest  
target on Earth.

John looks at the television in fear. Hamish picks up a bundle of clothes and sets it on the bed. He looks at John expectantly.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY

John, dressed in a new pair of clothes, leaves his room. Hamish follows close behind. He passes by a display of x-rays. He looks them over, takes one, stuffs it in his jacket, and continues behind John.

INT. HAMISH'S VAN

Hamish drives John, on the road to Broadwick Concert Hall.

INT. BACKSTAGE BROADWICK CONCERT HALL

Evelyn, prepped and read for her speech, stands in front of Ellie, reassuring her.

EVELYN  
Are you ready?

ELLIE  
(worried)  
Where's John?

EVELYN  
We're still looking for him. He'll  
be alright.

Ellie, scared and uncertain, nods.

INT. HAMISH'S VAN

John coughs into his hand, more blood.

JOHN  
How close are we?

HAMISH  
Close enough.

EVELYN (V.O.)  
We have been seen as radicals and  
extremists. I can't say that these  
names are without merit.

EXT. BROADWICK CONCERT HALL - PULPIT

Evelyn stands before a pulpit, a massive audience of  
reporters and attendees in front of her.

EVELYN (V.O.)  
But we believe in something. We  
believe in the preservation of  
humanity, whether they be dead or  
alive.

INT. HAMISH'S VAN

They are driving still, getting closer. John looks  
increasingly tense.

EVELYN (V.O.)  
We are idealists.

## INT. BACKSTAGE BROADWICK CONCERT HALL

Ellie stands, ready to come out on stage. She looks extremely nervous and somewhat unhappy. Kafka stands beside her.

EVELYN (V.O.)  
The protection of the souls of  
human kind our goal.

ELLIE  
Where is he?

KAFKA  
We don't know yet.

ELLIE  
I don't know if I can do this.

KAFKA  
You can. I won't let anything  
happen.

EVELYN (V.O.)  
Our purpose has long been the butt  
of the joke. The punchline.

## INT. HAMISH'S VAN

The van screeches to a stop. They made it to the concert hall. John bails out and sprints toward the stage.

## EXT. BROADWICK CONCERT HALL

EVELYN  
Today that ends. Today, we will  
show humanity the greatest  
phenomenon they've ever seen.  
Ladies and gentlemen, here today, I  
present to you-

John runs up on stage. Before Evelyn can finish speaking, John tackles her from the pulpit. A chatter arises from the audience.

Hamish makes it to the stage.

Evelyn and John sprawl across the stage. John holds her down as she catches her bearings. She identifies John.

EVELYN (CONT'D)  
(pissed)  
You!

JOHN  
Where is she?!

EVELYN  
Get off me.

JOHN  
WHERE IS SHE?!

Ellie comes out from backstage.

ELLIE  
John!

John hears her. He gets off of Evelyn.

JOHN  
Ellie!

They run to each other. Evelyn stands up, shuddering in anger, and pulls out a pistol from behind her back. She points it at John. Ellie notices. Her eyes go wide and she's about to shout a word of warning.

A shot fires. John stops running. He slowly turns around.

The pistol is pointed into the air. Kafka has moved Evelyn's arm. Evelyn looks at her confused.

KAFKA  
I looked up to you.

Kafka twists her arm, making her shout in pain and drop the gun. She turns to John and Ellie.

KAFKA (CONT'D)  
Go.

They obey. They run off the stage. Hamish follows.

EXT. BROADWICK CONCERT HALL - PARKING LOT

John, Ellie, and Hamish run out into the parking lot. Hamish gestures them over to the van. John and Ellie slow down.

JOHN  
Whoah, whoah, whoah. We're not going anywhere with you.

HAMISH  
Do you see any other cars?

JOHN  
We'll take our chances.

ELLIE  
John, he can help us.

JOHN  
Not him. Not him.

HAMISH  
You need to leave the city. She's not a target anymore, but any pest control agent worth their salt will find something suspicious about her, thanks to what little was broadcast.

JOHN  
We're not going with you!

Ellie separates from John and approaches Hamish.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Ellie, don't.

ELLIE  
You. You've been hunting me, haven't you?

HAMISH  
Yes.

ELLIE  
And now?

Hamish pauses. He looks over her face. He shakes his head.

HAMISH  
I'll take you beyond the city limits.

Ellie looks to John. John, still untrusting of Hamish, sighs.

JOHN  
Fine.

They all pile into the van and drive off.

EXT. CITY STREETS - EVENING

The sky is growing dark and they are still driving. John and Ellie sit in the back seat. John drifts off to sleep and Ellie closes her eyes.

EXT. ROAD OUT OF CITY - NIGHT

They leave the city.

EXT. ABANDONED FACTORY - NIGHT

Hamish pulls into an abandoned factory. The stop wakes up John and stirs Ellie. They look around, confused. DeMarco and Lang are illuminated in the van's headlights.

Hamish exits the vehicle and opens the door for them.

HAMISH

Come on out.

Still waking up, John slides out of the vehicle, Ellie behind him.

JOHN

This isn't...

He turns on Hamish.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You son of a bitch.

HAMISH

It has to be this way, John. This way, she disappears clean. No paperwork, no witnesses, no nothing.

ELLIE

You promised you'd help us!

HAMISH

I said no such thing.

John jumps at Hamish. DeMarco steps in and stops him.

JOHN

Fuck you! FUCK YOU!

DeMarco drops him to the ground.

ELLIE

We trusted you.

HAMISH

I have my reasons.

ELLIE

Why? It's for your job? It's your duty?

HAMISH

It's for him.

Hamish looks to John. John coughs heavily, spitting up blood.

JOHN

Leave her... alone.

HAMISH

I told you, John. She's dangerous.

JOHN

SCREW YOU!

HAMISH

Listen to me, John.

JOHN

(angrily)

No.

HAMISH

How long have you had that cough?

JOHN

What? I don't know, a few weeks?

HAMISH

Around the time Ellie became an echo, don't you think?

JOHN

Don't pin this on her.

HAMISH

She's killing you, John.

JOHN

You can't say that!

Hamish produces the x-ray he had taken before. He shows it to John. It is a chest x-ray, and there is a large black circle on the left side of his chest.

HAMISH

Do you know what this is, John?

John studies it.

HAMISH (CONT'D)  
That's cancer, John.

JOHN  
I... I don't have cancer.

HAMISH  
This isn't something that's made in  
a few weeks time. Unless something  
was making it grow.

Hamish looks to Ellie.

ELLIE  
It's... me?

JOHN  
Don't listen to him.

Hamish faces Ellie.

HAMISH  
I'm sorry, Mrs. Wells. As of right  
now, your very existence is killing  
him.

Ellie is very still, deep in thought.

JOHN  
No!

HAMISH  
Mrs. Wells... You know what has to  
happen.

JOHN  
Let us go, you son of a bitch!

John struggles. DeMarco holds him down. Ellie walks toward  
him.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Let us go! Let us go!

ELLIE  
(painfully)  
John.

John stops struggling. DeMarco gets off him. Ellie kneels  
down.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
John...

John looks into her eyes. He shakes his head, biting his lip.

JOHN  
You can't.

ELLIE  
I have to.

JOHN  
You can't leave me behind again!

John shudders as his eyes well with tears.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I can't lose you again...

Ellie imitates trailing her fingers along the side of his face.

ELLIE  
I love you.

JOHN  
Please.

ELLIE  
But I have to go.

JOHN  
No, please, no!

Hamish motions to Lang. Lang gets out her device and scans Ellie.

LANG  
She's at... Well, this can't be-

ELLIE  
Twenty-seven kilo-Hertz.

Hamish is surprised. Ellie looks at him.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
I know.

Hamish goes about setting the pylon. Ellie looks back to John.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
You take care when I'm gone.

JOHN  
I can't. I can't.

ELLIE  
Hey. You're not losing me forever.

JOHN  
God, Ellie...

ELLIE  
I love you.

JOHN  
I'll miss you.

ELLIE  
I know.

Hamish sets the pylon. DeMarco and Lang plug their ears, but Hamish doesn't bother.

HAMISH  
White noise in 3. 2. 1.

The pylon starts up. As the noise increases, Ellie's touch becomes physical. She reaches out to John, touching his face.

ELLIE  
I love you.

JOHN  
I love you.

They touch their foreheads together. The pitch and intensity of the pylon increase. Ellie smiles sadly, hugging John in their final moments together.

ELLIE  
I'll see you, John.

The pitch and intensity hit their peak. In a glorious disintegration of white, Ellie disappears. The pylon whines down. John is kneeling, alone. He doesn't move, but his expression gradually becomes more anguished as tears fall down his cheeks.

Hamish, Lang, and DeMarco, do nothing but watch. John raises his face to the night sky.

FADE OUT.

JOHN (V.O.)  
Funny how life goes on.

EXT. WELLS HOME - DAY

John stands outside his house, looking at it fondly. He breathes, and walks away.

JOHN (V.O.)  
 Something terrible happens, but  
 then you bounce back. You think it  
 will change everything forever, but  
 it doesn't.

INT. WARREN'S OFFICE - DAY

JOHN (V.O.)  
 I quit my job. I had enough.

John walks up to Warren in his office and hands in his resignation, a small smile on his face.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

JOHN (V.O.)  
 I said goodbye to my friends. I  
 won't see them again for a while.

John hugs April. Gives Luke a handshake. He leaves the office building.

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

John sits on a park bench.

JOHN  
 I think it's time I did something  
 new. Lived a little.

Hamish sits next to him, listening to him talk.

HAMISH  
 Good. More people need to.

JOHN  
 What about you? Still working?

Hamish shakes his head.

HAMISH  
 I retired. Ellie was my last straw.  
 I'm done with the business.

JOHN  
Good to hear.  
(pause)  
I don't hate you.

HAMISH  
That's good to hear.

JOHN  
It's just circumstances.

HAMISH  
Perhaps in others we could have  
been friends.

JOHN  
Yeah. In others.

John stands up to leave.

HAMISH  
Where are you going now?

EXT. AIRWAY STRIP - DAY

John walks out across an airstrip in skydiving gear to a waiting airplane.

JOHN (V.O.)  
Somewhere new.

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

Back at the park bench, John holds his hand out to Hamish.

JOHN  
Good luck, Hamish.

Hamish accepts the offer.

HAMISH  
Goodbye, John.

John walks away.

INT. AIRPLANE - MID-FLIGHT - DAY

John is in a plane, mid-flight, ready to skydive. A WOMAN sits next to him. They have to shout over the loud noises of the plane.

WOMAN  
First time?

John looks to her.

LUKE  
No, I've done this a few times.

WOMAN  
Same.

The woman looks out the open plane door.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Beautiful, isn't it?

JOHN  
Nothing quite like it.

WOMAN  
I always wanted to be a bird.  
Imagine what it's like flying up  
here.

JOHN  
Few things compare, don't they?

The FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR speaks up.

FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR  
All right! It's time to jump!

Everyone in the plane stands up. John is second, and the woman is behind him.

The first person jumps.

WOMAN  
I'll see you on the ground, eh?

John steps up. Before he jumps, he turns to the woman.

JOHN  
I'm John.

The woman smiles.

WOMAN  
Ellie.

John's smile dies for a second. Then, it comes back, softer, but still happy.

JOHN

Well then. I'll see you, Ellie.

John leaps out of the plane. He falls, suspended, and lets gravity take him. He closes his eyes.

THE END.