

From Nowhere

By

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INT. BARE APARTMENT, MORNING

We hear a loud, siren-like sound, and we cut to a shot of a bullhorn-like speaker on a pole outside in the street. We see a top down view of a bed. A young woman, SARAH (early-mid 20's, pretty but completely unconcerned about it), is laying on it, and she awakens with the sound of the siren.

SARAH

(V.O.)

For a population living an existence of so little consequence, waking up on time is considered inexplicably important.

SARAH rises from the bed and looks out the window. We see a bleak industrial landscape, very muted colors. There are men in uniform holding weapons standing every few yards. It is quickly established that wherever we are, it is a police state, and the regular citizens seem fairly miserable.

CUT TO:

INT. SARAH'S BATHROOM, MORNING

SARAH is in the shower (we only see from the shoulder's up), but it is sufficient to notice only a trickle of water coming from the shower head, and from SARAH's shivering it is obviously not particularly warm water).

SARAH

(V.O.)

We've all been going through the motions for so long now, we could do it in our sleep. I wish The Order would let us sometime...at least then we could dream while we do it.

CUT TO:

INT. SARAH'S LIVING ROOM, MORNING

SARAH opens a book, but we see that a portion of the pages have been cut out to make it a storage box. She pulls out a necklace, possibly a crucifix (while religious symbolism would be effective, this is not intended to be too heavy-handed or on-the-nose in that direction--therefore the nature of the necklace is at the director's discretion) and kisses it, carefully putting it back in its hiding place.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

(V.O.)

It's hard to remember how life was before. I just know it was different...but once you fall into a routine it's easy to change your impression of how things are SUPPOSED to be.

CUT TO:

EXT INDUSTRIAL AREA, MORNING

SARAH has left her apartment and ventured into the street. She is walking and we get a better look at the people. The ordinary citizens are dressed in drab colors, and every few yards we see armed "officials".

SARAH

(V.O.)

I was just a kid when all this started. I remember life being more fun--more colorful...but I don't know if it's "The Order" that changed that or just adulthood. All I know is, every day it's the same thing. The same walk, the same views...

At this point a VAGRANT steps out of an alleyway and yells at SARAH.

VAGRANT

(Angrily)

YOU SHOULD HAVE NEVER BEEN BORN!

SARAH

(V.O.)

...the same conversations.

SARAH mostly ignores the VAGRANT, and continues walking. We get the impression that these interactions may have bothered her at first, but by this point she is so used to it and convinced that the VAGRANT is crazy and that it is just part of her routine.

CUT TO:

EXT SOUP LINE, DAY

We see SARAH walking down the street, observing the people around her. There are police on every corner, and posters that say "If you see insubordination, say something."

SARAH

(V.O.)

This all started about ten years ago. Some terrorists set off a bomb in Washington, D.C. Over a million people were killed, including all but a handful of politicians. The ones who were left decided that things needed to change.

SARAH continues walking, and arrives at her destination, where a line has formed outside the door.

SARAH

(V.O.)

The first thing The Order did was undo some of the "mistakes" that those who came before them had made. "Liberty", they decided, was too precious to be entrusted to the masses. Too many mistakes would be made. The responsibility was too great.

CUT TO:

INT SOUP KITCHEN, DAY

We see a close-up of a tray, and an unappetizing ladle-full of gray goop is unceremoniously dumped onto it. The camera pulls back to reveal that SARAH is the recipient.

SARAH

(V.O.)

A surprisingly large number of people agreed to that. As long as the government met their basic needs, the loss of freedom was a small price to pay for being relieved of all personal responsibility.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET, DAY

SARAH has left the soup kitchen and is now walking elsewhere.

SARAH

(V.O.)

Not everyone wanted to go along with it. A few raised resistance, and were never heard from again.

SARAH walks past a wall, riddled with "missing" posters of people--implied to have disappeared for this reason.

SARAH

(V.O.)

After a while, most people lost their nerve, no matter how unhappy they were.

CUT TO:

INT. BARE APARTMENT, MORNING

The siren goes off again, and we have a nearly identical shot of SARAH waking up again, starting a new day.

CUT TO:

INT. SARAH'S BATHROOM, MORNING

Again, we see SARAH shivering in the shower.

CUT TO:

INT. SARAH'S LIVING ROOM, MORNING

Again we see SARAH pull out the necklace and kiss it.

CUT TO:

EXT STREET, DAY

Again SARAH walks past the VAGRANT, who promptly yells at her.

VAGRANT

IT WOULD ALL BE BETTER WITHOUT YOU!

SARAH doesn't react, but continues walking.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

INT SOUP KITCHEN, DAY

The slop is splashed onto her tray again. This time, though, we follow SARAH to a table, where she is conspicuously alone. She looks around at some of the other tables.

SARAH

(V.O.)

People are very divided here. Divided by how they look, what they like, how they think. People grasp onto anything that makes them different, and huddle together with others like them. The Order does nothing to discourage that. I guess when you can convince a person to define themselves as anything other than just a person, you can convince them to do anything. And if you convince them not to trust anyone outside of their circle, you've got them right where you want them.

We see a circle of people about SARAH's age, laughing and conversing. A girl approaches the circle, and the circle promptly opens up allowing her a place in the conversation. SARAH approaches the same group, but is ignored. She stands politely for a moment waiting to be acknowledged, but it never comes.

SARAH

(V.O.)

The politicians have created more victims and villains out of thin air than all of the storytellers in the world.

CUT TO:

INT. BARE APARTMENT, MORNING

Again, the siren goes off, and SARAH awakens.

CUT TO:

INT. SARAH'S LIVING ROOM, MORNING

A quicker shot of SARAH kissing the necklace.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET, DAY

SARAH is walking out of the apartment, when she sees a group of officials beating a teenage boy. She stops to look.

OFFICIAL #1
Move along, miss--this doesn't
concern you.

TEENAGER
(To SARAH)
Please--help me!

OFFICIAL #2
(Striking the boy with a
nightstick)
Shut up!

TEENAGER
I didn't do anything!

SARAH starts to object, but is cut off.

OFFICIAL #1
I am NOT going to warn you again,
lady. Move along. NOW!

SARAH hesitates, but ultimately complies. Tears fill her eyes as she walks away, obviously ashamed of herself for not being more courageous. She walks down the street, where she is confronted (as usual) by the VAGRANT.

VAGRANT
YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY WORTHLESS, YOU
KNOW THAT?

Today, though, SARAH is in no mood to ignore him. Today she turns to him and snaps back.

SARAH
Why are you always saying these
things to me? Leave me alone--you
don't even know me!

The VAGRANT seems surprised that SARAH has finally confronted him...and she is equally surprised with his articulate response.

(CONTINUED)

VAGRANT

I know you a lot better than you think I do, Sarah.

SARAH

How--how do you know my name?

VAGRANT

I've been watching you for a long time.

SARAH is understandably creeped out by this, and turns to walk away.

SARAH

Just stay away from me, ok?

She starts to walk away, but his next words stop her.

VAGRANT

What if I told you none of this was meant to be?

SARAH pauses, but she does have some curiosity.

SARAH

(Turning back to him)

I'd say you were crazy...but I already knew that.

VAGRANT

No...I'm not crazy. I'm just from someplace other than here. Someplace where that bomb never went off.

SARAH

Look...I've got to go...

VAGRANT

We both know you have absolutely nowhere of consequence to be, and that you won't be missed when you don't show up there...so indulge an old man, won't you? Hear me out, and I promise I will never yell at you again.

SARAH

You've got 5 minutes.

VAGRANT

Very well. Now where was I? Oh yes...where I come from, the bomb never went off. We wanted it to, though. It took a lot of planning, and to have it thwarted was...disappointing...to say the least.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, DAY

A young cop busts into his captain's office. The young cop is JAMES CHASE.

VAGRANT

(V.O.)

The blame for our plan's failure rests on one man--an idealistic young police officer named James Chase.

JAMES

Chief! You know that hunch I was following?

CHIEF

You mean the crazy one about a terrorist conspiracy?

JAMES

That's the one...I just got a lead that it's a lot bigger than I thought. I've got to get downtown, I need a backup team, stat!

CUT TO:

EXT ROOFTOP, DAY

JAMES is busting through a door to the roof of a tall building based on his lead, and he was not misinformed. There, on top of the building, is a suitcase nuke, with a timer counting down less than a minute. He frantically gets on his phone, and is requesting unheard instructions as the VAGRANT continues his story.

VAGRANT

(V.O.)

That bomb was a master plan. We could blame it on

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VAGRANT (cont'd)
terrorists...which ones were of no
consequence. Any fringe group that
we could get people to be afraid of
would do. From there, we could
feed on their paranoia and build a
new, better world...where we had
absolute control to shape it as we
saw fit.

JAMES
(On the phone)
Ok, just talk me through it...ok.

JAMES cuts a wire, and the clock stops at 1 second.

VAGRANT
(V.O.)
But it wasn't meant to be.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, DAY

JAMES is experiencing the congratulations and accolades of
his peers for a job well done.

VAGRANT
(V.O.)
Mr. Chase became the biggest hero
in America overnight. And
we...well, we didn't fare as well.

CUT TO:

EXT. GOVERNMENT BUILDING, DAY

A news broadcast is showing the next scene, with an anchor
describing what is happening as several well-dressed men are
led from the building in handcuffs.

NEWS CASTER
This was the scene in our nation's
capitol today as a group of notable
politicians who refer to themselves
as "The Order" were taken into
custody following the revelation
that they were the masterminds
behind the largest attempted
terrorist attack in American
history. We now go live to...

(CONTINUED)

The audio for the news cast is cut off by the VAGRANT's continued narration.

VAGRANT

(V.O.)

We were among the most powerful men in the nation, now reduced to pariahs. Some of us were smarter than the others, though. We managed to evade capture, but we knew our time was running out.

CUT TO:

INT AUDITORIUM, NIGHT

VAGRANT

(V.O.)

Of course, the rest of the population couldn't have been happier. They had a new golden boy to rally around, to inspire them.

We are at a ceremony honoring JAMES for his bravery. His father, JOHN--also a police officer in his dress uniform--is at the podium.

JOHN

When my son told me he wanted to be a "big city" cop, his mother and I knew he would come back home sooner or later. We knew he would do great things, but even we never imagined that he'd be back here having saved millions of lives. It is with great pride that I introduce my son, Jimmy--er, James--Chase!

There is a standing ovation from the crowd as JAMES comes to the podium, embracing his father in a warm hug before JOHN retreats to the wings of the stage. JAMES takes the podium.

JAMES

Thank you. You know, my father always told me that "the only way for evil to triumph is for good to do nothing." I don't think he came up with that himself, but--

JAMES holds the line for laughter, which the adoring crowd is happy to give him.

(CONTINUED)

JAMES

--but he sure did live it.

We cut to a shot in the wings, where JOHN and his wife MELANIE are watching their son proudly, with MELANIE giving JOHN a kiss on the cheek with this line.

JAMES

And he instilled it in me. I'm the one being honored today, but if it weren't for the skills and the values that he taught me, and the strength that I learned from my mother--

We cut back to the wing, where now JOHN is kissing MELANIE's cheek from this line.

JAMES

--I wouldn't be the man I am today. So please, join me in honoring THEM.

The crowd is happy to oblige, and JOHN and MELANIE join their son on stage.

VAGRANT

(V.O.)

That golden boy and his perfect family were the faces of all of our failures. Oh, how we hated them! Luckily, we were able to come up with a "Plan B".

CUT TO:

INT WAREHOUSE, NIGHT

We see a younger version of the VAGRANT (now clean cut and well dressed), arriving with a couple of his colleagues into the building.

VAGRANT

(V.O.)

Before I became a wanted man, I worked on military contracts. I knew a LOT of secrets. I knew about technologies that very few people could imagine. I knew about one that had been discovered by accident years ago when the navy was trying to develop a cloaking

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VAGRANT (cont'd)
device. Instead they came up with
something that opened a gateway
through time.

We see the men pulling drop-cloths off of some machinery.

VAGRANT
(V.O.)
At first the mission seemed
simple. Go back in time and kill
James Chase. Of course, murder is
messy--and the issue of DNA could
have been dangerous to my younger
self, so I proposed an alternative.

We--somehow--show the younger VAGRANT going back in time.

CUT TO:

EXT FIELD, DAY

The younger VAGRANT is shown waking up in a field.

VAGRANT
(V.O.)
My solution was considerably more
elegant. Why get my hands dirty
killing him when I could keep him
from ever being born?

CUT TO:

INT. BAR, EVENING

There are several people laughing and having a good
time. We see a younger version of MELANIE hanging out with
several girlfriends, and we see a younger version of JOHN
enter and take a seat at the bar.

VAGRANT
(V.O.)
Finding golden boy's proud parents
was simple. They became almost as
famous as he was, and those stupid
gossip magazines were full of
stories about how they met. But
this time would be different.

We see JOHN and MELANIE lock eyes from across the room, the
attraction obvious and instant. JOHN flashes her a shy

(CONTINUED)

smile, and she flashes a radiant, inviting smile back to him. He gets up from his bar stool to walk over to her, but as he does someone taps him on the shoulder. It is the younger version of the VAGRANT.

VAGRANT

Hey, buddy...can you help me out? My car won't start--can you give me a jump?

JOHN hesitates, as he really wants to meet this girl. But, he's the type of guy who will never turn down someone who needs help.

JOHN

Um...yeah. Yeah, of course I'll give you a hand, pal.

As the two leave, MELANIE looks disappointed, but is quickly distracted by one of her friends. We see a close up of her laughing and having fun. From there...

DISSOLVE TO

INT. TRAILER, NIGHT

We dissolve seamlessly from MELANIE at that moment, to a time lapse a few years later. Her face has become more aged and considerably less happy. She also has a black eye and a cut on her lip.

VAGRANT

(V.O.)

That poor woman. She was meant to be the wife of a saint, and the mother of a hero. She has to have been somewhat disappointed with where she ended up.

Despite her obviously poor circumstances, MELANIE manages to smile as she puts a necklace (the same necklace we saw SARAH looking at and kissing earlier) around her young daughter's neck.

MELANIE

(To her daughter)

Ok, now you need to get out of the way so I can finish dinner. You can get some milk out of the refrigerator but then I need you to go play, ok?

(CONTINUED)

The daughter agrees, and goes to the refrigerator as MELANIE works at the stove. As the daughter is reaching into the refrigerator, she causes a cardboard carton--almost full--of beer bottles to fall out and break on the kitchen floor.

MELANIE

(More panicked than angry)

I need for you to go to your room right now. Don't argue, just go.

As the little girl goes to her room, a scruffy, rough looking man named RICH enters. He is MELANIE's husband, and the little girl's father. He has obviously been drinking.

When RICH sees the broken beer, he gets extremely angry at MELANIE, believing that she was the one who broke them.

RICH

(Irrationally angry)

What did you do, you clumsy idiot!?

The little girl is revealed to still be in the hallway looking on, and what she sees is obviously horrifying.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAILER, NIGHT

We see RICH being loaded into a police car in handcuffs, with two men from the coroner's office loading a stretcher with a covered body into an ambulance. The little girl is led away by a social worker. The VAGRANT's younger self is shown to be watching from the street.

VAGRANT

(V.O.)

That was quite a day. Seeing as how my only job was to make sure Melanie never met John, I was able to go into retirement after that.

We get a close-up on the little girl's face, and...

DISSOLVE TO

EXT STREET, DAY

...it dissolves into the face of SARAH, who has tears in her eyes from the memory.

(CONTINUED)

VAGRANT

And there we have it. Our brave new world. For years it seemed like a victory...but I had no idea how wrong we were. Maybe it's just because I--or at least THIS version of me--am on the outside looking in. The other me has the power I always wanted, but for me to be in this hell-hole with the rest of you I see what a mistake this all was.

CUT TO:

EXT SECURED BUILDING, NIGHT

We see the old version of the vagrant putting his hand to a plate on the wall, with a screen showing his credentials in the form of a picture of his younger (current) self.

VAGRANT

(V.O.)

Of course, having the same DNA and handprint as one of the leaders of this world has it's advantages...as long as I'm sneaky enough.

CUT TO:

EXT STREET, DAY

We are back on the street where the story started, and the VAGRANT has a far-away look in his eyes. He then becomes very serious, and stares daggers into SARAH.

Suddenly he pulls out a gun--which is now illegal but which he was implied to have obtained in the previous cut-scene--and it appears that he is going to use it on SARAH.

VAGRANT

(Angrily)

This world needed a savior...and all it got was YOU!

SARAH flinches, bracing herself for what she thinks is the inevitable gun shot. But then...

VAGRANT

(Suddenly very sad)

And it's all my fault.

(CONTINUED)

With that, he puts the gun under his chin and pulls the trigger. Blood (which should be very vibrant against the gloomy, muted color) sprays SARAH in the face as she screams.

CUT TO:

EXT, SAME STREET, TIME LAPSED FORWARD A LITTLE WHILE

We see three officials loading the VAGRANT's body to take away.

OFFICIAL #1
Where did he get a gun, anyway?

OFFICIAL #2
No idea.

OFFICIAL #1
Well where is it now?

OFFICIAL #2 points to OFFICIAL #3.

OFFICIAL #2
He's got it.

OFFICIAL #3
What? I thought YOU had it!

We then see SARAH walking away from them and rounding a corner, with the gun tucked in her jacket.

SARAH
(V.O.)
Whether you call it "fate", or
"God's Plan", trying to make sense
of the world is a complicated
thing.

CUT TO:

INT COZY HOME, NIGHT

We see a shot of JOHN CHASE, hugging his wife and son in the "good timeline".

SARAH
(V.O.)
When times are good, people take
comfort in the idea that times are
SUPPOSED to be good, and that they
are SUPPOSED to be happy.

(CONTINUED)

We then fade from a shot of JOHN with his happy family to a shot of him in the "other" timeline (hopefully dissolved with an accuracy that makes his family seem to "disappear"). The JOHN of this timeline is no longer smiling. He looks defeated, and lonely.

SARAH

(V.O.)

The same notion that gives comfort during the happy times can be very cruel during the bad ones.

CUT TO:

EXT STREET, DAY

We see the shot of the young boy being beaten from earlier in the film.

SARAH

(V.O.)

Nobody wants to believe that they were meant to be broken...

CUT TO:

INT JOHN'S HOME, DAY

We see JOHN alone, in a very empty apartment.

SARAH

(V.O.)

...or lost...

CUT TO:

INT. AN OFFICE OF SOME SORT, DAY

We see SARAH, looking through a database of some sort and writing something down.

SARAH

(V.O.)

...or irrelevant.

CUT TO:

EXT STREET, EVENING

We see SARAH walking down the street, with a purpose.

SARAH

(V.O.)

When comfort can't be found in what
is "meant to be", sometimes you
have to take your own comfort.

SARAH walks up some steps to a door.

SARAH

(V.O.)

You take comfort in the idea that
maybe--just maybe---God's Plan
doesn't control you.

SARAH knocks on the door.

SARAH

(V.O.)

Maybe it DEPENDS on you.

The door is answered by JOHN CHASE.

SARAH

Mr. Chase, you've never met
me...but you and I have important
work to do.

SARAH then shows him the gun--not in a threatening way, but
in a conspiratorial way. At first he is shocked, but then
takes a glance around to see if she was followed and then
opens the door to let her into his home.

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END