

# Peripheral Vision

FADE IN:

## EXT. TRACK, SONOMA JUNIOR HIGH - DAY

ETHAN RUSSELL jogs around a muddy track in rain and fog. Rain falls on him lightly, then heavier until it's raining buckets. Tattoos that were hidden by his dry T-shirt are exposed by soaking wet clothing. He runs powerfully but without interest.

Rain cascades into the track, falling heavily, obscuring everything.

## EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A cloud of steam emerges from a vent beside the kitchen window. Rain splatters against the bare cement patio.

## INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A bright-red shirt hangs on a spinner rack outside. It glows against steely grey rain and fog. Ethan now wears a spiffy white captain's uniform. He sips from a steaming cup of coffee as his laundry is drenched on the line outside. There is a plaintive meow from the sliding door.

A shivering, soaking wet cat rubs against the glass. Cat food floats in a plastic tray on the steps.

ETHAN

If you think you're getting in here like that, you're crazy.

He turns away from the miserable cat and opens the dishwasher. Outside, rain splatters against a nearby rooftop.

## EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A Ford pickup is in the driveway. The garage door opens, revealing Ethan. Behind him, a weightlifting bench and a 500cc motorcycle. He turns to shut the door and the CAT darts in. He huddles in a corner, his yellow eyes glinting up at Ethan. Softening, Ethan pets the cat, who purrs loudly and rubs against his white uniform pants, smearing them with water, dirt and fur. He sneezes.

ETHAN

Lucky for you, ya don't haveta go work in this godawful mess.

## EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - NIGHT

Heavy rain splashes against mammoth red cables at the top of the bridge superstructure.

Dark rain clouds melt into each other in the distance.

Cars race by below, their lights blur into long ribbons of yellow and red in the glistening darkness. Lights from boats cross under the bridge.

## EXT. FERRYBOAT - NIGHT

Rain smashes into the sides of a huge ferryboat. Through its many large square windows, wet commuters shiver against each other in the crowded interior. Outside, the boat deck benches sit empty and wet. The camera follows a short flight of steps to the wheelhouse.

## EXT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

Rain pours off the exterior parking controls. Ahead, a black, fog-enshrouded bay. A shadowy figure moves inside the wheelhouse: Ethan in his white uniform.

He drops the tiller inside the wheelhouse and approaches the joystick on the exterior controls. He manipulates them with confidence, smoothly maneuvering the boat's position into alignment with the dock.

EXT. SAUSALITO DOCK - NIGHT

The huge ferryboat approaches.

Deckhands throw thick yellow ropes to the dock where they are caught and quickly tied to pilings. Ethan walks back into the wheelhouse and out of sight.

The gangplank is slammed into position, allowing the commuters to exit. They walk quickly to get out of the rain.

INT. WHEELHOUSE, SHIFT ROOM - NIGHT

An overworked electric space heater mounted on the wall glows red in the semi-darkness. The room is tiny. It is decorated with miscellaneous boat paraphernalia, charts, textbooks, crosswords and a handful of "adult" magazines. SCOTT, a good-looking young man in a captain's uniform sits at a small desk studying a map of San Francisco Bay. The door behind him opens, revealing Ethan.

ETHAN

Your turn, yuppie boy.

SCOTT

How is it out there?

ETHAN

Colder'n a witch's teat in a brass brassiere at the North Pole in the middle of an ice storm.

SCOTT

That good, huh?

Ethan sneezes.

SCOTT (cont'd)

You look like shit, Ethan. Are you all right?

Ethan does not look all right.

ETHAN

I'm fine, you sissy teenager. In fact, I could eat a bucket of boogers right now.

SCOTT

You should sleep this trip.

ETHAN

Are you kiddin'? I'm gonna be too busy diggin' my filthy claws into the steel hull of this boat because

I know it's being driven by a ten year-old who just got his license!

YOUNG CAPTAIN

(smiling)

Thanks.

ETHAN

(genuine)

You're OK in my book, Scott, even if you did just get your goddamned license.

Scott exits.

The bunks crammed in the back aren't all that comfortable, but that's all there is. Someone's left one of those \$25 X-rated magazines on the lower bunk. Ethan looks at it with disgust before stowing it in a cupboard.

**EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT**

Waves crest in small foaming whitecaps.

The ferry plows across the ocean.

**INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT**

ETHAN sweats in his bunk, gasping for breath. He startles awake, grabs the upper bunk.

The room rocks. Scott looks in from his seat at the controls.  
Ethan closes his eyes again.

Scott puts some blankets on Ethan, exits.

Ethan throws up. He looks at the mess, gets out of the bunk.

**INT. FERRY, RESTROOM - NIGHT**

Harsh white light illuminates Ethan's face in the small metal mirror. He slaps a steaming wet paper towel onto his forehead and wipes his face with it. A twinge in his intestines. He is not feeling good.

**EXT. FERRYBOAT - NIGHT**

Ethan carries a small stack of wet paper towels up the steps towards the wheelhouse staircase. He's got to sneeze, but he doesn't want to and he doesn't have a choice. When it happens, he reflexively covers his nose with the towels. He takes the towels away, his face glows anemically in the rain.

**INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT**

Scott looks up as Ethan enters.

ETHAN

(weakly)

Hey, Scott, I got a test for ya!

SCOTT

I'm afraid to ask.

ETHAN

It's a Rorschach test.

Ethan holds the soiled towel up for Scott to see. Scott is mortified. Ethan is humored by his response.

ETHAN (cont'd)

I'm gonna go make some more.

Ethan returns to the shift room with purpose. Scott swallows hard and turns his attention back to the boat.

**EXT. SAUSALITO DOCK - NIGHT**

Two short blasts from a foghorn, then the ferry appears from within the rain. It sidles up to the dock.

The passenger ramp slams to the ground, allowing a sparse group of passengers to disembark. Rain steams off the glass of an outdoor light fixture.

Ethan and Scott exit the boat.

ETHAN

Thanks for taking over my shifts, Scott. You're a real pal.

SCOTT

Always glad to help out a senior citizen.

ETHAN

Yeah, you punk.

Ethan grabs Scott in a headlock, Scott squirms.

SCOTT

Hey! Don't barf on me! I mean it!

ETHAN

I'll barf on whomever I please my darling, now hold still, I can feel it coming...

Scott breaks free.

SCOTT

Aaah!

ETHAN

Good night, kid! Give my regards to Stef and the midgets.

**EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

Ethan walks across the lot to the Ford. He wipes his nose on a paper towel before getting in. The engine roars to life, pumping exhaust into the night air.

**EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT**

The truck lumbers around a dark curve.

The needle on Ethan's speedometer holds steady at 55.

Ethan looks out the windshield. His pallor is near white in the glare of passing headlights.

Running lights on a tractor trailer glow in the rain. Ethan patiently slows down.

A motorcycle flashes by in the opposite direction.

Ethan is very ill. Beads of perspiration form on his face.

Traffic outside the truck literally moves in slow motion. Ethan turns to watch a slow spray of water as a car passes. A bright light crosses over his face.

**THE SCREEN GOES WHITE.**

Something flies out at us in slow motion, turning in the air as if weightless. It's a small photo on a chain. The face of a young girl smiles out at us from it. The chain crackles violently as it is pulled taught and snaps.

Then a chip of glass, and another, then several, and this is slow, so slow it's hard to tell what's really happening. A crack slowly grows out from the place the chips flew away from, more cracks.

The light is gone now and we can see again. We're looking at a piece of glass, and it's cracking all over the place. Hundreds of pieces of glass pull free and separate from the main mass, flying through the air.

A tree branch punches through the windshield, shattering it completely. Blood droplets smack into flying slivers of glass, rain pours in from outside. The landscape outside spins and now there's no more glass.

This is Ethan's POV as he flies through the windshield. A dark shape approaches and now we're moving fast. A load smack, a crash, a horn blaring, the truck rolling over an embankment, and...

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

Dark shapes swirl like smoke in a jar. Deep violets, dark reds, muddy oranges and blues dominate a spectral landscape of ghostly trees and highway. A glowing silver cord floats among the shapes, distant, stretching.

A car drives by, the driver's face illuminated by one of the Ford's red taillights. She is CONNIE WILCOX, a beautiful woman in her late thirties or early forties. A crucifix on her neck catches the light. A boy in the backseat (MATT) stares at the broken guardrail with fascination.

MATT  
(muted)  
Mom?

The woman reaches for her cell phone. The sound of her dialing mixes with the sound of an ambulance.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Telephone poles seen from above, white glowing raindrops plummet towards the upside-down truck.

Connie and her son stand to the side of a steep embankment with a great big chunk ripped out of the guardrail. Pan to the scene below.

The truck, upside-down on the hillside, wheels still spinning. EMS workers stand around the thing, getting Ethan into a stretcher.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

An ambulance on a highway in the rain, white, soft, luminous. The image folds in on itself to reveal buildings, a street, a hospital.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Slow motion tracking of a covered stretcher to the entrance.

Close-up on a nameplate mounted just outside the emergency entrance. "Sonoma Memorial Hospital." Emergency red lights flash against the wall.

INT. O.R. SONOMA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Ethan rests on a table in the center of the room. He wears the clothes we saw earlier, but they are torn badly and bits of raw bloody flesh show through. Ethan shudders. Sweat drips down his forehead.

The O.R. doors are pushed open with a bang. Several DOCTORS and ATTENDANTS rush in to set up their machines.

An IV line is hooked into Ethan's arm. An Attendant picks glass out of Ethan's face.

DOCTOR

Katharine, would you please tell Mickey to get in here with the films?

ATTENDANT

They say it's going to be another five minutes...

DOCTOR

Right, then get me my smock. And a Tab, I'm bloody thirsty.

A THIN, GLOWING SILVER CORD dances in the air. It sticks up out of the space between Ethan's eyes and extends between the Doctor and the Attendant. It continues up towards the ceiling, floating unnoticed.

Crouched in a corner of the ceiling like *Spider-Man*, a semi-transparent ASTRAL ETHAN watches. His form is suffused with a dull brownish light. Closer examination reveals spines of light that protrude at right angles from his every surface. The colors are darkest in areas that correspond to the position of wounds on Ethan's body.