

PENUMBRA

"Episode 4"

Written by
Connor Wall

I wrote a miniseries screenplay about a world where shadows live as doppelgängers outside our realm, where a suicide survivor confronts his doppelgänger. I collaborated with classmates on some episodes in a writer's room format. Episode 4/5. See more at my website: <https://connortwall.github.io/writtenwork.html>

INT. CELL IN SHADOW REALM

JOHN moves towards the light, shielding his eyes.

JANE lies in the center of the floor, heavy chains binding her feet and hands. Her lips are parched.

JANE John?

John rushes over to help.

JANE (CONT'D) What's
going on?

John begins untangling her heavy chains.

JANE (CONT'D) Hey!
Where are we?

He continues untangling the tangled metal.

JOHN
I'm not sure you'll understand.

JANE
Tell me what's going on!

JOHN up at JANE for a moment

JOHN Not
now.

JANE
(disbelief, fear)
I was grabbed! Dragged! Shackled!
And by what.. what even were those?

FOOTSTEPS sound in the distance. John turns quickly keeping a look out.

JOHN
C'mon. We need to get moving.
They're coming. (shadows planning
to begin the "shadow revenge
torture")

JOHN reaches for JANE's hand.

JOHN (CONT'D) Please.

Trust me?

JANE is tense, yet welcomes the strength of JOHN's supportive hand up.

JANE

You promised you'd tell me everything
- on warm days and cold days.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - A ROSE-TINTED MEMORY

MUSIC a swinging, soft melody plays in the background.

JANE stands at a sunlit kitchen counter rolling out pizza dough laborisly.

JOHN reaches for JANE's waist tenderly.

JOHN

How's the baking going? I'm
starving.

They sway together along with the gentle music and sunlit breeze. JANE looks back at him and smiles.

JANE

(playfully)

Today I was not meant to be a baker.

Her arms are covered in flour and the dough is sticking to everything - JANE's hands, rolling pin, and counter (even the window).

JOHN

Honey, it needs more flour.

JOHN reaches around JANE to get flour and add it to help roll out the dough. JANE turns around, her joy shifting to concern.

JANE grabs JOHNS scarred wrists which now have fresh scabs running length wise to his elbows.

A beat.

JOHN looks at his arms.

JANE

What happened? You promised you'd
tell me if anything was wrong.

JOHN pulls away and reaches for the sink on their right to
rinse his hands.

JOHN

It's the same feeling again. I feel
like a stranger in my own body.

JOHN looks down regretfully at the running water and his
now wet hands. Water flows over then, his skin is
illuminated in golden sunlight. There is a flicker of
shadow in the room.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I.. I'm trying. Sometimes I just get
this feeling at night... I don't
know what comes over me...

A beat.

JOHN (CONT'D) I

don't belong here.

JANE turns and grabs JOHN's arms, looking into his eyes.
Frustrated.

JANE

I don't understand. What's going?

JOHN looks down.

A beat.

JANE (CONT'D) I wanna

understand. I need you to help me
understand.

JOHN

You don't deserve to have to deal
with all this.

JANE

I can't live... I can't continue like
this... What can I do to make you
happy? Is there something wrong
between us?

A beat.

JANE now grabs JOHN's face by the sides, looking into his
eyes.

JANE (CONT'D) Promise me

— even at night — that you'll tell

me everything. In summer; in
winter; on hot days; on cold days.

Both embrace and the ambient sunlight floods the room into white.

CUT TO:

INT. SHADOWREALM PRISON - PRESENT

JOHN ignores the pursuit of shadows and JOHN looks intensely with love into JANE's eyes.

JOHN I
promise.

A beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Give me time. We're being chased.

JANE
Ok ok! Let's go!

Avoiding being seen, John and Jane stealthily sprint down the hallway. Jane breathes heavily, half worn out by physical stress and half hyperventilating.

JANE trips darkness and falls face first with a wet and loud slap, on the cold stone floor.

JANE (CONT'D) Damn!

JANE on the ground dazed. JOHN running back to help.

JANE (CONT'D)
How can you see? Its so damn dark.

JOHN scoops JANE up and keeps running.

JANE (CONT'D) This
is humiliating.

JOHN
You saved me. It's my turn to return
the favor.

The prison is like an endless labyrinth. He runs for several moments winding down corridors. JOHN stops at an intersection and considers each direction ahead of them.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(to himself)

I've forgotten too much about this place.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHADOWREALM (SHADOWREALM / HUMANREALM BORDER) - 5
YEARS AGO

JOHN (with shadowy features) enters the shadow plaza and joins other SHADOW REBELS. All are armed and ready for the crossing into the human world. The vortex itself seems to speak. A monumental vortex barrier swirls slowly in the center of the plaza.

SHADOW HIVE MIND Do not
forget your origins nor your goal
lest the shadow will only grow in
as you remain in the world of
light.

JOHN runs into the vortex with the others. Once at the barrier he struggles against the vortex as if walking underwater.

JOHN makes the final push and emerges into the human world. The smoke fades and sunlight shines on his face. He looks up and closes his eyes, letting the warmth wash over him.

INT. SHADOWREALM PRISON - PRESENT

JOHN slows and puts JANE down to catch his breath and gain his bearings. JOHN and JANE sit behind a the door of a small side room. JOHN looks to JANE,

JANE

So this whole time, you really felt
like you didn't belong... to the
world of the light? My world?
Because you came here from
somewhere else?

JOHN

Yes. JANE

So even my shadow.. is really a
person.. like you?

(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D) Yes, and my whole life, I was following someone. Doing everything that he did, what he wanted to do, didn't want to do. I had no choice. Or I thought I didn't.

JANE (CONT'D) What changed?

JOHN
I discovered how to love, how to feel warmth and cold. I've discovered desire free will. But also fear. I'm afraid. I'm so afraid.

JOHN looks to JANE

JOHN (CONT'D) I'm afraid of loss. I'm afraid of loosing you.

JANE
You're putting a lot of pressure on yourself.

A beat.

You saved our lives back there.

JOHN and JANE hug and several moments. They get up and continue down their path.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHADOWREALM COURTYARD

John and Jane escape the prison interior. They enter a central plaza with shadow buildings and industrial shrubs.

The ground shakes and fragments. Stormy clouds glitter and rumble. ANTI JOHN emerges from the crack in the **ground and can sense JOHN despite his stealth.**

ANTI JOHN We
meet again.

JANE looks confusedly between JOHNs.

ANTI JOHN (CONT'D) JANE,
I thought you'd have better
manners. We've been so hospitable.

SHADOWS emerge from the buildings surrounding the
courtyard, following the disturbance.

JOHN
Shit!! HE found us!

JANE What-?

ANTI JOHN
The real question is who.

ANTI John points to John.

ANTI JOHN (CONT'D)
It appears "JOHN" has a lot to
explain.

The SHADOWS encroach.

JOHN
Fine. Do anything, just let JANE be
free.

Jane steps away from JOHN abruptly.

JANE
Hold on. You are JOHN... and YOU
are JOHN?

ANTI JOHN
Aww she's funny, isn't she? I just
might take her with me. I'm sure
you'll miss her a lot, JOHN.

JANE
JOHN talk to me!

ANTI JOHN laughs.

ANTI JOHN
Your'e gonna pay JOHN! I'm gonna end
you!

An omniscient voice booms and echoes around them SHADOW HIVE
MIND It seems both of you abandoned your true mission. Betray
our species at the whim of individual gain?

A beat.

SHADOW HIVE MIND (CONT'D)

Centuries of subordination, eons of
darkness, forgiven? You are weak
and selfish. We obviously
miscalculated your aptitude. You
will both be erased in the great
balancing.

The individual shadows int he courtyard surround JOHN and
JANE. They encrouch like a series of waves crashing on
themselves and submerge JOHN, JANE, and ANTI JOHN,
drowning out all light on the ground.