

PENUMBRA 1

By

Connor Wall & Varen Talwar

EXT. EMPTY STREET - NIGHT

JOHN (19) is walking down the sidewalk. It's dark and late in the evening, and there's an eeriness in the air. As he walks, the street lights cast shadows all around him, like a lotus spread out around his feet.

John turns a corner into an alleyway. Now he has a shadow on the wall right next to him as he walks. Since the street lamps are spread out, the shadow seems to stretch out and gradually disappear until John reaches the next street lamp, where it is reborn.

Halfway through the alley, there is a distant, loud banging sound. John turns around to check his surroundings. Seeing nothing, he continues walking.

There is another banging sound, this time seeming to come from somewhere closer. John looks around him, scared.

He exits the alley and is back on the main road sidewalk. The street is empty and the street lamps are spread out at regular intervals. John keeps walking briskly as the sound seems to get closer. As the sound gets louder and louder, we start seeing his shadows wiggle unnaturally on the ground, like they are waves. It goes on for a while and it seems like they will break out of the ground anytime.

Which is exactly what happens all of a sudden. It takes only a second. The shadows rise into the air and form a cocoon around John and suck him into the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY (8 YEARS LATER)

An adult John (27) is sitting in front of a THERAPIST. He is clothed in a shirt, pants, and a blazer.

THERAPIST

That's the last thing you remember happening?

JOHN

Yeah. It felt like they just rose out of the ground and wrapped themselves around me. The next thing I remember was waking up in the hospital bed.

THERAPIST

What did the doctors say?

JOHN

They didn't know. I never had anything like that before that day, and nothing like that after it. Until the dreams, of course.

THERAPIST

And when did those start?

JOHN

I think two weeks ago

THERAPIST

Tell me more about them. Are they exactly what you think happened to you that day?

JOHN

Yeah, more or less. They just seem... I don't know... more malicious this time.

THERAPIST

More malicious?

JOHN

Like I'm not going to survive this time.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE BEGINS

A series of images of John walking through the crowded city, lost in the crowd, a sling bag hung around his shoulder. He looks troubled.

He goes to the train station and catches a train.

INT. TRAIN - EVENING (DREAM)

John (adult) is sitting on a seat in a moving train. His head rests on the window as he sleeps. He has a prominent reflection in the window. The sun outside is setting. As the train moves, shadows of the passengers form on the ground and on the walls of the train.

Suddenly, his shadows start to lift off the ground and tiny, shadowed, bony hands extend out of the ground and take hold of his body - grabbing his feet, torso. They go all the way up to his face, waking him up by that point.

As he looks in horror at what is happening, unable to process it, it's too late. The tiny fingers enter his mouth, eyes, nostrils, and ears and engulf him completely.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - EVENING

John wakes up with a jerk. He is on a train going back home after his therapy session. He seems tired and his suit is a bit unkempt now. He has a sling-bag hung around his shoulder and resting on his lap as he sits on the seat.

He looks around him. People are sitting, minding their own business. Most of them have earphones on. He examines all the shadows, and they seem normal. He sighs and rests his head back on the window. He is tired and troubled.

An OLD WOMAN (70, wrinkled) sitting beside him notices him.

OLD WOMAN

Bad day, huh?

John is a bit shaken off by her voice. He sits straight up and collects himself.

JOHN

You could say that, yeah.

A beat.

OLD WOMAN

It's a difficult time in a man's life - his late twenties.

JOHN

I guess.

OLD WOMAN

Have a wife at home?

JOHN

Yes. Her name's Kelly.

OLD WOMAN

That's a nice name. Are you going home to her right now?

JOHN

Yes.

OLD WOMAN

Does she make you feel better when you get back home after a day like today?

JOHN

Yes, she does.

OLD WOMAN

That's fortunate. You're a very lucky man.

JOHN

I am.

A beat.

OLD WOMAN

You know, I don't think it was a dream.

John is startled. He turns towards the woman. She has a faint wicked smile now that wasn't there before.

JOHN

What do you mean?

OLD WOMAN

(calmly)

You know what I mean, John. You know what's happening, don't you? It's finally catching up to you.

JOHN

Who are you?

OLD WOMAN

I'm your old friend. I've waited for this moment a long time, John.

JOHN

I don't know what you're talking about.

OLD WOMAN

Oh, you will soon.

JOHN

What do you mean?

The old woman slowly gets up, an eerie smile on her face. Once she is up, she drops dead all of a sudden. John is terrified and he gets up, looking at her dead body. He then looks around him.

All the passengers on the train are staring at him, a peculiar evil in their eyes. It is dark and shadowy in the train.

The train comes to a stop at John's station. He quickly walks to the doors to leave, terrified. As he is leaving, a LARGE MAN standing by the door speaks to him.

LARGE MAN

(maliciously)

Going home to your wife, huh?

John is mortified, and runs out of the train to his house, desperately trying to make it to his house in time to save his wife.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - LATER

John enters his house and frantically calls out to his wife.

JOHN

Jane? Jane? I'm home, honey! Where are you?

JANE (28) comes out of a room in a hurry after hearing John's panic.

JANE

What happened, John?

John, relieved, rushes towards her and hugs her tightly.

JOHN

Oh thank God!

JANE

What's going on?

John looks around the apartment. Everything seems normal. He goes out to the balcony and looks down.

JANE (CONT'D)

John? Tell me what's going on!

JOHN

It's nothing.

As John turns back, he notices something peculiar with Jane's shadow. It seems to wiggle. He leaps forward when he realises what is happening, but is too late. Jane is engulfed by her shadow and vanishes.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Noooo!

John stares at the empty spot his wife was standing on just seconds ago. A beat. He gets extremely agitated and ends up breaking some stuff in the house before he falls on the ground, crying uncontrollably.

As he sits on the floor weeping, he notices something odd with his own shadow.

It seems to be acting independently instead of following him.

He follows it as it moves away from him.

He stops to check again if the shadow is actually moving on its own. It is. It moves into the living room of the apartment and stops at the door. It moves from the ground and stands upright on the door. John walks towards the door slowly, but stops at a distance. The shadow and John seem to be facing each other now.

A voice starts speaking. It is presumably coming from the shadow. The voice is soft, eerie and hissing.

SHADOW

Dreaming well these days, huh,
John?

John stares at the shadow, unable to speak.

SHADOW (CONT'D) You
knew this day would come some
day, didn't you, John?

JOHN
Where is Jane?

SHADOW
She's with us. You remember us,
don't you?

John doesn't speak.

SHADOW (CONT'D) We've
all waited for this day for so
long.

(A beat.)
Does she know?

Silence from John. The shadow sniggers.

SHADOW (CONT'D) Of
course she doesn't. That makes
this so much more fun. I get to
tell her myself how much she
means to me. How she changed my
life.

JOHN
You leave her out of this!

SHADOW
She's at the centre of this all,
John. There's nothing you can do
about it.

A beat.

SHADOW (CONT'D) Tell
me one thing, John. Do you
know my name?

JOHN
No, I don't. You aren't supposed to
have a name.

There is silence, almost as if the shadow is offended. In a while, the door slowly starts to creak open, but there is nobody in the hallway. John is puzzled.

Behind him, a figure slowly and silently approaches him. It picks up a vase lying on a table nearby and before John realises he's there the figure hits him with the vase on the head, knocking him out.

As John falls down on the floor, unconscious, we see his assailant. It is John himself - a scarred and tattered version of him. He takes another swing at John.

SMASH TO BLACK.

PENUMBRA 2

By

Connor Wall

Absolute darkness.

ANTI-JOHN
Do you remember me?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE VOID

John opens his eyes.

He's stuck somehow in the expanse of a void- no light, no ceiling, no floor- just the dark in every direction. Small, purple lights can be seen glowing in the distance around them- and in the distance, what looks to be a black hole hangs, slowly swirling black smoke. But as John takes this all in, the darkness around him seems to be pulling away his essence in every direction, and John starts in confusion, which slowly turns to panic.

Ahead of John, a figure materializes in the darkness: AntiJohn, wearing all black, reminiscent of a dark angel.

The darkness continues to slowly dissipate John as the scene continues.

JOHN
What...?

ANTI-JOHN
Well, well, well. Look who finally decided to wake up.

JOHN
Who are you? Where am I?

Anti-John snarls at him.

ANTI-JOHN
Who am I? WHO AM I? You know who I am. You spend every waking moment in my flesh, in my house, in my life-

He pauses to control himself. John stares at him in terror and confusion.

ANTI-JOHN (CONT'D) God damn you. I mean you help kidnap me, you take my place, you take my name, you leave me behind to get punished for your crimes...

JOHN
No, wait, that's not possible.

ANTI-JOHN
... And now you're just pretending you don't know who I am?

Anti-John shakes his head. His expression suddenly hardens. The darkness begins eating at John at a faster pace. John yelps, but Anti-John snaps his fingers and a strand of darkness emerges and binds John's mouth, muffling him.

ANTI-JOHN (CONT'D)
Shhh. I want you to listen verrry closely. I'm sure you've figured out by now- we have your wife.

John's eyes widen in surprise and anger as he begins shaking, trying to thrash against the darkness.

ANTI-JOHN (CONT'D) But look, here's the thing. She's not gone gone yet. So if you were to make it to Citadel now, you might just get there in time to see her before it's too late.

Anti-John grins at this and twirls his necklace in his hand.

ANTI-JOHN (CONT'D) So here's the thing, JOHN. I'll let you head off to the Citadel for your big rescue - but you might wanna hurry.

Anti-John looks at John, who, still gagged, is now missing both legs from the knee down. Anti-John waves his hand and

the gag disappears from John's mouth. John gasps for air as he grabs his bearings.

SHADOW JOHN

Well, I wouldn't dawdle if I were
you.

Anti-John vanishes into the darkness, like a piece of black fabric folding in on itself. John, newly freed, begins flying towards the black hole as fast as he can.

John speeds through the expanse as the darkness eats away at his arms, his upper legs, and his ears before he finally reaches the black hole and flies in.

INT. BLACK HOLE

The hole is chaos- dark energy swirling quickly, as if waves of wind in a black tornado, pulling at John as he travels through in all directions, threatening to pull him under as it throbs and flashes. A surge nearly hits John in the head, and he dodges just in time, but this throws him off course as he gets sucked into the side of the vortex instead, and we watch from his point of view as the vortex pulls him under, John reaching for the light above as if drowning.

EXT. OCEAN

FLASHBACK: A hand peeks through the waves and grabs John's hand, yanking him up through the depths. As John is pulled onto a life raft, we can now see we're in the middle of the ocean. Sound is muffled, but there seems to be a panic among the people in a nearby yacht as they look over the deck at John being rescued. An unconscious John is carried by a Coast Guard to safety. In the distance, Jane stands on the deck of the yacht.

INT. MEDICAL BAY - LATER

John, disoriented, sits on a hospital bed, draped in a towel, clearly frustrated about something as he buries his head in his hands. Jane approaches the divider separating the beds.

JANE

Hi, how are you doing?

John pauses before speaking for the first time- it's as if he has to remember how to.

JOHN

Fine.

Jane enters the room fully.

JANE

I'm Jane. I'm really worried about you.

(A beat.)

I'm the only one who saw everything. I know you didn't fall by accident.

A beat.

JOHN

I don't know what you're talking about.

JANE

I saw you. I was there. I know. I have to tell the doctors.

John nods hesitantly. Jane gets up to leave, but stops halfway and turns back around.

JANE (CONT'D)

I'm not sure if I should be asking you this, but why did you do it?

Silence from John. Jane waits a while, but realises she's not going to get a response, and turns back.

JANE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have asked.

She starts to leave.

JOHN

I don't know why I did it. It just felt like the easiest way to get back.

JANE

Get back to where?

JOHN

Somewhere that isn't so... bright. Sometimes I wish I could just become my shadow and let it take my place. I'd rather feel nothing than whatever I've been feeling for as long as I can remember.

Jane is taken aback. She comes closer to John.

JANE

What happened to you to make you feel this way?

John thinks painfully before he speaks.

JOHN

I made a decision a long time ago,
when I was a stupid young idiot, to
leave my home and come here. I
thought I could be someone here and
I could find something that I
couldn't at home: happiness.
Obviously that was all fucking
bullshit. I'd rather be a nobody
among nobodies than a nobody among
somebodies.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

(A beat.)

I was not made for this. I wasn't
ready. And now I can't go back.

JANE

Why can't you go back?

A beat.

JOHN

I can't go back.

JANE

It's gonna be alright.

JOHN

(still crying)

No it's not. No it's not.

JANE

It's gonna be alright.

Jane keeps repeating that, and the sound fades away.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BRIDGE OVER RIVER - DAY

Jane and John are standing on a bridge over a river. The two look at each other and Jane nods at John. He picks up a bag filled with his possessions and after taking one last look at it, he chucks it into the river. The two smile and walk away.

EXT. THE VOID

John emerges from the vortex head first; every thought and movement is an effort. He looks in the direction he's headed in and sees a light in the distance.

John surges ahead through the vortex as shockwaves emanate from the direction of his destination, passing through his body, threatening to decompose his form with every pulse.

John is clearly trying to hold his body together - mentally. His body seems to transiently disintegrate and detach at the joints, as his limbs seem to hover about them.

He roars to keep his focus as he inches closer.

JOHN

Jane! JANE!

Something warm shines on him from the source. From John's point of view, all we can see is a bright orange light.

LIGHT

John?

FADE OUT.

PENUMBRA 3

By

Connor Wall

INT. SPACE IN-BETWEEN

JOHN falling into a void for what feels like too long, reaching towards the light above. Drowning in shadow.

There seems to be another spirit in the void with John, something that looks similar to him. The two are completely merged but are excruciatingly trying to separate, which they are eventually and gradually able to do.

They split in different directions and we zoom out to see that they are heading to different worlds. One heads to the real world: back to the lamp-lit street at night. The other falls into a dark abyss and dissolves in the darkness.

EXT. DARK CITY SKY

A large night sky. The depth of the sky is intangible, like a looming fog – just above head height yet also visibly distant and endless. The horizon is an outline with towering structures that resemble black rectangular clouds. Dust-like glitter floats in the air and reveal slivers of moonlight in the surrounding infinite void. The air shimmers.

A group of shadows stands around JOHN. JOHN is dazed from the journey. As his eyes adjust to his surroundings, his make out jittery movements to his right. And more in front of him. He begins to make out a crowd of dark figures moving in the speed of claymation and at slower frame rates.

JOHN
(looking up)
Where am I?

SHADOW 1:
(silent)

JOHN
What's going on?

SHADOW 1:
You will be punished.

JOHN

(confused)

Wait!

SHADOW 1 and other shadows glide-slither towards JOHN, standing in the middle of a central plaza. From all directions, they tackle JOHN. He is pinned to the ground by a mass of slithering appendages.

JOHN's left ankle is cuffed in the confusion.

The Shadows dissipate slightly. JOHN attempts to escape. JOHN trips and falls face first on the stone ground. JOHN notices the cuff around his ankle. He desperately claws at the ground as he's dragged by the chain around his ankle into the shadows.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. BUILDING

JOHN wakes to a voice, surrounded by darkness.

SHADOW 1

You are a failure.

JOHN

(sobbing)

I'm sorry. I don't understand.

INT. BUILDING

Many shots of JOHN inside the prison cell doing many activities like washing his face, picking his toes, laying down, counting, crying, jumping to reach the ceiling, banging head on wall.

INT. BUILDING

It is visibly darker outside of JOHN's cell. There seems to be more sound outside – a heavier bass/silence. A creaking wood-stretched-tight-latex sound outside signals the arrival of something. The sound grows into a deafening bass resembling a tsunami of sand.

Suddenly, a face emerges from the shadows face to face with JOHN. A direct yet subtle light reveals a dark face. The face is eerily still, motionless, with eyes devoid of expression, like a mask, like Koh the Face Stealer.

JOHN looks back frightened, with a weakness in his eyes.

JOHN

Where am I?

SHADOW 1

You will be punished for your crimes against our society.

JOHN

Who are you?

SHADOW 1

We are you. A shadow. A reflection.
You are among the most deserving of
punishment.

JOHN

I don't understand.

SHADOW 1

You tried to disrupt the balance of
nature. You monopolize the light
with unnatural forces. You force us
to live as shadows.

JOHN

How?

SHADOW 1

You have interrupted your ability
to dream. You stimulate your
senses with electric light after
the sun has set. We can no longer
roam freely. You have trapped us
to your physical. You have stolen
our freedom. You have disintegrated
our ability to dream.

JOHN

But there are billions of humans.

SHADOW 1

And there are billions of us.

JOHN

What can I possibly hope to change?

SHADOW 1

(disgustedly)

Your time is over, light dweller.

SHADOW 1 fades from view and into the void behind the bars.

JOHN reaches for the bars in attempt to catch another
glance at the figure. He is unsuccessful and attempts
shouting before stepping back into the void.

JOHN lays on the cell floor and attempts to sleep.

JOHN blinks. He only knows he's still awake by the his slightly comforting blinks. Blinks that shield him for the eternal void on the ceiling.

He rolls over and stares at the ground wall where is meets the floor.

He blinks several times (as seen by subtle difference in shade of black). He can barely tell if his eyes are closed or open. He blinks again. There is now a noticeable warm ember yellow haze.

Hours have passed. JOHN sits, knees to chest in the empty cell, dimly lit by ambient light. The subtle warm glow permeating the air and sound of tight latex hints at some sort of daybreak.

As time passes, JOHN begins shadow-morphosis. Many shots of JOHN inside the area doing many activities within the same space as before, only these actions are more routine and JOHN has less facial expression variation.

JOHN is visibly more tense and moves rigidly, much like the other shadows. JOHN also has a smooth element to his movement, as if his tense movements are results of bottled up anger and tension rather than stiff joints and an imprisoned body.

JOHN's perspective. Looking through the bars, he can see the day cycle. It is silent at first with the shadows moving about. Then, suddenly, as the sun rises in the real world, there is a shockwave throughout the shadow realm and tethered shadows are stuck to their counterparts, screaming.

Some of the seniors are not tethered. JOHN notices the bass, coarse whoosh of one of them in the distance.

JOHN
(shouting)
Hey!

The shadow stops and as does any sound of movement.

In a blink of an eye, the shadow stands in front of JOHN on the other side of the cell bars. This time both a face and complete silhouette are visible. The face is familiarly eerily still but has expressive eyes that look back at JOHN with interest. The shadow is no longer a reflection but a muted, non-descript face with a porcelain expression.

SHADOW 1
(inquisitively)
You see me.

JOHN
My eyes have adapted. Let me out. I will help with whatever is needed. Please anything but this cell.

SHADOW 1
You are a light dweller. You know nothing.

JOHN
I can understand the balance. I see how you move. You are tethered to the light dwellers.

Silence from the shadow. It leaves.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(shouting)
Where are you going?

A beat. The shadow seems to be considering John's words.

SHADOW 1
Quiet, light dweller!

The shadow thunders and leaves. John's shouts after it, but it doesn't turn back.

LATER

More time passes – weeks perhaps. JOHN completes similar tasks and moves rigidly like the shadowy figures but with a level of consistent control and fluidity rather than with jerky, uncontrolled motions.

JOHN hears conversation echoing along the hallway. Two shadows speak in a raised tone, approaching an argument.

SHADOW 2

We are tethered. How can we hope to travel across without permanently disrupting balance?

SHADOW 1

We have a source of light.

JOHN

(to the empty air)

You must recognize the light. I see you. I hear you move. You are trapped by your understanding of darkness. You are tethered to the world of light.

SHADOW 1 and SHADOW 2 visibly shuffle-slither to the cell.

SHADOW 2 has non-descript features like shadow two.

JOHN stands, looking at a clearer image of the noir figures watching him. SHADOW 2 with a look of surprise at JOHN's gaze following them.

JOHN (CONT'D) Just as the world of light makes shadows. This world can create light.

The shadows look at him silently.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Let me help you guys. Admit it, you need me.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

John is being dragged by the shadows to a chamber.

CHAMBER

There is a dark cloud floating in the middle of the chamber. It twitches and distorts constantly.

SHADOW HIVE-MIND

What do you have to say?

JOHN

I can help you gain control of the light world.

A beat.

SHADOW HIVE-MIND

Go on.

JOHN

I see how you move. You struggle at daybreak. When they wake, they control you.

SHADOW HIVE-MIND What does he know of our tether? How could he possibly understand the our world of shadow?

SHADOW 1

He has been in the world of light.

JOHN sees the cool light of a full moon shine into his cell.

He sees the eclipse. He has an understanding of both day and night; an understanding of the liquidity of shadows and rigidity of light.

JOHN

The traitor who took my place in the world of light is still connected to me. I can feel him sometimes. I can feel how he feels and see what he sees sometimes. I can get you to him.

SHADOW 2

How do we trust you?

JOHN

I want to find him as much as you
do. I want my revenge.

Silence from the Shadow Hive Mind. John looks nervous.
Slowly, murmuring sounds from the hive mind emanate, and.
They grow in intensity, unless a shadow suddenly approaches
John from behind.

SHADOW

Come with me.

INT. HALLWAY IN SHADOW WORLD

The shadows and John walk through a long hallway. Tethered
shadows suffer all around them, and they pass through huge
double doors and corridors. They finally reach the final
door and stop before entering it.

SHADOW HIVE-MIND

Are you ready?

Before John has a chance to process, they open the doors.

Yellow-orange ambient light suggesting sunset. The screams
seem to die down in this room. It is very peaceful, unlike
any other place in the shadow world.

There is a pond in the distance with absolutely still,
clear water.

John walks to the pond and cautiously enters the water,
disturbing its peace. A tempestuous whirlwind starts to
form and massive waves rise upwards. They splash around
John, and eventually engulf him fully.

PENUMBRA 4

Written by
Connor Wall

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 in the courtyard surround JOHN and
JANE. They encroach like a series of waves crashing on
themselves and submerge JOHN, JANE, and ANTI JOHN,
drowning out all light on the ground.

PENUMBRA 5

Written By
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INT. PRISON CELL (SHADOW-REALM)

JOHN wakes up, gasping loudly. He's lying on the dirty cold and grimy floor of a dark cell. Like the first one.

JOHN
Fuck! Again?

He gets up on his feet and looks around. He rubs his aching head and squints to try to see better. He calls out for help.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Jane? Hello? Anybody there?

There is no response, but after a few seconds, another voice speaks. The voice comes from a cell opposite to JOHN's cell. It's ANTI JOHN. He is hidden in his cell's darkness, so only a faint silhouette is visible. Even though JOHN can't see him, he can tell that the voice is that of a man who has lost all hope.

ANTI JOHN
I don't think she's woken up yet.

JOHN walks to his prison bars and leans against them, trying to get a look at ANTI John, but still only managing to see a faint shadow.

JOHN seems to burst with questions, but then gives up halfway. He knows the answers already. He sighs and sits down against the prison wall.

JOHN
They fucked us up good, didn't they?

ANTI John doesn't reply. His shadowy figure in his cell remains still.

JOHN (CONT'D)
It's alright. I don't expect you to talk to me.

JOHN walks around his cell for a while, occasionally looking back at ANTI John for a response. After some time, ANTI John finally speaks.

ANTI JOHN
You know I don't know how old I am.

A beat.

JOHN

You're 30.

ANTI JOHN

By Earth time, yes. But time here is different. It's weird. I'm not even sure it exists.

JOHN

Yeah it must feel different to a human.

There is no reply - just an eerie, somewhat angry silence from ANTI John. He sits still for some time, but then his shadowy figure in the cell moves. He gets up and walks to the prison bars.

He slowly comes into the light. He looks hideous. His body is not even whole. His limbs seem to be floating about the joints, and so is his head. He has deep and long scars all over.

ANTI JOHN

What about this looks human to you?

JOHN sees him and is shocked. He gets up and stands against the prison bars to get a better look. He struggles to find words.

JOHN

Your physical human body is probably dissolving from the drain of the Shadow Realm...

ANTI John cuts him off with thunderous anger.

ANTI JOHN

I don't give a fuck! It's all over now. I was holding on to get my revenge, and now I can't even have that. My body may dissolve to the fucking force. God knows my soul already did so long ago.

JOHN looks despondent. He steps back and turns around, looking the other way, and stands like that for some time before he turns back around.

JOHN

I'm sorry.

ANTI JOHN

It doesn't matter now.

JOHN

Still, I'm sorry.

A beat.

ANTI JOHN

What all did I miss all this time?

JOHN

Hm.. LaLa land was pretty good. We had a pandemic because some guy in China fucked a bat. Or ate. I don't remember. Had to stay inside and wear masks for a year because of that. Donald Trump was our president for four years. That was pretty fucked up. And Will Smith almost knocked Chris Rock out at he Oscars. Oh and Robert Pattinson now plays Batman.

ANTI JOHN

The-Pursuit-of-Happyness-I-amLegend guy almost knocked out the zebra from Madagascar? ..and Edward the vampire is now the Dark Knight?

JOHN

Yup.

ANTI JOHN

Wow.

JOHN

(laughs)

Certainly makes up for all that other shit.

Both of them laugh. ANTI JOHN bends over at the core, like a grandpa who using his diaphragm to laugh for the first time. (half laughing, half struggling)

Meanwhile, in cell, JANE is sitting awake. She's been sitting in on conversation for some time.

JOHN (CONT'D)

JANE?

JOHN rushes to the prison bars and looks around for JANE. He tries to get a look at her but is unable to.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm here. I'm here for you.

JANE

I'm tired. Of both of you. What's happening? Where are we?

JOHN

I don't know. Some prison in the Shadow Realm.

JANE looks up and notices ANTI JOHN looking at her. She recoils at his sight.

ANTI JOHN

Hi again.

JANE

To JOHN

What is he?

JOHN looks at ANTI JOHN, implicitly seeking approval to speak. ANTI John tells Jane himself.

ANTI JOHN

The shadows betrayed me. I'm stuck here too. Nothing more to do. Looks like we both failed at being shadows.

JANE

I'm not going to die here.

ANTI JOHN

Theres nothing we can do.

JANE

John!

JOHN doesn't know what to say.

JOHN I

don't know, Jane.

JANE is unable to accept this.

JANE

No. No... there has to be a way. This can't be it.

ANTI JOHN

Lady this is it, like it or not. My body is dissolving. It's only a

matter of time before yours starts to too. I'm pretty sure this place will fuck your shadow hubby up too. At least he can't go around bodysnatching and stealing other peoples' lives.

A beat.

I've hung on for a long time. Don't make my mistake. It's hopeless.

JANE looks to JOHN and collapse sitting down in despair. She holds her head, unable to process the information and that this is the end. She starts to tear up.

JOHN hears her cry and tries to console her.

JOHN

It's true, I never told you everything.

A beat.

We'll think of something, Jane. This is not the end.

A beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Long ago I replaced JOHN.

A beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

...And my crossing was really part of this invasion you see around you.

A beat. No response from Jane. JOHN waits for her to speak. When she finally does, she speaks crisply in a monotone.

JANE turns away in disappointment.

JANE (JANE

looks around)

All this...it's too much.. I wish you'd told me.

JOHN is heartbroken yet continues. He begins tearing up yet stops. He stares into the wall.

A beat.

JOHN

I made a promise to you. I'm sorry
 I couldn't keep it while we were
 together above. You know
 everything now. I understand what
 it means to be human; to grow from
 imperfection; to live in the light
 despite having darkness at the
 seams.

A beat.

In the background, ANTI John retreats back into his shadowy
 cell, similar to how he was earlier.

FADE OUT.

INT. PRISON CELL (SHADOW-REALM) - LATER

The cells are silent. JOHN is sleeping. ANTI John is still
 in his shadowy corner in his cell, absolutely still.

Jane is sitting with her back against the wall, awake.

She calls out to ANTI John.

JANE

Psst... Psst... John number 2? OG
 John?

A beat.

ANTI JOHN

Yes.

JANE

What do I call you?

A beat.

ANTI JOHN

Shaun.

JANE

Ok, Shaun. If you don't mind me
 asking, how old were you when these
 shadows kidnapped you?

ANTI JOHN

Jane is shocked.

JANE

Wow. 19. I remember being 19.

ANTI JOHN

I was actually 18. I was supposed to turn 19 the next month.

JANE

That sucks.

ANTI JOHN

Well at least I don't have to be human much longer. Living alone is overrated.

A beat.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. PRISON CELL (SHADOW-REALM) - LATER

The prison cells are still silent. The halls are empty since the shadow hive minds display of power. Sounds above them suggest the shadow population is now all above ground.

JANE is still awake.

JOHN is standing in front of a prison wall, staring into it. However, there seems to be a purpose behind this. He seems to be examining something. He moves forward and touches the wall. It is solid. He closes his eyes and concentrates. The intensity of his face increases steadily, and is intercut by flashes of his perspective when he had taken ANTI John's place in the real world. The frequency of the intercutting increases steadily, until JOHN finds himself in a different place altogether.

EXT. VORTEX

JOHN is in the vortex he had earlier been in when ANTI John was torturing him on Earth. It is completely silent and dark except for a silvery glow of the outline of the vortex, a giant orb-like dome.

This lasts only for a few moments and JOHN finds himself back in his cell.

PRISON CELL (SHADOW-REALM)

JOHN pants heavily, and a sense of victory and happiness slowly overcomes him. He celebrates silently for a bit. He looks over to ANTI John's cell to find him standing at his prison bars, looking at JOHN.

JOHN

It worked.

ANTI John looks even more dilapidated now than he was earlier.

ANTI JOHN

You know you won't make it out.

JOH

N

I know. It doesn't matter anymore.
All that matters is her. And you. I
want to do right by you this time.

ANTI JOHN

(smiles)

I am done, buddy. I was done a long
time ago. This is how it ends for
the two of us. This is how it was
always going to end.

JOHN acknowledges this truth he had been denying himself
with a sad nod.

ANTI JOHN (CONT'D)

She still has time. Save her.

JOHN nods and walks over to the prison bars and calls out
to Jane.

JOHN

Jane?

He hears shuffling on the other side as Jane wakes up but
doesn't speak to him.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I don't expect you to talk to me. I
just want you to know that I'm
sorry. I was selfish and I put you
in danger. You deserved someone so
much better than me.

A beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

But for all my lies, I have always
loved you, and nothing will ever
change that. I want you to remember
that. You saved me. You are what
made me human.

A beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I've ruined both of your lives. I
stole JOHN's life and lied about
myself to you.

A beat.

JOH

N

(CONT'D) I tried
my best and ruined all three of
our lives. I can't end it here.

A beat.

JANE sits up as he speaks, but doesn't say anything back.

JOHN stays there for a few moments and then looks towards ANTI John, who is still at his prison bars.

JOHN gets up and walks back to the prison wall. He puts his hand on it like last time and concentrates. After a moment he suddenly vaporizes.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL COURTYARD

JOHN floats in a void for several moments before the silver outline of the massive vortex glistens above him. He floats upwards towards it, wind rushing around him. He comes face to face with his reflection on the vortex.

He reaches out and passes his hand into the chaos before submerging himself into the vortex.

SHADOW HIVE MIND

How are you here, traitor?

JOHN

I'm ending this madness.

SHADOW HIVE MIND

You cannot stop us.

JOHN

Oh but I can. I've learned how to
be warm and cold - how to exist
alone with my light and dark side.
Us JOHNS have learned what it is
to exist as an individual. Now
what if you learned the same.

JOHN dissolves into a shadow form, sucked into the vortex and becomes one with the shadow hive mind.

SHADOW HIVE MIND

What are you doing? Don't be
foolish?

JOH

N

I'll do whatever it takes.

Screams echo within the vortex. There is a constant buzz. Countless shadows hover and swish around, distorted like ghosts sucked by a central vacuum.

EXT. CENTRAL COURTYARD

It is silent. An marbled shadow-light infection permeates the vortex. Suddenly the vortex implodes with shadows clawing their way out of the vortex.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CELL (SHADOW-REALM) - CONTINUOUS

The ground shudders and shakes. ANTI John feels the tremors and gets up, his joints clicking loudly as they move. He looks out of the prison bars and sees a light rushing down from the top.

JANE looks out of her cell at the light down the hall.

JANE

What's happening?

ANTI JOHN

He did it.

JANE

So we can get out of this shit hole now?

ANTI JOHN

You can.

JANE

What does that mean? What about you?

ANTI John smiles.

ANTI JOHN

My life ended a long time ago. I have been a soulless heap of nothingness for as long as I can remember.

A beat.

JOH

N

Besides no point holding a grudge
against dead man.

(MORE)

ANTI JOHN (CONT'D)

What used is revenge when he's
already lost? This is it for me.

The light floods their corridor. It is blinding.

JANE

But...

ANTI JOHN

I'm fading too. I'm a part of this
world.

Jane starts to get gradually absorbed by the light.

ANTI JOHN retreats back into his cell and lies down.

ANTI JOHN'S POV

The white light is blinding. He smiles as he sees it
coming.

EXT. VORTEX

JOHN is getting torn apart along with the shadow hive mind.
We can see them scream but not hear them.

JANE'S POV

The light shines brightly on her. Her body slowly starts
dissolving, becoming one with the light.

We intercut between these three POVs for some time, and
eventually the screen becomes fully white.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT/EXT. JOHN AND JANE'S HOUSE

Jane wakes up on her couch in her living room. It's dawn.
She looks around, unable to comprehend what just happened;
unable to accept for some time that she escaped. She walks
around her room, examining it. Much of it is overturned and
in shambles.

She finds a picture frame lying in the rubble. She picks it
up. It is a picture of her and JOHN. She runs her fingers

across it with sadness. She hugs it and stands there for some time, the frame stuck to her chest in her arms.

She notices her shadow on the wall in front of her. She is scared, but soon collects herself and reaches her hand out to the shadow and touches it. Nothing happens. She sighs with relief and brings her hand back.

She walks out to the balcony. The neighborhood is blacked out. The power lines are absolutely destroyed. She looks around at the electric debris.

There is a crackling sound in the distance. She looks out towards the source of the sound. It is a man running through the rubble and street. He runs looking back at his shadow, afraid of his own movement. Hundreds of others follow suit along the street.

Jane keeps looking at him. As he walks, he looks up and sees her. The man still has a look of trauma and fear. Jane lets out a sigh of relief. JANE looks behind her.

SMASH TO BLACK.