

## Final Project: The Impossible Church

### Cast of Characters

Jenna Hewitt- 20 something year old independent reporter

The Unknown- A shadow that seems to distort and shift at random. When it utters any sense of a conceivable language, it instills terror in the hearts of all those who hear it.

The Figure/The Shifter: Takes the common form of an emaciated man, with an otherworldly, sinister smile.

Thomas Marsh- Jenna's camera man

Mrs. Ortega: Jenna's next-door neighbor

The Ambience: disembodied voices crying, screaming and laughing.

### Story Synopsis

"Run, Hide, or Die" takes place in a recently shut down mega church in the densely populated city of Clear Stream, Arizona. A female reporter and her camera man, Jenna and Thomas, are investigating a series of disappearances that have been taking place at the deconsecrated church known as "Christ's Resurrection". The only thing that is different from any other abandoned church that was left to rot by the respective city: the congregation may be gone, but someone, or rather something, decided to take up residence.

### Scene Breakdown

Scene 1: Jenna and Thomas arrive in their van to the abandoned church and take it upon themselves to enter the condemned building at the behest of what appears to be a man standing at one of the windows peering outward.

Scene 2: Thomas running frantically towards the entrance of the church trying to catch up with Jenna after she heard what she thought was a little girl screaming from inside the church. When they enter, all appears to be "normal", or at least normal for an abandoned building, However, things begin to go bump in the not so night.

#### **Scene 1:**

News Channels flip from station to station, and lands on a news report of a series of disappearances that have taken place in the city of Clear Stream.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ VAN DRIVES OVER BUMPS OF BROKEN CONCRETE AND TIRES SCREAM AS THE VEHICLE COMES TO A HALT

Thomas: (Irritated) Why is it that the only outlet that balls to cover what we do is the same channel that runs articles like which celebrity is boning who and only every once in a blue moon covers the shit that actually matters?

Jenna: Your guess is as good as mine Tommy. As long as the state of Arizona knows which Marvel actor hooked up with who, the populace will go on with their everyday existence.

SFX\_\_\_\_\_ Van rumbles quietly as Jenna puts it into park.

Jenna: Well, there it is...doesn't look all that impressive now that I see it up close.

She stares out of the window at the massive, white mega church that towers over the parking lot.

Thomas: Why'd this place get shut down again? Another pastor get caught laundering money again or something?

Jenna: (trying to cover her laughter): Be nice! For all we know the guy could have done something else. Like MURDER! (speaking in a stereotypical old movie ghost)

Thomas: (Laughing) Alright alright, guess we should cut the bad jokes and get to work.

They exit the van and Thomas begins to film Jenna, microphone in hand.

Jenna: (Reporter Voice): We have just arrived on the scene of Christ's Resurrection. The church that has recently been condemned is suspected of being the grounds of multiple disappearances, ranging from urban explorers and film makers alike. We intend to enter the building and uncover any potential sign of a struggle that may have taken place inside this eerie estate.

Jenna begins to walk towards the front door, when something catches her eye.

Jenna: Wait...(her voice changing back to her regular speaking one) Tommy, do you see that? Second floor, middle window.

Thomas: (Slight tremble) Oh Christ, I really wish I hadn't.

Up on the second story, they pair see a male figure with his head tilted to the side, staring directly at the both of them. A wide, toothy and demonic smile stretches across the man's face from ear to ear.

Jenna: (fear rising in her voice) Oh god, why is he smiling like that, how is that physically possible?!

The man raises one hand to the glass and his mouth opens. A tongue far to large for a human falls from his mouth and begins to twitch. The man then violently slides back into the darkness, body rigid and unmoving, as if propelled by an unseen force.

Thomas: Oh fuck this Jen, we gotta go now!!

SFX\_\_\_\_\_ A SCREAM PIERCES THE AFTERNOON AIR AS A LITTLE GIRL SCREAMS FOR HELP FROM INSIDE THE CHURCH

Jenna drops the microphone and runs inside.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ FOOTSTEPS BREAK INTO A SPRINT GROWING FARTHER AND FARTHER AWAY

Thomas: Jen! What are you doing?! Fuck.

Thomas follows after her, camera still in hand.

## Scene 2

Thomas: (out of breath) Jen, what in the name of God would possess you to run into a condemned building?! In general that would be stupid enough as is, but did you really not see smiley-tongue bitch up in the window?!? How the flying fu-

Thomas stops speaking abruptly as he catches up to Jenna, in the middle of the shockingly pristine congregational area of the church.

Thomas: (shocked) Wait, how is this what the inside looks like? It's almost...like clean clean.

Jenna: This place looks as if it's been taken care of nearly every day. There's barely any dust or cobwebs anywhere. I could do without all the candles acting as the light sources though. Let's try and find a light switch or something.

Thomas: Hold up a second Jen, why did you take off running in here anyway? I know we both saw that...thing up in the window.

Jenna: Did you really not here the little girl scream from inside?

Thomas: What the hell are you talking about?

The two of them begin walking around searching for a way to get the lights on.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ TWO SETS OF FOOTSTEPS ALTERNATE AS THE SOUND REVERBERATES AROUND THE EMPTY ROOM

Jenna looks at Thomas with a confused, almost irritated look in her eye.

Jenna: The little girl?? How could you not here that?! It was borderline ear-piercing Tommy!

Thomas: Jen, I swear to you I did not hear anything of the sort. I saw that thing up in the window and next thing I knew you were sprinting at full speed into the building. There was no scream, no nothing.

Jenna: But...how? It was so loud how cou-

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ THE LEVER OF A BREAKER FLIPS, AS THE SYNCHRONIZED SOUND OF MULTIPLE LIGHTBULBS CRACKLE TO LIFE

Thomas: (triumphantly) Found you!

The room is illuminated by hundred of lights, ranging from far up in the rafters to all the way around the perimeter of the room. Rows upon rows of pews are seen for hundreds of feet, all the way to what appears to be the front of the stage, with a beautiful and intricate pulpit at the edge.

Jenna: Woah... Tommy are you seeing this?

Thomas: I'd be lying if I said I didn't. This place is massive! How on earth is it so clean though? The outside of this place looks like an absolute wreck. Weirdly enough, this place looked smaller from out there.

Jenna: Yeah, I'm glad you noticed that "little" detail as well. This place seems almost impossible. Some serious Doctor Who vibes from this place. Tommy, get some footage of this place, it's incredible!

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ RECORD BUTTON IS PRESSED AND THE BEEP NOTIFIES THE RECORDING IS ACTIVE

Thomas levels the camera and begins filming, sweeping across the interior of the church.

Jenna: This really is something else. Let's move a little closer in, towards the pulpit.

The two begin to move towards the front of the stage, when Thomas stops abruptly, the camera still at eye level.

Thomas: (panicked) What the hell was that?

Jenna: What are you talking about?

Thomas: Something moved behind the pulpit, I swear to Christ.

Jenna: I think you're just paranoid Tommy.

Thomas begins to become noticeably more irritated the farther they proceed towards the stage.

Thomas: Oh. I'm paranoid, am I? Says the one who supposedly heard a little girl scream from inside this place.

Jenna: This again? I told you exactly what I know I heard! Just because you didn't hear it doesn't mean it wasn't real.

Thomas: (pissed off) Are you kidding me? You're telling me that you hearing a scream, that one, should have been audible to the both of us, and two definitely did not happen, is more likely to be possible over me seeing something behind the podium?

Jenna: Just drop it will you?! Let's do our god damned jobs and find that girl.

Thomas: There isn't any girl here Jenna!! You're fucking nuts is what you are!

The two begin arguing more and more, until their quarrel is suddenly interrupted.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ LIGHT BULBS BEGIN TO POP AND GLASS SHATTERS ONE BY ONE.

Thomas: Okay, arguing is done. Time to go. NOW.

Jenna: (nervous) Yeah. Yeah couldn't agree more.

The two rush down the aisle, back towards the double doors of the church.

SFX\_\_\_\_\_DOORS SLAM SHUT, ECHOING ACROSS THE EMPTY ROOM

Jenna: No no no no no no!

Jenna pulls on the handle, but the door refused to budge.

Thomas: Come on, get it open!

Jenna: This would be easier if you actually helped!

SFX\_\_\_\_\_NAILS SCRAPING ACROSS WOOD

Jenna and Thomas turn slowly back towards the stage.

Jenna: (horrified) Thomas, wasn't the stage a lot farther away before.

Thomas: (equally scared) Yeah. But how-

His thought is cut off as he bears witness to the source of the sound. A long, gaunt arm reaches around the side of pulpit, scraping its claws down the front, and promptly disappears.

Thomas: (horrified) What the hell was that?! Please tell me you saw that, Jen!

Jenna: I've been trying to get the door open! What's wrong?

Thomas: Please tell me you saw it, Jen!

Panic begins to envelop Thomas as he tries frantically to pull up the camera footage.

SFX\_\_\_\_\_THE SOUND OF CAMERA FOOTAGE REWINDING

Thomas rewinds the footage, but he cannot find the horror that he had just bore witness to.

Thomas: No, no that isn't possible. I swear I saw an arm claw into the front of that thing!

Jenna: This is getting ridiculous. Thomas come on, stop trying to scare me and get your ass in gear. We need to get this door open.

Thomas: This place is messing with our heads Jen. It's making us see shit that isn't real I-

Jenna: No Tommy, this place is making YOU lose your shit. There was an electricity problem that blew the lights and we got spooked, and the old shitty wooden doors got wedged shut from how heavy they are. You just can't seem to keep it together.

Thomas: You're unbelievable, so when you supposedly hear something that I didn't, it is a factual occurrence but when I see something you didn't, I'm coming apart at the seams. Screw you, I'm not crazy!

Thomas: Hold on a minute. How did we both forget about the stage being closer than it was earlier, even you admitted that.

Just as Thomas ends his sentence, the two of them slowly look around. The walls begin to shift and contort around them. The façade of the shiny and clean interior begins to flake and tear apart as the true decrepit façade begins to tear its way into reality. Darkness slowly creeps towards the duo.

Jenna: (terrified) Okay, we're out!! RUN!!

The two try and stay in whatever light they can, running from the darkness that is slowly enveloping the room.

Thomas: Where do we go?! Jen we're running out of places to go!

The darkness is now only feet away from them when all of a sudden it stops.

SFX\_\_\_\_\_A RUSH OF WIND BLOWS THROUGH THE CHURCH

The wind blows from seemingly nowhere. The darkness recedes all at once.

Jenna: (panting) Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god. What even was that.

Thomas: I'm not sure, but whatever that shadow was, we can't touch it. I just know.

Jenna: Tommy all the candles are out now. I can barely see two feet in front of me.

Suddenly, a wave of otherworldly dread fills the room just as the darkness recedes. A figure on the opposite side of the room, shifting and contorting just as the auditorium had done moments ago.

Jenna: (nervously whispering) Tommy do you see that?

Thomas: Yeah.

The figure twitches and writhes standing still, yet not at the same time.

Jenna: (whispering) Oh god. Tommy I think that's the thing that was up in the window. The smiley thing. Can you get it on video?

Thomas: I can try, I don't think it's noticed us yet.

The figure begins to walk towards the stage. Continuously contorting and twitching as he goes. It fixes its gaze on the large, brass cross, surrounded by intricate stained glass.

Jenna (still whispering) Thomas, what can you see? What's it doing?

Thomas (still whispering) I'm not sure. It looks like its gaze is fixed on the cross at the back of the stage. The night vision on the camera isn't the best, but at least it's something to work with.

The figure continues to stare at the cross.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ DISTORTED, DEMONIC LAUGHTER FILLS THE ROOM,  
COMING FROM THE FIGURE

Jenna: (terrified, but whispering still) Oh Christ, why is it doing that. Make it stop!

Thomas continues rolling.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ VIDEO BEGINS TO DISTORT ON THE CAMERA

The Unknown: (distorted and warped) All things must come to pass, so it is willed, so it is done  
by HE who makes all is his image.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ NECK SNAPPING AND CRACKING

The figure's head snaps directly towards the duo.

The Figure: (demonic and distorted) And Jesus said, "I AM THE WAY".

The figure shrieks and disappears. Suddenly all the lights begin to flicker.

Thomas: (terrified) We've stayed too long. Get to the door. Quietly.

The two begin to make their way to double doors once more.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ DOORS CREAK OPEN

Jenna: Oh thank God! Tommy let's go!

Jenna flings open the door, revealing once more the parking lot, van still sitting exactly where  
they had parked it.

Jenna: I don't think I've ever been more excited to see the sun in my life. Tommy?

She turns back towards the door and sees Thomas on the steps, frozen and unmoving.

Jenna: Tommy?

Thomas's eyes roll back into his head as his jaw seems to unhinge like a snake. Jenna covers her  
mouth as she screams. The figure's head peaks around from behind Thomas's convulsing frame.

The Figure: The Unknown demands his due sweet child. I am his Shifter, his Herald,  
his...Harbinger, and you shall be as they are. They who slink and scurry in the dark, oh yes!

The Shifter's gaze shifts towards Jenna and points a long-clawed finger towards her.

The Shifter: (distorted) PLAYTHINGPLAYTHINGPLAYTHINGPLAYTHINGPLAYTHING  
AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

The Shifter grabs Thomas by the side of the head and by the arm as they both slide back into the  
church as the door slams shut.

Jenna walks to the car, stumbling as she goes. She makes it to the car and she loses  
consciousness.

END OF ACT 1

## ACT 2

Scene 3: Jenna awakens to find it dark outside, but when she opens her eyes she is greeted by something more than just darkness. The camera used by Thomas is lying on the hood of the van with 5 words scratched into the side: No one will believe you. She makes her way back home, trying to figure out how to contemplate what she had just witnessed and more importantly, how she can explain Thomas's disappearance.

Scene 4: Jenna wakes up the following morning, strangely well rested, all things considering the prior days horrors. Her workday begins in three hours, but her mind is only focused on whatever lies on the camera's memory bank. Managing to connect the camera to her laptop in order to download the footage, she begins to review what Thomas managed to capture. She had figured out one thing from the footage: the human senses could be tricked, but the footage didn't lie, or so she is starting to believe. Those five simple words carved into the side of the camera were starting to feel more like the truth than she cared to admit. What if she was seeing only what the shifter wanted her to see? Will she be able to trust her senses or is it too late for that?

Jenna awakens to find that the summer sun has changed into that of dusk. The church stands before her, looming ever present, ever hungry.

Jenna: Wha-what happened? Where am I?

She realizes that she managed to make it inside the van right before passing out.

Jenna: I need to get back home, I need to somehow get help I can't just leave Thomas in there.

Tears begin to well up in Jenna's eyes.

Jenna: (sobbing) I left him in there...I just left him. I thought he was right behind me, why didn't I even check to see if he was close by. I just kept running, I-

She looks up to see an object sitting on the hood of the car.

Jenna: (trying to compose herself) I-I-Is that the camera??

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ CAR DOOR OPENS

Jenna: But, but how? It was with Thomas when he-(the words catch in her throat).

She rounds the front of the car, and as she reaches to pick up the camera, she notices something. Five words have been scratched across the side of the camera's composite body.

Jenna: No one will believe you...

She gazes back to the doors of the church, only to briefly glimpse a decrepit hand gripping the door, followed by that same pale, uncanny face smiling back through rows of pointed teeth.

The Shifter: Plaaaaaaaaayttiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiime. See you soon Miss Jenna.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ THE CHURCH DOORS SLAM SHUT ONCE MORE

Jenna is panting as she runs around the front of the car towards the driver side door.

SFX\_\_\_\_\_KEYS FUMBLING FOR A MOMENT, FOLLOWED BY THE KEYS  
ENTERING THE IGNITION AND TURNS AS THE CAR ROARS TO LIFE AND TIRES  
SCREECH

Jenna sits in silence as she drives the van back into the city of Clear Stream, relief seeming to come back to her slowly as she sees the distant lights of civilization.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ AMBIANT NOISE OF CARS PASSING IN THE ONCOMING LANE  
OF TRAFFIC

Jenna: (thinking to herself) How the hell am I supposed to explain this to John. He's expecting a story, or at the bare minimum, footage. That church... (realization hits Jenna) Thomas and I experienced different phenomenon inside that place. Well and outside with that little girl screaming. How is that even possible? My eyes playing tricks on me I can understand to some extent, but a full-blown scream is something he should have heard too. We both saw that thing staring at the cross inside, the Shifter or whatever it called itself. But, there was something else. That booming voice in the dark didn't sound like the shifter. It sounded, well more transcendent, otherworldly. More so than the smiley bastard.

She begins to try and make sense of everything she saw, not sure whether she should even begin to trust her senses from the day's events. All she knew was one thing. Thomas was gone, and she's going to get him back. Or so she thinks. Exhaustion begins to set in as Jenna pulls into the parking lot of her apartment building.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ CAR TURNS OVER AS THE ENGINE DIES DOWN, GRADUALLY FROM AN IDLE TO SILENCE. CAR DOOR OPENS AND SHUT

An ambient voice whispers

The Unknown: All things are made in his image, my image, our image.

Jenna looks around, the lamp posts providing enough illumination for Jenna to make out...nothing. The lot is uninhabited of life, only a dozen or so cars sit motionless and quiet.

Jenna: I'm exhausted, except I really don't know how I can even think of sleep after this.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ A KEY SLOTS IN THE LOCK OF THE BUILDING'S DOOR. THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN AND SHUTS SHORTLY AFTER.

Jenna makes her way up the stairs of her 5-story apartment building. Walking up the stairs she constantly looks around, checking to see if anything seems out of the ordinary. The days events weighing heavily upon her tired and anxiety ridden mind. Thomas...the more she thought about him the more that creeping sensation of him being a lost cause began to take root.

Jenna: No, no I'm gonna find him. Maybe he managed to hide after that thing grabbed him, maybe.

Jenna's mind continues to race with the possibilities of Thomas's survival, failing to come to terms with what she saw. He was seizing as the shifter grabbed him.

Jenna: Maybe it was the building still playing tricks on me, yeah that had to be it. Just like the scream I heard. He had to be in there still. He just had to. He, he had to be.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ DOOR OPENS, CLOSES, AND LOCKS

Safety at last. Jenna locks her door and begins to look around her two-bedroom apartment. Ever vigilant. She walks towards her bedroom, seeing her bed, and she immediately falls face down into the soft sheets. The next thing she wakes to is the sound of her alarm. 6:00 a.m. The start of a new day.

#### Scene 4

The alarm she had constantly woken up to for who knows how long felt less like the start of another daily grind, and more like a reward. She had survived the night, with no uninvited house guests or spooky occurrences. The peculiar part was, however, she slept for over 8 hours, but she felt exhausted.

Jenna: Coffee. I need to stay awake.

Jenna makes her way towards the kitchen, the thought of much needed caffeine being at the forefront of her drowsy mind. She begins to brew herself a pot, as she sits down at the table, camera sitting next to her laptop. She connects a cable from the camera's interface into her laptop.

Jenna: Well, here goes nothing, I guess.

She begins to watch the footage from yesterday's horror show. Just as she had predicted, the footage showed what her eyes couldn't believe. She saw how the interior of the church began to shift, twist and warp before their very eyes, shrinking in on them right before the shifter appeared. That smiley SOB was right there, couldn't have been more than 30 feet away from where Thomas was filming. The strange part of all this was that Thomas had managed to capture all of this perfectly, but when he zoomed in on the shifter's face, the video began to glitch and distort. It almost seemed as if the shifter had...chosen what it wanted the camera to view and what it didn't, because when it began to laugh, the footage began to go haywire. Well, all except for the audio for some reason.

From Camera Audio: "And Jesus said: I AM THE WAY".

This was followed by the shifter shrieking and disappearing right before the two of them set off for the door. She pauses the video.

Jenna: So my eyes weren't just playing tricks on me. That church shouldn't be possible, it almost felt like it was...breathing. Almost alive.

Jenna picks up her phone and begins dialing the number of her boss, but before she can finish it, she sees something on the video.

Jenna plays the video once more. As she continues to watch the footage shows something that did not make any sense. It showed the point of view from outside the church. The footage showed what Thomas had recorded but instead of what Jenna saw with her own eyes, she saw just the opposite. The video showed Jenna being snatched by the shifter with Thomas screaming. She was witnessing her own demise.

Jenna: (disbelief and horror) What. The. Fuck.

Her mind couldn't even begin to explain away what she had just witnessed on the video. But as she sits there, trying to make sense of what she had just saw she hears a voice.

The Shifter: No one will believe you...

Jenna screams, jumping out of her chair and looking around her apartment. She grabs her beretta that she keeps in her purse and begins pointing it wherever she hears a noise.

The Shifter: Oh ho, miss Jenna is feeling BRAAAAVE. Now, where was that bravery when I...purloined your dear sweet little camera boy. In fact, where was that little gun of yours when you were inside my humble dwelling I wonder?

The voice of the shifter seems to come from directly behind her, but as she turns there is nothing. The voice then begins to emanate from the opposite side of the room.

The Shifter: Ohhhhhh this going to be soooooooooo much fun! I do so enjoy when playtime becomes, dangerous...

The apartment begins to take on a strange aspect. The hallway leading to the bedroom seems just a little too long, the doorways, a little too narrow.

Jenna: (increasingly panicked): What's going on, what's happening?!

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ THE APARTMENT BEGINS TO RUMBLE VIOLENTLY, CREAKING AND GROANING AS LIGHTS FLICKER

Jenna: Make it stop!! Make it stop!!

The Shifter begins to laugh hysterically as Jenna screams in terror.

Ever-changing, the walls of Jenna's homely sanctuary continue to twist in a way that the human mind cannot begin to even comprehend. Hallways stretching infinitely yet, unmoving at the same time. What was happening? Was any of this real? Everything seemed impossible. Everything was

bending and twisting around inside her mind. What had this church done to her sanity. What had the Shifter done to make everything distort and become every state of matter, seemingly.

The Unknown: Know me...know my limitless splendor...

All went black. How long had she been in this state, she wondered. Minutes, hours, days even? When Jenna awoke on the floor of her apartment, nothing was out of place. Nothing was off. But how could that be possible? Everything seemed to have defied every scientific law that she could comprehend. Was all that she had witnessed in her head? Was everything she heard a hallucination? Was it the inconsolable feeling of loss at the idea that Thomas was dead? Or was he alive? Who could say? The only thing that Jenna could think of at that very instant, at that very moment: the god damned church. It's almost as if...it's calling to her. Driving her to mind and psyche closer and closer to the mysteries that could be held there.

Jenna: (deliriously) I don't even know what is happening anymore. That church is the problem. I need to go back. *I want to go back.*

She snaps back to reality.

Jenna: Nothing about this makes any sense. Thomas is gone, or maybe he isn't gone. I just don't know anymore. Regardless I can't just sit here and do nothing.

She proceeds to begin her search for information about this impossible church. She dives more and more into sources ranging from nationwide coverage to conspiracy theories about how it's an entry point for some government funded weapons facility and that people who go in who aren't authorized never return. Religious propaganda about it being "the house of Satan himself". However, there was one article, one single source that caught her eye more than any of the others. "Researchers discover microscopic rift under old, abandoned church."

Jenna: (intrigued) Huh. Not exactly like the other bullshit I've come across it seems.

Jenna (looking closer): "Researchers and investigators alike have been drawn to the ruins of Christ's Resurrection after what scientists can only describe as "a shimmer in spacetime" leaks dark energy from somewhere we cannot see. Observers in the area have been known to see what they describe as "an otherworldly shifting and warping of reality" while inside of the church, with these occurrences happening more frequently and violently the closer one approaches the rift." How did this article get buried? Of all the coverage I have seen for this place, not one of them mentioned any sort of scientific observation taking place at the church sight.

As she continues to scroll through the online article, a photo catches her eye. A group of about a dozen researchers stand close the rift, with the photo being slightly warped from the supposed effects of the close proximity. But Jenna notices something in the very corner of the photo. She zooms in on the photo and jumps out of her chair.

Jenna: It's there...the shifter!!

The shifter face can be seen very faintly, but the alarming part wasn't only the fact that it was present in a photo from nearly a decade ago, but something else entirely. It was frowning.

Jenna: This thing always appears smiling ear to bloody ear. Why in this case is it almost...sad looking.

SFX\_\_\_\_\_A SUDDEN THUD AGAINST THE WINDOW

Jenna jumps from her chair once more, only to walk over to the balcony and see a twitching robin on the ground.

Jenna: Poor thing must not have been paying attention.

She walks back to the kitchen table to discover something she could not have expected. The shifter was smiling in the photo.

SFX\_\_\_\_\_MULTIPLE MOUSE CLICKS

Jenna refreshes the page over and over again, and the shifter changes its composure: Smiling, frowning, crying, and lastly, mid scream.

Jenna: It not only affects reality. It affects technology as well. Just like the camera distortion in the video! There has to be more in the article, there's no way that this thing can be missed, it's too noticeable.

She continues to read the article.

Jenna: "Remote controlled drones were sent in to document the effects the rift had on its environment, after it was discovered that...the longer one would spend in the church itself, symptoms of selective amnesia. Some researchers claimed to have more minor experiences such as, forgetting where they had placed a clipboard, forgotten the time right after checking their phone or watch; but then there were those who had claimed to not even remember how they had gotten to the basement in the first place. What they all shared in common however, was claiming to see a smiling figure in the corner of their eye, only to turn and see nothing." That has to be it. There is no other explanation for it.

Jenna pulls out her notepad from her bag and begins to write down everything she can remember about the church.

Jenna: (mumbling) Crumbling façade, larger on the inside than the outside, shifting interior. Entered the structure alone. Billowing, creeping shadow. Barely made it out after the shifter saw me. Experiencing strange occurrences back at home.

SFX\_\_\_\_\_KNOCKING AT THE DOOR

Jenna jumps as a knock comes from the door to her apartment. She walks over to the peephole and peers through. On the other side she sees her neighbor, Mrs. Ortega standing there.

Mrs. Ortega: Jen? Honey, are you okay? I heard an awful lot of screaming from your place, are you alright? Do you need help?

SFX\_\_\_\_\_DOOR OPENS WITH A CREAK

Jenna: Oh gosh, hi Mrs. Ortega. I'm so sorry I must have been having a really bad night terror or something. I woke up on the floor of my living room and knocked some stuff over. Must have been sleepwalking.

Mrs. Ortega (skeptically): I could have sworn I heard another voice from in there, but if you say you're okay dear I believe you. Please be careful sweetie.

Jenna: I will, thanks Mrs. O.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ DOOR CLOSING SHUT

Jenna: (thinking to herself) I knew I wasn't okay. Why did I tell her that I was fine? This doesn't make any form of sense anymore. That's it I need to somehow track down one of these researchers and see what they know. Easier said than done I suppose.

Jenna begins frantically searching online for any form of way to contact the research group or one of the researchers themselves. After a good couple of hours, she finds a name that matches one from the news article. The name reads, Dr. Elijah Shafer. She dials the number into her cellphone.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE DIALING AND TOLLING

Jenna: Come on, please pick up. Please, please, please.

Dr. Shafer: Uh, hello? Who's this?

Jenna: Hi Dr. Shafer. My name is Jenna Leads. I'm a reporter and wanted to see if I could ask you a couple questions.

Dr. Shafer: Questions? What about? If I may.

Jenna: I wanted to know about the work that you were conducting over at Christ's Resurrection. The assignment you were a part of nearly ten years ago?

Dr. Shafer: I, uh, I have no idea what you're referring to. Uh, please do not call again.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ LINE GOES DEAD

Jenna: Well, there goes one option I had down the tube.

A few moments later, Jenna's phone rings. The caller ID reads as unknown. She reluctantly answers the phone.

Jenna: Uh hello?

Dr. Shafer: How do you know about that article Ms. Leads. That report was supposed to be covered up. Oh god, if this gets out I don't know what's going to happen.

Jenna: Dr. Shafer, this is for my own understanding. I am investigating the disappearances that have been occurring there for the past few years. Over 20 people have gone missing, and I just found out through that article about some kind of, what, dimensional tear or something?

Dr. Shafer: It just appeared one day. It first came to our organization's attention when there were supposed tectonic shifts occurring in the area. We knew there was never a fault line in the area so we were sent to investigate. We worked there, documenting all we could about the church itself. Early on we discovered the tear. It was warping all non-organic material in the area, with the effects lessening the farther away you were from it. Now I say this about the non-organic material itself being affected, but that isn't to say people didn't feel any side effects. I'm sure you know about amnesia and all, correct?

Jenna: Yeah. It had varying degrees of effect, didn't it?

Dr. Shafer: Precisely. However, the longer you were around it the worse it got. Then it was hallucinations. A few of us started to see something. Something out of the corner of our eyes. We all saw the same thing. A tall, bipedal, rather humanoid looking thing. Ghastly pale in appearance. But the worst part was the smile. Too wide for its face. The worst part was that the amnesia would come in waves. We would forget about the whole thing, like the research project had never happened, but that thing we kept seeing out of the corner of our eye, it never went away. I still see it, except it's not out of the corner of my eye anymore. I'll see it clear as day, but then it disappears.

Jenna: Dr. Shafer, this same thing you've been seeing, I see it as well. Except it's far more hostile towards me.

Dr. Shafer: Oh...oh my dear. I'm so sorry.

Jenna: What for?? Dr. Shafer??

Dr. Shafer: I pray it will be over quickly.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ LINE GOES DEAD

Jenna: (breathing heavily) Oh please no.

The room begins to shift and twist once more.

End of Act 2

Scene 5: Jenna finds herself outside of the very place that she ran from not so very long ago. She was back in front of the church. The Unknown speaks softly and warmly, enticing her to come forth into its embrace, the promise of understanding of the disappearances. Something that she has desired for so long now. Thomas is nothing but a name. At least, she believes that now. But who can say if he is truly gone. The footage she viewed earlier on his camera showed something else entirely. Could he be alive?

Once more, Jenna awakens. But not where she was expecting. After seeing again, the walls literally closing in around her, she opens her eyes not in her own apartment. She finds herself back where her subconscious desired. She was back in front of Christ's Resurrection. The very place that her mind could not begin to process. She entered the first time as a reporter, and now she enters once more as a broken shell of a human being.

Jenna: (wearily) Ughhh, where am I? Oh no, no, no, no! Not again!

The church stands before her. Dark. Looming. Inviting. Repelling. Open. Shut. What words could even describe such a place? This was not a place of reverence any longer. This was a feeding ground. It was the zenith of something else entirely. It was a gateway. Christ's Resurrection, it was the entry and exit to a very tangible and real hell on earth. What could this "place of worship" offer those who go searching. Paradise? Damnation? Limbo?

Jenna: I...I cannot even remember how I got here. How? Wha-what did this to me?? Why can't I remember?!

The Unknown: Seek what I can provide...

Jenna looks around for the source of the voice. She knows this is not the Shifter that has been turning her perception of reality up on itself. This was almost, warm. Inviting. She wanted to know more. The reporter in her was oh so noticeably clear. She desired...closure. If she found out who or what was causing these disappearances, her work would finally be noticed. Could it be the tear? The Shifter? All she knew was this: she desires answers.

The Unknown: *Desire*

Jenna begins moving towards the entrance to her very own oblivion. Tidbits of information have become nothing but fleeting bits of memory. Gone and forgotten. Who was Thomas again?

Jenna: (Enthralled) Show me the source of the disappearances. I want it. I need to know.

SFX\_\_\_\_\_SLOW, STEADY FOOTSTEPS CLIMB CONCRETE STEPS.  
FOLLOWED BY TIRES SCREECHING INTO THE LOT.

Thomas: Jen!! Stop!!

His words snap her out of her trance. Who said those words? Who was this man? She remembered.

Jenna: Thomas? (realization) Thomas!

SFX\_\_\_\_\_DOORS OF THE CHURCH SLAM SHUT, JENNA'S VOICE  
MUFFLED BY THE WOODEN DOORS IN FRONT OF HER

Thomas: Jen!!

Thomas runs towards the church entrance. Climbing up quickly the concrete steps that felt like mountains to climb in the moment.

SFX\_\_\_\_\_THE SOUND OF DOORS VIOLENTLY SHAKING

Thomas: Come on, open up you piece of crap! Jen, can you hear me?! Jen!!

SFX\_\_\_\_\_DOORS CREAK OPEN

Thomas: Hang on Jen, I'm coming!

Thomas enters the congregational area; the same one he had been chased out of. He pulls out his phone and turns on the flashlight; hoping to see any sign of Jen. He presses deeper inside.

Thomas: Where are you, Jen? Why would you even come back to this fuckin place? Why did I come back to this place? What even is this place?

The Unknown: *Certainty*

Thomas: I will find you Jen. No matter what. I swear.

He begins to press ever further into the long and stretching halls of the church. He cannot make heads or tails of where he is going anymore. He is lost.

Jen: (screaming) Tommy!

Thomas: Jen! Where are you?!

Jen continues to scream out for Thomas. Her voice growing further and further away. Thomas runs further down the corridors of the church. Corridors that were not present when they entered before.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ SCRAPING OF CLAWS UPON STONE WALLS

Thomas: Who's there?

Silence. A pure and unadulterated silence greets Thomas's ears. He presses on further in search of his endangered friend.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ HIDEOUS AND GHASTLY DISTANT LAUGHTER EMINATES FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE LONG HALLWAY

Thomas: What the hell?

The Ambience: We knew you would come back...little man.

Thomas: Who said that?

Thomas rapidly shines his light around, searching desperately for the source of the voice he just heard.

The Ambience: He knew, YES, he knew. They knew. It knew. They've always known. Yes, bring the little pig to the Unknown. Show him his true embrace.

Suddenly a whirl of smoke begins to swirl around Thomas's feet.

The Ambience: JOIN US. JOIN US. JOIN US.

Thomas takes off, full speed down the corridor, hearing the sound of distant scampering behind him, growing ever closer.

The Ambience: JOIN US

Thomas: (panting)

The Ambience: JOIN US

Thomas sees what appears to be a door down at the end of the corridor. Only another couple hundred feet.

Thomas: (frantically) Almost...

The Ambience: JOIN US.

The pattering of dozens of feet grows closer to Thomas.

The Ambience: WE WANT YOU THOMAS...PLEASE DON'T GO!

Thomas: Fuck!

Thomas reaches the door, and swings it open.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ DOOR SWINGS OPEN AND CLOSED IN A RAPID SUCCESSION

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ DOZENS OF FISTS BANGING ON THE DOOR

Thomas finds himself in yet another offshoot of the main congregational area.

Thomas: It doesn't make sense. That felt like miles I just ran, and what the hell were those things chasing me?

The time for answers is cut short by another scream piercing the air.

Jenna: Help!!

Thomas: She's close. Hold on Jen!

He continues down another corridor. This one seeming to bend and turn unknowingly. Without reason or purpose.

Thomas: It's getting worse. The distortion is getting more intense.

The Unknown: *Purpose*

Thomas: Come on, Tommy. Keep pushing forward.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ FOOTSTEPS CLACK AGAINST THE FLOOR

Thomas: Light? Oh, thank God.

Thomas continues towards the source of light, a welcome sight after what felt like ages of running in near darkness. Shortly after, he finds himself at a yet another door. This one having a small stained glass window in the center, with light streaming through.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES

Thomas faces the door from the inside this time. Panting and catching his breath. Safety at last. Sight restored.

Thomas turns.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ GUN SHOT RINGS OUT

Thomas: (gasps)

There stands Jenna, the same Beretta pistol in hand. The same one she had forgotten the first time they had entered this hellscape. The pistol that had now put a hole in Thomas's chest.

Jenna: (disbelief and horror) No!!

Thomas backs into the wall and slides down.

Jenna: (Frantic) Tommy, I'm so sorry. I-I-I didn't know it was you!

Tommy chokes on his blood, unable to speak as terror and sadness fills his expression.

Life begins to leave Thomas's eyes. All this time, Jenna thought Thomas was dead; taken by the Shifter. She saw it. She knew he was dead. Only he wasn't. Well, that would soon change.

Thomas: (gasping for air)

The Unknown: **LOSS**

Jenna begins to sob uncontrollably. This place is a lie, she thought. It was showing truths that were false, and falsities that were fact. What had this place done to her. She saw Thomas as a fiend, until the moment that bullet left the barrel.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ CLAWED HANDS CLICK AGAINST THE CEILING

Jenna looks up slowly. Terror crosses her face.

The Shifter: Plaaaaaaaaytimeeeeeeeee.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ A DEMONIC SCREAM RUPTURES THE STILLNESS OF THE ROOM

Jenna screams as the Shifter drops on top of her.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ FLESH RIPS AND TEARS. CLAWS PIERCE MUSCLE AND SNAP BONES

Jenna's screams are heard throughout the impossible church. They clatter across the winding corridors, the never-endingness of this paradoxical building.

The Shifter: Yet another feeds our Unknown patriarch. Let this one's essence feed the rift, the tear so that you may grow ever closer to this mortal realm. Please dear Unknown, bless thy unholy child.

The Ambience: SHE JOINS US. SHE JOINS US. SHE JOINS US

A cacophony of terrible voices fill the air as an ever changing landscape creaks and groans once more.

SFX \_\_\_\_\_ VAN DRIVES OVER BUMPS OF BROKEN CONCRETE AND TIRES  
SCREACH AS THE VEHICLE COMES TO A HALT

The Shifter: And so the cycle begins anew. An eternal anguish. Rejoice my brothers and sisters!  
More have come to pay homage to our GODHAND.

End of Act 3

Thank you for reading!