

DOOM PATROL

Episode 101

"Pilot"

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LIMITED STUDIO DRAFT

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CAST LIST

CLIFF STEELE

JANE

RITA FARR

APRIL BOWLBY

LARRY TRAINOR

NILES CAULDER

NARRATOR/MR.MORDEN/MR.NOBODY

BUMP WEATHERS

CLARA STEELE

GISELLE

JOHN BOWERS

KATE STEELE

SHERYL TRAINOR

VON FUCHS

AIR CONTROL

BARTENDER

COP #1

DIRECTOR

FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

LITTLE KID

MAN-ON-THE-STREET

NEWS REPORTER

TV TOM

VALET

WAITRESS

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DOOM PATROL
"Pilot"

EXT. PARAGUAYAN TOWN - DAY (1948)

A YOUNG BOY holding the reins to an ALBINO DONKEY covers his head from the beating rain, watches an ancient bus wheeze to a stop across the muddy road.

Super: San Bernadino, Paraguay, 1948.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*This is the story of four
superheroes.
(a tired sigh)
Four more TV superheroes. Just
what the world needs.
(a beat)
Be honest - have you hung yourself
yet?*

A MAN in a suit and wide-brimmed hat steps from the bus, a satchel slung over his shoulder. This is MR. MORDEN - 40s, pale - clearly from away. Even the heavy rain can't dampen his mile-wide smile of expectation.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Our story begins with a man, not a
good man, not one of our heroes,
who simply wanted to become a
better bad man.*

The Boy turns up the road with the Donkey (which wears a DISTINCTIVE BRIDLE), whistles for Mr. Morden to follow.

EXT. PARAGUAYAN TOWN - VARIOUS - DAY (1948)

The Boy leads Mr. Morden through the town center, Morden greets each face with a smile, gets stony stares in return.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*And his story begins, as most bad
mens' stories do -- with a visit to
a Nazi.
(correcting himself)
Cobbler.*

THEY EVENTUALLY ARRIVE at a foreboding home. An imposing VALET holds an umbrella over an older German man. This is VON FUCHS - 60s/70s, German, an ex-Nazi.

VON FUCHS
Mr. Morden.

(CONTINUED)

MR. MORDEN

Yes, yes! You must be
Sturmbanhfuhrer Von Fuchs.

VALET

(re: Von Fuchs)
Martinez.

MR. MORDEN

Sorry?

VALET

Senor Martinez.

MR. MORDEN

Who?

VALET

The village cobbler.

MR. MORDEN

Oh?

(now he gets it)

Ohhh.

Mr. Morden delights in their little secret. Von Fuchs and the Valet just stare.

INT. VON FUCHS' LABORATORY - DAY (1948)

Von Fuchs leads Mr. Morden in. There are a multiple baroque contraptions befitting a mad scientist of the era.

Mr. Morden grins, steps forth-- the Valet stops him. Mr. Morden gets it -- they want to see payment. He opens his satchel, displays contents we never see. But - as Von Fuchs' eyeballs widen - we know it's more than enough.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

*Von Fuchs was renowned for his
theoretical experimentation,
offering certain enhancements for a
price - a price Mr. Morden was more
than willing to pay.*

Mr. Morden moves to gawk at what looks like a standing isolation chamber, hooked up to various pumps and levers.

VON FUCHS

My finest invention. Designed
according to the Fuhrer's most
demanding specifications.

(CONTINUED)

MR. MORDEN
(quietly awed)
Herr Hitler himself used this?

VON FUCHS
Because I'd be hiding in this sixth
world hellhole if he had?
(then, a smile)
The Fuhrer died before its
completion. Meaning you could be,
should be...
(eyeing the satchel)
...the very first.

INT. VON FUCHS' LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER (1948)

Mr. Morden, wearing a specialized suit, steps into the chamber. Von Fuchs shuts him in, steps to a control panel where the satchel hangs. Von Fuchs dons a headset, pushes a few buttons, pulls a few levers, compression tubes wheeze as--

INSIDE THE CHAMBER - Mr. Morden is in a strange and wonderful space. Sound drops away, time slows, as Von Fuchs' VOICE sounds tinny and echo-y over small speakers in the chamber.

VON FUCHS
Can you hear me, Mr. Morden?

MR. MORDEN
Yes!

But his voice sounds funny. Like he sucked helium.

MR. MORDEN (CONT'D)
Oh.

Which sounds different, too. He giggles. Which in itself sounds funny. Which leads him to hysterics.

VON FUCHS
Are you ready, Mr. Morden!

MR. MORDEN
Ready!

VON FUCHS
Repeat after me, please. The.

MR. MORDEN
The.

As they speak, Von Fuchs pushes various levers and the chamber begins to glow a blinding white.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

Limited Studio Draft

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The voices grow trippier and slower as Mr. Morden is driven from hysterics to amazed euphoria.

	VON FUCHS
<u>Mind.</u>	
	MR. MORDEN
Mind.	
	VON FUCHS
<u>Is.</u>	
	MR. MORDEN
Is.	
	VON FUCHS
<u>The.</u>	
	MR. MORDEN
The.	
	VON FUCHS
<u>Limit.</u>	
	VON FUCHS (CONT'D)
Again.	

As Mr. Morden repeats the phrase, HIS LIPS SEEM TO DETACH FROM HIS FACE, float in the whiteness, speak to him:

MR. MORDEN
The mind is the limit. The mind is
the limit. The mind is the - oh.
(hot damn...)
Funky.

As the LIPS SMILE and everything goes to WHITE and FUNKY, 60s-style, THEME MUSIC kicks in and we go to TITLES:

D O O M P A T R O L

EXT. PANAMA CITY, FL - TACKY MANSION - DAY (1988)

Godawful tacky piece of property. New money lives here.

Super: Panama City, Florida, 1988

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*And now, to the 1980s. Somewhere
in this abomination of glass and
blow is a pale white ass pumping up
and down. Up and down. The ass of
a hero.*

INT. TACKY MANSION - LIVINGROOM - DAY (1988)

KATE STEELE - 30s, attractive - does aerobics. We favor her butt.

INT. TACKY MANSION - DEN - DAY (1988)

A uniformed housekeeper vacuums. We favor her butt.

INT. TACKY MANSION - KID'S ROOM - DAY (1988)

A toddler girl cries in her crib. This is CLARA STEELE. We favor her butt.

Kate hears her crying.

KATE

Giselle!

The housekeeper vacuums.

KATE (CONT'D)

Giselle!

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - DAY (1988)

Cutesy front porch. Little sign. "Giselle"

INT. GUESTHOUSE - DAY (1988)

Giselle - 20s, attractive - pounds away with CLIFF STEELE - 30s, ruggedly handsome, Kate's husband. We favor his butt: it's pale, it's white, it pumps up and down.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

There it is. Mmm, smells like hero to me.

CLIFF

Who's the fox?

GISELLE

You are.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - DAY (1988)

Kate approaches the guesthouse. Growing suspicious.

KATE

Giselle?

INT. GUESTHOUSE - DAY (1988)

Giselle and Cliff keep pounding.

CLIFF

Who's the fox?

GISELLE

(climaxing)

Oh - my - god...

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - DAY (1988)

Kate walks to the door, raises an arm to knock when -- the door opens. Giselle, perfectly put together in her nanny uniform, exits. Kate stares daggers. It's mutual.

KATE

The baby's crying.

GISELLE

Really? Looks fine to me.

Kate reacts -- *huh?* She whips around to see--

Cliff, dressed, with their now-calm daughter in his arms.

CLIFF

She's fine, honey. You can't be so scared of her.

Giselle sashays past her to pluck the child from Cliff's arms. And now they both face her, as if they're the loving couple. But Kate stares only at Cliff, who does his very best to withstand her withering glare.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Behold, the bottom rung of marriage: contempt.

EXT. RACETRACK - DAY (1988)

Cliff, in full racing attire, walks through the pit area where he is adored by fans and crew. He is joined by his crew chief, BUMP WEATHERS - 30s, Southern - on the way to his car. Bump wears a shit-eating grin.

CLIFF

What?

BUMP

How in the hell'd you get Kate to agree to her?

(CONTINUED)

Bump's talking about Giselle, who tends to Clara.

CLIFF
You're a dirty old man, Bump.
(then)
It's called trust. Thought you
woulda learned that by wife number
three.

They come to his race car, where Kate - playing the smoking
hot race car driver's wife - awaits. Cliff leans in for a
perfunctory kiss, more for the crowd than anything, as Kate
whispers into his ear:

KATE
Crash and die, babe.

CLIFF
Love you too, honey.

Cliff waves to the adoring crowd, slips into his car and--

INT. CLIFF'S CAR/EXT. RACETRACK - DAY (1988)

We're racing! Cliff whips expertly around the track.
Maneuvers through a tight pack of other drivers.

BUMP (V.O.)
(through the comms)
Get to center, big fella.

CLIFF
Little snug getting there.

BUMP (V.O.)
How 'bout you cry about it back in
the box?

Cliff smiles. Jerks the car center. Narrowly misses a guy
as he passes him.

CLIFF
Whoo! You see that! God-damn!

BUMP (V.O.)
(not talking to him)
Whoaaa. Hey, there...

CLIFF
What?

BUMP (V.O.)
Uh, nothing, Cliff.

(CONTINUED)

CLIFF
Are we racing here?

BUMP
Hell, yes.
(then, another aside)
My god, sugar, don't do that--

CLIFF
Bump?

Cliff tears into the straightaway, passes his pit crew and he turns to check out what the hell is going on as--

TIME SLOWS. CLIFF'S POV - Kate has draped herself around Bump, her hand down his pants, stares directly at Cliff.

ON CLIFF. Time still slowed.

CLIFF (CONT'D)
What the fuck!

As TIME SPEEDS UP, Cliff whips his attention back to the track but he's furious--

CLIFF (CONT'D)
You're fucking my wife!

BUMP (V.O.)
Cliff, I swear to god no--

KATE
(cuts in, loving it)
--oh, yes he is, guess what I never
have to say when I'm banging big
ol' Bump?

CLIFF
Don't.

KATE
Is it in, yet?

Cliff SCREAMS. Distracted, his front end taps the back of the car in front of him, sets off a chain reaction --

CLIFF
Whoa. Whoa!

--that results in another car riding up on the side wall and FLIPPING SPECTACULARLY END OVER END, BACK OUT ONTO THE TRACK--

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED: (2)

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--DIRECTLY FOR CLIFF STEELE'S WINDSHIELD, as we--

CUT TO BLACK!

OVER BLACK -

An ANSWERING MACHINE BEEP. WE HEAR CLIFF'S TIRED VOICE and the same message, a few times. Except we hear it in different pitches, as if someone were playing with getting it just right.

CLIFF (V.O.)
(on tape)
*I don't know what happened to us.
I'm going to be better.*

A GLIMPSE -

OF A SHATTERED, BLOOD-SPECKED WINDSHIELD. HAZY SUNLIGHT FILTERS THROUGH. LIKE COLORED-GLASS.

CLIFF (V.O.)
(on tape)
*I don't know what happened to us.
I'm going to be better.*

There's an incongruous sound running beneath this image: THE SOUND OF A BLOWTORCH.

INT. STEELE TRAILER - DAY - FLASHBACK (1983)

Cliff and Kate, younger, poorer, happier, in their single-wide. 80s ROCK BLARES, Kate dances around with a beer, Cliff mixes Mac n Cheese, sliced hot dogs and barbecue sauce on the stove. It's all a little frantic:

CLIFF
TRAINWRECKS READY!

KATE
Wooooo!

Beneath all of it, that sound: THE BLOWTORCH.

INT. STEELE TRAILER - DAY - FLASHBACK (1986)

Cliff and Kate on the sofa, newborn CLARA sleeps on his stomach, Kate's head on his shoulder. They're exhausted.

CLIFF
*Do you think she has any idea who
we are?*

(CONTINUED)

KATE

*Baby Clara, your Daddy's gonna be a
big-time race car driver.*

CLIFF

*Naw, I mean the important things.
(then, to Kate)
Do you think she knows how much I
love you?*

*Weary chuckles. Which, after a beat, begin to SOUND like a
BLOWTORCH... as IMAGES OF A MAN IN A WELDING HELMET BEGIN TO
JARRINGLY CUT INTO THE MEMORY and we're in--*

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S LAB - NIGHT (1989)

AN UNKNOWN POV(CLIFF'S): A laboratory/machine shop. Vintage machinery. Hand-tools. MUSIC BLARES, SPARKS FLY as a MAN wearing a FLAME-DECALLED WELDING HELMET holds a BLOWTORCH and makes a weld... somewhere around what would be Cliff's chin?

[A NOTE HERE: The POV is not crystal clear. It is grainy, staticky, an imperfect video screen.]

The Man stops abruptly. Flips up his mask, we see his face for the first time. A bit wild-eyed, sweat-streaked, dirty, he's been at this for awhile. He stares in slight horror at his mistake. This is DR. NILES CAULDER aka THE CHIEF.

NILES

Fudge.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S LAB - NIGHT (1989)

CLIFF'S POV: Niles, in a wheelchair, eats a bowl of chocolate ice cream, watches a How-To Video on Welding.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S LAB - NIGHT (1992)

CLIFF'S POV: What appears to be a MAN wrapped fully in bandages sits slumped in chair in the corner of Cliff's field of vision. Is he drunk? Dead?

A moment later, something else creeps into Cliff's POV, a black, electrical mass that kinda sorta appears to be in the rough shape of a human... and it's definitely checking Cliff out...

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S LAB - NIGHT (1995)

CLIFF'S POV: A BOWL OF POPCORN rests on... his stomach? He can't tell. The man who wore the welding mask - Niles - sits on one side of him while a woman - elegant, a bit haunted - sits on the other. This is RITA FARR.

They face away from him, watch a 1950s black and white melodrama on the TV which appears to star... Rita Farr? Niles and Rita are like an old married couple, acting out this movie they've watched a million times.

RITA/TV RITA

I'm not sure you ever loved me,
Tom.

NILES/TV TOM

Of course I loved you. But I was
just never any damn good at showing
it.

RITA/TV RITA

You know what my father used to say
about smooth talkers like you?
Everything before the "but" is
baloney.

Dramatic music swells from the TV as TV Tom gives TV Rita one last look and leaves. Niles pats Rita's hand, knows watching herself is always bittersweet.

CUT TO BLACK.

NILES (PRE-LAP)

Cliff. Cliff Steele.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S LAB - NIGHT (1995)

CLIFF'S POV: Niles studies Cliff with gentle concern.

NILES

My name is Dr. Niles Caulder. Would
you please nod your head if you
understand me.

Nothing happens. Cliff's head doesn't move

NILES

(kind)

I want you to remember what it felt
like to nod your head, picture it
in your mind...

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

Limited Studio Draft

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QUICK POP. Cliff cocks his head, makes a silly face at his laughing daughter. 1988.

NILES (CONT'D)
...now I want you to nod your head.

A beat. OUR POV nods up and down. Which represents a massive accomplishment for Niles.

NILES (CONT'D)
Good man.
(a bit overcome)
Very good.
(gathering himself)
I'm certain you have lots of questions and I promise you I'm working on restoring your voice capabilities as soon as humanly possible. You were in a terrible accident, Cliff. Much of your body was rendered beyond repair. But we're getting there. I promise you, we're close.
(a kind smile)
Rest.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S LAB - NIGHT (1995)

CLIFF'S POV: Niles holds CUE CARDS with simple words for Cliff to read. Cliff's voice is still weak here, imperfect and slow. As they practice, Cliff zeroes in on a WALL CALENDAR behind Niles. It says "1995".

NILES
The buh-buh-bird.

CLIFF
Bird.

NILES
Fla - fla - flew.

CLIFF
Fu - ck.

NILES
Flew.

CLIFF
Fuck.
(then)
Nineteen-ninety-five.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

Limited Studio Draft

7/6/18 13.

Niles realizes Cliff's talking about the calendar.

NILES

Yes.

CLIFF

Nineteen-ninety-fucking-five.

NILES

(back to the cards)

Up-uh.

CLIFF

My - wife. Where's - my - wife?

NILES

Cliff - this is might be difficult to process. The world thinks you died in 1988. I'm sorry.

CLIFF

I'm - not - dead.

NILES

(false cheer)

And getting stronger every day!

CLIFF

You - mother - fucker. What - did - you - do - to - me?

NILES

How about - we take a break.

Niles reaches past Cliff to turn off a switch.

CLIFF

No--

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S LAB - NIGHT (1995)

CLIFF'S POV: Rita sits by the side of the bed. A cocktail in hand. Coolly appraises him.

RITA

The Chief's a good man. Big heart. A little odd, maybe a little vague, but it comes from a good place. Me? I'll always tell you the truth.

(then)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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RITA (CONT'D)

The Chief told you the world
assumes you're dead.

(Cliff nods)

Did he tell you that's because the
only part of you he was able to
save was your brain?

CLIFF

(a quiet beat)

No.

RITA

Which means we need to talk about
expectations. What you really,
really want.

CLIFF

I want to go home.

RITA

And then we need to take those
expectations, we need to give them
a gentle pat... and flush them into
the ocean.

Rita takes a mirror. Turns it on Cliff. For the first time,
he sees his whole self. His new self. He is no longer
human. He is a ROBOT.

CLIFF

What is that?

(growing emotional)

Stop... please...

(then, screaming)

What is that--!

Rita switches him off. Sits there a moment.

NILES (O.S.)

I told you he wasn't ready.

Niles sits in the doorway, disappointed. He wheels away.

RITA

Everyone deserves the truth.

INT. DOOM MANOR - DAY (1995)

WE ARE TRACKING through Doom Manor in an UNKNOWN POV. A vast
place that could have once been a period estate or a high end
sanitorium. It feels grand and faded and re-purposed all at
once.

(CONTINUED)

NILES (PRE-LAP)

You don't look like the person you
used to be, there's no getting
around that.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S OFFICE - DAY (1995)

Niles and Cliff.

NILES

But you're still very much you.

Cliff. Upright but immobile. Strapped to a hand-truck.

CLIFF

Sure.

(then)

What is this place?

NILES

My home. A safe place for you,
others like you. To heal.

CLIFF

Where's my wife?

NILES

(a beat)

What do you remember, Cliff?

CLIFF

I remember asking where's my wife.

NILES

I'm sorry. I don't have any
answers that you can't answer for
yourself.

CLIFF

What does that mean?

Niles doesn't say. Cliff searches for answers.

QUICK POP: He and Kate. Fighting. The bad times.

QUICK POP: That race car hurtling for his windshield.

RESUME CLIFF. Working it out.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Just tell me if she's moved on.
It's been seven years, she thinks
I'm dead, she's moved on.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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CLIFF (CONT'D)
(then)
I would've.

QUICK POP. More fighting. Their daughter, Clara, crying.

CLIFF (CONT'D)
I can't -- I can't hold a memory.
Everything's fractured.
Everything's bad.

NILES
You're experiencing something
called dissociative memory. After
a severe trauma, your brain only
lets you remember what it wants you
to remember. It's a coping
mechanism.

CLIFF
Which makes no sense. Why would I
only remember the bad?

NILES
(a gentle smile)
It will all come back. The bad and
the good. We'll get you on your
feet. You'll start feeling like
yourself soon enough.

CLIFF
(after a beat)
Why didn't you let me die?

NILES
If you had wanted to die, you would
have died.

The door opens. The mysterious BANDAGED MAN is there. This
is LARRY TRAINOR - 30s, erudite, slyly humorous.

NILES (CONT'D)
Cliff Steele, Larry Trainor. I
thought he might help with your
recovery.

INT. DOOM MANOR - DAY (1995)

CLIFF'S POV: Floating through Doom Manor. This is the
Unknown POV we saw before.

ON CLIFF. Strapped to the hand truck. Larry pushes him.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

Limited Studio Draft

7/6/18 17.

WIDE: They move through some of the vast spaces of this place
-- the solarium, the library, etc.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*And Larry gave Cliff the grand
tour, wheeling him like a coupla
pony kegs through this home we'll
come to know as, Doom Manor.*

EXT. DOOM MANOR - DAY (1995)

Larry pushes Cliff outside, to a veranda. The trees and
flowers groan under summer foliage, the air is full.

LARRY
I thought you might like some air.

Cliff takes it in. His first time outside in years.

CLIFF
I can't feel the air.

LARRY
(after a beat)
Sucks to be you.

Cliff turns, takes in Larry, really, for the first time.
This man, wrapped in bandages head to toe, like a mummy.

CLIFF
What was it like getting buried in
a pyramid with your cat?

LARRY
A sense of humor helps here. So
you'll work on that.

CLIFF
What's your story?

LARRY
(after a beat)
I flew airplanes.

EXT. AIRFIELD - EDWARDS AIRFORCE BASE - FLASHBACK (1961)

CLOSE ON: AVIATOR BOOTS crossing a tarmac.

SUPER: Edwards Airforce Base, California, 1961

NARRATOR (V.O.)
"Flew airplanes". Please. Larry
Trainor was an American god.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Air Force navigator. Test pilot.
Shortlisted for the Mercury Space
program...

WIDEN: Larry Trainor strides across the airfield in full, sub-orbital-appropriate, test pilot gear. Heads for...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
...an Atomic Age sex machine.

...THE X-15, an experimental ROCKET PLANE attached to the underbelly of a NASA B-52 mothership.

His Ground Crew Chief, JOHN BOWERS, falls in next to him as they do a sight inspect the X-15.

LARRY
How's my X-15?

JOHN
Fifty-seven thousand pounds-force
of thrust, Mach 6, like riding a
rocket ship between your thighs.
She's a beast.

INT. X-15/C-22 - FLYING - DAY - FLASHBACK (1961)

Larry sits in the rumbling cockpit of the X-15, still attached to the mothership. Aloft.

AIR CONTROL (V.O.)
Five seconds, zero-zero-eight.

LARRY
Roger, two, one, launch.

The X-15 is drop launched, its rocket engine ignites, Larry shoots into the heavens.

AIR CONTROL (V.O.)
Roger, we got a good light here,
Larry. Check your alpha and your
heading.

MOMENTS LATER. WITH LARRY. His plane hurtles upwards at Mach 6. Approaches 130,000 feet above the Earth...

AIR CONTROL (V.O.)
Count at twelve now... got twelve-
six... and thirteen...

LARRY
Very sensitive.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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AIR CONTROL (V.O.)
Mach still good.

The sky behind him darkens as he approaches sub-orbital atmosphere and sees, laid out in front of him: the curvature of the Earth.

LARRY
Sweet mother of God.

His reverie is broken by a looming, shimmering mass (think Aurora Borealis)... His plane flies right through it... but now the shimmery lights are inside his cockpit...

LARRY (CONT'D)
Hold on. Matter strike.
(off the dials)
Everything seems to be fine.

The X-15 suddenly starts to spin. Larry remains calm.

LARRY (CONT'D)
Gone squirrely. I'm in a spin.

INT. AIR SHED - DAY - FLASHBACK (1961)

John and the other members of the ground crew listen to the ground-to-air crosstalk. Oh, shit...

AIR CONTROL (V.O.)
Let's watch your theta, Larry.

LARRY
I'm in a spin.

INT. TRAINOR HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK (1961)

A woman, SHERYL TRAINOR serves breakfast to two kids. A FAMILY PICTURE includes Larry. Husband, Dad.

WITH LARRY IN THE X-15

Larry blacks out! As the rocket plane spins to Earth.

AIR CONTROL (V.O.)
Let's pull it up... Put some g on
it, Larry...

ON THE AIRFIELD

JOHN slams out of the shed, races for the motor pool.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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AIR CONTROL (V.O.)
Do you read, Larry?

WITH LARRY IN THE X-15

Larry, still unconscious. The plane hurtles down. When, inexplicably - Larry's chest begins to glow from within.

As SOMETHING - that BLACK, ELECTRICAL MASS we recognize from earlier -- springs from his torso, like another life force exiting him. Just as--

The X-15 SLAMS into the desert floor.

EXT. TRAINOR HOUSE - CONTINUOUS - FLASHBACK (1961)

Sheryl steps outside the screen door to the front yard, where neighbors in the street are looking off, to the airfield, where a plume of smoke rises in the air.

THE BURNING WRECKAGE

Through the flames we see Larry's body. Dead.

As now, that black electrical mass, almost humanoid in shape - call it THE NEGATIVE SPIRIT - floats down to the flames--

--and re-enters Larry's body as we--

RISE UP, through the smoke, to see ARMY VEHICLES racing at them from across the field.

WITH JOHN in the lead jeep as they arrive at the wreckage. But there's no way. No way Larry could have survived...

Until-- Larry shuffles out from the burning wreckage, fully aflame, charred, grotesque. But alive.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Kill me, but I sort of like Larry
Trainor's origin tale.

All stare. Stunned.

INT. DOOM MANOR - SOLARIUM - NIGHT (1995)

Cliff stands in front REHAB STAIRS. Three steps up, three down. Handrails. Larry watches. Cliff lifts a foot - CLANK! It bangs against the bottom step.

Across the room, Rita knits. Another cocktail beside her. Flinches at every grating CLANK!

(CONTINUED)

RITA

It is so important what you're
doing, Cliff.

(please stop)

But you know, there's always
tomorrow!

CLIFF

(to Larry)

What's Drinky's deal?

LARRY

Rita? She was an actress. She
prefers the light here in the
afternoon.

(to Rita)

Looking terrific today, Rita!

Rita holds up her drink in droll thanks. She knows.

CLANK! Cliff just can't do it.

CLIFF

Fuck me.

LARRY

Where are you going, Cliff?
Sometimes it helps to picture a
place you'd like to go.

CLIFF

How 'bout up the freakin' steps?

LARRY

(a quiet challenge)

Why go up the steps at all?

CLIFF

I can't walk. I can't fly, I can't
feel. I can't eat, I can't smell,
I can't shit, I can't fuck and I'd
like to be able to do one fucking
thing for myself when I kiss you
and the other Munster here the
sweet fuck goodbye.

Rita and Larry react. Oh.

CLARA (O.S.)

Daddy?

Cliff whips his head toward the stairs... HIS DAUGHTER CLARA
sits on the lowest step. She waves.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED: (2)

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And now she's gone. Cliff reacts -- what the--?

NILES (PRE-LAP)
Seeing your daughter, that's good!

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S OFFICE - DAY (1995)

Cliff and Niles. Niles tests bending Cliff's legs and ankles with a remote control.

NILES
That means the memories are coming back. Maybe she's just the inspiration you need.

Whirr. Whirr. Up, back. Up, back...

CLIFF
Has anyone ever left this place?

NILES
Some have. Some come and go. Others, like Larry and Rita, prefer to stay. Rita has her knitting, Larry, his horticulture. To be perfectly honest with you, those who leave find it's often more difficult for the world out there to accept who they've become than they do.

(then, re: the tests)
In better news, I can see no mechanical reason you shouldn't be able to walk.

(then)
Keep going, Cliff. You're almost there.

ON CLIFF. The THRUM OF RACE CAR ENGINES consumes him as--

INT. DOOM MANOR - SOLARIUM - DAY (1995)

Cliff watches NASCAR on TV. Planted on the sofa like a bookend.

QUICK POP: Cliff in his race car, in the thick of it.

RESUME CLIFF. Rita enters, carrying her drink and a roasted chicken. Afternoon snack.

RITA
Aren't you supposed to be not-walking?

(CONTINUED)

CLIFF

Yeah.

RITA

And?

CLIFF

I'm remembering.

A beat. Rita sits down. Stares at the TV.

RITA

You used to do this?

CLIFF

Yeah.

RITA

Around and around... that's it?

CLIFF

Yeah.

(after a beat)

You were in the movies?

RITA

Pictures.

EXT. AFRICA - FILM SET #1 - DAY - FLASHBACK (1955)

Super: Africa, 1955.

Moving through a 1950s movie set - a bush camp (think "King Solomon's Mines") - shooting on location in Africa.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Lovely, Rita. Queen of 50s cinema.
Some critics called her the poor
man's Deborah Kerr, some critics
called her the rich man's Yvette
Vickers.

(another tired sigh)

Critics. What do they know?
They're gonna hate this show.

*And landing on our star, Rita, in early-50s explorer garb
with pith helmet. The cameras are rolling, she writes a
letter at a campaign table.*

RITA

(as she writes)

Dearest Mother. Today was a fine
hunt in the bush.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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Rita's attention is slowly diverted to the FOCUS PULLER, who is missing one arm. She can't unsee it.

RITA (CONT'D)
Tom took down a kudu, whose horns
will look magnificent in the--
(breaking character)
Sorry.
(composes herself)
--whose horns will look--

She freezes, unable to take her eyes off of that arm.

EXT. FILM SET #1 - DAY - FLASHBACK (1955)

Rita, puffed up now, walks through the production with the FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR.

FIRST AD
Rita, please. He's the best focus
puller in Africa.

RITA
He's an eyesore, Charles, a real
liability.

FIRST AD
What if we covered up the arm. A
different set of clothes.

RITA
Get rid of him.

FIRST AD
(weakly)
But - the crew. They adore him.

RITA
So put his name on the marquee.

Rita enters her tent. The First AD sighs. Turns to face many of the crew, who heard it all.

INT. FILM SET #1 - RITA'S TENT - FLASHBACK (1955)

Rita brushes her hair in front of her mirror. There's a commotion outside. Yelling. Shouts of disapproval. Rita does her best to ignore them.

EXT. FILM SET #2 - FLASHBACK (1955)

The First AD leads Rita through the crew to her marks by a roaring river.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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This is the big caravan scene -- Rita and her caravan of explorers will cross the river. As she passes through the crew, she is met with unmistakable coldness.

FIRST AD

Now, Rita, you'll step out onto these rocks here, the crocodile will turn up there, you'll scream bloody murder and Joe'll blast 'er to Betsy. Think you can handle it?

Rita glances at the camera crew, staring bullets at her. There's a strapping new FOCUS PULLER. Shiny and whole.

RITA

Of course. It's fine, it's totally fine.

EXT. FILM SET #2 - FLASHBACK (1955)

Moments later. The scene rolls. The caravan crosses. Rita tentatively steps out on the rocks, a CREWMAN readies the fake crocodile just out of frame...

DIRECTOR

Now just one more rock, Rita, there you go, like it's a lovely day and--

...but as Rita steps on the last rock, it sinks! Rita goes under water!

UNDERWATER WITH RITA

She sinks into a deeper sinkhole, flails to get her bearings. Claws at rocks on either side of her...

THE FILM CREW

Watches the bubbling water. Nobody moves a muscle.

FIRST AD

Why are you standing there? Help her! Help her!

As crew members reluctantly spring into action--

UNDERWATER WITH RITA

She pulls at the rocks... one loosens from the pile, a MURKY-COLORED DYE, like octopus ink, shoots into her face, her eyes widen in fear as the dye consumes her, clouds the entire sinkhole, obscures her from view...

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

Limited Studio Draft

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THE FILM CREW

Has poles and such in the water, trying to give her anything to grab onto, as Rita bursts above water, gasps for air.

The crew pulls her out of the water, she stands there, shaken and drenched. Her back is to us.

RITA
I'm fine. I'm totally fine. Towel.

For a beat, nobody moves. The crew stares at her, agog.

RITA (CONT'D)
What's wrong with you? Never gone for a swim? Towel.

The Wardrobe Gal approaches with a towel. Freaked.

RITA
What are you staring at!

The Wardrobe Gal meekly produces a compact mirror. Shows Rita her face... we just see a small piece, the side of her eye seems to... droop? Rita takes the girl's arm, directs the mirror for a better look. As WE ARM AROUND TO SEE--

Rita. Half her face, collapsed, like some monstrous candle-dripping. It's horrible.

The Wardrobe Gal begins to sob. The new Focus Puller begins toretch... Rita, mortified, looks for escape... only to realize her foot has swollen to grotesque proportions.

Still, she walks off, an ungainly shuffle, tears running down her cheeks. Away from them all.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And away she ran. Monstrous Rita.

INT. DOOM MANOR - SOLARIUM - DAY (1995)

Rita sits there for a moment, in reverie.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Eventually finding her way to the only place she would ever feel safe and unjudged. Sitting next to a brain...

WE WIDEN to include Cliff, as she lifts the entire roast chicken sitting in front of her, takes a huge bite.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

Limited Studio Draft

7/6/18 27.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Consuming the first of what would
be three rotisserie chickens.*

They watch TV.

INT. DOOM MANOR - SOLARIUM - DAY (1995)

Rita sits with a drink, her knitting project nearly complete.
Larry wheels Cliff in, sets him upright by the foot of the
stairs. Cliff takes the handrails. Stands there.

Rita puts down her knitting. *Enough is enough.*

RITA
One step. So I don't gut myself.

Cliff throws her a look. But -- a LITTLE GIRL'S LAUGH swings
his attention back to the steps. But-- where is she...?

LARRY
What is it, Cliff?

CLIFF
(after a beat)
I used to hold my daughter's hands
when she was learning to walk,
she'd always want to go to the
steps, always wanted to go up. And
then she'd just stand there, and
I'd get so frustrated, you know?
Just walk up the steps. It's the
most normal goddamn thing in the
world.

LARRY
So walk up the goddamn steps.

Cliff looks down at the steps, but now: *they're the steps
from home, and he sees his daughter CLARA between his legs,
arms outstretched, awaiting his help.* Stunned, he pulls his
hands from the guardrails, gingerly takes hers, her fingers
on his robot fingers.

Cliff raises his left foot as she raises hers. Success.

And now the right... as she raises hers... yes...

Cliff can't believe this is happening. He gives in to it--

CLIFF
(to Clara)
There ya go, baby girl.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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And now they land on step #2.

CLARA
One more, Daddy...

They step up together to the final step. They did it.

CLARA (CONT'D)
You did it, Daddy!

Cliff does that things dads do -- pretends like he's a cheering crowd - *the crowd roars!* - as Clara giggles.

We WIDEN, Larry and Rita share a satisfied look as Cliff does his little celebration.

INT. DOOM MANOR - HALLWAY - DAY - INTERCUT (1995)

CLOSE ON - Cliff's feet. He's walking. And now, his face. Head held high.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S LAB - DAY (1995)

Niles works. Hears a FAMILIAR WHIRR, looks up as Cliff enters. Niles smiles, deeply happy for him.

CLIFF
My family thinks I died in a car crash seven years ago. My daughter's grown up without a father. My wife's probably moved on. But they deserve to know. And then they can decide what to do with it.
(then)
Thank you for everything you've done. But this isn't me.

NILES
I am thrilled beyond belief for you that you are walking, that you finally feel like you. All I've wanted was to give you a gentle place to land, a second chance.

CLIFF
And I appreciate that.

Niles gestures to a TAPE RECORDER.

NILES
I think you're ready to listen to this.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NILES (CONT'D)

It's the phone message I used to re-
create your voice. I think it will
help you understand how your brain
has been altering your memories to
help you cope.

(then)

Unless. Maybe you're not ready.

A beat. Cliff pushes PLAY. That BEEP SOUNDS.

CLIFF (V.O.)

(on the tape)

*I don't know what happened to us.
I'm going to be better.*

CLOSE ON THE TAPE RECORDER - Cliff pushes STOP. Then REWIND.
His robot finger hovers over the PLAY button. *Do I really
want to hear this?* And then he pushes PLAY again. As he
does--

EXT. RACETRACK - DAY - FLASHBACK (1988)

*That RACE CAR flies end over end toward Cliff's windshield--
BUT: Cliff jerks the wheel at the last moment, narrowly
avoids being hit! Emerges from the pile-up untouched!*

MOMENTS LATER. Cliff roars past the finish line in first!

*He slows the car to a stop. Pops his helmet visor open, sits
there for a moment, shaken.*

*He's yanked out of the car by his adoring pit crew. A MAGNUM
OF CHAMPAGNE is thrust into his hands as he spins to come
face to face with an also-shaken Kate.*

*For a brief moment we wonder if his near-death experience
will bring them together... but then he raises the magnum...
and proceeds to wallop the living shit out of Bump Weathers,
as the crowd falls into a stunned silence.*

*Cliff rears up, his face speckled with Bump's blood, pops the
cork and sprays the shocked crowd while letting out a totally
incongruous victory whoop.*

CLIFF

Yeahhhhh!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK (1988)

*Cliff fucks Giselle again. It's stylized, alcohol-fueled,
but, as we move closer to him, we see it for what it really
is: rote, meaningless. The racing trophy sits on a chair.*

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT - FLASHBACK (1988)

Cliff sits on the edge of the bed, Giselle naked and sleeping next to him. He's full of regret, tired, holds the phone to his ear. A RECORDING MACHINE BEEPS.

CLIFF

(into phone)

I don't know what happened to us.
I'm going to be better.

(then)

I know it's late--

KATE (V.O.)

--Hello?

CLIFF

Hey. Hi.

(then)

I don't know if you even care how
sorry I am.

KATE (V.O.)

(after a beat)

Go on.

EXT. KATE'S FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK (1988)

It's early morning, pre-dawn. Cliff waits at the front door of Kate's family home. Chastened. The door opens, Kate carries a sleeping Clara past him to the car.

INT. CLIFF/KATE'S CAR - NIGHT - FLASHBACK (1988)

It's a quiet ride, just a few long haul truckers on the road. Kate stares out at the rising sun. Cliff looks at Clara in the backseat, Kate next to him. This is worth fighting for.

CLIFF

Who wants pancakes?

KATE

(screaming)

Cliff--!

Cliff turns -- a SEMI looms in front of them! Cliff slams the breaks but it's too late as--

CLIFF'S CAR CAREENS UNDER THE BACKSIDE OF THE SEMI-TRAILER
(which has no under-ride bar) AS--

THE TRAILER RIPS THROUGH THE INSIDE OF THE CAR WITH
HORRIFYINGLY DESTRUCTIVE IMPACT AS WE INTERCUT -

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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--CLIFF/ROBOTMAN. PRESENT DAY. Still in Niles' lab. We're on the back of his head. PUSHING CLOSER...

--*THAT SHATTERED GLASS WINDSHIELD. Realize the hazy sunlight filtering through was actually the flashlight beams of first responders.*

--CLIFF/ROBOTMAN. PUSHING IN on his face...

CLIFF

No.

--*INSIDE THE WRECKED CAR - CLIFF'S POV: Kate. Bloodied, dead.*

--CLIFF/ROBOTMAN:

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Kate...

--*INSIDE THE WRECKED CAR. CLIFF'S POV - Turning to look for Clara, sees her bloodied arm...*

--CLIFF/ROBOTMAN:

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Oh, god, no. Clara. What happened to Clara!

NILES

I'm afraid you were the only survivor.

CLIFF

NO!

And now WE'RE SPIRALING AROUND CLIFF as he's overtaken by emotion... which quickly rises to anger as he PUNCHES the first thing he sees, a MASSIVE METAL PLATE -- WHAM! And the plate buckles where his fist hit it -- and we're unexpectedly getting a glimpse of Cliff's raw robotic power -- as he lashes out at the metal plate - WHAM! WHAM! WHAM! - rendering it to a cauliflowered heap as we-

GO TO RITA. Knitting. Hearing Cliff's screams.

GO TO LARRY. Tending to his orchids inside a converted school bus. Hearing Cliff's screams.

BACK ON CLIFF/ROBOTMAN. Lost. Standing there amongst the broken shards, as ALL SOUNDS DROPS OUT. Staring down -- there's Clara again, holding his robot fingers as they walk up the steps, except now she lets go, keeps walking up the steps, into the light, the bright light. And she's gone.

INT. DOOM MANOR - SOLARIUM - NIGHT (1995)

Cliff slumps on the floor, bangs his head against the rehab steps every few seconds. He stops when Niles arrives.

CLIFF

I can't feel pain. No matter how
hard I hit, where I hit, what I
hit, I can't feel pain.

(then)

That's mighty shitty of you, Doc.

And they sit there.

INT. DOOM MANOR - HALLWAY - DAY (1995)

Cliff walks down the hallway.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CLIFF'S ROOM - DAY (1995)

Cliff enters, closes the door. Stands at the window.
Utterly defeated. The spark gone out.

And the years pass. A CHYRON in the corner of the screen
ticks off each year: 1996, 1997, 1998...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

*And the years passed. And it's all
so depressing I just... can't.*

...1999, 2000, 2001...

Larry enters with a cardboard box, places it in a corner.

...2002, 2003, 2004...

Cliff opens the box. Pulls out a slot car. Looks off.

...2005, 2006, 2007...

Cliff looks again at the slot car.

...2008, 2009, 2010...

Cliff builds crazily. Plywood tables, etc.

...2011, 2012, 2013...

We're riding with a slot car on a track... but as the car
moves along, the scenery grows more elaborate -- we're
watching the creation of a fantastical slot car wonderland
happening over the years-- until, finally, we hit 2018.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CLIFF'S ROOM - PRESENT DAY (2018)

Cliff works his controller, proudly watches the cars run round the tracks. Rita knits. Larry carefully plants real miniature shrubs on the town's Main Street.

RITA

That's a new building. Next to the police station. What's it say?

CLIFF

Library.

RITA

Your handwriting is an abomination.

Cliff meekly holds up his hands.

CLIFF

Robot fingers.

They fall into silence. The cars go 'round.

Out in the hall, a COMMOTION. A WOMAN'S VOICE, irate. Rita shares a knowing look with Larry. *Here we go...*

RITA

Oh, goody. She's back.

LARRY

Rita.

RITA

Comes and goes as she pleases.
Like she owns the place.

CLIFF

Who?

But Rita zips it. Cliff goes to the door. Opens it.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Who, indeed. There's lots of "who" with this one.

DOWN THE HALL - Niles reasons with a LOUD WOMAN. Dark, tangled locks, dark clothes -- like she spent the last week crowd-surfing a youth hostel. This is JANE, aka CRAZY JANE.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Meet Jane. Some people call her Crazy Jane.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*One woman, 64 personas, each with
its own special power. Put it this
way -- Jane makes Sybil look like a
piker.*

At the moment, Jane is HAMMERHEAD, a tough-talking brute.

NILES
--of course you're welcome here,
but if you're going to stay, you
have to rest--

JANE/HAMMERHEAD
--My god, Chief, you're such a narc-

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*For example, meet Hammerhead. This
one's kind of an asshole.*

NILES
No... no.
(then)
I'd like to speak to Jane.

JANE/HAMMERHEAD
Okay. Except Jane's not here you
sissy little bitch--

ON CLIFF/RITA/LARRY. Watching.

CLIFF
She's in a mood.

LARRY
Which one of her is in a mood?

And now Jane/Hammerhead notices Cliff. Stares.

JANE/HAMMERHEAD
The fuck is that?

NILES
Hammerhead, this is Cliff.

JANE/HAMMERHEAD
Is he a toy?

NILES
Hammerhead...

JANE/HAMMERHEAD
(to Cliff)
Are you a toy?

(CONTINUED)

CLIFF

Yeah, heard you the first time.

(a beat)

Are you a raving douche?

Niles sighs. *Wrong answer.* Jane/Hammerhead smiles, marches right up Cliff. Behind him, Rita dutifully waves at her, as in, *let's get this over with:*

RITA

Hello, Hammerhead! Good to see you!

But Jane/Hammerhead keeps her focus on Cliff.

JANE/HAMMERHEAD

Fuck off and die, Rita.

(to Cliff)

This your pad, big guy? Your "man-cave"? Where the magic happens?

Come on, show me what you got.

Ooh, what kind of man-stuff you got in here?

CLIFF

(a beat, fuck me)

Cars.

JANE/HAMMERHEAD

Yeah. Little toy cars for a little toy man. I bet it gets wild in here in the wee, wee hours, huh? When you think no one's watching...

CLIFF

Anyone ever tell you to shut your fucking hole?

JANE/HAMMERHEAD

Or what?

CLANG! Jane/Hammerhead slams her multi-ringed hand right where Cliff's loins would be... if he had any. She holds her hand there, making her point. *You're no man at all.*

JANE/HAMMERHEAD (CONT'D)

Little toybot does what?

SLAM! The door closes between them. Shut by Rita, who gives Cliff a look -- *see what I mean?* But Cliff stands there a moment longer -- quietly intrigued.

EXT. DOOM MANOR - THE NEXT MORNING (2018)

Jane paints at an easel out on the lawn. Jane, her dominant personality, is less abrasive than Hammerhead, more thoughtful and vulnerable, but still very much a free spirit.

WE HEAR the WHIRR of Cliff's parts before we see him. He stops at a respectful distance.

CLIFF

Hi.

JANE

Jane.

CLIFF

Cliff.

JANE

The robot man. Hammerhead told me.

CLIFF

She tell you she grabbed my junk?

JANE

Hammerhead doesn't kiss and tell.

If Cliff could smile, he'd smile.

JANE (CONT'D)

How long have we been neighbors?

CLIFF

Next week would've been my daughter's birthday so... thirty years? Christ.

INT. LARRY'S BUS - HOURS LATER (2018)

Later. Larry works his orchids in the bus. Glances out into the yard where Cliff hasn't moved: watching Jane paint.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And so it was, after a brief misunderstanding in which junk was grabbed...

INT. DOOM MANOR - SOLARIUM - HOURS LATER (2018)

Rita knits, watches Cliff and Jane in what is now a light rain. Still, Cliff hasn't moved. Rita shares a look with Niles, whose been watching as well. *Huh.*

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR (V.O.)
...Robotman met Jane. And all was
right and all was good.
(then)
For now.

EXT. DOOM MANOR - HOURS LATER (2018)

Almost dark. Still, a light rain. Jane, cold and wet,
shivers at the easel. Cliff, right where we left him.

CLIFF
It's getting dark.
(then)
Jane.

JANE/THE HANGMAN'S DAUGHTER
No. I'm the Hangman's Daughter.

CLIFF
Okay.

Jane/The Hangman's Daughter: a painter of extra-human
abilities, soulful, frail.

JANE/THE HANGMAN'S DAUGHTER
Do you remember what it felt like?

CLIFF
What.

JANE/THE HANGMAN'S DAUGHTER
To be normal. Like them.

CLIFF
(after a beat)
Sometimes I try to remember.
Sometimes I still hope I will be.

JANE/THE HANGMAN'S DAUGHTER
I don't even know what to hope for.

Cliff doesn't know what to say. They both stare at her
painting as its colors run.

JANE/THE HANGMAN'S DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
My painting's ruined. Everything's
gone wrong.

After a beat. Cliff takes a few tentative steps toward her.
Gently, touches her arm.

(CONTINUED)

CLIFF

Come in out of the rain.

A final shot, these two standing there.

INT. DOOM MANOR - SOLARIUM - NIGHT (2018)

Larry, Cliff, Jane and Rita watch one of her old movies. Resembling group therapy. Jane fidgets, not happy about what's about to happen but not wanting to show it either.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And life in Dumb Manor proceeded accordingly.

Niles enters, prepared for a trip. His bags and gear all bear the hallmarks of a seasoned globetrotter.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

So much so, the Chief felt comfortable enough to resume his occasional travels.

NILES

I won't be gone long...

The gang joins in, never taking their eyes from the TV.

NILES (CONT'D)

--but there are mysterious things in this world that bear keeping an eye on--
(he gives them a look)
--so go I must.

EVERYONE

--but there are mysterious things in this world that bear keeping an eye on
(as he pauses)
--so go I must.

NILES (CONT'D)

So, we understand each other.

JANE

Bring a condom.

NILES

And you, behave. I'll be back in a few days.

Niles leaves. Cliff, Larry, Rita and Jane watch the movie.

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR (V.O.)

*Indifferent as they seemed, it did
occur to each every one - never had
all four been in the house without
Dear Father. Why, they could do
anything.*

INT. DOOM MANOR - VARIOUS - THE NEXT DAY (2018)

Rita knits.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Anything at all.

Cliff plays with his cars.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Groan.

LARRY carries a newly potted orchid to his bus... except the
bus isn't there.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

(piqued)

Wait.

HONK! HONK!

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Oh?

EXT. DOOM MANOR - DAY (2018)

Jane leans against Larry's bus, which she's spray-painted
matte black. Cliff, Larry and Rita step outside.

LARRY

Is that my bus?

Actually, no. Not anymore. It's the DOOM BUS now.

RITA

What on earth are you doing?

JANE

What are we doing? We're going to
town.

A beat. Stunned silence.

(CONTINUED)

RITA

After the Chief explicitly asked us
not to. This is your most reckless
scheme yet, Jane.

JANE

Crazy Jane.

A long beat.

CLIFF

I'm in.

RITA

Shocking.

JANE

Larry?

LARRY

No.

Larry turns, heads back for the house.

JANE

Rita?

RITA

Don't be ridiculous.

But Rita's torn. Truly torn.

JANE

Oh, come on. There's a whole world
out there waiting to be seen. That
hasn't seen you in 60 years.

RITA

I see what you're doing. Playing my
ego. I won't be played.

JANE

Okay. Happy knitting.

Rita straightens, accepting the challenge.

RITA

Larry.

Larry stops.

LARRY

Don't.

(CONTINUED)

RITA

Larry.

On Larry. He sighs. *What to do here?*

EXT. ROAD - DAY (2018)

The Doom Bus crests over a hill.

INT. THE DOOM BUS - MOVING (2018)

All four - Cliff's at the wheel - sit quietly content, windows open, taking in the scenery. Rita slips her hand out the window, dips it into the wind, like taking a road trip is the most natural thing in the world.

For these few moments, they're each finally free.

EXT. TOWN STREET - DAY (2018)

A small town. Covington, OH. As the Doom Bus rounds into the street.

INT. DOOM BUS - DAY - DRIVING (2018)

Cliff parks. The mood is decidedly more tense.

Rita studies herself in a pocket mirror. Jane stares.

RITA

Don't say a word.

JANE

You look nice.

Rita considers how to handle the compliment.

RITA

Of course I do.

She snaps her mirror closed, stands. Marches to the front of the bus, waits for Cliff to open the door.

RITA (CONT'D)

Don't wait up.

And she's gone. A moment later, she's back.

RITA (CONT'D)

Which one of you has any money?

EXT. TOWN - SIDEWALK - DAY (2018)

Rita strides down the block. Thrilled to be out. She stops. Seeing something across the street.

INT. TOWN - DINER - DAY (2018)

Rita enters. Slows, just a touch of hesitation here... it's been a long, long time. She finds a seat at the counter, a waitress drops a menu in front of her.

WAITRESS

With you in a sec, hon.

And that's that. Nobody gives her a second glance. *This is going well...* Then, she catches a FRY COOK checking out her cleavage. She smiles to herself. *Even better.*

EXT. TOWN - STREET - DAY (2018)

Jane and Cliff walk down the street. It's impossible for other folks not to notice Cliff. He feels each and every one of their astonished stares.

JANE

You okay?

CLIFF

(pretty terrified)

All good.

JANE

Almost there.

She guides him into... A TOY STORE. They walk amongst toy robots, games, etc.

CLIFF

I don't get it.

JANE

You said it was your daughter's birthday.

And Cliff realizes, this field trip, it was for him.

A LITTLE KID approaches Cliff.

LITTLE KID

Are you a good guy or a bad guy?

Cliff looks to Jane. Remembers what she called him days ago.

(CONTINUED)

CLIFF

I'm Robotman.

EXT./INT. DOOM BUS - DAY (2018)

Larry hasn't moved. Terrified to leave the bus....

INT. TOWN - DINER - DAY (2018)

The Waitress brings Rita her food. Cheeseburger and fries.
Pie. A malted. Rita could not be more delighted.

RITA

There is nothing, nothing like a
malted. Am I right?

WAITRESS

This is crazy - you even talk like
her, you know that?

RITA

Who?

WAITRESS

Rita Farr. Actress from the 50s.
My dad made me watch all her
movies.

RITA

Oh.

(then)

"Made" you?

WAITRESS

She might have been the first
actress I was ever like, you know
what? I'd hang with her. She was
cool. Sexy. But a broad too. I
mean, "Three Guns To Santa Fe?"

RITA

"El Paso." Three Guns To El Paso.

WAITRESS

Okay. So you do know her. I
dunno. Mostly I loved her because
I got to spend time with my dad.
It was a tough time in our lives.
Rita Farr got us through.

Rita, touched, pats the seat next to her.

(CONTINUED)

RITA

Sit. Tell me.

WAITRESS

About my dad?

RITA

No.

EXT. TOWN PARK - DAY (2018)

Jane and Cliff sit on a bandstand, their legs dangling over the edge. Cliff holds a STUFFED GIRAFFE on his lap.

CLIFF

One day a year, I had one job. Buy the present. It was my favorite day. The accident was a few days before her birthday, I was so angry by then, at my wife, myself, I couldn't see past my own stuff... and I forgot.

JANE

You forgot to buy your daughter's birthday present?

CLIFF

I was busy.
(then)
Fucking the nanny.

JANE

(after a beat)
You idiot.

CLIFF

Yeah.

Jane pulls a joint from her pocket. Prepares it.

JANE

And now I'm totally stressed out.

Cliff looks on, envious, as she lights up.

CLIFF

God. I would so fuck that joint up.

JANE

Except it's mine, so fuck off.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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She takes a hit. Reconsiders. Turns, blows smoke into Cliff's face.

JANE (CONT'D)
Anything?

Cliff UTTERS a DEPRESSED SIGH. Nope.

INT. THE DOOM BUS - DAY (2018)

The bus door opens. Larry steps out. Stops. *Christ.*

INT. TOWN - BAR - DAY (2018)

Larry enters. The BARTENDER'S back is turned and Larry's instinct is to ease by without causing a scene. But something makes him stop. *Let's face this head-on.*

LARRY
Pardon me.
(then)
Would you mind if I ordered a drink?

The Bartender takes in this strange-looking thing.

BARTENDER
What'll it be?

Larry is quietly thrilled. Savors the words:

LARRY
I want a beer.

The Bartender nods, gets to it. After a beat, Larry decides he should take a seat. He does.

INT. TOWN - DINER - DAY (2018)

Rita and the Waitress.

WAITRESS
Then there was that African picture.

RITA
Forbidden Congo.

WAITRESS
Forbidden dookie.

RITA
Oh, come on. I heard she fell ill.

(CONTINUED)

WAITRESS

They replaced her mid-picture! She was a drunk.

RITA

No.

WAITRESS

And then the whole porn thing.

RITA

The -- what? Rita Farr?

WAITRESS

Trust me. My dad had duffel bags full of the stuff.

RITA

Your father said Rita Farr was doing porn?

The Waitress is oblivious to Rita's distress.

WAITRESS

Full. On.

Rita turns away, stricken. As now the side of her eye starts to droop, losing shape... and she quickly slaps a hand over it to cover it up... Oh no...

EXT. TOWN PARK - DAY (2018)

Cliff and Jane. Jane smokes her joint, stares down a YOUNG GIRL gaping at them as she pedals by on her bike.

CLIFF

How pissed do you think the Chief would be knowing we were out here being gawked at.

JANE

I honestly don't care.

CLIFF

(after a beat)

Nope.

JANE

What.

CLIFF

Not buying it. I think you care a lot about what he thinks.

(CONTINUED)

Careful, Cliff. You're poking something here...

JANE
You don't know me.

CLIFF
You need him like the rest of us do. Hey, I hate to say it, but I need him. To get my life back, whatever that looks like.

JANE
(after a beat...)
If you want your life back, why don't you just call her?

CLIFF
Who?

JANE
Your daughter.

CLIFF
My daughter's dead.

JANE
According to...?

CLIFF
(after a beat)
My daughter's dead.

JANE
Because, of course, you confirmed that, right? Multiple sources? It's all on the internet, man. Your shitty driving. Wife, Kate, decapitated. Daughter, Clara, sole survivor.

That's hitting home more. The details....

CLIFF
Shut up, Jane.

She pulls out a cellphone, starts punching in letters.
Bingo.

JANE
Three Clara Steeles living in the United States. Three phone numbers.

(CONTINUED)

CLIFF

My daughter's dead.

JANE

Let's find out.

CLIFF

No.

JANE

What are we doing here, Cliff?
Why'd you get on that bus?

CLIFF

Let it go.

JANE

Sure. In a minute.

She punches in a number. Cliff grabs the phone, crushes it.

CLIFF

No.

JANE

Asshole!

Behind them, TWO POLICE OFFICERS get out of their cruiser...

INT. TOWN - BAR - DAY (2018)

Larry feels the eyes of the entire bar upon him.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

*Larry knew they were staring at him
and, yes, it bothered him, but not
for reasons one might think...*

EXT. AIRFIELD - EDWARDS AIRFORCE BASE - FLASHBACK (1961)

*FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE THAN BEFORE: Larry strides across the
airfield toward that X-15. John falls in next to him as they
move around the rocket plane to inspect it. Notice the
distinctive rag John carries in a pocket.*

NARRATOR (V.O.)

*...the truth is, Larry Trainor had
felt like a monster long before he
ever was one...*

*As the CAMERA finds Larry and John, tucked out of view behind
the plane, in passionate embrace.*

INT. X-15/C-22 - FLYING - DAY - FLASHBACK (1961)

Larry sits in the rumbling cockpit of the X-15, still attached to the mothership. Aloft. Notice now, Larry holds John's distinctive rag as he grips the controls.

IN THE AIR SHED

John and the other members of the ground crew listen to the ground-to-air crosstalk. As Larry wheedles his half of the colored rag in his hand...

LARRY (V.O.)

Gone squirrely. I'm in a spin.

Oh, shit. John leaps to his feet and rushes for the door.

ON THE AIRFIELD

JOHN slams out of the shed, races for the motor pool.

IN JOHN'S JEEP

As he rides shotgun. Sees the wreckage as absolute terror washes over his face.

WITH JOHN in the lead jeep as they arrive at the wreckage. The pain on his face. There's no way. No way Larry could have survived...

Until-- Larry shuffles out from the burning wreckage, fully aflame, charred, grotesque. But alive.

And as stare, stunned, John is the only one to leap from his vehicle, rush to Larry to smother him with a jacket, desperately trying to keep his lover alive.

JOHN

Help me! He's alive!

INT. TOWN - BAR - DAY (2018)

Larry traces a gloved finger through the condensation on the beer mug.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And the sadder truth was, he'd finally become what he had once felt like only inside.

As we PUSH IN to see his chest, ever so slightly, BEGIN TO GLOW. As he begins to panic.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
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LARRY
(to himself)
No...

INT. TOWN - DINER - DAY (2018)

Rita quietly freaks in her seat - covering her face while the Waitress tallies up the bill.

WAITRESS
You sure you don't want desert?

RITA
Just the check, please.

AS WE TRAVEL DOWN TO RITA'S LEG. Which slowly starts to balloon as it did in Africa....

EXT. TOWN PARK - DAY (2018)

Jane scoops up the pieces of her phone. Cliff reels.

JANE
You know you're buying me a new phone.

COP #1
Hey.

Cliff and Jane realize: it's the cops.

COP #1 (CONT'D)
Is there a problem, Ma'am?

But what the cops and Cliff don't realize: it's not Jane.

JANE/HAMMERHEAD
No, officer. Only problem I see is you.
(then)
Pig.

Cliff drops his head. *Here we go.*

INT. TOWN - BAR - DAY (2018)

Larry curls up on his stool, pulls his jacket tight, as the glow gets brighter and brighter. As patrons begin to stare.

LARRY
(to himself)
No, not now, please...

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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As Larry decides he has no choice but to sprint past the startled crowd for the exit...

INT. TOWN - DINER - DAY (2018)

Rita pays, stands, as patrons stare at her face, her NOW-MASSIVE FOOT. She attempts to walk out with as much dignity as she can muster... but the giant foot forces her to walk with a pronounced shuffle, exacerbating her humiliation...

WITH JANE AND CLIFF

Jane/Hammerhead sizes up the two cops flanking them. While Cliff attempts to put out this brushfire:

CLIFF

Officers, my friend is maybe a little depressed - maybe a little high - she takes it all back.

(over his shoulder)

Take it back, Hammerhead.

The cops react to something behind Cliff. He turns -- Jane/Hammerhead is now a GIGANTIC FIGURE WITH A SUN FOR A HEAD. This is SUN DADDY. Ready to fight.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Fuck me.

WITH RITA

Who's just about made it to the door, tears streaming down her cheeks as-- SHE STARTS TO COLLAPSE. As in, molecularly. Into -- is it a BLOB? As PATRONS SCREAM.

WITH JANE AND CLIFF

The SCREAMS draw their attention. Cliff stares at the diner as Jane -- Jane again -- steps next to him. *What the hell?*

WITH LARRY

He races out of the bar. Sees folks looking in the direction of the diner as--

THE DINER WALL COLLAPSES. A GIGANTIC BLOB OOZES OUT!

LARRY freezes. Sees JANE and CLIFF moving to help. He, on the other hand, turns and races the other direction. Larry's running away. As--

JANE and CLIFF near the blob.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

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CLIFF (CONT'D)
What the hell is it?

JANE
Rita.

Cliff freezes. *Say the fuck what?* But Jane has no patience.

JANE (CONT'D)
Help her.

The Blob overtakes cars, anything in its path-- it threatens to take down another building... Cliff gets there in the nick of time, holds it in place as people inside can safely flee!

Jane stalks alongside the blob.

JANE (CONT'D)
Rita! Can you hear me? Rita!

That's not gonna work. Jane turns into Hammerhead.

JANE (CONT'D)
Rita, you fucking bitch! Get a fucking grip on yourself!

Rita, from somewhere inside that blob:

RITA (V.O.)
I'm trying!

BUT: the Blob is heading right for a SCHOOL BUS. Full of KIDS. Peril! As WE'RE WITH--

LARRY

Who rounds a corner, heads for the Doom Bus to make his getaway when his chest starts to BURN BRIGHT--

LARRY
No. No no no! I'm running away--

--as the NEGATIVE SPIRIT leaps out of him and Larry collapses to the ground! The Negative Spirit whips back toward the chaos....

THE BLOB

Crushes everything in its path. Nears that SCHOOL BUS...

CLIFF AND JANE

Move between the Blob and the bus. The last defense.

(CONTINUED)

CLIFF

What do we do?

Jane turns into SUN DADDY. *Gonna do what we gotta do.*

CLIFF (CONT'D)

No, we're not doing that!

Cliff realizes: needs a better plan. He drops, digs BOTH ROBOT HANDS into the asphalt... and starts to push...

ON THE BLOB. Taking out electrical poles, which spark and threaten to burn until-- THE NEGATIVE SPIRIT rushes through them, the power extinguishes!

ON CLIFF. Pushes that Asphalt into a GIANT MOUND...

As the Blob reaches Cliff's barricade... starts to climb it... closer and closer to the peak... as Cliff hunches frozen against the other side, arms, propping that asphalt up, the school bus just feet behind him... as now the blob reaches the very top... and stops. Quivering.

Cliff doesn't move.

As then -- one piece of the blob slips over the side, dangles like pulled taffy down to Cliff's face. Now we see in it: RITA'S DISTORTED, GROTESQUE FACE.

RITA

(quiet, desperate)

I want to go home.

CLIFF

(a beat)

We can do that.

INT. DOOM MANOR - SOLARIUM - NIGHT (2018)

Rita stares off. Jane, Larry, each in his or her own space. Larry places a calming hand on Rita's. She dutifully smiles. Cliff sits stock still. Coiled.

INT./EXT. CHIEF'S CAR/TOWN - NIGHT (2018)

It's later. Niles drives slowly through the aftermath. He passes a NEWS REPORTER doing a stand-up next to the mound of asphalt created by Cliff, rolls down his window to catch--

(CONTINUED)

NEWS REPORTER

...apparently it was some sort of
giant blob run amok, until what
some witnesses described as a
"robot man" created this barrier
made of -- made of Main Street,
Bill--

--as Niles reacts -- *what the hell?* -- and keeps driving
through. Processing. Now he drives past what appears to be
an ALBINO DONKEY standing between two buildings... catches
just a flash of it, enough to--

SCREECH. He brakes. Backs up to look into the mouth of that
alley. Nothing's there. But whatever he may have seen...
it's spooked him.

INT. DOOM MANOR - NIGHT (2018)

The gang's still here. The front door SLAMS.

JANE

Daddy's home.

Cliff shoots up.

INT. DOOM MANOR - HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Niles wheels down the hallway. Stops at the doorway of the
room where our foursome sit. Cliff stands waiting.

CLIFF

We need to talk.

NILES

We do.

(to them all)

I warned you not to leave. I
begged you. You have no idea what
you've done.

Niles wheels away, backs into an ancient ELEVATOR, his eyes
on them, his disappointment plain.

JANE

(defiant)

It wasn't that bad!

Larry clicks on the TV. The LOCAL NEWS plays IMAGES OF
TODAY'S CHAOS. WE SEE the Reporter we saw before.

(CONTINUED)

NEWS REPORTER

"Bad" doesn't begin to describe
what befell Covington today, Rob.
Horrible. Destructive. Chaotic.
Just a few words used by locals to
describe what they saw:

The FOOTAGE CUTS to a MAN-ON-THE-STREET interview.

MAN-ON-THE-STREET

Look, I'll be honest, I used to get
jealous, how all the "heroes"
ignored the fly-over towns like us,
but come on, you're gonna send
something extra human to a place
like this? Send the Justice
League, man. Not the short bus.

The team absorbs that. They're losers.

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S LAB - NIGHT (2018)

Niles enters. Crosses to a LOCKED DOOR. He pulls off a
necklace tucked under his shirt. Attached to the necklace is
a key, which he uses to open the door. There's another thing
attached to it as well -- a SMALL, BLACKENED KNOT of...
something. He steps into--

INT. DOOM MANOR - CHIEF'S MAP ROOM - NIGHT (2018)

This is Niles' Map Room, his nerve center. Where a man, if
he so wanted, could covertly monitor weird shit from around
the world. Not a modern space. The machinery and cabinets
are vintage, think 'Darkest Hour'.

This is his secret space. With lots of places to hold his
secrets -- old journals, wooden file cabinets, a reel-to-reel
tape recorder, an 8mm projector, ham radio, etc.

Niles hustles to a cabinet, pulls from a dusty box a leather
satchel. Which we might recognize from our prologue -- this
was Mr. Morden's satchel. He pulls out 8x10 BLACK AND WHITE
SURVEILLANCE PHOTOS -- there's the Paraguayan boy, there's
Von Fuchs... and there's that ALBINO DONKEY. The very same
one he just saw in town. *Why does Niles have pictures of
1948 Paraguay? And why is he so spooked by what he sees?*

INT. DOOM MANOR - SOLARIUM - NIGHT (2018)

Niles sits in front of them, grave. Cliff paces.

NILES

I'm afraid there's no choice.

(CONTINUED)

CLIFF

There's always a choice.

NILES

Not today. Not after what you did.

CLIFF

We took a drive.

Niles does his utmost best not to explode.

NILES

You - whether you realize it or not
- your actions - your actions have
consequences and those consequences
are coming. Of that there is no
doubt.

RITA

You really think we're in danger,
Chief. That we need to pick up and
run. This is what you really,
really think.

NILES

As far away as possible. As soon
as we can.

CLIFF

What happens to the town.

NILES

The town is not my concern.

CLIFF

So the town gets screwed.

NILES

(now he explodes)

You've done quite enough to the
town, thank you!

JANE

This is bullshit.

NILES

Don't you start with me, too. When
you and I both know this field trip
was for little more than your own
amusement.

Jane retreats - stung by the truth of that.

(CONTINUED)

CLIFF

So now she's the bad guy. Okay.
Let's talk about you, Chief.
(then)
You told me my daughter was dead.

Niles is taken aback.

NILES

I was trying to protect you.

CLIFF

By lying.

NILES

I'm trying to protect you now.
(then)
Do you honestly think she would
have accepted you?

CLIFF

Did I get a chance to try? She
lost her mother, her father, I
don't know if she would have
accepted me. You robbed me of that
chance. What am I to her now? I'm
nothing. I'm a monster.

A beat. Niles softens.

NILES

I assure you, there are many
monsters in this world, and none of
them - not a one - is you.

(then)

There are things out there I've
tried to warn you about. Many of
them, if I'm being totally honest,
might be considered my enemies.

(as this sinks in)

Who, if they found me, would not
hesitate - in any way - to destroy
me and those I love. And, yes, the
town if -- well, just because.

(then)

I've tried so hard to shield you.
And I know what I am asking of you.
To leave the safest place you've
ever known. To step out into a
world that would rather ignore you.
Shun you. Belittle you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
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NILES (CONT'D)

But - if you stay here - if we die
now - this magical experiment, this
- you - my life accomplishments
all, it just --

His hands flutter in orbit for a lost moment -- *it all dies.*

CLIFF

Or. We stay. And we fight.

NILES

We could.
(then)
And we'd be doomed.

CLIFF

What are we now?

Both men's words hang over the room.

LARRY

(after a beat)
I'm going to go with the Chief.

Larry exits.

RITA

Agreed.
(to Cliff)
You were good today, Cliff. And I
thank you.

She exits as well. All eyes on Jane.

JANE

Fuck it.

She exits. Cliff's not sure what that means. Niles is.

A few moments later she returns, duffel in hand.

JANE (CONT'D)

(to the Chief)
Shotgun.

Jane walks out, no ceremony. Cliff stands there. Gut-punched.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT (2018)

Big, empty shot. Cliff walks along the side of the road.
Alone. Toward town.

Behind him, the Doom Bus pulls out, turns the opposite way.

INT. DOOM BUS - MOVING - NIGHT (2018)

Quiet. Rita can't help but watch Cliff's receding figure. Turns back, worried for him.

Niles gives her a small smile. *This is the right thing.*

Cliff recedes in the sideview mirror. Jane never looks.

EXT. TOWN - NIGHT (2018)

The town is quiet. Nothing seems amiss. TWO TRASH HAULERS throw debris into their truck. Cliff approaches.

CLIFF

Hey.

(then)

Seen anything weird?

The Trash Haulers stare.

INT. DOOM BUS - MOVING - NIGHT (2018)

Jane sings along to the tune on the radio, then falls silent. Each of them has fallen off into their own thoughts. Perhaps... second thoughts.

EXT. TOWN STREET - NIGHT (2018)

Cliff walks.

INT. DOOM BUS - NIGHT (2018)

Jane drives. Her hand bangs anxiously against the wheel.

JANE

Anyone else think Cliff was right about saving that town?

NILES

It's over, Jane. Let it go.

JANE

Okay, except I vote we turn around.

NILES

No.

JANE

Rita?

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

Limited Studio Draft

7/6/18 60.

RITA
I can't promise I won't, you know,
"blob out", but - yes.

JANE
Larry?

Larry doesn't answer, head in his hands.

RITA
Larry's a yes.

JANE
Whoo!

Jane fishtails the bus into a turn.

EXT. TOWN - NIGHT (2018)

Cliff walks. As the DOOM BUS pulls up alongside him.

ON THE DOOM BUS

Jane, Larry and Rita exit the bus. Rita hesitates. Shares a moment with Niles.

NILES
This is wrong.

Rita gives him a small smile.

RITA
Might be. Probably is. We'll be
back.

And she goes.

WITH CLIFF

Quietly moved as they approach. He gives them a small nod,
starts off again, toward town. They walk with him.

Rita's leg swells - a sign of her anxiety - but Larry touches
her arm, gives her a nod. She smiles, gamely shuffles on.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*And there they go, our four lovable
losers, banding together to become
the superhero fighting force no one
saw coming except everybody.
(then)
But. Fear not. Hope blooms.
(MORE)*

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED:

Limited Studio Draft

7/6/18 61.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*There's a way out of this dreck,
follow me.*

As our team marches on... and THE GROUND BEGINS TO RUMBLE...

ON THE DOOM BUS - INTERCUT

Niles reacts. *Oh, no.*

NILES
Paraguay.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Yes, Niles! Paraguay.

Niles turns to see a MAN that looks sort of like... Mr. Morden? He's half-man, half-nothing, of this world and not. Also, he's got a new name. He's MR. NOBODY now. And he's apparently been our Narrator for this entire story.

NARRATOR/MR. NOBODY
Always, Paraguay.

NILES
Morden.

NARRATOR/MR. NOBODY
Sure. But no. I haven't been Mr. Morden since, well,
(mock screams)
"Ahh! Help me! Noooo!"

We have no idea what he means. But Niles does.

WITH THE DOOM PATROL

As the ground rumbles around them--

RITA
It's fine. It's totally fine.

--*Clip clop clip clop*... That ALBINO DONKEY rounds a corner, stops, looks at them askance. They stare back.

The Donkey farts white smoke. Which drifts up into the air, forms into letters and words, like some twisted sky-writing. The words float high above them:

THE... MIND... IS... THE... LIMIT...

They stare. Awed, unsure.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"
CONTINUED: (2)

Limited Studio Draft

7/6/18 62.

NARRATOR/MR. NOBODY (V.O.)
*I've been admiring your friends,
Niles, those freaks of yours, for
quite some time.*

NILES
Don't you dare hurt them.

NARRATOR/MR. NOBODY (V.O.)
*Hurt them? No. That wouldn't be
much fun, would it? Would be quite
the same old story, actually. I
think we'll try something different
this time.*

A MASSIVE RUPTURE OPENS IN THE STREET. UPENDS CARS, TILTS
BUILDINGS.

NARRATOR/MR. NOBODY (V.O.)
*You were right about them in one
respect, however.*

THE RUPTURE OPENS FURTHER - like something was opening a
zipper in the middle of town - HEADS RIGHT FOR OUR TEAM--

NARRATOR/MR. NOBODY
They are quite doomed.

--Growing bigger, more ferocious, more foreboding, as our
foursome stands in its path, unsure what they are looking at,
unsure what to do, AS WE--

CUT TO BLACK.