

Slim Chance  
A Stranger Things Chapter  
By  
Joseph Bologna

INT. QUARANTINE ROOM - NIGHT

An American flag hangs lifelessly on a sickly-green tiled wall. Spots of harsh yellow light illuminate portions of an otherwise dark and sterile room.

A slender figure, SLIM (22), sits hunched over on a bench in the middle of the room facing the flag. His right shoulder protrudes slightly higher than his left. He wears a filthy green bomber jacket over the bottom-half of a formerly-white hazmat suit. His entire body sporadically TWITCHES.

Beneath him, a puddle of muck and blood spreads wider with every drip; His hands and face match its color. His eyes stare forward, starkly white in contrast to the mud and blood caked onto his face and hair.

His right hand twitches as the index finger pulls on a phantom trigger.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A small hand twists the screwdriver extension of an army-green multi-tool into the inner workings of a small FM radio. SLIM, (9), wearing shorts and a tank top, revealing his malformed shoulder, grimaces as he works.

SLIM

C'mon...

STATIC rings out from the other side of the room which immediately cuts out.

MAMA (O.S.)

Oh! I got it working, baby!

Slim drops the radio and RACES toward MAMA, (30), as she sinks into a recliner across from a boxy television set.

MAMA

Come on, Slim Jim.

Slim, multi-tool gripped in hand, climbs onto the recliner beside Mama and leans forward, glaring into the monitor.

NEIL ARMSTRONG

That's one small step for man...  
One giant leap for mankind.

The Apollo 11 moon landing is broadcast in black-and-white behind the glass screen. NEIL ARMSTRONG plants his feet firmly on the bright surface of the satellite.

(CONTINUED)

SLIM

Wow.

MAMA

That about says it.

WALTER CRONKITE, smiling, wipes tears from his eyes.

SLIM

Is this what papa is doing?

Mama tilts her head toward Slim.

MAMA

No, baby. What he does is more important. He helps keep us safe down here so we can aspire to go up there.

Slim turns around to face Mama. A smile crawls across his face and he turns back to the screen with wide eyes.

Neil Armstrong salutes a freshly-planted American flag.

SLIM (O.S.)

That's when I knew.

INT. MILITARY RECRUITMENT CENTER - DAY

An American flag hangs on the wall behind a desk where two RECRUITERS (40), sit across from Slim (18).

Warm sunlight shines into the room through an open window.

SLIM

I mean, that's what it's about.  
That's America. If we can literally shoot for the stars and hit one, the sky's no longer the limit.

RECRUITER 1 shuffles paperwork in his hands as RECRUITER 2 looks at Slim with his hands crossed on the desk.

SLIM

Now, I'm no rocket science guy, but I'm a warm-blooded American. If my role in the grand scheme of things is to keep the next Neil Armstrong safe, then I accept. All I've ever wanted was to serve. Just like my father.

(CONTINUED)

Recruiter 1 looks up from his papers to Slim's higher shoulder. Slim adjusts his posture.

SLIM

Um, I think my community work exemplifies that. We could discuss my sharpshooting awards, but I think what I really want to emphasize is my love for this country, for its people, its values--

RECRUITER 1

That's great, son. Thank you for your patriotism. Your record is highly commendable--

SLIM

Thank you, sir. I--

RECRUITER 1

But there is the issue of your malformation.

Slim's face droops into a frown.

SLIM

It's just a birth defect, sir. It doesn't hold me back in any w--

RECRUITER 2

Son, we here in the US Army pride ourselves on selecting the best of the best our country has to offer. Unfortunately, our strict criteria is sometimes a cut above otherwise prime candidates.

SLIM

I understand, but if you could maybe give me a chance to--

RECRUITER 1

I'm sorry, son. If it were up to me, I'd give ya a shot. But Uncle Sam's a stickler.

Recruiter one takes out a stamp and a red ink pad from under the desk. He presses the stamp into the pad.

SLIM

Please. This is all I know.

(CONTINUED)

RECRUITER 2

There are plenty other ways to  
serve the country, young man.

Recruiter 1 stamps a page with a--

EXT. LOCUST STREET - DAY

CLANG!

Slim (22) SLAMS a lid down onto a trashcan. Holding a full trash bag by his side, Slim wears a reflective orange vest and gardening gloves. He now wears a thick stubble and his longer hair is held back by a sun-bleached baseball cap.

A Sony Walkman is clipped to his belt, the headphones attached rest around his neck.

A gray sky hangs over the wet pavement and shiny street. Brown grass plagues each home's lawn and every tree is barren of any leaves.

Slim THROWS the bag into the the back of a garbage truck and wipes his brow. Behind him, an orange Mustang peels around the corner with a SCREECH.

Slim watches as it rockets into a driveway. A SOLDIER (25) in full fatigues exits the car and approaches the door beside the driveway. He rings the doorbell.

A YOUNG WOMAN (25) answers the door and SQUEALS. The two leap into each other's arms.

Slim SIGHS. He pulls the headphones over his ears and clicks the Walkman on with his thumb.

"Hard Time Losin' Man" by Jim Croce plays.

Slim trudges to the cabin of the truck. He climbs in and drives off.

INT. SANITATION CENTER - NIGHT

Slim pulls into the garbage truck depot.

LOCKER ROOM. INTERIOR - NIGHT

Slim TOSSES his vest into a locker and retrieves a set of keys. He slams the locker shut.

MANAGER, (45), turns a corner.

MANAGER

Slim. You had a call.

Manager hands Slim a shred of paper with a phone number written on it.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Slim punches the numbers into a wall-mounted phone. He leans against the wall while he holds it against his ear.

SLIM

Hi, um...

Slim looks down to the paper.

SLIM

Carol? Yes, this is him.

Beat.

SLIM

I'm well, how are you?

Slim's demeanor slinks. His body rolls inward to the phone dial and he presses his forehead against the wall.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Light rain dampens the field of dead grass and gravestones.

Slim sits alone, surrounded by empty chairs, before of an fresh grave. He wears a black leather jacket over dark jeans.

A coffin slowly lowers into it. Four HONOR GUARDS stand at attention.

Honor Guards 1 and 2 fold an American flag.

Honor Guard 1 hands the folded flag to Slim.

INT. SLIM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The cramped box of a living space shows all that it offers in plain view. A bed sits in corner behind a small sofa and a coffee table. A stove, sink, and refrigerator line the adjacent wall and a small table with two chairs stand under a mantle with few framed photographs displayed.

Slim sits hunched over on the sofa. He holds the green multi-toll in his hands while he stares at the folded flag on the coffee table. He pulls out the screwdriver extension.

Beat.

He pushes the screwdriver back in and extends a small blade.

Beat.

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK!

Slim turns to the door.

He opens the door. Outside stands FRANK "WASH" WASHINGTON, (55), wearing a trench coat and a fedora. He is a tall black man with a salt and pepper mustache. He removes his hat with his right hand to reveal grayer hair.

WASH  
Junior. The spitting image.

SLIM  
I'm sorry, I--

WASH  
No, no, I'm sorry. Please, allow me to explain.

Wash places his hat under his left arm, revealing a prosthetic arm with two small hooks on the end. He extends his right hand.

WASH  
Frank Washington. My friends call me "Wash." Your father was one of those people.

Slim's eye's widen. He shakes Wash's hand.

WASH  
May I come in?

Slim steps back and extends his arm into the room.

(CONTINUED)

WASH

Nice place you got here.

Slim closes the door behind him.

SLIM

I didn't see you at the funeral.

WASH

Didn't make it back here in time.  
I'm very sorry about that. Your pop  
and I were very close. Served  
together years back. I'm so sorry  
about what happened to him. You  
hear about crashes all the time,  
you just never think one'll  
actually happen to you or yours.

SLIM

Yeah.

Wash approaches the mantle and picks up a picture of an  
eight year old Slim and Mama.

WASH

He never was a photographic one,  
was he?

SLIM

Honestly, I didn't know him much. I  
thought things would change after  
mom, but...

Wash SIGHS and places the photo back on the mantle. He looks  
at another framed photo of Neil Armstrong in his red-striped  
space suit.

WASH

I'm sure he's back with your mom  
right now watching over us.

SLIM

Mhm.

WASH

He was a good man, your pop. If it  
wasn't for him, I'd be with the  
rest of my arm. I'd feel some sort  
of way if I never got to pay that  
forward.

(CONTINUED)



SLIM

I appreciate that, and I appreciate  
you stopping by but--

WASH

You know that old saying about what  
happens when God closes a door?

Slim's brows furrow as Wash approaches the small table.

WASH

Sometimes he's more literal about  
it. Take a seat.

Wash sits down beside the stout table. Slim joins him.

WASH

I'm a Missions Director at an  
aerospace lab in Indiana. Another  
favor from your father. We've  
had... an opportunity open itself  
to us. We're looking for man to  
lead a special mission.

SLIM

I'm... not sure I--

WASH

I pulled your record. It's a cryin'  
shame that they passed on a record  
as exemplary as yours. Lady  
Liberty's worse off without you  
watching over her. That's why I  
want you to come with me.

Slim adjusts his posture.

SLIM

How do I even know what you're  
telling me is true?

Wash reaches into his trench coat. Slim tenses. Was pulls  
out a Polaroid photograph and hands it to Slim.

WASH

I told you. Spitting image.

Beat.

SLIM

What kind of mission?

He hands the photo back to Wash.

(CONTINUED)

WASH

What's the weirdest thing you've  
ever heard? 'Cause it isn't about  
to be much longer.

EXT. HAWKINS NATIONAL LABORATORY - DAY

A Ford truck pulls into a parking lot lined with government  
cars and SUV's. Wash steps out of the driver's side and Slim  
exits the passenger's.

He looks up at Hawkins National Laboratory.

WASH (O.S.)

So what do you think?

INT. BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

The sterile white walls encase the empty room.

Slim sits on one side of a table, Wash the other.

SLIM

... So... a portal... to another  
dimension..?

WASH

I know it can be a lot to take in--

SLIM

Like "The Gunslinger."

Beat.

WASH

Like what?

SLIM

"The Gunslinger." Stephen King. The  
Man in Black, an alternate  
dimension?

WASH

I'm more of a Crichton guy, myself,  
but whatever helps you wrap your  
head around it.

SLIM

You think the Russians want access  
to it?

(CONTINUED)

WASH

Think and fear. Our greatest weaknesses are ones we aren't even aware of. As far as we've gathered, this place is an exact mirror of our world, just devoid of life. Other than that, any and every variable can be in play.

SLIM

And if there's already one way in--

WASH

We should assume there can be more.

SLIM

What is it you want to know about this place.

WASH

Whatever we can. Most pressingly, whatever strategic advantages a foothold on the other side may lend us. If we burn down Guiseppe's Pizza in there, I want to know what happens to it out here.

SLIM

You want to... burn down a pizarria?

WASH

Not quite.

INT. DEEP STORAGE - DAY

Double-layered steel doors pull back to reveal Wash and Slim standing outside the room.

SLIM

Oh.

A BIG ASS BOMB sits in the middle of the room behind ballistic glass.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Wash rolls a map of Hawkins, Indiana across the table.

(CONTINUED)

WASH

We need you to drive the payload to the quarry on the other side and initiate the detonation sequence. You'll have plenty of time to get back and see if we end up with a dent in the cliff face on our side.

Slim nods.

WASH

We've sent three reconnaissance teams in to scope it out and its location matches ours. We have a team in there constructing your ride now.

SLIM

I'm guessing it isn't just a leisurely cruise if the job wasn't just given to one of them.

WASH

This is far too important for that.

Wash walks over to Slim's side of the table and leans against it.

WASH

This is opportunity knocking. This is the precipice of a breakthrough that could see to the end of the Cold War; the end of War itself. Something your father spent his entire life striving toward.

SLIM

Sounds like a job for a soldier.

WASH

Soldiers fight wars. Heroes end them. I'm sorry that you couldn't be a soldier, but you're being given the chance to be more than that right here and now. What do you want to be?

Slim's posture straightens.

SLIM

What do I do?

INT. DANGER ROOM - NIGHT

The blank white room only contains a single seat flanked on both sides by two massive amps.

Slim enters, followed by Wash.

WASH (O.S.)  
We're gonna put you through the  
ringer.

Slim sits down. He wears a electroencephalogram on his head as SCIENTISTS strap his arms to the chair. A Scientist places a rubber mouth guard into Slim's mouth.

WASH (O.S.)  
And then whatever the hell is worse  
than that.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Wash and other SCIENTISTS observe Slim through a window. A machine records his brain activity. Wash nods and a Scientist flips a switch.

INT. DANGER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The amps begin to silently VIBRATE. Slim TENSES and JOLTS in his seat. Through gritted teeth, Slim SCREAMS.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Slim's brain scan SKYROCKETS.

WASH (O.S.)  
The other side is inhospitable. We  
have to prepare you for it.

MONTAGE:

- Slim shivers in a walk-in freezer.
- Slim collapses onto the floor.
- Slim floats in a deprivation tank.
- Slim sits blindfolded in a rotating chair.
- Slim projectile vomits into a bucket.

INT. FREEZER - DAY

The vault-like door is PULLED open. Wash stands in the frame. Slim, sitting on a box, hands in his pockets, looks up. He is still as a thick puff of air exits his nose, flowing past a thicker beard on his face.

WASH

It's time.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Slim ZIPS up a dark green bomber jacket. Lined up on the table lay a folded map of Hawkins, a radio, the green multi-tool, his Sony Walkman, and a red fanny pack.

Wash enters the room, holding a folded white hazmat suit. Its rectangular visor rests on top of it.

WASH

You'll be needing this.

He drops it on the table. Slim unfolds it. The white suit is accented with red striped, reflecting Neil Armstrong's Apollo 11 suit. Slim smiles and looks up to Wash.

WASH

Let's go make another giant leap.

INT. THE GATE ROOM - DAY

THE GATE towers up the far wall of the room beside an empty deprivation tank. The room is dark with spots of yellow light bounce around the decrepit walls.

Slim, fully clad in the white hazmat suit, steps into a transitional chamber. The red fanny pack rests on his side, the Walkman and radio clipped onto it.

Wash stands behind him.

WASH

It'll take you forty to fifty minutes to get to the quarry from here. Once the detonation sequence is initiated, you'll have 60 minutes to get back here or you're gonna have a whole lotta trouble hearing for a while.

Slim breathes heavily.

(CONTINUED)

WASH  
How do you feel?

SLIM  
Ready.

WASH  
Make us proud, son.

Wash pats Slim's back and exits the chamber. The door closes and PUFFS of air surround Slim. The chamber's Gate side opens. Slim steps out.

He approaches the Gate. Red light peers through its tendril-laced crevice. It's alive.

Slim looks back to Wash, standing with a line of Scientists. Wash nods at him. Slim nods back. He turns around to the Gate and extends his left hand toward it.

He pushes through.

EXT. THE UPSIDE DOWN - DAY

Slim's left hand extends out into the dark abyss. He pushes all the way through the gate into the other side.

A dark sky hangs over a rotting, plagued world. Unearthly overgrowth chokes every structure in sight. Empty cars left vacant rest scattered on the empty roads.

To Slim's right, a pristine semi truck waits for him. The black, flat-faced, cab-over model sits with a container hitched behind it.

INT. CONTAINER - CONTINUOUS

The doors PEEL open, revealing Slim. He steps in and approaches the BIG ASS BOMB, gently held in place by straps.

Slim exits and shuts the doors.

EXT. THE UPSIDE DOWN - CONTINUOUS

Slim leans against the cap of the truck. He surveys the gloomy surroundings, then pulls the Walkman off of his pack.

He presses play. "Should I Stay or Should I Go" starts playing. Slim skips it. "On the Road Again" plays.

Slim SIGHS. The song continues.

(CONTINUED)

## MONTAGE:

- Slim starts the truck with a VROOM.
- He cruises down the dilapidated road, swaying between static cars.
- Slim looks out the window to an Army Surplus store and a clock tower which reads "11:30."
- Slim pulls up to the quarry.

## EXT. QUARRY - DAY

A lake of murky water rests beneath the towering cliff face.

Slim DROPS down from the cab and pulls out his radio.

SLIM

Base, this is Slim. I've reached  
the destination. Are we a go? Over.

Static.

SLIM

I repeat: Base, this is Slim. I've  
reached the destination. Are we a  
go? Over.

Static.

SLIM

Great.

Slim looks around. He unzips his fannypack. He pulls out the folded up American flag from his father's funeral and the green multi-tool. He puts the tool in his pocket.

He surveys the immediate area and picks up a long branch. He feeds it through the holes in the flag and plants it into the ground on the other end of the quarry.

Slim steps back and salutes the flag.

Beat.

Slim turns to the payload but HALTS in his tracks.

A light RIPPLE forms in the water. Slim stares out to it.

Beat. Nothing. Slim turns to the payload again.



INT. CONTAINER - CONTINUOUS

Slim kneels beside the BIG ASS BOMB and presses two buttons. He holds the rado up to his mouth.

SLIM  
Base, this is Slim. I've reached  
the destination. Are we a go? Over.

Static.

SLIM  
Here goes nothing.

He presses a third button and the number 60 appears on the digital timer. It drops to 59. Slim heads for the back and closes the doors with a--

EXT. QUARRY - CONTINUOUS

CLANG! Slim detaches the payload from the truck.

In the distance, a red storm begins to cultivate in the sky.

Slim climbs into the cabin and turns out of the quarry. He HALTS to look at the flag one last time. He drives away.

The murky water ripples.

EXT. THE UPSIDE DOWN - CONTINUOUS

The storm intensifies as Slim weaves between cars faster than before. A thick cloud encompasses the truck.

The truck's high beams barely pierce through the fog.

Out the passenger side window, Slim quickly approaches a building under construction. It appears to blink between two phases of completion, one form taller than the other.

On the road, images of cars blink in and out of existence.

Dead ahead, a truck appears. Slim CRASHES into it.

Slim's head lays against the horn, it BLARES.

He lifts his head off the horn. A huge CRACK stretches across his visor. Air FIZZES out of it.

INT. TRUCK CABIN - CONTINUOUS

SLIM

SHIT!

Slim presses his hand against the crack and clamors out of the cabin.

EXT. THE UPSIDE DOWN - CONTINUOUS

Slim STUMBLES out from the truck and surveys the damage. The truck is totaled. The other car is crushed beneath it.

SLIM

Goddamnit.

Slim SWIVELS around and peers through the storm. Several yards away, Slim sees the Army Surplus he passed earlier.

INT. ARMY SURPLUS - CONTINUOUS

The store is far beyond decay. Black moss and rot cake the shelves and products found on them. Debris from the storm raging outside CLANG against the murky glass storefront.

A rock SMASHES through the glass windowpane of the front door. Slim's hand reaches through the fresh opening and unlocks the door. He PUSHES through.

The top of the door brushes against a chime which produces a TINGLING sound.

Slim DARTS to each isle, HALTING at each to scan down to the end. He reaches one that holds a single roll of tape.

He LUNGES toward the tape and pulls a stretch of the material out. He TEARS off a 12 inch length of the tape and SLAPS it onto the visor's crack.

The tape slides off of the visor, leaving a clear mucus in its path. He frantically pushes it back into place, but the tape slides away again.

Further down the isle, Slim spots a vintage Vietnam-era gas mask. He RUSHES over to it and takes it in his hands.

The crack in his visor FIZZES. He INHALES.

Slim TEARS the visor off and PULLS the mask over his face. His eyes are CLENCHED shut behind the mask's foggy eyes.

(CONTINUED)

His eyes SHOOT open and he EXHALES. He takes in a DEEP BREATH and let's it out. He breathes.

Slim slumps backward onto the isle and rests his head on the top shelf. He breathes normally.

A nearby TICKING catches his attention. He follows it to the next isle. A discarded watch lay on the ground. Its second hand ticks around the digits. He kneels down to it.

Slim picks up the watch. It reads 12:13 and a small squared number in the 6's spot reads "5."

The door chime DINGLES at the front of the store. Slim slinks closer to the isle.

STOMP. STOMP.

Slim slowly backs up to the end of the isle. He cautiously peeks over the top and sees a the silhouette of a GROTESQUE FIGURE stalking around the opposite side of the store. Slim DROPS down to his knees.

At the back of the store, Slim sees a Winchester repeating rifle behind a glass pane. He creeps over to it.

STOMP. STOMP.

Slim slowly pulls the door open with a CREAK. The shadowy Figure's head TWITCHES to its side.

Slim gently pulls the rifle out of its place and grabs a pack of bullets beneath it. Convenient.

STOMP. STOMP. The Figure sulks to Slim's position.

Crouched, Slim circles around the figure behind the isles. He loads bullets into the the weapon with a CLICK.

STOMP.

CLICK.

STOMP.

CLICK! Slim aims the weapon at the figure's back as he approaches the door. He holds his index finger over the trigger and--

CRACK!

Shattered glass crunches under Slim's foot.

The Figure SWIRLS around and it's face ERUPTS OPEN into four petal quadrants, each lined with sharp teeth.

A DEMOGORGON hulks over Slim, the rifle in his grip nearly drops out of his hands.

The monster LEAPS at Slim, who YANKS the gun upward.

BANG! The shot lands on the beast's shoulder. It CRASHES onto Slim, slamming him onto the floor. Its monstrous face wraps around the rifle and Slim holds it above his face.

The beast SNARLES as it chews into the rifle's wooden frame. Drool and blood drip onto Slim's mask as the Demogorgon's head thrashes him back and forth.

The beast PULLS the rifle and Slim upward and FLINGS them into the nearest isle.

Slim COCKS the rifle and FIRES again.

BANG! The monster shakes off a shot to the leg.

BANG! It pushes forward after a shot to the chest.

The Demogorgon SLASHES at Slim. He dodges to his right, but the monster's claw SLICES his left arm. He YELLS.

The beast stands between Slim and the front door. It perches on the floor, ready to pounce, as Slim holds his fresh gash.

Slim stares into the monster's eyeless face as it drips with drool and blood.

The Demogorgon RACES toward Slim. He charges at the monster.

The beast's face ERUPTS open with a ROAR, Slim matches his opponent with a hearty YELL.

Slim PLUNGES the rifle into the Demogorgon's gaping mouth; It HALTS in its tracks and GARGLES on the weapons.

Slim PULLS the trigger. BANG!

Slim is DRENCHED in blood as the beast FLIES backward, the rifle is split in half. The Demogorgon writhes on the floor, GARGLING and ROARING as it flails its inhuman arms around.

Slim drops his broken weapon and lunges for the door.

EXT. THE

Rushing out from under the tingling chimes, Slim SPRINTS into the intense storm. The surrounding area is indiscernible in the heavy fog and flashing red lightning.

Slim sprints along the yellow lines of the street he drove in on. He pulls the radio off of his pack, tearing the strap holding it on his waist. The pack and his Walkman fall to the ground behind him.

Slim STOPS in his tracks and turns back.

A ROAR echoes out in the distance. Slim HALTS again.

He hesitates, but turns back and continues the way he was running. He holds the radio to his mouth.

SLIM  
BASE! BASE, this is Slim! Do you  
copy?

Static.

SLIM  
SHIT!

Only a few yards in front of Slim, the Demogorgon LEAPS onto the street, facing the direction he is running. It gazes to its side. Blood profusely gushes out of its monstrous face.

Slim darts into the nearby woods and perches himself behind a tree. He holds the radio close.

SLIM  
Base? Base, goddamnit, do you copy?

Static. Slim turns the radio over and pulls out his multi-tool. He unscrews the back, revealing wires and nodes.

ROAR!

The beast CRASHES against a nearby tree and SLASHES it to bits. It POUNDS the ground and stalks the area.

Slim pokes at the radio's innards and it lets out a BEEP!

The monster TURNS and surveys the area.

SLIM  
Shit.

(CONTINUED)

As Slim peeks out from behind the tree at the monster, he sees a small portal in a tree to the beast's side. It matches the same faint red glow as the Gate and its opening is slowly closing.

Slim looks down to the radio. He pushes the multi-tool into it and it BEEPS again, but only for as long as the multi-tool is applied.

The Demogorgon looks around again.

Slim looks down to the multi-tool in his hand. He SIGHS.

Slim DRIVES the multi-tool into the radio and crams it into a place where it stays. It lets out a continuous BEEEEEP!

Slim THROWS the radio deep into the woods. The Demogorgon places its origin and CHASES after it with a ROAR!

Slim DARTS to the portal. Its opening shrinks with every desperate step he takes.

Slim DIVES into the tree.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Slim ERUPTS out of the tree and CRASHES onto the dead grass and leaves cakes into the ground.

Behind him, the portal seals shut.

Slim pushes himself up to his feet. He SHIVERS where he stands, his right hand twitches as it drips with blood.

He LAUGHS.

The brush behind him BURSTS.

SOLDIERS swarm Slim, their weapons drawn centered on him.

SLIM  
Whoa! Whoa! Easy!

SOLDIER 1  
On the ground!

SLIM  
Wait!

SOLDIER 1  
On the ground!

Soldier 1 SLAMS Slim face-first into the dirt.

INT. QUARANTINE ROOM - NIGHT

Slim SHAKES where he sits.

The doors behind him BURST open. Blinding white light FLOODS the room, he winces.

Two CLEANERS enter the room wearing dark yellow hazmat suits. The GRAB Slim by the shoulders.

INT. SHOWERS - CONTINUOUS

The CLEANERS STRIP the clothes off of Slim's body, push him against a wall and fire a high-pressure hose at him.

They viciously scrub his body with brooms as he SCREAMS.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM - NIGHT

Slim is DROPPED into a chair behind a table. He wears only a towel around his waist and another over his shoulders.

The Cleaners leave the room. Slim twitches.

Wash PUSHES the door open and stands motionless in the frame.

WASH

Thank God.

SLIM

Qu-- Quite a welcome back.

Wash sits down in front of Slim.

WASH

Is it true? What the told me?

SLIM

That there was a THING in there with me and that it almost tore me to fucking shreds?!

WASH

God...

SLIM

Did you know?

Wash stares at him

(CONTINUED)

SLIM  
You said, that place was lifeless.  
Did you lie to me?

Beat.

WASH  
There was one specimen--

SLIM  
Son of a bitch--

WASH  
But we thought that was all. I  
never would have sent you in there  
had I known.

SLIM  
Forgive me for not believing that.

WASH  
Forgiveness is what I beg. Of you,  
of God. This never should have  
happened.

SLIM  
Was it worth it? Did anything come  
of the quarry?

Wash stands up and paces toward the door.

WASH  
No. No discernible effect out here.  
But we did possibly reach a  
different breakthrough.

Wash opens the door and reaches out to the side. He pulls in  
a cardboard box. He walks over and places it on the table.

He pulls out a plastic bag holding the watch Slim found in  
the Army Surplus in the Upside Down.

WASH  
We found this in your jacket. Were  
did you find this?

SLIM  
That was in some store on the other  
side. I crashed coming back, had to  
mind something to--

(CONTINUED)



WASH

And it was just like this? You didn't change anything?

SLIM

No.

Wash EXHALES. He hands it to Slim.

WASH

Read the date, the smaller number on the bottom.

SLIM

Five. Today's the--

WASH

The ninth.

SLIM

So it's wrong.

WASH

Or it's early.

Slim looks at Wash.

SLIM

I don't follow.

WASH

It's December ninth. In twenty seven days, it will be January fifth.

SLIM

Okay.

WASH

A moon cycle lasts that long. You said you crashed into a car on your way back? Was that car not in your path to the quarry?

SLIM

There was a massive storm on the way back, I couldn't make much out--

WASH

Did you pass a building under construction? How tall was it on your way back?

(CONTINUED)

Slim stares a Wash.

WASH

That's the Hawkins Trust Bank. It's due to be completed into just over a month.

SLIM

So you mean--

WASH

We have a window to the future. We can see the world for what it will be. What might be where.

SLIM

And if we know what...

WASH

We can know who.

SLIM

This could change centuries of strategy and tactics.

WASH

And we can use it to keep our country safe.

Slim sinks back into his seat.

WASH

Son. You may have just saved the world. You'll be a hero.

Slim, though twitching, smiles.

WASH

But we don't have time to celebrate. I'm sorry that I haven't been entirely honest with you. I want to make that right.

Wash slides the box closer to himself.

WASH

Your father's work was more important than he ever led on. He worked here in this very lab.

SLIM

What?

(CONTINUED)

WASH

He kept you and your mother out to keep you both safe. You see, his work made him enemies. Powerful, dangerous ones.

Slim's expression droops.

WASH

It was no accident, what happened to your father. He was killed, son. Murdered.

SLIM

He... What?!

WASH

We've been infiltrated. The country. Soviet agents bent on toppling our nation and paving red over the rubble. The caught wind of our good work here and had your father assassinated, along with some other of our brightest minds, God rest their souls.

Slim's face tightens, his jaw CLENCHES.

SLIM

Do you know where they are?

WASH

I'm afraid it isn't that simple.

Wash opens the box and pulls out three files. He slides them into a line in front of Slim.

WASH

You're familiar with the term "Sleeper Agent," yes?

Slim nods.

WASH

We believe these three were 'awakened' just a few months ago and carried out the act. Were they just Russian hit-men trespassing on our soil, we could just round them up in broad daylight. These three have played the long game. For all intents and purposes, they're American citizens. We'll need to get creative.

(CONTINUED)

Slim opens the first file. Clipped to the top of several papers is a photo of JIM HOPPER, wearing his full Police Chief uniform and hat.

SLIM

A cop?

WASH

A wolf making play at a herding dog. I find the next two particularly upsetting.

Slim opens the next, revealing a photo of JOYCE BYERS. He opens the next, a photo of ELEVEN (11). The mug shot squarely frames her shaved head in front of a white wall.

SLIM

This is a kid.

WASH

That's what they want you to see.

Slim pushes back from the table.

SLIM

This can't be right. This... has to be--

WASH

This is what our enemies will do to tear us down. This is how far they will go To wear the faces of angels to do the devil's work. There's nothing more despicable.

Slim buries his face in his hands.

WASH

I'm sorry, son. Maybe I shouldn't have told you, but you had a right to know. Accidents don't take men like your father; Destined for greater purpose. Those types of people are taken by those who would seek damnation for us all. We're all the lesser in his wake, these three lost souls included. I give you my word, I won't rest until they're brought before their maker and face the consequences they've sown.

Slim releases his face. He leans onto the table and stares directly at the photo of Eleven.

(CONTINUED)

WASH

Take all the time you need.

Wash stands up and heads to the door.

SLIM

My father.

Wash HALTS. He turns back to Slim, who looks up.

SLIM

He... knew of this other place?

Beat.

WASH

Your father's the one who found it.

Slim breaks his gaze and looks to his side.

WASH

That case in there was his. A gift  
to me after my accident. I think,  
in some way, that it was meant for  
you.

Wash leaves the room.

Slim pushes the files aside and pulls the cardboard box  
closer. From within it, he pulls out a case resembling a  
shoe box. He opens the lid.

Inside sits an old-fashioned revolver, it's barrel devoid of  
any bullets. Slim takes it in his hand.

At the bottom of the box, a piece of paper rest tri-folded.

Slim places the gun to the side and takes the paper out to  
unfold it. Transcribed on it is a hand-written message.

"So you'll still have two arms. I  
hope you will keep fighting with me  
for a better future. May we all  
might be made whole again some day.  
Your friend, Brenner."

Slim places the paper down. He looks to the revolver.

He looks to the photo of Eleven.

He looks back to the gun.

"Carry on My Wayward Son' begins to play.

//Carry on, my wayward son...\

(CONTINUED)

Slim takes the gun in his right hand.  
//There'll be peace when you are  
done...\

He looks back to the photo of Eleven.  
//Lay your weary head to rest...\

Slim stares blankly ahead of him.  
//Don't you cry no more...\

Slim COCKS the revolver's hammer.

CUT TO BLACK.